

(MADRAS RADIO SANGEET SAMMELAN)
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Amar Nath has tender imagination

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By Our Music Critic

NEW DELHI, December 3: AIR has been instrumental in inculcating among the audience in the North and South appreciation of each other's musical system over the last 20 years. This has been achieved mainly by exposing listeners to recitals of the other musical system. Two of our well-known musicians, Amar Nath and Mushtaq Ali Khan, were made to perform in the Radio Sangeet Sammelan concert held in Madras.

By all counts, Amar Nath, a Delhi vocalist and a disciple of Ustad Amir Khan, is one of our most gifted artistes, endowed with a prolific imagination. His vocal rendering of the difficult raga Kaunsi Kanhra—though the simple Malkauns approximating to the Karnatak Hindolam would have elicited more instant response from the southern listeners—was packed with artistic content. It was expressive to the core. The most commendable feature was the natural, almost perfect fusion of the components—Malkauns and Kanhra—to form one entity with Ri and Pa made to appear as indis-

pensable limbs of the raga. The technical aspect of the melody remained inviolable.

An atmosphere of overpowering peace together with a strong feeling of nostalgia and wistfulness pervaded the exposition even in the tenuous and terse tanas and sargams. The occasionally falling notes and under-shooting voice represented only a temporary physical infirmity which paled into insignificance before the artiste's strength of mind and soul. And is not Amar Nath a dear legacy of the departed Amir Khan for us to adore and cherish?

In the setting up a tana or sargam and in his Aamad, Amar Nath carries the influence of Shiv Kumar Shukla or better still of Ustad Aman Ali Khan. His bhajan keyed to the Marathi style, favouring the notes of Gauri, seemed to take a leaf from Kumar Gandharva's book. His subtle imaginative conception was often let down by shoddy execution here.

Mushtaq Ali Khan's recording of the anticipated raga Kedar on the sitar was disturbed by loud talking in the concert hall. His music may be old wine for some to relish. But it is narrow in vision and conception. Its content is meagre, repetitive. His plucks seem to drag and tune is in distress. Soft, trailing Madhyamas was the only movement one liked. Conscientious musicians never let Kedar close in on Pa Ma Ri Sa, as he did. A streak of Ma Pa Ga Ma was also noticed a few times. Adana was played after Kedar. The tabla accompaniment by Karimullah Khan was excellent, though his right drum was offkey.