

Amarnath Makes Concert Lively

BY OUR MUSIC CRITIC

A concert of classical music featuring Amarnath (vocal) and Uma Shanker Misra (sitar) was held at the Triveni Garden Theatre, New Delhi, on Thursday evening.

Amarnath began with a slow khayal of Poorvi. Set to jhoomra, it was sung in a mood of profound engrossment, revealing in its different phases of development an extremely refined feeling for tone. Mellow and flexible, the artistes' voice conveyed the raga's form in a language that was lyrically impressive.

There was no mistaking it; every combination or phrase, serving to facilitate the emergence of the modal image, was used. Apt placing of the two madhyams, built up the mood and character of Poorvi. At the same time, it was kept distinct from the allied mode Gauri. The sargams (note-names), with their vivifying touches, helped highlight the raga's melodic profile.

The second piece (in allegro) was rendered in a lively vein. Strong of tone, swift, and precise, the sallies (taans) brought plenty

of animation into the performance.

The artistes next choice was Tilang, of which he presented an extremely well-shaped khayal (teental). It was rendered in a deeply musical mood. There were moments, when the singing took on a most happy emotional colouring, when it appeared to well up from some charmed spot in the artiste's sensibility. He showed great fondness for the sargam, which, together with the more rapid figures, served to diversify the singing.

Amarnath concluded with a thumri of Pilu. He received good rhythmic support from Sardar Khan (tabla).

Uma Shanker Misra began his sitar recital with Jog-Kauns. It was elaborately done in the traditional style. Starting from alap

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Graceful taans

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The Triveni music circle at its inaugural session on Thursday presented Amarnath (vocal) and Uma Shanker (sitar), both renowned in their fields. Amarnath's 'poorbi' found him in fine form. His supple and radiant voice gave colour and warmth to individual notes, and a fluid flow to the movement in general.

The 'aalap', where every point of the raga stood out as an aesthetic necessity rather than mere grammar, was a gradual evolution, emotionally motivated and intelligently directed.

The transition from the slow to the medium and from the medium to the fast was smooth and unhurried, and the taans in the 'drut' clear, pointed, well-designed, and gracefully finished.

The last piece, a thumri, his own composition, brought out his understanding of both music and poetry and his ability to create a successful fusion of the two. He was helped by Baldev Varma on the harmonium.

Although disturbed by the instruments' tendency to scatter, Uma Shanker played Jog Kauns with his usual poise and restraint. The unbroken stream of the Jhala, the speed and clarity of his taans were particularly marked. He was ably supported by Zameer Ahmed on the tabla.

Amar Nath back in form

By Our Music Critic

Triveni Kala Sangam announced the opening of a music circle by featuring recitals by Amar Nath and Uma Shankar Misra, two eminent artistes on its staff, at the Triveni Garden Theatre on Thursday. The new music circle intends to sponsor all varieties of music, provide a forum for performing musicians and periodically arrange concerts of specially recorded music.

My greatest pleasure on this day was to see Amar Nath back on the high pedestal of inspired musical creation. After a temporary falling off of form, this imaginative vocalist has, happily for his numerous admirers, staged a fine recovery. A part of the credit for this certainly goes to the local Press which gave a timely pointer. Amar Nath began with raga Purvi. From the first strain and the



cosy tunefulness of the shadja, he plunged in the deeps of the melody, gently touching its Shuddh Madhyama, then, his head and heart moved in unison—under one yoke. Accurate Sur helped the imagination to glow. One was sorry for the tabla which wavered in temps and was most of the time out of pitch.

A fine poetic composition in Tilang followed, a less tidy item than the previous. Though Tilang was unambiguous, it wore a slightly unfamiliar look. For one thing, the emphasised Madhyama altered the trajectory of the raga. Though seemingly a minor detail the straight Pa Ma Ga descent in place of the prevalent Pa Ga Ma Ga makes a vital difference to raga's complexion.

Pilu, the last item, was again warmly sung though it was closer to the Bhajan style than Thumri.

SITAR RECITAL

The next artiste, Uma Shanker Misra, chose the compound raga Jog Kauns. In this, he rendered Alap, Jor, Jhala and two Gats on the sitar. An inimical instrument did not allow him respite to settle down to calm, self-forcful playing. After every pull and pluck of the string, its tension slackened. But the indomitable artiste that Uma is, he never gave in, returned the erring sitar and provided patches of brilliant music. A peculiar light and airy grace in plucks is all his. An identical grace characterised Zamir Ahmad's manipulation of the drums.

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