

# PART- I



# THEORY OF MUSIC





## UNIT- 1

# INTRODUCTION TO MUSIC

### 1. PLACE OF MUSIC IN LIFE & MUSIC AS A FINE ART

#### Key concepts

- Divinity of music
- Music as the finest of the fine arts
- Chatushasti Kalas
- Music and Nature
- Music in the everyday life of man
- Music as a source of relaxation
- Therapeutic values of music

#### 1.1 Integral Part

Music is one of God given gifts to humanity. It has been cultivated from the dawn of human history. Man has always been attracted to music, irrespective of caste, creed, religion and nationality. Music has contributed much to the intellectual and aesthetic enrichment of people all over the world. Whether one realises it or not, music is an integral part of everyone's life. It satisfies man's intellectual thirst and gives solace to the soul. A society which fails to devote some of its time and resources to arts is bound to ruin. Shakespeare has rightly said thus:

"The man that hath no music in himself  
Nor is not moved with the concord of sweet sounds  
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils."

(Merchant of Venice)

According to our great scholars, arts are sixty four in number, collectively referred to as Chatushashti Kalas. These again fall under two categories- the ordinary and the fine arts. The fine arts also referred to as Lalita Kalas, are music, painting, sculpture, drawing, architecture, dance, carpentry and poetry. In this classification, music ranks as the finest of the fine arts. It is the brightest gem adorning the cultural heritage of a country.

## 1.2 Divine Art



In India, music is said to have a divine origin. All the Hindu Gods and Goddesses have been associated with some kind of musical instrument- Krishna with flute, Saraswati with veena, Siva with Damaru, Nandi with Mridangam and so on. Music had been an indispensable component in rituals and celebrations even from the Vedic period. In India, music has always been a means to salvation rather than being a means of mere entertainment. Our great saints Tyagaraja, Meerabai and Tulasidas have all used music as an aid to salvation.

Music has always been a part and parcel of man's life. Will there be a mother who has not put her baby to sleep by singing a soothing lullaby? Will there be a child who has not danced to the tunes of a rhythmic song? Will there be a teenager who is not moved by a romantic song? Will there be a man, on the run to earn his living, who has not even once yearned to relax himself with music? An old man who has not been driven by some peaceful music? Music acts as a faithful companion of man throughout his life.



*Let us do*

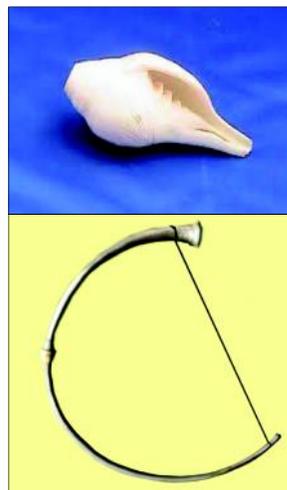
Demonstration of a lullaby

### 1.3 Music as an accompaniment

Every function in India is accompanied by some sort of music. The birth of a child used to be announced by the sounds of conch and trumpets. Other functions like upanayanam, marriage etc are also celebrated with music. Music is used even for the ceremonies after death. Therefore it can be assumed that man enters and exits from life to the accompaniment of music.

Spirituality is invariably associated with music. Music has always been an indispensable part in the religious activities of people all over the world. There are songs in every language for people of all sects to propitiate the Gods they believe in. It is believed that God lives in the hearts of those who sing His praises. Lord Vishnu has said

"I dwell not in Vaikunta, nor in the Sun, nor in the hearts of Yogins, but dwell where my devotees sing".



### 1.4 Therapeutic Value

Music has immense potential to offer comfort to humans. Ancient Greeks and Arabs used music to cure people of their diseases. Recent researches have re-discovered the powers of music and music is now being used for curative purposes for certain ailments. This idea of using music for curing diseases is called music therapy. Researches have also shown that music helps the brain to develop much more fully during the early years. It improves study habits and makes children brighter and logical. It has also been observed that music enhances memory. In Western countries, music is now a day used as an aid to treat Alzheimer's disease. It has been found that music increases the Alzheimer's patient's ability to remember new instructions.

### 1.5 Music for relaxation

Music helps to relieve tension and forget physical strain. This ability of music has been utilised by man from very early times. The harvest songs, craft songs, boat songs and marching songs of soldiers helped to alleviate physical stress, rejuvenate the spirit and bring uniformity in work. During exercise, listening to music helps people keep going and ignore the negative feelings of fatigue. Some people like to listen to music while



driving as it makes them relaxed and facilitate smoother and safer driving.

Music is the basis of all other art forms. No dance can be enjoyed without musical accompaniment. Dramas, Operas, Mimes, Ballets, everything need music for complete comprehension and appreciation. Can one imagine a movie without music or a

TV programme without musical underscores? Music acts as a supporting factor for films and television programmes. Sometimes it so happens that the songs become so popular that the movie solely depends on the songs alone for its success. Most commercials use jingles to help sell their products. So man is constantly in touch with music in his day to day life.



*Let us do*

Demonstration of boat songs, craft songs and harvest songs

## 1.6 Influence of Music

Music influences the nature as well. The animals of Brindavan were enchanted by the mesmerising music which flowed from Krishna's flute. It is well known that Muthuswamy Dikshitar brought rain in Ettayapuram by singing Amritavarshini raga. Recent researches show that plants grow faster and cows yield more milk when made to listen to music.

Thus we can see that in every spheres of life, music is indispensable. There is music and rhythm in everything, from the tick of the pulse, the beat of heart, the song of birds, the change of seasons, and so on. It is this music and rhythm that keeps the universe going. Music is thus a boon to human race.



*Let us do*

Demonstration of Amritavarshini kriti, 'Anantamrita karshini'



### **Learning Outcome**

- Identifies the importance of music in society
- Develops a general idea about fine arts
- Understands the theoretical values of music
- Gets an idea on the influence of music of other art forms like dance, drama etc.
- Acquires a basic knowledge about music

### **Evaluation**

- What are the therapeutic values of music
- Write a note on the influence of music on human beings, animals and nature
- Music is the finest of the fine arts. Explain

### **Reference**

1. Theory of music - Miss L. Isac
2. South Indian Music- Prof P Sambamoorthy
3. Dakshinendian Sangeetam - A.K. Raveendranath

## 1.2. THE CULTURAL, INTELLECTUAL, EMOTIONAL AND SPIRITUAL VALUES OF MUSIC

### Key concepts

- The cultural values of music
- The intellectual values of music
- The emotional values of music
- The spiritual values of music

All branches of knowledge other than science come under the heading of humanities. The Chatushashti Kalas mentioned in the ancient works include ordinary arts and fine arts. The Laita kala or fine arts appeal to the sense of beauty in us. Music appeals through the medium of ear. Visual arts like painting, sculpture and architecture appeal through the medium of eye. Music, Dance, Drama, Opera, Dance drama and Katha-kalakshepam come under the heading of performing arts.

Fine arts are important in promoting culture and progress. They develop the sense of beauty. It is believed that, a better man and a better society result by the promotion of the study of fine arts. Life becomes dull, uninteresting and devoid of all its charm, if fine arts are not allowed to prosper and grow.

Among all the fine arts, music may be placed on a higher level because it was developed by man's genius and imagination alone. Music is one of the God given gifts to humanity. It has been cultivated from the dawn of human history. It is the finest of the fine arts. Music appeals to all people irrespective of nationality,

caste, and religion. It appeals not only to man but to all creatures of this Universe and influences even the nature. Music is international and it exists in some form or other in all countries of the world. Though only a few nations have developed a classical system of music, yet in every country even in the most backward regions, we find music playing an important role in the lives of the people.



### *Memory check/ Progress*

Music as the finest of the fine arts

#### **1.2.1 Cultural Value**

Music is the language of emotion. It is a powerful factor in the moulding of one's character. The study and cultivation of music purifies man and thus promotes his culture. The sense of beauty that is developed in the person contributes to his cultural refinement. Through music, the negative instincts in man are suppressed and the nobler instincts are developed.

One who truly loves music cannot have any place in his heart or life for any of the negative emotions. It is one of the greatest joys of humanity and is the most harmless of pleasures. It acts as a powerful weapon in moral education. Music appeals to the physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual instincts of man. The greatest and widest appeal is on the physical and sensory side. A child is pleased by the soft strains of music though it does not understand the language of the song. Adults find rest and relaxation at times of stress and worry, by listening to good music. Music can be enjoyed at the moment it is heard, but in the case of other arts, the finished product alone can give pleasure. A good musician contributes much in creating a better understanding between the people of different countries. A musician through disciplined and controlled behaviour during his concert learns how to behave in a cultured manner towards the people around him.

#### **1.2.2 Intellectual value**

On the intellectual side, music has much to offer to those who are interested in the higher and subtle aspects of Sangita Sastra. The intricate gamakas, svara pattern, difficult talas and their varieties, permutations and combinations of the shadangas and shodasangas to create new time measures etc. will prove to be a never failing source of knowledge in classical music. Development of rare pallavis in rare talas, construction of

new kinds of instruments and subtler aspects of the subjects like Raga and Rasa, Ragas and Gamakas, 22 Srutis etc. are topics which present a challenge to the intellect.



### *Memory check / Progress*

The cultural and intellectual values of music

### **1.2.3 Emotional value**

Emotionally, music is best suited for expressing the deepest feelings of man. Rasanubhava is the main aspect of music. Ragas depict various rasas. The highly evolved compositions like kritis and padas are rich in emotional content. It is the ragas, which bring out the flavour of the various situations and incidents in Geya Natakas and Nritha Natakas. Music is both an art and a science. It removes the coarseness from human thought and expression and gives grace and refinement. Just as physical exercise serves to keep active every nook and corner of the body, the cultivation and hearing of good music serves to nourish the nervous system. Listening to good music serves to cleanse the internal dirt in a person. A wholesome effect is also experienced by him.

### **1.2.4 Spiritual Value**

The culture and tradition of India is based on spirituality and hence the spiritual and mystic aspect of music is predominant in India. Music has been employed from time immemorial to attain mental peace and tranquillity. It appeals to our conscience. In addition it helps one to realise the supreme qualities within him. In early times music was used for worship and prayers alone and not for any other secular purposes. Saint Tyagaraja says that dedication of oneself to pure music was a means of attaining salvation. The incidents in Muthuswami Dikshitar's life can be quoted as an example to prove the mystic powers of music. He composed the Navagraha kritis to save Suddha Maddalam Tampiyappa, his disciple, from a severe stomach ache. In another circumstance, Dikshitar created heavy rain by singing Amritavarshini raga. The therapeutic power of music is well accepted and appreciated now a days. Music is the medium adopted by great artists, thinkers and



*Muthuswami  
Dikshitar*

religious reformers for revealing their most refined and elevated thoughts to humanity. Music has the power to influence man's physical nature and give pleasure to his senses. Spiritually it gives him strength in trouble, solace in sorrow and doubles his joy. It gives him culture and understanding and polishes the crudities and rough edges of his nature, thus developing his character. Music develops the powers of concentration and it has the capacity to refine a person as well.



### **Memory check / Progress**

- The emotional and spiritual values of music
- The incidents in Dikshitar's life which can be quoted as examples to prove the mystic powers of music



### **Learning outcome**

- Realises the cultural, intellectual, emotional and spiritual values of music and influences of music in life.

### **Evaluation**

- Write a paragraph on the cultural values of music
- Explain how music is best suited for expressing the deepest feelings of man
- Give a brief note on the intellectual values of music
- Describe in detail the spiritual values of music