



తెలుగు సారస్వత సాంస్కృతిక సంఘము

Telugu Literary And Cultural Association

Sankarabharanam

Lyrics translation by Brij Bala

Vishwanath's musical hit, Sankarabharanam (The Jewel of Shiva), is often presented as the film that transformed the Telugu film industry in 1980s. Proudly identifying with the grand Karnatic musical tradition of the Telugus, the movie introduced classical music to the mass audiences and went on to become a runaway success. Also remarkable is the fact that S.P.Balasubramanyam flawlessly rendered all the songs with no previous classical training or experience.

The film spawned a whole genre: Bapu's Thyagayya(1981), Dasari Narayana Rao's Megha Sandesam (1982), Singeetam Srinivasa Rao's 'Sangeeta Samrat (1984), Vams's Sitara (1984), and Viswanath's own sequel Sagara Sangamam (1983) and Swathi Muthyam (1985).

Veturi Sundararamamurthy's lyrics add a whole new dimension of depth to the remarkable songs in this movie. Unfortunately, they might remain inaccessible even to many Telugu speaking people, especially the younger ones today. With the help of *Ms.Brij Baala*, we bring you the following translations of the songs. In this issue, we present the first two songs; The last three songs Maanasa Sancharare, Brochevaarevarura and Dorakuna Ituvanti Seva will be presented in the next issue.

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ఓంకార నాదాను



1. ఓంకార నాదాను సంధానమౌ గానమే శంకరాభరణము

Om kAra nAdAnu sandhAnamou gAnamE SankarAbharaNamu

Word to word meaning

Om kAra nAda = the celestial sound called Om

anusandhAnamou = that applies / harnesses

gaanamE = the song

SankarAbharaNamu = the rAga called SankarAbharaNamu (the jewel of Shiva)

Gist

The song that harnesses the power of the celestial sound Omkaaram is the one and only "SankarAbharaNam"

2. శంకర గళ నిగళము శ్రీహరి పద కమలము
రాగ రత్న మాలికా తరళము శంకరాభరణము

Sankara gaLa nigaLamu Sreehari pada kamalamu
rAga ratna mAlika taraLamu SankarAbharaNamu

Word to word meaning

Sankara = Shiva's

gaLa = throat/neck

nigaLamu = embraced

Sreehari = Lord Srimannarayana's

pada kamalamu = lotus feet

rAga ratna = the gem of rAga

mAlika = garland

taraLamu = shining

Gist

This SankarAbharaNamu is the shining jewel in the garland of gems called ragas. This is the adornment that embraced Shiva's neck and Lord Srihari's feet.

3. శారద వీణా రాగ చంద్రికా పులకిత శారద రాత్రము

నారద నీరద మహాతీ నినాద గమకీత శ్రావణ గీతము

SArada veeNA rAga chandrikA pulakita SArada rAtramu
nArada neerada mahatee ninAda gamakita SrAvaNa geetamu

Word to word meaning

SArada veeNA rAga = the song of Goddess Saraswati's instrument
chandrikA = the moonlight
pulakita = made ecstatic
SArada rAtramu = the night of Sarad Ritu (the season that follows rainy season, known for its moonlit nights)
nArada = the muni nArada
neerada = the cloud
mahatee ninAda = the sound coming from the instrument called mahati
gamakita = filled with the nuances of notes (gamakas)
SrAvaNa geetamu = the song of SrAvaNa month (Aani maasam that's characterized by rains)

Gist:

This SankarAbharaNam is like the ecstatic Sarad ritu night that's filled with the moonlight called the song from Goddess Saraswati's veena. This SankarAbharaNam is the song of Sravana month that's filled with the fine shades of notes from Narada rushi's Mahati veena and the sounds from clouds.

4. రసికుల కనురాగమై రస గంగలో తానమై
పల్లవించు సామ వేద మత్రము శంకరాభరణము

rasikula kanurAgamai rasa gangalO taanamai
pallavinchu sAma vEda matramu SankarAbharaNamu

Word to word meaning

rasikulaku = to the connoisseurs
anurAgamai = dear / close to heart
rasa gangalO = in the great river of "rasa" (emotion or sentiment)
tAnamai = bathed
pallavinchu = that blossoms
sAma vEda mantramu = the verse of the fourth veda called saama veda

Gist:

This SankarAbharaNam rAgam is the mantram from sAma vedam that's soaked in the fountain of emotion, cherished by the connoisseurs/experts of music and has blossomed.

5. అద్వైత సిద్ధికి అమరత్వ లబ్ధికి గానమె సోపానము....
సత్య సాధనకు సత్య శౌధనకు సంగీతమే ప్రాణము
త్యాగరాజ ప్రౌదయమై రాగరాజ నిలయమై
ముక్తి నొసగు భక్తి యోగ మార్గము
మృత్యులేని సుధాలాప స్వర్గము శంకరాభరణము

advaita siddhiki amaratva labdhiki gaaname sOpaanamu....
satva saadhanaku satya Sodhanaku sangeetamE praaNamu
tyAgarAja hrudayamai rAgarAja nilayamai
mukti nosagu bhakti yOga mArgamu
mRtiyalEni sudhAlApa swargamu SankarAbharaNamu

Word to word meaning

advaita siddhiki = to attain the state of advaita
amaratva labdhiki = to gain the immortality
gAname sOpANamu = only music is the staricase (path)
satva sAdhanaku = to achieve the satva guna (best one of the 3 gunas - satva, rajas, tamas)
satya sOdhanaku = to seek the truth
sangeetamE prANamu = music alone is the life
tyAgarAja hrudayamai = as heart and intent of saint tyagaraja
rAgarAja nilayamai = as the abode to the king of music
muktini osagu = granting the liberation
bhakti yOga mArgamu = the path of devotion
mrutiyalEni = that has no death / that never perishes
sudhAlApa swargamu = the heaven where song (alapana) is the ambrosia

Gist:

Only music is the path that leads to the state of advaita and the state of immortality. To seek the truth of nature and God, and to achieve the greatest of gunas called Satva guna, music alone is the key. This SankarAbharaNam is saint tyagaraja's heart and abode to Lord Rama. This is the path of devotion that grants the liberation, and key to the immortal heaven where the nectar of music flows.

రాగం తానం పల్లవి



రాగం తానం పల్లవి

నా మదిలోనె కదలాడి కడతేరమన్నవి

rAgam tAnam pallavi
nA madilOne kadalADi kaDatEramannavi

Word To Word

rAgam = the raaga
tAnam = the rythemic pulse of song
pallavi = the opening lines of the kriti
nA madilOne = in my heart and mind
kadalADi = danced / dwelled
kaDatEramannavi = told me to seek my end/destiny

Gist

The ragam taanam and pallavi dwell and dance in my heart and inspire me to seek the ultimate goal of life.

నాదవర్తులై వేదమూర్తులై
రాగకీర్తులై త్రిమూర్తులై
రాగం తానం పల్లవి

nAdavartulai vEdamoortulai
rAgaakeertulai trimoortulai
rAgam tAnam pallavi

Word To Word

nAdavartulai = the ones who dwell inside the sound
vEdamoortulai = the ones who are personified by vedam
rAgaakeertulai = the ones who are praised by the raagas
trimoortulai = the three gods - chaturmukha brahma, vishnu, siva

Gist

The ragam, taanam and pallavi that are like the three gods who dwell in the eternal sound and are personified by the vedam and are praised by the music itself, are inspiring me to seek my goal.

క్రిష్ణా తరంగాల సారంగ రాగాలు
క్రిష్ణలీల తరింగిణీ భక్తి గీతాలు
సస్యకేదారాల స్వరస గాంధారాలు
సరస హృదయ క్షేత్ర విమల గాంధర్వాలు
క్షీర సాగర శయన దేవ గాంధారిలో
నీ పద కీర్తన సేయగ

krishna tarangAla sAranga rAgAlu
krishnaleela taringiNee bhakti geetAlu
sasyakEdArAla swarasa gAndhArAlu
sarasa hrudaya kshEtra vimala gAndharvAlu
ksheera sAgara Sayana dEva gAndhAriLO

nee pada keertana sEyaga

Word To Word

krishna = the river Krishna

tarangAla = waves

sAranga = dappled / colorful

rAgaalu = raagaas

krishna leela taringiNee = the great book of devotional compositions by Sri Narayana Teertha

bhakti geetAlu = devotional compositions

sasya kEdArAla = fertile lands green with crops

swarasa gAndhArAlu = the natural and unadulterated northern lands (gandhara is a region, also gandhara is a note in the musical scale)

sarasa hrudaya kshEtra = the hearts of connoisseurs

vimala = pure, unblemished

gAndharvAlu = the union/wedding with mutual consent OR the art of gandharvas, i.e., music

ksheera sAgara Sayana = Lord SriMahaVishnu who's reclining on the milk ocean OR the tyagaraja kruti named Ksheera Sagara Sayana

dEva gAndhaariO = in the raga deva gaandhaari

nee pada = your feet

keertana sEyaga = singing praise

Gist

The dappled waves of river Krishna, Sri Narayana Teertha's devotional compositions, the lush green fertile gaandhara region filled with crops, and the pure music in the hearts of connoisseurs - all these are singing your praise in raga deva gaandhaari, O Lord Narayana!

Another Meaning

Sri Narayana Teertha's devotional hymns resembling the colorful waves of river krishna, And the gaandhaara notes that enrich the Kedaara raagam are getting unioned in the hearts of connoisseurs and singing the glory of Lord's lotus feet in the keertana called "Ksheera Saagara Sayana" set in deva gaandhaari raagam.

శ్మతి లయలే జననీ జనకులు కాగ
భావాల రాగాల తాళాల తేలి
శ్రీ చరణ మందార మధుపమునై వ్రాలి
నిర్మల నిర్వాణ మధు ధారలే గ్రోలి
భరతాభినయ వేద వ్రత దీక్ష పూని
క్లౌస సదన కాంభోజి రాగాన
నీ పద నర్తన సీయగ

Sruti layalE jananee janakulu kAga
bhAvAla rAgAla tALAla tEli
Sree charaNa mandAra madhupamunai vrAli
nirmala nirvANa madhu dhAralE grOli
bharatAbhinaya vEda vrata deeksha pooni
kailAsa sadana kambhOji rAgAna

nee pada nartana sEyaga

Word To Word

Sruti layaE = tone and beat
jananee janakulu kAga = became mother and father
bhAvAla = in meanings
rAgAla = in tunes
tALAla = in rythms
tEli = floating
Sree charaNa = Lord SriHari's lotus feet
mandAra = flower called mandara
madhupamunai = like a honeybee
vrAli = resting
nirmala = unblemished
nirvANa = liberation
madhu dhAraE = streams of nectar
grOli = drinking
bharatAbhinaya vEda = the vedam called bhārata sāstram (dance)
vrata = pious observance
deeksha = oath
pooni = undertaking
kailAsa sadana = one who dwells in Kailasam / lord Shiva
kambhOji rAgAna = in the raaga called kaambhoji
nee pada = your feet
nartana sEyaga = danced
Gist

I became a honeybee born to Sruti and Laya and floating in the meanings tunes and rythms reached the lotus feet of Lord Vishnu to drink the nectarian flows of moksham/liberation. I undertook the oath of practicing the Bharata sastra as Lord Shiva who dwells in Kailasa mountain is dancing to the raaga kaambhoji.

Notes:

The Ragam-Tanam-Pallavi is the longest and technically most challenging item performed in Carnatic classial music concerts. The song is personifying the ragam and tanam and pallavi as trimurtis. The lyrics to this song indicate a deep understanding of music and dance on the part of the lyricist. Every line is a double entendre, one meaning pointing to a beautiful landscape (ideal for dance) and the other pointing to the notes, ragas and keertanas in music, both meanings culminating towards devotion and the praise of Lord.

For example, the Gaandhaara in the first charanam refers to a region in the northern side of India (today's Afghanistan) that was very fertile, and also rich in sculpture. Gandhaara silpams were fashioned after beautiful bhangimas or poses in classical dance. Also, Gaandhaara is a note in the 7-note musical scale. Kedaara means fertile land and also it's a name of a carnatic raaga. The usage of "Gaandhaara" combined with "Kedaara" thus gives us two explanations, one based on music and one based on dance.