

Classic Poetry Series

**Tyagaraja
- poems -**

Publication Date:

2004

Publisher:

Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

Tyagaraja(1767 - 1847)

Tyagaraja is incomparable to other Indian mystics in that he falls into the genre of not only poet, but also music composer. He is one of the three emissaries of what is known as, "Carnatic Music" or classical music of South India; the other two of the renowned "trinity" being Muthuswami Dikshitar and Syama Sastri. These three would comprise the Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva of Carnatic music.

Tyagaraja's Life and Songs

Tyagaraja was born in Tiruvaiyaru, Tamil Nadu, South India of a musical and educated family – his grandfather Girirajakavi, a famous Telugu poet, and his father Raamabrahman, a vocalist and veena player. Tyagaraja has no direct living descendents, as his only daughter's (SitaLakshmi) sole son (also named Tyagaraja) died. But interestingly, the repertoire of Tyagaraja's musical legend lives on more than 160 years later...

The majority of Tyagaraja's compositions are written in Telugu, his mother tongue, and a handful in Sanskrit. If Carnatic music still attracts today, it is due to the potency of its uniqueness and composers like Tyagaraja. I perceive Tyagaraja as the "Tulsidas" of South India. Both writers idolize the same God, Raama, but perhaps Tyagaraja supersedes in the Bhakti (devotion) domain: his songs personally hand-carved and infused with musical nuances that appeal to every emotion imaginable. His writing style though simple, comprises the intricacies of human relationships. He comfortably negotiates and flatters the Lord – all in an attempt to portray an intense angst for the Divine. Indeed, it is how he manages to relate these feelings to the audience that truly intrigues. A Carnatic music concert anywhere in the world is incomplete without Tyagaraja's compositions.

The poet composed his first song, Namō Namō Raghavaya at the tender age of 13 years and continued till his later years (80 years), to build one of the largest collations of compositions on a single God, in this case, the God-King, Raama. Tyagaraja has a total of over 2000 writings to his name, 800 songs well documented and widely sung today internationally by Carnatic singers. The poet has also composed three plays – Prahlada Bhaktivijayam, Naukacharithram, and SeethaRaama Vijayam, saturating them with his music and lyrics.

Bhuvini Dasudane

Raga: shrIranjani

Tala: dEshAdi

pallavi

bhUvini dAsuDanE pErAsacE bOnkulADitinA budhamanOhara

anupallavi

avivEka mAnavula gOri kOri aDDudrOva trOkkitinA brOvavE

caraNam

cAla saukhyamO kaShTamO nEnu jAlijEnditinA sarivArilO
pAlamuncina nITamuncinA padamulE gati tyAgarAjanuta

Word to word meaning:

pErAsacE : with the greed to

anE : be known as

dAsuDuv: your devotee

bhuvini: in this earth

bOnkulADitinA: did I lie?

budha manOhara: Oh one who enchants the wise?

gOri kOri: asking favours from

avivEka: ignorant

mAnavulu: men

aDDudrOva trOkkitinA: did I traverse crooked paths?

brOvavE: protect me

nEnu jAlijEnditinA: did I think

tsAla saukhyamO: of good times

kaShTamO: or difficult times?

sarivArilO: for people like me

pAlamuncina : what if you bathe me in milk

nItamuncina : or water?

padamulE gati: your feet are my only refuge

Meaning:

Oh one who enchants the wise, did I lie out of greed to be known as your
foremost devotee on this earth?

Did I traverse crooked paths and lower myself by begging from base individuals?
Protect me!

Did I ever bother about profit or loss? For people like me, to whom your feet are
the only refuge, whether we bathe in milk or water it is all the same.

Tyagaraja

Enta Bhagyamu

Ragam : sAranga

Thalam : dEshAdi

Pallavi : Enta bhAgyamu ! mApAla galgitivi EvarIDu mujjagamulalO dana

Anupallavi : centajEri saujanyuDai paliki cinta bAga tOlugini brocitivi !

Charanam : munnu nIsamIpamuna vElayu sanmunulanElla naNimAdi lIlalacE
dinnagAnu pAlanamu jEsinaTu nannu gAcitivi tyAgarAjanuta

Meaning:

What good fortune is this? You are my refuge. Who is your equal in the three worlds?

You came near me talked to me with your charming face and alleviated me of all my worries.

Long ago, you did the same by protecting all the sages who realised you through the eight sidhdhis like Anima. You have done the same to me. Tyagaraja worships you.

Tyagaraja

Girirajasuta Tanaya

Ragam : bangALa

Thalam : dEshAdi

Pallavi :

GirirAjasutA tanaya sadaya

Anupallavi :

SuranATha mukhArcita pAdayuga! paripAlayamAm ibharAjamukha!

Charanam :

GananATha ! parAtpara ! sankarAgama vArinidhi rajanIkara ! PhanirAjakaNkana !
vighna nivArana ! shAmbhava ! srItyAgarAjanuta

Meaning:

O son of the daughter of the king of the mountains, O kind hearted one!

Protect me, O one who has the face of the king of the elephants. Your feet are worshipped by the king of the Gods.

O lord of the Ganas, O supreme one! You are the auspicious who is like a moon to the ocean like Vedas. The serpent king adorns your arm like a bracelet. You are the remover of obstacles. O son of Shambhu, Tyagaraja worships you.

Tyagaraja

Nadasudharasa

Ragam : Arabhi

Thalam : rUpakam

Pallavi : NAdasudhArasambilanu narAkrutAya manasA

Anupallavi : VEdapurANAgama sAstrATulakAdhAramaina

Charanam : SvaramulArunnOkati ghaNTalu vararAgamu kOdaNDamu Dura naya
dEshyamu triguNamu niratagati sharamura

Sarasa sangati sandarbhamu gala giramulurA dharabhajana bhAgyamurA
tyAgarAju sEvincu

Meaning:

Drink the nectar of pure Nada, O Mind.

Sri Rama is the incarnation of Omkara, which is the essence of the Vedas and the Shastras.

The raagas have become his bow, the Kodanda. The seven notes are the bells tied to the bow and the three styles, Ghana, Naya and Desya are the strings of the bow. The gatis are the numerous arrows and the sangatis are his soft speech.

What is the good fortune of Tyagaraja to have got this gift from the Lord.

Tyagaraja