

P.V. Krishnamoorthy

It gives me great pleasure to write about my friend, philosopher and guide P.V. Krishnamoorthy, fondly known as PVK. He was my anchor and guided me when I joined AIR-Cuttack, as a novice. I remember him as a dynamic administrator who was equally talented in music composition. He was the only Station Director who was so passionate about and involved in the creative aspect of his job. He took personal interest in all musical productions and was an inspiration to all of us, musicians.

PVK did discover me, as he did Smita Patil and many others, and it was my good fortune to work under his inspiring guidance early in my musical career. AIR-Cuttack became not merely a broadcasting station but a leading centre of culture in Odisha. Dr. Mahtab, who was the Chief Minister, honoured him in the

very first year of his stewardship of AIR-Cuttack. PVK knew the art of getting the best out of anyone who had the good fortune to come under his care.

I had the privilege of being the chief guest at his 90th birthday and I am sure I, along with many musicians and colleagues, will be there when he hits his century! Meanwhile, I wish him a happy and healthy life.

*Hariprasad Chaurasia
by email*

He led by example

I happened to see the article on PVK (sir) in the June issue of *Sruti*. As one of his “finds” I had the privilege of being handpicked by him as flute artist when he came to AIR-Kozhikode in 1953 as Station Director ostensibly, as the rumour went, to shift the station elsewhere in central Kerala for lack of talent

in Malabar! PVK straightaway got down to work on recruiting staff who could become the pride of the State. He brought in Mahakavi Akkitham, Kodungaloor, Kakkad, Udayabhanu, Gayathri, Maya Narain and many others who made AIR a centre of literary and cultural activities under the dynamic leadership of PVK.

Himself an accomplished keyboard player, he composed many songs and orchestral items. His contribution to the collection of folk and traditional songs from north Kerala was his signal achievement. Persuading the Kottakal Natya Sangh to perform *Buddha Charitham*—a novel Kathakali performance—was a bold step. The Akshara Slokam Sadas at the Cochin Palace in which top poets of Kerala and the Cochin Maharaja himself participated and presided was highly appreciated. PVK was a man brimming with ideas. There are too many of his novel ideas to be included in a letter. He was no boss but a seniormost colleague who led by example. No wonder when he was transferred to Cuttack, the leading paper *Mathrubhoomi* wrote a sub-editorial about him—a rare privilege extended to government servants.

*G.S. Srikrishnan
Calicut*

Phenomenal veterans

Congratulations to *Sruti* on publishing the article highlighting the phenomenal P.V. Krishnamoorthy, who deserves to be awarded the highest civilian honour of our nation.

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All India Radio and Doordarshan owe a great deal to this visionary for the invaluable contributions he has made to their growth and development. I have known him much before I came to know of his ‘irrepressible’ brother Subbudu (Mama). I feel happy and honoured to have received the Nritya Choodamani award (Sri Krishna Gana Sabha) from the hands of PVK. I remember him pointing out to the late R. Yagnaraman that both Shanta and myself should have been honoured together as we have always worked so. He appreciated my acceptance speech in which I spoke about sponsorship for programmes and requested corporates to come forward and help cultural organisations. On the other hand, his brother described my address as “indecorous speech by the awardee” in the papers the next day!

While serving as Director of AIR-Kozhikode station in Kerala, PVK was instrumental in reviving several regional art forms, folk songs, poetry and literature by opening new vistas to broadcast them. It is his vision that paved the way for unearthing several folk and ritualistic songs and bringing to light the beauty of those age old Malayalam lyrics.

Even at the ripe old age of 97, PVK is meticulous and alert on

matters concerning the art field and makes constructive remarks. He promptly replies to emails. Youngsters as well as persons in high places could emulate his discipline and the respect that he has for all. We can only venerate such great souls who stand tall among their contemporaries.

I also appreciate *Sruti* for publishing an interview with natyacharya Rajee Narayan. I however feel that the caption “dance guru” is not good enough to describe such a great acharya whose contribution to the Bharatanatyam repertoire is phenomenal. She can be listed in the galaxy of vaggeyakaras and is truly a *sangeetagna* with the qualifications of a poet-lyricist, instrumentalist and natyacharya—all three aspects of *sangeetam*—as described in the *Sangeeta Ratnakara*.

As mentioned by her in the article, we have choreographed for several of her compositions, which are very popular among Bharatanatyam artists. We have been recommending her book *Nritya Geeta Mala* to performing artists seeking new repertoires in different languages, and they have benefited a great deal. Her *varnam Gokulabala* in Kalyani raga and the *Rama Sabdam* are internationally famous and often performed not only

by our disciples, but several others who have taken it up for the lyrical beauty and simplicity of content.

Though veteran natyacharya Rajee Narayan is respected, and her work is recognised by artists and art connoisseurs, it is unfortunate that national awards do not figure in her list of honours. She deserves to be nationally recognised for her undiluted dedication to her art and for imparting training and mentoring several Bharatanatyam artists who are in the limelight today.

V.P. Dhananjayan
Chennai

Footnote

Sruti June issue

Malladi Brothers sang their first concert in Chennai for Vasanthapriya in 1993. It was organised by A. Kanyakumari in memory of M.L. Vasanthakumari. MLV was not alive to bless them (as mentioned in the article).

The title they received from Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Sabha, New Delhi, is Nada Kalanidhi.

In the photo published on page 32, the person sitting next to Vikku Vinayakram is veena vidwan R. Pichumani Iyer.



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