

Influence of Classical Music in Modern Film Music Composers

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3

Abstract

Classical Music played an important role in the South Indian Movies and many singers, musicians, composers established in their own style with the influence of Traditional Classical Music. There are several modern film music composers in Telugu movies who made films with classical touch based on the stories, situations and emotions. Some film songs have been taken to explain briefly about their style of composing in the influence of Classical Music and some songs were explained with brief notations.

Aim

The aim of this article to bring out the extent of Indian Classical music in film music and the impact of the same on modern composers. There have been carnaic music purely used in olden days movies and the gradual change has taken place and cinema music is now a separate industry by itself. Even though all music forms have a base in carnatic music and it is inseparable, the article aims at how some of the tradiotional ragas are used accordng to the movie context, they are modified to today's trend and to the need of the hour.

Introduction

In today's world modern film composers use Classical Music in movies. Music composers have composed many tunes influenced by Classical Music. They have adopted many ragas and even they have adopted the classical compositions themselves to provide a dramatic mood and underpin the narrative. Classical Music in Indian film music is an integral and vital component of the productions.

Composing film music is a whole different world. Making music for films is commercial and collaborative while composers need to tap into emotions and evoke them. There are music composers who were influenced by Classical Music and created some of the songs with classical touch. There are several composers in Telugu Industry who's compositions have been chosen to explain briefly about their composing style, usage of Classical Ragas and Talas.



Since music has always been an essential component of Indian cinemas, composers of the earlier period to the present furnish it as they compose songs based on the stories and situations in movies. Over the years in Indian films. There were many legendary musicians, singers, composers and actors who created music in traditional classical style. In South India from Telugu Cinema many artistes like Ghantasala, KV Mahadevan, S Rajeswara rao, Pendyala Nageswara Rao, ilayaraja, K Vishwanathan created their own style and contributed so much for Telugu movies. Classical Music played an important role in Telugu movies and played an integral in shaping our culture and our movies. The role of music in the films so much evolved and it became one of the significant factors for routes at the box office. All kind of musical forms have existed in Telugu culture for centuries, including Harikatha, Burrakatha, Kuchipudi and Hindusthani and Carnatic Classical Music. Classical Music played a vital role of Telugu Cinema. Over the years We have had many popular music directors but, in the modern period some film songs background score are tuned in Classical Music. This article is a compilation of some observances in Telugu film songs and background score during the period of 2018 to 2022 influenced by Classical Music.

Observations of Film Music in the years 2018-2022

Considering the films belonging to the years 2018 – 2022, “Agnathavaasi” was a film where Music was directed by Anirudh Ravichander. The Pallavi and Charnam of the song ‘Swagatham Krishna’ was used. It is a song originally composed by the famous composer from Tamil Nadu, Oothukaadu Venkata Subbaiyyar, in Mohana Raga and Tisra Gathi. The song starts from “Madhurapuri Sadana” and not from the original beginning as composed by the composer and at one point “Vraja yuvati jana Manasa Poojitha” the swara Kakali Nishadam is heard – that doesn’t belong to the raga, but used for variety.

d g r g s n p d | s n p d S s s //
vrajayuvati-jana| Ma-nasa Poojitha //

d g r g s d p d | s d p d S s s //
vraja yuva ti- ja na | Ma-na sa Poojitha//

The classical song found its way back in the film, the placement of the song marks a juncture of the entry of the hero, who is symbolised as a modern day Krishna. In this song the usage of Classical Music elevates the hero’s character.

The film called “Rangasthalam” was Music directed by Devi Sri Prasad. In this Film “Yetnhasakkagunnave” song was composed in Senjuruti raga in Tisra Gathi. The music composer has tuned this in folk format. It comes in the following pattern :



m p mm / p m p / m p m /
yerushana/ gaksam/ mattini/
g r s // r g r / gg r g /
thavvithe // ekam ga / thagi li na/
r g r / s s s //
lankebin / delaaga //
p s s / s s s / s , , / g r g //
yentha sa/ kkagunna / ve / lechumi //
p s s / s s s / s , , / , , , //
yentha sa/ kkagunna / ve / . . . //

Music director by S. Thamanhas scored the music for the film called “Chal Mohana Ranga”. In this movie they utilise the composition of “Bantureeti Kolu” Composed By Saint Tyagaraja in the Ragam Hamsanadam in Adi Tala. Music Composer used this varna mettu and began the song “Artham Leni Navvu”. The Pallavi comes in the following pattern :

; , P P p m R R / s R s ; R / s ; p ; P // p ; p ;
Artham Le - - ni Nav - vu Arthaalenni Antoo
; , P P p m R R / s R s ; R / s ; p ; m // p ; n ;
Artham Le - - ni Nav - vu Arthaalenni Antoo

The notation for the first line of “Bantureeti “Kolu” is given below:

; , P P p m R R / s R s ; R / s ; p ; P // p ; p ;
Ban tu ree - - ti / ko lu vu - i / yyava yya// Ra -ma
; , P P p m R R / s R s ; R / s ; p ; P // p ; n ;
Ban tu ree - - ti / ko lu vu - i / yyava yya// Ra -ma

In the above notations both Bantu reeti koluvu and Artham Leni Navvu are similar. In this song the composer also added one more Raga Natabhairavi in Violin as introduction. It comes in the following pattern :

g r r s / R R / , g r s / R ; // g r r s / R R / , g r s / R ; //
g r r s / R R / , g r s / R ; // N S / ; ; / , D p / d n s r //

In the Film called “Sakshyam” for which Music director Harshavardhan Rameshwar has contributed to music scoring, the song “Shivam Shivam” is composed in Kasiramakriya. This song explains deeply about five elements of Nature. In this song music director described Panchabhootha Sthalas called five elements of Nature through music. Based on the situation music composer used this song in the movie.



Music director Mickey J Meyer has composed for the Film “Mahanati”. The song “Sada Nannu” in Raga Kambhoji. This song narrated the friendship and love between hero and heroine. Mickey J Meyer composed this in Kambhoji Raga but added another note Sadharana Gandharam in the place of “Ani Nede Thelise” to give it a cinematic touch.

The same Music director Mickey J Meyern, in the movie, “Srinivasa Kalyanam” the song “Kalyanam Vaibhogam” is composed in Madhyamavanthy Ragam in Khanda Gathi. In this he has incorporated the note Chatusruthi Dhivatam in the background score. This Background score is following in the pattern :

S m r m // P P , // S m r m // P P , // S m r m / P P , //
p n D p // M R s //

Similarly Music director Vishal Chandrasekhar has composed music for the Film “Padi Padi Leche Manasu”. The song “O My Lovely Lalana” is composed in Kharaharapriya Ragam in Adi Talam. The beginning of the song “Nanda Gopala” is similar to “Chakkani Raja Maargamu” composed by Saint Thyagaraja in Adi Talam.

Notation for the line “Nanda Gopala”

; , G , R S , S , S / ; , S , S / g R N , D //
Nan da Go – Pa – La | e – mi | ti - Lee -La//
; , D , N d N M , G | R ; ; ; ; ; ; //
Kan ta pa da ve -mi|Ra..... .. //

Whereas, “Chakkani Raja Margamu” goes like this:

;; ; R ; G R ; S ; ; ; S r n N ; / n d D ; N ; S R ; / r s N S ; ; S S //
Chak kani Ra - - ja | - - - Maa rga mu lun - - Da ga

In these notations Nandagopala and Chakkani Raja lines are similar notations.

For both films “NTR Kathanayakudu” and “NTR Mahanayakudu” Music was directed by M. M. Keeravaani. The song “Vendithera Dora” is composed in Vakulabharanam Ragam in Tisra Gathi. The music perfectly synchronises with the emotional content. He also composed one more song “Bantureethi Kolu” taking the first line of Saint Thyagaraja’s kriti and he did fusion with adding Saraswathy Ragam in the middle of the song called “Ninnu Thalachu Vaare”.

Music was directed by Suresh Bobbili for the Film “Tholu Bommalaata”. The song “Goppadira Manishi Puttuka” is composed in Raga Shankarabharanam. Nagaswaram is played as a prelude to the song and the tune of Saint Thyagaraja’s kriti Swara Raga Sudha is used. Based on this kriti music director composed this song and it was used for a Funeral scene in the movie.

The Film “Ala Vaikuntha Puramulo”, music composing was directed by S. Thaman, features the title song beginning in Thodi ragam with Bammara Pothana’s poetry. This song pictures a happy and celebration mood.



Thamanhas also scored music for the film “Disco Raja” in which the duet song “Nuvvu Naatho Emannavo” is composed in Sindhubhairavi Ragam. The same composer has directed for the movie “Krack” which features the song “Balega Thagilavey”. The influence of the charanam lines “Aganitha Loka Dhara” of the kriti “Raa Raa Dasharatha” in raga Bhairavi composed by Walajpet Venkatramana Bhagavatar, is seen in the song “Balega Thagilavey”. This song was used as a duet song in the movie.

; p D n D P ; d p M / P , d N ; | ; ; ; //
Aga ni tha lo- ka-- / Dha- Ra- | - - - //
; S , S S S S S , n / N D D P | ; ; ; //
Ash-ri ta ja na man- / Dha – Ra - |.....||

The film “Varudu Kaavalenu”, has music directed by Vishal Chandrakekhar. The song “Manasulone” composed in Reethigowla raga in Thisra Gathi.

M.M.Keeravani is another music composer for films who’s music has a lot classical influence. The film “RRR” features the song “Janani” which is based on raga Shankarabharanam. In the line “Aa niswanaalu naa seda” (*gmpd D d D d N (NI) D p*) the usage of Kaisiki Nishadam gives it the filmy element. Another carnatic influence is observed in the song “Komuram Bheemudo” composed in the Ragam Sudha Dhanyasi in Tisra Gathi. This song narrates the pain of slavery in the British Period.

The most recent film “Sitaramam” is another example of music with carnatic influence which the composer Vishal Chandrashekhar has depicted in the background score. He has used chaste Saramathi Ragam for the same. Raga Shankarabharana has been adopted for the song “Inthandam”. At the point “Daasohamandi Naa Prapanchame” Kaisiki Nishadam was used to create some interest.

The use of Traditional Instruments is observed in film “Kantara”. Music composer B. Ajaneesh Loknath has composed the song “Varaaha Roopam” the ragas of Thodi, Mukhari and another raga similar to Kanakangi. Traces of raga Asaveri is also felt in the prelude of Nagaswaram music but a vivadi raga is observed at the same time. In this song each line is sung in a different raga. In the movie this song was used for rituals both in the introduction and climax scenes.

Conclusion

In history of South Indian Cinemas Classical Music playing very important role and similarly the Music composer called Isai Medhai G. Ramanathan in the period of 1940s movies he contributed to the success of films with adopting the Classical Music. His part in taking Classical Music to lay the people is a major contribution to the growth and spread of Classical



Music in a different platform, other than concerts. His composing has influenced several musicians/composers of the modern times which are seen in the above examples. We can be proud of a rich and cultural heritage in Indian Music and many art forms are a treasure for future generations.

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