



## SUNADA

Music, Therapy and More...

Volume XI, November, 2017



### *From the Editor's Desk...*

*Come November and everyone is talking about Childrens' Day. While we do a lot of talk about Chacha Nehru, his love for kids and not to forget red roses, there is really a lot of criticism about what is not being done for the welfare of children. However much we do, it is just not enough ever. I personally know of at least two organizations which are rendering yeomen service to the welfare and education of street/poor kids. We are presenting a face to face chat with Ms. Rekha Malhotra who is doing great work in this area.*

**KSVasanthaLakshmi**  
**Founder & Editor**

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## FACE TO FACE



Rekha Malhotra  
Eminent Music Therapist  
On Music Therapy

Q: You are a musician of the Hindusthani Classical genre. What made you undertake all this Service to street kids' activities?

Rekha: I am a vocalist and a singer. I am a graduate in Indian classical vocal music from Chandigarh University. I did my Visharad from Lucknow University.

Q: Where did you do your Music Therapy course from?

Rekha: I am a music therapist from Nada Music Center, Chennai and live in Gurgaon.

Q: What are the activities you are involved in?

Rekha: I run my own music school, Music Rest from my home. In my school we teach Indian classical vocal music along with doing music therapy. I am also running another school for under privileged children from the car parking of our condominium. Most of them are children of the maids who work in our homes as domestic help. Seeing that these children are left behind to play in the streets, I started teaching these children to sign their names first.

Q: What was your experience while teaching them?

Rekha: I found that these children were stammering. There are many reasons why children have speech defects like not being fluent, lack of command over language and above all lack of confidence. With poverty as a constant status they have no opportunity to improve their lot.

Q: How do you deal with this problem?

Rekha: I give them speech therapy with Swaras or musical Notes. The human tongue gets good exercise with seven Swaras. This chart I picked from

Gandharva Veda as part of my research work involving Music Therapy.

Doing tongue exercise with Swaras as Ka Kha Ga etc is my new discovery. I have created this new method using KA KHA GA GHA, the Hindi alphabet. While speaking, our tongue folded towards the throat. It is a very good exercise. Then we come to Swaras Cha, Cha ja Jha. The tongue touches the palate and this is just one action involved in this entire exercise. So I chose the songs with Swaras with which the child is not comfortable to speak. These exercises have brought about a great change in these children. They now feel happy and confident to move freely in the society as they can become a part of the main stream educational institutions. They fly high with sound of music. I am proud to say that nearly 90 percent of the children of my school have got admission into Delhi Public School on their own merit. They learn Music with a quality Education .They get Music Therapy to shed their feeling of inferiority and on the way to

becoming the good future citizens of India.

Last year I was also interviewed on the radio, in which this achievement of Jagriti School was highlighted.



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## *MUSIC AND CHILDREN*

*By KS Vasantha Lakshmi*

There is really no proper age to expose a child to music. Right from the time of conception, the foetus is exposed to external sounds which definitely include music. The music could be of any kind. However, once the child is born, it is surrounded by all kinds of music, which is ambient, as well as that which comes in the form of lullabies. Whether the lullabies are musically rendered or not is a different question. They are usually sung by the mother, the grandmas, aunts or even siblings. What is being stressed is the fact that there is no escape from music.

The point I would like to discuss here is the exposure of a child to structured music and what exactly is the right age, the right kind of music and so on and so forth. There really are no hard

and fast rules for this, as there are always child prodigies. We can only talk about the things in a general way.

Exposure of children must be a source of pleasure and joy and must help bring out the artistic tendencies of a child. Psychologically, music education influences the all-round development of children. Firstly, it contributes to the emotional quotient in a child's brain. Secondly it encourages the creative aptitude of the child. Finally, the fact that engaging in music activity engages the right and left sides of the brain simultaneously which will help in multitasking abilities, especially in the later years of an adult.

Singing is first and foremost musical activity that children love to be a part of. Right from Kinder Garten level by carefully selecting repertoire of simple and easy to learn to songs with

simple lyrics, an interest in music can be cultivated in them.

While teaching young children, I follow the method of teaching simple lyrics set to tunes. This also helps in clear diction and I have also used difficult tongue twister kind of songs which the children find it fun to sing and it has helped many children with a stammer or a thick tongue.

According to Dr. Zoltan Kodaly, a Hungarian genius and a composer, folklorist, musicologist, linguist, teacher, educator and patriot, "Only human voice, accessible to all, can become the fertile soil for universal music-culture embracing all people."

Therefore, an obligatory task for all general education schools is to guide school children right from learning musical notation and the skill of singing by notes based on their native music language, to the music

composed by great masters. Regardless of what line of work they may choose to go into later in life, children with a music education and appreciation are seen to be taking an active part in various groups or become knowledgeable on whatever they do with an eye for detail and a passion for perfection. It is also observed that the level of intellectual development in mentally differently-abled children improved when subjected to selective music. In the case of autistic children and kids with ADHD, music seems to improve their communication skills. The rhythm of music tends to give them a structured and methodical assimilation into the mainstream living. The mesmeric nature of music somehow seems to calm the hyperactive kids. Although I am unable to provide any statistical support, I have observed in my own music classroom that music

has helped children apply themselves better to their school activities and helped in building confidence. My program on “Confidence building through Music Therapy” has been a great success which I used in an NGO by the name LEU, in Gurgaon.

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Recipients of Nada Award of Excellence, New Delhi



The Author at LEU, Gurugram



The author with the students of Mr. Kishore Bharadwaj, Talahassee, USA

## WHAT YOU THINK



The content this time is more a scientific explanation of noise etc and less on the Music Therapy. But the defending argument will be an explanation of SOUND which is a combination of so many items and Music is one in its limited frequency range.

It is also heartening to note that there is a lot of information provided for the layman to understand what is good sound and bad sound. Soundwaves are nowadays are being used as a war ayudham. Like the soundwaves that are directed at the US Consulate personnel in Cuba leading to many of them with permanent disability. The same is true when bombs and rockets are exploded during war causing Ear shattering noise with plenty of destruction due the sound waves etc. In other words Sound in the way as music is good for the living and the same under a different category causes severe destruction silently etc. That is the magic of sound- Sound for music or Sound for Destruction. The choice is with us.

B.S. Murthy, VP (Retd.),TVS Shrichakra, USA

Happy Diwali to you and family. The article about noise is well detailed and informative. Thanks

Eachampati Rammohan, USA

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Gone through the latest edition of Sunada. Congratulations for the excellent coverage.

Dr. KVN Rao, (Management Consultant), India

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For Online and Face to Face(F2F)  
Therapy & Music Lessons

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