



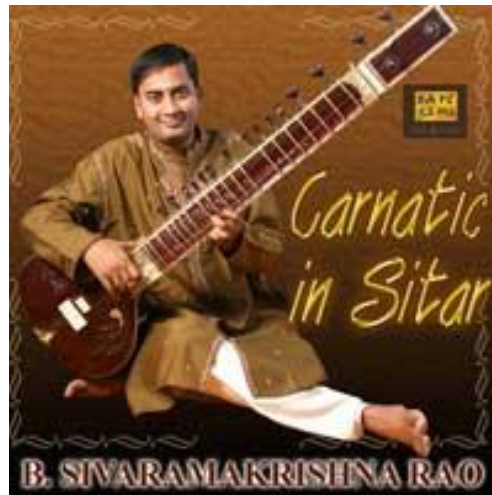
Carnatic in Sitar

by Vamanan [Author] August 2007.

Album: **Carnatic in Sitar**

Music: B Sivaramakrishna Rao

Label: SA RE GA MA



Noted sitarist B. Sivaramakrishna Rao's 'Carnatic in Sitar' is first of all a *tour de force* in musical adaptation, the queen of Hindusthani instruments making a scintillating foray into the Carnatic genre. But it is more than that because Sivaramakrishna Rao is not only a gifted player with an uncanny mastery over his instrument and the Carnatic idiom (a rare enough combination), but also a powerful composer with a gift for the offbeat and an arranger with a ear for mood and novelty. With a sheaf of Carnatic compositions that suit both his instrument and style, and give scope for elegant orchestral projection as well, Rao has come up with an effervescent, peppy and zestful presentation of south Indian music to the new fusion millennium.

Even in the opening number of the album, Tyagaraja's bouncy 'Giriraja Suta Thanaya', set in the zigzag phrases of raga Bangala, one gains a good impression of the composer and main player's sense of musical drama and exuberance. The energetic use both of percussion (rhythms arranged by Selva Ganesh and N. Ramakrishnan) and melody instruments adds great verve and raciness to the item. Thyagaraja's masterpiece

'Seethamma Maayamma' does indeed get a fitting rendition on the sitar, but the nuanced hues added on the flute, violin and keyboard and the rhythms and improvisations drummed up give it an awesome mounting. Lyrical sitar in grandiose setting.

The Pancharatna composition (Jagadaananda Kaaraka) is the piece de resistance, but with due deference to the masterpiece keeps close to it except for aural embellishments. Sindhubhairavi, Yaman Kalyan and Madhuvanti are familiar terrain for the winsome strains of the sitar, and also provide opportunities for the composer to yield to bewitching orchestral temptations marked both by melody and freshness. With 'Carnatic in Sitar', Sivaramakrishna Rao signals his versatility as a sitar player and energy and vibrancy as a composer bound to go places.

Written by,

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