

### Supplement 3

#### Additional discussion, Listening Guide, and Activities for CD Track 15, *niraval*

In this performance, Brinda chooses the first line of the *caranam* text (Activity 1) to render *niraval*. When she shifts to the next form of improvisation, *svara kalpana*, she will use the first phrase of the same text line as her theme of return. She begins *niraval* by singing the first words of the line, then, with responses from the flutist Viswanathan at each stage of the way, improvises successive turns or “rounds.”

#### Activity 1 *Kaligiyaṅṅē*, first line of *caranam*, used as basis for *niraval* improvisation

Tala:	1 . . * 2 . . . 3 . . . 4 . . . <u>5</u> . . . 6 . . . 7 . . . 8 . . .
Svaras:	p , p p , m , , r g , grr , , , r g m p , , , m g p m g r ,
Text:	bha gava ta gre sarulaku na rada-
Svaras:	r g m p , p p , (etc)
Text:	-a bha gava (etc)

(notes: asterisk denotes the *idam*; underlined numeral 5 denotes the *arudi*)

A few observations may help the listener in following this particular *niraval* improvisation. First, Brinda does not sing all the words of the text line in every round of *niraval* she improvises; but when she does sing one of the words of the line, it is always at, or very near, the same place in the tāḷa cycle. Second, the text phrase which she always returns to at the end of her improvised rounds is *bhāgavata*, beginning at the *idam* with the *svaras* [pa , pa pa]. This strong clearly audible phrase marks the end of each round of improvisation. Third, during *niraval* we begin to feel the gravitational power of the rhythmic resolution point *arudi*, in this performance located on beat five of the tāḷa cycle. At the conclusion of most of the rounds of *niraval*, Ranganathan creates a sense of resolution by playing a series of strokes ending on the fifth beat, followed by a brief silence before he starts playing again. Ranganathan “targets” and emphasizes this *arudi* strongly enough that a new listener might mistake beat five for beat one of the tāḷa. This would not be an illogical perception, because the strength of the first beat has already been diluted by the fact that the *idam* is 3/4 off the first beat, not directly on it. If a listener loses his/her place in the tāḷa, it can always be regained by listening to where the words

of the text line fall, because the rhythmic setting of the text is one of the constants in this particular improvisational setting. Activity 2 is a transcription of Brinda's first round of *niraval*.

**Activity 2** *Kaligiyuntē*, first round of *niraval* improvisation by T. Brinda (CD Track 15)

Tala:            1 . . \* 2 . . . 3 . . . 4 . . . 5 . . . 6 . . . 7 . . . 8 . . .

[0:00]

Svaras:            p , p p , m , , r g , grr ,

Text:              bha gava ta                      gre                      (Brinda pauses)

[0:10]

Svaras:            p , d p , p , , , , , p , , , , p d n dp , , , , g , m , , g , r

Text:              bha gava ta                      gre                      sarulaku                      na                      ra

[0:20]

Svaras:            r g m p , p p , m , pmm r g , grr ,                      p d p p ...

Text:              da            bha gava ta                      gre                      (flute begins...)

(notes: asterisk denotes the *idam*; underlined numeral 5 denotes the *arudi*)

In the first round of Brinda's *niraval* (Activity 2) she begins to improvise in the second cycle of *tāla*, resetting the melody by resting on *pa* through beats three and four instead of moving downward as in the original setting. Following this, she sings the word *sarulaku*, at beat six, higher in the *rāga* than in the original line. The rest of the line through the return to *bhāgavata* is left substantially the same. After Viswanathan's flute response, she begins her second round. This call-and-response dialogue continues through a total of eight rounds. Gradually the rounds for both vocalist and flutist get longer; in round five Viswanathan plays an especially extended *niraval*. For her final three rounds (rounds 6-8), Brinda sings in *madhyama kṛtā* (middle speed), where the underlying *svaras* of the text are conceived at twice the density of the *vilamba kṛtā* (slow speed) earlier rounds. This device, the doubling of density, will occur again in *svara kalpana* – another way that musicians can generate rhythmic interest without change of tempo. The following Listening Guide illustrates at what time in CD Track 15 and where in the *tāla* cycle each of Brinda's *niraval* rounds begin:

**Listening Guide:** *Kaligiyuntē*, beginning places for T. Brinda's eight rounds of *niraval* (CD Track 15)

*Vilamba kāla* (slow speed) rounds:

<u>Time</u>	<u>Cycle</u>	1 . . *	2 . . .	3 . . .	4 . . .	<u>5</u> . . .	6 . . .	7 . . .	8 . . .
0:00	1		bha gava...						
0:47	5						sarulaku...		
1:30	9						sarulaku...		
2:12	13						sarulaku...		
2:58	17								na rada...

*Madhyama kāla* (middle speed) rounds:

<u>Time</u>	<u>Cycle</u>	1 . . *	2 . . .	3 . . .	4 . . .	<u>5</u> . . .	6 . . .	7 . . .	8 . . .
4:11	24						sarulaku...		
4:32	26			[false start]			sarulaku...		
4:50	28			ta...					