

Supplement 5

Additional discussion, Listening Guide, and Activities for CD Track 17, drum solo

In every Kāṁṁṁṁṁ concert the percussionist has one opportunity to take an extended solo, which may be from two to over twenty minutes in length. A detailed analysis of T. Ranganathan's solo is beyond the scope of this work, but a few observations may help the listener keep tāḷa and follow its progress (for an in-depth study and video documentation of several eminent drummers' solos for *Kaligiyunṁṁṁ*, see Nelson 1991 [listed in the "Resources-Reading" section of the book]). At the beginning of his solo, the third stroke on the *mṁṁṁṁṁṁṁ* coincides with the *samam*, the first beat of the tāḷa. From this point on, audience members can be heard clapping along on the first, fifth, and seventh beats of the tāḷa cycle. A full-length *mṁṁṁṁṁṁṁṁ* solo usually moves through three sections, each combining two modes of playing, *sarva laghu* time flow and *kanakku* calculation.

Each section begins with time flow patterns, and gradually proceeds to a cadential concluding pattern called *kōṁṁṁṁṁ*. A *kōṁṁṁṁṁ* is a multi-part rhythmic composition, usually though not always performed three times, of which the last part is a *mōṁṁṁṁṁ*. Each part preceding the *mōṁṁṁṁṁ* expresses some rhythmic design, usually augmentation or diminution. In CD Track 17 the *kōṁṁṁṁṁ*s all conclude at the *mukkāl idam*, following the pattern of *niraval* and *svara kalpana*. (N.B. several terms used in this paragraph are introduced and defined in Supplement 2).

The process from time flow through cadence can occur multiple times in the first two sections. After completing a *kōṁṁṁṁṁ*, the drummer may start building again in the same basic tempo through time flow patterns towards another cadence, or move on to the next section, involving an increase in speed and density of the patterns.

In the second section the drummer may change the internal subdivision of the basic beat, switching between any of the five important subdivisions, 4, 3, 7, 5, or 9 (i.e., dividing the beat into fourths, thirds, etc.). If there is more than one percussionist, at the end of the second section a *koraippu* takes place, in which percussionists trade phrases of successively diminishing length, generating intense rhythmic excitement and propelling the ensemble into the final section.

The third, final, section contains three principal components. First come *parans*, conceptually simple but very fast patterns which generate energy and move the solo towards its conclusion. These lead to a big *mōṁṁṁṁṁ*, which in turn leads into the final *kōṁṁṁṁṁ*.

When, as on CD Track 17, a solo is brief, the drummer will often skip the first section, beginning with medium tempo time flow figures characteristic of the second section of a solo.

Activity 1 is a listening guide to the sections of T. Ranganathan's solo, taken cycle by cycle of tāla (at 1:18, just after the conclusion of the first *kōrvai*, someone accidentally brushes the microphone):

Activity 1 Listening guide to T. Ranganathan's drum solo (CD Track 17)

Time Cycle

0:01 1 medium tempo time flow patterns (0:00-0:43), leading to first *kōrvai*

0:12 2

0:22 3

0:32 4

0:42 5 *kōrvai* 1, played once (0:43-1:13)

0:52 6

1:02 7

1:12 8 *mōra* ends on *iḍam* at 1:13

brief cadence ending on *arudi* (1:15-1:17)

someone brushes against microphone at 1:18

medium tempo time flow patterns (1:18-2:05), leading to second *kōrvai*

1:23 9

1:33 10

1:43 11

1:53 12

2:03 13 *kōrvai* 2, played once (2:05-2:14)

2:13 14 *mōra* ends on *iḍam* at 2:14

brief cadence ending on *arudi* (2:16-2:18)

medium tempo time flow patterns (2:18-2:41), as transition to *parans*

2:23 15

2:33 16

2:43 17 *parans* begin on first beat (2:43-2:54)

2:52 18 big *mōra* begins at *iḍam* (2:54-3:13)

3:02 19

3:11 20 last *kōrvai* begins (3:13-3:41)

3:21 21 second statement of final *kōrvai* begins at 3:22

3:30 22 third statement of final *kōrvai* begins at 3:31

3:40 23 *kōrvai* finishes at *iḍam* (3:41)

		brief cadence ending on <i>arudi</i> (3:43-3:45)	
3:50	24	(solo ends on first beat)	

T. Ranganathan, a musician’s musician, performs a complex final *kōrvai* in this solo. In most situations, drummers begin and end the final *kōrvai* right on the *īḍam*, or begin it on the first beat of the *tāḷa* and end it on the *īḍam*. The *kōrvai* he plays for this solo is seven and three-quarter beats long; therefore, each of the three times he plays it, it begins one pulse earlier in the *tāḷa* cycle. At the end of the third time, the *kōrvai* concludes at the *īḍam* and then Ranganathan plays a small flourish touching the *arudi* before ending the performance on the first beat of the last cycle at 3:50 (Activity 2).

Activity 2 Beginning place of T. Ranganathan’s final <i>kōrvai</i> , 1 st , 2 nd and 3 rd time														
<u>Time</u>	<u>Cycle</u>	1	.	.	*	2	.	.	.	3	.	.	.	4
3:13	20									ta di tatom...				(first time)
3:22	21									ta di tatom...				(second time)
3:31	22									ta di tatom...				(third time)
3:41	23					*				<i>(kōrvai ends at mukkaḷ īḍam)</i>				
3:50	24	END												
(note: “time” in left column indicates the moment Ranganathan begins his statement of the <i>kōrvai</i> , not the beginning of that cycle of <i>tāḷa</i>)														