

Muthiah Bhagavatar

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Muthiah Bhagavata traced his origins to Tirunelveli district. He hailed from Harikesanallur, which village he placed on the musical map of India. Muthiah Bhagavatar hailing from a family known more for its Sanskrit and literary background travelled to Tiruvaiyyaru to learn music from T. S. Sambasiva Iyer, a descendant of Pallavi Doraiswami Iyer. Bhagavatar traced his musical lineage to Tyagaraja for T. S. Sambasiva Iyer's father Sabhapati Iyer was the great bard's disciple.

Bhagavatar left a mark in the field of composing. Bhagavatar's output is perhaps better known today. He was a pioneer both in making music a college and university discipline.

Muthiah Bhagavatar had served the Teacher's College of Carnatic Music set up by the Madras Music Academy and had also been actively involved in setting up course curricula. He was also the first musician to earn a doctorate by writing a thesis. He had served as president of the Music Academy's annual conferences in 1930 .

When the award of Sangita Kalanidhi was instituted by the Academy in 1942, he was bestowed with the honor. He had both contributed to the resuscitation of the works of earlier composers and composed his own. Muthiah Bhagavatar contributed in tuning some and publicizing several of Swati Tirunal's creations. Besides all this the musically hyperactive Bhagavatar was also an acknowledged Harikatha artiste and had also found time to compose music for films. There was a aura of royalty and regality in his appearance and behavior.

Muthiah bhagavatha had been ailing for some time and passed away. On July 5, 1945, tributes appeared in *The Hindu* from Professor P. Sambamoorthy, who as Head of the Department of Music, Madras University, was closely associated with muthiah bhagavatar . His statement highlighted the contrasting temperaments of the he and Ponniah Pillani. He referred to Bhagavatar as "a powerful and magnificent personality — endowed with versatile talents (who) attracted the attention of his brilliant contemporaries early in life.

He was one of the few professional musicians of front rank to take interest in musical research.

In a tribute from the first "Lady Bhagavatar," C. Saraswathi Bai said that with the passing away of Muthiah Bhagavatar the field of Harikatha "had suffered by his death".

Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer succeeded Muthiah Bhagavatar at the Swati Tirunal Music Academy, Trivandrum.