



Founder Director: Pt. Pushkar Lele **(www.pushkarlele.com)**

The teaching and learning of music has been an integral part of composite Indian culture. It has essentially been an oral tradition dating back to Vedic times when chants were memorized and recited in certain rhythm and melody to invoke the divine powers. From religious rituals in temples, to courts of emperors and kings to the *kothas* in marketplaces, to musical plays and films to concerts and with the advent of radio and television, in people's drawing rooms, music in India has evolved in many different ways and has traveled a long way to reach the masses, especially the urban populace.

Reformists like Pt. V.D Paluskar made further and rather invaluable contribution to the teaching and learning of music in India by liberating it from the rather strict and often restrictive system of *Gharana-s*, or schools of music. He developed music curricula for students of music with different levels of complexity based on the basic tenets of music rather than the normative structure of a particular school or *Gharana*. Pt. Paluskar's efforts assumed the form of a movement that altered the teaching and learning of Hindustani classical music in India in many fundamental ways and had far reaching repercussions.

Soon music was offered as degree courses in universities across India both at the undergraduate and post-graduate levels. The most important contribution of taking music outside the realms of *gharana* was to make it accessible to all!

However, what one sees today is more or less two extremes when it comes to music teaching and learning. On the one extreme, one has scores of private institutions and smaller ones affiliated to bigger institutions and on the other there are universities. These are extremes in terms of both content and method. While the former offers an overtly simplistic approach and a rigid curriculum, the latter tends to become too theoretical and esoteric.

There is a great need to find or initiate institutions that offer an alternative to these extremes. These newly found institutions have a role to play in creating well rounded students who are open, inquisitive and critical and are able to take a comprehensive and inter-disciplinary approach to music.

The 'Gandhaar School of Music' is a step in this direction. The school is based on principles of openness, sharing and nurturing individual talent and styles and takes a holistic approach to the education of Hindustani classical music. The school reaches out to both primary and advanced students as well as connoisseurs in their quest for quality music education in specially designed and personalised semi-structured learning and appreciation sessions. Discussions, interactions with experts and artistes and lecture demonstrations are some of the regular features of Gandhaar School of Music.

Teaching Hindustani vocal classical music, the school does not follow any fixed syllabus nor encourage the same. All trainings are given strictly on a tanpura and not on harmonium. Each batch does not exceed 2-3 students and goes in for a duration of approx 1 hour 15 minutes. However this is not a restrictive timing and is left to the Guru's discretion and students participation. There are generally two classes per week.

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