

## Graphic Novel on Madurai Mani Iyer

06 November 2012

If you are a music rasika, you would have noticed that the city's famed December season has now begun to roll in November.

So if you are attending Carnatica's annual music fest at the Narada Gana Sabha hall in Alwarpet, Chennai, this November fest does have the feel of the 'season'.

The auditorium is fairly packed, the corporates have assigned their execs and put up their banners all around and the greats launched the festival.

Dr Balamuralikrishna had with him mridangam vidwan Umayalpuram Sivaraman and once the formal launch which had as chief guest Jennifer A McIntyre, US Consul General at the Madras consulate was done with, there was a rush for seats in the hall.

A warm evening it was Lakshmi Devnath had the visage of a happy woman this evening. She got her new picture book (she now labels it a graphic novel) on the great Carnatic vocalist Madurai Mani Iyer released formally on stage.



This is the maestro's centenary year. And Lakshmi has timed this book well!

Over recent times, Chennai-based Lakshmi has published two such books that have the look and content of Amar Chitra Katha.

The first was on M S Subbulakshmi and the other on G N Balasubramaniam.

It has been a good effort. To have a storyline in a katha format told via illustrations and pictures and designed into a smart look and print is not easy.

Plus, it costs money.

Lakshmi deserves appreciation for executing the idea.

The read is easy (edited by Shreya Devnath), the images bright (by Ajay Krishnan) and the production great (design by J Menon, Jyotsna Bharti) and good printing by Aparna Graphic Arts.

Some more attention can be given to smaller details like photo captioning and font size of footnotes.

Yet, these books in the Pictures of Melody series make great buys, especially for kids and teens.

Lakshmi, who has written lots of features and articles now looks forward to a book on the legendary Lalgudi Jayaraman.

She will release 3 more graphic novels - on T. Brinda, Palghat Mani Iyer and Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar.

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