



By Johanna Alts

"A great rock is not disturbed by the wind; the mind of a wise man is not disturbed by either honor or abuse."

-Dalai Lama

World-Famous Musician-Scholar Teaches Indian Music at CC

By Ian Asbjornsen

In block one this year the world famous composer, vocalist, and musicologist Dr. Ashok Ranade taught a course on Indian music here at CC for his second time. Ranade is known world wide as a master scholar of Indian classical music, having received countless honors and awards for his leadership in the field of Indian music. Before he returned to India, I was lucky enough to have a short interview with him in his Packard office.

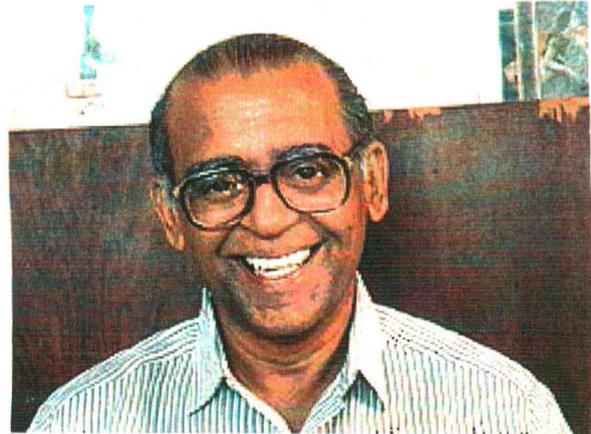
Ranade was born in India in 1937, and was introduced to music by his father and extended family at a young age. By ten years old he was already studying Hindustani classical vocal music, and soon began studying Western Classical music as well.

Ranade told me that he enjoys teaching at CC because students here appreciate new music and are very curious. He said that



Americans are "one of the most curious races," they really want to explore and understand new concepts. Indian students, on the other hand, are not as interested in new kinds of music, mostly because their intense schooling programs "suck the life out of them."

Ranade told me that Hindustani Classical music is truly an alternative system of



music. Unlike Western music which uses multiple voices (chords), Indian vocal music uses only one strand of melody. Whereas the Western Classical tradition emphasizes unity of a group of people, Indian music allows the solo performer to delve deeper into their own inner consciousness.

Dr. Ranade has devoted his entire life to the study of music. He told me that music facilitates a greater exchange of ideas than any other art form does. Dr. Ranade joked that "there is no dictionary of music." The mystery and ambiguity inherent in music allows it to go places that other mediums cannot. One of his favorite quotes is "All arts aspire to be like Music."

What makes a great ethnomusicologist, he says, is to have curiosity, and furthermore to look for and respect *differences*, not similarities in other cultures' music. This century everyone has access to all kinds of world music, it is up to us to respectfully and openly learn about systems of music completely different from our own Western Classical tradition.

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