



MUSIC

The Charisma of Folk Melodies

Text: Arundhati Nath

***"Dukh bhare din beete re bhaiyya,
Ab sukh aayo re...
Rang jeevan main naya layo re..."***



These are the lines of an evergreen song from the classic Hindi movie *Mother India*. The perfect blend of folk music from the north-eastern state of Assam coupled with the enchanting voices of veteran singers bring out the flavour of the Indian soil.

Indian folk music, the music of the common man, has a rich and diverse tradition tracing back to the days of the ancient vedas. The legacy of folk music is handed down from one generation to the next through songs, dances, celebration, feasting and merriment. Evolving since the beginning of its existence, folk music celebrates the joys and sorrows, dreams and aspirations and love and relationships of the common folk. They also portray the religious beliefs of the masses, the feelings of love and friendship and rejoice at the beauty of nature.

Our country is a land of variety and so is its folk music. We have folk songs on all occasions — be it a wedding or a festival, the joys of a bountiful harvest, the sorrows of poverty or the ushering of spring. Folk music is often accompanied by traditional musical instruments and dance in colourful ethnic costumes. However, the best part is — men, women and children participate with full fervour and enthusiasm.

Listening to folk music has a charm which cannot be compared to other forms of music. The foot-tapping Punjabi bhangra, the soul-stirring Bengali Baul Geet or the melodious tunes of Bihu from Assam — each of them have a magic of their own. Dancing to the beats of the energetic dandiya music during Navaratri is very popular in western India. Kolata is another famous dance form from Karnataka. Indian folk awakens the vigour in us and makes us want to dance along to the rhythm of the music.

Kesariya balam aawoni, padharoni mhare des is a very popular and soulful Rajasthani folk song which has been used successfully in films like *Lekin* and *Dor*.

The raunchy *Rangeelo maro dholna* sung by Shubha Mudgal and Sukhwinder Singh will surely make you stand up and dance without any inhibitions!

The instruments used in folk music are quite authentic as compared to those used in classical or semi-classical music. While classical music is often learnt within a fixed framework of rules to follow, folk music is more evolving and is inherited by a generation from its ancestors.

The chartbuster song *Ambar sariya* in the recently released film *Fukrey* is said to have been inspired by a Punjabi folk song and it sounds absolutely beautiful.

There are several folk songs around the themes of weddings and the onset of the harvest season. A good harvest brings hope and joy which is celebrated throughout our country. Harvest festivals such as Pongal, Makar Sankranti, Onam, Baisakhi, Holi and Bihu are celebrated with a plethora of fun, fare and feasting, along with folk music and dance.

Just as our festivals are a symbol of our tradition and identity, folk music is also a cultural legacy which binds us together as Indians. Nurturing the habit of listening to our folk music will go a long way in preserving our rich cultural heritage while enjoying our life as a family. As folk music is for everyone, each one of us can tune into it and have so much fun dancing away to the rhythmic beats!



Sneha Nath
Associate,
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“**Folk song** *Sab loke koi lalan ki jat sansare* tells a real fact that there is no caste in our social life, but we are the people who made this caste and religion.”

