



????? [Mandra]

S.L. Bhyrappa

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Mandra, the Saraswati Samman winner for 2010, is one of the most acclaimed epic novels of Bhyrappa. Though it takes its theme from the classical question of art versus morality, many more subtler and complex issues haunting human life are marvelously interwoven. Rooted deeply in the harsh realities of the world, the governing theme evolves like a banyan tree in all directions and pictures many home-truths that are inseparable with art, artist, art-tradition, art-criticism and the world of connoisseurs.

????? [Mandra] Details

Date : Published 2002 by Sahitya Bhandara

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Author : S.L. Bhyrappa

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Genre :

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From Reader Review ???? [Mandra] for online ebook

Krishnan Ranganathan says

An excellent narrative of a Hindustani classic singer and his life. His morality and his inspiration, emotional attachment to the world of music are well brought out. Some times particularly the immoral acts he commits with his female students seems a little far-fetched. However his characterization of each person in the story is captivating. Music lovers particularly of the Hindustani genre would love this novel for the efforts taken by the author to bring out live, the nuances and emotions of the various ragas and their details. His way of describing human psychology and behaviour is out of this world. In general every Indian would like the way he has treated the Indian middle class culture and way of living in the sixties and seventies. While the topic is well researched, the story line itself is commonplace and has no surprises and excitement. The end is a bit of an anticlimax.

Swathi Kiranmayee Manchili says

This is my 3rd book from the works of S L Bhyrappa. Another masterpiece from him. It is an excellent narrative of a Hindustani classical singer, Mohanlal and his life. The rise and fall of Mohanlal in the world of classical music is told in a very impressive way. The characters of Manohari, Madhu, Gore Saheb, Ramkumari are etched so well. The vulnerability of otherwise strong characters stands out for me. The mention of several raagaas throughout the book is not heavy even on readers like me with no knowledge of music.

A definite recommendation!

Gorab Jain says

4.25

Brilliant!

Was hunting for the author's acclaimed Parva when this suddenly popped up and resulted in an impulsive buy. And how I'm glad for a hardcover with a beautiful apt cover and a matching title.

Coming to the book, wish I had some first hand experience of classical music. The parts describing how an artist starts with singing and slowly elevates to different levels is superbly written capturing many details. Too good.

Though it deals with adultery on a big scale, it was contained and expressed very well without going into the explicit details. And I liked it even more just for this.

I always believed (and still do) that pure art emerges out from the purest of souls. So had difficulty digesting the various dark shades of almost all the characters.

"If you establish a relationship between art and the artist's private life, art itself will not survive."

Some minor parts had narration issues where the sudden shifts from first person became confusing. Not sure

if it was intended or because of translation. Apart from that, the English translation was mellifluous. In spite of some seemingly "extra" ordinary stretches, overall it was an extraordinary read.

Ashish Iyer says

This is my 4th book of Bhyrappa. So far I have read Aavarana, Tantu and Sartha. All 3 books were amazing. As usual you can see the amount of research the author has done before writing such book. You will find some musical terms. There are several ragas and swaras mentioned in the book. Even though I am not from musical background, I understood it quite clearly. While reading the book I was keep thinking how much author have given his thought writing any particular scenarios.

This novel is fictional story of a famous Hindustani Classical singer Mohanlal. He has one weakness, he can't control his desires for women. He often involves in sexual activities with his many female students. He used to call his favorite students with the names of the Raga's that suitable with them. This book revolves around how the protagonist meets many other characters and how he deals them in life. Mind you, the author has given each characters equal space to develop. It has an excellent and interesting story-line and has strong and well portrayed characters from both genders. The story was quite engrossing but the protagonist had illicit relationship with many women which were disgusting for me. In Indian culture teacher is God, in this book you can see how the teacher can take advantage of female disciple and how she has to completely surrender herself to teacher. There was one interesting character name paranjape. He was a journalist. He has the power of influencing public opinion to indirectly bully the protagonist. He somehow reminds me of lutyens journalists. The ease with which the story shifts back and forth in time is excellent. The author has also beautifully shown how emotional based decision makes you vulnerable. Even the grown up forget to take rational decisions.

The only problem with book is the drastic shift of narration, maybe it was because of translation but its not much a bigger issue. A reader who has interest in Indian Classical music can further appreciate the depth of details that Bhyrappa has included in this book. The book has shown the story from artistic perspective. After reading this book one would definitely want to listen classical Hindustani raagas.

Karthikeya Bhat says

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Shivarajan Gurunanjappa says

As usual with any books by Bhyrappa, this too is an amazing read with wonderful narration & great language. Got to know lot about music through this book. The characters at time are very intense in thoughts & did keep me going & going even though it was hard to get time to read much everyday. All in all a wonderful read.

Em*bedded-in-books* says

Was a literary and artistic feast depicting the rise and fall of a brilliant star in the world of classical music. Mohanlal, born of an impoverished mother is taught the basics of music by a devout swami ji in an ashram. He soon leaves behind his guru and seeks better teachers in the quest for ascension in the fiefdom of Hindustani music world. He succeeds. But his womanising ways and hid mulishness cost him a lot. He marries twice, fathers half a dozen children, in and out of wedlock, and leads a complicated life. In this saga we encounter the raw persona of Mohanlal, more dark than light, the women he associate with, the students he coerce into physical relationship, and all the foibles of the musical industry. Marhumita, a rising star pays a lot for having the privilege of being his student. It is Madhumita 's story as well as Mohanlal's - so also is Manohari, a classical dancer who entangled with him for a considerable chunk of his adult life featured prominently.

I didn't like Mohanlal or his myriad companions. If forced to ask the people I liked most , I would say Raja ram Tipnis, his harmonium assistant, and perhaps Madhumita towards the end.
For the past few days I was immersed in this musical world, almost an armchair musician, who got a good , long glimpse into the world of artists, their triumphs and pitfalls.

Ramachandrarjs says

Fantastic book...Saraswathi samman has got its respect increased by being awarded for this book...amazing novel!!!! Hats off to Dr.Bhyrappa...

Rohit Harip says

Bhairappa a classical Kannada novel writer.

I am surprised that how I am not aware with this fellow hitherto,

In Indian classical music, Mandra is raga.

same connotations follow the story line of the book.

a (love?) story of Famous classical singer and well-known Odissi dancer. the writing style of Bhairappa is unique because for a book like Mandra he has studied Indian as well as Carnatic classical music deeply. also, the form of the story narration is very broad and touches the wide spectrum of the subjects. there is four to five protagonist running the story of "MANDRA". Each Character is depicted so strongly and vividly . the power of words written by bhairappa is so strong that we can get lost in the characters completely and started to visualise the story as cinema running virtually.

last but not the least hereby it's my duty to express two words of gratitude for translator i.e. Uma Kulkarni. she has beautifully translated the novel from Kannada to Marathi with losing the gist of the content. it's a tough job to find the exact synonym when you translate the whole book from one Indian language to another.

Sumit says

This is a must read book to understand the changing emotions of human beings. The dialogues are very less and the characters are thinking for themselves continuously (like us). The internal agony, anger and frustration is depicted very beautifully. The author's usage of different Ragas at appropriate points of time is quite impressive. The only problem (not very big) is the sudden shift of narration, which I think is due to translation.

Yashwanth Balighatta says

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Nishanth says

The novel depicts the jazzy life of Mohanalal who is gifted with great musical knowledge but he doesn't have anyone who could say his name after his era. His few disciples (all of whom women) whom he also has sexual relations with, cut off from him because of his uncanny nature. Through out the book, we see the story unfold from these characters.

The book teaches us a good bit of Classical music and makes us fall in love with it.

Raju says

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Pradeep T says

Excellent, Deep, Must read for everyone. Its not just a mere novel. It is a musical journey. One would certainly want to listen to all the Classical Hindustani Raagas that comes in this novel. Slightly adult and revolves around the illicit relationship of all the characters. However, the protagonist of the novel Pandit Mohanalal and his experiments (sic) with all the women he meets and sexual acts with all of them in the name of Hindustani Music is bit exaggerated. Nevertheless, This is evident even now and it is much more worse in this modern society, as the famous saying goes "No Pain, No Gain". This novel describes exactly those thoughts, conservationists and orthodox people will find this book as an erotic novel. Everybody has their own perception. Must Read.

Sanjeev Nv says

Another masterpiece from S L Bhyrappa. Beauty of this book is that he doesn't get judgemental of the characters in the story and never preachy. He lets the reader decide whether love, hate or be neutral towards them. All the characters in the book- Mohanalal, Manohari, Madhu, Champa, Chunni, Gore Saheb are so strong and at the same time vulnerable. Looking at life from a artist perspective and trying to justify actions in the garb of artistic inspiration is beautifully portrayed in the novel. You just cant leave the book once started.
