



**FASTIDIOUSLY CLASSICAL:** Akkarai Subhalakshmi and Swarnalatha. Photo: R. SHIVAJI RAO

# Melding style with sensitivity

The violin duet of Akkarai Sisters was fastidiously classical, mature and unsentimental.

**GOWRI RAMNARAYAN**

**T**he maturity of the girls in *pavadai-davani* at once frightened and thrilled you at the Raga Sudha Hall. The twenty listeners at the morning violin duet of Akkarai Sisters Subhalakshmi and Swarnalatha were lucky to hear music fastidiously classical, suffused with unsentimental bhava. An inborn gift combined with a relentless refusal to settle for anything but the best.

The sisters are set to form a style



of their own. Their modulations were sensitive, hitting the higher notes with care and sensitivity, bringing off tonal variations on the different strings. Pace was well

thought out, both for kriti and manodharama. Swaraprastara in the rakti ragas was different from the sparkle of nadais in Nattai ("Sarasiruha") or the romp in "Sobhillu" (Jaganmohini).

Alapanas were burnished affairs, whether Ramapriya ("Korina varamu") or Sankarabharanam ("Enduku peddala").

Yadukulakambodi ("Divakaratanujam") was deeply moving, bearing shades of old padams, though one wondered at its inclusion in a recital which had both Kambodi and Sankarabharanam.

The coil-into-coil phrases were patterned on the human voice and breath, while the mandara prayogas built a distinct base. Just right for Dikshitar's grand navagraha kriti ("Divakara").

Open enjoyment of each other's role by the team made the recital memorable. R. Satheeskumar (mridangam) S. Karthick (ghatam) did not just offer fine undominating support (expected from the seniors), but also in encouraging the youngsters.

The girls in turn were visibly elated by the percussion.