

# Her Master's Voice

Twenty-two-year-old Jananiy on debuting as a composer with the film *Prabha* and getting legendary Carnatic singer M. Balamuralikrishna to sing in it

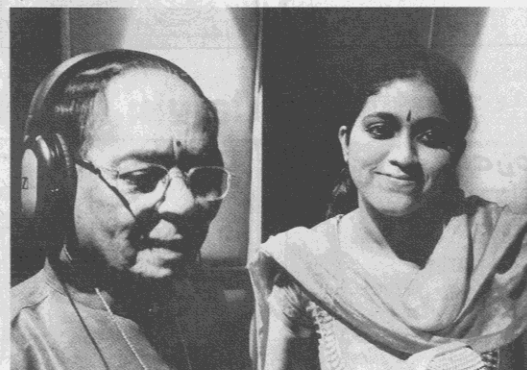


When I requested my guru, M Balamuralikrishna, to sing for *Prabha*, he said, 'Jananiy, I will sing for you, and only you'  
- JANANIY

SRINIVASA RAMANUJAM

Singer S.J. Jananiy can never forget that eventful week in March, this year. The 22-year-old musician — then pursuing her M.A (Music) at Queen Mary's College — was preparing for her final semester exams, when opportunity knocked at her door. Tamil film director, Nandhan (assistant of director Dharani) approached her through her uncle, Sankerganesh, to score music for his upcoming movie *Prabha*. He gave her an advance cheque and a book of lyrics of the songs that he wanted her to set to tune. The only hitch? It had to be completed

in seven days. There was music, some madness, and then, some more music.... At the end of the week, she gave him all the tunes, which he listened to, and approved. "It was hectic," she admits. "It was my debut and I wanted to do a good job." She had previous experience, of course, — having worked in the fusion series 'Classic Waves' and a few pop albums — and that helped her with the task at hand. What followed were five songs in different genres — Western classical, Indian classical, kuthu, blues and Latin reggae. One of the songs is very dear to her heart because it marks a comeback, of sorts, of the legendary Carnatic singer M. Balamuralikrishna to Tamil film music. The musical legend, who last sang in the 2009 film *Pasanga*, agreed to croon a



M. Balamuralikrishna and Jananiy

number for Jananiy in *Prabha*. "I met Guruji in 2007, at the launch of my devotional album and since, have been blessed to be his disciple. When I requested him to sing for *Prabha*, he said, 'Jananiy, I will sing for you, and only you'." In fact, during the recording session, he

asked me if I was satisfied with the output or whether he should sing it again. It was a dream-come-true for me." Other popular playback singers, including Vijay Prakash and Shweta Mohan, have worked on the songs of this film, the audio launch of which is likely to

take place next month. Having grown up learning Carnatic vocal music from popular personalities, she was also interested in trying out whatever she sang on different instruments. "My uncle is a keyboard and guitar player and taught me to play whatever I sang. That got me interested in chords and notes, and I started composing singles at age 12." Both Ilaiyaraaja and A.R. Rahman have been a huge inspiration for this youngster. "Whenever I listen to their songs, I try to identify their structure, the background tones and observe the nuances. All these helped me when I started composing albums," says the singer, who feels that women music composers require ample support from their families.