

Singer Amarnath

ASHA BHATIA

LOOKS ARE deceptive, they say. But when you look at Amarnath you are sure that your impression of him being an artiste is correct. He has made a powerful impact on those who have heard him. He has a deep, mellow voice with a nimbleness of tone, and this is rendered beautifully in the countless *ragas* he has sung in the *khayal*.

His mother died leaving him a lonely child at an early age. In his melancholy surroundings his feelings gave way to expression—an expression which was cultivated and led him on to the world of music.

Though keen to take medicine at first, his singing abilities were noticed, and this led him on to a different track altogether. He joined the A.I.R. and rose to become the music supervisor, a job which he retained for seven years.

And then? “I tried my hand at musical compositions, both

light and classical,” he says. And were they successful? Modesty on his rugged face, gave the answer.

And that was not all. A producer asked him to compose the musical score for a feature film *Garm Coat*. Lata Mangeshkar sang two of the songs set to music by him, and was so moved by the music that she refused to accept any payment.

No Payment

When they insisted she said, “After a long time a song has moved me. I will not accept any payment for singing it.”

Recently, Lata, in her LP of her life's twelve best songs, chose one with Amarnath's music, *Jogia Se Preet Kiye*.

And then, when the Ghalib Centenary was on, he was selected among numerous others to provide the musical score for the documentary on Ghalib.

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ASHOK BHARAL

AMARNATH : Power to move hearts