

# Dr. Ratish Tagde

## Preserving Heritage Through Digital Innovation

The Indian classical music industry with a few centuries old tradition is now facing the challenge of modernization. The future of music is threatened by shorter attention spans induced by social media, international competition presented by other genres, and the proliferation of AI. However, informal styles such as Hindustani and Carnatic can live on based on adaptability and universal attractiveness.

Raga Café, with a visionary Founder & Promoter, Dr. Ratish Tagde, a well-known violinist, and a doctorate in digital revenue for traditional musicians, is breaking new ground to address these challenges. Tagde, President of the Musicians Federation of India, a branch of the International Federation of Musicians, Paris in UNESCO, proposes technological adaptation and cross-national interaction.

## Preserving and Promoting Indian Classical Music

Raga Café is a multidimensional venture aimed at the preservation, promotion, and development of Indian classical music & other Indian heritage music genres. Having a vision of creating a connection between classical music and contemporary viewers, the company is reinventing the process of experiencing and enjoying this niche form of art.

The company also participates in cultural production with its small-scale production house named “All About Content” (formerly Perfect Octave) that builds web series, TV series, and short films. All About Content already produced and possesses repertoire spanning around 1000 music tracks featuring 250 plus upcoming and renowned musicians from different non-film music streams. The productions are meant to be a way of introducing classical music in an interactive and modern way that will be attractive to different audiences.

“Indian classical music is not just an art form; it’s a timeless journey of healing that draws us closer to our roots. says Dr. Ratish Tagde, CEO of Raga Café. “We aim to preserve its essence while making it accessible to modern audiences.” His vision underscores the company’s commitment to sustaining the legacy of Indian classical music while embracing innovation.

## **Harmonizing Tradition and Innovation**

All About Content was started in 2003 by Dr. Ratish Tagde as a result of a strong interest in Indian classical, folk, and contemporary music. Being a violinist himself, he combined performances with a professional career, acquired Company Secretary qualification in 1990 and moved to Mumbai in 1993 to achieve musical objectives. There, he dealt with corporate matters in big companies, then built his practice in 2002 with his focus on the statutory & listing compliances, corporate restructuring, fund raising & management consulting.

Perfect Octave was initially a small production company that specialized in event management and music album production. But Tagde was not only interested in entertainment; he wanted to preserve and popularize the musical tradition of India. This led Dr. Tagde to set up Insync TV on August 15, 2013 - the first ever Indian classical music-only satellite television channel in the world. Taking the idea of a discussion with maestros such as Ustad Zakir Hussain and other legendary maestros, Dr. Tagde gathered an advisory board with legends such as Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia, Pandit Shiv Kumar Sharma, Pt Vijay Ghate, Niladri Kumar and others. The channel focuses on purity, study of ragas and musical instruments and has since captured performances by more than 1,000 plus performers to make the largest archive of Indian classical music.

### **Will AI affect Indian Classical Music & Musicians?**

Dr. Tagde opines that Indian classical music and other improvised music traditions are unlikely to be majorly affected by AI because their essence lies in spontaneous creativity, emotional depth, and the unique human connection between performer and audience. Unlike fixed, repeatable genres, every raga performance is a one-time experience shaped by the artist's imagination, mood, and cultural context. Rooted in centuries-old guru-shishya parampara and spiritual practice, this music emphasizes authenticity, microtonal nuance, and the transmission of rasa (aesthetic essence), which cannot be replicated by algorithms. While AI may assist in accompaniment or learning tools, the core value of Indian classical music—its human improvisation and cultural lineage—will always remain beyond automation. Pure art—rooted in human imagination, improvisation, and legacy—will stand apart from algorithmic reproductions, and artists who embody these traditions will be valued more highly than any AI-generated creation. Pure Art: The New Status Symbol.

## **Elevating Indian Classical on the Global Stage**

Dr. Tagde's Raga Café project has a multidimensional future roadmap. Based on Ratish Tagde's doctoral thesis on the revenue potential for traditional musicians through the

digital streaming, he plans to introduce educational programs to help musicians learn how to use the platforms to engage with their fans and generate revenues. This would involve workshops on AI detailing about the contribution of AI to music, with a particular focus on how improvised music genres such as Hindustani and Carnatic classical and how these genres can withstand digital disturbance by prioritizing live experience.

Tagde is attempting to consolidate the fragmented classical music market through the Musicians Federation of India (MFI). Strategic aims are the creation of a summit organization to simplify events, cut revenue leakages, and promote international dialogues. Dr. Tagde is also focused on therapeutic uses of classical music, collaborating with hospitals and psychiatrists to market classical music as a form of stress-relief therapy and creating a potential for every classical musician to become a Professional Music Therapist. In the case of Raga Café, this would mean creating content where the classical elements are packaged into fusion content, which would attract younger audiences through social media and streaming. Tagde aims to make Indian classical music a symbol of status worldwide, which will change with technology and remain pure, which makes its sustainability in the digital age. Raga Café is also working on an ambitious project of identification of young talent, grooming them through conducting master classes by maestros leading up to providing suitable online/offline platform for promotion on national and international level.

**Quote:** Each note of Indian classical music is a bridge to our heritage, a touch to the soul, and a pathway to healing