

GLOBAL RESONANCES: MAPPING WORLD MUSIC INFLUENCES IN CONTEMPORARY INDIAN CLASSICAL AND FOLK FUSION

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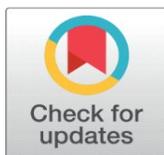
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ABSTRACT

The modern Indian classical and folk fusion music has become an important musical trend shaped by the increased globalization, the digital spreading, and the transnational artistic interaction. Although these fusion practices are commonly loosely grouped into the term of a world music, the available literature rarely constructs systemic frameworks to examine the manner in which particular global musical influences interact with the Indian musical systems both structurally and aesthetically. This gap is filled in this paper when the author presents the concept of global resonances as an analytical tool to evaluate mutual relations of Indian classical and folk traditions and global musical idioms. Based on interdisciplinary interpretations of ethnomusicology, cultural studies, and globalization theory, the paper offers a Global Resonance Mapping theory in order to classify and evaluate the musical influences in the world in various dimensions, such as rhythm, harmony, instrumentation, vocal aesthetics, form, and production practices. The research design is a qualitative and mixed-methods study that examines a purposely chosen collection of modern fusion work that covers in the styles of classical-rooted, folk-rooted and global-genre-led. Comparative case study is built up and applied to develop a structured taxonomy of global influences, showing the unique patterns of integration and accommodation between fusion orientations. The results prove that worldly impact in Indian fusion music is not one-dimensional or one-way but instead follows selective and context-dependent mechanisms that keep the balances between the traditions of the culture and innovations. The paper also suggests that fusion practices help to create a dynamic redefinition of authenticity as a negotiated and changing object. This paper builds analytical insights into Indian fusion music by providing a systematic mapping of global resonances and the transferable framework of the analysis of cross-cultural musical interactions in the globalized environment.

Keywords: Indian Classical Music, Indian Folk Music, Music Fusion, World Music, Globalization, Hybridity, Cross-Cultural Influence, Musical Hybridity

1. INTRODUCTION

Music has always served as a living cultural warehouse, which is being absorbed, changed and rearticulated on both geographical and temporal frontiers. In the modern age, the process of globalization, the spread of digital technologies, and artistic cooperation across the borders has radically changed the sphere of music creation and consumption on the global scale. The traditions of Indian classical and folk music, traditionally based on the regional performance, oral transmission, and heavily codified aesthetic systems, currently are becoming more involved in interacting with the global musical idioms [Ramesh \(2023\)](#). The result of this interaction has been a rich and multifaceted landscape of fusion where melodic structures based on the raga, rhythmic cycles based on taala, and folk motives of indigenous origins coexist with other influences of jazz, rock, electronic dance music (EDM), and other Western systems of harmony. The soundscape as it is created is not just a matter of experimenting with style, but of more fundamental negotiation and artistic rediscovery of culture.

Figure 1



Figure 1 Global Fusion of Indian Music

Modern Indian traditional or folk fusion exists at the crossroad between tradition and innovation. On the one hand, it attracts the legitimacy of the canonical systems, including Hindustani and Carnatic music, and various regional folk traditions who entrap the local histories, rites and social identities [Saini \(2025\)](#). Conversely, it is proactive in reacting to the worldwide music trends which are enabled by global festivals, streaming sites, diasporic societies and cooperative networks. This ambivalent stance has helped Indian musicians to cross the traditional genre boundaries without losing the identifiable cultural attributes. In this regard, fusion does not refer to a homogeneous or linear phenomenon; to the contrary, it is a continuum of practices between the inclusion of global timbre into classical models and extreme reiterations whereby global genres emerge as the dominant forces behind structural and production aesthetics.

Although the Indian classical and folk fusion are gaining popularity and exposure in the world stages, scholarly interests in this phenomenon are still poorly fragmented. The available literature tends to concentrate either on particular musicians, specific genres, or general discourses of world music and does not provide any systematic frameworks of how particular influences of the world interrelate with the Indian music systems. In addition, the issue of authenticity, cultural appropriation and commercialization often eclipse the critical analysis of the music and leave gaps in the knowledge of how the cross-cultural impact actually is received and converted [Dhand \(2023\)](#). It is quite evident that an integrative method is required, transcending descriptive explanations with an analytic attempt to follow patterns of influence within melody, rhythm, instrumentation, form, and production.

It is on this backdrop that the current research presents the term of global resonances as an analytical construct to theoretically analyze the contemporary Indian classical and folk fusion. The word resonance is adopted carefully to stress

the idea of a reciprocal interaction and not unidirectional influence since the aesthetic meanings of the music belonging to global and Indian worlds are vibrating together to create new meanings. The work is also proposed to make a systematic mapping of these resonances by determining recurrent influence patterns, classifying different forms of musical borrowing and adaptation, and placing them into larger socio-cultural and technological frameworks. In this way, the paper aims at making a contribution in the form of a systematic taxonomy and mapping framework which in turn can serve the purposes of both the qualitative musicological research and the future data analysis.

The aims of the research are 4-fold: (i) to situate current Indian classical and folk fusion within the global musical flows, (ii) to determine and categorize the prevailing world influences on contemporary fusion practices, (iii) to evaluate the ways these influences are reflected on the various musical levels and (iv) to critically comment on how they affect cultural identity, authenticity and artistic agency.

2. BACKGROUND AND RELATED WORK

The idea of musical fusion has traditionally held a tenuous status in musicology, cultural studies and ethnomusicology. In its simplest definition, fusion means being conscious of combining aspects of two or more musical traditions, creating hybrid forms that break traditional genre lines. The fusion in the Indian context has been present in a soft form in the past through the intercultural exchange of different cultures on the trade routes and the patronage systems at the courts [Chathuranga and Ekanayaka \(2025\)](#). Nevertheless, the modern Indian classics and folk fusion is a qualitatively new phenomenon, influenced by the further development of globalization, digital mediation, and distribution of musical capital throughout the world [Fusion Music in Contemporary India: Exploring Cross-Cultural Collaborations \(2022\)](#). To comprehend this change, it is crucial to take a critical look at how the fusion, the world music, the Indian classical systems and folk traditions have been theorized and analyzed in literature.

The concept of world music, commonly applied to non-Western or hybrid music in the international market, has caused a lot of controversy. Although it has assisted in achieving visibility to various musical traditions, scholars believe it also subjects reductive labels that render the cultural specificity more difficult to challenge and creates unequal power relations between the Global North and the South. In this context, Indian fusion music is often sold as exotic or spiritual, despite the use of western harmonic progressions, electronic production, or global rhythmic idioms [Paonam \(2025\)](#). These groupings are more inclined to give preference to consumption oriented discourses against the analytical interpretation of the musical structure, thus restricting the academic knowledge of the embedding of global influences in the practices of Indian music.

The very codified melodic and rhythmic systems that define Indian classical music traditions include raa and tala. These systems do not just exist as technical constructs only but as an aesthetic and philosophical ground on which improvisation, performance ethics, and the perception of the listener depend [Ginting et al. \(2024\)](#). Most of the previous research on fusion between Indian classical music usually dwells on the maintenance or dilution of these frameworks when they are combined with Western music genres like jazz or rock. Although this line of investigation is worthy it often subjects the global influence as an outward pressure on a fixed tradition as opposed to Indian classical music of being an adaptive and historically progressive system that can assimilate new concepts without its fundamental identity [Joshi \(2023\)](#).

The problem of folk music tradition in India can be even more complicated to analyze because of the vast regional diversity and close connection with local social backgrounds. Folk genres are interred in folk life, rituals, working, and oral traditions, and frequently they are not easily codified [Kapuria and Duggal \(2024\)](#). Available works about Indian folk fusion also emphasize the folk motifs as the emblem of authenticity and grass-root identity in modern music. These studies, however, are more inclined to lyrical themes and sociological narration rather than to musical analysis, and they leave the gaps to grasp the interaction of the global rhythmic patterns, instrumentation, and production aesthetics with local folk organizations at the sonic level [Narayanan \(2024\)](#).

Studies addressing the impact of global music in the fusion of Indian music often focus on the contribution of diaspora groups, international festivals, and the Internet [Ramesh \(2023\)](#). According to scholars, Indian musicians working in transnational spaces tend to embrace global genres as both a strategy of global response to global markets and audience as well as a stylistic choice. Jazz improvisation, electronic sequencing, hip-hop grooves, and Western harmonic language are usually mentioned as the streams of influence that are predominant [Impact of Globalization on Traditional Folk Performing Arts of Assam \(2022\)](#). However, the majority of current researches consider these factors

separately, which does not provide a comparative framework, allowing to trace a multitude of influence routes at the same time and consider the mutual exchange of Indian and global music traditions Akhtar (2024).

Another weakness of literature is how it addresses the issue of authenticity and cultural ownership. Cultural appropriation, commercialization and preservation of tradition have spawned valuable critical discussions, yet too often they have prevailed over empirical examination of musical form. Consequently, fusion music is often judged based on normative principles and not analytical principles. Relatively little has been done to systematically appraise the properly negotiated authenticity of the level of musical structure, such as the adaptation of raga phrases to the global harmonic environment or the re-creation of folk rhythms using electronic looping.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework of this study is the interdisciplinary concept that incorporates the ideas of ethnomusicology, cultural studies, and the globalization theory to analyze the dynamics of debate that surround the modern Indian classical and folk fusion. Instead of viewing fusion as a shallow melding of styles, the framework represents it as a negotiation process that continues over time where musical forms, cultural identities and power relations interplay. It uses the concept of global resonances to anticipate continuity, reciprocity and change and enables the analysis to transcend a simplistic dichotomy of tradition/modernity or local/global.

Figure 2

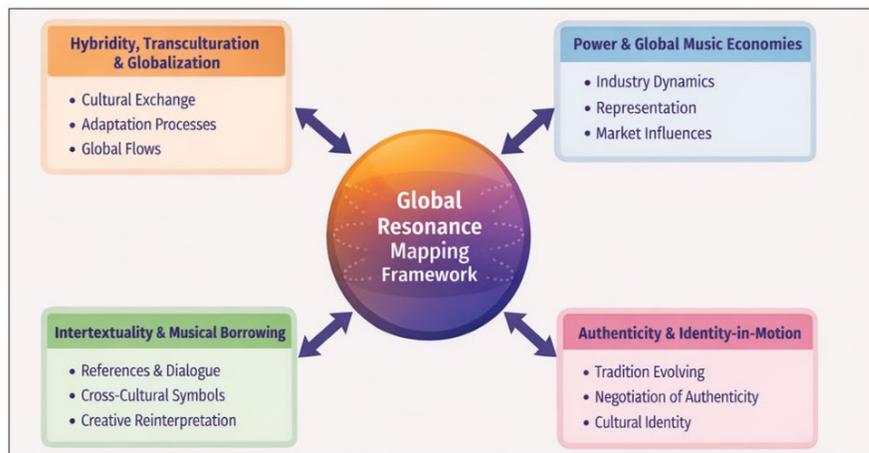


Figure 2 Theoretical Framework for Indian Classical-Folk Fusion Analysis

3.1. HYBRIDITY, TRANSCULTURATION, AND GLOBALIZATION IN MUSIC

Hybridity serves as a foundational concept for understanding fusion music, emphasizing the creation of new cultural forms through interaction rather than mere coexistence of distinct traditions. In the context of Indian classical and folk fusion, hybridity manifests through the reconfiguration of melodic, rhythmic, and formal elements drawn from multiple musical systems. Transculturation further refines this understanding by highlighting how cultural exchange involves processes of adaptation, reinterpretation, and resistance. Globalization accelerates these processes by enabling rapid circulation of sounds, technologies, and aesthetics, thereby creating conditions in which Indian musicians simultaneously engage with local traditions and global musical languages. This perspective acknowledges fusion as a historically situated response to global flows rather than an aberration from tradition.

3.2. INTERTEXTUALITY AND MUSICAL BORROWING

Intertextuality is one of the tools that aid in an examination of the construction of musical meanings by making reference to other musical texts. Intertextuality can be found in a fusion situation where raga phrases invoke classical traditions, folk themes indicate regionality, or jazz chords and electronic tones refer to international styles. In this model, musical borrowing is never considered to be imitative but as a dialogic practice whereby borrowed items are given new meanings by other structural and cultural environments. This method enables the research to track how certain musical

gestures like rhythmic grooves, chord progressions or timbral decisions are operating as a mark of influence as well as points of creative revitalization.

3.3. AUTHENTICITY, IDENTITY, AND TRADITION-IN-MOTION

Among the most debated notions when it comes to the fusion music, authenticity stands. This study takes an active view of tradition instead of perception of authenticity as a rigid commitment to the past rules as a historical tradition. Indian traditional and folk cultures have continually developed based on pedagogical traditions, regional diversity, and historical interactions. Within fusion practices, authenticity is achieved by negotiating between maintaining the main tenets of creative practice such as improvisational ethos or narrative functionality whilst permitting variability in form and instrumentation. In this respect, identity is practised and re-articulated in music, both in its rootedness at the local and its belonging to the global. This framework does not make normative judgments, but it looks at how authenticity is made and expressed through sound by musicians themselves.

3.4. POWER, REPRESENTATION, AND GLOBAL MUSIC ECONOMIES

Unequal power relations in the global music industries influence the production and circulation of fusion music. The record labels, streaming services, music festivals, and media discourses shape the visibility of fusion forms and how they are packaged to the viewers. In this sub section, musical analysis is placed in the wider political-economic framework, considering that global forces are not neutral but are mediated by market logic and representative practices. The core of interpreting the phenomenon of dominance and marginality of certain global genres and the ways Indian musicians maneuver around these limitations to exercise creative agency is the understanding of such dynamics.

3.5. THE PROPOSED GLOBAL RESONANCE MAPPING FRAMEWORK

It is based on the above theoretical bases that this study suggests a Global Resonance Mapping framework that can be effectively used to analyze world music influence in the Indian classical and folk fusion in modern times. The framework theorizes fusion as a network of resonant interaction on a multiplicity of dimensions: melodic systems, rhythmic structures, instrumentation, formal organization, and aesthetics of production. The influences are represented as bidirectional flows and not linear transfers, so that the convergence points can be determined where global and Indian factors will mutually change each other. This framework acts as a bridge between theory and empirical analysis as it provides an analytical framework through which the development of the taxonomy and case studies in the following sections will be provided alongside the possibility to compare various fusion practices in a systematic manner.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research takes a multi-layered and systematic approach research approach that aims at capturing the cultural, musical, and contextual intricacy of the contemporary Indian classical and folk fusion music. Since the research problem is exploratory and interpretive, the mixed-methods approach with a predominant quantitative aspect is used. It is the combination of musicological study and contextual and comparative study that makes sure that global influences are studied not just as abstract ideas but as phenomena that can be heard, felt and placed in a certain cultural setting.

4.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

The study is conducted according to a qualitative and exploratory design, with the usage of structured methods of analysis. The main focus is on the interpretive analysis of music content, with the accompaniment by the comparative and descriptive ones. The design is suitable in the investigation of fusion practices that are heterogeneous and contextual in nature. The study does not involve trying pre-tested hypotheses; instead, it seeks to determine patterns, categories, and relationship that can be discovered out of the musical material. Where applicable, the scanty quantitative indicators are added in order to facilitate clarity in analysis, without diminishing musical connotation.

4.2. CORPUS SELECTION AND SAMPLING STRATEGY

To build a representative set of contemporary Indian classical and folk fusion works, a purposive sampling strategy will be used to achieve a representative corpus. It contains studio recordings, live performances, and selected digital releases that were created in the past 20 years. Selection criteria will be based in terms of diversity in approach (classical-led, folk-led and global-genre-led fusion), national / international regional representation, national or international visibility and demonstration of overt global influence. The corpus will ensure that there is a good mixture of well-established artists and emerging practitioners so that there is no over-representation of commercially dominant narrative.

4.3. DATA SOURCES

Various data sources are used so as to guarantee analytical triangulation. Audio records and video recording of performance are the primary data out of which musicological documentation is formed. Such secondary data as artist interviews, album liner notes, concert program descriptions, critical reviews and media coverage are used. The use of digital platforms like streaming platforms and social media channels also gets analyzed to determine the patterns of dissemination and reception by the audience. All these sources offer some understanding of both the socio-cultural and sonic aspects of fusion practices.

4.4. ANALYTICAL PROCEDURES

The study is performed in a multi-level systematic framework of analyzing musical content in complementary dimensions. The musicological approach is concerned with the melodic structure, rhythmic construction, structure and improvisational tactics, and especially the way the Indian folk melodic idioms are in contact with the world harmonic or modal structure. The analysis of timbre and instrumentation focuses on the usage of the indigenous and global instruments, their functions, and re-contextualization of indigenous instruments in the fusion environment.

Formal and structural analysis examines the intersection of the global song forms, loop structures or jazz structures with traditional Indian performance logics. The analysis of production and sound aesthetics takes into account the studio techniques, digital processing, and mixing decisions as the parts of global influence. Where it is suitable, descriptive audio may be given (as tempo range, rhythmic density, etc.) to aid the comparative observations, without computational reductionism being prioritized.

4.5. CODING SCHEME AND COMPARATIVE FRAMEWORK

A coding scheme is created by comparing recurring categories of influence identified in the preliminary analysis to facilitate systematic comparison. Codings are done in the dimensions of rhythm, harmony, instrumentation, form and aesthetics of production. Such organized methodology enables the patterns of international impact to be compared among works and fusion types. To illustrate the convergences and divergences, cross-case comparison matrices are utilized as the empirical basis of the taxonomy and resonance maps developed later.

4.6. RELIABILITY, VALIDITY, AND REFLEXIVITY

Reliability in analysis is met by having people listen repeatedly, cross-reference various sources of information, and consistency in meaning of the codes. Triangulation is used to enhance validity, with the combination of musical analysis, contextual documentation, and critical discourse. Reflexivity is directly noted and that the interpretation is influenced by positioning in culture and school of thought. Instead of purporting being objective, the study focuses on transparency in making analytical decisions and interpretive arguments.

4.7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The ethical aspect involves a respectful presentation of the musical practices, correct credits to the performers and the communities and also sensitivity to the controversies of cultural ownership. The critique does not make evaluative

judgments that give one of the forms of fusion precedence over the other. Methodological weaknesses are subjectivity of the music analysis done qualitatively, selectivity of the corpus, and possible platform bias in favor of artists that are digitally visible. These constraints have been recognized as an effort to put the findings into perspective and not to devalue them. The combination of this methodological framework offers a very solid base to map global resonances in contemporary Indian classical and folk fusion, which offers analytical profundity, cultural sensitivity as well as conceptual coherence in the following sections.

5. TAXONOMY OF GLOBAL INFLUENCES IN INDIAN CLASSICAL-FOLK FUSION

In this section, I will introduce a systematic taxonomy of musical influences in the world that I have witnessed in Indian classical and folk fusion today. Based on the theoretical framework and methodology mentioned above, taxonomy is developed to categorize systematically the way elements of global music relate to impacts on Indian traditions through various levels of sonic and structural interactions. The taxonomy does not treat fusion as a homogenous category but identifies the dimensions of influence that are unique to each practices of fusion, showing the heterogeneity of fusion practices and the mechanisms that particular global resonances are being described.

5.1. RHYTHMIC INFLUENCES AND GROOVE STRUCTURES

Rhythm is also one of the most salient localities of world-ly influence in the Indian fusion music. Afro-diasporic rhythmic patterns, Latin grooves, funk backbeats and hip-hop-inspired loops often overlap with the Indian tala systems and folk rhythmic cycles. Traditional cyclic time structures are often still conceptualized and just rephrased in a global groove aesthetics, like steady meter, syncopation, or loop-based repetition [Ramesh \(2023\)](#). The interaction results in hybrid rhythmical structures balancing improvisational flexibility and the predictability needed to coordinate a group and electronic production.

5.2. HARMONIC AND MODAL INFLUENCES

Harmonic influence is a big breakage of the traditional Indian classical practice where the focus of the Indian classical tradition was on melodic development rather than the chordal development. Fusion compositions usually incorporate Western harmonic models, such as triadic progressions, sustained jazz harmonies, and modal exchange, and melody material produced by raga. Harmony is used in certain instances as a supportive background, and in other instances it plays an active role in determining melodic decisions and improvisational directions [Impact of Globalization on Traditional Folk Performing Arts of Assam \(2022\)](#). It is the part of the taxonomy that captures the selective adoption and adaptation of harmonic thinking to produce new modal-harmonic hybrids that question the traditional differences among melody-driven systems, harmony-driven systems and hybrid systems.

5.3. INSTRUMENTATION AND TIMBRE

The global influences are also well-presented in the development of instrumental palettes of fusion music. The local instruments like the sitar, sarangi, flute or local folk instruments are now being accompanied with electric guitars, synthesizers, bass guitars, drum machines and digital controllers. In addition to coexistence, fusion activities frequently resettle functional roles, e.g., Indian melodic instruments can take up riff-based roles or textural roles, whereas global instruments can talk to each other improvisational. Timbre then becomes one of the primary indicators of global resonance the mark of hybridity, which is often more of a psychological indicator in the sound texture than the melodic content [Akhtar \(2024\)](#).

5.4. VOCAL AESTHETICS AND PERFORMANCE PRACTICES

The identity formation of the fusion music through vocal expression displays subtle negotiations between Indian classical ornamentation, folk narrative approaches, and world vocality. Gamaka, meend, and microtonal inflection are combined with such global practices as breathy phrasing, layer effects in chorals and effects in the studio. Language selection and lyrical presentation also indicate the influence of the global society, as multilingual texts and adherence to the stylistic models of the popular and global art forms are also represented. This classification underscores the

contribution of vocal performance as a place of identity formation, as the mediating variable between tradition, innovation, and accessibility to the audience [Khan \(2025\)](#).

5.5. STRUCTURAL AND FORMAL INFLUENCES

Another imperative aspect of global influence is formal organization. The classical Indian performance forms like the slow revelation of a raga or the repetitive folk song structures are often re-structured in terms of a world song structure, like versechorus structure, breakdowns, and drops. The insistence on repetition and build-up that electrical music places on the perception of time frequently redefines the concept of time in fusion music [Anjum and Riaz \(2024\)](#). It is in this subsection that the impacts of structural borrowing on narrative flow and listener action can be absorbed and their outcomes, neither all traditional nor all global.

5.6. PRODUCTION AESTHETICS AND TECHNOLOGICAL MEDIATION

The modern fusion is strongly influenced by the global production practice and technologies. It is in many fusion works that digital recording, sampling, looping, and sound designing are involved, which not only impact sonic quality but also influence the way of thinking in composition. The aesthetics of production, imitated after genres of the world - refined mixing, spatial effects, rhythmic quantization - collide with the natural textures of the acoustic instruments. The given category highlights the importance of technology as the agent that promotes the global resonance and takes an active part in developing fusion aesthetics.

Table 1

Analytical Dimension	Classical-Rooted Fusion	Folk-Rooted Fusion	Global-Genre-Led Fusion
Primary Musical Anchor	Hindustani / Carnatic rāga-tāla framework	Regional folk melody and narrative traditions	Global genres (jazz, rock, EDM, hip-hop)
Role of Global Influence	Supportive and contextual	Enhancing reach and texture	Structurally dominant
Rhythmic Integration	Cyclical tāla retained with subtle global groove overlay	Folk rhythms blended with steady global beats	Global groove frameworks; Indian cycles adapted
Harmonic Usage	Minimal, often drone-based or modal	Limited chordal support	Extensive harmonic progressions and jazz harmony
Instrumentation Strategy	Classical instruments in lead roles; global instruments supportive	Folk instruments central; global instruments amplify	Global instruments lead; Indian instruments color
Vocal Aesthetics	Classical ornamentation and improvisation emphasized	Narrative-driven, regionally styled vocals	Hybrid vocal delivery with global phrasing
Formal Structure	Alap-development logic preserved	Song-based folk structures	Verse-chorus, loop, or drop-based forms
Production Aesthetics	Minimal processing; acoustic focus	Moderate studio enhancement	Highly processed, electronic-heavy production
Audience Orientation	Connoisseur and classical listeners	Community-based and regional audiences	Global and cross-cultural audiences
Authenticity Strategy	Lineage and aesthetic continuity	Cultural rootedness and storytelling	Innovation and hybrid identity

6. CONCLUSION

This paper aimed to explore South Park Indian classical and folk fusion in terms of global resonances and the goal of transcending the description of fusion to the analysis of how the influences of the world music are negotiated, absorbed, and transformed. Placing fusion in the context of other discussions on the same issues of hybridity, globalization and authenticity, the paper has shown that the present day fusion practices are not a weakening of tradition nor a blind imitation of global form. Rather, they are a process of dynamic interaction of the Indian musical systems with the world musical languages where the systems still have their own cultural identities. The suggested Global Resonance

Mapping framework is one of the major contributions of this piece of work. The framework allows a detailed examination of fusion practices in a way that brings musical complexity as well as cultural analysis by classifying the global influences into rhythmic, harmonic, instrumental, vocal, structural, and production dimensions. The taxonomy formulated in Section 5 points out that the global influence is not evenly distributed among all types of fusion; it also selectively appears according to the purpose of the artist, cultural background, and target audience. This observation disputes the homogenized accounts of the world music but reinforces the plurality of the fusion strategies that may act in the Indian musical space. The comparative case study analysis also supports this claim by illustrating how the various orientations of fusion, which include classical-rooted, folk-rooted and global-genre-led, meet the global influences differently. The classical based fusion is more conservative with continuity and lineage, it incorporates the global elements with reservations in order to maintain the original aesthetic tenets. Folk-based fusion places an emphasis on the regional identity and narrative role with the help of global instruments which increase the visibility and sonic scope. Global-genre-led fusion foregrounds, in contrast, feature stylistic experimentation, which places Indian musical elements as a malleable resource in global genre contexts. A combination of these models helps to understand that fusion can be better described as a continuum of practices, as opposed to a single stylistic category.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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