

## **In search of distinctive Sri Lankan music: Cyril de Silva Kulatillake**

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The history of Sri Lankan music is extensive and has changed substantially since then. Folk music from Sri Lanka portrays the diverse cultures and ethnicities of the country. Cyril de Silva Kulatillake was a pioneer in Sri Lankan folk music and made major contributions to the country's cultural heritage. This study aimed at studying and writing about Cyril de Silva Kulatillake as he would not only expand our knowledge about musical individuals but also enhance our understanding of music, culture, and the epistemological issues of music history, music biography, and ethnomusicology. The objectives of this study were to describe Kulatillake's musical beliefs, ideas, and preferences and to assess his impact on the strength of the genre. The case study method of qualitative research was used in this study. Data were collected from interviews, documents, autobiographies, and reports. Content analysis was used in evaluating the data. The results illustrated that Kulatillake provided folk music with a scientific basis and tied it to ethnomusicology. He was passionate about music, collected folk songs, recorded them, intelligently documented them, and rearranged them. He investigated musical expression among the public as a social activity in order to understand not only what music is but also what it signifies to its practitioners and audiences. He was gifted in music and had strong research, analytical, cultural awareness, and communication abilities. His research has not just been theoretical; he has also produced and created a number of works that draw on the rich tradition of native local music and dance, which have been highly welcomed by a grateful public. As a researcher, writer, pedagogue, artist, and administrator he followed in the footsteps of the great pioneer of musical science. The study concludes that Kulatillake traced cultural identity and pride, documented, taught, and presented it to national and international audiences, and preserved it for future generations. Future research should focus on the vision, philosophy, and methods of C. de S. Kulatilleke's remarkable contribution to the survival of folk music in Sri Lanka.

**Keywords:** Cyril de Silva Kulatillake, Sri Lankan ethnomusicologist, distinctive Sri Lankan music

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