

CLASSICAL VOCALIST

THE PURIST

Unlike most other women singers from Maharashtra, Manjari Asnare Ketkar is not a Kishori Amonkar clone. Yet, if there is anyone who can claim to keep the flag of the Jaipur gharana—or for that matter any gharana—flying it is this exceptionally gifted and confident musician.

Ketkar first made her mark in



Mumbai at a gathering of classical music maestros aged 19, when people of her ilk are thought to have barely cut their teeth. The gathering included an entire pantheon of masters: Bhimsen Joshi, Ravi Shankar, C.R Vyas and Shiv Kumar Sharma. Rather ambitiously Ketkar, who sings the khayal form, chose a rare and complex raga, Gauri. She had the veterans deeply impressed by the sheer power of her voice and rendition. It's only got better since. Given her passion for purity of style Ketkar might prove to be an anachronism in future, but she will also remain a voice that spans not just two octaves but two centuries as well. —S. KALIDAS