

Bhoomi Pranam 2012: A Report

An evening of Odissi Dance by two Kashmiri artistes, Arushi Tiku and Vitasta Tiku witnessed a packed audience in the Main Auditorium of the India International Centre, New Delhi on 19 August 2012. Arushi and Vitasta are senior disciples of renowned Odissi danseuse and Guru Alpana Nayak. Noted Danseuse Padma Bhushan Dr Swapna Sundari who was the Chief Guest at the event said that India's Cultural Diplomacy is now in the hands of very young generation, who despite the global influences, have been taking keen interest in traditional art forms of India.

Traditionally an Odissi dance recital starts with *Mangalacharana*, where the dancer dedicates herself to the Almighty and begs forgiveness from Mother Earth for stamping feet on her. Begs apology from the audience of any shortcomings and pays obeisance and seeks blessings from her Guru. In Mangalacharana dancers began with a prayer to Goddess Saraswati based on an Odia song *Jaya jaya Saraswati Mata Bagdevi.....*

The next item was Batu, which is a Nritya or pure dance. It depicts different sculptural postures of ancient temples of Orissa. This item is devoid of lyric and hence there is no Bhava-Abhinaya or expression. Vitasta Tiku excelled in her performance.

The third item of this evening was an Oriya Abhinaya: *Kahin gale murali phunka.....* written by the 18th century poet Banamali Das in which Radha searches for Lord Krishna who always flirts with other Gopis by playing his musical flute and troubles them with his naughtiness and pranks. Arushi Tiku performed as Radha.

The next item was *Rageshree Pallavi*. The word "Pallavi" has been derived from the Sanskrit word pallava, which means the bud of a leaf, or the shoots of a tree, which are very tender. As a small seed grows gradually into a large tree, in Pallavi, a tune is sung in a particular raga and it develops gradually into different varieties. In this item equal importance is given to dance as well as music and rhythm. The movements in this item are extremely graceful and lyrical. Both Arushi Tiku & Vitasta Tiku excelled in Pallavi.

The next item was 'Nava Durga', a prayer to Goddess Durga. In this presentation nine manifestations of the Goddess such as Bana Durga, Maha Durga, Giri Durga, Jaya Durga, Shuli Durga, Mahisha Mardini, Shakti Durga and Ghoru Durga are praised. Both the dancers, Arushi Tiku & Vitasta Tiku presented "*Jaya Bhagabati Devi Namu Varade.....*"

The Last item for the evening was *Moksha* in which the dancers prayed for salvation. Moksha means "spiritual liberation". This dance represents a spiritual culmination for the dancer who soars into the realm of pure aesthetic delight. The dance moves onto a crescendo that is thrilling to both, the eye and the ear. With the cosmic sound of the "Om", the dance dissolves into nothingness — just like Moksha or the deliverance of the soul in real life. Both the dancers performed Moksha.

Guru Smt. Alpana Nayak choreographed Bhoomi Pranam. She was accompanied by Sri Prashanta Behera (Vocalist), Sri Prafulla Mangaraj (on Mardala), Sri Dhiraj Pandey (on Flute), Sri Gopinath Swain (on Violin) to the compering by Ayushi Nayak.

