

## Bhoomi Pranam 2013: A Report

Guru Smt Alpana Nayak, eminent Odissi Exponent and her senior disciples presented Bhoomi Pranam, a Salute to the Mancha (Stage) based on Acharya Nandikeshwar's Abhinaya Darpana at Main Auditorium, India International Centre(IIC) on 25 August 2013. The programme was organised by Association for Learning Performing Arts and Normative Action (A.L.P.A.N.A.) which was launched in 2003 as a registered Society under the Societies Registration Act 1860 in the National Capital Territory of Delhi. In a short span of its coming into being, A.L.P.A.N.A. has made significant contribution to its espoused cause of spreading awareness among today's youth about the rich cultural heritage of India, especially Odissi Dance, Vocal and Instrumental Music.

A.L.P.A.N.A. Institute is a recognized training and examination centre of the Akhil Bharatiya Gandharva Mahavidyalaya Mandal, Maharashtra and Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). The biggest achievement of A.L.P.A.N.A. so far is the collaboration with University of Visual and Performing Arts, Colombo, Sri Lanka. A MoU was signed on 20 May 2012 between A.L.P.A.N.A. and University of Visual and Performing Arts, Colombo, Sri Lanka on faculty development and cultural exchange programmes between the two organisations. To operationalize the MoU, Guru Smt Alpana Nayak was invited by UVPA to conduct a workshop on Odissi Dance for three weeks in May, 2013.

Guru Smt Alpana Nayak is one of the few Odissi exponents of Delhi who is tirelessly working for the cause of spreading awareness among the youth about the rich, inclusive and composite cultural heritage of India, especially Odissi Dance.

Born and brought up at Balasore, Odisha Alpana Nayak began her training in Odissi Dance at the age of seven at Nritya Sangeeta Kala Mandira, Balasore under Late Guru Deva Prasad Das, Guru Sudhakar Sahoo and Late Guru Hare Krishna Behera. She gained her 'Nritya Shree' degree at the tender age of thirteen and 'Nritya Visharad' in Odissi Dance at nineteen.

Alpana has performed Odissi Dance (Solo) in almost all major cities and cultural festivals of India, England, Japan, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Mongolia.

Along with her performing career, Alpana is also a dedicated teacher. She has taught Odissi in several cities of India, England, Japan and Sri Lanka. Her Odissi dance disciples include persons with disabilities. She has been conferred with the title of Guru Samrat by SWID, Bangla Desh. She has conducted lecture-cum-demonstrations on Odissi Dance in different schools and universities of India, England, Japan, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Mongolia.

Traditionally an Odissi dance recital starts with Mangalacharana, where the artists dedicate themselves to the Almighty and plead forgiveness from the Mother Earth for stamping their feet on her, beg apology from the audience for any shortcomings and pays obeisance to their Guru. But at Bhoomi Pranam Smt Alpana Nayak and her

senior disciples - Ayushi Nayak, Amrit Setia, Vaishali Saini and Ila Kaushik - began with a salute to RANGA or MANCHA.....

Then Ayushi Nayak, the most talented student of A.L.P.A.N.A. presented an Odia Abhinaya "To Lagi Gopo Danda Mana Re Kalia Suna....." written by 18th century poet Gopal Krushna Pattanaik. In this song Radha says Krishna that only because of Him it has become difficult for all the Gopis, specially for herself to move on the streets of Gopapura as he troubles everybody with his naughtiness and pranks.

The next item was Kirvani Pallavi which was presented by Ayushi, Amrit and Vaishali. Original solo choreography of this Pallavi was done by Late Guru Shri Kulu Charana Mohapatra, but for this event the group choreography was done beautifully by the talented young dancers themselves.

Next item of the evening was another Oriya Abhinaya: 'Uthhilu ede begi kahinki re' written by Kavi Gopal Krushna Pattanaik in the 18th century. The song beautifully depicts the love of Yashoda, Krishna's foster mother, for her 'baal gopaal'. She requests him to go to sleep so that she may peacefully finish churning the curd and her other household chores without being troubled by him. This abhinaya set to raag Malavagoda was Choreographed and performed by Guru Alpana Nayak.

The last item for the evening presented by Smt Alpana Nayak and her disciples - Ayushi Nayak, Amrit Setia, Vaishali Saini and Ila Kaushik - was Moksha in which the dancers pray 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.

The Accompanying musicians were Sri Prashanta Behera, Vocalist, Sri Prafulla Mangaraj on Mardala, Sri Dhiraj Pandey on Flute and Sri Gopinath Swain on Violin.

Shri Keshav N. Desiraju, Secretary, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India was the Chief Guest and Shri Sanjiv Mittal, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Government of India was the Distinguished Guest of the evening. Shri Desiraju admired the performances and blessed the talented young dancers with lots of good wishes to do good in future. He appreciated the hard work of A.L.P.A.N.A. in spreading awareness among today's youth about rich cultural heritage of India.

\*\*\*\*\*