

Bhoomi Pranam 2014: A report

BHOOMI PRANAM 2014, an evening of Odissi Dance was presented at Main Auditorium, India International Centre(IIC) on 17 August 2014 where Dr. Vaishali Saini, a senior disciple of Guru Smt Alpana Nayak, made her solo debut through Mancha Pravesh and the senior disciples of Guru Smt Alpana Nayak presented 'Devi', a special choreographic presentation. The programme was organised by **Association for Learning Performing Arts and Normative Action (A.L.P.A.N.A.)** which is registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860. It is working since 2003. The Society aims at promotion of performing arts and working towards equitable human development and growth. The emphasis is on inclusive growth and composite heritage.

Padma Vibhushan Dr. Sonal Mansingh, internationally renowned Odissi Exponent and Scholar was the Chief Guest and Smt. Helen Acharya, Secretary, Sangeet Natak Academy was the Distinguished Guest of the evening. After the lighting of the ceremonial lamp by the guests the performances started.

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** Dr Vaishali Saini began with “Vakra tunda maha kaya” – a prayer to Lord Ganesha, the destroyer of all obstacles, the God of Wisdom and the God of Dance.

The next item was **Saveri 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.

After Saveri Pallavi Vaishali presented an **Odia Abhinaya : Kahin gale murali phunka.....**written by 18th century Odia poet Banamali Das in which Radha is searching for Lord Krishna who always flirts with other Gopis by playing his musical flute and troubles them with his naughtiness and pranks. He steals milk and curd from their houses and also their clothes from the bathing ghat of Yamuna river.

The Last item for the evening was “**Devi**” - a group choreographic presentation by senior disciples of Guru Smt Alpana Nayak. Hindu mythology has millions of goddesses. Hindus, in India and all over the world, worship their goddesses with as much fervour as they do their gods. Lakshmi, Saraswati, Durga, Parvati, Prakriti and about thirty three crore other goddesses receive the prayers and offerings of millions of Indians every day. We pray to Goddess Lakshmi for wealth and yet we are a nation that sets its daughter- in- law to fire over petty dowry issues. We pray to Goddess Saraswati for education and knowledge and yet we don't allow our daughters to get an education. 'Devi' is a choreographic presentation in Odissi that aims to bring out this inherent dichotomy that is present in Hindu Indian society. We wonder, how would Adi Paraashakti, Prakriti, Saraswati, Lakshmi, Katyayani, and Kaali react to the hypocrisy that underlies the actions their devotees?

Artists were Dr Vaishali Saini, Amrit Setia, Disha Kannan, Pihu Shrivastava, Prapti Gupta & Ayushi Nayak

Concept, Choreography & Direction was by Miss Ayushi Nayak
Music was Composed by Shri Prasanta Behera

The Accompanying Musicians are:

- Sri Prashanta Behera (Vocalist)
- Sri Prasanta Maharana (Mardala)
- Sri Gopinath Swain (Violin)
- Sri Lavinya Ambade (Sitar)

Smt. Helen Acharya who was the Distinguished 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. We must give them support and encouragement.
