



Venkatasubramanian

Indian Drummer

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Profile

K.VENKATASUBRAMANIAN S/o.Sri V.Krishnamoorthy, a Veena Artist hailed from Tiruvarur, the birth places of Music Trinities.

He was inspired into the world of percussion from his childhood.He had his early training in Mridangam (South Indian Drum) from Tiruvarur **Sri N.Sairam**, A.I.R. Artist, Tiruchirappali. Then under the tutelage of well known percussionist **Sri S.Sakthivel**, he had his advance training. He also had training from **Kalaimamani Tiruvarur .Bakthavathsalam**,a distinguished Mridangam artiste.

He has been playing the mridangam in classical music and dance for more than 15 years.

The mridangam is an integral part of a classical dance performance, rhythm plays a vital role. Venkatasubramanian is excelled in rhythm and able to follow the intricate foot work and able to embellish the dance with rhythmic improvisations.

He has had the privileges to perform at leading festivals of India's most prestigious art festivals. He has given percussion support to renowned Artists like Padmashree.Smt.Chitra Visweswaran , Padmashree.Dr.Padma Subramaniam ,Smt.Vayjayanthimala Bali , Smt.Alarmelvalli ,Smt.Priyadarshani Govindand ,Smt.RevathyRamachandran and upcoming Artiste in India and abroad.

Venkatasubramanian apart from accompanying dancers is also a very accomplished concert artist. He is highly sought after tutor & has been given training to many students in India and abroad.

[Friday Review](#) » [Dance](#)

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Adavus in motion

RUPA SRIKANTH



Uma Nambodiripad Sathya Narayanan. Photo: B. Jothi Ramalingam

The H.

Uma Namboodiripad's depiction of Narasimha and vamana avatars was unhurried and just right.RUPA SRIKANTH

As Kartik Fine Arts' tight scheduling allowed for limited performance time, this year's Nadanamamani awardee, Bharatanatyam dancer and musician Uma Namboodiripad Sathya Narayanan, wasted no time on preliminaries. She jumped straight into the deep with a Swati Tirunal Sanskrit Dasavatara kirtana, 'Kamalajaasya hrta' in ragamalika, Adi. The vibrant 50-minute piece, choreographed by Guru Chitra Visveswaran, who kept a protective eye on her protégé from the front row, presented a dancer who has grown in confidence, energy and maturity. She has adapted and internalised Guru Chitra's dynamic style that involves adavus-in-motion and introduction of the flick of the head and wrist to finish with a flourish, in a sense.

In tune with the times

This modern-day version of Guru Chitra is conscious of the trend towards maintaining good lines, sitting in proper araimandi especially for thattu-mettu sequences or during the theermana adavus, and infusing adavus with energy. Though some of these trends are not new to the style, there is a studied attempt by Uma to go with the times.

Uma's capable depiction of each avatara had a well-rehearsed finesse. Of them, the Narasimha and Vamana avatars were stand-out sequences when both the dancer's sensitive portrayals and the melodious music came together gloriously. Take the Narasimha story, when Vishnu appears as a man-lion who emerges from a pillar in a courtyard and attacks Hiranyakashipu, laying him across his thighs. He proceeds to tear his stomach, and this is interesting, the dancer used awkward wrist movements and bent fingers to depict the lion's paws.

Narasimha's expression is fierce as he disembowels the atheist demon; he remains in this mood for a time until his gaze falls upon the child-devotee Prahlada, when he goes back to a saumya roopa. Every detail was pictured unhurriedly.

The Vamana avatara was the coming together of the whole team: **K. Venkatasubramanian** set the tone with interesting rhythm and varying the volume-strong for Mahabali and soft for Vamana, like a speaking mridangam; the sanchari was shown with swaras, and vocalist B. Umasankar's voice rose dramatically as Vamana's dwarfed form grew large. The same event was then shown from Mahabali's reaction, as his eyes widened in wonder and fear.

We enjoyed melody from Mudikondan Ramesh (veena) all through the recital, being the only accompanist. Sukanya Ravindhar (nattuvangam) was a strong comrade-in-arms with her efficient performance.

The Sringara padam, 'Ariya Paruvam' (Hamsanandi, Adi, Periasami Thooran) brought in a change of mood but was bland due to a predominantly padartha (literal) treatment.

The Valachi thillana (misra chapu, Madurai N. Krishnan) saw the mridangam artist and the dancer in good energy, the former varying tones according to the adavus this time. The vocalist had his moments, but here his voice let him down on occasion.

The recital marks a new chapter in Uma Namboodiripad Sathya Narayanan's Bharatanatyam career.

[Friday Review](#) » [Dance](#)

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Mosaic of movement

RUPA SRIKANTH



Anubhuti.

Special Arrangement

Besides clean lines and superb co-ordination, unpredictability lent the edge to Anubhuti.

After a long career as a celebrated Bharatanatyam soloist, Chitra Visveswaran has turned her energies to group choreographies. She has proved herself yet again, this time through her dynamic and deft visualisation. 'Anubhuti- an Experience' is the latest Margam offering by Chitra's Chidambaram Dance Company. It was commissioned for the Opera of France at Lille in 2011 and has travelled the world since.

Apart from the high standard of execution, the clean lines, the excellent coordination and the melodious musical score, it was the unpredictability that Guru Chitra wove into the presentations that gave them the edge. She explored the diagonal, the circle, the horizontal et al, breaking up the songs into fast-moving, wonderfully dynamic visuals.

The invocation to Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, 'Trimurti Anjali' (ragamalika, Adi, R. Visveswaran) set off the unpredictable pattern. It was a song with only one line, 'Jham jham jhonukita...', composed in Gambira Nattai, Jog and Abhogi, and was finally fashioned into a 10-minute piece with vibrant nritta and sharply etched friezes.

The Lalgudi Jayaraman Navarasa padavarnam, 'Angayarkkani' (ragamalika, Adi) became a smooth mosaic of emotions, enactments, jatis, swaras, poses, entries and exits as the dancers explored different facets of Goddess Meenakshi in turn. There were no pauses to change the tune or the mood. One segment flowed into the other with well-visualised fluidity and coordination. If the music was consistently very good thus far, here it was arresting. The genius composer gets the credit, but the musicians' rendering also had to be given its due. G. Srikanth (vocal), R. Thiagarajan (flute) and Mudikondan Ramesh (veena) were the reason the varnam reached such heights that day.

Describing the mischievous young Krishna, the gopis see that there is more to the 'young boy' in Purandarasadasa's 'Chikkavane Ivanu' (Mohanakalyani, Ata). When one of them gets a vision of his divinity, the gopis realise who he is.

The tone of the presentation changed and the choreographer took a lead from here on by bringing in the avatars as quiet friezes in a Dasavatara sloka, 'Vedaanudharate.' The show ended with a beautiful visual of Krishna in Brindavan under a tree, surrounded by adoring calves.

The bright dancers were Arupa Lahiri, Sai Santhosh Radhakrishnan, Jai Quehaeni Reddy, Gayathri Rajaji, Divya Shruthi and Sharmada Viswanathan. Sukanya Ravindhar (nattuvangam) has grown as a nattuvanar to become an expert now. **She was ably supported by Venkatasubramaniam (mridangam).** Anand Kumar did the lighting.

Keywords: [Anubhuti](#), [dance](#)

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March 8, 2012

<http://www.thehindu.com/arts/dance/article2973871.ece>

Rich Offerings to Lord Rama



WITH EFFORTLESS EASE: Lavanya Sankar. Photo: M. Periasamy

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Today's Paper» FEATURES» FRIDAY REVIEW

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Theme is their speciality



GROUP *Guru S. Padma's disciples presented a scintillating show.*

The students of Jaya Sathvika Natyalaya recently presented a delightful Bharatanatyam programme at Vani Mahal. S. Padma, director of the school, which is a unit of Padma Surya Natyalaya, performed the nattuvangam. From Pushpanjali set in Adi talam (Hamsadhwani) to the Dhanasri tillana the presentation was marked by perfect jatis and sparkling footwork. The highlight was the Navaragamalika varnam that showcased the young dancers' skills and the guru's penchant for fiery solkattu. The disciples rose to the occasion to offer a scintillating performance.

Bhava dominated as the story of Lord Siva unfolded. Shalini as Siva, Meenakshy as Parvati, Divya as Manmadan, Sangeetha as Rati and Aiswarya as Devi deserve mention.

Vocals was by Venu Gopal, Venkata Subramanyam played the mridangam and Sikkil Balu, the violin.

A speciality of Jaya Sathvika Natyalaya is the thematic presentations the school makes trained by Guru Padma, proficient in both Bharatanatyam (disciple of Thanjai Arunachalam Pillai and Jayalakshmi Arunachalam Pillai) and Mohiniyattom (disciple of Kalamandalam Kalyani Kutti Amma). Her thirst for research resulted in seven dance-dramas - Navasandhi kavuthwam (dikbalas / 2002); Saptha Tandavam (2003); Ashta Nagas (2005); Thri Shakti (2007); Vallalar Songs (2008); Puratchi Kavi (2011) and Dasa Maha Vidyas (2013). A recipient of several titles and accolades, guru Padma has written books on the theory aspects of Bharatanatyam.

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Devotionals on Lord Rama, Sampradaya bhajan and a Bharatanatyam recital marked the Prathishtotsavam day of Sri Kothandarama Swamy Temple, Coimbatore.

A three-day celebration featuring homams, Divya Prabhanda goshti, devotional songs, bhajans and a Bharatanatyam recital marked the Prathishtotsavam Day of Sri Kothandarama Swamy Temple, Coimbatore.

On the first day, Girija Hariharan sang devotional songs on Rama and Krishna with 'Koluvamaragatha' in Thodi as the centre piece. 'Bhavayami Raghuramam,' 'Theeraadha Vilaiyattupillai' and 'Kaakkai Chiraginile' were some of the compositions she rendered. The following day, Thiruppathiripuliyur Gopala Sundara Bhagavatar presented a sampradaya bhajan with the traditional items along with tarangams and abhangs.

The concluding day saw a Bharathanatyam solo performance by Lavanya Sankar dedicated to Lord Rama. It drew large crowds and was thoroughly enjoyable. She began with a mallari in Gambhira Nattai followed by 'Sri Ganapathini' in Sowrashtram.

'Jagadanandakarakaa' was dealt with in great detail with interesting jati patterns. The sanchari for 'Jaanaki Praana Naayaka' depicting the scene where the various competitors tried in vain to lift the great bow of Siva was a good example of hasya rasa. The effortless ease with which the dignified Rama lifted the bow and the joyful blush on the face of Sita were delightfully depicted.

Effective depiction

'Gopi Gopala Bala' in Gamanashramam by Surdas gave Lavanya immense possibilities for abhinaya and sancharis and she revelled in presenting them. 'Janakipathe' in Kharaharapriya by Papanasam Sivan was a good choice. It was lovely to watch Kausalya enjoying her motherhood when Lavanya presented the sanchari for the line, 'Kausalyaananda Vardhanaa.' The episodes concerning Guha, Jatayu and Shabhari were briefly but effectively depicted for the charanam. The thillana in Desh and the Sita Rama Kalyanam preceding the mangalam by Balamurali Krishna were just right for the occasion.

During the thillana, Lavayana developed cramps and left the stage gracefully. In a while, she returned with a spirited bounce, exercising great will power to complete the concert with her usual flair.

Koushik Champakesan's impressive voice that reached the high octaves effortlessly was a great asset to Lavanya's performance. So was Sathishkumar's violin whose mood-setting solos during the sancharis were delectable. Thiruvavarur **K. Venkatasubramaniam's energetic mridangam** and Sairam Santhanam's majestic and crisp nattuvangam added to the effect.

A news bulletin in the name 'Sriramam' was released on the occasion by N.V. Nagasubramaniam, president of Sri Ram Seva Samithi.

Keywords: [Prathishtotsavam Day](#), [Lord Rama](#), [Sampradaya bhajan](#), [Bharatanatyam recital](#), [Sri Kothandarama Swamy Temple](#)

February 11, 2011

Her expressions said it all

<http://www.thehindu.com/arts/dance/article1271762.ece>



The Hindu Bhavya Balasubramanian. Photo: R. Shivaji Rao



Bhavya Balasubramanian is a confident, young dancer, who trained under Guru Vazhuvoor R. Samraj and dancer-teacher Srekala Bharath and is currently working with S. Srilatha of Kalakshetra. Her capsulated Bharatanatyam recital of little more than an hour was dominated by the story of Lord Rama, presented through Swati Tirunal's Sanskrit kriti 'Bhavayami Raghuramam' (tuned by Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer in ragamalika, Rupaka tala).

From Sage Viswamitra's visit to Ayodhya to the slaying of demoness Tataka in the Bala Kanda, until Rama's Pattabhisheka in the Yuddha Kanda, the tale spanned six books and many, many incidents. The composer has condensed 24,000 slokas of the

Valmiki Ramayana into one kriti with six verses (charanams), so the lyric is naturally indicative and requires elaboration.

Bhavya's approach was neat, detailed and diligent as she captured the milestones in Rama's story. There was a conscientious effort behind each expression and movement as every little story was given its due. Deftly, one incident flowed into another in a swiftly changing canvas, as the dancer introduced asides into the Valmiki Ramayana such as Manthara's thirst for revenge, the Lakshman Rekha and others.

While there was restraint in the drama, some scenes stood out for their visualisation or depth. One such scene was the kidnap when Sita cries out for help and throws down her jewellery from an airborne chariot. Another was of Hanuman growing in form in order to cross the seas and once in Lanka, shrinking to a small size, no bigger than a cat, to escape detection.

The best moment of the evening was, however, Rama's reaction when Hanuman hands over Sita's choodamani ornament; that one moment of recognition and intense longing captured by the dancer went beyond the dramatic role play and showed the dancer's depth. In time, Bhavya should be able to access this stillness.

The engrossing delineation was enhanced by an involved group of artists: S. Srilatha (choreography and nattuvangam), Chitrambari Krishnakumar (vocal), **K. R. Venkatasubramanian (mridangam)**, V. Muruganandam (violin) and Devaraj (flute).

THE HINDU

Online edition of India's National Newspaper
Friday, Apr 22, 2005

<http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/fr/2005/04/22/stories/2005042202760400.htm>

Dancer with mercurial feet

Dance Two artistes regaled the audience by their lively performances.



Precise teermanams: Srekala Bharat Photo: K. V. Srinivasan.

One must congratulate Saraswathi Educational Cultural and Charitable Trust on bringing classical dance back to the temple. They conducted the 'Vasant Utsav' at the Kapaleeswarar temple, Mylapore. Bharatanatyam exponent Srekala Bharat, who presented 'Sivastuthi,' said she felt inspired dancing in the temple close to the shrines of Kapali and Karpagambal. It was nice to see young children watching the programme keenly; the expressions fleeting on their faces as they watched the dancer's rapid footwork and the changing facial expressions was a treat indeed.

There was hardly a dull moment in her performance, at least till she completed the varnam. Beginning with an invocatory item on Ganesha, she took up Natesa Kavuthuvam replete with nritta. Then came the ragamalika varnam, 'Swamiyai Azhaithodi Va' of Dandayudapani Pillai. There were sancharis from the legend of Siva naturally, but it was the teermanams with complicated jatis handled with elan by Srekala, which bowled the viewers

over. After the varnam came the popular Sindhubhairavi song, 'Karunai Deivame' on Karpagambal. In this, Srekala took up the story of Goddess Parvathi feeding divine milk to Thirugnanasambandar and enacted it effectively. But it was the Kannappa Nayanar story in the following Abhogi kriti, 'Sabhapathikku' which made some of the women viewers get charged emotionally.

The nattuvangam by Guhendran was an asset to the recital as was the vocal support by Chitrambhari Krishnakumar accompanied by **Venkatsubramaniam on the mridangam** and Muruganandam on the violin. Another plus point was Srekala's costume in red; it is true that a dancer must maintain a pleasant expression while performing, but it would be better if she could avoid the constant toothy grin.

THE HINDU

Online edition of India's National Newspaper

Friday, May 02, 2008

<http://www.hindu.com/fr/2008/05/02/stories/2008050251050300.htm>

Pleasant voice, lively jatis

Dharini and Shubhasree exhibited their skills in music and dance respectively.



Melodious: Nagaswaram recital by S.Loganathan and S.Santhanam.

Pollachi Tamizhisai Sangam's Tamil New Year programme began with an impressive nagaswaram recital by Mambalam Brothers, S. Loganathan and S. Santhanam, at Mahatma Gandhi Mandapam, Pollachi. 'Moolaadhara Moorthi' (Hamsadhwani), - 6; Saravana Bhava' (Pasupathi Priya), 'Nannu Paalimpa' (Mohanam), 'Solliththaan Theriyumo' (Hamsanandhi), 'Gowri Manohara' (Gowri manohari) and 'Kanda Naal Mudhalaay' (Madhuvanthi) were some of the songs they presented. Mambalam S.P.Arulanandam and Adyar D.Senthil Kumar gave them excellent support on the tavil besides presenting an enjoyable thani.

K.Dharini, disciple of Sulochana Pattabhiraman, showed immense promise during her vocal recital. The stage is not new to her as she has been participating regularly in 'Abaswaram' Ramjhi's 'Isai Mazhalai' programme.

With a pleasantly husky voice, she breezed through the alapanas and swarakalpanas with absolute ease. The varnam 'Om Pranava Vimala Ganapathi' by Thyagarajan was lovely with sahityas for the charanaswaras. She portrayed Malayamarutham and Shanmukhapriya beautifully for 'Karpaga Manohara' and 'Parvathi Naayakane' (both by Papanasam Sivan). Her niravals and kalpanaswaras were enjoyable. It is true that there is still scope for improvement, but she is on the right track. Dharini sang 'Ganamazhai Pozhigindraan,' 'Kaakkai Siraginile' and concluded her brief concert with Lalgudi Jayaraman's thillana in Kalyanavasantham and a Thiruppugazh. G.Badrinath's violin was smooth and melodious. Prasanna Karthikeyan on the mridangam produced pleasing laya patterns.

Deft footwork

N.Shubhasree (disciple of Mutharasi Ravi) presented the Pushpanjali in Gambhira nattai, a Ganapati padam in Gowla, and a sthuthi on Ambal in Kedara Gowla prior to the varnam 'Innum En Manam Ariyaadhavar Pol', in Charukesi by Lalgudi Jayaraman during her Bharathanatyam recital.



K. Dharini.

She depicted the love-lorn heroine authentically with her facial expressions and body language, at the same time exhibiting remarkable footwork for the lively jatis incorporated in the varnam.

Shubhasree concluded her recital with the thillana by K.N. Dhandayuthapani Pillai. The orchestra comprising Sudhev Varriar (vocal support), Mutharasi Ravi (nattuvangam), **Venkata subramanian (mridangam)** and Shankar (violin) proved a great strength to Shubhasree's dance presentation.



VDS Arts Academy

(Arts Wings of Muthukrishnan Memorial Club)



REVIEWS APRIL 2010

http://www.vdsartsacademy.org/April_reviews_2010.php



On 18th April 2010 (Sunday) at 6.30 PM. That was a fine and very good dance performance by little C. Vishnu Priya. At 12 she cute, confident and has fine foot work. Dancing with smiling through out the two hours programme. It was a full fledged programme. She has been affectionately trained by her mother-cum-guru Shanthi Sriram.

Adi Sankara's Ganesa Pancharatnam, traditional shanmuka gowthuvam, Raji Narayanan's shabdham and she performed every thing very well. Thuraiyur Rajagopala Sharma's atana varnam was good. An episode from the Bhagavatham, Vishnu's abhinaya was fine while doing like naughty Krishna. Her bhairavi padam, Hamsanandi thillana and Andal also fine.

Chitrambari was enjoying the dance while singing, **mridangam by Thiruvarur Venkatasubramanian** and M.S. Kannan on violin have made their fantastic support to Vishnu.



VDS Arts Academy

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REVIEWS APRIL 2010

http://www.vdsartsacademy.org/April_reviews_2010.php



On 17th April 2010 (Saturday) at 6.30 PM. Manaswini,s dance was fine and very good. Our regular artist and performing for the 3rd time at VDS. We must appreciate her involvement in the dance. She is Slim, tall, flexible limb movements and has fast foot work. It was a full fledged programme and has been very well trained her guru Suma Mani.

Her varnam Swamiyai azhathuvadi sakiye in kamas ragam of Tanjore quartet was good. Her abhinaya was fine, limb movements were elegant and she proved her keen interest in dance. Bho Sambho was simply superb.

Chitrambari Krishnakumar on vocal, **mridangam by K. Venkatsubramanian,** Kalyani Shankar on violin and Bhagyalakshmi on flute have rendered very good support to Manaswini.



VDS Arts Academy

(Arts Wings of Muthukrishnan Memorial Club)



REVIEWS APRIL 2010

http://www.vdsartsacademy.org/April_reviews_2010.php



On 02nd April 2010 (Friday) at 6.30 PM. Shruthi Balamurali has performed a fine and very good dance performance. At 14 she is very confident and dancing with keen interest. Her bhava and foot-work is fine. She has been well trained by her guru Deepa Balaji.

Both dance and music was fine in Bhavayami Raghuramam. Shruthi enacted the different episodes of Ramayana very well. Her bhava was fine in the varnam. Her bhava and foot-work was fine both in the Chinna chinna padham vaithu in ragam kaapi and kadanakudhooklam thillana.

The vocal support by V. Venugopal, **mridangam by K.R. Venkatsubramanian**, violin by Muruganandam and flute by B.N. Ramesh have rendered their fine support.

Dance use Smt. Nagapriya Karthikeyan, chief guest of the programme has blessed Shruthi.

THE HINDU

Online edition of India's National Newspaper

Friday, Jan 27, 2006

<http://www.hindu.com/fr/2006/01/27/stories/2006012700580300.htm>

Impresses with bhava

T. K. GANAPATHY

Through select songs, Lavanya Shivakumar beautifully conveyed Tyagaraja's devotion to Rama.



Lavanya Shivakumar. Photo: K. Ananthan.

When Tiruvaiyaru gears up at this time of the year to pay homage to Saint Tyagaraja on Bahula Panchami day, music lovers and sabhas vie with one another in organising functions to sing the poet's pancharatna kritis in chorus. A music concert worth its name is incomplete without the presentation of the songs of Tyagaraja.

Lavanya Shivakumar presented 'Tyagaraja Samarpanam,' a Bharatanatyam recital, featuring select compositions of the bard of Tiruvaiyaru, for Alapana at the Ramar temple in the Abhinavatheertha Pravachana Mantapam, Ramnagar, Coimbatore.

Lavanya, a disciple of K. J. Sarasa, has a sprightly stage presence. Her agile movements are a treat for dance lovers. She is good in nritta and abhinaya and this was evident in the four numbers she presented as a tribute to the saint. Her pushpanjali, followed by "Sri Ganapathi" in Sowrashtram set to Adi tala, was an appealing devotional opening number.

Tasteful costume

Lavanya, dressed in a tasteful costume, established the sthayi bhava in front of a beautiful painting of Lord Rama, flanked by Lakshmana and Sita on either side with a worshipful Hanuman in the forefront. "Nagumomu Ganaleni" (Abheri) was an apt depiction of the poet's prayer to Lord Rama. Eurhythmics

was at its best in her presentation of the kriti, "Ksheerasagara" in Devagandhari. In the item that has tremendous scope for bhava, Lavanya's facial expressions were impressive and proved her mettle as a dancer. In the tillana, combined with "Thelisi Ramachintanato" (Poornachandrika), the dancer effortlessly executed the complex movements.

Fitting finale

The bard's plaint in the song that one should control the mind and concentrate on the tharaka mantra through namasankeertanam was a fitting finale, full of rhythm and melody. The teermanams, footwork and movement across the stage were performed with dignity and intensity.

The orchestra comprised S. Shanmughasundaram (nattuvangam), Randhini (music), **Venkatasubramanian (mridangam)** and Srinivasan (violin).

<http://www.hindu.com/fr/2006/01/27/stories/2006012700580300.htm>

THE HINDU

Online edition of India's National Newspaper

Friday, Sep 01, 2006 **Graceful display of talent**

<http://www.hindu.com/fr/2006/09/01/stories/2006090100530300.htm>

B. RAMADEVI

Alone and in group, performers at the Pollachi dance festival captivated the audience with their footwork and abhinaya.



A scene from `Balaramayanam.'

Participating in the dance festival conducted by the Pollachi Tamil Sangam, young Nivedha Suresh, a disciple of Sasirekha Rammohan, transformed herself into Mother Yasodha as she bathed, dressed, fed and punished little Krishna while she was dancing for "Enna Thavam Seidhanai" (Kapi). Her well-planned recital at the Mahatma Gandhi Mandapam, Pollachi, included `Pushpanjali' in Gambhiranattai, "Senthil Mevum Deva Deva," a padavarnam by Lalgudi G. Jayaraman and a thillana in Chandrajothi.

Nivedha's tasteful costumes, eloquent facial expressions, quickly changing statuesque poses, emotion-filled sancharis and brisk adavus were a feast to the eyes. Sasirekha's impressive announcement and nattuvangam, along with the majestic voice of Chitrambari Krishnakumar, made Nivedha's dance really enjoyable. Muruganandam on the violin and Venkatasubramanian on the mridangam joined them forming a powerful team.

Laudable and alluring

Bangalore-based Aishwarya Nithyananda's Bharatanatyam recital had high calibre and those who knew the intricacies of dance could appreciate the meticulous care that had gone in the choreography and the hard work that brought out its beauty. In Pushpanjali she depicted the fierce and powerful Siva from whom the rules of grammar emanated and the alluring Parvathi, the embodiment of feminine grace.

The verses from `Sri Krishna Karnamrutham' set in Reetigowla (which she presented as varnam) provided Nivedha a chance to depict rasa leela, the lifting of Govardhanagiri, Draupadi Vastrapaaharanam and Gitopadesam.

Aishwarya presented the essence of viyoga sringara in "Nee Poi Azhaithu Vaadi," a padam in Kapi by Ambujam Krishna. With her lovely poses and lightning footwork during the Revati tillana (Maharajapuram Santhanam), she brought into focus the beauty of the human form. The orchestral

support was exemplary with Pulikesi Kasthuri's nattuvangam, Ramesh Chataka's vocal support, Tulasiram's mridangam and Madhusudhan's violin.

Impressive presentation

Sri Devi Nrithyalaya, Chennai, presented Bharathiar's 'Shakthi-k-koothu' impressively in panchanadai. The dancers depicted 'sura samharam' and the 'mambazham episode' as sancharis for the varnam in Neelambari.

The dance of Siva for "Aanandam Pongum Inba Thaandavam" was majestic and awesome. The thillana by Dhandayuthapani Pillai in Desh ragam was presented in the form of 'Perani Natyam' and the dancers performed it on upturned clay pots. The dance drama, 'Balaramayanam,' (also by Sri Devi Nrithyalaya) began with the birth of Sri Rama and concluded with his wedding with Sita.

There were many picturesque scenes representing the different incidents that occurred in the life of Sri Rama.



BEAUTIFULLY BALANCED: A glimpse of 'Perani Natyam.'

Kathalmathi's lyrics were set to music by Balabharathi and choreographed by Sheela Unnikrishnan, founder and managing trustee of Sri Devi Nrithyalaya Trust. The well-known and well-loved story unfolded smoothly with lovely dance sequences.

The episode of Vamanavatharam was presented elaborately as one of the stories related to Rama and Lakshmana by Viswamithra.

The killing of the demoness Thataka was also presented with effective techniques and won great appreciation.

<http://www.hindu.com/fr/2006/09/01/stories/2006090100530300.htm>

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Reinventing knowledge and self

Padmini Krishnamurthy's forte — her choreographic skills — came to the fore through her disciples, who evenly balanced nritta and abhinaya. Saraswathi Vasudevan

Photo: M. Vedhan.



Brimming with enthusiasm: 'Saravanabhava' by Padmini Krishnamurthy and disciples.

A true acharya is one who experiences boundless joy and a sense of fulfilment on seeing the sishya explore and cross the boundaries of structured learning to reinvent knowledge discover 'self.' This perceptible truth came alive in 'Om Saravanabhava' presented by Padmini Krishnamurthy and her disciples under the aegis of Kartik Fine Arts.

Padmini Krishnamurthy (Muscat), senior disciple of Ranganayaki Jayaraman (founder - Sri Saraswathi Gana Nilayam) displayed her reverence for the guru-sishya parampara, a distinct lineage and legacy through a classical exposition of three generations on stage. While the senior acharya admirably wielded the cymbals for the first generation sishya, Padmini's students were equally blessed to share the stage.

Paying obeisance to Lord Muruga through the divine verses of Arunagirinathar's Tiruppugazh, the performer-teacher brought out the quintessence of its lyrical quality.

Charged with devotion, the younger troupe of dancers supplemented the inner meaning of bhakti bhava through the storyline. Their fiery emergence in the invocation, to explain Lord Ganesha's varied attributes uniformly established a total involvement in the fine arts.

Perfect timing

Choice episodes from Skanda Puranam interposed the poetry of Tiruppugazh which traced the wondrous stages of the Lord right from his birth.

The six lotuses were refreshing to watch and the dancers' timing perfect. The dancers' enthusiasm seemed to reach out to the rasika. While tala and tempo were maintained, individual stances warranted symmetry of line.

A glaring shift of axis in Padmini's 'kitatakatarikitatom' due to an extra forward tilt of the torso appeared exaggerated.

Thandai received a tandava treatment creatively interlaced with skilful jathi patterns to depict Lord Siva and son Muruga's ecstatic dance. Padmini and Shivani (the mother-daughter duo) did complete justice as they revelled in the composition and their roles.

What seemed geared to reach a crescendo, stagnated at a point in the depiction of the lyric, 'Anaivarumarundarunda.' Padmini's forte is her choreographic skills which came to the fore through her disciples who evenly balanced nritya and abhinaya. The visual effect of the excerpt revolving around Muruga atop Pazhani and Valli Kalyanam seemed prolonged diluting the effect.

Also, the colour and tone of the costumes did not quite match up to the vibrancy that shone through the vigorous dance of Padmini and her disciples. After all, aharya does play an equally important role!

The curtains came down on a reverberating note with the ever popular 'Nadabindu Kaladhi Namo Nama'.

The sollukettu and cymbals owed their grandeur to the resonance of Ranganayaki Jayaraman who is herself an institution.

Chitrambari's vocal chords were in fine tune with the lyrical compositions from start to finish. The variations in the time cycle provided by Venkatasubramanian on the mridangam was challenging indeed.

Flautist A.M.Bhagyalakshmi painted the moods with her melody. So did Kannan lend mellifluous outpourings from his violin. A special word for the talented Shivani Krishnamurthy who has imbibed this divine art with prudence.

The young dancers Ashina Naseer, Maneesha Satyanarayanan, R. Shivapriya, Ashwita Vasudevan and Varsha Kumar deserve a pat on their backs for playing a responsible and remarkable role as they danced their way through bhakti to surrender to 'Om Saravanabhava'.

<http://www.hindu.com/fr/2007/07/13/stories/2007071351220500.htm>

<http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/fr/2002/12/13/stories/2002121301070200.htm>

Tamil epics well-choreographed



PARVATI RAVI Ghantasala's presentation of the Five Tamil epics grouped as *Aimperunkappiam*, under the auspices of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Kala Kendra and Kala Pradarshini seemed a marathon effort. While the well-known stories of *Seevaka Chintamani*, and *Silappadhikaram* provide ample source-material for a dance ballet production, the less prominent ones, "*Valayapatti*", "*Kundalakesi*," and "*Manimekalai*," have been tactfully and colourfully constructed on scarce literary material available. Apart from portions of literary excerpts for *Seevaka Chintamani* and *Silappadhikaram*, a continuous flow of the story line was maintained with lyrics composed by Kumbakonam Gajendran at appropriate places, using suitable ragas to highlight the different moods. The production revealed Parvati's dedication and perseverance in proving her individual skill as a dancer, teacher and choreographer. The group of students who accompanied Parvati exhibited good co-ordination and enthusiasm.

Parvati's role as narrator and as the performer of the major roles was fine. However, she could have made use of some of the disciples to depict certain characters in the plays. For instance, the role of the hero in *Seevaka Chintamani*, would have been better with one of the taller girls doing it. The opening song in praise of Tamil Goddess and the one on Sound (*Osai* in the first play) by Gajendran were impressive and well-performed by Parvati. The scenes of *Seevakan's* skill in *Yazh* playing, his marriage with seven maidens, and the warfare came one after the other in an easy flow. However, the war scene could have been crisper and devoid of other forms like *Kalari*, which did not blend well with the concept. The philosophical outpourings on the unstability of wealth, Youthfulness (*Valibam* - elaborated with apt ideas by Parvati,) and the ultimate goal of life that underline the stories of the plays, "*Valayapati*", "*Kundalakesi*" and "*Manimekalai*" through the meaningful lyrics of Gajendran deserve mention. However, extracts from the original "*Silappadhikaram*" like "*Tera Manna*" etc. by Kannagi, as part of *Vazhakkurai Kaadai*, lost their charm because of the bland rendering of the same, by Indumati, one of the singers. What was lacking here was better co-ordination.

Suggestive pin-ups of the Silambu, Chintamani, etc. denoted the main titles of the plays. Orchestra comprising Girija Ramaswamy, Indumati and Priyasree Rao, accompanied by Padmanabhan (mridangam), Venkatsubramaniam (tabla), Nagaraju (violin) and Srinivasan (flute) provided solid support, although Indumati's trembling voice was disturbing from time to time. Priyasree has to improve her voice modulation. Girija as usual gave very matured vocal support, enhancing the mood of the situations. Suki, from Kalakshetra, is an excellent accompanist on the Nattuvangam (also in charge of rhythmical sequences) and conducted the show with confidence and perfect grip. Kalyani Rajaraman as compere, added charm to the show.

NANDINI RAMANI

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Fine blend of nritta and abhinaya



Lakshmi Viswanathan... Interpretative dance.

AFTER A fairly prolonged awards function conferring the Nrityachoodamani and the Acharya Choodamani distinctions on Bharatanatyam dancer Priyadarshini Govind and Guru Sri Lakshmi Narayana of Udupi, Barghavi Gopal, disciple of K. J. Sarasa took the stage in a recital giving ample proof of integrated potential for both nritta and abhinaya. After the prolonged ragamalika varnam of the Thanjavur Quartet, ``Saami Ninne Kori... " the dancer taking 15 minutes for a costume change (though one must admire her aesthetic feel for colour and simplicity without being overburdened by jewellery), tried the patience of the audience already at a low ebb after over three and a half hours of viewing. The expressional items too were one too many. After the Swati Tirunal Padam, "Itu sahasamulu" with the very young nayika warding off the amorous advances of Krishna, by contrasting her youth with his experience and age, came the Pantuvarali composition "Netru Varen Endru" of Mayuram Viswanath Sastry. Adding another expressional item in the sambhoga-sringar tone in Brindavani ``Chaliye Kunjalamo" was being self-indulgent. While the guru's nattuvangam was spirited, the singing seemed to lose steam in parts of the varnam and was off sruti at times. The sensitively played mridangam was a contrast to the loud veena.

Panorama of emotions

Flying on the wings of soulful music comprising the songs of Tyagaraja, ``Rama Bhakti" conceived and visualised in the Bharatanatyam idiom by Lakshmi Viswanathan translates the simple minimalism of Tyagaraja's impassioned lyrics of devotion into a panorama of emotions and myriad riveting images of nritya based on the life and deeds of the epic hero Rama.

Anything less than the beautifully blended honeyed voices of Bhama Visweswaran and Chitrambari Krishnakumar etched with clarity of sahitya, would not have done justice to Tyagaraja. Never

jarringly loud or invasive in attention demanding aggression the undisturbed even flow of melody was also to do with intelligent sound balancing, which established the presence of each instrument without allowing any one to overawe the total musical effort.

Roja Kannan (nattuvangam), Mudikondan Ramesh (veena), Venkatasubramaniam (mridangam) and Muthu Kumar and Sravanam (flute) and Sundar (kanjira and Morsing) all contributed their sensitive bit.

Lakshmi Viswanathan's flair for abhinaya, lives up to its fullest potential (not very evident in the recent past) in this production, which apart from the music rests on the depth and range of her interpretative dance, the elaborations woven round the musical lines speaking of creative imagination, the danced passages flowing more as evoked suggestions than as bald translations from the text.

It is the resonance of the Rama story, felt in flashes in the sahitya, rather than the words as they are, that the dance aims at capturing. The phrase "Bala Kanakamaya" in the Attana Kriti "Ela Nee Daya radu" is spun into fleeting images of child Rama, the vatsalya bhava changing to one of valour with the words "Ra Ra Devaadideva" with a pithy visualisation of the young princes Rama and Lakshmana being reluctantly spared by Dasaratha who accedes to Viswamitra's request for help in destroying Tataka and her tribe who are polluting his Yagna. "Sri Rama Padama" in Amritavahini paying homage to the 'sacred feet' of Lord Rama had the dancer present a sensitive rendition of Ahalya's resurrection, her experience of entering the live human domain once again very effectively communicated in the gestures and abhinaya. Nothing however could compare with the abhinaya passages knit into the Mohanam "Nanu Palimpa" in which Tyagaraja imagines his 'prananatha' approaching him — which in the dance translates into reactions, human and animal, to the beauty of Rama as he enters Mithila, along with the electrifying chemistry as Rama and Sita have a first glimpse of each other. "Vanaja Nayana Momunu joochuta..." line in the music with dramatic pauses echoes the wonder, the pleasure, the desire and the curiosity of women of all ages, stunned by a vision of Rama.

The expressional felicity covered a range of emotions, as women arresting whatever activity each one of them is engaged in, feast their eyes on the mesmerizing sight of the comely prince. The other passage wherein the best in the dancer came out was in images evoked by the phrase "aajaanubaahu yuga Sri Janaki Pati" from the Kriti "Nadupai" in Madhyamavati in which lyric Tyagaraja pleads for the protection of the Lord. Tagged on to this passage was "Pavanajasthuti" in Chenjurutti visualising in the dance the scene of Rama winning Sita, the enthusiastic enactment by two male dancers as Rama and Lakshmana in the well built up scene ending in a rather tame final breaking of the bow.

Dispelling earlier impressions of Rama Bhakti being more a solo production, with the 'group' reduced to a fringe involvement, came the latter half of the presentation with more substantial roles for the other dancers. In a complete rhythmic/interpretative varnam like treatment Vishnu in other manifestations as Krishna being spirited away at birth to Gokul and romancing with the gopis and as Narasimha destroying Hiranyakasipu became fleeting images in the Arabhi Pancharatna Kriti "Sadinchine" rendered by three dancers Madhusoodhan, Mathangi and B. Sudheesh. The episode of the golden deer followed from the Kriti "Vachamako-charamemanasa" in which Rama is evoked as the compassionate being who rescued a deer from the clutches of the greedy hunter. Alas! Fate willed that the same Rama be sent after a golden deer by his innocent wife, an act leading to the abduction of Sita. With Lakshmi having shown the entire sequence as abhinaya, the male dancer stepping in at the last moment to carry away Sita turned out to be a damp squib. Tyagaraja's lament of the worthlessness of a life that cannot constantly glory in the presence of Lord Rama in "Eti Janmam" became the anguish of Sita's pain while incarcerated in Ashokavana. Both singing and Lakshmi's abhinaya were very moving. In "Pahi Rama Dhootha" in Varali in praise of Hanuman, the dance composition spun in a sequence visualising Sita's faith being rekindled by the exchange with Hanuman. The chopped veena sounds and morsing created an evocative sound backdrop for the movements of Hanuman. A Tillana in Bageshri with Tyagaraja's exhortation in Sanskrit at the end of

the Lord's grace being showered on all who sing his songs with fervour ushered in the concluding note.

The other amateur dancers who fitted the roles they enacted, performed with involvement though the entire production was sustained by Lakshmi's abhinaya conviction.

LEELA VENKATARAMAN

<http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/fr/2002/12/20/stories/2002122001240700.htm>