

## A memorable three day festival of dance

By Dr Sunil Kothari



The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual edition ( June 26-28,2015) at Seva Sadan, Bengaluru, of Ananya Samarpana ,the cross border festival of classical dance was flagged off with a delectable Bharatanataym performance by Singapore based young Divya Ramesh, disciple of Gayatri Sriram. This was her first thematic single presentation Agni, specially commissioned for Samarpana festival in Singapore in 2014. The songs accompanying dance were composed by Vidwan Sri Gurumurthy, whereas Varnam was written by Dr Shankar.

Agni found its manifold expressions in the presentation covering mythological narrative stories of Agni as Shiva is the pillar of flame with no beginning and end, as Jyotirlinga, as single flaming arrow to kill Tripurasura, when Shiva opened his third eye to turn Kamadeva into ashes.

Divya with her thorough training under Gayatri Sriram from her very childhood displayed that now when she is 16, she has acquired command over technique through relentless practice, helping her to overcome the stress while performing continuously for more than an hour. There are no shortcuts to achieving perfection. In her execution of nritya one notices a seamless flow of movements embellished with geometrical precision. That gave her an opportunity to display the glorious form of Bharatanatyam. Not exaggerated, but restrained, the expressions looked appealing reflecting the nuances of sahitya.

In a padam Swaha, wife of Agni's lament was projected appropriately and even when offerings of Agni are not accepted without

uttering Swaha, as a wife Swaha suffers separation from Agni. Rendered in Mohana and written by G.Gurumurthy it had pleasant poetic touches. Tillana in khanda triputa and Sanakrabharanam raga had imaginative approach highlighting Shiva as the axis of the universe and becomes encircled in flames.

Divya is well poised to take off as an accomplished dancer and one hopes she would continue performing with equal fervour even when she would move on abroad for higher studies.

Shyamala Surendran's disciple Lakshmi N Vishwanathan's Mohini attam did not meet with the expectations one had looked forward to watching Mohini Attam from the products of Dharini School. From invocation to Lord Ganesha and Varnam in raga Dwijavanthi and talam Adi, choreographed by Shyamala Surendran, Lakshmi's exposition, though grammatically correct, did not display complete involvement for reasons one could not fathom. Kalyani kutty Amma's choreographed padam Varika Varika Sakhi had spark though overall the performance did not evoke rasa. Lakshmi concluded with Tillana composition of Dharini School.

On the second day Bharatanatyam performance by Sweta Prachande, trained under Sucheta Chapekar at Pune, as well as obtaining masters degree from Bharathidasan University and advanced training at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, UK, and currently studying under Priyadarshini Govind, was excellent. Right from the Viruttam describing the beauty and valour of Kartikeya and Alarippu set to mishra chapu interspersed with a Thiruppugazhi, Sweta was in elegant form. She captivated attention of audience with her stance, clean movements, sparkling nritya, and gave a feeling of her internalizing both the technique and spirit of the text. In Varnam Sumsayaka set