Kaveri Abrol Explores Divine Duality Through Bharatanatyam in “Dvi-itva”



The Bharatanatyam recital **“Dvi-itva: Divine Duality”** was

presented by **Kaveri Abrol**, disciple of **National Award–winning Acharya Jayalakshmi Eshwar**, on **4 February at 7:00 PM** at **The Stein Auditorium, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi**. Conceptualised and choreographed by **Acharya Jayalakshmi Eshwar**, the performance followed a traditional *mārgam* structure, exploring the philosophical duality of **Purusa and Prakrti**—consciousness and creative force—through layered narratives, expressive abhinaya, and precise nṛtta.

Daughter of **Professor Seema Bawa** and **Dr. Ashish Abrol**, Kaveri has been training in the **Guru–Shishya Parampara** under Acharya Jayalakshmi Eshwar since the age of eight.

The recital opened with **Ganapati Taalam** in **Gambhira Nattai raga** and **Adi tala**, choreographed by Acharya Jayalakshmi Eshwar. The invocation established a contemplative atmosphere as the dancer portrayed Ganesha's iconographic paradoxes—Ekadanta and Sukesa—with devotional restraint. The piece emphasised surrender and introduced the evening's central theme of divine duality.

The expansive **Vanajaksa Varnam** (**Bihag raga**, **Adi tala**, composer **T. R. Subramaniam**) formed the conceptual core. Through multiple episodes involving Rukmini, Draupadi, Satyabhama, and the devotees of Braja, the dancer explored diverse emotional and philosophical registers surrounding Krishna. Her measured abhinaya and expressive clarity enabled seamless transitions between devotion, surrender, pride, and grace, allowing the rasa to unfold organically.



In **Varattam Svami**, a padam in **Saveri raga** and **Misra Capu tala** presented in the Kalākṣetra tradition, the dancer embodied a *khandita nayika* expressing longing and gentle reproach toward

Lord Murugan. The intimate portrayal balanced emotional intensity with classical restraint, revealing the duality between deity and devotee through nuanced expression and subtle humour.

A highlight of the evening was **Pasa Khelat Hai**, composed in **Raga-malika** and **Tala-malika**, choreographed by Acharya Jayalakshmi Eshwar. Through the symbolic game between Radha and Krishna, the dancer explored divine *leela*, where apparent victory and defeat dissolve into spiritual unity. Her imaginative abhinaya, fluid transitions, and philosophical sensitivity enriched the narrative with depth and resonance.

The recital concluded with a vibrant **Kuntaravaraḷi Tillan**a (**Kuntaravaraḷi raga**, **Adi tala**, composer **Dr. Balamurali Krishna**), a rhythmically charged finale that showcased technical agility, energetic leaps, and confident command over laya and space. The evening ended with a reflective verse from *Saundarya Lahari* by Ādi Sankaracarya, bringing the philosophical journey to a contemplative close.

Kaveri Abrol's performance reflected a rare synthesis of intellectual engagement and instinctive artistry, where technique functioned not as display but as a vehicle for meaning. Her movements carried an internal rhythm that suggested deep listening and immersion in the music, allowing transitions between nritya and abhinaya to appear seamless and organic. She demonstrated a refined awareness of stage architecture, using stillness as effectively as motion, and allowing silence to hold emotional weight alongside gesture. Particularly impressive was her ability to sustain dramatic tension without resorting to overt theatricality; instead, she trusted the classical idiom and allowed subtle shifts in gaze, breath, and timing to shape the narrative. This restraint lent her performance a quiet authority, revealing a dancer who is not merely executing choreography but actively thinking and evolving within the tradition.

Overall, **“Dvi-itva: Divine Duality”** emerged as a disciplined and intellectually engaging Bharatanatyam recital that balanced conceptual clarity with emotional depth. Through refined technique, expressive maturity, and thoughtful choreography, Kaveri Abrol offered an evening rooted in *sattva*—a harmonious blend of devotion, reflection, and artistic sincerity.

GEETIKA AND MANTIKA – AN ARANGETRAM TO REMEMBER A Review by Suryakanthi Tripathi (Former DG ICCR)



A Perfect Pair

The two sisters, Geetika and Mantika Haryani, sixteen and thirteen years old respectively, had their Bharatanatyam Arangetram at the ISKON Auditorium in Delhi on 1st February 2009. For the young dancers, it was an evening to demonstrate how well they had learnt the classical dance over the past seven years.

Smt. Mala Murli of Nritya Geetanjali, who has distinguished herself as a Bharatanatyam guru, had instilled in both her students a level of confidence that allowed them to give of their best. Her own sensibility and individuality was also very evident in the dances performed by the two sisters.

The accompanying musicians enhanced the dance performance, particularly Shri K. Venkateshwaran, who had a rich voice and proved to be an able and versatile singer for the recital.

The recital followed the traditional order beginning with the Alarippu, followed by a Jatiswaram, Shabdam, Varnam, Padams and finally the Tillana.

The Varnam, as expected, was the piece-de-resistance of the evening. The dance, set to the Sanskrit composition of Maharaja Swati Tirunal and describing the ten avatars of Lord Vishnu, required skill in abhinaya, tala and in the execution of intricate adavu jatis. With their graceful movements, neat footwork and good coordination, the dancers drew the spontaneous applause of the audience more than once.

Their recital concluded with a fast-paced Tillana, in Ragam Hindolam set to Adi Talam, in which the sisters performed the complicated adavus and tirmanam with joyful élan.

The Arangetram came together in all aspects – the guru, the dancers, the musicians and the dances. The dedicated enthusiasm of both the teacher and her talented disciples was very evident that Sunday evening. Their debut on stage is

something both Geetika and Mantika can justifiably be proud of. If they continue to train and practice with the same degree of commitment, we will have, in the coming years, two very fine exponents of this great dance form.