

The Dance of the Hyperbole

Let us not even once, then, discount these as mere undecorated flecks, but as gigantic astronomical atoms, that pinpoint to the immense creativity and churning in the human mind. If just one of these little mites gets charged, we create a gigantic reaction in our minds. That chemical reaction is sure to explode, not to destroy but ...

Folk Dances of India: Ghoomar

Rajasthan is well famous for its vibrant traditions, enthusiastic dance forms and elegant culture. Ghoomar is just another spectacle of this diversity and culture that started with the Bhil tribe to worship Goddess Sarasvati and is now embraced by other Rajasthani communities. Typically performed by women, Ghoomar gained popularity during the reign of Rajputanas, who ruled Jaipur after defeating the Bhils. It showcases the rich culture of Rajasthan through aesthetically pleasing movement and traditional attire. Tourism in Rajasthan has boosted due to the peculiarities of regions, their manner of dressing, traditions, and folk dances. Ghoomar was a tribal dance that graduated to a folk routine that has now assumed international proportions thanks to a vibrant culture and its recognition as a pride of India.

Leading scholar of Indian classical dance, architecture, art history, culture Kapila Vatsyayan no more

Dr Kapila Vatsyayan passed away peacefully at her residence (No.85, SFS Flats, Gulmohar Enclave, New Delhi), Wednesday 16th September, 2020 at about 0900 hrs, this morning, . She was a leading scholar of Indian classical dance, art, architecture, and art history.

Music in Healing Discourses on Music -6 Prateeksha Sharma



Music appeals to the emotional side of the human nature. Music stirs, births, expresses, fires, harnesses, channelizes and tempers emotions. Music precedes the development of language as a form of expression. That is because music is present in nature even before the human is born as an individual or a

species. In his bid to emulate the sounds of nature man becomes musical. And yet in amputating himself from this connection with nature, in the process of socialization and civilization the human loses touch with the lyre within, coming to a point of dis-ease or an absence of ease.

Man has instinctively known forever about the healing aspects of music. Speaking about this knowledge in context of Indian music, Alain Daniélou the late Director of the International Institute for Comparative Music Studies and Documentation, Berlin, opines that "a general Sanskritic theory of music, termed *Gāndharva Veda*, was elaborated at a very early date." He continues saying that it seems that the *Gāndharva Veda* studied every use of musical sound, not only in different musical forms and systems but also in physics, medicine and magic. Music makes the human 'whole'- in harmony and in balance. Don Campbell says that bringing a body in to balance requires observing the orchestra in it's entirety, it's current condition and past experience, it's inherent strengths, it's potential for improvement. And the real genius of healing lies in teaching the body, mind, and heart to discover and play their own music-not something that has been dictated by social norms. If one is to examine healing in terms of emotion, then the process of healing involves the transformation of one kind of emotion into another. The *Natyashastra* of Bharata mentions about nine primary emotions or *rasa*-s. *Rasa* is the Permanent Mood when it is revealed through enjoyment[i]. The nine[1]accepted *Rasa*-s are: the Erotic (*Sringara*), the Comic (*Hasya*), the Pathetic (*karuna*), the Furious (*Raudra*), the Heroic (*Vira*), the Fearful (*Bhayanaka*), the Odious (*Bibhatsa*), the Marvellous (*Adbhuta*) and the Tranquil (*Santa*). The catalytic process of music is aimed at transforming the dominant emotion into another emotion or reducing the severity of the emotional experience, incase the dominant emotion is a disease producing condition or itself an offshoot of the disease. For example sadness at one extreme becomes depression, which can in an extreme case

also lead to a suicidal tendency. Music used appropriately with this emotion can aid in an expression that may not be spontaneously available to the individual due to disease related pathology.

It has been noticed that during conditions of illness, it is human tendency to revert to prayer, because of the impact faith has on the psyche, and the immune system. The greater is the patient's faith that they will get well and the more they silently pray, the lesser is their expectation from medical cures alone and also greater is the likelihood of them becoming well due to their own willpower. The reason is twofold: first, prayer takes the mind of the patient away from the disease and negative thoughts. Secondly, it gives a positive affirmation to the body's own immune system to fight the disease. Music unobtrusively becomes a catalyst in this process.

If one is to use music for therapeutic purposes, it is crucial to understand two principles: Entrainment and Isoprinciple. Entrainment is simply the principle from physics that tells us that our biorhythms tend to synchronize with the rhythm, tempo, or pulse of the music. We instinctively choose slow music when we want to calm down and faster music when we want to energize ourselves. The isoprinciple states that in order to change a person's mood with music, one must first begin with music that reflects the state he/she is in to start with. If one is feeling depressed one cannot simply put on "happy" music to change the mood. It must be done slowly and carefully.

When we mention the term music therapy we need to remember that in therapy, music is specifically used to achieve non-musical goals. Music can both be used as an alternative, stand-alone therapy as well as a complementary therapy in addition to traditional medical procedures.

There are four levels of music therapy practice:

- Auxiliary level: All functional uses of music for non-therapeutic but related purposes;
- Augmented level: Music therapy used to enhance the efforts of other treatment modalities
- Intensive level: Induces significant changes in the client's current situation
- Primary level: Singular role in meeting the main therapeutic needs of the client.

Music therapy is an interpersonal process in which the therapist uses music and all its facets- physical, emotional, mental, social, aesthetic and spiritual- to help clients to improve or maintain help. The music used in therapy maybe specially created by the therapist or client or it maybe drawn from the existing literature in various styles and periods.[ii]

Music and Ritual Discourses on Music -5 by Prateeksha Sharma



Ritual is an innate part of the human life. Ritual whether in the form of an invocation, a sacrifice, a fast or a penance, a holy dip in a river, ringing the bells, a prayer or an *aarti* they all contribute to disciplining the mind to focus. Every spiritual and religious tradition uses music to help in focussing. Prayer brings the mind to a point of concentration, and in a one-pointed thought about the object of prayer. The object maybe the form of a diety or a formless entity, musical sounds help in making the mind still and gathering the thoughts from all the various directions the mind is usually scattered in. Therefore, spiritual music has its own special parametres and singers. When we go into a house of worship the sound of the music playing instantly snaps the chord from the noise of the world and introverts the senses.

In India, with its unique tradition of community singing in *bhajans*, *satsangs* and *sankirtan* music is the predominant element that unifies the consciousness of the participants. Even if people are unable to sing, for not knowing the language or the lyrics, they usually join in the community act with something as simple as clapping. Such community activities, which are a part of the life of a householder, especially in certain communities or the post-retirement phase of life, are a prescription to stall the modern day affliction of alienation among the elderly; which often leads to mental, physical and spiritual decay. This kind of community musico-religious programmes are also a mechanism for those who are involved to remain active, busy and involved in a meaningful social exchange- by not being solely dependent on their families at all times. The greater is the social and physical involvement of an individual the less likely is the person to fall prey to degenerative diseases.

TO BE CONTINUED.....

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.

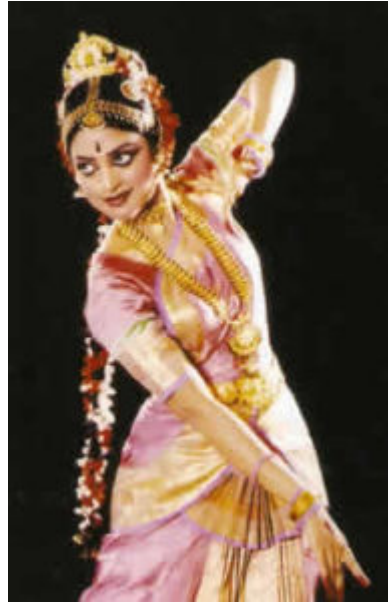
The recital followed the traditional order beginning with the Alarippu, followed by a Jatiswaram, Shabdam, Varnam, Padams and finally the Tillana.

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.

Arunima – a dancer who educates as she performs



I first saw Arunima dance before a TV camera in Lodhi Gardens. The effortless ease with which she glided through her steps almost simulated levitation. She is one of the India's most versatile leading young Kuchipudi dancers. The senior most disciple of the renowned dancing duo, **Padamashree Guru JayaRama Rao and Vanasree Rao**, she started learning Kuchipudi at the age of seven.

As a young girl of 9, Arunima acted in the ballet "Amrapali". The Kuchipudi Dance Academy formally launched her in 1995 where she performed her '**Arangetram**' at the **Triveni Kala Sangam**, New Delhi. Since then there has been no stopping her as she pursued her art with relentless devotion to achieve soaring heights in the field of classical dance.

Her dance is different from the way most others perform. It is interactive. She assumes that her audience doesn't necessarily understand the significance of bhavas and mudras. At a recent performance in the Malvia Durbar hall of Banaras Hindu University she endeared the audience not only with her performance but also with the way she conducted it like a lec-

dem (Lecture Demonstration). She had been invited by the Sanskrit Akademi and she chose to perform the 'Nala Damyanti' story from the Mahabharata.

Nala was a valorous, handsome, and popular king. He heard about the beauty of Damayanthi – the princess of Kundinapuram in Vidarbha, and decided to make her his consort. It so happened that when Narada visited Nala he spoke glowingly of Damayanthi and also told him that she would make an ideal match for our now besotted king .

The lovelorn King tries to distract himself by composing music and loitering in the royal garden. Suddenly one day he sees a beautiful, golden swan by the lake. Nala creeps upto the sleeping bird to capture the swan. The swan is released after persuading Nala that he will play cupid and win Damyanthi over for the King –

The cupid swan proceeds to Kundinam, and is amused to find that Damayanthi was also pathetically lovelorn. Obviously she too had heard of Nala's fame. He attracts her attention, lures her away from her companions- and eventually pretends to have come into her clasp – he teases her about her childishness. This scene was rendered in a charming fashion – the swan consoles Damayanthi, narrates Nala's goodness and eligibility and promises to help them. One can easily gather that there was a lot of scope for *abhinay* and the dancer exploited the theme to perfection. As Arunima quips in her eloquent style; **"dancing is like dreaming with your feet"**

Arunima has performed widely across the nation both as a solo artiste and as part of her gurus' team at various dance festivals, prestigious venues and lecture demonstrations including **the Andhra Day Celebrations in Hyderabad 1993, Hyderabad Arts Festival 1994, India International Centre, Andhra Bhawan, the India Habitat Centre, Ayappa Temple, Triveni Kala Sangam, Trade Fair 1999, 2002, 2003, 2006 SOPAN festival by Sahitya Kala Parishad, Delhi Tourism Festival at**

Santushti 2003, the Bharat Yatra Festival in Lucknow 2001, Shringaramani Festival in Mumbai 2001, Kuchipudi dance festival in Kuchipudi Village, Chitragada Ballet – National Choreography Festival at Habitat Centre 2003, Qutab Festival in 2003, Young Dancers Festival at Kolkata sponsored by Sangeet Natak Academy in 2004, Legends of India Festival in 2004, 2007, Kalidasa Festival at Nagpur in 2004, Habitat World in September 2005, Virasat Festival at Dehradun in 2005, the Mardol Classical Dance Festival at Goa, the Goa International Centre in 2006, Nehru Center in Mumbai in 2006, Biotech Conference in Hyderabad in 2006, Ugaadi (AP Bhawan) Celebrations in 2006, Jhansi Mahotsav in 2006 and Chamba festival in 2006, Mahabalipuram festival in Chennai in 2007, Jugalbandi with Kathak, choreographed by Pdt. Birju Maharaj at Holi Ke Rang Mahotsav (sponsored by Kalashram) at Habitat Centre in March 2007, Budh Mahotsav in Patna, May 2007 (where she performed the dance ballet Vasavadatta on Rabindra Sangeet Choreographed by her gurus), Jaya Smriti in Mumbai in June 2007 organised by Hema Malini, Radha Asthami in Barsana, September 2007, Indo-European Conference organized by ICCR, September 2007, Fusion concert with Band Advaita, September 2007, Sahitya Kala Parishad young dancer's Festival, September 2007, Neemrana Fort Palace in Oct 2007, SAARC Band festival November 2007, JNU Delhi November 2007 , HCL Concert Series at Habitat Center December 2007, Haridas Sammelan in Mumbai December 2008, Delhi International Arts Festival December 2007, Brahma Gana Sabha in Chennai January 2008, Nungambakkam Cultural Academy in Chennai , January 2008, Bhavbhuti Festival – Gwalior, February 2008., Ustad Allaiddin Khan Samaoroh – Maihar, Gwalior February 2008.

She was also invited to perform for the Honorable President of India at Rashtrapati Bhawan in June 2006.

Arunima has displayed her art in prestigious international dance festivals – **EXPO 1998, Lisbon, Portugal, India's 50th year of Independence held in Bonn, Germany, EXPO 2000 in**

Hanover, Germany, IC.C.R. tour in 2003, Ministry of External Affairs of India, in prestigious venues in Australia, including Canberra Festival, Sydney Opera House, Melbourne, Brisbane, Fiji, Thailand, Malaysia & Indonesia, India Week Celebrations at Buremburg and Frankfurt, Tagore International Center in Berlin in 2005, Nehru Centre in London, 2005, Asian Arts Festival in Manila , Philippines 2007.

Recognition has also come to Arunima in the form of the State Government of **India Sahitya Kala Parishad Scholarship** for Dance in 1998 and the **Shringarmani title by Sur Shringar Samsad**. Besides being empanelled as an Established artiste at the I.C.C.R., Arunima is also an A grade artiste of the **All India Radio and Doordarshan**. Her appreciative reviews and dynamic profile have been featured in all leading television and radio channels (Doordarshan, Sony, Aaj Tak, Star News etc) and newspapers including **Hindustan Times, Times of India, Indian Express, Business Standard, India Today etc.**, She also featured in the **London School of Economics Newsletter** for her outstanding performance. In an endeavor to share the joy of being closely involved with India's rich cultural heritage, she has also worked for SPIC MACAY, a voluntary cultural organization as its Planning and Finance coordinator. She is also a member of a *GATI*, a young dancers' art forum.

Besides Dance, Arunima has also excelled in academics. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics from India's prestigious **St. Stephen's College** and then studied **MSc in Accounting and Finance from the London School of Economics**. Her outstanding performance led her to **teach** at the LSE summer school in 2002. After completing her teaching assignment, she returned to India to continue with her dance. Until recently, she was managing a career in management consulting at a leading US based firm. She is now focusing to build her own arts foundation to promote performing arts across the globe. Arunima has also successfully ventured into dance choreography and research to explore different creative

aspects of the performing arts

She is also a **keen Pistol shooter** and has won several medals in State and National Championships, including a Gold Medal in national Championship in 1999. She was also, the Captain of the Rifle Shooting Club in her college and received College Colors for her outstanding performance in Shooting. She is also the recipient of the **Government of India Sports Talent Search Scholarship (1991-1992)**. She is also keenly interested **in dramatics** and has performed in several radio and TV programs (Yog Yatra on Star news etc), music videos and commercials.

However Kuchipudi continues to be her abiding passion, which she pursues with relentless devotion.

Endowed with “a pair of large eyes, a mobile visage and attractive stage presence”. Arunima is a devoted dancer with a promising career ahead....

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