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RHYTHM

Blending tradition with contemporary form



Renowned danseuse Geetha Sridhar who holds Master's degree in Dance Training and Education at the London School of Contemporary Dance currently teaching at Kingston University and at London School of Carnatic Music underwent training in Bharatanatyam at the Kalakshetra School of Dance in Chennai. In a candid interview with RangSudha Vemuri, she narrates her journey in the last 25 years, and she speaks about her performances, workshops con-

ducted, about her lecture demonstrations in Sydney, Toronto, Morlaix in France, Scotland and the Midlands. She also shares about her experiences where she co-performed with her sister Sukanya (Cine fame) in their own productions.

Geetha reveals the extant of her work and how she blends different elements in her choreographies.

Asian Lite : You have worked with the world-renowned dancer/ choreographer Chandralekha. Can you share your experience working with such

I have understood art is not something that you simply learn and reproduce, there is more to it. As a principal dancer in her productions, I toured India, former U.S.S.R, Germany, Italy, and the UK

a pioneer in Indian contemporary dance?

Geetha: Till I met her, I saw only conventional dance performances. She came across as a breath of fresh air. Working with her, I have learnt to think for myself. I have understood art is not something that you simply learn and reproduce, there is more to it. As a principal dancer in her productions, I toured India, former U.S.S.R.,

work in Kolams, the traditional art of floor painting?

Geetha: I have attempted to use my expertise as a Kolam artist in my dance work. My Kolams were displayed at 'Stree', a women's exhibition in Moscow and at the Inaugural of art festival 'Vivartha' at The Place in London.

Asian Lite: Can you share information on some of your accomplishments?

Geetha: Since moving to the UK,

in 1992, I have been involved in performing, choreographing and teaching.

I presented dance sequences for TAG, Theatre Company (Glasgow) for their production 'The Banyan Tree'. I have done a Bharatanatyam interpretation of Leo Tolstoy's work 'Ana

Canada for their International Dance Conference.

My most recent work is Baroque-natyam- an innovative project supported by Armour India-France in 2013. The string quartet ensemble renders its tunes and tones of Baroque music to the classical nuances of Bharatanatyam.

Asian Lite : That is quite an extensive work. Being a seasoned performer and teacher, do you think learners are spending enough time and effort on themselves before going for arangetrams?

Geetha: Interesting question. Some do completely believe in the heritage aspect. But many factors deter them from pursuing it at a desired pace. However, several torchbearers in this country are taking the art form forward. Universities are consciously acknowledging multi-cultural arts and the role of Indian dance. Our head of dance at Kingston University Jason Piper also believes and endorses the motto "Excellence through diversity".

Germany, Italy, and the UK.

Asian Lite : While your sister Sukanya has taken the silver screen route, have you ever thought of joining films?

Geetha: I actually did. I was booked for a Malayalam film. After the first day of the shoot, I have understood that it was not my cup of tea and gave it up.

Asian Lite : Tell us how you work in both strands of Traditional and Contemporary formats.

Geetha: Having undergone basic training in Yoga and Kalari from Chandralekha, I combine these physical disciplines with freestyle movements in my work.

Asian Lite : What about your



Geetha Sridhar

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