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Multiple Cultural Offerings Dazzle Rasikas with their Richness

By Dr. M. Surya Prasad | Published: 29th June 2015 04:36 AM | Last Updated: 29th June 2015 04:36 AM

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Lakshmi

The grand old lady of Karnatak music Neela Ramagopal, popularly known as Neela Maami, was felicitated on her 80th birthday recently. A two day music programme was held at Gayana Samaja auditorium last week to mark the occasion. Neela is equipped with a vast repertoire as a prolific performer and as a teacher. She has upheld the tradition and classicism of Karnatak music. Her solid expertise and vocal technique and style of presentation remind one of the legendary vocalist D.K.Pattammal.



Dancer Divya

She has brought out invaluable recordings including the one on mela kartha ragas. Neela has been extensively recognised for her great contributions to the field and her well-wishers and disciples came together to felicitate her on her birthday.

The second day's (Sunday) vocal concert by Vijaya Shiva turned out to be a wholesome musical birthday gift. The recital was a befitting tribute to Neela's genius. Quite a few times, he modulated his voice and sang in the lower octave contemplatively. He has a well-pitched voice which traverses from the top Ma to the lower Pa easily.



Vijaya Shiva

Vijaya Shiva has already gained a distinctive identity as a genuine classical performer. He showed crystalline purity and clear diction. The seasoned singer unveiled his interpretive flair, a broad dynamic palette and grace. His vocalisations were fluid. He had superb timing and shaped both the melodic and rhythmic phrases, well. It was conspicuous that everything had been scrupulously

pondered, down to the harmonic subtleties. Evocative imagery and poetic simplicity contributed

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considerable expressive power to the renditions.

After a long time Thyagaraja's Janaki Ramana in Shuddha Seemanthini raga was heard. Patnam's Dhanyudevavado in Malayamarutha raga (with neraval-Vara maddla and kalpanaswaras) and the weighty Begade krithi Thyagarajaya Namasthe (Muthuswamy Dikshitar were well crafted.

Vijaya Shiva impressed the rasikas with the rendition of Gopalakrishna Bharathi's Parka parka tighattummo (Harikambhoji). A demanding Swarajathi (Raave Himagirikumari with a shloka) in Todi raga by Shyama Sastry vouched for his seasoned skills. They were heard with rapt attention.

He sent the rasikas into raptures with his comprehensive delineation of Kalyani for Nidhi chala sukham. The entire presentation covering the ragaalapana, krithi, neraval at Sumathi Thyagaraja and swaraprastara segments was notable for its classicism, intense musicality free from tricky maneuvers and a high level of competence. He could comfortably communicate the import of Thyagaraja's simple lyrics.

The lovers of music were in for a rare treat of raga, tana and pallavi. The raga selected was a rare Jayanthasena, apparently a favourite of Pattammal and her son Jayaraman.

The raga is derived from the 22nd melakartha raga Kharaharapriya. (Remember Thyagaraja's Vinathasutha vahana by Thyagaraja).

The pallavi line Senapathe shakthi was elaborated in detail in the chtaushra jhame tala frame. It was spiced with ragamaliika swaras comprising of Bilahari, Kadanakutoohala and other ragas.

Dasarendare Purandaradasaru was sung with lyrical intensity. To add variety to the concert, he sang a javali Nera mora (Hamsadhvani), a Meera bhajan (Tumhi karan, Khamaj) and others including a Tamil bhajan on Arunchala Shiva. R.K. Srikumar (violin), Manoj Shiva (mridanga) and Anirudh Atreya excelled in imparting an enriching support. The violin repartees in particular deserve a special mention. The laya vinyasa was scholarly.

Admirable cultural collaboration

The fact that emotional integration and unity in diversity can be achieved through art and culture is amply proved. This can be achieved through exchange programmes wherein minds meet and positively interact to create positive attitudes.

Its manifold significance becomes vital if it happens at the cross-border level. In other words, it is good for everyone but for different reasons.

Ananya GML Cultural Academy led by Dr. Raghavendra which is notable for hosting some unique programmes has taken the right step forward by presenting on June 26, 27 and 28, Ananya Samarpana, a festival of classical dance at Seva Sadana, Malleswara. It aims at the creation of a cultural bridge between Bengaluru and Singapore. With Singapore's SIFAS, seasoned Bharatanatya dancer Gayatri Sriram's Shruti Laya and other individuals and institutions extending their support, the Ananya Samarpana festival highlights the rewards of the cross-border cultural collaboration. We were afforded the opportunity to see the dancers' particular brand of craft and artistic outputs. This bodes well for the future.

The festival began with a vivacious Bharatanatya recital by Divya Ramesh. Trained efficiently by Guru Gayathri Sriram and guided by veteran dance-Guru Minal Prabhu of Bengaluru, Divya stole the show with her dedicated thematic production. Superbly accompanied by Balasubramanya Sharma (vocals), Guru Minal Prabhu and Guru Gayatri Sriram (nattuvanga), Pradeshachar (violin), G Gurumurthy (mridanga) and Prasannakumar (rhythm pad), Divya successfully exhibited the connection between Lord Shiva and Lord Agni (Fire).

The compositions were artistically and effectively choreographed by the veteran Guru Minal Prabhu and set to music by expert vocalist Balasubramanya Sharma.

She began with a Pushpanjali and depicted the Shiva-Agni relationship. The central piece of the programme was a varna (Maamava Shiva) penned by Dr. Shankar that again brought to the fore, the Shiva-Agni combination.

Episodes of Manmatha dahana, Tripura Samhara, the Havis (oblation into the fire) et al were neatly enacted by the artists.

Her abhinaya and eloquent dance language conveyed varying moods triumphantly. It was all marked by meaningful karanas and freezes. Her pure dance marked by rhythmic precision and line perfections was a delight to watch.

A thorough and exacting approach to rhythm was commendable.

Divya's skills in description came to the fore in a Telugu pada (Mohana). We saw Agni's wife Swaaha pining for her Lord. She pleads to Him to not forget her in the midst of His different commitments and attractions.

Gurumurthy's pada and Divya's abhinaya gave a live account of her plight. Varied adavus, rechikas and teermanas of the concluding Shankarabharana tillana were beautifully negotiated by the dancer.

Moving experience

Though it surprised rasikas a bit for a while to watch her without the traditional Mohiniyattam hair style (tying the hair on the side with tight 'bun') Lakshmi N Vishwanathan's symmetry and chemistry with the dance was admirable.

Lakshmi is well trained in Bharatanatya and Mohiniyattam. Aided by recorded music, she impressed the rasikas with her satisfying and moving dance recital.

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Seshachalam

Here was a rare mixture of youthful enthusiasm and mature reliability. She was intelligent and sensitive to nuance.

Lakshmi displayed an effortless technique, splendid rhythmic grasp and fullness of interpretative qualities. Dancing in a graceful and vilamba pace, she allowed her performance to reach great heights through Ganesha stuti, Dwijavanthi varna (on Krishna) and Anandabhairavi pada.

Her technique was wonderful and energy tremendous. She added authenticity, musicality, dignity and genuine warmheartedness to her dance.

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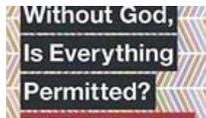
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