



Yoganjali Natyalayam pays Homage to Mother Earth

Description

Yoganjali Natyalayam, a premier institute of yoga and performing arts, presented its nineteenth full length dance drama title "A Homage to Mother Earth" on 29 December, 2013. Every year Yoganjali Natyalayam takes up a unique concept or story from the Hindu mythological scriptures and performs it as a dance drama. Last year, the performance was on the life and tales of the Dravidian saint poetess Avvaiyar while the year before that the tragic love story of Shakunthala and Dushyantha was portrayed. This year, the concept of the five elements, the Pancha Maha Bhutas was taken and as the central theme.



Shiva and Shakthi dancing together to create the Pancha Maha Bhutas

The drama opens with Shiva and Shakthi's cosmic dance through which the Pancha Maha Bhutas—earth, water, air, fire and ether manifest. Each element was then dramatised, glorifying their qualities and associating with a temple in south India. The mythological stories in relation to each of the temple were depicted through song and dance by nearly 80 students of all age groups.

While the drama began with precisely synchronised dancing of Shiva and Shakthi, there were folk dances too, which added to the flavour and ambience. Like the harvest dance performed by kids around the age of 10 and 15 for the element earth or the lamp dance for the element fire. Not only were the goodness of these elements shown, in case of earth and water, the ferocity of the elements were also portrayed in the form of Earthquake and floods.



The harvest dance

Each element was associated with a story about different devotees of Lord Shiva. The dancers who were from a wide range of age groups brought to life these mythical beings through their skilful dancing. The three-hour long performance was given life by the soulful singing of Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani, Chairman Yoganjali Natyalayam. He was ably supported by his wife, Yogachirini Smt. Devasena Bhavanani as vocal and nattuvangam support. The drama was directed and choreographed by Yogachirini Smt. Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani (affectionately called as Amma ji by all), Director of Yoganjali Natyalayam. In the words of Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani, it is the magical touch of Amma ji that brings life to the drama. Her distinct style of portrayal, deep sense of aestheticism and brilliant guidance is what helps the Yoganjali Natyalayam team to put up such a grand show.



The Chief Guest Dr. M. Ramadoss being honoured by Smt. Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani and Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani

The Chief guest of the event was Dr. M. Ramadoss, Director, Pondcherry University who showered his praises on entire team and appreciated their efforts as a team. Other guests were Pulavar I. Pattibiramane, Eminent Tamil Scholar and Dr. V. Muthu, President, Pudukkottai Tamil Sangam. The guests and audience alike stayed behind till the last scene of the drama, which saw the enormous cast of about eighty students all gathered on stage in their respective characters paying their gratitude to their Gurus, their audience and to their God. The evening ended with honouring of the performers and the crew by the eminent guests.

Photos: Sooganya N

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1st M.A. Mass Communication

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Date Created

December 30, 2013

Author

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