



Gundecha Brothers



Kadamb

Titled Dhruv Gati, the work rose to heights in a seamless manner. In alap, the salient features of Kathak in terms of the slow, small movements of wrists, arms, the swing of bodies in keeping with the dhira, gambhira, slow and dignified pace of raga went hand in hand, creating soothing visual images. The curves generated by the arms of dancers, took visual shape of the curves of the swaras, musical notes. The movements of the dancers resembled those of birds. The element of improvisation seeped in with the speed of the swaras. The accompanying sound of pakhavaj and tabla was imaginatively used by the dancers to take pirouettes. The introduction of *tatkar*, the footwork in *drut gati* (fast speed) appeared perfect. Alternating arm movements, bodily formations and traditional development of *jod* and *jhala* gave enough scope to dancers to display their virtuosity. Tabla accompaniment by Joby Roy was in perfect synchronization. As a choreographer, Kumudini showed how Kathak movements gave visual shape to the music notes.

The literary *bandish* in Malkauns, the text with Shankar Giirijapati, Parvati parameshavara, Jaya Ganesh, Lambodar, Shankarsuta offered dancers scope to evoke those images with finesse and grace. Lord Shiva's image with Ganga flowing from his hair, the female dancer enacting role of Parvati, the other two female dancers praying as devotees, made for excellent tableaux to explore the visual images. The *dhalis* performed by dancers pat on sam were arresting. The solo play of pakhavaj brought in exquisite sound texture. One experienced joy which was as it were of watching, listening for the first time. This *ananubhuta*, 'not ever experienced' joy was the reward for the rasikas.

Kumudini Lakhia had selected as an interlude between the two ragas of Dhrupad, her choreographic work of 1978 titled Yugal, to the music by late composer Atul Desai, with instrumental music, strains of sitar by seasoned sitarist Manju Mehta (sister of Vishwa Mohan Bhatt) and additional music on sarod. The male dancer Souvik Chakraborty stands in the centre and female dancer Sanjukta Sinha circling round him, covering the entire stage in breathtaking pirouettes brought down the house. The use of Kathak movements within tradition but in a novel manner has been the signature of Kumudini Lakhia. The intra forms of Kathak *tode*, *tukde*, *parans* and *tatkar* have been employed in this vintage work with imagination. With the synergy created by the male and female dancers as a pair, Yugal, even today after 35 years of its first presentation, seems refreshing. Many imitations have been seen in the succeeding years in Kathak choreography, proving Kumudini Lakhia's leading role as innovator. The dancers unleashed energy with high voltage winning them rounds of applause. The crescendo was palpable. Though performed to recorded music, the piece was received by the audience with unqualified enthusiasm.

After exposition of Hamir Kalyan, Gundecha brothers sang *Dhamar Hori* in Dhamar tala. The light designer Murugan, who was specially invited for lighting created the festive mood of Hori with imagination. The pink colour of *gulal* as it were coloured the sky. The *sahitya*, *bandish*, describing the mood of Hori, playing with colours transported the audience to Braj. The dancers Sanjukta Sinha, Bhakti Dani and Rupanshi Kashyap Thakkar enacted the play of Hori, the young male dancer costumed as Krishna and the female dancers clothed in colorful costumes evoked the visuals of miniature paintings. The syringe full of coloured water seemed to be spraying colour on the gopis, who in turn surrounded Krishna and smeared him with colours. At times the group of three gopis, and lone Krishna in a corner, or otherwise four of them holding hands dancing together, in a joyous mood evoked spirit of Hori to the mesmerizing music by Gundecha Brothers. The footwork, *tatkar* rising to crescendo, enhancing the Dhrupad music and the finale with finish of respective creators, the musicians, and the choreographer through her dancers, was thrilling. The audience gave them a standing ovation. Thus Samarpana's opening night became a truly memorable evening.

The presentation of Samarapan Citation 2013 to honour Madam Som Said, a choreographer, instructor, director with more than 40 years of experience followed. Mrs. Vijay Thakur Singh, the High Commissioner of India, gave her the citation. A short documentary on life and work of Madam Som Said was screened before the presentation.