

I WAS BORN TO SERVE DANCE

Renowned Odissi Guru Jyothi Rout is touring the city for the second time. She is all set to enthrall dance connoisseurs with her interpretation of colours of the rainbow



Jyothi Rout

ASKARI JAFFER

Hailing from Odisha, Jyothi Rout is an exponent of Odissi dance form and a renowned guru. She was trained at Utkal Sangeet Mahavidyalaya, a prominent college of music and dance in Bhubaneswar, under the guidance of Guru Deba Prasad Das and Guru Pankaj Charan Das. Apart from having a master's degree in Odissi dance form, she also mastered classical singing and Chhau, a dance form. She was in the city for a performance and spoke exclusively to Hyderabad Hans.

"I believe, I was born to serve dance. As a kid, I was very fond of dance and music and my father sent me to Utkal Sangeet Mahavidyalaya to be a singer but the teachers who interviewed me felt that my expressive face was suited for dance. And thus I had the opportunity to become a

dancer that I had longed for," said Jyothi speaking about her inspiration to take dance

Speaking about her life as a dance Guru in USA, Jyothi said, "Long back when I was performing in Rishikesh for Divine Life Society, one of the audience liked my performance and she took six months classes. She later took me to California. Twenty years ago, when I shifted to Northern California, no one had ever heard of this dance form. Later I started Jyoti Kala Mandir Odissi Academy where foreigners showed their interest. I wanted to promote this dance form abroad. Initial days were hard for me to make a living as an Odissi dancer".

Jyothi feels that she is presenting India, its culture and vast heritage in California through her dance. "It depends on the teacher whether its India or America, how and what you will teach? As a teacher I should not

think that American's don't know anything about our dance, so I can teach anything. I am representing my country there," shares Jyoti.

She is not only teaching in California but also in India. In addition to classes and workshops in California, students are invited to Bhubaneswar each winter to Jyoti Kala Mandir's sister school for a month-long dance workshop. "I have Jyoti Kala Mandir Odissi Academy, in Bhubaneswar too. Where my four students will take classes and once in two months I visit and help to clear their doubts and check whether my students are doing well or not. I perform once in a year in Bhubaneswar with my students. There are about 100 students are in California," says Jyoti.

Talking about the prominence and reach of Odissi in comparison to dance forms like Kuchipudi, Bharatanatyam and Kathak. "I feel our Odisha is rooted strongly to its villages. People here don't like to experiment and explore. They don't want to struggle and they are much hesitated comparing themselves to others. These are few reasons that our dance is not so popular. Odissi is totally different dance form, if we are not going to propagate then nobody can help us," shares Jyoti.

On her second visit to the city and she is going to present the 'Basics of Odissi', like background and postures at Lamakaan. At

Our Sacred Space, she will do 'Rainbow Expressions', this explores various moods behind the colours through abhinaya and sakura. Her tour culminates at Hyderabad Central University, where she will interact and teach the students of dance in 'Sthai Nato'(pure dance), which will lay emphasis on body movements and posture. Jyoti Rout is an Odissi dancer but she is curious to learn 'Vilasini Natyam'. I like the temple dance and I feel it will add a feather in my dance if I will learn this.



India's musical foundation always secular: PM



Ustad Amjad Ali Khan receiving Rajiv Gandhi National Sadhbhavana Award from Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. Also seen in the picture UPA Chairperson Sonia Gandhi

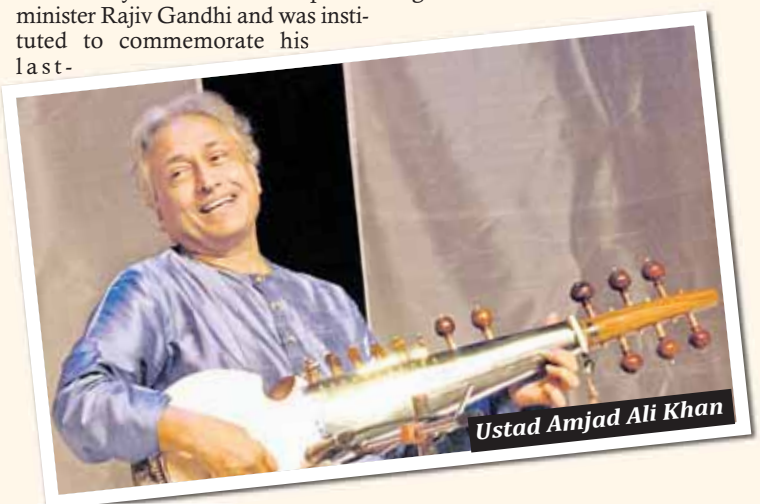
Conferring sardar maestro Amjad Ali Khan with the Rajiv Gandhi National Sadhbhavana Award for his contribution in promoting communal harmony and peace, PM Manmohan Singh emphasised on the fact that music has a universal appeal and speaks one language.

"Amjad Ali Khan has introduced sardar to the world. As we all know that music moves beyond the realms of culture and creed, he has consistently pushed the envelope and spread the message of secularism through this musical instrument," said the prime minister.

"In recent past, there has been communal violence in our country and we all should work together to curb the growth of these communal forces," he added. He said that musical foundations in India have al-

ways been secular. This award ceremony is held every year on the birth anniversary of the former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi and was instituted to commemorate his last-

ing contribution to promoting peace, communal harmony and fighting against violence.



Ustad Amjad Ali Khan