

A thing of beauty for eternity

Rina Jana has imbibed the body language and spirit of her guru with a great deal of conscientiousness and has been fulfilling the role of passing on the art form to the next generation



Narasimha Avatar

TAPATI CHOWDHURIE

Kolkata resident Rina Jana's presentation of an Odissi evening at Meghdoot Auditorium 1, Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi, was a pleasant surprise. Meticulously trained by Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra, Jana has emerged as one of the finest performers and teachers of Odissi. Her performance reminded one of the legendary Sanjukta Panigrahi — whether they were the slow movements or the fast paced ones, Jana was picture perfect in the three-bend stances, typical to the form. The movements, with the freezes in accurate sculpture-like positions as found in the temple walls of Odisha, were brilliantly executed. The *chowk* position was accurately delineated without popping the body up and down, as is generally the case with dancers look-

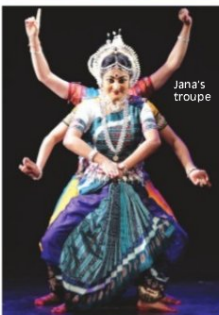
ing for quick results.

In her solo renditions, never once did Jana deviate from her guru's style with clear as well as renditions of the three levels of speed performed in the perfect idiom of Odissi. Flawless *nritya* and getting into the skin in the character were her strong points. Jana was the perfect devotee of Krishna as his mother, Yashoda who tried whole-heartedly to make her child sleep. The lullaby *Brojo ku chora asichi gheni jub* was symbolic of the universal mother, who has to use utmost ingenuity to induce her child to sleep. One did not need to know the language of the Odia lyric to get its full import as it was a composition of her guru, which the dancer rendered in a flawless manner.

Behag Pallavi, rendered solo, was also composed by Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra, the music for which was com-



The troupe giving it their all



Jana's troupe

posed by Pandit Bhubaneswar Misra. As the *raga* was developed step by step, so did the dance develop and grow in the hands of the guru, turning the piece into a thing of beauty for eternity. In the hands of a sensitive dancer, its crafting was good. The white costume complemented in not diverting the attention of the audience from what was being performed.

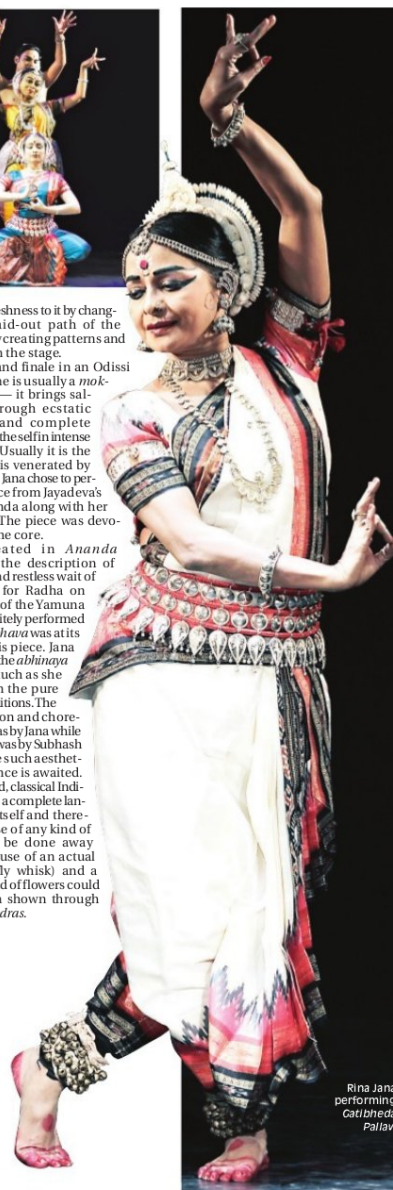
Jana is out-and-out a product of the legendary Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra. She has imbibed the body language and spirit of her guru with a great deal of conscientiousness and has been fulfilling the role of passing on the art form to the next generation. Her disciples Kausik Das, Sanjay Sahoo, Sweta Kundu, Subhomita Moitra and Sanghamitra Jana's *Dasavatar* was proof of her calibre as an effective mentor. This was her own composition using the music of Subhash Pani. Each of the avatars of Vishnu made an indelible imprint on the audience by the sheer clarity of thought displayed in the neat renditions. Jana performed *Gaibheda Pallavi*, which is long and challenging, because of the variations of rhythm pattern. The dance was choreographed by guru Kelucharan years ago in Mumbai for Odissi exponent Madhavi Mudgal, who was in the audience in New Delhi. Mudgal expressed her joy that at least there was someone, who had ventured to do this long *Pallavi* whose *Chanda* traversed one rhythmic pattern to the other, creating an almost insurmountable challenge. Jana was true to the composition of her guru, but

brought freshness to it by changing the laid-out path of the dancers by creating patterns and designs on the stage.

The grand finale in an Odissi programme is usually a *moksha* piece — it brings salvation through ecstatic dancing and complete merging of the self in intense devotion. Usually it is the Devi who is venerated by the *bhakti*. Jana chose to perform a piece from Jayadeva's *Geet Govinda* along with her disciples. The piece was devotional to the core.

Delineated in *Ananda Bhairavi*, the description of the long and restless wait of Banamali for Radha on the banks of the Yamuna was exquisitely performed as *bhakti bhava* was at its peak in this piece. Jana excelled in the *abhinaya* parts as much as she excelled in the pure dancer renditions. The composition and choreography was by Jana while the music was by Subhash Pani. More such aesthetic experience is awaited.

That said, classical Indian dance is a complete language by itself and therefore the use of any kind of prop can be done away with. The use of an actual *chamar* (fly whisk) and a real garland of flowers could have been shown through dance *mudras*.



Rina Jana performing Gaibheda Pallavi

Laced with glowing imagination



Both classical dance and music were served equally well during a recent cultural programme in Kolkata

SANDHYA SEN

A cultural programme, under the joint auspices of Kalamandalam and Kolkata Kairali Samajam, emerged as a creative production of glowing imagination thanks mainly to the performers, Haridas Alankode and Carina Langfeldt, who are well-trained disciples of Pandit Shiv Kumar Sharma and Thankamani Kutty respectively.

Santoor, with the blending of Hindusthani classical music and the Sufi tradition of Kerala, acquired the role of a solo instrument. Haridas Alankode with rigorous *srivaj*, proper *talim* and creative urge exemplified an inspiring performer. His demonstration of *Megh* was attractive for its elaborate demonstration of *alap*, *jod*, *jhala* and *dhruv gat* in *teental*, which were quite in tune with the majestic dignity of the melody. Alankode amply compensated the limitation of the instrument with stroke work of expansive *bistar* in *alap* phase and the *taman* portion of *gat*. His command over *gayaki* *anga* and *laya* work had the stamp of his *gharana* where due stress is put on the thematic gravity. He was duly accompanied on the *tabla* by Venugopalam.

The Bharatanatyam of Carina Langfeldt drew appreciation for focusing on the structural grace of the Kalamandalam *gharana* under the training of Thankamani Kutty. Starting with *Jatisvaranam*, Carina passed through *Natesha Kavutam*, *Alampu*, *Shabdham* and *Shibastakam*. Carina's admirable assimilation of Kutty's talim established the literature of the items perfectly.

Irreparable loss

Kolkata, apparently the present

Among the eminent iurv. veteran Meghdoot Theatre. It focused on the