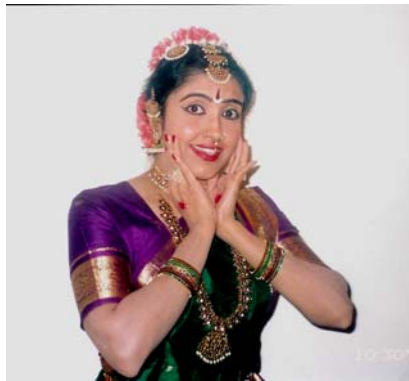


Review of the Performance - 'Divine Expressions'

On October 1, 2005, **The Princeton Association of India Development** hosted a spectacular presentation of Indian Classical dance, Bharata Nrityam by Bala Devi Chandrashekar, Senior disciple of the noted Bharata Nrithyam exponent, Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam. The presentation titled, "Divine Expressions" was held at the Film and Performance Theater at the Frist Campus Center at Princeton University

Bala began the performance with a song "Maa Mayil Meedh Eri Va" in praise of Lord Muruga, set in ragam Lathangi. Lord Muruga is held in special reverence by the Tamil speaking populace. Skanda has been eulogized by the 2000 year old Tamil Sangam literature and by the Sanskrit hymns of Aadi Sankaracharya & Kalidasa. Bala Devi, through her enchanting dance, brought alive the stories of the beloved Lord.

Her performance contained a variety of components ranging from pure dance (Nritta) to expression (Abhinaya) and the unique components of Karanas (temple Sculptures). Bala rendered the pure Nritta items with great precision to the language of rhythm, stimulating in the spectators the latent possible aesthetic experience.



The song "Neeradha Sama" in praise of Lord Krishna, brought alive the sentiments so closely associated with the enchanting Lord. Through her intricate Abhinaya, Bala depicted the form of Krishna and the significance of every ornament that adorned Him. She also brought alive Radha and Gopis sacred and divine passion for Lord Krishna

Bala concluded the performance with a composition of Saint Kanakadasa. In this song the audience saw the depiction of Yashoda beckoning child Krishna with vatsalya. The audience were spellbound seeing the story of Kanakadasa come alive in Bala's performance. The presentation brought to life the rich sentiment of Bhakti.

The performance at Princeton was truly a treat to the eyes and the soul. It lived up to its title, 'Divine Expressions'. The audience walked away from Frist auditorium with a feeling of having experienced moments of Divinity! We hope that Bala Devi will bring many more such Divine moments to the connoisseurs of art.

Shalini Ramanathan