

THE HINDU

DELHI, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1991

Fine festival sans audience

Mohiniattam by Priyadarshini Ghosh provided some of the most rewarding moments of the festival. This is one dance style where the nritta technique has no definite standard against which one can measure a recital. Even the basic sthana is undecided between the Bharatanatyam mandala and the Kathakali square posture. As for the geometry of the dance, while Kanak Rele propogates absolute circular movement, Kerala dancers like Kalyani Kuttiyamma have a mixed angularity and circularity, and it is the later version that Priyadarshini favours. This dancer's main weapon is a very classic face rather like an ancient Indian painting, and exquisitely sensitive abhinaya.

In the Siva stuti set to Revati, her expressions managed to convey a formless divinity in the 'nirguana,' 'nirbrahma' Siva. The pain of the virahotkhanita pining for Padmanabha in Swati Tirunal's "Pannagendra Shayana Sri Padmanabha" was full of quiet intensity. In the Brindavanasaranga "Chaliye Kunjanamo," the nayka's invitation to Krishna had hidden sensuousness in the constant allusions to creatures in the Nature seen in male female togetherness. The andolika sway is not very pronounced in Priyadarshini's dance. It is the face which makes the impact. One wishes the dancer could have had better singing support. The Yadukulakambodhi "Pandadi" and the tillana in Dhanashree were hopelessly out of tune. The finishing moments of the recital with Durga stuti and the culminating silence in "Aum" with Prabha Ramaswamy's veena 'metu' were well conceived.

—L.V.

LEELA VENKATARAMAN