


CALCUTTA FRIDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 1991



Priyadarshini Ghosh

A dedicated dancer



Mohiniattam, the charming dance of celestial nymphs, is a member of the Kathakali family and as such

has a limited repertoire. An extension and elaboration of the *lasya* aspect of Kathakali forms the basis of this dance form. Priyadarshini Ghosh highlighted these delicate movements in her performance at Gorky Sadan on August 30. She has been a dedicated performer for the last 15 years and her involvement was evident.

Shiva Sthuthi, a salutation to the dancing god, was the first item and brought out the sober beauty of the dance. The

keerthanam (*pannagendra sayana*), an enduring composition of Guru Thankamanikutty, revealed the dancer's expertise in abhinaya, especially while expressing a *virahothkandita-nayika's* myriad moods. The Hindi poem *Chaliye kunjalamo* of Swathitirunal in which a nayika implores Krishna to accompany her to a garden beside the Yamuna, was well enacted.

But the next song, *Radha sametha Krishna*, could not reach the lyrical and celestial characteristics of the dance. Instead it catered to popular taste.

Her tillana in the Raag Sankarabharanam was scintillating with graceful and variegated movements. However, the

concluding *Moksha*, composed to Chandi sloka, was a mere adaptation of Odissi where dancers like Sanjukta Panigrahi carry away the audience with the final chanting of Om. If Priyadarshini's intention was to enrich Mohiniattam, she should have opted for something which is closer to Mohiniattam.

The music—Lakshminaraswamy's vocal support, Champaknath's flute, G.V.Rajan's violin, Indira Ranganathan's veena, K.Kesavan's edakka, Srinivasan's madalam and Suchitra Mitra's nattuvangam—embellished the dances.

N.K.Sivasankaran