



ODISSI DANCE IS SHEER POETRY

The lyrical movements of Odissi dance enhance the postural grace of



the human body, says **Sarita Mishra** an established dancer of this graceful art form, and teacher for 17 years. Sarita holds Odissi dance classes on weekends at Sun City on Sarjapur Road and shares her knowledge about one of the seven dance forms of India

Odisi dance compels our body to follow discipline. The movements of the upper body (torso) are soft and lyrical while the lower body follows strong footwork, enabling the thigh muscles to be strong enough to move the legs in chowk and tribhangi form. Chowk and tribhangi are the two distinctive types of footwork that make Odissi dance different from all other classical dance forms.

Why learn Odissi dance?

In our daily life we all use our brain extensively. But how many of us use the body and soul?

Very few people everyday hit the gym. It becomes a routine after some time. But dance makes people come alive. The lilting music of Odissi dance has tremendous impact on our soul. The dance itself maintains a beautiful synergy between body and mind.

Odissi dance is rich in culture, tradition and mythology. As most

of the Odissi dance ballets are based on mythological stories, this gives all the dancers - especially the children - the understanding of those stories that took place a long time ago.

Odissi dance originated in the temples of Odisha in the second century B C. The sculptures carved on the temple walls and rocks of Khandagiri, Udaygiri and Rani Gumpha caves in Odisha clearly prove the richness of the art forms. The dance poses of

these statues exude a feeling that the sculptures are alive and dancing.

Nurturing body and mind

What better way to get rid of the boredom, and monotonous and routine stress-hit life than through Odissi dance?

In essence, Odissi dance is an art form that enables a person to utilise her body, mind and soul physically and spiritually

in an aesthetic manner.

Being an established dancer and a teacher of this precious art form, I believe in nurturing the dancer's body from the beginning. My class starts with warming up, stretching, dancing and the cooling down or relaxing exercises. This leaves the dancer tired at the end but with a wonderful sense of satisfaction of using the whole body in a holistic manner.



'BANGALORE WILL TAKE ODISSI TO ANOTHER LEVEL'

IN 2010 SARITA MISHRA moved to Bangalore and started a small dance school of her own with five students. Her objective was to impart training in pure Odissi dance. Adyasha Odissi Dance and Music Ensemble is Sarita's brainchild where she teaches all age groups, in India and abroad. Within two years the dance institution saw a rapid growth and gained a large number of students including children, IT professionals, interior designers, bankers, house-

wives and dancers of other dance forms who were fascinated by Odissi dance.

Sarita's students perform extensively all over Bangalore, India and abroad at prestigious venues, winning accolades and recognition for their creativity and grace.

'Adyasha' organises workshops many times a year with renowned dance 'gurus', with students having the opportunity to learn from renowned veterans. The workshops follow the rituals of taal workshop, dance workshop, abhinaya (expression) workshops.

As the director of her dance institute, Sarita continues to explore Odissi dance more and

more as a teacher, performer and choreographer. Her vision is to popularise Odissi dance like all other famous western dance forms but only in its purest form, and to do interesting dance ballets with new concepts and thoughts with mass appeal.

'Adyasha' has two branches in Bangalore - near Trinity Circle - Week days and Sundays - and at Sun City, Sarjapur Road with weekend classes in the mornings.

Sarita also runs a class for under privileged children from nearby areas, at her home twice a week.

A staunch believer in hard work, Sarita feels anything can be achieved.

> Kids learning the moves from Sarita at her dance class

