

Dance Arangetram of Ms. Deepa Ramanathan

Chennai on June 01,2013

Pujya Sri Swamiji graced the occasion of bharatanaatyam arangetram of Ms. Deepa, daughter of Sri Ramanathan at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan auditorium, Chennai on June 1, 2013.

Pujya Sri Swamiji made the day for Deepa, Deepa's bharatanaatyam teacher Dr. Srithika Kasturirangan, her teacher Dr. Ambika Kameshwar and Chief Guest Smt. Revathi Ramachandran, Deepa's parents, the orchestra and all who had gathered on the occasion.

The uniqueness of the event was for more than two and half hours, Pujya Sri was almost conducting the proceedings. Pujya Sri, Smt. Revathi Ramachandran, Smt. Ambika Kameshwar, Dr. Srithika, the orchestra and Deepa were a closed circle. As Deepa later mentioned, she was constantly aware of Pujya Sri's revered presence through the programme; her guru, Dr. Srithika, not for one moment, let Deepa out of her gaze; Smt. Revathi Ramachandran focused on Deepa's movements. Dr. Ambika was oscillating her attention between her disciple Dr. Srithika and her student, Deepa. Smt. Preeti Mahesh and the orchestra helped the stalwarts remain in the zone. Smt. Sheela



Balaji was watching from close quarters. Rest of the audience remained enthralled.

Pujya Sri in his anugraha bhaashanam was eloquent in his praise of Deepa's performance, her guru's efforts, and the parents' support, and more than anything Deepa's enthusiasm for the art form despite contemporary pressures of education and other distractions in today's society. He had generous appreciation for Deepa's portrayal of varnam and expressed awe at her foot



movements. Pujya Sri had special words of appreciation for Smt. Preety Mahesh, the vocalist and the orchestra for the excellent harmony which helped Deepa and Dr. Srithika give such an excellent performance of style and substance. Pujya Sri said it all when he mentioned that a student could only be as good as her teacher. Dr. Srithika, as humble as she can be, was very graceful in her acceptance of Pujya Sri's words of praise.

Smt. Revathi Ramachandran gave a very detailed account of Deepa's performance with minute observations on her foot movements, mobile face, apt portrayal of emotions, and her confident stage presence. In fact Pujya Sri mentioned that he exchanged notes with Smt. Revathi Ramachandran on Deepa's performance.

Deepa is blessed to have such an enthusiastic and keen observer as the chief guest for the occasion.

Dr. Ambika Kameshwar had great words of appreciation for Dr. Srithika as well as Deepa. She was in her elements when she elaborated on how an arangetram was as good an experience as child birth for the naatya guru. She literally showered her appreciation on both Dr. Srithika and Deepa. Both Deepa and Dr. Srithika would have had their heart's fill from the evening by the special appreciation of Dr. Ambika.

Pujya Sri blessed all the artists of the evening. He magnanimously blessed Deepa with a shawl. All who had gathered paid their respects to him. Deepa and all her respected teachers would have given Pujya Sri the feeling that our tradition was in the safe hands of these dedicated protagonists of the art form of Bharatanaatyam and in this great journey of preserving our Dharma through art and culture.

For the rest of the audience, it was simply a great evening which kept everyone spellbound in the web of dance, beautiful choreography, devotional content, rasa, and gracefully portrayed movements.

Deepa, in her vote of thanks, mentioned that this dance form had developed her devotion for the form and content through the numerous sessions of practice, culminating on the day of her arangetram and how Pujya Sri's words had always inspired her. She thanked one and all for making the day a memorable one for her. She was overwhelmed with emotion when she thanked her guru, Dr. Srithika.