



MANJULA B. MURTHY

Disciple of Guru Kalyani Kutty Amma and Guru Bharati Shivaji

Up ahead

Mohiniattam is not as well known as other dance forms like Bharatanatyam and Kathak. People mistake it for some other form. I want to popularise it so that even a lay person can recognise a performance of Mohiniattam. To achieve this I would like to perform more, as well as give lecture-demonstrations. My guruji, Bharati Shivaji, has done a lot in this respect, and I would like to follow in her footsteps. I would like to devote my time more to performing, though I do help out in teaching at my guru's Centre for Mohiniattam. If I want to work for the growth of Mohiniattam, I can't start teaching (full-time).

Appeal of the art

I'm quite a soft person, and Mohiniattam is also very soft and graceful and matches my character. I'm very expressive and Mohiniattam has a lot of scope for expression, so it suits me.

I learnt Bharatanatyam when I was in school, but I was blindly doing it. I didn't even know there were so many styles till I joined Nrityagram. When I first saw Kalyanikutty Amma, I thought this is what I want to do. (Later) when I saw Bharati Ma'am, I felt Mohiniattam has some special energy, and I started loving it even more. Her style has tremendous basics and body movements – it has vast scope, a lot to give.

Fleet street

DANCE Winners of Sangeet Natak Akademi's Yuva Puraskar-2009 on how they would like to contribute as artistes.