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Indian classical blends well with contemporary dance



The romance of pastoral deity Krishna (centre) and the Gopis (milkmaids). — Photo by Muhammad Rais Sanusi

KOTA SAMARAHAN: The spirit of contemporary dance can flourish alongside traditional form of Indian classical dance.

Such instances can be found through Sutra Foundation's brand of Indian classical dance which exemplified its belief that the contemporary spirit can actually thrive side by side with the traditional, said Sutra Foundation chairman Datuk Ramli Ibrahim.

In his keynote address prior to the showcase of Sutra Foundation's 'Krishna, Love Re-invented (Odissi)' at Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) Faculty of Applied & Creative Arts Pangung Eksperimen here on Sunday, the guru of Indian classical dance pointed out that Sutra's production appealed not only to Indian audiences but also non-Indians.

"Sutra has a great multi-racial following everywhere and what is persuasive about Sutra's production is not only the dancing but the concept of with which classical Indian dance is presented such that it appeals to all," he said, adding that 'Krishna, Love Re-invented (Odissi)' served as the perfect manifestation of an Asian traditional form whereby the modern and the classical manifested in seamless continuum.

"We offer a classical tradition which will hopefully be able to stir the imagination of an audience who is keen to find the indigenous dance motives and idioms explored to redefine what is perceived as modern within a traditional framework especially with regards to Asian contemporary artistic sensibilities," Ramli expressed.

Performed by Ramli and his 12 students, 'Krishna, Love Re-invented (Odissi)' is a mystical presentation in tribute to Krishna, one of the most popular Indian divinities who is the embodiment of love and divine joy.

Audiences which also included National Department for Culture and Arts Sarawak (JKKN) director Salehuddin Salleh, Unimas deputy vice-chancellor (Student Affairs and Alumni) Prof Fadzil Abdul Rahman and Unimas Faculty of Applied & Creative Arts dean Assoc Prof Dr Hasnizam Abdul Wahid among those present, were treated to a discovery of modern ideas within the creative and innovative presentation through its dance composition and choreography that still maintained the authenticity of the original spirit.

'Krishna, Love Re-invented (Odissi)' is currently on its national tour where they will next be performing in Kota Bharu on April 18, Kuala Terengganu on April 19, Melaka on April 26 and Seremban on May 10.

Source: The Borneo Post