

MARGI

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31.3.1997

KATHAKALI

Margi is functioning as a Kaliyogam from 1991-92 onwards. Under this system, the artistes are graded as Upadeshtavu, Advasthanam, Onnamkida, Idatharam, Kuttitharam, etc. Training and performance go on side by side, by a group of artistes who are held together for long periods. Upholding of tradition and classicism in the staging of programmes is the most important concern.

The general decline in the popularity of classical arts can to some extent be attributed to lack of variety in the extant repertoire. Margi has been countering this all along by selecting a variety of themes from the classical theatre itself - themes, which were once very popular, but disappeared later from the stage, in line with the general decline of the arts themselves.

Nalacharitha series.

The late Shri D.Appukuttan Nair developed the staging of Nalacharitha into a new format altogether. This magnum opus of Kathakali has infinite theatrical scope; drawing upon the related literature and developing the sequences, giving emphasis to the poetic aspects of this all time great literary creation. Shri D.A.Nair did an immense amount of research on this and wrote down a very detailed performance manual. According to this format Nalacharitha 1st day itself will take about 12 days to complete.

The performance manuals for days 1 and 2 have already been printed by Margi and is available for the use of art lovers. Day 3 is being printed.

Nalacharitham day 1 was staged in the elaborate Margi format during the year (vide list of programmes)

Another programme of Margi, as may be well known by now, is the presentation of currently popular themes (usually presented as abridged versions lasting anything between 45 minutes to 3 hours) in their entirety, as conceived and intended by the playwright. This takes a long session of successive stagings to complete a play. In the process, creative interpretations are also added to such sections of the play which provide the required scope for such poetic embellishments and elaboration. In this format, each session is a new presentation, a creative challenge for actor, singer and percussionist alike to continuously hone their respective creative talents and greatly helps to revitalise the art.

The ever popular classics of Kottayathu Thampuran, Kalakeya Vadhom was completed during the year. Rajasooyam was presented fully, over 4 days.

KOODIYATTOM & NANGIYARKOOTHU

The weekly Koodiyattom shows, as per ongoing programme of support by the Kendra Sangeet Nataka Akademy, continued during the year. This is the sixth year of the SNA supported scheme and 48 programmes were staged during the year; covering a wide range; drawing from the vast repertoire built up in Margi during the previous years. (Please see list of programmes). There was significant achievement in taking this art to a wider audience. Programmes staged in the city colleges were very successful in spreading the art among the younger generation of lovers of classical theatre.

RECOGNITION AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

The programmes staged at Margi were invariably watched by a good number of foreign tourists; particularly during the tourist season. The tourists consisted of both casual visitors as well as theatre persons. While the former were very much impressed by the power and depth of the histrionics of Koodiyattom, the latter kept coming back to know more about the finer aspects of the art.

The weekly programmes are being video taped regularly by a German professor for purpose of study in the Sanskrit and Indology Department of the University of Tubingen (Germany).

Koodiyattom was also selected for an international venture of fusion of arts. Two artistes each from Japan, Korea, Indonesia, Bali, India etc. were the participants in this cross cultural theatre presentation. The Indian artistes were Margi Madhu and Unnikrishnan Nambiar (Mizhavu). The programme titled 'Dragon Bond Rite' was staged in Italy (Bellagio Centre) during September 1996 and at the Kennedy Centre in Washington during June 1997.

PROGRAMMES STAGED DURING THE YEAR

The list of programmes staged during the year is appended.

FUTURE PROGRAMMES

Revival of the Kathakali plays 'Palazhimathanam' and 'Poundraka Vadhom', which have excellent scope for the actors, Subhadrachananjayam Act II and III in Koodiyattom and development of new episodes in Nangiyarkoothu from the 'Sreekrishna Charitham' compilation are contemplated in the future programmes of Margi.

GOVERNMENT GRANT & RECOGNITION FOR THE KALIYOGAM SYSTEM OF MARGI

From 1991-92 onwards, Margi is functioning more or less as a Kaliyogam. A detailed project report was submitted to Government in June 1994 to formally sanction the Kaliyogam system in Margi and release the full budget provision of Rs.5 Lakhs earmarked for Margi. Government sanction was received as per G.O.(Rt)No.126/95/CAD dt.29.3.1995, approving the Kaliyogam system and releasing an additional grant of Rs.2 Lakhs for this purpose. The grant of Rs.5 Lakhs was continued for 1995-96 and 96-97.

The important features of the Kaliyogam system are:

1. Grading of artistes under different categories like Upadeshtavu, Advasthanam, Onnamkida, Idatharam and Kuttitharam as against the old system of Teachers and Stipendiaries who were paid only stipends for 10 months in the year and had to leave the institution on completion of the time bound course like 4 years, 6 years, etc. This led them nowhere and the stipendiaries had to leave the profession altogether for want of continued training and performance opportunities.
- (2) Continuous training and performance side by side throughout the life time of the artistes and staying together as a well knit cohesive unit, which leads to high level production values.
- (3) This system is one most suited to restore the arts to their former glory by enabling revivals, creative elaborations through a poetic treatment, etc.
- (4) There is a constant challenge to the creative talents of the artistes in every production and performance.

With a grant of Rs.5 Lakhs, the highest remuneration that could be paid to a senior artiste, having more than 20 years of service, is Rs.1800 all inclusive. (The lowest is Rs.750 all inclusive). There are 42 artistes (30 Kathakali artistes and 12 Koodiyattom) who have to be paid out of the grant of Rs.5 Lakhs (which, incidentally, is being utilised only for the payment of salaries to the artistes)

Another distressing aspect is that the artistes are receiving the same salary for the last 3 years; with no compensation whatever for the skyrocketing cost of living.

The above matter with all details have been submitted to Government for being considered by a committee formed by Government. It is earnestly hoped that the long awaited and much needed relief will be extended to the very low paid Margi artistes.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA GRANT

The Ministry of HRD, Government of India had been kind enough to extend grant assistance to the Margi artistes, by way of salary grant, from the II half of 94-95 onwards, at the rate of Rs.1.08 lakhs per year. The committee would like to place on record, our sincere thanks to the Government of India for their generous gesture.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Committee would like to express its deep debt of gratitude to the Government of Kerala (The departments of Culture, Tourism and Public Relations), The Kendra Sangeet Natak Akademy, the ICCR and the Travancore Devasom Board.

Our sincere thanks are due to the Press in General and in particular the leading papers like Malayala Manorama, Mathrubhumi, Kerala Kaumudi, The Hindu, The Indian Express etc. for their regular coverage of the programmes of Margi.

In conclusion our thanks are also due to all the members of Margi for their unstinted co-operation.

Dr.A.D.Damodaran
Secretary

Thiruvananthapuram
20-6-1997

MARGI

Estd 1968 as a Charitable

LIST OF PROGRAMMES 96-97

KOODIYATTOM

5.4.96	Subhadradhananjayam II Act (Nangiyarkoothu)
8.4.96	Aascharyachoodamani - Mayaseethankom
12.4.96	Aascharyachoodamani - Mayaseethankom
13.4.96	Subhadradhananjayam Act I - Venue: MKK Nair Memorial Kathakali Centre, Quilon
21.5.96	Nangiarkoothu
24.5.96	Aascharyachoodamani - Mayaseethankom, Rishikumaran's Nirvahanam - 2nd day
27.5.96	-do- 3rd day
31.5.96	Mantrankom - Entry of Vasanthakam
7.6.96	Mantrankom - II day
14.6.96	Nangiarkoothu
21.6.96	Mayaseethankom - Rishikumaran's Cholliyattom
29.6.96	Mayaseethankom - Sri Raman's entry
3.7.96	Thapatheesamvaranam at Theerthapadamantapam
12.7.96	D.A.Nair Comemorative programmes Subhadradhananjayam, Natyabhaga at Theerthapadamantapam
13.7.96	Nangiarkoothu
26.7.96	Abhisheka Natakam - Thoranayuddhom Guest Artiste - Ammannur Kuttan Chakiar
2.8.96	Mantrankom
9.8.96	Mayaseethankom - Sreeraman's Nirvahanam
16.8.96	Nangiarkoothu
17.8.96	Mayaseethankom - Sreeraman's Nirvahanam
6.9.96	Mayaseethankom
13.9.96	Pratijnayougandharayanam 3rd Ankom, Mantrankom, 4th day
20.9.96	Nangiyarkoothu
27.9.96	Ascharyachoodamani, Mayaseethankom, Natakabhaga
11.10.96	Mayaseethankom - Natakabhaga
12.10.96	Nangiarkoothu
15.10.96	Subhadradhananjayam Act I - Natakabhaga
25.10.96	Mantrankom
9.11.96	Nangiarkoothu
12.11.96	Mantrankom at M.G.College Hall
15.11.96	Mayaseethankom, Natakabhaga
22.11.96	Mantrankom, 6th day
6.12.96	Nangiarkoothu
13.12.96	Subhadradhananjayam at Fine Arts College Hall, Palayam
20.12.96	Mantrankom, 7th day
27.12.96	Tapathisamvaranam at Siva Temple, Sasthamangalam
9.1.97	Asokavanikamkom at NSS College for Women
10.1.97	Nangiarkoothu
25.1.97	Mayaseethankom, 4th day
31.1.97	Mantrankom, 8th day
17.2.97	Nangiarkoothu

21.2.97	Mayaseethankom, Natakabhaga
26.2.97	Mantrankom - 9th day
28.2.97	Mantrankom - 10th day
2.3.97	Subhadradhananjayam, Natakabhagam at Annamanda UP School (Trichur)
14.3.97	Ascharyachoodamani, Act III, Masyaseethankom, Natakabhagam
21.3.97	Ascharyachoodamani, Act III, Mayaseethankom, Natakabhagam at Theerthapadamantapam
28.3.97	Subhadradhananjayam, Nangiarkoothu

KATHAKALI

27.6.96	Nalacharitha, Day I
28.6.97	Kalakeyavadhom at Theerthapadamantapam
10.7.96	D.A.Nair Comemorative programme - Nalacharitham, Day 1
13.7.96	Kalakeyavadhom
15.8.96	Kalamandalam Krishnan Nair Memorial Programme
25.9.96	Nalacharitha, Day I
26.9.96	Kalakeyavadhom
21.10.96	Lavanasuravadhom
30.10.96	Nalacharitham, Day I
31.10.96	Kalakeyavadhom
27.11.96	Nalacharitham, Day I
28.11.96	Rajasoooyam
18.12.96	Nalacharitham, Day I
19.12.96	Rajasoooyam
29.1.97	Rajasoooyam
30.1.97	Nalacharitham, Day I