

Effective mix of dance and music

THE 59TH Bhagavata Mela Nataka festival, — which began on May 19, was held under the auspices of the Melathur Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Jayanthi Bhagavatha Mela Natya Nataka Sangam. As part of the 10-day festival, the lively dance ballet, "Hari Hara Leela Vilasam" was presented at the Sri Varadaraja Perumal Sannidhi, Melathur.

This ballet tells the story of the birth of Hariharasuta, using the medium of dance and music effectively.

The Patrapravesa Daru of Chandasura, "Vedale" in Bhairavi, "Vachche Jaganmohini" in Vasantha, the neraval section of "Indu Sekharum" in Poorvikalyani, the lively entry of Vishnu set in Mallari, "Achyuta Varada", the longing of Siva for Mohini and "Ninnu Bayaleno Lalanaa" in Chenchurutu were some fine renderings by the Tiruvaiyaru Brothers, Narasimhan and Venkatesan.

Arvind as Mohini gave an effective portrayal; especially in "Mohametula" (Ananda Bhairavi), the agony of Mohini was elaborated at length employing poetic techniques like Atisayukti. Every minute detail of the different sancharis were well depicted with complete involvement and control, marking Arvind as a successful follower of this great artistic heritage. He is skilful while depicting calm, composed abhinaya nuances, adding a fine touch to each phrase.

Natarajan who led this troupe, innovatively included traditional Tillana (in the Patra Pravesa of Mohini), which fit into the basic framework quite well.

Natarajan as Bhasmasura who is vanquished by Jaganmohini, gave a suitable portrayal; the asura praising Lord Siva as Varadarajamitra and Unnatapureesa and worshipping the Lord at His entry — 11Pratyaksha Mayanamma Sri



A scene from "Hari Hara Leela Vilasam."

Sambha Sivudu", are fine lyrical pieces. Aniruddha as Kumudavati, the wife of the asura, was impressive.

The grand finale was the birth of Hariharaputra. Natrajan had tactfully infused some gestural techniques with subtlety at this junction and created the necessary ambience to the Divine Birth of Hariharasuta, whom Lord Siva declares as the Grama Devata or the village diety.

The orchestra of this year's festival comprised the veteran Granthika Krishnamurthi Sarma, and the main singers, Tiruvaiyaru Brothers, who stood up to the high standards of music maintained by this troupe through the years.

The void created by the veteran singer Veeraraghavan who passed away recently, is irreparable, his total absorption into the musical heritage of the Bhagavata Mela tradition was one of long time association and deep commitment, till his last days at the age of 74.

Also the absence of another soulful singer, Tirukkarugavoor Srinivasaraghavan, was felt.

However the younger musicians showed keen involvement and deep of understanding while they sang wholeheartedly, to fill up every situation of this lively play. Prabhakaran assisted the main singers ably, revealing promising talent.

Nellai Balaji gave solid support to the orchestra and followed the dancers meticulously. Durai (violin) and Raghava Raman (flute) rendered apt accompaniments.

NANDINI RAMANI

Fluent rendition

Ramanuja Nootrandadi — Chakkrika Audios — 25, Peyalwar Koil St., Triplicane.

"Ramanuja Nootrandadi" comprises 108 songs sung by Sri Thiruvarangathamudanar in praise of Sri Ramanuja. This is recited in all the Sri Vaishnavite temples and houses during worship.

The cassette contains this hymn, fluently and slowly rendered in the traditional style as done in the temples, by M. A. Venkatakrishnan and his party.