



East meets West

On Oct.25 our renowned dancer, teacher and choreographer presented her newest creation East meets West at Schumburg. This dance drama is depicted the story of an Indian lady Noopur whose passion is in rhythm and dance.

Her career brings her to US. She loves her new job but misses India immensely. Dancing helps her to adjust in her new home in the United States. She is introduced to Western culture and dance and learns to enjoy the fusion of westerns style dance with her own kathak dance style. She then realizes that dance is universal and just like love and laughter has no boundaries.



The program featured more than 60 dancers and was presented using six major dance forms around the world including Kathak, Mexican, Flamenco, Belly, Lavni and Folk Dance.

There are people who simply have a lot of energy, and the India-born choreographer Gauri Jog is clearly one of them. Since setting up her dance school in Chicago area in 2000, she and her students are performing all over USA with their high energy content driven materials. Recently Gauri Jog also performed at Cities of America pageant in Florida and won "Modeling and More" championship. In the past we have seen her finest performances, Jhansi Ki Rani (2005) and Fire - Fiery Tale (2007). Based what we have seen she truly represents what happens when creativity, handwork and education comes together. As one member of the audience described "her show is guaranteed not only to lift your spirits, but to stir up the rhythmic pulses deep within your soul".



Kathak, a North Indian classical dance form, emphasizes powerful, stamping footwork matched to the complex rhythmic cycles of classical Indian music. But it also demands the nuanced skills of abhinaya, the multitude of facial expressions and finely honed gestures that allow the

practitioner to incarnate multiple personalities or creatures in time-honored tales from the great Indian epics like the Mahabharata. Gauri perfected her Kathak dance and teaching techniques at Nagpur, India, where she trained intensively to dance and teach with Master Madan Pande. Her fluid and well-rounded approach to this art form gives her the ability to express herself with creative, original, versatile, and graceful movements.

The program began with Shiva's dance performed by Gauri Jog and her senior students. The dance represented both the destruction and the creation of the universe and revealed the cycles of death, birth and rebirth. The dancers evoked the mood of adoration and devotion. This dance was followed by "Ganapati Dance". Bright, warm, colorful, musical, and full of vitality...these are just some of the words one would use to describe "*Ganapati Dance*". This is an appeal to the Lord Ganesha, who protects from all obstacles and hardships, to bestow his blessings. The dancers wore a silver and pink fitted dress with a skirt that swirled and sparkled with silver when they turned.

Gauri Jog, in her solo, performed pure Kathak on taal Dhamar, a cycle of 14 beat taal, giving glimpses of the many intricate aspects and beauty of Kathak- the chaal, the gats, the tihais, the footwork, tatkar. Her subtle expressions and vigorous footwork proved her ability as a versatile Kathak dancer. She started with Amad – entry of a dancer on the stage, Todas – composition of time beats in a rhythmic cycle, Paran – kind of Toda with bols. She portrayed the three important phases of women's life. First she displayed "Vasaksajja" – the state of women where she adorns herself before meeting her love, "Abhisarika" – the time in women's life when she proceeds to meet her love and finally "Vatsalya Bhava" - motherly love of women.

In the Kathak-Jazz dance we clearly witnessed multiculturalism. The dancers enthralled the audience with complex foot movements, smooth spins and soulful expressions combining beautiful Jazz music with Kathak. The little dancers, who danced on the popular Hindi song "Lakdi Ki Kathi", repeatedly received loud applause for their performance. Another group of children also performed Kathak dance based on 1950 song "Murli manohar". Dressed in green and colorful costumes, bejeweled with silver ornaments, the dancers with their flawless movements and joyous abundance captivated the audience.

We discovered why each year the popularity of dance programs arranged by Gauri goes up. The simple answer is variety. This program also featured Belly Dancing by Jasmin Jahal Dance Company of Chicago, Lavni (a folk dance from India) by students of Gauri Jog, a Mexican dance by Mexican Dance Ensemble and fusion of Kathak and Flamenco between Gauri Jog and Michelle Nascimento. Both Michelle and Gauri danced the fusion between

