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ORISSA

September 1, 2005

New fest, a mix of treat and tribute

Thursday September 1 2005 15:02 IST

BHUBANESWAR: The connoisseurs of classical dance have a reason to rejoice. The stage is set for launching of an annual dance festival- Sangam: A confluence of dance - on the "Guru Divas" in Bhubaneswar on September 5.

City-based *Odissi* and *Chhau* exponent Ileana Citaristi, the Italian lady who made Bhubaneswar her home 26 years ago, is the brain behind the event.

"The festival will showcase two Indian classical dance styles every year with *Odissi* being a permanent partner."

"We have several annual dance festivals round the year in and around the State capital. But such events present plenty of *Odissi* while the audience gets little opportunity to have exposure to other Indian classical dance forms.

"This festival will be an attempt in bridging that gap," explained the dancer-choreographer who has also been the brain behind the annual Kalinga Martial Dance festival atop the historic Dhauli hills.

The logic behind holding such a festival on "Guru Divas" has a special significance, Ileana stated.

"Gurus have a special place in the lives of the dancers. My meeting with my guru (Kelucharan Mohapatra) made all the difference in my life. This festival will be a collective homage of the dancers to all the gurus of the world," she added.

A duet dance festival will further help the dancers and connoisseurs to understand the distinct features of each dance form and their inherent similarities.

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It will also provide a platform for choreographers to present their latest works, hoped Ileana who won the national award for best choreography for Aparna Sen's "Yugant" in 1996.

The inaugural edition of the festival on Monday at Rabindra Mandap will showcase choreographic compositions in *Odissi* and *Kathak* styles by Ileana's dance institution "Art Vision" and Aurangabad-based Kathak and Odissi exponent Parwati Dutta's Mahagami -- Mahatma Gandhi Mission Sangeet Academy.

While Ileana's troupe will present traditional *Odissi* performance including "Dasamahavidya", Parwati's presentations will have demonstration of rhythmic patterns special to *Kathak* besides a dance drama.

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