

MARGAZHI MUSIC SEASON DANCE

Bala Devi Chandrashekhar premieres her new production

DECEMBER 14, 2017 16:45 IST
 UPDATED: DECEMBER 14, 2017 19:55 IST



Of celestial love and monumental beauty 'Brihadiswara – Form to Formless'

Brihadiswara temple, Thanjavur, the structural masterpiece created by Rajaraja I, the illustrious Chola emperor has inspired artistes for many centuries. The grand monument with its 60-metre high vimana is the only temple that has karanas or dance postures carved on its walls.

Bharatanatyam dancer, teacher and choreographer Bala Devi Chandrashekhar's major new work 'Brihadiswara – form to formless' will be premiered in Chennai this Season. It takes the audience on a journey into the soul and mind of a Devaradiyaal, the one who has dedicated herself to the eternal service of the Lord.

Based on the guidance of scholar Dr. T.N Ramachandran and historian Dr. Kodavayil Balasubramanian and Dr. BM Sundaram, production celebrates the intertwining of the spatial and spiritual vibrations experienced by the Devaradiyaal, as she goes about her day to day life in the hallowed architectural wonder.

According to the New Jersey-based dancer, this production across four acts celebrates Devaradiyaal's beauty and the architectural mastery of the temple; the connect between form of the temple and the Lord's formlessness as the cosmic dancer.



The production weaves together the physical, metaphysical, lyrical and spiritual significance of each facet of the structure.

The compositions use the temple as a metaphor by highlighting the Thirumurai hymns of Sundarar and Thirugnana Sambandar.

It celebrates the nine facets of the lingam while extolling and deriving inspiration from the verses of Tirunavukkarasar, Manikavachagar, Thirumoolar and Sekkizhar's Periya puranam.

Lord Nataraja, it is said performed the different forms, initiated by Uma, His Consort. The beautiful Angaharas (grouping of Karanas), depicted inside the chamber of the first tier of the Vimanam above the sanctum, are performed for specific sollukattus of the panchamukha vadhya, a unique percussion instrument representing the five faces of the Lord.

The 'Kailai ula' anecdote of Sundarar and Cheran accentuates the artistic relevance of the fresco paintings during the Chola reign.

Concept, research and choreography are by Bala Devi. The music has been composed by Rajkumar Bharathi and script is by P.R. Venkatasubramanian.

'Brihadiswara – form to formless' will be performed on December 16 (8.30 p.m.) at South Zone Cultural Centre, Ministry of Culture, Thanjavur.

December 25 (7 p.m.), Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Kilpauk

December 29 (5.45 p.m.), Kartik Fine Arts, Mylapore

January 1, 2018 (7 p.m.), Krishna Gana Sabha, T.Nagar