

Some Reviews Anjali

REVIEWS:

2009 INDIA

Delhi International Arts Festival

*... your programme was of high artistic merit.. which explored themes that are of great relevance to our times. . Because of your long association with India, you have a **strong sensibility** that helps determine what works well here. This was another success. Congratulations.*

2008: INDIA

National Institute for Advanced Studies, Bangalore

It was a multi-sensual delight in several dance forms. It was a unique synthesis of art and science.

Deccan Herald, Bangalore, India December 2008

2007: CANADA

Crimson Coast Festival, Nanaimo, BC

*Clearly Anjali is an **artist of international stature** and we were very fortunate to have included her offering as part of our festival. For audiences here it was a revelation that the seamless interweaving of Indian dance, images, music and poetry can be **artistic, spiritually moving, fun and accessible to people of a wide variety of backgrounds and ages.***

Holly Bright, Artistic Director, Crimson Coast Festival, Nanaimo, September 2007

2007: Sruti India's Premiere Dance and Music Magazine

A multi-talented personality,... a cultural emissary...**always an admiring audience for her whether she is performing, giving a lecture or officiating as a chief guest at an arangetram. Besides her own achievement she has displayed leadership in producing earnest young second generation dancers. .. this year, it was the *Environmental Wisdom of the Buddha* performed in front of evocative images taken by Anjali and her husband Tony Gaston, in Assam, Orissa, Ladakh, Spiti, Canada and the south of France, this mixed media recital was set to an original score. .. The attributes of the various characters were enhanced with artistically modified masks from the Chhau Seraikella tradition. Anjali created a visually exciting picture of environmental events around the moment of the Buddha's enlightenment...**explored the tremendous creative potential within Indian dance.

2005: INDIA

HABITAT CENTRE, New Delhi

*This is **art without borders.** Anjali and Tony [Gaston] are part of an **international group of artists whose artistic expression belongs to world art.** This is **transnational work** and **resonates with diverse audiences be they from India Canada or elsewhere.** At this moment in history when trade barriers are breaking down, these artists are **speaking globally.***

Kri, New Delhi, December 2005

2005: GREECE

Leda Shantala Dance Theatre, Athens

*...**magical evening of a very high aesthetic and poetic quality** ... combining the **art of an enchanting dancer** with enjoyable multi-media effects, slides narration .. things that broaden the audience's understanding of Indian culture. Everyone was **enthralled,** and*

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*we also felt very **privileged** to welcome such a **unique** artist amongst us... also very comforting and uplifting to know that faraway Canada shares our concern and our endeavour to **make ourselves acquainted with cultures and artistic traditions different than our own:** and especially an ancient culture such as the Indian, which can surely offer us so much, can enrich our life and make it more beautiful*

Leda Shantala

2003: CANADA

Athena Brahmini, Arts Court Theatre, Ottawa

*We thoroughly enjoyed your recital at the Arts Court Theatre on April 26 , 2004 (Athena Brahmini) I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for your **fantastic creative work. Your dancing was superb and harmonious and the movements of your hands actually spoke in the most explicit manner to the audience.** In your excellent Athena Brahmini segment you managed to **interrelate elements of the Greek and Indian civilizations in a truly splendid way...** congratulations for the wonderful work that you are doing which is **a tribute to our civilization.** If I can be of any assistance to you please do not hesitate to contact me.*

Leonidas Chrysanthopoulos, Greek Ambassador to Canada

2002 INDIA

Habitat Centre Performing Arts Series, New Delhi

Habitat Centre, New Delhi, India considered it a privilege to host Anjali- Dr. Anne-Marie Gaston's concert "In Praise of Wilderness - Dancing Kyoto"

*Dr. Gaston's determination to stay faithful to the canons of Indian Classical Dance, the seriousness of her scholarship and her **commitment to the cause of the environment,** has always impressed those who have become familiar with her work. Drawing on long and rich years of a nurturing partnership with husband, Naturalist Environmentalist and Conservationist, Dr. Tony Gaston, Anjali's thematic, work reveals maturity of thought and retains cogency of communication. It uses an **age-old language,** accompanying it with **powerful electronic visuals,** to create a contemplative climate, and **creates a work of art, relevant to our times and trials.***

Any sensitive, thinking and concerned forum would benefit, in stature and impact, to showcase this important work, that straddles the beauty of dance and nature, while making a plea for caution.

Arshiya Seth, Director, Performing Arts Series

2000: CANADA

Mirror of Illusion, Arts Court Theatre, Ottawa

*Anjali is joining many of India's famed dance artists, who are engaged in extending the repertory of these classical forms into contemporary times and themes....**brilliantly incorporates both classical ideas and modern energies into her work.** One of the most impressive successes of Anjali's choreography is that she has conveyed **complex ideas** in a format both profound and essential, not simple or easy, but deeply meaningful and purposeful.*

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Based on earlier creative dance pieces which I have seen ANJALI perform I would say that this piece extends her repertoire.....and demonstrates that these classical forms can be used to engage audiences.....Anjali is aware of the provocative play of dance as illusion and uses this ambiguity to make her post-modernist intentions clear in the choreography., an interesting and highly enjoyable show.

Canada Council assessor

1999: CANADA

Envy Arts Court Theatre, Ottawa

*One of the pieces I found **particularly interesting** of this group was Nava Rasa, based on the Kathakali traditional. Anjali showed us how the nine different emotions are signified by the body, showing how for example a particular twist of the foot, a particular shift of the eye, a turn of the fingers can indicate rage or sorrow or fear and so on. In other words the dancer becomes a kind of living hieroglyphic performing a precise language which can be read as a story if you can read the body signs.*

*.. Along with this there were slides of Hindu temples in the background, good lighting effects. There were also the percussions all sorts of intricate rhythms, the traditional instruments and the beautiful costumes of the two women who were quite **lovely to watch**.. However, it was the **second portion of the show which caught my fancy**. This was not necessarily only traditional work. Anjali was experimenting here by fusing tradition, creating her own choreographic mixture. The mixing in itself is very western and corresponds to what a lot of **contemporary theatre groups** are doing these days. People like Lary Trembley and Martin Bon in Quebec. **I really enjoyed this piece very much.***

An evening with Anjali is a special experience, she will be back in Ottawa soon and when she comes, do try to see her, you will not only enjoy yourself but you will learn an enormous amount about all these traditions.

Alvina Ruprecht CBC Arts Reporter

1999: CANADA

Anjali's Choreography for The Pearl Fishers Opera performed by Opera Lyra, Ottawa, National arts Centre

*What seemed to have an **enormous impact on the conception of the whole** was the collaboration of Anne-Marie Gaston (Anjali), trained classical Indian dancer. The stage performance emphasized the spiritual quality of this Hindu based world. Each scene took on the appearance of a **highly structured ritual mixed with a quiet sensuality**.*

Alvina Ruprecht CBC Reporter

1998: CANADA

Ishtar and Gilgamesh, Ottawa, Arts Court Theatre

*This is a **major work-involving rich and varied** costuming, visual effects and dramatic interpretation. Anjali danced all three characters and she did so with **great ease and vitality**... a great deal of **inventiveness and bold expression** in this work- one of **her most daring and theatrical to date**... very **exciting and valuable** as a piece of dance theatre and a statement of human arrogance and blind domination. Anne-Marie understands the seriousness of theatre. Her recent performances at Arts Court in Ottawa again **revealed the theatrical richness and mythological and spiritual weight** of her presentations. **I believe that her path in dance is unique. She celebrates the***

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beautiful movement and aesthetics of many forms of Indian dance while moving into new territory by exploring her personal and very effective connection with western music and universal mythological themes. These forms are often extremely pertinent to today's concerns, i.e. human arrogance, forest degradation, sympathy for the downtrodden human being and the misuse of power...her new piece dealt with many of these issues. This is by no means an obscure legend...it is a driving story full of action, beauty and meaning, especially as we take on the challenges of this perilous time in history- namely human arrogance and its exploitation and destruction of nature. For me, Anne-Marie's costuming and her use of props, as well as her dramatic interpretation all reached new heights in this new work. Of course, the visual element in her presentations is always superb--often breathtaking. Her extraordinary photographic backdrops create a context and a visual setting that is often unforgettable...the very stunning and sophisticated images make superb theatre to me- especially when and experienced dancer is moving so organically in front of them. She is a brave creator and a splendid actor/dancer. Her face alone is worth the price of admission.

Alvina Ruprecht CBC Reporter

1992: CANADA

Theatre, National Arts Centre, Ottawa

Last night at the National Arts Centre, I saw Anjali: an East Indian dancer and choreographer. She is graceful, polished, interesting. Anjali is the stage name of Anne-Marie Gaston. She is an Ottawan, not an East Indian, but as I watched her, it was dance. It is a multi-media performance.....Anjali dance is barefoot-strong, supple, audible footwork. Anjali's last dance of all, where she blended a bit of western movement and feeling into oriental gesture and symbolism was brilliant stirring stuff, the high point of this evening altogether. Anjali's dance is delightful. I was glad to be watching an obviously talented, dedicated, polished performer. Anyone who likes dance at all ought to go.

Charles Haines, CBC

INDIA

The finest non-Indian dancer of Bharata Natyam, Kuchipudi and Odissi in the world.

Financial Express, New Delhi

Her footwork was flawless and her facial expression eloquent

Madras The Mail

Anjali is one of the few western dancers who can be mistaken for an Indian, not only for her stage presence but for the technical quality of her dance.

Delhi Financial express

Brought the house down with a Tillana of Exquisite Grace and Beauty

Delhi, Hindustan Times

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UK

Edinburgh Festival Fringe

packed houses.. recreates myths with POISE and SKILL.. well worth seeing

The Scotsman