

Serenaded by Shubha Mudgal

MUSIC The other worldly experience continues at Yaksha as Shubha Mudgal gives a stellar performance



CELESTIAL EXPERIENCE Shubha Mudgal at Yaksha PHOTO: K. ANANTHAN

There is just one star in the sky when the concert begins. The other one is shining on stage - Shubha Mudgal. It is the third day of the Yaksha festival at the Isha Yoga Center and Mudgal has just settled down with her accompanying musicians (husband Aneesh Pradhan on the tabla and Sudheer Nayak on the harmonium). "Aagya?" she seeks permission from Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev. There is a flash of her diamond nose pin, and she begins.

Mudgal has been a favourite ever since my then-five-year-old daughter, dressed as a peacock, danced to her song *Ab ke saawan*. But to sit a few feet away from her as she performs at Isha

is quite something else. *Devan dev mahadeva....* she sings and it is magic from then on. Her deep, resonant voice conjures up the vision of Shiva resplendent with his *jatha*, *damaru* and *trishul*. The composition based on raag Yaman is followed by another one in the same raag. It is an offering to *Devi dayaani daani* the remover of obstacles. It is hard not to be moved by the song, especially since it is all happening outside the Linga Bhairavi temple. As Mudgal's voice soars, even the most hardened sceptic would have felt the energy.

The next song is one of her favourites, says Mudgal. The shining simplicity and beauty of Kabir's pithy philosophy fills the air as she sings

Mein Ghulam Mujhe Bech Gusai... (I am your slave, sell me if you want to...). It is followed by a composition of poet Raidas, believed to be the guru of Meerabai. *Ab kaise chootay ram naam rat laagi...*

The sweetness continues after Kabir and Raidas with a Shabad, *Satguru Sahab jab meher kari*. All too soon the evening draws to a close. But not before Mudgal leaves us with a memorable and robust Sufi rendition of *Dayyari mohe bhejo...peer nizam ke rang mein*. Meanwhile, more stars have come out in the sky to watch her perform. But they fade away one by one as Shubha Mudgal leaves the stage.

PANKAJA SRINIVASAN

Myriad shades of devotion

NATYA Alarmel Valli's creativity came to fore in her portrayal of bhakti.

T.K. GANAPATHY

Poetic touches aplenty characterised the kaleidoscope of movements and swaras in the vivid and aesthetic Bharatanatyam performance of Alarmel Valli, on the opening day of Yaksha, the music and dance festival of Isha Foundation, held against the backdrop of the Linga Bhairavi shrine at Isha Yoga Centre, Coimbatore. *The Hindu* is the media partner of the event, which is on till February 19.

Valli's performance was a reflection of the Isha Foundation's dynamic outlook towards everything, be it philosophy, life or arts. Her invocation to Shakti and the prayer to Devi, displaying the transition from the sensual to the sublime (eulogised in *Devimahathmyam*) to lead a harmonious life, with verses drawn from *Sakunthala*, *Ritusamhara*, the forces of Nature depicted by Bharatiar and Ilango Adigal,



FROM SENSUAL TO THE SUBLIME: Alarmel Valli.

PHOTO: K. ANANTHAN

culminating with a prayer to Goddess Durga, provided a springboard for bhakti as the prime mood over her disciplined nritta.

Well-balanced

Her bright and simple costume was apt to the theme. The verse from *Purananooru* presented as *nriyhalahari* in *Rasikapriya*, set to complex patterns

and nadais with well-balanced pirouettes of the artist, won wide acclaim from the dance buffs.

In the last number, Alarmel Valli excelled in her depiction of an ironic look at a waiting woman in Arundhati Subramaniam's poem, *Vigil*, with a visual and melodic dimension. *Sanchari bhavas* were the highlight of the recital.

Mahashivaratri celebrations

Having played host to seasoned artists such as Shubha Mudgal, Pandit Channulal Mishra and Alarmel Valli, Yaksha — a week long festival of music and dance at Isha Foundation — will feature performances by Dr. L Subramaniam, Neyveli Santhana Gopalan and Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, today, tomorrow and on Sunday respectively. The Mahashivaratri celebrations culminate on February 20 with performances by Wasifuddin Dagar, Kailash Kher and the Colonial Cousins. *The Hindu* is the media partner for the event.

Venue : Isha Yoga Centre (at the foothills of Velliangiri)

Date : Till February 20

Time : 6.30 p.m. onwards

Tel : 94878-95812

