



**Sri Kapali
Fine Arts**

Malini Srinivasan, disciple of Professor C.V.Chandrasekhar, is a dancer from the diaspora. Her strength lies in the maturity and dignity that she lends to her Bharatnatyam style. Grace pervades her movements, whether she is executing a step or delineating a line.

The grace and the perfectly-proportioned petite frame creates an alluring picture. But there is this issue about grace - it can be a good thing and a bad thing, because if it spills over, the inherent forcefulness of the steps get compromised. And that's what happened with Malini.

One must also consider the high standards set by her guru; it behoves all younger dancers (below 70) to incorporate vigour into their movements, without exception. Malini included.

While the opening Alarippu ((Tisra eka in usi) proved the dancer's accurate sense of timing, the varnam ('E Maguva Bodinchura,' Dhanyasi, Adi, Mysore Sadashiva Rao), a Kalakshetra piece, gave her further opportunity in the back-to-back nritta segments. Both guru and student sailed through the fast rhythms with practised ease.

The trikalam theermanam was memorable for the guru's sollukattu recitation that just rolled off his tongue, especially those at high speed.

Expressive in parts

The guru's involvement in the recital went beyond the rhythmic segments as he also pitched in to guide the excellent-but-not-well-trained-dance-accompanist Sushanth Parambath. The guru's interjection of a short



POIGNANT: *Malini Srinivasan.*

PHOTO: K.V. SRINIVASAN

tanam (to denote the veena) and sollus (to show dance) in the description of the art-patron Maharaja Krishna Rajendra enhanced Malini's expressive gestures. The dancer's portrayal of a woman facing an indifferent man had maturity.

Malini was gentle in her reprimands and derision of the 'other woman.' But the padams ('Moguduchi,' Sahana, Misra Chapu and 'Yaarkakilum Bhayama,' Begada, Misra Chapu, Subarama Iyer) required more engagement with the protagonists. Even if the bravado in the Begada composition was adequate, the poignancy and sadness associated with a young girl having to leave a loved one for a man she was sup-

posed to have married in childhood did not come through enough. There is melancholy and bhakti as well when she tells Krishna that thoughts of Him will keep her going like how the lotus flower is nourished by the sun from afar. It needs to be worked on.

Of Malini's earnestness there is no doubt. The 'dance of nines' in the Khanda jati tripata tala thillana (Hamsanatham, Prof C.V.Chandrasekhar) was a visual treat of melody and rhythm. The tone of Adyar Balu's mridangam has a stately resonance that reflects his virtuosity. He played with great involvement, as did the violin-veteran T.K. Padmanabhan. This was a recital that rose above the ordinary.

CHENNAI