

A Brilliant Kathak Dancer - Vidushi Anjana Gupta

A firm believer and conviction in exploration of dance and its journey can describe Kathak dancer, Anjana Gupta. Her mind and body, heart and soul are always meditating on dance. This state of 'living', in dance, was only possible due to her intense training, practice and persistence. The learning happened automatically and everything else was a by-product. She is a living example that, Age is not a prerequisite for anything and definitely not a limitation.

Anjana was born to a traditional family in Delhi to Chandrakumar and Susheela. Her childhood and studies happened in Chennai. Although she was very much interested in learning Kathak, due to family elder's restrictions, she was unable to pursue it. The environment was such there was no encouragement and appreciation for art. Still, her interest in dance did not fade. Later she got married and her life took an unexpected turn once she moved to Bangalore.

Anjana took her six-year-old daughter Shruti to Guru Chitra Venugopal, to learn Kathak. Her deep-rooted interest since childhood sparked her enthusiasm again and she could not resist the *laya* of dance. She immediately joined as a student to Guru Chitra Venugopal. Now it was mother-daughter student duo for learning Kathak. Her age then was 29. She learnt persistently and rigorously trained for 7 years. It did not stop there. It continued with graduating in B.A Choreography and in completing senior diploma from Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

Under the direction of her guru, Anjana started giving dance shows and was part of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's '*Bhavanotsava*', every year. With the direction of well renowned Kathak Guru, Maya Rao, Anjana choreographed and performed soulful dance representations of '*Ganga Aavartan*', '*Ajeejaan*', '*Hasya Choodamani*', '*Calling of Mother Earth*'.

Anjana's never ending enthusiasm for Kathak resulted in successfully completing Kathak Vidwat exam organized by Karnataka Rajya Mandali and earning post-graduation degree from Khairagar university. A Doordarshan 'A' grade artist, Anjana has performed in ICCR and Department of Sanskrit. In addition, she has done *Nritya Seva* in many temples. By performing in many cities across India, Anjana has captured dance *rasikas* attention.

Anjana's passion for the dance form lead to the establishment of her own 'Samarpan Association for Culture and education' - 'SpACE' dance school. By being the director of 'SpACE' dance academy for almost a decade, Anjana has trained hundreds of students, enriched their learning and has proved to be a

prominent Guru for aspiring dancers. It is worth noticing the passion, beauty and patience in execution of her vision.

Every year, her academy organizes '*SpACE Kathak Nrityotsava*' and provides platform for upcoming dancers. The academy has already attracted crowds by performing many *Drishyakavyas* like '*Kathak Sarita*', '*Krishnamayee*', '*Samarpan*', '*Khoaj*', '*Beebi Naachiyaar*', '*Ekatva*' etc.

Along with these, she has organized various lec-dems, workshops, by Kathak Gurus to increase awareness of Kathak. Her many students have fared well in Kathak Junior and Senior exams. '*SpACE*' Academy is affiliated to Ravindra International and is amongst well-known Kathak academies that has received C.I.D International certification.

For Anjana to pursue and achieve her childhood dream after marriage, her constant support and encouragement was provided by her husband, Sunil Gupta. For all her creative endeavours and activities, Anjana is grateful for his all-time support. Her daughter Shruti is a wonderful Kathak dancer as well, who is currently engaged in a PHD program. Son Karan Gupta is currently studying at Oxford.