

METROPLUS

Interplay of styles

Chennai - INDE

EVENT East met West at the Raack Academy's "Lasya Laya" show

At 'Lasya Laya', there was a free interplay of Bharatanatyam, Kathak and modern western dance. Nirmala and Patrick Gleyse took centre stage in the programme, which was recently presented by the city-based Raack Academy of Dance and the Gleyses' dance company, Arabesques & Mudras, at the Music Academy.

The Gleyses specialise in a form of Indo-European ballet and their presentation, called 'Akshara', has been developed from these heterogeneous sources. Akshara's central theme was divine couples and for most part of the programme, the Gleyses were dancing under an orb-like contrivance meant to simulate the moon. Patrick says that their Akshara is a Western vision of the idea of 'Divine Couples', so accepted in India. The Gleyses complement each other. Patrick is a past master at western classical dance, having learnt it from Daniel Frank, faculty at the Theatre National de L'Opera. Nirmala has learnt Bharatanatyam from V. S. Muthuswamy Pillai, M. K. Saroja and Malavika.

There were six segments to the presentation. It began with the customary salutation (called 'Namaskar'), a set of interesting gestures presented by the couple and the Raack dancers. All through the show, the Raack dancers proved an



RIVETING PERFORMANCE Nirmala and Patrick Gleyse

ideal foil to the Gleyses. The sequence symbolising the union of Siva and Parvathi was arresting. Patrick and Nirmala had opportunities to hog all the attention through solo performances 'Rudra' and 'Kali' respectively.

A sense of hope was palpable in a performance that was called 'Vision of Eternity'.

Before the Gleyses appeared on stage, a couple of

dancers from the Odissi-Shivanjili Temple of Fine Arts presented a sequence. Another, choreographed by Ramash who heads Raack, was riveting. With Western and Indian dancers alternating in a setting that made use of light and shadow techniques, this piece prepared the audience for what was to follow — a confluence of western and eastern dance styles.

PRINCE FREDERICK