

A Soulful Dip in the 'Kalakumbh' Nrityaparv 2025

February unfolded with an array of enriching events, each vying for attention. While I wished to partake in all, the inevitable clash of dates made choices imperative. However, one event I was resolute about attending was Nrityaparv 2025, organized by the esteemed Anjali Memorial Committee, Vadodara.

Prof. Dr. Parul Shah, an inspiring luminary in the world of dance, has graciously extended invitations every year, and having attended the previous two editions, I was eager not to miss this milestone—the 45th year of Nrityaparv.

A message from Parulben in one of the dance WhatsApp groups reaffirmed my decision: “A lot of you have had a dip in the ‘Mahakumbh’... now is a chance to dip in the ‘Kalakumbh’!”

That call to immerse oneself in a sacred confluence of artistry resonated deeply.

Arriving punctually, I was warmly greeted by Parulben. As she busied herself with the final details,

I took my usual place in the fifth row, an ideal vantage point. However, upon noticing me, she insisted I move to the first row—an unmistakable hint of surprises ahead.

I soon found myself seated beside eminent figures: Smt. Manjari Sinha, a distinguished scholar in Sanskrit and music, adept in vocal, tabla, sitar, and Kathak, and a noted critic of music and dance, alongside Dr. Arshiya Sethi, an independent scholar, institution builder, and arts manager, twice a Fulbright Fellow and the first-ever Fulbright Arts Fellow to be associated directly with the Lincoln Centre.

To be in their esteemed company was an honour in itself.

As the evening commenced, Parulben invited the dignitaries to light the ceremonial lamp—Padma Shri Prof. Sitanshu Yashaschandra, a towering literary figure, Dr. Arshiya Sethi, Smt. Manjari Sinha, Prof. Gaurang Bhavsar, Dean of the Faculty of

75 आजादी का अमृत महोत्सव

Anjali Memorial Committee, Vadodara presents

Nrityaparv

8, 9, 10 February, 2025

PERFORMANCES - 8, 9, 10 February, 2025
Venue: C C Mehta Auditorium, Daily 7.30 pm onwards

WORKSHOP - 8, 9, 10 February, 2025
Venue: Concert Hall, Faculty of Performing Arts, Sursagar, MSU, Vadodara

Saturday, 8th February

SAKHYA
Dr. Swati Datar and Swarada Bhawe (Pune)

Sunday, 9th February

KALI
Dr. Swapnokalpa Dasgupta and Group, (Mumbai)

NIMITTA
Smt. Shila Mehta and Group, (Mumbai)

Monday, 10th February

DWITA
Smt. Rama Vaidyanathan & Smt. Dakshina Vaidyanathan Baghel, (Delhi)

KALARIPAYATTU
To be conducted by
Shri Nikhil Varagiri, Dharwad

8 Feb: 10.00 - 1.00 pm & 2.00 - 5.00pm
9 Feb: 10.00 - 1.00 pm & 2.00 - 5.00pm
10 Feb: 1.30pm-4.30pm
(Registration Required)

ROUND-TABLE - 10 February, 2025
Contemporary Sensibility In Traditional Forms W.R.T. Bharatanatyam

Venue: Concert Hall, Faculty of Performing Arts, Sursagar, MSU, Vadodara 9.30 am to 12.30 pm

Prof Sitanshu Yasheshchandra,
Prof Deepak Kannal, Shri Vihang Mehta,
Prof Gaurang Bhavsar, Smt Manjari Sinha,
Smt Rama Vaidyanathan, Smt Sujata Parsai
Dr Arshiya Sethi, Smt Sandhya Bordwekar,
Sushri Arupa Lahiry, Dr Rajesh Kelkar,
Shri Vivek Kane, Dr Pramod Chavan, Prof Parul Shah

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Performing Arts, M.S. University—and to my utmost surprise.... ‘me’!

Standing alongside such stalwarts to mark the auspicious beginning of the evening was a profoundly humbling moment, filling me with immense gratitude for my journey in the world of dance. In that moment, I reflected on the unwavering support of my parents, who never questioned my passion for dance and graphic arts, my various amazing Gurus who nurtured in me this divine art form, my sister who was my guiding light, my ever-encouraging family, and my wife Anita and son Aniruddh, who continue to stand by me—along with my extended family of well-wishers.

The concluding evening of Nrityaparv was graced by an enthralling duet performance by the illustrious mother-daughter duo, Rama Vaidyanathan and Dakshina Vaidyanathan Baghel. My connection with their revered family dates back to 2008 when I had the privilege of hosting Padma Bhushan Guru Smt. Saroja Vaidyanathan, Rama Vaidyanathan's esteemed mother-in-law, at JG College of Performing Arts.



Our bond remained strong over the years, and I fondly recall Saroja ji's participation in my early morning positive message video series during the pandemic.

Rama Vaidyanathan & Dakshina Vaidyanathan Baghel's, 'Dwita', was nothing short of mesmerizing—an embodiment of brilliance and aesthetic finesse. The duet exuded effervescence and mastery, seamlessly blending luminous choreography, exquisite spatial architecture, and boundless energy. Their synergy on stage was electrifying, leaving behind a repertoire of unforgettable moments.



The evening commenced with a duet on Goddess Lakshmi and Goddess Saraswati, portraying them as two inseparable facets of existence. This was followed by a rivetting Varnam where Dakshina portrayed a woman boldly expressing her love for Lord Nataraja.



Rama Vaidyanathan's solo depicted a woman's prowess in love, triumphing even over Lord Venkateswara, resonating with the spirit of Bhakti poetry.

A poignant presentation of an ancient Sangam poem on a mother-daughter relationship ensued, culminating in an exquisite blend of Tillana and Keertanam, marking a fitting finale to an extraordinary evening of dance.

commitments called me back to college the next morning. Nevertheless, this experience will forever remain etched in my heart, and I look forward to reciprocating this generous gesture in the times to come.

As the curtains fell on this sublime celebration of movement and expression, I felt deeply grateful to Parulben for the honour bestowed upon me. Though she graciously urged me to stay back for dinner, my

Nrityaparv 2025 was not just an event; it was an immersive journey into the divine world of dance—a true dip in the 'Kalakumbh' that will continue to resonate in my soul.



Thank you Parulben...