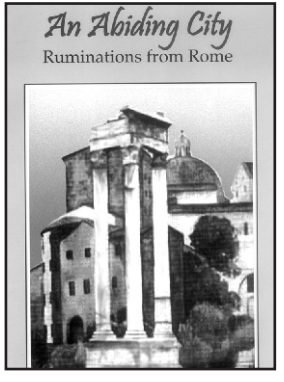


RECOMMENDATIONS



Book launching

December 17 The University Press Limited and The Daily Star will jointly hold launching ceremony of the book 'An Abiding City: Ruminations from Rome' by Neeman A Sobhan.

Visions-1

December 10-24 Alliance Francaise de Dacca will host an avant-gardist French exhibition titled, "Visions-1 new vision in fashion", which will present latest new forms of fashion photography.

Art Show

November 20 January 10 A group art exhibition of four young artists is being held at the American International School at Baridhara in the city and remains open daily throughout the day.

Surya Utsav

December 29 - January 02 Bangladesh Astronomical Association arranges one of its annual events, Surya Utsav (Sun Festival) as the organisation aims at showing the participants, several exciting matters including the first sunrise of the year 2003.

Dance

Celebrating gods, goddesses & Virgin Mary

Saju George Moolamthuruthil's non-stop Bharat Nattiyam performance at the Goethe Institut

FATHER Saju George Moolamthuruthil's performances of Bharat Nattiyam pieces, seen recently at the Goethe Institut auditorium, were all accompanied by short speeches and explanation. He did not feel that the dances in celebration of the Hindu gods and goddesses contradicted the ones about the one that celebrated Virgin Mary.

redeem him from this plight. While searching for solace the dancer gets the vision of Virgin Mary, who is seated on a high pedestal and appears full of grace and compassion for the people. Filled with joy, the devotee, the dancer i.e., praises the Mary as the one in sans sin, truthful and the mother of Jesus who had brought freedom to the poor and suffering.

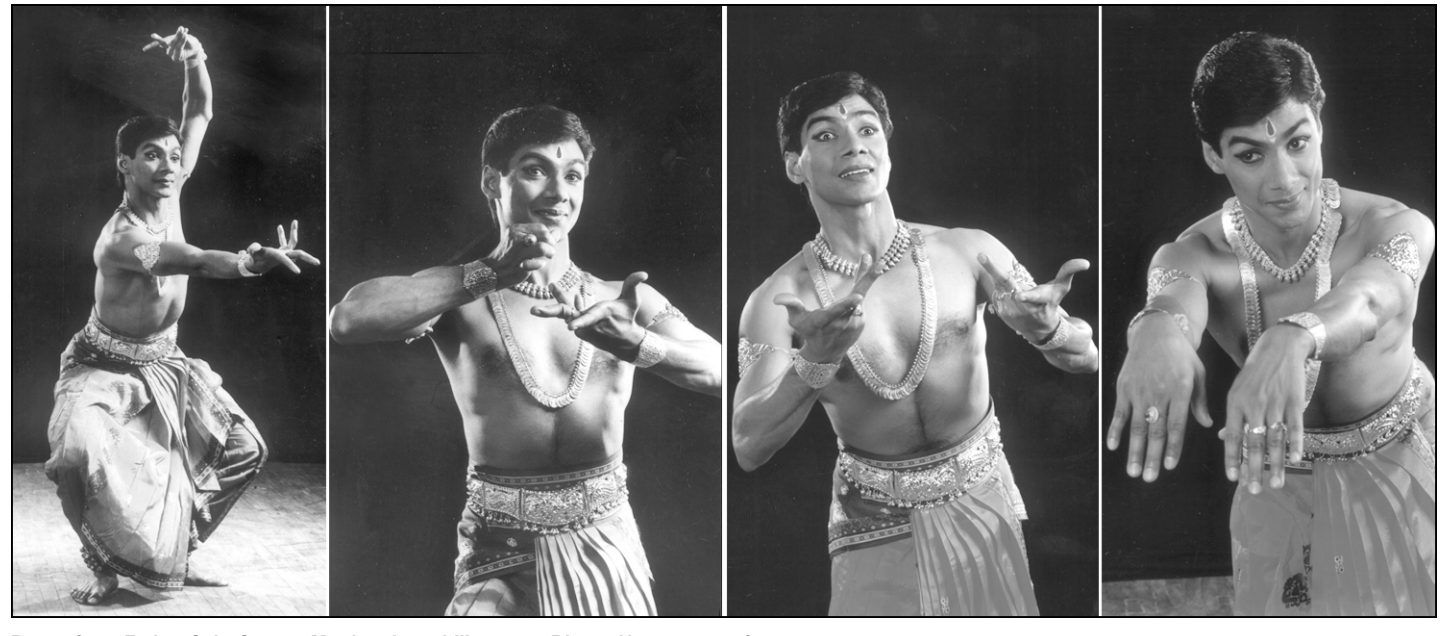
Moolamthuruthil said, "I belong to the Society of Jesus of the Calcutta province; I'm at present doing my PhD studies at the university of Madras, the topic of my search is 'Religion Philosophic Foundations of Performing Art i.e. Dance with special reference to the 'Shaiva Tradition of Nataraj'".

Asked where had performed, father Saju George, who speaks, English Hindi and four South Indian dialects said, "I've given several performances on my three visits to Bangladesh at Dhaka and other cities; I was invited to Moscow with Leela Samson too to perform as lead dancer at an Indian festival there in 1999."

Asked how he had amalgamated dances of Hindu deities side by side with those idolizing the Virgin Mary, and were the two subjects not contradictory, specially since he was a Roman Catholic himself, Father Saju George said, "I belong to a different world and a country which is pluralistic; various religions like Hinduism, Christianity, Buddhism and Jainism flourish there. I believe that my home has nurtured all religions. I'm from Kerala, South India, from a very traditional Catholic family. At the same time, from my childhood, my parents and others around me were open to other religious cultures: their beauty and their arts which were a vehicle of expression of spirituality, affection etc."

Asking about whether he cared to make a living by dancing, Father Saju George said, "As a Catholic priest of the Jesuit order, I've been teaching when I had been in Calcutta; at present my studies take up most of my time. I have to make new choreography and that is certainly requires a lot of thought and is time-consuming. I'm also involved in performances so that I'm not free to train students regularly."

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Poses from Father Saju George Moolamthuruthil's recent Bharat Nattiyam performance

"Keerthanam" was in praise of lord Nataraja—the cosmic lord of dance. In this dance the dancer described the cosmic dance of lord Nataraja in the beautiful hall of the Chidambaram temple in Tamil Nadu, India. This was followed by "Astapadi" of the poet Jayadeva. It was accompanied by "Rangam: Panthuvairali" and had "Talam: Adil". This celebrated the love poetry of Jayadeva, the most celebrated 12th century Indian poet who sang in praise of lord Krishna and his wife Padmavati danced to the lyrics in

steps and from her I got encouragement for dancing. I chose 'Bharat Nattiyam' as my forte as when I went to Calcutta, it was first introduced to 'Kuchipudi' dancing, the classical dance style of Andhra Pradesh at the Rabinindra Bharati University under Professor Derik Mandro. I worked under him for about four years and I was interested in my work and had performed in public but when I finally reached Madras I got interested in the 'Bharat Nattiyam' of the 'Kalakshitra' style. There I obtained a good 'guru' gurus, which involves a style that is more manly, powerful, which is more mathematical, systematic and is suited for the theatre as an ultimate goal."

speaking after the function, Father Saju George said, "I'm at present doing my PhD studies at the university of Madras, the topic of my search is 'Religion Philosophic Foundations of Performing Art i.e. Dance with special reference to the 'Shaiva Tradition of Nataraj'".

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TV GUIDE

Table with TV channel listings (CHANNEL 1, HBO, ATN BANGLA, STAR PLUS, STAR GOLD, STAR WORLD, CHANNEL V, ESPN) and today's highlights (Executive Decision, The Next Karate Kid, Freddy Got Fingered).