Ta (p) Thaiya!

Zainab Kantawala WESTSIDE

Here’s one of the best classic combinations you could get. It’s a merger of two different dance forms—the Western Tap dance and the Eastern Bharatnatyam—and the outcome is equally rhythmic Tap Natyam. Suparna Banerjee, a renowned Bharatnatyam danseuse and scholar, presented her paper ‘On the making of Tap Natyam’ at the 22nd world congress on dance research held in Athens, Greece recently.

Speaking about the new dance form, Suparna said, “Tap Natyam is a merging of diverse and disparate elements into a unified whole.” Dance is usually considered a pure form of entertainment. She wants to prove this concept wrong. “Dance is not merely for fun. It should be taken as part of education. Young generation should be introduced to newer things,” she said. One could experiment a lot in classical dance and she was exploring vastness of the classical dance forms, she added.

Tap Natyam received a huge response abroad. As people are familiar with Tap dance, they could relate to the new form. “At first, it was difficult for them. Gradually, they started relating to it,” Suparna said. Combining the two entirely different dance forms wasn’t easy. It required a lot of research.

Nobody had thought of it. People were amazed when they first saw Tap Natyam. I have received good response so far. People abroad also appreciated the neck and eye movements. Some even tried them,” she said.

Suparna started her training in dance at 10. She respects every dance form, she said. “My mother and my father have been my inspiration. They always keep encouraging me to do better,” she concluded.

Suparna Banerjee, an eminent Bharatnatyam exponent, has rhythmically blended two dance forms—Tap dance and Bharatnatyam—into Tap Natyam.