



## GORIMA HAZARIKA

### Born to Dance

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Gorima Hazarika, the noted dancer, choreographer, script-writer, designer, recipient of Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for dance, presently Director of Mitali Kala Kendra, a pioneer institution of Classical and traditional dances, was born in 1939 to her illustrious parents, Lokabandhu Dr. Bhubaneswar Barooah and Induprova Barooah of Guwahati.

A prolific dancer of Assam, Gorima revealed her spontaneous inclination towards dance from her early childhood. The inborn talent in the art of dance, its naturalness and spontaneity, was reflected in her scintillating dance performance during her school and college days. As a budding classical dancer, Gorima received high accolades from various corners when she was only a little child. Gorima passed Matriculation from T. C. Govt. Girls' High School, and BA from Cotton college, Guwahti. She is married to the noted dancer, artist and cultural activist of Assam, Sri Krishnamurty Hazarika.

Gorima Hazarika's initial professional training in dance was under the renowned dancer and teacher,

Pandit Charu Bordoloi of Guwahati, who was a disciple of the Kathak maestro, Sambhu Maharaj. Her training in Odissi Dance was under Guru Surendra Nath Jena of Triveni Kala Kendra, New Delhi, and Guru Muralidhar Majhi of Rabindra Bharati University of Kolkata. Under the tutelage of Borbayan Rosheswar Saikia and Borbayan Ghanta Kanta Bora of Kamalabari Sattrā, Gorima learnt Sattriya dance. Dance being her forte, she has also proved her mettle in folk and other traditional dances of Assam and the North East.

Gorima Hazarika has to her credit a plethora of dance-dramas, scripted, choreographed, designed and costumed by her—each being an artistic admixture of pure entertainment and instruction, having a valuable message to convey to the society. *Chetna* presents the image of the maimed, mutilated woman as she passes through many phases of history, from primitive to modern, *Mukti Sangram* is based on India's freedom struggle, *The Story of the Golden Butterfly* showcases Assam's famous Muga Silk, *Jaga Abhinava Chande* addresses women's issues, *Om Shanti* is a fervent appeal for maintenance of peace in the context of contemporary turmoils of Assam, *SeaGod* takes up the sensitive issue of untouchability *Prakriti-Manav* reflects the bond between man and nature, and also man's merciless destruction of nature's resources creating environmental pollution, *Nimati Kanya* of Jyotiprasad is a soulful feast of superb art. All these dance dramas were presented and performed before the audience, on different occasions with remarkable aplomb. Gorima has also scripted, choreographed and designed a number of children's opera and Ballet, based on contemporary dance style. Prominent among these are *Panchatantra*, *Hitopadesh*, *Raja* and *The Story of the Blue Bird*. Making use of folk and traditional dance and costumes of the North Eastern region, she has also choreographed patriotic songs composed by the noted lyricists of Assam. Apart from directing dance in more than eighteen Assamese films, Gorima also scripted and directed dance dramas for Mobile Theatres of Assam for stage presentation. A number of thought provoking dance dramas have been choreographed by her for Doordarshan Kendra, Guwahati, and Central production Centre, New Delhi.

As a connoisseur of dance, Gorima has put her heart and soul in the development and promotion of Sattriya dance of Assam. She is a dancer always in quest of a meticulous and perfect design that has imparted an unquestioning quality to all her performances which are reflective of a dazzling array of talents. The novelty of style and method is seen in her wide range of repertoire. She is the first to follow a methodology, a ritualistic order in the presentation of Sattriya dance, such as *Guruvandana*, pure dance *Geetor Bhag*, and *Abhinaya*. She has also, for the first time in Assam, extended her repertoire in the introduction of *'Abhinaya'* with *'Sansari Bhava'*. It is again Gorima who designed the costume for Sattriya by the Sattriya dancers of Assam even today. *Ramayan*, *Krishna Rukmini Katha*, *The Butterfly thief Krishna* and *Sishu Krishna Leela*—are some of her finely choreographed dance-dramas in the classical Sattriya dance style. The Sattriya dance recital by Gorima hazarika and her

troupe in Kolkata on November 8, 1995, before a distinguished gathering of dance critics, dance Gurus, dancers of repute and many elites of Kolkata was a performance of great virtuosity. She received warm appreciation from one of the doyens of Indian dance, Amala Shankar, for her enthralling performance. For her presentation of two short pieces from the writings of Sankardev and Madhabdev at the Unity Concert at Prasanthi Nilay of Puttapurty, she received the divine blessings of Sri Satya Sai Baba. The eminent Odissi Guru, Kelucharan Mahapatra showered on her lavist praises when she mesmerised a huge audience by her Sattriya dance recital at the Konarak Dance and Music Festival of Orissa. She also choreographed a Bihu dance to be presented at the first South Asian Festival of SAARC, held in New Delhi, in 1992. This vibrant Bihu dance was one of the high points in the whole agenda. One of her most popular and widely acclaimed dance recitals is *Jugalbandi* which is a flawless experimentation of a harmonious fusion of Sattriya and Oddissi dance forms, and it is a reflection of Gorima's clever use of new ideas which is her ingenious invention. In the Rabindra Nritya Natya *Chandalika*, she has made use of various traditional folk-dances of Assam.

Till today, Gorima has been devoting her self to her work with an unflinching determination and zeal, and with sustained labour, she has been engaging herself in exploring many unexplored vistas of dance. As a recognition of her outstanding contribution to art and Culture, and for her concern with the societal values which she desires to uphold through the medium of dance, she has been honoured with numerous awards, the culmination of all these being the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for dance which she received in 2006. Under her able guidance many budding dancers of Guwahati have been receiving training in the Mitali Kala Kendra, which is a cultural hub of the city, and she is the teacher and mentor of a number of meritorious dancers of Assam who have become well established in their dancing career. At present Gorima is a distinguished member of Sangeet Natak Advisory Committee, Lalit Kala Advisory Committee, Sankardev Study and Sattriya Sanskrita Pratisthan Committee, Review and Screening Committee of Doordarshan Kendra Guwahati, and many such prestigious institutions and organizations.

Besides being an accomplished dancer, Gorima's merits have been acknowledged in painting and drawing, in designing costumes and jewellery, and also in interior decoration. Life's little joys and simple pleasure, such as a long drive to some nature's serene bower far from the madding crowd, shopping, not in the sprawling Malls, but in the road-side shopping-corners, sharing a meal with friends and family in a Dhaba or a restaurant, cooking an instant snack for a guest,—with all this Gorima Hazarika has maintained a unique life-style which is a revelation of a wonderful zest for life, and this style is the very flag of her disposition. □□