

UNIT-6C

Explanation:

Maestro With A Mission is a lesson about the maestro of Kuchipudi Dr. Vempati Chinna Satyam earlier known as Vempati Chinna Satyam. He was born to Venkatachalamaiah and Varalakshmi on 15th October 1929. He led an illustrious life of 83 years and he breathed his last on 29th July 2012. He was survived by his wife Swarajya Lakshmi, two sons and three daughters.

Vempati Chinna Satyam was a 18 year old drop out from school when he left his house with just two rupees in order to realise his dream. He was extremely passionate about his dream and thus he wanted to elevate the status of an art form that he had learnt from his great gurus. And so, he decided to dedicate his life for the enrichment of that art and to live his dream.

He was 18 years when he left his house for Madras, now called Chennai about 400 kms from his place. He started 50 kms away from Vijayawada in Krishna district. He walked all the way and fed himself with plaintains and water. Later seeing his condition, a stationmaster offered him a full meal. The stationmaster enquired of him about his whereabouts but no reply came from Vempati. He was sad and was staring at the endless sky.

He started from Kuchipudi and the art form he was passionate was KUCHIPUDI.

The dance form KUCHIPUDI originated from the village Kuchipudi. For a long time, the art was performed at temples at the time of annual festivals and in streets on demand of the people. Initially it was male oriented dance form and even female roles were played by men. But great gurus like Vedantam Lakshminaraya, Chinta Krishna Murthy enriched and transformed it and welcomed women to play different roles in this dance form. There were many transformation done to this dance form and it was not much popular neither recognized on a par with classical dances till 1958.

Satyam had to toil hard in order to achieve his dream and bring Kuchipudi to the mainstream. He had to face many humiliation for desiring to learn the dance form even by his teachers. Keeping aside all the discomfort and humiliation, Satyam proceeded towards achieving his dream.

Tadepalli Peraiah Sastry and Vedantam Lakhshminarayana Sastry taught him the difficult aspects of Kuchipudi style and inspired him. Satyam then developed a genuine and ardent interest towards the art form. There were times he sold out his meal tickets to watch dance programmes in Chennai. His only desire was to liberate Kuchipudi from the clutches of insignificance and oblivion.

Vempati Chinna Satyam, with the encouragement from his cousin Vempati pedda Satyam, he tried his luck in Telegu film world. And Telegu film lovers can never forget the dance sequences in Narthanasala, Devadasu and Pandava Vanavasan. Thus, we can say that Dr.Vempati has carved a niche in Telegu films as well as a dance director. Even then, he wasn't satisfied with his success. He then established Kuchipudi Art Academy in 1963 in Madras, to popularize the art form. He composed 180 solo items and 15 dance dramas. His masterpieces "Padmavati Srinivasa Kalyanam" are the symbols of depth of his knowledge of mastery over Kuchipudi. His communication skills were so good that he was able to portray each nuance of the dance to the experts as well as to the laypersons equally well. His distinguished disciples take extreme pride in being his disciple.

He has many laurels to his name. He was conferred with 'Padma Bhushan' by the Govt. Of India. Andhra University awarded him an honorary doctorate in 1980. Sri Venkateshwara University, Tirupati, honoured him with an honorary degree D.Litt in 1983. He was also presented with the 'Golden Key' by the mayor of Miami, USA, Stephen P. Clark in the year 1981. There are many feathers in his cap. In the year,1976, the TTD made him the 'Asthana Natyascharya'.

The Telegu speakers identify themselves with Kuchipudi. Many people had worked hard for Kuchipudi but Dr. Vempati's contribution towards the dance form is immense and the whole world looks at him with reverent eyes. He can rightly be called as "Maestro With A Misiion".

.