

s_anjali@dndia.net

IT ALL BEGAN when she was just six. Soon her hobby became her passion. At 23, Poonam Panchwagh has reached newer heights of achievement over the past few years. "The credit completely goes to my mother Chhaya Panchwagh. As a young girl she dreamed of being a dancer, but could not pursue it because of social obligations. Hence I am living her dream," says Poonam.

Currently in Leipzig, Germany to perform with her friend, Poonam shares, "I had a German student studying under me in Pune for almost a year. It all started when she came up with an idea of having an Indo-German dance project - Spir-

Her best foot forward

international platform. This experience is helping me discover the distinctive possibilities of combining two dance cultures in a very alternative approach. Considering the very strong influence of contemporary dance techniques here, my effort of blending the two cultures, without disturbing the individuality of the respective dance styles, are being appreciated by the western as well as Indian audiences."

So, how has the international journey been so far? "I believe, that it is not always about winning, it is about making the audiences commemorate your performance. The appreciation that I earned after my performance in the Indian Embassy in May this year, is very momentous for me, as the minister Rakesh Mishra came up on stage and felicitated me," she says. The Centre for European Culture and Oriental is positively impressed by the performance, and has offered her to extend her stay to give more performances and workshops.

Poonam is thus grateful to her guru Rujata as she says, "She is the one who made me believe in myself."

Poonam Panchwagh is on a mission—the dancer is making her country proud with her Kathak performances in Germany

The compositions

- Krishnamayee
- Krishna Consciousness
- Jagruti

it—with Kathak as the main aspect."

Here, Poonam's guru and Rujata Soman encouraged her to go take the leap and under her dance school Urmees, she explored the western world of dance sticking to Indian classical roots. "Thus, I am in Germany, training the contemporary dancers here in Kathak, and giving various workshops and lecture demonstrations and performing around Europe," she adds.

Poonam informs that the presentation of Indian dance forms there, give very good exposure to a performer as well as a choreographer. "I am fortunate, that at such a young age, I am getting to study the technical aspects that are needed in organising the performances on an

LIVING HER DREAM:
Poonam Panchwagh

