



Bollywood is a big inspiration for oriental dancer Eva, finds Arun Jayan

THE DANCE EVANGELIST



CLAD in a blue dance attire, she moves her body to the sound of sea. Her belly gyrates in a natural rhythm much like the waves in the sea. Slowly she enters the world of oriental dance with her slender legs finding the right balance on the sand.

As the onlookers detect a similarity with the belly dance, her expression changes, and she switches to a passionate and flawless Bollywood dance number. Meet Eva - an oriental dancer from Munich in Germany, who has developed her own dance style mixing oriental and Bollywood styles - who is on a visit to Kerala as part of her trip to India to learn Odissi.

The blend of Bollywood and belly dance may sound strange to many, but for Eva it's just an extension of her passion for dance.

"Well, I came across Bollywood dance through a friend of mine in 2002. She purchased a CD which had dance sequences from famous Bollywood films and she gave it to me as she knows my passion for dance. I was fascinated by those gorgeous ladies dancing to the beats of Hindi song. Soon I started watching all those Bollywood flicks I could get my hands on in Germany. Also, it was the time when Bollywood movies started flowing into Germany," says Eva, who is into oriental dance from a tender age and has completed 20 years in the profession.

She runs a dance school in Munich which she has named 'Tanz (Dance) Temple'. She has around 30-40 students. "Now, I have completed

watching more than 100 Bollywood movies and also teach my students Bollywood dance. The trend of Bollywood dance is slowly picking up in Germany and mostly it is the teenage girls who are attracted to it. It's their passion for the dance form that drives most of them to me," says Eva who is accompanied by her friend and teacher Hildegard Weisis, a veteran oriental dancer from Germany who has organised big dance shows across the world.

For Eva, who performs Bollywood dance shows in Germany and oriental dance in India, 'Kajara Re', 'Jiya Jale' and



Eva and Weisis

'Dayya Dayya' are her favourite Bollywood dance numbers. "I like to dance to the music of A R Rahman. I can hum some of his songs," she says and makes true her claim by humming the song 'Jiya Jale' from the movie 'Dil Se'.

Currently she is in India along with Weisis to learn Odissi and she says her 'guru' is Sanggeetha Das from Pondicherry.

"I have performed in India before. Actually when I was barely 18 I have performed for Maharaja of Udaipur when he visited Germany nearly two decades ago. I also have performed in Morocco, Tunisia, Greece, Turkey and Switzerland," she adds.

Like her friend Eva, Weisis also has a taste for Bollywood dance but she is more interested in the culture and dance of Arabia. "I have travelled to almost all Arabian countries. I have traveled on camel, cycle and by foot covering the length and breadth of Arabian countries. Recently, I published a book in German about the Arabian culture and lifestyle called 'Basare, Sand und Kardamom'," says Weisis, who is all praise for the unique style of dance Eva has developed.

Ask Eva, if she has named her strange cocktail of oriental dance and Bollywood dance and you would be in a for a surprise. "Yes, I call it Kamasutra," she says with a laugh. Why the name 'Kamasutra'? "Well, Kamasutra is all about love. In dance it is love and passion that transpire through the body and soul of a dancer when she performs," says Eva, who wants to visit Kerala again to have a first-hand-experience of the traditional art form Kalari.

