



REPORT OF

Gudiya Sambhrama ...the Temple Festival 2016

23rd January to 28th February, 2016



सृष्टी रक्षति रक्षिता

Dedicated to Sacred Earth / Bhumi Devi.

A coming together of Nature, Culture & History in Heritage spaces

Heritage Trust & Team

Heritage, a non-profit registered trust has been actively involved since 1994 in the promotion, preservation and dissemination of our heritage and culture through seminars, workshops and cultural festivals.

Since 2010 Heritage has been successfully conducting thematic festivals: “Gudiya Sambhrama, The temple festival” and “Srishti Sambhrama the Earth Mother Festival”. Both festivals are a celebration and a coming together of our cultural and natural heritage in haloed sacred spaces of worship and learning.

The festivals are a feast to the eyes, ears, soul and the intellect too since they include performances, interesting talks, discussions, quiz questions, exhibitions and poster displays..



Introducing the working committee of GUDIYA SAMBHRAMA

Shri. Vijaykumar, the Founder President of the Heritage Trust is an industrialist, by profession, an organic farmer and philanthropist by choice with a fondness for our heritage and culture.

Smt. Vijayalakshmi Vijaykumar is a founder trustee and the secretary of the Heritage Trust. Presently a free-lance designer and member of the national philately board, she was a member of Central Board of Film Certification,

Smt. Supriya Komandur is a trustee and the joint secretary of the Heritage Trust. She is a Bharatanatyam dancer and the artistic director of Amrthavarshini, the academy for arts.

Smt. Rekha Raghavan is a co-ordinator of the Heritage Trust. She is a Bharatanatyam exponent and founder of CITA – centre for Indian Traditional arts in East Africa.



A report of GUDIYA SAMBHRAMA 2016

The theme of the festival “Sacred Earth / Bhumi Devi”

The concept of MOTHER EARTH was inherent in all the world's ancient civilizations through the ages. Earth is referred to as Mahi Matha, Vasundhara, Dharitri and Dharini in our Vedic literature. 'Mahi Matha' true to her maternal nature nurtures and fulfils our needs unconditionally. All of creation is her family and the responsibility to nurture and protect her falls squarely on the shoulders of mankind. The connect to natural and, cultural heritage is reinforced by our traditions,

Introduction: Over the last decade or more increased mobility, access to information and globalization has resulted in apparent progress and increased opportunity but has also brought some problems in its wake like the *loss and insensitivity to history, culture, heritage, and roots, the dawn of an age of disconnect from our own country and culture.*

It has been found that one of the best paths to sensitising people to country, culture and community is through the performing arts especially the traditional classical arts where the content is spiritual and peace giving.

Heritage takes care to select themes, that bridge the disconnect that man has with Natural Heritage today. The endless list of environmental disasters is a direct result of this disconnect and irreverence. Each year various themes related to Mother Nature are selected. The pivotal message of the festival is “Srishti Rakshati Rakshita”.

People of this culture relate simultaneously to the Supreme Godhead whether in sacred spaces within the temples, in the Yaaga Shalas, in the elements, in trees, animals, rivers, mountains, in all of nature, nay in all creation and without any confusion. The approach in the Indian ethos is one that is holistic and all-encompassing.



The venues for the festival are Sacred Heritage spaces. Temples are a creation of our open culture that recognises and understands the diversity of people's approach to the Supreme and the understanding of the Divinity of all creation. Performing arts, architecture, visual arts, literature, poetry, knowledge dissemination, environment and ecology were all a part of this temple culture. Bengaluru is home to beautiful temples some as old as 1200 years and Gudiya Sambhrama is an earnest attempt to revive this multi-faceted culture in temples today...

The resource person for any Heritage activity comes from the best of scholars, artists, academicians, naturalists and others.

Much research and work goes into creating thematic posters for display at the venues. Trees and plants are decorated and displayed with information boards.



“Gudiya Sambhrama...The Bengaluru Temple Festival” has been conducted annually for six successive years. The festival was held between 23rd January 2016 and 28th February 2016,

The theme selected for 2016 was Sacred Earth. Bhumi Devi. The festival brought together over a hundred artists and scholars of repute from across the country. Starting in the month of January for six week-ends and 7 venues, 20 temples resounded with the rhythm of dancing feet and the melody of music mingling with mystical chants and temple bells.,

The Heritage team took great care in finding an artist who worked with red earth and clay to create an image of Bhuvarahaswami the saviour of Bhu Devi in the Hoysala style that was installed on the stage and worshipped at every venue.

The striking features of GUDIYA SAMBHRAMA were many...

Gudiya sambhrama is reflective of the multi layered approach of our culture. Sharing culture and knowledge through the arts, talks and poster display of our heritage. It is an effort to rejuvenate the temple eco-system which was the fulcrum of the community.

It brought the best of art to the people making it accessible to a cross-section of society from



the flower vendor to the intellectual connoisseur of the arts. (No Entry Fee). Every artist included presentations focused on Sacred Earth.

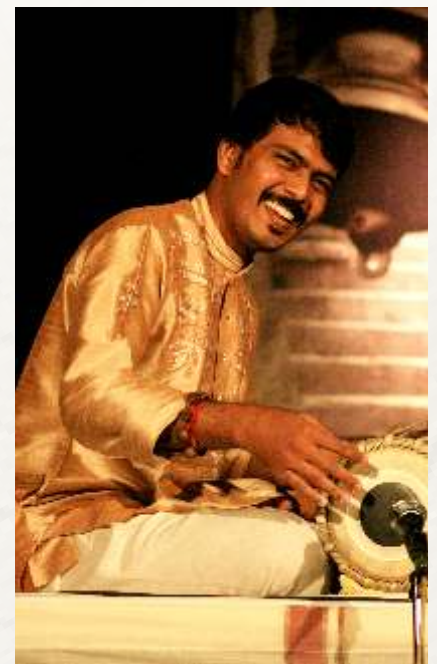
The audience expressed their joy at such grand art being made available to them in such a wonderful ambience. All the artists were also thrilled by the forum that was created for the performances and the opportunity to research and present thematic compositions.

Apart from the main stage performances artists performed inside each of the 20 temples as part of the sangeetha and nrithya upachara to the Supreme. This was the highlight of the utsava to bring back the devopacharas in the temple as this practice is slowly fading away. Artistes have found devopacharas inspiring and uplifting. Short stories were narrated about Earth reflecting the cultural and ecological significance.





A main stage was put up at 7 of these Bengaluru temple spaces and a very special ambience was created with a huge backdrop illustrating the elements along with the Gopura – the temple tower.



Behind the Scenes

A spacious stage was erected in each venue taking care to make it sturdy and smooth for the dancers. Artistically designed platforms were placed for the musicians. Two green rooms were installed next to the stage.

The best of sound and lighting was arranged for every venue. Generators were organized for an uninterrupted power supply during the performances.

Heritage took all the measures to take care of the outstation artists and their hospitality. Hotels were booked in advance to make the artists comfortable and food was arranged according to their requirements.

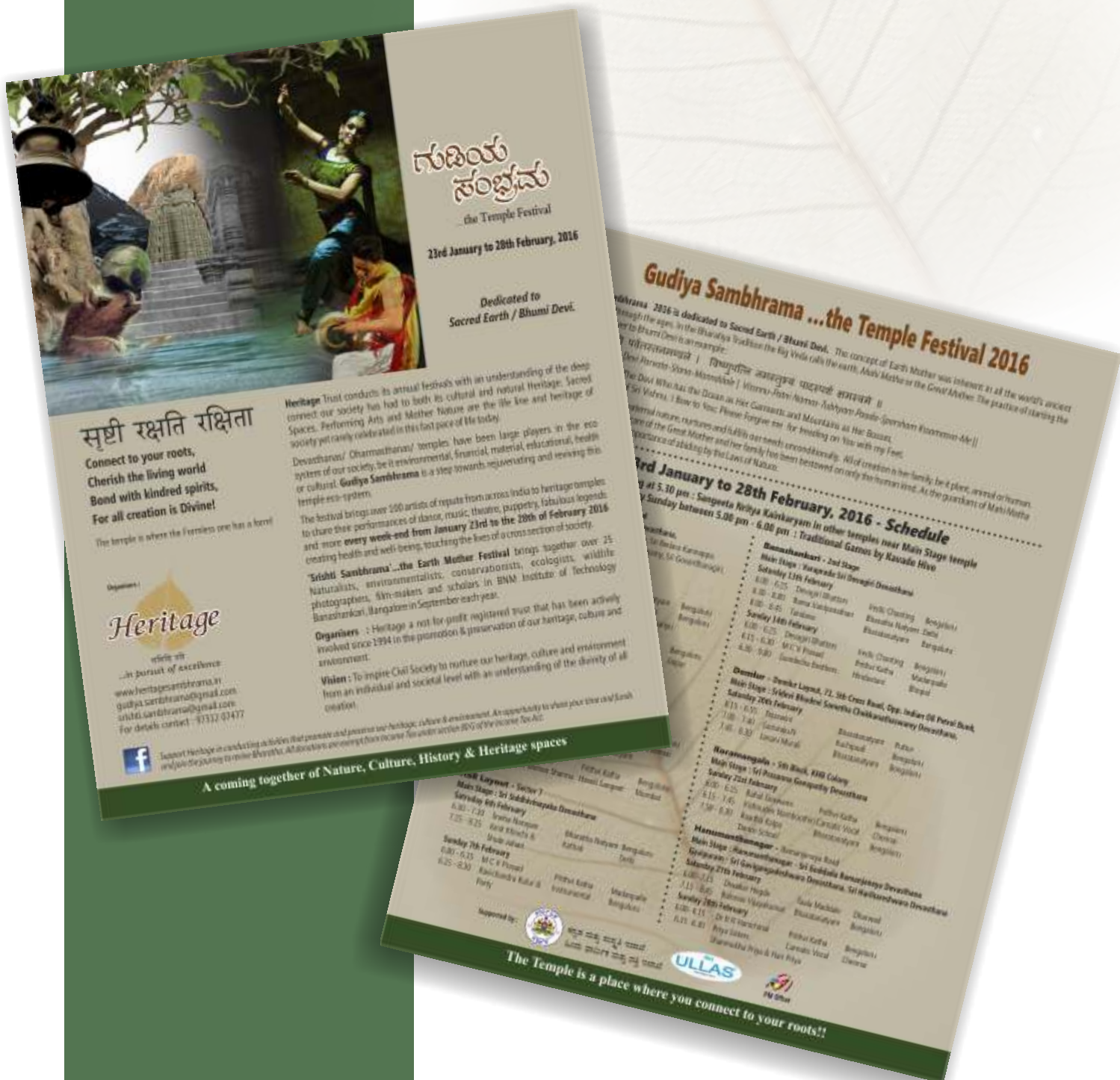
Transport was arranged for their arrival and departures and also to the programme venue.

All artists including their Gurus present were blessed with divine chanting by the Pradhana Archakas while they were given mementos by Heritage.

Memento to all the artists and chief guests was a sacred plant “Tulsi”, a pack of Organic Fox tail millet with a small write up about traditional Indian millet varieties and recipes, a book on spirituality and life, fragrant incense sticks in a paper bag to convey the message – “Avoid plastics”.



Hand-outs were printed on recycled brown paper with the images of a temple bell, sacred tree, a Mountain, a Boar lifting and protecting mother earth and a flowing river with the entire schedule and write-up of the festival



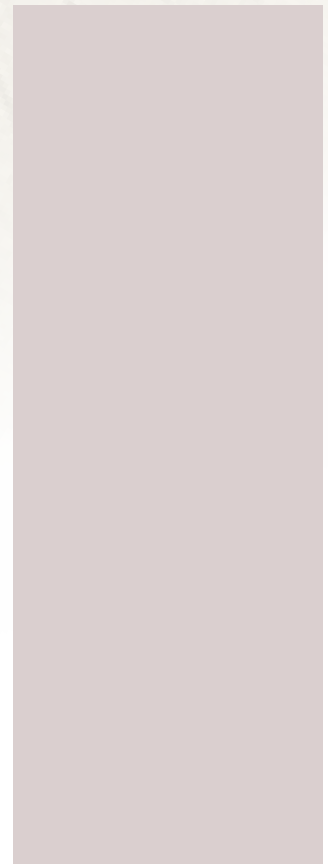


Audience were largely temple going public, vendors, art connoisseurs, and families with young children, nature and conservation club members, home makers, lecturers, professors, young photographers and artists.

Sanskrit scholars Dr. S. R. Leela and Shatavadhani Dr. R. Ganesh wrote thematic poems in Sanskrit and Kannada that were used by the artists for their performances.



Heritage in an effort to revive traditional Indian board games arranged for Kavade Toys Hive to be there before the performances started with their wonderful traditional games in every venue which the children and adults enjoyed to the hilt.



Basavanagudi



Performers and Performances:

We began this year celebrating Sacred Earth at 700 years old Bull temple - Sri Dodda Basavanna temple in Basavangudi with two days of soul stirring dance and music on 23rd Jan and 24th Jan 2016. The festival was inaugurated by Sri Prakash Belawadi a well-known journalist, theatre director, actor and award winning film director. Rukmini Vijaykumar's energetic and intense Bharatanatyam performance kept the audience spell-bound after which the young team of Yaksha Kala Academy regaled the audience with a brilliant Yakshagana performance, 'Veera Abhimanyu' featuring powerful portrayals by children.

The second day began with a wonderful talk on Bhumi Devi by Dr S R Leela a renowned Sanskrit Scholar and Vice President of Samskrutha Bharati. This was followed by a Mohana Veena concert by Padmasree Vishwamohan Bhatt accompanied by Sri Ravindra Yavagal on the tabla, transporting the audience to a world of melody. Dr Subramaniam Swamy, who arrived just as Panditji played Vande Mataram, spoke about the revival of temple culture and how GUDIYA SAMBHRAMA was a great effort in that direction.

Malleswaram

The second week-end on Temple Street in Malleswaram, devotees and art connoisseurs who witnessed the Sundara Kanda of Ramayana by Bharatanjali troupe from Chennai on 30th Jan 2016 were totally immersed in wonderful art. Sri Sri Yathiraj Jeeyar Swamiji, who has been a great support to our initiative, with his divine presence and short speech about Mother Earth, blessed all the artists and organizers. On the 31st people were transported to a realm of peace by Pandit Rattan Mohan Sharma and a vibrant group of accompanying artists with Haveli Sangeet. A committed scientist from IISC Sri A R Shivakumar presented a talk about Earth and water conservation.

Heritage began a three question quiz contest each day about the theme, the temple and that evening's performance. The prize was co-sponsored by Swarajya and Kavade Hive, it was a treat to see a very responsive audience eagerly vying to answer the questions too.



HSR Layout



Third week at HSR Layout Sri Vara Sidhivinayaka Temple was filled with the sounds of dancing feet on Saturday, one Bharathanatyam performance followed by a Kathak duo from Delhi. The audience watched with bated breath.

On Sunday the evening began with a sharing of thoughts on soil and agriculture by Sri. M CV Prasad who came all the way from Madanpalle, (Andhra Pradesh) an avid organic farmer with a close connect to Bhumi Devi. This was followed by Ravichandra Kulur on the flute while Karthik Nagaraj played the violin and they were accompanied by 3 wonderful artists on various percussive instruments. The audience kept beat and were so immersed in the music that none realised how time had flown by.





Fourth weekend at 'Devagiri' the hill of gods was replete with song and dance in celebration of Mahi Maatha, the earth mother. The event on Saturday had an auspicious beginning as the lamps were lit to the resounding Vedic chants of the Devagiri Varaprada Venkateshwara swamy Temple Archakas.

The inspiring talk by Mr Prasad that urged everybody to embrace a natural lifestyle had even the children responding eagerly. Bharathanatyam by Rama Vaidyanathan from Delhi and the all-male ensemble of 'Thandava' was a visual treat, more so in the spectacular ambience. Sri Suryaprakash Chairman of Prasara Bharathi graced the occassion. Drupad Hindustani music performance by the Gundecha Bandhu left every music drenched soul wanting more of it.

Banashankari





Domlur Koramangala



The fifth weekend saw two venues; one was the over 1000 year old Sri. Chokkanathaswamy Temple in Domlur. It was a joy to organise the festival in this venue as Shakuntala Mami the temple trustee-in-charge, her team and the temple community were so involved in the festival. We had three upcoming young auditioned artists perform .Bharathanatyam by Tejaswini from Puttur, Kuchipudi by Gururaj and Bharathanatyam Janani Murali.

Hundreds of terracotta lamps lit by the devotees in the temple premises, arranged aesthetically on beautiful Rangolis were the highlight of the evening.

The Ganapathy Temple in Koramangala was the site for Sunday's festival. The evening began with a talk on Agriculture, food and our culture by Sri Rahul Goswami; this was followed by a vocal concert by Sri Vishnu Dev from Chennai who had chosen his repertoire with care. All the compositions were based on Bhumi Devi. This was followed by the Raadha Kalpa Dance School's refreshing Bharatanatyam recital.



The Sixth and the final weekend were in Hanumanthnagar, the temple of Ram Anjaneya on the hillock. Nritya Kainkaryam was first offered at the Gavi Gangadeshwara Temple and in Harihareshwara Temple. An experimental “Vachika Yakshagana” was presented by Diwakar Hegde and his team which was interesting followed by Rukmini Vijyakumar's stunning Bharatanatyam presentation. Sri Annadaaneshwaranandanatha swamy representing Nirmalananda Chaitanya of BGS graced the occasion as also Sri Rajashekar, Director General of ICCR, New Delhi.

Hanumanthnagar



On the last day, the Mathadhipathi of the Avani Sringeri Math graced the festival and blessed the artists, organizers and the audience. The concluding vocal recital was by Hari Priya and Shanmuka Priya of Priya sisters' fame who had woven their entire concert around some beautiful compositions on Bhudevi and the Pancha Bhutam.



The audience were rooted to their seats and did not want to leave at the end of such an enjoyable and serene evening. The community spirit in this temple is indeed to be nurtured and cherished.



As always, this year too, heritage temples of Bengaluru Saw celebrations of **Mother Earth** in music, dance, Taala Maddale, Yakshagana, traditional games and story-telling with over 100 eminent performing artistes from all over India gathering in the city to pay tribute to our common protector. An additional effort was made to organize the live web streaming of all the concerts by SHAALE.COM so that overseas followers and absentees could enjoy the performances.

GUDIYA SAMBHRAMA...the Bengaluru Temple Festival of 2016 saw an increase in audience and interest. Over the 6 week-ends several thousand people were treated to enriching and soul elevating art. Artists were moved by this unique performance experience. Temple staff and community were over-joyed and the organisers satisfied with completion of yet another successful edition of Gudiya Sambhrama, a festival which was a coming together of nature, culture, history & heritage spaces dedicated to **Earth**, an indispensable source for the existence of life.





Kuchipudi Tribute

A graded artist of Doordharshan and a disciple of Guru Vijayanthi Kashi, Garuraju will be presenting a solo Kuchipudi recital as part of 'Gudiya Sambhrama - The Temple Festival'.

Where: Sreedevi and Bhudevi Temple
When: February 20, 7 pm

● 'Gudiya Sambhrama'

A tribute to earth

Heritage is celebrating the sixth edition of 'Gudiya Sambhrama - the Bengaluru Temple Festival' till February 28. This year, the festival theme is 'Sacred Earth/Bhumi Devi'.

The festival, which is a mix of music, dance and arts, found wide resonance last year with the participation of thousands of Bengaluru's citizens comprising regular devotees, families in the temple neighbourhood, senior citizens, flower vendors and connoisseurs of the performing arts.

This year's theme comes in response to the profound challenges that confront Planet Earth today — Climate Change.

As always, this year too, heritage temples of Bengaluru have been seeing celebrations of 'Mother Earth' in music, dance, 'Taala Mad-dale', 'Yakshagana', traditional games and story-telling with over 100 eminent performing artistes from all over India gathering in the City to pay tribute to the common



Rukmini Vijayakumar

protector. Traditional games by 'Kavade Hive' is being held every Sunday from 5 pm to 6.15 pm at the performance temple venues.

On February 27, 7.15 pm, Rukmini Vijayakumar will present a Bharatanatyam recital at Guddada Ramanjaneya Devasthanam, Ramanjaneya Road, Hanumanth Nagar. On February 28, at the same venue, RR Hanichinal will present 'Prithvi Katha'. For details, call 9731207477.

A temple festival to celebrate culture

Bengaluru has always been known for being a cultural hub — be it in the sense of traditional practices or otherwise. And in times where there is no dearth of such activities, it is not a surprise if you haven't heard of Gudiya Sambhrama hosted by the Heritage organisation, meaning the temple festival. Although conceived five years ago, the not-for-profit organisation is relatively unknown, mostly because of its relatively informal structure. But let that not lead you into doubting their impact.

"We are an organisation that looks at working at anything that disseminates traditional knowledge systems," says Supriya Komandur, who co-founded Heritage with Rekha Raghavan and Vijayalakshmi Vijaykumar. The founders explained that they began their initiative by organising workshops and seminars related to dance, music, Sanskrit and Indic studies.

Gudiya Sambhrama aims at promoting Indian traditions by organising cultural programmes in the premises of temples. The idea behind starting a festival like this was to make it accessible to common people, thereby cultivating interest in the masses. Classical music or dance performances have always only drawn a niche crowd — to attend them, one often has to purchase tickets or passes, and that proves to be an expensive affair for the layman. Also, it is the same crowd that ends up going everywhere. So to put an end to such a trend, Heritage came up with the idea of a temple festival. It entails performances by artistes (dance, music etc) that is spread over six-to-eight weekends in the City during the January-February period.

"Temples were often centres of knowledge and community development in the past. But they have become more commercial over the years. So we decided to host this in many neighbourhoods across the City because people can't travel everywhere," Supriya reasons.

Another intention behind such an initiative is to draw youth and children. So,

with the belief that all things are a part of nature, they base their festival on a different theme every year. Last year, the theme was sacred water, and this year, it was sacred earth. They have scholars penning poems for them based on each theme so they can reach out to a wider audience. They have had instances of children going back home and asking their parents about things they have probably picked up at the festival. So one can be assured that there is some kind of awareness that is being created, they believe.

When it comes to organising programmes too, they have a meticulous process in place. There is a selection process involved, wherein artistes apply, making their intentions clear as to why they are keen to participate. They ensure that the applicant knows the Festival's purpose, motive and theme completely enough to be committed to the cause. Needless to say, it is only those truly deserving artistes who are aspiring to be professionals are picked. This is not a spot for those who are looking at it as a hobby. All the slots are curated and candidates are picked by a special committee.

Even established artistes who perform at the Festival are very understanding of them and charge only a part of what they would normally charge otherwise. Gudiya Sambhrama has been organised in several localities across Bengaluru, evoking good responses in most cases, which has been a gratifying experience for the organisers. People who initially started coming out of curiosity later developed interest and stayed and came back the following years. The migrant population too has supposedly taken well to the fest.

The Festival is being organised in Hyderabad starting this year by a different group, under Heritage's expert guidance. So, does Gudiya Sambhrama look at expanding into other parts of Karnataka? "We want to, but do not have the resources or time to do so. If any other individual or organisation is interested to start this, we would like them to take the onus. But we will be fully supportive in whatever way we can," they say.

Deepika Nidige



FERVOUR One of the performances at Gudiya Sambhrama.

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six days a week

Temple festival



EXPRESSIVE Gururaju

'Heritage' is celebrating the sixth edition of 'Gudiya Sambharama - the Bengaluru Temple Festival' on February 20, 6 pm onwards, and on February 21, 7 pm, at Sri Prasanna Ganapathy Devasthanam, Koramangala and Sreedevi and

Bhudevi Temple, Domlur Layout respectively.

Gururaju, a graded artiste, will present a Kuchipudi recital on the first day and Rahul Goswami, Vishnu Dev and members of 'Raadhika Kalpa Dance School' will perform on the second day.



A tribute to earth

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Read Metrolife
six days a week

Gudiya Sambhrama

...the Temple Festival 2016

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, COMPANIES, ORGANISATIONS & INDIVIDUALS, WHO SUPPORT GUDIYA SAMBHRAMA

- ◆ **INDIAN COUNCIL FOR
CULTURAL RELATIONS - ICCR**
- ◆ **DEPARTMENT OF KANNADA
& CULTURE, KARNATAKA**
- ◆ **DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS
ENDOWMENTS (MUJARA)**
- ◆ **PATIL PARIMAL WORKS**
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Gudiya Sambhrama

...the Temple Festival 2016

23rd January to 28th February, 2016

Organisers :



संसिद्धिं प्रति
...in pursuit of excellence

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