



MEET YOUR NEIGHBOUR

ASHLEY LOBO CHOREOGRAPHER

■ Rashmi Kumar

HE'S BEEN in the industry for almost 21 years now, and firmly believes that he's here to express, not impress. Meet 36-year-old choreographer Ashley Lobo, who with an impressive track record has proved that he's much more than just a break-a-leg-dancer! For him what the audience sees is the tip of the iceberg, and that's where his work begins. "I want to educate people and to take them deep into dance, so that they can unravel the magic beneath what they see," he says.

Dance happened by accident to Ashley. He reminisces, "It all happened when my mother was directing a school musical play, which was being choreographed by Salomi Roy Kapoor. Since everyone knew I was into dancing, they asked me if I would try too. I did so and my



PRABHAS ROY

Dance Centre and Sydney Dance Company.

Giving up on a full time stable job in exports, he moved on to form his own dance academy in 1998, The Danceworkx Performing Arts Company, with an aim to teach dance along the lines of dance institutes overseas. The academy's curriculum includes styles such as Jazz, Classical Ballet, Contemporary Dance and Ballroom.

So what is new about his academy, especially when there are so many mushrooming at every corner in the city? Explains he, "The Danceworkx philosophy is to create thinking dancers, not just clones. The students are taught to respect their teachers, to draw out the best they can from what the teachers have to offer and to grow beyond their teachers." Be it Jazz or Ballet, the only thing that Ashley constantly asks his students to do is to develop connectivity. Anything creative, according to him, is spiritual and one needs to be in complete control of oneself, in order to express through one's creativity.

Ashley is already flooded with Bollywood offers and is excited about them because he wants to test how far he

effort was appreciated." It was here that the noted choreographer Karla Singh witnessed his performance and was quite impressed. She encouraged Ashley to work with her, and he later took up dance as a full time profession. Since then there has been no looking back for him. He then moved overseas to live in Sydney and studied dance at the Bodenweiser

can expand himself to choreograph for films. According to him, films are another dimension, another structure, where there is limited usage of light and space. Says he, "For me, to venture into films is like opening a Pandora's box."

As for the tremendous success he's had in the industry, he lays the onus on his wife. Happily married for eight years now, Ashley is hook, line and sinker in love with his wife. He feels that she is much more focused than he is. Says he, "Had it not been for Ramneeka, my love tank would have always been empty." Five years from now, Ashley sees himself firmly grounded in Bollywood. But for now, his stage musicals, belief in his students and immense love for his wife is what matters to him the most. As he sums up, "When I am dancing, I'm on another planet, and even when I'm not dancing, my wife makes sure I keep on flying high!"

What I like about South Delhi
Convenient location to be in

What I hate about South Delhi
It's too crowded and there's no parking space

Favourite restaurant
Diva at GK II, and Big Chill at East of Kailash

Favourite Shopping
Ansal Plaza and M Block GK I

One big dream
To have a few international level artists develop out of Danceworkx Academy