

Dancing to their tunes

WITH A RISE IN POPULARITY OF MUSIC VIDEOS, FASHION EVENTS, DANCE SHOWS IN AWARD CEREMONIES AND SPORTS EVENTS, THERE IS A DEMAND FOR CHOREOGRAPHERS, WRITES **PRITIKA GHURA**



Institute information

- Danceworx Performing Arts Academy
www.thedanceworx.com
- Shiamak Davar's Institute for Performing Arts
www.sdipa.com
- Passion Institute of Music and Dance
Passion music@rediffmail.com
- Sangeet Natak Academy

(Indicative listing)

Saif Ali Khan and Rani Mukherjee dazzled the audience with their well-choreographed dance steps during the closing ceremony of the Commonwealth Games in Australia. The Lakme Fashion Show was also a huge success. Events like these have made choreography a popular career option.

Says ace choreographer Ashley Lobo, "Though choreography is closely associated with dance, it is more than dance." It is an art of replicating life. A form of communication where one can express human sentiments and feelings, he adds.

The job of a choreographer is to give life and a theme to a song. Based on a theme, he/she composes a dance sequence. Choreography is becoming specialised and requires rigorous training. Ranjeet Ahuja, director, Passion Institute of Music and Dance, says, "Choreography is highly specialised and involves aspects like selecting a song and theme, understanding the mood of the song, composing the sequence of dance steps, giving a graceful look to the dance and much more."

SKILLS REQUIRED

Talent, creativity, passion and a keen sense of observation are the prerequisites for a

successful dancer. Neha Sharma, an instructor of Danceworx, says, "Choreography is not about physical requirement but about practice and dedication. One should be able to work under pressure and think out of the box." One should have humility and sensitivity to understand human sentiments and communicate effectively with the audience, she adds.

CAREER PROSPECTS

"Wherever there is dance, there is a requirement for a choreographer. The demand for trained choreographers is increasing with the number of shows held in India and abroad," adds Ahuja. Today, any and every show requires choreographers. From award functions to fashion shows to films and music videos, the demand for trained choreographers is increasing. The four areas where they work are:

- Film and music video choreography — it is the desire of every dancer to make Bollywood stars dance to their tunes. Here they direct songs and dance sequence in films and videos. At times they also decide cuts, camera position and costumes of actors, which adds to the dance.
- Event choreography — when they direct and coordinate dance shows for award ceremonies, beauty pageants, college festivals, product launches and social events.
- Fashion choreography — here choreography is not about dance but about the perfect catwalk. The main duty of a choreographer is to train models to walk on the ramp with music in an appealing manner.
- Classical and folk dance choreography — plays, shows and functions.

After retirement choreographers can open their own dance schools and studios.

REMUNERATIONS

Though there is no fixed monthly salary for a choreographer, they earn around Rs 3,000 to Rs 3,500 per show. The contract amount increases with their popularity. An instructor is paid around Rs 700 to Rs 2,000 per class. However, talented choreographers who can offer something different with new ideas and steps can dictate their monetary terms.

TRAINING

Training in choreography is offered by a few institutes but one has to go through many levels in training to master dancing. An aspirant starts with a beginner's level and undergoes rigorous training to clear the advance stage and finally becomes a professional dancer.

"However, it helps if you get some training from abroad as choreography is also a fusion of Indian and Western dance," adds Lobo, who was trained by the Sydney Dance Company.