

Saying it with foot taps

Kathak dancer and choreographer Shila Mehta tells **Nandini Shah** about eternity and ecstasy, which find expression through the tapping of her feet

Devotion. Joy. Ecstasy. Each of these will find meaning in Shila Mehta's hand and feet expressions, tonight, in her sequence at Natarani.

The performance will endeavour to express the *Soor*, "the one eternal spirit present in everything", which to her also means the energy and essence of dance.

"This is the first time I am performing at Natarani; I have trained with Kumudini Lakhia a few years ago," says the director of Nupur Zankar Academy of Performing Arts and Research Centre in Mumbai. Mehta's *gurus* include Nrityacharya Shri Prahalad Das, Pandit Vijai Shankar and Pandit Birju Maharaj.

Born and brought up in Kolkata, "the cultural capital of India", this *Kathiawadi* artiste has innovated extensively in her field by fusing folk dance with Kathak.

"My current research is in amalgamating Charni Sahitya with Kathak as both the arts are all about storytelling in a subtle and concise manner," she says.

The performance begins at 8.30 pm tonight.

