

Nothing tragic about it

Dance no longer means stylised movement set to music. It can be a realistic movement taken from our everyday life

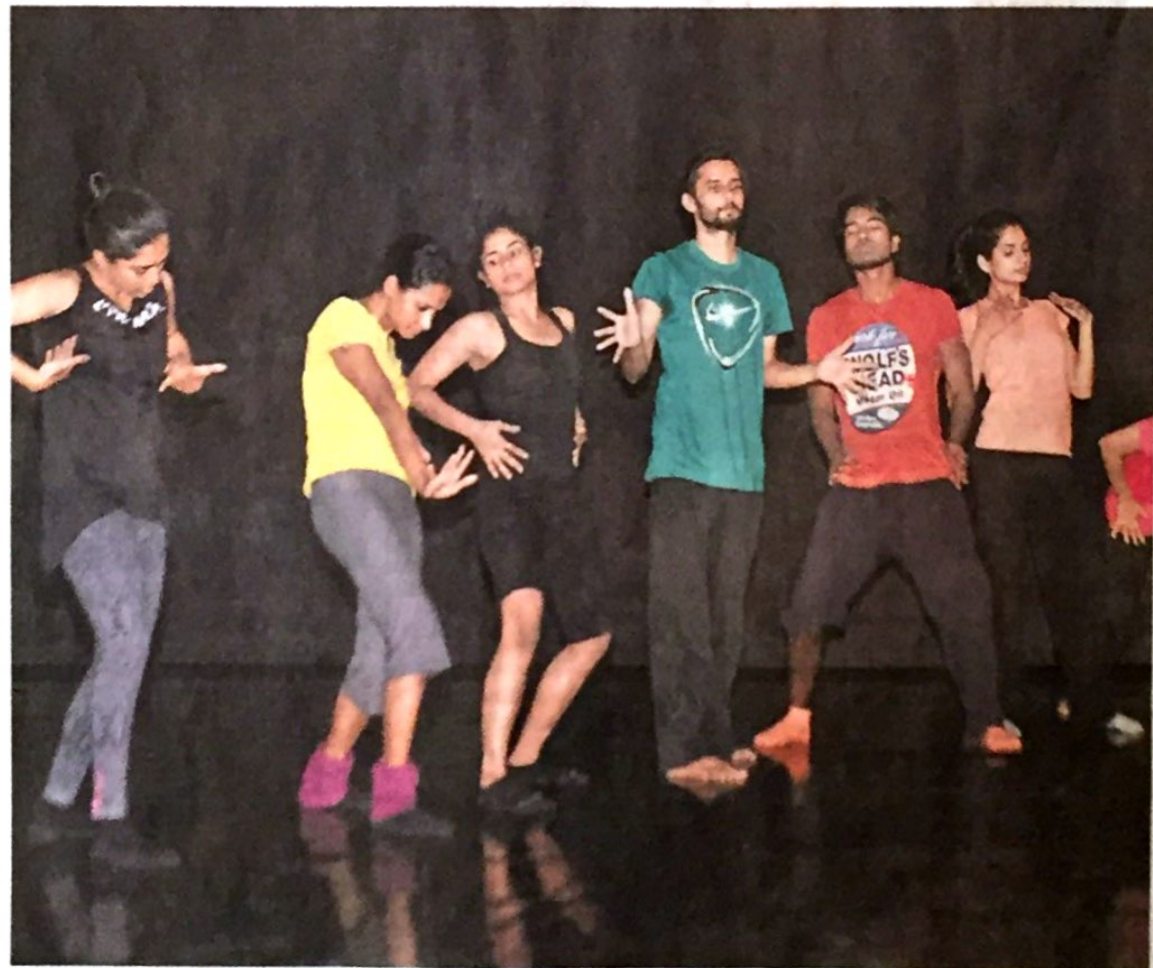
SHILPA SEBASTIAN R.

There is absolute silence. Seven dancers move across the stage in repetitive mechanical movements.

There is a kind of a unity among them, yet they are moving in diverse patterns. Welcome to the world of contemporary dance, which is getting more cutting-edge by the day. And, the piece just described is the work of Nicole Seiler, dancer-choreographer from Switzerland and her collaboration with Attakalari.

Titled *ISHH (K)*, Nicole is "inspired by the Hindi film *Devdas*. If you were bowled by Sanjay Leela Bhansali's version and the hit song "Dola re dola", where Madhuri Dixit and Aishwarya Rai swept you off your feet with their grace, then Nicole's work may come as a surprise to you as the movements are very realistic, oscillating between clownish and mechanical.

"There are two aspects for it. The first movement we are looking at is how a group can move as one — taking examples of swarms of insects and birds that fly in formation when they fly together. It is also about repetitive movement patterns as we are one and within this one we are individuals." For the music Nicole has used tracks from all the versions of *Devdas*,



EXPERIMENTING WITH A FILMI CONCEPT Nicole and her *ISHH (K)* PHOTO: BHAGYA PRAKASH K.

sometimes using narrations from the film. "Even the music is unconventional. The sound is taken from the four versions of the movie and movement is choreographed to that. I am not narrating the story

Devdas but am trying to find the many, many tiny stories within the main story."

She says we may not find anything peculiar with her work, which lacks any form of stylised movement or conventional music.

"It is similar to Indian classical dance, which uses hand ges-

tures and theatrical movement. *ISHH (K)* also has gestures, hand movements and theatrical movement".

She also adds that there will be a "big silence where the dancers will work on stage. This is to give movement an essence through the sounds or the absence of it."

There will be no technology used in her choreography, but with the movements, the "sounds will also be repetitive — certain chants from the old versions. It is also about how the Indian sounds have changed from the 30s to the present times and how a love story, which is Indian, is also universal and so appeals to all." The piece will first be staged in Switzerland at the Arsenic between April 19 to 24.

