

Sanskritik at the Reardon Smith Theatre

A taste of India to broaden our understanding

By IFAN PAYNE

REVIEW

BOYCOTTS have an effect not only on the sportsmen. Because of the Indian team's withdrawal from the Commonwealth Games, the Chorus Theatre of Manipur have cancelled their tour of Britain. Now that Chakravyuha will not be seen in St David's Hall, next month, the 16th Sanskritik Festival of the Arts of India, on Sunday evening, was an important opportunity to enjoy the music and dance of that continent.

The intimate setting of the Reardon Smith Theatre provided a wonderful opportunity to appreciate from

close up the dancing skills of the three very different dancers.

Sutapa Dutta Gupta, a dancer of extreme elegance in the ancient, classic Odissi style dance, contrasted well with the vivacious Aditi Santhanam in her extrovert Bharatanatyam dance.

But most captivating of all was Shovana Narayan in a fiery and dynamic dance in the Kathak style.

She is a happy dancer and her expressively mimed and spoken explanation was as eloquent and

engaging as her demonstration of virtuosic footwork with anklets and bells.

Where the music was concerned, the extended Karnatic piece, performed by a quartet featuring Narayan Mani's expressive playing on the Veena (an ancient instrument which looks like a deformed Sitar with a golden carbuncle) and T R Moorthy's eloquent flute playing was a joy.

What a pity that the sporting and now artistic sanctions against Britain are denying us more opportunities like that to broaden our understanding of international culture.