

THE DANCE INDIA

A Treasure Trove of Culture & Tourism

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₹ 90

TORCH BEARERS
**A MAN OF COMMITMENT
IN GOD'S OWN COUNTRY**
SADANAM PUTHIYA VEETIL BALAKRISHNAN

BEACONS OF LIGHT
JAYASHREE NAIR
A WOMAN WITH A STEADFAST BELIEF

COVER STORY

THIRUKKURAL

A GUIDE FOR
**MEANINGFUL,
EFFECTIVE AND
JOYFUL LIVING**



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Amaravati Nrithyotsav

3rd INDIAN DANCE FESTIVAL

On **2nd & 3rd December, 2017**, at 6.30 PM
at Sidhartha Auditourium, Moghalrajpuram
Amaravathi, Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh, India



Geeta Narayan - Kuchipudi - Visakhapatnam
Padma Shree Darsana Javeri & Group - Manipuri - Mumbai
Drishtinandan - Bharathanatyam - Kolkata
Somashekar - Kathak - Bangalore

**2nd DECEMBER, 2017
AT. 6.30PM**

SCHEDULE

3rd DECEMBER, 2017, AT. 6.30PM
KV Lakshmi's Group - Kuchipudi - Visakhapatnam
Mariia Osmachko - Odissi - Ukraine
Kashmira & Group - Bharathanatyam - Mumbai
Divyasree - A - Kuchipudi - Tenali
Roopa Gayathri - Kuchipudi - Visakhapatnam
Sumita Bhattacharjee - Bharathanatyam - Kolkata
Akruti - Kuchipudi - Visakhapatnam
Pinkey Choudary - Kathak - New Delhi
Sai Sanjana - Bharathanatyam - Chennai
Rachana - V - Kuchipudi - Visakhapatnam
Madhura Mukherjee - Bharathanatyam - Kolkata
Girija Nair - Bharathanatyam - Mumbai
Maanasi - P - Kuchipudi - Visakhapatnam
Kshitija Barve - Bharathanatyam - Goa

**3rd DECEMBER, 2017
AT. 3.00PM**



ILAPURAM RAJA
CHAIRMAN, AMARAVATHI NRITHYOTSAV



BR VIKRAM KUMAR
FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

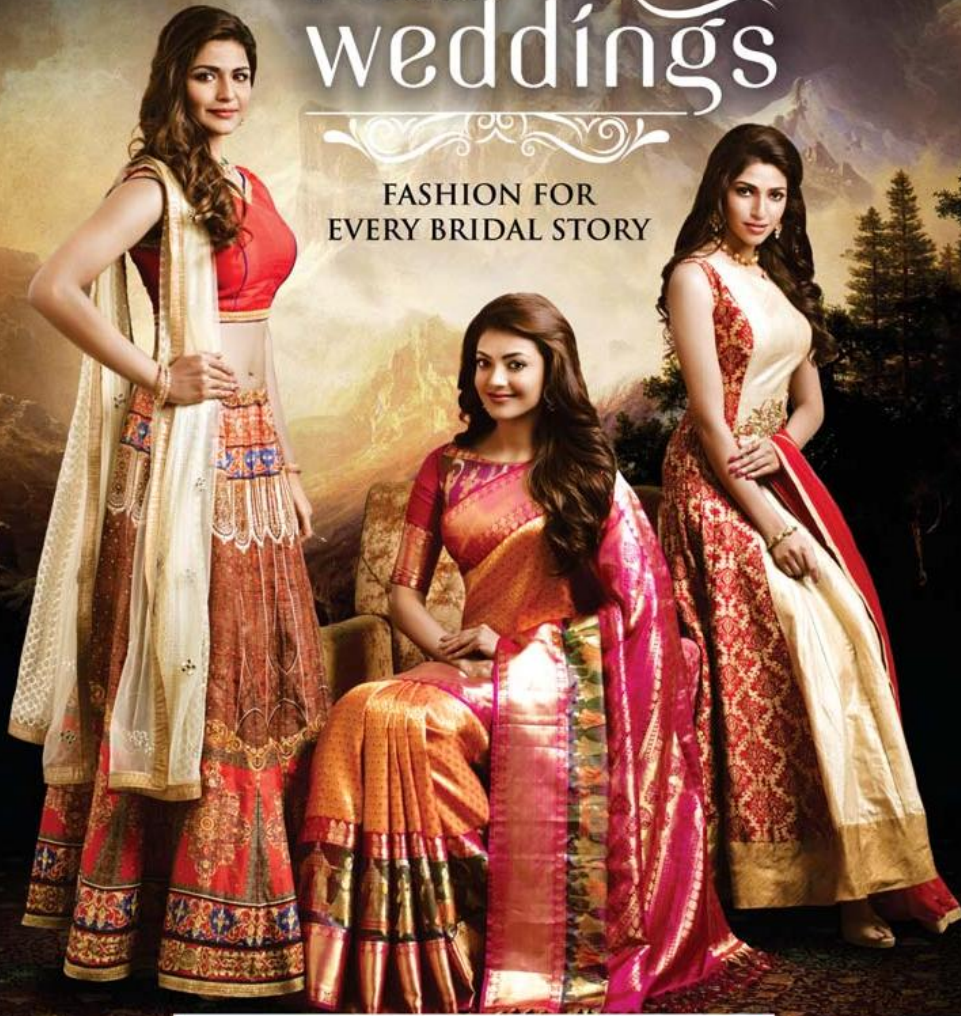
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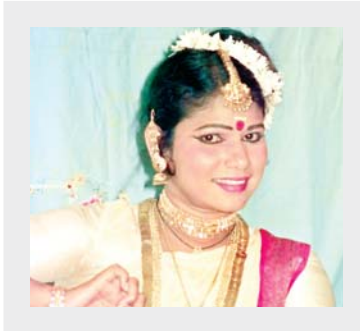
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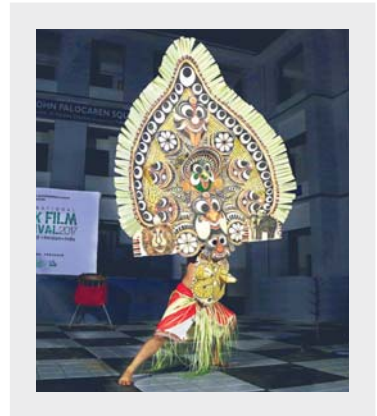
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Editorial

'The Dance India' - a monthly cultural magazine in English is our humble attempt to capture the spirit and culture of art in all its diversity.

"If the art is poor,
the nation is sick."

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Paul Surgeon Nicodemus

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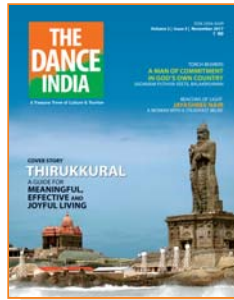
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Please include your full name, contact information (address and telephone number) and a short bio data.
- Articles are published in the magazine only on the condition that the author agrees to the terms of the Copyright Statement and Policy

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BR Vikram Kumar
Editor-in-Chief

The two challenging questions of the present day, for which the answers need to be provided, regardless of the consequences, are...

'What is the future of Indian Art Forms?'

'What would be the contribution of future generations towards it?'

Indian art forms are blended with culture and heritage and today, they face a challenge of becoming extinct if our future generations fail to rise to the occasion and take an initiative to pull the cart called 'Indian Art Forms'

forward. They are the wheels which would propel the cart forward through the challenges.

A tad of research which I have conducted during the last few years provoked a thought in my mind that incorporating Indian art forms into the education system as a part of their syllabus should be initiated at both State and Central levels.

Also, a practical solution would be to support the students who indulge in performing arts. Administration at both the State and Centre should conceive and come up with a 'New Educational Policy' wherein, grace marks would be awarded to students who represent, participate, practise and promote Indian Art Forms. This initiative by the Government would serve as a helping hand to the students who aspire to become art practitioners.

Noticing the aforementioned challenge, Union Minister for Human Resources Development, Smriti Zuben Irani should take an initiative to find a practical solution and then implement it early, it would not only create a boom among students but it would also be a boon to those who practise Indian art forms. Such a move would be highly appreciated by all the art lovers and art practitioners in the country.

Jai Hind!

BR Vikram Kumar

Editor's Note

Indira Gandhi Award to TM Krishna

The 30th Indira Gandhi Award for National Integration for 2015-16 will be bestowed upon the Carnatic Vocalist, TM Krishna for his services in promoting and preserving national integration in the country.

The singer, who won the Ramon Magsaysay award for bringing 'Social Inclusiveness in Culture' in 2016, will be presented with the honour by Congress president Sonia Gandhi on October 31, Indira Gandhi's death anniversary.

Krishna is not only one of the prominent vocalists in the rigorous Carnatic tradition of Indian classical music, but also an activist who has worked on creating egalitarian spaces for music and breaking down caste-barriers in the form.

An outspoken columnist, Krishna, has written and talked about a wide range of socio-political issues, including women's rights, children's needs, issues that make a society civil or uncivil, and the dangers of the mentality of war and narrow nationalism.

The award consists of a citation and a cash prize of Rs 10 lakh.



TM Krishna

The Congress instituted the Indira Gandhi Award for National Integration in 1985 in its centenary year. The award is conferred on October 31 for promoting national integration, understanding and fellowship among different communities and cultures of India.

Others winners include the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust (Indore, Madhya Pradesh), musician AR Rahman, Ramakrishna Mission Ashram, Narainpur, Chhattisgarh (jointly), poet Gulzar, scientist MS Swaminathan and activist PV Rajagopal, besides filmmaker Shyam Benegal and lyricist Javed Akhtar.

University, PA Sai Kumar. After an enquiry about the issue, they realised their mistake and corrected it by apologising.

Dr Thadepalli Satyanarayana Sharma, 'Bhagavat Mela Kuchipudi' Secretary said that this is not a publicity stunt to fight against such blunders, as considered by few responsible people, but an effort to protect the ever so delicate and beautiful dance form - Kuchipudi.

If any disturbance or trouble is caused to the art form, he mentioned that they would not keep quiet. He also emphasised that it has become a very common characteristic among all the institutions to teach very casually for the sake of certification which is a disgrace to the art form. He also warned that these kinds of mistakes would not be tolerated and the responsible citizens of the cultural community would fight for the rights of Kuchipudi dance form.

Scholarships to the young artists in the cultural field

Source : PIB

The Centre for Cultural Resources and Training (CCRT) under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India as invited online applications from the individuals for scholarships under the 'Scheme For The Award Of Scholarships To young Artist In Different Cultural Fields'. The award of scholarships for the young artists of outstanding promise in the fields of Indian Classical Music, Indian Classical Dances, Light Classical Music, Theatre,

Visual arts and Folk, Traditional and Indigenous arts for two consecutive years 2016-17 & 2017-18. There are 400 scholarships for each year. Applications are invited with effect from 1st November 2017 and the last date for applying is on 30th November 2017. Separate applications have to be filed by the applicants for both the years, if eligible. For more details applicants may log on to Ministry's website - www.indiaculture.nic.in or www.ccrtindia.gov.in

GoI Will Commemorate 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi From 2nd October, 2019 to 2nd October, 2020

National Committee headed by Prime Minister constituted for this purpose

Source : PIB

Government of India will commemorate the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Father of the Nation, during the period from 2nd October, 2019 to 2nd October, 2020. It has been decided to celebrate the event at both national and international levels, to propagate the message of the



The Minister of State for Culture (I/C) and Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Dr. Mahesh Sharma paying homage at Gandhi Smriti, on the 148th Birth Anniversary Celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi, in New Delhi on October 02, 2017.

Mahatma. A National Committee (NC) headed by Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has been constituted for this purpose. This Committee includes the Chief Ministers of all the states of the country, representatives from across the political spectrum, Gandhians, thinkers, and eminent persons from all

walks of life. The Committee will guide and approve policies/programmes/activities for the commemoration and will also supervise implementation of the decisions taken from time to time.

Dr Mahesh Sharma Inaugurates 'Deep Dharohar'

Dr Mahesh Sharma, Minister of State (Independent charge) for Culture inaugurated "Deep Dharohar" organized by the Ministry of Culture on October 13th, 2017. The festival was inaugurated by the lighting of 1000 diyas by the participating artists and artisans and children from organisations like the CCRT, SAPNA Prayas and Kailash Satyarthi's foundation, to the beat of *pakhawajs, nagadas, dhols* etc.

To reclaim the lost classical and folk traditions of Deepawali and with objective of transmitting, promoting and conserving India's diverse heritage, Ministry of Culture has organized this festival between the 13th -17th of October 2017. Several performances, art and craft workshops and artist's corners have been conducted between 11 am - 8.30 pm every evening.

Source : PIB



The Minister of State for Culture (I/C) and Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Dr. Mahesh Sharma at the inauguration of the "Deep Dharohar", Ministry of Culture's function to celebrate Deepawali, in New Delhi on October 13, 2017.

Dr. Mahesh Sharma inaugurates 'Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav - 2017' at Ahmedabad

Source : PIB

Continuing its endeavor to promote India's Heritage, Ministry of Culture has organised 3 days long diversified cultural carnival 'Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav - 2017' at the premises of Sabarmati River Front Event Centre, Ahmedabad, Gujarat. The festival was inaugurated by Dr Mahesh Sharma, Minister of State for Culture (I/C) and Environment, Forest & Climate Change in the presence of Shri Gautam Shah, Mayor, Ahmadabad Municipal Corporation and Dr.Kirit Solanki, Member of

Parliament, Ahmadabad (West) in Ahmadabad today. Ms.Sujata Prasad, Additional Secretary, M/o Culture and Shri Pranav Khullar , Joint Secretary, M/o Culture and many dignitaries were present .

The inaugural day witnessed soulful performances such as Pandvani by Teejan Bai and Vedic chants and Bhajans by Krishna Kant Shukla and fusion performances of more than 150 folk artists, highlighting different dance forms including folk and tribal.

Dr. M.S. Subbulakshmi, remains an unsurpassed phenomenon in Carnatic music: Vice President

Source : PIB

The Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has said that Dr. M.S. Subbulakshmi, remains an unsurpassed phenomenon in Carnatic music. He was addressing the gathering at the Birth Centenary Commemoration of Dr. M.S. Subbalakshmi, in Chennai, Tamil Nadu on 17th October, 2017. The Governor of Tamil Nadu, Shri Banwarilal Purohit, the Minister for Fisheries,

Personnel and Administrative Reforms, Tamil Nadu, Shri D. Jayakumar, family members of Dr. M.S. Subbulakshmi and other dignitaries were present on the occasion. The Vice President said that Dr. M.S. Subbulakshmi affectionately referred as MS Amma was the face of Indian Carnatic music for several decades.



The Vice President, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu addressing the gathering at the Birth Centenary Commemoration of Dr M.S. Subbalakshmi, in Chennai on October 17, 2017. The Governor of Tamil Nadu, Shri Banwarilal Purohit and the Minister for Fisheries, Personnel and Administrative Reforms, Tamil Nadu, Shri D. Jayakumar are also seen.

Lol for monuments under 'Adopt a Heritage Scheme'

Source : PIB

As many as seven shortlisted companies were given 'Letters of Intent' (Lol) for fourteen monuments under 'Adopt a Heritage Scheme' of Ministry of Tourism at the closing ceremony of 'Paryatan Parv' in the national capital. These companies will be the future 'Monument Mitras' who would associate pride with their CSR activities.

The Inter-Ministerial Oversight and Vision Committee members appreciated the positive response received from reputed organisations in the Initial phase, wherein Fifty Seven (57) responses have been recorded and fourteen (14) monuments opted through seven (7) Expression Of Interest(s). After detailed scrutiny, the following companies ranging

from the hospitality industry, travel industry and banking industry were shortlisted for vision bidding for final selection of Monument Mitras.

The SBI Foundation was shortlisted for the adoption of Jantar Mantar, Delhi, TK International Ltd. for Sun Temple, Konark, Raja Rani Temple, Bhubaneswar and Ratnagiri Monuments, Jypore in Odisha, Yatra Online Pvt. Ltd. for Hampi, Karnataka, Leh Palace, Jammu & Kashmir, Qutub Minar, Delhi and Ajanta Caves, Maharashtra, Travel Corporation of India Ltd. for Mattancherry Palace Museum, Kochi and Safdarjung Tomb, Delhi, Adventure Tour Operator Association of India for Gangotri Temple Area and Trail to Gaumukh and Mt. StokKangri, Ladakh, Jammu

and Kashmir and Special Holidays Travel Pvt. Ltd. (With) Rotary Club of Delhi for adoption of Agrasen ki Baoli, Delhi, NBCC for Purana Quila, Delhi.

The president of India launched the 'Adopt a Heritage Scheme' of Ministry of Tourism on World Tourism Day i.e. 27th September 2017. This scheme is an endeavour of Ministry of Tourism in close collaboration with Ministry of Culture and Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) which envisages developing monuments, heritage and tourist sites across India and making them tourist friendly to enhance their tourism potential and cultural importance, in a planned and phased manner, according to Sanjay Kumar.

Arun Jaitley Presents LoI to Seven Shortlisted Cos Under 'Adopt A Heritage Scheme' at Closing Ceremony of Paryatan Parv

Source : PIB

The Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Arun Jaitley presented the 'Letters of Intent' to seven shortlisted companies under 'Adopt a Heritage Scheme' of Ministry of Tourism at the closing ceremony of 'Paryatan Parv' in the national capital. He also presented Certificates to the 'Best Participating Central Government Ministry and Best Participating State Government'. KJ Alphons, Minister of State (I/C) for Tourism presided over the function. The Paryatan Parv was organised by Ministry of Tourism in collaboration with other Central Ministries, State Governments and Stakeholders across the country from 5 to 25 October 2017.

Ministry of Youth Affairs was given the Certificate of Best Participating Ministry and M/o Doner was given the Runner-Up Certificate. Madhya Pradesh was given the Certificate for the Best Participating State and Gujarat was given the Runner-Up Certificate.



The Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Arun Jaitley addressing at the Official Closing Ceremony of "Paryatan Parv – Grand Finale", organised by M/o Tourism in collaboration with other Central Ministries, State Governments and Stakeholders, in New Delhi on October 25, 2017. The Minister of State (I/C) and Electronics & Information Technology, Alphons Kannanthanam, the Secretary, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Rashmi Verma and other dignitaries are also seen

Addressing on the occasion, Arun Jaitley said that the Paryatan Parv is an event to show India's tourism potential which is available in our country. Geographically India has so many explored and unexplored tourism destinations. Normally religion, nature and history attract tourism and India has all these. India's cultural heritages and shrines are remarkable. It has the largest seashore in the world besides forests, wildlife and many historical monuments. Whereas many countries in the world

have one or two historical monuments to attract tourists, India has plenty of these.

In his address, KJ Alphons said that 'Paryatan Parv' is a celebration of art, culture and tradition and incredible performing arts of India. Tourism contributes to 6.8% of India's GDP. There is much more scope for promotion of domestic tourism in our country, he opined and further expressed his concern that still there is a huge shortage of hotel rooms in our country.

Poster Release of AMARAVATI NRITHYOTSAV 2017 by our Cultural Minister

Poster of Nataraj Music & Dance Academy's Amaravathi Nrithyotsav 2017 was launched by Hon'ble Minister for Culture & Tourism - Bhuma Akhila Priya at Novotel Visakhapatnam on Friday evening.

The event will be held on 2-3rd December 2017 at Moghalarajapuram Siddhartha Auditorium in Vijayawada with more than 60 artists performing Kuchipudi, Manipuri, Bharatanatyam and Kathak. Hon'ble Minister said that she felt privileged in releasing the wall poster of this Cultural Fest depicting India's various Classical Dance Forms, opined that these programmes also promote tourism. She assured that



Minister for Culture and Tourism, Andhra Pradesh, Bhuma Akhila Priya Reddy accompanied by the other dignitaries releasing

the Government of Andhra Pradesh will give full support to the programme. Nataraj Music & Dance Academy is a member of International Dance Council in UNESCO and ISO 9001-2008 certified organisation founded by B.R. Vikram Kumar. Padmashri Awardee Dr. Darshana Jhaveri, a well known Manipuri expert, will be receiving a prestigious award on this occasion during the programme.



INDIA RANKS

9th out of 136 countries

in cultural resources in Travel Tourism Competitive Index 2017 rankings by World Economic Forum@wef



A Treasure Trove of Culture & Tourism

Article Competition

The Dance India Magazine is conducting an article competition, on the following topics:

1. Indian Dance in the Educational Curriculum.
2. Swachh Sanskriti - Promoting and Protecting Indian Art Forms.
3. Impact of Fusion and Contemporary styles on Indian Music and Dance.

Participants should send a 300-500 word article to the following email Id: contest.thedanceindia@gmail.com

The piece of writing has to reach the editorial board by the end of November 2017. Participants should attach their details, along with their photograph and a letter giving rights and consent to use the article and publish it.

The top five articles on each topic would be selected and rewarded with an annual subscription of The Dance India magazine free of cost and the selected articles would also be published in the magazine.



TORCH BEARERS

A MAN OF COMMITMENT IN GOD'S OWN COUNTRY

Sadanam Puthiya Veetil Balakrishnan

Dancing is life dreaming with your feet which costs next to nothing. than a therapy. It has innate power to make you rejuvenate momentarily. These formulae were gleefully admitted by Sadanam Balakrishnan, a renowned Kathakali exponent and author in the country

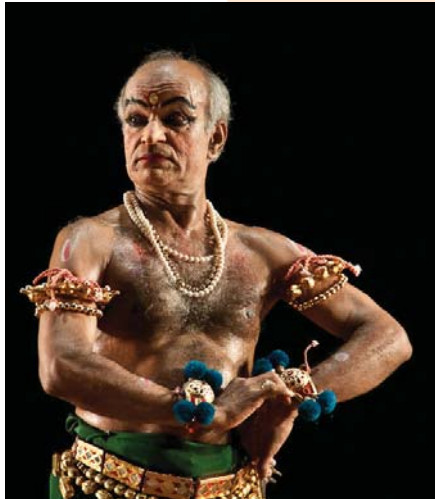
Born in the year 1944 at Taliparamba, Kannur in Kerala to Late A.V. Krishnan and Umayamma, Sadanam Puthiya Veetil Balakrishnan is a man of commitment to his art form. He has completed eight years of Diploma and two years of Post Diploma in Kathakali dance with the help of scholarships from Central Government. He was also a part of Rashtra Bhasha Praveen of Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha.



Since his childhood, Balakrishnan was always interested in the Kathakali art form. He began to learn Kathakali art from various eminent Kathakali proponents such as Kondaveeti Narayanan Nair Asan, Brahmashree Kurumathur Narayanan Namboodiripad. He also underwent intensive training at Gandhi Seva Sadanam Kathakali Academy, situated in Palakkad district.

The idea of becoming a dancer has stroke Balakrishnan at a very tender age. When he was in his sixth grade in South Higher Elementary school, he was one of those twelve students who were selected among sixty students to learn the Kathakali art form.

Beginning his dance journey, his first Kathakali guru was Kondiveeti Narayan Nair Asan who helped his to give his very first performance within one year at his school anniversary during the year 1956. His first performance was as 'Sri Krishna' in the play of "Duryodhanavadham", which won many hearts. This success was not a day's hard work.



He used to spend ninety minutes every day in travelling to a place to learn dance, which was appropriately six kilometers from his residence. However, he managed to overcome hurdles which he faced while learning Kathakali. His pledge was to yield good results in his works for which he spent two years and gave excellent performance as Sri Krishna in "Kuchelavritam" and as Arjuna in "Kiratham".

With his promising work, he was able to build a strong bond with the School Manager Brahmashree Kurumathur Narayanan Namboothiripad, who was very kind and generous to him and has made arrangements for him to learn dance at Gandhi Seva

Sadanam Kathakali and Dance Academy in Kerala which was one of the leading Kathakali schools. This Kathakali School has funded him for almost eight years completely.

While in this school, he got an opportunity to learn from other eminent Gurus such as Natyacharyan Thekinkatil Ramunny Nair Asan and many others. After his Post Graduation, he was appointed as a teacher and as a performer in his Alma Mater (Gandhi Seva Sadanam).

In the year 1980, Balakrishnan has taken the charge of Principal and Director of ICK, Delhi and was retired in 2006. Since then, he was associated with Kalashetra Foundation, Rukmini Devi College of Fine Arts as a visiting fellowship member for the department of Kathakali.

Balakrishnan was always fond of the local, colorful, ritual dance form which was called "Theyyam". He never missed single opportunity to witness these local art forms of his region. Though his parents were not happy with the idea of him learning Kathakali, they never

opposed or tried suppressing his interests but always remained lovable parents to him. With core support and blessings from Sree Narayanan Namboothiripad, Balakrishnan grew to become powerful artist of Kathakali.

Though there was a rigid training regime which was prevailing in those days, he never looked back or gave up, but always strived hard to excel in this Kathakali art form. His idea of promoting the dance tradition is to continue the legacy of his very first Guru Mr. Kumaran, Nair who always remains as an ideal person to Balakrishnan.



Radha and Krishna being performed by Balakrishnan

Balakrishnan wishes to share the knowledge and experiences, which he acquired by his Guru. He believes in inspiring the current young generation who are exposed to various art forms by his performances constituting innovative ideas, relevant themes and sensible dance from work. He urges to sustain the essence of Indian culture and tradition and uplifts its divinity with his hull capacity.

According to Mr Balakrishnan, Kathakali acquired great significance, among the four classical dance forms of the Ancient India. Later, various dance forms like Odissi, Mohiniyattam, Kuchipudi, Satriya, Chou and others were added into the list of Dance forms of Contemporary India. In the cultural fabric of India, Kathakali has a keen role to play in the art building.

He states that Kathakali art form is not just a dance; it is a highly systematic traditional dance drama which obeys the norms put forth by Rishi Bharatha for a Natya in his Natyashastra. But Kathakali never follows a single treatise for its aesthetic approach. This art form is originated in Kerala and was nurtured with various native traditional art forms. Kathakali was basically inspired by Kootiyattam which was gradually developed into well balanced combination of two different cultures (North and South India).

Sri Balakrishnan spends most of his time in practicing Kathakali. At times of leisure, he spends time in reading Puranas, epics and other Indian

Aesthetic writings. He is a man who adopts according to his surroundings with a strict diet regime. He likes being simple and sees himself as a man who preaches the dignity of the art and would like to sustain the purity of the art forms.

For Mr Balakrishnan sixty years of art life was not a cake walk. He faced numerous obstacles during his journey. One of the most challenging moments in his life, was when he was to suppose to give an experimental production which was based on Shakespeare's "Othello", facing much criticism. With self belief and confidence, he succeeded in his attempt.

Another best moment for him to cherish, was playing a role of Hanuman in "Kalyanasaugandhikam" in presence of his Guru Shri Kurumathur Narayanan Namboothiripad which was the most defining moment in his life. His Guru was extremely happy with Sri Balakrishnan when his Guru's efforts were fruitful.

In view of trending fusion culture, he believes that the purity of dance remains unaffected as it depends upon the approach. May be for novelty and popularity, a professional dancer would adopt this system of fusion and experimentation. This can carry

out a negative impact on the dance form, because the individual perspective of approach may vary from time to time and person to person.

Balakrishnan is a true believer of art and believes that with sincere, dedicated effort one can never be a failure. Art is meant for entertainment. Where all art forms are purely meant for entertainment, but the fact differs in the Country of India. While in India, traditional art forms play a key role of focus on improvement of an individual both mentally and physically in the form of entertainment. There is an inclination of this system



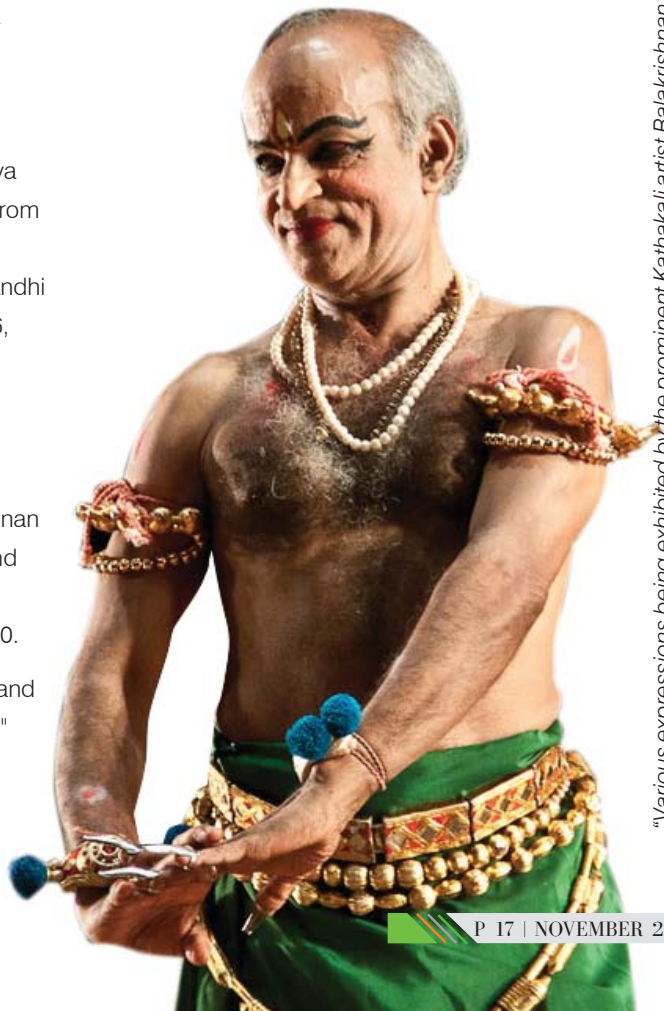
in this modern era. Throughout his dance journey, Balakrishnan was a recipient of numerous awards. Some of his notable awards are Swathi Thirunal Nadalaya Award in the year, 1986, Mookambika Kathakali Vidyalyaya

Award in the year 2003, Natana Bhaskara Award from Bharata Kalanjali and Bhaskara in the year 2003, "Guru Pattikamthodi Smaraka Puraskara" from Gandhi Seva Sadanam Kathakali Academy in the year 2006, Natyakalaratnam and Gold Medal from Mattannur Mahadeva Kshetram & Mattannur Pancha Vadya Sangham in the year ,2007, Kerala Kalamandalam Award in the year 2007, "Guru Sree" Award from Kaladarpan in the year 2008, Kalamandalam Krishnan Kutty Poduval Smaraka Award in the year 2009 and Dr. K.N.Pisharody Smaraka Award from K.N. Pisharody Smaraka Kathakali Club in the year 2010.

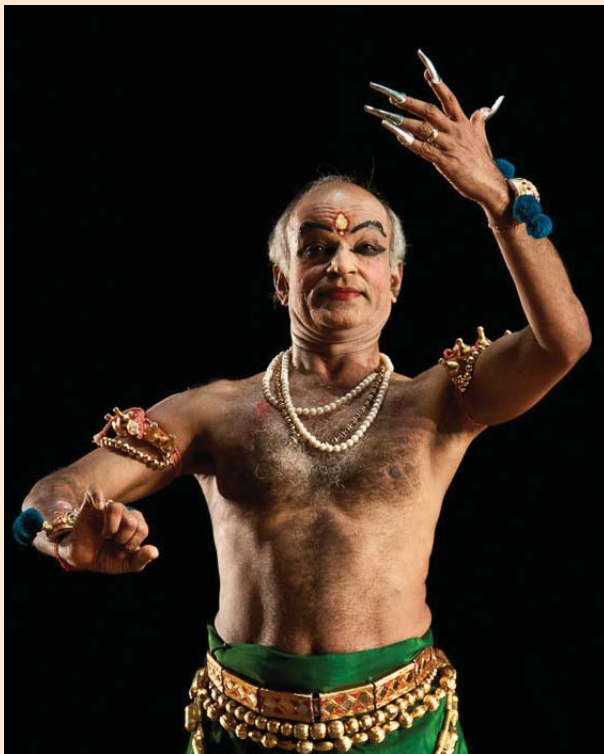
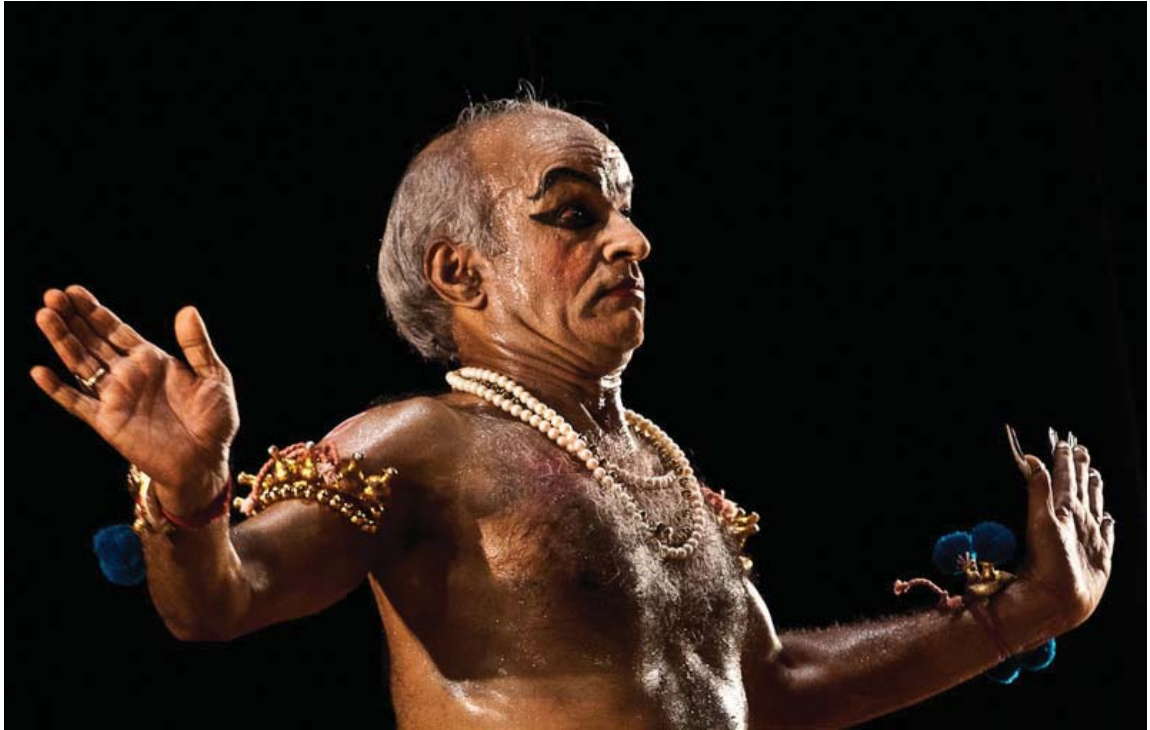
He also received international awards from Cleveland Bhairavi Finance Society - "Nriya Sagaram Award" US, 2015, First International Center for Kathakali Award, 2015 and a Gold Medal in the event, Mudralaya, from London in the year 1990.

Balakrishnan has been awarded with two Senior Fellowships by Ministry of Culture, Government of India. His areas of research are to undertake a study of the aharya abhinaya-the stylized costumes and headgear-of Kathakali characters with reference to other dance drama styles of South India and to prepare a manual and syllabus for a new Kathakali style based on the three prevailing styles.

He also completed an advanced study and research on Northern Kathakali style with the financial assistance of Central "Sangeet Natak Akademi". He has written and published two books, Kathakali (as part of a series on the six classical Indian dances) published by Wisdom Tree and Kathakali: A Practitioner's Perspective published by Poorna Publications.



"Various expressions being exhibited by the prominent Kathakali artist Balakrishnan"



Balakrishnan has performed extensively in dance festivals in various cities all over India. Being a global performer, he has staged over, more than ten countries like France, Brazil, USA, Europe, Mexico, Colombia, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, China, Holland, Croatia and Pakistan, in many prestigious International festivals all over the world.

He feels that such dance festivals give an opportunity to a performer to prove his talent, where festival organizers also play a vital role in bringing the artists into the lime light. Balakrishnan feels it a great honor to represent India through its great heritage and culture in other countries.

Balakrishnan, who dedicates his life for the sacred art forms of India, a true lover of Indian art and culture, always had an uncontrollable urge to dance Kathakali Dance form. Artists like him, always give hope to the society in preserving the sustainability of Cultural India.



COVER STORY



Authored by
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VoV Family,
Voice of Valluvar Family
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THIRUKKURAL

A Guide for Meaningful Effective and Joyful Living





Thirukkural is a Tamil literary work authored by Thiruvalluvar about 2000 years ago. In the category of literature having universal appeal, perhaps, this is one of the most widely translated works, which is a testimony to its relevance and reach even after such a long period. Thirukkural is a Universal Code of Conduct for people of all ages irrespective of their socio-economic status in the society.

While all other popular ethical literature derives strength from some religion or attributes the contents to some Divine Power, Thiruvalluvar never claims any such sanctity to his Work. On the other hand, there are several embedded evidences referred to, clearly indicating that he himself was well versed in a wide range of literary works encompassing all aspects of life, including the Statecraft.

Thirukkural is organised into 3 major parts, broadly dealing with Aram (Righteousness-380 couplets), Porul (Wealth-700 couplets) and Inbam (Pleasure-250 couplets), containing 13 sub-divisions. All in all, there are 133 chapters, each chapter containing 10 couplets dealing with a particular topic.

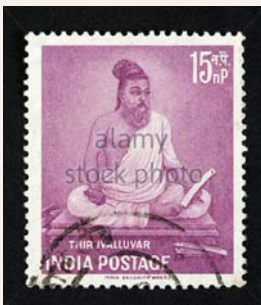
Thirukkural contains messages for individuals at each stage of his life which suggest the way how one has to conduct himself while raising the family, dealing with kith and kin, choosing friends, dealing with the society at large, managing the affairs of the State, running a business entity, etc.,

The uniqueness of Thiruvalluvar lies in the fact that he never prescribed anything as mandatory for anyone to follow. He only states the timeless and eternal Truth which has been handed over to the Humanity through the selfless teachings of our ancestors. The couplets

in Thirukkural state only the pros and cons of following or not following certain things. Every individual is responsible for his or her current state of affairs and not anyone else.

He emphasises the importance of efforts and ridicules the persons who put all the blame on fate. He declares that by birth all are equal and only the deeds determine greatness or meanness of a person and not his or her lineage. He says "The men of lofty line, whose souls are mean are never great; the men of lowly birth, when high of the soul, are not of low estate" (Kural 973). On the contrary, he says "Each one's deeds serve us touchstone of their greatness and meanness" (Kural 505). He was not a believer of empty rites and rituals with unclean minds and says, "What's the worth of shaven head or tresses long, if you shun what all the world condemns as wrong" (Kural 280). In other words, there is no need of a shaven head, nor of tangled hair, if a man abstains from those deeds which the wise have condemned.

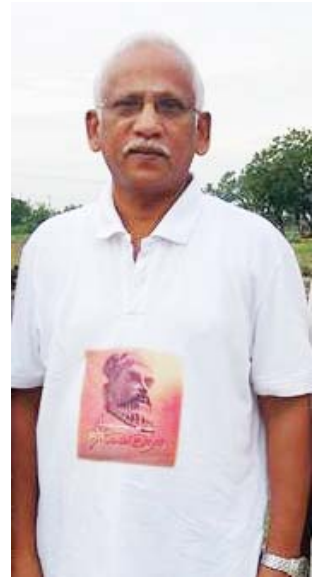
While Thiruvalluvar has accepted the wisdom of the past, he has not blindly followed but boldly condemns the empty rituals and false practices. He inculcates the scientific temper in the mind of the reader and recommends that one has to discern the truth in everything he hears or reads and says, "Though things diverse from diverse



sages lips we learn, it's wisdom's part in each the truth thing to discern" (Kural 423). In another place, he condemns God if it is true that He is the one who destined somebody to live

solely on begging. Thus, Thiruvalluvar was a revolutionary in his own time.

Thirukkural also refers to music as well as various musical instruments of those days. This is a clear indication of the fact that even 2000 years ago people had spent time on listening to



music and had fine arts as an integral part of their life. **The following are some of the couplets in Thirukkural** which stand as a testimony to the rich cultural facet of human life in this part of the country:

*The flute and lute are sweet they say
Deaf to babies' babbles lay (Kural 66)
Know men by acts and not by forms
Straight arrow kills, bent lute but charms (Kural 279)
Of what use the tuneless song?
Without gracious look what are eyes? (Kural 573)
The base are like beaten drum
Since others secrets they proclaim (Kural 1076)
Like drum beats, eyes declare my heart
From people who could hide its secret (Kural 1180)
A deadly arm, this shepherd's flute
Hails flaming evening and slays my heart (Kural 1228)
Like a drama- crowd wealth gathers
Like passing show its pride to goes (Kural 332)*

By using the musical instruments as similes, Thiruvalluvar not only drives home some eternal truths in the mind of the reader but also vividly captures the imagery of the ancient era.

Some salient features of Thirukkural:

It is a literature having universal appeal - Acceptable to all Community irrespective of Caste, Colour, Creed, Sex, Religion or Race - it proclaims "All lives are Equal by Birth".

It is Ancient and yet Modern - it contains lasting solutions for many Modern day problems afflicting the society.

It is not dogmatic but encourages scientific temper and questioning attitude.

It does not shun wealth; on the other hand, it emphatically stresses the importance of wealth creation and its true purpose. Inclusive growth is envisioned.

The attributes of an ideal man (Chapter 99) and ideal Super Power (Chapter 74) are elaborately outlined.

It is an Operating Manual for Life - encompassing all aspects of human beings - right from, individual (self), his/her interaction with spouse, parents, the family, kith and kin, friends, and the society.

It also explains in minute details, various Management concepts.

It contains the seeds of many Social, Economic and Political principles - contained in our Constitution.

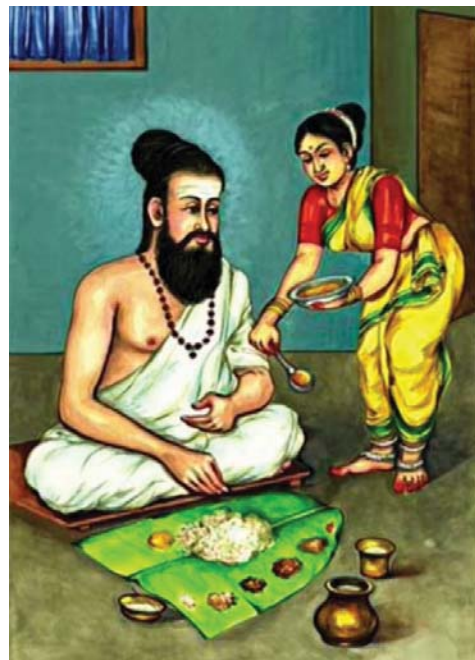
It emphasises that both the Means and the End will have to be honourable.

Though it originated in Tamilnadu, there is no reference to either Tamils or Tamil language or any Tamil King; Thus, it is Global in its approach.

Translated into several Indian and Foreign languages of the world, Thirukkural is a testimony to the fact that it has fascinated the scholars from far and wide and benefited everyone in the society.

Realising the importance of inculcating ethical values in the minds of youngsters, recently, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has issued a Circular on 29th June 2015 exhorting all the Universities and Colleges throughout India to organise essay competitions, seminars, quiz and debates based on the life and works of Thiruvalluvar. It is also relevant that Hon'ble High Court of Madras in the case of S Rajarathinam Vs. Government of Tamilnadu W.P.(M.D) No. 11999 of 2016 dated 26.4.2016, has passed a judgment directing the Government of Tamilnadu to incorporate the first 108 Chapters of Thirukkural in the school syllabus from 6th standard onwards.

Thirukural is a Universal Code of Conduct for people of all ages and walks of life. A deep study of the youth at a very young age would help them to live a wholesome life, which is not only useful to them but to the humanity as a whole. Thirukkural is a secular work of nonpareil, which can act as an operating manual for Meaningful, Effective and Joyful living.





A Social History of THIRUVALLUVAR's Age



Authored by:
Dr S Chellappa, IAS (Retd.)
Chairman, Telangana
State Commission of
Inquiry for Scheduled
Tribes, Hyderabad.

Thiruvalluvar, also popularly known as Valluvar, was a Tamil poet. Unlike other poets, he is a poet of all times. He belongs to the 3rd Sangam period in the history of Tamil literature, somewhere between Third Century and Second Century AD. But there are scholars who put him in the 7th or 8th Century AD. However the considered view of great Tamil

Scholars like Maraimalai Adigal, Pavanar, Tamil Kudimagan etc. Valluvar belongs to the 3rd Sangam period. I conducted a sort of research on Kural as to know about his life and times. Valluvar presents a fair view of the geography, history, mythology and other cultural factors of the 3rd Sangam period. While dealing with Valluvar, aesthetically and objectively, TP Meenakshisundaram of 20th Century says that whether Valluvar really reflected whatever that happened in his time or he presented only an ideal society - one has to ponder over it in a deeper manner and there is no straight answer to it. I also echoed the views of TPM in my book titled 'A Social History of the Thiruvalluvar's Age'. I have come to the conclusion that it is very difficult to tell other historical aspects of his time. He followed a style called couplet, wherein he wrote a poem within seven words and the poem had to be





within the permissible meter, should have symbols, imagery and also convey a meaning. In Tamil literature, his couplets are among the most quoted verses during his lifetime, during the Sangam period and even today. The couplets resemble the Japanese haiku poetry. Of course, haiku has three lines.

Talking about his personal life, a lot of stories were written, but they do not have any historical or biographical basis. These stories have come up just to establish the greatness of Valluvar. With regard to his greatness, there is a separate set of poems written by different poets called "Thiruvalluvar Malai". This has a unique place in Tamil literature. No other author in the entire body of Tamil literature has such a pre-eminent place to have a separate set of poems on a book and its author. Getting back to his life and times, we can safely say that whatever he has portrayed echoed the time in which he lived. Because the basic principle of literature is that it is a mirror that reflects life. If we adopt this rule, then Kural gives us glimpses of life and history of his time. However, Valluvar, being an iconoclast and an idealist, should have enshrined his noble ideals too in the sacred Kurals. It is possible.

The Thirukkural may be the most quoted work during his life and for the last 2000 years. One of the reasons why great men quoted his work could be attributed to its simplicity - his Kurals are very easy to quote - Seven words conveying a beautiful meaning. His masterpiece is divided into three major parts; again it is a question: whether Tiruvalluvar divided his work into three parts or the subsequent critics who followed him made them into three parts. Late S. Kasi Pandian

has written a treatise in this regard. Either way, there is no straight answer but over a period of time or in the last 2000 years, this division of the Thirukkural into three parts had been widely accepted by all the scholars. The first part deals with Virtue, the second part deals with Economics and the third part deals with Love and Family Life. Here, I must put forth a point. Some scholars say that Kural is an adoption of Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha philosophy of Sanskrit tradition. I strongly differ from that view because Valluvar believed that there is no such separate thing called Moksha. In one of his poems he says, "If you give up the quenching thirst of desire, that state in itself is heaven." (Kural: 370) That is the main reason that he did not concentrate on Moksha. In the entire Sanskrit literature Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha play a crucial role but that is not found in the Tirukkural. So in following the virtue, you experience heaven, in following the pure principles of economics, you will feel moksha. In Tamil literature, love is divided into two major divisions - love before marriage and love after marriage. In one poem, Valluvar even questions the concept of Vykunta. He asks, "Will the pleasures of the world of the Lotus-eyed Vishnu equal the pleasures on the bosom of one's sweetheart?" (Kural: 1103).

The Thirukkural does not appeal to any particular religion, but it is the other religious people who find their value system enshrined in Kural and hence Thiruvalluvar belongs to their religion. But it is a big question mark whether or not he belonged to that religion. Here you will find the religion of Lord Shiva, Lord Vishnu, Lord Buddha, and Lord Mahavira. Some of the Christian thinkers, who had done a lot of research, also say that some of the concepts of Thiruvalluvar were borrowed from the Bible. They say that because one of the disciples of Jesus Christ, St. Thomas by name came to India, up to Mylapur where Thiruvalluvar lived. As the tradition goes, Thiruvalluvar lived in Mylapur in Chennai and that is where we have Santhome Church; and it is believed that because of his contact with the Christianity, some of its principals



Any common person could understand all the 1330 Kurals in 133 Chapters. The Tamil language used by Valluvar is amazingly chaste, and its style down-to-earth. In Tamil literature, if you take any great literary work, it is not addressed to any individual and it is always addressed to

also find a supreme place in the Thirukkural. One of the Kurals says, "What good is that good which does not return Good for Evil?" (Kural: 987) This literally brings in the words of Lord Jesus on the cross. So the Christians think that Thiruvalluvar has enshrined a lot of Christian concepts in the Kural. But nowhere Valluvar openly says that he belongs to this sect or that sect. The Thirukkural stands as a supreme example of the Secular Sangam tradition. If you look into Tamil literature, however, you will find people and gods interacting with each other and maintaining the idyllic social harmony.

The reason for the popularity of the Thirukkural as said earlier is its simplicity. Today, the modern society is moving towards Haiku, as it is very easy to enjoy and remember. There was a time when people sat and listened to Kampan's Ramayanam, which has 24000 verses. Now, because of our modern life and change in lifestyle, economy and culture, a lot of things have changed and people do not find time to concentrate on poetry and more so on long poetry. Now we are going towards Haiku, but it was amazingly a new thought in those days to write in couplets. What has become superior in the 21st century had been superior in the Sangam period itself and that is the greatness of the Thirukkural. And its appeal was to the humans in general and not only to the Tamils.

the world - beyond the boundaries of region, religion and language. In the Thirukkural, the first Kural itself is addressed to the world. He introduces God to the world in an interesting way. Perhaps, that kind of an expression may not be available in other literature - "As the alphabet in a language starts with 'A', the World starts with God." (Kural: 1) Though it is the greatest of Tamil literary works, he never used the word Tamil in any of the Kurals. The appeal is not to the Tamils but to people who live in the whole world. It is because of this unique feature, the Thirukkural is translated into 34 languages of the world.

Irrespective of the times, the significance of the Kural has not been lost. I feel proud to say that one of the Kurals, "As far as birth is concerned, it is equal to all creatures" (Kural: 972), verbatim finds a place in the American Declaration of Independence and the same is echoed in Dr BR Ambedkar's concept of Equality, in the Preamble to the Indian Constitution. Be it a Politician, a King or Common people, the respect they gave to Thirukkural was immense. At this juncture, the credit also should go to three or four people who were foreign scholars who propagated the Kural to the West. I remember them with respect and love - Albert Switzer, a Nobel Laureate, GU Pope and Father

Beschi. In later days, irrespective of governments in Tamil Nadu, the Thirukkural was appreciated and given a prime place. DMK party in Tamil Nadu under the leadership of Former Chief Minister Karunanidhi went a step further and wrote the Kurals in all the state transport buses and constructed the historical Valluvar Kottam, a place of learning of Kural studies.

Now it serves as an interesting monument in Chennai, which attracts lots of tourists both Indian and foreign. This is how the Thirukkural is being propagated through the modern governments. I appreciate the steps taken by former MP, Tarun Vijay to install the statue of Valluvar in Uttar Khand.

In 1960's when I was in school, we had competition on reciting the Thirukkural. I was one of those children who took part in the recital of the Thirukkural and I was able to recite more than 150 Kurals. I took part and won the first prize. Later on, in 1978, I am humbled to put forth that I was the first IAS officer in Tamil Nadu to write the IAS examination in Tamil and got selected in the UPSC examination. It was my constant reading of the Thirukkural that made me read other literature and it also made me select English literature. It helped me to get in touch with some of the best authors in the world.

'A Social History of Thiruvalluvar's Age' is the title of my book. I have not taken other works as a source for my research. I have constructed the social history purely from the internal evidences and APJ Abdul Kalam appreciated it. According to the Tamils, the

Tamil land was divided into 5 major divisions - Kurunji, dealing with the life and culture of people living in the hilly region, Mullai, dealing with the life and culture of people living in the forests, Marudam, dealing with the life and culture of people living in the plains, Neydhal, dealing with the life and culture of people living near the seashore and Palai, dealing with the life and culture of people living in parched

wastelands. It is to be understood that the Tamil country did not have permanent "Palai" lands. Whenever there was a change in the environment of the Mullai and Kurunji, Palai came into being. It was a temporary phenomenon. All these divisions had different attributes like gods, music, animals, time, trees etc. Similarly, the king followed neither capitalism nor communism.

However, Thiruvalluvar presented individual capitalism and because people were

following virtues, they were supposed to practice charity. In one of the poems, Valluvar says, "Wealth in the hands of a good man is like a tree laden with fruit in the midst of a village" (Kural: 216). Valluvar's main aim was to show that man throughout his life should practise virtue, and make wealth through virtue. Love and family life are common to all human beings.

Valluvar presented a true cross-section of the life of his times and even sowed seeds of the modern concept of Gender justice 2000 years ago. Valluvar was against casteism and propagated that birth is equal to all, a great departure from the Sanskrit tradition.





Jayashree Nair: A Woman with a Steadfast Belief



The status of women has been changing over the years with the passage of time. At a certain point, there were several social evils that were imposed on women, irrespective of their deeds. Even with such social evils, women proved to be strong, both physically and mentally. They fought against various forms of social evils, starting from Sati system in the past to current female infanticide.

With many issues related to women arising in the present day world, people like Jayashree Nair stand as an inspiration for many women with her strong and unwavering persona and even in the aspect of dance evolution - she is a woman with a steadfast belief. She

Jayashree Nair with her daughter Sujatha



believes in the almighty and renders her services to differently-abled students who are keen in learning dance.

Originated from a Kerala clan, Jayashree was born and brought up in Mumbai, Maharashtra. Her father was PK Narayanan Nair who was one of the early Malayali businessmen who established the Jayanthi General Stores in 1932. Her mother Sreemathykutty was an active member of the Keraleeya Mahila Samaj and regularly participated in cultural programs. Because of that, she was influenced to learn art forms. Her husband, Sudhakaran Nair has always been helpful and encouraging and made her follow her dreams. Jayashree's daughter and granddaughter have also been following the same culture.

Nair started learning Bharatanatyam at a very young age under Guru GV Ramani and Ranganayaki Ramani of 'Darshana' at Matunga, Mumbai. She learned Mohiniattam from Guru Kalamandalam Rajalakshmi and Kathakali from Gopinath Nair. Jayashree did

Arangetram and performed in all the three styles. She was awarded the Best Dancer in the All India Dance competition held at Hyderabad. She joined Nalanda for Dance courses in Mumbai and graduated with a first class and continued to pursue her Masters too.

She received intensive training from her Gurus Kalamamani Kathiravelu Pillai, Kalaimamani Mahalingam Pillai and Ramaswamy Bhagavatar and also received training in Abhinaya from Kalanidhi Narayanan and Dr Kanak Rele. She learnt the intricacies in Mohinattam from Kalamandalam Satyabhama and she was also associated with Professor Kalamandalam Leelamma till her recent demise.

She expressed the concept of 'Unity in Diversity' in her own words saying, "Like all our art forms, Mohiniattam also has its unique features coupled with common





attributes of Indian art forms". She is a woman of spirituality who was inspired by spiritual stories especially about Krishna since her childhood. She believes that her deeds are the result of the divinity.

A commendable gesture by

Jayasree Nair was that she trained a large number of differently-abled children such as deaf, blind, physically handicapped, mentally retarded and prepared them to present the entire Ramayana as a

Bharatanatyam ballet, which had many repeat performances at different parts of the country. According to her, "experiments and fusions are amalgamations and associations happening between classical and western kind of different art

forms and they are taking place everywhere and the resultant products would definitely depend on the quality of ingredients". Just like her belief, it is true in the case of dance styles.



ॐ
तक्षशिला
Takshashila
takshashila nrityakala mandir
Present



Jayasree Nair with Prominent Artists of the Dance field at Takshashila Nrityakala Mandir



Jayasree Nair with her Husband

She says that any art form can be taken as a profession if it means earning money, but a real artist would gain much more than that - be it dances, music, acting, painting or any other art. She counts her most defining moments to be innumerate. In her view, the power of art is immense.

She believes that dance festivals play an important role in bringing closeness among dancers, dance teachers, institutions and enthusiasts of the art forms. These festivals create much-needed awareness about different art forms in the general public, especially in the younger generation.

She never performed overseas but has judged a few dance competitions abroad and her students have



Jayasree Family with Manipuri Exponent Darshana Jhaveri

also been performing outside India. From her experience and from what she has learned from others, our dance forms have a high place in the art scenario in other countries and are highly appreciated. It makes her proud to say that at many places the dance form of Kathakali was synonymous with the identity of India. Though she had a passion for all good things in life, currently she is fully dedicated to dance and only dance.

She is a staunch believer in God and believes in karma (service with sincerity) with dedication rather than winning and receiving awards. This not only portrays her as a simple and humble person but also stands as a 'Beacon of Light' for the next generations to follow.

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RAYS HOPE

A Kuchipudi



Diamond with Resilience

Some dance for fun, some dance for pleasure, some dance out of joy and some dance out of passion, but she danced with a hope of curing her illness. We might find numerous people who dance on their feet but only a few who are dedicated would dance with their heart and soul. Though many witness enormous hurdles during their journey, only a few survive and live to tell the tale of their sufferings.



Eminent Dancer Sai Jyothi



Dr Sai Jyothi Palisetty is one of those gems that was once a raw stone and was later polished into a diamond. Her agony described her determination. It was her willpower that made her dance. She was born on 19 May 1989 at Srikakulam. She pursued her graduation in Fashion Designing and followed it up with a Master's degree in Dance from Andhra University. Later, she completed her Doctorate in Kuchipudi dance form from Naatya Aaharyabhinayam Potti Sri Ramulu

Telugu University, Hyderabad. She has been a resident of Visakhapatnam from the last few years.

She has always been fond of dance since her childhood. Her parents played a vital role in her dance journey at every phase. Her mother dreamed of being a good dancer but due to some uncertainties, she could not pursue her dream. This made Jyothi work towards it with more resilience. Her family was also supportive and helped her to follow her dreams. She learned Bharatanatyam from Guru Vasundhara Thomas who was from Rukmini Arandal Kalakshetra, Chennai. She also jointly learnt Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi from Dr Raghupatruni Srikanth. She was left spellbound by Kuchipudi exponent Hanumanth Kumar from Visakhapatnam and learned Kuchipudi under his supervision. She acquired various dance techniques from distinguished legends like Dr Vedantam Ramalingayya Sastry, Siddendra Kala Pitham, Kuchipudi, Padma Shri Dr Shobha Naidu and Manju Baggavee.

Ex Chairmen of AP Legislative Council Dr. A. Chakrapani honoring Sai Jyothi with Doctorate in Amaravati Nrithyotsav 2016





Sai Jyothi Is being Honored by Actress Gowthami in Cancer Awareness Programme

According to her, Kuchipudi is in the veins of Indian tradition with its varied heritage. Its importance should be carried to future generations without losing its impact. She dreams of transforming Kuchipudi dance form into a larger scale throwing light on its significance. Her aim is to preserve, promote and propagate the essence of Kuchipudi dance to the present day world. She connects her passion for dance with serving the needy. Her wish is to be a helping hand to the poor with her earnings.



Sai Jyothi with one of the most graceful dancer Padmashree Shobha Naidu

She keeps her daily routines very simple. She spends her leisure with her family and friends and tries to keep herself at peace by practising yoga every day without fail. She maintains a healthy environment around her. The most striking part of her life was her battle with

cancer. It was literally a painful phase in her life but she did not allow it to bother her for an extended period. She starting to recover on her own by making herself

engrossed in learning dance. She began to perfect herself and unearthed her potential. She never gave up dancing even during the weak moments in her life. It was the most challenging part of her life.

She keeps herself strict in making no experiments with Kuchipudi dance form. She believes in

originality and tries to sustain these innovative past masterpieces. According to her, ballets play an important role as they convey a constructive message to the society which is essential in the present day world. Her message is especially to the parents

because she feels that they are the ones who need to identify the capabilities of their children. Parents should have a penchant for promoting the Indian art and culture among their children. It should be the duty of everyone to promote, propagate and profess the cultural heritage, tradition and various art forms of India. This small initiation of cultivating a culture in the young minds would definitely yield best results for the wellbeing of the society.

Her achievements are numerous and some of the awards and accolades include Natya Jyothi in Vysakhi Nrithyotsav (Nataraj Music and Dance Academy), Natya Dhrama in Kerala Satyanjali Dance Festival, Natya Siromani in Katak Mohotsav Odissi Dance Festival, Abhinaya Nrutya Mohini in Bobbili Raja Ranga Rao Festival (Andhra Pradesh), Vysakhi Excellence Award in Vysakhi Nrithyotsav, Natya Chudamani in Cuttuck Festival (Orissa), Natya Manjari in the 3rd International Indian Classical Dance Festival, Best Dancer in Vizag by Active 24 Charitable Trust, Satyabhama award in Satyabhama Dance Festival, the Best Dancer in Kuchipudi award by the Government of Andhra Pradesh. She loves to experience happiness in the eyes of her parents whenever she receives laurels.



Prominent Kuchipudi Artist Sai Jyothi



Receiving honour from Vilasini naatyam Exponrnt Padmabhushan Dr. Swapna Sundhari

Rasa United: Vanashree Rao and Dancers Scale Great Artistic Heights

Text: **Dr Sunil Kothari**

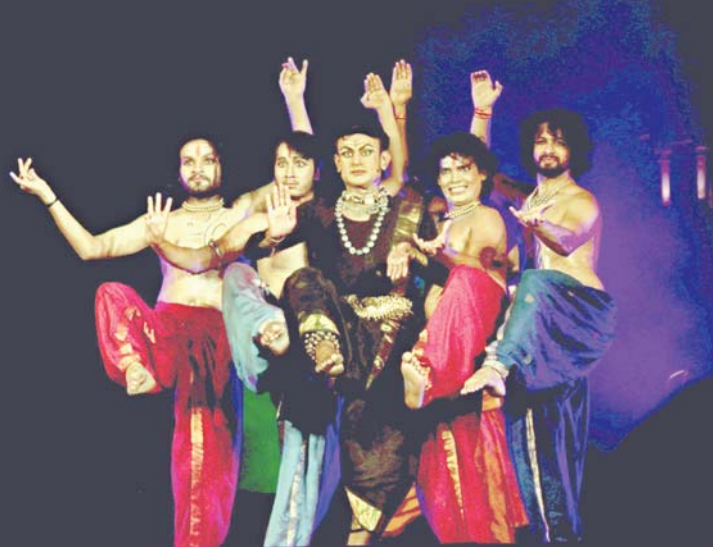
On Vijaydashami, the concluding day of Purana Qila Dance festival, New Delhi, Vanashree Rao's Rasa United presented mythological stories with Mahishasura Mardini to the chanting of 'Ya Devi Sarva Bhuteshu Shakti - rupena samsthita' creating magic and keeping audience under a spell with a captivating performance by her and the troupe of dancers whose teamwork was outstanding. The audience gave them a rousing ovation.

The Purana Qila stage had turned in to a battlefield. Tripurasamhara saw the three sons of Tarakasura creating a human pyramid, showing off their prowess. The postures and dancing by the Mayurbhanj Chhau dancers Kuleshwara Thakur, Prashant Kalia, and Deepak Khandari with their faces covered with half masks were breathtaking. Harassing, the apsaras who prayed to Lord Shiva to protect them was warned by Brahma that when the three sons of Tarakasura will be together, they would meet death. Lord Siva made Mount Meru the chariot, Brahma as Sarathi and, the sun and the moon two wheels, Vishnu the arrow and Vasuki the string and destroyed the three demons with one

shot. The music and performance with high energy kept the audience in thrall.

To the melodious music designed by Vanashree and composed by a team of musicians including Dr S Vasudeva, Venkatesh, Prasanna on flute, from Bangalore, Prasanna for special effects and percussion by Kesavan, the recitation for 12 Jyotirlingas, mentioning each sthala in praise of Lord Shiva, Vanashree wove the story of Markandeya who at 16 was to be taken away by Yamaraj, but

Rasa United festival



Markandeya prayed to Lord Shiva to protect him and clung to the Shivalinga from where appeared Lord Shiva and saved him from the noose of Yamaraj. The entry from the upper stage by Dr S Vasudeva as Lord Shiva was dramatic. Kuleshwar as Markandeya acted with complete devotion.

The new choreographic work Abhimanyu Vadh from Dronaparva of Mahabharata unfolded with Dronacharya's anxiety. Arjuna tells to Subhadra the secret of how to come out of Chakravyuha, which as fetus Abhimanyu listens carefully. But alas Subhadra falls asleep and the way to get out of Chakravyuha he does not learn. When Yudhishtira takes him to the battlefield and

promises him to save him from Chakravyuha, strategic formation created by Dronacharya, Abhimanyu plunges into war with the Saptarathis, who surround him. Alone fighting valiantly

Abhimanyu loses his weapons, is bodily injured and picks up the wheel of his broken chariot and tries to attack Dronacharya but falls, and Karna stabs him in the back. Helpless Yudhishtira is unable to protect him, as Jayadrath guarding the entry of Chakravyuha could not be defeated. The agony of Arjuna at the death of Abhimanyu is heart-rending and he cries and promises to kill Jayadrath next day before sunset.

The dancers performed with dynamism and energy, the young Kuchipudi dancer playing role of Abhimanyu with incredible stamina and the male dancers surrounding Abhimanyu, lifting his body, Abhimanyu picking up the wheel of broken chariot and attacking, all was performed with great intensity that one was glued to one's seat watching the anguished cry of Arjuna with his heart beating aloud to the excellent



music accompanying the scene. What a gripping story that created great sympathy for the young victim of the war.

Inspired by Pandit Jasraj's rendering of the song Vanashree and the dancers visualised the killing of Mahishasura by Goddess Durga. Using three dance styles Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi and Mayurbhanj Chhau for Mahishasuramardini in a powerful choreography, it opened with energetic dancing by five Kuchipudi dancers, creating an image of Goddess Durga, with ten arms Dashabhuj, wielding a variety of weapons the Gods gave her to kill the invincible demon. The relentless chanting during the battle with

the Goddess Durga, enacted with four dancers by Vanashree and Dr S Vasudav as Mahishasura, created a powerful atmosphere with pulsating sounds. The finale when the demon is vanquished Durga rode over the human pyramid made by dancers, as victorious

Shakti. The visual was so powerful that audience was completely awestruck by the image and later on broke out in a spontaneous round of applause.

It would be invidious to single out any one dancer as the group performed with understanding as a team and gave their best. The choreography was seamless and scenes followed one after another in quick succession. With music providing excellent support to various moods and basic Vira Rasa, Rasa United, indeed justified the title. That Vanashree has reinvented herself as a choreographer augurs well. Taking pains and paying attention to minutest details, she has in recent times given us amazing creative works. These choreographic works deserve to be seen in major dance festivals in other parts of India.

New Tourism Policy

"The Tourism department of Andhra Pradesh is going to launch a new policy for tourism", informed the Minister for Culture and Tourism, Bhuma Akhila Priya Reddy on 27th October, 2017 at Novotel, Visakhapatnam.

According to the suggestions given by few intellectuals and speakers who were present in the conference, a framework for the policy has been prepared. After discussing with few of the participants we received positive responses regarding projects related to tourism, quoted the Minister. The people who stepped forward to invest in these projects have been negotiated she said and added that a plan for Tourism Circuit at Rayalaseema has been made. Efforts are afoot to observe the month of Karthik as a State Festival. The devotional aspects of the states which are

the temples will also be developed for Tourism purpose.

The scope of water sports in the vast seas of Visakhapatnam which will be encouraged and will be started soon. She stated that environmental and health tourism at Araku would be developed. The INS Virat project is under progress; very soon this project would be given into the hands of Visakhapatnam. The land and properties which have been sanctioned in the past would be taken back and they would be allotted towards the development of tourism projects in near future. Himamshu Shukla, Chief Executive Officer of Andhra Pradesh Tourism Authority mentioned that Rs. 10 crores would be allotted for the establishment of hotels and resorts in Araku and Lammasingi. Rs. 10 crores has been sanctioned for the places like Rushikonda beach and Mangavaripeta.

The President of Andhra Pradesh Chamber of Commerce, G. Sambasiva Rao and Chairman of Tourism Sub-Committee, Lakshmi Narayana and other dignitaries were present.



Ms. Bhuma Akhila Priya Reddy - Tourism Minister addressing the Press Conference at Novotel Hotel

The Biggest Event for Children and Youth - 2nd CHIMERA 2017

The biggest event for children and youth, the 2nd CHIMERA 2017 Cultural Extravaganza and Prize Distribution Ceremony organized by AMRAPALI (Society for ARTS)® ended with grandeur and colorful participation on October 24, 2017 at District Library, Guwahati. The event was organized in collaboration with the Department of Cultural Affairs, Govt. of Assam, recognized by Shri Uttar Kamalabari Sattrra, Majuli and Media Partnered by Asomiya Pratidin.



CHIMERA FEST 2017

The Chimera is an annual event that is specifically centered within the artistic potentialities of children and youth, inviting applications for different participating fields like Greeting Card Making, Poster Making, Colouring, Handwriting, etc. from classes Nursery to XII. The 2nd Chimera 2017 was inaugurated by Mr. Preetom Saikia (IAS) Commissioner and Secretary, Govt. of Assam as the Chief Guest. The Special Guests were Dr. Anjana Goswami, Founder of Ashadeep Organisation; Mrs. Ranjumoni Saikia, eminent Sattriya danseuse and

Dr. Shyamal Prasad Saikia (IPS) Superintendent of Police, Bureau of Investigation (E.O).

This year the Dance Competition for Solo and Group is a new inclusion at Chimera for classes I to XII, which was hosted at Shilpgram, Guwahati on October 22, 2017. An event of this stature is a must to promote the innate artistic skills within children and propagate aesthetic understandings amidst the upcoming generation. Founder of AMRAPALI (Society for ARTS), Pranaame Bhagawati said, "It is such a great feeling to witness children, their parents and institutions as well as mentors/Gurus coming forward and celebrating every essence of the Chimera. With each passing year, we are growing with love and trust that we receive from our participants. Next year we will be having more competitions and varieties. I'm thankful to our supporters for all the help and concerns extended towards this event."

The Cultural Extravaganza and Prize Distribution Ceremony started with an invocation dance composition named 'Om', by Amrapali Institute of Arts and choreographed by its Founder and Artistic Director, Pranaame Bhagawati. The evening was further followed with some beautiful performing arts rendition of group dance by Iconic Hills Dance Academy and Rodali Dance Academy; Sattriya dance and chorus by children from Ashadeep organization and solo Manipuri dance recital from Karuna Dance Academy.



CHIMERA FEST 2017

International Indian Classical Dance & Music Festival (ICDMF) 2017 was held from 5th Oct 2017 to 7th Oct 2017 at SevaSadan Auditorium, Bangalore

Organised by: **Purvai Sannskreeti Kala Vikaash Kendra**

Purvai Sannskreeti Kala Vikaash Kendra, a social and non-profit cultural organisation dedicated to maintain, nurture and enhance popularity of our rich culture and keep our heritage, has organised a number of Dance & Music Festivals and Workshops in different parts of the country to provide platform to young budding talents to perform and to encourage them to preserve and promote our diverse heritage.

Recently, Purvai Sannskreeti Kala Vikaash Kendra has organised a 3-day Cultural Festival at SevaSadan Auditorium, Bengaluru. Professional Artists from all over India performed on 5th, 6th & 7th October 2017. Eminent Kathak Guru Harish Gangani along

with his Troupe performed "Shivarupaya". His control over footwork and abhinaya was superb. Smt Dimple Kaur performed memorable "Satyabhama" in Vilasini Natyam. It is a beautiful mixture of Nritta and abhinaya. American Guru Sharon Lowen proved her love for Indian Classical Dance by mesmerising the audience by her amazing and heart-touching Abhinaya - "Sakhi Hai Kaisi Mathana Mudaram" and Moksha - "Omkaara". Her performance was a treat for the eyes. Kathak dancer Smt Radhika Sathe beautifully presented 'Tintaal' and "Meera Bhajan". Acharya Anusuya Ghosh Banerjee pleased the audience with her choreographic work "Kamala Kanha". Her "Priye Charushiley" amazed all. The founder & festival director Nandini Chaudhry Mohanty performed an Odia abhinaya "Lila Nidhi Hey" which was vivid with sensuous movements. Shweta Venkatesh showcased the beauty of Bharatnatyam & Kathak. Audience basked in its glory. Divyani Mohanty performed "SaveriPallavi" which was an ornamental representation, marked by elegant and lyrical movements.

Performance by Harish ji group





Radhika ji Felicitation

Sri Kalakshi School of Dance (Bharatnatyam) from Chennai, Sanjeet Gangani (Kathak) from New Delhi, Nriyantar Academy of Performing Arts (Odissi), Laxminarayan Jena (Kathak), Vinitha Vergese (Mohiniyattam), Kala Srinivasan's Shanmukha Arts (Bharatnatyam) from Mumbai and Divya

Prasad (Bharatnatyam) from Bengaluru were some praiseworthy performers who were highly admired by the spectators. The trio of Anjana Prabhas, Jaya Srinivasan & Shohini Ghosh (Kathak), Ruma Dey (Gaudiya) from Bangalore, Nandini's 9th Count Dance Academy (Bharatnatyam) also fantasised the audience.



Sai Venkatesh felicitating Harish ji

Our Honourable Guests - Sri Sai Venkatesh, Guru Suparna Venkatesh, Sri Mysore B Nagaraj and Sri Vikram Suri felicitated the performers at the end of the day's program.

we have received from artists all over the country and encourage them to keep trying their best to promote Indian Culture. The stars of our previous Competitions who had also performed in the evening session were Divyani Mohanty, Angeleena Avnee performed and Thyryloka.

Sri Dillip Mohanty, the President of Purvai Sannskreeti Kala Vikaash Kendra appreciates the huge response



All the participants of ICDMF Bangalore 2017

Avirat Jalsa: An Eternal Celebration

On the auspicious occasion of the Ganesh festival, with his divine blessings, the first episode of 'Avirat Jalsa' took place under the guidance and patronage of Shingar Mani awardee and the director of Nritya Darpana Foundation (NDF), Paullumi Mukherjee. She has been the torchbearer for the legacy of the Guru Lacchu Maharaj and his wife Ramadevi Lacchu Maharaj of the Lucknow Gharana with her forte being abhinaya. The first episode was launched on 2 September 2017 at the Akhil Bharatiya Mahila Parishad in Matunga, Mumbai. It was a Kathak baithak Shrukala. The onwards journey of Kathak inaugurated by Chief Guest Chetan Saraiya, a disciple of Ashatai Joglekar in the presence of other guests of honour Smitaji More, a disciple of Pt Munnalal Shukla, Priti Mandar Valuskar, a disciple of Dr Raja Ketkar and Rachit Tiwari, a disciple of Pt Rajendra Gangani.

1st September is the birth anniversary of Guru Lacchu Maharaj, the legendary Kathak performer. He was an excellent choreographer as well, in Indian cinema. Ramadevi assisted her guru and husband, Lacchu Maharaj, in hundreds of memorable dance choreographies such as in Pakeezah, Teesari Kasam,



Kaala Paani, Mahal, Ram Rajya, Tamasha, Jeevan Mrityu, Kaale Badal etc.

After the deep prajvalan (lamp lighting ceremony), Rachit Tiwari performed Upajlayakari, Totetukade and Ruksarki gat taught by Madhurita Sarangji of Jaipur Gharana (Taalchoutaal). In the next segment Aparna Apte Biwalkar, a disciple of Pt Vikas Kashalkar presented 'khayal gaya ki Ganesh bhajan' ending with bhairavi. It was followed by the felicitation to all the guests with a memento. All the disciples of NDF organised and arranged the ceremony with grace.

Avirat Jalsa is an endeavour to pay tribute to Gurus and it promises to continue as a chain theme highlighting different facets and ingredients of Kathak with its every episode. It was an evolution and up gradation of Kathak, of not only Lucknow Gharana but also of Jaipur and Banaras Gharanas.

A Mesmerising Flute Concert

VRC Academy of Music and Dance headed by senior Mrudangam Artist Vidwan Vasanthapuram Chandrashekar, widely known in dance and music circle as VRC, arranged a highly memorable Solo Flute concert by a 9-year-old prodigy Master Achyutha, a disciple of Guru Vidwan Venugopal Hemmige, at his residence, near Electronic City. It was a thoughtful initiative by VRC to encourage the ever-growing number of budding prodigies. Son of Suma Manjunath and Manjunath Gundurao, the little master Achyutha had senior co-artists Vidwan Anantha Sathyam N on Violin, Vidwan VRC on Mridangam and Vidwan Betta Venkatesh on Ghatam as accompaniment.

The confidence with which the young artiste approached the ragas and kritis mesmerised everyone. Ragas like Simhendra Madhyama, Charukeshi were handled with confidence and ease that one cannot believe the artiste has only been learning for the last 3-4 years. His 1 hour 45 minutes concert was full of strokes of brilliance.

A scholarly and highly motivating review of the concert by Korgi Shankaranarayana Upadhyaya was a blessing for the budding artist.

9 year old Prodigy Master Achyutha's performance



Remembering Mahatma

Text by **Dr. Jayashree Rajagopalan**

"A nation's culture resides in the hearts and in the soul of its people."

- Mahatma Gandhi

In commemoration of the 148th birth anniversary of the Mahatma and in celebration of the 70th year of India's Independence, Nrithyodaya presented the 'Swatantra Bharat 70' Festival on 2 October 2017 at the Mysore Association Auditorium in Matunga, Mumbai.



Eminent Manipuri exponent Guru Darshana Jhaveri was also honoured

The festival was aimed at bringing to light the works of those great heroes who used their pen as their weapon to protect and re-establish the lost glory of our motherland and the dignity and spirit of her children. These works, belonging to different regions of our culturally vibrant and vivacious Bharat, were most appropriately represented through different classical dance styles, a music ensemble and a theatre presentation. The Chief Guest for the function was Suprabha Agarwal, Director, Rajmata Jijau Mother Child Health and Nutrition Mission, Government of Maharashtra. Eminent Manipuri exponent Guru Darshana Jhaveri was also honoured on the occasion.

The theme of '70 years' was symbolically represented with 7 groups presenting their styles for 10 minutes each, to offer a 70-minute ode to the motherland. The values of integration and interaction were further strengthened by collaboration and participation of ABHAI (Association of Bharatanatyam Artistes of India)



Students of Guru Shila Mehta

represented by 7 established gurus who opened the show to a soulful 'Vande Mataram'. Draped in different regional traditional attires, they brought together the soul of Bharat on stage.

Guru Jyoti Mohan's Bharatanatyam group was a fitting tribute to the children of our motherland calling upon them to offer their best to the land that nurtures them. Representing the East was the Odissi presentation by disciples of Guru Asha Balan Nambiar. This was followed by a rendition of soothing patriotic songs in different languages by students of Swaralasika, under the able guidance of Guru Hema Balasubramanian. Students of Guru Padmini Radhakrishnan brought to life the works of Tagore and Dwijendralal Ray through their Bharatanatyam performance. Guru Dr Jayashree Rajagopalan's troupe of 8 dancers, presented the famous works of Kavi Subrahmanya Bharati. Succeeding the presentation was the one by students of Guru Shila Mehta, who presented a Kathak piece conveying the values of dedication and determination as goal posts for a nation's strength. The show culminated with a moving theatrical presentation by the NYC cadres of the SIES College of Arts & Science.

The spirit of patriotism and the pride of national integration was what each member cherished in their hearts as they left this culturally charged atmosphere.



Soothing rendering of patriotic songs in different languages by students of Swaralasika under the able guidance of Guru Hema Balasubramanian

Rasajna National Theatre festival

Theatre questioned life. Baki Ithihas, a Telugu play reflected the society. The four-day Rasajna National Theatre Festival 2017 that stands as the hallmark for Indian eminence and modern technological values was conducted on October 2nd of 2017 at Kalabharathi Auditorium. Rasajna Cultural Service Organisation's founder president and festival director Dr Vemali Trinadh Rao with the courtesy of Ministry of Culture, Government of India; Andhra Pradesh Language and Cultural Department; Andhra University and Telangana



A scene from the Urdu Play Shara ki Malkin by mask players art group directed by Rakesh Sharma

Language and Culture Department has been organizing the Theatre festival annually for the last three years without any break. The prestigious festival was graced and inaugurated by HRD Minister Ganta Srinivasa Rao, Vice-Chancellor of Andhra University Prof Gollapalli Nageswara Rao, Registrar Prof

Velagapudi Uma Maheswar Rao, Ministry of Culture, Government of India AP and Telangana representative TV Rangaiah, Festival Chairman Lanka Satyanand, Festival Director Dr Vemali Trinadh Rao. Breaking the language and regional barriers, the festival selection committee handpicked 8 theatre groups from across the country to perform during the four-day festival.



A scene from telugu play baaki Ithihas performed by P Kondal Reddy and team.

Rasajna 3rd National Theatre Festival being inaugurated by AU VC Professor G. Nageswara Rao Registrar Professor V Uma Maheswara Rao, I. Satyanand, Leader Ramana Murthy are seen in the picture



"Awareness and determination can overtake anything."

"Awareness added with determination and sincere efforts can not only overtake anything in the world but can also cure any sort of visibly dangerous deficiency like cancer," quoted the film actor and founder of Life Again Foundation, Gautami, who is also a brand ambassador of Breast Cancer Awareness.

Gautami participated in an awareness meet on 'breast cancer' organised under the aegis of Leader People Services in association with Life Again Foundation at Anakapalle.





She underlined the importance of regular exercise to keep the body fit and healthy. Stress should be overcome and the mind should be free from tensions. One should consume less of sugar and salt and avoid junk foods altogether. Those affected by disease should not lose hope and trust their doctor completely.

A cancer survivor herself, Gautami suggested proper research on the medications available before going for the treatment.

In this program, the performance given by Dr Sai Jyothi, who herself was a cancer survivor and someone who fought with the disease for 13 years and succeeded, mesmerised the audience with her performance. It made Gautami embrace her with appreciation. While fighting the disease, she did not lose hope and with indomitable spirit, she even completed her doctorate. Through her performance, she showcased that self-confidence is the first step to success.

Leader People Services, chairman VV Ramanamurti said that every citizen has to give a helping hand in wiping out cancer from this planet. It is a proven fact that practising and witnessing classical dance is meditative and also a stress buster. Thereby, it can be considered as an alternative for cancer prevention.





PARINITI KALAKENDRA (R.)

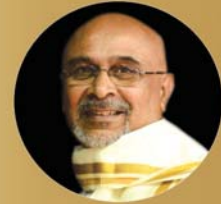
IN CO-ORDINATION : **SAI ARTS INTERNATIONAL, BANGALORE**



Parinithi National Dance Festival



2017



Festival Organisers: Gopal M, Sagar & Sai Venkatesh, Bangalore

Date: 25 & 26 November 2017 Venue: Sagar, Karnataka



Archana Punyesh
Kuchupudi



Madhulitha Mahopatra
Odissi



Kashmira Trivedi, Mumbai
Bharatanatyam



Girija Nair, Mumbai
Bharatanatyam



Kush Kushari, West Bengal
Bharatanatyam



Somashekar
Kathak



Remith, Kerala
Koodiattam



Dr. Suparna Venkatesh
Bharatanatyam



Vid. Brunda
Bharatanatyam



Vid. Roopashree Madhusudhan
Bharatanatyam

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Nrithyanjali celebrated Diwali in Switzerland for the 6th consecutive year

What once was a dream turns into reality by Switzerland consecutively welcoming Nrityanjali artistes for the 6th year to entertain the people - the locals and the NRIs. It is amazing to learn that art is acknowledged and appreciated across as it is one of the finest mediums of communication through its own language of

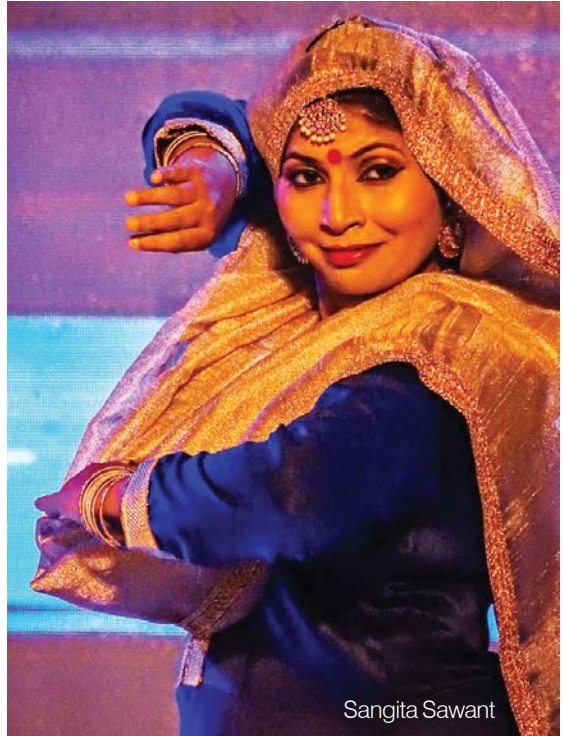


Girish Dalvi

movements and aesthetics.

Music and dance has always touched people of varied culture, locations and has been the reason for the bond that today we experience among people across borders. Music has provided relaxation, while dance has blown away imaginations. Both have touched the souls and unknowingly made people tolerant and appreciative.

In 2012, Nrityanjali was first invited to perform where the artistes showcased the people of Basel, cantonment sharing border with German and France. Indian classical dance, Indian Folk dances were



Sangita Sawant

performed during the 3 day festival organised by India-India Verein to promote India and tourism. It was ably supported by the India Tourism, Paris. Audiences also introduced to Warli painting and draping of sarees and other Indian attire, all encouraged by the artistes sportingly. On the first day, the then India Tourism officer Mrs. Padmaja Vashist inaugurated the 3 day event. The event ended with a Gala Dinner arranged in the honour of the artistes who kept the audiences excited and shared fresh news for the local media.

Since then every year during Diwali, i.e. October - November months, Nrityanjali artistes have been travelling regularly to perform. Nrityanjali, the institute of performing arts, education, personality development and management services always has been offering variety in the field of dance as most of its artistes are not only trained in one form of classical dance, but also trained into offering variety of folk dances of India.

This year was even more special for its challenge and new dimension it offered. This year Nrityanjali was invited by 4 separate organisations and all were Diwali Dawats organised by Indian associations in Bern,



Navrasa by Padma Shri Ananda Shankar Jayant and team

Zurich and St. Gallen. Special invitation was from a Cathedral of Bern that is known for its uniqueness, the uniqueness of bring all religions together under one roof.

On 8th October, Indian Association of Zurich invited Nrityanjali to showcase Bollywood through its simplicity and glamorous representation. 8 Nrityanjali artistes performed 8 songs from yesteryear till date. The stage was shared with Padma Shri Ananda Shankar Jayant - Bharatnatyam exponent who showcased 'Navarasa' - the expressions of life. Nrityanjali performances were just the extension of rejoicing those expressions till you exist. The event was supported by Embassy of India, Bern.

The next 2 performances were back to back. One on 21st October for the Bharatiya Association of Berne and on 22nd October for Marathi Mandal Switzerland at St. Gallen.

The mix bag of performances began with a celestial dance on Late Pt. Ravi Shankarji's music 'Om Shanti'. It was followed by Kathak dance recital; Indian Folk dance Ghoomar, Bhangda, and Lavani, Koli and Bollywood dances on some old and some new songs. The dances were choreographed by Guru and Founder, Dr. Tushar Guha and the artists.

Nrityanjali team that performed on 8th Oct for Indian Association of Greater Zurich



Pallavi Lele: A Brilliant Young Dancer

KINDLED
SPIRITS

Her graceful moves, striking facial expressions and her powerful presence on the stage, always leaves her audience spellbound - It is remarkable when we are talking about a youngster. Pallavi Lele started learning dance at the tender age of 3. Inheriting the talent from her mother, she showed early signs of taking up the divine art form. She belongs to the Lucknow Gharana. After years of rigorous training and dedication in Kathak, Pallavi has grown into an accomplished dancer with a fine grasp of technical intricacies of Taal and Abhinaya. She has received able guidance from renowned Kathak exponent Guru Bhavana Lele, her mother.

Pallavi was equally brilliant in her academics just like her Kathak. She holds a Bachelors Degree in Psychology and has completed Visharad in the year 2011-12 from Akhil Bharatiya Gandharva Mahavidyalaya. She completed her Post Graduation in Kathak i.e., Alankar from Gandharva Mahavidyalaya in 2014-16. Currently, she has been receiving training in choreography from her mother.

She has been mesmerising audiences all over the world at several prestigious festivals, some of them include Ankur festival, Pt Ram Marathe Sangeet Samroha, Rotary Club of Thane Midtown cultural program, Vysakhi Nrithyotsav in 2017 and many more. Her international performances include participation at Dubai Fest and at an event in Mauritius.

After receiving and completing scholarship of CCRT in the junior category, she received a scholarship from the Ministry of Culture of India (2016-18) in the senior category in the field of Kathak. She even bagged a gold medal for the second time in the International Cultural Olympiad organised by ABSS Pune in Thailand. She followed in her mother's footsteps and has started a new organisation named Kalakruthi Art Institute.



At a young age, her performances have won her many awards and recognitions which include bagging opportunity to perform before the Prime Minister of Mauritius in the year 2009. She also secured many prizes in various state and national competitions. Takshasheela Nrityakala Mandir also awarded her with Tarang Padma in 2014.



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VISAKHAPATNAM | ANDHRA PRADESH



Text: **Professor Prakash S. Khandge**
Reader, Performing folk arts department
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Folk DANCES of MAHARASHTRA

The term 'Folk Dance' is self-explanatory. Performed by folk or 'any group of people' and it is an inseparable part of our Folk Culture. Folk Culture relates with the ethos of specific communities. Though its origin has evolved from a primitive culture, it encompasses the modern culture also thus revealing its in-depth magnitude. 'Folk Dance' relates to our rich traditional heritage and hence imparts a much-esteemed contemporary significance too.

According to A J Agarkar, 'Folk Dance' could be described appropriately as follows - "Amongst the primitive people of all times, ceremonial dancing has been considered a matter of great

importance and used frequently as a means of sympathetic magic. If our contemporary ancestor wants to kill a bear, he goes through all the performances of hunting as a ritualistic dance and ends up by wearing some part of the animal skin." 'Folk Dance' relates to our spontaneous expressions with stylised additional energy. This 'additional energy' is expressed creatively through various dance-postures. This is commonly





Dhol Nritya

seen in humans as well as animals. Folk Dances that are thousands of years old have been traced by way of ancient paintings and ancient stone-carvings - these again depict various dance forms and point to our rich cultural heritage!

In these dancing pictures, we see the pictures of primitive people and of animals. Primitive people nurtured festive traditions, which are clearly seen in their various dance forms.

When our forefathers would go for hunting, they followed a specific ritual. They would clothe themselves with animal-skins before resorting to specific ritual dance forms.

Dance is an essential component seen at every stage of life viz. birth, adolescence, youth (which encompasses sexual attraction), marriage - and different events like hunting, war-times and even in the death rituals.

The different forms of Dances could be segregated as follows - as a dance of people; 'traditional dance', 'improvised' dance, 'dance of selflessness', 'choreographed' dance by a particular community. In India, there are several castes and tribes which are engaged in performing 'Folk Dance' purely as a Profession. These dance forms are not identified as 'Classical Dance Forms' but essentially as forms of the 'Folk Dance'.

Folk dance has always been identified as a vernacular dance form. The book, Folklore and Folklife: An

Introduction edited by Richard M Dorson, has a specific concept about vernacular dance. '1'

Dorson states, "A vernacular dance form performed in either its first or second existence as a part of the little tradition within the great tradition of given society."

"It is understood that the dance is an effective mode of expression which requires both time and space. It employs motor behaviour in redundant patterns which are closely linked to the definitive features of musicality."

Folk Dance always co-relates with the 'Cosmic Theory' of the Universe, as the original patterns of the folk dances are circular or semi-circular in nature. These traditional patterns of folk dances are illustrations of monotony (not only of the dance forms but also of the monotony of nature and the Cosmic World as well).

The classification of Folk Dances is done taking into consideration different aspects like -'Rasas' (Expressions), geographical diversities, various religious cults with diversified motives and the places of performance are also considered. There exists a clear-cut demarcation of folk dances such as 'ritualistic' Folk Dances, 'devotional' Folk Dances, Folk Dances with 'social messages', Folk Dances belonging to a particular community, 'gender-specific' Folk Dances and there are yet 'purely entertaining' Folk Dances too!

Maharashtra proudly owns a rich heritage of ancient culture and tradition of Folk Dances that are stunning and vibrant in nature. We commonly find all the above-mentioned categories of dance forms in Maharashtra.

Ritualistic Dance Forms

Talking about Ritualistic Folk Dances, dancing remains an integral part of many ritualistic folk plays. It is certainly one in kind with the primitive notion that dancing is an essential part of the ritual; with the only variation that it seldom approaches the fixed and definite method and happens to be more of a 'disciplined form' that denotes the characteristic of a 'ritual' dance. We find 'ritualistic' dance forms in 'Khandoba Jagran' of Waghyha Murli, together with

Amba, Bhavani, Renuka, Gondhal of 'Gondhali' - of common prevalence in Maharashtra.

'Waghya Murlis' performs the ritualistic 'folk play' with Jagran while Gondhalis perform another type of 'folk play' called Gondhal. During performing these 'ritualistic folk plays' the participants not only worship Lord Khandoba and Goddess Renukadevi but also dance while performing the 'folk plays'. As it is defined as a lesser form of a disciplined form, it is also defined as a natural style of dancing. Therefore, while Murlis dance



during the 'Jagran' presentation, they dance expressing intense devotion towards Khandoba. There are specific steps along with body-movements; as they sing and perform together, their movements are limited in nature. Having Ghati (a cymbal like an instrument) in one hand they dance using only one hand. If the dance has to be classically defined, then it could be said that it has 'Hansasya Hastamudra' and 'Ek Paad Chakkar' while their 'bent-back' posture is shown to be similar to that of a Lotus Bark ('Kamal Kalika') which is

incorporated in classical dance form. The hand-movements of 'Murali' while dancing, resembles an elephant picking the sugarcane in its trunk. These hand movements of Murali are known as 'Gajgras' seen in a Classical Dance form.

While all these movements are performed, there is no science involved in it but only a natural style of dancing prevails which enables them to dance as well as sing. Similarly, in Gondhal, the Gondhali (male performer) dances voluntarily on the beats of Sambal and at the same time, sings 'Gondhal' songs which are devotional in nature. These are sung while worshipping Goddess Renukabei. In this performance, the little 'jumps', 'chakkars' (circular movements) that the Gondhali performs are spontaneous and not pre-planned; it is entirely natural and free from any specific boundaries.

Devotional Dance Forms

While talking about Devotional Folk Dances, they are natural like we find the spontaneous devotional dance forms in 'Bharud' and 'Kirtan' which we also get to observe in the 'Warkari Kirtan' or 'Dindi Dance' which is performed during the 15 days of pilgrimage. Bharud is another form of devotional performance wherein we see dancing in its natural form. The 'Bharudkar' or the 'Performer' while preaching and giving a spiritual message dances on the rhythm of Pakhawaj and Cymbal. Bharudkar sings the opening line, preaches and in between dances to its glory swaying his hands and adding spontaneous little jumps on the beats. Thus it involves three things - singing, preaching and dancing. This kind of dancing is rendered as 'devotional dancing'.

The 'Bhagawat Sampradaya' popularly known as 'Varkari Cult' follows its own unique devotional dance called Dindi-Palkhi dance. The dance is not a choreographed one but is extempore and spontaneous with an overflow of devotional expressions of the Varkari (Pilgrims) - the ardent devotees of God Vithal. The Varkaris/Pilgrims dance with unbounded enthusiasm all the way to Pandharpur

to see Lord Vithoba during 'Ashadhi Ekadashi' and also walk down to Alandi of Saint-Dnyaneshwar during 'Kartiki Ekadashi'. The participants generally fall in two rows facing one another. The Mridanga and the Vina players who lead the dance walk between the rows. The rhythm-strings are interlocked which keeps them compact and in position. The other devotional 'Folk Dance' forms like Fugdi, Zimma, Pinga, Atyapatya, Logori, Chendufali are seen in the 'Dindi-Palkhi' Festival. The Pilgrims sing the narratives of the Saints and the 'dance forms' are based on the same.

Bohada

Bohada which is also known as Panchami, Akhadi, Chaitee constitutes a 'dance drama'. It is popular in the tribal belt of Thane district, Palghar district, Nashik and Nagar district. Akhadi, Panchami and Chaitee all these three forms are inter-related to mythological stories. The stories of the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, Lalit and Dashawataara also resemble the 'Bohada'. The word 'Folk-ballet' could be coined for Bohada and 'Bohada-like' forms. These are performed in the Annual Village Festival colloquially known as 'Grandmotsava'. Divine characters like Ganapati, Riddhi, Siddhi, Saraswati enter first (with the necessary masks) at the holy place of Bohada and then characters like Ram, Laxman, Rawan, Hanuman, Tratika, Bhasmasur, Bhairavnath, Khandoba appear on the scene in the open holy place of the villages. The characters perform the elite warrior-dance. Goddess Amba makes her appearance and the villagers seek Her blessings and offer Her with oblations of Coconut and flowers. Ganapati enters with a 'holy dance steps' which is a



Bala Nritya

mythological convention since He is known as the 'God of Performing Art'. The performance reaches a crescendo with the musical instruments like Dhol, Sanai, Manjiri, Sambal being played simultaneously in Bohada.

Dance Forms Conveying Social Messages

There are various Dance-forms which do the noble job of conveying 'Social Messages'. Amongst them, 'Powadas' (Ballads) have been popular ever since the time of Shivaji Maharaj. Powada has an inbuilt 'Veer Ras' (Spirit of Valiance) in it and successfully narrates the tales of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and other brave warriors. It is well known for the priceless propagation

of social doctrines and pronouncing social messages at various levels. Powadas were extensively used during the Freedom Movement of India and when Maharashtra was separated. A Powada essentially consists of the 'Shahir' (or the 'Bard') who enacts the

stories entwined into 'dance forms'. Though it may not be a complete form of 'dance', it has a subtle form of 'dance' with 'drama expressions' wherein the artist enacts different characters through facial expressions and body language. Powada (known as a 'Ballad' is a part of 'Oral Poetry' which goes hand-in-hand with performances related to the poetry mingled with dance, enactment and singing. Folk dances are particularly performed along with 'Oral Poetry' and are traditional products of Verbal Poetic Narrations that are transmitted from generation to generation. The same is the case with folk dances which are traditional as well as contemporary in nature. This Tradition is a combination of speech, music and dance. The steps of

Ballad singing often vary from each other. The steps in 'Powada Gayan' (Ballad-Singing) are unique and definite and it is precisely the narration of a spectacular victory of a particular dynasty or a brave warrior.

Ballads fall under two classifications - 'total oral' poetry and 'partially oral; partially written' poetry. Ballads were initially composed in a mythological form but later on, as different developments and progressive changes started having a profound influence over the mankind, they eventually developed into complex varied forms like the historical, revolutionary, contemporary, conveying social messages etc. Agindas and Tulsidas were two renowned ballad singers who sang traditional 'Gondhalis' and had composed ballads in Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj regime during the seventeenth century. We often witness ballad singers who use the 'Daf' ('Tambourine') and assume the characteristic posture wherein the person places his right leg in front and the left leg at the rear; moreover, they often keep jumping on their feet while they vividly narrate the victorious moments of the hero. They create an environment of valour and enact the victorious moments by artistic singing and dancing. In Maharashtra we have well-acclaimed Traditional Ballad Singers like Sidram Basappa Muchate, Shankarrao Nikam, Pirajirao Sarnaik, Shahir Lahari Haidar, Shahir Pandurang Khadiikar, Shahir Naniwadekar, Shahir Krishnarao Sable, Shahir Atmaram Patil, Shahir Amarsheikh, Shahir Annabhau Sathe, Shahir Gavankar, Shahir Vitthal Umap, Shahir Liladhar Hegde, Shahir Dada Kondke, Shahir Bapurao Vibhute, Shahir Babasaheb Deshmukh. Their performances constitute a powerful blending of ballad singing and various folk dances and are highly appreciated by people at large!

Entertaining Dance Forms

'Lavani' is identified with the word "Lawanya" which means 'Aesthetic Beauty' and is the type of dance performed in the folk theatre while Tamasha is rich in 'Sringar Ras' (Romanticism) both - drawing a large appreciative crowd. Clad in beautiful nine-yard saris, the main dancer, (along with her troupe of women),

present Lavani with their sensuous and gracefully moves. With Ghungroos (anklet-bells) chiming around their dancing feet, they dance gracefully with beautiful facial- expressions!

Lavani went through a social stigma as it was performed in Royal Courts of the Peshwas but later it regained its honour. There are two types of Folklores - Tamasha, 'Dholki Fadacha Tamasha' (Deewan-e-Aam) and 'Sangeet Baricha Tamasha' (Deewane-e-Khas). Lavani is performed in both these forms.

Since Lavani has a rich legacy of dancers, it is known to be the 'Queen of Folk Art'. The term Lavani is derived from the word 'Lavanya' which means 'beauty'. Lavani was in full bloom in the later phase of the Peshwa



period in the early nineteenth century. Two Schools of Thought emerged concerning the etymology of Lavani - one School believes that Lavani had its roots in the devotional narratives of the saints. The Second School believes that Lavani is purely an outcome of 'erotic poetry' and inherited by the traditional nomadic communities of Maharashtra. When the Muslim Emperors invaded South India they roped in the 'Mujra' culture of the North to South India. It is one of the most popular folk dance forms of Maharashtra and is an aesthetical combination of singing, enactment and dance.

The aforesaid Muslim Emperors and soldiers tried to entertain themselves not with 'Mujra' but developed fancy for 'Lavani'. Taus, Tambori, Dhol were the initial

folk instruments used rampantly in 'Lavani'. Dholki, Harmonium and Tabla became active components of 'Lavani' at a later stage. The characteristic feature of 'Lavani' was 'Singing' and 'Enactment' (also called 'Adakari') - these came to be introduced first and the dance component was introduced later. There are Lavanis' which are characteristically 'devotional' and 'ballad-type'. In such types, social atmosphere and people with their beliefs are depicted along with sex-education for the ladies, marriage-related customs. In this process of imparting educational touch, various shades of feminine beauty, dresses, ornaments together with the different hues of emotions of women and men are also depicted in Lavani. The excellence of the Lavani singers and Lavani dancers has taken this Folk Art not only on the National platform but also on the International platform too. Yamunabai Waikar, a traditional Lavani artiste is the recipient of Padma Shri Award whereas Vithabai Narayangaonkar, Satyabhamabai Pandharpurkar, Yamunabai Waikar are recipients of Sangeet Natak Academy Awards from the Government of India. It is a proven fact that Lavani artistes like Madhu Kambikar, Chhaya-Maya Khutegaonkar, Rajashri Nagaokar, Reshma-Varsha Paritekar, Pramila Lodgekar, Maya Jadhav, Vaishali Parbhanikar have performed Lavani exceptionally well on an International platform in Dubai, China, Russia, France and U.S.A. respectively. Sulochana Chavan and Roshan Satarkar, two Lavani singers made it so popular that Lavani reached from the courtyard to the kitchen winning the hearts of the women-folk. The well-known Music Critic and Artist Dr Ashok Ranade conceived the unique concept called 'Baithakichi Lavani' and moulded it into a creative and artistic Programme that was originally based on the classical Lavani singing of later Peshwa period. The name of Dnyanoba Utpat of Pandharpur is well known amongst those who composed the 'Lavani Programme'. The efforts of these two had taken Lavani to a level of elite calibre. The Government of Maharashtra organises the Lavani Festival annually in their honour.



Shakti Tura

Assorted Folk Dance Forms

Balya Dance Jakhadi

In Raigadh and Ratnagiri districts of Maharashtra, Naman Khele and Jakhadi are the prominent 'Folk Forms'. Naman Khele is purely 'Dramatic Folk Forms' which is performed in the 'Holi Season' whereas Jakhadi (also known as 'Balya Dance') is performed during Ganesh Festival. The word 'Balya Dance' is attributed to artistes wearing earrings called 'bali' while they were performing. Due to 'bali', the 'Balya' dance term has evolved. Another reason why this term is used owes to the participation of the children in the dance performance. The artistes are amateurs and wear earrings and don 'ghungru' ('anklet-bells) on their left leg. Dholaki, Tal and Ghunguru (bound to a stick) are the instruments used in Jakhadi. Jakhadi dance is performed in a 'circular form'. The instrument players are at the centre of the circle and other participants dance perform from outside the circle.

This dance is vibrant and the main artist who is designated as 'Chief' or 'Buwa' sings the divine songs of Ganapati, Riddhi, Siddhi, Saraswati. 'Gan, Gaulan' are assorted mythological narratives. Some mythological 'riddle-songs' are presented in Jakhadi along with the same pattern of dance throughout. In Naman Khele Ganesh, Riddhi, Siddhi, Saraswati and



Tarpa Dance



Varkari Dind

other mythological characters participate in the arena of Naman Khele. This can be designated as a 'Pure Folk Theatre'. Kalyachi fugdi, Tichki dance, Chapai dance, Radha dance, Gauri dance, Dhol dance, Tarpa dance, Takla dance - these various dance forms are very popular in Konkan belt which also includes Thane, Palghar and Tribal districts. In Sawantwadi Tehsil, Sindhudurga district, everybody popularly knows Chapai dance of the 'shepherd community'. It resembles the 'Gaja Dance' of Western Maharashtra. Musical instruments like Dhol, Khaital (Big Zanz) Sanai are the instruments used in 'Chapai' and in 'Gaja' dances respectively. These dances are performed to mark respect to the 'home-deities' of the Shepherds which are - Biroba and Jotiba. Participants from different dance-patterns; to illustrate, they endeavour high jumps in circular movement holding a handkerchief in one hand. They also prepare and play in a circle with 'Gof.' (They place cotton threads alongside a wooden pillar and play with these threads.) 'Gof' dance is also extensively performed in Junnar Tehsil of Pune district as the performers are from the Tribal Thakar Community. They use instruments like Dhol, Tasha and Zanz while dancing. Lezim is also widely popular in Maharashtra and has various patterns.

Koli Dance

Koli dance is very popular among the Fishermen Community. Goddess Ekvira and God Khandoba are known as their family-deities. Dhol, Pipani, Sanai and Ghumat are the instruments used in Koli dance. Koli dance is performed during Festive times like the 'Coconut day', Ganesh Chaturthi, Holi and even in the marriage rituals of fishermen community. They invoke and praise God Khandoba and Goddess Ekvira in the songs when men and women dance together. There are specific occasions for dancing such as Padva; Akshaya Tritiya; Ashadhi Ekadashi; Month of Shravan; Narali Purnima; Ganesh Chaturthee; Navaratri, Holi etc.

In Vidarbha, 'Khadi-Gammat' 'folk play' happens to be a 'Special Gavlan Dance' performed only by men. Kham and Dandar are the folk dance forms in Vidarbha. Other popular dances are Ghusadi dance, Tipri dance, Ghorpad dance, Holi dance, Banjara dance - these are popular in different tribal communities in Maharashtra. In womenfolk, the Mangalagaur and folk plays during Nagpanchami are also popular. These 'Folk plays' and 'Mangalagaur' are performed in front of their individual homes and are accompanied by the relatives and family friends.

Colourful folk-dances form the striking identity of Maharashtra's folk culture, which is diverse in nature, homogenous in soul and strengthens the silken bonds between the people bringing the community close to each other.

Frozen- in-Time



Pic : **Sunil Ammadam**
Freelance Photographer & Flute Player, KERALA

Padayani also called Padeni, is a traditional folk dance and a ritual art from the central portion of the Indian state of Kerala. A ceremonial dance involving masks, it is an ancient ritual performed in Bhagavati temples in honour of Bhadrakaali. The word 'Padayani' which translates to 'row of warriors' blends music, dance, theatre, satire, facial masks, and paintings. It is staged in temples dedicated to goddess

Bhadrakaali from mid-December to mid-May. Regarded as a remnant of the Dravidian forms of worship that existed before the advent of Brahmanism, the art form is unique to central Travancore, comprising the Pathanamthitta district of Kerala. It is like Theyyam in north Kerala. The percussion instruments used in Padayani are Padayani Thappu, Chenda, Para and Kumbham.

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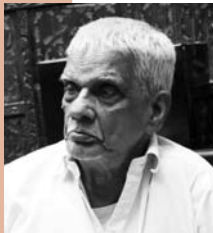
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Putrepu Jogarao Panthulu

Putrepu Jogarao Panthulu, an eminent theatre artist has left the theatre called World and has retired from his career called life on 21st of October, 2017. He has had an estimable theatre history of 60 years

in which he won three Nandi awards. The very first year, in which Nandi Awards had been introduced to theatre, he received a Nandi award for his performance in "Kinchith Bhagam" written by Vijay Bhaskar. He performed more than hundreds of acts, but the most prestigious act, which had given him lot of recognition is "Kanyasulkam". He played the revolutionary role which stands as a centre of attraction in the whole epic, 'Girisham'. He mastered on all the characters of the play. His demise is a great loss not only to his family but also to the Telugu theatrical world.



DS Aiyvelu

DS Aiyvelu was a National Award winning Costume Designer. He was born on 1 October 1930 at Vayalampur near Vandavasi. As a 12-year old boy accompanied by his uncle Narayanaswamy, he joined Gemini Studios as assistant 'Kaaja costume master Ambedkar

Boy' to the Ramamoorthy. Between 1950 and 1969 he became a personal costumer of Actor Vyjayanthimala and accompanied her wherever she went. Once she settled down in Madras, he set up his own shop in Kavignar Bharathidasan road for nearly 40 years then shifted his shop to Nandanam. VJ Sivakumar his son, who joined with him in 1996, took the shop to the global market. Customers have had absolute faith in DS Aiyvelu's designs and patterns. It gives us immense pain that such an eminent costume designer and National Award Winner is no longer among us. He passed away on 22 October 2017 at midnight. It is a great loss to the world of art and culture. The Dance India offers tribute to this renowned personality.

Vidushi Girija Devi



Girija Devi was an Indian classical singer of the Seniya and Banaras Gharanas. She was one of the last 'Thumri' exponents of Banaras Gharana.

She was born on 8 May 1929. She was the third daughter of Ramdeo Rai and Suryamukhi Devi. Her father encouraged her to take to music as he himself played the harmonium. Banaras has been a proud home to numerous performing arts like vocal, instrumental, drama, Kathak and several other forms that were nurtured by a thriving subculture of traditional performance practitioners. Thumri as a light classical genre gained popularity with several performers in the last century. It was into that rich tradition that Girija Devi started her musical journey as a six-year-old. She had her formal training under Gurus Sarangi maestro, Pandit Sarju Prasad Misra and Srichand Misra of the Seniya Gharana. At the age of ten, she sang at the Congress session in Jabalpur in 1939 and made her entry into the field of melody. She earned the praise of Mahatma Gandhi for her poignant performance as an untouchable girl in the film, Yaad Rahe. Girija Devi stood as the only representative of Purab Ang style of singing for the last few decades. The Purab Ang style of music became synonymous with her name. For her contribution to the field of Indian classical music, Girija Devi was honoured with the Padma Shri (1972), Padma Bhushan (1989), Padma Vibhushan, the Central Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (1977) and several other prestigious awards. With her demise, the genre of thumri faces a severe drought as for a long shot there are very far and few exponents of her mettle and stature. Vidushi Girija Devi passed away on 24 October at the Birla Heart Research Institute.

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