

KALA VISHWA

The World Of Arts



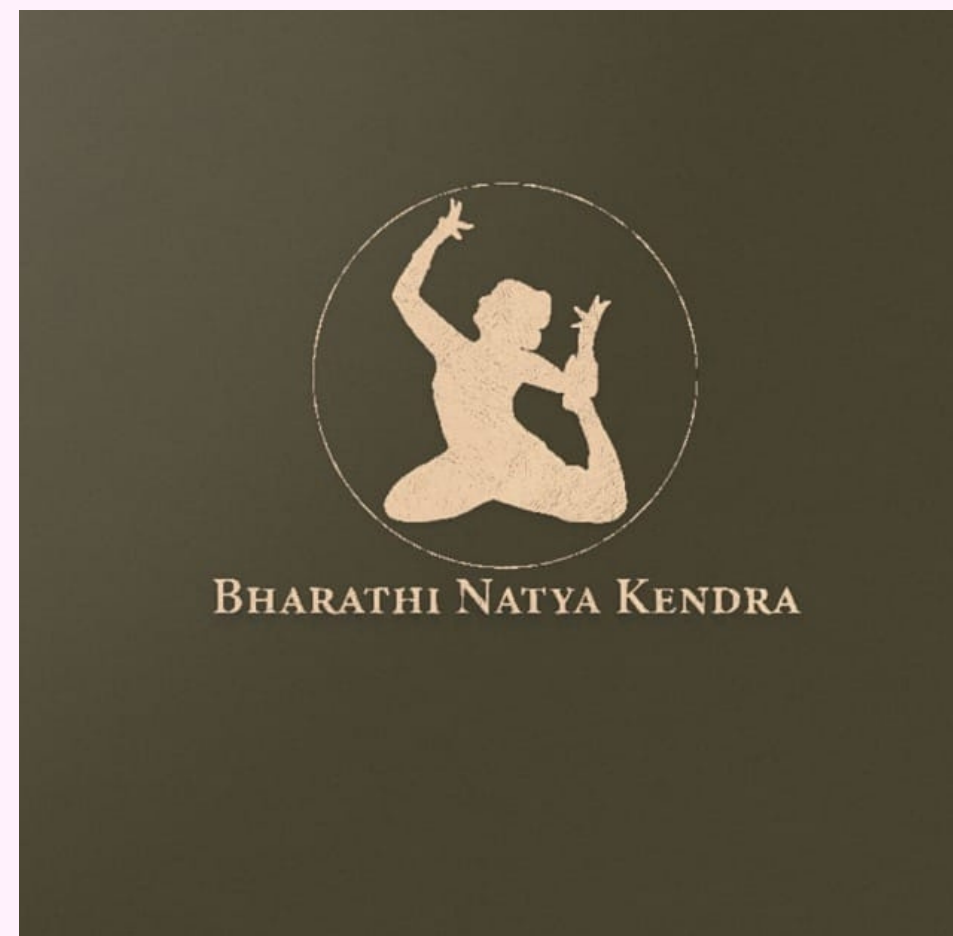
A Quarterly Magazine

By Bharathi Natya Kendra

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Cover Design by
Mahathi Abhyasa Batch



Editor's Note

It is with great joy that I am releasing the second issue of our school's art magazine. The students have had a hectic and exciting quarter with academic exams and switching to offline mode.

It has been a pleasure to actually meet all the students in person, interact and dance with them.

The highlight of this issue is the interview with the renowned artiste, Smt. Leena Mohanty. She is someone who is very dear to Bharathi Natya Kendra family and a great source of inspiration.

This issue will also cover the events that happened in Bharathi Natya Kendra and some thought provoking entries from our students. Enjoy reading!!

Cheers,

Varsha Radhakrishnan
Bharathi Natya Kendra

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INTERVIEW WITH LEENA MOHANTY

By Mahathi, Abhyasa Batch



(based on an online video call with the artiste)

Leena Mohanty is a performing artist in Odissi. She was born in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. At the early age of four, she started Odissi with Guru Deba Prasad Das and continued under Guru Durga Charan Ranbir. From the age of eleven to twelve she acted in an Odia movie and dance drama named Basanta Rasa which was directed by her father. She has many centres of learning in Bhubaneswar (Odisha), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), and New York City (USA). She has also won the Ustad Bismillah Khan award, The Mahari award and the Sanjukta Panigrahi award. Now, she continues to perform and teach Odissi.

What made you start Odissi?

My parents put me into it. I was only four years old when I started Odissi. My uncle brought my Guru, Deba Prasad Das, home. He was a pioneer of Odissi. So, he came and tied a red thread onto my hand and accepted me as a student.

How much time did you practice as a child?

First few years, Odissi was difficult. You have to sit in some difficult positions. My teacher knew how to teach young kids and was very affectionate. Because I liked him, I grew to like Odissi too. In the beginning, I don't think we practised because whatever he had done, I knew that he would ask me to do it in class again. When I continued with dance, we used to practise for hours. In the vacations, we used to go in the morning, practise till lunch, and continue.

How did you motivate yourself to practice?

It was a round the clock thing. I had rehearsals for dance-dramas, so we had to dance. Dancing was a joy!

When was your first solo performance?

My first solo performance was in grade 3. Our school had an annual function and wanted an Odissi dance. My guru told me I had to perform. There was someone to do my makeup and my mother bought all the accessories. I was dazed and didn't know what to do! He only told me, "You do what you have been taught and smile." It was very scary for me to go on stage, but still, I did it!

How did you balance studies and dance in higher grades?

It just came naturally, as I wanted to dance, I had to be good in school. If I didn't score well, dance might have been taken away from me. I think if you want something sincerely, it will come.

Did acting in dance dramas and the movie Basanta Rasa enhance your expressions in Odissi?

The only reason my father wanted kids to dance was for us to perform in Krishna Leela and spread it because people could hardly see it. We travelled to the interiors of Odisha. My father then made a movie of Basanta Rasa to see later. He said that actors don't have the innocence and expression of kids and they become the character. That's why he took children in the movie. We didn't learn to express but we knew the story, we felt the character. Once you are one with the character, it automatically shows.

Poetry



City Life

*Who said this life is easy,
Its blocked with buildings
And very squeezey
Vehicles rushing here and there
This is where we find fairs
Day and Night busy streets
But there's a bonus
Yummy fried treats
This is city life
But, I would prefer country side.....*

Anika, Kriya Batch

Hi all
my name is Ananya Today
I will be sharing the experience
of the folk dance

1. More than the dance I enjoyed laughing with my friends.
2. I also felt nervous when it was shooting
3. This was the first dance I was doing with my sister so I enjoyed it a lot
4. Whenever I felt nervous my sister encouraged me a lot

Thank you
Ananya



How to internalize an Item - By Pooja Sarangan



Performing an item is more than simply just smiling and following the rhythm. When we perform an item, it should be heartfelt and sincere. Obviously, as much as we try to sincerely dance, it often does not translate to our body. We often have a vision of how we want to dance but it simply does not reach till the tip of our fingers. We have to slowly analyze the item, practice it multiple times and then finally be able to internalize it. The first thing to do when trying to 'perfect' an item is to consolidate it. We can start off by trying to understand the item by its different elements.

An item usually consists of: a) The music b) The jathi c) The abhinaya When we listen to the item, we can grasp better understanding of how it flows, the rhythm, the words. This helps us to feel the item better. Separating the elements and practicing it alone gives a better hold on the item. Just practicing the abhinaya helps with control over our facial movement. Practicing the suitable navarasa solidly and then along with the music, automatically defines the emotion in the item. One way to understand the emotion of an item is by relating it to an incident where such emotions were felt. For example, acting as a gopika complaining about Krishna can be related to gossiping with friends. It's just supposed to be about what we relate it to the most. Another way is by thinking of abhinaya simply as another adavu. Just like how we have to sit in aramandi, keep natyarambham properly and strike with our feet properly, we should furrow our eyebrows, smile widely, open our eyes comically. It doesn't always have to be an authentic reaction especially when it comes to emotions that have never been felt before.

Sometimes, it's just about faking till you make it. When you are lost about how you can perform then simply follow along to your teacher's voice. Listen to her when you are performing. During practice, remember all the details she tells you because in the end it helps in making the item more nuanced. The tiniest suggestions, even holding your breath for a beat, changes the item into a well polished version. And it's also very important to give your own touch to the item. This doesn't mean necessarily changing the item but when you dance any item, you need to dance as if you own it. If you aren't confident or proud of your own dancing, no one else's going to be. Feel the item as your own and that itself gives it more character. But the most important aspect is to practice. Without hard work and a lot of effort, you cannot internalize an item. Practicing over and over again mindfully is what makes an item beautiful. No item can be performed perfectly, you just have to practice over and over again. When it comes to performing an item and internalizing it, you can always be better but not the best. Thus the main aspect to internalizing an item is practice

Why you need to learn music for dance - Sahana Venkat

Do you think music and dance are not related ? If so, let me show you how music and dance are interconnected.

A. In Dance a sense of rhythm is required for dancing and the rhythm taught in the dance class itself may be enough , but for great achievements you should learn music . If you have ever been to a Carnatic / Hindustani concert you may have noticed that the singers tap their hands on their thighs while singing . This concept is called “Thala” or “Thaal” . It is used to maintain rhythm. If you learn this concept it will be very helpful to stay on beat while you’re dancing .



B. Learning the song which you're dancing for will help you in many ways .

a. If you know the song very well the dance will be better for the dancer and the audience

b. If you tend to forget steps in the item , learning the song will help you remember the steps . You can also link the steps with the lyrics of the song .

Bonus point

Once you learn the dance , The "Bhāvam" (emotion) of the song will improve and please the audience .

- By Sahana . V

SHIVRATRI 2022

ON THE 1ST MARCH, 2022 THE YOUNG PERFORMERS OF BHARATHI NATYA KENDRA PERFORMED IN THE BASAVESHWARA GAYATRI TEMPLE ON THE ACCOUNT OF SHIVRATRI. IT WAS A ONE HOUR PERFORMANCE FROM 7:15 - 8:15.

WHILE THE STEPS OF THE DANCERS AND THE CO-ORDINATION AMONGST THE TEAM WAS BEING REPEATEDLY REHEARSED, THE PARENTS AND THE TEACHER -VARSHA RADHAKRISHNAN- DECIDED UPON THE DRESSES, JEWELLERY AND MAKEUP OF THE DANCERS.

THE PERFORMANCE STARTED WITH A PRAYER TO GANESHA ,THE REMOVER OF ALL OBSTACLES.

GANESHA KAUTHVAM PERFORMED BY AISHWARYA.

GODDESS PARAVATI INCARNATED AS MEENAKSHI IN THE CITY OF MADURAI. SHE WAS THE DAUGHTER OF PANDYA KING MALAYADHWAJAN AND QUEEN KANCHANAMALA. A SMALL SNIPPET OF MEENAKSHI KALYANAM WAS PRESENTED IN THE NEXT PIECE. "DEVI NEEYE THUNAI" RAGAM - KEERAVANI THAALAM - AADHI PERFORMED BY POOJA.

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THE NEXT ITEM PERFORMED WAS GANESHA VANDANAM OF RAGAM GAMBEERA NAATAI AND THALAM ADHI FROM BHARATAKALANJALI REPERTOIRE. PERFORMED BY SAHANA, MAHATHI, ROSHINI AND HAASINI.

THE PERFORMANCE CONTINUED WITH A TRADITIONAL THISHRA ALARIPPU PERFORMED BY ARSHIA, ROSHINI AND ANANYA.

THE FOLLOWING ITEM WAS A COMPOSITION OF MYSORE VASUDEVACHARYA ON GODDESS SARASWATHI. "MAA MAVATHU SRI SARASWATHI". RAGAM - HINDOLAM , THAALAM AADHI PERFORMED BY ISHA, MAHATHI AND SAHANA

NATARAJA IS THE DANCING FORM OF SHIVA. THE NEXT ITEM PRESENTED WERE VERSES FROM PERIYA PURANAM "NATARJA ANJALI " RAGAM - GAMBEERA NAATAI THAALAM - AADHI PRESENTED BY ANANYA, ARSHIA, ISHA AND HAASINI.

THE NEXT ITEM PRESENTED WAS A SHABDAM ON LORD MURUGA TOOK THE AUDIENCE THROUGH THE LORDS LIFE FROM A BABY IN A CRADLE THROUGH ADOLESCENCE AND FINALLY THE TACTICS HE EMPLOYS TO MARRY THE BEAUTIFUL TRIBAL WOMAN VALLI. IT IS SET IN RAGAMALIKA AND MISHRACHAPU THAALAM. PERFORMED BY POOJA, MUGDHA AND AISHWARYA.

THE PERFORMANCE ENDED WITH A BHAJAN BY SWATHI THIRUNAL IN RAGAM SINDHU BHAIRAVI "VISHVESHWAR DARSHAN". THE MUSIC FOR THE SONG WAS FROM THE "SWAPPNAM" ALBUM. THE DANCERS EXITED THE STAGE, GRACEFULLY, AS THE MUSIC FADED AWAY. THE PARENTS BROKE INTO A LOUD APPLAUSE. THE DANCERS HARD WORK HAD BEEN REWARDED.

OVERALL IT WAS A VERY BEAUTIFUL DANCE PERFORMANCE WHICH HAD A FASCINATING EFFECT. THE MUSIC ACCOMPANIMENT HOLDS YOU IN A TENSION AND THE DANCE MAKES YOU FEEL IN A REALM OF GODS.

How I motivate myself to practice - Nandhini

‘Practice makes a man perfect’ tells us about the importance of regular practice in our daily life. Perfection can only be achieved by regular practice. But practice can be boring sometimes so, how do I motivate myself to practice and how do I decide what to practice? To decide what to practice I use chits. I take two boxes and label them as – “Things to practice” and “Fun activities”. For the first box, which is the “Things to practice” box, I fill it up with chits which have names of different items and adavus. And for the second box which is the “Fun activities” box, I fill it up with some chits which have fun activities written in them like “act like your favourite animal in bharatanatyam”, “choreograph a dance in bharatanatyam” and many more exciting things. Everyday I pick up two chits from each box and do whatever is written in them. I also keep a little reward for myself after practice like a chocolate or my favourite snack, so I always look forward to practice because I get a reward after finishing my practice. Sometimes I also challenge myself, so that I want to complete the challenge no matter how unmotivated I feel. I also record my practice so that I can fix my mistakes. Sometimes when I am really tired I just sit and practice my eye movements and hands. These are a few things I do to motivate to keep practicing everyday.

Art Corner



Ananyashree

Patra Lakshanam: What are they, and my opinion on them

- Sucheta Rane, Abhyasa-Tapasya batch

Tanvi rupavathi shyama peenonnata-
payodhara / pragalbha sarasa kantha
Kushala graha-mokshayo / vishala-lochana
gita-vadya-talanuvartani // paraartha-bhusha
sampanna prasanna-mukha-pankaja / yevam
vidha gunopeta Nartaki samudarita //

Describing the desired attributes of a dancer (Patra) the text by Nandikeshwara, Abhinaya Darpanam, mentions: she, Nartaki, should be slender; neither stout nor very thin; be neither very tall nor short; very lovely, beautiful, young, having beautiful large eyes, and round breasts; self-confident, witty, pleasing and splendidly dressed; knowing well when to begin a dance and when to end it; able to perform to the accompaniment of vocal and instrumental music, properly keeping with the Tala (beats and rhythm).

Though these ancient texts have defined exactly what a dancer's body should and should not look like, with changing times and evolving meaning of aesthetics, these notions were also subject to change. While most of these "desired" qualities can contribute to a pleasing, memorable performance, it does not mean that a dancer must possess all of them to be considered a good dancer.

The idea, at least when it comes to appreciating classical dance, is that what one sees should give them pleasure. While one would think this means aesthetically pleasing visuals; in reality, it is that real pleasure can be achieved only through purity of emotions and expressions. One can learn these expressions but the emotions behind them must come internally for the audience to genuinely feel it too. This, I think, any dancer can achieve with practice and perseverance.

Some dancers grow up thinking they will be judged according to their physical appearance, mostly because a lot of their body is meant to look a certain way while doing specific movements. And movements would always be judged on the basis of how good their physicality is. But in my opinion, as long as a dancer has discipline and confidence in their ability to portray a story, they can be of any body type and age and give a beautiful performance.

What is Fitness ? – Roshini Raghavendran

FITNESS PAGE

We all know that fitness keeps us healthy, strong, flexible and helps us build stamina. But, what stops us from doing it? Is it too hard? Or do we think that its boring? Well, these things should not stop us from doing fitness.

Fitness has helped ton of people. And by doing fitness. many people have seen Changes such as:

- Increased Body Temperature
- Blood pressure
- Weight Loss
- Mental and Physical changes



MORE ABOUT FITNESS

There are some types of group fitness activities

- Pilates
- H.I.T
- Yoga
- Zumba
- Kickboxing

There are different types of workout routines you can do such as:

- **Abdominal workout** – Abdominal workout includes exercises such as = Crunches, Leg raises, Elbow plank, Superman pose, scissors, reverse crunches etc.
- **Lower body strengthening** - Lower body strengthening includes exercises such as = Calf raises, Lunges, squats, wall sit, wide squats, step ups etc.

Even if you have already done fitness before or are learning it, there are some ways that can help you improve your fitness, those are:

- Choose a reason to do fitness
- Make each day's fitness workout a little bit more intense
- Play music
- Have a friend to share your workout routine with
- Give yourself rewards

I had applied for the 'Centre for Cultural Resources and Training' [CCRT] scholarship in 2020. I had to fill a form which they provided to participate in the scholarship program. After filling the form and posting it to Delhi, I was eagerly waiting to know if I had got selected or not. But due to the 'corona virus' which spread through India in that year, all the selection process was delayed.

Eventually I forgot about the form and scholarship. After two long years somewhere in January 2022, my dance teacher Varsha ma'am sent me a message telling me that me and one of my other friend from my dance class had gotten selected for the scholarship interview.

The process of selection for the scholarship included a 5 min dance video which had to be sent to them through google forms and then a live interview with the judges of ccrt.

As soon as I got to know that I had been selected, I started preparing for the interview. In the interview I had to show them a dance which had both 'abhinaya'(expression) and 'nritta'(dance).

I started attending one-on-one classes with my teacher for the same. Even though all this practice had to be done online I was not disturbed by this and continued practising. Before the day of the interview, we did tons of practices and run throughs for the dance.

Finally the day of the interview came, I was slightly tense and nervous before my interview. When my turn came I greeted all of the judges and told them what I was performing. As I mentioned earlier I had prepared a dance which included both abhinaya and nritta. But when I told my dance to the judges they asked me to do something which was only nritta.

Due to this I did not do the dance I had planned to do but did something else.

Overall my experience for this ccrt scholarship was very good, even though my main interview did not go so well.

Because of this scholarship I was practising everyday, which did not happen often because of school and other things. And I also learned that one should always stay confident while answering anything, because that's the first thing the person sitting in front of you will judge.



Some snippets from April workshop

