



The Guru...

Asha Prem, a well known exponent of Indian dance received her early training in the Bharata Natyam and Kuchipudi styles from Ms. Sunandana, an alumna of Kalakshetra, Madras, and Eluru Korada Narasimha Rao. A pioneer in making the principal styles of Indian dance accessible to Missourians, she has enriched the cultural life of the Midwest by dedicating herself to teaching and performing classical dance forms over the past twenty years. She is consistently creative in breathing new life into traditional patterns and styles. She is the director of the School of Dances of India, St. Louis, and a member of the affiliate faculty of Washington University in St. Louis.

The dance form...

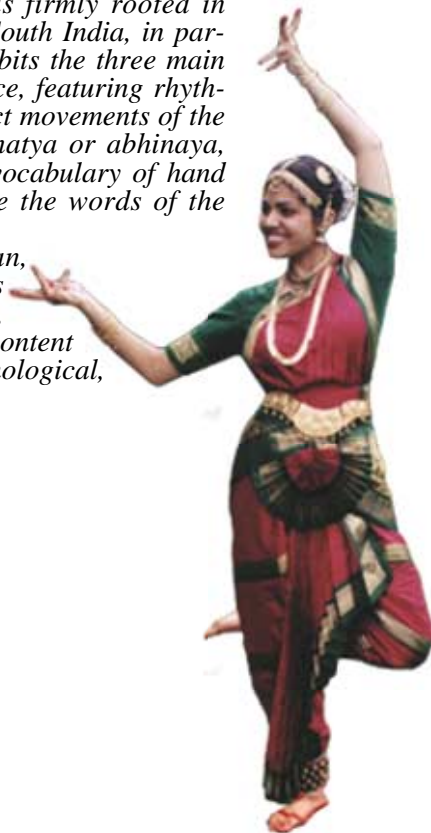
The art of natya, or dance drama, was so important in ancient India that it was referred to as the fifth Veda. Today there are six major classical dance forms in India, along with numerous dance drama and regional folk dance forms.

With ancient roots more than 2,000 years old, Bharata Natyam evolved over the centuries to take its present form about 200 years ago. Bharata Natyam is firmly rooted in Hindu mythology. This form is native to South India, in particular to the state of Tamil Nadu. It exhibits the three main components of dance: nritta, or pure dance, featuring rhythmic footwork patterns and beautiful abstract movements of the body; nritya, or interpretive dance; and natya or abhinaya, which is expressional dance, featuring a vocabulary of hand gestures and facial expressions that mime the words of the song. The pure dance technique of Bharata Natyam is characterized by clean, deliberate movements, exuberant leaps and bends, subtle neck and eye movements, and crisp, intricate footwork. The lyrical content of the songs is primarily devotional or mythological, and is sung in the Carnatic classical style.

The student...

SSS started studying Bharata Natyam with Mrs. Asha Prem when she was eleven years old. She has performed at several cultural gatherings in Columbia. SSS is also an accomplished pianist and singer of Hindustani classical music. She graduated from VVV High School in 1999, and will attend XXX University in YYY. She plans to major in ZZZ.

BHARATA NATYA RANGA PRAVESHHA (ARANGETRAM)



SSS

student of Mrs. Asha Prem

*August 7, 1999
Launer Auditorium, Columbia College,
Columbia, MO 65216*

INAUGURATION CEREMONY

Welcome: H.R. Chandrasekhar
Master of Ceremonies: Smitha Manusmare

INVOCATION: POEMS FROM BHAGAWATA IN BHAMINI
Music composed and sung by Sandhya Anu Pandurangi

The dancer offers flowers to and seeks the blessings of Vishnu, Shiva, Ganesh, and Saraswati. The lyrics of this song were composed by Tara's forefather Shri Ramanniah 1755, and are part of the twelve volume epic, Bhagavatha. Tara's father, H.R. Chandrasekhar, has spent several years transcribing this work from the original palm leaf manuscript. To our knowledge this is the first public performance of the lyrics in a musical format.

GANESHA STUTHI Raga Atana, Tala Adi

This dance is dedicated to Ganesha, patron of the arts and remover of all obstacles. The son of Shiva and brother of Shanmuga, he is the embodiment of the Upanishads. He resides at the base of the heart, emanating radiance and an aura of bliss.

NADA TANU MANISHAM Raga Chittaranjini, Tala Adi

In this composition by Saint Thyagaraja, Shiva is worshipped as the personification of sound. The dancer bows her head to Shiva, who represents the essence of the vedas. In addition to personifying the seven tonal notes sa-ri-ga-ma-pa-dha-ni (saptaswara), Shiva also promotes learning and is the destroyer of evil.

JATHISWARAM Raga Rasikapriya, Tala Adi
Composed by Lalgudi Jayaraman

Jathiswaram is a dance which celebrates the fundamental elements of rhythm. It takes the dancer through increasingly complex rhythmic patterns at varying speeds, set to the syllables of music. Each rhythm pattern is marked by a concluding theermanam.

VARNAM Raga Khamas, Tala Adi
Composed by the Tanjore Quartet

The Varnam is the centerpiece of a Bharata Natyam recital and exhibits in full measure all of the elements of this beautiful dance form. Complex and difficult pure dance sequences alternate with passages of expressive dance, which bring to life the words of the song. The dance will be explained in greater detail on stage.

INTERMISSION

PADAM: SMARA SUNDARANGUDE Raga Paras, Tala Adi
Composed by Dharmapuri Subbarama Iyer

In this expressive dance a woman thinks of her love for a king as she performs daily tasks such as churning buttermilk, cleaning rice, and drawing water from a well. When she plays the veena, her king listens with rapture. Of numerous handsome heroes, she considers him the best and most generous.

ANANDA LAKSHMI BARAMMA Raga Nattai, Tala Adi
Composed by Chaya Swamy Choreographed by the student

Lakshmi the goddess of wealth, beauty and happiness is beckoned in this dance. She is decorated with kumkum and haldi. By flowing at her feet the rivers of India are rendered holy. She arrives on Friday evenings at the hour of puja, and the people of the land welcome her.

CHITRAN CHIRU KAALAE Raga Malaya Marutham, Tala
Mishra Chapu
Composed by Saint Andal

This is a dance expressing devotion to Krishna, the cowherd, who resides in Gokul. On a more abstract plane, it depicts the desire of the soul to unite with the divine. The song is the 29th poem in a collection of 30 poems known as Thiruppavai.

GURU DAKSHINA AND VOTE OF THANKS

TILLANA Raga Sindhu Bhairavi, Tala Adi
Composed by Dwarki Krishnamurthy

Tillana is a dance expressing the joy of rhythm through numerous variations of fast, intricate footwork and sculpturesque poses set to dance syllables. Also known as Tarana in Hindustani music, the syllables were originally meant to mimic the sounds made by musical instruments. In recent times they are sometimes transformed into words with hidden meanings. The dancer concludes by invoking Vishnu in his ten forms (Dashavatara).

MANGALAM: POEMS FROM BHAGAWATHA IN BHAMINI
Music composed and sung by Sandhya Anu Pandurangi

The dancer concludes the performance by praying for prosperity and welfare of all life forms, and bids farewell to the audience. The lyrics are the final poems of Bhagawatha by Shri Ramanniah.