

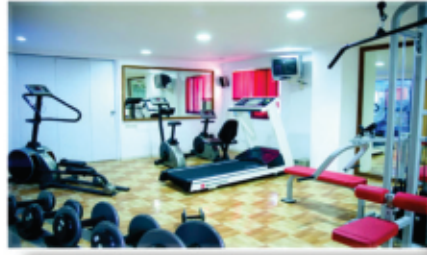
The logo for Powai Fine Arts features a stylized 'P' formed by two overlapping circular arcs. The outer arc is yellow and the inner arc is teal. The text 'Powai Fine Arts' is written in a blue, elegant cursive font to the right of the 'P'.

# *Powai Fine Arts*

*First Anniversary Commemorative Souvenir*



2011



*A feeling of being at home!*

# Oritel™ Service Apartments

Oritel Service Apartment is located at Chandivali, Andheri (East) within a close proximity to the Domestic Airport, Hiranandani gardens, Powai, Sakinaka & Ghatkopar & the international Airport is 3 KM away from the destination We offer special packages for corporates, short term & long term accomodation. We also have a facility of Conference which can be under a roof or in an open lush green Lawn just beside swimming pool, Cocktail/Mocktail Parties, Weddings/Receptions and lots more...



Contact Detail :

Oritel Service Apartments Chandivali Studio Road, D.P.Road No.2, Next to tata Symphony,  
Near nahar Amrit Shakti Complex, Andheri - (E) , Mumbai - 400 072





*Presents*

*First Anniversary  
Commemorative  
Souvenir*

*March-2011*



**Powai Fine Arts**

C 1203 Synchronicity, Nahar Amrit Shakti Road, Chandivali, Mumbai 400 072

Phone : +91-22-2857 2990 Mobile : +91-9820093260

E-Mail: [powaifinearts@gmail.com](mailto:powaifinearts@gmail.com) Website: [www.powaifinearts.org](http://www.powaifinearts.org)

## Our Vision

*Our vision is to build an organization that will revive, preserve and promote Indian Culture and Heritage among the residents of Powai and the surroundings, bringing Harmony and Happiness to one and all.*



[HOME](#) [ABOUT US](#) [EVENTS](#) [MEMBERSHIP](#) [PHOTOS](#) [RESOURCES](#) [CONTACT US](#)

## News & Updates

- *Dr.N.Rajam Inaugurating Powai Fine Arts - January, 2010*
- *Iyer Brothers (Australia) on Veena - January, 2010*
- *Thyagaraja Aradhana - January, 2010*
- *Bharathi Ramasubban-Carnatic Vocal July, 2010*
- *Abhang Bhajan - Ganesh Kumar August, 2010*
- *Sunita Bhuyan- Hidustani Violin Concert- November, 2010*
- *Roopa Mahadevan-Carnatic Vocal January, 2011*
- *Thyagaraja Aradhana - January, 2011*
- *Bharatanatyam - Pavitra Bhat, February, 2011*

[read more](#)

## Upcoming Events

**Carnatic Music Vocal**  
Sunday, April 17, 2011

Smt Lakshmi Rajagopal  
(Bombay Lakshmi) & Party

**Time:** 06:00 PM to 08:30 PM

[read more](#)

## Welcome to Powai Fine Arts



Powai Fine Arts (PFA) is the brainchild of few individuals who appreciate the value of Indian fine arts and are keen to preserve the cultural India.

This non-profit organization promotes various Indian art forms, primarily classical music and dance, by providing a platform for the artists to exhibit their excellence.

[Read more >>](#)

## Photo Gallery



[see more](#)

## Resources



[Membership Form](#)



[Articles](#)



[Downloads](#)



[Download Souvenir](#)

### Our Events :

- Carnatic Music
- Grand Violin Concert
- Marathi Abhang

### Join our Newsletter

Enter your email here:

[GO](#)

### Contact us

C-1203,Synchronicity Nahar Amrit  
Shakti Road Chandivali,Mumbai-72  
Ph : 022 2857 2990  
E-mail : [powaifinearts@gmail.com](mailto:powaifinearts@gmail.com)

# President's Message



Dr. G. Ramakrishnan

I am very pleased that Powai Fine Arts is celebrating the anniversary of the first year of its existence. For a cultural organization such as this, it is definitely a happy occasion since the dream of several people of this prosperous suburb has come true. It was just in the early part of 2010 that a few like-minded people came forward and decided to form a non-profit organization for the promotion of Fine Arts. 'Powai Fine Arts' presented a few good programs of music and dance during the last year and these were well received and greatly appreciated by the audience. I am happy to report that 'Powai Fine Arts' is now a registered Society and Trust under the Registrar of Societies of Maharashtra,

PFA felt that it will be very appropriate to bring out a souvenir publication to celebrate the completion of one year after its formation and felt that this souvenir with good articles will offer a deeper understanding of our cultural heritage. PFA also thought it appropriate to include in the souvenir brief introductions to artists and teachers in and around Powai so as to help the interested learners to find their potential teachers in music and dance. Bringing out a souvenir for the first time poses numerous challenges. The first one is to obtain good contributed articles for the souvenir. The second is to collate the data on music and dance teachers. I am pleased to say that our committee members were very active and successful in getting the articles and data on artists and teachers within the stipulated yet limited time.

Any effort of this magnitude does require sufficient funding and we are pleased that a few establishments obliged us by giving advertisements. We feel that our souvenir is also a good medium for advertisers to publicize their products and services. We want to express our gratitude to all advertisers for helping us to tide over the financial requirements for this publication. In a parallel move to this publication, we have also created a contemporary website [www.powaifinearts.org](http://www.powaifinearts.org) that will function as a two way channel that would inform viewers about our range of activities while at the same time help us, through feedback from viewers, to be kept informed of our past, present and future.

Another major challenge in bringing out such a souvenir is in its editing. The Editing process needs to ensure that the contributions are original in nature, cover varied topics so as to avoid monotony and that the contents add value to the reader,. I am very pleased to get the help of Dr (Mrs) Kumudavalli Vasudevan, who volunteered to edit all the articles. She is well suited for this role as she holds a Ph.D. degree in English language and is well read and knowledgeable about classical music and dance. I am very much indebted to her for accepting this challenge

Finally, I hope our members, readers and advertisers will appreciate the quality of this publication. I do hope that this publication will increase the awareness of Powai Fine Arts among the residents of Powai and surroundings and will act as catalyst to increase the Life Membership of Powai Fine Arts. Finally I hope that this souvenir will become a collector's item and that the receivers will find a small space for it on their book shelf. I also believe that if this souvenir becomes a success, we will be encouraged to bring out more such publications in future.



---

**Dr. G. Ramakrishnan** holds a Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry from BARC/Bombay University. He was a Research Associate at the Florida State University and Brown University, USA. He has worked for reputed firms in India (ICI), Saudi Arabia ( Kaki and Arab Security Studies) and Singapore( Hewlett-Packard). He came back to India in 1999 and worked for Agilent Technologies as VP and Thermo Fisher Scientific as Managing Director. He was the immediate Past President of Inidan Analytical Instruments Association ( IAIA) and presently the President of Chromatographic Society of India ( CSI). He is a Composer/Singer of Devotional Songs and Bhajans and is the Founder of website [www.bhakthi-gitanjali.com](http://www.bhakthi-gitanjali.com).



## *Rowai Fine Arts Management Committee*



Dr. G. Ramakrishnan	President
Mr. B. Swaminathan	Vice President
Dr. Ranjini Krishnaswamy	Honorary Secretary
Dr. Suman Badami	Joint Secretary
Mr. V. Ramakrishnan	Honorary Treasurer
Mrs. Bala Swaminathan	Joint Treasurer
Dr. Sailaja Desai	Program Co-ordinator
Mr. D. Thyagarajan	Program Co-ordinator
Mrs. Sukanya Sivakumar	Website and Publicity
Dr. Suhas P. Sukhatme	Advisor
Mr. Shyam K. Saksena	Advisor
Mr. N.R. Venkatachalam	Advisor



## *Souvenir Editorial Committee*

Dr. G. Ramakrishnan	Publisher
Dr. Kumudavalli Vasudevan	Editor
Dr. Ranjini Krishnaswamy	Administration
Mr. V. Ramakrishnan	Finance
Mr. Shyam Saksena	Co-ordination
Dr. Suman Badami	Co-ordination
Dr. Sailaja Desai	Co-ordination
Mrs. Bala Swaminathan	CO-ordination



# Editor Speaks...



I am immensely pleased to be associated with the Editing process of the First Anniversary Commemorative Souvenir of Powai Fine Arts, that is in your hands now. It was like a journey. The articles, beginning with Sahithyam in Sangeetam, seemed to arrive in a pre determined way, what with one article leading to the other, in terms of content, style and perceptions. The whole process moved so smoothly that within the stipulated time, the material was all ready for print!

**Dr. Kumudavalli Vasudevan**

I wish to congratulate the contributors for their in-depth knowledge of the subject they were writing on. PFA appreciates the authors for the painstaking research and excellent presentation that have made the articles eminently readable. In fact, the articles in the Souvenir cover the length and breadth of this ancient land of Bharata and stand witness to the grand path the fine arts of music and dance have traversed.

The articles on Carnatic and Hindustani music present authentic documentation of the evolution of these forms while at the same time touch upon the present day scenario. In their articles on veena and violin, the authors share the techniques of playing these instruments in a manner that enables us to comprehend the scientific nature of music in action. The articles on classical dance forms touch upon the soul and spiritual essence of these dance forms. I am particularly happy that all major classical dance forms are represented in the souvenir.

That each one of the authors is a present day torch bearer of merit is evident not only from their articles but also from their profiles presented in the souvenir. It was extremely thoughtful of the PFA managing committee and the editorial board to compile the profiles of artists who live in and around Powai, a step that is going to benefit the artists themselves and all prospective learners.

Working with Dr. G. Ramakrishnan was a learning experience in the areas of meticulous planning, unrelenting hard work, openness to ideas, and co-ordination of the creative process and the compulsions of finance. That he heads a team that is as dedicated is a tribute to the dynamism of the young PFA.

This is the first souvenir brought out by the PFA. We look upon it as a collector's item. We need to continue this venture. We could repeat the performance; raise the bar and do better; the possibilities are innumerable! Do pick up your pen and write an article for our next publication!



---

**Dr. Kumudavalli Vasudevan** is a Ph D in English on Science Fiction for young Adults. She is a Professor of English (retired) from R. Jhunjhunwala College, Mumbai. Kumudavalli had her music training from Smt.P.K.Rajalakshmi of Pune and later, for a brief period from Smt Kalyani Mani of Mumbai. She is one of the founding members of SAPTASWARA, a music group that presented the Thyagaraja Aradhana Programme in IIT and nearby suburbs for nearly two decades. Her brain-child Sanskriti in IIT is a cultural wing that conducts dance classes in IIT.



# Contents



◆	<i>Glimpses from our Past</i>	:	1
◆	<i>Forthcoming Programmes</i>	:	6
◆	<i>Profiles of Authors; Music &amp; Dance Teachers</i>	:	7
◆	<i>The Origin and History of Carnatic Music</i> <i>Courtesy www.carnatica.net</i>	:	17
◆	<i>Carnatic Music: A Perspective</i> <i>Courtesy www.carnaticindia.com</i>	:	23
◆	<i>The Importance of Veena in Carnatic Music:</i> <i>Ramnath Iyer &amp; Gopinath Iyer</i>	:	25
◆	<i>Sahityam in Sangeetham</i> <i>Anantha Sayana</i>	:	29
◆	<i>Techniques of Playing Violin in Carnatic Music</i> <i>Lalitha &amp; Nandini</i>	:	31
◆	<i>Music Quiz</i> <i>Malathi Hariharan</i>	:	33
◆	<i>The Gharana System in Hindustani Music</i> <i>Jayanthi Sundaram Nayak</i>	:	35
◆	<i>The Mystical Ghazal: Its journey</i> <i>Deepshikha Pathak</i>	:	39
◆	<i>South Indian Classical Dance Forms</i> <i>Jayashree Rajagopalan</i>	:	43
◆	<i>Lyricism in Movement</i> <i>Jyothi Mohan</i>	:	47
◆	<i>The Origin and Development of Kuchipudi</i> <i>Sailaja Desai</i>	:	49
◆	<i>Manipuri dance: Subtle and Dignified</i> <i>Darshana Jhaveri</i>	:	53
◆	<i>Kathak: A Repertoire of Grace</i> <i>Jonaki Raghavan</i>	:	54
◆	<i>Odissi: From Odra Magadhi to the Present</i> <i>Leesa Mohanty</i>	:	56
◆	<i>Powai Fine Arts Membership Form</i>	:	57
◆	<i>Acknowledgment to our Advertisers</i>	:	58







**Dr.N.Rajam Inaugurating Powai Fine Arts - January, 2010**



**Iyer Brothers (Australia) on Veena - January, 2010**



**Thyagaraja Aradhana - January, 2010**



**Bharathi Ramasubban-Carnatic Vocal July, 2010**



**Abhang Bhajan - Ganesh Kumar August, 2010**



**Sunita Bhuyan- Hindustani Violin Concert- November, 2010**



**Roopa Mahadevan-Carnatic Vocal January, 2011**



**Thyagaraja Aradhana - January, 2011**



**Bharatanatyam - Pavitra Bhat, February, 2011**



**Hindustani Sarangi - Anuradha Chaudhary, March 2011**



# Powai Fine Arts

## Our Forthcoming Programmes

Sunday, April 17, 2011

Carnatic Music Vocal

Smt Lakshmi Rajagopal ( Bombay Lakshmi) & Party

Sunday, May 22, 2011

Hindustani Classical & Ghazals

Sri. Sanjeev Chimmalgi & Party

Sunday, June 5, 2011

Carnatic Music Vocal

Sri, Saketha Raman & Party ( Chennai)

Sunday, July 31, 2011

Carnatic Music Vocal

Kum. Sushma Soma & Party (Chennai)

Venue: S.M. Shetty School Auditorium,

Hiranandani Gardens, Powai

Time: 06:00 PM to 08:30 PM



# Authors' Brief Biography



**Iyer Brothers**, Melbourne-based twin brothers Ramnath and Gopinath Iyer are disciples of veena maestros, Shri R. Pichumani Iyer and (Late) Trivandrum Shri R. Venkataraman. As Australia's leading exponents of the veena, the Iyer Brothers have made a name for themselves in Australia and overseas. They are also known as the unique instrumental duo in the field of Carnatic classical music. The brothers are 'A' graded artists of All India Radio. Together they founded the Pichumani School of Carnatic Music in 1990 in Melbourne. The school promotes

Carnatic Music through teaching of vocal and veena, presenting concerts, lecture-demonstrations and presentations on music related topics. The brothers have been recently awarded the Victorian Multicultural Award of Excellence for outstanding service to the Victorian community. They are featured in the Annual Music Season in Chennai and they have received the Best Veena Performance Award from Music Academy in 2010.

**Sri. Anantha Sayana** is very fond of music and enjoys listening to all forms of music. His deep interest in religion and literature makes him pay close attention to the lyrics besides the music itself. He enjoys writing prose and poetry. Sayana who works at Larsen & Toubro in the Information Technology function has been a Powai resident for the past 16 years and is happy to see the cultural scene here unfold. He can be contacted by Email [asayana@gmail.com](mailto:asayana@gmail.com) and by phone: 09820318963.



**Smt. Malathi Hariharan** was initiated into learning carnatic music and bharathanatyam at the age of six. under the tutelege of Guru Mahalingam Pillai. Malathi and her sisters gave performances in major cities, before Guruji shifted base from chennai to Mumbai to be a part of the growth of Rajarajeswari Bharatha Natya Kala Mandir. With a Master degree in Geography Malathy worked as Research Associate in IIT Bombay for a short period. She continued with her association with music and was a member of the Saptaswara Music group at IIT Bombay.



Internationally acclaimed Violin Maestros **Dr. M. LALITHA** and **M. NANDINI** hail from an illustrious family of musicians and belong to the fourth generation of musicians in their family. Their musical genius manifested itself at the tender age of three and they have blossomed into a top notch violinist today. With a career that extends over two decades LALITHA and NANDINI have traversed the four corners of the globe - spreading the message of global harmony through music. They have performed extensively in Major Music Festivals in India and in other countries across the globe. They have been honoured with numerous awards including the prestigious Kalaimamani by the Government of Tamilnadu in 1999. LALITHA holds a Ph.D

in Indian Music, for her thesis 'A Comparative Study of the Violin Techniques in Western and South Indian Classical Music'. She is a Director of the MS (Muthuswamy-Subbulakshmi) Academy of Global in Chennai. NANDINI holds a Triple Master's Degree in Information Science, Indian Music, and Ethnomusicology. M. Nandini is a Director of the Santhalaya School of Music in London.

**Smt. Jayanthi Sundaram Nayak** began learning Carnatic Music at the tender age of seven. She trained under Smt. Seethalakshmi Subramaniam, and Smt. Subbalakshmi Swaminathan. She studied for BA in Hindustani Music in Bombay University under Smt. Vasudha Limaye of the Jaipur Atrauli gharana and MA under Dr. Vidyadhar Vyas and later under Shri Raja Kale, and Pandit Yashwantbua Joshi, a doyen of the Gwalior gharana. She has performed in various cities and at reputed venues. She regularly conducts lecture demonstrations and music workshops. Besides singing, Jayanthi also has excellent skills as a teacher. She has recently recorded for AIR on their Asmita Vahini Channel. Jayanthi was also the Director of Cultural Activities for Goenka & Associates Educational Trust. She can be contacted by email: [jaqua@sify.com](mailto:jaqua@sify.com) and by phone: 09820613564



**Dr. Deepshikha Pathak**, a Gold Medalist in M.A. (Music), is a versatile artist who specializes in Ghazals. In addition to being a performer, Dr. Deepshikha is also a visiting Lecturer at the Lalit Kala Kendra, Pune University. She is also on numerous panels on cultural affairs. She was invited during the current year by the Indian High Commission at Male to perform Ghazals at the Republic Day celebrations, along with a lecture demonstration. As a University Grants Commission Scholar, she earned her Ph.D. (Music) on 'Influence and Role of Indian Classical Music in the Process of Evolution and Shaping of the Modern Ghazal'. A Post Graduate in 'Advertisement & Public Relations Management', she is founder Director of Smart Tracks Academy for Excellence which is involved in developing human potential





**Dr. Jayashree Rajagopalan** is a renowned Bharatanatyam dancer, teacher, choreographer and a research scholar. She is the foremost disciple of the internationally, renowned danseuse Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam. Her doctoral thesis is on 'AharyaAbhinaya as delineated in the Natyasastra'. She is the Director of Nrithyodaya the Academy of Performing Arts, Mumbai. In addition to being the Chief Examiner and Ph.D. Guide at the Centre of Performing Arts at Pune University. She is also a faculty member for the Distant Education Course on Bharatanatyam at the Sastra University, Tanjavur. Her productions are notable for innovative choreography in solo,

group and dance dramas. She is the recipient of the Senior Research Fellowship by the Govt. of India for her research work entitled "A Comparative Study of the Tiruppugazh and Manipuri Talas", and the Indal Fellowship, Asiatic Society Mumbai for research on "Lasyangas of Natyasastra -a gender perspective". She has given several lectures at various Universities and Seminars, in India and abroad.

**Smt. Jyothi Mohan** has learnt Bharatanatyam from Guru K. Kalyanasundaram, of Sri Rajarajeswari Bharata Natya Mandir, Matunga and Carnatic Vocal Music under the late Sri. P. N. Krishnamoorthy. She is the founder of Sriranjani Kala Nilaya that trains students in Bharatanatyam. In addition to teaching at her institution, Smt. Jyothi teaches at the Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya too. The Swar Sadhana Samiti has conferred up on her the title 'Vidya Vibhushan'. She can be contacted through Email: [jyothiarjun2010@gmail.com](mailto:jyothiarjun2010@gmail.com) and on phone: 09323593210.



**Dr. Sailaja Desai** is an accomplished Kuchipudi artist and a teacher. She is a resident of Powai and teaches classical dance to a good number of young students. She is a Gold Medalist in Post-graduation and holds a Ph.D. in Classical Dance from Hyderabad Central University. She has had her training under able Gurus like Smt. Maddali Usha Gayatri, Director, NrityaKinnara, Hyderabad and (late) Sri. Vedantam Jagannatha Sharma. She is an 'A' grade artist in Hyderabad Doordarshan. She has performed extensively in various cities in India and abroad including at the International Kuchipudi Conference in USA. Under the aegis of India International Rural Educational Centre, Dr. Sailaja presents Lecture-demonstrations on Dance in order to create a greater awareness in rural youth about Indian art and culture. She can be contacted through Email: [sailajadesai@hotmail.com](mailto:sailajadesai@hotmail.com) and Phone: 09821588909.



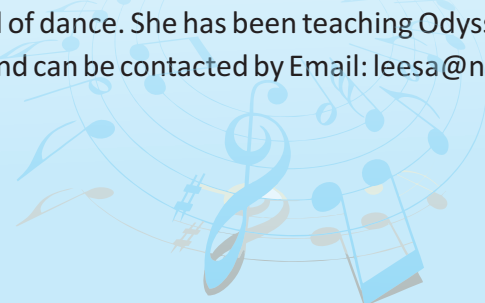
**Padmashri Darshana Jhaveri**, a classical Manipuri Dancer, Research scholar and teacher is one of the four internationally renowned Jhaveri Sisters, whose names have become synonymous with Manipuri Dance. Smt, Darshana has dedicated her life to preserve, perpetuate and propagate the classicism of Manipuri dance under the able guidance of Guru Bipin Singh, who has enabled her talent as a technically versatile and immaculate proficient dancer to blossom. She has specialized both in Tandav Lasya elements of Manipuri dancing and the drum playing. She has performed with her sisters all over India and abroad since 1958. As the leader of the group she

has given talks on the All India Radio, made television appearances, presented lecture demonstrations, conducted workshops and contributed articles in magazines, news papers, seminars and so on, since 1975. She has collaborated with late Guru Bipin Singh by actually visiting Manipur since 1956 more than thirty times, to meet reputed gurus, learn, collect, record music and correlate the oral tradition with vaishnavite parampara and Indian texts on dance and music. This has enabled her to create and choreograph dance compositions within the tradition of the theatre. She has received blessings and appreciations from eminent Gurus of Rass and Sankirtan. In 1958 she and her sisters were the first non-Manipuri artists to perform in the Govindajee place temple in Manipur.

**Smt. Jonaki Raghavan** is an exponent and teacher of Kathak and a resident of Powai. She trained under Guru Dr. Malabika Mitra of Kolkata and (Late) Guru Madhurita Sarang of Mumbai. She is presently under the guidance of Guru Shama Bhate (Pune), associated with Nalanda Nritya Kala Mahavidyalaya, Mumbai. Jonaki completed her Masters in Performing Arts from the same institution. She has been performing in various festivals in India and abroad including the likes of the Konarak Festival, The Mumbai festival, The Doverlane Music Conference and at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. She can be contacted by Email: jonakiraghavan23@gmail.com.



**Smt. Leesa Mohanty** is a well known Odissi Dancer and resident of Hiranandani Gardens, Powai. She hails from the Deba Prasad legacy and has been the founder of 'Nirguna Center' in Powai. She has performed in major dance festivals in India and has won several awards. Her book 'Dancing is Fun' is a unique contribution to the field of dance. She has been teaching Odyssey Dance for interested students in Powai and can be contacted by Email: leesa@nirguna.in



# Music Teachers

## (Vocal & Instrumental)



**Smt. Alamelu Mani** is one of the senior most teachers in Carnatic music in Mumbai and has been visiting Powai for teaching music. She has been trained under eminent musicians such as Shri.H.A.S. Mani, Thanjavur Sankara Iyer, Smt. T. Brinda and Smt. T. Mukta. She is the proud mother of internationally acclaimed singer, Shri.Hariharan. As the Principal of the South Indian School of Music since 1963, she has trained innumerable students in Carnatic music. Smt. Mani is an 'A' Grade AIR artist and has performed in Chennai Doordarshan over the years. She has performed in various cities of India as well as in the Carnatic Music Association of North America Inc. New York, Kenya, Doha and so on. In the year 1999 she was the jury for Zee TV with Shri. Amjad Ali Khan Sahab, Mr.Zakhir Hussain and Mr. A Hariharan in New York. She has released several albums such as Live at Shanmukhananda Hall, Padams and Javalis and Rare Kritis of

Thyagaraja, She has received several awards and titles which include, 'SwarVisharad' by Kanpur SangeethSabha, 'GanaShikhamani' from Vashi Fine Arts and 'Nada Vibhushanam' by SangeethSabha, Dombivili. She can be contacted by phone: 24141404.

**Smt.Kalyani Sharma**, the former Joint Director of Shanmukhananda Sabha Sangeetha Vidyalaya, Mumbai is currently a resident of Powai. She is a 'vainika-gayaki' an exponent of veena as well as vocal, a rare feat in itself. She is a well known performer and teacher of great merit. She trained under maestros like (Late) Sri Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer in vocal and Sri K.S. Narayanaswamy in veena at the Swati Tirunal Music College, Trivandrum. Later she underwent specialised training in Padams and Javalis under Smt T. Brinda and Smt T. Mukta. She is an 'A' grade AIR artist, who has performed widely both in India and abroad. She has imparted training in both vocal and veena to young students and aspiring musicians for five decades at various reputed institutions including her alma mater Swati Tirunal Music College and Shanmukhananda Sangeeta



Vidyalaya, Mumbai. After her retirement she moved to Powai where she trains senior artists and students. In addition to being a faculty member and an examiner for Carnatic music at the University of Mumbai, she is also on the panel of recognised guides for training advanced students in Government of India scholarships courses. Smt.Kalyani Sharma is a member of AIR audition board and has published three books titled 101 Keerthana Mani Malai, A compilation of Padams and Sri Kanchimamuni Pancharatna Haaram, the last two also released in CD and cassette format respectively. Many awards and accolades have come her way, the most recent one being 'Sri MahaswamyPuraskar' by Pujoyashri Jayendra Saraswathi, Sankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham and the 'Bodhaka' award from The Music Academy, Chennai. She can be contacted by email: sharma\_kalyani@hotmail.com and Phone: 25775543



**Smt. Bhavani Srinivasan** is a Carnatic music vocalist and a teacher. She passed the Lower and Higher Grade examinations in Music held by the Government of Tamil Nadu and obtained her Diploma in Carnatic Vocal from University of Mumbai. She has trained under eminent Gurus like Shri. S. Ramachandran and Smt. Kalyani Sharma and she continues to learn from the latter. She teaches Carnatic music to interested students in Powai and the nearby suburbs. She can be contacted by email: [ksrinivasan46@gmail.com](mailto:ksrinivasan46@gmail.com) and on phone 09821705898.

**Smt. Bharathy Nagaraj** is a Carnatic music vocalist and teacher. She is born into a family of musicians and had her initial training from her mother Smt. Krishnaveni Hebbar. Her brother, Vittal Ramamurthy is a famous Violinist. She has been learning from Smt. Kalyani Sharma for several years now. She teaches music in and around Powai and can be contacted by email: [nagrajb20@yahoo.com](mailto:nagrajb20@yahoo.com) and on phone 9819886357



**Smt. Mala Shankar** has been a performer of Carnatic Music and has been a teacher in Powai and the surrounding areas for several years. She has had training under (Late) D. K. Jayaraman and Shri. R. K. Srikantan. She has also trained under Needamangalam Muthukrishna Bhagavathar for Oothukadu VenkataSubbaier Kritis. She has given performances all over India, including the Thygaraja Aradhana at Thiruvayyaru. She has been a judge at several music competitions conducted by various cultural organizations in Mumbai. She can be contacted by email: [pranavshankarmalaabhi@gmail.com](mailto:pranavshankarmalaabhi@gmail.com) and phone: 9821441166.

**Smt. Bala Swaminathan** is a performing artist and a teacher of Carnatic music for the past several years. She lives in Powai. She had initial music education from Smt. Leelavathi Gopalakrishnan in Chennai. Later she trained under leading music teachers like (Late) Shri D. K. Jayaraman, Smt. Rukmani Ramani, Smt. Suguna Varadachari and Smt. T. Rukmini. After moving to Mumbai, she has been training under Smt. Alamelu Mani. She has been a first rank holder and Gold medalist from Madras University in both B.A. and M.A. in Music. She has won several prizes in music competitions and has coordinated fifty episodes of Carnatic quiz on Vijay TV. She can be contacted by email: [balaswaminath@gmail.com](mailto:balaswaminath@gmail.com) and phone: 09967485161



**Rajeswari Swaminathan (Raji)** is a resident of Raheja Vihar and teaches basic Carnatic music to Children. Raji learnt her music for 10 years under the guidance of her mother and also from her Guru Shri Oothukadu Muthukrishna Iyer in Chennai. Apart from the Carnatic Music Lessons, she also teaches bhajans, slokas, Jayadeva's Ashtapathy and other Devotional Songs. She is well versed in Sri Kamakshi Navavarnam and Navagrha Kritis and is currently learning Thiruppugazh. She can be contacted by Email [swaragam@gmail.com](mailto:swaragam@gmail.com) and phone: 09324419461



**Smt. Hema Shankar** is an experienced Carnatic Music teacher especially for beginners providing a solid foundation. She has learnt from various gurus right from her childhood and for the past 11 years and has taken advanced training from Shri. Vittal Ramamurthy, the renowned violinist. She has been teaching young students for the past 10 years. She can be contacted by phone: 0 9930982691

**Smt. Urvashi Jha** has been teaching Hindustani classical music in Powai for the past several years. She had initially trained under Pt. Ganga Prasad Mishra and Pt. Brahmadev Narayan Singh . Presently, she is training under Padma Bhushan Smt. Girija Devi of Banaras gharana. She is also a scholar at Sangeet Research Academy. She is a 'B' grade artist both on Akashvani and Doordarshan. She has given performances across India and has sung for the movie Bagh Bahadur and Bhojpuri serial Bahubali. She can be contacted by email : urvashi\_jha20@yahoo.co.in and phone: 09819631163



**Smt. Krishana Datta** has been teaching Rabindra Sangeet for several years and is a resident of Powai. As a child she learnt Hindustani classical music and later trained in Rabindra Sangeet and music at Dakhinee in Kolkatta. After she moved to Mumbai, she obtained a Diploma in in Rabindra Sangeet from Prangan, a school of Tagore music in South Mumbai. Later she served the same institution as a teacher. Presently she has set up a branch of Prangan in Powai, where she teaches this style of classical music. She can be contacted by phone: 09819365458

**Smt. Sangeeta Nambiar** is a Sangeet Ratnakar both in Hindustani Classical music and Nazrulgeeti (Bengal) from Bangiya Sangeet Parishad, Calcutta. She is the disciple of gurus Sanjeet Majumdar, Biman Mukerjee, Beauty Sharma Baruah and Prashant Samaddar. She has been teaching music for the past eighteen years. She is a resident of Powai where she also conducts classes in Hindustani Music, Semi classical music ,Bhajans,Ghazals, Bengali light music and Nazrul Geet. She can be contacted by email: nishabhngtr@gmail.com and on phone: 09867269348



**Smt. Madhavi Yashwant Kulkarni** is Sangeet Visharad in Hindustani Vocal and Harmmonium. She is the disciple and daughter of eminent gurus Smt and Sri Kolaktkar of the Ghatkopar Sangeet Vidyalaya. She is a regular performer and judge at competitions in and around Mumbai. She has been working as the music teacher at the Campus School in I.I.T Powai. She can be contacted by email: madhavi.kulkarni59@gmail.com and on Phone: 09820518113

**Smt. Annapurna Rao** is a versatile singer and teacher of classical, semi-classical, Bhajans, Patriotic and devotional songs. She has done Pravesh in Carnatic and Hindustani music and completed Visharada in music from Gandharva Maha Vidyalaya, Pune. She is now teaching the younger generation the nuances of Bhakti singing in the form of Bhajans and also the semi-classical and light music. She has also been teaching music to the students of Powai English Medium School since 1983. She is also a music composer; she can be contacted by phone : 09820979606

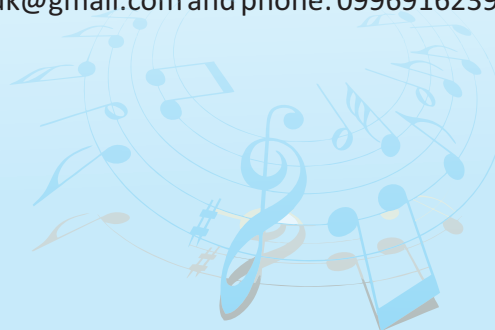


**Smt. Usha Thyagarajan** has been teaching Carnatic Instrumental on veena for the past two years and is a resident of Powai. She hails from a family of musicians and has been trained under reputed teachers in Chennai. She keeps herself up to date by training under Smt. Kalyani Sharma. Smt. Usha can be contacted on phone : 40264828

**Sri. Chittaranjan Chakraborty** is a renowned Tabla player, performer and teacher. He is the disciple of renowned Tabla Guru, Nitayagopal Sahaji of Calcutta and follows the Lucknow gharana. He has set up the Suranjali Music Academy in Mumbai, where he teaches Tabla playing and also prepares students for the Gandharva Mahavidyala Exams. He has accompanied many renowned artists in Mumbai on several stage shows, college programs, etc and is a regular performer at the Powai Durga Pooja . He conducts classes at Powai. He can be contacted on phone: 09821034292



**Sri Samar Modak** had his training in Classical Hindustani Violin under Guru Priyalal Chaudhuri and Sri Shishir Chatterjee in Calcutta. He has worked as the music director for Bengali TV serials, played for numerous functions of the Bengali association in Calcutta. He has worked at the Tagore Association in Thane as the Music Director, Nrityanjali Academy of Dr. Tushar Guha and is currently working at the New Era school as music teacher. He is also apart time music teacher at I.I.T, Powai where he lives now and teaches violin, Mandolin and Keyboard. His can be contacted by email: samarmdk@gmail.com and phone: 09969162393



# Dance Teachers



**Smt. Padmini Radhakrishnan** is a Bharatnatyam exponent and a teacher of the same. She had her initial training in Bharatnatyam under Smt. Rajalakshmi Venkateswar of Kolkatta and later from Guru Pt. V.J. Pillai. She holds a postgraduate diploma in Carnatic Music from University of Mumbai. She is the founder of Soundarya Natya Kalalaya in Mumbai and this institution has trained a large number of students in Bharatanatyam and many of them have performed their arangetram. Her proficiency in music and Nattuvangam and providing support during the performances of her students is noteworthy. Efforts to explore new themes marked by originality and innovative presentation have consistently characterised the work of Smt. Padmini. She has won several titles and has performed all over India and abroad. She conducts her classes in IIT, on Sunday mornings; she can be contacted through email: pad.rad@gmail.com and on phone: 09323960708

**Smt. Girija Nair** is a performer and Teacher of Bharathnatyam and is the founder of Geeta Nritya Vidyalaya. She is the disciple of Guru Shri Mani of Kalasadan. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A) degree from Nalanda Nritya Kala Mahavidyalaya, Mumbai. She has also trained under (Late) Vidwan Shri T.V. Soundararajan and (Late) Guru Kalaimamani Shri Kadirvelupillai. Her institute is affiliated to the Akhila Bharatha Gandharva Mahavidyalaya and Nalanda Nritya Kala Mahavidyalaya. Smt. Girija Nair conducts classes at Hiranandani Gardens, Powai. She may be contacted on phone: 09867234249.



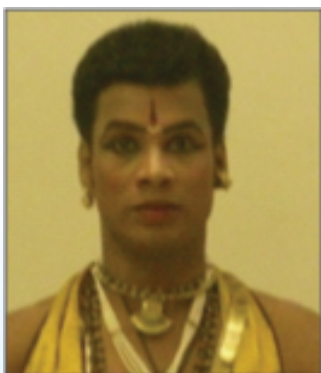
**Smt. Shailaja Madhusudan** has been teaching Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi, Mohiniattam and folk dances at her institute Nritya Vidya Nilaya since 1986. She has performed the arangetram of more than thirty students and has presented many dance dramas in Hindi and Kannda. She has performed extensively in India and abroad. She conducts classes at the S M Shetty School in Powai. She can be contacted through email: nrityavidyanilaya@gmail.com and on Phone: 09324350331





**Dr. Suman Badami** is a Bharatnatyam artist who performs and teaches and is a resident of Powai. She holds a Ph.D. in Aesthetics of Bharatnatyam from University of Mumbai. She had her training in Bharatnatyam under eminent Gurus like Kalaimamani Shri. S.K. Kameswaran and Smt. Saroja Kameswaran in Chennai. She has performed in several cities across India and abroad. She has presented several talks at seminars and has several publications to her credit. She is the founder of Natya Vimarsha in Powai where she trains students for Bharatanatyam. She is an active member of NGO, Vidya. She can be contacted through email: badamis@hotmail.com and on Phone: 09819709883

**Smt. Isha Mishra** is an acclaimed artist and teacher of Bharatanatyam and teaches children in and around the Chandivali area. She is trained under Smt. Jayashree and Smt. Radha Mohan in the field of Bharatanatyam, Mohiniattam and Kuchuppudi for over 12 years. Smt. Isha has given several traditional performances in Kerala, Hyderabad, Rajasthan, Gujarat, etc. She can be contacted by phone: 09867241375 and E-Mail ishamishrac@rediffmail.com



**Sri. Naresh Pillai** is a Bharatanatyam dancer, teacher and choreographer of international repute. His gurus are Padmashri Dr. Kanakrele, Smt. Jayalakshmi and Smt. Jayashree Narayanan. Sri. Naresh has performed at prestigious venues throughout the world and has received critical acclaim. His choreographic credits include eighteen full length productions and over three hundred works. He performed around nine hundred solo and group performances. He is the founder and Artistic Director of Kalalaya Nrithya Academy . He conducts Dance classes, workshops and advanced master classes in Powai he can be contacted by Email:natanamani@gmail.com and on Mobile: 09870060522

**Sri. Pavitra Bhat** is a young, powerful and elegant performer of Bharatanatyam and teaches in and around Powai. He had his initial training under Guru Vasantha of Kalanjali and later under the famous Guru Shri Deepak Mazumdar and Acharya Chudamani Smt. Anita Guha. He has given innumerable performances in India and abroad including at Powai Fine Arts. He can be contacted by Email: fluidfoot@yahoo.co.in and Phone : 09987164065





# The Origin and History of Carnatic Music

(Reprinted with permission from [www.carnatica.com](http://www.carnatica.com))

It is not easy to point to one period of history or one ancient form of music as the source of contemporary Carnatic music. Several changes in theory and practice have surely taken place from Vedic times to the present day. Historical records allow us to trace the interesting pattern of evolutionary changes in music.

## **ORIGINS**

**Divine Origins:** It is the general belief in Indian culture, that all art forms have a divine origin. Carnatic music is also believed to have originated from the Gods.

**Natural Origins:** A number of musical sounds are naturally produced, e.g. the sound emanating from the bamboo reed when air passes through its hollows. Ancient man observed this phenomenon and designed the first flute! Some ancient treatises describe the connection of the origin of swaras to the sounds of animals and birds. Man, with his keen sense of observation and perception tried to simulate these sounds. His ability to distinguish between sounds of different frequencies, qualities and timbre was an important factor in the evolution of

**Folk Origins:** Folk music, also said to have a natural origin, is considered by many scholars as one source that has influenced the structure of Carnatic music. While folk music evokes more spontaneity, a classical system like Carnatic music is more organized and rule bound. Certain folk tunes correspond to Carnatic melodies or *ragas* like *Anandabhairavi*, *Punnagavarali*, *Yadukulakambhoji*, etc.

**Vedic Origins:** It is generally accepted that the Vedas are a probable source of Indian music, which has developed over the centuries into the sophisticated system that it is today. The word Veda means knowledge. The thousands of hymns in the Vedas, which are dedicated to the Gods and Hindu rituals, in the form of chants were passed down by oral tradition from generation to generation. There are four Vedas - Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharvana. Of these, the Sama Veda is said to have laid the foundation for Indian music. Sama Veda consists mostly of Rig Vedic hymns, set to musical tunes. These used to be sung during Vedic sacrifices, using musical notes (3 notes - 7 notes), sometimes accompanied by a musical instrument.

## **LITERARY SOURCES**

**Sanskrit:** Apart from the Sama Veda, there are references to music and musical instruments in the **Upanishads**, **Brahmanas** and **Puranas**. Epics like **Ramayana** and **Mahabharata** also have some references to music. The music system in practice during Bharata's period was, perhaps, similar in some respects to the present day Carnatic system. Bharata's **NatyaSastra** mentions many musical concepts that continue to be relevant to Carnatic music today.

**Tamil:** Tamil works like **Silappadikaram**, **Tolkappiam** and other **Sangam** literature works give old Dravidian names for the seven notes in the octave, and describe how new scales can be developed by the modal shift of tonic i.e. shifting the reference *shadja*, from an existing scale. In the old Tamil music, the concept of *pann* corresponds to that of the modern *raga*. The rhythmic meters found in several sacred musical forms like *Tevaram*, *Tiruppugazh*, etc., resemble the *talas* that are in use today. Above all, Tamil music was practiced by the native Dravidians of Southern India. Since Carnatic music is prevalent in South India, many scholars believe that the ancient Tamil music is an important source from which Carnatic music is derived.

After the **Sangita Ratnakara** of Sarngadeva (1210-1247), the word Carnatic came to represent the South Indian classical music as a separate system of music. A clear demarcation between Hindustani music and Carnatic music as two different forms of Indian classical music came into being perhaps around the latter half of the 14th century. Classical Indian music flourished in the southern capital cities, particularly in Vijayanagara and Tanjavur. A number of musical treatises describing the concepts of Carnatic music were written. The present form of Carnatic music is based on historical developments of the 15th - 16th AD and thereafter.



# Eyeing Process Perfection.... ?

***Chemtrols !!!***

As the leading analytical solution provider, Chemtrols in collaboration with its overseas partners provides systems for :

- ★ Process Analysis
  - ★ Continuous Emission Monitoring
  - ★ Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring
  - ★ Petroleum Product Quality Monitoring
- AND
- ★ Steam Water Analysis

For details contact :

**Chemtrols Industries Ltd.**

Amar Hill Saki Vihar Road,  
Powai, Mumbai - 72

Tel. +91 22 2857 5089 / 0557

Fax : +91 22 2857 1913

E-mail : [chemtrols@chemtrols.co.in](mailto:chemtrols@chemtrols.co.in)

Website : [www.chemtrols.com](http://www.chemtrols.com)

 **Chemtrols**

## MYTHOLOGICAL ASPECTS

In India, mythology has a very important place and its influence on the art and culture of the country is phenomenal, Carnatic music is no exception to this. Owing to its spiritual and devotional aspects, Carnatic music is associated with Hinduism, the dominant religion of India. The origin of this art has been attributed to the gods and goddesses. Moreover, individual deities are associated with different kinds of musical instruments. We cannot conceive of Krishna without the flute or Saraswati without the veena. The literary sources such as the epics and mythological anthologies also mention the close association of music with divinity.

Apart from these sources, many saints and scholars believe that music is the greatest form of *tapasya* (penance) and the easiest way to reach godhead or to attain salvation. Most of the musical compositions are either philosophical in content or describe the various deities or incidents from Hindu mythology. There are others who believe that music itself is divine and that the perfect synchronisation of the performer with the musical sound, *Nada*, is the real divine bliss. This practice is called *Nadopasana*. Many musicians and music lovers visualise divine forms in the *Ragas* or the melodic entities of Carnatic music.

## HISTORY OF CARNATIC MUSIC

The history of Carnatic music spreads over three major periods of development, namely, Ancient, Medieval and Modern. Let's now look into the finer details of each.

**THE ANCIENT PERIOD (Vedic period - 4th Century AD):** This is the vital period in the history of Indian music. During this period there is no mention of the term, Carnatic music, in any of the sources, but there is sufficient reason to believe that this period was crucial to the original development of Carnatic music. Some important references are cited here:

**Vedas:** Of the four Vedas, *Rig Veda* hymns was first recited in a monotone known as *archika*, which later developed into the two toned chant the *gatika*. This was subsequently replaced by a three-toned chant, *samika*, which had a main tone and two accents, one higher and one lower. Sama veda is considered as the main source for the development of Indian music and the first full scale with seven notes in the descending order are seen in the rendering, even to this day. The melody is close to the scale of the raga, *Kharaharapriya* (22ndMelakarta) or *Natakapriya* (10thMelakarta).

Several references to music of musical instruments are seen in the Vedas. One of the earliest references to musical theory is found in the **Rik Pratisakya** dated 400BC, which mentions the origin of seven notes from the three notes. **Upanishads**, the concluding part of Vedas, that contains the essence of Vedas (100 BC - 300 BC), mention the musical notes and gives other musical references. Musical instruments like the veena and dundubhi are mentioned in the **Brihadaranyaka Upanishad**.

The two great epics, **Ramayana** (circa 40 BC) and **Mahabharata**, also have several musical references. There is also a mention of *Gandharvas* (600 - 500 BC), who were exceptionally versatile in music. Bharata in his **Natyasastra**, also acknowledges saying that music belonged to the *Gandharvas*.

**Bharata's Natyasastra** (The 2nd - 4th century AD): This is the earliest treatise that extensively elaborates on the science of music and dance. Music is dealt only partly in this treatise. Yet, various aspects like the ancient melodies, the *Jaati* which are the archetypes of *ragas*, their characteristic features, structure and the classification of the ancient instruments have been made in this work. The notes (*swaras*), their varieties, combination (*varnas*) and other such aspects are also elaborately described. Bharata has given the fundamentals of music as comprising *swara*, *tala* and *pada*. The music until Bharata's period was known as *Marga* (literally meaning way).

In the ancient period, the native Dravidians of the south had their own style, which is called Tamil music, owing to the native regional language of the area. The *Sangam* literature till 3rd AD in particular, has many references to this style. Works like **Silappadikaram** of Ilango Adigal, and its commentaries, describe the logical derivations of the important scales through the modal shift of tonic. The Tamil names of these notes have also been mentioned. Other works like **Tolkappiam**, **Pattupattu**, etc. also give musical references. Some of these descriptions and references correspond to contemporary Carnatic music concepts.

**MEDIEVAL PERIOD** (5th - 16th Century AD): During this period, many important musical concepts evolved in clear terms and care was taken by several music scholars to put into record, some of the important musical developments. This commendable work provides proper historical links. Several musical composers and luminaries also lived during this period.

The work of Matanga (6th - 7th Century A.D.), **Brihaddesi**, is the first to mention the word, raga. This text also gives the names of the then popular ragas, with their suitable structures, and a basic classification system. The other notable feature during that period is the gradual development of the art of music as an independent form, breaking away from being overly dependent on forms of dance and drama.

The *Kudimiyanmalai inscriptions* in a cave, near Pudukottai in Tamilnadu, have an array of musical diction (notation) of South Indian music in the 7th century AD. The **Tevarams** (6th - 9th century AD), songs in praise of Lord Siva, used more than 20 scales with Tamil names, which are in concurrence with the present system of Carnatic music. Many of these **Tevarams** are still rendered as musical pieces in concerts. This corpus, along with the **Divya Prabandham**, the compositions of the *Vaishnavite Azhwars*, (6th - 8th century AD), have been a significant contribution of the Tamil speaking region to Carnatic music.

The **Tiruppugazh** of Arunagirinathar, who lived around the 15th century, is another inspiring Tamil work which significantly influenced the Carnatic music. This has complex rhythmic meters, which remain, even today, unique and unsurpassed in their grandeur.

The **Gita Govinda** of Jayadeva (12th century) is a monumental work of the medieval period in Sanskrit. It consists of twenty-four songs, each set to a particular *raga*. The rhythmic meter is determined by the meter of the verse. These were, probably, the earliest examples close to the regular musical compositions and are called *Ashtapadis* (ashta meaning eight and padi meaning foot). These are popular throughout India even today, though the original tunes are lost. Contemporary musicians from both the Carnatic and Hindustani traditions have set these songs to music independently.

**Sangeeta Ratnakara** an important musical treatise was written by Sarngadeva (1210-1247). This work contains five thousand couplets in Sanskrit written in nine chapters, comprehensively covering *swaras*, *ragas*, *prabandhas* (musical form of this period), *tala-vadyas* (percussion instruments), *gamakas* (ornamentations) and such other aspects. This work marks the complete growth of Indian music from the period of the *NatyaSastra* (2nd century) to the 13th century. This work stands out particularly as a link between the two new systems that gradually split and evolved separately after his period, namely, the Hindustani music and Carnatic music. The music between the period of **Brihaddesi** and the **Sangeeta Ratnakara** was known as the Desi system.

Sarangadeva's work inspired many later scholars who wrote musicological treatises. The **Sangeeta Sara**, attributed to Vidyaranya (1320-1380) was the first to classify ragas as *Melakarta* (Parent) and *Janya* (off-spring) ragas. After this work, there seems to have been a lull in the theoretical development for almost two centuries. Ramamatya wrote his treatise, *Swaramela Kalanidhi*, in the 16th century. The clear exposition of *Melakarta*, *raga* and *veena* technique are served as a firm and fitting foundation to the growth of the modern music system and this work is considered a milestone in the scientific development of Carnatic music.

**Musical Forms:** This period gradually traces the evolution from *Gandharva gana* forms like *Dhruvagana* of Bharata's period, through the different kinds of *Prabandhas*, to the present day forms. Several important forms were composed during this period namely, *Tevaram*, *Divyaprabandham*, *Tiruppavai* that is a part of *Divyaprabandham*, *Ashtapadis*, *Padams*, *Kritis*, *Geetams* and so on apart from the *Abhyasagana*, *Alankara* and *Swaravalis* for beginners.

Tallapakkam Annamachar (1425 - 1503 AD), composed in a new form called *Kriti*, having three sections, namely the *pallavi*, *anupallavi* and *charanam*. This pattern became widely accepted and was popularised by later composers, in particular, by the Trinity of Carnatic music. This stands out as an outstanding contribution of Annamacharya to the practical side of Carnatic music. He is credited to have composed about thirty two thousand compositions of which around twelve thousand have been traced and some of these are still preserved in copper plates. The *Kritis* were not as complicated as the earlier *Prabandha* forms.

Purandaradasa (1484 - 1564 AD) is known as the *Sangeeta Pitamaha*. A prolific composer, he laid the foundation for the systematic learning of the system and he formulated the swara exercises for practice, apart from composing simple songs, *Geetams*, and a number of compositions (*Kritis*) with high philosophical import.

In a nut shell, during the medieval period, Carnatic music gradually attained its individuality built over a historically strong foundation. In particular, after the 13th century, no major treatise is seen from the North. Tanjavur and Vijayanagara emerged as the major seats of Carnatic music, with a number of classic monumental works being produced on both the theoretical and practical aspects of music.

**MODERN PERIOD** (17th century to present day): The 17th century can be considered the golden age of Carnatic music. During this period several important milestones in diversified angles were created that enriched this traditional art form, even while preserving its past glories. Some of the most important developments in both *Lakshana* (theoretical) and *Lakshya* (practical) aspects took place during this period.

**Theoretical aspects:** The well structured 72 *Melakarta* scheme was formulated by Venkatamakhi in his treatise **Chaturdandi Prakasika** in 1660 AD. This scheme is the proud heritage of our music, and is not simply of academic interest, but also has immense practical value to all musicians, musicologists and students. Other important treatises on music written during this period are the **Sangeeta Saramrita** of Tulaja (1729 - 1735 AD), **Sangeeta Sudha** of Govinda Dikshita and the **Sangraha Choodamani** of Govinda (1750 A.D).

By the end of the 19th century, notational schemes were developed, for written representation of musical compositions. These were published in works like Subbarama Dikshitar's **Sangeeta Sampradaya Pradarsini** in Telugu and Manikka Mudaliar's Tamil work, **Sangeeta Chandrikai**. A M Chinnasami Mudaliar published **South Indian Music Compositions** written in western staff notation. These early pioneers in recent times have paved the way for a research-oriented understanding of this practical art form.

While the theoretical works were trying to keep pace with the practical music, the practical music itself was evolving continuously and a number of luminaries made a tremendous impact on refinement of this art form, to keep it fresh and alive.

**Practical aspects:** In the 18th century, within a short period from 1763 - 1775 AD, were born the three great composers of Carnatic music, who were later to be celebrated as the Musical Trinity (Trimurti) – Syama Sastri (1762 - 1827) Tyagaraja (1767-1847) and Muthuswami Dikshitar(1776-1835). All of them combined their immense knowledge, deep spirituality and profound traditional musicianship with an amazing sense of creativity and innovative spirit. This has made their contribution to Carnatic music an invaluable one. The art of musical composition was elevated to great heights at their hands. It can confidently be asserted that all later composers have tried to live up to the standards set by these three bright stars. Other great composers who have contributed to the vast repertoire of Carnatic music compositions include Swati Tirunal (1813-1847), Veenai Kuppayyar, SubbarayaSastri, Gopalakrishna Bharati, Ghanam Krishna Iyer, Patnam Subramanya Iyer, Koteeswara Iyer, Muthaiah Bhagavata, Mysore Vasudevachar and Papanasam Sivan.

**Musical concepts:** The 72 Melakarta scheme was responsible for the transformation in the *Raga* system of Carnatic music. Several new *ragas* came into existence and were popularised by means of compositions tuned by the Trinity of composers along with others who followed the 72 *Melakarta* scheme. Many different kinds of musical compositions developed, having different structural arrangements (musical forms). These include the *varnam*, *kriti*, *padam*, *javali*, *tillana*, *swarajati* and other varieties. These forms have continued to remain popular in the 20th century.

Until the end of the 19th century, the patronage of Carnatic music and musicians was mostly limited to the major temples and royal courts, as also a few rich landowners, who arranged concerts for various events. In the 20th century, the patronage took a different shape, with the advent of a number of organisations (*Sabhas*) and corporate sponsors who brought a more professional outlook to this traditional art-form. As a result, Carnatic music is now heard in all major Indian cities, as also in major centers in Asia, Europe and America.

**Music Education:** The learning and teaching processes have also adapted themselves to the changes in the living style, over the years. The traditional *Gurukula* system has given way to an institutional system of training in the 20th century. Several good musicians have taken to teaching as their profession. Modern educational tools have been pressed into service, with the growth of recording technology. From analog tape recorders to state of the art computers and internet connections are being put to use in imparting musical education worldwide.

The written musical notation system has undergone several changes over the years and has been used as a reference material for learning. Research oriented study and documentation of musical forms have also increased over the years. A number of books in different languages, authored by musicians and musicologists, have also been useful to understand the different concepts of this system of music. The involvement of mass media and communications has been a vital factor in the increase in interest of the unexposed and the uninitiated, to this traditional art form. Through all this change,

Carnatic music has not only gained new vigour, but has also retained its freshness within the traditional framework of this system.



# Carnatic Music: A Perspective

(Reprinted with permission from [www.carnaticindia.com](http://www.carnaticindia.com))

The origin of Carnatic music, can be traced back to the age of vedas . Bharata's Natya Sastra , from around the 5th century A.D., and Saranga Deva's Sangita Ratnakara , from the early13th century A.D., are considered the to be the earliest recorded documents available on the theory and performance of Indian classical music . The history of Carnatic music is incomplete without stating about the contributions made by the saints Sri Purandharadasaru ( 15th century A.D.) , Sri Thyagarajar, Sri Shyama Sastri and Sri Muthuswamy Dikshitar, all of 18th century A.D. who left an enduring legacy of compositions. This tradition has a rich heritage and is perfectly attuned with Indian culture and religion.

Carnatic music is based on a twenty two scale notes i.e. the swaras, contrary to the earlier twelve note scale that was used in the western classical music. But for all practical aspects and purposes, not more than sixteen notes are used. Unique combinations of these notes or swara create separate ragas. The features and the constraints of a raga are clearly defined in the arrangement of the notes in its arohanam, the ascending notes and avarohanam, the descending notes. Thus, in Carnatic music, the raga connotes a mode or a route in which the music is supposed to travel. Since different combinations of the notes gives rise to different ragas, theoretically, there are thousands of ragas present in the system of Carnatic music. However, not all of these are used during performances in the present day. Next, the two most important features of the raga are *gamaka* and *brighaa*. The former refers to the modulation of the frequency of a particular swara and the latter refers to the speed with which the musician performs a set of swaras. Both *gamaka* and *brighaa* help to improve the appeal of the composition that is rendered. Western music is often based on a pattern of flat notes, whereas in Carnatic music, the swaras are performed using various modulations. The *brighaa* is often holds eight or sixteen swaras per beat as against the normal four swaras per beat.

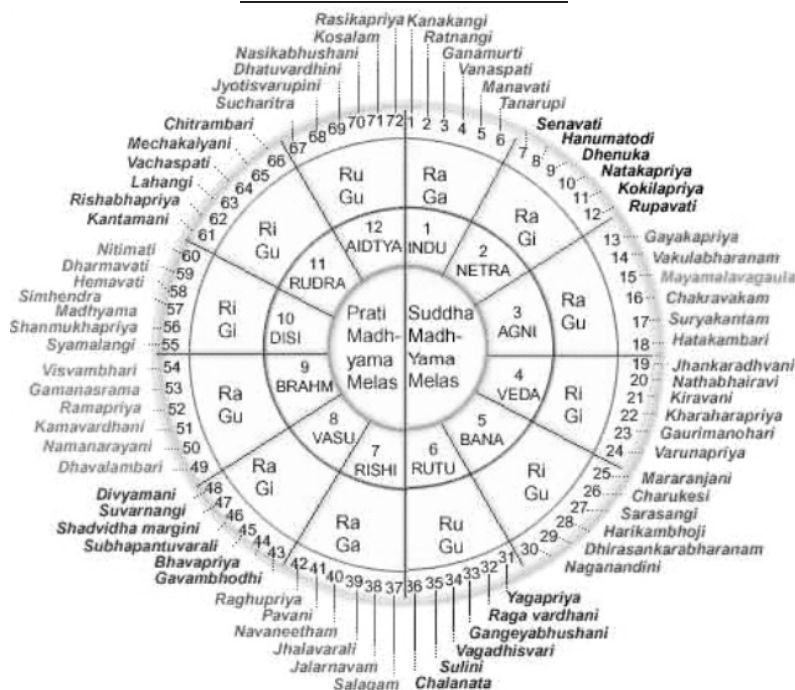
Another very important aspect of the Carnatic music is the *talam* or the rhythm. The *talam* is the rhythm of the piece that is being performed. There are six components of a *talam* namely Anudrutam, Drutam, Laghu, Guru, Plutam and Kakapadam. Out of these only the first three components are in popular use. The system of *sapta tala* is the rhythmic base for Carnatic music.

It refers to the seven core talas that are *Dhruva*, *Matya*, *Rupaka*, *Jhampa*, *Tripata*, *Ata*, and *Eka Talams*. Using these *sapta talas* all of the 150 Carnatic talams can be derived. Today, there exists more than hundred talams, but here again not all *talams* are used. The most popular *talam* have three, four , five, seven or eight beats in each *avartham* or round.

The Melakarta Ragams refers to the basic seventytwo Janaka ragams or the parent ragams for all of the infinite number of Janya ragams or the offspring ragams in Carnatic music. The seven notes or the *saptaswaras*, Sa, Ree, Ga, Ma, Pa, Da, Ni, are present both in the arohanam and avarohanam. The system is further sub divided into two sets of thirty six ragams each. The first set of thirtysix ragams use *suddha madhyama*, the simple Ma. The next set of thirtysix ragams use the *Prati madhyama* the sharper Ma. The Melakarta ragams are couched into Twelve chakras. The beauty and intellectual excellence of precise calculations and placement of ragams within the chakra are apparent. The appropriate names given to each ragam and the *katapayadhi sankhya* method of deciphering the positioning each ragam in the Melakarta scheme is a marvel in itself

Each passing generation adds valuable insights into, and perspectives on the already available wealth of information and ideas on the above mentioned aspects like *Swara*, *Talam*, *Ragam* & *Melakarta* scheme and so on.

## The Melakarta Chart



# Your prosperity Our guarantee

Highest NAV of 100 months guaranteed\*



\* Highest NAV over the first 100 months or NAV at maturity, whichever is higher

- Premium Paying Term: Single or 5 years • Policy Term: 10 years
- Age at entry: 8 yrs to 65 yrs • Partial withdrawal facility available

—❖ Available for maximum 3 months only from the date of launch ❖—



भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम  
LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION OF INDIA

Contact your nearest Branch or LIC agent for more information.

[www.licindia.in](http://www.licindia.in)

LIC/10-11/43

The premiums paid in Unit Linked Insurance Policies are subject to investment risks associated with capital markets and the NAV of the units may go up or down based on the performance of the fund and factors influencing the capital market and the insured is responsible for his/her decisions. The Life Insurance Corporation of India is only the name of the insurance company and Samridhi Plus is only the name of the unit linked insurance contract and does not in any way indicate the quality of the contract, its future prospects or returns. Past performance may not be an indicator of the future performance. In this policy the investment risk in investment portfolio is borne by the policyholder. For more details on risk factors, terms and conditions, please read sales brochure carefully before concluding a sale. A charge of 0.40% p.a. of the fund value shall be levied for the cost of investment guarantee. Insurance is the subject matter of solicitation.



# The Importance of Veena in Carnatic Music

Ramanath Iyer & Gopinath Iyer

The Veena, also referred to as Saraswati Veena, is one of the most ancient string instruments of India. It is a delicate, beautiful instrument that, in the hands of a master, can express all the nuances of Carnatic vocal and instrumental music.

The veena has a recorded history that dates back to 1500 BC, the Vedic period. It is also referenced in the ancient works from the Tamil land such as the Silappadikaram of 2nd Century AD. In Tamil isai the veena is referred to as the yazh. The yazh is classified into four types namely, peri yazh, magara yazh, sakota yazh and sengottai yazh. This classification is based on their number of strings built on to each of these yazh which were 21, 19, 14 and 7 respectively. Of these, the sengottai yazh made of a type of red wood and had seven strings, seems to be the closest to the current veena.

The present form of the Saraswati veena with twentyfour fixed frets evolved in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu during the reign of Raghunatha Nayak in 1600 AD. It is for this reason that this veena is sometimes called the Thanjavur veena or the Raghunatha veena. Prior to this time, the number of frets on the veena were fewer and were also movable. Today, several regions in South India make excellent veena.

The construction of veena is a complex, yet precise process. The veena, as we use today has a hollow stem made of resonant wood, about thirty-two inches long and four inches wide. It houses twenty-four brass frets embedded in bees-wax and is set on two chambers, the main sound chamber that is made out of wood and a secondary resonator that is made of a gourd. It has four main strings to produce the melody and three strings on the side to maintain drone and tala, the rhythm. The index and middle fingers of the right hand are used to pluck the melody strings while the little finger is used to strum the tala strings. The index and middle fingers of the left hand are used to glide over the frets and deflect the strings.

Veena is a majestic musical instrument that holds place of pride in the South Indian classical genre. It has several unique features. Firstly, the gap between the frets on the fret-board is concave in shape that enables the pulling of the strings to produce the gamakas, the characteristic ornamentations of Carnatic music. While this is done, one can observe the amount of deflections needed to produce the gamakas and visualise the science and grammar of music in action.

Another unique aspect of the veena is the way it helps the veena player to keep time cycles. Most other instruments need the use of both hands to produce the melody and hence keeping the time cycles, the tala, using the hands is not possible. The veena facilitates keeping the tala while playing the melody by the use of the tala strings. The musical phrases are produced with the index and middle fingers of both hands while the little finger of the right hand keeps the time by strumming the tala strings.

Next, a number of interesting and unique features are built into the design of the veena itself. The hollow chamber of the veena, the kudam, enables the sound to resonate from within, and this adds depth to the string vibrations. The string terminations at both ends too, are curved and not sharp. Also, the frets have much more curvature than any other instrument. Unlike in guitar, the string does not have to be pushed down to the very base of the neck. Hence, no rattling sound is generated. This design enables a continuous control over the string tension, which is important for the glides and produces more harmonics than any other instrument. Moreover the bees-wax that houses the frets absorbs any noise and this ensures a greater clarity of the sound.

Finally, the feature that distinguishes the music of the veena from all other instruments is the tanam playing which is the improvisation of the raga with an implied rhythm. The stroking of the tala strings of the veena during tanam adds a third dimension and produces a grand aural effect.

# Travel in style. Sleep in comfort. Arrive refreshed.



Altitude/Jet/2130



Experience luxury en route to the UK, USA, Canada, Europe and the Far East with our lie-flat beds in Première.

A touch of a button is all it takes to convert a plush armchair into a 180° lie-flat bed. It's just what you need to arrive rested and refreshed at your destination. Besides, you enjoy direct aisle access from your seats, sumptuous gourmet meals and a handpicked selection of wines. To unwind and relax, you have our award-winning in-flight entertainment designed to keep you enthralled. And to stay connected, constant access to e-mail and SMS.

For more information contact your travel agent or visit [jetairways.com](http://jetairways.com)

To the lay listener, all veena recitals may sound alike, but the discerning ear can distinguish different styles of veena playing. The technique of veena playing today can be broadly divided into three schools namely the Thanjavur, Mysore and Andhra schools. Each school has a proud heritage of its own, and there are purists even today who zealously guard their precious tradition. However, due to constant exposure of each school to the others via radio, television and other modern media, there is a merging of styles that is surely evolving.

The Thanjavur school aims at reproducing the vocal, the gayaki, style as closely as possible. This approach has been developed right from the heyday of Thanjavur court of the Kings and has been shaped and polished to perfection. This gayaki style stresses the importance of reproducing on the veena the pronunciation and accent on each syllable of the lyrics as if they are sung. Raga alapana of this style is replete with characteristic gamakas. The pace is leisurely. It is a stately and dignified style

with an everlasting appeal. The Karaikudi style is a branch of the Thanjavur style, developed by the Karaikudi brothers who lived in the first half of the twentieth century.

The Mysore school developed in a quite different direction. It focuses on bringing out the instrumental excellence of the veena. This school has a distinct North Indian touch, due to the proximity of Karnataka's northern districts to Maharashtra and the ensuing influence. It is a very pleasing and reposeful style.

The Andhra School of veena playing can be distinguished by the variety of plucking techniques used. High-speed passages are employed rigorously in this school. Veyi sadakam that involves practicing a set of exercises a thousand times, and repeating it from the beginning if any mistake is made during the practice, is a notable practice followed by this school.

Veena music has been fostered in South India by many famous veena players. Some of the notable maestros from the early part of last century are the Karaikudi Brothers, Veena Dhanammal, Veena Seshanna and Subbanna, Veena Venkatramana Das followed by Kalyanakrishna Bhagavata, K.S. Narayanaswamy, Mysore Doreswamy Iyengar, S. Balachander, Emani Shankara Sastry, Pichumani Iyer, Chitti Babu, Ranganayaki Rajagopalan, Trivandrum Venkataraman and Rajeswari Padmanabhan in recent times.

The patronage for veena is dwindling and this is acutely felt in the last two decades. As a result the number of performers, teachers and artisans is on the decline. It is the responsibility of veena practitioners, music institutions and organizations and interested audience to actively contribute to the propagation of veena music so as to ensure for this ancient instrument a well deserved pedestal in Indian music scenario! It is our bounden duty to preserve this divine instrument in all its glory for posterity!





# Chemtex Group



## Our Markets and Clients

- Petrochemicals and Chemicals
- Fibers
  - PET and Acrylic
- Energy and Environmental
  - LNG
  - Sulfur Recovery Units,
  - Specialized Waste Water Treatment
- Renewables
  - Bio-ethanol from biomass, cassava and others
  - Bio-Diesel
  - Beverage Grade Alcohol
  - Bio-ethylene and Bio-glycols
- Technology Providers
  - Helping our partners bring their offering to the international marketplace

## What We Offer

- State-of-the-Art Technologies
- Technology development with in-house R&D facilities
- Extensive Technology Transfer Expertise
- Conceptual and Feasibility Studies
- Process optimization and de-bottlenecking
- Front-end and Basic Engineering
- In-house Detailed Engineering
- Global Strategic Sourcing
- EPC capability and experience
- PMC Services
- Plant relocation expertise.

**Working together with clients and technology partners to deliver successful project solutions worldwide for more than 50 years**

**Chemtex Global Engineers Pvt. Ltd.**  
**Chemtex House, Main Street, Hiranandani Gardens, Powai, Mumbai 400 076 India**  
**Tel: 91-22-25716400**

**Chemtex Offices: Tortona – Wilmington – Mumbai – Bengaluru – Vadodara – Beijing – Shanghai**

**Email: [cgpl@chemtex.co.in](mailto:cgpl@chemtex.co.in)**

**Website: [www.chemtex.com](http://www.chemtex.com)**

*With Best Compliments,*  
**A.N.SHAJI (Managing Director)**



## **METMECH RADIOGRAPHIC INSPECTION PVT.LTD.**

*(An ISO 9001:2008 Certified Co.)*

601, El-Tara, Off.Orchard Avenue, Opp.Odyssey-II, Hiranandani Gardens, Powai, Mumbai – 400 076

Tel: 022- 25702025 / 26 / 27 Fax: 022- 25702028 Mob: 98200 94634

E-mail: [metmech@vsnl.net](mailto:metmech@vsnl.net) / [metmech76@gmail.com](mailto:metmech76@gmail.com)

Website: [www.metmech.com](http://www.metmech.com)

### **Specialized services in –**

- Radiographic Testing including Internal & External X-ray of Pipelines & Gamma Radiography
- Ultrasonic Inspection including automated UT of Pipelines
- Magnetic Particle Testing - Wet, Dry and Fluorescent
- Liquid Penetrant Testing
- Heat Treatment Services
- Hardness Testing
- Holiday Inspection
- Coating Thickness Measurement
- Eddy Current Testing
- Engineering Services
- Deployment of qualified Inspection Engineers
- Training & Certification of NDT Personnel

### Overseas Office:

Mechmet International L.L.C.  
 P.O. Box 8332, Ajman, U.A.E.  
 Mob : 050 8778553  
 Tel No. : +9716 7429902 Fax No. : +9716 7429903  
 E-mail : [mechmet@rediffmail.com](mailto:mechmet@rediffmail.com)

### Accessories Division:

Intercity X-rays,  
 8/Bhavani Service Indl.Estate,  
 Gr.Flr, Jain Temple Road,  
 Powai, Mumbai- 400 076  
 Tel: 022-25772957/25792290/25789644  
 E-mail: [intercityxrays@gmail.com](mailto:intercityxrays@gmail.com)

# Sahityam in Sangeetham

Anantha Sayana

Indian Carnatic music is not just about a sweet voice, ability to render great elaborations or the nuances of a raga or the ability to charm the audience with postures and gestures. Saint Thyagaraja said in his famous keerthana "*Sangeetha jnanamu bhakti vina sanmargamu kaladhe*" which means "the mere knowledge of music bereft of devotion cannot lead one to the right path". *Bhakti* or devotion is defined at times as passion to music itself where one pursues music with sincerity, discipline and respect. More often *bhakti* is devotion to the Lord. Dr.S.Radhakrishnan says in his foreword to the book, **The Spiritual Heritage of Thyagaraja**, "The attainment of life in God is achieved more easily by *bhakti* than by any other means" and quotes Ramanuja as saying "incessant loving meditation of God is *bhakti: sneha purvamanu dhyanam bhaktir ityabhidhiyate*".

There is a very strong link between devotion and Carnatic music. The simplest visible link is the fact that most of the Carnatic music compositions are about God and are sung in His praise. Many of these are eloquent articulations of the feelings of the composers as they converse, plead with, cajole, praise or at times even question the Lord.

Carnatic music compositions also called *kritis* have very meaningful context and content besides being lyrical and set to a good meter. The lyrics called *sahityam* contribute significantly to the exposition and enjoyment of music. The repertoire of Carnatic music consists of *kritis* composed mainly in Sanskrit, Telugu, Tamil and Kannada. Irrespective of the language these are couched in, the saint composers pour their hearts out in words. The *kritis* constitute a typical devotional fabric that comprises of themes like praising the Lord and His innumerable qualities, pleas to the Lord for grace or deliverance, chiding him for not heeding to the devotees cries and so on.

A fine example of this is a kriti composed by Saint Thyagaraja that poses a beseeching query to his inner self "*Nidhichala sukhama ? Ramuni Sannidhi seva Sukhama? Nijamuga palku manasa*" meaning "Oh my mind, Tell me the truth, what can give happiness... material wealth or the worship of Lord Rama at his altar?" In the same language Telugu, Annamacharya achieves that ecstasy on seeing the hills of Tirumala when he sings "*adivo alladivo Sreeharivaasamu; padivelu seshula padagala mayamu*" meaning "Behold! Here is the abode of the Lord Sreehari! I can see the ten thousand hoods of *Adishesha* -the holy serpent!"

In their Tamil compositions, while Subramanya Bharathi sees Lord Krishna's dark color in a crow's feather when he says "*Kakkai chiraginile Nandalala Nindhan Kariya niram thondrudayye Nandalala*", Papanasam Sivan envies and wonders at the kind of penance that Yashoda might have done to have the privilege of the omnipresent Lord address her as mother in "*Enna thavam seyghanai Yashoda, engum nirai parabrahmam amma endrazhaikka*".

In his Kannada kriti, "*Kandu kandu nee enna kaividuvade Krishna Purandaradasa says "thandai thayee vu neeve, Bandhugalavu neeve"* meaning that Krishna cannot forsake him, for, he the Lord is his father, mother, kith and kin". In yet another famous and lovely introductory passage, he cites many instances of the Lord heeding the cries of his devotees and pleads with the Lord to hear his cries for help "*ee dasaradasanu karadare, nanna palisa beko*".

The composers also set the *kritis* to the *raga* that is appropriate to the emotions expressed therein, so as to match its mood with meaning. The appreciation of the *sahityam* provides the *bhava* or the feeling to the song while one sings. The enjoyment of music is magnified manifold when both the singer and the listener derive the meaning of the *kriti*. They become one with the composer who expresses it and in a way, feel one with the Lord himself. An understanding of the *sahityam* also helps the singer in pronouncing the words correctly and with the appropriate splitting of the compound words so that the meaning is not corrupted. Given the fact that the *kritis* are in different languages and at times do not use words that are in common usage now, the meaning of the *Sahityam* may not be easy to derive even if one knows the languages. The silver lining is that there are websites on the Internet created by music lovers that can provide, if not exhaustive, at least rudimentary guidance for understanding the meanings of the *kritis*.

The study of *sahityam* in *sangeetham* is a pursuit in itself and is the subject of many discourses and research. Plenty of opportunities are available for both the singers and listeners today to dive deeper into the ocean of music to understand *sahityam*, the knowledge of which will greatly help cultivate *bhakti* and lead one to the right path (*sanmargamu*). In other words, if teachers and singers of Carnatic music learn, imbibe and teach the significance of *sahityam* along with *sangeetham*, everyone will be enriched. Thus *nada yoga* will lead to *bhakti yoga* which in turn will lead to divine bliss.



We offer a plethora of

# Web Designing & Web Based PHP Development Solutions

Web Designing	PHP Application Development	Custom PHP Development	Custom CRM Development
Web Development	ERP Implementation	Ajax Development	Custom ERP Development
Opensource Development	CRM Implementation	Ecommerce Solutions	Website Maintenance

Kush Infosystem Pvt. Ltd., A-17, Bldg no.5, Mittal I.Estate, Andheri (E), Mumbai - 400 059, India  
URL : [www.kipl.com](http://www.kipl.com) | Email : [info@kipl.com](mailto:info@kipl.com)

Are you geared up for NEXT GENERATION MARKETING?



Get Top 10 ranking in **Google** **YAHOO!** **bing**

## Why Freshrank SEO ?

- » Increase your Brand Visibility & Awareness
- » Take your Business to Global Level
- » Get Overseas Market Presence
- » ISO 9001-2008 Certified
- » Increase your Web Traffic & Online Business
- » Increase Sales
- » TOP 10 Ranking in Search Engines
- » 100% Guaranteed Results



Our Clients



amitthakurphotography



SHIRODKAR-FALNIKAR & ASSOCIATES

# Techniques of Playing Violin In Carnatic Music

M. Lalitha & M. Nandini

Although Violin in its present form came from the west, it has become an invaluable asset to Carnatic music. It is used both as an instrument of accompaniment to vocal artists and as a full-fledged solo instrument of Carnatic music performances. Before going into the techniques of playing on a violin, a few important points relating to the system of Carnatic music with regard to the place of the musical instrument, Violin, has to be mentioned. Carnatic music is primarily composed for singing and there is no special music composed for the instruments. Since the music is written to be sung, the range is limited and normally covers two octaves. The different musical forms like the *Varnam*, *Kriti*, *Tillāna*, *Svarajati*, etc., are all rendered to the same tonic or the basic *sruti* or the *ādhāra shadja*. Within the different sections of a song there is no change in the fundamental pitch or the *sruti*. The tempo of the *tāla* also does not change in between the sections. The musical compositions are memorised and rendered. Carnatic music is handed down from generation to generation through oral tradition and is not played by seeing into the notations. All intricate nuances are not written down and the notation is a mere skeleton. And when it comes to the *manōdharmā*, the improvisation part, the musical imagination of the artiste comes into play and hence the question of score does not arise at all. And therefore the technique with regard to playing the violin depends upon the fingering and bowing which the artiste devises to express the 'vocally' learnt music. This, of course, does not mean that the instrumental playing is oriented only towards interpreting the vocal. The capabilities of the instrument are exploited and made use of in *Kalpita* as well as in *Manōdharmā* sections. Carnatic music gives ample scope for *manōdharmā sangita* and individuals add their own imagination, *sangati-s* or variations. This possibility is open to violinists too.

In order to produce good sound, the tonal quality while playing the violin, good bowing technique is essential. In Carnatic music, the types of bowing like the '*Svara-vil*', '*Sāhitya-vil*' and the '*Tāna-vil*' occupy a predominant place and when speaking about the bowing technique, only these kinds of bowing are spoken of. Apart from these, there are other types of bowing freely used, which have not been mentioned so far in books. The elementary aspects involved with the technique of playing the violin are body posture while holding the violin, tuning of the violin, manner of holding the bow and the use of long bow and crossing strings

Normally, all artistes assume a sitting posture with the right foot stretched in front and the left foot tucked under the right thigh. The back of the violin body, especially the upper part rests on the left side of the chest. The scroll of the violin rests on the heel of the right foot. Except for a few minor variations, the sitting posture is broadly the same with individuals or in different schools. This posture is adopted or designed so to have a secured feeling especially while playing the *gamaka-s* or the ornamentation of the *swaras* and *sangatis*. The manner of holding the violin too, is unique. The neck or the dandi of the violin is placed in-between the thumb and other four fingers in a U-shaped position. The thumb serves only to hold the violin and does not press the fingerboard too tightly. The other four fingers while playing are placed curved and are not kept flat so as to reach the accurate *svarasthāna*. Moreover, playing with the tip of the four fingers is a good technique.

There are two different types of tuning the violin in Carnatic music. The 'D' string is tuned to *mandra sthāyi* 'pa', 'A' string is tuned an octave higher to *mandra sthāyi* 'sa'. The 'G' string is tuned to *madhya sthāyi* 'sa' and 'E' string is tuned to *madhya sthāyi* 'pa' which is an octave higher to *mandra sthāyi* 'pa' string. This tuning is done on the basis of *sadja* and *panchama* and the octave of these. This type of tuning is used for major part of the concert. The second type of tuning, the '*madhyama sruti*' tuning, is used to render musical pieces that are composed in the lower octave *rāga-s*. This helps raise the pitch of the composition. In the *madhyama sruti* tuning the strings are tuned as 'sa-ma-sa-ma' but are heard as 'pa-sa-pa-sa'. 'pa' of the original tuning is changed as *madhyama* but is kept as *sadja* and sung. *sthāyi* 'Sa'.

The manner of holding the bow, however, differs widely from one school of violin playing or one artiste to another. The heavier lower portion of the bow is called the 'frog of the bow' and the lighter upper portion is called the 'nut of the bow'. The right-hand fingers hold the stick portion of the bow near the frog and care is taken not to touch the hair of the bow. The thumb of the right-hand goes inside and is curved. It is placed near the frog, whereas the other right-hand fingers namely the index finger, the second finger, the ring finger and the little finger are placed above the stick portion of the bow and each of the four fingers have a different function to perform. The thumb and the second finger are placed parallel to each other. The four fingers are curved and placed on the stick. Whereas the fourth or the little finger helps in maintaining the equilibrium of the bow, the index finger helps in giving pressure to the stick.

The above method is used in the West and in the author's school of violin playing. Since there is no such standard method as in the West to hold the bow, here among carnatic music violinists too, the manner of holding the bow varies from person to person and it is difficult to choose or say which the right method is. However, the bow should be parallel to the bridge and should not go zigzag as the sound will not have clarity and will get distorted. The timbre or the quality of sound varies, and to get a good loud sound, the bow is placed very close to the bridge and moves slowly. To get a soft sound, the bow moves quickly near the fingerboard.

'Down Bow' is a common method of bowing. Here the bow-stroke is executed from the frog to the nut. It is called 'down-bow' because the bow moves in the downward direction, in other words, the bowing starts from the frog-end of the bow and moves outwards on the right-hand side and terminates at the nut-end of the bow. 'Up Bow' is also a basic bowing in which the bow-stroke commences from the nut-end of the bow and terminates at the frog-end. It is called 'up-bow' because the bow moves in the upward direction, in other words, the bowing starts from the nut-end of the bow and moves on the left-hand side and terminates at the frog-end of the bow. These terms are not used in Carnatic Music, although these types of bowing are used. However, when one begins a composition or an exercise it is better to start with a down-bow.

Each of the fingers of the right-hand has a different function to perform. The index finger slightly slants towards the right while holding the bow and while bowing, the right-hand does not raise high at all. For proper balance of the bow it is necessary to place all the fingers down on the string. In Western music the thumb plays a vital role in holding the violin whereas in Carnatic Music the thumb does not have to do this job, since the violin rests on the right foot and the chin holds it. When using the full bow from the frog to the nut or vice versa, care is taken to see that the sound is uniform from the beginning of the bow till the end. While learning the basic exercises, this type of bowing is taught. This is used normally to render slow passages and also while rendering a *rāga*. In the authors school of violin playing the authors grandfather Sri. V. Lakshminarayana Iyer stressed the use of long bow and had exercises specially devised for it. It is necessary to maintain evenness of sound throughout while playing the long bow because as it proceeds towards the nut the bow moves away from the right-hand thus increasing the distance. It becomes difficult to control the sound when it goes towards the nut, as it moves away from the control of the right-hand. So, as one plays more on the upper half of the bow. It is a necessary to increase the pressure on the bow to maintain an even sound. While playing the *ālāpana* for a *rāga*, this is used for rendering long *kārvai-s* when resting on a note. Crossing strings as the name suggests is a technique that involves the crossing of strings. While so doing, the position of the right arm changes its angle to touch the correct strings. This technique too is used in Carnatic Music it is not specifically documented. For example, the third *Ettugadasvara* of the *Varnam 'Jalajāksa'* in the *rāga Hamsadhvani* set to *Ādi tālam* and composed by Manambuchavadi Venkatasubbayyar.

npgr `ngrn' . . . pnpns nrsg| rp gn psn r| ngrn r npg|| . . .

In the phrase `nl-ga-ri-nl' of the second count, the crossing string technique is seen where the bow plays on `pA' string for the note `nl' and crosses to `sa' string to sound the note `ga'. After playing the note `ri' on the same `sa' string, the bow again crosses to the `pA' string to sound the note `nl'. It is necessary while crossing the string that both the right-hand and the left-hand should be ready to play their parts in time.

Violinists with immaculate bowing along with dexterous fingering technique make music that is matchless and unique. Its compatibility in accompanying both male and female singers and its ability to move across four octaves make violin a much sought after instrument. With their irresistible urge for perfection violinists continue to revolutionize violin playing techniques. Perhaps, in time musicologists and committed violinists would document technicalities of playing violin in Carnatic music tradition.





# MUSICAL QUIZ *By Malathi Hariharan*

- 1 There are two types of musical systems – Harmonic and Melodic. Which type of system is Carnatic Music?
- 2 How many basic notes are there in each of the two systems mentioned above?
- 3 What is a Raga?
- 4 Which type of notation does Indian music use – Staff notation or script notation?
- 5 What is a Varja Ragam?
- 6 What are the two main classifications of Ragas?
- 7 What is one important requirement of Janaka Ragas?
- 8 According to the Melakarta scheme, how many parent or Janaka ragas are there?
9. Who composed ramanatakam?
- 10 How is a thala different from a rhythm?
11. Give two examples of a ghana raga.
- 12 What does Sampurnam mean when applied to Melakarta ragas?
- 13 Who are the Trinities of Carnatic Music?
14. Name a composer who was accused of misusing tax collections to build a temple for Sri Rama?
15. Who systematized the method of teaching carnatic music and hence called Sangita pitamaha?
- 16 In what language did Muthuswamy Dikshitar compose most of his songs?
- 17 What is the mudra (signature) generally used by Syama Sastri?
- 18 Who, among the Trinities, is known as Avatara Purusha?
- 19 Name the two operas that St Thyagaraja wrote?
- 20 Name the composer who used the signature (mudra), Padmanabha

1	Melodic
2	Seven
3	Combination of swaras with a predetermined ascending (arohanam) scale and descending (avarohanam) scale.
4	Script notation
5	Omitting one or two swaras either in arohanam or avarohanam
6	Janaka ('parent') and Janaya ('offspring') Ragas
7.	All seven swaras must be present and they should appear in the same order and occur only once.
8.	Seventy two
9.	Arunachala kavi.
10.	A rhythm is a basic beat; a thala is a set of beats set to a cyclical order count with a beginning and an end.
11.	Nattai, Gowai, Kedaram
12	All the seven notes are present in the up and down scales of a Raga.
13	Saint Thyagaraja, Syama Sastri and Muthuswamy Dikshitar
14	Bhadrachala Ramadasa
15.	Purandaradasa
16.	Sanskrit
17	Syama Krishna Sodari
18	Saint Thyagaraja
19	Nowka Charitam and Prahlada Bhakti Vijayam
20	Swati Tirunal Maharaja.

*With Best Compliments  
from*

*Padmalaya Maternity & Surgical Home*

**158-C Sarsha CHS, Opp. IIT-Bombay  
Powai, Mumbai-400 076  
Phone 25780802**



*With Best Compliments  
from*



*Shree Ganesh Sagar*  
**Chembur**



# The Gharana System in Hindustani Music

Jayanthi Sundaram Nayak

The *Gharana* system is a unique feature of Hindustani classical music and is applied to all forms of exposition be it vocal, instrumental or percussion. This article will explore the *Gharana* System with particular reference to Hindustani Vocal Music so as to enable all music-lovers understand and appreciate the concept of *gharana*

The word *gharana* traces its origin to the Hindi word *ghar* which means house. In the terminology of Hindustani music, *gharana* specifically refers to a comprehensive musical ideology. Put in simple terms, the *gharanas* are styles of musical exposition wherein each *gharana* maintains its own distinct features. In Carnatic Music, one refers to an artiste's style of rendition as *bani*. Thus you have the GNB *bani*, the MLV *bani*, the Chembai Bhagavathar *bani*, the DKP *bani* and so on. In other words, a style of musical rendition made known and popular by a single artiste is accepted as a *bani*, musicologists and musicians admit a *gharana* into the fold only if it exists for at least three generations either within the family or through the *guru-shishya parampara*. The *gharana* is like a social system linking musicians by adherence to that particular style. It directly affects the thinking, teaching, performance and appreciation of music.

In fact, a *gharana* emerges from the creative style of a genius, who gives a totally new form, approach and interpretation the existing structures. These attributes are applied to the tone of voice, the pitch used, the inflections and intonations in singing, the specific nuances applied to the rendition and even the choice of *raga* that these attributes would enhance.

The name of the *gharana* typically refers to the place from where the musical ideology originated. Some of the well known *gharanas* for vocal music are Agra *gharana*, Gwalior *gharana*, Indore *gharana*, Jaipur *gharana*, Kirana *gharana*, and Patiala *gharana*.

The mainstay of Hindustani vocal music is a form known as *khayal*. In *khayal gayaki*, the *raga* forms the soul centre of rendering. Psychologically, the word *raga*, meaning colouring or passion, evokes the idea of the mood. In addition each *raga* is also associated with a particular bhava or emotion as well as with a particular time of the day or night. A *raga* thus becomes a melodic mould of the song with definite structuring. The vocal rendition of the *raga*, therefore, means an improvisation of this plan keeping within the framework of and adhering to the laws of its creation, as well as to that of its rhythmic accompaniment.

Since the concept of improvisation is the chief attraction of Hindustani music, the *gharanas* have distinct styles of presenting the *khayal* and provide clearly understood guidelines on how to enunciate the words of the composition, which notes of the *raga* should be emphasized, when to sing the *sthai* and *antara*, whether to begin the singing with non-metered *alaap*, what kinds of improvisations to use, how much importance to give to the rhythmic aspect, and so on.

The key factor in the *Gharana* system is the style of a musician that follows at least one authentic *gharana*. On the other hand, there may be brilliant musicians with a distinctive style of their own, which need not adhere to a single *gharana*. In other words, a musician may form a distinctive style by assimilating a variety of styles. When his children or disciples continue this style for three or more generations, a new *gharana* is born.

*With Best Compliments  
from*

*S. R. Pillai*

## **Navbharat Constructions**

38 Vijaya House, Station Road  
Vikhroli West, Mumbai 400 083  
Phone: 2578 3916, 2578 1549



*With Best Compliments  
from*

### **FUTURISK SIMPLIFYING INSURANCE .....**

Health Insurance Consulting | Property ,Liability & Casualty Insurance Consulting  
Marine & Motor Insurance Consulting

•  
Futurisk Insurance Broking Co Pvt Ltd  
No. 001 Ground Floor , Elecon Chambers  
Behind Sakinaka Telephone Exchange,

Samita Lane  
Off Andheri Kurla Road Sakinaka Mumbai 400 072  
Tel 4070 4000  
Mobile 9664662323

The Gwalior *gharana* is considered to be the fountainhead of Hindustani music. The oldest among *gharanas*, it was founded around the sixteenth century by Nathhan Pir Baksh. It is known for its lucidity, clarity and simplicity of rendition with equal emphasis on both the melodic and rhythmic aspects of music. It has a wide repertoire of compositions too. The musicians of this *gharana* also dazzle the *rasikas* with their clear use of *tans*, the fast musical phrases, and clever rhythmic interplay. Pt.Omkarnath Thakur, Pt. V.D Paluskar, Smt. Veena Sahasrabuddhe are amongst the exponents of this *gharana*

The Agra *gharana* , founded by Ghagge Khudabaksh and revived by Ustad Faiyyaz Khan places great importance on developing forcefulness and depth in the voice so that the notes are powerful and resonant. This style of singing is closer to the *Dhrupad* style of singing with *nom-tom* alaaps and slanted towards the rhythmic aspect of music

The Kirana *gharana* derives its name from the birthplace of Ustad Abdul Karim Khan of Kirana near Kurukshetra. The Kirana style of singing is characterized by slow-tempo raga development, emphasis on melody, long and sustained adherence to pitch and use of traditional *ragas*. The *swara* or note is used to create an emotional mood by means of elongation. Some noteworthy exponents of the Kirana *gharana* are Pandita Hirabhai Barodekar, Begum Akhtar, Pt.Bhimsen Joshi, Gangubai Hangal and Dr.Prabha Atre.

The most distinctive feature of the Jaipur- Atrauli *gharana*, founded by Ustad Alldiya Khan is best known by its use of rare and complex ragas, rippling taans and emphasis on melody with involutedly undulating phrases. Pt. Mallikarjun Mansur, Kesarbhai Kerkar, Smt.Kishori Amonkar, Shruti Sadolikar, Smt. PadmaTalwalkar and Ashwini Bhide Deshpande are popular vocalists of this genre.

The Mewati *gharana* gives importance to developing the mood of the raga through the notes that form it and its style is *bhava pradhan*. It also gives equal importance to the meaning of the text. The exponents of the Mewati *Gharana* are Pt.Moti Ram, Pt.Mani Ram, and Pt.Jasraj amongst others.

In addition to these *gharanas*, a few other *gharana* that gained prominence are Patiala *gharana*, Bhendi Bazaar *gharana* and the Rampur Sahaswan *gharana*

In recent times the *guru- shishya parampara* has been affected by the travails of time and distance. Technology has also made possible the availability and accessibility to many styles of musical tutelage. However the richness of the *gharana* tradition will continue to hold its sway on the artistes of all generations as long as the central idiom of each style remains authentic while yet evolving with the times.





With Best Compliments  
from



*Sri Kamakoti Ghatikasramam Trust (Regd)*

21 Durai Raj Street, Palavan Thangal  
Chennai-600 114  
Pone. 044-22314118/22314884



*With Best Compliments  
from*

**Trambak Travels Pvt Ltd.**

7 A.N.Chambers, 57 Turner Road  
Bandra West, Mumbai-400050  
Phone. 26451632/33/34  
E-Mail: [trambak@gmail.com](mailto:trambak@gmail.com)



# The Mystical Ghazal: Its journey

Dr. Deepshikha Pathak

In the vast ocean of Indian music *Ghazal* is like a new found gem. The word *ghazal* immediately floods our mind with mixed emotions and thoughts: romance, pathos, longing, loneliness and sometimes emotions beyond expression! What is so unique in a *ghazal* that sways both the heart and mind? Is it the shayari or the musical handling of *shayari* or the gifted voice of the singer? It is difficult to pin point a single feature, but what is true is that one gets transported to a different realm by the magic of a *ghazal*!

*Ghazal* that came from Arabia and evolved in Persia was introduced to India by the Persian scholar, Sufi poet and musician Amir Khusrau in 1200 AD. With this soulful love poem, a priceless heritage of the medieval times, Amir Khusrau made a great impact on contemporary music and arts in India. In spite of its Arabic and Persian origins, the lyrics of *ghazal* which are sung today are essentially of Indian origin. *Ghazal* evolved in the Urdu Persian cultural centres of Hyderabad, Delhi and Lucknow. The royal courts were the main patrons.

A fusion of poetry and music, the unique character of the *ghazal* singing, emanates from the fact that it is conditioned by the literary and poetic character of the *ghazal* which is sung. It is essentially melodic, both in scale and tempo and in mode as well. The meanings of the lyric can be interpreted at several levels, from pangs of loneliness, to hope of glimpse of the beloved, the romantic longings of the lovelorn, to the Sufi yearnings of the suffering soul, to the ecstasy of merger with the Infinite. Thus their words also have a resonance at deeper levels of 'being'.

Amir Khusrau not only nourished Indian classical music, but also nurtured *ghazal* singing in the style of *qawwali* and *sufiana* music. The specific features of *qawwali* lends uniqueness to it and this form has thrived not only in the romantic social scenario, but also in Sufi shrines. The Urdu *ghazal* came on its own when patronage by Mughal courts led this genre to a more sophisticated format that was also in keeping with the courtly grandeur. In the royal courts, Indian classical *Dhrupad* form of music held a position of pride. The so called less sophisticated forms of *ghazals* and *thumris* were forced to seek refuge in the dance numbers of the courtesans of those times. In fact, to Lucknow goes the credit of propagating and nurturing and giving identity to the two musical genres, *thumri* and *ghazal*.

With the advent of British colonial rule, the state patronage virtually collapsed and Indian music bifurcated into two channels. The first one went to the precincts of Rajas and feudal Nawabs, under whose patronage the *gharana* institution of singing flourished and parallel to this in the society the *guru-shishya parampara* thrived. The other stream went to *kothas* where the courtesans kept alive the romantic and erotic element of music as an art form. The result was efflorescence of the new forms like *thumri*, *tappa*, *dadra*, *kajri*, *hori*, *ghazal* etc. Owing to the patronage by these strata of society, *ghazal* also suffered the stigma of debasement and didn't enjoy any social recognition for long. It is interesting to note that at some point during the period of renaissance of Indian classical music, spearheaded by Pt. V. N Bhatkhande, *ghazal* was formally recognized as a part of classical music and *ghazals* were mostly sung in the same *ragas*, in which *thumris* were sung. However, they were freed from *raga niyam*.

The turning point in the fortune of *thumri* oriented *ghazal* came about when Begum Akhtar sang *ghazals* in a new way with tinges of the styles of both *poorab* and *Punjab* aang, yet with definite shape of its own. It is very clear that *ghazal* moved with time and gained and retained its acquired identity as an art form, thanks to the fact that exponents of both *thumri* and *ghazal* forms of music generally were the same artists. In a way *thumri* played 'big sister' to *ghazal* for a long time! With the passage of time *ghazal* found its very own identity at the deft hands of great artists of latter times. *Ghazals* created by each artist were unique and contributed to the development of the genre. They culled for themselves a place of pride in the scheme of evolution.

*With Best Compliments  
from*

*Le Papillon*

*(Corporate Housing & Relocation Consultants)*

414 Shree Complex, 73 St. Johns Road,  
Bangalore 560 042  
Phone: 080-25560875



*With Best Compliments  
from*

*Srishti Group  
Residential Projects  
“Synchronicity” at Chandivali &  
“Panchvati” near S. M. Shetty School, Powai*

2&3 BHK Flats with Modern Amenities like Modular Kitchen,  
Health Club & Swimming Pool with ample car parking  
Ph. 25905050/25687670/9967956449



With the arrival of technology in the form of talkies, gramophone records etc., the whole socio-culture scene got revolutionized. Interpretation of fine arts underwent drastic changes and same happened with *ghazals* also. *Ghazal* took yet another giant stride and new interesting style of *ghazal* appeared on the musical horizon of light classical music - that is, song oriented *ghazal* singing with limited improvisation. Technological advancements enabled music forms to reach the masses beyond the cloistered courts and *mehfils* of the connoisseurs. Strangely, appearance of recording restrained free flowing extempore improvisation and time bound limited singing practise came up. This scientific development gave lease to newer styles. Simultaneously, advent of talkies gave boost to film situation oriented lyrics of *ghazals*, which were shaped by the golden voice of K.L. Saigal, in and out of the films. This was yet another addition to the existing *ghazal* styles.

To this day, *ghazal* is continuously developing as an independent musical genre. The late sixties experienced yet another milestone in *ghazal* singing, with the eminently notable compositions of Mehndi Hassan and *ghazal* moved ahead by adding innovativeness to singing style. The later innovative style is best expressed by contemporary great singers like Gulam Ali. No words can express Gulam Ali's superlative craft and skills. He added yet again a new dimension in *ghazal* singing, by introducing classical techniques that resembled the broad character of *khayal gayan*.

The first aspect of the innovative era mentioned earlier, is best expressed in our very own Jagjeet Singh's soulful renditions, which took this genre to another level. He revolutionized *ghazals* in this subcontinent and made it popular by rejecting the old beaten track of conventional *ghazal* styles of artists of yester years and invented his own style, in which he mingled classical base with the choice of masses and presented his *ghazals* with *behlav*. Undoubtedly, Jageet Singh is the torch bearer of the modern style of *ghazal* singing, who brought *ghazal* out of the ivory tower to the man on the street!

For centuries and decades *Ghazal* - the dainty flower of Indian musical heritage bloomed in isolation under court patronage. From there to the present it has traveled a long way, collecting shapes and shades at different stages of its evolution, affected by other musical forms of Indian music and even effecting contemporaries at the same time. As long as *ghazal gayaki* has its foot firmly in its roots i.e. Indian classical music and its eternal beauty bejeweled with gifted voices and imagination, it would fill human heart with eternal emotions forever... No wonder, the halls resound with "Wah, Wahs" even when the listeners though not quite familiar with Urdu, still sway their heads and hearts, for the soulful combination in *ghazals* of words and their delivery transcends any barrier of language and touches your 'being' directly !



*With Best Compliments*  
*from*

# LAKSHMI BOOK CORPORATION

---

B-6 Shree Datta Guru CHS Ltd  
Deonar Village Road Mumbai-400 088  
Phone 25516815



With Best Compliments  
from

**Vikramraj Engineers Pvt Ltd**

# South Indian Classical Dance Forms:

Dr. Smt. Jayashree Rajagopalan

India is a land of living traditions. It is a land where culture has flourished in unbroken continuity for several millennia, a land in which culture is deep rooted and dates back to age of the Vedas, and a land that shows even today its adherence to its roots despite enormous changes that have taken place over several centuries.

At one point of time there was a common theatrical art all over India, based on the technique codified in the **Natya Sastra**, ascribed to Bharata Muni. As the earliest extant treatise on the art of Indian dramaturgy, it is a text of permanent value meant for the people of Jambudweepa, the landmass of Eurasia. The *Bharatiya* theatrical arts of dance, music, and drama flourished for more than two thousand years not only as codified in the Natya Sastra of Bharata Muni, as the *Marga* technique but also as the regional forms known as the *Desi*.

It would be of relevance to note here that in South India, there were distinctly two types of *Desi* forms, one the theatrical, performed mostly by a group of men, like the *Bhagavatamela* etc., and the other the *Bhanika* type of solo dance like *Dasiattam*, performed mostly by women. From epigraphical and literary sources it is quite evident that *dasiattam* or the dance of the *devadasis*, was prevalent all over South India and in particular as part of temple ritual. It is also clear that the *Marga* and *Desi* co-existed in the South till the 14th century.

The two hundred years that followed saw the development of literature in the regional *Prakrits* and the emergence of many kinds of musical forms that gave rise to various forms of *Dasiattam* in the regions of Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and to a great extent in Orissa and Maharashtra. By the 15th-16th century, the literary heritage of South India grew with the inclusion of the *Sangam* literature of Tamilnadu, the poetical outpourings of saint poets, the translations of Sanskrit works, vernacular theatrical compositions based on the principles of the **Natya Sastra**, versions of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, new musical forms like the *prabhandas* and *kirthanai*, and also the assimilation of folk tunes and lyrics in dance and music concerts, like the Kavadi chindu. The aharya that is the costume and jewelry also changed in keeping with the regional preference.

It is interesting to note that a few common features connect all these forms of dance. The basic unit of dance movement in all the southern forms is the *adavu* till date, including in the martial art of *Kalarippattu*. All southern styles of dance follow the Carnatic music system of *raga* and *tala*. The Bharata Natyam, Kuchipudi and Mohini Attam have almost the same repertoire like the *jathiswaram*, *padam*, *varnam*, *javali*, and *thillana*. The only difference is that Mohini Attam has the *Sollukattu* instead of *Todayamangalam* or *Pushpanjali*. Though Sanskrit is the common language for all these styles, there is a natural preference for the regional language of Tamil in Bharata Natyam, Telugu in Kuchipudi and Malayalam in Mohini attam and Kathakali.

Though all *Desi* forms have their links with the *Margi*, at some point of time, that awareness was lost. The *Desi* practitioners believed that their form grew in isolation based on their own dance literature. This led the *Desi* form of dance to develop into a beautiful art, create rules and norms for itself and redefine some aspects of the **Natya Sastra**. These were codified in texts, in Sanskrit and in the regional languages. While texts like **Kuttanool**, **Mahabharatachoodamani**, **Sangita Saramita** and **Abhinayadarpana** became source books for Bharata Natyam, and to some extent to Kuchipudi, **Hasta Lakshana Deepika** and **Balarama Bharatam** lay down guidelines for Kathakali and Mohini Attam. Though history shows that the Margi-Desi link was revitalized, the *Desi* forms retained their positions as the current classical dance forms of India.

**Bharatanatyam**, known earlier as *Koothu*, *Dasiattam* or *Sadirattam*, was nurtured and *Desi* developed in the region of Tamil Nadu, particularly in Tanjavur. It was one of the earliest dance forms of South India that had the patronage and influence of the Tamil, Andhra, Kerala and Maratha Kings. After the advent of the Muslims and thereafter the British, the art of dance suffered lack of patronage and social acceptance. To save the rich art and give it a social status, it was named Bharata Natyam, in around 1930, thereby giving it an identity with Bharata's **Natya Sastra**.

The new format established Bharata Natyam as a solo dance form and it had nothing to do with *Natya* i.e. drama. With the change of name and pioneering work done by Smt. Rukmini Devi Arundale and Sri. E. Krishna Iyer, this dance form became the most sought after popular classical dance of India, and pursuing this art became a status symbol.

The highly developed dance technique of Bharata Natyam has the striking features of neat defined lines and fluidity of body movements. The most important stance is the *mandala sthana*, referred to as *arai-mandi* in Tamil that refers to the half-seated position. The feet are turned to the sides and the body is lowered, bending the knees, which are also turned to the side. Most of the *adavus* are executed in this position. The footwork is firm and clear. The *salangai* (ghunghuru) is made with small bells stitched to on to a cloth or leather, and worn on the ankles. The torso is maintained in the *saushtava*, a posture with an erect back, stomach drawn in, chest raised, shoulders squared and the spine taut like a bow. The hand when stretched at the side has the elbow in line with the shoulder, and when the hands are placed in front of the chest there is a distance of one span. The *nritta* is rich in the variety of body movements and rhythmic patterns used. The dance is usually in *madhyama kala* or medium speed, as the *mandala sthana* arrests the speed unlike in the *Kathak* dance.

Bharata Natyam has obtained its present character due to composition in the Carnatic music style, with a lot of stress on the lyrics and syllables. The mridangam is the main accompanying percussion. The *nattuvangam* refers to the *nattuvanar* conducting the performance and keeping rhythm with his *nattuva talam* or cymbals, Since it is a very important aspect, the Guru himself conducts the *nattuvangam*, reciting the *sollukattu* or rhythmic syllables in the form of *theermanams* or *jatis*. The lyric of items like the *varnam* are often interspersed with such recitations. Earlier the orchestra known as *chinna melam* comprised of *nattuvangam*, vocal music, *mridangam*, *mukhaveena*, and *tutti*. These used to accompany the artistes standing behind the performer. Now-a-days the orchestra sits to the right of the artistes and the *tutti* is replaced by the *tanpura* or the *sruthi-box* and instruments such as the *veena*, flute, and violin are being used.

The *abhinaya* or emoting is mostly based on the *lokadharmi* style, that is a realistic representation of the lyric. Using the *hastas* according to *natya dharmi*, but with fluid, natural *abhinaya* is the hallmark of Bharatanatyam. It gives a lucid and easily understandable blend of both *loka* and *natya dharmi* that are theatrically conventional. The repertoire consists of *todaya mangalam*, *alarippu*, *jathiswaram*, *sabdam*, *varnam*, *padam*, *javali*, *slokas*, *viruttam* and *thillana*. Some years ago it was a practice to include light dances like the snake-dance and *kurathi* dance to cater to cosmopolitan audience.

The costumes worn by a Bharatanatyam performer are colourful, made of silk and gold jari, stitched into either short sari or the dhoti (pyjama) type with a pleated fan in front. Gold or golden jewellery studded with stones are worn. Silver colour is never used. It was the Tanjavur brothers, Chinnayya, Ponnayya, Sivanandam and Vadivelu who under the patronage of the Maratha kings of Tanjavur brought in the concept of *pritagarta* i.e. having independent items on different subjects, and also the use of a variety of ragas to enhance the concert.

**KATHAKALI**, is the most popularly known classical theatre art of Kerala, for story telling. In Malayalam, *katha* means story and *kali* means entertainment or play. *Kathakali* evolved from the earliest types of dance and dance-dramas of Kerala such as the *Chakiar Kootu* and *Kudiyattam*, the various ritualistic dances of the *Bhagawati* cult like *Muthiyettu*, *Tirayattam* and *Tiyattam*, the socio-religious and martial dances such as *Sastrakali* and *Ezhamattukali*, the rustic folk plays such as **Kamsanatakam** and **Minakshi natakam**. Later much refined dance dramas like **Krishnanattam** and **Ramanattam**. *Chakiar Kootu*, also known as *Prabandha Kootu* or *Kathaprasanga Mantrakam*, is probably the earliest known histrionic presentation of Kerala performed exclusively by the Chakiar community. It was a highly orthodox type of entertainment performed only in the *kootambalam*, the temple theatre, to be witnessed only by the Brahmins.

Sanskrit dramas of Bhasa and Kalidasa, as well as excerpts from **Bhagavatam** and **Ramayanam**, as also the *ashtapadis* of Jayadeva, were popularly used in *Kathakali*. The patron kings and other writers wrote several plays for Kathakali. Karthikai Tirunal Maharaja of Travancore, Balarama Varma, not only wrote several plays in Malayalam and Sanskrit but also the Sanskrit treatise on *Natya* titled **Balarama Bharatam**. Even Maharaja Asvathi Tirunal and Maharaja Swati Tirunal of Travancore, and Irayaman Thampi contributed very valuable works to the repertoire of Kathakali.

This art form also suffered a setback after the middle of the 19th century due to foreign invasions and their apathy towards the art. But Mahakavi Vallathol Narayana Menon founded the institution, Kerala Kalamandalam in 1930 to revive and revitalize the art of Kathakali. He later built a permanent structure in Cheruthuruthi near Shoranur in Kerala in 1937. The Cochin Govt. took over the institute in 1941, with Narayana Menon as its Head. Artistes like Gopinath strived to popularise the art form of Kathakali.

The Kalamandalam imparted systematic and arduous training to the students who come under the strict and vigilant eye of the Guru in the institution. A disciplined life of almost twelve years for the students enabled them to emerge as great artistes with absolute precision in their movements and expressions that involved every muscle of their face.

The dance technique of Kathakali is *natya dharmi*. The hand gestures are called *mudras* and there is a vast vocabulary of hand gestures, which are difficult for the uninitiated to comprehend. The eyes, eyebrows, cheek muscles and lip movements are very evocative and eloquent characteristic features of Kathakali.

The *aharya*, the costume of Kathakali is very elaborate. Rice paste with ground earthen colors mixed with coconut oil is applied on the face. There are huge headgears, *tadi* or beards of different colours and shapes, jewels made of beads of gold, silver, and different colours that are used. The dress is a invariably huge pleated skirts of white with border and sometimes even black or red for evil characters. Long sleeved upper garment with *uttariyam* or *dupatta* are worn round the neck in front. The *chalangai* or ghunghru are few longish bells stitched on to leather or cloth, worn on the knees.

The Carnatic style music is used and the accompanying instruments are *suddhamaddalam*, *chendai*, *edatalam*, and *chengalam*. The orchestra stands behind the artistes. They perform before a huge oil lamp lit for this purpose. During festivals, even today, the Kathakali performance goes on for the whole night. Some artistes have taken the trouble to bring this art to the proscenium stage, all over the world. It is now acclaimed as the most fantastic extant theatrical art of India.

**MOHINIATTAM**, known as the dance of the enchantress came into its present form in the court of the illustrious Swati-Tirunal Maharaja of Travancore, after the arrival of the Tanjavur brothers, Ponniah and Vadivelu at the royal court. The Maratha king Sarfoji of Tanjavur patronized the four Tanjavur brothers, famed for their knowledge in music and dance. The demise of King Sarfoji and the subsequent loss of royal patronage caused Ponniah and Vadivelu to migrate to Travancore with some sadir artistes. They were welcomed by Maharaja Swati Tirunal, who himself was a great artiste. In his court was Parameshwara Bhagavatar of Palghat. It is believed that these three *vidwans* with encouragement from the Maharaja shaped the present Mohini Attam by systematizing the dance and giving it a consistent form and repertoire. The rigid and severe demands of Kathakali and its exclusive male domination probably made the artistes seek an art more soft and gentle for women.

The repertoire of Mohiniattam is similar to that of the Bharathanatyam except that *allarippu* is replaced with *Chollu Kattu*, which like the *Shabdham* of *Sadir* has sung syllables and lyrics. Compositions in Carnatic music style are used and the orchestra is similar to Bharata Natyam but the *edakka* and *toppumaddalam* are used. The make-up is like that of the Kerala royal ladies, with eyes brows drawn long and dark with kohl and lips reddened. The hair is bunched up on top as a knot on the left side of the head and decorated with white flowers. Only gold or golden jewellery is used. The full-length pleated skirt is usually white with a gold or coloured border, with a small fan tied on the waist, a blouse and a upper cloth worn like a sari over the shoulder.

Myth has it that Mohiniattam originated from Mahavishnu, who assumed the form of Mohini carrying the ambrosia, when the milky ocean was churned by the *devas* and the *asuras*. Even as she enchanted the *asuras* with her beautiful movements, she deceived them by giving all the ambrosia to the *devas*. It is also believed that Vishnu manifested himself as Mohini and performed the Mohiniattam to reduce Bhasmasuran to ash and in the process save Siva. The visually pleasing Mohiniattam with its swaying movements resembles the swaying palms along the beautiful beaches of the green land of Kerala.

**KUCHIPUDI** is the classical dance of Andhra Pradesh, named after the village Kuchipudi from where it emerged and evolved to its present day classical form in the last four or five centuries. The Brahmins of Kuchipudi who were the performing artistes, the *bhagavatars*, had been practicing a theatre art known as the *Bhagavatamela*. They were, well versed in **Bhagavatam**, and sang the glory of *Bhagavan*. Kuchipudi has its roots in the *Bhagavatamela* tradition, which itself in turn is influenced by the *Sadirattam*.

The Telugu literary activity, and the emergence of various musical forms and operas, gave further impetus to the theatrical musical productions. Tirthanarayana Yogi, who authored the well-known Krishna Leela Tarangini, is considered to have brought refinement in the *Bhagavatamela* and Kuchipudi giving it a distinct identity as against the Andhra *Yakshaganam* and the *Veetinatakam*. He and his predecessor Annamayya, believed that the best form of *sadhana* and *mukti* was through dance, music and mime. He took the *Bhagavatamela* to Tanjavur and Karnataka, and his disciple Siddhendra Yogi brought it back to Kuchipudi. He had the vision of Lord Krishna who ordained him to compose the **Parijatapaharanam**, to attain salvation. The success of this production helped Siddhendra Yogi convince the Brahmin families in Kuchipudi to vow to spare at least one member of their families to train and play the role of Satyabhama in the *Bhamakalapam*. He also succeeded in making the Nawab of Golconda, to issue a copper plate in 1675, granting the village of Kuchipudi, as an *agraharam* to the Brahmins families dedicated to this art. There are nearly a dozen plays composed exclusively for performance in the Kuchipudi style. Among many artistes, Vedantam Satyanarayana, became very well known for his female roles and was instrumental in creating special *nritta* pieces, as individual items and in the evolution of Kuchipudi as a solo dance form.

The Kuchipudi dramas begin with the *Ganesa vandana*, then Satyabhama, enacted till the last century by a boy, would appear behind the curtain held by two others and throw her braid over the curtain and thereafter start her performance. Then the story would unfold with the *Bhagavatar* donning the role of the *sutradhar*, who would sing, speak, perform the *nattuvangam*, and inter link the scenes and characters. The performers would render their dialogue and often sing the darus themselves or have a vocalist to support their dance. When it emerged as a solo performance the artiste enacted all the roles, like a mono-acting performance, on the lines of bharatanatyam.

The *adavus* based on the *padabhedas* are similar to those of bharatanatyam. Even the items are similar, though the **Tarangam** is an exclusive speciality of Kuchipudi, where the artiste performs *tala prastaras* by placing the feet on the edge of a brass plate, balancing a *kalasa* or pot of water on the head. Sometimes a lighted lamp is placed inside the *kalasa*, and the holds lighted lamps on their hands too. The music follows the Carnatic style of rendering and the entire orchestration is like in a bharatanatyam performance.

Apart from these well known classical dances of the South, there are the folk forms or the tribal dances like *Kurathi* dance, folk dances like those performed by the harvesters or the fisherfolk, the community dances like *kummi*, *kolattam*, *kaikottikali*, and ritualistic dances like *aragam*, *kavadi*, *teyyum*, *bhuthattam*, all of which have the underlying love for communicating the various moods through the art of dance with graceful movements and rhythmic patterns so as to try and reach beyond the physical limitations and seek oneness with the Supreme Entity.

The greatness of Indian art, as we have seen, lies in its ability to assimilate and evolve, without losing its identity with its origin, its roots. This has kept the Indian theatrical art a living tradition, relating itself to the age old Vedas and the **Natya Sastra**.



# Lyricism in Movement

Jyothi Mohan

It was nearly three decades ago that I visited Matunga for the very first time after my arrival in the city of Mumbai. I soaked in the sights and smells of a South India far away from my hometown Bangalore, while the smell of fresh coriander beckoned me. Even as I busied myself buying a bunch of coriander, the all-familiar heavenly sounds of cymbals and *salangai* caught my ear. Turning around, I saw the board 'Rajarajeswari Bharatha Natya Kala Mandir.' It was like a home-coming for me! I had seen the *shishyas* of this institution perform in Bangalore and had always dreamt of learning from the Gurus here. I crossed the road and entered the premises with great excitement. I must have been the only prospective student greeting her future Gurus with a bunch of coriander in hand!! (Those were the days of no plastic bags, remember!) Till then, I had learnt various banis under several teachers as we moved to different cities. I was determined, however, to learn the 'Tanjavur style' of the Rajarajeswari school and the opportunity presented itself, finally! I wasted no time. I convinced the Gurus that I was serious and that I was willing to start afresh despite being a performing artiste.

What was it that prompted me to put aside all that I had learnt and begin afresh from *tatta adavu*? I was struck, I think, by the innate beauty and grace of the Tanjavur *bani*. of the Rajarajeswari school. There is power as well as lyricism and harmony in the *adavus*. Perfect symmetry in the positioning of the hands and legs, no ungainly bending of the torso in any manner and no jerky movements of any kind, are some of the characteristic features of this *bani*. The sheer variety of *adavus* makes *nritta* items a delight to watch. The *adavus* that form the *korvais* in the *nritta* passages are grouped very intelligently. The *adavus* that facilitate movement from side to side and ensure that the stage is covered comfortably from one side to the other, are followed by those which make the dancer move forward to reach the front of the stage. This is followed by an *adavu* which necessitates moving backwards. Thus, every *korvai* of a *jatiswaram* or a *tillana* has the dancer moving around the whole stage without resorting to giant leaps or unseemly running around! Effective pauses, beautiful

stances and very delicate head movements add allure to the *nritta* passages. The Gurus of this *bani* have perfected the art of using cross rhythm to enhance appeal of *nritta* patterns. Thus, one can find various *jatis* interwoven with great skill, making even a simple *alaripu* or *jatiswaram* a real challenge with mind-blowing permutations and combinations. The complexity is there for the expert to recognise. The layman is never aware of the underlying calculation or intricacy in rhythm, for it is presented with great finesse and ease. There are no long-winded *jatis* which are all fury and no substance! The *jatis* are short and crisp but contain enough fireworks to evoke admiration from the toughest of critics. These are recited by the Gurus with deep resonant voices which are well-modulated, adding to the beauty of the presentation. *Nattuvangam* as well as orchestral support are of the highest calibre as the Gurus are well versed in music.

Since the Gurus of the Rajarajeswari school uphold that *Abhinaya* should be subtle, anything loud or vulgar is severely discouraged. Excess of any kind, that compromises dignity and decorum is eschewed. The Gurus strongly believe that *abhinaya* should be *natyadharmi* and it is the duty of the dancer to suggest, in a manner that fires the imagination of the audience. The repertoire of the school had earlier consisted largely of traditional numbers, which the audiences in the South could comprehend comfortably. When the Gurus moved to Mumbai, however, they were quick to gauge the pulse of the cosmopolitan audience. They choreographed several pieces in Hindi and Marathi and became forerunners in doing so. They also realised that preludes were necessary to lead to the theme of the composition and to establish the storyline clearly. The wide variety of compositions choreographed by the Gurus, has given their *shishyas* a vast repertoire to choose from.

Who are the architects of this illustrious *bani*? The lineage can be traced backwards to more than three centuries. Sri Venkatakrishna Nattuvanar enjoyed the patronage of the Maratha ruler Serfoji II of Thanjavur. The second generation of Sri Veeraswamy Nattuvanar and his sister Chinnappa Ammal were followed by the renowned Sri Panchapakesa Nattuvanar who was the Samsthana Vidwan of Thanjavur and Ramanathapuram courts. Panchapakesa Nattuvanar was also honoured by the royal houses of Baroda and Mysore. He is credited with compiling in Tamil **Abhinaya Navaneetham**, a monumental treatise on *Abhinaya* and a practical guide especially to Hasta-abhinaya based on Nandikeswara's **Abhinaya Darpanam**. Panchapakesa Nattuvanar's only son Bharata Vidwan Kuppiyah Pillai was the prime architect of Sri Rajarajeswari Bharatha Natya Kala Mandir. In the early 1940's he revived the ancient *kavuthvams*, especially the *Navasandhi Kavuthvams*. His "Kamala Chakram", a lotus-wheeled compendium depicting the *matra*-based complex 108 talas, besides the popular 35 talas, is invaluable to all students of music and dance.

It was in 1945 that Guru Sri A.T. Govindaraja Pillai, assisted by his wife Smt. Karunambal, founded the Kala Mandir. The success of this venture led to the migration of Guru Govindaraja Pillai's father-in-law, the patriarch, Bharata Vidwan Sri T.P Kuppiyah Pillai and family from Thanjavur to Bombay. The institution that started with just four students, grew like a large banyan tree in course of time. Guru Kuppiyah Pillai's sons Guru T.K. Mahalingam Pillai and Guru K. Kalyanasundaram, through their individual brilliance, contributed to perpetuation of the institution. The institution continues the *parampara* that Guru Kuppiyah Pillai started way back in 1945. It has trained the current generation of Gurus G. Vasant Kumar, M. Vishwanath and K. Harikrishna. This generation has already proved its ability to carry on with dedication, the tradition of freshness in choreography and ability to adapt to the changing milieu. 'Rajarajeswari Bharatha Natya Kala Mandir' is the only institution of Bharathanatyam that is run entirely by a family of Natyacharyas who are the inheritors of the unique Thanjavur *bani*.

Students like me often recall how exciting and full of surprises our classes at 'Rajarajeswari Kala Mandir' were! Since the Gurus were highly respected and venerated, artistes visiting the city for performances would invariably drop by, to seek their blessings. We met renowned dancers, famous writers, musicians, film stars and dignitaries many a time. Leading journalists from India and abroad came to class to interview them and photograph a class in progress. Travelling as a part of the dance group with the Gurus was even more thrilling. I remember the red carpet welcome accorded to us at Tribhuvan airport when we toured Nepal. We were treated like royalty wherever we went and we danced to packed halls.

Despite the name and fame, the Gurus are epitome of simplicity and humility. From them we learnt to respect all styles, to watch others and recognise what was good, not flaunt what we knew and keep our eyes and mind open to imbibe fresh ideas. The Rajarajeswari *bani* is indeed like a giant banyan tree, firmly rooted in tradition and at the same time sending branches out into the sky seeking fresh air and sunlight. Tradition and innovation march forward hand in hand, adding new hues to the rich palette of colours handed down from generation to generation.





# The Origin and Development of Kuchipudi

Sailaja Desai

India is rightly called the land of art and culture because custom, tradition, art and culture have evolved in India since times known. Many scholarly treatise beginning with **Rig Veda**, have defined art from numerous perspectives. Vedavyasa Maharshi and Vatsyayana Maharshi have given dance a position of pride by placing it as one of the sixty four well defined arts. Dance is one of the most fundamental of all the human activities. Man danced with an urge to express himself, to express his emotions through movement, through the most natural and immediate channel of expression: the Body! Dance, hence, is a body language.

Indian dance forms, the classical ones in particular, are very traditional in nature. All of these relate to **Natya Sastra**, which is the lone authentic work and source book for all classical forms. Written by Sage Bharata, it dates back to the period between 2nd century BC to 2nd century AD. Bharata mentions about four *Pravrittis*, schools of dancing in **Natya Sastra**. The dance tradition of Kuchipudi is one such classical form, which emerged according to the *Pravrittis* and evolved into a new pattern based on *Lakshyas* and *Lakshanas*, the rules and regulations, of music and dance as laid down by Bharata.

A glance at the history of Kuchipudi that dates back to 14th century, leads us to Kuchipudi, a small village in the Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh. As the birth place of Brahmins, well versed in *Vedas*, the village was called Kuchipudi *agrahara*. It was also known as Kuchelapuri, Kuseelavapuri and Kuchennapudi. The Brahmins of Kuchipudi were called as *Bhagavathulu*, meaning people who enacted the stories and deeds of gods.

Even prior to the evolution of the dance-drama tradition, the *Jakku* and *Kurava* communities provided entertainment to the lay audiences. While the *Jakku* women, the devotees of goddess *Kameshwari*, enacted the stories of gods and goddesses in single characters, the performances were oriented towards entertaining audience. Similarly, *Kuruva*, the community of a wandering tribe, performed *Kuravanji* pattern of dancing that was like street dramas in which the female character was called *Singi* and the male *Singan* or *Singadu*. As the dance forms performed by these two types of rural folks were rustic and earthy in nature, the *bhagavathas* from learned families set about refining the existing dance forms. This process led to the evolution of a new pattern of dance, acceptable to the society irrespective of the social and economic status of the people. The *Bhagavathas* dressed themselves colourfully and depicted the mythological characters in broad day light, This was called *Pagativesha*: *pagati* meaning day and *vesha* meaning character, in Telugu. This was well received by the kings who in return patronized the *Bhagavathas*. This brought prosperity and fame to the *Bhagavathas* of the Kuchipudi village. In due course they formed a small group called *Mela* that came to be called the *Bhagavatha melas*. Further refinement of the art form gave rise to *Yakshaganas*. Men who were proficient in music and dance were grouped together to present the *yakshnaganas*. At some point of time the dictum prohibiting women participating in dance came into being. For a long time it remained a domain of men who traveled from place to place performing the *yakshaganas*. They traveled during the day and performed during the night.

The Kuchipudi tradition also stemmed from and was much influenced by the *Bhakthi* movement which was prevalent in those days. The *bhagavathas* took up music, dance, drama and poetry for religious propagation and created compositions on *vaishnavite* themes. The first *Yakshagana*, **Sugriva Vijayam** was composed in 1570 AD by Rudra Kavi. Many *yakshagana* troupes staged dance dramas at the royal courts. There is a mention of kuchipudi dance, recorded in the **Machupalli Kaifiat**, a local chronicle of 1505AD, of Vijayanagar kingdom. In 1678 AD Abul Hassan Tana Shah, the nawab of Golconda, the last of Qutub Shahi kings, gifted the kuchipudi *agrahara* of 600 acres, to Brahmin families after witnessing their Kuchipudi performance. Since then the Kuchipudi Brahmin families took up performing *yakshaganas* as family profession.

The Andhra tradition of *Bhagavatha melas* was carried over to Melattur of Tamil Nadu by Achyutappa Nayak (1561-1614 AD). The village of Melattur earlier known as Achyutapuram was gifted to the Brahmin *bhagavathulu* for the promotion of *yakshaganas* and propagating art and culture. Many scholars from Andhra families too migrated to Tanjore in search of patronage during the Nayak regime. Other than Melattur, the *Bhagavathas* also settled down in villages like Saliyamangalam, Soolamangalam and Uttukkadu. Telugu was the court language during the Nayak rule. So the *Bhagavatha mela* tradition at Melattur had a Telugu base. In Saliyamangalam, **Prahlada charitam** was the main item of presentation during Narasimha Jayanti by these *bhagavatha melas*. Bharatam Panchananda iyer composed five *Yakshaganas* in Telugu. These are titled **Prahlada charitam, Rukmini kalyanam, Sita Kalyanam, Vipranarayana** and **Rukmangada**. Utthukkadu Venkata Subbier (1700 – 1762 AD) who hailed from the village Utthukkadu was a great exponent of **Bhagavatha Mela**.

Siddhendra yogi, the *Moola Purusha* of kuchipudi style of dance prescribed the manner of presentation of Kuchipudi in detail and in strict accordance with **Natya Sastra**. Legend has it, that sage Narada appeared in Siddhendra yogi's dream and gave him the grammar and idiom of Kuchipudi. He developed a form of dance drama similar to *yakshagana* but more conventional and akin to the art of *Devaganikas*, the temple dancers. He composed the famous *Parijatapaharanam*, with *Satyabhama* as the central character. **Bhamakalapam** the piece de résistance of Kuchipudi performances even today is a version of the ever green **Parijatapaharanam**. The music and the literary aspect of this *yakshaganam* are highly meritorious. Siddhendra persuaded the Brahmin boys to adopt this art of dance- drama as their profession and play even the female roles. As a mark of respect to the great art form, he ordained that a bell be tied around the waist of every new born male child in the village of Kuchipudi. The children were given a broad based traditional education in Sanskrit and Telugu and were taught **Natya Sastra, Abhinaya darpana** and **Rasamanjari**. They underwent a thorough and rigorous training in **nritta, nritya** and **abhinaya**. This enabled the Kuchipudi dance form to get firm placement among the other classical dance forms of our ancient land!

Another composition that is synonymous with Kuchipudi is the the *Tarangams* of **Sri Krishna Leela Tarangini**, the devine composition of Yati Narayana Teertha. It is a master piece composed in chaste Sanskrit, set to melodious music including the *sollukattus* meant for dance. Yati Narayana Teertha was a *Paramahansa Parivrajaka* of *Teertha Sampradaya*. He was GovindaSastry in his *poorvashramam*.

**Sri Krishna Leela Tarangini** is a wonderful combination of narrative, dramatic poetry with dialogue, action, dance and music. It is the longest Opera in Sanskrit. Narayana Teertha, exhibits his mastery over music, philosophy, Sanskrit as well as dance in this composition. It is a *bhakthi prabandha rachana* and a *drisya kavya*. The main theme of **Tarangini** is taken from *dasamaskandha* of **Srimad Bhagavatham**. It is a divine story of Lord Krishna, from his birth to his wedding with Rukmini. It is one of the numerous works composed in the wake of the **Gita Govinda** of Jayadeva and is the only work to have maintained the comparable musical status. While **Gita Govinda** propagated *madhura bhakthi*, **Tarangini** dealt with the *bhakthi margam*.

The entire work of **Sri Krishna Leela Tarangini** is divided in to twelve *Tarangams* meaning waves that make up the **Sri Krishna Leela Tarangini**, i.e. The River of The Sport of Lord Krishna. The division of the work into twelve parts is based on the division of **Srimad Bhagavatham** in to twelve cantos and also of the twelve letters of the *dvadasakshari* mantra for which Narayana Teertha had a fascination. **Tarangini** is classified as a *Yakshagana*. The entire work is full of dignity and devotional fervour for Sri Krishna, presenting the *bhakthi* aspect of **Jeevatma** and *paramatma*.

The musical pieces composed in this text are so exquisite in respect of all the elements of *bhava, raga* and *tala*. Narayana Teertha makes the narration crisp by picking only the most telling episodes from **Bhagavatham** and condensed the story in a few places to give ample scope for his musical genius and poetic imagination. Each song is set in a standard form with *pallavi, anupallavi* and *charanams* linked to each other by well conceived *slokas, daruvus* and *gadyams*. It is composed in set rhythm, syllables and *jatis* most suitable for dance. **Tarangini** comprises of 155 *geetams*, short *daruvus*, 348 *slokas, gadyams* and *vachanams*.

**Tarangini** is an authoritative *lakshya grantha* for *raga* and *rasa*. Narayana Teertha portrays in vivid language, embellished in delightful music, the various *leelas* of Sri Krishna. Each song is preceded by a *sloka* and a *vakya*(prose passage). The *slokas, churnikas*, musical dialogues, *daruvus, dvipadas, chatushpadis* and the songs interspersed with *jatis* add interest to the work.

The character of Radha is introduced cleverly into the story of **Tarangini** as Gopi having the true knowledge of Sri Krishna's essential self as *Paramatma*. As the character of Radha is not mentioned in **Bhagavatham**, NarayanaTeertha too, avoided presenting the character directly. Under the guidance of Gopi, the other gopikas realize the true nature of Sri Krishna. The Gopika *vastrapaharana* is handled delicately in **Tarangini** by Narayana Teertha. In the dialogue between Gopis and Krishna, the Gopis ask for their *avaranam* that in this context means *aham* or *ahankara*.

In the composition of **Tarangini**, NarayanaTeertha has made use of 39 ragas. He has used both *rakti ragas* and *apurva ragas*. He composed 16 songs in *Kambhoji*, 13 in *Madhyamavati*, 16 in *Nadanamakriya* and 14 in *Saurashtram*. The *apurva ragas* used are *Dvijavanti, Mangalakapi, Navroj, DesakshiGauri* etc. The songs of the **Tarangini** in the 7th *Tarangam* is referred to as *Suladi Sapta Raga Talamalika Tarangam*. It begins with *Dhruva Mandala* describing the *Rasa lilavilasam*. It is said that this song was sung by *SuraVanaitas* describing the glory of *Rasa* showering flowers in admiration and enjoyment.

At the end of each song, jatis have been added conveying the divine rapture. The *Suladi Saptama Tarangam* begins with Naata ragam in *Dhruvatalam* and goes on to *Madhyamavati*, *Pantuvarali*, *Sri ragam*, *Anandabhairavi*, *Saurashtram* and *Todi ragam* with *Mattya*, *Rupaka*, *Jhampe*, *Tripata*, *Vilamba* and *Ekatalams*. He has added jatis in many other songs whenever he found the subject suitable. One such song is *Bala Gopalamamuddhara*....

At the beginning of each *Tarangam*, the story that is presented is described in plain *anushtubhs* shortly. *Anushtubhs* are metres, consisting of four padas of eight syllables each, the whole stanza consisting of thirty two syllables. The words *atha abhiniyate* are used frequently, clearly suggesting that the work was intended to be acted on stage. Another remarkable feature of **Tarangini**, is that, it reflects the greatness of its author in the exposition of the highest truths of the *advaita vedanta* in the episodes of *Gopika Vastrapaharanam* and *Rasaleela*. In the *Tarangini*, Krishna tatva is portrayed without the touch of eroticism. Sri Krishna Leela *Tarangini* embodies the theme of *bhakthi margam* and reflects the truths of *advaita vedanta*, decorated in language of beauty and soulful music. Sri Krishna Leela *Tarangini* has other distinctive features. *Tarangams* are of very flexible nature. These can be sung as *sankirtanams* in *bhajana sampradaya*. These can be danced to *ahinaya*, *nrutta* and *nrutya* by a solo artiste and can also be presented in the *Yakshagana* tradition. **Tarangini** reflects the *Bhagavan namaSankirthana* tradition where in the *Bhagavathars* with good musical knowledge, dance with devotion while at the same time maintain the tempo of dance by taking the devotees to the heights of ecstasy in *bhakthi* by dancing in various *gatis* to the same song. This *samoohika ganam* is also known as *ghosti*.

In late 1940s and early 1950s the chief architect of *Kuchipudi*, the doyen of *kuchipudi* late Sri Vedantam Lakshmi Narayana Sastry took great efforts to retrieve and recreate the dance drama tradition into a solo technique where a single artiste can perform. It is needless to mention that this great scholar's efforts proved fruitful. He innovated the *Taranga nrutya* to add charm to the repertoire. He choreographed *Tarangams* such as *balagopala*, *neelamegha sareera*, *yehi mudam dehi*, *krishnam kalayasakhi*, *pooraya mamakamam*, *saranam bhava*, *jayajaya ramanadha*, *veekshekada deva devam* etc. All these *tarangams* provide much scope for *chaturvidha abhinaya*. Not only these, but also the *Rukmini Pravesa Daruvu* and *Rukmini Lekha* run parallel to *Siddendhra yogi's Satyabhama Pravesa Daruvu* and *Satyabhama Lekha*.

Another very special feature of *Tarangam* is dancing on the edge of a brass plate. Narayana Teertha never mentioned or suggested about such a dance form in his text. This was introduced to attract the common man and elevate his interest in the dance form. This was a great introduction by Vedantam Lakshmi Narayana Sastry. Perhaps, this was introduced with a particular objective of testing the levels of concentration as one requires increased levels of concentration while balancing on the edges of the plate. This required artiste to have total control over *laya* with increased physical and mental concentration, in fact a perfect combination of the coordination body and mind.

**Sri Krishna Leela Tarangini** is an ocean which manifests itself in innumerable ways and is a source of inspiration for generations. The transformation of *Kuchipudi* dance from dance-drama tradition to solo form can be attributed to many reasons. In the beginning of the 20th century, when the entire country was ruled by the British, the cultural scenario of the country went through a lean phase. There were no royal courts or kings to give patronage to the performing troupes. The patronage shifted from the hands of the kings to the zamindars. The land lords with vested interests maligned the art form and degraded most classical forms of dance. The art forms appeared to decline and the artists were let down economically. This poor state of affairs coupled with heavy cost of transportation made it impossible for the dance troupes to travel from place to place. Such combination of the socio, political and economic factors led to the near extinction of the *yakshagana* tradition itself. However, major changes swept this scenario in the late nineteen forties and early fifties, when the chief architect of *Kuchipudi* form, the doyen of *kuchipudi* style of dance, the (Late) Sri Vedantam Lakshmi Narayana Sastry took great efforts in retrieving and recreating the dance-drama tradition into a solo technique, where in a single artiste would perform. His efforts were fruitful and hugely successful. He persuaded the ladies from respectable families to learn this art form and he himself taught the art form to them. He added numerous items to the repertoire of *Kuchipudi* as a result of which, a performance opened with *Ganapati Vandanam* and concluded with an abridged version of *Bhamakalapam*. The other items that have been incorporated are *Jatiswaram*, *Shabdham*, *Tarangam*, *Kirtanams*, *Javalis*, *Padams*, *Tillanas* and so on.

Today, it is heartening to see *Kuchipudi* survive in both the forms, the dance-drama tradition and solo tradition. This was possible only due to the great efforts of great masters who worked very hard to preserve the divine art form in its pure form and pass it on to the generations ahead.





With Best Compliments  
from

*Fancy Emporium*

Shop No. 11, Shivalaya Shopping Centre  
Opposite Natraj Cinema, Chembur  
Mumbai-400071  
Phone: 2528 5456



*With Best Compliments  
from*

---

**D.K.Chohan Developers**  
**( Engineers & Contractors )**

---

B/79, Madhugiri, Opposite V. N. Purav Marg,  
Chembur, Mumbai-400 071  
Phone: 2520 1080  
E-Mail. [nideni@gmail.com](mailto:nideni@gmail.com)

# Manipuri dance: Subtle and Dignified

Padmashri Darshana Jhaveri

The rich fertile valley of Manipur with the natural picturesque beauty of landscape has inspired the people of Manipur to create beauty and express their innermost feelings in highly aesthetic, artistic media. Dance and music are interwoven in the fabric of their lives. There is no religious festival or social occasion which is not celebrated with an appropriate form of dance and music. Since times known, Manipuri dancing has continuously enriched the emotional and the cultural life of the people of Manipur. Traditionally, the *Laiharaoba* festival 'The merrymaking of Gods' is celebrated by the Manipuri people during which *Maibis*, the priestesses, while invoking village gods describe the primitive concept of cosmology through dance.

With the advent of *Gaudiya Vaishnavism*, three hundred years ago, *Rasleela* based on the life and divine love of Lord Krishna and Radha, and the valorous deeds and mischievous pranks of young Krishna became a part of the society's collective consciousness and interestingly it had all the elements of classical dance-drama. The *Rasleela* performed in the *Mandapa*, the canopied halls, in front of the temple from dusk to dawn moved the onlookers tears of joy, aroused a feeling of ecstasy and oneness in the hearts of the art loving, religious people of Manipur. It also fulfilled their long cherished desire of witnessing the *leela* of their beloved Lord.

All through the year, various festivals are celebrated with different, yet specific types of dance. For instance, dances with different kinds of drums like the round *Dhol*, *Dholak*, *Khanjari*, and *Dafat* are performed during the festival of Holi in March-April. While the festival of *Laiharaoba* in May, is rendered in the traditional style by the *Maibis* priestesses as well as the people, the *Rathayatra* festival in June is celebrated with dance with claps by men and women. During the *Jhulan Yatra* festival in July, dancers use cymbals. Dances during *Durga Pooja* in October are performed with sword and spear. On social occasions like birth, marriage, death, and so on *Sankirtan* Dances with the *mridang* called *Pung* and big cymbals called *Kartal* are performed while invoking Lord Krishna and Radha.

*Rasleela* and *Sankirthan* are very highly developed aesthetic forms of expression of the religious feelings of the people of Manipur. There are as many as six *Rasleela* compositions namely *Maha Ras*, *Vasant Ras*, *Nitya Ras*, *Kunja Ras*, *RakhalRas*, *UlukhalRas*, all performed on different occasions in Manipur. The first four reveal Krishna's play with Radha and Gopis while other two render the childhood pranks of Lord Krishna. The *Rasleela*, divine and spiritual, elevates the mind of the onlooker and gives him immense and incomparable joy. Krishna symbolizes the soul while the Gopis symbolize the senses. The union of the Gopis with their beloved Lord Krishna suggests the growth of awareness that initiates a movement from the senses to the spirit. This is in keeping with the principles of *Vaishnavism* which preaches the philosophy of universal love through the depiction of the divine love of Lord Krishna and Radha.

The devotional art loving people of Manipur sit through the night during the dance drama presentation of *Rasleela* and shed tears of joy. The *Rasmandal* and the artists get transformed into the pious *bhoomi*, the sacred earth, of *Gokul* and *Brindavan*, and the mythological characters respectively!

Manipuri Gurus, while presenting *Rasleela* and *Sankirthan* delve deep into the *Gaudiya Vaishnavite* texts such as **Sangeet Sar Sangraha**, **Sangeet Damodar**, **Rag Ratnakar**, **Bhakti Ratnakar**, **GovingLeelamritam**, **Bhakti Rasamrita Sindhu**, **Anand Vrindavan-champu**, **Padakalpataru**, **GeetaChandrodaya**, **Krishna Bhavanamritam**, **Sangeet Madhav**, **Natakachandrika**, **Ujjwalanilamani**, **Rasamanjari** that describe dance, tala, songs, gestures, Abhinaya and related idioms as important aspects of the science of dramaturgy.

Manipuri Gurus have creatively contributed to rich treasure of *Tala*, the time measures and their *Prastars*, the Rhythm patterns. *Prastars* are evolved by all possible permutations and combinations of beats within a specified time unit. *Pung*, the *mridang*, has the capacity to interpret different elements of nature while at the same time evoke the spiritual sentiment and its corresponding mood. Dances are composed either on one specific *Tala* and its *Prastara* or on combination of *Tala* known as *TalaPrabhandha*. Although rooted in the *Vaishnavite Sastras* of music, the *Tala* system of Manipuri dance has flourished in its own way and has a variety of highly developed composition of *Tala* and their intricate *Prastaras*.

The songs of *Rasleela* and *Sankirthan* are selected from the *Vaishnava Padavalis* in different languages like Sanskrit, Bengali, Brajaboli, Braj and Meitei composed by the devotional poets like Goving Das, Chandi Das, Gyan Das, Jayadeva, Vidyapati and such others. The continuous patronage of the Vaishnavite kings of Manipur to the development of art and culture of Manipur enabled the Gurus cultivate strict codes of disciplines and principles that govern the Manipuri dance style. As a result, the classical form of Manipuri dance has evolved in a scientific manner and has culminated into a subdued, sophisticated and dignified form of art.



# Kathak: A repertoire of Grace

Jonaki Raghavan

The name kathak is derived from the Sanskrit word *katha* meaning story or to do with stories. “*kathakahe so kathak*”, is a saying many teachers pass on to their pupils. This generally translates as, 'one who tells a story is a kathak' but this can also be translated as 'that which tells a story is *kathak*'. The ancient *kathavachaks* narrated stories with philosophical, religious and moral imports and when their art developed into a full-fledged dance form, it came to be known by its function namely kathak. It is also popularly known as *Katthak*. As regards dance, the involvement of dance and music in meditation or in transmitting religious and social precepts was not considered alien in the scenario of the sub-continent. It was believed that as attainment of spiritual bliss or *ananda* was the ultimate goal, the practice of yoga could be the path towards the attainment of the same. Within this framework, the practice of dance was considered the highest form of practicing yoga. Truly so, because dance involved all the eight stages of yoga.

- The spartan religion of Buddhism that was in contrast to the Vedic rituals of Hinduism, spread to most parts of Asia during the reign of emperor Ashoka in 400 AD. Since Buddhism involved no gods, nor an elaborate worship of them, it did not employ performing arts all of which had hitherto been connected to religion and were propagated by the priestly class who had taken vows of chastity and poverty. Religious dancing like kathak was irrelevant to its needs. In 326 BC, the northern part of the subcontinent was subjected to the invasions of the Scythians, the Kushans, the White Huns and the Gurjaras, all of whom came through the mountain passes in the north-west. Each of these left the imprints of their racial and cultural characteristics on the population of northern India.

The constant influx weakened the social structure and the patronage of arts also, to some extent, passed from religious leaders into the hands of the kings and princes, although the themes undoubtedly still found their inspiration in the scriptures of the Hindus. The population of the Indo-Gangetic plain had by the time undergone considerable racial change and the classical dance of this area too underwent modifications and expansion in keeping with the new characteristics of its ethos.

- Historically, the region of the kathak became the entire Indo-Gangetic belt covering the modern day state of Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Rajasthan, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, northern parts of Gujarat and Maharashtra, and some of those areas of what constituted erstwhile Punjab of the pre-partition days.
- *Kathak* like many other dance forms passed through various vicissitudes of social and political life. From 700 AD the new dynamic force of Islam appeared on the subcontinent. It was first brought in by the Arabs and then in a more permanent form, by the Turks. For over a millennium, in spite of the many invasions that had taken place during that time, Indian society had not been called upon to adjust itself to so radically new a situation. The teachings of Islam prohibited idol worship; dance was not believed to be a form of worship. This attitude seriously affected *kathak* dancing which was not only concerned with many gods and goddesses but also portrayed them in human form. Thus *kathak* moved away from the temple to the court and then onwards it developed in two different *pravahas* or streams: one represented by the Hindu courts of Rajasthan, particularly the court of Jaipur and the other by the Muslim court of Delhi, Agra and Lucknow. Under court patronage *kathak* transformed itself into a highly technical and stylized art for the enjoyment of the chosen few. In both the Hindu and the Muslim courts *kathak* came to be regarded as a source of sophisticated entertainment with emphasis almost entirely on the solo performer and his virtuosity. In Rajasthan the *nritta* aspect of the dance received much importance and this resulted in making *kathak* there mostly a matter of mechanical display and rhythmic gyrotechnique. The Muslim patrons on the other hand had no patience with mere technical virtuosity, however dazzling it was. They wanted an art which mirrored life in all its moods, which projected life with all its passion. Hence *kathak* which blossomed under their patronage began to lay greater stress on *nritya* and *bhava* and eventually came to be characterized as a dance which was graceful, decorative, expressive suggestive and sensuous. It must be mentioned that under the Muslim influence *Kathak* reached great heights although the emphasis was more on entertainment than on spiritual awareness.

Performers today draw their lineage from three major schools of *kathak*: the *Lucknow*, *Jaipur* and *Banaras gharana*, born in and patronized by the courts of *Kachawaha Rajput kings*, the *Nawab of Oudh* and *Varanasi* respectively. There is also a less prominent and later *gharana*, the *Raigarh gharana* which amalgamated the techniques of all the preceding *gharanas* but became famous for its own distinctive compositions.

- As *kathaks* were Brahmin priests who meditated daily, the *brahma sthanak* position was a common feature. Being practitioners of yoga, it was but natural that the *mudra* that became the basic starting point in their dance was a position practiced during breath meditation. The most striking thing about *kathak* is the impression it creates of extreme subtlety. It retains the qualities of grace and courtliness together with the emphasis on speed and close attention to footwork. This is achieved by a contrast of sudden stillness with swift flowing motion. Indeed, sometimes, it might seem that *kathak* is devoted entirely to *nritta* aspect of dance to the exclusion of both *nritya* and *natya*. This is far from the truth, for although pure dance plays an important part in *kathak*, *nritya* and *natya* are by no means neglected and the expression of mood and sentiment forms an essential element of it. *Kathak* has a highly developed and complex technique of footwork that is unique to this style. The footwork and *tal* are closely related and interwoven. The skill of the dancer and percussionist is judged by the accuracy with which, after complicated variations they arrive simultaneously at the *sam*. Footwork in *kathak* is known as *tatkar*. It displays the technical virtuosity of the dancer. Another important constituent of the *nritta* aspect is the *tukra* (literally meaning piece or fragment) which are usually short which are usually short items lasting for about six to seven bars of the basic time scale. A *kathak* performance always progresses from a very slow speed in the beginning to a very fast one at the end, and so there are various types of *tukras* which are performed at slow, medium and fast speed. Prominent examples of slow *tetras* are *amid* and *salami*, of the medium ones are *parcels*, the fast are *parcels* and *pagans*. Pirouette or *chakkar* forms an essential part of the *tukra* and is executed with great speed and yet without spoiling the beauty of the line. One noticeable feature is that each rhythmic sequence is like a mini world in a larger galaxy or an element of life in the group of mankind, each complete by itself. *Gat nikas* where different gaits or *chaal* are used to depict the walk of a character, animal or god is a unique feature of the dance. *Ghugroos* play an important role in the dance. These are small, round ankle bells made of brass which are strung together on a cord *Padhant* or vocal rendition of the rhythmic sections is a distinctive feature of any performance.

In the rendering of *abhinaya* in *kathak*, the usage of neck, glances and moods lays emphasis on subtlety, spontaneity and naturalness in keeping with basic attitude of *kathak*, which is, not to divorce himself from life. However, maintaining immense control within given parameters, of conveying the entire range of emotions and movements with subtlety, grace and strength, places an immense responsibility on the shoulders of the *kathak*. In all delineation in the domain of mime, the *kathak* makes maximum utilization of the referential, metaphorical, and poetic interpretations of the text. The performance also displays the potential of the *kathak* and his capacity to improvise, as he draws heavily on the depth of his internalization and the expanse of his imagination. *Upaj* or improvisation, therefore, is the hallmark of a mature *kathak* artiste. A *kathak* presents various compositions that include the *sloka parabandh*, *kavya parabandh* and *geet prabandh*. These are rendered through various compositions such as *thumris*, *bhajans*, *dhrupad*, *hori*, *chaiti* and *ghazals*. Items revolving around the themes of the *nava rasas* and *ashta nayikas*, as a part of the *abhinaya* items are also presented. Apart from Sanskrit, Hindi, Awadhi, Brajbhasha, Rajasthani, Bbundelkhandi, Maithili, Bhojpuri, form the major part of a *kathak's* expressional repertoire.

- Over a period of time, *Kathak* as a dance form has undergone many transformations due to innumerable geographic, social and political influences. However, it is heartening to note that these have it has only resulted in making this dance form stronger and retain its lucidity and elasticity. *Kathak* offers space and medium for experimentation and exploration. This very flexibility and adaptability makes this dance form complete. It dazzles with its intricately woven advanced rhythm system, subtle emotional expressions, and beautiful aesthetics stance while still retaining its spiritual essence.



# Odissi: From Odra Magadhi to the Present

Leesa Mohanty

Odissi has its origin in one of the eastern states of India, Orissa. It is known for its subtle movements, lyrical beauty and extraordinary grace and charm. Bharata Muni's **Natya Shastra** mentions the *Odra Magadhi* style, thereby, recognizing the presence of this dance form even as early as 2nd century AD. Orissa was earlier known as *Odra Desha* or the country of the *Odras*.

*Vaisnavism* in Orissa centered round Lord Jagannath. During the rule of the Ganga dynasty, the *devadasi* system was strengthened in the temples of Orissa. The Meghaswara inscription that bears testimony to this says:

The ones whose eyes enchant the world,  
Whose foot movements make the three worlds  
(Heaven, Earth and Under-world) stand still,  
Whose bracelets studded with jewels shine like  
Ajanta lamp during their dance,  
These doe-eyed girls dedicated to the  
Conqueror of the three worlds - Lord Shiva

The *devadasis* were known as *maharis*. They performed various duties for the Lord. Singing and dancing by the *maharis* for the Lord was a daily ritual. During festivals and special occasions of the temple too, they performed in front of the deity.

During the 17th and 18th century, the Mughals raided the Jagannath temple in Puri, many times and looted its treasures. The invasions also affected the religious, social and cultural aspects of life. This was a severe blow to the Mahari tradition in Orissa. Later, it is believed, boys were trained in Odissi dance form so as to keep the tradition alive. They were known as the *gotipuas*. *Goti* means single and *pua* means boy.

The credit for getting the recognition of a classical dance form for Odissi goes to the relentless efforts made by the Gurus namely Guru Pankaj Charan Das, Guru Deba Prasad Das, Guru Kelu Charan Mahapatra and Guru Mayadhar Raut. These Gurus were trained as *gotipuas* themselves.

Odissi is known for its sculptural poses known as *bhangis*. The typical *bhangis* that makes Odissi stand out from other classical dance forms are: *chauka* and *tribhangi*. *Chauka* refers to the basic square stance. *Tribhangi*, the unique Odissi stance or posture, refers to three bends in the body; first caused by the crossing of the legs, the second by the curvature of the waist and the third by an inclination of the head to one side.

The repertoire of Odissi dance consists of five phases: *mangalacharan*, *batu nrutya*, *pallavi*, *abhinaya* and *Mokshya*. *Mangalacharan* is an invocatory item in which, the dancer pays salutations to a specific deity and finally concludes with three salutations to the mother earth, to the Guru and to the august gathering of audience. *Batu nrutya* is so named as it is dedicated to Lord Shiva known as *Batukeswara*. This piece is a pure *nritta* item that begins with series of sculptural poses danced to rhythmic syllables. *Pallavi* refers to blossoming or elaboration. This item is based on a specific raga and begins with the *shloka* describing the raga murti or image. *Pallavi* is again a pure *nritta* piece. *Abhinaya* is an expressional dance where the emotion described in the song is expressed through facial expressions, hand gestures and body movements. In *abhinaya*, choreographies based on both Sanskrit and Oriya poems are presented. *Moksha naata* is the concluding item of Odissi dance repertory. The dance aims at a realization of divinity and is danced in a fast tempo.

Odissi, as a dance form, has gained prominence in the recent past and is attracting dancers from all over the world. The Odissi dance repertoire is growing in size with young dancers and Gurus adding newly choreographed compositions to it every other day. However, a serious concern among traditionalists is about conserving the original flavour of this heavenly dance form.

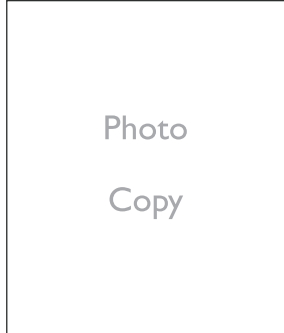






401 Solitaire, Orchard Avenue, Hiranandani Gardens, Powai - 400 076.  
Phone :+91 98205 23229 Email : powaifinearts@gmail.com

Membership Application Form-Individual



To,  
The Secretary,  
Powai Fine Arts.

I wish to join Powai Fine Arts as a Life Member by making one-time payment of

Rs. 10,000. I am enclosing herewith a cheque/Demand Draft no. \_\_\_\_\_

dated \_\_\_\_\_ drawn on \_\_\_\_\_ Bank in favour of "Powai Fine Arts".

**I give below the necessary particulars:**

- 1. Name : \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Date of Birth : \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Qualifications : \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Present Occupation : \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Address (Residence/ Mailing) : \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No.( LL) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_ Fax No. \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail ID (1) \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail ID (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Family members interested in attending the Programs \_\_\_\_\_

(Maximum Two allowed; Additional on Request/Payment)

**I agree to observe the Terms and Conditions of PFA**

Signature .....

Date : .....

**PFA Reserves the Rights for Admission of Membership**

Registered Office of Powai Fine Arts  
C 1203 Synchronicity, Nahar Amrit Shakti Road, Chandivali, Mumbai 400 072  
Phone : +91-22-2857 2990 Mobile : +91-9820093260  
Website: www.powaifinearts.org



**Is grateful to the Following Advertisers.**

Chemtex Group  
Chemtrols Industries Ltd.  
Corporation Bank  
D. K. Chohan Developers  
Fancy Emporium  
Futurisk Simplifying Insurance  
Jet Airways  
Kush Infosystems Pvt Ltd  
Lakshmi Book Corporation  
Le Papillon  
Life Insurance Corporation of India  
Metmech Radiographic Inspection Pvt. Ltd  
Navbharat Constructions  
Navrang Optics  
Oritel Service Apartments  
Padmalaya Maternity & Surgical Home  
Shree Ganesh Sagar  
Sri Kamakoti Ghatikasramam Trust  
Srishti Group  
Trambak Travels Pvt Ltd  
Vikramraj Engineers Pvt Ltd



# Just Click! Connect! Contact!

## And we will finance your educational journey.

**Corp VIDYA**  
Education Loan

**ONLINE**

No paperwork, no precious time lost. Put your dream career on the road to reality. Just log on to [www.corpbank.in](http://www.corpbank.in)

All you do is fill & submit online application form – to get an in-principle decision online. Thereafter you will receive an e-mail that guides you to the branch nearest to your place of domicile.



**Don't wait  
just click**

your way to a  
great career ahead!

For further details call our  
Toll Free No: **1800 425 3555** (8 am to 8 pm)



**कार्पोरेशन बँक**



**Corporation Bank**

A Premier Public Sector Bank

Conditions apply

# Navarang Optics

---



Johnson & Johnson

PORSCHE DESIGN

**MONT  
BLANC**

