

THE INDO-AMERICAN ARTS COUNCIL

The Indo-American Arts Council is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit arts organization passionately dedicated to promoting, showcasing and building an awareness of the arts and artists whose heritage lies in India in the performing arts, visual arts, literary arts and folk arts. All donations are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowable by the law. For information please visit www.IAAC.us

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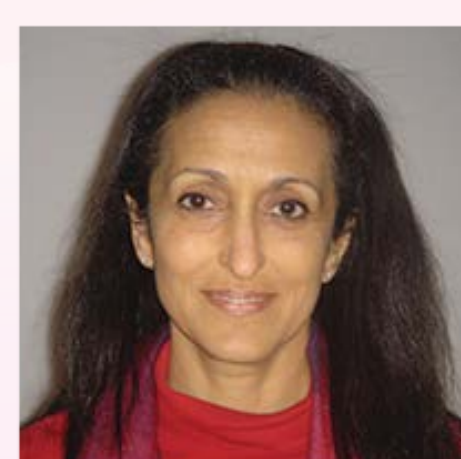
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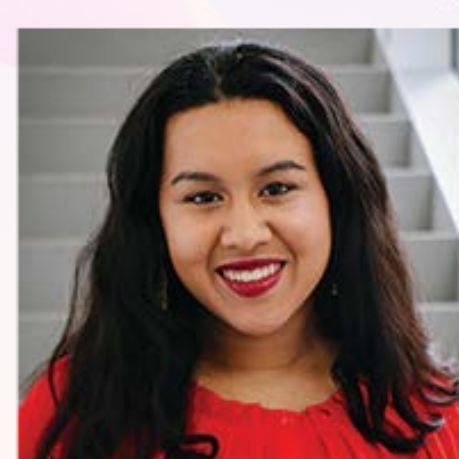
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INDO-AMERICAN ARTS COUNCIL PRESENTS Erasing Borders Dance Festival

Sep 20-21, 2025



Sep 20-21, 2025 | 6-8 PM | Ailey Citigroup Theater

Tickets at www.iaac.us

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Welcome

Dear Patrons, Artists, and Friends of the Arts,

It is my great honor to welcome you to the **seventeenth edition of the Indo-American Arts Council's Erasing Borders Dance Festival**, once again at the prestigious Ailey Citigroup Theater. Each year, this festival becomes a bridge that connects traditions and innovations, artists and audiences, India and the United States.

This year's program is especially rich, offering two evenings of performances by some of the most **distinguished and dynamic voices in Indian dance today**. From the depth and elegance of **Bharatanatyam masters Priyadarsini Govind and Rama Vaidyanathan**, to the powerful presence of the **Chitresh Das Dance Company in Kathak**, the grace of **Odisi soloist Trina Sarkar**, the vibrancy of **Kuchipudi ensemble Kalanidhi**, and the energy of young students from **Nrithyanjali School under Guru Ramya Ramnarayan**, our stage will be alive with the diversity and vitality of Indian classical dance.

We are equally proud to offer a **workshop led by Rama Vaidyanathan**, giving dancers and audiences alike a rare opportunity to engage directly with her artistry. This integration of stage and studio reflects the very spirit of Erasing Borders, to create access, dialogue, and discovery through the arts.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our **Festival Director and Curatorial Team—Deepsikha Chatterjee, Uttara Asha Coorlawala, Sruthi Mohan, Jin Won, Preya Patel, Srinidhi Raghavan, and Dipashreya Sur**—for shaping a program of such depth and resonance. My sincere thanks also go to our **patrons, board members, executive team and supporters**, whose belief in IAAC enables us to present Indian dance at the highest level in New York City.

This year, IAAC will present the **Tino & Rajika Puri Award**, a \$1,000 cash recognition in honor of the late Anupam "Tino" Puri and Rajika Puri, the festival's original Sutradhar as well as an acclaimed dancer, choreographer, and writer. This award celebrates their generosity and artistic legacy while supporting an emerging artist at the Erasing Borders Dance Festival.

As the lights dim and the first rhythms sound, I invite you to be transported by the excellence before you. May these performances not only inspire but also remind us of the power of culture to connect hearts across geographies and generations.

With warm regards,

Dr. Nirmal Mattoo

Chairman, Indo-American Arts Council



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NYC Cultural Affairs

THIS PROGRAM IS SUPPORTED, IN PART, BY PUBLIC FUNDS FROM THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CITY COUNCIL.



THIS PROGRAM IS MADE POSSIBLE WITH SUPPORT FROM THE HOWARD GILMAN FOUNDATION.

Fourth annual Dr. Sunil Kothari Honorary Lecture

Bruno Walter Auditorium, 40 Lincoln Center Plaza, New York, NY 10023

Thursday September 18 | 6 PM



The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts hosts the fourth annual Dr. Sunil Kothari Honorary Lecture, featuring Priyadarsini Govind. Presented by the Jerome Robbins Dance Division, Govind who studied in depth the art of abhinaya from the stalwart, Kalanidhi Narayanan, shares how human emotions are interpreted and transformed from everyday reality to stylized yet accessible aesthetic form.

Workshop with Rama Vaidyanathan

Ailey Citigroup Theater, New York City

Saturday September 20 | 3 PM



Workshop with Rama Vaidyanathan

TULA – finding the balance

This master class will focus on techniques of core control, while understanding the art of restraint and release in nritta. It will also explore balancing imagery with emotion in abhinaya while harnessing the vocabulary for tradition and creativity to co – exist. The master class will introduce several exercises that will help find that crucial balance in every aspect of dance.

Panel Talk with Students

Barnard College, Columbia University

Monday September 22 | 11:40 AM

Select artists will join Barnard/Columbia students for a panel moderated by Uttara Coorlawala, Senior Curator of EBDF and Professor of Dance at Barnard College, Columbia University. Room TBA.

Mala's School of Odissi Dance

Forest Hills, NY

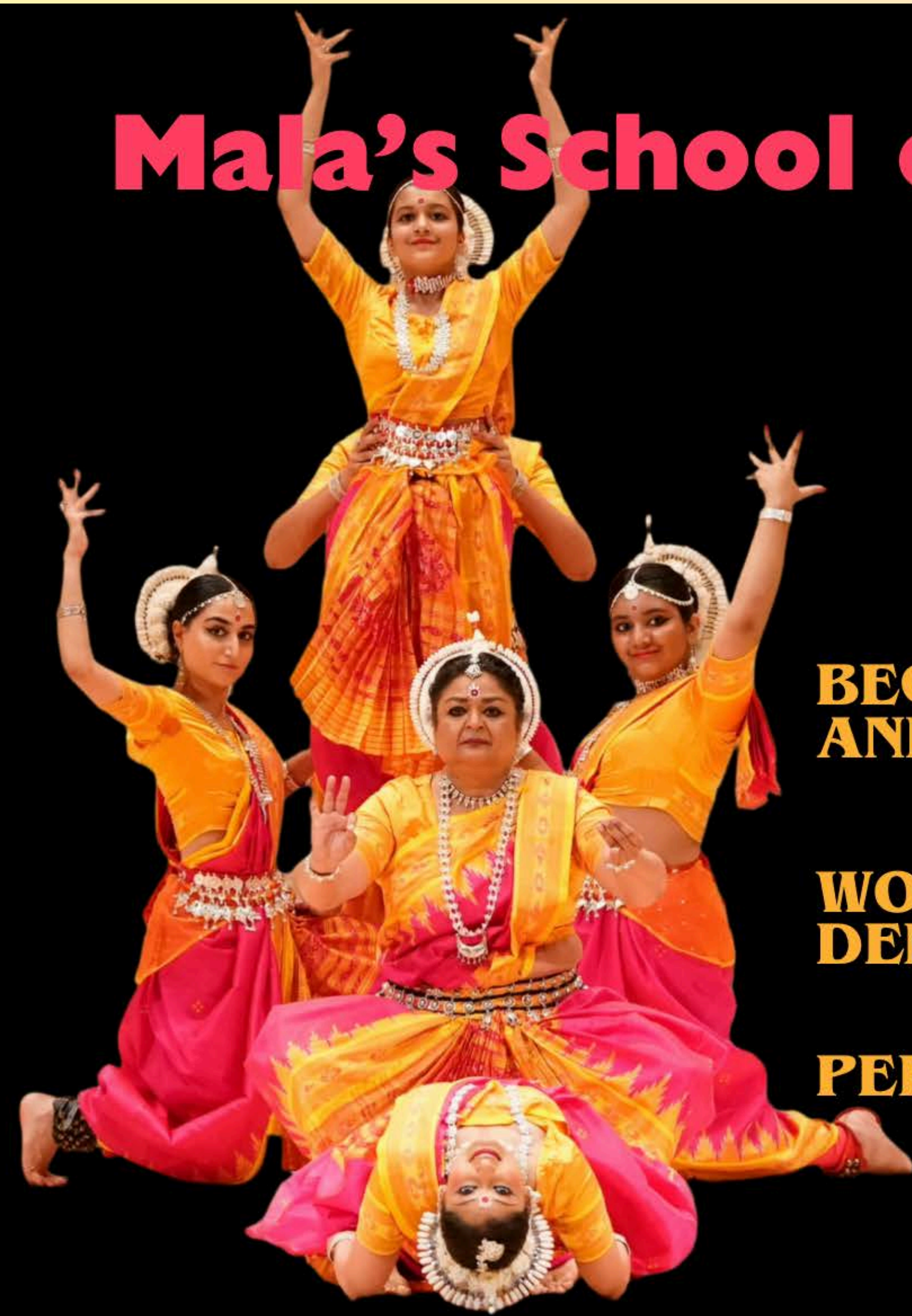
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A journey into Odissi

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More authors to be announced soon



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INDO-AMERICAN ARTS COUNCIL

GALA

CELEBRATING LIGHTS AND BONDS

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2025 | 5:00 PM

THE UNION LEAGUE CLUB, 38 EAST 37TH STREET,
NEW YORK

FOR MORE DETAILS VISIT WWW.IAAC

2025 HONOREES



Jyoti Menon

Jyoti is a product management, strategy, and development professional with 20 years of experience in delivering next-generation financial services products.



Deepak Raj

After many years spent on Wall Street, Deepak Raj founded The Raj Family Foundation to focus his wide-ranging philanthropic service on issues affecting India and Indian-Americans.

DAY 1, SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 20 | 6 PM

Ailey Citigroup Theater, New York City



School: Nrithyanjali Dance Ensemble:

Guru Ramya Ramnarayan/Bharatanatyam student group

Smt Ramya is recognized globally as one of the leading exponents of Bharatanatyam. The New York Times has called Ramya Ramnarayan “a considerable virtuoso and a complex stylist.” She is the protégé of two legendary dance maestros—“Kalaimamani” S.K. Rajarathnam Pillai and “Padma Bhushan” Kalanidhi Narayanan—and a recipient of the illustrious Kalaimamani award herself along with many other global accolades such as Natana mamani, Nirthya Seva Mani. She is Graded artist of Doordarshan, India, she is an ICCR empanelled artist and in 2024 she received the community impact award from the State of NJ for high artistic excellence.



Trina Sarkar: *Odissi solo*

Trina Sarkar is an Odissi dancer and instructor based in New York City. She began her Odissi journey with Smt Nandita Behera in Los Angeles, CA and has since performed extensively around the globe. Some notable performances include the International Odissi Dance Festival in Bhubaneswar, the International Arts Festival in San Francisco, the International Odissi Festival in Charlotte, North Carolina and the Indian Fine Arts Festival in San Diego. She is currently a disciple of Smt. Niharika Mohanty and a senior ensemble member of Guru Shradha, a Bay Area-based Odissi company.

Pallavis are a class of the Odissi repertoire that are non-narrative, pure “nritya” (or dance) items. The word “Pallavi” literally translates to “blossoming” or “unfolding”, so the music becomes increasingly complex and quick-paced as the dance picks up to match it. This pallavi is in raag Hamsadhwani, known for its bright and joyous tones, often associated with beginnings. This piece is choreographed by the legendary Odissi maestro, Padma Vibhushan Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra and music composition is by Pandit Bhubaneswar Mishra.



Kalanidhi: *Kuchipudi group*
Sriyuktha Ganipineni, Anjana Kuttamath, Mytreysi Nair, Pragnya Thamire, Deviga Valiyil

Ananda Tandava (*The Dance of Bliss*)

Kalanidhi Dance is a renowned Washington D.C.-based dance school and company dedicated to promoting and preserving the traditional Indian classical dance form of Kuchipudi, while also pushing its boundaries through innovative choreography and collaborations.

‘*Tandava*’ is a sacred dance performed by the supreme Lord of dance **Shiva** as ‘*Nataraja*’. The dance symbolizes the cosmic principles of creation, preservation and destruction to compose the rhythm of life. The song expresses the utmost devotion to Lord Shiva and the grandeur of his dancing. The dancer aims to invoke **Lord Shiva** himself, resulting in a piece that is intense, energetic, and a dance of pure joy.



Chitresh Das Dance Company: *Kathak group*

Dancers: Vanita Mundhra, Shruti Pai, Mayuka Sarukkai, Kritika Sharma

Musicians: Utsav Lal, Nilan Chaudhuri, Charlotte Moraga

Founded by the late master artist Pandit Chitresh Das, the Chitresh Das Dance Company is dedicated to preserving and promoting Kathak, a classical North Indian dance form, through traditional performances, innovative works, and education.

Invoking the River, an original work in kathak choreographed by Chitresh Das Dance Artistic Director Charlotte Moraga and composed and performed live by Raga Pianist Utsav Lal with Nilan Chaudhuri on tabla, explores the confluence of history, mythology, and the environmental changes of some of India’s most sacred waterways. Performed by the spectacular kathak dancers of Chitresh Das Dance, ‘Invoking the River’ recently completed a hugely successful three city tour to India with great acclaim. Invoking the River features stunning multimedia designed by filmmaker/visual artist Alka Raghuram. ‘Invoking the River’ opens with ‘Origins’, charting the rivers’ descent from the heavens to the earth and then follows the stories of the rivers Alaknanda, Ganga, Kaveri, and Godavari.

Shaktya: Rama Vaidyanathan, Dakshina Vaidyanathan Baghel, Sannidhi Vaidyanathan

SHAKTYA features a mother with her two daughters, portraying women characters from mythology, history and contemporary times.

Women who have inspired, have shown exemplary courage and have taken the difficult path to stand by their convictions. This work tells stories of many such women who have manifested the presence of the Goddess within them by speaking the unspoken and by treading the uncharted path.

SHAKTYA - A woman soft as morning light yet strong as ancient stone. She is the quiet might, unyielding all her own. Pondered why Durga’s form bears ten hands ? Each hand a sign - her skills transform, every duty she imparts.

MAI PAGHO - The untold story of the Sikh woman who bravely fought against Aurangzeb and fiercely protected her sacred faith.

JANABAI - The 13th century Warkari saint poet who rebelled against a misogynistic society to boldly express her love for Vitthala on her own terms.

MITRA - A true story of two ordinary women Phoola a Hindu and Gulabo a Muslim, set against the partition between India and Pakistan.

CREDITS

SHAKTYA by Rama Vaidyanathan Dakshina Vaidyanathan Baghel

CREDITS

SHAKTYA

Mridangam by Sannidhi Vaidyanathan, script by Meera Khanna

MAI PHAGO

Guidance and scholarship - Dr Arshiya Sethi
Lyrics in Punjabi - Shri Pritam Rupal
Lyrics in Hindi - Dr Himanshu Srivastava
Music composition and Vocal - Shri Onkar Singh
Jathis by Karakudi Sivakumar
Sarangi - Nasir Khan
Tabla - Nishit Gangani
Mridangam - Sannidhi Vaidyanathan
Special thanks to Smt. Ramanpreet Kaur and Dr. Gursharan Gill

JANABAI

Music composition and vocal - Karthik Hebbar
Mridangam - Sumod Sreedharan
Flute and Morsin - Mahesh
Nattuvangam - Dr S Vasudevan

MITRA

Music composition and vocal - Sudha Raghuraman
Sanskrit script- Dr Divyanand Jha
Hindi script - Meera Khanna
Flute - G Raghuraman
Sitar - Lavanya Kumar
Tabla - Shambhunath Bhattacharya
Pakhawaj - Prafulla Mangaraj
Mridangam - Sannidhi Vaidyanathan



Rama Vaidyanathan Trio: *Bharatanatyam*

Rama Vaidyanathan is one of the foremost Bharatanatyam dancers of her generation, trained under legendary Yamini Krishnamurthy and celebrated Saroja Vaidyanathan. In a career spanning more than 40 years, Rama has developed her individual style and has brought a fresh approach to the innumerable dance compositions that she has added to the repertoire that she has performed around the world. She has many awards to her name including titles like “Kalaimamani” by the Govt of Tamil Nadu, “Kalashree” by the Govt of Kerala, Kumar Gandharv Puraskar from the Madhya Pradesh Govt, Nadanamamani from Kartik Fine Arts Chennai, Vani kala Sudhakara from Tyagabrahma Gana Sabha Chennai, Nritya Choodamani from Krishna Gana Sabha, Nritya Kalanidhi from the Music Academy Madras, and the Central Sangeet Natak Akademi Puraskar. As the President of Ganesa Natyalaya New Delhi, she has been actively engaged in teaching, and maintains a hectic schedule of performances, workshops, and master classes all over the world, inspiring a whole generation of dancers.

Dakshina Vaidyanathan Baghel is trained under her grandmother Dr. Saroja Vaidyanathan (Padmabhushan awardee) and her mother Rama Vaidyanathan. Alongside Bharatanatyam she is an Electronics and Communication Engineer from Vellore Institute of Technology. Dakshina has been actively teaching and choreographing and directing productions with interdisciplinary themes and has performed all over the world.

Sannidhi Vaidyanathan learnt Bharatanatyam from her grandmother and mother. She has trained in Mridangam percussion from Karaikudi Sivakumar and receives advanced training under Ramamoorthy Sriganesh. As a female Mridangam artist Sannidhi is breaking the gender boundaries.



Priyadarsini Govind: *Bharatanatyam solo*

Priyadarsini Govind is a rare artist and a beloved mentor whose work stands today as an influential compass for the world of Bharatanatyam. An artist moulded on the cusp of unerring tradition and an increasing liberalisation of art, she has been an instrumental force in maintaining the relevance of the traditional in a modern world. Abhinaya has been the cornerstone of her approach to dance and her philosophy of Art has been keenly informed by her in-depth exploration of it.

Tonight’s performance is a presentation of movement and emotion set against the backdrop of time and space.

Devi - The Divine Mother. We begin with a selection of ancient Sanskrit texts woven together to describe the many facets of the Goddess, while seeking her blessings. *Credits: musical arrangement by Dr. Rajkumar Bharathi in Ragamalika and Talamalika.*

Aaadum Chidambaramo. This piece speaks of the abstraction and embodiment of the dance of Shiva. *Credits: Verses from the Tirumandiram - a sacred ancient text - are used as a prelude to the composition by Gopalakrishna Bharathi in ragam Behag and talam Adi.*

Dasamukhi - We then see Ravana, the antagonist in the epic Ramayana, lament his decisions as each one of his ten faces speaks of his downfall. *Credits: Text is from a traditional source and music composed by Dr. Rajkumar Bharathi.*

Samayam Ide Rara. The penultimate piece showcases a heroine as she asks her reluctant lover to come in through the back door of her house when her husband is away on business. *Credits: Lyrics by Patnam Subramanya Iyer in ragam Behag and talam Adi.*

Abhang. The concluding piece is an Abhang, which is devotional poetry on Vittala, a form of Krishna. *Credits: Composed by Saint Bhanudasa. Talam Adi.*

DAY 2, SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 21 | 6 PM

Ailey Citigroup Theater, New York City



School: Odissi Dance Company:

Guru Aparupa Chatterjee/Odissi student group

Dr. Aparupa Chatterjee is the artistic director of the Odissi Dance Company, the leading Odissi organization in the United States practicing in the Padma Vibhushan Kelucharan Mohapatra gharana. A Texas A&M University PhD, she also curates every year the Kelucharan Guna Keertanam festival, presenting new choreography and collaborative works. She currently resides and teaches in New Jersey.

Odissi Dance Company has been featured on 'Dancing with the Stars' ABC, and Aparupa has performed as an ambassador for Odissi in "Tarang", winning LA Disney Film Festival's best 3D Film. ODC has also been featured in quarter finals of America's Got Talent and presented her choreography at the Carnegie Hall, NYC this year. "The most successful and charmingly communicative number"- quoted by NY Times; "an outstanding Odissi performance of the evening"- quoted by The Statesman; "a digital exploration which accurately predicted its continuing success"- yet again by Stereoworld Newviews have been some noted critical acclaims!



Pranamyia Suri: Kuchipudi solo

Dr. Pranamyia Suri known for her eloquent grace and uncompromising precision, Dr. Pranamyia's delightful style is the result of a perpetual love for the ancient art form and a legacy steeped in tradition and artistic excellence. She is a disciple of her mother, Smt. Srilatha Suri, Sri Jai Kishore Mosalikanti and Padma Shri Dr. Sobha Naidu.

Pranamyia is also the Creative Director of Natyanjali Kuchipudi Dance School. She has performed extensively across the United States and internationally, including Belgium, Taiwan, Fiji, Cambodia, Amsterdam and at major Indian festivals. Alongside her artistic journey, Dr. Suri is a practicing interventional spine physician and co-founder of a nonprofit addressing fluoride-related health problems in rural India, while also promoting classical dance artists.



Rovaco Dance Company/Rohan Bhargava:

Group contemporary

Rovaco Dance Company, founded in 2015 by Rohan Bhargava, is a New York-based company that creates narrative dance-theater blending contemporary movement with various global dance forms, with a recent focus on exploring Indian culture and identity.

Madaari (The Monkey Master) exposes our tendency to possess and control others in relationships. Inspired by Indian street performers (Madaaris) who subjugate monkeys for money, it draws from my upbringing in New Delhi, where these performances reinforced patriarchal narratives. Gestures of urgent kissing, chewing, hugging, and escaping evolve into rhythmic movement. The choreography fuses my Western training (ballet, contemporary, street jazz, modern, floorwork) with Indian influences (Bhangra, Bollywood).



Ravija Desai: Kathak

Ravija Desai began her Kathak journey at the age of seven under Padma Vibhushan late Smt. Kumudini Lakhia at the Kadamb School of Dance, later continuing her training with the late Pandit Chitresh Das and Guru Deepali Vichare. She is currently under the mentorship of Smt. Vaishali Trivedi.

Ravija is set to present the Hindi ghazal 'Naina Re Naina,' an anguished ode to separation and eternal yearning. The central refrain, 'Naina re naina, kaise beete raina,' expresses the heroine's despair: 'How will I ever endure this night?' With her home adorned and her spirit dressed in hope, she awaits her beloved.

This evocative composition has been beautifully choreographed and also sung by Guru Smt. Vaishali Trivedi.