

*A collage  
of grace  
in motion*



Nishagandhi  
Dance Festival

20 - 26 JANUARY 2020  
KANAKAKKUNNU  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM




# NISHAGANDHI PURASKARAM 2020

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Padma Bhushan Awardee  
Prof. C.V. Chandrasekhar







A doyen of the Bharatanatyam classical dance form, Prof. C.V. Chandrasekhar began training at the renowned Kalakshetra institution in Chennai under the tutelage of Smt. Rukmini Devi Arundale. Having donned multiple hats over the course of his career - dancer, choreographer, researcher, musician, academician, composer and highly-acclaimed teacher of Bharatanatyam, he has been performing for the past five decades around the globe.

The many prestigious awards that have come his way include the Central Sangeet Natak Akademi Award, Nrithya Choodamani from the Sri Krishna Gana Sabha, Sangita Kala Acharya Award from the Madras Music Academy, and the Kalidas Samman from the Madhya Pradesh government.

His wife Smt. Jaya Chandrasekhar, daughters Chitra Dasarathy and Manjari are also celebrated dancers, and he has performed along with them at noteworthy festivals in India organised by the Sangeet Natak Akademi and ICCR.

With a number of music and dance compositions to his credit, his dance dramas have been well-appreciated for their individuality and the innovative approach. He served the universities of Banaras and Baroda, and retired as the Head and Dean of the Faculty of Performing Arts, MS University of Baroda, Vadodara.







## NISHAGANDHI DANCE FESTIVAL 2020 - PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

DATE	TIME	ARTISTE/TROUPE	DANCE FORM
20/1/2020 <b>Monday</b>	6.00 pm	Inaugural Ceremony	
	7.00 pm	P. Praveen Kumar	Bharatanatyam
	8.30 pm	Padma Shree Ranjana Gauhar and Utsav Repertory, Guru Jayaprabha Menon and The International Centre for Mohiniyattam, Guru Vidha Lal and AV Dance Company, Guru Mangoljao Singh and Manipuri Cultural Troupe, Guru Santosh Nair and Sadhya	'Nritya Dhara' specially choreographed programme incorporating Odissi, Mohiniyattam, Kathak, Manipuri and Chhau
21/1/2020 <b>Tuesday</b>	6.15 pm	Kalamandalam Veena Varrier	Mohiniyattam
	6.45 pm	Kavita Dwibedi & Group	Odissi
	8.00 pm	Arun Sankar	Bharatanatyam
22/1/2020 <b>Wednesday</b>	6.15 pm	Mansiya V.P.	Bharatanatyam
	6.45 pm	Geetha Padmakumar & Group	Kuchipudi
	8.00 pm	Bimbavati Devi & Group	Manipuri
23/1/2020 <b>Thursday</b>	6.15 pm	Arjun S. Kulathingal	Bharatanatyam
	6.45 pm	Dr. RLV Ramakrishnan & Group	Mohiniyattam
	8.00 pm	Naveen R. Hegde & Rohini Prabhath	Kathak
24/1/2020 <b>Friday</b>	6.30 pm	N. Srikanth & Aswathy Srikanth	Bharatanatyam
	8.00 pm	Dr. Ananda Shankar Jayant	Kuchipudi
25/1/2020 <b>Saturday</b>	6.15 pm	Devika Sajeevan	Bharatanatyam
	6.45 pm	Reshma U. Raj	Kuchipudi
	8.00 pm	Madhavi Chandran	Mohiniyattam
26/1/2020 <b>Sunday</b>	6.15 pm	Specially choreographed programme as part of 150 years of celebrating The Mahatma	
	6.45 pm	Dr. Sumitha Nair N.	Mohiniyattam
	8.00 pm	Jyotsna Jagannathan	Bharatanatyam







## **P. Praveen Kumar**

Hailing from a long line of artistes, the exceptionally talented Praveen Kumar was captivated early on by the aesthetic depth of the classical dance form Bharatanatyam. A strong believer that dance is the ultimate form of creative expression, he is currently under the tutelage of celebrated Guru Prof. C.V. Chandrasekhar.

Praveen is an empanelled artist of ICCR and an 'A' grade artist on television. Having travelled extensively, he has been a part of prestigious dance and music festivals, and currently runs the Chithkala School of Dance in Bangalore. Recognised as the 'Best Dancer of the Season' by the Madras Music Academy for two years in a row, several awards and commendations have come his way till now.

**20/01/20 (MONDAY), 7.00 PM**



## Nritya Dhara

A tribute to India's rich cultural heritage, Nritya Dhara is a one-of-a-kind production integrating four classical dance forms (Odissi, Mohiniyattam, Kathak, Manipuri) and one martial art style (Chhau), while representing various regions in the country through a unified voice. Starting with an invocation to the motherland, followed by a pure dance piece in each distinct style, and culminating in a finale to the lyrical music composed by Bharat Ratna Pt. Ravi Shankar; Nritya Dhara epitomises national integration through dance.

20/01/20 (MONDAY), 8.30 PM



## FUSION OF CLASSICAL DANCES



**Padma Shree  
Ranjana Gauhar and  
Utsav Repertory**

A multifaceted artist who has worked in theatre, film, dance education, and painting, she is the Founder-President of 'Utsav - Educational & Cultural Society'.

**Odissi**



**Guru Jayaprabha Menon  
and The International  
Centre for Mohiniyattam**

Danseuse extraordinaire, versatile choreographer and affectionate Guru, she is the Director of The International Academy of Mohiniyattam, New Delhi.

**Mohiniyattam**



**Guru Vidha Lal and AV  
Dance Company**

Disciple and daughter-in-law of renowned guru and Sangeet Natak Akademi Awardee Smt. Geetanjali Lal of the Jaipur Gharana, she is the Founder-Director of AV Dance Company: Kathak Resonance.

**Kathak**



**Guru Mangoljao Singh and  
Manipuri Cultural Troupe**

One of the world's leading exponents of the Manipuri Pung Cholom dance form, he is the Chairman of the Manipuri Cultural Troupe in New Delhi.

**Manipuri**



**Guru Santosh Nair and  
Sadhya**

A dance maestro and the founder of 'Sadhya' company, he has been working in this field for the last thirty years.

**Chhau**







## Kavita Dwibedi & Group

One of the finest exponents of Odissi in the country, Kavita Dwibedi's graceful movement, supple footwork and expressive eyes create a truly mesmerising display that at once seems pristine and divine. The daughter and disciple of veteran Odissi maestro Guru Harekrishna Behera, she was drawn to the dance form from a young age itself.

Kavita has received various honours such as the Odisha State Sangeet Natak Akademi Award, Mahari Award, Mahila Shiromani Award, amongst others. She is empanelled with ICCR in the 'Outstanding' category, 'Top' grade with Doordarshan, and 'Outstanding category artist in the Festivals of India Cell' with the Ministry of Culture. She has performed in over 42 countries over the course of her remarkable career. The Founder-Director of 'Sanchari Foundation' in Delhi, she currently imparts training to the next generation of Odissi dancers.

21/01/20 (TUESDAY), 6.45 PM



### Arun Sankar

An exceptional Bharatanatyam dancer and choreographer whose performances have seen him travel the world, Arun Sankar began his training under Gurus Smt. Girija Chandran, Sri. G. Sanil Kumar and Smt. Usha. He was the youngest faculty of the prestigious Kalakshetra Foundation and has represented India under the aegis of Sangeet Natak Akademi and Indian High Commission for the Festival of India in various countries.

A recipient of the prestigious Central Government scholarship for arts/dance, Arun was also conferred the T.S. Parthasarathy Award by Madras Music Academy in 2007. He has performed extensively at dance festivals in India and abroad, including the SAARC Festival (New Delhi), Kalanidhi Spring Dance Festival (Canada), and Docklands Festival (UK). He has also collaborated with dance societies in the UK, Canada, and Singapore.

21/01/20 (TUESDAY), 8.00 PM











## **Geetha Padmakumar & Group**

Dancer extraordinaire and a fine exponent of Kuchipudi dance, Geetha Padmakumar has enthralled audiences around the globe throughout her illustrious career. A disciple of the legendary Guru Padma Bhushan Dr. Vempati Chinna Satyam, Geeta completed a rigorous 7-year long training at the renowned Kuchipudi Art Academy in Chennai.

Deeply grounded in the Kuchipudi tradition, she has performed at prestigious venues such as the Khajuraho Dance Festival and Soorya Festival. Along with a Masters (2<sup>nd</sup> rank) in Bharatanatyam from MG University, she is proficient in Mohiniyattam and Carnatic Music. Geetha is currently propagating her knowledge of Kuchipudi at the Padam School of Dance whilst pursuing research in the same.

**22/01/20 (WEDNESDAY), 6.45 PM**



## Bimbavati Devi & Group

The daughter of renowned classical Manipuri dancers - Guru Bipin Singh and Guru Kalavati Devi, Bimbavati Devi was initiated into the world of dance and music at a very tender age. As a performing artiste of Manipuri Nartanalaya, a premier institute of Manipuri dance, she has taken the classical form to stages across the world.

An empanelled artiste of ICCR and 'A' grade artiste of Doordarshan, her stunning performances have graced the Khajuraho, Konark and Mudra Dance Festivals, apart from several others. She has received critical acclaim in national and international publications, and is the recipient of Sanskriti Award 2004, Aditya Birla Kalakiran Puraskar 2007, and sought-after National Scholarships in Manipuri Dance. She continually experiments with the dance form, constantly trying to expand the vocabulary of movements.

22/01/20 (WEDNESDAY), 8.00 PM











## Dr. RLV Ramakrishnan & Group

Epitomising lucid movements and evocative facial expressions in Mohiniyattam, Dr. RLV Ramakrishnan has donned the roles of performer and teacher with equal poise in his career. MA (1<sup>st</sup> rank) in Mohiniyattam from MG University and M.Phil from Kerala Kalamandalam, he was awarded a Ph.D. for research work related to male artistes performing this classical dance form.

A graded artist of Doordarshan, he has ordered many rhythms in Mohiniyattam as well as completed various stage performances. A long list of honours over the years include the Kalabharathi National Award for Dance in 2013, Natyakala Vidhwan Award in 2016, and Varadham Natya Samanthaka Award in 2018. The brother of late actor Kalabhavan Mani, Dr. Ramakrishnan has been teaching at the Tripunithura RLV College and Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit.

23/01/20 (THURSDAY), 6.45 PM



## **Naveen R. Hegde & Rohini Prabhath**

A highly versatile artiste in Bharatanatyam, Naveen Hedge's lead roles in acclaimed productions of the Abhinava Dance Company have seen him perform at prestigious platforms in India and abroad. He is an empanelled artist of the ICCR and a graded artist of regional television in Bangalore. Having completed his Bachelors in Bharatanatyam from SASTRA University under the mentorship of renowned Guru Dr. Padma Subramaniam, Naveen has also taken to teaching.

Rohini Prabhath has given spellbinding performances at celebrated national and international events as a principal dancer of the Abhinava Dance Company. Mentored in the art of Kathak for over 17 years by Smt. Nirupama Rajendra, Rohini has learnt special movement vocabularies of Karanas. She has also trained under legendary Guru Padmabhushan Kumudini Lakhia and was part of a multi-city tour organised by ICCR in Russia. She is a graded artist of Doordarshan, and currently works as a rehearsal conductor and educator.

**23/01/20 (THURSDAY), 8.00 PM**











## **N. Srikanth & Aswathy Srikanth**

Having carved a niche for themselves in the realm of Bharatanatyam, N. Srikanth and Aswathy Srikanth's performances have won them critical acclaim the world over. Srikanth has trained under several illustrious Gurus, including Sri. Shanmugasundaram Pillai, Dr. Saraswati, and Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam. Hailing from the all-male Bhagavata Mela tradition of Thanjavur, the perfection he has attained in performing female roles has brought him several accolades.

The daughter of legendary Malayalam writer Sri. M.T. Vasudevan Nair and renowned dancer Smt. Kalamandalam Saraswathy, Aswathy is trained in Bharatanatyam, Mohiniyattam and Kuchipudi.

'A' grade artists of Doordarshan, Srikanth and Aswathy have directed 'Kavadi Chindu', a global bestseller. They have performed around the world and are now engaged in passing on their legacy through students at the Nrityalaya School for Classical Dances.

**24/01/20 (FRIDAY), 6.30 PM**



## Dr. Ananda Shankar Jayant

Straddling the worlds of art and academics with ease, Dr. Ananda Shankar Jayant has produced a vast body of work spanning mythology, abstraction, poetry, philosophy and humour. Celebrated as an eminent dancer, choreographer and scholar, she was conferred the Padma Shri in 2007 and the Sangeet Natak Akademi Puraskar for Bharatanatyam in 2009 for her immense contribution to the field of classical dance.

Dr. Ananda has conceptualised and created 'Natyarambha', a first-of-its-kind Bharatanatyam practice app which is at the intersection of tradition and technology. A much sought-after speaker, she has graced prestigious platforms such as the Harvard Business School, and her TED talk in 2009 was ranked one among 12 incredible TED talks. As the Artistic Director of Shankarananda Kalakshetra, Ananda remains devoted to training aspiring Bharatanatyam artistes.

24/01/20 (FRIDAY), 8.00 PM











## Reshma U. Raj

A highly accomplished performer who has mastered the complexities of Kuchipudi, Reshma Raj is adept at Simhanandini - a fascinating 18<sup>th</sup> century art form where the dancer sketches the shape of a lion with her footprints. Having been under the tutelage of distinguished Gurus Smt. V. Mythili and Smt. Girija Chandran since the tender age of 3, she is currently undergoing advanced training with Natya Visharada Smt. Kalpana Sreenivas.

She has been conferred with many awards and recognitions, including the National Bal Shree Award in 2000 from the President of India and the Young Talent Award for Classical Dance (2016-17) from the Ministry of Culture. An empanelled artist in India World Cultural Forum and a graded artist of Doordarshan, Reshma has performed at many noted venues in India and abroad.

25/01/20 (SATURDAY), 6.45 PM



### Madhavi Chandran

Blessed with captivating stage presence and impeccable clarity of movements, Madhavi Chandran is looked up to as a rare alchemy of natural-born gift and utmost devotion to the art form. Introduced to classical dance at the age of four by her mother Smt. Girija Chandran, she started training under Padma Bhushan Dhananjayan from the year 2000.

She has undergone twenty years of intensive training in Bharatanatyam, Mohiniyattam, Carnatic Music and Nattuvangam. A recipient of the prestigious National Bal Shree Award in 2005, she also holds a Guinness World Record for being part of 1000 Mohiniyattam dancers performing on a single stage at the same time. An 'A' grade artist of Doordarshan and empanelled by the ICCR, she has performed at noteworthy venues in India such as the Rashtrapathi Bhawan, Kerala Sangheeta Natak Akademi, and Sri Krishna Gana Sabha, as well as international platforms like Cleveland Thyagaraja Festival in the USA, Soorya Festival in UAE.

25/01/20 (SATURDAY), 8.00 PM











## Dr. Sumitha Nair N.

A dancer par excellence, Dr. Sumitha Nair has been performing Mohiniyattam, Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi and Kathakali for over three decades. A Ph.D. in Mohiniyattam from Madras University, she has learned the nuances of the dance form under distinguished Gurus including Padma Shree Awardee Kalamandalam Kshemavathy. She has performed on behalf of the Kerala Tourism Department in Arunachal Pradesh and Calcutta.

The 'Kalathilakam' for four consecutive years in Calicut University 'A' Zone competitions and a recipient of multiple awards such as Rangasree Puraskaram 2015 and Sthree Sakthi Puraskaram 2016, her unique compositions have received much acclaim. Dr. Sumitha is the HOD of the Malayalam Department at Pazhassi Raja N.S.S. College in Kannur.

26/01/20 (SUNDAY), 6.45 PM



### Jyotsna Jagannathan

A phenomenally gifted Bharatanatyam dancer who brings commitment, passion and intelligent execution to the classical form, Jyotsna Jagannathan trained under Sri. A. Lakshmanaswamy for several years and also picked up a repertoire of pieces from Smt. Bragha Bessell. Her current mentor is the much-celebrated icon, Smt. Malavika Sarukkai.

She is the recipient of the coveted Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar from the Government of India and has received several other awards from dance organisations in India. Grace, finesse and style have come to signify her classical renditions. She has given multiple solo performances in India and abroad, and also with Smt. Malavika Sarukkai's group for the acclaimed work 'Thari – The Loom'.

26/01/20 (SUNDAY), 8.00 PM









### **Kalamandalam Veena Varrier**

Exploring the traditional repertoire of Mohiniyattam, Veena Varrier continues on her distinguished creative endeavour through research, practice and teaching. She has completed post-graduation and M.Phil from Kerala Kalamandalam, and is now pursuing doctoral research in the use of movements in Mohiniyattam.

Having trained under famous Kathakali artistes as well, she has been quick to grasp the nuances of these classical dance forms, rendering distinctive performances in India, Mauritius and the UK. Her many recognitions include the Balakrishna Kurup Award and Mukthika Puraskaram. Veena has facilitated several workshops in Mohiniyattam, apart from teaching at the R.L.V. College of Music and Fine Arts.

### **MOHINIYATTAM**

21/01/20 (TUESDAY),  
6.15 PM



### **Mansiya V.P.**

A professional dancer trained in myriad dance forms, Mansiya V.P. is skilled in Bharatanatyam, Kerala Nadanam, Kuchipudi, Mohiniyattam, Kathakali, and Kerala Folk Dance. She has also learned Nattuvangam from Dr. Lakshmi Ramaswamy.

An MA in Bharatanatyam from Madras University and M.Phil in Performing Arts from Kerala Kalamandalam, she has been conferred with prestigious awards including the Yuvaprathibha Award for Kerala Nadanam 2014, Yuvaprathibha Award 2015, and Kerala Nadanam Fellowship 2018. Mansiya has been lauded for captivating stage performances such as at the Chidambaram Nattanjali, Tanjavur, and National Dance Fests.

### **BHARATANATYAM**

22/01/20 (WEDNESDAY),  
6.15 PM



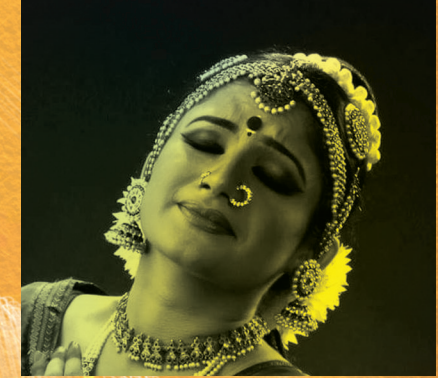
### **Arjun S. Kulathingal**

A devoted pupil of classical dance and a passionate performer, Arjun S. Kulathingal was awarded the title 'Kalaprathibha' of Kerala University three years in a row. Holding a Bachelors in both Arts and Technology, he remains dedicated to taking Kerala's dance forms to the world.

He has given several noteworthy performances at well-known events – Chilanka Nritholsavam, Nishagandhi Onam Fest, Ananthapuri Fest, apart from appearances on television. Arjun has received multiple recognitions such as the 1<sup>st</sup> place in 30<sup>th</sup> National Youth Festival under the category of Classical Dance Solo and 'B' grade Bharatanatyam artist by Doordarshan Kendra.

### **BHARATANATYAM**

23/01/20 (THURSDAY),  
6.15 PM



### **Devika Sajeevan**

An exceptionally talented performer and a budding artiste in Bharatanatyam, Devika Sajeevan has been a disciple of Guru Kalamandalam Leelamani, Smt. Kalakshetra Priya Ranjith and Smt. Geetha Padmakumar. She has performed at the Indian Embassy in Abu Dhabi and represented India in Japan on behalf of the Japan-East Asia cultural exchange programme.

Being a graded artist of Doordarshan and having received a host of recognitions including Jeevan Kalathilakam Award and Nrutha Pratibha Award, Devika has performed at various prestigious stages such as the Vadakkunnathan Temple and Sangeet Natak Academy to name a few.

### **BHARATANATYAM**

25/01/20 (SATURDAY),  
6.15 PM



**SPECIALLY  
CHOREOGRAPHED  
PROGRAMME AS  
PART of**



## **MAHATMA GANDHI - THE FATHER OF OUR NATION**

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, popularly known as Mahatma Gandhi, was born on 2 October, 1869. A lawyer by profession, he chose instead to fight the British by participating in India's freedom struggle. Unlike many other leaders of his time, Gandhiji took the path of peace and non-violence and was supported by a large number of Indians.

He held various movements and protests but all in a peaceful manner. His methods were indeed effective and he played a major role in freeing India from the British rule. Mahatma Gandhi is remembered as one of the greatest freedom fighters. He was a true leader and his ideologies continue to inspire people even today.

LYRICS: **NEETHU N.V.**, CONCEPT & CHOREOGRAPHY: **GIRIJA CHANDRAN & MADHAVI CHANDRAN**, MUSIC: **MATHEW T. ITTY**

## **BHARATHIYAR**

C. Subramaniya Bharathiyar was a poet, freedom fighter and social reformer from Tamil Nadu. He was known as Mahakavi Bharathiyar, the laudatory epithet 'Mahakavi' meaning great poet. His songs on nationalism helped to rally the masses in support of the Indian Independence movement in Tamil Nadu. He maintained good relations with national leaders and outlined his vision for a free India. He published the sensational 'Sudesa Geethangal' in 1908.

As a social reformer, he advocated gender equality and women emancipation. He was totally against the caste system, setting an example by removing his sacred thread. He opposed child marriage and dowry, and supported widow remarriage.

Bharathi's prophecy about the independence of India came true two and a half decades after his demise. He did not live for himself but for the people and the nation. That is why he is respectfully called Bharathiyar.

LYRICS: **SUBRAMANIYA BHARATHIYAR**, CONCEPT & CHOREOGRAPHY: **GIRIJA CHANDRAN & MADHAVI CHANDRAN**, MUSIC: **ABHIRAM THULASI JAYACHANDRAN**

**26/01/20 (SUNDAY), 6.15 PM**





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