



Natyapadhanjali School Of Dance
Presents...

Bharathanatyam Arangetram

of

DIYA & RIYA

Disciples of

GURU SMT. PRATHIBHA MANNIL

15TH AUG 2026 @ CLAYTON HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM, ST LOUIS, MO.

गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णुः गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः गुरुः साक्षात् परब्रह्म तस्मै श्री गुरवे नमः



Acharya

Smt. Prathibha
Mannil



Guru Smt. Prathibha Mannil is a passionate and accomplished Bharatanatyam dancer who began her artistic journey at the age of five. Over the years, she has trained extensively in Bharatanatyam and is also a skilled performer in Kuchipudi and Mohiniyattam.

She had the privilege of learning under the esteemed parampara of the legendary dancing couple, Padmabhushan Natyacharyas Dhananjayans, receiving rigorous training in various aspects of Bharatanatyam. Her debut performance was at the prestigious Museum Theatre in Chennai, where she portrayed Lord Ayyappa at the age of five.

Since then, Guru Prathibha Mannil has performed widely across India and internationally. An innovative choreographer, she has created and presented numerous productions, including Pothumarai, Bharathi, World Music, and Shakthi. Her work often blends Bharatanatyam with other art forms such as Indian folk dances, European ballet, and Sri Lankan Kandyan dance. She has also choreographed and performed at prestigious festivals in India and abroad, collaborating with organizations such as KHNA, TANA, and FeTNA.

Guru Prathibha Mannil has served as a judge for various dance competitions across North America and India. She is the Artistic Director of Natyapadhanjali School of Dance in St. Louis, Missouri, which she has led for over 23 years. The institution is affiliated with several universities and cultural organizations.

She is also the Missouri Coordinator for Griffin College London (International Exam Board, UK). In recognition of her contributions, she received the Excellent Community Service Award on September 22, 2024, from Griffin College London for establishing Natyapadhanjali as the first internationally accredited fine arts school in Missouri.

Her dedication to the arts extends into education and outreach, as she regularly conducts lecture-demonstrations on Indian classical dance, particularly Bharatanatyam, at various institutions including the St. Louis Ethical Society, Maryville University, Citi Group, and Asia Pacific Islander cultural awareness programs. Guru Prathibha Mannil was selected as the mentor artist for the 40th Annual Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program by the Missouri Arts Council and the University of Missouri's Museum of Art & Archaeology.

In addition to her artistic accomplishments, she is a licensed Physical Therapist practicing in Missouri. By integrating her professional expertise into her teaching, she has helped her students achieve exceptional flexibility, strength, and endurance, enabling them to perform complex movements with ease. Over the years, she has trained more than 1,000 students.

Shishya

Kum. Diya Naidu

As Diya prepares to graduate as a rising senior in high school, she reflects with gratitude on the experiences that have shaped her into a compassionate leader, dedicated student, and lifelong learner. She believes in leading with empathy, serving others with purpose, and embracing every opportunity to grow. Whether advocating for mental health, volunteering in her community, performing Bharatanatyam, or teaching Taekwondo, she strives to make a positive impact on those around her.

Academics have always been a priority, and she has challenged herself through a rigorous course load while balancing numerous extracurricular commitments. Her passion for science, research, and helping others has inspired her to pursue a career in medicine, where she hopes to combine scientific discovery with compassionate patient care. Along the way, she was honored to receive the State Certificate of Recognition from HOSA Missouri for her dedication and achievements in health science education.





Leadership and service are central to Diya's life. She served as the 2025 Team Building Committee Chair, fostering collaboration and strengthening relationships among her peers. She is also honored to serve as Vice President of Communications for Francis Howell High School's National Honor Society during the 2026-2027 school year.

To promote community service and mental health awareness, she co-founded and serves as Co-President of her school's NAMI on Campus chapter and Francis Howell Key Club, leading service initiatives and encouraging others to serve with compassion. Outside the classroom, Diya has developed discipline and resilience through martial arts, earning the international rank of 3rd-degree black belt. As a Taekwondo instructor, she mentors younger students, helping them build confidence, perseverance, and respect while strengthening her own leadership skills.

Dance has been one of the most transformative parts of her life. Since beginning Bharatanatyam at age six under the guidance of Guru Smt. Prathibha Mannil, she has spent twelve years developing discipline, endurance, grace, and perseverance. The countless hours of training have taught her patience, resilience, and the pursuit of excellence. She is honored to share this performance as a reflection of years of dedication to this beautiful classical art form.

As she prepares for the next chapter, Diya remains committed to using her education, leadership, and service to make a meaningful difference. She hopes to continue advocating for others, advancing medical research, and improving lives, carrying forward the values of compassion, perseverance, and hard work.



Shishya

Kum. Riya Naidu

As Riya begins her freshman year of high school, she is excited to embrace new opportunities, challenge herself academically, and continue growing as a student, athlete, performer, and leader. She strives to approach everything she does with kindness, compassion, dedication, and a willingness to step outside her comfort zone.



Academics have always been a priority for Riya. She has consistently demonstrated academic excellence, earning the 4.0 Academic Excellence Award from 2023–2026. As she begins high school, she is challenging herself with a full Honors course load because she enjoys learning and pushing herself to reach her highest potential. Her excellence in mathematics was recognized with a Mathlete Certificate from the Noetic Learning Math Contest, highlighting her analytical reasoning and problem-solving skills.





Dance has been one of the most transformative parts of Riya's life. She began training at the age of five and has spent the past ten years continuing to grow and evolve under the guidance of guru, Smt. Prathibha Mannil. Through years of rigorous practice, dance has strengthened her discipline, perseverance, resilience, physical endurance, and self-confidence. Each performance reflects not only her technical growth but also her passion for this beautiful art form and the dedication required to pursue excellence.

Athletics have also played an important role in shaping Riya's character. She is passionate about tennis and looks forward to representing her school while continuing to develop her skills. She is also an internationally ranked 3rd-Degree Black Belt, an achievement that reflects years of commitment, discipline, and perseverance. Martial arts has instilled in her the values of respect, self-control, leadership, and determination.

Looking ahead, Riya hopes to pursue a career that combines psychology and law, where she can better understand human behavior, advocate for others, and make a meaningful difference in people's lives. As she embarks on this exciting new chapter, she looks forward to excelling academically, deepening her involvement in dance and athletics, serving her community, becoming active in school organizations, and embracing every opportunity for personal growth.



Bharathanatyam

Bha - Bhava, Ra - Ragam, Ta - Talam

A classical dance form from the South India and is normally accompanied by classical Carnatic music derived its name after the sage Bharata Muni who is the author of the thesis on dramaturgy - *The Natyashastra*.



Arangetram

The word "Arangetram" holds deep cultural meaning. Derived from ancient Tamil, it emphasizes the significance of the stage. For dancers, it's a rite of passage indicating maturity and expertise.

Arangetram symbolizes dedication to an ancient art form. The ceremony strengthens community ties by celebrating cultural heritage.

Arangetram embodies values of respect, dedication, and artistic growth.



Program

“Angikam bhuvanam yasya Vachikam
sarva vangmayam Aharyam chandra
taradi Tam numah satvikam sivam.”

Angika -

The art of gestures and body language.

Vachika -

The harmony of song, recitation, music, and rhythm.

Aharya -

The visual splendor of stage setting, costume,
and makeup.

Satvika -

The profound emotional and mental connection of
the artist.

Program Starts at 3 pm....

Pushpanjali

Jathiswaram

Shabdam

~ Interval ~

Varnam

Alarulu Kuriyaga

~ Interval ~

Keerthanam - Ananda Nadamidum

Thandavam

Thillana

Mangalam

Guru Vandhanam &

Closing Remarks

Followed by Reception & Dinner

Pushpanjali



Raagam: Vasantha

Thaalam: Roopakam

Composer: Shri Vadivelu (Tanjore Quartet)

Jathiswaram is a pure nritta item in Bharatanatyam. It focuses on adavus (basic steps), which are strung together to form korvais (sequences). These korvais alternate with swaras (musical notes). The performance emphasizes rhythm, body geometry, precision, and coordination, without involving abhinaya.

Ganesha Krithi:

Raagam: Chakravakam.

(named Toyavegavaahini by Dikshitar).

Thaalam: Aadhi.

Music Composer: Shri. Muthuswami Dikshitar

"Gajānanayutam" is a beautiful composition on Lord Ganesha, who is the elephant-faced deity and the remover of obstacles. The composer constantly sings the praises of Ganeshwara, the Lord of the Devas, who is revered by Brahma, Indra, and all celestial beings.

"In this krithi, Lord Ganesha is described as the one whose lotus-like hands and feet are worshipped by the Bhūtagaṇas. He is celebrated for his valor and skill in vanquishing the demon Kunjara. The composition also glorifies him as the elder brother of Guruguha and as the embodiment of the sacred Praṇava (Om), the primordial cosmic sound.

This piece is a heartfelt invocation seeking the blessings of Lord Ganesha, who bestows wisdom, prosperity, and success while removing all obstacles from the path of the performance.

Jathiswaram



Shabdam

Thandai Muzhanga:

Raagam: Ragamalika (Kamboji, Simhendra Madhyamam, Hindolam, Mohanam, and Surutti)

Thaalam: Misra Chaapu

Music Composer: Shri. Turayur Rajagopal Sharma

"Thandai Muzhanga Shabdam" is a unique and captivating composition that beautifully portrays the life of Lord Muruga, Karthikeya, tracing his journey from childhood to his divine marriage with 6 stages. The poet first presents Muruga as an adorable child, taking his first steps while the anklets on his tiny feet ring melodiously. He then depicts the young boy who charms everyone with his radiant smile and words as sweet as honey.

As the narrative unfolds, Muruga appears as the handsome adolescent Kumāra, the son of Lord Shiva, adorned with dark, graceful eyebrows and a bright red tilakam on his forehead. The composition then celebrates him as the valiant warrior who arrives mounted on his blue peacock, carrying his divine spear (Vel) and showering his devotees with blessings and grace. Finally, the poet describes Muruga/Karthikeya assuming the guise of an elderly man to test the devotion and steadfast love of Valli before marrying her. This divine episode culminates at Tiruchendur Murugan Temple, one of the six sacred abodes (Ārupadai Veedu) of Lord Muruga.

Through vivid imagery and devotional fervor, Thandai Muzhanga Shabdam presents a complete and enchanting portrait of Lord Muruga—from the innocence of childhood to the fulfillment of his divine union with Valli



INTERVAL

Varnam

Varnam: Rupamu Juchi

Ragam: Thodi

Thaalam: Adi

Music Composer: Muthuswamy Dikshitar



"Roopamu Juchi" Varnam is a graceful and expressive Bharatanatyam Varnam that revolves around the central theme of nāyika's intense admiration and longing upon beholding the Lord's divine beauty.

In this composition, the heroine is completely captivated the moment she sees the Lord's enchanting roopam (form). Her heart is instantly drawn toward him, and she becomes immersed in love, wonder, and surrender.

The pallavi expresses her overwhelmed state—having seen His divine form, she is unable to contain her emotions and approaches Him with deep affection, yet also with gentle hesitation and humility.

In the anupallavi, she continues to describe His irresistible beauty and divine qualities, acknowledging that His presence alone removes sorrow and uplifts the mind. Yet, she wonders at His playful distance, as though testing her devotion.

The muktāyi svaram expands the emotional landscape, portraying her steady, unwavering contemplation of His glory. Every thought is filled with His form, His virtues, and His divine grace.

In the caranam, the varnam reaches its emotional peak. The nayika expresses intense śṛṅgāra bhakti, where longing and devotion merge. She pleads for His attention, unable to bear separation from the One whose beauty has completely captured her heart. Every phrase reflects surrender, devotion, and the sweetness of divine love.

Essence

"Roopamu Juchi" beautifully blends devotion and aesthetic longing, portraying how a single glimpse of the Divine transforms into lifelong absorption in love and surrender.



Alarulu Kuriyaka

Alarulu Kuriyaka:

Raagam: shankarabharana

Thaalam: Adi

Music Composer: Shri. Annamaacharya

Alarulu Kuriyaka, Alarmel Mangai" is a beautiful and devotional composition describing Goddess Lakshmi, especially in her form as Alarmel Mangai, the golden-hued goddess of prosperity and compassion, who is the consort of Lord Venkateswara. The phrase "Alarulu kuriyaka" evokes the imagery of blossoming flowers raining down, symbolizing auspiciousness, divine grace, purity, and celestial celebration. In this composition, the Goddess is envisioned as radiantly beautiful, seated in divine splendor, showering blessings to all.



INTERVAL

Keerthanam

Ananda nadamidum:

Raagam: kedaragaula

Thaalam: Aadhi

Music Composer: Paapanaasam Shivan

Endowed with Music, Wisdom and Ecstatic Silence, in the unifying ether, He, the Lord of Chidambaram dances the Anandha Tandavam.
Holding the deer and Damaru in His hands, wearing the snakes and crescent moon, He dances with His feet engulfing the skies and resonating with the sounds of anklets.
The Ruler of the fourteen worlds and the consort of Sivagami, whose speech is as sweet as the parrot. The embodiment of Tat - Tvam - Asi; those are the feet that devotees dutifully worship daily. With celestials, sages and the surrendered singing His glory, and His matted hair swaying, He dances the Anandha Tandavam.



Thandavam

Raagam: Raagamalika

Thaalam: Thalamalika

This is a soul-stirring hymn in praise of Shiva, the Supreme Lord who embodies auspiciousness, compassion, and eternal consciousness. The composition extols Shiva as Shambho, the bestower of happiness and well-being; Karuṇākara, the ocean of mercy and compassion; and Swayambho, the self-existent and eternal One.

The lyrics paint a vivid image of Lord Shiva adorned with matted locks carrying the sacred river Ganga, the crescent moon shining upon His head, and the trident symbolizing His supreme power over creation, preservation, and dissolution. Beyond His majestic form, the song celebrates Shiva as the indwelling presence in every being—the eternal source of peace, wisdom, and liberation.

This composition evokes profound devotion (bhakti) and serenity (shanta rasa), inviting both the performer and the audience to immerse themselves in the boundless grace and compassion of Lord Shiva.





Thillana

Raagam: Ragamalika (Hindolam, Mohanam, Vasantha, Kaanada, and Kalyani)

Thaalam: Adi

Music Composer: Shri K. N. Dandayuthapani Pillai

Thillana is primarily an abstract nritta piece in Bharatanatyam that emphasizes rhythm (laya) and melody (swaram), usually concluding with a short slokha. It showcases sculpted poses, intricate footwork, and brisk adavus, highlighting the dancer's technical precision and mastery. This particular Thillana is composed in praise of Lord Shiva, the cosmic dancer and God of dance.

"Devathanam shirasthasthu
Gurunamasya samsthithaha
Vakshastha-schaiva vipranam
Seshetva niyamo bhaveth"

Mangalam

Mangalam is the traditional concluding piece of the Bharatanatyam Margam (repertoire). It brings the recital to a serene and graceful close, invoking auspicious blessings from the Divine, the revered Guru, and the assembled audience. As the final offering of the performance, it expresses heartfelt gratitude for the successful completion of the recital and seeks blessings for peace, prosperity, and well-being for all.

Special Thanks

Event Master of Ceremony

- Shri. Sudhir Padmanabha Kozhikal

Student Program Compere

- Kum. Lekha Mulinti

Photography & Videography

- Shri. Manhar Bhaktha & Team

To all Family members & Friends for
their blessings and making the event a
great success

Proud Parents

Smt. Sunitha Chaliceemala &

Shri. Bhanuprasad Vellore



Orchestra

Shri. Gajendran Ganesan - Mridangam

Shri. Kumardas Chandran - Vocal

Shri. Radhakrishnan Selvaprasad - Violin

Shri. Kadapa Raghavendrachar - Flute





!!! Journey Begins !!!!