



bhakti इरिंगारा
SCHOOL OF CLASSICAL AND CONTEMPORARY INDIAN DANCE

Bharatanatyam Arangetram of

Sharanya Parboo & Tulasi Parboo



What is a Bharatanatyam Arangetram?



A Bharatanatyam Arangetram is the debut solo performance of a Bharatanatyam dancer, thus marking their transition from a student to a professional performer. The word Arangetram is derived from Tamil, where "Arangam" means stage and "Etram" means ascent. This, signifies the dancer's first official solo stage performance.

Traditionally, an Arangetram is performed after years of rigorous training under a guru, once the student has mastered the fundamental techniques, expressions (abhinaya), and intricate rhythms of Bharatanatyam.

While it signifies a milestone, it is not the end of learning but rather the beginning of a lifelong journey in this beautiful art form.

Guru Shrimathi Sivakalay Pillay

Shrimati Sivakalay Pillay graduated in Bharatanatyam in 1992 under the tutelage of Shrimati Manormani Govender. She taught dance for a period of eight years in Durban before relocating to Johannesburg, and in 2012 founded "Bhakti Sringara, School of South Indian Classical and Contemporary Dance". Shrimati Sivakalay has performed at a postgraduate level at numerous events with various accomplished artists and musicians, and has undertaken further studies under the tutelage of Vaishnavi Vignesh Raja from Chennai.

Sivakalay is also a qualified attorney by profession, having lectured at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and Varsity College in law, clerked for the former Chief Justice Chaskalson at the Constitutional Court and practiced as a lawyer up to Senior Associate level at Webber Wentzel. Sivakalay is currently at Principal level at Absa Corporate and Investment Bank as Regulatory Lead.

Guru Shrimathi Sivakalay Pillay's Message To Kumari Sharanya

Kumari Sharanya's performance today is a celebration of years of rigorous practice, commitment, perseverance, and dedication. Her Arangetram is a culmination of the journey taken from the age of 7 years to this point in her life where she has matured and grown in this classical art form.

I have watched Kumari Sharanya over the years with such admiration for her passion and commitment to Bharatanatyam. She always came to classes excited to learn and continued to show her love for this art form over the years. From a young age she has had excellent poise, with a strong grasp of the fundamental requirements of Bharatanatyam such as "low bending of the knees"

When Kumari Sharanya witnessed an Arangetram, many years ago, she immediately developed a yearning to graduate at some point and that has been her unwavering aspiration over the years. Kumari Sharanya worked hard on facial expression, despite her view that she could not do it. Today, she is absorbed into the characters, enjoying the emotions and illustrating the feeling beautifully.

I am privileged to have watched Kumari Sharanya grow and progress over the years to meet her goal to graduate. I wish Kumari Sharanya immense growth far beyond today's achievement, because I see her always finding infinite joy in dancing. Postgraduate dancing will lift her to a divine level that her soul aspires for.

Guru Shrimathi Sivakalay Pillay's Message To Kumari Tulasi

Kumari Tulasi joined Bhakti Sringara a few years later after Kumari Sharanya, at the age of 7, and she too had such a strong love for this beautiful art form. Her dancing has been naturally neat and stylised from very young age. I used to ask her to perform her steps in front of my senior students (at the age of 8), to illustrate the level of neatness and firm footwork required.

Kumari Tulasi did some soul searching over a brief period of time and pleasantly surprised me when she returned with renewed passion for Bharatanatyam. She felt more grounded and her commitment to learn and perform this art form has been unwavering ever since. She is a bright and a quick learner, but that in itself is not always enough.

She has the diligence and attentiveness that has played a major role in bringing her to this juncture. I was incredibly impressed with how Kumari Tulasi caught up so quickly, not just to her age group, but to the senior students as well, despite the complexity of the dances.

Her facial expression has matured beautifully and she naturally captures her audience with her intensity. Once again, I asked her to perform before my senior students to illustrate strong facial expression.

It gives me great joy to have walked this journey with Kumari Tulasi to reach this momentous milestone in her life. My wish for Kumari Tulasi is also to grow in her postgraduate career as a dancer, as her passion for it will hold her in good stead, and she will experience divine joy beyond her dreams.



Message from Kumari Sharanya Parboo



As I approach this long-awaited milestone, I would like to take a moment to reflect on my dance journey which started at the age of 7-year-old. My passion for this art form has always kept me intrigued, yearning to learn more about my religion, allowing me to connect and understand my roots, preserving the unique treasures of our culture and understanding the different forms of the deities we worship in our day-to-day practices. Although we have had the privilege to learn one of the oldest dance forms of Indian Classical Dance, it has simultaneously worked hand in hand with the Balvikas program founded by Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The Balvikas program has taught us the values of Tapas (discipline) and Bhakthi (devotion) which are qualities that I use in every area of my life.

My love for dance was nurtured not only by a vibrant class of dancers and a loving teacher but also by the unwavering encouragement of my family. They made every effort to attend each performance, supporting and inspiring me to pursue and truly enjoy this beautiful art form.

To my aunts, who motivated me to dance at the Sai Organisation—thank you for your keen eye, for correcting even the smallest details in my posture, and for always reminding me to smile. This entire journey has been a dedication to our ultimate Guru – Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

This day would have not been possible without my Dearest Guru Sivakalay. Thank you Teacher Kalay for the love and patience that emits from your being. It is something that I very much admire about you. Thank you for always giving us your precious time and doing it with a smile. Your values of perseverance and dedication to excellence will remain with me forever. I am forever grateful to have walked into your class as a nervous 7 year old and now I walk out as a confident young lady with grace.

Message from Kumari Tulasi Parboo

My dance journey began at the young age of 7, inspired by watching my older sister dance. I decided then that I wanted to follow in her footsteps. It was not always an easy path, there were times when I questioned why I was doing this whilst the rest of my class were eager to begin.

As time went on, my interest in Bharatanatyam began to fade, and dancing started to feel more like a chore than a joy. I remember telling my mom how much I disliked it and how I wanted to quit, and for years, she didn't give in to my pleas. But after much persistence, she finally said yes.

I left dance for about a year and turned my focus to golf. However, during the year-end dance exhibition which I attended with my family to watch my sister perform, I was overwhelmed with a sudden feeling of emptiness. In that moment, watching my sister on stage, I knew that this emptiness was something that only dance could fill. I missed the practices, the friends who had become family, and most of all, I missed my teacher, who is like a second mother to me.

After the performance, I spoke to my mom about how I was feeling, and she understood exactly what I was going through. She knew this moment would come. Without hesitation, she put me back into dance, and I could not have been happier.

It wasn't an easy start, relearning everything and perfecting what I had already learned was a challenge. But I was given the chance to pursue my dream again, and for that, I am forever grateful.

Throughout this journey, my teacher, Guru Sivakalay, played a pivotal role in helping me get back on track. She was always there, guiding me with patience and support. Teacher Kalay, I will always be deeply grateful to you, for reigniting my passion for dance and for your unwavering patience as I found my way.

As I stand here today, dancing on this stage, I am filled with emotion and immense gratitude for all the people who supported me along this journey. I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to my parents, whose dedication to ensuring that I attended dance practice every Saturday for the past seven years has been unwavering. To my grandparents, aunts, and uncles, who also supported me through this journey, I am deeply appreciative.

Most of all, I am grateful to my Swami, Sri Sathya Sai Baba, whose grace has allowed me the opportunity in this lifetime to learn this beautiful, ancient art form.



Programme

Natesha Kauthuvam

Raagam: **Hamsadwani** Taalam: **Adi** Choreography: **Smt. Manormani Govender**
An invocation to Lord Nataraja who is the One who performs the Cosmic Dance.

Allaripu

Raagam: **Naatai** Taalam: **Tisra Ekam**

Allaripu literally means “the blossoming of the flower”. It is the first item in a Bharatanatyam dance recital. Beginning with a standing posture, the movements of the neck, eyes, shoulder, arms, and hands are introduced with great charm followed by torso and finally legs and feet.

Jathiswaram

Raagam: **Kalyani** Taalam: **Rupakam**

A Jathiswaram is a dance composition that focuses on rhythmic patterns and melodic passages, rather than lyrics. It has multiple sections of different lengths, with transitions between slow and fast tempos.

Varnam – Adhi Moham Konden

Raagam: **Shankarabharanam** Taalam: **Adi**

A Varnam is a complex and elaborate composition in Carnatic music and consists of lyrics, and swara passages.

Kaliyuga Varadhan

Raagam: **Brindavaana Saaranga** Taalam: **Adi**
Composer: **Periyasaami Tooran** Choreography: **Smt. Vaishnavi Vignesh Raja**

In praise of Lord Muruga who is the granter of boons in the present dark age of Kali (Kali-yuga).

Tandana Padam – Bhramam Okate

Raagam: **Bowli** Taalam: **Adi** Choreography: **Smt. Manormani Govender**

A deeply meaningful devotional bhajan which tells the devotees that though there are differences in the way people lead their lives, the Supreme Spirit is one.

Stotram – Aigiri

Choreography: **Smt. Vaishnavi Vignesh Raja and Smt. Sivakalay Pillay**

A hymn or ode on the killing of the demon Mahishasuran by Goddess Durga, the daughter of the mountain.

Thillana

Raagam: **Dhanashree** Taalam: **Adi** Choreography: **Smt. Sivakalay Pillay**

This is the finale and the most brilliant and liveliest of pieces. An absolute delight to watch.

Mangalam

Raagam: **Chenchurutti** Taalam: **Adi**

A short prayer performed at the end of the Bharatanatyam recital to wish well-being on all beings, to the Lord, to the Guru, and lastly to the guests.

Message from Parents

As we reflect and celebrate this momentous occasion, our hearts are filled with immense joy and pride. We happily remember the first lesson the girls attended they were excited but nervous. All they wanted to do at first was adorn themselves in their outfits. The first few years of just learning steps was difficult and they did not see how it was going to form the beautiful dances they now know. This Arangetram marks a significant milestone not only in their dance journey but also in their lives.

This achievement is a testament to the power of tradition, culture, and family values. It is the fulfillment of a cherished dream, born from a grandmother's deep desire to pass on the beauty and discipline of Bharatanatyam to future generations.

As parents, we feel blessed to have nurtured our daughters' love for dance, music, and culture. Despite the demands of academic and social commitments, they have embraced this art form with dedication, growing into compassionate and confident young women with a profound appreciation for their heritage.

Through this journey, they have learned invaluable life lessons such as perseverance, teamwork, and self-expression. We have watched them laugh, struggle, grow, and mature, and it has been a privilege to witness their transformation.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Guru Sivakalay for her unwavering love, dedication, and guidance. Her support has been instrumental in shaping our daughters' into the talented and confident individuals they are today.

Dearest Sharanya and Tulasi, we are incredibly proud of your achievement. May the resilience and passion you have shown continue to guide you in all that you pursue. May you inspire future generations in our family to experience the joy of dance and carry forward this beautiful tradition.

With love and gratitude,
Mum and Dad

