



Neelima

Kuchipudi Nritya

Heritage of
Andhra Pradesh



Kuchipudi Nritya

Indian dance is a culmination of the arts of Dramaturgy, Theatre, Sculpture, Literature, Prose, Poetry, Music, Lyric, Rythm, Movement and Expression. It is not just a mere geometric perfection and presistivity in movement and expression but an inner quest towards divinity. Kuchipudi Nritya exemplifies the heart of Andhra Culture in its rich variety and flambuoyance clutched in the melliflous language of Telugu. It has its origins in the classical dance theatre known as the Bhagawata Mela Natakam in a small village known as Kuchipudi in Andhra Pradesh. Based on the tenets of Natya Shastra this dance form is a unique combination of the Lokadharmi and the Natyadharmi or the folk and the classical elements which give room for innovations in the traditional format for choreography. Charecterised by its fast rythmic tempo, eloquent stylished dramatic expression, rich aharya abhinaya and excessive charecterization in the sanchari bhavas it preserves in it, the pristine purity of the rich ancient heritage. Its scintillating rythm and fluid style captivates all, the dancer and the connoissuer alike.

About the Gurus

Padma Bhushan Dr. Vempati Chinna Satyam

Dr. Vempati Chinna Satyam an institution in himself, is synonymous with the art form and needs no introduction. Hailing from a traditional family of kuchipudi artists, Dr. Vempati following the footsteps of his great gurus Sri Vedantam Lakshminarayana Sastry and Tadepalli Perraya Sastry, took upon himself the task of reviving the almost dying art form and dedicated his lifetime for propagating it and restoring it to its former pristine glory. While most of the artists were taking up teaching profession as a means for pecuniary benefits by commercializing the art form, Dr. Vempati started his own institutions one at Chennai named as the **KUCHIPUDI ART ACADEMY** and another at vishakapatnam as **KUCHIPUDI KALAKSHETRA** and started teaching the art free of charge. The maestro has composed 180 solo pieces and 15 dance dramas which are critically and internationally acclaimed masterpieces that stand testimony on the sands of time for their exquisite sophistry, visualization and technicality in choreography. A man of principles and simple living Dr. Vempati believes that art is just not a destination that is reached but an eternal journey in the quest for perfection and that mere dependence on glamour and influence will not help develop the art form. Dedication, involvement and commitment can only help develop the art

Shri Hare Ram Murthy

Principal - Kuchipudi Kalakshetra

Born in Kuchipudi, the birthplace of the art form, Shri Hari Rama Murthy is one of the finest exponents and disciple of the legendary Padmabhushan Dr. Vempati Chinna Satyam. He underwent training at Kuchipudi Art Academy, Madras. Shri Hari Rama Murthy started teaching at kuchipudi kalakshetra since the year 1986 and is currently the principal of the institution. He has participated in the major dance festivals in India

including the Konark, Kajuraho and the Sangeet Natak Academy festivals. He has participated in the festivals of India held at Russia (1987), Germany (1992) and the first world music and theatre festival held at Netherlands in 1999. He has accompanied Dr. Satyam in every tour weather in India or abroad since 1984. He has played major roles in masters ballets and has enthralled audiences with his captivating performances in U.S.A, Canada and Europe. Principled, simple, hard working and a man of composure, Shri Rama Murthy is a source of inspiration, who constantly endeavors to bring out the best in his students. Dedication and involvement are his key attributes, which he passes on to his students at Kalakshetra. He is just not a practioner and a guru but a friend, philosopher and guide to his students who strongly believes that art is a way of life in the quest for excellence. He is ably assisted in his artistic and creative pursuits by his wife and companion Smt. Bhanu.

About the Artist

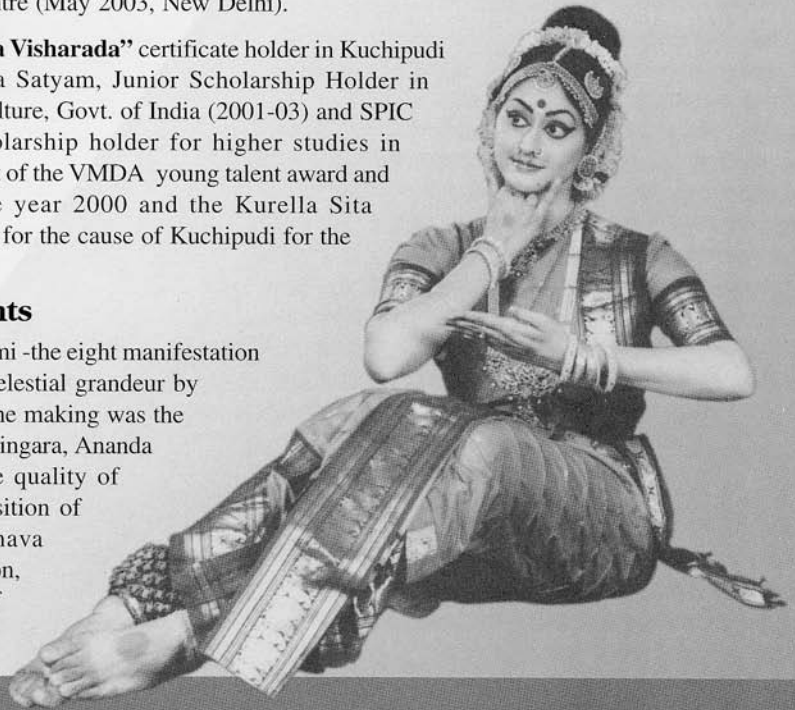
NEELIMA's fulfilment as a dancer does not lie in the scale of her achievements but in the continous quest to learn more about the art form she has loved ever since she took the first step on the dance floor. Groomed under the tutelage and guidance of Shri Hari and chiselled to perfection under Dr. Vempati since 1987 she is one of the young talented performer and practioner of Kuchipudi. Her mysterious sensivity for rythmic precision, aesthetic elegance of sculputuresque posture and sophistry in expression are all inspired by a measure of natural impulse.

Over the years she has given about 100 solo and group recitals all over India in which the major full length recitals are Kuchipudi Mahotsav (1993), Nrityotsava (1996, Anasuya Arts Academy), Kuchipudi Nrityotsav(1997,Central Sangeet Natak Academy), Vishaka Utsav (1996&1998, Ministry of Tourism, Govt of India), Sagar Utsav (1999, Dept. of Culture, Govt. of A.P.), 4th Biennial World Telugu Conference 2000, Gunghroo Festival (2001, Ustad Allaudin Khan Sangeet Academy, Govt. of M.P,Bhopal), Konark Music and Dance Festival (2002), Annual Music and Dance Festival (Dec 2002 Chennai), Tour of Orissa (Jan 2003, Regional Cultural Exchange Program sponsored by South Zone Cultural Centre), India International Centre (May 2003, New Delhi).

Apart from these she is a “**Natya Visharada**” certificate holder in Kuchipudi issued by Dr. Vempati Chinna Satyam, Junior Scholarship Holder in Kuchipudi from the Dept of Culture, Govt. of India (2001-03) and SPIC MACAY”s GURUKUL scholarship holder for higher studies in abhinaya. She is also a receipt of the VMDA young talent award and Ugadi Talent Awards for the year 2000 and the Kurella Sita Mahalakshmi Kala Puruskaram for the cause of Kuchipudi for the year 2001.

A Few Press Comments

The presentation of Ashta lakshmi -the eight manifestation of Godess Lakshmi in all the celestial grandeur by **K. NEELIMA**, a danseuse in the making was the star item of the evening.Be it Sringara, Ananda or Vira Rasa, with delectable quality of precision and beauty her exposition of the various facets of Rasabhava mirrored her fecund imagination, spontaneity and appreciation of



the nuances of the composition. Neelima's footwork, full of lithic grace is indicative of her dedication to the art

- *Indian Express March 1997*

The Lekha and Sakunalu episodes from Bhamakalapam presented by Neelima sans exuberance that is so common in classical dance recitals nowadays, stood out as a paradigm of balance between nritta, nritya and natya.

- *The Hindu July 1997*

With a flair for expression, her recital was impressive. While her presentation of slokas from Narayaneeyam highlighting the grandeur of Lord Krishna was pleasing, her delineation of Sivaashtakam delighted the audience. Her exposition of Lekha from Bhamakalapam with varied sancharibhavas of expressional nuances was impressive.

- *Indian Express June 2001*

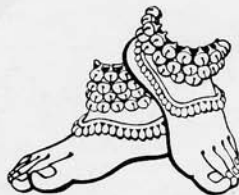
Elan and aesthetics marked Neelima Raju's dance recital. Marakathamanimayachela of Utthukadu Venkata Subbaiyar highlighting the childhood pranks of Lord Krishna stood testimony to the danseuse's ability in striking an aesthetic balance of nritta and nritya.

- *The Hindu June 2001*

While the Sivaashtakam presenting the various expressions of Lord Shiva captivated the hearts of the audience, the presentation of Ras, an expression from a well-known composition by Goswami Tulasidas proved that Kuchipudi is traditional among all the styles. Audience was spellbound by the performance of Neelima who performed on the thalli. She was successful in leaving a memorable mark in the hearts of the audience by presenting various Ras on one subject.

Gunghroo Festival

- *The Hitvada Aug 2001*



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