

Akādemi presents

MARGAM

Margam, meaning path or way, is the traditional format in which Bharatanatyam has been performed since the early 19th century.

DAREDEVAS

Since 2005 Akademi's Artist Development programme DAREDEVAS has nurtured the next generation of South Asian classical dancers. As part of a programme relaunch, this evening pilots a new focus for DAREDEVAS.

This new direction aims to enable dance artists to collaborate with live musicians. Counteracting the boundaries of space, time and support, we aim to produce dance artists that have honed the specific skills needed for working with live music. We want to negotiate new and stimulating partnerships, resulting in high quality touring productions.

Akademi is currently seeking partners to support this scheme, aiming to embed it within its core development programme.



#MARGAM

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Akādemi



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THE ARTISTS



Sooraj Subramaniam

Sooraj's first guru was his grandmother, Poovallappil Lakshmikutty Amma, under whose unapologetic urging, a love for art was born. He trained in Bharatanatyam and Odissi with Ramli Ibrahim, a visionary and pioneer of dance in Malaysia, and was later coached by the generous Stella Johnson into pursuing a diploma in ballet and contemporary dance. In London he trained in Kathak with Urja Thakore. Currently he lives in Belgium, works with contemporary dance companies, and spends holidays in India watching much dance, enjoying filter coffee, and complaining about the weather.



Nina Rajarani MBE

Nina has been running the Srishti organisation from the Harrow Arts Centre since 1991, comprising a dance school, a touring professional dance company, a youth group and an outreach education wing. In 2006 Nina won the Place Prize, Europe's largest choreographic competition sponsored by Bloomberg, and in 2009 she was awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours in recognition of her Services to South Asian Dance. In 2012, Nina was commissioned by Harrow Council to create new work for Her Majesty the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Nina is one of the Faculty's founder committee member and is a senior Bharatanatyam examiner for the ISTD.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND STAFF

Artist Development & Productions: Nina Head • **Lighting Designer:** Stuart Walton

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Akademi Team: Mira Kaushik, Tim Foxon, Monique Deletant Bell, Antareepa Thakur, Christina Christou, Nina Head, Sydney Rae, Amelia Hart, Claire Farmer, Rohanne Udall, Holly Morris, Catherine Ibbotson and Anita Srivastava.



Y Yadavan

Yadavan trained in Sri Lanka under Sangeeta Bhooshanam S Balasingam and later in Chennai, India, under Sangeeta Kalanidhi B Rajam Iyer. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Indian music from Chennai University and a Diploma from the Music Academy, Chennai. Providing vocal accompaniment for dance performances and *mridangam arangetrans* worldwide, he has worked across Europe, in Australia, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, India, Canada and the US. Collaborating with his wife Nina Rajarani since 2001, Yadavan has toured with Srishti nationally and internationally. He runs classes in Karnatic vocal and teaches the music component of the Bharatanatyam syllabus at ISTD.



Prathap Ramachandra

Prathap is an internationally acclaimed percussionist, specialising in playing mridangam, ghatam, khanjira and also konnakool (vocal percussion). Having trained initially with his brother Prakash Ramachandra, and later under K. N. Krishnamurthy, he has performed in some of the biggest festivals around the globe. Prathap also leads as Percussion Conductor and Composer for Britain's only Indian youth orchestra, SAMYO. Prathap's experience in cross-cultural collaborations has translated into the creation of his own band "Rhythm Yatra" (Journey of Rhythms), which aims to showcase the intricate and nuanced yet dynamic and flamboyant aspects of Indian Classical Music.



Madhusoodanan Satchithanandan

Madhusoodanan is the first student of "Venuganamani" P. Gnanavarathan, who taught him to play the bamboo flute in the Carnatic style. He has also learnt from S. Shashank and "Sikkil" Mala Chandrashekar. Skilled in Indian Cinema and Contemporary Classical styles, Madhusoodanan is a regular accompanist for Indian classical dance performances and cinema music groups in the UK. He has had the privilege of accompanying many playback singers and Vijay TV "Super Singers", including "Chinna Kuyil" KS Chithra, Vijayaprakash and many others. He was also blessed with the honour of performing on multiple occasions in front of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, in Puttaparthi.

PROGRAMME

This **Pushpanjali** is an offering of flowers to propitiate Lord Ganesha, to grace the stage, and to greet the audience.

Sanskrit verse selected from Mahendra Mahapatra's Abhinaya Chandrika, c. 15th century

The **Jatiswaram** is an abstract pure dance, in which a garland of sol-fa musical syllables frame rhythmic patterns that expand and contract with fractal beauty.

Composition: Ashwath Narayanan | Choreography: Sooraj Subramaniam

Raga (melodic frame): Kalyanavasantam | Tala (time cycle): Misracapu (seven beats)

'Entani ne telupudura' - The **varnam** delves into the drama of 'love in separation', where the dancer is in conversation with her lover, the beautiful yet elusive Lord Siva, coaxing him to return her affections. As is conventional, the narrative passages are punctuated by jatis (pure dance sequences) of rare brilliance and verve.

Composition in Telugu: Subbarama Dikshithar (1839-1906)

Choreography: Guru Adyar K. Lakshmanan (1933-2014)

Raga: Khamas | Tala: Tisra eka (three beats)

INTERVAL 20 minutes

'Mamava Minakshi' - This **kirtanam** is replete with the imagery of Lady Meenakshi - warrior goddess of the city of Madurai, and consort of Lord Siva - offering her praise and adulation. The low rumble of the raga is unsettling, yet it invokes the assuredness and conviction of the sacred feminine.

Composition: Muthuswami Dikshithar (1775-1835) | Choreography: Sooraj Subramaniam

Raga: Varali | Tala: Misracapu (seven beats)

'Aduvum solluval' - The **padam** is a poetic form, mostly conversational in nature, that offers extraordinary depth of meaning and freedom of interpretation. Less than enthralled by the sudden and dubious rise in fortunes of an ex-friend - previously near-destitute, now living in cosseted comfort - the protagonist vents her frustrations over the grandiloquence emanating from that 'other woman'.

Composition: Subbarama Iyer (late 19th century) | Choreography: Sooraj Subramaniam

Raga: Saurasttram | Tala: Adi (eight beats)

The **Tillana** is a pure dance form rumoured to have been inspired by the *tarana* of Hindustani music; they certainly came into fashion in the Carnatic form in the mid-18th century. The abstract melodic syllables offer cadence and colour to the danced rhythmic patterns. It ends with a short dedication to the southern Indian deity Muruga.

Composition: Lalgudi G. Jayaraman (1930-2013) | Choreography: Sooraj Subramaniam

Raga: Desh | Tala: Adi (eight beats)