

Nartana

AN INSIGHT INTO INDIAN PERFORMING ARTS IN MAURITIUS

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THE OFFICIAL SEASONAL
NEWSLETTER OF THE
NRITYA TEJ DANCE ACADEMY

EDITORIAL

As a dancer in my land

Sometimes I'm a king and
sometimes a pauper

There are times, I move around
with my motion ending with
applause and bravo

But other times I am snipped from
opportunities

Who holds those scissors?

Fighting for the light in the colour
of lime

They always hold the key to the
kingdom, letting no one in but
themselves

Meanwhile...

We dance in confinement, and
share on social media

Applauses become "likes", and
critics turn into "comments" and
thus a slow addiction

Sad it is that we settle for
convenience

All hard work ends with a piece of
paper amassing dust in the drawers

Watching the knowledge evaporate

For a whole life to teach only the
ABCs

With an unaware audience in the
making

Hard work goes unseen

Only the loudest speaker moves far

Such a sad story it is

As a dancer in my land

Sometimes I'm a king and
sometimes a pauper

Hear hear

How many are we?

As it feels like we are nil

Wake up!

As you are needed

History is witness

That arts beautify society

Not only one person can do it

Many and individually is also force

Tap your feet to the beat

Move the world around you

Let them see you

Let them hear you

Build the cultured nation that we
deserve

T.B.

The Nritya Tej Dance Academy (NTDA) was founded by Mrs Tejsree Bhangeeruthee Beharee 6 years ago. Its mission is to propagate Bharata Natyam in the Mauritian community. "Nartana" is an extension of this effort, and tries to encompass Indian Classical Arts in general. It seeks to bring together artistes and raise awareness about the greatness of the art form as well as pinpoint concerns about hurdles that artistes face.

If you are interested to share your views , please contact us on tejsree0505@gmail.com or +23059106036 ' You can find more about NTDA on the web site : www.nrityatej.com

In this edition of Nartana, the views and opinions of two local artistes are presented, namely Ms Keertee Rani Sawock (Kathak) and Mrs Gopeeka Narain Singh (Bharata Natyam).

We raise concern about the lack of opportunities available to local artistes and argue whether art is only for the rich...

In an attempt to simplify the complexities of the 8 codified moods of heroines in Indian Classical Arts, a comparison is made to animated characters from children's movies.

We end by giving an update on what NTDA has been up in since our last newsletter.

In memoriam

Amma Revathi Sunnasse

A Bharatanatyam dancer

Honored with the rank of Officer of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean (OSK) in 2014, for her contribution in the field of Art and Culture.

May peace be with you

Thank you for all contribution brought to our art from the bottom of our hearts

A rich journey of 40 years, shared with so many dancing souls around

We hope your vision to keep imparting this art is carried on for another lifetime



In memoriam



Mr. Ramnath Jeetah

One needs many lives to fulfil as much as he did

Honored with the prestigious title of G.O.S.K, recognizing his contributions towards education in Mauritius.

We thank you for the fight against illiteracy

What more can we ask than an educated nation

Your school which made history still stands today

The uplifting of Indian culture has opened doors for many

Encouraging the learning of Hindi and Sanskrit in Mauritius, which has become the livelihood and pride of many

Amongst all, your fight for independence will never be forgotten

An interview with Keertee Rani Sawock

About Keertee

Keertee Rani Sawock, holder of an Honors Degree in Mathematics with Computer Science and several other Diplomas, has started learning Kathak at the tender age of 9 years old, under the tutelage of several Indian Gurus at the Indira Gandhi Centre for Indian Culture (IGCIC) as a hobby. Later, dance became her passion as she showed sincerity and dedication toward Kathak Dance. After completing her Advanced Diploma in Kathak with Distinction from IGCIC, she entered the world of performing as a dancer, performer, and later a choreographer.

Along with her practical training in Kathak, Keertee always had an immense interest to acquire knowledge about the detailed history and theories in Kathak. She then joined the Diploma in Performing Arts (Kathak) at the Mahatma Gandhi Institute where she acquired knowledge about Indian Classical Dance forms, Kathak Repertoire, Natyashastra, Abhinaya Darpana, Sangeet, and Dance pedagogy.

She has also been blessed to learn various styles and vastness of Kathak under many renowned Gurus in different dance class sessions and workshops. She has completed her Advanced Diploma in Aprachalit Angs from the Natwari Kathak Nritya Academy in Indore under the tutelage of Dr. Puru Dadheech. She had the opportunity to participate in the Naval Kathak Utsav 2019 organized by Samantaa Dance Company in Delhi.

Keertee is a very talented dancer and choreographer. She is the founder of Keerthak School of Music and Dance. She has performed in numerous cultural programs, festivals, private events, and competitions.

She has a fire in her eyes, a purpose in her mind, and a lot of courage in her actions, and she is a dancer, ready to better the world's view on her art. In her words: "Ever wonder why Indian classical dancers are so passionate about their art? Once you try it, you may find that you will be touting the benefits of Indian classical dance to anyone who will listen!"

What are your views on the integration of Indian classical dance into Mauritian society and how does Keerthak School of Music and Dance fit into this?

Keerthak School of Music and Dance primarily aims to promote Indian Classical Music and Dance in Mauritius. The school has as prime aim to integrate Indian Classical Dance forms into the Mauritian society. With the constant influence of HipHop and Bollywood culture, people are no longer interested in learning Indian Classical Dance forms. It is sad to say that Mauritius has expertise only in three main classical dance forms such as Kathak, Bharatnatyam, and Kuchipudi. Other classical dance

forms such as Manipuri, Kathakali, and Odissi are not found in Mauritius. Interest in Indian classical dance forms are diminishing rapidly.

What can be done to encourage youngsters to learn Indian classical art?

Mythological tales, religious values, music, and dance are all part of our culture. Unfortunately, it is a struggle to make our new generations equally excited about our culture. As the founder of Keerthak School of Music and Dance, it is a struggle to make Indian Classical Dance relatable for the younger generations. The school eventually came up with free classical dance classes. Eventually, we have noticed that most of the population is not interested in the 'free' classes. Such classes have been associated with 'unprofessional and time pass classes'.

We need to encourage our younger generations to listen, observe and learn more about Indian classical dance forms instead of shying away from it.

This art may help to build their self-confidence and create a strong sense of identity among our youngsters as we are living in a multicultural society.

Cultural exchange programs and Indian classical dance workshops should be organized at regional, national, and international levels. Lecture demonstrations, sharing programs, live demonstrations, and more can be useful to bring Indian classical dance to the major populations. Proper studios and facilities should be provided to learners.

Indian Classical Dance forms have a crucial role to play in the overall development of the Republic of Mauritius, thus enhancing our cultural and economic values. Dance education has the potential to create and enhance human values at cultural, artistic, and social capital levels.

The benefit of learning an Indian classical dance is innumerable, to be brief about it:

- It helps you to relax.
- It relieves stress.
- It brings discipline to the learner.
- It creates team spirit.
- It is a creative art.
- It is an exercise.
- It keeps one healthy.
- It is good for anxiety relief.
- It helps you to make friends with similar interests.
- It is fun.

“Ever wonder why Indian classical dancers are so passionate about their art? Once you try it, you may find that you will be touting the benefits of Indian classical dance to anyone who will listen!”

Many students complain that Indian arts are rather bulky to learn along with pursuing academic students. Being someone who is involved in teaching and performing as well as having a full-time career in another field, what advice do you have for these young learners?

Pursuing Indian classical dance forms together with academic studies is not everyone's cup of tea. People think only blessed ones can do both. But I disagree— Everyone is talented. They just need to discover their talent. It is never easy to manage both, but where there is a will there is a way. Teaching



and performing along with a full-time career is a magical life experience for me. It requires a lot of planning but in the end, the results are fruitful.

Youngsters should be provided with opportunities to venture into learning an Indian classical dance. The experience of being on stage and performing in front of a crowded audience will help in their personal development. 'Emovere' – dance is essentially emotion in motion. In dance, our purpose is to express emotions, communicating physically, allowing those feelings to move through the body, out of the body, and in doing so, to move others. Dance gives you a feeling like no other. The stresses and burdens of your life, work, and hardships somehow are lifted away when you dance. Indian classical dance offers good career opportunities, if not, you will acquire the skills for any career choice.

“What is dance to you?”

What is dance to you?

I am often asked!

Sometimes it is a prayer

Offered daily

Where I express my gratitude and I ask for positivity in life

At times I dance the nritya (pure dance movements) to be thankful for my physical health

At other times I dance the nritya (expressional dance) to be grateful for my emotional well-being

And many times I teach this beautiful art, to share its positivity to my surrounding

Sometimes it is a science

Calculated through physical, biological, and chemical metaphors

As I dance, I balance the angles of movement with the lines of symmetry of my body

I play with the surge of adrenaline where my will to perform well osmoses the fear of stage

Each time forming a covalent relationship between my weakness and strength on the way to improvement

Sometimes it is a culture

Which has become a way of life

From dance, I distill the moral values and traditions of its myths and history

Which I connect with the aesthetics of the classical and the folk

And bond with the empathy of understanding change and moving to the contemporary

What is dance to you? T.B.



I came across an article the other day from Art Net News stating that artists most probably come from wealthy families. I was quite offended by this. But I decided to give it a fair thought. The article was a research carried out by a professor in Economics at the University of Southern Denmark and his data was based on the United States since 1850.

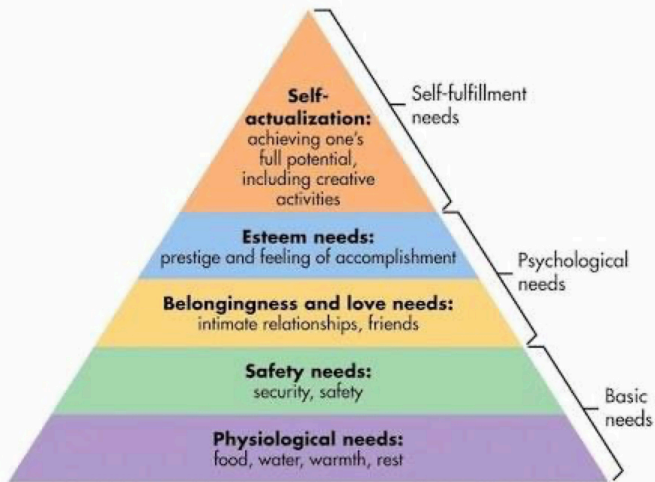
According to the study, for every \$10,000 in additional family income, a person is around two percent more likely to go into a creative occupation.

The study also says that the annual income for US artists is typically below average for the country. That makes sense since if one can rely on

family support, it makes it easier to enter a less financially lucrative field.

On a personal basis, I currently work in an art domain and I came from an average earning family. I was initially working in the field of engineering, and I changed my career to pursue my passion. My family has been supportive throughout, but it was not always easy. Studying in an art field still requires payment for the course and course materials.

Afterward, one needs to find a job in a field with limited opportunities, and the competition is fierce. In the beginning, the salary is not attractive, and being on a contract basis does not provide ideal job security. So, we still have to struggle



to pay rent, groceries, among other things until we are permanently confirmed.

But then, this is only my story. If we go through history, we have had many artists arising from rich families; Leonardo da Vinci's father was a well-off notary; Michelangelo descended from a family of bankers, and Édouard Manet's was the son of a judge and the goddaughter of a Swedish prince. Were they great minds or did they have ample time to think and re-think and think again for creating?

However, being a Mauritian, allow me to cite examples from our Mauritian cream of artists. Legends like Nitish Joganah and Kaya wrote meaningful songs like *Crapo crier* and *Sime lalimier*, which still struck our hearts today. Did they come from wealthy families? They were parents and heads of families who still had financial responsibilities.

My take on this matter has to do with Maslow's Hierarchy of needs .

When people in general still have basic and psychological needs to cover, they are not left with enough time, energy, and money to fulfil their passion and other creative

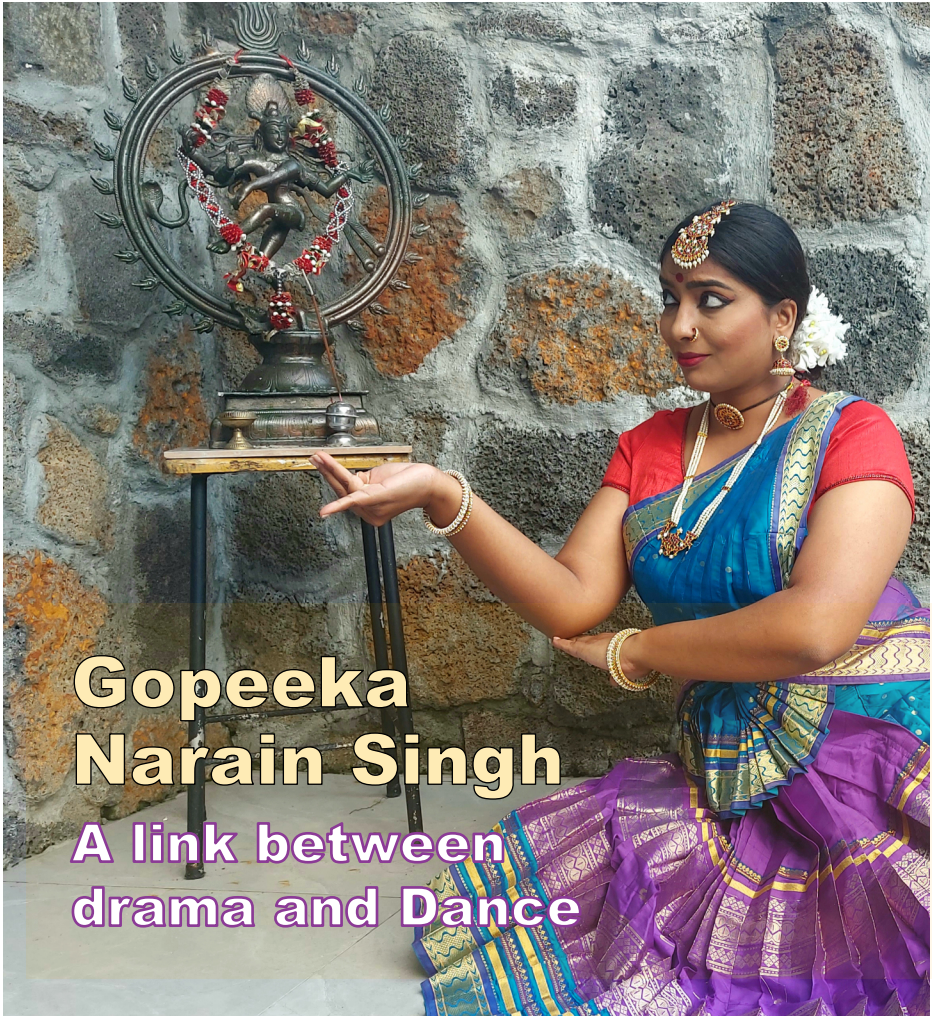
pursuits.

But this concept is still defied by those who are at the base of the pyramid and yet creating and indulging in arts. From my experience, artists have that room in their brain that strives on art to feel alive. Despite adversities, we need to retreat to that room and soak in the words and movements of our art, whether it is painting, writing, dancing, or singing among others. Meanwhile, we are also moving mountains to meet our basic needs, and without realising it, that little room covers and takes care of our psychological needs: accomplishment and self-esteem. Some artists are lucky enough to earn sufficiently through their art to meet their basic needs, while others find side jobs to meet the ends.

So, is art for the rich? Art is for anyone who chooses it. It is recognising what we are passionate about and using that feeling to 'create'. It is not always financial stability or a comfortable lifestyle that moves us to create art, but the feeling that is deep-seated in our minds to produce music, dance, paintings, and poems, among others. To me, art comes within...

Maybe those who are rich have an advantage over the others, like for instance, to find platforms and opportunities to showcase their work, while the others have to persevere to be seen. In other words, while art is not exclusively for the rich, more could be done to give a fair go to the rest. But well, that is, in itself, another topic for discussion.

T.B.



Gopeeka Narain Singh

A link between drama and Dance

The first time I met Mrs. Gopeeka Narrain Singh, was about a decade ago, during Diwali rehearsals for a dance drama. She was playing the role of Ahalya, a character in the Ramayana and I was mesmerized by the intensity of her expressions. It was beautiful!

I was behind the curtains, waiting for my cue to enter the stage with my dance mates, when she came to talk to me. "What's your name?", she asked. As expressive she is on stage, so is she in real life, true to herself, and a cheerleader for all her comrades.

Today, she is imparting that beautiful skill to many through her dance school, whether it is through dance or film making.

Please introduce yourself. Tell us about your journey in the field of dance.

I am Gopeeka Narrain Singh, a Dancer, Choreographer, Educator, Film Director, and Director of the Gopeeka Academy of Performing Arts (GAPA).

It all started at the age of seven when my mother enrolled me in the Sargam Academy of Indian Music and Dance. There, I learned Bharata Natyam, an Indian Classical Dance form under the guidance of Mrs. Sandhya Mungur and Mrs. Ambigey Muneapillay. After my Higher School Certificate, I was awarded an ICCR scholarship to pursue my further studies in Bharata Natyam at the prestigious Nalanda Nritya Kala Mahavidhyala, Mumbai, India.

I was fortunate to have learned from great Gurus at Nalanda, where Bharata Natyam was depicted in different dimensions thus opening doors for more exploration in this field. After 4 enriching years at Nalanda, I came back to Mauritius with a BA in Performing Arts.

The journey continued with the support of different Socio-cultural organizations when, in 2014, I opened GAPA (Gopeeka Academy of



“Learning Bharata Natyam will be a practical representation of the different principles of drama. Once a dance student has been able to master the techniques of expressions [...], he or she can interpret these techniques to depict different types of characters on stage...”

Performing Arts) at Plaine Magnien, where Bharata Natyam is primarily taught. I have performed and choreographed various Music Videos, stage Productions, cultural events, and conferences both at the National and International levels, conducted workshops, and empowered students in the field of Performing Arts. Today, GAPA, count 2 more Centres, one at

Mare D’Albert, and one at Tyack.

I have also had the opportunity in teaching Bharata Natyam at the Mahatma Gandhi Institute, and I am currently a dance Educator at the Ministry

of Education.

I have observed that you are also involved in making short films and dramas with your students. Being a dancer, what are the skills that help you in film/drama making?

As an Indian Classical dancer, you explore the concept of Abhinaya, which is the mode of expression, in most of the performances. Abhinaya may be in the form of the different techniques of moving your body, using your voice, dialogues, or music to create an impact, exploring the different costumes and props as well as the use of various emotional states. Similarly, the knowledge of abhinaya is required when directing a film or a play. One must think about how you want to present the character on screen as well as on stage using a different mode of expression.

An Indian classical dancer uses a Sthayi Bhava (Permanent emotions) and transforms it into Rasa (aesthetic pleasures) to depict an emotion. This process is made possible with the use of Vibhava (the catalyst of an emotion), anubhava (the reaction of the emotions), and vyabharibhava (

changing emotions). It may sound complex but in short, it is how a dancer will depict action and reaction on stage. Acting uses the same concept and thus helping me to understand and create beautiful characters and situations on stage as well as on-screen.

How can a Bharatanatyam course be modified to encourage people who wish to pursue a career in drama?

Since the Vedic period, dance and drama were intertwined with each other. Bharata Natyam is one of the different Indian Classical dances where its techniques are based on the treatise on the dramaturgy of Bharata Muni, the Natyashastra. From its basic dance postures and hand gestures as well as how to represent different emotions, everything is being



explained in the Natyashastra. Learning Bharata Natyam will be a practical representation of the different principles of drama. Once a dance student has been able to master the techniques of expressions, that of hand gestures and different types of movements, he or she can interpret these techniques to depict different types of characters on stage, they can be protagonists or antagonists and even express a situation or a story as an actor based on the different vrittis (style of presentation) from the Natyashastra.

According to you, what are the scopes of making a career in acting in Mauritius? What can be done to further expand it?

Over the past few years, we have observed a relative growth in the Film Industry in Mauritius. The Mauritius Film Development corporation is empowering youngsters and aspiring filmmakers and actors with training and platforms to showcase their talent and to arouse awareness of potential career prospects in this field. This initiative goes in line with the rapid growth of the digital world. We have experienced the bloom of different content creators in the field of acting. The OTT platforms and digital release of serials and movies on social media will give opportunities to aspiring actors to make a career in this field. However, more support is needed to sustain this growth. Stakeholders should go hand in hand to design a plan to make this Industry a profitable one. Collaboration with neighborhood countries and international filmmakers and actors to create and release their work should be further encouraged.

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Ashta Nayika & Disney heroines



Who does not like a good Walt Disney story?

Ashta Nayika is an important concept in Indian classical dance. Ashta means eight and Nayika means heroines, thus the eight heroines. In this article, heroine is referred to as a lady in love: her association with a man in an amorous way, whether it is in union or separation. When we talk about love and relationships, it is often accompanied by a feeling of joy, but there is also the aspect of pain. According to sage Bharata Muni, in his book Natya Shastra, there are 8 types of women in love.

They are:

1. Vasakasajja- The one eagerly waiting for her lover
2. Kalahantarita- The restless one confused with anger and sadness
3. Virahotkhandita- The lamenting heroine who is separated in love
4. Khandita- The angry bold one who has been cheated on
5. Swadheenapatika- The one who has her lover under control
6. Vipralabda- The betrayed one
7. Abhisarika- The uninhibited one
8. Proshritabhartruka- The one waiting for her lover to come back

If we reflect more on it, can there be

ONLY eight types of women in love? Human emotion is kinetic. We, women, revel into the thousand shades of mood. Every action in our surroundings triggers a new reaction, thus giving birth to a new characteristic in us. If we look around, every woman's love story is different. But if we distill the essence, we all go through similar feelings.

To understand those Nayikas better, I thought it interesting to try to compare them to some Disney characters. It is important to point out that in their respective stories, these Disney characters show a myriad of moods, and only a snapshot of their emotional journey has been taken to illustrate the relevant Nayikas.

1. Vasakasajja: The one eagerly waiting for her lover - The Little Mermaid

She is usually a young maiden, full of naiveness and always so eager to meet her beloved. It is most often a situation of mutual love, but in certain situations, her love has not yet been responded to. She is happily bedecking herself and waiting for her lover.

This Nayika reminds me of Ariel from The Little Mermaid. In one scene, she swims to the ocean's surface to watch a party onboard a ship. There, she spots Prince Eric to whom she becomes romantically attracted. But the fact that she is of a different species, makes her hesitant. Thus, she secretly goes to the shore to catch a glimpse of him from far, waiting for a miracle to happen to bind them.



2. Kalahantarita: The restless one confused with anger and sadness- The Lion King

She is usually in a confused situation after having fought with her lover. She is angry but also repenting as her lover leaves. Deep in her heart she misses him and wants him to come back and spend sweet moments with her.

Here I picture Nala from the Lion King as the Kalahantarita Nayika. She

comes across her long-lost friend and lover Simba and they both rejoice in this reunion. Soon it turns into an argument as Simba refuses Nala's request to go back to save their kingdom. Both get into a heated

argument and Simba leaves abruptly. Nala is in a dilemma where she is sure of her point, and she resents Simba for not understanding her, yet inside there is an unrealized love that burns for Simba.

3. Virahotkhandita: The lamenting heroine who is separated in love-Aladdin

This is a heroine in pain as she is separated from her lover. The word Vira from Virahotkhandita means pain. She does not feel good about anything, and she needs the company of her man only to feel happy again. The latter, who is faithful to her, is taken up somewhere else, and that leaves the Nayika in a sorrowful state, and nothing around her feels good.

Jasmine becomes the sad heroine when Aladdin is arrested under the charge of having kidnapped her. Though she explains to Jafar that she had run away of her own will and that she was not kidnapped, the latter declares that the charge cannot be

removed and that Aladdin will be sentenced to death. This shocks and saddens Jasmine. She mourns for him and replies to Jafar in a rebuking tone: "How could you?"... She then runs away in tears...



4. Khandita: The angry bold one who has been cheated on- Maleficent

She is a daring heroine who stands for herself by facing her disloyal lover. She is angry and disgusted. She plays with sarcasm to express herself. She is depicted as offended and rebuking her lover.

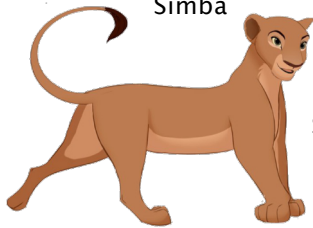
Maleficent from the Disney movie Maleficent takes the role of the Khandita Nayika. She was a fairy who fell in love with a human peasant, Stefan, at a young age. The latter reciprocated the love with a true love's kiss. But unfortunately, his ambitions took over his love and they grew apart. Years later,

Stefan is sent by a King to kill Maleficent. The hero could not bring himself to kill her, so instead, he drugged her and cut the fairy's wings using the "iron". For accomplishing this task, the King gave his daughter's hand to Stefan. Devastated by this betrayal, Maleficent turned her kingdom Moors into a dark place.



5. Swadheenapatika: The one who has her lover under control- Beauty and the Beast

She is a proud woman who revels in the love and care of her beloved. Her pride may have a touch of arrogance.



She is bold and carefree and keeps her lover under control. The lover is enthralled by his lady's intense love



and qualities. Since the word Swadheenapati contains the term 'pati' which means husband, it often means that this heroine is married.

That confident lover reminds me of Belle from Beauty and the Beast. By nature, she

is a very confident woman who does not care about what people think of her. She is someone who rightfully spends her time in books and learning rather than worrying about people's opinions. This confidence of hers is so contagious that it melts the heart of the Beast. The latter falls in love with her and gradually transforms into a gentle lover of Belle.

6. Vipralabda: The betrayed one-Frozen

She is deceived by the infidelity of her lover. In certain situations, she feels betrayed due to a misunderstanding also. In dance, she is depicted as throwing away her jewelry and being in pain.

This situation can be illustrated in the movie, Frozen.

The unfortunate event happens between Hans and Anna. The heroine was freezing after having been struck with Elsa's powers in an accident at the ice palace. She was brought back to the castle and handed over to Hans who could save her by an act of true love. But just when they were

about to kiss, Hans revealed his true nature. He divulged how he never loved her, and that Anna was only a tool for her to usurp Arendelle. He



ridicules her love and her wish to marry him and leaves her freezing to death.

7. Abhisarika: The uninhibited one-Pocahontas

She is bold, proud, and endearing. Filled with attitudes, she does not fear anyone. She openly goes to meet her lover, and gossip does not get to her. She is ready to face any difficulty and she defies them all to be with her lover.



This immediately draws my attention to Pocahontas.

When John Smith took the blame for a native's death, he was arrested to be sentenced to death by beheading. However, at the time of the unfortunate event, Pocahontas rushes to the execution's place and throws herself at John Smith to prevent her father from executing him. At this moment, she professes her love boldly in front of her father and her people, being a true Abhisarika.

8. Proshithabhartruka: The one waiting for her lover to come back-Cinderella

The sad heroine awaits the arrival of her lover without knowing when or whether he will come back. She tries to cope with her everyday life, but she is depressed and does not eat and dress properly, as she is so overwhelmed by sadness.

Cinderella has been the happily ever after story for many little girls as they grew up. But at one moment of the story, Cinderella does turn into the mourning heroine. It all begins when the midnight clock struck. As the magic gifted by her fairy godmother fades away, she rushes back to her place living with the memories of that mystical moment with The Grand Duke. But that happiness also was



short-lived. When the Duke decided to look for her, announcing her as the 'mystery princess', Cinderella's stepmother Lady Tremaine locks her up to give her daughters a better chance to marry the duke. During that moment, Cinderella mourns her fate, as she sees no hope to have her

door unlocked and to be reunited with the love of her life. She cries out her pain and feels no good to sing and dance and get dressed anymore.

Even though I have presented 8 different heroines, it does not mean that each type of heroine is unique to one person. If we look inside us, we can be all 8 of them and even more. My conclusion is that though the term is called ashta (eight) nayikas, with more research, more characters can be brought to the list. But though the list here talks about women, there can be a subsection that touches men as they also feel as much as women. The difference is that they express differently. This in a way challenges the traditional set of emotions/moods reserved to male characters in Indian classical dance, where men are never depicted as being soft and sensitive. Let me therefore finish with a last example to illustrate this last point. The movie Up starts with the perfect love story of Carl and Ellie who are childhood lovers. They grow up and build a life together until the first pain strikes their couple; Ellie finds out that she cannot have a children. Despite all, they try to overcome this pain and they do grow old together until Ellie passes away leaving Carl on his own. In this story, it is the heroine who goes away, leaving the hero in pain - similar to a virahotkhandita.

T.B.

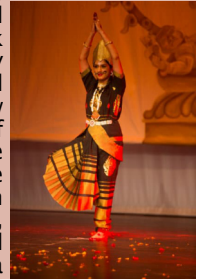


Nritya Tej Dance Academy Update

"The future projects of NTDA have as the backbone, the propagation of dance imbued with values...human values for a better world." Those were the last words of our previous edition of the Nartana newsletter. Did NTDA uphold its words?



In 2019, we embarked on our next annual show 'Mareech- Birth of the Pearl Island'. It is a Mauritian folk retelling of the Ramayana, adapted from the book 'Folk Tales of Mauritius' by Mr. Pahlad Ramsurrin. The show consisted of Bharatanatyam dance items, acting, dance drama, and Indian folk songs. This time, live music was added at the end as a surprise to bring more attention to our folkloric music.



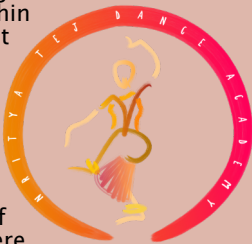
Still in the same year, we had the opportunity to display our work for Diwali at Rushmore University and La City Trianon.



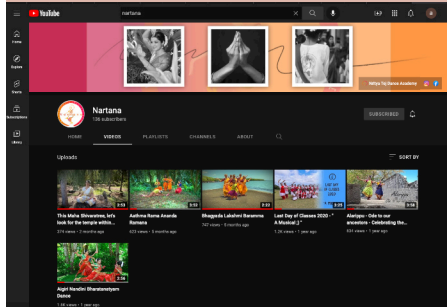
On 8th March 2020, NTDA organized a fundraising workshop for associations dealing with women in difficulties. The workshop comprised of Bharatanatyam dance classes, yoga, and Bhojpuri dance sessions. Tickets were sold, and a total sum of Rs 11,000 was gathered- a small contribution to the lives of some.



All students were very motivated and excited for the 2020's annual show, but COVID- 19 happened! It all began with a stop to dance; concerts and workshops being canceled and no studio recordings. We were all locked within our home. But it didn't bring a halt to our activities. In April 2020, N T D A launched its website, and video tutorials of classes were uploaded. Online classes were carried out, and of course, the online platform became our stage. Online dance videos were produced. We also modified our logo in line with the values that we hold close to our heart - innovation,



simplicity, and elegance. It was indeed a feather in our cap as on the way, we developed our graphic skills.



By the end of 2020, NTDA launched its YouTube channel- Nartana. Students were exposed to another way of performing by doing various shots and many takes. Since then, we have presented 6 videos, on various occasions like Navaratri, students' end-of-term holidays, Diwali, the arrival of indentured laborers in Mauritius, and Maha Shivaratri. It has been a new trend that we kept working on in 2021, as the world kept suffering from the adversities of COVID- 19.



In 2022, the world is slowly going back to normal, and NTDA has opened another branch in Moka, at La Kocotte Moka'mwad, continuing to propagate its love to other Bharatanatyam lovers.

Though Nriyaya Tej means the flame leading to enlightenment through dance, Nriyaya Tej Dance Academy will now be like water, taking the shape of whatever container holds it, and will take hold of opportunities to bring dance closer to its loved ones, thus keeping our promise, to propagate dance imbued with values...human values.