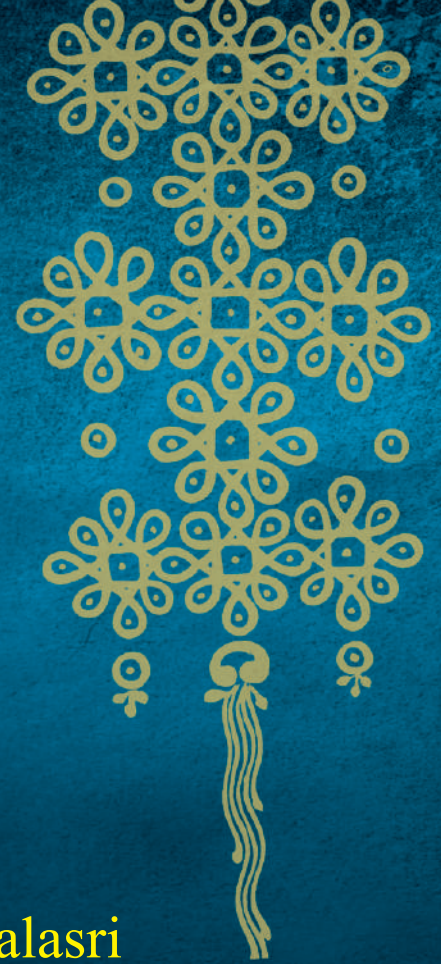




Karnataka Kalasri
Poornima Ashok

POORNIMA ASHOK

Danseuse, Director - Nrityanjali School of Bharata Natyam

Poornima Ashok is a performing Bharatha Natyam danseuse, choreographer and teacher from Bangalore. She is committed to the art as a lifetime pursuit. She has had her training from Guru Smt. Radha Sridhar from Bangalore and has furthered her training under the famous gurus Sri Dhananjayans of Chennai. She has learnt the intricate aspects of 'Abhinaya' from guru Smt. Kalanidhi Narayan. With time she has evolved a distinctive style - classically rooted with contemporary energies. She explores and expands the language of Bharatha Natyam through her performances and choreographies.

Even as a young student she represented Karnataka at various youth festivals and consistently won accolades. With a 'Debut par Excellence' in 1986, Poornima has never looked back. She has since performed at all major 'Sabhas' and for premier cultural organizations in the country and abroad. she celebrated her '25 Glorious years of dancing - Belli Gejje' in 2009 and was honoured by her gurus Padmabhushan Sri Dhananjayans. With three decades of dedicated performances in and outside the country she has enriched herself with the art form.

In 2016, Poornima stepped into 25 years of NRITYANJALI, Commemorating the event with "Belli-Hejje" celebrating dance with "Sri Krishna Sayujjya". Her aim is to nurture number of students to carve the niche for themselves and looking forward to new ventures with the same enthusiasm and verve, to serve and to be one with the art.





A few notable solo performances

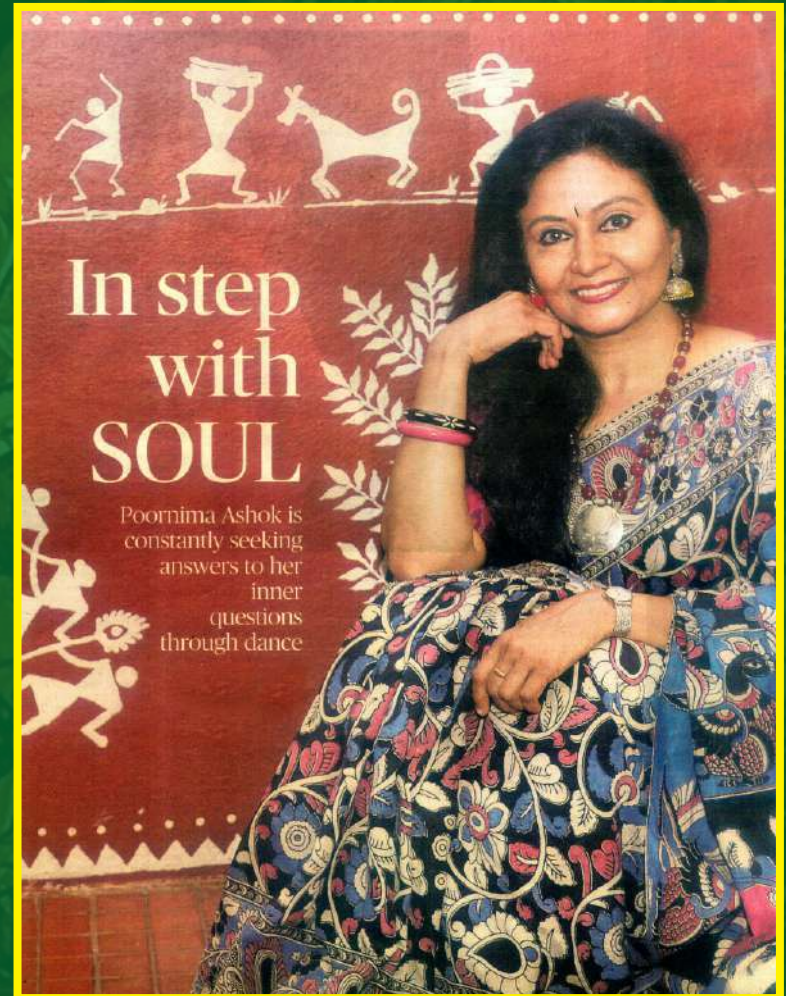
- Vishwa Kannada Sammelana in Mysore
- Karnataka Nritya Kala Parishad
- Bangalore Lalita Kala Parishad
- Indian Institute of World Culture in Bangalore
- International Dance Alliance (IDA) in Chennai and Bangalore
- DAKSHINI – SAARC Summit held in Bangalore
- Rajyotsava celebrations in New Delhi
- Mumbai Kannada Sangha
- Dasara Festival in Mysore
- Nrityotsava organized by Sangeet Natak Academy, New Delhi in Bangalore
- Hampi Festival, Somanathpur Festival, Pattadakal Festival sponsored by the Department for Kannada and Culture Govt. of Karnataka
- Nupura, Kinkini, Nirantaram and Nrityanjali Festivals in Bangalore
- Nishagandhi Festival in Trivandrum
- Bharat Bhavan in Bhopal and Shivali Festival in New Delhi
- Jugalbandi Festival in Pattadakal
- Rajyothsav Celebration of Chattisgarh at Raipur
- Solo & Group Dance productions for Bangalore Doordarshan, Udaya TV and ZEE Kannada



- Narada Gana Sabha, Bharatkalachar Sabha in Chennai
- Natyanjali Festival in Chidambaram
- Navraspur Festival in Gulbarga and Kanakadasa Festival in Udupi
- Nitya Neerajanam in Tirupati
- Belli Gejje - 25 years of dancing of Poornima in 2009
- Gudiya Sambrama - Bengaluru Temple Festival
- Bhavanotsava at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in memory of late Sri Mattoor Krishnamurthy
- Ananya Nritya Neerajanam in Bangalore
- Margam and Parampara Festival of dance in Bangalore
- BIAF – Bangalore International Arts Festival
- SAMSKRUTHI – Festival in New Delhi
- Festival of dance at the Bangalore Gayana Samaja
- DHARANI Festival in Cochin
- Vipanchee Dance Festival in Chennai
- Gunjan Dance Festival in Bhubaneshwar
- Mamallapuram Festival
- Prema Prana Prahara - Trio production with Aruna Mohanty and Gopika Varma



- Performed Radharani at Chandigarh for Pracheen Kala Kendra Dance Festival
- Premier performance of Radha Rani at Vrindavan on the eve of Radhashtami Celebration
- "Belli-Hejje" - 25 years of NRITYANJALI celebration in 2016
- Performed "MADHUR MILAN" Solo Thematic Production for ICCR Horizon Series at Allahabad, Patna, Pune, Mumbai, Varanasi, Shillong Guwahati, Ahmedabad, Nalanda University.
- "Nrityanjali-25" Festival of Dance - Silver Jubilee celebration in 2016
- Performed at Nrithyathi Festival at Bhilai
- Master Class and Demonstration at Nalanda University, Patna
- Master Class and Demonstration at Alliance University, Bangalore
- Performances in Russia (Vladivostok, Artyom & Khabarovsk) Sponsored by ICCR, Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India in 2017
- Master Class and Demonstration in Russia



Honours and Awards

- In 1994, she visited Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand.
- She was featured in the award-winning documentary 'Nectar in Stone' for Doordarshan.
- She was featured in a documentary of Jnanpith Awardee K. V. Puttappa (Kuvempu), to interpret his writings through dance.
- In 1998, she was honored by the Mayor of Bangalore.
- In 2000, Poornima visited U.A.E on an invitation from Kannada Sangha, where she was honored by the Consulate General Sri Ashok Bannerjee.
- In 2003, she was honored by the Chief Secretary, Government of Karnataka, for achieving excellence in the field of Bharatha Natyam.
- In 2003, she was honored in Singapore by SIFAS.
- In 2004, she visited Australia for concerts, workshops and lectures.
- In 2009, Poornima was honored by her Gurus Sri Dhananjayans at '**Belli Gejje**' - a celebration of her glorious 25 years as a performing artist.
- She was awarded '**Karnataka Natya Ratna**' in 2011.
- She was awarded '**Nritya Nipune**' by Karnataka Nritya Kala Parishad in 2012.
- She was awarded '**Natya Kala Vipanchee**' in 2013 by Maestro Dr. M. Balamuralikrishna.



- She was awarded with the title "NRITHYA SADHIKA" lifetime achievement award by SAIL - Bhilai Steel Plant in association with Nrityathi Kalakshethram in 2016
- She was awarded "KEMPEGOWDA PRASHASTHI" by BBMP, Govt. of Karnataka in 2016
- She was awarded "KARNATAKA KALASRI" by Karnataka Sangeetha Nrithya Academy Govt. of Karnataka in 2016







NRITYANJALI



As an extension of her devotion to the dance form, Poornima Ashok founded 'Nrityanjali' in 1989. A foundation aimed at promoting a better understanding of Indian Art and Culture, Nrityanjali is a platform where innovations in art are incorporated into performances.

Nrityanjali includes a Bharatha Natyam school where students are trained in the details and intricacies of the dance form, in both practical and theoretical aspects. The school is built on a strong foundation of Bharatha Natyam, particularly Kalakshetra tradition, at the same time being open to contemporary themes and ideas. The school has worked towards promoting young and talented artists, inculcating in them a sense of pride about the rich cultural heritage they have inherited. The students here are trained in three levels – junior, senior and proficient.

Poornima has helped many young talents bloom into graceful and professional dancers at Nrityanjali. Many of them have performed their 'Rangapravesha' and are pursuing this art form as their lifetime pursuit.



In addition to the teaching, Nrityanjali has also been involved in the following activities

- Master Class Workshops with renowned Gurus like C. V. Chandrashekar, Chennai and Yamini Krishnamurthy, New Delhi
 - Annual Dance Festivals showcasing young talent and renowned artists
 - Nattuvangam Workshops
 - Special Dance Projects
 - 'Kalavimarshana' an annual seminar on insights into the myriad layers of Bharata Natyam in Indian classical dance.
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Poornima's Dance Productions & Ekaharya Presentations

- **SAMMOHA** [Fantasy] - a solo dance feature portraying different manifestations of love
- **KRISHNAM VANDE JAGATGURUM** - a group production on the life of Sri Krishna
- **SRINGARA KRISHNA** - a dance drama from Jaydeva's Ashtapadis
- **ASHTANAYIKA** - a multilingual production depicting the different types of heroines (Nayikas)



- **ANDAL** - a solo dance feature, based on the commentaries of Purvacharyas by 'Sriramabharati'
- **MADHURA BHAKTHI** - a solo dance feature depicting Bhakthi in various manifestations
- **JAI GANESH** - a dance ballet for Doordarshan
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- The latest unique thematic presentation **PREMA PRANA PRAHARA** - a joint collaboration of Bharatanatyam , Odissi and Mohiniattam presenting three powerful woman characters of Indian mythology namely Sita, Radha and Draupadi performed by Poornima , Gopika Varma and Aruna Mohanty. It was well received in Nrityanjali festival Jan 2013 and 2014 , Mamallapuram festival 2014.
- **RADHARANI** - is based on Radha's unconditional love for Krishna. The production involves verses chosen from several well known texts including Gaudiya Darshanam set to lyrics in various vernacular languages. Concept, research, compilation of lyrics and choreography by Poornima.





Poornima also propagates the art form with her performances Master Class and Lecture demonstrations for foreign representatives and delegates, sponsored by established corporates, institutions and NGOs. She is an A-grade artist of Doordarshan and has appeared on the National network and regional Channels several times.

She was a recipient of the Central Govt. Scholarship for advance training in Bharatha Natyam and also an empaneled artist of ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations) under established category.



- “For someone so young, Poornima has a very serious and dedicated approach to classical dance her performance revealed elegance and a new poise. Her *abhinaya* is obviously her forte, has a delicacy and intimacy of a whisper. There was a certain elasticity of expressions and fluidity of foot work that made her performance into a truly aesthetic experience. She danced her way into halls of fame, there is no stopping this sure footed girl”. - *City Tab, Bangalore*

- “Poornima is one of those talented dancers whose commitment is unquestionable. She has ruminated upon the style and ways to reach an element of excellence. Poornima's *abhinaya* in her *padam* was a rewarding experience.” - *S. N. Chandrashekar, The Indian Express, Bangalore*

- “Poornima, with her mobile visage, registered the delicate and subtlest emotions with consummate artistry. A seasoned exponent with considerable experience and sound training, she explores various facets of themes and musical phases of Bharata Natyam”
- *Dr. Sunil Kothari, Narthaki Newsletter*

- “Poornima Ashok, who did the opening honours, is also the guiding spirit of her voluntary organization ‘Nrityanjali’. “Our aim, she claims, is to sponsor and promote young talent and make avenues for the upcoming practitioners of our classical dance traditions.” The answer to the successful festival lies in Poornima's efforts. - *M. V. Subramaniam, The Deccan Herald, Bangalore*

- “The most accomplished dancer, whose powerful renditions first drew plaudits from the delegates of SAARC summit, has thrown herself into her mission with a vengeance.” - *Sulochana Saralaya, The Times of India, Bangalore*

- “Excellent dancer of Bangalore, Poornima swept the audience off their feet by her tempestuous dance. Her sparking graceful *adavus* with matching *abhinaya* lifted her performance. Poornima Ashok revealed high caliber in her numbers. She has an excellent grip over all aspects of Bharata Natyam. Her fine bodyline stood her in good stead, with graceful *adavus* and tight footwork she carried the evening with her.
- *K. V. Subbudu, The Statesman, New Delhi*

- “The best performer of the 3 day Shivali Festival was Poornima Ashok of Bangalore, trained under the Dhananjayans. The dancer's tidy dance lines and poised performance was a treat to watch.” - *Leela Venkatraman, The Hindu, New Delhi*





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