



presents

SHANTALA SHIVALINGAPPA

with

B. P. Haribabu, nattuvangam and pakhawaj (percussion)

J. Ramesh, vocals

N. Ramakrishnan, mridangam (percussion)

K. S. Jayaram, flute

Tuesday, November 1, 2011, 8pm

Herbst Theatre

Swayambhu

by Shantala Shivalingappa

I. Prayer to Vani, Goddess of the Arts and Knowledge

II. Ganapati Vandana

III. Tarangam

IV. Tani-Dvayam

V. Kirtanam

VI. Tillana

VII. Pasayadan

Shantala Shivalingappa, artistic direction and choreography

Savitry Naïr, artistic consultant

Nicolas Boudier, lighting design

Éric Citony, technical direction and lighting

Vincent Morello, sound technician

Valérie Cusson, tour management

Shantala Shivalingappa and Nicolas Boudier, set design

D. S. Aiyyalu, costumes

The total duration of this performance is approximately 1 hour, 20 minutes. Please note there will be no intermission.

Production: Per Diem & Co.

Shantala Shivalingappa's North American Representation:

Ilter Ibrahimof, Director, Sunny Artist Management

www.sunnyartistmanagement.com



Artist Profiles

Shantala Shivalingappa appears with San Francisco Performances for the second time; her San Francisco debut performance was in 2009.

Shantala Shivalingappa

Born in Madras, India and brought up in Paris, **Shantala Shivalingappa** is the child of East and West. She grew up in a world filled with dance and music, initiated at a tender age by her mother, dancer Savitry Nair. Deeply moved and inspired by Master Vempati Chinna Satyam's pure and graceful style, Shantala dedicated herself to Kuchipudi—a classical dance form of South India—and received intense and rigorous training from him. Driven by a deep desire to bring Kuchipudi to Western audiences, she has since then performed in important festivals and theaters worldwide.

Acclaimed as a rare dancer by artists and connoisseurs in India and Europe, Shantala combines a perfect technique with flowing grace and fine sensitivity. Since the age of thirteen, she has had the privilege of working with some of the greatest artists of our time, including Maurice Bejart, Peter Brook, Bartabas and Pina Bausch.

Jetty Ramesh

Vocalist **Jetty Ramesh** is a disciple of highly respected Carnatic musician P.S. Narayanaswamy. He has accompanied India's most renowned classical dancers and has performed worldwide in countries including Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Germany, Italy, France, Belgium, Muscat, England, Portugal and Amsterdam. He has been invited back to the United States for the past nine years by the Samskrithi Society in Houston to perform as a guest vocalist.

B.P. Haribabu

B.P. Haribabu is a versatile master of the Mridangam (Indian drum), trained under gurus “Kalaimamani” Sri. V.P. Ramadoss and “Kalaimamani” Sri. Thiruvaroor Bhakthavatchalam. He attended the Tamilnadu Government Music College and was conferred the title “Vaadhya Visharadha” in 1988 in recognition of his talent. His eighteen years of expertise have brought him accolades worldwide. In addition to being an expert Mridangist, he is equally proficient in Tabla, Pakwaj, Ganjeera, Nattuvangam and rhythm composing. He is one of the most sought after Mridangists and has accompanied several distinguished artists throughout India and overseas, having performed in over seventeen different countries. He has produced a set of notations useful for dancers and accompanying artists and, in addition to his musical talent, has created innovative designs and stage décors.

Neelamani Ramakrishnan

Percussionist and Mridangam player **Neelamani Ramakrishnan** has been performing since the age of sixteen. He has appeared all over the world—in France, Germany, Italy, Denmark, the United States, Kuwait, Tokyo, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. He has performed at the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) in a production of Chandrakah’s Raga-In Search of Femininity and has recorded with, and accompanied, some of India’s finest classical artists including M.S. Subbulakshimi, renowned Carnatic vocalist, Dr. M. Balamuralikrishna, a distinguished Harikatha performer and India’s violin icon, Dr. L. Subramaniam. He has also performed as an accompanist with dancer Shantala Shivalingappa both in Paris and at the Spoleto Festival.

K. S. Jayaram

Flutist **K.S. Jayaram** hails from a family dedicated to teaching the Carnatic classical flute. He began his studies in music at a young age under the guidance of Sri. Mani Kant. His knowledge and dedication, along with the support and encouragement of his parents, brought him to Mysoreja, where he studied with renowned flutist Vidwan A.V. Prakash. He has since then performed in many international festivals, won many competitions and has been recognized for his contribution to the dance field for accompanying internationally acclaimed dancers in both the Bharathanatyam & Kupchupudi techniques. He was recently honored by the Prasiddha Foundation for his accomplishments and has also been assiduously devoting his time to discovering and developing new artists.

Program Notes

SWAYAMBHU

I. Prayer to Vani, Goddess of the Arts and Knowledge

II. Ganapati Vandana

An homage to Ganapati, or Ganesha, the elephant-headed God. Ganesha is the first deity that is invoked at all new beginnings. He destroys all obstacles and symbolizes joy, compassion and all that is auspicious.

“Glory to you Ganesha, with your graceful elephant head, and swaying trunk.

We offer you our first salutations, seeking your blessings. You, our protector, with your golden body shining, your lotus-like hands, and your gem-studded crown.

Our hearts bloom in your light, and we joyfully sing your name”

—Raga Ahir Bhairav,
mishra chaapu (7 beats)

Music and Lyrics by Vinayak Netke

III. Tarangam

Tarangam, “waves” in Sanskrit, is the name that we give to the devotional songs composed by the Saint Narayana Tirtha, one of the founders of Kuchipudi. The Tarangam dance showcases a great variety of Kuchipudi steps, while portraying the chosen poem. One part of the choreography is danced on a brass plate, a special feature of this style.

This Tarangam is dedicated to Shiva, the Lord of Dance.

“O Shiva, the great venerable one, may you always be in my heart.

You wear the brilliant crescent moon on your head, from your matted locks flows the river Ganges.

You are the protector of the universe.

You live on the sacred Mount Kailasa. A smile of yours is enough to destroy evil demons.

You wear a snake with five hoods around your chest; you are the supreme ascetic.

Your dance of infinite joy and power destroys all our sorrows,

Salutations to you, O Shiva.”

—Ragamalika, adi talam (8 beats)

Lyrics by Sri Narayana Tirtha

Music by J. Ramesh

IV. Tani-Dvayam (A Rhythmic duet)

Starting out with a regular, continuous beat—like a heartbeat—the two percussionists take turns in developing various rhythmic patterns. Some are based on complex calculations, others on the play of sounds and syllables or accelerations. Little by little, their beats come together and finally merge into one common pattern, woven onto the regular beat from which they started.

V. Kirtanam

A narrative dance based on a romantic poem. Goddess Padmavati addresses her husband Lord Venkateshwara.

“In my dream, we had a fight. I woke up with a start, and then, realizing that it was only a dream, relieved, I embraced you.

Often women get upset hearing their husbands’ harsh words. But we don’t have this habit between us. And if by chance your words to me are not sweet enough, I wither like a flower losing her petals. But in my dream we were really having a fight! And I was so upset! The coolness of the moon turned in to a solar furnace. I used the sandalwood cream instead of the kasturi cream, you should have seen my face! ‘O Venkateshwara, if you leave me, I will not be able to bear it’ I thought!

I dreamt all this, forgetting our love for each other. And then I woke-up with a start, and embraced you.”

—Raga Mukhari, khanda chaapu (5 beats)

Music and Lyrics by Sri Annamacharya

VI. Tillana

A dynamic and rhythmic dance, Tillana develops different elements of pure dance: movements of the eyes, of the neck, hand gestures, footwork etc. This Tillana is in praise of Lord Kumara, with a short poem that reads:

“In the temple of my heart, you are like a flood of light and compassion that washes away all darkness, O Kumara, you who love to play with peacocks.”

—Raga Tilang, aditalam (8 beats)

Music and Lyrics by Sri Lalgudi Jayaram

VII. Pasayadan

Pasayadan is a prayer composed by the very young saint Dyaneshwar. Having com-

pleted this text at the age of 21, he experienced a flow of divine ecstasy, went into deep meditation and left his physical body. Pasayadan invokes divine grace and blessings, peace and joy for all beings.

—Raga Sindhubhairavi
Lyrics by Dyaneshwar;
Music by Hridayanath Mangeshkar

About Kuchipudi

Kuchipudi is a classical dance form of South India. It takes its name from a small village called Kuchipudi, in the state of Andhra Pradesh, where it was born around the 15th century. Like all Indian classical dance forms, its technique is rooted in the *Natya Shastra*, a 2000 year-old treatise on dramatics, which gives a very precise and highly developed codification of dance, music and theater.

Kuchipudi was also influenced by popular folk dance and music traditions prevalent at the time in that particular region, thus it also developed themes of religious devotion. The result is a style which is highly evolved and structured, yet vibrant, lively and extremely intricate and graceful. Kuchipudi uses the two impor-

tant techniques, developed in different ways in the Indian classical dance styles: pure dance and expressive dance. Pure dance, or *nrtta*, is rhythmic and abstract. The footwork executes the complex rhythmic patterns of the accompanying music, while the rest of the body, from the head to the tip of the fingers, follows—sometimes with forceful precision, sometimes with flowing, graceful movements.

Expressive dance, or *abhinaya*, is narrative. Here, each part of the body is used to bring alive the text, poem or story, recited in the song. The hand gestures—*mudras*—are codified into a very precise language. The facial expressions are stylized so as to convey a wide range of complex and subtle sentiments and feelings. The whole body comes alive to communicate the emotions which arise from the song.

Kuchipudi is a harmonious combination of these two aspects, where the dancer alternates or blends together moments of pure dance—rhythmic, bright, vivacious, full of beauty and grace—and narrative moments based on Hindu mythology, where the focus is on the use of gestures, facial expressions and body language. The Kuchipudi performance is accompanied by a live, classical orchestra,

comprised of singing, flute, *veena* and percussion. The dance, music and rhythm are very closely interlinked, and each element is developed in relation to the other.

In the field of Kuchipudi, Master Vempati Chinna Satyam has clearly marked the last four decades with his dedication, extraordinary talent and sheer hard work. Through his collaboration with greatly knowledgeable and sensitive scholars, composers and musicians, he brought Kuchipudi from its village to the forefront of the artistic scene in India, and to an international audience. He renewed and restored a diluted and cruder form of Kuchipudi, at a time when it was fading in rigor and vibrancy, forging a very personal, precisely structured, pure and elegant style.

In 1963 he founded the Kuchipudi Art Academy in Madras, and from there, created a repertoire of solo dances as well as dance dramas or ballets. Today, thanks to him, Kuchipudi occupies a privileged position among other Indian classical forms, and his students continue his work both inside and outside of India.

—Program Notes by Shantala Shivalingappa



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