Alankār

Indian Classical Odissi Dance Training

Sioux Falls, SD

Instructor: Dr. Shreelina Ghosh
MISSION STATEMENT
The mission of Alankār is to educate and prepare students in Odissi dance, music, theory, and performance. Inherent in the training process is challenging students to choreographic skills, to think critically about Odissi movement and idiom, and to imbibe the spiritual significance of the artistic tradition.

Graduates of the program will be knowledgeable in invocatory dance, pure dance, expressional dance, basic Odissi music, foundational theory, make-up (aharya) and will be prepared for a full-scale Odissi recital (Ranga Pravesh).

PRACTICAL SYLLABUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level One</th>
<th>Exercises, Torso Exercises, Chowka steppings (10), Tribhangi steppings (10), Mancha Pravesh, Mangalacharan, Ranga Puja</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level Two</td>
<td>Vasant Pallavi, Batu, Nritya Vilas, Megh Pallavi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level Three</td>
<td>Saveri Pallavi, Mangalacharan (Namameesha), Moksha</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level Four</td>
<td>Abhinaya (Geeta Govinda), Aravi Pallavi, Dashavataar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level Five</td>
<td>Abhinaya (Oriya), Kirwani Pallavi, Durga</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ranga Pravesh: 2-hour solo recital (subject to discretion of the instructor)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Advanced training as per discretion of the instructor</td>
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</tbody>
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- The course syllabus of Alankār is based on the structured syllabuses of the University of Pracheen Kala Kendra-Chandigarh and Akhil Bharatiya Gandharva Mahavidyalaya Mandal (nationally recognized universities of performative arts in India). The duration of the basic course is 3 to 5 years which includes both practical (basic footwork, fundamental dance movements & introduction to some beginners' dance items) as well as theoretical (Abhinaya Darpana, Taal system & Oriya literature) components. Students graduate (and perform Ranga Pravesh).
- Though the syllabus mentions the Pallavis, Abhinaya, etc.by name, students may learn other items as per the instructor’s discretion.
- Changes to the syllabus may occur without prior notice. The time frame of each level will depend on the level of the student(s).

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1 Indian classical dances was born in the temples as a form of worship practices by devadāsis (meaning servants of God). The alankār devadāsis were the highest order of devadāsis. They were carefully chosen and initiated at a tender age. Alongside a rigorous training in Gandharva Vidyā (knowledge of dance and music), they learned all the intricacies of makeup, the art of decoration, etiquette, and spiritual scriptures.
THEORY SYLLABUS

Level One
1. Knowledge of Indian mythologies
2. Asamyuta and Samyuta Hastas
3. Foot positions: Adi, Sama, Viparanmitkha, Kumbha, Dhanu, Prushta Dhanu, Maha
5. Matra, Laya, Tali demonstration.

Level Two
1. Shirobheda, Drishtibheda, Grevebhedha.
2. Foot positions: Eka, Meenapuchha, Lolita, Uttolita, Ullolita, Nupura, Soochi, Kunchita, Anukunchita
3. Odissi Musical instruments
4. Temples, Pata chitra, & Palm leaf paintings & its relation with Odissi dance.

Level Three
1. Bhramari, Chali
2. Bhangi: Sama bhanga, Ahbhanga, Tribhanga, Atibhanga, and Chowka
3. Foot positions: Bilagna Parsni, Tribhanga, Swastika, Mandala, Chouka, Ardha Chouka
4. History of Odissi dance from its origin story to mahari, gotipua and Odissi’s revival

Level Four
1. Abhinayas: Angika, Vachika, Aharya, Lasya and tandava
2. Select Hasta vinayogas, Deva hastas, Bandhu hastas
3. Rasas and Bhavas
4. Matra - Laya – Tala
5. Foot positions: Bandhani, Utparni, Ardha Swastika, Rekha
6. Ek Taali – 4 Matras, Rupak – 6 Matras, Trputa - 7 matras, Jhampa – 10 Matras
7. Identify and define the 3 types of dance presentation: Nritta, Nritya and Natya
8. Study of Ashthapadi

Level Five
1. Identify the following texts, the author and list their significance to Odissi classical dance: Natya Shastra, Abinaya Darpana, Gita Govinda.
2. Nayakas and Nayikas
3. Khandis and Arasas; Arasas in Odissi Talas: Ektali (4 Matras) and Rupak Tala (6 Matras)
4. Odissi tala and music system, Musical accompaniments
5. Demonstration of Rupaka (6 Matras), Khemta (6 Matras), Astartala (8 Matras), Jhampa (10 Matras), Jatitala (14 Matras), Aditala (16 Matras)
6. Demonstration of Stayee Ukuta (Dharana), Bani, Ukuta, Khandi, Gadi, Maana, Jhula, Pohapata, Padi
7. Odissi dance make up, costume and significances

Senior
1. Study of Sacred Space, Guru and traditional mythologies
2. Karana, Angahara, Rechaka, Chari and Mandal
3. Knowledge of the Natyashastra
4. Oriya poetic traditions and forms
5. Concepts of choreography and professional dance production
6. Artistic collaborations
7. Dance pedagogy
RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. Annual Odissi sessions will be from April to November.
2. Punctuality and regularity to class must be maintained by students. Punctual attendance is expected in every class.
3. The timeless and age-old tradition of Guru-Shishya parampara will be valued in our class. Parents are requested to help students understand the concept both in context of our class, as well as in general.
4. Dance students must attend the class in salwar-suit or t-shirt and exercise pants. Students must bring a dupatta or scarf to class.
5. All clothes, jewelry and hair should be restrained so as not to interfere with movements.
6. Students must bring this course-pack (hardcopy), a notebook and pen in class.
7. Practical examinations will be held in the first week of December.
8. Theory revisions will be conducted over January and February.
9. Theory exams will be conducted in the last week of February.
10. If student misses a class, make-up classes will not be provided. However, the instructor might reschedule classes with prior notice.
11. If all students agree to re-schedule a class, that may be arranged with the instructor.
12. Students will be provided practice quality music for the compositions taught in class. Performance quality music can be purchased from the instructor for Ranga Pravesh or other performances.
13. The prescribed textbook Mirror of Gestures or Abhinaya Darpana by Nandikesvara will be provided by the instructor in pdf form.
14. All theory readings will be provided by instructors. Students should study them carefully.
15. Dancers will require to buy Odissi costume, ornaments etc. in order to participate in troupe recitals or Ranga Pravesh.
16. Ranga Pravesh (graduation) may be arranged by students as per discretion of the instructor. Special instructions will be provided regarding the requirements.
17. Items taught at the advanced stage will be as per discretion of the instructor.
18. Without the permission of the instructor, students are not allowed to accept any engagements to appear in public either on amateur or professional stage or in any program in classical Odissi dance till Ranga Pravesh (graduation).
19. Students are advised to participate in an Annual Intensive Training Workshop (practical and theory) by an eminent Odissi guru who will be invited by the instructor. This exposure will be an enriching experience for students. There will be extra expense for the workshops.
WHAT IS ODISSI?

Odissi traces its origins to the ritual dances performed in the temples of ancient northern India. Today the name Odissi refers to the dance style of the state of Orissa in eastern India.

Odissi dance is marked by its graceful lilt as well as elegance. Odissi is full of sculpturesque poses known as Bhangis. The technique includes repeated use of the tribhangi, or thrice deflected posture, in which the body is bent in three places, approximating the shape of a helix. This feminine pose is most approved with three bends in the body, the first cause by the crossing of the legs, the second by a curvature at the waist and third by an inclination to the head to one side, generally to the left. The most graceful feature of Odissi dance is the soft circular movement of the hand, head and torso, depicting the roundness of the Konark wheel or Sri Jagannath Deva’s eyes. The theme of Odissi dance is deeply rooted in spirituality.

A typical Odissi repertoire consists of the following:

Mangalacharan
In the Odissi style, the Mangalacharan marks the entrance of the dancer onto stage. The dancer invokes the blessing of Lord Jagannath for an auspicious beginning to the performance. Then the dancer offers salutation to the Mother Earth (Bhumi Pranam), the teacher, the accompanists and the audience. It is followed by a homage to a deity. Mangalucharanan essentially invokes the blessings of the revered God, Guru, and the audience.

Batu
Batu Nritya is a pure dance offering in honor of Lord Batukeshwar Bhairava, one of the 64 aspects of Lord Shiva. This dance item is indicative with sculpturesque poses describing such actions as the playing of the drum, veena, flute and cymbals.

Pallavi
Pallavi is also pure dance and implies elaboration; an exposition not only of the dance but also of the music that accompanies it. Like the blossoming of a flower, the Pallavi gradually unfolds the particular Raga upon which it is based: thus a beautiful tapestry of rhythm, music and movement is created.

Abhinaya
Abhinaya is an expressional in nature, a depiction of a bhava or deep emotion expressed in a song or lyric. In Odissi style, this item is danced to the musical poetry of Jayadeva’s immensely lyrical Sanskrit love poem, the Geeta Govinda of the 12th century AD. The Abhinaya item is sometimes danced to the accompaniment of Oriya lyrics composed by the three venerated poets of Odisha – Kavisurya Baladeva Rath, Gopal Krishna Pattnaik, Banamali Das - among others. Set to a slow tempo, the abhinaya provides ample scope to the dancer for delineating an emotion through the expressive artifices of mime – glances, hand gestures, sinuous movements of the body and the myriad uses of facial expression.

Mokshya
Mokshya means salvation or the ultimate release from the human life experience and the blissful integration of the human soul with the Almighty. Mokshya, the final item of the Odissi repertoire, signifies the total surrender of the dancer to God.
ABOUT SHREELINA
Shreelina Ghosh perfected the ancient art of Odissi dance under the strict supervision and loving care of the eminent Odissi exponent, Guru Aloka Kanungo for more than 25 years. She was initiated into the art by Guru Giridhari Nayak at the age of 4.

Shreelina has learned the nuances of Odissi Classical Music from the eminent Guru Gopal Chandra Panda and is a first-class Visharad in both Odissi dance and Rabindra Sangeet. She earned her PhD in Rhetoric and Writing from Michigan State University and is currently employed as Assistant Professor of Professional and Technical Communication at Dakota State University.

Shreelina has performed in most major festivals in India, including Khajuraho Dance Festival, Puri Beach Festival, India Habitat Center, Uday Shankar Dance Festival, Surya Festival, Kerala; Thalam, Kerala; Swaralaya Nrityotsav, Kerala; Kolkata Dooradarshan Utsav. She perform a number of times on the Indian National Television (Dooradarshan) and on state channels.

In USA, she performed Arizona, Texas, Washington, Illinois and in several cities in Michigan. She was invited to perform for Ragamala (Seattle) and in the Lincoln Center of Performing Arts (NY). She has collaborated with several artists in creative productions in Arizona, Michigan, and South Dakota.

As a choreographer, Shreelina made a unique attempt to juxtapose the subtle nuances of Buddhism and Hinduism through dance in Panamami Buddham. Conceived, written, and choreographed by the artist herself, the project was sponsored by the Mahabodhi Society of India and was performed on the holy of Bodh Gaya where Buddha attained bodhihood. The production brought her to attention of critics and media as an experimental choreographer. Her production Vayu: Visions of the Wind, was sponsored by Dakota State University College of Arts & Letters.

Among other accolades for performance, she received "Star of Tomorrow Award" from West Bengal Dance Group Federation, honorable mention at the Excellence in Diversity Awards at Michigan State University for "Artistic Expressions", and felicitation from the Thero at Mahabodi Society of India, Bodh Gaya.
ADMISSION FORM

STUDENT'S NAME: ..........................................................................................................................

BIRTHDATE (MM/DD/YY): .............................................................................................................

ACADEMIC STATUS: .......................................................................................................................

ADDRESS: ........................................................................................................................................

CONTACT NO. : RESI........................................MOBILE.............................................................

EMERGENCY CONTACT: ..............................................................................................................

Please list any ailments, or special medical conditions, past or present, of which Alankār
should be aware: ............................................................................................................................

TRAINING PURSUED EARLIER (If any )

Name of Guru(s)/Institution(s): .......................................................................................................

Form(s) of Dance: ............................................................................................................................

No. of years of training in each form: ............................................................................................... 

Photo/Video Release: Photo Release: I grant permission to Alankār to take photographs
or video of me/my child for promotional purposes of the school, including but not limited to
use in printed publications such as brochures and newsletters, as well as website or other
electronic forms. I understand that these images may be edited, duplicated and/or
reformatted in any form and manner without payment of fees, in perpetuity.

Liability Release: I am aware that dance training and the athletic exercises associated with
it place unusual stress on the body and carry the risk of physical injury. On behalf of my
child and myself (and if I am no longer a minor, on my own behalf), I assume the risk and
agree that Alankār shall not be liable in any way for injuries sustained during attendance at
the dance school or any of its' related functions. I understand that good Odissi training
involves touching and adjustment of the student's body by the instructor.

Signature........................................................................................................................................Date ............................................

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