

SPIC MACAY

Alekhya Punjala



ALEKHYA PUNJALA • Trained in Kuchipudi dance with Guru Dayal Sharan, in Bharatanatyam with Uma Rama Rao & in abhinaya with Guru Pasumarthy Krishnamurthy. Known for carrying forward the legacy of Guru Vedantam Satyanarayana Sarma • Ph.D on Kshetranya Padams & their importance in abhinaya in Kuchipudi dance. Postgraduate degree in ancient Indian history, culture and archaeology • Outstanding performer, dedicated teacher, choreographer and researcher • Performed at various Indian and International festivals and presented research papers at seminars • Professor and Head of the Department of Dance at Potti Sri Ramulu Telugu University, Hyderabad • Runs an institution called Trishna • Honours include the Abhinaya Tapasvini title awarded by the Sahitya Pitham at a very young age, Ugadi Visishta Puraskar (2002), the Hamsa Award and the Prathiba Rajiv Puraskar (2009) conferred by the Govt of Andhra Pradesh, Central Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (2009), Sri Kala Purna from Sri Annamacharya Project of North America (SAPNA) in Chicago (2013)

KUCHIPUDI DANCE • Kuchipudi is one of the 8 classical dances of India • Kuchipudi is a village in Divi Taluka of Krishna district in Andhra Pradesh that borders the Bay of Bengal which has given birth to many practitioners of Kuchipudi dance • Usually performed in temples by Brahmin men called Bhavathalu, women were not allowed to perform this dance at all • A typical performance begins with stage rites of sprinkling water on the stage, planting the Indra dhvaja (the flag of Indra) to protect the performance from interferences, followed by the worship of Lord Ganesh, Goddesses Lakshmi, Saraswati and Parashakti. After which each of the characters comes onto the stage and introduces themselves with a dharavu (a small composition of both song and dance), to introduce the identity & set the mood of the character in the drama. The drama then begins • The dance is accompanied by song which is typically Carnatic music. The singer is accompanied by a mridangam (a classical South Indian percussion instrument), violin, flute and the tambura (a drone instrument with strings which are plucked). Ornaments worn by the artists are generally made of a lightweight wood called Boorugu • Some of the renowned artists of Kuchipudi are Vedantam Laxmi Narayana Sastry, Chinta Krishnamurthy, Tadepalli Peryya, Vempati Chinna Satyam, Vedantam Satyanarayana Sarma, Raja and Radha Reddy, Yamini Krishnamurthy and Swapna Sundari.