

The SDSU School of Music and Dance and the Center for World Music present



**CENTER
FOR
WORLD
MUSIC**

SOUTH INDIAN CLASSICAL MUSIC AND DANCE

by the

Arpana Dance Company

Ramya Harishankar - Artistic Director/Nattuvangam

G. Srikanth - Voice

Naveen Basavanhally - Mridangam

Kiran Athreya - Violin

Nidhi Satyadev - Dance

Monday, February 16, 2015

6:00pm

SDSU Smith Recital Hall

Program

Idhu bhaagya – *Ragam: Panthucarali; Talam: Khanda Chapu; Composer: Purandara Dasa*

Vallabha Nayaka – *Ragam: Begada; Talam: rupaka; Composer: Muthusami Dikshitar*

Maddu mekkum – *Ragam: Chenjuruti; Talam: adi (tisra Nadai); Composer: Oothukada Venkata Subbayier*

Thilana – *Ragam: Kathanakanthukalam; Talam: adi; Composer: M. Balamuralikrishna*

Notes

Bharata Natyam, the classical dance style of South India, incorporates two basic dance techniques, pure or abstract dance and mimetic dance. As with the music that accompanies it, *bharata natyam* is lively, virtuosic, and rhythmic in character. Facial expressions, hand gestures (*mudras*), rhythmic footwork, and costume are all combined in order to tell a specific Hindu story, taken from mythology or legend, or simply to create beautiful visual designs within the staged dance space. Bharata Natyam is a demanding art form both physically and mentally; its performance requires years of dedication, hard work, and discipline.

Dance genres of South India include some of the following types: (1) *pushpanjali* (an invocation to the elephant-headed God Ganesha who is believed to be the remover of obstacles), (2) *jathilayasaram* (a virtuosic dance with scintillating footwork and statuesque poses), (3) *javali* (an interpretive mime dance with facial expression, body language, and symbolic gestures, all used to communicate the meaning of the song text), and *padam* (a devotional interpretive dance-song).

Vocal music in South India normally consists of a short religious text that has three different melodies: the first (*pallavi*) in a low range, the second (*anupallavi*) in a high range, and the third (*charanam*) in a middle range. The **veena** (vina) is the most prestigious chordophone in southern India. The European **violin** has displaced some traditional bowed instruments, but its tone and microtonal capabilities make it a superb instrument for expressing the slides and ornaments (*gamak*) that “spice” or decorate the melodic modes of Indian classical music, which are known as **rag** (*ragam, raga*). Aerophones are also used for melodic lead instruments, with a variety of flute instruments being the most popular. All lead instruments play atop a set of drone notes, played either on stringed instruments or electronically. The **mridangam**, the classical drum of South India, is a barrel-shaped, two-headed drum that is played with the fingers. It is constructed with two heads that are “loaded” (weighted) so that their pitches may be lowered. Combined with a virtuosic technique, the mridangam produces a surprisingly large variety of timbres and pitches. These drumming techniques are also applied to the **ghatam** (tuned clay pot) and **kanjira** (small tambourine with a single pair of jingles). **Nattuvangam** refers to small cymbals that are struck together; the player of nattuvangam conducts the dance performance. All percussion instruments are organized around the **tal** (*talam, tala*), the system of metric modes.

An award-winning dancer, choreographer, teacher, and musician, **Ramya Harishankar** has directed the **Arpana Dance Company** since its creation over twenty years ago (Arpana means “offering” in Sanskrit). For more information on **Ramya Harishankar**, please visit: <http://www.arpanadancecompany.org/>