



Kuchipudi Art Center

(Artistic Director Smt. Sunita Pendekanti)

Presents

Kuchipudi Rangapravesam of *Mahati Reddy Mettu*

On Saturday, August 1, 2026



Kuchipudi & Kuchipudi Art Center

Kuchipudi is an ancient Indian classical dance form known for its blend of grace, vigor, and spiritual depth. It originated in a village in the Krishna District of Andhra Pradesh, India, known as Kuchelapuram. Kuchipudi contains all three aspects of dance as listed in the Natya Shastra: Nritta (pure dance), Nritya (expressional dance), Natya (dance drama). With its blend of techniques, Kuchipudi solidifies itself as one of the most unique dance forms of India.

Guru Smt. Sunita Pendekanti founded the Kuchipudi Art Center (KAC) in 2001 to inspire youth and preserve this art form through both practice and theory. KAC has staged acclaimed dance dramas featuring top artists from India and the Bay Area, and its students have excelled in local and national competitions. The school continues to gain recognition, bringing joy to both performers and audiences alike.



Guru Smt. Sunita Pendekanti

Natya Mayuri

Nritya Bharathi

Guru Smt. Sunita Pendekanti started her initial training in the Indian dance form of Kuchupudi under the guidance of her mother Smt. Kandala Janani Sarala, who is an accomplished artist herself. She then started her training under Guru Vempati Kondarama Sastri at the tender age of four and continued under Smt. Vempati Nageswari's guidance for several years.

She made her solo dance debut Kuchupudi Nrityanjali at the age of 16 and since then has never looked back as the recipient of several district, state and national awards. She has also been bestowed title upon her as 'Natya Mayuri' in recognition of her graceful presentation style with specific importance to 'Lasya' and 'Abhinaya' without compromising on Nritta. Guru Smt. Sunita has participated as a lead dancer in several dance dramas conducted by her Guru Mrs. Vempati Nageswari, Guru Vedantham Prahlada Sarma, Guru Pasumarthy Venkateswara Sarma and many other prominent dancers.

Guru Smt. Sunita has a masters in Engineering and is working in the Bay Area. She founded Kuchupudi Art Center in 2001, directed and choreographed 'Krishna Mahima', 'Sarvam Krishna Mayam' and 'Dhruva Charithra' Kuchupudi Ballets. She was also awarded the 'Nrithya Bharati' title in 2007 from the prestigious Silicon Andhra Organization



Puja and Sabha Namaskaram

Choreographed by: Smt. Sunita Pendekanti

The program begins with a short piece where the dancer asks for blessings from God, her Guru, her Orchestra, and her Audience.

Jhem Jhem Ta na na

Ragam: Arabhi | Talam: Adi

Composer: Dr. M. Balamuralikrishna

Choreographed by: Guru Dr. Vempati Chinna Satyam

Jhem Jhem Ta na na is an opening dance piece in which the dancer offers flowers and salutations before beginning the performance. It first praises Lord Ganesha, the remover of obstacles, and then invokes Goddess Saraswati, asking for wisdom, grace, and artistic blessing. The piece prepares both the dancer and audience by entering the stage with devotion and joy. This dance symbolizes surrender to the divine and a respectful beginning to the artistic journey.

Alamelu Manga

Ragam: Hindolam | Talam: Adi

Composer: Sri Tallapaka Annamacharya

Song Choreographed by: Pasumarthi Venkateshwara Sharma

Sloka Choreographed by: Smt. Sunita Pendekanti

Alamelu Manga tells the story of Goddess Alamelu Manga, also known as Padmavati, the divine consort of Lord Venkateswara. In this piece, she is portrayed as a graceful goddess whose beauty is spiritual. The dance often focuses on how she moves with elegance and serenity, blessing her devotees with prosperity, peace, and protection. The piece depicts divine femininity, showing Alamelu Manga as both a loving goddess and a powerful symbol of grace and auspiciousness.

Ramayana Shabdham

Ragam: Mohanam | Talam: Adi

Composer: Sri Melattur Kasinathayya

Choreographed by: Guru Dr. Vempati Chinna Satyam

Ramayana Shabdham retells the essential story of the Ramayana. It traces Lord Rama's journey from his birth to Sita's swayamvara, exile, the battle against Ravana, and finally his triumph and coronation. This dance is more narrative, showing Rama as the ideal hero who represents dharma, courage, and righteousness.

Sringaralahari

Ragam: Neelambari | Talam: Adi

Composer: Sri Mysore Lingaraja Urs

Choreographed by: Smt Sunita Pendekanti

Sringaralahari presents the goddess Saraswati as a divine embodiment of beauty, music, and compassion, whose presence fills the world like a wave. The piece builds her image through descriptions of her charm, her gentle power, and the blessings she gives her devotees. The composition is often associated with the goddess through imagery of music, ornamentation, tenderness, and spiritual radiance.



Tarangam - Krishnam Kalaya Sakhi

Ragam: Mukhari | Talam: Adi
Composer: Sri Narayana Theerta
Choreographed by: Smt. Sunita Pendekanti

Krishnam Kalaya Sakhi is a devotional piece centered on Lord Krishna, where the speaker calls out to a friend, urging her to behold or seek the beautiful child Krishna. The composition praises him not only for his charm and playful, youthful form, but also for his deeper divine nature as Vishnu, the protector who guides devotees across the troubles of worldly life. So in dance, the piece moves between madhura bhakti and devotion, showing Krishna as both enchanting and spiritually powerful. In Kuchipudi, it becomes a graceful expression of love, wonder, and surrender to Krishna's beauty and divinity.

Adaro Padaro

Ragam: Aarabhi | Talam: Adi
Composer: Sri Tallapaka Annamacharya
Choreographed by: Smt. Sunita Pendekanti

Adaro Padaro is a joyful Kuchipudi piece that celebrates the divine wedding of Lord Venkateswara and Goddess Lakshmi. The lyrics call on celestial beings to sing, dance, and rejoice, describing the grandeur, ritual beauty, and festive atmosphere of the sacred marriage. Rather than focusing on one emotional conversation, the dance presents the splendor of a divine celebration, with the dancer bringing out happiness, devotion, and ceremonial excitement. In Kuchipudi, this piece becomes a vibrant expression of bhakti, inviting the audience to witness and share in the joy of the heavenly wedding.

Thillana - Hindola

Ragam: Hindolam | Talam: Adi
Composer: Dr. M. Balamuralikrishna
Choreographed by: Guru Dr. Vempati Chinna Satyam

Hindolam Tillana is a vibrant, rhythmic piece typically performed at the conclusion of the Rangapravesam. Set to a five-note scale of Raga Hindolam to create a deeply melodious structure, the composition beautifully balances intricate footwork with an evocative mood. The inherent grace of Hindolam, a raga associated with spring, a gentle swinging motion, and the romantic mood lends the energetic, crisp movements of the dance a uniquely flowing, blissful quality.

Mangalam

Choreographed by: Smt. Sunita Pendekanti

The program ends with a short piece where the dancer thanks everyone, including God, her Guru, her Orchestra, and her Audience for giving her the opportunity to showcase her culture's ancient art form.



Nattuvangam: **Guru Smt. Sunita Pendekanti**



Vocal: **Shree Siva Prasad N. N.**



Shree Siva Prasad N. N. is a highly acclaimed and versatile Karnatic and Sopaanam music vocalist with a distinguished performance career spanning over four decades. Born into a family of musicians in Kerala, his musical journey began with training in the Carnatic style under the tutelage of Shri K. M. Krishnan. He also mastered the traditional Sopaanam style of music from his father, Shri V. N. Narayan Nambudiri.

Shree Siva Prasad has graced countless stages, performing extensively both as a captivating solo artist and a sought-after accompanying vocalist for dancers of major classical forms, including Bharatnatyam, Kuchipudi, Kathakali, and Mohiniyattam. His versatility extends to contemporary music, as he frequently lends his melodious voice to fusion music bands and studio recordings. He has also been a regular performer with productions for All India Radio and Doordarshan.

His significant contributions to the arts have earned him numerous prestigious titles and awards, including: Sangeeta Pravina by Nateschwara in Baden-Switzerland, Sur-ratna, Mumbai Gaurav, Kalaratna, Shivali Sangeet Shiromani, Nupura Sangeeta Ratna, Girnar Sangeetha Ratna, Nritya Sangeetha Sevamani, Nadavedashree, Kalashiromani lifetime achievement award from AIAA Shimla.

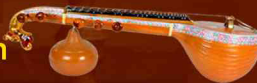
Mridangam: **'Vadya Ratna' Thanjavur Ramamurthy Kesavan**



Thanjavur Ramamurthy Kesavan is a distinguished percussionist and Nattuvangam artiste with a musical legacy spanning four generations. Carrying the title "Vadya Ratna," Kesavan began his journey at age six, eventually accompanying legends such as Dr. M. Balamuralikrishna and Sonal Mansingh. A "B High" graded artiste of All India Radio and Doordarshan, he is celebrated for his technical mastery of the Mridangam, as well as his versatility on the Thavil, Kanjeera, and Ghatam.

Beyond performance, Kesavan is a visionary composer and educator. He has conceptualized acclaimed thematic productions like Panchabootham and has conducted workshops in over 84 countries. An empanelled artist of the ICCR and holder of an Honorary Doctorate, he remains dedicated to preserving his Guru Parampara by mentoring the next generation of artistes, including providing free training to under privileged students for over a decade.

Veena: **Smt. Anjani Srinivasan**



Anjani Srinivasan, a remarkable Vainika in the world of Carnatic music, has captivated audiences since she first took the stage at the tender age of eight. This early initiation into the realm of music certainly set the foundation for a flourishing career, guided by the expertise and mentorship of legendary Vainika, Guru Smt. Kamala Aswatthama. Beyond classical concerts, she successfully bridges the gap between traditional and contemporary music by contributing her Veena expertise to dance performances and film recordings. Anjani also collaborates with notable musicians and dancers. Anjani's versatility across various musical genres, showcases her profound mastery of the Veena. Furthermore, Anjani is distinguished as a lead artist in her all-women band, 'Pravaham,' a group that celebrates women's contributions to music. Her international concert tours have taken her to vibrant locales like Dubai, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, France, Sweden, and the USA, underscoring her global impact and appeal. She is the recipient of many awards and accolades, that includes 'Child Prodigy' Award from Rotary Club, 'Bharat Ratna M.S Subbulakshmi Fellowship' award from Shanmukhananda Sabha Mumbai, 'Kalai Valarmani' by the TamilNadu Government.

Violin: Sri Madhuvanth Maheswaran



Madhuvanth Maheswaran is an accomplished Carnatic violinist and a prominent disciple of Guru Nirujan Sehasothy. His playing is celebrated for its technical precision and emotional depth, beautifully mirroring the human vocal tradition. Deeply rooted in his Tamil artistic lineage, he captures the intricate nuances of Southern Indian classical music.

Beyond his traditional roots, Madhuvanth is an active Western music practitioner and an exceptional multi-instrumentalist who plays the mandolin, saxophone, and keyboard. This diverse expertise allows him to seamlessly navigate everything from traditional concerts to cross-genre fusion projects as a highly sought-after soloist and collaborator.

Flute: Sri S. Kumar Babu



S. Kumar Babu, son of Sitaramlu and Rajeshwari, is a disciple of Guru Sri N. Ch. B. Aachaaryulu. Hailing from Vijayawada, Kumar Babu is one of India's leading flautists. With over two decades of performing experience, he has performed nationwide and toured extensively across the globe, including the USA, UK, Germany, Italy, France, Switzerland, and the Netherlands. As a highly sought-after accompanist, Kumar has performed alongside many leading dancers. He has also participated in prestigious music and dance festivals such as the Madras Music Academy, the Nishagandhi Festival in Kerala, the Salt Lake Festival in Kolkata, and the Thyagaraja Aradhanotsavam in Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam, among many others. Kumar Babu is a graded artist of All India Radio and, alongside his active performing career, has passionately trained a number of students.

About the dancer

Mahati began her training in Kuchipudi at the age of 7 under the guidance of Smt. Sunitha Pendekanti, Artistic Director of the Kuchipudi Arts Center and has studied the art form for close to a decade. Throughout her dance journey, she has developed a wide repertoire of traditional pieces and performed in many productions, including performances in India and Paris, and the Cleveland Thyagaraja Festival, the largest Indian classical

music festival held outside of India. She has also competed at events such as the BATA Classical Dance Competition and completed a classical dance degree through Potti Sreeramulu Telugu University.

Beyond dance, Mahati is passionate about technology and engineering. Throughout high school, she developed several educational technology projects, including a personalized storybook generator designed to make reading more engaging for children with ADHD and learning differences. Mahati also completed an internship with Dexati, where she worked on mobile app development and product development. In addition to her work in technology, she served as Secretary and Co-Founder of her school's Child Rights and You chapter, organizing fundraisers and campaigns focused on educational access and disability inclusion. She has also been on the varsity badminton team since her freshman year of high school, qualifying for NCS, and recipient of the Most Improved Player Award. She will attend Santa Clara University, where she plans to study Computer Science in the fall.

For Mahati, Kuchipudi is a meaningful connection to her cultural heritage and an important form of personal expression. Through dance, she has learned discipline and patience. She hopes to continue performing classical dance in college through a college dance team.

We sincerely thank you all for joining us
in celebrating this special occasion.

Nirmala and Kumar Mettu

