

Kansas City Young Audiences

Teacher Program Guide

Experience India

Artist: Samarpita Bajpai

Performance Description

Inside this guide:

Performance Description
Educational
Artist Bio
Vocabulary
List of Resources
Post-Performance Activities

Contact KCYA for more information on this and other programs.

816-531-4022
www.kcya.org

Samarpita Bajpai combines performance, lecture, and a PowerPoint presentation to give students insight into the diverse culture and traditions of India. First, she talks about and shows slides of the different kinds of regional attires, festivals, and traditions in India, stressing the “Unity in Diversity” theme.

She then goes on to talk about the ancient temple architecture and how the arts developed there. She then briefly talks about the seven major classical styles that exist in India, their history of evolution, and costumes. All of this is complemented by a slide show.

Samarpita then performs dances from two major styles. Each dance is preceded by a short narration

to illuminate the meaning and cultural context of the dance. Samarpita concludes the performance with a short question and answer period.

India has an extremely rich cultural tradition of music and dance, both classical and folk. Indian classical dance styles are among the most ancient dance traditions of the world. Most of these styles have a 2000 year old history. There are seven such acknowledged styles in India. These dance forms are some of the most well structured ones, both in terms of physical movements and theoretical contents. Indian dance theory is perhaps the



most expansive of all. It not only deals with specific structure of movements and beats, but lays equal stress on mime or expressions.

Educational Objectives and Standards

Students will:

- Develop an understanding of the diversity of Indian life.
- Learn how legends and mythology are the primary themes of all Indian classical dances.

Standards addressed:

- Knows the ways in which culture influences the perception of places and regions.
- Understands dance in various cultures and historical periods.

Special REQUIREMENTS:

Prefer hardwood stage at least 20' x 20'; no carpets; one microphone with stand; sound system with cassette/CD player; projector and room that can be darkened; stage area cleared 15 minutes prior to performance

Artist Bio: Samarpita Bajpai

Samarpita Bajpai started training in dance at the tender age of seven. She trained in all the seven styles for three years, before she went on to specialize in two of the most popular forms: Kuchipudi and Bharatnatyam. She trained in these forms for over 25 years.

She has given innumerable stage performances since 1988 both in India and the United States. Samarpita has ventured into creative choreog-

raphy too, experimenting with different styles of music and Indian dance forms.

She has been a dance instructor for almost two decades now. Samarpita is also a roster artist of both the Kansas Arts Commission and the Heartland Arts Fund.



Samarpita Bajpai

Vocabulary

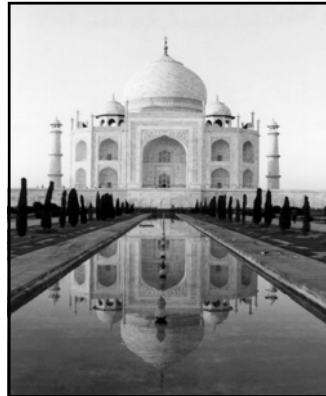
Abhinaya: The dramatic facial expressions used in dance to narrate the story.

Aduvus: The basic steps that form the foundation of all Indian classical dance forms.

Mudras: The codified hand gestures that convey the meaning of the song and narrate the story.

Raga: The sequence of musical notes to which the songs are set.

Tala: The sequence of beats to which the Ragas, and subsequently the dances are set.



Post-Performance Activities

1. Discuss the music and dance you saw today. What is the importance of expressions and why? Into what kind of structured sequences are the beats divided?
2. What is the role of spirituality in Indian Dance, and how do you think it helps? Do you think any kind of spiri-
3. In what ways are Indian dances different from the Western forms that you usually see?



List of Resources

BOOKS

Indian Classical Dances
by Shovana Narayan
Publisher- New Dawn (2005)
ISBN- 1-84557-169-X

Kucipudi Baratham or Kuchipudi Dance: A South Indian Classical Dance Tradition
by K. Uma Rama Rao
Publisher- South Asia Books (Dec 1992)
ISBN- 8170302919

Indian Classical Dance: Tradition in Transition
by Avinash Pasricha & Leela Venkatraman
Publisher- Roli Books Pvt Ltd (2002)
ISBN- 8174362169