



Dr Piyush Raj

Dr Piyush Raj – an artist having an academic approach, an arts entrepreneur and a performer, is a Doctorate in Pharmacy and a MBA in marketing and was in the medical industry for 20 yrs followed by a stint of 10 yrs of career in Interior and Furniture Design. His love for dance was constant throughout these many careers and that made him give up all the other careers and has now dedicated his time completely to Performing Arts and Dance. He has been instrumental in establishing a creative space for all performing arts- **the Natanam Studio for Performing Arts**- based in Mumbai, which is affiliated to Gandharva Mahavidyala and Natavari Academy of Kathak Dance.

Training in Dance-

A Nritya Alankar in Kathak, he was initiated into Kathak by **Dr Shveni Pandya**, (*disciple of Pandit Lacchu Maharaj*), Piyush further honed his art for over 20 years in the Guru Shishya Parampara from his **Guru Late Shri Bireshwar Gautam**, (*disciple of Guru Bandana Sen, Padmashri Pt. Gopi Krishna and Padmashri Damayanti Joshi*) a renowned Kathak dancer and accomplished Thumri singer. Piyush's dance derives its flavor from his tutelage- highlighting the nuances of Kathak by emphasizing the "Thehraav" while simultaneously developing the Bhava and Abhinaya aspect of Katha vaachan and poetry in dance. He has been pursuing his training in Thaata on Vilambit Khayaal- a unique presentation which was a trademark of his Late Guru Bireshwar Gautam

As a Ganda-bandhan shagird of **Mahamahopadhyaya Padmashri Dr Puru Dadheech**, he is now pursuing his advanced training in Kathak under his able guidance to work upon reviving the old traditions of Kathak Kathan Parampara and the Aprachalit taals. His deep interest to integrate Kathak Prayoga with Shastra has given him an impetus to consider pursuing further research in Kathak under his guidance.

Besides this, he has also attended various Kathak workshops conducted by Pt. Birju Maharaj, by Guru Pratap Pawar and also attended Body Movement workshops with Aditi Mangaldas. Having an in-depth knowledge of Indian Folk Dances, he has performed and assisted in choreography of many ballets based on Kathak and Folk dances.



CREATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Have assisted in choreography many Dance Ballets and is creatively involved in evolving a new project to convey the finer nuances of Kathak: Ballets which were conceptualized and choreographed by his Late Guru Shri Bireshwar Gautam and Guru Dr Puru Dadheech
 - RAAG MILAN– A synthesis between Rabindra Sangeet and pure classical music, set against the backdrop of Kathak.
 - KATHAK AUR THUMRI KE RANG – Brings out and elaborates the similarities between Thumri and Kathak.
 - SHAKTI- Salutations to the supreme power- Shiv and Durga and Kali.
 - SURAABHINAYA – A dance-drama which brings out the tension and conflict in the mother-son relationship between Karna and Kunti.
 - ASHTANAYIKA- An evocative presentation of the 8 Nayika bheds, based on various traditional thumris, composed and sung by his Guru Late Bireshwar Gautam.
 - BHARAT MILAP- A story of Ram- Bharat Milap in the Katha Kathan Style- written and conceptualized by Dr Puru Dadheech



- PARVATI PARINAY- Story of Rati Vilaap, Parvati Tapasya and Parvati Shiv Milaap- in the Katha Kathan Parampara – conceptualized and directed by Dr Puru Dadheech
- KATHA SOMNATHI KI- A story of the first Jyotirlinga in Somnath, in the traditional Katha Kathan Parampara – conceptualized and directed by Dr Puru Dadheech.

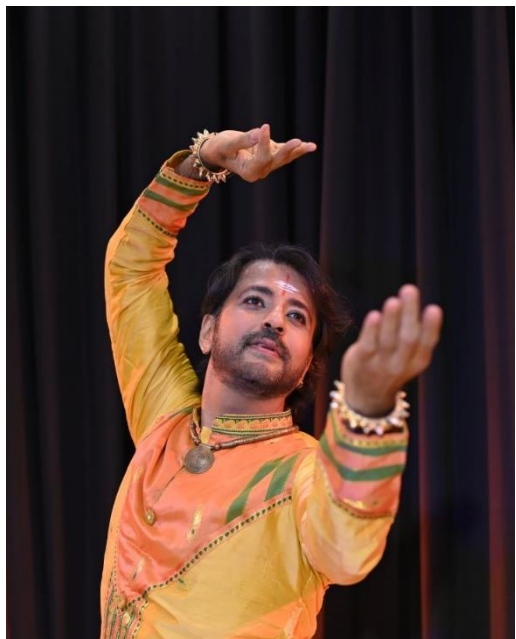
ACADEMIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN FIELD OF DANCE- Speaker/ Paper Published

- A speaker/ panel member of the Discussion of **Pedagogy of Kathak** at the Maya Rao Conference on Choreography in Kathak, organized by Natya Institute of Kathak and Choreography, Bangalore, March 2020.
- A panel member on discussion on **“Breaking Stereotypes of a Male classical Dancer”** organized by Sunshine Initiatives in Mumbai, as a part of their CSR activities.
- A speaker at the Global Tipping Point Summit 2023, at the JBCN International School, Mumbai, delivered a lecture on **“Dance as a medium for education in schools to teach Environmental Sustainability”**
- An invited speaker at the MADHYAAM 2023- the annual summit for the students of Mass Media Communication- Topic- **“Ordinary Lives- Extraordinary Stories”**



- Various Lecture Demonstrations on Kathak – the nuances, the body movements, the techniques and the aspects of Theraav in Dance.
- He is an accredited Kathak teacher, and an examiner appointed by the Akhil Bharatiya Gandharva MahaVidyalaya and is teaching Kathak to students at the **Natanam Studio for Performing Arts**. Virtual Online Training of students in Kathak in India and abroad at beginners and Advanced level. Associated with various educational institutes, World Forum of Art and Culture (WFAC-an Art of Living initiative) and others.
- Conducted lecture demonstrations for children of un-aided under-privileged schools under the collaboration of the VISTAAR program conducted by the **NCPA-Mumbai**.
- Was invited as an examiner for Kathak by the National Institute of Kathak- **Kathak Kendra** New Delhi
- Invited as a moderator at the Kathak Mohatsav-Pune, organized by **Kathak Kendra**-New Delhi to moderate a panel discussion on **“Natya in Kathak”**
- Presented a research paper on the topic **“Glimpses of Kathak Terminologies in Sangitadarpanam”** at the first International Kathak Conference 2021. The same paper is published in the **National Journal “Sangeet Natak”** Vol LIV, No 1-4, 2020, page no 37.
- A paper entitled **“Kathak-Vibhhin Paramparaon ka panjibhoot Swaroop”** under publication in **SANGNA** journal published by Sangeet Natak Akademi

ORGANIZATIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS:



- He is the Trustee of the charitable Trust **KATHAK DARPAN CULTURAL CENTRE** established by his Late Guru Shri Bireshwar Gautam.
- Founder Director of **NATANAM STUDIO FOR PERFORMING ARTS** in Mumbai which is affiliated to the Gandharva Mahavidyala and Natavari Kathak Nritya Academy.
- Was the General Secretary and key member of Dancer's guild- **NARTAK MILAN**, headed by Late Guru Krishnan Kutty and Late Guru Damayanti Joshi. Also organized events and competitions in Indian Classical Music and Dance for various schools and colleges of Mumbai to help to popularize classical art forms amongst the youth.
- Have been the General Secretary and a Board of Trustee of **Nrityanjali**-An institute of Dance, Music and Personality Development, Mumbai. Intensive training and performances in Indian Folk Dances and dance ballets under the guidance of Shri Tushar Guha.
- Initiated a diploma course and written the first thesis on **Personality Development through Performing Arts**- which was presented at the end of the Special Personality Development course (SPDC) developed by me with able guidance from Shri Tushar Guha. This course has now been adopted by the Education Ministry to be implemented in schools and adopted by corporates to train their executives.
- Under Dr Dadheech's guidance, he is instrumental in establishing the first ever "**Diploma Course in Kathak Shastra**", a two year long course exploring various facets of the ancient and recent literature available on kathak. The course is split into Two modules of 1 year each.
- Have organized festivals like **PURUSH**- All male Dancer's Festival, **SWARANJALI** – a festival of Music and Dance, **PHAGUN**- a festival of Dance and Music on Holi, **SHAAGIRD**- a Dance festival featuring young disciples of renowned Gurus.
- Organized a 2-day Dance Festival – **Ashitih Purukalp Utsav- 2022** in Mumbai, celebrating the birthday of Padmashri Dr Puru Dadheech. As a part of this , also organized and coordinated an All India Kathak workshop conducted by Dr Puru Dadheech with more than 800 participants on the occasion of Ashitih Utsav 2022- at the Nehru Science Centre, Mumbai.
- A key member of **SANSKRITA FOUNDATION**, a charitable institute founded by Guru Shubhada Varadkar, promoting Odissi Classical dance art form and other performing arts and working towards a noble cause of collecting funds for poor cancer patients. An active member in organizing their annual Dance festivals- **PRAYAAG** and **NAMAMEE**.
- A trustee member of the Charitable Trust- **Natavari Kathak Nritya Academy**, Indore- an organization founded by Gurus Dr Puru Dadheech and Dr Vibha Dadheech.
- Facilitated and hosted a Meet and Greet for all Mumbai Kathak Dancers and Director- Kathak Kendra at the Natanam Studio to help bridge the gap between the dancers and the National Institute of Kathak

DANCE PERFORMANCES TO NAME A FEW-

Have performed at many prestigious dance festivals with his Guru and solo and with his own students.
(Few Listed below) –

- Kala Ghoda Festival, Mumbai.
- Ellora Festival by MTDC, Aurangabad.
- Purush Festival-Bombay, Nehru Centre, Mumbai
- Festival of Dance, Spirit of Unity Concerts for International Integration- Chennai
- 'Vasantosav' of Kalashram, organised by Pt. Birju Maharaj in Delhi.
- Prayaag Festival, Mumbai.
- Prajvalan Concert Series- A tribute to Late Pandita Madhurita Saranag
- Dance India, The Dance Magazine -3rd Anniversary Festival at Nalanda Mahavidyalaya, Mumbai
- NCPA- Mumbai Dance Season- Opening Ceremony.
- Natyanajli Mahashivratri Festival, Chembur, Mumbai.
- Arghya Festival- Art of Living, Triveni Ashram, Pune
- Ashitih Utsav 2019, Indore
- Guru Wandana Festival- A Tribute to Late Guru Asha



Joglekar,
organized by Smt
Archana Joglekar.

- Dancing Soils, Art of Living Ashram, Gagangiri, Mumbai
- Atmanaad- A group presentation along with Students with other 108 Dancers of different styles organized by ALAP, Mumbai.
- Nritya Aradhana Festival- Thematic presentation on Lord Ram
- Baithak- Natanam Studio, Mumbai
- Kala Arpan -Navratri Festival, Art of Living Ashram, Bangalore
- Ashitih Utsav 2021, 2022, 2023
- Puru Kalp – Shiv Tatva in Puru Kalp-Indore 2023
- Koodalmanikaym Temple Festival, Thrissur- Kerala- 2022
- Ram Ratan Dhan Lata Mangeshkar Festival- NCPA Mumbai 2023
- Kalasamapran Festival-Mumbai 2023
- Chidambaram Festival- Celebrating Male Dancers- Mumbai 2023
- BHAAV 2025- The Expression Summit 2025, organized by World Forum for Arts and Culture, Art of Living, Bangalore
- Assisted Dr Puru Dadheech at his various Lec-Dem on his research topic of his National Tagore Fellowship of SNA
- Have acted in the theatrical dance production- **“Shyam Sakhi”**, directed by **Late Shri Chetan Datar** and conceptualized by Guru Rajashree Shirke and Shri Vaibhav Arekar staged in Prithvi Theatre, Mumbai.



Academic Qualifications-

1. Nritya Alankar- Kathak from Akhil Bharatiya Gandharva Mahavidyala Mandal.
2. Diploma in Kathak Shastra
3. Diploma in Personality Development through Performing Arts
4. Diploma in Kathak Shastra and Aprachalit Ang in Kathak
5. B.Pharm, M.Pharm and Ph.D (Tech) in Pharmaceutical Sciences- Mumbai University
6. M.B.A in Marketing- Prin. L.N. Wellingkar College of Management- Mumbai University

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