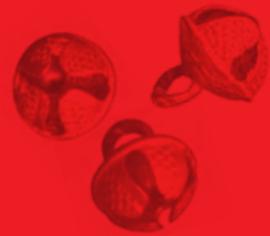


# Shubhada Varadkar

ODISSI EXPONENT





*Your soul I seek  
Through the  
movement so slick  
Your hand I hold  
To conquer the realm  
of artistic abode*



# Shubhada Varadkar



Shubhada has been enthraling the audience with her artistic excellence nationally and internationally at various prestigious festivals like Khajurao Festival - MP, Ellora Festival - Maharashtra, Taj Mahotsav- UP, Art in Action festival - UK, Mahari Festival - Bhubaneswar, Kalidas festival - Nagpur, Natyanjali festival - Chidambaram, Kalaghoda festival - Mumbai, National festival of Odissi dance - Bhubaneswar, 'Dance of hope' with western classical dance choreographer Curtis Speck - Germany, Festival of India - Ghana, festival of India - Venezuela and many more. She has conceptualized and performed a range of creative productions like Kanupriya, Journey to Divinity, Chitrangada, Mayurpankh, Amrutghanu and Prakruti Nartan, which are well received for their rich tapestry of music, choreography and literature.

A professor of Economics, Shubhada was a newscaster with Indian Television in Mumbai. But the call of tinkling anklets made her give up all her other professions and devote all her time and energy to Indian classical dance. For Shubhada, dance is not merely a creative art form; it is also a means of enriching and developing life. She established a charitable trust - Sanskrita Foundation dedicated to promote art and culture.

Shubhada is truly a multifaceted artist and she has captivated art lovers through her writing skills by penning her autobiographical account Mayurpankh and coffee table book, Glimpses of Indian Classical Dance.

An artiste with a quest for perfection, Shubhada Varadkar, a performer, a choreographer, a writer, a Guru and a Guide has taken the divine form of Odissi to transcendental heights with her flawless performances and mentoring of aspiring artistes. Her individuality, versatility and sensitivity blossomed under the guidance of her Guru, Padmavibhushan Shri. Kelucharan Mohapatra. Shubhada also shares a strong bond with Bharata Natyam, having trained under Guru Shri Mani, yet Odissi has remained her first love and her 'raison d'être'.

Hailed as a prima dona in Odissi by the critics, Shubhada's dance brings out the true spirit of Odissi as a dance of love and passion in its purity. Her deep commitment to this dance form led her to receive prestigious awards like **Sringar Mani, Priyadarshini, Maharashtra Gourav, Mahari Award, Kala-Ratna Award** to mention a few and **Senior Fellowship by Ministry of Culture** Government of India. A **national artiste for Doordarshan**, Shubhada is also an empanelled artiste of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR).



## Awards and accolades

**Sringar Mani** -Sursingar Samsad

**Maharashtra Gaurav** – Maharashtra Kala Niketan

**Mahari** – Guru Pankaj Charan Das Odissi Research  
Foundation

**Natyaveda** Award

**Natyatarang** Award

**Priyadarshini** Award

Empaneled with **Indian Council For Cultural  
Relations**

Recipient of senior fellowship by **Ministry of Culture**

Examination committee member of  
**Gandharva Maha Vidyalaya**

Committee member of **Sur Singar Samsad**



## Captivating performances

**Apana Utsav**, Mumbai Maharashtra, 1991

**NCPA**, Mumbai Maharashtra, 1991

**Vividha Kala Mahotsav**, Maharashtra, 1992

**Pallav Utsav Mysore**, Karnataka, 1992

**Swami Haridas Sanmelan**, Mumbai, Maharashtra, 1994

**Nrityanjali Festival**, Chidambaram, Tamilnadu, 1995

**Ellora Festival**, Aurangabad, Maharashtra, 1995

**Pune Festival**, Pune, Maharashtra, 1995

**Dance of Hope**, Germany, 1998

**Hindu Centre**, London, 1998

**Asian Music Circle**, Manchester, UK, 1998

**Vishva Hindu Parishad**, Germany, 1999

**Hindu Centre**, Virginia, USA, 1999

**ISKCON**, Amsterdam, 1999

**Soleil D'or Paris**, 1999

**University of Michigan**, USA, 1999

**School of Philosophy Croydon**, 2001

**Art in Action Oxford**, UK, 2002

**Kalidas Festival**, Nagpur, Maharashtra, 2003

**Spicmacay Virasat Festival**, Mumbai, Maharashtra, 2003

**Elephanta Festival**, Mumbai, Maharashtra, 2004

**Ellora Festival**, Aurangabad, Maharashtra, 2005

**Prayaag Mahotsav**, Mumbai, Maharashtra, 2006

**Art in Action**, Oxford, UK, 2007

**Mumbai Festival**, Mumbai, Maharashtra, 2008

**Rangashala**, Udaypur, 2009

**Taj Mahotsav**, Agra, 2010

**Mahari Festival**, Bhubaneshwar, 2011

**Prayaag Festival**, 2012

**Kala Ghoda Festival**, Mumbai, Maharashtra, 2014

**Namamee Festival**, Mumbai, Maharashtra, 2014

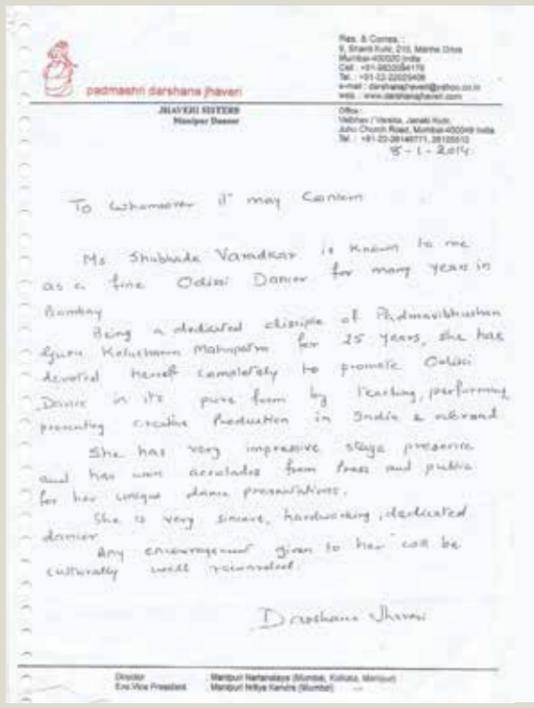
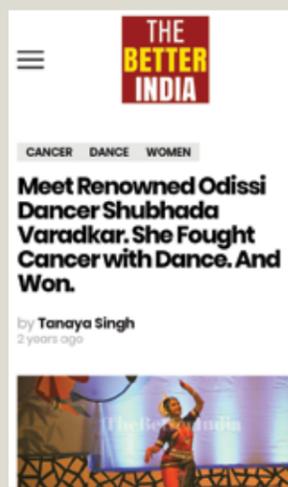
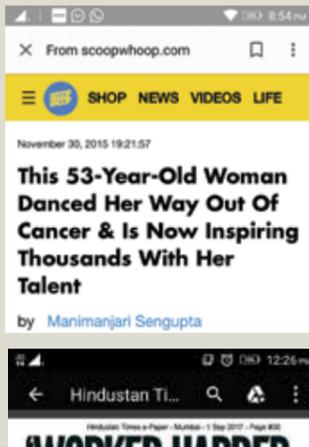
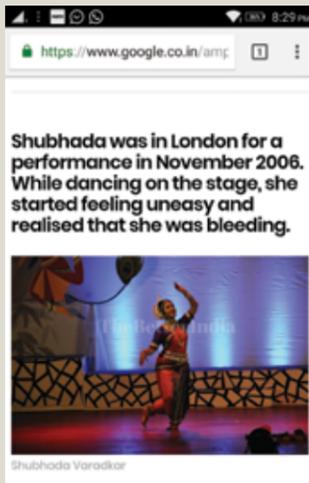
**Khajuraho Festival**, 2015

**Nehru Centre**, London, 2016

**Festival of India**, Ministry of Culture, Ghana, 2017

**NCPA**, Mumbai, Maharashtra, 2017

**International book exhibition**, Caracas, Venezuela, 2017



### Reviews

#### Poetry in motion

There was truth in the performance. Besides graceful movements, precise footwork and tender gestures, it was her abhinaya that raised it to a level above the ordinary.

*Shanta Gokhale, Mumbai Mirror*

#### Odissi steals the show

Petite and pretty Shubhada showed her prowess in an hour long recital she performed on Sunday. She has a figure and felicity, a pleasant disposition and a flair for sensitive and subtle expression which went a long way to make it a compact impressive performance.

*Indian Express, Hariharan*

This girl is a prima donna in Odissi. Quite unusually graceful, with dynamic movements not seen before. Shubhada's every sitting and standing position becomes a temple carving her reference to Krishna are delightful cameos of her dream of perfect union. This is Shringara at a pinnacle of love.

*The Afternoon Dispatch and Courier, Hima Devi*

#### The appeal of abhinaya

A freshness of repertoire and absorbing "Abhinaya" made Shubhada's Odissi recital stand out...

*The Times of India (Hariharan)*

#### Realms of the sublime

A woman of remarkable beauty who is at the peak of her development as a dancer technically, mentally and spiritually, she reached great heights in the Odissi school of dance. Slim as a larch she offered her heart and soul to God with utmost grace interjected with poses of unbelievable beauty. A sort of restrained vigour rules her performance and she has full control over varied rhythms.

*The Afternoon Dispatch and Courier (Hima Devi)*

#### Song of the soul

Shubhada, well-known exponent of Odissi style performed "Jatayu Moksha" with finesse. Her abhinaya as well as nritta component of dance was worthy of admiration.

*The Pioneer*

#### Creative confluence of odissi & bhajan

The dancer who is a ravishing beauty a fair girl incandescent in a dark green robe, shimmering with silver jewellery lights up the stage with her ardent interpretation of the Lord of all actors and dancers the Nataraaja. This I think was the first time I witnessed the dance of Shiva come alive in Odissi. A star was born.

*The Afternoon Dispatch and Courier (Hima Devi)*

#### Just one for many

So adept is one Shubhada at jumping from one character's portrayal to another... she does it with greatest of ease from Ravana as the conqueror of the world to Ravana as an old hermit there, before our eyes, an unbelievable transformation takes place.

*Femina*

#### Shubhada's captivating performance

The fight between Ravana and Jatayu was unimaginably detailed, dramatic and the death of Jatayu reminded me of Pavlova in "The Dying Swan". (Ballet)

*The Afternoon Dispatch and Courier (Hima Devi)*

In "moksha", Shubhada reached a level far above any style of dance, she was in the realms of the sublime.

*The Afternoon Dispatch and Courier (Hima Devi)*

#### Stylistic grace

In pure Abhinaya too the artiste was lucid in expression. Shubhada with spontaneity in facial expression and telling gestures interpreted the Ashtapadi number "Sakhi Hey Keshi Mathan Mudaram"

*The Times of India (Hariharan)*

When at the close of Jatayu's death, Shubhada flutters slowly to the ground and collapses; it is the stricken Jatayu that has died before your eyes, not a dancer posing as Jatayu. This girl is the soul of dance. She lives the elusive, fleeting irrevocable moment.

*Femina*



### CREATIVE PRODUCTIONS

Shubhada Varadkar has conceptualized and performed a range of creative productions which have been well received for their rich tapestry of music, choreography and literature.



#### Kanupriya

Kanupriya displays the kaleidoscopic range of emotions. It is Radha's monologue, performed in the Odissi dance form with a blend of theatrical technique. Kanu (Krishna) has left to create history, leaving a dejected Radha behind. She is remembering Krishna. While bathing in the blue waters of river Yamuna, as she sees her quivering reflection in the water, imagines that she is in the arms of Krishna. Baffled Radha attempts to define and give a name to her relationship with Krishna. She dreams of him seeking solace for comfort, abandoning the history like old clothing, yearning to go to Radha. Radha... Kanupriya has been waiting to join her Kanu.

This presentation developed as a non-linear cyclical story telling form, questions the existence of war and subsequent destruction. It is a collection of beautiful poems of Dr Dharamvir Bharati.

#### Amrutghanu

Amrutghanu is a unique confluence of Classical dance and Kirtan, based on the immortal works of the great saint of Maharashtra, Sant Dnyaneshwar. Amrutghanu takes the journey of Saint Dnyaneshwar's literature to unfold the evolution of human soul. Portraying his masterpiece "Dnyaneshwari" this production weaves poetry, music, and dance with Kirtan, a popular art form of Maharashtra.

#### Chitrangada (Dance drama)

Chitrangada is Rabindranath Tagore's most inspired play. Outwardly this may be taken as a love story of an exiled prince Arjun from the dynasty of the Kurus and warrior princess, Chitrangada, but Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore's rich imagery evokes Chitrangada's conscience and Arjun's realization of real inner beauty of a woman, making this as the most universal theme. Chitrangada, the princess of Manipur was adept in all the warrior skills. Like a brave soldier she fought for her kingdom, and like a benevolent king she looked after her citizens. Chitrangada meets Arjun and falls in love, Arjun rejects the unattractive Chitrangada. "Madana" the Cupid lord and "Vasanta" the spring lord blesses her with the beauty to attract Arjuna. The story assumes emotional undercurrent of conflicting emotions within the two external forms "Surupa"(beautiful) and "Kurupa"(unattractive). The dichotomy between the two and finally the acceptance of the inner beauty of a woman is the theme explored through this dance drama.

#### Saptaranga

Saptaranga is a unique presentation of all major Indian classical dance styles weaved together to project poetic beauty of these styles. Indian classical dance forms i.e. Bharatnatyam, Kathak, Kathakali, Kuchipudi, Manipuri, Mohiniattam, Odissi are performed in harmony linked with a poetry or narration describing the dance form.

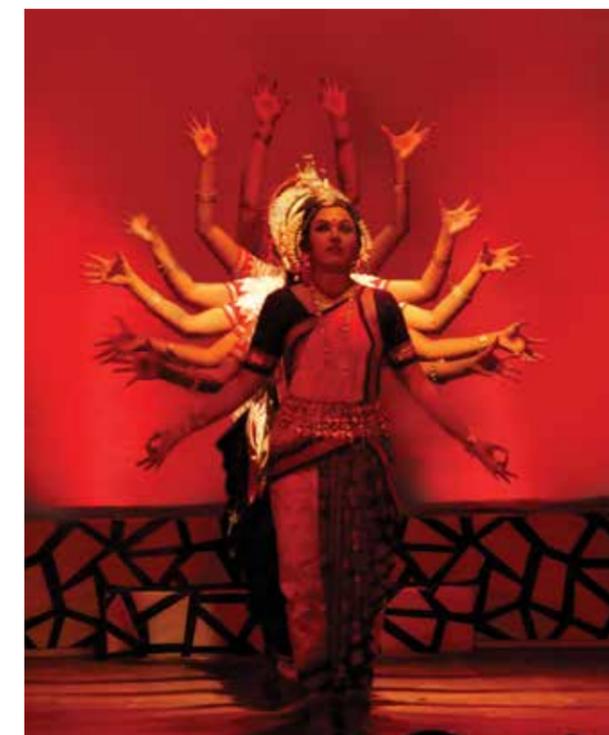


#### Journey to Divinity

Journey to Divinity is a classical dance recital portraying the eternal journey of human soul towards divinity. It is based on Swami Vivekananda's philosophy proclaiming that each soul is potentially divine and the struggle is to manifest this divinity, this unique tribute to Swami Vivekananda, through Indian classical dance form Odissi, is based on Swamiji's literature. "Journey to Divinity" takes a kaleidoscopic view of Swamiji's philosophy based on Karma (action) Gyaan (knowledge) and Bhakti (devotion). This interpretation of Swamiji's divine journey is in narrative form; it is classical dance in the conventional sense but also includes commentary and visuals.

#### Prakriti Nartan

Prakriti Nartan is a beautiful depiction of the endless and ever-enduring interaction between life and nature. The very existence of the world is governed by nature and its various infinite cycles. Splendour, Sacredness, Power and Divinity – Nature embodies all these elements through immeasurable energies of its altering seasons. Miracles of Splendour portrays these seasons with soulful images of the Indian classical dance form, Odissi as depicted by the Great poet Kalidasa. Nature is one of the most beautiful creations of God and requires us to admire, nurture, appreciate and eternally keep it in our hearts and souls.



#### Mayurpankh

MAYURPANKH- Dance of hope is Odissi Shubhada Varadkar's auto-biographical classical dance ballet. It is the story of an artist's victory over body and mind, where faith defeats a frightening disease. It narrates her inspiring real life tale of grit, guts and grace. It portrays a balancing beauty of belief in the face of betrayal. This theme is presented by using the medium of Indian classical dance form Odissi.

## Sanskrita Foundation

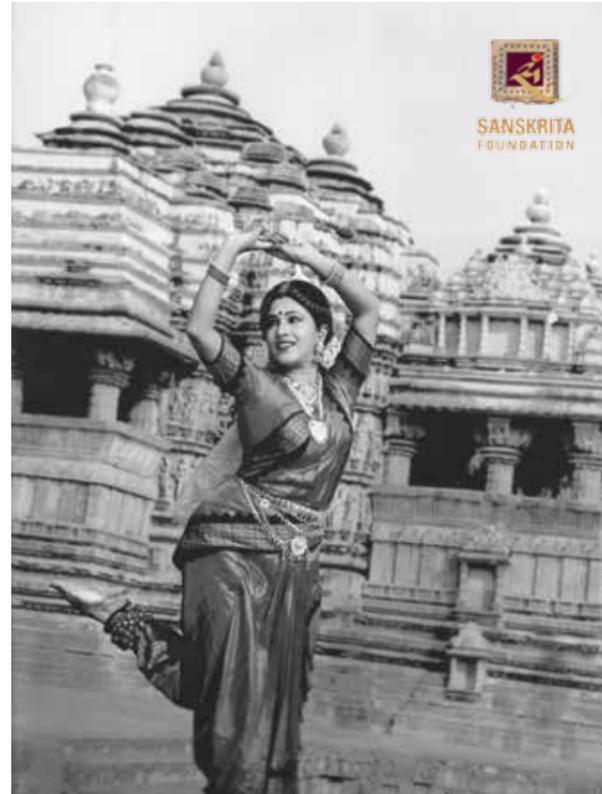
Sanskrita Foundation, a registered trust dedicated to promote art and culture was established by Odissi exponent Smt. Shubhada Varadkar in 2006. It organizes and supports a number of initiatives in the area of art and culture, particularly projects presenting and highlighting the everlasting progressive values of the India's rich cultural heritage.

The Foundation has been organizing cultural events like "Prayaag Festival" and "Namamee" at periodic intervals, entailing various eminent artistes from the field of Indian classical dance and music, like Smt. Shubha Mudgal, Pt. Sanjeev Abhyankar, Pt. Shaunak Abhisheki, Pt. Rupak Kulkarni, Devaki Pandit, Ratikant Mohapatra, Smt Suhag Nalini Das, Rajashri Praharaj, Sanjeeb Choudhury, Pt Shrinivas Joshi etc. and also providing a platform to budding talents.

Sanskrita Foundation has various productions to its credit like 'Kanupriya', 'Miracles of Splendour', 'Chitrangada', 'Amrutghanu', 'Mayurpankh', 'Journey to Divinity' to name a few.

Sanskrita foundation is dedicated to promoting the practice, development and awareness of dance as a performing art tradition, as well as a component of the rich classical heritage of the nation.

Along with organizing cultural events the foundation has also been involved in philanthropic activities like offering free training to under-privileged children. Sanskrita Foundation also endeavours towards providing support to poor cancer patients, and through its cultural activities collects money for supporting artistes undergoing cancer treatment. Every year Sanskrita Foundation donates money to Tata Hospital for the poor patients' fund.



## Shubhada Varadkar The author

### Mayurpankh

Mayurpankh an autobiographical monologue.

Within us, there is always an observer holding on to memories and locking them up deep in our consciousness. The observer watches like a third person, recording our sorrows, joys, sufferings struggles and victories over defeats.

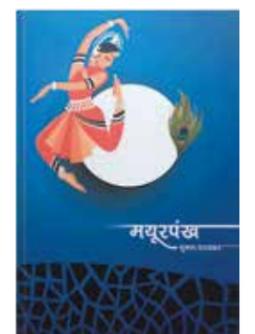
The observer within me becomes more keen and enthusiastic when I am sharing my experiences with the universe, and my heart like the Mayurpankh (peacock-plume), becomes light, egoless, almost celestial.

This book is a monologue which hopes to inspire those in despair.

### Glimpses of Indian Classical Dance

Glimpses of Indian Classical Dance is a coffee-table book that gives an overview of Indian classical dance. Each of the classical dance styles described in this book comes from a specific region of India and is governed by certain rules. These rules are applied either consciously or instinctively and are laid down in Bharat Muni's Natyashastra and other ancient treatises.

Apart from being informative, this book attempts to document the beautiful aspects of India's rich cultural heritage.





*Born to Freedom Fighter Shri Manohar Varadkar and Smt. Manik Varadkar, Shubhada continues to carry forward the philanthropic legacy of the Varadkar family, and the artistic legacy of her Guru Shri Kelucharan Mohapatra.*

*By the dewdrop of celestial dawn thou saw a dream,*

*Like a shining star of the Milky Way, I rest on thy stream.*

*Thy circular flow is the constant rhythm of my fight,*

*Your ancient stone is timeless flora of thy sight.*

*Fortunate to behold the Lord of the world so near,*

*You never know when and how you are His dear.*

*Divinity all over from sand lowest to peak highest,*

*Faith in the tinkling bells never moved slightest.*

*As essence of His kingdom's innermost purity,*

*Blessed to worship the brightest in darkest sanctuary.*





**Shubhada Varadkar**

1, Suyash, Reclamation,  
Bandra (West),  
Mumbai 400066,  
Maharashtra

M 98216 28388  
shubhadavaradkar@gmail.com  
sanskritafoundation.org