

**ShastriKuchipudi dance performance by Nartan group of Academy of
Dr. Smita Shastri**



Reasoned Justification

Smt. Smita Shastri Started taking intensive and authentic training in Bharatanatyam from the early age of 4 years.

She did her Arangetram in 1962 under the brilliant tutelage of great guru Shri Kitappa Pillai, and great of performer Shri Chatunni Paniker at Darpana Academy Ahmedabad.

She won many prizes. She won consecutively first prize in classical dance event in youth festival organized by Gujarat University. She won first prize in classical dance event in 9th All India inter- university youth festival held in Delhi in 1964.

She underwent an intensive training in temple dances in Kuchipudi style from 1963 under the great guru Shri. C.R. Acharyalu. She was the only Kuchipudi dancer in Gujarat for few years. Impressed by her Sincerity, Commitment, Dedication & Devotion, her guru Shri. C.R. Acharyalu (Disciple of the greatest guru shri. Vedantam Laxminarayan Shastriji) started teaching her the rare & unique items known as “Ganesh Kavutvam”, “Mayura Kavutvam”, “Simhanandini Nrityam” and “Mahalaxmi Udbhavam”. (Alaya Nrutyams). These items are very difficult to master and there are even very few dancers who are trained to perform them. There are some other dance items known “Sandhya Tandavm, Ashtapadis” and others which she learnt to perfection from her vidwan Guru Shri C.R. Acharyalu.

She started her Nartan School of Classical Dances in 1971, imparting intensive of Authentic training in Kuchipudi & Bharatanatyam dance styles.

In these 39 years as a teacher she has given the graduation “Nrity Tirtha” to more than 200 disciples. About 100 students have graduated in Kuchipudi dance styles from her Nartan School of Classical Dances.

Smita has trained seven disciples in these rare items of “Alaya Nrutyams” and they are regularly performing these rare dance items known as “Mayura Kavutvam”, Simhanandini and others.

She was invited to U.S. in 2004 & 2006 to conduct the workshop to import training in Kuchipudi dance items.

She received senior fellowship in 1999 for 2 years propagate the Kuchipudi dance form all over Gujarat state of she achieved the goal completely.

She was highly praised from her solo Kuchipudi performances in London in 1979 by the most authentic and knownd dance critic Mr. Ferno Hall of “Daily Telegraph”. He was highly impressed by her style and perfection in all aspects of this beautiful dance form.

For more than 20 years, Smita's students win most of the classical dance event in Kuchipudi & Bharatanatyam from Gujarat, like Yuva Utsav (Gov. of India), Youth Festival, Lila Mukut Nartan Vijay Padma and others. Her disciples have won prizes in National level events also. Reviving the "Prachin Parampara" or "Arangetram" and named it a "Dikshant Samaroh".

Since 1980, she has organized 19 "Dikshant Samaroh" presenting more than 100 students in Kuchipudi style of dance.

Smita does not accept any thing as a "GuruDakshina".

Smita alone has worked tirelessly to propagate Kuchipudi with complete commitment and now has more than 25 Kuchipudi dancers actively performing.

Her senior disciples Smt. Rita Chokshi in Surat and Smt. Ritu Daga in Kansas city U.S.A. impart training in Kuchipudi dance for many years.

To encourage and inspire the Kuchipudi & Bharatanatyam dances of Gujarat for making some mark in their respective field. She has introduced a classical dance competition for the age group of 16 to 24 years. "Lila Mukut Nartan Vijay Padma" is successfully conducted since 2007. Winners of this event gets to perform for Doordarshan Kendra, Gujarat State Sangeet Natak Academy's Kal-Ke-Kalakar festival and others with the recommendation of Nartan Institute of Performing Arts a registered charitable trust and it's managing trustee is Smt. Smita Shastri.

