

AKSHARA BHARADWAJ

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Akshara Bharadwaj is a Filmmaker, Bharatanatyam dancer- teacher and a theatre person. She is a graduate from New York Film Academy with a Master's degree in Filmmaking, and from Kalai Kaveri College of Tamil University with a Master's degree in Bharatanatyam. She is continuing her Bharatanatyam training under the discipleship of *Karnataka Kalashree*- Smt. Minal Prabhu, an Alumnus of the Kalakshetra Dance Academy in Chennai and Kathak training under Vid. Lakshmi Pradeep. Her parents, father- Dr. Prof. Ranganath Bharadwaj is a noted Econometrician, Philosopher and Theatre person and the Former Director of the Department of Economics at Bombay University and mother- Smt. Jaya Bharadwaj is the Managing Trustee of Karnataka Haridasa Scientific Research centre (KHSRC).

She is currently the Bharatanatyam faculty at The Structural School of Fine Arts and one of the Theatre instructors there. She is the Director of Bharadwaj Foundation for the Arts and 'TarangaRanga', a monthly concert series. Apart from taking up different writing, direction and associate direction roles in cinema and advertising, she serves as the Visiting Faculty in Filmmaking for Bachelor of Design students at PES University, Bangalore. She serves as the Secretary of Karnataka Haridasa Scientific Research Centre and a Research associate at The Institute for Educational Research and Development. She is currently pursuing her Doctoral research and serves as the organiser for The Akhila Bharatiya Gandharva Mahamandali Examinations at The Structural School of Fine Arts centre in Vijayanagar.

Interested in the academia, Akshara has contributed a research dissertation on 'Exploring Sringeri in Haridasa Literature' as part of her Masters' thesis and has rendered this work on stage with a Bharatanatyam *mārgam* titled 'Sringeri Tarangini'- a thematic recital with composition from the Haridasa literature exclusive in Sringeri rasa, depicting sringeri nāyikās. She has multiple published research papers to her credit, including 'Cinematic storytelling techniques and its parallels with Indian visual arts', which was presented at the Dhaatu International Puppet Festival 2018, for a conference on storytelling. She was recently awarded the National Award for Vocational Excellence by the International Institute for Social and Economic Reforms, by veteran filmmaker Sri. T.N Seetharam, Actor Bhavani Prakash; in the presence of former Chief Minister Sri. Sadananda Gowda.

Akshara started her Bharatanatyam training under Smt. Shubha Dhananjay & Smt. Rohini Dhananjaya and performed her Rangapravesha or Debut Solo Recital under the discipleship of Smt. Yogita Kulkarni, earning the 'Diploma in Advanced Bharatanatyam', under her tutelage. Her choreography of a short dance ballet of saint. Purandara dasa's 'Gajendra Moksha' has been presented at festivals such as Mysore Dasara, Navika's Amerikannadotsava, 'Udayaraaga' at Bandsand, Cubbon Park by the Department of Horticulture (Govt. of Karnataka), Raghavendra swamy Aradhana at Rajarajeshwari Nagar, Vijnana Vyjayanti, Neenasam auditorium- Dharwad and so on. Some of her other performances include Indian Econometric society conference valedictory at Jammu University, Kittur Utsava, Alva's nudisiri festival, Dharmasthala Lakshadeepotsava, Karavali utsava, Immigrant's day organised by the Mayor's office of Immigrants' affairs in New York, *Vasantotsava* by Brindavana Kannada koota in New Jersey, *Kaathiruthal* by Udalveli in Coimbatore, Nritya nirantara by Sadhana Samāgama trust, Shantala Nritya vaibhava by Shantala arts trust, International institute for social and economic reforms, Siddaganga mutt in Tumkur, Sripadaraja mutt in Srirangam, Natya Tantra for Sri Shankara channel, ladies club for Suvarna channel, to mention a few.

She was the director of 'The Indian Classical Arts Festival' in, which hosted eminent dancers from across the city in the presence of leading Gurus, scholars and exponents. The three day festival saw seminars, workshops, presentations and recitals in the eight Indian classical dance forms and the two classical music forms. In 2017, she organised the 'Children's Classical Dance Festival', where over 150 students of different teachers performed five different classical dance forms.

A filmmaker, Bharatanatyam Dancer and a Theatre person; she has been trained in Carnatic Classical vocal music for a decade. She has dabbled in Odissi, various Indian folk, contemporary and Freestyle dance forms through different workshops and programs. This lets her blend and integrate them in her choreography and theatre work. Her performance and choreography of the intricate war scenes in Dr. Prof. Ranganath Bharadwaj's musical theatre production *Vrokodara vruttanta* and her performance in Charles Dickens' play 'A Christmas Carol' at Billingsley theatre in South Carolina, USA are some of her theatre work. She was a co-producer of 'The Shakespeare Theatre Festival' in Bangalore which featured actors such as Kalki Koechlin, Vinay Pathak, Ranvir Shorey, Jim Sarbh and Cyrus Broacha in Shakespearean adaptations by Rajat Kapoor. She also co-produced, directed and performed in 'Conversations with her'- an anthology play. Her short film, 'The Hostage' was screened at the Warner Brothers' studios in 2013.