

## Bharathanatyam Dancers in Olden Day Cinema

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### ABSTRACT:

Bharathanatyam is the dance form practiced in Tamil Nadu. A reference to dance in Tamil texts goes back about 2000 year ago to the period of sangam literature. Bharathanatyam was earlier performed by the Devadasis and Rajadasis, who performed in the temple and court respectively. Tanjore quartets who were supported by Maratha king, crafted the repertoire known as Margam. The Margam forms the basis of the Bharathanatyam performance former even today. In film industry olden film also enlighten with all types of abhinaya. Many famous dancers are success in film industry and got popularity as well. Few examples are Travancore sisters, Vyjayanthimala, Kumari Kamala, L.Vijayalakshmi, Vennira Aadai Nirmala, M.K.Saroja, E.V Saroja, Rajasulochana, Hema Malini are dancers who got popularity and success in film industry.

**KEYWORDS:** Abhinaya, Bharathanatyam, Cinema, Dancers, Gurus.

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### I. INTRODUCTION:

Bharathanatyam is a major form of Indian classical dance that originated in the State of Tamil Nadu. It is one of eight forms of dance recognized by the Sangeet Natak Academy. Dance is a type of visual art that involves body movement based on expression and rhythm. The movement can be expressed along music and Instruments such as wind, string and percussion. Dance exists throughout the globe and there are many varieties that are influenced by the cultural contexts form which they originate.

Dance is a non-verbal communication. It is performed in social interactions involving traditions based on grammar, expressing stories through movement in contemporary style, free style, aerobic, exercises, martial arts and gymnastics. Dance can have a particular purpose or can be purely for joy without any specific objective. The term classical in Sanskrit is Shastriya referring to literature art and culture. In India, dance is performed on all auspicious occasions like birth, marriage, harvest festival, etc. The different aspects like music, dance and other performing arts are interdependent. Sculpture has helped us to preserve performing arts like dance. The temple carving, the various dance poses on the temple wall, the sculptures, etc. have helped us to preserve these dance forms.

All our Indian classical dancers are inspired by bhakti and religion; they performed mainly in courtyards and mandapas. They always depicted stories from Itihasas, Puranas and other mythological accounts. The dancer provided a

convenient medium for people to understand such themes. Among the forms of classical dance prevalent in India, Bharathanatyam occupies pre-eminent position. It is subtle and sophisticated dance form of the Southern part of India.

In cinema, dances are very important. Different dances are performed in cinema in group, duet, solo, in different forms like western, folk, classical, etc. For that, they have used different techniques of dance, costumes, hairstyle, ornament etc. to enlighten the dance. In cinema many of the actress is very popular because they have learnt Bharathanatyam from traditional Gurus. Thus they gained popularity.

### II. TRADITIONAL DANCERS IN CINEMA:

#### 2.1 Travancore sisters:

Travancore sisters refer to the trio of Lalitha, Padmini and Ragini, who were dancers and performers in Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu, Kannada and Hindi. They have learned dancing under Guru Gopinath and Guru T.K Mahalingam. Lalitha was an Indian actress and dancer, she was the eldest of Travancore sisters. She enters film before her sisters, concentrating more on film. Padmini was an Indian actress and trained Bharathanatyam dancer who acted in Tamil, Hindi, Malayalam, Telugu, Russian language film. She was a popular actress of her time. Ragini was an Indian danseuse and actress. She was the youngest of the famed Travancore sisters. She started her acting career in the mid

1950's along with her sister Padmini and has acted in movies of different Indian language including Hindi, Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu. She acted in many dramas also.

### **2.2 Vyjayanthimala:**

She learnt bharathanatyam from Guru Vazhuvoor Ramiahpillai and Carnatic music from ManakkalSivarajaiyer. She had her Arangetram at the age of 13 and started performing in Tamilnadu later. Vyjayanthimala was regarded as one of the best actresses in Indian cinema. When director M.V Raman was looking for a new face to cast in AVM productions Vazhkai, he saw Vyjayanthimala performing bharathanatyam in Gokhale hall, Chennai. Vyjayanthimala was known as the lady superstar.

### **2.3 Kumari kamala:**

She is an Indian dancer and actress. Initially featured as a child dancer, Kamala appeared in almost 100 Tamil, Hindi, Telugu, and Kannada films throughout her career. In the 1970s she became a teacher of the Vazhuvoor style of dance in which she specialises. At an early age kamala began taking lessons in the kathak dance style from Lachhu Maharaj in Bombay. She also took lessons in Hindustani classical music from Shankar Rao Vyas. Her dancing was noticed by other filmmakers and she moved to hindi films. She was trained under the Bharathanatyam teachers Kattumannarkoil Muthukumara Pillai and Vazhuvoor B. Ramaiyah Pillai

### **2.4 L. Vijayalakshmi:**

She is an Indian film actress and classical dancer whose career was in the 1960s and 1970s. She appeared in Malayalam, Tamil, Kannada, Telugu, and Hindi films. Vijayalakshmi's Father noticed her talent for dancing and sent her to a mentor; Sukumara Pillai. Vijayalakshmi's first performance was at a temple in Andhra Pradesh when she was nine years old. When Vijayalakshmi needed advanced dancing training, she was mentored by Kamala. Vijayalakshmi met K. J. Sarasa who sent her to the dance Teacher, Vazhuvoor Ramaiah Pillai. Ten months later. Vijayalakshmi made her debut at the Rasika Ranjani Sabha. Vijayalakshmi was introduced by E. Krishna Iyer, a classical artist, to the filmmaker, V. Shantaram. Vijayalakshmi's films included the bhangra dance form eg- Aadaludan paadalai .

### **2.5 Venniraaadainirmala:**

She was born as A.B. Shanthi in Kumbakonam. She is a Indian actress who has appeared in Tamil, Malayalam and Telugu film.

Debuting through C.V. Sridhar's venniraaadai in 1965, she has appeared in over 200 films in Tamil. She has acted in around 50 films in Malayalam with the screen name Usha Kumari. In addition to her acting career, Nirmala is a trained bharathanatyam dancers from Guru Shanmuga Sundaram Pillai.

### **2.6 M.K Saroja:**

Madras Kadiravelu Saroja, is an Indian classical dancer, known for her expertise, as an exponent and as a teacher, in the classical dance form of bharathanatyam. The Government of India honoured her, in 2011, with the Padma Shri, the fourth highest civilian award, for her services to the field of art and culture. She started learning classical dance when she was five years old, along with her sister, under the tutelage of Muthukumaran Pillai a known classical dance teacher and reportedly, the first dance teacher at Rukmini Devi Arundale's Kalakshetra. M.K Saroja acted in the popular mythological movies such as Nallathambi and Krishna Bhakthi. She retired from professional dance, after 40 active years in 2000. The legacy of M.K Saroja remains the purity brought into the bharathanatyam and lives through the numerous student

### **2.7 E.V. Saroja:**

E.V Saroja was a famous Tamil and Telugu actress and dancer. She was born on the third of November 1983 as Enganv. Saroja. She belonged to Engan village of Thiruvarur district, Tamil nadu. She was a disciple of Vazhuvoor Ramaiah Pillai. Her debut film was En Thangai in 1952 M.G Ramachandran. She acted in about 70 films with other top-ranking stars of Tamil and Telugu film industry like Gemini Ganesan, Akkineni Nageswara Rao. Her mother tongue is Tamil

### **2.8 Sayee-Subbulakshmi:**

Sayee and Subbulakshmi, were two Indian female bharathanatyam dancers, who performed on stage in South Indian and Hindi films. They were popular during the 1950s and 60s. They were noted for their synchronised dancing. They also performed Kathak and folk dances in regional languages films and Hindi films. Muthuswamy Pillai is a dance teacher who has choreographed dances for films since 1938. He trained them for 7 years. They were also trained in kathak dance by Gopi Krishna. Their Arangetram was conducted at R.R Sabha hall. They were called by N.S Krishnan as Pambara Sahodarigal. Subbulakshmi taught bharathanatyam to students. She was felicitated with the Kalaimamani award in 2000 for her services as a teacher.

## 2.9 Rajasulochana:

ChittajalluRajeevalochana better known as Rajasulochana, was a south Indian classical dancer and film actress. She learned Indian classical dance from Lalithamma, K.N.Dhandayuthapanipillai, Acharyulu and VempatiChinnasatyam, Krishnakumar, Vishnu vysarkar and KalamandalamMadhavan. She founded the dance school PushpanjaliNirtya Kala Kendram. She has trained many students in Indian classical dance. She gave dance performances in India and abroad

## 2.10. HemaMalini:

HemaMalini is an Indian actress, writer, director, producer, dancer, and politician. Malini received the Sopor Academy of Music and Performing arts Vitasta award from Bhajansopori in Delhi for her contribution and service to Indian culture and dance. Malini is a trained bharathanatyam dancer. Her daughters EshaDeol and AhanaDeol are trained odissi dancers. They performed with her daughters at the Khajuraho dance festival. Malini studied Kuchipudi with Vempatichinnasatyam and Mohiniyattam with Kalamandalam Guru Gopalakrishnan. She has played a number of dance roles including Narasimha and Rama Tulasidas's Ramacharithmanas. In 2007, She performed in Mysuru on the eve of Dussehra, where she played the roles of Sati, Parvati and Durga. Malini owns the Natya Vihar Kalakendra dance school.

## III. CONCLUSION:

In film industry olden films have the traditional bharatanatyam dance songs. Javalis and keertanams like Natanam Adinar were performed in films. Films like Thillana Mohanabal, Vanchikottaivaliban have enlightened with all the four abhinayas. Many actresses were dancers and thus they got popularity in films.

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