



*A Season of Discovery*

## Nrityagram Dance Ensemble

**October 11, 2025**

*Sponsored by Barclay Shelton Dance Centre,  
Steve & Leanne Shelton,  
Jon & Stacie Brown, and Nicole & Matthew Cox*

*With support from SAMA Music & Art*

**KHAṆKHAṆĀ**  
the sound of dancing feet



## **KHAṆKHAṆĀ / Khaṅkhaṇā** the sound of dancing feet

Nrityagram - land of red earth and birdsong - is both our home and our muse. For more than three decades, this soil has sustained us, even as we have offered it our labour, our dreams, and our art.

Khaṅkhaṇā is an invitation to journey with us through time, to listen to the pulse of dancing feet.

Featuring acclaimed works by choreographer Surupa Sen - both new and familiar - this

performance celebrates movement, memory,  
and a shared hope for our world.

**The Nrityagram Dance Ensemble**  
Presents

**Khaṅkhaṇā**  
the sound of dancing feet

**Choreography & Sound Design**  
Surupa Sen

**Music Composition**  
Pt. Raghunath Panigrahi  
Pt. Bhubaneswar Mishra (Pashyati)  
Surupa Sen

**Rhythm Composition**  
Dhaneswar Swain  
Surupa Sen  
Rohan Dahale (SmritiRāṅgā)

**Dancers**  
Surupa Sen  
Pavithra Reddy  
Anoushka Rahman  
Daquil Miriyala  
Namaha Mazoomdar

**Musicians**  
Jatin Sahu **lead vocal & harmonium**  
Rohan Dahale **chants & mardala** (percussion)  
Parshuram Das **bamboo flute**  
Siba Nayak **violin**  
Surupa Sen **manjira**

**Technical Director / Lighting Designer**  
Lynne Fernandez

**Exclusive USA Tour Representation**  
Pentacle  
Sandy Garcia | [sandyg@pentacle.org](mailto:sandyg@pentacle.org) |  
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**Nrityagram**  
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*The performance runs for 115 minutes  
including a 20 minute Intermission*

## **Khaṅkhaṇā**

the sound of dancing feet

## **Sankirtanam** (a prayer)

Wandering minstrels sing and dance in praise  
of Lord Krishna...

The lotus-eyed lord  
with the flute in his hands  
and a peacock feather in his hair.

The eternal lover,  
the yogi,  
the last refuge.

Protector of the universe,  
he is the purest of all beings.

The only truth.

**Dancers** Anoushka Rahman, Pavithra Reddy,  
Namaha Mazoomdar, Daquil Miriyala, Surupa  
Sen

## **Pashyatī Dishī Dishī**

A poem from the Gita Govinda is interpreted  
through facial expressions (bhava) and gestures  
(mudra). Written in Sanskrit in the 12th century  
by the poet saint Jayadeva, the Gita Govinda is  
a romantic ballad about the immortal love of  
Radha and Krishna. It is a song of love and  
longing that reflects the Vaishnava belief that  
all humankind is feminine energy (Radha)  
constantly seeking union with the one male  
godhead (Krishna).

The Sakhi says to Krishna, who is intoxicated  
with love for Radha:

“Oh Hari! Lord of the world!  
Without you, Radha suffers.  
She has braved her family  
and the darkness of night,  
to hasten through the forest to your secret  
retreat.

She searches longingly for you  
and calls out your name.  
Incessantly sobbing  
‘Why won’t he come? Why won’t he come?’

In her haste to unite with you,  
she stumbles and falls,

making thoughtless turns.

She has decorated herself for you  
and prepared a bed of love.

Obsessed with thoughts of passion,  
her body bristling with longing,  
she waits to taste the nectar from your lips.  
She has lost all sense of shame,  
as she asks her friends again and again,  
when will he come?

Oh Krishna!  
You who come to the aid  
of every devotee,  
do not make her suffer -  
she who loves you the most.  
Hasten to her,  
Radha awaits you.  
All sense of shame undone.”

**Dancer** Surupa Sen

### **Aakriti**

A submission to the inherently lyrical form of  
Odissi, this dance explores the various  
dimensions of its abstract, and geometric  
vocabulary.

**Dancers** Pavithra Reddy, Anoushka Rahman,  
Daquil Miriyala, Namaha Mazoomdar

## **INTERMISSION**

### **Śrīdevī**

A dance in praise of the Mother Goddess –  
As we brave new journeys, we ask  
the divine presence of the Mother Goddess to  
light our path.

“Oh mother!  
Supreme power of the universe,  
grant us the vision  
to behold you within.  
From you comes all life  
and into you we must all return.  
At your feet  
we offer our dance.”

**Dancers** Pavithra Reddy, Anoushka Rahman,  
Daquil Miriyala, Namaha Mazoomdar

**SmritiRāngā**

Memories are just songs  
that like feelings,  
have no definite path.  
Coloured and hues  
from moments they lived in  
and the people they touched.

Twisting and turning  
they swirl deep inside us,  
like the water we played in,  
immersing us now and again  
as we rise gasping for air,  
or in ethereal moments  
of love, freedom and ancestry.

We yearn for those moments,  
in inconsolable longing,  
desperately seeking  
that which once was known  
and can never again be.

A feather fleeting down the spine,  
urging an awareness  
of a longing,  
for something, someone, somewhere.

**SmritiRāngā**

Dancing again in moments we want to live in.

An abstract exploration of a feeling perfectly  
encapsulated in the Welsh word  
“Hiraeth”, which embodies a profound, innate  
longing for a home, person, or time  
that is forever lost. At its essence, it is an  
awareness of the presence of absence,  
kindling a feeling in which pain and joy are  
braided together too tightly to untangle.  
Hiraeth is a link with your long-forgotten past,  
the language of the soul, a call from  
your inner self. Half forgotten - fraction  
remembered. It is always there.  
Hiraeth is the yearning of the soul to come  
home.

**Dancers** Pavithra Reddy, Anoushka Rahman,  
Daquil Miriyala, Namaha Mazoomdar,  
Surupa Sen

## **ODISSI**

For centuries, a temple has looked out at a turbulent sea, its walls dancing a prayer to the rising sun. Magnificent ruins like these, in Odisha in Eastern India, confirm that Odissi was performed as far back as 200 BCE. Originally a sacred ritual dedicated to the gods, Odissi is one of the oldest dance traditions in the world. Its sinuous forms, languorous limbs and rapt expressions frozen in stone tell of a past rich in dance, music, myth and legend.

Odissi speaks of love and union, between human and divine, transporting viewers to enchanted worlds of magic and spirituality. Its sensuousness and lyricism reflect both the motifs of Odisha temple sculpture as well as the poetry from the deep wellsprings of Odia music.

## **NRITYAGRAM**

Nrityagram, meaning *Dance Village*, is a one-of-a-kind community where dance is not just practiced but lived. Founded by the visionary Protima Gauri, it is a cultural landmark dedicated to keeping alive India's rich traditions while reimagining them for the future.

Here, the ancient *gurukula* way of life is at the heart of learning. Students and teachers live together in an environment where discipline, creativity, and philosophy intertwine. More than a training ground, Nrityagram nurtures artists who embody mindful living, holistic practice, and a deep pursuit of excellence.

For over three decades, our village has been home to an Open School, an internationally renowned Dance Ensemble, and vibrant outreach programs. Together, they form a living ecosystem of art, community, and innovation.

The **Nrityagram Dance Ensemble**, led by Artistic Director **Surupa Sen**, is acclaimed as one of India's foremost dance companies. With performances in 25 countries across five continents, it has won global recognition, including the rare distinction of featuring twice in The New York Times' "Best Dance of the Year" list.

At Nrityagram, dance is more than art - it is a way of life.

## WHO'S WHO IN THE COMPANY

**SURUPA SEN** (choreographer, soloist)

Described by The New York Times as "among the world's greatest dancers," Surupa Sen is the Artistic Director, choreographer, and principal soloist of Nrityagram. She trained in Odissi under Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra and Guru Protima Gauri, studied Abhinaya with Guru Kalanidhi Narayanan, and the *Natyashastra* with Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam.

For more than two decades, Surupa has shaped a distinctive aesthetic for Nrityagram that is both rooted in tradition and boldly innovative. Passionate about choreography and rhythm, she has created an acclaimed repertoire of works, including eight full-length ensemble shows for Nrityagram *Śrī: In Search of the Goddess* (2001), *Ansh* (2005), *Sacred Space* (2005), *Pratimā: Reflection* (2008), *Śriyaḥ* (2010), *Samhāra* (2012), *Āhuti* (2019) and *Āhuti Relived* (2022); three full-length duet shows *Samyoga* (2012), *Songs of Love and Longing* (2013) and *Aṅgahāraḥ* (2025); three full-length solo shows *Yadunandana* (2017), *Vinati: Songs from the Gita Govinda* (2021) and *Madhuragati* (2024); two virtual shows - *Vinati*, a solo for World Music Institute's Dancing the Gods Festival and *Upadāna: An offering* for the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, and numerous dance pieces.

Her artistry has earned her some of India's highest honours, including the Raza Foundation Award (2006), Nritya Choodamani from Sri Krishna Gana Sabha, Chennai

(2011), and India's highest honour for the performing arts, the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for Odissi (2018).

### **PAVITHRA REDDY** (dancer)

Pavithra Reddy's association with Nrityagram began in 1990, when she joined its rural outreach programme while living on a nearby farm. She went on to become the first student to graduate from the programme, marking the beginning of a lifelong journey in Odissi.

Trained under the guidance of Surupa Sen and enriched by collaborations with dancers and movement specialists from around the world, Pavithra joined the Nrityagram Dance Ensemble in 1993. Since then, she has performed both as a soloist and with the Ensemble on some of the most prestigious stages in India and internationally.

Alongside being a full-time performer, Pavithra plays a vital role as Director of Outreach Activities, teaching in Nrityagram's residential school and in its community programmes, ensuring that dance continues to reach and inspire new generations.

### **ANOUSHKA RAHMAN** (dancer)

first encountered Nrityagram in 2018, when she came from Kolkata to attend a Summer Workshop. What began as a brief visit soon became her path, as she returned to pursue advanced training with Surupa Sen and Pavithra Reddy after starting Odissi under Smt. Dona Ganguly.

Recognised for her dedication with the Virendra Kumar Laroia Fellowship, she has performed with the Ensemble across India, the US, Canada, and Sri Lanka, and made her solo debut in 2024. With a postgraduate degree in Mathematics and a Sangeet Bhaskar in Odissi, Anoushka now dances full-time with the Ensemble, bringing together rigour, artistry, and imagination.



**DAQUIL MIRIYALA** (dancer)

entered Nrityagram's world in 2010 through its Village Outreach Programme. The following year she became a residential student, balancing her academic studies with immersive dance training under Surupa Sen and Pavithra Reddy.

In 2021, her journey came full circle as she joined the Nrityagram Dance Ensemble. Since then, she has performed across India, the US, Canada, and Sri Lanka, carrying forward the vision of Nrityagram from its classrooms to the global stage.

**NAMAHA MAZOOMDAR** (dancer)

is a dancer, trainer, theatre director, and storyteller whose artistic journey bridges multiple disciplines. She began her Odissi training in Mumbai under Guru Daksha Mashruwala, and since 2013 has worked as a freelance dancer with companies in India and Singapore, performing across India, Singapore, Australia, and Indonesia.

A qualified actor with a Diploma from the Intercultural Theatre Institute, Singapore, Namaha brings the depth of theatre into her dance practice. In 2022, she began advanced training with Surupa Sen and Pavithra Reddy, and in 2024 she joined the Nrityagram Dance Ensemble, bringing her diverse artistic experience into its fold.

**JATIN SAHU** (lead vocal, harmonium)

learned Odissi singing under the tutelage of Guru Ramahari Das at The Music College, Odisha. He lives in Mumbai and has worked with Nrityagram since 2008. He is also a concert singer.

**ROHAN DAHALE** (mardala - percussion)

began his training with Guru Kelucharan Mahapatra and has continued to learn from Guru Banamali Maharana for the past twelve years. He lives in Mumbai and accompanies Odissi dancers from the region. At present, he is percussionist at the dance village and travels and performs with the Ensemble.

**PARSHURAM DAS** (bamboo flute)

is a disciple of Pt. Mohini Mohan Pattnaik. He graduated from the Music College, Odisha and in addition to freelancing as a music accompanist, he teaches at Utkal University of Culture, Bhubaneswar. He has been with the Nrityagram Dance Ensemble since 2002.

**SIBA NAYAK** (violin)

has a postgraduate degree in Hindustani Violin from the Utkal University of Culture, Bhubaneswar. He freelances as a music accompanist and has worked with the Nrityagram Dance Ensemble since 2018.

**LYNNE FERNANDEZ** (lighting designer, technical director) is one of India's pioneering professional lighting designers, having collaborated with leading directors such as Barry John, Joy Michael, Ranjit Kapoor, and Lillete Dubey.

Her theatre work has been showcased internationally, from the Edinburgh Festival Fringe to London's West End and New York's Off-Broadway. She joined Nrityagram in 1993 as Production and Technical Consultant to the newly founded Ensemble, later becoming its Technical Director. In 1997, she was appointed Executive Director of Nrityagram Village, School, and Ensemble - a role she continues to hold.

Since then, she has been at the heart of Nrityagram's growth: shaping its administration, securing its future, and guiding its projects. She has overseen the Ensemble's emergence on the world stage, while also dreaming up new spaces for artists to create. Recent initiatives include **Kula**, a residence for arts practitioners, and plans for a **Performing Arts Centre** with a theatre, exhibition space, and rehearsal studios.

For Lynne, Nrityagram is not just an institution but a living community - one she has helped nurture into a place where dance, creativity, and mindful living come together.



All stage work performed by employees represented by I.A.T.S.E., Local No. 15