

*You are cordially invited
with family to the
Bharatanatyam Arangetram
(Indian Classical Dance Debut)
of our daughter*



Meera Raja

Disciple of **Smt. Shobha Subramanian**
Dance Director,
Jayamangala School of Music and Dance

*Saturday, July 30, 2005
at 5.00 p.m.*

*Dinner Reception
will follow program*

*Sri Siva Vishnu Temple
6905 Cipriano Road
Lanham, MD 20706*

Mrs. Indra & Rajagopal Raja

RSVP by July 9, 2005
Phone : 301-528-5353
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The Teacher

Shobha Subramanian, dancer-teacher-choreographer-singer of DC area was trained by senior gurus of India in dance from a very young age. She has studied under eminent teachers like Smt. Sundari Seshadri, Dhananjayans, and Prof. C.V. Chandrasekhar. After moving to USA in 1991 she continued her dance pursuits alongside a World Bank career in Washington DC until about 4 years ago when she gave up her Bank job to devote full-time to her dancing career. Shobha has won the Individual Artist Award thrice (1994, 2000 & 2004) from Maryland State Arts Council.

As Dance Director of **Jayamangala**, she spearheaded the production of a dance documentary film "Rhythmic Expressions" in 2001 with funding from PGAC. The film was screened at The World Congress held at Naxos, Greece in Nov 2003. Recently in Jan 2005, she was recognized for her contribution to the Indian immigrant community in DC metro and was presented the "**Pravasi Nrithya Nataraj**" (Outstanding Indian Dancer Abroad) award.

She has been training and presenting dance-dramas with youth and adults for more than a decade and gives them opportunities to perform for a wide variety of audiences. Under her leadership, Jayamangala Dance Company has performed at the Kennedy Center, Smithsonian, National Cathedral and Cherry Blossom Festival to name a few. She is well-known for her strict adherence to tradition and yet being innovative in her choreography and presentations. She has produced collaborative works with artists across genres such as Ballet, with the most recent "Shree Vinayaka" receiving great reviews.



Meera Raja



Bharatanatyam

Bharatanatyam is a South Indian classical dance form. Bharata is Bha (mood); Ra = Raga (music); ta = Tala (rhythm). Bharata is also a name for the country of India and natyam is the Tamil word for the art of dance-drama. It combines nritta (pure dance movements), nritya (mime or expression) and natya (drama).

Many of the ancient sculptures in Hindu temples are based on Bharatanatyam dance postures. Bharatanatyam is the South Indian idea of the celebration of the

eternal universe through the celebration of the beauty of the material body. In Hindu mythology the whole universe is the dance of the Supreme Dancer, Nataraja, a name for Lord Shiva, the Hindu ascetic yogi and divine purveyor of destruction of evil. It consists of elaborate gestures (Mridu Angahara's, movements of limbs), sentiments (Rasa's), emotional states (Bhava's) and actions (Kriya's).

A professional Bharatanatyam dancer must demonstrate a number of qualities. The AbhinayaDarpana has a sloka that describes the ten essentials of the dancer: Javaha (Agility), Sthirathvam (Steadiness), Rekhacha (graceful lines), Bhramari (balance in pirouettes), Drishtir (glance), Shramaha (hard work), Medha (intelligence), Shraddha (devotion), Vacho (good speech), and Geetam (singing ability).



The Dancer

Meera was first introduced to ballet and tap at age of 3 before she began learning Bharatanatyam at the age of 6 with guru Shobha Subramanian. For the past ten years Meera has been under the guidance of Shobha Subramanian. During these past ten years Meera has participated in solos, groups and dance-dramas at various platforms including the annual Jayamangala Dance recitals, Tamil Sangam, Kerala Association, Indian Dance Educators Association (IDEA), Sri Siva Vishnu Temple, Murgan Temple, ISKCON and other places around the D.C. Metropolitan area.

This coming fall Meera will be a senior at Northwest High School where she is a part of Drama Club, International Club, Jag TV (School produced show) and many other activities. Meera plans to continue to pursue her goals and ambitions in and out of school.

Meera would like to thank her friends and family for all the encouragement. She would especially like to thank her parents and Avva who have supported her and helped her get to all her practices. A special thanks to her brother Sriram (Harish). She would like to express her thanks to her Guru Shobha Subramanian for all her devotion and guidance over the years and especially for this performance. Meera plans to continue performing Bharatanatyam for various occasions in the community.

