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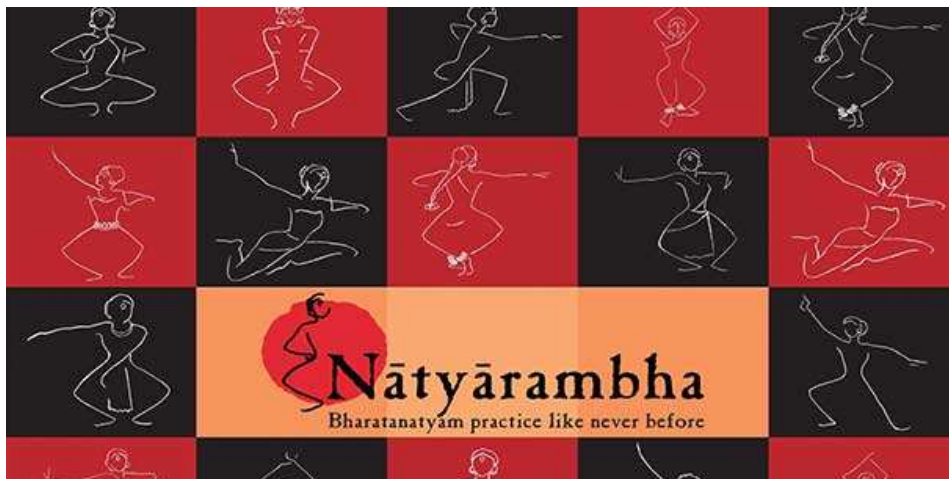
Natyarambha: Dance Anytime, Anywhere

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Here's how you could dance wholeheartedly with a single click of a button with Natyarambha !

She has put music to her troubles and danced them away. A cancer survivor and a symbol of indomitable spirit for women who are battling odds to realize their potential, Ananda Shankar Jayant lives to inspire. A Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi dancer scholar, Guru, and choreographer from Hyderabad she has added another feather to her motley cap at the age of 50. She became an entrepreneur as she started her venture, Natyarambha, a web based application to help in the practice of Bharatanatyam basics.

For her contribution to the field of classical dance, Ananda was conferred the "Padma Shri" in 2007 and the Sangeet Natak Akademi Puraskar for Bharatanatyam in 2009. She was invited by the BBC World Service to participate in a stirring discussion with Jamaican Olympic track star and cancer survivor Novlene Williams-Mills on the power of channeling one's passion to "conquer" a disease that dispirits as much as it kills.

Elaborating on the woman power Dr. Ananda engages in an enthused discussion with Baishali Mukherjee on her journey as an entrepreneur.

Like all good ideas (<http://iamanentrepreneur.in/category/entrepreneurs-stories/>), Natyarambha came one morning when I was sipping filter coffee! October 2012, that was when the word app was buzzing across sectors and products, and it got me thinking could this idea work for dance practice? Can dance also ride the tech wave? And as it has turned out now, it jolly well can! Natyarambha is a completely digital arts education initiative. It is a detailed and interactive Bharatanatyam practice app that enables practitioners and students,

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learn the basics of Bharatanatyam.

The genesis

As a classical dancer, practice, has been a constant companion in my life. Learning from a Guru is paramount in any performing art. And yet in today's fast paced lifestyles, formal training by the teacher is only feasible for a few hours a week making practice at home by the student an imperative essential. Many students find this difficult, for want of guidance at home, leading to delayed learning or even unlearning and loss of interest.

That got me thinking ... how can we make a young student be inspired to practice at home to perfect the basic grammar of Bharatanatyam? Today we wake up to, breathe, live and sleep surrounded by technology. Our arts intake and sharing is now more device and web driven than the sharing at the Sabha. Technology facilitates and mediates arts in more ways than we can imagine.

And so, eager to facilitate an engaging and exciting practice dance at home option and bridge the gap between classroom training and home rehearsals, we brainstormed and slowly the project took shape as we conceived Natyarambha.



(<http://hexa.tatamotors.com/>)

A handy tool for across learners



Inspired by PM Modi's Digital India initiatives, Natyarambha primarily helps beginners to practice and professionals and mature dancers to polish and perfect the es-

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Dr. Ananda

sential basics of Bharatanatyam, anytime, anywhere. We

are also getting feedback from many women in the professional workspace, who are finding Natyarambha the perfect tool to practice and build stamina, when they choose to come back to dance, after a break of many years. Natyarambha is also a ready reference tool for young teachers of Bharatanatyam, to refresh their early learning, getting the mnemonics right etc. The annual subscription for the app is of Rs 2500 and USD35 which we are giving as an introductory offer.

Team Natyarambha

Natyarambha, has been produced and created by Shankarananda Kalakshetra, along with a wonderful team of artistic, design and technical team of young professionals. Senior software professional and Bharatanatyam dancer and teacher, my student SnehaMagapu, heading Project Natyarambha, has enabled a traditional dance form ride the technology wave, by synergizing her unique skill set of a software professional and a Bharatanatyam dancer. The design and drawings are by my long-time associate Pratima Sagar, while my student Aditi Nigam shared her stick drawings for the Learn More options.

The vision

Today I have students are from all over the world. About 1000 -1200 students have gone through our portals. As a growth strategy I aspire to take Natyarambha across the world so that Bharatanatyam dancers have a ready digital practice tool. I am planning to collaborate with dance gurus of other styles, to be able to offer the same digital access to other styles.

I believe that we must provide professional training in the arts as much as we do with sports, and our education policy must embrace this. Training in fine art is usually outside the classroom, and thus is dependent on so many variables with a strong possibility of a talented but under privileged child not having access to training. I

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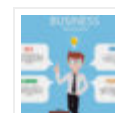
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want to address this gap through Natyarambha.

Do you think institutions like these would make a worthy addition in the startup space? Please share your views with us.

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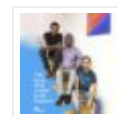
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