

## Indian dancer takes Tamil Nadu temple ode to UNESCO



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Celebrated Bharatanatyam exponent and research scholar Bala Devi Chandrashekar made history at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) headquarters in Paris recently when her film on the Thanjavur Big Temple, known as Brihadeeswara Temple in India, was launched in France.

'Brihadeeswara – Form to Formless' captures the essence and significance of the 1,000-year-old UNESCO heritage site in Tamil Nadu through the eyes of a temple dancer or Devaradiyal, the high priestess of the temple. The Permanent Delegate of India to UNESCO, Ambassador Vishal V. Sharma, launched the film earlier this month in Paris.

Chandrashekar said: "The temple is a testament to India's craftsmanship and cultural philosophy, serving as an architectural marvel for a millennium and drawing admiration from people across the globe.

"The film pays homage to the timeless splendour of this magnificent temple. Under the guidance of distinguished scholars, this performance embodies a profound narrative shaped by intensive research, shedding light on the temple's historical significance and vital connection between the physical and the metaphysical."

Using state-of-the-art technology and high-quality production, the film production is aimed at preserving the essence and energy of the live performance, creating a genuinely engaging and unforgettable experience.

"Viewers can witness the captivating dance performance from the comfort of their homes, transcending geographical boundaries and introducing people worldwide to the temple's architectural marvel and cultural significance," added Chandrashekar.

Back in 2018, she performed the production before a worldwide audience at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris. Set against the backdrop of UNESCO World Heritage site Brihadeeswara Temple in Thanjavur, her production is designed as a celebration of the physical, metaphysical presence of the magnificent temple through the eyes of the untarnished pure celestial love of the Devaradiyal and the ultimate unification of the individual soul with the supreme energy.

"All ancient texts from our region have messages that are very relevant in today's world. My mission is take on topics and present them to diverse audience across the world," she added.