

Bala Devi Chandrashekhar Presents Her Latest Bharatanatyam Production: 'Mauli – A Timeless Tradition'



Internationally acclaimed Bharatanatyam exponent, scholar, and professor of practice **Bala Devi Chandrashekhar** unveils her latest operatic dance-theatre production, ***Mauli – A Timeless Tradition***. Rooted in meticulous research and shaped by her deep engagement with Indian philosophy, temple architecture, and classical literature, this production continues her long-standing mission to bring India's sacred artistic heritage to contemporary global audiences through the transformative power of classical dance.

Mauli – A Timeless Tradition is an evocative exploration of the sanctity, history, and humanity embedded within the Pandharpur heritage. Conceived, choreographed, and **presented by Bala Devi Chandrashekhar**, the production pays homage to the timeless values of equality, devotion, and motherhood that form the heart of the Varkari sampradaya. Symbolically retracing the 250-kilometer wari from Alandi and Dehu to Pandharpur, the work follows the spiritual footsteps of saints and countless Varkari pilgrims who, year after year, undertake this sacred journey as a moving "walking sanctuary" of collective faith.

Speaking about her inspiration for the production '***Mauli – A Timeless Tradition***', **Bala Devi Chandrashekhar, Bharatanatyam Exponent** said, "Through a powerful confluence of Bharatanatyam, music, poetry, and layered narrative imagery, ***Mauli*** brings alive the crescent embrace of the Chandrabhaga River and the luminous presence of Panduranga-Vitthala. The production invites audiences to move beyond observation, transforming them into antar yatrīs—inner pilgrims—journeying through a landscape where philosophy, everyday life, and devotion merge seamlessly. As 'Mauli,' the tender crown and universal mother of this tradition, calls out to every seeker, the work highlights the innate spiritual equality of all devotees and the nurturing, inclusive grace of the divine mother who gathers humanity into her compassionate fold."

Bala Devi Chandrashekhar is a globally respected Bharatanatyam artiste, research scholar, and professor of practice in Asian Performing Arts, based in Princeton, New Jersey. A senior disciple of the legendary Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam, she is celebrated for her research-driven approach that weaves together shastra, sculpture, music, and literature into cohesive, immersive narrative productions. ***She has performed across more than 35 countries at prestigious venues including UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, cultural showcases aligned with the Paris Olympics, India House presentations, and leading artistic institutions across North America, Europe, and Asia.***



Against this distinguished legacy, **Mauli – A Timeless Tradition** emerges as a radiant testament to the living spiritual culture of the Varkari tradition. Through an aesthetically rich, deeply researched portrayal of Pandharpur's heritage, the production celebrates Mauli—both as the compassionate divine mother and as the timeless symbol of shared humanity—affirming that in the realm of devotion, all are equal, and all are embraced.

As the artistic director of her academy, Bala Devi mentors' students around the world and has created a rich repertoire of thematic solo operatic works that position Bharatanatyam as a rigorous interpretive medium capable of engaging with history, ecology, ethics, and philosophical thought.

She has **released 12 critically acclaimed productions** to date—**Nandanar Charithram, MLV favorites, KrishnaArpanam, Udhava Gita Lord Krishna's last message, Vishwam the Omnipresent, Tripura Divine Feminine, Karna Destiny's Child, Brihadeeswara Form to Formless, Padmavati an Avatar, Maa The Eternal Truth, An Ode to Tanjore Quartet & Mauli A Timeless Tradition**. These works span a remarkable thematic spectrum, illuminating temple heritage, epic literature, the ecological wisdom of ancient texts, the spiritual nuances of bhakti poetry, and the multiple dimensions of motherhood. Among them, *Brihadeeswara – Form to Formless* stands out as a profound homage to the Tanjore Quartet legacy and the monumental Chola tradition that continues to underpin her choreographic style and artistic philosophy.

SPNAPA Academy of Performing Arts serves as a facilitator for cultural presentation, preservation, and exchange of ideas of South Asian Performing Arts with a primary focus on Indian Classical Dance. SPNAPA is guided by the dynamic leadership and vision of Guru Kalaimamani Bala Devi Chandrashekhar, Bala is constantly developing performing studies in collaboration with Theater and Dance, History, Philosophy, Linguistic anthropology of various Universities in the United States and served as Artist in Residence, Carl A. Fields Center, Princeton University. Bala constantly strives to create awareness of Indian classical dance in the USA through her work with universities such as Princeton, Rutgers, Columbia, Mount Holyoke, Vassar, Yeshiva, Drew and McCarter theater etc. Currently Bala is an Associate visiting scholar at Upenn.

Event Schedule:

- **25th Dec 2025 – 7:30 PM:** *Brahma Gana Sabha, TAG Dakshinamurthy Auditorium, PS High School, Mylapore, Chennai*
- **27th Dec 2025 – 5:30 PM:** *Kartik Fine Arts, Bhavan Auditorium, Mylapore, Chennai*
- **4th Jan 2026 – 5:30 pm:** *Parthasarathy Swami Sabha, R K Swamy Auditorium, Mylapore, Chennai* •
- **9th Jan 2026 – 5:30 pm:** *Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Mylapore, Chennai*

For More Information:

Visit: www.baladevichandrashekhar.com