

# RHYTHM

Elegance in Every Steps

**The Balance**  
**The Challenge**  
**The Support**



*“Dance is the joy of movement and the heart of life.”*

# A Life in Rhythm: My Bharatanatyam Story

I embarked on my Bharatanatyam journey at the tender age of ten. When I was young, I had no idea that this classical dance form would become my lifelong passion and addiction. Over the years, Bharatanatyam has taught me invaluable lessons and skills, from mastering facial expressions to maintaining physical fitness. It has instilled in me discipline and also improved my memory power.

*“Dance is the hidden language of the soul.”*

*-Martha Graham*

My initial years in Bharatanatyam were filled with excitement and dedication. My parents were immensely proud to see me perform on stage, and their support fueled my enthusiasm. I was recognized as the best student in my dance class, never missing a single lesson. The joy and fulfillment I felt while dancing were beyond words. Unlike my peers who were absorbed in their books, I found my heart literally racing for the stage.

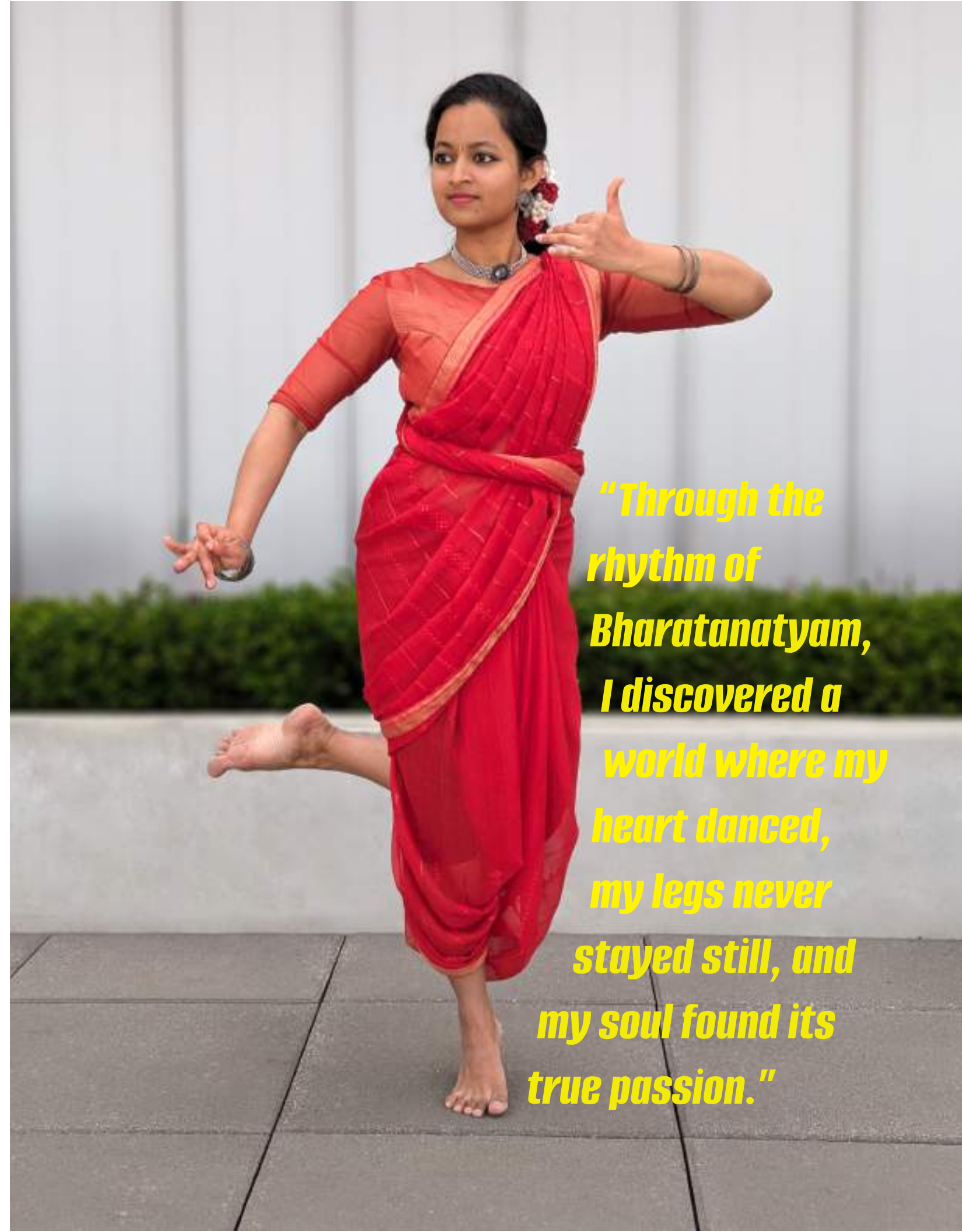
My dance teacher, Mrs. Sudha Rajan, who has been dancing since she was 15, has been a tremendous influence on me. Now at 60, she continues to teach countless students with undiminished passion. Also,

I always prioritized physical activity, and dancing for an hour straight during stage programs invigorated me, filling my body with power, energy, and enthusiasm. This relentless practice and my love for Bharatanatyam shaped who I am today.

## The Rich Heritage Of Bharatanatyam

Bharatanatyam is one of the oldest classical dance forms of India, originating from the temples of Tamil Nadu. Its roots can be traced back over 2,000 years, evolving from sacred temple dances performed by Devadasis. This dance form beautifully combines **Bhava (emotion)**, **Raga (melody)**, **Tala (rhythm)**, and **Natya (drama)**, which together form the essence of Bharatanatyam. The dance form features a distinctive and versatile style with rhythmic precision and graceful, controlled movements. Key elements include unique postures such as “**Nritta**” (pure dance) and “**Abhinaya**” (expressive dance), which convey various emotions and stories.

Bharatanatyam vividly portrays the nine fundamental emotions known as **Navarasam**. Each rasa (emotion) is expressed through facial expressions and body movements, capturing the essence of human experiences and emotions.



*“Through the rhythm of Bharatanatyam, I discovered a world where my heart danced, my legs never stayed still, and my soul found its true passion.”*



# Exploring Navarasam: The Nine Emotions in Bharatnatyam



*Shringara (Love)*



*Hasya (Laughter)*



*Karuna (Compassion)*



*Raudra (Anger)*



*Bhayanaka (Fear)*



*Veera (Courage)*



*Bibhatsa (Disgust)*



*Adbhuta (Wonder)*



*Shanta (Peace)*

# Facing Challenges: A Dancer's Personal Struggle

As I grew older, my parents' perception of my dancing began to change. Since they came from a conservative background, and as I approached adolescence, they increasingly felt that performing on stage was not suitable for girls beyond a certain age. Their concerns about societal norms and expectations led to numerous conflicts between us.

which fueled my determination to keep improving my skills.

Though I missed the exhilaration of performing on stage, the continued practice allowed me to stay connected to my passion. My dedication to Bharatanatyam remained strong, and I resolved to cherish and nurture this art form, no matter the obstacles I faced.

They believed that public performances might attract unwanted attention and potentially harm our family's reputation. The tension grew with each performance, and despite my protests and passion for dance, the pressure from my parents became overwhelming. Ultimately, I had to make the difficult decision to stop performing publicly.

Despite these challenges, my love for dance remained unwavering. I continued attending my classes, finding solace and joy in each session. Dance became my sanctuary, a space where I could express myself freely, away from the constraints of societal expectations. My teachers and fellow students provided support and encouragement,

***“ Even when I was forced to step back from the stage, my love for dance remained unshaken. It became my sanctuary, a place where I could express myself freely despite the constraints of societal expectations. ”***



# A New Chapter: Rediscovering My Passion

Marriage brought a new chapter in my life, transforming my relationship with dance. My husband, unlike my parents, not only accepted my passion for dance but also encouraged me to pursue it further.

His belief in my talent and dedication was unwavering, which gave me the confidence to return to the stage. With his support, I felt empowered to rekindle my love for dance and embrace opportunities that I had previously let go of. This shift was more than just a return to performing; it was a renewal of my identity and a celebration of the art form I cherished deeply.

Together, we embraced this journey with enthusiasm and shared goals. My husband, an avid photographer, captured beautiful moments of my dance performances

through his lens, preserving cherished memories that we both treasured. His involvement added a new dimension to my practice, merging our passions and strengthening our bond.



Whether it was late-night rehearsals, planning performances, or discussing new ideas, his constant support, guidance, and motivation are definitely invaluable and appreciated.

This shared experience not only rekindled my love for Bharatanatyam but also enriched our relationship, blending our individual passions into a harmonious and supportive partnership.

Passion is a powerful force that can overcome any obstacle. My journey with Bharatanatyam is a testament to this truth. Despite the challenges, my love for dance never waned. It is a part of who I am, and I continue to perform with the same enthusiasm and dedication as when I first started. Bharatanatyam is more than just a dance form; it is a celebration of culture, tradition, and devotion. It continues to evolve, captivating audiences around the world with its unique charm, timeless grace and beauty.







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*“Bharatanatyam  
has been my lifelong  
passion and sanctuary,  
guiding me through  
challenges and  
enriching my soul.  
With unwavering  
support, I’ve embraced  
this art form’s  
heritage, celebrating  
its beauty and deep  
cultural significance.”*