

Quarterly Issue of



The Newsletter from

RASA Ramana Sunritya Aalaya

July | August | September
2026

JULY ISSUE



RASA Ramana Sunritya Aalaya





Ramana Sunritya Aalaya

27 July 2026



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Theme: Dance Within, Theatre Without

Among the many sublime images that Bhagavan Ramana offers us, that which has always captivated me is the Divine as the Dancer. The Dance does not happen upon a stage, nor before an audience, but in the Heart itself as the silent pulsation of Pure Being, the **Aham Sphuraṇa**, "I-I" - *ever shining as our true nature*.

"Hṛdi Aham iti Ātmatayā Nṛtyasi"
"In the Heart, You dance as the Self, as the Eternal 'I-I'."

~ Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, *Arunachala Pancharatnam*

This is the Source. Life springs forth from this Source. Let us now move from Bhagavan's words to Bharata's Treatise - *The Nāṭya Śāstra*. Bharata describes **Nāṭya** as **Lokānukaraṇam** - *a reflection of life itself*. Through movement and stillness, rhythm and

silence, word and emotion, human experience becomes visible. Yet, behind every role, every relationship, every joy and sorrow, there remains the silent Witness, untouched by all that unfolds.*

In my understanding, then, even as Bhagavan reveals the Source, Bharata reveals its expression, and seen together, we can recognise a beautiful continuum:

The Heart expresses itself as Life.
Life expresses itself as Nāṭya.
Nāṭya leads us back to the Heart.

From the Source comes Expression. Through Expression, we return to the Source.

This understanding is the philosophical foundation of **RASA CHETAS™** - **Consciousness through Holistic Education via Theatre Arts Sādhana**.

Topics Covered

Event Updates

Stories of Impact

Bird's Eye View of Classes

Anbudan Store Front

Learning Corner | Q&A



Director's Note Continued....

After years of observation, contemplation and practice, we reached a point where it was felt that what I had codified as **TAHD** (Theatre Arts for Holistic Development) needed a change in terminology. Something that would reflect its Core better. We needed to emphasise on the deeper understanding of its true purpose, and that is what has flowered naturally into RASA CHETAS. Where one can recognise immediately that while Theatre Arts are surely a means for holistic development they also provide a conscious pathway from expression to Consciousness.

At RASA, therefore, Natya does not represent the culmination of expression, but is, in fact, the pathway through which expression returns to its Source. Dance, drama, music, storytelling and every creative act become opportunities to recognise the Presence from which they arise.

This also invites us to contemplate **Abhinaya** afresh.

Traditionally, **Abhinaya** means "to carry towards" (**abhi + nī**) to carry meaning and experience to the audience. Within the contemplative vision of **RASA CHETAS™**, we see an inward possibility. **Abhinaya** also becomes that which carries the individual towards the Self.

Expression, illumined by awareness, allows us to function from Within, giving authenticity to every movement - every action.

This philosophy comes alive every day in our work with differently able individuals. We have witnessed rhythm awaken communication, drama nurture relationships, movement kindle confidence and creative experience reveal moments of profound stillness.

Transformation begins not when one learns to perform, but when one begins to experience oneself differently.

The stage is no longer merely a place of presentation; it becomes a sacred space where the invisible Dance of the Heart finds visible expression.

I would like to leave you with one more thought. The Nāṭya Śāstra speaks of Rasa as the sole purpose of Nāṭya (**na hi rasaadrite kascidarthah pravartate**).**

True Rasa can only be experienced as Awareness. So it is, that when the *Anubhava Nāṭya* leads one back to *Hṛdaya Nṛtya*, when through *lived experience* one is led back once again to the *dance of 'I-I'* in and as the Heart - *Rasanubhava* happens. It is then that life's purpose is achieved - the purpose of Natya is achieved - all action finds its fruition.

Ultimately, the greatest performance is never enacted upon the stage. It is the eternal Dance of the Self, ever unfolding in the Heart. May every act of learning, creating and living become an opportunity to recognise this Truth.

Warm Regards,

Dr. Ambika Kameshwar
Founder-Director, RASA

Footnotes

* We dwelt a bit on '**Consciousness: The Stage , the Witness and The Play**' in our previous issue

** There is no meaning /objective/purpose (in Natya) other than Rasa





Kala RASA Parampara Vaibhava: A Tribute to Guru-Shishya Parampara

Chennai, July 5, 2026: Kala RASA Parampara Vaibhava, held at Rukmini Arangam, Kalakshetra Foundation, was a grand celebration of Guru-Shishya Parampara presented by the disciples of Dr. Ambika Kameshwar. The event commemorated her remarkable journey of 55 years of artistic excellence and 40 years as a Natyacharya, while celebrating the enduring legacy of learning, teaching, and artistic transmission nurtured through generations.

The evening was graced by an illustrious gathering of luminaries from the world of performing arts. Padma Vibhushan Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam, President of Nrithyodaya, Chennai, presided as the Principal Chief Guest, while Sri Rajkumar Bharati, Sangeet Natak Akademi Awardee, attended as Guest of Honour. The celebration was further enriched by the presence of Dr. Sarada Natarajan, President of Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning (RMCL), Bengaluru; Sri K. Harishankar, Honorary Secretary, Narada Gana Sabha; and

Sri R. Sekar, Honorary Secretary, Kartik Fine Arts.

The programme commenced with the lighting of the lamp accompanied by a musical presentation by the young children of the RASA Arpita Music Division, followed by an audio-visual presentation and the felicitation of Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam.

At the heart of the celebration was Nritya Samarpanam—a complete Bharatanatyam Margam featuring original compositions of Dr. Ambika Kameshwar. Presented by artistes and students from RASA Arpita, Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning, Sri Kala Ranga School of Dance, RASA Arpita Nanganallur, RASA Arpita Mandaveli, RASA STARS, and the Sri Ramana Maharshi Academy for the Blind, Bengaluru, the performances reflected the breadth of her artistic and spiritual vision. The presentations were guided by Dr. Vaishnavi Poorna, Dr. Sarada Natarajan, Dr. Srithika Kasturirangan, Dr. Nithyakalyani Gautam, Smt. Jayashree Natarajan, and Vidwan Dinesh.



Event Archives Cont'd...



The Margam traversed a rich repertoire of compositions including Arulin Aattral, Mayura Alarippu, Shambo Shankara, Hanuman Shabdam, Ramayanam Varnam, Margazhi Endral Enna, Vaanor Pugazhum Dayalan, Thaye Yashodai, Anbu, and Thillana. Together, these works showcased Dr. Ambika Kameshwar's distinctive artistic contribution to Bharatanatyam through the *Lāsyapriyā Pāṇi*, an interpretative style that views Bharatanatyam as a spiritual sadhana while emphasizing grace, communication, and inner transformation.

The students had planned two special surprises for their Guru. The first was a tribute presentation curated by Dr. Vaishnavi Poorna and fellow disciples, bringing to life some of Dr. Ambika's most cherished choreographic creations. The second was a moving audio-visual presentation featuring rare photographs and archival footage tracing her artistic journey—from her early years as a teacher to her pioneering work with visually impaired and special-needs learners.

The presentation offered a glimpse into her unwavering conviction that dance belongs to everyone and transcends conventional notions of ability.



Among the evening's most heartwarming moments was the presentation of Margazhi Endral Enna? by the RASA STARs, whose joyful performance captured the spirit of the Margazhi season while embodying the enthusiasm, surrender, and sense of belonging that have become hallmarks of the RASA journey.

Equally moving was Anbu, presented by the students of the Sri Ramana Maharshi Academy for the Blind, Bengaluru, led by Vidwan Dinesh. Rooted in Dr. Ambika Kameshwar's vision that "Love is Light," the composition celebrated love as the source of joy, wisdom, and awareness, while also recalling the institution where her journey of working with learners with special needs first began.





Event Archives Cont'd...

The celebration concluded with the presentation of the Natya RASA Parampara Bhushana Awards, honouring torchbearers who are carrying forward the artistic legacies of their Gurus. The awardees were:

- Smt. Sukanya Ravindhar, Director, CAPA, for carrying forward the legacy of Padma Shri Chitra Visweswaran, founder of Chidambaram Academy of Performing Arts, Chennai.
- Sri C. P. Satyajit, Artistic Director, Bharata Kalanjali, for carrying forward the legacy of Padmabhushan awardees The Dhananjayans.
- Smt. Aruna Rengasamy, Director, Ramana Natyalaya, for carrying forward the legacy of Dr. Kalarani Rengasamy, recipient of the Variyar Award.

More than a celebration of milestones, Kala RASA Parampara Vaibhava was a living testament to the Guru-Shishya tradition. Through music, movement, memory, and gratitude, the evening affirmed that a Guru's legacy continues not merely through compositions and institutions, but through the generations of students who carry that vision forward.





Theatre of Life | Dance and Expression

The fan whirls overhead as the children gather in a circle, with the teacher standing at the centre. The session begins with a simple movement activity. Using both hands, the teacher demonstrates the image of a flower slowly blooming.

The children observe carefully and recreate the gesture, each interpreting the movement in their own way. As the teacher moves around the circle, gentle corrections help them refine their posture and coordination.

After several repetitions, music is introduced. The children begin to sway and move with greater confidence,

responding to rhythm and melody while maintaining their flower formations.

Over the course of the month, they also learn to work with flower props, becoming comfortable holding and moving with them as part of the dance.

Many of these props are created by the children themselves during arts and crafts sessions. From making the props to using them in movement activities and performances, the experience encourages creativity, expression, coordination, and participation, making learning both meaningful and enjoyable.



Learning Corner

Learning Corner: The Aspects of Natya

Natya is a holistic approach that integrates multiple forms of artistic expression, including dance, drama, music, arts & crafts, and storytelling. Together, these aspects provide opportunities for individuals to explore, experience, and express their thoughts, emotions, and creativity in meaningful ways.

Dance encourages body awareness, coordination, and self-expression through movement. Drama nurtures imagination, communication, and confidence by engaging participants in role-play and creative exploration. Music develops listening skills, rhythm, concentration, and emotional

expression. Arts and crafts provide avenues for creativity, fine motor development, and visual expression. Storytelling fosters language skills, imagination, empathy, and the ability to connect with diverse experiences.

By enabling individuals to express their innermost feelings in a safe and supportive environment, Natya offers significant therapeutic value. It strengthens communication skills, enhances physical and cognitive abilities, promotes emotional well-being, and builds social awareness. Through these interconnected art forms, Natya supports holistic growth and lifelong learning.





Interview of the Month



In Conversation with Mr. Varun, a Beneficiary of RASA

Editorial Note

Mr. Varun has been a part of the RASA family since childhood. Over the years, he has participated in numerous performances, taking on roles ranging from Hanuman and Shiva to Surya Bhagavan. In this conversation, he shares what RASA means to him.

Q1. Interviewer: What is your name?
How long have you been coming to RASA?

Ans: My name is Varun. I've been coming to RASA for many years. I first came here as a small child and studied at Saraswati in RASA. Later, I left for some time and then came back.

Q2. You first joined RASA when you were very young; so, what do you like most about RASA? Dance, drama, or something else?

Ans: Yes. Everything! I like dance, drama, and the Independence Day drill. I really love the Independence Day celebrations.

Q3. What about your friends? Who are your friends at RASA? Can you tell me

some of their names?

Ans: Everybody is my friend. Santosh, Bhargav, Sharanya... and everybody.

Q4. What roles have you played in dramas and in programs?

Ans: I have played Hanuman and Shiva. I was a soldier and a devotee.

Q5. Last year you also played Surya Bhagavan, the Sun God. You weren't feeling well, but you still came for the final rehearsal. Do you remember?

Ans: Yes. I wasn't well, but I remember playing the Sun God.

Q6. Which role was your favourite? Why did you like playing that role?



Conversation Cont'd...

In Conversation With Mr. Varun, a Beneficiary of RASA

Ans: Shiva. Because he is a god. He lives in heaven. He lives in Mount Kailash.

Q7. Which is more challenging for you—dancing or sitting quietly? Between them which is easier?

Ans: Dancing. I can't kneel because of my knee, but I can stand and dance.

Q8. Can you tell me what you do from morning to night? And how do you come to RASA?

Ans: In the morning, I have a bath, change my clothes, get ready, and come to RASA. I come by bike with my dad.

Q9. What do you do after you return home from RASA? Do you help at home while setting the table for dinner?

Ans: My father opens the door, and I go inside. I put my lunch box in the sink, go to my room, change my clothes, and then watch TV. I keep the volume low.

Yes. I fill the water.

Q10. During summer holidays, Christmas holidays, or other vacations, what do you usually do?

Ans: I get bored. I just watch TV. I don't know what to do at home.

Q11. What do you enjoy the most—coming to RASA or staying at home? And why?

Ans: Coming to RASA.

I don't feel happy sitting at home. I feel happy when I come to RASA.

Q12. Suppose a new student joins RASA. What would you tell them? What would you tell them about RASA? What can they expect when they come here?

Ans: I would say, "Welcome to RASA!"

We do dance, drama, and many activities. We celebrate Independence Day too.

They can do anything they want. There are lots of dramas and activities.

Q13. Is there anything else you would like us to do at RASA? What kind of entertainment would you like?

Ans: During the summer holidays, we can have entertainment.

We can have music... English music.

"Everybody is my friend!"

"Welcome to RASA"

~ Varun

Questions & Answers Corner



Reader's Mailbox

Q1. What role do the arts play in holistic development?

Ans: The arts nurture the whole person—body, mind, emotions and spirit. They build creativity, confidence, empathy, discipline and self-awareness, helping individuals grow into balanced and compassionate human beings.

Q2. How does RASA create learning experiences that are engaging and meaningful for learners of different ages and abilities?

Ans: At RASA, we use our RASA CHETASTM methodology—Consciousness through Holistic

Education via Theatre Arts Sadhana—to create joyful, experiential and inclusive learning. Every learner is encouraged to explore, participate and grow according to their unique strengths and potential.

Q3. How can families support creative learning and self-expression at home?

Ans: Families can nurture creativity by spending quality time together, encouraging curiosity, listening without judgment, and giving children the freedom to express themselves through stories, music, movement and play. A supportive home is the foundation of lifelong learning.



For More Information related to the Course, Classes, or RASA, please get in-touch with our coordinator at the following:

WhatsApp No.: +91 98401 39607

Drop your queries, feedback, and encouragement to our official Email:

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For Bulk Order

We accept bulk orders. For details get-in-touch with our **RASA Coordinator**

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Upcoming Events

July 31 | Gnananjali - Dance Production at Narada Gana Sabha

Aug 2 | Tiruvakku Kandam - theatre production at Narada Gana Sabha

Aug 14 | Independence Day at RASA

Aug 16 | dance by Gurushankar and VM Bharath at Rani Seethai Hall

Get-In-Touch

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Thank you for reading!



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as we are **thankful for your support**
for our causes

AUGUST ISSUE



RASA Ramana Sunritya Aalaya





Ramana Sunritya Aalaya

27 August 2026

**DIRECTOR'S NOTE****Theme: SVAATANTRYAM - True Freedom**

This month, as we celebrated India's Independence Day, my mind went back many years to a theatre production we created at RASA called Svaatantryam.

At that time, we had set out to explore a question - What indeed is true freedom?

We speak naturally of freedom in terms of independence - freedom from external rule, freedom from oppression, freedom to make our own choices and to live according to our own laws.

The freedom of our nation is something we rightly celebrate with gratitude and pride, and shudder to think of external rule.

In a similar manner, even in our own lives, we shudder to think of external rule by anyone, even from within our own families or external circles. External rule is something we all abhor and are completely in fear of.

Despite this, somewhere we miss out and allow our ego-self to rule

instead of staying and being as our very Self. We can see that we are ruled by our limitations when fear makes us hesitate, when anger makes us react, when desire makes us pursue, and when hurt makes us withdraw. We are carried away by emotions, identifying ourselves so completely with what we feel that, for that moment, the emotion becomes the ruler and we become its subject. We say, "I am angry", "I am afraid", "I am hurt", instead of recognising that anger, fear or hurt is being experienced by us. In that identification lies the bondage.

How is one to attain, then, this freedom from the rule of an entity and an enemy who rises and rules from within our own body-space? How can we live every moment so that we reach that state of True Freedom through practice initially and live in that experience thereafter, and how can the beautiful RASA CHETAS methodology hold our hands through that path?

Theatre by itself provides the greatest opportunity to recognise

Topics Covered**Event Updates****Stories of Impact****Bird's Eye View of Classes****Anbudan Store Front****Q&A**



Director's Note Continued....

that the actor is not oneself. Ambika acts as Sita, Azhagamma, Meera Bai, the Rani of Jhansi, and the like. Every emotion, every role is played with conviction and complete surrender to the character, but never ever losing sight of the fact that it is Ambika playing the roles - and therefore never being touched by any of these emotions or roles. The emotions are real within the experience of the performance, but they do not become a permanent identity.

This is one of the deepest disciplines of theatre, and understanding this gives us the path to the true freedom that we seek.

In our varied roles in life, we experience joy, sorrow, anger, fear, success, failure, praise and criticism. We enter each experience fully. But there must be an awareness that says: I am experiencing this, but I am not merely this experience.

This is where theatre becomes more than performance. It becomes a Sadhana. And this is precisely the possibility that RASA CHETAS opens.

So, as I thought again of Svaatantryam, it became important to draw one's attention beyond the meaning of independence and go deeper, to a point where there exist neither external nor internal chains. What is the use of being outwardly free and internally bound?

Bound by fear. Bound by habit. Bound by our conditioning. Bound by our ideas about ourselves. Bound by what others have told us we can or cannot do. Bound even by the very notion that "I am this person, with these limitations."

Bhagavan Ramana says that this ego-identity is, in fact, a non-entity. We give it a form and allow it to rule. When we turn and enquire, 'Who am I?', the ego takes to its heels. Thereafter, there is the state of True Freedom. After that, there is neither a thought of bondage nor freedom, says Bhagavan.

பத்தன் நான் என்னும் மட்டே பந்த முத்தி
சிந்தைகள்
பத்தன் ஆர் என்று தன்னை பார்க்குங்கால்
சித்தமாய்
நித்த முத்தன் தான் நிற்க நிற்காதேல் பந்த
சிந்தை
முத்தி சிந்தை முன் நிற்குமோ?

"Only so long as one thinks, 'I am bound,' do thoughts of bondage and liberation arise. When one looks within and asks, 'Who is this one who is bound?', the eternally liberated Self alone remains. When the thought of bondage has ceased, can the thought of liberation remain?" (Sri Ramana - ulladu naarppathu)

Again, Freedom is not something that has to be newly acquired. The Self is already free. It is our mistaken identification with limitation that makes us experience ourselves as bound.

Hence, Svaatantryam is not merely freedom from something. It is the discovery of what we truly are. At RASA, Svaatantryam is not an abstract philosophical idea. It is something we try to make possible every day. Art, here, is a disciplined, joyful engagement through which we encounter ourselves and seek to transcend self-imposed limitations.

Through theatre arts - through movement, music, rhythm, storytelling, role-play, expression, observation, interaction and creative participation - we learn to experience, to respond, to observe ourselves and, slowly, to distinguish between the role we play and the Self that plays it.

Just as the actor enters a role completely without forgetting that the role is not the Self, CHETAS can help us engage fully with life while gradually becoming aware that we are more than the roles, emotions, limitations and circumstances with which we identify ourselves.

That is true Svaatantryam - not merely to free ourselves from what binds us, but to discover the Nitya Mukta, the ever-free Self that was never bound.

Then, there is simply the Self - ever free.

Warm Regards,

Dr. Ambika Kameshwar

Dr. Ambika Kameshwar





Ramana Chakram: A Journey of Devotion to Ramana Through 72 Melakarta Ragas

Honouring HMV Raghu with the title of Sangita Chakravarthi and a Lifetime Achievement Award

Chennai, July 31, 2026: The Gnananjali Festival 2026 brought together music, dance and devotion through Ramana Chakram, a dance-theatre production inspired by the life of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi.

Presented by the Bhagawan Sri Ramana Maharshi Research Centre, Bengaluru; RASA Trust, Chennai; and RASA Arpita Academy for Research and Performance of Indian Theatre Arts, Chennai. The production brought together dance institutions and artistes from Bengaluru and Chennai in a celebration of devotion through the arts.

At the heart of the production was the musical vision of Sri K. S. Raghunathan, affectionately known as HMV Raghu, whose compositions draw upon the 72 Melakarta ragas. His earlier Tamil Chakram had explored the ragas through associations with figures and

stories from the Indian epic tradition. For Ramana Chakram, the idea took a different form: each raga would connect with an incident from Bhagavan's life.

The presentation at Narada Gana Sabha featured six of these ragas. Kanakangi was associated with Sahayamba, whom young Ramana regarded as his mother; Ratnangi with Meenakshi and his spiritual awakening in Madurai; Ghanamurti with Krishna and his journey to Arunachala; while the subsequent ragas carried the story into his early years at Arunachala. Through music, narration and Bharatanatyam, the incidents became a moving artistic journey from birth and awakening to renunciation and complete surrender to Arunachala.

HMV Raghu — A Life in Music

Sri K. S. Raghunathan, fondly known as HMV Raghu, has been closely associated with Indian music for decades. His long career with HMV (His Master's Voice) brought him into close contact with many of the leading musicians of his generation. As a recording professional and music connoisseur, he played an important role in documenting and preserving India's rich musical heritage.



Event Archives Cont'd...



The evening also marked Raghunathan Sir's 90th birthday. The three organisations came together to honour his lifelong contribution to music by conferring upon him the title Sangita Chakravarthi and a Lifetime Achievement Award. G. Kameshwar, who had interviewed him many years ago, recalled the depth of his musical knowledge and his long association with some of the greatest musicians of his generation.

The evening thus became more than a presentation. It was an offering to Bhagavan — bringing together a lifetime of music, the language of dance, and the continuing journey of Ramana's life through the arts.

Musical Journey Cont'd...

His own musical journey has included work as a composer and a deep engagement with Carnatic music. His compositions, including those conceived around the 72 Melakarta ragas, continue this tradition while finding new expression through dance and theatre.

His musical inheritance also has deep roots. He comes from a family associated with scholarship in Ganita and Jyotisha, and his father, Sri Subramanya, was also a veena player and devotee of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi.

At Ramana Chakram, on his 90th birthday, HMV Raghu was honoured with the title of Sangita Chakravarthi and a Lifetime Achievement Award.



Independence Day Celebration at RASA CHETAS Centre, RKM

Chennai, August 14, 2026: RASA CHETAS Centre at RKM celebrated Independence Day with a vibrant programme bringing together prayer, music, movement, theatre and expressions of patriotism.

The celebration opened with a prayer song presented by Deepa, Rashmi, Sujani, Sripriya and Sangeetha, invoking peace, learning and the Guru Parampara.

Students of Unnati Prithvi presented a drill to Vande Mataram, based on the composition of Mahakavi Subramania Bharati and choreographed by Dr. Ambika Kameshwar. This was followed by character depictions of national leaders and freedom fighters by Sreyas Mayura, with students portraying Mahatma Gandhi, Kasturba Gandhi, Subramania Bharati, Bhagat Singh and Sarojini Naidu.

The programme continued with Engal Thai, a Bharatiyar song and dance presentation by V. M. Bharat and Guru Shankar, based on Bharati's poetry



Event Archives Cont'd...

and choreographed by Dr. Ambika Kameshwar.

The celebration was honoured by the presence of Padma Shri Smt. Meenakshi Chittaranjan, founder of Kaladiksha. In her address, she appreciated RASA's work and highlighted how singing, dancing, performing and communicating on stage provide students with opportunities to develop confidence and identity. She also spoke about encouraging her own students to contribute towards meaningful social causes and expressed her happiness at supporting RASA.

The celebration concluded with Jana Gana Mana, bringing the gathering together in a shared spirit of pride, gratitude and unity.





Theatre of Life | From Pattern to Expression

Learning Through Beadwork

In the Jewellery Making Department, our students develop the ability to sort, organise and sequence through the simple yet purposeful activity of beadwork. Students begin by sorting beads according to colour, shape and size. They are then introduced to a simple pattern and encouraged to recreate it by following a given sequence of coloured beads and other components.

As students work with the beads, they learn to observe carefully, remember what comes next, maintain attention and organise their actions towards a desired outcome. The repetition of a sequence helps them understand order and pattern while gradually developing greater independence in completing the task.

From Pattern to Expression

The completed necklace becomes more than a craft product. It is a visible expression of the skill acquired through the process.

The students' ability to follow a pattern, maintain the sequence and complete the necklace reflects their growing capacity to organise thought and action.

This developmental experience finds a natural extension in Natya. Just as the student learns to recognise and reproduce a sequence of beads, the student of Natya learns to recognise, remember and reproduce sequences of movement, gesture and expression. Through Abhinaya, an action is no longer merely repeated; it is understood and given meaning.

When movement, expression and meaning come together within Natya, they create the possibility for Rasa — an aesthetic experience shared between performer and spectator.

Thus, a simple activity in Jewellery Making can become a foundation for the attention, sequencing and expressive abilities that find fuller manifestation in Natya, Abhinaya and Rasa.



Interview of the Month



In Conversation with our Natya RASA Rasika Ratna Shri Thyagarajan

Editor's Note

Two years ago, Shri Thyagarajan was awarded the Natya RASA Rasika Ratna honour, recognising his quiet but persistent support of RASA's performances—from its early days to our latest production.

Here are the thoughts of our gentle yet steadfast supporter, Shri Thyagarajan Sir:

Q1. You have been part of the RASA journey for over three decades. What has kept you coming back, year after year?

Ans: From Day 1, every RASA presentation has focused on one central subject — Bhagavan — expressed through stories, incidents, experiences and anecdotes. These are not merely performances; they speak of values and truths that are lasting, permanent and eternal. That, to me, is what gives RASA productions their enduring quality.

Q2. What is it about Dr. Ambika Kameshwar's work and performances that has touched

you most deeply over the years?

Ans: What makes RASA unique is Ambika Kameshwar's creativity with a clear purpose, combined with her strong musical foundation and understanding. She has the ability to create productions that appeal equally to the mass and the class, while still retaining depth, meaning and artistic integrity.

Q3. As someone who has supported RASA so steadfastly, what does RASA mean to you personally?

Ans: I have always made it a point to attend RASA's presentations,



Conversation Cont'd...

In Conversation with our Natya RASA Rasika Ratna Shri Thyagarajan

wherever they are held. For me, attending a RASA performance is not merely watching a programme — it is an experience that brings inner peace, tranquillity and a sense of spiritual enrichment. I always come away with something to reflect upon.

Q4. If you could share one thought with the younger generation about experiencing and supporting the arts, what would you say?

Ans: My only suggestion to the younger generation would be this: do not miss RASA productions. They

have the power to give you wisdom, strength and perspective to face the trials and tribulations of life. As the beautiful thought goes:

**“நாம் பாடுற பாட்டும், ஆடுற கூத்தும்
படிப்பினை தந்தாகணும்;
நாட்டுக்குப் படிப்பினை
தந்தாகணும்.”**

That, in essence, has always been Dr. Ambika Kameshwar's vision — that what we sing, what we dance and what we create must not merely entertain, but must teach, enlighten and leave something meaningful in the hearts and minds of people.

**These are not merely
performances; they speak of
values and truths that are
lasting, permanent and eternal.**

Questions & Answers Corner



Reader's Mailbox

1. What opportunities does RASA provide for learners to experience the arts beyond the classroom?

Ans: At RASA, learning extends beyond the classroom into the experience of creating, performing, observing and engaging with the arts. Learners have opportunities to participate in productions, workshops, demonstrations, festivals, interactions with artistes and other arts-based experiences. These encounters allow them to see the arts not simply as a subject to be learnt, but as a living practice that connects creativity, discipline, expression and life.

2. How can artistes and arts organisations engage with RASA's work?

Ans: RASA welcomes meaningful engagement with artistes, scholars, educators and arts organisations through performances, workshops, residencies, collaborations, demonstrations, discussions and other

programmes. Such partnerships create opportunities for learners and audiences to encounter diverse artistic practices and perspectives, while also contributing to a wider culture of dialogue and appreciation for the arts.

3. What can a learner's journey through RASA lead to beyond performance?

Ans: A learner's journey through RASA can extend far beyond becoming a performer. The arts can nurture confidence, creativity, discipline, sensitivity, observation, communication and the ability to work with others. Depending on the learner's interests and journey, this foundation may lead towards performance, teaching, research, arts administration, curation, creative practice or simply a lifelong engagement with the arts. At RASA, the larger aim is to help learners discover what the arts can awaken in them and how that learning can enrich the way they engage with the world.

For More Information related to the Course, Classes, or RASA, please get in-touch with our coordinator at the following:

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communications@rasaindia.org

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Upcoming Events

Sep 1 | RASA STARs
present Song of
Courage - Veeram at
Sai Samarpan
Vocational Training
Centres Annual Day

Get-In-Touch

RASA

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Thank you for reading!



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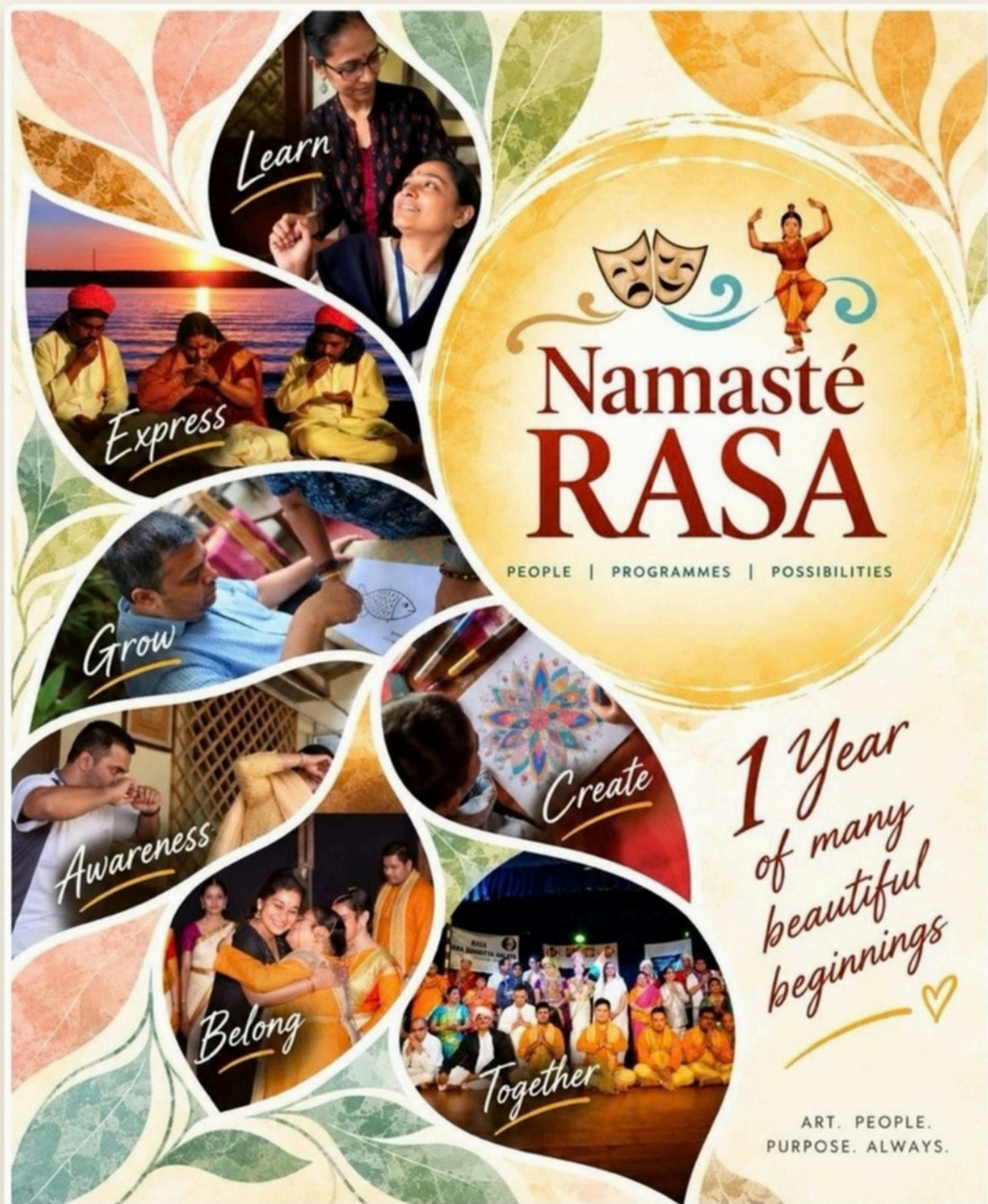
SEPTEMBER ISSUE



RASA Ramana Sunritya Aalaya



September 2026



EDITORIAL TEAM

Dr. Ambika Kameshwar

Dr. Vaishnavi Poorna

Smt. Srividya Suryanarayanan

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Theme: MANY NEW BEGINNINGS

"Navo Navo Bhavati" - ever new, ever becoming.

There is something deeply beautiful about a new beginning.

In my journey through life, I have always recognised that every moment is, in itself, a new beginning. No moment returns exactly as it was. Each moment brings with it a new possibility, a new discovery, a new way of seeing, experiencing and expressing.

And that makes every moment beautiful, as it provides so much joy.

The joy of discovering the moment.

The joy of understanding the moment.

The joy of experiencing the moment.

The joy of expressing what the moment reveals.

The joy of sharing.

And, simply, the joy of being.

The ancient phrase from the Rg Veda **"Navo Navo Bhavati" - ever new, ever becoming** - beautifully captures this spirit.

It reminds us that life is not merely a repetition of what has been, but a continual unfolding of what can be.

This is especially true of Theatre.

Theatre, like life, presents us with challenges, possibilities, unexpected turns and discoveries at every moment.

Yet when we approach each moment with the comfort of a seasoned actor playing a role - with the keenness to do justice to the role play and with the sense of wonder and delight of a child discovering something for the very first time, even a challenge can become an invitation - to observe, to listen, to question, to explore and to discover.

And in that discovery of the moment, we discover ourselves.

At RASA, Theatre has never been merely an art to be performed. It has been a **sadhana** - a journey of exploration.

Topics Covered

Event Updates

Stories of Impact

Bird's Eye View of Classes

Anbudan Store Front

Q&A



Director's Note Continued....

Through role play, movement, music, expression, observation and interaction, we encounter different people, different worlds and different possibilities. But ultimately, every exploration takes us inward.

We discover the many facets of the individual self, and through repeated, joyous practice, gradually glimpse the deeper connection with the universal Self.

Looking back at the twelve issues of Namaste RASA, I feel that, as always, this first year too been a journey of many new beginnings. Each issue has opened another window into our work and our thought. We have reflected upon **joy, sadhana, purpose, awareness, being in the present, being active without-and silent within, and the many dimensions of conscious living.**

Though the themes have been different, they have continually led us towards one underlying enquiry:

How do we become Self Aware?

In manifestation too, we need to recognise that awareness is not simply an intellectual understanding. It is an experience. It is the ability to be present to every moment - to observe without prejudice, to experience without fear, to act with consciousness, to listen deeply and to recognise the meaning within each moment.

And when awareness becomes a way of being, we recognise that everything springs from that unending flow of true joy – The Self



This is also the essence of **RASA CHETAS™** - the exploration of consciousness through the practice of Theatre Arts as sadhana. The outer expression may be Theatre, but the inner journey is one of awakening, discovery and becoming.

As we celebrate the first year and the twelfth issue of Namaste RASA, I see this too as a joyous beginning. A beginning that has given us the opportunity to look back with gratitude, to look within with awareness, and to look ahead with curiosity and surrender.

Every new beginning invites us to discover, to create, to share, to grow and to experience the joy of the journey. Yes,

Every new moment brings a new discovery.

Every discovery deepens our awareness.

Every experience opens another dimension of joy.

May we continue to move forward, ever new, ever becoming -**Navo Navo Bhavati.**

With joy,

Dr. Ambika Kameshwar
Founder Director, RASA





Inclusive Vibrance at Sai Samarpan Annual Day Celebration

By **Mrs Lakshmi Saravanan**

Sai Samarpan Annual Day Celebrated with a Vibrant Presentation of Talent and Inclusion

Chennai, September 1, 2026: The Sai Samarpan Annual Day Presentation was a delightful experience for the audience, who thoroughly enjoyed the programme. The event featured an engaging mix of group and solo performances, including keyboard, drums, music and dance, along with a cheerful ramp walk by the children.

A special highlight was the children's presentation for "Dawn."

For the first time, the children performed to a particular song with specific movements and coordinated sequences, making the presentation especially meaningful. Despite a last-minute space constraint, the children adapted remarkably well and presented the piece with confidence.

The dedicated efforts of the staff played an important role in making the presentation successful. Monica, Nivetha, Kalai, Karpagam, and Prabha took the lead in training the children, while Suchitra, Suresh and Rajkumar supported the preparation, including the making of props.



Event Archives Cont'd...



For many of the staff members as well, this was a new experience, and their commitment ensured that the children received the best possible practice and support.

Another much-appreciated presentation was “Veeram,” performed by the children of RASA. The performance was warmly received by the audience. Following the presentation, Mr. Sivaraman, Trustee, spoke to the parents about the lyrics of the song and reflected on how its message could be understood and incorporated into everyday life. It was also shared with him that the song was written by RASA's Director, Dr. Ambika Kameshwar.

The Annual Day was, overall, a memorable celebration of the children's abilities, the dedication of the staff and the collective spirit of Sai Samarpan. The programme offered a wonderful opportunity for the children to share their talents, participate together and experience the joy of being on stage.

It was a great experience to witness and enjoy this function. I thank Ambika Akka, as always, for giving me the opportunity to be part of such a wonderful experience.

They adapted to the unexpected and stepped onto the stage with confidence.



Theatre of Life | When Children Join the Story

A storytelling session in the classroom began with the children being introduced to the story they were about to hear. As the story unfolded, however, listening soon became participation.

The children interrupted with questions—about unfamiliar words, actions, and things they did not understand. Instead of moving ahead, the story paused. Each question became an opportunity to explain, demonstrate, or briefly revisit what had already happened before continuing.

The story was not simply read aloud; it was brought alive through voice, expression and a little performance.

The children listened, questioned, responded and gradually began to follow not only what was happening in the story, but also the ideas within it.

This simple classroom interaction reflects an important aspect of facilitation: learning does not always move in a straight line. Sometimes, the most meaningful moments are the pauses—the moments when a child asks, “What is that?” or “Why did that happen?”

By the end, the children had experienced more than a story. They had participated in its telling, asked questions freely, clarified their understanding, and discovered that their curiosity could become part of the learning itself.



In Conversation with Dr. Sarada Natarajan

Editor's Note

This month's special interview features Dr. Sarada Natarajan, who is the President of the Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning, Bengaluru, and a Member of the RASA Advisory Board.

Q1. "RASA" through your eyes. Having been associated with RASA from its very inception, what does RASA mean to you, and what do you believe is the essence of its work that continues to touch people across generations?

Ans: Sri Ramanaiya!

Rasa means connecting in consciousness, a natural oneness that is fostered through the unbroken practice of Indian theatre arts. I would like to explain this. Theatre by itself fosters harmony internally and externally. However, at RASA there is a conscious and continuous practice of the philosophy of Indian theatre coupled with its structured application.

This is the path breaking RASA CHETAS methodology, This I believe is the core of Rasa, whether it is applied in the typical Bharatanatyam section or in the section handling developmental challenges.

To state that Indian Fine Arts are divine has become an almost hackneyed phrase. The RASA CHETAS methodology demonstrates what exactly the meaning and application of Natya Shastra translate to in practice: Understanding the significance of Role Play and striving to implement it in daily life.

Focus on the 'now' leading to obliteration of prejudiced perception and pressures of expectation -



Conversation Cont'd...

In Conversation with Dr. Sarada Natarajan

- Attention to natural potential.

Everyone is a star.

The strength coming from discipline of preparation coupled with the suppleness of adaptability - knowledge and surrender.

Few artistes may be aware of all or at least some of these tenets of Natya. Fewer may strive to consciously apply these to their practice or even be aware of the manifestation of these spiritual experiences in their art practice. I believe RASA is unparalleled in the conscious practice of these transforming and elevating principles of Natya all through the day, every day for nearly four decades, not just singly but as joint sadhana by all the teachers and students.

This results in a palpable experience of love and joy at RASA to all who enter this space from outside.

My own take home has been to get a clearer understanding of the spiritual power of Natya, find inspiration to earnestly strive to apply it's principles in daily life and rejoice in the blessings of all my experiences at RASA through the decades.

Q2. From One Institution to Many Lives.

You have taken RASA CHETAS™ into RMCL, where it reaches hundreds of children each year. What have you discovered about the possibilities of this methodology when it is lived and expressed in a different institutional context?

Ans: Because I have personally benefitted immensely from the RASA CHETAS methodology, I have always sought to share its power with as many as possible. So, I encouraged all the staff members at RMCL to get trained in the methodology. This spontaneously led to an application of the methodology in our work. This happened even in our Workshops on self-enquiry. But most significantly it happened through a program for underprivileged urban school children to help them tackle the psychological impact of their socio-economic condition. Currently more than thousand children are being serviced in this manner through the project RAISE.



Conversation Cont'd...

In Conversation with Dr. Sarada Natarajan

RASA's intensive training brings in-depth development in the students. RMCL's inputs are like seed dispersals. One day we may find that an entire forest of RASA CHETAS has arisen organically.

Q3. A Shared Vision, Many Expressions

RASA and RMCL have their own identities yet share a deeper vision of empowering individuals through the arts. How do you see this shared vision evolving through the different ways in which each institution expresses it?

Ans: How a vision is born and evolves is always divine destiny. In our childhood and youth, we did not envision RMCL or RASA. So, the future lies in the hands of the Supreme Force that we call by the name Ramana. The vision of RASA is to awaken Self-awareness purely

through the path of Natya. For RMCL the vision of Self-abidance, the path is the life and teachings of Ramana and Natya is one of the vehicles to travel on this path. Our paths keep interweaving and I envision that they will continue to do so seamlessly.

Q4. Carrying the Vision Forward
You have helped carry RASA's vision not only through RASA CHETAS™, but also through your support and guidance for Aharya and RASA's creative products. What, in your view, is most important for RASA to preserve- and what should it continue to explore- as it moves into its next chapter?

Ans: Again, I reiterate that the future lies with the divine. Holding on to the fluidity that is one of the basic tenets of RASA CHETAS, we can make plans.



Conversation Cont'd...

In Conversation with Dr. Sarada Natarajan

What to me are the most important aspects at this juncture are strengthening the methodology by creating greater awareness about it. This could be done by holding interactive seminars in colleges on the methodology, speaking to school children about it, speaking at various forums, publishing articles and if possible, books as well. It is important to make 'RASA CHETAS' enter the consciousness of the art fraternity and the people at large.

Another important aspect is an in-depth documenting in multiple manners of the contribution in the past decades of RASA as an institution.

All activities, including Aharya will develop organically as needs arise. As the structure is practically in place, these are bound to blossom at the right time.

“One day we may find that an entire forest of RASA CHETAS™ has arisen organically,” says **Dr. Sarada Natarajan**



Questions & Answers Corner



Reader's Mailbox

Q1. Is RASA a dance/movement therapy organisation for people with special needs?

Ans: No. This is one of the most common misconceptions about RASA.

RASA is a cultural organisation rooted in the Indian theatre arts and their potential for holistic development. While movement is an important component of our work, RASA is **“not a dance/movement therapy organisation.”**

Our work with participants with differing abilities is one part of a much larger vision: using theatre arts to nurture **expression, communication, creativity, confidence, awareness, and participation.**

Q2. If it is not therapy, then what does RASA do?

Ans: RASA works through RASA CHETASTM – Consciousness through Holistic Education via Theatre Arts Sadhana, our approach to holistic education through theatre arts.

RASA CHETASTM brings together **movement, music, rhythm, storytelling, voice, imagination, emotion, interaction, and performance** as interconnected tools for learning and expression.

The intention is not to **treat** a disability, but to **discover abilities, nurture potential, and create meaningful avenues for expression through the arts.**

Q3. Is RASA only for people with differing abilities?

Ans: No. RASA is for everyone.

RASA works across **arts education, performance, research, training, cultural initiatives, and inclusive arts.** Our programmes engage children, young people, adults, artists, educators and participants with differing abilities.

Our inclusive work is an important part of RASA, but it does not define the organisation. **At its heart, RASA is about the transformative possibilities of Indian theatre arts and making those possibilities accessible to all.**

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Thought of the Day

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