

SACHI, Society for Art & Cultural Heritage of India

in collaboration with

The Department of Religious Studies and Center for South Asia
at Stanford University

Invites You to Join an Illustrated Talk cum Dance on

Thyagaraja Ramayanam

presented by Ananda Shankar Jayant

India's eminent Bharatanatyam dance artist and leading choreographer

Thursday, Nov. 13, 2014, 7 p.m.

Cummings Art Bldg., Classroom ART 2

435 Lausen Mall, Stanford University

(corner of History Bldg., and Lausen Mall)

Free Admission and Open to the Public; Recommended parking, around the Oval



Photo courtesy: Chella

*'As long as the mountains stand and rivers flow on earth,
so long shall remain the legend of Ramayana.'*

Sri Rama and the Ramayana have inspired seers and scholars across eons and centuries. It is a story that transcends space and time - a tale of love, devotion, and sacrifice.

Rama's story has been written, interpreted and commented upon by mystic sages, poets and musicians, and by the Bhakta (devotee) with utmost reverence and ecstatic devotion.

Telling and re-telling the Ramayana has not tired the storyteller, the listener or the viewer!

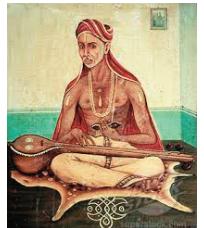
While the essential story of the Ramayana remains the same, its various interpretations through the ages, represent a great diversity in the way the story and its characters are presented.

In 1986 the artist Ananda Shankar choreographed and performed the *Thyagaraja Ramayanam* which explored the character of Rama through the vision of the poet saint Thyagaraja

In an all time favorite work for the artist, Ananda will introduce and discuss select episodes/songs from the Ramayana as visualized by Thyagaraja and portray some in visual dance format set to Thyagaraja's music with select Valmiki Ramayana shlokas in enacting roles from the epic story.

Ananda's solo-ballet composition, or *ekaharya* is based on D Seshadri's book, *Thyagaraja Kriti Ramayanam* in which select devotional songs or *kritis* of Thyagaraja describe the story of Sri Rama.

Thyagaraja (1767-1847) is one of the most revered composers of Carnatic music (one of the two main sub-genres of Indian classical music commonly associated with southern Indian states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala). Carnatic music is mainly sung through compositions, especially the *kritis* (devotional songs). Thyagaraja, the doyen saint singer, and a great devotee of Rama, composed and sung movingly on his beloved Sri Rama. His musical genius enabled Thyagaraja to create thousands of devotional compositions infused with melodic beauty and spirituality, many of which remain popular today.



Dr. Ananda Shankar Jayant is one of India's celebrated *Bharatanatyam* and *Kuchipudi* dance artists and a leading choreographer, teacher and scholar from Hyderabad, India. As the Artistic Director of Shankaranand Kalakshetra, Ananda leads an acclaimed ensemble while training and presenting the next generation of *Bharatanatyam* artists. She is the recipient of the *Padma Shri* national award (4th highest civilian award in India) in 2007, and the Sangeet Natak Akademi (India's apex cultural body) award in 2009.

A prolific solo and ensemble performer, Ananda is a much loved teacher and Guru, a critically acclaimed and brilliant choreographer, and a sought after motivational speaker and writer. Ananda was a TED speaker in 2009 and lectures widely on art related and

other topics. She holds a Masters degree in Ancient Indian History, a M.Phil in Art History and a Ph.D in Tourism.

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