

**TEATRO
TASCABILE
DI BERGAMO**

Accademia delle
Forme Sceniche

ANGIKAM. LOVE SONGS

Indian classical dance-theatre in Bharata Natyam style

*You, the earth
Supporter of All
Worshipped by Devatas
Praised by Enlightened ones
Protecting those who seek your shelter
To you, I come to humbly pray
Mother, bear upon Thyself the beat of my feet*

Bharata Natyam is the Indian classical dance “par excellence”. It was once performed in temples by sacred dancers, the devadasi, who were raised and instructed in the arts and music for this sole purpose.

Having fallen into disfavour due to Victorian censorship under British rule, this dance was restored to its cultural and artistic status in the second half of the 20th century, thanks to the tenacious work of research and reconstruction of the repertoire by Rukmini Devi, an enlightened dancer of the Brahmin caste, founder of the most important school of Bharata Natyam in India, the Kalakshetra: the sacred enclosure of the arts.



The style that is presented belongs to the purest tradition of the Tamil Nadu region, the cradle of Bharata Natyam. The performance combines moments of pure dance, characterised by a certain edginess, even severity, typical of the Dravidian culture of South India, with pieces of recited dance, where the dancer translates the poetic text with body movements as well as the use of hand language, the famous Hastas, inherited from the ancient technique of memorising sacred texts used by the Brahmins. The dancer’s movements are emphasised by the red lacquer that colours her hands and feet, thus creating a strong visual impact.



A special feature of Bharata Natyam dance is the tatttu-mettu technique, in which the meaning of the lyrics is combined and integrated with the pulse of the body, thus allowing the dancer to accompany the poetic text with the pressing rhythm of her feet. As in the tradition of Indian theatres, the dance pieces are introduced by short explanations that allow the audience to understand the choreographic compositions.



With: Alessia Baldassari and Caterina Scotti

Photos: Jayasimha Reddy

Duration of the performance: 75'

TTB would like to acknowledge Masters Usha Raghavan and Praveen Kumar

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