

INDIAN CONSERVATORY OF PARIS



# L'Inde Éternelle



Eternal India



À L'HONNEUR : KATHAK SHARMILA  
INTIMATE CONVERSATIONS AND SOULFUL INTERVIEWS

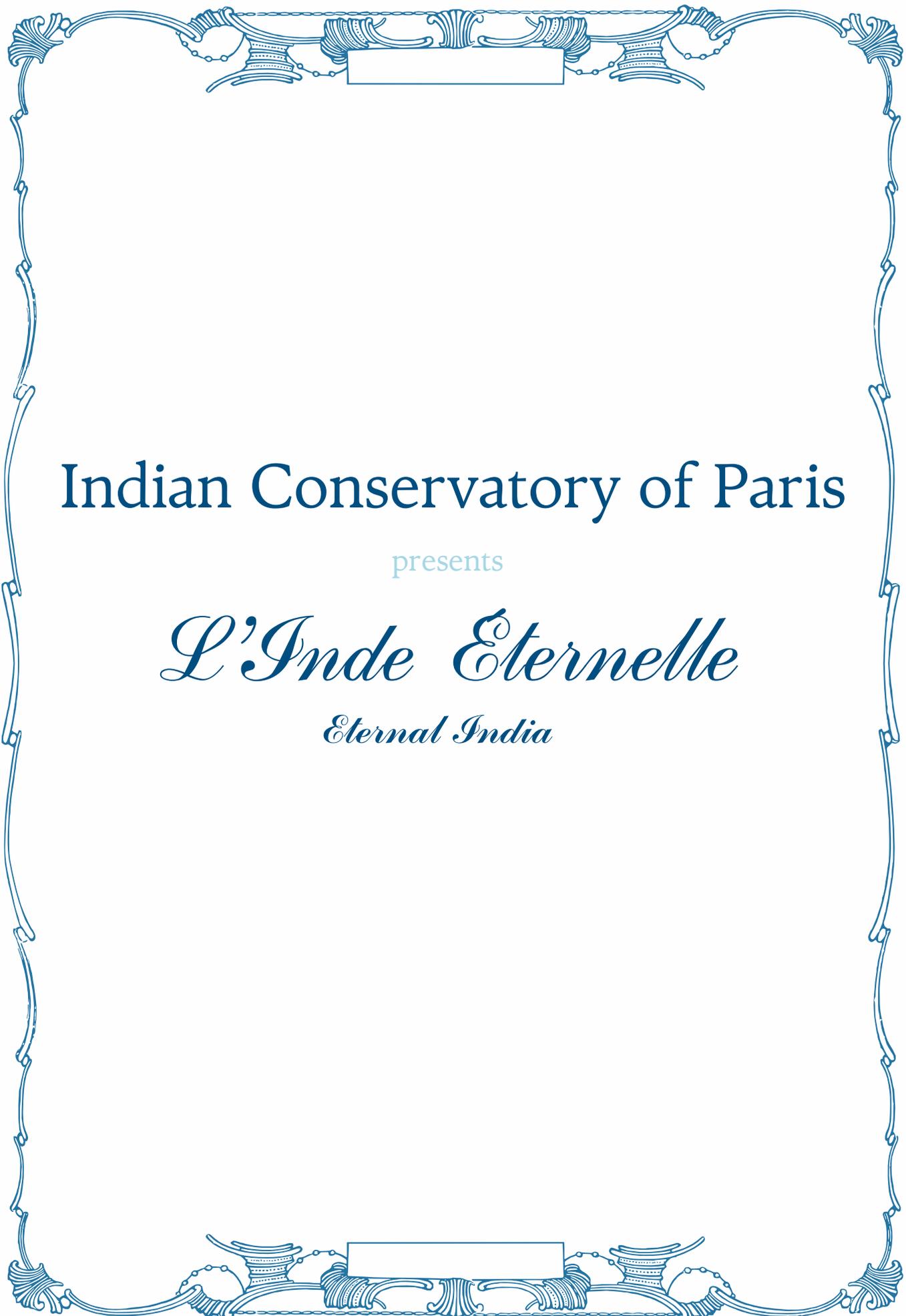
AVEC DES ÉCRITS SUR LA DANSE, LA POÉSIE ET BIEN  
PLUS ENCORE

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presents

*L'Inde Eternelle*

*Eternal India*



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## Bhavana Pradyumna

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Bhavana Pradyumna is a Carnatic vocalist, veena artiste, Bharatanatyam dancer, and founder of the Indian Conservatory of Paris. She curated India's cultural showcase at the 2024 Paris Olympic Fan Zone, earning recognition from the Prime Minister of India. An author of Children's Carnatic, Approach to Music- The Indian way (Vol. 1 & 2), and Raga & Yoga, she pioneers global access to Indian classical arts through education, performance, and cultural diplomacy.



## Pradyumna S Kandadai

### President

Business Solution Director at Manhattan Associates and a seeker of Yogic Knowledge, Pradyumna is the co-founder and the current President of the Indian Conservatory of Paris (2024 - present). His genius lies in channelizing his creative energies to elevate customer experience for Haute Couture Brands. His prowess is also extended to the books published through ICParis as he has edited and compiled the books. His vision, calm, and management skills lay the foundation for ICParis.



## Daya Surabhi Balaji

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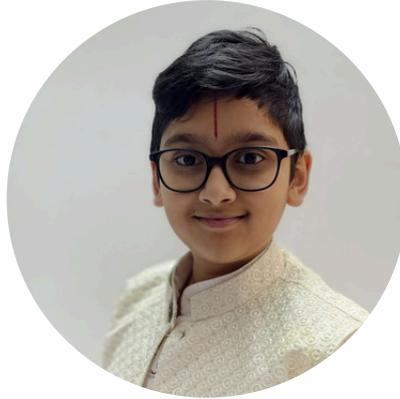
Daya Surabhi Balaji is a freelance writer based in Aesch, Switzerland, with a passion for language and storytelling. With degrees in English Literature and experience as a copy editor, communications trainer, and IB English tutor, she has contributed to major publications and publishing houses. Her work explores stories that connect communities and highlight shared human experiences.



## Amruthavarshini Mahankali

### Designer

Amruthavarshini Mahankali is a trained Carnatic vocalist who began her musical journey under her mother, Bhagavathula Ratnavali, and later trained under Dr. D.V. Mohana Krishna. She is also trained in light music in India, exploring diverse forms such as film music, Tarangams, Ashtapadis, and Annamacharya keertanas. She is working in the pharma sector after her Masters in Management degree at ESSEC Business School in Paris and is passionate about bringing culture into a contemporary light through creative writing, music, and storytelling.



## Aniruddha Pradyumna Kandadai

### Language & Proofreading Associate

Aniruddha Pradyumna Kandadai (13) is a gifted young musician trained in Carnatic vocal, Veena, Mridangam, Konnakol, and world percussion. Performing since age 8 across France, Czech Republic, and India, he is also the creator of Amarakosha doodle videos. A chess enthusiast and passionate linguist, he speaks Sanskrit, Kannada, Tamil, English, and French, and is learning Latin, Spanish, and Telugu—embodying a rare blend of musical, intellectual, and cultural brilliance.



## Sous la plume de l'Éditrice

As we present this February edition of *L'Inde Éternelle*, we find ourselves in a quieter, yet deeply meaningful moment in the cultural year. Between cycles of visible activity lies a subtle and essential space, a space for reflection, preparation, and renewed intention.

Not every phase announces itself through milestones. Some of the most important work unfolds in continuity, in classrooms where knowledge is transmitted with care, in individual practice that refines both discipline and awareness, and in the gradual maturation of ideas that will find their moment of expression.

In the Indian cultural calendar, this period carries a special significance. The inward stillness of Margazhi gently yields to the first stirrings of Vasant, the season of renewal. This transition is not marked by sudden celebration, but by quiet preparation. Musicians return to their practice with deeper listening. Dancers refine their movement with renewed sensitivity. Communities begin to turn their attention toward the festivals, gatherings, and shared experiences that the coming months will bring.

This edition reflects that spirit of continuity. Through its pages, we encounter voices, ideas, and expressions that remind us that culture is not a fixed inheritance, but a living presence shaped through attention, care, and participation.

As the season turns, it brings with it a sense of gentle anticipation. New encounters, new learning, and new expressions await their unfolding. Until then, this space between becomes not a pause, but a preparation.

May the eternal continue to illuminate the present.  
May we remain attentive to its transmission.

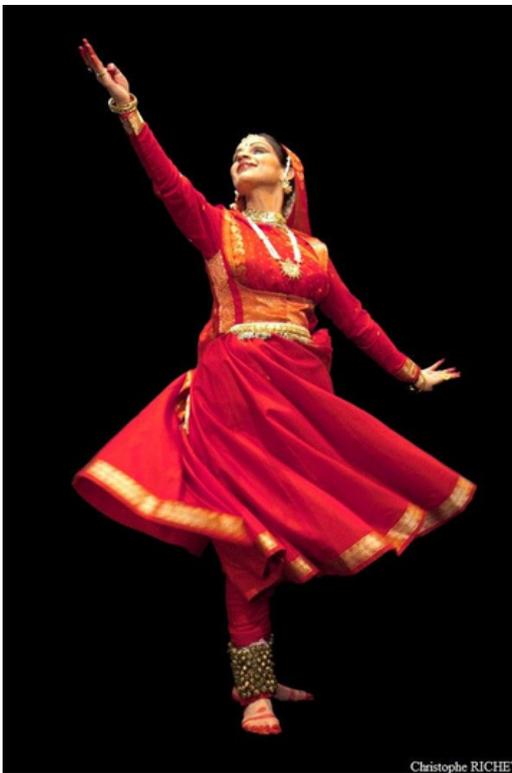
*Bhavana Pradyumna*

Rédactrice en chef

# Kathak, as the essence of Life :

## A candid conversation with Sharmila Sharma

### Origins & Calling



Sharmila Sharma-Kathak

Kathak has been part of your life from a very young age. When did it move from disciplined training to a life-defining calling?

I had already chosen to pursue Kathak as a career when I gave my first performance at the age of three. When I was fourteen years old, I started dancing professionally.

### Lineage & Gurus

How do the teachings of Pandit Birju Maharaj and Pandit Rajendra Kumar Gangani continue to shape your dancing and pedagogy today?

I am fortunate to learn from great Gurus. My Guru Pandit Birju Maharaj used to tell me,

*'I am giving you the seed of Kathak. Now it's your responsibility to grow this seed into a beautiful tree.'*

My guru's teaching and hard work have shaped me into the dancer and teacher I am today.

### Arrival in France

When you began your journey in Paris, Kathak was largely unfamiliar. What were the earliest challenges you faced, and what sustained you?

In the beginning, I faced a lot of difficulties.

*Without speaking the language, introducing Kathak to an uninitiated audience was a Herculean task.*

In the beginning, I faced a lot of difficulties. Bharatanatyam and Kathakali were the two dance forms most French people were familiar with. The faith of my gurus, and my family kept me going on my Kathak journey in France.

## Life between cultures

Living and working in France for decades, how has Kathak transformed you as an artist and as an individual?

As an artist, I conduct my own research to make it easier to understand my students, and as an individual, I gain knowledge about new cultures and traditions.

## The Most Testing Phase

Was there a period in your life abroad that challenged you most — artistically, emotionally, or culturally?

I had performed in various countries before arriving in France. I was lucky enough to be surrounded by good people and not face any artistic, emotional, or cultural challenges.

## Invisible Struggles

The difficulty of finding classical musicians in Europe and bringing them together for the rehearsal. Taking care of everything from lighting to sound to organization alone.

## Reaching Non-Indian Audiences

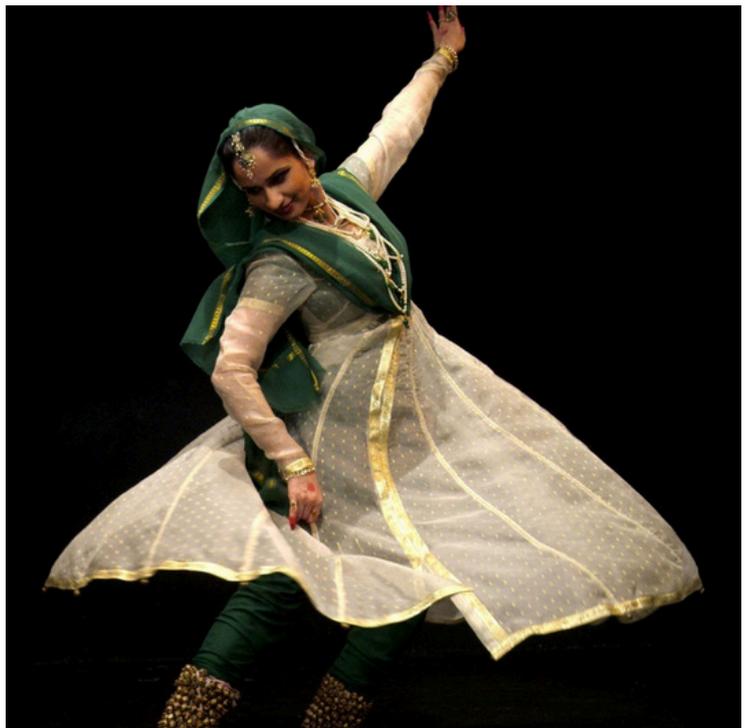
How did you help audiences unfamiliar with Indian culture access the emotional and narrative depth of Kathak?

By providing a detailed explanation of the story. When I perform in a foreign country, first I have to explain everything about the Indian mythology—to integrate the audience into my performance.

## Cultural Expectations & Integrity

Have you ever felt pressure to adapt Kathak to Western expectations, and how do you protect its core integrity?

I'm fortunate to be living in France. The French audience like traditional and pure art forms. There was no pressure on me regarding this.



*Sharmila Sharma-Kathak*

## Storytelling in a Fast World

In an age of speed and shortened attention spans, how do you keep Kathak's storytelling tradition alive on stage?

The power of Kathak, my Guru's teachings, and my experiences all contribute to immersing the audience in the storytelling tradition.

## Authentic Cultural Dialogue

You have engaged in cross-cultural collaborations. What distinguishes true cultural dialogue from superficial fusion?

I have worked exclusively with Flamenco, Persian, and Baroque music

*There is a significant amount of symmetry present in this music, particularly in the context of North Indian music and Kathak rhythm.*

## Teaching as Cultural Transmission

While training students from diverse backgrounds, what aspects of Kathak remain non-negotiable for you?

*It is my responsibility to pass on my art to the next generation. My training sessions with students from diverse backgrounds are non-negotiable for me.*



### For New Dancers Arriving in France

Many young dancers arrive with strong technique. What cultural or professional realities should they be prepared for?

*The most important thing is to know the French language and culture. This will help them communicate with the French audience.*

### A Hard Truth for Aspirants:

What is the most difficult truth about pursuing Indian classical dance professionally abroad that young artists must understand?

When performing or teaching abroad, young artists should understand that they are presenting their country and their art.

*Patience, dedication, and true dedication are essential for making people understand their art.*

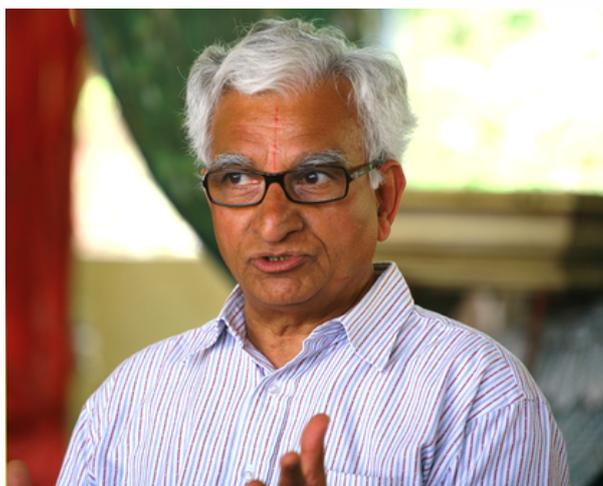
## Women, Discipline & Artistic Leadership

As a woman who has sustained an uncompromising artistic life outside India, what inner strengths and disciplines have mattered most?

Every day, I dedicate myself to practicing, meditating, and praying. My inner strength is my dance.

*By Bhavana Pradyumna,  
Paris, France*

# Sri T.K. Sribhashyam : la fidélité d'un maître au yoga traditionnel



Fils du grand maître Sri T. Krishnamacharya, Sri T.K. Sribhashyam a consacré sa vie à transmettre la sagesse millénaire du yoga, de l'ayurveda et de la philosophie indienne avec fidélité et humilité. Il est venu vivre en France en 1970, a fondé l'École Yogakshemam dispensant des formations dans plusieurs pays d'Europe. Aujourd'hui, son œuvre continue de rayonner à travers l'Association Yogakshemam International (AYI) qui a organisé son premier congrès du 31 octobre au 2 novembre 2025.

## Un nom porteur de sens

Le nom Sribhashyam associe deux significations : Sri Bhashya est l'un des noms d'Adishesha, le serpent mythique qui soutient la Terre, et Bhashya désigne celui qui commente les textes philosophiques. Ainsi, le nom de Sri T.K. Sribhashyam reflète deux dimensions de sa vie : celle du soutien fidèle de la tradition, et celle du pédagogue, enseignant éclairé des écritures sacrées.

## Fils et disciple du légendaire Sri T. Krishnamacharya

Sri T.K. Sribhashyam naît en 1940 à Mysore, dans l'État du Karnataka, au sein d'une famille dont la tradition spirituelle remonte au IXe siècle. Il est le fils et le disciple de Sri T. Krishnamacharya (1888–1989), considéré comme le père du yoga en occident, maître de plusieurs figures illustres telles que B.K.S. Iyengar, Pattabhi Jois, Indra Devi ou son frère, et T.K.V. Desikachar...

Mais avant d'être une personnalité, Sri T. Krishnamacharya fut avant tout le gardien d'une lignée ininterrompue de maîtres spirituels issue du sage Sri Nāthamuni, l'un des fondateurs de la tradition Vishishtādvaita, qui enseigne l'unité dans la diversité : l'âme individuelle et le divin sont unis, sans être confondus.

Dans cette atmosphère où la philosophie, le yoga et la dévotion se vivent au quotidien, Sri T.K. Sribhashyam reçoit une éducation traditionnelle, fondée sur la transmission orale.

Son père, à la fois philosophe, médecin et yogi, lui enseigne dès son plus jeune âge le Yoga sūtra de Patañjali, les upanishads, les darshanas (les six écoles philosophiques indiennes), ainsi que les bases de l'ayurveda et de la psychologie indienne.

Les cours, donnés en tamoul ou en kannada, commencent toujours par une prière. Ils durent entre 45 minutes et 2h. La mémorisation des textes, la récitation et l'analyse font partie intégrante de la pédagogie, dans le respect absolu de la tradition orale indienne.

*<<Mon père nous transmettait son savoir sans jamais recourir à des manuels. L'écoute attentive, la répétition et la réflexion étaient nos livres vivants », disait Sri T.K. Srihashyam.>>*

Cette immersion dura quarante-cinq ans, forgeant un maître d'une rare profondeur, à la fois philosophe, thérapeute et pédagogue.

## Un parcours d'érudit et d'enseignant

Dès 1956, à seulement seize ans, il commence à enseigner à Madras tout en poursuivant ses études universitaires. Il y applique déjà les principes de la philosophie indienne et de l'ayurveda, intégrant la dimension psychologique, thérapeutique et spirituelle à la pratique du yoga.

En 1962, il obtient une maîtrise en gestion commerciale, puis en 1968, une maîtrise en philosophie indienne. Ses recherches en psychologie indienne le conduisent à étudier également auprès de maîtres de danse Bharata Natyam et de musique carnatique, comme auprès du Dr. TV Gopalakrishnan avec lequel il joue de la vīṇā, et qu'il fit venir à Nice pour des concerts. Immergé dans les enseignements de ces arts, il étudie la science subtile des émotions.

En outre, son père lui enseigne l'aspect psychologique du Yoga sutra de Patanjali et leurs applications pratiques.

Entre 1965 et 1969 notamment, il donne de nombreuses conférences à Madras sur ce sujet. Ses interventions à l'American Club et au British Council témoignent déjà de sa capacité à bâtir des ponts entre les cultures.

En 1970, une bourse d'étude lui est attribuée pour mener des recherches scientifiques à l'étranger. Il choisit la France et s'installe à Nice. C'est dans cette ville du sud de la France qu'il rencontrera sa future épouse et qu'il fondera une famille.

## Yogakshemam : l'école de Yoga Traditionnel

Avec la bénédiction de son père, il fonde en 1982 l'école Yogakshemam.

*« Le mot "yogakshemam" signifie acquisition d'une nouvelle richesse et de sa protection. De même, avoir la vision de Dieu et, de là, obtenir la libération, est aussi "yogakshemam" »  
-Sri T.K. Srihashyam.*

Il voyage à travers l'Europe — France, Belgique, Suisse, Allemagne, Grèce, Italie — pour transmettre la sagesse de sa lignée. Son enseignement se distingue par trois axes essentiels :

- Une fidélité absolue à la tradition du yoga transmise oralement,
- Une adaptation respectueuse aux besoins et aux cultures de chacun de ses élèves,
- Une approche holistique intégrant les dimensions physique, mentale et spirituelle.

En 1999, l'Institut des Hautes Études de Sanskrit de Mysore lui décerne le titre d'Acharya आचार्य, maître en philosophie, pour sa fidélité exemplaire à la transmission traditionnelle et son rôle de transmetteur en Occident, sans altérer la tradition.

Jusqu'à son décès en 2017, Sri T.K. Srihashyam incarne un yoga intégral, profondément humain, où chaque respiration devient prière et chaque geste, un enseignement.

## Une œuvre vivante : l'association Yogakshemam

Animé.e.s par un profond sentiment de gratitude et de responsabilité, et désireux de répondre au souhait de Sri T.K. Sribhashyam de rassembler au sein d'une même structure, ses élèves ont repensé l'organisation existante afin de l'adapter à cette vision.

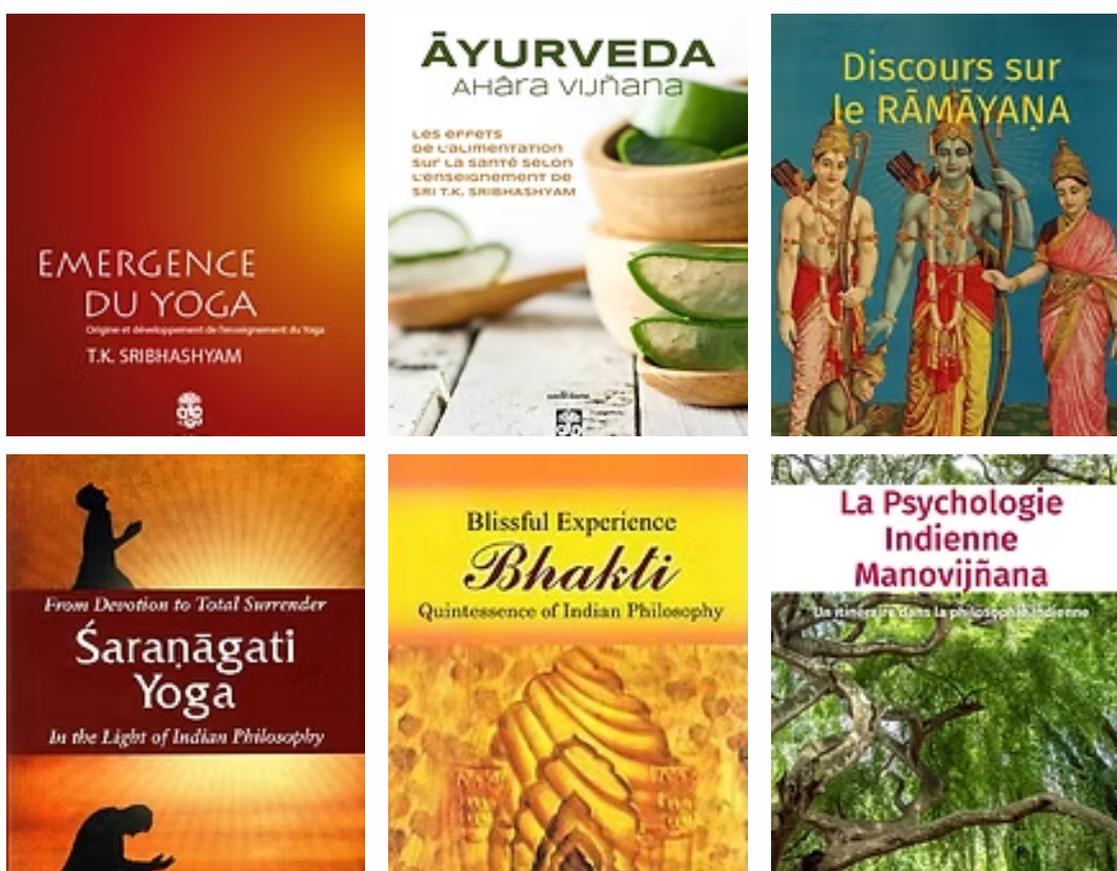
Cette initiative vise à poursuivre l'enseignement de Sri T.K. Sribhashyam dans un esprit d'unité, de respect et d'ouverture. Au-delà d'une simple transmission, il s'agit de faire vivre le yoga traditionnel, son message spirituel, le lien entre l'Inde et l'Occident et de permettre à chacun d'en expérimenter la profondeur.

L'association est aujourd'hui un espace de partages et de pratiques, où la sagesse de Sri T.K. Sribhashyam continue d'inspirer et de relier.

L'association assure également le suivi des publications des éditions Yogakshemam :

[À lire, à voir | Ecole Yogakshemam](#)

Livres et Newsletter sont disponibles en anglais et en français, ainsi qu'en d'autres langues.



## Le congrès international Yogakshemam : une célébration du yoga traditionnel

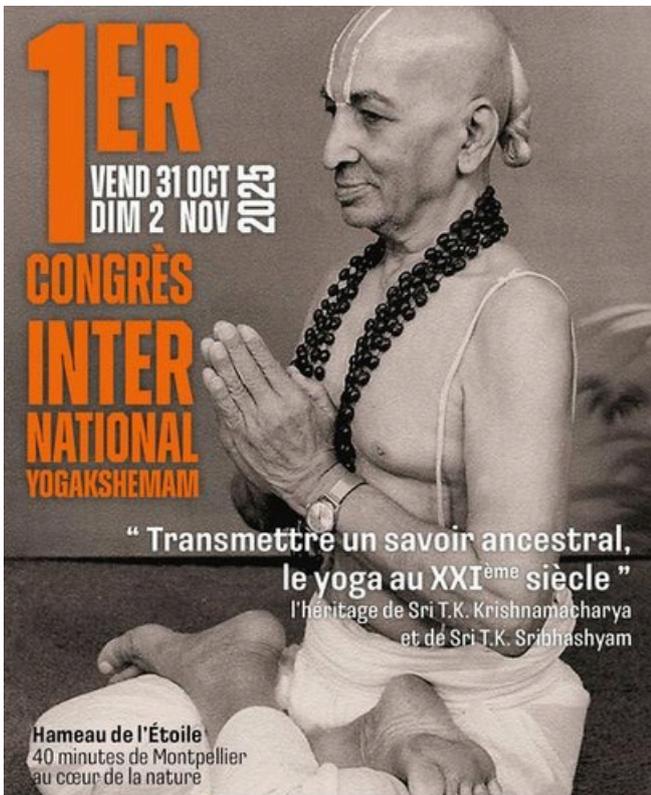
De cet élan collectif est né le premier congrès de l'Association Yogakshemam International, un événement majeur rassemblant élèves, enseignant.e.s et passionné.e.s venu.e.s de toute l'Europe. L'objectif ? Honorer la mémoire de Sri T.K. Sribhashyam, transmettre ses enseignements et partager la richesse de la tradition qu'il incarnait.

## Une œuvre vivante : l'association Yogakshemam



L'invitée d'honneur, Sri Shubha, sœur de Sri T.K. Sribhashyam a apporté sa lumière à l'ensemble des interventions, offrant à ce congrès une vibration non seulement chaleureuse mais aussi spirituelle. Ses prises de parole, empreintes de joie, de sagesse et de bienveillance, ont défini le yoga comme l'union du corps, de l'esprit et de l'âme, un chemin d'harmonie et d'unité entre les êtres, un chemin d'union de l'âme au Divin. Elle s'est dite heureuse de voir réuni.e.s dans ce même élan les élèves de ses deux frères Sri T.K.V. Desikachar et Sri T.K. Sribhashyam, symbolisant ainsi concrètement cette union qu'incarne le yoga.

### Sept conférences au cœur de la sagesse



- Tradition et transmission – Sandra Flamand : selon l'enseignement de Sri T. Krishnamacharya et la nécessité d'adapter le yoga à chaque individu.
- Les 4 forces spirituelles & l'histoire de Nammalvar – Estelle Lefebvre : un hymne à la gratitude envers tous ceux qui soutiennent notre existence.
- Qu'est-ce que le mental ? – William Altman : exploration des mécanismes du mental selon la philosophie indienne.
- Transmission du Yoga traditionnel – Stéphanie Djabri-Vanhooydonck : la continuité de la connaissance depuis les rishis unis au divin jusqu'à nos jours au travers du symbole de l'arbre banyan.
- Les émotions selon la psychologie indienne – Mireille Hervé : comprendre et équilibrer les émotions à travers la pratique du yoga.
- Bhakti : adorer "Cela" avec ou sans nom, avec ou sans forme – Catherine Cavagna : la voie du cœur et de la dévotion.
- Spiritualité et méditation jusqu'au XXIe siècle – Patrice Delfour : la permanence du spirituel face aux transformations du monde moderne.



## Une expérience complète

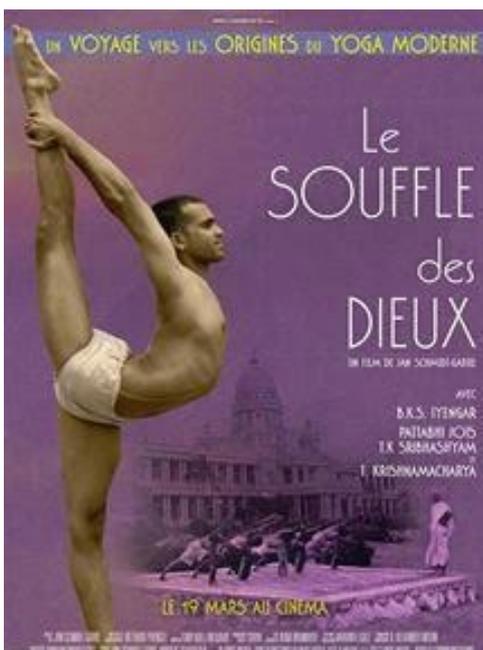
Le congrès a également proposé six séances de pratique de yoga traditionnel — āsana, vinyāsa krama, prāṇāyāma, mudrā, dharana, dhyana — guidées par des professeur.e.s formé.e.s depuis plus de vingt ans auprès de Sri T.K. Sribhashyam.

## Deux soirées ont complété cette immersion traditionnelle :

- Une soirée suspendue entre musique et méditation. La talentueuse Bhavana Pradyumna KANDADAI avec sa vīṇā, et leur fils prodigieux Aniruddha au Mridanga, nous ont guidés dans un voyage intérieur, où chaque note semblait effleurer l'âme. Son époux, Pradyumna KANDADAI, a participé à cette magie en chantant des versets du Yoga sūtra, comme un fil invisible reliant le son à la sagesse ancienne.
- Une soirée cinéma a réuni les passionné.e.s autour du film Le souffle des Dieux, retraçant la vie et l'héritage de Sri T. Krishnamacharya. Le film, porté par un immense respect, fait résonner la voix de ses disciples et la puissance de son enseignement.



La présence de Jan Schmidt-Garre en visioconférence, réalisateur et témoin de cette histoire, a rendu l'expérience encore plus vivante. Il a répondu aux questions des participant.e.s, partageant avec sensibilité, anecdotes et éclairages sur ce maître. Nous avons appris que le film n'avait pas encore été diffusé en Inde.



## Un héritage intemporel

- À travers ce congrès et les activités de l'association Yogakshemam International, la présence de Sri T.K. Sribhashyam continue d'habiter les cœurs. Son message, profondément universel, reste d'une actualité saisissante : « Le yoga n'est pas seulement une pratique. C'est une voie d'union, de connaissance et de respect de la vie sous toutes ses formes. »
- En reliant l'Inde ancienne à l'Occident moderne, il a ouvert un chemin de paix et de compréhension mutuelle. Aujourd'hui encore, le souffle de son enseignement inspire celles et ceux qui cherchent, non pas à "faire du yoga", mais à vivre en yoga.

<https://www.yogakshemam.net/>

-By Yogakshemam

# Deepavali as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity: Preserving a Living Tradition

Deepavali, also known as Diwali, is one of the most widely celebrated festivals in the world, observed by millions across India, Southeast Asia, and the global diaspora.

*Deepavali represents far more than a religious or seasonal event. It is a living cultural tradition that embodies values, beliefs, social practices, and collective memories passed down through generations.*

The recognition of Deepavali as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO highlights its universal significance and emphasizes the importance of safeguarding this vibrant tradition for future generations.

## Tangible and Intangible Heritage: Understanding the Difference

Cultural heritage can be broadly divided into tangible and intangible forms. Tangible heritage refers to physical structures and objects such as monuments, temples, historic buildings, sculptures, and archaeological sites. Examples include the Taj Mahal, the Eiffel Tower, and the Great Wall of China. These can be seen, touched, and preserved through physical conservation.

Intangible cultural heritage consists of living traditions, customs, knowledge systems, festivals, and social practices that exist in people's lives rather than in material form. While monuments represent the visible achievements of civilizations, intangible heritage reflects the emotional, spiritual, and social dimensions of culture. Deepavali belongs to this category, as it lives through shared beliefs, practices, and community participation rather than through physical structures.

## Historical and Cultural Roots of Deepavali

Deepavali has ancient origins spanning over two thousand years and is mentioned in early religious texts and epics. Over time, it has developed diverse meanings across regions and communities

In Hindu tradition, it is associated with the return of Lord Rama to Ayodhya and the victory of good over evil. It is also linked to the worship of Goddess Lakshmi. For Jains, it marks the nirvana of Lord Mahavira, while Sikhs observe it as Bandi Chhor Divas in memory of Guru Hargobind's release. Some Buddhist communities also relate it to spiritual events. These varied interpretations show how Deepavali transcends religious boundaries and functions as a shared cultural heritage..



## Symbolism and Core Values

Deepavali symbolizes the triumph of light over darkness and knowledge over ignorance. The lighting of lamps represents hope, renewal, and moral clarity. The festival encourages values such as kindness, gratitude, generosity, and social harmony. By bringing families and communities together, it strengthens relationships and promotes mutual respect and understanding.

*The lighting of lamps represents hope, renewal, and moral clarity*

By bringing families and communities together, it strengthens relationships and promotes mutual respect and understanding.

## Worldwide Celebration of UNESCO Inscription

The announcement of Deepavali's inscription as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity was welcomed with pride and joy by communities across the world. In France, the occasion was celebrated under the high patronage of the Embassy of India at the Maison de l'Inde, Cité Universitaire. The Indian diaspora and friends of India gathered to mark this historic recognition in a spirit of unity and cultural exchange. The event reflected the global relevance of Deepavali, and glimpses of this memorable and joyful moment are shared in the photographs below.



*Biren Shah,  
President, India-France Association  
Head of Operations, PPI France*

# Monsoon Music as Climate Witness: Culture and Environment in Tamil Nadu

## The women who raised me

During my stay in Tamil Nadu in 2015, while teaching Western music at the Swarnabhoomi Academy of Music (Chengalpattu), I witnessed the extreme North-East monsoon, a thrilling experience that awakened my understanding of how deeply this natural phenomenon permeates India's cultural, artistic, and spiritual identity and life itself. The rhythm of rainfall, the purity of its sound, and the collective reverence for its arrival reminded me that culture and nature breathe together, even if we, humans, do not usually recognize it.

*Poetry and music, among other arts in India, reveal an intimate connection between humanity and nature,*

where the monsoon embodies both beauty and sometimes destruction, serving as a source of emotions of fascination and fear, renewal, and spirituality.

The monsoon's power and enchantment have long inspired Indian artistic expression.

*From the miniatures of the Garland of Ragas and the modern canvases of M. F. Husain to the ancient poem Meghdutam by Kālidāsa and Tagore's Abar Esheche Ashar song, the rains have become both muse and metaphor.*

In cinema, too, monsoon songs symbolize love and emotional intensity (Various artists, 2020). In Indian folk and classical traditions, each region expresses the monsoon's arrival through unique musical languages: Maharashtra's Bhilari and Shetkari songs, Uttar Pradesh's Kajri, Manipur's Kumdam Eshei, Himachal's local songs, Punjab's Teej festival, and Rajasthan's Manganiar community repertoire. We can observe rain-invoking ragas such as Malhar,

Mian ki Malhar, and Megh, or the later Raga Megh Malhar, whose resonance is believed to summon rain (Ayur, 2021). Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941) explored this tradition creatively, and 79 of his 115 rain compositions employ nontraditional or modified ragas (Mitra, 2015; Badal et al., 2019).

Apart from Hindustani classical music, cinema, and various regional folk styles, the Carnatic music tradition also offers another profound layer to India's musical landscape. One of the first Carnatic pieces I learned from my teacher, Sreyas Narayanum, was Anandamritakarshini by Muthuswami Dikshitar (1776–1835), composed in Raga Amritavarshini (“rain”). Legend says that when Dikshitar sang this keertana during a severe drought, rain began to fall, seen as a miracle of the sacred bond between music and the elements (Vriksha, 2020).

This sacred intertwining of nature and music is also present in Hindu texts. In the Govardhana-Dharana legend, Krishna lifts a mountain while playing his flute, protecting his people from Indra's furious rains (Vaudeville, 1980). The goddess Sarasvati, patron of music and wisdom, symbolizes this divine harmony, her river once nourished by monsoon rains, until deforestation led to its disappearance (Beena, 2016; Britannica, 2021).

*Through these interconnected artistic, spiritual, and environmental expressions, the monsoon emerges as a living allegory of balance and transformation. Its music, myths, and art remind us of humanity's fragile bond with nature and of our responsibility to preserve its rhythm for the generations to come. It is important to notice the interaction between monsoon and music, the mutual influence they perpetuate throughout history: monsoon is represented in music, and music upholds it, through the structure of the ragas, evocative lyrics, and unique soundscapes, offering a backdrop to nature*

Scientifically, the monsoon is defined as a tropical and subtropical seasonal reversal of winds and precipitation driven by differential heating between land and ocean (IPCC). The Arabic term mausam (“season”) distinguishes the South-West and North-East monsoons (Sirvraj, n.d.), which are vital for India's agriculture and economy, accounting for 16% of its GDP (Chakraborty & Acharya, 2019; Shaalaa, 2022). With 60% of arable land dependent on monsoon rains, its regularity sustains millions of lives (Joseph, 2021).

Yet, climate change threatens this balance: rainfall has decreased by 10% since 1950, and both heavier rains and longer dry seasons are expected in the future (Ucar, 2022). The El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) disrupts these patterns, bringing floods, droughts, and cyclonic intensity (Sirvraj, n.d.). The floods in Chennai and its surroundings in 2015 are an example of these anomalies (Cities of the World, 2015)

*More than three hundred people died, thousands of people had to leave their flooded places or were trapped in their homes for several days (like me), and of course, the most fragile part of society suffered the worst consequences. In fact, natural disasters affect vulnerable communities more.*

Observing the interaction with nature through culture in times of environmental crisis in India makes us reflect on the deterioration of the landscape (both visual and sound), the role of Indian ecological activism, and climate refugees (increasingly numerous).

*Music can be a powerful social and environmental justice tool, especially if it reflects its social and natural environment, becoming a witness to the deterioration of nature, or creating emotional bonds and empathy with the different ecosystems by sharing the beauty of soundscapes, where nature speaks for itself.*



*Image: Chandar, Vinoth. 2016 A Rainy Day Nada Cyclone Chennai India. 1 Dec. 2016. Wikimedia Commons,*

**By Mili Vizcaíno Jaén**

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# “L’Inde en Lumière : Visages, Couleurs et Traditions”

Je suis français, ingénieur à la retraite et passionné de photo.

Au cours des 15 dernières années j'ai beaucoup voyagé lors de mes congés et en particulier dans de nombreux pays d'Asie : Inde, Malaisie, Indonésie, Birmanie, Vietnam, Cambodge, Sri Lanka, Thaïlande, Laos.

L'attraction pour ces pays est due à la bienveillance des habitants toujours prêts à valoriser leur pays, leur culture. La vivacité des couleurs de ces pays en font un émerveillement pour qui aime prendre des photos et partager.

En ce qui concerne l'Inde j'ai été très attiré par la diversité des régions, les activités traditionnelles de la population, la vie des festivals (Navratri, Holi, Diwali, Dussehra,...) et les temples à travers tout le pays.

Je suis allé 5 fois en Inde dans différentes régions, Kerala, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, et ces 3 dernières années dans les états du Gujarat, Odisha et Chhattisgarh.

J'ai eu de nombreux contacts avec les habitants dans les petits villages multi-ethniques du Gujarat, d'Odisha et Chhattisgarh et j'ai pu partager leur quotidien et leur culture riche en tradition.



Les sourires des habitants et des enfants m'ont beaucoup inspiré ainsi que les couleurs des saris, des vêtements traditionnels que l'on retrouve dans les marchés et villages.



L'idée de faire ces compositions entre tissus et photos des habitants m'est venue en voyant la richesse des tapisseries du Gujarat et la technique des tissus imprimés à la main avec des tampons en bois.



Ma démarche artistique permet de faire connaître les habitants des petits villages d'une région et leurs traditions ainsi que de valoriser le travail des artisans locaux.

En 2024 j'ai créé à partir de mes photos des visuels, sur de la soie avec des tapisseries digitalisées du Gujarat, puis en 2025 avec des vieilles tapisseries et des tissus imprimés au tampon en bois réalisés et fournis par des artisans locaux de Vadodara (Gujarat) et Bhubaneshwar (Odisha).



J'ai réalisé 2 expositions (2024 et 2025) à la maison de l'Inde à la cité universitaire de Paris lors de la fête annuelle.

Une exposition est en cours du 26/01/26 au 13/02/26 (vernissage le 5/02/26 à 18h30) au CSCB de Sceaux.

Une nouvelle exposition, celle-ci collective sur le thème "Féminin" et autour du fil et du textile, aura lieu à Fontenay-aux-roses à l'espace Rosa Bonheur du 23 février au 15 mars 2026.

## Exhibition 2024



Photos on silk from Gujarat State (Kutch)  
Villages of Nirona and Hodka

House of India : 7R bd Jourdan 75014 Paris  
25 May 2024 from 11am




Alain Cortesi

<https://alaincortesi.com>    <https://www.instagram.com/cortesiaain>

## Exhibition 2025




Photos on tapestry from Gujarat and handblocked  
print fabric from Odisha and Chhattisgarh

House of India : 7R bd Jourdan 75014 Paris




Alain Cortesi

<https://alaincortesi.com>    <https://www.instagram.com/cortesiaain>

Mon but est de faire connaître l'Inde, ses régions et ses savoirs faire. Je souhaite aussi renforcer les liens dans les villages en y retournant pour partager les photos prises des villages et des habitants.



Alain Cortesi



# THE CHURN WITHIN: Yoga Vāsiṣṭha, the Gītā, and the Hidden Grace of Human Turmoil

When Guruji Dr. H.R. Nagendra ji inaugurated the Gītā Jayanti celebrations this year, I walked in expecting wisdom. What I did not expect was revelation. Something in his words touched a raw, hidden seam of experience inside me. He spoke of the viśāda of Arjuna, the existential fatigue of Rāma in the Yoga Vāsiṣṭha, and the psychosomatic churn that arises not because something is wrong with us — but because something deeper is awakening within us.

Listening to him, I felt something click.

*As if years of questions that lived silently inside me suddenly found their voice.*



Because these churns — these inexplicable emotional storms that arrive even when life is objectively beautiful — had touched my life too. Twice in my adult life, after milestones that the world considered profound, I found myself slipping into a quiet inner collapse. Once after the birth of my second child, and once after the global recognition during the Paris Olympics Fan Zone. There was no visible reason to feel low. The achievements were real, the societal impact tangible. And yet, the mind had its own weather.

*I often asked myself: Why does emptiness visit even when we are surrounded by meaning?  
Why does the heart tremble after moments of triumph? Why do we feel unanchored just  
when we should feel fulfilled? Guruji's words became a doorway. They guided me back to  
the Gītā and the Yoga Vāsiṣṭha*

— two texts that do not treat despair as pathology, but as the beginning of transformation. This article is my attempt to walk through that doorway and share what I found.

## Rāma's Weariness: The Crisis No One Talks About

In the Yoga Vāsiṣṭha, Rāma expresses a deep existential fatigue:

मनः पश्यति नैवार्थान्न हृष्यति न कुप्यति ।  
न शोचति न च क्रुद्धो नानन्दति न पश्यति ॥

Transliteration: manaḥ paśyati naivārthān na hr̥ṣyati na kupyati | na śocati na ca kruddho nānandati na paśyati ॥

Meaning: My mind feels no clarity; it neither delights nor angers, neither grieves nor rejoices; nothing holds its interest.

He continues with a confession that many today would resonate with:

व्यथितं मम चित्तं हि न तिष्ठति कदाचन ।  
कथं नु भवितव्यं मे न वेद्मि गुरुनन्दन ॥

Transliteration: vyathitaṁ mama cittaṁ hi na tiṣṭhati kadācana | kathaṁ nu bhavitavyaṁ me na vedmi guru-nandana ॥

Meaning: My mind is disturbed; it never rests. What will become of me? I do not know.

This is not weakness; it is awakening.

## Arjuna's Collapse: Viṣāda as a Gateway

Centuries later, a similar collapse unfolds on the battlefield:

सञ्जय उवाच ।  
तं तथा कृपयाऽविष्टमश्रुपूर्णाकुलेक्षणम् ।  
विषीदन्तमिदं वाक्यमुवाच मधुसूदनः ॥ २.१ ॥

Transliteration: taṁ tathā kṛipayā'viṣṭam aśrupūrṇākulekṣaṇam | viṣīdantaṁ idaṁ vākyaṁ uvāca madhusūdanaḥ ॥ 2.1 ॥

Meaning: Arjuna, overwhelmed by compassion, his eyes filled with tears, fell into despair.

And Krishna begins his teaching with:

अशोच्यानन्वशोचस्त्वं प्रज्ञावादांश्च भाषसे ।  
गतासूनगतासूंश्च नानुशोचन्ति पण्डिताः ॥ २.११ ॥

Transliteration: aśocyān anvaśocas tvaṁ prajñā-vādāṁś ca bhāṣase | gatāsūn agatāsūṁś ca nānuśocanti paṇḍitāḥ ॥ 2.11 ॥

Meaning: You grieve for what should not be grieved for.

THE CHURN: NOT DEPRESSION, BUT METAMORPHOSIS

Both texts describe these emotions as transition — the end of one identity, the preparation for another.

## Why It Hits Even After Achievement

Krishna offers the most empowering instruction:

उद्धरेदात्मनाऽत्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।  
आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ॥ ६.५ ॥

Transliteration: uddhared ātmanātmānaṁ nātmānam avasādayet । ātmaiva hyātmano bandhur ātmaiva ripur ātmanaḥ ॥ 6.5 ॥

Meaning: One must lift oneself by oneself.

## Grace Hidden Inside Turmoil

Yoga Vāsiṣṭha echoes the same understanding:

यथा पयः क्षीरं भवति तथा मनो ब्रह्मतां व्रजेत् ।

Transliteration: yathā payaḥ kṣīraṁ bhavati tathā mano brahmatāṁ vrajat

Meaning: Just as milk transforms into butter, the mind churns slowly into higher awareness.

## What Comes Next

And Krishna reassures the seeker:

पूर्वाभ्यासेन तेनैव ह्रियते ह्यवशोऽपि सः ।  
जिज्ञासुरपि योगस्य शब्दब्रह्मातिवर्तते ॥ ६.४४ ॥

Transliteration: pūrvābhyāseṇa tenaiva hriyate hy avaśo'pi saḥ । jijñāsur api yogasya śabda-brahmātivartate ॥ 6.44 ॥

Meaning: Past practice carries the seeker forward.

## Connecting to My Creative Work

This understanding inspired me to revisit my ongoing Bhagavad Gītā doodles — a project that makes these eternal truths alive, accessible, visual, and relevant for the next generation. The personal turbulence transformed into creative tapas, turning struggle into clarity and expression.

## A Closing Thought

Rāma discovered it. Arjuna discovered it. We will discover it too. Pain that comes without reason often carries purpose beyond understanding. The mind may tremble, the heart may feel empty, but the soul knows exactly where it is going.

And sometimes, the answer arrives unexpectedly... during a speech, on Gītā Jayanti, when we are simply ready to hear.

The churn is not the end. It is the beginning of the next chapter.

--Bhavana Pradyumna,

Paris, France

Picture Courtesy: Daya Balaji

# Margazhi to Pongal - A month rooted in spirituality and tradition

It's mid-December. Women wake up to the sound of birds chirping. It is still dark; the sun has not yet risen. As they decorate their porches with intricate kolams (Geometric designs that resemble Mandalas), they chant the Thirupaavai, composed by the only female poet known in Tamil literature, Andal.

Families gather to reflect upon themselves as the year comes to a close. In the evening, once the day's work is completed, families rush to various sabhas ('court', but in this context, it means a concert space that allows various artists to showcase their skills, run by prestigious organizations) to enjoy dance and music performances.

The concert halls are jam-packed with people and artists. During this time, everyone is interested in the upcoming artists and the veterans and doyens of music alike. Heated discussions about ragas and thalams take place over dosas and filter coffee. The air is different.

Image: "SIKKU KOLAM" by Cheran via Wikimedia Commons,

Margazhi is not only filled with tradition; it gives people a chance to meet family and friends. As Margazhi ends, the spiritual and musical energy culminates and leads to Pongal, the festival of harvest. In its essence, Pongal is a festival that celebrates nature. People let their cows graze in the open and prepare big pots of sweet and savoury porridge (i.e., Pongal).

When the Pongal is cooked, it flows over the pot, symbolising abundance. People give their gratitude to Nature for its abundance. Pongal also marks the beginning of Thai, the first month of the Tamil calendar. There is a saying: "Thai porandhal, vazhi pirakkum", which means, when the month of Thai begins, new paths to knowledge emerge. The saying symbolises the faith people have in new beginnings.



## Bala Leela

Margazhi and Pongal are two special periods in South India. Margazhi marks the culmination of spiritual reflection, and Pongal marks the beginning of Thai, which paves the way for new beginnings.



Picture Credit: "Ponggal" by Eesha via  
Wikimedia Commons, licensed  
under CC BY-SA 3.0

-Samvidha Srinath

# Sankranti: A Festival of Light and New Beginnings



Sankranti is an important Indian festival that celebrates the movement of the Sun and the arrival of a new season. It marks the time when the Sun begins its northward journey, bringing longer days and warmer weather.

Unlike many Indian festivals that follow the lunar calendar, Sankranti is based on the solar calendar and is usually celebrated in January. The most well-known celebration is Makar Sankranti, which occurs when the Sun enters the zodiac sign Capricorn.

Across India, families celebrate Sankranti in different ways. Children fly colourful kites, homes are decorated with traditional patterns, and special dishes are prepared. Sweets made from jaggery and sesame seeds are shared as a symbol of warmth, friendship, and kindness.

Sankranti teaches children to respect nature, welcome change, and begin every new journey with hope.

-Aniruddha,  
Paris, France



# Sankranti : une fête de la lumière et du renouveau



Sankranti est une fête indienne importante qui célèbre le mouvement du Soleil et l'arrivée d'une nouvelle saison. Elle marque le moment où le Soleil commence son parcours vers le nord, apportant des journées plus longues et plus lumineuses.

Contrairement à de nombreuses fêtes indiennes basées sur le calendrier lunaire, Sankranti suit le calendrier solaire et est célébrée généralement au mois de janvier. La célébration la plus connue est Makar Sankranti, lorsque le Soleil entre dans le signe du Capricorne.

À travers l'Inde, les familles célèbrent Sankranti de différentes manières. Les enfants font voler des cerfs-volants colorés, les maisons sont décorées de motifs traditionnels et des plats spéciaux sont préparés. Les douceurs à base de jaggery (sucre brut) et de graines de sésame symbolisent la chaleur, l'amitié et le partage.

Sankranti transmet aux enfants des valeurs essentielles : respecter la nature, accueillir le changement et avancer avec optimisme.

-Aniruddha,  
Paris, France



# On Purandharadasa - Father of Carnatic Music - Sangeetha Pitamaha



Purandaradasa, born around 1479, is one of the greatest composer-saints of Carnatic music and a central figure of the Haridasa movement in Karnataka. He is lovingly revered as the “Father of Carnatic Music” because of the systematic pedagogical framework he established for teaching this rich musical tradition.

## **Early Life and Family Background:**

Purandaradasa was born as Srinivasa Nayaka into a wealthy merchant family. He received a good education and, from a young age, showed exceptional intelligence and skill in trade. As a result, he became highly successful financially and grew to be one of the richest merchants in his region.

He later married Saraswati Bai ardent devotee of Lord Vittala; the couple led a happy and prosperous life. However, during his early years, Srinivasa Nayaka was known for being extremely attached to wealth and material possessions.

## The Story of His Transformation:

A turning point in his life occurred when a Brahmin, believed to be Lord Vishnu himself, approached Srinivasa Nayaka seeking financial help. Srinivasa Nayaka refused to part with his wealth. The Brahmin then went to his wife, Saraswathi Bai, who was kind-hearted and compassionate, and she gave him her precious nose ring.

The Brahmin later went to Srinivasa Nayaka's shop to pawn the nose ring. Srinivasa immediately recognized it and accused his wife of giving it away. Terrified of her husband's anger and not knowing what to do, Saraswathi Bai, an ardent devotee of Lord Krishna, began chanting the Vittala Nama. Miraculously, the nose ring appeared in the cup before her.

This divine encounter deeply shook him and brought about a complete spiritual transformation.



**Realizing the impermanence of material wealth, he gave away all his riches, renounced worldly life, and embraced the path of devotion. He took the name Purandaradasa, became a disciple of Vyasaraaja, and dedicated the rest of his life to spreading Bhakti (devotion) through music.**

He traveled extensively, singing devotional compositions and inspiring people across regions.

## Musical Contributions and Teaching System:



**One of Purandaradasa's greatest contributions to Carnatic music is the structured teaching system he introduced for beginners. He established a graded learning methodology that is still followed today, beginning with:**

- **Sarali Varisai**
- **Jantai Varisai**
- **Dattu Varisai**
- **Sapta Suladi Tala Alankaram**

**Geethams, including the first four Pillari Geethams.**

All these foundational lessons are set in the raga Mayamalavagowlai, which he chose deliberately for pedagogical reasons.

Write-up and Illustration by  
Urjita Krishnan ,II,  
Houston, USA

## Why Mayamalavagowlai?

### Bala Leela

Mayamalavagowlai is the 15th Melakarta raga in Carnatic music.

Arohanam:

**S R<sub>1</sub> G<sub>3</sub> M<sub>1</sub> P D<sub>1</sub> N<sub>3</sub> Ś**

Avarohanam:

**Ś N<sub>3</sub> D<sub>1</sub> P M<sub>1</sub> G<sub>3</sub> R<sub>1</sub> S**

The raga has clearly spaced intervals, especially between Shuddha Rishabham (R<sub>1</sub>) and Antara Gandharam (G<sub>3</sub>), making it easier for beginners to distinguish and grasp the swaras. Unlike vivadi ragas—for example, Nasikabooshani, where swaras such as D<sub>2</sub>(chatushruti Daivatham) and N<sub>2</sub> (Kaisiki Nishadam ) are closely placed—Mayamalavagowlai offers clarity in pitch perception.

Similarly, the interval gap between D<sub>1</sub>( Sudha Daivatham) and N<sub>3</sub> ( Kakali Nishadham) in the descent further aids students in recognizing swara positions. The symmetry and consistent pitch intervals of this raga make it ideal for teaching fundamental exercises and compositions to beginners.

### Compositions and Mudra:

One of Most of Purandaradasa's compositions are dedicated to Lord Vittala (Krishna) of Pandharpur, who appeared before him and transformed his life path. His compositions are rich in devotion, philosophical depth, and musical beauty.

Some of his most famous kritis include:

- Dasanamadiko – the very first song he composed after his spiritual transformation
- Jagadodharana
- Bhagyada Lakshmi Baramma
- Vittala Salahoswami

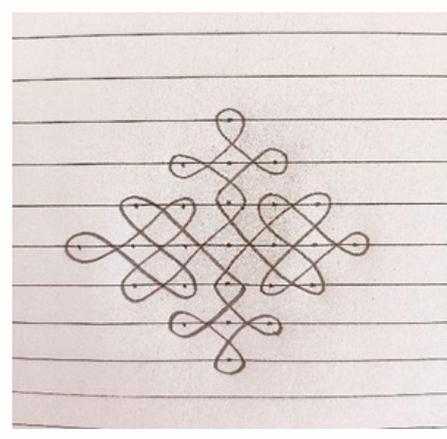
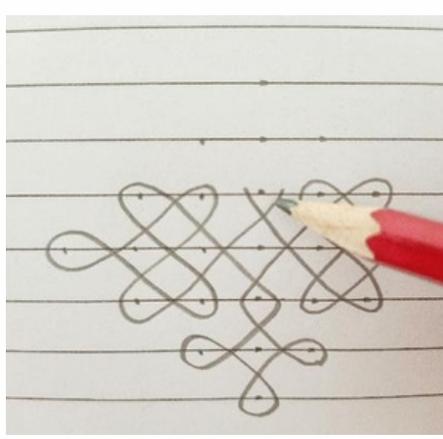
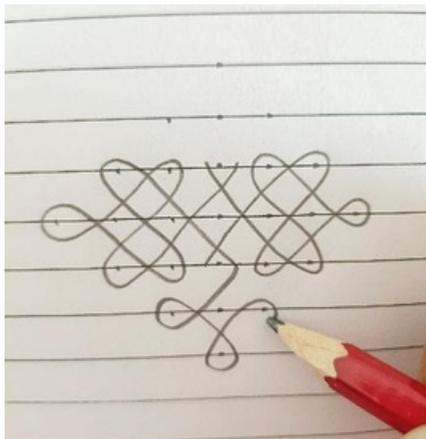
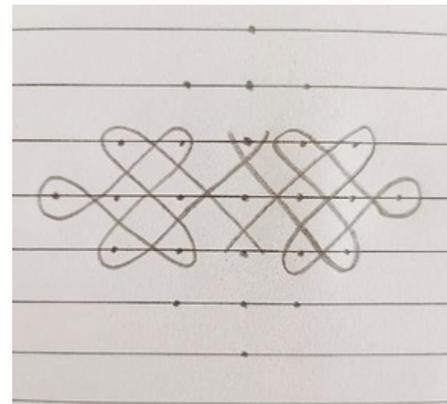
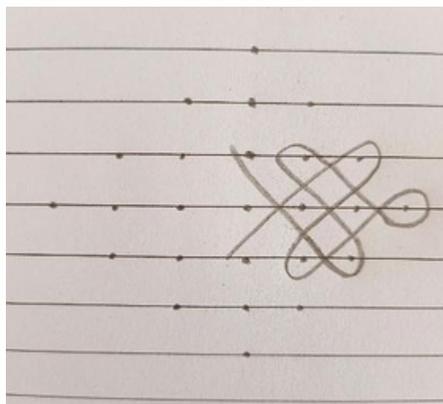
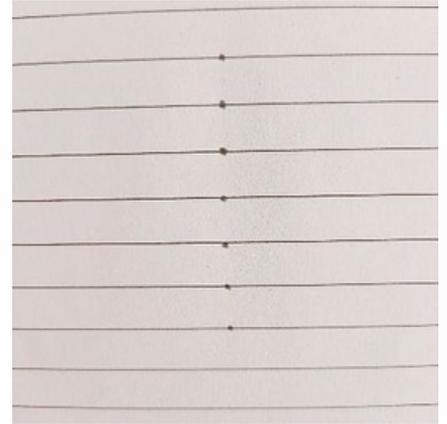
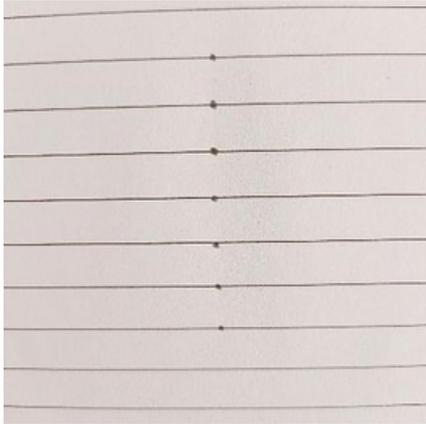
His compositional signature (mudra) is "Purandara Vittala",

Write-up and Illustration by  
Urjita Krishnan ,II,  
Houston, USA

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Artiste et passionnée de kolam  
Lyon, France

 Tutos Instagram

# Indian Traditions in Winter

## 1. Choose the correct answer:

Which Indian festival is celebrated in January to mark the Sun's movement?

1. Makar Sankranti
2. Diwali
3. Holi

## 2. Match the festival and the region:

1. Pongal – Punjab
2. Lohri – Tamilnadu
3. Makar Sankranti – Celebrated across India

## 3. Fill in the blanks:

- a. The Sun is called \_\_\_ in Sanskrit.
- b. \_\_\_ are flown to welcome the new season.



## Correct answers:

1. Makara Sankranti
2. Tamil Nadu 2b: Punjab, 2c: Celebrated across India
- 3a: Surya, 3b: Kites

Aryashree, India

# Indian Traditions in Winter

## 1. Choisis la bonne réponse:

Quelle fête indienne est célébrée en janvier pour marquer le mouvement du Soleil?

1. Makar Sankranti
2. Diwali
3. Holi

## 2. Associe la fête à la région:

1. Pongal – Punjab
2. Lohri – Tamil Nadu
3. Makar Sankranti – Célébrée dans toute l'Inde

## 3. Complète les phrases:

- a. Le Soleil est appelé \_\_\_\_\_ en sanskrit.
- b. \_\_\_\_\_-volants sont associés à la nouvelle saison.



## Correct answers:

1. Makara Sankranti
2. Tamil Nadu 2b: Punjab, 2c: Célébrée dans toute l'Inde
3. Surya, 3b: Les Cerfs

Aryashree, India

# KNOW YOUR RAGA

## #Le raga Saveri

Connaissez-vous le raga Saveri ? Il est sérieux, mais il est très beau. Le raga Saveri n'est pas aussi simple que le Hamsadhvani, que nous avons discuté dans la première édition. Saveri est un janya (dérivé) du 15ème mela (raga parent) Mayamalavagowlai. Saveri est un Rakthi Raga, ce qui signifie que c'est un raga basé sur des phrases, avec une sonorité riche et évocatrice et vous allez certainement le rencontrer dans beaucoup de concerts. Faites-moi confiance, une fois que vous allez commencer à écouter, vous allez adorer Saveri et vous n'allez pas arrêter d'écouter. Maintenant, nous allons voir la structure du raga.

Aa: S R I M I P D I S

or

S N3 D I P M G3 R I S

On peut voir qu'en ascendant, les notes N3 et G3 ne sont pas présentes. Quand nous chantons, nous devons être prudents avec cette structure. En même temps, les notes G3 et M1 sont très importantes pour l'identité du Saveri. Mais c'est seulement une structure très, très simple du raga. Comme j'ai mentionné avant, puisque Saveri est un raga basé sur des phrases, la structure n'est pas suivie partout, comme vous pouvez trouver dans beaucoup de compositions. Pour un exemple simple, il y a des phrases comme

S R G S R, M P D M G R,

qui ne suivent pas cette règle.

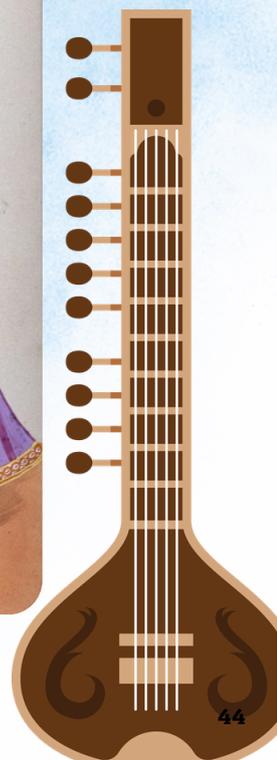
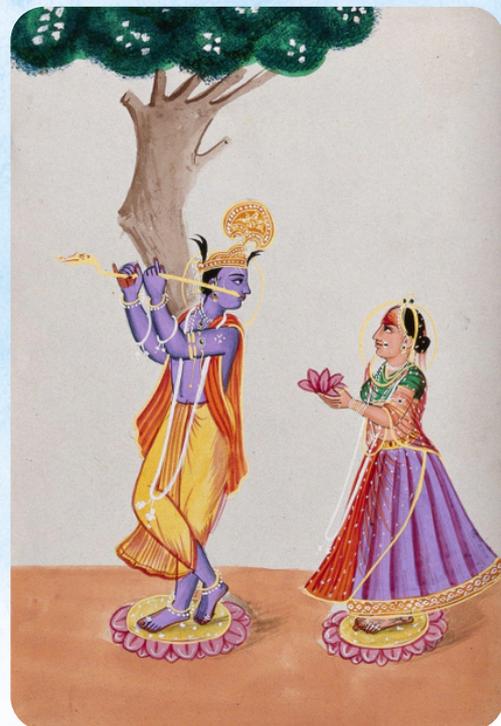
La spécialité de ce raga est qu'il est méditatif, dévotionnel et compatissant dans sa sonorité. Si vous voulez explorer plus ce raga fantastique, vous pouvez écouter les compositions « Muruga Muruga », « Shankari Shankuru », « Shri Rajagopala », « Rama Bana », et bien sûr, le célèbre varnam « Sarasuda ».

-Akshara, Aesch, Switzerland  
16 years

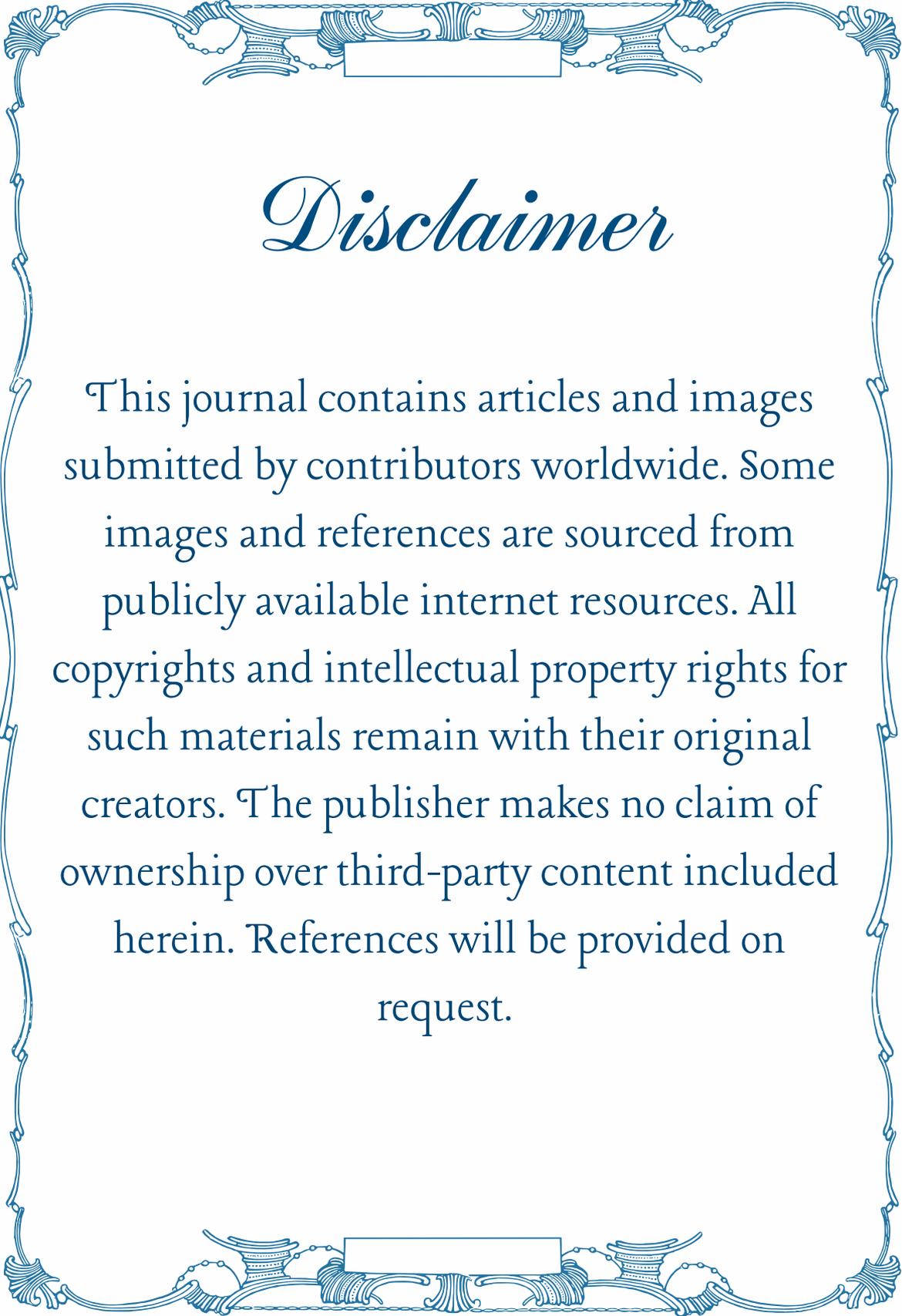
Picture: Wellcome Collection. "Radha and Krishna (Gouache drawing)." Look and Learn History Picture Archive, ID YW044954V,

Vous voulez savoir quelque chose de très intéressant pour ce raga ? Saveri est l'un des 28 ragas que les trinités – Shayma Shastri, Saint Tyagaraja, et Muthuswami Dikshitar ont composé (Musical Scientist. "shrI rAjagOpAla - sAvEri." Nadha Sudha Rasa, 18 Nov. 2012). Je vous recommande d'écouter Saveri et, si possible, de l'apprendre. Je suis sûre que vous allez être en immersion. J

Au revoir avec un autre raga intéressant !







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INDIAN CONSERVATORY OF PARIS

# L'Inde Éternelle



Eternal India

“

In this third edition, we reflect on the growth of our community and the enthusiastic participation found within these pages. Filled with creativity and purpose, this issue brings together the voices of children and adults alike, whose contributions inspire our lives and offer lasting enrichment to our readers

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