

A description of precursors of Bharatanatyam from the 2nd century CE can be found in the ancient Tamil epic Silappatikaram, while temple sculptures of the 6th to 9th century CE suggest dance was a refined performance art by the mid-1st millennium CE. Sadiraattam, which was renamed Bharatanatyam in 1932, is the oldest classical dance tradition in India. Bharatanatyam is the state dance form of Tamil Nadu.

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Bharatanatyam contains different types of banis. Bani, or "tradition", is a term used to describe the dance technique and style specific to a guru or school, often named for the village of the guru. Bharatanatyam style is noted for its fixed upper torso, bent legs and knees flexed (Araimandi) combined with footwork, and a vocabulary of sign language based on gestures of hands, eyes, and face muscles. The dance is accompanied by music and a singer, and typically the dancer's guru is present as the nattuvanar or director-conductor of the performance and art. The performance repertoire of Bharatanatyam, like other classical dances, includes nrita (pure dance), nritya (solo expressive dance) and natya (group dramatic dance).

Sadiraattam remained exclusive to Hindu temples through the 19th century. It was banned by the colonial British government in 1910, but the Indian community protested against the ban and expanded its performance outside temples in the 20th century as Bharatanatyam. Modern stage productions of Bharatanatyam have become popular throughout India and include performances that are purely dance-based on non-religious ideas and fusion themes. The Thanjavur Quartet developed the basic structure of modern Bharatanatyam by formalizing it.



Classical Dance Forms

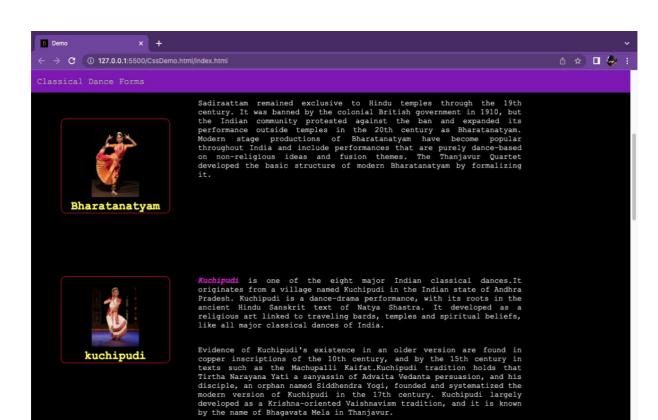


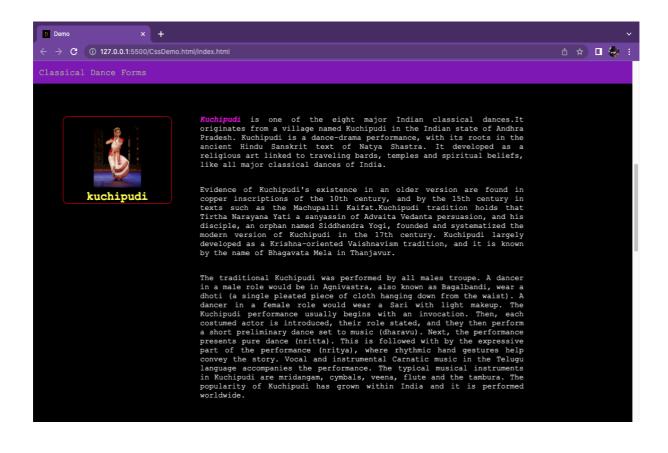
Bharatanatyam

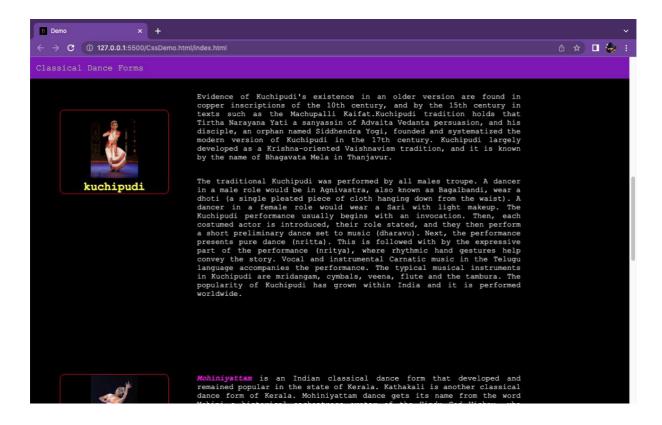
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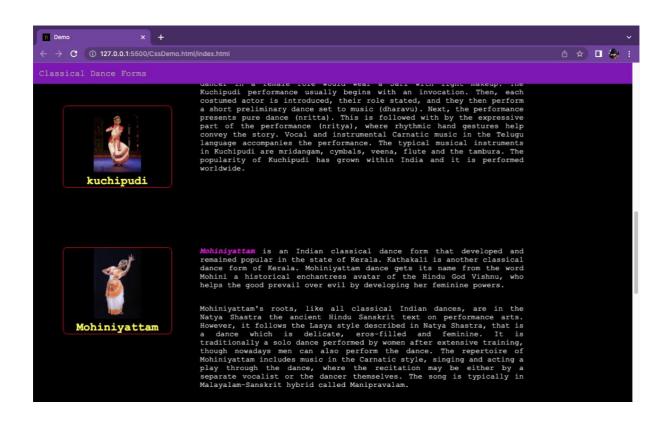
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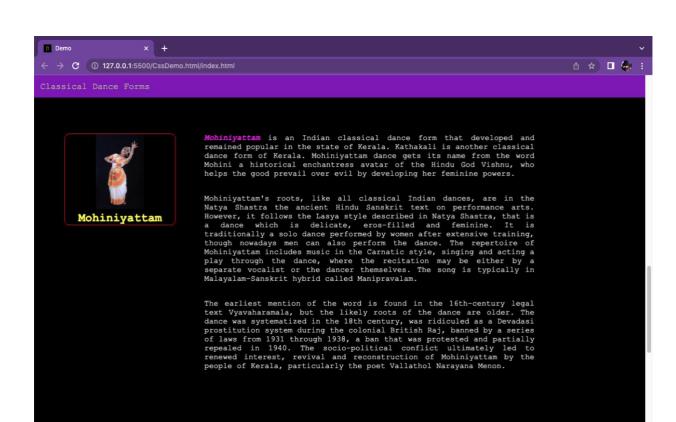
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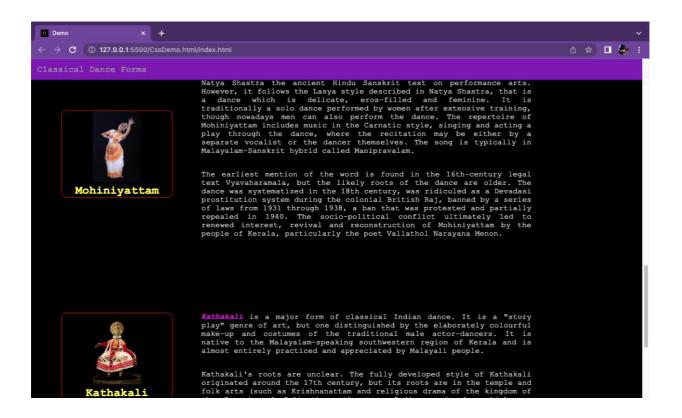


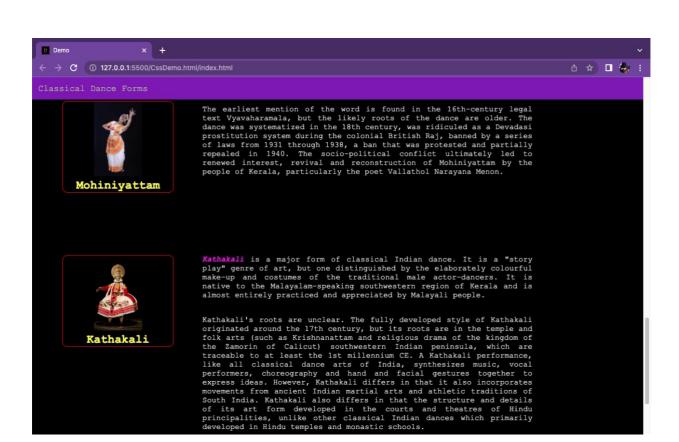


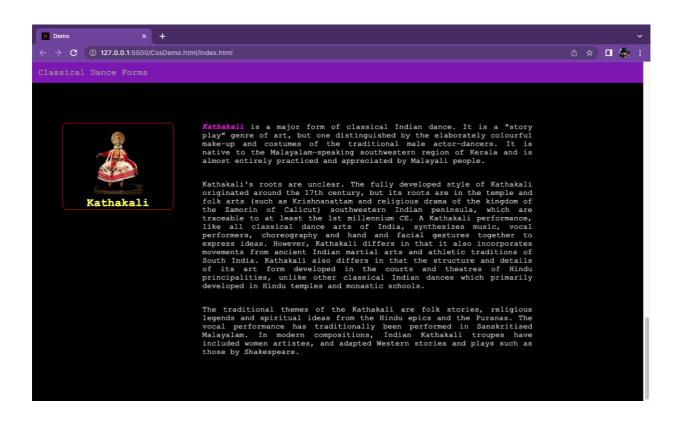




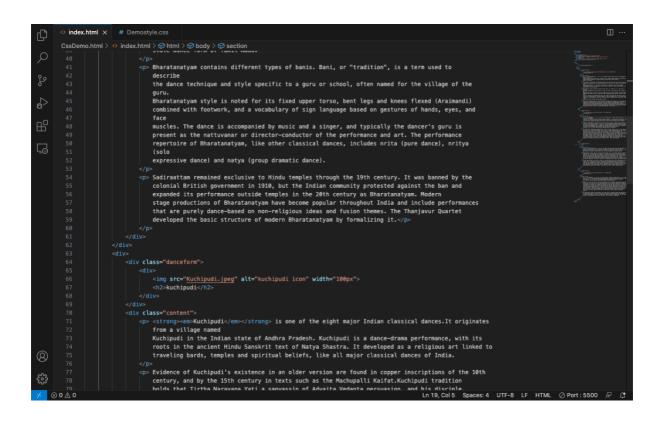








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