

# AKSHAYA IYER

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**Akshaya Ramesh Iyer** is a dedicated Bharatanatyam dancer and teacher based in Nagpur. She is a senior disciple of the renowned Guru **Smt. Ratnam Janardanan**, the founder of *Pratibha Nritya Mandir*, where she has been training for over **16 years**. Akshaya successfully completed her **Arangetram** in **2020**, marking a significant milestone in her classical dance journey.

For the past **five years**, Akshaya has been serving as a **faculty member and choreographer** at Pratibha Nritya Mandir, where she plays an integral role in shaping the next generation of dancers. In addition, she runs her own dance classes both **online and offline**, training students from across **India**, the **United States**, and the **United Arab Emirates**.

Her dedication to the art has led her to perform extensively across India, both as a **soloist** and as part of her Guru's **reputed troupe**, gracing the stages of numerous **prestigious dance festivals**. Her performances are marked by a deep emotional connection and expressive storytelling through **Abhinaya**, a quality that has earned her high praise from her Guru and from **Manju Nair**, a celebrated Bharatanatyam exponent from Kerala.

Apart from her accomplishments in dance, **Akshaya Ramesh Iyer** is also a trained **Carnatic vocalist**. She began her musical journey under the guidance of **Guru Smt. Sundari Padmanabhan** and the late **Guru Smt. Rajeshwari Neelakantan**, both of whom played a pivotal role in laying a strong foundation in her vocal training.

Continuing her pursuit of excellence in music, Akshaya is currently undergoing **advanced training** under the esteemed **Shri Vishnudas S. Manalar**, a renowned Carnatic vocalist based in Mumbai. Her dual expertise in both Bharatanatyam and Carnatic music allows her to bring a deeper understanding of rhythm, melody, and expression to her performances, enriching her artistry as both a dancer and musician.

With her commitment to preserving tradition while embracing a global outlook, Akshaya continues to inspire audiences and students alike through her passion, discipline, and graceful artistry.

## Educational Background

A strong academic foundation complements Akshaya's artistic journey, with a focus on statistical sciences and classical art forms.

- Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) in Statistics and Computer Science – Completed

- Master of Science (M.Sc.) in Statistics – Currently pursuing

### Classical Dance and Music Education

Akshaya has pursued rigorous formal training in Bharatanatyam and Carnatic music, earning certifications from prestigious institutions.

- Alankar Poorna in Bharatanatyam (Postgraduate Diploma) – First Division, Akhil Bharatiya Gandharva Mahavidyalaya Mandal, Miraj
- Visharad Poorna in Bharatanatyam (Equivalent to B.A.) – Distinction, Akhil Bharatiya Gandharva Mahavidyalaya Mandal, Miraj
- Visharad Poorna in Carnatic Music (Equivalent to B.A.) – Distinction, Hindustan Art & Music Society
- Senior Diploma in Carnatic Music – Distinction, Hindustan Art & Music Society

### Performances at Prestigious Dance Festivals and Cultural Platforms

Akshaya has showcased her talent on numerous reputed stages across India, performing in both solo and group presentations.

- Featured performer at the **Soorya Festival**, Trivandrum, Kerala – one of India's most prestigious cultural festivals.
- Performance at the **5th Innovative International Film Festival**, Bangalore, under the aegis of the **South Central Zone Cultural Centre (SCZCC)**, **Thanjavur**.
- Performance in the **International Performing Arts Festival (IPAF)**, showcasing global artistic excellence.
- Performed in the acclaimed dance drama "**Naari Jayathe**" at the **South Central Zone Cultural Centre**, Nagpur.
- **Doordarshan National Telecast** – Featured performance broadcast live on national television.
- Solo performer at the **Natyanjali Festival**, Mumbai, organized by **Upasana Academy**, in both 2024 and 2025.
- Performed in the "**Orange City Festival**", organized by SCZCC, Government of India, held in the esteemed presence of Union Minister **Shri Nitin Gadkari**.
- Starred in "**Jayatu Bharatam**", a patriotic dance production presented at SCZCC, Nagpur.

- Performed at **Pratibhotsavam Festival**, Nagpur – a celebration of emerging talent in classical arts.
- Performed in the **Natya Rasa Pravah Festival**, Bhilai.
- Featured artist at the **108th Indian Science Congress**, inaugurated by the Honorable Prime Minister **Shri Narendra Modi**.
- Performed at **Symbiosis International University**, showcasing classical dance in an academic environment.
- Cultural performance at the **National Academy of Direct Taxes (NADT)**.
- Cultural performance at the **Fire College of India**, presenting classical dance at a premier national training institute.
- Devotional performance at the historic **Melpathur Auditorium**, Guruvayur Temple, Kerala.
- Cultural presentation at the **Law Forum, Nagpur**, in the presence of senior legal luminary **Advocate Vishnu Shankar Jayant**.
- Performance at **NrityaAvishkar**, organized by **Raisoni Cultural Centre**, celebrating innovation in classical dance.
- Performed at the **Youth Festival**, organized by the **International Performing Arts Festival (IPAF)**, spotlighting young talent on a global platform.

### Dance Productions

Akshaya has played vital roles in several major thematic productions, reflecting her storytelling ability and emotional depth as a performer.

- **Dashavataram** – depiction of the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu
- **Naari Jayathe** – celebration of womanhood and empowerment
- **Jayatu Bharatam** – patriotic dance drama
- **Aaru Padai** – lead role portraying the six sacred abodes of Lord Muruga

### Awards and Honors

Her talent and commitment have been widely recognized through numerous prestigious awards at regional and national levels.

- Yuva Nritya Pratibha Award – Pratibhotsavam Festival
- Nrutya Sangeet Rasa Pravah Award – Nrutya Dham, Bhilai
- Mayor Cup – Nagpur Municipal Corporation

- Felicitated by the South India Association, Nagpur
- Extraordinary Performer Award – South India Education Society, Nagpur
- Bala Nipun Award – Bal Kala Utsav, Delhi

### **Workshops Attended Under Renowned Gurus**

To deepen her understanding of Bharatanatyam, Akshaya has participated in intensive workshops under legendary exponents and teachers.

- Padma Bhushan Rama Vaidyanathan (NatyaSutra)
- Guru Shobana Balachandran (Disciple of Natyacharyas Dhananjayans)
- Guru Unnikrishnan (Disciple of Padma Bhushan Guru Rukmini Devi Arundale) – Dubai
- Manju V. Nair – Kerala

### **Achievements in Dance Competitions**

Akshaya has consistently secured top positions in various reputed competitions, reaffirming her skill, stage presence, and dedication.

- First Prize – AIDA International Competition of Dance
- First Prize – 37th All India Cultural Meet
- First Prize – Akhil Bharatiya Sanskrutik Sangh, Pune
- Second Prize – State-Level Youth Festival 'Indradhanush'
- Winner – National-Level Dance Competition by Nagpur Municipal Corporation (NMC)
- Numerous awards in regional and institutional competitions

### **Conclusion**

With over 16 years of dedicated training, a wide repertoire of performances, and deep academic and artistic foundations, Akshaya Iyer continues to shine as a committed performer, teacher, and cultural ambassador of Bharatanatyam. Her ability to combine technical precision with expressive depth has made her a respected and admired artist in the Indian classical dance community. As she moves forward, Akshaya remains committed to enriching the classical arts through continued learning, performance, and the nurturing of the next generation of artists.