



DANCE
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111 – 2750 Quadra Street
Victoria BC Canada V8T 4E8

DanceVictoria.com

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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A Creative Dialogue Between Cultures: Nrityagram Dance Ensemble (India) and Chitrasena Dance Company's (Sri Lanka) *Āhuti*

March 8 + 9, 7:30 pm | Royal Theatre

VICTORIA, B.C. — Each season, [Dance Victoria](http://DanceVictoria.com)'s presentations highlight artistic excellence from around the globe. But rarely is there an offering like India's [Nrityagram Dance Ensemble](http://NrityagramDanceEnsemble.com) and Sri Lanka's Chitrasena Dance Company, two world renowned companies who will perform a contemporary fusion of traditional Odissi and Kandyan dance – accompanied by live musicians – at the Royal Theatre. Nrityagram Dance Ensemble is one of the premier Indian dance ensembles performing today, with the unprecedented distinction of making *The New York Times*' "Best Dance of the Year" list two years in a row.

Āhuti is about dualities and dialogue. Even the work's name has no single translation, meaning 'invoking' in Sanskrit and 'offering' in Pali. Born out of the companies' long-time collaboration, *Āhuti* celebrates centuries of cultural heritage, showcasing India's traditional Odissi dance with Sri Lanka's Kandyan dance in a contemporary context. Playing off each other, these distinct dance traditions, each associated with its own movement vocabulary, push the boundaries of this creative dialogue.

Under the artistic direction of choreographer Surupa Sen, an ensemble of five instrumentalists and a vocalist joins these two world-class companies on stage for a performance that unfolds in four movements. In the evening's first half, *Sankirtanam* (a prayer) offers praise to Lord Krishna, while *Poornāratī* (complete offering) draws upon traditional temple rituals seeking to access the highest state of being in the performers. As a special addition to this tour only, Surupa Sen, who is revered as one of the world's best Odissi dancers, will perform her *Āhuti* solo.

Returning from intermission, *Invoking Shiva* is a powerful calling to the Hindu God of Dance and Destruction. The evening culminates in the colourful and energetic *Ālāp*, where Odissi and Kandyan traditions collide in an at-times playful, at-times challenging embrace of the two forms in space.



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During Nrityagram Dance Ensemble and Chitrasena Dance Company's visit to Victoria, these artists will give a live, educational performance at Tillicum Elementary School, as part of Dance Victoria's Community Engagement programs. Finally, this presentation is made possible with generous support from Season Sponsor Derma Spa, Lead Presentation Sponsor Departures Travel, TD Bank Group through the TD Ready Commitment, and public support from the Government of Canada, Canada Council for the Arts, Government of BC, BC Arts Council, and the CRD Arts Development office.

About Nrityagram Dance Ensemble

More than a dance company, Nrityagram was founded as a Gurukula (school) devoted to Indian dance. The all-female ensemble's daily life of intensive training and meditation brings to the stage compelling, captivating performances that are at once sensual and lyrical.

Literally translating as 'Dance Village,' Nrityagram is located on 10 acres of farmland outside of Bangalore, India. The community identifies itself as India's first modern Gurukula, an ancient education system where shishya (students) live closely and study under a guru or gurus.

Conceived this way for almost 30 years, Nrityagram imparts not only technique in dance but nurtures a philosophy of being that embraces holistic practices, mindful living, and the pursuit of excellence. All members of Nrityagram Dance Ensemble, along with a community of more than 100 students, live, work, study, and play on the grounds of this dance village.

The result of this dedication is a company whose dancers do not simply practice their art – but *live* it. It is a distinction that can be readily felt by any audience who is so fortunate to be present for this embodied, vibrant ensemble.

About Chitrasena Dance Company

The Chitrasena Dance Company is Sri Lanka's oldest and most prestigious dance company, founded by Guru Chitrasena in the 1940s. The company is credited with bringing its country's traditional dances from village rituals to modern stage. Chitrasena has led the development of Kandyan dance in Sri Lanka, being a key proponent to opening this dynamic style of dance to women, whilst also preserving it as a cultural tradition and introducing it to a contemporary audience.

Nrityagram Dance Ensemble & Chitrasena Dance Company

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How To Buy Tickets

Phone: The Royal and McPherson Box Office at **250-386-6121** or toll-free at **1-888-717-6121**, Monday to Friday, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm (Royal Theatre closed 1:00 to 1:30 pm)

Online: DanceVictoria.com

Visit the [Royal and McPherson Theatres website](#) for current Box Office details.

Single Ticket Prices (Non-Subscriber Pricing)

Loge	\$130.25
Premium	\$120.25
A	\$99.50
B	\$80.75
C+	\$40.25
C	\$31.00

[Pay Your Age](#) (ages 12 to 29) and [Night Moves](#) (ages 30 to 45) tickets are also available.

About Dance Victoria

Dance Victoria brings the *World's Best Dance* to the Royal Theatre and supports the development of new dance for the international stage from its studios in Quadra Village. Dance Victoria is a non-profit charitable society. DanceVictoria.com

Media Materials

Email anne-sophie@dancevictoria.com to request high-resolution images and other media materials.

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