

Sangeet Natak Akademi  
National Academy of Music, Dance and Drama, New Delhi  
Bharatiya Sangeet Sadan

# कार्तिकोत्सव *Kartikotsav*

## MAHARAAS LEELA

25 November 2015, Delhi



## Dedicated to Late Smt. Kamla Devi Chattopadhyay and Late Raas Dhari Pt. Ladli Saran Sharma (Vrindavan)

### MAHARAAS LEELA

This particular “Maharaas” is unique in that it combines the traditional Raas of Brindaban with classical Kathak, a field in which Uma Sharma has done considerable research. Based on the 10th chapter of Shreemad Bhagavad, the Maharaas as conceived by Uma Sharma as a dance form is a unique blend which pinpoints her creative originality as a choreographer and also shows her concern for placing Kathak in its true perspective as a dance for the gods, to the gods, in the home of the gods – in the temples. She attributed the dedication with which she has pursued research in Maharaas and then presented it to the people to the inspiration given to her by the late Smt. Kamladevi Chattopadhyaya.

The ballet is based on the 10th chapter of the Shreemad Bhagavatam. According to the text it was on a full moon night that Lord Krishna decided to dance the Raas, the relationship between the soul and the supreme Lord, dance with his gopis (cow-herd girls). He decorated himself with fragrant flowers and played his flute. On hearing the notes from his flute the Gopis were enchanted. They left whatever they were doing at home and rushed to be with their loved Krishna. The Lord on his part started advising them not to leave their homes and husband and come to him at the dead of night in forest unescorted. On hearing this gopis were disappointed and annoyed. Giving in to their pleasure Krishna surrounded by many gopis started dancing.

This show of affection and lavish attention by the supreme Lord himself soon made them proud. Krishna sensing this decided to teach them a lesson. He along with Radha disappeared. Radha also soon became vain with Krishna’s attention. He left her too. When the gopis realized that Krishna was not amongst them they went mad with the agony of the separation. They started looking for him everywhere to diminish their sorrow, they started enacting scenes from Krishna’s life. One of them acted Makhanchorileela. Other acted as Putana the devil, who had come with poisoned milk to feed baby Krishna and kill him. Another relived the lifting of Govardhan Parvat as Krishna had done to save his village Brindaban from their houses. They danced the story of Krishna going in to a pond to retrieve his ball and finding the serpent Kalia there decided to punish him for wanting to kill his village people.

Still Krishna did not appear. This made them even more restless. Realizing that the gopis had learnt a lesson Krishna appeared. When the gopis rebuked him for leaving them and going away he said that he had done it just to see how anxious they would get for him. He explained that he should not repay their love for him even throughout the lifetimes of the demi gods, it is impossible to repay you for your love so be content by your own pious activities the Lord told the gopis.

To satisfy and pacify the gopis Krishna started the Maharaas dance which is a spiritual experience. With his supreme powers he multiplied his form so that each gopi felt that Krishna was at her side and dancing with her alone.

Dance Choreography by UMA SHARMA.

Music Direction by PANDIT JAWALA PRASAD.

### UMA SHARMA

Uma Sharma, the renowned Kathak exponent has done pioneering research work on the “Raas” dance and drama of Vrindavan. Over two decades ago she studied the technique under the guidance of Late Pt. Ladli Saran Sharma, the authority on this particular style. Uma Sharma brought the Vrindavan Raas Leela troupe to perform in Delhi for a few years, every year till 1984.

Uma Sharma has now evolved a fine blend of Kathak and Raas Leela for her annual presentation of MAHARAAS LEELA at her “SHARADOTSAV” festival on the occasion of “Sharad Purnima” day.

She has done extensive research in this art form. The inspiration behind this venture was given by late Smt. Kamladevi Chattopadhyaya – who urged her to take up this worthy cause before the art form became extinct. At that time Raas Leela groups of Vrindavan used to make their presentations mostly in “filmi” style both in respect of music and costumes. Thanks to the pioneering work done by Uma Sharma, this wrong path has been abandoned now by most of the Vrindavan Raas groups.

Uma Sharma has been able to bring about cohesion and a balanced synchronization of Kathak and Raas with a unique idiom in the “Nritya” part. She has been presenting this dance-drama at different temples in Delhi so that the non-theatre going public too would become aware of this important style of dance-drama which is being performed by her disciples.



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and

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cordially invite you to

# *Kartikotsav*

## *MAHARAAS LEELA*

Dance Ballet – Kathak and Brij-Raas Leela Style  
(Based on Shrimad Bhagwat “Dashma Skandha” 10th Canto)

by

**UMA SHARMA & GROUP**

on Wednesday, 25 November 2015 at 6.00 p.m.

at Meghdoot Theatre–I, Copernicus Marg

New Delhi 110 001

Enq: 26432998  
26431978

Dance Director : Uma Sharma  
Vocal & Music Director : Jwala Prasad  
Vocal : Madho Prasad  
Tabla: Mubarak Khan  
Sitar: Khalid Mustafa  
Flute: Vinay Prasanna  
Padhant & Special Effects : Yograj Panwar  
Pakhawaj : Ashok Parihar  
Tabla Tarang : Tarun Parihar

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**Live webcast: [sangeetnatak.gov.in/sna/video-gallery.html](http://sangeetnatak.gov.in/sna/video-gallery.html)**

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Invitees should take their seats 15 minutes before the commencement of the programme.

In view of security reasons, briefcase, handbag, umbrella, i-pad, mobile phone, tape recorder, camera, or any other objectionable articles may not be allowed in the auditorium. Audio/video recording is prohibited.

Programme subject to change.



**NATIONAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC, DANCE AND DRAMA**

RABINDRA BHAVAN, FEROZE SHAH ROAD, NEW DELHI-110 001

Tel: 23387246, 23387247, 23387248, 23382495

Fax: 91-11-23382659

E-mail: [mail@sangeetnatak.gov.in](mailto:mail@sangeetnatak.gov.in)

Website: <http://sangeetnatak.gov.in>



**UMA SHARMA SCHOOL OF DANCE & MUSIC**

52, Community Centre, East of Kailash, New Delhi- 110065