



### **Sridevi Jagannath, Director Laasya School of Dance and Music**

Sridevi Jagannath is a proficient Bharatanatyam dancer, an art which is one of the oldest and magnificent Indian Classical dance forms. Trained under great Gurus like Padmini Ravi and K.J. Sarasa, Sridevi has been a performer for over 3 decades. During the years, she had the privilege of improving her skills by taking the able guidance of distinguished dance teachers like Late Guru Smt. Bhanumathi, Guru Smt. Lalitha Srinivasan (Mysore Style). She is currently training under Natyacharya Smt. Shobana Balachandra and Padmini Ravi. Laasya reached the quarter century milestone in 2020. She has been a proud resident of Durham for the past 27 years.

Under the banner “Laasya School of Dance and Music’, Sridevi has been grooming innumerable students in this rich art form. Many of her students have completed their graduation under her able guidance and are teachers in the nearby areas. Laasya School of Dance and Music was established in Durham, NC back in 1995. Since then, the school has developed a reputation as one of the premier institutions teaching Bharatanatyam in this area. Laasya school is very proud of initiating a non-profit organization NATYA, run by senior students of Laasya to promote solo classical dances in the Triangle area.

"Sridevi akka", as she likes to be addressed by all her students, teaches students from several age groups and is a household name in the Triangle Indian community and beyond.

Sridevi is not only a danseuse par excellence, she is a wonderful teacher that insists on students learning the fundamentals the right way from the get-go with a great emphasis on theory. In her 27 years of teaching, Sridevi has helped over 50 students complete their arangetrams thus far. She conducts workshops on a regular

basis to reinforce concepts besides inviting guest artists from all over the world to ensure that her students get an opportunity to learn from the best.

Sridevi has performed in various parts of the U.S, Canada, Australia and India. Dance productions presented at various international levels are Krishna Bhakti Mala, Let Go, Ananya, MUDRA – The mark of an indelible woman, Dashavataram, Karnataka Navarasolasa, Yaatra – A Soulful Journey, Samatva - a project addressing the stigma surrounding mental health in the Asian communities just to name a few. Her collaboration project “Raja Simha”, inspired by The Lion King, received rave reviews by Triangle art connoisseurs. Also, she has partnered with her contemporaries in starting "Srishti - The Creation" a decade ago. This is an informal group of dancers who interact and perform on a regular basis to carry the tradition and dance form forward.

Sridevi has received numerous accolades like Heritage India Award for excellence in teaching, Leadership Excellence Award from Pratham just to name a few. She was conferred the prestigious Aryabhata International Award, by the Government of Karnataka in June of 2017. In 2018, she was conferred the Konark Nritya Ratna Award by the government of Orissa for which she traveled to Cuttack, India and performed for their festival.

Sridevi is a staunch believer of giving back to the community. She is associated with many Indian and American societal causes through the dance medium. Be it fundraising or volunteering, Sridevi is always there with the Laasya team. She raised over \$25,000 for Pratham through mega dance productions like Mudra and Matsyakanya. Laasya School raised over \$4000 for Make-A-Wish foundation NC chapter.

She is the cultural ambassador for Heritage India, RTP, NC. She is a member of DANC, a non-profit organization that upholds the mission of artists across the globe. Sridevi is a huge promoter of youth leadership. NATYA (North American Triangle Youth Association), an organization founded to promote solo performances of various dance forms. This organization is run by senior disciples of Laasya. NATYA has hosted quite a few concerts in the Triangle area.

She currently serves on the Examination Board of The Griffin College, London. She is also on the exam board of Pracheena Kala Kendra. She has an MBA in Global Management and is a certified Life Coach. Sridevi is currently learning the eighth classical dance form, Sattriya.