SONALI SKANDAN

Dancer | Choreographer | Educator | Curator | Producer

+16462517463 jivaperformingarts@gmail.com www.jivaperformingarts.org

Education:

BS: New York University,
Summa cum laude, 1993

MA: Teachers College,
Columbia University 1997 –
International Education;
Sociology of Urban Education;

Artistic Experience:

Choreographer
Dancer
Teacher
Producer
Curator

Administrative Experience:

Artistic Director - Jiva Performing Arts 2007 - present

Oversees the mission and operations of this non-profit - responsibilities include and not limited to - envisioning and implementing programming, events, classes and projects. Manages staff and faculty, works with Board Of Directors to implement strategic vision; works with accountants to prepare annual reporting and manages grants, budgets and fundraising activities. Manages social media and marketing.

Original Dance Productions:

Lessons From My Mothers (2025) - in development support from New Music USA, NYSCA, MidAtlantic Arts

Shilpananatam (2023-24) - presented throughout the US and Chennai, India Fall 2023/24 supported by NYC Dept. of Cultural Affairs

Kaleidoscope (2023) - premiere at Greenspace, Gibney Studios and Making Moves Dance Festival supported by Queens Council on the Arts

B'Rhythm (2019-2021) - work in progress showing at Drive East Festival, La MaMa, full premiere at NYC Open Streets - Garfield Place, Brooklyn supported by NEA

The Four Horsemen (2019) – premiere at Dixon Place, NYC

Mayura: Blue Peacock (2014) – premiere at Chen Dance Center NYC

Rasa/Laya (2013): Indian rhythms and dance with Akshara, NYC Flushing Town Hall

Parampara:Tradition (2012) - Duet dance with Win Thang from Paris, France

Swarupa:Infinite Form (2011) - Infinite Form: Sonali Skandan & Jiva Dance premiered at the NYC International Fringe Festival

Sampradaya: Celebrating Tradition (2008) - solo Margam of Sonali Skandan featuring Prof. CV Chandrasekhar

Urban Kutcheri (2006) - premiered at Joyce/SoHo (Producer, Director & Performer)

Solo Bharatanatyam Margam (2004) - Lighthouse International Auditorium, New York, NY (producer, dancer)

Dance on Camera Work

**** Produced and Presented three Dance on Camera festivals:***

- Still Point Expanding (2020)
- Dualities (2021)
- (un) silent voices (2022)

"In Her Element" (2022) created for Jiva's (un) silent voices festival

"The Adventures of the Naughty Bee" (2021) Commissioned by Erasing Borders Festival of Dance

"The Sun Unto A Day" (2021) Commissioned by The World Music Institute for Dancing the Gods Festival

"The Backyard" (2020) commissioned for Narthaki's virtual Series Boxed

"Into Nature" - a film short using hand gestures within nature

"Melting" - a short dance film commissioned by Jiva's Still Point Expanding Festival (2020)

Urban Nritta (2016)– concept, choreography and production by Sonali Skandan and Jiva Performing Arts – selected for the 17th.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P64yDi9EfYw

Specially Commissioned Works

Elements and Durga (2022) - new dance works commissioned by Tale Root at Greenspace and Making Moves Dance festival - Jamaica Center for Arts and Learning, Making Moves Festival

From Heaven and Earth (2017) – solo works by Sonali Skandan curated and performed throughout Europe

Bharatanatyam: A Comparison of 2 Styles (2012) at Lotus Fine Arts, NYC

Trimurti – Bharatnatyam, Odissi, Kathak at Sruti's 25th year anniversary celebrations (2011) Original Choreography by Sonali Skandan, Parul Shah and Sonali Mishra

Multimedia

Juilliard's Online Educational Program – released in 2017

'Bharatanatyam in a Modern World' (2017) by NBC Learn – Jiva Dance was featured in a vibrant video featured on NBC Learn's educational portal, featuring music by Bala Skandan and Akshara.

http://nbclearn.com/portal/site/learn/cuecard/110980

Mental Floss Magazine, "Why We Dance" (2016) – choreography by Sonali Skandan

https://www.facebook.com/mentalflossmagazine/videos/vb.10974002364/10154477101217365/?type=2&theater

Selected Teaching Experience

Head of Faculty, Jiva Performing Arts, 2007-present

Queens College – Adjunct Professor of Dance, 2019-2020

Juilliard School of Dance - Professional Development for K-12 Educators, Digital instructional videos for Bharatanatyam 2018

Joffrey Ballet Summer Intensive 2015, 2016, 2017

Sarah Lawrence College Adjunct Faculty in the Dept. of Dance 2009-2010, Taught a course to dance, theater and music majors on Bharatanatyam

Select Awards

National Endowment for the Arts (2025) Withdrawn

New Music USA Organization Fund(2024)

Mid Atlantic Folk and Traditional Arts Community Projects grant (2024)

Mertz Gilmore Late Stage Award administered by Greenspace (2022)

NYC Dept. of Cultural Affairs Grant for project support for Dance on Camera Festival, solo repertoire, master classes (2020-2

New York State Council on the Arts Project Support for Solo Repertoire (2021/2022)

New York State Council on the Arts Project Support for Organizations (2022-2025)

National Endowment for the Arts Cares grant - 2020/2021

National Endowment for the Arts grant for B'Rhythm - 2020-21

"Natya Ratna" title from the Trinity Arts Festival, Chennai, India (2018)

Dance/NYC Dance Advancement Fund (2017-26)

CUNY Dance Initiative Dance Residency (2017/2018)

NYC Dept. of Cultural Affairs Grant for the creation of the Four Horsemen (2018, 2019)

New York State Council on the Arts Apprenticeship Grant (2015, 2016)

New York State Council on the Arts Project Support for the creation of Mayura:Blue Peacock(2014)

Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Manhattan Arts Grant for restaging Urban Kutcheri (2008)

Interviews

https://www.womanaroundtown.com/sections/woman-around-town/my-career-choice-sonali-skandan-jiva-performing-arts/

https://dance-teacher.com/what-my-teacher-taught-me-sonali-skandan-on-maya-kulkarni/

Other

- Conceived and Created "Dance Talks," a global community of Indian Classical dancers and lovers to build dialogue and sharing of ideas during the pandemic of 2020-2022
- Produced and Presented Cultivating Depth - a series of free Master classes focusing on ancillary and parallel practices to Indian classical dance training - such as Indian Classical Rhythm, Music theory, Hip openers, Graham Technique, Nattuvangam and the Karanas of the Natyashastra.