

20:20

**SUJATA BANERJEE**
online*Hello my dear readers,*

I hope that you are all well, safe and finding a reformed way of life, given the still prevalent Coronavirus pandemic. Following the last newsletter in May 2020, a lot has happened in SBDC and the whole world. **Why I so strongly believe in Dance Education?** Here's sharing some thoughts...

20:21 ✓

I have been teaching dance for over 40 years, started my own dance school in India when I was 20, and regardless of the intensive studies and competitive sports I was involved in, dance above all, kept me physically, intellectually, logically and creatively engaged.

20:23 ✓

Dance is one of the most demanding activities, which has endless benefits - Health (physical and mental), it enhances life skills and intelligence, and it also is a recreational activity.

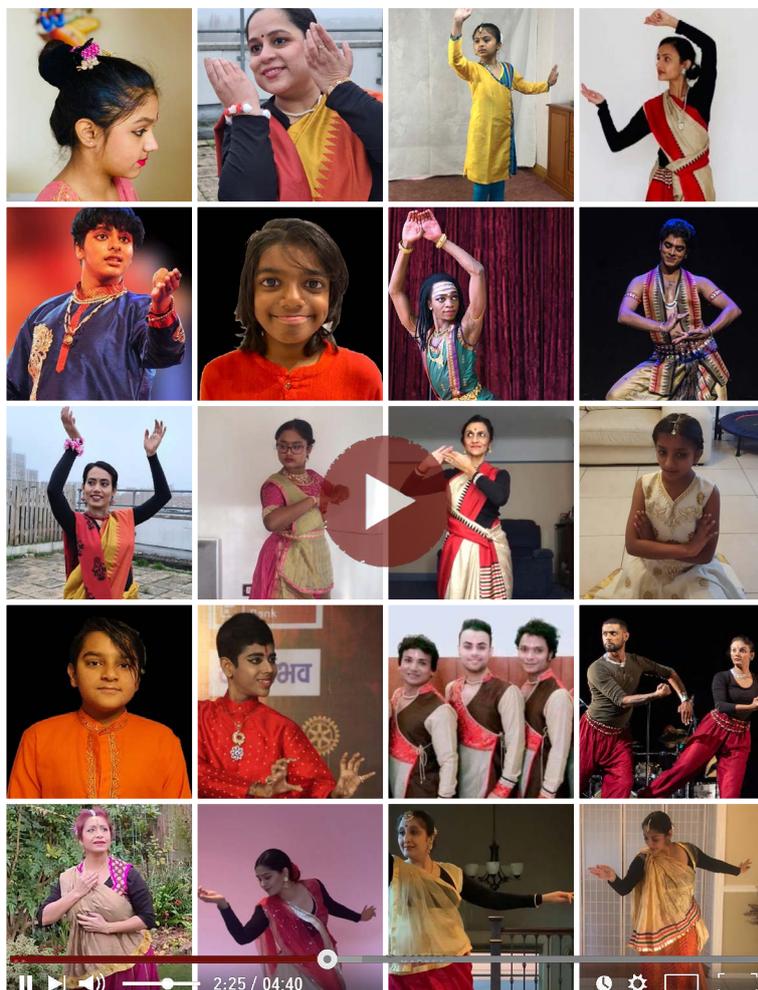
20:22 ✓

Typing . . .

It keeps one happy and intensely focused, and as such, it helps to nurture an innate confidence that exists in each of us.

Encourage dance participation for a HEALTHY Body - Mind - Happiness.

20:26 ✓

*Love and best wishes,*
Sujata Didi**HEMANTIKA 2020**

Hemantika Dance Festival is a one of a kind kaleidoscope of Kathak and other classical Indian dance in celebration of Autumn, which is now **successfully running it's fifth year!**

Each year we offer various workshops, master-classes, performances, debates, seminars and competitions. **Sujataji** curates this strategically to keep all students engaged and other enthusiasts motivated and educated in the beautiful art of 'dance'. Each year, we have increased in geographical presence and welcomed more participants from across the diaspora. This year has allowed us to reach even more audiences given the virtual world we now find ourselves in – COVID-19 wasn't going to stop us. **Hemantika 2020 will be one to remember in years to come when 120+ dancers took part from across the world.** Sujataji's vision, coupled with enthusiastic students and renowned artists saw four weekends of celebrating DANCE remotely, despite the pandemic. A **new feature of 2020 was the Quiz**, which was fun and educational.

Shatabdi Sengupta, one of our Grade 4 Adult Students writes about her virtual performance experience from Australia, "I have always been a fan of SBDC and watched Hemantika's short clips. Now I am student of SBDC. I was overjoyed to have the opportunity to perform at Hemantika. At first, it was quite nerve wrecking but with the support of my fellow dancers from my class gave me confidence to take part. Although there is very little chance that I will travel to UK now or even next year, but I now have so many friends from SBDC."

- Written by Bhavisha Mehta (Trustee)

SHIKSHA SBDC BURSARY

We, at SBDC offered Bursary informally for many years but in 2021, it will be offered formally through applications. (Contact SBDC Admin for more details). There will be 2 categories: 10 - 16 years and adults or at vocational level.

BURSARY WINNER WILL BE ABLE TO LEARN DANCE FREE FOR 1 YEAR IN SBDC!



THE VISION

To bring art and artists from around the world together on a common platform to celebrate diversity and dance participation.

Sujata Banerjee
(Founder & Artistic Director SBDC UK)

DANCE SYNERGY

A GLOBAL DANCEATHON CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

ARTIST MESSAGE

Being part of Dance Synergy reassured me that my talent is appreciated and valued. It was inspiring to be part of a global cast that has enhanced my experiences in dance.

Glendale Mudzimu
(Bharatanatyam Dancer, Zimbabwe)

A DREAM that Sujataji envisioned became a spectacular reality this year. Her vision of *bringing together the art, the artist and the world* at a time when we were grappling with the intensity of the COVID-19 Pandemic was realized through the magnum opus production - **DANCE SYNERGY 2020** - a celebration of creativity, diversity, community and well-being!

August 22-23, 2020 were 2 days of history being made in the dance world by SBDC. It was a **26 hour non-stop marathon** of many dance styles, which travelled across the globe and time zones. The event included live and recorded performances and interactive dance workshops.

Dance Synergy was envisioned to:

- **Celebrate diversity**, featuring artists and dance companies from across genres and countries and seen by global audiences and participants.
- **Support artists** by remunerating them during the difficult lock-down period when live concerts and performances were cancelled.
- **Promote health and well being**, especially since every person on the planet had been challenged physically and mentally during the pandemic.



Dance Synergy empowered us to embrace art as a community, as an outlet and indispensable blessing!



The **viewership hit 150,000 dance enthusiasts** worldwide by end of August, and is still growing as performing arts' patrons and dancers continue to watch the highlights of this event on the SBDC Facebook page.

Artists who had performed all their lives on stages worldwide with lighting and sound taken care for them, were now having to acquire skills to perform and teach on the various digital platforms during the pandemic worldwide. Artists performed on the rocks of Indonesian mountains, stunning bridges and parks in New York, from a community hall in Greece, in a small bedroom in New Castle, Himalayas as the back drop from Pakistan and so many fascinating corners of the world.

With the support from arts enthusiasts of different countries, particularly in the USA, **Dance Synergy raised nearly £8000** to support and pay all performing artists a fee for their performances.

This was indeed an extremely humbling and exhilarating experience for a **Rockstar Team of 35 volunteers** who successfully made Dance Synergy the **epitome of Diversity and Inclusion in the performing arts' world.**

It was a reminder to many that *'art always brings us home.'*



Dance Synergy 2020 Photo Courtesy: Performing artists; Photo Credits mentioned on all DS publications.



Written by Manisha Advani
(Global Volunteer & Event Lead)

Excerpts by Shalini Rao
(Designer - Dance Synergy)



**WATCH THIS SPACE FOR MORE INFO ON
DANCE SYNERGY 2021**

SUBJECT TO COVID-19

SUMMER CHALLENGE 2020



Summer Challenge 2020 Winners
Photo Courtesy: SBDC

Barcelona based Kathak professional **Shreyashee Nag** writes of the Summer Challenge -

"I have my own dance school, and also learn from Sujataji at a Vocational level. Although I have known Didi for 5 years but it was never possible for me to learn from her regularly. The current Pandemic and SBDC online classes changed my life, in a way, for the better.

I had the privilege of being one of the judges for the Summer Challenge. We judged the Senior/ Advance level dancers. The youngest judge in my group was Eight! The concept of various students judging various groups was very unique and typical of Didi, as this offers a long-term educational vision and continuous engagement with Dance.

When judging, we were made to observe students' exercises, core engagement and mark to suit. I was overwhelmed with the articulation and comments of the younger judges and realised why Didi wanted it this way.

Neuroscience research has proven that when we watch someone else's movements, the parts of the brain that direct our own physical movements are activated. Observation accelerates the learning process - while we were observing and critically reasoning, we were making ourselves more aware of the mistakes we often make and how we could work on them.

So the Summer Challenge was a total learning experience for the participants as well as the judges!"

"LET'S DANCE NOT FIGHT!"



Photo Courtesy: SBDC



Photo Courtesy: SBDC

A Youth and Community Project -

SBDC had been invited to be part of a great initiative by Paddington Arts and Impact Dance - **Let's Dance Not Fight!**

Following a 'socially distanced' sharing on 01 November 2020, one of our dancers, **Mithun Gill** writes his take on it -

"SBDC had the opportunity to help bring awareness to an issue that affects many in the country. Fighting in youths is at an all time high. I had an chance to address this issue - through dance.

As artists, it's important to help raise social issues through our art. Sharing the space with other dancers and artists helps bring a sense of community in dance. Sharing Kathak with an audience who may not have experienced it before was also very special.

This experience was one of sharing and observing - on how others address the same task and interpret it in their ways. I look forward to continuing SBDC's work with Youth and Dance."

MADRID TOUR



Photo Credit: Shreyashee Nag

In the middle of the restrictions, with risks, SBDC had a performance tour in **Madrid on 10 October 2020. Tulani Kayani-Skeef**, one of our Company's dancers shares her experience -

*"On Thursday, 08 October 2020, my fellow SBDC dancers **Jaina Modasia and Mithun Gill, our Guru, Sujata Banerjee (Didi) and I** flew to Madrid in Spain to perform! We ensured we took all necessary health and safety precautions.*

*Didi choreographed various pieces for the performance, which paid homage to the late **Legend Pandit Ravi Shankarji's 100th Birthday celebrations.***

*We performed at **Teatros del Canal** - the most famous "Dance House" in Spain. Spanish people showed great enthusiasm for dance and were respectful of the local health and safety rules, despite theatres being open. We were fortunate as **the show sold out** with 450 people in the audience. The Theatre worked in half its capacity for social distancing. **We received a spectacular response!***

*We had to **quarantine for 2 weeks** on return and I stayed with Didi, which was a bonus! Although being in quarantine could make anyone feel exhausted, it was rewarding for me - non-stop learning, cooking, watching Netflix, and Yoga. **I regained my mental strength - so the Madrid tour on the whole was a win-win!"***

STUDENT'S SUCCESS STORY



Photo Credit: Reenul Singh

One of SBDC's 16 year old Intermediate students, **Reenul Singh**, writes about her business venture **"Atara Jewellery"** that she started the middle of her GCSE's and the Global Pandemic. Read on -

"My Dad brought up the idea of starting a business. Initially, I had no idea what a business entailed - let alone knowing how to run one! I had a million questions staring at me with no answers - where do I find products, whom do I sell to, what do I even sell?"

*Yet, the idea intrigued me. With time and research, I fell more in love with the idea of starting my own **jewellery company** - I could use both my artistic & business interests, and enjoy it.*

*This experience has taught me so much about marketing, financial sensibility and the importance of **hard work and perseverance."***



Do you have a success story you'd like to share with your SBDC Family?
WRITE TO US AT
admin@sbdc-kathak.com

WHO WE ARE

Founder & Artistic Director:
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Teachers:
JAINA MODASIA, TULANI KAYANI-SKEEF
Newsletter Design: SHALINI RAO

" We wish you a safer, more peaceful and hopeful 2021!

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

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