

Guru Wickramasinghe Nritya Samrat Mahotsav 2026

Posted on

Celebrating the Legacy of Dance Sri Lanka's Unique Tribute to a Legendary Maestro



A Kathak performance.

By bridging the artistic worlds of Sri Lanka and India, the fourth edition of the Guru Wickramasinghe Nritya Samrat Mahotsav celebrates the enduring legacy of Jinadasa Wickramasinghe Maharaj, promotes artistic excellence, and opens new pathways for the future of classical dance.

Dance is far more than physical movement; it is a living expression of history, identity, spirituality, and human emotion.

Across generations, classical dance traditions have preserved the profound knowledge of great masters, carrying their artistic visions from one generation to the next.

In Sri Lanka, the Guru Wickramasinghe Nritya Samrat Mahotsav stands as a remarkable example of this enduring cultural legacy, bringing the rich tradition of Indian classical Kathak into the spotlight while celebrating the contribution of one of its most significant Sri Lankan exponents, Jinadasa Wickramasinghe Maharaj.

Organized by the Edgevin Vihan Dance Company, the Mahotsav returns in 2026, bringing Indian classical Kathak and Sri Lankan traditional dance takes the spotlight.

Honoring a Maestro

The Mahotsav is dedicated to Jinadasa Wickramasinghe Maharaj, the distinguished Sri Lankan Kathak guru whose artistic journey helped establish a lasting connection between Sri Lanka and the Lucknow Gharana of Kathak. A devoted disciple of Guru Achchan Maharaj Ji, Wickramasinghe dedicated his life to the study, teaching, and development of this sophisticated classical dance form. His contribution extended far beyond performance; as the creator of an Indian Kathak syllabus tailored for Indian students, he helped nurture generations of dancers. His legacy continues to shape future artists through the knowledge, discipline, and artistic values he imparted.



Dr. Ravibandhu Vidyapathy.

Vihanga Rukshan: Carrying the Legacy Forward

Behind the festival's vision is Vihanga Rukshan, the Founder and Artistic Director of the Edgevin Vihan Dance Company and Guru Vikram Singhe Gandharva Vidyalaya. A professional and highly accomplished Kathak and contemporary dance artist and choreographer, Vihanga has advanced studies in India and accolades from both Indian and Sri Lankan institutions.

Through the Edgevin Vihan Dance Company, Vihanga strives to promote Indian classical dance in Sri Lanka by creating opportunities for performance, education, and artistic exchange. The company provides a platform to nurture dancers, present meaningful productions, and introduce audiences to the depth and beauty of classical dance.

For Vihanga, the Mahotsav represents a responsibility to preserve the knowledge inherited from earlier masters. A significant initiative associated with the 2026 edition is his Sinhala translation of Kathak Nritya Mala, the Hindi-language sourcebook on classical Kathak compiled by Pandit Wickramasinghe Maharaj in 1984. By translating this work, Vihanga aims to make the maestro's foundational knowledge more accessible to current and future generations of Sri Lankan students.



Vihanga Rukshan, Founder and Artistic Director, Edgevin Vihan Dance Company.

The 2026 Edition: A Meeting of Artistic Traditions

The 2026 edition continues the Mahotsav's commitment to bringing together outstanding artists and celebrating the rich dance traditions of Sri Lanka and India. The festival features a unique exploration of classical Kathak alongside Sri Lanka's own Kandyan dance heritage, celebrating distinctive identities while exploring the artistic connections that unite them. This year, the festival is honored to feature Dr. Ravibandhu Vidyapathy, an eighth-generation bearer of a family tradition encompassing dance, drumming, and temple painting. Renowned for his contributions to traditional dance, choreography, and percussion, he has dedicated his career to preserving and developing Sri Lanka's traditional arts while bringing their richness to wider audiences.

In recognition of his invaluable contribution to the performing arts, Dr. Ravibandhu Vidyapathy will be felicitated at this year's Mahotsav. The evening will also feature his special production, ANUVRITTI – Bequeathal of a Legacy, which reflects the transmission of artistic knowledge, wisdom, and tradition across generations. The program will also feature a Kathak performance by Vihanga Rukshan and the Edgevin Vihan Dance Company team, reflecting the continuing journey of this classical dance tradition in Sri Lanka. The Mahotsav further highlights artistic excellence through the Nritya Samrat Samman (The Dance Empire Award), a lifetime achievement honor established in association with the festival. Previous recipients include distinguished artists such as Srimati Aditi Mangaldas, Srimati Sanjukta Sinha, Guru Upeka Chitrasena, and Guru Waidyawathi Rajapaksha.

Edgevin Vihan Dance Company invites audiences to experience an evening celebrating Indian classical and Sri Lankan traditional dance, honoring distinguished artists, and preserving an invaluable artistic heritage. Through the legacy of Guru Jinadasa Wickramasinghe, the vision of Vihanga Rukshan, and the artistry of Dr. Ravibandhu Vidyapathy, the Mahotsav celebrates a timeless truth: a master's legacy lives on through the art they impart and the generations who carry it forward.

Guru Wickramasinghe Nritya Samrat Mahotsav – Fourth Edition

November 29, 2026

Venue: Lionel Wendt Theatre, Colombo 7;

Time: 7pm

Performances: ANUVRITTI – by

Dr. Ravibandhu Vidyapathy

KATHAK – by Vihanga Rukshan and

the Edgevin Vihan Dance Company team

Tickets: Rs. 1,200, Rs. 2,000, Rs. 2,500,

Rs. 3,000, Rs. 5,000

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