



The group has performed on a number of occasions for social causes in different places. The group has had the honour of performing in universities, art and culture festivals, conferences and local community events .

According to the place, context, venue and time, the Mohanam group designs appropriate programmes and performances. It takes up the challenge to remain in a continuous creative growing process to invoke the specific quality of the here and now.



The Music House

The Music House is in *Thoppu Veedu*, a quiet coconut grove and a learning center for the youngsters in Sanjeevinagar village near Auroville. Here they practice and rehearse various performing arts.

The house is built in the traditional style. It serves as a platform for the youngsters to play and learn various sound and percussion instruments. It is also a musical laboratory wherein they experiment with different sounds for their dance and theater performances.

The learning garden offers the youth a deeper connection to nature and its cycles and helps to create environmental awareness and responsibility.



Mohanam Performing Arts Youth Group welcomes other performing arts youth groups around the world to collaborate and conduct workshops and classes for mutual learning and experimentations. The group is very enthusiastic to connect with like-minded youths involved in similar art and culture work.

Balasundaram is the leader of the group. He is a cultural and social activist with special interest in empowering the youth. In 2004, he participated in the international youth camp 'Surfing the Creative' in Boulder, Colorado, USA.



This has been a great source of inspiration for him. With the guidance of his mentors Aurelio of Mohanam Cultural Centre and Meliisa Michaels of Golden Bridge of Boulder, USA, he formed the Mohanam Performing Arts Youth Group.

Hailing from Sanjeevi nagar near Auroville and being an Aurovillian, he has been involved with Mohanam Cultural Centre since its founding in the year 2000. Balu believes in bringing peace and harmony to the world by involving the youth through travel exchange, knowledge and experience, building a youth network internationally and creating an awareness about local and global cultures.

For presentations, performances and workshops please contact us in the following address:

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Take up one idea. Make that one idea your life—think of it, dream of it, live on that idea. Let the brain, muscles, nerves, every part of your body, be full of that idea, and just leave every other idea alone. This is the way to success, and this is the way great spiritual giants are produced.

-Swami Vivekananda-



Mohanam Performing Arts Youth Group





Mohanam is an all pervasive harmonious raga which evokes the power of enchantment and attraction. It fulfillment of our aspiration for beauty and harmony.

Mohanam Cultural Centre presents this harmony through arts and culture. The center trains village children in Bharatnatyam, Carnatic singing, drawing, folk dance, HathaYoga, martial arts, theatre practice, toy making and local crafts. Along with these activities, the centre also offers personality development and leadership training programmes for village youth.



Our Mission

Mohanam firmly believes that young people play a significant role in addressing social issues and that a space should be provided for self-expression among them. We see art and cultural expression as a key medium for promoting the positive impact youth have on the world.

Our mission is to involve young people and provide them with a space where their energy and creativity can be channeled in a background that promotes the brotherhood and solidarity between them. At the same time, we strive to make them conscious of the problems facing humanity.



The group, through their arts and culture activities, not only tries to preserve the original culture but also raises awareness about social issues like HIV/AIDS, indigenous rights, sustainable development and agriculture, peace building, human rights, health, youth culture and empowerment and environment education.



Our People

Our performing youth group consists of young boys and girls from rural village backgrounds. In spite of their being raised in the under-privileged sections of the society and without much education, they possess knowledge and skill in their native arts and culture which makes them outstanding from other youths.

Our programmes

The boys' wing of the group performs both original Tamil folk dances *Kolattam* and *Thappattam*. The group has been trained well in the Tamil Martial art *Silambam*. They also perform the traditional Tamil folk theater art *Therukkoothu*.

As some of them are working in Svaram Musical Research Center in Auroville, they also get an exposure in musical improvisations with newly developed musical instruments.



The girls' wing performs the classical dance, *Bharatnatyam* and the folk dances *Karakaattam* and *Kummi*.

Seasonally, the group gives dance presentations in Auroville and other parts of the country. The group also participates in Cultural and Theater festivals.



Mohanam does not limit the training to only the native arts and culture. It also offers them the opportunities of learning various art forms from around the world (African dance, Contact Improvisation, Theater Improv, Five Rhythms..). The contact with Auroville, the international community project, presents them these opportunities which create a meeting ground between local and global cultures.

Mohanam invites international students, interns, volunteers and experts to offer workshops and short term courses for the youth of the region.

Through this, it is hoped to create a healthy blend of a reinvigorated traditional and modern contemporary culture.

