

## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Indian Dance Group to Perform "Sleeping Beauty"

BY DEBBY TEICH

**I**NDIAN CLASSICAL DANCE IS BEAUTIFUL, BUT IT can also be complicated and difficult for audience members to understand if they are not familiar with the storyline. The Rhythms School of Dance has created a new adaptation of the classic children's fairy tale "Sleeping Beauty" to help connect Indian traditions with other cultures. Performances will be held on August 31 and September 1 at the Rose and Alfred Miniaci Performing Arts Center in Davie.

"The problem with traditional Indian dance is that

it is abstract and obscure," said Artistic Director Ranjana Warier. "There are symbolisms and complex codes and if you are not familiar with all these details, it's hard to stay engaged. This dance drama puts customs into a story that people already know very well. Instead of highlighting the differences, the performance will show our similarities."

The Rhythms School of Dance received a \$25,000 grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation to help offset the cost of the two performances. "Few things like the arts can bring people together, providing the kinds of collective experiences that build great communities," said Dennis Scholl, VP/Arts at Knight Foundation. "By providing a hybrid performance, the Rhythms School of Dance will provide a way for our diverse community to connect and celebrate all that our various cultures have to offer."

As a 2012 Knight Arts Challenge Miami winner, Warier brought together a team of six professional Indian classical dancers and 40 advanced students for the production. The team includes members of

Local Indian dancers prepare for the upcoming performance of "Sleeping Beauty."

five other dance schools: Nrutyanjali School of Dance (Parkland), Vanee School of Dance (Miami), Nritya Surabhi School of Dance (Pembroke Pines), Narthana Dance Academy (Parkland) and Navarasa Dance Academy (Tampa). The group has been rehearsing for the past nine months.

The colorful and high energy show is ideal for all ages and has a surprise twist at the end. It includes English narration to help make the show easier to understand. All of the costumes were designed and stitched in India. Many of the props also come from India.

The grant also provides for workshops at local libraries, museums and other venues. They will include lectures and demonstrations to help demystify the complexity of traditional Indian storylines.

"We are hoping to break down the cultural barrier and attract people who have never seen a show like this," said Warier. "Our goal is to engage, educate and entertain."

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The Rose and Alfred Miniaci Performing Arts Center is located on the campus of Nova Southeastern University. Tickets are \$20, \$30 and \$40 and can be purchased by calling 954-462-0222 or at [www.miniacipac.com](http://www.miniacipac.com). For information on Rhythms School of Dance, visit [www.erhythms.net](http://www.erhythms.net), call 954-472 6004 or send an email to [info@erhythms.net](mailto:info@erhythms.net).

