

RITAM (AUROVILLE, INDIA) & KALARIGRAM (TAMIL NADU, INDIA) IN COPRODUCTION WITH  
WATER CARRIERS/PORTEURS D'EAU (RÉUNION, FRANCE)  
PRESENTS

ॐ BHŪ | EARTH

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The journey of a man looking for connection with himself and nature.  
Dance and theatre show inspired by the oldest martial art in the world: Kalaripayattu.

*Artistic direction : Philippe Pelen Baldini*



## A TRIBUTE TO MOTHER EARTH

### CONCEPT NOTE

India has a deep and ancient tradition of connecting with the Bhuthas (Five Elements): earth, water, fire, air and ether. The Bhuthas are universal. Through connecting with them, humans can reconnect with the origin and cradle of consciousness that is the source of all matter.

In this show we invoke the spirit of the BHU element (earth). The Kalari warrior carries, in his body, the memory of the earth. Through this process, we are able to reconnect to the pure origin that keeps him in motion with the heartbeat of the earth.

We create a dialogue between the earth and the body of the performers, music and the audience.



## STORY

'It wails, it shouts in his body. Something is suffocating... His skin bag feels too tight. Something is missing.. Some anger and violence are inside him. As far as he can remember, he always loved to fight... That's why when he meets the Kalaripayattu master, he thinks he will learn from him the secrets to become a great fighter. But in fact, the latter teaches him how to fight his demons, his fears, his ego. The master teaches him how to dance with the elements, earth, water, fire, air and ether as well as with the wild beasts. But will he let "his body become all eyes," always in a state of alertness, one with Nature, one with Shakti -- the deep feminine energy that makes everything move?

This is the journey of a man who discovers his deep union with Mother Earth (Bhu).

Beyond a story, this show invites the audience to an itinerary, accessible to everyone. A universal experience.



## PROCESS

- Bhu offers an interactive performance combining theatre, dance, traditional and contemporary music and Kalaripayattu.
- The process is led by Philippe Pelen Baldini and Thierry Moucazambo, and guided by master of Kalaripayattu: Sri Guru Lakshman Gurukkal.
- This show questions the body memory of the dancer, one with earth and Nature. It is an experimental play that uses both modern theatrical , choerographic tools and the traditional form of kalaripayattu to create an organic dance, a contemporary show. Connected to the Shakti (primordial or feminine energy) within the body of the warrior dancer, this artistic process develops traditional Kalari movement in a contemporary way.
- The performers are Kalaripayattu warriors / dancers/ healers / masters in energy. With them we experience origin of movement and theatrical act. We are looking for this experience of body "becoming all eyes" as they are used to say in Kalaripayattu wisdom. This happens when all the body is fully connected with his environment and nature.



## KALARIPAYATTU

Kalaripayattu is the world's most ancient martial art, and is dedicated to the five elements.

It is the origin of many forms of theatre, dance and martial art in Asia, such as Kathakali, Koodiattam, Kung Fu and many more.

The earliest Masters of Kalari were inspired by nature and took their forms from eight different animals: The Elephant, Horse, Lion, Wild Boar, Snake, Cat, Cock and Fish. These postures evolved into styles of combat and contemplation. For the creation of the artistic form of Bhu, Kalaripayattu is explored in its artistic form: 'Lasya Tatva'.

The Kalaripayattu masters are warriors as well as healers. The practice of Kalaripayattu involves intensive training in combat as well as healing techniques, using the energising potential of human touch.

## PRODUCTION TEAM



**BARBARA** (GERMAN, AUROVILLE), PROJECT HOLDER

Barbara is the founder of Ritam a wonderful place of nature shaped by herself and the community in the aim to regenerate the land and create a space for consciousness. Her practice is based on the integral yoga of Sri Aurobindo. She accompanies many people and artists who experience movement and energy.



**LAKSHMAN GURUKKAL** (INDIAN), PRODUCER AND KALARIPAYATTU EXPERT

Born into a traditional Kalari family, to Veerashri Sami Gurukkal and Sharda. He is the Founder and director of Kalarigram and director of Hindustan Kalari Sangam, Kerala. Appointed as Lecturer in Martial Arts, in Sri Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kaladi, Kerala. He along with his team conducted a spectacular Kalaripayattu show for 3 months in the 50th anniversary celebrations of Indian Independence in Japan.



**PHILIPPE PELEN BALDINI** (FRENCH, AUROVILLE), ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, DIRECTOR, CHOREOGRAPHER FOR BHU.

Theatre maker, founder of Water Carriers & International Talipot theatre. He has created and directed 27 shows, with dancers, actors, musicians and video creators from Indian Ocean, Africa, India and Europe. These shows have been performed in 82 countries, opera of Paris, theatre de La Ville of Paris and biggest venues and festivals in the world. His shows received many awards from Poland, Scotland, France, Italy, South Africa and many more.



**NIKHIL VARAGIRI** (INDIAN), CREATOR, AUTHOR, ARTIST, DANCER FOR BHU.

Kalaripayattu trainer, dancer, actor and disciple of Guru Lakshman Gurukkal. He has conducted various Kalaripayattu performances and workshops across India. He has worked as a choreographer in various Indian productions. He works as a Kalari teacher at Kalarigram.



**THIERRY MOUCAZAMBO** (FRENCH, AUROVILLE), ASSISTANT DIRECTOR & PERFORMER FOR BHU.

He has many different origins : Indian, Chinese and African. Actor-storyteller, dancer, singer, multi-talented performer. As student of Philippe Pelen Baldini, he founded with him Talipot Theatre and then the company Water Bearers. Since 1986, He was involved as a performer recognized in all the creations of Philippe Pelen Baldini.

## THE CAST



**NIKHIL VARAGIRI** (INDIAN)

Performer  
Kalari artist and Dancer



**THIERRY MOUCAZAMBO** (FRENCH, AUROVILLE)

Performer  
Dancer, Singer and Actor



**PRAKASH** (INDIAN)

Performer  
Musician, Kalari artist  
Dancer



**MADHU JAYAMURTHY** (INDIAN, AUROVILLE)

Performer  
Musician, Kalari artist,  
Dancer

**SWAROOP KANNAN** (INDIAN)

Performer  
Kalari artist and Dancer



**SURESH KALIYATH**

Musician,  
Performer, Kalari artist



## TECHNICAL TEAM

**JEAN LEGRAND**

Light Designer



**AURELIO C. HAMMER** (AUSTRIA, AUROVILLE)

Sound and  
music advisor



## RITAM

Ritam is a unit of Auroville.

It focuses on Yoga of the Earth and learning conscious evolution.

It's research on consciousness and energy work is based on the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother.

Bhū is Ritam's initiative to explore the intensive body practice of Kalaripayattu and it's science, in line with it's energy work. This contemporary exploration is a research of rhythms of Shakti in the field of arts: theatre, dance, music, video, painting and life.

## KALARIGRAM

- Kalarigram is a traditional school of Kalaripayattu and Ayurveda, founded by Guru Shri Lakshman Gurukkal, eldest son of Guru Veerashri Sami Gurukkal of Hindustan Kalari Sangam, Calicut, Kerala.
- Lakshman Gurukkal, the founder of Kalarigram has received numerous awards and national and international appreciations for it's outstanding achievements in the field of Kalaripayattu and Ayurveda. Many national and international universities have selected this school for the quality of it's teaching.
- Kalarigram also serves as a resource center located in a peaceful environment in the vicinity of Auroville and Pondicherry. With its authentic infrastructure, including a classic Kalari pit dug into the earth, Kalarigram has an identity of its own.
- This place aims to bring together the lifestyle of Kalari, ancestral Indian arts and spirituality.



## THE WATER CARRIERS COMPANY

- The company, based in Reunion Island, led by Philippe Pelen Baldini and Thierry Moucazambo, is a professional dance and theater company which stemmed from their previous company, the TALIPOT Theatre.
- For 30 years Philippe and Thierry presented creations inspired by the memory of the body, nature and the elements. These performances have been acclaimed with numerous awards. They were presented in more than 82 countries in prestigious venues such as l'opéra of Paris, the Théâtre de la Ville de Paris, the International Festival of Zurich (Switzerland), the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown (South Africa) the International Festival Tasmania (Australia), the French May Festival (Hong Kong), the Edinburgh Festival (Scotland), the Kontakt Festival in Torun (Poland).
- Moving beyond denial and loss, their creative process questions the notions of identity, memory and freedom. Their contemporary creations feed on various forms of traditional performing arts of Indian Ocean, India and Africa.



## ACTIONS IN AUROVILLE

This professional creative process is happening at Auroville and Kalarigram in Edeyanchavadi. The show is inspired by Kalaripayattu, and integral yoga of Sri Aurobindo and Mother. The aim of the show is to inspire people about Mother Earth and yoga of Earth and to empower young artists from Auroville and from villages around.

- Rehearsals in New Creation, Cripa, Auroville and Kalarigram (Edeyanchavadi)
- Performances in Auroville (Barathnivas or Cripa) for the community
- Performances for Auroville schools
- Performances in Kalarigram
- Workshops in Auroville (cripa). Dance, theatre, kalaripayattu
- Lectures in Auroville

## PARTNERS

Kalarigram | Water Carriers Company | Ritam | Auroville Arts Service | Hindustan Kalari Sangam | Aurodhan  
Yogishananda Peetham | New Creation | Svaram | Alliance Francaise Pondicherry | French Consulate in Pondicherry  
City of Saint-Denis, Reunion | Region Reunion | Conseil General Reunion | FEAC : Culture & Overseas Territories  
French Ministries | French Institute | French Institute in South Africa

## POTENTIAL PARTNERS

IFA | Sri Aurobindo Institute | Bharat Nivas | Adishakti | Cripa  
Stichting De Zaaier | Air Austral | AVIS

## PROJECT TIMELINE



## CONTACTS

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