

Artistic Team



Artistic Director, Eswari Raja is an accomplished dancer and choreographer with over twenty years of experience and a dedication to bringing Indian dance to the forefront of the dance arena. Born and raised in Houston, TX, she began her training as a child learning Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi, two formal disciplines of Indian classical dance. She later went on to pursue further training in India under the guidance of Dr. Vempati Chinna Satyam at the Kuchipudi Art Academy located in Madras. She spent several summers going through a rigorous program in dance, dance theory, and music. By the age of eighteen Eswari was performing internationally, teaching classes, and adding a number of Indian classical and Bollywood dance choreographies to her repertoire. Eswari has performed and choreographed for various organizations, charities, South Asian television networks, and conventions across the U.S. In addition, she has had the opportunity to collaborate with a variety of dance companies and perform in dance ballets across the nation. After training extensively in Indian dance for many years, Eswari grew an interest to venture out into other styles and began taking classes in modern, jazz, hip hop, and ballet. She later joined the Urban Indian Beat to experiment with fusion choreography and became an Artistic Director for the company. In 2004, Eswari founded the Mahira School of Dance and began teaching classes in Indian classical and Bollywood dances. Two years later, the school evolved into a professional performing company now known as the Mahira Dance Company. Utilizing her knowledge with the Indian dance world, Eswari is the brainchild behind Mahira.

Marketing Manager, Biju Jose brings to Mahira her creative vision and extensive dance experience with over twenty years of training in Kathak, Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi, Indian folk, hip hop, jazz, and modern. Biju's passion for dance created many opportunities to be involved in numerous productions as both a choreographer and as a dancer. As a hip hop dancer, she has performed with Houston's Planet Funk, and through her affiliation with the Urban Indian Beat, she has been exposed to the fusion of Indian classical and Western dance styles. Prior to joining Mahira, Biju also performed as a freelancer, presenting Indian classical dances for various shows and charity events. With a range of performances under her belt, including a recent venture in acting, and as an active board member of the Urban Indian Beat dance company, Biju is no stranger to the artistic world. Biju's combination of artistic talents and business savvy are the driving forces behind Mahira's success.



Performance Director, Julie Patel began her dance career as a child and was exposed to many international styles such as Indian folk, Kathak, African dance, Brazilian Samba, ballet, jazz, and flamenco. Originally from Florida, Julie was very active as a choreographer and performer at Tulane University. She choreographed and taught Bollywood, Gujurati Folk, and Bhangra dances for various events at Tulane as well as local organizations in Florida. She even had the opportunity to perform in the Endymion Parade at the annual Mardi Gras parade. Julie currently serves as the Performance Director for Mahira and is responsible for training the dancers and handling rehearsals. With her diverse dance background and excellent leadership skills, Julie is a valuable addition to Mahira.

Mahira
Dance Company