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Vision-Aid
A non-profit organization serving the visually disadvantaged

presents

Justice of The Anklets
Concept and choreography: Madurai Muralidaran

Sunday, July 18, 2010
3:00pm - 5:00pm
Sorenson Center For Arts

Designed by: Sudeshna Das
Tel: 1-630-364-9458
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Justice of the Anklets
the story

This dance drama is based on Silapathikaram, one of the five timeless masterpieces of Tamil literature. It was written by Elango Adiga, an author known for his poetic brilliance.

The story is set in the first century A.D. in a town by the Cauvery river, and revolves around the lives of the Tamils in the Chola and Pandyan Kingdoms.

The story starts with the happy times shared by Kovalan and his wife Kannagi. But the happy times come to an end when Madhavi, a dancer with both skill and beauty, enters their lives. Unable to resist the beauty, talent and charm of Madhavi, Kovalan soon forgets his wife Kannagi.

Madhavi captures the heart of Kovalan, who enraptured by her beauty and dance, settles down with her to a life filled with dance, poetry and music, and fathers her child.

As the story unfolds Madhavi participates in Intha Vizha, the annual festival in the Chola Kingdom. Her scintillating performance captures the heart of all the spectators. But soon after the festival fate changes the blissful life that Madhavi and Kovalan lead.

One moonlit night, the lovers are lost in each other as they sit on the banks of the river Cauvery. The beauty of the moon and the gentle breeze from the water intoxicates Kovalan’s senses. He sings in admiration of nature but Madhavi thinking that he is singing about another woman counters his song with her own and sings about a non-existent lover. This infuriates the possessive Kovalan and he leaves her in a fit of rage and returns to his wife Kannagi.

Kovalan is back with Kannagi but having spent all his money on Madhavi, has nothing to live on. Kannagi asks him to take her gold anklet and sell it so they could use the money. Reluctantly Kovalan takes it and sets out to the city of Madurai, where he hopes to sell it to a goldsmith.

Meanwhile, the Queen of the Pandyan Kingdom sends her anklet to the Pankollu, the goldsmith, for repair. The greedy goldsmith wants to steal it and is desperately thinking of a way to do so. When Kovalan arrives at his doorstep with an anklet similar to that of the queen, the opportunity presents itself to him. He decides to keep the Queen’s anklet and frame Kovalan for stealing it.

The scheming goldsmith sends word to the King that Kovalan has stolen the Queen’s anklet. The enraged King looks at the anklet and orders Kovalan’s execution.

When Kannagi hears her husband was executed for stealing the Queen’s anklet, she is outraged and proceeds to the king’s court in a state of shock, disbelief, sorrow and anger.

She proves her husband’s innocence by throwing and breaking her other anklets, which splits into pieces scattering precious gems. The King states in disbelief at the sight of the gems. The Queen’s anklet had pearls in them while Kannagi’s anklet had precious gems!

Unable to accept the fact that he had wrongly executed an innocent man, the King falls from the throne and dies on the spot, followed shortly by the Queen. But Kannagi is not appeased. Her wrath turns into a burning fire that spreads through Madurai. The story ends with the mighty capital city being reduced to ashes.

Even today, Kannagi is worshipped as a Goddess, who did not rest till she avenged the injustice to her husband.
INNOVATION: Camera Mouse
COST: Rs 2,200
WHAT IT DOES: Helps those with poor vision scan and read text messages, and see pictures from any written matter. It is also useful in viewing three-dimensional objects.

Seventeen-year-old SaiLaxmi (sic) is a Class XII student who is nearly 90% blind and cannot see normally. Yet she can read small print and is learning to use the computer with camera mouse. For a staggering two crore Indians, camera mouse is a potential magnifier with a difference as it enables those with poor vision to continue rather than miss out on the joy of reading small print material in books, journals and newspapers.

Besides helping those with poor vision scan and read text messages, and see pictures from any written matter, it is also useful in viewing three-dimensional objects. It also helps people with normal vision to closely examine documents and objects up to 20 times in true color and proportions. Consequently, it is also useful in critical examination of questionable material and distinguishing the genuine from the fake-be it coins, currency notes, handwriting, cheques and signatures-making it a handy forensic tool.

The distinct advantage of the camera mouse is its simplicity and relatively low cost of Rs 2,200. The other advantages are ruggedness of construction, low power consumption, comparable to a night lamp (less than 10 watts), and total safety (low voltage DC). “The unique feature of the camera mouse is the facility for reading as well as writing by a low vision person. Full colour projection, automatic internal lighting are the other features,” says Mani Prasad, Sanyasi Raju, 65, an alumnus of IIT, Khuragpur, and a retired engineer who founded the Vision Aid Charitable Services Society, Visakhapatnam, and developed the device.

Work on the camera mouse began in June 2006. It took a year to design and develop the prototype, and later make it acceptable to the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research that offered a grant of Rs 50,000 to meet the costs that included designing, tooling, testing, buying material and hiring labour. Thereafter, it took another six months to begin the production. “Our challenge at that time was to find quality components in small quantities,” says Raju.

Electronic devices employing magnification and illumination for the visually impaired have become available in the last 10 years in developed societies, especially in Europe and the US. The prices of these devices, however, range between Rs 30,000 and Rs 50,000, making them patently unaffordable to average Indians. The high cost is due to the producers’ assumption that the select band of users will not mind a one-time high expenditure for a dare physical necessity. Further, the producers are also treating this as a luxury niche product and not a social necessity.

Raju, therefore, has conceived and developed the camera mouse as a low-cost solution without compromising on features or technology. While his Vision Aid Charitable Services Society supplies it at Rs 2,200 on non-profit basis, the cost is reduced further by offering a subsidy to disadvantaged low-income users.

Significantly, he has applied for a design registration just to protect potential users from spurious copies. “We have not attempted to patent the circuit design because we want the idea to proliferate and would welcome if any improvements or better models are designed by others. We have absolutely no commercial or profit motive on this,” asserts Raju. This is why adaptations and modifications are also being made. His Vision Aid Society is offering camera mouse along with a TV monitor to public libraries in order to facilitate their virtual large print sections, which will enable senior citizens and people with poor vision to read any small print book or magazine available there.

“Libraries abound have separate large print sections for this purpose and such a set-up in Indian libraries would cost around Rs 5 lakh. Our virtual large print set-up would be available within Rs 15,000. If the Government adopts this, it will revolutionise reader-friendly service by the libraries to senior citizens and low-vision persons,” says Raju.

His feat aside, Raju is constantly striving for modification and improvements to help the visually impaired. “We have developed technical knowhow packages for Vision Enhancement, Vision Rehabilitation and Pedagogy methods for teaching computers to blind and low vision persons. We are constantly working in these areas in order to create opportunities for the disabled,” explains Raju, who received the B.J. Modi Award of the National Society for Equal Opportunities for Handicapped in 2009.

What’s more? The Vision Aid helpline is always ready to accept mail or phone orders for the camera mouse which can be sent to customers anywhere in India within 48 hours with a warranty for the device. This sounds like an idea whose time has finally come.
**FACT SHEET**

**Non-Invasive Delivery of Drugs to the Eye**

EyeGate Pharma is focused on treating unmet ocular medical needs with the EyeGate® II Ocular Drug Delivery System, a non-invasive drug delivery technology that has the potential to treat multiple ocular diseases.

### Corporate Overview and Strategy

EyeGate Pharma is a privately held, venture-backed specialty pharmaceutical company using its proprietary iontophoresis technology to safely and non-invasively deliver therapeutics to the anterior and posterior chambers of the eye. EyeGate Pharma is addressing the need for an alternative mode of ocular drug delivery; there are safety and efficacy drawbacks posed by current ocular delivery applications, such as eyedrops, injections or implants, which are hindered by low bioavailability, collateral toxicities, sight-threatening infections and/or retinal damage.

EyeGate Pharma is the first company to demonstrate clinical significance utilizing iontophoresis for the local treatment of ocular conditions.

EyeGate Pharma is developing an internal pipeline of products, including its lead candidate for dry eye syndrome. The company is pursuing partnerships with pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies that are marketing or developing products for serious eye diseases such as age-related macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy. EyeGate Pharma offers a patient-friendly alternative to safely and non-invasively deliver drugs to the eye.

### Technology

EyeGate Pharma’s transscleral (transmitted across the sclera, or white outer membrane of the eye) iontophoresis delivery platform, the EyeGate® II Delivery System, was designed by ophthalmologists based on over ten years of research and development and a strong body of scientific and proof-of-concept data. The technology was developed at the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute at the University of Miami and optimized by EyeGate Pharma. EyeGate Pharma’s iontophoresis technology is coulomb-controlled, which means that it regulates each unit of drug delivered for treatment. Its annular design and electrode composition uses a low voltage electrical current to safely and effectively deliver a wide range of therapeutics.

### Clinical Programs

EyeGate Pharma’s lead internal clinical candidate, EGP-437 (dexamethasone phosphate ophthalmic solution), is currently being developed to treat dry eye, uveitis, allergic conjunctivitis, and other inflammatory conditions. The product employs the company’s proprietary iontophoresis technology to deliver an approved, well-prescribed drug to the eye. In 2009, EyeGate Pharma completed Phase II clinical studies in dry eye and uveitis. Results of the dry eye study showed significant findings in multiple symptoms and signs and had a rapid onset of action. Results of the uveitis study are expected in Q4 2009.

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The Performers

Choreography & Production: Madurai R. Muralidharan

Madurai R. Muralidharan is a well-known performing dancer, dance-guru, composer, and musician, who has composed over 1200 varnas, produced several dance dramas and dance music albums in all the 35 styles, which is unparalleled in the field of Bharatanatyam.

Abieet Dhill had her Arangetram in 2003 under the tutelage of Ranjani Saigal. She will be a senior at Barse College, where she is majoring in Biochemistry and double minoring in Dance and American History. She has choreographed and performed pieces in multiple styles.

Aditi Bhavandkar studied Bharatanatyam under Smt Vimala Naik (Mumbai) and Smt Sudha Bhude Chapkar (Pune) and performed her Arangetram in 1996. She is currently working as a Software Engineer at MathWorks in Natick, MA. She is continuing her Bharatanatyam training under Smt. Poornima Rudhir.

Amrita Saigal had her Arangetram in 2002 under the tutelage of Ranjani Saigal. She has won several awards including the prestigious NPAA award for dance. She just graduated from MIT where she also served as the President of MIT-Naty.

Neha Pillai is an eighth-grader at Advanced Math and Science Academy, Marlborough, MA. She has been learning Bharatanatyam since 2015 under the guidance of Jayshree Chathraja for the past 5 years. She recently completed a certification course in Bharatanatyam from Alagappa Performing Arts Academy, India.

Nithisha Prasad is a student of Jayshree Chathraja and has been learning Bharatanatyam for seven years. She has performed in many programs and received a certificate in Performing Arts from Alagappa Performing Arts Academy. She will be a freshman at Westford Academy next fall.

Sarasvath Chidambaram is currently a student of Mrs. Somuva Ramathan of Lexington and also a student of Mrs. Mouli Pal of Wilmington, MA learning Guru Khojikaran Mahapara style Odissi. A software engineer by training he enjoys working for various charity organizations.

Saranvathi Puram is currently receiving advanced training from Guru Smt. Jayshree Chathraja. She has presented her own piece to the OA Bay Area audience to much acclaim. She will be a sophomore at MIT in the fall where she is also a member and choreographer for MIT-Naty.

Shripryta Naaraj Moorthy studied Bharata Natyam under Smt. Revathy Kumar (director of Akbanka Natya Sala, Ellicott City, MD), and had her arangetram in 1996. In 2000, Priya co-founded MIT Natya, one of the first collegiate classical Indian dance organizations.

Subha Kannath, a dancer and a Software Developer, has received training in Bharathanatyam and Mohiniyattam under the tutelage of Smt.Kalamandalam Ambika & Smt. Kalamandalam Premalatha. She performed her Arangetram in 1992 and currently trains under Jayshree Chathraja.

Sujatha Meyyappan is an accomplished dancer and the director of Kelam Academy of Dance in Töngbörö, MA, in addition to being a software engineer. She had her training under guru Late Kalaramanm. T.K Rajalakshmi ammal and Guru Smt. Subalimithi Chandrasekar.

Susmith Rajanala had her Arangetram in 2009 and has been learning dance from Ranjani Saigal. She has danced at various programs and fundraisers over the years. Susmith will be a sophomore at Yale and Greensough School in the fall where she is a member of the dance team.

Thara Thatcherry had her arangetram under the guidance of Smt Devasiti and Kalamandalam Kunhiraman. She continues her Bharatanatyam training from Smt Jayshree Chathraja and Mohiniyattam from Kum Naha Parikh. An architect by training, she teaches dance to her two daughters.

Thomas Rajan is a creative director of Aparna Academy of Arts in Bellingham, MA. She has performed in Singapore, Malaysia and India. She had her training with Smt. Malathy Theodhars, Chennai and later from Viswakala Bharati Smt. Neila Sathyalingam, Singapore.

Thiyaya Ragupathy has been studying Bharata Natyam under Smt. Jothi Raghavan for ten years. She is a graduating, Aston-Brookshiege Regional High School senior and plans to continue dancing as Pre-Med student at UMass Amherst.