

‘Natya Kala Acharya’ for Malavika Sarukkai

‘Excellence and holistic approach to art are her hallmarks and she is never afraid to innovate’



Susan Tuller, Deputy Consular General, Consulate General of United States, in Chennai, presenting the title to Bharatanatyam exponent Malavika Sarukkai at The Music Academy's 11th dance festival. Academy president N. Murali in the picture. — PHOTO: B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI: Renowned Bharatanatyam dancer and guru Malavika Sarukkai was on Tuesday conferred the title of ‘Natya Kala Acharya’ at the inauguration of The Music Academy’s 11th dance festival here.

Susan Tuller, Deputy Consular General, Consulate General of United States in Chennai, who presented the title, said this was her first Margazhi season and that she was awed by the scores of ‘sabhas’ in the city that have thousands of concerts. She congratulated Ms. Sarukkai on winning the title. The US Consulate here

enjoyed bringing together South Indian and American artistes, she added.

Academy president N. Murali said Ms. Sarukkai was a wonderful exponent of Bharatanatyam. “Excellence and holistic approach to art are her hallmarks and she is never afraid to explore and innovate. To her, innovation is only an organic growth from within,” Mr. Murali said. The 2017 edition of the dance festival will feature 26 performances over seven days comprising a variety of dance genres, including Bharatanatyam, Odissi, Kathak, Kuchipudi and Mohiniattam, he said.

In her acceptance speech,

Ms. Sarukkai said it was an honour to be recognised by the Music Academy which has played a pivotal role in the resurgence of Bharatanatyam from the 1930s. She acknowledged with gratitude her gurus and her mother Saroja Kamakshi, who anchored her dance journey.

“Classical dance is a gift — both precious and vulnerable — that must be nurtured and supported for it represents the heritage of India and requires a conducive ecosystem to survive and flourish,” she said. The responsibility to do this lay with sponsors, philanthropists, organisers, artistes, media, dance enthusiasts.