

**RICHAA 2025**  
**Ramana Indian Cultural Heritage Archives and Awareness**

**A Project by Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning**  
**Supported by CSR from TATA ELXSI LIMITED**

**RICHAA** is a unique initiative of RMCL Bengaluru, which brings about a symbiosis of the Indian Cultural Heritage with the teachings of Ramana Maharshi which are the essence of that heritage. Sri Ramana Maharshi's life, teachings and poetic works invite one and all to partake of the rich bounty of this heritage and further proclaim that it is indeed the birth-right of each and every one to savour and continuously enjoy this experience. Large numbers of people across the world are finding their lives touched and transformed by the teachings of Ramana Maharshi and by the values epitomized in his life and works. Through this they are getting insights into the vast beauty and glory of the Indian Heritage.

Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning is a non-profit registered society started in 1979. It is inspired by the life and teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi. In its more than four decades of service in the field of Indian Heritage preservation and dissemination, the Centre has held 48 National Seminars, 4 International Seminars, 100 Cultural Festivals and several hundred programs of music, dance and drama. The Centre is a grantee organization recognized as a premier cultural institution by the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India, which has supported the Centre's Cultural Archives Project as well as its Auditorium and Cultural Education Block. Practically all of the Centre's 150 dance dramas and musical creations have been produced with support from the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India for more than four decades now.

The Centre is honoured to take Indian Cultural Heritage Awareness free of cost to under privileged school children every year for the past decade through its project RAISE. Currently the Centre educates more than 1000 children in Indian Heritage and provides them with a platform for Excellence through Self Awareness.

**Five Contributions of the RICHAA project**

There are five contributions to the society that stem from the RICHAA program

1. Preserving and Rejuvenating Ramana Maharshi Centre of Learning's four decades Archive of Indian Cultural Heritage
2. Creation of New Cultural Material – videos of music, dance and theatre
3. Special Inputs for Children
4. Awareness through online sharing of the Archives and the New Material
5. Global Online Contest and Awards

***The Significance of Preserving and Rejuvenating the Archives:***

The first part of the project is to digitize a major portion of the Archives in order to preserve it, further to clean, edit and rejuvenate it, thereby making it available to posterity and also currently to the maximum number of people. The Archives of Ramana Maharshi Centre is a rich treasure which includes several facets and genres of Traditional Indian Theatre, importantly Carnatic Classical Music, Traditional Devotional Music, Indian Classical Dance – Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi, Natya –Indian Dance Theatre or Dance Drama.

- **Carnatic Classical Music**

**Tradition and Innovation:** Every tradition is kept alive both by continuing it as well as by innovations that are yet in line with the tradition. RMCL has taken up the pioneering work of researching and documenting the literary compositions of Sri Ramana Maharshi and other contemporary literary works

in classical Sanskrit and Tamil related to the life and teachings of Ramana Maharshi. These have been set to music along the lines of the Carnatic Classical tradition, incorporating all aspects of the Carnatic tradition, thus rejuvenating the tradition with a significant new repertoire. *The Archives of RMCL have renderings by practically every eminent Carnatic Classical singer over three decades from 1980 to 2010.*

**Excellence and Expanse:** 30 eminent music directors and numerous leading music exponents have contributed to this body of work. The emphasis in this genre which is called ‘Ramananjali Sangeetham’ is on the spiritual essence of Indian Heritage as also on taking this heritage back to the masses, freeing it of elitist trends. *The Archives are a testimony to the excellence of the Indian*

*Heritage and a record of the musical genius of South India in the last two decades of the 1900s.*

**Vast repertoire:** Presently the Centre has built a repertoire of 2000 new songs on this single subject. These have been set to music in Carnatic Classical Music, Devotional and Folk styles, giving birth to a whole new stream of music. *The Archives of 2000 songs is a treasure to be preserved and shared.*

- **Literature**

**Pan India and Global awareness:** In the new repertoire of 2000 songs of Ramananjali Sangeetham, the compositions of the Maharshi are in primarily in Tamil, with a few in Telugu, Malayalam and Sanskrit. Those of poet saints like Mugavai Kanna Muruganar, Sadhu Om and Shuddhananda Bharati are in chaste literary Tamil. The compositions of Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni are in mellifluous Sanskrit. To share these poetic compositions of rare literary and spiritual quality across India and the world, they have been translated into various Indian languages such as Telugu, Kannada, Hindi, Gujarati, Marathi, Malayalam, and also into English. More than 50 poets of our times have contributed to this body of new poetic literature. *The Archives include the poetic contributions of several eminent poets of 20th century in Kannada, Telugu, Hindi and English.*

- **Bharatanatyam**

**Horizontals and Verticals:** While the music repertoire has been taken in- depth in a vertical manner, the songs have been also been the seed and inspiration to take this work across other genres of Indian Theatre. A new repertoire based on Ramananjali Sangeetham has been developed in the Bharatanatyam format as well, opening the beauty of these valuable literary compositions to the world of Indian classical dance. Some compositions have been created in Kuchipudi as well. *The Archives include dance performances by several eminent Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi artistes and a few in other classical genres such as Kathak and Odissi which are a great inspiration for all time to come.*

- **Theatre**

**Unique Contribution:** The Theatre explorations of Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning in the past four decades has led to the production of 150 dance dramas that are in line with the holistic theatre tenets of Bharata Muni in Natya Shastra. These include drama, dance, music and arts and crafts. *The Archives are enriched by videos of 150 dance dramas and two television serials, one of 13 episodes and another of 26 episodes, each in four languages, having directors of eminence, Dr.Sarada Natarajan, Dr.Ambika Kameshwar, Sri H.T.Nagendra and Sri P.Seshadri.*

***Vast Scope for Creation of New Material:***

Once the Archives are available in digital format, there is a practically infinite possibility of creating several formats of new material. The following will be undertaken this year under the project.

- A weekly song - Producing 52 songs as videos with picturization and other embellishments like script, notation etc. making each a complete, self-sufficient document.
- A weekly dance - Producing 52 dance numbers with subtitles.
- A monthly Theatre input - Producing 12 Dance dramas in newly edited format
- A monthly concert – Editing and presenting 12 music/dance concerts
- A monthly talk – Editing and presenting 12 talks from the National and International Seminars

***Special Inputs for Children:***

Right from 1981, through Ramana Bala Kendra classes, and more so in the last decade, the Centre has been taking Indian Cultural Heritage in an extensive manner to children. With a view to make this appealing to children a body of Rhymes and Songs has been created. These have been enacted from time to time in the Centre's Summer Camps and RAISE programs. The availability of the Archives of these programs will provide insights to create professional videos of the same.

- Producing 12 videos of Indian Heritage Rhymes and Songs. These will have the theme of Self-awareness as their essence. They will be presented using traditional attires wherever appropriate and backdrops to inculcate a love for the Indian Heritage in children.
- Producing 4 plays by/for children – one for each quarter of the year.

***Awareness through Sharing the Archives and New Material:***

The Archives that are preserved and renewed and the new material will be brought into the public domain through:

- The Centre's YouTube Channel.
- The Centre's website.
- The creation of a digital library and/or App for the music, dance, drama and children's productions.
- Sharing of reels, shorts and other audio-visual formats in Social-Media.
- Sourcing and appointing a team for online production and promotion.

***Global Online Contest and Awards:***

The 'TATA ELXSI- Ramananjali Awards for Cultural Excellence' could be instituted. These Awards will be given through the holding of Global Online Contests in different spheres of Indian Cultural Heritage, especially those based on the Archival and new material being brought into the public domain through this project like Carnatic Classical Music, Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi, Theatre, and Arts and Crafts.

- Ramana Maharshi Centre has held an All-India cultural contest in the year 1979. Subsequently, from 2000 to 2015 the Centre held Inter-school contests for children in music, dance, drama and other aspects of Indian Heritage in Bangalore, Chennai and Tiruvannamalai. Lakhs of children participated and benefitted from the awareness so created.
- In 2013-2014 the Centre conducted its first Global Online Contest 'Ramananjali Awards' which met with a good response. In 2015-2016, in collaboration with Sri Sankara TV, the Centre ran an Online Global Contest and Fest with two weekly episodes which was immensely well received.
- Based on the above experience, this is seen to be one of the best ways to promote interest and participation in the Indian Heritage at the same time bringing heightened cultural awareness among people of all ages across the world.

***Why RICHA?***

Preserving Archives of intangible cultural heritage such as traditional knowledge, oral histories, music, dance, drama, and craftsmanship has several benefits and sustainable developmental goals.

- Educating and inspiring.
- Promotes respect for diversity and creates a vibrant cultural ecosystem that promotes unity while celebrating diversity.
- Offers numerous social benefits such as strengthening cultural identity and encouraging social cohesion.
- Fosters intergenerational dialogue
- Preserves human history
- Gives the experience of the collective psyche of a tradition

## **RICHAA Strategies**

### **Expertise**

- Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning has been working in the field of Indian Heritage Awareness for four decades now.
- Works in collaboration with several artistes of eminence in the fields of music, dance and theatre in Chennai and Bangalore.
- Has three senior artistes and three supporting artistes in the fields of dance and music on its rolls for more than two decades. Four TAHD Certificate holders
- Has close association with experts in the technological area of audio and video production through its work on the production of more than 100 audio cassettes and its television serials on Doordarshan and Sri Sankara TV (the former 13 and 26 episodes each in four languages and the latter 165 episodes in two languages)
- 15+ years of experience of working with children through Theatre Arts for Holistic Development TAHD.
- Four decades of experience in Theatre techniques and working with children through theatre.
- Expertise in conducting mega cultural events including global online contests.
- Continuous training in methodology
- Powered by self - enquiry sessions
- A vibrant YouTube channel with daily and weekly content that has more than 1 Lakh hours of viewing.

### **Outcomes of RICHAA**

- Preservation of 200 hours of Indian Cultural Heritage
- Acquiring equipment for audio and video recording and editing.
- Production and uploading from Archives of 52 songs, 52 dances, 12 dance dramas, 12 music concerts and 12 talks.
- Production and uploading of 12 rhymes and 4 children's plays.
- Creation of a Digital Library for creating awareness of the material uploaded.
- Conducting a Global Online Contest based on the Cultural Archives and instituting Awards for the same.