

**B E I N G**

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# **WOMAN**

FEBRUARY 2015

A LIFESTYLE &  
FASHION MAGAZINE

**BRAJ KI  
HOLI  
&  
CARNIVAL  
IN GOA:**

GREAT  
CELEBRATIONS  
OF COLOR, JOY  
AND MUSIC

**BEING  
SHALLU JINDAL**

TALKS ABOUT HER LIFE, FAMILY,  
PHILANTHROPY AND HER  
DEVOTION TO DANCE.

**WOMEN AT SEA:**  
A LUCRATIVE CAREER  
IN MERCHANT NAVY

**SEE A FABULOUS 'YOU'  
THIS 14TH FEB**  
-WITH 14 SUPER FOODS  
-EXOTIC DIY SKIN CARE SCRUBS AND  
PACKS

**STYLE  
STUNNERS**

AT THE GOLDEN  
GLOBE AWARDS  
2015

**TATTOOS:**  
A GREAT WAY TO BE  
TRENDY AND SHOW YOUR  
INDIVIDUAL STYLE.



BEING

# WOMAN

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## BEING IN FOCUS



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# BEING SHALLU JINDAL

Grace of a swan,  
heart of gold and soul  
of a devoted artist

*-Aastha Banga Khandpur*

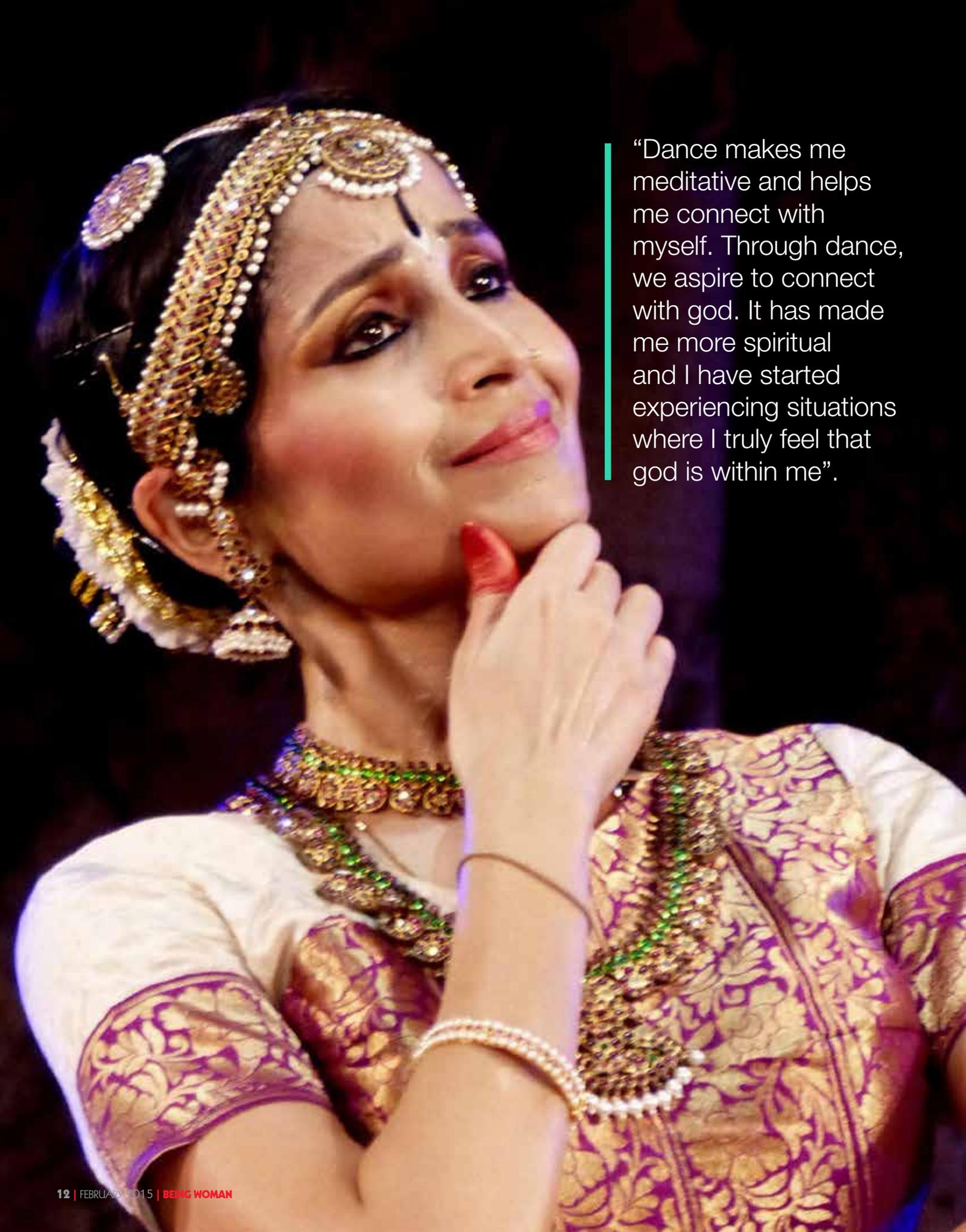
Jindal Power and Steel; just the mention of the name commands respect. Being the wife of an important politician and business magnate does give you access to a position of influence. But as they say 'with great power comes great responsibility'; and Shallu is a perfect personification of this phrase.

She has carved a niche for herself in a field which requires sincerity, skill and most of all perseverance. Over the years, Shallu's efforts have helped her firmly establish herself as one of the most acclaimed Kuchipudi exponents. She has gone a step ahead and is working towards making the art form more accessible, both to the audience and to budding artists.

As I walked into the Jindal House, a residence that has the reputation of being one of the showplaces of the country, I was surprised at the warmth the place exuded as I was expecting a mansion filled with artefacts and ornate furniture. There was no butler, but Shallu herself at the entrance. Her daughter, Yashasvini, was animatedly talking to her grandmother in the front parlour. The house itself was a work of art; but more than a house, it felt like home where a close knit family lives. The fact that it was strewn with family photographs, mementos and a beautiful collection of books, added to the aura.



“We are blessed to be women because we have been chosen by god to experience the miracle of birth and bring a new life into the world”.



“Dance makes me meditative and helps me connect with myself. Through dance, we aspire to connect with god. It has made me more spiritual and I have started experiencing situations where I truly feel that god is within me”.

Shallu is every bit as charming as she looks in her pictures. Her dedication towards dance and spiritual awareness that comes from worship of art is evident from her personality and her thoughts. As she talks about her journey in her soft lilting voice, she unravels the story of a woman who has set exemplary precedents for the generations to come.

### Journey from small town child to an industrialist's wife

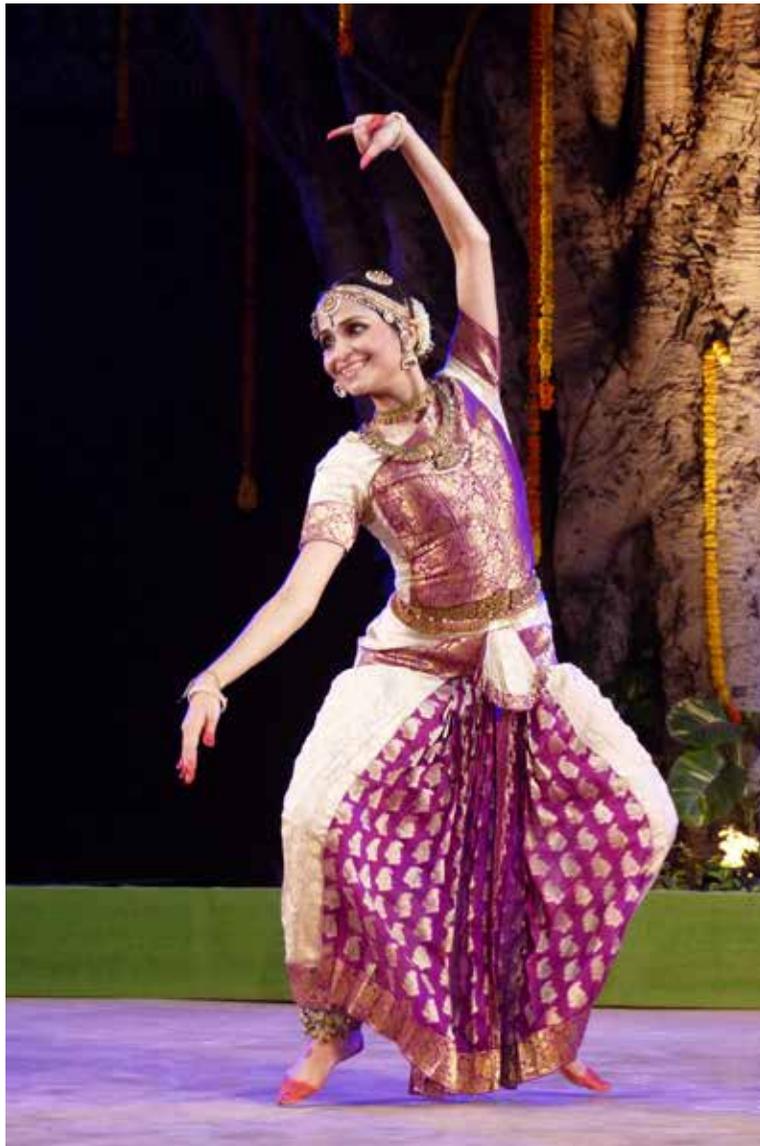
I had a typical small town kind of childhood in Ludhiana. My mother was very keen on me learning a form of art, so I learnt Kathak and won many awards and accolades for it. After my graduation my family took a conscious decision to move from Ludhiana to Mumbai because terrorism was on the rise in Punjab. I studied business management and fashion design for a year in Mumbai and then went to London to pursue a two year course in interior design. After returning from London I immediately got married and then dance became a distant dream.

I got busy with being a wife and used to help Naveen with work. Naveen had just set up a few plants in Chhattisgarh and that was where my journey with social initiatives started. We set up schools and I got involved with corporate social responsibilities. In spite of all this, I was clueless about who the real Shallu was and wanted to find my true self.

### Finding my true calling

A divine sort of intervention helped me find my path. When I was thirty-three years of

age, I had gone to Tirupati Balaji for darshan where I first met Raja and Radha Reddy who then invited me to learn Kuchipudi dance from then. It was just out of the blue. My children were very young and I had no idea about how it was going to change my life. Even though I had a dance



background, Kuchipudi was an unknown territory. I started learning the dance from thirteen years ago and today, my identity as a dancer is most precious to me. Since I resumed dancing, I have become a happier, evolved and a balanced person.

Dance makes me meditative and helps me connect with myself. Through dance, we aspire to connect with god. It has made me more spiritual and I have started experiencing situations where I truly feel that god is within me. In my performances, I get transported to a zone of mind consciousness where everything goes blank; the only thing that exists is the spirit of dance reaching out to the divine.

### Taking the 'rasa' of Kuchipudi beyond the language barrier

Kuchipudi is a cosmic dance form which has a beautiful amalgamation of Tandava and Lasya. Many of us like to believe that it originated from Lord Shiva. Since Kuchipudi started in Andhra Pradesh, the recitals are mostly in Telugu and Sanskrit. Most of my Kuchipudi performances were in the North of India and although my audience loved the recitals they were unable to connect with the gist of the art because of the language barrier. So, to enable them to get maximum 'Ananda' and 'Rasa' out of the recital, I started performing in Hindi, English and Urdu while keeping the principles of Natya Shastra intact. I have performed on Meerabai bhajans, Sufi Nazams by Abida Parveen and even on a poem by APJ Abdul Kalam and my next performance would be on a Punjabi Sufi

Kalam by Bulle Shah.

I really want the new generation to connect with the beauty of art and to help them do that, I am in process of launching Jindal centre for arts in New Delhi and Odisha.



“Follow your dreams, work hard and never give up because if you work hard and be passionate about your aim, you will certainly achieve it and make your life mean something.”.

I would also like to encourage underprivileged children to learn music, dance and art. We will give them scholarships and help them secure employment in that field. This is my way of sending out a message to the government to help the cause of artists and revive our culture.

### People tend to get judgemental about me because of my background

A typical day in my life starts with spending time with my children. My son is studying in US now but after my daughter leaves for school, I do my Puja and go for my dance practice which continues till 1PM. After that I attend meetings and devote time to the foundations I have been working for.

I like to lead a very quiet and simple life. If someone comes to attend my recital or is attending a CSR event, they would know me. But If I go out on the street, hardly anyone would recognize me. The other day I had gone for an event to talk about my book 'India- An alphabet ride' and I was just standing there with my publisher when a camera person came and said – "Which one of you is Shallu Jindal? I need to put a mike on her."

On the other hand, when I started giving recitals, people used to come with a mind-set of 'Oh, she is a rich woman. She will just come onstage in a nice costume; will move a bit and leave.' However, after a couple of years that perception has changed. I personally feel that, no amount of money can make me a good dancer. Its only the effort, emotion and passion that I put into my performance that will help the audience relate to me and make them come back for my next performance. I am very grateful to God for the fact that, there are people who genuinely appreciate my art and look forward to my recitals.

### Glorifying philanthropy defeats the purpose behind it

Naveen and I are really believe that God has been very kind to us and are thankful for every blessing that has been bestowed upon us. We try our best to share the goodwill with all but I do have an internal dialogue about why we and not every person have been given so much.

Many astrologers say that it's your karma that decides what your next life will be like and that's why it's important to be generous. But, I strongly disagree with that thought process. If you quantify what you are doing with what you will get in your next birth, you are making it all about yourself and that defeats the whole purpose. According to me, philanthropy is something that should be a routine thing for everyone that it doesn't even deserve a special mention.

### Women are blessed to be Women.

We are blessed to be women because we have been chosen by god to experience the miracle of birth and bring a new life into the world. I also believe that women are more intelligent than men. We women have the ability to multitask and can handle a lot of things at the same time. On the other hand, men tend to compartmentalize and can handle only one thing at a time.

Women don't need empowerment because we are already empowered. When we give birth we go through an unbelievable amount of pain. Yet we have the inbuilt ability to endure it again and again. Only a woman can take care of her family, children and household, excel in her profession and still be happy, charming and radiant.

Still, the world that we live in is called a 'Man's world' and that is why we don't realize the capability that lies within us. Every parent must teach their daughter that she is as capable as her male counterpart since childhood. Maybe only then we would be able to change the perception that women are weaker.

Follow your dreams, work hard and never give up because if you work hard and be passionate about your aim, you will certainly achieve it and make your life mean something.

## KNOWING SHALLU

- My biggest achievement as a parent is that my daughter is also pursuing Kuchipudi and even if she decides not to take it up as a career, it will always be an integral part of her life.
- Traits that I have passed on to my children – Both my children are extremely hard working, empathise and try and relate to everyone's situation
- Climbing Mount Kilimanjaro – I climbed Mountain Kilimanjaro as a part of breast cancer awareness initiative by a hospice called 'Karunashraya' .Climbing a mountain made me believe in living in the moment. I didn't know what will happen in the next step and each move took a real effort. It taught me the 'never say die attitude' and the feeling of reaching the top was unbeatable.