

TODAY'S WEATHER

CLEAR
7 °C

4 Day Forecast | Traffic

if there's a **HOT CLUB** in H

Wednesday, April 25, 2007 | Today's Paper | Star P.M.

PHOTOS VIDEO COLUMNISTS



www.thestar.com

Search thestar.com

Advanced Search | Fu

HOME OPINION BUSINESS SPORTS A & E LIFE atHOME HEALTH SCIENCE & TECH WHEI

Toronto & GTA | Ontario | Canada | World | Obituaries | National Report

Meet Mr. Happy Feet

Superstar dance guru Shiamak Davar was in town recently to visit his Mississauga dance studio - and to speak with Desi Life about his origins, philosophies and vices

Apr 19, 2007 01:30 AM

BAGESHREE PARADKAR**Name:** Shiamak Davar**Zodiac sign:** Libra (born Oct. 19)**Other avatars:** Dancer, choreographer, actor, director of musicals.

Describe yourself: I've always been a passionate kind of person, (an) extrovert, someone who loves to express myself. Dance is an extension of what I am, of what I can do. I remember singing songs and playing the piano at the age of 5, 6 and 7. I would enact scenes for friends and family, thinking I was a legend of the living room.

What do you love most about dancing? Dance is a therapy. When you dance, you sweat, your feel-good hormones come out. People get so much out of the class and then we put the people on stage to perform. Every three months all my students come on stage and perform, all shapes and sizes. Performing on stage gives some self-worth, self-confidence. It gives you something more than just dancing in class



STEVE RUSSELL/TORONTO STAR

Bollywood dancing choreographer Shiamak Davar.

- Email story
- Print
- Choose text size
- Report typo or correction
- Tag and save

POWERED BY del.icio.us

- VIDEO: SHIAMAK DAVAR'S MOVES
- AUDIO: EXCERPT FROM DAVAR'S

When did it all begin? In Bombay, they didn't like what I was doing 25 years ago. They used to say, "Who'll ever come to your stupid classes? What's this rubbish jazz? You should be doing Indian dance. Boys don't dance. Who'll marry the girl?" All that natak (drama) used to happen.

How did you change attitudes? Starting with certain students - Lucky Ali, Kitu Gidwani - over my musical theatre career, more people got to know me. Gauri was also my student (Shah Rukh Khan's wife) and that's how my first film, Dil To Pagal Hai, happened. Shah Rukh told me "Don't be silly, you must do a film." So I thought I must try.

Your advice for people with two left feet: I'd say come to class, learn, absorb. It's more about hunger, a hunger to learn. If people are interested they should do it anyway. My actual motto is "Have feet, will dance," so I don't care about two left feet. We're teaching people who are physically and mentally challenged. We have someone who's 82 in Nagpur. Dance is for everybody, I feel. I think if you want to learn, it's never too late. I started at age 21.

Do people hunger for fame? Yes. It's an addiction, it's something that people are desperate for. It's the ones who are hungry who never get it. I've seen that. Because if you're desperate for something you're never going to get it until you learn the lesson that you have to let it go.

Your vote for best-ever Bollywood dancer goes to: Helen. There's nobody like her. You can't even compare a Madhuri or a Karishma or Aishwarya. Helen is Helen. I've never seen such movement, and in those days, no technical wizardry, nothing. She was so mindblowing.

Your favourite person in the whole world: My mother and my spiritual mother Khorshed Bhavnagri and my spiritual guides called Vispi and Ratoo. They're two brothers who died in a car accident. I never knew them. But their books I've read. Laws Of The Spirit World is about life after death, karma, reincarnation and the story of two boys and their mother. I've got very close to that subject.

I know if you do something wrong, it'll come back to you. And you can do what the hell you want, but you're gonna have to pay for it. Good or bad. Eating, drinking, having sex, having children, going out, buying, fame, money. I don't think God has made life only for that. There has to be something about seva or to be of service. I believe all this really and I live my life like that.

We hear you're an intuitive person. What's that all about? It's about knowing who you are, where you come from. You know that you have a subconscious mind, that tells you when you're doing the wrong thing.

So it's all in the vibe? Good vibe, bad vibe . . . Like attracts like. You always see lots of good people coming together, lots of those negative types always together because that's the law of attraction. So whatever you do, good or bad, you attract.

If you were judging a contest, all things being equal, who'd be the winner? The one with more soul, more magic, more spark. It's something innate. Lots of people work really hard, dance so well, but they lack something, that quality of magic, that quality of performance, that star quality. You can make out those people.

The reason you're single: There's no reason. I've had some bad times and I've been also quite stupid. Completely my fault. I've really not wanted relationships after three of them. I've busted my head. But I'm happy in a way. I never, never go for somebody because I know it's time, because I'll jhap (damage) that also. I try to live my truth, I can't get away from that. I'll just know when it's right. And if it's not, that's the way it is. Why force something? I mean, look at how many marriages are broken up because of some stupid idea of love. I'm not negative about it. But I'm not desperate for it.



Watch multi-talented Shiamak Davar's reel showcasing his accomplishments as a dancer, choreographer, actor, and singer.

• Also **hear** an excerpt from his interview.

What qualities would you want in a partner? The most important thing is compassion. I don't like people who are cold. People who are funny. A giving nature is important. People who love animals, who basically love life. Not negative people. I can't stand people who are proud. I love people who are humble. I love people who give of themselves. I do get attracted to dancers, or people . . . who are creative. It does give me a high.

How many DVDs do you own? Thousands. I just love the movies. I love the illusion, the maya of the film. But if you ask me to choose a movie or a live theatre show, I'd go for the live theatre show because truth - it's there, it's in the moment.

But then, I'm also the kind of person who likes to dream. So I like to go to the movies. The old movies are still superior. Of course, technologically we're so advanced today. But there was something in the olden films. There was more soul.

Are you romanticizing the past? But I am like that. I'm a hopeless romantic. I love it. I try to be practical, which is quite dumb, because I'm not.

What are your vices? Spending money, eating all the wrong food, which I really enjoy. I can't bear food meant to be good. I hate it. I have to eat it, though. Yuck! But I love eating rubbish. I love eating spicy food. I know it's really bad for me. I don't drink or smoke, so I'm boring like that.

My worst, worst quality is I'm a spendthrift.

I just love spending. It's a bad thing, but...

SPECIALS

[Hockey night in the desert](#)



[Our new A&E blog](#)



[10' x 6' apartment](#)



[More special reports](#)

[Great home delivery subscription deals here!](#)