Mohiniyattam, also known as dance of the enchantress is Kerala’s sole female classical dance.

The term Mohiniyattam comes from the words “Mohini” meaning a beautiful woman and “attam” means dance.

It was also known as Mohiniatham, Thanam, Thanattam, Thanattam, etc.

In the 18th century, it gained prominence under the rulers of Travancore in Kerala and Veerarajah, a son among the Travancore Querim.

After its decline, the efforts of famous Malayalam poet V. N. Menon and Kaliyani Amma (the mother of Mohiniyattam), revived it.

**Evolution**

**Important Features**

- The dance form is characterized by graceful, swaying body movements with the abrupt jerks or sudden leaps.
- The grace and elegance of Bharatanatyam is combined with the vigour of Kathakali.
- It emphasizes on the Leysa style of the recital, which is feminine in nature.
- It recounts the story of the goddess dance of Vishnu.
- White and off-white are the main colours used for dancer’s costume.
- The movements in dance performance resemble the waves of the sea and swooping of the coconuts, palm trees and paddy fields.

**Famous Proponents**

- Madhuri Amma
- Jayaprakasha Menon
- Sunanda Nair