

## 'The Secret of Life'

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On the evening of Saturday, February 20, 1965, we are staging a Science Ballet on 'The Secret of Life' at the Auditorium of the National Physical Laboratory between 6.30 - 8.30 PM. This Ballet attempts to show how the first living molecules originated and how the genes within our cells beget proteins. This Ballet itself will last only about half an hour and I am writing this to request your presence at this function. We very much desire to have the privilege of your presence because of the immense potentialities that this form of Ballet has in communicating scientific concepts to the public. It is probably for the first time in India that such an attempt is being made to interpret scientific ideas through the medium of music, dance and mime. We would hence very much like to benefit from your advice and criticism of this novel form of presenting scientific facts.

### Producer's note on the Ballet

This Ballet has grown out of the belief that Art, to be meaningful, must deal with the things that are meaningful to Man. To scientists daily engaged in penetrating the mysteries of life, what goes on inside the living cell is as important as what goes on around them; it engages most of their waking thoughts, besides being their livelihood. It is the reality of their lives. How can this reality, and its magic and its beauty, be conveyed to those who do not inhabit this special mental world? This Ballet seeks, through the medium of music, dance and mime, to interpret the "reality" of the concepts which lie at the frontiers of modern science.

Words and music, carefully chosen both for mood and for suggestiveness of structure, provide the background against which the drama is played out. The scene of the action is the inside of the cell. The dancers, at first representing parts of the basic atoms, show how the first organic molecules were developed from inorganic molecules. Later, they demonstrate the structure of deoxyribose nucleic acid, (the basic substance of life) by portraying the arrangement of its nitrogenous bases; and next, they indicate, in mime, how the genetic code operates in building proteins with amino acids. Finally, the Ballet turns to the ancient symbol of creation, the Dance of Siva -- in humble recognition of the fact that Science has not yet solved the ultimate mystery of life.

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