
Katha Dance Theatre  |  5444 Orchard Avenue North, Crystal, MN 55429  |  763.533.0756  |  www.kathadance.org
REPERTOIRE

Traditional Kathak

**KATHAK YATRA – THE JOURNEY OF KATHAK DANCE** Kathak Yatra offers glimpses of the evolution of Kathak through the eras, starting in the temple period, evolving through the royal courts of the kings and emperors, ending with today’s proscenium stages.

Run Time: 60 – 75 Minutes

Contemporary Kathak

**BLACK CANDLE** Through the lyrical storytelling of Kathak dance and based off the poetry of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Black Candle honors the lives of today’s South Asian women. Ranging from the joys of marriage to breaking free from the bonds of rituals, caste and religion.

Run Time: 60 – 90 Minutes

Collaborations

**SOUL TO SOLE** An exciting blend of live soulful Gospel music and Kathak. Katha Dance Theatre joins forces with nationally renowned Gospel singer Robert Robinson and his company to present an innovative cross-cultural collaborative, examining the similarities between these two unique cultures.

Run Time: 75 Minutes

**RUBAIYAT – LIFE IN A DAY** The haunting, melancholy musings of the Persian philosopher-poet are brought to life in vivid detail in this production centering around a day in a person’s life as from dawn to night as well as life in a day as from birth to old age.

Run Time: 60 – 75 Minutes

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

**PREFERRED STAGE DIMENSIONS:** 40 feet proscenium opening (minimum 32); 32 feet wide at wings and 25 feet of depth from the front of the curtain to last working line set.

**FLOOR:** Katha Dance Theatre dancers dance in bare feet. Interior floor options include wood or Marley floor. Exterior floor options include large wooden platforms, free of raised nail heads or soft concrete (the kind in gymnasiums or museums).

**SOUND SYSTEM:** Katha Dance Theatre does not carry a sound system. Presenter will provide all needed equipments.

**LIGHTING EQUIPMENT:** Katha Dance Theatre does not carry lighting equipment necessary for performance of the repertory. Presenter provides all lighting equipment.

FURTHER INQUIRIES

If you would like more information on Katha Dance Theatre’s programs and performances and technical rider please contact:

**Booking Representative: Christy Spillman George**
Katha Dance Theatre
5444 Orchard Avenue North, Crystal, MN 55429
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info@kathadance.org

Front photograph by Eric Saulitis
WHAT THE CRITICS SAY
“Katha Dance Theatre's show Pourush – The Masculine is spectacular. A performance like this catches breaths and entwines eyes. Indian statuary has never looked so expressive after seeing what this cast can convey.”

– Basil Considine, Twin Cities Arts Reader

“Katha Dance Theatre’s Indian dance-dramas transport audiences to another world. It is a joy to experience the elegance in their productions, choreographic precision, and artistic integrity. Furthermore, their ability to string together current themes in an ancient art form is extremely courageous and praiseworthy.”

– The Boston Group, Boston, MA

“Rita Mustaphi, who more than any other disciple of grand master Pandit Birju Maharaj, has recovered the great dance form of Muslin and Hindu courts that slid into obscurity with the coming of the British for contemporary Indians.”

– Jyotirmoy Datta, News India Times, Minneapolis, MN

“Katha Dance Theatre is dazzlingly proficient in the dramatic and virtuosic style of Indian classical dance, while being adept of taking English speaking audiences into the literary wellsprings of classical Indian dance performances.”

– The Octopus, Champaign, IL

“Katha Dance Theatre's pieces capture both the fragile emotions of oppressed women and their boundless inner strength that holds the key to their emancipation and happiness.”

– Maija Pnikis, Appleton Post-Crescent, Appleton, WI

“Rita Mustaphi is a Kathak exponent and has been successfully performing with her Katha Dance Theatre. I have seen her traditional, contemporary, and experimental works. All of her choreography and performance are exquisite.”

– Padmavibhushan Pandit Birju Maharaj, Calcutta, India

“The complexity and power of Katha Dance Theatre's stories are fully realized in their dynamic, percussive dance sequences...”

– Camille LeFevre, Star Tribune, Minneapolis, MN

Front photograph by Eric Saulitis
THE ARTISTS

RITA MITRA MUSTAPHI

Rita Mustaphi has been dancing for 28 years, and has choreographed more than 50 evening length works that performed locally, nationally and internationally. Her selected awards include three McKnight Fellowships for choreography, leadership award from the Council of Asian Pacific Minnesotans, Lifetime achievement award from the India Association of Minnesota and Education Award from the Ordway Center of Performing Arts in the category of Excellence in Vision. She has performed at Carnegie Hall, New York; several International Kathak Dance Festival, New Delhi, India. Mustaphi is a roster artist for COM-PAS, Community Programs in the Arts as well as a teaching artist for the Cowles Center for Dance & the Performing Arts.

ANURAG SHARMA

Anurag Sharma began learning ‘Kathak’ dance in 2004 from Rita Mustaphi. Anurag attended International Kathak Festival at Chicago (2004) & attended Kathak workshops from Pandit Birju Maharaj, Saswati Sen, Pandit Chitresh Das, Anjani Ambegaokar and Kumudini Lakhia. As a Company Member, his performance credits with Katha Dance Theatre include annual fall concerts since 2005; at the North American Bengali Conference, Toronto, Canada (2013); at the India Dance Festival with Indian Classical Music Circle in Dallas, Texas (2013). Recently he completed 3-months intensive training from Pandit Birju Maharaj in New Delhi, India. He teaches Kathak for Katha Dance Theatre.

MUKTA SATHE

Mukta Sathe learned Kathak from her guru, Sanjeevani Kulkarni in Nasik, India, and won the national “Swar Sadhana” competition while touring throughout the country. She has studied Kathak with Rita Mustaphi for ten years now and regularly performs in KDT productions. As a Company Member, her performance credits with Katha Dance Theatre include annual fall concerts since 2005. She has attended International Kathak Festival at Chicago (2004) and participated in workshops conducted by Kathak Maestro Pt. Birju Maharaji, Kumudini Lakhia and Saswati sen. Mukta also teaches Kathak at KDT’s Edina location.

MONICA SINGH

Monica Singh has studied Kathak for 16 years with Rita Mustaphi. She has performed in several performances across the Twin Cities and has traveled with the katha Dance Theatre to various locations including Baltimore, Appleton, and Toronto. She has performed in numerous KDT productions since 2006. She has attended master classes with Pandit Birju Maharaj and Saswati Sen. She teaches Kathak at KDT’s Hopkins location.

DEREK PHILLIPS

Derek Phillips danced and toured nationally with the Nancy Hauser Dance Company and the Children’s Theatre Company. He has been a roster artist for the Minnesota State Arts Board’s Artists—in—Education Program. He performs English country dances with Minnesota Traditional Morris, and is a teaching artist for CTC’s Neighborhood Bridges Program, the Cowles Center for Dance and the Performing Arts, and the Perpich Center’s Dance Course for Educators. Derek has performed in many KDT shows since joining the Company in 1991.
ACTIVITIES AND CLASSES


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Activities & Classes

“Performed with unfailing graciousness, Katha Dance Theatre takes an evocative art form and makes it vibrantly real.”
– The Star Tribune, Minneapolis, MN

In addition to our main stage performances, KDT offers a variety of activities to engage, entertain and educate audiences of all ages.

Performances

Traditional Indian dance is quite foreign to most American audiences. Katha Dance Theatre aids this culture gap by introducing Kathak technique and history through interactive performances. Company performances often include a Post show discussion, where audience members can hear from the artists, ask questions, and voice opinions. Additional student–only shows introduce school children to the performances, their teachers having been previously provided a study guide. In these ways, KDT performances extend beyond the limitations of the usual patron/artist relationship.

Classes

Katha Dance Theatre offers a variety of classes for children ages 6 and up and adults. Classes focus on technique, grace, and stamina. Three school locations are open in Hopkins, Maple Grove, and Edina (MN). Students are offered detailed and focused classes from September through May, with workshop and performance opportunities given June through August. Students are given a written, dance, and performance evaluation at the end of each year to further support their skills in the next year.

Summer Intensive

KDT offers a 2 week program in August, designed to give motivated students the opportunity to study Kathak dance in an exciting professional environment. The program is structured to advance the technical, artistic, and performance skills of dancers by offering an exciting variety of techniques workshops. The classes are offered for beginners and advanced students, and bring together body, mind and spirit in an energetic union of music, dance and oral tradition of Kathak. All workshops culminate in studio showings on the last day of the program.

Residencies & Workshops

Mustaphi has been active in arts education for more than 25 years, and her belief in respect for different cultures and unity provides a high quality creative and cultural education for students of all ages. KDT’s residencies enrich a student’s personal growth, developing their communicative, social, physical, and cognitive skills. Such residencies and workshops include modified dance lessons, cultural activities, and lectures on the historical background of the stories and traditions associated with Kathak.

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The mission of Katha Dance Theatre (KD) is to present, promote and strengthen the Kathak dance culture of India through creation, preservation and sponsorship of the artistic and cultural endeavors. We believe in the fundamental elements of tradition, innovation, education, access and community.

Founded in 1987 by Artistic Director Rita Mustaphi, KDT is an organization based in Crystal, Minnesota. KDT seeks to explore, enrich and promote Kathak, the classical dance of Northern India. KDT is dedicated to offering high quality educational and cultural dance performances to all, extending its boundaries through an uncompromising commitment to creative innovation and artistic expression.

The work Kathak is derived from the Sanskrit word Katha, meaning “a story.” The form has its origins in the narrative traditions of the village minstrel, the ‘Kathakars’ – who sans songs of heroic tales and legends dramatized by subtle gestures and expressions. Their stories were enriched over the centuries through exposure to Indo-Persian cultures, and around the 16th Century AD, came from the temples to the royal courts. There it acquired secular elements of sophistication, especially in its pure dance passages. Katha also represented a unique synthesis of both Hindu and Muslim cultures, creating a balance that makes it the most natural of the Indian classical dance forms. Kathak expresses abandon, yet it carries a sinuous nuance and intricate rhythmic precision conveyed through strong and often complicated footwork, mimetic gesture and subtle facial expression.

Katha Dance Theatre has established itself as an essential component in Minnesota’s cultural milieu, teaching and performing regularly in the Twin Cities while also collaborating with organization such as the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, The Southern Theater, The O’Shaughnessy at St. Catherine University, Zorongo Dance Theater, The Ritz Theater, The Hindu Society of Minnesota, he Loft Literary Center, Jawaahir Dance Company, and Ethnic Dance Theater alond with international artists such as Pandit Birju Maharaj (New Delhi, India), Saswati Sen (New Delhi, India), Kousic Sen (London, UK), Debashis Sarkar and Chandrachur Bhattacharya (Kolkata, India).

The repertoire of Katha Dance Theatre celebrates the uniqueness of the Indian–American cultural experience, and the preservation and enrichment of India’s Kathak traditions. It is the percussive nature of the technique, along with its stoytelling, poetry, mime and interdisciplinary elements that make it a vibrantly powerful form of expression.