



Katha Dance Theatre (KDT) is a Minnesota-based dance company and school rooted in Kathak, the Indian classical dance form. Rita Mustaphi (photographed below) founded KDT with the goal of making Kathak relevant and accessible across lines of generation, culture, and community. Over three decades, she has built a reputation as an innovative, risk-taking artist; introduced Kathak to a worldwide audience and garnered countless awards for her choreography and leadership.

Kathak is an ancient dance form characterized by rhythmic footwork, graceful hand gestures, pirouettes, lyrical movements and storytelling. Conceptualized by Rita Mustaphi, KDT's repertory strives to modernize and diversify Kathak in ways that make it relevant and inclusive while still maintaining its authenticity and cultural integrity. Through incorporating cross-cultural influences and crossing boundaries of genre and form, KDT is at the forefront of Kathak's artistic evolution.

In addition to performances and education, KDT's programs include touring and outreach opportunities specifically tailored to suit the needs of individual communities. These programs deepen audiences' connection to the material, helping KDT more effectively fulfill its mission to make Kathak universally accessible. Outreach programming options include master classes, lectures/demonstrations, residencies and workshops in dance or folk art.



KDT's recent work includes *Shaamya - Of Equality*, which embodies the ideas of writer and activist Kazi Nazrul Islam through dance choreographed by Rita Mustaphi. Collaborators on the project are famed Twin Cities musician J.D. Steele and poet Ifrah Mansour. Cross-cultural collaboration being integral to KDT's mission, past collaborators have included gospel singer Robert Robinson, Native American dancer Larry Yazzie, flamenco dancer Susana di Palma, legendary Kathak master Pandit Birju Maharaj, tabla artist Ustad Zakir Hussain, and Ethnic Dance Theatre, among others.

Current Touring Repertory:

Ritu - The Seasons

Ritu is a vivid portrayal of the Indian seasonal cycle, which both expands and subverts American expectations. Based on the lyrical poem “Ritusamhara” by the great Sanskrit poet Kalidasa, *Ritu* depicts the six Indian seasons within beautiful and intricate Kathak movement, celebrating nature’s beauty through Kathak’s grace and subtlety.

Kathak Yatra

Kathak Yatra follows Kathak’s evolution through time, beginning with its inception in Hindu temples and culminating in its contemporary multicultural incarnations. It explores Kathak’s duality as both classic and modern.

Sufiana - The Sufi Ecstasy

Featuring live music composed by 2016 McKnight Fellow Dr. Pooja

Goswami Pavan and choreography by Rita Mustaphi, *Sufiana* captures the Sufi concepts of spiritual devotion and love of all humanity. It is uplifting, vibrant, and ecstatically alive!



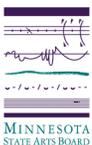
Critical Consensus:

“Performed with unflinching graciousness, Katha Dance Theatre takes an evocative art form and makes it vibrantly real.” ... “The complexity and power of Katha Dance Theatre’s stories are fully realized in their dynamic, percussive dance sequences.” - The Minneapolis Star Tribune

“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

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