

A Meeting of Two Cultures

NRITYAGRAM | CHITRASENA
DANCE ENSEMBLE | DANCE COMPANY



STUDY GUIDE

**MOSS
ARTS
CENTER**

A Meeting of Two Cultures

NRITYAGRAM DANCE ENSEMBLE AND CHITRASENA DANCE COMPANY

SCHOOL-DAY PERFORMANCE
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2022, 10-11 AM

RECOMMENDED FOR STUDENTS IN GRADES 8-12

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WE WANT EVERYONE TO ENJOY THE SHOW

Please prepare your students for their visit to the Moss Arts Center by practicing audience etiquette before you attend a live performance. The following guidelines will ensure that everyone can enjoy the show:

- Turn off your cell phone and any other device that creates light or could make noise and distract others during the performance.
- Photography, audio, or video recording is not allowed inside the theatre.
- Food, gum, and beverages are not allowed inside the theatre.
- Stay seated during the performance and for safety purposes, please keep the aisles clear during the performance.
- Unless invited by the performers to participate, please do not talk or distract your neighbors during the performance.

ABOUT A MEETING OF TWO CULTURES

This one-of-a-kind cultural exchange transports students on a journey through time and space to eastern India, the birthplace of Odissi (one of the world's oldest classical dance forms), and to the island of Sri Lanka, home to Kandyan dance (an ancient folk dance ritual).

Accompanied by Nritygram Dance Ensemble's live music group and a Kandyan drummer, this engaging show includes audience participation and introduces students to the language of Odissi and Kandyan dance—from body positions and movement vocabulary to nuances such as walks, spins, and jumps.



NRITYAGRAM DANCE ENSEMBLE

The Nrityagram Dance Ensemble is regarded as one of the foremost dance companies of India. Led by Artistic Director Surupa Sen, the company has achieved worldwide critical acclaim, performing across the globe, including an annual tour to the United States.

The company is devoted to bringing Odissi—one of the oldest dance traditions in the world—to audiences worldwide. Performed as far back as 200 B.C. as a sacred ritual dedicated to the gods, Odissi speaks of love and union between human and divine, transporting viewers to enchanting worlds of magic and spirituality. Its lush lyricism reflects both the motifs of Odisha temple sculpture as well as the poetry from the deep wellsprings of Oriya music.

Although steeped in and dedicated to ancient practice, the ensemble is also committed to carrying Indian dance into the 21st century. Enabled by grants from international arts funding organizations, Nrityagram's dancers not only explore creative expansions of tradition, but are also able to commission fresh compositions from leading Indian classical musicians.

NRITYAGRAM DANCE VILLAGE

Nrityagram (which means "dance village") is located outside Bangalore, India. It was founded in 1990 by Odissi dancer Protima Gauri, who converted 10 acres of farmland into a setting for the study, practice, and teaching of dance.

Nrityagram is dedicated to creating excellence in Odissi through the traditional method of learning, the Guru Shishya Parampara—a unique and sacred relationship between mentor and disciple, referred to as mentorship in modern times.

Nrityagram's dance pedagogy is inspired by the Gurukula, an ancient Indian residential teaching paradigm where students and teachers live together in an integrated environment of practice, theory, and discipline. Learning is a way of life, and students have a rare opportunity to imbibe the spirit of the guru by living with them and observing them at work.

Conceived this way for almost 30 years, Nrityagram imparts not only technique in dance but nurtures a philosophy of being that embraces holistic practice, mindful living, and the pursuit of excellence. The daily schedule includes a unique, scientific body conditioning and training program that is sourced from yoga, Natyashastra, Kalaripayattu, Western fitness methods, and Odissi body-conditioning exercises. This training method is designed to increase the performance lifespan of a dancer and is sought after by accomplished dance and movement professionals from different disciplines.

With a student strength of over 200, Nrityagram provides an environment that fosters the artistic, intellectual, and personal growth of its dancers and prepares them for successful and productive lives as artists and citizens, as well as to become leaders in their professions.

The aim is to prepare dancers for careers that combine performance with teaching, community outreach, and leadership. To enrich their practice, dancers are taught yoga, meditation, and martial arts along with Sanskrit and ancient dance scriptures. Choreographers, musicians, writers, and theatre practitioners from all over the world visit to perform and conduct workshops and seminars in their area of practice.

This unique blend of traditional knowledge with contemporary understanding and application makes Nrityagram the only institution of its kind in the world and strengthens its position as a groundbreaking institution.



EXPLORE INDIA



The Indus Valley civilization—one of the world’s oldest—flourished during the third and second millennia B.C. and extended into northwestern India. Aryan tribes from the northwest infiltrated the Indian subcontinent about 1500 B.C.; their merger with the earlier Dravidian inhabitants created the classical Indian culture. The Maurya Empire of the fourth and third centuries B.C.—which reached its zenith under Ashoka—united much of South Asia. The Golden Age ushered in by the Gupta dynasty (fourth to sixth centuries A.D.) saw a flowering of Indian science, art, and culture. Islam spread across the subcontinent over a period of 700 years. In the 10th and 11th centuries, Turks and Afghans invaded India and established the Delhi Sultanate. In the early 16th century, the Emperor Babur established the Mughal Dynasty, which ruled India for more than three centuries. European explorers began establishing colonies in India during the 16th century.

By the 19th century, Great Britain had become the dominant political power on the subcontinent, and India was seen as the “Jewel in the Crown” of the British Empire. The British Indian Army played a vital role in both World Wars. Years of nonviolent resistance to British rule, led by Mohandas Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, eventually resulted in Indian independence in 1947. Large-scale communal violence took place before and after the subcontinent partition into two separate states—India and Pakistan. The neighboring countries have fought three wars since independence, the last of which was in 1971 and resulted in East Pakistan becoming the separate nation of Bangladesh.¹

At slightly more than one-third the size of the U.S., India is the world’s eighth largest country and the second most populated. With nearly 1.39 billion citizens, it is second only to China in population. The capital city of New Delhi, in the north-central part of the country on the west bank of the Yamuna River, has a population of over 32 million alone.

¹ “India.” Central Intelligence Agency. Central Intelligence Agency. Accessed October 4, 2022. cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/india/.



EXPLORE HINDUISM

Hinduism is the third largest religion in the world, with over a billion followers worldwide. It is one of few ancient religions to survive into modern times, having developed at least over 5,000 years ago in the Indus Valley, the largest civilization in the ancient world. Some may also refer to Hinduism as Sanatana Dharma or the Eternal Way, because the tradition has no identifiable beginning or end.

While Hinduism has an extensive collection of religious texts, scripture does not have the same place in Hinduism as it does in many other religious traditions. Sacred writings are considered valid sources of knowledge about God, but other sources of knowledge, including personal experience, are also highly respected. The Vedas, one of Hinduism's primary religious texts, are considered to be divine in origin and contain the foundational truths in Hinduism.

Hindus believe that Brahman, or the Absolute (used interchangeably with "the Divine" and "God"), is the supreme spirit that pervades the entire universe. Brahman is existence and reality and is understood as the cause of creation, preservation, and dissolution. These three functions of creation, protection, and destruction are often depicted to be the work of the three main deities Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, respectively.

Because Hindus accept that Brahman can appear in many forms, they accept that there are a variety of ways in which all human beings connect with the Divine. In Hinduism, God is worshipped in both male and female forms. Other forms resemble animals or birds. Each of these forms of God has symbolic meaning.

Most Hindus understand the soul, *atman*, to be eternal. When this physical body dies, the soul is reborn in another body (*samsara*, or continuous cycle of life, death, and reincarnation). Rebirth is governed by the Law of Karma: that every action has a result, like cause and effect. How an individual deals with the problems they face in this life determines whether they create good or bad karma for their present and future lives.

Hinduism promotes respect for other religions and acknowledges the potential for truth in them. This philosophy leads to pluralism within Hinduism and outside of it. The core philosophy of Hinduism is the search for truth, not the specific path taken. A quote from the Vedas that summarizes the Hindu perspective on God is, "Truth is one. The wise call It by various names."²



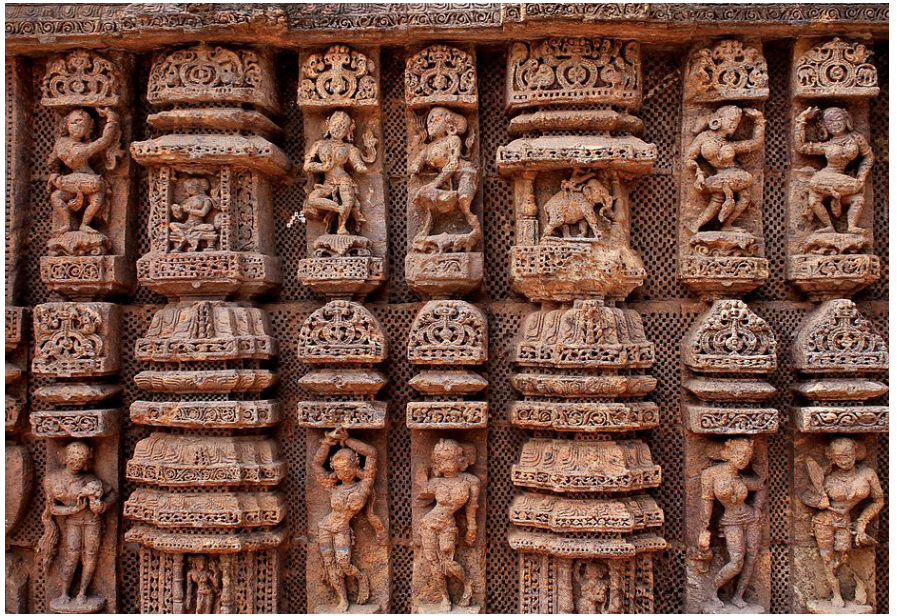
² "Hinduism 101." Hindu American Foundation, August 30, 2022. hinduamerican.org/hinduism-101.

ODISSI DANCE

THE HISTORY OF ODISSI

Odissi, also referred to as Orissi in older literature, is a major ancient Indian classical dance that originated in the Hindu temples located in Odisha, an eastern coastal state of India. Odissi is considered one of the oldest dance forms of India, dating back to the second century B.C.

The foundations of Odissi are depicted in the *Natyashastra*, an ancient Sanskrit text of performance arts (second century B.C.E to second century C.E.). The basic dance units described in the *Natyashastra*, all 108 of them, are identical to those in Odissi.



Innumerable Orissa temples, built over several centuries and adorned with prolific dance sculptures, serve as a veritable lexicon of dance. Sculptural evidence dating to the first century B.C. shows a dancer performing with musicians before a royal couple. Buddhist, Jain, and Hindu archaeological sites in Odisha show inscriptions and carvings of dances that are dated back to the sixth to ninth centuries. Actual sculptures that have survived into the modern era and reliefs—sculptures where a modeled form projects from a flat background—in Odisha temples, dated from the 10th to 14th centuries, show Odissi dance.

Odissi, in its history, was originally performed by women inside temples and expressed religious stories related to Hindu gods and goddesses and spiritual ideas. These women were called *maharis* or “servants of God,” and they sang and danced inside the temple for Lord Jagannath (presiding deity of Odissi dance).

Later another tradition arose, where young boys dressed as women performed outside the temples; this was Gotipua dance, which was marked by extreme athleticism, and most of the gurus responsible for the revival of Odissi dance were trained in Gotipua dance.

In the 1950s several gurus and scholars studied temple sculptures and defined Odissi dance as we know it today, using the sculptures as dance poses and threading them together to make dances. Three “schools” of Odissi dance were created by three of the most prominent gurus.

Nrityagram dancers originally learned Odissi from Guru Kelucharan Mahapatra and belong to that “school” of dance. However, after over two decades of research and development, there now exists a Nrityagram “school” or style of Odissi dance.

In addition to Odissi, the Sangeet Natak Akademi — the national level academy for performing arts set up by the government of India — recognizes seven classical Indian dances: Bharatanatyam, Kathak, Kathakali, Kuchipudi, Sattriya, Manipuri, and Mohiniyattam.

ODISSI TECHNIQUE, BHANGAS, MUDRAS/HASTAS, AND BHEDAS

Odissi is a lyrical style of dance and follows body norms quite different from those of other dance forms. Its subtlety is at its core, and the intimate relationship between the dance and the music is the feature upon which the aesthetic of the style is built.

Torso movements, a specialty of Odissi, conform directly to the positions and movements of the lower half of

ODISSI DANCE, CONTINUED

the body. The lower limbs remain steady in relation to torso movement, and the hips do not move. Rather, the upper torso undulates gently in a vertical plane, the head moving in opposite deflections to the torso causing a visual effect of lyrical, undulating beauty.

The movements in Odissi are lyrical, perhaps due to the curved, rolling, and spiral nature of the style. The neck movements follow a natural tilt of the head in relation to the angle of the torso and maintain a central line with that of the upper half of the body. The neck also moves sideways, as opposed to being tilted to the sides.

The hands are used in Odissi around the frame of the body in various ways. Circular movements and semi-circular extensions of the arms, moving downwards or upwards from the center of the chest to the sides, are often seen. Often one hand is placed above the head, encircling it as it were, and the other extended along the line of the leg in a relaxed position, like that seen in sculptures all over India.

Dance is an expression of the individual's joy through movement. This pure expression and release of energy, when in the classical mold, must strictly adhere to the codes of a systematized technique. Odissi bases itself on a wealth of such techniques and abounds in prescribed or handed-down codes. The positions of the feet, toe and heel contacts, body positions, deflections of the body, and units of movements are all graceful and subtle.

Bhangas

Odissi is learned and performed as a composite of basic dance motifs called the *bhangas*. The *bhangas* involve the lower (footwork), mid (torso), and upper (hand and head) body as three individual sources of expression.

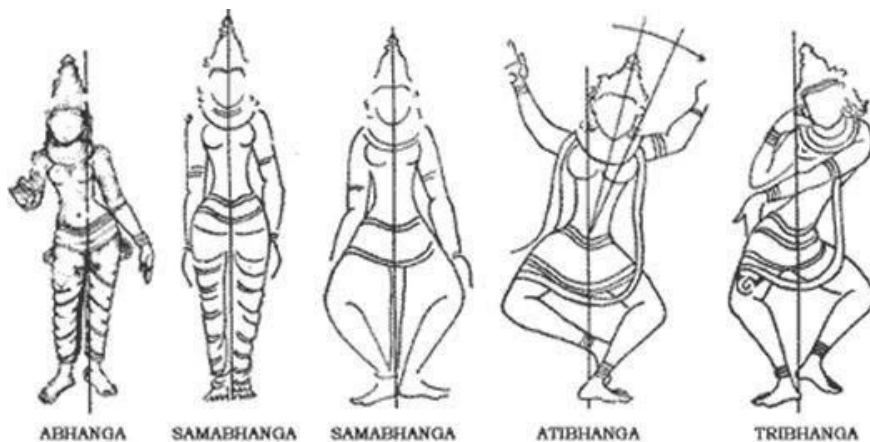
The four basic *bhangas* in Odissi are:

Abhanga: an asymmetrical position with the body weight shifted to either side and one hip consequently dropped lower, the upper body slightly bent to compensate.

Samabhanga: a straight, universal standing position with the feet together in parallel or with feet and hips turned out.

Atibhanga: a great diagonal bend in the torso with the knees bent.

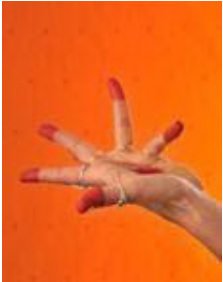
Tribhanga: the triple-bent, elaborately graceful position of the body. The head, shoulders, torso and waist, hips, and knees zigzag back and forth across the center of gravity to create a balanced asymmetry.



ODISSI DANCE, CONTINUED

Mudras (Hastas)

Mudras or *hastas* are hand gestures which are used to express the meaning of a given act or represent an animal or object. There are 63 *hastas* in modern Odissi dance, and dancers spend much of their training mastering all the subtleties of the *mudras*.



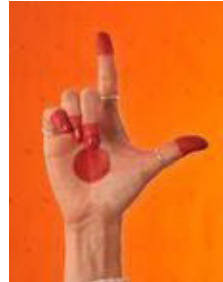
Alapadma
fully opened lotus



Simhamukha
lion face



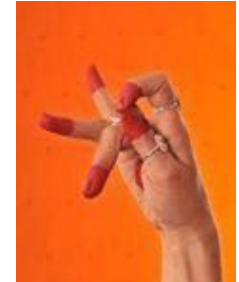
Sarpasirsha
serpent head



Chandrakala
crescent moon



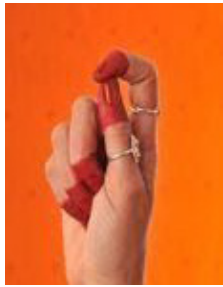
Suchi
needle



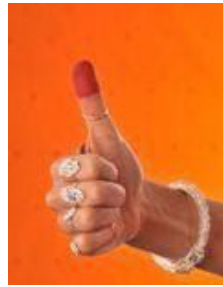
Kataka-mukha
link in a chain



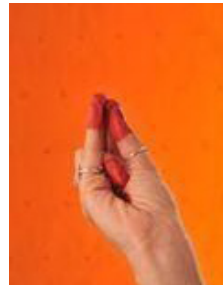
Mayura
peacock



Kapita
wood-apple



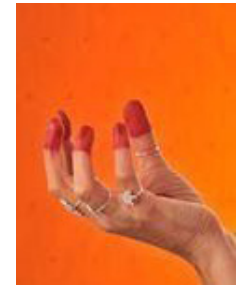
Sikara
spire



Kangula
tail



Mirga Sirsa
deer head



Padmakosh
lotus bud

Bhedas

In Sanskrit, the word *bheda* refers to the different ways to hold the eyes, head, and neck while dancing. In Odissi dance, there are three *bhedas*: *Dhristi bheda* (eye movements), *shiro bheda* (head movements), and *greeva bheda* (neck movements):

Dhristi bheda: "eyes"

- **Samam:** Eye straight forward without any movement.
- **Aalokitham:** Roll eyeballs in a circular pattern.
- **Saachi:** Eyeballs side to side to the corner of the eyes.
- **Praalokitha:** Right to left eye movement.
- **Nimeelithe:** Eyes half closed.
- **Ullokitha:** Eyeballs looking up.
- **Anuvritte:** Rapid movement of eyeballs up and down.
- **Thathaachaiva:** Looking upwards.
- **Avalokita:** Looking down.

Shiro bheda: "head"

- **Samam:** Head straight forward without any movement.
- **Udvaahitham:** Head upwards.
- **Adhomukham:** Head downwards.
- **Alolitham:** Roll in circular pattern.
- **Dhutam:** Right to left head movement.
- **Kampitam:** Up and down head movement.
- **Paravrittam:** Sharp turn of head either right or left.
- **Ukshiptam:** Head raised.
- **Parivahittam:** Slight head shake right and left.

Greeva bheda: "neck"

- **Sundari:** Neck side to side, also called *attami*.
- **Tirashchina:** Upward side to side, V-shape.
- **Prarivartita:** Neck in semicircle motion.
- **Prakampita:** Neck moved in and out like a duck.



ODISSI DANCE, CONTINUED

COSTUMES AND MUSIC

The costumes in Odissi dance are very elaborate. Some elements of Odissi dance costumes are as follows:

- **Pattasari:** brightly colored silk wrap dress
- **Kanchula:** black or red blouse embellished with diverse stones and gold and silver thread
- **Ardh-bathaka:** semicircular hair bun
- **Pushpa-chanda:** hair coiled into the shape of a flower
- **Kati-beni:** hair in single plait down the back
- **Bindi:** an elaborate design often made on the forehead with a red mark
- **Mahkoot:** crown worn by Odissi dancers
- **Ghoba:** flower-decorated back piece of the *mahkoot*, which sits around the dancer's hair and is pulled into a bun at the back of the head. It represents the lotus flower with one thousand petals that lies above the head in the form of head chakra, or energy center
- **Thiya:** the longer piece that emerges from the center of the back piece, which depicts the temple spire of Lord Jagganath or the flute of Lord Krishna
- **Kapa:** elaborate ear covers, similar to earrings
- **Bahichudi or bajuband:** pair of bracelets worn on the upper arm
- **Kankana:** bangles worn on the wrist at the waist; they wear an elaborate belt
- **Ghungroo:** bells that are attached to a leather belt
- **Alta:** red colored dye that may cover the dancer's palms and soles

Odissi dance is accompanied by Odissi music, a synthesis of music styles. Many scholars of Odissi dance believe that it is a form of "visualized music." Each note has purpose and is attached to a mood in classical Indian music, which Odissi accompanies to express feelings. This is true whether the performance is formal, or less formal.

An Odissi dance troupe comes with musicians and musical instruments. The orchestra consists of various regional musical instruments such as:

- **Mardala:** barrel drum
- **Harmonium:** pump organ
- **Bansuri:** bamboo flute
- **Flute:** woodwind instrument
- **Tanpura:** plucked string instrument that does not play melody, much like a bass guitar
- **Manjira:** metal cymbals
- **Sitar:** plucked string instrument that plays melody, much like an acoustic guitar
- **Swarmandal:** zither

A special feature of Odissi music is the *padi*, which consists of words to be sung in *druta tala* (fast beat). *Chhanda* (metrical section) contains the essence of Odissi music. The *chhandas* were composed by combining *bhava* (theme), *kala* (time), and *swara* (tune). Odissi *sangita* (music) is characterized by a combination of these three elements of music:

- **Dhruvapada:** first line or lines to be sung repeatedly
- **Chitrapada:** the arrangement of words where all words begin with the same letter
- **Chitrakala:** referencing works of art in song

CHITRASENA DANCE COMPANY

Founded by Guru Chitrasena with a vision to inspire and exhilarate through the traditional dances and drums of Sri Lanka, the Chitrasena Dance Company has always been at the forefront of transforming the traditional arts landscape of the island. Chitrasena is recognized for rescuing the traditional dances that were confined to village settings and presenting it to audiences in Sri Lanka and across the world.

The company was founded in 1943 and initially nurtured under the creative genius Chitrasena, and later together with his wife, Vajira. They worked tirelessly for decades to carefully distill ancient rhythmic rituals—reviving and refining elements of it while staying firmly rooted in the old—and developed an authentic dance language.

For over seven decades the Chitrasena Dance Company has given life to compelling performances, ranging from a rich repertoire of dance and drumming pieces, to acclaimed original ballets and productions inspired by ancient rituals and contemporary culture. *Karadiya* (1961), *Nala Damayanthi* (1963), *Nrithanjali* (1965), *Kinkini Kolama* (1978), *Shiva Ranga* (1984), *Chandalika* (1996), and *Bera-Handa* (2001) are some of the most renowned productions. More recently, the Chitrasena Dance Company has brought to the stage *The Art of Chitrasena* (2006), *Kumbi Kathawa* (2007), *Dancing for the Gods* (2010), *Devanjali* (2015), and *Guru Gedara Festival* (2018). The creative partnership and collaboration with Nrityagram Dance Ensemble has led to the much-acclaimed productions *Samhāra* (2012) and *Āhuti* (2019).

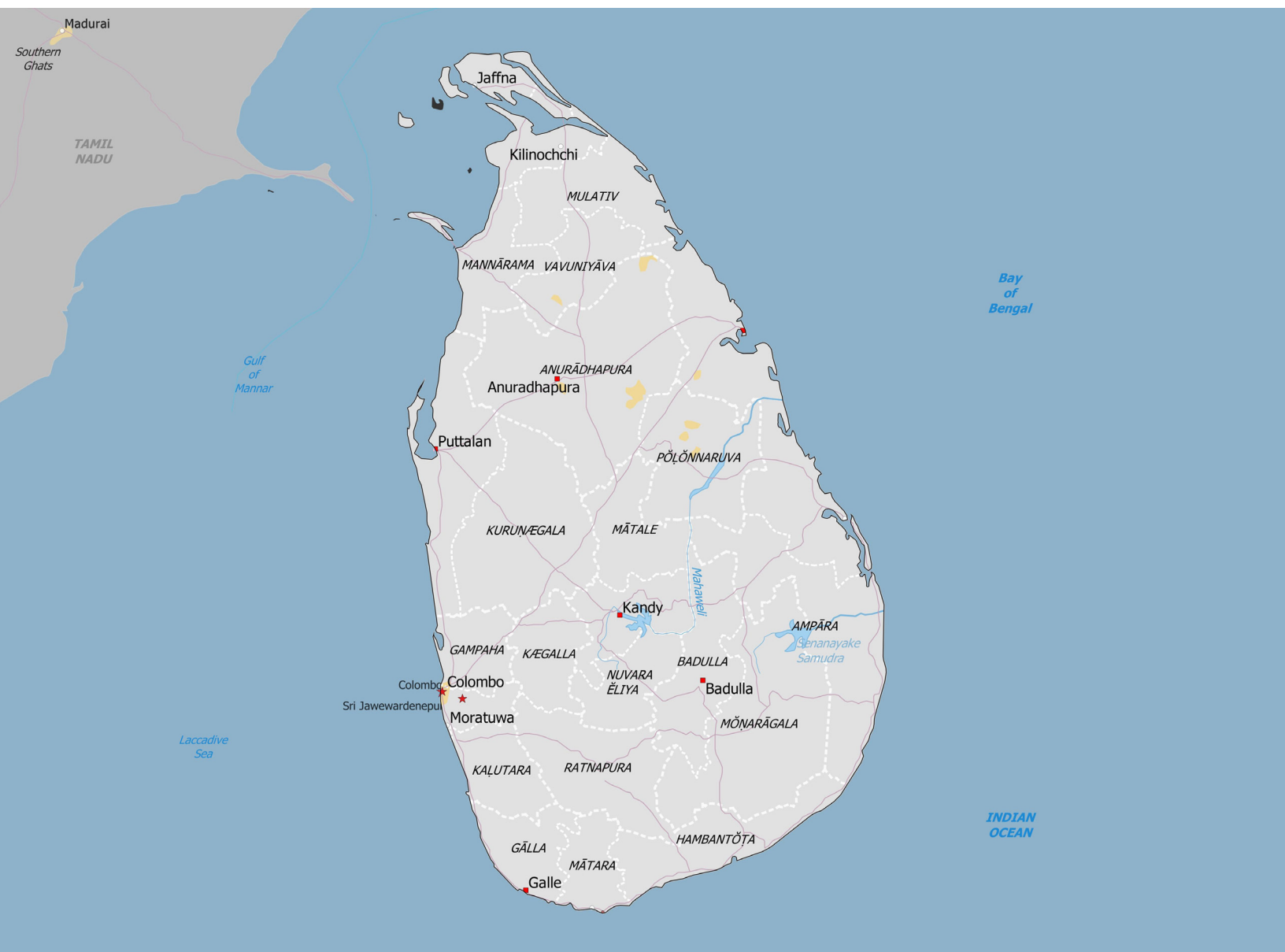
The Chitrasena Dance Company celebrated its 75th year in 2018, and the third generation is led by Heshma Wignaraja, artistic director and eldest granddaughter of Chitrasena and Vajira, who continues to take forward the legacy of her grandparents. Experimenting without compromise and using traditional dance language and form to push boundaries, the new work offers a fresh perspective while upholding Guru Chitrasena's philosophy that "the new is but an extension of the old."



EXPLORE SRI LANKA

The first Sinhalese arrived in Sri Lanka late in the sixth century B.C., probably from northern India. Buddhism was introduced circa 250 B.C., and the first kingdoms developed at the cities of Anuradhapura (from circa 200 B.C. to circa A.D. 1000) and Polonnaruwa (from about 1070 to 1200). In the 14th century a south Indian dynasty established a Tamil kingdom in northern Sri Lanka. The Portuguese controlled the coastal areas of the island in the 16th century followed by the Dutch in the 17th century. The island was ceded to the British in 1796, became a crown colony in 1802, and was formally united under British rule by 1815. As Ceylon, it became independent in 1948; its name was changed to Sri Lanka in 1972. The name Sri Lanka means “resplendent island” in Sanskrit.³

Sri Lanka is slightly larger than West Virginia. The commercial capital is Colombo, a port city that is also the largest city in Sri Lanka by population. Over 5.6 million of the 23.2 million Sri Lankan citizens live in the Colombo metropolitan area. The second largest city, Kandy, is located in the Central Province and was the capital during the era of the Sinhalese kings. It is the birthplace of Kandyan dance.



³ “Sri Lanka.” Central Intelligence Agency. Central Intelligence Agency. Accessed October 4, 2022. www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/sri-lanka/.

KANDYAN DANCE

THE PAST AND PRESENT OF KANDYAN DANCE

Kandyan Dance encompasses various dance forms native to the area called Kandy of the central hills region in Sri Lanka. As legend says, the dance originated from a healing ritual called Kohomba Kankariya, which was originally performed by Indian shamans who came to the island at the request of the king, who was suffering from a recurring dream. After the performance of the Kohomba Kankariya, the illness vanished.

Kandyan Dance was adapted for the stage in the 1940s by Chitrasena. His wife and dance partner, Vajira, was the first professional female Kandyan dancer, and together they established Kandyan dance as a performance art.

OTHER TYPES OF KANDYAN DANCE

Naiyandi Dance

Dancers in Naiyandi costume perform during the initial preparations of the Kohomba Kankariya, a specific traditional dance, during the lighting of the lamps and the preparation of foods for the demons. This is a graceful dance, also performed in Maha Visnu, (Vishnu) and Kataragama Devales temples on ceremonial occasions.

Uddekki Dance

Uddekki is a very prestigious dance because of its important history behind the instrument used. Its name comes from the "Uddekki" which is a small, lacquered hand drum in the shape of an hourglass. It is believed to have been given to people by the gods.

Pantheru Dance

The dance is said to have originated in the days of Prince Siddhartha, who became Buddha. The instrument used in Pantheru dance is called a "pantheruwa." This instrument is dedicated to the goddess Pattini. It resembles a tambourine (without the skin) and has small cymbals attached at intervals around its circumference.





COSTUMES AND MUSIC

Dancers are covered in elaborate costumes, known as the Ves costume, which include headdresses; the chest is traditionally decorated in beading. The headdress of the Ves costume can only be worn by males.

Traditionally, only men were allowed to train as dancers, however now women are allowed to be trained in traditional Kandyan dance. The costumes are focused on the males, but the women have found ways to adapt the costumes in different ways. The dance in its traditional form is still performed each year at the Dalada Perahera, a procession held annually at the Temple of the Tooth in Kandy.

The Kandyan dance is traditionally performed to percussion only. The most common instruments used are the Geta Beraya, a drum, and Thalamota, small cymbals.

ACTIVITIES, CONTINUED

HISTORY AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

Evaluating Artifacts: See, Think, Wonder

Share the image of the Shiva Nataraja, at left, from the Metropolitan Museum of Art with learners before introducing the history and foundation of Hinduism. Ask students to independently examine the image and write down:

- three observations or descriptors (see)
- two speculations about the sculpture's origin, meaning, or purpose (think)
- one question about the sculpture (wonder)

After studying the origins, beliefs, and traditions of Hinduism, allow students to revisit the image and discuss how the sculpture reflects Hindu beliefs. Students can learn more about this work of art by reading or listening to the description on the web page.

Virginia History and Social Science Standards of Learning: WHI.3, WHI.4, WHII.1, WHII.5



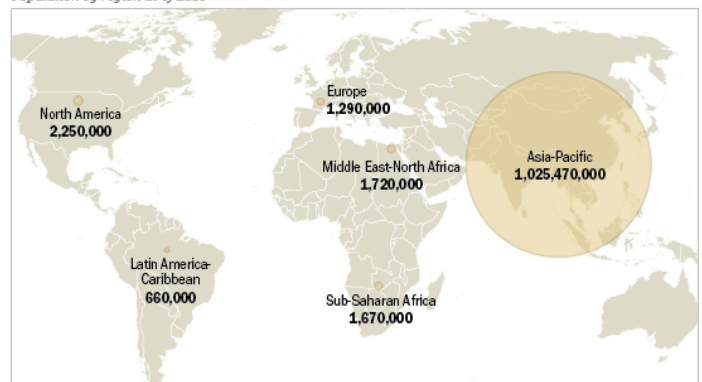
Interpreting Data: The Spread of World Religions

Using data from the Pew Research Institute's [Global Religious Landscape Data](#), ask students to analyze the geographic distribution of Hindus across the world. Using what they have learned about the origins, spread, and beliefs of Hinduism, make inferences about why the vast majority of Hindu followers are located in the Asian-Pacific region. Compare this to the geographic distribution of adherents of other major world religions and determine some of the push and pull factors that may account for the spread of religions over time.

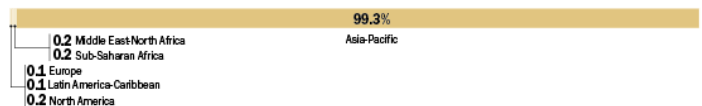
Virginia History and Social Science Standards of Learning: WHI.4, WHII.1, WHII.15

Regional Distribution of Hindus

Population by region as of 2010



Percentage of world Hindu population in each region as of 2010



Population estimates are rounded to the ten thousands. Percentages are calculated from unrounded numbers. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding. Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life • Global Religious Landscape, December 2012



ACTIVITIES, CONTINUED

DANCE AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Similies and Symbols

The *mudras* (or *hastas*) used in Odissi dance have symbolic meaning, and many of them represent animals or objects. Working with a partner or small group, ask students to choose one *mudra* and find the meaning. They will then create a simile comparing dancers to the chosen *mudra*'s meaning (e.g., “dancers prance like peacocks” or “dancers can be as stealthy as a serpent”) and a locomotor movement to visually represent that simile. When it is time to share, students will perform both the *mudra* and the locomotor movement simultaneously across the floor.

Virginia Dance Standards of Learning: 8.1, 8.13, 8.15, DI.1, DI.5, DI.13, DII.1, DII.5, DIII.1, DIV.1

Dance Fusion

Watch the video of [Odissi dancer Rosi Das performing to Ed Sheeran's Shape of You](#) with your students. Thinking about the unexpected pairing of classical Indian dance and contemporary pop music, discuss what makes a successful fusion of styles and genres in dance. What aspects of both the song and the dance make the pairing successful?

Working in small groups, challenge students to create short pieces of original choreography that combine one aspect of Odissi or Kandyan dance or music with another style of dance or music. Students can use the information in the Resources section of this guide to help them learn more about Odissi and Kandyan techniques and music.

Virginia Dance Standards of Learning: 8.3, 8.4, 8.6, DI.3, DI.4, DI.6, DII.3, DII.4, DII.6, DIII.3, DIII.4, DIII.6, DIV.3, DIV.6, DIV.11

Virginia Physical Education Standards of Learning: 8.1, 8.4, 9.1, 9.4, 10.1, 11.1, 12.1



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The World Factbook 2021. Washington, D.C.: Central Intelligence Agency, 2021. [cia.gov/the-world-factbook](https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook)

RESOURCES

NRITYAGRAM DANCE ENSEMBLE:

- [Nrityagram Dance Ensemble's official website](#)
- [Nan Melville's documentary on Nrityagram, *For the Love of Dance*](#)
- [Excerpts of Nrityagram Dance Ensemble performing *Sriyah*](#)

CHITRASENA DANCE COMPANY:

- [A Step in Time: The Chitrasena School of Dance](#)
- [Upeka Chitrasena on turning 70, dance, and the Chitrasena Dance Company](#)

DANCE AND MUSIC:

- [YouTube playlist of Classical Indian dances](#)
- [Comprehensive guide to Odissi music](#)
- [Odissi dancer Rosi Das performs to Ed Sheeran's *Shape of You*](#)
- [The Beautiful Power of Kandyen Dance](#)

INDIA, SRI LANKA, AND HINDUISM:

- [The World Factbook: India](#)
- [The World Factbook: Sri Lanka](#)
- [Hindu American Foundation](#)
- [Hindu Creation Story](#)
- [Pew Research Center's Global Religious Landscape](#)

WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

CHANGING YOUR RESERVATION

If you cannot attend or your party turns out to be smaller than the number of tickets you have reserved, please inform the Moss Arts Center as soon as possible by contacting Shara Appanaitis at sappanaitis@vt.edu so that Moss staff can release your tickets to those on the waiting list.

ACCESSIBILITY

The Moss Arts Center is committed to being accessible to all of our patrons. Patrons with disabilities and their companions are accommodated through wheelchair seating, parking, and other special requests throughout the center at all levels. Assisted listening devices are available. Service animals are permitted. Sign interpretations and large-print programs are available with advance notification. If you or your students have questions regarding accessibility or would like assistance, please contact Jamie Wiggert at wiggertj@vt.edu.

DROP OFF

The bus drop-off location is on the Alumni Mall side of the Moss Arts Center, located at 190 Alumni Mall on the campus of Virginia Tech. Drivers may pull their buses into the driveway loop directly in front of the center. Staff will be on-site to assist. Recommended arrival time is 15-30 minutes before the start-time of the performance.

PARKING FOR CARS AND VANS

Those driving cars and vans may park in the North End Center Garage (300 Turner Street NW), which is one block from the Moss Arts Center's Turner Street entrance. A valid university parking permit, a validation from one of the retail tenants, or payment of the daily fee is required to park in the North End Center Garage.

PARKING FOR BUSES

Bus staging is located in the upper section of the Chicken Hill lot (Football Lot 5) on the campus of Virginia Tech. The lot entrance is on Southgate Drive, opposite Sterrett Drive. Parking passes will not be required for buses. For more information about parking at Virginia Tech, please visit parking.vt.edu. Please note that buses are not permitted to park adjacent to the Moss Arts Center's Turner Street entrance, except in special circumstances when permission can be granted.

CHECKING IN

When you arrive at the center, please check-in with Moss Arts Center staff to confirm that your party has arrived. Staff will be on-site to assist seating your group, directing you to restrooms, and answering any questions you may have.

WHAT TO KNOW, CONTINUED

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

In accordance with guidance from Virginia Tech, masks are no longer required in indoor public spaces, but remain recommended. The Moss Arts Center adheres to the guidelines of the Virginia Department of Health and Virginia Tech in its operations, including protocols for face coverings and cleaning and sanitation. Find more information about the university's policies [here](#).

We ask patrons to do their part in keeping our community healthy. If you feel unwell, please stay home.

PICK UP

It is recommended that buses arrive back at the Moss Arts Center 15 minutes before the end of the performance. Following the performance, please remain in your seats; school groups will be dismissed by Moss Arts Center staff to ensure a smooth and speedy departure for all. Staff and volunteers will assist school groups in meeting their buses in the center's Alumni Mall driveway.

FEEDBACK

Following the performance, you may receive an email requesting feedback on your group's experience. Please make time to respond, as doing so could significantly improve the Moss Arts Center's pre-K to grade 12 programs for you and future visitors.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT MOSS ARTS CENTER PROGRAMS

Please subscribe to the [Moss Arts Center's email list](#) and/or join the email list for K-12 programs.



MOSS ARTS CENTER

PERFORMANCES | EXHIBITIONS | EXPERIENCES

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