

Welcome to the third incarnation of Moving Cultures. Moving Cultures was originally developed by Dave Robertson for the Peterborough Arts Umbrella (PAU). We owe a debt of gratitude to Dave and everyone at the PAU for originating this event, whose unique mandate is to celebrate cultural diversity - both within our community and beyond - through dance, on a program aimed at schools and audiences of all ages.

Special Thanks:

Deirdre Chisholm and the Art Gallery of Peterborough, Powerhouse Digital Video, and the Arts Presentation Program at the Department of Canadian Heritage, which provides the critical financial support needed to mount Moving Culture.

for Moving Cultures

Patti Shaughnessy, *coordinator*
Kerry Day, *design*
Ryan Kerr, *technical director*
Charlie Glasspool, *workbook writer*

for Peterborough New Dance

Bill Kimball, *artistic producer*
Esther Vincent, *general manager*

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PETERBOROUGH ARTS UMBRELLA

Moving Cultures

in order of appearance

Krishna

by Richa Khandelwal Bhat

Music:

1. *Vishnu Sahasranamam*: M. S. Subbulakshmi
2. *Mira Ho Gayi Magan*: Anup Jalota
3. *O Palanhare*: Lata Mangeshkar and Udit Narayan
4. *Yasomati Maiya Se*: Lata Mangeshkar
5. *Radha Kaise Na Jale*: Asha Bhonsale, Udit Narayan

Photographs:

The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, India.
International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Richa Khandelwal Bhat is a dancer, journalist and filmmaker from New Delhi, India, and now resides in Peterborough. She is an experienced dancer with a four year diploma in the classical Kathak dance form. Her solo performance entitled Krishna focuses on devotional Kathak dance fused with North Indian dance folk forms. The performance depicts the different roles Krishna assumes for his devotees.

Old School Hoofing

by Bill Coleman

musical accompaniment: Curtis Driedger

Music:

- Tea for Two*: Vincent Youmans and Irving Caesar
Centerpiece: Harry Edison and Jon Hendricks
Night Train: Oscar Peterson

On this program Bill performs old school hoofing in the style of Sandman Simms and Bunny Briggs. This is a non-taught, rhythmic style that was practiced throughout the Vaudeville era.

EXCERPTS FROM THE EDUCATOR'S WORKBOOK

Here are some excerpts from the Educator's Workbook compiled for the classes that came to Moving Culture this week. Some of this material was originally developed by the Peterborough Arts Umbrella, with input from many of the artists along the way.

First Nations Traditional/Contemporary Dance

The Indigenous peoples of North America embody thousands of languages, nations, and cultural identities. Frequently, dance in First Nations cultures carries a ceremonial or social value. Briefly, First Nations dance is best described in the Foreword to the National Museum of the American Indian's publication, *Native American Dance*: "Why do Native Americans dance? The reasons are as complex and manifold as the dances themselves: to assert cultural identity, to fulfill family and community obligations, to enjoy the sense of belonging to a group, to feel the sheer joy of

movement. Whether it is ceremonial or social in nature, native dance is an essential part of being-it may be wonderfully entertaining but it is never regarded as entertainment."



Rene Highway
Canadian, 1954-1990

Dance has consistently played an important role in First Nations culture. It holds the power to transform life, alter awareness, and help people connect to the environment and to life. It has also traditionally been used as a method of communion, prayer and healing.

Many traditional dances have only fairly recently been rediscovered after

years of being outlawed or otherwise suppressed. As in other cultures around the world, dance becomes a powerful expression of perseverance and preservation of identity.

Mainstream awareness of First Nations cultures is so often confined to the past, to the old, to the history Canada's first peoples. There is so much value in studying this realm of the past, but what is so often lost is an understanding of First Nations cultures in the present.

Contemporary dance is unique and diverse, and as such, not easily definable. The First Nations contemporary form is unique and deeply personal. It is a modern art form, which borrows from the conventions of traditional dance forms unique to each First Nation and geographical region and their different meanings and purposes.

The contemporary First Nations dance presented in this program is, in essence, the bridging of the present with the ancient and the traditional. The shape of the movements, the style of costume, and the body of the presentation, all of these are contemporary interpretations. The soul of the piece, however, is rooted in traditional themes derived from First Nations traditions.

Students seeing this performance will be given a new interpretation of First Nations dance. The experience of this performance can open doors of discussion regarding the traditional in relation to the contemporary, the different interpretations of culture and heritage, and the contemporary lives of First Nations peoples in Canada.

Modern and Contemporary Dance

Contemporary dance is a term that is often used interchangeably with modern dance. However, it specifically means dance that developed from the roots of modern dance, but that is no longer aligned with the modernist art movements of the early 20th century. Some of the artists in *Moving Cultures* use the term contemporary to describe those aspects of their dances that are not derived from their specific cultural traditions. In fact, combining dance styles from different cultures in one dance can be a mark of contemporary dance.



*Maud Allan
Canadian, 1873-1956*

Developed in the early 20th century, modern dance was created purposefully to reject the rigid "rules" of classical ballet. Modern dance evolved throughout Europe and America through pioneers such as Isadora Duncan, Martha Graham and Canadian, Maud Allan. In opposition to classical ballet which strives to free itself from the bounds of gravity, Modern dance plays with gravity, either giving in to it or resisting it. In further opposition to classical ballet, the roles of men and women vary greatly. In classical ballet, female dancers are often held high off the floor by male dancers to simulate flight, whereas in modern dance, dancers will throw themselves onto the floor as often as they leap off it. In modern dance, a female dancer will lift a male dancer just as frequently as the male will lift the female. The advent of Modern Dance marked many opportunities for artists to be more expressive and creative and the ensuing freedom has led to many fine dancers and dance companies around the world, including many here in Canada.

West African Dance

African dance embodies athleticism and a graceful beauty flowing with rhythm. In Africa, dance is a means of marking the experiences of life, encouraging abundant crops, and healing the sick soul and body. It is also done purely for enjoyment. All ceremonial African dances have a purpose. They tell stories and relate history. African music and dance in its essence communicates concepts of life on an elevated level; dance to the African is a universal, transcendent language. Traditionally, people throughout the continent of Africa achieve direct communication between themselves and their gods through ritual music and dance, including many with masks. The importance of ceremonies in African society, as in other societies, is apparent at significant points in a person's life cycle. Ceremonies often announce changes in one's social status and social relationships with those in the community, for instance the transition from childhood to adulthood, or marriage.

Many things about ceremonial dances change when they are brought to the stage from their original context in village life. For example, in Africa the dancers are not on a stage, but are interacting directly with the rest of the people, who also participate in the ritual, not by sitting in seats in an audience, but by singing, playing and having dialogue with the musicians and dancers. When these dances are done on the stage, they often include both traditional and innovative elements, illustrating how dance is not static, but changing and growing even as the performers meet new people and styles on their travels!



*Zelma Badu
Canadian, b. 1963*

Kathak/Ghoomar Dance

Kathak is among the six major classical dances of northern India. The word Kathak is derived from *katha*, meaning "the art of storytelling". With dance, music and mime, these storytellers of ancient India would bring to life the great Indian epics. From its early form as a devotional expression of Hindu Gods, Kathaks moved out of the temples telling stories everywhere, from royal courts to villages. The storytellers of Northern India have developed this ancient art into a fine, classical technique called Kathak dance. A slight gesture makes clouds, a sudden glance breaks a lover's heart, a quick turn and a new character appears. Without sets or props, the dancer conjures up the world of imagination.



Krishna and Radha

Ghoomar is a folk dance of the Rajputs, performed by the women of the house and traditionally out of bounds for men, uses simple, swaying movements to convey the spirit of any auspicious occasion. There is, however, an amazing grace as the skirts flare slowly while the women twirl in circles, their faces covered by the veil. Traditionally, all women, whether old or young, participate in the dance, which can continue for hours into the night. A new bride, on being welcomed to the home of her husband, is expected to dance the ghoomar as one of the rituals of the new marriage.

Old School Hoofing

A non-taught, rhythmic style of tap dance that was practiced from the 1880s through the 1920s. Performed mainly by African American migrants, old school hoofing was developed on street corners much the same as break dancing in the '70s. This street talent transferred itself from the cotton fields of oppression on its evolving journey from virtual obscurity to main stream popularity. Tap dancing made its way into New York City and Harlem via the streets and became a way of earning money in hard times for many years before its great popularity in the mid 1930s. Hoofing seems to have coincided with the emergence of jazz music in America and predates tap or jazz dance. The affiliation with Irish clog dancing, which was a very close one, became a source of ideas. Tap borrowed many of the Irish rudiments and approached them differently introducing syncopated rhythms, which were so reminiscent of jazz at that time. The application of different rhythms and styles are both common to tap and jazz music. Unlike Hollywood tapping, like Fred Astaire, there are few film records of this style.



*Bunny Briggs
American, b. 1922*

Krishna

Richa Khandelwal Bhat's dance piece, *Krishna* depicts Lord Krishna in the numerous forms he takes for his devotees.

1 - **Krishna, the Supreme Soul:** Giving up material life, the devotee takes sanyas (renunciation). Being one with God becomes the only purpose of his life. He chants the Vedas and meditates and ultimately his soul merges in the Supreme Soul.

2 - **Krishna, the Divine Lover:** For Mirabai, Krishna's devotee who lived in the 15th century in India, Krishna was the husband, master, lover, lord. Born as a princess, she denounced her worldly life and wandered in search of enlightenment, longing to be one with Krishna.

3 - **Krishna, the Protector:** For devotees, Krishna becomes the protector in difficult times. He answers their prayers and becomes the destroyer of pain and suffering and restores peace.

4 - **Krishna, Yasoda Son:** Krishna was born in India, around 5,000 years ago. As a mischievous child, he stole butter around Vrindavan village and played with milkmaids. In this scene, he is complaining to his foster mother Yasoda that he has a dark skin while his divine lover, milkmaid Radha, is fair.

5 - **Krishna, the Friend and Lover of Milkmaids:** Milkmaids of Vrindavan village vied for the attention of Krishna, their divine lover. In this scene, Radha, Krishna's most prominent lover expresses to Krishna her jealousy of other milkmaids when Krishna shares with them a glance or talks to them.

Bill Coleman was born in Berwick, Nova Scotia in 1961, and studied dance at the Doreen Bird School of Theatre Dance in London, England. His professional career started in 1979 with Sir Anton Dolin of the Dublin City Ballet. Since then, he has created over 50 works and been presented in Scotland, Italy, Singapore, Russia, throughout the United States and Canada.

Growing up in a cold gothic Christian subculture where dancing was verboten, Curtis Driedger is these days reveling in the delicious irony of finding himself entangled with a troupe of beautiful nutty dancers.

50 yrs. + Forever

created by Wes Ryan,
performed by Wes Ryan and Kate Story

Wes is an actor, dancer and choreographer residing in Peterborough. He has appeared in several 4th Line Theatre productions. Wes teaches dance workshops at P.C.V.S. and has written scripts for the Kawartha Montessori School.

Kate is a performer, writer and choreographer who creates original performance works, with elements of dance, theatre and performance art, that have been presented in Peterborough, Toronto and her native St. John's, Newfoundland. 50 yrs.+ Forever is a love story presented through a combination of theatre, oral narrative and contemporary dance.

Passage

by Christine Friday-O'Leary
sound mix by Rob Bertola

Christine is a dancer, teacher and choreographer from Teme-Augami located in Northern Ontario. She has toured with several dance companies across North America and is a recipient of numerous dance awards. Passage combines First Nation traditional and contemporary dance forms to explore how Anishnaabe teachings and legends shape and influence one's character.

Orange

by Mayelin Lovet-Semmler
music by Abbilona, Caribe Productions Inc.

Mayelin Lovet-Semmler graduated from the School of Arts in Havana, Cuba, with a Bachelor's degree in Modern Dance and Folklore. She has toured France, Haiti, and the United States with several professional dance companies. Mayelin now resides in Peterborough. Orange draws upon traditional West African and contemporary dance forms to create a work full of colour and energy.

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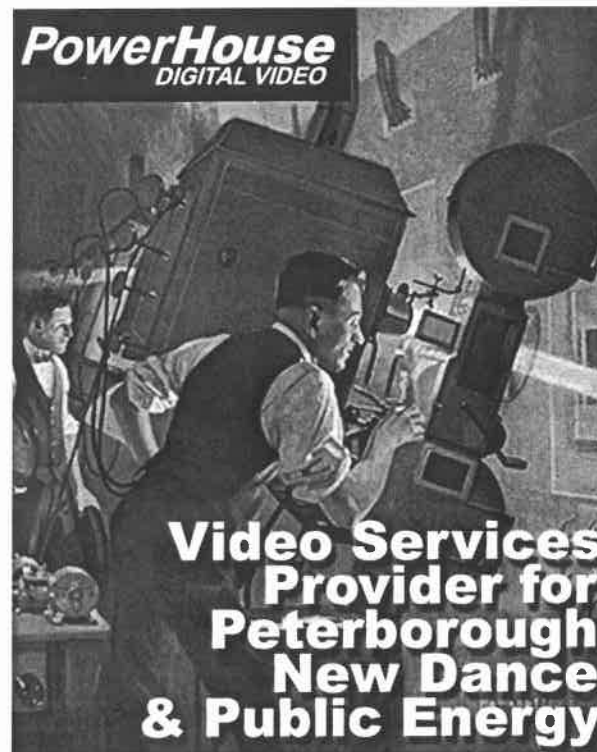
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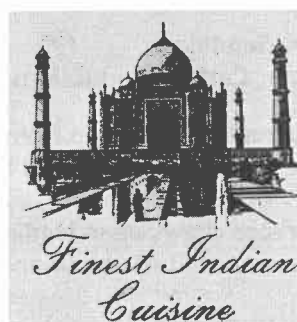
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