

Ancient Stories, Modern Rites I

*Sufi Songs*



solo performance in Kathak by Deepti Gupta

An Angikam dance initiative Produced with generous assistance from  
the Ontario Arts Council and the Laidlaw Foundation



## Sufi Songs

"Sufi Songs" is a contemporary Kathak performance that revives the traditional "kathavachan" or story telling techniques of Kathak in modern form. The work combines the mystic poetry of Jallaluddin Rumi – 13<sup>th</sup> century Sufi who began the ecstatic dancing of the whirling dervishes – with the mystical stories of the Krishna Legend. In a seamless flow the dancer takes the audience on a journey through legends of love, life and protection with a Sufi storyteller for a guide. All this is interwoven with the delightful and exhilarating dancing of the Kathak style.

Beginning with the dance of the Sufi and some of his favourite stories the dancer presents Kathak as a dance of mystic experience. This is followed by tales from the Krishna Leela such as Govardhan (Krishna lifting the mountain) and the Enchantment of the Milkmaids. The dramatic tales culminate in the presentation of a traditional song of separation – the thumri of the Lucknow Gharana, leading to a grand finale of whirling into the ecstasy of the dance.

This show has been created to introduce Kathak dance to Western and universal audiences and makes selective use of English translations. The visual design is reminiscent of Indian miniature paintings which create a pictorial world for these tales.

The dancer, choreographer, Deepti Gupta has worked closely with Guru Munna Shukla to understand the depths of traditional Kathak and discover in it hidden layers of interpretation for this particular theme. She believes that the dancing is in itself a mystical experience and offering for which the stories and songs act only as vehicles.

## Sama: The Enraptured Dance



Peterborough New Dance and Peter Robinson College  
present

An Illustrated Talk with visiting artist

**DEEPTI GUPTA**

**THE ART OF LOVE:  
INTERSECTIONS OF SUFISM & BAHKTI**

Wednesday, October 11, 8pm  
Peter Robinson College Dining Hall



Accompanied by poet, singer and musician Tricia Postle, Deepti Gupta's presentation features slides of miniature paintings and a discussion of themes of devotion in Indian art, poetry, and dance, with a specific emphasis on the poetry of the Bhakti era in which mystic poets from Islam and Hinduism often borrowed from each other's work and used similar imagery. Peterborough New Dance will present "Ancient Stories Modern Rites 1: Sufi Songs", a performance in Kathak by Deepti Gupta and Tricia Postle at the Market Hall Theatre on October 12 & 13 at 8pm.

Contact Peterborough New Dance for more information: 745-1788



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## Sama: The Enraptured Dance



## Notice from a Mentor

Deepti Gupta, creating bridges between Canada and India: a keen Canadian practitioner of choreography and design for dance has been easily blessed by her traditional gurus of Kathak and Chhau for her striving to present these forms in the enduring substance of myth, legends and now Sufi poem ...Rumi!

Her upbringing in Canada, her travels and study in Europe, her visits and teaching children in India – her experience of Canada as a fulfilling measure of variant culture, has given her a freedom of approach, and a universalizing genius instead of a narrow road of repetitious classicism.

This engagement with Rumi, the 13<sup>th</sup> century mystic, who wrote a second Koran, - so well did he shore up orthodoxy with the willing consent of self-discovery, of the content of culture – inclusive of poem, music, meditation. And by-passed power and disappointment, by entry into enlightenment and engaged the desert of monotonous being so that it became a flower garden of a thousand responses. He shores up our ruins far beyond present destruction and presents the Sufi or mystic's viewpoint beyond the atom. “And oh for the beat of a distant drum...” (Omar Khayyam).

The Word ‘suf’ is popularly connected with wool, in which the dervish or inspired dancer/healer would be seasonably clad for his travel, night meditations, or visits in privacy, as opposed to the sumptuary richness, opulence of silk. A little austerity is practiced by all those who live by concentration and attention to truth. But beyond the friction of such garments, the mystic's rose is perfume; entanglement in the curls of Divinity; his sensibility in being grateful to dust motes, because they show the Rays of the Sun. The safest path of humility, humour and present joy is given to us instead of the drag of the undertow to Being. Ah, that our faith should not be amiss whatever obsucations 72 veils and the hard-won stations of the way of life may cause us. Today the world moves fast, from nation to inter-nation; from religion to pure contemplation. Physicists practice Zen, Chang or Dhyan. So Rumi is worthily contemporary! The dance features of Deepti's work are finely honed, large and bounteous and have lived long in my imagination.

By Ms. Nibha Joshi, Professor, Indian Aesthetics & Art History  
National School of Drama, New Delhi

### **The Reed Flute's Song**

*Listen to the story told by the reed,  
of being separated.*

*"Since I was cut from the reedbed,  
I have made this crying sound.*

*Anyone apart from someone he loves  
understands what I say*

*Anyone pulled from a source  
longs to go back.*

*At any gathering I am there,  
mingling in the laughing and grieving,*

*A friend to each, but few  
will bear the secrets bidden*

*Within the notes. No ears for that,  
body flowing out of spirit,*

*Spirit up from body: no concealing  
that mixing. But it's not given us*

*To see the soul. The reed flute  
is fire, not wind. Be that empty."*

*Hear the love fire tangled  
in the reed notes, as bewilderment*

*melts into wine. The reed is a friend  
to all who want the fabric torn*

*and drawn away. The reed is hurt*

*and salve combining. Intimacy*

*and longing for intimacy, one  
song. A disastrous surrender*

*and a fine love, together. The one  
who secretly hears this is senseless.*

*A tongue has one customer, the ear.  
A sugarcane flute has such effect*

*because it was able to make sugar  
in the reed bed. The sound it makes*

*is for everyone. Days full of wanting,  
let them go by without worrying*

*that they do. Stay where you are  
inside such a pure, hollow note.*

*Every thirst gets satisfied except  
that of these fish, the mystics,*

*Who swim in a vast ocean of grace  
still somehow longing for it!*

*No one lives in that without  
being nourished every day.*

*But if someone doesn't want to hear  
the song of the reed flute,*

*It's best to cut the conversation  
short, say good bye and leave.*

### **Thumri**

*Around and around gather the dark clouds  
It flashes! the clouds thunder and rain  
Around and around gather the dark clouds  
A black cloud veil, deep and dense has surrounded me.  
The bed lies vacant, my heart is fearful.  
Oh Binda, my body is trembling.  
While the dark clouds gather  
It flashes! they thunder and rain.  
Around and around gather the clouds, the clouds.*

-Bindin Maharaj

Peterborough New Dance Presents

**DEEPTI GUPTA**  
with Tricia Postle

**ANCIENT STORIES, MODERN RITES I:  
SUFİ SONGS**

**Market Hall Performing Arts Centre, Peterborough, Ontario**  
**October 12 and 13, 2000**

1. **You That Love Lovers**  
Lyrics – Rumi  
Music – Tricia Postle
2. **Dance Of The Sufi**  
Music – Deepti Gupta, Sanjay, Ravi  
Choreography – Deepti Gupta
3. **Teentaal – Dance of Meditation**  
Music – Guru Munna Shukla  
Choreography – Traditional Kathak
4. **The Enchanted Flute**  
(i) Krishna Lifting The Mountain  
Choreography and Music – Guru Munna Shukla  
(ii) Enchantment Of The Milkmaids  
Choreography and Music – Rohini Bhate
5. **The Reed Flute's Song**  
Lyrics – Rumi
6. **Lillies**  
Lyrics – Rumi  
Music – Tricia Postle  
Choreography – Deepti Gupta
7. **Song of Separation**  
Music and Choreography – Guru Munna Shukla
8. **The New Rule**  
Lyrics – Rumi  
Music – Tricia Postle  
Choreography – Deepti Gupta

#### **Instruments:**

Hurdy Gurdy Jean-Claude Boudet, 1990  
Qanun Rabia Sherif, 1999

**Administration:** Preet Chauhan, I.B. Your Office

**Lighting Design:** Chris Clifford

*- please join us after the performance for a reception with the artists in the lobby -*

Tricia Postle is a performance poet and musician whose work aims at continuing the troubadour tradition. She holds a degree in medieval studies and music from the University of Toronto, her writing has been published in various Canadian literary magazines and anthologies, and she has performed both medieval music and modern poetry in a wide range of venues, from museums to Queen Street clubs. She recently spent a year in Cairo, Egypt for study.



**PETERBOROUGH NEW DANCE IS** a not-for-profit animator of contemporary dance and performance. PND presents a main stage series of companies and independent choreographers drawn from across Canada, commissions new work in concert with other Canadian presenters on the CanDance Network, and supports the development of the local dance community by presenting workshops with visiting artists and producing Emergency, an annual festival of new dance and performance by area artists. PND is affiliated with the Peterborough Arts Umbrella, a charitable agency serving Peterborough artists and arts groups. Tax deductible donations to PND can be made via the PAU. PND receives valuable operating support from The Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council and is a member of CanDance, Canada's national network of dance presenters, and Dance Ontario.

**FOR PETERBOROUGH NEW DANCE**  
Artistic Producer: Bill Kimball  
Stage Manager: Phil Oakley  
Web Master: Jerrard Smith, Tricksters Design  
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voice: 705.745.1788, fax: 705.749.28718, email: [dancing@pipcom.com](mailto:dancing@pipcom.com)  
web site: <http://members.xoom.com/dxodxo>

**COMING UP**  
PND presents Vancouver's **The Holy Body Tattoo** in their newest work, *Circa*, at Showplace Peterborough, Friday, October 27, 2000 at 8pm. A celebration of the sensual forces of submission and control, *Circa* is imbued with the dark beauty of decay and the (unspoken) language of desire. Saturated with smoky tango and cabaret debauchery, it is a raw duet evocative of the tangled rituals of foreplay, unfulfilled desires embraced, the imprints of old lives, and a shadowy yet uncompromising eroticism. Performed by choreographers Noam Gagnon and Dana Gingras, *Circa* features original music by England's infamous ensemble The Tiger Lillies, violinist Warren Ellis (The Dirty Three), Steven Severin (formerly of Siouxsie and The Banshees), film elements from Grammy Award nominated filmmaker William Morrison, set design by acclaimed designer Steven R Gilmore and lighting design by Marc Parent.  
Tickets for *Circa* are \$16 / \$11 for students and seniors. Available at Showplace Box Office, (705) 742-7469.

**YOU CAN SUPPORT PETERBOROUGH NEW DANCE IN A NUMBER OF WAYS.**  
➤ **Buy one of our fine art limited edition posters.** *A dance class with Frank Augustyn in the Market Hall*, photographed by Wayne Eardley. \$10 each, \$20 for a limited number signed by Frank Augustyn. Proceeds are split by Peterborough New Dance and the campaign to Save The Market Hall.  
➤ **Putting your name on the mailing list is free, but you can make a charitable contribution.** Choose one of the following categories, fill out the form and drop it off at the box office or mail to the above address. Make cheques payable to Peterborough Arts Umbrella, our charitable trustee. We will mail you an acknowledgement and charitable tax receipt.

☐ Friend, up to \$99/

☐ Supporter, up to \$249/

☐ Patron, up to \$499/

☐ Benefactor, \$500 or more

Name:

Address:

Telephone:E-mail:

**THANKS TO THIS YEAR'S PND FRIENDS SO FAR:**  
Bar Cee Dee, Simone Georges, Philip Kummel, Robin Loder, Sheila Nabigon Howlett, Sutherland Wilson

*Where Everything is Music*

*Don't worry about saving these songs!  
and if one of our instruments breaks,  
it doesn't matter.*

*We have fallen into the place  
where everything is music.*

*The strumming and the flute notes  
rise into the atmosphere,  
and even if the whole world's harp  
should burn up, there will still be  
hidden instruments playing.*

*So the candle flickers and goes out.  
We have a piece of flint, and a spark.*

*This singing art is sea foam.  
The graceful movements come from a pearl  
somewhere on the ocean floor.*

*Poems reach up like spindrift and the edge  
of driftwood along the beach, wanting!*

*They derive  
from a slow and powerful root  
that we can't see.*

*Stop the words now.  
Open the windows in the centre of your chest,  
and let the spirits fly in and out.*

*Rumi translations by Coleman Barks with  
John Moyne from The Essential Rumi.*

*Flutes for Dancing*

*It's lucky to hear the flutes for dancing  
coming down the road. The ground is glowing.  
The table set in the yard.*

*We will drink all this wine tonight  
because it's Spring. It is.  
It's a growing sea. We're clouds  
over the sea,  
or flecks of matter  
in the ocean when the ocean seems lit from within.  
I know I'm drunk when I start this ocean talk.*

*Would you like to see the moon split  
in half with one throw?*

*Enchantment of the Milk Maids:*

*And such was the sound of his flute that it made the  
village women restless...*  
*One woman came back home*  
*One woman went off to see for herself*  
*One heard the sound of the flute and shriveled in  
disappointment in her home*  
*One laughed and talked and talked*  
*One jumped and danced about*  
*One swayed in trance to the sound*  
*One totally forgot her household chores*  
*One paced restlessly about*  
*One could not keep her veil on*  
*One felt love pangs rising and was inflamed with desire*  
*One said "It plays, it plays, everywhere!"*  
*One said "Where, where does it play?"*  
*One said "It plays. The flute plays  
In the home of Krishna, the dark one."*

*— anonymous*



## Kathak

***"Katha kahe so kathak kahave""***:

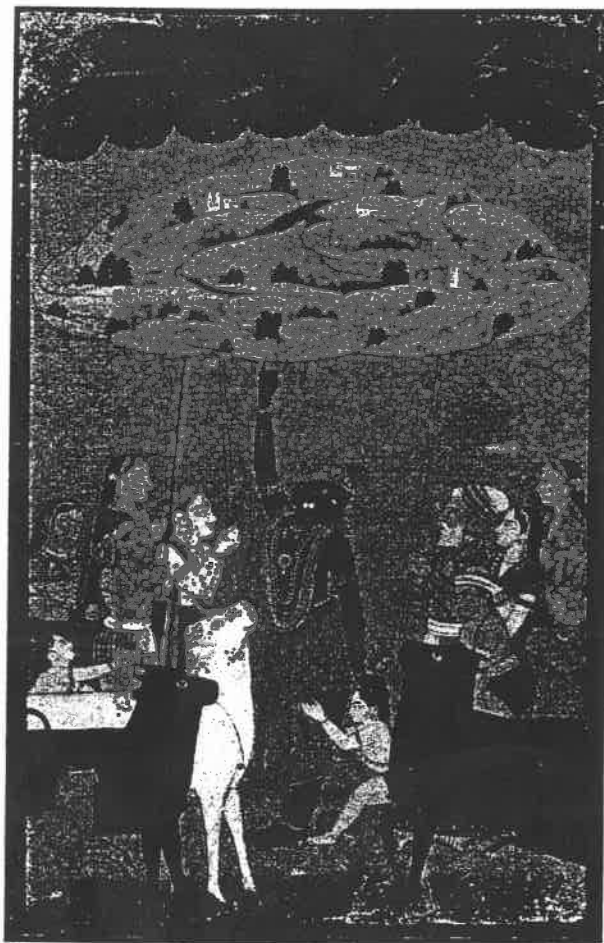
*He who tells stories is the story teller.*

The kathaks have wandered the earth for untold centuries telling stories everywhere from village courtyards to royal courts in the guise of the minstrel, the gypsy, the Sufi and the courtesan. With rhythm, music, song and gesture, they have danced many a tale.

The story tellers of north India have long been practicing this ancient art and have developed it into a fine technique of rare subtlety known as the Kathak dance. The Kathak of Lucknow seems deceptively simple, so easily does it treat the most esoteric subjects. The technique is built of a language of gestures, intricate rhythms, a dance of circles and spirals and a spontaneous approach to the telling.

A slight gesture makes clouds, a sudden glance breaks a lover's heart, a quick turn and a new character appears. Without sets or properties the dancer conjures up the world of the imagination where heroes do battle and lovers are united. The dancers wear hundreds of brass bells on their feet to create spontaneous rhythms in accompaniment to the tales.

*The art of the story teller is a feast for the senses: the eyes, the ears, the heart and the soul.*



## Deepti Gupta

... Dancer, choreographer Deepti Gupta is an accomplished exponent of the elegant Kathak of the Lucknow Gharana. She has been performing internationally for many years with a repertoire that includes sparkling traditional dances and contemporary choreographies that push the boundaries of Indian dance.

Deepti is artistic director of *angikam dance initiative*, an organization dedicated to exploring new ways of working within dance. Since 1994 she has created four major contemporary works, *Shakuntala*, *QUANTA*, *adya* and *The Tamarind Tree*, with commissions from the National Arts Centre, the Canada Dance Festival and the Candance Network. Her choreographic works and solo performances have been featured in major international dance festivals and dance series in New York City, Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa and Banff.

Deepti is a disciple of Guru Munna Shukla, renowned guru and grandson of late Sri Acchan Maharaj of the Lucknow School. From her years of immersion in Kathak, Deepti has developed a strong dedication to perform this dance tradition while exploring it for contemporary choreography and universal appeal. In keeping with the Indian dramatic tradition of *"Naty"*, her work blends various artistic disciplines to create a complete sensuous experience for her audience. Deepti's various creations such as *"adya"* in Kathak and *"The Tamarind Tree"* in Chhau have accomplished this to great critical and public acclaim.

Deepti is also trained in Chhau (martial dance of Orissa), western Modern dance and various other international forms. She has studied toward a Masters in Fine Arts (Dance) at York University in Toronto and the University of Hawaii, Honolulu. Her work has been recognized by numerous scholarships and awards by Arts Councils in Canada, the Shastri-Indo Canadian Institute, the Jon Higgins Memorial Scholarship, the Laidlaw Foundation and the Ministry for External Affairs (Canada) amongst others. She has been a regular contributor to various dance magazines and journals as well as a consultant with the Canada Council Touring Office and the Harbourfront Centre, Toronto.





- *"Undeniably exquisite..."*  
Globe & Mail

- *"Gupta is an entrancing dancer."*  
Toronto Star

- *"A choreographer with a  
distinct contemporary voice."*  
Dance Connection Magazine

