

HOP HOPKINS CENTER
FOR THE ARTS

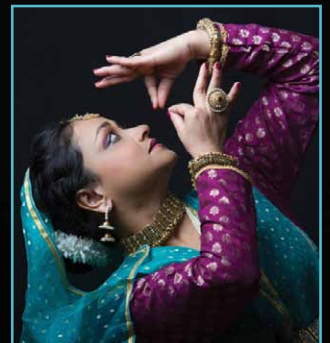
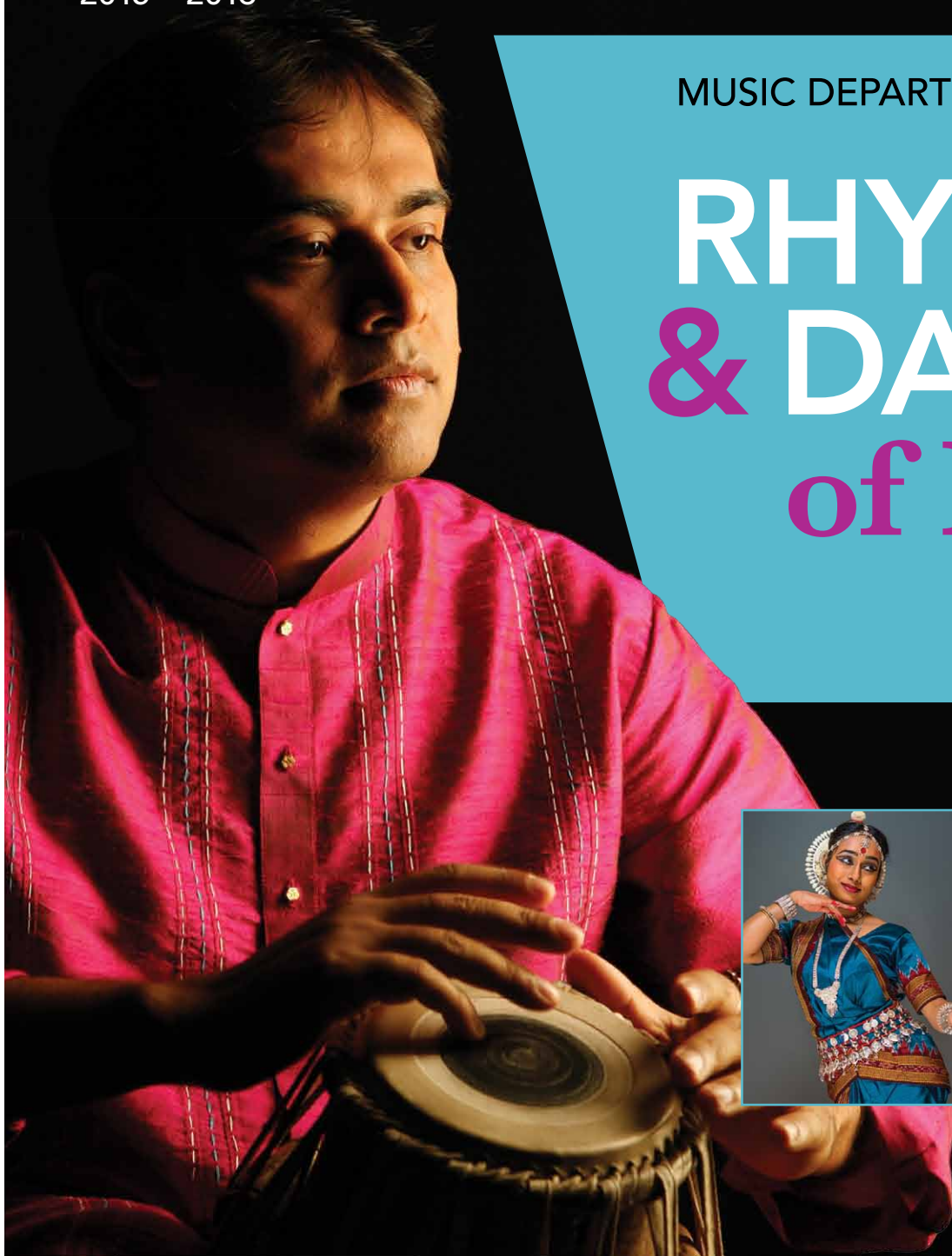
SCHOOL MATINEE SERIES STUDY
GUIDE

2015 • 2016

MUSIC DEPARTMENT RESIDENCY

**RHYTHM
& DANCE
of India**

fri MAR 4 10 am



Hopkins Center Outreach & Arts Education • hop.dartmouth.edu/outreach • 603.646.2010



WELCOME TO THE HOP

A performance needs an audience, so be prepared to play your part!

THEATER ETIQUETTE

When entering the Hopkins Center, show consideration for all those sharing the building by remaining quiet and respectful in common areas.

Be aware and use quiet voices. Remember that live theater differs greatly from watching television or movies or attending a sporting event. Live performers can hear and see you and are easily distracted by any talking or moving around in the audience. Even the smallest sounds can be heard throughout the theater, so it's best to be quiet so that everyone can enjoy the performance.

Applause is the best way to show your enthusiasm and appreciation!

Important things to remember: Backpacks, food, drink and gum are not allowed in the theater. Please turn off all cell phones and note that recording the performance or taking any photos is strictly prohibited. Hats off! It is respectful to remove hats during your time in the theater.

INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

Be prepared and arrive early. You should arrive at the theater 30 to 45 minutes before the show. Allow for travel time, parking, and trips to the restroom. You should be in your seat at least 15 minutes before the performance begins.

Have a head count. On the day of the performance be sure to have an accurate head count of students, chaperones, and teachers.

Staying for lunch? Please call 603.646.2010 no later than one week in advance of the show to make sure we have space available. The day of the show, bring lunches in marked boxes and give them to a Hop staff member. Lunches will be ready for you after the show in Alumni Hall.

Photo Policy. The Hopkins Center may take photographs during the performance for use on our website or on promotional materials. If you or your students do not wish to be photographed, please see a Hop staff member.

The Show Must Go On! We do not cancel events due to inclement weather. Performances will only be canceled if the artist is unable to reach the theater. Schools will be notified by phone if the performance has been cancelled. We do not issue refunds for weather-related cancellations; please feel free to fill empty seats with other school or community members.

This study guide was created for you by the Outreach & Arts Education team. Special thanks to Arts Alliance of Northern New Hampshire for use of their Mouli Pal Study Guide. To download copies of this study guide, see additional resources for this event, or view past study guides, please visit: www.hop.dartmouth.edu/outreach.

ENJOY THE SHOW!

Hopkins Center Outreach Department:
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The Hopkins Center Outreach & Arts Education department embodies the Hop's mission to "ignite and sustain a passion for the arts." It provides Dartmouth, the community and beyond rare personal contact with artists and a broad context for the performing arts. Unveiling the creative process of extraordinarily diverse artists, Outreach programs touch more than 14,000 lives each year.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The Hopkins Center opened in 1962.
- The Hopkins Center was designed by Wallace Harrison, architect of Lincoln Center and the United Nations Building in New York City.
- The first three rows of The Moore Theater are on an elevator that goes eleven feet below ground to create an orchestra pit and can also be raised to the height of the stage to make it larger.
- In The Moore Theater, the area over the stage, called the "fly loft," is 63 feet tall.

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

Rhythm and Dance of India was the idea of Newton, MA *tabla* player Sandeep Das. Incorporating traditional Indian music played on the *tabla* with classical Indian dance in the *Odissi* and *Kathak* styles, Sandeep has created a performance that honors many Indian performance traditions. When asked to share more about his upcoming performance at the Hop, Sandeep said, "Rhythm and dance—like in most cultures of the world—are an integral part of Indian society and culture. *Tabla* is the main instrument when it comes to performing *Kathak* dance, whereas *Pakhawaj* (another Indian percussion instrument) is important when it comes to *Odissi*. By bringing them both together, I am trying to showcase how, if you learn one thing well first, you can reach out and find connections with most things around you. A nice **synthesis** can be forged. First the audience will see and hear the main percussive instrument from the North of India, *tabla*, as a solo instrument. Then they will be able to see two different forms of Indian classical dance, and then see how all three come together to blend into one!"

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

The Music:

Sandeep Das—*tabla*

The Dance:

Mouli Pal—*Odissi*

Urmi Samada—*Kathak*

"Sandeep! Leave and stand outside the classroom!" As a child in school, Sandeep heard this many times as he was either tapping the floor with his feet or tapping his hands on anything he could find. Luckily, his father realized that he had interest in rhythm and took him to a local *tabla* instructor in Patna, India. A year later, he won the gold medal for his *tabla* playing at a city-wide music competition. When he was 16, he had his debut, or first big concert, with one of the best known Indian musicians in the world, **Pandit** Ravi Shankar.

As a professional musician, Sandeep's music has helped him travel the world, from the Middle East to Europe and to many countries in Asia. Fifteen years ago, Sandeep met and played with the famous cellist Yo-Yo Ma and the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. He is now part of Silk Road Ensemble, a well-known world music ensemble founded by Yo-Yo Ma.

Sandeep's music can be found on CDs, iTunes, television and the radio. When he's not playing music, Sandeep loves swimming and playing golf, table tennis and soccer.



Sandeep Das and Yo-Yo Ma

Ravi Shankar was a much-lauded **sitar** player and composer. He rose to prominence in America in the 1960s when he taught sitar to Beatles guitarist George Harrison and played at the Woodstock Music Festival. He died in 2012 but is survived by his musician daughters, sitar player Anoushka Shankar and Grammy Award-winning singer-songwriter Norah Jones.

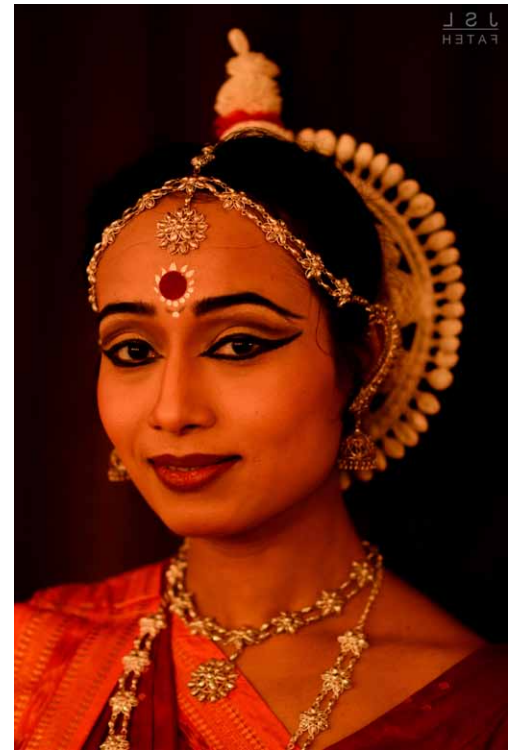
Ravi Shankar with his sitar in front of a portrait of his **guru** Baba Allauddin



ABOUT THE ARTISTS: (CONT.)

MOULI PAL, ODISSI DANCE:

Mouli was raised in Kolkata (Calcutta), India. She now lives in Boston and performs all over New England. In addition to being an *Odissi* (oh-deh-SEE) performer, Mouli is also a dedicated teacher, director, choreographer and a passionate **proponent** of the dance form. The desire to promote Odissi in North America prompted Mouli to form Upasana, an organization that works to preserve the art form of Indian dance. In addition to her dance training, Mouli also has a Master of Science in Finance degree from Suffolk University.



Mouli Pal



Urmil Samadar

URMI SAMADAR, KATHAK DANCE:

Urmil Samadar is an accomplished performer, choreographer and teacher in

Indian classical dance. She has received *Kathak* (ku-TUHK) training from many notable gurus. She was a recognized child artist on Doordarshan (Indian television) and was invited to perform before Mrs. Indira Gandhi, late Prime Minister of India, when she was in elementary school. Urmil is the director of Aarkriti, a professional Indian dance performing troupe. When not dancing, Urmil works at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Sloan School of Management.

ABOUT THE INSTRUMENTS:

The word *tabla* (TAH-bluh) is thought to be derived from the Arabic word *tabl* which means "drum." Tabla is a very popular Indian percussion instrument constructed of goat or cow skin, wood and metal. It is played with the hands, not with sticks, and the musician is often seated on the floor while playing. The instrument consists of two parts: a small drum made of wood called *dayan* and a larger, metal drum called *bayan*. The *dayan* is played with the right hand and the *bayan* is played with the left hand. Students often learn the *tabla* by ear instead of by reading music. Instructors call out the **bols** and the student responds by striking the drum in the appropriate way based on what he or she hears; there are many different ways of striking the drum depending on what sounds you want to produce. The *tabla* is a versatile percussion instrument and is used in classical, popular and religious music.



ABOUT THE DANCE:

Odissi traces its origins back to the first century BCE, with evidence of the dance found in cave paintings from that period. This dance tradition was begun by the Devadasis, or female temple dancers, who performed the dance as a part of their daily rituals. When Devadasis were abolished by British rulers in the 1700s the dance was preserved by young boys who dressed up as girls and performed the dance at village festivals and gatherings. The current form of *Odissi* is a result of a revival by eminent Gurus, scholars and dancers. The dance depicts musical moods—love, fear and anger—and describes the beauty of nature through captivating storytelling.

A traditional *Odissi* dance begins with *Mangalacharan*, where the dancer offers respects to Lord Jagannath, the Lord of the Universe. It is followed by a salutation to Mother Earth and a prayer to Lord Ganesha (guh-NAYSH), the elephant-headed God who is considered the remover of obstacles.

The second piece is *Pallavi* in which the dancer represents a blossoming tree using her body. She starts with simple slow notes—the roots and trunks—and develops into complex, fast-paced patterns—the branches, leaves and flowers.

In *Abhinaya*, the dancer enacts stories and poems, creating multiple characters and giving life to words and lyrics from traditional Sanskrit literature. This is done primarily through **mudras** (MOO-drah), which are **codified** hand gestures and facial expressions. Fingers are bent and spread to create patterns representing objects, events, feelings, animals or objects such as the swan, the bird, peacock, fish, flowers and the crescent moon. An important aspect of the dance vocabulary, mudras help the dancer communicate **nonverbally**.

Moksha is the final piece, a fast-paced dance of ecstasy and joy that symbolizes liberation and freedom.

Kathak is from Northern India and may be the only dance form in the world

that links **Hindu** and **Muslim** cultures. From its early form as a devotional expression dedicated to the Hindu gods, *Kathak* gradually moved out of the temples and into the courts of the rulers, both the Hindu *maharajas* (princes) and the Muslim *nawabs* (kings). During the mid-1800's, *Kathak* enjoyed a renaissance and gained prominence among the kings and *zamindars* (feudal overlords) not only as a form of entertainment, but also as a classical art form. The word *Kathak* is derived from *katha*, meaning "the art of storytelling." It is synonymous with the community of artists known as *Kathakas* whose **hereditary** profession it was to tell stories. These storytellers of ancient India would roam from village to village using dance, music and mime to bring life to the great scriptures and epic stories, especially those from Sanskrit literature such as the ***Mahabharata*** (ma-HAH-bah-ruh-ta), the ***Ramayana*** (RA-may-eh-NA) and the ***Puranas*** (pur-AHN).



Head of serpent mudra



Waxing moon mudra



Kathak dancers



ABOUT THE DANCE: (CONT.)

The technique of Kathak today is characterized by fast, rhythmic footwork set to complex time cycles. Performing in bare feet, the dancer's steps are accented by live musicians on instruments like the tabla. The dance includes numerous pirouettes executed at lightning speed that end in poses. Like Odissi, Kathak also uses *mudras* to communicate information.

Dancers wear *ghungroos* to accent the percussive *tatkaar*, or footwork, of Kathak. Weighing in at three to four pounds each, a *ghungroo* (ghun-ga-ROO) is made of 50-100 bells woven onto thick string and wrapped around the ankle and lower calf to produce sound when the feet are moved.



Ghungroos

CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

DANCING STATUES

As early as the Vedic period (1600–550 BCE), the visual arts were used to depict characters and stories from Indian literature and mythological narrative. In some artworks these characters—often gods and goddesses—were depicted in dance poses, showcasing the importance of dance in day to day life.

Dancing Ganesha (marble, 5th-6th century): Like his father, *Shiva* (SHEE-vah), the well-loved god Ganesha loves to dance. One of his roles is to entertain his father and mother, *Parvati* (PAR-vah-tee), which he does by dancing. Ganesha dances with his axe in the crook of his right elbow and a plate of *laddu*, his favorite sweets, in his left hand.



Ganesha, above; Shiva, below

Dancing Krishna (bronze, 19th century): *Bala* (baby) Krishna stands on his left foot while rising and bending the opposite leg. He stretches his right arm in order to keep his balance, holding in one hand a sweet butter ball, his favorite treat.



Krishna

Shiva, the lord of dance (jade, 10th-11th century): This statue shows Shiva, god of destruction and creation, demolishing and re-creating the **cosmos** through dance. Shiva also creates with music (using the *damaru* drum he carries in his upper right hand) and destroys with fire, seen in the ring of flames around him.



CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND (CONT.)

India on the world map



ABOUT INDIA

India is the world's second most populous nation at 1.2 billion people. It contains 29 states and seven territories and each region has its own language and culture. Since each state has its own identity, India is a multi-lingual country. Over 20 recognized languages are spoken throughout the country including Hindi, English, Bengali, Telugu, Marathi, Tamil and Urdu.

POLITICS

India is a country whose residents have struggled and are still struggling with maintaining ownership of their lands. India was taken by Great Britain in the early 18th century and a strong British military presence kept the Indians from revolt. In 1947, Britain relinquished power after a non-violent protest led by **Mahatma Ghandi** empowered Indian citizens to take back their country. Today, there are some parts of India that are in **dispute**, claimed by both India and either the People's Republic of China or Pakistan. There is no resolution to these conflicts on the horizon, but a **tenuous** peace is upheld among the people who live in these areas.

GEOGRAPHY

India is bordered by the Indian Ocean to the South and the Himalayan Mountains to the North. Though India is near the equator and is considered to be a tropical country, the country includes many ecosystems, including deciduous forests, tundra in the far north and desert. India contains the Ganges River, a river sacred to those that practice the Hindu religion. The river is believed to be the goddess Ganga and many Hindu's ritually bathe in it as a sign of faith. It is also one of the most polluted rivers in the entire world, used for everything from drinking water and clothes washing to dumping chemical factory waste water and raw sewage.

RELIGION

Many Indians practice Hinduism. Hinduism is a **polytheistic** religion and the third largest in the world after Christianity and Islam. Hinduism's three major deities are Brahma, the creator; Shiva, the destroyer; and Vishnu, the preserver of universal order. The supreme goddess is Devi or Parvati. As one of its many practices, Hinduism focuses on living by the *Purusarthas*, or proper goals for life. These include *dharma* (ethics), *artha* (work), *kama* (emotions), and *moksha* (freedom).



PRE PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What do you think the tabla will sound like? Do you think there are Western instruments that sound similar?
- What Western dance genres have a tradition of storytelling? In what ways does dance tell a story? Is it effective or not?
- Are there other parts of Indian culture with which you are familiar? If so, describe them. Are there parts of Indian culture you have questions about?

POST PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- The classical music and dance of India does not incorporate language. Do you think the music was successful at communicating ideas or emotions, regardless of its lack of lyrics or words? Why or why not? What about the dance?
- How would you describe the sounds of the tabla? Did you notice anything unique about the sound or the way the artist played the instrument?
- How were Odissi and Kathak similar? How were they different? What words would you use to describe the dancers' movements?

LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

MAKE A MUDRA (GRADES 3-5):

Mudras are gestures with the hands and facial expressions that create patterns and represent objects, allowing a dancer to communicate without using words. Work with a partner to create a series of hand shapes that represent a familiar story or fairy tale, such as *Little Red Riding Hood*. Repeat shapes when you can and arrange into chronological order. Share your gestures with the rest of the class to tell the story.

Extension: Keep your hand gestures and add whole body gestures. Be sure to create a whole body gesture or shape that complements and/or extends the shapes you've made with your hands. How would you hold your body if you were running from a wolf? Walking through a forest? Talking to your grandmother?

AN ARMY OF AVATARS (GRADES 5-7):

Vishnu is one of the major deities of Hinduism. In stories about Vishnu he often appears as one of his many avatars, deliberately descending to Earth in human or animal form to intercede for a human in need. The word "avatar" has been adopted in modern, Western language to mean a virtual representation of one's self, such as in a video game. Create your avatar. Draw and/or write the features that would have—be imaginative. Identify all the ways your avatar is both like you and different from you. Don't forget to name your avatar. For stories about Vishnu, visit <http://www.balagokulam.org/kids/stories/dashavatara.php>.

Extension: Write a short story in which your avatar is one of the characters and intercedes as Vishnu does. Research Hindu myth and storytelling for further inspiration.

GODS AND GODDESSES, PAST AND PRESENT IMPROV (GRADES 8-9):

Select a Hindu deity to research. Based on your research, create a biography for your god or goddess. Be sure to identify how he or she is related to or interacts with the other deities in the pantheon of Hindu gods. Present your biography to the class by reading it aloud. Make sure classmates listen closely to be prepared for the activity! After each biography, a classmate will interview you as if you were the deity and they are the host on a daytime talk show. Interview questions might include: What are your favorite films? How do you feel about the other gods and goddesses in the **pantheon**? What amazing feats have you accomplished recently? Questions may also be inspired by the interviewer's own created persona. If you are playing the deity you must answer based on what you know about the deity, though part of the answer is imagination and requires thinking about how that deity might act in the modern world.

Extension: In groups, create freeze frames or **tableaux vivants** of Indian gods and goddesses in their stories.

VOCABULARY

Bols: vocal sounds or words assigned to the various sounds and rhythms of the tabla

Codified: arranged according to a plan or system

Cosmos: universe; of or relating to the material universe of planets and galaxies outside the earth

Dispute: a disagreement between two or more entities

Guru: Teacher, guide or master of a particular skill or knowledge

Hereditary: the holding of a position by inheritance

Hindu: person who practices Hinduism, a polytheistic religion originating from the traditions and culture of South Asia

Mahabharata: epic poem about a great war that ends one age and begins another; contains all the lore and legends of classical Hindu tradition

Mahatma Gandhi: political and spiritual leader of India during the country's struggle with Great Britain in the early 20th century

Muslim: followers of Islam, a monotheistic religion based on the word of God as revealed to Muhammad in the 7th century

Nonverbally: without use of spoken language, using facial expression or body language to communicate

Pandit: a respectful title or form of address for a skilled musician derived from Sanskrit language

Pantheon: all the gods of a religion or people referred to collectively

Polytheistic: religion that worships more than one god or goddess

Proponent: a person who advocates a theory, project or idea

Puranas: a series of books of Hindu sacred literature written in Sanskrit, recounting the lives of Indian deities, creation and destruction and recreation of universe

Ramayana: the story of Sri Rama and one of the great epics of India

Sanskrit: ancestor of most languages of northern South Asia and Sri Lanka. Though it is not spoken by many people, it is the language of Hindu scriptures, classical literature, and other scientific, philosophical, and religious scholarship

Sitar: a large, long necked Indian lute or guitar

Synthesis: the combination of ideas to form a theory or system

Tableaux vivants: a storytelling method in which a group of actors are carefully and theatrically posed to visually represent all or part of a story

Tenuous: very weak; insubstantial

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

The Artists' Websites:

<http://www.sandeepdas.com/>

<http://moulipal.com/>

<http://www.urmisamadar.com/about.html>

<http://www.rameshmisra.com/>

http://chandrakantha.com/articles/indian_music/nritya/Odissi.html

<http://www.geocurrents.info/place/southeast-asia/new-maps-of-india-and-of-the-indian-economy>

<http://www.artic.edu/aic/collections/exhibitions/Indian/resource/1042>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashtapadi>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jayadeva>

<http://www.xip.fi/atd/india/dance-in-the-visual-arts.html>

http://www.renzofreschi.com/gallery/slideshow.asp?img_id=1026&ci=4

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hinduism>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ganges>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geography_of_India

<http://www.indianewengland.com/ME2/Audiences/dirmod.asp?sid=&nm=&type=Publishing&mod=Publications%3A%3AArticle&mid=8F3A7027421841978F18BE895F87F791&AudID=756E039087DD4B24942F6FF552F26C64&tier=4&id=ADEA96553ACD4A0F81877A4FB98FE3A4>

<http://www.ancientscripts.com/oriya.html>

<http://musicalbridges.org/index.php/about/news/2-uncategorised/255-about-the-performers-3>

<http://www.biography.com/people/ravi-shankar-9480456> <http://www.ravishankar.org/gallery.html>