

Rita Mustaphi



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Bio

Founder and Artistic Director, Katha Dance Theatre
Katha Dance Theatre, the dancing storytellers of India

Katha Dance Theatre creates, performs & educates through the art forms of dance, music, poetry & storytelling. Rooted in Kathak dance, the classical dance style of North India, KDT tells stories using facial expression, movements, hand gestures, percussive footwork, music, poetry & mime that makes it a dynamic multimedia presentation.

Founded in 1987 by Artistic Director Rita Mustaphi, KDT is the only organization of its kind, size, and scope in the Midwest keeping alive the tradition of Kathak & expanding upon its forms. Currently, the company has 8 dancers and 7 apprentices. Under Rita Mustaphi's direction, KDT has shaped the Kathak landscape for 36 years preserving Kathak dance & pushing the form's boundaries in an effort to make innovative, inclusive works.



What are you working on in the next two years?

Prakritir Pratisodh - Nature's Revengel!

When the elements in nature, Earth, Air, Fire, Water & Space, exist in harmonious balance, we experience inner peace & robust health. But, when they fall out of equilibrium, suffering & discontentment may ensue. Currently, we are living in an age filled with environmental challenges & relentless climatic destruction. The world is undergoing rapid transformations, evoking feelings of unease & apprehension within us all. Prakritir Pratisodh, with its series of dance vignettes depicts the natural forces are now threatened by human induced environmental alterations. Yet, it also conveys a message of hope, emphasizing that the responsibility to shape our collective destiny & that of future generations still rests with each of us.

Repertoire available for touring

Kathak Yatra - The Journey of Kathak Dance of India

Kathak Yatra offers the viewer a glimpse of the evolution of Kathak dance throughout India's historical eras & its contemporary rendition! Starting from the ancient temple period, through the royal courts of the kings & the emperors to today's stages!

Kathak, this storytelling art form, has its origin in the narrative tradition of the village minstrel who sang songs of heroic tales & dramatized their lyrics with subtle gestures & expressions. Rhythmic footwork, fast pirouettes & complex movements characterize this graceful spontaneous dance. Later, the art came from the temples to the royal courts & represented a unique synthesis of both Hindu & Muslim cultures. Kathak expresses abandon, yet it also carries a reticence that offsets this flamboyance and creates charm that is simply irresistible.

Performers: 8 dancers. Tech: 1 light designer and 1 stage manager.

