



The Visual Times

Designing Dance



● **RASHMI KHANNA**

As a trained Bharatnatyam dancer, I was always keen on doing my masters from an institution that not just enhanced my skills but also made me more aware of the global performing artscenario. Last year I was thrilled to discover the Masters Program in Performing Arts offered at WUD, Sonipat. In Delhi, there are no post-graduate courses in dance, only music courses at Delhi University and a Bachelor's or Ph.D. in Bharatnatyam at IGNOU, but no Masters. However, at WUD, I was pleasantly surprised to learn that they offer a diverse range of new skills related to dance and all its allied fields in both BPA and MPA programs. The curriculum

is precisely formulated to provide students with immense knowledge about various aspects of dance, including its evolution, movement techniques, dance styles, and allied subjects such as Arts administration, Dance Therapy, Light Designing, Costume Designing and Stage Craft etc, which can enhance a dancer's ability to perform and create dance productions.

Moreover, the program offers exposure to new ideas, which can help dancers to create more innovative techniques for their practice. Keeping Indian classical dance forms as the base the SoPA dance programs give an in depth knowledge of international and contemporary dance forms along with Kalari and Chhau and Choreography. The the-

ory classes covers all aspects of Natyasastra including Iconography and mythology, Temple Architecture, Aesthetics, Movement techniques, Evolution of Dance and drama, and prepares the students for competitive exams like NET.

The Degree from a reputable UGC approved University like WUD can improve a dancer's career prospects and provide networking opportunities with other professionals in the field, leading to collaborations, performance opportunities, and job offers. Therefore, although individual goals may vary, obtaining a degree in performing arts can be a valuable opportunity for those seeking to expand their creative abilities and career prospects beyond being a performer.



Dhrupad Legend visits WUD

● OUR CORRESPONDENT

Ustad Wasifuddin Dagar ji was honored with the Critics Choice Award for Performing Arts by Dr. Sanjay Gupta, the Vice Chancellor of WUD. The School of Performing Arts was happy to host Ustad ji on WUD campus. Ustad Wasifuddin Dagar comes from a lineage of renowned musicians, being the son of the late Ustad Nasir Faiyazuddin Dagar and the nephew of the late Ustad N. Zahiruddin Dagar,

both of whom were part of the junior Dagar brothers, descendants of the legendary Haridas Dagar, who was Tansen's teacher. His musical training began at the age of five, under the guidance of his father and younger uncle, and he also received instruction from his grand uncle, elder uncle, and several cousin uncles, all of whom are highly skilled in Dhrupad singing. Wasifuddin Dagar's first public performance was with his uncle Ustad Zahiruddin Dagar just a few days after his father's



death in 1989. He has since recorded and performed extensively, both solo and in collaboration with other artists, in various countries, including Switzerland, India, Japan, and America. He has also performed at many prestigious venues in North America, such as the UN, Smithsonian Institutions, Yale, and Stanford University.

Ustad F. Wasifuddin Dagar represents the 20th generation of dedicated dhrupad singers in the Dagar family. He is the nephew of Ustad N. Zahiruddin Dagar and son of Ustad N. Faiyazuddin Dagar, the legendary younger "Dagar Brothers". Though traditionally his family has always performed dhrupad as a duet, Wasif (shorted form of his name) successfully presents the dynamic of a duet in a solo performance by maintaining the distinct musical approaches and styles of both

his father and uncle.

Wasif's early training was with his uncle Ustad N. Zahiruddin Dagar, and his father Ustad N. Faiyazuddin Dagar. Wasif also had the good fortune of the tutelage of his grand uncle Ustad Rahimuddin Khan Dagar, a dhrupad exponent and his grandfather's younger brother. Other elders including uncles Ustad N. Aminuddin Dagar, and Ustad N. Mohiuddin Dagar (renowned vina virtuoso) have also greatly influenced him. Wasif continues to benefit from the knowledge, experience and guidance of his uncles Ustad. R. Fahimuddin Dagar, Ustad Z. Fariduddin Dagar, and Ustad. H. Sayeeduddin Dagar.

During his visit, Ustad Wasifuddin Dagar ji shared his profound knowledge of Dhrupad with the faculty and students of WUD through interactions and discussions.

Kala Shrinkhala

On 27th February, 2023, School of Performing Arts organised an Odissi master class with Ms. Anushua Chowdhury under “Kala Shrinkhala-Conversations with connoisseurs” for the Masters students.



• SHALINI DARAMWAL

Odissi is one of the pre-eminent classical dance forms of India which originated in the Hindu temples of the eastern coastal state of Odisha in India. Its theoretical base trace back to ‘Natya Shashtra’, the ancient Sanskrit Hindu text on the performing arts. Age-old tradition of Odissi is manifested from Odisha Hindu temples and various sites of archaeological significance that are associated with Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism, the sculptures of which adorn dance postures of this art form. A form of illustrative anecdote of mythical and religious stories, devotional poems and spiritual ideas emoted by dancer with excellent body movements, expressions, impressive gestures and sign languages, its performance repertoire includes invocation, nrita, nritya, natya, and moksha.

Globally known for her pristine performance style, Anushua specialises in the Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra as well as Guru Hare Krishna Behra gharana of Odissi. She taught the students, the theoretical aspect of the origin and development of this classical dance style along with the basic stances – the Chowka, Tribhanga, Abhang and Samabhang. The different types of Pada Bhedas (Feet postures) were explained and taught practically apart from making the students learn the various syllables or ‘bols’ used in some

of the stances. A detailed analysis of the costumes and jewellery was also explained systematically and methodically.

In the latter half of the session, students learnt an entire Mangalaacharan with some Shlokas. It was an enlightening and enriching session which helped the students who

learn different Classical dance forms understand and practise the body movements and nuances used in Odissi. The amalgamation of theory as well as practical was a well-balanced approach to open a gateway for the pupils to another world of the rich classical dance tradition of India.



Learning through Experience



● ABHISHREE JOSHI

As major milestones in a dancer's career or learning journey, staged performances are not only a test of the artiste's dancing skills, but also of their memory, stamina, and strength. It is especially significant for an Indian classical dancer, as it is one of the few times that they wear the elaborate and traditional outfit, representative of their dance. In other words, while the training is the foundational and vital part of

being a dancer, a staged performance is the identity affirming aspect of it.

When it comes to organizing such an event, the process begins with setting a date, after which a venue is selected. In terms of the date selection, the urban lifestyle of Delhi restricts performances to weekends, due to which, one often has to book a venue months in advance. The selection of the venue depends on the size of the audience, i.e. capacity of the venue, and the number of performers, i.e., size of the stage. Additionally, in Delhi,

the coveted venues are situated in Central Delhi, a location which is considered to be the hub of all things cultural. Once the venue is booked, the next step is to generate interest. This is done through the designing of posters and invitation cards, their circulation, and publicity on various social media platforms. As with the venue, make-up artists, photographers and videographers are also booked well in advance. In case the show includes live orchestra, the same is done for the musicians as well. The icing on the cake is when one is able to secure a chief guest of repute to grace the event. Last on the list to organize in advance is the compering and lecture demonstrations. On the day of the performance itself, flower arrangements, lights and the Natraj are set up to complete the experience of being transported to an artistic space. During the show, one member of the organizing team is required to sit with the stage technician to manage the light and in cases when recorded music is utilized, for the sound as well. Some members of the team are stationed off-stage, where they welcome and seat the guests. The members of the organizing team which remain backstage ensure the smooth functioning of the show and assist the dancers in all their needs.

This includes fixing make-up, jewelry or costumes, helping them get ready or providing water and food in between the performances. The organizing team's responsibilities continue well after the completion of the show as they aid in wrapping up the evening. As one can see, it takes a village, or in our case, a family to organize a dance performance.



Shuddhaangam Classical dance meets AI

● RASHMI KHANNA,
SARITA NEGI & PRAGATI GUPTA

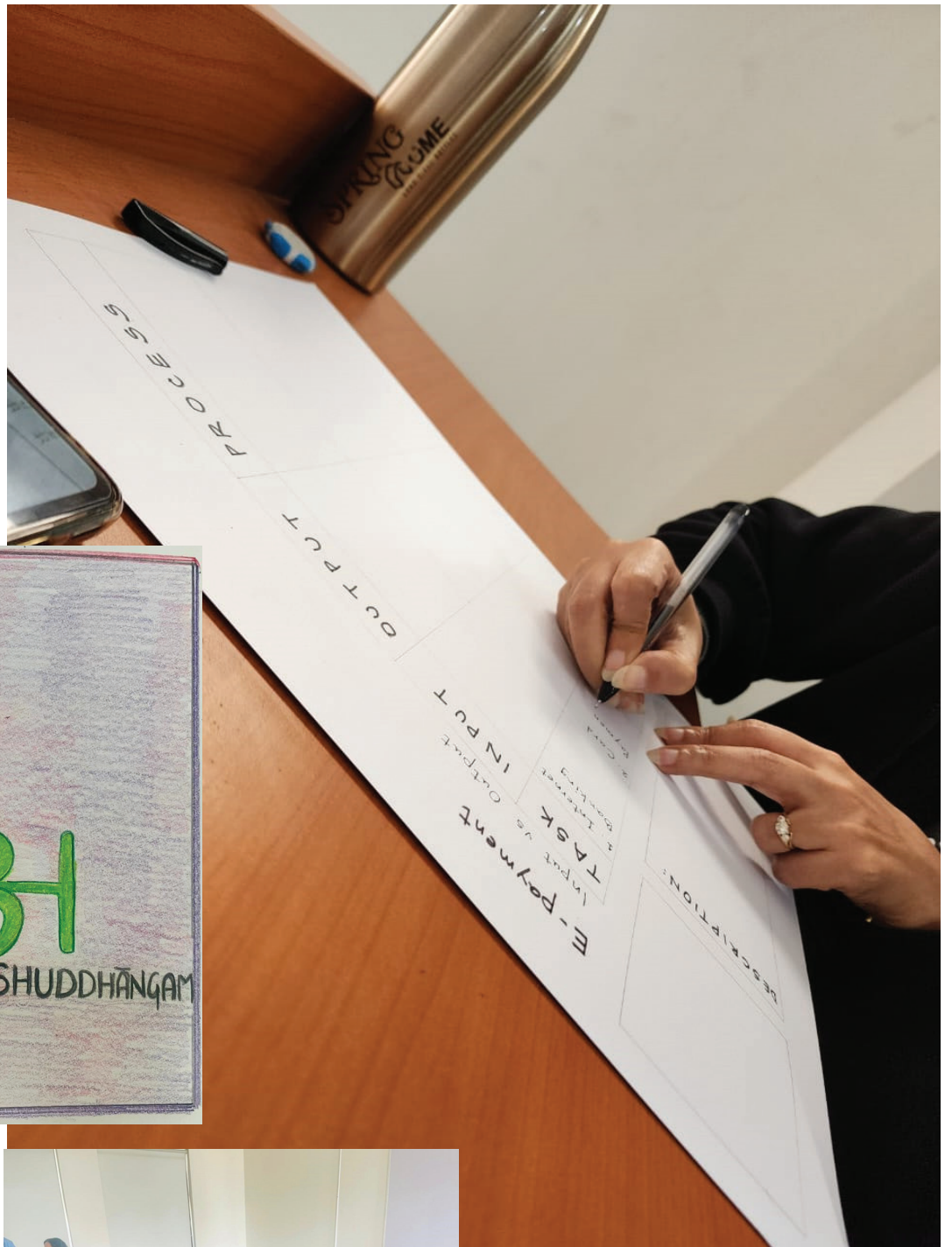
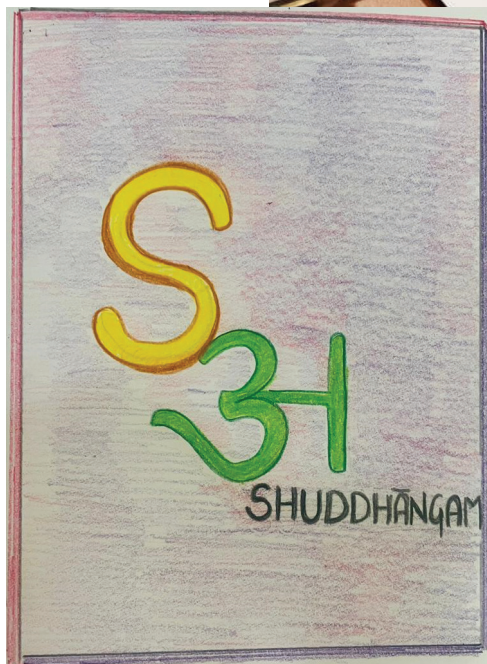
AI is the simulation of human intelligence processes by machines, especially computer systems, which process large amounts of data so that it can recognize patterns, make decisions, solve problems and judge somewhat similarly to humans.

Using and applying AI is a whole new experience for the students of Performing Arts, especially so due to the non existence of any AI app to help dancers improve their performance.

Keeping the above said reason in mind, the Masters students of SOPA, helped create an app in their Elective course which helped simulate the correct postures required for any Bharatnatyam dancer based on their height and specific measurements of their limbs.

The application was named “Shuddhaangam”, meaning the purity or clarity of the body language.

It is one of a kind application which helps the self correction of Bharatnatyam postures of limbs - mainly arms, elbow, knees and feet. It can be used by all beginners and senior dancers, to improve their linear geometry which is a very important part of Bharatnatyam.



The dancer is required to fill all the details in the app. Once the details are filled, the pre fed data creates an algorithm specific to the dancer. When the dancer starts practising in front of the computer or phone, it recognizes the incorrect angles of the arms, elbows, feet and knees and simulates the correct postures with a different colour limb with which the dancer can align herself till such time that she is able to manage the right posture with muscle memory.

Such an app reduces the pressure on the teacher to constantly keep correcting the pupil and is perfect for self practice at home. It can speed up the process of learning and assist in quicker learning.



Intricate Melodies and Hypnotic Rhythms



● **SIMER PREET SOKHI (ASST. PROF.)**

Shri. Gaurav Mazumdar, a Grammy-nominated sitar virtuoso with over 30 years of experience, has been captivating audiences worldwide with the ancient and sacred tradition of Indian classical music. He has not only preserved the art form but also expanded it through cross-cultural collaborations with renowned artists like Daniel Hope, Philip Glass, and the Hesse family. Gaurav has achieved several milestones, including being the only Indian artist to perform at the Vatican and the 'Concert for George' in memory of George Harrison. Gaurav ji mesmerized the students and faculty of WUD with his performance at the inception ceremony, where he shared the intricacies of music and showcased his students' exceptional talents in tabla and vocals. He was also conferred with the Critics Choice Award for Performing Arts on this occasion.

Pathway to a Musical Career

● **SHRI PRASHANT TRIVEDI**
(Acclaimed Music Arranger and member of EUPHORIA Band)

As someone who has been involved in percussion and music arrangement for many years, I have always felt the need for comprehensive educational programs that can help aspiring musicians turn their passion into a profession. When I discovered the BPA and MPA (Music) programs at the World University of Design, I immediately recognized that these programs are exactly what today's music students require.

The BPA and MPA in music programs at the World University of Design, offers comprehensive education in music that combines both practical performance and theoretical aspects. The programs cover a wide range of musical practices, critical thinking, contemporary theory, performance, composing, administration, and production experience to help students develop a unique approach to launching their professional music careers.

These courses prepare the students with



a solid foundation in performance theories and the nuances of classical, folk, and contemporary music, as well as the basics of production and presentation. The programs also offer a rigorous understanding of the global music industry and exposes students to practical and theoretical practices in performing arts across various cultures.

Our faculty consists of top musicians and allied arts experts who inspire students to think creatively about music beyond just performance. Students learn to support

their practice with research in music arranging, composing, performance, therapy, pedagogy, art administration, and explore the historical, social, cultural, and digital contexts of music.

Students have the opportunity to work closely with experienced teachers, professional musicians, and composers in classes that use live or recorded music. They can also refine their skills in a well-equipped studio. Additionally, the program includes learning how to use and control digital media to promote and present the performing arts in response to the current crisis.

The goal of the BPA and MPA (Music) programs is to expand students' knowledge of music through its physical, intellectual, and exploratory dimensions. The programs emphasize on practical and theoretical lessons to help students understand themselves and their unique artistic voice, enabling them to make informed choices as holistic artists.

I am excited and eager to utilize my experience and expertise to shape the future generations of musicians, as an Adjunct Professor at WUD's School of Performing Arts.

Visit to Gandharv Mahavidyalaya



● OUR CORRESPONDENT

The students from the School of Performing Arts got an opportunity to visit the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya in Delhi, where they were able to gain knowledge about the complexities of music as well as the significance of riyaz (practice) from Pt. Madhup Mudgal.

During the visit, the Dean of SoPA, Dr. Parul Purohit Vats, along with renowned art critic Mr. Qazi, presented Pandit Madhup Mudgal with the Critics Choice Award for Performing Arts.

Pt. Madhup Mudgal is a renowned Hin-

dustani classical music vocalist from India, who is known for his renditions of khayal and bhajan. He is a disciple of Kumar Gandharva and is also a composer and conductor of the famous Gandharva Choir. Since 1995, he has been serving as the principal of the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya in Delhi, a school for music and dance. In recognition of his contributions to the field of music, he was awarded the Padma Shri by the Government of India in 2006. Madhup Mudgal was born in New Delhi to Professor Vinay Chandra Maudgalya, a renowned classical musician from the Gwalior gharana, who founded the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya in 1939. Growing



up in a musical environment, Madhup was exposed to the music of veteran musicians like Pt. Omkarnath Thakur and Ali Akbar Khan. Madhup Mudgal has performed across the world and has been the conductor of the Gandharva Choir for many years. He has also composed music for productions of his sister, an Odissi dancer and choreographer.

Pandit Madhup Mudgal was delighted to learn about the music degree programs offered by WUD and extended his best wishes to the SoPA team.

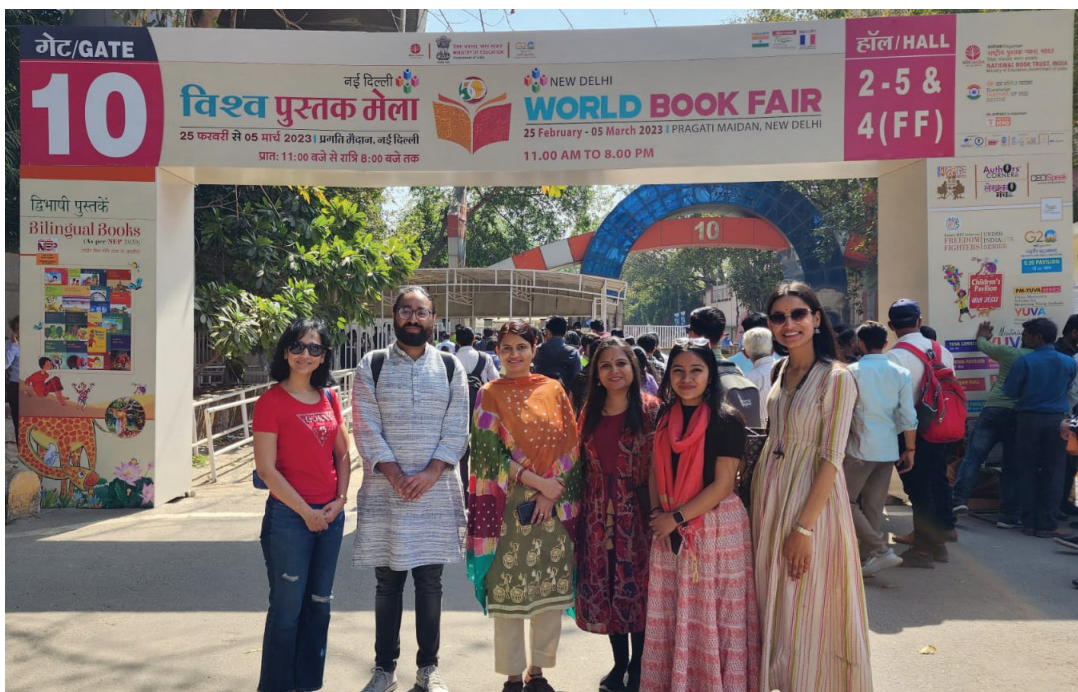
Arts Administration on site training

The arts administration course in WUD under the school of performing arts is being conducted by Shri Arijeet Mukherjee who was the program coordinator at Kathak Kendra and also heads the artist association of India. Apart from having regular classes on allied arrangements for performing arts, grants, proposals, licensing etc the students are given onsite training sessions also. They were given onsite training of open air auditorium, basic light and sound etc. at the Meghdoot – I, open air auditorium, SangeetNatakAkademi, during the Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar distribution and Kalotsav 23 Festival. They also went through a master class on basic training of photography and video during Guru Malti Shyam's performance at the India Habitat Centre.

Onsite performance management | basic indoor auditorium training was given to them during the tabla academy of Ajrara Gharana's Show in Kamani Auditorium, New Delhi. WUD Critics Choice Award was given Ustad Akram Khan during this programme.



Visit to Book Fair and SNA



When we speak about performing art, the general premise that exists, is that it is primarily a practical subject requiring only intense practice of technique, timing, rhythm, music and emotion. Few people know about the amount of theoretical knowledge required to becoming close to a complete artiste. To assist the Artistes books play a pivotal role by providing a wealth of information, knowledge, expert opinions, styles, historical analysis of particular genres and evolution of dance styles, In-depth analysis of scripts, experiences of performers etc.

For the same reason, an educational excursion was planned for the students of SOPA, WUD, Sonepat to take them to the Book Fair and the Sangeet Natak Akademi(SNA). The students pursuing Masters in Performing Arts visited the Library of SNA where they understood the working of a library in a government organisation, how to find books and articles through their website, how to find material for research papers as well as brainstorming about their dissertation topics with all the relevant books, publications, articles, rare out of print manuscripts and interviews that they could access with the help of the very supportive staff.

It served as an important resource for students pursuing higher studies in performing arts by providing comprehensive information, reference material, research support, cultural exposure and professional development opportunities.

The Book Fair also provided an immense selection of books related to Performing Arts, ranging from all kinds of Classical and folk dances, Autobiographies of great artistes, selected articles published by great critics of music and dance, temple architecture, mythological tales, NET /JRF preparation, books on music, iconography, aesthetics etc.

Overall, attending the Book Fair was a valuable experience, which provided the students with opportunities for personal and professional growth by expanding their network and resources.

G20 Summit Jodhpur

The group of twenty (G20) is the premier forum for international economic cooperation. India holds the presidency of the G20 from 1 December 2022 to 30 November 2023, to solve the Asian financial crisis was founded in 1999. The G20 event of Jodhpur was choreographed by renowned Kathak Guru Maitreyee Pahari. Second semester student of our Masters in Performing Arts, Ms. Pragati gupta got selected for this production and got a chance to performance on 2, February 2023 with Ms. Maitreyee Pahari's repertory.



Festival Performance

Sanjeev Kumar student of the School of Performing Arts BPA, got an incredible opportunity to showcase his talent as a performer at the highly regarded Bharat Muni Sangeet Utsav. This esteemed festival, which celebrates the rich cultural heritage of India, is renowned for showcasing some of the most talented artists in the country. Sanjeev Kumar performed in the magnificent dance drama called "Shri Krishna Charitam", choreographed by the highly acclaimed Kathak guru and choreographer Shri Dheerendra Tiwari, an adjunct professor at WUD's school of performing arts. This performance by Sanjeev Kumar is a significant achievement, not just for him but also for the School of Performing Arts. It is a reflection of the quality of education and training that the institution provides to its students

In-house performance

The School of Performing Arts (SoPA) and Dance Club presented two stunning performances on the evening of 6th February 2023 at the opening ceremony of Vietnam India International Exhibition and

Workshop (VIIEW). The first performance was a Kathak dance style Ganesh Vandana, prepared under the guidance of Dr. Parul Purohit Vats, Dean of the School of Performing Arts. The students beautifully showcased their skills and devotion through graceful movements, paying homage to Lord Ganesh.

The second performance was a Mohiniattam Padam, a classical Indian dance style from southern India, prepared under the guidance of Simer Preet Sokhi, Assistant Professor School of Performing Arts. Nanda Anoop and Adharva C.S. performed the piece depicting a conversation between Lord Krishna and Draupadi, which was gracefully executed with perfect expressions and movements. The students of SoPA and dance club exhibited their dedication and hard work through their flawless execution of the dance pieces.

Indian classical dance style.

The first piece, Krishnaashtakam, performed by four talented dancers - Shweta Roy Anand, Sarita Negi, Shalini Dharamwal, and Pragati Gupta - was a musical and lyrical composition saluting Lord Krishna. The second performance was a Thumri, a Shringaaric style of Kathak dance performed by Sarita Negi. Her performance seamlessly integrated the technical aspects of Kathak dance with the emotions of the song. The dance performances were an unforgettable experience for the audience and an excellent opportunity for students to display their talent.



The School of Performing Arts, master's program students, put on a magnificent display of Kathak dance on the evening of 13th February, 2023 for the closing ceremony of VIIEW. The performance was divided into two pieces - Krishnaashtakam and Thumri, both performed in the traditional



Drishtikon Masterclass

5 students from the BPA and MPA program were selected to participate in the 2 day masterclass conducted by internationally acclaimed choreographer and guru Ms. Aditi Mangaldas at her studio Drishtikon. The first day of the workshop included warm-up exercises and discussions about the thought-provoking terms used during riyaz. The participants learned that translation is easy, but true transformation comes from within and requires observation of the surroundings. Improvisation is an advanced level of technique that requires a

strong foundation and proper training from Gurus. They learnt that it's not necessary to simply translate mythological characters, but rather, to interpret and understand them in a way that resonates with the individual's observations and intellect, much like how books and stories can be interpreted in various ways.

From the perspective of a Kathak dancer, it appears as though one is dancing on a canvas.

The dancer moves with the intention of filling the space with the emotions and feelings that they want to convey. They use the language they have learned to express themselves with the mnemonic sounds and syllables of Kathak. When asked about how to create a bandish, the dancer explained that it is based on the feeling of what needs to be danced, utilizing the space and pace. For example, they learned to express fire and water in a bandish, which was inspired by various

sources, such as pictures, paintings, statues, or the surrounding environment.

On the second day, Aditi ji explained about the importance of synchronizing the lights, backdrop, and other elements to present a thoughtful and engaging production. She discussed the meaning of "traditional" in Kathak, explaining that they do not conform to the traditional style of dancing. Instead, they believe that Kathak has evolved over time and can be termed contemporary. They use the language or grammar of Kathak to express themselves. An intense session of martial art form 'Kalaripayattu' helped them understand the body and its reactions. There was a discussion around the importance of being spiritual rather than merely religious, as the human body has descended for a higher purpose. The SoPA students came back enlightened from this experience.

Faculty Talks

Vidushi Shweta Dubey

Adjunct Professor Music Department
Hindustani Semi Classical Vocalist &
Leading Exponent of Banaras Gharana

The music programs at WUD are carefully designed to provide students with a comprehensive education in a wide variety of musical genres and allied arts. One of the things that sets this program apart is the emphasis on collaboration, experimentation and exploring different styles and techniques. The idea is that students get to work with their peers to create original music that pushes boundaries and challenges conventions. This approach not only fosters creativity, but also helps students develop the essential skills of teamwork, communication, and adaptability.

The faculty members are experienced musicians and educators, passionate about sharing their knowledge and expertise with the next generation of music makers. Personalized instruction and mentorship help students identify their strengths and develop their unique musical voice.

Overall, I am proud to be a part of the progressive music degree program, and I am excited to see where our students' musical journeys will take them. If you are passionate about music and are looking for a challenging and rewarding education, I highly recommend our program.





Faculty Talks

Simer Preet Sokhi
Asst. Professor SoPA

One of the unique features of the Performing Arts Department at World University of Design is its emphasis on interdisciplinary collaboration. Students are encouraged to work across disciplines, and to explore the ways in which different art forms can inform and enrich one another. This approach fosters a spirit of experimentation and innovation, and prepares students for the ever-changing demands of the creative industries.

My varied academic background allows me to adopt a comprehensive approach to my teaching. Having received training in the traditional Gurukul system and studied within a university setting, I have gained a deep appreciation for both traditional teaching methods and the contemporary demands of industry.

As an instructor, I integrate my expertise in museum and arts management, iconography, and temple architecture into the theory courses that I teach. These courses not only provide students with valuable knowledge in their respective fields, but also equip them with the skills needed to succeed in competitive exams like the UGC NET. Furthermore, the curriculum is designed to expand their professional horizons by preparing them for careers in areas such as event curation and museum management. Additionally, my teaching style aims to inspire and develop students' research abilities in the field of performing arts.

The Performing Arts Department at World University of Design, Sonipat is a dynamic and creative space that offers students the opportunity to explore and develop their talents in a wide range of artistic disciplines. With a focus on practical skills, theoretical knowledge, and creative expression, the department aims to produce well-rounded and versatile artists who can thrive in a variety of contexts.

Joe Matthew, Adjunct Professor, Contemporary Dance

The BPA and MPA program in WUD provides a comprehensive approach to studying movement, with the goal of helping dancers maintain optimal physical and emotional health. By understanding safe dance practices, dancers can reduce their risk of injury and learn how to properly treat injuries that may occur.

The courses covers a variety of topics related to safe dance practice, including warm-up and cool-down routines, proper technique and alignment, injury prevention, and rehabilitation. By understanding how their body works and how to care for it, dancers can improve their performance and prolong their career.

To excel in dance, it is essential to have a solid understanding of safe dance practices and proper movement techniques. In this context, this course highlights the importance of demonstrating mechanical understanding of the dancing body and us-

ing appropriate dance techniques in performing combinations, sequences, and dances. As dancers progress, students also demonstrate an increased skill level and the ability to perform more complex routines.

A dancer must have an enhanced understanding of reading and understanding dance and movement information to perform with precision and artistry. Practical application, including movement aesthetic, interpretation of concepts or thoughts, and the performance is a significant part of the dance program. Students are encouraged to master all of these facets and become a well-rounded performer.

They learn strategies for managing stress, anxiety, and other emotional challenges that may arise during their career.

Overall, this course provides a holistic approach to dance training, helping dancers to achieve their full potential while maintaining their health and wellbeing while learning both Indian as well as contemporary dance forms.





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Creative Painting, Digital Drawing & Illustration, Contemporary Art Practices, Art Education, Curatorial Practices in Art

Design Strategy & Management, Design Strategy & Management (Exec.)

Dance / Music

Architecture, Built Environment & Habitat Studies

WUD offers a whole range of merit & other scholarships* to deserving candidates.
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- Project based learning
- Global management events
- International Student Exchange
- High return placements
- Startup assistance
- 12 acre green, safe & secure campus
- Air-conditioned WiFi campus
- Separate boys & girls hostels
- Well maintained gym & cafeteria



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* Conditions apply