

PRESS KIT

# ODISSI DANCE



UNDER THE ARTISTIC DIRECTION OF DR SAM GORAYA

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Odissi is one of the eight classical dance forms recognised by the Ministry of Culture in India. The theoretical foundations of Odissi trace to the ancient Hindu Sanskrit text of performance arts called the Natya Shastra. Its existence in antiquity is evidenced by the dance poses in the sculptures of Orissan Hindu temples and archaeological sites related to Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. These have been traced back to early sculptures found in the Rani Gumpa caves at Udaygiri in Orissa dating back to the 2nd century BCE.

# HISTORY & MISSION

Odissi is a dance drama to express religious stories and spiritual ideas, particularly of the god Vishnu. Historically, young girls (maharis) devoted their lives to this dance and other rituals in temples, which continued until the state of Odisha lost its independence to foreign rulers who destroyed the temples. The maharis were forced into courts to entertain the kings and eventually lost their status and reputations. At the end of the 15th century, the Minister Ramananda Patnaik, a devotee of Vishnu, took a radical step to adopt boys, dressed them as girls, in order to dance during religious ceremonies, with the aim to revive and preserve the Odissi dance form. These boys are called gotipuas.

Dr Sam Goraya, is a Melbourne based dancer and choreographer and an accomplished Odissi exponent. Sam has devoted many years in Australia, New Delhi, Odisha and Kerala to understand Odissi in its ancient and modern contexts as well as the political, religious and artistic challenges through time. Sam has kept the tradition of Odissi alive and promoted it in Australia and New Zealand through his own dance and collaborative works with local and international artists. He collaborates with choreographers, painters and musicians from Australia, New Zealand and Asia and works tirelessly to support community-based projects with underprivileged children and artists at the Rudrakshya Foundation, in Odisha, India. The Foundation houses gotipua dancers under the guidance of Guru Bichitrananda Swain, who has pioneered educational productions that are based on concepts of higher consciousness.

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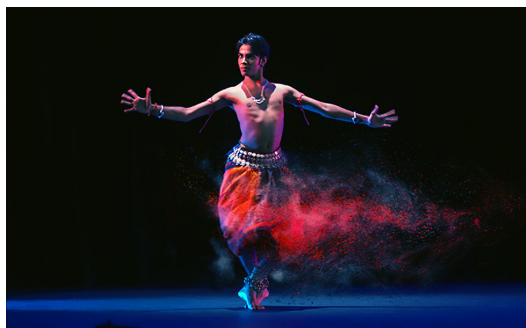
# DANCERS



## SAM GORAYA

began his Odissi training, at age five, with his mother Kirpal Kaur Goraya, who taught him the basics and the conventional framework of Odissi.

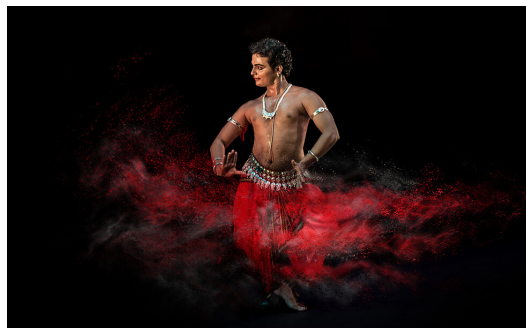
He then advanced his Odissi training with Padmashree Madhavi Mudgal at Gandharv Mahavidyalaya in New Delhi, acquiring a new perspective on Odissi through Madhavi's structured and methodical approach. In 1992, Sam migrated to Melbourne, Australia and worked as a resident artist with the Australian government funded Bharatam Dance Company, directed by Dr Chandrabhanu for eleven years. These works involved Odissi, Bharata-Natyam and contemporary dance. Over the recent years, Sam has collaborated with Guru Bichitrananda Swain at the Rudrakshya Foundation to create and perform in exceptional productions. Sam has extensively studied Koodiyattam Sanskrit Theatre, an art form that has been recognised by UNESCO. Sam also has four Masters degrees and a PhD in Mathematics and Oceanography.



## SANTOSH RAM

commenced his Odissi training at the age of fifteen and is a disciple of Guru Bichitrananda Swain and is an emerging dancer at the Rudrakshya Foundation.

He completed his Masters of Philosophy in Bhubaneswar, Odissi at Utkal University of Culture. Santosh has an appealing stage personality with strong technical virtuosity. Santosh Ram has performed in many prestigious national and international festivals. His international tours with the Rudrakshya Foundation include Australia, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, South Korea and China (Beijing). Santosh is a recipient of the Senior Scholarship awarded by the Ministry of Culture in New Delhi, India.



## SAMIR PANIGRAHI

is an upcoming dancer and a disciple of Guru Bichitrananda Swain at Rudrakshya Foundation.

He began his Odissi training under the tutelage of his mother. He then went on to train under the guidance of various prominent Odissi Gurus in India. He has received several awards for his performances at various national and international festivals in Australia, New Zealand, USA, France, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, South Korea and China (Beijing). He is a recipient of the Senior Scholarship awarded by the Ministry of Culture in New Delhi, India. Samir has an amazing dance style and stage persona, with the ability to bring the Odishan temple sculptures alive.

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# PERFORMANCES & PRESS



AUSTRALIA  
PROMO



MYSTERY OF  
CHAKRAS



PAST  
SHOWS

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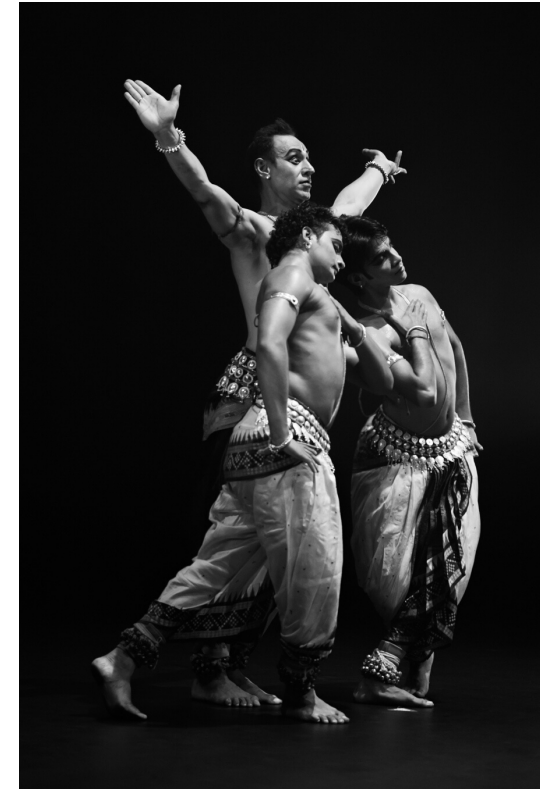
!ENERGISING, ELECTRIFYING AND  
SLIGHTLY MEDITATIVE EXPERIENCE!

**IN  
THE PRESS**

Kundalini – The Awakening, is Sam's new work for release in 2020 in Australia and New Zealand. This performance will express the latent energy that resides in all human beings, which can be evoked to rise and transform the chakras to a higher awakened state. Odissi's unique spiritual aspect offers dancers to balance masculine (Tandava) and feminine (Lasya) energies to attain this higher state of consciousness.

Audiences will be treated to an opportunity to see a dance form rarely performed, especially by men. Sam believes that the purpose of dance is not just to entertain but also to impart knowledge. In modern day post colonial India, male and female roles and identities are shifting due to economic and social reasons, which have resulted in a greater number of male dancers emerging.

This performance will support Santosh and Samir, two exceptionally talented artists from an underprivileged background to perform on a world stage and afford them the opportunity to showcase their talent and to educate audiences about the Odissi dance form, ensuring that this tradition is never lost.



# NEW WORKS



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# SOCIAL



FACEBOOK



INSTAGRAM



YOUTUBE

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# CONTACT INFORMATION

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# PHOTOS

