

# Uncharted Seas

**ADITI MANGALDAS**  
**DANCE COMPANY**  
THE DRISHTIKON DANCE FOUNDATION





# Classical Kathak (Group) on live music

Concept & Choreography  
Aditi Mangaldas

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“We look for fixed points, but there are none, either in ourselves or outside in the universe. To live without these fixed points is our challenge.” - J. Krishnamurti

Standing alone, looking out at the distant stars, have we not wondered what is it all about? What lies beyond the realms of the known? What lies beyond what our mind can perceive? What lies hidden in the deep recesses of our heart? Is this search external, on paths that have been laid down through centuries? Is the search internal, again through paths that are known, tried and tested? Is this search still, without any movement?







# Without? Within? With?

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“You will find freedom, truth, beauty, love, which are one and the same, only when you no longer seek them. Can the mind exist without the movement of search?” - J. Krishnamurti

**\* Corridors of light**

“Let it be revealed to these eyes that are thirsty.”  
- Bhartendu Harishchandra

**\* Is this seeking external?**

“I gaze, amazed at his beauty.” - Meerabai

**\* Is this revealed gently?**

“ like the soft sound of a dew drop falling upon a leaf in a dream.”  
- Josh Malihabadi

**\* Is it a storm unleashed?**

“ My heart is on fire, In my madness I roam the desert, The flames of my passion devour the wind and the sky.” - Jalalludin Rumi

**\* Is this search internal?**

“ Within oneself lie the sun and the moon.” - Kabir

**\* Is it revealed when all search ends?**

All that one seeks is there, and if one is silent, without outward or inward movement, then it is revealed.



# Choreographer's note

## Aditi Mangaldas

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“In the words of David Bohm, ‘The field of the finite is all that we can see, hear, touch, remember and describe.’

This field is basically that which is manifest or tangible. The essential quality of the infinite, by contrast, is its subtlety, its intangibility. The search for the intangible, may we call it God, truth, beauty, love or freedom, is the essence of **Uncharted Seas**.

Though I have separated the pieces, it is actually the entire production viewed in its entirety that tries to capture the essence of ‘**search**’. So, each piece may or may not refer to all our queries.

Some, attempt to transform poetry into images or emotions. Others use abstractions of movement, light, space, rhythm and ambience to evoke images asking the same questions.”







## Credits

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Concept, Choreography, Costumes & Stage:  
**Aditi Mangaldas**

Vocal Compositions: Shubha Mudgal and Aneesh Pradhan

Light Design: Sander Loonen

Sung Literature: Bhartendu Harishchandra, Meerabai & Sant Kabir

Research: Devyani Mangaldas, Shubha Mudgal, Aneesh Pradhan and Aditi Mangaldas

Dancers & Musicians: Aditi Mangaldas Dance Company & Drishtikon Dance Foundation repertory members

Coordination and Administration: Sangeeta Rana, Kusum Arora and Manish Sharma

**Production:** **Aditi Mangaldas Dance Company & the Drishtikon Dance Foundation**



# World Premiere | Delhi, India | 2006

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## Presented at:

UK, Edinburgh (Edinburgh International Festival 2012)

South Africa (Cape Town, Durban & Johannesburg)

Russia (Moscow, Khabarovsk, Sochi & Vladivostok)

Poland (Warsaw, Krakow & Gdynia)

Libya (Tripoli, Misrata & Benghazi)

Germany (Hamburg & Karlsruhe)

Egypt (Cairo & Alexandria)

Australia (Adelaide), Belgium (Brussels), Israel (Tel Aviv),  
Netherland(Rotterdam), Spain (Valladolid), Thailand (Bangkok)

India (Delhi, Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Bombay,  
Chandigarh, Chennai, Cochin, Coimbatore, Goa, Gurgaon, Jaipur,  
Khajuraho, Konark, Kolkata, Lucknow, Orchha, Pilani, Pune, Raipur,  
Rishikesh, Thiruvananthapuram & Udaipur)





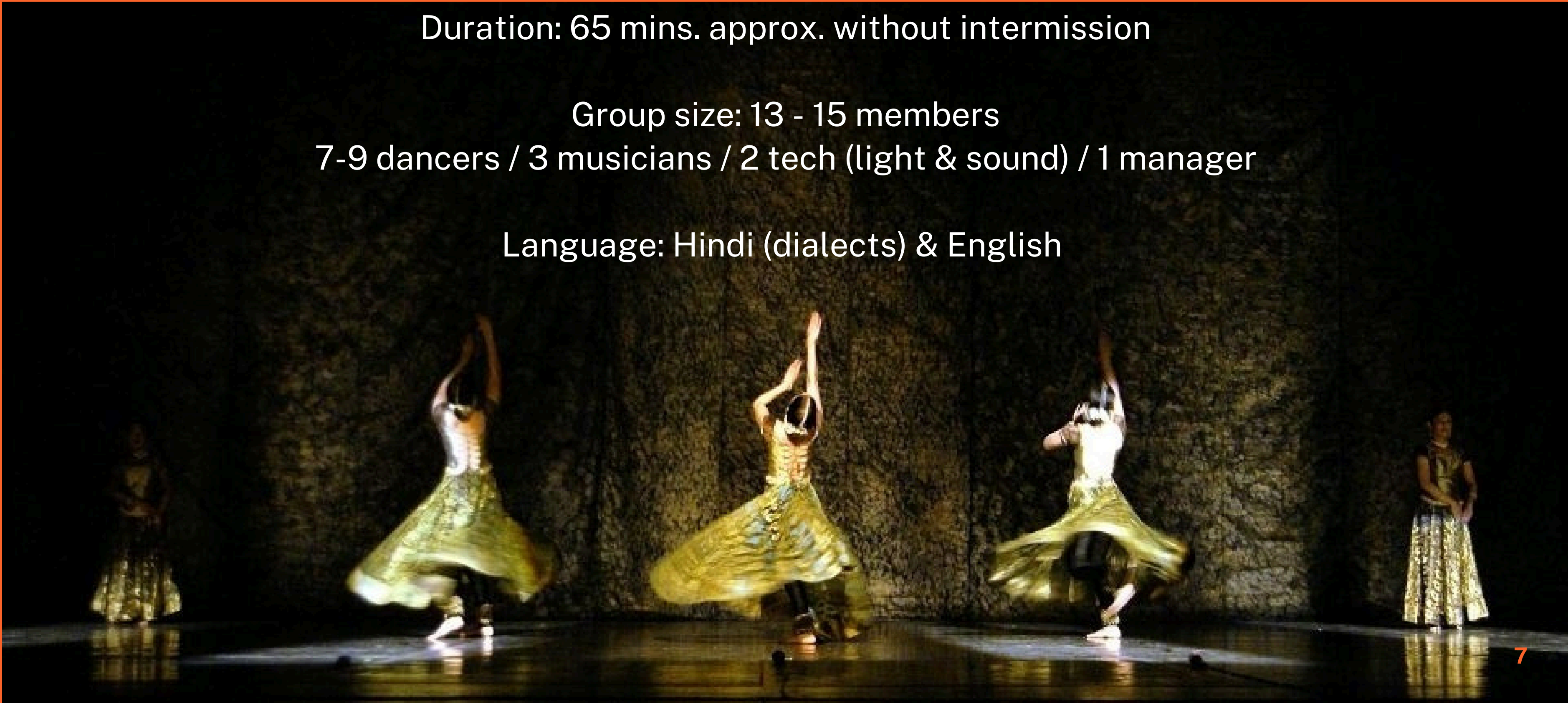
# Touring Information

Duration: 65 mins. approx. without intermission

Group size: 13 - 15 members

7-9 dancers / 3 musicians / 2 tech (light & sound) / 1 manager

Language: Hindi (dialects) & English





# Uncharted Seas

Official Trailer | [www.youtube.com/watch?v=JgYvTdK8UEE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JgYvTdK8UEE)

For full length video link contact the dance company office





# Reviews

“India's dancer Aditi Mangaldas weaves the silver threads of Kathak into Egyptian audience.”

- **Ati Metwaly, Ahram Online, Cairo | Egypt 2017**

"Mangaldas and her dancers reveal more than virtuosity, they reveal the poetic soul of this profoundly beautiful and meaningful dance. Mangaldas has poured her own awareness of time passing, of age changing her perspectives on life and mortality, into a company piece that sets individual adjustments in pace - a sudden pause interrupts the movement flow, the dancer is caught in fragile immobility - against vivid glimpses of shared relationships in duets and ensembles."

- **Mary Brennan, The Herald Scotland, Glasgow | 2017**

“She has a sense of responsibility to push the art form ahead.” - **India Today | New Delhi 2015**





# Reviews

“The first piece on their double bill, **Uncharted Seas**, is classical kathak: rapid spins, fast, fluent arm and hand movement, an astonishing variety of foot stamping... Multiple turns, emphasized by the woman’s swirling skirts, often finish suddenly, the barefooted dancers stop-still, with arms, bodies, heads in frozen gesture... A thrilling performance.” - **Alan Brissenden, The Australian | Australia 2012**

“Aditi Mangaldas intones: “I seek the beloved,” letting the words hang softly in the air as she sits still on stage, a picture of perfect repose. Is this search for the beloved (whoever, whatever that may be) a dewdrop falling on a leaf, or a storm unleashed, she asks, before letting loose a blizzard of breathtaking movement and sound that spirals slowly into silence. Those who only vaguely grasped what that moment meant then will surely now arrive at deeper, more complex understandings of the daily physical, psychological, intellectual, metaphysical striving constituting artistic endeavor: the elusiveness, the tantalizing nearness, of the goal.” - **Akhila Ramnarayan, Shruti | Singapore 2012**

“Something about a solo evening performance by Aditi Mangaldas.... evoked for me this exquisitely ephemeral image... signaling perhaps hope, perhaps despair, perhaps solace for pain, now here, now gone. Mangaldas traversed the space between temporality and transcendence, invoking the ghosts of bhakti and Sufi poets past, straddling the line between contemporary and classical Kathak in the process.” - **Akhila Ramnarayan, Shruti, Dance India Asia Pacific Festival | Singapore 2012**

“Mangaldas, a leading Kathak dancer and choreographer, is the charismatic heart of ‘**Uncharted Seas**’, performing an extraordinary number of tight twirls, all executed within her wider circular movements around the stage. The flurries of movement make the think bands of bells round her ankles chime, but with such precision that their sound is an integral part of a profoundly musical experience, melding with the mesmeric sounds provided by the onstage musicians and singer.” - **Helena Smith, Festival Blogger, Edinburgh International Festival, | Edinburgh 2012**

“Her concept of the intangible embraces the divine and the profoundly human: love and freedom, truth and beauty being as cosmically mystical as God. This inspires wonderful excursions into the heart of rhythm, the energies of light, the ambience of space, the structures of movement and the power of stillness.” - **Edinburgh International Festival, Mary Brennan, The Herald | Edinburgh 2012**



# Reviews

“The probing intelligence behind the work shone through brightly. **Uncharted Seas** is a polished, highly kinetic ensemble piece anchored in ‘the search for the intangible’... All the hallmarks of Kathak were excitingly present: the slap of bare feet on a hard floor, the whirlwind pirouettes and the upper limbs flickering like a flame... As a performer Mangaldas exudes a strong presence but laces this power with a delicacy and sense of detail... The solo in **Uncharted Seas** was marked by speed and spins. Mangaldas looked positively regal as she quivered and stamped downstage to the sound of her own ankle bells. Her footwork appeared to catch fire.” - **Donald Hutera | UK 2012**

“Aditi entralls with her Kathak repertoire...The Chandigarh Arts and Heritage Festival saw an enthralling Kathak performance **Uncharted Seas**, depicted through the techniques and pure grammar of kathak a search for the self, for the true essence of being and becoming...Through the leitmotif of the ocean-vast, unfathomable, unknown - Mangaldas embarks on an introspective flight into the mysteries of creation.” - **Express News Service, The Indian Express | Chandigarh 2012**

“Aditi harnesses Kathak’s abstract repertoire with suggestive finesse, the quieter interpretive moments built round the poetry of Meera, Kabir, Jalaluddin Rumi and Bhartendu Harishchandra (largely rendered by her), contrasting with the rich group virtuosity, drawing constant applause from an appreciate audience.” -**Leela Venkatraman, The Hindu, Konark | Bhubaneswar 2011**

“Of the classicists, Aditi Mangaldas’s precision-tooled Kathak commands time – slowing movement to a dream, then setting her arms flashing like swords.” - **David Jays, The Sunday Times | London 2009**

“Aditi Mangaldas opened the show and within the first few minutes established that this was no ordinary performance....She (Aditi ) performed the most sublime kathak. The form was putty in her hands, to be pulled and skewed and twisted until she could give it the three dimensional quality of a sculptor....Always moving and changing with lightening speed and fierce attack....The use of music was sensationally original. The unadorned accompaniment was highly effective.” - **Sanjeevini Dutta, The Pulse | London 2009**



# Reviews



“Abstract becomes sensuous... As Aditi performed it, the movements of Kathak and its naturalistic mudras resonated with the multiplicity of the worlds images, its ever-changing lights, until they found quietus in an all encompassing love. The recitation of the mnemonics, a mandatory virtuosic display in Kathak, became reverberations of the souls thirst for the Oversoul.” - **Gawri Ramnarayan, The Hindu | Chennai 2008**

“The essential quality of the infinite, is its subtlety, its intangibility... “**Uncharted Seas**” captures this essence and you share the artistes” search for that which cannot easily be given a name... Through images that were so poetic, so beautiful, so pure that they actually hurt, Aditi and her team have managed to give us a glimpse of that which has no name. By no means an easy task!” -**Shanta Serbjeet Singh, Hindustan Times | Delhi 2006**

“Aditi brought amazing versatility to her choreography and the remarkable ease with which she and her troupe performed without diluting Kathak’s spontaneity, is a must to make a recital successful....(Their) strength throughout the production, lay in ensuring that after displaying the virtuosity of nritya aspect, they could afford to pull the movement back, shove it to the background and reveal the essence of the piece though abhinaya.” - **Lada Guruden Singh, The Statesman, Delhi 2006**



## About Aditi Mangaldas | Artistic Director, principal dancer and choreographer

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Aditi Mangaldas is a leading dancer and choreographer in the classical Indian dance form of Kathak. With extensive training under the leading gurus of Kathak, Shrimati Kumudini Lakhia and Pandit Birju Maharaj, Aditi is today recognised for her artistry, technique, eloquence and characteristic energy that mark every performance. Besides dancing and choreographing classical productions, both solo and group, she has broken new ground by using her knowledge and experience of Kathak as a springboard to evolve a contemporary dance vocabulary, infused with the spirit of the classical.

Considered a maverick in India, Aditi is unafraid to confront social and present-day concerns. Celebrated around the world for the startling richness and intricacy of her dance and choreography, Aditi has recently won the UK Theatre Awards 2024 in the category of 'Achievement in Dance' for MEHEK, a duet with her co-choreographer and dancer Aakash Odedra. Aditi was nominated in the category of 'outstanding performance (classical)' by the National Dance Awards UK - Critics Circle in 2017 for INTER\_RUPTED as well as, more recently, for 'outstanding female modern performance' by the National Dance Awards UK - Critics Circle in 2023 for FORBIDDEN, and for the Eastern Eye Arts, Culture, and Theatre Awards 2024 (ACTAs), UK for MEHEK, which was also ranked as 'Top five dance shows of 2024' by The Stage, UK.

Aditi Mangaldas is empanelled with ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Government of India) in the 'outstanding artist' category. Aditi was awarded the Gujarat Sangeet Natak Academy award, India 2007 as well as the National Sangeet Natak Akademi award, India 2013, that due to compelling reasons, she declined.





## About **Aditi Mangaldas** (continued)

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Aditi Mangaldas has won much critical acclaim across the world including at major international dance festivals. As quoted by Eastern Eye UK 2024... “She is rightfully considered one of the greatest of all time.” Or by The Straits Times Singapore, 2023... “Erupts in energetic brilliance.” Or by Seeing Dance UK, 2023... “Exceptional... compelling... every moment is imbued with meaning.” Or Eastern Eye UK, 2023... “Shattering glass ceilings, breaking boundaries and delivering path-breaking performances have defined the dance journey of Aditi Mangaldas.”

As quoted by the Guardian, London in 2017, “Mangaldas owned the stage without trying to earn it.....” Or at the Perth International Arts Festival, 2016, “Her artistry and poise, her dramatic gifts and unshakable technique are truly astounding” .... and at the Edinburgh International Festival, 2012, “Her concept of the intangible embraces the divine and the profoundly human: love and freedom, truth and beauty being as cosmically mystical as god.”

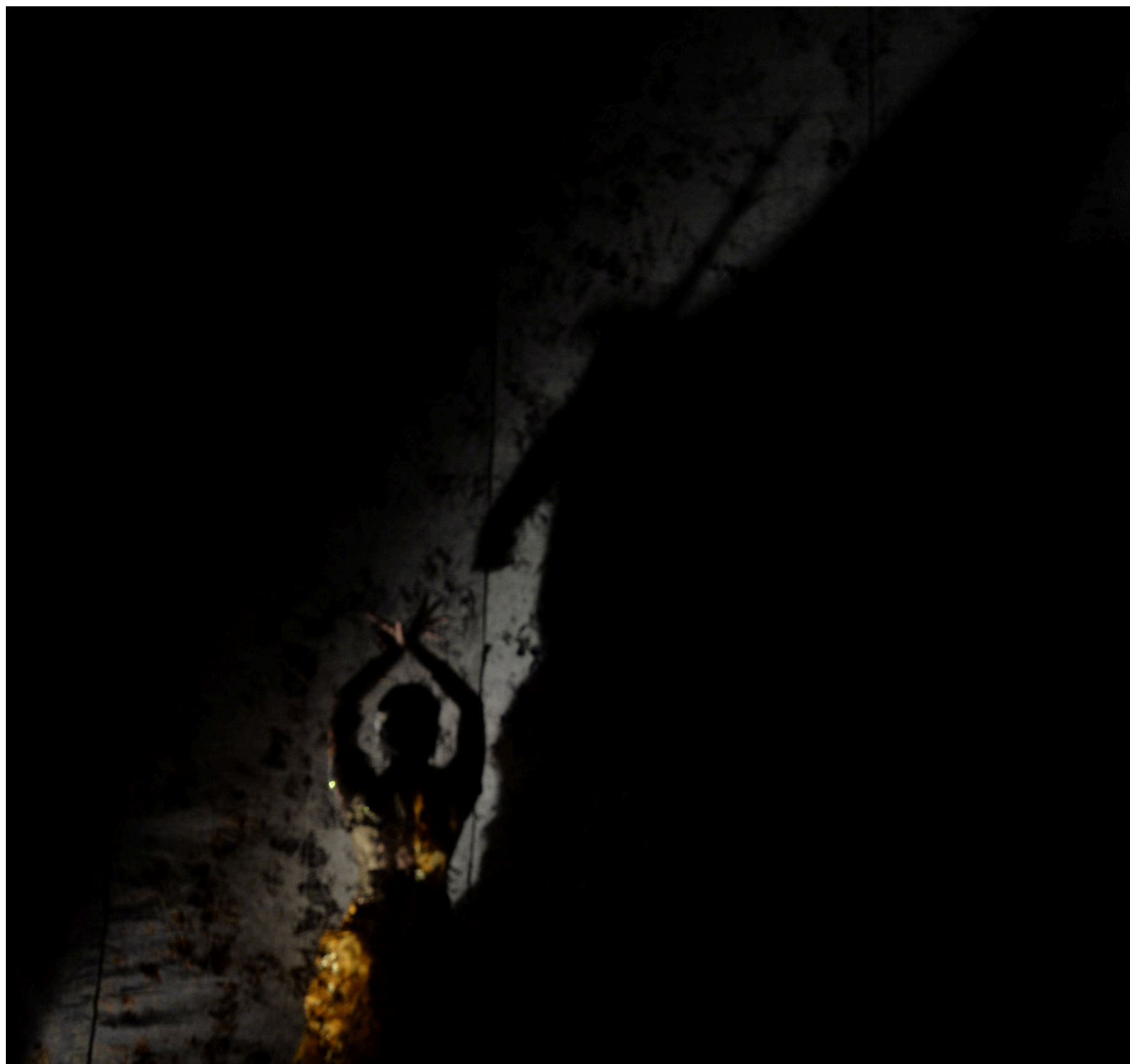
In India, many dance critics and connoisseurs celebrate her dance, “Her dance demonstrates what it means to be utterly free in body, mind and spirit to explore the world”. – Shanta Gokhale

She heads the Aditi Mangaldas Dance Company & the Drishtikon Dance Foundation.

[www.aditimangaldasdance.com](http://www.aditimangaldasdance.com)







## Contact

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## Photo credit

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