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# CHITROLEKHA

## JOURNAL ON ART AND DESIGN

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**Review: *Readings on Dance – from 75 years of Marg, September-December 2022***

INTERACTIVE ARTICLE COVER

### About the Journal

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<b>Reviewed by</b>	<b>Soma Ghosh</b>	
<b>Affiliation</b>	Librarian and Social media Officer, Salar Jung Museum, Govt. of India, Hyderabad.	
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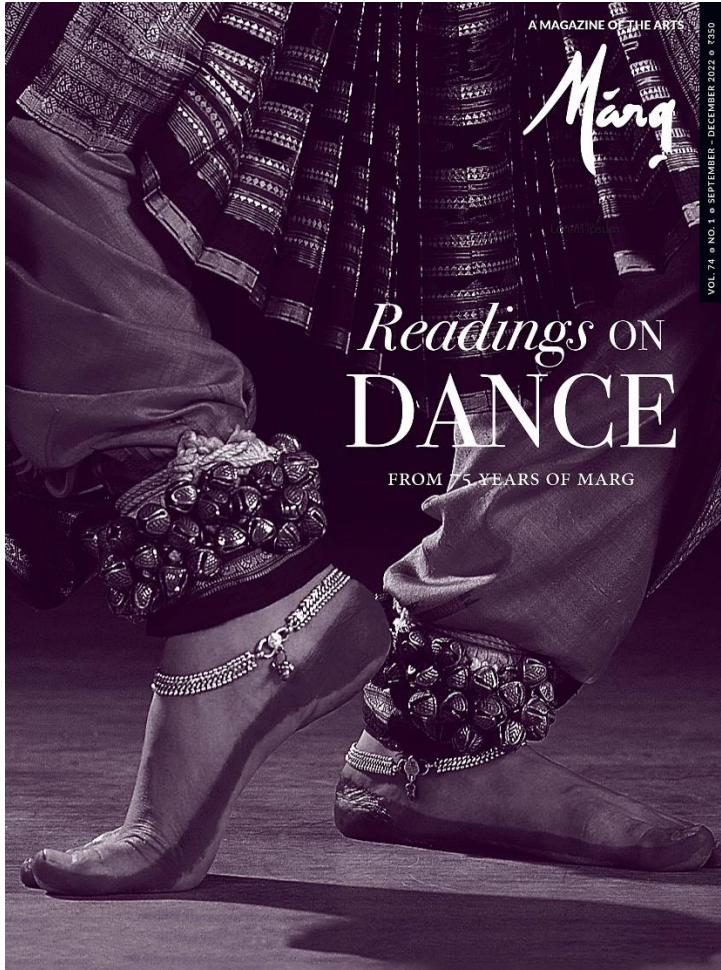
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## Review: *Readings on Dance – from 75 years of Marg*, September-December 2022

Volume 74 Number 1. Edited by Anita Elizabeth Cherian, Urmimala Sarkar Munsri.

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Reviewed by

**Soma Ghosh**

Librarian and Social media Officer, Salar Jung Museum, Govt. of India, Hyderabad.

Researcher and writer on Art history.

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The issue '*Readings on Dance – from 75 years of Marg*', 2022 is an excellent compilation of articles published over 75 years. It is a collectors' item on Indian Dance. The issue addresses dance in all its aspects and formats. Beginning with the depictions of dance and music in the Bagh Caves the subjects covers many dance types in India. The thematic sections which would interest readers are -

Section I - Heritage, Heredity and Arts Patronage

Mulk Raj Anand , Khokar, Mohan , Vatsyayan, Kapila , Purnima Shah

#### Section II - Regional Performances and Living Traditions

Sunil Kothari, Nambiar, Balan, Khokar, Mohan, Barreto, Floriano, Chittaprasad, Tana, P. , Singh, Tayenjam Bijoykumar

#### Section III - Presenting and Re-presenting the Classical

Nair, D. Appukuttan, Khokar, Mohan , Jhaveri, Angana , Warriar, Kalamandalam Govinda, Rao, Maya, Mahanta, Pradip Jyoti, Doraiswamy

#### Section IV - The Guru, Shishya and Parampara

Sunil Kothari, Subrahmanyam, Padma , Sharma, Surachand, Bose, Nilmadhab, Panikkar, Chitra

#### Section V - Dancing in Contemporary Times

Hall, Fernau, Subramaniam, Arundhathi, Venkataraman, Leela, Dave, Ranjana, Sasha Waltz, Akram Khan, Navtej Singh Johar

The issue has a special focus on how dance evolved in modern India and the support from the Government contributed to it. Further, there is a plethora of images in nostalgic black and white all through. The pioneers in the evolution of post-independence dance movements have been traced and celebrated, and also how dance forms like *Odissi* moved from temple environs to a bigger public stage has been discussed. Some other Indian dance forms have been touched upon in a very visual narrative like the *Mando* dance of Goa. The ancient ritual dances of Kerala, *Bhuta* and *Theyyam* have been described at length. The ritual *Chhau* dance of Odisha, Jharkhand, Bihar and West Bengal, performed in the Indian month of Chaitra, during mid-April, when 'the flowering trees are all ablaze' is well analyzed; mainly the *Seraikella* of Jharkhand and *Mayurbhanj* of Odisha have been discussed. The eclectic tradition of *Lai Haraoba* from North East India is traced from its beginnings to the present times.

The important dance forms of *Bharatnatyam* and *Kuchipudi* from Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh are explained and their components are analyzed from the point of historical literature which is used for its content. *Kathak* has been highlighted in this special issue with special emphasis on its charming hand movements called '*hastas*' to convey ideas or moods. The essay on *Mohiniattam* reconfirms its seductive allure while talking about certain lyrical elements of graceful women of Kerala and calling it a secular social art form. There is an essay on the elaborate dance format of Lord Krishna's *Rasleela* performance on full moon nights at a Krishna temple- Govindaji temple in Manipur. The dance-drama form of Kerala, *Kathakali* has been elucidated by describing the process—the colouring and make-up and its emphasis on gestures and facial expressions. The institution of *Sattri* of Assam has been studied deeply to understand its effect on society, and the related theatre-dance form *Sattriya* has been studied as well.

This issue discusses the '*guru-shishya*' tradition, the institutions and individuals involved in the revival of major dance form *Odissi* in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Another photo essay describes the documentation of poses of *Bharatnatyam* for use by practitioners as they are seen in temples.

The issue has documented dancing in contemporary times by narratives sketches by Feliks Topolski, dance as seen in cinema, and dance in India at present. All of these make interesting points on the status of dance in movies, choreography and its changing character in films. The write-up on contemporary dance mentions how practitioners are experimenting with the forms and pluralism seems to be the order of the day.