

Katha Dance Theater (Rita Mustaphi) - Kathak Dance Group

Objectives: Rita Mustaphi, Founder of the Katha Dance Theatre, has brought a North Indian traditional form of dance called Kathak to Minnesota. This unique form of dance is influenced by both Hindu and Muslim culture and is often referred to as “the Storyteller’s Dance”, with “talking foot” that focus on fluidity, simplicity, delicate precision, and spontaneity. In this activity, you will listen several examples of music and dance from different cultures all over the world, discuss them, and finally create your own version of a song and “storytelling dance” using a music program (i.e. Garageband or something similar) based on a familiar story.

Standards (Suggested 4th+):

ELA:

- 4.1.2.2 - Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text
- 4.1.3.3 - Describe in depth a character, setting, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text
- 4.1.7.7 - Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text, identifying where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text
- 4.8.8.8 - Create an individual or shared multimedia work for a specific purpose

Arts

- 4.1.1.1.1 - Describe the elements of dance including body, action, space, time, and energy
- 4.1.1.1.3 - Identify Western and non-Western styles or genres of dance such as African, ballet, Capoeira, classical, Indian, folk, improvisation, modern, social tap/percussive, and West African
 - 4.1.1.3.1 - Describe the elements of music including melody, rhythm, harmony, dynamics, tone color, texture, form, and their related concepts
 - 4.1.1.3.3 - Identify the characteristics of a variety of genres and musical styles such as march, taiko, mariachi, and classical
- 4.1.2.1.1 - Demonstrate movement using control, coordination, and balance in movement replication and improvisation in more than one dance tradition
 - 4.1.3.1.2 - Describe how dance communicates meaning
 - 4.1.3.3.2 - Describe how music communicates meaning
- 4.2.1.1.1 - Create movement sequences and improvisations using choreographic forms to express an idea, theme, image, or tradition
 - 4.2.1.3.1 - Improvise and compose rhythms, melodies, and accompaniments using voice or instruments to express a specific musical idea

Tools/Resources:

MN Original video clip, iPad or tablet with Garageband or a similar music composition app, collection of well-known, simple stories (i.e. Little Red Riding Hood, The Pied Piper, Hansel and Gretel, etc.)



Video Clip: <http://www.tpt.org/mn-original/profile/rita-mustaphi/video/rita-mustaphi-9guhgg/>

Activity

- 1) Watch the segment and discuss:
 - a. Rita Mustaphi refers to the Kathak dance style as the “storyteller’s dance”, why do you think that is?
 - b. How would a practiced, choreographed dance differ from Kathak, which is based on improv/spontaneity?
 - c. The Katha Dance Theatre combines different dance, cultures, and music for their dances - why is this collaboration between differences important? How does this change the Kathak dance form and other dance forms?
- 2) Watch various examples of other forms of dance from different cultures. YouTube has numerous examples of traditional dances from around the world; some examples: Zorbas (Greece), Haka (Maori), Cossack (Russia), Tao Yao (China), Congolese (Kongo Kingdom, now Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Angola), Jalisco (Mexico), Dhaanto (Somalia), Yaj Yuam (Hmong), etc.
- 3) Discuss!
 - a. How was each dance different? Pick one new type of dance and music to compare to the Kathak form of dance and music. Think about form, technique, motion/movement, number of dancers, spontaneity or practiced, etc.
- 4) Create!
 - a. Working alone or with a partner, pick a well known story (see examples)
 - i. If you were to create a dance and song that retold the story, what would the song sound like? What would the dance look like?
 - b. First create the music - using the iPad or tablet and music composition app, create a simple song that is at most 2 minutes long
 - c. Once song is created, work together to create a simple dance that can be used to retell the story through motion and movement
- 5) Share!
 - a. Share your song and dance with others, be sure to introduce the story first, after performing, explain the movements and music chosen to your audience.