

The Resonance of Ghungroos, Everywhere—New York Kathak Festival 2023

The New York Kathak Festival returned to the heart of Manhattan to celebrate kathak—a style of Indian classical dance

NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK, USA, June 11, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The New York [Kathak](#) Festival made its return after three years with a showcase of the rich and diverse expression of kathak dance. As the city's only festival dedicated to this ancient Indian dance form and a landmark event within the kathak community, it brought renowned artists and practitioners of the art form together for a weekend, leaving audiences spellbound. "The festival is drawing the world's attention to New York City, creating an ocean of droplets dedicated to kathak," said Pt. Rajendra [Gangani](#), the headliner artist for the festival.



Prashant Shah & Dancers at the New York Kathak Festival 2023

The festival spanned three days and paid homage to the 5000-year-old art of kathak, rooted in the storytelling traditions of India. Audiences were treated to a spectacular lineup of emerging and established artists from around the world, who demonstrated the depth and versatility of kathak.

“

The New York Kathak Festival is doing great work for peace, happiness, art, and artists—may this festival live for 1000 years.”
Pt. Rajendra Gangani

The first day opened with a dedication to the greats who passed during the pandemic, presented by dancer Seema Viswanath. Her presentation included delicate gestures paired with precise footwork. The concert was headlined by legendary artist, Vidushi Shama [Bhate](#) and her disciple, Ameera Patankar, described by one audience member as

“a force to be reckoned with.” Another noted, “there was such diversity: mother-daughter, teacher-student, younger-senior, east-west, different ethnicities.” Bhate, upon closing the

concert stated, “I pray that such festivals are in each and every corner of this world—the resonance of ghungroos, everywhere.”

The second day continued with workshops led by Pt. Rajendra Gangani, director at the Kathak Kendra in New Delhi, as well as New York’s own Shri Prashant Shah. Participants had the rare chance to refine their skills and learn directly from these esteemed artists. The experience was immersive, and brought “individual teachers and their philosophies, and the diversity of kathak—different flavors and nuances across the world of the form,” as one participant shared.

The New York Kathak Festival's concerts took place at the Peter Norton Symphony Space, while the workshops were hosted at Ballet Hispánico—clearly, a three-day kathak takeover of Manhattan’s Upper West Side!

The third day concluded with a lecture demonstration led by Bhate, on tradition and innovation within kathak choreography. “The discussions at the New York Kathak Festival provided a unique platform for dancers to deepen their understanding of kathak and explore new perspectives. It was a transformative experience for all,” said one participant.

The festival closed with performances ranging from soul-stirring solos to electrifying group presentations, showcasing the captivating footwork, graceful spins, and emotive storytelling that define kathak. Massachusetts-based Shefali Jain’s presentation moved audience members to tears with her depiction of the story of Draupadi. “The festival presented New York with exhilarating dance, music, rhythm and color. I was very happy to witness the blend of tradition and modernity in making kathak fit for the twenty-first century. This is the way to move forward,” said one senior artist in the audience. The finale, presented by Pt. Rajendra Gangani began with an invocation before moving on to a robust exploration of complex, improvised rhythmic patterns and rare compositions. “The New York Kathak Festival is doing great work for peace, happiness, art, and artists,” said Gangani from the stage—“may this festival live for 1000 years.”

About the New York Kathak Festival:

The New York Kathak Festival is a nonprofit organization that presents and promotes dancers, scholars, and practitioners of kathak, a classical dance tracing its origins to India. We produce a festival bringing together established and emerging artists from across the United States and beyond. New York Kathak Festival is produced by the American kathak community, inspiring creative exchange between local kathak artists and diverse New York audiences.

For more information, please visit kathakfestival.org/.

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