Saint Mary’s College  
School of Liberal Arts  
Department of Performing Arts  

Asian Dance  
Performing Arts

PROFESSORS: Jia Wu  
OFFICE: LeFevre Theatre 5  
OFFICE HOURS: by appointment only (T.TH 11:20 -12:50 pm)  
PHONE: (925) 631-4299  
CLASS HOURS: 1:15-2:50 T TH

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Classical dance is a significant symbol for the contemporary Asian nations-state and its diasporas. In this class, we will explore how the category of “classical dance” was defined in 20th and 21st century in Asia and investigate the performative value of the concept—that is, we will look into what the idea of “classical dance” does, how it is deployed, and examine the circumstances of its production and reception. Out of the many established classical and contemporary forms, our focus will be on wayang wong and shadow puppet in Bali and Java, Kathak and Bharatanatyam in India, Peking Opera, Yangge, Ethnic Dances and “Revolution” Ballet in China and Classical Dance in Cambodia. We will explore the key sources upon which the dances are based; survey the histories of the forms that comprise the classical canon; and situate the revival, reconstruction, and institutionalization of classical dance as a symbol of national identity and heritage in these four nations. We will also look at “folk,” “social,” “popular,” “Bollywood,” “modern,” and “contemporary” dance as categories distinguished from—and which interrogate—classical structures. Throughout, we will critically consider the relationship between dance, colonialism, nationalism, religion, and social history.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Dance in Bali and Java: students will be able to
   • Identify the basic characteristics and vocabulary in classical dance
   • Understand the key concepts and discourses involved in the study of these forms
   • Develop an awareness of the context and politics of performing as well as viewing these dances.
   • Develop writing a dance paper with a critical eye, an historical context, and a feminist perspective
   • Understand the connection between the various forms and how they lead to the development of a new style of dance
   • Recognize the relationship between the movement and music
2. Dance in China: students will be able to
   • Identify the basic characteristics and vocabulary in Peking Opera, Yangge and other ethnic China dances
   • Understand the key concepts and discourses involved in the study of these forms
   • Develop an awareness of the context and politics of performing as well as viewing these dances.
   • Develop writing a dance paper with a critical eye, an historical context, and a feminist perspective
   • Understand the connection between the various forms and how they lead to the development of a new style of dance
   • Distinguish “classical”, “folklore”, “modern,” and “contemporary” dance
   • Recognize the relationship between the movement and music
   • Distinguish major contemporary choreographers
   • Understand the dance education system

3. Dance in India: students will be able to
   • Identify the basic characteristics and vocabulary in Bharatanatyam and other classical Indian dance
   • Understand the key concepts and discourses involved in the study of these forms
   • Develop an awareness of the context and politics of performing as well as viewing these dances.
   • Develop writing a dance paper with a critical eye, an historical context, and a feminist perspective
   • Understand the connection between the various forms and how they lead to the development of a new style of dance
   • Distinguish “classical”, Bollywood,” “modern,” and “contemporary” dance
   • Recognize the relationship between the movement and music

4. Dance in Cambodia: students will be able to
   • Identify the basic characteristics and vocabulary in Cambodian Classical Dance
   • Understand the key concepts and discourses involved in the study of these forms
   • Develop an awareness of the context and politics of performing as well as viewing these dances.
   • Develop writing a dance paper with a critical eye, an historical context, and a feminist perspective
   • Recognize the relationship between the movement and music

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

• Attendance and participation
• TWO in-class presentation
• Three quizzes – on Sep 26, Oct 22 and Nov 19
• Essay proposal – due Week 6 on Oct 11th
• One 12-15page essay – due Week 14 Dec 5th
• Final paper presentation –due Week 14 and Week 15
• **ATTENDANCE / PARTICIPATION: 10%**
You will be graded on faithful attendance and the depth of your involvement in class discussions. You have 2 free absences before your grade is lowered. If you arrive 5 minutes later than the attendance has been taken, you will be marked as lateness. 2 latenesses will be marked as one absent. If you come class without a copy of the reading, you will be marked as absent. No cell phone in the class.

• **ON-LINE FORUM: 5%**
You are required to post at least one question and respond two other questions per reading on on-line forum, which is set in MOODLE. All questions need to be posted before 11:30pm either on Wednesdays or Sundays.

• **IN-CLASS PRESENTATION: 20%**
You will be responsible for making TWO 20-minute presentation in class on a theme related to the readings. Presentations will take place every class, starting from 2nd week. Please contextualize the reading, highlight key concepts and arguments illuminated in the text, and raise pertinent questions and/or issues for discussion. You are free to illustrate your presentation with performance materials (live or recorded), artistic exercises, visual materials (artwork, photos, video/film, performance clips), even a site visit (during section hours only)--but only if it helps to flesh out a particular concept. That is, these supplemental materials and strategies should not take up a large portion of your allotted time. You should concentrate on the reading itself and will be evaluated on how well you are able to summarize, analyze, and communicate the material in the text.

You may use the same text as a source for your final paper only if you receive approval from the instructor. Sign-up for presentations will be completed in the first week. If you decide to switch at any point, it is up to you to make the necessary arrangements and inform the instructor a week in advance.

**THREE QUIZZES ON Sep 26, Oct 22, Nov 19: 30%**
cannot be made-up without prior arrangements

• **ONE 12-15-PAGE ESSAY: 25%**
Asian Dance is a vast subject that can only be touched on lightly in a class such as this, therefore, each student will be asked to write a 12-15 page research essay. This essay will be graded for demonstration of critical thinking. Each essay should have a particular argument and focus on a dance style, issue, or performance discussed in class. You could also choose to write a comparative paper where you analyze a theme or concept of Asian Dance in relation to your own dance practice, or another dance style. **A proposal which includes an abstract, references, and initial outline of your essay is worth an additional 5%.** The proposal will be reviewed for scope and feasibility but can change as your work progresses throughout the quarter.
• **SYMPOSIUM PAPER PRESENTATION: 10%**
The act of writing becomes less solitary when you bring your work into a public forum—and so in Week 15, we will organize a symposium where you share your work with the class. You will transform your 15-page essay into an 8-page paper suitable for a 20-minute talk (maximum time limit), and decide if/how you want to complement it with audiovisual elements, performance practices, or workshop-style audience participation. We will also include a short Q&A session after each presentation.

This culminating exercise is designed to enhance your presentation skills. It will also give you the opportunity to receive valuable feedback from classmates, discuss your research process, and give you an idea of how to refine your methods and arguments, should you wish to develop your project further. You will also get a sense of the varying approaches used by your peers and have a chance to exchange ideas with them.

**Mandatory Concert dates:**
*Sep 7: A Message in Progress by Nadhi Thekkek, Sophia Valath, and Arun Mathai,*
Lesher Center for the arts, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek

*Nov 8: 7:00pm the Escape and Rescued Memories: New York Stories by Lenora Lee Dance,*
Koret Auditorium, De Young Museum

**2 master Mandatory Workshop dates:**
*Sep 24: Classical Indian Dance with Artist Nadhi Thekkek*
*Oct 22: Classical Indonesian Dance with Artist Emiko Saraswati Susilo*

**Mandatory viewing:**
*October 2 –viewing an international awarded film: Farewell My Concubine 霸王別姬 in the community time at classroom or in the library by appointed*

**Reading:**
*Books on reserve in the Library and all readings can be found at Gaelearn. All readings must be printed and brought to the class for discussion.*

**CLASS HINTS:**
- Keep a notebook/journal of only your work in this class. Include the syllabus, all handouts, concert and video notes/discussions, lectures, etc.
- Read your syllabus everyday for reading assignments, quizzes, papers, etc.
- Read your syllabus before class to be familiar with daily objectives.
- The syllabus will note a reading assignment for a particular day; read it before you come to class.
- Tests and quizzes will include all class notes and reading assignments. Some material will overlap both. Be aware that some information covered in the text may not be covered in class.
COURSE OUTLINE:

DANCE IN INDIA Week 1 – Week 3

Week 1 Sep 3 - Objective: to provide a comprehensive overview of the course, review course materials, dates, expenses, guidelines on essay, and to overview of region. Discussion: What is dance? What is Classical Dance? The dance observer, what do you see? What is dance to you? What is Classical Dance to you? What is important to the performer and audience of each nation? Videos: various styles of dance we will see this semester Reading: Kapila Vatsyayan, Indian Classical Dance, Chapter 1: History of Dance p1-6

Sept. 5 - Objective: overview culture, geography, politics and eight classical dances in India Video: JVC India 1 Odissi dance by Sujata Mohapatra Mallika Sarabhai in Heritage Dances 3 (Kuchipudi Solo) Reading: Pallabi Chakravorty, “Dancing into Modernity: Multiple Narratives of India’s Kathak Dance” Dance Research Journal 38 / 1 & 2 summer / winter 2006 135 pg, 115-136

*Sign-up for weekly presentations

Sep 7: A Message in Progress by Nadhi Thekkekk, Sophia Valath, and Arun Mathai, Lesher Center for the arts, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek


Week 3  
Sep 17: to study Bollywood dance in India  
**Lecture:** Bollywood Dance  
**Videos:** “Dola Re Dola” in the film Devdas (2002)  
"EkD o Teen" in the film Tezaab (1988)  
Performed by Sridevi in the film Chaalbaaz (1989)  
**Song:** Ishq Kamina in movie Shakti: The Power  
**Website:** Akram Kham Company [http://www.akramkhancompany.net](http://www.akramkhancompany.net)  
Bollywood Dance Experience  

Sep. 19 - **Objective:** to study Modern and Contemporary dance choreographed by Indian/Indian influenced choreographers: Akram Khan and Chandralekha  
**Lecture:** Contemporary/Diasporic Challenges to the Classical  
**Videos:** Ruth St Denis in the ‘East Indian Nautch Dance’ (1932)  
Ted Shawn's Cosmic Dance of Siva  
Chandralekha (Interview and excerpts touring in UK)  
Akram Kham ‘IN I collaborating /performing with Academy Award-Winning actor Juliette Binoche (The English Patient)  
In-I Interview with Juliette Binoche and Akram Khan  
zero degrees - Akram Khan and Sidi Larbi  
**Excerpt:** Sheetal Gandhi's Bahu-Beti-Biwi  

Week 4  
Sep 24 Workshop: Classical Indian Dance: Bharatanatyam with Artist Nadhi Thekkekk  

Sep 26  
**QUIZ #1 – Dance in India**  
**Reading:** I Wayan Dibbia, *Balinese Dance, Drama and Music* pg 1-19  

**DANCE IN INDONESIA** Week 5- Week 8  

Week 5  
Oct 1 - **Objective:** to begin the study of classical dance in Bali  
**Lecture:** Dance of Bali  
**Video:** Master Piece of Bali  
JVC Indonesia 1  
**Reading:** I Wayan Dibbia, *Balinese Dance, Drama and Music* pg 1-14  

Oct 3 - **Objective:** to begin the study of classical dance in Bali  
**Lecture:** Dance of Bali  
**Video:** Master Piece of Bali  
JVC Indonesia 1  
**Reading:** Catherine Diamond, “Fire in the Banana's Belly: Bali's Female Performers Essay the Masculine Arts”, *Asian Theatre Journal,*
Volume 25, Number 2, Fall 2008, pg. 231-271

**Week 6**

Oct 8 – **Objective:** to continue the study of Classical Dance in Bali  
**Videos:** JVC Indonesia 1  
**Lecture:** Dance of Bali  
**Reading:** Andrew N. Weintraub, “Contest-Ing Culture Sundanese Wayang Golek Purwa Competitions in New Order Indonesia”, *Asian Theatre Journal*, Vol. 18, No. 1, Special Issue on Puppetry (Spring, 2001), pg. 87-104

Oct 10 – **Objective:** to continue the study of Classical Dance in Bali  
**Lecture:** Dance of Bali  
**Videos:** JVC Indonesia 1  

*Research proposal due* – To include: title; subject/thesis (basic research questions, hypothesis, topic, etc), outline of sections; bibliographic resources. 3 pages

**Week 7**

Oct 15 to start the study of Classical Dance in Java  
**Lecture:** Dance of Java  
**Reading:** Jukka O. Miettinen, “Cross-Dressing Across Cultures Genre and Gender in the Dances of Didik Nini Thowok”, *Asia Research Institute*, Working Paper Series No.108

Oct 17- **Objective:** to continue the study of Classical Dance Java  
**Lecture:** Didik Nini Thowok  
**Videos:** various videos by Didik Nini Thowok  
**Quiz #2 Dance in Indonesia**

**Week 8**

Oct 22 - Workshops: Oct 22: Classical Indonesian Dance with Artist Emiko Saraswati Susilo

Oct 24 – Midterm Holiday  

**DANCE IN INDIA Week 9- Week 11**

**Week 9**

Oct 29 - **Objective:** To start our study on Peking Opera  
**Lecture:** Peking Opera  
**Videos:** Various Peking Opera excerpts  
**Reading:** Jenny Kwok Wah Lau, “Farewell My Concubine - History, Melodrama, and Ideology in Contemporary Pan-Chinese Cinema”, *Film*
Oct 30th: Wednesday: film viewing: Farewell My Concubine 1993 霸王别姬 at the community time

Oct 31 – **Objective**: Continue the film and our study on Peking Opera
**Reading**: Emily Wilcox, *Han-Tang Zhongguo Gudianwu and the Problem of Chineseness in Contemporary Chinese Dance: Sixty Years of Creation and Controversy*

Week 10

**Nov 5 – Objective**: To start our study on Classical Dance in China
**Videos**: Ta Ge
Classical Dance Technique by Liu Yan
Bamboo Dream by Sun Yue
Shan Wu Dan Qing
Qian Shou Guan Yin

**Nov 7 – Objective**: to study Classical Dance in China
**Reading**: Maoist model theatre, Chapter 4: *Gender and the Kinesics of YANGBANXI Ballet* by Rosemary Roberts

Nov 8th: 7:00pm the Escape and Rescued Memories: New York Stories By Lenora Lee Dance, Koret Auditorium, De Young Museum

Week 11

**Nov 12 - Objective**: Yangbanxi Ballet/Chinese revolutionary Ballet
**Lecture**: Yangbanxi Ballet/Chinese revolutionary Ballet
**Video**: The White Hair Girl, The Red Detachment of Woman

**Nov 14 - Objective**: to study Chinese influenced contemporary dance in Mainland China, Taiwan and New York City
**Lecture**: Contemporary Choreographers: Jin Xing, Lin-Hwai Min and Shen Wei
**Videos**: Interview with Lin Hwai Min
Cursive II by Cloud Gate Dance Company
Bamboo Dream by Cloud Gate Dance Company
Water Moon by Cloud Gate Dance Company
Interview with Jin Xing
Jin Xing Shang Hai Tango
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xgWtC_Ytaxw
Shen Wei Dance Arts
Folding
Brush the Pattern
Connect Transfer
Re- II (Angkor Wat)
Re- (Part III) new
Map
**Websites:** Cloud Gate Dance Company
http://www.cloudgate.org.tw/eng/
Shen Wei Dance Arts http://www.shenweidancearts.org/

**DANCE IN ISRAEL Week 12- Week 13**

**Week 12**

**Quiz #3 Dance in China**
Nov 19 - **Objective**


Frontline interview of Sophiline Cheam Shapiro

Nov 21 - **Lecture:** Cambodian Classical Dance

**Video:** ROYAL BALLET OF CAMBODIA


**Week 13**

Nov 25: Cambodian Classical Dance workshop

**Nov 27-Dec 1 Thanksgiving Holiday**

**Week 14**

Dec 2st  Class Symposium #1 - *Presentation of final papers group 1 *

**FINAL PAPER DUE,** turn in your paper in the class.

**Week 15**

Class Symposium #2 - *Presentation of final papers group 2*

**Student Disability Services:** Student Disability Services extends reasonable and appropriate accommodations that take into account the context of the course and its essential elements for individuals with qualifying disabilities. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the Student Disability Services Office at (925) 631-4358 to set up a confidential appointment to discuss accommodation guidelines and available services. Additional information regarding the services available may be found at the following address on the Saint Mary’s website:
http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/sds

**Honor Code Statement:** Saint Mary’s College expects every member of its community to abide by the Academic Honor Code. According to the Code, “Academic dishonesty is a serious violation of College policy because, among other things, it undermines the bonds of trust and honesty between members of the community.” Violations of the Code include but are not limited to acts of plagiarism. For more information, please consult the *Student Handbook* at http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/your-safety-resources/student-handbook [for traditional undergraduate students] or http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/graduate-professional/graduate-and-professional-student-handbook [for graduate and professional students].