

Reference Code

RAM

Title

SADAA: Ram Gopal Collection.

Extent

2 boxes of documents and photographs.

Level of description

Collection

Name of creator

Ram Gopal

Administrative/biographical history

Ram Gopal, 1912 (?) – 2003, was a dancer, choreographer and teacher. Born in Bangalore to a Rajput father and a Burmese mother, he was fascinated by dance from a child. While still a boy he gave his first performance at a party given by the Yuvaraja of Mysore.

Despite the disapproval of his father he was trained in classical Indian dance forms of Kathakali, Bharata Natya and Manipuri, and travelled and studied, visiting remote villages to research Hindu dance.

Before the Second World War Gopal travelled the world with dance companies. This included tours of the UK, in company with dancers of Kathakali and Kathak style, and Javanese and Balinese dancers. During the war, he was in India, where he performed for ENSA, and reopened his dance school in Bangalore.

In 1947 he returned to the UK with a new company, and undertook more training in Kathak and the style of Bharata Natyam. Gopal went on to tour UK, Europe, USA, and India. In India he also lectured and demonstrated dance at Sanskrit universities.

After the war, he appeared in Hollywood epics such as "The Purple Plain," 1954, and "Elephant Walk," 1954, for which he choreographed the dance sequences. Gopal wrote 2 books at this time, "Indian Dancing," 1951 and "Rhythm in the heavens," his memoirs, in 1957. In the 1960s he married Edith Alexander, who died in 1969.

Gopal wanted Eastern and Western dance forms to work together, for example with ballet. In the 1960s he worked with the Harlequin Ballet Company, teaching Indian folk dance. His most famous ballets were "Dances of India," "Legend of the Taj Mahal," and "Dance of the Setting Sun." In 1960 he danced a duet which he had choreographed with the ballerina Alicia Markova. He tried to found a "School of Classical Indian dancing" in London, but this not successful.

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In 1988 he went on his last tour, to the USA. This he found exhausting, and he retired. After living in Venice, and France, he moved to England, where he spent his last years in a nursing home in Surrey, and died in 2003.

Archival history

This collection is part of the The South Asian Diaspora Literature and Arts Archive (SALIDAA) which was founded in 1999. The aim was to preserve sources and information about the contribution of the South Asian community to literature and arts in Britain.

There is a note; "Ram Gopal materials; Original Photos (not sorted); Presented in 3 boxes + 1 envelope to SALIDAA by Pam Cullen, 03/03/04."

Immediate source of acquisition

SALIDAA deposited part of their archive with Brunel University Special Collections.

Scope and content

Photographs, biographical information, promotional material.

Dates

1930s to 2016.

System of arrangement

Boxes and numbered files.

Access conditions

Available to researchers, by appointment. Access to archive material is subject to preservation requirements and must also conform to the restrictions of the Data Protection Act and any other appropriate legislation.

Copyright/conditions governing reproduction

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Language of material

English. One article in French.

Physical characteristics

Collection includes photographs and negatives which may be fragile.

Finding aids

A finding aid is available for manuscript material.

Archivist's note

Described by Paula Gerrard with amendments by Katie Flanagan and Naomi Percival.

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Rules or conventions

ISAD (G) 2nd ed.

Date(s) of description

21/3/2013

Indexing;

Subjects

Choreography
Dance
Ballet
Indian dance
Indian dance; Bharanta Nayam
Indian dance; Manipuri
Kathak (Dance)
Kathakali Dancers and Musicians
War work
World War, 1939-1945 - India

Persons

Alexander, Edith
Ambrose, Kay
Anderson, Jack, 1935-
Beaton, Cecil, 1904-1980
Christout, Marie-Francoise
Cullen, Pam
Dadachanji, Serozh
Datta-Ray, Sunanda K., 1937-
David, Ann
Devi, Rehka
Dhorda, Keshan
Diaghilev, Serge, 1872-1929
Erulkar, Sarah
Gopal, Bisano Ram, see Gopal, Ram
Gopal, Bissano Ram, see Gopal, Ram
Gopal, Pandit Ram, see Gopal, Ram.
Gopal, Ram, 1912-
Gregory, John
Kantirava Narasimharaja Wadiyar, Yuvaraja of Mysore, 1888-
Khan, Naseem
Khokar, Ashish
Khokar, Ashish Mohan, see Khokar, Ashish
Kumar, Easwar
Kumar, Radhika
Kumar, Rohini
Lal, Sohan

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Lloyd, Chris
Markova, Alicia, Dame, 1910-2004
Mohini, Rhetna
Rossel, Lucile
Sundaram, Chitra
Vali, Sandra

Corporate bodies

Abebooks
Channel 4 (Great Britain)
Daily Telegraph (London)
Entertainments National Service Association (Great Britain)
Harlequin Ballet
Hindustani Social Club
Independent
International Herald Tribune
Konsertbolaget
Kutcheri Buzz
Les Saisons de la Danse
Los Angeles Times
Narthaki
National Archives (Great Britain)
New York Dancewear Company
New York Newsday
New York Times
Ram Gopal British Commonwealth School of Dance, Drama and Music
Ram Gopal's Commonwealth School of Pakistani, Ceylonese, Indian Dances
Ram Gopal School of Classical Indian Dancing
Saisons de la Danse
Sotheby's
The Times, London
Vaudeville Theatre (Organization: London, England)
Veena; Indian Arts Review
Victoria and Albert Museum
World Ballet News
Yorkshire Ballet Seminar
Yorkshire Post

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