

Arushi Singh

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Education

December
2022

University of California, Los Angeles

Ph.D. Culture and Performance, Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance

- Dissertation Title: *The Institutional Formation of Contemporary Indian Dance from the Twentieth Century to the Present: The Patronage of the Sangeet Natak Akademi, Max Mueller Bhavan and Gati Dance Forum*
- Committee: Profs. Susan L. Foster and Anurima Banerji (co-chairs), Janet O'Shea, Aparna Sharma, and Urmimala Sarkar Munsri (Jawaharlal Nehru University, India)

2015

Jawaharlal Nehru University, India

M.Phil. Theatre and Performance Studies, School of Arts and Aesthetics

- Thesis Title: *Pivotal Moments in the Practice and Patronage of Dance in Post-Independent New Delhi*
- Chair: Prof. Urmimala Sarkar Munsri
- Passed thesis defense with high honors

2012

Jawaharlal Nehru University, India

M.A. Arts and Aesthetics, School of Arts and Aesthetics

2009

Delhi University, India

B.A. with Honors in Economics, St. Stephens' College

Current Position

Fall 2023

Lecturer, The Sharon Disney Lund School of Dance, California Institute of the Arts, Santa Clarita, California

- Introduction to Critical Dance Studies
- Anthropology of Dance

Lecturer, Department of Dance, Chapman University, Orange, California

- Dance History: Forces and Figures

Research and Teaching Fields

Dance, Culture and Performance Studies | South Asian Performance | Postcolonial and Decolonial Studies | Non-Euro-American Dance Traditions | History and Theory of Modern/Postmodern Dance | Arts Patronage and Cultural Policy | Dance and the Political Economy | Contemporary Art in the Global South | Critical Institutional Studies | Arts and Activism | Interdisciplinary Research Methods (historical approaches, ethnography, choreographic analysis, and discourse analysis)

Major Fellowships, Grants, and Awards

2020–21	<i>Oxman Fellowship</i> , The School of Arts and Architecture, UCLA
2020	<i>Sambhi Summer Graduate Student Research Fellowship Award</i> , Center of India and South Asia, UCLA
2019–20	<i>International Fellowship</i> , American Association of University Women
2018–19	<i>Dean's General Scholarship</i> , The School of Arts and Architecture, UCLA
2018–19	<i>Clifton Webb Scholarship</i> , The School of Arts and Architecture, UCLA
2016–17	<i>Dean's General Scholarship</i> , The School of Arts and Architecture, UCLA
2017–18	<i>Gerald and Merle Meases Dance Scholarship</i> , The School of Arts and Architecture, UCLA
2017–18	<i>Medha Yodh Memorial Scholarship</i> , The School of Arts and Architecture, UCLA
2016–17	<i>Hawkins' Scholarship Award</i> , The School of Arts and Architecture, UCLA
2017	<i>Graduate Summer Research Mentorship</i> , Graduate Division, UCLA
2016	<i>Graduate Summer Research Mentorship</i> , Graduate Division, UCLA
2016	<i>Conference Travel Bursary</i> , International Federation for Theatre Research
2015	<i>Conference Travel Bursary</i> , International Federation for Theatre Research
2014–22	<i>University Fellowship</i> , Graduate Division, UCLA

Publications

2025 (forthcoming)	“Innovations Through Tradition or Interculturalism? The Sangeet Natak Akademi's Classification and Support of Contemporary Indian Dance Since the Twentieth Century.” In <i>Oxford Handbook of Dance Praxis</i> , Anurima Banerji, Jasmine Johnson, and Royona Mitra, eds. Oxford University Press.
2021	“Embodying Flexibility: The Aesthetics and Politics of British South Asian Dance.” <i>Dance Chronicle: Studies in Dance and Related Arts</i> 44, no. 2: 289–295. Book review of Anusha Kedhar's <i>Flexible Bodies: British South Asian Dancers in an Age of Neoliberalism</i> (2020).
2020	“Introduction: South Asian Perspectives on Yoga.” <i>Race and Yoga</i> 5, no. 1: i–v. Co-authored with Lakshmi Nair.
2019	“Uncovering the Limitations of the Indian State's Ideologies of Nationalism and Democracy: The Official Discourse on Modern Indian Dance in the Twentieth Century.” <i>Conversations Across The Field of Dance Studies</i> XXXIX: 24–27.

- 2016 “Maya Krishna Rao: A Deep Fried Jam.” In *Tilt Pause Shift: Dance Ecologies in India*, Anita E. Cherian, ed., 199–203. New Delhi, India: Tulika Books.
- 2016 “Issue Concerning The Money Issue.” *Dance House Diary* 9.
<https://www.dancehousediary.com.au/?cat=724>
- 2015 “Poetics & Politics: A Documentary Research Symposium.” *Leonardo Reviews: The International Society for the Arts, Sciences and Technology*. Conference review co-authored with Samuel Mark Anderson.
https://leonardo.info/reviews_archive/reviews2010.php

Past Teaching Experience

- 2020–21 **Instructor**, Academic Advancement Program, UCLA
- Arts Initiative Research Program (full responsibility for course design and teaching)
- 2015–20 **Teaching Fellow**, Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance and Visual and Performing Arts Education Program, UCLA
- Introduction to Dance Studies
 - World Dance Histories
 - Global Perspectives in Dance
 - Introduction to World Arts and Cultures
 - Art as Social Action
 - Art as Moral Action
 - Arts Encounters
 - Looking for the Unseen – a cross-disciplinary art course
 - Myth and Ritual
 - Introduction to Arts Education
 - Arts Education Teaching Practicum
 - Introduction to Community Engagement through the Arts
 - Exploring Issues of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Access in Arts

Invited Lectures, Talks, and Movement Workshops

- 2021 “Contemporary South Asian Dance.” Lecture for *Asian American Performance: Activism and Aesthetics* course, Department of Theatre, Williams College. Instructor of Record: Prof. Shanti Pillai
- 2020 “Bharatanatyam Abhinaya: Emotion through Gesture.” Dance workshop for *World Arts, Local Lives* series, Fowler Museum, UCLA.
- 2020 “Between: The Contradictions of Non-Alignment.” Moderated talk with Christina Novakov-Ritchey for *New Wight Biennial: Once More, With Feeling... (on Non-Alignment & Non-Polarity)*, UCLA.

- 2019 “Modern Indian Dance Pedagogy: The Creative Legacy of Uday Shankar.” Lecture and movement workshop for *World Dance Histories* course, Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance, UCLA. Instructor of Record: Prof. Anurima Banerji
- 2018 “Postcolonial Resistance.” Lecture for *Introduction to Dance Studies* course, Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance, UCLA. Instructor of Record: Prof. Pallavi Sriram
- 2018 “Sweating Saris: Indian Dance as Transnational Labor.” Post-recital moderated talk with Priya Srinivasan, Pallavi Sriram and Ramya Harikrishnan, Highways Performance Space, Santa Monica, CA.
- 2017 “Choreographic Analysis.” Lecture for *Introduction to Field-Based Research Methods* course, Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance, UCLA. Instructor of Record: Prof. Ryan Koons
- 2017 “Bharatanatyam: Aesthetics and Cultural Significance.” Movement workshop for *World Dance Histories* course, Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance, UCLA. Instructor of Record: Prof. Janet O’Shea
- 2016 “Bharatanatyam: Embodying Elements of the Form.” Movement workshop for *Global Perspectives on Dance* course, Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance, UCLA. Instructor of Record: Prof. Victoria Marks

Conference Participation

- 2023 (upcoming) “Teaching as/with/for Hope” Working Session. *American Society for Theatre Research*, Providence, RI.
- 2018 “Innovation Within Tradition: Sangeet Natak Akademi’s discourse on Contemporary Indian Dance.” *Third Annual Graduate Interdisciplinary Conference on South Asia*, University of California, Los Angeles, CA.
- 2017 “Privatizing Creativity: Impacts of the non-profit model of patronage on contemporary dance in India.” *The South Asian Studies Association 11th Annual Conference*, Claremont McKenna College, CA.
- 2016 “The Risky Business of Contemporary Dance.” *International Federation for Theatre Research Conference*, Stockholm University, Sweden.
- 2015 “Dancing in the Capital: Production of nationalized dance space in New Delhi.” *International Federation of Theatre Research Conference, Department of Theatre Arts*, Hyderabad University, India.
- 2015 “Orientations of Indian Contemporary Dance.” *Dance Under Construction Conference*, University of California, Riverside, CA.

- 2014 “Emerging Dialogues in Indian Dance: An unstable aggregate of practices.” *World Dance Alliance Global Summit*, University of Angers, France.
- 2014 “New Directions in Indian Dance.” *International Conference of Indian Society of Theatre Research, Department of Culture and Media Studies*, Central University of Rajasthan, India.
- 2013 “The body as a subject of self-reflection in Padmini Chettur’s beautiful thing 2.” *World Dance Alliance–Americas Conference and Festival*, Scotiabank Dance Center, Vancouver, B.C.
- 2013 “Contemporary Dance Residencies: An Evolving Potential for Intercultural Exchange and Performance in Asia.” *The World Symposium on Global Encounters in Southeast Asian Performing Arts*, Bangkok University, Bangkok, Thailand.
- 2012 “Infrastructure for Performance: A Working Group.” *Ignite! Festival of Contemporary Dance*, New Delhi, India.

Professional Service

- 2023, 2017 **Peer Reviewer**, *Journal of Emerging Dance Scholarship*
- 2022–present **Editorial Board Member**, *Conversations Across The Field of Dance Studies* journal
- Read and evaluate issue proposals and offer recommendations and feedback to *Conversations* Editor to convey to Guest Editor(s).
 - Assist the Editor in guiding Guest Editor(s) throughout the process of developing, editing, and publishing issues.
 - Serve as peer reviewer for 3-4 essays per year.
- 2022 **Peer Reviewer**, *Performance Matters* journal
- 2021–22 **Reviewer**, Undergraduate Admissions Committee (B.A. Dance), Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance, UCLA
- 2020–21 **Graduate Student Advisor**, Finance and Development Committee of Dance Studies Association (DSA)
- Helped create DSA’s annual budget and find the financial means to support the organization’s mission and initiatives.
 - Undertook an Equity Audit for DSA with the intention to redistribute resources in support of junior scholars and projects that galvanize antiracist and decolonial praxis in dance studies.
- 2020 **Guest Editor**, *Race and Yoga* journal
- Invited by the Editorial Board of *Race and Yoga*, the first peer-reviewed journal in critical Yoga studies, to curate a special issue on “South Asian Voices on Yoga,” which was published in 2021.

University Service

- 2018, 2015 **Event Organizer**, Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance, UCLA
- Arranged and facilitated a somatics workshop with eminent Indian choreographer Navtej Singh Johar (2018) and a seminar with notable performance studies scholar Rustom Bharucha (2015) for undergraduate and graduate students in the department.
- 2017–19 **President**, The School of Arts and Architecture Council (SOAA), Graduate Students Association, UCLA
- As a council member and representative of The SOAA, worked on voicing the concerns of our graduate students to executive members of the Graduate Students Association (GSA) and university administrators at quarterly meetings throughout the academic year.
 - Secured resources for my department's graduate students from the annual GSA budget to support individual and collective academic/artistic projects.
- 2016–18 **Co-Chair**, Professional Development Committee, Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance, UCLA
- 2014–16 **Co-Chair**, Chew on This: Brown Bag Presentation Series, Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance, UCLA

Professional Affiliations

Dance Studies Association

Dance History Writing Circles (organized by the *Long Nineteenth-Century* Working Group of the Dance Studies Association)

World Dance Alliance–Asia Pacific

International Federation for Theatre Research (member of the *Choreography and Corporeality* Working Group)

India International Centre

Street Dance Activism – a BIPOC collective focused on movement and Black liberation

Jawaharlal Nehru University Theatre and Performance Studies Forum

Languages

English (native proficiency), Hindi–Urdu (native proficiency), and Punjabi (conversational)

Movement and Dance Training

- 2011–present Training in Patanjali’s Ashtanga Yoga and Hatha Yoga from Om Prakash Pathak (Delhi School of Yoga, India), Jerome Mercier (Power East Yoga, Los Angeles), and Valucha Hamovitz (Los Angeles, California).
- 1994–2005 Received advanced tutelage in Bharatanatyam dance (Thanjavur style) from Saroja and Rama Vaidyanathan (Ganesa Natyalaya, New Delhi, India). Presented my *arangetram* or solo graduation recital in 2005 at the India International Centre, New Delhi, India.

Performance History

- 2024
(premiere
upcoming) ***Reorient the Orient*** (performer), choreographed by Lionel Popkin, REDCAT, Los Angeles, CA.
- 2023 ***TROUBLE*** (co-creator and performer), directed by Ajani Brannum, Human Resources-LA, Pasadena, CA.
- 2022 ***Rendición II*** (co-creator and performer), choreographed by Christine Suarez, Plummer Park, Los Angeles, CA.
- 2019 ***Rendición*** (co-creator and performer), choreographed by Christine Suarez for “Beach Dances: Shared Practice,” Annenberg Community Beach House, Los Angeles, CA.
- 2019 ***Chance Procedures*** (performer), facilitated by Meryl Friedman for “Merce Cunningham: 100 Solos Pre-Show,” Royce Hall Terrace, UCLA.
- 2017 ***Made in a Marble Palace and Fugit....Tempus: Improvisation Edition*** (performer), choreographed by Darrian O’Reilly and Sarah Jacobs for “Fowler Out Loud,” Fowler Museum, UCLA.
- 2016 ***Springs Eternal*** (performer), choreographed by Victoria Marks, Pieter Performance Space, Los Angeles, CA.
- 2015 ***Unlearning***, co-choreographed and performed with Shweta Saraswat for “Culture Crossing,” Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance, UCLA.
- 2012 ***Sit Properly***, co-choreographed and performed with Promona Sengupta and Manola Gayatri for “Theatre and Performance Studies Lab,” Jawaharlal Nehru University, India.
- 2005 ***Devi Stuti*** (performer), composed by Saroja Vaidyanathan, Rashtrapati Bhavan (President’s House), New Delhi, India. Invited by former Indian president, Dr. A.P.J Abdul Kalam to perform as part of a festival spotlighting emerging artists across the country.

- 2005–10 Company Dancer, Ganesa Natyalaya. *Selected works:*
- ***Jalapraya***, Nanning Cultural Festival, Peoples Republic of China
 - ***Dasavataram***, Triveni Kala Sangam, New Delhi, India
 - ***Pancha Nadai Allaripu, Swaranjali and Natanam Adinar*** – a medley of pieces from the Bharatanatyam repertoire, India International Centre, New Delhi, India
 - ***Panchabhuta***, Siri Fort Auditorium, New Delhi, India
- 1998–2003 Member of the performing arts ensemble, Ruchika Little Theatre Group led by playwright – director Feisal Alkazi. Performed in several English, Hindi, and Urdu-language plays over the years, which were staged at venues like Triveni Kala Sangam, LTG Auditorium, India Habitat Centre, and Sri Ram Centre in New Delhi, India.

Reviews of aforementioned dance and theatre performances have appeared in *L.A. Dance Chronicle*, *WEHO Times*, *presidentofindia.nic*, *Times of India*, *Hindustan Times*, and *The Hindu*.

Research Experience

- February–April 2023; **Research Assistant to Prof. Shanti Pillai**, Department of Theatre, Williams College, Remote Position
- January–March 2022 • Primary duties in this position included providing research support and assistance with the preparation of the following manuscripts for publication, authored by Prof. Pillai: (1) a forthcoming book about women, feminist politics, and contemporary performance in India, and (2) a forthcoming essay, “Kafka’s Ape Meets the *Natyashastra*” in a special issue of *Arts* called, *South Asian Diasporic Dance Artists: Choreographic Cultural Negotiations*, edited by Lionel Popkin.
- September 2021–June 2022 **Graduate Student Researcher for Prof. Lionel Popkin**, Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance, UCLA
- Primary duties in this position related to helping Prof. Popkin develop content for his durational performance, *Reorient the Orient*, which unpacks the history of interculturalism within the nearly 30-year archive of his dance-making, placed in the context of the history of presentations of the Indian diaspora within the United States (premiers at the REDCAT, Los Angeles in 2024).
 - Systematically catalogued and analyzed 300 performance brochures, program notes, and reviews of Indian dancer Uday Shankar’s tours to the US and Europe in the 1930–40s and 1950–60s from the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts archives. Selected and arranged relevant materials that will feature in the printed matter and performance text during the show.
 - Read over 100 texts on topics related to Indian contemporary dance, South Asian migration to the US, orientalism, intercultural theatre, and critical race theory. Wrote concise summaries on each text to build the conceptual and historical frameworks for the choreography.
 - Assisted Prof. Popkin in crafting early drafts of 3 movement scores for the performance through an iterative process of structured improvisation and critical feedback.

- Provided research and editorial support to Prof. Popkin in preparing his article, “On the Edges of Diaspora: Second-Generational Mixed Thoughts,” for publication in *The Oxford Handbook on Indian Dance* (2024), co-edited by Anurima Banerji and Prarthana Purkayastha.

September–
December
2019

Graduate Student Researcher for Prof. Susan L. Foster, Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance, UCLA

- Primary duties in this position involved assisting Prof. Foster prepare Doran George’s book manuscript, *A Conceit of the Natural Body: The Universal–Individual in Somatic Dance Training* (2020) for posthumous publication by Oxford University Press.
- Based on reviewing 26 books, drafted summaries of 17 somatic dance practitioners analyzed by the author. Text from these summaries are now included as part of the biographies appendix in the book.
- Successfully sourced and solicited photographs of somatic dance practitioners from individual collections and institutional archives in the US, UK, and Australia that now feature in the book.

March–June
2015

Graduate Student Researcher for Prof. Aparna Sharma, Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance, UCLA

- Primary duties in this position included supporting Prof. Sharma in organizing a documentary films conference, “Poetics and Politics: Documentary Research Symposium,” at the University of Santa Cruz (May 15–17). One of the highlights was co-authoring and publishing a review of the conference proceedings in the peer-reviewed journal *Leonardo Reviews: The International Society for the Arts, Sciences and Technology*.

September
2014–March
2015

Graduate Student Researcher for Prof. David Gere, Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance, UCLA

- Primary duties in this position were associated with helping Prof. Gere’s institute, UCLA Art and Global Health Center, design the “Interdisciplinary Culture of Health Research Leaders” program for Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, a Princeton-based philanthropic organization.
- Conducted 20 qualitative interviews with health research leaders, clinical scholars, and community and arts-based mentors across the US about their recommendations related to course design.
- Co-wrote a first draft of the program design based on an interpretation of the responses and recommendations of the aforementioned interviewees.

August
2012–July
2014

Research Associate, The Gati Dance Forum, India

- Directed a key project of this performing arts organization, called “Dance Union: Initiative for a Sustainable Dance Environment,” with support from the Royal Norwegian Embassy and Goethe-Institut in India.
- Conducted over 50 qualitative interviews with cultural administrators, theatre venue owners, and dancers from Delhi to assess the condition, accessibility, and affordability of performance and rehearsal spaces in the city.
- Carried out archival research on Indian cultural policy and the provisions for performing arts infrastructure in India since 1947.

- Based on an analysis of the data collected from the interviews and historical research, designed a pilot intervention plan for revitalizing three existing spaces in Delhi that met the requirements of performing artists. Developed plan in collaboration with members of the dance community, government cultural bodies, architectural firms, as well as national and international funding agencies in the arts.

April–
November
2012

Scholar-in-Residence, Gati Summer Dance Residency, India

- Commissioned by The Gati Dance Forum to write about its annual dance residency to trace and spotlight the culturally-specific aesthetics of contemporary dance in India.
- Served as a participant-observer for the creative process of 5 dancers as they created original choreographic works over 9 weeks of the residency. Visually documented each dancer's process and interviewed them about their dance training and movement explorations.
- Developed storyboards for text-annotated videos about the dance residency by synthesizing visual documentation, observation notes, and transcribed dialogues from the interviews. Worked with a web developer to publish the final product on the public access digital multimedia archive, *Pad.ma*.

Additional Professional Experience

2023–
present

Writer, '62 Center for Theatre and Dance, Williams College, Williamstown, MA

- Authoring scholar notes on performances featured during the annual Williams Center Series

2022–
present

Transcriber,

- "PillowVoices: Dance Through Time," a podcast series produced by internationally-renowned modern dance institution, Jacob's Pillow (Becket, MA)
- "Inside The Dancer's Studio" and "How People Move People," podcast series produced by The National Center for Choreography at the University of Akron (Ohio)

References

Dr. Susan Leigh Foster, Distinguished Professor (*Dissertation co-chair*)
UCLA Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance
slfoster@arts.ucla.edu

Dr. Janet O'Shea, Professor
UCLA Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance
joshea@arts.ucla.edu

Dr. Aparna Sharma, Professor
UCLA Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance
a.sharma@arts.ucla.edu

Dr. Urmimala Sarkar Munsî, Professor
School of Arts and Architecture, Jawaharlal Nehru University
usmunsî@mail.jnu.ac.in

Dr. Anurima Banerji, Associate Professor (*Dissertation co-chair*)
UCLA Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance
anurima@arts.ucla.edu

Dr. Shanti Pillai, Assistant Professor
Williams College Department of Theatre
sp22@williams.edu

Dr. Kevin Kane, Director
UCLA Visual and Performing Arts Education Program
kkane@arts.ucla.edu

Dr. Carolina San Juan, Director
UCLA Academic Advancement Program Graduate Mentoring
csanjuan@college.ucla.edu