



Scheme for “Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India”

Form for National Inventory Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage of India

A. Name of the State: **JHARKHAND**

B. Name of the Element/Cultural Tradition (in English): **SERAIKELLA CHHAU DANCE**

B.1. Name of the element in the language and script of the community Concerned, if applicable : **ODIYA.**

C. Name of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned (Identify clearly either of these concerned with the practice of the said element/cultural tradition): **ODIYA COMMUNITY, SRI KEDAR ART CENTRE**

D. Geographical location and range of the element/cultural tradition (Please write about the other states in which the said element/tradition is present): **JHARKHAND, BENGAL, ODISHA.**

E. Identification and definition of the element/cultural tradition of the India

(Write “Yes” in one or more boxes to identify the domain(s) of intangible cultural heritage manifested by the element. If you tick ‘others’, specify the domain(s) in brackets.)

- i. () oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage
- ii. () performing arts
- iii. () social practices, rituals and festive events
- iv. () knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe
- v. () traditional craftsmanship
- vi. other(s) ()

F. Provide a brief summary description of the element that can introduce it to readers who have never seen or experienced it.: **It is a very old traditional dance form connected with very rich local rituals. It was originated at Seraikella, it was modified, choreographed and given the modern shape by Late Bijay Pratap Singhdeo and many other sung and unsung**

artistes, Gurus contributed a lot for the development of this age old art form. It is a mask dance and unique in style.

- G. Who are the bearers and practitioners of the element/Cultural Traditions? Are there any specific roles or categories of persons with special responsibilities for the practice and transmission of it? If yes, who are they and what are their responsibilities? **Sri Kedar Art Centre, Sri Kalapith, Govt. Chhau Dance Centre, Sri Ganesh Performing Chhau Centre, Acharya Chhau Bichitra, all are at Seraikella.**
- H. How are the knowledge and skills related to the element transmitted today? **By training and teaching young boys, girls by different groups and school of Chhau dance. According to *Guru-Shishya Parampara*.**
- I. What social functions and cultural meanings do the element/cultural tradition have today for its community?: **it is based on religious sentiments and culturally it is important because it is a entertaining and informative.**
- J. Is there any part of the element that is not compatible with existing international human rights instruments or with the requirement of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, or with sustainable development? I.e. describe any aspect of the element/cultural tradition that may be unacceptable to Law of the country or may be in opposition to practicing community's harmony with others. **No.**
- K. Your Project's contribution to ensuring visibility, awareness and encouraging dialogue related to the element/cultural tradition.: **try to make a syllabus, and to maintain its originality, beautifulness and purity.**
- L. Information about the safeguarding measures that may protect or promote the element/cultural tradition
- a. (Write "Yes" in one or more boxes to identify the safeguarding measures that have been and are currently being taken by the communities, groups or individuals concerned)
- i. () transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education
 - ii. () identification, documentation, research
 - iii. () preservation, protection
 - iv. () promotion, enhancement
 - v. () revitalization
- b. Write about the measures taken at local, state and national level by the Authorities to safeguard the element/cultural tradition? : **On national level Sangeet Natak Academy, New Delhi given a few project and state**

Govt. Giving training. And on local level private organization giving training.

M. Write about the threats, if any, to the element/cultural tradition related to its practice, visibility and future longevity. Give facts and relevant reasons based on the current scenario. **The Apathy of the local and state authorities to this form of cultural tradition is the factor that the young generation is not being attracted to and there is no bright prospect of the artistes those who practice the cultural tradition. Written syllabus only can preserve this art form. Not having written syllabus is the major threat for this art form.**

N. Safeguarding measures proposed

(This section should identify and describe safeguarding measures to protect and promote the element/cultural tradition. Such measures should be concrete and can be implemented to formulate future cultural policy for safeguarding and promoting the element/cultural tradition in the state) **The authorities should come forward and provide many opportunities for the artistes and practitioners of this art/ cultural tradition. They should be financially helped so that they can continue to preserve and protect this cultural tradition. Massive training of young artistes and making them aware of this invaluable cultural heritage.**

O. Community Participation

(Write about the participation of communities, groups and individuals related to the element/cultural tradition in formulation of your project): **Kumbhakar, kansari, Mukhi, Gudia, Rajput, Brahmin, Karna, Mahato etc. Sri Radhakant Pattanayak (Traditional Artiste, Exponent), Guru Sri Ganesh Chandra Mahato, Costumes and Ornaments Sri Ajay Kumar Sahu, Traditional Mask Maker Sri Sushanta Kumar Mahapatra, Kush Kumar Karua, Vinand Rakhal Das, Guru Prasad Baskey, Guru Charan Mahato, Bahadulla Kumbhakar, Mansa Singh Modak, Rahul Mishra,etc.**

P. Concerned community organization(s) or representative(s)

(Provide detailed contact information for each community organization or representative or other non-governmental organization that is concerned with the element such as associations, organizations, clubs, guilds, steering committees, etc.)

- i. Name of the entity
- ii. Name and title of the contact person
- iii. Address
- iv. Telephone number
- v. E-mail
- vi. Other relevant information

Name of the Entity	Name & title of the contact person	Address	Telephone no.	e-mail ID
Sri Ganesh Chhau Performing Centre	Guru Sri Ganesh Chandra Mahato,	Ward no-5,(old) new-8 Seraikella, Jharkhand	09234413155	mahatoganeshchandra@gmail.com
Sri Ram Pathagar	Vinand Rakhal Das, Secretary	Bara Gamharia, bagan para, Seraikella, Jharkhand	09263468375 09572578375	Vinanddas@rediffmail.com

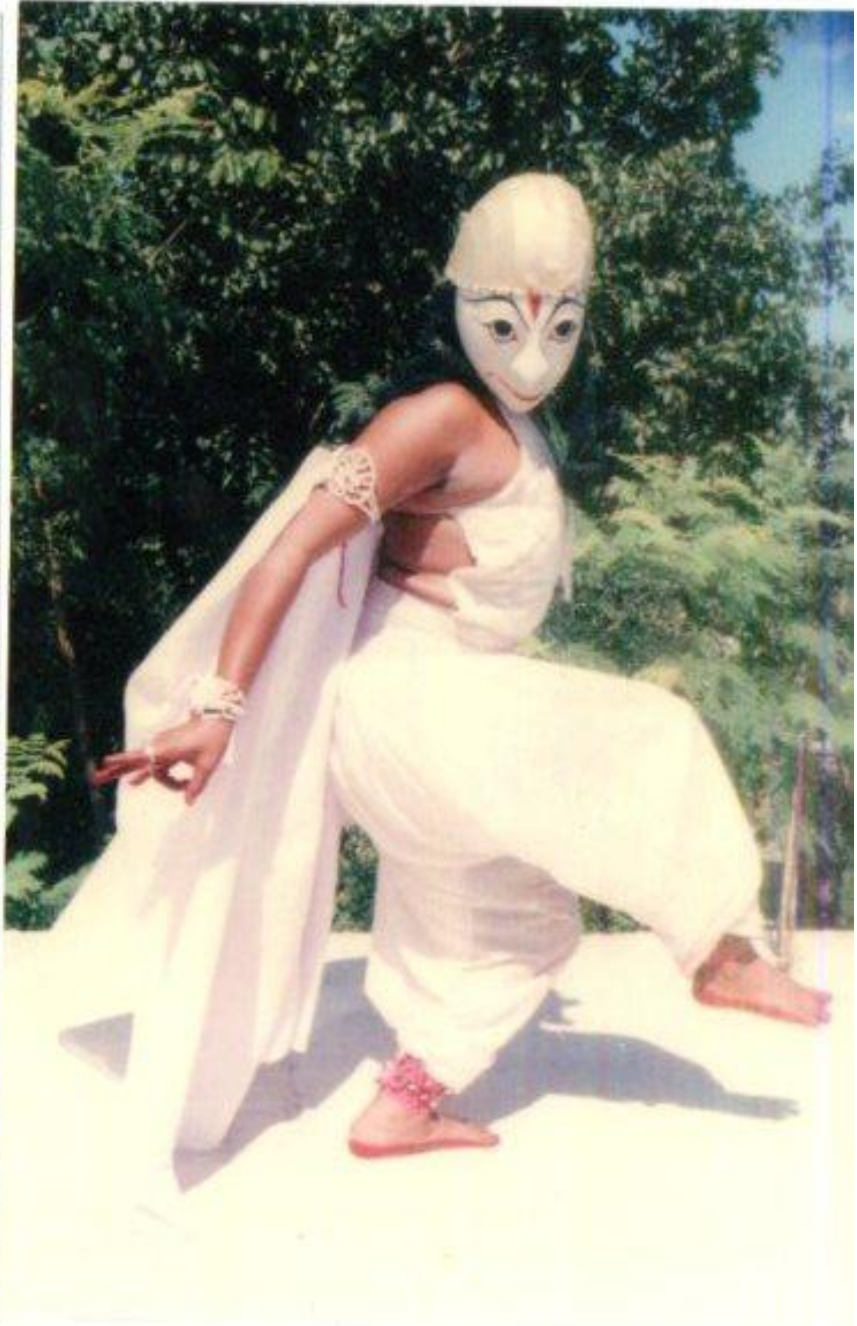
Q. Give information of any Inventory, database or data creation centre (local/state/national) that you may be aware of or of any office, agency, organisation or body involved in the maintenance of the said inventory etc. **Sri Kalapith, Seraikella, National level Sangeet Natak Academy, New Delhi, Govt. Of Jharkhand, Sri Kedar Art Centre,**

R. Principal published references or documentation available on the element/cultural tradition: **magazine of the art (Marg) Chhau Dance of Seraikella, Edited by, Dr. Sunil Kothari. 1968 (Marg Publication, Army And Navy Building, Fort Mumbai.**

1st Report (6 Months) a Training Programme of (ICH scheme 2015-16)
By Guru Malay Kumar Sahu

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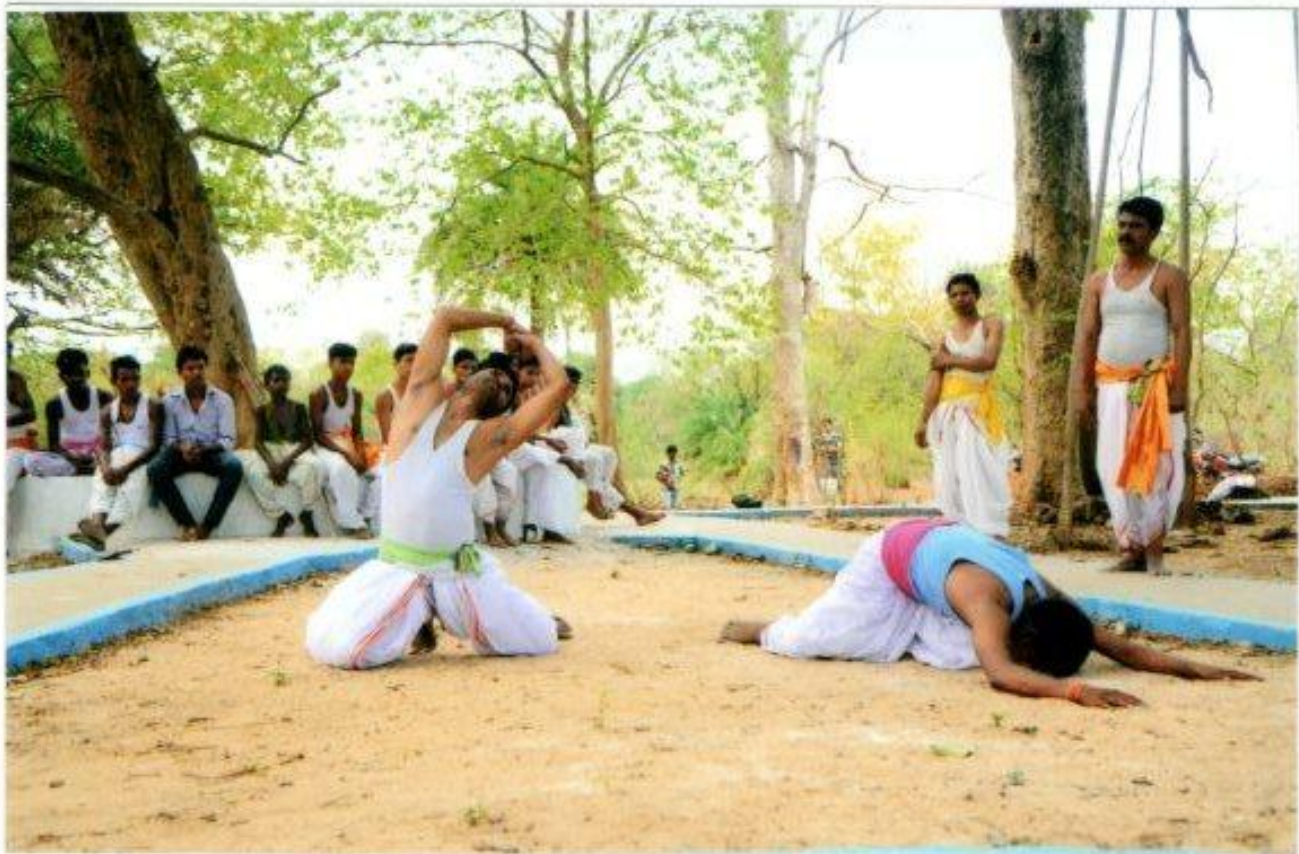
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3.	Uphalaya, Ufli diya, jump etc	11 to 20	20 Photographs
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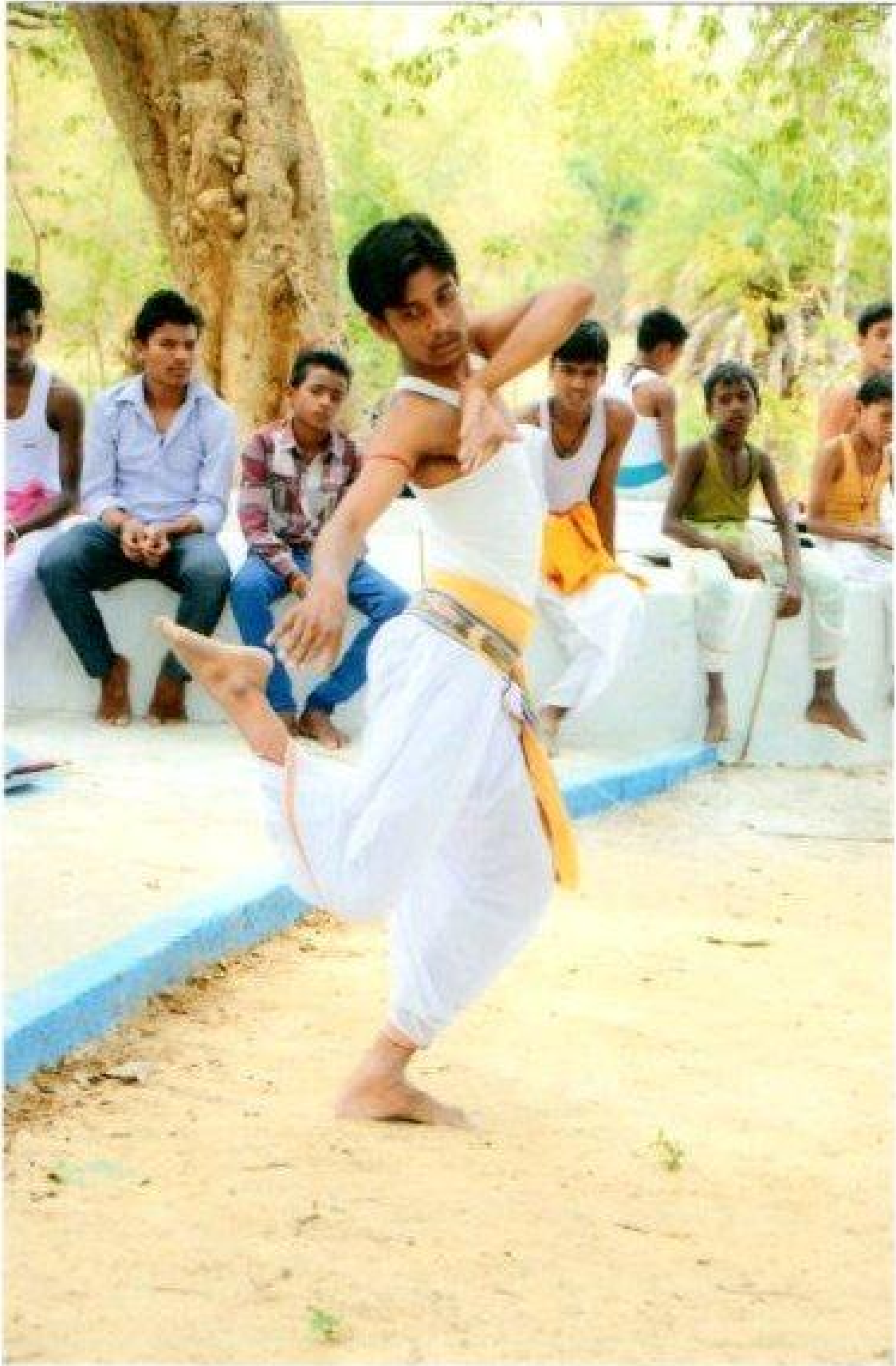
Hansa Gati



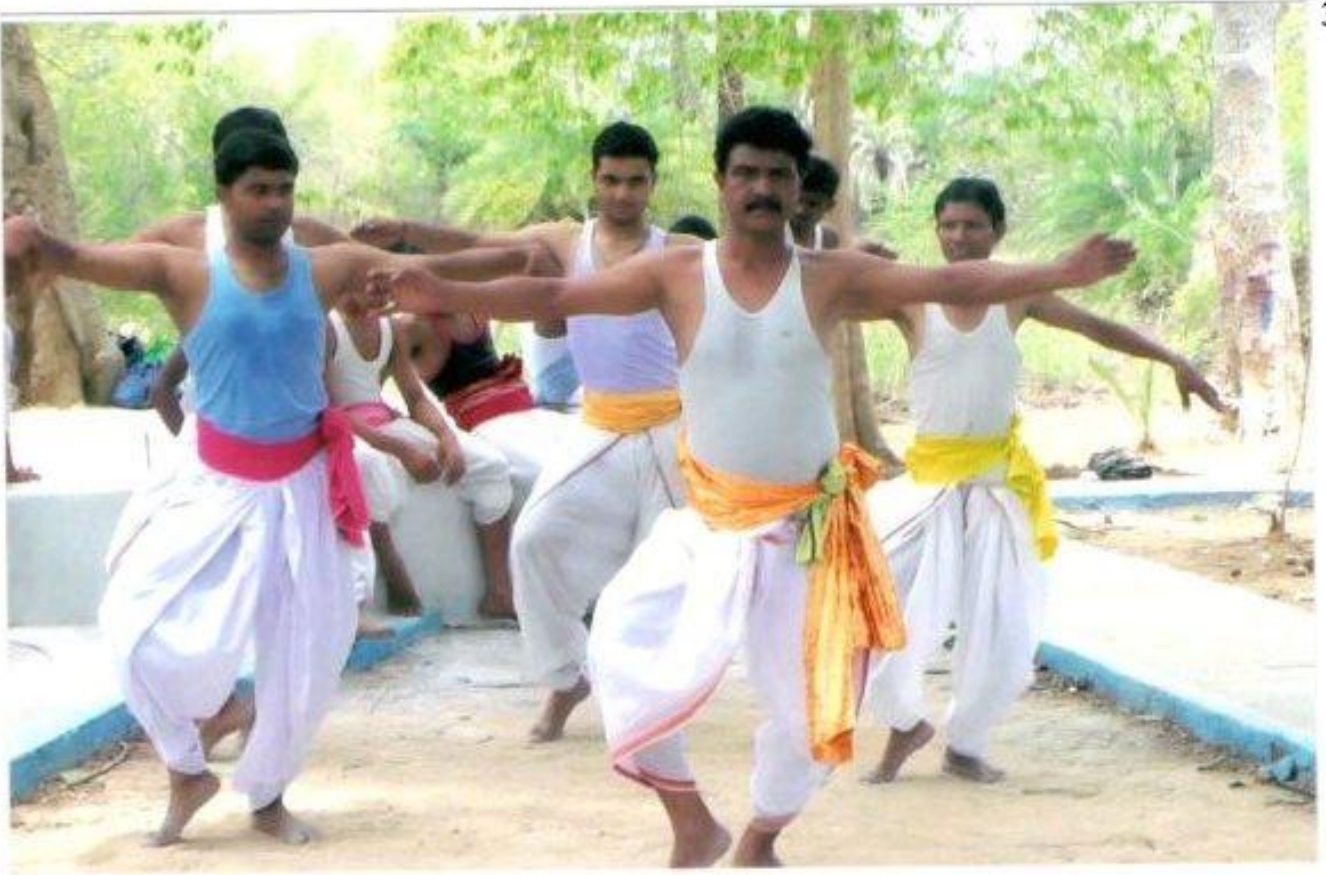
Lazza (Expression of Shyness)



Bichada (Sefration)



Mayur Gati



Jwar (Wave- Saagar Dance)



Jwar (Wave- Saagar Dance)

CONCLUSION AND MY PERSONAL VIEW

In Seraikella Chhau Dance Mask is the beautiful and highly stylish worn on the face. The Dance is Completely transformed by this association with mask. Seraikella Chhau mask are the focal point of Chhau Dance. In them are concentrated the peculiar and particular moods (Bhava) or themes of the dance facial expression (Mukhabhinaya) is absent, but through body movement which produces the totality of human feeling relevant to different themes symbolical body movements (Angikabhinaya) expressed throughout the Seraikella Chhau Mask. The wearing (Chhau artist) of the mask causes the dancer to lose its own identity, transforming into own impersonal being and humane and universal is visible. Bharat Muni in his Natya Shashtra enumerates 108 Nritya karana, in Seraikella Chhau dance these are known as uphli or Upalayas.

I have already submitted about process of training in the ICH SCHEME -2014-15. But the syllabus on Seraikella Chhau is highly essential otherwise the purity of this dance will be extinct very soon.

BY BHARAT MUNI - SHABDA KALPA DRUMO

The gestures for suggesting a mood & sentiment where based on the rhythm is called dance. Or in other words the dance is rhythm and gestures for suggesting mood and sentiments. The dance becomes of two kinds :- Tandava and Lasya, the dance of violent and vigorous from based on violent and extensive leg and body movement for suggesting, furious, heroic, terrible and odious sentiments and moods of anger, energy, fear and disgust is called Tandava and graceful of lenient by movement & gestures for suggesting erotic, comic, pathetic & peace, the mood of love, laughter, sorrow and quietness is called Lasya.

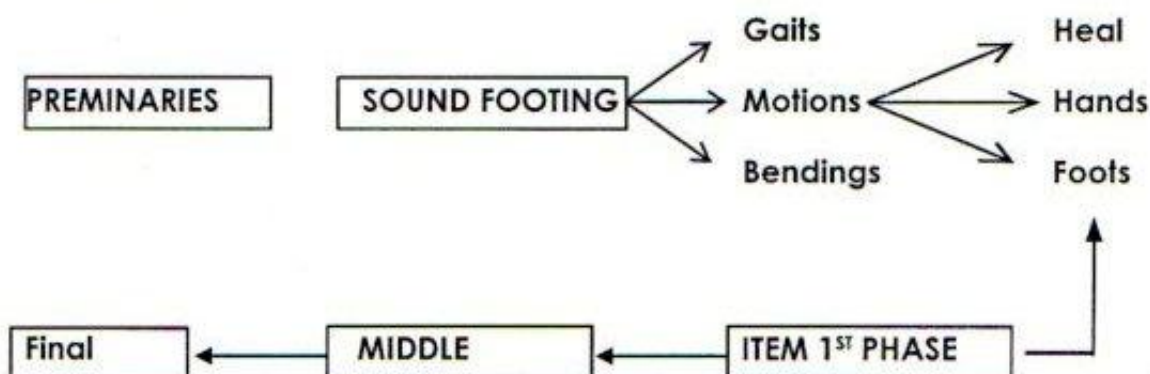
There are two types of Tandava dance : - Such as "Pebali" & "Bahurupam".

The dance formed by extensive leg and body movement which does not give any expression to any mood & sentiment are called "Pebali" and the dance based on violent and extensive leg and body movement with slaying and cutting piercing of sword and other weapons is called "Bahurupam".

PROCESS OF TRAINING OF SERAIKELLA CHHAU DANCE

After preliminaries "Dharana" (Dharana is the first basic standing posture of pharikhanda left leg is forward, right leg is backward. The face is up, the chest is extended, in left hand shield, in right hand sword) is practices i.e. the stand style in the dance at the beginning. Then they are taught gaits and different poses and stepping in harmony with drum beatings nad metres. Before entering the field of dance - all are well trained in these movements and gaits. The lowly aged children are imparted training in groups in "Hare-Bishnu" or of "Khene-khene Gopal" or "Madan Gopal", and their defects or commitments are corrected. Such children are separated and they are again trained up with more vigour and vigilance. The aged ones after ones after preliminary stepping and bending are round are wide gaits are led straight to participate in dance items to learn the same with the experts. This rehearsal continues for days and months till they are able to dance it themselves. Thus they continue to practice and learn both duets and other single items. After this, mask wearing is practised and with masks they begin to re-hearse one after another. This process goes on for several months till the target is reached.

The dancers then display their debuts with masks and ringlets before the instructors and Gurus who look in their stepping, gaits and harmonious movements and expose the faults if any. Thus the dance performance are refined after healthy criticism. The following diagram will show the entire structure :-



Approach to such Dance Items :-

After learning the “Dharans”, which may differ according to sentiment or emotion that the dance conveys, the young dancers move to the other parts of dances. As it is known, every dance of Seraikella Chhau has been split up in three Phases - Primary, Middle and the Final stage i.e. “Nachpali”. In order to learn a particular item of ‘Tal’, a beginner has to run according to the beats and musical ‘Matras’ in different channels to express with language of movements of head, feet, hands and face, longer stepping or shorter stepping as the case may be. Before presentation, the new learner must master these movements with clear conceptions of what he is going to show, in what matras he would move in every phase and how best he would express himself. The last phase marks as the conclusion of a literary essay on the gist of a poem and poet’s opinion. The artist while exhibiting his movement expending certain ideas with symbols, facial expressions and the mask in the first two parts of the item, jumps to the last phase with more vigour to mark the end of his show.

In rural areas that I have visited, I have found such instructions, given to the learners every where and the gurus always make attempts to bring all the intricate or compounded movements clearly home to this disciples. I do also opine that untill and unless the first phase is mastered, learners should not be left thought fit for the second one.

As far myself, I at first teach the simple talas after “Dharan’ being mastered by the trainees and gradually raises them to make compound movements. By such movement I mean the movement of the head (Suppose) with hat of feet, body and hands. In difficult items like “Sabar” (Hunter), Prajapati, (Butterfly), Sagar (Ocean), Mayur (Peacock) it is the more difficult item. vigorous exercises are essential which should be taught separately one and one then a full conglomeration is to be made to complete the item of the dance.

- I. At first for the beginners minor items like - hare Vishnu, Khene-Khene Gopal, Madan Gopal are to be taught with simple uflies (Upalaya)
- II. At the second group they should learn a bit complex items like Bana Bridhya, Sharada Sashi and others with simple uflies (Upalaya).
- III. The third stage shall comprise with many compound movements and gaits like Parikhandas, vigorous exercises (Uflies)
- IV. The fourth shall be the female dances with female feet movements and hand gestures.

The second stage, shall consist of animal dances like - Tiger, Bear, "Orang-Gotan and the "Snake-Dance" which has easy and comfortable gaits though they are compounded. The second part of the second stage consists of sword and dagger dances with more "Uphlies" requiring more vigour. The learners are taught this hard practice with wooden swords and lighter shields so that no injury may be done as they may not dance upto the time the others fall upon them. If they continue their dancing fully upto the "Talas" with precise movement of sword and shield they may be successful within about required else they may fail in the estimation of the general spectators. Speed be allowed to handle steel swords and daggers.

DHARAN - STANDING POSITION OF CHHAU DANCE

- **Thani - Style**
- **Chali - walk**
- **Guru Pranam -**
- **Shiv pranam - god prayer**
- **Bhumi pranam - Prayer to Motherland**



**Bhairav Shaal or Akhda Shaal - a oldest
Chhau dance training place of Seraikella**



Student's PRAY TO LORD SHIVA



DHARAN Standing Position



THANI STYLE



CHALI (STEPING)



GURU PRNAM (PRAY TO MASTER)



SHIVA PRANAM (PRAY TO LORD SHIVA)



BHUMI PRANAM (PRAY TO EARTH MOTHER)



Aadli Chali (Side Step)

SYNOPSIS OF ARDHANARISWAR DANCE

The Hindu conception of the greater is undefined and complex. He is, at the sometime mother and father, creator, preserver and destroyer and yet of the entire universe itself. She bears the child rears it up, gives it hope and aspiration. He gives it life, gives it vigour, guides in the world and endows it with power both to project and to destroy

Expression in Ardhanariswar Dance

(Dance by Director Malay ku.sahu)

1. Lajja (shyness)
2. Pralay (Destruction)
3. Ghodatobka (a horse tort)
4. Dolono (Trample)
5. Sheho (mother affection)
6. Pratipaloyna (rearing up)
7. Chhua suaiba (make the baby sleep on mother cradle)

Musicians

- . Dhol (drumplayer) - Guruprasad basky & Bahadula kumbhakar
- . Nagara (kittle drum) - Guru charan mahato, Flute & sehnai - Kush kumar karwa
- . Jhanj (Hand cymbals) - Jogjadi mahato
- . Costumes & ornaments - Ajak kumar sahu
- . Mask - Sushant kr. mahapatro

Students

Devnarayan singh, Vinod Rakhal das, Bhairav paramanik, Mansha singh modak, Yudhistir mahato, Akash nath, Ganesh mahato, Satyajeet das, Gangotri mahato, Ravi kund modak, Ravi sankar satpathy, Sahab nath, Mahesh pan, Sidesh mahato, Umesh pan, Doctor tiu, Pavan Mahato, Niranjana mahato, Arjun das, Subham mishra, Sawan kumar, Shibnath mishra, Sushil kumar mahato, ~~Rohit Mishra~~



Biro (heroic expression in Ardhanariswar Dance)



Biro (heroic expression in Ardhanariswar Dance)



Chhua Khaliba (Playing Baby)



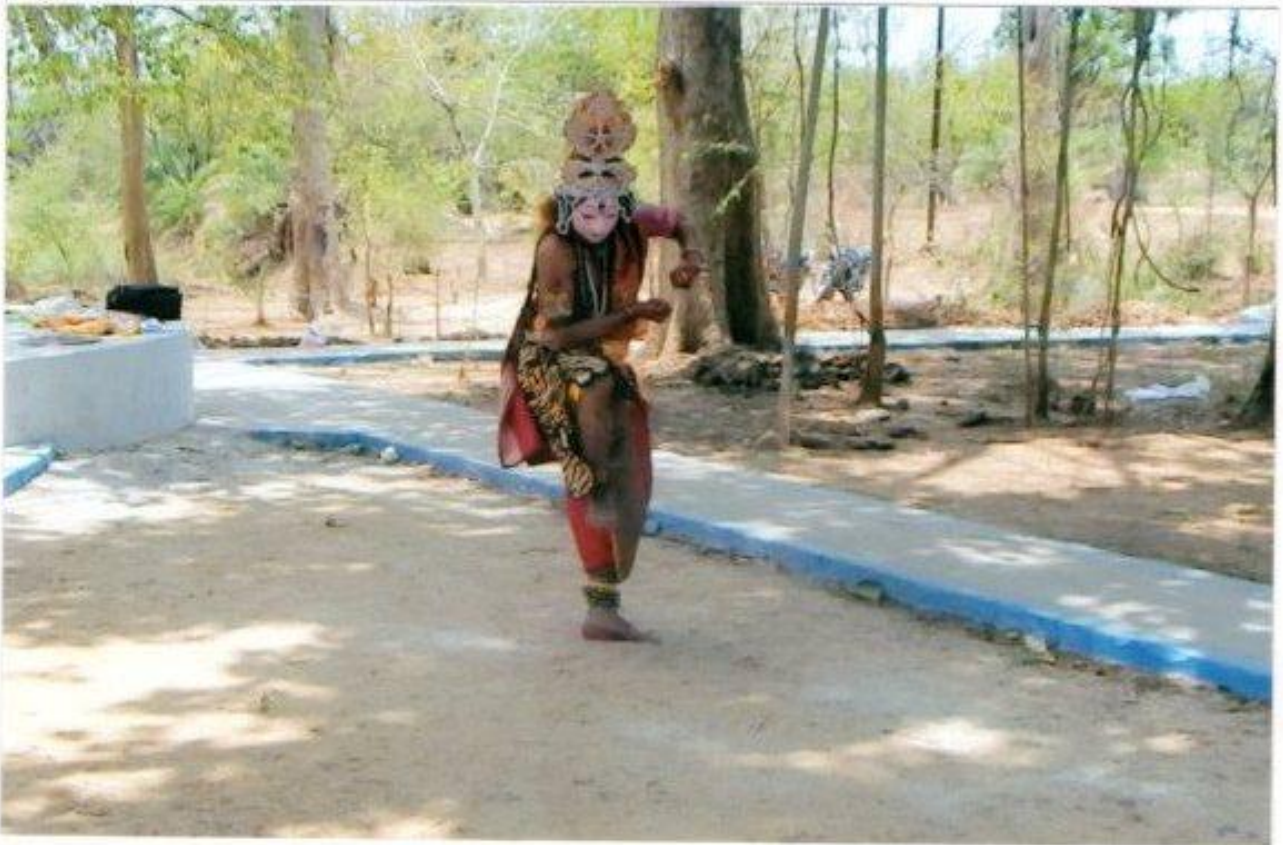
Chhua Suaiba (Make the baby sleeping on mother cradle)



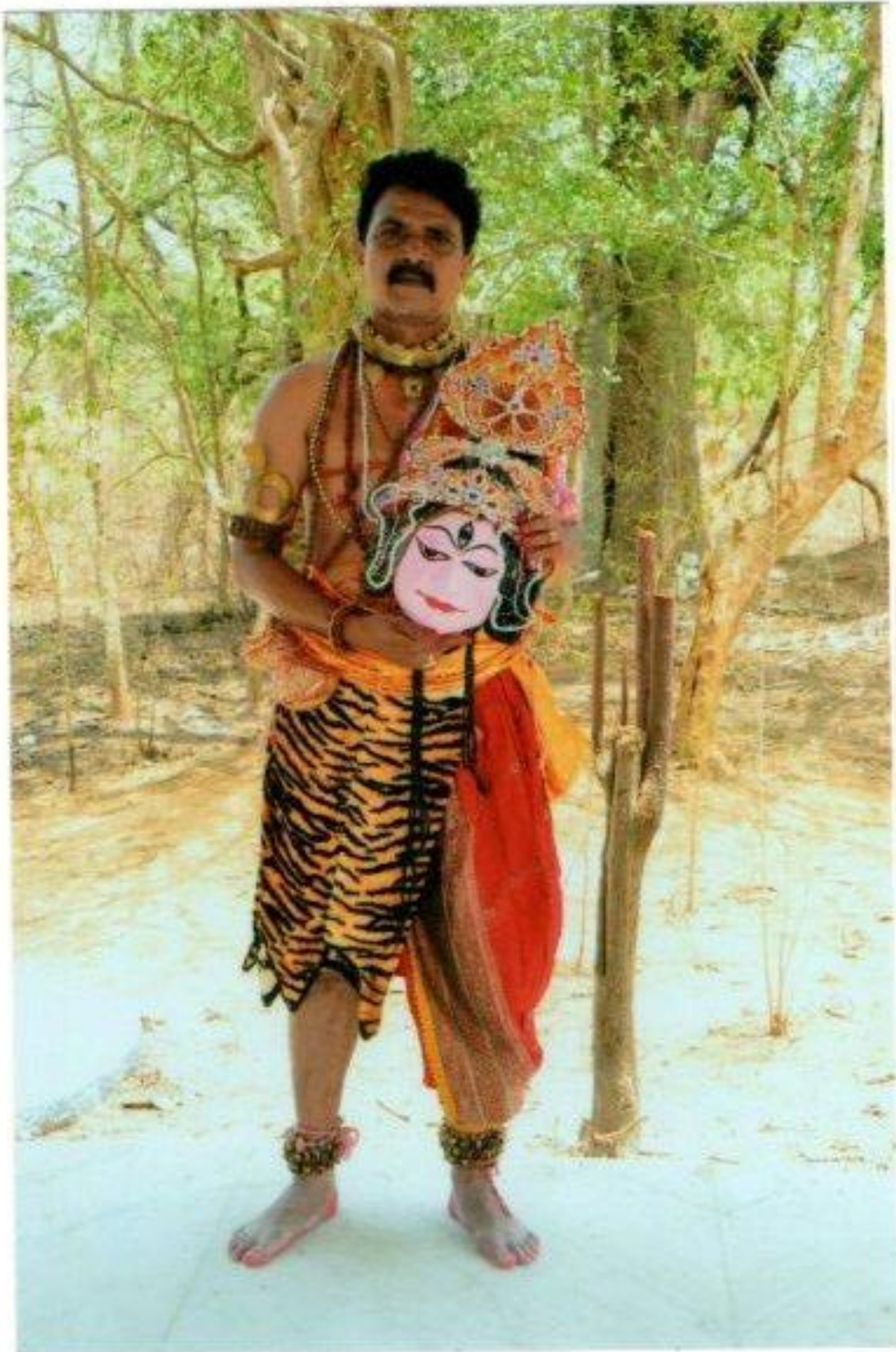
Sheno (Mother Efection)



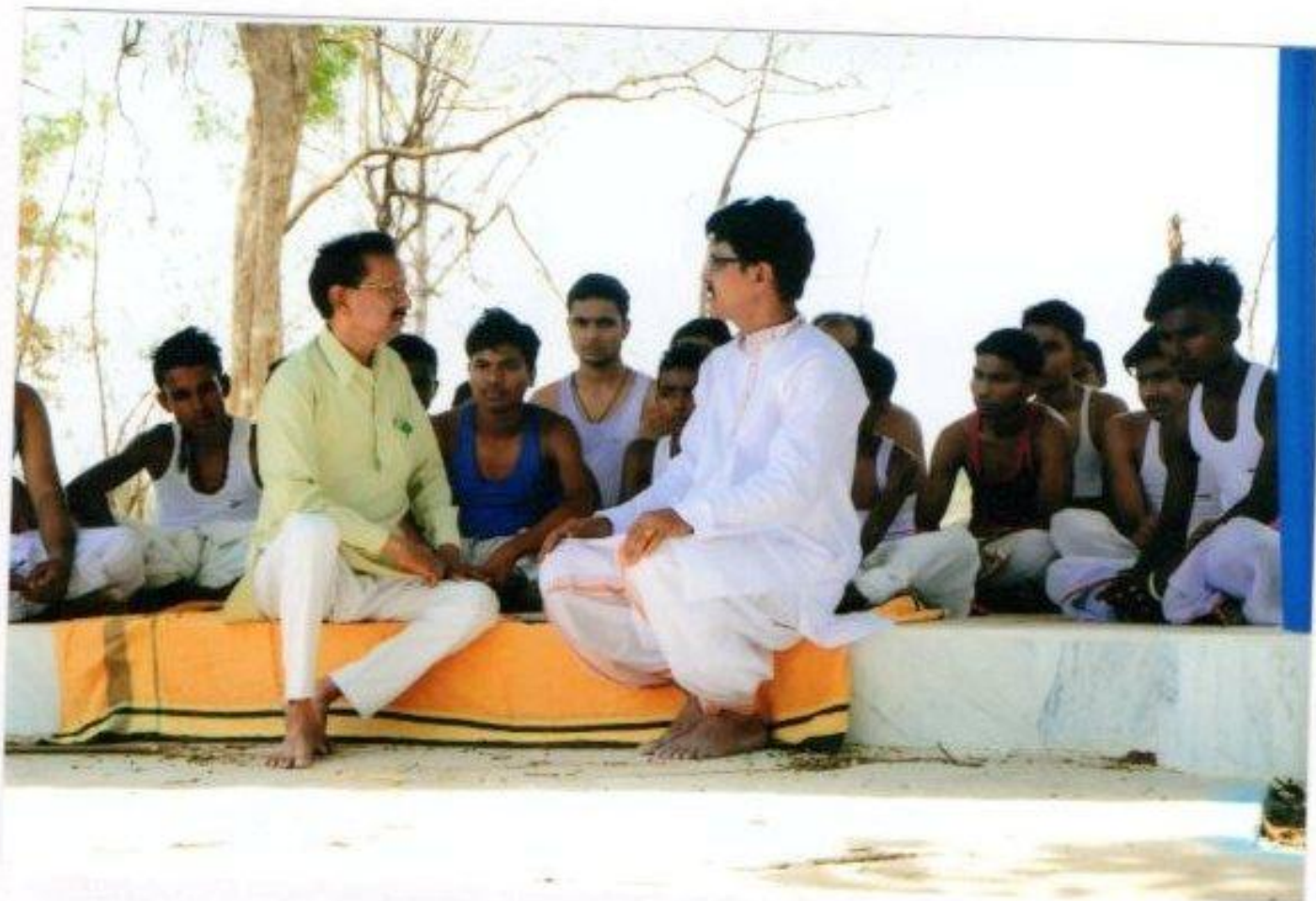
Pratipaloyna (Rearing up)



Dolono (Trample)



A picture of Guru Malay Kumar Sahu after performing the dance Ardhanariswar.



**Interview with Guru Radha Kant Pattanayak
(Chhau Exponent)**



**Interview with Guru Ganesh Chandra
Mahato (Chhau Exponent)**



Musicians of Sri Kedar Art Centre.

SERAIKELLA CHHAU MASK

Seraikella Mask had been in use since the emanation of dance at Seraikella. Makes are colloquially called CHHAU in Oriya. The language of this region hence the dance is called "Chhau Nach" Chhau Nrithya or The Mask Dance. At first the masks were made of water melon, kakharu, nau tunba, light bamboo pieces hollowed. They were specially of longer size pieces and chiefly suited for animal dances namely of tiger, horses, bears, monkey, lion etc. Later on a few artists made masks (wood masks) of light wood and cut out in size with eye holes, nostrils, mouths. They were roughly colored and sometimes in irregular shape. These had an ugly look and were very inconvenient for the dancers to wear as they could not be folded as tilted. Bamboo mask is lighter and comfortable. Bamboo and wattle came into use and (some time used banyan cloths) bamboo mats were prepared and cut out in proper shapes. They were then colored to suit to the purpose in the last part of the 18th century. Mask built with paper, clothes mud and dissolved soil came to use. At first the masks were of crude form and they were colloquially called "Hhumapatiya Mohouda".

It is reported by many that some goyadhat bhandari (Barbar) was the first to build such mask at village Dugni, near Seraikella ears and necks and present the king of Seraikella (Material are soil colors clothes) and a few years later an ideal mask maker late Guruparsanoo kumar Mahapatro built mask and after that many students learning Chhau making from him like Kanahilal Maharana, Bishonath Saho, Purno Barik etc. Between this period many other mask makers also built mask like Raghu ram Maharana, Markando Shau, Kusto

Shau , Dhrolal Bhol, Susant MahaPatro, Basant Barik and many in village also (Tatoposi) Kashab Achariya etc. The Late Prasanna Kumar Mahapatro has earned reputation in this art the mask being to be painted as per Sahatri, natural and social things painting are all quite artistic . The top gears and head dress are quite decorative and attractive they are mainly embroidery works with different colors particularly dazzlingly white where ever crowns are necessary they are also brought in

The Seraikella Chhau stans different from that of Mayurbhanj and Purulia . It is Never a fact that chhau everywhere performs same function.

Mask play a predominate role in the Seraikella School of Dance. Besides showing the identity of the dance exhibited, it maintains a single emotion throughout . It is the Mask that sustains the emotion and inside the correct idea that the dancer reflects and the meanings of the poses, the dancer projects. The construction of eyes, longer, shorter and bigger , paintings of eyebrows and mouth imply different sentiments . It is with help of the Mask that the dancer by inclination of his head or setting his eyes direct below , the dancer can expound his views and emotion that he tries to convey . Masks follow the nature and natural shapes like shapes of buds and petal of flower, eyes of animals like- Elephant, deer, Kurangi etc. Radha's eyes are like Kurangi, so Radha called Kuranginayani, Ram is Padmalochan due to his lotus like eyes. Masks are not useless wear or embellishment. The paintings of head and hair with hairstyle are other that appear to be very attractive.

Seraikella masks are one of the finest in the world. Masks of Seraikella are cannot be avoided. It is a must in Seraikella School of Chhau . In Some

Masks particularly of legendary and dances, relate to providence, head decoration are added.

IN DIFFERENT PERIODS DIFFERENT TYPES OF MASK WAS USED .

- 1- Laves Mask – Especially “Palash” laves Were used
- 2- Face and Body Painting - Were Painted by different Natural Colors.
- 3- Wooden & bomboo Mask – Lighter Woods are Used like – Mango, gombhuri, Simoal etc.
- 4- Bamboo & Pumpkin Mask – Pumpkin Were Used in Making Human Face, Demon, Ghost etc.
- 5- Soil – Solution – Cloths are Used then it becomes fine Mask .

Conclusions & my Personal view

Late Mr. Prasann Kumar Mahapatra was very eminent Mask Maker at Present about Sraikella Chhau Mask. Sri Kanhilal Maharana, Vishwanath sahu & Susant Mahapatra are good mask maker, in there own Style, Sri Kanhilal Maharana is also genious mask maker. But amongst the Three Vishwanath sahu has Pickup the style, Raso , Bhava of the mask as was being done by Lete P.K Mahapatra and has been appreciated by most of the Chhau Dance.

List Of the Some Old New Mask Maker Names :-

- 1) Late Mr. Prasann Kumar Mahapatra.
- 2) Late Hamo Mahapatra.
- 3) Sri Kanhilal Maharana
- 4) Late Dhiro Lal Bhol.
- 5) Late RaghuRam Maharana .
- 6) Late Markondo Sahu.
- 7) Late Kristo Ch. Sahu.
- 8) Vishwanath sahu
- 9) Susant Mahapatra
- 10) Late Purno Barick.
- 11) Late Kasobo Achariya- From Vill- Tentoposi
- 12) Dilip Achariy. – From vill- Tentoposi
- 13) Basant Barick.
- 14) Late Bado Nunu- Old Wooden Mask Maker & Some Pattanyak & Pani Was also builder Mask.

Mask materials are Used and Making Process

1. Chita Maati – Alluvial Soil for mold
2. Khara-Ashes
3. Maida-Chita – Muslin Paste
4. Suti Kana – Old Cotton Cloths
5. Kagaj – old news paper
6. Poli maati – Black Soil
7. Nagli Wooden
8. Iron – Karani

Making Process –Seraikella Chhau Mask (Mold) is made of (chita maati) Alluvial clay found near the bank of river Kharkheei . this clay is pounded , strained dissolved in water , and made into a thick paste . the basic face acts. the mask maker fixes the clay mold of the character on a wooden plank and lets it dry for enough time harden it . after one day , then putting ashes on the mask . then a muslin gauze is pasted on it with two layers of pieces news paper. Then it put on the sun light to dry . then small old cotton cloth is pasted on it with muslin gauze. again one layer old news paper with gauze. Again it put on the sun filled up again smooth black soil solution after that cotton cloth with alluvial gauze is pasted over it.

The nose mouth eyes are finished by steel instrument (karni or nagli) and the mask is polished then it put on the sun for dry , after dry the mask is scrubbed out from the mold . After that mask maker banding (side) it with cotton cloth . Then polished and painted with white color. It is then painted now with several comical , natural and color to suit it.

Some rare and very beautiful masks made by
Late. P. K Mahapatra , Late Dhero lal bhol , &
Kanhai lal maharana seraikella in 1972 , 2002 , 2000

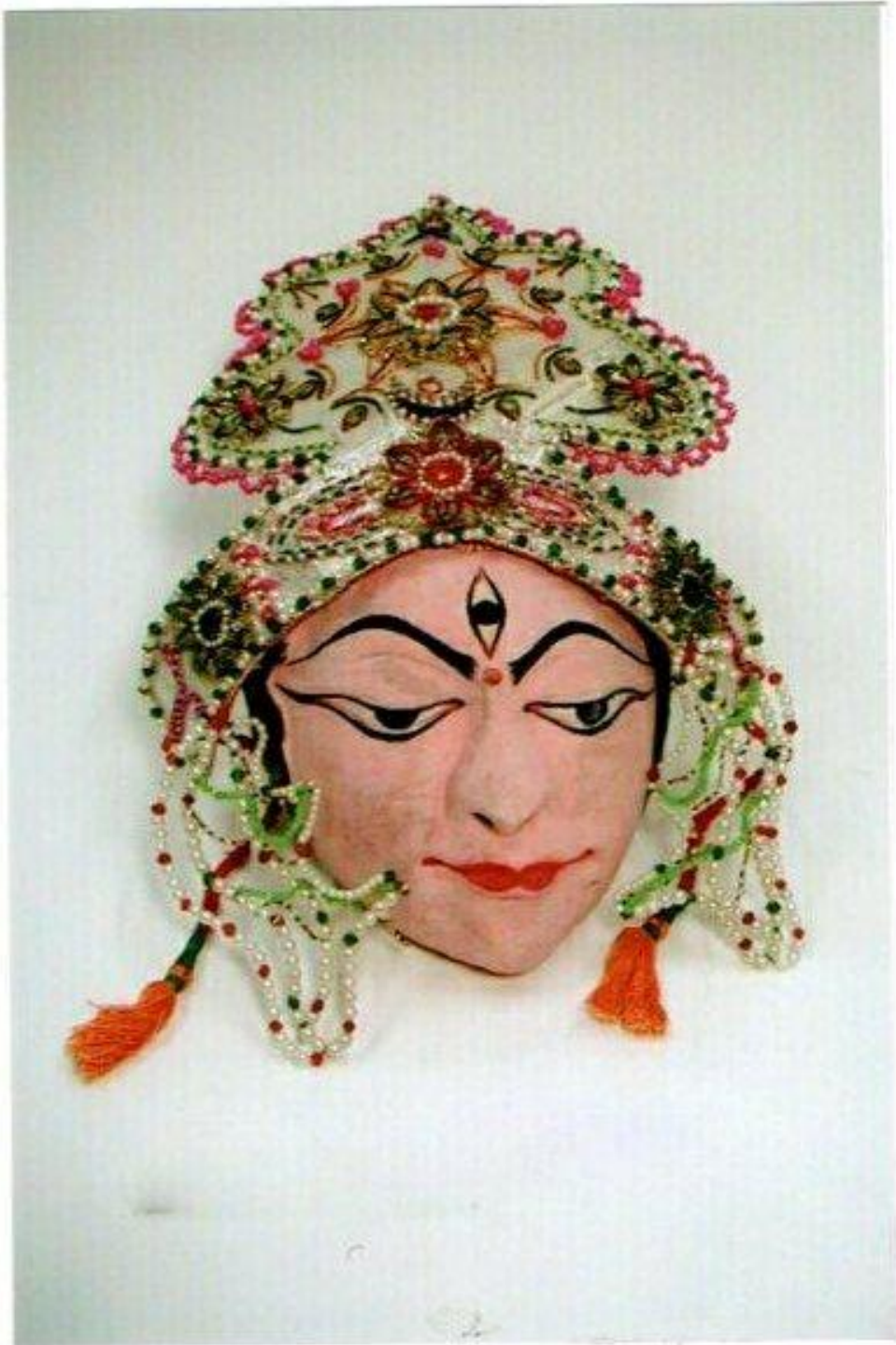
picture collection from sri kedar art center seraikella



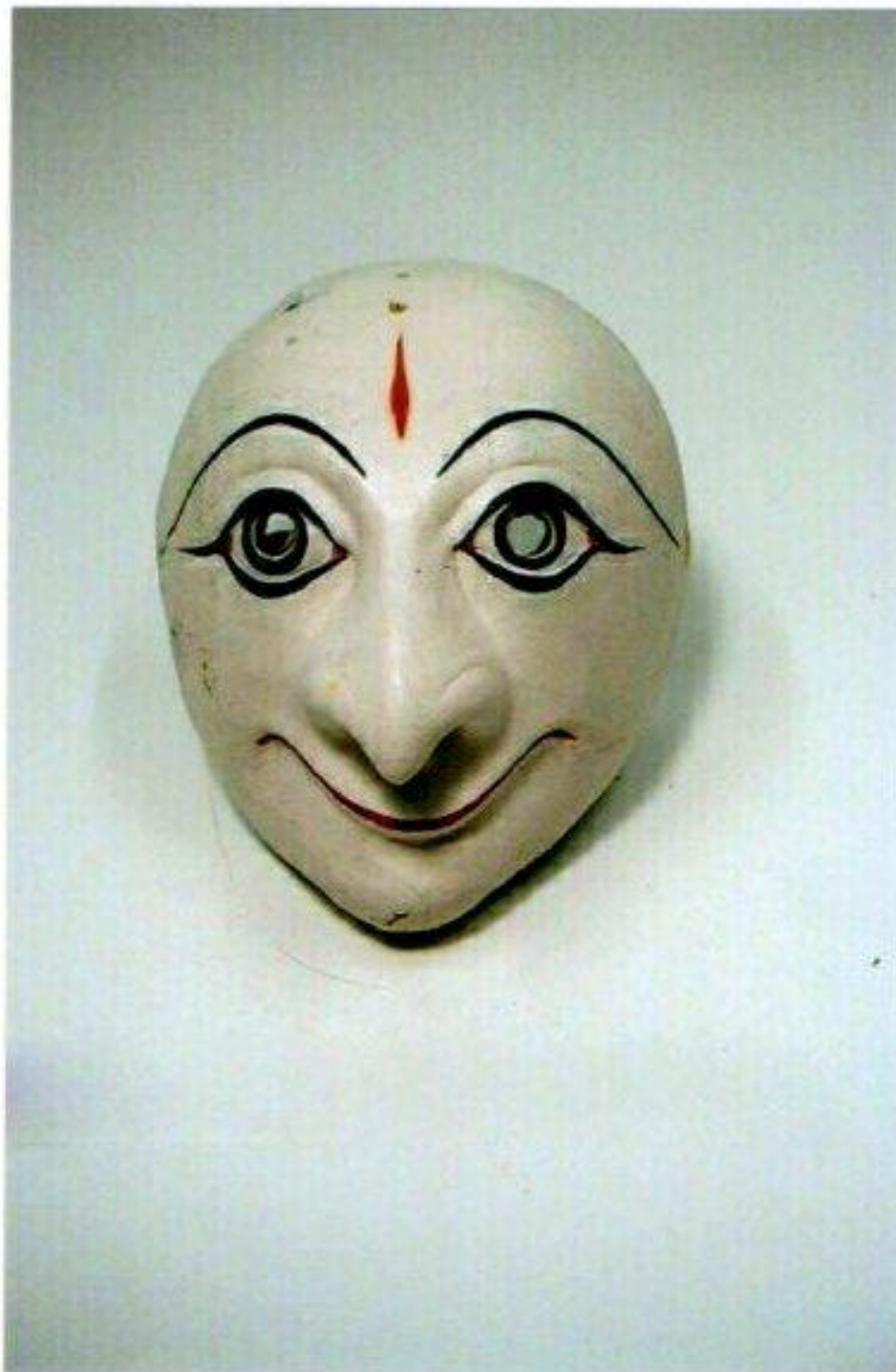
A mould made by late Dheera Lal Bhol



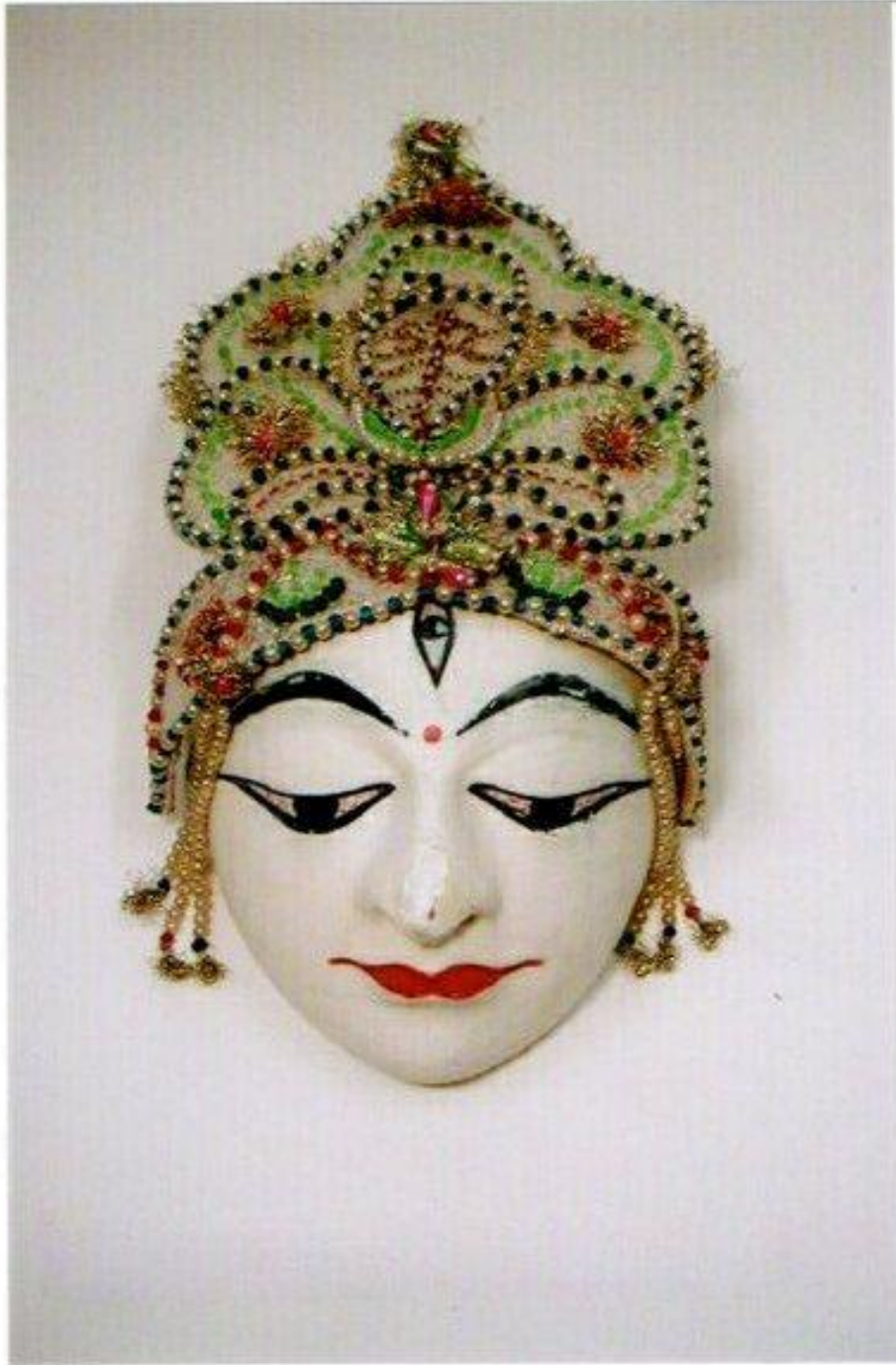
**The masks on making.
By Kanhai Lal maharana.**



A Mask of Ardhanariswar made by late Guru Prasanna Mahapatra in the year 1972



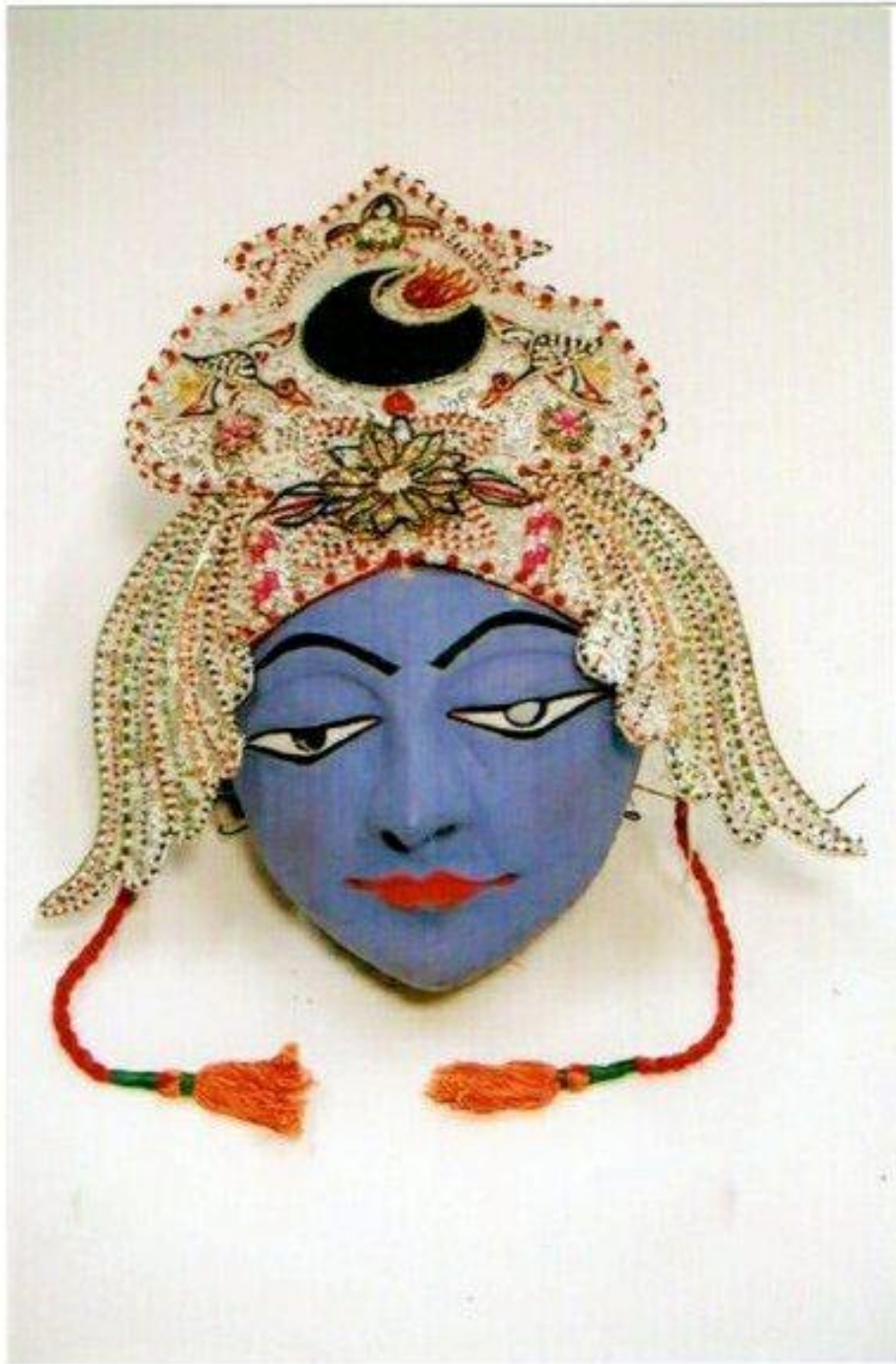
A Mask of Swan (Hansa) made by late Guru Prasanna Mahapatra in the year 1972



**A Mask of Hara (Shiva) made by late Guru Prasanna Mahapatra
in the year 1972**



A Mask of Shiva Tandava made by late Guru Prasanna Mahapatra in the year 1972



A Mask of Ratri made by late Guru Prasanna Mahapatra in the year 1972



A Mask of Sagar (Ocean) made by late Guru Prasanna Mahapatra in the year 1972



Sabar Hunter (Mask made by Late Prasna Kumar Mohapatra 1972)

SARAIKELA DISTRICT



Map not to Scale

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PURBI SINGHBHUM DISTRICT



Map not to Scale

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editorial

Defend yourself

Last week a reader called us and told us about how he was assaulted by a gang of white youths. The attack he told us, was completely unprovoked, and had started with the youths making fun of his wife who was wearing a saree. The youths found the costume to be "funny" and made remarks at them, it seems. Not wishing to start any trouble, the reader, an insurance executive, walked quickly to the parked car. But he was stopped. The youths then went on to break the windshield and when the owner objected, assaulted him and broke his jaw bone. When the police arrived on the scene all the youths except those who assaulted the reader were still left it seems. And yet the police took no action. They did not even file a complaint and merely told the reader to go to the hospital!

Such incidents alas are not isolated ones. "Indian Bashing" seems to be fast becoming one of the favorite sports in parts of Flushing. Even more scandalous is the reaction of the police whose continued inaction and callousness in this matter makes us suspect whether they may indeed be conniving at such behavior.

The police often seem to put the blame on the victims and have criticized the Indians for not being "street wise". Would the police like the Indians also to be "wise" enough to go around beating up others? This kind of disgraceful advice has also been given by some of the so called white "Community Leaders" and we are ashamed to say, some Indians as well. These prophets of passivity are advising Indians not to be "conspicuous" and not to wear sarees etc. in order to stay out of trouble.

The Indian community should reject such nonsensical advice and start defending themselves immediately—by using whatever means and with or without police cooperation. Self defence is a universal human right and we all have the right to look as "conspicuous" as we want. If we let this trend continue, next they will be telling us that our brown skins are too conspicuous and that we should adapt by changing our skin color.

Mayor Koch never wastes an occasion to sing the praise of the "hard working" Indians. We hope he would persuade the police under him to better defend the community whom he keeps telling us he admires very much. And we wish the Indian "community" leaders who never waste a chance to appear before TV cameras and delight in giving awards to each other, would pay more attention to this matter which involves the very life and death of the community. Otherwise, the assaults on the Indians and the desecration of their temples would not only continue, but increase as the hoodlums whose appetite has been whetted decide that the Indians are an easy prey. There have been no racist murders of Indians as yet in the U.S. as there have been in Canada and the U.K. We do hope that the community will not wait for such drastic incidents to happen before arousing itself. Let us act to defend ourselves before it is too late.

Guru Sahoo brings Chhau to the US

Where else but in New York City could you find a master of Indian dance teaching a group consisting of several Americans, a Portuguese, a Japanese, and a Chinese? This ethnic melting pot is being conducted by the venerable master of Chhau (masked dance) himself, Guru Kedar Nath Sahoo, who is visiting the U.S. this summer to bring Chhau to the West, (and of course to the East). This is Guru Sahoo's first time in America, naturally at first Guru Sahoo felt a bit exhausted from the adjustments to a new time zone, and a new climate. But we students participating in his classes, would not have known this from the energy level and

movements in their modern dances and takes great interest in other dance forms. Guru Sahoo himself has choreographed new Chhau dances in the classical mode; one of them, "Night" is currently being rehearsed by two of his advanced American students.

Finding out that I am a student of Balinese dance, Guru Sahoo immediately launched into raptures over the beauty of Indian dance. "Bali, Java, Sumatra they all belong to the family of Kalings, which is also my blood, but now I am Bihar," he commented after we discussed the similarities and differences between Balinese and Chhau dance. Very little

call upon all his reserves of energy, and training to project a raga. Chhau uses the entire body; legs are extended up into the air and sudden fleeting leaps are executed; all this with a mask! A deer is not symbolized by a

Warriors trained in the martial arts made their contribution to ... Indian dance

mudra alone, instead the dancer will leap into the air while looking back with his head and upper torso. It is easy to see how warriors trained in the martial arts made their contribution to the vast kaleidoscope of Indian dance styles.

No longer blessed with a secure source of royal patronage, Chhau is in the precarious position of having to promote itself and having to secure state support. Chhau culturally belongs to the state of Orissa, but since independence Sareikela has become a part of Bihar. Sahoo however is very concerned about the future. As more Indians and foreigners are exposed to Chhau dance, its future survival will be guaranteed. Guru Sahoo had not



Guru Sahoo demonstrates a Chhau mudra

concentration he demands from his students. In the classes he will demonstrate a particular walk, then sword in hand he will prove that Chhau movements are derived from the martial arts.

Guru Sahoo's Chhau hails from Sareikela of the state Bihar. He is sixty years now and was raised on Chhau, training in the slow classical pace—several decades and only then emerged as a true artist. A strict classicist, he once rebuked the use of British bugles by the Maharaja of Mayurab-

seems to surprise or disturb his cosmopolitan taste and knowledge of art. Once as a joke two students demonstrated the erotic African pelvis thrusting to Guru Sahoo's drumming.

Guru Sahoo's main criticism of Western dance is that it has no story or abstract idea, *Kalpana bhava*. This elusive quality of Indian dance, thought or feeling, transforms a crouching walk into the stalking gait of a hunter in search of game. Gesturing with his hands, Guru Sahoo explained to me that when he is dancing, his heart is also dancing and is transforming his whole body. In class the sixty-year old master truly becomes a young maidenly temple dancer, or a warrior on the prowl or beautiful and languid Rhadha. The beauty of Asian dance traditions is that the dancer is also a storyteller, an actor, and a mimic.

...the dancer is also a storyteller, an actor and a mimic

hanj to accompany Chhau performances. Being a classicist does not necessarily mean you cannot keep up with the times. Guru Sahoo is proof of this. He encourages his foreign students to experiment with Chhau dance

Chhau dances are usually short, about five to ten minutes long. The paper-mache mask impairs breathing and limits the peripheral vision. His face hidden, the Chhau dancer must



The masked Chhau dancer

a 1968 performance tour of Europe and has since had numerous lecture-demonstrations throughout India. At the state-supported Chhau dance school in Sareikela there are 111 students, of which 15 are foreigners. Guru Sahoo's main disappointment is that with such a busy schedule he can no longer live his quiet village life. This summer's teaching engagement was sponsored by the John D. Rockefeller Foundation and the New York University School of the Arts.

Hwa Ling Ong

Chhau: From martial art form to modern dance

By GURU KEDAR NATH SAHU

Steeped in symbolism, Chhau is a colourful, vigorous dance form which originated in ancient times as a martial art form. The word 'Chhau' is derived from the Sanskrit chhaya, meaning the shadow of an object; the dance itself is thus identified totally with the essence of symbolism. The dance form has been evolved into a highly specialised art at Seraikella in Bihar having some unique features.

In Seraikella Chhau, the mask is the centre of attraction. Vachikabhinaya is absent, and with the elimination of speech there is greater scope for expression through mime and body language. Different bhavas (moods) and rasas (sentiments) are exquisitely expressed through the movements of the limbs in Chhau. The Seraikella Chhau has evolved from a distinct martial art called 'Phari-khanda' (sword and shield) and has a few distinguished manners of execution. The style, postures, movements and footwork conform to a positive martial art form, bestowed with grace. The Chhau techniques can be identified with the different karnas of Bharata's *Natyashashtra*.

The Chhau, as practised in Seraikella, can be divided into two categories—the Phari-khanda dances and the thematic or narrative dance items. The first category is a pure dance form or 'nritt', without abhinaya. A Phari-khanda dancer has to be skilled in the gruelling Chhau techniques. The second kind of Chhau portrays and exposes different characters—human beings, birds, beasts, or episodes from Hindu mythology or the *Puranas*.

Dance is also a mode of worship, and the blessings of gods and goddesses are often sought by dancing with devotion. The Chhau dance performed during the Chaitra parva celebrations in mid-April is in honour of Lord Shiva.

Since Chhau dance is essentially an open-air affair, all the special instruments used for the accompaniment emit loud or sharp sounds. Traditional musical instruments used for Chhau include dhol, nagara or dhumsa (kettle-drums), jhanj (brass cymbals), flute, mohuri (a wind instrument like shehnai) kartal, conch shells, turi and veri (long bamboo

pipes).

The masks used by the Seraikella Chhau dancers were at one time made of bamboo or wood. Nowadays, the dancers prefer to use clay masks. The original Chhau masks were huge, heavy, grotesque and disproportionate. The mode of presentation of the dance was also different: a dancer would come into the arena and stand in dharan while drums played in the background. Most performers would dance with minimum costumes, which were mostly simple in design, while some preferred to dance bare-bodied.

The beginning of the 20th century saw a remarkable transformation of this dance form. New ideas were incorporated, masks were developed and improved upon to a great extent and finer, colourful costumes took the place of the simple ones. Some classical musical instruments like shehnai, veena, pakhawaj, mridanga, etcetera, were also introduced and played along with the traditional ones, producing a unique music typical of Chhau.

While these developments in

the field of Chhau were taking place, Kumar Bijoy Pratap Singhdeo, younger brother of Raja A.P. Singhdeo of Seraikella, spearheaded a revolution. A man endowed with tremendous artistic qualities, Bijoy Pratap was instrumental in refining the Chhau dance to its present form. The Seraikella Chhau, till then essentially the martial art form of Phari-khanda incorporated thematic and modern dance ingredients. As a result, even the Chhau masks were transformed. The masks became human faces portraying bhavas (emotions) like pain, anger and joy. The colours also now conformed to the character being depicted. Natural colours, angular shapes, artistic lining and intelligent painting of the contours of the brow, eyes, nose and mouth produced a dynamic visual character of the mask itself.

Bejoy Singhdeo also introduced the now-popular form of presentation in which the Chhau performer starts the dance from the wings or from behind the audience following recitals of tala and also ends the dance behind the crowd.

Even the costumes underwent a change, for the better under the patronage of Bijoy Singhdeo. They not only became more colourful and costly but more meaningful as well. A definite colour scheme representing a particular rasa of the theme and special designs suited to the character are the hallmarks of the modern Chhau dance costumes.

All credit for popularising the present form of thematic Chhau dance goes to the now-octogenarian masters and exponents of Seraikella whose endeavours embellished the pure dance of Phari-khanda to a higher aesthetic level. Only the style of presentation remains the same as before—swinging hands, vigorous footwork and twisting body movements together explore the possibilities to express bhava and heighten rasa. The themes of Chhau contain nothing that is parochial or local, for its very idea is universal in appeal and meaning and the language in which its ideas are expressed is cosmopolitan. A rare confluence of colour, action and symbolism, the Seraikella Chhau has thus remained a visual treat.



Dancers in Seraikella Chhau performance

AT THE VALLE INDIAN DANCES OF SERAIKELLA

Seraikella is a country in the interior of India : a legendary country retaining the most ancient rites, independence and native sovereignty, which is surrounded by mountains and water. In India dancing is a form of religious expression, sacred ceremony in which princes themselves take the parts of personages in the myths of ancient poems. Now for the first time, these princes have come to Europe with their court and have begun their series of performances, in Rome, under the auspices of the Italian mid and far east Institute.

Yesterday evening of the stage valle, their highnesses Kumar Shuvendra Narayan, Kumar Hirendra & Kumar Himanshu Pratap Singh Deo danced, assisted by the dignitaries of the court - Banabehari, Kedar, Kumari Bani, Avimanyu, Sarat & Taley.

There life is Rhythmic, their drama is comic, their serpentine feet trace an imaginary pythagorical chart which reflects the arithmetical movements of the arms, the expressive movements of the head are left by the masks worn upon the face, four those of the neck, twenty three those of one hand alone (with the palm paint red), twenty three those of the hands joined, sixteen the way of rising and sitting, five those of leaning, seven are the spiral movements, eighteen the manners of walking.

A most simple music, in keeping with canons of the dance and its pantheistic expression, accompanies the action, played by native drums, copper synpols, flutes and lyrics.

The costumes are enchanting, worth of <<A thousand of one nights<<

((II tevere>> 26/3/1938.

CHHAU DANCE DISPLAY FINE PERFORMANCE BY SERAIKELLA TROUPE

In strict conformity with the classical code the Choreograph open with "Shiva Tandava" full of masculine virtues and forceful rhythms. The "Arati" or lamp offering together with "Devdasi" is a dance form with a devotional air released from a spiritual plane of thought. The "Phoolo Bhramara" and "Mayura" nritya are pure "Lasyas" with amorous fancifulness and passionate yearning. They "Haunt" startle and waylay like the alluring will-o-wisp against the inky, dark background of the night. The danseuse of the "Sagar Nritya" displayed the Marvellous waves of limb the blue whirls finally bursting in an awful and amazing crescendo. The Kapalika is a pure "Macabre" in tone and temper. "Chandra Bhaga" is undoubtedly the best execution in the poetry in motion & Plasticity of emotion. With gliding steps the sun descends. The entire episode interpretes a profound symbolism, the eternal quest, so finely put in the mythological grabs of different ages. "Savara" is a virile composition with matchless rhythm and harmony.

The chhau display a wistful, simple beauty. It is a wild flower of dance. It refuses any tinsel. It is vitalized with native lustre of crystals, not meant to be refined primitive art-cultures. The gestures apparatus is transported without the frequent, static, sculpturesque repose. It is dynamics rhythm, with poses unprecedented, emerging out of dramatic moods of absolute and impersonal detachment, where no part of the body is passive and where all limbs are vibrant with motion. The footwork is nothing but pattern weaving with decorative details. The Mask is so artistic and richly expressive that is attuned to the inner harmony of character-portrayal.

The dancers are absolutely devotees of art. Their command over rhythm and laya, simple but at times difficult is a veritable despair to the average professional.

"Amrit Bazar Patrika" 10/11/1937.

Photograph no. 4, Late Guru Kumar Bijay Pratap

QUEEN

17th July, 1938,

VAUDEVILLE: "SERAIKELLA"

Once again the east has descended on the western world of entertainment at the VAUDEVILLE theatre where the Hindu dancers and musicians from SERAIKELLA, a state in Western India are presenting their extremely interesting Ritual dance.

Those who worshipped in the shrine of UDAY SHANKAR and his ballet company of last season will find in this group the same fascinating rythmes and whole tones of lilting music as perfectly reflected in the seniours movements and symbolic gestures of the dancers.

Unlike their predecessors, the dancers are masked, so that all interpretation is of necessity limited to pose and gesture, the most striking example of this being shown in the tragic love of the Sun-god for the maiden, "CHANDRABHAGA" given by SHUVENDRA, the leader of the group, and KEDAR, a young boy in the part of the madden.



DHARAN Standing Position



THANI STYLE

Books: Singhbhum Seraikella And Kharsawan- Through Ages, Written by: Tikayet nrupendra Singhdeo (1954)

Bharatiya Chhau Nritya –Itihas Sanskritiy Aur Kala. (Part I & II)

Written by :Badri Prasad , Professor.

Publishers: D. K. Printworld Pvt. Ltd, new Delhi

Available in SNA New Delhi.

Articles : (attached herewith some old article from abroad as well as some from India)

Chhau- from Martial Art form to Modern Dance.

Guru Sahoo brings Chhau to USA

By: Guru Kedar Nath Sahoo.

(Books, articles, audio-visual materials, names and addresses of reference libraries, museums, private endeavours of artistes/individuals for preservation of the said element, publications or websites)

Signature: *Malay Kumar Sahu*

Name & Designation: Malay Kumar Sahu, Director

Name of Institution (If applicable): Sri Kedar Art Centre

Address: ... Ward No- 5 (old), 8 (new), At & PO- Seraikella,

Dist: Seraikella-Kharsawan, Jharkhand- 833219

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**श्री
केदार
आर्ट
सेन्टर**

**Founder Director Late Guru Kedar Nath Sahoo (Padmashree)
Established : 1988**

To,
The Deputy Secretary (Drama)
ICH Section, SNA, New Delhi.

Dated : 30-08-2019

Sub. : Regarding Correction of No. of photographs for Final Report on ICH Project ,
File No.- 28-6/ICH 2015-16/49

Dear Sir/Madam,

I have already submitted my Final Report on dated 21-08-2019. My Project Title is "Technique in Seraikella Chhau Dance in the verge of extinction".

I am extremely sorry for providing wrong data of number of photographs due to typing mistake. The actual number of photographs is 107 along with two nos. of DVDs and copies of Audited Reports by a chartered Accountant.

I hope the project will be accepted by the ICH expert committee. Kindly release the rest amount of my project.

With Best Regards.

Yours Faithfully

Malay Kumar Sahu

(Malay Kumar Sahu)

Director

Sri Kedar Art Centre

Seraikella(Jharkhand)

Mob. : 7488621801