

Shaily Dadijala She/Her

Choreographer · Dancer · Art Instigator
Artistic Director · Usiloquy Dance Designs · Philadelphia, PA
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Education

- Visharad (B.A. equivalent) in Classical Dance specializing in Bharatanatyam from the Bruhad Gujarat Sangeet Samiti, India. (1988-1994)
- 2-year training in Hindustani Classical Music.

Instigation

Founded contemporary Bharatanatyam company Usiloquy Dance Designs in Philadelphia (2008), Artistic Director, choreographer, and Dancer.

Choreography and Performances

- "Memory Futures: Desi Transcendence" with live music by Rini, 2025.
- Featured Participant in "Philly Daydreams", Anula Shetty's augmented Reality film, a performer at the event premier, 2023.
- Multidisciplinary talk and embodied response to Humaira Abid's Sacred Games II in
- The exhibition Vessel: Embodiment, Autonomy, and Ornament in Wood. Commissioned by Museum for Art in Wood, Philadelphia, 2023.
- Choreographer of "Jungle Nama: A Story of the Sundarban" world-premiere musical performance of Amitav Ghosh's first book of verse, brought to life on-stage with composer-singer-songwriter Ali Sethi. Performed by University of Pennsylvania students. Collaborated with Spring fellows Ali Sethi and Amitav Ghosh and director Brooke 'O Harra resulting in two performances produced by the Penn Center for Experimental Ethnography, Philadelphia, 2022.
- Dance on film collaboration with video artist Barb Baur for "Women Making Waves" selected for Society of North American Goldsmiths. Virtual, 2021.
- "My Place is in the Kitchen" Bharatanatyam and mixed-media solo underscoring the life of female entrepreneur Jyoti Gupta in a living-museum format produced by the Philadelphia Asian Performing Artists, Asian Arts Initiative, 2019.
- "Ragas and Airs" highlights parallels between Celtic music and folklore and Indian traditions. Premier at the An-Gorta Memorial, Philadelphia, 2014. Produced by Usiloquy Dance.
- Performer in Gabrielle Revlock's "Confetti," a series of overlapping and interlocking duets, a human obstacle course, and a non-monogamous dance dating journey, the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, Philadelphia, 2014.
- "The Buddha's Dance from Lumbini" is based on Indian and Japanese music with composer Gene Coleman and Ensemble N_JP at the Rotunda, Philadelphia, 2013.

- "Point of departure" commissioned by the Melanie Stewart Dance Company randomly pairing thirty music composers with thirty dancers, Christchurch Neighborhood House, Philadelphia, 2012.
- "Chandroutie" is based on the music and traditions of the Indo-Caribbean diaspora that originated from the indentured labor movement to South America in the 19th century. Premier at the Philadelphia International Festival of the Arts, 2011. Produced by Usiloquy Dance Designs.
- "Chaat" The myriad textures and flavors of the South Asian Street dish Chaat serve as metaphors for the complexity of universal human emotions. Premier at the Painted Bride Art Center, Philadelphia, 2009. Produced by Usiloquy Dance Designs.
- "Grihani" is an exploration of the undervalued world of a homemaker and the societal expectations of the role. Premier at the Philly Fringe Festival, 2008. Produced by Usiloquy Dance Designs.

Select Performances

Wilmington Fringe, the Wilmington Opera House, DE (2009), Jahajee Sisters' Indo-Caribbean Women's Empowerment Summit, Queens Museum of the Arts, Queens, NY (2011), Roots, Rites, 'N' Rhythms festival at the Mann Center for the Performing arts, Philadelphia (2012), Asian Pacific American month celebration at the Capitol Building, Harrisburg, PA (2019).

Presentation

- "Asian America Across the Disciplines" - Asian American Studies Program, University of Pennsylvania, November 2023.
- "Classical Indian Dance in a Contemporary Context - An Introduction to The Theory and Practice of Bharatanatyam."
- 10th annual conference of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the National Association for Multicultural Education How Far Have We Come and Where Are We Going: A Forty Year Retrospective on the Movement for Multicultural Education. Philadelphia, April 2008

Awards, Committees, Recognitions

- Special Recognition by The Forman Arts Initiative (2024)
- "Women leading the 175th" awarded by PA State Representative Mary Isaacson (2024)
- Philadelphia Mayor's Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs (2020-current)
- Women's History Month honor by the Irish Memorial of Philadelphia (2022)
- New York State Choreographer's Initiative Selection Committee panelist (2022)
- Philadelphia Asian Performing Artists Strategic Planning Committee (2021) Devised the Mission/Values/Vision of the organization as part of a nine-member team.
- Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts Grant Committee Panel (2014)
- Recipient of the Leeway Foundation's Art and Change Grant (2012).

Teaching

- Ongoing Bharatanatyam classes, Usiloquy Dance Designs, Philadelphia (2008-Present)
- Levittown, PA in collaboration with the township recreation department (2005-2008)
- Private classes in Queens, NY (2001-2003)
- Workshops and Masterclasses at the Thomas Jefferson University and Temple University, Philadelphia (2006), DeSales University, Center Valley, PA (2007), Fall and Spring semesters at the University of the Arts, Philadelphia (2009), College of Design, Nasik, India (2013).