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Singapore dancer brings history full circle



 gpstampcollage

As Singapore counts down to its National Day celebrating 50 years independence, a 75 year old Indian dancer has brought history full circle when the Singapore Philatelic Museum discovered her as the model for a 1968 postage stamp, promoting community harmony through the arts. Nearly fifty years later, Mrs Santha Bhaskar is artistic director and choreographer of an Indian dance academy in Singapore.

Singapore Philatelic Museum had contacted Bhaskar's Arts Academy this year asking for a dancer to perform an Indian dance routine at the launch of an exhibition. The academy's artistic director and choreographer, Mrs Santha Bhaskar, read the e-mail from the Singapore Philatelic Museum, and had a pleasant surprise. It requested the performer to don a costume in the same colours as the dancer in a 1968 stamp that would be featured in the exhibition. As it turned out, Mrs Bhaskar, 75, was the dancer in the stamp, which was issued then to promote racial harmony.

The stamp is now being shown at the exhibition titled [The Singapore Journey: 50 Years Through Stamps](#). It features stamps and related items showing Singapore's progress through the years, to celebrate the nation's Golden Jubilee.

The 1968 series of stamps were commissioned to feature the traditional performance arts of the Chinese, Indians and Malays, and proved that the arts were flourishing in Singapore in the 1960s.

"It didn't just promote racial harmony. People thought that at that time, Singapore didn't have any art, it was a cultural desert. But it's not true. The only thing was that there was no funding available, but there was art, theatre, music, dance."

Indian dance is still relevant today, Mrs Bhaskar added. "In any art form, you find your roots. You'd know where your grandparents came from."

While Mrs Bhaskar turns 76 in October, she still maintains an active lifestyle by conducting classes at least once a week at Bhaskar's Arts Academy and at the National University of Singapore's Centre For the Arts.

Read the full story in the [Straits Times](#)

Singapore celebrates its National Day on August 9th, the culmination of the nation state's Golden Jubilee, a year long jamboree of events under the [SG50](#) banner.

If you are in Singapore over the **Jubilee Weekend** (7-10 August 2015),

check out **Arts Republic's** current arts events recommendations: **5 things to do over the Jubilee Weekend**

Image: Mrs Santha Bhaskar (left) was the dancer featured in the original stamp (right). The photograph in the middle shows Mrs Bhaskar in the late 1950s. PHOTOS: LIM YAOHUI FOR THE STRAITS TIMES, BHASKAR'S ARTS ACADEMY, SINGAPORE PHILATELIC MUSEUM

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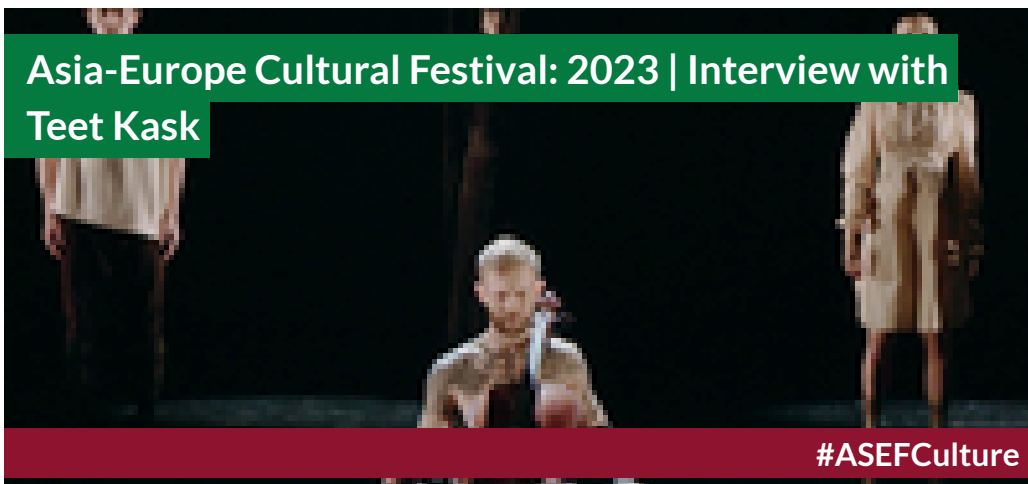


Sutra Dance Theatre

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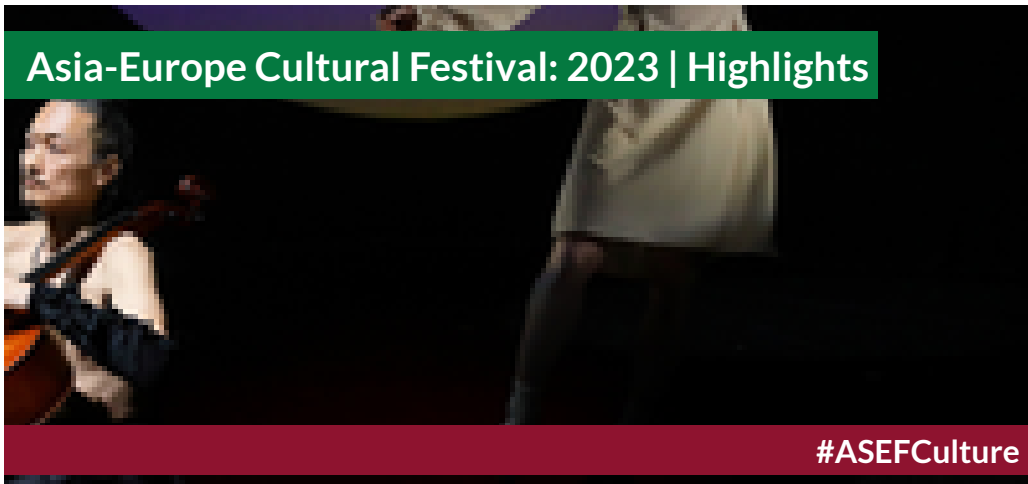


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