Lamont School of Music & Theatre

North Indian Classical Ensemble

Shilpa Sharma
Director

Nabin Shrestha, tabla
Sumit Maharjan, bansuri
Aarna Dhawan, harmonium
Sureela Academy of Kathak Dancers

Friday, November 6, 2026
7:30 p.m.
Frederic C. Hamilton Family Recital Hall

UNIVERSITY OF DENVER
Robert & Judi Newman Center for the Performing Arts

Program

Rangmanch: "Coloring of the Stage"• »
Rangmanch, literally "coloring the stage," is a traditional opening that prepares and defines the performance space. Through mudrās (hand gestures), rhythmic movement, and gestures drawn from pūjā (ritual worship), the dancer symbolically invokes the forces of creation, preservation, and transformation: Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheshvara.

Fundamentals: Tatkār Kramalaya, Tihāīs, & Tatkār ki Bandish °
Tatkār, the foundational footwork pattern of Kathak, is the first rhythmic language learned by every student. Tonight, our dancers present tatkār in multiple speeds, a practice known as kramalaya. As the subdivision intensifies to four steps per beat, they demonstrate tihāīs, rhythmic phrases repeated three times to resolve precisely on sam, the first beat of the cycle.

A Tatkār ki Bandish reconfigures the syllables of tatkār into a composed structure, showing how even the most basic material can generate complexity and play. For generations of students, these elements have formed the groundwork for embodied rhythmic understanding and expressive freedom.

Ginti Compositions & Solahgun Tihāīs •
Set in drut laya (fast tempo), this piece highlights gintis, compositions based on numbers rather than the dance syllables (bols) that typically accompany Kathak. Each ginti composition is performed twice: once in the Lucknow style of Kathak and again in the Jaipur style of the dance. Each style showcases different footwork patterns and turning techniques. The sequence builds toward solahgun tihāīs, phrases rendered at eight steps per beat, demanding exceptional control and stamina. The final tihāī weaves stepping turns and heel pivots before resolving on beat one, sam.

Please silence your cell phones

Photography and video/audio recording of Lamont concerts and recitals are prohibited without prior permission from the Manager of Marketing & Communications

Musical Interlude by Nabin Shrestha & Sumit Maharjan

Tete Kata Gadi Gena Sequence
Tete kata gadi gena is a foundational rhythmic phrase shared by Kathak and tabla. In this piece, the dancers move through multiple speeds, progressively intensifying its density within the 16-beat tīntāl cycle. The final acceleration renders eight bols per beat, requiring exceptional stamina and balance.

Concluding Pranām – "Bansuri Baj Rahi"
The program concludes with pranām, an offering of gratitude to teachers, musicians, audience, and the art form itself. Often described as a "meditation in motion," pranām invites the dancer to attune to something larger than the self, acknowledging the earth upon which we dance and the oral tradition through which knowledge has been passed from generation to generation.

° denotes Sureela Foundation Level Dancers
• denotes Sureela Progression Level Dancers
» denotes Sureela Pre-Professional Level Dancers

Personnel

North Indian Classical Ensemble

Mahee Kulkarni
Namrata Susana
Ripa Ghosh
Shreya Subedi
Sonia Kinra-Chen
Sophia Dellota

Sureela Guest Dancers

Foundation Level Dancers°
Ashma Basnet
Bhavana Basnet
Prahasa Mandhadi
Ekta Bhattacharya

Progression Level Dancers•
Dhara Shaikh
Gopa Mukharji
Ishika Thakre
Jyoti Upadhyay
Nimisha Upadhyay
Nittra Dhawan
Manisha Pal
Mira Logan
Priti Upare
Raya Gupte
Sayujya Nikhil
Shruti Sharma

Pre-Professional Level Dancers»
Aishwarya Bhavan
Helena Bolle (BA ‘24)
Hannah Stoltenberg

Biographies

Shilpa Sharma has trained in Kathak for nearly two decades in both India and the United States, studying within two major lineages. She began her study under Jigyasa Giri of the Lucknow Gharana and, for the past decade, has immersed herself in the California Gharana tradition of Pandit Chitresh Das. Since 2015, she has trained intensively with Dr. Sarah Morelli in Denver, who continues to guide her as guru and mentor. In 2025, she presented a traditional Kathak solo under the guidance of Dr. Morelli—a significant milestone in her ongoing artistic journey.

In addition to her performance work, Shilpa has contributed to Dr. Morelli's research through Hindi–English translation, including material featured in A Guru's Journey, an ethnography of Pandit Chitresh Das's artistic legacy. A committed educator, she is busy as faculty at Sureela Academy, as Founder and Artistic Director of Celestial Dance Academy (teaching light classical dance and Kathak-influenced choreographies), and this quarter as Adjunct Faculty Instructor for the DU North Indian Classical Ensemble.

Nabin Shrestha began studying tabla at the age of eight under the guidance of Guru Shri Rabin Lal Shrestha, drawing additional inspiration from his brother, Rajendra Shrestha. While pursuing his academic studies in music, Nabin received a scholarship from the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) to continue his musical training in India. During his time there, he had the opportunity to study with distinguished artists including Ustaad Shri Faiyaaz Khan and Shri Tansen Shrivastav. After completing a Master's degree in music, he continued advanced training under the legendary tabla maestro "Taalmani" Pandit Suresh Talwalkar.

Nabin has recorded a variety of projects, including Raaganubhuti, a Hindustani classical vocal album; Redrums, a fusion project featuring traditional drums from Nepal; and Murchchhanaa, a jazz fusion album. We are incredibly fortunate that he is based in Colorado, where he performs with artists across a wide range of musical genres, records, composes music, and offers tabla instruction.

He has presented workshops, lectures, and demonstrations at institutions including the University of Denver, University of Colorado Boulder, Colorado College, Naropa University, and the University of New Mexico. Recent projects have included collaborations with Sheela Bringi and Elden Kelly, and with the Temporal Taal Ensemble, including presentations of Nightfall Rhapsody with symphonies across the

country, including at Johns Hopkins University, University of Northern Colorado, Stockton University, and Rowan College, as well as a full-evening performance in St. Petersburg, Florida. Through performance, teaching, and collaboration, Nabin continues to foster meaningful artistic connections across communities and musical traditions.

Sumit Maharjan has been playing the bansuri (bamboo flute) since the age of twelve, receiving traditional training under Raman Maharjan in Nepal. Known for his soulful tone and versatility, Sumit brings a distinctive voice to every performance. He regularly collaborates with leading Nepali artists, including Sajjan Raj Vaidya, and draws from a wide range of musical influences. While the bansuri remains his primary instrument, Sumit also plays several others, blending diverse musical styles and cultural traditions into a sound that is uniquely his own.

Donate

Lamont Society

Donors to the Lamont School of Music & Theatre are an integral part of the Lamont community. Since 1983, the Lamont Society has provided financial and other support that has sustained our program's excellence. It has enabled us to purchase instruments, underwrite masterclasses and guest artist performances, support touring ensembles, provide students with professional development funds, support faculty initiatives, maintain scholarships for our deserving students, and much more. We are deeply grateful for this philanthropy!

To support Lamont, please contact Laura Mack, Director of Development, at 303.871.6267 or laura.mack@du.edu.

You may also donate through https://liberalarts.du.edu/lamont/society or with the QR code on this page.

Scan to receive our monthly newsletter, upcoming events, and more:

LA BELLE ROSETTE
ESPRESSO & WINE BAR

Present your Lamont program or ticket stub to La Belle Rosette within 24 hours of an event (either before or after) and receive 20% off your order.

Located steps from the Newman Center at 2423 S University Blvd, Denver, CO 80120

Hours
Mon-Fri, 7 AM to 5 PM
Sat, 7 AM to 2 PM
Sun, 8 AM to 2 PM

720.508.4469
labellerosette.com

Lamont School of Music & Theatre
UNIVERSITY OF DENVER