

MEDIA KIT



Duniya Dance & Drum Company



WWW.DUNIYADANCE.COM
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OUR MISSION

To cultivate respect for traditional forms, foster cultural exchange, effect social justice and engage in community building, Duniya performs and teaches traditional and innovative performance pieces from Guinea, West Africa and Punjab, India.





ABOUT US

Formed in April 2007, Duniya Dance and Drum Company creates dance and music from Punjab, India, and Guinea, West Africa, as well as unique blends of these forms and beyond. The word duniya means “world” in a wide array of languages, including Punjabi, Arabic, Susu and Wolof. Duniya’s work embodies this word, as it explores the forces that have brought together the members of the company and their dance and drum styles, including, but not limited to, colonization, globalization, immigration, art, dance, music and love.



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[DUNIYADANCE](https://www.youtube.com/DUNIYADANCE)



[DUNIYADANCE](https://www.facebook.com/DUNIYADANCE)



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REPERTOIRE



HALF AND HALVES





This show explores the little-known cultural and artistic legacies of early 20th century California's Punjabi-Mexican communities inspired the collaboration between Bhangra dancer/choreographer Joti Singh, with her company Duniya Dance & Drum Company, and Mexican folkloric dancer/choreographer Zenon Barron of Ensembles Ballet Folklórico de San Francisco.

This production uses live dance and music, spoken word, and video to explore the coming together of Punjabi and Mexican agricultural workers in California's central valleys. In the early 20th century, men from Punjab, India moved to California primarily to work on farms. Because of discriminatory immigration laws, they could not bring wives from India, so many married Mexican women with whom they worked. The Mexican women saw marriage with these men as a way out of poverty. The children of these unions were known derisively as "Half and Halves."

PERFORMERS

10-40

DANCERS

10

MUSICIANS

Short excerpts can be performed with recorded music



10-45

MINUTE EXCERPTS CAN BE PERFORMED

The 90-minute performance brings together Bhangra - a high-energy harvest and celebration dance from Punjab, India - and Mexican Folkloric dance and music in order to explore the complex dynamics of immigration, discrimination, and shared communities.



Press Release



KALW Public Radio Feature

REPERTOIRE

10

*A DECADE
OF DANCE,
DRUM &
DISSSENT*

This show includes a wide range of Duniya Dance & Drum Company's repertoire, including Bhangra, Bollywood, Dancehall, Afro-Pop, spoken-word, and live West African dance and drumming.

DDD 

Duniya Dance & Drum Company



“GHADAR GEET: BLOOD AND INK”

A dance/spoken-word exploration of the Ghadar Party and intersections with contemporary acts of resistance.

In the early 1900’s, Joti Singh’s great-grandfather lived in San Francisco and was the president of the Ghadar Party, a political party fighting for the independence of India from the British. Blood and Ink overlaps the political action of the Ghadar Party, with present-day activism; linking the Ghadar party’s strategic diversity with today’s uniting of minority movements. The performance uses Bhangra dance, music, and spoken-word to explore its themes.



“ZINDAGI EK SAFAR”

Bhangra and Bollywood dancing. Bhangra music and dance originates from the Punjab region of India. This energetic piece includes opportunities for audience participation (if space permits)



“WAHKILY”

Live West African dance and drumming. This fun, high-energy piece includes opportunities for audience participation (if space permits).

PERFORMERS

10-20

DANCERS

5-8

MUSICIANS

Excerpts can be performed with fewer dancers and musicians



Press Release



Video Highlights

75

MINUTES
RUNNING
TIME

REPERTOIRE



THE MADNESS OF THE ELEPHANT

PERFORMERS

8-20

DANCERS

5-10

MUSICIANS

Excerpts can be performed with fewer dancers and musicians

A West African dance, music, and theater performance exploring the reign of Guinea's controversial first president and benefactor of traditional arts, Sekou Toure, nicknamed "The Elephant."



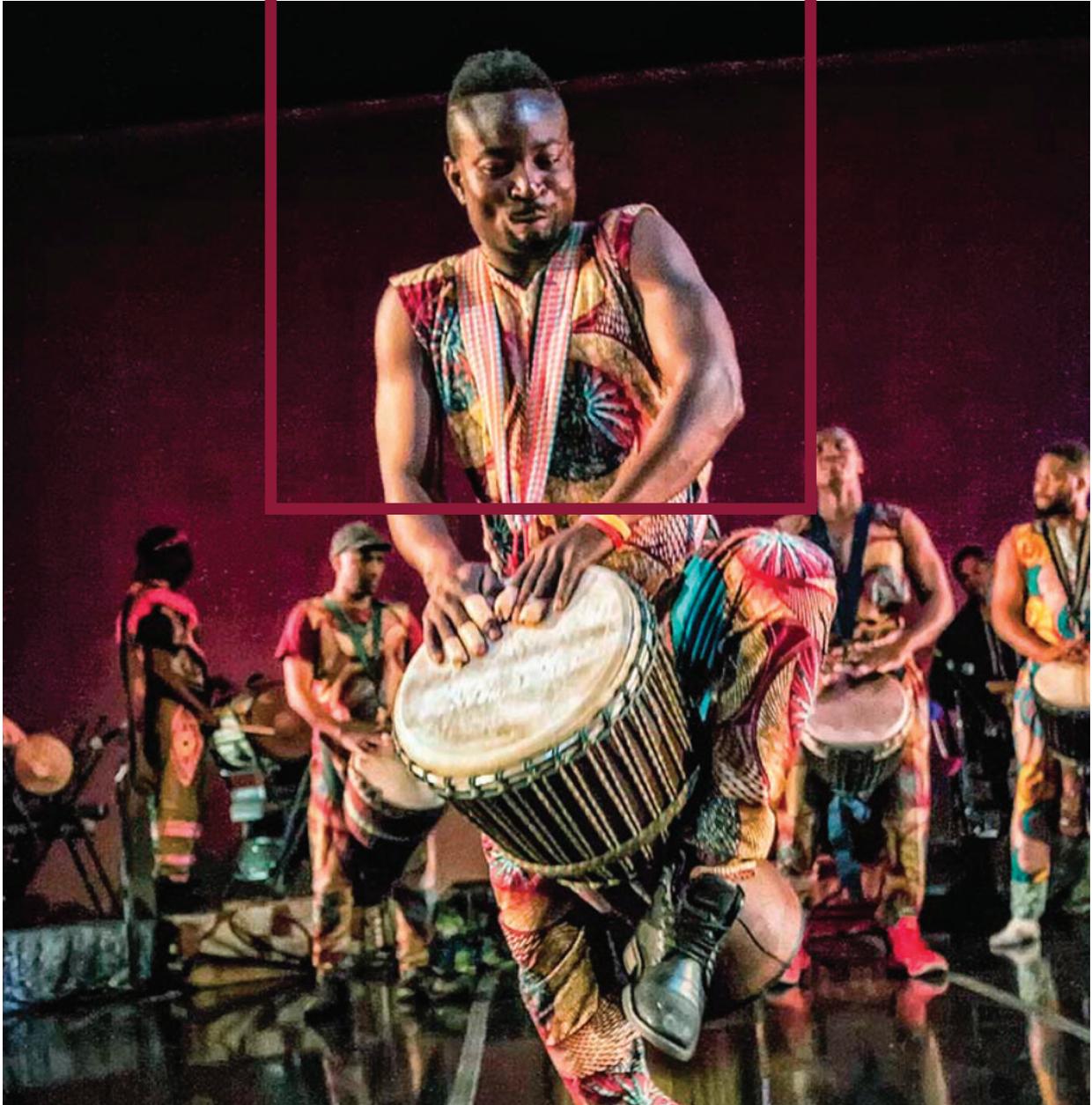
Video Excerpt
(kora)



Video Excerpt
(dance & drum)



TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS



PREFERRED STAGE DIMENSIONS: 25' to 40' wide and 25' to 35' deep

FLOOR: Dancers perform barefoot, so preferred performance surfaces are marley or wood (free of protruding nail heads and splinters)

SOUND AND LIGHT: Duniya Dance and Drum does not travel with a Technical Director, sound system and lighting needs to be provided at the venue

JOTI SINGH



THE DIRECTORS

Artistic Director

Joti Singh is a dance creator and dance innovator, sprung from the U.S. American south to parents from northern India. She is the Artistic Director of Duniya Dance and Drum Company. Joti began her dance training in Punjabi circles, carrying through her body the culture that's in her blood and memory. As an adult, West African dance entered Joti's purview, transforming her body's culture. Through this multilingual body, Joti explores where history intertwines with contemporary continuities of celebration and injustice. She has created works such as "Half and Halves," about the Punjabi-Mexican communities of California with collaborator Zenon Barron, and "The Madness of the Elephant," about Guinea's first president, Sekou Toure. Joti has received funding from the Creative Work Fund, the San Francisco Arts Commission, Dancers' Group's New Stages, the Alliance for California Traditional Arts, and the American India Foundation. She participated in the CHIME mentorship program and has been an Artist-in-Residence at CounterPULSE twice, most recently in their Performing Diaspora program. During this residency, Joti created the piece "Red, Saffron and Green," about the Gadar Party, based in San Francisco in the early 20th century, fighting for India's independence from Britain.

Joti and her husband, musician Bongo Sidibe, lead annual trips to Guinea and recently opened the Duniya Center for Arts and Education in Conakry. She teaches all over the SF Bay Area, including Dance Mission Theater and the San Francisco School of the Arts. Joti holds an MA in South Asian Studies from UC Berkeley and a BA in English from Reed College.

ALPHA OUMAR “BONGO” SIDIBE



THE DIRECTORS

Music Director

Alpha Oumar “Bongo” Sidibe is a traditional drummer from Conakry, Guinea in West Africa. He is Musical Director of Duniya Dance and Drum Company. Bongo studied with Master Drummer Mamady Keita at his school, Tam Tam Mandigue, Guinea, and participated in his workshops in Conakry and Balandougou, Mamady’s village.

He performed with Ballet Jah Karlo in Dakar, Senegal, and recorded the CD “N’dguel Fall” and toured with Orchestre Baye Fall. Before leaving Guinea, he was co-director of Balandougou Kan, a group of traditional percussionists and dancers.

Since arriving in the U.S., Bongo has performed with Rhythm Village, Joan Baez, Mickey Hart, the Grateful Dead, and Black Nature from the Sierra

Leone Refugee Allstars. He is also the founder and lead singer of the international reggae group Wontanara.

MEET OUR 30+ OTHER ARTISTS ON OUR WEBSITE AT DUNIYADANCE.COM/ABOUT/

PRESS COVERAGE



“Mixing bhangra and Mexican folkloric styles, dancers explore the Punjabi-Mexican communities that took root early in the 20th century when farm workers from India married Mexican women.”



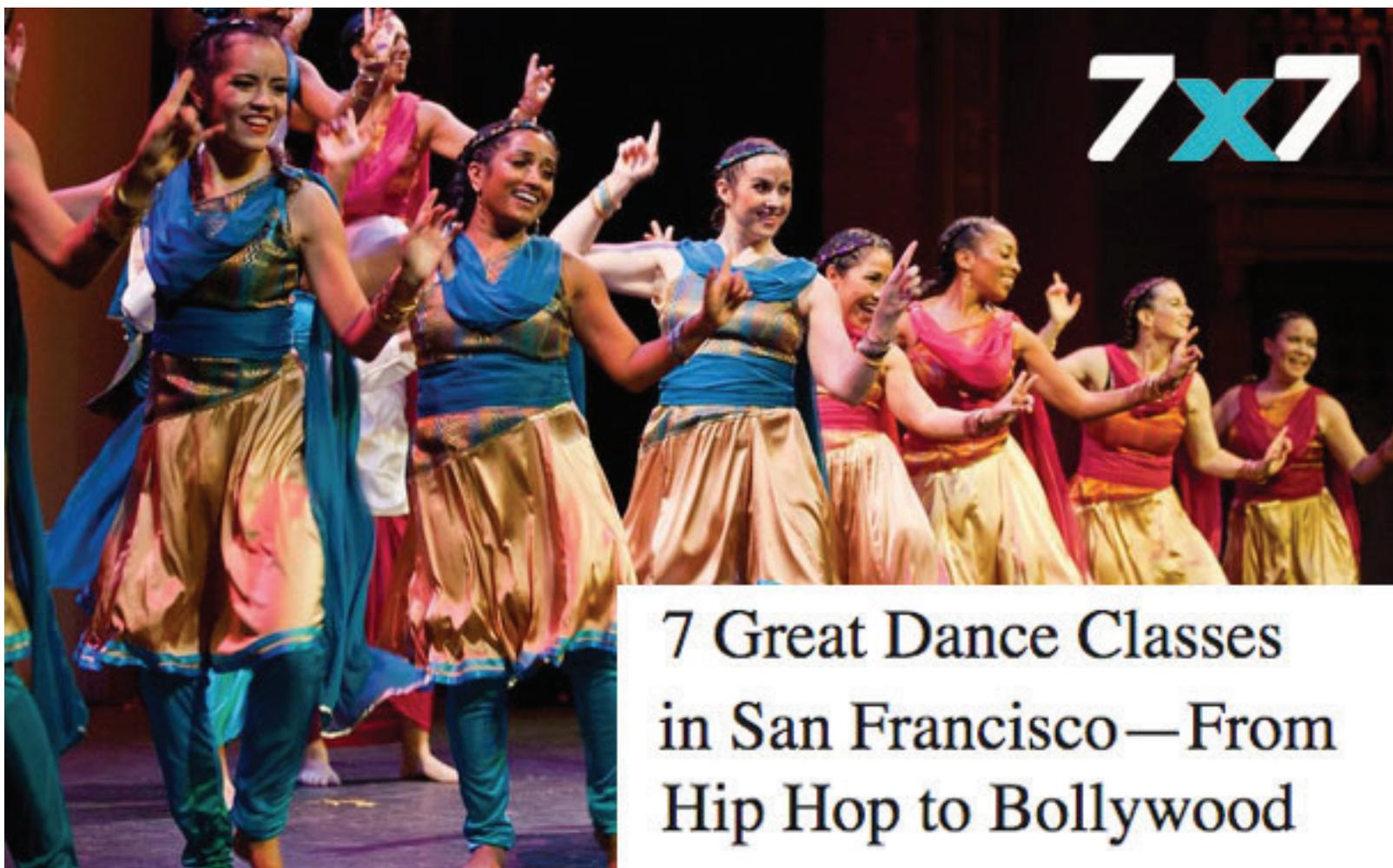
KQED ARTS

“Learn some seriously fun footwork at Duniya’s Bollywood classes, which combine fabulous Bollywood music with a variety of moves from Indian folk dances to modern hip hop. Combined, they form a diverse routine to make you dance like a star.”



SHIKHA KAIWAR

7x7



**7 Great Dance Classes
in San Francisco—From
Hip Hop to Bollywood**

“The sounds you’re hearing are by the Duniya Dance and Drum Company ...providing the rhythm for ‘The Madness of the Elephant,’ a theater production about the first president of the nation of Guinea. Guinean dance, which figures heavily in this show, is noted for its enthusiasm and energy.”



KALW PUBLIC RADIO

“We have heard nothing but praise for Half and Halves from colleagues and museum visitors. Just one example: Immediately after your second set, an older gentleman rushed up to tell me how much it meant to him. He explained that he was an immigrant himself and believes that performances like yours will bring us together. We couldn’t agree more.”

PETER MANSEAU, P.H.D

Smithsonian Institution & National Museum of American History

“Joti Singh, artistic director of the Duniya Dance Company, has a very special connection to Ghadar history as the great-granddaughter of Ghadar leader Bhagwan Singh Gyanee. In her recent work ‘Red, Saffron, and Green,’ a moving ... bhangra, spoken-word, and music performance, Singh explored Ghadar history through her family’s story, using biography as an entry point to a complex history. ‘Knowing this history,’ she explains, ‘makes you realize and question where we are now, and where our struggle is.’”

COMMUNITY OUTREACH



In addition to performing at events, Duniya Dance & Drum Company teaches classes including Bollywood, Bhangra, West African Dance, West African Drumming, and private lessons in Bollywood, Bhangra, and West African Drumming. Duniya also hosts community workshops and enjoys residencies at art centers, education centers, etc. See [here](#) or email info@duniyadance.com for more info.





Duniya also performs at school assemblies around the Bay Area.



Duniya Dance & Drum Company PRESENTS

AFRICAN ARTS FESTIVAL

#AFRICANARTSFEST

AFRICAN ARTS FESTIVAL

This free festival, presented by Duniya Dance & Drum Company, celebrates the diverse and vibrant Bay Area arts scene. African Arts Festival is happening again **September 29, 2019!** Visit us online for more information.

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