SUMMARY: Programs in 6 cities, 5 public performances, 30 master classes and workshops, 1 lecture-demonstration, 2 speeches, an award ceremony, a panel discussion, 2 television broadcasts and feature articles in over 20 English and local language newspapers and magazines.

Battery Dance of New York City undertook a national tour of India during the month of January, 2018, with SHAKTI, a Return to the Source as the artistic centerpiece with music by the legendary Hindustani vocalists Rajan and Sajan Mishra and Indian guest artist Unnath Hassan Rathnaraju joining the American ensemble of seven. The impact of the tour was made palpable through intense media coverage in each city, national editions as well as live television interviews and broadcasts. The Company’s expertise as arts educators resonated through the provision of 30 workshops that reached girls rescued from human trafficking, street children served by local NGOs, dance students, freelance dancers and members of prestigious Indian dance companies.

The tour was jointly sponsored by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations and the U.S. Embassy New Delhi, which offered support towards programs in Mumbai, Kolkata and New Delhi. Pune and Bengaluru were added to the schedule by Battery Dance in order to fill what emerged as a 13-day gap between available dates in suitable theaters in Mumbai and Kolkata. Travel sponsorship from Air India, a grant from State Bank of India, and hospitality sponsorship from the Oberoi Bengaluru provided supplemental support.
A 5-day program in Bangladesh sponsored by the U.S. Embassy Dhaka and an Arts Envoy grant from the ECA Bureau with local in-kind support from the Shilpakala Academy, Bangladesh’s national cultural agency, filled the gap between the programs in Kolkata and New Delhi. The Pune performance and outreach activities were separately sponsored by two acclaimed dance institutions, Kalavardhini Trust and NADROOP, with hospitality sponsorship from the JW Marriott Pune and engagement with FLAME University and Lalit Kala Kendra, the performing arts division of the University of Pune. Unexpectedly, Lucknow came into play while the company was on tour when it was announced that Jonathan Hollander would be presented with the inaugural Arjun Mishra Award.

CITY-BY-CITY PROGRAM SUMMARIES

MUMBAI: The India tour opened with a performance at St. Andrew’s Auditorium in Bandra on January 11th before a packed audience of approximately 700. U.S. Consul General Edgard Kagan, ICCR Regional Director M.K. Malik and Jonathan Hollander addressed the audience at the top of the show, after which four works were presented, two contemporary pieces from the Battery repertoire (a commissioned work by South African choreographer Theo Ndindwa, a recipient of the prestigious Mandela Fellowship, and the other by Battery...
Dance senior dancer Sean Scantlebury; a classical Bharatanatyam solo by Unnath Hassan Rathnaraju, and SHAKTI, A Return to the Source performed by the entire company. ICCR provided an emcee and the U.S. Consulate produced handsome placards with headshots and biographies of each of the 8 members of the Company that were displayed on easels in the lobby of the theater. Niloufer Sagar, COO of the Terence Lewis Dance Company, and Radhika Jhaveri, a marketing executive related to Hollander’s AFS Exchange family, provided local support by putting a hold on the hall, liaising with ICCR re the ticketing process and manning a table at the lobby of the theater in order to check in those guests invited by Battery Dance, Asia Society and Terence Lewis, who has a huge following on social media. Radhika handled communications with the local dance schools and NGO's that serve street children, arranging for 8 workshops that the Company conducted during its time in Mumbai. Battery Dance Board Member Laura Entwistle enabled Battery Dance to run two workshops at a government facility for girls rescued from sex trafficking, following on the earlier experience she had facilitated in Delhi and Badlapur in 2014 through her NGO, EmancipAction. Hollander was invited to represent arts and culture in a panel discussion at the Essar House as part of the ‘Avid Learning’ programs with American Consulate’s David Moo moderating and Manjeet Kripalani, Bharat Joshi and Royston Braganza as fellow panelists.
**PUNE:** A public performance at the Yashwantrao Chavan Auditorium was presented to an audience of approximately 600, hosted by Pune’s leading Bharatanatyam dancers Sucheta Chapekar and her daughter Arundhati Patwardhan as the opening event of the 30th Anniversary Season of their Kalavardhini Trust. One day earlier, the Company had presented a 2-hour lecture-demonstration and Q/A session at a new dance center under the auspices of well-known choreographer Shama Bhate and her Kathak institute, NADROOP. While four of the Company’s dancers returned to Mumbai to teach workshops, Hollander and Sean Scantlebury stayed behind in Pune. Scantlebury conducted a two-day advanced contemporary dance workshop for senior dance students at the Lalit Kala Kendra, the performing arts division of Pune University. Assistant Professor of Lalit Kala Kendra and well-known Bharatanatyam performer and choreographer Parimal Phadke interviewed Hollander on stage at Lalit Kala Kendra in a 90-minute talk on Hollander’s career as a dancer, choreographer and arts manager. A talk focused on the infrastructure and support for the arts in America was given by Hollander at FLAME University for students of business and arts; and an interactive session was held at Kathak dance guru Prerana Deshpande’s institute Nrityadham with members of her dance company and Hollander, who had presented Deshpande in Battery Dance’s summer festival in New York many years earlier.

**BENGALURU:** Over the past 17 years since Battery Dance’s last performance in Bengaluru, the metro has become a nexus for dance activity with many dance schools teaching classical Indian forms and others concentrating on contemporary dance. Battery Dance’s performance in Bengaluru was highly anticipated as were its workshops and master
classes at three important dance centers. The Company’s performance was presented at the centrally located Guru Nanak Bhavan and was attended by leading dancers, choreographers, dance writers and governmental officials and a general audience of over 700. Earlier in the day, The Oberoi Bengaluru hosted a press meet for the Company with representatives of 5 of the leading local print media as well as Ashish Mohan Khokar, one of India’s most highly respected dance scholars. Battery Dance’s teaching artists conducted three contemporary dance master classes for students who had never experienced American contemporary dance before at Mithun Shyam’s Vaishnavi Natyashala Institute of Bharatanatyam and Nirupama & Rajendra’s Abhinava Kathak Dance Institution. Two workshops were offered to the contemporary dance students at Attakalari. Jonathan Hollander delivered a lecture on arts management using Battery Dance as a case study for undergraduate business administration and arts students at REVA University; and spoke to the dancers at each of the workshops before the practical training began.

**KOLKATA:** Battery Dance returned to Kolkata for the first time since 2001 with a performance at the city’s prestigious Kala Mandir Auditorium. Over a thousand spectators attended the performance that was introduced by U.S. Consul General Craig Hall, ICCR Regional Director Mr. Venugopal, and Jonathan Hollander. Three workshops were conducted in for the students and company members of two important dance companies -- the acclaimed Tanusree Shankar Dance Company and Sudarshan Chakravorty’s Sapphire Dance Company, yielding invitations to return in both cases. Jonathan Hollander lectured at the Bickram Ghosh Academy of Performing Arts for a combined program organized by Arkadev Bhattacharya and his Niharika Centre for Performing Arts; followed by a creative movement workshop led by Clement Mensah. Interviews were set up by the U.S. Consulate with the Times of India and other leading media outlets, yielding lavish coverage before and after the Company’s stay in Kolkata. Among all of the workshops which Hollander supervised, he also made time to meet with contemporary dancer/choreographer and entrepreneur Vikram Iyengar and to visit the Pickle Factory, a recommissioned cinema hall that is being converted into a performance venue for dance, theater and visual arts.
New Delhi: The final performance of Battery’s tour took place at Kamani Auditorium in New Delhi, in the presence of U.S. Ambassador Kenneth Juster, Minister-Counselor for Public Affairs Jeffrey Sexton, Sangeet Natak Akademi Chairperson Shekhar Sen, ICCR President Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, ICCR Director General Ambassador Riva Ganguly Das and the Hindustani classical music maestros Rajan and Sajan Mishra in the front row. Despite some injuries and illnesses, the Company managed to pull out a flawless performance that won the appreciation of the diplomats as well as leading dance artists Geeta Chandran, Rama and Dakshina Vaidyanathan, Rajesh and Rakesh Sai Babu, and dean of Indian dance scholarship and criticism Dr. Sunil Kothari. Many of these dance icons had attended a talk and video showing by Jonathan Hollander hosted at The Atelier in Lado Sarai as part of the Desmania Foundation program of arts talks the day before the performance. Workshops for Heemanshu Sharma’s That’s Dance group and Sohaila Kapur’s theater workshop brought Battery teaching artists in contact with 40 high level freelance dancers and actors in Delhi and resulted in invitations for continued affiliations in both cases.

Lucknow: While the Company was on tour, Jonathan Hollander was named a recipient of the inaugural Arjun Mishra Award, and arrangements were made for him to travel to Lucknow to deliver a speech and receive the award. The award commemorated the Kathak dancer and guru, Arjun Mishra, who had headed the Lucknow Kathak Kendra since 1998 and whose American tour Jonathan had organized in 1995. Arjun’s son and daughter, Anuj and Kantika, are now two of the leading young Kathak dancers in India and continue operating the school that Arjun built with the help of Anuj’s wife Neha. They currently inculcate hundreds of students in Lucknow. Anuj arranged a press conference and performance at a
theater in Lucknow where his students performed and where Hollander delivered an address and was presented with the award with various television and print media interviews.

Press Quotes:

**The Daily Eye**, January 15: Finally the big guns were out with Shakti. The group donned the stage in a human chain, connecting each other. The work evokes the sentiment of Bhakti (devotional love for goddess). The inspiration behind the work is derived from Indian classical music and dance forms. Both music and the dance amalgamated seamlessly into one spectacular piece of art. It’s soulful music and excellent choreography is a complete show stealer. The fusion of Indian and Western culture and dance forms is a wondrous thing propounded by Battery Dance.  

*Denver Fernandes*

**Deccan Chronicle**, January 16: Super Dynamic, highly creative, tremendously talented with humility as his second name, all bundled up into one man Mr. Jonathan Hollander...  

*Sanjid Soparkar*

**Pune Mirror**, January 14: This week, the renowned choreographer from New York presents his ode to Durga, a confluence of Bharatanatyam and ballet.  

*Kunal Ray*
The Indian Express: Hollander is among the leading choreographers in the world and his Battery Dance Company ... is well-known for artistic excellence.

The Hindu, January 11: Elf could have been his middle name and he just might be one, going by his goodness in the dance field: Smiling, helpful, impish, high energy, never say die (though he almost lost much in 9/11), Jonathan Hollander, lives his life in dance, cinemascpe. New York's longest and continuous, direct dance connection with India, his Battery Dance Company is named after the district where 9/11 took place, but with many other elves, he built it up again. Long term collaborator guru Sucheta Chapekar Bhide, who is helping with hosting his visit in Pune, says: He is inspirational. Never complains and always explains concepts properly. Once on stage, he seemed to fly because he thought I was floating! There is something ethereal about his art. Other worldly . Ashish Mohan Khokar

Deccan Chronicle, January 21: Dance Weaves a Tale of Power. The music will haunt you. Rajan and Sajan Mishra's rendition of Raag Durga strikes a clear path to the audience's soul as the dancers enter, their movements, slow, measured, reverent. This is Jonathan Hollander's Shakti – Return to the Source, the production that premiered back in 2016 as The Durga Project.” Darshana Ramdev

Times of India, Calcutta Times, February 2: Many dignitaries were present in the auditorium which was filled to capacity. The guests were enthralled by the delightful fusion dance. Meet Jonathan Hollander who feels art is the medium that allows one to look beyond the mundane nature of life.

Hindustan Times, February 2: Wrapping up its high-octane India tour, a New York-based dance troupe enthralled the audience in New Delhi with a western contemporary performance infused with Indian classical themes, which its director described as a “wild experiment”. “The blend of one art form with another was done very gracefully by all artistes. They performed to the chantings of Raag Durga, which was very difficult, but they did it with ease. The artistes were performing contemporary dance, which involved a lot of body movements and contacts, but it was done with grace,” Sajan Mishra told PTI.

DNA, January 29, Yogesh Pawar: India is part of my DNA: Jonathan Hollander. His extensive work with Indian dancers, musicians and costume designers give each of his productions a uniquely Indian flavor.

The Times of India, Pune, January 11: AT THIS GIG MODERN DANCE FUSES WITH INDIAN MUSIC. Woven into the raga is the amalgamation of Bharatanatyam and American contemporary dance that portrays the power of women.

The Pioneer, February 5: YES, THEY BLENDED. The seamless fusion of Bharatanatyam and American contemporary dance showed how the NY-based Battery Dance company shape-shifted itself with purist Unnath Hassan Rathnaraju. If you ever thought that tradition could not blend with modernity and would only remain the source with the latter being a derivative, you would be forced to revise you opinion after watching a fusion act of Bharatanayam and contemporary dance as we did.
**Personal Tributes:**

**Rajan & Sajan Mishra** on FB: It was such a pleasure watching the interpretation of our Raga Durga. Jonathan’s reverence towards India was so obvious in his beautiful choreography. Thank you Jonathan for the inspiring evening. Such wonderful work Battery Dance Company

**Heemanshu Sharma, That’s Dance, New Delhi:** I would like to take this opportunity to thank Battery Dance Company for being so kind and sparing their valuable time during the India tour to come to our studio, That’s Dance, for a workshop followed by an interactive session with our dancers. The session was filled with enriching knowledge and helps add another layer to the movement quality of the dancers. The first session, lead by Unnath, was very informative and he helped us realize the benefits of yoga training on a regular basis and also the value of yoga to help overcome various body related hurdles that dancers face while training. Inspired by this, we have made yoga a part of our training curriculum and wish to expand our knowledge pool of the same. This was followed by Robin’s session, which as seamless and very aptly suited to give us the dancers release and flow through Gaga improvisations while also giving a little technique and finally ending with two snippet of the company repertoire. This stimulated the dancers to find their movement within the choreographic structure and left the dancers eager to learn more. Overall this workshop was an elating experience and we look forward to any future interaction with the company.