

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART  
11 WEST 53 STREET, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Shanta Rao, India's great classical dancer, accompanied by her own musicians, will give her first public performances in the western world at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, April 26 and 27, at 8:30p.m. This is the second part of the "Living Arts of India" series of evenings on Indian music, dance and films presented by the Museum of Modern Art's Junior Council in connection with the exhibition of Indian textiles and ornamental arts which has just opened at the Museum.

Miss Rao, 25-year-old dancer, and her accompanists came to this country last month with Ali Akbar Khan and Chatur Lal, who performed this week at the Museum to sold-out houses. They were brought here by the Junior Council and the Ford Foundation's TV Workshop and all appeared on the Omnibus TV program on April 10.

During the intermission on Tuesday, April 26, Mr. Arthur S. Lall, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, will speak. Miss Rao will be introduced by Dr. Stella Kramrisch, well-known scholar and art historian. Admission is \$2.25 for Museum members and students; \$3 for non-members.

Indian dance, with a tradition dating back 5000 years, reflects all the arts of India. Music and song are, of course, used and frequently dances are based on tales from Indian literature. Dance costumes use the fabrics and jewelry for which India is famous. The dance is considered the mother of all the arts and dancing figures appear often in Indian painting and sculpture.

Miss Rao will perform selections from three great classical dances of India: Bharat Natyam, of which she is considered the greatest living exponent; the Mohini Attam and Kathakali dances. Each dance takes many years to master and Miss Rao has been studying since the age of 10. Like Indian music, Indian dancing is a combination of creative improvisation by the performer within a strict framework handed down through the centuries. Unlike Western dancing, the movements of the eyes, arms, hands are as important as the leg and feet movements. There are fourteen different eye movements, for example, and hundreds of movements of the hands and fingers.

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Note: Photographs and Program Notes available.