

## **ANGIKAM. HONEY ARROWS**

### **Indian classical dance-theatre in Orissi style**

*Some hours of the day are magical or very evocative. Such is undoubtedly the twilight. Indians call it Sandhya, and portray it as a tender hind, Brahma's daughter, fleeing from her incestuous father. It is the time of prodigies, and it is the time when most religious ceremonies are performed. When the bell tolls, a priestess walks down a hidden path through the temple, enters the sanctum, and there, before the image of the deity, performs her dance. This is a way of praying of old Indian priestesses. When the prayer is over, the dancer picks up the image of the deity and lays it to rest for the night, as if it was a human creature.*

(Renzo Vescovi)

The Orissi dance, which is named after the present-day state of Orissa in eastern India, has very ancient origins.

Traditionally, it was a religious practice that was reserved exclusively for certain priestesses, the maharis, who performed it in honour of the god Jagannath, the Orissa divinity to whom the dance was originally dedicated. Virtually unknown in the Western world, this type of dance has been rediscovered in recent times. It was only around the middle of the 20th century that, relying both classical treatises and iconographic tradition as well as the assistance of the most experienced maharis, four of Orissa's most reputed gurus fixed the extremely rich vocabulary of the tradition in its entirety.

The Orissi practice of TTB actresses, whose performances have been presented several times in Italy, Europe, South America and India, directly descends from one of the four founding gurus, Maya Dhar Raut, and her prestigious pupil, the great Aloka Panikar. In New Delhi the actresses of Tascabile have raised the admiration of the Indian public itself and the Times of India praised them as follows: "Italian born to Indian dance" (1989) "Their presentation could be an inspiration even for Indian dancers" (1992).

The respect and recognition accorded to TTB's practice of oriental dances in the cultures of its origin pays tribute to the tenacious work by which TTB has been able to establish a new category in the western cultural scene.

An Orissi performance features moments of pure dance, which do not refer to any particular meaning or feeling, and moments of more distinctly dramatic interpretation, related to a poetic text, introduced by brief explanations that allow the audience to understand the choreographic narrative.



**With:** Tiziana Barbiero, Antonietta Fusco, Marta Suardi.

**Photos:** Gianfranco Rota

**Duration of the performance:** 75'