

Guide to Ram Gopal "Golden Eagle" photograph and autographed card C0483

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1956



Title Statement

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

C0483

Unit ID

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Unit Date

1956

box

1 (folder)

Language

English

Abstract

Black and white photograph of Ram Gopal dancing in "Golden Eagle" or "Garuda" costume by Planet News, Ltd. taken on September 10, 1956. Included is a card featuring Gopal's signature in English from the collection of Thomas H. Scullion of the Autograph Collectors Society from the same year.

Creator

Planet News Ltd. (London, England)

Creator

Ram Gopal, 1917-2003

Extent

.01 Linear Feet 1 items

Physical Location

R 72, C 3, S 5

Repository

George Mason University. Libraries. Special Collections Research Center

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no access restrictions.

Use Restrictions

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Acquisition Information

Purchased by Steve Gerber from Schubertiade Music in October 2009.

Processing Information

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Preferred Citation

Ram Gopal "Golden Eagle" photograph and autographed card, C0483, Special Collections Research Center, George Mason University Libraries.

Biographical Information

Ram Gopal was an internationally celebrated Burmese-Indian dancer. Known as a master of Indian classical dance, Gopal blended his classical dance background with other modern dance styles. Born in Bangalore, India in 1912, Gopal learned Kathakali - one of eight styles of Indian classical dance - at an early age. As an adult, Gopal gained international renown through his interpretation of Indian classical dance for Western audiences: "Ram was shrewd enough to realise that western audiences would be daunted by an unadulterated classical repertoire. So he created short, spectacular items drawn from Kathakali...but without the traditional make-up and clothes. Costumes, staging and lighting were all meticulously considered and beautifully carried through. He interspersed his own pieces with music and other folk and classical styles" (The Guardian). Perhaps Gopal's most well-known dance was that of "Garuda," or the "Golden Eagle," a legendary golden bird in Hindu mythology. Gopal passed away in 2003.

Scope and Content

Black and white photograph of Ram Gopal dancing in "Golden Eagle" or "Garuda" costume by Planet News, Ltd. taken on September 10, 1956. On the back is an inscription that reads: "The Golden Eagle/London: Wearing his exotic Golden Eagle costume, Indian dancer Ram Gopal flies gracefully through the air during rehearsal at the Royal Festival Hall. Ram Gopal and his company of Indian dancers - who have recently been performing at the Edinburgh Festival - open tonight at the Royal Festival Hall for a two-week season. The company, sponsored by the Indian government, is the largest ever to come to this country from India. British

film producer Sir Michael Balcon has approached Ram Gopal asking him to consider playing the role in a new film as Buddha. The dancer has not yet indicated whether he will accept."

Included is a card featuring Gopal's signature in English from the collection of Thomas H. Scullion of the Autograph Collectors Society from the same year.

Related Materials

The Victoria and Albert (V&A Museum holds performance costumes worn by Ram Gopal, including his [Garuda costume](#).

The South Asian Diaspora Arta Archive hosts the Ram Gopal Collection, which includes materials on his Garuda dance. It also hosts the Garuda project, which "in collaboration with the V&A Museum aims to raise awareness of Ram Gopal's contribution to Indian dance in the UK. This project included the conservation of Gopal's historic Garuda costume which has now been donated to the V&A's collection" (SAADA).

The Archives at Yale University hold the [Carl Van Vechten Papers](#) which contains photographs and other material featuring Ram Gopal.

Keywords

Dance

Garuda (Mythical bird)

Kathakali

Ram Gopal, 1917-2003

Bibliography

Costume for the Eagle Dance worn by Ram Gopal, 1966. S.111:1 to 8-2004, Theatre and Performance Collection, Victoria & Albert Museum. <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O106796/theatre-costume-jenny-levy-casperson/>.

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Arrangement

This is a single folder collection.