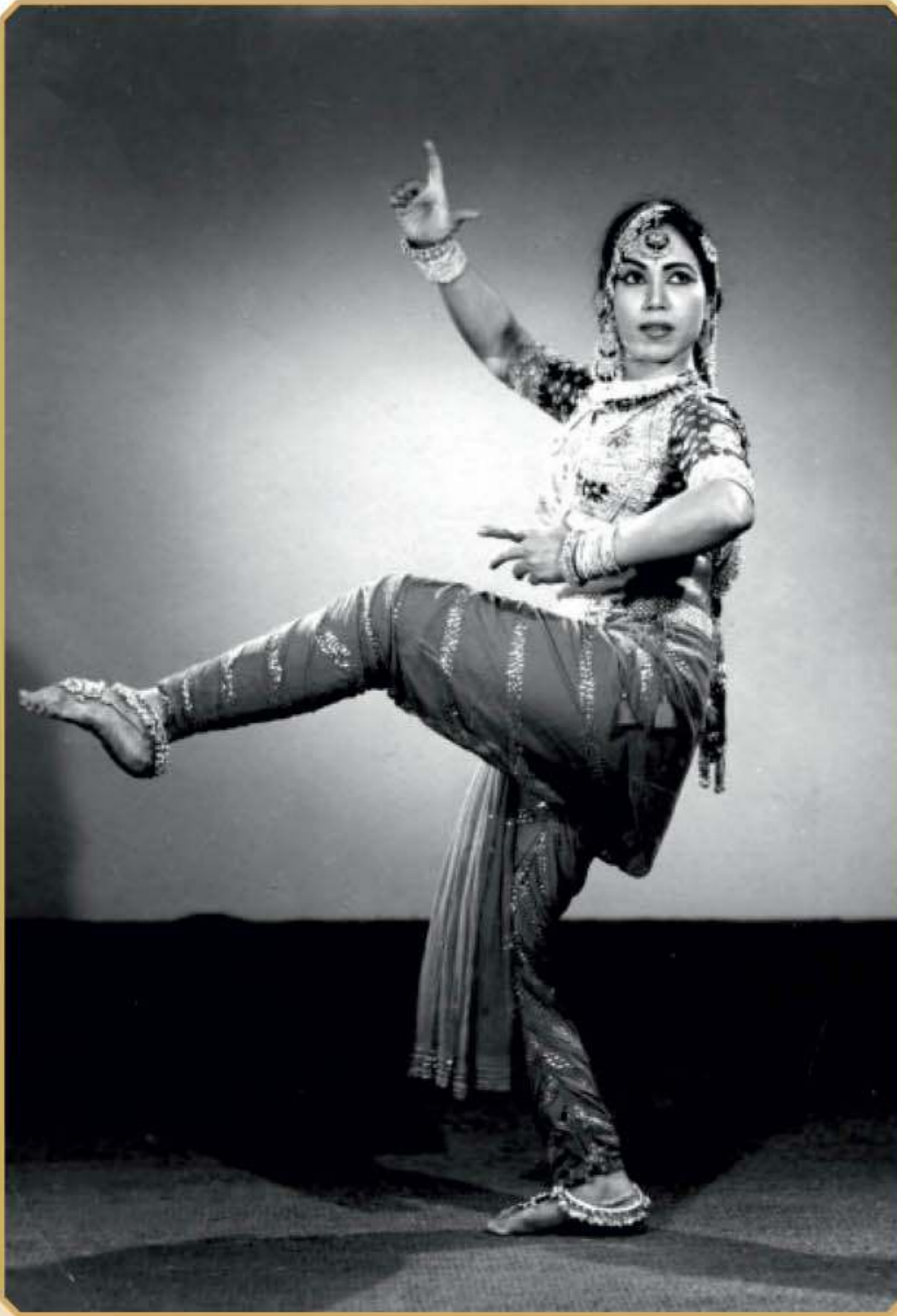




राष्ट्रीय आधुनिक  
कला संग्रहालय  
NATIONAL GALLERY  
OF MODERN ART



ICCR Bengaluru



## National Gallery of Modern Art, Bengaluru (Ministry of Culture, Government of India)

in collaboration with

**Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Bengaluru**

Presents

An illustrated talk as a tribute to legendary  
Kathak Queen **Sitara Devi**

by Padmashree Dr. Sunil Kothari

*(Sangeet Natak Akademi awardee, dance historian, scholar, author and critic)*

**on 18th April, 2015 at 5.00 pm**

**All are welcome**

Sitara was born in a Brahmin family on Dhanteras, Lakshmi Poojan, auspicious day. Her father Sukhdev Maharaj therefore named her Dhanlakshmi and was addressed as Dhanno. She had two other sisters Tara and Alaknanda and a brother Chaubey Maharaj.

Her father was a court musician in Nepal. On returning to Benaras, he studied Kathak under Achhan Maharaj, father of Birju Maharaj and trained his three daughters in Kathak. Those were not easy times to present girls as dancers in public. Sukhdev Maharaj, his wife Maytsya Kumari dressed the

girls in costumes of Krishna and Radha and composed Kavits in praise of Gods and Goddesses.

Dhanno was given name as Sitara. She performed before Gurudev Rabindra Nath Tagore who gave her title Kathak Queen when she was barely sixteen.

Sitara had a chequered career. She also joined films. Some of her films like Najma with Ashok Kumar and later on Phool, Roti were hit. However, she gave up films and concentrated on classical Kathak and earned great fame as a leading dancer.

Her dance was energetic, full of life, and captivating. Both in nritta, pure dance and nritya, abhinaya she scaled great heights. She also studied under Shambhu Maharaj and Lacchu Maharaj. Her father composed several kavits on Kali, Durga. They were executed with energy and gave her dance dynamic quality. Her padhant, reciting bols was loved by her fans, who were all over the world. From Motihari village in Bihar to Manhattan in New York.

She was truly a People's artist. In Kathak, dancers speak to audience and Sitara used to establish great rapport. People loved her talking to audience, explaining subtle nuances of abhinay and quality of nritta, bols, tode, tukde, improvisation.

She contributed a lot in popularising Kathak and shall be remembered for her joyous temperament, zest and love for life.

**ADMISSION FREE to all on first come first serve basis**

**Venue: National Gallery of Modern Art, Auditorium**

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