

# Paresh Prasad Parit's Play: Mahishasur Mardini



Director: Paresh Prasad Parit

Group: Purulia Chhau Dance Academy, Jharkhand

Language: Bengali

Duration: 1 hr 15 mins

## The Form

Chhau is a traditional dance-drama performed during the Chaitra festival (April-May) in the adjoining districts of the three bordering states of West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Ramayana and Mahabharata, as well as stories from the Puranas, and those from everyday life, are portrayed through this masked dance form. A Chhau troupe consists of 15-20 artists. The musical instruments used are drums (dhol) and flute (shehnai).

## The Play

The performance begins with an invocation to Lord Ganesha, and then to Lord Kartikeya.

Mahishasura, a demon who has created terror in the world of the gods, has captured heaven, earth and the nether world. Goddess Durga, who rides a lion and has been bestowed upon with weapons from Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh to fight Mahishasura, after a long battle slays him.

## The Director

Paresh Prasad Parit is a well-known artist of Purulia Chhau and is popularly known as Guru Paresh Kumar. He is an M. A. in History and a trained dancer, musician, composer and choreographer who is dedicated to this art since childhood. His inspirations have been Padma Shri Gambhir Singh Mura, Padma Shri Nepal Mahto, Ustad Juru Kumar, Ustad Laal Mahto,

Ustad Rasu Sahis, Ustad Gopal Suri (Mandal), and his own parents. He was trained under Chhau Guru Sudhir Kumar who is an international famed artist of Purulia Chhau. He has struggled for the preservation and promotion of Purulia Chhau in the borderlands of West Bengal & Jharkhand, hoping for a bright future of this traditional form. He has received the Fellowship for Purulia Chhau from the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India. He has also been awarded the Panchal Ratna Award from All India Cultural Association (Regd.), Chhau Guru Award, MRD cultural award, and Jharkhand Sanskritik Samman. He is a member of CCRT Regional Selection Committee under the aegis of Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India.

### The Group

Purulia Chhau Dance Academy was founded in 1985. The group is based in the village Jamdih, under Tila Panchayat, Nimdih block of Seraikela Kharsawan, a district state of Jharkhand in India and a border-land area of West Bengal. It is a troupe and training centre aiming to preserve and promote Purulia Chhau. The dancers and musicians of the group are farmers, farm labourers and students. Although the academy is dedicated to Purulia Chhau, it actively participates in social service as well. It is registered under the Govt. of Jharkhand and empanelled under Indian Council for Cultural Relations. It has performed in cities like Delhi, Kolkata, Patna, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Ahmadabad, Gurgaon, Bareilly, Agra, Jaipur, Baripada etc. The academy has received many prizes and awards in festivals and fairs held at different places in India.

### Cast & Credits

Lord Ganesha Swapan Machhua

Lord Kartikeya Gunadhar Kumar

Goddess Durga Falari Kumar

Demon Mahishasur Dhiren Singh

Devil Lakhindar Machua, Parmeshwar Majhi,

Alang Chand Kumar, Sudip Yogi

Laxmi Gansh Karmakar  
Saraswati Gayapati Mahato  
Lion Ram Nath Singh, Ram Charan Singh  
Peacock Bhut Nath Machua  
Dhol Dhar Kalindi  
Shahnai Shikant Kalindi  
Maracas Bibhuti Singh  
Tasa / Nagara Purna Kalindi  
Casio Bhis Dev Machhua  
Prompter Udai Mahali

Director & Group Leader Paresh Prasad Parit

#### Contacts

Purulia Chhau Dance Academy  
Jamdih, P.O. Tilla  
P.S. Nimdih, S.D. Chandil  
Distt. Seraikela Kharsawan  
Jharkhand – 832401  
M: +91 8709364919, 9955332690  
E: pareshkumar99@gmail.com

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A new identity are thus being assumed by the participants while there is a fair amount of continuity in the subject and it has seen some amount of stability in its dramatic content, costumes, music, plot and carefully choreographed movement. At the same Chhau can be said to be traditional as