

Poshak Puralekh Evaluation Report



A Costume Archiving Project For The Centre for Indian Classical Dance

Mita Pujara
June 2020



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Photo: Kesha Raithatha (CICD alumni, dancer)

Photos in this report taken by : Keri Todd, Sandeep Chohan, Krupa Patel, Matthew Cawrey, Kavi Pujara, Sarah Levitt, Mita Pujara.

ALL costumes photographed in this report are worn by dancers from Centre for Indian Classical Dance and are part of its collection.

Executive Summary

Poshak Puralekh was the last in a series of NHLF projects to help the Centre for Indian Classical Dance (CICD) **digitise, archive and celebrate** its significant collection of paper, film and materials charting its 40 year history. This project engaged **4355 people, across 15 events** to celebrate 150 vintage Indian classical and folk dance costumes which were 'at risk' of being lost or neglected. The funding also enabled CICD to **record, catalogue, organise and find ways of reducing** this substantial collection.

Impact

- **People learned about heritage** The public and volunteers enjoyed learning about the costumes' history, Indian dance in Leicester, the classical dance style of Kathak and CICD's role in the cultural heritage of the city.
- **Better management, identification & recording** A significant step was towards cataloguing and redistributing the collection of over 1000 costumes. This includes a visual inventory of **250 pieces**, identifying **280 costumes** for future performances, labelling **68** (of the 252 which were identified for this) and donating **24 to museums, 60 to community groups, schools and up-cycling.**
- **Better interpretation and explanation** Over 250 'hidden' costumes were brought to life in accessible ways through performances, talks, workshops, written material, mannequins, films, conversation and oral history interviews. Future public access is ensured through a new CICD website which will include multiple resources from this project including the archive film, visual inventory, Oral Histories and accompanying text.
- **Reducing negative environmental impact** **370 costumes** were saved from going to a landfill. The *Costume Disposal Policy (appendices)* will continue to ensure that the collection finds good new homes over the coming years.
- **People enjoying themselves** Audiences, participants and volunteers enjoyed many aspects of *Poshak Puralekh* such as the performances, learning about cultural heritage, feeling civic pride, participating in a team and understanding CICD's legacy in Leicester.
- **People changing attitudes and behaviour** Much of the audience was new to South Asian culture, as the events were programmed in many areas across the city, including those with largely White communities. People found the events accessible and that it changed their understanding of Indian dance.
- **People volunteered their time** A team of volunteers of diverse ages and backgrounds brought a plethora of skills to the project which increased CICD's capacity. They were involved in all aspects from event management, logistics and marketing to choreography and performance.
- **People developed their skills** Volunteers brought many new skills to CICD but also gained new expertise from working on the project. Most of the training was informal and 'on the job' including event management, communication, digital processes, choreography and performance. Some formal skills training was delivered to volunteers and staff in Oral History, which was well received.
- **Organisational becomes more resilient.** A dynamic, diverse, intergenerational volunteer base, new administrative and artistic personnel to work in the future has enabled CICD to strengthen its core, grow its civic profile, social media following, reflect on its legacy, and think strategically about the future.

Learning and Recommendations

This was an extremely successful project, however some challenges were experienced in areas such as volunteer management and organisation, logistics and communication. CICD will continue to redistribute the remaining costumes as per the disposal policy, maintain an 'on demand' hire service, build on the relationships with Leicester Museums and other venues in this project, and create further professional training opportunities for local emerging talent.

Impact in Numbers



Introduction

Aims and Overview

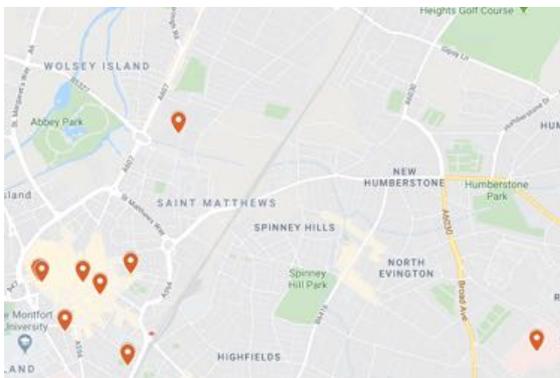
Poshak Puralekh aimed to celebrate 150 vintage Indian classical and folk dance costumes which were 'at risk' of being lost or neglected.

The funding enabled the Centre for Indian Classical Dance (CICD) in Leicester to record, catalogue, organise and reduce the significant collection of outfits and accessories held at CICD in Leicester.

It was the last in a series of NHLF projects which digitised and archived the paper and film based materials from this organisation's 40 year history. *Poshak Puralekh* brought over 4000 people from Leicester's diverse communities together, to celebrate this shared heritage and connection. with Indian culture through 15 public events.

We wanted to spread the work across the city to make sure that we could reach diverse audiences, especially those who might not usually take part in South Asian cultural activities.

Nilima Devi, MBE
Artistic Director, CICD



*Top: Blaine Greene, Sharena Gulzar at Peepul Centre.
Below: Map of venues including: The Curve Theatre, ISKCON Temple, New Walk Museum, Abbey Pumping Station, Guildhall Museum, Peepul Centre, Sue Townsend Theatre, Leicester General Hospital and BBC Radio Leicester*



Above: Bina Patel at The Curve Theatre

Outcome 1

INCREASING LEARNING ABOUT HERITAGE

AIM

To provide an in-depth opportunity to learn through the project.

To enable the public to experience least 10 enjoyable and attractive events, attracting potentially several thousand people in total.

To provide access to learning about CICD costume collection online for many more people in the future.

ACTUAL

Poshak Puralekh provided many opportunities to learn about the heritage of the costumes, Indian classical and folk dance and the history of CICD in the city. Through performances, talks, videos, informal conversations, exhibitions and workshops, the public engaged in 15 public events across Leicester. The online archive is currently being uploaded to the new website. One full page will be dedicated to this project and will house visual, aural and written content (photos, oral histories, videos, a costume inventory) of the project for future generations.



Above: *Dhyani Modessa*

What did the audience say?

I learned about the history of Kathak and how even the costumes play a traditional role depending on the style and origin of the dance. Also how deep rooted dance is Indian culture in expressing prayer, celebrating festivals, portraying history or simply to entertain.

This is a great example of heritage representing different regions of India, a great for the youth and future generations.

I am new in Leicester, so definitely everything I hear about the Indian heritage in this city is new to me. I am amazed about the big presence of Indians in the Leicester.

This is a great project which keeps heritage alive!

A great turnout for a heritage event of this nature.

IMPACT

The vast majority of audiences were not familiar with the history of CICD, classical and folk dance or the heritage of the costumes. This was true of some South Asian parents of students. Audiences mentioned the differences in **Kathak styles, its history in the Moghul courts, CICD's archive of performances** as key areas of learning.

Many of the **volunteers** were students or alumni of CICD and so had considerable knowledge of the dance forms. Despite this, **90% of volunteers** felt they learned about heritage of the costumes and CICD's own history through speaking to the Artistic Director, Nilima Devi, interviewing for oral histories, photographing, cataloguing and handling the costumes themselves.

The dancer volunteers may have experienced the deepest learning around heritage as they wore, modelled and performed in them. This enabled them to **reconnect instantly and embody** hundreds of years of folk and classical dance heritage.



Above:Kesha Raithatha

What did the volunteers think?

I have a higher respect for costumes and the efforts behind them being made. Also how significant each costume can be to a performance.

I've loved learning about the different styles of Kathak and how this influenced costumes design.

I was wearing a Chaniya Choli that was handmade and stitched in India under the direction of Nilima Deviji. Wearing it made me feel the power that it actually holds inside it. It's helped me to embody the culture and the traditions and keep them alive.

I wore a traditional men's Kurta. It was something that was different for me. It is something that I wanted to do but never had the opportunity.

**45% of
volunteers
learned 'a great
deal' about
heritage at the
events across
the city.**

Outcome 2

BETTER MANAGEMENT, IDENTIFICATION AND RECORDING OF HERITAGE

AIM

Photograph and record 150 costumes
Donate 15 outfits to Leicester Museums collection which would be cared for following national museum standards.
Distribute remaining costumes following an appropriate procedure, with the aim of finding suitable, responsible new homes for them.

Check, clean and repair costumes as required before going to new homes.

IMPACT

This funding enabled CICD to begin to organise the substantial collection by systematically cataloguing and beginning to re-distribute the costumes. The target for photographing and recording costumes was exceeded by 100 pieces. 50 costumes have been donated or sold but finding 'good', new homes required more time so the remaining 100 pieces will be redistributed in this way over the next year. The approach is outlined in the Costume Disposal Policy (see *Appendices*).

An unexpected outcome was the renewed interest in students wearing these costumes to perform. Therefore, 280 costumes have been identified for this purpose and will now be retained, labelled and stored appropriately for future use.



Above: Sharena Gulzar at the Sewing Bee labelling costumes

ACTUAL

Visual Inventory : 250 costumes, comprising around 1000 individual pieces, were photographed and recorded to create a visual inventory. This will be uploaded to the new website. These costumes in the inventory represent a snapshot of the total collection held at CICD. This includes key information about the main costumes such as when and where they were made and worn.

Labelling : 252 have been selected for labelling. Prior to Covid 19, **68** were labelled at a sewing bee but the remaining **184** labels will be sewn after social distancing restrictions are lifted.

Further Life : 280 costumes were identified as having further life as classical, folk or creative dance costumes and will be worn during the 40th anniversary celebrations of CICD in 2021

Cleaning: On inspection, most **costumes were in good condition** and did not require cleaning/repair work.

Redistribution : 150 pieces were identified for redistribution .

Donations : 15 costumes were donated New Walk Museum collections, **4** to Wolverhampton Museum, **3** costumes to the V&A Theatre Museum, **12** to Abbey Primary School. **6 saris and 4 salwar sets** have been donated to St Phillips Church for their roadshow.

For Sale : 6 were sold at various events.

Repurposing : 60 pieces which were no longer in good condition were identified for repurposing and were sent to community-led, up-cycling fashion project *Made in Camden*.

Outcome 3

BETTER INTERPRETATION AND EXPLANATION OF HERITAGE

AIM

To hold 10 events where high quality information and experiences will be provided.

To make available interesting and easy-to-use online information about many costumes on the website.

To make information about these 'hidden' costumes publicly accessible, including a short film *Abhilekh* and learning resources.

IMPACT

This project brought these 'hidden' costumes to life and shared their stories in accessible and interesting ways with the public.

Audiences were able to access, interpret and understand the costumes' significance in multiple ways including: performance, talks, workshops, written material, textile handling, films, conversation and aural interviews.

The website will dedicate a page to the project which will include the archive film, visual inventory, with accompanying text & the slide shows to ensure that this information remains available and easily accessible in the future.

The Oral Histories will also be stored and made publicly accessible in East Midlands Oral History Archive and on the new CICD website.

ACTUAL

A wide variety of high profile city venues were chosen to hold **14 free and 1 paid event**. These included **3 city museums, 3 theatre/cultural venues, one temple, 1 hospital, 1 school, the HQ of BBC Radio Leicester** as well as outdoor performances at Leicester's Asian Summer festival, the **Mela**.

40 Performances by the highly skilled dancers brought the costumes to life.

Talks and introductions prior to the performances helped the audience understand their context.

Up to 9 dressed mannequins, which the public could **handle** were exhibited at 13 events.

A fashion show by CICD students with costumes being introduced by the Artistic Director, Nilima Devi.

A short film was screened, which introduced and showed archival dance footage in 22 productions.

2 slide shows were screened.

Staff and volunteers spoke to the public informally.

Laminates from the **visual inventory** were on display for the public to read.

15 Creative arts, crafts and dance workshops also took place

7 Oral History interviews were recorded with past dancers and the artistic director, offering a more personal perspective on the costumes.



Above: Manasi Dandekar from India, leading a Kathak workshop at ISKCON

Outcome 4

REDUCING NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

AIM

To prevent 150 costumes from going to a landfill by being recycled, donated to museums, other good homes and potential new users.

IMPACT

Negative impacts on the environment have been significantly reduced. Prior to this project the whole collection was heading for the landfill. *Poshak Puralekh* has prevented 370 items from this, more than double what was originally anticipated. Perhaps more significantly, it has raised an awareness amongst staff, dancers and volunteers at CICD, who will continue to redistribute costumes according to the priorities outlined below (for full details see *Appendices*).

- Offer the remaining costumes to any accredited museum free of charge
- Offer them to midlands education establishments and community-based groups free of charge
- Offer them for sale to the public, with the proceeds going to CICD to further its work
- Offer any damaged costumes to local embroiderers and crafts people for re-use
- Offer costumes charity shops which specialise in high quality Indian costume
- Remaining unwanted costumes will be given away for re-use of the fabrics
- Any left will be recycled, if cotton and so recyclable.

ACTUAL

51 costumes have been re-distributed to good homes through donations to museums, schools, community groups and sales.

60 items identified as having no further life were donated to charity shops, a local religious group and a colleague in Mauritius.

30 pieces were donated to *Made in Camden*, a community-driven, up-cycling fashion collection in London/

Leicester College (Fashion and Embroidery) may take some costumes for teaching.

CICD are also ready to provide a low-key occasional costume hire service.



Outcome 6

PEOPLE WILL HAVE CHANGED THEIR ATTITUDE OR BEHAVIOUR

AIM

To present traditional Indian heritage in an accessible, positive way, promoting greater intercultural understanding in our super-diverse city.

To engage people who may not be familiar with it from different cultural backgrounds including white communities.

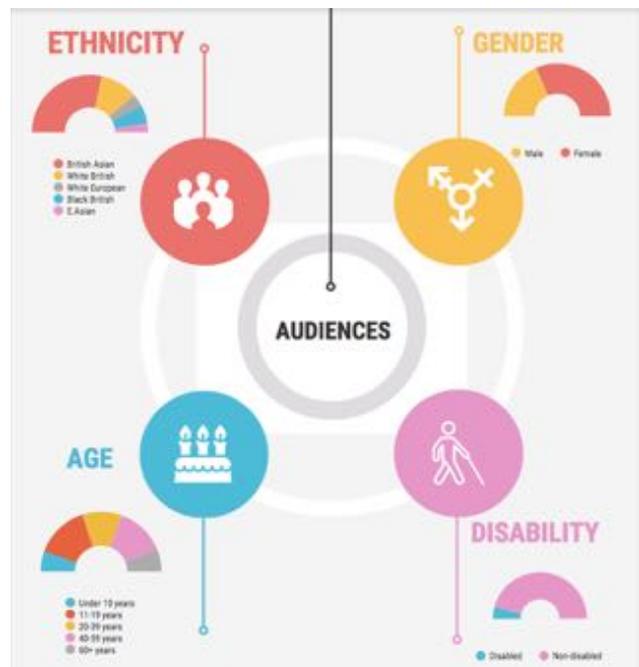
IMPACT

Poshak Puralekh has changed attitudes through delivering a programme which had a broad appeal and drew new diverse audiences across the city in age, ethnicities, disability and gender as the infographics show. Many of these communities have never attended Indian cultural events, as they may feel it is not meant for them. However, feedback indicated that people of all ages and backgrounds felt really welcomed and enjoyed talking informally to the volunteers to find out more about the costumes and CIDC.

75% of audience said their perception of Indian dance changed after attending the events.

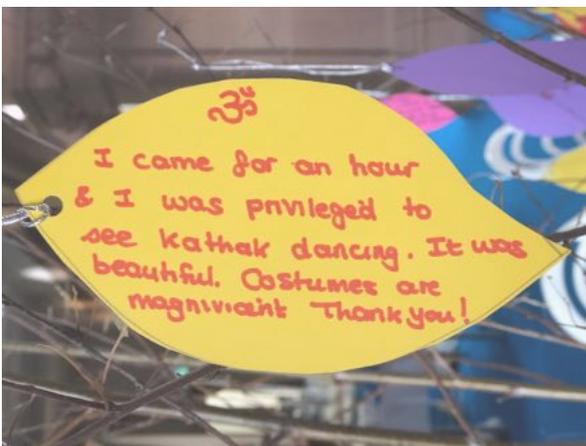
“Speaking to the feedback from local white community attending the events this outcome certainly seems to have been achieved.”

Sarah Levitt, Board Member and Volunteer.





Top: Volunteer Blaine Greene organises the Mela stall
Middle: Audiences stopping to watch the outdoor performances at the Asian Summer Festival, Mela.
Bottom: Audience Feedback



What did the audience think?

It was absolutely brilliant, it was really embracing and really included everyone.

Welcoming, cheerful, insightful - a cultural experience of extraordinary intimacy.

My daughter is only four loved the program. I've never seen Indian dance but it was absolutely brilliant, really embracing and included everyone.

I didn't mean to stay for so long but it was so interesting to chat to the volunteers. I thought Indian dance was only Bollywood, had no idea that it was so rich!

*It was such a warm welcome - thank you!
Audience at the ISKCON Temple*

I enjoyed the diversity of dances from classical through to Bhangra and folk.

I loved seeing all the different ages on stage performing together.

Had no idea that Indian dance had such a rich and varied heritage! It's not just Bollywood!

Outcome 7

PEOPLE WILL HAVE VOLUNTEERED TIME

AIM

At least 56 days will be given of volunteers' time. Recruit 25 volunteers from the local community including the 13 who received formal training in oral history)
Organisations will give at least 31 days of employees' time to such as recording and research, supporting, organising and delivering events.

ACTUAL

39 volunteers were recruited from the local community, aged from 9-65+, from diverse cultural backgrounds (85% S.Asian 15% non-S.Asian).
All public events were hosted by a team of volunteers.
31 days of employees time was used. Each of the 15 events used several hours of staff time and often included more than one person from the venue.
9 volunteers participated in the Oral history training and interviewing.
1247 hours equivalent to 155 days were offered by volunteers.
88% would like to volunteer again for CICD.
66% felt well supported.

"I think most of the team worked well together, appreciating each other's work and understood that this project could not be fulfilled without a team effort. The team of volunteers is amazing, they have great skills and many ideas to share. Without their help I don't think we would've reached this far. What a great team to keep close!"

Project Officer



CICD Volunteer team getting at the Oral History training

IMPACT

The recruitment and time given by the volunteers exceeded all expectations and proved to be a key success of this project. A group of 6 volunteers emerged as a core team who supported the project over the year. The whole group brought an enormous amount of enthusiasm, passion, energy, ideas to every area along with skills and expertise. These existing skills ranged from: marketing, publicity, social media, performance and technical support to music, visual arts, data collection and photography. The group was age and culturally diverse reflecting the appeal of the project and most volunteers found it to be a hugely rewarding project. Several of the core members have continued to support CICD in different ways since the lockdown and have really strengthened the capacity of the organisation. However, there is still some learning which could improve the experience for volunteers at CICD in the future. These would be around management, communication and teamwork (see *Learning and Recommendations*).

What did the volunteers say ?

Its great meeting people from different backgrounds and working with young people.

It was great being part of the photo shoot and getting together with old friends for this purpose.

Great to be organising parts of the Mela preparations, creating costume history boards and setting up the stall.

I made lots of new friends and the older students helped me rehearse before the shows.



Above: Chandni Patel, Anamika Pujara, Kunika Tandel



Above: Ravi Morjaria and Blaine Greene

Outcome 8

PEOPLE WILL HAVE DEVELOPED SKILLS

AIM

To provide training and experience project management and delivery, collections management, collections research, digitisation, event management, evaluation, performance and photography.

To recruit at least 13 volunteers in collections handling, oral history, digitisation, recreating performance.

ACTUAL

39 volunteers (aged 16-65+) were recruited by the end of the project in total. It was not necessary to train volunteers handling or digitisation however, 9 attended the Oral History training and 6 trained to rehearse and choreograph dances to bring the costumes to life. All those surveyed (n=19) mentioned developing skills in the following areas: event management, collections handling, oral history recording, performance, digitisation, photography, negotiation, printing, marketing, backstage management, communication, team work interviewing bid writing and increased confidence to perform.

IMPACT

This project demonstrated a real exchange model between volunteers who brought a range of skills with them and developing new training and skills from CICD in all sorts of areas from logistics, administration, communication and digital processes to, live performance techniques and presentation. Those who attended the Oral history training found it useful and informative and would be able to use these skills elsewhere in their lives. Many students spoke of an increased joy and confidence in performing Kathak in public for friends, families and the local community.

Skills

It helped me evolve as a Kathak dancer, because the more I danced in public, the more confident I became. I also enjoyed talking to people at the shows and collecting feedback on vox pops.

Milan Pujara - Age 11



Working alongside the other volunteers and our two project officers is very refreshing for me because they are all younger than me and very familiar with IT.

Sarah Board Member & Volunteer

It's a very fast paced project and I am learning a lot in terms of approaching events stakeholders

Andreea Ghervan, Project Officer



Top: Anamika (aged 8) and Milan Pujara (aged 10)

Below: Sneya and Andreea setting up the exhibition BBC Radio Leicester

Outcome 9

INCREASING ORGANISATIONAL RESILIENCE

AIM

To enable CICD to plan for the future, build networks and continue to attract interest in and engagement amongst its local community and stakeholders.

To meet new people at this delicate time who could hold the administration and management well and support the future growth.

“CICD is now definitely stronger than it was before this project.”

**Nilima Devi, MBE,
Artistic Director**

“This project has enabled us to be realistic, sort some things out and think about what our future direction should be.”

**Sarah Levitt, Board
Member**

IMPACT

Poshak Puralekh enabled CICD to **take stock** of its history, **understand its USP** as Leicester’s leading Indian classical and folk dance organisation. This project has both **strengthened the core** and **refreshed the profile** of the organisation with much renewed interest in classes.

Volunteers Prior to Covid 19 there was a consistent flow of volunteers in the office supporting the Artistic Director with ideas for future funding projects. Since lockdown, classes were stopped but there is ongoing technical support from some volunteers to ensure that classes can run on zoom and there is a consistent social media presence.

Dance Teachers two potential dance tutors have been identified through this project who can continue to teach Kathak, Folk and Bollywood dance styles at the centre.

Admin Support One project officer, who grew in confidence and skills was employed part-time to provide administrative support to the Artistic Director and has continued to be involved throughout the pandemic when possible.

Social Media There has been continued development of our social media presence through the project. We have lots of followers at present with 374 new followers on Instagram, Facebook 1167, Twitter 302). This stronger strand of CICD will ensure that it is easier to contact and finish off the sewing bee which is the final activity for this project.

Strategic Thinking CICD has been able to reflect on staffing structures which suit the organisation.

Challenges & Learning

Whilst CICD has been running consistent classes, it had not run a project of this scale for some time. Regular staff in the office was just the Artistic Director and some part-time admin help. Therefore, a lot of organisational learning has been gathered along the way which will enable it to strengthen delivery and management.

Costume Disposal - It was more challenging to find good, suitable homes for the costumes than had been imagined, not all 150 costumes were disposed of within the timeframe of this grant. However, CICD is now confident that this will take place over the next few months and the remaining costumes will be donated to organisations which will make use of them, display or up-cycle them.

Volunteer Management - Whilst the volunteers were invaluable to the project there were consistent management issues throughout. Their enthusiasm led to ideas which could not be actioned within the scope of the project, and left some feeling disappointed and under valued. Sadly, several disagreements between some volunteers and a project officer took place, whose approach was perceived as 'authoritarian' at times. These issues were brought to the attention of senior management and the evaluator and some matters were resolved.

Organisation and Logistics - Feedback suggests that some of the events did not feel well organised in terms of volunteer roles and logistics, particularly for the photoshoot and performance at the Sue Townsend Theatre.

Communication from the leadership team was not always clear. A handful of volunteers felt roles were sometimes blurred.

Capacity The success of our volunteers scheme meant that we had many more than had been anticipated. Therefore, additional support was needed for them. The 10 events spring boarded to 15 events plus a photoshoot which meant that the capacity was stretched to the maximum.

Recommendations

Build on the **relationships with all the Leicester Museums** as they are a venue which attracts a diverse audience in gender, ethnicity, socio-economic backgrounds and all ages. with more targeted marketing to underserved communities in the city.

To continue to build **relationships with venues from this project** and increase CICD's presence in the city, especially with communities who are underserved by the arts and cultural sector.

To continue a **relationship with Made in Camden project** to dispose of all fabric/ costumes and cloth which have no further use.

To keep a low key **'on demand' hiring service**.

To hold a **sale for costumes which are in good condition** but have no further dance life before Diwali/ Navaratri.

Further training in **volunteer management**.

Professional development **training for emerging dance amateurs and project directors**.

Further reach into **local schools to deliver workshops** and donate costumes.

To continue to hold an **annual showcase** which brings all CICD students together from across the city.

Appendices

Centre for Indian Classical Dance Leicester, Costume Disposal Policy, Revised 6.04.2020

1. Introduction and description of collection.

Poshak Puralekh, our National Lottery Heritage Fund-supported project, is a celebration of all the Indian dance costumes amassed by CICD since it was founded by Nilima Devi MBE in 1981. As part of this, all have now been numbered and a photographic inventory created of them. There were thought to be at least 150, but depending on the method of counting, the inventory has shown that there are between 250 and 1,000 costumes. These are stored at CICD's HQ and studio, and currently take up three double wardrobes, two shelves of a corridor-long cupboard and about 30 large plastic storage boxes stacked in the studio itself. The studio is 'bursting at the seams' and the amount of costume stored there needs to be reduced, while at the same time the collection as a whole needs to be more fully recorded.

The costumes are either individual outfits for solo dance pieces or sets of matching costumes worn by troupes of performers. These are often worn with trousers and scarves, plus jewellery. Some were worn for individual dances and some were worn in large scale productions, for example at the Phoenix or Haymarket Theatres, or stage shows at local cultural festivals such as Diwali. These include costumes for adult men and children, but most are for female dancers. The styles are similarly varied- Some are for classical Indian styles of dance in jewel-coloured silks with gold thread woven border patterns, embroideries and gold braid trims. Others are plainer silk-type fabrics in contemporary styles, sometimes tie- or dip dyed. Some are made of brightly coloured appliqued, mirror-worked and embroidered cottons and these were worn for traditional Indian folk dances, often with props, such as painted water-containers. Some sets were made for East/West fusion stage productions, like the Ugly Duckling or the Jungle Book. The costumes were sometimes made by tailors and sari shops in Leicester. Sometimes they were quickly home-made and sometimes they were ordered from India. One key purpose of the project is to reduce the total number, and this disposal policy is the first step of that process.

2. Costumes to be donated to Leicester Museums

Leicester Museums have accepted 15 outfits. These have been selected on the basis that they are typical examples of costumes worn by CICD dancers over the years.

- Their inventory records are being augmented by Nilima Devi who is writing their histories on each of the 15 sheets alongside record photographs
- Some good quality photographs have been taken of the costumes worn by models, which will be copied to Leicester Museums
- People who created and wore them have been filmed. Footage will be given to Leicester Museums.
- A 25 minute film has been created, introduced by Nilima Devi, which shows excerpts from original performances.
-
- This will be given to Leicester Museums as a key learning resource. It is hoped the costumes will be featured on their website which is due to be complete in 2020. They will also be uploaded onto the CICD website as a learning resource for future researchers into CICD and the Indian Classical Dance tradition in Leicester.

3. Disposal of remaining costumes

This gift to Leicester Museums will create an important record of CICD's work over nearly 40 years since its foundation. However, a reduction of 15 costumes will barely make an impression on the overall scale of the collection. Therefore in 2020, work will be carried out to dispose of some of the remainder.

Our successful application stated that 'after research and documentation, 15 outfits will be given to Leicester Museums and others will be given to neighbouring museums, colleges and community groups.' The National Lottery Heritage Fund have since stated that "Regarding the costumes that are to be disposed of, from our perspective the priority would be for these to end up going to somewhere where they will be used and appreciated, ideally by community groups or the public....Our preference would be that every effort is made to donate the costumes to groups that can use them for heritage, culture or education in some way. (Email from Charlotte Mulliner to Sarah Levitt 3.6.19)

One recent idea is to offer some of the costumes for sale or for hire. In her email, Charlotte Mulliner of NLHF was also open to this, although giving them away 'would come before trying to generate any income but keeping some to hire out at a reasonable charge definitely makes sense or auction/sell them off with the proceeds benefitting the spirit of the project in some way'.

4. Approach in order of priority

1. Offer the remaining costumes to any accredited museum free of charge
2. Offer them to midlands education establishments and community-based groups free of charge
3. Offer them for sale to the public, with the proceeds going to CICD to further its work
4. Offer any damaged costumes to local embroiderers and crafts people for re-use
5. Offer costumes charity shops which specialise in high quality Indian costume
6. Remaining unwanted costumes will be given away for re-use of the fabrics
7. Any left will be recycled, if cotton and so recyclable.