

Printed from

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Dance frees them to fight abuse

Malini Nair, TNN | Apr 23, 2014, 01:35 AM IST



NEW DELHI: Having grown up on Kalkaji's footpaths, Nita, 17, is no stranger to the horrors that confront a woman on Delhi's streets. The long abuse and malnourishment tell in her frame, but up on a stage at the YWCA auditorium she has full control of her life, surrounding space and body. She and 37 other sexually exploited homeless girls in the 12-22 age group are choreographing a performance in which dance and real life meet with happy consequences.

Helping the dancers are two master teachers collaborating with the Battery Dance Company (BDC) of New York. The renowned company runs an outreach programme, Dancing to Connect, to address issues of exclusion in society. On Wednesday, the choreography will be staged at FIA Auditorium as a part of Catalyst Conference, a programme on sexual abuse.

"Dance is not learnt, it is created daily in our lives. If you can breathe you can dance" is Slovenian dancer-choreographer Tadej Brdnik's philosophy for the workshop. Brdnik asks the girls, drawn from

two shelter homes in the city, to interpret their names using their bodies. Some use their limbs, others twist their torsos, but one teen only moves her head and shoulders, eyes lowered. "Even in that jerky awkwardness there was dance, so we gave her a partner who did the same movements as her. It became a choreographed awkwardness," says Brdnik.

Sanved, a Kolkata NGO that specializes in dance therapy, is collaborating with BDC on the project. The underlying philosophy of the workshops is to help the youngsters realize that they have some control over their lives and they don't have to resign themselves to abuse and humiliation. Lydia Tetzlaff, another master teacher, says the girls "show no rancour, no hesitation at all in working with each other. The level of trust and helpfulness is amazing".

The freedom from structure is a bit unsettling for the girls, who would much rather do some unbridled Bollywood moves. "There will be some frustration, some boredom, some lack of concentration and that happens everywhere. But in the end, this has to be their dance," says Brdnik.

EmancipAction, an international NGO working to end child sex-trafficking, is organizing the event. Laura Entwistle, founder & CEO, said, "We wanted to bring new people to the table-young leaders who could bring their skills and networks and resources to bear on the issue". The BDC itself will also perform on Wednesday, and dancer-activist Mallika Sarabhai will stage her acclaimed solo work 'I Am Not That Woman'.

(Names of the participating girls have been changed)

[Post a comment](#)

More from The Times of India

- [Why NRI marriages fail](#) 14 Apr 2014
- [Bangalore cops slap sober techie with drunk driving case](#) 08 Apr 2014
- [Chewing gutkha may land you in jail in Bengal](#) 21 Apr 2014
- [Rannvijay and Prianka's lavish wedding reception in Delhi](#) 22 Apr 2014
- [Minor student raped by teacher](#) 05 Apr 2014
- [Attingal twin murder: Woman held](#) 18 Apr 2014

From Around the Web

- [See Why Families Keep Coming Back to New Jersey](#) New Jersey Tourism
- [Visiting New Jersey? You MUST See These Top Parks and Forests](#) New Jersey Tourism
- [Sugar and Diabetes: Myth vs. Fact Better Medicine](#)
- [Kidney failure Symptoms, Diagnosis, Treatments and Causes](#) Right Diagnosis
- [A billion-dollar daily shot in the arm for the American economy](#) ExxonMobil Perspectives Blog
- [5 Reasons Why Dubai Is Crumbling](#) The Richest

[Recommended by](#)
THE TIMES OF INDIAPowered by **INDIATIMES**
[About us](#)
[Privacy policy](#)
[Newsletter](#)
[Sitemap](#)
[Advertise with us](#)
[Feedback](#)
[TOI Mobile](#)
[Archives](#)
[Terms of Use and Grievance Redressal Policy](#)
[RSS](#)
[ePaper](#)
Other Times Group news sites

The Economic Times
 इकनॉमिक टाइम्स | ঐকনোমিক টাইমস
 Pune Mirror | Bangalore Mirror
 Ahmedabad Mirror | ItsMyAscent

Living and entertainment

Timescity | iDiva | Entertainment | Zoom
 Healthmeup | Luxpresso | Gadget Reviews
 Guylife | Online Songs

Hot on the Web

World | Politics
 Business | Sports
 Entertainment

Services

Book print ads | Online shopping | Free SMS | Website design | CRM | Tenders
 Matrimonial | Ringtones | Astrology | Jobs | Tech Community | Property | Buy car
 Bikes in India | Deals | Free Classifieds | Send money to India | Used Cars
 Restaurants in Delhi | Movie Shows | Timings in Mumbai | Remits India | Buy

Education Times | Brand Capital
Mumbai Mirror | Times Now
Indiatimes | नवभारत टाइम्स
महाराष्ट्र टाइम्स | മലയാള ഭാരത ടൈംസ്
Go Green | NavGujarat Samay

Interest Network
itimes | Email

Science & Tech
New Cars

Mobiles
Listen Songs | News | Real Estate Developers

Trending Topics

Watch TV Shows | Photogallery | You Tube | Lok Sabha Elections 2014 | Katrina
Kaif Photos | Irctc | Projects in Mumbai | Yoga | Watch Tamil Movies Online |
Facebook | Sunny Leone Photos

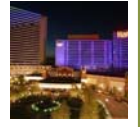
Copyright © 2014 Bennett, Coleman & Co. Ltd. All rights reserved. For reprint rights: [Times Syndication Service](#)



**MONTE CARLO
RESORT AND ...**

\$312

Search!



**HARRAHS
RESORT ATLA...**

\$44

Search!



**RIVIERA HOTEL
AND CASINO**

\$21

Search!