

## **A Traditional Picture-Storytelling Performance of India Comes to Philadelphia**

Join us 4:30-6:00, April 2<sup>nd</sup> at the International House for a performance of Pabuji's *phad*. Shree Mohan Bhopa and his wife Patasi will demonstrate how they sing, dance and chant the epic of Pabuji in the desert villages of Rajasthan. Shree Kalyan Joshi will demonstrate how he creates the intricate narrative paintings used by the singers. South Asian folklorist Joe Miller will introduce the program and serve as interpreter. Paintings will be on sale after the performance. All donations go to the singers, just like it's done in Rajasthan.



**Singer Mohan Bhopa playing the  
*ravanhattho*.**



**Patasi singing with Mohan Bhopa in  
front of their *phad* of Pabuji.**



**Kalyan Joshi demonstrating how he  
paints *phad* figures.**



**Completed *phad*-painting detail  
of Pabuji in his court at Kolu.**

**Join us April 2<sup>nd</sup> at 4:30 PM in the South American Room,  
International House, 3701 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.**

For directions go to [www.ihousephilly.org/about-directions.htm](http://www.ihousephilly.org/about-directions.htm)  
For info contact [jcmiller@custom-video.com](mailto:jcmiller@custom-video.com) or 610-563-3333

## About the Performances:

The epic of Pabuji is an oral story in the Rajasthani language about a mediaeval Rajput deified-hero named Pabuji. Singer-priests called *bhopas* recite his story in front of a long narrative painting on cloth called a *phad* or *paR*. The *phad*-painting is treated like a temple of Pabuji. Performances are part of an all-night wake in which camel-keepers worship Pabuji. There are usually two performers: the *bhopa* and his wife the *bhopi*. The *bhopa* plays a spike-fiddle called a *ravanhattho*. He sings and dances, and then recites and points to pictures on his painting. The *bhopi* sings with the *bhopa*, and then illuminates scenes on the *phad*-painting with her oil-lamp during the recitations.

## About the Singers:

Shree Mohan Bhopa and his wife Patasi Devi represent some of the best singers of Pabuji's epic that can be heard today. They were recently profiled in William Dalrymple's essay titled "Homer in India" in the *New Yorker* (11/20/06). Since 2004 they have been performing at the annual Jaipur Heritage International Festival and in 2006 they performed in Portugal and France. The couple lives in the village Pabusar in Churu District of Rajasthan's Shekhawati region. Mohan Bhopa began singing with his parents at the age of 15 and performed the epic of Pabuji on his own when he was 20. Today Mohan's family lives off of their performance earnings and farming income.

## About the Painter:

*Phads* are painted by a lineage of professional artists called Joshis, members of the Chipa or textile-printing community, living in Bhilwara and Shahpura, Rajasthan. Kalyan Joshi is son of Shrilal Joshi, the most celebrated among the *phad* artists. Kalyan has continued his father's mission of reviving the *phad*-painting tradition. He not only works with epic singers, but also with art schools and institutions, and exhibits his work in Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai. Kalyan joined his father in 2002 at Syracuse University as a feature artist in "Beneath the Banyan Tree," an extensive exhibit of folk arts and crafts devoted to storytelling.

## About Dr. Joseph C. Miller:

Since the early 1970's Joe Miller has immersed himself in Rajasthan by studying its art, languages, stories and folklore performances. Joe has collected many folk paintings and artifacts, and has worked extensively with singers of both Pabuji and Devnarayan traditions of *phad*-painting performance. His work includes:

- **The Twenty-four Brothers and Lord Devnaryan: The story and performance of a folk epic of Rajasthan, India**, Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania.
- **Tales of Pabuji**, a 33-minute video co-produced with Axel Horn and distributed by Filmmakers Library (NYC).
- "Rajasthani *paRs*," in **Beneath the Banyan Tree: Ritual, Remembrance, and Storytelling in Performed North Indian Folk Arts**.
- "e-*paR* of Devnarayan: Electronic version of a traditional narrative painting from Rajasthan," presented at **New Forms Festival**, Vancouver, Canada.