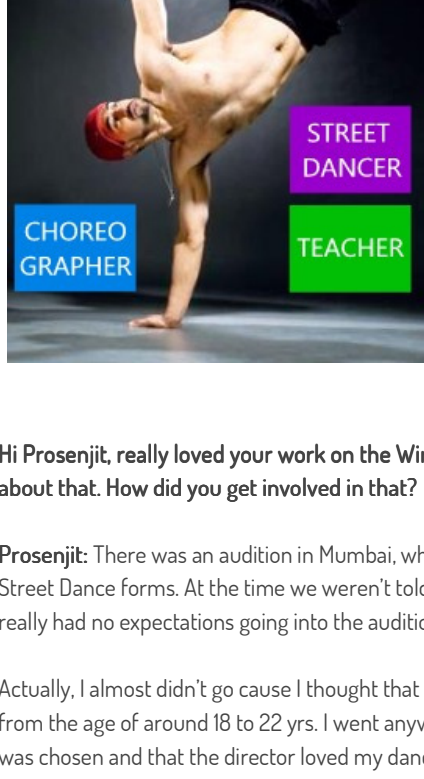


Aspi's Drift

TUESDAY, JANUARY 08, 2013

Prosenjit Guy Kundu, Choreographer and Dancer, talks about his work on the Windows 8 Commercial

Like 0 If you haven't seen the commercial for Microsoft's long in the making Windows 8 operating system - now playing on Indian TV channels - you should! You'll love it (scroll to the bottom of this post). Designed to showcase the brand new Metro user interface on Windows 8 and also invite users to get over their initial apprehensions and give the software a whirl, the commercial showcases two freewheeling dancers. The dance choreography evokes the movement and flow of panels in the Metro UI and the song (reused from the 2009 Bollywood flick **Agey Se Right** and composed by **Ram Sampath**) urges you to get over your fears and try out Windows.



The person who choreographed and danced in that commercial is **Prosenjit Guy Kundu** who has been pioneering street dancing in India for years. Born in India, Prosenjit grew up in the US where he discovered his passion for House and Hip Hop dance. Curious also to explore his father's birthplace, Prosenjit (whose mother is French) arrived in India in 2005 with the goal of spreading the art form far and wide. He danced wherever he got an opportunity, he taught whoever showed an interest. He's never left since. Prosenjit still travels to far corners of India hoping to get kids interested in dance.

Hi Prosenjit, really loved your work on the Windows 8 commercial. Let's talk about that. How did you get involved in that?

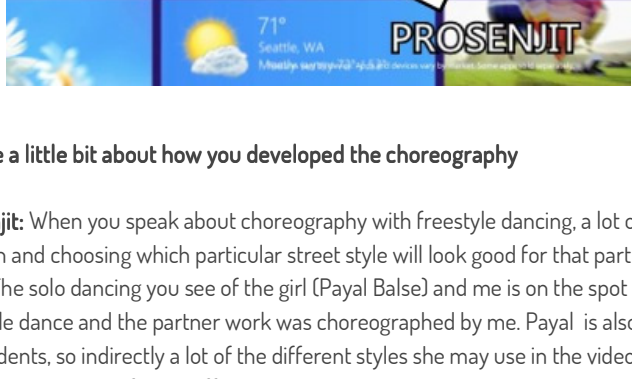
Prosenjit: There was an audition in Mumbai, which required freestyle dancers in the Street Dance forms. At the time we weren't told it was for such a big brand, so I really had no expectations going into the audition.

Actually, I almost didn't go cause I thought the requirement was for dancers from the age of around 18 to 22 yrs. I went anyways and got a call back saying that I was chosen and that the director loved my dancing. I then was told that it was for the Windows 8 Global Campaign to be shot in Taiwan with a world-renowned director **Tong Beng**.

What was the experience like?

Prosenjit: First of all I really enjoy visiting new places through my work and this was my first trip to Taiwan, so that in itself was a fun and new experience. Also, working with such a huge brand such as Microsoft Windows was a once in a lifetime experience especially since they have launched a new operating system that will be used by so many people all over the world. It was really professional and well organized and there were clients from all over the world at the shoot as well as other commercials being shot simultaneously for the campaign.

I was also hired as the choreographer and working with Tong Beng was really refreshing cause he gave me the freedom to execute all my ideas. All in all it was really exciting, the entire process, to be part of a global campaign on such a big scale.



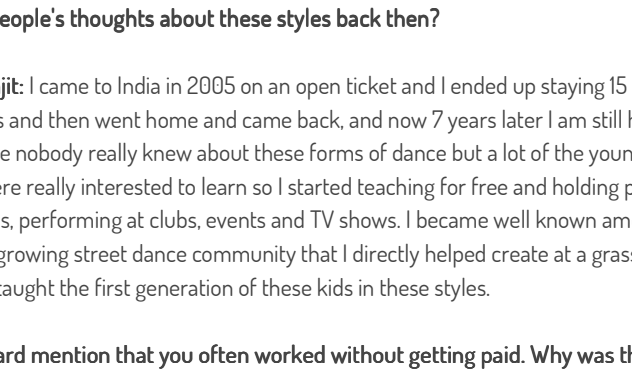
Tell me a little bit about how you developed the choreography

Prosenjit: When you speak about choreography with freestyle dancing, a lot of it is ideation and choosing which particular street style will look good for that part of the track. The solo dancing you see of the girl (Payal Balse) and me is on the spot freestyle dance and the partner work was choreographed by me. Payal is also one of my students, so indirectly a lot of the different styles she may use in the video are influenced by some of the stuff I have taught her.

People might think that the dancing is decided step by step beforehand where in reality we just dance for a couple of hours to the music and the director picks and chooses what he likes.

Now that I have seen this commercial: is there anything you can't choreograph? How about dentures? That would have to be real tough, right?

Prosenjit: I guess you would have to smile a lot and dance... ha ha ha!



Let's talk a bit about your work in this field. You came to India to establish breakdancing, popping and locking as dance forms. What year was it and what were people's thoughts about these styles back then?

Prosenjit: I came to India in 2005 on an open ticket and I ended up staying 15 months and then went home and came back, and now 7 years later I am still here. At the time nobody really knew about these forms of dance but a lot of the younger kids were really interested to learn so I started teaching for free and holding practice sessions, performing at clubs, events and TV shows. I became well known among the slowly growing street dance community that I directly helped create at a grass roots level. I taught the first generation of these kids in these styles.

I've heard mention that you often worked without getting paid. Why was that?

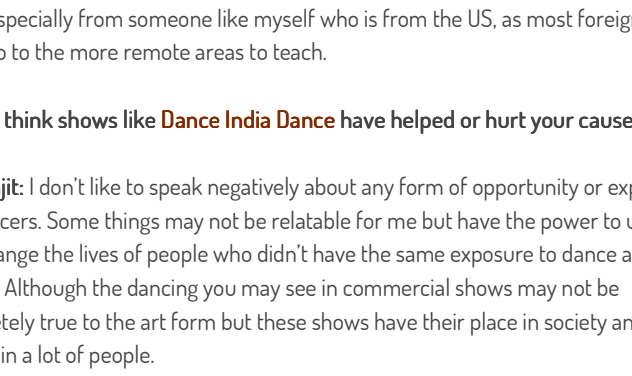
Prosenjit: There are different ways I can answer this question.

One, I don't expect to be paid when I teach kids that are not well off and eager to learn.

Two, I do cultural events and community building programs for free and

Three, when I get asked to do more commercial projects "for the love of dance" and not get paid...but I no longer agree to these requests

My ability to work and get paid well in India sets the standard for other younger dancers in my field. We have a skill and it has a value and so its important that dancers get paid well for their talent and hard work.



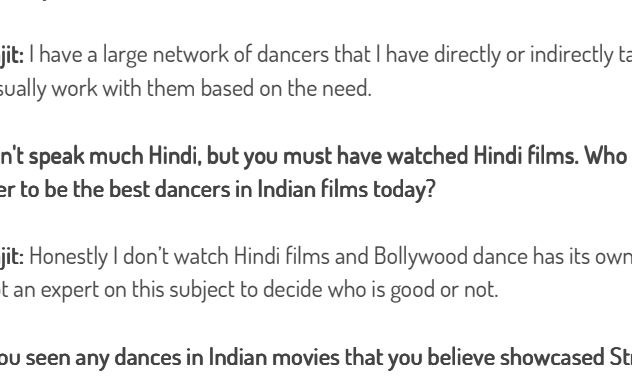
You spend a lot of time training people in remote locations. Why do you think your students want to learn dance?

Prosenjit: There is a rapid growth of Dance TV shows, Events, International contests, TV commercials, and Films that now embrace Street Dance styles as a legitimate form of dance. The people in the remote areas have a lot of heart and are eager to learn especially from someone like myself who is from the US, as most foreigners don't go to the more remote areas to teach.

Do you think shows like Dance India Dance have helped or hurt your cause?

Prosenjit: I don't like to speak negatively about any form of opportunity or exposure for dancers. Some things may not be reliable for me but have the power to uplift and change the lives of people who didn't have the same exposure to dance as myself. Although the dancing you may see in commercial shows may not be completely true to the art form but these shows have their place in society and they entertain a lot of people.

At the same time it doesn't really add fuel to my personal cause either other than the fact there is more demand for training, I was a judge on the first Street Dance reality TV show in India called Footloose and that was a really enjoyable experience and I tried to give as much accurate info to the public as I could on the show so no, I don't have a problem with dance TV shows.



When you have to choreograph something, how do you pick the people who will dance with you?

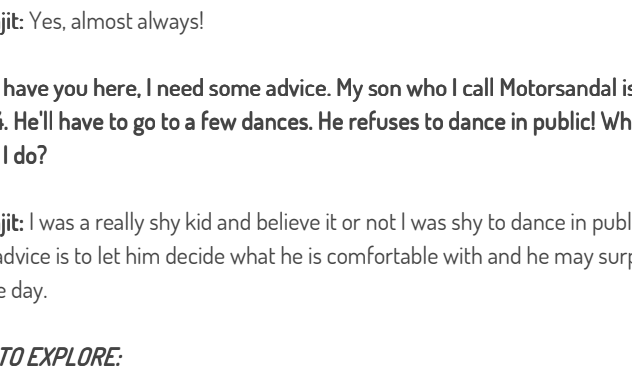
Prosenjit: I have a large network of dancers that I have directly or indirectly taught and I usually work with them based on the need.

You don't speak much Hindi, but you must have watched Hindi films. Who do you consider to be the best dancers in Indian films today?

Prosenjit: Honestly I don't watch Hindi films and Bollywood dance has its own flavor. I am not an expert on this subject to decide who is good or not.

Have you seen any dances in Indian movies that you believe showcased Street Dance really well?

Prosenjit: Not really as yet.



Let's say you had to work with a superstar who blew chunks at dancing. Would you:

- Shake your head and refuse the assignment
- Choreograph your dance to hide the superstar's lack of skills
- Create the best dance moves for the situation and tell your superstar to shape up

Singers always get asked to sing whenever they are at a party or gathering. Do you get asked to break out a few moves at parties?

Prosenjit: Yes, almost always!

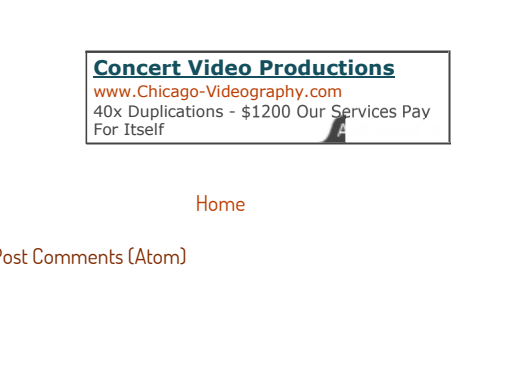
While I have you here, I need some advice. My son who I call Motorsandal is going to be 14. He'll have to go to a few dances. He refuses to dance in public! What should I do?

Prosenjit: I was a really shy kid and believe it or not I was shy to dance in public too, so my advice is to let him decide what he is comfortable with and he may surprise you one day.

MORE TO EXPLORE:

- Prosenjit's web site
- The original song Daav Lagaa from Agey Se Right (Vocals: Sona Mohapatra)

The Windows 8 Commercial



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Comments

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Ritu wrote:

Can't explain either Salman or Akshay to newbies. Not to mention Rohit Shetty. So good they are not on this list. Aspi you should do a post on music!


on [Bollywood 101: A brief introduction and movie recommendations for newbies](#)

Anonymous wrote:

whaat! forgot the Atlas holding up the globe? Sallu myan. Kahan hai? on the other hand, how do you explain him to non-desis :)

on [Bollywood 101: A brief introduction and movie recommendations for newbies](#)

Susan Kaye Quinn wrote:

 Thanks for posting this! I've watched Band Baja Baraat and Luck by Chance on your recommendation and enjoyed them both - but in different ways. Bride and Prejudice was also very good, although I can ...


on [Bollywood 101: A brief introduction and movie recommendations for newbies](#)

Warner Carter wrote:

 There were films which were released without much fancy and owing to the innovative nature of the content that they had, they emerged as surprise hits, or rather sleeper hits, i.e. they gained in the ...

on [Box Office Report: Bollywood is making more hits!](#)

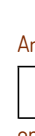
Aspi Haveewala wrote:

 I remember Jism. It made a lifelong fan of Bips out of me. But it would it work the same magic on everyone? :)

Kanan, I aim to watch all three. I know you are such a big fan of Akshay and I don't have ...

on [Bollywood 101: A brief introduction and movie recommendations for newbies](#)

Kanan wrote:

 What a great list! Even I haven't seen about half of these so really glad for the mini-reviews. Aspi, you must watch Hum Tum, SOTY, and Kahaani ASAP. Btw, Tashan is another one that should be on the l...

on [Bollywood 101: A brief introduction and movie recommendations for newbies](#)

Anonymous wrote:

You left out Jism off this list?

on [Bollywood 101: A brief introduction and movie recommendations for newbies](#)

Mind Rush wrote:

This is such a scary task, but no one is in a better position to make recommendations, than our omniscient Drift sahib! I was missing some of my favorites from your list until I realized that your lis...

on [Bollywood 101: A brief introduction and movie recommendations for newbies](#)

Mind Rush wrote:

Wow, these numbers look good! I want a post with pie charts: Who took what percentage of the profits from the major hit films of 2012?


on [2012: Bollywood's biggest winners](#)

Trade wrote:

Good analysis. It is good how you've given total box office. But you should mention the flops also. Joker was a flop and that goes against Akshay and Sonakshi

on [2012: Bollywood's biggest winners](#)

Susan Kaye Quinn wrote:

 Looking forward to your Bollywood 101 post! I can tell already that I've found the expert. :)

on [Dabangg 2 and Salman Khan versus Ajay Devgn](#)

Mind Rush wrote:

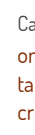
Wah, wah! Maan guys, Drift bhaiyaal! Kya sundar post hai!

If anyone in Kanpur can match up to to Chulbul's punches, or Munni's ab crunches, it's your pen (er, keyboard!)

Loved the comparison...fab job!...

on [Dabangg 2 and Salman Khan versus Ajay Devgn](#)

Aspi Haveewala wrote:

 Thanks for reading! Piyush's next book should be out around May 2013.

on [Piyush Jha, author Mumbaistan, talks about his super entertaining crime fiction](#)

Sanch wrote:

Read this book back in September and great review. Read up on some of the terms you used :D What I liked about this book is that all the characters have a very powerful motivation for doing what they ...

on [Piyush Jha, author Mumbaistan, talks about his super entertaining crime fiction](#)

Mind Rush wrote:

I have not read this book. Loved his comment about the worst crime in Bollywood. Captivating interview!

on [Piyush Jha, author Mumbaistan, talks about his super entertaining crime fiction](#)

Mind Rush wrote:

Mind Rush has been rushing around due to Christmas and work pressures and is therefore late to this party... Three cheers to you Drift-saab! You managed to get the attention of bank employees during t...

on [Vishal Bhardwaj: guys are more 'complexed' than girls](#)

Anonymous wrote:

Um... Erase is not dubstep.

on [Priyanka's new song Erase \(with The Chainsmokers\)](#)

Drift Memsaab wrote:

Well done, Aspi. I like the 'juggalaandi' that you and Piyush have in the interview. I look forward to his film just based on his responses.

Good timing for me..Now I have my holiday reading! I have t...

on [Piyush Jha, author Mumbaistan, talks about his super entertaining crime fiction](#)

velagyan wrote:

I think the movie was quite entertaining. The performances were strong and i didn't felt bored at all

on [Talaash: why it worked \(until that twist came along\)](#)

Anonymous wrote:

Even srk held his breath in all the bare body scenes in om shanti om. Its all about looking good one shot at a time. Then you see some of these men in real life and its huh who is that????

- Jeet


on [Vishal Bhardwaj: guys are more 'complexed' than girls](#)

radhika wrote:

...contrast that with Nayakan. Aamir screaming his head off was more weird than scary-tormented-soul. Misshapen Kamal did not even need to raise his voice for the same effect.

on [Vishal Bhardwaj: guys are more 'complexed' than girls](#)

Aspi Haveewala wrote:

 In a matter of great coincidental timing I ended up watching a bit of Ghajini in a waiting room today. In that scene in which Aamir takes his shirt off for the first time, you can see the man sucking ...

on [Vishal Bhardwaj: guys are more 'complexed' than girls](#)

Radhika wrote:

...on a side note. I bet you'll recently gymmed out pumped looks would have been laughed at as effeminate in the south. Mustachioed, pot bellied looks were no bar to lethal mardangi :)


on [Vishal Bhardwaj: guys are more 'complexed' than girls](#)

Radhika wrote:

I am loving this idea of guys getting all 'complexed' and vulnerable about their body image...ha ha cant stop laughing! I will never be able to see a shirtless hero again without chuckling. Thankyo...

on [Vishal Bhardwaj: guys are more 'complexed' than girls](#)


Aspi Haveewala wrote:

 Joules, no I haven't. And I've been hesitating but always happy to take a recommendation. Its on netflix so easy to get to.

leera, yes killer beginning! And I loved the way 'Pinky' was introduced to Aa...

on [Talaash: why it worked \(until that twist came along\)](#)

leera basu wrote:

 I have always been one to be spooked out by dark water. The second that car careened through a sunsaan gali into those foreboding pitch black waves, I was thrilled and hooked.

You have already cover ...

on [Talaash: why it worked \(until that twist came along\)](#)

Anonymous wrote:

Haven't seen the movie but you are right - the mustache adds an authority to chocolate hero Amir. btw, have you seen Kiran Rao's Dholbi Ghaat. Caught it on the plane on a trip and was completely surpr...

on [Talaash: why it worked \(until that twist came along\)](#)

Ritu wrote:

Agreed! The twist left me cold and thinking 'now what happened and where did that come from' - otherwise really enjoyed the rest of the movie. It was tough to watch and realistic but it was very vial...

on [Talaash: why it worked \(until that twist came along\)](#)

Aspi Haveewala wrote:

 Hey hey, I thought people liked The Devgn. Wish he made better movies though. I could get behind him. (And no, I haven't seen SoS yet)

on [Son of Sardar versus Jab Tak Hai Jaan: So who won?](#)

Wink wrote:

And he still chasing women! Heard about Kangana Ranaut? on [Son of Sardar versus Jab Tak Hai Jaan: So who won?](#)