



Frieze with Dancer and Musicians, Cleveland Museum of Art

For pleasure, for liberation?

Discourses on the performing arts in classical and medieval India

4th Zurich International Conference on Indian Literature and Philosophy (ZICILP) University of Zurich, 29th June - 1st July 2023

A fundamental ambiguity characterizes premodern Indian discourses on the performing arts. They are represented, on the one hand, as spectacles in which the arts of music, dance, storytelling, or poetic recitations are performed for the sake of pleasure, entertainment, and social prestige, and on the other as instruments for attaining religious merit and liberation.

This conference moves away from modern interpretations of Indian art as “spiritual” and from an aesthetic paradigm disconnected from social and political contexts. The focus is on the historical embeddedness of performance practices, and on the religious, aesthetic and intellectual discourses that inform the relationship between pleasure-orientation and soteriological goals.

Organizers

Dr. Elisa Ganser, Prof. Dr. Angelika Malinar

Venue

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