



Photos show Indian dance pioneer Astad Deboo.

# Indian dance pioneer Astad Deboo dies at 73



Indian dance pioneer Astad Deboo, who was famous for celebrating fusion and collaborating with international artists like Pina Bausch and Pink Floyd, died aged 73 yesterday, his family said. "He left us in the early hours of December 10, at his home in Mumbai, after a brief illness, bravely borne," Deboo's family announced on Facebook. "He leaves behind a formidable legacy of unforgettable performances combined with an unswerving dedication to his art, matched only by his huge, loving heart that gained him thousands of friends and a vast number of admirers," the statement added.

During a career that spanned half a century, Deboo consistently pushed boundaries, combining Indian classical dance forms such as Kathak and Kathakali with Western techniques to create a style that was indisputably modern. He performed with artists ranging from British rock band Pink Floyd,

German dancer Pina Bausch and choreographer Alison Becker Chase, and appeared on stage in over 70 countries according to local media reports.

He also collaborated with Indian artists including painter M.F. Hussain, Bollywood filmmaker Vishal Bharadwaj as well as Tamil director Mani Ratnam. He was awarded the Padma Shri, India's fourth highest civilian honor, in 2007. The Astad Deboo Dance Foundation, established by him in 2002, provided free training to poor and disabled students while Deboo himself worked with deaf students in India, Mexico and Hong Kong since the 1980s. Despite his success, Deboo felt financial sponsors were hard to come by for modern dance. "My journey has been full of ups and downs. Even today after 50 years, or 40 years, its difficult to get a sponsor for contemporary dance," he told Indian newspaper The Hindu in 2018. "You are always dancing on the edge." —AFP

