

**WEDNESDAYS**  
**@ THE CENTER**

**PRESENTS**

# Dancing with the Goddess

the Ras-Garba Traditions of Gujarat, India

A film by

**Purnima Shah**

Producer and director

**Wednesday, Sept. 26, 2012**

**12.00-1.00 pm**

**240 Franklin Center**

**2204 Erwin Road**

**Duke University**

**light lunch served**



“Dancing with the Goddess” is an ethnographic film focusing on the religious performative traditions of Goddess worship in Gujarat, India with particular attention to the Ras and Garba dances performed during the religious festival, Navaratri. Garba is a circle dance signifying the eternity or circle of life and performed by women on auspicious occasions including women’s vows, ritual worship, wedding ceremonies, and pregnancies and hence identified as a religio-cultural heritage. In the last few decades, however, the impact of globalization, industrialization, urban sprawl and the proliferation of commercial media has spawned a diminution of religious practices of the garba on the one hand and an increasing popularity of the “modernized” secular versions of the dance on the other, giving rise to new forms such as the disco-garba. The film exemplifies these transformations and questions the ramifications pertaining to the survival of the obscured symbolic meanings and religious connections of this performative genre with ancient traditions of Goddess worship in Gujarat.

**Presented by Duke University Dance Program in collaboration with the Department of Religion and the Center for South Asian Studies at Duke.**