



American Parai Team ...

St. Louis based non profit Tamil percussion dance team was formed to promote this vibrant music/dance combo art form. Consisting of working professionals, this team has been doing considerable charity work in Tamil Nadu, south India – close neighbors of Kerala.

Parai - is a circular drum, played with two sticks, one long and thin, the other short and thick.

In Tamil, the word 'parai' means to 'speak' or to 'tell'. Local histories describe the parai as an ancient instrument performed in the courts of Sangam, Chola, and Pandiyan rulers. The drums were used to announce important messages and orders of the great Tamil kings.

As an aural tradition, parai folk drumming does not have a codified system of written notation. Musicians learn through years of unconscious absorption, conscious listening, imitation, and practice.