

Sagepath presents a
Deeksha School of Performing Arts Production
in collaboration with Abhinayam

July 29, 2017
Joe Mack Wilson Center (formerly SPSU)
KSU Dance Theater, Marietta, GA



PRAKRITI



musings of motion, emotion & liberation



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Dancing with Traditions

It has been 15 years since I set foot on this soil. As an upcoming artist in India under my guru, there was a lot to achieve and conquer in the world of dance. The admiration and adulation I had received under her, was enough to deter anyone from changing the course of his or her life. As fate would have it, I got married and came here. It did feel different to start a life again, but that was the choice I consciously made. A new world awaited me. A world which I had never known. I was skeptical and questioned myself often.

Today, as I step into my 16th year of married life, I couldn't be happier. Yes, I didn't have the career I had set out on. I didn't get to continue to travel all over the world performing in famous theaters. Yet, I would not give this up for anything. I got to become a teacher. I got to setup my own performing arts school and teach the beautiful art of dance to such a wonderful group of passionate and eager young women. And I got to instill in me a deeper purpose.

A teacher is a gardener who fights against poor soil, little sun, and even gale force winds. But we tend and we nurture and we hope. We hope that the child will flower and produce fruit. And that is the beauty of teaching. After 10 years of formally shaping the life of more than 170 students who have stepped through the doors of our institution, I can confidently say, it has been a wonderful journey of self-discovery, cultural emancipation and dancing with traditions. I love my students and think of them as my own. Their journey from childhood to adulthood happens right in front of my eyes and I am grateful to have played a part in their wonder years as they fly away to lead their own lives. My aim has always been to instill in them a passion for the art form and transform them into strong leaders of art.

I can't imagine I could have achieved this, if destiny hadn't altered my course. Which brings me to today. It is with a great sense of pride, joy and the blessings of my guru, Padmashri Saroja Vaidyanathan, that I present this program to you. In 2009, we showcased "Sanskriti". In 2014, we came back with "Aakriti". Today, our humble tribute to you on the 10th year anniversary of the school is "Prakriti". The entire production and event management team at Deeksha School of Performing Arts have worked tirelessly to make this happen. So have all the teachers and artists – my personal friends, my senior disciples, my students, my tiny tots and all their parents.

This year we have partnered with Abhinayam, an inspiring endeavor of my dear friend Shankar (Sengupta) Da. Abhinayam is an innovative group looking to foster the art of theater in Atlanta



and I commend their passion for this type of art form. As a performing arts school, we felt that we could do something different and take a risk in bringing forth a drama with the same level of professionalism that we aspire for our dance productions. We drew strength from the knowledge that you, would allow us to stretch our boundaries and take the creative freedom we sought. I sincerely hope you accept a different offering in our production.

One of the most exciting aspects of this year's production is that we have Usha Ganguli amidst us directing the second act of our program. UshaDi, who has blazed a trail all over India with her thought provoking visual and oral communications has pushed us to the limits. With an unparalleled work ethic, and her passion for theater, she has been instrumental in infecting us with her enthusiasm and love. If ever we needed someone to show how it is done, if ever the underlying themes in Chandalika - of disenfranchisement, of inequity, of oppression, of hope, of salvation needed a contemporary interpretation and a language that threads it all together – she brought it all together.

This year we are raising funds for Raksha. Raksha is an organization close to my heart. The focus on women and the need for a voice for the oppressed even in this country has resonated with me ever since I came to know about their work. Please support Raksha in any way you can. They are doing some great work in our community.

An undertaking like this does not happen in a vacuum. From corporate sponsors to donors to organizations in the community who have supported us; many have left an indelible mark on our journey through their contributions. And we thank you for supporting us.

Enjoy the show and do let us know how we did.

Anupa G. Thakurta
Anupa Guha Thakurta



Prakriti - Musings of Motion, Emotion and Liberation

Prakriti (प्रकृति) (in Vedanta) is the prime material energy of which all matter is composed. Wherever energy exists in the world and whenever power becomes active, Prakriti is said to be working. It is the basic nature of intelligence by which the Universe (depicted as a feminine form) exists and functions. It is described in Bhagavad Gita as the "primal motive force". Prakriti (or Shakti) means energy, power, movement, change, nature. It is the maternal principle – the provider, the source of abundance. It offers nourishment, warmth and security as well as provides energy and impetus for action.

Prakriti is Deeksha School of Performing Arts' humble tribute to power of women – an ode to the creative feminine; from the mythological women to the women in society today. From the traditional to contemporary – Prakriti alludes to the various forms of women and the world around them with creations showcasing a myriad of dances in the Bharatanatyam style. The program depicts women in their grace, purity, tenderness, beauty and their relationships with other women, their daughters and the men in their lives. The program features two Acts.

Act 1 - Nritya, showcases traditional and contemporary dances of the maternal principle with characters and stories from the Hindu mythology. The myriad of dances followed in a traditional Bharatanatyam dance concert juxtaposing contemporary music celebrates the various forms of feminine energy depicting her as Prakriti, Shakti, Durga, Ganga, and exploring her relationships with Shiva, Brahma and Vishnu. Metaphorically all women should mirror what the mythological women were, empowered, liberated, and quintessentially powerful. The show even attempts to venture into the astrological aspects of the universe through a unique composition called 'sun signs'.

Act 2 - Natya, in the second act is aptly called Prakriti: The Untouchable, a recreation of Rabindranath Tagore's Chandalika written in the year 1938 under the direction of renowned theater maestro and director – Usha Ganguli. The dance drama revolves around the societal women, the complexities of human mind and its conflicting needs and wants. It bespeaks the anguish of a girl, "Prakriti" whose consequence of birth compels her to live on the edges of society as an untouchable. Prakriti, the daughter of a black magician 'Chandal' emerges as a voice of the silenced and marginalized in history. She is a rebel who questions societal norms that relegated her to an existence of a lesser being, an untouchable. A chance incident of providing

water to a monk sparks a new self-realization in her. The 'dancing body of Prakriti' becomes a symbol of mobility, resistance and autonomy. Through her dance movements Prakriti articulates her anger and love. Anger, against a social status imposed upon her to which she finds herself shackled for life. And love, for a monk who respects and acknowledges her as a human being.

The program attempts to deliver and associate itself with the message, that you are not just a pretty face, you are Prakriti, you are Shakti. You are Nature - Never forget for a moment that you have the power to give and nourish life. Mother nature is all powerful and you are part of that potent force of life. If the world around you does not appreciate and value your loving nature, occasionally you may have to showcase your Shakti or personality too to keep your world in a good balance. Do not be trampled upon - neither physically nor emotionally. Be bold and stand up for something that you truly believe in. Gain the trust of your children and become their friend so that they can discuss freely with you. You have a lot to teach so that they have a good moral and value belief system to live a good life. Understand men better - men also have their share of challenges in life.

And of course, always be Glad to be a Woman!!



About Anupa Thakurta and Deeksha School of Performing Arts

Anupa Guha Thakurta is an exponent of the traditional and classical Indian dance form of Bharatanatyam in the Tanjavur style, which is the oldest and the richest classical dance of India. The Tanjavur style is characterized by its grace and vigor – symbolic of Anupa's personality. Anupa was introduced to Bharatanatyam at the tender age of six by her first guru - Shrimati Thankamuni Kutti of Kalamandalam, Kolkata, India. It was under the tutelage of Padmashri Guru Saroja Vaidyanathan of Ganesa Natyalaya (largest School of Bharatanatyam Dance and Performing Arts in New Delhi, India) that her talent was honed. Under her tutelage and blessings, Anupa completed her 'Arangetram' (Bachelor's Degree in the Bharatanatyam) in 1998.

She has successfully passed numerous arts and dance related courses with distinction and honor offered by the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya Mandal (University of Dance and Music) in Mumbai, India and Prayag Sangeet Samiti (Indian Association of

Renowned Dancers and Musicians) in Allahabad, India. Anupa has also studied Bharatanatyam in theory, called the "NATYA SHASTRA" (an encyclopedia on Dance, Drama and Music) during her training as a dancer. She was conferred the honorary title of "Natyashree" by her Guru for demonstrating mastery over movements to grace, balance, suppleness, physical endurance and a faultless sense of rhythm. The ancient dance form has now become her first love and profession.

Anupa exemplifies the entire range of emotions, styles and substance of the dance, and brings to life the mystique and magic of the art form through her live performances, lecture-demonstrations, choreographies and teaching a wide range of enthusiasts all over the world since the early 1990s. Anupa has received numerous accolades, reviews and commendations from the various communities in India and the US for her contribution to growth of the dance form. Her repertoire of performances range from the traditional 'Nataraja and dance festivals' in India to 'Festivals of India' across the globe.

Known for her bold, modern themes and strong choreography, Anupa is equally at home presenting a traditional Bharatanatyam margam for the 'season' in Delhi or experimenting with form and style for performances in the US. An artist by heart, Anupa has always been open to the juxtaposition and fusion of different dance forms and towards this she maintains an open dialogue with artists of various dance forms throughout the US. She has incorporated interesting and different movements in her dances to add dynamism – an excellent example of her innovation and need to evolve with the times. She has performed with artists of different art forms and worked as a cultural ambassador to instill an awareness of traditional dances around the world.

To continue her pursuit of perfection in the dance form and impart Bharatanatyam training to many disciples in India and lately in Atlanta, she started Deeksha School of Performing Arts (DSPA).

Most of her students have been deeply focused in the art form and continue to learn even today. DSPA aims to promote love and passion for Indian traditions, history and mythology through the art form of dance. Currently DSPA imparts training in Bharatanatyam to more than 65 students in the metro Atlanta area. DSPA has participated in various cultural events across Atlanta and other parts of the United States. DSPA students are not only passionate about Bharatanatyam but any dance form in general. Most of the DSPA students end up with leadership roles in various cultural and community organizations as well as lead dance groups in their respective colleges.





With the blessings of my Guru
Padmashri
Saroja Vaidyanathan

Padmashri Guru Saroja Vaidyanathan trained under the accomplished Guru Lalitha of Saraswati Gana Nilayam from a very tender age of seven. She is the third generation (parampara) disciple of the famous Guru Kattumannar Muthukumaran Pillai. She has also undergone training in Carnatic music under Prof. P. Sambamoorthy at the Madras University.

Guru Saroja has been one of India's most prominent Bharatanatyam exponents earning her fame as an intelligent and innovative choreographer. Her dance repertoire has revolved around subjects ranging from mythology to current social issues that have been widely acclaimed by the audience and the critics alike. She has widely traveled within India as well as globally performed and given demonstrations at various prestigious venues. She has also choreographed over a score of enthralling ballets based on mythology and social themes that have been appreciated and repeatedly sponsored.

As the Founder President, Saroja Vaidyanathan established GANESA NATYALAYA, a leading fine arts institution in New Delhi, the capital of India, in 1974. This institution has churned out over a hundred graduates who have performed their Arangetrams (graduations) and traveled around the world spreading the art form through concerts, lecture demonstrations and arts schools.

Guru Saroja is the recipient of several National and State awards and titles, including "Padmashri" from Government of India, "Delhi State Award" from Sahitya Kala Parishad of Government of Delhi, and "Kalaimamani" from Government of Tamil Nadu besides being honored with titles and credits from various prestigious institutions. Saroja has delved deeper into the field of Bharatanatyam by authoring several books such as "The Science of Bharatanatyam" which was released by the then Honorable Prime minister of India Mrs. Indira Gandhi and adjudged the best art book of the year. Other publications include "Bharatanatyam - In Depth Study", released by the then president of India Mr. S.D Sharma, "Carnataka Sangeetham", released by Mr. H.Y. Sharada Prasad, the then Principal Secretary of Prime Minister and submitted a research paper "Encyclopedia of Bharatanatyam" to National Council for Research and Training. She has released audio set to compositions of Subramanya Bharati.

For Saroja and her disciples like Anupa, dance is a means of expressing the inner quest for self-realization. She has taught her students to aspire to use the dance form as a medium to come closer to the supreme truth.



Deeksha School
and Abhinayam
welcomes
Usha Ganguli

Usha Ganguli (born 1945) is an Indian theatre director-actor and activist, most known for her work in Hindi theatre in Kolkata in the 1970s and 1980s. She founded Rangakarmee theatre group in 1976, known for its productions like Mahabhoj, Rudali, Court Martial, and Antaryatra. Born in Jodhpur, Rajasthan, in a family from village Nerva in Uttar Pradesh, Usha Ganguly learnt Bharatanatyam dance and later moved to Kolkata, where she studied at Shri Shikshayatan College, Kolkata and did her master's degree in Hindi literature.

She was awarded the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for Direction, given by the Sangeet Natak Akademi, India's National Academy of Music, Dance & Drama in 1998. She has also been honored by the West Bengal Government as the best actress for the play Gudia Ghar.

Professionally Usha Ganguli retired as a senior lecturer in Hindi language & literature from Bhawanipur Education Society college and now devotes all her time to theatre, which has been her first love. Trained as a Bharatanatyam dancer, she brings to her work in theatre as director and actress, the choreographic skills that are enriched by her scholarly and literary sensibilities as evident in works like Mahabhoj, Lok Katha, Holi, Court Martial, Rudali, Himmat Mai, Mukti, Shobhayatra, Kashinama, Trilogy woven around the life & works of Sadat Hasan Manto.

Rangakarmee, the theatre group that she set up in 1976, remains the most active and prolific group performing in Hindi in India. Travelling extensively throughout the country and many parts in the world including Germany, Pakistan, USA, Bangladesh. Most of the production by Rangakarmee have been scripted and directed by Smt. Usha Ganguli. Apart from the productions that she directed, she has also performed in plays directed by Tripti Mitra, Shyamanad Jalan, Bibhas Chakraborty, Rustam Bharucha and Anuradha Kapoor and appeared in solo performances of texts by France Rame, Bertolt Brecht and herself.

Her achievements in and contribution to Indian Theatre have been recognized in the form of numerous awards including the prestigious Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (1998) and several awards from the West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh state academies.

Smt. Ganguli has served as member in several committees of both local & national importance like Senate Member of Calcutta University Member of Executive Committee of Sangeet Natak Akademi; Society Member of National School of Drama; Executive Committee of Paschimbanga Natya Academy; Member in the Satyajit Ray Film Institute, Kolkata; Member of Academic Councils of Rabindra Bharati University. She is now serving as Adjunct Professor at Tagore Memorial Institute under the auspicious of Visva Bharati University.

About Abhinayam

Abhinayam was formed in Atlanta in 2016 just prior to their inaugural stage performance in November. The idea had been baking for a few years – nurtured by a group of individuals who wanted to expand beyond linguistic and thematic barriers and build bridges with other communities in their love of artistic expressions. As evidenced in their first production, a biopic on the legendary theater doyen Sisir Kumar Bhaduri, Abhinayam combined well researched elements of stage, visual arts, costume, songs, and dialog reminiscent of 1920s Bengal.

In keeping with that tradition of seeking the new and groundbreaking, Abhinayam is partnering with Deeksha School of Performing Arts in presenting an epic interpretation of Tagore's Chandalika by noted playwright Usha Ganguli. Chandalika was written by Tagore in 1938, in the backdrop of B. R. Ambedkar's passionate battles against untouchability and casteism in India, which often put him at odds with Gandhi. Tagore's Buddhist dénouement foreshadowed Ambedkar's own conversion to Buddhism in 1956. Usha Ganguli's interpretation of Chandalika takes Tagore's play and grinds it in the sweat and pain of the oppressed classes and the visual imagery built with elements of earth and nature that is a signature of Ushaji's style and presentation.

Abhinayam will continue to challenge themselves and the audience with themes and stories that provoke and stimulate while not deviating from the essence and rigor of stage performance.

Please visit our website www.abhinayam.club and stay informed and supportive.



Program Guide

Act 1: Nritya
Dances of the maternal principle, the creative feminine energy

Aum
The Sound of Prakriti

We begin the program with the holy chant of Aum. If there is one word, in all the oral traditions of Vedas and Upanishads, that encapsulates the answer to the mysteries of life, it is this sacred word. This powerful chant is repeated millions of times across the nations of men and women, is profound, religion agnostic and infinitely deep. Aum is a state that the human mind cannot comprehend and a spirit which preserves the past and the present while starting the regeneration for the future. Aum is Prakriti. Aum is the universe. Likewise, all else that may exist beyond the bounds of time, is Aum.

Featuring: Rati Sarkar, Abhi Nathan, Navya Katragadda, Veena Anil Kumar, Shruti Prathip, Olivia Datta, Joyshree Saha, Anushree Saha, Paroma Mukhopadhyay, Amrita Sarker

Thodoya Mangalam
Invocation

Thodoya Mangalam is an introductory song presented to invoke the blessings of the lord and purify the "Prakriti" (environment) in which the program is being presented. Meant to bring about an auspicious effect to the entire presentation, the invocation is composed of swaras and ghana ragas.

Featuring: The entire dance ensemble

Nagendra Haraya
The Panchakshara (five syllables) hymn

Per Indian mythology, Shiva is said to be Purusha and Shakti is said to be Prakriti. Prakriti represents Nature. Purusha is the consciousness whose observation creates actuality out of potentiality. He is masculine because he creates life out of himself like a man. Shiva is therefore symbolically depicted as Purusha. In this composition, Shiva is depicted as someone who wears a garland of snakes, has ash all over him, has three eyes, yet is eternal and pure.

Featuring: Aakriti Majumdar, Anjali Chareddy, Sreya Srinivas, Puspita Dhar, Avani Dhuri, Shreya Paul, Sneha Ghosh, Deeksha Uday, Srija Dutta, Tarini Gajelli, Easha Mukherjee, Moumita Sutar

Allaripu
The Flowering Bud

Allaripu is a perfect introduction to the audience of the basic framework of Bharatanatyam. A short and crisp nritya (abstract dance form) piece, allaripu is done to the accompaniment of rhythmic syllables recited by the Nattuvanar (one who says the beats) along with the talam (rhythm) and the mridangam (percussions). There is no song for this piece. In this dance, the aramandi (the essential half sit position of Bharatanatyam, in which the dancer compresses her height to at least 3/4 of her original height to give the typical triangular shape and stability) posture and the way movements flower out on both sides of the body become clear. Very precise, the movements attempt to draw clean lines in space. Crisp movements of the neck, eyes and shoulder show exactly how the body works in Bharatanatyam.

Featuring: Susmita Dhar, Nyssa Talukder, Sanvi Mathan, Mehek Saha, Sohini Gupta, Ashvika Anil, Dona Roy, Sharanya Hari

Jatiswaram
Unity of music, rhythm and movements

The purpose of jatiswaram is to create various beautiful forms, purely for artistic pleasure. No mood or sentiment is expressed. There are certain choreographic features that are typical of a jatiswaram – an elegant gait to each side of the stage, for example – that contribute to its unique quality. The dance combines rhythmic sequences of movements in groupings of jatis. It is performed to swara passages in a particular raga (melodic scale) and tala, accompanied by musical instruments. These two elements give the item its name, jatiswaram.

Featuring: Proma Chowdhury, Sarita Saha, Siya Saha, Tanvi Dhuri, Sukanna Sarkar, Uma Mukhopadhyay, Gopika Das, Sanjana Menon, Naeha Nayar, Jillian Vacha, Maya Narayan, Manasa Prasad

Thillana
The Showering of flowers

A lively item of pure nritya, the thillana is performed to specialized rhythmic syllables sung to the melody, and repeated. Each passage begins with graceful body movements, which give way to adavu sequences (korvais) executed in two or three tempos, culminating in scintillating teermanams. The thillana embodies the Lasya, or lyrical, aspect of nritya in its alluring poses and exquisite patterns of movement. The movements of a thillana are joyous and expansive, giving it a vivacious quality.

Featuring: Rati Sarkar, Veena Anil Kumar, Shruti Prathip, Olivia Datta, Nisha Raj, Anupa Thakurta



Program Guide

Aiyigiri Nandini

Daughter of the mountains

A very popular piece in praise of Shakti (or Prakriti) who is portrayed as the daughter of the mountains, the wife of Shiva, the mother of the world, and the slayer of the demons. The original traditional hymn was written and recited to worship Shakti by Sri Adishankaracharya.

Featuring: Aakriti Majumdar, Anjali Chareddy, Sreya Srinivas, Puspita Dhar, Avani Dhuri, Shreya Paul, Sneha Ghosh, Deeksha Uday, Srija Dutta, Tarini Gajelli, Easha Mukherjee, Moumita Sutar

Nritya Swara

The humble beginnings of Bharatanatyam

The young students of Deeksha School in the age group of 4 to 6 present a Nritya piece, in which they display all the adavus that they have learned. Adavus are basic steps in Bharatanatyam which every dancer must learn before he or she goes to the next level of learning. They form the fundamental lesson for the entire syllabus of Bharatanatyam.

Featuring: Rishika Ghora, Debi Das, Anishka Chibbar, Sanah Mathan, Manya Pradeep, Rishima Saha, Ravina Katragadda, Shorani Roy, Amrita Chandrasekaran.

Shiva Tandava Stotram

The Flowering Bud

An ode to Shiva describing his power and beauty. It is believed that Lord Shiva is the king of all dancers. He was an expert in the tandava style of dancing which is vigorous and manly. Shiva symbolises consciousness, the masculine principle, the unchanging, unlimited and unswayable observer. Only when Shiva and Prakriti combine can action, movement and creation arise.

Featuring: Rati Sarkar, Abhi Nathan, Navya Katragadda, Olivia Datta, Joyshree Saha, Anushree Saha, Paroma Mukhopadhyay, Amrita Sarker

Jaya Gange

Ode to River Ganga

In Hinduism, the river Ganges is considered sacred and is personified as a goddess. Hindus believe that bathing in the river causes the remission of sins and facilitates Moksha (liberation from the cycle of life and death), and that the water is pure. Ganga is also a manifestation of Prakriti, the melodious, the fortunate, the mother that gives much milk, the eternally pure, the delightful, the body that is full of love, affords delight to the eye and leaps over mountains bestowing water and happiness, and the benefactor of all that lives.

Featuring: Anupa Thakurta, Nisha Raj

Brahma's Dance

The Creator of this Universe

Brahma is the first god in the Hindu triumvirate, responsible for the creation, upkeep and destruction of the world. Brahma symbolizes the aspect of supreme reality that brings forth creation and has a closer affinity to Prakriti. His divine consort is Saraswati, the Goddess of learning who provides him with knowledge that is necessary for the process of creation. This composition is a tribute to the creator in us.

Featuring: Proma Chowdhury, Sarita Saha, Tanvi Dhuri, Uma Mukhopadhyay, Gopika Das, Sanjana Menon, Naeha Nayar, Jillian Vacha, Maya Narayan, Manasa Prasad

Sun Signs

The 12 zodiacs in our calendar

A sun sign refers to a time-space location at the moment of your birth. The position of the earth in relation to the sun indicates your sun sign. A sun sign, is the active part of your personality. Just like the sun shows itself with blaring intensity, the personality traits we show people most are those shown through our sun signs. Through this unique composition, we showcase the 12 zodiac signs of the calendar represented through their unique symbols. Do you know what your star sign means?

Featuring: Rati Sarkar, Abhi Nathan, Navya Katragadda, Olivia Datta, Joyshree Saha, Anushree Saha, Paroma Mukhopadhyay, Amrita Sarker, Aakriti Majumdar, Anjali Chareddy, Sreya Srinivas, Puspita Dhar, Avani Dhuri, Shreya Paul, Sneha Ghosh, Deeksha Uday, Srija Dutta, Tarini Gajelli, Easha Mukherjee, Moumita Sutar

Follow my lead - Finale

An Indian Raga Adaptation - Music credit: Shape of You: Carnatic Mix (Feat. Aditya Rao) by Indian Raga

We conclude Act 1 with a tribute to the beauty of the modern day American women using an innovative Indian Raga adaptation of the number-one single in the charts of 30 different countries called “Shape of You” by Ed Sheeran. Ultimately Deeksha School teaches every student to be independent, powerful and beautiful. This composition is a celebration of all our students, how dance has shaped their lives and their achievements past, present and future.

Featuring: The entire dance ensemble.



Program Guide

Act 2 – Natya

Prakriti – the Untouchable, Tagore’s Chandalika in Hindi Directed by Usha Ganguli

Cast: Maa (Anupa Guha Thakurta), Prakriti (Payel De), Ananda (Anindya Chakraborty), Bhairav (Shubhadeep Roy), Raani Ma (Dona Paul Roy), Brahmin (Subhadra Gupta), Sipahi (Premanand Goswami & Somesh Karanjee), Sangini (Ruchira Basu Roy & Mallika Basu), Aadithya Prem, Chalamaya Batchu, Sohawm Sengupta, Satish Dharmarajan .

Chandalini, Graamvaasi, Monks, Nuns: Students from Deeksha School of Performings Arts, Volunteers from Abhinayam

Scene 1: Destiny unites us

Drought has set in and water is scarce in the village. Maa dances in resolute demonstration of solidarity with her Chandals - a dance of dignified majesty and grace in the face of daily injustices she and the tribe faces and will face in the future.

Scene 2: Questioning destiny

At home, Prakriti asks Maa the hard questions about the meaning of life, it’s injustices and why she should worship a God who is indifferent to their plight. The villagers summon Maa to find them a source of water using her special powers.

Scene 3: Water for the privileged

Maa works her magic and finds water. The Chandals rush to fill their pots but is prevented by the Brahmin and the King’s soldiers. Prakriti’s revulsion for the social injustices knows no bound.

Scene 4: My love for you is endless

Prakriti, as a sign of defiance, breaks the bow that Maa used to pull water from the depths of earth. Maa and Prakriti talk and each explain their rationality. Ultimately, filial love embraces help them bond and erase their difference of opinion.

Scene 5: The coming of spring

Spring has come and it is time for joy and celebration. Amid all the laughter and happiness, Prakriti is reminded by merchants that their wares are off limits to her as her mere touch will pollute the bangles and curd they sell to villagers. For her, winter lingers in the middle of Spring’s bounty. The King’s soldiers have a prisoner who escapes.

Scene 6: The slave and the untouchable

The prisoner is provided refuge by Prakriti. They are bound by their hapless plight - by the cruel hand that fate has dealt them. Ironically, the prisoner is only safe in the house of the untouchable because no one will visit. Ananda, the Buddhist monk, however, visits. He convinces Prakriti that she is no different from any other human and quenches his thrust from her hands.

Scene 7: The royal summons

Ananda’s words are seared in her mind and in her being. She recognizes in a moment of clarity that Ananda has given her the answer to all the questions that she has continued to ask about life’s unfairness. Maa, in the meantime, is again summoned to use her magic spell to retrieve the Queen’s lost bird.

Scene 8: The bird has flown

The Queen cannot understand why the bird would have flown away from its life of luxury in a gilded cage. Maa requests a grain of bird feed so her spells can connect to the bird and convince the bird to return.

Scene 9: Unattainable

Prakriti is still tormented by Ananda and his revelations. She wants Maa to bring back Ananda using her magic spell just as she did with the Queen’s bird.

Scene 10: Salvation

Maa knows the dangers of doing so and the dangerous path she is embarking on. She, however, cannot say no to her daughter. She dances the dance to bring Ananda back....



Our Expression of Gratitude

Raksha, Deeksha School of Performing Arts and Abhinayam gratefully thank and acknowledge the contributions of our corporate sponsors, donors, foundations, community organizations and individual contributors who made this fundraiser possible. It is our sincere attempt to acknowledge and thank everyone who contributed to this effort. We sincerely apologize for any omissions.

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- Raksha, Bengali Association of Greater Atlanta, Puja Parishad, Purbasha Atlanta, Spotlight Columbus Inc.

A big Thank you to all our volunteers, sponsors, students, parents and patrons who made this show possible.



Meet Team Prakriti

Act 1: Nritya

CONCEIVED & CHOREOGRAPHED BY

- Anupa Guha Thakurta (Maa)

FEATURING:

- Anupa Guha Thakurta (Maa)
- Nisha Raj

GRADUATE DANCERS (ARANGETRAM COMPLETED)

- Rati Roshni Sarkar
- Abhi Nathan
- Navya Katragadda

SENIOR DANCERS

- Shruti Prathip
- Veena Anil Kumar
- Olivia Datta
- Joyshree Saha
- Anusree Saha
- Paroma Mukhopadhyay
- Amrita Sarker

DANCERS

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| • Aakriti Majumdar | • Anjali Chareddy |
| • Sreya Srinivas | • Puspita Dhar |
| • Avani Dhuri | • Shreya Paul |
| • Sneha Ghosh | • Deeksha Uday |
| • Srija Dutta | • Moumita Sutar |
| • Easha Mukherjee | • Tarini Gajelli |

SUPPORTING DANCERS

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| • Proma Chowdhury | • Sarita Saha |
| • Tanvi Dhuri | • Sukanna Sarkar |
| • Sanjana Menon | • Naeha Nayar |
| • Gopika Das | • Siya Saha |
| • Jillian Vacha | • Maya Narayanan |
| • Uma Mukhopadhyay | • Manasa Prasad |
| • Susmita Dhar | • Nyssa Talukder |
| • Sanvi Mathan | • Mehek Saha |
| • Sohini Gupta | • Ashvika Anil |
| • Dona Paul Roy | • Sharanya Hari |
| • Rishika Ghora | • Debi Das |
| • Anishka Chibbar | • Sanah Mathan |
| • Maanya Pradeep | • Rishima Saha |
| • Ravina Katragadda | • Shorani Roy |
| • Amrita Chandrasekaran | |

PRODUCED BY

Abir Thakurta

DIGITIZATION, MIXING AND ADDITIONAL MUSIC

Sandeep Savla (AV Studios)

Vocals and Instrumentation for Sun Signs by Siddharth Kelam

SCRIPT AND NARRATION : Shankar Sengupta

HOST & PRESENTER : Aruna Rao-Mccann

LIGHTING DESIGN : Abir Thakurta

STAGE MANAGEMENT TEAM : Koushik Talukdar, Bob Nayar, Puja Shah, Ahona Chatterjee, Kaushik Basu, Monamee Adhikari

ARTWORK : Sanjoy Maity

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY : Venkat Kuttua

Act 2: Natya - Tagore's Chandalika in Hindi

DIRECTED BY

Usha Ganguli

PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT BY

Shankar Sengupta

FEATURING:

- Anupa Guha Thakurta (Ma)
- Payel De (Prakriti)
- Anindya Chakraborty (Ananda)
- Shubhadeep Roy (Bhairav)
- Dona Paul Roy (Raani Ma)
- Subhadra Gupta (Brahmin)
- Premanand Goswami (Sipahi)
- Somesh Karanjee (Sipahi)
- Ruchira Basu Roy (Sangini)
- Mallika Basu (Sangini)
- Aadithya Prem, Chalamaya Batchu, Sohawm Sengupta, Satish Dharmarajan

Chandalini, Graamvaasi, Nuns, Monks:

Students from Deeksha School of Performings Arts, Volunteers from Abhinayam

SONGS/MUSIC/PLAYBACK

Mousumi Karanjee, Ruma Sengupta, Barnali Banerjee, Ashok Sarker, Moitri Sarker, Byasdeb Saha, Shubhadeep Roy, Dona Paul Roy

RECORDING, MIXING AND QUEUING – SOUND ENGINEERING

Indranil Chowdhury, Somesh Karanjee, Jogy Jose (Divinity AV)

Meet Team Prakriti

LIGHTING DESIGN AND QUEUING

Usha Ganguli, Shankar Sengupta

COSTUME DESIGN, STITCHING, PROCUREMENT

Usha Ganguli (Act 2), Anupa Guha Thakurta (Act 1),
Radhika Katragadda, Adimathara Preethy, Rina Datta Chakravorty, Jayita Deb

STAGE DESIGN AND SETUP

Anirban Majumder, Arup Dhar, Subhadra Gupta, Somesh Karanjee, Ananda Rakhit

PROPS

Sonjukta Halder, Joyshree Guin

EVENT MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION

Rajeev Menon, Radhika Katragadda, Srijata Chareddy, Dipankar Roy, Ashim Saha

RAKSHA COORDINATORS

Aparna Bhattacharyya, Anjali Guntur

SPONSORSHIPS AND FUND RAISING

Radhika Katragadda, Ashim Saha, Abir Thakurta

MARKETING, TICKETING, PROMOTIONS AND SALES

Beena Prathip, Soma Datta, Radhika Katragadda, Srijata Chareddy, Arup Dhar,
Moitri Sarker, Debjani Saha, Roopa Luthra, Dipankar Roy, Ashim Saha, Neeta Bose,
Anjali Guntur

PRESS KIT

Rina Datta Chakravorty

HOSPITALITY AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Rajeev Menon, Anjali Guntur, Sumit Datta, Dipankar Roy

DEEKSHA VOLUNTEERS

All Deeksha Moms and Parents

ABHINAYAM VOLUNTEERS

Rina Datta Chakravorty, Joy Bhattacharjee, Kaushik Basu

KSU TEAM

Robert Jenkins, Staff at the Dance Theater at Kennesaw State University

INSURANCE AND TAX ADVISORY FOR DEEKSHA SCHOOL

Rick Hendrix (Pilot Mountain Insurance), John Henry Egle (H&R Business Services)

LEGAL COUNSEL FOR DEEKSHA SCHOOL

Cy Pritchard - The Law Office of C. H. Pritchard, LLC

IMMIGRATION COUNSEL FOR DEEKSHA SCHOOL

Jay Solomon, Shaibalini Bagchi

TRAVEL AGENT FOR DEEKSHA SCHOOL

Shiladitya Sinha, TNS Travels

BROCHURE

Srijata Chareddy, V Green Media (Hyderabad)



Does someone in your life:

A Non-Profit Support Organization for South Asians



1. Make you feel unsafe at home, work, or school?
2. Insult you by calling you names and making you feel small and unimportant?
3. Choke you? Punch you? Use objects to scare you? Use weapons to threaten you?
4. Tries to control you with threats of kicking you out of your home?
5. Threaten to hurt your children or take them away?
6. Threaten to take your children out of the country?
7. Not allow you to talk to or see your friends and family?
8. Threaten to hurt your family and friends?
9. Threatens to hurt themselves or others if you leave them or don't do what they say?
10. Keep you from seeing a doctor? Controls your access to birth control?
11. Threaten your immigration status or threaten to deport you?
12. Keep your documents and jewelry away from you?

13. Take and share pictures of you without your permission?
14. Record you or your phone conversations without your permission?
15. Restrict or keep you from learning how to drive, going to school or working?
16. Not provide you with money for basic needs, control your money or keep your money?
17. Force you to watch things in real live on television or videos) that you are not comfortable watching?
18. Touch you or others without permission in ways that make you uncomfortable?
19. Force you to have sex or perform acts that you are not comfortable with?
20. Pressure you to marry someone you don't want to marry? Pressure you to get married before you finish school?

If you can say yes to one or more of the statements above, please know that you are **not alone!**

Free and Confidential help is available.

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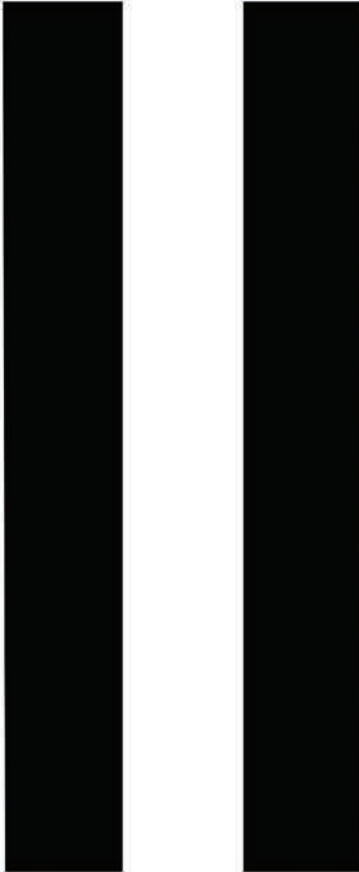
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