

Sunday, April 2, 2023

Performance Santa Fe Presents Ragamala Dance Company: Sacred Earth By Ranee Ramaswamy and Aparna Ramaswamy, Artistic Directors

Company: Lensic Performing Arts Center
Venue: Lensic Performing Arts Center
Location: Santa Fe, NM

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Ragamala Dance Company's 30th season continues with Sacred Earth, presented April 2, 2023, at 4pm at Performance Santa Fe's Lensic Performing Arts Center, 211 West San Francisco Street, Santa Fe, NM. Tickets start at \$35 and are available at performancesantafe.org/event/ragamala-dance-company.

Rooted in the expansive South Indian dance form of Bharatanatyam, Ragamala Dance Company manifests a kindred relationship between the ancient and the contemporary. Sacred Earth explores the interconnectedness between human emotions and the environment that shapes them. Performed with a stellar musical ensemble, the dancers create a sacred space to honor the divinity in the natural world and the sustenance we derive from it. Inspired by the philosophies behind the ephemeral arts of kolam and Warli painting, and the Tamil Sangam literature of India, Sacred Earth is Ranee and Aparna Ramaswamy's singular vision of the beautiful, fragile relationship between nature and man.

Presented through the generosity of Natalie Beller and Performance Santa Fe Season Sponsors, Ann Murphy Daily and William W. Daily; Leah Gordon

"Ragamala, directed by the mother-daughter team of Ranee and Aparna Ramaswamy, is an excellent company. Their devotion to the Bharatanatyam style and to treating that lineage as a living language is always radiantly clear." —The New York Times

"[the] universal and visual atmosphere is intoxicating, no matter your background...a wholly magnificent piece of live art." – The Chicago Tribune

About Ragamala Dance Company

Ragamala Dance Company is the vision of award-winning mother/daughter artists Ranee Ramaswamy and Aparna Ramaswamy. Over the last four decades, Ranee and Aparna's practice in the South Indian dance form of Bharatanatyam has shifted the trajectory of culturally rooted performing arts in the United States to create an exemplary company within the American dance landscape. Through both intimate solos and large-scale theatrical works for the stage, Ranee and Aparna empower the South Asian American experience. By engaging the dynamic tension between ancestral wisdom and creative freedom, they reveal the kindred relationship between ancient and contemporary that is urgently needed in today's world.

Featuring Aparna Ramaswamy as Principal Dancer, Ragamala has been commissioned and presented extensively throughout the U.S., India, and abroad, highlighted by the Kennedy Center (Washington, D.C.), Joyce Theater (New York), Lincoln Center (New York), Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival (MA), Walker Art Center (Minneapolis), American Dance Festival (Durham, NC), The Soraya (Southern California), Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, International Festival of Arts & Ideas (New Haven, CT), Cal Performances (Berkeley), Arts Center at NYU Abu Dhabi (United Arab Emirates), Just Festival (Edinburgh, U.K.), Bali Arts Festival (Indonesia), Sri Krishna Gana Sabha (Chennai, India), and National Centre for Performing Arts (Mumbai, India), among others. ragamaladance.org

Ragamala at 30

The word 'Ragamala' directly translates to 'garland of melodies.' Every day in India, people string together garlands of flowers as offerings to the gods, hoping the deities will vanquish the darkness and fill their life with radiance and meaning. Our work weaves together artistic and cultural practices from past generations to find new values within our current circumstances. The garland represents a collaborative ethos that unveils the synergies between people from every walk of life, finding and forming a language that speaks across time and cultural difference to probe the universal aspects of humanity. Ragamala at 30 continues to seek radiance and meaning by connecting the ancient and current ways in which we as human beings engage the world around us.

Ranee Ramaswamy is Founding Artistic Director of Ragamala Dance Company. Her creative vision is driven by a profound commitment to the artistic lineage imparted to her through four decades of training under legendary Bharatanatyam dancer/choreographer Padmabhushan Smt. Alarmél Valli, intertwined with a pioneering spirit of innovation and collaboration across culture and discipline. Since immigrating to the U.S. in 1978, Ranee has been a trailblazer, working tirelessly to create a place for her culturally rooted work on the major stages of the U.S. dance landscape. Her choreographic work has been commissioned and presented by the Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, Joyce Theater, Northrop, Walker Art Center, American Dance Festival, and Arts Center at NYU Abu Dhabi, among many others. In September 2021, Ranee's Fires of Varanasi opened the Kennedy Center's 50th Anniversary celebration. Ranee serves on the National Council on the Arts, appointed by President Barack Obama. Her recent honors include a Guggenheim Fellowship, Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, Bogliasco Foundation Fellowship (Italy), Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center Research Fellowship (Italy), United States Artists Fellowship, McKnight Distinguished Artist Award, Bush Choreography Fellowship, and 14 McKnight Fellowships for Choreography and Interdisciplinary Art, among others.

Aparna Ramaswamy is regarded in the U.S. as one of the exemplary soloists in Bharatanatyam. As a choreographer, performer, and culture

bearer, Aparna mines the artistic, philosophical, and intellectual depths of her dance form with the intent to evolve ancestral and cultural knowledge in the diaspora as a catalyst for contemporary human thought. Her four decades of training in Bharatanatyam under legendary dancer/choreographer Padmabhushan Smt. Alarmél Valli is the bedrock of her creative aesthetic. As Executive Artistic Director of Ragamala Dance Company, Aparna has catalyzed a bold new vision for Bharatanatyam in the diaspora. Her choreographic work ranges from emotionally spacious yet intimate solo presentations to large-scale, multidisciplinary theatrical works. Her work has been commissioned and presented by the Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, Joyce Theater, Northrop, American Dance Festival, Silk Road Ensemble, and Arts Center at NYU Abu Dhabi, among many others. In September 2021, Aparna's Fires of Varanasi was selected to open the Kennedy Center's 50th Anniversary celebration. Aparna's honors include a Guggenheim Fellowship, Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, Bogliasco Foundation Residential Fellowship (Italy), Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center Research Fellowship (Italy), Joyce Award, four McKnight Fellowships for Dance and Choreography, and the 2022 Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award from Carleton College, among other.

About Performance Santa Fe

Performance Santa Fe has been bringing the very best of music, dance, and theater to iconic Santa Fe locations since 1937. Now in its 86th season, the organization upholds excellence in the performing arts and brings joy and enrichment to the community. Alongside its extensive performance season, the organization runs three dynamic, exciting, and inclusive educational programs for students in the community— Arts for Life, the Masterclass Series, and the Field Trip Series. PSF's 2022-2023 season brings 27 performances to Santa Fe and celebrates the diverse possibilities of artistic expression.

Lensic Performing Arts Center
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<https://performancesantafe.org/event/ragamala-dance-company/>

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