

November, 20-21, 2021

The Cowles Center presents Ashwini Ramaswamy's Let the Crows Come

Company: Ashwini Ramaswamy
Venue: The Cowles Center / Online
Location: Minneapolis, MN

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Ashwini Ramaswamy's *Let the Crows Come* is presented on November 20, 2021 at 7:30pm CT and November 21, 2021 at 2pm CT at The Cowles Center in Minneapolis, MN. Livestream tickets are \$20; in-person tickets are \$25 (student/senior rate) and \$30 (general admission); and each are available at thecowlescenter.org/let-the-crows-come.

Evoking mythography and ancestry, Ashwini Ramaswamy's *Let the Crows Come* uses the metaphor of crows as messengers for the living and guides for the departed. *Let the Crows Come* evolved from a simple idea; when a DJ remixes a song, its essence is maintained while its trajectory is changed. To Minneapolis-based dancer/choreographer Ashwini Ramaswamy—a founding company member of the internationally renowned Ragamala Dance Company—this mutation is reminiscent of being a second-generation immigrant—a person that has been culturally remixed to fit into multiple places at once. This work features local movement artists Berit Ahlgren and Alanna Morris-Van Tassel who join Ramaswamy in exploring deconstruction and recontextualized memory.

"As an artist of diaspora, I am a cultural carrier with an instinct to move within ancestral patterns," explains Ramaswamy. "There is a continuum between what we perceive as real/tangible and what we accept as unknown/unknowable; this gravitation between the human, the natural, and the metaphysical—which are forever engaged in sacred movement—is a focal point in my work."

In a series of three dance solos, Ramaswamy (Bharatanatyam technique) and fellow Minneapolis-based dancers Alanna Morris-Van Tassel (contemporary/African Diasporic technique) and Berit Ahlgren (Gaga technique) deconstruct and recontextualize the South Indian classical dance form Bharatanatyam, recalling a memory that has a shared origin but is remembered differently from person to person. The dancers' use of imagery and narrative is set to a commissioned original score: the soaring voice of Carnatic singer Roopa Mahadevan and two other classical Indian musicians — percussionist Rohan Krishnamurthy and violinist Arun Ramamurthy — perform an original piece by Prema Ramamurthy. Concurrently, cellist Brent Arnold extrapolates from the classical Carnatic (South Indian) score, utilizing centuries-old compositional structures as the point of departure for sonic explorations — co-created with composer/DJ Jace Clayton (DJ/rupture) — that incorporate pop music and electronic sounds. After the piece premiered in 2019, it was listed among the 'Best performances of the year' by the Minneapolis Star Tribune, Minnpost, and City Pages, with City Pages citing Ashwini's work as "illuminating Bharatanatyam's future."

Ashwini Ramaswamy "weaves together, both fearfully and joyfully, the human and the divine. There is a continual flow of energy coursing through her limbs." —The New York Times

The presentation of *Let the Crows Come* was made possible by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, with lead funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

About Ashwini Ramaswamy

The foundation of Ashwini's work and aesthetic begins with decades of Bharatanatyam training with her gurus - her mother Raneeramaswamy, sister Aparna Ramaswamy (Directors of Ragamala Dance Company) and the legendary Smt. Alarmel Valli of Chennai, India. As a founding member of Ragamala, she has toured extensively, performing throughout the U.S. and in Russia, Taiwan, Indonesia, Japan, the U.K, and India. Ashwini has received commissions from the SPCO's Liquid Music Series, American Dance Platform, and the Great Northern Festival, residencies at the Baryshnikov Arts Center (NYC), UNC Chapel Hill (North Carolina), and the National Center for Choreography (Akron, OH), and support from the National Dance Project, the MAP Fund, US Artists International, the Minnesota State Arts Board, Metropolitan Regional Arts Council, South Asian Arts Resiliency Fund, a Jerome Hill Artist Fellowship and McKnight Foundation Artist Fellowships for Dance and Choreography. She is currently a Visiting Professor at Macalaster College, and will bring *Let the Crows Come* to several national venues in the 2021-22 season. www.ashwiniramaswamy.com

About the Cowles Center

The Cowles Center is a dance and performing arts hub that promotes movement and growth for artists through supportive programs and spaces; engages audiences through dynamic performances; and educates learners of all ages through robust and inclusive education initiatives. www.thecowlescenter.org

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<https://www.thecowlescenter.org/tickets/ashwini-ramaswamy-sat-2021/>

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