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APARNA RAMASWAMY
CO-ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, RAGAMALA DANCE COMPANY



www.aparnaramaswamy.net
www.ragamaladance.org

Darial Sneed



APARNA RAMASWAMY

Described as “thrillingly three-dimensional... rapturous and profound” (*The New York Times*) and selected as one of *Dance Magazine*’s 25 to Watch for 2010, Aparna Ramaswamy is known as an insightful choreographer and explosive performer who actively questions and engages the dynamic tension at the intersection of tradition and innovation, ancestral wisdom and creative freedom.

Born in India and raised both in India and the United States, Aparna is a senior disciple of legendary dancer/choreographer Alarmél Valli (Chennai, India). Aparna’s cultural hybridity has given her the perspective to approach her idiom—the South Indian classical dance form of Bharatanatyam—as a living, breathing language through which to create works that speak to the contemporary experience.

Aparna is Co-Artistic Director, Choreographer, and Principal Dancer of Ragamala Dance Company with her choreographic partner (and mother) Raneer Ramaswamy. Together they have created their own specific sub-genre that combines a contemporary Western aesthetic with an Indian ethos.

Aparna’s choreographic work for Ragamala has been supported by the National Endowment for the Arts, National Dance Project, MAP Fund, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, New Music/USA, and USArtists International, and commissioned/presented by the Walker Art Center, Lincoln Center, Krannert Center at the University of Illinois, Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center at the University of Maryland, the Arts Center at NYU Abu Dhabi, and Opening Nights Performing Arts at FSU. She has developed work in residence at the Magee Allesee National Center for Choreography, the Arts Center at NYU Abu Dhabi, and during an NPN residency at The Yard.

Aparna has toured extensively, both as a soloist and with Ragamala, highlighted by the Joyce Theater, Kennedy Center, American Dance Festival, Lincoln Center, the Music Center of Los Angeles, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, International Festival of Arts & Ideas (Connecticut), University Musical Society at the University of Michigan, the Bali Arts Festival, Open Look Festival in St. Petersburg, Russia, Nagoya Kita Bunka Shogekijyo in Japan, the Music Academy in Chennai, India, the Soorya Festival in Kerala, India, and National Centre for Performing Arts in Mumbai, India.

Aparna has been awarded several honors, including a 2016 Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, a 2016 Joyce Award from the Joyce Foundation, three McKnight Artist Fellowships for Dance and Choreography, a Bush Fellowship for Choreography, an Arts and Religion grant funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, choreographic and travel support from the Jerome Foundation and Minnesota State Arts Board, and the Lakshmi Vishwanathan Endowment Prize from Sri Krishna Gana Sabha (Chennai, India). Aparna is an empaneled artist with the Indian Council for Cultural Relations of the Government of India.

“Aparna Ramaswamy, the heralded Bharatanatyam soloist and choreographer preserves ancient dance forms with stunning technical virtuosity and expressivity. Yet she also aims to create a living tradition that is resonant for modern times”

Karen Campbell, *The Boston Globe*



Amanulla

THEY ROSE AT DAWN

WORLD PREMIERE:
THE JOYCE THEATER, NEW YORK

APARNA RAMASWAMY, SOLOIST

ACCOMPANIED BY A SOUTH INDIAN CARNATIC ORCHESTRA

In this solo *margam*, women are depicted as carriers of ritual. Navigating inner and outer worlds, they invoke a sense of reverence, of unfolding mystery, of imagination. A stellar Carnatic musical ensemble accompanies Aparna Ramaswamy as she explores the spontaneous interplay between music and movement and the dynamic contours created by the artists onstage.

Performance excerpt: <https://vimeo.com/154115971>

The Making of: <https://vimeo.com/164771387>

They Rose at Dawn 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, with additional support from the National Endowment for the Arts.



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PRESS HIGHLIGHTS

“The eye often goes straight to Ms. Ramaswamy’s impeccable technique and incandescent beauty. Through her dancing, the music’s textures come into view.”

Siobhan Burke, *The New York Times*

“Ramaswamy soars as a soloist in the prime of her life, channeling her deep understanding of technique in a captivating performance.

Sheila Regan, *Minneapolis Star Tribune*

“Ragamala has become the standard bearer of a singularly successful kind of hybridity, merging ancient traditions into high-end productions that are hard to resist”

Mallika Rao, *The Huffington Post*



John Whiting

“Rapturous and profound...Aparna Ramaswamy is an enchantingly beautiful dancer.”

Alastair Macaulay, *The New York Times*

“Aparna Ramaswamy, the heralded Bharatanatyam soloist and choreographer preserves ancient dance forms with stunning technical virtuosity and expressivity. Yet she also aims to create a living tradition that is resonant for modern times”

Karen Campbell, *The Boston Globe*

“As an Indian dancer based in the U.S., Ramaswamy’s works reflect the rich heritage and deep philosophical roots of India amalgamated with the inquisitiveness and creative liberty of the United States.”

George Pioustin, *The Hindu*

The New York Times

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2015

The Week Ahead

A SURVEY OF THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

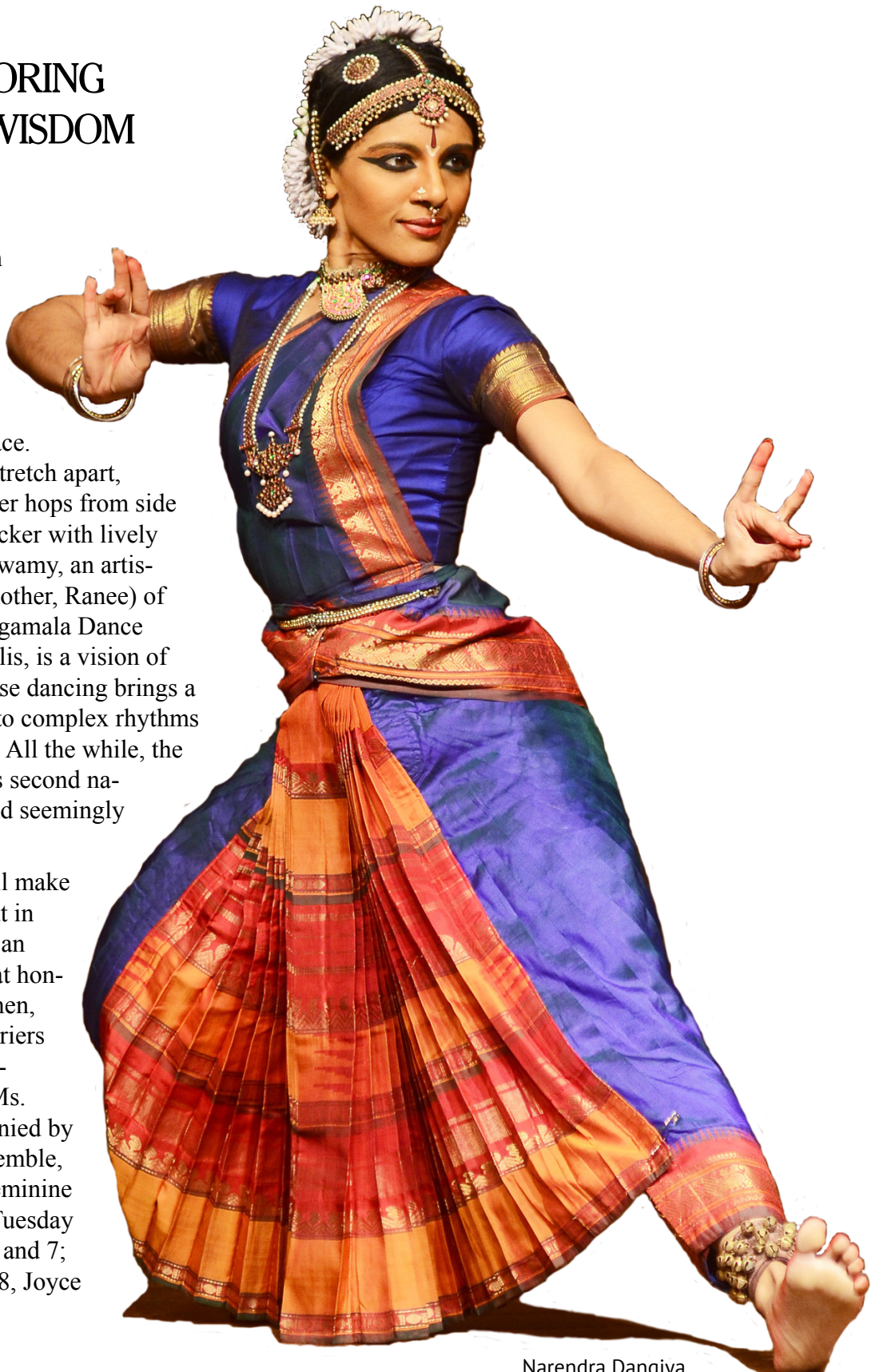
DANCE

A SOLO HONORING A WOMEN'S WISDOM

GIA KOURLAS

In the classical South Indian dance form of Bharatanatyam, the body is material — an interlocking puzzle of pieces assembled to create otherworldly grace. The fingers splay and stretch apart, the heels flex as a dancer hops from side to side, and the eyes flicker with lively vitality. Aparna Ramaswamy, an artistic director (with her mother, Raneer) of the much-respected Ragamala Dance Company in Minneapolis, is a vision of sculptural lucidity whose dancing brings a full-bodied awareness to complex rhythms and shifts of dynamics. All the while, the strength of her purity is second nature — both explicit and seemingly casual.

Ms. Ramaswamy will make her Joyce Theater debut in “They Rose at Dawn,” an evening-length solo that honors the wisdom of women, who are seen as the carriers of reverence and imagination. Settle back as Ms. Ramaswamy, accompanied by a Carnatic musical ensemble, unlocks mysteries of feminine mystique. (7:30 p.m., Tuesday and Wednesday, Oct. 6 and 7; 8 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 8, Joyce Theater, joyce.org.)



Narendra Dangiya

INTERNATIONAL TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- NYU Abu Dhabi Arts Center (Abu Dhabi, UAE)
- Music Academy (Chennai, India)
- Narada Gana Sabha (Chennai, India)
- Just Festival (Edinburgh, U.K.)
- Soorya Rasavikalpam Festival (Trivandrum, Trissur, Palakkad and Kozhikode)
- National Centre for Performing Arts (Mumbai, India)
- Soorya Festival (Kerala and Tamil Nadu, India)
- Iida Bunka Kaikan (Iida, Japan)
- Nagoya Kita Bunka Shogekijyo (Nagoya, Japan)
- Matsumoto Bunka Kaikan (Matsumoto, Japan)
- Bali Arts Festival (Bali, Indonesia)
- Festival of Spirituality and Peace (Edinburgh, Scotland)
- Open Look Dance Festival (St. Petersburg, Russia)
- Miao-Li International Festival (Miao Li, Taiwan)
- Mandapa (Paris, France)



Narendra Dangiya

UNITED STATES TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- The Joyce Theater (New York, NY)
- Lincoln Center Out of Doors (New York, NY)
- Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (Washington, D.C.)
- American Dance Festival (Durham, NC)
- International Festival of Arts & Ideas (New Haven, CT)
- Museum of Contemporary Art (Chicago, IL)
- Opening Nights at Florida State University (Tallahassee, FL)
- Cleveland Museum of Art (Cleveland, OH)
- Walker Art Center (Minneapolis, MN)
- Clarice Smith Center for the Performing Arts (College Park, MA)
- Flynn Center (Burlington, VT)
- Wesleyan University (Middletown, CT)
- Hancher Auditorium (Iowa City, IA)
- Krannert Center (Urbana, IL)
- Phillips Center (Gainesville, FL)
- The Music Center of Los Angeles (Los Angeles, CA)
- Lied Center (Lawrence, KS)
- California Institute of Technology (Pasadena, CA)



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