

*The Modern Natya Company Presents*

# *Veera*

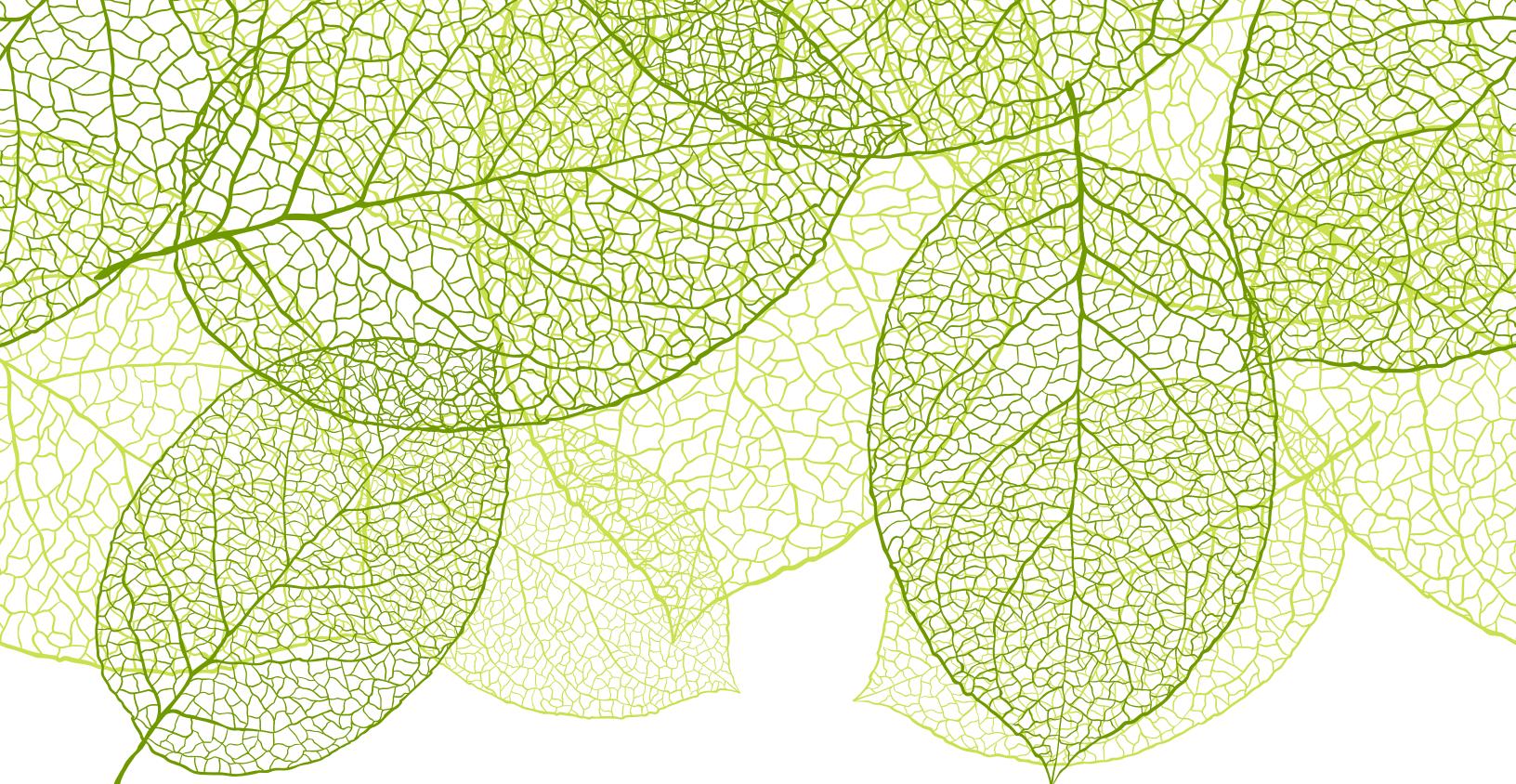
**the origins of courage**

**June 11, 2025 | 6 PM PST**

**Fremont Central Park**

**CO-PRESENTED BY**

**Fremont Cultural Arts Council &  
Asian-Pacific Islander Cultural Center**



## **grounded in tradition. groundbreaking in methodology.**

The Modern Natya Company™ blends Indian classical arts with Western contemporary techniques to explore social issues important to the South Asian diaspora. MNC uses film and live performance to challenge audiences to see Bharatanatyam as a versatile movement foundation that isn't limited to "classical" traditional performances; rather, MNC's trailblazing projects show how Bharatanatyam can—and should—be used as a storytelling tool across diverse media to bridge communities and cultures.

The company's signature movement style, Modern Natya™, pays respects to 2 cultural lineages: Tamil (South Indian) traditional arts and the cultural model of disability. MNC is inspired by and owes deep gratitude to its San Francisco/Bay Area home, which is both the birthplace of the American Disability Rights Movement and the epicenter of the largest South Asian professional performing arts community in the United States.

# from the directors

When we started working on this piece, we weren't setting out to make a show. We were just trying to answer for ourselves:

*how do we stay strong in the face of intimidation & oppression?  
how do we build (and rebuild) our resilience in order to move forward together?*

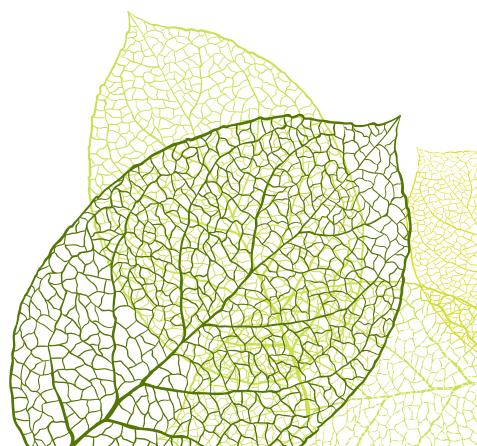
*as a community, how do we keep courage–veera–alive?*

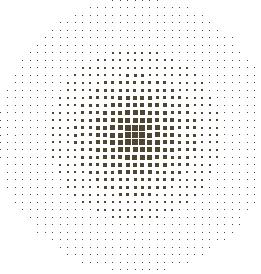
How beautiful that this momentous day—Modern Natya's very first home season show!—emerged as a result of these explorations.

We have been absolutely humbled by the support, encouragement, and enthusiasm you've all have shown for this production and all of the artists on this team. Thank you for going on this journey with us and being a part of our community.

Working on this production helped us find our veera. We hope tonight's show helps you find a little bit of yours too.

*in solidarity,  
swetha & shrikrishna*





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# the Panchakanya Project

*Sita, born from the Earth. Ahalya, buoyant like water. Tara, swift as the wind.  
Mandodari, as expansive as the sky. Draupadi, bolder than the hottest fire.*

Stories of the Panchakanyas (5 heroines of The Ramayana and The Mahabharata) have been told countless times over centuries, but there is more to their narrative than simplistic depictions as beautiful paragons of virtue. "The Panchakanyas Project" presents a new Bharatanatyam dance drama that reclaims the centuries-long erasure of these women's power and offers a more culturally-authentic retelling.

Inspired by the Mahari dance tradition of Odisha, the show uses the imagery of the 5 natural elements traditionally associated with the Panchakanyas to center their narratives, explore the impact these women had on the men and communities surrounding them, and to reflect on the cultural elements that have persisted despite colonial efforts to erase this collective history. Just as nature can not exist without all 5 of the natural elements, the great Indian epics—and the religious and cultural traditions built on them—could not have existed and survived without these women. ("Pancha" means 5, "Kanya" means woman.)

# PANCHAKANYA ALARIKKU

## PLOT DESCRIPTION

Alarippu means "flowering bud" and in traditional Bharatanatyam repertoire, it is the introductory piece of the show. This piece takes inspiration from the traditional alarippu elements to showcase the best qualities of the panchakanyas. What's exciting about this composition is that we play with the idea of 5 on 4 different levels: the panchakanya (5 women), the panchabhuta (5 elements of nature), the panchanadai (5 core beats in Carnatic music), and the pancharaga (5 music scales).

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## SHOW TRANSCRIPT

## ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

*The dancers' salangai (bells) accentuate the beats of the music.*

*Nattuvangam (hand cymbals) and mridangam (hand drum) accompany  
the vocalist.*

### (SANSKRIT)

Jalaiva  
sahanashllatA jalaiva  
klishTapariNAmeshu  
dhRDasankalpinl ahalya  
Panchakanya smaranityam

### (SANSKRIT)

*Like water  
embodying patience, like water  
Ahalya embodies resilience and mental  
fortitude  
thinking of the five maidens*

vishAla gaganaiva, dhyuti rUpiNI,  
rAjanlti nipiNI manDodarl

*Vast & majestic like the sky, Mandodari  
embodies skillful diplomacy*

prithviVeeta sIta

asmAn pOSayatl  
sarvadA dadAti  
dharatl vidadhaati

sthirapRthvlva shAnti  
svaRupiNi, gaurava sanAtha  
soundaryA dharmanishThA  
sItA  
angi draupadI

yA vahatl  
sA prauDhl

yA vahatl  
tArA prauDhl  
prANAShwAsA sA pavana

malayAnila dhA yaSa iva  
pavana  
chakravAta nirbhItaiva  
pavana  
ca vEgaiva vikalpaiva  
pavana  
nAmeva sA rAja mAtA tArA

*Seetha, one who is loved by  
the Earth  
taking care of us  
always giving to everyone  
she's one to behold; she's one  
who gives*

*Like earth, Sita is steady,  
calm; beautiful, righteous,  
and dignified  
Like fire, Draupati embodies  
strength and courage*

*One who is quick witted  
She is mature and confident*

*One who is quick witted  
Tara, mature and confident  
The vital breath like the wind*

*Famous for her confidence,  
like the wind  
She's a force to be reckoned  
with, like the wind  
Quick and decisive like the  
wind  
She is a powerful queen*

# AGNI PRAVESA: SITA'S TRIAL

## PLOT DESCRIPTION

Ravana—the demon king of Lanka—has been defeated and Sri Rama has rescued his wife, Seetha, after a long and painful separation. The world expects a reunion — a happy ending. But instead, Rama asks Seetha to prove her purity. Not out of personal doubt, but to uphold dharma in the eyes of his people. What unfolds is the Agni Pravesham — the Trial by Fire — where Seetha commands Lakshmana (Rama's younger brother) to light the pyre and walks into the flames with unshaken dignity. Through dance, verse, and music, we witness not just her trial, but her transcendence — as a woman who becomes the fire, and rises from it.

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## SHOW TRANSCRIPT

## ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

*The dancers' salangai (ankle bells), the mridangam (drum), and the nattuvangam (hand cymbals) accentuate the beats of the music.*

(TAMIL)

(TAMIL)

*Aṇṇai sol kēṭṭēn*

*Obeying the words of His mother,*

*Instrumental-Veena Solo plays in beats of 5 (kanda nadai)*

Aṇṇai sol kēṭṭēn

*Obeying the words of His mother,*

Aṇṇan arugil chella

*He walked over to His elder brother.*

Mūḍiya kaṇ pārṭtē

*With eyes closed, He observed,*

Maṇṇan maṇam aṛintē

*And understood the king's (Rama's) heart.*

Mūḍiya kaṇ pārṭtē

*With eyes closed, He observed,*

Maṇṇan maṇam aṛintē

*And understood the king's (Rama's) heart.*

Maṇatai māṛṛi marugi (x2)

*Silently changing His own mind,*

Vīragai vaiththān vittagan

*The wise one (Lakshmana) laid the firewood.*

*Carnatic Konnakol/Sollakattu & Veena alternate solos and harmonizing together*

Eri taḷal aṭukku!

*Into the stack of blazing fire, She stepped and ascended.*

Aḍi vaiththu ēṛa

*Into the stack of blazing fire, She stepped and ascended.*

*Earth and sky trembled,*

Nilam vāṇam adhira

*The daughter of the earth walked forward —*

Nilam vāṇam adhira

*Earth and sky trembled,*

Nila maṅgai naṭandā!

*The daughter of the earth  
walked forward —*

*Carnatic swarams & Veena alternate solos*

Nilam vāṇam adhira

*Earth and sky trembled,  
The daughter of the earth  
walked forward —And stood  
her ground, unwavering.*

Nila maṅgai naṭandā!

*Earth and sky trembled,  
The daughter of the earth  
walked forward —*

Nilam vāṇam adhira

*And stood her ground,  
unwavering.*

Nila maṅgai naṭandā!

Nilai niṇrā! naṇrē

*Instrumental-Veena Solo*

Ulagam thānum uyyavē

*So that the world itself may  
be saved,*

Analāy nānum aṅgamāy

*I too become fire — a part of  
it,*

Ulagam thānum uyyavē

*So that the world itself may  
be saved,*

Analāy nānum aṅgamāy

*I too become fire — a part of  
it,*

Veppamenṛa poruḷāy

*The very meaning of burning  
heat,*

Veppamenṛa poruḷāy

*The very meaning of burning  
heat,*

Ennai ulagham kāṇavē

*Let the world now witness  
me.*

Ulagam thānum uyyavē

*So that the world itself may  
be saved,*

Analāy nānum aṅgamāy

*I too become fire — a part of  
it,*

Ulagam thānum uyyavē

*So that the world itself may  
be saved,*

*Instrumental-Veena Solo*

Ulagam thānum uyyavē

*So that the world itself may  
be saved,*

Analāy nānum aṅgamāy

*I too become fire — a part of  
it,*

Ulagam thānum uyyavē

*So that the world itself may  
be saved,*

Analāy nānum aṅgamāy

*I too become fire — a part of  
it,*

Veppamenra porulāy

*The very meaning of burning  
heat,*

Veppamenra porulāy

*The very meaning of burning  
heat,*

Ennai ulagham kāṇavē

*Let the world now witness  
me.*

Ulagam thānum uyyavē

*So that the world itself may  
be saved,*

Indru nān thavikkirēn  
Aṇṇai anal aṇḍavē

*Today I suffer in silence,  
As even Mother Fire touches  
me.*

Indru nān thavikkirēn  
Aṇṇai anal aṇḍavē

*Today I suffer in silence,  
As even Mother Fire touches  
me.*

Āṇḍavā īdhen sōdhanai  
Āṇḍavā īdhen sōdhanai  
Nāñum thāṅgā sūt̄tiñai  
Aṇḍam thāñ thāṅgumā?

*O Lord, is this Your test?  
Lord, is this Your test?  
Even I cannot bear this heat  
Can the cosmos itself  
withstand it?*

*Carnatic Konnakol/Sollakattu & Veena alternate solos and  
harmonizing together*

Nāñum thāṅgā sūt̄tiñai  
Aṇḍam thāñ thāṅgumā?

*Even I cannot bear this heat  
Can the cosmos itself  
withstand it?*

*Instrumental-Veena Solo  
Carnatic Konnakol/Sollakattu*

Nāñum thāṅgā sūt̄tiñai  
Aṇḍam thāñ thāṅgumā?

*Even I cannot bear this heat  
Can the cosmos itself  
withstand it?*

*Carnatic Konnakol/Sollakattu*

Nāñum thāṅgā sūt̄tiñai  
Aṇḍam thāñ thāṅgumā?

*Even I cannot bear this heat  
Can the cosmos itself  
withstand it?*

*Carnatic Konnakol/Sollakattu & Veena harmonize*

Akhilam kākkum aravindan

*The lotus-eyed one who  
protects the world,*

Aṇṇai thaṇṇai kāththida  
 Analil avaḷai aṛudiyē  
 Avaṇum ēṛrāṇ vaṇcōllē

Arakkar kūṭṭam taṇṇilē

Vēṅgai vēṭkai adhikamē  
 Thārā thāram ākiya

Mandi thalaivan matthiyil

Mādhu avaḷai eṇṇāthu

Māṇam kāththa maṇṇavaṇ  
 Aṇṇai aṛindhāl aṇṇalai

Aṇṇai aṛindhāl aṇṇalai

Aṇṇum iṇṇum eṇṇumē  
 Naṇmai kāṭṭum iruvarē

Arumai Sītā Rāmarē

Arumai Sītā Rāmarē

Naṇmai kāṭṭum iruvarē

*To safeguard the mother,  
 Even tested Her in fire —  
 Yet with noble words, He too  
 bore the burden.*

*Among the horde of  
 rakshasas,  
 Desire and greed ruled high,  
 One who took another's wife  
 as his own —*

*The monkey chief stood at  
 the center.*

*But unlike them, He (Rama)  
 never once  
 Saw Her as less than pure.  
 The king who upheld Her  
 honor —*

*The king who upheld Her  
 honor —*

*The mother knew Her Lord.  
 Then, now, and forevermore,  
 they show the world the path  
 of virtue —*

*The sacred pair, Seetha and  
 Rama*

*The sacred pair, Seetha and  
 Rama*

*Then, now, and forevermore,  
 they show the world the path  
 of virtue —*

Arumai Sītā Rāmarē

*The sacred pair, Seetha and  
Rama*

Nañmai kāṭṭum iruvarē

*Then, now, and furthermore,  
they show the world the path  
of virtue —*

Arumai Sītā Rāmarē

*The sacred pair, Seetha and  
Rama*

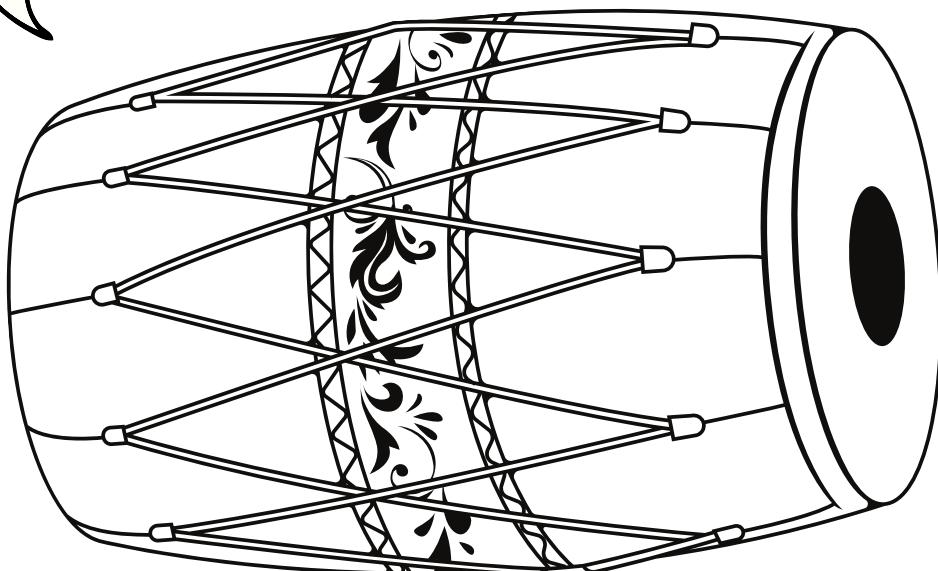
Nañmai kāṭṭum iruvarē

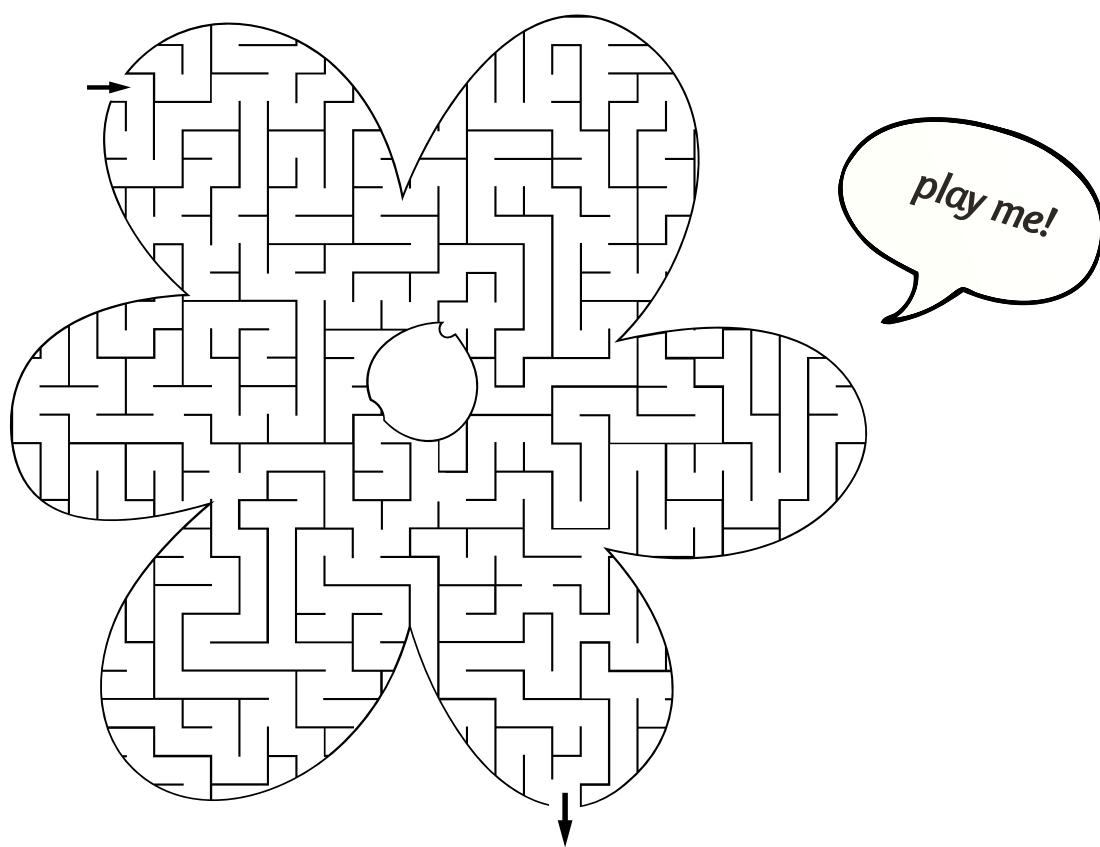
*Then, now, and furthermore,  
they show the world the path  
of virtue —*

Arumai Sītā Rāmarē

*The sacred pair, Seetha and  
Rama*

color me!







# Intermission Music

## Triple Nadai Thani

**Mridangam: Anirudh Ramakrishnan | Thalam: Adi  
Thalam Support: Aditya Iswara**

In this explosive thani (solo set), the mridangist explores 3 different nadais: thisra nadai (3), chatushra nadai(4), and khanda nadai (5) — rhythmic groupings of 3, 4, and 5 syllables per beat.

In Carnatic music, nadais are representative of how many words are in a beat. This is similar to time signatures in Western music. There are 5 main nadais:

thisra nadai (3), or  $\frac{3}{4}$  time  
chatushra nadai (4), or  $\frac{4}{4}$  time  
khanda nadai (5), or  $\frac{5}{4}$  time  
mishra nadai (7), or  $\frac{7}{4}$  time  
sankeerna nadai (9), or  $\frac{9}{4}$  time

Anirudh's set will explore the 3 most common nadais, but all 5 nadais are used throughout the show! *Can you spot when we switch from one to the next?*

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STANFORDLIVE

Raja Kumari



# Veera

Veera is a thoughtful, family-friendly exploration of how cultural arts preserve and strengthen communities.

The piece is rooted in the writings of C. Subramania Bharati–Bharatiyar—an Indian writer, poet, journalist, teacher, Indian independence activist who lived from 1882 to 1921. Bharatiyar was the first Indian writer to have their work nationalized in 1949; thus, his writings advocating for gender equality, anti-casteism, and rights for all marginalized identities are emphatically interwoven with the literal origins of the modern Republic of India.

While Bharatiyar's work is well-known all over India, his work has always been especially loved amongst the communities that originate in and around the Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu, Bharatiyar's birthplace.

Veera leverages these familiar cultural touchstones to build artistic bridges that make conversations about healing cultural wounds and advancing social justice more conceivable.

In Veera you'll experience the company's flexible range, spanning traditional Bharatanatyam & Carnatic techniques all the way to very non-traditional contemporary dance-theater.

As Indian-American artists, “3rd culture kids”, we've experienced firsthand how the arts can be a powerful tool for grappling with complex questions and integrating the many facets of one's 3rd-culture identity. For us, “Classical-Fusion” artistry is like a form of kintsugi—gold painted between fractured pieces of broken pottery—that helps us find strength and safety in our Indian traditions/heritage, while simultaneously honoring the new perspectives of our diasporic American home.

To push this idea and ourselves, we intentionally chose to blend Classical AND Contemporary techniques from both countries within every layer of this show's movement and music. We leverage this multi-layered fusion artistry to open dialogue about what it means (and how) to truly value & integrate non-Western wisdom, knowledge, and practices in \*all\* disciplines of life.



## PLOT DESCRIPTION

We delight in the beautiful nature around us as we canoe down a river and explore a meadow.

.....

*Throughout the show, the dancers' salangai (ankle bells) and stomping accentuate the beats of the music.*

**Ragam: Shankarabharanam**

**Thalam: Thishra Nadai**

*This song has no words, and is all solfege/swarams. Solfege/swarams are methods of naming musical notes with syllables.*

*In Western Music solfege: the notes of a major scale are named using the syllables "do", "re", "mi", "fa", "sol", "la", and "ti". These syllables are assigned to the notes of the scale, with "do" usually representing the tonic or root note of the key.*

*Similarly, in Carnatic Music swarams: the major scale's notes are named using the syllables "Sa" (tonic, or root note) "Re", "Ga", "Ma", "Pa", "Dha", "Ni", "Sa"*

## PLOT DESCRIPTION

After a long day of outdoor exploration, we decide to check out a new library and read a story together. As the night grows late, Cassandra decides to stay behind and finish reading the book.

.....

### RAGAM: THILANG

*There are no pre-set lyrics; the vocalist performs swarams (improvised solfege in Carnatic music). The violinist accompanies the vocalist's swarams and also performs improvised swarams of their own.*



**CAN YOU GUESS WHAT  
CLASSIC FAIRYTALE  
THEY'RE READING?**

## PLOT DESCRIPTION

Cassandra notices books starting to catch fire, and frantically tries to put out the flames. Horrified, she resolves to tell the town about what she witnessed and rushes off to find help.

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### SHOW TRANSCRIPT

### ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

#### **RAGAM: THILANG THALAM: THISHRA NADAI**

(TAMIL)

Manathil uruthi vendum,  
Vakkinile inimai vendum,  
Ninaivu nallathu vendum,  
Nerungina porul kaipada vendum,  
Manathil uruthi vendum,  
Manathil uruthi vendum,

(TAMIL)

*Let my thought be firm and resolute  
Let my words be sweet and gentle  
Let my thoughts be noble  
Let me attain what is close to hand  
Let my thought be firm and resolute  
Let my thought be firm and resolute*

(ITALIAN)

Fin che tu spiri spera  
Fin che tu spiri spera

(ITALIAN)

*As long as you breathe, be hopeful  
As long as you breathe, be hopeful*

*Violin solo in Ragam: Charukesi*

## PLOT DESCRIPTION

Though initially believed, the town pushes back on Cassandra's account of the arson. Confusion, anger, and chaos ensue. As tensions escalate and relationships rupture, Cassandra flees the town. Meanwhile, the fires grow and ultimately burn down the entire library.

.....

### SHOW TRANSCRIPT

### ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

#### VIOLIN JATHI CHARUKESI TO SHANKARABHARNAM

#### THALAM: THISHRA NADAI

(TAMIL)

Manathil uruthi vendum,  
Vakkinile inimai vendum,  
Ninaivu nallathu vendum,  
Nerungina porul kaipada vendum,  
Manathil uruthi vendum,  
Manathil uruthi vendum,  
Pagaivanukkarulvai  
Manathil uruthi vendum,  
Pagaivanukkarulvai  
Manathil uruthi vendum,  
Pagaivanukkarulvai, nan nenje  
Vakkinile inimai vendum,

(TAMIL)

*Let my thought be firm and resolute*  
*Let my words be sweet and gentle*  
*Let my thoughts be noble*  
*Let me attain what is close to hand*  
*Let my thought be firm and resolute*  
*Let my thought be firm and resolute*  
*Love your enemy*  
*Let my thought be firm and resolute*  
*Love your enemy*  
*Let my thought be firm and resolute*  
*Love your enemy, my heart*  
*Let my words be sweet and gentle*

**RAGAM: JONPURI**

cippiyilE nulla muttu vilainthiDun	<i>Don't you know that beautiful pearls are found</i>
ceydi yariyAyO nannenje cippiyilE nulla muttu vilainthiDun	<i>Within the oysters vile shell? Don't you know that beautiful pearls are found</i>
ceydi yariyAyO nannenje Kuppaiyile malar koncun kurakkatik kOti valarAdo	<i>Within the oysters vile shell? Won't many flowers blossom even as they grow on top of garbage?</i>
Kuppaiyile malar koncun kurakkatik kOti valarAdo	<i>Won't many flowers blossom even as they grow on top of garbage?</i>
Pagaivanukkarulvai, nan nenje Pagaivanukkarulvai Manathil uruthi vendum,	<i>Love your enemy, my heart Love your enemy Let my thought be firm and resolute</i>

**RAGAM: CHANDRAKAUNS**

ULLa niraivilOr kaLLam pukundiTil	<i>If the heart guards a wound, will it ever achieve inner peace?</i>
ullLam niraivAmO nannenje ULLa niraivilOr kaLLam pukundiTil ullLam niraivAmO nannenje	<i>If the heart guards a wound, will it ever achieve inner peace?</i>

teLLiya tEniOr cirittu  
nanjayum  
cErtappin cEyOmO  
teLLiya tEniOr cirittu  
nanjayum  
cErtappin cEyOmO  
Pagaivanukkarulvai, nan nenje  
Pagaivanukkarulvai  
Manathil uruthi vendum,

*Even if honey is mixed with poison,  
Won't it be wholesome nevertheless?  
Even if honey is mixed with poison,  
Won't it be wholesome nevertheless?  
Love your enemy, my heart  
Love your enemy  
Let my thought be firm and resolute*

**RAGAM: SUDDHA SAVERI**

vALvai ninaitthappin tALvai  
ninaippadu  
  
vALvukku nErAmO  
vALvai ninaitthappin tALvai  
ninaippadu  
  
vALvukku nErAmO  
tALvu pirarkkenat- tAnazhivA  
nenra  
cAttiran keLAyO  
tALvu pirarkkenat- tAnazhivA  
nenra  
cAttiran keLAyO  
Pagaivanukkarulvai, nan nenje  
Pagaivanukkarulvai

*When you think about the goodness  
in life and then think about the  
downfalls of life  
Is that fair to life?  
When you think about the goodness  
in life and then think about the  
downfalls of life  
Is that fair to life?  
"Those who seek the downfall of  
others, fall themselves as prey,"  
Haven't you heard that proverb?  
"Those who seek the downfall of  
others, fall themselves as prey,"  
Haven't you heard that proverb?  
Love your enemy, my heart  
Love your enemy*

**INSTRUMENTAL-PERCUSSION SOLO**  
**INSTRUMENTAL-PERCUSSION & VIOLIN DUET**

## PLOT DESCRIPTION

Confronted with the ashes of the library, the town realizes that Cassandra's account of a suspected arsonist was right all along. Their despair grows as they realize that she is nowhere to be found, and there is no way to recover the literature and art that has now been destroyed.

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### SHOW TRANSCRIPT

### ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

**RAGAM: GAURIMANOHARI**

**THALAM: THISHRA NADAI**

#### (ITALIAN)

Che si può fare?  
Che, Che, Che si può fare?  
Le stelle rubelle  
Non hanno pietà, pietà  
Non hanno pietà  
Che si puo fare?  
Che  
Che s'el cielo s'el cielo non dà  
Un influsso di pace, un influsso di  
pace  
al mio penare,  
Che si può fare? Che, Che

#### (ITALIAN)

*What can you do?*  
*What, What, What can you do?*  
*The starts, intractable,*  
*have no pity, pity*  
*have no pity*  
*What can you do?*  
*What?*  
*Since the gods, the gods don't give*  
*a measure of peace, a measure of*  
*peace*  
*in my suffering,*  
*What can I do? What What?*

## OPERA

## (HINDI)

Kaise jiyenge hum?  
 Kaise..., kaise jiyenge?  
 Aasmaan se durbhaagya ka toofan  
 barastaa hai.  
 (barastaa... hai)  
 Kaise jiyenge hum? Jaise...  
 Akele, apne gharon ke bina,  
 (hum gharon ke bina)  
 hum surakshit nahin hai.  
 (nahin hai, surakshit nahin hai,  
 surakshit nahin hai)  
 Kaise jiyenge hum?  
 Kaise..., kaise jiyenge?

## (HINDI)

*How will we live?*  
*How... how will we live?*  
*From the sky a storm of misfortune*  
*pours down.*  
*(it rains...)*  
*How will we live? As...*  
*Alone, without our homes,*  
*(hum gharon ke bina)*  
*we are not safe.*  
*(no, not safe, not safe)*  
  
*How will we live?*  
*How... how will we live?*

## PLOT DESCRIPTION

Now alone in exile, Cassandra reflects on the events in town square. Overwhelmed by her grief and despair, she collapses.

.....

## SHOW TRANSCRIPT

## ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

## CARNATIC SOLFEGE (SWARAM)

## (TAMIL)

yArukAgilum bhayamA

## (TAMIL)

*Am I scared of anyone?*

**Ragam: Shanmuka Priya**

yArukAgilum bhayamA summa  
sollatum

*Am I scared of anyone? Let them say whatever they want.*

**Talam: Mishra Chapu**

idhu enna ragasiyamA  
yArukAgilum bhayamA summa  
sollatum  
idhu enna ragasiyamA  
yArukAgilum bhayamA

*Is it some big secret?*  
*Am I scared of anyone? Let them say whatever they want.*  
*Is it some big secret?*  
*Am I scared of anyone?*

**OPERA**

yArukAgilum bhayamA

*Am I scared of anyone?*

**Carnatic**

nAnE sammadittAl matravarkenna  
nashti  
rAjAngamAginEn yAr solvAr adl

*When I accept, what is the problem for other people?*  
*If this was said by someone of royal upbringing, no one would say anything*

**Ragam: Sarasangi**

rAjAngamAginEn yAr solvAr adl

*If this was said by someone of royal upbringing, no one would say anything*

### *Ragam: Saveri*

*rAjAngamAginEn yAr solvAr adl*

*If this was said by someone of royal upbringing, no one would say anything*

### *Ragam: Subhapanthuvarali*

*rAjAngamAginEn yAr solvAr adl*

*If this was said by someone of royal upbringing, no one would say anything*

### *Ragam: Kathanakuthoohalam*

*rAjAngamAginEn yAr solvAr adl*

*If this was said by someone of royal upbringing, no one would say anything*

### *Opera & Carnatic harmonize*

*rAjAngamAginEn*

*If this was said by someone of royal upbringing*

*instrumental and percussion riff*

*yAr solvAr adl*

*no one would say anything*

*instrumental and percussion riff*

*yArukAgilum bhayamA*

*Am I scared of anyone?*

*instrumental and percussion riff*

yArukAgilum bhayamA

*Am I scared of anyone?**Opera Vocalist*

Vane son scuse e ragioni

(ITALIAN)

per placar donna oltraggiata,

non pensar che ti perdoni!

*Donna mai Donna mai non vendicata  
pace ha in bocca e guerra  
e guerra in petto*

*In vain are excuses and reasons*

(ITALIAN)

*to try to placate an outraged woman;**don't believe that she will forgive you!*

*The woman, the woman that has never taken revenge has peace in her mouth and war, AND WAR in her heart.*

*Carnatic*

Donna che ha agito  
guerra ha in boca e pace in petto

(TAMIL)

yArukAgilum bhayamA  
summa sollatum

*But when a woman takes action  
There is war in her mouth, but peace in her heart*

(TAMIL)

*Am I scared of anyone?  
Let them say whatever they want.*

*Ragam: Hamir*

yArukAgilum

*for... anyone?*

*Ragam: Kapi*

allal thIrka mAttAyA  
vanbum eLimayum soozhum  
nAtiE

*Won't you remove the pain?  
In this world surrounded by  
meddling and simplicity,*

*Opera*

yArukAgilum bhayamA

*Am I scared of anyone?*

*Carnatic*

aram yEthu endru yAm  
maram yEthu yendrumE  
arikilAtha pothu yAm

*When we did not understand what is  
right  
from what is heroic*

*Opera*

yAru

*Who?*

*Carnatic*

yArukAgilum bhayamA  
allal thIrka mAttAyA

*Am I scared of anyone?  
Won't you remove the pain?*

*Opera*

yAru

*Who?*

*Carnatic Ragam: Desh*

allal thIrka mAttAyA

*Won't you remove the pain?*

*Instrumental-percussion & violin duet*

## PLOT DESCRIPTION

Bharatiyar appears in front of Cassandra, and reveals that all of this is a dream warning. To stop this from coming true, Bharatiyar teaches Cassandra to use the arts to connect with the townspeople's empathy, motivate them to work together, and help the community.

---

### SHOW TRANSCRIPT

### ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

**RAGAM: DESH**

**TALAM: ADI**

#### (TAMIL)

Thubam nergayil yazhyeduthu  
nee,  
Inbam erkka mattaya- emakku,  
  
Inbam cherkka mattaya-Nal,  
Anbila nenjil thamizhai padi nee,  
  
Allal theerkka mattaya -kanne,  
Allal theerkka mattaya

Vanbum elimayum soozhum  
naatile ,  
Vazhvil unarvu cherkka -Yem  
Vazhvil unarvu cherkka -nee,

#### (TAMIL)

*When sorrow strikes , won't you take  
the harp,  
And add sweetness to my life-Won't  
you,  
Add sweetness to me –Won't you,  
Remove the pain in my heart bereft  
of love,  
By singing in Tamil, Darling,  
Won't you remove the pain.*

*In this world surrounded by  
meddling and simplicity,  
For adding feelings to this life –for,  
Adding feelings to my life –won't  
you,*

Andrai natrramizh kuttin  
murayinai,  
Aadi kattu  
Aadi kattu

*Dance the steps of ancient Tamil  
dance-darling  
Dance and show us  
Dance and show us*

*Instrumental-percussion & violin duet*

## PLOT DESCRIPTION

Cassandra wakes up and realizes she has been asleep and alone in the library all night. She sees a small fire beginning to burn in the library, and realizes that this is what Bharatiyar was warning her about.

.....

### SHOW TRANSCRIPT

#### (TAMIL)

Vanbum elimayum soozhum  
naatile,  
Vazhvil unarvu cherkka -Yem  
Vazhvil unarvu cherkka -nee,  
  
Andrai natrramizh kuttin murayinai,  
  
Aadi katta mattaya  
Aadi katta mattaya

### ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

#### (TAMIL)

*In this world surrounded by  
meddling and simplicity,  
For adding feelings to this life –for,  
Adding feelings to my life –won’t  
you,  
Dance the steps of ancient Tamil  
dance-darling  
Won’t you dance.  
Won’t you dance.*

*Instrumental-percussion & violin duet*

*Opera vocalist solo acapella*

yArukAgilum bhayamA

*Am I scared of anyone?*

*Instrumental-percussion & violin duet*

## PLOT DESCRIPTION

Cassandra rushes into town square to get help. Using Bharatiyar's advice, she successfully convinces a painter and a writer to help her save the library.

.....

### SHOW TRANSCRIPT

### ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

#### **THALAM: THISHRA NADAI**

(TAMIL)

arivillAdha podhu yAm  
arivillAdha podhu yAm

(TAMIL)

*When we don't understand*  
*When we don't understand*

#### **CARNATIC RAGAM: BEHAG**

#### **THALAM: KANDA CHAPU**

(TAMIL)

amizhnthu periru lAmAri yAmayil

(TAMIL)

*Despite being humiliated by the*  
*darkness of ignorance,*

*Percussion solo*

arivillAdha podhu yAm  
arivillAdha podhu yAm

*When we don't understand  
When we don't understand*

*Carnatic Ragam: Behag*

amizhnthu periru lAmAri yAmayil

*Despite being humiliated by the  
darkness of ignorance,*

*Percussion solo*

Adi kAttuvEn  
Adi kAttuvEn

*I will dance and show  
I will dance and show*

*Carnatic Ragam: Behag*

umizhnthu thalluthal pennara  
mAgumAm

*[She] fights and abolishes this  
slavery and that reflects [her] virtue,*

*Ragam: Darbari Kanada*

Udhaya kanni uraippathu kEttirO  
nilathil yArkum anjAdha  
nerigalum

*Did you listen to this modern  
women's words?  
She is fearless because of her  
integrity*

## PLOT DESCRIPTION

The townsfolk recognize Cassandra's bravery and foresight to be the first amongst them to take a stand against the arson. Realizing that they are stronger when united, everyone works together to put out the fire & successfully preserve the library.

.....

### SHOW TRANSCRIPT

### ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

**RAGAM: ATANA**

**TALAM: KHANDA CHAPU**

**(TAMIL)**

Nimirntha Nannadai Nerkonda  
Paarvai

Nilathhil yaarkum anjaatha  
nerigalum  
Thimirntha gnana cherukkum  
iruppathaal  
Chemmai maadhar thirambuva  
thillaiyaam  
Chemmai maadhar thirambuva  
thillaiyaam  
Amizhnthu periru laamari  
yaamaiyil  
Avala maithi kalaiyindri  
vaazhvathai

**(TAMIL)**

*She walks with her head held high  
and looks straight ahead*

*She is fearless because of her  
integrity*

*She is confident because of her  
intelligence and wisdom,  
The righteous women will not  
become weak*

*The righteous women will not  
become weak*

*Despite being humiliated by the  
darkness of ignorance,  
Despite being ashamed without any  
knowledge*

Umizhnthu thalluthal pennara  
maagumaam  
Udhaya kanni uraippathu kettiro

Manathil uruthi vendum,  
Vakkinile inimai vendum,  
Ninaivu nallathu vendum,  
Nerungina porul kaipada vendum,  
Ninaivu nallathu vendum,  
Nerungina porul kaipada vendum,

*She fights and abolishes this slavery  
and that reflects her virtue,  
Did you listen to this modern  
women's words?*

*Let my thought be firm and resolute  
Let my words be sweet and gentle  
Let my thoughts be noble  
Let me attain what is close to hand  
Let my thoughts be noble  
Let me attain what is close to hand*

## PLOT DESCRIPTION

The town comes together and discovers anew the beauty of the cultural arts they just nearly lost. Finding immense joy through painting, literature, music, and dance, they resolve to always protect their arts—and each other—by standing together courageously.

## SHOW TRANSCRIPT

## ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

### OPERA

(TAMIL)  
Achamillai  
Achamenpathu illayE

(TAMIL)  
*I have no fear  
I have no fear*

**TALAM: THISHRA NADAI**

**(TAMIL)**

Achamillai  
AAchamillai  
Achamenpathu illayE

**(TAMIL)**

*I have no fear*  
*I have no fear*  
*I have no fear*

**VIOLIN-PERCUSION DUET  
OPERA**

**(TAMIL)**

Icckathulorellam  
Icckathulorellam  
yethirthu nindra pothilum,  
Achamillai  
Achamillai  
Achamenpathu illayE  
Achamillai  
AchamillayE

**(TAMIL)**

*If Everyone in the world*  
*If Everyone in the world*  
*stands against me*  
*I have no fear*  
*I have no fear*  
*I have no fear*  
*I have no fear*  
*I have no fear*

**VIOLIN-PERCUSION SOLO**

nadru dru dhim thom dhru dhim tha dhim  
tha dhim thana dhim thakita dhim  
nadru dru dhim thom dhru dhim tha dhim  
tha dhim thana dhim thakita dhim

**CARNATIC THILLANA SECTION**

thakathajam thakadheem

**RAGAM: MAAND**

thakathajam thakadheem  
 thakathajam  
 tana dheem tha dheem tha dhirana  
 thakathajam thakadheem  
 thakathajam thakadheem  
 thakathajam  
 tana dheem tha dheem tha dhirana

**OPERA****(TAMIL)**

Thuchamagi yenni nammai	<i>If they judge me as the worst</i>
yenni nammai thooru cheyta	<i>Judge me as the worst</i>
thooru cheytha pothilum,	<i>Judge me as the worst</i>
Achamillai	<i>I have no fear</i>
Achamillai	<i>I have no fear</i>
Achamenpathu illayE	<i>I have no fear</i>
Achamillai	<i>I have no fear</i>
AchamillayE	<i>I have no fear</i>

**PERCUSSION SOLO****(TAMIL)**

Ichai konda porulellam,	<i>Everything dear to me</i>
izhandu porulellam	<i>If I lose everything</i>
izhandhu vita pothilum	<i>Even if I lose everything dear to me</i>
Achamillai	<i>I have no fear</i>
Achamillai	<i>I have no fear</i>
Achamenpathu illayE	<i>I have no fear</i>
Achamillai	<i>have no fear</i>
AchamillayE	<i>I have no fear</i>

## CARNATIC THILLANA SECTION

## CARNATIC SWARAM OPERA STYLE-SOLFEGE

takum tajum tanum tadhim tathom

## CARNATIC SWARAM

ta ka tom ta dhim dham ta ka nam ta jham jham ki ta jham ta thom thom  
thom tana dheem tha dheem tha dhirana

OPERA

(TAMIL)

Achamillai

Achamillai

# Achamenpathu illayE

Achamillai

AchamillayE

(TAMIL)

*I have no fear*

# *I have no fear*

## **PERCUSSION DUET - GRAND FINALE CRESCENDO**

**FUN FACT #1**

**As the closing number of our show, this piece incorporates elements of a traditional thillana and mangalam, with our signature Modern Natya flair.**

.....

**Can you spot all of the art forms represented in this piece?**

**FUN FACT #2**

**We've intentionally incorporated the navarasa - the 9 quintessential emotions ("rasas") of dance into the choreography.**

.....

**Did you catch 'em all?**

**BIBHATSA (DISGUST)****HASYA (LAUGHTER)****RAUDRA (ANGER)****ADBUTHA (SURPRISE/WONDER)****KARUNA (COMPASSION/SORROW)****BHAYANAKA (TERROR/FEAR)****SHANTA (PEACE OR TRANQUILITY)****SHRINGARA (LOVE/BEAUTY)****VEERA (HEROISM/COURAGE)**

## the cast

### SOWMYA JUJJURI

### DANCE CAPTAIN

began her Kuchipudi training under the guidance of Smt. Priyadarshini Madhunapantula, later continuing her studies with Smt. Prashanti Harathi. She completed her foundational dance education with Anuradha Ganesh, the artistic director of Nartana Kuchipudi in Portland.



### SRINIDHI SRINIVASAN

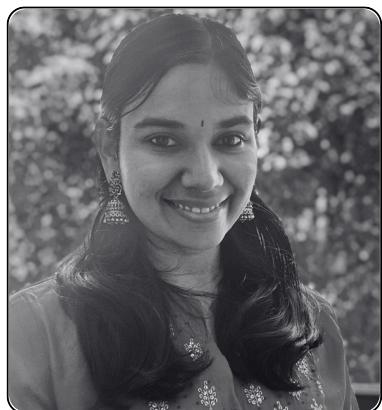
### DANCER

is a Bharatanatyam dancer and choreographer. She has been studying the art form for over twenty years under multiple gurus, including Guru Subhashini Santhanam and currently under Guru Anwesha Das in Seattle.

### CONNIE CHEW

### OPERA VOCALIST

is a vocalist who has studied under Ina Kraus, Knuti Van Hoven and Margo LeDuc. She started out in local theatre and has performed in local events in Fremont and Santa Clara County. After a full career as a paralegal, she now wants to devote more time in the Arts.



### AKSHAYA ARUNKUMAR

### VOCALIST

is an accomplished carnatic vocalist, graded by All India Radio, Government of India. She trained under Padma Shri Smt.Lalitha Chandran of the Bombay Sisters and Smt.Sankari Krishnan. Akshaya actively performs as a vocalist for classical dance productions. Akshaya is the show music captain.

## the cast



### ADITYA ISWARA — MRIDANGAM, KANJIRA

is trained in Mridangam, Carnatic Music, and Bharatanatyam with an abundant sense of rhythm. He is a disciple of Sri Poovalur Sriji, for Mridangam and Kanjira, Sri Vittal Ramamurthy for Carnatic Violin, and a disciple of his mother, Smt. Vani Iswara for Bharatanatyam.

### ANIRUDH RAMAKRISHNAN — MRIDANGAM

has been learning Mridangam from Shri. Gopi Lakshminarayanan for the past 8 years. He also learns carnatic vocal from Smt. Kasthuri Shivakumar of IAIM. In his free time, Anirudh likes to read books, play chess, bike, and participate in cross country.

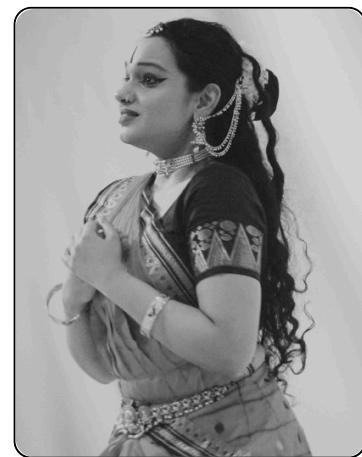


### KEERTHI KRISHNAN — VIOLINIST

is a violinist from the San Francisco Bay Area. He started his tutelage with Smt. Anuradha Sridhar and now continues under Smt. Sandhya Srinath. He is an avid accompanist and performer and has performed across multiple organizations in the Bay Area.

### NIKITHA SREEKANT — DANCER, CHOREO

has had the privilege of beginning her lessons in Bharatanatyam from Smt. Suganda Sreenath, artistic director of Jayendra Kalakendra, & learned from Smt. Divya Shiva Sundar, disciple of Bharatha Kalanjali fame, The Dhananjayans. Nikki currently teaches at her school Natyakshetram and is also the founder of Nirmathi - a dance collaboration.





## Swetha Prabakaran

*choreographer*

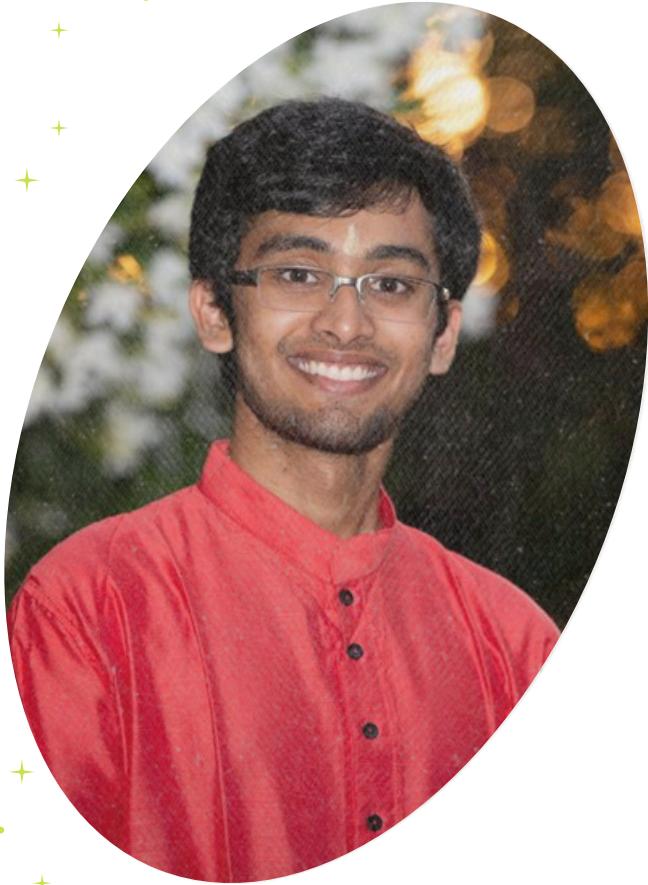
As Artistic Director of The Modern Natya Company™, Swetha explores themes around third-culture/diasporic identity, femininity, and accessibility. She is a 2025 Voices of Bhakti Fellow (by Interfaith America), Center for Cultural Innovation Awardee, and AXIS Choreo Lab Fellow (by Mellon Foundation)

In June 2025, Swetha made history as the first South Asian choreographer in AXIS Dance Company's 38-year history. Other recent works have been presented at Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA), Dance Mission Theater, and many more.

Swetha performed her Bharatanatyam arangetram in Tirunelveli, India under Smt. Subhashini Krishnakumar (a disciple of Smt.Kalaimamani K.J. Sarasa) in 2015. She completed undergraduate studies at UC Berkeley's Dance, & Performance Studies program before training in Disabled Dance pedagogy with AXIS and Dark Room Ballet.

## Shrikrishna Shivakumar

*composer*



Shrikrishna Shivakumar started learning vocal music from his parents Smt. Kasthuri Shivakumar and Shri Shivakumar Bhat at age 4; he now receives advanced training from Sangeetha Kalanidhi Shri Neyveli R. Santhanagopalan. Shrikrishna has won many competition prizes including at Cleveland Thyagaraja Utsavam and the People's Choice award in Carnatic Music Idol USA.

Shrikrishna and Shrikanth—the Shri Brothers—have performed many concerts around the US and in India, including organizations like Dhvani, Brindavani, CCC, Lotus, iCarnatic, and SR Fine Arts.

Shrikrishna additionally learns mridangam from Vidwan Shri Vinod Seetharaman and had his arangetram accompanying Neyveli sir. Shrikrishna teaches young, aspiring students at the International Academy of Indian Music in the Bay Area. Veera is his first evening-length musical composition for dance.

## show credits

***Veera*** was developed by The Modern Natya Company (a project of Swetha Prabakaran Productions) with the support of Center for Cultural Innovation and Voices of Bhakti Fellowship by Interfaith America. Earlier versions of the work were supported by the IMPACT Genesis Residency. The Panchakanya Project was additionally supported by SAFEhouse for the Arts.

This event is co-presented by Fremont Cultural Arts Council & Asian Pacific Islander Cultural Center (APICC) as part of the 28th annual United States of Asian America Festival , which is made possible thanks to the National Endowment for the Arts, San Francisco Arts Commission Grants for the Arts, Fleishhacker Foundation, and other generous supporters.

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**Directed and Produced by**

Swetha Prabakaran

**Music by** Shrikrishna Shivakumar

and Divya Pillai

**Choreography** Swetha

Prabakaran with ensemble

**Performers**

**Dancers** Sowmya Jujjuri, Srinidhi Srinivasan, Swetha Prabakaran

**Musicians**

Akshaya Arunkumar, Carnatic (Indian Classical) Vocals |

Connie Chew, Opera

(Western Classical) Vocals |

Aditya Iswara, Mridangam &

Kanjira | Keerthi Krishnan,

Violin | Anirudh

Ramakrishnan, Mridangam

**ASL Team**

**Deaf Interpreter** Christine Ganacial | Hearing

**Interpreters** Harshada Kadu

& Rob Merin | ASL

**Coordinator** Nicole Carlos-Watson

## show credits

### Production Team

**Stage Manager** Kellyann Ye

**Audio Engineer** Shrikrishna

Shivakumar

**Visual Designer** Anna Rizvi

**Livestream** Ara Chawdhury

**Videographer** Daniel Raphael

Ancheta

**Photographer** Versoul

### Music Development

**Original Compositions &**

**Dialect Coach** Shrikrishna

Shivakumar **Arrangements of**

**historical pieces** Shrikrishna

Shivakumar, Divya Pillai

**Featuring compositions and**

**writings by** C. Subramania

Bharati (1882-1921), Manadhil

Uruthi Vendum, Paigavannaku

Arulvai, Nimirntha Nannadai,

Achamillai Achamillai |

Barbara Strozzi (1619-1677)

Fin Che Tu Spiri, Che si puo

fare, La Vendetta |

Harikesanallur Muttayya

Bhagavatar (1877-1945), English

Notes | Bharathidasan (1891-

1964), Thunbam Nergayil |

Subbarama Iyer (1845-1902),

Yaarukaagilum Bhayama

### The Panchakanya Project

**Directed and Produced by**

Swetha Prabakaran

**Choreographed by** Nikitha

Sreekant

**Panchakanya Alarippu**

**Performed by** Nikitha

Sreekant and Swetha

Prabakaran

**Music Credits** “Panchakanya

Alarippu”, an original

composition conceptualized

by Nikitha Sreekant, with

support from Maya Rau-

Murthy (composer &

sollukattu), Shreyas

Ramaswami (mridangam),

Shruthi Aravindan (vocals),

and Chandra Suvarna

(lyrics). Panchakanya

Alarippu was developed with

the support of the

SAFEhouse Resident Artist

Workshop program.

## show credits

**Agni Pravesha: Sita's Trial**  
**Performed by Nikitha**  
Sreekant (Sita), Swetha  
Prabakaran (Lakshmana,  
Agni Deva), Srinidhi  
Srinivasan, Sowmya Jujjuri

### Music Credits

“Sita’s Trial”, conceptualized by Nikitha Sreekant, with support from Swaminathan Ganesan (composer), Ram Srivatsa Kannan (mridangam), Akshay Aravindan (sollukattu), Shruthi Aravindan (vocals), Kesav Viswanadha (vocals), Anand Sampathkumar (lyrics), GN Praveena (lyrics), and Siddharth Chandrasekar (audio engineering).

“Agni Pariksha: Sita’s Vow” was developed with the support of the 2025 APICC United States of Asian American Festival, in partnership with MPWRD Collective.

### Special Thanks

**Veera’s Residency**  
**Collaborators** Ms. Divya Pillai, Ms. Akshaya Mohan  
**Modern Natya Company**  
**Team** Mr. Parth Nobel, Ms. Iris Mcleary, Ms. Harini Rajan **Artistic Collaborators & Partners** Mr. Ting Alvarez-Maquinta (MPWRD Collective), Mx. Janesta Edmonds (MPWRD Collective), Mr. Rohit Kumar (Rohu Films). Mr. Varun Pattabhiraman, Ms. Priya Chatwani, Mr. Jesse Bie  
**Gurus and Mentors**  
Smt. Subhashini Krishnakumar  
Smt. Kasthuri Shivakumar  
Shri. Shiv Kumar Bhat  
Shri. Krishna Parthasarathy  
Shri. Gopi Lakshminarayanan  
**Voices of Bhakti Fellowship by Interfaith America** Dr. Preethi Ramprasad, Mr. Nikhil Mandalaparthy  
**Natya Rehab & Wellness** Dr. Surya Ravi, DPT, Dr. Divya Raghavan, DPT

## show credits

### **Urban Jazz Dance Company**

Mx. Antoine Hunter

Ms. Zahna Simon

UJDC dancers & community

### **Fremont Cultural Arts Council**

Ms. Arathi Satish,

Ms. Knuti Van Hoven, Smt.

Anuradha Suresh

Ms. Julie Gilson and the

Fremont Creates team

### **APICC Team**

Melanie Elvena, Piper Cruze Prolago, Jay Kim,

TJ Basa, Vinay Patel (Exec.

Director), Fremont Parks &

Recreation

### **PUSH Dance Company**

Ms. Avery Rissling, Ms. Ashley

Gayle, Ms. Quinn Martinez

### **Community Partners**

International Academy of

Indian Music (IAIM),

Sri Paduka Academy,

MPWRD Collective,

Bay Area Indian Nurses

Association & Stanford

Medicine, Fremont Parks

and Recreation

### **Event Co-Presenters**

Fremont Cultural Arts

Council & Asian-Pacific

Islander Cultural Center

### **APICC**

Bay Area Asian Deaf

Association (BAADA)

Fremont Cultural Arts

Council, Voices of

Bhakti/Interfaith America,

Center for Cultural

Innovation, IMPACT

Genesis Residency,

SAFEhouse for the Arts

### **Additional Thanks**

Mr. Prabakaran

Murugaiah,

Ms. Deepa Sankaralingam

## MODERN NATYA DANCE CLASS

Join **Swetha Prabakaran** for a weekly drop in class — all levels welcome

weekly classes at *The Sanctuary*  
447 Minna Street, SF  
[pushdance.org](http://pushdance.org)



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MODERN NATYA  
COMPANY

## PUSHLAB PERFORMANCE WORKSHOP

*PUSHlab* is a 6-week workshop series culminating in a performance at *PUSHfest*

- for teens and adults
- all-levels welcome
- Learn brand new Modern Natya choreography and perform with Modern Natya Director Swetha!



Auditions: Aug

San Francisco

[WWW.SWETHA.PRODUCTIONS/PUSHLAB](http://WWW.SWETHA.PRODUCTIONS/PUSHLAB)

Rehearsals: Aug - Sept

Performances: Oct 4 & 5