

SAMPRADAYA
DANCE CREATIONS

KALANGAN
SERIES

ARŪPA



Sonia St-Michel
and
Julie Beaulieu



Tanveer
Alam

LEHER

7:00 PM | NOVEMBER 19TH
SAMPRADAYA THEATRE



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ARŪPA is a journey into the antechamber of forms exploring the imprints left by our respective practices of Odissi and Bharatanāṭyam, revealing a sensitive experience hiding behind the forms. The shapeshifting dance progresses around and inside an imaginary temple where the notions of paths, passages and gates intersect. A musical and choreographic architecture where fragments of transparency appear; where memory, thought and intuition exist somewhere between form and formlessness.



**Sonia St-Michel
and
Julie Beaulieu**



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Our artistic approach was driven by a desire to create bridges between our sensory experience and our imaginary. In this sense, it is about renewing the way in which we resonate with the traces, memories and sensations. An approach allowing us to explore new choreographic paths deploying in time and space new possibilities in terms of gestures, rhythms and interactions.

We approach the subtle energetic qualities of the forms differently to revisit them, that is to say reinterpret them in a new choreographic territory.

From the creative process this story appeared and accompanied our journey. A story created by Jonathan Voyer, Julie Beaulieu and Sonia St-Michel and inspired by La Loba, Clarissa Pinkola Estés (1996) in Femmes qui courent avec les loups.



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« There is an Old Lady, known to all, who lives in a hidden place. We know her by different names: the lady of the bones, the gatherer, the mother, Luna-wolf; ARŪPA. Her main task is to collect bones. When she manages to piece together a skeleton in its entirety, she sings. ARŪPA sings a song so deep that the creature's ribcage and limbs become covered in flesh and its fur grows. Soon, the beast opens its eyes, rises to its feet and rushes into space. Somewhere during its journey, the creature suddenly transforms into two dancing women, tracing the horizon with their euphonious steps. Through their dance, shapes come and go, appear, and disappear like bursts of laughter in the eternal breath of the Great Knitter. This is why, it is said that when the time comes, after the wanderings, the dances and the rites, the feasts, the tears and the dreams, when the sun finally sets on our last breath, it is possible to hear in the distance the echo of a well-known song. It is that of ARŪPA, the song that gives shape to what fades into the night. »

Choreography and performance:
Sonia St-Michel and Julie Beaulieu

Music : Jonathan Voyer

Rehearsal director : Natasha Bakht

Costumes : Roxane Beaulieu

Lighting design : Chantal Labonté and Guillaume Houët

Thanks : Canada Council for the Arts, Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, Sampradaya Dance Creations, Aroha Fine Arts, Le Centre Kabir pour les Arts et la Culture, Tangente, Festival Accès Asie, Ottawa Dance Directive, l'Académie de danse de l'Outaouais, la Salle Émile Legault du Cégep de Saint-Laurent, le Département de danse de l'UQAM, le Quai 5160, CRILQC (Université du Québec à Montréal).



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SONIA ST-MICHEL

Sonia is a dancer, choreographer and artistic director of Sonia St-Michel Creations, an organization dedicated to research, creation and dissemination of works involving collaborations across diverse mediums and artistic practices. Her practice in Odissi dance began in 2000 (Anjali Academy, Upasana), and since 2005 she travels regularly to India for training with Aloka Panikar (2005-2011) and Sujata Mohapatra (2012-2018). Her art finds grounding in the Alexander technique, yoga and meditation, and somatic approaches that have been part of her life for 20 years. Initiated in western classical singing by Stephanie Piercey and Jonathan Voyer, Sonia considers herself a dancer-musician; through

body percussion and voice, movement goes hand in hand with sound as an all-encompassing form of expression. She has sought the mentorship of Rekha Tandon, Tedd Robinson and Daniel Mroz in her creative and choreographic research. Her work has been presented in theatres, festivals and art galleries in Canada and abroad by presenters such as the Odissi International festival in India, la UNAM and Galeria Rosenblueth in Mexico, the Ottawa Dance Directive, the NAC, Kalanidhi Fine Arts, Alliance Française de Toronto, Tangente and Festival Accès Asie. Committed to promoting arts education, she teaches Odissi dance and offers school workshops.



(PHOTO : DAVID LOPEZ)



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JULIE BEAULIEU

Dancer, scholar and teacher, Julie Beaulieu holds a Bachelor's degree (1996) and a Master's degree in dance (2015) from Université du Québec à Montréal. A disciple of Vidushi Smt. Rohini Imarati since 2003, she periodically stays in India to perfect the art of Bharatanāṭyam, to offer performances and to create new choreographies. Her past collaborations and creations brought her to work in Canada, Italy, Germany and France. As a contemporary dancer, Julie has collaborated with choreographers Marie-Julie Asselin, Emmanuel Jouthe, Louise Bédard and Roger Sinha to name a few. She also worked as choreographer-dancer with Les Demi-Lunes Violentes from 1996 to



2006. In 2010, she cofounded Saṃskāra : les artisans du passage with the musician and scholar Jonathan Voyer. The collective's mission is to promote transcultural dialogue through the arts. Julie is an associate member of CERIAS (Centre d'études et de recherche sur l'Inde, l'Asie du Sud et sa diaspora) and a member of the International Dance Council CID. She teaches dance at Cégep de Saint-Laurent and is a yoga instructor certified by the International Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Center (2005). Julie is now pursuing her doctoral studies in artistic research (UQAM, doctorat en études et pratiques des arts). Since 2017, her deep interest in the history of Bharatanāṭyam led her to participate in numerous research residencies in India and Hungary, under the direction of Dr. Saskia Kersenboom (Paramparai Arts).

(PHOTO : MARTINE DOYON)



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JONATHAN VOYER (COMPOSER)

Jonathan Voyer is a disciple of santoor maestro Pandit Satish Vyas and of kirana gharana vocalist Pandit Somanath Mardur. He received his initial training with voice teacher Louise Yard from whom he learned the Bel Canto singing technic. He is an active performer of Hindustani music and composes music for dance since 2003. With dancer Julie Beaulieu, he founded Samskara : les artisans du passage to promote transcultural dialogue through arts. Jonathan has a Bachelor's degree in Education (B.Ed), a Master's in Religious Studies (M.A) and a Ph.D in Artistic Research from the University of Quebec in Montreal (UQAM). He is a membre of Centre d'études et de recherche sur l'Inde, l'Asie du Sud et sa diaspora (CERIAS) and a lecturer in arts at UQAM.



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NATASHA BAKHT (REHEARSAL DIRECTOR)

Natasha Bakht is an Indian contemporary dancer and choreographer who trained in bharatanatyam under Governor-General Performing Arts Medalist Menaka Thakkar for 20 years, touring internationally with her company. As a member of the Shobana Jeyasingh Dance Company in London, England, Natasha performed in celebrated venues around the world. She has worked with choreographers Roger Sinha, Wayne McGregor, Yvonne Coutts and Peggy Baker. Her own choreography includes multiple solos for herself, and group works



commissioned by the Menaka Thakkar Dance Company, the CanAsian International Dance Festival, Sampradaya Dance Creations and Fall for Dance North. Natasha's dances have been the subject of two films by Mouvement Perpétuel (<http://mouvementperpetuel.net>) and have been screened in film festivals globally. She has published and given keynote lectures examining Canada's history and contemporary practice with Indigenous and racially/culturally diverse arts/artists at festivals and universities. Natasha is an award-winning artist (Dora Award nominations, 2003/2010; K.M. Hunter Artists Award, 2008; Ottawa Arts Council Mid-Career Artist Award finalist, 2018; Johanna Metcalf Performing Arts Prize finalist, 2021; Order of Ottawa, 2022). She is artist-in-residence at the Ottawa Dance Directive. Natasha has been described as "a brilliant diamond" (Dance Current), a "powerhouse" (Hindustan Times)... "all honed to the bone elegance and precision" (Vancouver Sun).



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Leher, is a work-in-progress choreographed by Tanveer Alam which examines Kathak aesthetics and techniques, in relation to the anatomical structure of the spine. Through this work, the dancer dances solely in Vilambit Laya, the slow tempo within Kathak, and explores the density, elasticity, and fluidity that can be achieved from this choice.



Tanveer
Alam



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The work is anchored by the Kathak repertoire structure of Thaata in which the dancer uses transitional movements to establish a variety of poses. Choreographically, Leher proposes waves of thinking on the Kathak vocabulary, and considers the spine as an outlet for subtle movement expressions of the waves themselves - flowing, expansive, and contained. In this iteration of the work, Tanveer is exploring the possibilities of working with projected images of the body from different viewpoints, and how those create different spatial parameters.



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Choreography and performance:
Tanveer Alam

Videography and Editing: **Eamon Macmahon**

Direction of Cinematography and

Dramaturgy: **Brandy Leary**

Movement dramaturgy: **Harikishan S. Nair**

Music Composition: **Gurumurthy Vaidya**

Mixing: **Roshin Shabu**

Supported by the Sadhana Project Residency
(Anandam Dancetheatre), Canada Council for
the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, Toronto Arts
Council, and CanAsian Grit Short Dances



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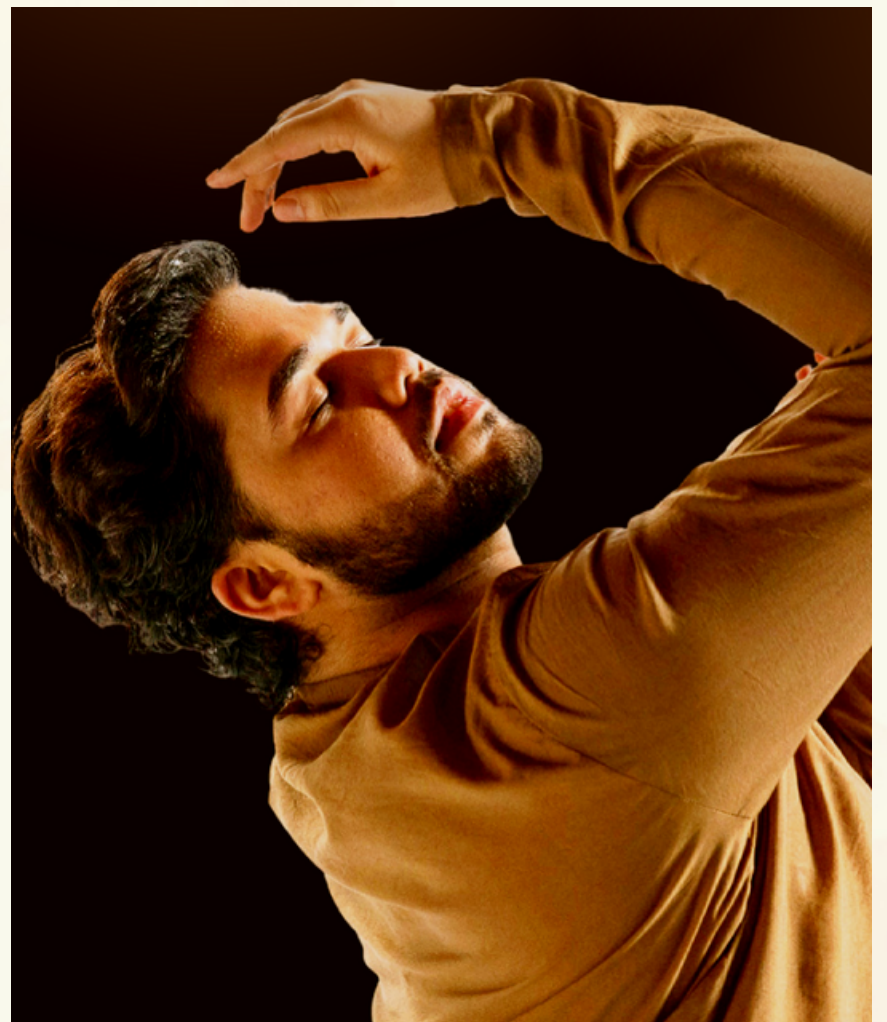
MISSISSAUGA



LEHER

TANVEER ALAM

Toronto-based Tanveer Alam started his Kathak training with Sudeshna Maulik and pursued further nuanced learning with the Late guru Sandhya Desai. Alam is a 2019 graduate of The School of Toronto Dance Theatre. Alam has performed in the works of Rina Singha, Lata Pada, Padmini Chettur, Brandy Leary, Harikishan S. Nair, Sashar Zarif, Lucy Rupert, and Peter Chin.



As an emerging choreographer, he has presented work at SummerWorks Festival, Battery Dance Festival +, MAI - Montréal, arts, interculturels, CanAsian Dance Festival: Grit Short Dances, and Tangente. Alam has been supported by Toronto Arts Council, The Ontario Arts Council, and The Canada Council for the Arts.

Across the 21/22 season, he worked with international choreographer Padmini Chettur as part of her new work Chalking, commissioned by Anandam Dancetheatre, and premiered The Tagore Project (co-choreographed by Atri Nundy), at Tangente and Sampradaya Dance Creations. Recently, Alam is co-created In Multiplicity with Nithya Garg, presented as a part of the Independent Projects stream at Nuit Blanche (Humber Galleries), and choreographed Haazri, a new Kathak solo for The National Ballet of Canada's Sharing The Stage program.