

The Kathak Ensemble & Friends

Celebrating its Twenty-Sixth Season

presents

POWER PLAY

**Produced and Directed
by Janaki Patrik**

**University Settlement
184 Eldridge Street
New York City**

**November 17 -21, 2004
Wednesday through Saturday evenings at 8pm
Saturday and Sunday matinees at 3pm**

THE KATHAK ENSEMBLE & FRIENDS

The Kathak Ensemble & Friends/CARAVAN, Inc. celebrates its twenty-sixth anniversary this season. The Ensemble and its arts-in-education unit, CARAVAN, communicate the richness of Indian culture through its arts, most specifically through the classical North Indian dance form Kathak, its storytelling techniques (*katha*) and its accompanying Hindustani music. The Ensemble also creates its own innovative repertoire, which interacts with familiar American art forms, demystifying unique details of Indian culture and engaging audience members in a journey of the imagination, revealing exotic *other-ness* as a variation on the common theme of *human-ness*.

Founded in 1978, the Kathak Ensemble was incorporated in 1997 in the State of New York as a non-profit arts and education organization. It welcomes the support of its audiences through volunteer work and donations. Information about the Ensemble is posted on its website at . The Kathak Ensemble & Friends/CARAVAN, Inc. can be reached at 141 East 3rd Street, #12 H, NY, NY 10009, and also by emailing the Artistic Director at .

*These performances are dedicated to the memory of
Karen Sara Erdman
December 20, 1964 – October 14, 2004*

PROGRAM

SITA SPEAKS

Concept and direction: Janaki Patrik
Translation of Valmiki's Sanskrit RAMAYANA: credited below *
Sanskrit chant: Dr. Indira Viswanathan Peterson
Recordings mix: Stephen Petrilli
Kuchipudi dance and *mudras*: performed by Sreshta Paranji,
choreographed by Sadhana Paranji
American Sign Language: Gerald Small
Modern dance and Kikuyu responses:
choreographed and performed by Wanjiru Kamuyu
Photographs: credited below **

THIS WAY UP

Composed by Dinuk Wijeratne
Performed by Naren Budhkar, Chris Marolf, Dinuk Wijeratne

CHEATING, LYING, STEALING

Choreography: Janaki Patrik and the Dancers
Music: Cheating, Lying, Stealing, composed by David Lang, credited below ***
Dancers: Aimee Phelan Deconinck, Caron Eule, Wanjiru Kamuyu,
Sita Mani, Amy Priya Santos, Yayoi Suzuki
Rehearsal assistant: Yayoi Suzuki

SARANGI INTERLUDE

Directed by Pandit Ramesh Misra
Performed by Pandit Ramesh Misra with members of the ensemble

POWER PLAY

Choreography: Janaki Patrik with Anup Kumar Das and the Dancers
Texts: Shiv Tandav Stotra, Kali Stuti, Ardhanarishwara Kavita Torah –
credited below ****

Music: Dinuk Wijeratne, Premier November 17, 2004
Dancers: Anup Kumar Das, Aimee Phelan Deconinck, Caron Eule,
Wanjiru Kamuyu, Sita Mani, Amy Priya Santos, Yayoi Suzuki, Matthew Wagner.

Musicians: Sarah Beaty, clarinet; Naren Budhkar, tabla and chant; Peter Fagiola,
pakhawaj and world percussion; David Fedele, flute; Usha Kallianpurkar,
Hindustani vocal; Chris Marolf, bass; Pandit Ramesh Misra, sarangi;
Sabina Rakcheyeva, violin; Dinuk Wijeratne – piano.
Costumes: Meenakshi Prabhakar

PROGRAM NOTES

SITA SPEAKS grew out of an abstract concept – to compare American Sign Language and the hand gesture language called *mudra*, which is used in Indian classical dance. The choreographer chose the text from India's epic RAMAYANA in response to photographs of America's war in Iraq in the media in October and November 2003. The photographs, which drove the creation of this brief dance theater piece, showed the price of human suffering paid by those who wage war and those who endure its consequences.

As this dance developed, it also grew into an examination of language and human emotion, and their translation into physical gestures. Sanskrit, Kenya's Kikuyu language, English, American Sign Language, abstract emotive gesture and *mudra* all illuminate the words which the epic's female heroine Sita speaks.

Considered by modern-day Hindus as the divine paradigm of a faithful and obedient wife, Sita says to her warrior husband, Ram, "My mighty husband, I do not like your going to Dandaka forest... On no account should you take up your bow and, unprovoked, turn your thoughts to killing the demons of Dandaka. My mighty husband, I do not like your killing creatures that have done no wrong. Wicked thoughts come from handling weapons."

The words which Sita speaks this evening to her husband Rama have been excerpted from the original version of the RAMAYANA. Composed in Sanskrit by Valmiki (500 B.C.E. ?), the RAMAYANA was preserved orally for at least a millennium before being committed to written form. In its original version the hero Rama and heroine Sita move through a landscape of court life and elemental natural forces. Banished to the forest as a result of court intrigue, Rama decides to wait out his seven-year absence from society by fighting demons in the wildest reaches of the forest. Rama and Sita's departure from and return to civilization involve a transformative journey.

A multi-faceted story of love, war, and transfer of power from king to eldest son, the RAMAYANA forms the core repertoire of many South Asian theater and dance traditions. It has been told and retold in many languages and with dramatically variant plots and relationships of characters. During its still-vibrant two and one-half millennia history, the RAMAYANA has been transformed from oral story to sacred text, and its main protagonists, Rama and Sita have been deified.

Archetypal characters embody different messages for different audiences and different times. Sita and Rama's words and actions still speak to us today. Wars of succession, religious differences, racial rivalry and outright greed impel rulers to search for and destroy real and imagined demons. But at what price to their own people and to the earth?

CHEATING, LYING, STEALING

Composer David Lang wrote about his 1995 composition: “In *Cheating, Lying, Stealing*, although phrased in a comic way, I am trying to look at something dark. The piece is a series of unreliable, imperfect repetitions.” And yet studying Lang’s score reveals the precise logic used to construct a frame for these imperfections: the piece ends with a mirror image of the beginning, winding back into itself.

Propelled by Lang’s dark sonic landscape, six women communicate with vague gestures and suggest undefined emotional entanglements, alternately pulling away from and drawn back into a vortex of unrelenting unanimity.

POWER PLAY is based on tradition poetry and chants describing the Indian deities Kali and Shiva, concluding with the image Ardhanarishwara – the union of male and female archetypes. Using three powerful poetic compositions as the progenitor of vocal, melodic, and physical movement, **Power Play** explores the outward attributes, inner qualities and emotive effects of these manifestations of universal power. Traditional poses and hand gestures/*mudras* from Indian classical dance vocabulary are carried into space using broad movements not included within the boundaries of any classical Indian dance styles. The immediacy of physical power, rising through the torso and involving breath and emotional intent, results in the embodiment rather than simple translation of the texts. This premier is funded in part by The Fund for Creative Communities, a grant administered by the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council.

POWER PLAY TEXTS:

SHIV TANDAV STOTRA

Shiva

Neck purified by the waters of the Ganges River,
falling from the thick forest of his matted hair;

Wearing a long snake garland,

His damaru drum keeping rhythm – damat damat damat damat – dancing

Let that Shiva bless us.

Shiva

With the fierce fire of his third eye burning – dhagad dhagad dhagad dhagad

Burning the God of Love in a huge fire sacrifice,

Drawing flower designs on Parvati’s breasts,

May Shiva, that three-eyed artist, love me.

Shiva

Enjoyer of the honey flowing from the flowers of the perfect, auspicious arts of your consort,

Parvati,

Destroyer of the God of love, destroyer of the demon Tripura, destroyer of worldly

entanglements, destroyer of Daksha’s sacrifice,

Destroyer of the elephant demon, destroyer of Andhaka, destroyer of the God of Death,

Shiva, I pray to you.

KALI STUTI

Om, Kling, Hail auspicious Kali
Hand takes skull cap, sword flashes, cleaver shines
Frowning, eyes wide open, wearing a necklace of skulls
Holding the trident, teeth chattering
Kali, Chamunda.

Teeth glittering, blazing tongue flickering,
Lapping, drinking red blood
Shaking, skeleton rattling, laughing loudly
Shouting threateningly
Ma Kali, Mother Kali dances.

Hail Chandee, colored with blood, drops of blood,
She who delivers salvation
She who destroys fear
Savior of the world, brilliant as the moon.

Crush, crush, crush
She who tramples the wicked demons
She who rides on Shiva
She who walks in splendor
Auspicious savior,
Mother, mother.

Victorious, victorious.
She who lives in the heart of Shiva Shankara –
the auspicious one who causes happiness
Beloved of Shambhu, the benevolent.
She, like a king, remover of obstacles,
Mother.

ARDHANARISHWARA

Half of the head is illuminated by the moon,
from the other half flows the Ganges River
Half of the forehead is smeared with sandalwood paste,
the other half is decorated with red powder
Half of the throat holds poison,
the other half is filled with the elixir of immortality.
Around half of the neck is twisted [a garland of] teeth,
from the other half hangs a garland of jungle flower
One hand holds the hourglass drum,
the other hand is decorated with bangles.
Half of the torso shines with ashes,
the other half is adorned with ornaments.
From one side of the waist hangs a tiger skin,
from the other side hangs shining white cloth.
Half of the body shows the *tandav*/vigorous aspect,
half shows the *lasya*/languorous aspect.
Jay jay jay hay ardhangapati Hail, hail, hail –lord [whose] body is half [and half]

ARTISTS' BIOGRAPHIES

Janaki Patrik, Artistic Director, has been trained in Kathak classical north Indian dance, Hindustani vocal and tabla drumming at the Kathak Kendra, New Delhi by Padma Vibhushan Pandit Birju Maharaj, Vidushi Srimati Siddheswari Devi and Guruji Purushottam Das. In the United States she has studied Kathak under the late Nala Najan and Najma Ayashah. Also trained in western classical flute, ballet and Merce Cunningham modern dance technique, Janaki creates productions, which combine western music, stage craft and choreography with Indian dance, music and literary themes. Co-founder of The Kathak Ensemble with Paul Leake in 1978, Janaki has performed both classical Kathak and her own choreography in the United States, Canada and India at venues including Lincoln Center, the Smithsonian Institute, the Philadelphia Museum, Symphony Space/NYC, the Indian International Center in New Delhi and Premier Dance Theatre in Toronto. Active in the field of arts-in-education, Janaki and the Ensemble's arts-in-education unit CARAVAN perform and conduct workshops in NY metropolitan area schools and cultural institutions through Young Audiences/New York. Janaki received her MA in Indic Languages and Literature from Columbia University in 2000. Her work has been supported by the Fulbright Foundation, the American Institute of Indian Studies, the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council and the Asian American Arts Alliance.

Sri Lankan-born **Dinuk Wijeratne** grew up in Dubai and received his undergraduate degree at the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM), Manchester, UK. While at the RNCM, Dinuk was recognised for the diversity of his musical talents and interests, not only winning prizes for contemporary classical composition and conducting, but also major prizes for Jazz improvisation and for his collaborations with visiting artists including Victor Mendoza, Tim Garland and John Dankworth. Upon graduating, he was awarded the RNCM's highest honour for contribution to its musical life, the 'Sir John Manduell Prize'. Invited by American composer John Corigliano to join the composition program at The Juilliard School with a full scholarship, Dinuk received his MA in Composition from Juilliard in May 2003. He is currently enrolled at the Mannes College of Music in their Orchestral Conducting Professional Studies program. Dinuk was appointed Artist-in-Residence by the Performing Arts Foundation at International House for the 2003/4 season. His Chamber Concerto 'About Sankhara', written for the New Juilliard Ensemble, was the first work by a Sri Lankan composer to be performed at Lincoln Center. He made his Carnegie Hall debut in September 2004 as a conductor, composer and pianist, performing with Yo Yo Ma and the Silk Road Project.

Clarinetist **Sarah Beaty**, born in England, studied at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester. A winner of a Yamaha Music Foundation of Europe Scholarship in 2003, Sarah currently studies with Charles Neidich in the Masters of Music program at The Juilliard School of Music. Scholarships from the Hattori Foundation, the Martin Musical Trust and the Musicians Benevolent Fund financially aid her studies in the United States.

Naren Budhkar, *tabla* drummer and world percussionist, born and raised in Pune, India, is an active performer and teacher living in New York City. He has performed classical *tabla* solos as well as accompanied top classical Indian dance, vocal and instrumental artists. As a world musician Naren has contributed his percussion to various music forms such as rock, jazz, folk, country and Irish-Celtic. He has been cited by The New York Times and El Diario and has been featured on C.N.N.

Anup Kumar Das received his initial dance training in Dhaka, Bangladesh. From 1986-87 he studied Manipuri and Kathakali at the Vishwa Bharati University, Shantiniketan. During the four subsequent years, he studied Kathak under Smt. Reba Vidyarthi, Pandit Munalal Shukla and Sri Raj Kumar Sharma at Kathak Kendra, as well as Bharata Natyam under Padma Shri Leela Samson at the Bharatiya Kala Kendra. Anup teaches and performs Kathak and Bengali folk dance.

Aimée Phelan Deconinck's dance credits include works by Martha Graham, Meryl Tankard, Bill T. Jones, and David Parsons. Her training includes scholarships for study at The School of American Ballet and The Martha Graham Center of Contemporary Dance. She holds an MFA in Acting from Columbia University, and has performed internationally at the Volksbuhne in Berlin as well as nationally.

Caron Eule received her BFA from SUNY Purchase. She has performed with Stephan Koplowitz as a core company member, Daniel Gwartzman, Naomi Goldberg, Carol Fonda, Jodi Liss, and The Shadowbox Theater. Ms. Eule is the Artistic Director of C. Eule Dance, in which her choreography has been presented at the Elan Awards, Dancers Responding to Aids, the Williamsburg Art neXus, the 92nd St. Y, University Settlement, and Dance Space.

Peter Fagiola is an exponent of world percussion, performing on the North Indian *pakhawaj*, frame drums and marimba. Mr. Fagiola is classically trained in both Western/European classical and contemporary music as well as North Indian classical, folk and devotional music. He performs in a wide variety of musical situations ranging from free improvisational music to devotional chanting.

David Fedele, a graduate of The Curtis Institute and The Juilliard School, currently serves as Professor of Flute at the University of Kansas in Lawrence. Mr. Fedele has performed as soloist and recitalist throughout the United States, Europe, South America and Asia. Festival appearances include Spoleto USA and Lincoln Center Festival. Mr. Fedele concertizes with his own trio, Trio Fedele, and in duos with harp. He performs and records with numerous ensembles.

Usha Kallianpurkar, Hindustani vocalist, has studied with Smt. Sudha Divekar, Pandit Firoz Dastur (Kirana style), and Pandit Madhav Bhatki (Gwalior style). Usha performs regularly for established music circles in India and the United States. Fringe arts collaborations have culminated in performances at the Ravinia Music Festival in Chicago, and at the Kaye Playhouse, the United Nations and Lincoln Center in New York City.

Wanjiru Kamuyu: Kenyan native; MFA – Temple University, Philadelphia; Training - Alvin Ailey American Dance Center, American Dance Festival, Philadelphia Dance Company a.k.a. Philadanco; Company work - Urban Bush Women, Molissa Fenely and Dancers, nathantrice/RITUALS, Tania Isaac Dance Projects, Restlessnatives, Skeleton Projects, Bandana Women, Gametophyte Inc, Movin' Spirits Dance Theater (understudy)...

Sita Mani has performed and taught in both her native India and in the United States. Her musical theater credits include *Cabaret*, *Best Of Broadway*, *Last Tango In Heaven* and *Acushla*. She has performed Off Broadway in *The Little Clay Cart* and with dance companies including Guido Tuveri's Sanza Nemo CDC, Impact Theater and Compagnie Piedo. She has worked with choreographers Nixon Beltran, Uttara Coorlawalla, Katrina Van Zee and Smruti Patel.

Bassist **Chris Marolf** is involved with a number of projects dedicated to exploring and expanding music from around the world. He performs in a Chinese folk trio with erhu, has recently recorded for a Celtic crossover project, and performed with the Middle Eastern ensemble The Howling Makams. He tours regularly and records with singer/songwriter Jann Klose, is a member of the collaborative jazz quartet Grand Central, and freelances with various jazz ensembles and orchestras.

Pandit Ramesh Misra, master of the thirty-seven-stringed Indian *sarangi*, has accompanied all major dancers, vocalists and *tabla* players of North India for over three decades in concerts and festivals throughout the world. Recipient of the 1992 Sangeet Akademi (Indian National Academy of the Arts) Award for his contributions to Hindustani music and the preservation of the endangered tradition of *sarangi* playing, Rameshji is the son and disciple of the late Pandit Ramnath Misra. He has studied raga with legendary sitarist Pandit Ravu Shankar for over ten years.

Sreshta Paranji is a fourth grader at P.S./I.S266Q, Glenoaks, Queens, NY. She has been studying Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi since the age of three and has performed at venues including Boston University, American Telugu Association conferences and Tamil Sangams programs. She has received several prizes for her dancing. Sreshta also sings Karnatic music and plays the piano.

Stephen Petrilli, lighting designer, has also designed for Rebecca Kelly Ballet, Pilobolus Dance Theatre, Ailey II, Shapiro & Smith Dance, The Kevin Wynn Collection, Isabel Gotzkowsky & Friends, Complexions and Performance Artist Judith Ren-Lay. Stephen has designed several plays for New York's Pearl Theatre Company, National Asian American Theatre Company and Second Generation Productions. He toured as Production Stage Manager for Nikolais and Murray Louis Dance Company, and as Lighting/Sound Supervisor for Pilobolus.

Meenakshi Prabhakar, costume design and execution, formerly danced in the company of Shiamak Davar's Institute for the Performing Arts, Bombay, India, where she also worked in production and wardrobe. She designed the costumes for the production of "Tuglaq" by Bombay's Masque Theatre Company. Meenakshi is a physical therapist with Riverside Physical Therapy.

Violinist **Sabina Rakcheyeva**, a native of Baku, Azerbaijan, attended Academia Chigiana, Italy and the Fontainebleau School of Fine Arts, France. She completed her MA at The Juilliard School in New York in 2002. Sabina has been featured on BBC, CNN, WQXR and Voice of America.

Amy Priya Santos teaches ashtanga yoga in the tradition of Sri K. Pattabhi Jois. Thank you Mata Amritanandamayi for your wisdom, grace, and love. These performances are her first with Janaki. She is happy to share this experience with her parents, and with Steve. I still miss you Alan, and always will.

Gerald Small received his education from the New York Society for the Deaf in Sign Language and Interpreting, and from The Juilliard School in Theatrical Interpreting. He has interpreted for shows including *A Laying on of Hands, If One Could Fly, And A Nightingale Sang, Measured Honesty, Promise of the Park, New York Toy Stories, Freeda People, Christmas Revels, A Christmas Carol* and *Roots of Rap*. He has acted in *A Midsummer Night's Dream, Twelfth Night, A Flea in Her Ear, The Tempest* and in the movie *Five Days in Central Park*.

Yayoi Suzuki, native of Tokyo, Japan, received her MA in Dance and Dance Education from NYU. She has worked with choreographers such as Douglas Dunn, Renata Celichowska, Lucia Wright, Yuki Hasegawa and Gabriela Granados. She currently dances with Saba Dance Theater and Thoughts in Motion. She would like to thank her parents, Yashiro and Akemi Suzuki for their love and support.

Matthew Wagner moved to New York City in 2002 from Minnesota. He has worked in the concert dance world as well as in theatre. He has danced for Stephan Koplowitz in the Grand Step Project, The Shadow Box Theatre Co., Shela Xoregos, Caron Eule, and currently dances for choreographer Alona Mor. Matthew has also performed in *CATS, 42nd STREET, and FIDDLER ON THE ROOF*. He received his BFA in dance and music from Stephens College, and gives many thanks to his family.

CREDITS

* Excerpts from “The Ramayana of Valmiki: An Epic of Ancient India” : Volume III, Aranyakanda. Translation by Sheldon Pollock, Edited by Robert Goldman, Princeton University Press 1991.

** The photographs projected in SITA SPEAKS were chosen from Reuters Picture Archive, through which licensing permission was obtained. 1. Fifty kilometers from Monrovia, Liberia, August 23, 2003. Vasily Fedosenko / Reuters. 2. Sarajevo, 1994. Peter Andrews / Reuters. 3. Grandfather and grandson, Sasen Nava, Gujarat, March 2, 2002. Stringer / Reuters.

*** *Cheating, Lying, Stealing* by David Lang is used by arrangement with G. Schirmer, Inc., agent in the United States for Red Poppy, publisher and copyright owner. Recorded music of David Lang: *Cheating, Lying, Stealing*, from Cantaloupe CA 21010 Bang on a Can Classics, is used by permission of Cantaloupe Music.

**** *Shiv Tandav Stotra* – traditional Sansrit chant – translated by Janaki Patrik with assistance from Dr. P. Jayaraman and Pandit Ramchandra Patwardhan

Kali Stuti, as played by Raj Kishore Das, pakhawaji – transmitted to Janaki Patrik by Pandit Samir Chatterjee. Translated by Janaki Patrik assisted by Pandit Samir Chatterjee, Professor Rachel McDermott and Smt. Abha Bhatnagar Roy

Ardhanarishwara Kavita Torah, as played by Raj Kishore Das, pakhawaji and attributed to Lacchu Maharaj – transmitted to Janaki Patrik by Pandit Samir Chatterjee. Translated by Janaki Patrik, assisted by Pandit Samir Chatterjee, Smt. Abha Bhatnagar Roy and Smt. Sandhya Desai

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THANKS

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