



Asia House and Akademi present Dance Dialogue

Glittering Tales:

Dancing for Rajahs, Nawabs, and the Officers of the Raj

In today's talk accompanied by demonstration, Dr. Swarnamalya Ganesh and Chitra Sundaram will explore the narratives, the women, and the repertoire of Sadir Āttam: the command performance of the 17th – early 20th century that was presented in darbars and salons for royalty, aristocracy and officers of The Raj.

This event presents the her-story of the Sadir dancer; her repertoire and her reputation as an articulate, charming and sophisticated performer. Dr. Swarnamalya Ganesh will share the experiences of seeking out hereditary dancers; piecing together closely guarded anecdotes and repertoire pieces.

Credits

Dr Swarnamalya Ganesh, Performer

Swarnamalya is a combination of a performer of Sadir, a scholar of dance history, an academician in art practice and sociology and an actress in Indian cinema. She contextualises her work through gender, stigma and political movements. Having trained under several Devadasi women, she performs, writes, speaks and teaches Bharatanatyam as Sadir, its subaltern form. She has a Masters in Bharatanatyam and a PhD in Dance History from Madras University. *From The Attic* is her unique platform for Sadir revival and reconstruction.

Chitra Sundaram, Programme Host

Chitra is a choreographer, Bharatanatyam performer, mentor and educator. Her research concerns the problems and potential of classical forms in cross-cultural and intergenerational transmission of narratives. Chitra was on the board of Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing. She is an Associate Lecturer at Goldsmiths and a Fellow of the Royal Society of the Arts.

Guru Bharadwaaj, Mridangam

Trained under Maestro Karaikudi Mani, Guru is a performer and composer with a deep interest in innovation. His precise technique and fine balance of sound make him a sought after mridangist for dance. He has worked as a lecturer at Kalakshetra for a few years and is now pursuing his Ph.D in music.

Srikrishnan Balasubramanian, Harmonium

Srikrishnan is a disciple of Carnatic and Hindustani musical traditions. The fourth-generation musician in his family, he performs with prominent artists in India and abroad. He plays both the Harmonium and the violin. Srikrishnan has been accompanying Dr. Swarnamalya Ganesh for over a decade.

(Mysore) Sangeetha Sudhir, Vocalist

Sangeetha is an award-winning vocal artist in carnatic music, singing for prominent senior dance artists. She is also a violinist, in the Parur style, performing in duet with her husband K.J. Dileep. In 2017, Sangeetha represented India in Uganda, Tanzania and South Africa and performed as an Indian Cultural Delegate.

About Akademi

Founded in 1979 by the legendary Tara Rajkumar, Akademi is the UK's leading South Asian Dance organisation, capturing imaginations through inspiring storytelling and unique spectacle. Creating vital talent pathways for the next generation of dance artists, Akademi also takes dance to the heart of the community, offering life-affirming experiences for those who are disadvantaged, disengaged or isolated.

In 2019-20, Akademi is marking its 40th anniversary with an ambitious programme of year-long celebratory events in London, showcasing the breadth of its work and highlighting some of the best South Asian dance talent associated with Akademi's history in the UK and globally.

About Asia House

Asia House supports a vibrant Arts and Learning Programme – a creative hub for Asian arts and Culture. It is a completely unique initiative in the UK in presenting a pan-Asian artistic and cultural programme with a scope of more than 40 countries in the region.

Through their programme of events on arts, culture and education, Asia House act as a catalyst for the discovery of the diverse arts and cultures of Asia and the Asian diaspora, and serve as a bridge of understanding between the UK and Asia.

Acknowledgements and Staff

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