



Photo credits: Ed Bock, C. Rod Bacon



APARNA RAMASWAMY



"At once iconic and explosive, Aparna Ramaswamy infuses the formal rigor of Bharatanatyam with fluid spontaneity and rock star allure."

—Dance Magazine

CONTACT INFORMATION

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“With my work, I hope to bring to audiences a synthesis of the philosophy, mythology, and spirituality of my Indian heritage; to speak from my own tradition with an original voice, and find intersections between the ancient and modern worlds.”

- Aparna Ramaswamy

Born in India and raised in the United States, acclaimed dancer/choreographer Aparna Ramaswamy has impressed critics and audiences worldwide with her performances of Bharatanatyam. Groomed by Smt. Alarmel Valli, the world’s leading exponent of the Pandanainallur tradition of Bharatanatyam, Aparna has been described as **“a marvel of buoyant agility and sculptural clarity” (Dance Magazine).**

For the past 20 years, Aparna Ramaswamy has returned to Madras, India every year to study with her guru and absorb the intricacies and nuances of the Pandanainallur tradition. At the age of twelve, Aparna was the first of Smt. Alarmel Valli’s students to perform her arangetram. Aparna is proud to carry on her guru’s signature aesthetic while creating a unique style of her own. Aparna has been featured at prestigious venues throughout the United States and abroad including the Kennedy Center (Washington, D.C.), the New Victory Theater (New York, NY), Mandapa (Paris, France), Krishna Gana Sabha, Karthik Fine Arts, and the India International Center (New Delhi). Aparna was fortunate to tour with her guru to nine cities in Japan, under the auspices of the Min-on Concert Association.

In recognition of her performance and choreography, Aparna has been awarded many grants and fellowships, including a McKnight Artist Fellowship for Dancers, a McKnight Artist Fellowship for Choreography, a Bush Fellowship for Choreography, an Arts and Religion in the Twin Cities grant, funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, two Jerome Foundation Travel Study Grants, an Artist Exploration Fund Grant from Arts International (New York), the Lakshmi Vishwanathan Endowment Prize from Sri Krishna Gana Sabha (Chennai, India), and the Sage Award for Best Dancer (Minneapolis, Minnesota). Aparna’s choreography is supported by the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Dance Project, the Japan Foundation, and the Minnesota State Arts Board. **Most recently, Aparna has become the first Bharatanatyam artist to be named one of “25 to watch” by Dance Magazine.**

As Co-Artistic Directors of Ragamala Dance, Aparna and her mother, Ranee Ramaswamy, are internationally recognized for their contemporary approach to Bharatanatyam—one which maintains its emotional richness and aesthetic integrity while remaining consistently innovative. Together, they have created numerous productions in collaboration with eminent US-based and international artists of diverse disciplines, and continue to create an awareness of Bharatanatyam throughout the United States through extensive workshops, lecture-demonstrations, and master classes.

Aparna Ramaswamy presents both solo and ensemble works for tour that may be accompanied by either a live orchestra or recorded music. As a compliment to her mainstage performances, Aparna offers workshops, lecture-demonstrations, and master classes in the history and technique of Bharatanatyam and its relevance in the modern world.

FROM THE PRESS

“Ramaswamy knows Bharatanatyam inside and out, completely absorbing herself in the movement.”
— **The Scotsman, U.K.**

“Aparna Ramaswamy conveys wonderfully the intricacy, and spirituality of the art form with highly expressive use of the eyes, hands, and carriage of the body.” — **Three Weeks in Edinburgh, U.K.**

“As petite as her teacher, Alarmel Valli, Aparna Ramaswamy has imbibed from her guru the same light-footed easy grace in her Bharatanatyam.” — **The Hindu, New Delhi**

“As Aparna Ramaswamy weaves patterns of grace and rhythm skillfully onstage, one feels encouraged at the rise of gifted talent in Bharatanatyam.” — **The Indian Express, Chennai**

“Aparna’s movements were technically perfect. You could call her one of the best dancers of her age.”
— **Femina Magazine, Bombay**

“Ramaswamy was impressive...[her] lithe arm movements give a fine sweep to her dancing.”
— **The Hindu, New Delhi**

“In addition to her charm and light-footedness, Aparna possessed an unbridled energy which she handles with maturity.” — **The Statesman, New Delhi**

“It’s fascinating to watch Ramaswamy, an amazing dancer, demonstrate a sensual interplay of rhythmic precision, sculptural form, and spontaneity.” — **City Pages, Minneapolis**

“Aparna Ramaswamy was able to project an unusual kinetic joy in the pieces.”
— **The Patriot, New Delhi**

“Ramaswamy shows a rhythmic explosiveness and theatrical flair that is both forceful and fetching.”
— **Star Tribune, Minneapolis**

“Ramaswamy is alternately rose and diamond; the weaving, playfully darting dance of her head and eyes contrasts with her sudden jumps and lunges.”
— **Minneapolis/St. Paul Magazine**



U.S. HIGHLIGHTS

Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (Washington, D.C.) • New Victory Theater (New York, NY) • Kupferberg Center (Flushing, NY) • Queens Theater in the Park (Queens, NY) • Chautauqua Institute (Buffalo, NY) • Center for the Performing Arts (University Park, IL) • Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall (Sarasota, FL) • Main Street Fort Worth Arts Festival (Fort Worth, TX) • Carver Center (San Antonio, TX) • Tamil Nadu Foundation (Detroit, MI) • Tamil Nadu Foundation (Pittsburgh, PA) • Tamil Nadu Foundation (Orlando, FL) • State Theater (New Brunswick, NJ) • Prairie Center for the Arts (Schaumburg, IL) • Paramount Theater (Denver, CO) • New Jersey Performing Arts Center (Newark, NJ) • Lied Center (Lawrence, KS) • ArtWallah Festival (Los Angeles, CA) • Castleton Fine Arts Center (Castleton, VT) • Academic Arts Theater (Westchester, NY) • The Duke Theater (New York, NY) • Marcus Center for the Performing Arts (Milwaukee, WI) • Festival Dance and Performing Arts (Pullman, WA) • Gould Academy (Bethel, ME) • Wharton Center for Performing Arts (East Lansing, MI) • St. Anselm College (Manchester, NH) • California Institute of Technology (Pasadena, CA) • Pantages Theater (Tacoma, WA)

INTERNATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Mandapa • Paris, France
Krishna Gana Sabha • Chennai, India
Kalarasana • Chennai, India
Rani Seethai Hall • Chennai, India
Bharatiya Vidhya Bhawan • Chennai, India
Soorya Festival • Kerala, India
Indian International Center • New Delhi, India
National Center for the Performing Arts • Mumbai, India
Bali Arts Festival • Bali, Indonesia
Nagoya Kita Bunka Shogekijyo • Nagoya, Japan
Matsumoto Bunka Kaikan • Matsumoto, Japan
Iida Bunka Kaikan • Iida, Japan
Open Look Dance Festival • St. Petersburg, Russia
Festival of Spirituality and Peace • Edinburgh, Scotland
Miao-Li International Mask Festival • Miao Li, Taiwan
Edmonton, Canada
Calgary, Canada

