



Esplanade
Presents

Raga

Śṛīṅāra Nāyikā

— Hues of Love

BY OMKAR ARTS

22 & 23 JUL 2022
FRI, 8PM
SAT, 3PM & 8PM
ESPLANADE THEATRE STUDIO



About Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay

Esplanade is Singapore's national performing arts centre and one of the busiest arts centres in the world. Since its opening in 2002, the centre has presented more than 50,000 performances and activities, drawing an audience of 32 million patrons and 114 million visitors. This architectural icon, with its distinctive twin shells, houses world-class performance spaces complemented by a comprehensive range of professional support services.

Esplanade's vision is to be a performing arts centre for everyone and its programming is guided by its social mission—to entertain, engage, educate and inspire. It seeks to enrich everyone's lives, including seniors, youth, children and underserved communities, through the arts. The centre's year-long calendar of about 3,500 arts performances and activities span different cultures, languages and genres including dance, music, theatre, and more. Of these, more than 70% are presented free for all to enjoy. Esplanade's visual arts programmes at its public spaces also allow visitors to view and explore art works for free.

Esplanade also brings the arts virtually to audiences in Singapore and beyond, through its diverse range of digital programmes on *Esplanade Offstage*, an all-access backstage pass to the performing arts and guide to Singapore and Asian arts and culture, with videos, podcasts, articles, quizzes and resources.

Esplanade regularly presents world-renowned companies and artists that attract international attention and add to Singapore's cultural vibrancy. The centre is also a popular performance home for arts groups and commercial presenters who hire its venues to stage a wide range of programmes. These carefully curated presentations complement Esplanade's own diverse offerings for audiences.

Esplanade works in close partnership with local, regional and international artists to develop artistic capabilities, push artistic boundaries and engage audiences. The centre supports the creation of artistic content by commissioning and producing new Singapore and Asian work for the international stage. As an Approved Training Organisation (ATO) of the SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG), Esplanade conducts a range of courses that develops technical capabilities for the industry nationally.

Turning 20 in 2022, Esplanade marks the occasion with a year-long celebration themed *20 and Beyond: Keeping the Lights On*. In addition to the presentations of its year-long festivals, programme series, and special initiatives and events, there will also be a season of new works by Singapore and Asian artists specially commissioned for the arts centre's 20th anniversary and official opening of its newest venue, Singtel Waterfront Theatre.

Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay is operated by The Esplanade Co Ltd (TECL), which is a not-for-profit organisation, a registered Charity and an Institution of a Public Character. The Charity Council awarded TECL the Charity Governance Award – Special Commendation for Clarity of Strategy in 2016, and the Charity Transparency Award for four consecutive years since 2016. Esplanade is Singapore's first Dementia-Friendly Arts Venue and a certified Dementia Go-To Point, as well as a Guide-dog Friendly centre.

TECL receives funding support from Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth and its Community Programmes are supported by Tote Board Family, comprising Tote Board, Singapore Pools and Singapore Turf Club.

Visit [Esplanade.com](https://www.esplanade.com) for more information.

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CHOREOGRAPHERS' MESSAGE

Śṛṅgāra Nāyikā is a quest for love in a woman's life, where she traverses through different emotions or *avasthas*. The conundrums that she faces and her reactions concerning her lover is what we as choreographers have delved into in this production.

The concept of *Sanjog* (union) and *Viyog* (separation) has been explored through different facets of *abhinaya* in kathak and bharatanatyam styles. This has led us to be inquisitive and thus experiment on the theme of *Ashtanayikas*, and now we present our choreography to all of you.

Every performance is not possible without team effort and we would like to thank and acknowledge the efforts of those who journeyed with us—Esplanade and National Art Council, Dr Anupama Kylash, Praveen D Rao, Daryl Soh, Keerthi Kumar, Lavanya Balachandran and Gauri Gupta.

Special thanks from Ponnamma to teachers Minal Prabhu and Madhu Nataraj, Natya Stem Dance Kampni, Flamenco Sin Fronteras family, Dastak team and friends; last but not the least Allapanda family, Shantharam family and Meru for being the rock behind her journey. Special thanks from Sreedevy to teachers Shanta Ponnudurai, Prof Uma Rao and Bragha Bessell, Omkar Arts company dancers and students and Viju Chakarapany, Aathmika and Saathvik for being a constant support and strength.

Ponnamma Devaiah and Sreedevy Sivarajasingam

PROGRAMME NOTES

Opening: Nāyikā Stavaha – An exaltation of the heroine

Ragam: Hamsadwani, Amritavarshini, Vasantha
Talam: Adi / Teentaal

Śṛṅgāra Nāyikā opens with a performance in praise of a woman, describing how she is likened to the creative force of nature or Prakṛti, the changing seasons, and five essential elements that make up this material world. This piece brings Bharatanatyam and Kathak into a conversation, with lyrics by Sudha K.K.

Scene 1: Vasakasajjika – one dressed up for union



Inta Prodaya – composition by Kshetraya

Ragam: Yamankalyani

Talam: Teentaal

The heroine adorns herself and decorates her home in eager anticipation of union with her lover. She waits for him and falls asleep. When she wakes up, she realises it is already dawn, but he is nowhere in sight. She regrets adorning herself and decorating the home. She says, “What use are these ornaments on me? Why do I bother? You are probably not coming so why should I be waiting for you?”

Scene 2: Virahotkanthita – one distressed by separation



Hanta Njan – composition by Swathi Thirunal
Ragam: Pantuvurali
Talam: Adi

The *nāyikā* continues yearning for her lover and grieves to her friend. She requests her friend to visit him and pass her letter which is urging him to return to see her. She thinks about how else she can convince her lover to come and visit her again. She moans about Manmatha's (Cupid) relentless attack on her. She recounts the first instance she met him at the Padmanabhaswamy temple, and ends in distress due to separation.

Scene 3: Vipralabdha – one deceived by her lover



Balamwa Tumkya Jaano Preet – traditional *bandish* (song)
passed on through generations
Ragam: Keeravani
Talam: Teentaal

The Virpralabdha *nāyikā* waits eagerly for her *sakhi* (friend) to return with good news. However, she notices that her friend has not passed her letter to her lover. Furthermore, when her friend explains that her beloved never came to the designated place to receive her message, she gets suspicious. This drives her into a tizzy and she spirals further into distress. She shuts the door and proclaims that she will not open the door when her lover comes.

Scene 4: Khandita – one enraged with her lover



Chellunantaa Chetapatta – composition by Annamacharya
Ragam: Gaanamukhari
Talam: Misra Chapu

The anger builds up in the Khandita *nāyikā* who has decided not to allow her lover back into her house or heart. She goes about her daily chores when her lover returns and knocks on the door. She ignores him but he persistently knocks. She rushes in anger to open the door and he grabs her hand. A quarrel ensues, she refuses to listen to him and accuses him of trying to talk his way out. She asks him which woman he has been with, having sensed deceit. She tells him that she is unable to control her emotions be it love or anger when he comes towards her. She has always been trusting but he is unfaithful to her and continues to hurt her already bruised heart. Though he is the great Venketaraya (Lord Vishnu) whom the world praises, he still is disloyal. In anger, she ends by shutting him off.

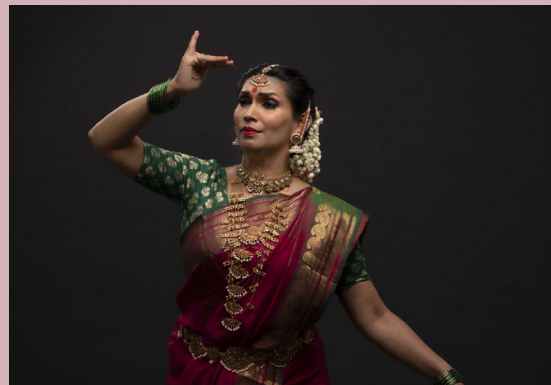
Scene 5: Kalahantarita – one separated by quarrel



Apachaara Maadidene – composition by Bhavani Ramnath
Ragam: Poorvi
Talam: Khanda Chapu

After driving the beloved away, the heroine is filled with regret. She is tormented even in her dreams. She realises that she should have heard his side of the story instead of shunning him away in anger. She quarrels with him about some jewellery that he gave her too. She realises that she cannot live without him and requests her friend to quickly inform him of her condition and bring him immediately.

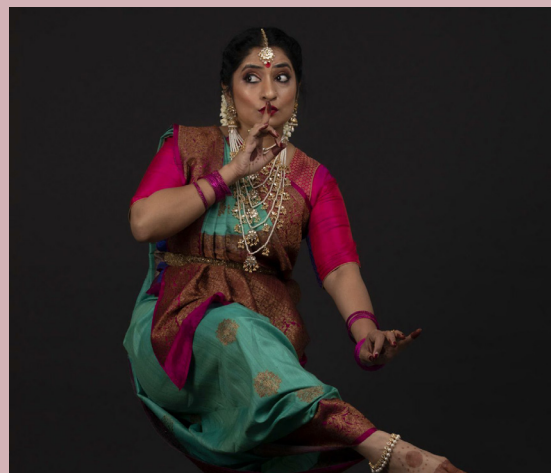
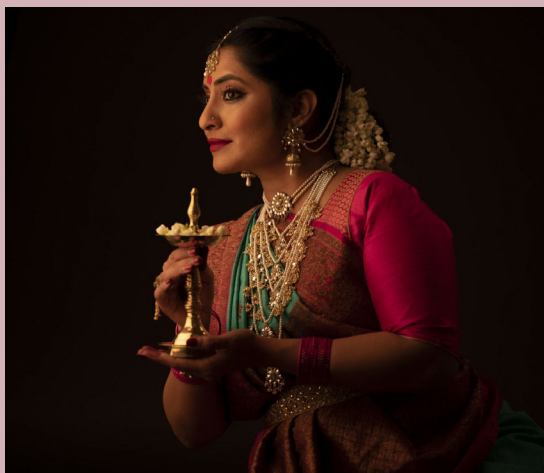
Scene 6: Proshitabhartruka – one with a sojourning lover



Sakhi hai Balaam – composition by Vidhyapathy (In Mythili dialect)
Ragam: Sarasangi
Talam: Adi

The heroine hears news from her *sakhi* that her lover has left the country for a long sojourn. She is saddened by the news and feels lonely and forlorn. Everything in nature reminds her of her solitary state. She cries desolately and tells her pet bird to take a message to her lover to persuade him to stay. She says she's always been a good wife, so she has the right to stop him from leaving her. She also says no one understands the pain she feels when he leaves and everyone around her mock her for her behaviour. She has always shown deep love and devotion towards her lover. But now that he leaves, she will surely die and he will be blamed by everyone.

Scene 7: Abhisārika - one who goes in search of her lover



From *Rasamanjari* by Bhanu Dhatta
Ragam: Aahir Lalat and Bhatiyar
Talam: Mishra taal

The *sakhi* tells the Abhisārika *nāyikā* that her lover has returned from his sojourn, but it was too late for her to visit him at that hour. However, the *nāyikā* is overwhelmed with eagerness to meet him that she was not deterred by the fact that it was late and dark, or that it was going to rain with thunder and lightning, or that the path was strewn with thick foliage and dangerous animals. She boldly takes her lamp and sets out to meet him. Not only does she meet him, but she also spends the night in loving embrace.

Scene 8: Svadhinapatika – one who is confident of her love and lover



Avaraipol Kidaikuma – composition by Subarama Iyer
Ragam: Sri Ranjani
Talam: Misra Chapu

The *nāyikā* returns after a joyful night spent with her lover. She walks arm in arm with him and is proud of the man that she is with. The *sakhi* who watches them approaches her with curiosity and probes her about what transpired between them. To that, the *nāyikā* lauds her lover as someone who is incomparable in the love that he has for her, in his beauty, strength and intelligence. She says she is content just being with him and does not need him to shower her with material wealth. Just seeing him and being embraced and loved by him is all the *nāyikā* seeks. She is one who is proud and confident of her lover.

Finale: Dwidhārā - A flow of two streams

Ragam: Kaapi
Talam: Adi/Teentaal

The *nāyikā* is an embodiment of love and her love manifests in many forms. She is firstly a mother, then a lover and finally Goddess incarnate who is revered. This piece is an ode to women, with lyrics set by Sudha K.K.

1 hr 15 min, no intermission

CREDITS

Concept/Choreographers/Dancers: S Sreedevy
& Ponnamma Devaiah

Narrator: Dr Lavanya Balachandran

Mentor: Dr. Anupama Kylash

Music composer: Praveen D Rao

Lead vocalist: Varija Venugopal

Opening and closing piece lyrics: Sudha K.K.

Lighting Designer: Daryl Soh

Stage Manager: Nadia Noordin

Poster Design and Multimedia Design: Keerthi Kumar

Original sketches and paintings and Emcee: Gauri Gupta

Costume Designer: Ramya Nagaraj

Costume Tailors: Renuka Tailors

Admin support: Niketha and Karthik

Hair and makeup: Dhanusha and Karthik

Rehearsal Space: Studio Epitome

Special thanks

Madhu Nataraj (feedback and suggestions)

Natya and Stem Dance Kampni

Bragha Bessell (Choreography supervision for *Bharathanatyam*)

Ramya Nagaraj (Choreography supervision for *Kathak*)

Prof Raghuraman (Tamil lyrics in narrator links)

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Esplanade gives our heartfelt thanks
to our Esplanade partner, arts benefactor, donors and sponsors for believing in our vision to be a performing arts centre for everyone. They made all these possible!^



1,276

activities took place at Esplanade.

Ticketed



412

Non-Ticketed



864

223,399



People attended our activities at the centre.

Ticketed

18,081

Non-Ticketed

205,318

We believe that everyone should be able to experience the joy of the arts, including children, youth, seniors, migrant workers and individuals with special needs. Our community engagement activities bring the arts to those in need.



185
Activities

4,357
Participants

*Figures for Esplanade's activities from Apr 2020 to Mar 2021.



Your contribution* will make a difference.

On behalf of the communities we serve, thank you!
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With Gratitude

Esplanade–Theatres on the Bay is a charity, a not-for-profit organisation and Singapore's national performing arts centre. We seek to entertain, engage, educate and inspire through the arts.

In 2022, we mark our 20th anniversary of being an arts centre for everyone. We thank everyone who has been a part of our journey. You have helped us bring joy, inspiration and positive impact to Singaporeans from all walks of life.

Our heartfelt appreciation goes especially to our Donors and Sponsors, for their steadfast belief in our mission and for generously supporting us.

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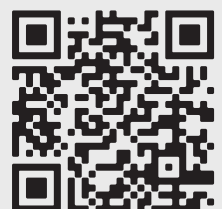
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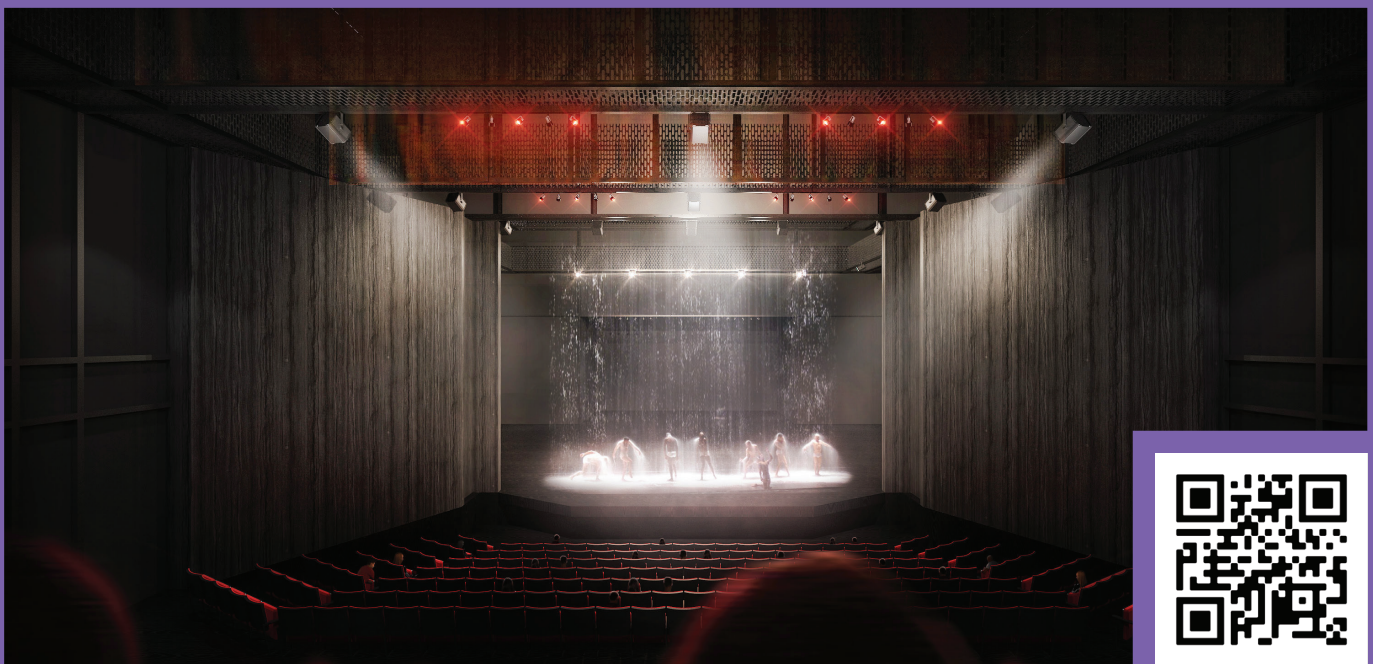
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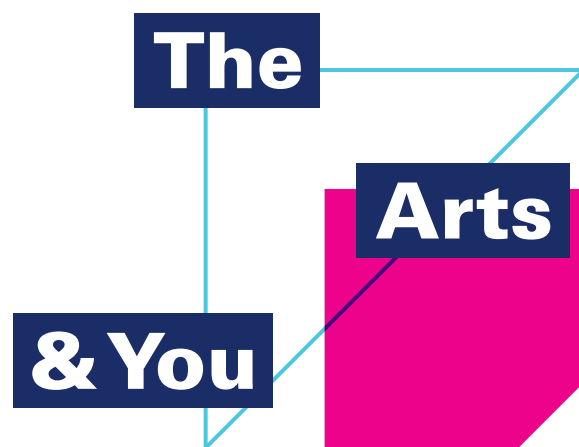
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