

FRIGHT NIGHT: FACES OF KALI

Saturday 31 October 2015, 7.30pm, Rich Mix, London

Akādemi
SOUTH ASIAN DANCE UK

Akademi curates an evening inspired by the violent obliteration of evil by the Hindu goddess Kali. Become bewitched by fierce and intense Kali performances including classical Indian dance, storytelling and music. Kali, also known as Kalika is the Hindu goddess associated with empowerment. She illustrates the ferocious and forceful side of the goddess Durga (Parvati). The evening combines the celebrations of Halloween with that of Kali Puja. Kali is portrayed wearing a garland of human skulls, clad in tiger's skin with lolling tongue and vicious stare.

Introduction

Narrated by Seema Anand

Devi Stuti

Artist: Pallabi De

Music: Pandit Birju Maharaj

Choreography: Pandit Birju Maharaj readapted by Pallabi De

Invoking Goddess Bhagawati while seeking her blessings.

At one time, when the Gods' of heaven were constantly being defeated by 'Mahisasur'(the ruler of the demons); Lord Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva created Devi Durga also known as Bhagawati. Equipped with weapons on her ten hands, the Devi killed Mahisasur after a fierce battle and saved the Gods' from the tyranny of the 'Asuras'. A battle of good over evil, we thus pray to the Devi to eradicate all evil and sorrow.

The Devi is a mother too; blessing her sons for ages. This dual nature of the Devi who is a symbol of 'Shakti' and motherhood is revealed in the stuti.

Dance Of Death

Artists: Kali Chnadrasesaram, Nisha Somasundaram

Music: Navadurga -Harihar Panda Tandav – Bikram Ghosh
Nocturnal Hecate – Daemonia Nymph

The ego, characterised by anxiety, doubt, fear and rage are inner demons of the human mind and proposes a challenge in any situation. Dance of death is a reflection of the struggle that the human mind goes through in overcoming these personal demons. In Hindu mythology, a battle occurs between the demon Mahisha who represents the epitome of these inner demons, and the Goddess Durga who represents inner personal strength, sensibility and sensitivity. The Goddess ultimately destroys and overcomes the demons within. In each human being these contradicting energies exist and the battle; the demon and the Goddess exists within us everyday and when faced with different situations in life.

Do we give in to the demons that ultimately lead us to misery and personal gratification or do we fight the battle within for peace of mind with equal veneration for all?

Nacho Go Nacho Kali (Dance Kali)

Artists: Sohini Alam, Oliver Weeks

Sohini and Oliver present a modern take on the Bengali folk song *Nacho Go Nacho Kali* (Dance Kali).

Kali

Choreographer/Artist: Arunima Kumar

Music: Arunima Kumar and R Kesavan

Raaga: Revathi Talamaalika

Kali is the Hindu goddess depicting Shakti, divine power of a woman. In this powerful classical Kuchipudi solo, Arunima explores diverse complex aspects of the goddess. She is Bhadrakali, benevolent to her devotees and fierce to all evil. Kalika, the black goddess of eternal time, transition and death, Chandika, she is Maaya, the goddess of tantric beliefs and philosophy, she wears skulls and resides in the cremation ground with disheveled hair. She drinks blood while slaying demons such as Raktabeeja. Kali is the ultimate reality and is revered as the redeemer of the universe with the tantric mantra - Aum Hreem Kleem Shreem. She is the consort of Shiva, and dances on the universe until she rests her foot on his chest to subdue her anger.

Moksha and Mahakali Dyana

Music: Kaali – Veena

Shahasrabudde

Moksha – Kelucharan Mohapatra
Mahakali Dyana – Gajendra Panda

Choreographer/Artist: Kali Chandrasegaram

Artists: Katie Ryan, Maryam Mayflower, Nisha Somasundaram, Tiyaasha Dutta Paul, Elena Catalano.

Kalikula lineages focus upon the Goddess Kali as the source of wisdom (vidya) and liberation (moksha). She is naked, severs the heads of demons, dances holding headless corpse, is drenched in blood, cuts her own head off and yet with her lotus eyes, bestows her blessings and is worshiped by great saints.

What are the great knowledge and hidden meaning behind these exaggerated horrifying images of Kali that make these learned and evolved souls revere her?

AKADEMI

Akademi is a pioneering, progressive arts organisation that exists to enhance the practice, understanding and appreciation of South Asian dance in the UK. Since 1979, Akademi has been taking South Asian dance into unconventional spaces, re-defining the parameters of the art form itself. For more information about Akademi, please visit:

www.akademi.co.uk.

@akademi #FacesofKali

Akademi.SouthAsian.Dance

Akademi Team: Mira Kaushik, Nina Head, Rob Lynden, Antareepa Thakur, Renu Mehto, Glyn Ley, Taylor Roche, Sydney Rae, Christina Christou, Jennifer Ball, Monique Deletant Bell & Jaykishen Patel

Stage Manager: Beth Hoare Barnes

Lighting Designer: Chloe Kenwood

ARTISTS

Seema Anand is London based mythologist and Doctor of narrative practices. Seema's work in the revival of women's narratives is associated with the UNESCO project for Endangered Oral Traditions. Seema lectures on the Kamasutra and is an acknowledged authority on Eastern Erotology. In her less peaceful moments she tells stories from the Mahabharata, the Bhagavad Gita and Tantra. Seema consults internationally.

Pallabi De took to dancing at an early age of four. Initially being trained by her first Guru Smt Kanan Sen in Kolkata; she later sought advanced training from Guru Pt. Birju Maharaj at Kalashram, New Delhi. Pallabi has taught in Kalashram, New Delhi for eight years and is now teaching at her own institute at Brijdham in Kolkata, India.

Kali Chandrasegaram is multidiscipline dancer, choreographer and teacher who believes in dance as a personal, physical journey of the soul within, for self and communal awareness.

Nisha Somasundaram is an Odissi dancer and trained lawyer currently pursuing postgraduate studies in Indian history and Sanskrit and portrayals of gender in Indian literature and art.

Sohini Alam is third-generation vocalist from a well-known Bangladeshi singing dynasty. Her repertoire includes folk, patriotic, modern and traditional Bengali songs with a specialisation in Nazrul Sangeet. She has sung in bands Khiyo & Lokkhi Terra and has been acclaimed for her vocals on Akram Khan's Olivier Award-winning dance piece DESH. She is also a founding member of the arts company Komola Collective.

Oliver Weeks is a London-based composer and multi-instrumentalist. His works have been performed by the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the Philharmonia Orchestra, the BBC Singers and the Mercury Quartet, amongst others.

Arunima Kumar is a highly acclaimed Kuchipudi performer, teacher and choreographer. She has performed and toured in over 35 countries at prestigious festivals and spaces including Sydney Opera House, Brazil Festival, Berlin Festival, Olympic torch parade and Houses of Parliament.

Elena Catalano is a dancer, teacher and scholar who believes in art as a form of knowledge and is interested in sharing practices and develop collaborative projects.

Tiyasha Dutta Paul has been studying Odissi since a child under Subikash Mukherjee. Her focus includes the classical form, Indian temple art and architecture.

Maryam Mayflower is an Odissi Indian classical dancer, who holds love and devotion to art as her path to spiritual growth and self-realisation.

Katie Ryan is UK trained Odissi dancer and physiotherapist who values dance as a medium of communication and expression that transcends the barriers of language and culture.

Akademi would like to thank Rich Mix London, Arts Council England and the Nehru Centre for their continued support.



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