

Folk Dances of India: Mohiniyattam

One of India's famous classical dances that represent the historical enchantress avatar of the Hindu god Vishnu was developed in Kerala called Mohiniyattam. The Mohini myth forms the heart of every Mohiniyattam performance as it stands for good prevailing over evil. It utilizes the sign language (mudra) to expressing emotions through a musical performance wherein the performer identifies herself with the character and resonates her sentiments.

Crossings : Exploring the facets of Lady Macbeth

The Play

Four performers represent the facets of Lady Macbeth, in constant conflict, to create a fluid performance, bringing together elements of Indian classical dance, movement, the original text of Macbeth, Hindustani classical, folk and tribal music.

Crossings mirrors the journey of Lady Macbeth through Shakespeare's original play. She receives a letter from Macbeth telling her of his encounter with three witches who foretell that he will be King. This plants the idea of killing King Duncan in Lady Macbeth's mind to further her husband's ambition. Battling her own conscience and femininity, she plans and executes a gruesome murder. She is consequently haunted by the images of blood even as she plays a gracious hostess at the coronation banquet where the guests become

suspicious of the truth. Bereft of support and company from her equally guilt-ridden husband, her world crumbles towards a lingering death.

Director's Note

Poetry, lyricism, allegory, metaphor, repetition, imagery, rhythm, representation, symbolism – all imbue both Shakespeare and classical dance. Lady Macbeth is arguably Shakespeare's most complex and layered female character. When I watched a Schezuan Opera actress in a riveting solo rendition of the character, I asked – could one interpret Lady Macbeth through Indian classical dance?

We embarked on this remarkable journey in December 2003, with text, music, movement and design responding to each another in a myriad different ways, encountering parallels in Indian mythology and iconography, finding fresh possibilities in rendering both text and dance. The performance, as it stands today, has been distilled through several versions since the first workshop production in April 2004, and presents Lady Macbeth in all her magnificent complexity.

The Director

Vikram Iyengar is a dancer, choreographer, theatre director, performing arts researcher, writer and curator based in Calcutta. He is the co-founder and artistic director of Ranan and project initiator of The Pickle Factory – a hub for dance and movement work. Noted for the conscious bringing together of kathak dance, movement, spoken drama and design, his production work spans choreography for stage and film, dance and theatre explorations, and performance collaborations. His international credits include co-choreography with Helena Waldmann for the Faust Prize nominated Made in Bangladesh. He also works regularly with contemporary choreographer Preethi Athreya. He was the co-editor of India Theatre Forum's web-based e-Rang from 2009 to 2015, and is a guest lecturer/presenter at several universities in India and abroad. He is an ARThink South Asia Arts Management Fellow (2013-2014) and

Global Fellow of the International Society for the Performing Arts (ISPA), 2017. A member of Kick Start – an international platform for arts entrepreneurs, Vikram is currently one of the four Asian participants in the International Arts Leaders programme of the Australia Arts Council. He was awarded the Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar for contemporary dance by the Sangeet Natak Akademi in December 2015.

The Group

Ranan is a kathak-based performance company with the express desire to demystify classical dance and make it accessible and enjoyable for a range of audiences. Its work is committed to sharing the magic of the arts, and spans three areas: practice, production, promotion. The group works with kathak dancers, actors, and designers, creating connections between different performance languages, and keeping kathak at the centre of our experiments.

Cast & Credits

Created With / Performers Anubha Fatehpuria

Dana Roy

Debashree Bhattacharya

Jayati Chakraborty

Original Music and Vocal Nageen Tanvir

Percussion Siddhartha Bhattacharyya

Stage and Costume Design Vikram Iyengar

Lighting Design Sudip Sanyal

Production Amlan Chaudhuri

Concept, Design, Direction Vikram Iyengar