

Dakshina/Daniel Phoenix Singh & Company

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“Experience India” Festival to Feature Performance by Acclaimed Dancer and Activist Mallika Sarabhai & the Darpana Dance Company

Sarabhai Will Perform Hot Talas, Cool Rasas at Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center on October 29

Washington, DC—October 10, 2005—Mallika Sarabhai, a classically trained dancer known for her contemporary interpretations of Indian dance forms, will appear in the Washington, DC, area next month as part of the upcoming “Experience India” festival. Sarabhai will perform *Hot Talas, Cool Rasas* at the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center in College Park, Maryland on October 29. A talented performer and choreographer, Sarabhai’s works push buttons in India and abroad for her work on women’s rights, social justice issues and caste issues. “I want to take dance further, to use it as a language, as an agent of change,” says Sarabhai. In the past, Sarabhai has had her passport revoked and has often been placed under house arrest by the officials in India for her outspoken feminist views. In this performance, she uses dance as a social commentary and challenges our concepts of India and the role of art in social justice issues.

Mallika Sarabhai’s appearance in the “Experience India” festival will give Washington-area audiences a rare opportunity to see Sarabhai and ten dancers from her company, Darpana, perform live. Sarabhai’s performance, *Hot Talas, Cool Rasas*, will feature Bharata Natyam, Kuchipudi, Kalaripayattu, and various Indian folk styles. It will include thematic vignettes that address topics such as women’s experiences in mental asylums and the recent riots in Bombay as well as abstract rhythmic sections. The work will also incorporate a series of poems by the distinguished poet and actress Dipti Naval that explore human rights issues in India. Set to a vibrant score that showcases traditional Indian musicians such as Maestro Trilok Gurtu and Jazz virtuoso Danielle Goyone, the performance will be a unique combination of theater and social commentary.

Mallika Sarabhai is a critically acclaimed dancer and director of the Darpana Academy of Performing Arts in Usmanpura, India. She first garnered international attention for her performance in Peter Brooks’s *The Mahabharata*. Since then, Sarabhai has continued to reach audiences around the world through her performances and her work as a director and choreographer. At the same time, she has addressed a range of contemporary issues through her art—from the role of women in Indian society to problems of racism and violence. In recognition of her efforts to promote social justice through the arts, Sarabhai was recently nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize as part of the 1,000 Women for the Nobel Peace Prize campaign (www.1000peacewomen.org). Sarabhai has received numerous awards including the Palme d’or and the Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres from the government of France, and several awards from the government of India. Several films have been created about her contribution to the arts and she serves as an ambassador for both the arts and the underserved people of India.

Sarabhai’s performance at the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center is the concluding event of “Experience India,” a month-long festival of Indian dance and other arts presented by Dakshina/Daniel Phoenix Singh & Company. In addition to *Hot Talas, Cool Rasas*, the festival will feature performances of regional Indian dance forms by local companies Dakshina/Daniel Phoenix Singh & Company, Nrityanjali, and Kuchipudi Kalandhi and a range of other cultural events. As part of the festival, Dakshina has also arranged for

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Mallika Sarabhai to lead community workshops, lectures, and demonstrations at the George Washington University and the University of Maryland during the week prior to her performance.

“Experience India” is funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts. Other sponsors include National Geographic Live, Asia Society, and the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities. For more information about Mallika Sarabhai’s performance or any of the other events in the fall festival, visit www.Dakshina.org.

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About Dakshina

Dakshina/Daniel Phoenix Singh & Company is a young Indo-American dance company that performs and presents Indian forms, such as Bharata Natyam, and modern dance, mirroring the multiple identities of second-generation South Asians. The company combines the arts with social justice issues both through the themes of its work and through partnerships with local community centers and schools.

The vision of Dakshina/Daniel Phoenix Singh & Company is to explore and present dance in its complexity and multiplicity, celebrating tradition while constantly creating new vocabularies in movement and dance, evolving to newer and higher standards. The company is particularly committed to engaging in dance not only as a means for aesthetic and artistic growth, but also as a vehicle for social change and community development.

About Daniel Phoenix Singh

Daniel Phoenix Singh is the Artistic Director and President of Dakshina/Daniel Phoenix Singh & Company. Singh completed an MFA in Dance, along with a Graduate Certificate in Women’s Studies, at the University of Maryland. He obtained a Laban Movement Analyst Certificate from the Laban/Bartenieff Institute of Movement Studies, NYC. He finished his undergraduate work in Dance and Computer Science at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

Singh continues his Bharata Natyam training with Guru Meena Telikicherla of Nrityanjali, MD. He has had the opportunity to work with the leading exponents of the art form, including Guru Adayar K. Lakshman, Guru C.V. Chandrasekhar, and Guru Banumathi.

Singh’s most recent explorations in dance include the Cuban/Colombian variations of Salsa and Merengue with Javier Varela and Shawn Malone. He is currently on the faculty at Joy of Motion, Maryland Youth Ballet, and Results the Gym. Singh is active in KhushDC, a Washington DC organization serving the South Asian LGBT community and its friends. His works have been the critic’s pick in the Washington City Paper and the Washington Post. The Voice of America will be profiling his dance company in the fall of 2005. Most recently his work Songs of My Life was nominated for Excellence in Stage Design by the Metro DC Dance Awards committee.