

Sangam



● Shyama Sasidharan.

■ After a year of lockdowns, the team at **Sangam** were keen to showcase some new works created by **South Asian** classical-contemporary performers.

To this end their sponsors including **MAV** with guidance by **BlakDance** allowed them to stage an exciting and varied program at **Dancehouse**. The artists were mentored by **Priyadarsini Govind**, **Mavin Khoo** and **Dr Chandrabhanu**.

Program One began with a video performance by **Philadelphia** based artist **Kasi Aysola's** work, *Eyes*. The rhythmic music and dance movement explored varied perspectives of the **God** who falls from grace, but needed more to complete the narrative.

The second piece was a duet by **Shyama Sasidharan** and **Divya Shreejit Kumar**, entitled *Melbourne Rasa*. This piece focused on the struggle both politically and emotionally to belong as a migrant. This was particularly well acted showing the cultural bubbles people enter to protect their family.

Lastly, **Rukshikaa Elankumaran's** solo piece *Amma: The Loss of our Motherland* showcased her strong dance style and brilliant story-telling. This work was based on the **Tamil Eelam** liberation struggles in **Sri Lanka** and explored the emotions felt after fleeing the genocide.

Program Two began with **Sooraj Subramaniam's** video work, *Nimbus*. This contemporary solo piece was mesmerising with the fluidity of his arm, hand and body movements simulating the formations of nimbus clouds. Exceptional videography, lighting and costuming enhanced this work.

Shriraam Theivendran's solo work, *Sacred Sensuality*, was a little long but his story-telling was compelling. The live musicians and vocalists enhanced the ritualistic movements. **Shriraam's** sense of syncopated rhythm was outstanding, as was his physical strength.

The final performer was **Raina Peterson** presenting *Maya*. This experimental work explored **Hindu** conceptions of the self, and the distribution of the elixir of life. While showing emotion and lustful exuberance, the work generally lacked energy and movement.

The programs were enhanced by the lighting design of **Jack Wilkinson** and sound engineer, **Nishta Kumar**.

For more information about **Sangam** go to sangam.com.au

- Review by Lyn Hurst