



# ASHWINI RAMASWAMY

2019 CHOREOGRAPHER FELLOW

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Photo: V. Paul Virtucio

### BOOKING AGENT CONTACT INFO

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## ARTIST BIO

Ashwini Ramaswamy (whose dancing “weaves together the human and the divine” – *The New York Times*) is a founding member of the internationally renowned Bharatanatyam ensemble Ragamala Dance Company. Her work is supported by USArtists International, National Dance Project, and MAP Fund, and commissioned by the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra’s Liquid Music Series.

Ashwini’s choreography has been presented nationally and internationally; highlights include the Joyce Theater (New York, NY), The Yard (Martha’s Vineyard, MA), and The Just Festival (Edinburgh, U.K). She is a 2012 McKnight Artist Fellow for Dance, a 2019 Jerome Hill Artist Fellow, and the recipient of multiple grants/fellowships from the Minnesota State Arts Board, Metropolitan Regional Arts Council, and Jerome Foundation. She has developed work in residence at the Baryshnikov Arts Center, UNC Chapel Hill, The National Center for Choreography at the University of Akron, and is a Spring 2020 Fellow at the Bogliasco Foundation in Bogliasco, Italy.

## REPertoire AVAILABLE FOR TOURING

### LET THE CROWS COME

NDP touring subsidies available – 2020/21 season

“The transference of impulse was so clearly evident, rippling from one body to the next. Riveting, compelling.”

-Minneapolis Star Tribune

“There’s a beautiful parallel to the experience of diaspora suggested in this dance between differences.”

-Kristin Lin, Editor, The On Being Project

“Let the Crows Come is complex and fully formed, polished and sure.”

-Minnpost

In *Let the Crows Come*, Ramaswamy deconstructs and re-contextualizes the Bharatanatyam form—evoking mythography and ancestry to explore how memory and homeland can channel guidance and dislocation. A series of trios and solos by dancers from three distinct artistic lineages is set to an original score played live by a hybrid orchestra of south Indian classical instruments, electro-acoustic cello, and synthesizers.

### TOURING COMPANY:

**Performers:** 3 dancers, 5 musicians (Carnatic/south Indian classical vocals, violin, and percussion; dj/Electronics; amplified cello)

**Tech:** 2 technicians, theatrical lighting, professional sound system, musician platform if not raked seating

### WITH RECORDED MUSIC

**Performers:** 3 dancers

**Tech:** flexible depending on space

#### Let the Crows Come tour schedule:

- November 8, 9, 2019: The Lab Theater, Minneapolis, MN (Premiere)
- November 10, 2019: Carleton College, Northfield, MN
- April 8-10, 2020: The Baryshnikov Arts Center, New York, NY
- April 14, 2020: Fine Arts Center, Amherst College, Amherst, MA
- April 17: Ware Center, University of Pennsylvania, Millersville, PA

CONTINUED ON BACK



## REPERTOIRE AVAILABLE FOR TOURING CONTINUED

### NOCTURNE

*"On stage we see unfold the rational thought behind Ashwini's carefully considered movement, yet the overall effect is one of utter enchantment. For one hour we are transported into an exquisite dream state."*

– Minneapolis Star Tribune

A nocturne is a composition inspired by, or evocative of, the night, and cultivated in the 19th century primarily as a character piece for piano. Ramaswamy brings this concept into the lexicon of Bharatanatyam, set to an original score of sitar, cello, and kanjira (Indian percussion). *Nocturne* explores night from the perspective of the natural, human, and spiritual worlds. Ancient belief in India sees the moon as the controller of the water, circulating through the universe, sustaining all living creatures. The enigma of night – which conceals and liberates, frightens and absolves – is the universe of *Nocturne*, inspired by movements of nocturnal plants and animals, and observed Indian rituals to recall the auspicious hours between midnight and sunrise. Over three movements, the work enters various realms steered by imagery found in the writings of Rabindranath Tagore, Jorge Luis Borges, the Tamil Sangam poets, and The Vedas.

**Performers:** 5 dancers

**Tech:** theatrical lighting, flexible depending on space

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## WHAT ARE YOU WORKING ON IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS?

Aside from touring *Let the Crows Come* in 2020-21 and my full time position as Choreographic Associate and Communications Director at Ragamala Dance Company, I am using my Jerome Hill Artist Fellowship to map out a multi-year career trajectory. My work will continue to personify the nostalgia of the immigrant—both concrete and abstract—to convey the feeling of moving geographically farther and farther from a homeland while discovering new concepts of home.

I believe that pushing myself to innovate with choreographic methods, (as I have done with *Let the Crows Come*) will open new avenues to create work for non-Bharatanatyam dancers and companies on a national/international scale – opportunities rarely given to classical Indian choreographers. This is how I will continue experiment within the industry and take an active role in the evolution of my art form.



*Let the Crows Come*

Photo: Jake Armour

### MCKNIGHT ARTIST FELLOWS

The McKnight Fellowships for Dancers and Choreographers awards mid-career Minnesota dance artists whose work is of exceptional artistic merit and who have demonstrated a sustained level of accomplishment and commitment. Six fellows are selected each year to receive a substantial unrestricted cash award, as well as additional support for career and artistic development.

The McKnight Fellowships for Dancers and Choreographers is a program of The Cowles Center for Dance & the Performing Arts and is funded by the McKnight Foundation. Founded on the belief that Minnesota thrives when its artists thrive, the McKnight Foundation's arts program is one of the oldest and largest of its kind in the country. Support for individual working Minnesota artists has been a cornerstone of the program since it began in 1981. Awards are made in fourteen creative disciplines through twelve arts organizations. Program partner organizations administer the fellowships and structure them to respond to the unique challenges of different disciplines. Currently the foundation contributes about \$1.7 million per year to its statewide fellowships.

### THE COWLES CENTER

The Cowles Center for Dance & the Performing Arts serves as the Twin Cities' flagship for dance, presenting a wide array of productions each season in the Goodale Theater in the heart of Downtown Minneapolis. The Center's campus includes three performance spaces, education studios and administrative offices for more than 20 arts and nonprofit organizations – making it a dynamic and vibrant hub for the Twin Cities' performing arts community and a place where dance can grow and thrive.