

# RAGAMALA

• DANCE COMPANY •

Ranee Ramaswamy & Aparna Ramaswamy, Co-Artistic Directors

"Thrillingly three-dimensional...  
rapturous and profound."  
— *The New York Times*



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REDUCED SCALE/  
AVAILABLE FOR OUTDOOR PROGRAMMING

## *Body, the Shrine*

Created and performed by Raneer Ramaswamy,  
Aparna Ramaswamy, Ashwini Ramaswamy  
3 dancers, 1 crew (same day load-in)

[WATCH THE TRAILER](#)

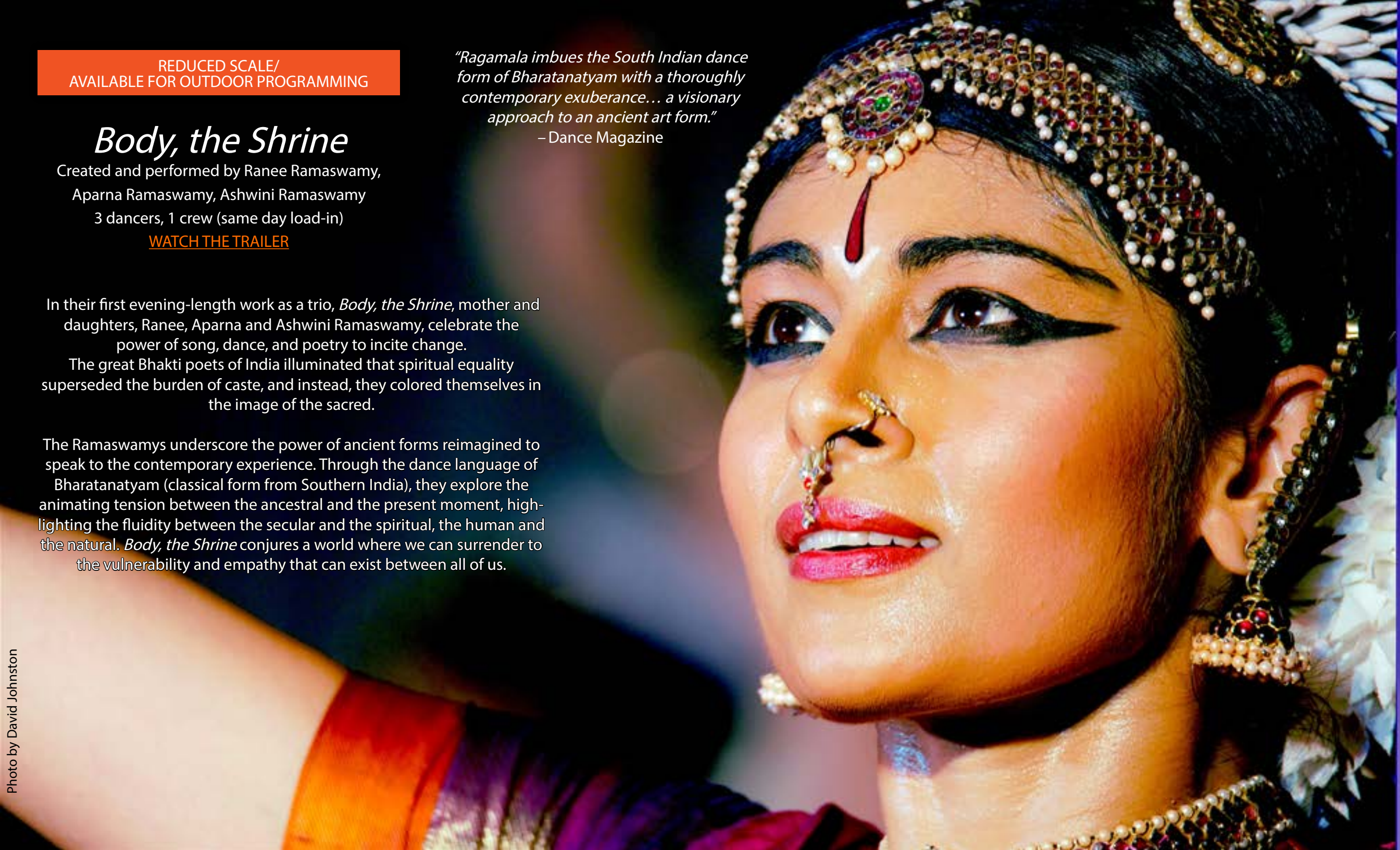
In their first evening-length work as a trio, *Body, the Shrine*, mother and daughters, Raneer, Aparna and Ashwini Ramaswamy, celebrate the power of song, dance, and poetry to incite change.

The great Bhakti poets of India illuminated that spiritual equality superseded the burden of caste, and instead, they colored themselves in the image of the sacred.

The Ramaswamys underscore the power of ancient forms reimagined to speak to the contemporary experience. Through the dance language of Bharatanatyam (classical form from Southern India), they explore the animating tension between the ancestral and the present moment, highlighting the fluidity between the secular and the spiritual, the human and the natural. *Body, the Shrine* conjures a world where we can surrender to the vulnerability and empathy that can exist between all of us.

*"Ragamala imbues the South Indian dance form of Bharatanatyam with a thoroughly contemporary exuberance... a visionary approach to an ancient art form."*

– Dance Magazine





# Fires of Varanasi

10-11 dancers, 4 crew  
Available for indoor and outdoor programming

*Fires of Varanasi* explores the birth-death-rebirth continuum in Hindu thought, examining immigrant experiences of life and death in the diaspora and the tenacity of people and cultures across time. The work evokes and embodies the millions whose feet rewrite a city's geography year after year.

## World Premiere:

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, D.C.  
(Lead Commissioner)  
April 20-21, 2021

## Minneapolis Premiere

Northrop at the University of MN, Minneapolis, MN  
(Commissioner)  
May 1, 2021

## Awaiting rescheduling:

The Harris Theater for Music and Dance (Commissioner)  
The Hopkins Center for the Arts at Dartmouth College (Commissioner)  
The Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts  
Cal State Northridge (Commissioner)  
The Meany Center for the Performing Arts at the University of  
Washington (Commissioner)  
American Dance Festival (Commissioner)

With additional commissioning support from:  
Jay and Susie Gogue Performing Arts Center at Auburn University

## VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING

Ragamala can create personalized digital programming for your virtual season. Educational sessions, live-streamed demonstrations, participatory dance classes, lectures on cultural hybridity/the South Asian experience, and pre-recorded performances with introductions by the artists are a few examples of the digital content we can provide for your audiences and classrooms.

In partnership with Northrop, the Kennedy Center, and the Meany Center, our 20/21 season includes the world premiere of *Fires of Varanasi*; virtual sessions on food as ritual, podcast interviews, shared connections between Bharatanatyam and yoga, and interfaith responses to life and death in the diaspora.

Please visit [www.ragamaladance.org/tour-calendar](http://www.ragamaladance.org/tour-calendar) to find out more about these offerings.



# About the Artistic Directors

Ranee Ramaswamy and Aparna Ramaswamy (Artistic Directors, Choreographers, and Principal Dancers) explore the dynamic tension between the ancestral and the contemporary, highlighting the fluidity between the secular and the spiritual, the inner and the outer, the human and the natural. Their training in the South Indian classical dance form of Bharatanatyam under legendary dancer/choreographer Alarmél Valli, known as one of India's greatest living masters, is the bedrock of their creative aesthetic.

Ranee and Aparna are 2022 Residency Fellows at the Bogliasco Foundation in Bogliasco, Italy. They were awarded a 2020 McKnight Choreography Fellowship, a 2018 Guggenheim Fellowships and selected as 2017 Research Fellows by the Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center (Italy).

Ranee currently serves on the National Council on the Arts, appointed by President Barack Obama. She is a recipient of a 2014 Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, a 2012 United States Artists Fellowship, and a 2011 McKnight Distinguished Artist Award.

Aparna is a recipient of a 2016 Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, a 2016 Joyce Award, a Bush Fellowship for Choreography, and was selected as one of Dance Magazine's '25 to Watch.'

Ragamala's work has been commissioned by the Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center Out of Doors, American Dance Festival, Harris Theater, The Soraya, the Hopkins Center at Dartmouth College, the Arts Center at NYU Abu Dhabi, and the Walker Art Center, among others, and supported by the NEA, National Dance Project, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, MAP Fund, US Artists International, Japan Foundation/New York, and New Music USA. The company has toured extensively, highlighted by the Joyce Theater, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, International Festival of Arts & Ideas, Cal Performances, Just Festival (Edinburgh, U.K.), Bali Arts Festival (Indonesia), and National Centre for Performing Arts (Mumbai, India).

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