



**Prakriti  
Foundation**

**The Prakriti Excellence in Contemporary  
Dance Awards  
(2016)**

## **About PECDA 2016**

India is a country of tremendous artistic heritage, but there are very few Indian practitioners today with significant international exposure in the field of performing arts. This is certainly not for want of talented artists in the country, but is a direct result of there not being enough platforms for Indian artists to explore and hone their talents. Since our inception, we at the Prakriti Foundation have aspired to play a catalytic role in providing such a nurturing platform to artists in India.

We believe that contemporary dance is the new emerging form of expression, that weaves its own language and grammar in India. This needs to be recognized and mentored, thus enabling artists to achieve high levels of excellence. Hence, we have instituted the Prakriti Excellence in Contemporary Dance Awards (PECDA), a biennial event, which will be a platform for emerging contemporary dance forms, where-by exposing artists to a wider audience. That said, PECDA, for artists, is not merely a means of showcasing their work, but is also a launchpad for their future development; ultimately leading to the development of contemporary dance in the country.

PECDA is open-entry competition, where judges look at works in progress of all entrants, over a span of two days and vet down the performances to the best. The winning performance is awarded two key things – a funding of INR 5 lakhs and an annual mentorship by an internationally-renowned dance company. While the funding is meant to serve as a means for artists to develop their work-in-progress performance into a full-fledged one, the mentorship provides them exposure and nurturing at the International Level – an element that was so far missing in the Indian contemporary dance scene.

After developing their performance over the period of a year, under the mentorship of the internationally-renowned company which helps the artists refine their production and presentation, the winning team subsequently showcases their choreographic piece at The Park's New Festival, on a 6-city tour.

Karthika Nair, noted author, dance producer and curator is the Festival Director of PECDA. Karthika Nair was born in India, lives in Paris, and works as a dance producer and curator. She is the author of Bearings, a poetry collection; DESH: Memories, inherited, borrowed, invented, a dance diary; and The Honey Hunter/ Le Tigre de Miel, a children's book illustrated by Joelle Jolivet. Nair was the principal storywriter and scriptwriter of DESH, choreographer Akram Khan's award-winning production. As a dance producer, Nair has worked in several Parisian cultural centers and with choreographers Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Damien Jalet and Mourad Merzouki.



The jury members for this edition were:

Claire Verlet (Deputy Artistic Director, Theatre de la Ville, Paris), Eddie Nixon (Director, Theatre and Artist Development, The Place UK), Frederic Mazelly (Program Director, La Villette, Paris), Elena Carmona (Director, Residency Space, Mercat de les Flors), Arundhathi Subramaniam (Author, Poet, Journalist and Curator) and Renuka Narayanan (Author, Poet & Journalist).

Prakriti Foundation, in collaboration with Kalakshetra Foundation, presented the 2016 edition of the Prakriti Excellence in Contemporary Dance Awards (PECDA).

The winning performance in 2016 was Folktale, choreographed by Surjit Nongmeikapam of Nachom Arts of Contemporary Movement and performed by Purnima Devi Yengkokpam, Hemjit Meitei Senjam, Suraj Roy Laiphangbam, Sumeet Sagolsem, Mukta Singh Khadangbam, Premananda Nongthongbam, Swavinath SharmaAribam, and Surjit Nongmeikapam.

## **Schedule**

### ***DAY 1***

Synopsis: The finalists (choreographers) shortlisted for day 1: Avantika Bahl, Atul Kumar, Surabhi Jain, Ronita Mookerji, Virieno Christina Zakiesato, Aparnaa Nagesh, Riya Mandal, Priyabrat Panigrahi, Meghna Bhardwaj, Surjit Nongmeikapam and Jyotsna Rao.

Date: 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2016

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Rukmini Arangam, Kalakshetra

### ***DAY 2***

Synopsis: The finalists (choreographers) shortlisted for day 2: Abhilash Ningappa, Satakshi Nandy, Sahiba Singh, Anuradha Venkatraman, Manju Sharma, Shruti Maria Datar, Anish Popli, Mirra, Parth Bhardwaj, Joshua Sailo and Diya Naidu.

Date: 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2016

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Rukmini Arangam, Kalakshetra

## ***DAY 3 – Announcement of Awards***

Synopsis: The winner of PECDA 2016 was declared.

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 2016

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Rukmini Arangam, Kalakshetra

## **Artiste Profile**

### ***1. Avantika Bahl***

The founder of Avantika Bahl Dance Company, she worked as an instructor and performer with The Danceworx, a Jazz company in New Delhi from 2004-2010. Avantika has worked independently as a performer and teacher in New Delhi from 2010-2011 and has studied at The London Contemporary Dance School from 2011-2012. Avantika also has a Diploma in Contemporary Dance from Kent University and MA in English literature from Mumbai University.

She helps run Dance Dialogues, an initiative that connects dance makers and dance lovers to provocative and diverse ideas, to individuals and to institutions. She has been teaching and creating work in Mumbai since 2012. Avantika is one of the 12 choreographers in India to participate in a collaboration programme with PARTS school from Belgium. She is currently learning Indian Sign Language and holds a yellow belt in Mixed Martial Arts. She is currently organizing StopLookGo, a series of improvised exchanges at busy traffic signals, where performers are invited to explore non-formal, public spaces as alternative performance venues, while mapping the city of Mumbai.

Some of her works include '{wonkot}' in 2013, which premiered at NCPA Mumbai; '110048,M81', a solo, as part of the Gati Residency 2014 which premiered in New Delhi at the Goethe Institute; 'Maximum City', 2014, a site specific piece that was commissioned for the Bandra Festival in Mumbai; 'Here', solo, as part of the Facets Residency 2015, premiered at the Attakalari Biennial in Bangalore; 'Cheer System', 2016, a site specific piece that was commissioned for the Litmus festival.

### **Note on Performance - 'Say, what?'**

Performed by Avantika Bahl & Vishal Sarvaiya.



'Say, what?' is a piece that attempts to deconstruct the notion of communication; what it means for a hearing individual and what it means for a deaf individual. It focuses on the negotiation between deaf culture and hearing culture and it is interesting to witness what emerges as a result, when those two worlds collide. Suspended between sign, movement and the spoken word, the performance examines how a 'hearing identity' is based on the lack of an entire body of language. The work aims to unravel the equation and the tension that rests between the two poles of transmission.

## **2. Atul Kumar**

Atul Kumar hails from the city of Patna Bihar and is currently living and practicing performing arts in Bangalore. He is one of the performing members, as well as faculties in the dance company, LFRD (Left Foot Right Danceworks). Atul underwent training in Hip-Hop from 2010 to 2012. Post which, he started training in contemporary dance, ballet and *kalari*. He has also engaged intensively in methods of bodywork and somatic practices like Passing through, Flying Low, Body-Mind-Centric Technique, Biomechanics, Fighting Monkey and Yoga. Since 2013, has worked with many artistes such as Hrishikesh Pawar, Wendy Jehlen, Anna Rothlisberger, Abhilash Ningappa, Olivier Besson and Nakula Somana.

Atul has been certified from the California University of Arts in site specific work creation, mentored under Stephen Koplowitz, in 2014. After completing an intensive contemporary dance course from Attakkalari Center of Movement Arts in 2014, he was selected to participate in the PARTS Exchange program, which was an intensive 6 weeks program facilitated by PARTS school (Brussels, Belgium) at Adishakti in Auroville. He is also a visual artist and has collaborated and worked with artists such as Matej Kezar (faculty at SEAD, Salzburg) and Nakula Somana, as a set designer and visual artist for their projects in India.

### **Note on Performance - 'Where should I Look?'**

Performed by Atul Kumar.

'Where should I Look?' project was an outcome of a research program with the students and faculties of PARTS, Brussels, Belgium, conducted in Auroville. The piece revolves around the state of a female body, represented through the medium and view of a male body, politically placed in the modern Indian society. It presents an interesting perspective on the perception of gender and the situation in current Indian society.

The narrative draws inspiration from the epic, Mahabharata, particularly the state of Panchali (Draupadi) after the disrobing ceremony, and is placed in that era. Parallels from Panchali's story can be made to events from contemporary Indian society, showing us that

though it has been almost three thousand years since the events of the Mahabharata unfolded, society has not come much further in terms of the way women are treated. When the antagonist tries to harass Panchali by removing her sari, though her prayers are answered and the sari becomes infinitely long, no one present in the court attempts to save her from this act of sexual harassment.

Laxmi Oraon, a tribal woman, rallying for better tribal rights in the north-eastern Indian state of Assam during 2007, faced similar harassment and was stripped naked and beaten by a violent mob. As onlookers witnessed the incident as if it were a spectacle, no one came to her aid. Numerous other cases of eve-teasing are proof that many women are still subjected to the same public sexual harassment that Panchali suffered. Though Panchali was never raped, she received more than enough of her share of unwanted advances by men, a phenomenon that seems to be prevalent even in today's society.

There are many incidents of public shaming and suppression prevailing in modern society. The answer to the questions, 'Where are we leading to?', 'What are we looking for?', should be sought by each and every one of us. This piece keeps on questioning the existence of paradoxes within the female character - abused yet confident, fierce yet compassionate, mysterious yet simple, confused yet determined.

### **3. *Surabhi Jain***

Surabhi Jain has completed her Diploma in Dance Studies from the Trinity Laban Conservatoire for Music and Dance, London. She received a scholarship from J.N. Tata Trust to pursue her Diploma. Apart from this, she has a Diploma in Movement Arts and Mixed Media and was trained at the Talent Academy from the Attakkalari Centre for Movement Arts, Bangalore. She has completed the Intensive Dance Programmes 1 and 2 at the Ruggieri Dance Academy in London. Surabhi has also pursued a Professional Acting Course from the Darpan Theatre and Cine Arts, Mumbai.

Her performances include 'Metamorphosis', choreographed by Angelo Rugerrio, Justine Lee, April, 2013; Shindig Summer Festival, choreographed by Angelo Rugerrio, June, 2013; 'Absence Presence', choreographed by Sonia Rodriguez Hernandez, Dec 2014 and Jan 2015; Cinemascope (Attakkalari Repertory Piece performed as part of Talent Academy), March 2015; Nritarutya Dance Company, May 2015; 'The Thing' (Translated from German play Das Ding) directed by Salmin Sherrif, July 2015; 'Wah Bhai Wah' and 'Hum Nahi Sudhareng', Hindi Theatre Productions, July 2010. Writer, Director and Editor - Sunil Prem Vyas.

Her choreographic works include – ‘You Go First’, performed at Kala Rasa (May 2014) in collaboration with Vinod Nanaware and Purnendra Meshram. This piece talks about twin fetuses inside a womb, one boy and one girl. It explores emotions and thoughts that the unborn lives undergo, their bond with the inside world and their fascination with the outside world; and ‘Cusp’ performed at LshVa (June 2015) in collaboration with Ramya Shanmugam. This explores the idea of negotiation or coming to a meeting point in a jumbled environment.

### **Note on Performance - Fitting Room**

Performed by Alice Briggs, Mary Kinsella, Penny Slater and Swasti Sharma.

Society demands conformity. It can be a very difficult choice to make, whether to compromise your values and what is real to you, in order to belong. Sometimes you find yourself in situations where the thoughts of judgement, fear of rejection and self-consciousness make you almost incapable of listening to your soul and what you truly stand for.

The performance takes its inspiration from a study on conformity by psychologist Jenness (1932), which proved that people become victims of group-think and forego their individual choices and preferences, in order to align their opinions with a group that they’re a part of. This is so true for today’s society at many levels. People always try to fit in with each other and everyone wants to be like everyone else – they look to others for approval of our own actions and choices. From the simple things like how to dress up to serious decisions like whom to get married to, people are governed with how this society is going to judge or react.

Why people choose to comply or yield to group pressures, regardless of whether they agree or not, happens for many reasons. They want to be liked or they don’t want to be left alone or they want to be accepted or they want to establish a relationship with the group. There is a threat of rejection or isolation because of which they think it’s better to not go against everybody else and follow the majority. This performance explores the concept of social conformity, how people tend to be under the influence of a majority as a sense of security, even when this may perhaps be false support. It also comments on how this social behavior is still prevalent, even now, during a time when social interactions have become increasingly virtual.

#### **4. Ronita Mookerji**

Ronita Mookherji has trained in Bharatanatyam from the age of 5 and did her *Arangetram* in 2006 in Kolkata. In 2008, she completed her diploma at Attakkalari Centre for Movement Arts, Bangalore. Since then, she has been a performer/choreographer and teacher in Attakkalari Repertory Company.

As a Senior Dancer in Attakkalari, Ronita has performed in their productions Meidhwani, Adhaarachakra and For Pina, along with their Mobile Theater Program SANCHARI and other corporate shows. In 2012, she choreographed two pieces in Japan - For You, A 1000 Times Over and We Need the Heaters On. In 2013, she performed and choreographed a solo work, "I See Dreams in Grey". In 2013, she had the opportunity to perform "Zameen" (The DAM (N) Project) in Queensland and Sydney in collaboration with Australian artistes. Other performances include 'Belleville', a Dance Production in Theater Bremen, Germany by French Choreographer Samir Akika and Goethe Institute; 'Hidden Connection', choreographed by Soohyun Hwang in Seoul, Korea in collaboration with Asia Culture Centre and Korean National Contemporary Dance Company, funded by the Korean Government; 'Bardo Beings', with Diya Naidu in PECDA 2012; Choreographies by Rianto from Indonesia and Kama from Poland, etc.

#### **Note on Performance – Who?**

Performed by Ronita Mookerji and Akshata Joshi.

Ronita has been pondering on questions such as 'Who am I?', 'What defines me?', 'How do I visualize myself?', 'Do I see myself with my own eyes or someone else's eyes?', and so on for a long time. A saying by Tatum, "The answer largely depends on who the world around me says I am", triggered her to delve deep into her thought process, understand and reason to reflect on this question, and specifically recognize her real identity in this world and the society.

Erik Erikson, a developmental psychologist says: "Formation of Identity is one of the most important part of a person's life." In today's rapidly progressing, globally developing contemporary India, one has to play several roles and can't have a simple life defined by a single identity. We can't be one character or do one work at a given time and space. One is challenged to be well equipped to be able to live through different situations and experiences and changes. This leads to not having one constant, but having rapidly changing multiple realities and lives for survival! This in turn leads to a highly suffering identity or personality due to no neutrality and high-strung potential changes with respect to time, amounting to an identity crisis.



Ronita chose to explore this idea of Identity and everything associated with it, to create a dance piece which is personal and introspective. Through this work, she aims to challenge herself artistically, using different contemporary techniques of dance and physical expressions to define who she really is and what people perceive of her, thereby, inducing the audience to question themselves this simple question – “Who they are and where do they belong?”

Dance being the physical medium/ language that it is brings the performer and the audience to come to a tangible form of exchange of energies that lead to an unknown balance of energy, a level at which emotions can be exchanged – a visual motivation to question themselves.

### ***5. Virieno Christina Zakiesato***

Virieno’s foundational training is in ballet, jazz and contemporary movement arts from Mumbai, Kolkata and Bangalore. She worked on company productions while she was with Rhythmosaic, at Kolkata. She has worked with primary school children as a ballet teacher at Mumbai and worked with NGOs for underprivileged children in Delhi and Bangalore.

A freelance performing artist, she had the opportunity to perform at the Ignite, Festival of Contemporary Dance, 2015. She has also performed with the Nagaland Folkloric Group for the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo Festival, 2014 and was associated with the International Center for Cultural Studies, USA, as a part of the Nagaland Folkloric Group cultural exchange, 2014. She had the enviable opportunity of inaugurating the National Hornbill dance competition, performing a solo contemporary ballet, in 2013.

Currently, she conducts Body-Awareness workshops, as her practice deals with Body Awareness through Somatic Practices. Her inquiry focuses on the Feldenkrais Method, Cranial Sacral Therapy and other somatic practices. Virieno’s investigation on the body as a solo performer started in 2014. She is amongst one of the few reputed north-eastern dancers from Nagaland.

#### **Note on Performance – F4**

Performed by Virieno Christina Zakiesato.

The Fight-Flight-Freeze-Friendly Response is a series of instinctive reactions that a person may experience when confronted with an external stress or stimulation, during a survival situation. The body’s own response in such situations can either result in an instinctive peak when in stress such as Fight, Flight, or Freeze and when relaxed it allows a calm (i.e. Friendly)

response. We experience at least one of these reactions on a daily basis, yet our innate ability to respond to these situations usually goes unnoticed by our conscious mind.

The research for this piece focuses on the effects of these instinctive reactions and their physiological responses. Some examples of these physiological responses have opposing effects, which are: increased heart-rate or slowing of the heart rate, increase in blood pressure or decrease in the blood pressure, shutting down or activation of the gut for digestion and tightening of the muscles or activation of the relaxation response

The aim of this performance is not to compartmentalize each instinctive reaction by illustrating them separately from one another (e.g. “This is flight. Now this is fight. Now this is freeze”), but to create a performance that encompasses all four of these instinctive reactions and their physiological responses, to which everyone can relate.

## **6. Aparnaa Nagesh**

Aparnaa Nagesh is a versatile dance professional with over 17 years of training, teaching and performance experience. She has trained extensively in various dance styles such as Jazz, Ballet, Contemporary, Latin & Street and now creates contemporary dance theatre work under her own unique movement vocabulary, titled Global Dance Fusion. She is a graduate of the ISVP dance course at Broadway Dance Center, New York with a certificate of excellence. Currently she runs her own all girl dance ensemble, High Kicks, who have performed at the prestigious Commonwealth Youth Dance Fest, prior to the start of the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland in 2014. High Kicks is a platform for talented and enthusiastic female dancers to explore their potential as performers, teachers and choreographers. High Kicks also undertakes teaching workshops, movement arts programmes in schools and conceptualizes and executes various dance festivals, productions and dance arts project.

Aparnaa is the recipient of a prestigious TEDx Chennai Star Award, BREW Award for excellence in Dance and Ba’hai Rose of Ridvan Award. She was also an inspirational speaker/ performer at the TEDx Hindustan Event and the TEDx IIT events held in 2013, as well as the Global Youth Voice event held by AIESEC in 2015. She is also currently a mentor with the Vital Voices Mentoring Walk held in Chennai and was also an inspirational speaker/ performer at Indian Youth Conclave 2016.

### **Note on Performance – White Noise**

Performed by Lavanya Shankar, Ananya Shankar, Alisha Ajit, Varsha Ramesh, Dhvani Giri, Aanchal Anand, Shreya Kallingal and Aparnaa Nagesh.



White Noise refers to a constant background noise, one that drowns out other sounds; meaningless or distracting commotion, hubbub, or chatter. We live in a bubble of noise, a constant stream of real & digital chatter. Yet, loneliness and the feeling of being alone have only increased. Every conversation we have leaves us feeling more alone. We rant & rave our opinions, struggles, problems on social media, but pretend to have exciting lives filled with laughter, friends and color. Our minds are on the brink of suicidal depression, bordering on schizophrenia. Schizophrenia is described as a mental disorder characterized by abnormal social behavior and failure to understand reality. Common symptoms include false beliefs, unclear or confused thinking, hearing voices, reduced social engagement and emotional expression, and a lack of motivation. If we go by this description, then we are all schizophrenic because we are all hearing voices in our heads, voices that drown out our actual sound.

White Noise talks about all the noise that we create, without really listening to it. All the conversations that we have without meaning or intention and ultimately find ourselves smothered in a silence of our own making. A silence that is surrounded by noise, but a silence that ultimately leaves us depressed and suicidal.

## ***7. Riya Mandal***

Riya Mandal is a performer, choreographer and a movement therapist. She started training as a kathak dancer from Shambhu Maharaj Kathak Academy at the age of 12. After 5 years of unbending classical training, she started exploring jazz and modern techniques in 2008. She has also been formally trained in various forms like Kalaripayattu, Chhau, release technique and floor work. Riya Mandal has choreographed for various theatre productions and has been creating her own work in collaboration with artists from different genres such as film, music and theatre. She has been a part of various dance festivals in India such as the Khajuraho Dance Festival, Narendra Sharma Festival. She has presented her solo in the prestigious Ignite Festival of Contemporary Dance in 2015 and has also been chosen by the Arts Council of Korea as a young South Asian choreographer to perform a solo at the Seoul Art Center. Her degree in psychology sparked her interest in closely examining the mechanics of human behavior, which reflects in her work as an artiste.

### **Note on Performance - 23.4/15.8**

Performed by Riya Mandal, Parinay Mehra, Anisha Tavag and Jahnvi Sreedhar.

By means of movement, this work aims to understand conformity and the genesis of norms in a society through the simple image of hens trapped inside a cage. The choreography

explores the possibilities of understanding the mundane everyday lives of human beings through the reflection of the image of the caged animals.

### **8. Priyabrat Panigrahi**

Priyabrat Panigrahi is a trained contemporary dancer, choreographer and performing artist from Bangalore, India. He formally started his dance training in year 2011, with the diploma in movement arts and mix media course, at the Attakkalri Centre For Movement Arts, Bangalore. He has got intensive training in Kalaripayattu, bharatnatyam, contemporary dance, ballet, pilates, flying low and light design. He secured distinction and then decided to pursue his training further in P.A.R.T.S contemporary dance school in Brussels in 2013. Here he studied ballet for contemporary dancers, contemporary technique classes, release technique, floor work, contact improvisation, composition classes, Forsythe's improvisation technology, Trisha brown early work, flying low and passing through by David Zambrano.

In 2012 he joined the repertory company Attakkalari Center for Movement Arts. He has performed at many places nationally and internationally. He has worked extensively with the community, amateur dancers and students of dance, both as a facilitator and a choreographer. He currently teaches at Fluid, a program for professional dancers at Shoonya Centre for Art and Somatic Practices, Bangalore. He conducts classes for the community at LSHVA, Attakkalari Centre for Movements Arts and Hyper Monkey.

#### **Note on Performance - What are you here for?**

Performed by Priyabrat Panigrahi.

The performance seeks to answer to the question, "What are you here for?"; an answer that millions across the globe have desired to know for decades. To seek this answer, we need to look not only at the surface of our lives, but know that there is something greater inside of us that lives and that we must give birth to it. We must be conscious to receive the present that awaits our arrival. And in order to do so, we need to let ourselves go, to feel the freedom, take a chance and figure out what we are here for. This means traversing the ups and downs to get to that place of purpose and enlightenment.

### **9. Meghna Bhardwaj**

Meghna Bharadwaj began dancing at The Danceworx Performing Arts Academy, Delhi in 2008, and later underwent brief trainings in Classical Ballet, Modern, and Contemporary



dance techniques at Marameo, Berlin, and Kibbutz Contemporary Dance Company, Israel, in 2013-2014. In order to further her dance vocabulary, she began to train in Bharatnatyam under Smt. Jayalakshmi Ishwar at Triveni Kala Sangam, Delhi. A lot of her dance training has happened through dance-making, and choreographing. She has had opportunities to present her choreographic works at platforms both in India and abroad, which include, American Dance Festival, WDA, China, and Gati Summer Dance Residency, Delhi. She is currently working on her Ph.D. at the School of Arts and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi, where she is studying the works of contemporary Indian dance artists and understanding what is 'contemporary' in dance with regard to Indian context.

As a dancer, she is interested in virtuosic movements that push the human body to do all that it can do. At the same time, she enjoys practicing deeply internal work of the body, and understanding the role of breathing in movement. As a dance-maker, she feels motivated to create work that has political undertones. She believes it has a lot to do with her academic training in JNU. So far, she has touched upon subjects such as female menstruation, religion, urban congestion, and eve-teasing. She aims to further her practice by honing her movement knowledge, engaging with other artistes, and acquiring ways of reading artworks.

#### **Note on Performance - Edges (Duet)**

Performed by Sanchita Sharma and Meghna Bhardwaj.

This work emerged from movement explorations coming out of imagining a constrained body; a body that is stuck, tied, pushed, controlled, and limited. First proposed at GSDR 2015, it was a solo created out of movements that were negotiating a grid-like space. In this performance, Meghna brings forth a dance duet, performed by herself and her long-time friend and dance colleague, Sanchita Sharma, wherein they weave together the impulses emerging from feelings of 'stuck-ness', 'bounded-ness', and 'flat-ness', while being the bodies on the 'Edges'.

### **10. *Surjit Nongmeikapam (Bonbon)***

Surjit Nongmeikapam (Bonbon) was born in Manipur, India. Bonbon has a B.A. in Choreography and has worked with the Natya Stem Dance Kampni and Natya Maya, Bangalore as a contemporary and traditional dancer. Bonbon is trained in Kathak, Kalaripayattu, Manipuri dance, contemporary dance and Thang-Ta, a form of martial arts. He continues to learn many other movement styles from various gurus/ mentors. In 2010, he trained under Kolkata Sanved in their 3-month course - Dance and Movement Therapy. He was also a dance therapist at H2H, Human to Humane, Imphal, during 2009-2013. He has spread awareness to and conducted dance workshops for several trauma victims in Manipur.



Bonbon is now exploring an interdisciplinary experimental performance art with the physical and emotional in his pieces. He also works with visual artists and filmmakers as collaborators. Some notable dance films he has worked with include, Black Pot and Movement and UNDERLINE.

Bonbon has been to many international and national level artists' residencies. He has toured and participated in major dance festivals in Switzerland, France, Singapore, Belgium, Japan, USA, Germany, Spain, Portugal, UK and more. He is the Managing Director of Nachom Arts of Contemporary Movement, Manipur.

### **Note on Performance – Folktale**

Performed by Purnima Devi Yengkokpam, Hemjit Meitei Senjam, Suraj Roy Laiphangbam, Sumeet Sagolsem, Mukta Singh Khadangbam, Premananda Nongthongbam, Swavinath SharmaAribam and Surjit Nongmeikapam.

In this piece, the performers go through a thorough process of exploring a fruit and trying to understand it, by studying each of its characteristics. For instance, a lemon taken as an example, gave them a pleasant feeling due to its smell. They then dig deeper and try to feel the kind of impact the lemon makes on their body and mind. The performers go on to explore the lemon's properties such as its sourness, its bitterness, the fibrous feel of it, and so on. This exploration gives the body a different kind of movement, and a sensation that was hidden deep inside; this sensation is triggered as a part of their performance.

The sensations that come along with experiencing the lemon have been expanded into a movement, given a form, internalized and ultimately delivered to the audience. Along with the sensations felt here, also come the emotions, the association, and the rasa that the performers go through. The piece is telling the story of a lemon, trying to give it an identity as to who it is. Like every human being has several qualities, some good, some bad, some dangerous and some pleasant, so does the lemon. Sometimes it becomes difficult to understand a person by just one behavior. Similarly, the lemon also exhibits different characteristics and properties, which are being conveyed to the audience. The performance attempts to present the story-telling method through movement and expressions, using a different kind of body language, but delivered in a very traditional and indigenous manner.

## **11. *Jyotsna Rao***

Jyotsna Rao is a Dancer and Choreographer who is known for creative exploration in her works and has carved a niche for herself as a versatile performer. She is the recipient of 3 Scholarships and holds a Diploma degree in movement arts from Attakkalari, and is a Senior



in Talavadya from Karnataka board. Rao is one of the finest performers in India and has performed extensively across Germany, Sweden, UK, South Korea, Muscat, Australia, Thailand, China and India in more than 50 international festivals. She is the lead performer with Daksha Sheth Dance Company for the production 'Sari', which has toured China, Thailand and India.

She is a qualified Psychologist from Bangalore University and her contribution to projects such as Attakkalari's Nagarika DVD on Kalaripayattu, Kali-Kalisku by IFA have been enriching. As the Creative director of AartiQlate - India's first graphic narrative on performing arts, she unleashed the artist in her. A dedicated researcher, she is currently working on a Dance-research project called ANGIKA Anatomy, which studies the science of movement in Kathak dance repertoire.

Jyotsna is a natural and talented actress who has been critically acclaimed for her works in the past including her cameo dance performance in the feature film 'Oonga' directed by Devashish Makhija, which was showcased at the Cannes International festival, Toronto festival and New York Film festival. Other films in which she has performed are Premism, Uttama Villain and Bengalurinalli lavvu.

She has learnt dance forms like Bollywood Jazz, Contemporary dance techniques, Ballet, Bharatnatyam, Kalaripayattu and Kathak. Rao's solo journey began when she was invited to showcase her work 'Soma diary' at the young Choreographer's laboratory in Bangalore and Goteborg, Sweden, and Kochi. As a Repertory member, she has collaborated and performed with artists from Spain, UK, Portugal at Brouhaha International Street festival, IBSA Summit by ICCR at Rashtrapathi Bhavan, and has enthralled dignitaries including former PM Manmohan Singh, former President Pratibha Patil, P. Chidambaram, the Consulate and cultural ambassadors of China.

### **Note on Performance – Spider Solo**

Performed by Jyotsna Rao.

With Spider Solo, the artiste explores and investigates the Corporeal influences and changes of being a human in a bustling city like Bangalore and how it influences the body to move through constricted roads in an anamorphic way, on vehicles through GPS operated road maps, WIFI enabled spaces, gadgets spurting out of bags, that imagining a life without these is almost impossible!

Bangalore is pacing with fast momentum towards sporadic growth, which seems robotic and Superhuman. Within the well-connected city there is disconnectedness and isolation and hence the Web (internet) becomes its residents' safety net or comfort zone.

The piece draws inspiration from the Spider and its static and sharp movements; its ability to stay well connected with its surroundings as the corporeality of the piece.

## **12. *Abhilash Ningappa***

Abhilash is an Indian-born performer, teacher and choreographer working in India and Europe. He post-graduated at SEAD, Salzburg and did a Post Masters in APASS (Advanced performance and scenography studies), Belgium on a movement research project called PLAY PRACTICE. A yoga practitioner and a martial art teacher, trained in Kalaripayattu and contemporary dance, he started his training in India and later travelled in India and Europe, working and practicing. He worked with La Caldera (Spain), Nunart (Spain), Royal Conservatoire Antwerp (ARTESIS, Antwerp), I-dance (Hong Kong), Ibiza Contact Festival (Spain), and has been teaching professional classes in Dock 11 (Berlin), Dansehotel (Malaga), Residency in PARTS (Brussels), Le chien Perdu (Brussels), Love-in (Canada), Dance Identity (D.ID) (Austria), Danskias (Vienna), and Association of Professional Dancers (Ireland).

He has organised Play Practice Apprenticeship Program, Goa Scholarship Program, Impro-junction Scholarship Program, as well as residencies for artistes who are visiting India, as well as for young artistes from India. Abhilash has worked with choreographers such as Constanza Macras in 'Back to the present' and 'The past', Katie Ducks Improvisation performances, Tania Carvalho in 'Icosahedron', Rex levitates Dance Company (Ireland). 'Bodies in urban spaces' by Willie Dorner, Reinhild Hoffman in 'Pro Choreo Laboratory', Ka fai in 'what I think about when I think about dancing' and Nuni Lazaga 'To dream or not to dream'.

### **Note on Performance - Architect of Self Destruction**

Performed by Atul Kumar, Ronita Mookerji, Anand Dhanakoti, Prashant More and Sonia Jain.

Architect of Self Destruction talks about an experience of movement. It's about space and self in the same space. The self and space can never separate. In the process of destruction, the space and the self is bound to be destroyed. The performance traces the process of destruction through evolution, social system of traditions and movement experiences. It looks at destruction and self-destruction as an experience of breaking systems.

Destruction is a process akin to our perception of progress and development. Every movement is a projection stemming from the action of either destroying or creating. Change happens by denying certain things, and how does one change things - by letting



them occur naturally during the process of creation or come upon something completely new. Destruction creates space. A movement or action, which describes destruction, is used as a metaphor in order to understand destruction.

Somewhere in the back of our minds, we know that creation and growth must be accompanied by destruction and decline. Destruction is often associated (and conflated) with evil. More troubling — it is often associated with pain, even if there is no evil intent involved. Self-destructive behavior is a widely used phrase that conceptualizes certain kinds of destructive acts as belonging to the self and space around oneself. Destruction is not this messy simply because we are unkind or evil. Destruction is fundamentally messy, and keeping it gentle takes a lot of work.

Destruction is a practice to make one stronger through movement art practice. Movement evokes physical changes, which are conducive to growth. Not always perform-able but about feeling the movement physically as a bodily experience. Destroying conventional ways of moving or creating movement creates a new movement experience. Destruction of this viscous cycle is the only way forward. In a group of performers that are experiencing a stressful situation is bound to lead to destruction that in turn leads to creation.

Destruction is a process, as well as a creation. In a more practical sense, destruction is used in order to understand space in the form of emptiness, freedom through movement research. During the performance, the artists work on methods which trigger emotions, a game or scores where the task is planned and discuss various aspects of destruction and its result. Physical experience is the output and observation. A structured destruction leads to creation of the performance work.

### **13.       *Satakshi Nandy***

Satakshi is a Contemporary Dancer who was born and brought up in India. She was trained in Kathak and Classical Jazz prior to pursuing her diploma in ‘Movement Arts and Mixed Media’ at ‘Attakkalari Centre for Movement Arts’ in 2014 – where she trained in the martial art, Kalaripayattu, Ballet, Indian folk Styles, Bharatnatyam, and European Contemporary Dance techniques. She also underwent a month-long intensive training in Kalaripayattu at the CVN Institute of Kalari, Trivandrum and a month-long Movement and Research Residency called ‘Play Practice’, under the guidance of Choreographers Abhilash Nینگappa (India) and Jasmina Siplila (Finland). Satakshi is an independent performer who collaborates with Independent artistes, established film-makers, Theatre Directors and Theatre Companies as an actor, dancer and performer. Her recent works include being a dancer and actor in a Docu-fiction based on Bengal’s theatre stalwart Nati Binodini’s life, named ‘Amar

Katha', that won at the 62nd Indian National Award (Best Cinematography and Best Biography) in 2014, evolving a solo piece named 'Strange Fruit', based on lynching and social discriminations within the Indian political and social scenario, that was created during the Play Practice Residency in 2015. She is presently working towards collaborating with Paris based Artiste and feminist scholar, Ludivine Metairie, on a duet named 'Sister Outsider' based on feminist struggle and complexities of gender binaries.

### **Note on Performance – Strange Fruit**

Performed by Satakshi Nandy.

'Strange Fruit' is inspired by the poem of the same name, written by Abel Meeropol, who wrote under the pseudonym 'Lewis Allan'. The poem was written in 1937 as a protest against the lynching of African Americans and the racism they had been, and still are, subjected to. The piece is also inspired by Choreographer Pearl Primus' work on the said poem. This piece questions the violence and discrimination, mainly within India and other Third World countries, that are caused by creating minorities and marginality on the basis of caste, religion, gender, nationalism, academia, or any sort of privilege that rejects the existence of the said minority, established by a higher authority.

This dance and movement piece introduces the most marginalized and dispensable character, i.e., of a least privileged, aboriginal and the least intellectual woman, who enacts a part of the regular abuse and discrimination she undergoes in her life. The dance rests on this woman, who is abject to continuous surveillance. This is the point where the piece connects the larger concept of national identity to a personal story of a woman who is dealing with a marginality that she herself never intended to create. The said body is under constant trauma of having to calculate her movements and intentions so as to not cross social and moral lines. The protagonist is a native, tribal, "savage" woman that has tolerated years of sexual male dominance by upper caste, privileged, powerful people throughout her life. For most of the piece there is a constant sense of urgency and paranoia that this female body undergoes. There are traces of retaliation and aggression in the piece, but that is soon subdued which results in the performer ending up being submissive, polite, and obedient to protect her chances of survival.

## **14. Sahiba Singh**

Sahiba Singh is a Bangalore based choreographer. Originally from New Delhi, Sahiba started her dance training in 2005 with The Danceworx, where she learnt Ballet and Jazz. She soon moved to Bangalore in 2007 and studied at the Attakkalari Centre for Movement Arts where she graduated with a one-year diploma course in Movement arts and mixed media. Post this,



Sahiba worked with the Attakkalari Repertoire for 2.5 years during which she was a part of two of their dance productions that toured all across India. The productions were called For Pina and Sanchaari.

Sahiba co-founded a dance company in March 2014 called NIVESAA and has been teaching her company and other students contemporary movement techniques since then. She was a part of a contemporary dance productions, “The Heartbreak Hotel”, choreographed by Keya Ann D’souza and “Time Upon Once” choreographed by Olivier Besson, both of which premiered at the Alliance Francaise.

She choreographed another piece with her company members called “Is 42 the Answer?”, which was a physical theatre piece that premiered in Shoonya Centre for Somatic Practices. She is a resident choreographer at the FO CO CO residency, headed by Atalya Baumer and THE KHA FOUNDATION. Sahiba was trained in contemporary dance by Chris Lechner, Nakula Somana and Fransesco Scavetta; Flying low technique by David Zambrano (HJS, Amsterdam); Contact improvisation by Chris Lechner and Oliveir Besson; Ballet and Pilates by Claire Coleman. She was trained in Bharatnatyam by Minal Prabhu (Kalakshetra) and Jyotsana Shourie (Tanjavore), She has learnt the Feldenkrais method by Michele Casanova. She completed her advanced Yoga training under Pradeep Gowda.

### **Note on Performance – Parallel Intersections**

Performed by Sumesh PB, Raam Kumar R, Pia Bunglowala, Aastha Gulati and Sahiba Singh.

Parallel Intersections is a piece about overlapping realities. Based on the idea of finding love at the wrong time, or meeting a loved one, not quite in the same space, choreographer Sahiba Singh explores the idea of parallel lives that tie us within an unknown and an unspoken bond of familiarity and longing. The piece is a non-linear narrative depiction of ‘time- space’ intersections. Those that are not so destined to meet, yet intersect because of the powerful force of love that can transcend many universes to merge in one.

Choreographer Sahiba Singh takes inspiration from pedestrian movements, literature (Stephen Hawkins, Carlos Castenda, Richard Dawkins), theatre and delivers a clear narrative using imagery, spoken text and a written story board. She visualises this piece as a motion picture or even a novel and hence the power of story board reflects well in the work.

Parallel Intersections also goes deeper into the questions of quantum physics and the multiverse theory, but Sahiba chooses to narrate it through 2 lovers instead of making it extremely scientific, although, she believes that the other end of the scientific spectrum is nothing but science explained through art. Not all answers lie here with us, and art just adds another perspective to look at questions we have been asking for eons.

Through this choreography, Sahiba's aim is to create a visual treat, a visceral response, a dialogue between the scientific and the artistic community and to have different people from different backgrounds and age, relate to excerpts from the piece and resonate with them through their lives. The premise of the piece is scientific, however, joined together through a common thread of relationships – something that we all relate to at some point. The piece poses the idea of a multiverse theory, but through a personal narrative of love lost and longing which, the choreographer feels, may strike a deeper cord with the audience without losing its premise of the questions of quantum physics.

### **15. Anuradha Venkatraman**

Anuradha Venkatraman is a trained Bharatanatyam dancer and has been performing for almost 15 years. She has performed widely in India and Abroad. She has been actively involved in theatre for almost 5 years, has performed in 10 professional plays of Theatre. Anuradha has choreographed and presented 4 solo productions, namely Pratham Parth, based on the poetries of Ram Dhari Singh Dinkar's and Rashmi Rathi (Dept. of Culture Production grant); Jananyey Namah- An Ode to Motherhood; Vaidehi- The Story of Sita and Ravana and Stories Unearthed (India Foundation for the Arts production grant under Project-560). She also attended a puppet residency under TUIDA, South Korea. Anuradha has performed in Bosnia, Poland, Denmark, Luxembourg and Germany, sponsored under ICCR.

#### **Note on Performance – To See**

Performed by Anuradha Venkataraman and Shashikala Reddy.

“To See” is an exploration into the experience of the world around us and the value of things using the natural five physical senses and the acquired political, social, and cultural ones. What we sometimes fail to acknowledge is the constructed nature of the reality that surrounds us. This performance delves into this empire of axioms that we have created for ourselves using the Voyager Golden Record as a catalyst.

The Voyager Golden Record was sent to outer space in 1977 and contained a comprehensive catalogue of being human- like greetings in different languages, the best music and pictures of the human body; the idea was to send across a friendly message to any intelligent extra-terrestrial existence. Everything negative or evil was avoided, like the representations of war, in order to reflect Earth as a peace-loving planet. In short, the human race decided to send to space a time capsule of our celebrated existence for alien consumption. Now, what if the aliens did get the record and played it, and hated it! What belief do we hold that what we consider loved, revered and symbolic, will be perceived as is

by others elsewhere? This production marks this question as its foundation- perception as an eternally fluid understanding of physically accumulated information.

A famous composition in Carnatic genre of music describes a *dalit* devotee of Shiva pleading to enter the temple. The almighty relents and clears the path for him to get a glimpse from outside. Does this composition, which for years has been interpreted as warm and comforting, question the society for even creating such demarcations based on their birth? A number of *Sringar*- based poetries, which were offshoots of the Bhakti traditions depict the beauty of making love. They are flowered with intricate details and are often interpreted as spiritual liberation - the union of the Jeevatam with Paramatma. Could these poems be read to be perceived as something dark instead of free? Could these be seen as a representation of a patriarchal society's sexual exploitation with poetic license? Wars and heroism has been part of the mankind's cultural narrative across geographies, with several homages to warriors. But today we need to revisit this glorification and examine why violence is celebrated when perpetrated on our behalf but criticized when it is perpetrated on us. One man's freedom fighter they say is another man's terrorist.

Using these motifs – one personal, one inter-personal and one communal, the performance tries to explore how things get the values they possess, and how like the 'x' in Algebra. the search for constancy is eternal.

## **16. Manju Sharma**

Manju Sharma is a Dancer, Choreographer and Teacher who started out working on Bollywood dance in her college days. She has worked in THE DANCEWORX as a choreographer and company dancer for 7 years. She was trained in Jazz, Contemporary, Classical Ballet and Hip-Hop. Her love to perform for larger audiences led her to participate in a TV reality show, Dance India Dance Season 3. She continues to work with amateurs and professionals in the dance and theatre fields, while exploring her movement source through her own disciplined practice of contemporary dance.

Her work experience includes 'A Male Ant Has Straight Antennae', Choreographed by Mandeep Raikhy; 'Inhabited Geometry', choreographed by Mandeep Raikhy; 'Parallel', choreographed by Rajan Rathore, IGNITE Contemporary Dance Festival (New Delhi); Dance India Dance Season 3, Top 18 (Mumbai); Choreographed Theatre Ek Maun Masoom Ka for National School of Drama (Delhi).

### **Note on Performance – Rush Hour**

Performed by Rajesh Kumar, Kunal Sood and Manju Sharma.



This performance draws inspiration from the metro rides that Manju takes every day. While pondering over the day on her way back home, she would notice the pushing and pulling, the rush, the tiredness, the anxiety, the excitement, the relaxation, and all kinds of emotions and activities around her in the metro. Entering a metro would feel like entering a new world of curiosity, observation and rhythmic motion. She began to question what physical and sensorial experience such a setting could bring to the body. She got interested in exploring the impulses a metro ride could provoke in her movements.

Having delved into these questions for over a year, Manju began to perceive the metro as a metaphor for the society that is crammed, and where bodies are constantly running in order to ensure a space for themselves. Amidst the anxiety that such rushing creates, she also sensed the humor of our monotonous lives. It is these monotonous, palpitations, thumping, and longing that she attempts to capture in an ensemble work that she proposes to extend out of this still-evolving performance piece.

## **17. *Shruti Maria Datar***

Shruti Maria Datar is a Mumbai based performer and movement trainer, whose movement expertise lies in contemporary dance and Bharatanatyam. She has completed her Professional Training in Contemporary Dance from Danscentrumjette, Belgium and holds a Diploma in Movement Arts from 'Attakkalarri Centre for Movement Arts', Bangalore. She trained for 18 years as a Bharatanatyam dancer and is a freelance trainer in Mumbai, since 2014. She is a Drama facilitator with Theater Professionals Pvt. Ltd. and she coaches young adults in Theater Arts and Dance. Additionally, she has taught several workshops as a guest faculty at various Dance schools in Europe and in India. Blending the aesthetics of Theatre and Dance is what drives her in her practice.

She has performed two site specific works under choreographer Avantika Bahl in Mumbai. She has also engaged in a research project on Improvisation and Dance making with collaborators Janhavi Pathak and Abhay Mahajan in Pune in 2014, resulting in two rough sketches for works. One of these have been taken forward as a solo work titled 'Phi'. She has also collaborated with video artist Sanket Ray for a dance video improvisation work titled "Lucid Reflections" in 2015.

### **Note on Performance – Phi**

Performed by Shruti Maria Datar.

'Phi' is a Dance Theater piece which aims to abstract aesthetics of Dance and theater. Exploring ideas of perfection and proportion in relation to images and stories. The piece

aims to mimic these very images and deconstruct them. What are the implications of these images? What is perfection? Are some of the questions explored through the work? Performed as a woman examining herself in front of the mirror, the piece poses questions on the Idea of The Feminine that we are constantly exposed to.

## **18. Anish Popli**

Anish Popli is the Creative Director and Choreographer at Choreotheque School of Contemporary Dance, New Delhi. He has completed his MFA in Choreography from Trinity Laban, London. Some of his recent works include 'Open-Mouthed', on invitation by Instituto Cervantes - a choreography based on Spanish Photographer Christina Garcia Rodero's exhibition; 'Untitled' (a triptych) - reflecting on Perception of Absence/ Presence -Trinity Laban Graduate Showcase 2015, 'Break in News', choreographed for Deptford Collective, performed at Resolutions, The Place's (UK) annual new year festival of short, January 2016; 'Choreography' (book launch)- Based on the book Spatial Justice written by Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, Professor of Law & Theory at the University of Westminster, London 2014; Locating Traces-Source, Form and Separation -Trinity Laban 2014; 'Blind Faith' - Contemporary Dance Theatre performance for a Delhi University college, which won nationwide awards; Web of Webs- commentary through dance on the effect of social media on our lives and so on.

### **Note on Performance – Mindscapes**

Performed by Inder Jot Singh, Vansh Sethi, Nikita Maheshwary, Sunaina Jain and Nishant.

The body is an archive of memories. Memories superimpose various layers in time, impregnating the body with their history. This piece explores the memories locked within the human body. While the word 'impregnate' inadvertently assigns to memory a feminine character, this piece looks at memories as asexual and transgender, inscribing themselves on the mind, surfacing when triggered. It explores the process of what happens to the body when memories are triggered - does it reproduce the reactions experienced earlier or does it produce newer/ different reactions to memories diluted with time. A work in progress, the piece is experimenting with the roles that male and female minds play at retaining certain 'types' of memories. 'Mindscapes' questions the gender of experiences that form memories and attempts to delve into the real, virtual and fragmented bodies, juxtaposing the real with the virtual, as an extension of the physical body.

## **19.      *Mirra Arun***

Mirra Arun is a dancer, teacher and choreographer. Mirra has been engaged in Movement Arts since 2002, starting her career with Attakkalari Center for Movement Arts. She has been trained in Contemporary dance techniques - Kalaripayattu, Bharathanatyam and yoga. She is also a Yoga practitioner and an instructor certified by a1000 yoga. Her creations are informed and inspired by the world around her and presently she is engaged with the idea of consumerism and its effects on the lives of people and the environmental consequences. She works extensively in dance in education and is passionate about working with creative dance for children. Her experience with children ranges across age and backgrounds – children from 5-15 years of age, special needs children, street children and the entire K-12 segment.

She has performed in several venues around the world, a few of which are as follows: Julidans Festival, Theatre Bellevue, Amsterdam, The Netherlands 2007; China, 2007; Yena, Germany, 2008; Julidans, Netherlands, 2008; Ignite 2014; Attakkalari Biennial 2014 and Soibhans Dance Studio – London 2015

Her choreographies include ‘No Name – Is it somebody else in my body?!’, a dance duet created with two European dancers, Raechel Deadman and Nicola Penfold. No name is inspired by the book Eleven Minutes by Paulo Coelho; ‘Kanda 1’, inspired by the personal experiences of the artiste during pregnancy through motherhood. Kanda was performed in a confined space to a select set of audience, where the dialogue happened between herself and her 2-year-old son Vishakh; ‘Kanda 2’, choreographed and performed with Veena Basavarajiah, this a unique project, where the choreography takes shape along the lines of instincts and reflexes instigated by 12 children on stage. The limitations and possibilities of the piece are influenced by the children, while the dancers adapt.

### **Note on Performance – The Conveyor Belt**

Performed by Mirra Arun.

The Conveyor Belt, a physical theater piece that delves with the idea of over production and mindless consumption - both of which are economically manifested in the chronic purchasing of new goods and services, with little attention to their true need, durability and the environmental consequences of manufacture and disposal. We enter into a hedonistic world of ‘created wants’-fulfillment which creates further wanting in an attempt to bring lasting happiness. The piece also looks at the working conditions of Assembly line system, which generates a regiment way of functioning, revealing how such dull, mechanic labor, that



requires no skill, creativity or thought, de-humanises people, reducing them to little more than cogs in a machine.

The main aim of all countries being GDP, the focus is to increasingly produce and encourage consumption rather than a sustainable economic living. Excessive consumption leads to bigger houses, faster cars, trendier clothes, fancier technology, and overfilled drawers, resulting in increasing the GDP of an economy. It promises happiness, but never delivers. Instead, it results in a desire for more – a desire which is promoted by the world around us. And it slowly begins robbing us of life. It redirects our God-given passions to things that can never fulfill. It consumes our limited resources.

## **20. *Parth Bhardwaj***

Parth Bhardwaj has been a professional contemporary dancer since 2008. His initial training was in kathak and classical ballet. He graduated with distinction in the diploma program in Movement and Mixed Media Arts at the Attakkalari Centre for Movement Arts', Bangalore. Since 2009, he has been an active part of the repertory company at Attakkalari, Bangalore. He has been a part of Attakkalari's recent works such as 'Meidhwani' and 'Aadharachakra' and has performed and collaborated on them on an international platform.

In 2012, Parth also collaborated with Yola Yolifianti (an Indonesian choreographer), for a piece titled 'Being Salma' which premiered at Facetes 2012 in Bangalore. In 2016, he collaborated with the Nicole Seiler company, Lausanne, Switzerland, for a piece titled 'Isshh(k)', to be premiered at the Arsenic Centre for Contemporary Dance at Lausanne, Switzerland. He has also been conducting education and outreach work in the area of contemporary dance in India and abroad since 2011.

### **Note on Performance – Urban Chaos**

Performed by Parth Bhardwaj, Sylvester Mardi, Amruth. P, Ashwin George and Nikhil Nagaraj.

'Urban chaos' reflects on the state of disorder or pandemonium that grips our ever-expanding metro centers. The rapid urbanization has exposed people to vulnerable lifestyles. Struggle, peace, monotonous lifestyles, heinous crimes and disorder encapsulates the soul of our cities and its people alike. Urban chaos finds its expression in the microcosm of the fear and psychology of people, representing the macrocosm of our booming urban centers.

## **21. *Joshua Sailo***

Joshua Sailo began his professional training at The School of Toronto Dance Theatre, where he had the privilege of working with renowned Canadian choreographers – Peggy Baker, Louis Laberge-Côté, and Heidi Strauss amongst others– inspiring him to pursue his own interests in choreography. Upon graduation, Joshua was awarded the TransFormation scholarship for his dedicated and admirable approach in movement investigation and research in TransFormation Danse in Montreal. He has since worked with choreographer Darryl Tracy, Cirque Du Soleil and Toronto Dance Theatre.

Upon his return to India, Joshua continues to investigate his own practice by working with the local community, teaching, performing, creating, and fostering the development of contemporary arts in his hometown, Aizawl, through the initiative Prospectus. He is currently based in New Delhi, working with choreographers Mandeep Raikhy and Riya Mandal.

### **Note on Performance – Wail**

Performed by Joshua Sailo and Alan Rinawma.

‘Wail’ is the result of an exploration in the movement of ocean bodies, and the systemic and complex relationships that thrive within the ecosystem. Looking at the volatile interference of human activity and its adverse effects, Wail draws upon these sources to generate movement and juxtaposes the ecosystem with ourselves in stories of abuse, misuse, dependence, co-existence, and the exercise of power in a personal struggle for survival and sustenance.

## **22. *Diya Naidu***

Diya Naidu is an independent dancer and choreographer based in Bangalore, India. She has been choreographing contemporary work since 2009 and started out with a sort of personal and existential quest. Her first pieces included NADIR (A look at the schizophrenic experience of living in the urban space), and BARDO BEINGS (A duet inspired by Tibetan Buddhist Philosophy). Diya is deeply excited by storytelling and by the kind of research that she feels only the artist can enjoy – which is to experientially integrate different worlds in oneself, and use this experiential research to reflect, manifest and influence contemporary reality.

She is also an independent performance artist. She has trained with The Danceworx, New Delhi and received a Diploma in Movement Arts and Mixed Media from The Attakkalari Centre for Movement Arts, Bangalore, after which she was a repertory dancer with them for

7 years. She has done shorter projects with Rythmosaic, Kolkata and Lshva and Nritarutya, Bangalore. Recently, she started writing Articles on Dance and also doing administrative work around Art and culture, such a consulting with Shoonya Centre for Art and Somatic Practices.

### **Note on Performance – Hands and Face Project**

Performed by Diya Naidu.

Most women, experience the following: constantly looking behind one's shoulder as they walk on an empty street, checking if the front door is locked almost obsessively before turning the lights out, dreading entering an elevator with unknown men. Fear - general and constant fear, taking ages to figure out what to wear- based on how much skin is revealed or covered - based on which area one is travelling to and using what mode of transport, constantly monitoring other women - have they got home yet, are they safe and so on. Humiliation and powerlessness at being eve teased, cat called and harassed, self-derision from feeling this fear - calling ourselves paranoid and neurotic, a sense that the roads are not theirs.

The artist tries to explore through this piece the answers to questions – “who or what are we (women) afraid of?”, “What is this fear?”, “What do we imagine this threat to be?”. In India, a country that has been divided based on caste and class for centuries, what happens when there is contact outside of the stipulated boundaries? One kind of result is the harassment and fear that perhaps are accentuated by eons of superficial boundary making. People are constantly trod upon, denied equal treatment and artificially separated - we have strict codes for how to interact with members of other socio- economic strata.

Our lives constantly include interactions with those from other classes and strata but they are highly codified and strictly designed to allow for no real boundary breaking - no real friendship, intimacy or love. What happens when these worlds are confronted with each other? When boundaries are tried and tested? When someone no longer accepts being told exactly how to behave? The street often becomes this place where someone manifests their rage, where women feel unsafe - perceiving a danger and a resentment that couldn't possibly be caused just by that one interaction.

The work uses footage filmed on the streets and public spaces to subtly present the situation of these worlds meeting - meeting through the moment, meeting through eyes and skin and hands.

## **Jury Profile**

### ***1. Krithika Nair***

Karthika Nair was born in India, lives in Paris, and works as a dance producer and curator. She is the author of *Bearings*, a poetry collection; *DESH: Memories, inherited, borrowed, invented*, a dance diary; and *The Honey Hunter/ Le Tigre de Miel*, a children's book illustrated by Joelle Jolivet. Nair was the principal storywriter and scriptwriter of *DESH*, choreographer Akram Khan's multiple- award-winning dance production. As a dance producer, Nair has worked in several Parisian cultural centers and with choreographers Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Damien Jalet and Mourad Merzouki (Kafig). She is the associate programmer of Festival Equilibrio in Rome.

### ***2. Frederic Mazelly***

Artistic Director at the Parc et Grande Halle de la Villette from 2000 to 2007, Frederic Mazelly has been the project initiator of the festivals 100 Dessus Dessous (dance, theatre and performances), Villette Sonique (musiques actuelles), Villette Numerique (digital and electronic arts), and many more outdoor projects oriented to fine arts and world music, with Scenes d'Ete. In October 2007, he became the Director of the Performing Arts Department at the Parc et Grande Halle de la Villette (EPPGHV). He particularly pays attention to the young international Creation in performing arts and actively seeks to encourage creative works, (welcoming artists in residences, allowing joint productions). Former administrative and artistic director of the Theatre de Chatillon, he graduated from the French school of political Science and studied lyric singing at the Paris Conservatoire.

### ***3. Claire Verlet***

After a career as a dancer and professor, Claire Verlet became producer for major American artists (Lucinda Childs, Karole Armitage John Cage, Robert Ashley). From 1996 till 2000, she was artistic counsellor at La Filature - Mulhouse as well as consultant at AFAA (now Institut Francais), which, in 1999, appointed her as head of its dance section. Claire Verlet joined the Centre National de la Danse in early 2000 as director of the Maison des companies et des spectacles until 2008 when was asked to take the responsibility of the Artistic programme at Theatre de la Ville, Paris.

### ***4. Elena Carmona***

Since 2012, Elena has been part of the team of GRANER, a center for research and creation in dance and movement in Barcelona, where she coordinates different projects and co-curates the SALMON< festival in Mercat de les Flors. She coordinated Dance Connection in

Barcelona in 2015, which is a residency programme that promotes mobility of emerging Indian choreographers in Europe. Elena started to work in the dance field in Barcelona in 2005, focusing first on projects of dance and community. She was co-director of the street arts festival Per Amor a l'Hart from 2009 to 2012, and invited by CoNCA (Arts Council of Catalonia) to be member of the Dance Expert Commission (2010-2011-2012). In 2010, she became part of the contents department of Mercat de les Flors (Barcelona). She has a degree in journalism and two postgraduate diplomas in Cultural Management.

### **5. Renuka Narayanan**

Renuka Narayanan writes on religion and culture. She lives in New Delhi. She was formerly Arts Editor and Religion Columnist, The Indian Express; Editor, Religion and Culture, Hindustan Times and the start-up Director of the Indian Cultural Centre, ICCR-Embassy of India, Bangkok. Her published books include The Book of Prayer (Viking), Faith - Filling the God-sized Hole (Penguin) and The Little Book of Indian Wisdom (Penguin).

### **6. Arundhati Subramaniam**

Arundhati Subramaniam is a poet and writer who has worked over the years as an arts journalist, curator and poetry editor. She has written on Indian classical dance, theatre and literature for several publications over the past two decades, including The Times of India, The Indian Express and The Hindu, among others. She has been a columnist on culture and literature for Time Out (Mumbai), The Indian Express and New Woman. She has worked at Bombay's National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA) for several years, as the Head of 'Chauraha', an interactive arts forum, and later as the Head of Dance. She has collaborated with Bharatanatyam dancer Alarmel Valli on a production on love poetry, entitled 'Only Until the Light Fades'. In 2013, she curated a festival of Indian dance and Bhakti poetry at the NCPA, entitled 'Stark Raving Mad'. Widely translated and anthologized, her poetry has won various awards and fellowships. Her recent book of poems, When God is a Traveler, is the Winter Choice of the Poetry Book Society, UK, shortlisted for the TS Eliot Prize.

### **7. Eddie Nixon**

Eddie is Director of Theatre and Artist Development at The Place in London. Eddie started tap and 'modern' dancing classes when he was 5 years old. He also loved singing and acting and appeared in The Sound of Music and Bugsy Malone in London's West End. As a teenager, he was a member of the youth dance company at Swindon Dance. After studying Chemistry at Bristol University, he changed career direction somewhat and gained a BA (Hons) and MA at London Contemporary Dance School. For 12 years he performed for a wide range of companies and choreographers including New Adventures, The

Featherstonehaughs, Protein Dance, DV8 Physical Theatre, Adventures in Motion Pictures; Rosemary Lee, Aletta Collins and Mark Bruce. In 2004 Eddie was awarded a Fellowship from The Clore Leadership Programme. He began working as Associate Director of The Place in 2005, programming theatre seasons and leading the theatre's projects and artist development programmes. He was appointed to the role of Director in 2009. During this period, he has initiated many new seasons and projects at The Place – Work Place, Pivot Dance, Exit Visa, Choreoroam, Summer House, Currency, Touchwood and Fringe at The Place, as well as developing established seasons such as 'Resolution!', Spring Loaded and the Place Prize for Dance. He is the UK representative for the Aerowaves network and represents The Place on the National Dance Network and European Dancehouse Network.

## **Reviews**

The Hindu, Chennai, 25 August 2016 – In forward motion

<http://www.thehindu.com/features/friday-review/dance/In-forward-motion/article14588955.ece>

The Wire, 11 September 2016 - The Scent of Danger When Art Comes Alive: Four Voices on 'Nerves'

<https://thewire.in/65303/the-scent-of-danger-nerve/>