



**Sunday, November 20, 7pm**  
**Malini Srinivasan and Dancers presents *Brooklyn Raga Massive*.** At Baruch Performing Arts Center, 55 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10010. *Tickets \$20 advance/\$25 at door.*

**Malini Srinivasan & Dancers** presents the fabulous musicians of **Brooklyn Raga Massive**, the musician's collective rooted-in and inspired by Indian classical music, in a special performance to start our Thanksgiving right! With artists Arun Ramamurthy, Max ZT, Bala Skandan, Jay Gandhi and Roopa Mahadevan.

Malini Srinivasan and Dancers Presents  
**Brooklyn Raga Massive**  
**Nov. 20 at 7pm**  
**Baruch Performing Arts Center**



**Brooklyn Raga Massive** is a globally recognized musician's collective rooted-in and inspired-by Indian Classical music. Grounded by tradition and guided by the spirit of improvisation, BRM has cultivated a creative community of artists through its weekly concert and jam sessions. Both a critical and audience favorite, Brooklyn Raga Massive have been praised by the Wall Street Journal for "Expanding the notion of what raga—the immersive, epic form of Indian music—can mean." The New York Times for "Preserving the past while blurring genres in an inventive spirit," and have been crowned the the "Leaders of the Raga Renaissance" by The New Yorker.

*Program Content and Layout by Anjna Swaminathan and La'Toya Latney  
Cover and BRM Ad Design by Vidya Santosh*

# APPEASING RADHIKA



PRESENTED BY  
MALINI SRINIVASAN AND DANCERS

NEWMUSIC  
USA

## ON LITERATURE, LOVE, AND LEGACY

### Scene 1: A House Concert

Bangalore Nagarathnamma's home, 1921

#### **Sri Māhaganapathim Bhajeham**

Composer: Mysore Jayachamaraja Wodeyar | Ragam: Atāna | Talam: Adi

#### **Sri Rāma Jaya Rāma**

Composer: Thyāgarāja | Ragam: Yadukula Kāmbhoji | Talam: Adi

#### **Nityakalyāni**

Composer: Sitārama Iyer | Ragam: Rāgamālika | Talam: Rūpakam

#### **Mātāda Bāradeno**

Composer: Bangalore Nagarathnamma | Ragam: Khamās | Talam: Misra Chāpu

### Scene 2: Excerpts from Avatārika of Rādhikā Sāntwanamu

In the court of Pratāpasimhendra, circa 1745

#### **Invocation to Bhūdevi (Mother Earth)**

Oh Mother Earth, who proudly carries the mountains and the rivers,  
Bhūdevi, beneath whose feet lie the elephants, the serpents, and even Lord Vishnu  
in his tortoise form!

It was you, who gave birth to Narakāsura, and later killed him, taking the beautiful  
form of Satyabhāma.

Give me mercy, oh Mother Earth! Protect me always!

[Avatārika 3, composed by Nivedita ShivRaj]

#### **Invocation to Lord Vishnu**

Oh Lord Vishnu! Sreenivāsa, who removes all sins, I salute you.

I praise your divine vehicle, the vulture Garuda with his towering form.

And I appreciate the learned poets who bow down to Lord Hari, the slayer of  
demons.

[Avatārika 4, composed by Nivedita ShivRaj]

#### **Muddupalani's Mother**

Rāmavadhuti, the best of women, had built an *agrahāram*\*,

That was aptly named Rāmabhākyā.

There, she also built a temple for Pārvathi and Parameswara,

And arranged for daily festivals to sing their praises.

Are there any limits to the praise of such a woman?

\*a village inhabited by Brahmins

[Avatārika 25, composed by Nivedita ShivRaj]

“However often I read this book, I feel like reading it all over again... Since this poem, brimming with *rasa*, was not only written by a woman but one born into our community, I felt it necessary to publish in a proper form.”

- Bangalore Nagarathnamma on Muddupalani's *Rādhikā Sāntwanamu* in the preface to the new edition of the book (Tharu and Lalita, 1991)

In light of recent events, any form of camaraderie feels like a small act of revolution. The stories and history depicted in *Appeasing Radhika* center on a period of time during which the voices of non-brahmin women artists and scholars were actively silenced and eradicated from what we know as Indian 'classical' art today. In re-experiencing the awe, respect, and transcendent love that Bangalore Nagarathnamma had for Telugu poet Muddupalani, however, we can be renewed with a sense of inspiration and drive to appreciate and encourage our fellow artists. In a time like this, it is imperative that we look to activist-artists of the past like these two incredibly charismatic Devadasi women, to learn to assert ourselves, express freely, and let the legacy of women's artistic voices live on.

This is the first work-in-progress performance of *Appeasing Radhika*, a new multidisciplinary work created and conceived by Bharatanatyam dancer and choreographer, Malini Srinivasan. Following the performance, I will be leading a brief talk-back with the artists. As this is a new production, still in the very early stages of its development, we sincerely encourage you to stay for the talk-back, and to ask questions and offer critical feedback to the creative team and performers. We thank you for being part of this journey. Your presence at this evening's performance will be woven into our creative process in the months to come.

With love and respect,  
Anjna Swaminathan, dramaturg

**NEWMUSIC  
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**Jay Gandhi (bansuri)** Shaped by years of intensive training under the legendary bansuri maestro, Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia, Jay's music is at once reflective of his devotion to his Guru and a diverse range of musical influences. A recipient of the prestigious AIFS Performing Arts Fellowship, Jay maintains a busy schedule performing to acclaim for audiences across the globe. He currently is based mainly out of New York City, where he is very active as a performer and a founding member of Brooklyn Raga Massive, a prominent Indian Classical musicians collective.

**Max ZT (hammered dulcimer)** Lauded as “The Jimi Hendrix of the Hammered Dulcimer” by NPR, and a “Force of Nature” by NY Music Daily, Max ZT is an innovator of the instrument. With Irish folk music roots, Max has transplanted his compositional techniques to both Senegal, where he studied with the Cissoko griot family, and to India, where he received the prestigious AIFS grant to study under santoor maestro Pandit Shivkumar Sharma. His fresh perspective and bold experimentalism have been the backbone to beautiful, complex, and genuine compositions, while his unorthodox style has been a pioneering force in revolutionizing the instrument’s techniques.

#### ***Technical Crew***

**Dan Sullivan (audio technician)** is a New York based audio technician and musician. He enjoys playing in a number of bands regularly in the outer boroughs and Long Island. Thanks to the cast and crew for this experience.

#### ***Presented By***

**Malini Srinivasan and Dancers**, a group committed to presenting new works stemming from and expanding the tradition and technique of Bharatanatyam, the classical dance from south India. The group creates and performs works that connect the ancient and mythological worlds with our contemporary selves. The company has presented their work at Brookfield Arts (NYC), the Queens Museum of Art,, Charles B. Wang Center (Stony Brook), LaMama (NYC), the LaGuardia Performing Arts Center,, the New York International Fringe Festival, The University of Chicago, and on tour in Europe.

#### ***Special Thanks To***

*Event Manager:* Sloka Iyengar | *Front of House:* Michael Tanksley | *Graphic Ad and Lobby Display:* Vidya Santosh & Prithi Kanakamedala | *Program Design:* La’Toya Latney | *Volunteers:* Manjula VK, Karthiga Devi, Devanshi Jatania, Gayatri Mohan, & Sohani Das Sharma | *Translations:* Annapoorna Subramani | Baruch College Staff

#### **Muddupalani Describes Herself**

You were among them, young Muddupalani,  
Shining like the moon among the stars,  
Attracting one and all with your talent for the fine arts,  
And becoming the greatest in the court of Pratāpasimhendra.

[Avatārika 30, 31; composed by Nivedita ShivRaj]

#### **Dream of Krishna**

[Avatārika 9, 10, 11; composed by Nivedita ShivRaj]

#### **Song of Krishna**

[Avatārika 38, 39, 40, 41, 42; composed by Arun Ramamurthy]

### **Scene 3: Excerpts from Chapter 1 of Rādhikā Sāntwanamu**

*In the forest of Brindāvan*

#### **Rādhika, dearer than life to Sri Krishna**

Were her breasts not like lofty mountains  
Would they withstand the attack of Krishna’s hands?  
Were her eyes not like water lilies  
Would they sparkle at a mere glance from Hari?  
Were her body not like the creeper that spreads to the tree  
Would it merge with Krishna’s dark one?  
Were her feet not like blossoms fresh  
Would they flower at Krishna’s touch?

[Ch. 1 Verse 9; composed by Arun Ramamurthy]

### **Scene 4: A Meeting between Nagarathamma and Rādhikā**

*Timeless, Placeless*

#### **Mātāda Bāradeno**

Shouldn’t you say something, my love,  
Shouldn’t you say at least one word, just now?  
The moonlight falling on my eyes seems  
Like the burning sunlight  
And the buzzing of the bees put fear in me

The mild breeze is driving me mad  
My beautiful body is losing its lustre  
Shouldn’t you say something my love  
Cupid’s arrow has pierced my body  
Is this fair, O Narahari of Namagiri?

[Mātāda Bāradeno, composed by Bangalore Nagarathamma

*Khamās coda*, composed by Arun Ramamurthy]

### **Creative Team**

**Malini Srinivasan (director/choreographer/dancer)** is a third-generation Bharatanatyam dancer, choreographer and teacher, and the disciple of Guru Sri C.V. Chandrasekhar. A critically acclaimed soloist, she also performs with her company, Malini Srinivasan and Dancers. Malini is dedicated to developing new dance works through commissioning music for dance from composers in world musical traditions. She was awarded the NYC Fringe Award for Excellence in Choreography (2012), the QCA Individual Artist Grant (2010, 2012, 2014), and a New Music USA grant (2016). Based in New York City, Malini is an Adjunct Lecturer at SUNY Stony Brook, on the dance faculty of Chhandayan, and a Teaching Artist with City Lore.

**Arun Ramamurthy (musical director/composer/violinist)** is a versatile violinist, composer and educator based in NYC. Trained in Carnatic Classical music by celebrated violinists, Dr. Mysore Manjunath & Sri Mysore Nagaraj, Arun has become one of the country's leading Indian Classical and crossover musicians. He has performed with esteemed artists such as Dr. Balamurali Krishna, Sudha Ragunathan, Anindo Chatterjee, Marc Cary, Awa Sangho among others. Arun is a co-founder of Brooklyn Raga Massive, a collective of forward thinking musicians rooted-in and inspired-by the classical music of India.

**Roopa Mahadevan (Nagarathamma/vocalist)** trained under Asha Ramesh and later, Suguna Varadachari in Chennai under a Fulbright scholarship. She has performed in notable Carnatic venues including Music Academy and Cleveland Thyagaraja Aradhana. A trained Bharathanatyam dancer, she sings often for traditional and experimental dance projects; she also enjoys exploring R&B/soul. Roopa is an Indian Raga fellow and a regular of the Brooklyn Raga Massive. Roopa also leads NYC-based choir Navatman Music Collective. Roopa works in public health policy in NYC.

**Arpita Mukherji (assistant director)** is a writer, director, producer and choreographer with over a decade of experience in professional theatre. After working for Washington Shakespeare Company and Shakespeare Theatre Company, Arpita Mukherjee founded her own theatre company. She has written, produced, and directed several productions, most notable of which are *Love Times Seven: A Bollywood Musical*, *My First Time* (only directed), *Moving Forward*, and *I AM SAAM*. Her work was featured in the South Asian Theatre and Arts Festival at the Smithsonian. A classically trained dancer, Arpita has also choreographed for musicals. She studied Non-Fiction Writing at Columbia University.

**Madhuri Shekar (scriptwriter)** is a playwright from Chennai, India. She is currently a fellow in the Juilliard Playwriting program. Her plays have been produced or developed at the Alliance Theatre, Victory Gardens, the Center Theatre Group, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Hedgebrook Playwrights Festival, the Kennedy Center

and the Old Globe. She co-wrote the web series Titus Andronicus ([titusandronicus.com](http://titusandronicus.com).) More info at [madhurishekar.com](http://madhurishekar.com).

**Nivedita ShivRaj (composer)** is a Carnatic composer, performer and teacher, an instrumentalist and a vocalist. She is the founder and leader of the world music band "Charanams", that performs her compositions. She collaborates with musicians of different genres, has recorded with pop star Alicia Keyes, western classical musicians, rock bands and Gospel Choir. Her compositions for the production 60x60 have been presented in the USA, Europe and Canada. She is the founder & artistic director of RagaChitra Fine Arts.

**Anjna Swaminathan (dramaturg)** is a versatile violinist and theatre artist. As a young writer and dramaturg with interests in postcolonial thought, gender and queer theories, and the convergence of Hindu spiritual thought and Indian national identity, Anjna often engages in artistic work that ties together multiple aesthetic forms towards a critical consciousness. Anjna has played a major role in developing many new plays, theatre pieces, and dance performances, and has also workshopped her own solo poetry-music work, *WOVEN*. Anjna holds a BA in Theatre from the University of Maryland, College Park.

### **Performers**

**Bala Skandan (mridangam)** is a performer/teacher of both Carnatic Violin and Mridangam. As a mridangist, he belongs to the school of Sri Karaikudi R. Mani of Chennai. He has also trained in Kanjira under Prof. T.V Gopalakrishnan. Bala is based in Manhattan and performs widely in the US. He has accompanied established international musicians and dancers and has performed in prestigious venues in Chennai, Europe and North America throughout his musical career. He also has many large music and dance productions to his credit. He is the lead musician and composer for Akshara, an Indian classical music inspired band based in NY. In 2007/08 Bala has taught Indian rhythm at the Juilliard School of music and NYU. He is currently teaching vocal rhythm at Sarah Lawrence college.

**Kadhambari Sridhar (nattuvangam)** is an Indian classical dancer learning and performing Bharatanatyam with her Guru's dance company Malini Srinivasan and Dancers. In addition to her dance training, Kadhambari began learning nattuvangam from Malini in 2011 and continues to accompany her in performances in the US. Growing up in India, Kadhambari trained in Kuchipudi under Guru Shailaja Prasad in Hyderabad. She has also choreographed and presented performance art, monologues, and storytelling in and around New York City. Kadhambari works in the field of global public health. She will be performing her Bharatanatyam Arangetram in Feb. 2017.