



# News

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**Asia Society and Sanskriti Center present**

***MALAVIKA SARUKKAI***

**Ganga – Nitya Vaahini – The Eternal River**

**Performance - Saturday, March 12, 2011 • 8:00 pm**

**Discussion - Sunday, March 13, 2011 • 3:00 pm**

at Asia Society and Museum

725 Park Avenue (at 70th Street), NYC



Malavika Sarukkai. Photo Credit: Brian Slater, Birmingham Dance Festival

“...without any doubt the most expressive of contemporary Indian dancers”

Rene Sirvin, *Le Figaro*.

Inspired by her devotion to the Ganga River, Malavika Sarukkai, a master of the Bharata Natyam dance style, will present her solo choreography *Ganga – Nitya Vaahini – The Eternal River* that at once traverses physical terrain and metaphysical spaces. Accompanied by live music, Sarukkai’s performance on Saturday, March 12, at 8:00 p.m., will explore the Ganges as a mythic river and as a river of life coursing through the plains of India. The company includes Murali Parthasarathy (vocals), Srilatha (Nattuvangam), M.S. Sukhi (percussion), Sai Shravanam (table), Srilakshmi Venkataramani (violin), Saroja Kamakshi (artistic director) and K. Murugan (lights).

Sarukkai, who is considered one of the most important and innovative dance artists in India, will participate in a discussion on Sunday, March 13 at 3:00 p.m., exploring the future of Indian dance as an authentic voice of both traditional and contemporary expression of India today. She will be joined by Rachel Cooper, Director of Cultural Programs and Performing Arts at Asia Society and Swati Bhise, President of Sanskriti Center.

This program is copresented by the Sanskriti Center. Part of The Kennedy Center's *Maximum India* festival. Part of Asia Society's new interdisciplinary series, Rivers of Asia, which looks at Asia's rivers from multiple perspectives.

Ticket prices for the performance are \$20 for Asia Society members/students/seniors and \$25 for nonmembers and for the workshop/discussion \$15 members/students/seniors and \$20 for nonmembers. To purchase tickets and for more information, call (212) 517-ASIA or visit [www.AsiaSociety.org](http://www.AsiaSociety.org). Members of the press interested in the performance should contact Asia Society's public relations department at 212.327.9271 or [pr@asiasociety.org](mailto:pr@asiasociety.org).

### **Asia Society**

Founded in 1956 by John D. Rockefeller 3rd, Asia Society is a nonprofit nonpartisan educational institution. Through exhibitions and public programs, Asia Society provides a forum for the issues and viewpoints reflected in both traditional and contemporary Asian art, and in Asia today. Asia Society is located at 725 Park Avenue (at 70th Street), New York City. [www.AsiaSociety.org](http://www.AsiaSociety.org)

### **Sanskriti Center**

Sanskriti is an institute for Indian culture in New York City, dedicated to the children of the greater New York area. Sanskriti's instruction will instill in its students a deep appreciation of India's heritage. The institute strives to integrate the ethos of Indian dance, music, history, literature, art and philosophy into the lives of all students. A few will embrace one or more facets of their instruction as a professional career, but above all, individuals will have the knowledge and understanding to appreciate the depth of India's cultural legacy. [www.sanskriticenter.org](http://www.sanskriticenter.org)

### **About Malavika Sarukkai**

Intense and luminous are the qualities that distinguish Malavika Sarukkai's dancing. She is acclaimed globally for her creative dance choreographies, which transform traditional *Bharata Natyam* into a vibrant contemporary form taking dance beyond specific geographies. As a passionate, path breaking dancer from India, she has contributed a significant and large body of work to the dance world. Her collaborative productions have created dialogues with artists from other genres including poets, musicians, painters, sculptors and contemporary writers.

At the age of seven, motivated by her mother Saroja Kamakshi, Malavika Sarukkai began as a student, practicing and replicating the classical form as taught to her. Gradually she emerged as choreographer, inventing a deeply compelling style of her own which she later consolidated through a series of powerful and spiritually infused thematic performances. Her deep conviction and faith in the power of *Bharata Natyam* to speak through her dance in a contemporary mode, has enabled her to successfully take this classical style to diverse audiences across the world.

Malavika Sarukkai has participated in major dance festivals including, Festivals of India in USA, France, UK, Japan, Brazil; International Festivals and Cultural Events at Jacob's Pillow, UCLA, Asia Society and the Smithsonian Institution in USA; Theatre de la Ville, France; Edinburgh Main Festival among many others. She received the prestigious *Padmashree* and the *Sangeet Natak Academy Award* from the Government of India. She has been filmed by BBC/PBS for the 8-part series *Dancing*, and by ARTE, Cinematheque de la dance and featured in the films – 'Samarpanam' and 'Malavika Sarukkai – Dancing Life.' [www.malavikasarukkai.com](http://www.malavikasarukkai.com)