

L'Orient: Search for the Real Lakmé



L'Orient is a thrilling new dance opera from three award-winning female creatives: choreographer Preeti Vasudevan, composer Kamala Sankaram, and writer/librettist Catherine Filloux. Their provocative questioning of the classical arts - to subvert the rules and usher in a new era of inclusivity is the heartbeat of this dynamic new work.

Taking as its starting point Lakmé, the 1893 opera by Léo Delibes, the new work is set in the cut-throat world of reality television where the audience meets the finalists: a black ballerina, a transgender actress, an Indian TikTok star, and other familiar characters that make up the modern landscape.

L'Orient combines choreography based on the principles of classical dance—ballet and South Indian bharatanatyam—alongside contemporary and street moves. The choreography is brought to life through a radical sound world, bringing together elements of carnatic (South Indian classical) music, traditional grand opera (including themes from Délibes' score), and the compulsive rhythms of electronic dance music.

This genre-bending dance opera embraces new connections and cultural collisions questioning colonialism, patriarchy, and gender to create a dynamic insight into our current times.

Creative Team:

Artistic Director/Choreographer: Preeti Vasudevan

Composer: Kamala Sankaram

Writer/Librettist: Catherine Filloux

Set Designer: Audrey Vuong

Lighting & Multimedia Designer: Robert Wierzel

Assistant to Director: Ramona Kelley

Click [here](#) to read more about the creative team



Lincoln Center on THE GREEN, 2021.

Photo Credit: Sachyn Mital

Kamala Sankaram, Composer



Praised as “one of the most exciting opera composers in the country” (Washington Post), composer Kamala Sankaram moves freely between the worlds of experimental music and contemporary opera. Recent commissions include works for The Glimmerglass Festival, Washington National Opera, the PROTOTYPE Festival, and Creative Time, among others.

Kamala is known for her operas fusing Indian classical music with the operatic form, including Thumbprint, A Rose, Monkey and Francine in the City of Tigers, and the forthcoming Jungle Book.

Kamala is the leader of Bombay Rickey, an operatic Bollywood surf ensemble whose accolades include two awards for Best Eclectic Album from the Independent Music Awards, the 2018 Mid-Atlantic touring grant, and appearances on WFMU and NPR. Awards, grants and residencies: Jonathan Larson Award, NEA ArtWorks, MAP Fund, Opera America, HERE Artist Residency Program, the MacDowell Colony, and the Watermill Center.

Dr. Sankaram holds a PhD from the New School and is currently a member of the composition faculties at the Mannes College of Music and SUNY Purchase. [More on Kamala.](#)



Composition Samples:

Dropbox Recordings

Spotify Recordings

Vimeo Recording

Treatment

L'Orient challenges the world of classical forms from both the west and east. Seeking to create a new language of music, movement, and text, *L'Orient* brings the classical arts into a more inclusive and representative sphere of today's society.

Setting

L'Orient is an immersive show developed for an intimate audience to allow for the interactive elements to take flight. The audience enters through a digital installation lobby experience and moves into a non-proscenium, dynamic/flexible black box space to immediately become part of the action.

Duration: 60 minutes (no intermission)

Number of live performers: 11 (5 soloists/6 ensemble)

Number of filmed/digital performers: 4 (TBC)



Libretto Draft



Choreography Examples



Set Design Examples

For more information please visit: <https://www.threshdance.org/l-orient>

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