

Shaily Dadiala Artist Statement

Immigration moves me. The idea of No woman's land seems so native.

I lived in the Indian state of Gujarat, raised Hindu and Sikh before making the United States my permanent home in 2000. I have danced since I can recall, my *Bharatanatyam* training and performance running a contiguous thread in the changing landscape of life. My connection to the dance and music of my motherland strengthened as other beliefs weakened. Over the years, my work has been greatly driven by ethnomusicology and diasporic trends.

My observations about the subcultures resulting from immigration and transformed traditions as well as how personal and communal behaviors respond to adopted territories find a perfect partnership in the complexity of Indian classical dance *Bharatanatyam*. My motivation to choreograph is informed by staying authentic to the techniques of a dance style that has thrived unbroken for thousands of years while experimenting with contemporary, global themes.

Bharatanatyam to me is the Perfect Language. The aspects of pure rhythmic dance-*Nritta*- and expressive emoting-*Nrithya*-seem like a vast thesaurus from which limitless stories begs to be danced. The precise geometry of rhythmic movements become sheer childlike delight in execution while the thematic acting forces me to suddenly grow up and probe my deepest feelings and sentiments.

I like to push the sensory envelope. What would this move taste like? If this piece were a *sari*, would it be a combination of Red and Fuchsia with a gold border? The content of my work is not tethered to the traditional interpretation of South Asian literature. Instead, I love to examine how a character would behave in a different time-space context. The tone of my work is a reflection on a different scale of the larger matrix that is *Bharatanatyam*: A technique so rich and powerful that 'fluid structure' is a normative term rather than a contradiction.