

MAGIC AT MILLER WITH NAACH HOUSTON'S GOT BOLLYWOOD 2024

Naach Houston performs to packed audiences at Miller Outdoor Theater



There was magic in the air on Saturday April 13th at the Miller Outdoor Theatre, the dancers from Naach Houston, a Community based Bollywood dance Theatre Company, bustling with excitement backstage, getting ready for an enchanting evening under the stars, on a perfect day in the spring of 2024.

This show was funded in part by the city of Houston through the Miller Theatre Advisory Board, produced by Moksh Community arts, its 7th production at the miller outdoor theatre titled, Once upon a time to happily ever after and everything else in between, inspired by fairy tales, using the missing shoe in Cinderella as a starting point in the story - Conceived, Choreographed and Directed by Bollywood maestro Mahesh Mahubani, a magical evening of multimedia Bollywood dance theatre with 30 mesmerizing dancers, seamlessly moving through dreamy transitions, living their story, with a canvas of textured lighting and visuals designed and created by Mahesh, transporting the viewer to a world of love and magic, in a timeless experience, etching its beauty in their eternal consciousness.

A full audience excited in their seats, and families parked themselves on the hill with their snacks and blankets, to witness

a spectacular performance. The show opened with a welcome speech, by Disha Thadani, the board member at Moksh community arts welcoming the excited audience to introduce the show.

The night opened to a spectacular performance with mind-blowing visuals and lighting, performed by the adult team of Naach Houston, followed by the teens, and pre teens, a prayer to lord Shiva, the androgynous god, consecrating the space before unfolding the story of the two lovers in this fairy tale.

This year's show format used English subtitles, with a brief narrative on the screen, to serve as a theatrical device instead of using a voice over, to allow the scenic movement & visual to leave the audiences open to their imagination, through the experience.

The opening act, The gateway to love, post the overture introduced all the characters in the story, beginning with the hearthrob, the stage was on fire with the electricity of the dancers, danced by the lead character Hirsh Chavan & celebrated by the beautiful maidens that were out to woo him, the pretty girl, our lead female character Aditi Mootheahath, drops her scarf in the rain dance, only to be found by her hearthrob who sings and dances looking for the girl who

dropped it, leading to the next scene a rock n roll dance at the carnival of love where the two lovers encounter each other

The story progressed to act two titled "In the garden of earthly delights, Rangasari, the colour of love performed by the adults, leading to fun filled flirtations on the dance floor. Concluding the flirtation, the girl unsure about her decisions leaves her lover stranded by her indecision, followed by the comical with childlike curiosity, dance of questions. The Lovers decide to meet in secret to celebrate their decision to move forward, only to be interrupted by the angry mother of the girl, played by Nithya Venkatesan in a stellar performance, separating the lovers in the story, leading to the dance of separation by heart-broken lover, played by Hirsh in a powerful performance.

This Crisis led to the third act depicting the desires and disappointments, expressing love, loss and surrender. This act was sensitive, beautiful and visually mesmerizing, communicating the feelings and emotions associated with the inner journey, in the landscape of Love. The lover is consoled and distracted to visit the courtesans palace to distract him for a while, the lover is so spurned that he decides to leave, this act led to a beautifully performed and cho-

reographed dance, inspired by a classical dance form Kathak. Kahe Ched Mohe which means why you tease me, the celestial dance of love between lovers, leading to the dance of sadness danced in all white except the lead girl in black and the boy in black and white, depicting through the dance, costume and visual all integrated beautifully to visually see the dual path of black and white, the separation of darkness and light.

The next dance was the turning point where there is always light at the end of every tunnel performed mystically by Mahesh Mahubani the dance of surrendering to the light, journeying to the dance of meeting yourself in love, performed by the adult team with effortless joy, "when love begins within then love manifests itself with the other".

The lovers take the courage to stand up for their love in a prayerful celebration to appease the angry mom, the dance of true love's victory, their prayers are answered and the mother is won by their love.

The last act was a sheer celebration of love, the collective dance of the beautiful souls.

Truly an enchanted evening under the stars, the performance was a beautiful dream, that finished too soon, as one of the

audience member asked, the videographer, Chris Rangel who was in the audience,

"if there was more dances coming, I don't want it to end," it was the best compliment to all the performers at Naach Houston, Moksh and Mahesh Mahubani.

As Mahesh says it "All beautiful experiences are magical endings to spark new beginnings in the evolution of beautiful life."

The magical moments in the show were captured by ace photography team Navin Mediwala and Thiru T.A. The show was sponsored by the Asrani group, Naach Houston, AIG and CoreBridge Financial. The Press sponsor for the event was India Herald.

Please visit www.naachhouston.com to see videos and photographs of the show and the work they do

Their summer camps starts on 27th may, join to experience the magic of Naach.

Visit the nonprofit www.mokshcommunityarts.com to check out their work to nurture local talent and creatively collaborate with diverse cultures.

Credits
Collage created by Anita Vyas
Photography: Navin Mediwala and Thiru. T.A.