

New Play Reimagines Cleopatra: Woman With No Wings Sept 27-29 in Seattle

Uncover the fierce yet vulnerable Cleopatra in this powerful dance drama exploring mental health and inner strength. Written and directed by Smitha Krishnan.



SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, USA, August 28, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Step beyond the crown and into the

shadows of Queen Cleopatra's mind. This September, Mohini Dance School transports audiences to the ancient world of Egypt with "Woman With No Wings," a bold new production that reimagines the story of Queen Cleopatra.

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Running from September 27-29, 2024 at Cornish Playhouse, this compelling play, written and directed by Smitha Krishnan ("Nirvana", "Ghanashyam"), explores the inner struggles of one of history's most iconic figures, offering a deeply human portrait of Cleopatra. Featuring over 50 Seattle-area cast members and dancers, the play not only explores Cleopatra's political prowess but also brings to the forefront her profound psychological challenges, highlighting the relevance of mental health in

her journey. Tickets are available at mohinidanceschool.org.

“Mental health touches everyone's lives because we or someone we know lives with a mental health disorder,” says writer/director Smitha Krishnan. “Yet, mental health issues are the least talked about conditions, especially in the South Asian community. My lived experience was my inspiration to write the script.”

The story is brought to life through a stunning fusion of English drama, along with Indian Classical and Contemporary Dance. The production's choreography, set against a backdrop of originally composed music in five languages, invites audiences to journey beyond the traditional image of Cleopatra and into the intricate layers of her humanity. She emerges as a woman fighting inner demons while wielding political power.

“This is not just Cleopatra as you’ve seen her before,” Krishnan elaborates. “But a portrayal of a woman whose struggles echo those of so many today. Mental health is highlighted in this play because it’s a story that belongs to all of us, yet it’s one we seldom tell—and need to spotlight.”

"Woman With No Wings" uses dance as a medium to visualize the concept of the "Shadow," one of the archetypes in Jungian Philosophy, and the parts of ourselves that can bring out the best or the worst in us, if left unacknowledged. The dancers or Shadows represent Cleopatra's inner demons as she confronts her darkest moments, including self-accusations and overwhelming guilt. This internal struggle culminates in her reclamation of the Shadows, a crucial step toward self-realization, acceptance, and healing.

“Cleopatra’s struggle echoes the universal experience of grappling with mental health, a theme that remains deeply relevant today. By recognizing and embracing her Shadows, she is able to take the first step towards true healing and transformation. I hope her journey and mine can be an inspiration for others,” adds Krishnan.

Post Performance Discussion, Sunday, September 29

More than just a performance, "Woman With No Wings" serves as a platform for important discussions. Mohini Dance School will host a post-show discussion immediately following the 2 p.m. performance on Sunday, September 29, in partnership with Crisis Connections and IACS – Indian American Community Services. This talk-back will explore the play’s examination of mental health and its relevance in today’s society through the themes of the play, providing a platform for meaningful dialogue.

Bringing Cleopatra's Journey to Life

"Woman With No Wings" features original music that mirrors Cleopatra's journey. Pacific Northwest singer and composer Gokul Kolady created original music for the production that is both powerful and reflective. “My primary goal with the feature composition [Today You Lose](#) was to reflect Cleopatra’s triumph over her mental turmoil,” Kolady says. “The heart of the song is a chord progression on the piano that carries the bittersweet essence of Cleopatra’s internal growth. The song ends with a modulation to a higher key, culminating in an uplifting shift in energy that represents Cleopatra acknowledging and overcoming her inner demons. As a young artist, I believe it is important to explore these themes through art as they are often overlooked in daily life.” The show’s original music, including Today You Lose, is available to stream on Spotify, Apple Music and YouTube.

Truc Dever, dancer, singer and “Voice of Cleopatra” says, “‘Woman With No Wings’ portrays Cleopatra’s struggle with the demons in her mind, a challenge that one in three Americans can relate to. I was drawn to this story and the friendship between Cleopatra and Charmaine because it is a reminder to all of us that those with mental health issues need support from family, friends, and those around them to help overcome these struggles, and not suffer in silence.”

About Smitha Krishnan:

Smitha Krishnan is the Founder and Artistic Director of Mohini Dance School, the first in the Northwest United States to offer a dedicated curriculum for Mohiniyattam, the classical dance form of Kerala, India. Trained under the legendary Guru Kala Vijayan, Smitha has a deep-rooted connection to this traditional art form. Smitha's innovative works, including Nirvana - Revisioning the Mythical Medusa, have been celebrated for their fresh perspectives and cultural fusion. Her latest production, "Woman With No Wings" promises to captivate audiences with its powerful narrative and artistic depth.

FOR EDITORS/PRODUCERS:

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE:☐

Friday, September 27: 7 p.m.☐

Saturday, September 28: 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.☐

Sunday, September 29: 2 p.m. (post-show discussion focusing on the themes of the play and mental health will immediately follow the performance).

LOCATION:☐ Cornish Playhouse, 201 Mercer Street, Seattle, WA 98109

TICKETS:☐ Single tickets start at \$45. ON SALE NOW.

To purchase tickets: <https://www.mohinidanceschool.org/woman-with-no-wings>. Prices are subject to change.

PHOTOS:☐ High-resolution photos >> "Woman With No Wings" Press Room

Thank you: Crisis Connections, IACS - Indian American Community Services and Ambili Sukesan - Global Realtor

ABOUT MOHINI DANCE SCHOOL

☐ Since its founding in 2016, Mohini Dance School has evolved from a center dedicated to the Mohiniyattam dance form into a groundbreaking theater production company. Renowned for its original Indian Classical Dance Ballets, the school's productions, including Ghanashyam and Nirvana, have earned acclaim at prestigious events such as the Soorya Festival in India and the Northwest Folklife Festival in Seattle. With "Woman With No Wings," Mohini Dance School continues to push artistic boundaries, blending drama and dance to spark vital conversations on social issues. For more information, visit www.mohinidanceschool.org.

Gail Benzler

BSG Public Relations and Marketing

gailb@gailbenzler.com

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