

WALKER ART CENTER PRESENTS



Where the Hands Go, the Eyes Follow

WALKER GALLERY A/B FRIDAY – SUNDAY, MAY 15 – 17, 1998

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RANEE RAMASWAMY'S
WHERE THE HANDS GO, THE EYES FOLLOW

FRIDAY – SUNDAY, MAY 15 – 17, 1998

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY 8 PM, SUNDAY 1 AND 7 PM IN GALLERY A/B

Choreography: Ranee Ramaswamy
Music: Howard Levy
Photography: Marc Norberg
Poetry: Indicated below

(Poetry to be read by the poets except where indicated. Please note, Robert Bly will be reading live on Sunday at 7 pm only.)

PROGRAM A (FRIDAY AND SATURDAY)

Robert Bly (audio tape):

"The Clouds"
"It's True I Went to the Market"
"Don't Go, Don't Go"

Jim Moore:

"These Prayers Our Bodies Make"
"Your Dark One"

Janet Holmes:

"Wordless"
"Aromatic Interlude. In Blindfold"

Jane Hirshfield (read by Patricia Kirkpatrick):

"Nor is the Hand its Meadow"

PROGRAM B (SUNDAY)

Robert Bly (1 pm audio tape):

"The Clouds"
"It's True I Went to the Market"
"Don't Go, Don't Go"

Robert Bly (7 pm live):

"Listening to the Köln Concert"
"Why Mira Can't Go Back to Her Old House"

Mary Easter:

"This Moment"
"Coming Round"

Coleman Barks:

"Half a Peanut Hull"
"Music Lesson"

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Ranee Ramaswamy, a native of India, has been teaching and performing Bharatanatyam in the Twin Cities since 1978. She has studied for several years under Alarmel Valli, a leading exponent of the Pandanallur style, which requires grace and subtlety of expression. Ranee has received numerous fellowships in recognition of her dancing, choreography, and tireless work for Bharatanatyam in the Minnesota area, including ten McKnight Fellowships administered by the Minnesota Dance Alliance, a two year National Endowment for the Arts Choreographer's Fellowship in 1994, and a 1996 Bush Fellowship for choreography. In 1997 she received a McKnight Interdisciplinary Fellowship, a 1997 Minnesota State Arts Board Cultural Collaboration grant, and a 1997 McKnight Choreographers Fellowship administered by the Minnesota Dance Alliance. In 1998 Ranee received a Leadership Initiative Neighborhood grant from The St. Paul Companies.

Marc Norberg was born and raised in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, where he began to make photographs at the age of twelve. He currently resides in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and specializes in portraiture for editorial, corporate, and advertising clients. Marc has shared numerous awards for his photographic work and has shown nationally.

Howard Levy's musical adventures include journeys into many realms - jazz, pop, rock, world music, Latin, classical, folk, blues, country, theater, T.V., film, and commercials. Along the way, he has appeared on more than a hundred albums, been nominated for several Grammys, won a Joseph Jefferson Award for Best Original Music for a Play, and performed six times on The Tonight Show. From 1989 to 1992, Howard was a member of the trailblazing contemporary jazz group Bela Fleck and the Flecktones. In 1993 and 1994 he toured and recorded two albums with Kenny Loggins, and with Eugene Friesen and Glen Velez, formed Trio Globo. The Trio has two CD's on the Silver Wave label. Before and during those years, Howard also performed and recorded with Dolly Parton, Styx, John Prine, Paquito DÍRivera, Claudio Roditi, Ken Nordine, Bonnie Koloc, and many others. As a music educator, Howard has taught hundreds of students privately, and has been a guest lecturer at Dartmouth College, Northwestern University, Francis Parker School, led jazz clinics at colleges and high schools, and has presented over a hundred performances of *Music from around the World*, a program of international music for children and adults.

Nirmala Rajashekar (Musician, singing with Robert Bly) is an exceptionally talented musician and a Twin Cities resident since 1995. She has been performing for the last 17 years as a veena player (the veena is a seven stringed instrument of South India), vocalist, and composer. She has been awarded the prestigious Grade A certification from the All India Radio, India's premiere broadcasting medium. She has appeared on several television and radio programs in India, Europe, and the USA. As a concert soloist, she has performed in England and Switzerland for various organizations having won critical acclaim in her home country India. In Minneapolis, her concert and lecture demonstration hosted by the Indian Music Society was very well received. Audio Lit, California has featured her on their *Poems of Mirabai* album released in 1997 with the poet Robert Bly. As a composer, Nirmala's most recent work has been the original music score for the play *Inner World* of Pangea World Theater and the *Thillana* (a fast rhythmic classical composition) for Ragamala's production of *Chaturam* at the O'Shaughnessy Dance Series.

Mary Moore Easter, as a poet/writer, her work has appeared in many journals and anthologies such as The Hungry Mind Review (where she is a contributing editor), and Sing Heavenly Muse! her chapbook, Walking From Origins, was published by Heywood Press as a part of the Northfield Women Poets Series. Currently, she is professor of dance at Carleton College where she also directed the program in African/African American Studies for six years. Honored as a choreographer with fellowships from the Bush

Foundation, Intermedia Arts, the McKnight Foundation and the Minnesota Dance Alliance among others, Easter has presented her performance work, for which she writes the texts, in Minnesota and nationally for over 20 years. Recent work includes this season's *And the Walls Come Tumblin' Down* with Judith Brin Ingber; *Running in the Family*, a piece she and her daughter, Allison Easter, created and performed on a commission from the Walker Art Center; and a season as an actor in the Guthrie Theater Lab's production of Femi Osofisan's *Many Colors Make the Thunder King*. A veteran of many live readings, her broadcast work includes "story" commentaries and the radio show, "To the Ancestor Spirits" on WCAL Public Radio, and the creation of the video pieces *Some People* and *Mab* (KTCA Public Television).

Janet Holmes - *The Green Tuxedo*, Janet Holme's second book of poems, won the Ernest Sandeen Prize in Poetry from the University of Notre Dame Press and was published in 1998. She is author of *The Physicist at the Mall* (Anhinga Press, 1994) and the chapbook *Paperback Romance* (State Street Press, 1984). A recent recipient of fellowships from the Bush Foundation and the McKnight Foundation and two Minnesota State Arts Board grants, she has also been awarded a career initiative grant from the Jerome Foundation in association with The Loft. Her work has twice been collected in the *Best American Poetry* volumes, and in 1997 W.S. Merwin selected her work for the Pablo Neruda Prize in Poetry. She lives and teaches in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Jim Moore prefers to write in cafes, trains, and buses - enclosed places where he feels closest to life. Fortunately for Moore, traveling is something he does often. A common theme in his most recent publication, *The Long Experience of Love*, traveling is important to Moore. By displacing himself, the constraints that dominate his everyday life loosen, and he is inspired by the freedom it provides him. Moore was born in Decatur, Illinois, in 1943 to a family of writers. His grandmother was a novelist who wrote a 1952 bestseller. Moore's father was for a time a reporter, and his grandfather wrote campaign speeches for Adlai Stevenson. It was during his junior year at the University of Minnesota, where he earned his B.A. in 1966, that Moore first began to think of himself as a poet, and after graduation and a summer spent living and writing in a VW bus in the Colorado Rockies, Moore earned his M.F.A. in poetry from the Iowa Writers Workshop. He returned to Minneapolis in 1970 and cofounded the Loft, a community arts organization for literature. Moore has since taught literature and writing at the Loft, the University of Minnesota, and other local colleges and universities. He has co-edited one anthology, *Minnesota Writes: Poetry* (Milkweed 1987), and published five books of poetry, including the *Freedom of History* (Milkweed 1988). In recognition of his talent, Moore has received a Jerome Travel Fellowship, two Bush Foundation Creative Fellowships, three Minnesota State Arts Board Grants, and a McKnight Fellowship, among others. Currently, Moore lives in St. Paul, Minnesota with his wife, photographer JoAnn Verburg. They travel frequently, with a special affection for Italy, where the enclosed places Moore so enjoys are plentiful.

Coleman Barks is a poet, translator of Rumi, and Emeritus Professor of English, University of Georgia. Since 1977 Coleman Barks has been collaborating with various Persian scholars (John Moyne most often) to bring over into English the poetry of the thirteenth century mystic, Rumi. That work has resulted in fourteen volumes, including the best-selling *Essential Rumi* (Harper, San Francisco), and most recently, *The Illuminated Rumi* (Broadway Books). He was featured on an hour-long segment of Bill Moyers' PBS special, *The Language of Life*. His Rumi translations have been included in the prestigious *Norton Anthology of World Masterpieces*. He often collaborates in performances with musicians - the Paul Winter Consort, Hamza El-Din, David Darling, Olatunji, and others - as well as with the dancer-storyteller, Zuleikha. Before retiring this year, he taught contemporary American poetry and creative writing at various universities for thirty-four years.

Robert Bly was born in western Minnesota in 1926 to parents of Norwegian stock. He enlisted in the Navy in 1944 and spent two years there. After one year at St. Olaf College in Minnesota, he transferred to Harvard, where he graduated in 1950, and spent the next few years in New York. Beginning in 1954, he took two years at the University of Iowa at the Writers Workshop. In 1956 he received a Fulbright grant to travel to Norway and translate Norwegian poetry into English. During the 1970s he published eleven books of poetry, essays, and translations. During the 1980s he published Loving a Woman in Two Worlds, The Winged Life, Selected Poems and Prose of Thoreau, The Man in the Black Coat Turns, and A Little Book on the Human Shadow. His work Iron John: A Book About Men is an international bestseller which has been translated into many languages. In the early 1990s, with James Hillman and Michael Meade, he edited The Rag and Bone Shop of the Heart. Since then he has edited The Darkness Around Us Is Deep: Selected Poems of William Stafford, and The Soul is Here for Its Own Joy. Recent books of poetry include What Have I Ever Lost by Dying? Collected Prose Poems and Meditations on the Insatiable Soul, both published by Harper Collins. His second large prose book, The Sibling Society, is published by Addison-Wesley in hardcover and Vintage in paperback. His new book of poems, Morning Poems (Harper Collins), is named for William Stafford's practice of writing a poem each morning, which he has continued since Stafford's death in 1993.

Jane Hirshfield is the author of two new books, The Lives of the Heart (poems) and Nine Gates: Entering the Mind of Poetry (essays), both from Harper Collins. Her last book, The October Palace (Harper Collins, 1994), and the Bay Area Book Reviewers Award; the New York Times Book Review called it "a radiant and passionate collection." Her other books include Of Gravity & Angels (Wesleyan University Press, 1988) and Alaya (Quarterly Review of Literature Series, 1982). She has also edited and co-translated Women in Praise of the Sacred: 43 Centuries of Spiritual Poetry by Women (Harper Collins, 1994) and The Ink Dark Moon: Love Poems by Komachi & Shikibu. Women of the Ancient Court of Japan (Vintage Classics, 1990). Her honors include a Guggenheim Fellowship, Columbia University's Translation Center Award, a Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Fellowship, two Commonwealth Club Poetry Medals, and a Pushcard Prize; her work has appeared in the *New Yorker*, the *Atlantic*, the *Nation*, the *American Poetry Review*, the *Paris Review*, the *New Republic*, and numerous anthologies. She has been Visiting Associate Professor in Creative Writing at U.C. Berkeley and a Lecturer in the University of San Francisco's Masters in Writing Program; in 1999 she will begin teaching in the Bennington Writing Seminars M.F.A program.

Patricia Kirkpatrick is a poet and the author of the picture book Plowie: A Story from the Prairie. She has received poetry fellowships from the NEA, the Bush Foundation, and the Minnesota State Arts Board. She teaches at Hamline University and recently served as scholar for the Saint Paul Public Library Series "Poetry and the Sacred."

Mary Hansmeyer (Costume Designer) has designed for Chuck Davis, Ballet Memphis, Shapiro & Smith, James Sewell Ballet, Mixed Blood Theater, Joe Chvala and the Flying Foot Forum, Paula Mann Dance, Park Square Theater, Ragamala Music and Dance Theater, and the Zenon Dance Company. While working with the University of Minnesota Repertory Dance Company, she designed costumes for works by Bebe Miller, Neil Greenberg, Merce Cunningham, Mark Morris, Billy Siegenfeld, and Dan Wagoner.

THE POEMS WHICH INSPIRED THE PHOTOGRAPHS

"The Clouds"

When I saw the dark clouds, I wept, Oh Dark One, I wept at the dark clouds.
Black clouds soared up, and took some yellow along; rain did fall, some rain
fell long.

There was water east of the house, west of the house; fields all green.

The one I love lives past those fields; rain has fallen on my body, on my hair,
as I wait in the open door for him.

The Energy that holds up mountains is the energy Mirabai bows down to.
He lives century after century, and the test I set for him he has passed.

"It's True I Went To The Market"

My friend, I went to the market and bought the Dark One.

You claim by night, I claim by day.

Actually I was beating a drum all the time I was buying him.

You say I gave too much; I say too little

Actually I put him on a scale before I bought him.

What I paid was my social body, my town body, my family body, and all my
inherited jewels.

Mirabai says: The Dark One is my husband now.

Be with me when I lie down; you promised me this in an earlier life.

"Don't Go, Don't Go"

Don't go, don't go. I touch your soles. I'm sold to you.

No one knows where to find the bhakti path, show me where to go.

I would like my own body to turn into a heap of incense and sandalwood
and you set a torch to it.

When I've fallen down to gray ashes, smear me on your shoulders and chest.

Mira says: You who lift the mountains, I have some light, I want to mingle
it with yours.

— Robert Bly

THE POEMS INSPIRED BY THE PHOTOGRAPHS

"Why Mira Can't Go Back to Her Old House"

The colors of the Dark One have penetrated Mira's body; all the
other colors washed out.

Making love with the Dark One and eating little, those are my pearls
and my carnelians.

Meditation beads and the forehead streak, those are my scarves and my rings.

That's enough feminine wiles for me. My teacher taught me this.

Approve me or disapprove me: I praise the Mountain Energy night and day.

I take the path that ecstatic human beings have taken for centuries.

I don't steal money, I don't hit anyone. What will you charge me with?

I have felt the swaying of the elephant's shoulders; and now you want me
to climb on a jackass? Try to be serious.

— Robert Bly

"Listening to the Köln Concert"

After we had loved each other intently,
we heard notes tumbling together,
in late winter, and we heard ice
falling from the ends of twigs.

The notes abandon so much as they move.
They are the food not eaten, the comfort
not taken, the lies not spoken.
The music is my attention to you.

And when the music came again,
later in the day, I saw tears in your eyes.
I saw you turn your face away
so that the others would not see.

When men and women come together,
how much they have to abandon! Wrens
make their nests of fancy threads
and string ends, animals

abandon all their money each year.
What is that men and women leave?
Harder than wrens' doing, they have
to abandon their longing for the perfect.

The inner nest not made by instinct
will never be quite round,
and each has to enter the nest
made by the other imperfect bird.

— Robert Bly

"These Prayers Our Bodies Make"

When hands come together, palms up,
it is the shape a prayer makes
when it is open, asking for nothing,
hoping only to hold the things
of this world. This is the prayer
of those who live and then must own
a death that flows like a river
without end, like the lines in this palm: life
lines they're called, these rivers cut
into our very flesh, these prayers our bodies make
of themselves. It works like this: what we touch
in the world must sometimes hurt us. But in this way,
cut by cut, rivers are shaped within us.
How else would we ever find the sea?
To pray is to hold still and ask
for nothing but what already is:
naked palms held open
for all the world to see these lines

that cross our flesh, signatures
impossible to read, scribbled mysteries
impossible not to touch.

— Jim Moore

“Your Dark One”

Who is the one inside you
that longs to turn away from light
and like a moon half full
needs the darkness
to swallow it?

You lift your hand
to your eye, let your wrist
become a bridge.
On one side is the far shore
of your shyness, how you love
to turn away. On the other side
is the naked light that longing knows
to make of sadness. It is here,
inside this sadness,
that your happiness must dance
if you want your dark one
to go on shining within you.

— Jim Moore

“Nor is the Hand its Meadows”

A hand is not four fingers and a thumb

Nor is it palm and knuckles,
not ligaments or the fat's yellow pillow,
not tendons, star of the wristbone, meander of veins.

A hand is not the thick thatch of its lines
with their infinite dramas,
nor what it has written,
not on the page,
not on the ecstatic body.

Nor is the hand its meadows of holding, of shaping
not sponge of rising yeast-bread,
not basket reeds,
not clay.

The maple's green hands do not cup
the proliferant rain.
What empties itself falls into the heart that is open.

A hand turned upwards holds only a single, transparent question.

Prayer forms itself first of the fingers;
then see how the radiant thought spills out as if winged.

— Jane Hirshfield

"Wordless"

My wordlessness is small
and female, not grand enough to be
a Silence, which belongs to whole peoples

(which is respectable)
not just to me, a child or, rather, memory
of a child (it happened when I was a child

and did not have words
for it, was first wordless then), so,
grown. I contain that small first wordlessness

which is no less fresh,
and you tell me how common
it is, this event which took my speech.

so common as not
to be Unspeakable, not *that* bad,
just unworthy of remark, Unremarkable,

quotidian, so common
that this wordlessness is not even Omission -
and you don't want to hear about it, it's so boring;

you're sorry it happened
but please, won't I shut up about it,
think how much worse things are in other places,

in wartime, in chaos,
you suggest I move on, get over with,
like a parent saying *I'll give you something*

to cry about; you think
that's *worth crying about?* and then relent, say
(to the child) OK, now it's OK to mention what happened,

nobody will blame you
or even care, you're just one
of millions, of most women, thousands every day,

and you may talk about it
here, or here ___ like this, or this ___
there's a kind of group you can join ___

but my wordlessness
belongs to the child: is small
and female, doesn't budge, won't be fooled

— Janet Homes

"Aromatic Interlude. In Blindfold"

A flower. But not in my nasal vocabulary -
(not gardenia, not rose, not orange blossom)

can't name its odor from memory-
(not violet)

smells - like the kind of flower it is:

Lily? Geranium? Daisy? Tulip?

Help,

Doesn't smell *like* anything else, of course:

we don't have the words, aren't
so wired, the brain shuttles aroma straight

to the limbic system.

which is why Marcel
takes seven thick books to explain the immediate

whammo of recall that single Madeleine packed
- and don't tell me that was *taste*: there's only

four distinct tastes, smarty-pants: sweet
and sour, bitter, and salt.

That's why

the winetasters train themselves on bouquets
with elaborate setups, dozens of cups

each with its signature scent, and they move
from one to another

(fresh-mown grass, mint,

eucalyptus, grapefruit, pineapple, oak)

memorizing

for instant recollection. If it were sight
it would be photographic memory they're after.
Each in its turn they lift to their sensitive noses

(currant, strawberry, molasses, bell pepper, cloves)
and later, when they make tasting notes

on some new bottle, those are the words
that come to them

vanilla, butterscotch,

hay) —

I don't know this flower. Know
when I sniff. I remember a hike we took

to a meadow. Smells like.

Not clover,
not honeysuckle.

"I love the smell
of napalm in the morning!" the soldier said
in the movie. "That smell. that gasoline smell.

Smells like....victory" And you knew by that
he was mad, the way he talked

about smell, about what made it, about
what it was like.

I don't know this flower
by its perfume. I'd have to peek. Can't
say "Smells like love" or "seduction"

or "trouble" or all three.
Nothing's like it. Madness to talk about it.

Crazy to put it into words.

— Janet Holmes

"This Moment"

We all know this moment
when we pray a desperate prayer
beseech a spirit with hands clenched.
We, too, wring our hearts
between hands tight as a knot.
What music could release us
what voice, which words
send tremors along the line of faults we enumerate
on each wrinkled finger?

Drum for us we ask
pound new accents in our attention,
complex rhythms we've forgotten
how to find on our own.
Syncopate our desires with surprise.
Loosen this hold
on a single shred of life,
allow an opening.
The world demands reentry.

— Mary Moore Easter

"Coming Round"

We insist on more than the throat's sinew,
the resolute turn of chin
We bargain, wheedle, beg
and finally moan for what we desire:
give all, hold back nothing.
We claim we deserve it. To no avail.
Like leaves falling and stars in their orbit,
like birth, death and woman's will
she comes round in her own time, not ours.

Twisting away, she offers her back in halo
arches as if to run from full disclosure,
surrenders her face to darkness.
But revelation's what we always want
from those who won't give it.
This spine should be enough she says,
the hint of woman's belly withheld in profile
the fullness of buttock, enough.
Watch the snaking hands if you doubt.

— Mary Moore Easter

"Half a Peanut Hull"

Its many family strew the floorboard of my
backseat from a session of tossing I indulged

driving to the mountains one late afternoon
lastweek. Dints in the hull remember the Middle

Ages: armor, fatigue, primitively smelted metal,
and further back, a baby Canaanite king's coffin,

and forward, sideways crooked canvas boat, in-
tentionally bent, wrung, wronged like this to carry

8th century Irish monks through the surf of the new
world they would call Wine, land of the vine. Now

the streaks are columns of ogham, now the meanings
an Indian dancer opens and offers, those fingers

that never tire.

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I give this spent
icon to the man who pushes a big grey plastic barrel

on wheels when he comes this way. He smiles for
this paltriest contribution and recalls how the

lighter-than-air emptiness did once hold beauty, a
sleek nub, the polished fob of phenomena, thumbshape

of Etruscan desire, a moist and usable tan cock, its
bashful nut. But there is no sign of where that

reality was ever attached, no navel for the miraculous
missing pea I ate. Is this how body flows from spirit

and spirit from body, with no valve? The tendrils
flower and lose flowers, then bend to the ground to

perfect their appeal. The dull hulls fill, beside
themselves in the earth, until like poetry bells
they lift, dripping, dirt personified and shaken,
freed for a country dance in the spicy town,

so hull around pea and nut within hull perform
the silken African mystery of taste.

— Coleman Barks

“Music Lesson”

Granddaddy, look what I found behind the sofa. What.
My conscience. She lifts up her jaunty conscience,
a set of bowlegged yellow plastic legs, half a cowboy.

Stands then her conscience on the piano like some new
Kind of metronome. My old Uncle Willie loves dear old
Aunt Tillie. He also likes basses and double bassoons.

And dear old Aunt Tillie adores Uncle Willie.
She also likes bells and balloons. If there's a top half, or not,
to your conscience in the area behind the furniture, call

her lost Sponta Neity. Three crows, three cows, four robots
made from kitchen pots. They're both fond of fiddles and
puzzles and riddles, but they never cared much for games

or for rhyme. Friendship like this is what the wind brings
when you write outdoors, leaf-pages turning, learning. Right
hand, left hand, prancing on the jinglesnow, pulling the roan

October creed, orange-red, greenish-grey, brown-black with
rain-streaks. Music is an animal's wet living fur slipping
about in the crowcalling fall. I know people are

treacherous and cruel and cold liars to the end. I have
done that, am not so kind and reliable as I may seem

in these granddaughter poems, though I aspire to be.

Confession's not the point. Reverse and stand his yellow legs on their belt. Conscience now is diving into the piano trying to be whole, to find his lost Sponta yin sweetheart

mermusic. She plays the swimming like she's raking in a jackpot with both hands. Some people sing the blues. We sing the glad pinkies on ivory. So tell me why Willie and

Tillie are silly. Why do they like pennies not dimes? I give you ten clues, five do's, five don't's, two will's, two won't's, and turn the page for the new next thing to sing.

— Coleman Barks

PRODUCTION NOTES FROM RANEE RAMASWAMY

My dancing comes from a tradition unfamiliar to many in this country, and I have often wondered if people understand the stories and poetry I try to interpret. When I watch modern dance, see modern art, or hear a poem, I am sure my interpretation of them are different from that of the artist. The idea behind this project is that what one sees is not what other people see.

With this in mind, I selected three of my favorite poems, including translations of Robert Bly's "Mirabai Versions." I had choreographed and performed dances to these poems in 1991. I then approached Marc Norberg, who had shot my favorite photograph for Ragamala's production *Canticle of Mary*. Marc has an unusual ability to capture the essence of the ideas of my dances in his photographs. Marc not only was interested in the project but was extremely generous with his time and worked gratis with me for many hours, making it a truly collaborative effort. We made twelve stunning images, four for each poem.

At the same time I was contacting poets whose work I liked. I wanted the poets to write poems in response to the photographs, not knowing anything more than what they saw. Local poet Jim Moore agreed to be a consultant on the project. I approached Robert Bly first and he said he usually does not write to pictures, but that I could use two of his existing poems. I decided to use "Listening to the Köln Concert" and "Why Mira Cannot Go Back to Her Old House." The photographs were sent to Janet Holmes, Jim Moore, Coleman Barks, and Mary Easter and they wrote two poems each. Jane Hirshfield wrote one poem combining her impressions of two pictures.

Last summer, I was at a friend's home and Howard Levy, a musician from Chicago, was visiting them. I had the opportunity to listen to him play the piano and the harmonica. He had an unusual ability to reproduce anything he heard. I showed him a dance video of mine and right away he played the music he heard on the piano. At that point I knew I had the musician for the project. I would be the first Indian dancer, as far as I know, to use piano and harmonica for accompaniment. Howard received the poems and photos in February of 1998. He sketched out the music and we met twice. His fabulous music helped me choreograph some of the poems with which I was struggling. He proved to be a wonderful collaborator.

I did not get a chance to work closely with the poets. I was amazed at how different from my original ideas some of their poems were and how close others were. I had a whole range of

subjects to work on in my choreography. Hopefully it will be as enriching an experience for those in the audience as it has been for me.

This collaboration has given me some wonderful friendships, an opportunity to work with artists I admire, and a chance to perform at the Walker Art Center, which is a dream come true. I am hoping to publish the photographs and poems in book format so that there will be an end product that will remain after the performance.

This program was made possible with a Fellowship from the Bush Foundation, an Intermedia Arts/McKnight Interdisciplinary Fellowship and a generous contribution from the Marc Norberg Studio. I wish to thank Diane Waller, Schmidt Music Center, The Loft, and Ragamala Music and Dance Theater. This project is co-commissioned by The Walker Art Center.