

**J**ayanthi Siva-Lecolley began her training in various Indian classical dance styles at the age of 8, with a particular focus on Bharatanatyam, Odissi, and Kathak. As a passionate advocate for these traditional forms, she entered the Singapore arts scene in 1998 as an independent professional artist. Her desire to innovate led her to formal studies in theatre, which eventually took her to Brisbane, Australia. There, she rapidly advanced into Physical Theatre and Contemporary Dance Theatre while pursuing a degree in Drama, followed by a Master of Fine Arts at Queensland University of Technology. In 2003, Jayanthi was invited by The Substation to join as an Associate Artist, receiving support for her work until 2010. During this period, she maintained strong ties with Australia and was actively involved in various Singapore-Australia collaborations. Notably, she was invited to the Queensland Poetry Festival in 2004 and 2005, where she showcased her poetry-dance collaborations with contemporary poets such as Michael Corbidge (UK), Cyril Wong (Singapore), and Terry Jaensch (Australia).

In recognition of her unique contributions to Singapore's arts scene, Jayanthi was featured in the 2005 National Day video, "Forty Under Forty," commissioned by the Ministry of Information, Communications & the Arts.

As the Co-founder and Festival Director of The Grey Festival in 2007 and 2008, Jayanthi spearheaded a platform that promoted dialogue, creation, development, and education in Indian Contemporary Dance Theatre in Singapore. Following this, she staged her first full-length solo performance, choreographed by the internationally renowned and award-winning Indian artist, the late Padmasree Astad Deboo. In 2010, she celebrated a decade of professional collaboration with Michael Corbidge with the production "Body Chapters," before he left Singapore to join the Royal Shakespeare Company.

Following this, Jayanthi directed and staged *JUS Reductions Compotes Coulis* in 2011 at the Drama Centre, featuring artists from various disciplines, including Western classical opera. That same year, she was commissioned to choreograph for the acclaimed musical *The Expat Wives*. Before taking a professional break in 2011 to focus on her family, Jayanthi was invited to serve as a festival forum panelist, mentor a collaborative workshop, and showcase her work at the 25th Festival in Brisbane, Australia.

Her commitment to her craft remained strong, and even after the birth of her son, Rishi, in 2012, she continued her work in theatre. In 2013, Jayanthi directed and staged *Voices*, which led to an invitation to the Castlemaine State Festival in Australia. This project expanded her repertoire, incorporating live sound design in collaboration with established artists from various backgrounds, resulting in a new kind of multi-disciplinary and multicultural production.

In 2014, a year after the passing of one of Singapore's most acclaimed theatre veterans, Christina Sergeant—who was also one of Jayanthi's most passionate mentors—Jayanthi directed and staged *Manifest – A Tribute to Christina Sergeant*, bringing together several artists from different disciplines to celebrate her mentor's life and work.

Jayanthi now dedicates much of her craft to lecturing at Republic Polytechnic, where she imparts her knowledge of both literary and performance arts. She has also taken on the responsibility of Module Chair for core and discipline modules. Additionally, she taught drama and art as ECA enrichment and ran a Physical Theatre enrichment ECA program at GEMS World Academy as an Artist in Residence. Jayanthi also trained private students for the Trinity College grade exams in Acting, Communication Skills, and Performance Arts, with a record of 100% distinctions across Trinity grades 1 to 7 at The Perse School Singapore. She is currently training Year 1–8 students at Invictus International School (Bukit Timah) for Trinity College London Performance Arts exams.



**Name** Jayanthi Siva-Lecolley  
**Mobile Number** 81573303  
**Email** [jaynthi@live.com](mailto:jaynthi@live.com)

### Academic Qualifications

Sept 2002	Queensland University of Technology (Australia) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Masters of Fine Arts</li> </ul>
Sept 2000	Queensland University of Technology (Australia) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor of Arts (Drama)</li> </ul>
Nov 1995	Management Development Institute of Singapore <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diploma in Mass Communications</li> </ul>

### Additional Qualification

April 2020	Verified Certificate HarvardX - Hum3.0x <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shakespeare's Life and Work</li> </ul>
May 2020	Verified Certificate HarvardX - Hum3.0x <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice : Shylock</li> </ul>
Sept 2012	Problem-Based Learning (Foundational) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Republic Polytechnic</li> </ul>
Sept 2006	Certificate in Kinergetics Level 1 (Singapore) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kinergetics National Association</li> </ul>
May 2002	Touch For Health 1 and 2 (Kinesiology)(Singapore) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Kinesiology College</li> </ul>
Sept 2005	Pilates Instructor Training Program Certificates - Levels 1 and 2 (Sydney) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pilates International (PILATESITC)</li> </ul>
1984	Certificate in Bharatanatyam (Singapore) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Singapore Indian Fine Arts Society</li> </ul>

### Bursaries/Scholarships and Recognition

1997 – 2000	<i>NAC Arts Bursary for BA in Drama (Australia)</i>
2000 - 2001	<i>Julia Gabriel Speech and Drama Centre Scholarship for MFA</i>
2002	<i>Event – Good Morning Singapore, Full Feature on Channel 8 Upcoming Performing Artist</i>
2003 - 2013	<i>Associate Artist of the Substation</i>
2005	<i>Event – 40<sup>th</sup> National Day Featured – National Pride, Forty under Forty Video</i>

## Teaching Experience

July 2024	Invictus International School (Bukit Timah) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance Specialist Master Class</li> </ul>
June 2024 - Present	Republic Polytechnic for School of Technology for the Arts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Module Chair (Adjunct)</li> </ul> Overseeing core and/or discipline module/s
Jan 2024 -Present	Invictus International School (Bukit Timah) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance Arts (Trinity College London) (ECA)</li> </ul> Training and preparing students Year 1-8
Jan 2024 -Present	Invictus International School (Bukit Timah) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solo Drama (Trinity College London)</li> <li>- (Acting/Performance Arts/Communication Skills)</li> </ul> Training and preparing individual students Year 1-7
Aug 2023	The Perse School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A-Play-In-A-Day Full Day Workshop</li> </ul> Training and preparing students of Year 6 for performance
Aug 2022 -Dec 2023	The Perse School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance Arts (Trinity College London) (ECA)</li> </ul> Training and preparing students Year 1-8
Aug 2020 -Dec 2023	The Perse School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solo Drama (Trinity College London)</li> <li>- (Acting/Performance Arts/Communication Skills)</li> </ul> Training and preparing individual students Year 1-7
Nov 2012 - Present	Republic Polytechnic for School of Technology for the Arts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Associate Lecturer (Adjunct)</li> </ul> Lecturing year 1, 2 and 3 both Theatre and core modules
Aug 2019 -2 Weeks	GEMS World Academy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arts Week Artist in Residence for Physical theatre and Art</li> </ul> Training students from Pre-school – Grade 5
Aug 2019 -March 2020	GEMS World Academy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical theatre Instructress</li> </ul> Training students from Grade 2 – 5 for ECA Enrichment
Dec 2019 -One day workshop	MOE – Guidance Branch <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training staff for team building Art workshop</li> </ul>
Aug 2012 - Nov 2012	ETON House International (Pre-school) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specialist Teacher in Performing Arts</li> </ul>

Dec 2010 - Jan 2011	4 week Camp Magic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitator and Movement Director (Project based)</li> <li>- Working with children from ages 3 to 12 years old.</li> </ul>
June 2010 -Aug 2010	5 week Camp Magic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitator and Movement Director (Project based)</li> <li>- Working with children from ages 3 to 12 years old.</li> </ul>
Jan 2003 -May 2005	St Francis Methodist School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Theatre Studies Teacher</li> <li>- Teaching Pre-U 1 and 2 students (Adjunct)</li> </ul>
Jan – Nov 2004 (1 semester)	LaSalle College of the Arts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indian Dance and Movement Teacher for Asian Theatre Lab (Single semester program)</li> <li>-Taught Theatre students technical aspects and, practical and theory of Indian dance styles.</li> </ul>
Mar 2003 (2 day Workshop)	Queensland University of Technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indian Dance and Movement Teacher World dance Module</li> <li>-Taught 1<sup>st</sup> year dance students technical aspects and, practical and theory of Indian dance styles.</li> </ul>
Sept 2002 (2 day Workshop)	Queensland University of Technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indian Dance and Movement Teacher World dance Module</li> <li>-Taught 1<sup>st</sup> year dance students technical aspects and, practical and theory of Indian dance styles.</li> </ul>

### Professional Arts Experience from 2000

<b>2000</b>	Event – The Angry Mime Venue – The Brisbane Powerhouse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guest Artist</li> </ul>
	Event – Mediation of the heART (Australia) Venue – QUT Kelvin Grove Campus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guest Artist</li> </ul>
<b>2001</b>	Event – A Perfect Love Affair and Other Mythical Creatures by Mime Unlimited Venue – Cairnhill Arts Centre <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dancer/Choreographer</li> </ul>
	Event – The Angry Mime Venue – The Brisbane Powerhouse Guest Artist
	Event - LasyaFemme (Australia) Venue – Woodward's Theatre
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produced/Choreographer/Director/Performer</li> </ul>

<p><b>2002</b></p>	<p>Event – Four Sides to a Ring by Mime Unlimited Venue – the Substation Theatre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dancer/Choreographer</li> </ul> <p>Event – Ramayana by World In Theatre Venue – The Substation Garden</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principal Acting Role/Dancer/Choreographer</li> </ul> <p>Event – LasyaFemme (Singapore) Venue – Esplanade, Amphitheatre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Director/Choreographer/Performer</i></li> </ul> <p>Event – Nava Rasas for Singapore Arts Festival, Late Night Series Venue – ZOUK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-director/choreographer/performer</li> </ul> <p>Event – Good Morning Singapore Featured – Full Feature on Channel 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upcoming Performing Artist</li> </ul>
<p><b>2003</b></p>	<p>Event - Performing Words, Magdalena Festival, Australia Venue – Brisbane Power House</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop participant/performer</li> </ul> <p>Event – Incubating Juice (Singapore) Venue – The Substation Theatre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-Producer/Co-Director/Choreographer/Performer</li> </ul> <p>Event – Incubating Juice (Australia) Venue – The Judith Wright Performing Arts Centre, Brisbane Australia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-Producer/Co-Director/Choreographer/Performer</li> </ul>
<p><b>2004</b></p>	<p>Event – ISOLATE Venue – The Substation Theatre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Producer/Director/Choreographer/Performer</li> </ul> <p>Event – Moving Afterlife for The Queensland Poetry Festival (Australia) Venue – The Judith Wright Performing Arts Centre, Brisbane Australia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-Director/Choreographer/Performer</li> </ul>
<p><b>2005</b></p>	<p>Event – Elektra by World In Theatre Venue – The Esplanade Concert Studio</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principal Acting and Dancing Role (Elektra)</li> </ul> <p>Event – Random Access Memory (Singapore) Venue – The Substation Theatre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Producer/Director/Choreographer/Performer</li> </ul> <p>Event – Random Access Memory for The Queensland Poetry Festival (Australia) Venue – The Judith Wright Performing Arts Centre, Brisbane Australia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Producer/Director/Choreographer/Performer</li> </ul>

2005	<p>Event – 40<sup>th</sup> National Day  Featured – National Pride, Forty under Forty Video</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performing Artist</li> </ul>
2006	<p>Event – Release, The Modern Day Chapters  Venue – The Substation Theatre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Producer/Director/Choreographer/Performer</li> </ul> <p>Event – ‘Content’ for the Magdalena Festival, Singapore  Venue – The Substation Theatre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choreographer/Performer</li> </ul> <p>Event – Plastic Goddess By Haymini Muthusamy  Venue – The Substation Theatre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artistic Director and Choreographer</li> </ul>
2007	<p>Event – Double Bill – Smoking Incense  Venue – The Substation Theatre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Producer/Director/Choreographer/Performer</li> </ul> <p>Event – Plastic Goddess By Haymini Muthusamy  Venue – The Substation Theatre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artistic Director and Choreographer</li> </ul> <p>Event – Double Bill – Smoking Incense  Venue – The Substation Theatre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Producer/Director/Choreographer/Performer</li> </ul> <p>Event – Damsels/Divas/Demons for The Grey Festival  Venue – The Substation Theatre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director/Choreographer/Performer</li> </ul>
2007	<p>Event – Notional  Venue – The Art House</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Producer/Director/Choreographer/Performer</li> </ul> <p>Event – Small Packages  Venue – The Substation Theatre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Producer/Director/Choreographer</li> </ul>
2008	<p>Event – Thought Intervals Choreographed by Astad Deboo  Venue – The Substation Theatre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Producer/Solo Performer</li> </ul>
2010	<p>Event – Body Chapters  Venue – The Drama Centre Black Box</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director/Choreographer/Performer</li> </ul>
2011	<p>Event – JUS reductions compote coulis  Venue – The Drama Centre Black Box  Director/Choreographer/Performer</p> <p>Event – Performance piece – 6 Degrees  The 2High Festival 2011 (Australia)  Venue – The, Brisbane Powerhouse  Director/Choreographer for 6 Degrees</p>

**2013**

Event – VOICES  
Venue – The Drama Centre Black Box  
Director/Choreographer/Producer

**2014**

Event – MANIFEST (A Tribute to Christina Sergeant)  
Venue – The Arts House  
Director/Choreographer/Producer

## Remembering Sergeant with poetry and more

Amanda See

A year after theatre veteran Christina Sergeant (right) died of a heart attack, some members of the arts community are putting on a theatre production to pay tribute to the actress and educator who was one of the pioneers of Singapore's theatre scene.

**Manifest** – A Tribute To Sergeant weaves together 15 independent pieces based on poems by Cyril Wong, Australia's Terry Jaensch and Englishman Michael Corbridge, who is better known as an actor.

Artistic director Jayanthi Siva-Lecolley, who was introduced to theatre by Sergeant when she was a student at Lasalle College of the Arts, came up with the idea. She had combined the works of these three poets in a production called Random Access Memory in 2005 and wants to bring this concept back for the tribute.

Many of the poems chosen for Manifest are related to Sergeant, such as Corbridge's *Lost In A Photograph*, which she performed as a solo mime piece for



The cast of the tribute to Christina Sergeant includes (clockwise from far left) Sabrina Zuber, Cyril Wong, Sonia Kwek, Pavan Singh, Liz Sergeant, Tan, Elle-May Patterson, Meghna Das and Linden Furnell. PHOTOS: R. NEDUMARAN, ST FILE

### Book it

#### MANIFEST – A TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT

**Where:** The Arts House Play Den  
**When:** Jan 23 to 25, 8pm  
**Admission:** \$25, \$17 (concession for students, senior citizens and The Arts House members)  
**Info:** Tickets from The Arts House Box Office, go to [www.thearts-house.com.sg](http://www.thearts-house.com.sg) or call 6332-6900

Siva-Lecolley's dance-theatre production *Isolate* in 2004. Sergeant was 57 when she died in February last year.

Most of the 10-strong cast, which includes actors Pavan Singh and Linden Furnell, have previously worked with her. They were acquainted with her or were inspired by her.

Siva-Lecolley, 40, wants the audience to have fun at the tribute and to treat it as a celebration. "I tried to make every piece more positive than serious and intense, so we try to keep a light-heartedness for most of the pieces," she says.

**Manifest** boasts a multi-ethnic and multi-disciplinary cast. Audiences can look forward to a hybrid of traditional and contemporary art forms, as well as a range of disciplines from both East and West. For example, there will be live guitar accompaniment and use of the tabla.

This experimental style is reminiscent of Sergeant's method of working. "She had a way of blending art forms and bringing them together," says Siva-Lecolley.

Sergeant's 21-year-old daughter, Liz Sergeant Tan, will be performing, too. The Intercultural Theatre Institute student says she grew up watching her mother act and was inspired by her to become an actress.

"I think it is fitting that my first professional acting job is to pay tribute to my mother," she says. "Were it not for her, I would not be the person I am today."

She is the only one of the late theatre practitioner's three children to be involved in theatre. The middle child has two brothers. Her father, Mr Tan Ban

Kwee, 61, is retired. Sergeant founded Mime Unhinged in 1993, which focused on physical theatre and mime and which operated until 2007. She was also a co-founder of the Actors Theatre Circle in 1989, which specialised in plays by and about women. She was on the theatre faculty of School of the Arts. She was nominated for Best Actress at the Life! Theatre Awards for her performance as Dr Martha Livingstone in *Agnes Of God* in 2003. She directed *The Finger Players'* Furthest North, Deepest South, which won Production of the Year at the awards in 2005.

Siva-Lecolley, who has known Tan since she was a child when Sergeant would take her to rehearsals, says Tan is like a "younger version" of her mother.

Poet and counter-tenor Wong, 37, who will also be performing, got to know Sergeant in 2002 during his days as programme manager at The Substation. While Sergeant had talked about working with Wong's poems, they never had the chance to collaborate.

"It's ironic that I'm finally working in an indirect way with her through this show," he says. "I think what this show symbolises is also what Christina symbolises. It's a kind of theatre that fuses everything. It's about taking new risks in a very imaginative direction."

Part of the proceeds will be donated to the Singapore Drama Educators Association, of which Sergeant was a co-founder.

Siva-Lecolley says: "Everyone gets busy, everyone moves on with life. But it's nice to stop and think and remember her. So this is an opportunity to do that with us."



is also example, the queue was at the centre of a tug of war between the Manchu rulers and the Han Chinese people. The queue, at different points in time, came to symbolise both patriotism and cowardice. If you think women are being frivolous when they angst over whether to chop off their long locks, you would change your

trip was sponsored by Garage Art and the British Council.

### DO YOU HEAR THE ARTISTS' VOICES?

Eleven artists from Singapore, Australia, Malaysia, the West Indies and Europe present an experimental theatre piece titled Voices. It will feature an eclectic array of art forms, such as Indian classical vocal techniques and Western opera.

Voices is conceptualised and directed by Jayanthi Siva-Lecolley and written by Michael Corbidge.

**Where:** Drama Centre, Black Box

**When:** Feb 1, 8pm; Feb 2, 3 and 8pm

**Admission:** \$25, \$18 (concession) (go to [www.ticketbooth.com.sg](http://www.ticketbooth.com.sg) or call 6296-2929)

when actress Keri Russell hacked off her curly locks in the second season of the hit show *Felicity*? Studio executives blamed the show's falling ratings on the hair cut, but I thought it was due more to the fact that the storytelling was weak. Still, there was a subconscious association of the hair cutting with a loss of attraction that made



Sabrina Zuber (left) and Sharon Frese in *Voices*. PHOTO: R NEDUMARAN

of passage from the commitment al cleansing Which? ion, back A ing choice softer [www](http://www)

GIG! Ren kno th Es

# Rooting for Grey

Two dancers team up to showcase contemporary Indian dance in a festival that is a first of its kind here

**June Cheong**  
ARTS REPORTER

FLYING the flag for Indian contemporary dance in Singapore can be a lonely business, as dancer Jayanthi Siva found out.

She says: "I came across a lot of people who dismissed the genre and thought it second to classical Indian dance."

But Siva, 34, found a kindred spirit in fellow dancer Raka Maitra last July.

**'There's no black-and-white definition of contemporary dance. It's all shades of grey in exploration'**

**Dancer Raka Maitra (far right) on The Grey festival. With her is fellow dancer Jayanthi Siva**

The pair met at the aptly titled *Crossroads*, a week-long performance festival showcasing women artists.

Eager to introduce more people to the genre, the pair have organised The Grey Festival featuring five nights of Indian contemporary dance at The Substation from May 9 to 13.

Asked why the festival is named Grey, Maitra, 36, says: "There's no black-and-white definition of contemporary dance. It's all shades of grey in exploration."

Indian contemporary dance draws from classical Indian dance but is a separate genre from it.

Although Siva has been trained in the classical South Indian dance, Bharatanatyam, since 1980 and classical eastern-Indian dance, Odissi, since 1987, she stopped performing classical works in 1998.

Her change of heart came about during her postgraduate days studying dance at the Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane, Australia, from 2000 to 2002.

"I experimented with ballet and jazz dancers and saw how their bodies translated Indian classical dance. That was what made me interested in other kinds of choreography and I came back determined to do that."

With dance and theatre workshops, forums, screenings and performances lined up, the pair hope to ignite not just the public's passion for dance but also to spark discussion on where contemporary dance in Singapore is headed.

She says: "People can't tear away from the Western contemporary model of dance when they think of the word 'contemporary'. But



PHOTO: DESMOND FOON

we're contemporary because we live in the 'now'."

Performers who will appear at the festival include renowned Indian dancer Anita Ratnam, co-artistic director of India's avant-garde arts event The Other Festival; Indian dancer Astad Deboo, who is celebrated for fusing the Northern Indian classical dance kathak with Western modern dance; and local theatre stalwart Michael Corbidge, who wrote poems for a dance performance in the festival, *Plastic Goddess*.

Siva and Maitra will also perform a solo each at the festival. The latter will draw from her Odissi background to re-interpret late Calcutta-born poet and Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore's epic poem, *Stray Birds*. The former will fuse Japanese urban legends and fairy tales to explore the female identity.

Although coordinating the schedules of artists and seeking sponsorship have taken

them away from rehearsals, they are happy that they are making "five days of breathing dance" come true.

Maitra says with a laugh: "Last month I forgot I could dance. I'd been running around so much talking to sponsors."

"The most challenging part is getting funding. We don't have enough for accommodation for the artists so we're asking friends to put them up."

> [junec@sph.com.sg](mailto:junec@sph.com.sg)

> The Grey Festival will be held at The Substation from May 9 to 13. Tickets for the workshops, opening night and performances are \$30, \$45 and \$25 respectively. Tickets are available from The Substation box office (tel: 6337-7535). For more information, contact Jayanthi on 8172-6800 or e-mail [jayanthi@thegreyseries.com](mailto:jayanthi@thegreyseries.com), [rakamaitra@thegreyseries.com](mailto:rakamaitra@thegreyseries.com) or [zarina@thegreyseries.com](mailto:zarina@thegreyseries.com)

# Love is a many layered thing

**June Cheong**  
ARTS REPORTER

WHEN choreographer Jayanthi Siva creates a new dance, she usually tries the moves out in front of a mirror and demonstrates them later to dancers.

But the 34-year-old freelance dancer and associate artist at The Substation created her latest work, Plastic Goddess, while sitting down, her neck encased in a brace.

She had hurt her back in a car accident three months ago, and is still going for physiotherapy sessions.

Since she could not perform the solo dance herself, she enlisted the help of her cousin, Haymini Muthusamy, 29, a dancer with Nrithyalaya's Aesthetics Society, a classical Indian dance performance group.

Siva, who has trained in the classical South Indian dance Bharata Natyam since 1990, says: "I've choreographed dances for her since we were children. I know what her body can do and how far she can go."

The 60-minute dance will be performed at The Substation Guinness Theatre from tomorrow till Sunday.

It is a contemporary dance performance which mixes classical Indian dance with English-language poems.

Set to five classical Indian songs layered over 10 poems by Singapore-based poet and actor Michael Corbidge, the dance explores the theme of perfect love and the quest to find the perfect partner.

Siva says: "Women are getting more education and looking better partly because of age-defying serums or cosmetic surgery.



PHOTO: MUGILAN RAJASEGERAN

**IS THERE PERFECT LOVE? Haymini Muthusamy (above) animates questions about impossible ideals.**

"But what happens is, the more you perfect yourself, the more difficult it is to find perfect love as your demands get higher. What you used to think was perfect love at

21, you wouldn't even consider at 30."

Asked if she herself is happy to be single, she says with a laugh: "I find a lot of contentment in what I do. There're other things to do in life and there's not just one thing to make you happy."

"I think the idea's been in societies for centuries that you need a family to complete life. And we get too caught up in that pressure."

> Plastic Goddess performs at The Substation Guinness Theatre tomorrow till Sunday. Tickets cost \$15 and \$12 (with concession) and are available from The Substation Box Office (tel: 6337-7800).

> [junecc@sph.com.sg](mailto:junecc@sph.com.sg)



LAU FOOK KONG

The hypnotic grace of dancers Muralitharan Pillai (right) and Jaynathi Siva was alluring.

## An oasis of love and potent verse

### **THEATRE**

#### **A PERFECT LOVE AFFAIR**

*Mime Unlimited*  
Cairnhill Arts Centre  
Last Wednesday

By **CLARISSA OON**

PILGRIMS scouring the island this Valentine's season for an oasis of love untainted by cheap roses, would have found a temple of

ripe images of Corbidge's poetry with assurance.

A pair of Indian dancers — Muralitharan Pillai and Jaynathi Siva — provided some *frisson* with their hypnotic movements and darting eyes.

Midway through the one-hour set, the production began to run out of ideas, partly because Corbidge himself tended to stretch the images in his verse too far.

NON-STOP THEATRE

# Fun shows up with Maskman

**New drama group promises there will not be a dull moment, even during the breaks, at its maiden production**

By ADELINE YEO

FIVE young 20somethings with a theatrical bent did not want to "operate within somebody else's rules". So they started their own theatre production company.

Called Thank You Maskman, it began when television producer Ian Seymour, journalist Zarina Muhamad, theatre student Jayanthi Siva, editor Gunasegaran K. and commercials producer Iskander Walen got together at a hawket centre last December.

Walen would only say that the rather eccentric name of the group is derived from a Lone Ranger-like figure who did good deeds for

From the second you step into The Substation foyer, a host of characters from the plays greet you, from Indian dancers to trees and she-devils.

The short intervals between the six plays, while sets are changed, are never allowed to become dead time. Instead, the audience will be treated to cabaret-like intermissions such as dramatic monologues from Shakespeare's plays.

"We don't ever want you to sit in the dark," Walen concludes, "because when you come in, you are doing us a favour."

A mission to showcase unproven talents is what inspires members of the group. Moving within the theatre and television circles, they constantly see undiscovered thespian ability waiting to be tapped. "We want to take chances with these new people. Take them seriously and not be afraid to aim high," Walen says.

The production is a mix of new talent and estab-



It is a labour of love for (from left) Iskander Walen, Jayanthi Siva, Gunasegaran K, Ian Seymour

◆ Pick It, Roll It, Flick It will be performed at the Guinness Theatre, The Substation, daily till Saturday. Showtime is 8 pm. For tickets at \$15, call 386-7005.