

# ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

## Takademe

(1999)

*Choreography by Robert Battle*

*Music by Sheila Chandra*

*Original Costumes by Missoni*

*Costume Redesign by Jon Taylor*

*Lighting by Burke Wilmore*



Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's Yannick Lebrun in Robert Battle's *Takademe*. Photo by Andrew Eccles

For his first season as Artistic Director, Mr. Battle chose to bring one of his first creations *Takademe* to the Ailey Company. Previously performed by Ailey II, the complex, tightly woven rhythms of Indian Kathak dance are deconstructed and abstracted in this percussive, fast-paced work. Clear shapes and propulsive jumps mimic the vocalized rhythmic syllables of Sheila Chandra's jazzy score.

“...one can add Battle’s name to the list of brilliant solo choreographers such as Isadora Duncan, Ruth St. Denis, and Ted Shawn...”

-Jean Lenihan, *Los Angeles Times*, March 7, 2012

“The piece is a gem...”

-Wendy Perron, *Dance Magazine*, Dec. 18, 2011

“... [a] fast-moving excursion into rhythmic exotica.”

-*The New York Times*

“The rhythmic sounds are those that accompany Indian Kathak dance, and Mr. Battle uses their complexity and propulsiveness as an inspiration for a highly kinetic, demandingly coordinated dance that incorporates sudden scissoring jumps, low stamping, a contracting torso and fluttering hands — often all at the same time.”

-*The New York Times*

### Sheila Chandra

Born in South London to a South Indian immigrant family, Sheila Chandra discovered her voice at the age of twelve while at Theatre Arts school. In 1981 Sheila Chandra met Steve Coe in London and became the lead singer of his Asian fusion band Monsoon which then signed to Polygram. Monsoon had a UK Top Ten hit with their first single "Ever So Lonely" when Sheila was 16. After Monsoon disbanded, Sheila signed Steve Coe's Indipop label in 1984 and went on to make her first four solo albums in two years. Sheila retired when she was 20 to take a sabbatical that lasted 4 years and re-emerged with her fifth solo album on Indipop.

In 1991 Sheila decided to give concerts for the first time and developed her distinctive voice and drone approach — drawing on vocal cultures from around the world — so that she could perform alone on stage. Sheila formed her own

music production company and went on to write a trilogy of albums in this style, each of which she licensed to Real World as one-offs, in order to retain creative control.

*At select performances (Dec 13, 15, 16 and 18 eve), Sheila Chandra's syncopated vocal score will be sung live by Naren Budhakar.*

**Naren Budhakar** was born and brought up in India in the classical music tradition. At a young age he mastered playing tablas, the popular classical drums of North India. With these, he has accompanied a wide range of instrumentalists, vocalists, and dancers in Asia, Europe, and America at many prestigious venues, including Carnegie Hall, New York City Center, the Kennedy Center, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Mr. Budhakar's melodic understanding and ability to vocalize his percussion compositions has allowed him to perform with many music genres, including rock, jazz, Irish Celtic, and devotional music. He lives in New York, where he is an active performer and teacher.

## **Takademe**

### Music Credit Information

Song: **Speaking in Tongues II**

Written and performed by Sheila Chandra

Courtesy of Real World Records Ltd.