

Songs of the Bulbul at The Lyceum

This dance piece is based on an ancient Sufi myth about a captured, common songbird of Africa and Asia, the bulbul, which sings an exquisite tune before perishing from despair. The routine combines Indian classical dance (known as Kathak) and Islamic poetry. Kathak is one of the nine major forms of Indian classical dance – Its origin is attributed to the traveling bards in ancient northern India known as Kathakar (“storyteller”), who communicated stories through dance, songs and music. And Sufi Kathak combines that tradition with that of Sufism.

The score of Rushil Ranjan was enveloping, the tabla particularly noticeable in an exciting, invigorating way; it combined aspects of both Western & Eastern musical conventions in a seamless blend allowing the choreography of Rani Khanam full expression. The execution of the moves by Aakash Odedra were sublime, moving from the hatching of the bird through the phases of freedom, caging, and ultimate demise. The movement had reminders of the dervish as well as the peace of the yogi.

This world premiere illustrates once again why the EIF deserves and enhances its reputation as a platform for the greatest performing arts from all parts of the globe.



<https://www.eif.co.uk/events/songs-of-the-bulbul>