



MID EAST PERFORMING ARTS ACADEMY

AN ONGOING PASSION

Today, one of the things that Samay is widely known for is her devotion to the Egyptian style.

Most of us will readily agree. The feeling and intricate movements that have come from dancers such as Samia Gamal, Taheya Carioca and Sohair Zaki (who are among Samay's favorites) have mesmerized crowds for ages. The musical is also beautiful, she explains, and she continues to admire classics by such greats as Oum Kalthoum, Farid al-Atrache and Abdel Halim Hafez.

Another thing Samay is recognized for is the feeling she conveys during performances; the music seems to run through her veins and empower her movements and emotion. She believes that such feeling cannot be taught, and that one must allow it to come from within, by portraying each instrument's purpose and telling a story with each dance move.

One of her favorite contemporary instructors is the legendary Raqia Hassan. Since she first laid eyes on her, Samay has had a high regard for the feeling that Hassan puts into her teaching and the "juiciness" she adds to the dance, encapsulating much of it in her own dancing.

A mentor who has played a big

"I have been blessed to work side by side with such a wonderful teacher," she says. "Through the knowledge I have been able to learn, I have been able to explore folklore dance in depth.

TAKING A DEEPER LOOK

Outside the limelight down-to-earth as she is, she has a beautiful performance free spirit. She is a child at heart, loves going to Disney World, and spent a day at the mall. "I'm not just goofing around," she says. "I'm learning about many hobbies, and I'm learning about myself. I'm not just a performer, I'm a person. I'm not just a dancer, I'm a woman. I'm not just a star, I'm a human being. I'm not just a superstar, I'm a person."

Her family strength, she passed away last year, her mother breast cancer.

"My learning is not just about the dance, it's about the feeling that Hassan puts into her teaching and the 'juiciness' she adds to the dance, encapsulating much of it in her own dancing.

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"People take life for granted," she says, "when it can end in a heartbeat. I tell my students

SAMAY: A JOURNEY INTO THE HEART OF AN INSPIRATIONAL ARTIST

Samay has directed annual student showcases since 1999, featuring over 200 performers and successfully selling out to crowds in Miami. She also continues to create annual productions in large theaters. For the first time, Samay sat in the audience and did not perform for her 2010 show, Egyptian Nights, while she recuperated from her C-section. "I immediately started crying," she recalls. "I was nervous that I wasn't running the show back stage, but it was such a wonderful experience to watch from the audience's perspective and not from the wings." This ambitious dancer and director has also created her own dance troupe, Samay Mideast Performing Arts Company. In the beginning, she wanted to see them execute her choreographies and represent her as a force. Over the years, her goal with the troupe is to see them all grow as dancers and teachers, and develop on their own with what they have taken

from the dance. "I have been blessed with such a wonderful dance troupe," she relates. "Everyone cooperates in helping out with rehearsals, events, costuming, etc. And we have such a good vibe in the group. Everyone gets along, and most importantly, we have grown to feel like one big family." The troupe executes beautiful and elegant choreographies of folkloric and classical Egyptian dance styles to provide audiences with an authentic Egyptian dance experience. Samay has been fortunate enough to be a featured workshop instructor throughout Europe, Asia, and Egypt. More international seminars and performances are definitely in store for her future, as she continues on the workshop circuit. Her annual student showcase is scheduled for October. This year, she will present Arabian Dreams at the Manuel Artime Theater in Miami, using music from her first

CD, *Miya Miya Raqa Ma*. Samay: She also plans to continue producing choreography for her troupe. "I am very proud of Samay's accomplishments and her artistry as a dancer," Tarmajin Dallal says. "Most of all, I appreciate that she educates dancers, not only about dance, but about culture." Samay hopes to continue to visit the Middle East with group excursions, to help expand people's knowledge of the culture. "As far as what I'll be doing 10 years from now," she says, "Well — Insha'Allah — to keep teaching and choreographing." ☺

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MIAMI PADE COLLEGE
KENDALL CAMPUS
SCHOOL OF CONTINUING EDUCATION
& PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
presents

Arabian Dreams

An Authentic Middle Eastern Dance Show
OCTOBER 28, 2011 • 8:00 P.M.
MANUEL ARTIME THEATER*
TICKETS \$25

Directed by SAMAY MIDEAST PERFORMING ARTS & ARTS STUDENTS
Performed by MIDDLE EASTERN CULTURE & ARTS STUDENTS

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