

**FOR
IMMEDIATE
RELEASE**

76 GRAND STREET NEW YORK NY 10013



SHARMILA DESAI

Anjali

February 22, 2003, 8PM

One night performance

Deitch Projects presents *Anjali*, a one night performance by Sharmila Desai at 18 Wooster Street. Anjali is an Indian mudra (ritual hand gesture) that means 'offering'. The theme of 'offering' as a thread between various devotional practices - be it yoga, Indian dance or tantra -- is the heart and inspiration of *Anjali*.

Anjali explores the theme of devotion through a live performance with tracks composed by French-Algerian DJ Cheb I Sabbah and accompanied by live South Indian percussionists Pirashanna Thevarajah and Vidwan R.N. Prakash, from London's Bharitya Vidya Bhavan.

Desai comes from a maternal lineage of Indian dancers, most notably her great aunt Menaka and her grandmother Hima Devi who were legendary exponents of dance. Similar to her ancestors in pushing traditional forms of movement and art, Desai has intermingled martial art, yoga, and Indian dance to investigate the ways in which the body can be used to question traditional notions of femininity.

Using the vocabulary of various age-old Indian forms of movement, Desai has created her own language of expression. Her performances are not only formed by her artistic vision but also by her progression and commitment to her various practices. The beauty of *Anjali* lies in Desai's ability to combine ancient practices into a performance that is not only contemporary, but also seemingly timeless.

CONTINUED ON REVERSE

As a young girl Desai practiced classical Indian dance and was then introduced to yoga asana. She embraced the daily discipline in dance which later led to her concentration in yoga. She became more interested in the roots of Indian movement and began to experiment within these forms.

Desai performed *Anjali* this past October at the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA) in London – a week-long production of live performance, music, and community workshops. Other recent performances include the Tibetan Peace Garden Benefit and Mediatheque at Central Saint Martins in England.

**GALLERY HOURS 12-6, TUESDAY – SATURDAY
FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT
JULIA CHIANG AT 212-343-7300**