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**Pratidhwani Chooses Their Own Ending for *Devi***

*Family-friendly Indian dance-drama features 45 performers, 10 dance styles, and 1 woman who must choose between power and influence, or tradition and family.*

**For Immediate Release—March 14, 2019**—This spring, Pratidhwani, ACTLab, and more than 50 Seattle-area artists from the South Asian community will come together to create an extravaganza of drama, costume, dance, and music, as they tell the story of a Hindu woman's improbable rise to power and return to family...or not.

In the original 1884 Bengali novel *Devi Chaudhurani* by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, the young, illiterate, and impoverished Prafulya unexpectedly soars to great heights as Devi [they-vee/], a woman who rises to power against the rule of the British. Despite being beloved by her people, Devi ultimately submits to cultural pressure and returns to her traditional duty as a wife.

In this new, English-language adaptation by local writer/director Moumita Bhattacharya, Pratidhwani gives Prafulya the power of choice—proving that a woman can be the protagonist in her own story, despite men's best efforts to make her invisible. Will Prafulya return to her love and traditional life? Will she remain Devi, the leader of a military movement? Or will she fully embrace the religious identity of her new name, and dedicate her life to God?

Find out when *Devi* performs April 16–May 11 in the Allen Theatre at ACT, 700 Union Street, in downtown Seattle (appropriate for ages seven and up). Tickets are affordably priced from \$22-\$42, available online at [acttheatre.org/devi](http://acttheatre.org/devi), by phone at 206-292-7676, or at the ACT Ticket Office at 700 Union Street.

“When Bankim wrote *Devi* in the 1880s, despite the compelling story of a powerful woman, the ending was driven by Bankim's principles of a ‘perfect society’ and was predictable,” says Bhattacharya. “There never was a question of where she would go. To me, that was not acceptable. Every human being needs to have a choice. Most importantly, as I adapted the story for stage, I felt like Devi herself was demanding that she be given a right to choose her own life!”

*Devi* is the fifth collaboration between ACTLab and Pratidhwani; their last dance-drama, Gregory Award-winning *Chitrangada—The Warrior Princess*, was critically acclaimed as “engaging,” “novel,” and “heartfelt.” Pratidhwani, a Seattle-based nonprofit committed to creating and promoting South Asian arts and artists in the Puget Sound region since 2001, comprises a group of professionals who have full-time careers and dedicate their late evenings to creating art, like writer/director/costume designer Moumita Bhattacharya, producer Amrita Bhandari, and stage manager Akshay Johar. For more information about Pratidhwani, visit [pratidhwani.org](http://pratidhwani.org).

For information or to arrange interviews, contact Christine Bateman at [christine@scandiuzzikrebs.com](mailto:christine@scandiuzzikrebs.com).

**About Pratidhwani**

Pratidhwani is a 501(c)(3) non-profit cultural organization based in the Seattle area. Conceptualized and founded in 2001, Pratidhwani was formally established in 2003. At its core, Pratidhwani is a group of professionals of South Asian heritage that are enthusiastic and passionate about the artistic traditions of the Indian subcontinent, and are dedicated to the promotion and cultivation of the performing arts of their homeland in the Seattle area. Pratidhwani recognizes that the performing arts of South Asia encompass a vast and varied number of styles, genres and traditions, and to better organize its efforts, the organization functions as a collection of artistic wings, each with independent missions, but with cross-wing interaction and cooperation. The present wings of the organization are Light Music, Classical Music, Dance and Drama.

**About ACTLab**

Launched in 2007 as The Central Heating Lab, ACTLab serves as an incubator and catalyst for new works. Uniquely positioned to provide the space and resources to the development of projects in a collaborative environment, ACT partners with emerging and seasoned local artists, giving them the sustenance and pressure required to experiment, grow, and transform their work and reach new audiences. ACTLab presents artists working in all performance genres and provides an artistic home for a variety of local performance groups and artists like The Seagull Project, eSe Teatro, and UMO Ensemble.

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