Tower Hamlets Council Presents

A Season of Bangla Drama

Performances, exhibitions and talks

1-30 November 2014

For more information call
020 7364 7900
www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/arts
festivalsandeevents@towerhamlets.gov.uk
Message from the Mayor of Tower Hamlets

I am delighted to welcome you to the 2014 Season of Bangla Drama. This is back for the 12th year running with another energetic, high calibre and diverse programme of events which take place throughout November. It promises to be entertaining and informative as well as being a great vehicle for championing local talent and engaging new and established audiences in celebrating and learning about Anglo-Bengali theatre. I hope Tower Hamlets’ residents will take advantage of this wonderful and unique theatrical festival.

Lutfur Rahman
Mayor of Tower Hamlets

Message from Head of Community Affairs, Canary Wharf Group Plc

Canary Wharf Group Plc are once again delighted to be associated with A Season of Bangla Drama 2014. We take pride in supporting local community initiatives, events such as this give local emerging writers, directors and performers from the community the opportunity to showcase their hidden talent. I am particularly pleased to see the performances being held at different venues in the borough, displaying another great selection of drama, music and seminars for all to enjoy. I hope the 2014 season continues to inspire audiences through its many performances by once again exploring the Bengali culture and heritage. Congratulations to all the writers, directors and performers for sharing their wonderful thoughts and aspiration with us, and good luck with all your future endeavours.

Zakir Khan
Head of Community Affairs
Bangladeshi musical play Mohajoner Nao (The Boat of Infinity), is a biographical sketch of mystic bard Baul Abdul Karim portrayed through the tradition of Baul folk songs which use music and lyrics to express thoughts on divinity and philosophy.

Shah Abdul Karim Karim was born in a remote area of Sunamganj in Bangladesh where the low lands are submerged with water for much of the year. With no formal education, Karim’s life has been focussed around the land, the water and nature. In his quest to seek out truths about himself and his creator, his songs explore the manmade structure of the boat as a metaphor for the self and how to navigate safely through life. In this play, the body is compared to a rented boat from a merchant (i.e. the almighty, infinity) which has be rowed correctly to its ultimate destination in order to be returned in good order. Human existence is a journey with numerous perils and challenges and the good character of the protagonist is also depicted through Karim’s stand against bigotry and social discrimination, in keeping with the Baul tradition of celebrating spirituality and moral strength.

Subachan Nattya Sangsad was established in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 7 January 1977. Subachan is a professional theatre group and an active member of Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation and the Bangladesh Centre of the International Theatre Institute. We are committed to protecting cultural heritage and celebrating the power of human achievement through activism and performance. Subachan keeps faith in the spirit of humanity and chants: humanity thou supreme, humanity thou subject, humanity thou eternal prospect.
East is a project that invited local residents to join in and share some of the stories which stem from the East End’s rich and diverse history of immigration. Working in collaboration with storytellers Shamim Azad and Sef Townsend, and supported by local organisations Bishwo Shahitto Kendro and Daedalus Theatre Company, this project not only celebrates the cultural variety of East London but also some of the points of connection between peoples from across the world. It has been created in rehearsals using a mixture of the performers’ own experiences, and their memories of traditional songs and tales. The resulting performance will be backed up with music, visuals and a taste of local food.

East is funded by Arts Council England with support from Apples and Snakes. It was initially developed at Rich Mix, with additional funding from Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

**Actors:** Cathy Daniels, David Solomon, John Heyderman, Rubi Hoque, Ziaur Rahman, Pernilla Iggstrom, Shoma Bari

**Performers/Assistant Project Leaders:** Farah Naz, Paul Burgess, Sef Townsend, Shamim Azad

**Stage Manager:** Vera Erenbourg
Friday and Saturday, 7-8 November
Brady Arts Centre

Eastern Thespians presents
Uttoradhikar (The Inheritance)
Written and directed by Debasish Banerjee
www.easternthespians.com

SYNOPSIS
Set in the year 1958 in Goa, now a coastal state in India, this is the story of a time of change that revolves around the De Cunha family estate and the disintegration of its once glorious past. The play begins on a Sunday morning in 1958 on the De Cunha family estate where Anatole De Cunha, the septuagenarian who looks after the estate, his nephew, Joaquim and niece, Margarita, the heirs to the estate are entertaining some old friends. Through a series of scenes of reality interpolated with illusions of Margarita, the protagonist of the play, we are drawn into a turbulent world that makes the characters face questions of allegiance, heritage, rights, roots and identity. While uncle Anatole adheres staunchly to his Portuguese origin, Margarita and Joaquim respond to the situation very differently as do the other characters in the play. As the play unfolds and hurtles to its inevitable climax it raises the questions of belonging and identity and our search for it, a question that remains moot in the current world with its large migrant population.

ABOUT US
Eastern Thespians are a contemporary theatre group, based in London, UK. Drawing on the rich resources of both eastern and western life, thought, philosophy and art forms both traditional and contemporary, we are committed to presenting life theatre that is vital, thought provoking and engaging. We explore various genres of theatre in order to deliver productions with a wide, multicultural appeal.

Actors: Chandrayee Sengupta, Suchishmita Ganguly, Souveek Ray, Mazedur Chowdhury, Samrat Sengupta, Debasish Banerjee
Technical Support: Arjun Sen, Wasim Javed Makeem, Nilanjana Sengupta
Stage Management: Adrika Sen
Publicity: Shobhon Ahmed
Saturday and Sunday, 8-9 November
Pinter Studio, Queen Mary University of London

Mukul & Ghetto Tigers presents
Romeo & Juliet

Written by William Shakespeare
www.mukulandghettotigers.com

SYNOPSIS

Romeo and Juliet have been crossing cultures for centuries and this Bengali language interpretation of one of Shakespeare’s most cherished works uses poetry, dance and music to tell the tragic, but ever-relevant story of the star-crossed lovers whose feuding families prevent their happy union.

Two families in the city of Verona are locked into an ancient vendetta. Juliet, a Montague, and Romeo, a Capulet, fall in love but cannot be together. The ill-fated lovers are wed secretly but Romeo kills Juliet’s cousin Tybalt by accident and is sent into exile. Juliet’s parents plan to marry her off to another suitor, Paris, and to prevent this happening, the Friar suggests that she feigns death by taking a strong sleeping potion. Meanwhile Romeo is directed to meet his lover in secret but does not learn about the wider subterfuge. On arrival at the tomb, he mistakenly believes that she is dead and in grief takes his own life. When Juliet awakes and finds Romeo dead she too seeks solace in death and the promise of being reunited with her lover in eternity.

ABOUT US

Mukul and Ghetto Tigers was founded in 2011 by Mukul Ahmed. MGT is a London-based ensemble which devises inspiring and physically driven theatre. We are committed to exploring the art of storytelling in all its facets, from developing new writing to re-imagining classical works. Our vision is to create opportunity for the underprivileged. We propagate that theatre is not a commodity but a democratic means of self-expression and a vehicle for raising questions, protestations and provocations which are all signs of a functional democratic society. The company believes that innovative theatre supported by the community helps us to understand our responsibilities.

Actors: Delwar Hossain Dilu, Rez Kabir
Vocalists: Tanusree Guha, Sharmin Reya
Lighting: Paul Micah
Set, Costume & Music: Mukul and Ghetto Tigers Collective
Vashkorjo is based on an incident that happened in Sylhet Bangladesh in 2013 and explores the themes of art, religion, the symbolism of public sculpture and freedom of expression by recounting the actual debates which took place. It was planned to erect a Sculpture at the gate of Shahjalal University in Sylhet, a prominent educational institute and the only University in the region of Sylhet. The Sculpture was themed around the 1971 Freedom Fight of Bangladesh, and depicted a mother blessing her son at the moment of him leaving her to fight for the freedom of both his mother and the mother land. A mother and a son. It was that simple, that divine.

A protest group contested the plans by claiming that the body of the mother and son would go against the Islamic values of the town where the University is located. They called it ‘Murthi’ a Bengali name for Hindu God & Goddess that they worship. The drama Vashkorjo deals with the question whether a Sculpture is a piece of work which represents art, cultural heritage, and national history through symbolism as well as the meanings behind individual, human stories or something only to worship by a particular religious group.
Thursday, 13 November
Rich Mix

Dakshinayan UK presents
Navrasa - The Nine Emotions
Written by Rabindranath Tagore

SYNOPSIS

This is an exploration of the nine emotions which govern our states of being and are interpreted through Tagore’s dance dramas. Passions, reactions and feelings are key ingredients of powerful storytelling and this production uses excerpts of Tagore’s works to present a contemporary reflection on the age-old and universal emotions of mankind. Titles and themes include Dakghar (sadness), Chitranagada (courage), Notir Puja (peace), Chandalika: (disgust), Rakta Karabi (anger), Tasher Desh (wonder), Khudhito Pasan (fear of death), Chirokumar Sabha (laughter) and Shyama (love).

ABOUT US

Dakshinayan UK was established in London in 2003. Its main aims are to propagate South Asian art forms and the works of Rabindranath Tagore. Dakshinayan runs weekly classes when it teaches the curriculum of Dakshinee Kolkata, with whom it is affiliated. The members of Dakshinayan are all professionally trained singers, musicians and dancers and the group has performed at venues throughout the UK and internationally.

Overall Concept & Direction: Dr Ananda Gupta
Directed by: Dr Arpita Ray
The Cruel Truth

Written by Showmi Das and Junior Mumun
www.rokeya.co.uk

SYNOPSIS

‘The Cruel Truth’ includes various disciplines of dance and theatre and is based on the true stories of two young girls, Shaista and Rani from the Indian Sub-Continent who consent to arranged marriages with strangers living in the UK, leaving friends and family behind and building a new life in a foreign land. Some arranged marriages do work, but if they go wrong, the consequences can be disastrous. Both stories are explored from a positive and negative perspective. Issues faced along the way include rape, domestic violence, maltreatment and more, all of which will affect their destinies. This production also pays tribute to another revolutionary figure, champion of women and a civil rights activist, Maya Angelou, whose messages were similar to those of Rokeya Hossain.

ABOUT US

The Rokeya Project is named after Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain, a revolutionary figure in Indian and Bengali history; an ecologist, a human rights activist and a campaigner for education across India and Bangladesh. The Rokeya Project uses her ideologies to build cross-continental links between UK and the world. We address these injustices through arts, education and discussion in order to explore why these issues happen, how we feel about it, and how together we can work to resolve the issues.

Director & Choreographer: Showmi Das
Lighting Design & Direction: Salvatore Salvo
Sound Design & Direction: Kadir Hussain
Two men, Vladimir and Estragon, meet near a tree. They converse on various topics and reveal that they are waiting there for a man named Godot. Other characters, the boy messenger, Pozzo and Lucky, come and go with changed fortunes and mixed messages in each act as the play progresses but there is no resolution because all the protagonists are still tied together on an endless journey to an unknown place to rendezvous with a man known only as Godot. Insults are traded and the various causes of their sufferings are revealed which link in with the four main concepts that Beckett imparts; namely the suffering of the tramps, their futile attempts to pass time, their intentions to leave, and, ultimately, their incessant wait. Waiting for Godot is one of the most important English plays of the 20th Century. The answers are ambiguous; the play can be interpreted in many ways, times and places and a Bengali translation will introduce a whole new audience to this modern classic.
Tagore’s poetry is represented in Karna-Kunti’s dance theatre through an excerpt from the great epic ‘The Mahabharata’ which tells us the story of Kauravas, the hundred sons of the blind King Dhritaratra and Pandavas, the five sons of Pandu. One key episode is the battle of Kurukshetra which mirrors and symbolises the political, social, economical and emotional turmoil of the wider narrative. The main protagonists in battle are brothers who are fighting on opposite sides, unaware of their blood ties as the result of Karna being abandoned at birth despite his royal lineage. This drama depicts the episode where Kunti secretly approaches Karna to reveal her identity as his biological mother in a bid to end the bloodshed between her sons. It highlights the inherent conflicts of loyalty to a cause and to a family.

**SYNOPSIS**

**Karna-Kunti**

*Recitation in English:* Shabana Azmi (Kunti) and late Farooq Sheikh (Karna)

*Dancers:* Bithika Raha Basu and Cid Shaha

*Translation:* Ketaki Kushari Dyson

*Concept & Direction:* Bithika Raha Basu.

**Leela** – Dance drama adaptation of *Bhanu Shingher Padabali* by Rabindranath Tagore

*Dancers:* Tuhina Chakravorty Bhattacharya, Suchismita Ganguly, Senjuti Das, Showmi Das, Umme Rumman Adity Roy, Payel Basu, Ishita Bhattacharya and Bipasha Sreya Raha

*Music & Editing:* Shomik Raha & Kavi Varsani

*Photography & Lighting:* Shobhon A Ahmed and Dhiraj Varsani

*Publicity:* Syed B Mahmood & Chaya Biswas

*Stage Management:* Sulakshana Biswas & Tithi Ghose

**ABOUT US**

Nrityakala Dance Heritage was founded by Bithika Raha Basu in 1986 as a school of Indian dance with the philosophy – learning through rhythm. Lord Dholakia is Patron of the organization. Our central mission is to produce dance theatre based on poems and stories through translation which celebrate Tagore, and intertwine literature with drama in thought provoking and relevant ways.
Sunday, 16 November
Brady Arts Centre

Monchshoilee presents
The King’s Courier

Written by Dr Bishnu P Choudhury

**Synopsis**

Tagore’s much loved tale of The Post Office, Dak-Ghar, is reinterpreted into ‘The King’s Courier’, a one-act play which is more of a ‘fantasia’. Both Tagore’s and the present play deal with the premature death of a little boy called Amal. With a large number of children in lead roles, this play has a focus on mortality. Yet there are considerable differences. In Tagore’s play the dying boy is always on-stage, acting as a catalyst to adult reactions to his certain death. In the present play, the boy Amal is very much off-stage while the on-stage adult characters (almost oblivious to the boy and his death) queried by village children, express their purpose on earth and the joy of their work. The village children eventually relate each character to Amal’s imminent departure from the mortal world.

**About Us**

Monchshoilee is part of Bishwo Shahitto Kendro, a creative art, literature and education based organisation whose programmes promote harmonious cross-community relationships.


**Director & Choreography:** Ziaur Rahman Saklen

**Creative Producer:** Shamim Azad

**Production Manager:** Arifuzzaman Syed

**Advisor:** Humayuen Kabir Mahin

**Lighting:** Rajib Das

**Wardrobe:** Khadija Rahman

**Led by:** Nila Shaha, Syeda Ifat Ara, Nusrat Sarmin

**Head of Music:** Anuradha Roma Choudhury

**Backing Vocalist:** Shudeshna Chakroborty Diya Taslima Parvin Shima

**Set Design:** Shudip Chakraborty, Atiqul Islam

**Make-up:** Ruhul Amin and Rajib Das, Ashesh Roy, Ifti, Jakir

**Projector Design:** Khadija Rahman
A Dance Drama telling the tale of Chandalika by Rabindranath Tagore which centres around how a low caste girl obtains the blessing of a Buddhist monk resulting in a significant transformation to her life, outlook and behaviour.

The play begins at the confrontation of Prakriti and her Mother over the topic of Ananda’s inspiration of Prakriti as a living, breathing human being and not as an untouchable, despicable, socially rejected Chandalini. His magical words – ‘Give me water’ – addressed to the frightened girl, significantly negate her orthodox sense of being an outcaste. In terms of social and religious codes of conduct, to receive and to give food or water were sacrilegious for both – them and the untouchable. In the play, therefore, the ‘water act’ presents the untouchable’s liberation from the unjust bondage of slavery of the customary prison of marginality. A new human being full of vitality, exuberance and revolt from this oppressive custom is born.

SYNOPSIS

Written by Rabindranath Tagore

ABOUT US

Charulata Academy was established in Bangladesh in 2007 and in London in 2014. It has developed a varied programme in order to give pupils the opportunity to develop skills in performance, appreciation and teamwork. Chandalika is the first production in London from Charulata.


Director & Founder: Alpana Roy Barman

Co Founder: Prosenjit Choudhary

Production Manager: Suparna Roy Barman
### A Season of Bangla Drama

**1-30 November - Exhibition: Bengal Dream** by Rahemur Rahman FREE

Tickets cost: £8 & £5 concs (unless otherwise stated).
Doors open 7.00pm show starts 7.30pm
E: festivalsandevents@towerhamlets.gov.uk
To book tickets, go to [http://aseasonofbangladrama2014.eventbrite.co.uk](http://aseasonofbangladrama2014.eventbrite.co.uk)

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### FRIDAY

- **Mohajoner Nao - The Boat of Infinity (Bangla)** £10 & £8
  
  **Brady Arts Centre**

### SATURDAY

1. **Mohajoner Nao - The Boat of Infinity (Bangla)** £10 & £8 (also matinee at 2pm)
   
   **Brady Arts Centre**

2. **Uttoradhikar (The Inheritance)** £10 & £8 (Bangla)
   
   **Brady Arts Centre**

3. **Romeo & Juliet (Bangla/English)**
   
   **Pinter Studios**

4. **Vashkorjo (Bangla)**
   
   **Brady Arts Centre**

5. **The Cruel Truth (English)**
   
   **Rich Mix**

6. **Waiting for Godot (Bangla)**
   
   **Brady Arts Centre**

7. **The King’s Courier (Bangla)**
   
   **Brady Arts Centre**

8. **Highly Unlikely (English)** £10 & £8
   
   **The Space**

### SUNDAY

1. **Mohajoner Nao - The Boat of Infinity (Bangla)** £10 & £8 (also matinee at 2pm)
   
   **Brady Arts Centre**

2. **Uttoradhikar (The Inheritance)** £10 & £8 (Bangla)
   
   **Brady Arts Centre**

3. **Romeo & Juliet (Bangla/English)**
   
   **Pinter Studios**

4. **Vashkorjo (Bangla)**
   
   **Brady Arts Centre**

5. **The Cruel Truth (English)**
   
   **Rich Mix**

6. **Waiting for Godot (Bangla)**
   
   **Brady Arts Centre**

7. **The King’s Courier (Bangla)**
   
   **Brady Arts Centre**

8. **Highly Unlikely (English)** £10 & £8
   
   **The Space**

### VENUES

- **Brady Arts Centre**
  
  192-196 Hanbury Street, E1 5HU
  
  Tel: 020 7364 7900

- **Kobi Nazrul Centre**
  
  30 Hanbury Street, E1 6QR

- **Pinter Studio**
  
  Queen Mary University of London, Mile End Road, E1 4NS

- **Rich Mix**
  
  35-47 Bethnal Green Road, E1 6LA
  
  Tel: 020 7613 7498

- **The Space**
  
  269 Westferry Road, E14 3RS
  
  Tel: 020 7515 7799

### A Season of Bangla Drama 1-30 November 2014
Saturday, 22 November (1.00pm-7.30pm)
Brady Arts Centre

‘A’ Team Arts House of Talent
Youth Theatre Pathways
For young people aged 13-19 that live or study in Tower Hamlets

Are you interested in or currently studying Drama?
Step into the world of theatre, imagination and creativity!

Working with professionals in the theatre industry to explore performance techniques and create a short performance in 2 hours after the workshops!

Dynamic master classes by industry professionals include physical theatre & masks, Page to Stage and Stanislavski and the Method.

Following the short performances young people will have the opportunity to audition for our next big production Hidden Heroes, a site specific show for 2015.

For more information or to book your place, please contact Canan Salih on 020 7736 7912 or email canan.salih@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Tower Hamlets Council’s youth arts platform ‘A’ Team Arts co-ordinates programmes across the borough aimed at young people aged 13-19 years, and up to 25yrs with SEN, who live or study in Tower Hamlets. Using theatre, textiles, design, and music, artists and young people learn, discover and experiment. Ideas are transformed and translated into performances, exhibitions and personal works of art to share with friends, families, the community or sometimes a much wider public.
Synopsis

The Planet of the Grapes and the Attack of the Green Chillies is a surreal but contemporary take on the themes from George Orwell’s Animal Farm, by using fruit and vegetables to portray hierarchy and the passion for change.

This alternative comical look at the Grape War on the Western Front, examines issues of conflict by using the metaphor of the vines and the many colours of their varied produce. From black to white, with varied attire, languages and accents, the grapes represent different cultures, countries and races.

Drawing from his British Bangladeshi, Muslim upbringing Musalman undertakes a humorous journey which encounters beauty and the power of human nature. Live music is provided by two accompanying percussionists. There is also a complimentary table-top pop exhibition.

About Us

www.musalman.me.uk is a freelance creative industries related company fronted by an individual, with the stage name Musalman Qualam. His extensive education incorporates a BA Hons degree in Design and the production of a collection of Islamic Geometric hand-felted, hand painted, soft Mario Wool Scarves. His MA involved research into ‘Digital Bangladesh’ and he is now planning to embark on a PhD study in Saudi Arabia, beginning in 2018. With wide-ranging interests and cultural output, his performing arts pieces involve social commentary as well as Muslim humour.

Script Writer, Actor, Director, Producer: Musalman Qualam
Executive Director: Ejel Khan
Highly Unlikely is a whimsical foray into different perceptions of relationships and marriage told through the perspectives of four individuals with varying values, experiences and beliefs! One protagonist is a young man about to enter into an arranged marriage, another is a free spirited young woman who rejects the whole notion of matrimony, an older man who has remained single and a woman who is a divorcee. Needless to say, some ideas change with age and this light hearted comedy cuts through the 'matchmaking and check-listing' route to marriage and questions the real reasons for wanting to ‘tie the knot’.

The Filim Company are a mixed media production company that specialise in creating engaging and thought provoking productions that have mainstream commercial value entertainment with strong social narrative. Established back in 2002 by two brothers Kayser A. Foyz and Kobir A. Forid have continued to create works in film, stage, documentary and animation and have recently set up their first international branch in Bangladesh. The organisation’s long term objective is to create interesting and engaging pieces of stage, film, drama, and documentaries and to attract both mainstream audiences and niche groups with complex subject matters which are relevant to the fast-paced age we live in.

**Synopsis**

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**Actors:** Hari Sajjan, Sayera Haque, Uzair Bhatti, Taj Kandula  
**Produced by:** Aleya Chowdhury  
**Production Manager:** Kobir A Forid  
**Assistant Producer:** Yasmin Chowdhury  
**Stage Manager:** Shahed Miah
The play is based on life stories of people who came to 'Brick Lane' in London from a place called 'Biswanath' in Sylhet. The play examines the effects of migration on families, along with the dreams and myths about settling here. The storyline revolves around a mother, a son, and his beloved. It looks at the social context of the liberation war and its victims and repercussions. It highlights the sacrifices they made over the years. The play combines an unconventional story, innovative acting, folk songs, and live music including flute and Dhol. It is dedicated to two key charity groups: Colour of Paradise and Shisuder Jonne Amra.

**ABOUT US**

Established in 2012, Natnandan works to nurture the theatre movement of Bangladesh and has successfully delivered a range of drama productions including 2 folk stage shows, 6 street shows, and 1 home production. Natnandan has involved itself with charity works, helping a group of Rana Plaza victims and underprivileged abandoned children of working girls. It contributes 50% of all its collection to these charities.

**SYNOPSIS**

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Supported by

**Actors:** Mosammet Asma Akhter, Shamsun Nahar Begum, Md Fazlur Rahman, Ahsan Habib, Muhammad Delowar Hussain Ripon, Md Mahadi Hasan, Sayem Murshed Talukder, Syed Eraz Mahamodi, Ahmed Akhter Joty

**Set Design:** Syed Eraz Mahamodi, Muhammad Delowar Hussain Ripon

**Light & Sound:** Syed Eraz Mahamodi, Ahmed Akhter Joty

**Music:** Md Mahadi Hasan  **Songs:** Md Fazlur Rahman, Ahsan Habib

**Costume Design:** Shamsun Nahar Begum

**Poster Design:** Dr Shahedur Rahman, Muhammad Delowar Hussain Ripon

**Photography:** Mir Rezaul Hayat Shabbir

**Production Coordinator:** Dr Shahedur Rahman
The collection took inspiration from photographs of Rahemur Rahman’s parents, fusing their heritage from Bangladesh through clothing with the lifestyle of the modern sartorial dream. Looking at colours and textures that were used to create intricate fabrics from weave, knit, and print, the designer merged the aspects into a vibrant spring/summer collection.

Rahemur Rahman’s use of collage is what made ideas and concepts on paper come alive, putting the colourful fabrics against traditional menswear shapes created a strong visual starting point. Through experimental weaving, knitting and traditional screen printing, all practices still used in old world Bangladesh, new fabrics and textures were created to bring alive the sartorial silhouettes of menswear.

Rahemur Rahman sampled weave by hand in London to produce samples and quick ideas into visual formats, but ultimately designs were sent back to the village of Mirpur, Bangladesh to produce the fabric. Using traditional weave he highlights the country’s strengths as a sustainable manufacturer of fabrics, despite recent events such as Rana Plaza. The collection was produced with this ethical ideology to show that Bangladesh is still viable as a fashion entity. The use of fabrics and manufacturers in his collection was very important to the designer, as being Bangladeshi himself he felt it was needed to emphasise the sustainable and ethical uses of Bangladesh as a producer of fashion.

The collection was accessorised with bags, sunglasses and shoes, all made and customised by the designer himself. Rahemur Rahman used soft suede, and lambskin using spray paints to create striking bags to bring out the vibrancy of each look. Traditional menswear shoes were spray painted gold, pink and peach to compliments and enhance the textiles, along with sunglasses to bring forward that fresh new approach to sustainable fashion in high end luxury menswear.
Thursday, 6 November
Arts 1, Pinter Studio,
Queen Mary University of London
The Long Table ‘What ‘use is performance in the Bangladeshi Community?’

The Long Table format for creative debate is a hybrid between a dinner party conversation, a seminar and a performance, combining open-ness with a unique mediating structure provided by the table itself. First developed by Professor Lois Weaver of Queen Mary, University of London, the Long Table is now used internationally as an alternative to more formal modes of discussion. After the great success of last year's Long Table we are pushing the potential of the format in 2014 to go where ordinary debates dare not tread, framing the event with the deliberately provocative question: WHAT "USE" IS PERFORMANCE BY THE BANGLADESHI COMMUNITY? The holding format of the event allows this kind of contested question to embrace digression: to branch out into whether performance BY the Bangladeshi community is the same as FOR or WITH or ABOUT. And with an emphasis on Youth participation (by popular demand from last year's guests) we anticipate a full and challenging evening, whether you watch, whether you witness, whether you speak or whether you launch into a good old fashioned rant!

Monday, 3 November
Kobi Nazrul Centre
My Experience by Sudip Chakroborthy
followed by musical show by Subachan Nattya Sangsad

Sudip Chakroborthy is a theatre practitioner and academic based in Bangladesh who will discuss his journey in creating and touring theatre at home and overseas. As part of the Department of Theatre & Performance Studies at the University of Dhaka, he has worked creatively in India, UK, USA and the Republic of Korea. Performance credits include directing 22 plays, acting in 20 plays, conducting numerous workshops with children and youth organizations and providing set and lighting design for 35 plays in Bangladesh. He received the Charles Wallace Artists Visitorship Award in 2013 –14 and Contacting The World (CTW) Professional Development Programme bursaries from CONTACT Manchester in 2006 & 2010. He has also been supported by the International Festival for Emerging Artists (IFEA) by Theatre Royal Stratford East London in 2008.
Friday, 14 November
Rich Mix, 8.45pm

SAWCC: Dirty Linen - The Challenges of Creating ‘issue led’ Asian drama in Britain

The South Asian Women’s Creative Collective (SAWCC) co-hosts a unique ‘fishbowl-style’ post-show discussion after The Cruel Truth, and begins by asking the question, ‘are Asian writers and artists washing dirty linen in public?’ Asian writers and theatre practitioners often choose to explore complex cultural themes – especially female-centred topics – in public spaces. Could doing so make our communities more vulnerable to cultural stereotyping? Issues such as forced marriage, honour based violence, arranged marriage, and cultural repression – although not specific to Asian culture, do affect many of our communities. Artists therefore often face the dilemma of engaging the public honestly, whilst being sensitive to the British cultural landscape. Does such art build multicultural credibility for mainstream spaces? Does ‘washing dirty linen’ in public spaces enhance or hamper our place in multicultural British society? Join theatre practitioners and experts; as well as the director and cast, as we dialogue via this gathering of people with common interests.

This post-show dialogue is FREE; open to The Cruel Truth attendees, and to others as a stand-alone discussion.

About SAWCC
SAWCC London (pronounced ‘saucy’) are a creative network by and for women arts practitioners and appreciators with origins from, or a keen interest in South Asia. SAWCC nurtures independently-forged British South Asian female creative expression. Featuring free women-only ‘monthlies’ and extremely popular open public events, SAWCC offers a platform where women can actively share, develop, and promote creative ideas and works. Founded in 2004 and celebrating 10 years, SAWCC London is a sister organisation of SAWCC New York, a vibrant respected arts organisation.

Wednesday, 19 November
Kobi Nazrul Centre

Sandpit Arts host Panel Discussion: Theatre in Conflict

The notion of conflict is intimately connected with theatre-making. We rely on conflict to drive our stories forward. A theatre working in the area of conflict transformation is, therefore, working in familiar territory. Or is it? In this panel discussion, invited speakers will explore the role theatre and performance can play in times and spaces of conflict.

Sandpit Arts is a non-profit arts organisation established in 2011. Past work has included The Far Pavilion, Brighton’s first ever festival of Arabic film, music, dance and storytelling as well as our annual playwriting competition for new and emerging writers, Bulbul, which attracts entries from around the world. As well as these activities, we have also run film screenings, lectures, performances and workshops around the country. www.sandpitarts.org.
Mijarul Quayes likes to go by his intellectual hat of un *homme des lettres*. He teaches aesthetics and the history of art at the National Academy of Fine Arts in Dhaka, and writes about the arts in a broad sense as well as focussing on aesthetics, drama and film. He sits on the Board of Trustees of the Bishwo Shahitwo Kendro (World Literature Centre), Dhaka, which he worked to establish with Magsaysay Award winner Abdullah Abu Sayeed. Quayes has been involved with two of the premier international cultural events in Bangladesh, viz., the Asian Art Biennale – Bangladesh, and the Dhaka International Film Festival; having served on the international jury for both the festivals.

In his everyday professional life, Mijarul Quayes is the High Commissioner of Bangladesh in Brazil. A career diplomat, he has previously served as Bangladesh’s Foreign Secretary (2009-2012) and High Commissioner of Bangladesh, London (2012-14).

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Sunday, 23 November
Brady Arts Centre
Reading: Purbanat CIC presents Salty Water & Us

A reading from the tale ‘Salty Water’ gives us an insight into the life of Soidulla who came to the UK from Sylhet (Bangladesh) around the time 1808 to 1810 as a ‘lascar’ sailor and outlines the difficult plight of his journey, how he bonded with his peers and his plucky determination. The story unfolds when he arrives in the UK, and reveals how he came to meet an Englishman and bond in a different way by making unexpected links. The ensuing cultural interaction through food and other shared interests shows how mutual respect and a two-way learning process was achieved.

Murad Khan is a Diaspora theatre activist and a well-known playwright in Bangladesh. While living in Bangladesh he worked with a number of theatre groups as an actor, director and writer as well as teaching drama in two different schools. Now based in the UK, he is an Area Youth Worker who has been involved with several different community art groups and theatre projects across Britain, and has delivered numerous workshops, along with directing plays and short films and helping to develop young peoples’ Arts Award portfolios.
Friday, 28 November
Kobi Nazrul Centre

Hope N Mic

Join us for a night of networking and live acts from singers, poets, wordsmiths and musicians.

Hope n Mic is the best open mic scene in East London, providing a platform for spoken word artists, both established and those who are new to the scene, raising money for charity and giving the public an entertaining night out for only a £5 donation that goes to the charity of choice. We are called Hope n Mic because our event provides hope: hope for those wanting to try out spoken word performances, and hope for the charity we support each month with our entry fee.

Acknowledgements


Brochure information correct at time of going to press.

Festival Curator: Kazi Ruksana Begum
Festival Assistant Producer: Isma Arif
Centre Manager: Jerry Deeks
Marketing and Publicity: Karen Hubbard
Lighting and Sound Advisor: Suna Miah
Lighting & Sound: Tracy Hamill and Mithu Azad
Exhibitions: Jill Fullbrook
Volunteer Development Co-ordinator: Rajia Khan
Festival Volunteers: Salman Chowdhury, Jesmin Chowhury, Md Rasoul, Protthoy Sheikh, Sanjida Afso, Sarah Chakmakchi and Samiah Habiba Hannan
Brady Centre Staff: Doug Bines, Bill Cooper, Titrana Suszynski, Mushahed Ahmed, Hedayet Moula, Khadiza Begum, Janet Trigg, Alison Philcock, Ian Bennett and Regina Drungilas

Queen Mary University of London, in partnership with A Season of Bangla Drama

CPD Co-ordination: Rose Sharp
CPD Facilitation: Ali Campbell
QMUL Web Support: Rob Ellis
QMUL Publicity Support: Mark Byrne
CPD Support by AiR Supply Mentors

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to everyone involved in making A Season of Bangla Drama possible.
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