

*South Asian Arts Society Presents*



# MONSOON<sup>TM</sup>

FESTIVAL OF PERFORMING ARTS

**#WelcomeTheStorm**  
**AUGUST 11 – 21, 2016**

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[www.MonsoonArtsFest.ca](http://www.MonsoonArtsFest.ca)

# WELCOME FROM THE PRODUCERS

GURPREET SIAN & ROHIT CHOKHANI

Welcome to the inaugural Monsoon Festival of Performing Arts. We are honoured and delighted to be co-producing this multilingual festival, which is presented by South Asian Arts Society. It has been a long time dream of the society and us both to create a festival of this nature, which is the only South Asian mandated theatre festival in Canada and one of just a few in North America. Our hope is to provide a new platform for local South Asian artists and also provide a unique opportunity to the multicultural audiences of BC to see South Asian talent from all over the world. We are grateful to the department of Canadian Heritage and the Canada Council for the Arts for their support. The Cultch and Surrey Civic Theatres have not only supported us through their venue sponsorship but have also provided much needed expertise through their presentation history. Without the support from our funders and venue partners, this festival would not have been possible. We hope you enjoy the festival. Namaste! Sat Sri Akal!

# WELCOME FROM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

KALLOL MITRA, BOARD CHAIR

Welcome to the Monsoon! The South Asian Arts Society Board of Directors is excited to welcome you to the first ever Monsoon Festival of Performing Arts, where we will be celebrating South Asian theatre. As a Board we have been proud to put on shows such as Fish Eyes, Bollywood Wedding and I Can't Believe It's Not Butter Chicken as individual productions in the past, however we felt the time had come to put forward a full festival centred around South Asian culture. As the Lower Mainland grows in diversity, the full representation of our varied communities in the arts is an important and vital step forward. The Diaspora, that has become the vibrant South Asian community in British Columbia, and its second generation, which is defining its unique character in Canadian culture, have things to say and want to be heard. Join us as we enjoy the first step toward an inclusive and multi-cultural artistic vibrancy that the city and community have been asking for. Welcome the Storm!



# MESSAGES FROM OUR PARTNERS



## THE HONOURABLE MÉLANIE JOLY - MINISTER OF CANADIAN HERITAGE

Our country's diversity is reflected in the vibrant arts and traditions of Canadians of South Asian origin. As Minister of Canadian Heritage, I invite everyone to enjoy the Monsoon Festival of Performing Arts' presentations of theatre, music and dance. Thank you to all those who helped make this event possible.



## GREGOR ROBERTSON - MAYOR OF THE CITY OF VANCOUVER

On behalf of my colleagues on Vancouver City Council and the citizens of Vancouver, I want to extend my very best wishes to the South Asian Arts Society on their First Annual Monsoon Festival of Performing Arts.

We are proud of Vancouver's reputation as a major centre for the performing arts and it is gratifying that so many local and visiting artists have developed and display their crafts in our city.

Best wishes to the organizers and participants for a successful inaugural festival. I hope everyone in attendance has a wonderful time!



## LINDA HEPNER - MAYOR OF THE CITY OF SURREY

On behalf of Surrey City Council, it is my distinct pleasure to welcome everyone to the Monsoon Festival of Performing Arts presented by the South Asian Arts Society.

The City of Surrey is proud to be a sponsor of the festival and participate in celebrating our rich cultural diversity.

I hope everyone enjoys this exciting festival!

# OPENING NIGHT RECEPTION



**Aug 11, 2016 @ 7:00pm**

The Cultch Historic Theatre

**Tickets:** \$20 (plus s/c & GST)

Celebrate the opening of the inaugural Monsoon Festival of Performing Arts at the beautiful Cultch Historic Theatre with an evening that will include sneak peek performances of the four shows being presented in the 10 days ahead:

- Honour: Confessions of a Mumbai Courtesan
- I Can't Believe It's Not Butter Chicken
- Meena's Dream
- Kehar Singh Di Maut (The Death of Kehar Singh)

Drinks and snacks will be served, along with a live DJ spinning a healthy dose of the latest Bollywood, Bhangra and Pop music.

It's a chance to mingle with your friends, make some new friends and also schmooze with the artists. Be sure to pack your dancing shoes, business cards and a freshly charged cell phone battery!

# HONOUR: CONFESSIONS OF A MUMBAI COURTESAN (NEW YORK)



**Aug 12, 2016 @ 7:00pm**

**Aug 13, 2016 @ 6:00pm**

The Cultch Historic Theatre

**Tickets:** \$20 (plus s/c & GST)

*Post-show talk back on*

*August 12th*

## **MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA" MEETS "SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE"**

Award-winning actress Dipti Mehta's new and acclaimed solo-show visits India's red light district where we meet the eunuch, priest, pimp, mother and daughter who call it home. A fun and poignant look at the exotic, dangerous life of Mumbai's real-life brothels and why they exist. This dark tale of pursuit of truth in modern day Mumbai is a testament to survival and pride and is a mother's gift to her only daughter.

*"Dipti is making India proud."* — **Times of India**

**WRITTEN & PERFORMED BY** Dipti Mehta

**DIRECTED BY** Mark Cirnigliaro

**MUSIC COMPOSITION/SOUND DESIGN** Rhythm Tolee

**CHOREOGRAPHY** Monica Kapoor (Broadway choreographer from Mama Mia and Bombay Dreams)

**LIGHTING DESIGN** Jason Flamos

**COSTUME CONSULTANT** Scott Westervelt

# I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S NOT BUTTER CHICKEN (VANCOUVER)

PRESENTED BY DAILY HIVE



## VANCOUVER SHOW

**Aug 13, 2016 @ 8:30pm**

The Cultch Historic Theatre

## SURREY SHOW

**Aug 14, 2016 @ 6:00pm**

Surrey Arts Centre

**Tickets:** \$20 (plus s/c & GST)

*Post-show talk back on  
August 14th*

*STRICTLY 19+*

Tickets for the Surrey Show are also available from Kamal's Video Palace: (604) 592-9777

## SKETCH COMEDY AT ITS FINEST AND FUNNIEST!

Having spent a couple years off the scene, the I Can't Believe It's Not Butter Chicken gang is back with a brand new show featuring never-before-seen sketches! No topic is out of bounds as they serve up a gut-busting buffet of laugh-till-you-cry, edgy, racy, totally R-rated and fast-paced live sketch comedy.

If you've never been to one of their sketch comedy shows, get ready for a show that tackles (and chuckles at) issues regarding race, sex, diaspora, village life, and pretty much anything else you can think of!

**WRITTEN BY** Kallol Mitra, Leena Manro, Munish Sharma

**PERFORMED & DIRECTED BY** Kallol Mitra, Leena Manro, Munish Sharma, Jason Vaisvila, Carmel Amit

**TECHNICAL COORDINATOR** Jill Perry



# MEENA'S DREAM (WASHINGTON D.C.)



**Aug 19, 2016 @ 7:00pm &**

**Aug 20, 2016 @ 6:00pm**

Surrey Arts Centre

**Tickets: \$20 (plus s/c & GST)**

*Post-show talk back on  
August 19th*

**Tickets are also available from Kamal's Video Palace: (604) 592-9777**

Actress and Playwright Anu Yadav performs a tale of nine year old Meena, who wishes her mother had the medicine she cannot afford. By night, Hindu God Lord Krishna begs her to battle the 'Worry Machine' to save the universe from destruction. Alternating between imagination and reality, Meena must face her deepest fears, and keep dreaming of a world where everyone has enough. A fantastical world with an original score of South Indian classical traditions, jazz, and indie folk.

*"Quite simply, Yadav is incredible!" — Broadway World*

**WRITTEN & PERFORMED BY** Anu Yadav

**DIRECTED BY** Patrick Crowley

**MUSIC** Anjna Swaminathan, Rajna Swaminathan, Sam McCormally

**CHOREOGRAPHY** Paige Hernandez

**TOURING PRODUCER** Ronee Penoi

**DRAMATURG** Caleen Sinnette Jennings

**SOUND DESIGN** Jeffrey Dorfman

**COSTUME DESIGN** Ivania Stack

# CLOSING NIGHT CELEBRATION



**Aug 20, 2016 @ 8:00pm**

Surrey Arts Centre

**Tickets:** \$20 (plus s/c & GST)

**Tickets are also available from Kamal's Video Palace: (604) 592-9777**

Ten days after it's opening in Vancouver, the Monsoon Festival of Performing Arts comes to a close in Surrey with some very talented guest presentations:

- **Meena's Dream creator Anu Yadav** presents a short reading from her play 'Capers', a one-woman show based on the stories of families at DC's Arthur Capper/Carrollsborg public housing projects – nicknamed 'Capers' – who protested the government-funded demolition of their neighborhood.
- **Indo-Trinidadian performer Jiv Parasram** presents his hilarious one-man show, "Take d Milk, Nah?", which answers the question: "Why do Hindus love cows?" Through detailed storytelling, Jiv entertains the audience with the history of his people, and in so doing he explores his own sense of identity. Oh, and he tries to birth a cow. Sort of.
- **Gary Thandi** presents a short reading from his novel entitled "Hyphenated", which addresses social issues like addiction, domestic violence and youth violence without glorifying or focusing on such elements in a sensational manner. Instead, he addresses issues with humour and ultimately focuses on the strength of family. Gary recently did an author reading at the Harrison Festival of the Arts.

Drinks and snacks will be served, along with the hottest Bollywood, Bhangra and Pop music.



# KEHAR SINGH DI MAUT

## (THE DEATH OF KEHAR SINGH)



**Aug 21, 2016 @ 7pm**

Bell Performing Arts Centre

**Tickets:** \$20 (plus s/c & GST)

**CO-PRODUCED WITH  
RANGMANCH THEATRE**

*Performed in Punjabi*

**Tickets are also available from Kamal's Video Palace: (604) 592-9777**

This play is based on a Punjabi folk tale of a young man, Kehar Singh, whose death is orchestrated by his greedy mother-in-law and her two sons. The drama is complemented by comedic characters and humorous dialogue, however the beauty of this play lies in the depiction of the simple-minded Kehar Singh and his wife Ram Kaur, who truly love each other. Although not overly intelligent or worldly in the conventional sense, Kehar Singh wins us over with his pure heart and his declaration that wealth and riches are nothing in the face of true love.

**WRITTEN BY** Ajmer Singh Aulakh

**PERFORMED BY** Kiran Kaur as Ram Kaur, Harwinder Kaur Ratol as Kehar's Mother, Bhupinder Dhaliwal as Kehar's Father, Kamal Bhuller as Kehar's Mother-in-law (Sus), Harmanjit Singh as Kehar Singh, Sukhjot Mann as Ginder Gappi, Navpreet Brar as Anto, Ramanjit Cheema as Banto, Navreet Singh Johal as Pakhar Singh, Rupinderjeet Singh Dhillon as Army Officer, Akshdeep Singh Samra as Jella Singh, Mehram Sharma as Kid.

**DIRECTED BY** Roopinderjit Sharma (Rangmanch Theatre)

**BACKSTAGE** Ranbir Johal, Seerat Rana, Devinderpal Kaur, Roopinderjit Sharma

**MUSIC COMPOSITION/SOUND DESIGN** Rayman Bhuller

**STAGE MANAGER** Shaurya Kanwar

# INDUSTRY SERIES

Project SAT (South Asian Theatre) is happy to announce a series of workshops for artists who self identify as South Asian and/or artists of colour. These free community based initiatives are excellent opportunities for artists of all skill levels ranging from amateur, emerging to established. The workshops are open to actors, storytellers, writers, directors and all members of the community. So in other words, you don't have to be a director to attend the directing workshop.

These workshops are FREE OF CHARGE. Registration and acceptance into the program is required. Visit [monsoonartsfest.ca/industry-series](https://monsoonartsfest.ca/industry-series) for more details.

SAT is a sector development initiative led by Rohit Chokhani and is supported by the Canada Council for the Arts, BC Arts Council and the National Arts Centre - English Theatre.

## **CREATION WORKSHOP WITH ANITA MAJUMDAR**

**August 13th - 11am to 5pm at The Cultch, Vancouver**

Spend the day with Anita Majumdar and learn the art of creation. This workshop is limited to 10 participants only!

## **WRITING WORKSHOP WITH ANOSH IRANI**

**August 17th - 11am to 5pm at Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Surrey Campus**

Join critically acclaimed novelist and playwright Anosh Irani for an all-day writing workshop.

## **DIRECTING AND DRAMATURGY WORKSHOP WITH ROHIT CHOKHANI AND JIVESH PARASRAM (TORONTO'S PANDEMIC THEATRE)**

**August 18 - 11am to 5pm at Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Surrey Campus**

Join Rohit & Jiv in an introduction to directing workshop along with traditional practices in dramaturgy. The session includes a case study in directing using one of Jiv's projects as an example.

# ABOUT THE FESTIVAL

THE HEAVY MONSOON RAINS OF INDIA TAKE OVER THE COUNTRY ON AN ANNUAL BASIS.

Amidst the damage and destruction, the monsoon season is filled with celebration, including dance, music, theatre, film and festivals. The welcoming of captivating and spiritual force of the monsoon dates back thousands of years in India. Vancouver is also known for its heavy rainfall. With the intersection of these two natural phenomena, the goal is to celebrate the monsoon here in the Lower Mainland by welcoming the storm with the 1st Annual Monsoon Festival of Performing Arts, presented by South Asian Arts Society.

In its inaugural year, the festival has a deliberate spotlight on South Asian theatre. South Asian Canadians are the largest visible minority group in Canada, yet a simple scan of Vancouver's performing arts community suggests that there are very few South Asian theatre professionals currently working in our industry.

Aside from the presentations, community engagement is also key, with multilingual development workshops on dramaturging, playwriting, directing and acting, along with readings and an "industry" series are also in the pipeline.

# ABOUT THE PRESENTER

SOUTH ASIAN ARTS SOCIETY

South Asian Arts Society is committed to creating performance and educational opportunities for professional and amateur artists, while developing artistic forums that act as a platform for building knowledge of South Asian culture via new projects, new ideas, and new collaborations.

*[www.southasianarts.ca](http://www.southasianarts.ca)*



# PRODUCTION TEAM

**CO-PRODUCER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:** Gurpreet Sian

**CO-PRODUCER & ARTISTIC PRODUCER:** Rohit Chokhani

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:** Jennifer Deol

**MEDIA RELATIONS:** JLS Entertainment

**DIGITAL MARKETING:** Murray Paterson Marketing Group

**PHOTOGRAPHER:** Jesse Winter Heading

**INDUSTRY SERIES/ARTISTIC SERVICES:** Emma Laishram

**VOLUNTEERS:** Thank you to all the volunteers for their dedication and hard work in support of the festival.

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Kallol Mitra** CHAIR

**Sabrina Saran** SECRETARY

**Vishal Hiralal** TREASURER

**Vineeta Minhas**

**Harpreet Johal**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In addition to our production team, board of directors, volunteers and sponsors, the festival would not have been possible without the support from many others whom we would like to acknowledge:

Barb Wolfe, Christina Campbell, Cindy Reid, Heather Redfern, Joyce Rosario, Kent Gallie, Nathan Medd, Norman Armour, Pam Patel, Rayman Bhuller, Cindy's Wedding Centre, Siddharthas Kitchen, Verka Foods and our friends & family.

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