

Tower Hamlets Council presents
**A SEASON OF
BANGLA DRAMA**
20 ACTS OF LOVE
1 - 26 NOVEMBER 2023



www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/seasonbangladrama
#BanglaDrama23



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



WELCOME TO A SEASON OF BANGLA DRAMA

Welcome to A Season of Bangla Drama 2023.

We are thrilled to announce that after 20 years, Tower Hamlets' acclaimed and unique theatre festival is going from strength to strength.

Throughout November, communities from across the borough can come together, celebrate and discover new writing and performance. In 2023, the season focuses on the theme of love in all of its guises.

We are also very proud of the immense homegrown talent that will have a platform at this festival. It gives a voice to young and emerging writers as well as those who are more established. All tackle the phenomenon of British-Bengali identity with a range of perspectives. All plays, including debut performances, are relevant to an East London audience.

Topics explored include the notion of love conquering all despite adversity. Real life is prominent in three singular productions. The power of poetry is showcased; comedy within marriage is

given a spotlight; and wider art-forms include music, dance and movement!

The festival's fringe programme of events also has plenty on offer including exhibitions, talks and walks, so there will be something for everyone to enjoy.

We hope you can make the most of this diverse and inspiring month-long festival.

Do keep an eye on www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/seasonbangladrama (the listings pages) for full details of this exciting programme.

Executive Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

**Councillor Iqbal Hossain
Cabinet Member for Culture and
Recreation**



MARRIAGE IS MURDER BY MARBLE SINEW

**Wednesday
1 November –
Saturday 4 November**

Doors 6.30pm | Show 7.30pm

BRADY ARTS CENTRE

English | 80 minutes

£12, £15 - opening night | 12+

SYNOPSIS

Marriage is Murder is an ensemble dark comedy murder mystery. It centres around the perilous task of finding a life partner.

Siyena, a jaded marriage detective shows up at a wedding to collect an overdue payment, only to find herself in the middle of a murder. Now she and her trusted assistant Kasandra will have to find the killer amongst them while trying to answer what love looks like in this modern age.

Finding a life partner can be the death of you!

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Marble Sinew tell genre based, character driven stories in stage and film. Inspired by life experiences, these are tales of extraordinary situations. They include drama, comedy and suspense.



TWENTY ACTS OF LOVE BY COLLAB ARTS

**Wednesday
1 November**

Doors 6.30pm | Show 7.30pm

BRADY ARTS CENTRE

**English | 15 minutes
(first part of double bill)**

SYNOPSIS

"I let twenty years of love blind me to his flaws."

Maya and Amanda are from different generations, cultures and backgrounds. They meet for the first time in a hospital waiting room. They meet in unusual circumstances. They start to question their understanding of each other and the people whose lives are interwoven with theirs. They embark on unlocking the truth.

This is a 15-minute performance piece. It is a commission especially for A Season of Bangla Drama 2023. It tells the story of the second generation of Bengalis who have seen the struggle of their parents. They have fought hard to avoid history repeating itself for their siblings.

This piece may include inappropriate language. There are also moments of outrage and mentions of physical injury.

ABOUT THE COMPANY

This collaborative performance piece was written, directed and acted by Rokshana Khan. It is acted and produced by Clarice Montero. Both are long-time participants of the festival. Both have studied drama and worked in community theatre.



BIBORNO KRISHNOCHURA BY MONCHOSHOILEE

Sunday 5 November

Doors 6.30pm | Show 7.30pm

BRADY ARTS CENTRE

Bangla/English | 70 minutes

£10 | 5+

SYNOPSIS

Mr Kamran is a towering, award-winning figure in Bengali literature. Yet his son Rudra is unfamiliar with his father's literary works and is indifferent to his legacy. This is due to a language barrier and his western lifestyle. This stems from a fascination with English culture. It alienates Rudra from his parents. In an interview with a reporter, Mr Kamran realised that no-one will inherit his creative output. Furthermore, he and his wife Sajeda are drifting apart.

The focus shifts to single mother Nayla Haque, and her attraction to Irfan who is Pakistani. The cultural differences, perceived hostility and language barrier are a challenge for their relationship. Nayla is aware of the ensuing tension between romantic love and ancestral love, or a sense of belonging. All protagonists face inner conflicts. Can love help resolve these issues or are love's many faces the root of the problem.

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Monchoshooilee have been part of A Season of Bangla Drama since 2010. They mirror the best and worst of society on stage. This both educates and entertains the audience. Monchoshooilee fuse eastern and western theatre practices to engage new generations.

HARMONIUM MELODIES BY DHANUSH VEENA GIRIDHAR

Thursday
9 November

Doors 6.30pm | Show 7.30pm

BRADY ARTS CENTRE

English | 50 minutes

£10 | 5+

SYNOPSIS

A theatre piece with musical elements that explores how the love of music spans different generations and brings people together.

"Harmonium Melodies" looks at how the love of music spans generations. It explores how people express themselves with music. The story follows a young and traditionally trained musician who yearns to be a pop star. It follows the hurdles faced in pursuit of such goals.

It maps the journey through the way they engage with music.

The play looks at how people across generations support, and sometimes judge, decisions made by those pursuing music. The story uses music as a backdrop to reveal the importance of valuing the community.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Dhanush is an emerging young theatre practitioner. His play, 'The Startup', was described as a 'standout' piece in the ACT II Festival. He has performed in Blue Elephant Theatre's inter-generational community play. He trained at Tara Theatre's Young Company and is part of WAC Actors Young Company.



THE LIGHTNING KATHAK BY KATHAK ROCKERS

Friday 10 November

Doors 7pm | Show 8pm

BRADY ARTS CENTRE

60 minutes

£25 | 5+

SYNOPSIS

Experience the mesmerising beauty of traditional Indian dance like never before! This innovative and modern interpretation of an ancient art form is based on the epic 'Mahabharat'. It is brought to you by the visionary founder of Kathak Fusion, Kumar Sharma. He is a renowned youth icon of traditional dance. And that's not all! Brace yourself for an unforgettable performance by the sensational Kathak Rockers!

Join us for an extraordinary event. Let the electrifying energy and passion of these performers ignite your senses. Be transported to a realm where music and movement intertwine in perfect harmony. This is an event you cannot afford to miss!

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Kathak Rockers explore the new world of Indian classical dance Kathak with a modern approach to tradition. The prestigious crew bring contemporary poise and finesse to this traditional dance form. They take pride in their ability to preserve Indian culture and give it a global reach.

The Lightning Kathak is produced by Bolly Flex.



EXTRAMARITAL BY AYNA ARTS

**Saturday 11
November**

**Matinee Doors 5pm. Show
5.30pm | Doors 7pm, Show
7.30pm**

BRADY ARTS CENTRE
English/Bangla | 60 minutes
£10 | 12+

SYNOPSIS

Set in post-lockdown UK 'Extramarital', 60 per cent of which is in English, is a light-hearted play within a play. The story follows the extramarital affairs of two couples who take the love and strength in their relationships for granted. They are bored, and search for excitement and pleasure elsewhere.

As rehearsals for the play descend into chaos, slap-stick comedy is on show along with a glimpse of the drama

'back-stage'. The parallels between the actors' lives on and off the stage become clearer. The line between reality and fiction gets blurred.

The play ends with the main characters realising the value of their existing relationships. This entertaining romp will give the audience food for thought.

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Ayna Arts provides a creative platform for empowerment and self-expression. They focus on theatre productions that explore social and humanitarian issues. This way, they help develop a sense of community. Ayna Arts is committed to building bridges between generations and cultures. It aims to develop a new arts audience, particularly from the BAME communities.



SHIMANA PERIYE (BEYOND THE BOUNDARY) BY BANGLADESH UDICHI SHILPI GOSHTI UK SANGSHAD

Sunday 12 November

Doors 6.30pm | Show 7.30pm

BRADY ARTS CENTRE

Bangla/English | 60 minutes

£10 | 5+

SYNOPSIS

This is a story about the love of two young people from different cultures.

One was born and brought up in Birmingham with parents who are Bangladeshi born Muslims. They herald from two different regions of Bangladesh. Despite differing social backgrounds, they fell in love. They married against their parents' wishes and migrated to the UK.

The other is offspring of a Somali refugee family. They meet at university and are idealists who dream about justice and a lack of prejudice in society. They share their experiences which leads to a greater understanding of one another. After graduation they decide to tie the knot. Breaking the news to their families causes conflict. Despite a shared religion, their respective Asian and African backgrounds are very different. They face prejudice and misinformation. This puts a huge pressure on their love.



ABOUT THE COMPANY

Bangladesh Udichi Shilpi Gosthi UK Sangshad works across creative disciplines. It promotes the cultural heritage of Bangladesh. They use music, dance, drama, literature, and more. The organisation encourages progressive thinking.

Udichi is based in London with a branch in Birmingham. It also runs Soyttan Sen School of Performing Arts (SSSPA) located in Tower Hamlets.

THE GREEKS HAVE 6 WORDS FOR LOVE BY MMAJ PRODUCTIONS

**Thursday 16
November**

Doors 6.30pm | Show 7.30pm

BRADY ARTS CENTRE

English | 55 minutes

£10 | 16+

SYNOPSIS

The Greeks Have 6 Words for Love is based on a true story. This is a story of friendship which straddles cultures and religions. It focuses on three residents of Tower Hamlets.

The play is set in the 22nd century. Researchers are trying to discover if love actually existed in the first decades of the 21st century. They see the prevalence of wars, hatred and fear stoked by social media.

Researchers discover recordings of conversations between the three friends. One is called Jelinek. She shares a surname with the man who spearheaded voice recognition for IBM in the 1970s. She is Jewish. The other two are nameless, but one is a Bengali cockney woman and the other is a Somali woman refugee.

The story explores numerous aspects of love, despite the barriers put up by communities.



ABOUT THE COMPANY

Alana Jelinek, writer, and Maheen Mohammadally, director are London-based artists. They have collaborated on this project under MMAJ Productions.

Alana migrated to Tower Hamlets from Australia in 1991. She is passionate about the area and its stories. Maheen is from London. Like Alana, she is eager to amplify under-represented voices.

CYCLES BY FARHA BI

Friday 17 November

Doors 6.30pm | Show 7.30pm

BRADY ARTS CENTRE

English | 60 minutes

£10 | 12+

SYNOPSIS

In 2018, feeling burnt-out and untethered from her sense of self, Farha cycled 15,000km from Mile End to Benin. She took to the road to rediscover the ancestral knowledge within. She sought a sense of belonging and freedom through nature. In this evening of storytelling, Farha invites you in, to share a cup of chaa and a story, and to become part of her journey.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Farha is a creative thinker, community organiser, social justice activist and storyteller. She breathes life into wild dreams! She loves to slow-travel. She explores different ways of (un)learning, (re)centring ancestral knowledge. This is through daily practice and connections with land. Farha grew up in both 1990s Birmingham and 1960s Kashmir. She has mastered the art of time travel.

Shavena is a singer and musician from London. She trained in Carnatic music and spent some time as a jazz singer. Drawing from these and other influences she creates vibrant, soulful compositions.





AVINASHI ANURAG (ETERNAL LOVE) BY ADITY ROY DANCE CIC

**Saturday 18
November**

Doors 6.30pm | Show 7.30pm

BRADY ARTS CENTRE

English | 60 minutes

£15 (includes after show dinner)

SYNOPSIS

An autistic child fights against all the odds and many obstacles that life throws at her. These include difficulties at school, socially and at home. She also feels anxious and insecure because of the war in Ukraine. Her ability to overcome these obstacles is only possible through acceptance and love.

This production highlights the need for empathy, inclusion, acceptance and

love. This is particularly true of the more vulnerable members of society including young people with special needs.

This production uses dance to convey an important message. Namely, that love can help one can find the eternal beauty, peace and essence of life. It can help overcome problems and challenges, both amongst individuals and nations.

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Adity Roy is a London based dancer, choreographer and teacher. She trained in Bharatanatyam Indian dance. She has performed in the UK and abroad. She has choreographed an array of work in schools and for the community. She teaches dance movements to neurodiverse children with a variety of special needs.



BANDHAN (EVERLASTING LOVE) BY TRIOARTS

**Saturday 18
November**

Doors 7pm | Show 7.30pm

RICH MIX

Bangla/English | 60 minutes

£10

SYNOPSIS

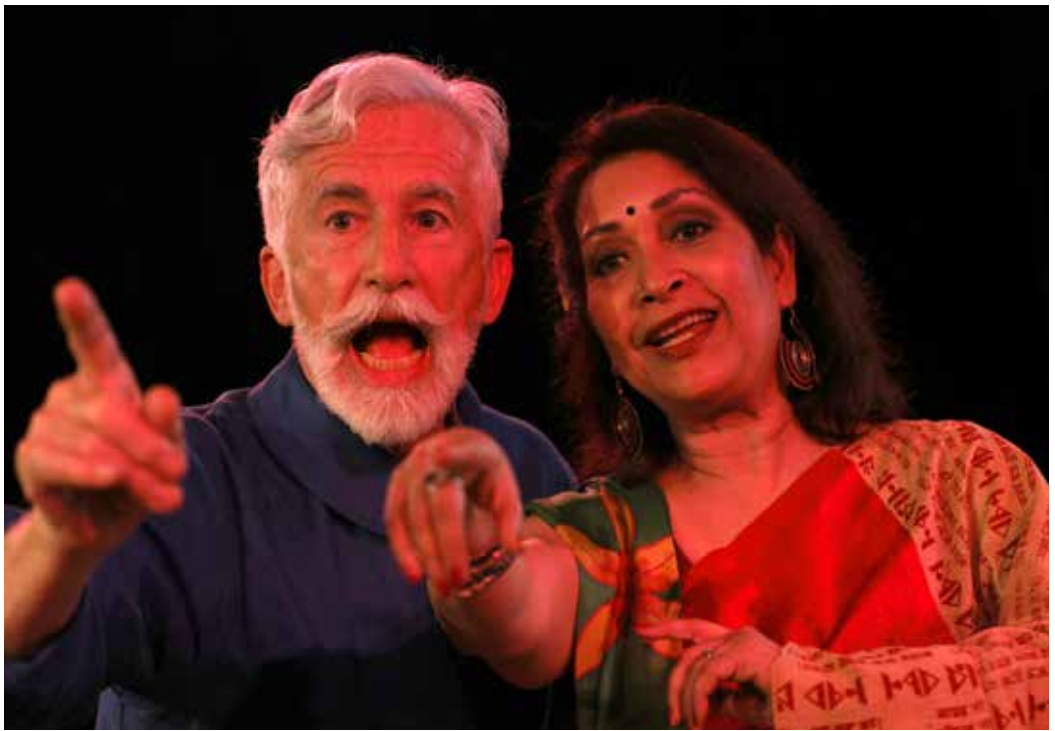
This is an adaptation of 'Mejdidi', a popular classic short story from Bengali literature. It was written decades ago by Sharat Chandra Chattopadhyay. Its message is still relevant. The backdrop is a modern British Bangladeshi family. This version of the story depicts the same motherly affection.

This play tackles the theme of "love" in a unique way. It represents the undying love between an orphan boy and his adopted mother, Samira. She is willing to sacrifice her family relationships for the happiness of the orphan.

This play contrasts love and care with self-centredness. It shows how two strangers bond and forge a mother-son relationship. It shows that a mother's love transcends boundaries of personal and social limitations.

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Trioarts is a London based cultural organisation formed in 2020. They use music, dance and drama to focus on current issues facing the Bangladeshi community. They concentrate on issues facing women and children.



TEN YEARS EAST BY DAEDALUS THEATRE COMPANY

Sunday 19 November

Doors 5pm | Show 5.30pm

RICH MIX

English | 60 minutes

£10

SYNOPSIS

Join us for an evening of compelling stories and unforgettable songs. These span the diverse cultures of east London. Ten Years East is a celebration of love as a language that crosses borders and breaks boundaries. Love is bound up with the memories of lost homelands and dreams of new frontiers.

The East storytelling project presents an exciting lineup of musicians and storytellers. Material reflects the rich cultures of our East End. It ranges from English folklore to Bengali tales and Jewish songs. All ages are welcome.

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Daedalus Theatre Company is a queer-led, Bethnal Green-based charity. They run projects that explore big topics across many perspectives. They use a range of art forms to connect arts professionals and communities.

WHO IS THERE? BY PURBANAT CIC

Sunday 19 November

Doors 6.30pm | Show 7.30pm

BRADY ARTS CENTRE

English/Bangla | 60 minutes

£10 | 7+

SYNOPSIS

'Who is there?' is a satire on culture and freedom of speech. It is a humorous foray into the rights of performers and artists. The play explores whether freedom of speech is actual or mythical. It intertwines this with love for ones birthplace and heritage.

How is patriotism defined? It looks at the concept of a "Big Brother" state. Has

government surveillance and control reached ridiculous extremes? These questions are prevalent through the story of a group of eccentric characters. They become heroes of resistance in a dystopian society where citizens' lives are tightly controlled.

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Purbanat CIC has been based in the West Midlands since 2014. They work with their partners to create theatre that works across cultures. They do this by reaching beyond the traditional concept of theatre. They share creative activities that touch the hearts and minds of targeted communities.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2023

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

EXHIBITIONS:

Wednesday 1 – Sunday 26 November

Seasons of Bangla Drama, BAC

Brick Lane: A Community Portrait, KNC

MARRIAGE IS MURDER 1
BAC £15 (opening night)

MARRIAGE IS MURDER 2
BAC £12

6

7

A LOVE LETTER TO MY DARKNESS 8
QMUL FREE 6PM

HARMONIUM MELODIES 9
BAC

13

BENGALI HISTORY WALK 14
£5 2PM

LOVE, UNFILTERED 15
R/25 FREE 7PM

THE GREEKS HAVE 6 WORDS FOR LOVE 16
BAC

20

21

22

STORIES FROM HOME 23
QMUL FREE 6PM

Doors open 6.30pm, shows start at 7.30pm sharp
(unless otherwise stated)

Tickets cost £10 (unless otherwise stated)

More info: 020 7364 7900

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/seasonbangladrama

VENUES

ArtsOne,
Pinter Studio
Queen Mary
University of
London (QMUL)
Mile End Road,
E1 4NS

Art Pavilion (AP)
Clinton Road,
E3 4QY

Brady Arts
Centre (BAC)
192-196
Hanbury Street,
E1 5HU

Grocers Wing
(GW)
Tower Hamlets
Town Hall,
Whitechapel
Road, E1 1BJ

Kobi Nazrul
Centre (KNC)
30 Hanbury
Street, E1 6QR

Rich Mix (RM)
35-47 Bethnal
Green Road,
E1 6LA

Root/25 (R25)
116B Bow Road,
E3 3AA

Toynbee Hall
(TH)
18 Commercial
Street E1 6LS

FRIDAY

MARRIAGE IS MURDER 3
BAC £12

USE YOUR WORDS 10
QMUL FREE
6.30PM
THE LIGHTNING KATHAK
BAC £25 8PM

BANGALIANA 17
RM FREE 6PM
CYCLES
BAC
BHALABASA
TH FREE 5.30PM

THE TWO HEADED BIRD 24
BAC

SATURDAY

MARRIAGE IS MURDER 4
BAC £12
EASTENDERS1985
QMUL FREE 4PM
EQUALITY OF LOVE KNC FREE
6PM
SPICE WARS AP
FREE 6.30PM

EXTRAMARITAL 11
BAC +5.30PM
MATINEE

MASTERCLASS BY GEO BRITTO 18
GW FREE 10.30AM
ETERNAL LOVE
BAC £15
EVERLASTING LOVE
RM

A PALANQUIN OF ONE'S OWN 25
BAC

SUNDAY

SUNDAY IS SAREE DAY 5
BAC FREE 1PM
FOR THE LOVE OF TAGORE
QMUL FREE 4PM
BIBORNO
KRISHNOCHURA
BAC

KNOTTED 12
QMUL FREE
6PM
SHIMANA PERIYE
BAC

TEN YEARS EAST 19
RM 5.30PM
WHO IS THERE?
BAC

YOUTHFULNESS 26
RETURNS
BAC

To book tickets (booking fees apply):
<https://seasonbangladrama23.eventbrite.com>

Tickets can only be purchased online

1-26 NOVEMBER 2023



THE TWO HEADED BIRD (DOU MARTHA PAKHI) BY TAMARIND THEATRE CO.

Friday 24 November

Doors 6.30pm | Show 7.30pm

BRADY ARTS CENTRE

English | 60 minutes

£10

SYNOPSIS

The Two Headed Bird is an exciting interactive performance. It uses theatre storytelling with music, song and dance to entertain the whole family. A young woman concerned about the environment visits her grandfather on the River Thames. She and her friends are unhappy that the local business magnate wants to turn their green space into a car park.

Her grandfather shares his story of Tarun the fishermen. He goes in search of the mythical Two Headed Bird to achieve fame and fortune. Everyone warns him not to go including his mother and his friend Pubali who loves him. Against their wishes Tarun goes out on a stormy night and encounters the deadly leopard. Will the soldiers capture him and punish the village? Can Pubali save him in time. Will Tarun be saved or will he meet disaster?

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Tamarind Theatre Company make interactive theatre storytelling for everyone. Since 2009 it has created 12 productions which celebrate language, culture and well-being. They use stories originating in India, Bangladesh and the UK. They also offer arts and theatre training to new artists, young people, families and communities.



PRITHOK PALONKO (A PALANQUIN OF ONE'S OWN) BY BISHWO SHAHITTO KENDRO (BSK) UK

**Saturday 25
November**

Doors 6.30pm | Show 7.30pm

BRADY ARTS CENTRE

Bangla/English | 60 minutes

£10 | 10+

SYNOPSIS

This play tells the legendary love story of iconic Bengali poet Abul Hasan and scholar-poet Suraiya Khanum. It is set in the post-independence era of Bangladesh.

Suraiya Khanum is a brilliant Cambridge graduate and advocate for Bangladesh's independence. She returns to teach at Dhaka University in the early 1970s, becoming a muse for young poets. There, she falls in love with Abul Hasan, a celebrated modern poet. Their love

blossoms, and they continue to inspire one another's poetry. Hasan's life is cut short in 1975, leaving Suraiya devastated.

The play also explores parallels with Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes. It embraces the confessional movement of the mid-20th century. It highlights the profound influence of love upon poetry and the impact of love and loss on the oeuvre of these writers. It depicts the solace of nature as an escape from personal turmoil. The enduring legacy of Hasan and Khanum's poetry is a testament to their profound connection.

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Bishwo Shahitto Kendro, UK (BSK, UK) engage the community through events in Bengali and English. They run festivals and workshops. These help forge connections between participants from diverse backgrounds.

FHIRE PAWA JOUBAN (YOUTHFULNESS RETURNS) BY MITALI ARTS GROUP

Sunday 26 November

Doors 6.30pm | Show 7.30pm

BRADY ARTS CENTRE

Bangla | 60 minutes

£10

SYNOPSIS

The play follows the story of eight characters. All are in their senior years. It follows their journeys from loneliness and isolation to well-being and connectedness. It is a testament to how lifestyle changes can help overcome depression.

Love and friendship are key to this transformation. Meeting up, making plans and helping one another through group activities and physical exercise all play a part.

Hilarity ensues when Ameena is mistakenly assumed to be pregnant. There is also romance in the air between an older bachelor Moni, and Meena, a singer.

The play ends with the affirmation that the characters are, 'retired but not redundant'!

ABOUT THE COMPANY

The Mitali Arts Group was formed in 1978. The group has produced many plays, both in Bangla and English. The group members are talented, semi-professional members of the community.

They develop their own scripts, focusing on issues relevant to the local community.





EXHIBITION: SEASONS OF BANGLA DRAMA BY REHAN JAMIL

1 – 26 November

BRADY ARTS CENTRE

Free

Seasons is a stunning visual record to mark two decades of A Season of Bangla Drama. Photographs by Rehan Jamil paint a vivid picture of countless productions which encapsulate the

enormous breadth of this festival. The themes covered have included human rights, women's rights, freedom of speech, coming of age, self-identity and far more.

Rehan Jamil is a social documentary photographer working with marginalised communities with a particular focus on British Muslims across the UK.



BRICK LANE: A COMMUNITY PORTRAIT BY KOIS MIAH

1 – 26 November

KOBI NAZRUL CENTRE

Free

This window display is a preview of Brick Lane: A Community Portrait. This tells the stories of British Bangladeshis from Brick Lane. This iconic street became the heart of a fledgling community in the 1960s. The first of a series of photos and video interviews captures the narratives of the migration journey. They record the complexities of transition to east London and how it shaped their lives.

The photographs celebrate the ordinary men and women who have helped make Brick Lane the extraordinary community it is today. This project documents a unique time and place, capturing the last of those voices as a legacy of our recent past.

Kois Miah is a London based British Bangladeshi photographer and film maker. His primary projects combine photography/film with community participation. He has a personal connection with the cityscape and communities living and working in East London.

EQUALITY OF LOVE BY CHANDOSIK

Saturday 4 November

Doors 5.30pm | Show 6pm

KOBI NAZRUL CENTRE

Bangla | 90 minutes

Free

This poetry performance celebrates the equality of love. People can love no matter their skin colour or religion. Words and imagery explore the beauty of diversity and how it enriches our lives. Words remind us that love knows no boundaries. It is a universal force. The performance highlights the



importance of acceptance, tolerance and understanding. With each word and every beat, the performers will inspire us to embrace our differences.

Five elocutionists will perform, and two to three poets contribute their thoughts. We welcome audience feedback. So come be a part of this unforgettable evening and let love shine in all its glory!

SPICE WARS BY BRICK LANE CIRCLE AND ARTS WITHOUT BORDERS

Saturday 4 November

Doors 6pm | Show 6.30pm

ART PAVILION

English | 60 minutes

Free | 11+

This captivating play will take you on a journey through time. It will unravel the history and allure of the Spice Wars set on the Banda Islands (Indonesia).

Two workmen uncover a chest containing the secrets and stories of a series of events known as the Spice Wars. These took place in 17th Century Indonesia (Banda Islands) between the British East India Company, the Dutch



India Company and the Portuguese traders. Learn about the British Chandlers, the Bengal slaves and the Dutch officers. All played a role in this spicy story of love, power, survival and trade.

EASTENDERS1985 #THEBANGLAMIXTAPE BY LORI KING

**Saturday 4
November**

Doors 3.30pm | Show 4pm

ARTSONE, PINTER STUDIO

English | 45 minutes

Free

This reimagines the 1980s representation of the Bengali East End using children's puppet theatre. That generation of immigrants possessed a rich culture. They formed a strong

impression that permeated into the current day. How can the children of the borough know what came before them? How can they see a visualisation of that era in a way they understand?

Lori Zakariyya King is a writer and performer. He's a former BBC Writersroom alum. He has delivered hundreds of Rhyme Time sessions to children in Tower Hamlets and beyond. His themes are nostalgia and reframed memory, sometimes within an experimental comedy context.

SUNDAY IS SAREE DAY

Sunday 5 November

1-6pm

BRADY ARTS CENTRE

English | 60 minutes

Free | Women Only Event

Come and celebrate womanhood through both sarees and the Bangladeshi delicacy, pittha. There will be a variety of entertainment, stalls and activities. These include an art workshop for mothers and children, saree workshop and a fashion show. There will also be traditional Bengali music, dance, and spoken Bengali poetry. Delicious food will be available to buy. This is a women-only event.

Dress code: any shade of pink



Mohila Ongon is a grass-roots organisation which represents ethnic minority and Bangladeshi women. They organise a wide range of activities, events and educational workshops/sessions.

FOR THE LOVE OF TAGORE BY BRITISH BILINGUAL POETRY SOCIETY

Sunday 5 November

Doors 3.30pm | Show 4pm

ARTSONE, PINTER STUDIO

English | 60 minutes

Free

Exploring this season's theme, BBPC will engage people of all ages in listening to and developing poems about love. This can include love of family, friends, pets and nature. It is a collaborative writing workshop session. It will take inspiration from readings of Tagore and there will be the opportunity to perform the poems which emerge.

AMAR ONDHOKARKE EKTA CHITTI (A LOVE LETTER TO MY DARKNESS) BY TANHA QUADI

**Wednesday 8
November**

Doors 5.30pm | Show 6pm

ARTSONE, PINTER STUDIO

Bangla/English | 90 minutes

Free

Join the S/huno Collective for an evening of spoken word, poetry and conversation. This will explore mental health and healing in the British Bangladeshi community. They will be sharing stories of love, acceptance and the darkness within. This event will host poets, speakers, and a short film. Have a chance to share your own work and contribute to a poetry book. Open to all. Be curious.



The S/huno Collective is a group dedicated to the voices of the unheard. It brings together oneness through culture, faith, and creativity. The name stems from the Bangla word which means to "listen". It highlights the power and healing in collective listening.

USE YOUR WORDS BY CENTRE STAGE & ARTS WITHOUT BORDERS

Friday 10 November

Doors 6pm | Show 6.30pm

ARTSONE, PINTER STUDIO

English | 60 minutes

Free

Join us for an evening of live spoken word, poetry and performance with Use Your Words. Staying with the theme of 'love', we hope this showcase will inspire you to explore love through art. It follows a series of workshops with young talent from east London.



READING: KNOTTED BY QUEEN OF ARTS THEATRE COMPANY

Sunday 12 November

Doors 5.30pm | Show 6pm

ARTSONE, PINTER STUDIO

English | 60 minutes

Free | 12+

Knotted is a new play by artist, theatre maker and writer Tasnim Siddiqa Amin. The story follows two best friends who have found themselves trapped underground someplace. They must work together to escape, but do they trust each other? A gripping coming-

of-age tale about the blurry lines between love and friendship.

The play tackles themes of love, friendship, sexual identity and internal religious conflict. The title alludes to the struggle that is common for young queer people from Muslim families.

The play has a radical narrative structure. The timelines chop and change. The stories they tell one another become surreal. What is real and what is fantasy? What secrets remain unspoken?

BENGALI HISTORY WALK BY SWADHINATA TRUST

**Tuesday 14
November**

2pm

ALTAB ALI PARK

60 minutes

£5

The Banglatown walk and talk is for anybody interested in Bengali migration and settlement in the East End of London. It is an opportunity to learn about the Bengali community's history and heritage. Find out about the lives of people with diverse backgrounds, values and customs. The experiences of Bengalis in the East End highlight both the value of multiculturalism and the tensions it creates. The walk/talk will look at the legacy of the British Empire.



Migration from the colonies continued throughout the twentieth century. A poet will be joining this year's walk to add a new dimension to this engaging, interactive slice of local history.

Meeting point: Shahid Minar (Martyrs Monument), Altab Ali Park, Adler Street/ Whitechapel High Street.

THE OITIJ-JO COLLECTIVE PRESENTS BHALABASA

Friday 17 November

5.30pm

TOYNBEE HALL

60 minutes

Free | 13+

A collection of short films from independent film makers, on love. Curated by Zubayr Hossain. Is this love? Whom do we love? Is it love by any other name? Without love. Questions and Answers. Very personal. The essence of who we are or who we become. The films will explore and look at some of these and many other themes on love.

<https://Bhalabasa.eventbrite.co.uk>

RESTLESS BEINGS PRESENTS LOVE, UNFILTERED

**Wednesday 15
November**

Doors 6.30pm | Show 7pm

ROOT/25
90 minutes
Free | 16+

An evening of poetry and song (Bangla & English) celebrating love in all its forms, unfiltered. A gathering of poets and singers from across the city sharing their take on this year's theme. Refreshments will be available to buy with all proceeds going to charity.



BRITBANGLA PRESENTS BANGALIANA

Friday 17 November

Doors 5.30pm | Show 6pm

RICH MIX
English | 90 minutes
Free

A creative panel of British Bangladeshi women share their experiences of love, culture and heritage. They explore these topics through spoken word, comedy and film. Join us for some witty and captivating exchanges. The audience will be able to join in the discussion.

The panel will include Momtaz Begum-Hossain, journalist and Colour



Therapist, Shama Kun, Sustainable Designer – Culturally Yours, Shofa Miah, Writer and Artist, and Inshra Sakhawat Russell, Filmmaker, Writer and Creative Director.

MASTERCLASS BY GEO BRITTO, ESCOLA DE TEATRO POPULAR

**Saturday 18
November**

10.30am-4.30pm

**GROCCERS WING, TOWER
HAMLETS TOWN HALL**

Free

This practical talk will introduce you to the activities of the Escola de Teatro Popular (ETP). Based in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, it works with 8 groups

from social movements, favelas, occupations and trade unions. They use the Theatre of the Oppressed as a form of struggle against fascism. Participants will engage in theatrical exercises and games. This will help you understand how the work happens in practice.

Geo Britto and Julian Boal created the ETP as a training tool for those working in social movements. They use theatre as an instrument to overcome struggle.

STORIES FROM HOME BY MILE END COMMUNITY PROJECT

**Thursday 23
November**

Doors 5.30pm | Show 6pm

ARTSONE, THE BLOC

English | 60 minutes

Free

Discover the heartwarming "Stories from Home" project. This is an award-winning collaboration. It brings together the QMUL Language Acquisition Lab, Mile End Community Project, Human Stories Films, and Blooming Parenting. Short, illustrated films take inspiration from stories shared by grandparents with their grandchildren.

This project aims to strengthen bonds



between generations. It fosters a deeper appreciation of heritage languages. It celebrates the wealth of traditions within our local neighbourhoods.

Join us for a short film screening session and conversation about the project. Share your own stories. Help preserve cultural heritage.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A M Neswar - Founder of A Season of Bangla Drama, Emma Warden, Melanie Goldstein, Fokrul Hoque, Rukom Alom, Urmee Mazhar, Hafiz Alam Baksh, Farhan Masud Khan, Rehan Jamil, Aoife Monks, Alex Brown, Tabaraqul Islam, Dip Joy, Sripriya Sudhakar, Alex Hatt, Muhaiminul Islam, Ken Brown, Abdul Salique, Hassan Ahmed, Shohida Begum, Janet Tuck, Mahbub Rahman, Adam Renvoize, Phillip Nduoyo, Alima Khatun, Andy Hemming, Jessica Odubayo, and Cheryl Westmacott.

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

WHO WE ARE

Festival Producer	Kazi Ruksana Begum
Lead CPD Co-ordinator	Professor Ali Campbell
Production Manager	Tracey Hammill
Dramaturge	Dr Canan Salih
Lighting/Sound Operators	Jules Deering, Suna Miah, Tom Wilson, Dave Wright, Matthew Kowalczyk, Sophie G Telfer, Clarice Montero and Tracey Hammill
Camera, Editing, Subtitles	Kayser A Foyz
Festival Photographer	Rehan Jamil
Festival Assistant producer	Mushahed Ahmed
FOH Supervisor	Petrina Fitzpatrick and Clarice Montero
Festival Assistants	Lynda Khun, Shraddha Sheth, Roland Kulanda, Malalay Barezai, Benny Mpulusu, Hilary Leung, Yasmin Metto, Sophie Bunbury, Lily Mya Siddiqua and Hussain Ismail
Centre Manager	Stuart Grey
Social Media Content Manager	Tasnim Amin Siddiq
Marketing and Publicity	Karen Hubbard, Alison Philcock and Ru Dannreuther
Exhibition Officer	Becca Chester
Brady Centre Support	Hedayet Moula, Kalam Hussain, Kamal Hussain and Rasel Miah
Selection Panel	Kazi Ruksana Begum, Professor Ali Campbell, Suna Miah, Rokshana Khan and Dr Canan Salih

All characters, corporations or establishments appearing in this theatre festival are fictitious. Any resemblance to real persons, living or dead is purely coincidental.

LOG ON FOR WHAT'S ON!

Brochure information correct at the time of going to print. However, this may be subject to change. For up-to-date programme information please visit

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/seasonbangladrama

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Reverend



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CHANNEL 5



RICH MIX

root /25



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NETWORK

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