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**Tower Hamlets Council presents**

# **A SEASON OF BANGLA DRAMA**

**4 - 27 NOVEMBER 2022**

[www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/  
seasonbangladrama](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/seasonbangladrama)

**#BanglaDrama22**

# WELCOME TO A SEASON OF BANGLA DRAMA

We are delighted that A Season of Bangla Drama returns to Tower Hamlets this November.

This month-long festival uses the powerful medium of theatre to celebrate Bangladeshi heritage in a creative and accessible way. There is a wide range of plays in the programme, many of which cross language barriers through the mediums of dance, music and physical theatre.

This year's theme is 'freedom of speech and self-identity'. This is prevalent as some productions look back through history with topics including the Bengal famine of 1943-44; one man's journey in the context of the 1971 genocide in Bangladesh; and the story of migration in the 70s and 80s. Crucially, as 2022 marks the 70th anniversary of the beginning of the Language Movement, this momentous subject is addressed in two plays.

Freedom of speech and self-identity are also present in the background of other plays which deal with hardship or suffering. These universal conditions are highlighted through social

injustice, delicate mental health or the vulnerability of children. On a lighter note, there is exuberant dance-theatre celebrating nature's glory, the crossing of generational divides through Bengali folk music and reverence for a modern Bengali poet.

There is also a fringe programme of exhibitions, talks and more. Covid has reminded us that there is no substitute for live performance, and for physical connection so we hope you can take advantage of this and venture out to see some of what's on offer.

Please keep an eye on the listings pages for details of this exciting and complete programme.

**Lutfur Rahman**  
**Mayor of Tower Hamlets**

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

**SUCHISMITA GANGULY DANCE COMPANY PRESENTS**

# **SEASONAL HUES**

**Friday 4 November**

**Doors 7pm | Show 7.30pm**

**BRADY ARTS CENTRE**

**English/Bangla | 60 minutes**

**£15/£8 concessions**

## **SYNOPSIS**

The main character of this story has separated from her beloved due to Covid. She is melancholic and finds it difficult to focus. She closes her eyes and prepares for another long night without him. Her mind engages in a battle between negative and positive thoughts. This is a battle we all have gone through during the pandemic. Something tells her that she must cherish the joyous moments. With these positive thoughts, she believes she will once again find her beloved and be with him.

Our heroine takes the audience on a journey with her imaginary friends. She crosses the four seasons in all their colours in search of her beloved. They are finally reunited. The beauty of the natural world and the changing seasons symbolise hope. In times of calamity, the healing power of Mother Nature is a cause for optimism.

## **ABOUT THE COMPANY**

Indian classical dancer and choreographer Suchismita Ganguly leads this company. Productions focus on storytelling through dance, music and spoken word. The company often engages young people and experiments with artistic fusion. Western and Indian classical music and dance come together in exciting ways.



**4-27 NOVEMBER 2022**

MUKUL & GHETTO TIGERS PRESENTS

# DEATH OF AN ORANGE

**Saturday 5 November**

**Doors 7pm | Show 7.30pm**

**BRADY ARTS CENTRE**

**English/Bangla | 75 minutes**

**£10**

## SYNOPSIS

A Bengali writer is the author of a book on the life of Jibanananda Das and the narrator of this play. He is in discussion with the translator who is converting this into English.

The play begins with the end of Jibanananda's life; a terrible incident of 22 October 1954. The writer and the translator discuss whether it was an accident, suicide, or foul play. It explores the complicated life of an underrated man. Despite his poetic brilliance, he suffered rejection, financial uncertainty and crippling social anxiety.

Key events include the economic depression of the 1930s, World War Two and the partition of India. An unhappy marriage, job loss and conflict with Nobel laureate Tagore compound his suffering. Poems, monologues and music represent his experiences with symbolic use of stage props and light. Towards the end we revisit the same question about the October incident. How did Jibanananda meet his end?

## ABOUT THE COMPANY

Mukul and Ghetto Tigers is an East London based theatre company. It features new writing along with a fresh look at classic works. The company believes that theatre is a voice of exploration and even dissent in a democratic society. Their mantra is re-imagination, innovation and collaboration. Genres include playwriting, dance, folk forms, music and other expressive arts.





**BANGLADESH UDICHI SHILPI GOSHTI UK SANGSHAD PRESENTS**

# **OGGATONAMA: IDENTITY UNKNOWN**

**Sunday 6 November**

**Doors 7pm | Show 7.30pm**

**BRADY ARTS CENTRE**

**English/Bangla | 70 minutes**

**£10**

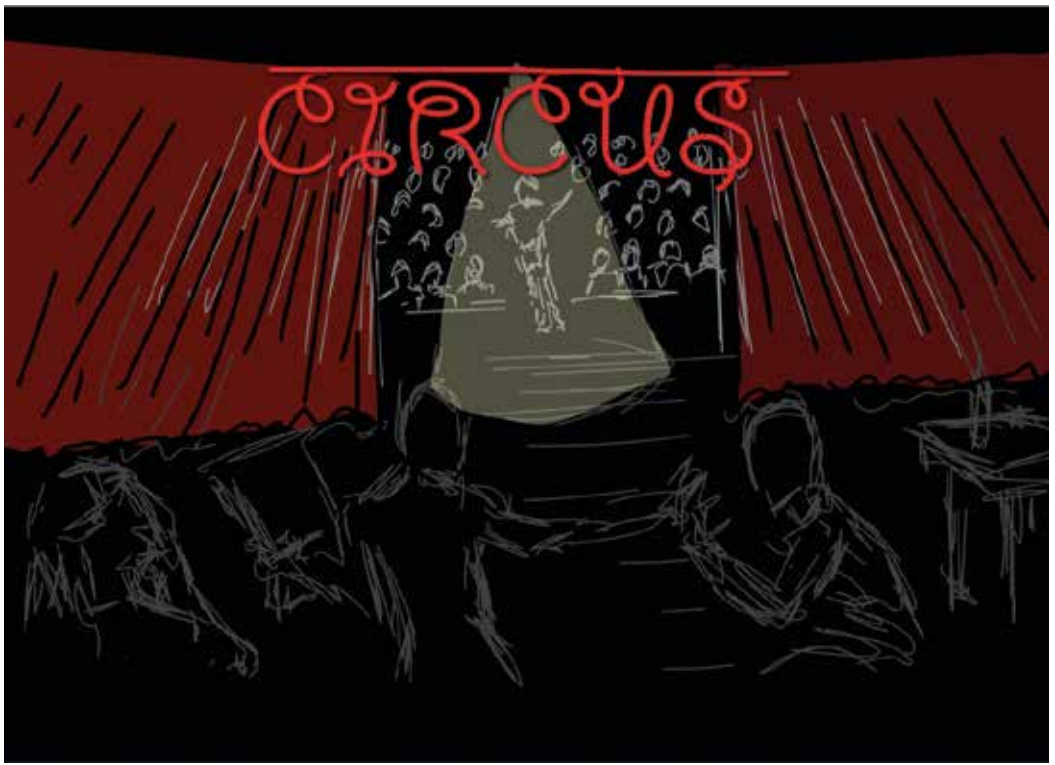
## **SYNOPSIS**

This unique new drama highlights the plight of the social underclass. Prejudice and stereotyping can lead to a miscarriage of justice. Two religions are pretexts to spread misinformation and create hatred among the community.

The aim is to gain power and abuse it through exploitation. This drama questions institutional corruption and privilege. It examines how this misuse limits an individual's freedom of expression.

## **ABOUT THE COMPANY**

Bangladesh Udichi Shilpi Goshti UK Sangshad is an established cultural organisation. They work with participants and audiences of all ages. Their output is local, national and international. Events and activities include music, dance, drama and recitations.



**MARBLE SINEW PRESENTS**

# **CIRCUS**

**Wednesday 9  
to Saturday 12  
November**

**Doors 7pm | Show 7.30pm**

**ARTSONE, PINTER STUDIO**

**English | 75 minutes | 12+**

**£10**

## **SYNOPSIS**

Another dark social comedy from the people that brought you assassins working in offices 'Hitman Inc.'

CIRCUS is about a playwright who decides to re-invigorate her failing

theatre company. Her final play courts controversy by turning cultural and diversity politics upside down. Will her audience get it? Will it save her theatre? YOU get to decide the ending, every night!

*"Success might end a story; failure might begin it."*

## **ABOUT THE COMPANY**

Marble Sinew tell character-driven stories on the condition of our age, on stage, TV and film. Real life experiences inspire their tales of extraordinary, sometimes fantastical situations. They use drama, comedy and suspense.

SUFI SOUP PRESENTS

# HOW TO MAKE RICE

**Friday 11 November**

**Doors 7pm | Show 7.30pm**

**BRADY ARTS CENTRE**

**English/Bangla | 60 minutes | 12+**

**£10**

## SYNOPSIS

This is seemingly a tutorial on the process of making rice. It actually revisits the Bengal famine of 1943-44 through a Bengali lens. Much of the story of the famine has centred on the white gaze. There has been little focus on the experience of those most affected by the famine. The play attempts to bring forth those voices.

The play explores the senses through the use of technology. It combines sounds, folk songs, video and archival material. As they discuss whether to

drain rice water or not, another debate ensues: how best to tell the story of this famine?

Tradition, class and caste come to the fore against a backdrop of colonialism and reconciliation. The aim of the play is to bring forth narratives from Bengal's history. It addresses the confusion and questions of the younger generation. It goes beyond a mere re-telling and challenges known facts and contentions.

## ABOUT THE COMPANY

Sufi Soup explores and engages with Sufism in our world today. The aim is to further academic praxis and personal growth through dialogic conversations. The co-creators of this play raised Hindu and Muslim, rethink the idea of a united Bengal through the Bengal Famine 1943-44.



**4-27 NOVEMBER 2022**



**AYNA ARTS PRESENTS**

# TELEGRAM

**Saturday 12  
November**

**Doors 7pm | Show 7.30pm**

**BRADY ARTS CENTRE**

**English/Bangla | 75 minutes**

**£10**

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## SYNOPSIS

Set in the late 70s and early 80s, 'Telegram' tells the story of Bangladeshi migrants to the UK. They paved the path for British Bangladeshis to live a prosperous life here. It focuses on the journey of women who came here as young wives leaving their known world behind. Inspired by a few real-life stories, the play highlights a time when families started arriving. This meant a switch from migration to settlement and thus the beginning of a whole new set of

challenges. The play shows how folk music helped them to survive through the difficulties.

When Amina came to the UK, she knew hardly any English. This enabled her husband to violate her human rights so she decides to take charge of her own destiny.

## ABOUT THE COMPANY

Ayna (mirror in English), also means 'come along'. Based in the North-West, Ayna Arts is a platform for creative people to come together to empower and express themselves. The group aims to develop individuals' creativity and sense of community through theatre. They explore social and humanitarian issues that affect our community. Ayna is working towards building bridges between generations and cultures.

**A SEASON OF BANGLA DRAMA**





**WAW CREATIVE ARTS PRESENTS**

# **A CURIOUS JOURNEY THROUGH THE GOLDEN AGE**

**Sunday 13 November**

**Doors 7pm | Show 7.30pm**

**BRADY ARTS CENTRE**

**English | 60 minutes**

**£10**

## **SYNOPSIS**

A journey of curiosity through the Golden Age is an exploration of Muslim contributions to the modern world. This revives the rich and diverse history of Islamic Culture across the globe. This is a play led by young people aged 11-19. They have adopted a light-hearted and creative approach to this topic. It is about a school trip to a museum which is the springboard for an exciting discovery.

Young people learn about the hope, promise and magic of the Golden Age of Islam. See some ground-breaking theatre. Leave the theatre feeling proud and smiling from within.

## **ABOUT THE COMPANY**

WAW Creative Arts is the world's first Muslim creative arts school for kids aged 4-16. They teach drama, singing, poetry and art with a syllabus that derives from Islamic history. They endeavour to motivate the next generation. They encourage self-expression, self-confidence and pride in their Muslim identity.

**4-27 NOVEMBER 2022**

PURBANAT CIC PRESENTS

## SECTOR 12

Tuesday 15 to  
Wednesday 16  
November

Doors 7pm | Show 7.30pm

THE SPACE THEATRE

English | 75 minutes

£10

### SYNOPSIS

During the liberation war in 1971, Bangladesh was divided into eleven sectors according to the geographical area. The play makes a strong argument for a 12th sector. British Bangladeshi's (East Pakistan at that time) were fighting to campaign for the noble cause of liberation. They garnered international support. They collected funds to support the fight for independence and they arranged demonstrations.

In 1971 a young man named Yousuf from Birmingham, started his own battle to rescue his 9-year-old daughter Rahima from Bangladesh. As military operations began in Dhaka, freedom fighters in Birmingham staged a huge demonstration at Small Heath Park. They flew the independent Bangladesh flag in Birmingham to mark the event. Newly married Jebun Nessa donated all her wedding jewellery for this campaign. This encouraged people to raise funds by giving their full weekly wages.

Desperate Yousuf started his rescue journey. As the war continued, campaigns and demonstrations in the UK



grew in tandem with his mission. Yousuf's journey became a metaphor of war. The sacrifice made by Jebun Nessa 50 years ago, is not forgotten.

### ABOUT THE COMPANY

Purbanat work with their partners to create theatre that works across cultures. They specialise in producing new plays and adaptations of existing international written works. Since 2014 Purbanat has become an established theatre company in the West Midlands. Recently they have evolved and extended their creative activities beyond traditional theatre.

TAAL TORONGO PRESENTS

# EKUSHE GOLPO

Friday 18 November

Doors 7.30pm | Show 8pm

BRADY ARTS CENTRE

Bangla with English Narration |

55 minutes

£10

## SYNOPSIS

This is a dance-drama about the language movement in 1952 performed by young people.

It uses songs from across the past seven decades, English narration, and Bengali folk dance including Kathak and Bharatanatyam. This is an exciting and colourful history lesson using physical movement to tell a story about Bangladesh and its roots.

February 21 is the anniversary of a defining moment in the creation of Bangladeshi national consciousness. "Ekushe February", or simply "Ekushe" is "the 21st" in Bangla. It commemorates the day in 1952 when students at the University of Dhaka gathered in protest. They were taking a stand against the imposition of Urdu on the people of what was then East Pakistan. The police opened fire, killing four students, one other person and injuring many.

## ABOUT THE COMPANY

Taal Torongo is a London-based school of music and dance. They have been using performance arts to celebrate and promote traditional Bengali culture in the UK for over 20 years. They have delivered dance workshops to second generation British Bangladeshis and Indians.



4-27 NOVEMBER 2022



**BANGLA CONNECTION PRESENTS**

# **PIYAR ALIR BHANGA MUKH (SHATTERED FACES OF PIYAR ALI)**

**Saturday 19  
November**

**Doors 5.30pm | Show 6pm**

**ARTSONE, PINTER STUDIO**

**Bangla | 50 minutes | 12+**

**£10**

## **SYNOPSIS**

The play reveals private pain and existential angst due to internal colonialism and genocide. It is a reworking of Shakespeare's Pericles. The original story is a tragi-comic tale of a man's solo journey and is also regarded as a touching and hopeful tale of loss and reconciliation. This production aims to deconstruct Shakespeare through a minimalist language.

The solo performance uses digital images to explore the journey of a Bangladeshi-British man named Piya

Ali. Displaced by the war in 1971, the child Piya Ali moves to the English countryside with a loving home and mother. After her death, Piya Ali's journey starts with the rediscovery of his past, the genocide and the fate of his family.

This performance is an endless "empathetic journey". It blends South Asian storytelling techniques with post-dramatic theatre aesthetics. A blurred world emerges at the cross-over between the physical and the digital worlds.

## **ABOUT THE COMPANY**

Bangla Connection is a Bangladeshi community-led art and cultural organisation. It produces art works and theatrical performances connected to the community. Work links to the collective imagination. It has built new audiences across the globe in international festivals.

DOCKLANDS THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

# TWENTY FIRST FEBRUARY (AAT-I FALGUN)

**Saturday 19  
November**

**Doors 7pm | Show 7.30pm**

**BRADY ARTS CENTRE**

**English/Bangla | 75 minutes**

**£10**

## SYNOPSIS

Amma is a woman of the language movement era. Most of her long and fascinating life is behind her and her memory is patchy. With the onset of dementia, she easily becomes confused. Yet she recalls the important events of 21 February 1952 (Aat-i Falgun) with clarity.

She tells her son Shoriful Islam that her carer stole her tasbi (rosary beads). Shoriful tells Amma he is moving to

another city to take up a new job, which confuses her.

Amma does not recognise her daughter-in-law, Kaniz Fatema or remember that she shares a house with Shorif and Kaniz. The household is not harmonious. Her carer Sayeed reminds her of her other son, Shahid. Amma wakes up in a nursing home. Sayeed arrives and informs her that Shorif lives in a different city. Amma breaks down in tears over her inability to understand what is happening to her.

## ABOUT THE COMPANY

Docklands Theatre and Performing Arts works with young and not so young people from a Bengali background. They provide high quality Bengali Movement Theatre. They often work in partnership across Tower Hamlets.



**4-27 NOVEMBER 2022**

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**MESSAGE CULTURAL GROUP PRESENTS**

## **A BROKEN DREAM?**

**Sunday 20 November**

**Doors 7pm | Show 7.30pm**

**BRADY ARTS CENTRE**

**English/Bangla | 60 minutes**

**£10**

### **SYNOPSIS**

Shiulee and Polash come from broken homes but have unbroken dreams.

Shiulee's father lives in Bangladesh, her mother has mental health issues, and she is in a foster home. Though bright and creative, she has behavioural problems. Seeing her fellow students' stable family lives leads to resentment. She has no loving parents who collect her from school and who she can talk proudly about. She is jealous of other children, lashes out and is always in trouble. Drawing is her outlet.

Polash is 14 years old. His parents are violent alcoholics. His dream is to help all the children that are survivors like him! He wants to become a police officer.

Shiulee starts to learn Bangla, and dreams of going to Bangladesh to meet her father. She wants to be a doctor to help those who, like her mother, have poor mental health. Can their dreams remain unbroken?

### **ABOUT THE COMPANY**

Message Cultural Group is a community cultural organisation established in 1999. They perform theatre and short dramas for YouTube. They also deliver recitations, workshops, children's activities and nasheeds. Message has been part of A Season of Bangla in 2018 (Cries of the earth), 2019 (Our World) and 2020 (Class). Message Cultural Group have also performed on stage across the UK.



**BISHWO SHAHITTO KENDRO (BSK) UK PRESENTS**

## **THE LOVE SONGS**

**Saturday 26  
November**

**Doors 7pm | Show 7.30pm**

**BRADY ARTS CENTRE**

**English/Bangla | 75 minutes**

**£10**

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### **SYNOPSIS**

This play examines the lives of a group of first generation British-Bangladeshis. They are socially active and proud of their cultural background and heritage. They have their own struggle and crisis in life but are always eager to engage with their community. Despite spending half of their life in the UK, they can't integrate with wider society. Their children go to the best universities, but they do not have British degrees.

This throws up the cultural divide between the younger generation and their parents. They adapt to change in different ways due to completely different cultural exposure.

The play illuminates how culture travels beyond differences. It restores connections between generations through the soul-searching celebrations of (Bengali) folk music.

### **ABOUT THE COMPANY**

BSK UK is an established name on London's cultural scene. The organisation tries to unite communities by bringing in classic literature in English. It works with local and regional organisations to create topical and relevant art.

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2022

**MONDAY**

**TUESDAY**

**WEDNESDAY**

**THURSDAY**

Doors open 7pm, shows start at 7.30pm sharp (unless otherwise stated)  
Tickets cost £10 (unless otherwise stated)

Friday 4 – Sunday 27 November  
Exhibition: Portraits by SM Asad, BAC  
Tuesday 1 – Tuesday 15 November  
Exhibition: Creative Memories, KNC

**7**

**LONDON BANGLA PRESS CLUB**  
QMUL FREE 4PM

**8**

**CIRCUS QMUL**

**9**

**CIRCUS QMUL**

**10**

**14**

**BENGALI HISTORY WALK**  
£5 2PM  
SECTOR 12 ST  
PANEL DISCUSSION  
CU FREE 6PM

**15**

**BIDROHI – AN EVENING OF REBEL POETRY**  
R/25  
FREE 7PM  
SECTOR 12 ST

**16**

**AAMI BANGALI – FROM A FEMALE PERSPECTIVE**  
BAC FREE

**17**

**21**

**OPEN DRESS REHEARSAL: LEGEND OF THE BLACK LOTUS**  
BAC 3PM

**22**

**23**

**24**

More info: 020 7364 7900

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## FRIDAY

## SATURDAY

## SUNDAY

**SEASONAL HUES**  
BAC £15/£8

4

**DEATH OF AN ORANGE**  
BAC

5

**SUNDAY IS SAREE DAY**  
BAC FREE 12PM  
**READING**  
KNC FREE 4PM  
**OGGATONAMA: IDENTITY UNKNOWN**  
BAC

6

**CIRCUS QMUL**  
**HOW TO MAKE RICE**  
BAC

11

**CIRCUS QMUL**  
**TELEGRAM**  
BAC

12

**TAKING PRIDE IN HISTORY**  
QMUL FREE 6PM  
**A CURIOUS JOURNEY THROUGH THE GOLDEN AGE**  
BAC  
**BANGLA POETRY**  
BAC FREE 2PM

13

**EKUSHE GOLPO**  
BAC  
8PM

18

**PIYAR ALIR BHANGA MUKH**  
QMUL 6PM  
**TWENTY FIRST FEBRUARY**  
BAC

19

**USE YOUR WORDS**  
QMUL FREE  
4PM  
**A BROKEN DREAM?**  
BAC

20

25

**THE LOVE SONGS**  
BAC

26

**BANGLISH**  
BAC

27

## VENUES

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

**Craft Unit (CU)**  
Lighterman  
House, 3 Clove  
Crescent, E14  
2BB

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

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

**Space Theatre (ST)**  
269 Westferry  
Road, E14 3RS

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

To book tickets (booking fees apply):  
<https://seasonbangladrama22.eventbrite.com>

TRIOARTS PRESENTS

# BANGLISH

**Sunday 27 November**

**Doors 7pm | Show 7.30pm**

**BRADY ARTS CENTRE**

**English/Bangla | 75 minutes**

**£10**

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## SYNOPSIS

This play reviews the events of 21 February through the interesting story of a mother and her son. A young British Bangladeshi couple have a bilingual ten-year-old son. The young mother wants to be a perfect parent but struggles to balance motherhood and her career. When the little boy talks at home, he can't always find the proper words in Bangla. He uses funny words which are a mix of Bangla and English, hence

the name of the play: "BANGLISH." He always does something interesting or silly, which makes his mother more worried about him.

The boy is growing up in London, unfamiliar with Bengali history. The young mother uses popular Bengali poems and songs to tell her son the informative history of 21st February. In this way, the play uses art to teach young audiences about Bengali heritage.

## ABOUT THE COMPANY

Trioarts is a cultural organisation based in London based in London. It supports Bengalis in Bangladesh and London. During Covid, Trioarts raised funds to help struggling artists from Bangladesh.



# EXHIBITION: PORTRAITS BY SM ASAD

Thursday 3 – Sunday  
27 November

BRADY ARTS CENTRE

FREE

Artist SM Asad presents a large and vibrant selection of portraits of well-known performers from both the UK and Bangladesh. It is a celebration in paint, of the diverse genres that come within the performing arts umbrella and a fitting exhibition to accompany this year's A Season of Bangla Drama. On the opening night of the exhibition, 3 November, Asad will create a super-fast real-time painting with a burst of energy that launches and signifies both the art show and the wider festival of which it is a part.



4-27 NOVEMBER 2022



## EXHIBITION: CREATIVE MEMORY

**Tuesday 1 - Tuesday  
15 November**

**Tuesday - Saturday | 2-6pm**

**KOBI NAZRUL CENTRE**

This exhibition is the creative showcase of the Migrant Memory and the Postcolonial Imagination (MMPI) project. Since 2017, the MMPI project has been working with different community groups in London and Loughborough, using creative activities as a way to evoke memories of Partition, migration, and the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh and

stimulate discussions around identity, Britishness, and belonging. These collaborations have resulted in creative outputs including photographs, music, sound and film, which we will showcase in this exhibition.

Migrant Memory and the Postcolonial Imagination is a research project conducted at Loughborough University and Loughborough University London, which explores the legacies of the 1947 Partition of British India for South Asian communities in the UK and their memories and post-memories of migration.

**MOHILA ONGON PRESENTS**

## **SUNDAY IS SAREE DAY**

**Sunday 6 November**

**12noon-5pm**

**BRADY ARTS CENTRE**

**FREE | Women only event**

This is a women-only event to celebrate womanhood through both sarees and the Bangladeshi delicacy, pittha. There will be a variety of entertainment, stalls and activities. These include a saree workshop and a fashion show as well as a drama performed in Sylheti. There will also be traditional Bengali music, dance, and spoken Bengali poetry. Delicious food will be available.

Dress code: black and white sarees or traditional dress



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

**MUKUL & GHETTO TIGERS PRESENTS**

## **READING**

**Sunday 6 November**

**4pm**

**KOBI NAZRUL CENTRE**

**FREE | 80 minutes**

Get involved in the playwriting process. Come and join us for the reading of a new play and take part in an interactive feedback session to help inform the development of this production. The play is about the choices facing young women in Bangladesh: the garment industry, domestic service or early marriage, which is believed – falsely – to be 'the place of safety' for a girl.



# THE LONDON BANGLA PRESS CLUB ANNUAL LECTURE

**Tuesday 8 November**

**Doors 3.30pm | Starts 4pm**

**ARTSONE, PINTER STUDIO**

**FREE | 90 minutes | 16+**

Join us for a panel discussion on freedom of speech and the language movement in 1952 to protect the mother tongue, Bangla. The bloody struggle that took place on 21 February of that year led the way to independence. A new country was born in 1971. In 1999, the UN adopted 21 February as International Mother Language Day.

This is a timely topic in keeping with the 70th anniversary of the language movement. It is also an era of cancel



culture, censorship and the echo chambers of social media. News organisations and journalists have their own “principles of good practice and code of ethics”. Most share the standards of truthfulness, accuracy, objectivity, impartiality, fairness, and public accountability. This discussion interrogates these ideals.

**BRITISH BILINGUAL POETRY COLLECTIVE PRESENTS**

## TAKING PRIDE IN HISTORY

**Sunday 13 November**

**Doors 6pm | Starts 6.30pm**

**ARTSONE, PINTER STUDIO**

**English | 120 minutes | 11+**

**FREE**

Come along to a craft-making and storytelling workshop with poetry-performance. The free workshop is for 11- to 19-year-olds.

In part one, participants will learn how to make the symbolic Bijoyphool (Victory Flower). They will also learn about the history of the 1952 language movement. This took place in then East Pakistan,

now Bangladesh. Part two will be a fun, interactive, poetry translation workshop and performance. It explores the iconic Bengali poem “amar bhaiyer rokte rangano”.

This is an opportunity to engage with defining historical events of Bangladesh. It will also develop an understanding of Bengali as a language through translation and performance.

Delivered by British Bilingual Poetry Collective in collaboration with Bijoyphool (Victory Flower project).

**THEATRE SHOISHOB PRESENTS**

# **BENGALI POETRY WORKSHOP**

**Sunday 13 November**

**2pm**

**BRADY ARTS CENTRE**

**FREE | Bangla**

Bengali poetry masterclass for children,

led by actor and poetry reciter Sujoy Proshad Chatterjee from Kolkata. An engaging opportunity for those aged 7-11 to gain an insight into the power of the spoken word and the performative aspects of poetry.

**SWADHINATA TRUST PRESENTS**

# **BENGALI HISTORY WALK**

**Tuesday 15 November**

**2pm**

**ALTAB ALI PARK**

**£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

# PANEL DISCUSSION: THE ROLE OF ARTS AND CRAFTS IN ESTABLISHING CULTURE

**Tuesday 15 November**

**6pm**

**CRAFT UNIT**

**FREE | 60 minutes**

We all remember that one toy, book or TV show we had or saw when we were young. It made a mark on us. Key events from our youth remain in our consciousness. Our formative years include a pattern of firsts. Impressions were made from the influence of popular culture and the media at large. Whilst memory fades in other areas, the memory for this item or activity remains strong and shiny.

In this panel discussion, OITIJ-JO has brought together an expert panel of

practitioners and producers of arts and crafts in the UK:

- Shama Kun, Nakshi Kantha and sustainable designer, @culturally\_yours
- Rukia Ullah, Print Designer, @ruk\_iiiia
- Momtaz Begum Hossain, Colour Expert and Journalist, @momtazbh
- Ihitashri Shandilya, Founder and CEO of MITHILAsmita
- Dr Natascha Radclyff-Thomas, @fashionnatascha (panel host)

OITIJ-JO aims to showcase and celebrate Bengali traditions in arts and crafts. Their vision is about enrichment and enhancement through lively practice.





RESTLESS BEINGS PRESENTS

# BIDROHI – AN EVENING OF REBEL POETRY

Wednesday 16  
November

Doors 6.30pm | Show 7pm

ROOT/25

FREE | 16+

Bidrohi is an evening of rebel poetry. Go on a raw, thought-provoking and emotive journey with us over steaming chai, coffee and snacks. We will bring together poets who will explore the theme of freedom and end the night with an Open Mic.



BRITBANGLA PRESENTS

# AAMI BANGALI – FROM A FEMALE PERSPECTIVE

Thursday 17  
November

Doors 7pm | Show 7.30pm

BRADY ARTS CENTRE

FREE

This talk highlights the remarkable women of the language movement. It remembers the women who fought for the Bangla language and risked their own lives to do so. Followed by a panel discussion by female members of the

Bengali Britain project. These women reflect on freedom, self-identity and what it means to be Bengali.

Panel Members: Tanha Quadi, Nutun Ahmed, Razia Sultana and Anjuma Choudhury.

Hosted by Taryn Khanam BEM

Stay with us for an engaging panel discussion, accompanied by samosas and tea!

**ARTS WITHOUT BORDERS PRESENTS**

# USE YOUR WORDS

**Sunday 20  
November**

**Doors 3.30pm | Show 4pm**

**ARTSONE, PINTER STUDIO**

**FREE | 105 minutes**



This performance is the culmination of a series of workshops with young people. It will be a potpourri of individual poems, scripts, spoken words and prose. It was written by year 10 and 11 students from Stepney All Saints. They brought their own perspectives to the language movement of 70 years ago and explored how language can define oneself. They analysed the ways that language

enables, nurtures and shapes means of communication. Join us for this sharing event to celebrate what they have created.

Arts Without Borders is a London based voluntary arts organisation that runs various arts based activities, projects and productions that are specifically aimed at addressing, exploring and promoting social and cultural interests.

**TAMARIND THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS**

# OPEN DRESS REHEARSAL: LEGEND OF THE BLACK LOTUS (KALA SHAPLAR GOLPO)

**Tuesday 22  
November**

**Starts 3pm**

**BRADY ARTS CENTRE**

**English | up to 45 minutes**

**Pay what you want**

Come and join two siblings as they embark on an epic journey of danger and discovery to find the legendary Black Lotus.

They enter a world beyond their dreams and imagination. They encounter magical beasts and strange monsters of illusion and trickery. Will they overcome the challenges to save their family?

An interactive story to amuse, enchant and excite the senses. Great family fun with clapping, singing, rhythm and movement. In English with elements of Bangla and other languages!

# WHO WE ARE:

A Season of Bangla Drama is organised by London Borough of Tower Hamlets Arts, Parks & Events team in partnership with Queen Mary University of London, Migrant Memories and the Post-Colonial Imagination Project and Arts Without Borders.

Festival Producer	Kazi Ruksana Begum
Lead CPD Co-ordinator	Professor Ali Campbell
Production Manager	Tracey Hammill
Dramaturge	Dr Canan Salih and Dr Sudip Chakroborthy
Lighting/Sound Operators	Jules Deering, Suna Miah, Tom Wilson, Dave Wright, Toby and Tracey Hammill
Festival Assistant producer	Mushahed Ahmed and Tasnim Siddiqa Amin
FOH Supervisor	Clary Montero
Centre Manager	Stuart Grey
Marketing and Publicity	Karen Hubbard, Alison Philcock and Rupert Dannreuther
Exhibition Officer	Becca Chester
Festival Support	Hedayet Moula, Kalam Hussain, Kamal Hussain Sagren Arran and Jaxx Evans
Selection Panel	Kazi Ruksana Begum, Professor Ali Campbell, Karen Hubbard and Dr Canan Salih

## 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 refer to our website

[www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/  
seasonbangladrama](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/seasonbangladrama)



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

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

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# A SEASON OF BANGLA DRAMA 2023 20 ACTS OF LOVE

## Do you want to get involved in another great festival of theatre?

A Season of Bangla Drama will be back in 2023 for its 20th anniversary, and we are seeking new writing.

The theme is love, and we are on the lookout for plays that embrace the nobler qualities of, for example, care, redemption, compassion, generosity and understanding.

These can be applied in a wide variety of contexts such as:

- homelessness
- foster care
- romantic love
- the breaking down of prejudices

...and countless other scenarios that demonstrate betterment!

Theatre companies can be based locally or nationally but content should be relevant to an east London audience and must be new writing.



Expressions of Interest will open in **February 2023**. Please register your interest by emailing [festivalsandevents@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:festivalsandevents@towerhamlets.gov.uk) with SBD23 – 20 Acts of Love in the subject line.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## FUNDERS, SPONSORS AND PARTNERS OF A SEASON OF BANGLA DRAMA



Queen Mary  
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Sign up to our monthly events newsletter, packed with fun and free activities

[www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/signup](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/signup)



THevents TowerHamletsEvents ThePavilionsMileEnd

# Looking for a venue for your event?

## The Brady Arts & Community Centre

The Brady Arts and Community Centre is our multi-purpose arts centre in the heart of the East End. The centre is a welcoming and accessible place for the local community. The Brady Art Gallery is open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

The venue has flexible spaces available for hire and includes a well-equipped 100-seater studio theatre, halls for all kinds of events, an art gallery, art room, and the Brady Garden.

To find out more please email [brady@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:brady@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

## Our venues

We manage the stunning Art and Ecology Pavilions in Mile End Park, as well as the Brady Arts & Community Centre and the Kobi Nazrul Centre just off Brick Lane.

Our venues are available to hire for exhibitions, performances, private and corporate functions. The Pavilions are fully licensed wedding venues.

Email [artsandevents@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:artsandevents@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

