

TEESRI DUNIYA THEATRE



ANNUAL REPORT



2023. Counter Offence
Photos: Brooklyn Melnyk

2022-2023

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A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD

Community, connection and safety

In “The Before Times”, prior to the pandemic, I’m not sure I understood where my sense of safety came from. I knew that I was fortunate to live in a place of relative peace, where I have a loving family, wonderful friends, a good job, a good home, and an amazingly supportive community. When you have always felt relatively safe, you don’t spend a lot of time thinking about where that safety comes from.

As I watched the world wheeze and rattle its way through the pandemic, I was shocked to see people whose lives looked so similar to my own slowly fall apart. I worried. If it could happen to them, couldn’t it happen to me? I thought those things kept a person safe.

All around me, people were looking for a culprit, a boogeyman, someone to blame. I watched one vulnerable community after another bear the brunt of the world’s anger and confusion. Where were the things that were supposed to keep all of us safe? That’s when I realized where my safety really came from.

The ground doesn’t always feel firm under my feet, but the connections I feel to the communities I belong to are where my sense of safety comes from. I know there is a place where we can share our stories, confess our fears, lift each other up, keep each other warm, learn from one another, and carry each other forward, even when the world is mired in uncertainty.

These past few years have been strange, but I know that the Teesri Duniya Theatre will continue to create community, foster connection, and hold a space where we can all feel safe.

Adreienne Piggott



A WORD FROM OUR ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

No One Is Safe If All Are Not

Meet Me, Tribes!, and a brand new production of Counter Offence in 2023 demonstrates Teesri’s resolve that the cancellation of our plays and activities was never an option.

Since March 2020, when social distancing became the pandemic norm, Teesri Duniya Theatre has bridged the distance between wrong and right through its varied activities. While masks became a pandemic reality, we sought to unmask many problems that ail our world. Through our lockdown era, we celebrated the resilience of our unrecognized heroes; frontline workers, care providers, all individuals who sacrificed their safety so the rest of us could live safe and sound.

The pandemic’s big lesson is that no one is safe if all are not – and that has been Teesri’s guiding light throughout everything we have done.

While the lockdown challenged us to remain creative, meaningful, and relevant, it also revealed that the most fundamental contradictions of our world predate COVID-19 – that is a pandemic of poverty, violence, trafficking, missing and murdered Indigenous women, xenophobia, homophobia, transphobia, right-wing populism, wars and world hunger, to name a few.

Teesri Duniya Theatre has remained steadfast in telling unique stories of people that right the wrong. We continued addressing pressing issues before and during the pandemic by making space to share diverse voices and ideas from a progressive perspective.

Now that the pandemic is settling, we continue to decenter colonial spaces and disrupt colonial narratives, inviting audiences to see the world differently. With an ever-present consciousness towards decolonization, Teesri Duniya Theatre continues to tell stories that imagine positive change. Our plays combine artistic beauty with social relevance – we challenge and entertain simultaneously, creating opportunities for conversation to promote social justice, equality, and shared human dignity. We invite our audiences to see the world as it should have been. Beyond the pandemic, our journey remains the same – change the world one play at a time.

Rahul Varma



MISSION

Teesri Duniya Theatre is dedicated to producing politically relevant plays that explore life-affecting issues faced by people today. We aim to uplift the voices of historically marginalized communities by making the space for their cultural experiences to be reflected on our stage. Our plays connect communities, foster critical thinking, and generate cross-cultural dialogue. Indigeneity, multicultural diversity, LGBTQ+ consciousness, and interculturalism are central to the work we do here. Teesri ensures that stories of colour hold the space that is theirs to hold and tells them in a way that honours the sources they come from.

VALUES

REPRESENTATION

We are colour conscious, not colour blind. While colourblind casting has its advantages, it ultimately promotes an assimilationist view. Presuming that the dominant culture is a unified whole, visible minorities are denied their characteristics and social standing. We practice multicultural casting and respect the characters' cultural heritage and colour.

ENGAGEMENT

The community is at the heart of everything that we produce. We create and solicit works that deal with public forums, information sessions, and panel discussions prior to, during, and after the presentations. Our panels are composed of experts with different viewpoints, setting the stage for a true debate.

In Memoriam

*Celebrating the life of
co-founder, Rana Bose*

Rana Bose lives on in our collective memory.

Our dear friend and comrade Rana Bose passed away on May 10th, 2023.

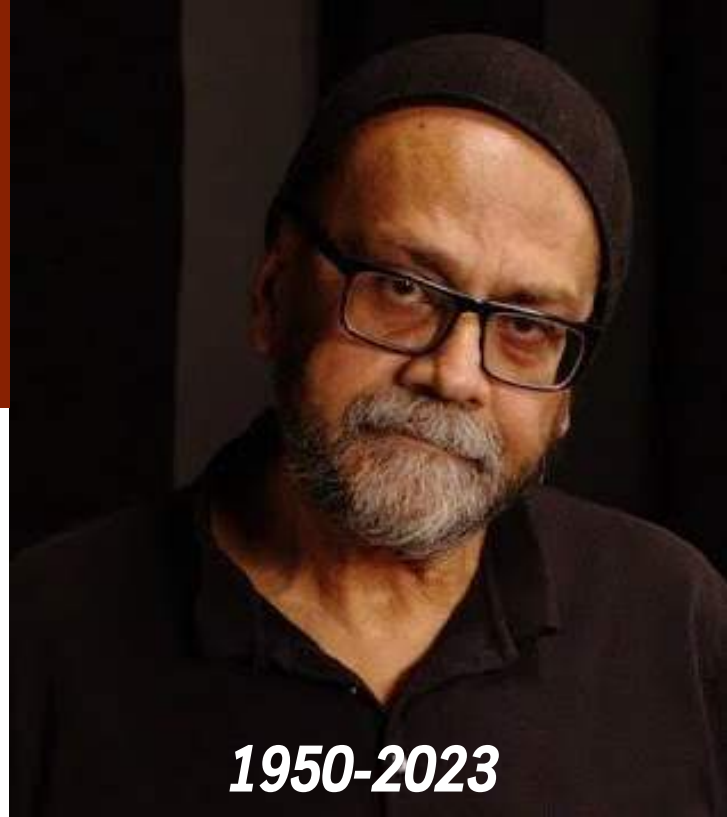
Rana wore many hats. He was a poet, playwright, novelist, artist, ideologue, scientist, engineer, co-founder of Teesri Duniya Theatre, founder of Montreal Serai, and an honest Marxist who fought for a world where people live in peace as equals. His writings, thinking, and actions pushed for progress through human dignity.

Rana dedicated his life to fighting crimes of capitalism, protesting the suppression of democracy, human rights, women's rights, and ultimately the right to dignity. He fiercely questioned ethno-majoritarianism and nationalism and attacked the rise of Hindu nationalism that is wrecking India. Rana never gave up his quest for truth and a socialist world vision. He inspired us to envision a world where people care for each other and himself launched a relentless fight against class oppressors.

Rana loved people. He loved his family, his extended family, children, and grandchildren, and they loved him. He left us today, but we must celebrate Rana's life, ideas, actions, and struggle for a better world.

I am proud to be one of the many people inspired by his life and vision.

- Rahul Varma



PRODUCTIONS



Live Action Theatre Project in collaboration with Teesri Duniya Theatre presents

Meet Me

an audience interactive theatre experience

Meet your character.
Follow their path.
Choose their story.

Written by Julia Ainsworth
and Rosaruby Kagan

Directed by Rosaruby Kagan

With Danagh Mondour,
Zashaun Saleem, Leigh Ann
Towler

PERFORMANCE DATES

ALL SHOWS AT 7 PM
RUNS THU. SEPT. 29TH
- OCT. 8TH 2022

MCGILL CAMPUS
TNC THEATRE
3485 MCTAVISH
(MORRICE HALL)

\$30 regular
\$20 students

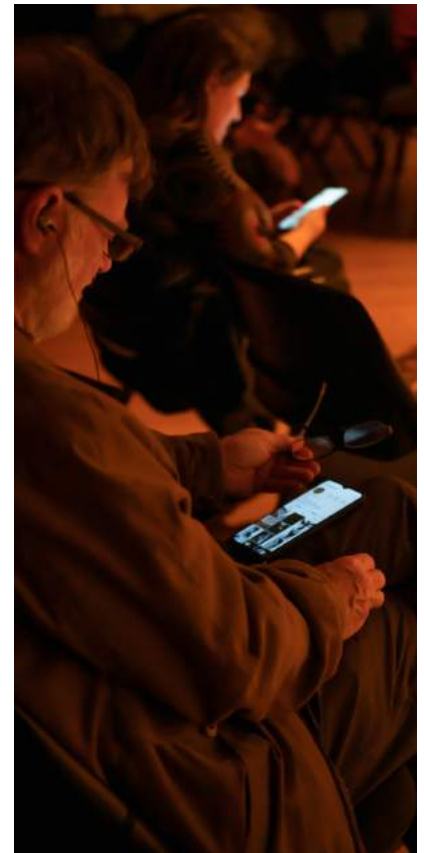


MEET ME

Sept 29th - Oct 2nd 2022

By Rosaruby Kagan Glaberman &
Julia Ainsworth

The Live Action Theatre Project, in collaboration with Teesri Duniya Theatre, presented the world premiere of Meet Me. A branching narrative, audience-interactive theatre experience exploring dating, consent, and cancel culture in the post #metoo era. Over the course of the show, audience members equipped with a cellphone, follow one of three characters (Gemma, Qas, or Roslyn) through three distinct locations around the McGill campus. Through the use of audio/ visual media components and audience interaction, Meet Me investigates a case of alleged sexual misconduct amongst faculty members, forcing the audience to ask: where do we draw the line?



MEET THE TEAM

CAST

Darragh Mondoux - Gemma

Zeshaun Saleem - Qasem

Leigh Ann Taylor - Roslyn



PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT

This project was supported by a team of psychology interns who were present at each show to facilitate discussion, and to aid audience members should they have any discomfort pertaining to the subject matter of the show.

Interns: Ellora Kothare, Cassandra James, Akinyi Olouch, Chalace Smoke.

Internship Coordinator: Marini Daniela Agop

CREATIVE TEAM

Rosaruby Kagan Glaberman - Director/Playwright

Julia Ainsworth - Playwright

Ahlam Gholami - Assistant Director

Meagan Schroder - Intimacy Director

Chad Dembski - Production Manager

Adam Walters - Technical Director/ LX Design and Video

Elyse Quesnel - Stage Manager

Rachel-Anne Germinario - Set and Costume Designer

Leticia Chicoine - Assistant Set and Costume Designer

Rob Denton - Sound Designer

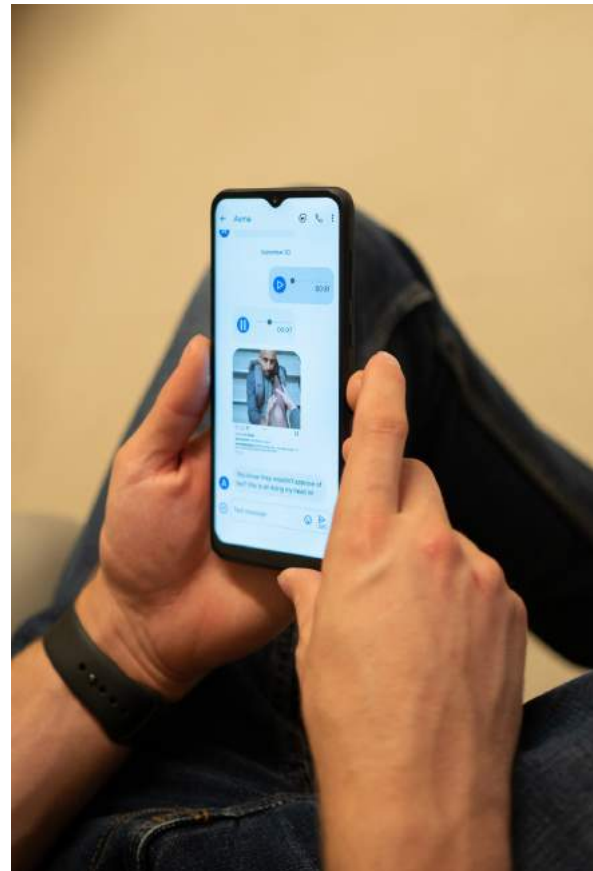
Claire Bourdin - Assistant Sound Designer

Nicole Goertzen - App Designer

Charlie Joubert - Graphic Designer

Nate Plong - (Media Content Generator)

Stephanie Merulla - (Media/Digital Content Writer)



COUNTER OFFENCE

March 16th - April 2nd 2023

By Rahul Varma

Counter Offence, one of the cornerstone pieces by Artistic Director Rahul Varma, had its third production by Teesri at the Segal Centre for Performing Arts in March of this year. Other production years include 1996 and 2020, the later of which was postponed twice due to Covid-19. This year, through much perseverance, the show finally got its chance to be produced.

Over 50 actors signed up for the auditions, making it one of the largest audition turnouts in Teesri's history!

A note from director Murdoch Schon:

"These are complicated people who are making difficult decisions motivated by money, power, fear, and fury. Inside each of them are contradictions and paradoxes. *Counter Offence* asks us to question who defines justice, and what it looks like for different people?"

CAST

Arash Ebrahimi - Shapoor Farhadi
Amanda Silveira - Shazia Rizvi
Ambica Sharma - Shafiqa Rizvi
Andrew Joseph Richardson - Mohammed Murad Rizvi
Aladeen Tawfeek - Moolchand Misra
Sophie-Thérèse Stone-Richards - Clarinda Keith
Oliver Price - Guy Gaillard
Howard Rosenstein - Giles Prougault

CREATIVE TEAM

Violette Kay - Sound Design
Aurora Torok - Lighting Design
Marie-Eve Fortier - Set design
Diana Uribe - Costume Design
Ava Bishop - Stage Management
Emmanuel Dagenais - Apprentice Stage Management
Julia Lenardon - Accent Coach
Anita Nittoly - Fight Choreography
Eric Holmes - Intercultural Dramaturg

Playwright
RAHUL VARMA

Director
MURDOCH SCHON



MARCH 15 - APRIL 2, 2023

EVENING PERFORMANCES: 7:30 PM / MATINEES: 2 PM

COUNTEROFFENCE

Segal Centre for Performing Arts



CAST

Aladeen Tawfeek
Amanda Silveira
Ambica Sharma
Andrew Joseph Richardson
Arash Ebrahimi
Howard Rosenstein
Oliver Price
Sophie-Thérèse Stone-Richards

PRODUCTION TEAM

Aurora Torok, Lighting Designer
Ava Bishop, Stage Manager
Diana Uribe, Costume Designer
Emmanuel Dagenais, Apprentice Stage Manager
Jonis Kirshner, Publicist
Lee Tucker, Production Manager

Marie-Eve Fortier, Set Designer
Shanthony Exum, Graphic Designer
Summer Mahmud, Assistant Director
Taylor Cott, Technical Director
Violette Kay, Sound Designer

For tickets go to www.segalcentre.org or call 514.739.7944



POST - SHOW ACTIVITIES



The production had three panel discussions:

Panel #1: March 19th 2023

TOPIC: *Domestic Violence & Racial Profiling* (In Collaboration with the Montreal Council of Women)

PANELISTS: Dolores Chew, Fo Niemi, Maria Peluso

MODERATOR: Penny Rankin

Panel #2: MARCH 26th 2023

TOPIC: *Addressing Crimes Against Women Across Cultural Differences*

PANELISTS: Mariah Inger, Adrienne Piggott, Ehab Lotayef, Diana Safardoost

MODERATOR: Alex Megelas

Panel #3: April 2nd 2023

TOPIC: *Breaking the Silence or be Silenced*

PANELISTS: Shahrzad Arshadi, Vishesh Abeyratne, Dipti Gupta, Dr. Balbir Singh

MODERATOR: Summer Mahmud

Rahul Varma was also available after each performance to take part in a short talk back about the play with the audience.



TRIBES! (NO MATTER WHAT)

BY RANA BOSE

JUNE 8TH TO 18TH | 2023

TUESDAY TO SATURDAY 7:30PM
SUNDAY 11TH | 2PM, 18TH | 2PM & 7PM
TICKETS \$15 GENERAL | \$10 STUDENTS, SENIORS, GROUPS

HOWARD ROSENSTEIN DIRECTION

WITH
SIMON PELLETIER
SOPHIE-THÉRÈSE STONE-RICHARDS
& HOWARD ROSENSTEIN

KATE HAGEMEYER STAGE MANAGEMENT
JON CLEVELAND LIGHT | ROB DENTON SOUND
ANITA NITTOLY FIGHT DIRECTION

3680, RUE JEANNE-MANCE | MONTREAL QUEBEC H2X 2K5



TRIBES! (NO MATTER WHAT)

June 8th - 18th 2023

By Rana Bose

Tribes! (No Matter What): theatre that makes you think. This piece, the final play by activist and writer Rana Bose, is an absurdist work that forces the audience to question everything and take nothing for granted. *Tribes! (No Matter What)* played at the MAI Theatre from June 8-18, with the entire process being completed in only a month and a half.

Though Rana could not be with us to celebrate his accomplishments, performer and director Howard Rosenstein made it all happen, doing whatever was necessary to ensure this production went forward. *Tribes! (No Matter What)* featured performances from fabulous local actors Sophie-Thérèse Stone-Richards and Simon Pelletier, and had a stellar creative team comprising of Kate Hagemeyer (stage management), Jon Cleveland (lighting design), Rob Denton (sound design), Barbara Rosenstein (poster design), and Anita Nittoly (fight direction).

All of the creative work was supported by the Teesri office team, including Sean Ryan, Prerna Nehta, Fred Blais, Brooklyn Melnyk and Artistic Director Rahul Varma. Audience turnout was high, and the reviews came in overwhelmingly positive- including a stellar review from Jim Burke. Many theatregoers highlighted the striking design elements and strong acting work, with numerous audience members commenting on how thrilled they were to be back in the theatre witnessing such a refreshing and stimulating performance!

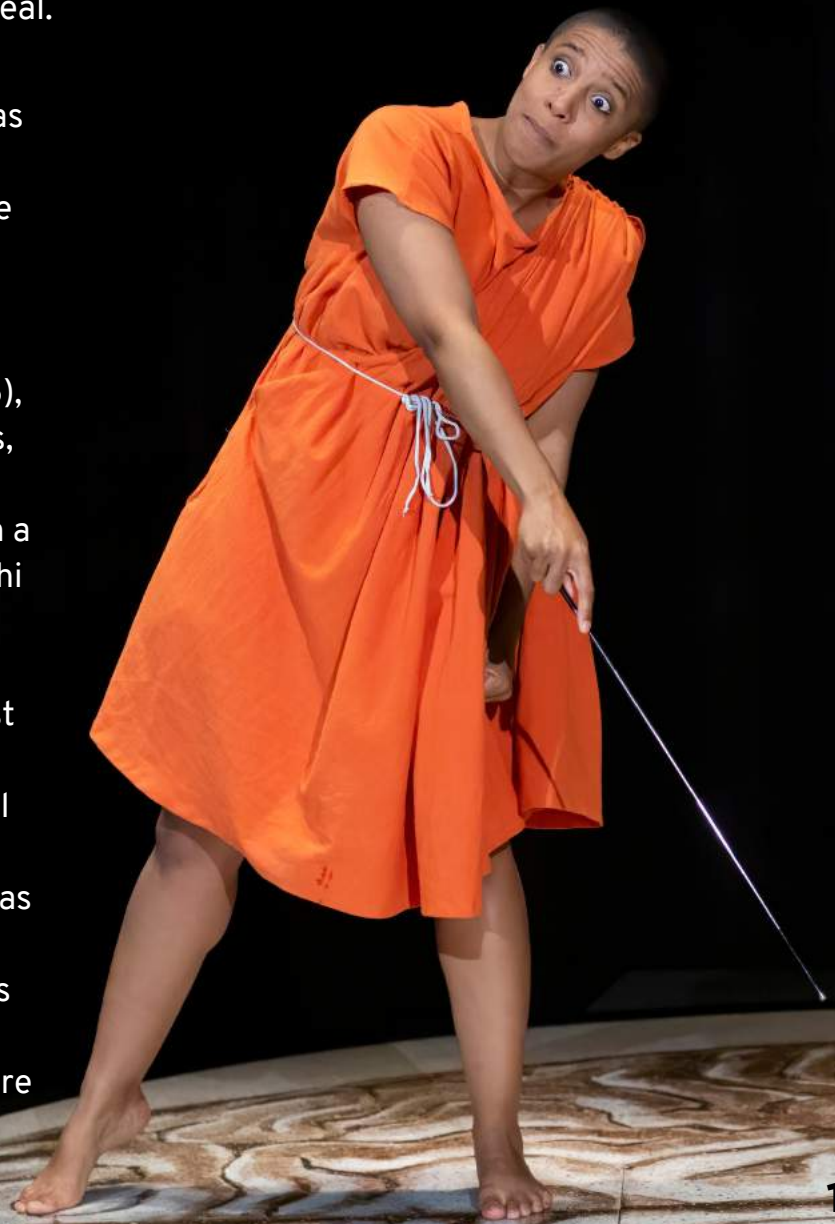


A NOTE FROM LISA FOSTER

Rana Bose was a playwright, novelist, poet, writer and professional engineer, born in Calcutta and long based in Montréal. He was one of the founding editors of the theatre group and magazine Montréal Serai, committed to magnifying the voices of “New Arts, New Communities” and bringing the margins to the centre. Activism was in his bones, and his extraordinary energy, wit and vision have helped sustain a far-reaching community based on solidarity and respect, shifting and decolonizing the cultural landscape. Rana had over 40 years of writing, theatre and production work on stage under his belt. He wrote and staged 11 plays, 10 of which have been performed in Montréal, New York, Vancouver, Toronto, Guelph, Chicago and India. Rana’s theatre works and play scripts have been featured in several anthologies published in the U.S. and Canada, as well as being used for doctoral dissertations in literature and drama in Belgium, the U.S., Canada and India.

He directed plays by other playwrights as well, including Sue Townsend’s *The Great Celestial Cow* (when he was co-founder of Teesri Duniya Theatre) at the Centaur Theatre in Montréal, and Sharon Pollack’s, *Komagata Maru Incident*, performed in Montréal and Vancouver to mark the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the ship in Burrard Inlet. Rana also did theatre design and lighting design for major shows in St. Louis and Montréal.

Many of the plays he wrote and directed were performed by Montréal Serai: *Baba Jacques Das* and *Turmoil at Côte-des-Neiges Cemetery*, *On the Double*, *Some Dogs*, *Nobody Gets Laid*, *Five or six characters in search of Toronto*, *Black Skirt*, *The Death of Abbie Hoffman*, and *The Sulpician Escarpment*. Rana authored four novels: *Recovering Rude* (Véhicule Press, 1996), *The Fourth Canvas* (Mawenzi House Publishers, 2008), *Fog* (Baraka Books, 2019) and *Shaf and the Remington* (Baraka Books, 2022). *Fog* won a Best Canadian Fiction award from the Miramichi Review. He wrote over 300 articles, reviews, short stories and critical essays that were published in various publications and broadcast and reviewed on the CBC, as well as in the *Montreal Gazette*, the *Globe and Mail*, *Montréal Serai*, *Quill and Quire*, *The Montreal Review of Books* and the *Ottawa Citizen*. In 2016, Rana was awarded the Quebec Writers’ Federation Judy Mappin Community Award for his contributions to English literature in Quebec. He served on many Canada Council juries for grants to theatre groups and emerging writers.



FESTIVALS & MENTORSHIPS



GO FISH!

On May 11th, 2023, Teesri Duniya Theatre hosted a staged reading of Carolyn Fe's new play, *Go Fish!* directed by Lib Spry as part of Accès Asie's Asian Heritage Month Festival. Originally developed as part of Teesri's 2022 Fireworks program, Carolyn wrote this work in part to ensure older women had access to acting opportunities and to allow them to see themselves being represented on the stage.

Featuring local actresses, Raissa Beaudoin, Nouella Grimes, Li Li, Bonnie Mak, and Linda Nourse, Fe tells the story of an older woman who becomes a witness to her past as she prepares to let go. Separating and compartmentalising all the women she had been with at different stages in her life as she lives out her last day on Earth.



Playwright -- Carolyn Fe



Director -- Lib Spry



Left to right: Raissa Beaudoin, Bonnie Mak, Li Li, Linda Nourse, Nouella Grimes

FIREWORKS PLAY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

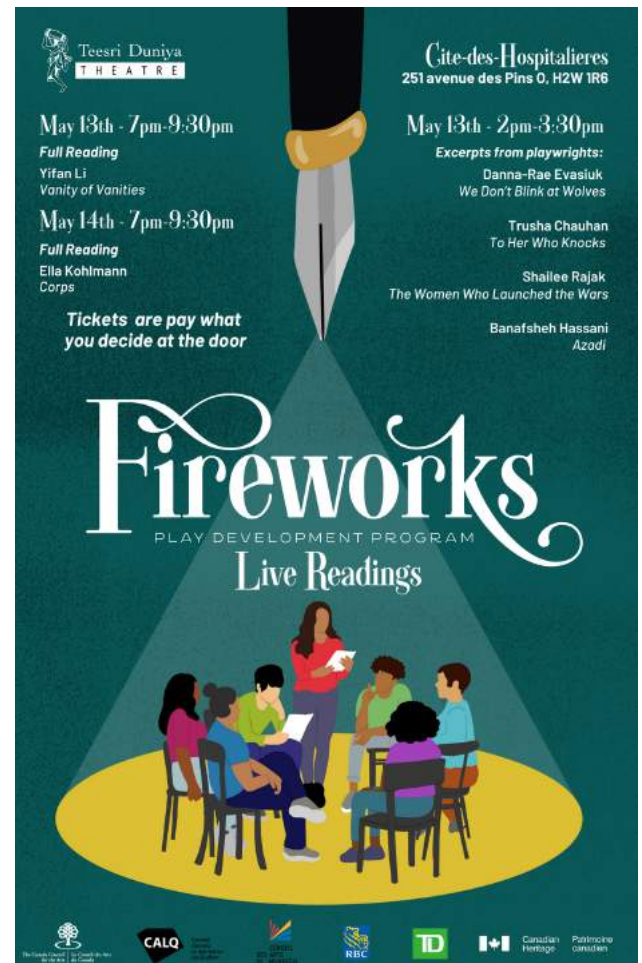
The Mentorship Program ran from November 15, 2022-May 1, 2023, with performance's being held live and in person in the Salle de Communaute at the CDH building May 13 and 14th.

Developed by Teesri Duniya Theatre, the Fireworks Playwrights' Development Program is a unique intercultural theatre artist development program focused on playwriting and culturally sensitive dramaturgy. Now in its ninth year of operation, the scope of this program has grown in its ability to support the featured artists and showcase their talent to a broader audience base.

Phase One featured a guided program where artists developed their skills as playwrights, broadened their ideas, and produced a workshop draft of a full play. They received group and one-on-one dramaturgy/ mentorship with established and celebrated dramaturgs Vishesh Abeyratne and Jen Cressey.

In the second phase of the program, artists with complete drafts worked with both emerging and professional practitioners (actors, directors, producers) to produce a publicly presented reading.

These public readings were delivered in person for the first time in 3 years, marking a triumphant return to Fireworks in person programming. In all, this program employed two (2) seasoned dramaturges, six (6) breakout playwrights, and nineteen (19) actors of diverse backgrounds.



Dramaturg - Jen Cressey



Dramaturg/Facilitator - Vishesh Abeyratne

THE PLAYS & PLAYWRIGHTS

To Her Who Knocks **by Trusha Chauhan**



Indy can't hold down a job whilst caring for Eve, her widowed grandmother. At her wit's end, Indy decides to get her hands on her grandfather's inheritance money as her way out of the house she feels trapped in. Indy discovers things are not what they seem as her search for independence begins to reveal secrets from Eve's past and that money may grant freedom but it cannot wash away the sins that bind a family. *To Her Who Knocks* is a contemplation on caregiving and highlights the dissatisfaction, resentment and guilt that hide beneath the surface of love. At its core, it is a story of two women who are forced to reckon with the crushed expectations that colour their relationship.

Excerpt performed May 13

Azadi **by Banafsheh Hassani**

This is an Iranian woman.
Not today, not since Zhina.
Always.

Excerpt performed May 13



We Don't Blink At Wolves **by Danna-Rae Evasiuk**



The Northern Boreal Forest. Late January at 3:30PM - pitch black. In a snowstorm that isn't howling. They're young enough to be lost, but old enough that their lost-ness has become a personal problem for themselves. They're the salt of the earth, but never cook for themselves so they don't really know that much about seasoning. They're suffering a shared existential crisis.

Excerpt performed May 13th

the Women who launched the Wars **by Shailee Rajak**

"In my entire life on the mortal plane, no one asked for my story. They thought they knew me... I was the most beautiful of all women alive. They praised me, desired me, and killed each other to own me. They said I was the face that launched an army across the sea, I was the face that destroyed a kingdom." Sita and Helen. Two of mythology's best-known 'heroines', famed for the epic wars fought over them in Lanka and Troy. There are endless accounts of how beautiful they were, what happened to them, and how their valiant husbands rescued them. But what do we really know of the women themselves? What did they think? How did they feel? Listen now to their own stories, in their own voices... In this cross-cultural, feminist retelling through a musical drama, Shailee imaginatively constructs their hidden lives on stage, filling in the gaps where there was only silence before.

Excerpt performed May 13



Corps

by Ella Kohlmann



At an unnamed midsize tech corporation still reeling from the aftermath of a sexual assault scandal, four employees gather in a conference room to attend a company-mandated “empowerment workshop for women in business and tech.” In an office down the hall, the disembodied spirit of the recently-deceased Director of Human resources gives pointers to her replacement. As arguments erupt and a life is put on the line, each woman confronts what she is willing to do to make herself feel safe. Corps is a surreal, feminist horror-dramedy about what it's like to keep going to work while the world falls apart outside your door.

Full play reading performed on May 14th

Vanity of Vanities All is Vanity

by Yifan Li

Ming, a gay man fleeing China, wanders in a foreign city in search of the purpose of life amidst the chaos. From a disastrous wedding to a tangled web of exes, a desperate therapist, a haunting breakdown, a pillbox, a stained shirt, and utter chaos...eventually led to an inevitable death. Follow Ming’s footsteps as he navigates through his memories and realities, where stories of politics, sexuality, identity, and love ultimately spiral into nihilism. In the frenzied bustle of the modern city, we rip apart the body of a Chinese man where there has long been no heart, but vanity.

Full play reading performed May 13th



FIREWORKS ACTORS

2023



Charity Adzie



San Choi



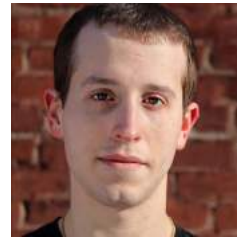
Tiernan Cornford



Robyn Erin Ellison



Nazifa



Gabriel Lezza



Natasha Fagant



Arash Ebrahimi



Rahul Gandhi



Niyayesh Golestani



Mirza Sarhan



Tevin Sawyer



Mahin Sekendra



Leya Graie



Sean Henderson



Gio Imola



Ambica Sharma



Leigh Ann Taylor



Shadi Yazdani

EVENTS



ARTIST GATHERING FOR MAHSA AMINI



Mahsa Amini. A name. A woman. A movement. Since the 16th of September the name Mahsa Amini has ricocheted through the world illuminating the violence of the Islamic Republic's totalitarian regime. For Teesri Duniya Theatre, this has been a call to action.

Twenty-two years old Mahsa Amini was arrested by Iran's morality police, accused of wearing her hijab "improperly." After being severely beaten by the morality police she died in custody after three days. Iranian authorities insist Mahsa died from a stroke, which reminds us of the Iranian regime's denials of the deaths of Zahra Kazimi, Satar Beheshti, Zahra Bani Youghoubi and many more over the decades.

A global response is needed. Teesri Duniya Theatre joins those who are outraged at Mahsa's death and at the continued harassment and repression of women both in Iran and worldwide.

On October 28, 2022, we hosted an event to hear from Iranian Canadian artists, inviting a free exchange of thought.

Since April 2023, Teesri has been selling calendars whose contents present feminist poetry to resist oppression and demand freedom for all women. To date we have raised over \$400 which will be strategically donated to ensure access to Iranian women on the front lines.

GLOBAL DIALOGUES

Led by board member, Cristina Alejandra Jiménez Gómez, Part One of the Global Dialogues project was aimed at creating space to discuss intersectional concerns within communities interested in meaningful discourses in order to generate alliances and take action.


Global Dialogues' challenge was to offer a platform to counter misinformation and provoke culturally inclusive conversations.

Global Dialogues was a community-based project developed in two cycles: Word Circles and Action Spirals. Both sessions were designed by applying ancestral technologies like orality, spiral thinking and participatory action research. These techniques served as vehicles to develop sessions which care for the cultural and human experience. Moreover, this project was intended to establish alternative spaces for Teesri Duniya's communities to gather and exchange.

The success of this project was only possible because of participants' openness, listening, and voice. It was nourishing to learn from their experiences, knowledge, and contributions. Projects like these provide communities with the opportunities to grow and to learn more about Teesri Duniya's Mission of changing the world one play at a time.

Part two of the Global Dialogues project - expected to be released by the next year, is a podcast series created to interchange ideas on local issues aligning with artistic and educational perspectives. We want to have thought-provoking conversations. We aim to open social dialogues, raising awareness and intersecting communities with inspiring processes and experiences of change.





FILM SCREENING: THE MODI QUESTION

On February 19, 2023, the Rang collective alongside Teesri Duniya Theatre, the Center for Study and Research in South Asia (CERAS), and Montreal Serai hosted a free screening of *India: The Modi Question*, a two-part BBC documentary that examines claims about Indian PM Narendra Modi's role in the 2002 riots that left over a thousand dead.

Presented as part of Screening South Asia, a series by the Rang Collective in Montreal, this series showcased work by filmmakers and artists- feature films, documentaries, short films, experimental films etc. emanating from South Asia and its diaspora.

The goal was to create dialogue and awareness around Social Justice issues for marginalized South Asian and South Asian-adjacent communities, primarily through cultural events, especially in Quebec- a goal which was achieved at this event.

The turn out was large, sporting approximately 50 audience members. Following the screening, a lively discussion was hosted by the Rang collective where Muslim and Hindu community members alongside others, were able to learn and debate together, sharing their perspective on the causality and consequences of the riots.

BREAKING

June 2nd, 2023

Teesri Duniya Theatre in collaboration with McGill's office of Gender Equity and 2SLGBTQIA+ Education, Action Santé Travesti(e)s et Transsexuel(le)s du Québec (ASTT(e)Q), Param Nrithyalaya Dance School, and AGIR Montréal (Action LGBTQIA+ avec les ImmigrantEs et RéfugiéEs), hosted Dr. Narthaki Nataraj where she spoke about her journey as a trans-woman and performed in the Indian classical dance form, Bharatanatyam.

Dr. Nataraj, a recipient of the Padmashri award, (one of the highest Indian civilian awards) for her work in the arts and her unwavering support of the LGBTQ+ community at home and abroad, led a lecture demonstration entitled "Breaking Barriers", instilling awe and unconditional love into all those who attended.

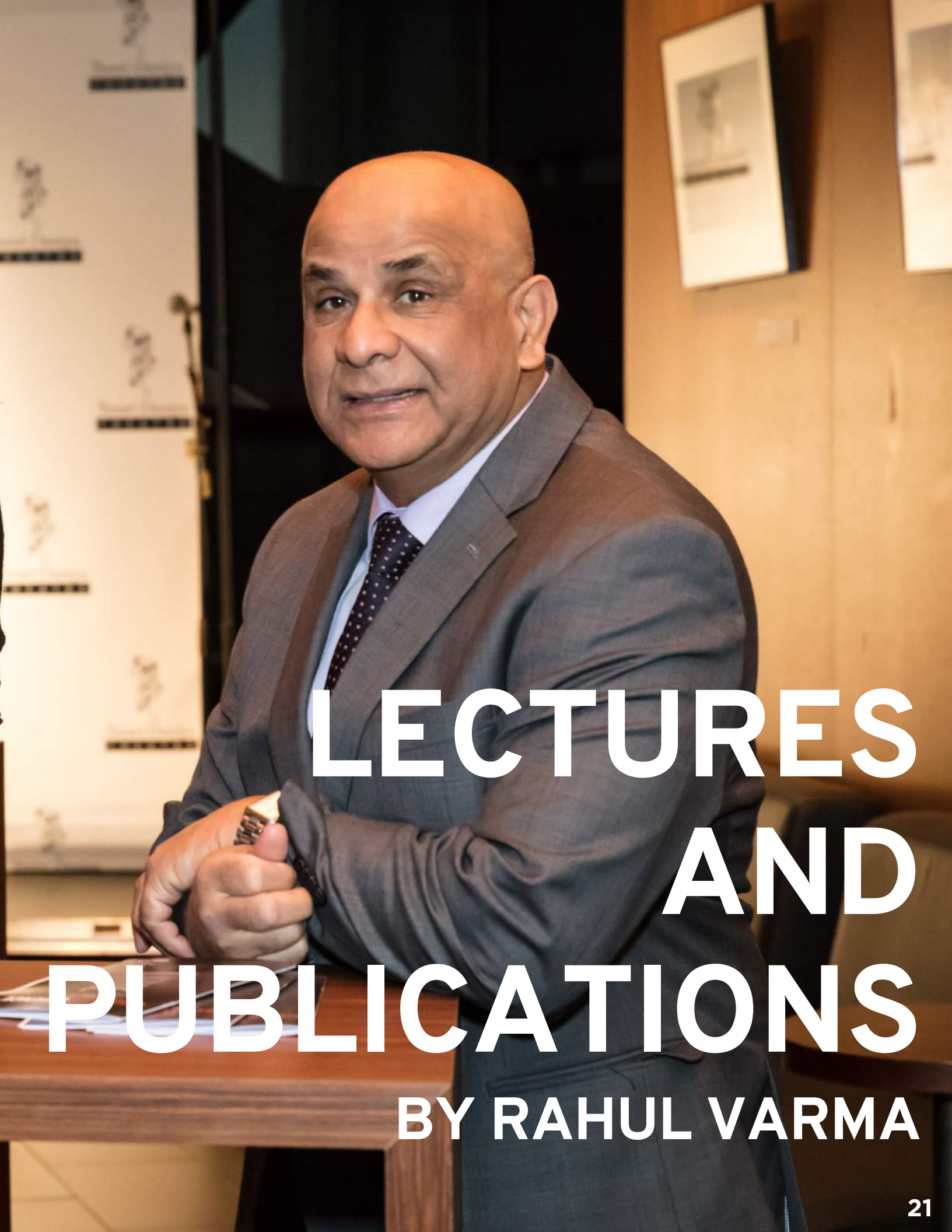
It was a full house that evening, with the nearly 70 audience members filling the Salle de Communauté. The introductions were given by Deeksha Arya (En) and Daphne Barile (FR). The event was moderated by Deeksha.

Dr. Nataraj spoke of the policies she is proposing to support the LGBTQ2S+ community in India, stating that governments still have much to learn and much to do to ensure equity. In a divine ending to the evening, Dr. Nataraj said that all she and Ms. Bhaskar want is a world not discriminated by identity, but rather where everyone is accepted and recognized for their merit - a world with "unconditional love".

The evening held many powerful moments, perhaps memorable was when Dr. Nataraj's inseparable trans sister, Ms. Sakthi Bhaskar, joined her on the stage, and Dr. Nataraj spoke of how Ms. Bhaskar, an equally adept Bharatanatyam artist and Tamil literature scholar, is her biggest supporter, taking on the role of Dr. Nataraj's manager and mentor, the pride shining brightly on both of their faces.

BARRIERS





LECTURES AND PUBLICATIONS

BY RAHUL VARMA

LECTURES

During COVID or through the lockdown, I presented many panel discussions that I have not kept track of. However, here are a few where I was the sole/key presenter.

**Decolonization as Theater -
Decentering and Disrupting
Colonial Spaces and Narratives**
2022, Council of European studies

Charter at Forty
2021, University of Alberta,
Alberta, Canada

**Social Movements, Performance
and Democratic Practices (Indo-
Canadian Dialogue)**

2021, Shastri-Indo Canadian
Institute Golden Jubilee Online
Conference, Jawaharlal Nehru
University, India

**Global Education and the
Humanities in the Time of Covid
19: Challenges and Perspectives
Beyond Borders, (2021,
International Conference on
Canadian Studies, Jadavpur
University, Kolkata, India)**

Guest Lectures 2022/2023:
Jadavpur University,
The British University in Egypt,
McGill and UQAM

PUBLICATIONS

Since 2021, i.e. during the COVID time, the following have been originally published on the dates provided. Most of them were republished by others at different times and in different formats.

**The Blindness of Colour-Blind
Casting**
Winter 2023
Canadian Theatre Review Issue 193

Trial! Not an Apology
Aug 1, 2022
Commentary, Montreal Serai
(<https://montrealserai.com/news/>)

**Whitewashed: Canada is shackled
by its history of denial**
July 22, 2021
(<https://rabble.ca/education/whitewashed-canada-shackled-its-history-denial/>)

**Islamophobia & Racism cannot be
defeated without dismantling
colonial White Supremacy**
July 7, 2021
Commentary in Montreal Serai

**Interview of Rahul Varma, by
Anouck Carsignol, researcher,
CERIAS (UQAM)**
May 25, 2021
SAMAJ, South Asian
Multidisciplinary Academic Journal
(<https://journals.openedition.org/samaj/>)

**Miss Portrayal of Asians Promotes
Racism**
April 7, 2021
Opinion Piece
(Rabble.ca)

COMMUNITY OUTREACH



Community Alliance (CA) is a project spearheaded by the Artistic Director (Rahul Varma) and managed by the Outreach Coordinator (Sean Ryan). Together they assembled a team of representatives to act as Teesri Duniya ambassadors. The team consisted of Ambica Sharma, Louna Fezoui, and Lisa-Willia Volcy.

The ambassadors' main goal was to establish, build, and maintain mutually beneficial (non-monetary) relationships between Teesri Duniya Theatre and the various community organizations they connected with. Our target organizations were to focus on providing services for or which promote BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ people, women's rights, social justice, and environmental issues.

The team created a list of Montreal based organizations to contact, then designed an email template to introduce Teesri Duniya - including our mission and mandate, and outlining the notions of the CA project. Alongside the email, the team drafted a script for in person and/or phone meetings, an informational pamphlet (print) and audio-visual slideshow providing details on the project and history on Teesri, as well as a print poster which was distributed to the organisations to be hung as promotional material for Teesri.

Our time was also spent deepening and reaffirming existing relationships. The majority of the Artistic Director's in-kind work was spent in consultation with various South Asian groups such as the Rang Collective, a Montreal based collective for the arts, and Bharat Bhavan, a foundation which provides social support to members of the South Asian diaspora.

GRANTS

Canada Summer jobs

(2 positions - summer 2022) (two 8 week full time contracts at minimum wage)

Cultural Human Resources Council

1 position: summer 2022 (\$7,000), 2 positions: summer 2023 (\$7,000 each)

KATIMAVIK

2 positions

Cole Foundation

Awarded a commissioning grant for Rahul Varma to write “Talaq” - \$10,000 (2022)

Awarded a commissioning grant for Vishesh Abeyratne to write “White Lion Brown Tiger” \$10,000 (2023)

Awarded a production grant for 2 upcoming shows, Azadi + Chemical Valley Project - \$12,500 per each (2023)

TD

Awarded \$40,000 for 2023 season and awarded \$40,000 for 2024 season

Wuchien Michael Than Foundation

Awarded \$7,000 per year for the next three years

PCH

Awarded \$60,000 for the Capacity Building program

Awarded \$22,000 for the New Voices Initiative

Awarded \$18,000 for Next Stage Project

CAM

Awarded an operating grant of \$10,000 for one year

CALQ

Awarded an operating grant of \$80,000 for one year

CCA

Awarded an operating grant of \$110,000 for this fiscal year

Anonymous Donation

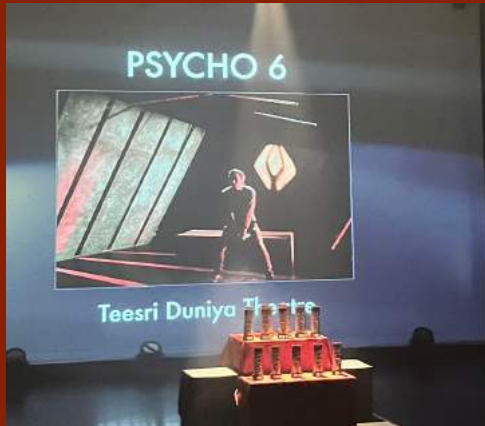
\$10,000 in a private internal donation (Tribes!)

Anonymous Donation

\$17,000 in a private internal donation (Tribes!)

META'S

The Teesri team attended the 10th annual Montreal English Theatre Awards to celebrate a vibrant year of performances in the city. This year our 2022 production, *Psycho 6* was nominated under four categories:



Oliver Koomsatira:
OUTSTANDING LEAD PERFORMANCE - PACT Production

Oliver Koomsatira:
OUTSTANDING NEW TEXT

Oliver Koomsatira and Liz Valdez:
OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO THEATRE

Christine Lee (Sound Design):
OUTSTANDING EMERGING ARTIST - Production

Although we didn't bring home the trophy, the META's allowed us to come together as a team to celebrate and honour all the hard work that went into creating the powerful story that is Oliver Koomsatira's *Psycho 6*.

SELECT MEDIA REVIEWS

MEET ME

September 30, 2022 - Jim Burke Funhouse Theatre:
twitter.com/FunhouseTheatre/status/1575881841965309959

September 30, 2022- Pat Donnelly @patstagepage:
twitter.com/patstagepage/status/1575964326350962704

October 4, 2022- The McGill Tribune review by Dana Prather:
www.mcgilltribune.com/a-e/meet-me-provokes-audience-reflection-throughinteractive-theatre-10042022/

October 7, 2022- CJAD, Sarah's long weekend list Oct. 7-10 by Sarah Deshaies:
www.iheartradio.ca/virginradio/montreal/trending/sarah-s-long-weekend-list-october-7-10-1.18606698
(on air on the Andrew Carter Show)

COUNTER OFFENCE

March 1, 2023- Cult MTL print edition interview with Rahul and Murdoch by Savannah Stewart:
www.pressreader.com/article/281663964214645

March 19, 2023- Forget the Box review by Naghmeh Shafiei:
www.forgetthebox.ca/arts/counter-offence-review

March 29, 2023- The Marianopolis News Blitz review by Molly Yu:
themarineblitz.com/2023/03/lies-in-your-truthcounter-offence-exploring-the-complicities-between-justices/

March 28, 2023- Montreal Scene review by Deborah Rankin:
montrealscene.ca/f/counter-offence-at-the-segalcentre-for-performing-arts

March 29, 2023- Westmount Magazine review by Byron Toben:
www.westmountmag.ca/counter-offence-provokethought-on-two-issues/

March 31, 2023- Our Theatre Voice review by Joe Szekeres:
<https://www.ourtheatrevoice.com/items-2/'counteroffence'-by-rahul-varma>

TRIBES

June 14, 2023- Jim Burke Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=10159351167965373&set=a.10156249678075373>

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INTERN



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ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

Interns and
Artists in Residence



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ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



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GENERAL MANAGER

SEAN RYAN
ADMIN &
CREATIVE SUPPORT/
OUTREACH

PRERNA NEHTA
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LITERARY MANAGER



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COMMUNICATIONS

MAHIN SEKENDRA
FORMER
PRODUCTION
ADMINISTRATOR

EMMANUEL DAGENAIS
FORMER
CREATIVE SUPPORT

KATIMAVIK sponsorship

Teesri Duniya Theatre wishes to thank KATIMAVIK and their Future Perfect program for giving Fred and Emmanuel the opportunity to join the Teesri Duniya team.

KATIMAVIK is an organization which supports diverse young people in finding employment in their field as a way to jumpstart their careers. For more information about the organizations, follow the link!

<https://katimavik.org/en/we-are/#missionvisionEN>

EVENT SUPPORT TEAM



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[HTTPS://ABOUT.ME/JANIS.KIRSHNER](https://about.me/janis.kirshner)



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