

ILLICIT WORLDS OF INDIAN DANCE

Welcome to this exquisite evening exploring the *Illicit Worlds of Indian Dance*.

This evening investigates the demise of the courtesans, battles of the bar girls and the exclusive worlds of cross dressing and queer performers.

Known but hardly acknowledged and let alone understood, this culture plays an important part in the history of Indian classical dance and music.

Akademi champions the understanding and appreciation of marginalised and underground forms of dance. We were delighted to come across **Professor Anna Morcom**'s extensive field research in this area, which became the inspiration to curate this programme.

"It's really exciting to see these marginal and underground forms of dance recreated ...

Congratulations to Akademi for taking this on"

Professor Anna Morcom, Author



Akademi

 #illicitworlds

"I am so excited to be taking part in this Akademi production at Rich Mix.

Classical Indian dance is full of rich history, full of art, culture and passion and I'm proud and honoured to be included in the name of diversity.

I'm particularly delighted that Akademi are bold enough to have LGBT inclusivity when it comes to classical Indian Dance."

Asifa Lahore, Performer

THE AUTHOR



Anna Morcom

Professor Anna Morcom's work focuses on Indian and Tibetan music and dance. She has written three books: *Unity and discord: Music and politics in contemporary Tibet* (2004); *Hindi film songs and the cinema* (2007); and *Illicit Worlds of Indian dance: Cultures of exclusion* (2013) which was awarded the Alan Merriam prize of the Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM) and the Marcia Herndon prize of the Gender and Sexualities section of SEM.

THE ARTISTS



Natalia Hildner

Natalia presents Kathak's subtle and sensitive aesthetics on the international stage, integrating Taal (rhythm), Ang (grace), and Abhinaya (expression). She is currently receiving tutelage from Kathak maestro Padmavibhushan Birju Maharaj, and has previously trained with Smt. Sandhya Desai (disciple of Padmashri Kumudini Lakhia), Ms. Mekhala Natavar and Ms. Purnima Shah. In 2008, she was awarded a prestigious fellowship as Senior Performing Artist from the American Institute of Indian Studies.



Emiko Ishii

Emiko is a British-born Japanese Dancer, Choreographer and Dance Teacher. Her love for Indian Dance started in Indian cinema which led her to train in Kathak under Padmashri Pratap Pawar. With a background in ballet, hiphop, street dance, Bellydance, Nihon Buyo (Japanese traditional Dance), Kathak, Bhangra and Bollywood she creates unique and thought-provoking fusions. Emiko is the Artistic Director of Epika Dance Troupe.



Raheem Mir

Raheem has been training in Kathak for nearly 10 years and has been under the tutelage of Gauri Sharma Tripathi and Sujata Banerjee and is a student at Royal Holloway University of London. Upon discovering Kathak, the art of abhinaya intrigued him more than any other aspect of Kathak because of the embodiment and change in persona when performing.



Leela Ek Paheli

Leela is a dance artist with over 11 years of experience in performing Indian folk dance and over five years in Bollywood dance. The journey to becoming Leela started over 3 years ago. He has performed to over 20 different traditional folk and modern Bollywood medleys, both the styles he is equally at ease with. He regularly performs at the popular night at Desi Boys, where he will perform after tonight's event.



Asifa Lahore

Asifa Lahore, the alter-ego of Asif Quraishi is Britain's first out Muslim drag queen, is pushing the boundaries of what it means to be Gay and Muslim. Lahore made her debut in 2011 winning bronze in the annual Drag Idol UK competition. Now an established figure within in the Gaysian community, in 2015 Asifa featured in Channel 4's documentary Muslim Drag Queens and received the prestigious LGBT award at the Attitude Magazine Pride Awards.

Artist Development & Productions:

Nina Head

Lighting Designer:

Stuart Walton

Akademi Team: Mira Kaushik, Tim Foxon, Monique Deletant Bell, Antareepa Thakur, Christina Christou, Nina Head, Sydney Rae, Amelia Hart, Claire Farmer, Rohanne Udall, Holly Morris, Catherine Ibbotson and Anita Srivastava.

ORDER OF ACTS

PART I: From courtesans to bar girls

Natalia Hildner

Kathak poetry

Kathak solos

Thumri, Mohe Rang Do Lal

Tarana

Emiko Iishi

With Yoshina Boodhoo & Grace Penaloza

Kajra Re

-

Compilation of Bollywood Songs

Maar Daala, Aaja Nachle remix, Halkat Jawani, Jalebi Bai,

Chikni Chameli and Dhoom Machale

PART II: Cross-dressed and queer performers

Raheem Mir

Dil Cheez Kya Hai

from the film Umrao Jaan (1980)

Leela Ek Paheli

Bollywood Compilation

Mera Assi Kali Ka

Sridevi Compilation

Asifa Lahore

Punjabi Girl

Bollywood Ballad

Rise like a Phoenix

RICH MIX
EASTEND



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