



art asia

Annual Review
April 2007 – March 2008

Artistic Statement 2008

Our mission is to communicate the rich and exciting experience of South Asian Arts to the widest possible audience. Our work aspires to be entertaining, surprising and to celebrate our belief that the Arts of South Asia are universal in their appeal.

Throughout our history we have risen to many challenges, and as a thriving organisation we continue to learn and explore.

We wish to develop the traditional, contemporary and experimental practice of artists in the UK and abroad by commissioning and showcasing the best, the unexpected and the unknown. We will create the spaces in which established and emerging artists may test themselves and their art and pursue new ideas and new partnerships.

We wish to create a supportive environment for participants in which transformative experiences and exciting intercultural exchanges can take place.

Through our links with arts organisations, venues and other creative professionals we will challenge assumptions, raise awareness and prepare the platform on which our artists can bring their work to diverse audiences.

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Charity Number: 1070019

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Introduction by the Chair



As a key arts organisation in the South of England, Art Asia is committed to its mission: communicating the rich and exciting experience of South Asian Arts to the widest possible audience. It is a challenging but fulfilling task and one that is constantly evolving.

In 2007-08, we organised 8 high quality concerts and performances with our various partners across the region and ran the annual Southampton Mela Festival. More than 11,500 people experienced the richness and variety of South Asian Arts with a diverse programme of music, dance and drama.

Through our education service, we have worked with 20 schools in Hampshire, the Isle of Wight and Sussex (including 3 rural schools) and engaged with more than 4,000 participants aged 4 – 18 across the Southern Region.

Perhaps one of the most exciting projects Art Asia is currently involved in is the South African PanJazz Project (see page 10) which is a wonderful example of Art Asia's belief that the Arts know no bounds and can be an exciting, enjoyable, and thought provoking shared experience for all.

All this work would not have been possible without the enthusiasm and hard work of all the staff of Art Asia – including tutors and volunteers – and the dedication of the Board of Directors. We are very proud and pleased that in recognition of his hard work and dedication over the past 25 years our Chief Executive, Vinod Desai, has been awarded an MBE for his work in the arts.

Finally, on behalf of Art Asia, I would like to thank our many partners and sponsors – and in particular our two main funders, Arts Council England and Southampton City Council – for their support which is essential in enabling Art Asia to deliver an exciting and stimulating programme in the region.

Dahlia Jamil
Chair of the Board

Events

Over the past year Art Asia has promoted 8 high quality events attracting a total audience of around 3,500, plus around 8,000 people at the Southampton Mela Festival 2007.

Jai Hind – Turner Sims Concert hall

Indian and western instruments combined in a programme of traditional Indian music and newly-written works.

A Fine Balance – Tamasha Nuffield Theatre

In this tender and powerful production, Tamasha revealed an astonishing period in India's recent history whilst capturing the exceptional human spirit of its people.

"Nothing short of a miracle." Sunday Telegraph

Southampton Mela Festival – Hoglands Park

Despite the very wet weather people from the local and surrounding communities came together to have fun and celebrate traditional and modern South-Asian culture. About 8,000 people attended the Mela creating their own sunshine on a very squelchy Saturday!



▲ A Fine Balance



▲ The Southampton Mela Festival



▲ Nisbat



▲ Hariprasad Chaurasia



▲ Asima

Nisbat – Sonia Sabri New Theatre Royal, Portsmouth

A high impact performance presenting powerful Kathak Dance. Internationally acclaimed dancer and choreographer Sonia Sabri and her dancers were accompanied by live musicians on santoor and vocals, with the world-renowned Sarvar Sabri on tabla.

"a fine dancer, intense and intelligent... Sabri's work is brimming with promise. Make sure you catch her next time" The Times

Hariprasad Chaurasia Turner Sims Concert Hall

Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia is a world-leading bansuri (North Indian Bamboo flute) player and was accompanied by Yogesh Samsi on tabla. The concert was a captivating performance of traditional Indian music.

Asima – Turner Sims Concert Hall

An exquisite male choir and percussion ensemble from Kerala in Southern India. The group combined various elements of India's rhythmic and melodic sounds with the harmonic tones of western music.



▲ *There's Something About Simmy*

There's Something About Simmy Rifco Arts – Nuffield Theatre

An entertaining and enjoyable story about family, friendship and fate with a hint of Bollywood.

International Women's Day Mount Pleasant School

A free event presented by the WEa and Art Asia, with workshops, performances and stalls held by local artists.



▲ *Play Ball*

Cultural Show – Garden Court, Southampton University

Full of Music, Dance, Comedy and Fashion. The show was a partnership with Southampton University Asian Students Society, show-casing local, young talent.

Play Ball – Srishti New Theatre Royal, Portsmouth

3 pieces centered on Lads' Culture featuring traditional Bharatanatyam dance and Karnatic music by famed composer Y Yadavan. A lively and accessible show celebrating being macho through playing football, talking big bucks and succumbing to love.

*“Completely spellbinding,
breathtaking and dynamic
– enchanting.”*

Christine Nionty, Audience member



▲ *International Women's Day*



▲ *Drumming Workshop at Mela*

Education

- Art Asia worked with approximately **4,000** participants aged 4-18 across the Southern region.
- **19** workshops were run with 20 schools in Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Sussex (including 3 rural schools).
- Musicians and Dancers were supplied to **5** outreach projects.
- **10** Music and dance demonstrations and workshops were run at the Southampton Mela festival.
- Weekly classes were organised in Bharatanatyam, Bollywood dance and Tabla. A new Beginners Tabla class started at Art Asia and Bharatanatyam dance classes began in Portsmouth. **81** students attended, an increase of 25 students from 2007.
- The advanced Bharatanatyam class students had a master class with a Bharatanatyam dancer and choreographer. from Srishti



▲ *Mela Demonstration*



▲ South African Panjazz Project

South African Panjazz Project

Art Asia joined the Panjazz Project run by Portchester Community School and Brookfield Community School. Musician Sanju Sahai provided an Asian rhythmic element to the project and joined them for a tour of South Africa.

Women's Art Workshops

In the run-up to International Women's Evening, Art Asia ran a ceramic art workshop. Participants used Asian architecture as inspiration to make ceramic treasure boxes which were displayed at the International Women's Evening in March.



▲ Women's Art Workshops

February Fun Workshops

Families used images from traditional Bengali art and culture to design decorative bunting using Batik techniques.



▲ February Fun Workshop



▲ Fusion Project

Fusion Project

Composer Surinder Sandhu created a piece of Bollywood music for 95 students from Bitterne Park Secondary School and Bevois Town Primary School using both Western and Indian classical drums. Students worked for 10 weeks of Summer term and performed at the Mela Festival 2007.

Chamberlayne Park Dance Values Project

Students learned about Bharatanatyam and choreographed creative routines to explore and share their personal values. Every student experienced Bharatanatyam dance workshops (1,020 children in total) and primary school pupils watched performances and presentations.

Portchester School Festival Project

4 days of workshops in music and dance enabled 25 students to create a new piece of music and dance, which they then performed to 500 people at the Portchester School Festival.

Hello Too Mount Pleasant Junior School Project

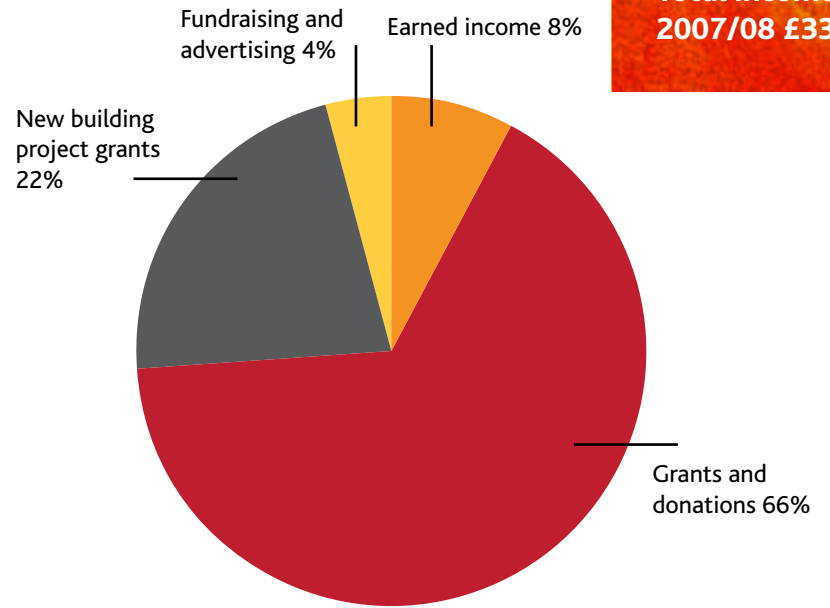
4 full-day Bollywood dance workshops at Mount Pleasant Junior School for 30 pupils who then performed Bollywood dance and a fashion show at the Mela Festival 2007.



▲ Hello Too project



Total Income
2007/08 £331,850



Other news

Chief Executive, Vinod Desai MBE

Vinod Desai, Art Asia's Chief Executive was made a Member of the British Empire in the Queen's 2007 Birthday Honours list for his services to the Arts, Vinod received his MBE from Prince Charles.

The South Africa PanJazz Project

As part of Art Asia's involvement in this project Chief Executive Vinod Desai MBE was able to join PanJazz on their South African tour. It was an inspiring first-hand experience of the opportunities and problems involved in an international collaboration and a valuable insight into the excitements and frustrations of working with world-wide partners.

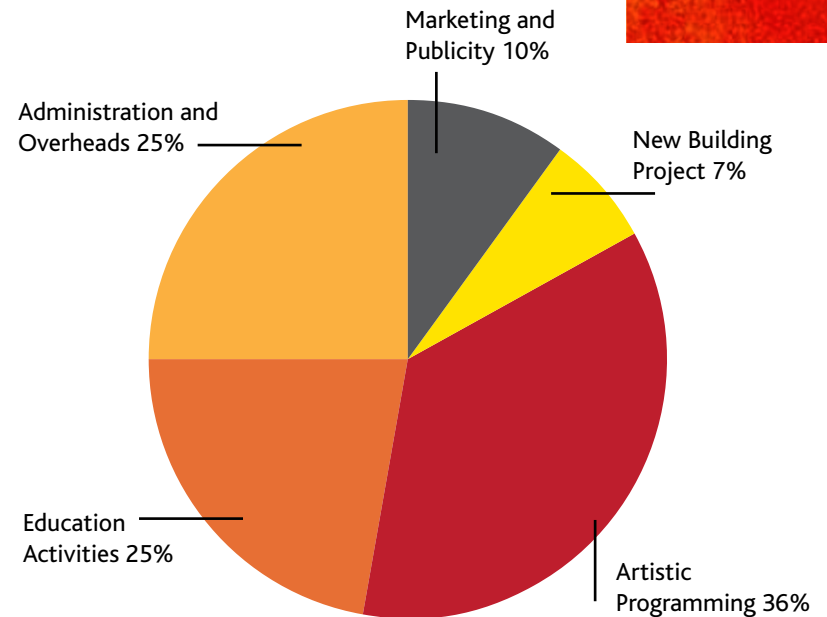
The Southampton's New Arts Complex project

The project progressed positively with the appointment of Jill Low as Client Team Leader and The Nuffield Theatre joining Art Asia, City Eye and the John Hansard Gallery to become the fourth arts partner.

Investment in Marketing and Audience Development

After 3 successful trainee post in May 2007, Lucy-Jane Attrill became our first Marketing Officer.

Total Expenditure
2007/08 £259,313



▲ The South Africa PanJazz Project



Partnerships

regular music concerts



varied programme of drama events



varied programme of dance events



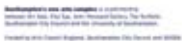
Nisbat –by the Sonia Sabri Dance Company



International Women's Day Event



Southampton University Students Union Asian Cultural Society – joint promotion of the Saathiya Cultural Show



Southampton's New Arts Complex building



Thank you to Paul McKenna and Bob Anthony for giving their time and expertise throughout the year.

Thank you to all our volunteers for their time and support.



Mela 2007 Sponsors and Supporters



Board of Directors as from September 2007

Dahlia Jamil (Chair)

Extensive experience in Community and Adult Education, currently works for Workers Educational Association (WEa) in Southampton. Former consultant to UNICEF on gender issues in Bangladesh.

Geeta Uppal (Vice Chair)

Currently the Community and Adult Learning Co-ordinator at Southampton Solent University. Her role is to encourage under represented groups into higher education. This is carried out by working closely with schools, further education colleges and community groups.

Arvind Pandit (Treasurer)

Chartered Accountant with over twenty years' experience in business, most recently as Finance & Operations Director for a publisher and distributor. Now runs his own Accountancy and business advisory practice. A past Honorary Treasurer of Harrow Round Table.

Jaya Gunatillaka

Chartered engineer for an international company. Formed the Hampshire Sri Lankan Cultural Society (HSCS) in 1997 and chaired it for two years. Enthusiasm for the promotion of culture.

Arzoo Iqbal

Bilingual Assistant for schools, ESOL and basic skills tutor at Southampton City College and WEa. Executive member of Alnissa (Muslim women's group), member of Urdu Women's Group.

Peter Knight

Over twenty years experience of working in Information Technology and Logistics. Member of the Council of the Institute of Patentees and Inventors. Broad spectrum of experience in the voluntary sector, both on the committee of the Southampton Federation of Resident's Association and in the scouting movement. Co-editor of Community Connecting Magazine.

Meena Vashisht

Works for Southampton City Council. Has extensive experience and knowledge in Local Taxation and Health and Safety at work. Also works in Community Development for children and families. Has passion for Indian music and Art.

Michelle Nand

A graduate in Sociology with a long history of association with Art Asia. Works in PR/Marketing.

Forkanul Quader

Works with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency as an Examiner of Master and Mates at MCA's Southampton Head Quarters. Long association with Rotary clubs and Lion International. One of the vice presidents of Southampton's 'Cultural Diversity Advisory Group to the Media'.

Staff

Chief Executive Vinod Desai MBE

Operations Manager Helen Keall

Arts Administrator Emma Price

Education Development Officer
Hannah Cowburn

Marketing Assistant Rehana Amin
(to May 2007)

Marketing Officer
Lucy-Jane Fitzpatrick
(from May 2007)

Education tutors and artists

Vidya Thirunarayan (Bharata
Natyam dance)

Iqbal Pathan (Tabla)

Mayuri Boonham (Bharata
Natyam dance)

Sanju Sahai (Tabla)

Surjit Singh Hassanpuri (Tabla)

Rakhi Sood (Bollywood Dance)

Lakshmi Raju (Bollywood Dance)

Devina Kanani (Bollywood Dance)

Arun Ghosh (Thornden Residency)

Lucy Mcloughlin (Visual Arts)

Isle of Wight Arts Unit Carnival
Team (Visual Arts)

Surinder Sandhu (Bollywood
Brass Band)

Kiranpal Singh (Santoor)

Sonia Sabri (Kathak dance)

Theresa Darvil (Belly dance)

Crishna (Katak dance)

Camilita (Katak dance)

Lucy Jenner (Visual Arts)

Jackie Giran (Visual Arts)

A larger print version of the Review is available from Art Asia

Supported by



www.artasia.org.uk