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Annual Review  
April 2010 – March 2011

# Introduction by the Chair

Welcome to Art Asia's 2010/11 Annual Review. Looking back over the year, there is much to be proud of. The Southampton Mela Festival enjoyed a bumper year, with fantastic weather and a fabulous line-up attracting record audiences. People often comment on the very special atmosphere at the Mela, and I would like to pay tribute to the amount of hard work and careful planning which goes into creating an event which appeals to people of all ages and cultural backgrounds.

2010/11 also saw work get underway on two major projects which Art Asia is delivering as part of 'Art at the Heart', a partnership between Southampton's arts organisations and the City Council to bring exciting events and projects to Southampton's emerging Cultural Quarter. Despite continuing uncertainty over Art Asia's role in Southampton's New Arts Complex, we remain committed to the development of the new Cultural Quarter, which has the new arts complex at its heart. The Giant Rangoli and Bollywood Baraat projects mark a significant new development for Art Asia as well, as the company takes on a creative producer role for the first time.

Another highlight was the very positive start of a new partnership with Hampshire County Council. The 'Aakrishit' show was especially

created to tour to small venues across the County, and enjoyed sell-out success. The Global Rhythms event at Winchester Discovery Centre was equally successful, and there are plans to hold similar events elsewhere in the County in future.

These considerable successes took part against a back-drop of continuing public sector funding cuts, which began to impact with the early closure of the Find Your Talent funding scheme, affecting our ability to continue with the three excellent projects we have been running with this funding over the past two years. Art Asia also had to re-apply for our Arts Council grant, along with every regularly-funded organisation in the country. Whilst we are very pleased that we remain in the portfolio of funded organisations, we are facing a significant reduction to our grant from 2012/13. As I said in my introduction last year, we will need to be ever more enterprising and inventive in our partnerships and funding sources in future but we will, of course, continue to be absolutely committed to bringing the rich and exciting experience of South Asian Arts to the widest possible audience.

**Dahlia Jamil,**  
Chair of the Board.



Above: Meera, at the Nuffield Theatre  
Below: Talvin Singh, at the Turner Sims



# Art Asia's Artistic Statement

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 transformational experiences and exciting inter-cultural 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.

## The Year in Numbers:

14 events

28,703 audience

150 workshops and demonstrations

4,794 participants

13 dance and music classes run weekly in Southampton and Portsmouth

144 class attendees







# Southampton Mela Festival 2010

Southampton Mela Festival is a free annual festival held in a city centre park each July.

The festival's stages showcase national and international artists and create a platform for community groups and schools to perform.

The various workshops and arts activities give all ages the chance

to experience something new, whilst the stalls lining the park feature a range of products and organisations.

This year's Southampton Mela Festival was full of outstanding acts and bright sunshine, attracting over 25,000 people to the one day event - the biggest audience in the festival's eight year history.



Left: Rajasthani folk musicians & dancers at the Southampton Mela Festival 2010.  
Photo by Murray Freestone

Above: Masks at the Southampton Mela Festival 2010.  
Photo by Paul Davison

# The 2010 Southampton Mela Festival Highlights

- 43 Music and Dance acts performing 24 different genres of music and dance
- World class performances by acts including Rajasthani musicians & dancers and Qawwali musicians.
- Visual arts project with Solent University, Secondary school students and India based artist Jayanta Chaudhuri. The students created large scale hand painted archways, banners and tree

decorations exploring the themes of unity and the Olympics.

- The introduction of a new stage - Stage 2, features professional and community performers, including for the first time Polish Dancers and Tamil Folk Dance.

Below: The Art Asia Dhol drummers and a mystery dancer at Southampton Mela Festival 2010.

Photo by Murray Freestone



Above: The Mela Archways  
Photo by Murray Freestone



Right: Crowd enjoy the main stage at  
Southampton Mela Festival 2010  
Photo by Murray Freestone



Below: Karparty Polish dancers on the new  
2nd Stage at Southampton Mela Festival  
2010  
Photo by Murray Freestone







## Events

### Global Rhythms

Winchester Discovery Centre

Led by Art Asia in partnership with Essequibo Music, Hampshire Music Service, Panjazz International and Hampshire County Council. Winchester Discovery Centre hosted 15 free workshops and 2 evening concerts exploring music from India, Africa, Java and the Caribbean. Over 1500 people visited the centre that day and experienced or participated in music from around the world.

### Meera

Nuffield Theatre, Southampton

This Subrang Arts show saw a cast of over 50 community performers take to the Nuffield Theatre stage and tell the tale of Meerabai, a Rajput Princess, Poet and Devotee of Lord Krishna. The show mixed dance, acting and projection to bring enduring characters from the mythological archive alive. The show was very popular in Southampton and across the country, and a tour of America is now planned.

### Memories of Rafi

Vedic Temple, Southampton

Mohammed Rafi was a music legend in the Hindi film industry. Bankim Pathak and his orchestra took the audience down a musical memory lane of Rafi hits. It was a sell-out show with several members of the audience singing and dancing along.



### **Aakrisht**

Art Asia Tour – Forest Arts, New Milton

In a new partnership with Hampshire County Council, Art Asia toured some of the Council's venues. The specially designed introduction to Indian Classical Music and Kathak Dance made audiences gasp in Aldershot and was a sell-out success in Winchester and New Milton.

### **Swati Natekar**

Vedic Temple, Southampton

As part of a series of programming bringing high quality artists into the heart of Southampton's South Asian community, Swati sang a range of Ghazals. Her beautiful Indian Classical vocals were accompanied by Komalbir Singh on violin, Mohamed Kassam on keyboard and Harif Khan on tabla.

### **Sugato Bhaduri**

West End Centre, Aldershot

Continuing a new relationship with the West End Centre, Art Asia presented Sugato Bhaduri. Sugato is a leading Mandolinist, his approach to Indian Classical ragas sees him play this traditional Western instrument in the time-honoured way of Gayakiang (playing with the versatility of the human voice)

***"It was great to have such a varied programme of performances and workshops for all ages taking place under one roof. The centre was jamming and it was great to see so many people learning how to play instruments they may have never seen before"***

***Nick Coates, Winchester Discovery Centre***



Above: Harishchandrachi Factory UK premiere

# Events

## Dhamaal

Nuffield Theatre, Southampton

Art Asia & the Asian Cultural Society, University of Southampton

This variety show by students has become a regular event and for the past four years has sold out. As well as supporting the students, performance opportunities are provided for local and new artists to showcase their new talent.

## International Women's Evening

St Marys Leisure Centre, Southampton

This popular annual event aimed at hard-to-reach women in the heart of Southampton's Asian community is now at full capacity, with 400 women and children enjoying a multi-cultural evening of performances, workshops and craft activities. Organised in partnership with WEa.

## Indian Classical Minis

Holyrood Church, Southampton

As part of Music in the City, Art Asia filled the ruins of Holyrood Church with Indian Classical performances and workshops. Music in the City offers the chance to take part in a variety of music experiences across Southampton and Indian Classical Minis exposed a largely new audience to Indian Classical Music.

## Harishchandrachi Factory

Southampton University Student Union, Southampton

As part of Southampton Film Week Art Asia premiered the first UK screening of Harishchandrachi Factory. Working with City Eye (Film Week organisers) Art Asia brought the Director Paresh Mokashi over from India to host post-show talks about his award winning film to Phoenix Film Society Members and festival-goers.



Right: International Women's Evening  
Photo by Zoha Zokaei





# Art Asia Supports

## **Panjazz International**

Kolkata, India

Art Asia continued to provide advice and support to enable the inclusion of South Asian arts in this ambitious multi-cultural school music project. The trip saw young musicians from India and the UK perform in various locations and record at the HMV recording studios. It was a great opportunity for young talented musicians from both countries to meet and exchange culturally and artistically.

## **Terry Riley**

Turner Sims, Southampton

Seminal minimalist composer Terry Riley celebrated his 75th birthday at Turner Sims with California Kirana – the West Coast Legacy of Pran Nath. Joined by saxophonist George Brooks and renowned tabla player and percussionist Talvin Singh, Terry explores the music of influential Hindustani classical singer and teacher Pran Nath, focusing on some of his favourite ragas from the Kirana tradition, alongside traditional ragas and works from his own repertoire.

## **Love is in the Air**

The Nuffield Theatre, Southampton

Continuing the company's established style of a male-dominated cast, Love is in the Air is an innovative piece combining film, aerial performance, and live music with the traditional form of Bharata Natyam dance. To accompany the show Art Asia and Srishti offered Wildern School a two day workshops (see workshops and projects page).

## **The Shiver**

The Point, Eastleigh

Created by Subathra Subramaniam, former co-director of Angika Dance Company, with text by the Southbank's internationally acclaimed poet-in-residence Lemn Sissay and with scientific input by Dr. Morten Kringlebach, professor of psychiatry at Oxford University; The Shiver presented a contemporary approach to Bharata Natyam.

## **Sivaloka & Ghatam**

The Point, Eastleigh

Art Asia's artistic associate Mayuri Boonham's new company ATMA, presented contemporary dance using classical Indian Bharata Natyam. Sivaloka explored the concept of Siva and was inspired by the dramatic, rock-cut Elephanta temple in India. Ghatam is a percussion instrument made of fired red clay. In this dance the 'dancedrummers' create a playful, dynamic expression of the four core characterful percussive sounds of the Ghatam. To accompany the show Mayuri worked with Thorden School students to produce a curtain raiser for the show (see Workshops and Projects page).

Right: The Shiver, at The Point





# Find Your Talent

Art Asia has successfully run three projects with children and young people with funding from Find Your Talent (FYT). These projects all targeted hard to reach groups in deprived areas and opened the participants to life changing opportunities. From meeting their music idols to performing in front of three generations of their family in a woods to dressing up as a bird and walking through the streets of London! The projects have required a high level of commitment from participants who engaged with all the projects in their spare time.

Unfortunately this funding has now stopped so we can no longer continue all three projects in the same capacity. Below are details of the fantastic work that the children and young people achieved with us.

## Bangla Music Project

This project focused on engaging with the Bangladeshi communities from Portsmouth and Southampton and consisted of weekly classes in singing and harmonium with international tabla player and singer Yousuf Ali Khan, tabla classes with Iqbal Pathan in Portsmouth and a second trip to the huge Tower Hamlets Baishaki Mela in London. This time the group of twenty children made colourful bird carnival costumes and flags with a visual artist from Emergency Exit Arts. The group performed in their costumes at the opening procession which was animal themed.

## Bhangra Bonanza

Well into its second year the Bhangra Bonanza project is still going strong. A second term of regular classes took place in Portsmouth with experienced Bhangra percussionist Bindi Sagoo and two classes in Southampton have been integrated into our regular paid classes.

In April a group from Portsmouth and Southampton went on a trip to see two events at the first Alchemy Festival run at the Southbank Centre in London.

The group was shown around the Southall Story exhibition by its creative director, musician Kuljit Bhamra. Kuljit explained his concept for the exhibition and talked to the group about his career in the music industry.

Next the group was able to meet the stars of the evening concert; Nihal's Desi Live hosted and curated by Nihal from BBC Radio 1 and BBC Asian Network.

The senior group of Dholis also took part in a series of music production classes with SoCo Music Project working on an exciting live fusion project that brought together talented young musicians from across the city. The work they produced explored Bhangra rhythms fused with the latest in R&B and Hip Hop which they performed on Stage 2 at the Mela and at the Share Your Talent event at the Southbank Centre, a FYT showcase for successful projects from all over England.

## Newtown Youth Centre Drama Project

Art Asia has been working with Newtown Youth Centre, Hathi Productions, (a young BME Theatre Company from Leicester) and local theatre practitioners on an exciting drama project where the aim is to lay the foundations for a Youth Theatre Company at Newtown Youth Club.

This year started with a really successful intensive summer holiday project. Thirteen young people from Southampton's inner city attended nine days of workshops, culminating in a performance at Spinney Hollow Woodland Theatre. The group aged 12-19 learnt a script which was specially written by Hathi Productions for the project. The adaptation of a Midsummer Night's Dream was performed to a crowd of 85 people in the atmospheric woodland setting.

***'the stage was filled with a heady mix of infectious Bollywood beats, silent slap-stick, "Thriller" dances, and anarchic comedy all put across with refreshing enthusiasm. Everyone involved deserves the highest praise for this totally original evening...'***

***Ed Howson, Daily Echo.***



Below: Bangra Bonanza group looking  
around the Southall Story exhibition at the  
Southbank Centre  
Photo supplied by the Southbank Centre







# Bollywood Baraat

Bollywood Baraat is an ambitious 10-month project led by Art Asia in partnership with City Eye, The Nuffield Theatre and the John Hansard Gallery. This year saw the start of Bollywood Baraat with a number of smaller projects that will feed into the final performance in May 2011. With a specially commissioned script, original soundtrack and the community workshops, the outdoor spectacular will blend live theatre, music, dance and film with a carnival procession to create Southampton's wedding of the year!

## Bollywood Film Trailer

Local theatre practitioners Neil Gibbs and Tiffany Powell worked with a group of young people from Newtown Youth Theatre on the film trailer for the Bollywood Baraat project. The group devised and wrote the scripts which they later filmed with Film Director David White from City Eye. These were shown at the Bollywood Baraat press launch party and features on [Bollywoodbaraat.com](http://Bollywoodbaraat.com)

## Bollywood for the Over 50's

Bollywood dancer and choreographer Rakhi Sood worked with six women in a series of workshops to teach them a dance routine which they performed in front of large crowd at the over 50's Rendezvous Festival at Southampton Guildhall. Rakhi also ran an open workshop at the event which attracted many participants.

## Bollywood Baraat Teacher Training - Carnival Costume Making

Teachers and support staff from five of the six schools involved in the Baraat Carnival Procession took part in a one day training course with two artists from the Carnival Learning Centre. The group learnt how to make carnival headdresses, clothes, staffs, flags and decorative carnival backpacks. With their new skills the staff will help to make head-to-toe carnival costumes with their students who will perform in the final show.

## Wedding memories

A group of local women came together to share their wedding stories and create artworks inspired by their experiences, City Eye made a short film capturing the day and the sometimes poignant memories of the women involved. In follow-up workshops artist Caroline Rackham worked with mixed-generation groups of Asian women who shared their stories of their own weddings and created delicate collages using seeds and grains, inspired by the tradition of wedding mehndi (intricate henna decorations on the bride's hands and feet).

***When people speak of things being "inclusive" they are often speaking of including minorities, but this demonstration showed how a demonstration of this kind can make a "majority" feel included into a "minority" culture. Very successful well done!***

***Linda Templeton,  
Age Concern***



Above: Carnival headdresses made at the Bollywood Baraat teacher training course  
Photo by Lucy Jenner

# Workshops and Projects

## Mela Visual Art Project

Art Asia's resident visual artist Dr. Jayanta Chaudhuri (from Kolkata) worked with Illustration and Fine Art students and staff at Solent University to develop hand-crafted artworks for the Mela festival. Hand painted main stage banners used the Olympic rings to explore the idea of unity in diversity.

Dr. Chaudhuri also worked with St Anne's and Redbridge Secondary Schools for two days each to create large scale, colourful archways for the Mela. The archways were used as entrances to the vibrant Family Learning Zone and have definitely enhanced the visual aesthetic of the Mela.

## Master Class with Midival Punditz and talk by Mayuri Boonham

The composition master class with Midival Punditz was hosted by SoCo Music Project and focused on production, performance and collaboration. The Punditz are made up of composers Tapan Raj and Mrityunjay Raina who are pioneers of the electronic music scene in India and whose work is described as the new sound of 21st Century India.

The Punditz composed the music for ATMA's latest work Sivaloka. This was an exciting and innovative process as the recording took place in the Elephanta caves in India which are an ancient world heritage site. Mayuri talked to the group about their collaboration and the thinking behind recording the dance soundtrack in such an unusual way.

## Love is in the Air – Srishti School Workshops

As part of a commission by Art Asia, educational workshops were offered to Wildern School for Srishti Dance Company's latest touring work Love is in the Air. Year 8 students and young people from Art Asia's Bollywood and Bharata Natyam dance classes attended the workshop. The group learnt a routine with lead dancer Seshadri Yengar and were filmed by Roswitha Chesher. The footage formed part of Shristi's performance at the Nuffield Theatre.

## ATMA Dance - Dancing Fibonacci Workshops

Creative Director of ATMA Dance Mayuri Boonham worked with sixteen Year 9 dance students from Thornden School in a two day Bharata Natyam workshop. The students performed their specially choreographed dance piece as a curtain raiser for ATMA's performance at The Point.

Mayuri really pushed the limits of the young dance students by using the Fibonacci number sequence as the rhythm for their dance. The students danced in silence which encouraged self reliance amongst the dancers and awareness of each other movements. The Fibonacci number sequence was introduced as a way of sharing, not just the stage with ATMA, but as something that linked their piece creatively with ATMA's Sivaloka.

*'Thank you for providing the young people with such a wonderful experience this week with the Srishti Workshops. The energy levels were lovely and I can't believe how focused the group were at the end of the second day!'*

**Alison Neasom, Head of Dance, Wildern School**

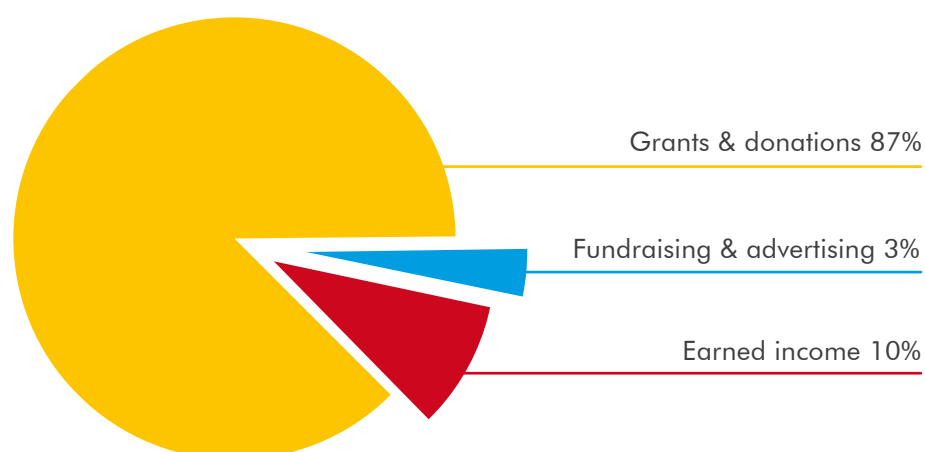
Students performing for the camera, at the Srishti Workshop  
Photo by Lucy Jenner



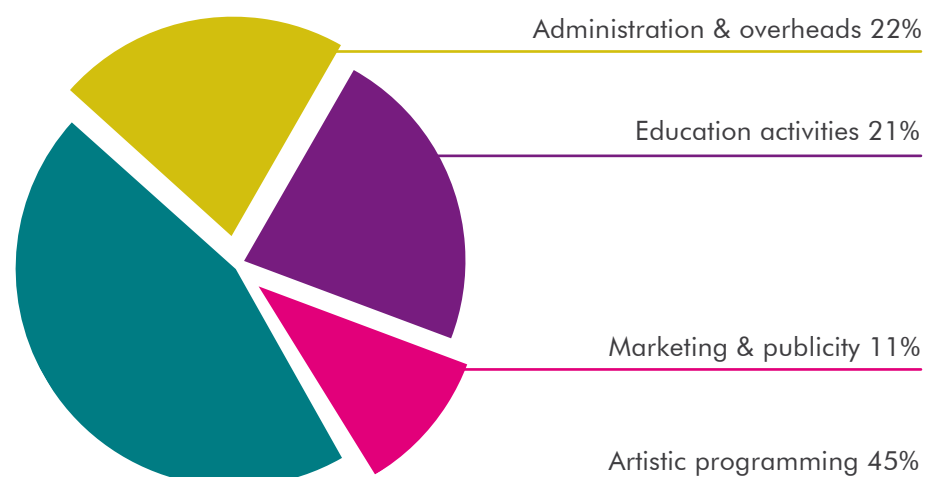


# Income and Expenditure

## Income



## Expenditure





# The year at a glance

## Events

Aakrisht – Forest Arts, New Milton  
Dhamaal 2010 – Nuffield Theatre, Southampton  
International Women's Evening, – St Marys Leisure Centre, Southampton  
Sugato Bhaduri - West End Centre, Aldershot  
Indian Classical Minis – Holyrood Church, Southampton  
Swati Natekar – Vedic Society Community Hall  
Harishchandrachi Factory – Southampton University Student Union  
Love is in the Air – The Nuffield Theatre, Southampton  
The Shiver – The Point, Southampton  
Terry Riley – The Turner Sims, Southampton  
Memories of Rafi – Vedic Society, Southampton  
Sivaloka & Ghatam – The Point, Eastleigh  
Global Rhythms – Winchester Discovery Centre, Winchester  
Meera – The Nuffield Theatre, Southampton  
Southampton Mela Festival, Southampton

## Education projects

Find Your Talent	Bhangra Bonanza Bangla Music Project Newtown Youth Centre Drama Project
Bollywood Baraat	Bollywood for the Over 50's Teacher Training - Carnival Costume Making Wedding Memories Bollywood Baraat Film Trailer
Love is in the Air – Srishti School Workshops	
ATMA Dance - Dancing Fibonacci Workshops	
Visual Arts with Dr Chaudhri - Solent University, St Annes and Redbridge Secondary School	

## Classes

Bollywood Dance (beginners) with Rakhi Sood - Southampton  
Bollywood Dance (intermediate) with Rakhi Sood - Southampton  
Kathak (beginners) with Rakhi Sood - Southampton  
Tabla (beginners) with Surjit Singh Hassanpuri - Southampton  
Tabla (intermediate/advanced) with Surjit Singh Hassanpuri - Southampton  
Bharata Natyam for children (beginners) with Vidya Thirunarayan - Southampton  
Bharata Natyam for adults (beginners) with Vidya Thirunarayan - Southampton  
Bharata Natyam (intermediate/advanced) with Vidya Thirunarayan - Southampton  
Bharata Natyam (beginners) with Vidya Thirunarayan – Portsmouth  
Singing and Harmonium (childrens) with Pooja Angra - Southampton  
Singing and Harmonium (adults) with Pooja Angra - Southampton  
Dhol (beginners) with Ricky Kasba  
Dhol (advanced) with Bindi Sagoo

# Directors, Staff and Tutors

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## Staff

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Marketing Officer Lucy-Jane Attrill  
Arts Administrator Siobhan Balfour  
Projects Assistant Tracy Stevens  
Mela Site Co-ordinator Paul Mckenna  
Additional Mela programming Paul Atwal  
Accountant Bob Anthony

## Education tutors and artists

Rakhi Sood (Bollywood Dance)  
Iqbal Pathan (Tabla)  
Sanju Sahai (Tabla)  
Jaymini Sahai (Kathak Dance)  
Demi Ladwa (Visual Arts)  
Bindi Sagoo (Dhol)

Ricky Kasba (Dhol)  
Pooja Angra (Singing & Harmonium)  
Surjit Singh Hassanpuri (Tabla)  
Shreya Kumar (Bharata Natyam Dance)  
Mayuri Boonham (Bharata Natyam Dance)  
Vidya Thirunarayan (Bharata Natyam Dance)  
Mittel Purohit (Tabla)  
Chrishna Budhu (Bollywood Dance)  
Sue Riley (Visual Arts)  
Dr Jayantha Chaudhri (Visual Arts)  
Rakhee Thakrar (Theatre)  
Vikash Patel (Theatre)  
Tiffany Powell (Theatre)  
Neil Gibbs (Theatre)  
Matt Salvage (Music production)  
Jon Houghton (Music Production)  
Gurcharan Mall (Dhol)  
Yousuf Ali Khan (Singing, Harmonium & Tabla)  
Mehboob Nadeem (Sitar)  
Pete Beadell (Steel Pan)  
Keith Waithe (Flute & Vocals)  
Jo Jo Yates (African Percussion)  
Tapan Raj (Composer)  
Mrityunjay Gaurav Raina (Composer)  
Niraj Chag (Composer)  
Andy Fisher (Composition Workshops)  
Dave White (Film Director)  
Caroline Rakhm (Visual Arts)  
Tamsin Loveday (Visual Arts)  
Pat Woolven (Visual Arts)  
Emma Garofalo (Carnival Arts)  
Chris Slann (Carnival Arts)  
Helen Davenport (Carnival Arts)

Seshadri Iyengar (Bharata Natyam Dance)  
Roswitha Chesher (Film Maker)

## Partnerships

Art at the Heart  
City Eye  
Essequibo Music  
Hampshire County Council  
Music in the City  
Nuffield Theatre  
Over 50's Festival  
Southampton Solent University  
Southampton Puja and Cultural Association  
Southampton Bangladeshi Society  
The Point  
The Vedic Society  
Turner Sims Concert Hall  
Newtown Youth Centre  
West End Centre, Aldershot  
Workers Education Association  
University of Southampton Asian Cultural Society  
Unity101  
The Phoenix

## Southampton Mela Festival Sponsors

Southampton Solent University  
Hampshire Constabulary  
University of Southampton  
Diabetes Research Wellness Foundation



Children from the Bangla music project  
showing off their costumes that they made  
for the London Baishaki Mela  
Photo by Lucy Jenner





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

**A downloadable version is available from the Art Asia website.**

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Cover Photo - Love is in the Air at the Nuffield Theatre  
by James Rowbotham

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**ARTS COUNCIL  
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Registered in England & Wales | Company Number: 2964315 | Charity  
Number: 1070019 | VAT Number: 717 6959 87

Brochure design by: Johnny Toaster - [www.johnnytoaster.co.uk](http://www.johnnytoaster.co.uk)

