



Introductory Notes

1. Introductory information

Event name: Paradise or the Impermanence of Ice Cream

Event presenter: OsAsia with Indian Ink Theatre Company, New Zealand.

Event date and time:

The audio-described performance is on **Saturday 21st October 2023** at 3pm with a touch tour commencing at 1.45pm.

Event location:

The production takes place in the **Space Theatre** at the Adelaide Festival Centre.

Runtime: 80 minutes (with no interval)

Event synopsis: This theatre piece takes us on a wild ride to paradise with Indian Ink's powerful new play about impermanence – of life, love... and ice cream!

Jacob Rajan delivers a fast-paced solo performance as he channels seven Indian characters, weaving the afterlife and a dash of Bollywood disco into the real-life mystery of India's vanishing vultures.

With gentle humour, exquisite puppetry, and clever sound effects, this is a beautiful, funny, and sad meditation on what we do with the time we have, as you are transported between life, death, and Mumbai.

This production is inspired by Ernest Becker's Pulitzer prize-winning book *Denial of Death*, and the vibrant, life-filled chaos of India's most cosmopolitan city, Mumbai.

Audio Describers: Jules Fielke and Kay Jamieson

2. Set description

The set is stark and simple. A raised mound or platform sits in the centre of a blue carpeted floor. This island-like platform has raked edges that lean slightly inwards and a slanting upper surface, that splits in two, with a 20cm drop just shy of the midway point. The platform is also carpeted in the same blue material.

Sound with lighting effects and projections on screens set at the rear of the stage take us to different locations and set the changing scenes, providing the nuanced atmosphere that accompanies the emotional journey of the play.

Key locations are:

The Bardo (or limbo) is seen as an intermediate, transitional, or liminal state between death and rebirth, in some schools of Buddhism.

Club Sutra, a nightclub/disco in Mumbai.

The Kulfi Shop sells ice cream and was owned by Meera's grandfather.

Dr Rao's Apartment, a wealthy apartment in Mumbai.



Malabar Hill provides a view over the city (following a motorbike ride) and is next to **The Towers of Silence**, a place where Parsees lay out the dead for the vultures to eat. **The cattle dump** is a research site that provides Dr Vibhu with the material he requires.

Vibhu's Lab, a private laboratory where Dr Vibhu continues his research.

The Roof Terrace, above the Kulfi shop where the aviary is situated.

3. Characters and Costumes

Jacob Rajan plays all 7 characters, switching between each in an instant.

He has a mobile face with short dark hair that is greying at the temples. His eyes are dark under straight brows, and he is buck-toothed, his upper front teeth sticking out beyond his lower front teeth. He is dressed throughout in mock traditional Indian clothing.

He wears a dark red and black tie-dyed, loose-fitting cotton overshirt, with long, loose-fitting sleeves and wide rucked lapels. It's knotted loosely at the waist, over the top of an old, thin, greying, cotton t-shirt. His patterned trousers are red, black and white stripey Indian jodhpurs, much like riding breeches, very loose to the knees and tight-fitting from knee to ankle. He wears brown leather jootis (traditional Indian slip-on shoes).

The play is fast paced with no time for costume changes. Voice and physicality mannerisms take us instantaneously to another Indian character.

The first character we meet is **Kutisar**, an elderly Indian man, slightly hunched with age and now living in Canada.

As **young Kutisar** in Mumbai, he uses a higher timbre voice, with the same accent. His movements are of a quick and lively young man.

As **Meera**, the voice is lighter and has the softer quality of a young woman. She often plays with her long hair, absent-mindedly stroking the braid that lies over her right shoulder.

The Bouncer has a deep, loud and raspy voice and hulking physicality.

Farooq (Meera's cousin) has a square shouldered stance, a clipped, impatient way of speaking and a rough voice.

Dr Rau (an older woman) has a plummy, upper-class voice and leans forwards slightly, often clasping her hands together in front of her chest. She constantly fusses with her blouse and skirts.

Vibhu, (Dr Vibhu Prakash) is an older academic and museum director, he often puffs on a cigarette and speaks with a nasal accent.



The Money Lender wears spectacles, he pulls them from his pockets and wipes their lens. He is well-spoken and his voice often seems reasonable but he has a volatile personality.

Jon Coddington is the puppeteer, he creates and inhabits the vulture that is the other onstage presence.

The Vulture makes its first appearance in the initial minutes of the show and its identity is never far away. It stands about 1metre high, with a wingspan of approximately 1.2metres. Its bald pink head has a sharp white hooked beak and beady/piercing black eyes in white protruding eyeballs. The head sits on a long strong pink neck, its many folds stretch out to a good length and provide a mobile platform for the skull like head. Around the base of its neck is a collar of pale feathers which continue to flow over the body of the bird, its barrel like chest and large thighs are also dusted with similar feathers. Expansive white wings on either side of the vulture have long extravagant feathers. Its lower legs are pink and scaly and end with three large toes and one smaller inside toe that form its feet, their jagged nails the feared curved talons of this scavenger.

Seamless use of Voiceovers introduces other characters and information as required, such as Kutisar's answer machine message, the Narrator of the Bombay Natural History Society recorded audio description Tour service, and Brian, Kutisar's Canadian workmate.

4. Creatives

Co-Writer & Performer: Jacob Rajan

Co-Writer & Director: Justin Lewis

Dramaturge: Murray Edmond

Set Design: John Verryt

Costume Design: Elizabeth Whiting

Puppeteer/ Puppet Design & Build: Jon Coddington

Composer & Sound Design: David Ward

Lighting Design, Production & Stage Manager: D. Andrea Potvin

Sound Operator: Adam Ogle

Projected Imagery Photographer/Editor: Bala Murali Shingade

5. Access information

The production takes place in the **Space Theatre** at the Adelaide Festival Centre.

There is an accessible drop off area located off Festival Drive under the River-bank Footbridge, with a lift to the promenade level.

A designated disability drop off is also available 45 minutes before performances. To access the drop off area, turn onto Festival Drive from King William



Road, pass the Festival Plaza car park entrance and stay left, driving through the EOS Hotel visitor drop off loop to arrive at the Space Theatre access drop off.

Adelaide Festival Centre is easily accessible by public transport, including the tram (stop at Railway Station), trains, buses and a free bus service that operates on a loop throughout the city and North Adelaide with stops on the corner of King William Road and North Terrace.

You can enter the Space Theatre by foot from North Terrace, Adelaide Railway Station, Adelaide Oval, or King William Road.

From North Terrace, walk down the laneway alongside SkyCity Casino. From King William Road, you can walk over Festival Plaza (there's a lift and escalator down to the Dunstan Playhouse and Space Theatre level) or along the Walk of Fame from Elder Park.

Assistance: assistance is offered by venue staff