



GEMARTS

MASALA

FESTIVAL

15th to 21st July 2024

A MIX & BLEND OF THE FINEST
SOUTH ASIAN ARTS & CULTURE

WELCOME

GemArts is thrilled to present Masala Festival 2024!

From the 15th to 21st July, experience vibrant performances, exhibitions, workshops, pop-ups, demonstrations, and delicious Indian food. Our extraordinary line-up of artists from the UK and across the South Asian diaspora will explore diverse themes, reflecting the essence of both urban and rural life, the quest for freedom, and the spirit of resistance through classical, folk and contemporary art forms.

Thank you to our brilliant artists, volunteers, partners, funders, and sponsors for making the festival possible.

Join us for an incredible week, celebrating a mix and blend of the finest South Asian arts and culture.

Vikas Kumar MBE
Director

GEMARTS IS SUPPORTED BY:



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ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND



GEMARTS MASALA FESTIVAL SPONSORS:



DABBAWAL
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GEMARTS MASALA FESTIVAL PARTNERS:



Funded by
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MASALA FESTIVAL LAUNCH:
AUNUSTHAN: PAGRAV DANCE COMPANY

DATE: Monday 15th July
TIME: 7.30pm
VENUE: Dance City, Temple St, Newcastle, NE1 4BR
TICKETS: £15 / £12 concessions
BOX OFFICE: www.dancecity.co.uk / 0191 2610505

GemArts is thrilled to launch Masala Festival 2024 with Pagrav Dance Company's Aunusthan, a celebration of Neo-Classical Indian Dance and Music.

Step into a world of abstracted relationships, interweaved complex patterns, rigorous choreography, virtuosic performance and riotous rhythms with Aunusthan.

Accompanied by an outstanding ensemble of live musicians and featuring a cast of talented British Asian dance artists who have trained with Pagrav Dance Company, Aunusthan showcases the bright future of kathak in the UK. These talented performers bring their passion and creativity to every moment of the show, creating an unforgettable experience for all.

Presented by GemArts and Dance City



ARTFUL STRUGGLES: CONTEMPORARY ART FROM SRI LANKA

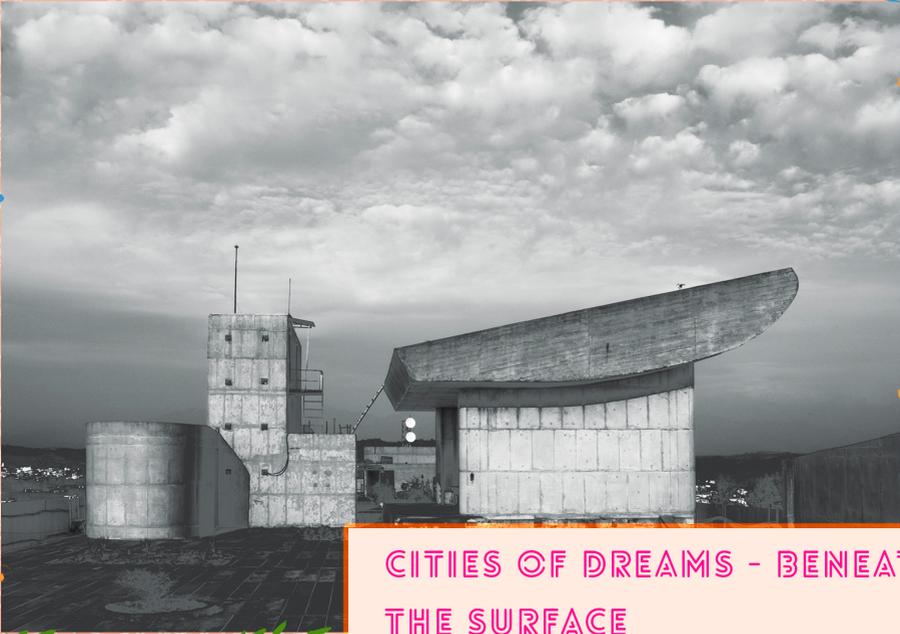
DATE: Monday 15th - 27th July
TIME: Library opening times
VENUE: The Gallery, Gateshead Central Library, NE8 4LN
TICKETS: Free - Just Drop In!

Artful Struggles commemorates the second anniversary of the Aragalaya/Porattam ("Struggle" in Sinhala and Tamil respectively) – Sri Lanka's 2022 Occupy movement against corruption, immiseration, and impunity, which toppled a president and a prime minister. The exhibition raises greater awareness about Sri Lanka's crisis and struggles through the work of contemporary artists. It explores how art helped promote a more hopeful, pluralistic, accountable,

and democratic politics for Sri Lanka before succumbing to increased repression.

The exhibition is curated by Professor Lars Waldorf (Northumbria Law School) and Dr Nilanjana Premaratna (Newcastle University) and supported by community partners Agora and Vimbam.

Presented by GemArts and Gateshead Culture Team



CITIES OF DREAMS - BENEATH THE SURFACE

DATE: Tuesday 16th July
TIME: 6.30pm
VENUE: BALTIC, Gateshead, NE8 3BA
TICKETS: £5
BOX OFFICE: GemArts Eventbrite / 0191 440 4124

Contemplating the built environment, from sprawling urban metropolises to cities of tomorrow, this programme explores representations of architecture. A curated selection of South Asian short films reflecting on future cities and the 'ideal city', as well as memories and the past that lie within a city's urban fabric.

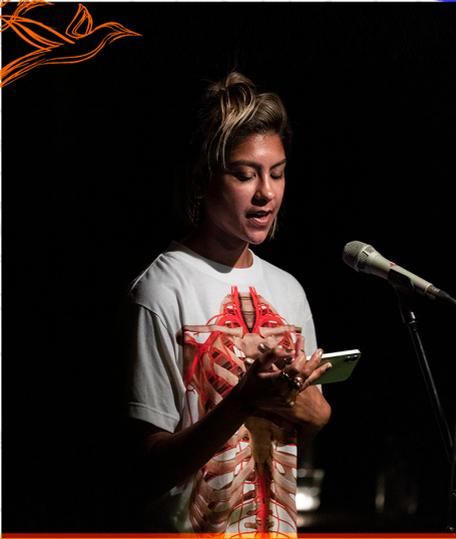
Post-screening discussion with industry contributors.

Running time: approx. 120 minutes

Suitable for Ages 14+

Curated by Sonali Joshi

Presented by GemArts and Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art



NEW WAYS OF MOVING IN THE COUNTERWORLDS

DATE: Wednesday 17th July
TIME: 7.30pm
VENUE: Cluny 2, 34 Lime Street, Ouseburn, Newcastle, NE1 2PQ
TICKETS: £12 advance and £15 on the door
BOX OFFICE: GemArts Eventbrite / 0191 4404124

In a special performance commissioned for Masala Festival, bassist John Pope and violinist John Garner will play alongside poet Nisha Ramayya in an experimental homage to their shared influences. Drawing upon Pope and Garner's 2022 album *Water Music* and Ramayya's forthcoming collection *Fantasia*, the trio will celebrate luminaries of jazz and poetry including Alice Coltrane, Moten/López/Cleaver, and Nathaniel Mackey and The Creaking Breeze Ensemble.

The work of these great artists extends art into the realms of spiritual community, collective study, and political action, and Pope, Garner, and Ramayya perform with an attunement to the changes that become possible when we come together to play. The event will include a discussion chaired by Preti Taneja (Director of NCLA) before the music/poetry performance.

Presented by GemArts, Jazz North East and Newcastle Centre for Literary Arts



SNOW LEOPARD

DATE: Thursday 18th July
TIME: 6pm
VENUE: Tyneside Cinema, 10 Pilgrim St, Newcastle, NE1 6QG
TICKETS: £11.75 | £9.75 concessions
BOX OFFICE: www.tynesidecinema.co.uk / 0191 227 5500

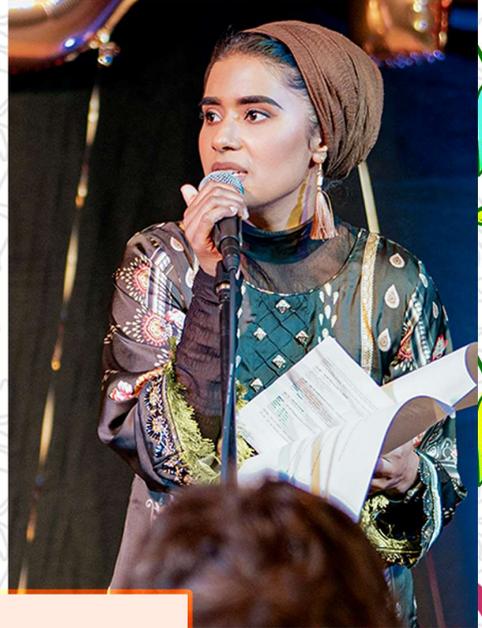
Shot in the stunning high altitudes of the Tibetan Plateau, *Snow Leopard* is the story of a majestic yet deadly snow leopard and its complicated coexistence with the communities in this remote part of Tibet. When a local snow leopard claims the lives of nine rams belonging to a herder, tensions escalate as the herder seeks retribution. Meanwhile law enforcement, his father and his brother monk advocate to save the leopard at all costs.

Widely considered the 'father' of Tibetan cinema, director Pema

Tseden tragically passed away as the film neared completion last year and is missed by cinephiles, filmmakers and the film world who continue to feel the loss of this outstanding auteur, but whose memory lives on through his outstanding body of work.

Director: PemaTseden | Tibetan/Mandarin with English subtitles | China 2023 | 110mins | cert. 12A

Presented by GemArts and Tyneside Cinema



FREESPILL: A NIGHT OF UNFILTERED DESI SOUL FLOW

HOSTED BY TAHMINA ALI

- DATE:** Thursday 18th July
- TIME:** 6.30pm
- VENUE:** DiverCity Hub, 120 Buckingham Street, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE4 5QU
- TICKETS:** £5.00
- BOX OFFICE:** GemArts
Eventbrite /
0191 4404124

Contributions from the South Asian communities within the UK have been profound and particularly important in shaping British culture including food, fashion, music, art and wider popular culture

Join us for an exciting evening of spoken word poetry, celebrating multi heritage and the vibrant South Asian diaspora communities in the UK. The night will be hosted by Newcastle's very own Tahmina Ali and our line-up will include Brown Girls Write, Wajid Hussain and special guest Nasima Bee.

Presented by GemArts



RAJASTHAN HERITAGE BRASS BAND

DATE: Friday 19th July
TIME: 2pm, 3pm, 4pm & 5pm (each performance 25 minutes)
VENUE: Monument Metro and Haymarket Metro, Newcastle
TICKETS: FREE – see gemarts.org for times/location

Back by popular demand! From Rajasthan – the majestic land of royalty – a dazzling gem in the golden sands of the Thar Desert, to the Masala Festival in the heart of the Toon: the extraordinary Rajasthan Heritage Brass Band.

Expect a diverse repertoire spanning Rajasthani folk songs, Bollywood hits, spiritual qawwali, Bhangra beats, sci-fi and intergalactic funk

and even some well-loved pop songs. These highly talented musicians cover the full spectrum of the inspiring and joyous music that defines their rich culture, heritage and tradition. Get ready for a rousing and colourful performance!

Presented by GemArts and Tyne & Wear Metro



WHEN CHAI MET TOAST

DATE: Friday 19th July
TIME: 8pm
VENUE: The Glasshouse, St Mary's Square, Gateshead NE8 2JR
TICKETS: £8.30 to £16.50
BOX OFFICE: theglasshouseicm.org / 0191 4434661

Since forming seven years ago, this Kerala-based quartet - Ashwin Gopakumar, Achyuth Jaigopal, Sailesh Pai, and Palee Francis - have carved a loyal fan base for their unique sound, a blend of indie folk and pop rock with English lyrics intertwined with Hindi and Tamil. With a contagious brand of hummable pop music, When Chai Met Toast have pioneered the genre in India, becoming the most streamed band in the country.

Their joyful, heart-warming live performances are unforgettable, transforming each concert into a vibrant singalong experience captivating audiences globally.

Presented by GemArts and The Glasshouse



BALLADESTE

DATE: Saturday 20th July
TIME: 2pm
VENUE: St Marys Heritage Centre, Gateshead, NE8 2AU
TICKETS: £5
BOX OFFICE: gateshead.gov.uk

Balladeste is a collaboration between cellist Tara Franks and violinist Preetha Narayanan. Writing all new music collaboratively, this unique string duo interweave contemporary minimalism, Indian classical and folk to create all original compositions that are vibrant and experimental yet melodic and filmic in quality 'songs without words with an alt-folk experimental twist'.

"Absolutely stunning" BBC Radio 4 - Anita Rani (Woman's Hour)

Presented by GemArts and Riverside Routes, and supported by Jazz North East. This event has been programmed through Riverside Routes which is part of the Tyne Derwent Way Programme, supported by HM Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.



MINI MELA & MINI BOOK FAIR

DATE: Sunday 21st July
TIME: 11am to 3pm
VENUE: Bensham Grove Community Centre, Gateshead, NE8 2XD
TICKETS: FREE Just drop in!

Get ready for the grand finale of Masala Festival! It's time for our amazing Mini Mela for children and families, and guess what? It's absolutely FREE! Explore a Mini Book Fair bursting with tales from South Asian heritage, groove to Bollywood beats, create beautiful Rangoli art, make kites, and get your face painted. Plus, try henna designs and pottery to craft your own masterpiece! There are loads of other fun activities and mouth-watering Indian food waiting just for you!

Presented by GemArts





MASALA FESTIVAL AT DABBAWAL

DATE: Monday 15th – 21st July
TIME: Dabbawal Opening Times
VENUE: 69-75 High Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 6BX /
1 Brentwood Mews, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne
NE2 3DG
BOOKINGS: www.dabbawal.com

The award-winning Dabbawal Street Food Kitchen and Masala Festival are teaming up again this year for an exciting culinary adventure! Get ready for a seven-day flavour journey that captures the vibrant essence of the Masala Festival, don't miss this chance to savour the sights, tastes, and feels of this extraordinary celebration at both Dabbawal High Bridge and Dabbawal Jesmond branches.



WORKSHOPS AT MASALA FESTIVAL 2024



INK PI WORKSHOP

Date: Wednesday 17th July
Time: 11am - 1pm.
Venue: Wailes Room, Gateshead Central Library, NE8 4LN
Tickets: £5, pre-booking essential. Adults only
Box Office: GemArts Eventbrite / 0191 440 4124

GemArts Masala Festival is excited to present an artist workshop with Kavan Balasuriya where you will learn about making geometric art with numbers. By using the mathematical sequence, Pi (π), Kavan will show you how to create a colourful and unique design.

CULTRAL THREADS AT SPRINGBANK PAVILLION

Date: Wednesday 17th July
Time: 2pm - 4pm.
Venue: Springbank Pavilion, Leazes Park, Newcastle, NE2 4BJ
Tickets: Free, prebooking essential
Box Office: GemArts Eventbrite / 0191 440 4124

Join artist Benji Spence for a special Masala Festival edition of the weekly Cultural Threads program. Learn how to harness natural landscapes in your illustrations!

BOLLYWOOD DANCE WORKSHOP



Date: Saturday 20th July
Time: 10am - 11am
Venue: Bensham Grove Community Centre, Sidney Grove, Gateshead NE8 2XD
Tickets: FREE, pre-booking essential
Box Office: GemArts Eventbrite

Join our Bollywood dance workshop with Breeze George, one of the most famous, fun modern dance styles from Indian film industry, fusing Indian classical dance, folk dance, Bhangra, hip hop, salsa, and Belly Dancing!



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For more information
visit our website gemarts.org

Contact us on 0191 440 4124
or email info@gemarts.org

