



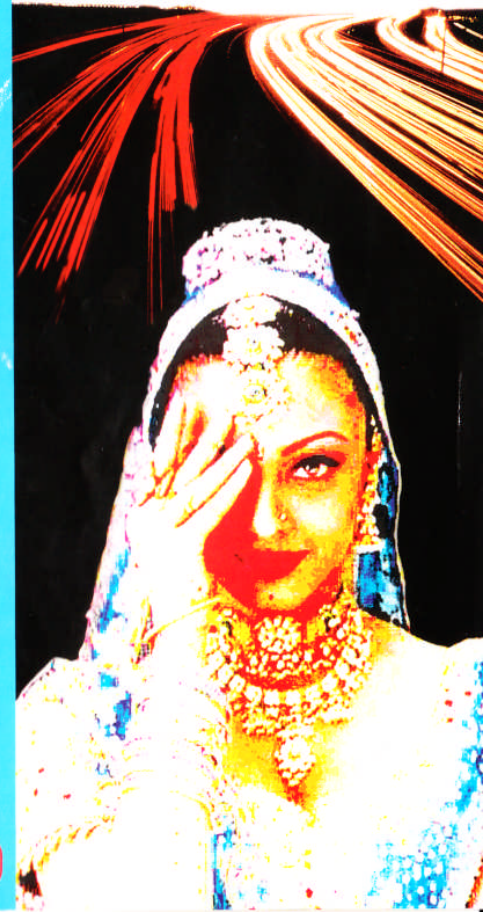
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THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER



revelations



CAST in alphabetical order

Joanna Burnett	Art
Ravin J Ganatra	Dharma (Dum)
Ashvin Kumar Joshi	Kam
Murali Menon	Kiratha
Praveen Sond	Shaks

Chorus and all other roles played by the company and DJ Ka

PRODUCTION

Director	Jatinder Verma
Designer	Claudia Mayer
Lighting Designer	Jvan Morandi
Movement	Chix, Tom Wu & the Company
Production Manager	Shaun Tracey
Company Manager	Peter Handley
Wardrobe Supervisor	Hilary Lewis
Assistant Designer	Becky Brown

Set Construction	Myrmidon
Scenic Artist	Paddy Hamilton
Puppet Maker	Monster Creations
Fibre Optics	Keith Barritt at Absolute Action
Paraglide	Green Dragon Airsports Ltd

REVELATIONS is based on extensive research conducted among young Asians in England between January and March 2000.

'He that overcometh shall inherit all things...'

King James version of the Bible,
Book of Revelations, 21:7

UNCOVERING REVELATIONS Dharma's grandparents left India to work in East Africa. His parents came to shiver in England in the 60s. No wonder he has travelling in his bones. He's English – but his roots are in India and Africa.

Revelations follows Dharma at a turning point in his life. Everyone's dying to tell him what to do, so he takes a trip through the heart of England, and the heart of his dilemma – who is he?

He visits Coleybingham, a free Asian state where Bollywood movies are compulsory viewing every night. He's enticed by blond blue-eyed devils in Caxton Gibbett. At every step he's faced with more stories, more choices. Will he have the strength to find out his own truth – or will he fall for others' false visions? This is the journey we take together in Revelations.

Revelations is the third of a trilogy by Tara Arts – which this year marks its 23rd anniversary of producing Asian theatre.

Kiratha is an avatar of Shiva, the Destroyer. In the Mahabharata he presents the hero Arjuna with a test of character – Arjuna only wins after acknowledging his vanity. Arjuna's prize is the knowledge of Shiva's secret and deadly weapons, which he and his brothers eventually use to win the battle at the heart of the Mahabharata epic.

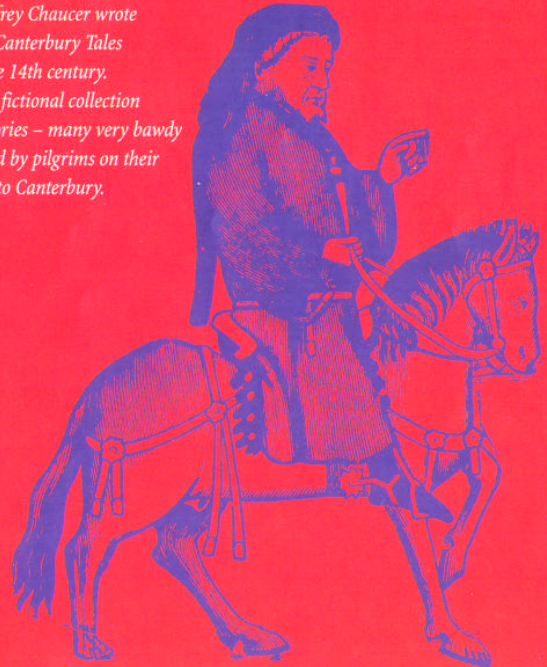
epiphany 1. *manifestation of a supernatural or divine reality*
2. *a moment of great or sudden revelation*

REVELATIONS – A STORY OF STORIES Revelations is a story of stories: as Dharma travels, he's told stories which illustrate the choices he faces.

This telling of stories within a story is an honourable and long tradition: just think of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, the *Ramayana*, *Midnight's Children*, and *Pulp Fiction*.

All good stories both entertain us and force us to examine our own beliefs and identities. Our feelings about the stories in *Revelations*, and about Dharma's choices, ebb and flow along with Dharma's own. And with him we begin to understand who we are at his moment of epiphany at the end.

Geoffrey Chaucer wrote *The Canterbury Tales* in the 14th century. It's a fictional collection of stories – many very bawdy – told by pilgrims on their way to Canterbury.



LIFE'S A TRIP All faiths – Hindu, Islamic, Sikh, Christian, new age – see life as a journey. We don't have actually to travel anywhere – though there are some great stories of journeys at the centre of all our faiths. And paths, straight and narrow, crop up all over the place in stories. Just think about the winding path through the dark woods that Hansel and Gretel followed.

Dharma speeds up the M1, the straight path to the north, in search of freedom and enlightenment. On the way he resists temptation and false ideals and keeps on travelling until he reaches his destination: understanding of his true duty in life.

*'Guide us in the straight path,
the path of those whom thou
has blessed...'*

The opening lines of the Qur'an

'Who is a Hindu?...
recognition of the fact that
the means or ways to
salvation are diverse...'

BG Tilak's definition of what makes a Hindu, quoted by India's Supreme Court in 1995

'I have a new dharma, Gramps, to
make this England my England and
all your long journey west will be the
wind under my wings, will be the
taste under my tongue, will be the
touch of my hand!'

Dharma's final speech, *Revelations*

'We're on the road to nowhere' Talking Heads

*'Whan that Aprill, with his shoures soote
The droghte of March hath perced to the roote...
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgramages'*

Opening lines of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales

TO BE A PILGRIM August 2000. Rome is filled to overflowing with young pilgrims clutching mobile phones and queueing in the baking sun to confess. Even the Vatican seems surprised. Pilgrimage is back!

A pilgrimage is what you make of it. Been to Ayia Napa yet? Land's End? Your parents' home in Kenya? Mecca? Pack your bags now and get going. Find yourself!

There's nothing new under the sun. And we've been making pilgrimages ever since people first upped sticks. Some go back to their roots. Some go in search of new dreams. Some go for the company, and some go to get away from it all. But there have always been pilgrims.



A third century Roman sculpture of the Persian god Mithras, found at Hadrian's Wall. Mithras, the Lord of Ages, is being born from an egg - the symbol of eternal time. The Romans imported their own belief systems and culture wholesale into their English colony. They discouraged mixing between Roman soldiers and the natives. Ironic?

RESPECT!

'I was embarrassed by my mum wearing a sari. That was sooooo immature – it was because I wanted to fit in.' Amina, 29

'I just really admire my parents. They borrowed £100 when they arrived here. Now they're paying for me and my brothers to go to the best school. How can I repay them? ... I'll repay them by succeeding.' Sahid, 17

DJ Ritu's parents only accepted the value of her work when she worked with the BBC – an organisation they knew and understood.

*'Something inside
that was always denied
for so many years.
She's leaving home.
Bye bye.'* from *She's Leaving Home*, The Beatles

Preethi Nair gave up her job as a management consultant to go and sit on a Greek island and write. To quote from the resulting book, *Gypsy Masala* *'For if just once in your life you take a chance...'*

'My parents can't understand that it's OK to change direction, change career – they've always felt that Protestant work ethic thing, you know – a job should be stuck at, no matter what ...' Isabelle Fenton, 25



DHARMA = DUTY

When writer Ayub Khan-Din was asked about the pressures on young Asians today, he said that you have to find a balance. While the commonly accepted picture is of children fighting their traditional parents, he's seen young Asians tell their parents they've become too modern and accepting – and where has it got them? On the other hand, his film *East is East* told his own story of rebelling against his father's traditional values: its success shows that it struck a chord with audiences of all cultures.

ASIANS WITH ATTITUDE Asian cool has finally arrived. (We haven't been waiting long, have we?) And though Asians might compromise a bit to reach that crossover market, we're definitely up there and proud to be Asian. Look at Asian Dub Foundation, DJ Ritu and Talvin Singh (and Talvin started out as a classical tabla player when it wasn't even cool – which is pretty cool). Look at the shelves of Body Shop, stacked high with Ayurveda remedies. And, well, look at Goodness Gracious Me!

*'Titanic is an Indian movie!
It has rich girl poor boy.
Insurmountable odds.
Not enough lifeboats ...
Pure Bollywood!'* Arshad, 18

Tahir Mohsan, boss of Time Computer Systems is one of the 500 richest people in the country. Up there with him are GK Noon and Parveen Warsi of Patak's.

'...the Asian community is the most vibrant cultural and commercial force in Britain today...' The Guardian, August 8, 1999

'Vindaloo!' Fat Les's World Cup song for England

'Perhaps the most baffled ... is the first time Indian visitor to the British Isles. For a start, which Indian has ever used the word "curry" to describe Indian food?'

Shrabani Basu, Curry in the Crown

Marks and Spencer sells 18 tonnes of chicken tikka masala every week. And more than a quarter of people in Britain eat curry at least once a week.



CONFLICT Cut your hair and lose your tradition. Keep your turban and lose your job. Things have improved since the 60s – but how much?

Those who resent the resurgence of Asian identity accuse Asians of failing to integrate. Parents accuse their children of losing their culture. Children accuse parents of not understanding their lives in modern England. And racists just accuse...

WHO AM I? It's been said that it's when you leave England that you find out how English you are. African Americans who feel African in the US report that in Africa they feel – and are seen as – entirely American. Oprah Winfrey asked her audience to discuss whether Tiger Woods is African American, American Thai, African American Thai, or a multi-ethnic phenomenon. Are we defined by where we are and who we're with?

*'As I look ahead, I am filled with foreboding.
Like the Roman, I seem to see "the River Tiber
foaming with much blood"'* Enoch Powell, 1968

'Which side do they cheer for?' Norman Tebbit, 1988

**'I've even been asked
"Is your blood red?"'** Verun, 24

'We were called Paki all the time. We were shocked initially - didn't realise it meant us. We are Indian.' Anjali, 31

'On programmes like The Bill they have two Asian police women, but I've never seen an Asian police woman.'

Amina Kibria, 17, the Guardian, Feb 25, 1999

**'So will the real, the real
great Britain step forward.
This is the national identity parade'**
from Real Great Britain, Asian Dub Foundation, March 2000

*'The main aim of my schooling was to lose my
Indian accent'* Meera, 34

**'English is my mother tongue
but not my mother's tongue'**
popular saying in India

'I look forward to the day when a Sikh can say with great pride "I'm a Sikh. I'm an Englishman"' Khushwant Singh, 1987

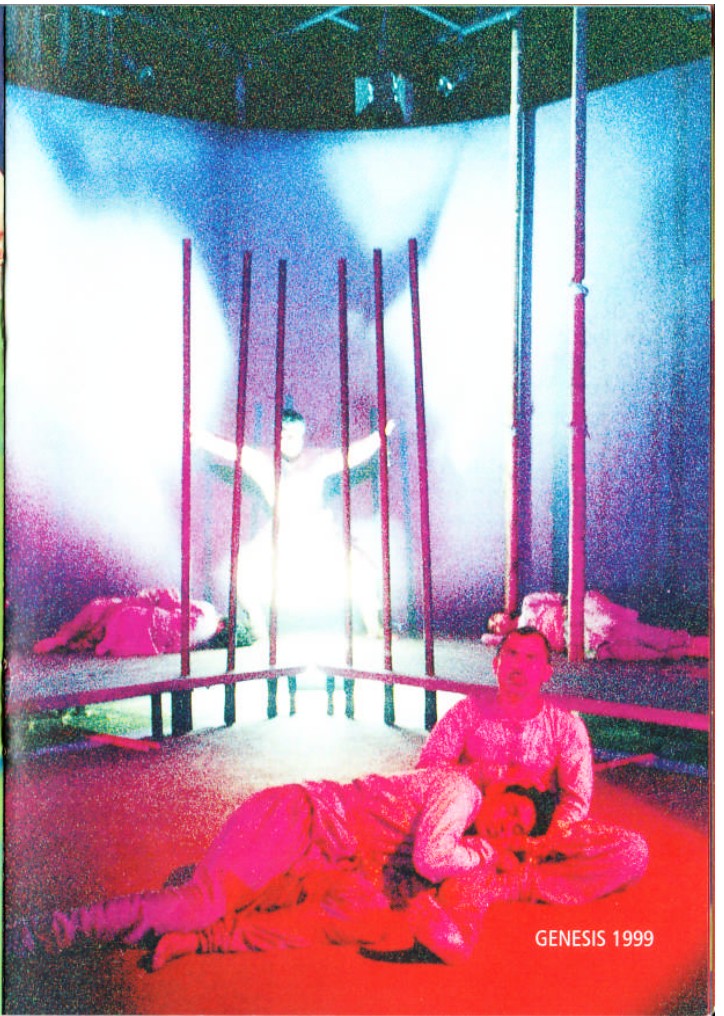
'This is home. This is definitely home.' Javed, 26



GENESIS 1999



EXODUS 1998



GENESIS 1999