

2015-16 Events

Monday, September 28

A talk by Rustom Bharucha (Jawaharlal Nehru University)
"The Aftermath: Reflections on Terror and Performance"

Rustom Bharucha is Professor of Theatre and Performance Studies in the School of Arts and Aesthetics at Jawaharlal Nehru University. His research interests span the fields of interculturalism, secularism, and oral history; and his publications include *Rajasthan: An Oral History* (2003), *Another Asia: Rabindranath Tagore and Okakura Tenshin* (2009) and *Terror and Performance* (2014). Bharucha curated the March 2015 conference "Rethinking Labor and the Creative Economy: Global Performative Perspectives" organized jointly by the School of Arts and Aesthetics at JNU and Performance Studies international (PSi).

Monday October 5 Mary Keating Das Lecture Christopher Shackle (SOAS, University of London) "The Story of Sohni in the Sufi Literature of Pakistan"

Christopher Shackle is a retired Professor of Modern Languages of South Asia, Department of the Languages and Cultures of South Asia, and Professor, Department of Study of Religions, and head of the Urdu department at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. He served as Head of the South Asia Department from 1983 to 1987 and as Pro-Director of SOAS from 1997 until 2003. Elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1990, he received the 2004 Award of the Royal Asiatic Society and was given Pakistan's highest award for the arts, the Sitara-i-Imtiaz, in 2005. He has written many books, book chapters and journal articles. His most recent book is *Bullhe Shah: Sufi Lyrics*, from the Murty Classical Library of India (2015).

Monday, October 12
A talk by Chris Fuller (London School of Economics)
"The peripheral position of India in British anthropology during the colonial era"

Chris Fuller is Professor Emeritus of Anthropology at the London School of Economics. Fuller has researched and written extensively on popular Hinduism and Hindu nationalism, the caste system, the anthropology of the state, nationalism and globalization in India, and other topics. His publications include *The renewal of the priesthood: Modernity and traditionalism in a South Indian temple* (2004); *The camphor flame: Popular Hinduism and Indian society* (2004); and the co-edited volume *Globalizing India: Perspectives from below* (2005).

Tuesday, October 20 A talk by Pratap Bhanu Mehta "The Identity of Indian Political Thought"

Time: 12:00pm - 1:00pm

Location: Fayerweather Hall, Room 411 (Upper Campus)

Organized by the Committee on Global Thought

Pratap Bhanu Mehta is the Fall 2015 Ahuja Fellow at the South Asia Institute. Mehta is president and chief executive of the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi. He is a political scientist who has taught at Harvard University, Jawaharlal Nehru University, and the New York University School of Law. His areas of research include political theory, constitutional law, society and politics in India, governance and political economy, and international affairs. Dr Mehta holds a BA (first class) in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics from Oxford and a PhD in politics from Princeton. He received the 2010 Malcom S. Adishehshiah Award and the 2011 Infosys Prize for Social Sciences - Political Science.

Dr Mehta has served on many central government committees, including India's National Security Advisory Board, the Prime Minister of India's National Knowledge Commission, and a Supreme Courtappointed committee on elections in Indian universities. Mehta is a prolific writer; he is an editorial consultant to the *Indian Express*, and his columns have appeared in dailies including the *Financial Times*, the *Telegraph*, the *International Herald Tribune*, and the *Hindu*. He is also on the editorial boards of many academic journals, including the *American Political Science Review*, the *Journal of Democracy*, and *India and Global Affairs*.

Tuesday, October 20 A talk by Rudarangshu Mukherjee (Ashoka University) "Why Liberal Arts in India"

Rudrangshu Mukherjee is Vice-Chancellor and Professor of History at Ashoka University. He was most recently Editor of the Editorial Pages, at *The Telegraph*, Kolkata. Prof. Mukherjee has taught history at the University of Calcutta and held visiting appointments at Princeton University, the University of Manchester and the University of California, Santa Cruz. He studied at Presidency College (Kolkata) Jawaharlal Nehru University, and earned a D.Phil in Modern History at the University of Oxford in 1981. Prof. Mukherjee is the author of five books on the revolt of 1857 in India including *Awadh in Revolt, 1857-58: A Study of Popular Resistance* (2002). Among many other publications are the edited volume, *The Penguin Gandhi Reader* (1995); and the 2014 monograph, *Nehru & Bose: Parallel Lives*.

Friday, October 23 A discussion with Amartya Sen and Pratap Bhanu Mehta "Indian Politics and Political Economy Today"

Time: 3:00pm - 4:30pm

Location: Altschuler Auditorium, 417 International Affairs Building

420 West 118th Street at Amsterdam Avenue

Amartya Sen is Thomas W. Lamont University Professor, and Professor of Economics and Philosophy, at Harvard University. He was until 2004 the Master of Trinity College, Cambridge. Sen earlier held appointments at Jadavpur University Calcutta, the Delhi School of Economics, the London School of Economics, and Oxford University. His research has ranged over social choice theory, economic theory, ethics and political philosophy, welfare economics, theory of measurement, decision theory, development

economics, public health, and gender studies. Among the awards he has received are the *Bharat Ratna*, the Agnelli International Prize in Ethic, the Edinburgh Medal, the Brazilian *Ordem do Merito Cientifico*, the Eisenhower Medal, the Legion of Honour (France), Honorary Companion of Honour (UK), the George C. Marshall Award (US), the National Humanities Medal (US), and the Nobel Prize in Economics.

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Friday, October 23 A lecture and Demonstration by dancer and choreographer Leela Samson

Time: 5:30pm - 7:00pm

Location: Barnard Hall, Room 305, 118th Street at Broadway

Leela Samson is a dancer, teacher, writer and choreographer of *bharatanatyam*. She has been deeply influenced by Rukmini Devi Arundale, who founded *Kalakshetra*, the premier academy of arts in Chennai, where she studied during her formative years. In 1995, she formed a group called *Spanda*, to explore group dynamics in *bharatanatyam*. Leela Samson has authored several articles as well as two books, *Rhythm in Joy* (1987) and *Rukmini Devi: A Life* (2010). Samson has served as Director of the Kalakshetra Foundation, and as Chairperson of the Sangeet Natak Akademi.

Friday, October 30
A talk by Pratap Bhanu Mehta
"The Indian Constitution Today: Challenges and Compromises"

Time: 4:00pm - 5:30pm

Location: Kellogg Center, Room 1501 International Affairs Building, 420 West 118th Street at

Amsterdam Avenue

Pratap Bhanu Mehta is the Fall 2015 Ahuja Fellow at the South Asia Institute. Mehta is president and chief executive of the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi. He is a political scientist who has taught at Harvard University, Jawaharlal Nehru University, and the New York University School of Law. His areas of research include political theory, constitutional law, society and politics in India, governance and political economy, and international affairs. Dr Mehta holds a BA (first class) in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics from Oxford and a PhD in politics from Princeton. He received the 2010 Malcom S. Adishehshiah Award and the 2011 Infosys Prize for Social Sciences - Political Science.

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Friday, October 30 In Concert at the Miller Theater Ustad Shahid Parvez Khan (sitar), with Amit Kavthekar (tabla)

Time: 8:00pm – 10:00pm Location: Miller Theatre

Ustad Shahid Parvez Khan descends from six generations of sitarists, and is one of the leading exponents of the *Etawah Gharana*, a musical tradition or "family" committed to the sitar. He is the grandson of Waheed Khan, the surbahar and sitar virtuoso, who was the younger brother of Inayat Khan. Shahid was first introduced to vocal and tabla by his father Aziz Khan, before he was initiated into the art of playing sitar. In 2007, the New York Times called him "one of India's more celebrated younger musicians, prized especially for the vocalistic phrasing of his raga improvisations."

Wednesday, November 11 A discussion with Qalandar Memon, Etienne Balibar, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak "Our Struggles"

Organized by the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society Co-sponsored by the South Asia Institute

Time: 6:00pm - 7:30pm

Location: Room 208 Knox Hall, 606 West 122nd Street, between Broadway and Claremont

Qalandar Memon is a writer and poet, and editor of the on-line magazine, *NakedPunch.com*. **Etienne Balibar** is Visiting Professor in the Department of French and Romance Literature at Columbia; Professor Emeritus of moral and political philosophy at Université de Paris X – Nanterre, and Distinguished Professor of Humanities at the University of California, Irvine. **Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak** is University Professor and a founding member of the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society at Columbia.

Friday, November 13

A film screening and discussion with director Vibha Bakshi

"Daughters of Mother India"

Organized by the Chazen Institute of International Business

Co-sponsored by the South Asia Institute, and the Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality

Time: 3:30pm - 5:30pm

Location: Davis Auditorium, Schapiro Hall

In 2012, several grotesque incidents of sexual assault sparked rage and national debate in India. The rape and murder of 23 year-old student from New Delhi by a group of men marked a turning point for public awareness. For weeks, mass protests filled the streets of India and the country witnessed gender consciousness and extraordinary solidarity by ordinary citizens—like never before. The eyes of the world were on the country's rampant gender violence, and stories about violence against women in India were hitting the world's headlines almost on a daily basis.

Daughters of Mother India, a 45-minute award winning documentary, questions how Indian society is changing after the 2012 events. Although an Anti-Rape Law was promptly passed and radical changes were made within the police force and the judiciary, gender violence still persists. Has anything changed? The film probes local judges, police officers, teachers, activists and even street performers that are fighting against gender violence on a daily basis, while simultaneously showing the critical role that each one of these social actors must play to bring real change in India.

Vibha Bakshi directed and produced *Daughters of Mother India*, which won the 2015 National Film Award for Best Film on Social Issues, and Best Documentary at the New York Indian Film Festival. She is a former business reporter for CNBC, and studied Journalism and Broadcasting at Boston University and New York University. Vibha Bakshi's films have been aired on HBO and Lifetime TV in the United States. Her other films include *Too Hot to Handle* (co-directed and co-produced with Maryann De Leo), on climate change, and as a producer, *Terror at Home*, on domestic violence.

Film Website: www.daughtersofmotherindia.com
Trailer: www.youtube.com/watch?v=em3cFAJotmY

Monday, November 16 A talk by Michael Meister (Pennsylvania) "The Measure of Monuments"

Michael W. Meister is W. Norman Brown Professor of South Asia Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. He has served as Chair of the Departments of South Asia Studies, and History of Art and Director of Penn's South Asia Center. He is Curator of Indian Art, Asian section, University Museum, and Curator of the South Asia Art Archive. Meister is a specialist in the art of India and Pakistan, and his research and writing focuses on temple architecture, the morphology of meaning, and other aspects of the art of the Indian sub-continent. His most recent book is *Temples of the Indus: Studies in the Hindu Architecture of Ancient Pakistan* (2010).

Monday, February 15 A talk by playwright and director Mahesh Dattani "An Indian playwright's perspective on theatre making in India"

Moderated by Shayoni Mitra (Theatre Department, Barnard College)

Mahesh Dattani is the Spring 2016 Ahuja Family Fellow at the South Asia Institute, and Visiting Theatre Director at the Theatre Department, where he will direct a production of Partha Chatterjee play, *Choker Bali* (based on the Tagore novel), which runs from March 3-5 at Barnard College (see below). Dattani is an actor, playwright, screenwriter, and a theatre and film director. He was educated at St. Joseph's College (Bangalore) and has taught at the University of Oregon and the Drama School in Mumbia. His many plays include *Dance Like a Man* (1989), *Thirty Days in September* (2001), *Brief Candle* (2009), and most recently, *Guahar* (2015), based on the novel by Vikram Sampath. He directed the film *Mango Soufflé* and wrote and directed *Morning Raaga* (2004).

Monday, February 15 A talk by Lisa Mitchell

"Hailing the State: Collective Assembly and the Politics of Recognition in the History of Indian Democracy"

Introduction of Sudipta Kaviraj (Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies)

Lisa Mitchell is an anthropologist and historian of southern India, and earned her PhD (with distinction) at Columbia. Her interdisciplinary research and teaching interests include political practice, public space, and the built environment; the cultural history of cement in South Asia; ethnography of informal urban credit networks; technology and infrastructure as they impact social, cultural, and political forms and everyday practices; neoliberalism and economic corridors; ethnographic approaches to the state; colonialism; and Telugu language and literature. She is the author of *Language*, *Emotion*, *and Politics in South India: The Making of a Mother Tongue* (2009), and is currently finishing a book on *The Politics of Recognition: Collective Assembly, Public Space, and Political Practice in the History of Indian Democracy*.

Monday, February 29

A talk by Kavita Singh (Jawaharlal Nehru University)

"Exhibiting the Unspeakable? Minority Communities, Difficult Histories, and the Holocaust Museum Paradigm in India"

Introduction by Vidya Dehejia, Barbara Stoler Miller Professor of Indian and South Asian Art, Department of Art History and Archaeology

Kavita Singh is Associate Professor at School of Arts and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University. Her research interests include History of museums in colonial and post-colonial India; the global art museum; repatriation; religious objects and secularization of art; religious revivalism and its cultural forms; heritage discourse; historiography of art history; history of Indian courtly painting. Her recent publications include *No Touching, No Spitting, No Praying: The Museum in South Asia* (with Saloni Mathur, 2015).

Thursday, March 3 to Satruday, March 5

Chokher Bali [Sand in my Eye]

A play by Partha Chatterjee, based on the Rabindranath Tagore novel

Directed by Mahesh Dattani

Dramaturgy by Shayoni Mitra

Thursday, March 3, 2016 at 8:00pm Friday, March 4, 2016 at 8:00pm Saturday, March 5, 2016 at 8:00pm

Sponsored by the Department of Theatre at Barnard College and Columbia College, and the South Asia Institute.

Location: Minor Latham Playhouse, Milbank Hall, Room 118, Barnard Campus, 119th Street and Broadway (entrance at 118th or 119th Street) [Directions and map from the Columbia website.]

In March 2016, the Theater Department at Barnard College will present the English language premiere of *Chokher Bali* [Sand in My Eye], based on the classic novel by Rabindranath Tagore, dramatized and translated by Partha Chatterjee, directed by internationally renowned playwright and director Mahesh Dattani, and Dramaturged by Assistnat Professor Shayoni Mitra. Chokher Bali is a compelling account of marriage and widowhood, and a meditiation on feminine desire and agency, told against the backdrop of the rapidly modernizing *bhadralok*, or gentlemanly class, of late 19th century Calcutta.

Mahesh Dattani is the Spring 2016 Ahuja Family Fellow at the South Asia Institute, and Visiting Theatre Director at the Theatre Department, where he will direct a production of Partha Chatterjee play, *Choker Bali* (based on the Tagore novel), which runs from March 3-5 at Barnard College (see below). Dattani is an actor, playwright, screenwriter, and a theatre and film director. He was educated at St. Joseph's College (Bangalore) and has taught at the University of Oregon and the Drama School in Mumbia. His many plays include *Dance Like a Man* (1989), *Thirty Days in September* (2001), *Brief Candle* (2009), and most recently, *Guahar* (2015), based on the novel by Vikram Sampath. He directed the film *Mango Soufflé* and wrote and directed *Morning Raaga* (2004)

Partha Chatterjee is a Professor jointly appointed in the Departments of Anthropology and Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies. **Shayoni Mitra** is Assistant Professor in the Theatre Department at Barnard College.

Monday, March 7

A talk and exhibition by Anthony Acciavatti (School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation)
"Ganges Water Machine: Infrastructure Across the Ganga River Basin since 1854"

Time: 6:00pm - 7:30pm

Location: East Gallery, Maison Française, Beull Hall (east of Low Library)

See Map and Directions.

Moderated by Upmanu Lall (Alan & Carol Silberstein Professor of Engineering, Fu Foundation School of Engineering; and Director, Columbia Water Center)

In the summmer of 2005, with only a camera and hand-held GPS unit, Anthony Acciavatti arrived in India as a Fulbright Fellow to map the most densely populated river basin in the world. During his increasingly long expeditions into the mountains and plains, he began to obsessively record the cycles of the Ganges River, the iconic watercourse of India that reached everywhere. For nearly a decade, Acciavatti crisscrossed the Ganges River by foot and boat, deploying new methods of mapping cities and towns as well as the rhythms of the monsoon. His book, *Ganges Water Machine: Designing New India's Ancient River* (awarded the John Brinckerhoff Jackson Book Prize for 2016), is a dynamic atlas of the Ganges River basin - the first such comprehensive atlas in a half a century.

Anthony Acciavatti is an Adjunct Assistant Professor at the School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation. An historian, architect, and cartographer, he has spent the last decade hiking, driving, and boating across the Ganga basin in India to make a dynamic atlas. *Ganges Water Machine: Designing New India's Ancient River* (2015), a book and traveling exhibition, is the outcome of this fieldwork and archival research.

Monday, March 28 Film Screening with director Nakul Singh Sawhney Muzaffarnagar Baaqi Hai [Muzaffarnagar, Eventually] (2014/135 mins), Hindi with English subtitles

Moderated by Shayoni Mitra (Theatre Department, Barnard College)

Time: 6:00pm - 8:30pm

Location: Held Auditorium, Barnard Hall, Barnard College, entrance at 118th Street and Broadway

Directions: See < http://www.sai.columbia.edu/location-directions>

In September, 2013, Muzaffarnagar and Shamli districts of Western Uttar Pradesh witnessed their worst ever anti-Muslim pogrom since Indian Independence. More than 100 people were killed and close to 80,000 people were displaced. The film looks at the social, political, and economic repercussions of the massacre, and how they found resonance in the 2014 Indian General Election campaign.

Nakul Singh Sawhney's first film, *With a little help from my friends*, earned an award for the 2nd best film at the 60 Seconds to Fame film festival in Chennai in 2005. While studying at the Film and Television Institute of India in Pune during 2005-06, his films *Agaurav* and *Undecided* which were cited for 2nd Best Film and Best Director respectively at the Hyderabad International Film Festival. His feature films to date include the documentary *Once upon a time in Chheharta* (2007) on the history of the working class movement of Chheharta, Amritsar; and the highly acclaimed film *Izzatnagari Ki Asabhya Betiyaan* (2012) on "honour" crimes in Haryana.

Friday, April 8

"Hungry Tides: Conquering Time, Water and the Weather on the Indian Subcontinent" The Science of Water and Weather in Late Colonial India Sunil Amrith, Mehra Family Professor of South Asian Studies, Professor of History, Harvard University

The Making of Gondwana: Geology and the Colonial Conquest of Time in India?

<u>Pratik Chakrabarti</u>, Professor and Chair of History of Science and Medicine, Centre for the History of Science, Technology and Medicine, University of Manchester

Chairs and Organizers of the Seminar:

Kavita Sivaramakrishnan, Assistant Professor of Sociomedical Sciences, Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health

Eugenia Lean, Associate Professor of East Asian Languages and Culture, Director of Weatherhead East Asian Institute, Columbia University

Marwa Elshakry, Associate Professor of History, Columbia University

Co-sponsored by The Center for Science and Society and the South Asia Institute

This seminar in the history of science in South Asia features two leading speakers in the field who will discuss their new research relating to debates around the recasting of scientific disciplines, continental landscapes, and measures of time and the weather in colonial India. Both lectures will explore several tropes and narratives of sciences and the deep past, such as the ancient supercontinent Gondwanaland, colonial efforts to appropriate India's antiquity and to shape and reconfigure time in the present; and the making of scientific authority around the monsoons and the weather of the subcontinent.

Time: 3:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Location: Knox Hall, Room 208, 606 West 122nd Street, between Broadway and Claremon

Monday, April 11

A discussion with Prabhat Patnaik (JNU) and Gyanendra Pandey (Emory) "On Perry Anderson's India"

Time: 4:10pm - 6:15pm

Location: Knox Hall, Room 208, 606 West 122nd Street, between Broadway and Claremont

Moderated by Sudipta Kaviraj, Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies

Co-sponsored by the Heyman Center for the Humanities

Prabhat Patnaik held the Sukhamoy Chakravarty Chair of Planning and Development at the Centre for Economic Studies and Planning (CESP) in the School of Social Sciences at Jawaharlal Nehru University at the time of his retirement in 2010. **Gyan Pandey** is Arts and Sciences Distinguished Professor, and Director, Colonial and Postcolonial Studies Workship, in the History Department at Emory University.

Monday, April 25

A talk by Veena Das (The Johns Hopkins University)

"The Rhythms of Psychiatric Power: Foucault From the Slums of Delhi"

Time: 4:10pm - 5:45pm

Location: Knox Hall, Room 208, 606 West 122nd Street, between Broadway and Claremont

Veena Das is Krieger-Eisenhower Professor of Anthropology at the Johns Hopkins University. Before joining Johns Hopkins, she taught at the Delhi School of Economics for many years and held a joint appointment at the New School for Social Research from 1997- 2000. Das has been a Visiting Professor at the Universities of Chicago, Heidelberg, Harvard, and Paris, as well as the École des hautes études en sciences sociales, Paris. Her research covers a range of fields: the question of how ethnography generates concepts; how we might treat philosophical and literary traditions from India and other regions as generative of theoretical and practical understanding of the world; how to render the texture and contours of everyday life; and the way that the everyday and the event are joined together in the making of the normal and the critical. Das's most recent books are *Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary* (2007); *Affliction: Health, Disease, Poverty* (2015); and three co-edited volumes, *The Ground Between: Anthropologists Engage Philosophy* (2014), *Living and Dying in the Contemporary World: A Compendium* (2015) and *Politics of the Urban Poor* (forthcoming).

Wednesday, April 27
Books and Authors
A talk by Shahid Amin
Conquest & Community: the Afterlife of Warrior-Saint Ghazi Miyan

Time: 7:00pm - 9:00pm

Location: Common Room, Heyman Center for the Humanities, East Campus Building

Directions: http://heymancenter.org/visit/

Moderated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, University Professor, English and Comparative Literature

Shahid Amin received his D.Phil. from Oxford University and is currently Professor of History at the University of Delhi. Among his publications are *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chaura, 1922-1992* (1995) and *Writing Alternative Histories: A View from India*(2002). He is the editor of *A Concise Encyclopedia of North Indian Peasant Life* (2005), the co-editor, with Gyan Pandey, of *Nimnvargiya Itihas, Bhag Ek, Bhag Do* (1994, 2001), and has also written the Hindustani dialogues of the feature film *Karvan*, directed by Pankaj Butalia.

Monday, May 2
Mary Keatinge Das Lecture
David Shulman (Hebrew University)
"The Serpent's Ecstacy: Deep Seeing in the Sanskrit Theater of Kerala"

Time: 7:00pm - 9:00pm

Location: Common Room, Heyman Center for the Humanities, East Campus Building

Directions: http://heymancenter.org/visit/

David Shulman is the Renee Lang Professor of Humanistic Studies at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He earned his PhD at the University of London, and has been a Visiting Professor at Johns Hopkins, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin-Madison. His research interests include the history of religion in South India; Poetry and poetics in Tamil, Telugu, and Sanskrit; Tamil Islam; Dravidian linguistics; and Carnatic music. His recent publications include *More than Real: A History of the Imagination in South India* (2012); *The Sound of the Kiss, or The Story That Must Never Be Told*, translations, with Pingali Suranna and Velcheru Narayana Rao (2012); *Textures of Time: Writing History in South India 1600-1800*, with Sanjay Subrahmanyam and Velcheru Narayana Rao (2013).

Time: 4:10pm - 5:45pm

Location: Knox Hall, Room 208, 606 West 122nd Street, between Broadway and Claremont