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Press Contacts:  
Amy Killion, amy@bucklesweetmedia.com  
Rebecca Calkin, rebecca.calkin@woollymammoth.net

**WOOLLY MAMMOTH THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS  
THE SOHO REP AND NAATCO PRODUCTION OF  
PUBLIC OBSCENITIES  
CO-PRESENTED WITH THEATRE FOR A NEW AUDIENCE**

**Written and directed by Shayok Misha Chowdhury  
Runs Nov. 13 - Dec. 23, 2023**

**WASHINGTON** –Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company and Theatre for a New Audience present the Soho Rep and NAATCO National Partnership Project production of *Public Obscenities* Nov. 13 – Dec. 23 at Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company (641 D St NW). Written and directed by Bengali-American poet and playwright, **Shayok Misha Chowdhury**, it is co-commissioned by Soho Rep and The National Asian American Theatre Company through the NAATCO National Partnership Project. Tickets and further information can be found on the new Woolly Mammoth website [here](#).

When Choton returns to Kolkata on a research trip with his Black American boyfriend Raheem, his grandfather's photograph stares down at him from the walls of his family home. Choton loves being the translator, toggling nimbly between Bangla and English, interviewing queer locals, showing Raheem his world. But through the lens of Choton's grandfather's old camera, Raheem begins to notice things Choton can't. Peer into this bilingual play from visionary writer-director Shayok Misha Chowdhury about the things we see, the things we miss, and the things that turn us on.

*“Public Obscenities* is a family drama, queer romance, bilingual mystery, and snapshot of the underground LGBTQ+ community in India — all rolled into one incredible package,” Woolly Mammoth Artistic Director, **Maria Manuela Goyanes** said. “Misha’s brilliant play peeks behind the curtain into the private and personal life of Choton and all the ways he serves as an interpreter in his life — in his romantic relationship, with family, and in showcasing the queer folks in Kolkata he interviews for his documentary. This production sold out and extended in

New York, and is set to return to NY with TFANA after our run. I'm overjoyed to bring this beautiful and enthralling show to DC audiences."

Chowdhury began writing *Public Obscenities* as an inaugural member of Soho Rep's Project Number One, which gives theater-makers staff positions, a full salary, and benefits to experiment and collaborate on new work. The play is inspired, in part, by a dream Chowdhury's uncle relayed to him, from which he "made a play about who gets to be an artist and what to do with all these unexpected things we inherit."

Following its premiere and successful extended run in 2023 at Soho Rep, the production was named a **New York Times Critic's Pick** with Chowdhury described as: "A writer with great promise who, with *Public Obscenities*, may have found himself on the brink of greatness."

*"Directed by Chowdhury with a swooning hypnotism reminiscent of the best works of neorealism..."* **The New York Times**

*"The playwright-director Shayok Misha Chowdhury's bilingual text and production are both gorgeously precise...even the non-Bangla-speaking members of the audience stayed rapt...it was a testament to how convincingly Chowdhury had built his world—and to how carefully he had taught us to listen."* **The New Yorker**

#### **ABOUT THE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM**

**Tashnuva Anan** as Shou; **Arbar Haque** as Choton; **Golam Sarwar Harun** as Jitesh; **Gargi Mukherjee** as Pishimoni; **Nafis** as Sebanti; **Jakeem Dante Powell** as Raheem; and **Debashis Roy Chowdhury** as Pisha

The Associate Director is **Mekala Sridhar**; Costume Designer is **Enver Chakartash**; Lighting Designer is **Barbara Samuels**; Stage Manager is **Tenley Pitonzo**; Assistant Stage Manager is **Annie Choudhury**; Cultural Dramaturg, is **Sukanya Chakrabarti**; Dramaturg is **Sarah Lunnie**; Video & Projections Designer is **Johnny Moreno**; Props Designer is **Patricia Marjorie**; Scenic Designer is **Peiyi Wong**; Sound Designer is **Tei Blow**; Associate Scenic Designer is **Jessica Trementozzi**; Assoc Sound Designer is **Ryan Gamblin**; Movement Consultant is **Ashleigh King**, Light Board Operator is **Reina Ramos**; Lighting Programmer is **Angela Armstrong**; Video Programmer is **Dylan Uremovich**; Production Assistant is **Jordyn Fields**; and Technical Director is **Teddy Mueller**.

#### **PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE**

*Public Obscenities* runs from November 13 – December 23. The typical performance week includes Tuesday-Sunday performances, with weeknights at 7:30 PM, Saturdays at 2:00 PM and 7:30 PM, and Sundays at 2:00 PM. View the full performance schedule at [woollymammoth.net](http://woollymammoth.net).

There are Pay-What-You-Will preview performances on November 13 & 14. Previews run through November 17, with the invited Opening Night on November 18.

A special Golden Ticket member night will be held on Monday, November 20 at 7.30 pm with a pre-show mix-and-mingle and free concessions item for any of Woolly Mammoth's Golden Ticket holders in attendance.

Affinity Nights include Friday, December 1 at 7:30 pm (South Asian Night) and Friday, December 8 at 7:30 pm (LGBTQIA+ Night), with talkbacks to follow.

### **TALKBACKS (IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE PERFORMANCE)**

- Monday, November 20th, 7:30pm
- Friday, December 1st, 7:30pm
- Friday, December 8th, 7:30pm
- Sunday, December 17th, 2pm

### **ACCESS PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE**

- ASL Interpreted performances on December 2 at 7.30 pm and Sunday, December 10 at 2pm which feature interpreters placed inside the theatre who translate what the actors are saying and expressing to the audience.
- Audio Described performances Saturday, December 9 at 2 pm and Saturday, December 16 at 2 pm which feature live narration interspersed with the actors' dialogue used to provide information surrounding key visual elements.
- Open Captioned performances on Wednesday, December 6 at 7.30 pm and Thursday, December 7 at 7.30pm, which feature permanently visible, on-screen text description that displays dialogue, identifies speakers, and describes other relevant sounds

Assistive listening devices are available for all performances. Transmitters and accompanying headsets and ear speakers are available at the Box Office. For more information on Access Performances please visit the play's website page.

### **TICKET INFORMATION**

Tickets start at \$34 and are available at [woollymammoth.net](http://woollymammoth.net), by phone at (202) 393-3939, and via email at [tickets@woollymammoth.net](mailto:tickets@woollymammoth.net).

Preview Pay-What-You-Will performances on Monday, November 13 at 7.30 pm and Tuesday, November 14 at 7.30 pm through Woolly Mammoth and TodayTix. There are also Pay-What-You-Will tickets available for every remaining performance by selecting the PWYW seats and adjusting the ticket price at [woollymammoth.net](http://woollymammoth.net). Tickets for PWYW previews are open for sale 2 weeks prior to the first preview, and PWYW seats for the full production run are available starting on November 13.

Patrons who are 30 years old and younger may purchase tickets starting at \$25 for any performance. There are also discounts available for educators, first responders, and active U.S.

military personnel, spouses, and veterans. More information is available at [woollymammoth.net](http://woollymammoth.net).

### **ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT**

Born in India, based in Brooklyn, Misha wrote *Public Obscenities* as an inaugural Project Number One Artist at Soho Rep, where he directed the play's premiere "with a swooning hypnotism reminiscent of the best works of neorealism" (NYTimes, Critic's Pick). A many-tentacled artist, Misha has been honored with the Relentless Award, Drama Desk and Drama League nominations, the Mark O'Donnell Prize, a Princess Grace Award, and a Jonathan Larson Grant for musical theater. Misha collaborated on the Grammy-winning album *Calling All Dawns*. Other favorites: *Brother, Brother* (New York Theatre Workshop) with Aleshea Harris; *SPEECH* (Philly Fringe) with Lightning Rod Special; *MukhAgni* (Under the Radar @ The Public Theater) with Kameron Neal. Misha is also a Sundance Fellow and the creator of *VICHITRA*, a series of short films rooted in queer South Asian imagination. A Fulbright, Kundiman, and NYSCA/NYFA fellow, Misha's poetry has been published in *The Cincinnati Review*, *TriQuarterly*, and elsewhere. BA: Stanford. MFA: Columbia.

### **ABOUT WOOLLY MAMMOTH THEATRE COMPANY**

The Tony Award®-winning Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company creates badass theatre that highlights the stunning, challenging, and tremendous complexity of our world. For over 40 years, Woolly has maintained a high standard of artistic rigor while simultaneously daring to take risks, innovate, and push beyond perceived boundaries. One of the few remaining theatres in the country to maintain a company of artists, Woolly serves an essential research and development role within the American theatre. Plays premiered here have gone on to productions at hundreds of theatres all over the world and have had lasting impacts on the field. Currently co-led by Artistic Director Maria Manuela Goyanes and Managing Director Kimberly E. Douglas, Woolly is located in Washington, DC, equidistant from the Capitol and the White House. This unique location influences Woolly's investment in actively working towards an equitable, participatory, and creative democracy.

Woolly Mammoth stands upon occupied, unceded territory: the ancestral homeland of the Nacotchtank whose descendants belong to the Piscataway peoples. Furthermore, the foundation of this city, and most of the original buildings in Washington, DC, were funded by the sale of enslaved people of African descent and built by their hands.

### **ABOUT NAATCO**

Under the leadership of Founding Artistic Producing Director Mia Katigbak and co-founder Richard Eng, NAATCO was founded in 1989 to assert the presence and significance of Asian American theatre in the United States, demonstrating its vital contributions to the fabric of American culture. NAATCO puts into service its total commitment to Asian American theatre artists to more accurately represent onstage the multi- and inter-cultural dynamics of our society. By doing so, they demonstrate a rich tapestry of cultural difference bound by the American experience.

## ABOUT SOHO REP

Soho Rep provides radical theater makers with productions of the highest caliber and tailor-made development at key junctures in their artistic practice. We elevate artists as thought leaders and citizens who change the field and society. Artistic autonomy is paramount at Soho Rep; we encourage an unmediated connection between artists and audiences to create a springboard for transformation and rich civic life beyond the walls of its theater.

Soho Rep was named the “Best Theater in NYC” by *Time Out New York* in their Best of the City Awards, noting, "Soho Rep isn't the last word in downtown experimental theater: Better than that, it's often the first, championing major voices at key points in their careers...and Soho Rep's low ticket prices, help keep some of the city's bravest, boldest and wildest theater within the reach of all New Yorkers."

Plays that have premiered at Soho Rep's and gone onto future productions include: Aleshea Harris's *Is God Is*, Branden Jacobs-Jenkins' *An Octoroon*, Hansol Jung's *Wolf Play* which received 5 Lortel Awards including Outstanding Play, and Jackie Sibblies Drury's *Fairview* which was also recognized with the Pulitzer Prize in Drama. For more info, visit [sohorep.org](http://sohorep.org)

## ABOUT TFANA

Theatre for a New Audience, founded in 1979 by Jeffrey Horowitz, is led by Horowitz and Managing Director, Dorothy Ryan, With Shakespeare as its guide, TFANA explores the ever-changing forms of world theatre and builds a dialogue spanning centuries between the language and ideas of Shakespeare and diverse playwrights, past and present. TFANA is committed to building long-term associations with artists and theatre companies from around the world and supporting the development of plays, translations, and productions through residences, workshops, and commissions. TFANA performs for an audience of all ages and backgrounds; is devoted to economic access; and promotes a vibrant exchange of ideas through its humanities and education programs.

TFANA's productions have played nationally, internationally, and on Broadway. In 2001, it became the first American theatre invited to bring a production of Shakespeare to the Royal Shakespeare Company.

TFANA created and runs the largest in-depth program to introduce Shakespeare and classic drama in New York City's Public Schools. Since its inception in 1984, the program has served more than 140,000 students.

In 2013, TFANA opened its first permanent home, Polonsky Shakespeare Center in the Brooklyn Cultural District.

In addition to productions, TFANA supports ongoing development through the Merle Debuskey Studio Fund, which provides artists with residencies and workshops to create and explore outside the pressures of production.

**JOIN THE CONVERSATION**

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Instagram, Threads, & Tiktok: @woollymammothtc

Twitter: @WoollyMammothTC

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