

My Big Fat Cowpat Wedding

By Sayan Kent

CAST

Arjun **Aaron Virdee**
& BIG FRANK, MADHU, DEV, UNCLE ASHIN & TYRONE

Clare **Aimee Berwick**
& LAURA, NINA & DOM

Shruti **Sheena Patel**
& DEEJ, SCOTTISH RACHEL, RINA, AUNTY LALITA & TOM

Jack **Graeme Rose**
& RICHIE, MAJOR BARNES, BINA & AUNT MARIGOLD

Directors **Janet Steel & Steve Johnstone**

Designer **Abigail King**

Music **Sayan Kent**

Company Stage Manager **Nicola Cartwright**

Stage Management Placement **Eveliina Tiensuu**

Photography **Florence Fox, Robert Day**

Graphic Design **Luke Wakeman**

First public performance Wed 1 October at Newhampton Arts Centre

Many thanks to Francesca Green for the wedding cake, Jonathon Brookes for the farm tour and Dairy Dreams for loan of the cow bench, and to all those whose help came too late to be mentioned here.

Please add a comment to Clare and Anjum's Facebook page [Facebook.com/Clare-Arjun](https://www.facebook.com/Clare-Arjun)

FOR KALI THEATRE

Artistic Director **Janet Steel**

General Manager **Chris Corner**

Audience Development **Binita Walia**

Admin Assistant **Jonna Nummela**

FOR BLACK COUNTRY TOURING

Co-Artistic Directors **Steve Johnstone & Frances Land**

Producer **Dawinder Bansal**

Company Manager **Deb Justice**

Promoter Co-ordinator **Natalie Kidman**

Admin Assistant **Sarah Watton**

Blogger **Vimal Korpai**

FOR ARTS ALIVE

Directors **Sian Kerry & Ian Kerry**

Finance **Terri Jones**

Administrator **Mary Napper-White**

Intern **Bryoni Sadler**

Thanks to all the people who participated in the original Black Country/Green Country workshops and those we interviewed when first developing this project. Without their stories to inspire us, it wouldn't have happened.

The interviewees: Amy Beeston, Tom Crone, Jac Elsley, Victoria Anne Ganderton, Dilbir Gauher, Peter Chand, Sharmila Chauhan, Gillian Griffiths, Ro Hands, Parminder Kairo, Rajesh Mair, Melissa Paul, Douglas Preston, Satnam Rana, David Ryder, Bob Thompson, Binita Walia, Deta Ward & Courtia. **Researchers:** Dawinder Bansal, Jenny Matthews, Tahira Paul, Janet Steel.

Please let us know what you thought of the show via:

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kali

Kali Theatre has been presenting ground-breaking new theatre writing by women with a South Asian background for over 20 years.

We seek out and nurture strong individual writers who challenge our perceptions through original and thought-provoking drama, and actively encourage our writers to reinvent and reshape the theatrical agenda.

Our work presents the distinct perspective and experience of South Asian women, engaging people from all backgrounds in work that reflects and comments on our lives today. We have won rave reviews, sold-out shows and inspired audiences all over the UK with work that challenges our perceptions through original and surprising theatre.

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Black Country Touring (BCT) works in partnership with volunteer promoters and venues in the Black Country to create a dynamic programme of professional theatre and dance for local communities. BCT also works in partnership with a wide range of theatre and dance organisations to create new work rooted in the rich vein of stories of people who live in our region. These productions take place in a variety of different settings from empty shops and touring caravans to historic houses and village halls.

To find out more about our work and future shows

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Every year Arts Alive organises over 100 live professional performances and nearly 1000 film screenings through Flicks in the Sticks.

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arts alive

BLACK
COUNTRY
TOURING

My Big Fat Cowpat Wedding

By Sayan Kent

The wedding reception of a country girl and a lad from the city, with all their friends and family. What could possibly go wrong?





COUNTRYSIDE OR CITY?

As part of our research for My Big Fat Cowpat Wedding we interviewed people in mixed marriages, from different ethnic cultures and from both urban and countryside environments. We asked them – Countryside or City? These are some of their responses.

CITY

- “Cities are full of life with a great buzz and lots people rushing about. It’s where all the fun seems to be happening!”
- “There’s people everywhere so you might not ever see the same face twice.”
- “Cities are multicultural and full of difference. I think you’d feel more accepted here.”
- “It’s like everything is on your doorstep in the city, like your family/friends, schools, jobs and supermarkets.”
- “My Best Man didn’t make it to the church on time. He didn’t realise that driving 16 miles through London would take far longer than 16 miles in Shropshire!”

COUNTRY

- “I remember, the first time I stayed overnight in the countryside. It’s the strangest thing but the silence was deafening and I just couldn’t sleep. Not until I put the radio on for background sound.”
- “It’s so green and beautiful here and I feel more relaxed. It’s good to get back to nature sometimes.”
- “First thing I noticed were those narrow country roads and no street lights – driving is so scary at night without lights. There’s no pavements, so how do you know where to walk?”
- “People in the country know everyone and talk to everyone. They help you out if they know you, but they spot an outsider straight away.”
- “Some locals just turned up to my wedding at the Church without being invited! They’d heard there was a wedding on and stood in the road to wave good wishes. Would that happen in a city?”

Illustration by Liz Dickeson

COMPANY BIOGRAPHIES

Aimee Berwick *Clare*

Based in Birmingham, Aimee studied at LIPA and The Actors Temple. **Recent work includes:** one woman play *A New Way Of Living*, George Eliot in *A Ploughed Heart* (Vanessa Oakes), *An Angel Abroad* (tour), workshops and readings for Bold Text, The Birmingham Rep, Capital Theatre Festival and The Belgrade. **Film:** *Betsy and Leonard* (Best Supporting Actress, Tenerife International Film Festival), *The Film-Maker’s Son*, *The Scenic Route* (winner of Shropfilm48). She is the Artistic Director and producer of Theatre Exchange and has performed at over 100 weddings as lead singer of *The Little Big Band*. www.aimeeberwick.com

Sheena Patel *Shruti*

Sheena trained at Guildford School of Acting, where she graduated with BA (hons) in Acting. **Theatre includes:** The role of Humeera/ Mum in *Break The Floorboards* (Rifco Arts/Watford Palace), Shirley the Soothsayer in *Robin Hood* (Watford Palace); Young Soraya/Shanti in *Wah! Wah! Girls* (Kneehigh Theatre/Theatre Royal Stratford East/Sadler’s Wells); Fairy Twitter in *Mother Goose* (Watford Palace); Mrs Patel/Ensemble in *Britain’s Got Bhangra Remixed and Remastered* (Rifco Arts); Vandella in *Miss Lilly Gets Boned* (Finborough Theatre); Anita in *Wuthering Heights* (Tamasha Theatre/Lyric Hammersmith). **TV includes:** *Emmerdale*, *Eastenders*, *Holby City*, *Law & Order UK* and *Casualty*.

Graeme Rose *Jack*

A Birmingham-based theatre-maker and performer. He

is co-founder of theatre companies Stan’s Cafe and The Resurrectionists, and a regular collaborator with others including Talking Birds and the KILN ensemble. He specialises in creating shows for unusual spaces, having performed in a swimming pool, a car park, caravan, canal boat, abandoned market, empty gaol, tin whale and an old operating theatre. **Recent projects include** *The Furies* and *A Journey Round My Skull* for KILN ensemble; *EAT!* for Black Country Touring/ Birmingham Rep, and for Stan’s Cafe, *The Anatomy of Melancholy* and *The Cardinals* (touring internationally next spring).

Aaron Virdee *Arjun*

Theatre credits include: *The Wiz* (Birmingham Repertory Theatre); *Changing Faces* (The Drum); *Time Has Fallen Asleep in the Afternoon Sunshine* (Birmingham Repertory Theatre / Fierce Festival). **TV credits include:** *Citizen Khan* (BBC). **Voiceover credits include:** *Rani & Sukh* (Listening Books). **Film credits include:** *Harry Potter & The Deathly Hallows Part 2* (Warner Bros); *The Merchant of Little Venice* (Friday Night Films); *Inside Out* (Biscuit Town Productions); *Land Gold Women* (A Richer Lens); *To Forget & Forgive* (Truth Lake Productions) and *Gotta Go* (Forward Motion Movies). **Other work includes** *Oxasians & Ram Sahai Story 1800* (Talking Pictures).

Janet Steel *Co-Director*

Artistic Director of Kali since 2003, she has directed over 30 readings of new work and productions of *Calcutta Kosher* (2004 & 2012), *Chaos*, *Paper Thin*, *Deadeye*, *Zameen*,

Another Paradise, *Behna*, *Ghandi & Coconuts*, *Purnjanam/Born Again*, *Mustafa*, *My Daughter’s Trial* and *The Husbands*. After many years as an actress, Janet began directing in 1988 at Loose Change Theatre with White Biting Dog. **Other directing credits include** *Behzti* (The Rep), *April in Paris*, *Bretevski Street*, *A Hard Rain*, *Top Girls* (Northampton Royal), *Millennium Mysteries*, *Big School* (Belgrade Coventry); *Antigone*, *The Mother*, *Orpheus Descending*, *An Ideal Husband*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *The Knockey*, *Serious Money* (Rose Bruford).

Steve Johnstone *Co-Director*

Currently co-Artistic Director of Black Country Touring. **Production work includes:** *Eat!*, *The Corner Shop*, *Apna Ghar*, *And Tigers Mingle*, a residency at Wightwick Manor with Kathak dancer Sonia Sabri and hip-hop poet Dreadlock Alien. Former Artistic Director of Pentabus Theatre Company. As a freelance director he specialises in the direction of new writing and site specific work & has directed productions for Shared Experience, Moving Hands & Birmingham Rep, Chol Theatre Company, Welsh National Opera, O Teatro Regional Da Serra Do Montemuro, Meet the Future, Mac Productions and many others. He has worked in a number of countries including Portugal, India, Finland and Bangladesh.

Sayan Kent *Writer*

Plays include: *The Predator* (Reading by Open Door/ Birmingham Rep) *Like Happy Stuff* (Tristan Bates/Kali ‘12’) *Endless Light* (Southwark); *Monologues 1* (Curve), *Monologues 2* (Arcola); *Antigone’s Sister* (Birmingham Young Rep); *Another Paradise*, (Edinburgh/national tour –

nominated for the John Whiting Award); *The Contract* (Joint winner Capital New Writing Festival); *Invisible* (mac, 2010 / 2011); *Killing Wasps* (Soho reading); *The Good Companions* (New Vic Stoke, Belgrade Coventry, Wolsey Ipswich, Keswick), *Silas Marner*, *Mother Goose*, *Dick Whittington*, *Aladdin* (Belgrade Coventry). Sayan is also a composer; she trained at Rose Bruford as an actor and at Birmingham University, Playwriting (MPhil). Currently writing a musical for the Liverpool Royal Court.

Abigail King *Designer*

Abigail trained at Birmingham Institute of Art and Design. Recent work has been with Birmingham School of Acting on *The Superheroes*, *Heterophobia* and *The Pirates of Cannon Hill* and with the REP and Black Country Touring designing costumes and working on the set for *Eat!* **Previous design work** has been with Clearchannel Productions, Coventry Belgrade, Birmingham Theatre School, Almeida Opera, Gazebo Theatre, Maverick Theatre, The Crescent Theatre, The Conservatoire, New Sussex Opera as well as working on short and feature length films for Solar Pictures, One Small Barking Dog, Birmingham Media and Incubator Screen.

Nicola Cartwright *Stage Manager*

Nicola Cartwright graduated from East 15 Acting School with a BA in World Performance. **Her professional stage management credits** include *My Daughter’s Trial* (Kali Theatre), *Storming the Barricade/Keep Smiling Through* (Claire Evans Productions) and *A Rock and A Hard Place* (Act Naturally).