



RAFTA, RAFTA...



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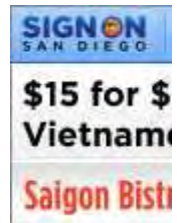


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Quick take: 'Rafta' gets a slow start at the Globe

BY JAMES HEBERT

MONDAY, MARCH 28, 2011 AT 12:43 A.M.

There's an infectious energy to the [Bollywood](#)-style dance sequence that the cast of "[Rafta, Rafta](#)" indulges in at the [Old Globe Theatre](#). It's just about the best part of the show, which would be fine except that it's also the last part of the show - and stands out mainly because it's such a contrast to the sputtering, fitful appeal of the actual play.

It's tempting to pin the troubles of this production (which opened Sunday night, after a three-day delay) on the fact it lost a cast member very late in the game. Except that Kamal Marayati, who replaced the ailing [Ranjit Chowdhry](#) as the patriarch of the play's Indian-immigrant family, is actually quite good. In fact, the whole cast is competent, and a few members are much better than that.

It's also possible there's some kind of narrative music to [Ayub Khan-Din's](#) play that has eluded director Jonathan Silverstein - the whole enterprise (besides that curtain call and another dance sequence near the top of the show) does feel strangely muted. But look at what the director had to work with: A play that, all its multicultural textures aside, feels as though it deals in some of the most shopworn clichés of family comedy. ("Rafta, Rafta" is based on the 1960s [Bill Naughton](#) work "All In Good Time.")

There's the well-meaning but oafish dad; the meddlesome in-laws; the wise and long-suffering mom. There also are one too many long, static chats in the parlor, and the play's cause isn't helped much by boilerplate lines like, "You're finished, you hear me? Finished!"

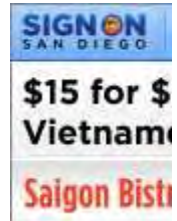
All of this considered, the actors still do a remarkable job of breathing life into the people who populate the play's two-story house in the north of [England](#). Rachid Sabitri and Mahira Kakkar make for a charming and disarming pair of frustrated newlyweds, and I especially appreciated Geeta Citygirl Chopra's turn as the groom's exasperated mother, a role she inhabits with a natural warmth.

"Rafta, Rafta" means "slowly, slowly" in Urdu. The phrase comes from a poem. Unfortunately, at least in these early days of the Globe production's run, it also describes how a performance of the play progresses.



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Play review: 'Rafta' closes well, yet lacks finish

 BY [JAMES HEBERT](#)

MONDAY, MARCH 28, 2011 AT 3:21 P.M.

There's an infectious energy to the [Bollywood](#)-style dance sequence that caps the Old Globe's latest show.

And as for the rest of "[Rafta](#), [Rafta ...](#)"?

(Dot dot dot ...)

The production's boisterous curtain call puts an exclamation point on a

play that otherwise tends to live up to the ellipsis in its title. [Ayub Khan -Din](#)'s family comedy, which opened Sunday after a three-day delay, comes off like an unfinished thought, a perplexed pause, a story told in tentative tense.

It doesn't help that the most vibrant part of the show is also the last part, and presents such a contrast to the fitful appeal of the actual play.

One could pin the troubles of this production on the fact it lost a cast member very late in the game. Except that Kamal Marayati, who replaced the ailing [Ranjit Chowdhry](#) as [Eeshwar](#) - the patriarch of the play's Indian-immigrant family - is actually quite good.

It's also possible there's some narrative music to Ayub Khan-Din's play that has eluded director Jonathan Silverstein. While previous stagings earned good reviews in London and New York, the Globe's West Coast premiere feels oddly muted.

And yet look at what the director had to work with: A play that, all its multicultural textures aside, feels as though it deals in some of the most shopworn clichés of family comedy. ("Rafta, Rafta..." is based on the 1960s [Bill Naughton](#) work "All In Good Time.")

There's the well-meaning but oafish dad; the meddlesome in-laws; the wise and long-suffering mom. There also are one too many long, static chats in the parlor. And the play's cause isn't helped by a boilerplate line like "You're finished, you hear me? Finished!," or a too-easy Kama Sutra gag.



/ HENRY DIROCCO

Families unite to celebrate a wedding in the Old Globe's "Rafta, Rafta ..."

DETAILS

"Rafta, Rafta ..."

Old Globe Theatre

When: 7 p.m. Tuesdays-Wednesdays; 8 p.m. Thursdays-Fridays; 2 and 8 p.m. Saturdays (no matinee April 16); 2 and 7 p.m. Sundays; through April 24.

Where: 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park

Tickets: \$29-\$85

Phone: (619) 234-5623

Online: theoldglobe.org

Considering all this, the actors for the most part do a remarkable job of breathing life into the people who populate the play's two-story house in the north of England. (The place is smartly designed by Alexander Dodge, though it doesn't quite convey the story's sense of people living cheek by jowl.)

The story pivots on a pair of newlyweds, Atul and Vina, whose struggle to consummate their marriage while living in the groom's family home winds up putting both their families in an uproar.

Rachid Sabitri and Mahira Kakkar are charming and disarming as the frustrated newlyweds, and Geeta Citygirl Chopra exudes a natural warmth as the groom's exasperated mom. Nasser Faris makes a good comic foil as Vina's uptight but loving dad, with Gita Reddy as his sniffy, somewhat distant wife.

But the character of Atul's brother, Jai (Ariya Ghahramani) has little to do but leer at Vina, and those played by Amir Darvish, Caralyn Kozlowski and Shalin Agarwal can seem more like comic props than flesh-and-blood people.

As funny as a few scenes can be — including one in which Eeshwar is clueless to the others' fanciful euphemisms about his son's persistent virginity — the overall feeling is one of vagueness. Scenes end on hesitant notes; characters exit to go shopping or take a bath, then reappear mere moments later; even the volume of the dialogue seems subdued.

“Rafta, Rafta” means “slowly, slowly” in Urdu. The phrase comes from a poem. Unfortunately, at least in these early days of the Globe production's run, it also describes how a performance progresses.

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News Summary



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M. Hausberg

Old Globe Theatre

March 29, 2011

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 THEATER REVIEW

'RAFTA, RAFTA' IS TENTATIVE, TENTATIVE

Family comedy at Old Globe has a muted, unfinished feel to it

JAMES HEBERT • U-T

There's an infectious energy to the Bollywood-style dance sequence that caps the *Old Globe's* latest show. And as for the rest of "Rafta, Rafta ..."? (Dot dot dot ...)

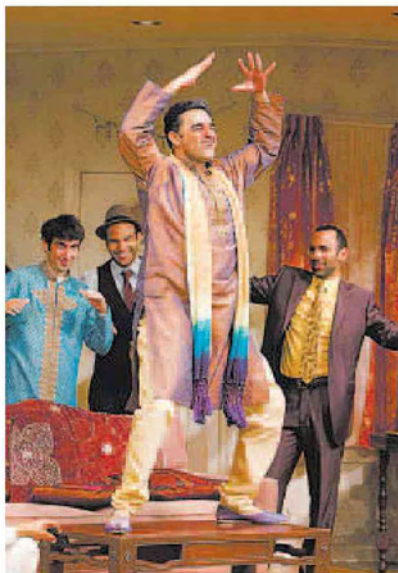
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There's the well-meaning but oafish dad, the meddlesome in-laws, the wise and long-suffering mom, and the surplus of static chats in the parlor. Considering all this, the



Ariya Ghahramani (from left), Shalin Agarwal, Kamal Marayati and Amir Darvish in the West Coast premiere of Ayub Khan-Din's "Rafta, Rafta ..." at The Old Globe through April 24.

HENRY DIROCCO

"Rafta, Rafta ..."

Old Globe Theatre

When: 7 p.m. Tuesdays-Wednesdays; 8 p.m. Thursdays-Fridays; 2 and 8 p.m. Saturdays (no matinee April 16); 2 and 7 p.m. Sundays; through April 24.

Where: 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park

Tickets: \$29-\$85

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The story pivots on a pair of newlyweds, Atul and Vina, whose struggle to consummate their marriage while living in the groom's family home winds up putting both their families in an uproar. Rachid Sabitri and Mahira Kakkar are charming and disarming as the frustrated newlyweds, and Geeta Citygirl Chopra exudes a natural warmth as the groom's

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SAN DIEGO ARTS

<http://www.sandiego.com/arts-and-theatre>

RAFTA, RAFTA... at the Old Globe Theatre

A domestic comedy of sorts now at the Old Globe Theatre

By [Welton Jones](http://www.sandiego.com/writers/welton-jones) (http://www.sandiego.com/writers/welton-jones) • Sun, Mar 27th, 2011

Read More: [San Diego Theatre](http://www.sandiego.com/index.php?option=com_googlesearch_cse&n=30&Itemid=1320&cx=013678227439384630463%3Ahppbq4mmxui&cof=FORID%3A11&ie=ISO-8859-1&hl=en&q=San+Diego+Theatre) (http://www.sandiego.com/index.php?option=com_googlesearch_cse&n=30&Itemid=1320&cx=013678227439384630463%3Ahppbq4mmxui&cof=FORID%3A11&ie=ISO-8859-1&hl=en&q=San+Diego+Theatre), [theatre review](http://www.sandiego.com/index.php?option=com_googlesearch_cse&n=30&Itemid=1320&cx=013678227439384630463%3Ahppbq4mmxui&cof=FORID%3A11&ie=ISO-8859-1&hl=en&q=theatre+review) (http://www.sandiego.com/index.php?option=com_googlesearch_cse&n=30&Itemid=1320&cx=013678227439384630463%3Ahppbq4mmxui&cof=FORID%3A11&ie=ISO-8859-1&hl=en&q=theatre+review), [Old Globe Theatre](http://www.sandiego.com/index.php?option=com_googlesearch_cse&n=30&Itemid=1320&cx=013678227439384630463%3Ahppbq4mmxui&cof=FORID%3A11&ie=ISO-8859-1&hl=en&q=Old+Globe+Theatre) (http://www.sandiego.com/index.php?option=com_googlesearch_cse&n=30&Itemid=1320&cx=013678227439384630463%3Ahppbq4mmxui&cof=FORID%3A11&ie=ISO-8859-1&hl=en&q=Old+Globe+Theatre), [Balboa Park](http://www.sandiego.com/index.php?option=com_googlesearch_cse&n=30&Itemid=1320&cx=013678227439384630463%3Ahppbq4mmxui&cof=FORID%3A11&ie=ISO-8859-1&hl=en&q=Balboa+Park) (http://www.sandiego.com/index.php?option=com_googlesearch_cse&n=30&Itemid=1320&cx=013678227439384630463%3Ahppbq4mmxui&cof=FORID%3A11&ie=ISO-8859-1&hl=en&q=Balboa+Park), [Rafta Rafta](http://www.sandiego.com/index.php?option=com_googlesearch_cse&n=30&Itemid=1320&cx=013678227439384630463%3Ahppbq4mmxui&cof=FORID%3A11&ie=ISO-8859-1&hl=en&q=Rafta+Rafta) (http://www.sandiego.com/index.php?option=com_googlesearch_cse&n=30&Itemid=1320&cx=013678227439384630463%3Ahppbq4mmxui&cof=FORID%3A11&ie=ISO-8859-1&hl=en&q=Rafta+Rafta)

There's no denying the cultural vitality of India's popular art. From Satyajit Ray's APU TRILOGY to the jubilant excesses of Bollywood musicals, the country's influence is exploding around the world.

Judging from *RAFTA, RAFTA...*, a domestic comedy of sorts now at the Old Globe Theatre, there's also an Indian tradition of puerile banality which matches up solidly with the world mainstream of trashy broad comedy, regardless of ethnicity.

Or perhaps it's the Brits who are to blame here. Ayub Khan-Din's play reportedly was a big hit in the UK, which doesn't excuse the Globe for doing it but does suggest what may have clouded our management's usually dependable judgment. Remember BOEING-BOEING, booked here as a result of London success?

Certainly there are British fingerprints all over the piece. After a delightful opening scene of an ethnic wedding, with

marvelous movement and music –

thanks to Reetu Patel and Mark Danisovszky, respectively – the wedding party retires to a dismal tract house and starts broadening the vowels and flinging around the “bloodies.” The tradition may be Indian but this suburban ghetto is English.

Thus is rendered much of the dialogue unintelligible, with two accents fighting for American ears and the amplification none too pushy.

But sparkling repartee is not Khan-Din's preoccupation here. (The level of wit peaked early for me, when a mother urged her kids: “Eat! People are starving in India.”) Instead, he's looking for the warm and fuzzy payoff that finally vanquishes the dirty joke hovering in the background at all weddings: sexual consummation.

The universal convention is that a young couple will survive all the stresses, the innuendoes, the supposedly friendly hazing and start a happy life together. What *Rafta* offers is a situation so filled with traps and jerks that the couple hasn't a chance. Until – awwwwww... – nature takes its course.

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Mahira Kakkar and Rachid Sabitri in the Old Globe Theatre's

RAFTA, RAFTA... (1 of 8) [VIEW PHOTOS](http://www.sandiego.com/photo-feature/arts-and-theatre/rafta-rafta) (http://www.sandiego.com/photo-feature/arts-and-theatre/rafta-rafta)

Henry DiRocco photo

(http://www.sandiego.com/photo-feature/arts-and-theatre/rafta-rafta)

They don't go on a wedding trip, just up the stairs to the bedroom sharing a toilet with his parents. There's a creepy younger brother with a leer; a pompous little father-of-the-bride all too close to his only child; her frigid, snobby mother; a bunch a skinny, snickering friends; and maybe a bit too much to drink.

But the real disaster is the groom's father, a loud, swaggering bully who is too busy with self-love to notice that this party isn't about him. According to the traditions of this creaky old plot, Dad has a heart of gold under that rough exterior and, after we all share fond chuckles at his gaucheries, he comes through for the kids.

Well, sorry. This lout doesn't deserve my sympathy no matter how hard he worked to make a life in a foreign clime yada, yada, yada. As the pushy macho parent of a lad who prefers reading and classical music over male strutting, he's bent the sapling too cruelly for it to recover. That's why he's reduced to showing his money as the curtain falls.

Mahira Kakkar is sweetly appealing as the bride, Geeta Citygirl Chopra steadies every scene as the boy's mother, Nasser Faris and Gita Reddy are plausible as the bride's parents and Caralyn Kozlowski has nice moments as a worldly friend.

But Rachid Sabitri never finds a handle for the meager role of the tormented young groom. And Kamal Marayati makes the impossible father even worse than he's written, somehow squeezing together decades of bad comedy habits into a sitcom hell with an inscrutable British/Indian accent.

Director Jonathan Silverstein had little choice but to stand back and let 'em rip. His attempt to sweeten the show with that lovely movement prologue and a lively set of choreographed, confetti-ed bows is as brave as it is pathetic.

Not the least of his trouble is the clumsy construction of the play. Everything must fit into this one set – more sitcom echoes – so all of life's key moments must be herded into this single pen and the doorbell becomes another character. It's a problem that defeats set designer Alexander Dodge. The cabinets look empty, the furniture looks crowded and the dummy wall between kitchen and living room finally just gets ignored. So Dodge takes a trick from the director and makes the edges of the set, and a pom-pom drop, look terrific under Lap Chi Chu's sorbet lighting. Costumes? Christal Weatherly's Indian bits are juicy, the rest about what the script deserves.

Which, as I say, isn't much.

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The Details

Category	Arts (http://www.sandiego.com/arts-and-theatre)
Dates	7 p.m. Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays; 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays through April 24, 2011.
Organization	The Old Globe Theatre
Phone	619-234-5623
Production Type	Play (http://www.sandiego.com/related/production-type/play)
Region	Balboa Park (http://www.sandiego.com/related/region/balboa-park)
Ticket Prices	\$29-\$85
URL	www.theoldglobe.org
Venue	Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park, San Diego

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Playwright Ayub Khan-Din takes an insightful comedic look at two British South Asian families in his delightful, cross-cultural comedy *Rafta, Rafta...* The 2008 Olivier Award winner for Best New Comedy, *Rafta, Rafta...* now gets its West Coast Premiere in a vibrant, colorful production at San Diego's Old Globe Theatre.

Based on Bill Naughton's 1963 play *All In Good Time* (filmed in 1966 as *The Family Way*), *Rafta, Rafta...* ("slowly, slowly..." in Hindi) focuses on newlywed couple Atul Dutt and Vina Patel, their Indian-born parents, and assorted friends and family members.

Though Bolton-born-and-raised Atul and Vina have married for love (unlike the previous generation's arranged marriages), in one significant way they are more like their parents than their Anglo-Saxon counterparts. Despite having done their fair amount of pre-marital fooling around, Vina has remained a virgin till her wedding night.

And herein lies the crux of both Naughton's mid-'60s play and Khan-Din's '00s adaptation. Even six weeks after their wedding day, the young couple's marriage remains unconsummated, and despite their best efforts, it remains hard (or not so hard as the case may be) for the groom to get it up.

Secrets like this one rarely remain secrets for long, Vina's naïve post-confession plea to her mom ("Promise you won't tell anyone?") a virtual guarantee that the Indian grapevine will soon be abuzz. Before long Atul's parents and Vina's father have also become privy to their offspring's embarrassing state of affairs, as have Atul's younger brother Jai, his boss Jivaj and Jivaj's Anglo wife Molly, and his buddy Etash, putting even more pressure on the newlyweds to move past third base into home run territory.

The improbability of most contemporary English brides still being "intact" on their wedding night would likely make a 2011 revival of Naughton's original play a period piece at best and at worst, simply too dated to succeed in the more sexually permissive new millennium. On the other hand, the more tradition-bound Indian culture that surrounds Atul and Vina even in 21st Century Bolton makes *Rafta, Rafta...* not only absolutely credible but particularly fascinating to Western audiences, especially to Americans unfamiliar with British Indian ways.

Still, as director Jonathan Silverstein points out in his director's note, we humans are more alike than unlike, and regardless of ethnicity, we all can chuckle at a father who can't help putting his foot in his mouth or a wife who doesn't understand her husband's need to spread a particular condiment on whatever he eats. Likewise a mother who envies and resents her daughter's closeness with her father is as universal as how the revelation of long suppressed family secrets can reopen old wounds.

Playwright Khan-Din paints characters as colorful as the vivid hues of Christal Weatherly's gorgeous Technicolor costumes, with a splendid cast of mostly South Asian actors giving richly textured performances under Silverstein's sharp, perceptive direction. Geeta Citygirl Chopra (Atul's mother), Amir Darvish (Atul's boss), Nasser Faris (Vina's father), Ariya Ghaharamani (Atul's brother), Mahira Kakkar (Vina), StageSceneLA Award-winner Caralyn Kozlowski (Amir's boss's wife), Kamal Marayati (Atul's father), Gita Reddy (Vina's mother), Rachid Sabitri (Atul), and Shalin Agarwal (Atul's friend) sparkle and sizzle, each and every one. In particular, native Brit Sabitri (last seen in *La Mirada* in *The Tale Of The Allergist's Wife*) combines

the kind of leading man charm and first-rate comedic chops that ought to gain him mainstream romantic leads. Marayati, who stepped into the role of Eeshwar at the last minute, deserves special applause for a nearly flawless Opening Night performance.

Rafta, Rafta... at the Globe is bookended by a pair of infectious bhangra dance numbers choreographed by movement consultant Reetu Patel. Scenic designer Alexander Dodge's stunning two-story four room middle class Bolton home fills every inch of the Old Globe's big proscenium, with Lap Chi Chu's expert lighting not only clueing us into to the time of day but focusing attention on whichever room(s) the action is taking place in. Paul Peterson's sound design is equally fine at setting just the right moods. Kudos go also to dialect coach Gillian Lane-Plescia and music consultant Mark Danisovksy. Diana Moser is stage manager. Casting is by Samantha Barrie, CSA.



With the South African thriller Groundswell playing next door at the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, The Old Globe is the place to be for those craving a trip abroad at minimum expense ... and what's more, no passport or pat-down is required.

Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park, San Diego.

[Click here](#) for current performance schedule, closing date, and reservation line.

www.oldglobe.org

--Steven Stanley

March 27, 2011

Photos: Henry DiRocco

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THEATER REVIEW: Globe's 'Rafta, Rafta' is funny but uneven

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THEATER REVIEW: Globe's 'Rafta, Rafta' is funny but uneven

By ANNE MARIE WELSH - For the North County Times North County Times - The Californian | Posted: Wednesday, March 30, 2011 1:53 pm | No Comments Posted | Print

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The cast of "Rafta, Rafta..." at The Old Globe. Photo courtesy of Henry DiRocco

"Rafta, Rafta ...," a comedy about immigrant Indian family life, proved a popular hit for playwright Ayub Khan-Din at London's National Theatre four years ago.

At the Old Globe on Sunday, despite several good performances and much laughter and poignancy, the comedy split in two. Though the title translates from Hindi as "slowly, slowly," the first act felt interminable, riddled with dead spots and lurching pauses between moments when the characters engaged or elicited laughter of the sort familiar from cozy TV sit-coms.

Act 2, by contrast, moved at a sprightly if still measured pace, as the two sets of Indian parents whose children have married recall their own newly wedded travails and learn how to back off yet support the growth of the next generation.

As Khan-Din explains in a Globe program note, he adapted the plot of "Rafta, Rafta ..." from a 1960s comedy by Bill Naughton, "All in Good Time." He transposes the story of newlyweds whose marriage remains unconsummated six weeks after the wedding to a blue-collar immigrant neighborhood of Bolton, four hours north of London.

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"Rafta, Rafta ... "

When: 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays; 7 p.m. Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays; through April 24

Where: The Old Globe, Balboa Park, 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego

Tickets: \$29-\$67

Info: 619-234-5623

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'Rafta, Rafta' is funny but uneven

BY ANNE MARIE WELSH
 For the North County Times

"Rafta, Rafta ...," a comedy about immigrant Indian family life, proved a popular hit for playwright Ayub Khan-Din at London's National Theatre four years ago.

At the Old Globe on Sunday, despite several good performances and much laughter and poignancy, the comedy split in two. Though the title translates from Hindi as "slowly, slowly," the first act felt interminable, riddled with dead spots and lurching pauses between moments when the characters engaged or elicited laughter of the sort familiar from cozy TV sit-coms.

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The cast of "Rafta, Rafta ..." at The Old Globe.

Courtesy of Henry DiRocco

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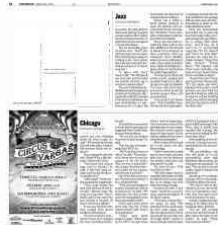
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Old Globe Theatre

March 31, 2011

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THEATER REVIEW

'Rafta, Rafta' is funny but uneven

BY ANNE MARIE WELSH

For The Californian

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Theater review: 'Rafta, Rafta ...' at the Old Globe in San Diego

March 31, 2011 | 6:30 pm

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The familiar contours of countless domestic comedies get a curried shake-up in "Rafta, Rafta ..." at [the Old Globe](#) in San Diego. This West Coast premiere of Ayub Khan-Din's 2007 British hit about young Indian newlyweds living with the groom's family is hardly fresh, despite major *bhangra* gyrations to convince the audience otherwise.

It starts promisingly as a festive wedding party, costumed by designer Christal Weatherly, gleefully traipses down the aisle,



welcoming us en route. After a compressed ceremony before Alexander Dodge's pink-and-orange-flowered show curtain, the celebrants proceed onto his serviceable but under-detailed set.

Welcome to the Dutt domicile in Bolton, England, where sensitive eldest son Atul (Rachid Sabitri) brings bride Vina (Mahira Kakkar) in lieu of a honeymoon. Lopa (Geeta Citygirl Chopra), Atul's acerbic mother, is the household's engine; Eeshwar (Kamal Marayati), her bluffly tyrannical husband, is its overlord. Younger son Jai (Ariya Ghahramani) represents the assimilated next generation.

Their immigrant turned middle class status contrasts with Vina's upscale parents, overly paternal Laxman Patel (Nasser Faris) and politely tight-lipped wife Lata (Gita Reddy). Atul's cinema-manager employer (Amir Darvish), his hip English spouse (Caralyn Kozlowski) and Atul's assistant projectionist (Shalin Agarwal) complete the play's slate of archetypes, er, characters.

Even with the Hindi and digital age terms that author Khan-Din ladles onto his source -- Bill Naughton's 1963 boulevardier "All in Good Time" -- "Rafta" labors under a dated, conventional premise. After Atul and Vina's disastrous wedding night, it's clear that the proximity of his clan, particularly Dad, prohibits consummation of their sexual congress. Six weeks later, Vina remains a virgin, Atul faces suspicions of being gay and their kin are akimbo. Of course, all leads to an intended heart-tugging happy resolution and Bollywood-style curtain call.

Director Jonathan Silverstein stages the calculated clashes and lowbrow humor as straightforwardly as possible. Makkar's charming bride and Chopra's zinger-ready matriarch are the standouts of a competent, hardworking cast, although Sabitri's groom and Marayati's paterfamilias are still finding their rhythms, the least of this bland tandoori's liabilities. That "Rafta, Rafta ..." won the Olivier Award suggests 2007 was a skimpy year for comedies in London. Undemanding patrons may enjoy its sitcom turns, but the titular translation -- "Slowly, Slowly" -- is, alas, truth in advertising.

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-- David C. Nichols in San Diego

"Rafta, Rafta ...," [Old Globe Theatre](#), 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego. 7 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 8 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays, 2 and 8 p.m. Saturdays, 2 and 7 p.m. Sundays. Also 2 p.m. April 13, no matinee April 16. Ends April 24. \$29-\$85. (619) 23-GLOBE or www.TheOldGlobe.org. Running time: 2 hours, 20 minutes.

Photo: A scene from "Rafta, Rafta ..." with Gita Reddy, from left, Geeta Citygirl Chopra, Mahira Kakkar, Caralyn Kozlowski, Kamal Marayati, Ariya Ghahramani. On floor - Rachid Sabitri. Credit: Henry DiRocco.

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Page 1 of 1

Indian spicing to familiar tale

The Old Globe's
'Rafta, Rafta ...'
updates a 1963 British
family comedy.

DAVID C. NICHOLS
FROM SAN DIEGO

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Dated premise

Their immigrant-turned-middle-class status contrasts with Vima's upscale parents, overly paternal Laxman Patel (Nasser Faris) and politely tight-lipped wife Lata (Olga Reddy). Atul's cinema-manager employer (Amir Darvish), his hip English spouse (Caralyn Kodowski) and Atul's assistant projectionist (Shalin Agarwal) complete the play's slate of archetypes, er, characters.

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PATRIARCH: Kamal Marayati, foreground, as the head of household.

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Award winner

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'Rafta, Rafta ...'

Where: Old Globe Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego

When: 7 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 8 p.m.

Thursdays and Fridays, 2 and 8 p.m. Saturdays, 2

and 7 p.m. Sundays. Also 2 p.m. April 13, no matinee

April 16. Ends April 24.

Tickets: \$29 to \$85

Information: (619) 23-GLOBE or

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Running time: 2 hours, 20 minutes.

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Rafta, Rafta

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Old Globe Theatre

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Two generations of immigrants from India cluster around an unconsummated marriage in Ayub Khan-Din's (no-) sex comedy, set in Bolton, England. The premise shows promise: talk of assimilation and differences (smartly depicted in Christal Weatherly's multi-cultural costumes); traditional customs observed, dances and games enacted. But the play settles for easy laughs and a climax that, figuratively and literally, happens off stage. The Old Globe production, often too brightly lit, sports some fine performances, especially Geeta Citygirl Chopra (who obviously could do much more than she's given), though Kamal Marayati, a late cast change, had timing troubles and threw scenes off rhythm. *Rafta, Rafta*, "slowly, slowly" in Urdu, has interesting moments. The rest is sitcom.

March 24 through April 24

When:

Sundays at 2 p.m.
Sundays at 7 p.m.
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Wednesdays at 7 p.m.
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Out West Arts

Into the Diaspora

April 05, 2011



The cast of *Rafta, Rafta...* Photo: Henry DiRocco 2011

The Old Globe in San Diego officially opened performances of Ayub Khan-Din's comedy *Rafta, Rafta...* last weekend after some unexpected cast changes for the play's West Coast premiere. The play originated at Britain's National Theater in 2007 where it was a big success and had a well-received Off Broadway run in New York the following year. The play is a fairly faithful adaptation of a much older one, Bill Naughton's *All in Good Time* from 1963, which was later turned into a 1966 film version entitled *The Family Way* starring John and Hayley Mills. The story concerns a young newlywed couple who elect to move into the home of the groom's parents for economic reasons. Soon, however, they are confronted with his inability to consummate the marriage, which in short order becomes public knowledge in the households of both families in a small working class British community. And while this may sound old fashioned for source material of a contemporary revival, Khan-Din's interest in recasting all the characters as part of a South Asian community in contemporary Britain provides an interesting and modern twist. For a community that still prizes interpersonal behavior and values that may seem somewhat antiquated in the larger Anglo majority society, the travails of Naughton's original play make sense in a new context.

The humor and melodrama here is genteel, but there are a number of genuine laughs throughout *Rafta, Rafta...* Kamal Marayati, who took over the role of Eeshwar Dutt well into the play's rehearsals in San Diego, is winning as the magnetic head of the blue-collar Dutt clan whose son Atul, played by Rachid Sabitri, has just wed Vina Patel, played here by Mahira Kakkar. Atul's belittlement by his father is a constant sore spot for his mother, Lopa Dutt, played by Geeta Citygirl Chopra in one of the standout

performances in this excellent ensemble cast. Vina's parents, Laxman and Lata, played by Nasser Faris and Gita Reddy respectively, come from a somewhat higher economic echelon, but their family dynamics tie the Patels closely to the Dutts independently of their children's marriage. This is not a play that turns on shocking revelations or big set pieces and director Jonathan Silverstein keeps the energy level of the cast high without letting it overwork the material. *Rafta, Rafta...* does recall a more straight forward approach to its emotional content even if some of the sexual politics the story turns on may be stale even for this particular group of characters in this particular community. Perhaps a broader concern for *Rafta, Rafta...* in this outing, though, is how well its story translates to American audiences. Sure there are plenty of laughs, but for everyone that lands, there appear to be another that misses the mark due to particulars of the British working class life and the large community of immigrant South Asians in Britain. And while the South Asian diaspora reaches into the Southern California fabric as much as it does the British one, jokes about honeymoons in Blackpool and the sort may have more bite on the other side of the Atlantic. But there are still plenty of laughs that do make an invitation to this particular wedding party one worth attending. *Rafta, Rafta...* runs through April 24 at The Old Globe in San Diego.

Labels: [Old Globe Theater](#), [Out of Town Theater Reviews](#)

posted by Brian | 4/05/2011 12:14:00 AM



A man in a purple and gold outfit with a rainbow scarf dances on a wooden table, surrounded by three other men in suits and traditional attire.

4/13/2011 2:25 PM



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Page 1 of 2

Laughter spills all through the Old Globe's 'Rafta' Rafta'



Let's Review

BY DIANA SAENGER

The gales of laughter hailing from the Old Globe Theatre are coming from audiences enjoying the West Coast premiere of "Rafta, Rafta," on-stage through April 24.

The 2008 Olivier Award-winning comedy by Ayub Khan-Din brings Indian family traditions forefront when a recently married couple must live with the groom's family. The British play examines what happens when a young couple must choose between saving money or their marriage ...

... The Dutt family migrated to England years ago. The play opens as the wedding of second-generation son Atul Dutt (Rachid Sabi-

If you go

- **What:** 'Rafta, Rafta'
- **Where:** The Old Globe Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park
- **When:** 7 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays; 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays; 2 and 7 p.m. Sundays, through April 24
- **Tickets:** \$29-\$85
- **Phone:** (619) 23-GLOBE
- **Website:** TheOldGlobe.org

tri) and Vina Patel (Mahira Kakkar) is about to take place. Merriment and dancing fill the stage until it's time for the evening to wind down.

At the Dutt home, both sets of parents are anxious to let their children retreat to their room, which happens to be located right across the hall from Atul's parents Eeshwar (Kamal Marayati) and Lopa (Geeta Citygirl Chopra), and his brother Jai



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Vina (Mahira Kakkar) and Atul (Rachid Sabitri) dance at their wedding.



The families of the bride and groom celebrate in 'Rafta, Rafta,' playing at the Old Globe Theatre. PHOTOS BY HENRY DIROCCO

(Ariya Ghahramani).

But before the "send-off," the women congregate in the kitchen where Vina begs her mother Lata (Gita Reddy) to quit talking about sex while in the living room, Eeshwar wants to party.

As the girls re-enter it's soon apparent that Eeshwar and Atul don't get along. Eeshwar says what he thinks and acts out his thoughts while Atul is quiet, reserved, shy. When Eeshwar has too

much to drink and falls down, the newlyweds bid farewell to their parents and head upstairs.

Although Atul takes steps to make the room romantic while Vina changes, the wedding night is a disaster because Atul can't consummate the marriage. Vina, of course, is so perplexed she spills the beans to her mother, and soon everyone knows Vina remains a virgin after weeks of marriage.

As the families get to know one another and try to help the newlyweds as best they can, personalities flare. Lata keeps a tight rein on Eeshwar, Vina chastises her mother for babbling, her father Laxman (Nasser Faris) tries to hold on to his daughter, and Jai becomes moon-eyed over Vina, too.

The play, directed by Jonathan Silverstein, is filled with music and funny one-liners, and the characters

are easy to like — even the crazy Molly (Carolyn Kozlowski). On the downside, trying to deliver lines in an Indian dialect with a British accent is difficult and many words spoken were missed, dulling some conversations.

Despite the troubled accents, "Rafta, Rafta" is a fun time with a simple story that requires little work to understand. It takes even less work to really enjoy it and have a good time.



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Let's Review: Laughter spills all through 'Rafta, Rafta'— a gem of a comedy playing at the Old Globe

By Diana Saenger

The gales of laughter hailing from the Old Globe Theatre are coming from audiences enjoying the West Coast premiere of "Rafta, Rafta," onstage through April 24. The 2008 Olivier Award-winning comedy by Ayub Khan-Din brings Indian family traditions forefront when a recently married couple must live with the groom's family. The British play examines what happens when a young couple must choose between saving money or their marriage ...



The families of the bride and groom celebrate in 'Rafta, Rafta,' playing at the Old Globe Theatre. Henry DiRocco

... The Dutt family migrated to England years ago. The play opens as the wedding of second-generation son Atul Dutt (Rachid Sabitri) and Vina Patel (Mahira Kakkar) is about to take place. Merriment and dancing fill the stage until it's time for the evening to wind down.

At the Dutt home, both sets of parents are anxious to let their children retreat to their room, which happens to be located right across the hall from Atul's parents Eeshwar (Kamal Marayati) and Lopa (Geeta Citygirl Chopra), and his brother Jai (Ariya Ghahramani).

But before the "send-off," the women congregate in the kitchen where Vina begs her mother Lata (Gita Reddy) to quit talking about sex while in the living room, Eeshwar wants to party.

As the girls re-enter it's soon apparent that Eeshar and Atul don't get along. Eeshwar says what he thinks and acts out his thoughts while Atul is quiet, reserved, shy. When Eeshwar has too much to drink and falls down, the newlyweds bid farewell to their parents and head upstairs.

Although Atul takes steps to make the room romantic while Vina changes, the wedding night is a disaster because Atul can't consummate the marriage. Vina, of course, is so perplexed she spills the beans to her mother, and soon everyone knows Vina remains a virgin after weeks of marriage.

As the families get to know one another and try to help the newlyweds as best they can, personalities flare. Lata keeps a tight rein on Eeshwar, Vina chastises her mother for babbling, her father Laxman (Nasser Faris) tries to hold on to his daughter, and Jai becomes moon-eyed over Vina, too.

The play, directed by Jonathan Silverstein, is filled with music and funny one-liners, and the characters are easy to like — even the crazy Molly (Carolyn Kozlowski). On the downside, trying to deliver lines in an Indian dialect with a British accent is difficult and many words spoken were missed, dulling some conversations.



Vina (Mahira Kakkar) and Atul (Rachid Sabitri) dance at their wedding. Henry DiRocco

Despite the troubled accents, "Rafta, Rafta" is a fun time with a simple story that requires little work to understand. It takes even less work to really enjoy it and have a good time.

If you go

What: “Rafta, Rafta”

Where: The Old Globe Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park

When: 7 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays; 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays; 2 and 7 p.m. Sundays, through April 24

Tickets: \$29-\$85

Box Office: (619) 23-GLOBE

Website: TheOldGlobe.org

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Comments by

ABOUT ME

New Older Woman

San Diego, California, United States

Is a name I gave myself when I was young old. My real name is Charlene Baldridge. My writing partner is Brenda. She writes what I dare not. I am a member of the San Diego Theatre Critics Circle and write for numerous publications regionally and nationally.

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 2011

Rafta, Rafta, Or, Foxfire, PWP, Rosenkavalier

Whew!

An East Indian family fighting cultural changes and impotence in the UK, a *menage a trois* in Restoration England, an aged widow in a changing Appalachia, two plays by 18-year-olds, and Hugo von Hoffmannsthal's *tristesse* romance in Vienna -- Add to all that a brilliant lecture last night at Lamb's Player's Theatre, delivered by Walter Wangerin, author of the fantasy *The Book of the Dun Cow*, which I see Friday night in Coronado as newly produced. No wonder I'm exhausted!

Comedy at Globe

Playing at the Old Globe Theatre through April 24, Ayub Kahn-Din's two-act comedy, *Rafta, Rafta* is set in Bolton, UK (about 175 miles from London) and concerns two East Indian families united by marriage.

The action takes place in the home of Eeshwar Dutt (**Kamal Maravati**), a self-made man who immigrated to England as a young man, along with his (unseen but much discussed) friend Briyesh. Penniless, the young men found jobs in manufacturing, sent all their money to families in India, and eventually were able to send for Eeshwar's wife, Lopa (**Geeta Citygirl Chopra**). The couple has two sons, 22-year-old Atul (**Rachid Sabitri**) and 18-year-old Jai (**Ariya Ghahramani**).

When the action begins, Atul has just wed Vina Patel (**Mahira Kakkar**), only child of Laxman Patel (**Nasser Faris**) and his wife, Lata (**Gita Reddy**), who is somewhat disapproving of the extremely close relationship of father and daughter.



(from left) Ariya Ghahramani, Shalin Agarwal, Kamal Maravati and Amir Darvish.
Photo Henry DiRocco

On the other hand, the senior Dutt is disdainful of Atul, who is a film projectionist at the Bollywood-film cinema nearby. Atul is much prefers the company of his mother, who is in turn exceptionally disdainful of her husband one moment and springs to his defense the next.

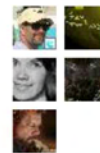
Other post-wedding-reception guests are the Bhatt's. Jivaj (**Amir Darvish**), who is Atul's boss, his English wife Molly (**Caralyn Koslowski**) and Etash Tailor (**Shalin Agarwal**), Etlul's co-worker.

That's a dizzying array of characters in any set-up scene, and added to the confusion of so many people, and trying to figure out who they are, is their diversity of accents, pure East Indian, northern-England tinged East Indian, and, in Molly's case, northern England.

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Once the play settles down to more intimate scenes, the plot begins to involve onlookers; however, that takes a long time.

Henry DiRocco

In brief, Atul is sensitive and shy. For instance he chooses Samuel Barber's "Adagio for Strings" to accompany the nuptial night lovemaking. Because he and Vina are so young, they are living with the Dutts until they can afford their own place. The dilemma and the recurring joke is this: there is no privacy whatsoever and after six weeks, Vina is still a virgin. The truth comes out, implications abound, insinuations are made, and as a result the secrets of the elder generation are exposed, and one – the most touching of all – in the play's last few moments.



Geeta Citygirl Chopra Photo: Henry DiRocco

Outstanding in the company are Marvati as the arrogant Dutt patriarch and Chopra as his self-martyred and not entirely blameless wife. The play is exceptionally funny, insightful into the family lives of East Indians (it helps to have experienced these dynamics), and more than likely extra funny to those with an interest in Bollywood films and film stars. The best, funniest and most poignant scene belongs to Chopra as she recounts the Dutts' oddball honeymoon, on which the mysterious Briyesh was their companion.

The piece is based upon Bill Naughton's play, *All in Good Time*. It is directed by Jonathan Silverstein with astonishing set and lighting by Alexander Dodge and Lap Chi Chu, respectively. Christal Weatherly creates appropriate costumes. Paul Peterson is sound designer.

Rating: Three Burgoos

Info: www.theoldglobe.org or (619) 23-GLOBE

A little bit historical, Or, a little bit hysterical

As 17th century playwright Aphra Behn says in 21st century playwright Liz Duffy Adams' 2009 comedy titled *Or*, the word "or" does more to divide than to link.

As played by **Jo Anne Glover**, **David McBean** and **Jacque Wilke**, Behn and those in her orbit are united in scandalous ways. Glover inhabits Behn, touted as the first female who made her living as a writer. She was also a spy for King Charles II, who did not pay her, resulting in her incarceration in debtor's prison where the play begins. While Glover portrays only Behn, McBean plays the king, Behn's Jailer, and her former lover, William Scot (sometimes spelled Scott) also a spy. Wilke plays famous Restoration actor Nell Gwynne, Behn's servant, Maria, and Lady Davenant, an arts patron.

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SAN DIEGO: Rafta, Rafta... at the Old Globe

Posted by: **BillEadie** 01:21 am EDT 04/13/11

Rafta, Rafta... won the 2008 Olivier Award for Best Comedy, and it's hard to tell why in Jonathan Silverstein's production for the Old Globe. I can only venture a guess: the Brits do have a different sense of humor about sex, and this domestic sit com has sex (or the lack of same) as its centerpiece.

Atul (Rachid Sabitri) has married Vina (Mahira Kakkar), and they've moved in with Atul's family. In a kind of pressure cooker surrounded by Mama (Geeta Citygirl Chopra), Papa (Kamal Marayati) and pesky brother Jai (Ariya Ghahramani), Atul discovers that he has trouble consummating the marriage. At first Vina just tries to be patient, but eventually she spills the beans to her mother (Gita Reddy) and father (Nasser Faris) and it all breaks loose.

Ayub Khan-Din's play has its share of laughs, particularly when the two sets of parents get together for a scene out of *God of Carnage*, but there's never really any doubt about how the story will turn out.

Nothing wrong with the Globe's production. Alexander Dodge's multi-level set provides appropriate playing spaces, and Lap Chi Chu is quickly becoming the go-to lighting designer for San Diego's top companies. Nothing wrong with the actors, either. Perhaps it was more of a novelty in 2008 London to see a company of Indian actors playing non-exotic roles. In any case, despite all it has going for it, *Rafta, Rafta...* never really satisfies. It runs through Sunday, April 24.

Bill, in San Diego

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“ Rafta Rafta ”



by Robert Hampton

Rafta, Rafta (written by **Ayub Khan-Din**), the British comedy/drama now playing at the **Old Globe**, runs until April 24, 2011. The story is about the relationships of a working class Indian Family living in England. The story is set in current times.

Rafta, Rafta means *slowly, slowly*.



The eldest son - Atul (**Rachid Sabitri**) has taken a bride and the story starts at the wedding reception. Everyone is quite jolly until the groom's father - Eeshwar (**Kamal Marayati**) starts ribbing his son for not drinking liquor (*son prefers tea*), too not dancing the traditional male wedding dance. He even bests his son at arm wrestling, causing embarrassment in front of his bride Vina (**Mahira Kakkar**). Male egos run rampant (*both fathers and sons*) with the standard refrain of the mother - Lopa (**Geeta City girl Chopra**) having to run interference between the two, as in a television sit-com device.



ZERO IN on:

RAFTA RAFTA
Where: SD Old Globe Theatre
Performances: thru...April 15th
Tickets: \$ 29-75 - Tel: (619) 231-1941
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It was somewhat interesting to observe the psychodrama of the father/son relationship evolve into a mature, loving and normal realm. All this is done with a lot of humor and

comedy lines. Both father and son grow from this, but not without pain and a few laughs. A catharsis in the relationship comes about. Other scenes involve betrayal on the part of the bride, societal concerns over why the young man was unable to perform on his wedding night and beyond. The whole community seems to have joined in...with some nasty turns/comments and speculation. Yes, Viagra was brought up!

Early on REHEARSALS

That said, the set by **Alexander Dodge** was wonderful. A two story house sliced in half...the family; father, mother, younger brother and the newlyweds, all live in the same house, and



you can see what goes on in the living room and bedrooms at the same time. The costumes by **Christal Weatherly** were colorful, which were turbans, saris and Nehru type coats...the curtain was a series of chrysanthemum type balls hanging in strands.

Director **Jonathan Silverstein** kept the show at a lively pace. The story does hold ones attention, though is not totally satisfying, because its focus is centered on the consummation of the marriage issue. The father, portrayed by **Ranjit Chowdhry** appeared handsome and virile, with a pleasingly soft voice. The mother - **Geeta City girl Chopra** was likewise attractive, well groomed (*no sweats and tennis shoes here*) and with a few extra pounds - ala middle age. Both parents spoke with the charming Indian accent. The younger brother played by **Ariya Ghahramani** did a great job as the mischievous Jai Dutt, tall and lanky, with a mop of hair and a British accent. The son/husband and bride both spoke with British accents. Their comic portrays were right on. Kudos to voice coach **Gillian Lane-Plescia**.



The evening ended *Bollywood* style - with all players on stage in front of the curtain, dancing and rousing the audience to a state of clapping along with the music. This was a cheery ending, a highlight and plenty of fun. Music consultation was by award winning **Mark Danisovszky**. Future Old Globe productions include **August: OSAGE COUNTY** on 5/7-6/12th, and **LIFE of RILEY** (**Sheryl White Theatre**) on 4/30 - 6/5th. Call for reservations... (619) 231-1941.



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“RAFTA RAFTA” – The Old Globe, “...AND THEN I WROTE A SONG ABOUT IT” – Diversionary Theatre & “FOXFIRE” - Moonlight Stage Prod.

I see a lot of plays -- more than 200 a year. And sometimes, I just sit back and wonder: Why on earth was this piece chosen? Who could have thought it would be entertaining for San Diego audiences?

I thought that twice this past week, during two plodding productions, one large-scale, one small. They share a well-worn dramatic theme: sons who are disappointments to their fathers. There might be some new vein to mine on the subject – but it doesn't surface in “Rafta Rafta” at the Old Globe, or Diversionary Theatre's “...And Then I Wrote a Song About It.”

“Rafta” isn't deep or incisive or particularly funny, as it aims for low-end sex and fart humor. Like any sitcom, it should be played at a brisk clip. But director Jonathan Silverstein evidently took the play's title literally; in Hindi, it means, ‘slowly, slowly.’ His capable, if not stellar, cast lumbers along, dragging out a one-joke setup: the unconsummated marriage of a newlywed couple forced to live in the bustling, thin-walled house of the groom's parents.

Originally written about English class distinctions, the play was adapted by Ayub Khan-Din to apply to Indians living in London. It made a big splash on the West End; it barely causes a ripple here.

Same thing at Diversionary Theatre, where “...And Then I Wrote a Song About it” is billed as a “one-man musical whirlwind.” Talk about your false advertising! Nick Cearley, an amiable performer, is being asked to carry an entire show on his back. Obviously trying super-hard, he sags under the burden, even though the piece is feather-light, a rehash of gay life in the early Age of AIDS. The songs, by Daniel Acquisto and Sammy Buck, are pleasant if not memorable, but Cearley just doesn't have the chops for 80 minutes of singing, dancing and solo storytelling.

Fortunately, there were a couple of sweet highlights that took the bitter taste from my theatergoing mouth.

Moonlight Stage is presenting a charming production of “Foxfire,” set in Appalachia and featuring a live bluegrass band. Co-written in 1982 by acclaimed actor Hume Cronyn, for his equally celebrated wife, Jessica Tandy, it's all about aging, longevity, roots and moving on. The skillful ensemble is sensitively directed by Kathy Brombacher.

But the capper of the week was witnessing the rise of a genuine local superstar. In the Playwrights Project's 26th annual Plays by Young Writers, Dylan Hoffinger starred in the clever and whimsical comedy, “Trevor,” by Carlsbad native Ben Kelly, expertly directed by Ruff Yeager, with hilarious slides by Tom Christ. Fifteen year-old Hoffinger is a knockout – adorable, charismatic, rubber-faced funny and absolutely irresistible. Catch him at the Lyceum through Saturday; he'll knock your socks off – and make your week a better one, too!

Moonlight's production of “Foxfire” plays through April 10 at the Avo Theatre in Vista.

“And Then I Wrote A Song About It” also runs through April 10, at Diversionary Theatre in University Heights.

“Rafta Rafta” continues through April 24 at the Old Globe Theatre in Balboa Park.

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THEATER REVIEW: Old Globe's "Rafta, Rafta..." suffers from predictability

JEAN LOWERISON - SDGLN THEATER CRITIC
 April 12th, 2011

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Clashes – generational, marital and ethnic – are the topics of "Rafta, Rafta..." a plodding, predictable sitcom dressed up with British accents and spiffy East Indian costumes.

Playwright Ayub Khan-Din's show hit it big in London four years ago, winning the 2008 Olivier for best new comedy. Now it's crossed the pond and is at the Old Globe Theatre, where it plays through April 24.

The play opens with the wedding of a handsome young Indian couple in Bolton, a working-class suburb of Manchester. Atul Dutt (Rachid Sabitri) and Vina Patel (Mahira Kakkar, resplendent in a traditional red wedding dress) marry and move in with Atul's dad Eeshwar (Kamal Marayati) and mom Lopa (Geeta Citygirl Chopra).

That last is their first mistake. Aside from the obvious proximity problems, there's the generational communication gap: Atul and his dad have been talking at each other for years, but little real communication has taken place.

Eeshwar is old school – he and his best friend relocated to England as young men, where they struggled with socially-imposed discrimination born of differentness. But Eeshwar got a factory job, stayed there and built a life, and doesn't understand why Atul doesn't do likewise. He's mystified that his son's job count is already up to six.

In addition, though dad loves both Atul and his son Jai (Ariya Ghahramani), he is utterly unaware that his bull-in-a-china-shop approach is often hurtful. For example, a "friendly" post-wedding arm wrestling match results in a loss of face and unnecessary embarrassment for Atul.

Then, of course, there's the matter of, um, husbandly performance in such a setting. 'Nuff said.

We have a pair of meddling in-laws as well, and Chopra's long-suffering mom Lopa, who holds the disparate pieces of this thin plot together with sheer determination.

The young couple is charming and convincing as the young generation that wants to edge away from the traditions of the past.

Bless the actors, who work their hearts out, but the material just seems stale and dated.

Christal Weatherly's costumes do a good job of contrasting old and new. Alexander Dodge's dual-level set is lovely but looks more spacious than the script intends.

The show ends with a Bollywood finale that revives some of the sagging energy of the plot's predictability. But by then it's too late.

The details

"Rafta, Rafta..." plays through April 24 at the Old Globe Theatre in Balboa Park.

Tuesday and Wednesday at 7 p.m.; Thursday and Friday at 8 p.m.; Saturday at 2 and 8 p.m.; Sunday at 2 and 7 p.m.

For tickets, call (619) 23-GLOBE or visit [HERE](#).

ENLARGE



Photo credit: Henry DiRocco

Mahira Kakkar as Vina Patel and Rachid Sabitri as Atul Dutt in "Rafta, Rafta..." at The Old Globe.

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A Light Cultural Divertissement On View At The Old Globe

April 10, 2011 | Filed under: Jack Lyons | Posted by: BigDaddy



One of the tricky things about cultural assimilation is the unfamiliarity of the new culture and the overwhelming yearning and safety of the old one. In drama, this dichotomy can produce a wide range of emotions, resulting in interesting and insightful theatre. In comedy, the audience is asked to relate to the plight and the situation the characters find themselves in; all the while relishing the comedy possibilities presented by the playwright and actors.

In The Old Globe Theatre production of "Rafta, Rafta..." written by Ayub Khan-Din and directed by Jonathon Silverstein, the core values of British playwright Bill Naughton's highly successful 1965 comedy "All in Good Time", are still intact.

The strong Northern accents, so integral and necessary in the original play, are now replaced with lilting Indian accents and cadences. Does this updating and accent change, now set in 2011, alter the dynamic or lose anything in the updating of the cultural core story? No, not really. But, I'm sure the play resonates more with a British audience (the play won a 2008 Olivier Award for Best new comedy). And resonates even more with today's Indian/Asian audiences.

The comedy is set in the working-class town of Bolton, in Lancashire, and examines the story of marital difficulties within an immigrant family. Eeshwar Dutt (Kamal Marayati) is a first generation immigrant and patriarch of the family. He has a troubled relationship with his eldest son Atul (Rashid Sabitri), whose married life with Vina Patel (Makira Kakkar) has gotten off to a rocky start. The play deals with how the young couple and the their families set out to resolve the various conflicts. There are earnest performances turned in by Sabitri and Kakkar as the young couple, along with Geeta Citygirl Chopra as Lopa Dutt, Gita Reddy as Lata Patel, and Kamal Marayati as Eeshwar.

It's a simplistic TV sitcom-like tale, complete with the requisite clichéd characters: the leering younger brother, the wisecracking friends, and the befuddled parents of the young newly-weds. The humor in the play centers around the situations and reactions of the two prudish families who worry



over things that are, in the main, trivial and insignificant. For me, the larger question is: does the dated story hold up against the mores and lifestyle of the twenty first century? What was avant-garde dialogue a half century ago isn't all that bold or compellingly funny in today's world (not one "f- bomb" dropped in the entire show) American audiences might well ask themselves, "What's all the fuss about?"

The actors, however, are uniformly hardworking and do their best to draw us into their world of cultural apprehension where all the younger generation wants to do is fit into their birth country's society without alienating their old-country parents. It's an old and familiar plotline, which features appealing characters, but, alas, Khan-Din's story failed to fully engage me. However, it did not fail to engage the audience the evening I attended. They were extremely responsive. They laughed in all the right spots and had a wonderful time.

The Old Globe has few equals when it comes to technical credits. Visually, Alexander Dodge's set sparkled, and his two-story design was very functional, allowing the actors ample room to roam and even dance (one of more energetic spots in the production). Christal Weatherly's costumes were eye-popping for the ladies, and appropriately conservative for the older men.

The curtain call for the show is a toe tapping, Bollywood-style series of moves, rhythms, and a beat that gets the entire audience chanting, clapping and fully involved. Perhaps, the production curtain call should begin the show as the opening?

"Rafta, Rafta..." runs through April 24, 2011.



Photos by Henry DiRocco

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Photos by Henry DiRocco

By Ayub Khan-Din Directed by Jonathan Silverstein -WEST COAST PREMIERE

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Lata Patel

Gita Reddy

Atul Dutt

Rachid Sabitri

Playwright

Ayub Khan-Din

Director

Jonathan Silverstein

Scenic Design

Alexander Dodge

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Christal Weatherly

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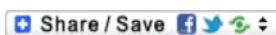
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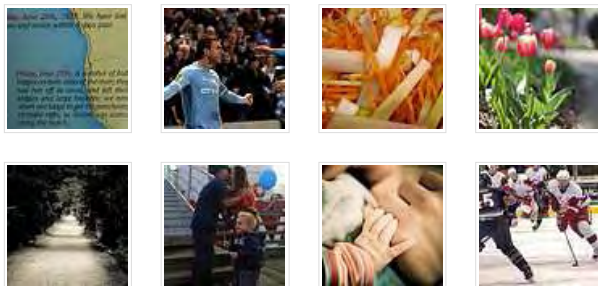
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Theatre Scene: A truly uninspired family comedy

Posted by [admin](#) on 4/08/11 • Categorized as [Arts/Entertainment, Theater](#)



(l to r) Mahira Kakkar, Caralyn Kozlowski, Geeta Citygirl Chopra and Gita Reddy in "Rafta, Rafta... ." (Courtesy Henry DiRocco)

"Rafta, Rafta..."

Through April 24

Old Globe Theatre

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By Cuauhtémoc Kish | Theatre critic

Director Jonathan Silverstein must have taken the Urdu translation of the play's title ("slowly, slowly") to heart, because Ayub Khan-Din's "Rafta, Rafta..." playing at the Old Globe Theatre through April 24, is nothing more than a plodding, uninspired rehash of family sitcoms from the past.

Silverstein never quite found the pace and rhythm that allowed this comedy to enjoy favorable criticism in both London as well as New York. I, for one, am struck with the fact that this play was the winner of the 2008 Olivier Award for Best New Comedy. The writing, based upon the 1963 Bill Naughton work, "All In Good Time," is mired in cliché and offers only used and threadbare, literary goods.

Kamal Marayati (Eeshwar Dutt) brought in to replace the ailing Ranjit Chowdhry late in pre-production, was still fumbling over lines when I reviewed this production on March 29. The cast seemed overly subdued, seeming to await lines that were late in arrival or were lost altogether. This lent itself to a less-than-stellar production akin to the level of a mediocre community theatre production.

Khan-Din's storyline is simple and straightforward: Eeshwar and Lopa (Geeta Citygirl Chopra) Dutt extend the hospitality of their home to their newlywed son and daughter-in-law, Atul (Rachid Sabitri) and Vina Patel (Mahira Kakkar), until they can afford to move out on their own. In the meantime the newly married couple struggle for the right moment to consummate their relationship. It is within this frustrating, claustrophobic atmosphere that insinuations and accusations are elevated against many of the family members, most dealing with a failure to connect: father to son, mother to daughter, husband to wife.

Sabitri and Kakkar play sweet, then sour, as the play progresses, doing the best they can with their assigned dialogue. The same goes for the other cast members. Chopra and Nassar Faris (Laxman Patel), playing the part of Vina's father, try hard to elevate the comedy, and even their combined efforts fail in the end. Players such as Amir Darvish (Jivaj Bhatt), Caralyn Kozlowski (Molly Bhatt, and Shalin Agarwal (Estash Tailor) have characters so poorly fleshed-out that they have little or no opportunity to demonstrate their acting skills.

On a bright note, the costume designs by Christal Weatherly were perfectly bright and cut just right. Alexander Dodge gave us a two-story home that I would define as mostly modest.

"Rafta, Rafta..." will open as a film this June. I hope it got a re-write, because if it sounds anything like the truly uninspired comedy of the same name that I saw at The Old Globe Theatre, it's going to sadly die at the box office.

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Rafta, Rafta

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Cast. Photo by Henry DiRocco.

It's not a dysfunctional family, really, but the members have different opinions about norms and values in today's world. Generational divisions account for most of those variant views, which cause some friction, which can escalate to heated conflict. Parents try to solve their adult children's problems, while neglecting to address some of their own.

Sound familiar?

Indian playwright Ayub Khan-Din thought so when he crafted his Oliver Award-winning comedy, *Rafta, Rafta...*, some years after his family's viewing of a BBC film based on British author, Bill Naughton's *All in Good Time*. Jewish director Jonathan Silverstein thought so, too, when San Diego's Old Globe Theatre tapped him to direct its production of Khan-Din's adaptation. Based on the audience's uproarious laughter, Southern Californians agree that family life contains some universal themes.

What better situation to illustrate that commonality than a wedding and its aftermath? Such is the circumstance that begins the story of the Patels and the Dutts, the latter Indian immigrants, as they negotiate their individual and collective places in a newly blended family living in Northern England. Early on, the generational divide between immigrant parents

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and modern children come to light in charming flickers of dialogue. The bride has gifted her groom a Blackberry. The bride's father had received a water buffalo from his own father.

Comedy is perhaps the most challenging genre, demanding impeccable timing and teamwork. Without that combination, this play would slip into caricature, or, worse, slapstick. Not to worry, for this cast and its director have produced a thoroughly modern marvel of a show.

The opening dance scene, like a clip straight out of a Bollywood musical or "Slumdog Millionaire," sets the tone for the lively action surrounding the marriage of Atul Dutt and his bride, Vina Patel, who will live in the family home. The moment his parents, Lopa and Eeshwar, welcome the new in-laws, Laxman and Lata, to their home for post-ceremony food and drink, the groom begins to grapple (both emotionally and physically) with his male relationships. Rachid Sabitri skillfully manages to keep the conflicted, somewhat immature Atul a sympathetic, albeit self-centered, character. Atul and his hard-headed father (a marvelously authentic Kamal Marayati) have the most difficult issues, but each of the men wrestles to find his own position in the familial and working class hierarchy. Somewhat outside, yet trying to accommodate, is Vina's proud papa Laxman Patel (a sincere and amusing Nasser Faris), whose mysterious resentment of his wife causes much of the play's tension.

Not that the women are struggle-free. As a new bride and working woman, Vina (Mahira Kakkar) must come to terms with a life away from her comfortable home and doting father while tip-toeing around a house that is not her own and a husband who is not quite himself. Her circumstances produce the play's more distressing moments, and Kakkar handles them all without a smidge of pathos. Trying to assist her, but succeeding only in making quite a mess, is her naïve mother Lata (Gita Reddy). Reddy's wonderful bits of hand-waving to flick away negative thoughts are among the play's funniest. Equally adept is Geeta Citygirl Chopra, who gives Atul's shrewd, but insightful, mother Lopa the perfect vulnerability that hides beneath the brassy confidence.

As is often the case in families of all ages and backgrounds, when the in-laws step in to solve the newlyweds' problems, they end up revealing more about themselves than about their offspring. In this play, the revelations move from comedic to poignant and back again. More modern than Lata, Lopa uses euphemisms such as "No new planting in the Shalimar garden," in trying to enlighten Vina's naïve mother. The

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heretofore dictatorial Eeshwar tells a story of long-lost friendship that explains much of his marital relationship and puzzling resentment. Laxman has an equally telling story that unties the conflicting knots between him and Lata. There are dozens of such intricately woven stories within this play, making the entire work a tree of life tapestry.



The well-drawn minor characters include the cross-cultural couple, Jivaj (Amir Darvish) and Molly Bhatt (Caralyn Kozlowski) and Atul's boss Etash Tailor (Shalin Agarwal), all of whom come to appealing life, thanks to the actors' flair for balancing cleverness and silliness.

This is a comedy, after all. All of the difficulties and challenges will be met. All of the mysteries of these familial relationships will be solved. Forgiveness and redemption will come from understanding and love. Nevertheless, familiarity, in this case, does not preclude a very engaging, somewhat surprising, story appropriate for both generations.

Rafta, Rafta . . . continues on The Old Globe Theatre stage in San Diego's Balboa Park through April 24.

Showtimes are: Tues-Weds at 7 p.m.; Thurs-Sat at 8 p.m.; Sun at 7 p.m.; Sat & Sun matinees at 2 p.m.

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“Rafta, Rafta”... far from comedy central



Carol Davis

By Carol Davis

SAN DIEGO—Family and ethnically themed comedies are not new to most audiences. (There’s always Neil Simon) What might be new, however, is that Indian ethnicity isn’t your usual fare of what’s seen on local stages these days unless you see *Rafta, Rafta*”, Ayub Kahn-Din’s Oliver Award winning comedy now playing at the Old Globe Theatre in Balboa Park. Another reason for it not being readily available is it’s set in the working-class English town of Bolton whose claim to fame is a heavily populated Indian immigrant population, so far away from the shores of good old U.S.A.

Rafta, Rafta, I’m told, translates ‘slowly, slowly’ or all in good time. “All in Good Time” is the name of the 1963 Bill Naughton play from which it was adapted. So “what’s it about,” you ask?

The short answer is *Rafta, Rafta* is a contemporary comedy about the cultural differences between old and new customs and traditions. For example, young Indian couples are expected to consummate their marriage on their wedding night in the home of the groom’s parents. (Old custom). Young couples usually consummate their marriages, if they haven’t already been living together, at a hotel or resort far far away from the eager ears of family members, especially if they share a common wall. (New custom or East meets West.)

In Ayub Kahn-Din's comedy, which got rave reviews in Great Britain as well as in New York, (go know!) the young couple in question Atul Dutt (Rachid Sabitri) and Vina Patel (Mahira Kakkar) who are newly married arrive at the paternal in laws home to meet and greet the family (both sides are there), check out the wedding booty, have a traditional meal, and then under the watchful eyes of all concerned, head upstairs to Atul's bedroom to satisfy the age old Indian custom.

Needless to say, things go from bad to worse between all parties and that's including the newly married couple who fumble and bumble on their wedding night (and after), both sets of parents whose expectations are as different as are their family values and other family members who really don't make one bit of difference in the scheme of things in this not-so-funny family drama. That's the long answer. And it's the long answer that gets dragged out, played out and worked out over a two-plus hour evening. Yup. Slowly, slowly!

The production starts out with a fun filled Bollywood looking wedding celebration with the entire wedding party dressed to the nines (Christal Weatherly) in traditional outfits walking and dancing (Mark Danisovszky supervised the music and Reetu Patel the dance) down the theatre isle on to the festive looking backdrop on the main stage (Alexander Dodge) giving the impression of being one big happy wedding party.

That lasts until they all make it over to Eeshwar (Kamal Marayati) and Lopa (Geeta Citygirl Chopra) Dutt's working class home (Alexander Dodge) where breakfast foods await and the traditional kicking over of a small container of sugar is complete before the young couple can enter the home.

It's clear to see that Vina's family, Mom Lata (Gita Reddy is always uptight and in character) and Dad Laxman Patel (Nasser Faris is perfect as the attentive and caring dad) come from a much more sophisticated and upscale background and kinda look down on the Dutt's.

Both families have their issues with their respective mates as well as with their respective off spring. It seems that Vina is Daddy's little girl and Atul is Daddy's big disappointment. That becomes a running theme throughout as Vina's mom vies to become an important confidant of her daughter's and Atul's mother continually defends her son against her husbands putdowns.

Director Jonathan Silverstein, "a nice Jewish boy from Rhode Island" (I can relate) claims to see similarities in most ethnic idiosyncrasies especially the insider vs. the outsider in dealing with every day situations i.e., following family traditions as opposed to living the more 'modern lifestyle'. It's a difficult case to prove given the story line in which he has to work.

This is sit-com 101 and it's just not fun. Most of the throw away lines are typical like "eat, there are starving children in India". Wrong! It might have made a difference if the characters were more interesting and we could care about them. Unfortunately neither Atul nor Vina seemed to have much energy around their unconsummated marriage and their separation was no big surprise. And the big secret secretly told to Vina's mom, ...well, forget about keeping that one under wraps.

Things deteriorate until in Act II we finally get some more insight into the minds of the parents and can actually understand a little more of their struggles, their hardships and the love they have for their children. This indeed is universal. Sometimes though it's not always funny. That said, the most engaging and yes, funny and insightful repartee comes between Lopa Dutt and her husband Eeshwar. They are, of the three couples, the most believable and vibrant. Geeta Citygirl Chopra and Kamal Marayati (who just came into the role days before the show opened) are terrific together.

Other minor characters include co-workers and friends; Atul's brother Jai (Ariya Ghahramani) Jivaj Bhatt (Amir Darvish) and Molly Bhatt (Caralyn Kozlowski) and Etash Tailor (Shalin Agarwal) who are more window dressing than anything else. Atul runs a movie projector and they all share a love of the cinema. Javaj is Atul's boss. They have a slight altercation, nothing serious, no cuts or bruises. Other than that revelation, there is nothing else to say about them except why are they there?

The Bollywood style ending bookends with the opening number but now instead of the solemn ritual of the marriage ceremony, we have a relaxed and smiling young couple fully engaged in having fun with their friends and family and ready to get on with their lives. Would that the entire show had that much bounce.

See you at the theatre.

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Organization: The Old Globe

Phone: 619-234-5623

Production Type: Comedy

Where: 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park

Ticket Prices: \$29.00-\$67.00

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San Diego, CA



“Rafta, Rafta”... far from comedy central



Carol Davis



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Cast of Rafta, Rafta
Photo: Henry DiRocco

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Theater review: 'Rafta, Rafta' at the Old Globe in San Diego

THE PALM BEACH PROPER VIA THE LATIMES CULTURE MONSTER

Published 03/31/2011 - 4:30 p.m. EST by THE PALM BEACH PROPER VIA THE LATIMES CULTURE MONSTER

The familiar contours of countless domestic comedies get a curried shake-up in "Rafta, Rafta" at the Old Globe in San Diego. This West Coast premiere of Ayub Khan-Din's 2007 British hit about young Indian newlyweds living with the groom's family is hardly fresh, despite major *bhangra* gyrations to convince the audience otherwise. It starts promisingly as a festive wedding party, costumed by designer Christal Weatherly, gleefully traipses down the aisle, welcoming us en route. After a compressed ceremony before Alexander Dodge's pink-and-orange-flowered show curtain, the celebrants proceed onto his serviceable but under-detailed set. Welcome to the Dutt domicile in Bolton, England, where sensitive eldest son Atul (Rachid Sabitri) brings bride Vina (Mahira Kakkar) in lieu of a honeymoon.

All or Part of the info in this report is from:: THE PALM BEACH PROPER VIA THE LATIMES CULTURE MONSTER On March 31, 2011.

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Welcome to the Dutt domicile in Bolton, England, where sensitive eldest son Atul (Rachid Sabitri) brings bride Vina (Mahira Kakkar) in lieu of a honeymoon. Lopa (Geeta Citygirl Chopra), Atul's acerbic mother, is the household's engine; Eeshwar (Kamal Marayati), her bluffly tyrannical husband, is its overlord. Younger son Jai (Ariya Ghahramani) represents the assimilated next generation.

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"Rafta, Rafta..." at the Old Globe

Traci Louie | Apr 12, 2011 | Comments 0



Courtesy of Henry DiRocco

With light-hearted grace and an upbeat cadence, the play "Rafta, Rafta..." finds its space at the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego's Balboa Park.

"Rafta, Rafta..." is a comedy written by Ayub Khan-Din as an adaptation of Bill Naughton's "All in Good Time." After winning the 2008 Olivier Award for Best New Comedy at The National Theatre in London and boasting a positive reception of its subsequent New York production, "Rafta, Rafta..." makes its West Coast premiere under the direction of Jonathan Silverstein.

The play opens on the marriage of Atul (Rachid Sabitri) and Vina (Mahira Kakkar), a young Indian couple living in present-day England. With a dancing drumbeat and whirl of glittering costumes, the newlyweds are quickly whisked away to Atul's parents' house, where the two plan to live until they can save enough money for a place of their own. Somewhat irked by the boisterous merriment of the wedding party and the blatant chidings of his father, Atul is anxious to get out of the living room and spend some time alone with Vina.

However, when the couple is finally left to their bedroom void of distractions and pranks, Atul is horrified to discover that he is impotent — perhaps due to the overwhelming presence of his family or the societal expectations that he has as a husband, Atul and Vina cannot consummate their marriage, thus bringing shame upon Atul's manhood and reputation.

The rest of the comedy playfully portrays the succeeding events that surround this unfortunate circumstance, highlighting the clashes between gender and generation in a warm, comedic light.

The story focuses mainly on Atul, Vina and both of their parents, and aside from a couple of extraneous characters Khan-Din could have done without, he portrays his front six endearingly well.

Atul and Vina attest for the younger generation, portraying the hopes and dreams of an up-and-coming class that is forced to find some sort of harmony in a world that is different from the one that their parents came from — while honoring their past, they must break tradition to make a new life and new culture that is their own. Sabitri and Kakkar play their characters well, embodying a youthful spirit panging with the passion that the young couple have for each other, despite the difficulties and frustrations.

Eeshwar and Lopa Dutt (Kamal Marayati and Geeta Citygirl Chopra, respectively) are Atul's parents, and they relate to their son in very different ways.

Eeshwar relishes in his Indian tradition and is always quick to recount how he brought his family to England, building life out of a cardboard suitcase. With a Willy

Loman-esque mentality, he refuses to be the dime-a-dozen Atul thinks he is. Though a smirk and a jest lighten the mood here and there, the traditional father-son conflict rests at the heart of the play as the two plead for each other's acceptance and approval. Marayati plays his part brilliantly, his natural essence charming the audience with just the right amount of fatherly care.

Lopa balances her husband out perfectly, keeping the foot on the brake whenever Eeshwar speaks too far out of place. She has a profound love for her son, and it is this degree of protection that causes most of the bickering between her and her husband. Though firm, her graciousness adds to whatever tact Eeshwar may be lacking, and her snarky comments are funny, timely and always embellished at the end with unconditional love. Chopra accomplishes this attitude well, and the glow that she brings to the stage provides exactly what Lopa embodies for her family.

Laxman and Gita Patel, Vina's parents, are substantially flatter characters, and their involvement in the story is slightly awkward and dry. The Patels' entrance into scenes usually stops the candid flow that is already occurring onstage, and the sidebars that they provide for the story are lengthy and somewhat irrelevant. Though their characters provide a contrast to the Dutts' relationship, Khan-Din tried to do too much by adding in another couple with another set of problems.

In general, most of the play's off-shooting stories are too far-reaching for the amount of emphasis that the storyline as a whole allows, and ultimately they leave the audience feeling unsatisfied and confused. Because the entirety of the play occurs within the Dutts residence, it makes more sense to provide fuller characters for Atul's parents, but the Patels' storylines seem mostly extraneous.

The stage is kept very simple with little prop movement and virtually no scene changes, and the atmosphere is instantly comfortable with its bright colors and cheery lighting. Without many visual distractions, the play relies on the characters to carry the story, which they do with a foray of tongue-in-cheek jests, ethnic song singing and the traditional Bollywood-esque Bhangra dancing.

"Rafta, Rafta..." is a smart, fun and whimsical play that paints a real-life family dealing with all of the expected growing pains that comes with real life. "Rafta, rafta" translates in Hindi to "slowly, slowly," capping the play with the feel-good moral that patience will always see you through, with a little laughter along the way. The Old Globe Theatre offers a variety of programming throughout the year, and "Rafta, Rafta..." will run until April 24.

Rating: 4/5 Stars

Popularity: unranked [?]

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"RAFTA, RAFTA..." AT THE OLD GLOBE

STAGE: "Rafta, Rafta..." makes its successful West Coast theater debut in San Diego.

By Traci Louie
Staff Writer

With light-hearted grace and an upbeat cadence, the play "Rafta, Rafta..." finds its space at the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego's Balboa Park.

"Rafta, Rafta..." is a comedy written by Ayub Khan-Din as an adaptation of Bill Naughton's "All in Good Time." After winning the 2008 Olivier Award for Best New Comedy at The National Theatre in London and boasting a positive reception of its subsequent New York production, "Rafta, Rafta..." makes its West Coast premiere under the direction of Jonathan Silverstein.

The play opens on the marriage of Atul (Rachid Sabitri) and Vina (Mahira Kakkar), a young Indian couple living in present-day England. With a dancing drumbeat and whirl of glittering costumes, the newlyweds are quickly whisked away to Atul's parents' house, where the two plan to live until they can save enough money for a place of their own. Somewhat irked by the boisterous merriment of the wedding party and the blatant chidings of his father, Atul is anxious to get out of the living room and spend some time alone with Vina.

However, when the couple is finally left to their bedroom void of distractions and pranks, Atul is horrified to discover that he is impotent — perhaps due to the overwhelming presence of his family or the societal expectations that he has as



PHOTO COURTESY OF OLD GLOBE THEATRE

A young Indian couple living in England deals with a boisterous family in this light-hearted comedy.

a husband, Atul and Vina cannot consummate their marriage, thus bringing shame upon Atul's manhood and reputation.

The rest of the comedy playfully portrays the succeeding events that surround this unfortunate circumstance, highlighting the clashes between gender and generation in a warm, comedic light.

The story focuses mainly on Atul, Vina and both of their parents, and aside from a couple of extraneous characters Khan-Din could have done without, he portrays his front six endearingly well.

Atul and Vina attest for the younger generation, portraying the hopes and dreams of an up-and-coming class that is forced to find some sort of harmony in a world that is different from the one that their parents came from — while honoring their past, they must break tradition to make a new life and new

culture that is their own. Sabitri and Kakkar play their characters well, embodying a youthful spirit panging with the passion that the young couple have for each other, despite the difficulties and frustrations.

Eeshwar and Lopa Dutt (Kamal Marayati and Geeta Citygirl Chopra, respectively) are Atul's parents, and they relate to their son in very different ways.

Eeshwar relishes in his Indian tradition and is always quick to recount how he brought his family to England, building life out of a cardboard suitcase. With a Willy Loman-esque mentality, he refuses to be the dime-a-dozen Atul thinks he is. Though a smirk and a jest lighten the mood here and there, the traditional father-son conflict rests at the heart of the play as the two plead for each other's acceptance and approval. Marayati plays his part brilliantly, his natural essence

charming the audience with just the right amount of fatherly care.

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A difficult lifestyle portrayed in The Old Globe

[David Dixon](#),

Posted on 12 April 2011.



Vina Patel (Mahira Kakkar) and Atul Dutt (Rachid Sabitri) enjoy fantastic onstage chemistry in “Rafta, Rafta...”, Courtesy of J. Katarzyna Woronowicz

Many young adults do not get along too well with both their parents and siblings. Despite this fact, some people are forced to live with their families when money is tight and they are not independent enough to move away. That is the case with Atul Dutt (Rachid Sabitri), one of the main characters in the Olivier Award winning comedy “Rafta, Rafta...”

Atul and Lata Patel (Gita Reddy) are an Indian couple who live in Bolton, England. Notwithstanding the fact that they are newly married, the two have to live in Atul's family home. Though Atul gets along fine with his mother Lopa (Geeta Citygirl Chopra), his brother Jai (Ariya Ghahramani) is an obnoxious prankster and his father Eeshwar Dutt (Kamal Marayati) is a tyrannical egoist. Adding to their concerns, Atul and Lata have intimacy problems that stem from peculiar and comedic circumstances.

A week before opening at The Old Globe Theatre, Marayati replaced actor Ranjit Chowdhry, who had to bow out because of health complications. Marayati is great in this role and his physical and verbal comedic timing makes him the life of the party. Chopra's portrayal of Lopa is very different from her stage husband though. Lopa is an endearing, modest woman with a good sense of humor and loving affection for her family.

As a serious young husband, Sabitri is just right in his depiction of Atul and manages to sneak in some good one-liners every now and then. Reddy has a natural sweetness that is crucial to Lata, though she does boldly speak up for herself on several occasions.

"Rafta, Rafta..." is an enjoyable production, but sometimes plays things too safe. Complex issues brought up in the first act are solved fairly quickly by the conclusion. While the ending wraps things up a little too neatly, Marayati adds an emotional punch to the final scene when Eeshwar has a bittersweet revelation.

A problem with the script by Ayub Khan-Din, is that several of the supporting actors, including Lata's parents, remain underdeveloped. Also, certain characters introduced in the opening wedding scene act in an entirely different manner when they reappear later in the show.

One example is Atul's boss, Jivaj Bhatt (Amir Darvish). When the audience first meets him, he's a funny guy who occasionally gives Atul a hard time, but in act two he's a jerk who harshly and violently taunts Atul for no apparent reason. However, the Dutts and Lata do not have these types of disjointed character flaws because the writer devoted more time fully developing them.

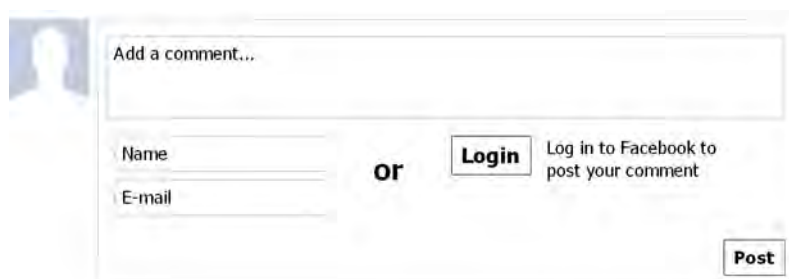
Jonathan Silverstein's production of "Rafta, Rafta..." is fairly lighthearted and pleasing in spite of its flaws. There are many laughs and universal truths that most family members can relate to. The audience roots for Atul and Lata because they are good people who deserve to be together, despite the absurd bedlam occurring around them.

Tickets and information about "Rafta, Rafta..." can be found at theoldglobe.com.

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The Old Globe: featuring two culturally-relevant shows

"Groundswell" explores South African racial anxieties in a three-man play

By Kyle Strickland

"Groundswell," a play written by Ian Bruce and directed by Kyle Donnelly, arrived at the renowned Old Globe in March and is nearly ready to depart the stage with its final show this weekend. This short yet dense play is not to be missed; it is full of tense situations and deep emotions. The drama embodies the anxious post-apartheid sentiment of its setting in South Africa, especially highlighting how both white and black citizens struggled to cope with the aftereffects of the racial system's demise.

Performed without an intermission, this play features three characters whose lives are fraught with secret pain and tension. Thami, played by Owiso Odera, is an African man living away from his family, working in a rental cottage to provide for them and hoping for a big break to help him buy his own farm. Johan, played by Antony Hagopian, is a white friend of Thami's who has worked long and hard diving for diamonds in the sea nearby after leaving the police force under mysterious circumstances.

As the two discuss the possibility of finding a big break, Johan realizes that the third and final character, the wealthy cottage guest, Smith (Ned Schmidtke), could be the investor they have been looking for. Their goal is to invest in a government

concession that would provide them with the means to excavate diamonds in the nearby mines. Smith is an older gentleman whose wealth is obvious and in stark contrast to the other men. With Johan's overbearing insistence that Thami go along with his plan, the possibility that all the men will clash only increases as alcohol begins to pour.

The play features a completely static set, which allows for the true nature of the characters and their struggles to stand out. From beginning to end, the play's action remains within the confines of the rental cottage. As day turns to night and stormy weather effects reflect growing tension, the situation grows dangerous. With only three characters in the play, the audience is able to develop a full understanding of each man's struggles, while the night peels back the layers of the characters' pasts and forces out repressed anger towards their society's injustices.

The problematic idea of compensation dominated in the play, lending a powerful emotional side that is reflective of sentiment present not only in South Africa, but in the United States as well. This made the play relevant to the American idea of identity in comparison to our segregated history, and the actors demonstrated these anxieties all too well in their performances.

Aside from the many positive

aspects of the play, there were a few minor detractors to the overall experience. Even though the play was only a single act and not significant in length, the action tended to drag slowly in the beginning. Johan and Thami spent what seemed like ages in iterative arguments over the same things.

The characters moved in and out very little, all three staying on stage for the bulk of the play. While this definitely seemed intentional in order to solely emphasize the character development, the play could have used a bit more action to spice up the transitions throughout the play.

Senior Jen Gabrielli reacted to the action in the play, agreeing with the decision to force the characters into close proximity with no distractions.

"I appreciated the playwright's volleying of dialogue between the characters over who owed compensation to who," Gabrielli said. "I thought it represented both sides well and provided a fair argument, which demonstrated the troubles faced by the entire society. I did think that the action was somewhat anticlimactic, however, because the end result was not too hard to guess."

Despite minor diversions, this play is definitely worth a viewing. Hurry this weekend to one of the final showings of "Groundswell" at The Old Globe, before this pertinent cultural and racial drama disappears.

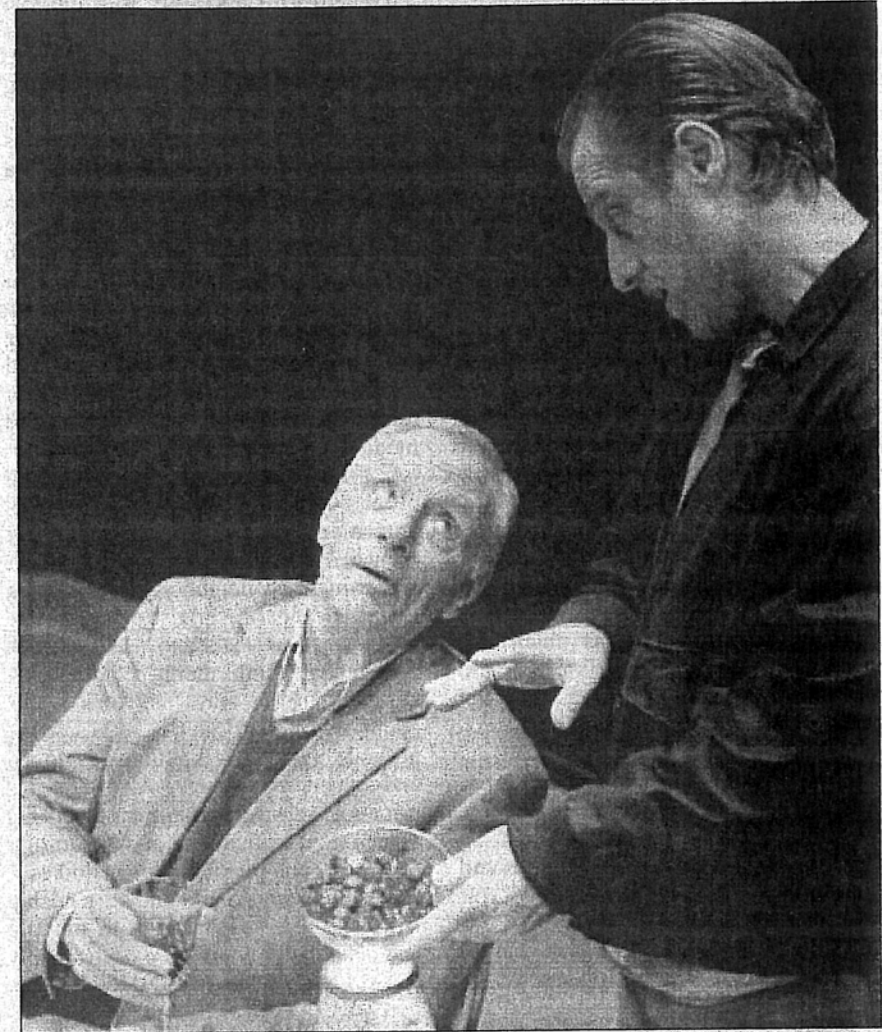


Photo Courtesy of the Old Globe

Johan (Hagopian) tries to tempt Smith (Schmidtke) with jewels to invest in his scheme.

"Rafta, Rafta..." pokes fun at generational differences of British-Indian immigrants

By Kyle Strickland

"Rafta, Rafta..." is Jonathan Silverstein's rendition of the Olivier Award-winning British comedy. This play, originally written by Ayub Khan-Din, is a humorous look at the complex intertwining of two first-generation Indian families in England. The play's cast includes Kamal Marayati as the hilariously entertaining father, Eeshwar Dutt, and Gita Reddy as Lata Patel, the proper Indian mother who is humorously too involved in her daughter's new marriage.

A marriage between the children of the two families kicks off the comedy, with both bride and groom having grown up in England. The differences groom Atul Dutt, played by Rachid Sabitri, and new wife Vina Patel, played by Mahira Kakkar, have from their parents are notable, leading to hilarious situations and awkward moments.

The crux of the humor in the play is the couple's decision to live in Atul's home until they have enough money to move into their own. Laughter was abundant as the couple returned to the groom's family's home to begin their new life together, only to be barraged with witty sexual innuendos about what their first night together would inevitably bring.

Unfortunately, Atul and Vina

underestimated the pressures of the contrasting traditions of their parents and those of their peers in England. A month later, a big problem has arisen, or Atul's case, does not arise. More puns ensue as the audience finds out that Atul cannot quite get it up, causing an awkward and silent problem between him and his wife. From here, the comedy continues, as more and more family members become involved in their very personal problems.

The show takes place in the Dutt home on a large, two-story set. Beautiful stage lights, Indian music and a few snippets of live singing make this show exciting and fresh, and the action is relatively dynamic. Multiple layers exist in the plot, adding to a diverse show that grabs attention through both comedy and relatable family issues. Atul, for example, is obviously having some daddy issues, which are only compounded by the fact that the rest of his family keeps him from getting any real alone time to actually consummate his marriage.

The impotence issue, though funny, actually leads to some tense, dramatic moments. The audience gasped when Atul shouted at his wife on their wedding night, providing a darker contrast to the airy humor leading up to it. He snapped at her after their bed broke underneath them, stopping their first attempt at

having sex and revealing how much Atul's family had been bothering him all night. These moments, though important, digress from the overall light mood of the play, and somewhat hurt its comedic aspect.

USD Senior Akhil Israni noted that the comedy didn't encompass the essence of Indian family drama enough to be truly hilarious.

"It was funny at certain points, of course," Israni said, "but it seemed like an inaccurate depiction of an Indian family, which made me confused more than amused overall. The accents were especially off, and this stood out a little too much in my opinion."

Despite these minor drawbacks, audiences were still smiling and laughing throughout the play. The married couple's struggle with fitting into two completely opposite cultures is dealt with expertly, expressing both the realistic angst and humor. The good-natured presentation of the newlyweds' naivety is inspiring and fun to watch.

The Old Globe will be showing this comedy until April 24. Whether you are Indian, British or American, the pressures depicted of trying to find one's own place in the world will undoubtedly speak to you. A good comedy reveals our true nature and helps us laugh at it, and this is exactly what "Rafta, Rafta..." achieves.

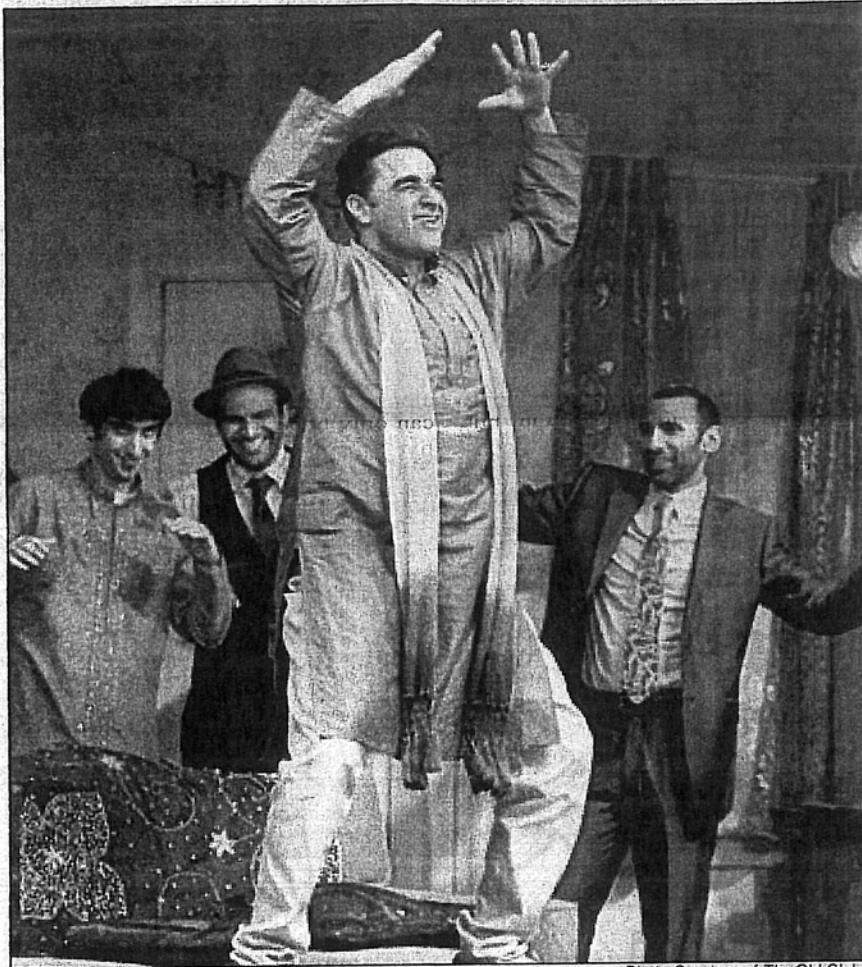


Photo Courtesy of The Old Globe

Kamal Marayati is table-dancing Eeshwar Dutt in this witty comedy.

The Old Globe: featuring two culturally-relevant shows

"Rafta, Rafta..." pokes fun at generational differences of British-Indian immigrants

By [Kyle Strickland](#)

Published: Wednesday, April 13, 2011

Updated: Wednesday, April 13, 2011 15:04

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April 18, 2011

Cherise Lopes-Baker, Staff writer

“Rafta, Rafta,” a comedy about the trials and tribulations of a newly wed Indian couple in England living under their family’s roof, is currently running strong at the Old Globe theater. Though the set is definitely interesting with props and costumes of vibrant colors that capture the eye, as in a Bollywood movie, the acting often feels forced at times.

It could have to do with the awkward central theme of sex, or the couple’s lack thereof, but the majority of jokes fell flat, at least to the ears of a younger audience. Relying on old-timey jokes about the Soviet Union, the play was often funny only when not meaning to be.

As for the central conflict- The main character’s inability to get it up and have sex with his girl because his parents are next door- it isn’t likely a conflict many people our age seem to have trouble with. The conflict between the characters on the other hand, only made me dislike them more. It was painful to watch what an ass almost every character was. In some ways this can be good, if aiming at a larger theme, but I wasn’t convinced for most of the show.

It was things like this that put me off and kept me from enjoying the play for what it was, an interesting domestic glimpse into a different culture. I think it was great that the Old Globe, usually the runner of mainly Shakespearean plays, was ready to give “Rafta, Rafta,” a shot and I hope the play does well for the rest of its run. I think, while it was aimed at an older audience, if you’re interested in what an Indian family is like, or simply in a more cultured play, than this is worth a view.

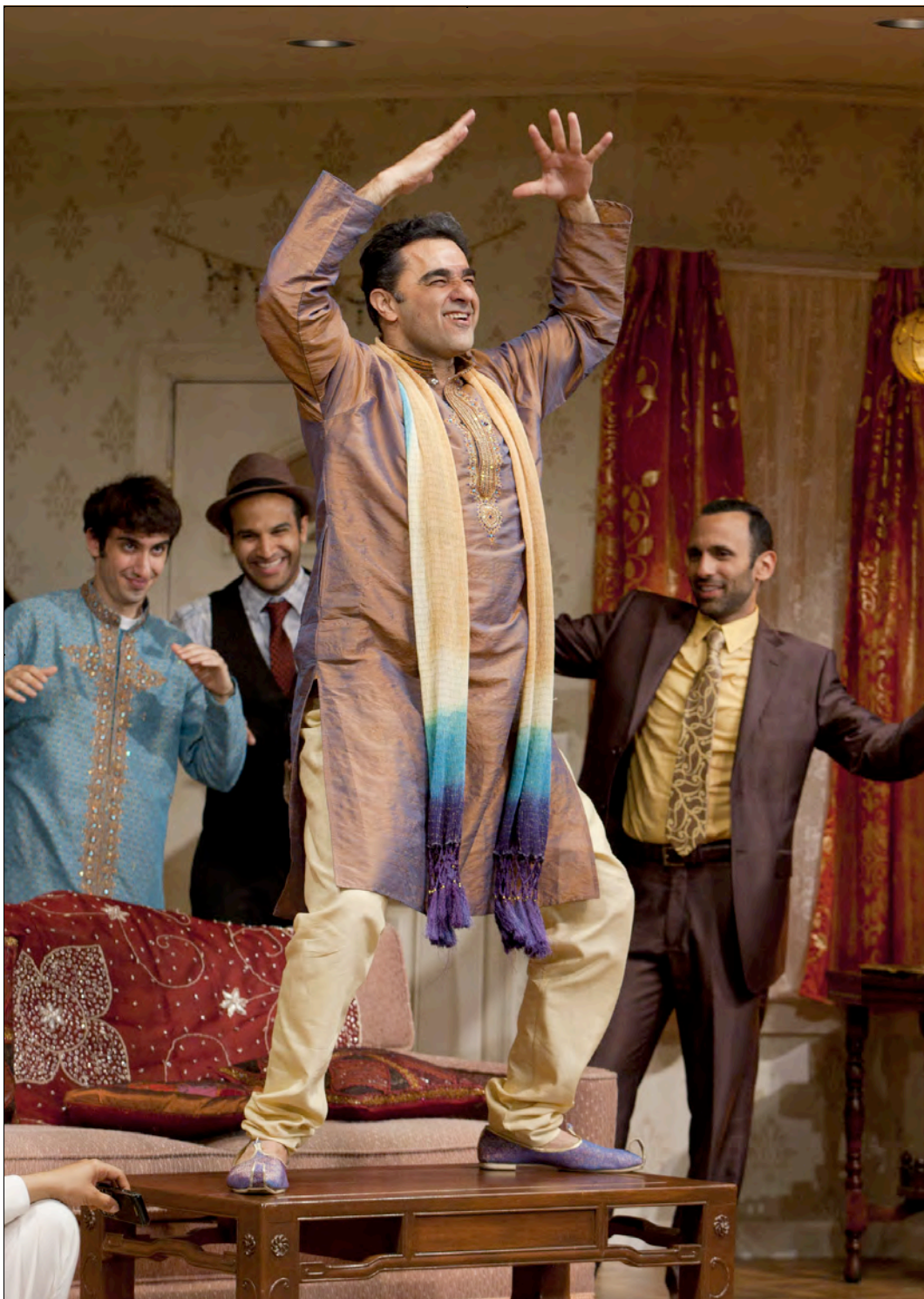
It runs at the Old Globe 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays; 7 p.m. Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, through April 24 with tickets from \$29 to \$67

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THEATER

Indian wedding comedy makes West Coast premiere at Globe

BY PAM KRAGEN

pkragen@nctimes.com

In the Hindustani language of Urdu, the phrase "rafta, rafta" means "slowly, slowly."

It's the first line of a famous poem that begins: "Slowly, slowly, she became the power of my existence."

"Rafta, Rafta ..." is also the title of an Olivier Award-winning domestic comedy by Ayub Khan-Din that makes its West Coast premiere this weekend at the Old Globe.

It's the story of an immigrant Indian family in a working-class English town who are celebrating the marriage of their son, Atul. Things go haywire when the newlyweds are forced to spend their wedding night with Atul's parents, Eeshwar and Lopa Dutt, and conflicts arise between the Duttts and the Patels, the parents of the young bride, Vina.

Khan-Din adapted his play from a 1963 stage comedy by "Alfie" playwright Bill Naughton ("All

"Rafta, Rafta ..."

WHEN Previews, Saturday through Wednesday; opens March 24 and runs through April 24; showtimes, 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays; 7 p.m. Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays

WHERE The Old Globe, Balboa Park, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego

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in Good Time," which was later adapted into the film "The Family Way"). "Rafta, Rafta ..." had its premiere in 2007 at England's National Theatre, followed by an off Broadway premiere in 2008 at the Acorn Theatre in New York.

New York native Geeta Citygirl Chopra is making her Old Globe debut this month, starring in the play as the groom's mother, Lopa Dutt. Chopra — who often goes by her middle name "Citygirl" or simply "City" — is the founding



Ranjit Chowdhry, Geeta Citygirl Chopra, Rachid Sabitri and Mahira Kakkar in "Rafta, Rafta" Photo courtesy of J. Katarzyna Woronowicz.

artistic director of Salaam Theatre in New York, and is herself a first-generation American born of Indian immigrants.

She talked about the play in a telephone interview last week.

Question: Is this your first encounter with "Rafta, Rafta ...?"

Answer: I made it to the final round of auditions for the New York production

and didn't get cast, so I was really excited to get cast this time around.

Q: Tell me about your character.

A: When I was auditioning for the New York production, I auditioned for Lata, the mother of the bride. She is reserved, she's very snooty and she looks down on people. But the casting agents told me I wasn't right for it. They



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saw me as the other mother, Lopa. She's more like Mother Earth — very open. She speaks her mind but she's diplomatic. She knows how to balance her guests, even if she's not so educated. I thought I was too young for the part, but I see now why they saw me as Lopa. The woman they cast as Lata is very tall and thin, and I'm shorter and heavyset. And the actor they cast as my husband couldn't be tinier (Bollywood film actor Ranjit Chowdhry). It reminds me of "The Jeffersons." I'm like Weezie, the big mama with the bubbly, cheerful personality, and he's like Mr. Jefferson, a little guy with a larger-than-life personality.

Q: The play that inspired "Rafta, Rafta ..." was written in the 1960s. Has much changed since then?

A: It really hasn't changed very much. Whether it's the '60s or 2011, the family misunderstandings are the same. Children will always want to do better than their par-

ents. In the play, we're working-class people and we live in the projects. Our first son wants to do better and we support that, but he talks back to his parents. He has married a girl from a different class. We are Punjabi, who are the farmers. The Patels are Gujaratis, who are from the business class. They look down on the hick farmers, but the Punjabis always throw the best parties and can drink everybody under the table. We're very loud and boisterous and the Patels are more reserved, but there's something bubbling under the surface with the Patel family and at the top of Act Two, things start to unravel. It's one of those things where when you're around loud people and you're drinking, your reserve dissolves and all your frustrations of 22 years come tumbling out.

Q: Your parents both immigrated to America from India, like the Dutts. Did you

'Rafta'

Continued from Page 20

model your character after your mother?

A: My mom and aunts came over to America in the '60s. They all cut their hair short, they'd get their hair set like all the Jewish ladies on Long Island, and they colored their hair red, so that by the time they're in their 70s, they have orange hair. I have long brown hair, but I said to Jonathan (Silverstein, the play's director) and the costumer that I'd like to have hair like the women of my mom's generation.

My husband in the play has a great speech about how people look at him differently and that reminds me of what my father said. He came to New York in the '60s to go to school and he said when he walked up the steps of Columbia University, people looked at him like, "What's India?"

Q: This play takes place on a wedding day, and many Bollywood films revolve around weddings. Is there a significance to weddings in the Indian culture?

A: You see a lot of weddings in Indian films because they're very colorful, very lively, very boisterous and there's good music that's from the soul and the heart. And when you use something like that to tell a story, you can touch people who don't know anything about your culture.

Q: Through your Salaam Theatre, you've been able to do a lot of work about and for the South Asian community in New York. Do you feel, as an Indian-American actress, that the days of typecasting are over?

A: It's still there, but it's changing. We refer to it as the "post-Slumdog" era (in reference to the 2008 Oscar-winning, India-based film "Slumdog Millionaire"). We're now seeing more Indian actors getting work, but it's slow steps. Ninety percent of the Indian actors you see on television or in film are from Britain. The casting agents go to London to get actors rather than look right here. But this play is a big step. The Old Globe is such a prestigious theater and it's producing the West Coast premiere, so this is a step in a right direction.

See 'Rafta,' 22

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Indian wedding comedy 'Rafta, Rafta' gets its West Coast premiere at Old Globe

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Indian wedding comedy 'Rafta, Rafta' gets its West Coast premiere at Old Globe

By PAM KRAGEN - pkragen@nctimes.com North County Times - The Californian | Posted: Wednesday, March 16, 2011 9:54 am | No Comments Posted | Print

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Photo courtesy of J. Katarzyna Woronowicz Geeta Citygirl Chopra, Mahira Kakkar and Rachid Sabitri in the West Coast premiere of Ayub Khan-Din's "Rafta, Rafta ...," running March 19-April 24 in the Old Globe Theatre.

In the Hindustani language of Urdu, the phrase "rafta, rafta" means "slowly, slowly."

It's the first line of a famous poem that begins: "Slowly, slowly, she became the power of my existence."

"Rafta, Rafta ..." is also the title of an Olivier Award-winning domestic comedy by Ayub Khan-Din that makes its

West Coast premiere this weekend at the Old Globe.

It's the story of an immigrant Indian family in a working-class English town who are celebrating the marriage of their son, Atul. Things go haywire when the newlyweds are forced to spend their wedding night with Atul's parents, Eeshwar and Lopa Dutt, and conflicts arise between the Dutt and the Patels, the parents of the young bride, Vina.

Khan-Din adapted his play from a 1963 stage comedy by "Alfie" playwright Bill Naughton ("All in Good Time," which was later adapted into the film "The Family Way"). "Rafta, Rafta ..." had its premiere in 2007 at England's National Theatre, followed by an off Broadway premiere in 2008 at the Acorn Theatre in New York.

New York native Geeta Citygirl Chopra is making her Old Globe debut this month, starring in the play as the groom's mother, Lopa Dutt. Chopra ---- who often goes by her middle name "Citygirl" or simply "City" ---- is the founding artistic director of Salaam Theatre in New York, and is herself a first-generation American born of Indian immigrants.

She talked about the play in a telephone interview last week.

Question: Is this your first encounter with "Rafta, Rafta ..."?

A: I made it to the final round of auditions for the New York production and didn't get cast, so I was really excited to get cast this time around.

Q: Tell me about your character.

A: When I was auditioning for the New York production, I auditioned for Lata, the mother of the bride. She is reserved, she's very snooty and she looks down on people. But the casting agents told me I wasn't right for it. They saw me as the other mother, Lopa. She's more like mother earth --- very open. She speaks her mind but she's diplomatic. She knows how to balance her guests, even if she's not so educated. I thought I was too young for the part, but I see now why they saw me as Lopa. The woman they cast as Lata is very tall and thin, and I'm shorter and heavysset. And the actor they cast as my husband couldn't be tinier. It reminds me of "The Jeffersons." I'm like Weezie, the big mama with the bubbly, cheerful personality, and he's like Mr. Jefferson, a little guy with a larger-than-life personality.

Q: The play that inspired "Rafta, Rafta ..." was written in the 1960s. Has much changed since then?

A: It really hasn't changed very much. Whether it's the '60s or 2011, the family misunderstandings are the same. Children will always want to do better than their parents. In the play, we're working-class people and we live in the projects. Our first son wants to do better and we support that, but he talks back to his parents. He has married a girl from a different class. We are Punjabi, who are the farmers. The Patels are Gujaratis, who are from the business class. They look down on the hick farmers, but the Punjabis always throw the best parties and can drink everybody under the table. We're very loud and boisterous and the Patels are more reserved, but there's something bubbling under the surface with the Patel family and at the top of Act Two, things start to unravel. It's one of those things where when you're around loud people and you're drinking, your reserve dissolves and all your frustrations of 22 years come tumbling out.

Q: Your parents both immigrated to America from India, like the Dutt. Did you model your character after your mother?

A: My mom and aunties came over to America in the '60s. They all cut their hair short, they'd get their hair set like all the Jewish ladies on Long Island, and they colored their hair red, so that by the time they're in their 70s, they

have orange hair. I have long brown hair, but I said to Jonathan (Silverstein, the play's director) and the costumer that I'd like to have hair like the women of my mom's generation. My husband in the play has a great speech about how people look at him differently and that reminds me of what my father said. He came to New York in the '60s to go to school and he said when he walked up the steps of Columbia University, people looked at him like, 'What's India?'

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"Rafta, Rafta ... "

When: Previews, Saturday through Wednesday; opens March 24 and runs through April 24; showtimes, 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays; 7 p.m. Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays

Where: The Old Globe, Balboa Park, 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego

Tickets: \$29-\$67

Info: 619-234-5623

Web: theoldglobe.org

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Jonathan Silverstein to direct 'Rafta, Rafta...' and Henry Wishcamper will helm 'Engaging Shaw' in new productions at the Old Globe

Executive Producer Lou Spisto today announced that Jonathan Silverstein will direct the Globe's upcoming production of Ayub Khan-Din's multi-generational comedy, *Rafta, Rafta...* Henry Wishcamper, originally announced to direct *Rafta, Rafta...*, will helm the summer season's West Coast premiere of John Morogielo's comedy of manners, *Engaging Shaw*.

Spisto said, "Henry asked to be released from directing *Rafta, Rafta...* so that he could spend time with his family immediately following the birth of their second child. I'm so pleased that we were able to accommodate his request and still have him with us for *Engaging Shaw*. I'm also excited to have this opportunity to invite the talented Jonathan Silverstein to the Globe - and back to San Diego."



Director Henry Wishcamper

Rafta, Rafta... Winner of the 2008 Olivier Award for Best New Comedy for its acclaimed run at The National Theatre in London, and a hit with critics and audiences in New York, *Rafta, Rafta...* takes a hilarious look at the generational divide between sex and marriage within a close-knit Indian family living in London. Following their wedding, two newlyweds find that starting their life together under the roof of the groom's family is no honeymoon. With warmth and humor, this British comedy examines what happens when the young couple must choose between saving money or their marriage.

***Engaging Shaw*.** This unexpected new comedy follows the battle of wits and the real life romance between socialite Charlotte Payne-Townsend and playwright

George Bernard Shaw. When wealthy heiress Charlotte Payne-Townsend sets her sights on the famed author of *Pygmalion*, *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, and *Major Barbara*, the challenge of romancing this confirmed bachelor, philanderer, and unromantic man, is more complicated than in any of his stories. *The*



New York Times hailed *Engaging Shaw* as "...a charming romantic comedy. If there's a minute of the play that's less than clever, you'll be hard pressed to find it" and *Variety* cheered, "A spirited and intelligent combat of words and sparkling banter."

Rafta, Rafta... will run at the Old Globe Theatre March 19 - April 24 and *Engaging Shaw* in the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre July 29 - Sept. 4. Tickets can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at 619-23-GLOBE or by visiting the Box Office. ♦

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A classic immigrant tale with a difference

Ayub Khan-Din aims to keep it real with nuanced characters in his 'Rafta, Rafta.'

REED JOHNSON
REPORTING FROM SAN DIEGO

Of course there's a big Bollywood-style musical finale (even though it wasn't in the original script). And naturally, there's a boisterous wedding scene, wisecracks about the Kama Sutra, a large dollop of "East-West" conflict and clothes as brilliantly hued as a tropical fruit basket.

What else would you expect from a bittersweet domestic drama about multigenerational Indian migrants coping with family life in a northern England town?

But if Ayub Khan-Din's play "Rafta, Rafta" fulfills certain cultural expectations, it likely flouts others. And so may the **Old Globe** theater this spring, simply by the act of hosting an Olivier Award-winning, contemporary immigrant drama in a space best known for its polished Shakespeare productions and the occasional Broadway-bound musical.

At the center of "Rafta, Rafta" is a newly married young couple, Anil Dutt (played by Rachid Sabiri) and his bride Vina Patel (Mahira Kakkar), struggling to consummate their marriage while living under the groins' parents' roof. If that sounds like a premise that wouldn't be out of place in a Neil Simon comedy, "Rafta, Rafta" director Jonathan Silverstein suggests, you may be onto something.

"I think the Globe's mainstage season is really geared toward the family this year: 'August: Osage County,' 'Brighton Beach Memoirs,' 'Broadway Bound,'" Silverstein observed during a break at a rehearsal for the play, which opens Thursday and runs through April 24. "They all really do share this intense dysfunction but yet love. I mean, I think that's present in all these plays."

"Dysfunctional but lov-



GARY FREEDMAN LOS ANGELES TIMES

UPBEAT NOTE: Director Jonathan Silverstein plans to cap the family drama with a Bollywood-style number.

'Rafta, Rafta'

Where: The Old Globe, San Diego

When: 7 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 8 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays, 2 and 5 p.m. Saturdays, 2 and 7 p.m. Sundays. Thursday through April 24.

Tickets: \$29 to \$85
 Information: (619) 23-GLOBE, or www.theoldglobe.org

ing" succinctly describes the Dutt and Patel clans. Residents of the one-time industrial hub of Bolton, the two families become united in marriage when their children tie the knot in the play's colorful opening sequence. But they're divided — mostly amiably, at times testily — by differences of class, education, regional background and lifestyle aspirations, which add to the layers of tension surrounding their offspring's extended, in-house "honeymoon."

By turns serious-minded and borderline absurd,

"Rafta, Rafta," whose title in Hindi translates as "slowly, slowly," is based on a 1960s British kitchen-sink comedy called "All in Good Time." Speaking by phone from his home in Spain, the playwright said that "All in Good Time" was so structurally solid, and its themes so universal, that he decided to adapt and update it.

"It's the juxtaposition of incredibly dark and sad moments with this farcical humor," said Khan-Din, who appeared as an actor in two seminal 1980s films about South Asian immigrants in London, "My Beautiful Laundrette" and "Sammy and Rosie Get Laid."

But if the play's storyline could work in Brooklyn, Berlin or Beijing, its specifics of setting and nuances of character are what make "Rafta, Rafta" stand out from other contemporary plays attempting to dramatize the intimate human effects of the huge demographic shifts sweeping the globe. "Here in the States, so many of the stories that involve not the major minorities are so simplistic," said

Gita Reddy, who plays the bride's mother. "The stories are always like, 'Oh, the immigrant parents who've worked so hard to come to this country are like this, they're very rigid. The kids, who've grown up here, are like this, they're very loose.' Clash! Clash! And this is so much more sophisticated, complex clash, which means it just feels more real."

An honest look

As a playwright, Khan-Din doesn't judge his characters but he's brutally honest about them, the actors agreed. "And that's very cathartic, by the way, for any community," said Nasser Faris, a native of Egypt who plays the bride's father. "Spike Lee did it with the African Americans, the Asian community and Indian community in Britain did it, and I think there are a lot of Egyptians that are trying to do it."

Sabiri favorably compared "Rafta, Rafta" to the work of Hanif Kureishi, the Anglo-Pakistani novelist-screenwriter who wrote "My Beautiful Laundrette" and

"Sammy and Rosie."

"With Hanif or Ayub's work, or any good playwright's work, everyone has secrets, everyone has a certain way of being in society," Sabiri said. "And then when they've got their back to the wall, true character comes out."

Unlike the critically praised 2008 New Group production of "Rafta, Rafta" in New York, which reportedly used only actors of Indian heritage, the Old Globe's players practically form a mini United Nations. Sabiri is a Brit of Moroccan descent, Geeta Citygirl Chopra (Atul's mother) and Shalin Agarwal (Atul's best friend) are Indian Americans raised in Long Island and Miami, respectively. Faris was born in Cairo, and Arya Ghahramani (Atul's pesky brother) and Amir Darvish (Atul's boss) are Iranian Americans.

For the cast, "Rafta, Rafta" shaped up as a rare chance to portray characters close to their personal ethnic identities and experiences. Agarwal said that the play's depiction of attitudes

toward marriage and sexuality, for example, "absolutely" rang true to his upbringing in Miami's close-knit Indian community.

In many ways, Indian culture — it still is not as progressive," he said. "Divorce is still a big taboo, homosexuality is a huge taboo, except for in Mumbai."

Equally resonant for several actors was the gap in expectations between first-generation parents who feel proud and satisfied to have built a modest, working-class life in a new country and their more upwardly mobile, English-speaking children. Or, conversely, parents who traded away the class status of their homeland to give their sons and daughters a better chance elsewhere.

"My parents, they were pretty well-to-do when they were in Iran," Darvish said. "But with the revolution they lost everything and moved to the States in '79 and had to start over with nothing. So I can relate."

But although the play marks time to its multiple dramatic tensions, and ends on what Silverstein calls "a very quiet note," it's unlikely to send audience members back to the parking lot with frowny faces. Taking his cue from the Oscar-winning "Slumdog Millionaire" and Elizabethan comedy, Silverstein has added an upbeat curtain call that requires flower petals and audience participation.

"We are going to try to get them with a little dancing, teach them a couple moves," Silverstein said. "We'll kind of see how that works."

For the actors, as well as some patrons, there may be an additional cause for celebration at performances of "Rafta, Rafta." Chopra said she recently attended matinees of two other Old Globe shows at which she "could count on one hand the number of people of color in the house."

She expects that won't be the case with "Rafta, Rafta." "I think it's a great, huge step for the Old Globe," Chopra said.

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'Rafta, Rafta' a classic immigrant's tale with a difference

Ayub Khan-Din aims to keep it real with nuanced characters in his 'Rafta, Rafta.'



Actors rehearse "Rafta Rafta" at the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego. (Gary Friedman / Los Angeles Times)

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By Reed Johnson, Los Angeles Times

March 20, 2011

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Reporting from San Diego — Of course there's a big Bollywood-style musical finale (even though it wasn't in the original script). And naturally, there's a boisterous wedding scene, wisecracks about the Kama Sutra, a large dollop of "East-West" conflict and clothes as brilliantly hued as a tropical fruit basket.

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family life in a northern England town?

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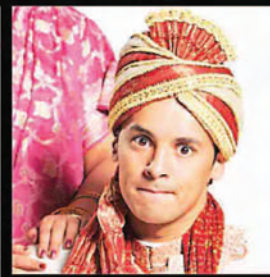
'Rafta, Rafta' is a comedy about relationships within an Indian household in England, but its themes are universal

Complex bonds

“

It could be Greek, it could be Italian, it could be anything. Because it's about family.”

Geeta Citygirl Chopra • actress





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JAMES HEBERT • U-T

In India — that sprawling, mystical, sometimes mystifying land — there's an ancient folk tale that might shed some light on how modern-day Americans perceive the country.

It's the one about the blind men who, asked to appraise an elephant, can describe it only in terms of the part each has touched: a tail, a trunk, a tusk.

In a similar way, Western pop culture offers up fragmented, sometimes conflicting images of Indian life: the grit of the hit movie "Slumdog Millionaire"; the glamour and exuberance of Bollywood musicals; the ubiquity of those India-based call centers, the target of countless comedians' zingers (and now the setting of the NBC-TV comedy "Outsourced").

That occluded view seems to be changing, though, as Indian influences on our culture continue to grow. And yet in "Rafta, Rafta," a poignant comedy opening at the Old Globe Theatre this week, the more exotic, South Asian-inspired elements turn out to serve a story that sounds as familiar as any classic American family saga.

"It's no different from watching 'Brighton Beach Memoirs' or 'Death of a Salesman,'" says actor Rachid Sabitri of the work, which playwright Ayub Khan-Din sets among an immigrant Indian family living in England. "The success of this play I think rides on things that are true to everyone, whether you're from San Diego or Kashmir or wherever.

"But what's great about it is it's glossed with an Indian and also Northern English coat. (It's about) people having to adapt to

SEE 'RAFTA, RAFTA' • E3

From left: Geeta Citygirl Chopra as Lopa Dutt, Rachid Sabitri as Atul Dutt and Mahira Kakkar as Vina Patel in the Old Globe Theatre's "Rafta, Rafta."

PHOTO BY J. KATARZYNA WORONOWICZ
 U-T PHOTO ILLUSTRATION

"Rafta, Rafta"

Old Globe Theatre

When: Now in previews.
 Opens March 24. Schedule: 7 p.m. Tuesdays-Wednesdays; 8 p.m. Thursdays-Fridays; 2 and 8 p.m. Saturdays (no matinee April 16); 2 and 7 p.m. Sundays (no matinee today); through April 24.

Where: 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park

Tickets: \$29-\$85

Phone: (619) 234-5623

Online: theoldglobe.org

**From left:
 Geeta City-
 girl Chopra,
 Rachid Sabitri
 and Mahira
 Kakkar in
 "Rafta, Rafta."
 The play
 opens March
 24 and runs
 through April
 24. J. KATARZYNA
 WORONOWICZ**



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Page 3 of 4

'RAFTA, RAFTA' • Director borrows a page from 'Slumdog Millionaire' ending

FROM **E1**
that new society, which is also relevant here."

"Rafta, Rafta" — the title translates as "slowly, slowly" — follows the plight of a young newlywed, Atul (Sabitri), who is eager (maybe even desperate) to consummate his marriage to his wife, Vina (Mahira Kakkar).

Trouble is, their honeymoon is happening in the crowded home of the groom's family; swirling around them are the complex bonds and frictions among all the other characters in this 10-actor piece.

"That's what's beautiful about this play," says Jonathan Silverstein, the University of California San Diego grad and busy New York-based director who has returned to San Diego to stage the show. "Every relationship gets pretty complex. You think it's about the bride and groom, or maybe the groom and the father. And then you discover there's something going on in

every relationship."

Playwright Khan-Din adapted the work from "All In Good Time," a Bill Naughton play first produced in the 1960s (and later made into a movie).

Geeta Citygirl Chopra ("Citygirl" is a nickname from her youth that she later adopted more formally) plays Atul's mother, Lopa, in the Globe's "Rafta, Rafta." (The actor who was to play her character's husband, Ranjit Chowdhry, left due to illness and has been replaced by Kamal Marayati.) Chopra agrees with her castmate Sabitri that there are truths in the play that cross cultural lines.

"The fact that it originally was written not for an Indian cast — to me that speaks volumes," says Chopra, who founded the South Asian arts company SALAAM Theatre in New York. "Ayub Khan-Din saw that, wow, I can actually turn this into a brown version with the same story.

"It could be Greek, it could be Italian, it could

be anything. Because it's about family; it's about communication; it's about these two different generations. To me, that's the core of the story. The Indian thing adds dimension, it adds flavor, but it's not about that."

For Sabitri, this is the second go-round in "Rafta." He appeared in the touring version of the National Theatre's original London production, which won an Olivier Award (the British equivalent of the Tony) as best new comedy. The actor, who was born in England to a family of Moroccan immigrants, says the Indian flavor feels more overt in Silverstein's staging than in Nicholas Hytner's production for the National.

"There are elements in this one that are kind of a bit more celebratory of Indian/Bollywood culture," Sabitri says. "What Jonathan has tried to do is excite the audience a bit more with the vibrancy of those colors, that music, the dance.

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more modern "Bollywood epilogue/curtain call" (as he terms it) in the manner of the closing number "Jai Ho" from "Slumdog."

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first seemed so foreign to his own.

"Every play's in a different landscape, but I was like, 'Wow, OK, this is *very* different,'" Silverstein says. "It's Indians living in Britain, very different from this Jewish boy who lives in New York."



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Jonathan Silverstein • UCSD graduate, New York-based director

seven other Oscars) about a dirt-poor youth from Mumbai who, as a grown-up, gets a shot at riches on a quiz show.

At the Globe, he says, "Rafta, Rafta" will be bookended by a prologue of a traditional wedding dance that introduces the myriad characters, and a

of the modern way of living," Silverstein says. "This conflict goes all throughout the play.

"So what I wanted to do is show a little bit of tradition at the beginning, and then at the end, show some modern (influence) with the Bollywood idea."

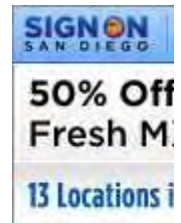
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Theater preview: Globe's "Rafta" weds East to West

Ayub Khan-Dhin's poignant comedy has Indian flavors but universal themes

 BY [JAMES HEBERT](#)

SATURDAY, MARCH 19, 2011 AT 11:15 P.M.

In India — that sprawling, mystical, sometimes mystifying land — there's an ancient folk tale that might shed some light on how modern-day Americans perceive the country.

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can describe it only in terms of the part each has touched: a tail, a trunk, a tusk.

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/ J. KATARZYNA WORONOWICZ

Rachid Sabitri as Atul and Mahira Kakkar as Vina in the Old Globe Theatre's production of "Rafta, Rafta."

Playwright Khan-Din adapted the work from “All In Good Time,” a Bill Naughton play first produced in the 1960s (and later made into a movie).

Geeta Citygirl Chopra (“Citygirl” is a nickname from her youth that she later adopted more formally) plays Atul’s mother, Lopa, in the Globe’s “Rafta, Rafta.” (The actor who was to play her character’s husband, Ranjit Chowdhry, left due to illness and has been replaced by Kamal Marayati.) Chopra agrees with her castmate Sabitri that there are truths in the play that cross cultural lines.

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jim.hebert@uniontrib.com • (619) 293-2040 • Twitter @jimhebert

“Rafta, Rafta”

Old Globe Theatre

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UCSD grad to direct Old Globe's 'Rafta, Rafta'



Jonathan Silverstein

By Diana Saenger

Ten years ago Jonathan Silverstein left UCSD with a MFA in directing and headed to New York where his career as a director has been nearly nonstop. Silverstein is back in San Diego to direct the West Coast premiere of "Rafta, Rafta" beginning preview performances at the Old Globe Theatre on March 19.

The Olivier Award-winning comedy by playwright Ayub Khan-Din is based on "All in Good Time" by Bill Naughton, and is rife with laughs. It's the story of a young Indian couple in England who get married and then move in with the bride's family.

"It's a beautiful story about the complexities of family life and relationships — be they newly married ones or older married relationships or even friendships," Silverstein said. "Many of the plays I've done might be comedies, but they also have a truthful emotional side to them, and this play has both of those things."

"In the center of the story is a very complicated relationship between father and son. Although we are introduced to the problems of the bride and groom, as the play unfolds, we find out that both sets of parents have their own difficulties."

Silverstein helmed the Off Broadway world premiere of "The Temperamentals," "The Dining Room," "Tea and Sympathy," "I Never Sang for My Father," and "The Hasty Heart," among others, and serves as Resident Director for the Keen Company. He does a lot of plays centered on families and that's what enticed him to direct "Rafta, Rafta."



Atul Dutt (Rachid Sabitri) and Vina Patel (Mahira Kakkar) enjoy temporary honeymoon bliss in 'Rafta, Rafta.' Katarzyna Woronowicz

The cast includes Shalin Agarwal, Geeta Citygirl Chopra, Amir Darvish, Nasser Faris, Ariya Ghahramani, Mahira Kakkar, Caralyn Kozlowski, Gita Reddy and Rachid Sabitri.

(The Union-Tribune reported on March 17 that Ranjit Chowdhry, who was set for the role of the bride's father, will be replaced by Kamal Marayati. The newspaper reported Chowdhry left "due to illness.")

Casting calls went out in San Diego, Los Angeles and New York. Chowdhry and Sabitri (the son), have appeared in a prior production of "Rafta, Rafta."

Silverstein added a prologue and epilogue to the script.

"There will be some dancing, and there's a wedding that starts the play with a 45-page scene, full cast, in the living room, so it begins with a bang," Silverstein said.

"And there's a Bollywood number that ends the play – like the 'Jai Ho' dance in 'Slumdog Millionaire.'

" 'Rafta, Rafta,' has a lot of everything – comedy, music, surprises and heart."

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Page 1 of 2

UCSD grad to direct Old Globe's 'Rafta, Rafta'

BY DIANA SAENGER

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Jonathan Silverstein directs 'Rafta, Rafta' opening March 19 at The Old Globe Theatre.

COURTESY

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Silverstein helmed the Off Broadway world premiere of "The Temperamentals,"

If you go

- **What:** 'Rafta, Rafta'
- **When:** Matinees and evenings March 19-April 24
- **Where:** The Old Globe Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park
- **Tickets:** \$29-\$85
- **Contact:** (619) 23-GLOBE
- **Website:** TheOldGlobe.org



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Atul Dutt (Rachid Sabitri) and Vina Patel (Mahira Kakkar) enjoy temporary honeymoon bliss in 'Rafta, Rafta.' KATARZYNA WORONOWICZ

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Darvish, Nasser Faris, Ariya Ghahramani, Mahira Kakkar, Caralyn Kozlowski, Gita Reddy and Rachid Sabitri.

Casting calls went out in San Diego, Los Angeles and New York. Two of the actors, Chowdhry (who plays the bride's father) and Sabitri (the son), have appeared in a prior production of "Rafta, Rafta."

Silverstein added a prologue and epilogue to the script.

"There will be some dancing, and there's a wedding that starts the play with a 45-page scene, full cast, in the living room, so it begins with a bang," Silverstein said.

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Old Globe Cast Announced For Rafta, Rafta..., The Olivier Award-winning Comedy By Ayub Khan-Din

Latest Press Releases and News From I-Newswire.com

Published: 02/26/11 05:05 AM EST

Cast and creative team is announced for Ayub Khan-Din's Olivier Award-winning comedy, Rafta, Rafta.... Directed by Jonathan Silverstein, Rafta, Rafta... will run at San Diego's Old Globe March 19 - April 24, 2011.

Executive Producer Lou Spisto today announced the complete cast and creative team for Ayub Khan-Din's Olivier Award-winning comedy, Rafta, Rafta..., based on All in Good Time by Bill Naughton. Directed by Jonathan Silverstein, Rafta, Rafta... will run in the Old Globe Theatre March 19 - April 24. Preview performances run March 19 - March 23. Opening night is March 24 at 8:00 p.m. Tickets can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the Box Office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park.

Winner of the 2008 Olivier Award for Best New Comedy for its acclaimed run at The National Theatre in London and a hit with critics and audiences in New York, Rafta, Rafta... takes a hilarious look at the generational divide on sex and marriage within a close-knit Indian family living in England. Following their wedding, two newlyweds find that starting their life together under the groom's family's roof is no honeymoon. With warmth and humor, this British comedy examines what happens when a young couple must choose between saving money or their marriage.

The cast of Rafta, Rafta... features Shalin Agarwal (Etash Tailor), Ranjit Chowdhry (Eeshwar Dutt), Geeta Citygirl Chopra (Lopa Dutt), Amir Darvish (Jivaj Bhatt), Nasser Faris (Laxman Patel), Ariya Ghahramani (Jai Dutt), Mahira Kakkar (Vina Patel), Caralyn Kozlowski (Molly Bhatt), Gita Reddy (Lata Patel) and Rachid Sabitri (Atul Dutt).

The creative team includes Alexander Dodge (Scenic Design), Christal Weatherly (Costume Design), Lap Chi Chu (Lighting Design), Paul Peterson (Sound Design), Gillian Lane-Plescia (Dialect Coach), Reetu Patel (Movement Consultant), Mark Danisovszky (Music Consultant) and Diana Moser (Stage Manager).

Playwright Ayub Khan-Din was born in 1961 and grew up in Salford, Manchester. After leaving school he worked briefly as a hairdresser before enrolling in drama school, where he wrote his first stage play, East is East (1997), for Tamasha, a theater company in London. An autobiographical story of a mixed-race family growing up in an overcrowded terraced house in a white, working-class area of Salford in the early 1970s, it was first staged at the Royal Court Theatre in London and subsequently adapted (by himself) into a highly successful feature film. His second play, Last Dance at Dum Dum (1999), concerns the septuagenarian members of the British Indian community in Calcutta, still clinging tightly to their old imperial past. Notes

Large Cap Stocks to Watch Today



on *Falling Leaves* (2004) was first performed at the Royal Court Theatre, and *Rafta, Rafta...* (2007), a comic adaptation of Bill Naughton's 1960s story *All in Good Time*, won a Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Comedy in 2008. His new film, *West is West* (a follow-up to *East is East*), will open soon and the film version of *Rafta, Rafta...* will follow in June. He recently delivered his commissioned play, *Fauzi*, based on Marlow's *Doctor Faustus*, to Lincoln Center Theater. Khan-Din's latest play, *All the Way Home*, will premiere in Manchester, England, and he is currently working on a musical for the Royal National Theatre called *Bunty* Berman Presents.. Khan-Din also works as an actor and has appeared in many films including *My Beautiful Laundrette* and *Sammy and Rosie Get Laid*.

Director Jonathan Silverstein helmed the acclaimed Off Broadway world premiere of *The Temperamentals* by Jon Marans, produced by Daryl Roth, Stacy Shane and Martian Entertainment (Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Ensemble). His other Off Broadway credits include revivals of A.R. Gurney's *The Dining Room* (Drama Desk nomination for Outstanding Director, Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Ensemble), Robert Anderson's classics *Tea and Sympathy* and *I Never Sang for My Father* and John Patrick's *The Hasty Heart*, all for Keen Company, where he serves as Resident Director. His other New York credits include *Red Herring* by Michael Albanese (New York International Fringe Festival, Outstanding Direction award), *Blueprint* by Bixby Elliot (Summer Play Festival), *Cocteau's Indiscretions* and *A Perfect Analysis Given by a Parrot* (Phoenix Theatre Ensemble), *The Rats Are Getting Bigger* (New York International Fringe Festival and The Public Theater's New Work Now! festival), *Greater Messapia* (Queens Theatre in the Park) and *The Train Play* (Clubbed Thumb). Silverstein's regional credits include *The Fantasticks* (Merrimack Repertory Theatre), *Merton of the Movies* and *Marry Me a Little* (Dorset Theatre Festival), *The Triumph of Love* (Cleveland Play House), *Urinetown* and *tick, tick. BOOM!* (Cape Rep Theatre), *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Cymbeline* (The Theatre at Monmouth) and *Ionesco's The Chairs* (Sledgehammer Theatre). Silverstein was featured as one of 2009's Out 100, Out Magazine's annual list of the most outstanding and inspiring men and women of the year.

TICKETS to *Rafta, Rafta...* can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the Box Office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. Performances at the Old Globe Theatre begin on March 19 and continue through April 24. Ticket prices range from \$29 to \$85. Performance times: Previews: Saturday, March 19 at 8:00 p.m., Sunday, March 20 at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 22 at 7:00 p.m. and Wednesday, March 23 at 7:00 p.m. Regular Performances: Tuesday and Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m., Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings at 8:00 p.m., Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2:00 p.m. and Sunday evenings at 7:00 p.m. There is also a Wednesday matinee on April 13 at 2:00 p.m. and no Saturday matinee performance on April 16. Discounts are available for full-time students, patrons 29 years of age and under, seniors and groups of 10 or more.

Associated events taking place during the run of *Rafta, Rafta...* include:

INSIGHT SEMINAR: *Rafta, Rafta...*

Monday, March 21 at 7:00 p.m. FREE

Insight Seminars are informal presentations of ideas and insights to enhance the theater-going experience. The seminars feature a panel selected from the artistic company of each production and take place in the theater where the production is performed. Reception, 6:30 p.m. Seminar, 7:00 p.m. Admission is free and reservations are not required.

POST-SHOW FORUMS: *Rafta, Rafta...*

Tuesdays, March 29 and April 5 and Wednesday, April 13. FREE

Discuss the play with members of the *Rafta, Rafta...* cast and crew at post-show discussions led by the Globe's creative staff after the performances.

OUT AT THE GLOBE: Thursday, March 31 at 6:30 p.m. \$20

An evening for gay and lesbian theater lovers and the whole LGBT community, *Out at the Globe* includes a hosted wine and martini bar, appetizers and door prizes. \$20 per person. RSVP at (619) 23-GLOBE. (Tickets to *Rafta, Rafta...* are sold separately.)

THANK GLOBE IT'S FRIDAY: Fridays, March 25 and April 1 at 6:30 p.m. \$20

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LOCATION: The Old Globe is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way. There are numerous free parking lots available throughout the park. Valet parking is also available (\$10). For additional parking information visit www.BalboaPark.org.

CALENDAR: Jane Austen's *Emma* - A Musical Romantic Comedy (1/15-3/6), *Death of a Salesman* (1/22-2/27), *Rafta, Rafta...* (3/19-4/24), *Groundswell* (3/12-4/17), August: *Osage County* (5/7-6/12), *Life of Riley* (4/30-6/5).

PHOTO EDITORS: Digital images of The Old Globe's productions are available at www.TheOldGlobe.org/pressroom.

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The Tony Award-winning Old Globe is one of the country's leading professional regional theaters and has stood as San Diego's flagship arts institution for 75 years. Under the direction of Executive Producer Louis G. Spisto, The Old Globe produces a year-round season of 15 productions of classic, contemporary and new works on its three Balboa Park stages: the 600-seat Old Globe Theatre, the 250-seat Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre and the 612-seat outdoor Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, home of its internationally renowned Shakespeare Festival. More than 250,000 people attend Globe productions annually and participate in the theater's education and community programs. Numerous world premieres such as *The Full Monty*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *A Catered Affair*, and the annual holiday musical, *Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas!*, have been developed at The Old Globe and have gone on to enjoy highly successful runs on Broadway and at regional theaters across the country.

x x x

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

SHALIN AGARWAL (Etash Tailor) is thrilled to be making his Old Globe debut with this production of *Rafta, Rafta...* He recently starred in two productions of Kristoffer Diaz's Pulitzer Prize finalist play, *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity*, at the Mixed Blood Theatre in Minneapolis and InterAct Theatre Company in Philadelphia. His other New York and regional theater credits include *There or Here* (Hypothetical Theatre Company), *subUrbia* (PossEble Theatre Company), *Breakroom* (Manhattan Repertory Theatre), *Antony and Cleopatra* (Hudson Shakespeare Company), *King Lear* (Kitchen Dog Theater) and *The Tale of the Allergist's Wife* (Penobscot Theatre Company). Agarwal has appeared on television in "30 Rock," "Cupid," "One Life to Live," "As the World Turns" and in the films *Homeland*, *A Dangerous Place* and *Bronx Paradise*.

RANJIT CHOWDHRY (Eeshwar Dutt) has performed *The Mesmerist* with Steppenwolf Theatre Company and *Rafta, Rafta...* with The New Group. His film credits include *Mississippi Masala*, *Girl Six*, *Such a Long Journey*, *Fire*, *The Perez Family*, *Bollywood/Hollywood* and *The Last Holiday*. His television credits include "NYPD Blue," a recurring role on "Cosby," "Prison Break" and "The Office." In India, Chowdhry has performed in a dozen or so Bollywood films and later formed his own theater group, Stages. As a writer he has adapted R. K. Narayan's *Malgudi Days* for international television. He also wrote and starred in Deepa Mehta's *Sam and Me*, runner-up for the Cam ra d'Or at the 1991 Cannes Film Festival.

GEETA CITYGIRL CHOPRA (Lopa Dutt) is a proud native New Yorker and is overjoyed to be making her Old Globe debut. She started SALAAM Theatre (the first professional South Asian theater/arts company in the USA), and for over 10 years as Artistic Director, she has had the opportunity to express her personal and creative ideals. Her stage credits include *Charles Mee's Queens Boulevard (the Musical)* (Signature Theatre Company), *Serendib* (The Ensemble Studio Theatre), *The Wound* (La MaMa E.T.C.), *Democracy in Islam* and *Trail of Tears* (Theater for the New City), *Kalighat* (Baruch Performing Arts Center) and *Gallathea and Law Against Lovers* (Aaron Davis Hall). Citygirl Chopra's television credits include "The Good Wife," "Rescue Me," "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit" and "Law & Order: Criminal Intent."

AMIR DARVISH (Jivaj Bhatt) is the winner of the 2010 New York Innovative Theatre Award for Outstanding Actor in a Featured Role in *Psych* and a New York Midtown International Theatre Festival nominee for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Play for *The Higher Education of Khalid Amir*. His previous New York theater credits include *Taxi To Janna*, *Falling*, *Homeland*, *Shoes*, *Dinner with Ahmed*, *Mona's Dream*, *subUrbia*, 1001 and the critically acclaimed Off Broadway one-man show about Freddie Mercury titled *Mercury: The Afterlife and Times of a Rock God*. In addition to voice-over and commercial work, Darvish has appeared in numerous film and television productions including *Month to Month*, *Charlie Wilson's War*, *Confessions*, *The Pink Panther*, "Running Wilde," "The Colbert Report," "Law & Order," "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart," "Human Giant," "Late Show with David Letterman," "Spin City," "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit," "The Unusuals," "NYPD Blue" and most recently the new series "Bar Karma."

NASSER FARIS (Laxman Patel) most recently played the role of Baba in the theatrical production of *The Kite Runner* at Actors Theatre of Louisville and Cleveland Play House, directed by Marc Masterson. He also portrayed Emad Al-Bayit in the world premiere of Michele Lowe's play *Inana*, directed by Michael Pressman at the Ricketson Theatre in Denver. He also costarred in the indie feature *AmericanEast* (Best Picture at the 2008 Madrid International Film Festival and First Time Film Festival in Los Angeles) with Tony Shalhoub and Sarah Shahi. His other credits include recurring guest role on "24" and guest star roles on "The Cleaner," "The Unit," "Brothers & Sisters," "The Shield," "Sleeper Cell," "JAG," "NYPD Blue" and "Malcolm in the Middle." He starred in the television movies *Saving Jessica Lynch* and *Homeland Security*. Faris' feature film credits include David Mamet's *Spartan*, Vadim Perelman's *House of Sand and Fog*, Sam Mendes' *Jarhead* and Steven Soderbergh's *Ocean's Twelve*. His recent stage credits include the world premiere of *Benedictus* in San Francisco and Los Angeles and Akhmed in Moscow Arts Theatre's *The Shelter at Odyssey Theatre Ensemble* in Los Angeles (five Ovation Award nominations, including Ensemble Performance).

ARIYA GHABRAMANI (Jai Dutt) is proud and humbled to join the historic Old Globe for the first time in *Rafta, Rafta...* He has recently completed work on a staged reading of *Urge for Going* at The Public Theater and *The Kite Runner* at Actors Theatre of

Louisville and Cleveland Play House, as well as his first feature film, Ken Kushner's *When the Devil Comes*, and the Twentieth Century Fox television series *"New Amsterdam."* Ghahramani's most recent theater credits include the North American premiere of *Camille*, *Seven Against Thebes*, *The Good Woman of Setzuan*, *The Tempest*, *The Laramie Project*, *Once Upon a Mattress*, *Honk!*, *The Waltz of the Toreadors*, *The Shadow Box*, *Oklahoma!*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Wild Party*.

MAHIRA KAKKAR (Vina Patel) is happy to be making her Old Globe debut. Her Off Broadway and New York credits include *All's Well That Ends Well* (The Public Theater), *Sophistry* (The Beckett Theatre), *Miss Witherspoon* (Playwrights Horizons), *The Cave Dwellers* (The Pearl Theater), *Opus* (Primary Stages) and *Betrothed* (Ohio Theatre). She has appeared regionally in *Three Sisters* and *Lady Windermere's Fan* (CENTERSTAGE), *Romeo and Juliet* (Arden Theatre Company and Virginia Stage Company), *Our Town* and *Coriolanus* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), *Seven* (Skirball Cultural Center and international), *Around the World* (Florida Studio Theatre) and *Inana* (Denver Center Theatre Company). Her film and television credits include *A Night in the Hill*, *"Blue Bloods"* and *"Law & Order: Criminal Intent."*

CARALYN KOZLOWSKI (Molly Bhatt) is thrilled to return to The Old Globe, having previously played Gretchen in *Boeing-Boeing* and Amanda in Amy Freed's *Restoration Comedy*, a role she created at Seattle Repertory Theatre. Her New York theater credits include *I Hate Hamlet*, *Flygirls*, *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, *Secrets of a Soccer Mom*, *Fair Game*, *Murdering Marlowe*, *The Milliner* and *The Odyssey*. In eight seasons with The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, her favorites have included *Beatrice in The Servant of Two Masters*, Amanda in *Private Lives*, Ilona in *The Play's the Thing*, Gwendolen in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Desdemona in *Othello*, Olivia in *Twelfth Night* and Irina in *Three Sisters*. Kozlowski's other credits include *Rosalind in As You Like It* (Connecticut Repertory Theatre) and *Mac in Three Viewings* and *Evelyn in The Shape of Things* (Barrington Stage Company). Her television and film credits include *"Law & Order," "Numb3rs," "Six Degrees," "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit," "Guiding Light," "All My Children," "Third Watch"* and *Practical Magic*.

GITA REDDY (Lata Patel) is overjoyed to be back in San Diego and making her Old Globe debut. Her theater credits include *When January Feels Like Summer* (City Theatre and Sundance Institute Theatre Lab), *The Moth and The Flame* and *Tamburlaine* (Target Margin Theater), *Staying Afloat* (Ice Factory, directed by Lenora Champagne), *Slavey* (Clubbed Thumb, directed by Robert O'Hara), Ariel Dorfman's *Widows* (Reverie Theatre Company, directed by Hal Brooks), Rajiv Joseph's *The Leopard and the Fox* (AlterEgo Theatre Company), *Betrothed* (Ripe Time), Peter Gil-Sheridan's *Topsy Turvy Mouse* (Cherry Lane Theatre Mentor Project, directed by Daniella Topol), Han Ong's *The Suitcase Trilogy* (Ma-Yi Writer's Lab workshop, directed by Ron Daniels), *Queen of the Remote Control* (Mixed Blood Theatre) and *Air Raid* (National Asian American Theatre Company). Reddy's film and television credits include *Eat Pray Love*, *"Law & Order," "Possible Side Effects"* (Tim Robbins' pilot for Showtime), *"Numb3rs," "Where Are You Going, Elena?"* (SXSW music video) and *Prana* with Danny Glover. Her solo performance work includes *Secret M.U.T.A.N.T.* (published in *Tokens: The NYC Asian American Experience on Stage*, Temple University Press). Her theater directing credits include *Turning Tables* (Coffee Cup) and *7Eleven: Franchised* (Desipina & Company).

RACHID SABITRI (Atul Dutt) is delighted to be joining The Old Globe after his recent U.S. theatrical debut, *The Tale of the Allergist's Wife* at La Mirada Theatre. His previous U.K. credits include the West End production of *Romeo and Juliet* and the National Tours of *Rafta, Rafta...* (directed by Nicholas Hytner), *Bloodtide* and *Beyond Midnight*. His regional credits include *Twelfth Night* (Royal & Derngate Theatre in Northampton), *Beautiful Thing* (York Theatre Royal) and *Tangier Tattoo* (Glyndebourne). Sabitri's television credits include *Generation Kill* (HBO), *"The Odds"* (pilot, CBS), *"Doctor Who," "Casualty," "Wannabes"* and *"Family Business"* (BBC), *The Walk* and *"Blue Murder"* (Granada TV) and *"The Bill"* (Thames Television). He has also had an extensive voice-over career including the recent motion pictures *The Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time* and *The Wild Swans* and the radio soaps *Silver Street* and *Together* for the BBC.

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The much-loved Rafta, Rafta comes to California

ARTHUR J PAIS

Call it a sitcom with dark edges or simply a comedy of maladjustments, the play *Rafta, Rafta* is infectious. And though the English language comedy is about a newlywed Indian couple in a British town finding life in the groom's parent's home no honeymoon, it has universal appeal.

It was a hit in New York about three years ago, running for over three months. Now, some of the best-known artists in the South Asian production scene in New York get an opportunity to shine in the new version of writer Ayub Khan-Din's work, on at the Old Globe Theater in San Diego, California. Though Ranjit Chowdhry, who got excellent reviews for his work in the New York production, had to exit for health reasons, the new version directed by Jonathan Silverstein has Mahira Kakkar, Gita Citygirl Chopra and Gita Reddy in principal roles.

Silverstein, who loved the New York production, admits he felt taking on *Rafta, Rafta* required a mental leap into family dynamics that initially seemed so foreign.

'It's Indians living in Britain, very different from this Jewish boy who lives in New York,' Silverstein told the *San Diego Union Tribune*, adding: 'Indians can be just as loud and judgmental as Jews can be.'

Khan-Din is best known for the film *East Is East* and its sequel *West Is West*, both featuring Om Puri as the boorish Pakistani immigrant in England. The sequel, which has already grossed \$5 million in the

United Kingdom, is due soon in America. A big screen adaptation of *Rafta, Rafta* is being cast in London, to be released early next year.

For the play *Rafta, Rafta*, Khan-Din adapted a 1960s story — *All in Good Time* by Bill Naughton — to look at the generational divide on sex and marriage within a close-knit Indian family living in a town near Manchester. It could be a story of

Indian families anywhere.

Following their wedding, the couple (Mahira Kakkar and Rachid Sabitri) must soon choose between saving money or their marriage. Built amidst the comic machinations to get the couple consummate their marriage and have their first baby is a poignant father-son story. In the play's new avatar, there is also a boisterous song, taken from the hit Hindi film *Jab We Met*.



At the rehearsal: Gita Reddy, Nasser Faris, Mahira Kakkar, Rachid Sabitri and Geeta Citygirl Chopra

'The Indian thing adds dimension, it adds flavor'

In *Rafta, Rafta*, Gita Citygirl Chopra, the founder of the Salaam Theatre in New York, plays Lopa Dutt, the bridegroom's mother.

How did you get into the play?

My relationship with this play goes back a few years. In 2008, I auditioned for the New York production and got to the final callbacks, but did not book the role of Lata Patel (the bride's mother). In November 2010, the casting search for this West Coast premiere began in various cities around the country. I was once again submitted for the role of Lata Patel. At my first audition, the (Old) Globe's casting director Samantha Barrie and Jonathan Silverstein immediately said they didn't see me as a correct fit for the role of Lata. Before I could be too disappointed, they asked me to prepare the audition material for the role of Lopa Dutt. I was very surprised since I didn't know if I was old enough to play Lopa but I also knew it is a juicier part. Instead of second-guessing them, I began to prepare for my next audition. The first step was to remove the self-doubt about me and the role of Lopa and give them an honest and real portrayal of the character. After that, I had a final callback audition with the director before the decisions were made in January. When I got the offer, I couldn't be happier. The Old Globe is such a prestigious theater company. To work at The Old Globe is a privilege and a blessing.

What is special about this play?

To me, this is a story about families, about the immigrant generation and their 'Westernized' kids and the ways in which the parents have come to this new land without a handbook on how to live in this new society. The play takes place in Bolton (northern England in Manchester) — a working-class neighborhood. It's a story about a newly married couple (*Vina and Atul*) who have chosen to live with the groom's parents until they can save up enough money to get their own place. Since Atul's parents (*Lopa and Eeshwar*) live in a small, modest house, the newlyweds are not able to consummate their marriage. Instead of finding a solution, the parents begin to start bringing up their own memories and issues about the early days of their own marriages. It is also a wonderful exploration of the parents' generation. Instead of portraying them in a stereotypical way, we really get to know the parents and their experiences.

Ranjit Chowdhury is not in the production.

It was wonderful to work with Ranjit Chowdhury during the three weeks of rehearsals. Since he had performed this leading role in the New York production, he had some great insights into this complicated play. Unfortunately to the disappointment to everyone, Ranjit had to permanently leave the production due to illness last week, just three days before we were scheduled to open to the public. My new stage husband is being played by Los Angeles-based Kamal Marayati, a fantastic and charming actor.

You said recently, 'The fact that it originally was written not for an Indian cast — to me that speaks volumes... Ayub Khan-Din saw that, wow, I can actually turn this into a brown version with the same story.'

The origin of this play is quite fascinating. In 1965, Irish-born British writer Bill Naughton wrote the play *All in Good Time*, centering on British families. A year later, it was adapted for the screen as *The Family Way*. My understanding is that Ayub Khan-Din saw this film and thought it could easily be adapted to involve South Asians. And the fascinating part is much of the dialogue is the same in both plays. Even some character names start with the same letter. Example: Ezra and Lucy have become Eeshwar and Lopa in *Rafta, Rafta*. The fact that this play was not written with Indian families in mind, speaks to the universality of the story. You could change the families into any ethnicities. And the fact this story concerns a Punjabi family and a Gujarati family, just adds a bit of *masala* and a certain flavor to the mix. To me, the Indian cultural part is just the landscape in which we are playing this story. I have said in an interview it could be Greek, it could be Italian, it could be anything. Because it's about family; it's about communication; it's about these two generations. To me, that's the core of the story. The Indian thing adds dimension, it adds flavor, but in the larger picture the play is not about Indians as such.

— Arthur J Pais

These Days | Mon-Thurs at 9 a.m. on KPBS Radio

'Rafta, Rafta' Offers South Asian And Middle Eastern Actors Complex Roles

By [Angela Carone](#), [Maureen Cavanaugh](#)

March 23, 2011



The Indian family drama "Rafta, Rafta" offers actors of Middle Eastern and South Asian descent a chance to play complex characters on the stage. We'll talk with three of those actors and learn more about the Old Globe production.

Guests:

Geeta "Citygirl" Chopra plays the character of Lopa Dutt, the groom's mother.

Rachid Sabitri plays the character of Atul Dutt, the newly married young man at the center of the play.

Nasser Farris plays Laxman Patel, the father of the bride, in the Old Globe's "Rafta, Rafta."

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Above: (l. to r.) Geeta Citygirl Chopra as Lopa Dutt, Mahira Kakkar as Vina Patel and Rachid Sabitri as Atul Dutt in the West Coast Premiere of Ayub Khan-Din's "Rafta, Rafta," running March 19 - April 24, 2011 in the Old Globe Theatre. Photo by J. Katarzyna Woronowicz.



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THE UNITED NATIONS OF RAFTA, RAFTA...

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From L to R Ariya Ghahramani, Amir Darvish, Shalin Agarwal and Rachid Sabitri

by david vera

The term “star-studded” doesn’t necessarily describe a cast of obscenely paid celebrities on a red carpet. In fact, it might better describe the tireless troupe behind the vivid characters in Jonathan Silverstein’s eagerly anticipated production of Ayub Khan-Din’s *Rafta, Rafta...*—a tale of young newlyweds who decide to live with the groom’s parents to save some money. Finding that they cannot consummate the marriage behind paper-thin walls, wild comedy is wrung out of the new couple’s tragic circumstances and new obstacles “pop up” left and right, while the groom’s bait and tackle seems unable to do the same. The result is a witty and warmly relatable comedy about family, both blood-locked and symbolic.

The Rage Monthly had the distinct pleasure of speaking with four talented cast members from what the production team has affectionately called “The mini-United Nations:” **Rachid Sabitri**, a British-born New Yorker of Moroccan descent who plays Atul Dutt, the groom; **Shalin Agarwal**, a Miami native of Indian lineage who plays Etash Tailor, Atul’s best friend; **Amir Darvish**, an Iranian-American who grew up in Boston and plays Jivaj Bhatt, Atul’s boss; and the young **Ariya Ghahramani**, also of Iranian ancestry, who portrays Atul’s brother, Jai Dutt.

“I’m Indian but I came out Cuban!” Laughs Shalin. “One of the things I like about this play is that it reminds me a lot of my family growing up.”

This familiarity seems to be one of the major sources of attraction to this play.

“I think the success of this play is the fact that it crosses all kinds of cultures and borders,” said Rachid. “I imagine that when you come and watch it, you’re going to recognize a member of your family. Not to give too much away, but there’s singing, dancing, fighting, accents, brown people, curry...What more could you want?”

Though *Rafta, Rafta...* is an adaptation of the 1963 Bill Naughton play, *All in Good Time*, each character is integral to the plot.

“Etash Tailor is Atul’s best friend,” detailed Shalin. “During this big wedding scene, he’s basically giving inside information on Atul and letting everyone know what he’s like. They share a love of classical Indian cinema. In *All in Good Time*, my character didn’t even exist. Part of the struggle was to make him active and alive. Luckily, Jonathan’s been really great about creating this character out of the little that’s written about him. That, and I sing a classical Indian song to serenade Atul. I had to learn a lot of inflections that aren’t really, uh, normal in the way we sing.”

Though building a role from the ground up is a daunting task for any actor, *Rafta*’s lead also faced challenges, not the least of which were, “...convincing myself that I’ve got erectile dysfunction. (laughs) Atul gets quite desperate during the play, and so his actions make him not-the-most-likeable-of-characters. What’s interesting for me is trying to find this fine line of giving

the audience a bit of what this guy was like before and showing that the way that he's reacting is just a byproduct of the situation—so that we can feel some sympathy for him. It's about him growing up and dealing with these adult situations. That's the biggest challenge: swaying a bit of empathy for the character, because what's written in the script is the action, not the subtext. I just kind of lucked out that the director liked the direction I wanted to go with it. So it's nice, for a change...as opposed to, 'NEXT!'"

I actually forgot, the biggest issue I've had is working with one of the members of the cast: Shalin Agarwal—he's very awkward. 'Sound more English, Shalin! You're not going to do it like THAT, are you?' (laughs)."

"He literally stops in the middle of scenes...'You're going to say it like that?' (laughs)"

"Atul has a strong regional dialect—it's quite different from the way I actually speak. All the older characters have Indian accents while the younger generation has a northwest England accent. It's like figuring out a puzzle—what drives that particular individual, what makes him tick. With good writing, you can—as an actor—bring a whole spectrum of colors to the canvas. That's exciting to me. I also like the challenges of accents, singing, physically having to change...anything that takes me away from being me. (laughs)"

These two aren't the only ones whose characters challenge them.

"One word for my character is misunderstood," admitted Amir. "Jivaj comes across as very confident, gruff, kind of the jokester whom everyone looks down upon. But that's a front. There's other stuff going on, as with any normal human being. His back-story is coming from Northern India and then moving to Bolton after losing his family and starting his life again. So really, this whole cast of characters is Jivaj's family. He came from nothing and really made a man out of himself. The difficult part was showing his vulnerability and what makes him a relatable human being. That's been a challenge because it's easy to have him be one-dimensional. It's funny, we're in previews right now. You go in thinking that you're going to get a reaction out of the audience, and it's been very different for me. I've come to the conclusion that when most people see Jivaj, they either want to punch me or f*ck me. (laughs) So it's just a matter of layering him a little bit more—maybe even make them like him a little bit too."

On the other end of the scale is Ariya's character, Jai—the one whom Ayub calls "the horny younger brother."

"He's attracted to Atul's wife...kind of a troublemaker," said Ariya. "I like him (laughs) I think he's a very fun character to play—very different from any other role I've ever played. I just finished *The Kite Runner*, which is a very intense drama. So to come back and do something as colorful and vibrant as *Rafta, Rafta...* is a very different taste."

Though it may seem as though these boys are having too much fun with what they do, their devotion and professionalism are unquestionable.

"A lot of my previous roles have been strong and confident characters who are broken on the inside," Amir elaborated. "I'm really attracted to someone who is vulnerable and weak to begin with. It takes a lot to put yourself out there, especially onstage, and be weak and vulnerable consistently. You really have to tap into certain experienced in your life and bring it out onstage."

"Obviously you want to immerse yourself in the culture and watch Bollywood films. I personally don't have an Indian accent. In the play, Jai has a Bolton (British) accent. I worked with an amazing dialect coach—Gillian Lane Plescia—who is just phenomenal. Also, the costumes really help. Especially in this play which begins at a massive wedding. When you're performing in costume, it absolutely brings it to life. I actually see a lot of similarities between Indian and Iranian culture—very close-knit, big celebrations, everybody's in each other's affairs, they want the best for their kids...and reputation is very important in both cultures."

"There's definitely a common thread between all Middle Eastern cultures. Our families can be very loud, (laughs) but at the same time very warm, affectionate and loving. There's a lot of respect within the family despite conflict...it doesn't matter where you're from. It's family."

"We had a cast member who fell ill and he had to be replaced four weeks in. He was playing my father. We became very close, we built that chemistry. Then, when a new actor came in, we had to develop that relationship all over again in a very short time. We want to make sure we know each other well and we're believable as a family. That transition was definitely the most challenging for me."

Family clearly takes center stage in *Rafta*, but how did a career onstage initially sound to the families of these actors? Ariya has studied drama in London and New York with great success, but... "I think my parents were weary about me becoming an actor—they pushed 'doctor' and 'lawyer' on me as soon as I came out of the womb. They were trying to convince me that being a lawyer was exactly like being an actor: you get to perform in front of the court...so it took a few years."

After seeing him perform, however, Ariya's parents began actively encouraging him.

"Now during every audition, they call me up, 'have you drunk enough water? Have you done this...done that?' ...So I've been very blessed along the way. I'm 23; I'm sort of the baby of the cast. My agent, Shirley Faison (mother of Donald Faison of *Scrubs* fame), signed me while I was still in school. *Rafta, Rafta...* was the first audition that I ever went on in New York. I went in for the part of Atul—which Rachid is playing now. I just wasn't right for it, so they had me read Jai, the younger brother. They said, 'you're very charismatic. How much do you know about Indian culture?' I said, 'Well...I saw Bombay Dreams, I enjoy Indian food and I did research!' (laughs) and I did! I just wasn't Indian, and they ended up going with an all-Indian cast. So fast-forward three or four years, I tried for Atul again, and again they said, 'Let's go with the younger brother.' So I read it and they were laughing the entire time. And here I am. I came full circle four years later!"

For Shalin, it came just as natural.

"I was the youngest in my family so I was always entertaining people—the ham of the family...but it was pretty much *The Lion in The Wizard of Oz* that did it for me! (laughs)"

Amir's talents were spotted at an early age as well.

"My fourth grade teacher insisted on casting me in school plays and said that this was something I had to pursue. She took me under her wing through all of elementary school and I decided to pursue it through high school and graduate school. She was my inspiration."

And Rachid entered the profession with love on the brain.

"I got into it through a crush with a girl at school back in the day. I used to walk her home. She went missing one night—it turned out she was in the school production of a show, so I decided to try out for the ensemble. The only other brown kid in the school was playing one of the leads...he broke his leg, I ended up playing one of the leads and the rest is history!"

As far as the differences between stage and film go, the actors have rather varied views.

"It's a completely different art form. The audience plays a huge role in what happens when you're performing, whereas on film it's just you and the camera and your screen partner...not taking the hundreds of crew in the background and the director. The stage is a lot more intimate—you get that immediate feedback with what you're doing. It's incomparable."

"Ultimately you're doing the same thing, right? Just getting up in front of people, dressed up as someone else, saying lines."

"I make a conscious shift between film and theatre acting. It's the same in that it all comes down to believability. But there's no doubt that when you're in front of camera, you've got to feel smaller."

"...Or when you're in front of 600 people in the audience. There are people up in the balcony. You've got to open up and use your body a bit more."

"There's absolutely nothing like performing in front of a live audience. You can literally feel the energy in the air on an opening night. It takes a different set of skills to be on stage than it does to be on camera. The little nuances and gestures—the camera will catch them whereas audiences won't. You have to make everything a little more grand. My firm belief is that if you're honest, whatever the character, you shouldn't have to worry whether it's stage or film. Audiences from both are smart and they'll be able to catch on when you're in and out of the character. Whenever people ask me whether I prefer being on film or on stage, I tell them that as actors, we just want to work in any that we possibly can! (laughs)"

Though their *Rafta* roles are satisfyingly challenging, the boys do have a few common favorites regarding the types of characters to play.

"I enjoy playing any character that challenges me. When I get a script and I'm terrified of it, I know it's something that I should do. I remember actors in school, if they were great at auditioning, they would take the auditioning workshop. If they were great at Shakespeare, they'd go and take the Shakespeare workshop...they would never want to take a class in something they didn't feel comfortable with. Back then, I never did any comedies. I was always the dramatic/classical actor—very intense roles. So I guess I love dramatic characters. A 20-year-old character's dialogue isn't as beautiful as a 30-year-old's dialogue. But I enjoy anything that challenges me—different cultures, different ways of life, characters with different objectives...I love to play an eclectic group of roles."

"It's work, I love it. Any medium it happens to come in, I embrace it."

"Well, the ones I LEAST like portraying are 'Terrorist #3.' (laughs)"

"For me it's 'Deli Owner.' (laughs)"

"I'd love to play a deli-owner!"

"I actually really enjoyed playing a terrorist one time. I got freakin gangsta,' dude! It was great! (laughs)"

"I've come to the conclusion I'm a rubbish terrorist."

"You're too nice! (laughs) "I'm really attracted to good writing. Whether it's comedy or drama, I like trusting the writing and letting my character go from there."

"It's been an interesting six weeks in the rehearsal process with what it feels like not being able to get it up, so to speak. (laughs)"

"I remember when 9/11 attacks happened. I wondered, 'my god, are there going to be any roles for my type at this point? Am I going to play nothing but terrorists for the rest of my life?' I just wasn't sure. I'm lucky because I'm fairer skinned. I never really wanted to change my name. I always believed that the name you're born with is what drives you and takes you through life. I didn't want to cut off my past and my family for an easier time."

For now, the boys are quite content with their roles and the certain success that each will bring to the plot, even though Shalin originally auditioned for the role that Rachid is playing now.

"He just couldn't do an English accent as good as me. (laughs)"

"And *he* basically came in and said, 'I have erectile dysfunction.' (laughs)"

If they're this quick *offstage*, I'm sure we're in for a riot of a laugh at The Old Globe.

Rafta, Rafta... continues its West Coast premiere at The Old Globe Theatre until Sunday, April 24. Go to oldglobe.org for tickets and show times.

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The United Nations of *Rafta, Rafta...*

The term “star-studded” doesn’t necessarily describe a cast of obscenely paid celebrities on a red carpet. In fact, it might better describe the tireless troupe behind the vivid characters in Jonathan Silverstein’s eagerly anticipated production of Ayub Khan-Din’s *Rafta, Rafta...* — a tale of young newlyweds who decide to live with the groom’s parents to save some money. Finding that they cannot consummate the marriage behind paper-thin walls, wild comedy is wrung out of the new couple’s tragic circumstances and new obstacles “pop up” left and right, while the groom’s bait and tackle seems unable to do the same. The result is a witty and warmly relatable comedy about family, both blood-locked and symbolic.

The Rage Monthly had the distinct pleasure of speaking with four talented cast members from what the production team has affectionately called “The mini-United Nations.” **Rachid Sabitri**, a British-born New Yorker of Moroccan descent who plays Atul Dutt, the groom; **Shalin Agarwal**, a Miami native of Indian lineage who plays Etash Tailor, Atul’s best friend; **Amir Darvish**, an Iranian-American who grew up in Boston and plays Jivaj Bhatt, Atul’s boss; and the young **Ariya Ghahramani**, also of Iranian ancestry, who portrays Atul’s brother, Jai Dutt.

“I’m Indian but I came out Cuban!” Laughs Shalin. “One of the things I like about this play is that it reminds me a lot of my family growing up.”

This familiarity seems to be one of the major sources of attraction to this play.

“I think the success of this play is the fact that it crosses all kinds of cultures and borders,” said Rachid. “I imagine that when you come and watch it, you’re going to recognize a member of your family. Not to give too much away, but there’s singing, dancing, fighting, accents, brown people, curry... What more could you want?”

Though *Rafta, Rafta...* is an adaptation of the 1963 Bill Naughton play, *All in Good Time*, each character is integral to the plot.

“Etash Tailor is Atul’s best friend,” detailed Shalin. “During this big wedding scene, he’s

basically giving inside information on Atul and letting everyone know what he’s like. They share a love of classical Indian cinema. In *All in Good Time*, my character didn’t even exist. Part of the struggle was to make him active and alive. Luckily, Jonathan’s been really great about creating this character out of the little that’s written about him. That, and I sing a classical Indian song to serenade Atul. I had to learn a lot of inflections that aren’t really, uh, normal in the way we sing.”

Though building a role from the ground up is a daunting task for any actor, *Rafta’s* lead also faced challenges, not the least of which were, “...convincing myself that I’ve got erectile dysfunction. (laughs) Atul gets quite desperate during the play, and so his actions make him not-the-most-likeable-of-characters. What’s interesting for me is trying to find this fine line of giving the audience a bit of what this guy was like before and showing that the way that he’s reacting is just a byproduct of the situation—so that we can feel some sympathy for him. It’s about him growing up and dealing with these adult situations. That’s the biggest challenge: swaying a bit of empathy for the character, because what’s written in the script is the action, not the subtext. I just kind of lucked out that the director liked the direction I wanted to go with it. So it’s nice, for a change... as opposed to, ‘NEXT!’”



RACHID



SHALIN



AMIR



ARIYA

I actually forgot, the biggest issue I've had is working with one of the members of the cast: Shalin Agarwal—he's very awkward. 'Sound more English, Shalin! You're not going to do it like THAT, are you?' (laughs)."

"He literally stops in the middle of scenes... 'You're going to say it like that?' (laughs)"

"Atul has a strong regional dialect—it's quite different from the way I actually speak. All the older characters have Indian accents while the younger generation has a northwest England accent. It's like figuring out a puzzle—what drives that particular individual, what makes him tick. With good writing, you can—as an actor—bring a whole spectrum of colors to the canvas. That's exciting to me. I also like the challenges of accents, singing, physically having to change... anything that takes me away from being me. (laughs)"

These two aren't the only ones whose characters challenge them.

"One word for my character is misunderstood," admitted Amir. "Jivaj comes across as very confident, gruff, kind of the jokester whom everyone looks down upon. But that's a front. There's other stuff going on, as with any normal human being. His back story is coming from Northern India and then moving to Bolton after losing his family and starting his life again. So really, this whole cast of characters is Jivaj's family. He came from nothing and really made a man out of himself. The difficult part was showing his vulnerability and what makes him a relatable human being. That's been a challenge because it's easy to have him be one-dimensional. It's funny, we're in previews right now. You go in thinking that you're going to get a reaction out of the audience, and it's been very different for me. I've come to the conclusion that when most people see Jivaj, they either want to punch me or f*ck me. (laughs) So it's just a matter of layering him a little bit more—maybe even make them like him a little bit too."

On the other end of the scale is Ariya's character, Jai—the one whom Ayub calls "the horny younger brother."

"He's attracted to Atul's wife... kind of a troublemaker," said Ariya. "I like him (laughs) I think he's a very fun character to play—very different from any other role I've ever played. I just finished *The Kite Runner* which is a very intense drama. So to come back

and do something as colorful and vibrant as *Rafta, Rafta...* is a very different taste."

Though it may seem as though these boys are having too much fun with what they do, their devotion and professionalism are unquestionable.

"A lot of my previous roles have been strong and confident characters who are broken on the inside," Amir elaborated. "I'm really attracted to someone who is vulnerable and weak to begin with. It takes a lot to put yourself out there, especially onstage, and be weak and vulnerable consistently. You really have to tap into certain experienced in your life and bring it out onstage."

"Obviously you want to immerse yourself in the culture and watch Bollywood films. I personally don't have an Indian accent. In the play, Jai has a Bolton (British) accent. I worked with an amazing dialect coach—Gillian Lane Plescia—who is just phenomenal. Also, the costumes really help. Especially in this play which begins at a massive wedding. When you're performing in costume, it absolutely brings it to life. I actually see a lot of similarities between Indian and Iranian culture—very close-knit, big celebrations, everybody's in each other's affairs, they want the best for their kids... and reputation is very important in both cultures."

"There's definitely a common thread between all Middle Eastern cultures. Our families can be very loud, (laughs) but at the same time very warm, affectionate and loving. There's a lot of respect within the family despite conflict... it doesn't matter where you're from. It's family."

"We had a cast member who fell ill and he had to be replaced four weeks in. He was playing my father. We became very close, we built that chemistry. Then, when a new actor came in, we had to develop that relationship all over again in a very short time. We want to make sure we know each other well and we're believable as a family. That transition was definitely the most challenging for me."

To read the COMPLETE interview, visit ragemonthly.com.

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ANNE MARIE WELSH
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FROM E1
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A genial man of Arab descent, he pulls out a stack of 5-by-7 file cards, each containing a line or speech, all bound with a thick metal ring. "I asked for these, so I could just flip through at odd moments, when I'm eating or backstage. The Globe also brought in a script helper to run lines."

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"We already had a kind of shorthand; we spoke the same language," Odera said.

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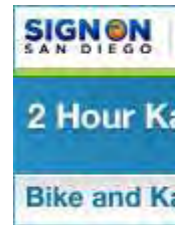
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Getting their act together quickly

Last-minute substitutes ably step into major roles at Old Globe

BY ANNE MARIE WELSH SPECIAL TO THE U-T

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED APRIL 10, 2011 AT 12:01 A.M., UPDATED APRIL 11, 2011 AT 1:13 P.M.

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Geeta Citygirl Chopra: Lighting Up The Stage Rafta Rafta

The LATimes is raving about Geeta Citygirl Chopra's performance in Ayub Khan Din's 2008 Olivier Award winning comedy Rafta Rafta (Slowly Slowly), which is presently running at San Diego's prestigious Old Globe Theater.

by Archana Chaudhary



Directed by Jonathan Silverstein, Rafta Rafta takes a hilarious look at the generational divide on sex and marriage within a close-knit Indian family living in England and is the first Indian themed play to be showing at the Old Globe.

In an exclusive interview with Desiclub.com, Geeta Citygirl tells us more about her character Lopa Dutt and what the South Asian theater scene needs to do in order to become more successful.

How does it feel to be performing at the Old Globe Theatre, it is such a prestigious place?

It has been a remarkable experience, for all of us who made it through the auditions to perform at the Old Globe Theatre. It is one of the best experiences that I could have had. I feel so blessed to be able to be a part of it.

Tell us something about Rafta, Rafta, what is it all about?

Rafta Rafta is a play written by Ayub Khan Din, which in turn was adapted from Bill Naughton's 1963 play All in Good Time. The original story revolved around Caucasian British families and their family dynamics. Ayub Khan Din has transported the same story into a South Asian set up. A lot of the dialogue is very similar and incidentally the names of certain lead characters are similar too: The groom's father in Rafta Rafta is Eeshwar and mother is Lopa whilst in the original play they were called Ezra and Lucy. It's the story of two families, two generations and the conflicts between them.

Since it is based on a play written in 1960 - how relevant is it in present day?

Family is family and their issues are always universal and the same. In fact, in today's tough economic times family becomes more relevant. Rafta Rafta is the story of a young couple who belong to two different communities. When they get married, they don't have enough money to afford a place of their own and as a result they have to move in with the groom's family. That gives rise to a lot of complications and frustration, because the newly weds are unable to consummate their marriage, with people running in and out of the house, and them sharing a wall with their parent's bedroom - these themes are relevant and will always be relevant.

The play revolves around Indian immigrant families living in England; your parents are Indians; did you draw upon any personal experiences for your role?

Funny question my parents did come to the US in the 60's but the story takes place in Bolton so their experiences have been different. As far as drawing an inspiration is concerned I did look at my mom and all the other Indian aunties for the look of my character. Not just my mom, but most women of her generation, across all ethnicities - Italian, Jewish, Greek - they had this very unique hair style. When I was narrating the character of Lopa Dutt, I immediately imagined her as having that kind of hair. They would set their hair in rolls;

it's a very distinct look. I brought that suggestion up with the wig department at the Globe and we came up with a distinct look for Lopa.

Tell us something about your character, Lopa Dutt?

She is mother earth, she is the ultimate diplomat. Like many women, she likes to think she's the boss of the house, but she knows who really is the boss of the house! But she also knows how to manage her kingdom, without making others aware of her status. She has to let her husband think he has made the decisions, without him knowing she's steering him in that direction. Her husband is this very exaggerated, over-the-top and larger than life persona, whilst her older son Atul is the opposite - he's quiet and sensitive. So Lopa is always trying to strike a balance between both of them who are

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The play revolves around a newly married couple, so are the audiences treated to a big fat Indian wedding?

The credit for this goes to our director Jonathan Silverstein. In the London version of the play there was no wedding scene or a song, but Jonathan decided to begin the play with a quick three minute abbreviated Hindu wedding. It sort of gives the audience a brief idea about the play. The way the play ends is poignant and melancholic. Jonathan didn't want the audience to leave with a sad mood so he thought of having everyone break out into song and dance in the end. So after the play ends everyone comes together and dances to the beats of the hit Bollywood song Nagara Nagara from Jab We Met.

What do you think of the current state of South Asian theatre, in the US?

I definitely see a positive change from when I began SALAAM, the first South Asian Theatre company, in 2000. Then, there weren't too many roles written for South Asian actors. Since 2000, though, things have definitely picked up especially in the last five years with more TV and film roles opening up and there is a lot of multi ethnic casting happening, which is exciting. The fact that the Old Globe decided to do Rafta Rafta, a play featuring almost all Indian characters, proves that there is a market and interest. San Diego isn't as diverse as New York City, but still The Old Globe decided to have Rafta Rafta, that is a big indication of good things to come. When I first arrived here in February for rehearsals, I saw two plays here: Death of a Salesman and Emma, and there were only a handful of people of color in the audience. However, now when I'm performing and I just glance at the crowd I can see a diverse audience it makes me happy. Though we do have a long way to go, on the TV and film front we do need to have much better roles written for us - Archie Punjabi's character in The Good Wife is a great role and we need more such characters.

In India there aren't too many takers for theatre, is it the same here?

No I think it's very different here, we have a good competitive theater culture here. Though off late the budgets have been tight because of the current economic scenario and hence a lot of productions are depending upon A-list Hollywood celebrities. Casting big names sells tickets and at the end of the day that is very important for any production.

So what is it that you miss most about New York?

The energy, the pulse, the people! But when an opportunity like this knocks at your door you have to accept it. I have a very loving family who supported my decision to take this job, to always pursue my dreams. And I know that work begets more work. My family has definitely shaped me as a working member of society. They instilled in me, a dedicated, hard-working and honest work ethic. My father is someone who really lives life as if work is the highest form of prayer. Work is the belief we were raised with in my family.

Is there a market for South Asian theatre and plays in mainstream US?

Yes, at the end of the day it's all about writing. As artistic director of SALAAM, we have had some wonderful plays. They may not necessarily be about South Asians or written by South Asians but the bottom line for the success of any good play is good writing. If we are going to keep churning the same ABCD story then we aren't going to get anywhere. We need to tell stories that are truthful and that tell the real, reality. Take the case of Rajiv Joseph, he's part South Asian, but his plays are doing so well because they are well written!

Catch Rafta Rafta by [clicking here](#).

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With No Understudies, the Pressure's On

"Rafta, Rafta" at The Old Globe March 22 to April 24, 2011



Photo by Henry DiRocco / Courtesy of The Old Globe

Kamal Marayati, the arm-wrestler on the left of this cast photo from "The Old Globe's "Rafta, Rafta," stepped into his role as the father of the groom in a last-minute cast change just days before the show was supposed to start.



Photo by J. Katarzyna Woronowicz / Courtesy of The Old Globe Owiso Odera joined the cast of "Groundswell" as Thami in a last-minute cast change at The Old Globe.

Posted: Tuesday, April 12, 2011 11:34 am | *Updated: 7:10 pm, Wed Apr 13, 2011.*

With No Understudies, the Pressure's On

by **Kelly Bennett**

It's rare for a theater to have to hire a replacement actor for a "big, juicy role" so close to opening night as The Old Globe recently had to — for two plays. But the theater had a key cast member for "Rafta, Rafta," withdraw from the show due to illness. And a cast member [left "Groundswell"](#) soon before it opened for reasons that haven't been specified.

Local theater writer Anne Marie Welsh dove into the actors' work behind the scenes to manage the [last-minute scramble](#) in a story in Sunday's Union-Tribune.

Partly because both roles require actors of particular ethnicities, the Globe had hired no understudies to fall back on, Welsh says.

Actor Owiso Odera came into the role in "Groundswell" only two days before the play's first preview performances. And actor Kamal Marayati had just three days before audiences were supposed to show up for "Rafta, Rafta."

I was glad to read the story because I was hoping to hear more about how this process works. I thought these were interesting bits about the allowances the theater — and the audience — made for the latecomers:

Both actors could use scripts or a prompter for the first few previews. Opening night for "Rafta, Rafta" was moved forward three nights. And preview audiences, informed of the late replacements in a preshow announcement, seemed to root for them.

"So here's how I have been looking at it," Marayati said, "as if the rehearsal process is just totally backwards. But I have the other actors. They've got my back."

Have you seen either play? What'd you think of how Odera, who plays Thami in "Groundswell," and Marayati, the father of the groom in "Rafta, Rafta," did to blend in with the other actors who've been rehearsing for much longer? Did you find yourself rooting for them?

I'm the arts editor for VOSD. You can reach me directly at kelly.bennett@voiceofsandiego.org or 619.325.0531 and follow me on Twitter: [@kellyrbennett](https://twitter.com/kellyrbennett) and at facebook.com/behind.the.scene.SD.



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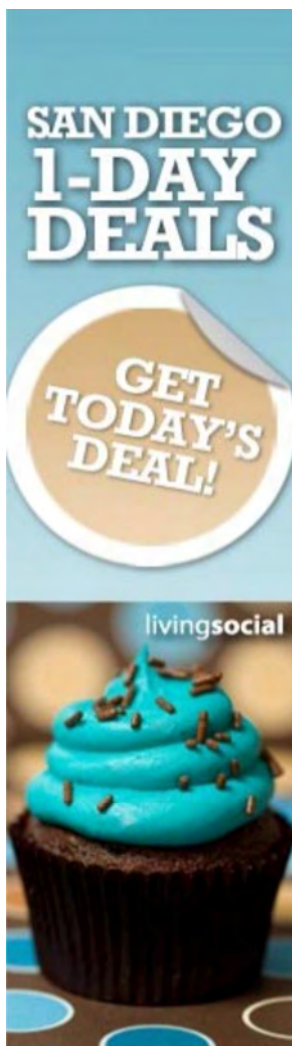
Executive Producer [Lou Spisto](#) today announced that [Jonathan Silverstein](#) will direct the Globe's upcoming production of [Ayub Khan-Din](#)'s multi-generational comedy, *Rafta, Rafta....* [Henry Wishcamper](#), originally announced to direct *Rafta, Rafta...*, will helm the summer season's West Coast premiere of John Morogiello's comedy of manners, *Engaging Shaw*. *Rafta, Rafta...* will run in the [Old Globe Theatre](#) March 19 - April 24 and *Engaging Shaw* in the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre July 29 - Sept. 4. Tickets can be purchased online at [www.TheOldGlobe.org](#), by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the Box Office.

"Henry asked to be released from directing *Rafta, Rafta...* so that he could spend time with his family immediately following the birth of their second child," said Spisto. "I'm so pleased that we were able to accommodate his request and still have him with us for *Engaging Shaw*. I'm also excited to have this

opportunity to invite the talented [Jonathan Silverstein](#) to the Globe - and back to San Diego."

[Jonathan Silverstein](#) most recently directed the acclaimed Off Broadway world premiere of *The Temperamentals* by [Jon Marans](#) (Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Ensemble). His other Off Broadway credits include revivals of [A.R. Gurney](#)'s *The Dining Room* (Drama Desk nomination for Outstanding Director, Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Ensemble), [Robert Anderson](#)'s classics *Tea and Sympathy* and *I Never Sang for My Father* and [John Patrick](#)'s *The Hasty Heart*, all for the [Keen Company](#), where he serves as Resident Director. His other New York credits include *Red Herring* by Michael Albanese (New York International Fringe Festival, Outstanding Direction Award), *Blueprint* by Bixby Elliot (Summer Play Festival), *Cocteau's Indiscretions* ([Phoenix Theatre](#) Ensemble), *The Dadshuttle* (Drama League DirectorFest 2003), *The Rats Are Getting Bigger* (New York International Fringe Festival and [The Public Theater](#)'s New Works Now! festival), *A Perfect Analysis Given by a Parrot* ([Phoenix Theatre](#) Ensemble), *Greater Messapia* (Queens Theatre in the Park) and *The Train Play* (Clubbed Thumb).

[Henry Wishcamper](#) recently directed the Globe's production of *The Mystery of Irma Vep*. His Off Broadway credits include *Spirit Control* ([Manhattan Theatre Club](#)), *Graceland* (LCT3), *Port Authority* ([Atlantic Theater Company](#)), *Elvis People* (New World Stages), *The Polish Play* (Katharsis Theater Company) and *Pullman Car Hiawatha* ([Keen Company](#), Drama Desk Nomination for Outstanding Revival of a Play). His regional credits include *Animal Crackers* ([Goodman Theatre](#), [Joseph Jefferson](#) Award nomination), *Talking Pictures* ([Goodman Theatre](#)), *Art* ([Barrington Stage Company](#)), *The Seafarer* and *Speech and Debate* (Hartford TheaterWorks) and *The Good Thief* (Portland Stage Company). He also served as Assistant Director of the Broadway productions of *August: Osage County* and *Shining City*. Wishcamper is the Artistic



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Director of Katharsis Theater Company.

TICKETS to Globe productions can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the Box Office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. Rafta, Rafta. performances begin on Mar. 19 and continue through Apr. 24. Ticket prices range from \$32 to \$85. Engaging Shaw performances begin on July 29 and continue through Sept. 4. Ticket prices range from \$29 to \$67.

LOCATION: [The Old Globe](#) is located in San Diego's Balboa Park at 1363 Old Globe Way. There are numerous free parking lots available throughout the park. Valet parking is also available (\$10). For additional parking information visit www.BalboaPark.org.

The Tony Award-winning Old Globe is one of the country's leading professional regional theaters and has stood as San Diego's flagship arts institution for 75 years. Under the direction of Executive Producer [Louis G. Spisto](#), [The Old Globe](#) produces a year-round season of 15 productions of classic, contemporary and new works on its three Balboa Park stages: the 600-seat [Old Globe Theatre](#), the 250-seat Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre and the 612-seat outdoor Lowell Davies [Festival Theatre](#), home of its internationally renowned Shakespeare Festival. More than 250,000 people attend Globe productions annually and participate in the theater's education and community programs. Numerous world premieres such as The Full Monty, Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, A Catered Affair and the annual holiday musical [Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas!](#) have been developed at [The Old Globe](#) and have gone on to enjoy highly successful runs on Broadway and at regional theaters across the country.

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Jonathan Silverstein, Henry Wishcamper to Direct Upcoming Old Globe Productions

By: **Dan Bacalzo** · Dec 8, 2010 · San Diego

Jonathan Silverstein will now direct the Old Globe Theatre's production of Ayub Khan-Din's Olivier Award-winning comedy, *Rafta, Rafta...*, March 19-April 24. Henry Wishcamper, who was **previously announced** to helm that production, will instead direct the theater's staging of John Morogiello's comedy, *Engaging Shaw*, July 29-September 4.

Rafta, Rafta... takes a humorous look at the generational divide on sex and marriage within a close-knit Indian family living in London. Silverstein received a Drama Desk nomination for his direction of *The Dining Room*, and recent New York credits include the world premiere of *The Temperamentals* Off-Broadway.

Engaging Shaw follows the battle of wits and the real life romance between socialite Charlotte Payne-Townsend and playwright George Bernard Shaw. Wishcamper's recent Off-Broadway directing credist include *Spirit Control*, *Graceland*, and *Port Authority*.

For more information, visit www.TheOldGlobe.org.



Jonathan Silverstein
(Courtesy of The Old Globe)


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Geeta Citygirl Chopra, Mahira Kakkar, Gita Reddy, Rachid Sabitri et al. Set for Old Globe's *Rafta, Rafta*

By: **Dan Bacalzo** · Feb 25, 2011 · San Diego

The Old Globe Theater in San Diego has announced complete cast and creative team for Ayub Khan-Din's Olivier Award-winning comedy, ***Rafta, Rafta...***, based on *All in Good Time* by Bill Naughton. Jonathan Silverstein will direct the production, which will run March 19 - April 24, with an opening on March 24.

The play takes a look at the generational divide on sex and marriage within a close-knit Indian family living in England, as a pair of newlyweds move in with the groom's family.

The cast will feature Shalin Agarwal (Etash Tailor), Ranjit Chowdhry (Eeshwar Dutt), Geeta Citygirl Chopra (Lopa Dutt), Amir Darvish (Jivaj Bhatt), Nasser Faris (Laxman Patel), Ariya Ghahramani (Jai Dutt), Mahira Kakkar (Vina Patel), Caralyn Kozlowski (Molly Bhatt), Gita Reddy (Lata Patel), and Rachid Sabitri (Atul Dutt).

The creative team will include Alexander Dodge (scenic design), Christal Weatherly (costume design), Lap Chi Chu (lighting design), and Paul Peterson (sound design).

For tickets and more information, [click here](#).



Rachid Sabitri and Mahira Kakkar in *Rafta, Rafta...*
(© J. Katarzyna Woronowicz)



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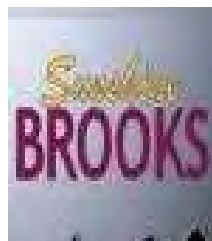
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the groom's family's roof is no honeymoon. With warmth and humor, this British comedy examines what happens when a young couple must choose between saving money or their marriage.

The cast of Rafta, Rafta... features Shalin Agarwal (Etash Tailor), [Ranjit Chowdhry](#) (Eeshwar Dutt), [Geeta Citygirl](#) Chopra (Lopa Dutt), Amir Darvish (Jivaj Bhatt), Nasser Faris (Laxman Patel), Ariya Ghahramani (Jai Dutt), [Mahira Kakkar](#) (Vina Patel), [Caralyn Kozlowski](#) (Molly Bhatt), Gita Reddy (Lata Patel) and Rachid Sabitri (Atul Dutt).

The creative team includes [Alexander Dodge](#) (Scenic Design), [Christal Weatherly](#) (Costume Design), [Lap Chi Chu](#) (Lighting Design), [Paul Peterson](#) (Sound Design), [Gillian Lane-Plescia](#) (Dialect Coach), Reetu Patel (Movement Consultant), [Mark Danisovszky](#) (Music Consultant) and Diana Moser (Stage Manager).

Playwright [Ayub Khan-Din](#) was born in 1961 and grew up in Salford, Manchester. After leaving school he worked briefly as a hairdresser before enrolling in drama school, where he wrote his first stage play, East is East (1997), for Tamasha, a theater company in London. An autobiographical story of a mixed-race family growing up in an overcrowded terraced house in a white, working-class area of Salford in the early 1970s, it was first staged at [The Royal Court Theatre](#) in London and subsequently adapted (by himself) into a highly successful feature film. His second play, Last Dance at Dum Dum (1999), concerns the septuagenarian members of the dwindling Anglo-Indian community in Calcutta, still clinging tightly to their old imperial past. Notes on Falling Leaves (2004) was first performed at [The Royal Court Theatre](#), and Rafta, Rafta... (2007), a comic adaptation of [Bill Naughton](#)'s 1960s story All in Good Time, won a [Laurence Olivier](#) Award for Best New Comedy in 2008. His new film, West is West (a follow-up to East is East), will open soon and the film version of Rafta, Rafta... will follow in June. He recently delivered his commissioned play, Fauzi, based on Marlow's Doctor Faustus, to [Lincoln Center Theater](#). Khan-Din's latest play, All the Way Home, will premiere in Manchester, England, and he is currently working on a musical for the [Royal National Theatre](#) called Buntty Berman Presents.. Khan-Din also works as an actor and has appeared in many films including My Beautiful Laundrette and Sammy and Rosie Get Laid.

Director [Jonathan Silverstein](#) helmed the acclaimed Off Broadway world premiere of The Temperamentals by [Jon Marans](#), produced by [Daryl Roth](#), [Stacy Shane](#) and [Marian Entertainment](#) (Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Ensemble). His other Off Broadway credits include revivals of [A.R. Gurney](#)'s The Dining Room (Drama Desk nomination for Outstanding Director, Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Ensemble), [Robert Anderson](#)'s



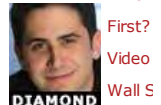
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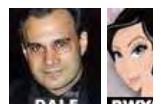


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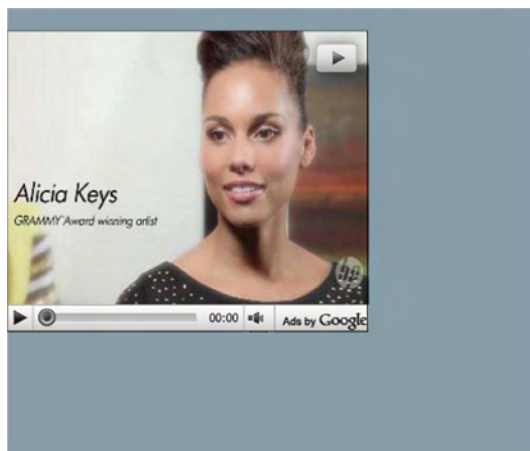
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classics Tea and Sympathy and I Never Sang for My Father and [John Patrick's](#) The Hasty Heart, all for [Keen Company](#), where he serves as Resident Director. His other New York credits include [Red Herring](#) by Michael Albanese (New York International Fringe Festival, Outstanding Direction award), Blueprint by Bixby Elliot (Summer Play Festival), Cocteau's Indiscretions and A Perfect Analysis Given by a Parrot ([Phoenix Theatre Ensemble](#)), The Rats Are Getting Bigger (New York International Fringe Festival and [The Public Theater's](#) New Work Now! festival), Greater Messapia (Queens Theatre in the Park) and The Train Play (Clubbed Thumb). Silverstein's regional credits include The Fantasticks (Merrimack Repertory Theatre), Merton of the Movies and Marry Me a Little (Dorset Theatre Festival), The Triumph of Love ([Cleveland Play House](#)), Urinetown and tick, tick. BOOM! (Cape Rep Theatre), Much Ado About Nothing and Cymbeline (The Theatre at Monmouth) and Ionesco's The Chairs (Sledgehammer Theatre). Silverstein was featured as one of 2009's Out 100, Out Magazine's annual list of the most outstanding and inspiring men and women of the year.

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comedy examines what happens when a young couple must choose between saving money or their marriage.

The cast of Rafta, Rafta... features Shalin Agarwal (Etash Tailor), Geeta Citygirl Chopra (Lopa Dutt), Amir Darvish (Jivaj Bhatt), Nasser Faris (Laxman Patel), Ariya Ghahramani (Jai Dutt), Mahira Kakkar (Vina Patel), Caralyn Kozlowski (Molly Bhatt), Kamal Marayati (Eeshwar Dutt), Gita Reddy (Lata Patel) and Rachid Sabitri (Atul Dutt).

The creative team includes Alexander Dodge (Scenic Design), Christal Weatherly (Costume Design), Lap Chi Chu (Lighting Design), Paul Peterson (Sound Design), Gillian Lane-Plescia (Dialect Coach), Reetu Patel (Movement Consultant), Mark Danisovszky (Music Consultant) and Diana Moser (Stage Manager).

Playwright Ayub Khan-Din was born in 1961 and grew up in Salford, Manchester. After leaving school he worked briefly as a hairdresser before enrolling in drama school, where he wrote his first stage play, *East is East* (1997), for Tamasha, a theater company in London. An autobiographical story of a mixed-race family growing up in an overcrowded terraced house in a white, working-class area of Salford in the early 1970s, it was first staged at the Royal Court Theatre in London and subsequently adapted (by himself) into a highly successful feature film. His second play, *Last Dance at Dum Dum* (1999), concerns the septuagenarian members of the dwindling Anglo-Indian community in Calcutta, still clinging tightly to their old imperial past. Notes on *Falling Leaves* (2004) was first performed at the Royal Court Theatre, and *Rafta, Rafta...* (2007), a comic adaptation of Bill Naughton's 1960s story *All in Good Time*, won a Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Comedy in 2008. His new film, *West is West* (a follow-up to *East is East*), will open soon and the film version of *Rafta, Rafta...* will follow in June. He recently delivered his commissioned play, *Fauzi*, based on Marlow's *Doctor Faustus*, to Lincoln Center Theater. Khan-Din's latest play, *All the Way Home*, will premiere in Manchester, England, and he is currently working on a musical for the Royal National Theatre called *Bunty Berman Presents..* Khan-Din also works as an actor and has appeared in many films including *My Beautiful Laundrette* and *Sammy and Rosie Get Laid*.

Director Jonathan Silverstein helmed the acclaimed Off Broadway world premiere of *The Temperamentals* by Jon Marans, produced by Daryl Roth, Stacy Shane and Martian Entertainment (Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Ensemble). His other Off Broadway credits include revivals of A.R. Gurney's *The Dining Room* (Drama Desk nomination for Outstanding Director, Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Ensemble), Robert Anderson's classics *Tea and Sympathy* and *I Never Sang for My Father* and John

Directed by Jonathan Silverstein, *Rafta, Rafta...* will run in the Old Globe Theatre, part of The Old Globe's Conrad Prebys Theatre Center, March 22 - April 24. Preview performances run March 22 - March 27. Opening night is Sunday, March 27 at 7:00 p.m. Tickets can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the Box Office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park.

Winner of the 2008 Olivier Award for Best New Comedy for its acclaimed run at The National Theatre in London and a hit with critics and audiences in New York, *Rafta, Rafta...* takes a hilarious look at the generational divide on sex and marriage within a close-knit Indian family living in England. Following their wedding, two newlyweds find that starting their life together under the groom's family's roof is no honeymoon. With warmth and humor, this British



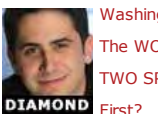
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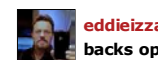
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Following Delay, *Rafta, Rafta...*, Olivier-Winning Comedy About Indian Family, Begins March 22

 By [Kenneth Jones](#)
 22 Mar 2011

 Geeta Citygirl Chopra, Mahira Kakkar and Rachid Sabitri
 Photo by J. Katarzyna Woronowicz

Ayub Khan-Din's *Rafta, Rafta...*, winner of the 2008 Olivier Award for Best New Comedy for its acclaimed run at The National Theatre in London, gets a new American production starting March 22, three days later than previously announced, at the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego, CA.

Saturday and Sunday performances were canceled due to a recent cast change that prompted extra needed rehearsals. Performances play to April 24. Opening is now set for March 27 rather than March 24.

Ranjit Chowdhry, who was set for the role of Eeshwar Dutt, withdrew due to illness. The role of Eeshwar Dutt is now being played by Kamal Marayati.

The comedy, directed by Jonathan Silverstein and based on the 1960s story "All in Good Time" by Bill Naughton, "takes a hilarious look at the generational divide on sex and marriage within a close-knit Indian family living in England," according to Old Globe notes. "Following their wedding, two newlyweds find that starting their life together under the groom's family's roof is no honeymoon. With warmth and humor, this British comedy examines what happens when a young couple must choose between saving money or their marriage."

The title, translated from Urdu, means "Slowly, Slowly." It's a line in the Hindustani language of Urdu from a famous poem that begins: "Slowly, slowly, she became the power of my existence."

The New Group presented the play's American debut Off-Broadway in 2008.

The Old Globe cast features Shalin Agarwal (as Etash Tailor), Geeta Citygirl Chopra (as Lopa Dutt), Amir Darvish (as Jivaj Bhatt), Nasser Faris (as Laxman Patel), Ariya Ghahramani (as Jai Dutt), Mahira Kakkar (as Vina Patel), Caralyn Kozlowski (as Molly Bhatt), Kamal Marayati (as Eeshwar Dutt), Gita Reddy (as Lata Patel) and Rachid Sabitri (as Atul Dutt).

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Playwright Khan-Din was born in 1961 and grew up in Salford, Manchester. After leaving school he worked briefly as a hairdresser before enrolling in drama school, where he wrote his first stage play, *East is East* (1997), for Tamasha, a theatre company in London. An autobiographical story of a mixed-race family growing up in an overcrowded terraced house in a white, working-class area of Salford in the early 1970s, it was first staged at the Royal Court Theatre in London and subsequently adapted (by himself) into a feature film. His second play, *Last Dance at Dum Dum* (1999), concerns the septuagenarian members of the dwindling Anglo-Indian community in Calcutta, still clinging tightly to their old imperial past. *Notes on Falling Leaves* (2004) was first performed at the Royal Court Theatre. His new film, "West is West" (a follow-up to "East is East"), will open soon. A film version of *Rafta, Rafta...* will follow in June. He recently delivered his commissioned play, *Fauzi*, based on Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, to Lincoln Center Theater. Khan-Din's latest play, *All the Way Home*, will premiere in Manchester, England, and he is currently working on a musical for the Royal National Theatre called *Bunty Berman Presents...*

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 Ayub Khan-Din's *Rafta, Rafta...*, winner of the 2008 Olivier Award for Best New Comedy for its acclaimed run at The National Theatre in London, opens March 27 in a new American production at the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego, CA.



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Rafta, Rafta..., Comedy About East Indian Ties That Bind, Opens March 27 at Old Globe

By *Kenneth Jones*

27 Mar 2011



Ariya Ghahramani, Shalin Agarwal,
Kamal Marayati and Amir Darvish
Photo by Henry DiRocco

Ayub Khan-Din's *Rafta, Rafta...*, winner of the 2008 Olivier Award for Best New Comedy for its acclaimed run at The National Theatre in London, opens March 27 in a new American production at the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego, CA. Previews began March 22.

Performances play to April 24. Ranjit Chowdhry, who was set for the role of Eeshwar Dutt, withdrew due to illness. The role of Eeshwar Dutt is now being played by Kamal Marayati.

The comedy, directed by Jonathan Silverstein and based on the 1960s story "All in Good Time" by Bill Naughton, "takes a hilarious look at the generational divide on sex and marriage within a close-knit Indian family living in England," according to Old Globe notes.

"Following their wedding, two newlyweds find that starting their life together under the groom's family's roof is no honeymoon. With warmth and humor, this British comedy examines what happens when a young couple must choose between saving money or their marriage."

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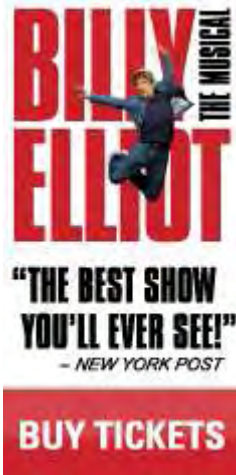
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The title, translated from Urdu, means "Slowly, Slowly." It's a line in the Hindustani language of Urdu from a famous poem that begins: "Slowly, slowly, she became the power of my existence."

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The New Group presented the play's American debut Off-Broadway in 2008.

The Old Globe cast features Shalin Agarwal (as Etash Tailor), Geeta Citygirl Chopra (as Lopa Dutt), Amir Darvish (as Jivaj Bhatt), Nasser Faris (as Laxman Patel), Ariya Ghahramani (as Jai Dutt), Mahira Kakkar (as Vina Patel), Caralyn Kozlowski (as Molly Bhatt), Kamal Marayati (as Eeshwar Dutt), Gita Reddy (as Lata Patel) and Rachid Sabitri (as Atul Dutt).

The creative team includes Alexander Dodge (scenic design), Christal Weatherly (costume design), Lap Chi Chu (lighting design), Paul Peterson (sound design), Gillian Lane-Plescia (dialect coach), Reetu Patel (movement consultant), Mark Danisovszky

(music consultant) and Leila Knox and Diana Moser (stage managers).

Playwright Khan-Din was born in 1961 and grew up in Salford, Manchester. After leaving school he worked briefly as a hairdresser before enrolling in drama school, where he wrote his first stage play, *East is East* (1997), for Tamasha, a theatre company in London. An autobiographical story of a mixed-race family growing up in an overcrowded terraced house in a white, working-class area of Salford in the early 1970s, it was first staged at the Royal Court Theatre in London and subsequently adapted (by himself) into a feature film. His second play, *Last Dance at Dum Dum* (1999), concerns the septuagenarian members of the dwindling Anglo-Indian community in Calcutta, still clinging tightly to their old imperial past. *Notes on Falling Leaves* (2004) was first performed at the Royal Court Theatre. His new film, "West is West" (a follow-up to "East is East"), will open soon. A film version of *Rafta, Rafta...* will follow in June. He recently delivered his commissioned play, *Fauzi*, based on Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, to Lincoln Center Theater. Khan-Din's latest play, *All the Way Home*, will premiere in Manchester, England, and he is currently working on a musical for the Royal National Theatre called *Bunty Berman Presents...*

Director Silverstein helmed the acclaimed Off-Broadway world premiere of *The Temperamentals* (Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Ensemble).

For more information, visit www.TheOldGlobe.org.

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Mahira Kakkar, Caralyn Kozlowski, Geeta Citygirl Chopra and Gita Reddy
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Old Globe delays "Rafta, Rafta" opening

BY JAMES HEBERT

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MARCH 21, 2011 AT 4:31 P.M., UPDATED MARCH 21, 2011 AT 5 P.M.

The Old Globe Theatre is pushing back the dates for "Rafta, Rafta," the Ayub Khan-Din play that was to have begun previews last Saturday.

The first preview is now scheduled for 7 p.m. Tuesday. The production's official opening, originally set for Thursday, now will take place at 7 p.m. Sunday.

The change comes after a key cast member, [Ranjit Chowdhry](#), withdrew from the show due to illness. Kamal Marayati has since stepped in to play the role of Eeshwar Dutt, patriarch of an Indian-immigrant family living in Britain.

The Globe said the dates were moved back to provide additional rehearsal time in the wake of the casting change.

"Rafta, Rafta" (which means "slowly, slowly" in [Hindi](#)) is based on the 1963 [Bill Naughton](#) comedy "All In Good Time." It centers on a young couple's efforts to enjoy their honeymoon in the crowded house of the groom's difficult father. The Globe staging is the play's West Coast premiere.

Client Name: Old Globe Theatre
Publication Name: San Diego Union-Tribune
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**Clockwise from top left:
Ranjit Chowdhry, Geeta
Citygirl Chopra, Mahira
Kakkar and Rachid Sabi-
tri in "Rafta, Rafta."**

J. KATARZYNA WORONOWICZ

SLOW START FOR 'RAFTA, RAFTA' AT OLD GLOBE

JAMES HEBERT • U-T

The Old Globe Theatre is pushing back the dates for "Rafta, Rafta," the Ayub Khan-Din play that was to have begun previews Saturday.

The first preview is now scheduled for 7 p.m. today. The production's official opening, originally set for Thursday, now will take place at 7 p.m. Sunday.

The change comes after a key cast member, Ranjit Chowdhry, withdrew from the show due to illness. Kamal Marayati has since stepped in to play the role of Eeshwar Dutt, patriarch of an Indian-immigrant family living in Britain.

The Globe said the dates were moved back to provide additional rehearsal time in the wake of the casting change.

"Rafta, Rafta" (which means "slowly, slowly" in Hindi) is based on the 1963 Bill Naughton comedy "All In Good Time." It centers on a young couple's efforts to enjoy their honeymoon in the crowded house of the groom's difficult father. The Globe staging is the play's West Coast premiere.

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Monster Mash: Jon Cryer joins musical production of 'Company'; 'Spider-Man' choreographer still has job

March 22, 2011 | 7:30 am

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Going to plan B: Jon Cryer, whose role in the CBS sitcom "Two and a Half Men" is uncertain as a result of the Charlie Sheen tumult, is joining the cast of the New York Philharmonic's April production of the musical "Company." ([Playbill](#))

Still working ... for now: Daniel Ezralow, the choreographer of Broadway's "Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark," has issued a statement contradicting an earlier report claiming that he is being replaced. ([Broadway World](#))

Celebration: Architect Frank Gehry celebrated his 82nd birthday over the weekend in the New York building that bears his name, with the likes of Bono, Candice Bergen and Mike Nichols. ([Curbed NY](#))

New leader: Oliver Tostmann has been named curator of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. ([Boston Globe](#))

Ailing: James Levine, the music director of the Metropolitan Opera, has cut back on his appearances this season as a result of continuing health problems. ([Los Angeles Times](#))

New date: The Old Globe has delayed the opening of the Olivier-winning comedy "Rafta, Rafta." ([San Diego Union](#))

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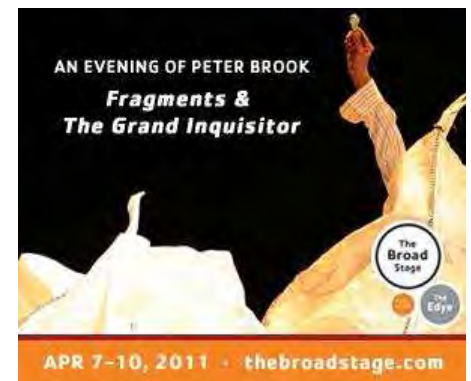


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Casting update: Globe replaces two actors

BY JAMES HEBERT

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 2011 AT 1:59 P.M.

It's been an eventful day in the offices (and rehearsal halls) of the [Old Globe Theatre](#). The Globe has two shows in the works right now, and each one has lost a cast member late in the game.

First, the theater reported that Mfundo Morrison left the cast of ["Groundswell"](#) last week, for reasons that haven't yet been

specified. "Groundswell," a political thriller set in South Africa, is in previews; it opens Thursday. Morrison has been replaced by Owiso Odera, a graduate of [UCSD's](#) MFA program who had a memorable turn in the 2008 Summer Shakespeare Festival production of "[Romeo and Juliet](#)."

Now the latest word out of Balboa Park is that [Ranjit Chowdhry](#), who had been cast as the Indian-immigrant father in the family comedy-drama "[Rafta, Rafta](#)," has left due to illness. His replacement is Kamal Marayati, who has had roles in film as well as on such [TV shows](#) as "[Desperate Housewives](#)" and "Invasion."

"Rafta, Rafta" begins previews Saturday and opens next Thursday. There are no understudies in either play's cast ("Groundswell" only has three actors), so both Odera and Marayati have had a little catching-up to do. But a theater spokesman reports that Odera was in the first preview of "Groundswell" on Saturday.



/ OLD GLOBE THEATRE

Owiso Odera is now playing Thami in the Old Globe's "Groundswell."



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Page 1 of 1

ACTORS LEAVE GLOBE PLAYS JUST BEFORE 2 SHOWS OPEN

They're replaced;
productions have
no understudies

JAMES HEBERT • U-T

Two actors have departed the Old Globe Theatre's latest productions, just as the shows are poised for their official openings.

The Balboa Park theater announced Wednesday that Mfundo Morrison has left the cast of "Groundswell," a political thriller set in South Africa. A Globe spokesman

said only that the show's director and the theater's artistic staff "felt that it was necessary to replace" the actor. Owiso Odera, an alumnus of UCSD's graduate theater program who has appeared in several Shakespeare plays at the Globe, has taken over the role of Thami.

The theater also said that Ranjit Chowdhry, who was to play the Indian-immigrant father in the family comedy-drama "Rafta, Rafta," has left that production due to illness. His

replacement is Kamal Marayati, who has had roles in film as well as on such TV shows as "Desperate Housewives" and "Invasion."

"Groundswell" began previews last week and opens tonight. "Rafta, Rafta" has its first preview Saturday and opens March 24. Both actors came in on short notice (neither production includes understudies). But a Globe spokesman said Odera was able to perform in the first preview of "Groundswell," and that Marayati has joined the "Rafta" rehearsals.

Out West Arts

In The Wings - April '11

March 31, 2011

The theater and dance choices around town are particularly strong this month as well, starting right off this weekend with two nights only from New Zealand choreographer and director [Lemi Ponifasio with *The Tempest: Without a Body*](#), which will be performed at L.A.'s historic downtown Million Dollar Theater on Broadway. (The image at the top of this post is taken from that production.) South Coast Repertory in Costa Mesa will present [Lauren Gunderson's *Silent Sky*](#) about astronomy and women at the turn of the last century on April 1, while Jane Anderson will look at the life of a very different woman in the world premiere of [The Escort at the Geffen Playhouse](#). Down in San Diego, [Ayub Khan-Din's well-received *Rafta, Rafta...*](#) will get its long awaited West Coast Premiere at the Old Globe Theater opening on the 3rd. And, of course, L.A.'s biggest theater production company, Center Theater Group, will have three promising shows across its three major stages with [Martin McDonagh's *The Cripple of Inishmaan*](#) starting on the 5th at The Kirk Douglas Theater in Culver City; the revival of the late Lanford Wilson's [Burn This at the Mark Taper Forum](#) from the 5th; and the much anticipated arrival of [Yasmina Reza's comedy *God of Carnage*](#) at the Ahmanson Theater on the 13th with its original Broadway cast, including James Gandolfini, Marcia Gay Harden, Hope Davis, and Jeff Daniels. Oh, and not to be missed are two big events at The Broad Stage in Santa Monica. F. Murray Abraham will appear as Shylock in Theater for a New Audience's well-received touring production of [Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*](#) starting on the 14th while for four nights starting on the 7th, Peter Brooks will appear in [The Grand Inquisitor and Fragments: From Beckett to Dostoyevsky](#).

**Erin Reiter**

Rafta, Rafta... special events at the Old Globe



Rafta Rafta...
 Photo: The Old Globe

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The Old Globe's new show *Rafta, Rafta...* has some amazing special events for you to enjoy before the performances!

Rafta, Rafta... takes a hilarious look at the generational divide on sex and marriage within a close-knit Indian family living in England. Following their wedding, two newlyweds find that starting their life together under the groom's family's roof is no honeymoon. With warmth and humor, this British comedy examines what happens when a young couple must choose between saving money or their marriage.

INSIGHT SEMINAR: *Rafta, Rafta...*

Monday, March 21 at 7:00 p.m. FREE

Insight Seminars are informal presentations of ideas and insights to enhance the theater-going experience. The seminars feature a panel selected from the artistic company of each production and take place in the theater where the production is performed. Reception, 6:30 p.m. Seminar, 7:00 p.m. Admission is free and reservations are not required.

POST-SHOW FORUMS: *Rafta, Rafta...*

Tuesdays, March 29 and April 5 and Wednesday, April 13.

FREE

Discuss the play with members of the *Rafta, Rafta...* cast and crew at post-show discussions led by the Globe's creative staff after the performances.

3. Erik Estrada, wife Nanette Mirkovich & daughter Francesca at LA Fashion Weekend
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6. 'Dancing With The Stars': Kirstie Alley gears up for her dancing debut

OUT AT THE GLOBE: Thursday, March 31 at 6:30 p.m. \$20
An evening for gay and lesbian theater lovers and the whole LGBT community, Out at the Globe includes a hosted wine and martini bar, appetizers and door prizes. \$20 per person. RSVP at (619) 23-GLOBE. (Tickets to *Rafta, Rafta...* are sold separately.)

THANK GLOBE IT'S FRIDAY: Fridays, March 25 and April 1 at 6:30 p.m. \$20

Kick off the weekend with the Globe's Friday pre-show bash. TGIF includes a hosted wine and martini bar, appetizers and desserts. \$20 per person. RSVP at (619) 23-GLOBE. (Tickets to *Rafta, Rafta...* are sold separately.)

Tickets to *Rafta, Rafta...* can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the Box Office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park.

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By Erin Reiter

Erin Marie is a dedicated theater attendee, theatre performer and worker, a dedicated talker, and has a lifelong passion for theater. She loves to...[Read more](#)

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Erin Reiter

Rafta, Rafta... at the Old Globe



(l. to r.) Geeta Citygirl Chopra as Lopa Dutt, Mahira Kakkar as Vina Patel and Rachid Sabitri as Atul Dutt in *Rafta, Rafta...*

Photo: J. Katarzyna Woronowicz

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Executive Producer Lou Spisto has announced today the revised complete cast and creative team for Ayub Khan-Din's Olivier Award-winning comedy, *Rafta, Rafta...*, based on *All in Good Time* by Bill Naughton. There was a slight change of cast with the role of Eeshwar Dutt is now being played by Kamal Marayati instead of by Ranjit Chowdhry as previously announced. Directed by Jonathan Silverstein, *Rafta, Rafta...* will run in the Old Globe Theatre, part of The Old Globe's Conrad Prebys Theatre Center, March 22 - April 24. Preview performances run March 22 - March 27. Opening night is Sunday, March 27 at 7:00 p.m.

Rafta, Rafta... is the winner of the 2008 Olivier Award for Best New Comedy for its acclaimed run at The National Theatre in London and a hit with critics and audiences in New York. The play takes a hilarious look at an ever increasingly common scenario, adult children that are still living with their parents and the complications it brings. This play is about the generational divide on sex and marriage within a close-knit Indian family living in England. It follows two newlyweds just after their wedding that due to circumstances, must live with the grooms family. With warmth and humor, this British comedy examines what happens when a young couple must choose between saving money or their marriage.

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3. Talk shows taping in Burbank the week of March 21, 2011 (PHOTOS)
4. David Guetta
5. Soap Stars Budig, Mathison and Bernsen on 'Castle' March 21
6. Fallen or free woman in 'The Eccentricities of a Nightingale' at A Noise Within

The cast of *Rafta, Rafta...* features Shalin Agarwal (Etash Tailor), Geeta Citygirl Chopra (Lopa Dutt), Amir Darvish (Jivaj Bhatt), Nasser Faris (Laxman Patel), Ariya Ghahramani (Jai Dutt), Mahira Kakkar (Vina Patel), Caralyn Kozlowski (Molly Bhatt), Kamal Marayati (Eeshwar Dutt), Gita Reddy (Lata Patel) and Rachid Sabitri (Atul Dutt).

Tickets to *Rafta, Rafta...* can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE or by visiting the Box Office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. Performances at the Old Globe Theatre begin on March 22 and continue through April 24. Ticket prices range from \$29 to \$85. Discounts are available for full-time students, patrons 29 years of age and under, seniors and groups of 10 or more.

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By **Erin Reiter**

Erin Marie is a dedicated theater attendee, theatre performer and worker, a dedicated talker, and has a lifelong passion for theater. She loves to...[Read more](#)

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The Shorthand Lingo of Art-Making

To an outsider, the dancers at Malashock Dance the other afternoon seemed to [speak their own language](#). I'd just watched six dancers run through one of the scenes of their upcoming piece, "The Floating World," and artistic director John Malashock was giving them notes on things they should tweak for the next time.



They gestured and waved their arms and spoke in vague grunts and half-formed sentences. But, remarkably, this shorthand lingo of people who make art together all the time worked: They all knew what part they were talking about, and what each other meant. Malashock has been opening its studio doors for the last several weeks to let the public in on this new piece headed for performances next month at the San Diego Museum of Art. We stopped in on a couple of rehearsals, one with [photographer Sam Hodgson](#), and one with a [videographer from NBC San Diego](#), to see the dancers work to turn these grunts and gestures into fluid narratives.

You're reading the Arts Report, our weekly collection of San Diego arts stories, from our pages and elsewhere. You can stay in the loop the rest of the week by checking our [Behind the Scene blog](#), [following us on Facebook](#), or following me, [@kellyrbennett](#), on Twitter.

Locals:

» Making inflatable sculptures - [or, balloon animals](#) - is just one of Dan McLellan's jobs. He's also a Chargers reporter for CBS Sports and elsewhere.

[Forward to a Friend](#)

Arts Headlines

Behind the Scene TV: Dancers Afloat

We go inside an afternoon rehearsal as Malashock Dance prepares its next piece.

Dancers on a Plane

A new piece at Malashock Dance follows a story of a dance company on tour and weaves together woodblock prints, videos and costumes.

Moonlighting: Chargers Expert, Balloon Sculptor

Balloon artist Dan McLellan creates crazy hats, pretty hats, bows and arrows, monkeys on a tree with bananas. The rest of the time, he reports on football.

The Curtain Dropped; One Horn Player Won

After an intriguing, stealthy audition process, Bay Area musician Darby Hinshaw, 31, won the San Diego Symphony's tryout for an open French horn seat yesterday.

Photo of the Week



Dancers on a Plane

Dancers Christine Marshall and Bradley Lundberg rehearse a dance piece at the Malashock studios in Point Loma.



To purchase Gala tickets, call 619-794-8272

» Engineer-turned-photographer Joseph Rubenson, a former trustee of the Museum of Photographic Arts, self-published a book of [photographs of Julian](#) in 2005, the rural community he'd called home since buying an apple ranch there in the mid-1980s. He died last month at age 90. (Union-Tribune)

» Famed UCSD neuroscientist V.S. Ramachandran speculates 20 percent of art can now be explained by brain science. ([The Smart Set](#))

On Stage:

» The Old Globe Theatre's two current shows had to [replace a cast member at the last minute](#) in each play. (Union-Tribune)

On Twitter, I asked [how often this happens](#).

Jim Hebert, the U-T's theater critic, chimed in:

"I'd say [unusual but not unheard of](#). Globe's 'Whisper House' replaced 1 actor in previews & another in midrun last year. ... But haven't seen it happen [this late](#) with 2 actors in 2 separate shows. Appears to be just an unfortunate coincidence."

The [Globe delayed its opening](#) of one of those plays, "Rafta, Rafta," by a few days to give the new cast member more rehearsal time.

» Actor Malcolm Gets, who plays the depressed Uncle Frank in La Jolla Playhouse's "Little Miss Sunshine," has been [sitting out "a number of performances"](#) of the show due to a throat infection. (L.A. Times)

» A costume designer works with "[garish and kitschy](#)" as guides - definitely not "pretty" - as she builds the wardrobe for Cygnet Theatre's upcoming production of "Cabaret." (KPBS)

» For that play, Cygnet is [twisting the usual casting](#) to have a woman play The Emcee - its artistic director hopes to convey the "seductive quality of fascism and Nazism and nationalism." (Union-Tribune)

Music:

» The San Diego Symphony's board chairman believes the

Join the San Diego arts community on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) :



Through April 10. \$50-\$70. (949) 497-2787. lagunaplayhouse.com.

AT THE HOP—THE DOO-WOP SHOW

The Alley Cats bring their unique sound of the '50s and '60s alive through a cappella singing. Welk Resorts Theatre, 8860 Lawrence Welk Dr., Escondido. Tuesdays. \$25 (888) 802-7469. welktheatre.com.

THURSDAY, MARCH 17

MONSTER TOMATO AND PEPPER SALE

Some 250 varieties of tomato plants and more than 100 varieties of hot and sweet peppers will be for sale. All tomatoes and peppers for this sale were propagated and organically grown exclusively in the Arboretum nursery by skilled volunteers. The Fullerton Arboretum, CSUF campus, Yorba Linda Blvd. and Associated Road., Fullerton. Through March 20. (657) 278-3407. fullertonarboretum.org.

SATURDAY, MARCH 18

LEGALLY BLONDE

Underestimated blonde sorority star Elle Woods doesn't take "no" for an answer. So when her boyfriend dumps her for someone "serious," Elle puts down the credit card, hits the books and sets out to go where no Delta Nu has gone before: Harvard Law. Fox Performing Arts Center, 3801 Mission Inn Ave., Riverside. Through March 20. Ticket prices vary. (951) 779-9804. foxriversidelive.com.

SATURDAY, MARCH 19



RAFTA, RAFTA . . .

Following their wedding, two newlyweds find that starting their life together under the groom's family's roof is no honeymoon. With warmth and humor, this British comedy examines what happens when a young couple must choose between saving money or their marriage. The Old Globe Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego. Tues.-Sun. through April 24. \$55-\$94. (619) 234-5623. theoldglobe.org.

MARK TWAIN TONIGHT

Hal Holbrook took to the stage almost 60 years ago in a tiny off-Broadway theatre and introduced the world to Mark Twain, a man they'd never forget. Holbrook continues to enthrall audiences around the world with his one-man show. Balboa Theatre, 868 Fourth Ave., San Diego. \$28-\$88. (619) 760-8585. sdbalboa.org.



TICKET TO RIDE

The musical biography of the Beatles – as seen through the eyes of the band's manager Brian Epstein – highlights pivotal moments in the group's reign: from Liverpool's Cavern Club to appearances on The Ed Sullivan Show and a concert at New York's Shea Stadium in front of more than 50,000 fans. Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts, 12700 Center Court Drive, Cerritos. \$30-\$60. (562) 467-8818. cerritoscenter.com.

THURSDAY, MARCH 24

NATHAN GUNN

Opera star Nathan Gunn has earned rave reviews for his performances in concert versions of "Showboat" and "Camelot." Segerstrom Center for the Arts, Samueli Theater, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa. Through March 27. \$72. (714) 556-2787. scfta.org.

IRVINE MUSEUM DOCENT TOUR

Weekly tour. The Irvine Museum is dedicated to the preservation and display of California art of the Impressionist Period (1890-1930). The Irvine Museum, 18881 Von Karman Ave., Ground Fl., Irvine. Thursdays. Free. (949) 476-2565. irvinemuseum.org.

FRIDAY, MARCH 25

TEN LITTLE INDIANS

In this classic Agatha Christie mystery, ten people are invited to an unfamiliar country house on an island off the coast of Devon, England. When life starts to imitate the nursery rhyme, the stranded strangers frantically search for a murderer, and their own pasts return to haunt them. Riverside Community Players, 4026 14th St., Riverside. Through April 10. \$15-\$18. (951) 686-4030. riversidecommunityplayers.org.

SILENT FILM NIGHT: PETER PAN

San Diego Symphony Winter Pops, Copley Symphony Hall, Seventh & B St., San Diego. \$20-\$30. (619) 235-0804. sandiegosymphony.com.

SATURDAY, MARCH 26

RUTH

The uplifting Biblical story of Ruth is recounted in this award-winning musical. Ruth's moving portrait of love and devotion reveals the poignant path to her marriage – a union granting her a special place in the family's lineage leading to Jesus. LifeHouse Theater,

1135 N. Church St., Redlands. \$15-\$19. Weekends through May 8. (909) 335-3037 ext. 21. lifehousetheater.com.

THURSDAY, MARCH 31

JAZZ AT THE MERC

Jeremy Brown Quartet. The Mercantile, 42051 Main St., Temecula. \$15. (866) 653-8696. temeculatheater.org.

APRIL

FRIDAY, APRIL 1

THE BOOK OF THE DUN COW

In a mythical age before time, a barnyard of animals must band together to fight the evil. Walter Wangerin's story the memorable characters of Chauntecleer the Rooster, the mournful, funny Mundo Cani Dog and the mysterious Dun Cow. Lamb's Players Theatre, 1142 Orange Ave., Coronado. \$48-\$53. Through May 15. (619) 437-6000. lambsplayers.org.

SATURDAY, APRIL 2

CURTAINS

When a Broadway musical is in its out-of-town tryout... well, sometimes it's murder. Never fear. Boston's finest detective, and a diehard musical theatre fan himself, is on the case. Landis Performing Arts Center, 4800 Magnolia Ave., Riverside. Weekends through April 10. \$20-\$75. (951) 222-8100. performanceriverside.org.



SUNDAY, APRIL 3

BRANFORD MARSALIS QUARTET & TERENCE BLANCHARD QUINTET

Award-winning musicians Marsalis and Blanchard and their bands perform. Segerstrom Center for the Arts, Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa. \$25-\$69. (714) 556-2787. scfta.org.

ROSENKAVALIER

Light and dark themes of relationships mingle in this masterpiece of love and loss. San Diego Opera, Civic Theatre, Third Ave. & B St., downtown San Diego. Also Apr. 6, 9, 12. \$35-\$220. (619) 533-7000. sdopera.com.

THURSDAY, APRIL 7

JAZZ AT THE MERC

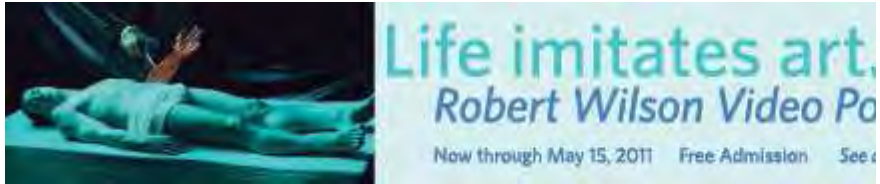
Ian Tordella Quartet. The Mercantile, 42051 Main St., Temecula. \$15. (866) 653-8696. temeculatheater.org.



THURSDAY, MARCH 10 WICKED

Long before that girl from Kansas arrives in Munchkinland, two girls meet in the land of Oz. One – born with emerald green skin – is smart, fiery and misunderstood. The other is beautiful, ambitious and very popular. Learn how these two grow to become the Wicked Witch of the West and Glinda the Good Witch. Segerstrom Center for the Arts, Segerstrom Hall, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa. Through April 3. \$39-\$99. (714) 556-2787. scfta.org.

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THE FOOD ISSUE

[Home](#) / [Articles](#) / [Arts](#) / [Theater](#) / **Blood feud**

Wednesday, Mar 16, 2011

Blood feud

The Lieutenant of Inishmore and more San Diego theater listings

By [Martin Jones Westlin](#)



The Lieutenant of Inishmore - Photo by Claudio Raygoza

Wee Thomas the cat isn't quite feeling himself these days. Truth be told, he's not feeling much of anything ever since two blokes blew his brains out in a ruse to lure his master home. It so happens the owner is the notorious Padraic, a Northern Irish paramilitary whose love for Wee Tom trumps his bloodlust (when we first meet him, he's trussed up a badly beaten drug dealer by the ankles and is about to relieve him of a nipple). He beats feet to the more placid climes of Inishmore island posthaste, his

search for feline justice evolving into a bloodletting and dismemberment the likes of which local theater has rarely seen.

Irish playwright Martin McDonagh wrote *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* as a jet-black satire on Irish republican activists and their supposedly shallow motives—their colossal maudlin streak, he seems to say, invariably wins out over whatever sense of patriotism drives their cause.

But two elements hobble this ambitious Ion Theatre Company entry: Even as the blood and gore is considerable, it also falls short against McDonagh's eviscerating dialogue (featuring Ryan Kidd's thunderous bombasts as the simpleton Davey). Director Claudio Raygoza needs to drown his stage in rivers of crimson and arms and legs, the same way McDonagh must do more to humanize his characters and thus gain our interest in them; he's on the right track as he introduces Mairead (Morgan Trant), who's equally interested in bloody revolution and banging Padraic. McDonagh knows black comedy, and Kyle Sorrell and Walter Ritter are fine as time-bomb Padraic and his punch-drunk father Danny in a show that almost works (but not quite).

Through April 9 at BLK BOX @ 6th & Penn, 3704 Sixth Ave. in Hillcrest. \$25-\$29.
iontheatre.com

Opening

Cabaret: A cabaret singer, an American writer and the denizens of Berlin's Kit Kat Klub are caught up in the swirling maelstrom of a changing society on the eve of Hitler's rise to power. Produced by Cygnet Theatre Company, it's in previews March 17 and opens March 26 at the Old Town Theatre in Old Town. \$25-\$54. cygnettheatre.com

Groundswell: In a small lodge on the South African coast, three men find themselves caught in a power struggle fueled by greed and desperation and will go to any length to secure a chance at a better life. In previews now, it opens March 17 at The Old Globe Theatre's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre in Balboa Park. \$29-\$67. oldglobe.org

In the Next Room (or the vibrator play): A group of men and women get curious as a gynecologist treats "women's problems" with a newfangled electric vibrator in 1885 upstate New York. Produced by San Diego Repertory Theatre, it opens in previews March 19 at The Lyceum, Downtown. \$29-\$53. sdrep.org

Rafta, Rafta: Two newlyweds find that starting their life together under the groom's family's roof is no honeymoon. In previews March 19, it opens March 24 at The Old Globe Theatre mainstage in Balboa Park. \$29-\$70. oldglobe.org

Now Playing

Last of the Red-Hot Lovers: Dreary Barney invites three women to his house while his wife and kids are away for the summer. Through March 19 at OnStage Playhouse in Chula Vista. \$8-\$16, onstageplayhouse.org

* **Eurydice:** Dying too young on her wedding day, Eurydice must journey to the underworld, where she reunites with her father and struggles to remember her lost love. Produced by the SDSU School of Theatre, Television and Film, it runs through March 20 at the Experimental



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Page 1 of 1

» AGENDA

APPLAUSE

BY PHYLLIS DeBLANCHE

CIRCLING THE GLOBE

The Old Globe proffers triple treats this month: Bubbly hit *Jane Austen's Emma* is held over on the main stage through Mar. 6, bowing out for the familial comedy *Rafta, Rafta...*, Mar. 19–Apr. 24. In the Sheryl & Harvey White Theatre, thriller *Groundswell* has audiences holding their breath Mar. 12–Apr. 17. theoldglobe.org.



HENRY DIROCCO

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Page 1 of 1

CALENDAR

SATURDAY, MARCH 19



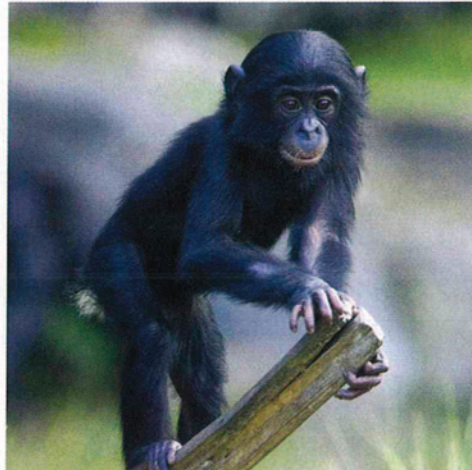
RAFTA, RAFTA . . .

Following their wedding, two newlyweds find that starting their life together under the groom's family's roof is no honeymoon. With warmth and humor, this British comedy examines what happens when a young couple must choose between saving money or their marriage. The Old Globe Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego. Tues.-Sun. through April 24. \$55-\$94. (619) 234-5623. theoldglobe.org.

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EXPLORING

Balboa Park



Left to right: the graceful architecture of the House of Hospitality; a bonobo at play at the San Diego Zoo (located inside the park); the **Old Globe Theatre**.

Art, music and
performance
bloom year-round.

Spanning 1,200 acres of lush, beautifully landscaped terrain, Balboa Park is known as San Diego's "crown jewel," offering a variety of outdoor recreation options for kids and adults alike, not to mention a verdant respite from the bustle of the city's increasingly metropolitan pace. The park is also the seat of San Diego's thriving cultural scene.

Nestled between palm trees and botanical gardens, ornate Spanish Colonial buildings house many of the park's museums and art exhibits. Several of the buildings were constructed as part of two world fairs: the Panama-California Exposition in 1915-16, and the California-Pacific International Exposition in 1935-36.

It can take more than one day to see and enjoy each museum, garden and attraction. The **Visitors Center** (619.239.0512) in the House of Hospitality offers a Passport to Balboa Park, allowing admission to any of the park's museums for one week. (Keep in mind some museums are closed on Mondays.) Deluxe packages include passes to the neighboring **San Diego Zoo**. Or go high-tech and let the park's new iPhone app be your guide.

ARTS & CULTURE

Performing arts abound in the park. The **Old Globe Theatre** routinely presents top talent in world-renowned productions; spring features include *Rafta, Rafta...*, about the honeymoon of an Indian couple living in working-class London (March 19-April 24), Alan Ayckbourn's new comedy *Life of Riley* (April 30-June 5) and the Pulitzer-winning *August: Osage County* (May 7-June 12; see p. 51 for more theater listings).

Elsewhere in the park, the **Marie Hitchcock Puppet Theatre** presents whimsical puppet shows, while **Spreckels Organ Pavilion** houses the world's largest outdoor pipe organ, with some 4,500 pipes. Free concerts are offered Sundays at 2 pm.

The park is also home to groups celebrating culture. The **House of Pacific Relations International Cottages** promotes the heritage of countries around the world by hosting open houses and weekend festivals. Neighboring **WorldBeat Center** uses art, music, dance and education to celebrate African and indigenous cultures, while **Centro Cultural de la Raza** is a multidisciplinary center dedicated to the preservation of Chicano/Latino culture.

The park has a vast array of institutions celebrating the visual arts, past and present. Known for its presentation of eclectic traveling exhibitions, the **San Diego Museum of Art** also has a trove of Renaissance and Baroque works, plus a vast Asian collection; an exhibition of the art of Thomas Gainsborough continues in spring. The world-class **Museum of**



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Page 1 of 1



'RAFTA, RAFTA ...'

The comedy about immigrant Indian family life is playing at the Old Globe through April 24.

Page 22



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Publication Name: Los Angeles Times
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Page 1 of 1

5 DAYS OUT

Highlights of the week
ahead in arts, music and
performance.

THEATER

"Rafta, Rafta"

Where: ~~Old Globe~~ Theatre,
San Diego

When: Tuesday through
Sunday evenings, with
weekend matinees
Through April 24
Tickets: \$29-\$99

SUBMIT EVENTS TO CALENDAR@PACIFICSANDIEGO.COM.

HOME GAMES

PADRES READY TO PLAY BALL

The San Diego Padres kick off their regular season April 2 against the St. Louis Cardinals at Busch Stadium. Opening day at Petco Park is April 5, when the Pads take on the San Francisco Giants. For more home game times and giveaway deets, see the schedule below or visit sandiegopadres.com.



Chris Hardy

CHRIS HARDY

- 4/5: San Francisco Giants, 3:35 p.m. (free opening day T-shirt)
- 4/6: San Francisco Giants, 3:35 p.m. (free magnetic Padres schedules)
- 4/8: Los Angeles Dodgers, 7:05 p.m. (free rally towels and fireworks show)
- 4/9: Los Angeles Dodgers, 5:35 p.m. (free Padres mesh caps)
- 4/10: Los Angeles Dodgers, 1:05 p.m. (military opening day)
- 4/11: Cincinnati Reds, 7:05 p.m.
- 4/12: Cincinnati Reds, 7:05 p.m.
- 4/13: Cincinnati Reds, 3:35 p.m.
- 4/21: Philadelphia Phillies, 7:05 p.m.
- 4/22: Philadelphia Phillies, 7:05 p.m. (wine and food festival, college night)
- 4/23: Philadelphia Phillies, 5:35 p.m. (free six-pack tube coolers)
- 4/24: Philadelphia Phillies, 1:05 p.m. (free fielding gloves for kids)
- 4/25: Atlanta Braves, 7:05 p.m.
- 4/26: Atlanta Braves, 7:05 p.m.
- 4/27: Atlanta Braves, 12:35 p.m.

4/8: HALFWAY TO HALLOWEEN

Venue: Hard Rock Hotel San Diego

Tickets: \$25

Info: hardrockhalloween.com

Dust off your sexy cop costume for Hard Rock Hotel San Diego's latest and greatest, "Halfway to Halloween," featuring a roster of powerful DJs and a headlining performance by krunk junkie Lil Jon.

04/8

Lil Jon headlines
Halfway to Halloween

COURTESY SKAM ARTIST

04/2

04/3-05/22

4/2: RAFTA, RAFTA...

Venue: Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park

Tickets: \$29-\$85

Info: oldglobe.org

Find out what happens when young newlyweds from the blue collar town of Bolton, England, move in with the groom's conservative Indian family in this award-winning comedic play.



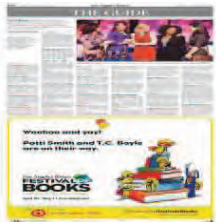
4/3-5/22: THE PHOTOGRAPHY OF IMOGEN CUNNINGHAM

Venue: Oceanside Museum of Art

Admission: \$8

Info: oma-online.org

View the black and white botanical images of pioneer American photographer Imogen Cunningham (1883-1976), which call attention to the abstract detail in nature.



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Page 1 of 1

THEATER

Openings

Rafa, Rafa — Apin Khan-Din's play takes a comic look at the generational divide on sex and marriage within a close-knit Indian family living in Los Angeles. West Coast premiere. The Old Globe, 1015 Old Chicago Way, San Diego. Today, 7 p.m.; Thu.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Thu.-Fri., 8 p.m.; Sat., 8 and 9 p.m.; next run, 7 and 7 p.m.; ends Apr. 28. \$29-\$55. (619) 534-5022.

calendar

**4/2: RAFTA,
RAFTA...**

Venue: Old Globe
Theatre, Balboa
Park

Tickets: \$29-\$85

Info: oldglobe.org

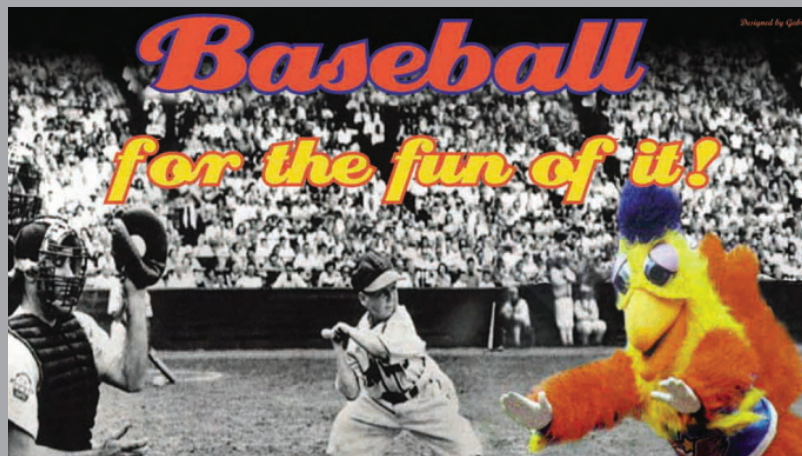
Find out what happens when young newlyweds from the blue collar town of Bolton, England, move in with the groom's conservative Indian family in this award-winning comedic play.



CALENDAR

Orange County/San Diego/Inland Empire

APRIL 2011



TUESDAY, APRIL 12 BASEBALL FOR THE FUN OF IT!

An exhibition of photographs, artworks, artifacts and documents exploring some of the amusing events and personalities that have added much to the history and legacy of the national pastime. Highlights include a 60th anniversary tribute to Eddie Gaedel, the 3-foot, 7-inch tall player who came to the plate for the St. Louis Browns in 1951. The feathered orange and yellow San Diego Chicken, the pioneering mascot who transcended his character to become a virtual folk hero, is featured in a display of various personal artifacts and props from a game-worn suit to his famous eye chart for umpires. West Covina Public Library, 1601 West Covina Pkwy., West Covina. Through April 23. (626) 791-7647 or terymar@earthlink.net

ENTERTAINMENT

SUNDAY, APRIL 10

FOLLIES FOREVER!

The Follies are known for celebrating the music and dance of the '40s, '50s and '60s with a cast ranging in age from 56 to 81. Guest stars, The Four Preps, stroll down memory lane with their million-sellers like "Big Man," "Lazy Summer Night," "Down By the Station" and their chart-topping "26 Miles." Plaza Theatre, 128 South Palm Canyon Dr., Palm Springs. Follies run through May 15, 2011. \$50-\$92. (760) 327-0225. psfollies.com.

PRIVATE LIVES

Passion, anger, love, laughter and romance all shaped by Noël Coward's wit and comic genius sets the stage for perpetually dueling lovers Amanda and Elyot. In Coward's most celebrated comedy, the two divorcees unwittingly book adjoining rooms while honeymooning with their new spouses, and quickly realize the folly of their new marriages. The Laguna Playhouse, Moulton Theatre, 606 Laguna Canyon Road, Laguna Beach. \$50-\$70. (949) 497-2787. lagunaplayhouse.com.

TEN LITTLE INDIANS

In this classic Agatha Christie mystery, 10 people are invited to an unfamiliar

country house on an island off the coast of Devon, England. When life starts to imitate the nursery rhyme, the stranded strangers frantically search for a murderer, and their own pasts return to haunt them. Riverside Community Players, 4026 14th St., Riverside. \$15-\$18. (951) 686-4030. riversidecommunityplayers.org.

THE BOOK OF THE DUN COW

In a mythical age before time, a barnyard of animals must band together to fight evil. Walter Wangerin's memorable characters include Chauntecleer the Rooster, the mournful, Mundo Cani Dog and the mysterious Dun Cow. Lamb's Players Theatre, 1142 Orange Ave., Coronado. \$48-\$53. Through May 15. (619) 437-6000. lambsplayers.org.

CURTAINS

When a Broadway musical is in its out-of-town tryout... well, sometimes it's murder. Never fear. Boston's finest detective and a diehard musical theatre fan himself is on the case. Landis Performing Arts Center, 4800 Magnolia Ave., Riverside. \$20-\$75. (951) 222-8100. performanceriverside.org.

MONDAY, APRIL 11

THE FLOWER FIELDS AT CARLSBAD RANCH



Explore 50-acres of Giant Tecolote Ranunculus flowers in bloom. This year a new one-acre orchid showcase joins other recent additions such as the 4,000-sq. ft. Paul Ecke Jr. Family Barn designed to recall even more of a ranch setting. The Flower Fields at Carlsbad Ranch, Paseo Del Norte, Carlsbad. Through May 8. 9 a.m.-6 p.m. \$9-10. (760) 431-0352. theflowerfields.com.

TUESDAY, APRIL 12

ROSENKAVALIER

Light and dark themes of relationships mingle in this masterpiece of love and loss. San Diego Opera, Civic Theatre, Third Ave. & B St., downtown San Diego. \$35-\$220. (619) 533-7000. sdopera.com.

GROUNDSWELL

In a small lodge on the ferociously rocky coast of South Africa, two men plot to convince their lone guest to invest in their diamond mining scheme. The three men find themselves caught in a power struggle fueled by greed and desperation and will go to any lengths to secure a chance at a better life. The Old Globe, Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego. Tues.-Sun. through April 17. \$29-\$67. (619) 234-5623. theoldglobe.org.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13

DRINKIN', SINGIN', SWINGIN'

A salute to Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis, Jr. and Dean Martin. Welk Resorts Theatre, 8860 Lawrence Welk Dr., Escondido. Wed.-Sun. through April 24. \$45-\$65. (888) 802-7469. welktheatre.com.

THURSDAY, APRIL 14

RAFTA, RAFTA . . .

Following their wedding, two newlyweds find that starting their life together under the groom's family's roof is no honeymoon. With warmth and humor, this British comedy examines what happens when a young couple must choose between saving money or their marriage. The Old Globe Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego. Tues.-Sun.

through April 24. \$55-\$94. (619) 234-5623. theoldglobe.org.

JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR

Considered the world's first rock opera, this fabulous musical depicts the final days in the life of Christ. Music and lyrics by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice. Old Town Temecula Community Theater, 42051 Main St., Temecula. Thurs.-Sun. through April 24. \$20-\$28. (866) 653-8696. temeculatheater.org.

FRIDAY, APRIL 15

SHOTGUN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

An evening of comedy, betrayal, and ...murder. Help solve the murder mystery before it is too late and the inheritance is lost. Mystery Café Dinner Theatre, Imperial House Restaurant, 505 Kalmia St., San Diego. Fri.-Sat. through April 30. \$60. (619) 544-1600. mysterycafe.net.

RUTH

The uplifting biblical story of Ruth is recounted in this award-winning musical. Ruth's moving portrait of love and devotion reveals the poignant path to her marriage – a union granting her a special place in the family's lineage leading to Jesus. LifeHouse Theater, 1135 N. Church St., Redlands. \$15-\$19. Weekends through May 8. (909) 335-3037 ext. 21. lifehousetheater.com.

SATURDAY, APRIL 16

PHOTOGRAPHING THE CAHUILLA LANDSCAPE

Enjoy a day outdoors photographing the beautiful landscape of Cahuilla Indian territory with Sue Meyers, an award-winning photographer and naturalist. Bring camera equipment and picnic lunch. Agua Caliente Cultural Museum, 219 S. Palm Canyon Dr., Palm Springs. \$10. Register (760) 833-8169 or cvictor@accmuseum.org. (760) 833-8167. accmuseum.org.

SPRING BUSKER FESTIVAL

The cobblestone streets of Seaport Village bring the unbelievable to life as one-of-a-kind street performers showcase their extraordinary and bizarre talents for a weekend of exhilarating outdoor family amusement unlike any other festival in the region. Jugglers, sword swallowers, contortionists, comedic stuntmen and more will awe the crowds. Festival is free of charge, all buskers accept tips. Seaport Village, West Harbor Dr. and Pacific Hwy., adjacent to Embarcadero Park North. Also April 17. (619) 235-4014. seaportvillage.com.

RAMONA

Based on Helen Hunt Jackson's 1884 novel, this classic story follows the tragic romance of an orphan girl raised by a rich Mexican family and traces the many struggles of

CURTAIN CALL

FEBRUARY AND MARCH THEATRE OPENINGS

Craving a little culture in your life? Look no further than the latest theatre openings SD has to offer...

San Diego Civic Theatre

What: **The Wizard of Oz**
When: February 15 – 20
Where: 1100 Third Ave., San Diego
How: 619-570-1100
800-982-2787
broadwaysd.com
♿

Cygnnet Theatre Company Old Town Theatre

What: **The Tragedy of the Commons**
When: Through February 20
Where: 4040 Twiggs St., San Diego
How: 619-337-1525
cygnnettheatre.com
♿

La Jolla Playhouse Mandell Weiss Theatre

What: **Little Miss Sunshine**
When: February 15 – March 27
Where: 2910 La Jolla Village Dr., La Jolla
How: 858-550-1010
lajollaplayhouse.org
♿

The Lyceum Theater

What: **Romeo and Juliet**
When: February 12 – 13
Where: 79 Horton Plaza, San Diego
How: 619-295-7311
sandiegoballet.org
♿

Old Globe Theatre

What: **Jane Austin's EMMA: A Musical Romantic Comedy**
When: Through February 27
Where: 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego
How: 619-23-GLOBE
theoldglobe.org
♿

Old Globe Theatre

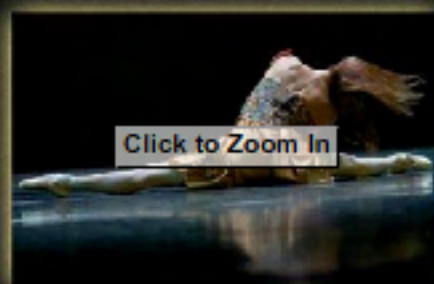
What: **Rafta, Rafta...**
When: March 19 – April 24
Where: 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego
How: 619-23-GLOBE
theoldglobe.org
♿

San Diego Symphony Copley Symphony Hall

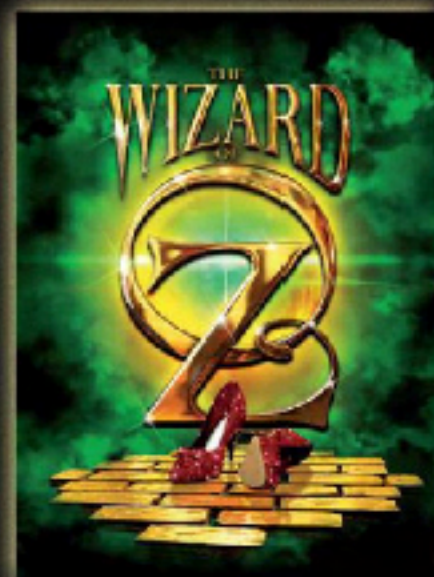
What: **Brahms' Double Concerto: A Jacobs Masterworks Concert**
When: February 11 – 13
Where: 750 B St., San Diego
How: 619-235-0804
sandiegosymphony.org
♿

Sheryl & Harvey White Theatre Old Globe Theatre

What: **Groundswell**
When: March 12 – April 17
Where: 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego
How: 619-23-GLOBE
theoldglobe.org
♿



Romeo and Juliet



The Wizard of Oz



La Jolla Playhouse



Old Globe Theatre

♿ Wheelchair Accessible
👨‍👩‍👧‍👦 Family Fun
🎵 Symphony
💃 Ballet

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PERFORMING ARTS

"Rafta, Rafta..." 『ラフタ・ラフタ...』

インド文化を継承する移民家族と新婚2人の葛藤／イギリス産の喜劇

⑤ イギリスのランカシャー州ボールトン。インドから移民してきたダット一家の長男アトゥールとロパの結婚式が行われていた。儀式後に両家の家族や友人たちがダット家に集まり、賑やかな祝いのパーティーを繰り広げている。アトゥールの父は常に周囲の関心を集めたがる性格で、息子に腕相撲を挑戦する。そして、見事に打ち負かしてしまい、アトゥールは肩身の狭い思いをする。父親は新しい嫁口パのことを気に入っていない様子。経済的困窮に瀕している2人はアトゥールの家族が暮らす家屋の屋根裏で新婚生活を始めることにするが...



Rafta, Rafta... / Photo by Katarzyna Woronowicz / The Globe Theatres

⑥ 映画化もされた自伝的戯曲 "EAST IS EAST" (邦題『ぼくの国、パパの国』) など知られるアユブ・ハーン＝ディン脚本による戯曲。1963年発表のビル・ノートン作 "All in Good Time" を改作した本編は、2007年にロンドンの英国国立劇場で初演を迎えて成功を収め、2008年にはオフ・ブロードウェイでも上演された。2008年にローレンス・オリヴィエ賞最優秀コメディ部門の栄冠も獲得している。

① THE GLOBE THEATRES (Old Globe Theatre), 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park / 619-239-2255 (T)。期間 — 4/24 (日)迄。上演—火・水曜：7pm、木・金曜：8pm、土曜：2pm & 8pm、日曜：2pm & 7pm。チケット—\$29 ~ \$85。

<http://www.oldglobe.org>