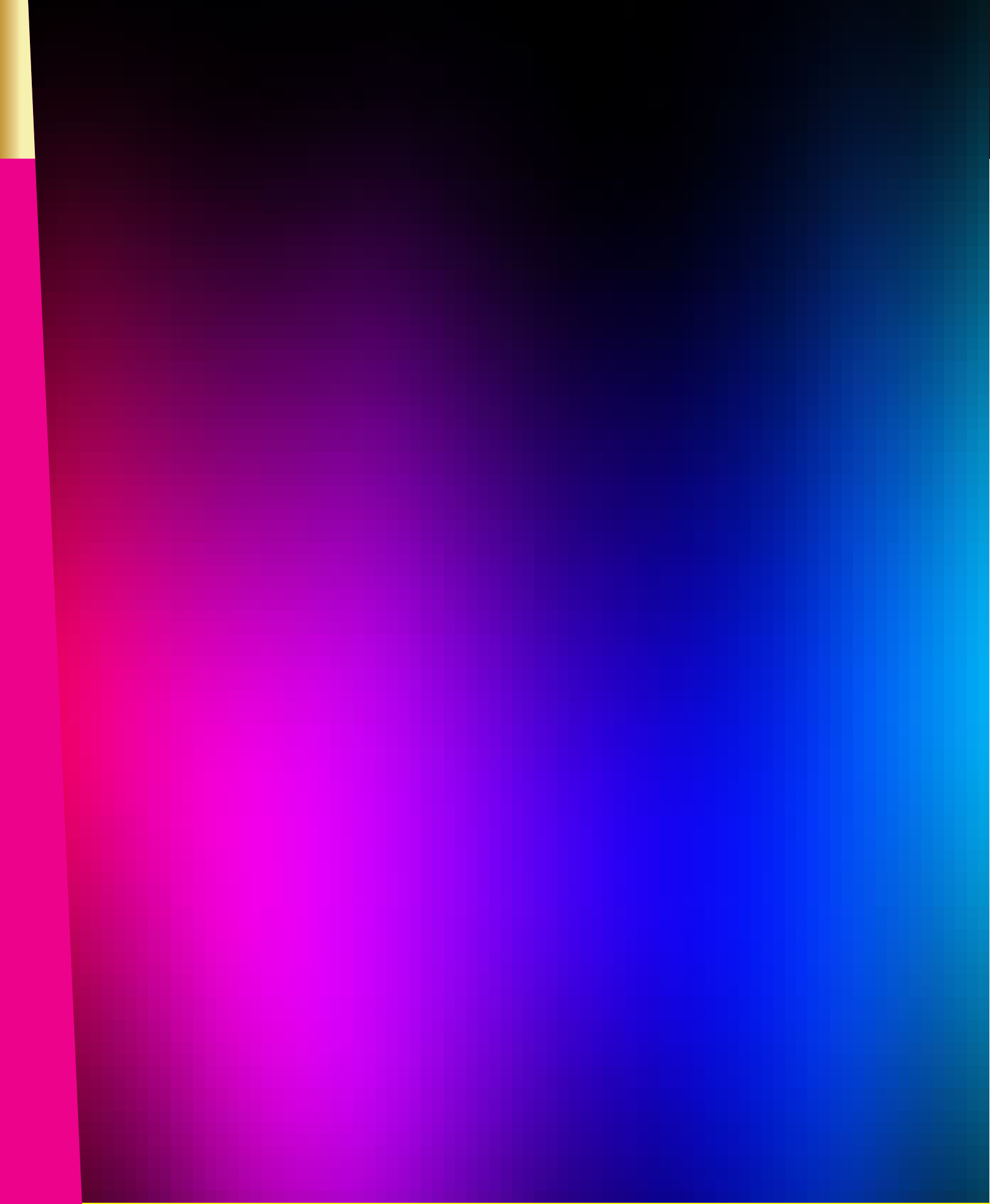


# Pakistan Cultural Society

*Annual Report 2009-2010*



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ENGLAND**



# Pakistan Cultural Society Annual Report 2009-2010

## Background

The Pakistan Cultural Society (PCS) was founded in 1993 with the aim of providing an intercultural forum that would promote traditional and contemporary Pakistani arts and cultures. Over the years, PCS has managed to bring together diverse audiences which have helped to break down conventional boundaries and cultural barriers. PCS offers a platform for cross-racial, cross-cultural and cross-social creative dialogue in arts and education. It also promotes itself as an effective tool for positive social development and continues to provide initiatives by organising international partnerships and exchange programmes.

## Mission Statement

"To promote equality and cultural diversity, economic, health and social wellbeing of individuals and communities through the arts, education and inter-cultural activities within the North East of England and beyond."

## Artistic Policy and Vision

Our work is based on the belief that everyone is creative or has the creative potential within them. We value and encourage individuality, collaborative endeavour and participation.

Aims:

- Develop young people and adults as imaginative, creative beings with a lifelong interest in the arts.
- Develop skills and confidence of potential artists in using the arts to communicate ideas that make positive differences in their lives.
- Support artists by helping them develop professional competences linked to increasing their chances and opportunities for employment.
- Develop awareness and appreciation of the rich cultural diversity of art.
- Encourage partnership working through developing the skills of collaborative endeavour.
- Develop the expertise of our staff and Board to enable us to identify and share best practice and provide this expertise and resources within our community.

- Continue to work with professional artists and qualified practitioners to deliver high quality work.
- Employ a wide range of staff including professional artists and qualified practitioners to deliver high quality work and for specific purposes such as musical instrument tuition and choreography, etc.
- Develop our educational strand to provide workshops and activities for young people (youth service). These are delivered by professional artists and include music, creative writing, crafts, dance and drama.
- Develop our educational strand to provide workshops and activities for women. These are delivered by professional artists and include music, creative writing, crafts, dance and drama.
- Work with other community youth groups region-wide and deliver tailor-made programmes accordingly.
- Provide artists to other community groups according to their needs in order to deliver high quality educational work.
- Provide programme design consultancy work in the region through our expert professionals to meet clients' specifications and needs.



## Chair's Introduction

For the last fifteen years Pakistan Cultural Society has been contributing significantly to the growing cultural sector of the North East. During this journey our audience have become more diverse and we are now evolving as an organisation working for the arts development of not only South Asian culture but also all the different Black and Minority Ethnic communities based in the region.

Though the global economic downturn has affected our funding and we have lost some of our staff, yet we continue our tradition of delivering extraordinary programme of events and unique performances by talented artists from around the world.

We continue to forge national and international partnerships through distinctive programmes that have enabled us to be recognized as one of the leading arts development organizations of the region.

Our Youth Engagement Activities are well received by the local communities and we strive to keep the momentum going.

PCS's reputation has enhanced over the years in the region because of its activities and we hope to maintain that goodwill through the professionalism of artists, staff members, management and overall high quality artistic programmes that is meant for all our audiences, participants, partners and associates. And, I hope we continue to overwhelm everybody with our achievements and success.

**Mumtaz Sanam, Chairperson**

## Director's Report

In times of recession, with our funding going down by 25% since last year, it was indeed a tough task for a partially funded organisation like the PCS to maintain its pre-recession momentum. Dealing with this change was a challenge and we did rise to the occasion by keeping our focus on our regular 'Youth Engagement', 'Health', 'Literature Development', 'Arts & Heritage' and 'Educational' projects by adding more variety to them.

Since the past few years PCS has worked not only for the development of South Asian arts and culture but also evolved as an organisation working increasingly towards the arts development of the North East's Black and Ethnic Minority(BME) community. Thus, in the past year PCS has commissioned the performances of musicians and singers from Azerbaijan and Vietnam, enabled a unique collaboration between a Chinese and Persian calligrapher and recorded oral testimonies of dozens of Persians and other members of the diverse BME community based in Newcastle upon Tyne as part of the Islamic Heritage Project.

Although, our focus remained on Internationalism and we hosted several International talents to perform in the region, yet some of our International events had to be cancelled due to funding and logistic issues.

Nevertheless, we strove hard to work on our regional projects designed to encourage young people to take to the arts, shun antisocial behaviour and become active members in the development of the society around them.

'Sahelian' health project, which started as a pilot project few years ago has been a huge success and we continue to use it to advocate women empowerment. Whereas the Islamic Heritage Project is in full swing, involving volunteers from the local communities to work closely for the purpose of gathering and recording valuable data of the region's Islamic community.

Thus, in these 'changing' times, the desire to contribute to the arts sector has been even stronger than before and I hope we are moving towards a better future with greater opportunity to work together with the regional community and contribute towards their wellbeing.

**Munmun KC, Director**



## Literature Development Programme (LDP)

PCS has always prioritised the development of literature in the region by establishing platforms for new as well as established writers to express themselves through their work. The **'International Mushaira'**, an event dedicated to 'live poetry' has been one of our long running events that featured regularly in the PCS calendar. As part of the occasion, leading vernacular poets from around the world are invited by PCS,

with their travel, lodging and appearance expenses borne by us. Regional poets, **Nkosana Mpofu, Peter Adegbie, Wajid Hussian, Lubna Kiran** and others shared the podium with their international counterparts from India, Iran, USA, Netherlands, Pakistan, and Canada. The audience at Westgate Community Hall was jam-packed with approximately 150 people for the event who enjoyed the multilingual verses of the 25 assembled poets.

The ecstatic audience swooned to these verses and some of them admitted the 'International Mushaira' to be *'the best they have ever attended,'* while others requested the PCS *'to organise the event at least twice in a year.'*

## KITAAB @ Durham Book Festival

As part of the literature development programme, for the second year running, PCS worked in partnership with Durham City Arts and New Writing North to organise **'Kitaab'**, which helped celebrate 'world literature' by enabling multicultural writers to promote their work at the Durham Book Festival. Kitaab helped launch new voices like Nigerian **Kachi A. Ozumba**, whose book *'Shadow of a smile'* has recently been nominated for the Desmond Elliot prize, along with established authors such as **Amanda Craig, Marina Lewycka, Yasmin Alibhai Brown and Ziauddin Sardar**. The latter, a well known journalist, scholar, broadcaster and cultural critic used the event to draw attention to his latest book, *'Balti Britain'*, a sharp observation of life in multicultural Britain. Ukrainian Marina Lewycka famous for her witty, Man Booker shortlisted *'A*

*Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian'* and *'Two Caravans'* talked about her latest venture *'We Are All Made of Glue.'* British novelist Amanda Craig, admired for her sense of humour in her writing is already a familiar name for her previous books, *'A Vicious Circle'* and *'Love in Idleness'* discussed her new work, *'Hearts and Minds'* with Marina Lewycka, whereas leading journalist Yasmin Alibhai Brown chatted about her memoir *'The Settler's Cookbook: Tales of Love, Migration and Food'* that kept the audience hooked to their seats for the entire duration of her talk at Durham's Gala Theatre.



## Drama and Community Arts Education (DCAEP)

Over the years PCS has taken several initiatives to facilitate young people's participation, inclusion and education through arts development programmes. It has always been our strategy to engage youths in arts and creative activities, especially those at risk of falling into anti-social behaviour and crime. At PCS, we help young people to harness their creativity and gain valuable experience in the arts by getting them involved in various artistic projects involving creative writing, participation in music, dance, drama, craft work, performance art, calligraphy, drawing, painting, graffiti art and numerous similar creative endeavours that help the youngsters learn new skills and techniques together with their cohorts, while at the same time getting to know new people and making new friends, which gives a much needed boost to their self confidence and personality. This process of involving the youth in arts development is quite productive as it aids in the future development of these youngsters, who in the long run learn to become more constructive with their lives and contribute their part to society.

# Key Achievements

Annual Report 2009-2010

During the past year, PCS organised several workshops with the target of getting young people involved in them. In our **'Arabic Calligraphy'** workshops, delivered by artist **Richard McLeod**, a series of sessions were held for pupils at schools and local community venues across the North East. The initial workshops were held in the Newcastle-based EMTEP and Millin community centres of Fenham and Benwell areas. The eager students were taught how to write their names in different Arabic characters and other such basic nuances of the art of Arabic Calligraphy.



In another artistic **workshop on Chinese Art**, local Chinese artist, **Dr. Chun Chao Chiu** worked in residency at Lowick School on the Holy Island, Berwick upon Tweed. He delivered workshops to 100 children on a site specific commission of work in reaction to the environment around the Northumberland Coast. Dance residencies were organised in local schools by well known choreographer **Chitralekha Bolar** founder of **Chitralekha Dance Company**. Series of **Creative Writing workshops** were also organized in schools and community centers in and around Newcastle upon Tyne.

## Kids Kabin Summer School Project

In this project, the PCS aligned itself with a wonderful local arts centre called Kids Kabin that prepares innovative summer holiday programmes for young people aged between 11 to 16 years. PCS backed the 2009 summer school by designing two appealing arts sessions like **street dance** and **theatre puppet making**, enabling them to demonstrate their newly acquired skills in front of a full audience of family and friends.

## Stockton International Festival Community Carnival

Celebrated each year, Stockton's Community Carnival is an integral part of the town's International Festival that brings together hundreds of local people to celebrate the occasion. The focus of the 2009 festival, the 22nd edition of the festival was on children. Titled 'Small Wonders, Big World,' the theme of the 2009 festival reflected how young people grow and see the world around them. Working in collaboration with Comerhouse Youth Project, PCS supported a group of youngsters to create animated and multihued carnival costumes under the guidance of professional artist Lisa Bean. Over a thousand young people in stunning carnival costumes lead a boisterous procession around the streets of Stockton-on-Tees, cheered all the way by an equally large and lively crowd.

## Off The Edge

This was yet another of our performance enhancing skills projects for youngsters, especially for those in the 12 to 16 age group. In this participatory arts project the students were taught puppetry, stilt walking, juggling, acrobatic dance and other such circus skills at Newcastle's Nunsmoor Play Centre.



In addition to the above, PCS continued the practice of offering **'Free South Asian Music Sessions'** every week to Asian music enthusiasts, along with **'Tabla classes'**. These sessions were mostly taught on a one-to-one basis.

The last of PCS Youth Engagement Workshops were the **'West African Drumming'** sessions at the picturesque Northumberland village school of Lowick in June 2009. A professional West African drummer had been hired by the PCS to teach the twenty-nine vivacious children hailing from the mainland as well as from the Holy Island. The drumming sessions had the unique themes of ship wrecks and communication



# Promotional Activities

# Annual Report 2009-2010

## International Film Festival @ International Women's Week

Every year we celebrate International Women's Day through innovative and inspiring events. This year we celebrated through a film festival during the week of International Woman's Day (IWD) by screening three most powerful award winning films – Deepa Mehta's - **Fire**, Jag Mundhra's - **Provoked; a true story** and Sabiha Sumar's – **Silent Water** (Khamosh Pani).

## Music

### Huong Thanh - Vietnamese Trio

Paris-based Vietnamese vocalist Huong Thanh is famous in world music circles for her skilful crossover of French and Vietnamese music, quiet evident in her critically acclaimed album 'Fragile Beauty.' UK music lovers recognize Huong for her BBC Radio 3 World Routes studio session with Lucy Duran in December, 2007.



PCS in league with Asian Music Circuit arranged her first-ever live performance in the North East at the Northern Rock Foundation Hall, The Sage, Gateshead. Along with her fellow compatriots Hong Nguyen and Xuan Vinh Phuoc, these leading exponents of Vietnamese music soothed the audience with their poignant music and songs sung in the limpid voice of Thanh. And it was quite

obvious when several members of the assembled audience admitted being 'hypnotised' by the mesmerizing quality of the vocal and instrumental music they just relished. Many of them were enticed by the indigenous instruments used by the trio such as the 'Sen' and 'Moon' lute, the 16-string 'Zither', the two-string, arch-shaped 'Dan Nh'i' that is played with a bow and the drums, flocking to the stage after the concert to know more about these instruments and feel them.

### Music of the ASHIQS from Azerbaijan

This event was a result of PCS' collaboration with London based Asian Music Circuit. The Azerbaijanis consider the music of Ashiqs as a symbol of their cultural and national identity. And it is not difficult to see why, as the band of seven

suit-clad musicians mesmerised the eager audience at The Sage through their unique vocal and instrumental music that is famous worldwide for exceptionally blending storytelling, poetry and dance. All seven musicians— Aytekin Akbarova, Qalandar Zaynalov, Azer Maharramov, Ramin Qarayev, Elshan Mansurov and Gochoq Askarov demonstrated their expertise either with their traditional instruments such as the 'Saz', 'Tar', and 'Kamancha' or through their passionate singing, all the while rendering enticing melodies captivating their audience throughout the event.



### Azad Kashmir Folk Group

As part of our policy of patronising the music of BME communities, PCS hosted the Birmingham based Azad Kashmir Folk Music Group. Having already completed the silver jubilee of their establishment, it was quite natural that the group have a distinctive fan base both in the UK and in Pakistan— the region from where this traditional folk music hails from and are considered among the leading exponents of the area's folk poetry or 'Sher Khawani.'

### Raga—Soul of Indian Music

Newcastle University's Professor of Music, Dr. Vijay Rajput is one of UK's leading Indian classical singers. PCS commissioned his latest performance at Literature and Philosophical Society's Neville Hall, where he gave a combined performance with table maestro Shahbaz Hussain and Indian sitar ace Ashraf Sharif Khan. The trio swung the assembled audience into their whirlpool of intriguing and rhythmic tunes, in which the expertise of each performer was equally scintillating. This magical performance was so spellbinding that a member of the audience expressed his disbelief that he was witnessing this event at Newcastle. Many others shook their head in unbridled satisfaction at the captivating rhythmic melodies these virtuosos were delivering with effortless ease and dynamic variation. When the musical journey concluded, it was a foregone conclusion that the

scores of CDs of the performers' music would be sold out in minutes. There was little doubt that the virtuoso musicians had captured the imagination of the delighted audience.

## Drama

### **Chand si Ladki ( International)**

Directed by Majid Zaigham, this interesting Punjabi language play was staged at the Westgate Community College in liaison with the PCS. The play starred few actors who were once part of a Bollywood dancing troupe. The show turned out to be a crowd puller with scores of people flocking to watch the play at Westgate Community college at West road.

### **Handful of Henna – Regional Tour**

Malaysian-born playwright **Rani Moorthy**, the artistic director of Manchester-based theatre company RASA, is famous for her hit plays—'Curry Tales' and 'Shades of Brown.' Her latest production, 'Handful of Henna,' is a joint venture with Oxfordshire Theatre Company. PCS as part of its mainstream partnership with national theatre companies, promoted this show in four venues in the North East — **The Customs House, Middlesbrough Theatre, Darlington Arts Centre and Queens Hall Arts Centre**. Based on real stories from the Muslim women this was a moving tale of lives lived across two cultures and about a girl's journey to understanding her mother and about the healing power of Henna. The play ran to full houses in all the above mentioned venues and got fantastic feedback from the audience.

### **Beneath the Banyan Tree**

Darlington-based **Theatre Hullabaloo** specialise in creating original quality theatre for young people. They use theatre as a creative and active learning medium to stimulate young people's understanding and exploration of the wider world of ideas and feelings. In partnership with Theatre Hullabaloo and **Canada-based Theatre Direct**, PCS promoted the theatre production— 'Beneath The Banyan Tree,' a vibrant

fusion of theatre, traditional Indian (Bharatnatyam) and Western dance, movement, puppetry and music. This dynamic production aimed at children aged seven and above and their families, told the story of Anjali, a young girl who has moved to the UK from India.

## Commissions and Productions

### **Visual Arts Exhibition: A Journey through Brushstrokes**

PCS commissioned the development of a unique collaborative project on calligraphy between two cultures – **Chinese** and **Persian**. In this project, two UK-based calligraphers—Taiwanese **Dr. Chun-Chao Chiu** and Iranian **Mehrangiz Modarres** Tabatabaei worked together over a period of nine months through a journey of creativity by exploring innovative approaches, sharing and discussing differences between the two cultures and their respective style of calligraphy to create together a series of new work as part of this creative journey. This exceptional project, which was the first of its kind in the UK, was exhibited for two weeks at the Newcastle-based Ouseburn Warehouse Workshops & Studios in February 2009. It will also be exhibited in other venues throughout 2010-11.

Dr. Chun-Chao Chiu is well known in the North East art circles for his traditional and contemporary Chinese art forms. His clever self-portrait titled 'Me in I or I in Me', in which he created a replica of his face inked in hundreds of the Chinese character 'I', turned out to be the cynosure of the exhibition. Mehrangiz, on the other hand is an experienced Persian calligrapher, currently based in Newcastle upon Tyne, who also specializes in 'miniature painting' and is skilled in the traditional methods of Chinese painting. Their extraordinary collaborative work of art reflected the depth of their respective art forms.

### **Musical Dance Drama: Rabindranath Tagor's 'Shyama'**

PCS commissioned this work by Newcastle based Indian Classical dancers and choreographer **Mohua Kumar** and **Sharmistha Chatterjee-Banerjee**. Based on Indian Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore's highly acclaimed play of the same name, 'Shyama' ran to a full house at Westgate Community college. The audience primarily composed of families, who were treated with South Asian delicacies during the interval, watched with wonder as the all-female ensemble cast put on a striking display of traditional Indian attires in combination with adept movements and unique Indian folk music, with Sharmistha and Mohua flawlessly personifying 'Shyama' and 'Bajrasen,' the unforgettable lead character's of Tagore's classic.



## Arts and Health Programme

### **Sahelian Project**

Over the years women of the region's Asian community have increasingly felt the need of an outlet to address their common problems. Observing this need a project was set up called 'Sahelian' means 'female friends' in Urdu and Hindi. The project encouraged women, especially those confined to housework, to come out and socialise with their peers from a similar background on a regular basis, at the same time creating awareness among these women about several ways to improve their overall welfare.

Now in its fourth year, the Sahelian health project is a household name among Asians of the North East, being increasingly recognised as a synonym for women's self-development. The project continues to raise awareness about the factors affecting women's health, focusing on the importance of nutrition and regular exercising and the need for healthy cooking without the use of oil and other unhealthy ingredients and other such details of living a healthy life, which has helped scores of women of the community to overcome persistent health disorders in due course of time.

Along with the regular physical fitness and Yoga sessions, the project got the participants involved in painting, flower-arrangement and other such creative and artistic endeavours that helped them to express themselves through the arts and has had a therapeutic affect on their mental health and wellbeing.

The number of participants is always on the rise as it is a unique opportunity for older, housebound women of the community to come out and socialise with their counterparts in a relaxed atmosphere, which they prefer over other public leisure centres that they find uncomfortable considering their traditional upbringing. Most members admit the project has changed their lives.

Hence, the project not only seeks to boost the morale of these women, but it is also empowering them as a whole. But, of late, due to the reduction of funding many of the project's activities have been downsized temporarily.



## Islamic Arts and Heritage Programme

Following successes of Islamic Arts and Heritage Programme since in 2006, we launched an Oral History project (Islamic Heritage) in 2009 with the support of Heritage Lottery Foundations and the Arts Council England North East. The aim of this project is to record the testimonies of individuals from a cross-section of the Islamic community who reside in the North East of England. The project focuses on all aspects of their lives and heritage such as childhood, environment, work, lifestyle, family, traditions and culture. Project is coordinated by competent team leader/project worker and 15 volunteers from a diverse age and cultural background who are receiving training in interviewing, transcribing, archiving and other such skills required to gather and record oral history of the local Islamic community. The volunteer group is also being trained to

use oral history as a resource, benefitting all the wider community to have a better understanding of their heritage by gaining access to the untold stories, histories and experiences of significant community groups.

Creative activities are the integral part of the project. A series of visual arts and literature workshops are being delivered in communities which will be part of the finale event during

October 2010 at Newcastle City Library, where the collected and collated information in the form of photographs, cultural objects, interviews in texts and audio tapes will be exhibited.

## "Vote of Thanks" - Sponsor's and Partners

List of our sponsor's and partners are growing at regional, national and international level. Our thanks goes to all who have been supporting our work for many years and to those who are new to our list in particular Heritage Lottery Foundations, Stockton Borough Council, Customs House, Darlington Arts Centre, Queen's Hall, Literature and Philosophical Society of Newcastle, Gala Theatre, Newcastle City Library, Side Cinema, Live Theatre, Durham City Arts, New Writing North, Theatre Hullabaloo, Rasa Production, Kali Theatre and many others. Our sincere thanks go artists who inspire us through their work, our audience who encourage and motivate us and finally our team of staff and volunteers who relentlessly work hard and help us to achieve our goals.

## Accounting Statement

### Statement Of Financial Activities

For The Year Ended 31 March 2010

	Notes	2010	2009
Incoming Resources			
Northern Rock Foundation		-	30,000
Donations		101,219	83,321
Members fees		610	1,940
Bank Interest		33	41
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>		<b>101,862</b>	<b>15,302</b>
Resources Expended			
Charitable Expenditure		32,313	51,030
Costs of Activities for			
Charitable Objectives	2(b)i	96,593	84,901
Management and			
Administration	2(b)ii	7,289	3,158
<b>Total Resources Expended</b>		<b>136,195</b>	<b>139,089</b>
<b>Net Movement In Funds</b>		<b>(34,333)</b>	<b>(23,787)</b>
<b>Total Funds Brought Forward</b>		<b>41,068</b>	<b>64,855</b>
<b>Total Funds Carried Forward</b>		<b>6,735</b>	<b>41,068</b>

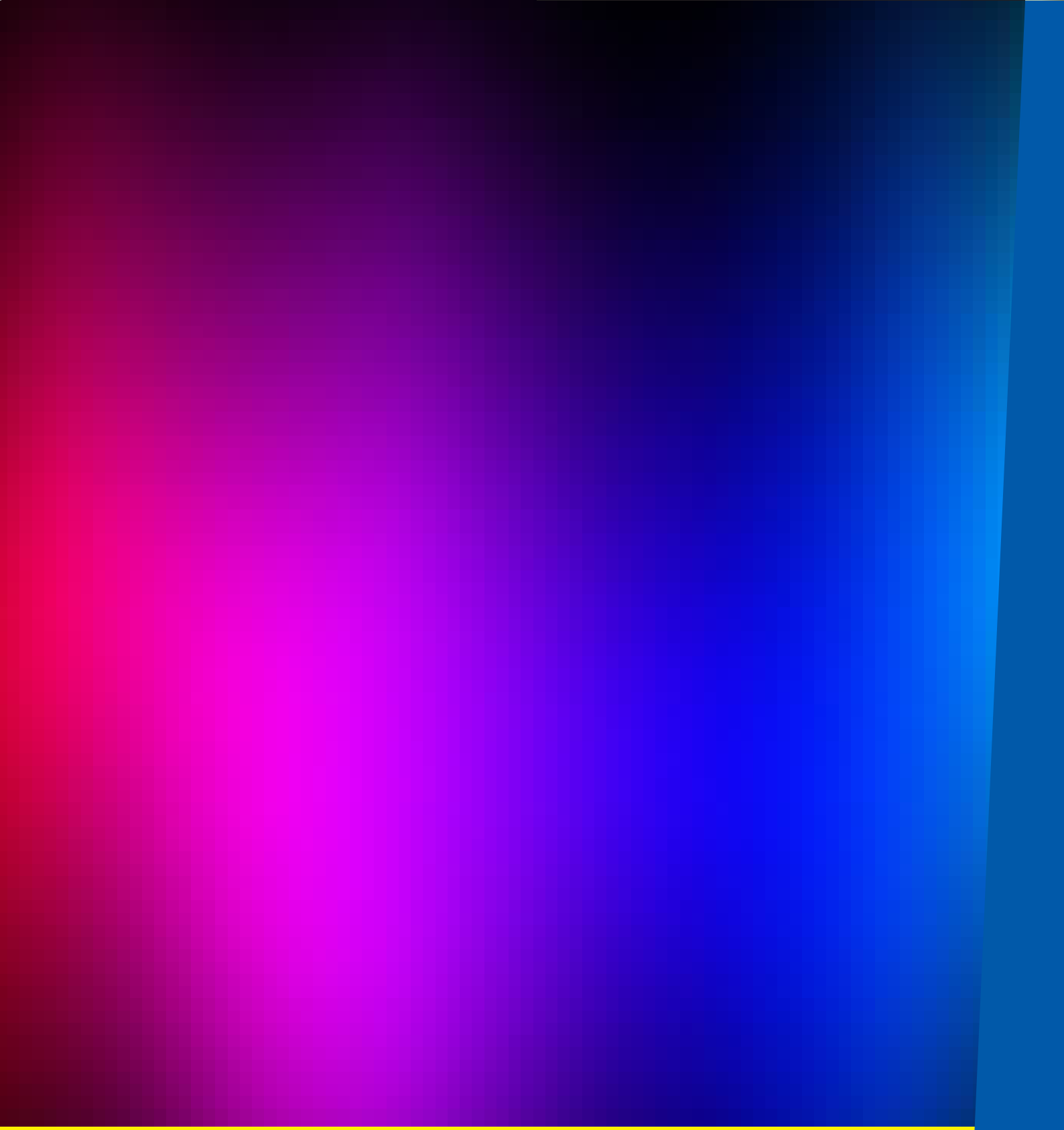
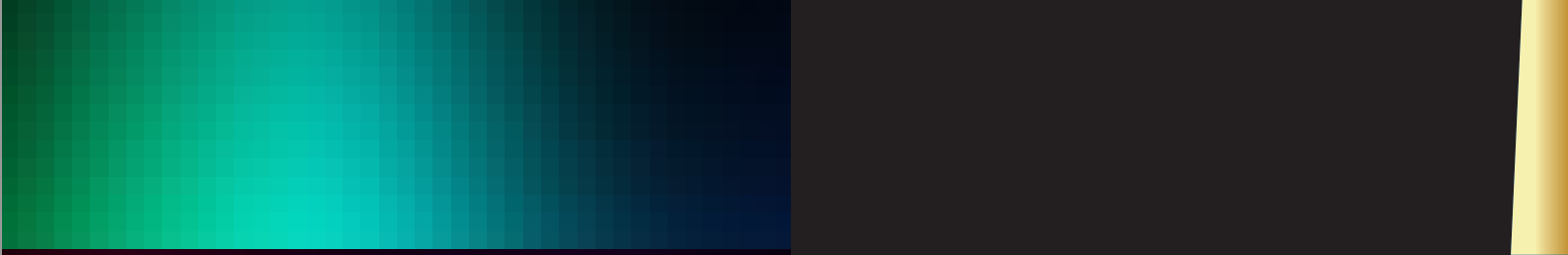
## Balance Sheet

### The Pakistan Cultural Society

As At 31 March 2010

	Notes	2010	2009
Fixed Assets			
Tangible Assets	5	7,148	7,363
Current Assets			
Debtors		3,200	2,125
Cash at Bank and in Hand		14,078	35,267
		17,278	37,392
Assets		24,426	44,755
Accruals		1,691	-
Funds received in Advance		16,000	-
Current Liabilities		17,691	3,687
<b>Total Assets Less Current Liabilities</b>		<b>6,735</b>	<b>41,068</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>		<b>6,735</b>	<b>41,068</b>
Represented By:			
Income Funds			
Cash Funds		6,735	41,068





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