Akram Khan Company
Chotto Desh

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2018
11AM | Jackson Hall
Recommended for grades 4–12

Common Core
The Common Core broadens the definition of a “text,” viewing performance as a form of text, so students are experiencing and interacting with a text when they attend a performance. Seeing live performance provides rich opportunities to write reflections, narratives, arguments, etc.

4-12 RL.2; 4-12 RL.3; 4-12 RL.5; 4-12 RL.6; 4-12 SL.2

About Akram Khan Company
In July 1999, an animated and curiosity-filled conversation took place in London between the young gifted dancer/choreographer Akram Khan and an ambitious former dancer and recently graduated arts manager named Farooq Chaudhry. That conversation laid the foundation for a dynamic collaboration, culminating in the creation of the Akram Khan Company one year later.

Inspired by Khan’s early training in the Indian classical dance form called Kathak, and the hybrid language that organically emerged when his Kathak training encountered contemporary dance, a vision began to form, fueled by a desire to learn and create through collaboration with the very best people across all the disciplines in the arts.

The rules were simple: take risks, think big, be daring, explore the unfamiliar, avoid compromise and tell stories through dance that are compelling and relevant, with artistic integrity.

Akram Khan Company is now one of the foremost innovative dance companies in the world with a major international presence and tours that reach many cultures across the globe. A milestone in the company’s journey was the creation of a section of the London Olympic Games Opening Ceremony in 2012.

About Chotto Desh
Chotto Desh is the first dance work for young people created by the Akram Khan Company, adapted from his acclaimed production, DESH. Chotto Desh or “small homeland,” draws on the cross cultural storytelling style of Akram Khan Company to tell the story of a young British Bangladeshi man who dreams of becoming a dancer.

Individual scenes drawn from Khan’s personal story utilizes dance, music, storytelling and animation. There is a haunting music score by Jocelyn Pook, visual animation by Yeast Culture and interspersed Bengali and English text written by Khan with poet and writer Karthika Nair. The production is directed by Sue Buckmaster, an acclaimed puppet maker whose company, Theatre-Rites, has been at the forefront of providing inspiring site specific, multidisciplinary work for children.

Buckmaster says: “Chotto Desh is very pertinent right now as our young people are experiencing increased pressure associated with a multicultural society. It will inspire children to think about their own stories and perhaps make their own autobiographical art full of truth and beauty.”

LEARN MORE:

Akram Khan Company website
(http://www.akramkhancompany.net/)

About Chotto Desh
(http://www.akramkhancompany.net/productions/chotto-desh-2015/)

Chotto Desh trailer
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kENBz2xbIEU)
Think About It

Dear Students,

1. How did the elements of the performance (music, dance, animation) work together to tell the story?

2. What did you like best about the performance and why? Was it what you expected?

3. If you were to create a dance about your own life, what stories would you want to tell?

What is expected of student audiences at the matinee:

- To facilitate starting the performance on time, get a drink of water and use the restroom before entering the seating area.
- Enter the auditorium quietly and take your seats immediately (note that all matinees have reserved seating).
- Show courtesy to the artists and other guests at all times.
- Demonstrate appreciation for the artists’ work by applauding.
- Refrain from making unnecessary noise or movements.
- Please eat lunch before or after the performance. Food is not allowed in the theatre.
- Use information learned from the pre-matinee discussion to enhance the performance experience.
- Please do not photograph or record the artists.

What your students can expect of their experience at the Mondavi Center:

A theatre is a charged space, full of energy and anticipation. When the house lights (the lights that illuminate the audience seating) go down, the excitement level goes up! Theatres are designed so that the voices of the singers and actors and the music of the musicians can be heard. But this also means that any sound in the audience, whispering, speaking and moving about, can be heard by other audience members and by the performers. Distractions like these disrupt everyone’s concentration and can spoil a performance.

The performers on stage show respect for their art form and for the audience by doing their very best work. By watching attentively the audience shows respect for the performers. Appreciation can be shown in many different ways, depending upon the art form and the culture(s) of the people in the audience. For instance, while the audience at a dance performance may sit quietly, other types of performances may invite audience participation.

Applause is the best way for audience members to share their enthusiasm and to show their appreciation for the performers. Applaud at the end of a performance! Sometimes the audience will clap during a performance, as after a featured solo. Audience members may feel like laughing if the action on stage is funny, crying if the action is sad, or sighing if something is seen or heard that is beautiful.

Mondavi Center Arts Education

Arts Education provides CueSheets for all performances in the Mondavi Center 2018–19 School Matinee Series. They are intended to help teachers prepare their students for the school matinee that they will attend at Mondavi Center, UC Davis.

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