

COLONIAL CIRCUS

PLAYBILL



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Cast

Shreya Parashar as *Disciple/Lady*
Sachin Sharma as the *Priest/Governor*

Crew

Shreya Parashar..... Creator/Writer/Performer
Sachin Sharma..... Creator/Writer/Performer
Tushar Dalvi..... Stage Manager
Damien Nelson..... Publicist, Want and Able



Shreya Parashar

Shreya is a clown, writer and improviser who trained in Indian classical dance and music, but became an Engineer because she excelled in academics. So, not your usual theatre kid. She is committed to creating safer, inclusive spaces for underrepresented BIPOC artists, especially women and femmes, with Hinprov. On an average day, find her in a corner, trying to summon courage for small talk and then watch her crush it through her puns. What an actor!



Sachin Sharma

Sachin, an actor, clown, and improviser, is passionate about creating art in languages beyond English. As a co-founder of Hinprov- a multi-lingual improv troupe with all BIPOC artists, he wants art to be accessible to everyone. Also, an obsessive people pleaser, turning awkward silence into comedy gold. With an MBA and a degree in Engineering on his LinkedIn profile, he is what happens when a business suit runs to join the circus!



Tushar Tukaram Dalvi

Tushar is a Toronto-based theatre actor, director, designer, and producer known for immersive, site-specific work. A recipient of the ADC Mentorship Grant and founder of Rangaai Theatre Company, he has worked with Aluna, Sawitri, Red Beti, and Nautanki Bazaar.



Damien Nelson

Damien is a press agent with over 15 years of experience. She works with comedians, organizations and festivals, including Julie Nolke, Neema Naz, Tom Hearn, Two2Mango, Toronto Fringe, Hamilton Fringe, and more. Damien is Vice Chair of the Board of Bad Dog Theatre Company, and is the editor of PartonandPearl.com.

Script or No Script?



"Process of Creation of Colonial Circus"

The oddball duo of Shreya and Sachin perform as Two2Mango- a Toronto-based South Asian artists' duo blending clown, improv, and classical dance into bold body-driven performances, where laughter meets curiosity and the bizarre takes the centre stage.

This show, Colonial Circus, was dreamed up by Two2Mango-us, with a deadline to perform at Toronto Fringe 2024. There was no written play, just many wild ideas. So, each time, we stepped out with an inkling of an idea, performed in front of an audience, watched the footage, and journaled on medium.com - our feelings, not the script. This went on for months; it became a ritual, a medium where our ideas took shape, our doubts found solace, and our mini celebrations held space. After all, no one else was reading it. Bit by bit, the show began to take form. Still scriptless.

In the process, Two2Mango also found its voice and its art form. We brought our bodies, spirits and unique points of view- an Eastern perspective- to every cabaret show that would have us. Soon, Colonial Circus was simmering, stirring something in the audience. During the lows, when we felt directionless or just plain empty, we began to sketch, drawing our feelings onto paper. Those sketches later became bookmarks (check out the merchandise we have for sale!). We devised this show around an ever-evolving premise - with a distinctly clownish tilt:

"What if the colonizers were clowns?"

which evolved into

"What if we pretended to be British colonizers?"

and then into

"What if two brown clowns pretended to be White British colonizers?"

Ooh, spicy! Right?

Because honestly, if you really look at what colonization did to the world, the whole thing feels like an absurd joke. Like a handful of clowns went on a massive power trip, and somehow, the world just... played along.

So that's what we did: we grabbed a few props and set sail. Ahem!

But still scriptless.

And then came the moment when we had to convey the show to the production team, which meant paper tech, beat sheets, and cue sheets. Various grant applications needed a script. Panic hit the roof.

Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa.....aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa.....aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa....

...Wait, we had always been writers (Look at this playbill, for example). So we sat down and wrote.

But then the real question hit us: How do you capture what happens *in the moment*? The improvised bits, the clowning gold, the audience interactions- how do you bottle *that*?

The answer? You don't.

Instead, we created a broad beat structure to capture the essence of what these characters are reaching for. And when we throw live audience interaction into the mix... well, that's when the madness truly begins. That's why no two shows are ever the same. We jive with the audience as they invite us to play, making each performance a unique experience.

Call it cheeky, but this show isn't just a performance, it's a living journey that deepens with every run- taking on new shapes, making our voices sharper, honest and more vulnerable. Offstage, we carry the weight of this story with us- seeing the world's history through new, often painful, lenses. We weave these truths into the show, exploring the lasting scars and echoes of colonialism that stretch across cultures and continents. It's a journey that changes us as much as the show itself, and one that feels endless.

And honestly, this process might never end.

So far, various versions of Colonial Circus have been performed at

Toronto Fringe Festival, 2024
WTF Spring Thing 2024
Pinch Cabaret Comedy Show, 2024
Orlando Winter Festival, 2025
Toronto SketchFest, 2025
Newfoundland SketchFest, 2025
Montreal Fringe Festival, 2025
Edmonton Fringe Festival, 2025

We will be heading to London, England, in November 2025, performing the show where it all began, centuries ago. Yeah, we do like to live dangerously.



People who made us



“...It took a village”

Like a baby, this show is alive and kicking, thanks to so many people - the people who taught us how to walk on that stage. Like most artists (certainly all artists of colour), we are constantly full of self-doubt. We find ourselves staring at our reflections in borrowed mirrors in those tiny green rooms, calming our nerves, fooling our demons with those golden words: “We Belong”.

With this show, we jumped into the deep, dark end of the pool. This topic was no joke; we couldn't just do something for fun and giggles; **we could die**.

As two allegorical Bouffons, we had to walk the tightrope between the boring and the dangerous. Lean too far one way or the other, and we risk getting stoned by our audience.

Thankfully, we found people who helped us gain footing in our creative chaos. *Isaac Kessler*, who directed us during our first tentative steps at the Toronto Fringe 2024, sharpened our act and ignited our boldness. We are indebted to *Lowen Morrow*, whose keen and insightful guidance helped us shape and elevate the play. To *Zita Nyarady* for making our moves graceful; to *Ken Hall*, *Gordon Neil*, *Oliver Georgeou*, and *Seann Murray* for their continuous guidance and conversations; and to all the clown teachers whose workshops and intensives have shaped our craft. Every bit has helped us grow.

A big, over-the-top, joyous scream to *Sweet Action Theatre* for creating a community where work like ours is celebrated. To *Leslie* and *Emily*, for giving us the stage at their Bouffon Cabaret. To *Legacy Cabaret*, for welcoming us weirdos among the suave performers. And to *Victoria*, *Leslie*, and *Josh*, for launching the Work-In-Progress Shows, where we stumbled, fell, bruised our egos (and souls) more times than we can count... but always got back up. Thanks to *The Bad Dog Theatre* for guiding us through the comedy jungle. Deep gratitude to the *Ontario Arts Council* for their generous funding support. And a heartfelt thanks to *The Native Earth Performing Arts* and *The Aki Studio*, especially *Himanshu Sitlani*, for supporting this show with amazing staff and a fantastic venue.

Lastly, we are deeply grateful to all our audiences, those who saw Colonial Circus in the past and shared it with others; to those who laughed and cried with us, spoke to us, hugged us, or simply held our hands and let their eyes do the talking. You all mean the world to us. Thank you for reminding us that we are funny, that we belong, and that we don't have to die...**not today**.

We also want to thank:

- Virginia Woodall, Toronto SketchFest, who creates spaces and opportunities for artists, Dana Puddicombe, NL SketchFest, who is our lighthouse from coast to coast, Ben Gorodetsky- Pinch Cabaret, Byron and Alicia- WTFestival and all the comedy show producers who keep creating spaces for us to test our materials, you da real MVP.
- Our tech superstars in the past: David (TO Fringe), Juan (Orlando Winter Fringe), Alanna (TO SketchFest), Lucas & Anna (NL SketchFest), Vladimir (Montreal Fringe) & Ken (Edmonton Fringe).

- Our SMs and marketing coordinators in the past: Sagar and Sonali (TO Fringe), Victor (Montreal Fringe), Jen (Edmonton Fringe)



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- Leave a Video Testimonial- say something nice :)
- Chat with Us: Come say hi, share a hug or just vibe. We always need love!

Support other South Asian Voices

Here is an upcoming show that we would recommend:

COMING SOON

NAUTANKI BAZAAR presents **AN IMM-PERMANENT RESIDENT**

written and performed by NEHA PODUVAL & HIMANSHU SITLANI

09 TO 22 MARCH

Factory Theatre
125 Bathurst St

directed by
MIQUELON RODRIGUEZ

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Instagram: @two.2.mango | Website: www.two2mango.com

"There's nothing like it on any other stage"

- Liz Nicholls, Edmonton 12thNight.ca

"Surreally spicy slice of protest art"

- Orlando Weekly

"...Commedia dell'arte..spun on its ear"

- Forget The Box, Montreal



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