

# \*\*\*\*\* Press Release \*\*\*\*\*

## Spirit Unleashed

The Story of Hope and Courage inspired by the Ramayana

Imagine a procession of dancers, musicians and artists winding their way through hospital corridors calling people to, participate in, watch and listen to a celebration of Diwali. This became reality on the **13<sup>th</sup> November**. The audience were taken on a colourful journey through the story of the Ramayana, one of the major Hindu epics, by 50 dancers, 3 musicians, 2 choreographers and a video and visual artist, at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital.

**Akademi** presented a performance directed by Arti Prashar and choreographed by Gauri Sharma Tripathi and Anusha Subramanyam, **Spirit Unleashed** was the culmination of a week of intensive workshops, which took place at the hospital during October exploring the story of the Ramayana. The ideas thoughts and inspirations were drawn from the patients, staff, and visitors of the hospital, who had the opportunity to participate in workshop sessions. This creative exploration resulted in two spectacular site specific performances. Incorporating the patients directly in the artistic process not only increases their access to the arts and stops people from being isolated but also stimulates and invigorates them contributing to the process of recovery and well being.

Akademi has been a lead provider in education and the community for over 15 years, working with a wide range of groups in a variety of settings. The community and education department initiates innovative and accessible programmes of work that use South Asian Dance to enhance the personal, cultural and social development of people in the community across London.

This performance was part of a two-year programme, **Dancing for the Spirit**, taking place at the hospital in collaboration with the hospital arts team, and generously funded by **The Bridge House Estates Trust Fund**. A stimulating programme of events into have taken place at the hospital, ensuring that patients, staff and visitors have access to the work of some of the most exciting South Asian dance and music artists working in Britain today.

**Spirit Unleashed** has been devised and co-ordinated by Akademi's Education and Community officer, Nicola Froud in collaboration with Chelsea and Westminster Hospital Arts co-ordinator.

### Artistic Team

Direction	Arti Prashar
Choreography	Gauri Sharma Tripathi Anusha Subramanyam
Musicians	Tom Simenauer Neil Craig Peter Mac Donald
Video Artist	Bhavesh Hindocha
Visual Artist	Sarbjit Natt

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