



**Asia**  
Society<sup>SM</sup>

India Centre

# Asia Society India Centre Spring Edition 2012

## In This Issue...

### Message from the Executive Director

#### Highlights

- Aruna Roy Addresses University Students on Movements for Change
- Harvard University President Speaks on Education in a Changing World
- KENTARO!! Brings Contemporary Japanese Dance to Mumbai
- International Education Summit in New York

#### Featured Web Content

- New York Exhibition on Princes and Painters in Mughal Delhi

#### Asia 21

- Nitin Das and Films that Make You Think

#### Book Corner

- "India After the Global Crisis" by Shankar Acharya
- "Pakistan on the Brink" by Ahmed Rashid

#### Announcement

- Fullbright-Nehru Environmental Leadership Fellowship

## Message from the Executive Director

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the Spring 2012 Edition of our quarterly newsletter. We are delighted to present you with select highlights of Asia Society's activities these past three months, which we hope gives you a sense of how we have been working to deepen understandings and exchanges across the Asia-Pacific.

Our events at the India Centre have included a performance by contemporary Japanese performer KENTARO!!, a private dinner with former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in New Delhi, a panel on new models for cultural collaboration at the India Art Fair that took forward the report of the Asia Society Conference on Indo-US Cultural Exchange last year, and a discussion on the city as a dream at the Jaipur Literature Festival, with authors Mohammed Hanif, Aman Sethi, Meenal Baghel, Rabi Thapa and Ashok Vajpeyi.

At our global centres, our events have included an address by South Korea's former Prime Minister Lee Hong-Koo, a luncheon with the IMF Deputy Managing Director Zhu Min, a Global Vision award conferred to Myanmar democracy activist Aung San Suu Kyi and accepted via video, and a performance of Hoichi the Earless, innovatively interpreted by three Japanese

## Quick Links

[www.asiasociety.org/centers/india](http://www.asiasociety.org/centers/india)

[www.facebook.com/AsiaSocietyIndiaCentre](http://www.facebook.com/AsiaSocietyIndiaCentre)

<http://twitter.com/#!/AsiaSocietyIC>

## Upcoming Events

[www.asiasociety.org/events](http://www.asiasociety.org/events)

3 May

Earth Day Film Screening: Flow  
6:30pm, American Center, Bandra, Mumbai

8 May

Collaborating with Competitors:  
Driving Industry and Managing  
Dominance, with Kiran Karnik,  
Former President, NASSCOM  
7pm, Mumbai

5 May

Studio Visit with Artist Shilpa Gupta  
Mumbai

21 June

Discussion with Vinod Rai,  
Comptroller and Auditor General of  
India  
7:00pm, Mumbai

June

World Environment Day Film  
Screening: Warriors of Quigang  
6:30pm, Mumbai

artists.

In February, Asia Society Hong Kong moved to a new home at a former Explosives Magazine in a complex made up of new and restored British military colonial buildings. The space opened as Asia Society's first cultural and exhibition facility in Asia, amidst celebrations with hundreds of guests, and of course, conversations and performances that brought together the best of Asia. We now look forward to the opening of Asia Society Texas Centre's new space in Houston in April. With programme venues, auditoria and exhibition facilities now in New York, Hong Kong and Houston, we encourage you to drop by these spectacular spaces when your travels take you to these cities.

Our website ([www.asiasociety.org](http://www.asiasociety.org)) has summaries and video highlights of all these events and more, including blog posts (<http://www.asiasociety.org/blog/asia>) on latest developments across Asia- do visit us online to access our expansive resources on arts, cultures, policy, business and education in the Asia-Pacific.

As a membership-based organization, we rely on your support to continue serving to prepare Asians and Americans for a shared future. We look forward to your joining us if you are not already a member- more information can found at <http://www.asiasociety.org/support/membership/india>, and we would be happy to assist you with any queries you may have.

Our next newsletter will reach you in July 2012. In the meanwhile, please do let us know if you have any feedback for us, and we hope to see you at one of our events in the near future.

Bunty Chand  
Executive Director  
Asia Society India Centre

### Aruna Roy Addresses University Students on Movements for Change

On January 13, 2012, Aruna Roy, a founder of the movement for Right to Information in India and member of the National Advisory Council, addressed students at Jamia Milia Islamia university as part of our AsiaLive series with Open Magazine. She was joined in conversation by Manu Joseph, Editor of Open Magazine.



Roy lamented that dissent in India has been reduced to simplistic "with us or against us" positions, and as a negative phenomenon. In a democracy, she said, it is imperative that we recognize that there can be different degrees of dissent and dissent against different aspects of movements — from their methods to their purpose — and that we must recognize nuances within dissent.

Roy explained that dissent is a crucial aspect of any democracy, and that we must create formal platforms through which opinions and positions can be expressed without immediate suspicions being cast on intent and without broader threats to one's reputation or safety. She emphasized the importance of transparency in the legislative process, of preserving the systems of democracy and accountability, and of having the humility to understand that other views and variables can be important factors in affecting socio-political change. Such movements, Roy said, must be tethered to stated principals and must be plural in their

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Lehman Brothers  
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composition.

Visit <http://asiasociety.org/policy/governance/aruna-roy-speaks-managing-dissent> for more information and video highlights.

### Harvard University President Speaks on Education in a Changing World

On January 19, 2012, Harvard University President Drew Gilpin Faust joined Asia Society for a private event chaired by Nita Ambani, Chairperson of the Reliance Foundation and Founder and Chairperson of the Dhirubhai Ambani International School.



Harvard University President Drew Gilpin Faust with Sunil Mehta, Country Head of AIG India, and Chairperson of the Dhirubhai Ambani International School, Nita Ambani

Faust addressed the need to improve the quality and reach of primary and secondary education, which she called the foundation of successful civil society and a growing middle class. There is also an explosive demand for higher education, she said, at a time when ideas and capital travel across the world with ease and when knowledge has become the primary driver of social mobility and prosperity.

Faust regretted the effects of the financial crisis on universities globally, and said that debts associated with student loans have exceeded 1 trillion dollars in the US. Moreover, many students around the world simply cannot access universities. India generates 14% of the global talent pool and has the world's third largest

university system, but faces a shortfall of top talent.

She also cautioned against building universities that only address short-term albeit vital issues like economic development and health provisions. Broader questions and humane perspectives must not be eclipsed, so that sustainable and long term development can be shaped. The arts and humanities, which allow us to be critical and creative, must flourish alongside science, and free-roaming skepticism and curiosity must not be curtailed.

Watch video highlights of the discussion at <http://asiasociety.org/education/drew-gilpin-faust-what-do-we-want-higher-education>.

### KENTARO!! Brings Contemporary Japanese Dance to Mumbai

On March 12, 2012, Asia Society India Centre presented a contemporary Japanese performance of *After Raining, It Will Be Sunny*. It was a solo piece presented by young Japanese dancer and choreographer KENTARO!!, exploring universal expressions of the 'end' and the 'beginning' of things. The devastating earthquake that struck Japan last year left a deep impact on KENTARO!!, and he created this performance to characterize the resilience



of his people to cope in the aftermath of the earthquake. Through his work, he sought to emphasize that the gloom of the rain will eventually stop and the sun will shine!

The performance comprised of stoic choreography which alternated with exuberant movements. The dance was attuned to music, and other than pop and hip-hop, KENTARO!! used electronic music and

### Board of Directors

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Vishakha Desai

Pheroza Godrej

Sangita Jindal

Sunil Mehta

Rashmi Poddar

Jaidev Shroff

lyrics composed and written by him.

This performance was part of the celebrations initiated by the Japan Foundation to mark 60 years of diplomatic relations that were initiated between India and Japan in 1952.

Visit <http://asiasociety.org/arts/performing-arts/dance/kentaro-brings-contemporary-japanese-dance-and-choreography-mumbai> for more information and video highlights.

## International Education Summit in New York



In January 2012, Asia Society co-organized the Second Annual International Summit on the Teaching Profession in New York City. Attended by delegations from 23 countries, the Summit brought together ministers of education, union leaders and thought leaders from around the world to grapple with issues of school leadership, teaching 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, and training enough high quality teachers for all students.

The summit discussions and emerging lessons from around the world were released in a report titled “Improving Teacher Quality Around the World: The International Summit on the Teaching Profession.” The report was authored by Asia Society’s Senior Advisor for Education Vivien Stewart on behalf of the Summit’s partner organizations.

As a pre-Summit event, Asia Society held a breakfast for the delegation leaders from China, Japan and Hong Kong to discuss the connection between education and the economy and how these countries think about preparing students for the future. Following the Summit, Asia Society assisted the National Center for Time and Learning in engaging education ministers in a discussion for policymakers and funding organizations on how time for learning is allocated and used to support high quality education.

Visit <http://asiasociety.org/education/learning-world/worlds-education-leaders-support-teachers> for more information and to access the Summit report.

## New York Exhibition on Princes and Painters in Mughal Delhi



*Sir David Ochterlony in Indian dress, smoking a huqqa and watching a nautch in his house in Delhi, c. 1820, Watercolor and body color, Add.Or.2, The British Library*

From February to May 2012, Asia Society’s Museum in New York is showcasing an exhibition that reveals how Delhi has served as a cultural centre of North India for more than a millennium in different incarnations. This exhibition focuses on the 18th century to the mid-19th century, the crucial period when Delhi moved from being the heart of the late Mughal Empire to becoming the jewel in the crown of the British Raj.

The exhibition examines Mughal artistic culture to highlight the interwoven nature of Mughal, European and regional patronage networks within which Delhi artists operated. Approximately 100 objects include works by Delhi-based court artists Nidha Mal and Chitarman, and less familiar works

## Asia Society India Centre Staff

Priyanka Bhuyan

Project Coordinator

[priyankabhuyan@asiasociety.org.in](mailto:priyankabhuyan@asiasociety.org.in)

Bunty Chand

Executive Director

[buntychand@asiasociety.org.in](mailto:buntychand@asiasociety.org.in)

Komal Hiranandani

Programme Associate

[komalhiranandani@asiasociety.org.in](mailto:komalhiranandani@asiasociety.org.in)

Moomal Mehta

Senior Business Development Officer

[moomalmehta@asiasociety.org.in](mailto:moomalmehta@asiasociety.org.in)

Rachna Shah

Office Manager

[admin@asiasociety.org.in](mailto:admin@asiasociety.org.in)

Pooja Varma

Senior Programme Officer

[poojavarma@asiasociety.org.in](mailto:poojavarma@asiasociety.org.in)

Phone: +91 22 6610 0888

Fax: +91 22 6610 0887

by artists such as Ghulam Murtaza Khan, Ghulam Ali Khan and Mazhar Ali Khan.

In addition to Mughal miniatures produced under later emperors, this exhibition highlights a selection of Company School paintings produced for Delhi-based personalities such as William Fraser, James Skinner and Thomas Metcalfe. Select photography, drawings and decorative arts are also included. William Dalrymple and Yuthika Sharma are guest curators of the exhibition.

View the exhibition website for an introductory video, images and more at <http://sites.asiasociety.org/princesandpainters/>, and visit <http://sites.asiasociety.org/princesandpainters/related-events/> for related events including performances and demonstrations.

### Nitin Das and Films That Make You Think

*The Asia Society India Centre supports over 80 Asia 21 Fellows with varied backgrounds in areas such as environment, film, business, health, and education. This space features a different Asia 21 India Fellow in each edition and highlight their organisations, initiatives, and projects. To learn more about Asia 21 visit [www.asiasociety.org/asia21](http://www.asiasociety.org/asia21). This quarter, we look at Nitin Das his world of films.*

Nitin Das, the Director of Filmkaar Productions, has developed an array of films and concept advertisements on topics ranging from the environment and women's rights to population control.

Most recently, he has launched *Jadui Pankh (Magic Feather)*, a fun film for the entire family made up of 7 interlinked stories. These are stories of magic and adventure, of friendship and mischief, of courage and a clever ghost. This film has been shot over a period of 2 years across various slums in Mumbai, though the stories are not about poverty, misery or hunger.

The film takes you to an unusual world through the eyes of children. It shows you that even in the darkest of times and most difficult of situations, it is possible to find happiness and hope. *Jadui Pankh* has been made with children from 7 non-profit organizations across Mumbai. Every month a new story is released on <http://www.filmkaar.com/magic-feather/>.



### Book Corner

*The Book Corner features two books in every edition of our newsletter that we believe would be of interest to our members. We feature both new releases as well as older books of relevance today, which engage themes relating to Asian countries.*

#### India After the Global Crisis

This book assesses India's resilience in the face of the global financial crisis and also shows the toll that the global crisis and India's domestic policy failures have taken on India's economy. Written against the backdrop of renewed global economic turmoil — stalled economic revival in 2011, mounting problems of sovereign fiscal stress and banking fragility in Europe and U.S. — and clear signs of economic slowdown amid political weakness and indecision in India, author Shankar Acharya delves into challenges that lie ahead, outlines the priorities that the government must focus on, and debunks several myths that weaken current policies.

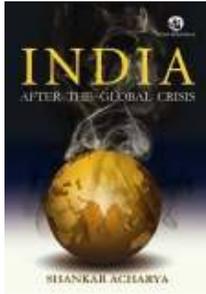
### About Asia Society

Asia Society is the leading global and pan-Asian organization working to strengthen relationships and promote understanding among the people, leaders, and institutions of the United States and Asia. We seek to increase knowledge and enhance dialogue, encourage creative expression, and generate new ideas across the fields of arts and culture, policy and business, and education.

Founded in 1956, Asia Society is a nonpartisan, nonprofit educational institution with offices in Hong Kong, Houston, Los Angeles, Manila, Melbourne, Mumbai, New York, San Francisco, Seoul, Shanghai, and Washington, DC.

Charles R. Kaye, Chairman, Board of Trustees

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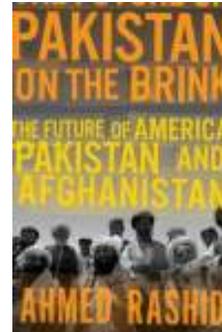


To discuss the impact of the financial crisis on India, Asia Society India Centre convened a panel on March 1<sup>st</sup> 2012, with author and Member of Board of Governors of ICRIER, Shankar Acharya, Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, Subir Gokarn, Director of Oxus Research and Investments, Surjit Bhalla, and Chairman and Chief Editor of Business Standard, TN Ninan. For highlights of the event, visit <http://asiasociety.org/business/economic-trends/financial-crisis-reaches-india>.

### Pakistan on the Brink

What are the possibilities and hazards facing America as it withdraws from Afghanistan and as it reviews its long engagement in Pakistan? Where is the Taliban now in both these countries? These are some of the crucial questions that Ahmed Rashid- one of Pakistan's preeminent journalists- takes on in this follow-up to his acclaimed book, "Descent into Chaos."

In this book, he focuses on the long-term problems- the changing casts of characters, the future of international terrorism, and the actual policies and strategies both within Pakistan and Afghanistan and among the Western allies- and offers solutions as the world tries to bring some stability to a fractured region saddled with a legacy of violence and corruption.



On March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2012, Asia Society New York hosted a discussion on these issues with author Ahmed Rashid and former Executive Editor of the New York Times, Bill Keller. Visit <http://asiasociety.org/video/policy/ahmed-rashid-pakistan-brink> for more.

### **Fullbright-Nehru Environmental Leadership Fellowship**

This fellowship is designed for mid-level Indian environment professionals. The programme will combine short-term practical training and internship with opportunities for networking with American counterpart organizations. Selected fellows will be placed at US environmental organizations, academic institutions or research centers and environment related government agencies.

The application deadline July 16, 2012. For more information, please visit <http://www.usief.org.in/Fellowships/FIC-Fulbright-Nehru-Environmental-Leadership-Programs.aspx>.

### **Mailing List, Membership, and More**

For more information on the following, please email [admin@asiasociety.org.in](mailto:admin@asiasociety.org.in).

- Upcoming events
- Join the mailing list
- Individual membership
- Corporate Membership

If you would like to react, offer suggestions, or comment on any of the content you've read in this newsletter, we would be happy to hear from you. Please write to [asiasociety@asiasociety.org.in](mailto:asiasociety@asiasociety.org.in). We look forward to your active participation in the Asia Society India Centre community.

Thank you!