



Silk River Press Release

For immediate release 17 Oct 2017

Silk River flies Thurrock flag at Trafalgar Square Diwali celebration

Last Sunday, 15th Oct, colourful banners from Purfleet, Tilbury and East Tilbury, along with all the other Silk River scrolls, took a leading role in the Mayor of London's annual Diwali celebration in Trafalgar Square, which is the Hindu festival of lights.

Around 35,000 came to central London for the event, which has been hosted at Trafalgar Square on 16 occasions. This time, the festivities kicked off with a colourful procession of the Silk River scrolls, accompanied by drummers from the London School of Dhol and dancers wearing brightly coloured saris. Each of the scrolls was carried proudly by representatives from that area, with Ali Pretty from Kinetika, representing Purfleet, Les Morgan for Tilbury and Mike Ostler for East Tilbury.

Once the opening procession was over the banners were displayed around the festival site for the crowd to admire, and Trafalgar Square was transformed with a colourful and vibrant mix of music, dance and live performance for the rest of the day, including a broadcast from the BBC Asian Network.

Londoners from all communities and visitors to the capital were invited to attend the celebrations and the sunny setting was the perfect atmosphere for people from around the world to join in the dancing at a one of the country's most recognisable locations.

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said: "As Mayor of London, I want to send my warmest wishes to everyone celebrating Diwali in London and around the world.

"During this wonderful festival of lights, we come together to share the story of Rama and Sita, to light candles in our homes, and to pay tribute to the warmth and generosity of our Hindu, Sikh and Jain brothers and sisters. Friends and families reflect on the past year together, and mark the triumph of good over evil, light over darkness and friendship over enmity.

"Diwali's central message of peace and mutual respect is one that we can all learn from. It reminds us that London succeeds when London is open to all.

"From my family to yours, Happy Diwali and a prosperous new year."



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For another chance to see the scrolls, head over to Kew Gardens 22-27th Oct where they will be on display in the Nash Conservatory along with some family friendly activities.

More info on the Kew exhibition is here: <https://www.kew.org/kew-gardens/whats-on/artful-autumn-silk-river-unfurls>

Ends.

For media enquiries, imagery and interview requests please contact:

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Notes to Editors

Diwali

1. The Diwali Festival is organised by the Mayor of London with the Diwali in London Committee as organising partner. The free event is supported by headline sponsor, Lebara and supporting partners Jet Airways / Incredible India. BBC Asian Network is the programming partner.
2. Diwali on the Square is organised by the Mayor of London in partnership with the Diwali in London (DiL) Committee. The committee includes representatives from Art of Living Foundation (UK), Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS), Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University (UK), Brahmin Society North London, Chinmaya Mission UK, City Hindus Network, International Society for Krishna Consciousness Limited (ISKCON), Metropolitan Police Hindu Association, Oshwal Association of the UK, Sai School Harrow, Telugu Association of London, Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) Ilford Temple and Akademi. For more information about the DiL Committee, visit www.diwaliinlondon.com.
3. Diwali is a five-day festival celebrated in India and many other countries around the world by Hindus, Sikhs and Jains, which each year takes place between mid-October and mid-November.
4. The word Diwali or Deepavali means 'a row of lamps', which are lit to signify the victory of good over evil, light over darkness and knowledge over ignorance. The festival marks a new



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beginning, a renewal of commitment to family values, and represents the universally revered values of love, reflection, forgiveness and knowledge.

5. UK/India 2017 Year of Culture is a year-long celebration of the long-standing relationship between India and the UK, which will see a vast programme of cultural exchange and activity take place in cities across both countries. Working with a huge number of partners and institutions, the British Council is developing a programme of cultural activity which will connect and inspire people in both countries; and strengthen and celebrate the UK and India's cultural ties. For more information on UK/India 2017 please visit www.britishcouncil.in

Silk River Project

www.silkriver.co.uk

Silk River is an ambitious project which explores the unique relationship between London and Kolkata through artistic exchange between communities along the Thames Estuary and India's Hooghly River. Kinetika's Artistic Director Ali Pretty, with associate Artistic Director Ruchira Das (Think Arts, India) and an international team of artists, writers and photographers, will capture and interpret the experience of journeying along these two mighty rivers.

Working in 20 locations from Murshidabad to Batanagar (Hooghly) and Royal Botanic Gardens Kew to Southend (Thames) to reinterpret a shared heritage, Kinetika's Silk River will raise cultural awareness of the Indo-British relationship through engaging diaspora communities who live alongside both rivers.

Silk River culminates along the Thames between 15-24 Sept and along the Hooghly 7-17 Dec 2017 with two river walks where the stories of the 20 locations will be revealed to local, national and international audiences through the showing of 20 giant hand-painted Bengali silk scrolls and accompanying performances.

More details about Silk River:

- Silk River website: www.silkriver.co.uk
- UK Walks: <http://www.silkriver.co.uk/UK-walks/>
- India Walks: <http://www.silkriver.co.uk/india-walks/>

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/silkriverkinetika/>

Twitter #SilkRiver

<https://twitter.com/SilkRiver2017>

Instagram #SilkRiver

<https://www.instagram.com/kinetikapeople>



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22-27 Oct Banners on display at Kew Gardens

<https://www.kew.org/kew-gardens/whats-on/artful-autumn-silk-river-unfurls>

16 Nov Tower Hamlets & Burrabazar banners on display

Exhibition, workshop and reprise performance of the Tower Hamlets walk 'from Street to Stage' at the Brady Centre, as part of 'A Season of Bangla Drama'.

6-17 Dec 2017 Silk River Walk India

<http://www.silkriver.co.uk/india-walks/>

About Kinetika

www.kinetikaonline.co.uk

Kinetika is an internationally renowned company with an 18-year track record of combining world-class design with community projects to produce spectacular outdoor events that engage diverse audiences wherever they work. Founded by artist Ali Pretty in 1997, and inspired by her training in carnival arts in Trinidad and India, Kinetika now has an unrivalled reputation for working with local communities on projects that change the way people feel about where they live. From local community events in shopping centres, ceremonial boulevards and local high streets, to the Great Wall of China and the heart of Kolkata.

The charitable arm, Kinetika People, is known for its high quality community engagement work, running participatory programmes, workshops and artist training schemes, which aim to nurture new artistic talent and engage communities, raising aspirations and building a sense of place. The commercial arm, Kinetika Design Studio, has been commissioned to create work for ceremonies at high profile events including FIFA World Cup 2009, the London Paralympic games/Team GB Parade in 2012 and the European Games 2015.

About UK/India 2017

UK/India2017 is a year-long celebration of the long-standing relationship between India and the UK, which will see a vast programme of cultural exchange and activity take place in cities across both countries.

Silk River is part of the UK/India 2017 programme. Working with a huge number of partners and institutions, the British Council is developing a programme of cultural activity which will connect and inspire people in both countries; and strengthen and celebrate the UK and India's cultural ties. For more information on UK/India 2017 please visit www.britishcouncil.in