



CREATIVE ARTS FROM ACROSS THE CONTINENTS ANNOUNCED FOR THIS YEAR'S EDINBURGH MELA

The Edinburgh Mela 2005 will take place on 3 and 4 September at Pilrig Park in Edinburgh and is Scotland's biggest intercultural festival.

Highlights include:

- topping the bill, South Asia's biggest pop sensation, **Raghav**
- **Legacy** fronted by Tariq Khan, one of the most successful singers in the British Asian music industry
- Rajastani brass band **Kawa**, whose ensemble boasts nine musicians, a sword swallowing fakir and a Gypsy dancer who moves like a cobra.
- **Grassroots Theatre Company** from Zimbabwe who combine Shona and Ndebele cultures to perform an inimitable mix of dance, drum and song from Zimbabwe, Botswana and South Africa
- cutting-edge DJ **Dr Zeus**, and early bhangra pioneers **Alaap**
- **Bobby & MC Intensaty** best known for the hit tune Akhiyan Akhiyan
- Award winning Bollywood Bhangra group **B21**
- Traditional dancing, songs, folklore and Nepali Hip-Hop from **ROKPA** a group of ex-street kids from Kathmandu
- Giant spinning shadow puppets from **Puppet Lab**, inspired by mythology and folk traditions of South Asia, installed across the entire site
- the ever-popular multi-cultural **Fashion Show**, Saturday and Sunday at 1pm £3/£2 featuring innovative choreography, and unique and unusual designs for all ages.
- **Sakhian Ladies Night**, on Friday 2nd September 6.30 – 9pm £3/£1.50 a special evening of Mela entertainment for mothers and

daughters, grandmothers and aunts!

- Choirs from the **Congo** and a Scottish South Asian choir who combine Bengali poetry with Robert Burns

This year the festival has been produced by a new team from Out of the Blue, the Edinburgh-based arts and education trust. As well as performing arts, the Edinburgh Mela 2005 will feature a decorative **circus enclosure** offering free circus skills workshops; the return of a new improved '**Chai Serrai**' tent where festival-goers can chill out and sample different Asian teas, watch folk arts and more intimate acoustic performances; and a **bazaar** with over 100 stalls and information centres selling everything from food and fabrics to crafts and jewellery.

The 2005 Edinburgh Mela will also feature a special safe dedicated children's area, the '**People's Planet**' run by **Creative Artworks**, where children are issued with a passport and take an interactive arts journey around the world through music, dance, painting, storytelling, puppetry, drama, craft, junk art, fruit tasting and much more.

The Edinburgh Mela, now in its 11th year, is a vibrant festival for all the family. Founded by Edinburgh's South Asian communities, the Mela now brings together many different cultures to celebrate the breadth and depth of Scotland's cultural diversity.

The Edinburgh Mela is funded by the City of Edinburgh Council, the Scottish Arts Council, and project-managed by Out of the Blue. The full programme will be released mid-August.

**For further information please contact:
Colman Getty Scotland PR on 0131 558 8851**

**Emma Henderson: email emma@colmangettypr.co.uk
Rebecca Salt: email rebecca@colmangettypr.co.uk**

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. The Edinburgh Mela 2005 will take place on 3rd and 4th September at Pilrig Park, off Leith Walk.
2. Edinburgh Mela was founded in 1995 by members of Edinburgh's Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi communities, and one of its key objectives from the outset was to reflect and celebrate Scotland's cultural diversity, while retaining its roots in the South Asian communities.

3. Main Sponsors of the 2005 Edinburgh Mela are Health Scotland, Royal Bank of Scotland, Western Union, Unison and Cairn Energy.

4. In 2004 more than 40,000 people attended the festival, including over 4,000 children.

6. Events in the Main Marquee, which can accommodate up to 1,000, are ticketed. After 6pm, evening tickets cost £10 for entry to all acts. For tickets call The Mela office on 0131 557 1400 Entrance to the Festival, and events in all other venues, are free.