

TARA ✕ THEATRE PERMISSION



By Hunia Chawla
Directed by Neetu Singh

30 May — 7 June 2025



SUPPORTED BY
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**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

**There isn't just one South Asian story.
Our stories are a rich tapestry, woven
from histories, cultures and identities
from across the globe.**

Which is why in my first season as Artistic Director, we will champion writers and stories that connect the many journeys of South Asian communities. We will transport you from Wandsworth to Karachi. We will ignite you with a protest in London to making chapatis at home.

These are our stories, your stories and their stories. But most importantly, these are the urgent and current realities of the people you pass in the street or sit next to on the tube.

At the heart of Tara Theatre is a community of artists and audiences. It's a place to see innovative theatre, explore new ideas and connect with the next generation of South Asian talent. What will you discover?

Natasha Kathi-Chandra

Artistic Director, Tara Theatre





WRITING PERMISSION

At its core, *Permission* is about love, conflict, and the ties that hold us together in our collective pursuit for freedom. It follows Minza and Hanna — two young women dreaming of freedom and dreaming of each other. Their friendship is messy, tender, and urgent. Hanna’s relationship with her Abba adds another layer: what does it mean to be “free” when it pits you against the people you love?

These interpersonal tensions mirror the fractures in our wider world — power imbalances, missed connections, and unresolved grief. Can we fight oppression, empire, and injustice if we lose each other along the way? Who are we fighting for, if not each other?

Permission was born out of frustration — specifically, with the way stories of Muslim and South Asian women are flattened into a tired trope: a girl “rescued” from a conservative background by Western liberal values. This narrative is not just reductive — it’s colonial. It ignores the global systems that shape many women’s lives in the global south: war, borders, state violence.

Too often, the language of liberation is used to justify the very violence it claims to oppose — from drone strikes in Afghanistan ‘for the women,’ to Zionist mockery of ‘Queers for Palestine.’ Western ideas of freedom often come with conditions — and casualties.

So what does liberation really mean? Who decides? What are we willing to risk to imagine something better?

To stage this play at Tara Theatre — a space for bold, political storytelling — is a real honour.

Hunia Chawla
Playwright

A **Tara Theatre** co-production with **Hunia Chawla**

Cast

Hanna	ANISA BUTT
Minza / Anushe	REA MALHOTRA MUKHTYAR
Abba	BHASKER PATEL
Umer / Pakistani News Anchor	ASFANDYAR KHAN
Immigration Officer / Counsellor / British Policeman / British News Anchor	LAVAN JEYARUPALINGAM

Creative Team

Director	NEETU SINGH
Playwright	HUNIA CHAWLA
Set & Costume Designer	AMANDA RAMASAWMY
Lighting Designer	ALI HUNTER
Sound Designer	PIERRE FLASSE
Stage Manager	SHUYIN STELLA WANG
Production Manager	SEAN LAING
Associate Production Manager	JUAN FELIPE GAVIRIA
Production Carpenter	SONNY ANDERSON
Scenic Artist	DAWSON
Rehearsal & Production Photographer	ADAM RAZVI
Video Editor	HAMZA BOUJELOUAH
PR	BREAD & BUTTER
Publicity Consultant	DHEERAJ AGNIHOTRI

Special thanks to

Katie Bachtler, Will Gibbs, Anna Short, Kiln Theatre

Lead artwork photographed by **Mathushaa Sagthidas**

For Tara Theatre

Artistic Director & Joint CEO	NATASHA KATHI-CHANDRA
Executive Director & Joint CEO	HELEN JEFFREYS
General Manager & Producer	CERI LOTHIAN
Associate Director	GAVIN JOSEPH
Head of Marketing	BECCA PRATT
Marketing Officer Administrator	FREDERICK ZENNOR
Senior Technician	PATRICK MCANENY

PERMISSION CAST



ANISA BUTT

Hanna

Anisa has built a versatile and dynamic career, bringing complex characters to life on both stage and screen. Last year she starred in and sold-out production *Permission* on stage, adapted from being a one woman show. And it's back, in no better home then with Tara Theatre with a brand new vision.

On-screen, she's had the privilege of working on projects like **Zoya Akhtar's** *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara* and **Netflix's** *Brahman Naman*, along with **Disney India's** *Ishaan*. She currently has an NFTS short in association with **Amazon** in post-production titled *Leave Me Alone*.



REA MALHOTRA MUKHTYAR

Minza / Anushe

Rea (she/her) studied English and Theatre at Warwick University followed by an MA in creative writing and children's literature at Goldsmiths, London.

Her first foray into acting was age 8, when she was cast as Milky Daisy, a cow of poop-throwing fame. Since then, she has gone on to perform on **Netflix**, at the **Edinburgh Fringe** and in Bollywood films. She also worked as a teacher across schools in Mumbai and has published award-winning children's books.

She is passionate about telling stories full of heart, and nothing brings her more joy than learning lines and saying them in front of strangers (to thunderous applause, obviously)!

PERMISSION CREATIVE TEAM



NEETU SINGH

Director

Neetu Singh (she/her) is a director from Hackney, East London. She read English Language & Literature at the University of Oxford. Recently, Neetu assistant directed *The Cherry Orchard* on its New York transfer to **St Ann's Warehouse**.

Selected credits include:

Director: *The Valley of Queens* (**Midlands Arts Centre**), *The End* (**Bush Theatre**), *Brown Girl Noise* (**Camden People's Theatre**).

Assistant Director: *King Troll* (**New Diorama Theatre**), *The Cherry Orchard* (**Donmar Warehouse**), *Run, Rebel* (**Pilot Theatre**), *Noor* (**Kali Theatre**), *Kabul Goes Pop* (**Brixton House**).

Next, she is directing *Our Place* (**Lyric Hammersmith**).



HUNIA CHAWLA

Playwright

Hunia Chawla is a writer and director living in London and originally from Karachi, Pakistan.

She is an alumnus of the **Old Vic Theatre-makers programme** and part of the **Soho Writers Lab 2025 cohort**.

PERMISSION CREATIVE TEAM



AMANDA RAMASAWMY

Set & Costume Designer

Amanda (she/her) is a performance designer & artist filmmaker. She also works extensively as a freelance buyer & set dresser for screen. She trained at the Royal Central School of Speech & Drama.

Design credits include: *Positive* (**Southwark Playhouse**), *Breathe with Me* (**Chats Palace**), *By Their Fruits* (**Theatre503**, 2025 OFFIE winner – Design), *Dismissed* (**Soho Theatre**), *My Brother's Keeper* (**Theatre503**).

As Associate: *Slave Play* (**Noel Coward Theatre**), *The Seven Pomegranate Seeds* (**Rose Theatre**), *Mephisto: A Rhapsody* (**Gate Theatre** – Assistant Designer).



ALI HUNTER

Lighting Designer

Ali (she/her) is an award-winning Lighting Designer working across dance, theatre and opera. She trained at RADA and was the Young Associate Lighting Designer for Matthew Bourne's *Romeo and Juliet*. Ali won the inaugural Profile Award for Outstanding Achievement in Theatre for *Red Pitch*.

Recent credits include:

Wolves on Road (**The Bush**), *How I Learned to Swim* (**Paines Plough**), *Autumn* (**Park Theatre**), *Red Pitch* (@sohoplace), *The Bleeding Tree* (**Southwark Playhouse**), *Last Rites* (**Ad Infinitum**), *Meetings* (**Orange Tree Theatre**), *Protest* (**Northern Stage**), *Titus Andronicus* (**Shakespeare's Globe**), *The Wizard of Oz and Notes from a Small Island* (**The Watermill**), *Samskara* (**The Yard**).

PERMISSION CREATIVE TEAM



PIERRE FLASSE

Sound Designer

Pierre Flasse (he/him) is a composer, sound designer and performer based in London. He is an avid collaborator and theatre maker, composer's assistant to **Sally Potter OBE**, and writes for numerous original projects, including a cinematic jazz project in his own name. He's an Elemental Artist with the Watermill Theatre and is mentored by **Pete Malkin** and **Ella Wahlström** with support from the **Association of Sound Designers and Production**.

Theatre Credits include: *Local* (**Northern Tour**); *Big Strong Man* (**Northern Tour**); *Piaf* (Assistant Sound Designer: **The Watermill Theatre, Newbury**); *The Snow Queen* (Associate Sound Designer: **Reading Rep**); *Pinocchio* (Assistant Sound Designer: **The Watermill Theatre, Newbury**).



SHUYIN STELLA WANG

Stage Manager

Shuyin Stella Wang (she/they) is a stage manager and writer with a creative writing MA from the University of Warwick.

Selected credits include *Brown Girl Noise!* (**The Glitch**), *King James* (**Hampstead Theatre**), *Pins and Needles* (**Kiln Theatre**), *The End* (**Bush Theatre**), *Communion* (**Bush Theatre**), *Bat Night Market* (**LIFT** at **Science Gallery London**), *The Cord* (**Bush Theatre**), *Two Strangers* (*Carry a Cake Across New York*) (**Kiln Theatre**), Camden Fringe 2023 at **The Hope Theatre**, and *DNA* (**Tara Theatre**).

Shuyin is passionate about shining the spotlight on the Global Majority, especially the ESEA communities in theatre.

PERMISSION CREATIVE TEAM



SEAN LAING

Production Manager

Sean Laing (he/him) is a Production Manager for Opera and Theatre. He has recently been the Production Manager for **Bill Kenwright Ltd.**, overseeing shows including *Boys From The Blackstuff*, *The Lightning Thief* and *Cruel Intentions* on UK Tours and in London. He has been Production Manager at **Waterperry Opera Festival** for three years, and regularly works with the **Royal Academy of Music**.

Recent Production Management credits include: *Toutes Les Femmes*, *Ruth / Six of Calais*, *The Aspern Papers*, *The Prodigal Son / Passion*, *Poison & Petrification* (all **Pegasus Opera Company**); *Turn Of The Screw*, *The Snowman*, *Acis and Galatea*, *Dido and Aeneas*, *Roald Dahl's Revolting Rhymes* (all **Waterperry Opera Festival**).



COMING SOON TO
TARA ∞ THEATRE

I DREAM OF THERESA MAY



A new play by Vivek Nityananda
Directed by Natasha Kathi-Chandra

17 — 29 November 2025



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