

For Immediate Release  
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**M.A.D. Playhouse Presents  
Half-Hearted  
by Mohan Rakesh**

November 25, 2013 - After a successful run of their first play this summer, M.A.D Playhouse brings us another South Asian family drama **Half-Hearted** written by Mohan Rakesh, and directed by Hafiz Karmali at The Cherry Lane Theater from December 19 through December 22.

Set in 1969 India, **Half-Hearted** depicts the story of a family in crisis with the sharp, multi-layered subtext of a Chekhov play, the ease and naturalism of a great film script, moments of farce that recall traditional Commedia dell'Arte, and characters that feel equal parts original and universal. Bringing this beautiful story to a New York audience for the first time is M.A.D. (making a difference) Playhouse.

Savitri, named after a mythical goddess who rescues her husband from death, is in this case doomed to a failing marriage and dysfunctional family. Of all her suitors, she happens to have married an unfortunate businessman. Her elder daughter eloped, and has returned disappointed; her son is an artistic soul trapped in domestic hell; the youngest daughter is a spoiled brat.

Savitri longs to escape her half-hearted, unfulfilled, incomplete, regretful existence. She continues to receive gentleman callers as she attempts to balance the cultural needs of her family with her own desires for a better life. Her plight is the plight of all women at this time torn between tradition and modernity. The question remains: must one accept fate and shape desires to events, or can one fashion life's events to suit one's desires?

Cast: Aizzah Fatima (Dirty Paki Lingerie, The Good Wife) as Savitri, Ashok Kumar Chaudhary (Parts and Parts of Stitches, Hot L Baltimore) as Mahendra, Dipti Mehta (Honour, Golden Boy) as Binni, Akshay Reddy (The Passport, Italian American Reconciliation), Prince Vaghani (Chaos in Gotham Part I), Robin Johnson (The Four Seasons, The Death of William Poole) & Yarin Brosh.

Show times for this run are:  
Thursday, December 19 @ 6:30pm  
Friday, December 20 @ 6:30pm  
Saturday, December 21 @ 6:30pm  
Sunday, December 22 @ 6:30pm

The creative team includes Sets by Laura Greenfield, Costumes by Sherry Martinez, featuring Music by Ashique Khudabuksh.

**Hafiz Karmali** (Director) Most recently, Hafiz directed the Sufi fable, *Conference of the Birds* (Vancouver); *War & Peace*, an anti-war farce by Tawfiq al-Hakim and *Rumi x 7 = Tales from the Masnavi* in circus style with clowns and acrobats at the ReOrient 2012 Festival held by Golden Thread Productions in San Francisco. To commemorate the Aga Khan's golden jubilee as spiritual leader, Hafiz

co-wrote, designed and directed an international touring theatre production, *Ali to Karim – A Tribute to the Ismaili Imams*. At the **ReOrient Festival in 2009**, Hafiz directed three new plays (*Abaga* by Torange Yeghiazarian; *The Review* (a Skype play) and an Egyptian adaptation of Chekhov's *The Marriage Proposal* by Yussef el-Guindi. Hafiz was also a member of a panel on theatre and peace-building.

Directing credits include: *Azaan – A Call to Prayer* (an Islamic opera in the making with performers from Tajikistan); *Rumi Vaudevilles x 7* (tales from the *Mathnavi* enacted by circus acrobats in Tashkent); *Water for Life* (in collaboration with a dance company from Gujarat); *Legend of the Baltit Fort* (Karimabad, Hunza). Buchner's *Woyzeck*; *Leonce & Lena*; Garcia Lorca's *The Shoemaker's Prodigious Wife* (Festival Avignon-Off, France); *Cristobal & Rosita*; *Dialogues of Buster Keaton*. Carlo Gozzi's *Love of Three Oranges*; *The Raven* (Montreal); *Jamatkhanas: A Journey* (video documentary); at UNESCO in Paris, *Caravane de la Paix* — French and Afghan poets calling for peace. Following his M.F.A (Directing) from Carnegie-Mellon University, Hafiz trained at the American Repertory Theatre where he assisted Andrei Serban and Robert Wilson. While at the A.R.T. Mr. Karmali was also a Teaching Fellow for courses taught by Robert Brustein at Harvard.

### **M.A.D Playhouse,**

We are a young and determined, dedicated team who is bringing works of South Asian Playwrights to New York by showcasing the rich, classic and contemporary literature through thought-provoking performances & nurturing international artists by blending art across different cultures.

We aspire to perform as many times in a year & keep repeating this cycle forever and ever.  
[www.madplayhouse.com](http://www.madplayhouse.com)

***Half-Hearted*** runs from December 19 through December 22 Thursday-Sunday at 6pm, and Thursday at 2:30 pm at The Cherry Lane Theater located at 38 Commerce Street, three blocks south of Christopher Street, close to the 1 train. Also close to West 4 Train stop A/C/E, B/D/F/M subway lines. Regular tickets are \$31, and are available by calling 866-811-4111 or online at [www.madplayhouse.com](http://www.madplayhouse.com).

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