

• dance • venue • practice • discourse • movement •



• **PICKLE FACTORY**

7 FEBRUARY - 11 MARCH 2018

SEASON 01
REPORT





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1. SUMMARY

The Pickle Factory is a hub for the practice, presentation and discourse of dance and movement-based performance in Calcutta, housed in spaces re-purposed for the arts. We are nomadic at the moment, but looking to find a permanent home in the architecturally textured fabric of Calcutta.

Pickle Factory Season 1 spanned five weeks in February-March 2018 across different venues presenting performances, talks, workshops, lecture-demonstrations, dance in public spaces, exhibitions and more by artists from India and abroad. The Season programmes were extensively documented by Project Performance Jadavpur University, and will be available for public access in their digital archive. Click here for a [recap video](#).

After this big inaugural splash, we will be focussing on smaller, regular programmes with various partners in Calcutta for the next next 12-14 months. Presenting work with local, national and international artists, these programmes will build our relationship with artists, audiences and support systems, and as we work towards Pickle Factory Season 2 in the latter half of 2019.

The Pickle Factory Dance Foundation is a not-profit company registered under Section 8 of The Companies Act, 2013

COMPANY DIRECTORS

Vikram Iyengar
Ruchira Das

CORE TEAM

Vikram Iyengar
Ruchira Das
Dana Roy
Anubha Fatehpuria

REGISTERED OFFICE

Flat 105, 8 Sultan Alam Road
Calcutta 700 033



2.

INTRODUCING THE PICKLE FACTORY DANCE FOUNDATION

Who

The Pickle Factory is a hub for the practice, presentation and discourse of dance and movement-based performance in India.

We are inspired by and constantly revisit the question of what it means to create, share and reflect on such work in a shifting and uniquely Indian context, while being closely connected to an international network of similar endeavours.

We actively work with, for and through artists, audiences and support systems towards a vibrant, invested, and critical culture and community.

Why

The Pickle Factory responds to the absence of spaces for discourse and development for dance in India, spaces where practitioners can explore their practice, share and exchange ideas and values, and interact with current and potential audiences, embracing and cutting across the many frictions of form, style, aesthetics and politics that now divide rather than strengthen us.

What

We Curate Catalyse Cultivate

- Provide regular performance opportunities for practitioners to experiment with and expand their body of work
- Offer residencies, workshops and training involving local, national and international practitioners evolving a diversity of perspectives
- Create and implement stimulating arts engagement programmes to develop interested and sensitive audiences

Where

The choice to locate such a venue in Calcutta is a conscious one, taking into account the strong cultural and socio-political history of the city. The city is a true confluence of cultures, a unique pastiche of meeting and morphing histories, times and traditions. This is reflected in its diverse architecture, religious and cultural communities and community expressions, cuisine, languages, academic thought, and artistic practice. Historically a centre for arts experimentation, Calcutta still enjoys a reputation for dealing in the currency of ideas and imagination and is home to a large population of artists and audiences hungry for art.

The Pickle Factory aims to be an anchor around which such a community, area and city can come to life, part of an international network of vital and vibrant arts spaces.

3.

3. PICKLE FACTORY SEASON 1: 7 FEBRUARY TO 11 MARCH 2018. AN OVERVIEW

Curation

Pickle Factory's inaugural season responded to four key words that lie at our core – dance, movement, practice, discourse. The programme located itself in diverse lenses through which to view and perceive work originating from movement artists and the trained, moving, performing body, offering a pluralism of experience and expression. Pickle Factory Season 1 was curated by Vikram Iyengar and presented by the Pickle Factory Dance Foundation in collaboration with Ranan.

Components

Pickle Factory Season 1 comprised three elements:

- A **two-week workshop** for professional dancers culminating in a series of public interventions, led by award winning choreographer from Edinburgh, Janis Claxton
- A **fortnight-long exhibition** of installations and art works on the moving body in performance, along with several allied events
- A **ten-day festival** of performances, conversations, workshops and more, featuring the work of four internationally acclaimed Indian artists: Padmini Chettur, Daminee Basu, Preethi Athreya, Kapila Venu

Facts and Figures

When, Where, Who with

7 February to 11 March 2018

12 venues across the city (including our pre-season events)

33 partners from India and abroad (arts organisations, funding bodies, individuals, NGOs, dance groups, clubs, venues)

Artists and Participants

5 featured artists

20 artists contributions in the exhibition

100 local participants (dance jam, photo walk, platform performances, residency, conversations)

210 workshop, talk, and lec-dem participants

Audience reach

4500 direct audience members across the five weeks (dance connoisseurs to tea-stall vendors, young people, first time audiences and more)

10,000 audience through social media engagements (from India, UK, USA, Australia, Germany, Bangladesh, Italy, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Canada, Sri Lanka)

Pickle Factory Season 1 Team

7 people in the Season 1 team

26 technical and support staff

8 festival volunteers

4.

PFS01: VISITING RESIDENT ARTIST: JANIS CLAXTON 7 TO 25 FEBRUARY 2018



Background

Janis Claxton Dance company's highly acclaimed work *POP-UP Duets* (fragments of love) comprises short duets that emerge from ordinary situations in public spaces before an accidental audience. The experience is an infectious and unexpected encounter with dance where accidental audiences across demographics respond with surprise, shock, irritation, realisation and finally engaged participation. Pickle Factory invited Janis to re-imagine this in and for an Indian context working with Indian dancers, introducing them to improvisation and partnering techniques that underlie *POP-UP Duets*. Duo improvisations between the dancers then emerged in various public venues across the city.



Dance is a way to love myself.
Janis taught me to learn by creating curiosity. Trusting my instinct, taking chances...
It was a journey through the confusion between living consciously in the moment
and enjoying the story as it unfolds.

Rhea Dawn RESIDENCY PARTICIPANT

Programme

- a two week residency with kathak-trained dancers from Calcutta groups Ranan and Rhythmosaic
 - DIPS / POTS Dancing Interventions in Public Spaces / Pickle on the Streets – pop-up duet improvisations in four very different locations across the city: Jadavpur University, National Institute of Fashion Technology, Chitpur Road, Victoria Memorial Hall Gardens
- Videos on the project:
- [Dancers Speak 1](#)
 - [Dancers Speak 2](#)
 - [Janis Claxton speaks](#)
- Workshops for children, for dancers / dance students, and for pairs of grandparents and grandchildren

■ **Partners** Janis Claxton’s participation in Pickle Factory Season 1 was supported by BRITISH COUNCIL, CREATIVE SCOTLAND, SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT, JANIS CLAXTON DANCE, RANAN, RHYTHMOAIC, JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY, THINK ARTS, EMAMI ART, HAMDASTI, DIVYA JALAN, NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FASHION TECHNOLOGY, AND VICTORIA MEMORIAL HALL

Responses



The British Council/Creative Scotland Partnership, with additional investment from the Scottish Government, were delighted to be able to support the ‘Dancing Interventions in Public Spaces’ collaborative project put forward by the Scottish-based and multi-awarded choreographer Janis Claxton in partnership with much-respected Indian choreographer/dancer Vikram Iyengar.



The premise of the project: an invitation to re-imagine the ‘POP-UP Duets’ within a new and unfamiliar context (public spaces), challenging preconceived ideas around those, and as part of the inaugural season of an innovative dance hub in Kolkata - were certainly amongst the strongest elements of this proposition.

Although its participants (leaders, performers and audience alike) might still be processing the reverberations of what happened in those 3 weeks in February in Kolkata, it seems already clear to us that our aim to support long-term sustainable partnerships between the UK and India where collaborations flourish and sustainable networks are formed, will certainly have been achieved.

Isabel Moura Mendes | ARTS PARTNERSHIP MANAGER | UK REGION
BRITISH COUNCIL SCOTLAND

Thank you for the countless hours you've spent working with me. Thank you for inspiring, helping, and motivating me to achieve new dancing methods - things I never thought possible.



It was the first time I was participating in this kind of programme. The best thing we learnt to do was choreography on the spot but with specific techniques. We danced in front of accidental audiences in the street, museum gardens, main roads and universities without any music. Now we know we don't need any stage because now we can see every space like a grand stage.

Vihanga Rukshan, RESIDENCY PARTICIPANT

Audience responses ran from mild to amused, wherein after having completed a set, the dancers were greeted with applause. Claxton's work brought back an old equation of the dancer and her space, and the result of such a dialogue that finally is laid open to a public that is completely unprepared for such an enchanting encounter.



Riti Sharma, PROJECT FELLOW, PROJECT PERFORMANCE, JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY



5.

PFS01: EXHIBITION DANCING WITHOut DANCERS

20 February to 4 March

An installation of artistic and archival works created with, responding to, and inspired by dancers and movement artists

Concept

DANCING WITHOut DANCERS presented a collection of video and photographic installations from India and abroad, offering ways of encountering the moving body and movement artists in their physical absence. The eclectic selection brought together current and older pieces, and archival material along with special presentations by dancers. The design and layout of the exhibition attempted to provide the experience of movement and space.

Contributors

The installations included:

- *Varnam*, a 3 screen video installation by Padmini Chettur. Chennai, India
- *Endangered Species*, a photo collage of a piece by choreographer Siobhan Davies made in response to a voyage to the Arctic. Photographer: Victoria Long. London, UK
- *Big Dance Shorts India*, a set of 4 dance films presented by Big Dance, Channel 4 and the British Council
- *Dance Matters in Kolkata*, an installation of archival works by Project Performance Jadavpur University focussing on elements of dance history in Calcutta
- *Body in Motion*, an installation of photographs created by Calcutta Instagrammers working with local dancers and movement artists

Dancers and photographers at large in Calcutta – glimpses





■ Partners

This exhibition was presented in collaboration with **EMAMI ART**, and was the first to be held at the main gallery of their new arts centre, **KOLKATA CENTRE FOR CREATIVITY**.



Responses



We at Emami have always believed in art as being a way of living life. It was a pleasure to be a part of Pickle Factory's first edition. We look forward to many more such associations, and growing together to give the city the best possible. Congratulations on a grand and successful beginning.

Richa Agarwal, DIRECTOR, EMAMI ART



The first time I heard about Pickle Factory Season 1, I was to some extent gobsmacked, wondering if it will be really possible to execute! As time passed we became more and more confident and we went ahead to be a partner with Pickle Factory Season 1 with the exhibition at Kolkata Centre for Creativity (KCC). The centre which was yet to be opened formally was receiving artists, performers, writers and enthusiasts from different parts of the city. International Museum personalities from 20 nations who came to KCC for a conference during that time, also spoke very highly about the exhibition. We look forward to what Pickle Factory will bring in Season II with even more excitement.

Reena Dewan, A V P-OPERATIONS & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, EMAMI ART

I am super-excited, because there is a collaboration happening here between classical dancers, b-boys, hip-hop dancers, myself - a contemporary dancer. So it's like knowledge, you're gaining knowledge. So I'm having great fun.

Sayantani Mukherjee, PARTICIPANT IN THE 'BODY IN MOTION'

PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECT WITH CALCUTTA INSTAGRAMMERS



6.

PFS1: FESTIVAL

1 TO 11 MARCH 2018, GEM CINEMA

Artists and Venue

The festival featured the work of four internationally acclaimed Indian artists: Padmini Chettur, Daminee Benny Basu, Preethi Athreya, Kapila Venu. The main venue was the wonderfully atmospheric Gem Cinema. The first 70mm cinema in Calcutta, the building was destroyed by a fire in the 1990s. In recent years, the burnt out shell has hosted art installations and music concerts. The Pickle Factory brought live dance and movement work into Gem for the first time.

The venue was designed and programmed to imagine what a permanent hub for performance can be. From 5pm every evening, the space came alive with artist conversations, platform performances by local groups, and a pop-up food court. The featured evening performance was held in the erstwhile main hall of the cinema. Each artist set up the space differently, to create a markedly different spatial experience for the audience each time.

Gem Cinema also hosted an impromptu music concert by the musicians working with Padmini Chettur before the formal opening of the festival. Workshops, talks, artist interviews, and lec-dems were held at other partner venues during the same period.



[Gem Cinema – our festival hub](#)



Programme

Padmini Chettur: 1 to 5 March 2018

Featured performance – *Beautiful Thing 2*

In addition to a talk, workshop, conversation, and archive interview

Daminee Benny Basu: 5 to 11 March

Featured performance – *Project Stereotype 2*

In addition to workshops and conversations

Preethi Athreya: 6 to 10 March 2018

Featured Performance – *The Lost Wax Project*

In addition to a workshop, conversation and archive interview

Kapila Venu: 9 to 11 March 2018

Featured performance – *Saundaryalahari*

In addition to a lecture-demonstration, conversation, workshop and archive interview

■ Partners

Our main venue partners for the festival were GEM CINEMA and LATA BAJORIA.

The festival was supported by many individuals and organisations in various ways: through sharing artists costs and coordination, providing workshop venues, arranging local hospitality, volunteering their time, and much more:

EMAMI ART, SAPPHIRE CREATIONS DANCE WORKSHOP, ANANDA SHANKAR CENTRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, KOLKATA SANVED, SAVE THE CHILDREN, RANAN, KALAM CLUB, DNA DANCEWORKS BODYWORKS, ANANTARA, JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY, NATYANOVA PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE, ANITA RATNAM, MALAVIKA BANERJEE



Responses



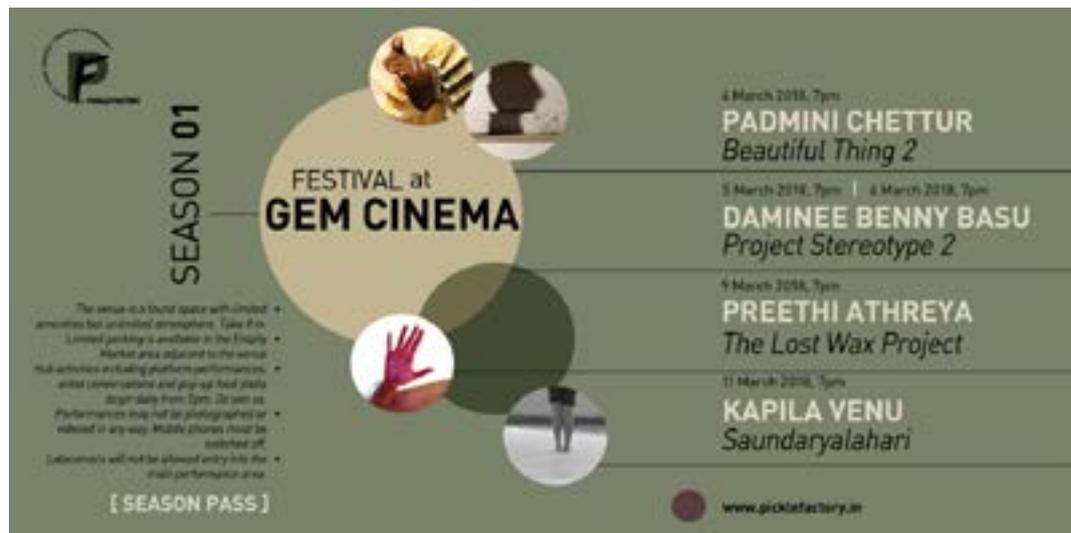
I want to thank you for having us in Calcutta. We all really had a very good feeling collaborating with you. I totally appreciate the passion with which you all work and sincerely hope you will sustain this for many seasons.

Kapila Venu, FEATURED ARTIST

The Pickle Factory's festival of dance and movement threw open some important queries facing the world of dance today. The questions pertained to rigour, technique, individuality and creative expression, both in classical as well as contemporary forms. The definition of dance was questioned and answers were sought. The spectrum of expressions included the age-old art of storytelling, Kudiyaattam, presented with stunning modern-day relevance and contemporary choreographies that approached abstraction with weighty stillness and serenity. The festival created different contexts and resonances by curating performances with inherently varied thematic and artistic possibilities. Centred around an unusual venue — the dilapidated, deeply atmospheric Gem Cinema — the event provided a platform for serious dancers and their unconventional work.

It was the start of something important. Let us watch it grow.

Kathakali Jana, AUDIENCE MEMBER AND DANCE CRITIC



A commendable initiative for the City of Joy.

As partners Anantara was very happy to bring to its audience such a wonderful performance.

We have always found it a challenge to "sell" the performing arts in Kolkata.

Gem Cinema as a venue was fabulous, its character itself is intriguing,

Thank you for opening up the performing arts world to me, at a personal level the movements were very meaningful in their expressions, many unspoken.

Look forward to many more interesting partnerships.

Anita Kanoi

ANANTARA, PROGRAMME PARTNER

It was a potpourri of experience where high art met carnival. From food to performance, guest list to the unusual venue, it was an eclectic sensual delight. The event witnessed several debut performances, which left the audience enthralled.

Attention to detail was evident in installation art decor as well.

The city rarely witnesses a holistic art festival like this

Popup and Potpourri, PARTICIPANT IN THE FESTIVAL FOOD HUB



6.

CREDITS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Pickle Factory Season 1 was made possible by the participation of a whole host of individuals and organisations contributing at many different and vital levels. Our grateful thanks to this wonderful and diverse community that pooled in so many resources to make this happen.

The Season 1 Team

OVERALL MANAGEMENT: Vikram Iyengar and Ruchira Das

ADMINISTRATION: Debaroti Chakroborty

SPONSORSHIP AND MARKETING: Shreya Kanoi

PRODUCTION: Dana Roy

PLATFORM PERFORMANCES: Anubha Fatehpuria and Debashree Bhattacharya

VENUE DECOR: Anubha Fatehpuria and Richa Bose

SITE PHOTOGRAPHY: Indudipa Sinha

PUBLICITY DESIGN: Sukanya Ghosh

WEBSITE DESIGN: Madhushree Basu and Soumadeep Sen

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND PUBLICITY: Paramita Saha

COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH: ArtsForward Ideas and Events

DOCUMENTATION: Project Performance, Jadavpur University

RESERVATIONS: BookMyShow

Artists

Janis Claxton

Padmini Chettur

Daminee Benny Basu

Preethi Athreya

Kapila Venu

Season Partners

Goethe-Institut / Max-Mueller Bhavan Kolkata

British Council

Creative Scotland

Scottish Government

Sridar Iyengar

Emami Art / Kolkata Centre for Creativity

Gem Cinema / Lata Bajoria

Jadavpur University Project Performance



“

Many, many congratulations for the milestones crossed! It was a fantastic effort that had a quiet and calm bearing - all of us loved the first season of Pickle Factory!



I appreciate the vision you have for this project, as well as the tiny details that made it so special - the print, the bags, the choice of partners, the air of non-fussy, non-bureaucratic officiousness - all noted and appreciated.

I sincerely hope the phases that you have imagined for this enterprise roll out as you desire and that Kolkata becomes a hub for artists.

Preethi Athreya, FEATURED ARTIST

”

Connectors and Advisors

Anjum Katyal
Nandita Palchoudhuri
Gulan Kripalani
Oindrilla Dutt
Friso Maecker
Chandrika Grover
Pooja Sood
Mandeep Raikhy
Christophe Knoch
Jochen Sandig
Barbara Friedrich
Andreas Lübbers

Residency Participants / Partners / Hosts

Samila Bhattacharya
Rhea Dawn
Indudipa Sinha
Darshana Borkotoky
Ama Nethmi
Vihanga Rukshan
Rhythmosaic
Ronnie Ghosh
Mitul Sengupta
Ranan
Debashree Bhattacharya
Sohini Debnath
Janis Claxton Dance
Divya Jalan
Jadavpur University Department
of Comparative Literature
Samantak Das
Ranan Workspace

Co-presenters

Emami Art
Anantara
Kalam Club
Richa Agarwal
Reena Dewan
Anita Kanoi
Mukul Agarwal
Malavika Banerjee

Logistics, Hospitality, Documentation

WELCOME KITS, DOMESTIC TRAVEL, LOCAL TRANSPORT,
ACCOMMODATION, RECEPTIONS, VIDEO, PHOTOGRAPHY
Jyoti Sharma
Anita Ratnam
Sapphire Creations Dance Company
Malavika Banerjee
Hamdasti
Sumona Chakravarty
Jardine Henderson
Samrat Dutta
Mohana Iyer
Priyadarshini Ghosh
Ruchira Das
Paramita Saha
Arts Forward
Priti Patel
Mukul Agarwal
Jayanta Sengupta
Lata Bajoria
Riti Sharma
Nilanjana Gupta
Indudipa Sinha
Jayati Chakraborty

Venue Hub

FOOD STALLS, SEATING,
DESIGN ELEMENTS, EQUIPMENT

Sienna
Darshan Shah
Toopsie's Table
Ishee'z Kitchen
Pop up and Potpourrie
Nawab's
Lata Bajoria
Dana Roy
Anubha Fatehpuria
Richa Bose

Volunteers

Sampritee Ghatak
Aopala Banerjee
Jennifer Kishan
Abhisikta Dasgupta
Sohini Banerjee
Arna Sarkar
Kriti Ghosh
Rudrani Guha

Workshops and Event

Partners and Hosts

Natyanova
Calcutta Instagrammers
Jamsteady
Cal Bunka
Think Arts
Mirror Workshops
Kolkata Sanved
Save the Children
Studio 21
Curious Little
Ranan Workspace
3 Dover Park
Kolkata Centre for Creativity
Ananda Shankar Centre for Performing Arts
DNA Danceworks Bodyworks
Victoria Memorial Hall
National Institute of Fashion Technology
Jadavpur University
Tanusree Shankar
Ruchira Das
Tamali Bhattacharya

“



A huge congratulations from all of the dance community across the world. I am very proud of all that you have achieved. I can well imagine what delicate and multiple logistics were involved in pulling off TPF's first season.

I am happy to have supported you.

Dr. Anita Ratnam, DANCER AND CHOREOGRAPHER,
FOUNDER OF NARTHAKI.COM

”



Platform Performances

4th Bell Theatre
Subarna Banerjee
Bohuswar
Palash Chaturvedi / Pratigya Ghosh /
Karanjit Singh
Nayeeka Theatre
Anubha Fatehpuria
Debashree Bhattacharya
Nilanjana Gupta
Sruti Banerjee
Samik Bandopadhyay

Sayantani Mukherjee
Pintu Das
Ankita Dutttagupta
Rajdeep Banerjee
Rittik Bhattacharya
Pawan Choudhary
Surojit Maity
Naveen Choudhary
Dibyendu Tarafdar
Gargi Mukherjee
Arnab Jana
Kaustav Sarkar
Anupam Guha
Shaayer Mukherjee
Ritesh Ghosh
Suprotim Nandi
Ananya Das
Subhajit Sen

Photo Walk Participants

Sammyabrata Mullick
Kallol Bhattacharya
Rhea Dawn
Ranu Saha



Pickle Factory provided an enriching platform where audience were triggered to converse, understand, appreciate, critique and in the process grow and evolve. It was a thought provoking experience... a wonderful opportunity to see each artist perform their creative pieces reflecting years of hard work and rigour, each unique in their approach, thought process, practice, research and philosophy.

Pickle Factory has definitely helped in broadening the mental make up for a better understanding and assimilation of art as a whole and dance in particular.

Debashree Bhattacharya and Sohini Debnath, CALCUTTA DANCERS
AND AUDIENCE MEMBERS



It was a fabulously conceived season with great performances and a variety of other activities. It was wonderful to be a workshop partner. I wish for many more such seasons and activities.

Priyadarshini Ghosh Shome and Mohana Aiyer, NATYANOVA



Many congratulations on a great Season 1. We were delighted to be a small part of your journey. Look forward to working together again!

Tamali Bhattacharya, THINK ARTS



7.

PICKLE FACTORY 2018-2019

Goals and Structure

From August 2018, Pickle Factory is working with various partners to create and present regular programmes throughout the year. In keeping with our mandate these will focus on

- working with local, national and international artists, and facilitating engagements with them
- providing inputs and opportunities for practitioners to develop their work and hone their skills
- building connections with different audiences in Calcutta and its suburbs
- intervening in a range of spaces to consciously promote the conversations between movement and architecture, body and space

Programmes

Pickle Factory Preludes

Start date: August 2018

a series of two-session modules presented in partnership with the Goethe-Institut / Max Mueller Bhavan Kolkata. The aim is to develop a critical vocabulary around practice, and create the space and habit of imaginative discourse open to both offering and meeting challenges.

Pickle Factory Weekends

Start date: September 2018

Pickle Factory Weekends keeps alive the idea of a vibrant venue through occasional weekends of tightly programmed engagements in unusual Calcutta spaces. Each weekend focuses on a specific concern from the dance world, with performances, workshops, discussions, screenings and more, curated in close consultation with the artists in question. The weekends will also encourage critical feedback sessions, to enable the artists to reflect back on and further develop their own work, theories, assumptions and ideas.

Pickle Factory Specials

Intermittent

Showcases curated around a visiting artist or special event in the city. In partnership with local and international bodies, these will include performance experiences, workshops, and lecture-demonstrations. Specials for the year include a workshop by a New York based dancer, and a programme of performances, workshops and talks by an award-winning dance company from Wales.

Pickle Factory Events

To be announced

Individually created for and with different organisations and venues, these premium events will offer a central element of dance and movement work to be enjoyed within a specifically designed lifestyle experience.

Pickle Factory Residencies

Scheduled for July 2019

Working with community organisations in Calcutta's suburbs and beyond, we offer practitioners, students and the layperson the opportunity to spend an intense and immersive period with an artist – learning, sharing, conversing, reflecting, evolving – in a setting far from the madding crowd.

8. PICKLE PAL PROGRAMME



Be part of the Pickle Factory movement
Become a Pickle Pal!

Would you like to contribute to the Pickle Factory?

Do you have / know of / have access to a space in
Calcutta that could be re-purposed for the arts?
Invite us to take a look.

Would you like to partner us in any of our projects?

Would you like to volunteer your time, resources,
expertise to help us in our journey? No contribution
is too small or too large!

Would you like to be a member or donor to the
Pickle Factory Dance Foundation and support us
long term?

Do you have any specific ideas you feel match our
vision and mandate?

We would love to hear from you, and start a
conversation. Please get in touch with us on
picklefactorycalcutta@gmail.com



