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Meet *Great Expectations* Playwright Tanika Gupta

Tanika Gupta is a British playwright of Bengali origin. In addition to adapting *Great Expectations*, which will have its American premiere presented by Silk Road Rising and Remy Bumpo Theatre Company, her work includes *Love'N'Stuff*, *The Empress*, *Wah! Wah! Girls*, and *Mind Walking*. Shakespeare's Globe will present the world premiere of her new play, *Lions and Tigers*, as part of their 2017 Festival of Independence. Her work has been seen at Stratford East, Young Vic, Royal Court Theatre, National Theatre, and Bolton Octagon Theatre. Gupta has also written for television including *EastEnders*, *Grange Hill*, *The Lives of Animals*, *Banglatown Banquet*, *Crossroads*, and *The Bill*. In, 2008, Gupta was awarded an MBE (Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire), and in 2016 was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. She is also the recipient of a John Whiting Award and received a Laurence Olivier Nomination for Outstanding Achievement in an Affiliate Theatre.

Artistic Statement from Tanika Gupta

Of all the Dickens novels I read as a youth, *Great Expectations* was always a favourite. The novel felt very Indian to me. Even the names sound vaguely Indian: Pumblechook, Gargery, Magwitch (say them with an Indian accent and you'll see what I mean).

This was a story I could absolutely relate to because of the eccentric characters, the intricate storylines and the aspiration of the main character, Pip, to rise above his class and status and be educated. It was what my 24-year-old father aspired to when he got on a ship in Bombay in 1961 and sailed to England with the obligatory £1 note in his pocket.

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-Tanika Gupta, Playwright

The great thing about adapting such a classic novel for the stage is that the plot and characters are already in place; as a playwright, one is able to inject one's own ideas into the pre-existing drama. I didn't want to simply retell the recent “immigrant” story and I didn't want to do a straightforward “Indian” adaptation.

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-Tanika Gupta, Playwright

I was fascinated by the way the colonial British authorities educated Indians of so-called good families in a very British way, encouraging them to embrace English values and morals. In this adaptation, Pip's aspiration to be an educated English gentleman awakens his sense of Indian pride. [Read More»](#)

Don't Miss *Great Expectations!*

May 11th - July 2nd

The U.S. Premiere

Co-Produced with Remy Bumppo Theatre

Written by Charles Dickens

Adapted by Tanika Gupta

Co-Directed by Lavina Jadhvani and Nick Sandys

Dickens' beloved tale of aspiration, intrigue, and romance is thrillingly transplanted to a colonized India by award-winning British Bengali playwright Tanika Gupta. When Indian orphan Pip receives a mysterious inheritance, he must choose between his humble rural life and the city life of an English "gentleman." In a vibrant clash of cultures, classes, and conscience, Gupta's brilliant adaptation expands Dickens' enduring question: Is it worth losing who you are for who you might become?



**All performances take place at Silk Road Rising
(77 W. Washington St., Lower Level, Chicago, IL)**



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