





In the search for an idea for a narrative we came across the fascinating story of Dr Edwin Lutyens and his wife Emily during the building of the iconic monument India Gate in New Delhi. There were many surprising facts to this story which spans in time between 1890 and 1947. Most of the characters are fictional and those that aren't are linked or probably with a little fictionalisation. However, the story DOES attempt to follow real events and there is an emotional truth behind the fictional writing.

**Dr Edwin Lutyens** was a famous British architect who designed grand houses and was instrumental and who was commissioned to design the whole government quarter in New Delhi. His wife, **Emily Emily**, was a Theosophist and a disciple of the leader and guru, **Mrs. W. Woodcroft**. She supported Edwin from his art and was remarkably independent for her time. **William Singh** was a famous Sikh Martyr who assassinated Sir Michael O'Dwyer (a Governor of The Punjab at Canton Hall in London in 1915). The play attempts to show different Indian and British perspectives surrounding the troubled path towards independence.

The history of Britain's colonial past in India is not a good one with violence, exploitation and racism being the order of the day. Britain also used heavily on India troops to support various war efforts. One sixth of the soldiers fighting for Britain in the First World War were Indian; 84,000 were killed and 85,000 injured and this does not include those who had died in earlier British campaigns in Afghanistan. The '41 hole War Memorial' (also known as 'India Gate') designed by Edwin Lutyens, was an attempt to acknowledge his debt and remember the dead. Later, in the Second World War, 2.5 million Indian troops helped support the British war effort but even so, **independence in 1947 was hard to grasp.**

**India Gate** is a new production for The Questions Theatre and it has been a privilege to work with the Punjab Theatre Academy. Together we have tried to bring to life parts of our shared heritage. We have shared a lot from each other along the way and sincerely hope that opportunities for further collaborative projects may follow.

### WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO

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Approximate running time 50 minutes