

NEWS

New Vic *Borderlines* teams up with government to launch ‘honour’ violence project in Staffordshire schools***All Our Daughters?*****National Forced Marriage Conference****Thursday 4 March**

A best-selling author, a Director of the Crown Prosecution Service and one of Scotland Yard’s top detectives are kick-starting a groundbreaking tour that will, for the first time, bring the issues of forced marriage and so-called ‘honour’ violence to the attention of schoolchildren.

Jasvinder Sanghera, author of *Shame* and founder of charity Karma Nirvana, Crown Prosecution Service Director, Nazir Afzal OBE, and expert in ‘honour’ crimes Metropolitan Police Detective Inspector Brent Hyatt will be keynote speakers at a conference in North Staffordshire, launching newly commissioned theatre piece, *All Our Daughters?*

Based on the testimonies of real women, the drama and accompanying workshops will travel to schools, colleges and community venues across Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire over the next five weeks in a bid to raise awareness of forced marriage and end the secrecy surrounding ‘honour’ violence.

The project aims to increase understanding of the problem so that children, teachers and other professionals are more prepared to spot tell-tale signs and help those who may be vulnerable.

Supported by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the joint Home Office/Foreign Office’s Forced Marriage Unit and the Department for Children, Families and Schools, the event and tour are being hosted and devised by Staffordshire’s award-winning community initiative, New Vic *Borderlines*.

Said *Borderlines* Director Sue Moffat: *“Honour-related crime is different from other forms of violence because of its collective nature – actions are often condoned and kept secret by the family and community. Young people are particularly vulnerable.*

“Children can literally disappear from schools and people assume it is part of the culture to go abroad and get married. It is often a school friend, or a teacher who can play an enormous part in spotting a problem.

“We want to put forced marriage on the agenda so that young people know how to support each other, and help those who fear honour-based violence to have the confidence to come forward and report their concerns.”

The first scheme of its kind in the UK, *All Our Daughters?* will pilot in Staffordshire with the potential to tour nationally.

The conference, being held at the New Vic Theatre, will premiere the drama, as well as bring together those at the frontline of the drive including experts from the UK Forced Marriage Unit, police, health and local charities, and other key players.

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Journalist and reporters are welcome to attend on the day of the conference. To arrange filming/photography, or for more information please contact Clare Hargreaves on 01782 717954 ext 317 or email chargreaves@newvictheatre.org.uk.

Notes to Editors:

***** A forced marriage is a marriage where one or both partners do not consent to the marriage or consent is extracted under duress. This is not to be confused with an arranged marriage, where the marriage is entered into freely by both people. *****

1. *All Our Daughters?* will tour to schools throughout Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Mon 8 March – Thurs 1 April. For more information contact Adhia Mahmood on 01782 717954 ext 309 or email am Mahmood@newvictheatre.org.uk.

2. *All Our Daughters?* is a New Vic Borderlines Project in partnership with Staffordshire County Council, East Staffordshire Community & Learning Partnership, Newcastle District C&LP, Newcastle Borough Council and Stoke on Trent City Council and supported by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office and the Department for Children Schools and Families.

3. Members of the public seeking advice, help and support on honour-based violence should call the joint Home Office/Foreign Office Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151.

4. Honour-based violence is defined as a threat to someone's wellbeing because they have not, according to family and local community members, conformed to religious or cultural expectations. Examples could include individuals being forced to marry, kidnapped, being physically or mentally abused and, in the worst cases, being murdered.

5. Karma Nirvana runs the Honour Network Helpline, which is staffed by victims of forced marriage or honour-based violence. It is active 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday on 0800 5999 247. For more information on Karma Nirvana go to: www.karmanirvana.org.uk/

New Vic Borderlines

New Vic *Borderlines* is the award-winning New Vic Theatre initiative working with people at risk of being socially marginalised due to position, status, class, or culture. Established in 1999, it has undertaken work of international significance and is acknowledged as a national beacon for the ways theatre can be used to work within the community.

Theatre is used to help people understand themselves, their communities and their responsibilities and to challenge destructive and anti-social attitudes.

Awards include: a Clarion Award; two Citizenship Foundation Global Ethics Impetus Awards; a Sustainable Staffordshire Award; a British Community Safety Award