



CLARA THOMAS ARCHIVES

**Inventory of the
Desh Pardesh fonds**

Inventory #F0522

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F0522 - Desh Pardesh fonds

Fonds/Collection Number: F0522

Title: Desh Pardesh fonds

Dates: 1989-2001, predominant 1996-2000

Extent: 2.8 m of textual materials
 249 photographs : b&w and col. ; 28 x 35.5 cm and smaller. - 23 negatives, 35 mm. - 6 slides, mounted. - 38 prints.
 3.9 m of moving images (148 video cassettes, VHS and Betacam, PAL, NTSC)
 3 computer disks
 57 audio cassettes. - 7 compact disks

**Biographical Sketch/
 Administrative History:** Desh Pardesh was a multidisciplinary arts festival dedicated to providing a venue for underrepresented and marginalized voices within the South Asian diasporic community, particularly left wing and queer South Asian artists and academics. It operated from 1988 to 2001. The organization's mandate states: "Desh Pardesh is lesbian and gay positive, feminist, anti-racist, anti-imperialist and anti caste/classist. Desh exists to ensure that the voices and expressions of those constituencies in the South Asian community which are systematically silenced are provided with a community forum. In particular: independent artists, cultural producers and activists who are women, lesbians and gays, people with disabilities, working class people and seniors." Founded in the late 1989, the festival was originally conceived as "Salaam Toronto!" and administered by Khush, an association of South Asian gay men in Toronto. This day-long festival was held at 519 Community Centre in May, 1988. The Khush committee later developed into a coalition-based organizing committee to administer the newly named Desh Pardesh, which was held in March 1990, and was co-sponsored by Khush and The Euclid Theatre. Desh Pardesh was incorporated as a non-profit organization on April 7, 1994. In addition to organizing an annual summer conference and arts festival (featuring film screenings, workshops, issue-driven seminars, spoken work and literary readings, music, dance and performance art pieces), Desh Pardesh also hosted periodic arts development workshops, community outreach seminars, mini-festivals, art exhibits, and film retrospectives. It also served as a resource centre and referral service to various South Asian community groups and artists, cultural organizations and activists. In later years, Desh Pardesh worked in close collaboration with SAVAC (South Asian Visual Arts Collective). The Desh Pardesh festival and its administrative body closed in 2001 due to a financial crisis.

Scope and Content: Fonds consists of the administrative records, artist submissions, promotional material, fund raising, financial and operational records of the Desh Pardesh organization relating to its annual conference and arts festival and its year-round events related to South Asian youth, women's issues, fund raising, community development and anti-racist efforts. In addition to administrative records, the fonds also includes the submissions of local and international South Asian artists, dancers, film makers, poets, playwrights, photographers and other performers, including audio-visual, photographic and written material, as well as promotional packages and brochures. Fonds is arranged into 11 series.

S00363	Board of Directors records
S00364	Committee records
S00365	Program and project files
S00366	Publicity and promotional materials
S00367	Grant applications
S00368	Financial records
S00369	Fundraising and membership campaign records
S00370	Human resources and building administration records
S00371	Media and reference files
S00372	Audiovisual material submitted to Desh Pardesh
S00373	Audiovisual material screened at and recordings of Desh Pardesh

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Custodial History: Following the dissolution of Desh Pardesh, the records of the festival's activities remained in the custody of SAVAC, the South Asian Visual Arts Collective. Many of the members of SAVAC were former participants and board members of Desh Pardesh. The records were deposited by the Executive Director of SAVAC at the Clara Thomas Archives of York University in May 2007.

Language of material note: Some film submissions are in, or contain Hindi, Urdu, Tamil and/or Bengali.

Restrictions on Access and Use: Access to some series has been restricted. Please see the series-level descriptions for more specific information.

Finding Aid: Finding aid is complete at this time, including series-level descriptions.

URL of Finding Aid: <http://archivesfa.library.yorku.ca/submissions/fonds/ON00370-f0000522.htm>

Accruals: The fonds comprises the following accessions: 2007-042, 2007-043. No further accruals are expected.

Physical Condition: Records are in fair to very good condition, with some fading of fax transmissions. Some video cassette casings are damaged.

Immediate source of acquisition: Donated by Haema Sivanesan, Director of SAVAC in 2007.

Other Notes: Note on arrangement: Due to the disorganization of the records, archivist has imposed an order on the material and created series and file titles based on the functions and formal organization of the Desh Pardesh administrative committees.

Provenance Access Points: Desh Pardesh
Khush : South Asian Gay Men of Toronto
SAVAC (South Asian Visual Arts Collective)

Date of creation: 2007/10/01

Date of last revision: 2008/11/26