

ANNOUNCEMENT OF DEATH: VETERAN INDIAN BORN ACTOR SAEED JAFFREY HAS DIED

Submitted by: Jaffrey Associates

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LONDON: The veteran Indian born actor Saeed Jaffrey OBE, who starred in more than a hundred and fifty films, has passed away peacefully in the early hours of November 14th at a London Hospital. He was 86 yrs old. Mr Jaffrey had collapsed at his London residence from a brain haemorrhage and never regained consciousness.

He leaves his wife Jennifer who, as always, was at his side.

His funeral is being planned to take place in London around 2 weeks time.

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SAEED JAFFREY OBE

Saeed Jaffrey's acting career began in India, where he was born, and where, after obtaining a Master's degree in History he formed his own English theatre company in Delhi playing leads in productions of Shakespeare, Wilde, Priestley, Fry, Dylan Thomas and Tennessee Williams. He then went to America as a Fulbright scholar to obtain a Master's degree in Drama.

He then became the first Indian actor to tour and perform Shakespeare across the United States, and the first to appear in a major role on Broadway, playing Professor Godbole in *A Passage to India* opposite Dame Gladys Cooper. Another tour of America followed in Brecht on Brecht with Lotte Lenya and yet another "first" was the radio programme series *Reflections of India*, which he wrote and narrated for the New York Times. His recording of *Kama Sutra, Art of Love*, was listed by Time magazine (February 1967) as "one of the five best spoken word records ever."

Saeed's first appearance in the West End was as God, Brahma, the lead, in *Kindly Monkeys*, earning him excellent reviews. He then starred with Margaret Lockwood and Siobhan McKenna in the comedy *On A Foggy Day* and was featured in Shaw's *Captain Brassbound's Conversion* with Ingrid Bergman. Other plays include *My Giddy Aunt*, *A Touch of Brightness* and Hanif Kureishi's *The Mother Country*. His Oberon in Shakespeare's *Dream at Regent's Park* was vastly acclaimed as was his Egyptian cook and magician, Ibrahim, in Christopher Hampton's *White Chameleon* at the Royal National Theatre, directed by Sir Richard Eyre. Saeed's Colonel Pickering in *My Fair Lady* at the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield, was considered "Pukka perfect" by the critics. His last West End performance was as *The Kralahome* in *The King and I* at the London Palladium.

On television Saeed has starred in *Jewel in the Crown*, *Tandoori Nights*, *Staying On* with Trevor Howard and Celia Johnson and *Far Pavilions* with Omar Sharif and Sir John Gielgud. He played the lead role in *A View From the Window* and three major roles in Channel 4's *Partition*. Other television appearances include *Minder*, *Tales of the Unexpected*, *A Passage to India* with Dame Sybil Thorndyke, and Mike Newell's BBC film of David Edgar's *Destiny*. It was his interpretation of the suave Rafiq in the cult classic *Gangsters* for the BBC TV that first brought him national recognition. TV viewers also remember him from

Love Match, A Killing on The Exchange, Hard Cases, Rumpole of the Bailey, Little Napoleons, Two Oranges and a Mango and that marvellous Bill Ivory series Common as Muck for the BBC. In 1998 Saeed had a great following when he played Ravi Desai in Granada TV's Coronation Street. Recent television includes Inspector Lynley Mysteries, Holby City and Doctors.

Saeed's first major starring role in an international film was as Billy Fish in John Huston's classic The Man Who Would Be King with Michael Caine and Sean Connery. Other films include James Ivory's The Guru, Hullabaloo Over Georgie and Bonnie's Pictures with Dame Peggy Ashcroft, Courtesans of Bombay and John Masters' The Deceivers with Pierce Brosnan. In The Wilby Conspiracy he played the nervous dentist opposite Michael Caine and Sidney Poitier. He won a BAFTA nomination for his role as Nasser in My Beautiful Laundrette. Sir Richard Attenborough loved his Patel in Gandhi, and Sir David Lean cast him as Hamidullah in A Passage to India. Saeed played three diverse leads in the Canadian film Masala and the drunken lead in the film After Midnight with Hayley Mills, for Channel Four. Masala won Saeed not only rave reviews but also the Best Actor nomination for The Genie - the Canadian Oscar. He starred as Julie Christie's husband in the film The Hermit of Amsterdam, which also starred Burt Reynolds. In 2006 he starred in the American film Bunker Hill which was filmed in Kansas. Saeed's other films include the English film Chicken Tikka Masala, filmed in Preston, the award-winning short film Open Secrets and Everywhere and Nowhere filmed at Pinewood Studios.

For BBC's World Service Saeed has written and broadcast hundreds of scripts in Hindi, Urdu and English. He's acted in scores of plays for BBC Radio Four, including The Pump, with Sir Michael Redgrave (with Saeed playing nine roles) which won the Prix Italia. He was the Rajah in Tom Stoppard's In the Native State with Dame Peggy Ashcroft and Felicity Kendal. In 1997 the World Service broadcast Saeed's rendering of the Vikram Seth novel A Suitable Boy in 20 episodes. Saeed was the narrator and played all 86 characters! He has also recorded Clive James' The Silver Castle narrating and playing all the 46 characters! A few years ago Saeed recorded the Indian classics Shakuntala and Savitri and yet again narrated and played all the characters. The noted columnist Khushwant Singh termed it "a touch of genius". He was a regular - Dr Massud - in the BBC Asian Network radio series Silver Street.

Saeed's first film in India was Satyajit Ray's classic The Chessplayers in which his co-star was Lord Attenborough. Since that film, Saeed starred in over one hundred Indian films, making him a household name.

In 1995 the Birmingham Film Festival featured a retrospective of Saeed's Film and TV work and for his contribution to British multicultural film and television drama he was presented with the Norman Beaton Award. But the highlight of that year was when he was awarded the O.B.E. in the Queen's Birthday Honours list for his services to Drama. He was at the time, the first Indian actor to be so honoured. In the Millennium edition of the Guinness Book of Records, Saeed was included as the only Indian actor who has appeared in eighteen international films.

Saeed's autobiography - Saeed - An Actor's Journey - was published by Constable in 1998.