

Exhibition of
Self Discovery

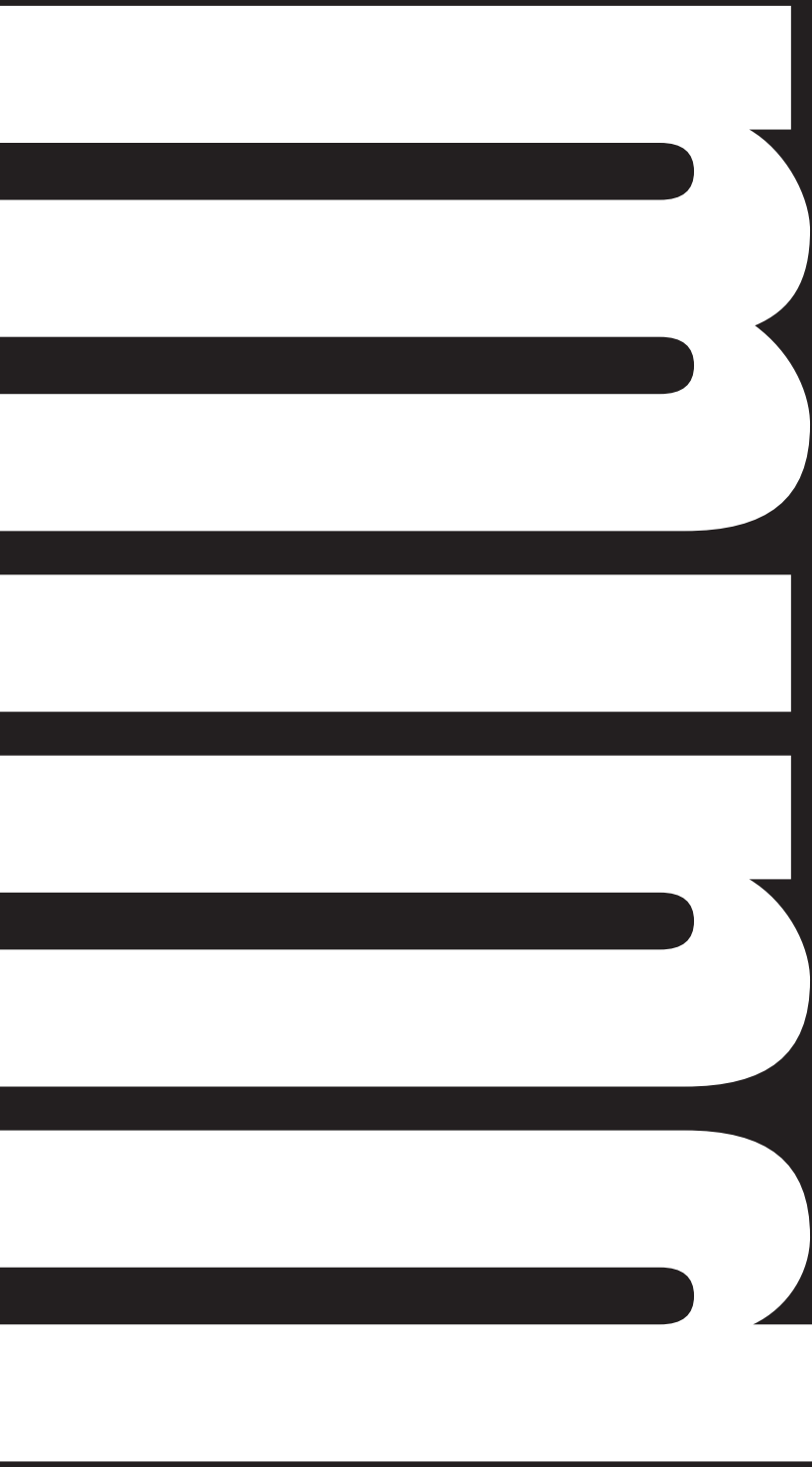
Arnolfini

05.11.22

— 04.12.22



Journey of the



We live in difficult times. Struggling with constant pressure from a world where we are always connected through digital media but still suffer loneliness. Anxiously searching for peace, happiness and love from the external world.

The impact of Covid-19 has also left its mark on mental health. On top of this, concern for the health of the planet and social injustice have left many feeling hopeless.

This exhibition explores the texts of the Sikh teachers and how, through these, the journey to understand the mind begins. And how the mind battles against negative forces within, to find peace in troubled times through focused practice, community and selfless service.

Digital paintings and handmade drawings by Canadian artist Kanwar Singh and short films by British animator Christian Wood illustrate the stories of those who had attained the highest spiritual levels, which gave them the clarity and foresight to see all as one.

The Gurus

Starting with Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji in 1469, each of the ten Gurus (teachers) of the Sikh faith made a unique contribution to humanity. They also revealed that the mind is the Sikh (a learner).

The Gurus taught that there is a root cause to the pain that the mind suffers, which leads to social injustice and inequality. In healing the mind a healthy community is created, which impacts wider society and then humanity.

Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji 1469

The world Guru Sahib lived in was turbulent, hectic and divided, much like the present day. He revealed in a simple manner that the pain the mind suffers can only be healed internally. Focusing on the physical world to alleviate the mind's pain is a distraction, not a cure.

Sri Guru Angad Dev Ji 1504

Living busy lives, it is easy to get caught up in daily tasks without thinking about the bigger purpose. Guru Sahib demonstrated how direction can be found by making the Shabad (Sound of Waheguru) the foundation of existence.

Sri Guru Amardas Ji 1479

It is testing to live in a world where inequality is rife and many are striving to tackle social injustices – the gap between rich and poor, racism and sexism. Guru Sahib taught the importance of setting prejudice aside and acting together as equals to nourish our body and mind through Simran (focused practice).

Sri Guru Ramdas Ji 1534

Everyday challenges and pressures can be unbearable. Attempts are made to alleviate external pain through distractions like shopping, drinking, eating. But these solutions are only temporary and generally lead to more unhappiness. Guru Sahib taught that by stopping the internal chatter of thoughts, internal peace can be achieved.

Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji 1563

It is easy to succumb to the social pressure to be constantly accumulating things – material wealth tied up with ideals about status. This greed takes attention away from the truth that none of these things are essential. Guru Sahib's unwavering refusal to bow down to tyranny resulted in him becoming the first Shaheed (martyr of the Sikh cause). Without hesitation he accepted Waheguru's (the Creator's) will.

Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji 1595

Life is short and precious, not to be wasted. Each individual can make a positive impact in the world. Guru Sahib taught that at the end of life, judgement will not be based on the accumulated wealth or the social status that has been achieved. It will be how the mind directed its attention in Simran every day.

Sri Guru Har Rai Sahib Ji 1630

Every day in the news there are stories about the plight of our planet. Climate change caused by humanity's lack of regard for the natural world is a source of constant worry for many and the feeling of being powerless is real. Through his actions, Guru Sahib taught how to see Waheguru's light in every living thing through the focused practice of Simran.

Sri Guru Har Krishan Sahib Ji 1656

The Covid-19 pandemic is a reminder of how exposed humanity is to physical disease. The visibility of mental health issues has also increased in public discourse recently as people step forward to discuss the struggles they face as a result of life's challenges and pressures. Guru Sahib taught how sickness can be alleviated by taking the medicine of Shabad Guru (the Sound of Waheguru) through Simran.

Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji 1621

With a myriad of different media sources readily available, attention is divided, flitting from one story or task to another without committing or devoting time fully to anything. Guru Sahib taught the value of a meaningful, purposeful existence, with his devotion to Waheguru through Simran and his sacrifice in the service of others.

Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji 1666

The mind never seems to be silent. It drowns in the constant internal chatter, self-criticising, procrastinating, worrying and daydreaming. Guru Sahib showed how, through Simran, to silence this exhausting monologue and discover a different journey for the mind, bathed in sweet nectar, leading to peace and enlightenment. The mind can be seen.

Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji 1708

The materialistic world can feel eternal, immovable and oppressive. But there is another world full of inner happiness, peace and freedom, which can be reached if the question of where and how is asked. Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji teaches us all how to remove the veil of materialism from our eyes, ears and mouths, so that we too can see, converse and merge with Waheguru.

Panj Pyare

The creation of the Panj Pyare (Five Beloved Ones) in 1699, by the tenth Guru, marks the birth of the Khalsa (Pure), where the identity and qualities of Sikhs were conferred.

The original Panj Pyare were five individuals from varying socio-economic backgrounds, and when together they had the standing of a Guru.

It is the duty of the Panj Pyare to reinforce the teachings of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, from theory to practice. It is in the practice of the teachings that the journey begins.

The Panj Pyare reveal Waheguru externally. It is then the individual's responsibility to continue the journey of the mind to merge into Waheguru internally, through Bhagti (a dedicated focus).

The Warriors

Warrior-Saint is a state of mind which leads to external strength and courage.

By embarking on the spiritual journey and merging into Waheguru (the Creator) the mind becomes a saint. The mind becomes a warrior by fighting the daily battle against thoughts, distractions and attachment to the external world.

The warriors during and after the Gurus' time lived practically by the teachings, making their mind a Warrior-Saint. Through Simran the mind becomes fearless and steadfast when facing adversity, persecution or even death.

Simran

The external and internal world is full of negative forces: hatred, intolerance, ignorance, ego and attachment. But it is possible to find peace by looking inwards, through the journey of the mind.

This journey starts with Simran, which is the practice of focused repetition of a word. Sikhs use the Gurmantar Waheguru, but you can use any word.

As the word is repeated, thoughts are eliminated and the mind starts to connect to peace.

To try it, close your eyes and place your full focus in Waheguru (or your chosen word), listening to Waheguru as you say it on repeat.

With practice, the aim is to repeat the Gurmantar with every breath – wherever you are and whatever you are doing.

Eventually the mouth and tongue won't do the chanting, the mind will start doing it day and night, even when you are asleep.

But for now, try it for a few minutes and see how it makes you feel.

Programme

As part of the 'Journey of the Mind' exhibition at Arnolfini, Bristol, we will present a public programme including Creative Mind Workshops, sound experiences, talks, poetry and guided tours.

This series of events will offer a collaborative forum for discussion and debate, and will provide the opportunity to delve deeper into the ideas behind the exhibition. Exploring the connections between art, spirituality and mental wellbeing.

Soundwaves

12/11/22
14:00—15:00
Arnolfini
Auditorium

A durational sound performance exploring contemplation of the internal space.

Jason Singh in collaboration with Liz Hanks and Ranjana Ghatak come together to create a durational immersive performance of live soundscapes inspired by Indian ragas, nature, repetition, minimalism and contemplation.

Using a combination of voice, cello, harmonium and electronics to generate and create live immersive soundscapes, the performance will also be an open space allowing audiences to enter, sit, move and leave freely.

Please note, there will be a short silence between each piece, but no introductions.

*Seats and space for those with accessibility needs will be provided.

■
Ticketed
Booking essential
www.asianartsagency.co.uk/whats-on/

“11=”

19/11/22
14:00—15:00
Arnolfini
Auditorium

11= (read as “eleven equals”) - A music performance by Gnarly x Nikita Gill. Featuring an exclusive message that has stood the test of time to be ever relevant today about the timeless journey of the mind.

Combining the cadence and tone of bestselling Irish-Indian poet Nikita Gill’s voice and words with the live production of internationally renowned British-Sri Lankan finger drummer Gnarly, this union is something completely new that fundamentally shifts the paradigm of live performance.

The natural push and pull between its members is a hypnotic conversation that creates an organic, integrated and deeply moving stage presence. The live motion graphics generated from Gnarly’s cues and Nikita’s hand-drawn illustrations further deepens their collaboration.

■
Ticketed
Booking essential
www.withoutshapewithoutform.com/gnarly-x-nikitagill

Faith vs Culture

26/11/22
14:00—16:00
Arnolfini
Auditorium

A South Asian collaboration of minds.

Have you ever had the opportunity to vocalise your thoughts on limiting and taboo topics in South Asian culture?

Would you be open-minded to consider this from a different perspective?

Through interactive group work and creativity, you will have a safe space to express your impressions on aspects of South Asian culture that may be experienced as limiting. The afternoon will introduce a powerful focused practice and how this can be implemented to free the mind of cultural constraints.

Light refreshments will be served.

■
Free
Booking essential
www.withoutshapewithoutform.com/faith-vs-culture

Power of Connection

03/12/22
12:00—13:30
Arnolfini
Reading Room

This workshop reveals our hidden abilities to be creative with others and how we can still our busy minds before approaching everyday tasks and challenges.

This fun and engaging session will help you discover and practice collaboration while making some fascinating creative artworks. Come and enjoy learning new ways to create and experience togetherness using sound, drawing and a few simple instructions.

Don’t worry if you haven’t done anything like this before. You will gain valuable insights to “Sangat” (togetherness) and learn how to do Simran – a focused practice for the mind.

■
Free
Booking essential
www.withoutshapewithoutform.com

Simran Creative Lab

03/12/22
14:00—15:30
Arnolfini
Reading Room

This creative workshop is designed to help you learn how we can still our busy minds before approaching everyday tasks and challenges.

This session will help you discover Simran - a focused practice - while making some fascinating creative artworks of your own. Come and enjoy learning new ways to find focus in a busy world and have fun making some creative works with us in a group setting.

■
Free
Booking essential
www.withoutshapewithoutform.com

Exhibition Tours

Every Tuesday & Sunday
13, 20, 17/11/22
11:30—12:30
Arnolfini

Guided tours of Journey of the Mind — an exhibition of self-discovery.

Through the paintings of Canadian artist Kanwar Singh and short films by British animator Christian Wood, this exhibition explores the texts of the Sikh teachers and how, through these, the journey to understand the mind begins. And how the mind battles against negative forces within, to find peace in troubled times through focused practice, community and selfless service.

■
Free. Drop-in
For more info
www.withoutshapewithoutform.com

Simran Workshop

Every Thursday & Sunday
13, 20, 17/11/22
16:00—17:00
Arnolfini
Reading Room

Learn how to do Simran — a focused practice for the mind. A technique that eliminates thoughts and the internal chatter so that the mind can find peace. It is the start for the journey of the mind.

■
Free. Drop-in
For more info
www.withoutshapewithoutform.com

Discover The Mind with Arnold Art Cart

05/11/22—04/12/22
11:00—18:00
Arnolfini
Reading Room

Arnolfini's Arnold Art Cart will be packed full of creative materials inspired by Journey of the Mind, for children and adults alike to 'Discover' more of the positive aspects of the mind.

■
Free. Drop-in
For more info
www.withoutshapewithoutform.com

More information

Arnolfini
16 Narrow Quay,
Bristol, BS1 4QA

Tuesday - Sunday
11am – 6pm

Free entry
arnolfini.org.uk

Without Shape Without Form
221 Bath Road
Slough, SL1 4BA

withoutshapewithoutform.com
[@withoutshapewithoutform](https://www.instagram.com/withoutshapewithoutform)

GMGG
221 Bath Road
Slough, SL1 4BA

gmggurdwara.com
[@gmggurdwara](https://www.instagram.com/gmggurdwara)

Credits

Curator
Deep Kaur Kailey

Public Programme
Renu Kaur Dhariwal

Interpretation
Claire Henry

Exhibition Design
LYN Atelier

Graphic Design
Studio Rejane Dal Bello

Partners

ARNOLFINI
EST. 1961


AsianArtsAgency

ARNOLFINI

EST. 1961



Supported and funded through
ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND