



SURTAL ARTS PRESS RELEASE

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Derby Season of Light returns for 2025 with inspiring arts activities



Derby Season Of Light celebrates its fifth year!

Derby Season Of Light 2025 events (22nd October to 5th December) include family-friendly lantern-making workshops, Derby Lantern Parade, plus special events ‘Surya’ and ‘Roshni’

Derby’s Surtal Arts are delighted to present Derby Season of Light (DSOL) which returns in 2025. From October through to December, Derby's dazzling diversity and creativity will be celebrated; embracing traditional cultural festivals including Diwali, Rabi’ Al-Awwal, Hanukkah, Bonfire Night, Christmas, and the upcoming Chinese New Year, which all share the common theme of 'light'.

Derby Season of Light is a family friendly festival bringing communities and cultures together, organised by Surtal Arts and supporting partners. A series of inspiring arts activities and events will take place across Derby and Derbyshire shining a spotlight on the universal theme of ‘Light, Peace and Friendship’.

Curated by Surtal Arts, Derby Season Of Light celebrations begin with **'Surya'**, a specially commissioned Indian dance and music performance by National Trust, on **Wednesday 22nd October, 4:30pm to 5:30pm** taking place at Kedleston Hall. The backdrop to the performance will be the **'Helios'** artwork by Luke Jerram. Named after the sun god in ancient Greek mythology, **'Helios'** is a seven-metre sculpture on display as part of Kedleston's Diwali celebrations, combining solar imagery, light and sound to highlight the sun's intricate details.

In keeping with their priority of nurturing new emerging artists, Surtal Arts presents emerging new dance talent, Sowmya Maiya in the event **'Surya'**. Sowmya's performance showcases Indian classical dance style. Saluting the sun as a powerful symbol of light, energy, and life; *Shiva Panchak* is an Odissi Abhinaya dance that portrays the beauty of Lord Shiva and his deep love for his wife Parvati. Accompanied by talented percussionist, Arijit Sen on tabla, the event also sees a critically acclaimed Indian classical violinist and Ghazal singer, Pt. Kamalbir Singh performing **'Time Theory of Ragas'** also inspired by 'Helios'.

'Surya' is supported by the Arts Council England and Derby City Council. **This event is now sold out.**

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/peak-district-derbyshire/kedleston-hall/events>

Derby Lantern Parade is the Season of Light flagship event and will light up the city centre on on Thursday 27th November from 5pm. Organised in partnership with Derby LIVE, part of Derby City Council as part of Festive Derby, with funding from UK Shared Prosperity Fund, this year's Lantern Parade serves as a precursor event to the Christmas Lights Switch-On. Featuring hundreds of community-made and professionally commissioned lanterns, alongside colourful and diverse cultural dance and music performances to bring the whole city centre alive! Derby Lantern Parade is free to attend and open for all.

There is a chance to join the parade bringing your own eco-friendly Diwali lantern, made in advance at a **lantern-making workshop** using biodegradable materials. Illuminate your lantern with a battery-operated LED light and bring your finished lantern to the parade.

The lantern-making workshops take place from 29th October to 23rd November:

- Derby Market Hall on Wednesday 29th October at 1pm to 3pm
- Chapel Street Arts Centre (formerly Déda) on Thursday 30th October at 10am to 12 noon

- Electric Daisy (Halloween Special event) on Friday 31st October at 10:30am to 12:30pm
- Derby Chinese Welfare Association on Saturday 1st November at 10:30am to 12:30pm
- Thrivemind Village on Sunday 2nd November at 11am to 1pm and 1:30pm to 4pm
- Elvaston Castle & Country Park on Saturday 15th November at 10:30am to 12:30pm and 1:30pm to 3:30pm
- Derby Market Hall on Saturday 22nd November at 1pm to 3pm
- Geeta Bhawan Hindu temple (Diwali Special Lantern) Sunday, 23rd November, 10:30am to 12.30pm

The workshops are suitable for individuals or families with children aged 5 and above and cost £5 per person per lantern. Places can be booked in advance: <https://www.surtalarts.co.uk/event-details/lantern-workshops-2025-10-29-10-00> The lantern-making workshops are supported by: Derby Season Of Light, Arts Council England, Derby City Council, UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Cosy Direct Foundation, Derby College, Derbyshire Chinese Welfare Association, Thrivemind, Electric Daisy, Safe & Sound, Krishna Sweet Centre and Elvaston Castle and Gardens Trust.



Kathak dancer Jaymini Sahai performs 'Roshni' (*The Light*)

Concluding the Derby Season of Light, an evening of Indian dance and music celebrates Diwali in Belper with performance of '**Roshni**' (*The Light*). **Jaymini Sahai**, one of the most graceful Kathak dancer in the UK performs intricate technical 'Tarana' a celebratory dance traditionally performed during festive occasions like Diwali, showcasing the joy and vibrancy of the season. Renowned Indian classical violinist and Ghazal singer **Pt. Kamalbir Singh**, accompanied by the dynamic **Arijit Sen** on tabla will present an

immersive musical experience, blending intricate melodies with spontaneous improvisations. The evening concludes with a creative **Abhinaya** (expressive dance) performance, choreographed to one of Kamalbir Singh's soul-stirring Ghazals in an exquisite ode to the beauty of God's creation. Suitable for ages 10 and above '**Roshni**' takes place on Friday 5th December, at Number 28 in Belper. Tickets are £15, or £10 for children and concessions, to book tickets see www.surtalarts.co.uk/event-details/roshni

For details of all Derby Season of Light events, please see: <https://www.surtalarts.co.uk/our-events>

Gopa Nath, Surtal Arts Artistic Director, commented: *"Derby always amazes me, there is so much creativity, talent and goodwill among the community that it has been a joy curating this year's Derby Season Of Light. We feel the arts have a role in breaking down barriers and making Derby an even more friendly place. Partnering with community groups is important to us, to involve people who have never previously engaged with arts and cultural activities."*

"Surtal Arts has a long history of working on Diwali projects at Kedleston Hall so we are thrilled to have been commissioned by The National Trust to produce 'Surya' to celebrate Diwali there, inspired by their exhibition of 'Helios'; and showcasing the emerging classical dance artist Somya. Thank you to The Arts Council England and also to Derby City Council for their funding which has helped us to develop this exciting Season Of Light Programme."

ENDS

Please note – the date of the Lantern Parade, 27th November from 5pm, is a revised date

ABOUT SURTAL ARTS

Surtal Arts are a Derby based combined contemporary arts organisation with specialism in South Asian arts & culture, supported by funding from The Arts Council England.

Based in Derby for over 30 years, Surtal Arts exist to create educational experiences and cross-cultural productions that enrich the lives of everyone. Surtal Arts aims to create, celebrate and debate diversity in the arts and be a home for South Asian Arts learning and creativity and to deliver a body of innovative, contemporary new work that is relevant, meaningful and sustainable. Surtal provides on demand arts workshops in schools, college, health sector and care homes throughout the year, regular [dance class](#) & [choir singing](#) & organise annual festival [Derby Season of Light](#) & Derby [Lantern Parade](#) in partnership with various arts & cultural partners from Derby and Derbyshire. Surtal Arts is funded by Arts Council England. For further information please see <https://www.surtalarts.co.uk/>

**For images or further information, please contact: Kathy Wilson, 0779144194
kathymwilson31@gmail.com**