

British Theatre Guide

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In Search of Goldoni

Saikat Ahamed

Beyond Face Production in association with Theatre Royal Plymouth and Impossible Producing
The Drum, Theatre Royal Plymouth

7–9 May 2025

Saikat Ahamed packs (and unpacks) a torrent of emotion and humour in a very personal 95 uninterrupted minutes as he drags his family around a damp Venice in search of a prolific 18th century playwright.

Aldo Vaxquez's simple set—a metal bridge and shiny floor—and Rajiv Pattani's lighting transports the tale from Venetian gondola and watery streets to Romford hospital and a mosque by way of a chair, box or book.

A veritable Smurf on the backdrop of the algae-dripping, awe-inspiring Italian treasure and subtly dressed in national colours, Ahamed is stepping in the footsteps of his recently lost MGM musical-loving father whose stoic stories of migration and putting down roots are reflected in his metastasing tumour and final resting place: just off the A12 in Hainault.

Dad jokes and Listerine-tasting granita menthe in St Mark's Square prompt memories of a first taste of cheesecake as the veil of reality rips and a grieving son finally finds his father reliving his last days, the visiting platoon of ancient Bangladeshi doctors, death and alien rites of passage.

In what he describes as a labour of love and loss, Saikat explores the strangeness surrounding death and grief through an ingenious mix of wit and honesty, although a careful edit would sharpen up the focus.

Tear-jerking for the bereaved, but worth a look while on tour.

Reviewer: [Karen Bussell](#)