

CONTEMPT

Whoever voluntarily has carnal intercourse against the order of nature with any man, woman or animal, shall be punished with imprisonment for life.

Written and directed by
Danish Sheikh

In 2012, the Supreme Court of India heard arguments relating to the decriminalization of homosexuality in India over a period of 2 months. The Section 377 case finally ended with the Court passing a judgment that criminalized queer intimacy in the country. *Contempt* explores the hearings in the courtroom over that period, while also imagining ways in which the lived narratives of LGBTQ individuals might serve as a form of dissent to the violence of the law.

Cast

Archit Krishna, Satyajit Sarna, Romit Sarkar, Danish Sheikh, Rupali Samuel,
Jayanti Singh

Lighting and Sound

Kalyani Menon, Arshiya Qasba Nabi

Poster Design

Anish Dasgupta

Writing and Direction

Danish Sheikh

Contempt owes a huge debt of gratitude to Neel Chaudhuri and the work of the Tadpole Repertory. The first draft of the script was written under his guidance as part of the Writers Room Summer Workshop of 2016. From there, the 15 minute draft has grown through feedback and conversations with a wide range of persons. These include, but are not limited to: Bhamati Sivapalan, Daniel Elam, Akhil Katyal, Swar Thounaojam, Rupali Samuel, Jake Oorloff, Anirudh Nair, Ajita Banerjie, Dhrubo Jyoti and Sanhita Ambast. We are grateful to the Floating Space Theatre Company based in Colombo for performing the first staged reading of this play in July 2017, and to the staff and students of the O.P. Jindal Global University for engaging with the production in its early stages.

Above all, Contempt is dedicated to the lawyers and activists in the queer movement, and the millions of queer lives that are affected either directly or indirectly because of this law. 377 is not the be all and end all of our struggle, but it is the most direct example of state prejudice against queer persons. The Supreme Court's decision is a further reflection of the inability to empathize.

We dissent.