

**“Anurupa Roy—Puppeteer and HIV/AIDS Educator” Lunch and Discussion.
February 2, 2007. New York.**

Executive Summary

On February 2, 2007, the Asia Society hosted a special luncheon with Anurupa Roy, the acclaimed artist and HIV/AIDS educator from the Indian Puppet Theatre. This roundtable included other artists, grantmakers, scholars, and programmers, representing a broad range of understanding and involvement on HIV/AIDS. Roy is best known for using her skills in puppetry to promote social change; she is particularly influential in her promotion of tolerance with regards to the marginalized community living with HIV/AIDS in India. After showing clips of her work [<http://dma.ucla.edu/events/calendar.php?ID=448>] and talking about her evolution as an artist and an activist, the discussion grew into a broader dialogue of the challenges facing the global response to HIV/AIDS, such as the sheer scale of the epidemic, the impact of trade and regulations, the ongoing stigmatization of the disease, and the need to educate children about infection. Participants also spoke about some of the tools available including theater, film, tv, and other education efforts.

Anurupa Roy received her professional training in puppetry from the Dramatiska Institute at the University of Stockholm, Sweden. She also holds a diploma in traditional glove puppetry from Scoula Della Guaratelle in Naples, Italy. With an emphasis on children and women, Roy travels with her troupe “Kat Katha”. She uses puppetry as a medium to address taboo public health subjects such as female sexuality and HIV/AIDS prevention. Children find puppetry accessible, and they identify with both the performance and interaction of puppetry, which makes Roy’s work an effective means to educate and encourage social understanding at an early age. Health education is a critical dimension to Roy’s mission. In 2006 Roy delivered the keynote performance at the Asia Society’s Annual Asian Dialogue on HIV/AIDS, held in Mumbai, India. Roy’s performance was a creative contribution to the Annual Asian Dialogue on HIV/AIDS, and she underscored the constructive ability of the performing arts to raise critical issues for the global health community and wider public audiences.

Asia Society Initiative on HIV/AIDS and Global Health