

REMEMBRANCE:

Kalpesh Oza

— Activist/Performer

For those of our readers, who had never met him, Kalpesh was a gay activist, who joined the ranks of Serai, with our first theatre production, at the Centaur Theatre in Montreal. For those of you, who did not know, Kalpesh was a prolific writer, who wrote short stories in our magazine, wrote some of our editorials and opinion pieces. For those of you, who did not notice, it was Kalpesh's picture that adorned last year's review article on Desh. (Living with AIDS on roller blades). For those of you who did not know, Kalpesh was an extraordinarily perceptive man, whose activism in the AIDS network, all over the country, in Montreal, in Toronto, on Newswatch, in international conferences, touched the lives of people with his sharp and challenging views that brought in the general perspective of the society we live in and the need to bring about basic change. Kalpesh, lived and breathed in an intense manner — his eyes glowing with anger and passion at the wrongs he perceived, at the inequalities he saw and the incorrectness of priorities that he often had to deal with.

For those of you who did not know, Kalpesh was a progressive man, who aligned himself with social change that went beyond single issues. Whether against racism, against the zillion phobias that this society inflicts on us, against cultural exclusionism, against neo-colonial politics in the third world, against backwardness, worldwide, Kalpesh aligned himself and spoke up. For those of you, who did not notice, Kalpesh was

an outrageous fellow, who spent a short time with us, in a hurry to accomplish things, to talk, incessantly about his ideas, to make his views known while he faded away. For those of you, who never knew him, he was a scientist, a bio-chemist, who made his best attempts to work with the disease, while being constantly under its attack. He perhaps, knew a whole lot more about the progress of AIDS through him, than some of the people who treated him.

For those of you, who will never know him, he was a friend of many, who aligned himself with the advanced guard of progressive culture. Wherever he went, he kept in touch with his old friends, always wanting to talk and remember. Kalpesh Oza died in Toronto on the 3rd of June, 1995.

Take me away, where there is no lord that giveth,

Take me away, where there is no lord that taketh,

Take me away, where there is no lord, period,

and I shall be free to do what I have always wanted

to do,

Come what may. ☸

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