



They Call Me Q Comes To CU

By Christian Pridemore

On February 24, 2016



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We all look for answers to fundamental questions about who we are and what defines us as individuals and even as groups of individuals. One such inspiring story came to Concord University on February 16, 2016 in the form of a young Indian-American woman straight out of the Bronx who tells a story of soul searching and self-acceptance.

"They Call Me Q" is the story of Quarrat Ann Kadwani, or as she better refers to herself throughout most parts of the play, "Q". Kadwani's play describes her journey through life, starting from grade school going almost to the present day. In this one-woman play, Kadwani herself portrays thirteen characters along with herself, including both her parents, friends, bullies, and even strangers. Kadwani quickly got the audience sympathizing with the all-too relatable characters, from the forever worrisome mother and strict father, to the friends that were both helpful and harmful to her individuality. Kadwani also drives home the engaging message of being an independent person from what parents and others expect her to be, while still being able to call upon her family in times where she feels lost or confused as to what to do. The overall message of the play resonates as being one of self acceptance, where Kadwani finds herself going back and forth from India to America to better get in touch with her culture and find out who she is as a person.

"They Call Me Q" has won several awards, including Best Play from Maui Onstage in 2013 and an Assemblyman Award from the state of New York in 2014, and Kadwani herself has won the title of Best Actress from the Variations Theater in 2012. However, that's not all Kadwani is known for doing.

In addition to being the first South Asian female to have a show produced off Broadway, Kadwani's biography on the website for her play, theycallmeqshow.com, states that she also teaches private classes in solo play creation and other points of theater performance, and has made several television appearances in shows such as "The Blacklist" and "Falling Water." Kadwani also coordinates an annual philanthropic project titled "A Slice of Hope" and has been the MC for several different events for non-profit organizations such as World Women's Global Council at the United Nations, Asha for Education, and SOS Children's Villages India. Kadwani's inspiration to become an actress and playwright has led her to do some amazing things, but the true source of her inspiration comes from Kadwani's overall message.

Kadwani makes it a tradition of holding a question and answer session after every show in order to get the audience's opinions and interpretations. In the Q&A after her show at Concord, Kadwani stated that she wanted to send the message that no matter your ethnicity, we all go through tough times, and it was these times for her that became this award-winning play. The timing of this play in today's world has had an impactful message against racist ideas such as Islamophobia, which was one of the topics brought up after the show. Kadwani stated that she believes that our world is in a transition period, and talked about how the general public is becoming more aware of the struggle by other ethnicities to overcome adversity, which was another overlying theme throughout the play. Kadwani says that every time she performs the play, she not only understands her parents and friends better, but she understands herself better as well. For more information about Kadwani and her play, go to theycallmeqshow.com.

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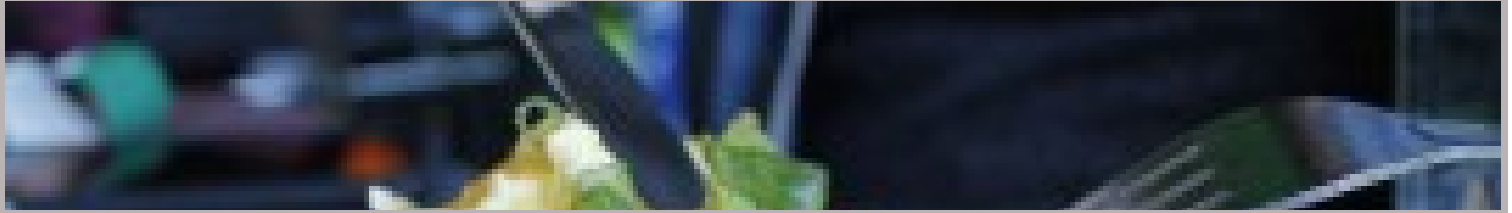
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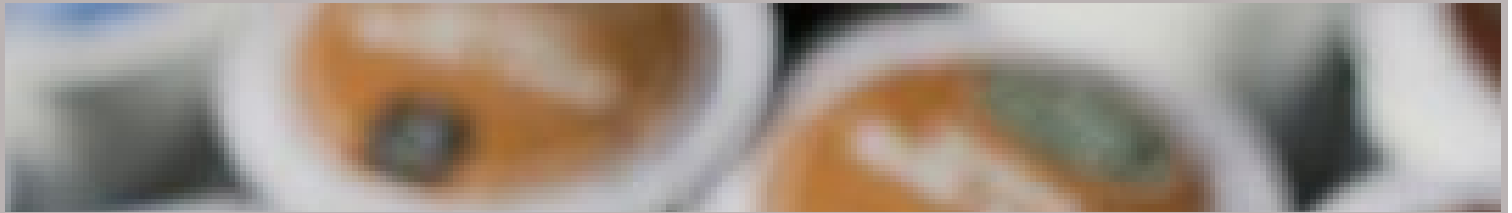
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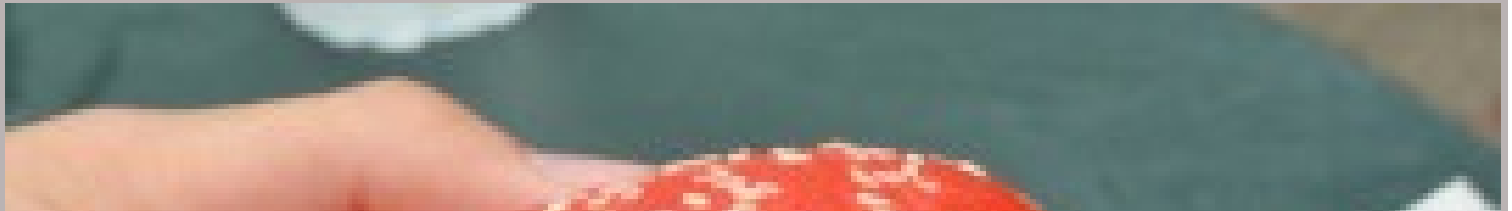
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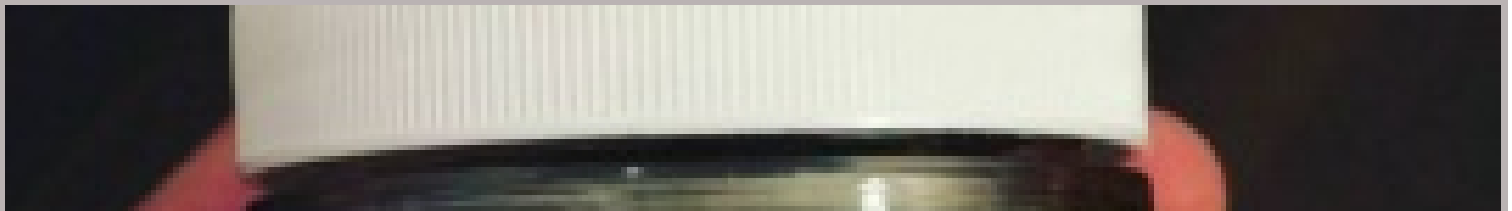
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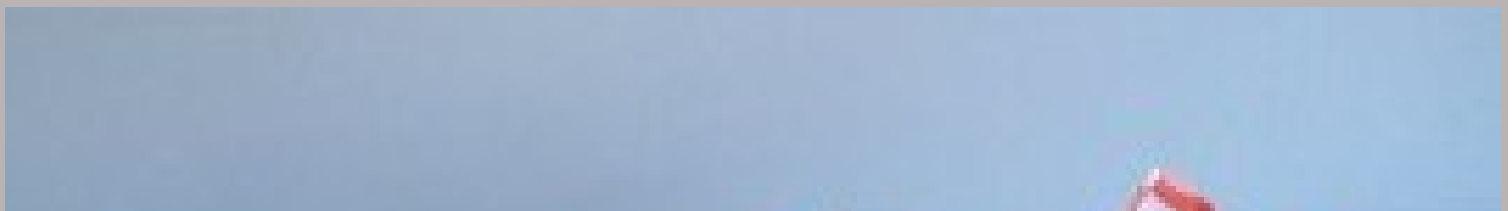
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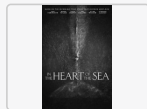
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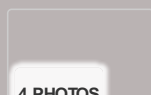
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