



chains of feudal thinking and  
ality; assert your rights; pursue  
just and seek integrity"

Ambalavaner Sivanandan

" When memory dies a people die  
But what if we make up false  
memories? That's worse that's  
murder" When Memory Dies

# THE HEART IS WHERE THE BATTLE IS

A celebration of Sivanandan's legacy

**GARY YOUNGE**  
**NANCY MURRAY**  
**LINTON KWESI-JOHNSON**  
**LIZ FEKETE**  
**COLIN PRESCOD**  
**JOHN PANDIT**

**SAT 23 JUNE 2018**

**1:30pm - 5:00pm**

**Conway Hall**  
**25 Red Lion**  
**Square**  
**London**  
**WC1R 4RL**

**PLUS SPEAKERS FROM:**

**Institute of Race Relations, Race & Class, Migrant Rights Network,  
The Monitoring Group, Samora magazine (Oslo) and ReachOut (Berlin)**

**INSTITUTE OF**  
**RACE**  
**RELATIONS**

Register via Eventbrite [www.bit.ly/sivanandan](http://www.bit.ly/sivanandan) or via email [info@irr.org.uk](mailto:info@irr.org.uk)

# **BUILDING ON COMMUNITIES OF DISSENT**

It is now clear that neoliberalism is not working. All that stuff – about wealth trickling down, no society only individuals, the market as the regulator of everything – has been shown to be false in terms of everyday reality. The combination of austerity and marketisation has impacted on the sheer need to exist. Hence the protests: the coalition against poverty, unemployment workers' groups, boycott workfare networks, the students' campaign against fees and cuts, stop G4S, campaigns against PFI and, indeed, the right to protest itself.

There is a beginning of dissent in the air, the stirrings of rebellion. And it is the market which sets that political culture, that sets people against themselves. The market speaks to profit, not to values, to social control, not to social cohesion, to personal greed, not to individual responsibility. The market corrupts, and the free market corrupts freely. And it is with that awareness of how destructive market forces are of the human condition, that we will create a political culture that does not accept the ruling ideas of the ruling class. One caveat though, the state, whether Tory- or Labour-led, has armed itself with all the new powers of surveillance helped on by technology, and the politics of fear.

But the spaces are there for us to fight back in, and the time is here to be seized.



June 2015

# **‘THE HEART IS WHERE THE BATTLE IS’**

**A celebration of Sivanandan’s legacy**

**23 June 2018 1-5pm**

**Conway Hall, London WC1R 4RL**

- 1pm** Registration and refreshments in Brockway Room
- 1.30pm** **Film** clips of Siva, including at a 1987 meeting in defence of Viraj Mendis, claiming sanctuary in Church of the Ascension, Manchester.
- 1.35pm** **Welcome** Bali Gill (The Monitoring Group) and Colin Prescod (The Institute of Race Relations)
- 1.45pm** **SIVA THE INTERRUPTER** chair: Colin Prescod  
**Speakers** Gary Younge; Priya Thamootheram; Musurat Dar; Wayne Farah; Herman Ouseley; Anya Edmond-Pettitt, Sophia Siddiqui, Daniel Renwick  
**Poetry** Linton Kwesi Johnson
- 2.40pm** **SIVA THE ALCHEMIST** chair: Liz Fekete  
**Reading** from novel *When Memory Dies* by Colin Prescod  
**Film** clip of Siva discussing communalism and racism  
**Speakers** Virou Srilangarajah; David Edgar; Chris Searle  
**Music** ‘Passports on our faces’, an as yet unreleased track by Siva with music by John Pandit
- 3.30pm** **SIVA THE BUILDER** chair: Jenny Bourne  
**Speakers** Gus John; Nancy Murray  
**Roundtable** Khalid Salimi, Luk Vervaet, Biplab Basu and Suresh Grover
- 4.15pm** Brockway Room – for mingling and memories

## Information on contributors

**Biplab Basu** contacted Siva and *Race & Class* on moving, with his wife Anjali Gupta, to Germany from Bombay in the 1990s. They worked together on a number of anti-racist projects. Biplab is Co-founder of ReachOut, a victim support group in Berlin.

**Jenny Bourne**, who has worked at IRR since 1970 as writer and researcher, amongst other things, currently co-edits *Race & Class* with Hazel Waters.

**Musurat Dar** works with a number of community projects in Birmingham empowering women and asylum seekers and refugees. She joined IRR on a student placement and then worked at IRR in the early 1990s, when she became involved in Pakistani Students' Movements.

**David Edgar** is a politically-engaged playwright (associated with the RSC) who has, since researching his anti-fascist play 'Destiny' in the 1970s, worked with the IRR, serving on its Council and writing for its journal.

**Anya Edmond-Pettitt** is a researcher at the Institute of Race Relations and contributed to its recent publication *Humanitarianism: the unacceptable face of solidarity*.

**Wayne Farah**, vice-Chair at Newham Clinical Commissioning Group, is chair of the Migrants' Rights Network and a member of the Board of the African Refugee Housing Action Group.

**Liz Fekete** is director of the IRR and head of its research programme. She writes and speaks extensively on aspects

of contemporary racism and fascism. Her most recent book is *Europe's Fault Lines: racism and the rise of the Right*.

**Bali Gill** is a founding Partner of the firm Imran Khan and Partners and has been involved in a number of Human Rights cases and public inquiries, including that of Stephen Lawrence, the Undercover Policing Inquiry and now the Grenfell Tower Fire. She has worked for many years in a voluntary capacity with Southall Monitoring Group, now The Monitoring Group.

**Suresh Grover**, founder director of Southall Monitoring Group, now The Monitoring Group, has been involved in numerous family campaigns for justice in the UK and abroad – including those of Gurdip Singh Chaggar, Blair Peach, Victoria Climbié, Stephen Lawrence, Zahid Mubarek and the Dawood family killed in Gujarat during the anti-Muslim genocide of 2002 – influential in calling the state to account. He lives and continues to be politically active in Southall, West London. And for four decades he maintained a strong political/personal relationship with Siva.

**Professor Gus John** is an influential education campaigner, lecturer and speaker. He was elected as part of the Council of the 'new' Institute of Race Relations in 1972 after the ousting of 'the old guard'.

**Linton Kwesi Johnson** is a Jamaican-British poet and musician. As a member of the Black Panther Movement and later a university student he used the IRR's library where he met Siva, who encouraged the publishing of his first

collection 'Voices of the Living and the Dead' (TRJ 1974).

**Nancy Murray**, the long-term Director of Education at the ACLU of Massachusetts, worked at IRR in the mid-1980s and has been a member of the *Race & Class* editorial working committee since then.

**Herman Ouseley**, former head of the Commission for Racial Equality and now chair of Kick it Out, is a member of the House of Lords and the Council of the IRR with which he has had a long association.

**John Pandit** is an anti-racist, civil rights activist with over 30 years' experience working with grassroots campaigns and organisations. He is also a founder member of the Asian Dub Foundation.

**Colin Prescod** is a cultural curator to local authorities, galleries and museums, advising especially on matters relating to black agency, having over five decades, been an academic, a documentary film and theatre maker, and TV commissioning editor. He is chair of the IRR with which he has been involved since the mid-1970s, frequently speaking alongside Siva in Europe and the USA. He directed IRR's films 'Struggles for Black Community' and the more recent interview with Siva, 'Catching History on the wing', available on DVD.

**Daniel Renwick** is a youth worker, writer and videographer who is making a film about Siva.

**Khalid Salimi**, activist and cultural adviser in Oslo, helped develop the

Norwegian Centre Against Racism and the magazine *Samora* in terms of lessons learned from Siva and the example of the IRR.

**Chris Searle**, socialist educator, poet and writer has been closely associated with Siva and the Institute of Race Relations since the late 1970s, and is on the editorial working committee of *Race & Class*, for which he is a regular contributor.

**Sophia Siddiqui** who writes on matters relating to racism and feminism is an editorial assistant on *Race & Class*.

**Virou Srilangarajah** is a writer and volunteer at Tamil Information Centre. He was also a volunteer at the IRR, having been deeply influenced personally and politically by Siva and his writing.

**Priya Thamotheram** – a Sri Lankan Tamil – came to IRR when a student at North London Polytechnic. He maintained a friendship with Siva for over 40 years during which he's been involved in community education / development work, initially in Brixton and currently in Highfields, Leicester.

**Luk Vervae**t is a Brussels-based activist educationalist working in prisons and with families of prisoners. He has been influenced by Siva's concept of communities of resistance.

**Gary Younge** is a journalist and editor-at-large for the *Guardian*. His most recent book was *Another Day in the Death of America: A Chronicle of Ten Short Lives* (2016).

## Excerpts from a few of the many tributes to Siva

**Saqib Deshmukh** As a young working class Pakistani man my encounters with him both in person and in his writings were so meaningful and powerful. He was always one of the bravest of our elders and the wisest.

**Daniel Renwick** Siva is my hero. No greater influence on my political thinking. He should be remembered as we think of people like Stuart Hall, but he wasn't as easy to accept in academic and cultural circles. He was a polemicist, he was brutal in his interventions. I will make a film on his legacy.

**Amrit Wilson** Siva shaped the thinking of a generation of Black activists. He laid out for us the essentials of what Black Left politics meant. His encouragement when I was completing my first book *Finding a Voice – Asian women in Britain* meant a lot to me.

**Nancy Murray** I started working at the IRR 35 years ago, and such was the intensity of friendships formed in its unique culture where Siva presided as an intellectual mentor and guiding light, that I feel as if I have never left. I vividly recall the worlds that opened up around the IRR lunch table as he challenged us to wrestle with his analysis of the changes wrought by new productive forces or read to us segments of his Sri Lanka trilogy as it was taking shape. He remained a personal lodestar after I moved to the US.

**Mukhtar Dar** In the midst of inner-city rebellions of the 1980s, Siva's writings were photocopied and distributed amongst the street fighters. As members of the Sheffield Asian Youth Movement, our

mini-busses frequently drove to London to hear Siva address campaign meetings. His speeches were duplicated on cassettes and played on our ghetto blasters alongside speeches of Malcolm X and the songs of Peter Tosh and Bob Marley.

**Herman Ouseley** He inspired me always, as he did others, but above all, I treasured his love.

**Sujata Aurora** I'll never forget the magic that happened in a room when Siva spoke.

**Wayne Farah** The single most important Black man of the 20th century in the UK. I remember his wicked sense of humour, our shared love of Paul Robeson, and his ability to tell you off, set you straight and lift you up all in one sentence.

**Barbara Ransby** He showed us what it meant to be a people's intellectual: unbought and unbossed.

**Suresh Grover** His politics and compassion transformed an ordinary bank clerk into an extraordinary political thinker and intellectual. That legacy is the IRR, his thinking and writings and in his method.

**Gus John** No one debunked the hypocrisy and hubris of the British state in the post-war period better than Siva.

**Cathy Bergin** I read Siva's essay 'All that melts into air is solid' in Dublin in the early 1990s and its impact on my politics was profound. It was just so incisive, and witty and exasperated I have read *Race & Class* ever since.

**Jane Shallice** A Marxist who was throughout so clear about capital and the centrality of class whilst constantly analysing the changing nature of capital's extending arms.

**David Milner** Siva offered a mind-set, a heart and a conscience that could not be found in academic text books and would sit on my shoulders for ever.

**Purnaka de Silva** Uncle Siva was instrumental in inculcating a deep sense of racial equality that helped fashion the politics of a generation of Sri Lankan political activists 30 years or more his junior. It was from him that I learned about Fanon's "The Wretched of the Earth"; Rodney's "How Europe Underdeveloped Africa"; Cabral's "Unity in Struggle." The IRR was a safe haven and a crucible for intellectual curiosity, and cross-pollination for activists from many countries.

**Jasbir Singh** His writings articulated and defined my experiences as a young new immigrant to Britain in the 70s. I felt his words, he stoked a fire, gave our anger grounding... He ignited something in us that is still burning after so many decades.

**Maria Lujan Leiva** Siva helped me to find a path in politics and research. He awakened consciences even in the Far South (Argentina).

**Graeme Atkinson** Siva was at the forefront of educating anti-fascists in anti-racism with his trenchant, ever-perceptive analyses and personal indomitable fighting spirit.

**Jeremy Corbyn** So sad at the death of Siva, a privilege and an honour to know him. "When Memory Dies" is a superb encapsulation in a novel of so much of

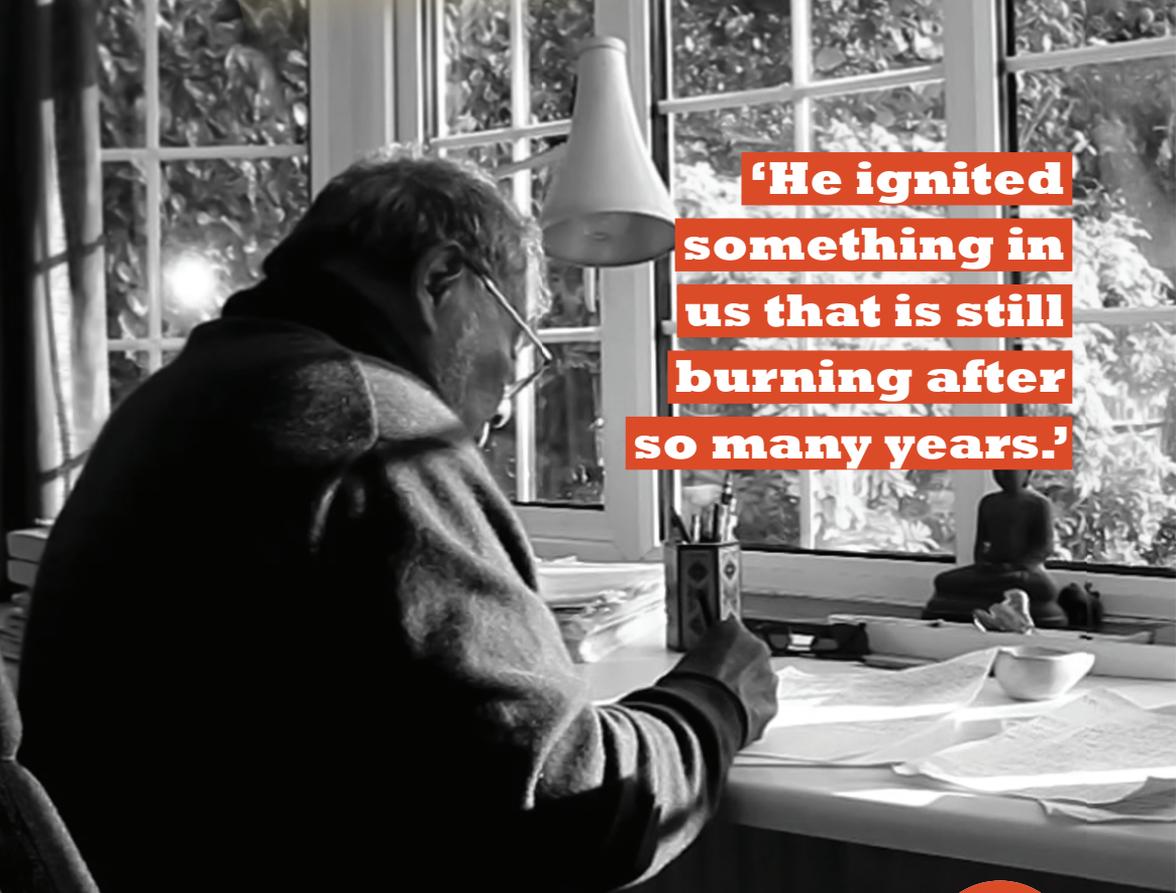
life and hopes but also of the history that influences us all.

**Brid Brennan** His work on the nexus of imperialism, neo-colonialism and racism is as enduring as is his emphasis on the collective action and the counter-power of movements needed to defeat this.

**SV Rajadurai** He was the only person from a Tamil speaking community background who rose to become one of the outstanding International Marxist intellectuals of our era.

**Elizabeth Peters Robinson** Things I might not know had we not met Siva in the 1970s: That 'Black' could be more than a racial binary and encompass so many of the colonized. That the miracle of the microchip was born on the backs of women whose kitchens brewed toxic chemicals so that we might exchange information at the speed of light. That 'free trade zones' were only free for exploiting the indigenous populations whose wealth was exported in a twinkling. That the brilliance of young people often undereducated and discouraged could be coaxed from them and realized in the vitality of IRR and beyond.

**Frances Webber** In 1969 when I went to the old IRR as a temp and met Siva, then the librarian, he revolutionised my life ... during which he read us poetry and short stories he'd written on the tube, delighted in mischievous pranks and silly jokes, tried to teach us the value of anger, the glory of Beethoven and the paramount importance of relationships, which informed his politics ... 49 years later he still thought at the speed of light and always bested me in argument. His analysis was always fierce and brilliant, his passion for justice never wavered.



**‘He ignited  
something in  
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**Get involved with IRR News**  
A news service on race and refugee  
issues in the UK and Europe

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globalisation

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**STILL  
AVAILABLE**

