



Ermatingen, 29 September 2004

## Wolfsberg Think Tank

**Date:** Thursday, 14 October 2004, 4.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m., followed by buffet dinner

**Topic:** The New Popularity of India in Western Media

**Led by:** Michael Ward, CEO, Far Pavillions Ltd, London, England

Dear Sir/Madam

Why has theatrical producer, Michael Ward, invested six years of his life turning M. M. Kaye's best-selling novel **The Far Pavilions** into a West End musical (due to premiere at London's Shaftesbury Theatre in April 2005)?

Come and hear the story of how this India-born British business entrepreneur changed direction and made his way instead into the heart of London's close-knit world of theatre. He will present **The Far Pavilions** as a case study, in the context of other recent and highly-popular Indo-British media ventures, such as **Bombay Dreams, Bend it Like Beckham, Monsoon Wedding, Goodness Gracious Me, Lagaan, The Rising, Bride & Prejudice, and The White Mughals.**

Michael will also discuss whether India's influence on Western popular culture (music, dance, films...) is a passing phase or a long-term phenomenon.

Michael was born on a tea plantation in Assam, India, within sight of the Himalayas. His early schooling was at the Jesuit-run Little Flower School in Digboi. The transition from this familial warmth to the austerity of a Benedictine boarding school in Scotland, was not an easy one. Escape came in the form of writing poetry, in bringing out a rival to the school magazine and in acting in plays/theatre. Michael graduated from Stirling University in 1982 with an honours degree in French and obtained a Postgraduate Diploma in International Marketing from Napier College, Edinburgh. In 1985, he won The Lord Mayor of London's Travelling Scholarship, sponsored by the Institute of Marketing, for a thesis on the Middle East. A successful business career in the export, oil and shipping industries took him all over the world when a chance meeting with composer Philip Henderson led to a complete change of direction and saw the beginning of a creative partnership that centred on musical theatre, starting in 1992. The first fruit of this collaboration was *Ratcatcher*, a musical inspired by Robert Browning's *Pied Piper of Hamelin*. This project brought them to the attention of the West End theatre industry, and, after workshop and concert productions in 1995 and 1996, all rights to *Ratcatcher* were sold. John Whitney, Chairman of Andrew Lloyd Webber's Really Useful Group challenged Michael to find "the next big commercial idea for a West End musical".

The prize would be an entrée into the world of London theatre and the backing of a man who could open doors. A number of ideas were being considered when Michael's wife, Elaine, suggested he adapt her favourite novel, *The Far Pavilions* by M. M. Kaye. Michael wrote off to Publishers Penguin immediately and was delighted to receive an invitation to lunch with the author. Their mutual love of India led to a late-flowering friendship that lasted six years until Kaye's death aged 95 in January 2004. Michael co-founded, in 1997, the production company Far Pavilions Ltd. with John Whitney.

Programme:

3.30 p.m. Welcome Coffee  
4.00 p.m. Introductions, presentation and discussion  
6.00 p.m. Apéro and buffet dinner

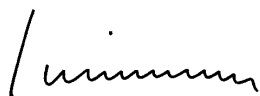
To cover costs, we shall charge only 120 CHF per person (UBS staff are covered by SLA). \*

**For further information and to register please contact Regina Villiger (phone 071 663 56 51) or send an e-mail to [regina.villiger@ubs.com](mailto:regina.villiger@ubs.com). Please register by 10 October 2004 latest.**

We look forward to welcoming you to this Wolfsberg Think Tank. **If you cannot attend, but know someone else who might find it of use, kindly pass on the information. Finally, some of your clients may also be interested in this event and you may wish to think of inviting them along.**

Yours sincerely

WOLFSBERG



Dr. Toni Schönenberger  
Managing Director



Professor Prabhu Guptara  
Executive Director

**P.S.:** Please note that overnight accommodation is available at Wolfsberg for a charge of 150 CHF including breakfast. Lunch is also available for 45 CHF. Please indicate your needs with the registration.

**P.P.S.:** Information on other forthcoming Wolfsberg events and reports on previous Wolfsberg Think Tanks and other such events can be found at [www.wolfsberg.com](http://www.wolfsberg.com).

\* Cancellations must be received at the latest by 7 days before the event. In case of cancellations received later than this, the following arrangements apply: cancellations received up to 3 days before the event - 75 % of the fee will be payable; after that date - the full fee will be payable. However, a substitute participant is welcome.