

# Cambridge Elements

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## THE FESTIVAL OF INDIA

*Development and Diplomacy  
at the End of the Cold War*

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## The Festival of India

### Development and Diplomacy at the End of the Cold War

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**Abstract:** This Element is an in-depth study of the Festival of India (1985–1986) in the United States, one of the biggest events ever mounted to promote goodwill between two countries. Comprising more than seven hundred programmes of music, dance, drama, film shows, art exhibitions, and workshops sponsored by over two hundred cultural institutions across over a hundred cities, the festival constituted a prismatic event that refracted the complex forces at play on the global stage during the 1980s. The Element delineates how this multi-sited spectacle of unprecedented size and near unfathomable political, economic, and cultural influence impacted theatre and performance studies. Simultaneously, it traces how two complex historical shifts were communicated to the global public at the end of the Cold War: India's desire to transition from planned Nehruvian socialism to *laissez faire* capitalism and the efflorescence of the model of 'cultural development' that centred the arts in development.

**Keywords:** Festival of India, Cold War theatre, Peter Brook, cultural development, Indian craft, political performance

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