

AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE

The Play

Dr. Stockmann discovers that the source of drinking and spa water is riddled with pathogenic micro-organisms, caused by industrial effluence. Stockmann wants to publish the findings in the newspaper and demands that the city council re-route the water pipes. Influential citizens and local journalists promise their support. However, his brother Peter, the councilor of the city, raises some serious concerns. The economic prosperity of the spa town will be threatened and the citizens will have to bear the brunt of the high repair costs. Suddenly the support for Stockman from the town's policymakers begins to wane. They spread seeds of doubt about his plans and try to cover up the fact of the contaminated water. But Stockmann insists on transparency and intends to go public on the matter. In an all-important speech, he hopes to win the town over to his way of thinking. He accepts that this will cause a permanent rift between himself and his brother and that he also runs the risk of being ostracized by the community. For him the affair has long since ceased to be about the polluted health spa, his target is society as a whole. Ibsen's drama wavers on a fine line between honesty and fanaticism. What is the potential for transparency in a commercialized society?

The Director

Thomas Ostermeier was born in 1968 in Soltau. He spent his youth in Landshut. From 1992 to 1996 he studied directing at the Ernst Busch Academy of Dramatic Art Berlin. From 1996 to 1999 Ostermeier was Artistic Director of the Baracke at the Deutsches Theater in Berlin.

Since September 1999 Ostermeier is a member of the Artistic

Direction and Resident Director of the Schaubühne. He has been awarded with numerous international prizes. Ostermeier has been appointed Officier des Arts et des Lettres by the French Ministry of Culture. In 2010 he was announced as president of the German-French Council of Culture. His productions are touring worldwide and have been shown in cities such as Adelaide, Athens, Avignon, Barcelona, Bordeaux, Brussels, Caracas, Copenhagen, Dublin, Hong Kong, Krakow, Lisbon, London, Madrid, Marseille, Melbourne, Moscow, Naples, New York, Omsk, Oslo, Ottawa, Paris, Prague, Québec, Reims, Rennes, Seoul, Sydney, Taipei, Tel Aviv, Tokyo, Venice and Vienna.

Playwright

Henrik Johan Ibsen (20 March 1828 – 23 May 1906) was a major 19th-century Norwegian playwright, theatre director, and poet. He is often referred to as “the father of realism” and is one of the founders of Modernism in theatre. His major works include *Brand*, *Peer Gynt*, *An Enemy of the People*, *Emperor and Galilean*, *A Doll's House*, *Hedda Gabler*, *Ghosts*, *The Wild Duck*, *Rosmersholm*, and *The Master Builder*. He is the most frequently performed dramatist in the world after Shakespeare, and *A Doll's House* became the world's most performed play in early 20th century.

The Group

The Schaubühne am Lehniner Platz was founded in 1962. Since 1999 it has been led by artistic director Thomas Ostermeier. The foundation of his tenure was laid in the formation of a new ensemble of permanently employed actors, who essentially have been working together ever since, regularly extended by new appointments. The Schaubühne premieres a minimum of ten shows per season alongside a repertoire of over 30 existing productions.

Jadubangsho

The Play

Jadubangsho boldly faces the problems of a tumultuous time. The time is the independent India in the 1950's, with Bengal cut in two- trying to survive the severing of old ties of languages, lives and love. Jadugopal's business flourishes in North Calcutta, but he is easygoing and childish. His wife Nandorani blames his laidback attitude for the fact that they are still without a child. She devotes all her time to rituals in a hope that an heir is born, even though both husband and wife are way past their prime. With them stay Jadu's brother Narugopal who is a Jatra proprietor, rendered out of work because of the violence and restrictions that came with partition and Fagun, an employee's daughter from East Pakistan who has taken shelter from the mayhem all around. Dhurjoti, a distant relative of Jadugopal looks like a perfect gentleman, but is a thief unlike Sanai who though jailed for robbery, is not a thief. The two meet one night when a group of refugees are looking for a lost child.

Director's Note

The borders drawn in 1947 ripped not only across geographic terrain but deliberately tore people on the basis of religion, tearing individual from individual, threatening to wipe out the bonds of love and caring we shared since the beginning of time. Independence came to Bengal demanding labels. People were displaced, terrorised and killed. An entire generation was brutalized.

This play does not really focus on the anger and agony that Partition brought. It focuses on human relationships and the

urgent need for communal harmony, a bonding across economic and social strata, a sense of belonging on which can grow a healthy sense of nationhood without religious considerations of any kind. More people are killed in the name of religion than anything else. As Jean Paul Sartre would have said Religion has proved to be a “costly hypothesis”.

The production is also keyed to that...the stage is uncluttered and we go less for period sets, more for authentic thoughts and feelings that are often obscured by political propaganda. My characters (as varied as the birds on a tree) dominate with their backgrounds, their beliefs, their interactions...The music refers briefly to the sentiments of the time but the theme music rolls in and out constant, unbroken like the tune that binds all together.

The Director and the Playwright

Manoj Mitra is the president of the Paschimbanga Natya Akademi (Govt. of West Bengal), and Sundaram. His professional career began as a professor of Philosophy at the Ranigunj College. Today he is a leading playwright of Bengal. He has till date written over a hundred plays like *Mrityur Chokhe Jal*, *Sajano Bagaan*, *Parabas*, *Alokanandar Putra Kanya*, *Mesh O Rakhash*, *Noisho Bhoj*, *Operation Bhomragar* etc. His works have been translated into many languages and produced by directors like Ratan Thiyam, Rajinder Nath and others. They are extremely popular in Bangladesh, America, Australia, England and other places. He has written several books on film and theatre and is the recipient of many awards like, Sangeet Natak Akademi Award, Calcutta University Award, Bengali Stage Centenary Award, State Government Award, Filmfare Award for Best actor, Bangavibhushan Award etc.

The Group

Dedicated to the theatre of conscience, a tireless seeker of truth and beauty in all its forms – ‘Sundaram’ was found in

1957 by a handful of college friends. The founder members of the group are: Manoj Mitra, late Partha Pratim Chaudhury, Prasanta Bhattacharya, Dulal Ghosh and others. Soon many more came to be associated with the group. At 58 with many new members Sundaram has a history of over 65 immensely popular original productions. To meet the paucity of original scripts in Bengali, for the last 23 years, the group has been conducting the only annual Bengali playwriting competition- 'Parthaprati Sarane Smriti Purashkar'. It has also launched two awards for children and backstage artists- Ananta & Ashim Purashkar.

Touring India and abroad Sundaram has won many, national and state-level, governmental and non-governmental awards and has, more importantly, won the support of countless theatre lovers.

Tughlaq

The Play

Tughlaq is a play about the turbulent rule of Mohammad Bin Tughlaq. The protagonist, Mohammad bin Tughlaq, had great ideas and a grand vision, but his reign was an abject failure. Tughlaq was known for his reformist ideas, one of which was shifting the capital from Delhi to Daulatabad in order to have a capital that is in the centre of his province. This play covers the consequences that followed this decision. The play dramatically highlights the importance of credibility and authenticity for a leader. The play outlines his clever plots to eliminate his opponents and ends with scenes of utter chaos and misery in the kingdom, and Tughlaq being left alone, having been abandoned by those who survived him.

Director's Note

Tughlaq is a political play. Mohammad is more about power than about an individual. Therefore the structural difference between the individual Mohammad and the political Mohammad is crucial. When Power undergoes conflict, lying within an idealistic false consciousness, the notion of nation is abandoned. The conflict between duty and the political ambition of Mohammad makes life difficult for the masses, and the very foundations of the imagination of a nation are forsaken. The play *Tughlaq*, analyses the various dimensions of 'how' or 'what' a ruler should or should not be. It is this contemporarily relevant idea that we should gather from the play than mere history.

The Director

Dr. Samkutty Pattomkary is a freelance director, designer and technical trainer in theatre. Formerly, an executive member of the Kerala Sangeet Natak Academy, Government of Kerala. Some of his plays as a script writer include *Bheemaparvam* , *Deepra Thamas (Illuminated Darkness)*, *Urubhanga Sangodom* etc. As a director, he has been associated with many plays like, *Kaalam Sakshi*, *Andha Yug*, *Ghatakarpparanma*, *Anth Nahin*, *Mahachaitra*, *Yeshodhare*, *Medea* etc. He has also designed more than 350 amateur/professional theatre and dance productions in Kerala with many leading directors from Kerala and abroad. In cinema, Dr. Pattomkary has acted for the documentary film *Nayanarude Katha*, worked as Director for the documentary film *From Hutment Colonies to Agricultural Land* and as an Art Director for movies like *Mankolangal* and English film *Tantra*. Dr. Pattomkary has received many awards, some of them being, Bank men's Art Director Award, G. Sankara Pillai Endowment Award, Thoppil Bhasi Director Award (KPAC) and School of Drama Silver

Jubilee Award.

The Playwright

Girish Raghunath Karnad (born 19 May 1938) is a writer, playwright, screenwriter, actor and movie director in Kannada language. For four decades, Karnad has been writing plays, often using history and mythology to tackle contemporary issues. His plays have been translated into many Indian languages and directed by eminent theatre personalities like Ebrahim Alkazi, B.V. Karanth, Alyque Padamsee, Prasanna, Arvind Gaur, Satyadev Dubey, Vijaya Mehta, Shyamanand Jalan and Amal Allana. He is active in the world of Indian cinema working as an actor, director, and screenwriter. He is a recipient of the 1998 Jnanpith Award. He was conferred Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan by the Government of India.

The Group

'Samudaya' established in 1974, is a pioneer cultural organization. Some of its prominent proscenium plays are, Maxim Gorky's *Thayi* (Mother), Sarveshwar Dayal Saxena's *Kuri*, P. Lankesh's *Sankranthi*, H.S. Shivaprakash's *Mahachaitra*, *Kattale Daari Dura* an adaptation of Chekov's 'Ward No. 6', Mahaswetha Devi's *Rudaali* and *Neeru*, K.P. Poornachandra Thejaswi's *Jugari Cross*, *Suttikondare Sarpa* a Kannada adaptation of Ibsen's *Enemy Of The People* etc. The group has also produced many street plays like *Patre Sangappana Kole*, *Kooli Thangi*, *Belchi*, *Bhanvri Devi*, *Tippu*, *Kesari Bili Hasiru*, *Meravanige*, *Dhanvantri Chikitse* etc. as a cultural protest pertaining to the contemporary issues of the nation. In addition to the plays, Samudaya has been active in conducting seminars, book releases and national festivals too.

C SHARP C BLUNT

The Play

Meet Shilpa, an attractive, interactive and user-friendly mobile phone application that has been projected to be the most popular mobile applications of 2013. Created, incorporating the latest technology, Shilpa will sing for you – in the flesh. She will sing what you want to hear in her sugary and husky voice, and shake her hips when you want her to, dancing to your favourite tune. Best of all, she behaves exactly the way women are supposed to behave in the eyes of men; that is, until the next update is released.

C Sharp C Blunt is the latest offering by Germany's, Flinntheater, in an Indo-German collaboration that explores the realms of digital dramaturgy, repetition and user choices to create a new hybrid form of theatre-meets-performance art.

Director's Note

Our team comprises of working women in the entertainment/art industry today and we felt the need to say something about its limits for women, the small sexism, the twisted images we have to battle and the glass ceilings – but we wanted to do it in an entertaining and satirical way. This play has been devised from the realm of our shared experiences, but certainly lays more focus on the experiences of women performers in India than in Germany. Swar Thounaojam, Ritu Bhattacharya and Irawati Karnik contributed to this play in different ways, but the centre was certainly Pallavi and the disparate worlds she occupies in one day. I consider myself more of a frame worker than a director in the classical sense. I am interested in performers that have a need to express a

certain issue. I try to frame this issue and give it an exciting and contemporary form that the audience would like to watch and engage in. We had nothing, but some secondary text material, when we started. About five lines from Donna Haraway's, *A Cyborg Manifesto* made it into the play. But the rest of our script is based on wild improvisations and after a while some ideas, scenes and performance oriented moments prevail. Then we had to weave this into a performance that had logic in recurring themes, symbols and ideas as well as an energetic dramaturgy, that would keep the audience engaged although they are not following a linear narrative.

As technology and the media shape the way we perceive and interact with the world, I like to reflect this in my theatre. The concept of user inputs and user choices has been intriguing me for a while because it is contradictory to the theatre set up, where there is a group of people instead of only one user. It is an experiment, all I can say is: Come and use the App and 'C' for yourself.

The Director

Sophia Stepf lives in Berlin and has an MA in Dramaturgy for Theatre and Media from Leipzig and Toronto. She has been involved in theatre for the past fifteen years, as a director, dramaturge, critic and scout and is the Artistic Director of the company, Flinntheater that has produced acclaimed performances with writers and performers from India and Nigeria. Her play *India Simulator* won several awards in Germany and her documentary play *A Small Small World* travelled to Dhaka, Bangalore, Bremerhaven and Hamburg. Her new play *The Power Play* was invited to Lagos/Nigeria in December 2012..

The Group

Flinntheater Company was found in 1992 in Kassel /Germany and has produced and co-produced seventeen plays. Since 2007, the sisters Sophia and Lisa Stepf are the artistic directors of the group and work with professional teams of actors, writers

and musicians. Since 2009, their productions take up globally relevant issues and are devised with the input of writers, performers and musicians from countries, like India, Bangladesh and Nigeria. Flinntheater has an education branch too and puts up its productions for schools and young people. Flinntheater was awarded the art award of the city of Kassel and the culture award of the Dr.-Wolfgang-Zippel-Foundation. The play, *India Simulator* (2009) has won several awards. The group has toured India, Bangladesh, Germany and Nigeria with its productions.

Inna Ki Awaaz by Syed Asghar Wajahat

The Play & Director's Note

Inna Ki Aawaz is political satire based in an imaginary country where the king is a tyrant. Inna is a common man employed in the construction of a new palace for the king. He has got a melodious voice, all the workers, masons gather around him to listen his magical singing. He becomes so popular amongst lower strata of the kingdom that king feels threatened by him

The play *Inna ki Aawaaz* deals with the individual's hidden tendencies both at political & social level. How an individual overplays the tricks to save his power, how important it becomes for him to suppress the voice of opposition.

The effective plan is not to finish the existence but to create such a situation where these voices are diverted and never find their way out.

It resembles a lot with contemporary political scenario where one's supremacy includes the opposition to play safe, and after its utilization, is disposed off.

Secondly, it directs to the tendency of an individual, who after attaining one certain position forgets his own landscape and gets addicted to the facilities provided.

And this uncertainty leaves him somewhere near nowhere.

The Director

Shyam Kumar Sahani started his theatre journey from his group 'Theatre Unit' and later moved to Begusarai where he worked with 'Akashganga Rangchaupal'. He has acted in *Andha Yug*, *Andher Nagari*, *Panchlight*, *Godan*, *Kafan*, *Macbeth*, *Civilization on Trial* etc. His directrial ventures include *Papa Kho Gaye*, *Bas Aakar Chale Jana*, *Aaj Ka Hatimtai*, *Faans* etc. He has worked as designer in many plays and has also done Art Direction for TV serials.

The Playwright

Syed Asghar Wajahat, popularly known as Asghar Wajahat born July 5, 1946 is a Hindi scholar, fiction writer, novelist, playwright, an independent documentary filmmaker and a television scriptwriter, who is most known for his work, 'Saat Aasmaan' and his acclaimed play, *Jis Lahore Nai Dekhya O Janmyai Nai*, based on the story of an old Punjabi hindu woman, who gets left behind in Lahore after the partition and then refuses to leave.

He has published five collections of short stories, six collections of plays, street plays and four novels.

The Group

This play is being presented as part of the National School of Drama's Graduate Showcase (Class of 2014), which aims to provide a platform for emerging theatre practitioners, while

allowing them to share their work with a wide audience.

Chanakya by Mihir Bhuta

The Play

Chanakya brings to life the great visionary and statesmen, Chanakya, but in a modern context. Realizing the threat of invasion and conquest and equally driven by the desire to improve the condition of his kingdom, Chanakya decided that it was imperative to create an authority figure who could rule the subcontinent as well as the hearts of his subjects. It was because of his brilliant manoeuvres and the integrity of his intentions that the cruel rule of the Nandas ended and was replaced by the Mauryan Empire, marking the beginning of a new era in Indian history.

The second version of *Chanakya* was started immediately after the 26/11 terror attack on Mumbai and its first show was dedicated to the memory of martyr Constable Tukaram Umbale.

Director's Note

Internal discord, external threat, polluted politics and the despicable corruption of public servants – Was this the scenario in the times of Chanakya? Or are these just the headlines of today's newspaper? The fabric of our once magnificent society has corroded from within and without, and we are plagued by the decay of morality and social consciousness. Only the austerity and selfless commitment of Chanakya's thoughts and concepts can rebuild this society and restore it to its previous glory. This play is our modest attempt to look into the past and to present an opportunity for introspection for society and its leaders.

The Director

Manoj Joshi has been an actor on stage, in television and in films for the last twenty five years. His work includes performances in television serials like *Ek Mahal Ho Sapno Ka*, *Damini*, *Kehta Hai Dil*, *Yeh Meri Life Hai*, and others; and films like *Aan –Men At Work* directed by Madhur Bhandarkar, *Jaago* directed by Mehul Kumar, and *Devdas* directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali. His work on stage includes Hindi plays like *Chanakya*, *Rageela Re*, *Golmaal Pyar Ka*, and Gujarati plays *Suryavanshi*, *Doctor Tamhe Pann*, *Gandhi Virrudh Gandhi*, among others.

Playwright

Mihir Bhuta is a well known playwright of theatre from Gujarat. He has to his credit more than fifteen plays such as *Atank*, *Atmas* and *Shapath*. He has won 'Best Writer's' Trophy in the full length play competition organized by the Abhiyan Magazine and the 'Best Script of the Decade' award for *Chanakya* by the Gujarat Government. He has written for Gujarati, Marathi and Hindi television serials such as *Khel*, *Aakaashpeltana* and *Chauraha*. He has also written for films like *Tore Aanchi Ki Chaiyaa Tale* and *Shortcut*. Mr. Bhuta is also a member of the Committee for Awards for Gujarati Films; has designed and runs the Gurjari Channel and the Sankraman Studio as Creative Director.

The Group

'Manoj Joshi Creations' started its production of Gujarati and Hindi plays and theatre activities in 1995. The prime objective of the group is to promote theatre artists, youth and other aspirants. Some of the group's major productions include *Rangeelo*, *Ghasiram Kotwal*, *Rangeela Re* and *Shobha Yatra*. In 2008 it produced three one-act plays, *Chhoti Si Kahani Se*, with amateur actors to promote inter-collegiate theater activities; and in 2009 it revived the Hindi

historical *Chanakya*.

DU and ME by Shrirang Godbole & Vibhawari Deshpande

The Play

As we all know, we live in a jet age. This is an era of connection, exchanging and growing beyond geographical boundaries and that has brought about a great deal of cultural crossovers, amalgamation and conflicts.

Uday, Uma, their daughter Radha and grandmother Aaji live in a typical Maharashtrian urban upper middle class family. Uma is presumably a free modern mother who believes that her daughter needs western exposure. Hence, she enrolls Radha in a student exchange program between Berlin and Pune. Deshpande family welcomes Boris Seidler- a young boy from Berlin, Germany through this exchange program.

Du and Me, deals with this in a very light hearted manner. The play talks about all the bittersweet, amusing, disturbing and alarming moments, such a cultural contrast might bring out. It also says that two people from across the globe can cross over all the socio-cultural boundaries and connect with each other when they talk a language of love.

Director's Note

Grips Theatre, Berlin and Maharashtra Cultural Centre, Pune has a long collaborative association. It started in 1986 when Max Mueller Bhavan and Theatre Academy, Pune collaborated to produce the first Grips play *Chhan Chhote Vaitta Mothe*. Since

then this theatre movement has strengthened over the years. With more than 1500 shows of 13 productions in the last 26 years, it is one of the strongest Children and Youth theatre movements in India.

During the 25th Year celebrations in 2012, when Grips Theatre founder Volker Ludwig and his team visited India, an idea of “Author Project” was struck upon.

Author Project is a novel concept where both Indian and German Grips writers are working upon a “common script”. Michael Flucht, the then director of Max Mueller Bhavan initiated the Author project in which Shrirang Godbole & Vibhawari Deshpande from India and Lutz Huebner from Germany collaborated. A common text of the play *Du & Me* (You and Me) evolved through interactions and improvisations with artists in Germany and India. This play is first being performed in Marathi in Pune. It will be performed in Berlin by Grips actors February 2014. It is for the first time that a common text is being performed by both the theatres.

The Playwrights & Directors

Shrirang Godbole: Actor, writer, director and lyricist in theatre, films and television has been associated with ‘Theatre Academy’ and ‘Maharashtra Cultural Centre’ for more than 35 years. He has written both mainstream and experimental plays. He is a writer-director for GRIPS plays since 1986.

Vibhawari Deshpande: Actor, writer, director in theatre, television and films, has been associated with GRIPS theatre movement through ‘Maharashtra Cultural Centre’ for more than 25 years. She has written & directed 8 plays till date.

Lutz Huebner (Co-writer): Is an Award winning contemporary playwright from Germany. His work has been translated into over 10 languages and has been staged around the world. He is an immensely respected theatre personality all over Europe.

The Group

‘Maharashtra Cultural Centre’ is a public charitable trust based in Pune since 1965, devoted to the promotion of performing arts mainly Drama, Music and Dance for the last 49 years. The centre has two intimate experimental auditoria at Pune named- ‘Sudarshan Rangmanch’ & ‘Jyotsna Bhole Sabhagruha’ which now have become a hub for theatre activities.

The multifarious cultural activities of the Centre are – Production of experimental & GRIPS plays, seminars and workshops in performing arts, Indian classical music and dance lessons and film and art appreciation workshops.

Co-writer:

Lutz

Huebner

Written & directed by:
Shrirang Godbole, Vibhawari
Deshpande

Ma Aak Nirvik Soinik by Koushik Kar

The Play

A mother is a woman. She gives birth to a new life, which is why she cannot take away a life. Maybe for this reason, there is no woman-martial group worldwide. Men fight and exhibit their strength and power and rule over the world. They willingly dedicate their youth to mass slaughtering and

cherish the crude political gamble. The mother is the only loser in this whimsical primitive game as she has to empty her lap every time.

Anaturi is one such mother who tries to inflict in her only son, Kohen, the seed of the eternal virtue of love. It is her continuous fight to protect her son under the warmth of her safe apron strings from the ill-effects of war-loving King Bumbujang or against the shimmering of sharp weapons of the Souramati King. It is a war pledged against war.

Director Note

A warring world. Since the very dawn of creation, man has existed by applying only his strength and power. The entire world becomes afflicted towards establishing the rule of the most powerful and the mighteous. The state power is not only the sole origin of this exhibiting warring nature. This love for power & violence gets infected in every man, in every child. For of this millennium through the game of blood and war like Max Paine, Prince of Persia or Contra video games or to relish over the blood smeared screen and rejoice over killing, as in WWF Action TV shows. As the child grows up, his addiction to taste blood and violence also grows. This greed thrashes him into dirty politics in schools, colleges, which calls for inter country quarrels in the guise of narrow patriotism and thus nationalism culminates into nasty terrorism. Here, in my play, there is the story of a mother who struggles all-out to keep her only war-loving son away from the deadly weapons and bloodshed and imbibes the value of eternal love. Mother is a woman and she alone can give birth to a child. When a life is lost in war, it is only a mother's lap that becomes void.

But at times, a mother needs to pick up arms in her hand to establish the virtue of love and mercy at the cost of giving up precious gem that is her only son. It is a war waged against war, a war to establish eternal love against crude

violence. My play is dedicated to mothers world-wide who have lost their sons in war. A mother is actually 'a fearless warrior'.

The Director & Playwright

Koushik Kar has been a theatre personality with over 12 years of experience as an actor and director. He is known for being a keen planner, strategist and implementer ensuring successful management of operations in theatre. His time-centric approach is coupled with a flair for executing production. He has been the Founder-President of 'Kolkata Rangeela'. He essayed many important roles in major productions of *Yuganata*, *Rann*, *Minerva Sangskriti Charchakendra* and *Nirnoy*. He was honoured with Best Director Award for *Terrorist* and *Dour*.

The Group

'Kolkata Rangeela' was founded last year under the leadership of Koushik Kar. It launched its first production, *Ma Aak Nirvik Soinik*, with the unveiling of its logo by the eminent theatre personality, Bibhash Chakraborty.

The organisation is ready for shouldering the responsibilities of offering a new focus on the Total Quality Theatre. While trying to fulfill the objectives of entertainment, education and information, it would pay special attention towards developing the thought process of the theatre workers and audience.

Playwright & Director

Koushik Kar

Les Chants de l'Umaï

The Play

Les Chants de l'Umaï consists of five sequences, set in a surreal Indo-Arab context with Persian and Jewish influences, in which dance stems from singing in long undulating iterations, somewhat like the chants of ancient manuscripts. While creating this show, Marcia Barcellos was particularly inspired by the Carnatic songs and signifying gestures of Indian sacred dances. In the imaginary, dream-like state that Marcia Barcellos creates in this piece, she is Umaï, the womb of the universe, or a woman-dragon of the fictional territory of Gravbekistan. In this ode to femininity, the reconstructed memory of many fantasized imaginary divinities is conveyed through five songs loosely derived from Indian or African melodies. Each of them, in the manner of ancient theatre, introduces an epic poem of a past era that only the body-memory can tie us to. As a loyal disciple of American choreographer, Alwin Nikolais, Barcellos uses the whole gamut of effects, including video, lighting, holograms and props created by the co-founder of Systeme Castafiore, Karl Biscuit. The intersection of a movement vocabulary particular to Barcellos and ever-evolving scenography, *Les Chants de L'Umaï* goes as close as it can to a reimagined world.

Director's note

"It's an operatic form that combines singing and dancing, with a dramatic and scenic device to carry it all. The theme, a sort of distant past, reinvented or a prehistoric mythology revolves around femininity. *Umaï* is a word from the ancient Mongolian which means matrix. Through this form we created different women characters which form a kind of mythology of the origin of the world. Each piece is preceded by a song, in a mysterious language, which announces the next one, a bit like with the Greek chorus. We take the viewer on board of a

rather contemplative epic poem, with a great freedom of interpretation.”

The Director

Système Castafiore is directed by theatre director and musician Karl Biscuit and Brazilian dancer and choreographer Marcia Barcellos, both of whom, having worked with Alwin Nikolais, remain followers of his style of total dance-theatre in which dance is just one element in an integrated performance including sound, light and theatrical effects. They first entered the new French dance movement through the *Lolita collective*, before founding their own company in 1989. Together, they created 19 performances including choreographies for national ballets. Naturally gifted with humor, talent, imagination and a rare ingenuity, they put experimentation at the forefront of their art.

The Group

Dance company *Système Castafiore* has no equivalent on the French performing arts scene. Operating for over 30 years, it has created its own universe, flirting with Dadaism. Co-directed by choreographer Marcia Barcellos and director/composer Karl Biscuit, the company's representation of reality reflects the madness of our world through an extraordinary work of experimentation between movement, sophisticated projections and sound installations.

Dance & Songs: Marcia Barcellos

Music & Direction: Karl Biscuit

Tamasha Na Hua by Bhanu Bharti

The Play

To commemorate Tagore's 150th anniversary, a theatre group is shown busy, rehearsing his celebrated play *Muktdhara*. During the rehearsal, an argument about the relevance of the play in the present time erupts among the actors. This argument leads to the famous debate between Tagore and Gandhi, and the issue of man's freedom in today's scenario. The discussions leads to many real issues faced today, like the Farraka 'barrage' and its effect on Bangladesh agriculture and fisheries, the effects of free economy and consumerist culture on the society as well as 'Gandhian socialism' v/s 'Marxist socialism'. After serious arguments and counter arguments among the actors, the debate remains inconclusive and the play unperformed.

Director's Note

Men's aspiration for freedom has engaged the best minds in the realms of religion, philosophy, ethics, science, arts and politics for centuries. With industrial revolution, economy acquired a central place in all the discourses related to the concept of human freedom, in modern age. With this economy, machine and its relation to the development of human society also became greatly significant.

All through the freedom movement of India, there were great minds that were watchful and emphatic in avoiding the narrow nationalistic view of freedom and kept the larger issues of men's freedom as the central discourse; freedom, not only from a foreign rule, but a complete freedom at all levels – material and spiritual. While the freedom of the country was paramount, universal humanity was never out of sight. This was

a unique feature of our 'national' movement for freedom. Among these great minds with a universal vision, Mahatma Gandhi and Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore were the most prominent.

I felt that Tagore's ideologies merited a revisit in the context of the tumultuous modern times. As a tribute to his work and ideas, the play *Tamasha Na Hua* depicts a group of theatre actors rehearsing one of Tagore's most popular works – *Muktdhara*. The narrative is essentially a discussion among the actors on the relevance of the play which leads to a serious debate about the freedom of men in the present political, technological and cultural context.

The Director and Playwright

An NSD alumnus, Bhanu Bharti is best known for his bold innovations and creativity in Indian theatre. In search of an authentic theatre experience, he has engaged in a lot of things, from conventional modes to the freedom of folk idioms, highly stylized Noh and Kabuki theatre to the utterly liberated tribal Bheel 'Gavari' style of his native Rajasthan. Such eclectic influences have informed his seminal directorial output like *Pashu Gayatri*, *Amar Beej*, *Kaal Katha*, *Taambe ke Keere*, *Chandrama Singh urf Chamku* and *Katha Kahi Ek Jale Hue Ped Ne*. Indefatigable and multi-dimensional, he is acclaimed as an actor and as author of original plays like *Tamasha na Hua*, *Chandrama Singh urf Chamkoo*, *Katha Kahi Ek Jale Ped Ne* and *Nachinai*. He has launched many thought provoking events such as the Centenary of Satyagraha, Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, and Celebration of Indian Freedom – Bharat Utsav.

He has been honoured with the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in the field of theatre as a director and the prestigious 'Nandikar', an award for lifetime contribution to theatre.

The Group

Aaj Rangmandal was established in 1984 by Shri Bhanu Bharti in Udaipur, Rajasthan. It created a special niche for itself in the theatre scenario. During this process, a need to involve the urban actors along with tribal actors was felt, to further its creative and innovative pursuits. Thus Aaj – Delhi was found and since then, this unique theatre company consisting of the urban and the tribal actors is constantly involved in its innovative and thought provoking work. Aaj Theatre Company presents a theatre festival of its own productions in Delhi, every year. Some of its most important theatre productions are: *Pashugayatri*, *Amar Beej*, *Kal Katha*, *Katha Kahi Ek Jale Ped Ne*, *Naachni*, *Mahamayi*, *Dehantar*, *Bapu* etc.

Playwright & Director – Bhanu Bharti