Across The Sea (Puppet Play)

The Play
This is a non-verbal musical puppet performance for children aged 4 +. Across the Sea, as the title suggests, is about an adventure that takes a baby penguin from Antarctica across the sea to Africa. In this journey the baby penguin meets many new & strange creatures, and makes friends fearlessly and without judgment. This is a story of friendship between diverse people in today's global world. This play addresses issues like being separated from family, adjustments and being free of prejudice and judgment. It celebrates diversity, differences and the spirit of childhood.

Director's Note
This piece was created over a month of devising with the actors of TIE (Theatre-in-Education) Company. The story of a little lost creature emerged and became the story of a lost penguin baby, separated from his family but determined to survive and make new friends. The story emerged in pieces as the actors responded to stimuli like story-telling without words, playing with material and with different forms of puppetry. The little penguin has all the qualities of little children, and lives their fantasies of travel and adventure while learning about Africa and Antarctica. We hope that with this play would make the children in the audience fall a bit in love with theatre and puppets.

The Director
Anurupa Roy is a Puppeteer, Puppet Designer & Director. She has trained at the Marionette Teatern, Dramatiska Institute, University of Stockholm, and at the Scoula De La Marionette. In 1998 she started Katkatha Puppet group which was registered as the Katkatha Puppet Acts Trust in 2006. Anurupa has been an artist-in-residence at Rote Fabrik, Zurich; APPEX, Bali,

Indonesia; University of California, Los Angeles; Deutches Forum for Figunrenteater, Germany; and Charleville Mezeires, France. She is a recipient of the Bismilla Khan Yuva Puraskar (SNA) 2006.

The Group

The Theatre-in-Education Company (Sanskaar Rang Toli) of the National School of Drama was established on October 16, 1989, and is one of the important educational resource centres in the country. The TIE Co. consists of a group of actor-teachers working-with and performing-for children. The major focus of the company is to perform creative, curriculum based, and participatory plays in school, designed and prepared specially for children of different age groups. The company holds a one month long intensive Summer Theatre Workshop for Children organized in May-June every year. TIE Co. also participated in the International Theatre Festival at Warsaw (Poland). Participated in International Symposium on Actor's Training Theatre Showcase at Beijing (China), Manila (Philippines) and also performed in International Theatre Festival at Shinzouka (Japan). Jashn-e-Bachpan and Bal Sangam are biannual festivals organised by the company where it invites plays by and for the children from different parts of the country. Bal Sangam is a festival of Indian performing folk and traditional arts presented by children practicing these arts from different regions of the country.

Cast & Credits

Baby Penguin	Soumita Kundu
Penguin's Parents	Aparna Kapoor, Manoj Sharma
Penguin	Manoj Kumar, Nidhi, Mahesh, Soumita, Manoj Sharma, Aparna, Mridul, Jayotsna
Egg	Soumita, Jyoti Bala, Piyush
Fish	Manoj Sharma, Aparna, Mridul, Nidhi

Ants	Aparna, Mahesh, Jyoti, Piyush
Ostrich	Aparna, Mahesh
Giraffe	Tasabber, Nidhi, Mridul, Manoj Sharma
Flamingo	Jyotsna, Piyush, Aparna, Jyoti, Kaleem, Mahesh
Crab	Manoj Kumar
Baby Elephant	Tasabber Ali
Crocodile	Nidhi S Shashtri
Bird	Jyoti Bala
Mother Elephant	Jyotsna, Mahesh, Kaleem
Hunter	Mridul
Tourist	Manoj Sharma, Aparna
Mountain & Water Set-Up	Tasabber, Piyush, Manoj Kumar, Jyoti, Mahesh
Shadow	Jyotsna, Piyush
Light Operation	Meeta Mishra
Light Assistant	Dhirendra
Music Operation	Vikramjeet Singh
Stage Manager	Tasabber Ali
Director	**Anurupa Roy**
Chief of TIE Co.	**Abdul Latif Khatana**

Pulling Strings – A review of the Ishara International Puppet Theatre Festival by Divya Raina



Daddee Pudumjee with his puppeteers and puppets

It doesn't quite matter whether one pulls strings or uses larger than life marionettes, glove or rod puppets, its pure theatre that one is watching. Quite distinct from a puppet or the ***kathputli*** show this form of theatre is as creative, compelling and meant for adult audiences as much as for kids. In fact **Dadi Pudumjee** has been a staunch crusader for the cause and promotion of puppet theatre for decades now. An extraordinarily talented puppet creator and manipulator, director, performer and choreographer, he along with his remarkably versatile crew of the **Ishara puppet theatre troupe**, has entertained and enabled Indian (and international) audiences to view a totally different type of performance art.

This was vividly brought out at the staging of the Spanish "Batuta" or small baton, at the recent **Ishara International Puppet theatre Festival** held at the **India Habitat Centre** in collaboration with **ICCR** and others. It was quite a treat to watch the interplay of music, lighting, spoken dialogue and most of all, the entrancing moves and gestures of the animated puppets of different shapes and sizes.

What came through clearly was the constant refrain" I love

music” and also “*musica classica*”, and the entire duration of the performance was devoted to an exploration of different forms of music with accompanying puppet movement. The saxophone puppet duet was the highlight with its foot –tapping rhythm, but there were many other musical elements incorporated. It was as though there was an earnest plea in this globalised TV-corrupted world, to both young and old viewers to re-connect with “purer” forms of music than the fusion and confusion of mtv-inspired forms one generally finds today.

Did it work? For most of the audience, with its short-attention -span habits and general restlessness it was quite a novel experience. One wishes however that anxious moms insisting on ramming ‘culture’ down their offspring’s throats would dispense with their loud running commentaries which unfortunately become an unwelcome sound-track thrust upon one on such occasions.