

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