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Maximiliano Modesti knows the world of fashion: the Franco-Italian stylist led Azzedine Alaïa's studio from 1994 to 1998. Since then, he lives between Paris and Bombay, India, where he founded the Atelier 2M. With its 350 employees, he collaborated with French luxury brands and international designers. He moved to India 15 years ago to research the traditional methods in the field of textile.



Two years after his graduation from NIFT Delhi, **Rajesh Pratap Singh** introduced his own line of men's and women's clothing in 1997. Rajesh is closely associated with and has had research-based collaborations with several Indian fabric mills. He has received numerous awards in recognition of his design and creativity; his Ajrak prints are housed in the permanent textile and apparel archives of the Victoria & Albert Museum in London. Rajesh's collections have been showcased in India, Paris & Milan.

SYNOPSIS

Gates To India Song is a unique theatrical experience that journeys through two works of one of the most important French authors of the 20th Century: Marguerite Duras. For the first time on the eve of celebrating the centenary of her birth, the India dreamt in *The Vice-Consul* and *India Song* by the author of *Hiroshima mon amour*, meets the reality of India through the embodiment of Indian actors.

It is the story of a love lived in an India of the 30s, set in the climax of passion, where, at a

reception of an imagined French Embassy in Calcutta, a cursed Vice-Consul screams his love for Anne-Marie Stretter.

In this world premiere, French director Eric Vigner – continuing his highly acclaimed and inspired stage work with Duras' writing – unites a new generation of Indian theatre artists and invites world-renowned actress, Nandita Das to take possession of the spirit of Anne-Marie Stretter – the ultimate Durassian heroine who travels through the writer's body of work, from book to book, play to play, film to film.

WITH THE SUPPORT OF



The French Embassy in India & Institut Français
in collaboration with the Alliances Françaises in India
present

GATES TO INDIA SONG

a theatrical piece by **Éric VIGNER**

based on the novels *The Vice-Consul* and *India Song* by
Marguerite DURAS

A Coproduction between **Institut Français en Inde** & **CDDDB Théâtre de Lorient**
Created in Mumbai on the occasion of Bonjour India 2013

Production Managed by **QTP**

This play will be performed as part of the Bonjour India Festival

14th TO 17th FEBRUARY 2013, PRITHVI THEATRE, MUMBAI

21st FEBRUARY, NATIONAL CENTRE FOR PERFORMING ARTS, MUMBAI

26th TO 28th FEBRUARY 2013, TAGORE HOUSE, KOLKATA

9th TO 13th MARCH 2013, RESIDENCE OF THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR, NEW DELHI

For more information, please visit our website www.bonjour-india.in

THE DIRECTOR'S NOTE

I met Marguerite Duras in 1993 after a workshop I conducted with students at the National Conservatory of Dramatic Art in Paris adapting her novel: Summer Rain. The novel illustrates Durasian dramaturgy perfectly, showing us what she's doing : writing the story as it's being invented. Ever since I discovered this palimpsest writing, I've never left her. Duras gave me the vocabulary and the fundamentals of the kind of theatre I want to create.

The enigma that distinguishes the theatrical art of oration from everyday speech poses a question about the nature of theatre itself. Beyond the semantic understandings related to each culture and each language, there is a universal understanding related to sound. The Vice-Consul's truth is beyond words, and can be revealed through his deafening scream, which, in a single gesture, expresses both his horror at

the violence done to the lepers of Calcutta and his love for Anne-Marie Stretter. The discovery of this text informed what I wanted to do in theatre: to hear something from literature.

This time, it's India—Kolkata, Mumbai and Delhi—where we will tell the story of the Vice-Consul's and Anne-Marie Stretter's tragic, silent passion. This is where Anne-Marie Stretter, the wife of the French Ambassador will receive the French Vice-Consul from Lahore. Indian actors will lend their art to the ghosts of Anne-Marie Stretter and the ViceConsul, helping us hear the music that is so distinctively Marguerite Duras'.

More than a play, this is an artistic experience in which Duras' mobile writing travels between literature, theatre, and cinema. Isn't the subtitle to India Song after all: text – theatre – film.

— ÉRIC VIGNER



Appointed to head the CDDDB - Théâtre de Lorient, Centre Dramatique National in 1996, Éric Vigner implemented an art project dedicated to unearthing a new generation of writers, directors and artists while further developing international links. Whether he stages Molière at the National Theatre of Korea in Seoul, Koltès in Atlanta or Beaumarchais in Albania, Éric Vigner practices a "théâtre d'art" – theatre as an art form – where foreign cultures meet and learn about each other through the art of theatre.

CREDITS

Text: MARGUERITE DURAS (based on India Song and The Vice-Consul)

Adaptation, Director and Set Design: ÉRIC VIGNER

Translation: COLE SWENSEN, MORGAN DOWSETT, JUTTA JOHANNA WEISS

Lighting Design: FRANK THÉVENON

Sound Design: JOHN KACED

Costumes: RAJESH PRATAP SINGH

Embroiderer: MAXIMILIANO MODESTI

Assistant director: MORGAN DOWSETT

CAST

Nandita Das: ANNE-MARIE STRETTER

Suhaas Ahuja: THE VICE CONSUL

Subodh Maskara: AMBASSADOR/CLUB SECRETARY

Jim Sarbh: CHARLES ROSSETT, THE YOUNG ATTACHÉ

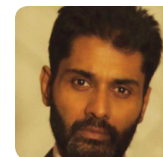
Neeraj Kabi: PETER MORGAN



A former stage actor, Nandita Das achieved fame in 1996 with her role in the film Fire directed by Deepa Mehta. Since then, despite having cinematic proposals pouring in, Nandita shoots sparingly, preferring to continue her work in social welfare and puts her popularity to limelight the issues of violence against women, children's rights, and marginalized communities. Chosen as a member of the jury at the Cannes Film Festival 2005, she was awarded Chevalier to the Order of Arts and Letters by the French government in 2011.



Suhaas Ahuja did his Film education from Middlebury College, U.S. He began his theatrical career in Chennai, and continued to evolve in the heart of various cinematic and theatrical circles in Mumbai. He had a reoccurring role for the Indian television series Kahaani ghar ghar Kii in 2008. Suhaas is also a musician who composes music for the film industry and sings his own lyrics.



Subodh Maskara has been an entrepreneur in television, events, and the environment. In 2010 he decides to take a break from his career to give free rein to his creative passions. He trains with renowned Indian teachers Waman Kendre and Mahesh Dattani. In 2012, he acts with his wife Nandita Das in the show Between The Lines, produced by their own company, Chhoti Productions.



Since his debut in 1997, Neeraj Kabi has made a name in the theatre circles of Mumbai, having performed lead roles in various Western classical plays. He directed Aham (2004), Hamlet (2006) and a play for the Delhi Ibsen Festival 2009. He was also cast for Indian and international movies, including a crucial role opposite Harvey Keitel in Kranti Kanade's Gandhi of The Month.



Trained in theatre at Emory University, Atlanta, Jim Sarbh acted in successful theatre productions across the U.S. In 2009 he received the Major Supporting Actor Award for Ice Glen directed by Ellen McQueen, and Best Director Award for Ariel Dorfman's Death And The Maiden (Furries Awards). Back to India in 2011, he performed in plays which toured in Delhi, Goa and Bombay.