



Actors Suhas Ahuja and Nandita Das in the play, Gates To India Song

'I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND IT FULLY'

... and yet Nandita Das is acting in a French play in town today, says it will be like 'experiencing literature'

Watching this play will be like observing a painting which you cannot understand intellectually, but you still look at it because it gives you a pleasant feeling

— Nandita Das, actor

Divya Kapoor

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She is the main protagonist in a play which she "couldn't understand at all" when she first read the script. A play which is a synthesis of two stories by renowned French author Marguerite Duras, whose writings are considered difficult even by the French. But actor Nandita Das decided to do *Gates To India Song* (GTIS) nevertheless, because for her, "it was a chance to expand and experiment with the definition of theatre."

"This has been one of the most difficult characters to play, as understanding the text itself took a lot of time. I still can't claim that I understand it fully, but I am glad I

got to push my boundaries," she explains. "Watching this play will be like observing a painting which you cannot understand intellectually, but you still look at it because it gives you a pleasant feeling. It will be like experiencing literature," Nandita says.

The 90 minute-long production is part of the *Bonjour-India Festival* and will take place at the French Ambassador's residence in Chanakyaपुरी for five consecutive days, starting today. What makes the play interesting is that it will begin in the lobby of the ambassador's residence, move to his room and end in the building's beautiful garden. "The audience too, therefore, will move around with the characters. It's my style of doing theatre," says director Eric Vignor.

Further more, the production neither has defined characters, nor a clear storyline. "A character may feel a deep emotion of love, but nothing will be explained through words. People may have difficulty understanding it because it's a complete contradiction to the most popular mode of entertainment in India: Bollywood. They will have to come with an open mind to understand it," sums up Vignor, somewhat setting the rules.

CATCH THE PLAY HERE

What: *Gates To India Song*
When: From March 9 to 13
Timing: 7pm
Where: Residence De France, Nyaya Marg, Chanakyaपुरी



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