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Super 'Troupe's

Viren Kapoor recounts the Junior English Summer Production's tour of New Delhi and Mumbai during the summer vacations



Early this year, the junior dramatists performed *V for Virtue* as a summer production, which was received quite well. Due to the encouraging response to the play in School, a short tour was planned for the troupe, as another event commemorating DS-75. The cast and crew were indeed excited and planning began almost immediately. Soon, the dates and places were set: the play was travelling to New Delhi and Mumbai and the shows were scheduled for July 23 and 25 respectively.

In order to rehearse, the entire cast and a few crew members assembled in School on July 19. The boys were looking forward to their performance with mixed feelings of eagerness and nervousness, as it was the first time many of them were performing outside School. After a couple of days of rehearsal, the entire troupe, along with SNA, AAQ, ABQ and MCI, left for Delhi on July 22. Upon reaching Delhi, we headed straight to the Vasant Valley School to continue rehearsing. (To say the least, we had ample rehearsal time!) The entire school staff and authorities were very hospitable and cooperative. They not only put up with our imposing on them, but also looked after us. Most importantly, they fed us well, and all the delicious snacks that came in quick succession were more than welcome. So while the masters and crew members sweated it out in the Delhi heat, the actors were making the most of the tour by helping themselves to some (hardly) well-deserved delicacies. We did a number of run-throughs but they were not really up to the mark; the cast members kept forgetting lines and the crew faced a number of snags in the lights and sound departments, making SNA extremely nervous about the next day's performance.

The next day, all of us reached the Vasant Valley School by 1:00pm to rehearse before the final performance. Those few hours flew by, and before we knew it, the guests had begun to take their seats. Finally, the show started and everyone hoped that it would be a success with the Delhi audience too, but early on, the play ran into some unexpected problems. As the venue was very close to the airport, every five minutes a plane would fly past and the drone of the engines not only made it difficult for the audience to hear the dialogues, but also repeatedly broke the concentration of the actors. The extreme heat and humidity worsened matters as the play was being staged in an outdoor arena. Still, the actors were able to put up a decent show and the audience appreciated the play for its humour and lively performances.

The next day we reached the airport at 7 in the morning to catch our flight to Mumbai. After checking in our baggage and going through the process of security checks, most of us went towards the food court and grabbed a quick bite before our flight was ready for boarding. Upon our arrival at Mumbai airport, we were greeted by some local Dosco families who took us to our Mumbai venue, the Mumbai Cricket Association Club. After our Delhi venue, we were half-expecting another open-air auditorium with the chance of our performance being washed out by the Mumbai monsoon. We were all pleasantly surprised when the venue turned out to be a well-appointed, air-conditioned banquet hall with excellent facilities. The only problem was that no provisions were made for any rehearsals. In fact, we were told that the only time we could practise was two hours before the actual performance. There was no point in fretting over this and we digested the news along with our dinner. We were then taken sight seeing by our host families in Mumbai. We saw the Worli Sea Link, the houses of various celebrities, Linking Road and the Band Stand. The next day we assembled at the club, with barely three hours to set up the stage, sound and light systems, position the lights properly and squeeze in a last minute run-through before the first guests began arriving. By 7:30 pm, we were staring at a crowd of around two hundred guests, all there to watch the play; this really made us very nervous. We knew that the show had to be perfect. After checking and rechecking everything, the hall lights were switched off and the show commenced. Much to our relief, the audience seemed to be having a wonderful time, laughing at the events unfolding on stage and appreciating the witty punch-lines. As hoped for, we were able to put on a good performance. The entire cast delivered a sterling performance, in fact better than any of their previous performances at Vasant Valley or even The Doon School. The crew did equally well with the lights and sound. By the end of it, we were given a standing ovation by large sections of the audience. We felt it was a job truly well done.

SCRIBE

Utkarsh Gupta has been appointed the **Boy-in-Charge** of the **Archives**. We wish him a fruitful tenure.

GOAL!

The **School Soccer Team** played a friendly match against the Masters' XI on Wednesday, August 11, 2010, and won 6-0. Vahin Khosla scored all the goals. Well played!

DEBATE UPDATE

The School was represented by Shoumitra Srivastava and Vivek Santayana in the **Second Stage** of the **Frank Anthony Memorial All-India Inter-School Debates** held on Friday, August 6, at **Welham Girls' School, Dehradun**. Shoumitra Srivastava was adjudged **Best Speaker** and Vivek Santayana was adjudged **Runner-Up**. The School won the debate, qualifying to the final stage to be held in September.

The following are the results of the first round of the **Junior Inter-House English Debates** held on Thursday, August 12:

Hyderabad vs Jaipur

Best Speaker: Utkarsh Jha

Most Promising Speaker: Rahul Srivastava

Winner: Hyderabad House

Oberoi vs Kashmir

Best Speaker: Vrindam Nagpal

Most Promising Speaker: Rishabh Tusnial

Winner: Oberoi House

Well done!

WHILE ON HOLIDAY...

Samarth Jaiswal participated in the **13th J. K. Tyre National Racing Championship**. The first two rounds were held in Chennai and Coimbatore in June/July. His best finish was a 6th place, and he was the only rookie on the grid and the third-youngest driver. Keep going!

Abhishek Parasrampurua participated in the state and national-level badminton championships. He reached the semi-finals in the U-16 boys' singles and the U-19 boys' doubles events at the state-level. Well done!

Unquotable Quotes

He doesn't have his own originality.

Shaurya Sinha alleges.

Andhere mein light kaise dikhta hai?

Siddhart Bidasaria seeks enlightenment.

My jokes are very well.

Vaibhav Gupta, healthy joker.

All boys who wish to join the Organising Committee for the Chuckerbutty Debates should assemble after breakfast outside lunch.

Itihaas Singh demands attendance.

Everyone got down to a bang start.

Arifeen Chowdhury kicks off.

Do you realize that I am capable of beating up you?

Vikram Singh Gill negotiates aggressively.

All seniors who want to try out for the Junior English Debates should stay back.

Arjun Sethi bridges the gap.

There is a lot of humid rain in the air.

Saarthak Singh, weatherman.

| Poetry |

The Price of Freedom

Aditya Bhattacharya

In our cruel world today,
There are people led astray,
They're Satans of humanity,
Threatening our collective sanity.

Millions wake up just to scream,
Victims of some horrible dream,
Of soldiers of fortune and of greed,
Who prey on people plagued by caste and creed.

They stretch the points of authority,
Picking on people living in poverty.
If you don't do as they say,
They are ready to blow you away.

Peace for them makes no sense,
They're killing and living at our expense.
Leaders and terrorists walk hand in hand,
Against them can nobody make a stand.

Power, money, violence, it's all beyond reason,
Groveling under it is the price of freedom.

Not Forgetting

Arifeen Chowdhury

Now that I am here so far away,
I feel you all around me.

I seem to see you everywhere,
But find your trace nowhere.
You left bewildered and lost,
Confused and asking why.

Now that everything is broken,
I stand alone thinking of you,
With no plans for tomorrow,
And vague memories of yesterday.
Only you etched distinctly.
Erasing it will take more than myself.

Unrest

Shashank Peshawaria

I lie still in bed at midnight,
Like a silent ghost walking
In a cemetery of decayed dreams,
Like a quiet scream
Stretching its hand
Out of a depthless past
Of dense desires,
Like a lonely soul
In the company of lost hopes.

Opinion oll

Did you find your experience in the making of the DS-75 film enjoyable?



(307 members of the community were polled)

Next week's question: Do you think the Indian youth today takes pride in being a citizen of this country?

A Wake-Up Call

Abhinav Kejriwal on the Australasian Junior Round Square Conference held at United World College, Singapore, between June 17 and 29



'Round Square' is indeed an intriguing term. The name was derived from a seventeenth-century building at Gordonstoun School, Scotland, which was a square for horses, carriages and equipment for the estate built in a circular design. The Doon School is a member of the Round Square organization. There are many common principles of education that the Organization shares with the School. In fact, our second headmaster, John Martyn, had made a reference to Kurt Hahn in one of his addresses at Founder's Day.

This year, ten of us, escorted by ASH, visited United World College, Singapore and Tioman Island, off the east coast of Malaysia for the Australasian Junior Round Square Conference. We joined ten other schools for the Juara Turtle Project as a pre-conference trip, which is, according to the brochure, "an environmental conservation project aimed to rejuvenate the sea turtle population and habitats of Tioman Island in the most natural way possible". The pre-conference session comprised a short trek (which we found rather easy, owing to the rigours of our midterms), building a hatchery as part of the Turtle Project in the hot, tropical climate of Malaysia, some kayaking, snorkelling, tours to a nearby village and an amusing variety show in which all of us were made to perform. After the preconference, we convened at The United World College campus which, though built on a small (twenty-seven-acres) campus, housed a luxurious hostel for the students. Our routine throughout the conference comprised keynote speeches, tours of Singapore, games, workshops on global issues and a whole lot of fun. We also visited Sentosa, Singapore's popular resort island.

But what I remember most vividly from the conference is the 'Global Village Banquet', towards the final days of the conference. We were informed on one of the days that there would be a grand banquet instead of a regular lunch. Our excitement was second only to our hunger. However, when the banquet was laid out, we were surprised to see only 100 plates of food for the 168 delegates. We were put in three groups, blue, green and red, the significance of which we understood later. 92 out of 168 delegates were in the red group with only 4 sandwiches and some fries to share, whereas the green group, which had 50 delegates, had 10 sandwiches. The blue, comprising 26 delegates, shared 86 sandwiches. Obviously, this exercise represented the disparity in the demographics of the world. Developing nations have a scarcity of resources which is grossly insufficient to sustain their population, while developed nations live in abundance. In India, after the recent monsoons, there are silos full of grain that is rotting rather than being distributed, while millions are still starving. The 'banquet' showed us that such staggering paradoxes are realities, and we often take our comfortable lives for granted.

Kurt Hahn was an educationist, prominent in the early decades of the 20th century. He believed that young people should be taught through motivation and incentive and not through punishment. He also laid great emphasis on outdoor adventure. He believed such teachings combated the 'Six Declines of Modern Youth': Decline of Fitness, Decline of Initiative and Enterprise, Decline of Memory and Imagination, Decline of Skill and Care, Decline of Self-discipline, Decline of Compassion. In retrospect, much of our life in School (such as midterms, games, SUPW, STAs and the Independence Day social service) and many of the activities of the conference (adventure sports, trekking and service activities) reflect similar (if not, the same) principles: we are reminded of the other side of reality, that there are many not as fortunate as us. Indeed, modern youth runs the risk of callous indifference and self-indulgence, but these activities and conferences remind us of the value of physical labour, our responsibility towards the world at large and, most importantly, the joy of serving society. The Global Village Banquet had a message that all of us are aware of, but too easily forget.

Path of Service

Arifeen Chowdhury on the Round Square Regional Service Project held at Pathways World School, Gurgaon, between June 5 and 14

Ten boys, escorted by PVD, met at Pathways World School for the project. We were received with a warm welcome by a former master of School, Sumit Durgan (SMD), who gave us a short tour of the campus. Afterwards we were briefed about the work to be done followed by an ice-breaking session.

Early the next morning, we visited the project site, a dry percolation pond. Work began almost immediately: we were to dig a larger water bed and several canals leading to the pond. This was part of an irrigation system that we had to get operational before the monsoon set in. We were to head to the site twice a day, morning and evening, each session being three to four hours long. In addition, we had a workshop every day, during which we had to rehearse a play about water conservation for the locals. Through these many activities, we got to know each other. In fact, we worked so well together that we did more than what was assigned to us: we built a dam out of stone and mud as added protection for the pond. The last two days of the project were spent digging a shallow trench for a pipe to go through to a local school. As the school did not have any direct water supply; we were to provide water to the school from a water source. We interacted and played some games with the children. A student from St George's School, Switzerland, also volunteered as a ballet teacher, and all of us tried our hand (and feet) at it. On the final day, we performed our play (after rather haphazard preparation) which was received very well. The village school children put up a brilliant display of ballet for all of us.

During the trip, we did a lot of social work, but we also relaxed and enjoyed ourselves. All the facilities of the host school were open to us, and film screenings and lavish dinners were organized frequently. Participants also had the opportunity to tour Old Delhi one day- we visited the Red Fort, had lunch at the world famous Karim's restaurant in the Jama Masjid area, and also rode on the New Delhi Metro. The project eventually came to an end, much too soon for our liking. We made new friends, met old ones and returned home, exhausted but content.

| Interview |

New Strokes

The Doon School Weekly interviewed **Banita Bhau** and **Anupam Chaudury**, who joined the teaching staff recently as part of the Art faculty.

Doon School Weekly (DSW): Please tell us something about yourselves and your career in art.

Anupam Choudhury (APC): Although I was born and brought up in Tripura, I did my Masters in Fine Arts from Kalabhavan, Vishwabharti, Shantiniketan. Art has always fascinated me, although I never had art as a subject in school. Even as a child, I got myself involved in it, as it was a personal interest. My parents encouraged me as it was my way to express myself. As I grew older I realized that art could be pursued as a career. And coming from Shantiniketan, I have been inspired by the life and works of Rabindranath Tagore.

Banita Bhau (BAB): In school, I had always liked making diagrams and projects. I also realised that my painting skills were amongst the better ones in class. I was determined to develop my interest in art. The only reason I was unsure about taking it up as a career was because I was never aware of the career options in the art stream. Art at that time was confined to drawing and painting. My parents also were of the opinion that I should take up sciences and that is what I ended up taking. After my 12th I continued with sciences but soon realised that it was not meant for me and soon switched my streams. I did my Bachelors in Fine Arts from the Jammu Institute of Music and Fine Art and Masters in Fine Arts from Shantiniketan. Later, I went to the Industrial Training Institute for one year to pursue my interests. I was introduced to animation, sculpture and many other forms of art. I then did a two-year foundation course in sculpture. I got to know about varieties of sculpture like thread, paper, pin, ceramics and other forms. I later went to Shantiniketan for specialisation in ceramics.

DSW: What are your interests other than art?

APC: I enjoy playing the violin and have a keen interest in music. My hobby is to collect coins. I also enjoy watching football although I cannot play. I enjoy chess at a pastime level.

BAB: Other than art, I also like cooking and dancing. I also enjoy singing although I am not very good at it. I have just learnt how to ride a bicycle and would surely like to be a active member in the STA.

DSW: How would you like to encourage more students to take up art?

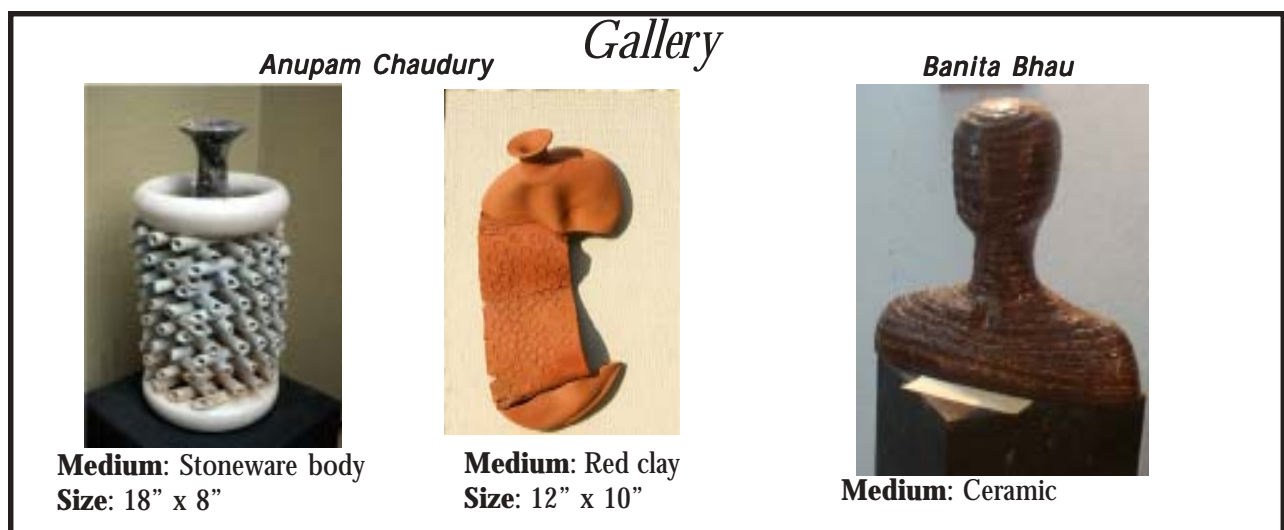
APC: Without art we cannot make any design, without which life would not keep evolving. I believe that to design and create anything you must have a sense of art. Take for example a computer; it first has to go through a design process and has to be approved before it can go to the market. I want to show them the real beauty of ceramics through exhibitions of my portfolio and the work done by the boys. Art is related to life and it is not going to die with the influence of technology.

BAB: I feel that the best method of teaching students is through visuals. I would like to show my own work and hope that some students would be inspired by it. I think that the infrastructure in School is also very impressive and art can do very well in School. I feel that the students' imagination and creativity is commendable and the only thing which is required to develop this is for them to be informed about the various aspects of art.

DSW: Why did you choose to come and teach at Doon?

APC: I chose Doon because I think that exposure to art from a young age is very important. Here, one has the opportunity to interact with and motivate many such young people.

BAB: Doon being my first school, I was very nervous before joining, but I think I have adapted very well to the surroundings. I think I can understand students well and want to help them explore possibilities in this field. I feel this school also gives me an opportunity to help me develop my interests as an individual.



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