TARA ARTS GROUP

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The Little Clay Cart

CAST

COURTIER/SHARVILAKA/CLERK	Bhaşkar
SANSTHANAKA	Yogesh Bhatt
MADANIKA/MASSEUR/JUDGE	Sudha Bhuchar
CHARUDATTA/MATHURA/VIRAKA	Ayub Khan Din
GAMBLER/DRIVER	Rezaul Kabir
MAITREYA/CHANDANAKA/EXECUTIONER	Nizwar Karanj
VASANTASENA/ARYAKA	Naushaba Khan
RADANIKA	Mala Sikka

MUSICIANS

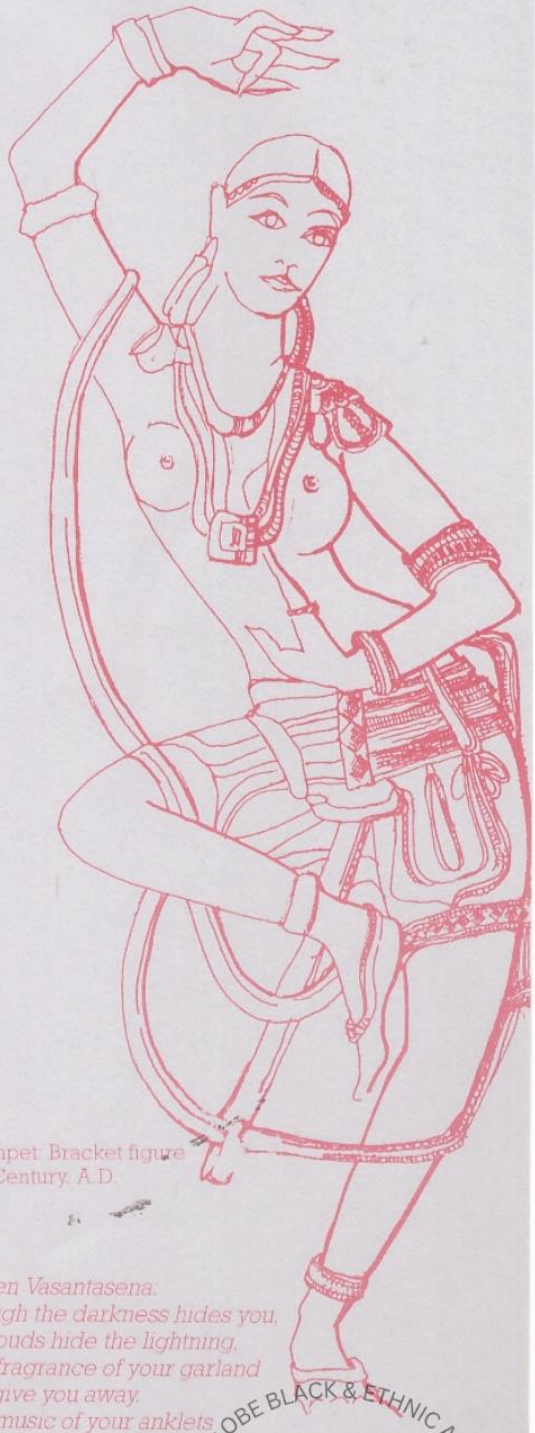
SITAR	Baluji Srivastav

PRODUCTION

CHOREOGRAPHY	Shobana Jeyasingh
DESIGN	Ann Hubbard
COSTUMES	Magdalene Rubalcava, Mrs. Khan
LIGHTING DESIGN	Paul Armstrong
VOICE COACH	Gordon Gardner
PRODUCTION MANAGER	Rajnikant Chudasama
STAGE MANAGEMENT	Rita Mishra
	B. Bahi
	Dominic Frank
PUBLICITY	Shehnaz Khan
	Simon Dove
	Jabir Walji
POSTER DESIGN	Julie Newell
PHOTOGRAPHY	Chris Ha
ADMINISTRATIVE CONSULTANT	Rekha Prashar
ADMINISTRATION	Shaila Parthasarathi
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	Arti Prashar
DIRECTOR	Jatinder Verma

"The drama as I have devised, is a mimicry of actions and conducts of people, which is rich in various emotions, and which depicts different situations. This will relate to actions of men good, bad, and indifferent, and will give courage, amusement and happiness as well as counsel to them all."

Natya Shastra c.500 BC.



Palampet: Bracket figure
13th Century. A.D.

"Listen Vasantasena:
Though the darkness hides you,
as clouds hide the lightning,
The fragrance of your garland
will give you away.
The music of your anklets
will give you away.
Where are you Vasantasena? calls out
Sansthanaka's COURTIER.

ACT I, Little Clay Cart

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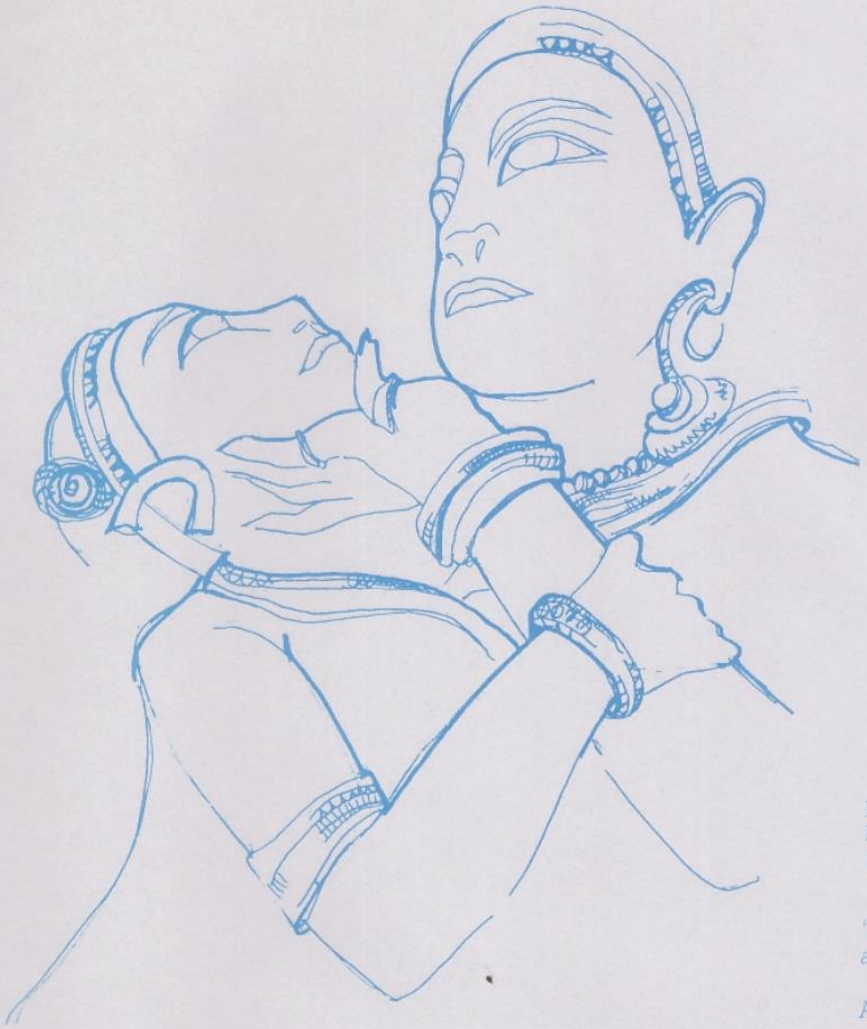

Lovers. (Maithuna)
Konarak, Orissa.
13th Century A.D.

"My love is in my arms
and now it is time to sleep"

ACT V, Little Clay Cart

THE LITTLE CLAY CART,

adapted from the 8th century A.D. original.

The production tells the story of the merchant CHARUDATTA – outcast from society because the king has made him poor. A rich courtesan, VASANTASENA, falls in love with CHARUDATTA but . . . the king's wicked brother-in-law, SANSTHANAKA, lusts for VASANTASENA!
And, behind the scenes of this fitful Romance, gamblers, servants, thieves, soldiers and monks are stirring against the king and his wicked brother-in-law.

This production, in TARA ARTS GROUP's 10th Year, is choreographed by Shobana Jeyasingh, one of the country's foremost classical Indian dancers, and features music by Baluji Srivastav – a classical Indian musician from Agra.

A total cast of eight, along with two musicians, present this great classic of Indian drama.

SANSKRIT DRAMA
The Golden Age of Indian Classical Drama was between the 4th and the 9th Centuries A.D. The earliest extant classical plays are those by Bhasa. Kalidasa's plays – undoubtedly the greatest poet-playwright of India's Classical past – still enjoy much popularity. The play, *Sakuntala*, inspired Goethe's structure of *Faust:* the prologue of *Faust* is specifically ascribed by him to his reading of a translation of *Sakuntala*. Visakhadatta, who's *Rakshasa's Ring* is a masterly insight into the art of politics, is

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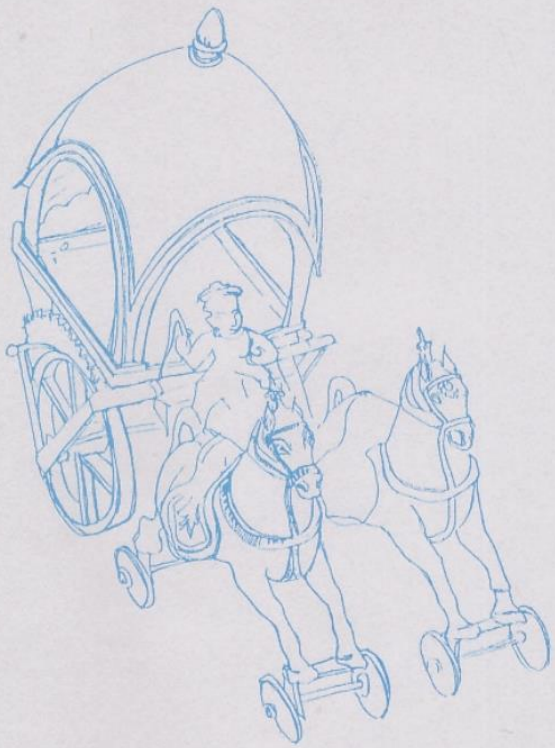
another playwright, who may almost be described as a precursor of Machiavelli. Classical Indian Theatre was a theatre of and for the upper classes; its essential concepts, however, permeate folk theatre as much as they do classical.

THE LITTLE CLAY CART is the only known play ascribed to Shudraka. It is dated around the 8th Century A.D. where all existing classical Indian plays derive their inspiration – in terms of story and character – from the epic literature of India and from legends. Shudraka's *Clay Cart* is unique in prescribing entirely original characters and story. It is the only Classical Indian play which offers an insight into the range and type of Society that produced the play: merchants, courtesans, gamblers, thieves, peasants, servants, policemen, as well as nobles. It is the only play which features a revolution in society: the overthrow of a wicked king.



Ratha – Ceremonial Chariot
Jodhpur, Rajastan
Bronze. Mid 19th Century.

"Now Charudatta's son is crying for a golden toy cart, instead of this clay one" pleads MAITREYA with VASANTASENA.

ACT VI, Little Clay Cart

Woman Writing.
Khajuraho
10th-11th Century A.D.

"I must look radiant – but not overly so; loving – but not too forward; shy – but not too hesitant"
VASANTASENA contemplates before going to meet her love CHARUDATTA.
ACT VI, Little Clay Cart

Siddhartha's departure.
Gandhara style relief.
3rd Century A.D.

"I demand Justice!
Note also that I
am a famous man!"

Sansthanaka to the Judge.
ACT IX, Little Clay Cart

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TRADITIONAL INDIAN THEATRE

"The drama as I have devised, is a mimicry of actions and conducts of people, which is rich in various emotions, and which depicts different situations. This will relate to actions of men good, bad and indifferent, and will give courage, amusement and happiness as well as counsel to them all."

With these words, Bharata, the legendary author of the NATYA-SHASTRA – the treatise on Theatre compiled c.500 B.C. – defines the characteristics of drama.

Sikar: Musicians and Dancers
Harsagiri, Murana Mahadeva Temple.
10th Century A.D.

The NATYA-SHASTRA characterises acting as a fourfold craft: encompassing Movement (incl. Gesture), Speech, Costume and Make-up, and Emotional States. A salutation to the God Siva – the legendary mentor of the performing arts – at once details these four elements of acting and suggests the indissoluble link between Indians' traditions of theatre and ritual.

By its emphasis on acting being inseparable from movement and music, traditional Indian theatre becomes a theatre of archetypes, of archetypal stories and characters. The emphasis in this theatre is therefore on spectacle, (What Brecht describes as "Sport,") not on plot. In such a theatre, the actor had no choice but to regard himself as a "vessel" – the medium of a character-type rather than the embodiment of character.

A large part of the NATYA-SHASTRA is devoted to an analysis of the Rasa – the "Emotional States" that are the bed-rock of acting, and the correct manner of their representation. The treatise categorizes 8 major emotional states – Comedy, Love, Pathos, Terror, Heroism, Anger, Disgust and Wonder. There are very strict rules prescribed as to the manner of the representation of these emotional states, in speech, through movement, and in the usage of costumes and make-up.

The NATYA-SHASTRA also provides detailed descriptions of various types of Playing Houses; different types of plays, their structures and the ideal types of spectators.
In its detail and scope, therefore, this treatise offers an unrivalled analysis of drama.

Dancing Siva, (Nataraja)
Bronze.
Chola. 11th Century.

"We bow to Siva, to whom the whole world is the movement of his body, all sound his speech, the moon and stars his ornaments, embodiement of sentiment and emotion."
Abhinayadarpan
(Mirror of Gestures)
c. 12th C. A.D.

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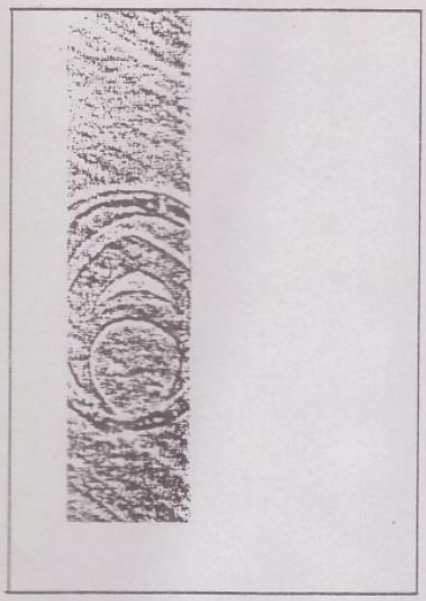

TARA ARTS GROUP

The GROUP was established in 1976/77, to express the Asian Experience in Britain through original plays in English. The GROUP's policy is to promote and develop Asian Arts as distinctive artistic expression in Britain: drawing upon traditional resources to reflect contemporary experiences. TARA ARTS GROUP, which operates nationally, is subsidised by the Arts Council of Great Britain, the GLC, various Local Authorities, and Regional Arts Associations.

the TOURING THEATRE COMPANY –

the only professional Asian Theatre company subsidised by the Arts Council. Averages 3 major touring productions every year, performing in Theatres, Arts Centres, and Community venues. The tours have included: Haymarket Studio, Leicester; York Arts Centre; Oldham Coliseum; Mitchell Theatre, Glasgow; Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham; Riverside Studios, Oval House, Watermans Arts Centre, London; the Soetrijn, Amsterdam, Huddersfield Poly, Crewe and Alsager College, Fleet Community Education Centre, Greenwich Young Peoples Theatre, Battersea Arts Centre, The Cave, Birmingham, Cranford Community Centre.

TARA-in-EDUCATION

a professional schools theatre company; supplementing schools' curricula by theatre inputs to the teaching of History, Literature and Social Studies. Tours schools in London and the Regions.

TARA ARTS CENTRE

opened in September 1985 in South London, it is the only Arts Centre in the country offering a regular programme of performance, training workshops, lectures, and films displaying the vibrancy of Asian Arts in Britain today.

TARA ARTS GROUP

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tara in education

AN ASIAN THEATRE-IN-EDUCATION COMPANY

recent performances include;

Cockpit Theatre, Dagenham Priory School, Rokeby School, Paddington School, Addington School, Hackney Downs School, Southfields School, St. Pauls Way School, Theatre Centre-Islington, William Morris School, Tricycle Theatre.

TARA ARTS CENTRE

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recent events include;

Anup Biswas, Astad Deboo, Meera Syal, Flora Gatha, Urdu Markaz, Asian Women's Writers Workshop, Journeywomen, Valli Subbiah, Hounslow Arts Cooperative, 'My Beautiful Laundrette', Loveleena Labroo, Shujaat Hussain Khan, Pan Project.

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'Sense of good theatre . . . indisputably on the ball'

BIRMINGHAM POST

'Brecht would have approved'

TIMES EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT

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