

They channelise kiddie josh



SUMMER schools are an excellent way to keep kids busy in a constructive manner. They are also such a wonderful break from books and studies.

And as part of this endeavour, Durga Das Foundation is organising a theatre workshop for children in the age group of 4-7 years.

Well-known theatre personalities like Anahita Uberoi, Sita Mani, Avan Mehta and Vikram Kapadia will be a part of this workshop. Each artist will be conducting a different workshop.

Act it out is a workshop in drama by Anahita Uberoi. The workshop is aimed at creating a

sense of fun and curiosity about theatre and acting. A method that is widely used in the West for children as well as adults, called "theatre games," is what this workshop is based on.

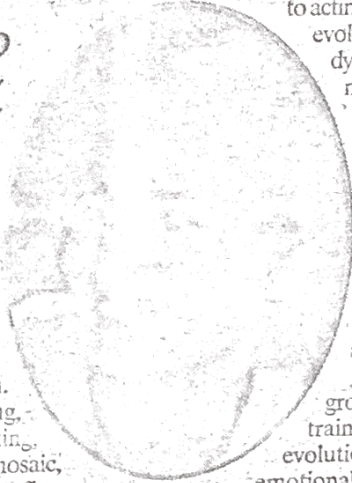
Sita Mani, who studied at Alvin Ailey School and belongs to a dance company in New York will use a technique combining Jazz and Modern Dance for the workshop *Dance it through*. Her class will include choreography, dance improvisations and will focus on an introduction to this form of dance.

Art and craft projects can excite even the



youngest child's imagination and promote a sense of self-expression. Basic colour mixing, sculpting, painting, stenciling, paper-mosaic, printing, stamping, finger painting are all techniques of art and craft that will be explored by the children in the workshop *Primary Colours* by Avan Mehta.

Theatre Games will be conducted by Vikram Kapadia from May 25 to June 18. This workshop is meant for children in the age group of 8-14 years. The workshop will not restrict its ambit



Sita Mani

to acting alone. Instead, it will seek to evolve an understanding of the dynamics of theatre and its many aspects. The workshop will attempt to develop a means of channelising the creative energies of young imaginations in new and unexplored directions.

It will comprise a series of games that engage the children's interest and tap their creative sensibilities in a host of ways.

The exercises will include group improvisations, physical training, a brief history of the evolution of theatre, sense and emotional memory exercises, observation techniques, stage mechanics and management, basics of lighting and sound and basics of dance and movement.

Part of the workshop will include rehearsals for a production of William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* that had been adapted for the stage by Nigel Williams. The performers will consist of children aged between 11 and 14.

—PARUL

Moulding tiny thought into pieces of art

By Sanjeev Singh Bariana
Tribune News Service
CHANDIGARH

May 22 — Ever seen shape of an earthen mould develop when the gentle hands of a quality designer moulds them during the continuous process, beginning from a plain mould of earth to a fine artistic piece?

Quality hands with thoughtful minds can be seen toying with children in the summer workshop at Durga Das Foundation for the summer school. The hands of Anahita Uberoi and Sita can be seen gently moulding free pieces of tiny thought into interesting shapes and postures.

Uncontrollable energy to fight and run moulds into vigorous but beautiful dancing, shapeless talking turns into speech controlled presentation, with natural understanding and even mimicry Sita, currently based in New York, and Anahita, also a New York theatre product currently in Mumbai, are managing the workshop of the Durga Das Foundation, clearly reflecting a different but worth praising effort towards involving children in theatre and dance.

Anahita says, "Instead of making up their (children) minds for anything that parents thought was suitable at tender age, their minds should be exposed to a million things. They should be allowed to make a correct choice themselves."

When asked on why theatre and related activities had seen a major boom in school and college extra-curricular activities over the past few years, Anahita said the media boom made a very big difference. Because of television, movies and theatre, opportunities in this field had increased. She said in a number of cases parents themselves were giving a lot of chances to their wards to see if they had any future of success in the field.

Anahita said children started growing inhibitions along with their age. At a tender age, they were free

and could manage finding ways of freedom, which could be useful in future.

Anahita said she was born into theatre. Her mother introduced her into Marathi theatre. She, however, managed work in New York. Anahita said one movement in Mumbai theatre was coming in of English language but English

was merely a language and the theatre expression was Indian.

Sita also comes from Broadway Theatre, New York. She has been caught during her vacation. This, however, is not her first experience with children.

Sita is currently voyaging into new theatre and has been associated with the leading light

in dancing, Shiamak Davar.

Sita says younger children are more open to trying out new innovations. The seniors are more rigid. The workshop also attempts giving specialised aspects of theatre and dance but not in the form of a strict classroom teaching curriculum. In fact, no presentation is planned at the end of the

workshop.

Sita has also worked with Shiamak Davar and conducted classes for children in public schools in New York.

Mr Atul Khanna, director of the Durga Das Foundation, said Vikram Kapadia would also land in the city for a workshop on May 25.

Anahita is all set to feature in a Hindi feature film being made by Rahul Bose. She had tied up with two directors recently for a runaway hit theatre show in Mumbai.

Sita has a long and varied dance background, having been a member of the original jazz company of Davar. Her dance drama class uses music and games of personal expressional through body and voice as well as group effort and fun. This is at teaching fundamentals of dance such as rhythm, body coordination, usage of space, self expression and most importantly, joy of movement.

Anahita continues the history of her mother Vijaya Mehta, popularly known as the grandmother of Marathi theatre. Both of them have a long list of performances in different categories.



Anahita Uberoi "acts it out" in a workshop with children at the Durga Das Foundation's summer school in Chandigarh on Monday.

— Tribune photo by Manoj Mahajan

Kiddy fun, uninterrupted!



BALPREET

WHILE leafing through a book many years back, there had surfaced a line which ran: "Education is what remains after you have forgotten all that you read in books." And indeed, as schooling dissolves into college and college into university, what probably remains years after, has most to do with some odd seminar or a workshop or that painting class.

While school bags turn a baggage, if there is any time when our kids do get a chance to 'just be', it is probably the good old summer break. And if they want, it can be a break that hands them down some great opening to explore a whole new world of creating and creations. This is where comes up yet another summer school by the Durga Das Foundation, Nehru Bhavan, all set to hold varied workshops, and many other activities for kids under varied age groups. And by some of the best in the field being brought down all the way from Mumbai.

Starting May 22 and running till June 10, the first one for kids in the age group of four-seven years. This workshop boasts of an exciting amalgam of theatre, dance and other arts and crafts. The first one goes by the name: 'Act it out', which is a workshop in drama by Anahita

Uberoi with a resume dotted with performances on Broadway, a diploma in Herbert Berghof Studio (New York) that boasts alumni like Marilyn Monroe, Marlon Brando et al, besides some famed productions like *Going Solo*, *The Glass Menagerie* et al. Based on a western concept called 'theatre games', this one is about helping the kiddies letting go with imagination running riot aided with games aimed at doing away with all that comes in the

aimed at helping kids cull out their dancing shoes after those exciting exercises in choreography, dance improvisations besides the basic warm-ups. Sita Mani, from a well-known New York-based dance company and an ex-member of Shiamak Davar's dance company, is all set to toss up a blend of jazz and modern dance, thus bringing along a dance form totally fresh for the city.

Then there is Avan Mehta, another famed name in the world of art, crafts, dance and theatre make-up... besides a whole lot more, ready to take charge of the little artists in each kid by helping explore all possibilities with different crafts media, textures, surfaces while colour-mixing, sculpting, painting, stenciling, printing stamping, and crafts like making puzzles, greeting cards, photo frames, puppets... the list runs long.

For the ones between 8 to 14 years, the excitement begins May 25 and runs through June 18 as they get down to discovering theatre that goes beyond acting. With a multi-faceted man like Vikram Kapadia, a well-known theatre actor, director, ad-filmmaker et al... this has to be anything but humdrum. Beginning with a brief history of it, sense and emotional memory exercises, group improvisations... this should be wild fun. Besides of course, rehearsals for a production of William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* to be performed by kids between the age

groups 11 and 14. The programme also includes a three-day camp at Naldera in the Simla Hills.

For the ones in the 14-16 year age group, there is a lot of fun to be dug up from June 5 to June 11 when they camp close to Nature at Sangla Valley over seven days... horse-riding, golfing, playing volleyball, badminton, trekking, kite flying...

The admission to each group is on a first-come-first-serve basis. And fun, unadulterated.



Chandigarh Tribune

Wednesday, May 17, 2000

Summer School 2000

Under the auspices of the Durga Das Foundation
Nehru Bhavan, Sector 24-B, Chandigarh.
Tel. 715239 / 713274

Programme

"ACT it out"

a workshop in drama by Anahita Uberoi

"DANCE it through"

a workshop in dance movements by Sita Mani

"Primary Colours"

an art and craft workshop by Avan Mehta

Age : 4 - 7 years
Duration : May 22 to June 10
Time : 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Programme

"Theatre Games"

a theatre workshop by Vikram Kapadia

"Summer Camp" at Naldera

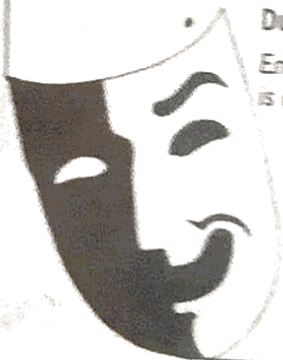
Age : 8 - 14 years
Duration : May 25 to June 18
Time : 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Programme

"Summer Camp" at Sangla Valley

Age : 14 - 16 years
Duration : June 5 to June 11

Enrolment to all the above programmes
is on a first come first serve basis.



Chandigarh Tribune

Tuesday, May 23, 2000

Moulding tiny thought into pieces of art

By Sanjeev Singh Bariana
Tribune News Service
CHANDIGARH

May 22 — Ever seen shape of an earthen mould develop when the gentle hands of a quality designer moulds them during the continuous process, beginning from a plain mould of earth to a fine artistic piece?

Quality hands with thoughtful minds can be seen toying with children in the summer workshop at Durga Das Foundation for the summer school. The hands of Anahita Uberoi and Sita can be seen gently moulding free pieces of tiny thought into interesting shapes and postures.

Uncontrollable energy to fight and ran moulds into vigorous but beautiful dancing, shapeless talking turns into speech controlled presentation, with natural understanding and even mimicry. Sita, currently based in New York, and Anahita also a New York theatre product currently in Mumbai, are managing the workshop of the Durga Das Foundation, clearly reflecting a different but worth praising effort towards involving children in theatre and dance.

Anahita says, "Instead of making up their (children) minds for anything that parents thought was suitable at tender age, their minds should be exposed to a million things. They should be allowed to make a correct choice themselves."

When asked on why theatre and related activities had seen a major boom in school and college extra-

curricular activities over the past few years, Anahita said the media boom made a very big difference. Because of television, movies and theatre, opportunities in this field had increased. She said in a number of cases parents themselves were giving a lot of chances to their wards to see if they had any future of success in the field.

Anahita said children started growing inhibitions along with their age. At a tender age, they were free

and could manage finding ways of freedom, which could be useful in future.

Anahita said she was born into theatre. Her mother introduced her into Marathi theatre. She, however, managed work in New York. Anahita said one movement in Mumbai theatre was coming in of English language but English

was merely a language and the theatre expression was Indian.

Sita also comes from Broadway Theatre, New York. She has been caught during her vacation. This, however, is not her first experience with children.

Sita is currently voyaging into new theatre and has been associated with the leading light

in dancing, Shiamak Davar.

Sita says younger children are more open to trying out new innovations. The seniors are more rigid. The workshop also attempts giving specialised aspects of theatre and dance but not in the form of a strict classroom teaching curriculum. In fact, no

presentation is planned at the end of the

workshop.

Sita has also worked with Shiamak Davar and conducted classes for children in public schools in New York.

Mr Atul Khanna, director of the Durga Das Foundation, said Vikram Kapadia would also land in the city for a workshop on May 25.

Anahita is all set to feature in a Hindi feature film being made by Rahul Bose. She had tied up with two directors recently for a runaway hit theatre show in Mumbai.

Sita has a long and varied dance background, having been a member of the original jazz company of Davar. Her dance drama class uses music and games of personal expression through body and voice as well as group effort and fun. This is at teaching fundamentals of dance such as rhythm, body coordination, usage of space, self expression and most importantly, joy of movement.

Anahita continues the history of her mother Vijaya Mehta, popularly known as the grandmother of Marathi theatre. Both of them have a long list of performances in different categories.



Anahita Uberoi "acts it out" in a workshop with children at the Durga Das Foundation's summer school in Chandigarh on Monday.

— Tribune photo by Manoj Mahajan

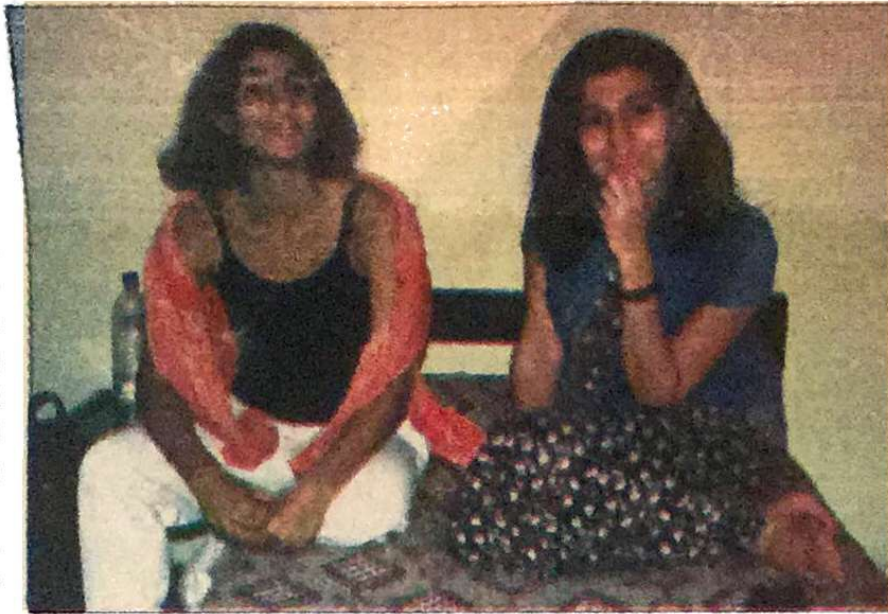
For one theatre is an illusion, for the other dance is growth

DHARMINDER KUMAR
CHANDIGARH, MAY 24

ANAHITA and Sita share more than the last syllable in their names. The girls from Broadway can chat you up while you watch them moving around in their room. And when they speak, every word is jacked up by a more eloquent gesture.

The theatre workshop for children by Durga Das Foundation is an off-broadway experience. "When you work with children, it's a different experience since they come to try a new thing and not to become an actor like adults," says Anahita. Like the kids they teach at the workshop, Anahita and Sita too practice performing arts not to "become" something but because it's the stuff they are made of.

For Anahita, theatre is more than a personal passion. It has been running full-house in the family for three generations. Her grandmother Durga Khote had almost the same relationship with Hindi cinema. Vijaya Mehta, her mother, is one of the pioneers of Marathi theatre. "At a very tender age I understood that theatre was an illusion. I used to see doors on the stage that opened into nowhere," says Anahita as she



Theatre artistes Anahita and Sita, who are in Chandigarh.
Express photo

recalls her childhood spent mostly under the proscenium arch than in the playground.

But ask her if theatre is her life, and she vigorously shakes her head. "I don't want to live anybody else's life. The two hours on the stage don't seep into my life. My husband is in no way related to theatre and so are most of my friends. Theatre is only a part of my existence but, of course an important part," she says.

Anahita did 15 productions in five years in New York and her repertoire runs from Shakespeare to Stoppard. She is soon to start working on an English film with Rahul Bose. The film is about eight characters who unfold their lives as they cross-cross one another's path.

"Children are open and less

inhibited," interjects Sita, the danseuse based in New York. Relating her experience with the children, she says when she tried to get their own movements out of kids, they broke into Bollywood jigs. But slowly she made them come out with their own way of moving.

She was on a holiday in Mumbai when Anahita asked her about Durga Das Foundation assignment.

For Sita, dance is not only self-expression but also a form of growth. "Lessons from dance go into life and from life into dance," she says.

This intertextuality between her dance and her life made her opt for a career which promises little financial security. She realised the extent of her commitment with theatre when she was drawn back to it after saving herself from it for one full year.

Sita has swirled through ballet and jazz and is now poised on modern dance. "Modern dance reaches all kind of audience. And because it's not a set art form, there is no limit to self-expression," she Sita.