

WILDE & VOGEL

figurentheater

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SESAME / तिल

Ranga Shankara Bengaluru/ India in co-production with Westflügel Leipzig with the support of the International Co-Production Fund of the Goethe Institute.

Soumya Bhagwat (performance), Shravan Heggodu (puppet design, performance), Gagan Kumar (performance), Sharat K (performance, assistant to production), Vivek G (live music, composition), S Surendranath (production management, dramaturgy, lights), Michael Vogel (direction, puppet design, stage design), Charlotte Wilde (dramaturgy, musical advice)

Till Eulenspiegel, the cunning and crude anarchist from the old German folk book, and his kindred fools and tricksters from Asia are at the centre of this production with figures, masks and live music. In the face of social divisions, international conflicts and the aftermath of the pandemic, social inequality and political radicalisation, the figure of the fearless provocateur who relentlessly exposes truths is immensely appealing. Rich and poor, peasants and kings, artisans and priests alike are hoodwinked by Till, their weaknesses are exposed or they are simply confused with jugglery by the travelling street performer.

Back-translated, Till or Til means sesame, so anyone who can read the Sanskrit script in the title above reads Til, i.e. sesame. A grain that was cultivated in India thousands of years ago and is particularly precious for oil extraction. Sesame plays a role in Hindu festivals and customs and is used as a synonym for a tiny thing, a trifle, a quint.

A fleeting encounter between Surendranath and Wilde & Vogel at a puppet theatre festival led to the desire to work on a production together, and after years of international isolation during the pandemic, the opportunity to meet for the first time in Bengaluru, India, with the support of the Goethe Institute. Now the actors on and in front of the stage plunge into a joint adventure, always along language confusion, diverse cultural imprints, different generations and a wealth of stories, the crucial question clearly before their eyes: What does the fool say?

The people stood, opened their eyes and mouths and actually thought he was going to fly. Then Eulenspiegel began to laugh and exclaimed: "I thought there was no fool or foolish man in the world but me. But now I see that the whole town is full of fools. And if you all told me that you wanted to fly, I would not believe it. But you believe me, a fool! How could I fly? I am neither a goose nor a bird! Nor have I wings, and no one can fly without wings or feathers. Now you see that it is a lie."

With that, he turned around, ran from the bay window and left the people standing there.

www.rangashankara.org /// www.figurentheater-wildevogel.de

THE TEAM

Ranga Shankara

Ranga Shankara, a theatre space, a production house, is run by The Sanket Trust, a non-profit organisation established in 2004. Ranga Shankara in Bengaluru is one of the few institutions in India completely dedicated to theatre. Ranga Shankara aims to enrich India's cultural fabric with its theatre arts and to reach out to as many people of all walks of life as possible. For the past 18 years, it has been committed to its philosophy of "one performance a day", bringing to the city a wholesome feast of local and international theatre that awakens and delights the senses.

Ranga Shankara has a number of international collaborations, both in producing plays and in imparting knowledge through workshops on theatre and allied arts. A 15-day workshop 'No Such Thing-Playwriting for Young Audience' with Lutz Hübner and Mike Kenny; a production of 'Fish Tree Moon' with South Korea; a puppet workshop production with Gertrude Tröbinger from Austria; an Indo-German-Swiss production of Squirrel's Birthday, a scenic workshop with Alliance Francaise led by Jean Guy Lecat are just a few examples. Since 2005, Ranga Shankara has worked continuously with Germany through the Goethe Institute, including the Wanderlust Fund, which has led to excellent collaborations between Ranga Shankara and Germany to date. Ranga Shankara's production of Boy With a Suitcase (Mike Kenny's play directed by Andrea Gronemeyer of the Nationaltheater Schnawwl, Mannheim, with a German-Indian ensemble) is one of the most important collaborations, which already includes more than 120 performances all over the world.

Figuretheater Wilde & Vogel

In 1997 the musician Charlotte Wilde and the puppeteer and puppet maker Michael Vogel started their company, first in Stuttgart, from 2003 in Leipzig, where Wilde & Vogel are co-founders of the International Centre for Animated Theatre Westflügel. With tours to more than 30 different countries in Europe, Africa, America and Asia as well as at numerous festivals, Wilde & Vogel are among the most renowned ensembles in the field of puppet theatre.

Puppetry and Live-Music are the artistic means of Wilde & Vogel. Themes and dramatic material for the productions are manifold. They are always questioned concerning the adequate means of expression and reduced to the essence, to open room for imagination beyond the visible for the audience. Apart from classical drama, adaptations of novels, musical material or poetry there is also a series of productions that emerged from their own conceptions. Co-operation with directors and colleagues from different artistic fields are essential for Wilde & Vogel and there are several international performances. Since 2007 Westflügel Leipzig has been the premiere theatre and also co-producer of all Wilde & Vogel plays. FITZ Stuttgart has been partner and co-producer since 1997.