

## Old World Theatre Festival: Play to paint portrait of modern

When actress Suchitra Krishnamoorti proposed to Karan Johar for marriage, the filmmaker was perplexed.

"I just want a rich and powerful man to look after me," Suchitra clarified nonchalantly.

Suchitra's life is full of such over-the-top anecdotes and the multifaceted film actor, writer, singer, and painter is all set to bare it all in her upcoming play that opens the Old World Theatre Festival here today.

Befittingly titled, "Drama Queen", Suchitra's play, based on her memoir of the same name, pulls down the day-to-day pretences that one puts up to live by.

"The tone of the book is exaggerated, and so are my reactions. I tend to over-react in my life," the actress said.

The play attempts to depict the modern Indian woman in a whole new light, with all her vulnerabilities and strengths.

A single mother, stuck in the quagmire of her strict middle class moral upbringing, Suchitra hurtles, chugs and summersaults on a rollercoaster journey in a desperate bid to find security and true love.

The narrative manoeuvres through the important moments in her life -- a successful debut film 'Kabhi Haan Kabhi Naa' with Shah Rukh Khan, marriage and subsequent divorce with internationally renowned filmmaker Shekhar Kapur, a pop album with music by Andrew Lloyd Weber, among many others.

And, Suchitra plays herself effortlessly.

In her candid, wacky, madcap style, she takes the audience on a hormone driven period of her life five years post marriage and divorce, fame and everything that a girl from a "decent" Indian family would want.

"This is no longer the world of propriety that any culture would prescribe for a woman. The play is a bared out version of my life," she said.

According to Inaayat Ali Sami, who has directed the play, the production will bring to light Suchitra in her truest form.

"Suchitra is a flawless actor. We are confident we can do full justice to the theatrical interpretation of her novel and bring to the fore Suchitra in totality, not as the world knows her but as what she really is," Sami said.

Preparing for the play, Suchitra said, made her rediscover her relationship with her mother, her past and most importantly herself.

"I have emerged with a new voice, long suppressed and lost under the perplexing burdens of conforming to being 'I'm a good girl - I am'," she said.

'Drama Queen' is among the 15 plays that will be staged at the 16th edition of the Old World Theatre Festival over the course of 10 days at India Habitat Centre here.

# Business Standard

October 6, 2017

The line-up includes Manav Kaul's knee-dropping romantic comedy 'Chuhal', award-winning children's play 'How Cow Now Cow', Vinay Sharma's surreal duet 'Yahan', Tennessee Williams' evocation of loneliness and lost love in 'The Glass Menagerie' directed by Rajit Kapur, Neel Sengupta's adaptation of T S Eliot's 'Love Prufrock', The Company Theatre's 'Khwaab Sa', which weaves together a landscape of Shakespeare's fantastical vision in 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' among many others.