



Honouring Jeffrey Sichel

It is very difficult to write about someone very close to you. You first need to believe that this person is no more. You first need to understand the meaning of him not being there in this world. And I am finding it very difficult to understand that Jeffrey is no more.

Jeffrey Sichel was someone who came in my life, brought a lot of happiness, innovation, curiosity in my life and went away.

He was not a very old friend. I met him in 2010 for the first time, but the bond became very strong. He became like a brother to me. He helped me to look at the global theatre scenario in multiple ways. He encouraged me to get involved in theatrical engagements around the world.

I was able to invite him to Pune several times. Every time we would come up with a new project, more work, more theatre. His energy was infectious. He was an integral part of IAPAR - International Association for Performing Arts and Research since its inception. He was keen that it becomes a part of several global networks. He encouraged me to engage

with the global theatre community, be it ITI, Unitwin Network, or any other organisation around the world.

On a personal level, he became a part of our family. He was loved by all. His visits to us were always full of joy, laughter and happiness. His varied and interdisciplinary interests were amazing. He would talk about arts, entrepreneurship, history, geography and what not. Those times always brought so much of intellectual satisfaction.

For the last couple of years, he was struggling with his illness, but he was there. He was still talking to me about Salman Rushdie's adaptation of Don Quixote and what he feels about it! I believed that he was a fighter, which he was! I hoped that he would come out of his illness...

We owe him a lot. I owe him a lot. We were making plans of meeting again soon. We were planning to co-directing a performance in India. We were dreaming about a theatre program that would cater to the global community of students in India. Too many things are pending now...

My prayers for him and my heart goes out to his family. He was very fond of them. When he used to show pictures of his children, his eyes would sparkle with happiness and pride.

Jeffrey, wherever you are, be peaceful. If there is something called heaven, I am sure you have already started talking to others about a possibility of initiating a new theatre work there!

Love you, my dear friend... Rest in peace!

Vidyanidhee Sudheer VANARASE

Executive Council Member of International Theatre Institute

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