

# 10

## QUESTIONS

### Nandita Das



*The actor-director on her new stage production*

- 1 Coming back to theatre after eight years?**  
I have only done two professional plays in the past and I have always wanted to do theatre. This time, the subject of gender inequality and exploring a new medium attracted me.
- 2 On your theatre group Chhoti Productions?**  
My husband (Subodh Maskara) and I wanted an outlet to explore ideas in film and theatre.
- 3 Tell us about *Between the Lines*, your new play that is travelling across the country.**  
The play explores the relationship between a lawyer couple on opposing sides of a murder case. The idea came from a 1960s film, which was adapted by writer Purushottam Agarwal.
- 4 It's your theatre directorial debut. Nervous?**  
Excited and nervous!
- 5 Tougher to direct: cinema or theatre?**  
Theatre is a whole different language, no less challenging than cinema.
- 6 On directing your husband's acting debut....**  
He is comfortable and creative narrating stories, mimicking people. He has a natural flair for acting, but it's his passion for theatre that gave me the confidence.
- 7 About the lead roles the both of you essay?**  
Shekhar is a high-profile criminal lawyer, while Maya balances work and life by drafting contracts for a law firm. It's interesting to see how, as they fight the case in the court, their own inequalities begin to surface.
- 8 Were your real-life experiences incorporated into the script?**  
Yes, absolutely. Art mirroring life can be scary and cathartic.
- 9 What were the biggest challenges?**  
Being the director, I have to focus on Subodh's acting as well as my own, and be the third eye too. It's my first project after motherhood: juggling responsibilities has been a challenge.
- 10 Are we going to see you back in films?**  
I recently finished a Tamil and a Hindi film. Direction requires more time, so perhaps next year I will start exploring some ideas.

Neha Bhatt