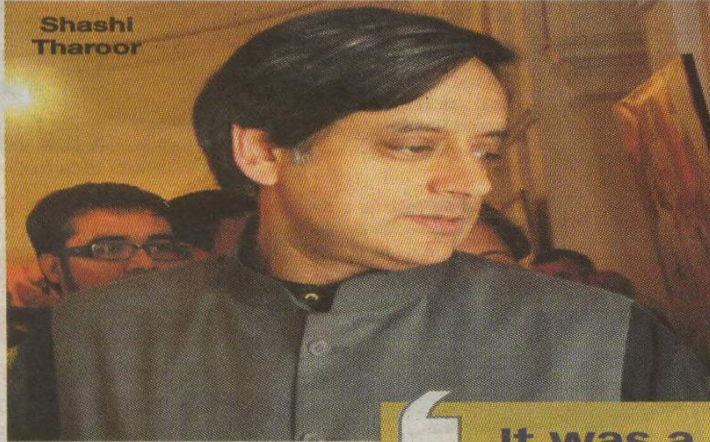


Shashi Tharoor has played Antony to Mira Nair's Cleopatra in a play in DU, when they were both in college

Ranjit Kumar



Shashi
Tharoor

GARIMA SHARMA
Times News Network

Shashi Tharoor's personality, his work and his current portfolio in the government have a certain degree of gravitas, so you wouldn't imagine that the minister of state for external affairs was once an actor. But an actor he certainly was. During a recent art exhibition in Delhi, we asked the 53-year-old Tharoor about his other, relatively unknown side, which includes being a former theatre actor, writer and a consummate tweeter.

Acting was the first question on our list. Tharoor told us that his familiarity with oratory and the stage goes back to his days as a student of History at Delhi University's St Stephen's College. He says, "Theatre was popular and I was a regular. It was during an adaptation of the Shakespearean play *Antony And Cleopatra*, in 1974, that I shared the stage with (now) director Mira Nair, who was then a student of Miranda House. The play was directed by Joy Michael. I played Antony and Mira was Cleopatra. She is quite an accomplished actress, and I must say that it was a loss for the large screen, at least, when Mira chose to go behind the camera."

Incidentally, theatre director Aamir Raza Hussain, also a student of History at the time at Stephen's, essayed the role of Pompei and won the best actor award for it. While Nair moved on to a career in cinema, Tharoor too had his rendezvous with the silver screen, when his book *Show Business* was converted into a movie.

It was a loss for the large screen when Mira (Nair) chose to go behind the camera



Mira
Nair

>> Will Tharoor agree to another adaptation? To find out, turn to

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