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MUMBAI, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2018

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## Aruna's Story

The tragic story of nurse Aruna Shanbaug, who was brutally raped in the hospital she worked at, shook up the entire nation. That incident had left the nurse in a vegetative state for 42 years before she passed away in 2015. Shanbaug's ordeal was documented by journalist Pinki Virani in her book *Aruna's Story*, which was published in 1998. This weekend, Raell Padamsee's Ace Production is staging a play based on Virani's book. It is a solo-act, directed by Arvind Gaur and well-known actress Lushin Dubey will be starring in it. "This story is very close to our hearts. At the Create Foundation [her NGO], we work with issues related to women and children and try to institute change through the creative arts," says Padamsee. Dubey plays as many as 18 characters. "It is difficult. As an actor, you have to remain in the moment all the time. Over the years, I have developed this skill, especially in a solo act when you are shifting in and out of different characters. In a linear play, we have a carry-over of motions whereas in a solo, it is very truncated because you are transition-

ing from, say, an old woman to a 15-year-old boy," says Dubey about playing multiple characters. According to the actor, one not only has to be in the moment with the character but also be in the moment with the switches in those characters. Dubey adds, "The director gave me immense freedom in interpreting the character. I was clear that I want to show the spirit of this woman - confident and determined." She also feels that it is the right time to stage a play like this due to the ordeals that women had and are facing. Agreeing with Dubey, Padamsee says, "I think it's about time all this was out in the open. Most women live with this constant fear regarding their security. Why should that happen? It gives so many women a voice to speak of the crimes against them."

**Aruna's Story, a Mirror Tribes initiative, will premiere this evening at Royal Opera House, Girgaon, 7 pm. Entry: Rs 500 (for members) and Rs 750 (for non-members). Log: [www.mirrortribes.com](http://www.mirrortribes.com)**

