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To Whom It May Concern

Gregor Schneider the well-known German sculpture presented 'it's all Rheydt' Kolkata 2011 in Kolkata last September during the biggest religious festival of Bengal the **Durga Puja**. The festival, over the years have gone beyond being a religious festival, it can be considered as one of the world's biggest open air art festival. The festival celebrates the victory of the mother Goddess Durga over buffalo demon Mahisasura on one hand, and also the home coming of the goddess with her two daughters and two sons. The city is decorated all over and temporary constructions are made to house the Goddess and her family for five days, at the end of the festival the idol of the Goddess and her family is immersed in the holy river of Ganges and the temporary constructions are dismantled. These temporary rooms over the year have developed into to an exhibition of art and crafts from all over the country. In addition, 2011 also marked the beginning of the Germany in India Year in order to celebrate 60 years of Indo German Friendship.

Gregor Schneider who specializes in constructing three dimensional sculptures, especially constructing rooms came forward to join hands with Ekdalia Evergreen Club (one of the most famous and oldest pujas of Kolkata) to present the city with a unique presentation, where he designed the temporary room to house the Goddess and it was executed by local craftsmen. It took two months to construct the whole structure. Gregor Schneider also celebrated the Durga puja Festival at the Ekdalia Evergreen Club Puja, Kolkata in 2011. The whole project was a huge success and the people of Kolkata accepted this whole collaboration between cutting edge German contemporary art with the age old traditional festival. The construction was beautifully executed by using local material. This unique construction where Schneider actually constructed a road from his hometown and placed it upright in the middle of the road was visited by over 4 million people in five years. This road had gradually developed into a temple (Hindu sacred place)

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which housed the goddess and She was worshipped for five days during the festival. Millions of devotees visited it to pay their respect to the Goddess and also witness this very special art work. The Ekdalia Evergreen Club invited Gregor Schneider with open arms because he wanted to create something very new. The city of Kolkata has always been very liberal and open minded about its culture and religion. This explains the ease at which the Ekdalia Evergreen Club, which one of the biggest traditional pujas in the city, accepted this intervention very warmly. The club fully trusted him and his work and he surely did not disappoint the Kolkatans, his work and the Ekdalia Evergreen Club received an award by one of the most prestigious television channels of Bengal, for having the most number of people visiting the construction and paying their respect to the Goddess. We consider him a great ambassador of Germany contributing substantially in strengthening Indo-German Friendship. Now it would wonderful if he continued this project as planned, by reconstructing 'it's all Rheydt' Kolkata 2011 in Germany. It will not only mark a unique cultural exchange between the two countries but also make a beautiful festival, the Durga Puja known to the world. A festival which celebrates unity in diversity along with victory of good over evil, something which is most important all over the world today. I also feel, like Kolkata, Kassel will also be able to enjoy the Gregor's work and understand the spirit of the festival. Schneider's project in our traditional religious festival had a huge response and I am sure that by taking our festival to Kassel would mean a lot to the people I represent and myself. To us it seems that we have started the circle and look forward to Schneider and you to complete the circle.

I wish him all the very best for his work.

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