Agarbatti by Ashish Pathak



The Play

In order to rehabilitate the widows of Behmai massacre, the government opened an incense stick factory. Until killing the jailed Bandit Queen of Chambal, Lala Ram Thakurain postpones the last rites of immersing the ashes of her husband. Damayanti initiates a discussion questioning why all those massacred were only men, and not women. Series of events, arguments, break- downs and imputing allusions lead them to the appalling truth that a convict committing the crime without participating in it is also a criminal. Lala Ram Thakurain mixes the ashes of her
husband in the incense stick powder as natural justice.

Director's Note

This is not just a play for me but a relationship. It has my voice. Initially, I thought about the contemporary value of this play and came to the conclusion that it is a serious question on humanity, if caste, class and gender differences still exist in the 21 st century. This play has a serious discourse which reached a point that created a boiling turbulence felt by me during the process of the play. I consider this play as an extension of classic film 'Bandit Queen', although the questions and issues raised in the play go beyond that. It was painful going through Phoolan's life, character and Behmai as an event, but it is even more painful to perform this play since it brings us to the situation where

we are ashamed as human beings

The Director

Swati Dubey was born on 1 st February 1988 in Chhatarpur (Madhya Pradesh). She did her graduation in Microbiology and Journalism. She did MBA in Rural Management from Gujarat. She did a one-year diploma course in theatre from Madhya Pradesh School of Drama. In 2014 she got selected for three year diploma course in National School of Drama and specialized in Design and Direction. Presently she is doing theatre in her city Jabalpur

The Playwright

Ashish Pathak was born on 8 September in 1977 at Jabalpur (M.P.). He got involved in theatre during his college days. His knowledge of psychology, sciences and social issues sharpened his writing skills. His plays Popcorn, Red Frock and many more have gained lot of popularity. Ashish believes Drama is be the best weapon to oppose social evils, which not only makes his dramas entertaining but also gives them a conservative and developing platform to innovate more. He has also directed many plays like Vishkanya, The Dumb Dancer, Maaya, Pratiuttar, Vijaynagar, Agarbatti, Popcorn, Red Frock, Yugpurush-Abhipurush, Manusmriti, Sugandhi, Hayvadan, Azaadi ki Mahagatha, Chouraha, Ek Akeli Aurat, Daariyo Fo, Jaadu ka Suit, etc.

The Group

This play is being presented as a part of National School of Drama’s graduate showcase (class of 2017), which aims to provide a platform for emerging theatre practitioners, allowing them to share their work with a wide audience.

Cast and Credit

Thakurain : Rukmini Sircar
Suman : Aruja Srivastava
Kaushalya : Babi Baruah

Parvati : Shwetha Rani H. K.
Lajjo : Pallavi Jadho
Kalli : Jina Baishya
Nanhi Bai : Goge Bam
Damyanti : Swati Dubey
Ramkali : Rachna Gupta
Sukkan Bai : Snehlata Tagde
Heera : Gagan Shrivatava
Sohan Singh : Bhupendra Singh Jadawat
Shivpal Lala : Aamir Mallick
Bansi Thakur : Vivek Emmaneni
Raghu Thakur : Niranjan Nath
Lala Ram Thakur : Manohar Pandey
Surjan Thakur : Baljit Singh
Set Execution : Rohit Jha
Light Operation : Susheel Mishra
Sound Operation : Pooja Vaidvikhyat
Voice-overs : Govind Namdev, Babi Baruah
Set, Light & Costume Design : Swati Dubey

Playwright : Ashish Pathak
Design & Direction : Swati Dubey