# Kalaimamani PK Sambandan's Play: Karna Motcham

Director: Kalaimamani P.K.Sambandan
Group: Purisai Duraisami Kannappa Thambiran Parambarai Therukoothu Manram, Tamilnadu
Language: Tamil
Duration: 1 hr 35 mins

The Play
After the 16 days of continuous defeat, on the 17th day, before going to war, Karnan visits his wife as it could be his last visit. His wife refuses to see him and calls him low-born. Then Karnan reveals the secret of his birth that he is the first son of Kunti and Sun god, and the eldest Pandava. His wife implores him to join their side in the battlefield. He refuses saying that it was Duryodhanan who accepted him despite his birth. In the battlefield, Karnan is defeated through Krishna's deceit. In a conversation with Duryodhana, Karnan reveals that he has readied the weapon of war, Nagastram, to kill Arjuna, but he needs King Salliyan as charioteer to depose or challenge Arjuna in the war.

Director's Note
Therukoothu is a traditional and popular form of folk theatre from the interiors of Tamil Nadu. Its themes are drawn from Indian mythology and epics, particularly, the Mahabharata. Its performance is a combination of three main modes of creative expression i.e. verse recital, song and dance. Not only does it serve as means of entertainment for rural folks, but also displays a ritualized trajectory of traditional human values. Rituals are meant to merge the dramatic identities of performers with viewers' participation.

The Director
Kalaimamani Sambandan was born in 1953. He is the younger son

of Kalaimamani Purisai Kannappa Thambiran and fifth generation artiste of the Purisai School of Therukoothu. He performs as lead actor in the productions. He has participated in workshops conducted in NSD, by Bansi Kaul at Gandhigram, and by Badal Sircar and Ingbor Mayor. He has conducted major workshops on Therukoothu with NSD and at a variety of venues and prestigious theatre organisations and occasions in cities including New Delhi, Pondicherry, Singapore and Colombia. He directed his group's Therukoothu version of Gabriel Garcia Marquez's An Old Man with Huge Wings, at Bogotá, Colombia, and Bertolt Brecht's, Caucasian Chalk Circle. Some of his Therukoothu choreographic performances have been in collaboration with Une Chambre En Inde of Theatre du Soleil, Paris; and God has changed his name with Avanthi Meduri. He has received many national and international honours and awards.

The Group

Purisai troupe is run by a family of fifth generation of artistes of the traditional folk form of Tamil Nadu, Therukoothu, headed by Sambandan Thambiran. The group has widened the tableau of its presence by introducing contemporary, Indian and foreign works in their originally traditional repertoire from 1984 onwards. Along with Indian epics Ramayan and Mahabharata their work now spans Thenali Raman, Caucasian Chalk Circle (Bertolt Brecht), Gabriel Garcia Marquez's An Old Man with Huge Wings in Therukoothu, and a collaboration with Theatre du Soleil, Paris in Arianne's Une Chambre En Inde.

The group runs a school of Therukoothu in Purisai village since 2007 for all ages with an aim to prepare professional Therukoothu artistes and preserve the art form. The students are introduced to other art forms too. The group invites other art forms to perform at their eagerly awaited annual Kalaimamani Kannappa Thambiran Memorial Theatre Festival.

Cast & Credits

Kattiyakaran V. Baskaran
Duriyodhanan Kalaimamani P. K. Sambandan
Karnan Palani Murugan
Salliyan S. Muthukumar
Ponnuruvi S. Gowri
Arjunan E. Prakashraj
Krishnan V. Hariprasath
Mridangam G. Vijayan
Harmonium S. Raghupathy
Mugaveenai Elumalai
Thaalam S. Baskaran, M. Sampath Kumar
Curtain Holders S. Manikandan, K. Saravanan,
Back stage P. Sivasankaran, R. Arunachalam

Director Kalaimamani P. K. Sambandan

Contacts
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