Chandan Sen’s Play: Damini Hay

Playwright: Chandan Sen
Director: Meghnad Bhattacharya
Group: Sayak, Kolkata
Language: Bengali
Duration: 1 hr 30 mins

The Play
Damini Hay is an elaborate and symbolic portrayal of how a woman stricken by poverty remains unburdened by it. The play is a tribute to a woman’s inner strength and ability to rise above problems such as grinding poverty. The situation of the play is a poverty-stricken, out-of-the-way village of Bengal where hunger, exploitation, greed, and deception reign unbridled, and the poorest subalterns living there grow-up believing everything is an unchangeable lot.

Director’s Note
The space between the parameters of poverty and utopia is difficult to describe and justify. The play moves between the real and the surreal, between poverty and hunger, and dreams of utopia and motherhood. The play is also concentrated on well established truths about poverty and exploitation, most of which is man-made. Simultaneously it pays tribute to a woman’s inner strength and ability to rise above grinding poverty.
The set design demonstrates an experiment of a dwelling place that is visually in ruins and is a representation of the stark reality of poverty that has gripped even those who claim the right to live. The light and music have been designed to describe the dreams of motherhood that the protagonist has.

The Director
Meghnad Bhattacharya has directed the translations as well as

adaptations of plays by great masters like Tolstoy, Brecht, Schedrin, Somerset Maugham and Moliere. His noted play productions are Dui Hujurer Gappo, Gnan Briksher Fol, Daibaddha, Bashbhumi, Badhutantra, Karnaboti, Aa Awa Ka Kha, Sanjhbela, Dildar, Pinki Buli, Dhrubatara, Damini Hay, Passing Show, Premkatha etc. Meghnad has also directed three plays in Canada produced by Prabasi Toronto in 2006, 2008, 2013 and three plays in USA, one produced by Epic Actors' Workshop in 2013, and two by Spotlight Columbus in 2015 and 2016. He has also directed a play Charduar by Gandhar Kolkata in 2002. Apart from theatre Meghnad has directed several TV plays in different channels and has also acted in at least 50 TV serials and films.

The Playwright

One of the frontline playwrights of Bengal, Chandan Sen has written more than hundred plays including his adaptations and inspired works of Schedrin, Chekov, Tolstoy, Lorca, Eugene O' Neil, Sartre, Brecht and others for the Bengali Theatre. His plays have been translated in Hindi, Assamese, Oriya, and Telugu.

The Group

Sayak has the pride distinction of staging more than 3000 performances of 26 full length and 7 short plays, not only in all corners of West Bengal but also in different parts of the country and in countries like U.S.A. Canada, Bangladesh and Kuwait. Sayak, with its large involvement in multifarious theatrical activities has built a theatre hall Bijon Theatre, in North Kolkata. The group also conducts lectures on dramaturgy, and organises festivals of selected Bengali plays and children theatre workshops, and publishes a yearly theatre journal Sayak Natyapatra.

Cast & Credits

Lakshmikanta Biswanath Roy

Ganesh Pradip Das

Kartick Uttam Kumar Dey

Damini Kathakali
Jabali Aruna Mukherjee
Judhistir (Chief) Subrata Bhawol
Kalyan (Head Clerk) Dhurjati De
Bonomali (Tout) Meghnad Bhattacharya
Chakka Ajoy Sankar Banerjee
Panja Goutam Sen
Gunga Jayanta Das
Farash Samar Das
Villagers & Ghosts Kartick Maitra, Santanu Bhattacharya, Susanta Dasgupta,
Samir Deb, Prasenjit Kundu, Samiran Bhattacharya,
Parimal Chakraborty

Music Subhendu Maity
Light Joy Sen
Stage Soumik, Piyali
Choreography Subhendu Mukherjee, Kabir Sen Barat
Make-up Panchanan Manna
Light Operator Somenath Chattapadhyay
Background Music Swapan Bandhopadhyay
Music Operator Asit Maitra

Story Amar Mitra
Playwright Chandan Sen
Director Meghnad Bhattacharya

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