

Karun Nair- a brilliant cricketer who deserves better

By Sunil Sarpal



Karun Nair, only the second Indian batsman who scored a triple ton

India unearthed a batting talent approx.. three years ago, including him in the playing 11 to represent India in a test match against West Indies held in India. He scored a mammoth 300 runs in an innings. His name was Karun Kaladharan Nair.

Since then his name never figured in contention to represent India. This must be a case of dipping form. Hitting 300 runs in a match against West Indies in itself is an achievement beyond imagination and comparison with his contemporaries.

He is definitely an exceptional talent and should not be overlooked.

BCCI should nurture such talent so that he gets acclimatised to play in different conditions and evolves his batting.

There are other cricketers also with lot of talent but due to meagre resources cannot compete at higher level.

Luckily in India, BCCI is one of the richest cricket bodies in the world. It can nurture such extra-ordinary talent, providing stipend or free facilities.

County Cricket in England is one such platform where young and up-coming players can blossom if given a chance to play alongside International stars.

It is the duty of the new BCCI President Roger Binny to form a committee whose primary task should be to unearth such talent and provide all facilities free of charge for their exposure so that they become tomorrow's stars.

What is your view in this matter. Please post your opinion in the comment box below.

Kohli's Resurgence in Indian

Cricket

By Sunil Sarpal



Image courtesy [Insidesport.in](https://www.insidesport.in)

Virat Kohli leading India to victory against Pakistan in T20 world cup in Australia this October takes us back to the Asia Cup match played against Afghanistan just a little over a month ago when he broke a jinx and his resurgence began.

Indian Cricket is not spared from dirty politics and jealousies. In Kohli's words, when he gave up captaincy, only one man showed concern and called upon him. That was MS Dhoni. Others also had his number, he complained, but were probably jealous of his record tumbling feat.

Kohli's dipping form for over 3 years has been a cause of concern in cricket fraternity. Had he been in the Australian team, he would have been shown the exit door. But a better sense prevailed upon BCCI that he had been persisted with.

It took Kohli three years to score 71st International ton. During his dry period, Indian legend Kapil Dev talked in terms of writing him off and spoke in favour of better bench strength and in-form players.

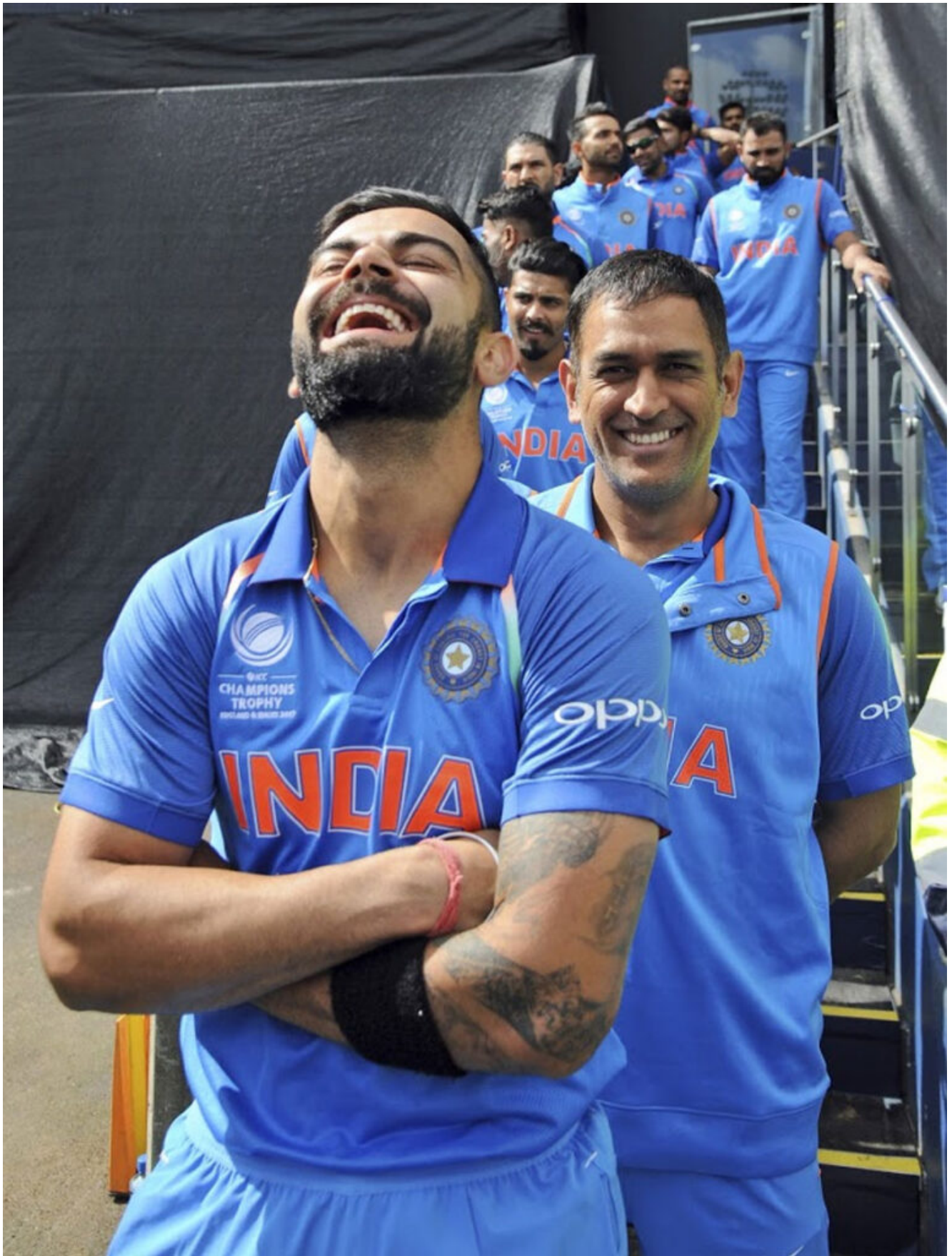
Now, those critical of his inclusion in the side, will twist their statement, saying it was their way of motivating Virat so that he starts delivering yet again. That is why it is a well known fact that our society is riddled with hypocrisy.

Now that Kohli has finally scored 71st ton, he shall be the most relieved man.

It is not imperative on part of past legends such as Kapil Dev and Gavaskar to make irresponsible statements. It's unbecoming of their status. It is only their way to keep their name afloat and remain in the public eye. They do not want somebody else joining them in greatness. They are apparently ego-centric and biased.

Kohli, in an interview, said that till the time God wills, he will keep on playing. In fact, past legends outbursts do not bother him much. On the other hand, cricketers from abroad spoke highly of Kohli and wished him success.

Definitely, his blade will keep on accumulating runs till the time God so desires. God always stand by those who have a clean and unbiased heart, like Kohli.



Kohli and Dhoni Sportsmanship

India vs Pakistan – The October'22 Cliff Hanger in Australia



Virat Kohli – Snatching Victory from the Jaws of Defeat
India vs Pak match is always a cliff-hanger. The T20 match which was played on Sunday in Australia reminds us of the Sharjah match when Javed Miandad hit a six on the last ball off Chetan Sharma. In this match, Kohli stood his ground like a rock under trying circumstances and snatched the game from the jaws of defeat. This knock is being rated by the purists of the game, as the best ever played by him. He was cool as a cucumber when the match was headed down to the wire. Kohli's innings teaches a few invaluable lessons too that one needs to build his innings brick-by-brick and not throw away his wicket

in a jiffy.

When the going gets tough and the new ball bowlers are wrecking-havoc, patience and perseverance are the virtues which need to be applied. In doing so, one gets settled down and visibility of the ball becomes easy.

The early advantage did rest with India when they won the toss and rightly chose to bowl first on a wicket which assisted seamers. Both Bhuvn and Arshdeep bowled in the right areas, making the ball move both ways and presenting umpteen problems for Pak openers – Babbar and Rizwan. They were clueless against the quality attack. The early 'impressive' spell set the tone of the match and from the beginning itself Pakistan was under a lot of pressure, and in the process, lost both openers cheaply.

Pakistan's batting never settled down till the time Iftikhar hit four magnificent sixes to take the team to a respectable score of 159. Indian opening combination of KL Rahul and Rohit was patchy and tumbled early on, handing over the gauntlet to Kohli and Pandya to build the innings. Of the two, Kohli looked more fluid and played a gem of a knock. Some of Kohli's sixes left Pakistan awe-struck. The game went down to the wire and the last ball chip by Ashwin sealed the deal for India.



The MCG ground was sold out like all India-Pak matches the world over

The Curious Case of Ravi Shastri



Many Avatars: As a commentator

Ravi Shastri's career graph in Cricket and related fields is quite interesting and variable in nature. When he entered cricket arena, he was a left-handed leg spinner. Interestingly, he used to bat right-handed.

Ravi took his cricket very seriously and because of his learning curve, from No. 10 or 11, he was elevated to open the batting for India. Facing the new ball at an International level, by any stretch of imagination, is not a joke. It calls for a lot of grit and determination, which Ravi had in plenty. Transition from a left-arm slow bowler to a genuine all-rounder was in itself an achievement.

During his cricketing career, he won 'man-of-the-series' award in a triangular 50-over tournament between India Australia & New Zealand, winning an Audi car as prize money.

Once Shastri's cricket career came to an end, he took to

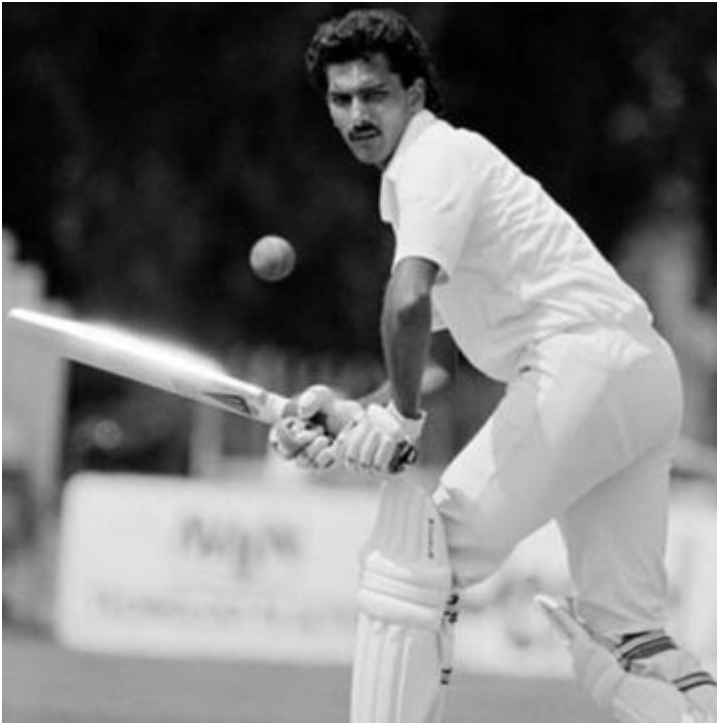
cricket commentary alongside the likes of Richie Benaud, Bill Lowery, Tony Gregg and Ian Chappel – all legends of the game. His comments were always commendable and commentary noteworthy. He possesses the right 'oratory skills' to speak precisely on air.

Later on, when BCCI wanted his services to be utilised as a Manager of Indian Team, he performed that responsibility to perfection. As a Manager, he displayed an exemplary equation with the then India captain MS Dhoni and later on with Virat Kohli to take Indian Cricket forward.

Again he was elevated to the position of Director of Team India. He coached Team India admirably for two successively tenures. He literally became the backbone of Team India and took the team to dizzy heights. He successfully introduced Yo Yo test as a compulsory yardstick without which entry into Indian side was not possible. Clearing the Yo Yo test enables a player to prove that he is fit enough to represent Team India.

Now, that Shastri is no more India Coach, and he has been replaced with Rahul Dravid, Ravi is back to his stint as a commentator.

The amount of exposure and experience that Shastri has secured, in different capacities, during his cricketing career, it is perhaps a good idea for BCCI to utilize his services for a more responsible assignment such as being the BCCI President.



Many Avatars: As a cricketer

SO YOU GET WHAT YOU WISH a play by Gouri Nilakantan

SO YOU GET WHAT YOU WISH

A Children's Play by Gouri Nilakantan

(For performing this play, read the corollary at the bottom)

Characters

Zooli/Mr Anthony Lobo

Freeman/rahul

Wise guy/ Rohit

Fullon-rockon/ Puskar

(Anthony lobo enters the stage. He has a strange hairdo and is wearing a long red overcoat)

Lobo/Zooli: good evening and greetings my dear little friends and all their grownups. I know introductions are entirely

unnecessacry sometimes and the play should speak for itself but I need to explain why I am here. NO you don't want to hear...ok then let me tell you all a secret...I make...I make...I make wishes come true...yes yes....just like the fairy god mother of Cinderella or a fairy queen but only I am a man in this case....no not man...actually let me let you know my real name my name is Z000000000000LI...Zooli...from the nether nether world...the world that only I know...hey I can hear someone...its time for my disappearance but don't worry friends only to appear once again...

(A house setting. Three children on the stage, one child is playing on his train set and the other two enter)

Freeman: There he is (pointing to fullonrockon) hey pushkar

(Pushkar does not respond)

Fr: hey puskar... (Waits a second and then goes to him and gives him a loud push, pushkar falls on the floor)

Fullon: what did you do that for my dear dear rahul?

Freee: because my dear dear dear Pushkar...what is your name?

Pushkar...yani push...karo...pushkar

(Wise guy also comes near and is eating a lollipop and starts laughing)

Wiseguy: hey that's funny...push...kar...push kar

Puskar: stop it guys...you all know I hate my name...why don't you call me what I am supposed to be called ...that's FULLONROCKON...I rock guys I rock

Wise guy: yes yes you do rock, you are as heavy as a rock anyway hahaha

Puskar: yes that's why we call you wise guy...you wise guy...

Wise guy: I am a wise guy...the wisest guy in this gang

Freeman: but listen I am the boss of this gang...I am the eldest

Pushkar: says who

Freeman: says me...that's who

Wise-guy: Rahul (freeman looks at him sternly)...sorry Freeman...

Freeman: guys don't forget the rules...in this club we have to only call each other by our code names got it...wise guy?

Wise guy: yes yes got it freeman

Freeman: what about you? Got it Fullonrockon? Yes ...or no

Fullon: yes yes got it. So whats our plan for today?

Freeman: well this week I think we have to draw out our plan for our club activities.

Wiseman: what about collecting insects this week?

Freeman: no we have done that last month, remember Chaluram our ant...how he died?

Fullon: poor little chap; he was suffocated, what an idea to keep him in an insect jar which had been an achaar jar poor fellow died of smelling all aam ka acchar.

Wiseman: now what do we do?

Freeman: what about getting all the dogs together and giving them a pet party?

Wiseman: my mother would never agree she absolutely refuses to part with her biscuits.

Fulon (looking very disappointed): now what do we do?

Wiseman: hey have you heard about that new neighbour of ours...he lives opposite my house.

Freeman: you mean that fat guy who keeps shouting at the drivers, yahan betne ki jagah nahi hain...bhaago

Wiseman: arre nahi that fat guy is in hospital...I heard that he had kicked a dog and the dog bit him

Fullon: arre nahi yaar, he ate too many old pizzas and the whole night he went (holds his nose) purr purr purr

Wiseman: how do you know?

Fullon: my didi told me ...puskar beta...pizza mat kha...pata hain bechaar arora uncle hospital main hain kyuki kitna pizza khaya ki per hi kharaab ho gaya...bechare arora uncle...ha ha ha

Wiseman: arre nahi not arora uncle this is one strange guy, Mr Anthony Lobo...really strange...keeps all his doors and windows locked and curtained even during the day and only sets out at night after seven when it is all dark

Fullon: really

Wiseman: and children say that he wears a dark red clock in the night...

Fullon: baap re...dar lag raha hain

Wiseman: yes...and I also heard that he drinks the blood of cockroaches and hearts of frogs for dinner... (Makes an eerie sound)

Freeman: ok then decided...its Anthony lobo then. This week we have to enter his house and enter his bedroom

Fullon: baap re...enter his bedroom now that's tough

Freeman: allright allright just make sure that we can enter his house and search for his red cloak

Wiseman: you mean the magical one

Freeman: that is our mission...everybody with me...Wiseguy?

Wiseguy: yes sire!!!

Freeman: fullon rockon?

Fullon: well I am not sure...this week I have a history test

Wiseguy: liar! History test in class one? History starts in class V allright...you better come rockon...see you are the youngest and the cutest mr lobo will never suspect you...never

Freeman: that's right since you are the youngest you can make an easy entry and then we all can barge in...And while I keep talking to Mr lobo, you freeman try and get his coat

Fullon: and then...???

Freeman: we will decide that later...first we must enter Mr Lobo's house

Wiseguy: ok operation LOBO ...thumbs up

All three: THUMBS UP

(Freeze music is heard end of scene one)

(Music is heard enter Anthony lobo and goes to the dresser and pulls out a red cloak and removes his waist coat and mutters to himself)

Lobo: very good very good...I look fine...Zooli from zooli land...hahahah (hears a knock on the door) now who is hear let me check...first let me hide this cloak...no one should see it (looks through the window) three children...hmmm...interesting...three fine specimens for my next experiment...maybe I should call them in (door bell rings again)...wait a second...just coming (wears his coat and opens the door) yes...

Wiseguy: uncle uncle...we are children...

Lobo (sternly): yes of course I can see you are children...now what do you want

Rockon: uncle...I mean sir...sir...

Lobo: what sir...sir

Freeman: uncle we are selling raffle tickets....for our school party!

Lobo: school party

Freeman: yes sir...no sir...I mean school carnival

Lobo: so...???

Wiseman: so let us into your house

Lobo: into my what?

Freeman; sir ignore him...he is saying can you please please please buy our tickets

Lobo: ok

Freeman: sir sir...rockonfullon...i mean fullonrockon...I mean puskar is thirsty

Rockon: hey I am not thirsty

Freeman: of course you are (winking at him)...are you not

Rockon: yes sir...I am dying of thirst...water water....

Wiseguy: sir I think he will collapse if you don't give him water

Freeman: sir he is fainting (holds him while he sways) can we take him inside your house sir

Lobo: ok ok...but make sure he is our as soon as he becomes better

Wiseguy: sir ham aaye aur gaye...I mean no problem sir

Rockon: paani paani paani chakkar aa gaya...paani

Lobo: ok ok before you faint at my doorstep come in...(Takes them inside)...you guys sit here...(turns to leave but comes back at once) and don't touch anything especially that cupboard...just no touching

(He leaves and rockon grins)

Rockon: hey guys how was I...super cool right

Wiseguy: tu cool nahi fool hain...why were you overacting like that paani paani...I am fainting

Rockon: listen just because I was looking so cure he let you all inside

Wiseguy: OK cutie pie

Freeman: hey you two stop fighting...quick let's try and find his cloak...you go there you search in that cupboard and let me see under the table

Wise guy: (finding the cloak) hey guys...I found it...here it is

Rockon: gosh it's big

Freeman: hey don't touch it...just let it be...it could be magical...

(Zooli enters and says in loud commanding tome)

Zooli: stop freeze all of you (the children look scared and see Zooli)...stop at once...come here (the children all come close to him)...did anyone of you touch the cloak

Rockon: sir...I...I

Zooli: you did! (he is pleased)...good good good

Freeman: good sir!

Zooli: yes good because you have broken the spell!!!

Freeman: spell what spell

Zooli: I think I better explain...I am actually a fairy god father...

Rockon: fairy god father...hahahah funny

Zooli: why can't guys be fairies?

Wiseguy: ok ok so you are a wizard

Zooli: well technically you can say that but I am a good wizard...

Wiseguy: so you are not Anthony Lobo

Zooli: Actually I was doomed to become a man by a wicked witch. I accidently stumbled upon a secret that she was working on...a magic potion so she cast a spell on me and turned me into a man.

Wiseguy: being a man is not such a bad thing

Zooli: try being a wizard...I mean fairy god father and then you will understand the benefits of being a wizard. Anyway let's cut the conversation short as I was saying

Freeman: we have broken your spell

Zooli: yes now that you have found my cloak and broken my spell I am only zooli Z0000LI no Mr Lobo shobo...how I hated that...so I need to give you something in return for this...SO YOU GET WHAT YOU WISH

Freeman: get what we wish

Zooli: yes your wish is my command tell me what you want and I will get you that, tell me where you want to be and you can go there, tell me what you want to become and you can become that

Rockon: wow three wishes

Zooli: sorry only one

Rockon: but fairy god mothers give three wishes to people and we found your cloak, broke your spell ...that's not fair

Zooli: no just one wish...so what do you guys want

Wiseguy: I would rather I became someone...I always wanted to be something like my life

Zooli: your wish is my command

Wiseguy: I wanted to become a star all my life

Zooli: a pop star, a rock star, a bollywood star...amir khan, salman khan, sharukh khan

Wiseguy: no a star...a star in the sky...a star that looks upon the planets something like interstellar

Lobo: are you sure that you want to become that?

Wiseguy: oh absolutely, infact that swat I want most of all

Lobo: ok then

Rockon: ok take out your magic wand then

Lobo: no need for the wand let me just read your charm

FEEEE FIIII F000 FUMMM

LET THIS KID HAVE ALL THE FUN

MAKE HIM INTO THAT BRIGHT NEW STAR

TWINKLING, SHINING NEAR AND FAR

ZIPPPPP ZAPPPPP ZOOMMMM

Wiseguy: hey I haven't changed

Lobo: it will start working once your back home, don't worry.
(Turning towards freeman) Ok now rahul....sorry free man what's your scene?

Freeman: I don't want t become some silly star....I just love candy....why don't you make me a taster in a candy factory. My

mother will never scold me for eating so many lollipops then...yummy I can see such good times coming ahead...candy for day and candy for night...please that's what I want. Yes a candy taster...nothing more nothing less

Lobo: are you sure

Freeman: you promised

Lobo: yes yes so you get what you wish

FIDDLE DEE FIDDLE DOO FIDDLE DEE DEE

MAKE HIM THE CANDY TASTER FOR ALL TO SEE

LET HIM EAT CANDIES ALL DAY LONG

CANDIES FOR LUNCH< TEA AND DINNER WITH WINE AND SONG

Freeman: wow, thanks Zooli...you are amazing, marvellous and stupendous....A zillion, million thanks

(Zooli turns towards the last child, fullonrockon)

Zooli: so you are now the last and your wish is also my command, what do you want to become

ROckon: well actually I can't tell you that since it's a big secret

Wiseguy: hey how can he make you into anything if you don't tell it?

Rockon: no people will alugh at me but I am really seious bout it I want to become that and nothing else

Lobo: go on speak your mind; no one will dare laugh at you while I am here

Rock on: well ok then...I want to become a rock

Wiseguy: a rock...hahahahah...

Rockon: see I told you that they would laugh did I not...now I am not talking to anybody...I don't to become anything

Wiseguy: hey sorry yaar...really sorry batana

Rockon: I want to become a rock because I have a reason...actually I really hate my name...people keep on making fun of it. So if l become a rock no one will be able to push me anymore. Infact if they tried I could just roll over and crush their legs...hahahah

Lobo: that seems only like a fair deal...I think it's high time you became a rock....that's right...

FILLIN FILL OUT FIIIII FIIII
MAKE HIM THIS HUGE BIG ROCK HEHEHE
SEE HIM CHRUSH ALL TO BITS
WILL MAKE YOU GO OUT OF YOUR WITS

So guys...happy now

All three: absolutely, you are the best...this is great

Lobo: remember one thing fellows; we will all meet in a week time. This spell needs weekly rejuvenation its needs its weekly dose. So do meet me next week, bye and best of luck

(Music is heard, and enters lobo)

Lobo: A so dear friend one week is over and it's time for my liitle buddies to start arriving. Hope everything will go according to my plan...fine little specimens I found and they all walked straight into my plan...good good wait I can see them

(Enter the three kids looking very very sad and downcast)

Lobo: hey kids how are you...

Three: (in a very small voice) hi Mr. Zooli

Lobo: so how has it been going for you all fine?

Freeman: hmmm ok I guess

Wiseguy: yes just fine

Rockon: (looks very upset)...hmmm fine...oh what do I say...and starts crying...not fine not fine...I can't stand this torture anymore

Lobo: why guys...look sit down relax and tell him what happened

Freeman: sir...sir

Wiseguy: sir we are not happy just not happy...infact we are not only sad but miserable

Rockon: please sir...I have my old self back...I don't like this get up...I hate this

Lobo: ok guys just relax first and then tell, you start freeman

Freeman: I was so happy being that candy taster at first...nestle, cadbury, lollipops, sweets, hajmola candy...life was perfect...but I had to eat only that for one whole week...(pulls out his tongue)...see this my poor taste buds...I

hate the idea of anything sweet...I want to eat simple dal roti chawal and aloo ki sabji...mummy ke haath ka khana...never an chocolate again in my entire life...the idea of even a small piece of candy makes me want to... yuck

Rockon: sir sir...I hate being a rock, at first I was so happy that I could just sit and laze around, relax and chill in the sun...imagine no school, no homework just lie down and feel happy and I was so happy no one could dare push me. But all that sitting down has made me so sad, I want to walk normally, play and run

Lobo: and what about you wise guy

Wiseguy: I well...I wud hate to tell a lie but being star is actually no fun. I thought I was sooper cool guy in this whole galaxy...but I was in this huge space so far away from my home. I could only be seen in the night and i was far away from my friends, my mom dad everybody...and it was cold ...my gosh so cold in the galaxy and I could not even wrap myself in something warm because I was too big. I want my old self back...please please

Rockon yes sir please sir

All three: pleaseeeee pleaseeeee

Lobo: ok ok...but this spell is permanent

Wiseguy: no you can't say that, you are a good fairy father not a wicked one, we will do anything

All thre: yes sir anything...

Lobo : anything

All Three: yes sir we swear

Lobo: well will you be good children, not fight with each other, help each other and be the best neighbours?

Three: yes sir

Lobo: will you be kind to mr.Arora and not barge in people's houses just to harass them and

Three: yes sirs never never never disturb the old and the sick?

Lobo: will you help your parents in the house and do your homework without winging and whining

Rockon: do homework...sir

Wiseguy: ignore him sir...sir I will dp jhaadu, poncha baratan, cook the food and do my homework...i promise

Lobo: do you promise to be generous and kind and share everything with other children...even your best toys

Rockon: my best toy

Wiseguy: ignore him sir

Freeman: yes sir, yes sir

Lobo: alright then...your spell will wear out as soon as you leave my house. Let me tell you a secret I came from the nether world looking for the best specimen for this experiment and now I can return back to nether world.

Freeman: experiment

Lobo: yes experiment, I wanted to teach children never to wish for something that they don't know about. Because YOU GET WHAT YOU WISH so one should only wish for the best and nothing but the best. Now that my job is done, I can return back happily to netherland. Ok guys one last thing now what do you all want to become when you grow up

All three: A FAIRY GOD FATHER LIKE YOU OFCOURSE MR Zooli
(Zooli laughs and the others join him and music is heard)

The Playwright, permits theatre practitioners to perform this play Royalty free, with one request, please message us in the comment box if you are interested in doing this play. Also if and when you schedule your play, inform us and our readers in the comment box about it. Who knows someone might amble into your show after reading your message.

MY HEART IS AN ALIEN SPARROW

and other poems in English and Italian



MY HEART IS AN ALIEN SPARROW

Ah my heart, my heart is an alien sparrow.

Ah my heart, my heart, which dance of love,
that dances a comma of your land.

Ah my heart, my heart,
in the summer fire
between thirsty slopes,
in the clear sky,
between your roots
.

Il mio cuore è un passero alieno

Ah il mio cuore, il mio cuore è un passero alieno.

Ah il mio cuore, il mio cuore, che danza d'amore,

che danza una virgola del tuo terreno.

Ah il mio cuore, il mio cuore,

nel fuoco d'estate

tra pendici assetate,

nel cielo sereno,

tra le tue radici.

(Antonio Blunda, © 2022)

YOU COULD BE MY SON

You could be my son

Ah...My son...How could you be that!

I can't forget your name

In the days that is yet to come

I will end up soon

But it will be you

To find me among the dead

Together we will fly away,

Sail in the wind

As evil is all visible

And goodness is hiding

Come and hold my hand

At your leisure

POTEVI ESSERMI FIGLIO

Potevi essermi figlio.

Figlio mio, ah come potevi esserlo!

Non perderò il tuo nome,

nei giorni che restano.

Finirò il mio respiro,

ma sarai tu

a trovarmi tra i morti.

E voleremo insieme

come una vela al vento,

come il bene nascosto

nel male di questo mondo.

Tu allora, d'un conforto,

verrai a prendermi per mano.



You could be my son Image: ColumbusDojo

THE SOUND

The life – it's our strongest hold

We are in this world

And with our light

We lift ourselves from the ground

Life is so beautiful

because it has its rhythmic sound.

A sound

That I hear from the bloomed flower

by god's grace

I listen to it in love and compassion

The sound

Of trains in the railway station,

I listen to it even in the still clocks

And in the passing winds
The sound that lingers
Inside the rooms of my house
And I am ever listening to my own sound
The sounds that make you feel things around
I hear it from behind my tears of the youth
And still from the green paths of those small roads
Now I feel it in my middle age
Life...my life
the sweet sound of it
But yet something more to be heard
Life...you are the light so heavenly
And the sound –
The moving reason behind
All those fluttering butterflies

RUMORE

La vita
è la mia cosa più forte.
E' caduta appena
per questo mondo
d'una mia luce breve,
e mi solleva da terra.

La vita è così bella

perchè fa un rumore.

Un rumore che conosco

nel fiore dischiuso

nella mano di Dio

nell'amore amato e coincidente

nel cerchio della mia pietà

.

Il rumore che conosco di tutti i treni

di tutte le stazioni con gli orologi fermi

di tutti i passanti nel vento

.

Questo rumore

che va bene per tutte le stanze,

per le stanze della mia casa

dove, da sempre,

ricordo il rumore.

.

Il rumore di cui parlo,

il rumore che ti fa sentire le cose

.

qualcosa già prima

per ogni mia lacrima

.

Perchè ho pianto, in gioventù.

E nel cammino verde

della piccola strada

sento adesso la via

così a metà della mia vita.

.

Vita, mia vita,

vita mia,

immenso dolcissimo rumore

di tutto il mio vivere.

Rimani ancora qualcosa.

.

Tu che sei la meravigliosa luce

e la ragione commovente

delle mie farfalle.

YOU NO LONGER KNOW WHAT WINTER IS

(To my father)

You no longer know what winter is

a winter of the Thermopylae kind

the hatred
sickened by love
the road
perspiring from medicine
the cold
in steam from water
all this cold
like the last unfinished
speech at six
the kind that discards me
like a defeated soldier
inoculated
and kicked like tin cans
that discards me
with all the candy souls of radiators.

TU NON SAI PIU' COS'E' L'INVERNO

(A mio padre)

*Tu non sai più cos'è l'inverno
quest'inverno da Termopili
l'odio
ammalato d'amore
la strada*

nel sudore della medicina

il freddo

nel vapore dell'acqua

tutto il freddo

come quell'ultimo discorso

incompiuto delle sei

da scartarmi via

con la resa d'un soldato

inoculato

in calci da barattoli

da scartarmi

con tutte le anime di caramelle dei radiatori.

TELL ME I LOVE YOU

Tell me I love you,

I who hardly can say it any longer.

Tell me I love you,

so that this house, for once,

will not remind me

because the last sunset

seems a story told

because "I love you"

is something immense

in this silence
that vibrates so much
tell me I love you
and I swear to you
that I will have slowly counted
all the swallows"

DIMMI TI AMO

Dimmi ti amo,
io che quasi non so più dirlo.
Dimmi ti amo,
perché questa casa, per una volta,
non me lo ricorda
perché l'ultimo tramonto
sembra un viaggio narrato
perchè "ti amo"
è qualcosa di immenso
in questo silenzio
che vibra così
dimmi ti amo
e giuro
che avrò contato piano
tutte le rondini

AGARBATTI – THE SEXUAL INCINERATION ON STAGE – SO ARRESTING!

Sexually Explicit Content – Well, the phrase itself provokes many intelligent communities to either hide their face behind the four walls of the house or to protest against it in loud volumes. I must say, the opening scene of the play AGARBATTI - (**Directed By:** Swati Dubey **Produced By:** Samagam Rangmandal Written by Ashish Pathak, the play has bagged four awards at Mahindra Excellence in Theater Awards META) is been so intelligently devised by the director that it resists both these reactions in the most convincing manner. The scene is brutal in its explicit provocation of sexual act openly but, in spite of the same, it forces admiration for the craftsmanship that works behind making such a sensuous implication bold and yet appreciable in its own right.

Women who are the major participants of this scene inviting and enacting sexual insinuations manage to extract the susceptibility that stimulates sexual urge and receptivity towards sexual matters in the feminine gender. The most significant part of the reality about women especially those in the conservative Indian rural areas (now I am not generalizing here though) who despite being apparently uninitiated in the matters of sex, as the world knows it, display their repressed sexual urge through such innuendos. Primarily, this sort of depiction on the proscenium in front of an apparently cultured urban audience accompanies the predicament of these women being stereotyped as flagrant on account of the evident unconcern about propriety. The consideration that the lack of urban literacy in these ladies

may provoke them to comply with blatant projections of the kind they choose to engage into in such private gatherings exclusively for women may or may not be the conscious level of acceptance in the midst of the educated audience. The same being represented in a rural set up amidst village audience also may not offer a neat solution for the participants. This is because, the onslaught of orthodoxy may not give it a fair chance to explain the social reality that forces the play participants to opt for such depictions that escape revering societal taboos against phenomenon like sex.

Witnessing the scene, it seems the director makes a bold choice; the one that lets him the freedom to outdo inhibitions that often mar the essence of the play despite an interesting script. That sexual acts do often have the potential to be synonymous with brutality is the implication one explicitly gathers when one watches the sexual act being symbolically represented through the means of an enactment and gives a feel of the supposed theme (Now I need to watch the play to comment more on this) this play perhaps would be dealing with coercion the women often encounter with respect to overbearing masculine tendencies. It is this very intent that makes the apparent sexual content in the scene worth watching (particularly for those that know its content) as it emblematically proclaims the reason to justify its inception on the stage. It works as a foreboding of a gruesome massacre that is perhaps supposed to occur next. However, for someone (as I) who has no knowledge of the subject matter on which the play is based nor has access to the entire script of the play, this entire scene comes as a jolt for the manner and the extent to which a sexual intercourse is celebrated elevates curiosity to construe the reason that it has been done this way. Therefore, the scene appears relevant to those that know the reason and interests those that do not know the reason for the explicit proclamation of sex in the opening scene of this drama. This (I feel) makes it a justifiable attempt in spite of its radical nature and helps it survive the jeopardy of

questions or objections that accompany a presentation of such an explicit kind. When you explicitly dramatize "let's have sex" for the people, you are required to maintain a symbolic decorum which does not exclude the need to be barefaced. This paradox is a difficult challenge and to a great extent it has been managed very well by making women participants cover their visage (full/half) with veils that douse their brazen nature in spite of its openness- and it's supposed to be so in conventional milieu(supposedly). Moreover, the mannerisms of theirs in terms of aping a sexual intercourse are well regulated in spite of the recklessness because every time you see the actor in disguise of a man attempting to assault, there is an obvious emphasis on the mode of representing it as a part of a dramatization than a realistic event. There is a dramatized attempt, extremely effective by the women to thwart him from the shameless act.

When you witness the entire dramatization, since it appears 'dramatic', it convinces that it is not ruthless in spite of obviously trying to show the ruthlessness that accompanies such acts which embody forceful subjugation of women. A well balanced attempt which certainly shows how tactfully a vigilant and responsible theatre practitioner can manage the repercussions that are invariably a part of such a portrayal which intends to upset many brand ambassadors of decency and propriety. Well, admitting the fact that sobriety is an essential responsibility to be observed in artistic endeavours, I also feel that the needful depiction of violence and sex may not be essentially curbed but rather could be exposed taking full advantage of the scope that theatre offers; to dramatize the dramatic content. I felt, this scene is a vital to construe the relevance of histrionics that must be in close proximity with reality but not lose connect with the genre of "performance". It is this distanced involvement of this scene with 'realism' that erases all issues pertaining to decorum instead of avoiding it entirely as a tabooed matter or criticizing its candour, watching it makes one rethink

about the societal indifference towards certain realities that has ushered the need for art to penetrate into such explicit rebuttal of the so-called morality. As a result one cannot help but admire its intensity apart from anything else...therefore; the dramatized sexual havoc on stage appears so arresting!

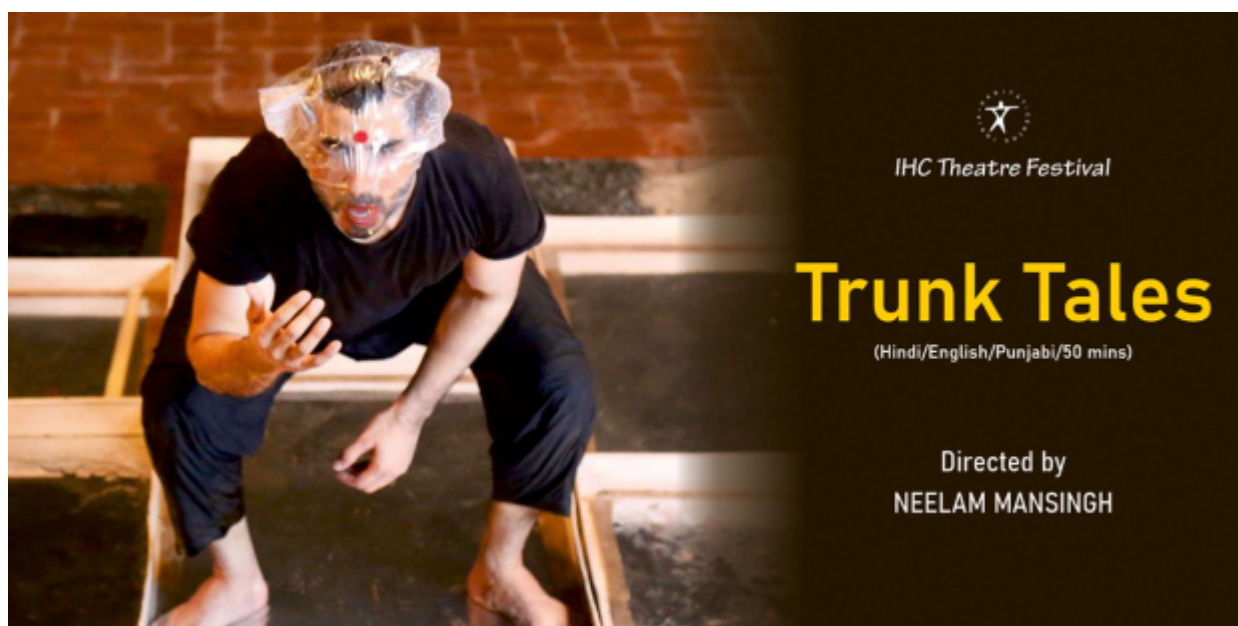
For comments (if any) please post in the box below.

For more information on the play please visit:

Sources:

Agarbatti: The Play – <http://metawards.com/plays/agarbatti>

‘TRUNK TALES’ lives up to Neelam Mansingh’s unique presentation style



Neelam Mansingh Choudhry is a well-known name in Hindi theatre world. A student of Ebrahim Alkazi at the National School of Drama, she has been running her group, The Company in

Chandigarh since 1983. Her work always shows the high standards of production in her presentations, displaying the values inculcated by Alkazi in his students. Her plays like Kitchen Katha, Yerma, Naked Voices, Nagmandal etc. have received loud applause from the public, as well as received rave reviews from the critics. Her work has also earned her well-deserved international recognition.

Recently she brought her Hindi/English/Punjabi play 'Trunk Tales' to the IHC Theatre Festival in Delhi. It was a solo performance, although bearing the same old well-known mark of hers on the production. Her plays are generally based on her everyday observations and experiences of day-to-day life. She is master of creating magical moments out of the daily mundane chores of household. Remember the childhood games... 'Akkad bakkad bambe bo assi nabbe poore sau...', or 'Machhli jal ki rani hai...'? That innocence of the childhood was present on the stage in this play... the innocence, which remains with us through our life-time, but which also becomes the 'other' thing of our life as we grow old!

A non-scripted performance piece, the play 'Trunk Tales' revolved around telling stories in a Dadi-Nani style, bringing out stories out of their 'potlis'... only that, here, the 'potlis' have been replaced in this play by four trunks kept on the stage. Stories tumble out of these trunks one by one, bringing us face to face with that 'otherness' in life. The point she wanted to stress upon was that we generally live within certain boundaries, as per the set rules of behaviour. Anything not conforming to these sets of rules creates a sense that the person going beyond these boundaries of rules is not one of us... he is the 'other' person in the society. She takes support of poems, childhood stories and little play-songs, small episodes, some memories for presenting her 'non-linear' stories, to tell about the people who don't really fit in," she said to someone in an interview.

These stories strived to present the 'otherness' in life...

stories on politics of water, body-abuse including rape and child abuse representing no control on one's own body, hunger, and finally trans-gender behaviour... It is difficult to present the 'otherness' in gender in a palatable way, but Vansh Bhardwaj deserves applause for performing this difficult task so well... he knows how to use his body on the stage. "I had to develop different body languages and understand the psychology of the characters." Vansh said in an interview some time ago! I have seen Swatilekha Sengupta performing a full two and a half hours long solo 'Shanu Roychoudhury' on this very stage many many years ago. I hope to watch Vansh repeat that wonder some time, under the direction of Neelam Mansingh Choudhry sometime in future.



A Scene from Trunk Tales

In 'Trunk Tales', she had kept a few trays filled with water on the floor of the stage. With water, she wanted to present an essential element of life, which has a flexible nature, a fluidity, and gets easily moulded to take any shape. Water worked as the element of life represented in the stories told

by the actor on the stage, who presented stories full of vigour and vibrancy of every daily life! Keeping the sets to a minimal is her known style as well as the need of the hour in today's constrained situations as far as presenting a play in an auditorium is concerned. Keeping the sets to a minimal also helps her create the ambience through the props and the activities of her actors on the stage.

She has done a play 'Kitchen Katha' on the theme of fire (although she concedes that the theme of fire was not on her mind when she did 'Kitchen Katha', neither was water on her mind while doing this play). Now she has done a play with water as its theme. We hope she comes out with the remaining three elements of life, earth, air and pran!

The thing that we missed the most in this play was live music by the folk singers of Punjab, her famous hallmark. She has done a lot in the past to revive Punjab's folk music, which had suffered a severe blow in the troubled times of Khalistani terrorism in Punjab in the eighties of the twentieth century. She tells that it is Corona to be blamed for missing on music... our theatre-persons have not been able to come out of the after-effects of Corona still. She avers, "we are still coming out of the effects of Corona, and it will take some time before we can come back to our own basics".

Best thing about her plays is that she does not try to make them a make-believe world... she actually brings the reality to the auditorium. Some of you might have enjoyed hot jalebis prepared by the 'halwai' in the auditorium itself while watching her play 'Kitchen Katha'! Alas, the jalebis did not reach me, as I was sitting in the sixth-seventh row on that day! She had taken inspiration from her childhood impressions of the tradition of 'langar' in Punjab for 'Kitchen Katha', where community cooking used to take place. In 'Trunk Tales' also, Vansh has a thali full of real food, and enjoying it actually on the stage, instead of empty thalis, cups and glasses, through which the directors ask the actors to pretend

eating or drinking ... this adherence to 'reality' makes Neelam's plays a REAL treat for the eyes!

She plans to do Girish Karnad's Hayavadana in Hindi coming February. It is being planned to be done on a big scale. She avers that the actors from across the country will be a part of this production. She is using Karanth's translation for this production, although with some new insights into the play, keeping in mind the sensibilities of the modern times.



Neelam Man Singh

On the issue of the trends in play-writing these days, she does feel that more new plays are needed with newer sensibilities in mind. She feels that there should be deeper connection between the writer and director while developing new plays. Making one's own script by the director, in collaboration with the actor/s, is a new trend according to her, although it is not new... it has always been resorted to by the directors and writers. She quoted the making of Mohan Rakesh's plays by Alkazi, and also pasting of the new plays on the walls of Paris by Moliere, to solicit the response from the public directly during the writing of the play!

Folk Theatre of India: Koothu

The term Koothu refers to two performing arts viz. Terukuttu and Kattaikkuttu. In contemporary times, the two terms have an interchangeable usage. However, in medieval times, the two terms referred to two entirely different dramatics art forms. Kattaikkuttu consists of performances that take place overnight at a stationary fixed place. Terukuttu often refers to mobile and non-stationary performances that usually take place in a procession.

Beyond transience – Soulful sufi rendition

An ethereal experience–

Sufi singers are prolific artists illuminating the possibility of uniting divine feelings with sublime love.

Vocalist Dhruv Sangari recreated the magical splendors of SUFIYANA culture with his vivacious serenity encompassing aesthetic beauty and reverential Indian ethics – magically interwoven.

For me, the program primarily effaced the Hindu Muslim divide as the singer so poetically inculcated the true feelings of divine invocation irrespective of class, caste distinction; a

classic paradigm of the SUFIYANS who sing in praise of the lord. This ethereal composition he rendered " chaap tilak" was not only one of the sweetest sufi chants of the eve but also indoctrinated me and my folks(parents) with the message of "ISHWAR ALLAH TERO NAAM"- Am sure it might have made the recipients rethink the concept of caste and class differences often acting as a hindrance in matters of spiritual escalation.

Sangari's uniqueness lay in his profound explorations of the renditions he chose. Each musical composition preceded a explanation admirably detailed to entrench the specialty of the song chosen. This reflected the erudition of the artist; a mandate with regards to a performance that's meant to be an IBADAT – A PRAYER to the almighty.

The open air theater of Darpana – NATRANI became the most adequate purveyor of the tools that assist such a presentation resounding the features of FOLK CULTURE. It was heartwarming to see people once again.having gathered in an open space (independent of covid fears fortunately) to listen.and get one glimpse of the talented artist. It replicated the village folk artistic tradition very well; of course the audiences were English speaking urban elite with.modern.western.attires – a stark reality of the urban.India today) I must admit that the organizers were pretty particular in their choices of apparels – Mallika Sarabhaiji in her traditional Indian dress and her accompanied trio too dressed similarly well; obviously one does expect the consciousness from.someone as distinguished as them.

I got the privilege the second time to be at Natrani. The first time I went was some 10

Years back when I saw,Rajit Kapoor performing Girish Karnad's monologue Flowers at the open air auditorium. It was an indelible experience and this one I had yesterday night revitalized my spirits and invigorated my soul to acknowledge

the superiority of sufiyana art that's no less than a means to elevate our material consciousness towards the possibility of experiencing BRAHMANANDA – spiritual delight which crosses the boundaries of transient earthly living and becomes an eternally pleasurable ethereal experience. A heavenly feeling that Natyashastra speaks about so rightfully when it endorses natya as a blissful process meant for redeeming the world from sins. As Sangri rendered CHAP TILAK.sab cheen li re mose naira milake – the feelings of respectful admiration arose in my heart for an artist who chose a sublime melody of SUFIYANA sangeet which gives us a moment of realization " We love our lord too" not just worship him. Meerabai reverentially merged the feelings of adoration and invocation in her worship of Krishna. In the rendition I felt the same mood restored in me – self surrender to the lord I love and revere at the same time. Yes, it could be for someone close to us in fact anyone who we feel is inseparably in us – why only God? It was this intersection of divinity and earthly feeling of love that made the presentation so special, so heavenly.

I drank the elixir of sufiyana art sumptuously and though pressed for time wherein I couldn't listen to more than two melodious songs, I acknowledge my heart grew fonder.

Overall, I loved the performance and the night was indeed memorable with fine white lamps shining in the midst of the open air auditorium giving it the feel of a traditional Indian setting with oil lamps and lanterns adorning the environment making it look no less than a paradise. Natrani is a must visit and I would recommend it to one and all that desire to relish classic art.

Last but not the least, its discipline is praiseworthy and noteworthy. We reached a bit late, gates were shut. Nonetheless, I must recognize their waiving of the stringent rule for us and letting us enter which was indeed an insignia of an organization that is both adequately strict and endearingly loving.

Thank you Natrani for an unforgettable event that is sure to remain perpetually etched in my memory as an experience beyond the fleeting worldly domains of earthly concerns.

Review by –

Dr. Payal Trivedi

[For comments if any post below the article on the website.]

