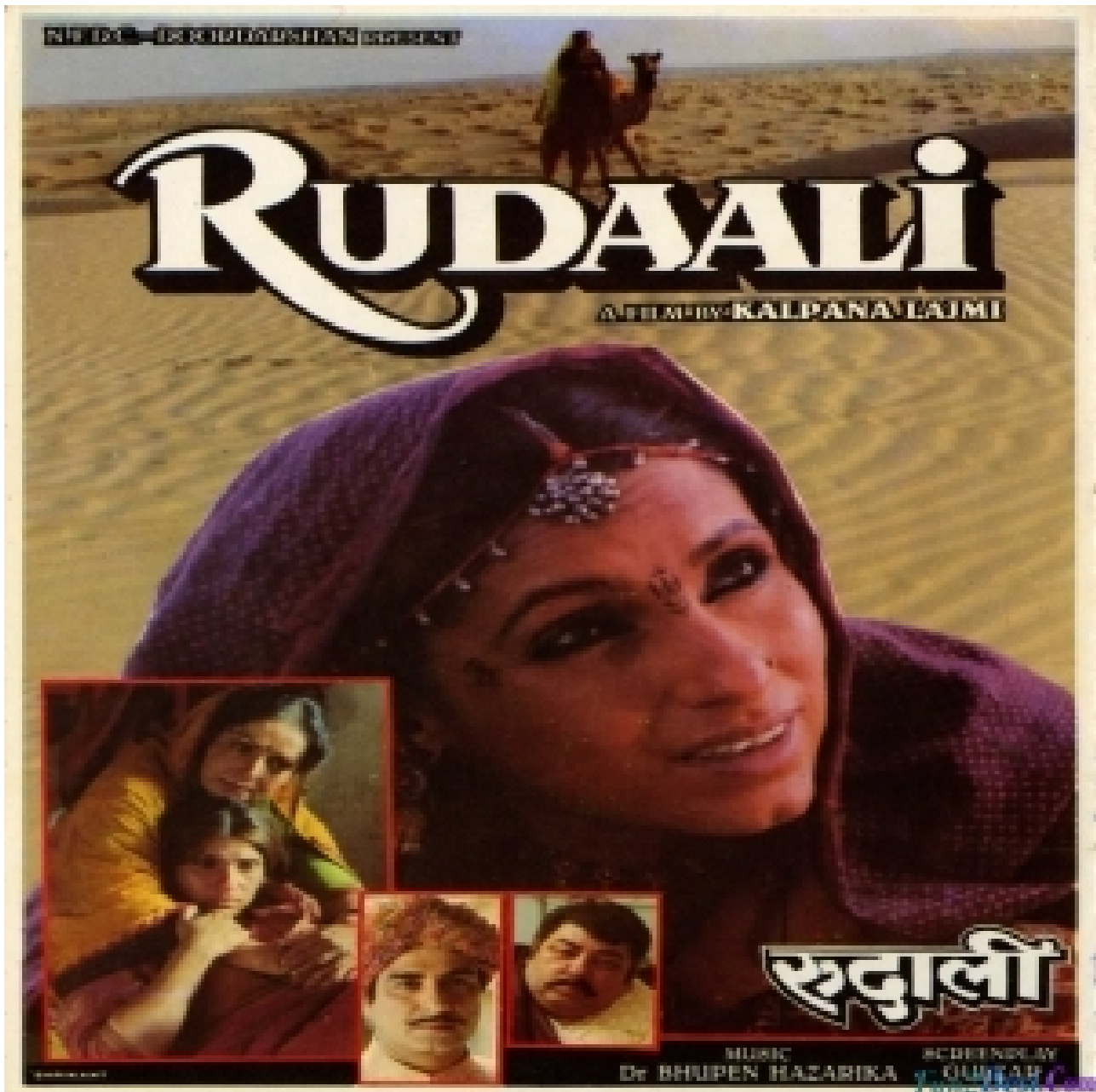


Folklore and Hindi Films



Folklore and Hindi Films

India is the largest film producing country in the world; it produces about 900 films annually. Indian films are not only seen in South Asia but also almost all parts of the world love to watch “the song and dance routine” of Bollywood. Indian films are popular in Russia, Canada, Australia, Middle East, United States and Mauritius just to name a few countries. Incidentally, Raj Kapoor a popular actor of the 1950s and 1960s attained the status of a folk hero in some parts of

Soviet Union. His film Awaara in 1951 was highly acclaimed and popular not only in Russia but also in Africa and countries like Turkey.

Cinema opens a new window into culture by studying it we get a deeper understanding of the customs, behaviour patterns, values and arts and crafts of the Indian people. Deeper insights into the complex process of modernization, colonialism, nationalism and freedom and status of women can be acquired through Indian films. Cinema not only mirrors culture but also shapes it. By studying Indian cinema we can see how they have in turn shaped and promoted modernization, westernization, urbanization, secularism and emancipation of women.

Folk ideas and folk motifs have also found its way in Indian cinema and have regularly been used in particularly in Indian film songs and dances. Several folk tunes for example songs sung by Latha Mangeshkar in the film directed by Gulzar Lekin, Yara sili sili and Kesariya Balama are based on popular folk tunes. S.D. Burman, highly inspired by the Baul singers of Bengal, also used several folk tunes of these Bhatiyali while composing music; this can be seen in a very popular song Sun mere bhandu re in the film Sujatha. One of the best and popular music composer, who has won the Oscar, A.R. Rehman is greatly influenced by folk tunes, (said to be composed by Ghazi Khan) that can be seen in his composition Limbuda in the film Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam. He also uses sufi music to large extent that is heavily popular not only in India but also the west.

Many dance numbers also borrow folk concepts and Saroj Khan the famous dance choreographer is heavily influenced by folk dance of India. This can be seen in the dance of the famous actor Sri Devi in Morni Baaga main boli aadhi raat ma in the film Lamhe. Hybridized folk dancing can also be seen in many other films like used in Jhanak Jhanak Payal Bhaje. Another form of dancing was also popularized by actor Vyjayanthimala

who in the film New Delhi combined Bharat Natyam dance steps with Kathak dance and Bhangra, a Punjabi folk dance.

By studying Indian cinema we can enter productively into the thought worlds and the performance worlds of other traditional arts such as the folk ones. Many Indian film directors from pioneers such as Dadasaheb Phalke to directors like Satyajit Raj, Ritwik Ghatak and Shyam Benegal have sought to employ creatively the visualizations and the colour symbolisms that can be seen in folk dance, music, mime and theatre. In the use of song, dance, humor, structure of narrative, the melodrama, the folk plays of Lavani, Tamasha of Maharashtra, Jatra of Bengal, Bhavai of Gujarat, Nautanki of northern India and Terukuttu of Tamilnadu have had great influence on popular Indian filmmakers.

Perhaps the greatest influence of folk in films can be seen in the genre of mythology. The first Indian feature film Raja Harishchandra directed by Phalke was based on the mythology from the Ramayana. Phalke was highly influenced by the film the Life of Christ and he decided to make a mythological film. His 50 minute film Raja Harishchandra became immensely successful that saw its influence on many other films based on the same genre. The myth has a strong cultural- religious tradition and the Indian mind is deeply attached to it. This can be seen in later films like Jai Santoshi Maa which helped in resurrecting a little known provincial goddess to a grand overpowering level where new temples for her have sprung up in all over the country. Among the most popular myths have been from the epics Ramayana and Mahabharata and the countless tales connected with Lord Krishna. These have been repeated frequently and we can give a number of instances such as Shataram's Surekha Haran, Vijay Bhatt's Bharat Milap and the actor Dara Singh playing lord Hanuman in Bajrangbali. Many animation films like Hanuman and Return of Hanuman are also being created now to find the audience amongst children and keen adults.

Mythological themes like good fighting and destroying evil (Sholay by Ramesh Sippy,) brothers uniting (Kabhi Khusi Kabhi Gam by Karan Johar), reincarnation (Om Shanti Om by Farah Khan), sacrifice (Mother India by Bimal Roy) and tolerance (Bombay, and Roja by Mani Ratnam) can also be seen in films. Historical anecdotes and instances can be seen in films such as Mohenjadaro and Jodha Akbar.

Folklore legends about holy men and women (example Sant Tukaram and Savitri Satyavan), kings and queens (Mughal –e- Azam, Ruzia Sultana and Jodha Akbar) and even outlaws and dacoits (Reshma aur Shera by Sunil Dutt) can be seen in films. There are also stories about legendary love pairs who have lived and died for love which have been made into films such as Heer Ranjha, Sohni Mahiwal, Mirza Sahiban and Dhola Maru. Fantasy based and magic films were made by Kikubhai Desai as early as the 1930s. Today we see that Subhash Ghai and late Manmohan Desai have raised this genre to the opulent levels of grand, multistar films, good examples being Dharam Veer, Amar Akbar, Anthony and Parvarish. Pure fantasy films have also been made such as Alladin, Alibaba, Sindbad the Sailor and Thief of Baghdad. By and large, all the non myth genres in films have functioned as mythological by products, existing in a supernatural miracle world and promoting old world beliefs and superstitions.

Im-Pact: Innovative Digital Theatre Based Corporate Training Practices



Theatre has the ability to transform, to bring about a radical change and also the tool to enhance productivity by opening us creatively. Theatre often makes us work against our own body, our own emotions by getting “into the skin of others”. This art makes us think beyond us, and only create the characters. As we are living right now in insecure times, in total social distancing and also in grave economic implications theatre based digital training programs will solve many of the grave implications.

The economy has deeply impacting not only the daily wagers but also companies such as the aviation sector, education, lifestyle, wellness and beauty just to name a few. What hence is needed is that the company looks for solutions first and foremost to increase the productivity of the employees.

Training of the soft skills like boosting the morale of the

employees, improving communication skills, stress management does increase the productivity of the employee; however training has to primarily focus on increasing the revenue of a company and bringing in more sales. For this what is critically needed is that while the company works on the soft skills of the employees they also focus on the solutions to provide ways in which the revenues can be generated.

Here, is where Digital Theatre based Corporate Training Practices comes in. The Digital methods that are focused not “inwards” or simply to “improve the soft skills of the employee” but are “outward” driving most empathetically towards “enhancing production of the company.”

Here, one should realize that one should adopt the means of “gentle power of persuasion” for employees to see and understand the needs of their mother company. Theatre being extremely persuasive and while keeping emotions as the cornerstone can further help in the this “gentle power of persuasion”. The employees should be urged to look beyond themselves, their traditional roles in the company and think of the multiple ways they can reinvent themselves in this stressful situation.

Rewards can be given to good solutions which could mean words of encouragement in a mail forwarded to all employees or even small gifts and monetary benefits. No step should be seen as “not worthy enough”, if it is considered not worthy it enough then it should be analyzed why it is not worthy enough and what can be done to make it more effective.

Theatre does not discard any action but looks at it

critically. The same should apply in this
Im-pactful theatre- based training practice. We are here
looking at times that need
innovation, reinvention and reconsideration of what we know.
It's time to SURGE
FORWARD AND NOT LAMENT!

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 unnessacry 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 achar 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 cloak 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: alright alright 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...S0 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 D00 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 little 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: allright 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.

Looking at Alternate Spaces for Performance in Delhi – NCR



Studio Safdar, 2253E, Shadi Khampur, Delhi 110008

Putting up any production can be most daunting for most theatre practitioners in India. It is customary for most Indian directors who many times, run small amateur theatre groups to not only foot all bills but also look after the needs of the artists involved. The most challenging of this cost is that of the auditoriums. Most proscenium auditoriums in Delhi and Gurgaon can cost anywhere between 15,000 (around \$220) to 1,00,000 (around \$950) depending on its size and capacity. Furthermore, there is a long waiting list to get the

required dates, most weekends getting booked almost a year ahead! Hence, the supply versus the demand is either beyond one's means or it requires tremendous patience for the group to perform.

The need for finding alternate spaces for performances hence is rapidly growing which is being met to some extent by a few in India. There are several around Mumbai but here the article will focus on two spaces created. The first one in that of the group, Rang Parivartan, in the growing rich cosmopolitan Gurgaon created by Mahesh Vasistha and the second one , the Teesri Manjil, of Ruchika Theatre group, created by Feisal Alkazi in South Delhi. It is important to focus on these two spaces, as the city of Delhi besides being the capital of India, is the Mecca of theatre training, while Mumbai largely focuses on film production and the thriving industry of Bollywood.

Delhi, has been timelessly known for its intense theatre training that is both affordable and also provides the correct knowledge to the aspiring actors. The prestigious National School of Drama is situated here, along with Sri Ram Centre, the school of Arts and Aesthetics at Jawaharlal Nehru University that offers not only the masters course in performance studies but also a Ph.D in theatre and also the newly formed Ambedkar University that offers bachelors and masters in Performance studies are also located here. Besides this we also have an a diploma course offered in theatre by Indira Gandhi Open University, that is lesser than \$25 for six months, as an distance program.



Feisal Alkazi and his private rehearsal space – Teesri Manzil, South Delhi

As training in theatre is of high value in Delhi, there is a need for students to experience the stage as much as possible. It becomes impossible for students to do theatre without the experience of a stage, lights or sets. Both Mahesh Vashista and Feisal Alkazi have found the answers and that too within their own homes! Both these thespians have created beautiful auditoriums within the upper floors of their homes. Both these spaces are intimate and are not open for the public, which in other words means is not for commercial gains but rather for training and also for holding small intimate shows for a discerning audience.

Feisal is of the opinion that one must allow theatre to enter homes and allow the audience to become a part of his large family. He says, ' Most actors have been with me for as much as 25 years and above and they have been an integral part of my life, hence I see new audiences as the same. I am just extending the Teesri Manjil, or my third floor to my family who should not be taken as some disconnected people.' Radhika Alkazi echoes much the same as she receives each one of her guests with warmth and enthusiasm and both she and her son Arman take immense joy in serving each guests fresh home made kebab rolls, biryani and wine.



Mahesh Vashist's Private performance Space, Gurgaon



Mahesh Vashistha

Mahesh Vashistha whose students have painstakingly made the auditorium with him extends his performance space free of charge to theatre practitioners not only across Delhi and Gurgaon but anyone who wishes to perform there. Both these auditoriums might seem like one as small steps but careful attention has been given both by Feisal and Mahesh regarding the technicals of an auditorium. Feisal has painstakingly thought of the lighting (having over 20 set lights including pars and LEDS and a dimmer) and the correct sound proofing of the stage. Mahesh has not only kept the lights and stage

setting in mind but has also kept the make up rooms in mind of the actors, and also has carefully insulated the place.



Akshara Theatre – Baba Khadak Singh Marg, Delhi



Kaala Dibba

Actor Factor Studio

3rd Floor, 416/2 Ghitorni Market

It is heartening to see such magic being created and to be lucky even to have open access to these performance spaces. Such free flowing needs based training venues are going to bring more thespians to do the same with their homes. This will make as Feisal wishes and does, a family of theatre and

not mere disconnected spectators who come and do not feel the intimacy of theatre due to the daunting presence of the mighty auditoriums.



Black Box Theatre, A 68, Okhla Industrial Estate, Phase 2, Delhi

The informal performance spaces have come up because theater is becoming un-affordable because of lack of revenue and astronomical cost of auditorium spaces in Delhi. Leaving you images of some of these spaces which offer hope for survival of Amateur theatre in Delhi. More about it in the next piece by Gouri Nilakantan

Playwriting for Children

10 golden pointers to be kept in mind while writing children's plays.

1) Do not be afraid of using contemporary language and one can even throw in few phrases in Hindi, if the need be. Make it Hinglish if you want.

2) Children love comedy. They might not have the same taste as adults and might find things like “ farting” “ throwing up” comic. Add them to the script, they just add to the flavour. Please do not become prudish.

3) Another thing that fascinates children is the idea of mystery and surprise, you can use them too.

Read the rest.....

The Universe within the Womb / Gouri Nilakantan



Does the cold womb speak to the warm vagina, are we meant to be bound and knit into the body, so much so we do not seem to belong, not to have any identity ever? The guess is not in the mystification nor in the pontification of the “female” in the eyes of society. Nor it is amongst the peering eyes of manhood and by keeping them as some elusive or exclusive

superior race. It lies in the individuality and the recognition of the self amongst all. For once let us not see ourselves only through the wombs , the vaginas, or paling breasts but only as having separate yet same voices. This through which we can declare strongly enough to be defined as all belonging to each other.

The time to be in categories of gender has long gone, it needs to be attacked and discarded as worthless. These binaries and super binaries that do not see women as individuals first but use the safety net of phrases of gender are to be shot down as fallacies. We have been honoured enough by given powerful names by our ancestors. We have been given recognition for sounding phrases strong. Enough of gendering, enough and more than enough, it's time to think ahead, as "you and me", and "we all", "as all of us" that belong entirely to each other.

This will allow us to love unconditionally, to let go unconditionally and remain forever within the societal definitions of a " wife" "mother" " daughter" or "sister". It will thus also not negate the man as a " husband" " father" " son" or " brother" and bondages will only only grow stronger and stronger. Such singular terms of unity therefore allows one to outgrow force and coercion that often come within societal relationships. The urge here I see to all of us only as me and you and forget the male, female, alpha male, alpha female etc. The society will then accept unconditionality in loving and wanting to be loved.

For once live only for you and me and forget all expectations from each other, not because god says so, or you have enlightened and seen Buddhahood, or emerged victorious from the caves of inner meditation, but only because you truly and truly believe in the selfhood of each person. Wombs will then create the universe with its totality and spirit of mind. Enjoy and embark in this unconditionality of living and letting to live.

Memories of the Recitative Past



All of us are born with memories that we wish to forget and discard like faded photographs having hazy blurry images or the thrown pennings of blue inland letters and creamy pages fading with endearing attachments. We would rather regurgitate the past than carry it within us. Are we in the real sense of failing to remember or do we wish not to hear the words of the recitative past and not get the truthful recollection of the echoing sights? To be called only as a witness is easier than to bear and pour out the visions we wish not to see. The ability to see things as they are, are so difficult to break, that to escape into the light hearted day seems much easier and much more uncomplicated.

No one wants to resound pain, express trauma or grieve for a loss. The identity of the self to happily live only within the

confines of the day, going from hour to hour and knocking down the doors of the minutes that dissolves then into seconds, is true serenity and peace. However, many times we need to challenge the tranquillity we have falsely created and listen to the polyphonous sounds of the dead and buried. The graves of the bygone as much as you bury, as much as you decide the deepest depth the coffin should lay, needs the embalming, only and only to cleanse your soul.

To gain the convincing reincarnation of this lost spirit, is only possible if we allow ourselves to cry, lament and mourn for the forgotten memories. Just by dismissing the bygone and not evoking the emotions of sorrow, by not shedding the salty reservoir, we are creating only adulterated personifications of what we term as today. Its reason is enough to moisten the sodden earth of the buried past, so that the watering down can reach the submerged coffins. One has to sometimes open to see the enclosed skeletons and beat one's breast to lament for the faded photographs or tethered inland letters or torn creamy papers that are screaming to be heard.

So, hear the cries within, grieve for the past, sob along with the beats of your heart and let your tears become the pulse. It will only allow the recitative past to become beautiful, melodious verses of songs of your life you will want to hear again and again.



The Exodus Needs a Companion / Gouri Nilakantan

I see the human mind seeking and wandering eternally in the search of this unerring habitat. If our birth homes can define and allow such unconfined liberties, uncontested un-contemptuous ways, will only then, this never ending.....

The Prosaic Names the Profound

Vibrancy comes not from creating something new and novel all the time, but in the unchanging ways we have adapted ourselves into. The ordinary is the one that creates the true promise

of the.....

The Dance of the Hyperbole

Let us not even once, then, discount these as mere undecorated flecks, but as gigantic astronomical atoms, that pinpoint to the immense creativity and churning in the human mind. If just one of these little mites gets charged, we create a gigantic reaction in our minds. That chemical reaction is sure to explode, not to destroy but ...