

# 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 ...

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## Myth of Social Media / Gouri Nilakantan

This self indulging practice that we are consumed with, becomes thus our daily practice show, our daily practice rehearsal, and our daily practice “for viewership and arduous, colossal, consumerism”.

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## The significance of props on stage

Andrew Sofer, in his book, “ The Stage life of Props” says that, “ the object must be seen as having a sign.” The stage props hence has a strong presence, sometimes as strong as the actor themselves. As Felix Bossonnet sees the props they are much more than the physical presence they hold. Props have to be read between the complex relationship between the actor the

text and the audience. It provides a complete whole experience of transmission of the audience into the world of the “ play or krida”. As Sofer sees the distinctions between the props and the characters should become more and more blurred, it should be amalgamated as one whole. The responsibility of this hence is not just within the text but by the directors as well as the actors.

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## **Schedule: 21st Bharat Rang Mahotsav Feb 2020**

If you are at wits end on which play to see, just check out the preview in this E-Mag itself ([www.stagebuzz.in](http://www.stagebuzz.in)), under the Category: Theatre



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## **Stake holders in Artistic Practices: An Economic Model**

When we hear the word stake holders, it reminds us of a company, with a marketing head looking into profits for the company. Do we see a theatre company to be functional as a profit making company, most unfortunately no! In India, with a strong tradition of socialism and the IPTA and the ideas of being the catalyst for change and activism we often fail to see a theatre company to have an economic model behind it.

With increasing globalisation and now India adapting itself into a more and more global economy, theatre should also not fail to look at the most important aspect of being an economically strong and viable model. This hence will create more and more stake holders in artistic practices.

In India, the practices are dependent highly on grant giving bodies and neglect to get into even selling tickets for their shows. The management practices are highly lacking and often times publicity is given the last minute emphasis and impetus. Often one sees that it is the management students, despite their little formal training students doing a much better job at marketing and public relations. What we really lack today is an equally strong focus on theatre management. Theatre in India should go much beyond waiting for the god in form to a government grant to arrive or to wait for a private benefactor to knock the doorsteps of the company.

The stake holders of a theatre company is thus not the role of only the producer and the director but the entire team. Unless and until the theatre company does not make profits it will impossible to give any monetary remuneration to the actors. The actors hence will be forced to look for work beyond theatre and get more and more into films ( if lucky) or be forced to act in sometimes absurd television serials in which they might go largely unnoticed.

We lack a strong focus and determination to get beyond the mechanics of staging a play and not looking at marketing in specific and general terms. This input will also be able to not keep a record of all the old audiences but also create new ones and go to places that were unexplored before. Theatre management will also make sure that designing of the



wondered about its deeper significance? Do we even for one look closely at “ the skull held by Hamlet” or the “ crystal glass unicorn held by Laura” in Glass Menagerie? Even once does the director care to explain to the actor for him/her to closely touch and feel the object as not only a part of the text but also beyond the whole text. It should provide a moment of heightened emotion not only for the actor themselves but also for the audience. Every object is to be placed by the set designer and the director with great fortitude and understanding.

The Natyasastra states that natya was created to meet the demand of a plaything, it's a “ Krida” (a source of pleasure and diversion to boredoms, wants the miseries of daily existence). Therefore an art form can induce a temporary state of diversion of one's immediate sorrow and an escape into a world of pleasure and happiness. Nataka or drama can do this more efficiently than other art form, because unlike other arts, it is both drisya and sravya, it has visual and aural appeal. It can satisfy us by graceful or spectacular senses presented on the stage, can gratify our ear or heart. This is efficient only through props that makes the experience of the audience go beyond his reality.

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# Khamohsi

Aksar baat karne ki kosish main Zubaan Khamosh kyu nahi reh jaata

Kyu nahi gum main asoon nikalte nahi

Kya duniya ki aagosh main yese sawaar hui

ki angaar baraste hain asoon nahi

Kya aise haalaat sahi

kya sirf angaare hi ankhon ka ujala bankar rahe

Aur awaaz uski asoon

Ek baar sirf tum meri nami bhari ankhon ko hi meri pechaan banao aur usi main meri baaton ki nishaani rakhna

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# To be eternally lived



Her crumpled clothes still lies on her beloved bed  
Her uncombed strands of hair lying still  
They are not strands of shredded shrouds  
But create the wave of tumultuous lived lives  
of moments ...of minutes...the hands of the clock lying still  
To be unwound by her alone to live...to be eternally lived

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## **What is “folk” after all? – Gouri Nilakantan**

“Folk”, the ordinary, the mundane, the one without any purpose, that’s the first thing that comes to ones mind when we think of the word. Is that true, can we negate the voice

of the common man, the arts belonging to the masses as just meaningless, not to be cared for? The recognition for folk arts, theatre, music, oral ballads, tales, stories now is a recognized study on its own. It is being now seen as strong discipline to be studied and understood. To categorize and delineate any dramatic performance as being folk, traditional or modern would be simply dispensing them off that can endanger our readings and interpretations for it. Our tradition has to be also be seen in through the eyes of the masses, the simple potter, the folk stories and the music of our villages, or cooking recipes and our theatrical shows all need to be studied in much more depth. While talking about theatre, all dramatic performances display set codes and conventions such as costumes, makeup, text, and use of diction prose or poetry and evolved choreography, movement or premeditated action. It can be said as one having a "traditional process" as pointed out Brynjulf Alver.

By definition it is the process of tradition which creates, alters and renews, chooses and works in new topics in an endless chain, by the interaction between the individual bearer and the community. (Alver, 47)

Folk drama is said to often belong to the common and non-literate people. It is time to go beyond the 'folk' or the common and rethink about this dramatic form as an ongoing concern of contemporary life. As in the words of Steve Tillis,

...folk drama might be present throughout a culture, employing of any social rank who use texts that might either be freshly composed or have a basis in literature, and whose performances are an ongoing concern of contemporary life. (35)

Indian theatrical tradition goes back to antiquity and is deeply rooted within local culture and consciousness. Therefore, it has its own uniqueness and structure that is truly eastern in its orientation. The theatrical traditions

of India are divided into Loka dharmi (the popular), the folk, which includes Nautanki of Punjab and Swang of Himachal Pradesh and the Natyadharmi (the traditional), the classical, based on ancient texts on drama, like the Bharatanatyam. Several characteristics delineate the classical and the folk. The classical performances of India are based on a set of codified laws, such as those of the Natyashastra, but at the same time are “open” to interpretation. The Natyashastra (800 A.D.) is an ancient Indian treatise on drama, written in Sanskrit that is the foundation for not just the classical dances but also most of the theatrical dance forms prevalent in the country such as Kuttiyattam of Kerala, Ankiya Nat, Ramlila and Raslila of Uttar Pradesh and Terukootu, of Tamil Nadu and Chhau of Eastern India.

This demarcation unfortunately has given the classical arts an “high and elitist definition. It’s time to rethink and reconsider what is “high” and “low” after all? Its time for a change in thinking, for reconsideration and perhaps a redefinition to all arts in general. The future students and communities of practitioners now need to speak in favor of all arts, it’s time to think act now and implement the much needed change now!

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## **Parable of the Ten Virgins: Play Scripted for Nilakantan**

# Gauri by Prema Sastri

(For permission to perform this play read the note at the bottom)



(Left)Virgins in Waiting  
(Right)The Wedding

## CAST OF CHARACTERS.

VIRGINS.10.

TOWN CRIERS 2

CROWD.

FRUIT SELLER.1

BEGGARS 2.

SCHOOLCHILDREN.3

SHOEMAKER.1

POLICEMEN.3.

STREET SINGERS 5

OLD LADIES. 2

OLD MEN 2

THE KING. 1

The KING`S ATTENDANTS. SEVERAL.

FIRST ATTENDANT.1

THE QUEEN.1

THE QUEEN`S ATTENDANTS.

FIRST ATTENDANT.1

THE KING`S SON. 1

35 speaking roles.

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SCENE ONE.

PLACE. THE MIDDLE EAST IN THE TIME OF JESUS.

TIME.LATE AFTERNOON.

SCENE. A BUSY STREET IN THE CAPITAL.

AT RISE. STREET SCENE. PEOPLE ON STAGE.

ENTER FRUIT SELLER.

FRUIT SELLER. Fresh fruit.Bananas, pomegranates, grapes. I also have olives, and dates.( Arranges his baskets, and goes around soliciting)

ENTER SHOEMAKER.(He is holding a string of shoes(.Addresses. Fruit seller) I hope you have some extra fruit for me.

FRUIT SELLER. I have fruit for anyone who will pay.

SHOEMAKER. You have not yet paid me for the repairs I did to

your shoe.

FRUIT SELLER. You just put in a couple of stitches.

SHOEMAKER. Without that your shoe would have come apart.

FRUIT SELLER. Allright, here is a pomegranite for you

ENTER SCHOOLCHILDREN.3

(Children run around)

FIRST CHILD. It is good not to be in school.

SECOND CHILD. The classroom was stuffy.

THIRD CHILD. The thatch on the roof was coming apart.Let`s  
have fun. No one knows where we are

.ENTER. OLD MEN. (They stare at the children, and shake their  
heads)

ENTER TWO OLD LADIES.( They look around.)

FIRST OLD MAN;(To schoolchildren)

Why are you on the street?

SECOND OLD MAN> You should be in school.

FIRST CHILD. It is a holiday today.

FIRST OLD LADY. What nonsense. My grandchild went to school  
today

SECOND OLD LADY. So did mine.

THE OLD MEN AND THE LADIES SHAKE THEIR HEADS IN DISAPPROVAL.

ENTER STREET SINGERS.

FIRST SINGER. This looks a merry place.

SECOND SINGER SINGER. So it is.

THIRD SINGER. Let us look around.

FOURTH SINGER. I am sure the people will love our song

.FIFTH SINGER. . Don't be so sure about it. In the last town they chased us out.

FIRST SINGER We will sing our latest song; the one we made up in the desert.

SECOND SINGER. First let s eat something. (They go to the fruit seller, and buy fruit)

ENTER THE TEN VIRGINS.

FIRST VIRGIN. This is where we were told to come by the temple priest

.SECOND VIRGIN. It is too crowded here.

THIRD VIRGIN. We will stand to one side, and see what happens.  
(The virgins form a group)

ENTER BEGGARS.

FIRST BEGGAR. This is a good place for our trade.

SECOND BEGGAR. Ladies and gentlemen. We are hungry. Give us something. (People move away from them, as they go round.).

ENTER POLICEMEN.

FIRST POLICEMAN. Why are you people making such a noise.? You are crowding the street.

SECOND POLICEMAN. Get out of the way. (raises baton)

FRUIT SELLER. It is market day today.

THIRD POLICEMAN. .Sell your wares in the market, not here.

FRUIT VENDOR. This is my market. (Laughs) Come buy grapes,

oranges bananas

SECOND POLICEMAN. I`ll give you oranges.(Snatches an orange from the basket)

FRUIT SELLER.Hey give it back.

SECOND POLICEMAN. I`ll give you this.(Raises baton, and gives a blow

The crowd disperses to a side.The two beggars are in front).

FIRST POLICEMAN. What are you doing.?

FIRST BEGGAR. Begging sir. Have you something to give me?.

FIRST POLICEMAN(Raises baton) Yes I have.

SECOND BEGGAR. Have pity on us.

FIRST POLICEMAN. Why should I/ The king will be furious to see the street so crowded. His carriage is due any moment.

SCHOOLCHILD 1 Do we really get to see the king?

POLICEMAN. What are you doing here. ?You should be in school.

SCHOOLCHILD 2. I have to get some things for my mother.(Joins his friend.)

SCHOOLCHILD 3. We will stand in the shade..(They move to a side, trying to look inconspicuous)

OLD LADY 1. What are children coming to these days.

OLD LADY 2 They don`t care about anything.

OLD MAN1.Very true.

OLD MAN2 Not like they were in our day.

STREET SINGERS. Did you say the king was coming this way.?

FIRST POLICEMAN. I did.

SHOEMAKER. Perhaps he may buy some shoes from me.

SECOND POLICEMAN. The king buy shoes from you. That is a joke.(Laughs)

STREET SINGERS. The king is coming. Let us dance and sing.

SINGERS SING. THE CROWD DANCES.

FIRST POLICEMAN. Enough(Turns to virgins)Who are you.? VIRGINS.(Together) We are the keepers of the flame.We bring light.

SECOND POLICEMAN. Stay together then. Let us see the light.(Laughs)

ENTER TOWN CRIERS with a roll of drums

TOWN CRIER.Listen to me all you people. (The mob is silent and looks at him)

I have great and important news for you..

CROWD. Tell us. Tell us.

TOWN CRIER. The king`s son Liam is going to get married.

THE CROWD CLAPS, WAVES ITS HANDS AND DANCES AROUND THE STAGE.

SECOND TOWN CRIER. Wait. There are some special invitees. ( He goes to the virgins)You ladies. You have been invited to the wedding feast to light the courtyard. Be sure that your lamps are burning bright.

VIRGINS. We will.

FIRST TOWN CRIER . The prince is going to marry the fair Sara.There will be a great feast. Liam and Sara are a fairy tale couple.

FIRST VIRGIN. Will the queen be coming now.?

SECOND TOWN CRIER. Yes she will.

SECOND VIRGIN. Are we invited to the feast?

FIRST TOWN CRIER. You are. The king and his company will get down near the statue, and walk this way.

THIRD VIRGIN. Is the prince as handsome as they say.?

SECOND TOWN CRIER. He is.

FOURTH VIRGIN. Will the prince`s friends attend the wedding?.

FIRST TOWN CRIER. He has many friends. They will come.

FIFTH VIRGIN. Are they also princes?.

FIRST TOWN CRIER. A prince`s friends can only be of his rank. They are all princes from various countries.

SIXTH VIRGIN. Will there be music? 2

SECOND TOWN CRIER. The best in the land.

SEVENTH VIRGIN. Are there any dancers?

FIRST TOWN CRIER. There will be dancing till dawn.

EIGHTH VIRGIN. Oh how lovely. (Claps her hands.)

NINTH VIRGIN> We are so fortunate.

TENTH VIRGIN. We will have a wonderful time..

SECOND TOWN CRIER Be ready with your lamps. The prince comes to the palace hall at midnight.

EXIT TOWN CRIERS. WITH ROLL OF DRUMS

FIRST POLICEMAN. The king and his court are coming. Stand back.

(The crowd moves back.)

THE KING, THE QUEEN, AND THEIR ATTENDANTS CROSS THE STAGE. THEY GREET THE CROWD. THE CROWD IS RAPTUROUS. EXIT KING AND ENTOURAGE

FIRST POLICEMAN. Now all you people clear the street.

FRUIT SELLER. But I haven't sold any fruit.

SECOND POLICEMAN. That's your bad luck.

BEGGARS. You did not let us go near the king.

THIRD POLICEMAN. It is our job to keep the likes of you away.

STREET SINGERS. We wanted to sing, but we gazed in wonder instead.

SCHOOLCHILDREN. We will say we were invited to the wedding, and could not attend school

.OLD GENTLEMAN. Oh what it was like to be young. The young prince will be getting a beautiful bride. (Starts singing. The other old people join in.)

FIRST POLICEMAN. Off with you. All of you.

( They herd out all the people..The stage empties.)

FADE OUT

. FADE IN.

It is late at night in the outer chambers of the king's palace. The ten virgins are on stage., in two groups. They are carrying lighted lamps.

BRIDAL MUSIC. THE VIRGINS SING. AND DANCE

FIRST VIRGIN. I never dreamed I would be given such a great honour.

SECOND VIRGIN. To be invited to a prince`s wedding.

THIRD VIRGIN. We are truly chosen.

FOURTH VIRGIN. God has blessed us.

FIFTH VIRGIN. Let us be ready for the prince. We will trim our lamps.

THE FIVE VIRGINS TEND JARS OF OIL AND THEIR LAMPS.

SIXTH VIRGIN. I feel as if I could dance. ( Dances a few steps)

SEVENTH VIRGIN. I long to sing. ( Sings a few bars.)

EIGHT VIRGIN. The queen will be wearing a beautiful gown. (Walks a few steps as if trailing a gown.)

NINTH VIRGIN. There will be pearls and gems sewn on to it. ( mimes studying the gems on her gown.)

TENTH VIRGIN. I bet the prince will look handsome, and have handsome friends. ( Looks into space, dreaming.)

(the wise virgins attend to their lamps: the foolish virgins laugh and chatter among themselves)

FIRST VIRGIN. It is past midnight. I can see the lights have gone out in the city'

SECOND VIRGIN. Look, the people In the courtyard are sleeping. (Light on stage shows slumbering people.

THIRD VIRGIN. We dare not sleep.

FOURTH VIRGIN. We will walk and keep awake.

FIFTH VIRGIN. We must be ready when the time comes

THE VIRGINS ON THE OTHER SIDE ARE LYING DOWN HALF ASLEEP. SUDDENLY ONE OF THEM WAKES UP.

VIRGIN SIX. Look, our lamps have gone out.

VIRGIN SEVEN. What shall we do?

VIRGIN EIGHT. Look inside the jars. There may be some oil in them. I forgot. We did not bring extra jars.

VIRGIN NINE. The other group seem to have their jars full.

VIRGIN TEN. Let us ask them to give us some oil.

THEY APPROACH THE OTHER VIRGINS

VIRGIN TEN. Dear sisters, our lamps have gone out. Can you give us some from your jars?

VIRGIN ONE. Sorry dear sisters. We do not know when the prince will come. We have hardly enough oil for our own jars.

VIRGIN NINE. Please do help us.

VIRGIN TWO. We would like to, but we are helpless.

VIRGIN EIGHT. Don't be so cruel.

VIRGIN THREE. We don't mean to be, but we have to first do our own duties.

VIRGIN SEVEN. Give us just a little.

VIRGIN TWO. We cannot. The prince may come any time. Go quickly to the market place, and get more oil.

VIRGIN SEVEN. You are being mean. You can spare each of us a little oil, just a little.

THIRD VIRGIN. We cannot.

( The foolish virgins weep and wail, and get into a frenzy. They turn on the wise virgins)

NINTH VIRGIN. We will take it from you..

(There is a scuffle. The wise virgins hold on to their jars)

VIRGIN SIX. We will have to get some oil. How foolish we were not to bring extra jars of oil.

VIRGIN SEVEN Let. us go quickly, before the prince comes.

EXIT FOOLISH VIRGINS. THERE IS A SOUND OF REVELRY. ENTER THE KING, QUEEN, ATTENDANTS AND PRINCE

KING. It is dark, on one side of the courtyard. Luckily, There is light on the other. We will go that way.

VIRGINS TOGETHER. Welcome your majesties.

KING. Come with us.

THE VIRGINS FOLLOW THEM. THE PRINCE GOES OFFSTAGE. PREPARATIONS ARE MADE FOR THE WEDDING. GARLANDS ARRANGED, CHAIRS DRAPED WITH SILKS ETC.

ENTER FOOLISH VIRGINS, THEIR LAMPS BLAZING BRIGHTLY. THEY SEEK ADMITTANCE. THE KING SENDS AN ATTENDANT,

ATTENDANT. What do you want?. The King is busy.

SEVENTH VIRGIN. We were asked to attend him. ( The attendant goes to the King, and whispers to him. The king comes to the door.)

KING. Who are you?

VIRGIN SIX. We are the virgins sent to light your way.

KING. I did not see any light. Did you O queen?

QUEEN. I did not. The ladies with the lamps are already with us. The rest of the hall was dark. (Turns to her attendant) Is that not so.

QUEEN`S ATTENDANT. Yes, your majesty. It was so dark on one side, we nearly tripped on our gowns.

KING. Where were you.?

VIRGIN TEN. We had gone to fill our lamps with oil

.KING> You made your king wait, while you went to fill your lamps You should have brought oil with you.. You lazy, stupid creatures, I do not know you. I do not want you here. Go from hence, You should have been prepared for me like your sisters. They will be richly rewarded. (To Attendants) Send them out.

ATTENDANT. You heard what the king said. Go from here.

ATTENDANTS HUSTLE OUT THE FOOLISH VIRGINS.

The KING TURNS .THE PRINCE HAS ENTERED WITH HIS BRIDE.

MUSIC.KING GESTURES TO THE WISE VIRGINS.)

You waited for me, prepared your lamps for me, and lit my way. Come now and join in the ceremony..(MUSIC....FESTIVITY....BLACK OUT) END OF PLAY

## **PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS.**

### **A note on production.**

The script should run to ten to twelve minutes, or more.

There are song and dance sequences, a scuffle and other forms of action, which would altogether take about six minutes. Action has been mixed with dialogue to prevent a young audience from getting bored and restless..

This parable could easily be put in modern times. It depends on the production requirements, and the producer.

There are thirty five speaking parts, with a possibility of adding as many players as required on the stage in the crowd scene.

In the courtyard sequence, it is possible to use figures moving upstage, people waiting for the king, people in various stages of slumber. The prime action could be by the virgins own stage, possibly even using the apron.

The script leaves room for innovation. Finally, the presentation is up to the interpretation of the director.

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