

# Selections from the Annual Open Frame Film Festival, New Delhi by Tarini Sridharan



Still from *Sadir to Bharatanatyam*

This year's Annual 2012 Open Frame Film Festival, organized by the Public Service Broadcasting Trust, included a series of compelling, thought-provoking films on a variety of diverse subjects. *Light on the Dark Side* (2012), a documentary directed by Geeta Singh, stood out in its aesthetic restraint. While its subject dealt with the phenomenon of blind individuals who had discovered their latent genius for photography, the film's tone remained controlled, light and celebratory, ending with a close up of the determined, relentless strumming of the sitar by one of the blind photographers who was also musically gifted. Nidhi Tuli's *A Saroj Khan Story* (2012) was a stirringly poignant eye-opener into the Bollywood industry, captured through the portrayal of a brave and talented genius. The film delved into the life of Saroj Khan, arguably one of the greatest choreographers of the industry, yet consigned to a relative obscurity. Saroj's vulnerability and heartbreak were brought out at every point, with the film interspersing conversations with her, alongside visually creative ways of revisiting landmark moments in Bollywood. In *Freedom Song* (2012), co-directors Paranjoy Guha Thakurta and Subi Chaturvedi combined eclectic musical styles

and references to popular culture in a brilliantly engaging and intensive documentary interrogating the levels of intolerance in India, with a special focus on the ethical dilemmas surrounding freedom and artistic expression. Delhi-based filmmaker Viveka Chauhan's *Sadir to Bharatanatyam* (2012), a documentary tracing the evolution of a classical dance form in India – Bharataynatyam – left a lasting impression. The film, which incorporated insightful interactions with brilliantly gifted dancers Navtej Johar and Aranyani Bhargav, pitted the historical evolution of the dance against questions of modernity and its influences on perceptions of the body, sensuality and culture, through a stunning interplay of music and dance put together in a brief 27 minutes. The screening was followed by a discussion with director Viveka Chauhan, historian Uma Chakravarti and moderated by filmmaker Anandana Kapur. When asked what inspired the theme for her film, Viveka Chauhan responded that she'd been reading about it for a long time. "Whenever you talk to people there's a kind of 'hush-hush' about it. There are not even enough dancers who really know about the Devadasis," she elaborated. Bharatanatyam as a dance had itself become synonymous with Indian culture. She referred to the insight Navtej Johar had made in the film – that bharatanatyam dancers had in some senses become literal "ambassadors of Indian culture", a state of affairs Johar himself found counterproductive to being an artist. A fascinating and detailed discussion shaped itself around the clash of modernity and its implications in terms of sexuality, the body, and the history of the Devadasis, who were originally viewed as court dancers; a perennial moral taint surrounding them. These origins were sharply countered by their successors who developed a more spiritualized outlook, as if to wipe out the previous image. Someone in the audience made the comment that Muthulakshmi, "the daughter of Devadasi", was highly "moralistic" and yet had to face the consequences of this taint. As Navtej Johar asserted in the film: "In the original tradition, sensuality was considered

alright, it was accepted and a natural part of the dance and its beauty. Now, with modernity, it has become 'coy' and ugly and unnatural, and this has problematized things to quite an extent." On the suggestion that the film was postmodern rather than modernist, in light of its exploration of 'bodies' and 'culture', and of a "gay male dancer finding himself creatively through such dance", Chauhan responded "We wanted to look at history here, and that always alludes to sensuality. In the past, even a certain gesture or movement would mean something and hold significance." Uma Chakravarti commented on how the transformations in the 80s and 90s development of feminist theories had opened up the way for interior stories and that questions of gender were critical to creative expression, as were those of identity. Viveka Chauhan revealed "Aranyani Bhargav is dealing with the same issues, and she says a lot of young people are in training but really aren't aware of this heritage, and even the ones that are, don't know what to do with it." Another notable film was the 52 minute documentary Marine Drive (2012), directed by Krishna Bagadiya. In the discussion that followed, Bagadiya related how he had grown up living in Marine Drive; he had seen Shah Rukh Khan and Salman Khan dancing in the streets under his window and it had always held a special place for him. Moderator Samina Mishra asked if he had planned to have the film focus so much on his uncle Atul, and people in the audience were curious as to how his family had reacted, considering the film seemed to exclusively feature them in unflinching detail. Bagadiya replied that his family hadn't seen it yet, but went on to make the disclaimer that throughout shooting, everyone had been responsible for what they were saying and he hadn't in any way 'commented' on them as a director. He added "I've taken a cell, an organ, of a part of Bombay, and tried to show one person in the film – my uncle Atul." On how the title was connected to the themes explored in the film, especially his focus on Marwaris, he explained "A location has an impact on its people. Take Sunset Boulevard, or David Lynch's Mulholland Drive. Marine Drive is

very special because you have a lot of family homes, like havelis, and there are many Marwaris settled in this area. And my uncle – perhaps I can explain it this way – Bombay was like Sin City, and my uncle is a product of Bombay, and a product of modernity, including its vices and its glamour, and this sits uneasily with the other theme of tradition.”

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## **Bharangam 13 – All The Plays of Bharat Rang Mahotsav**

**Choose Your Plays before you Buy your Tickets**



**A Still from one of the plays: Othello**

This year the Bharat Rang Mahotsav will be presenting a fare of 81 productions selected out of nearly 450 proposals received from across India and from around the world. Taking forward the ‘Young Experimenters’ component of last year, BRM 13 also includes productions by graduates of the school in a synthesis of experience, new energy and vision. We present the synopsis of all the plays so that you can pick and choose.

1. Play: A Wife’s Letter

Playwright: Adapted from Rabindranath Tagore's play *Streer Patra*

Director: Neelam Man Singh Chowdhry

Group: The Company, Chandigarh

Language: Punjabi

Duration: 1 hour and 10 minutes

The protagonist is a child bride Mrinal who secretly writes poetry to assuage that dank listlessness of her routine and mundane life. She finds companionship with the cows and buffaloes in the house while fulfilling the routine chores of her household. In this monotonous universe enters Bindu, the orphaned sister of her older sister-in-law. This simple event becomes the trigger which unravels layers of experiences that are then shared and collectively explored.

## 2. Play: About Ram

Director: Anurupa Roy

Animation Visualization: Vishal Dar

Group: Katkatha Puppet Arts Trust, Delhi

Language: Non-verbal

Duration: 55 mins

As the name suggests, the performance is about Ram, the prince who is sent on a long journey far away from his home when he is exiled by his father along with his wife Sita and brother Lakshman. About Ram was created with a performance grant from the India Foundation for the Arts and in collaboration with animator Vishal Dar. It is an experimental theatrical piece using excerpts from Bhavbhuti's *Ramayana* and told through animation, projected images, dance, masks and puppets.

## 3. Play: Aguner Barnamala

Playwright: Hara Bhattacharya

Director: Anirban Bhattacharya

Group: Drishyapat, West Bengal

Language: Bengali

Duration: 2 hrs 25 mins ( including 10 mins intermission)

The play is a psychological journey into the turbulent inner world of the protagonist Kushal, a seventeen-year old young man, who has been referred for psychiatric intervention and treatment after he burns his father to death. It talks about the language of fire as manifested through passion, rage, quest for truth, and desire. The fires of purity, morality, hunger, lust, anger, hatred, and warmth interlock and overlap with each other throughout the play. The concurrent theme of our present social reality intermingling with our past rituals and mythology is woven into the narrative.

#### 4. Play: Andhere Akele

Playwright: Inspired by Ariel Dorfman's Death and the Maiden

Director: Biplab Bandyopadhyay

Group: Niva Arts, West Bengal

Language: Bengali

Duration: 2 hrs 5 mins (including a 10 min intermission)

The play takes place in a closed room now occupied by three persons— Dr. Sadashib Samanta, a psychiatrist; Jayanta Sarkar, a young lecturer with his own set of aspirations; and Parna, a woman believing in the philosophy of life drenched in the songs of Rabindranath Tagore, yet aware of the stark reality of the pain suffered by her body and soul. As these three people try to establish their own versions of truth, the play looks at the dynamics of negotiations, interactions and conflicts that develop between them

#### 5. Play: Before the Germination (Inspired by Oriana Fallaci's Letter to a Child Never

Born

Playwright & Director: Manish Mitra

Group: Kasba Arghya, West Bengal

Language: Bengali & English

Duration: 1 hr 10 mins

A simple story, being simply told, Before the Germination, is about a mother's talk with her unborn child describing the

world into which the child would be born in. after hearing what the mother tells it, the unborn child refuses to take birth in such a world. Inspired by Oriana Fallaci's "Letter to a Child Never Born," the play addresses the various crises and power structures in contemporary societies and also the aspects of deviant human behaviour.

6. Play: Dreams of Taleem

Playwright: Sachin Kundalkar

Director: Sunil Shanbag

Group: Zero Theatre Company, Maharashtra

Language: Hindi & English

Duration: 2 hrs 10 mins

Anay, an ambitious theatre director is thrilled when Sita, an acclaimed but enigmatic actress agrees to work with him in his new play. Abandoned by most of his young colleagues, except for his gay lover Yash, Sita's acceptance is a great opportunity for Anay to take his fledgling career forward. But when rehearsals begin, nothing goes according to plan. Anay fears he has lost Yash, and Sita struggles to come to terms with gay relationships. The line between reality and fantasy is blurred, and characters are forced to examine their beliefs and convictions in the mirror of the play.

7. Play: Drowa Jhagmu: Ek Devi ki Kahani

Written & Directed by: Suk Bahadur

Group: Central Institute of Himalayan Cultural Studies (CIHCS), Himachal Pradesh

Language: Arunachali Hindi

Duration: 1 hr 30 mins

The play is based on a story from a 1400-year old region of Arunachal Pradesh. The reign of king Kalawangphu is one characterized by violence. One day he comes across a beautiful fairy called Dowra Jhangmu, falls in love with her and marries her after promising to change his ways. He converts to Buddhism and starts a family. But then, the king's evil first

wife, Hachang, returns and tries to kill the children. The plot then moves on to what happens next and how the story comes to a happy ending.

8. Play: Jaan-E-Kalkatta

Playwright & Director: Bhadra Basu

Group: Paikpara Akhor, West Bengal

Language: Bengali

Duration: 2 hrs 20 mins (with 10 min. intermission)

The play tracks the trajectory of Gauharjaan, who, through rigorous training from famous maestros and her innate finer artistic sensibilities, emerges as the 'Nightingale of Kolkata' in late 19th Century, Kolkata. Her sharp intellect and unique style of musical rendition make her the 'Jaan-E-Kalkatta'. One of the pioneers to record her voice in gramophone discs, she amasses huge wealth, but is betrayed and deprived of her fortune by the men she trusts most, and ends up fighting extended court cases. Finally she has to accept the job of the court singer at Mysore where she dies broken hearted in 1930.

9. Play: Kashmir Kashmir

Playwright: Ramu Ramanathan

Director: Mohit Takalkar

Group: Aasakta Kalamanch, Maharashtra

Duration: 100 minutes

Language: English

A honeymoon couple named Rajivlal and Champa, check in Hotel Kashmir Kashmir situated in the middle of nowhere. In this play, the hotel is the protagonist and the multiple story lines are borne along by a shadowy narrator who seems to represent historical influences. The hotel is the metaphor that projects the plight of the people, state and the seemingly endless disturbing situation. Freak and banal events keep occurring in the hotel and mysteries are never resolved. The drama combines the surreal with the satirical to present a



dark, pithy and whacky story of Kashmir.

10. Play: Kumbh Katha

Playwright & Director: Trishla Patel

Group: Tpot Production, Maharashtra

Language: Hindi & English

Duration: 2 hours (with 15 mins intermission)

Kumbh Katha draws its storyline from Kumbh Mela, that is celebrated in India because it is believed that during the struggle for power between the devas and asuras, four drops of amrit fell from the kumbh at the four holy places of Nasik, Ujjain, Allahabad, and Haridwar. The fifth drop remained a mystery. This play unravels the fantastical journey of the two brothers, Hari and Amrit, and reveals how their fate is tied to the fifth drop as they journey to bring together all the elements needed to end kalyug and save humanity.

11. Play: Macbeth

Playwright: William Shakespeare

Design & Direction: Pravin Kumar Gunjan

Group: Ahuti Nataya Akademi, Bihar

Language: Hindi

Duration: 2 hrs 10 mins

Macbeth is the last and shortest of Shakespeare's four great tragedies. Considered one of his darkest works, it is about Macbeth's bloody rise to power, the murder of the Scottish king, Duncan, the guilt-ridden pathology of evil deeds generating still more evil, the supernatural element of the three witches and their prophecies, and the memorable character, Lady Macbeth, whose ambition for power and love for her husband lead her into an unnatural, phantasmagoric realm of witchcraft, insomnia and madness.

12. Play: Mahakabyer Pare

Playwright & Director: Kallol Bhattacharya

Group: Ebong Amra, West Bengal

Language: Bengali & Santhali

Duration: 1 hour

In Mahakabyer Pare, the Kshatriyas are still rulers of the world. They oppress the Shudras, who finally declare war against them. Eklabya is sent to learn the art of warfare from Dronacharya, but since he is a shudra, Dronacharya refuses. Yet, Eklabya learns these skills, driven solely by his desire. When Dronacharya's Kshatriya disciples inform him of this, he meets Eklabya and asks for his right hand thumb as gurudakshina. Eklabya is ready to pay this price but the Shudras stop him by claiming his thumb to be the weapon of the entire community. He refuses and Dronacharya along with his Kshatriya disciples are imprisoned by the Shudras.

13. Play: Mathematician

Playwright & Director: Gowri Ramnarayan

Group: JustUs Repertory, Chennai

Language: English

Duration: 1 hr 15 minutes

The monodrama, which is set in 500 CE Babylon, the commercial, centre of the ancient world, interweaves dialogue, music and poetry. Castrated and sold into slavery by his father, Nikor is apprenticed to the Greek Plautus, the Chief Economist of Babylon. With his brilliance in mathematics and stagecraft, he attains incredible fame and wealth as the state's Chief Mathematician, Accountant General and Keeper of the Seals. When he finds his childhood friend, Salla, now the wife of a debauched prince, Nikor is haunted about questions about himself, the pursuit of knowledge and what Salla means to him.

14. Play: Mirel Masingkha (Will of the Soul)

Playwright & Director: Dr. Yumnam Sadananda Singh

Group: Kanglei Mime Theatre Repertory, Manipur

Language: Non-verbal

Duration: 60 minutes

Presenting the chaotic social structure and utter lawlessness that characterise Manipuri society today, Mirel Masingkha, the Will of Soul, makes an attempt to raise awareness about the various atrocities and acts of terror that people witness in their daily lives. Dedicated to Irom Charu Sharmila, it is a physical play based on her campaign against terror. The soul of Sharmila emerges from these incorrigible events and the stinking rot, throws light on the people's plight, highlights brutalities like rape, fake-encounters, custodial deaths committed by the army and terrorist activities that threaten the delicate socio-cultural fabric of Manipuri society.

15. Play: Miruga Vidhusagam

Playwright & Director: S. Murugaboopathy

Group: Manalmagudi, Tamil Nadu

Language: Tamil

Duration: 1 hr 45 mins

Donning animal masks and motifs and carrying totem poles, miruga vidusagas (animal jesters), journey into war-torn lands, highlighting the plight of refugees affected by war calamities and drawing attention towards the problems faced by migratory population due to industrialization. They stop briefly to speak about the issues and concerns of indigenous people and women, questioning the control of people by the government and misuse of power by media, and finally appealing to the people for the creation of a world based on love, justice, respect and dignity for natural resources and people.

16. Play: Ms. Meena

Playwright: Rashmi Ruth Devadasann (Inspired by Friedrich Durrenmatt's 'The Visit')

Director: Rajiv Krishnan

Group: Perch, Chennai

Language: English (with a smattering of other Indian languages)

Duration: 1 hr 40 mins (with 10 min. intermission)

Ms.Meena, formerly known as Asha, is an iconic film star. She returns to her native village Pichampuram, which has descended into a state of dire poverty. after two decades to make her final film. With news of her arrival there is a new burst of energy and hope in the village and she is hailed as their saviour, while Ravi, her former lover, is pushed to appeal to her on the village's behalf. Ms. Meena arrives and seems quite willing to help the village. She promises to make the villagers prosperous beyond their wildest dreams. But in return, she demands a terrible price.

#### 17. Play: Khidkiya

Based on Clemens Madge's German play Im Stillen

Director: Girish Jayant Joshi

Group: Maharashtra Cultural Center, Maharashtra

Language : Marathi

Duration: 1 hr 15 minutes

Khidikya portrays old age related issues, and is a window to the loneliness, failing health, lack of care and attention, and insecure future faced by the elderly in our society. The protagonist Kamala, as a child, used to watch an old woman sit and stare outside aimlessly in an attempt to stay connected with the world. Now, at seventy, she connects to people via the internet, creating an imaginary young girl in love, writing her blog, and receiving responses. However, even as she gets addicted to the interaction, she begins losing her battle against dementia.

#### 18. Play: Ojha Fanoosh

Playwright: Based on Christopher Marlowe's Dr. Faustus

Director: Gunaker Dev Goswami

Group: Purbaranga, Assam

Language: Assamese

Duration: 1.20 hrs

Inspired and based on Christopher Marlowe's "Dr. Faustus", this play is its Assamese adaptation presented in a traditional theatre form. Ojha Fanoosh himself is not just a

man, he is a myth. He is the tireless seeker, searching for knowledge, forbidden and otherwise. He is the driving force of curiosity and the ambitious yearning for control over knowledge and the universe, that lurks within all humanity. Since he is not definable as a historical being whose life can be substantiated in documentary evidence, in this play his mystic nature has been highlighted.

#### 19. Play: Park

Playwright: Manav Kaul

Director: Kumud Mishra

Group: Aranya Theatre Group, Maharashtra

Language: Hindi

Duration: 1 hr 20 mins

Any park.

In...just about anywhere.

With three regular benches. And three men...just any men...squabble about the choicest of seats.

Because each one's claim is the greatest, and the most fundamental.

And....just about anywhere, there is never enough room for everyone.

#### 20. Play: Roop Aroop

Playwright & Director: Tripurari Sharma

Group: Shabdaakaar Art & Cultural Society, New Delhi

Language: Hindi

Duration: 70 minutes

This play has the popular performing tradition of 'Nautanki' as its backdrop. Till some time back—and even today in certain parts of the country—female roles would be played by men who would take on feminine personas, in a performance style that was passed on from generation to generation. The play looks at what happens when women set foot on the stage and start performing. The tussle between accomplished male actors and the aspiring women who wanted to enter what was traditionally

seen as the man's space, could not have been an easy one. This is an attempt by two young actors to explore some of the human dimensions of this phenomenon.

21. Play: Madhabi

Playwright : Bhisham Sahni

Director: Smt Swatilekha Sengupta

Group: Nandikar, West Bengal

Language : Bengali

Duration: 2 hours & 15 minutes (including 10 min intermission)

When Galab offers Gurudakshina to Vishwamitra, the latter in an attempt to teach him humility, demands eight hundred Ashwamedha horses. Unable to meet this demand, and driven by divine intervention he arrives at Yayati's hermitage. Yayati has nothing to offer to him except his daughter Madhabi, endowed with boons of eternal virginity and the gift of begetting sons destined to be king of kings. What follows is the great drama of Madhabi in quest of eight hundred Ashwamedha horses. Amidst several cross-currents the play explores different aspects of Madhabi—her duty, her love and her identity.

22. Play: Tritiyo Anko, Otoeb

Playwright & Director: Soumitra Chatterjee

Group: Prachyo New Alipore, West Bengal

Language: Bengali

Duration: 1 hr 40 mins

The play starts with something of a prologue where the protagonist, as if in a nightmare, encounters an unknown guest, who is an assassin waiting to kill him. The protagonist then starts his autobiography and travels down memory lane. He reminisces about his family and recounts amusing incidents from his boyhood and youth; he reveals his traumatic experiences during the Great Famine of Bengal, the War of Independence and partition; and he talks about the third phase of his life which is characterized by failing health, the

threat of incurable diseases, and the reality of death.

23. Name of the play: Suraj ka Satwaan Ghoda

Playwright: Dr. Dharamveer Bharati

Director: Rajkumar Rajak

Name of the group: Ex-Tra – An Organization, Uttar Pradesh

Languages: English, Polish, Bangla, Bhojpuri, Rajasthani, Hindi

Duration: 1 hr 30 mins

The play presents 'love' in various dimensions, and the individual's struggle to achieve it. The various factors that cause turmoil between lovers include disparity in socio-economic conditions, and different cultural and traditional backgrounds. It focuses on the threats that love faces and also on its faulty interpretation. It aims to influence and initiate positive changes within individuals and society.

24. Play: Shamnadraba Mami

Concept & Direction: Heisnam Tomba

Group: Kalakshetra, Manipur

Language: Multilingual (Manipuri, Bengali, Gujarati, Assamese, Rabha)

Duration: 50 mins

Play:

The play Shamnadraba Mami, meaning disjointed image, is about the unending conflict in Manipur, contextualized against the growing disenchantment with strife, and the torment and turmoil a war-torn land creates in the minds of its people. Reflecting upon the bitter human conditions and the breakdown of social, legal and psychological support systems, the play, in its search for peace, talks about the captive citizens of a free country.

25. Play: Sanchari

Playwright: Sumathy Murthy

Director: A. Mangai

Group: Marappachi, Chennai

Language: Kannada

Duration: 50 mins

Play:

Sanchari is the story of Raag Kalyani. The play begins with the different versions of the origin of the raag, be it from medieval Greece, ancient Persia or Arabia. The play then moves on to speak of Indian composers and the history of the raag is traced through a mesh of stories from the sultanate period including Akbar's court in the north and Krishnadevaraya's court in south India. The attempt to codify the raag into melakartha and ragaragini system is commented upon. The 17th century musicologist, Venkatamakhi, who is said to have banned the raag for her unconventional origins is spoken off and challenged.

26. Play: Some Stage Directions for Henrik Ibsen's John Gabriel Borkman

Based on Henrik Ibsen's John Gabriel Borkman and Texts by the Raqs

Media Collective (Monica Narula, Jeebesh Bagchi and Shuddhabrahta

Sengupta)

Director: Zuleikha Chaudhari

Group: Zuleikha Chaudhari Productions, Delhi

Language: English and Hindi

Duration: 1 hr 10 mins

Play

The play revolves around John Gabriel Borkman, former bank manager imprisoned for financial fraud and released eight years ago; Ella, John's former lover; Gunhild, Ella's twin sister married to John; and Erhart, John and Gunhild's son. While John was in prison, Ella took great care of Erhart. When the play unfolds, she shares the fact that she suffers from a terminal illness and requests permission for him to live with her and take her name. Borkman agrees but Gunhild refuses;



Erhart turns up to say that he cannot live for either of them, or for his father. John leaves the house, goes out into the winter night with Ella, and eventually dies.

27. Play: Siddhartha Gautama Dekhi Buddha Samma...Ek Yatra

Playwright: Vijay Mishra

Direction: Bipin Kumar

Group: Srijana Natya Manch, Sikkim

Language: Nepali

Duration: 1 hr 45 mins

Play

The play is based on an incident that occurred between Icchamati and Nillohith, two newcomers who wanted to join the Sangh started by Gautama Buddha and run by his disciple, Ananda. As Icchamati and Nillohith are about to enter the Sangh, a certain situation arises that takes Icchamati to the verge of violating its disciple. Ananda arrives on the scene and unable to answer her questions, he orders her to leave. Icchamati then expresses her desire to meet the Buddha, but is not allowed to do so. She, therefore, leaves, but only after accusing her accusers of misrepresenting the Buddha and with a promise to return someday. The play looks at what happens after this incident and stresses the multi-dimensional nature of truth.

28.

Play: Sangeet Ranadundubi

Playwright : Veer Ramanrao Joshi

Director: Uday Dhupkar

Group: Navneet Cultural Association, Maharashtra

Language : Marathi

Duration: 2 hours 45 minutes (including 10 min intermission)

Written in 1927 against the backdrop of the freedom struggle, the play tells the story of how King Kandarp of the Kadamba regime surrenders his kingdom as per a peace treaty with the enemy nation, but his fiancé, Tejaswini, opposes this

decision. When the enemy's flag is hoisted, Tejaswini protests and is arrested. The enemy King Matang Yuvraj usurps all power and arrests King Kandarp. Matters come to a head, and finally all ends well as Kandarp, along with his loyalists, wins back kingdom by defeating Matang Yuvraj.

## 29. Play: The Surprised Body Project

Choreographer: Francesco Scavetta

Group: Wee Company, Italy

Language: Italian

The Surprised Body Project embodies different kind of meetings, both in the sense of cultural meeting, by traveling with residencies in different countries, involving local dancers, but mostly in a conceptual way: through emphasizing that state of mind that allows us to be open physically and mentally, and that is related to awareness and perception. The goal is the scornful athleticism, the absurd acrobatics of a body in balance, that state of precariousness, not only physical, in which one might fall at any moment, even if this will not happen. The play also explores how the movement can be challenged by limitations in different body parts, with a sense of the body as damaged or scarred, fragmented; a disjointed body manipulation, a concentrate of fluidity and deformation, humour and folly.

## 30 Play: The Songs of Euripides

Playwright: Euripides

Director: Tomasz Rodowicz

Group: Theatre Association Chorea, Lodz, Poland

Language: Polish, Ancient Greek

Duration: 50 minutes

### Play

Songs of Euripides revolves around women called the Bacchae. The performance focuses on reading the choir parts of Euripides' classic play through gesture, song and dance. The play is contemporary choreia, and through the unity of music,

gesture and word is looking for a new language to communicate with the world. The primeval rhythm of Greek texts along with ancient music in the background sets the stage for choral, polyphonic interpretations of the Dionysian myth, as the atmosphere of Bacchic Maenads pervades space, sound, gesture and movement.

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### 31. Play: Ugetsu Monogatari

Written & Directed by: Madoka Okada

Group: Kaden Theatrical Art Company, Katsushika, Japan

Language: Japanese

Duration: 1 hour

The play that unfolds in 10th century Japan, opens on a seashore, where a beautiful lady named Manago comes to the house of Toyoo, a son of a rich fisherman, to take shelter from the rain. Toyoo lends her his umbrella and promises to meet her again. One day he goes to her house on the pretext of getting back his umbrella, and gets intimate with her. due to a series of incidents he discovers that she is not human but a serpent who transforms herself into a woman. Driven by her deep passion for Toyoo, Manago, the serpent, stalks him. As the play develops, one is left with the question of whether or not her non-human love will be accepted by him?

### 32. Play: In a Yellow Sun: Memories of an Earthquake

Written & Directed by: Cesar Brie

Group: Teatro de los Andes, Bolivia

Language: Spanish, with English subtitles

Equal parts docu-play, physical theatre and comic burlesque, En Un Sol Amarillo sheds light on tragedy and corruption with wit and pathos. Fusing actual testimonies with electrifying theatrical imagery, it recreates the feverish atmosphere of Bolivia in 1998, when a massive earthquake rocked the country's foundations. An emotionally-charged retelling of a

community faced with devastation, it is timeless in its urgency, and sheds light on the calamity wrought by the earthquake and the corruption that followed. A gripping story told with wit, pathos, simplicity and creativity that resonates the world over.

33. Play: Khatijabai of Karmali Terrace Based on Stella Kon's Emily Of Emerald Hill.

Director: Quasar Thakore Padamsee

Group: Q Theatre Productions, Maharashtra

Language: English

Duration: 1 hr 15 mins

The play is about an orphan girl who marries into the Karmali household. We discover Khatija through her exploits and the relationships with those around her as she moves along the fascinating journey of life. Gradually Khatijabai emerges as the powerful matriarch, wrapping her family in 'the web of her providing'.

Originally located in Singapore, this version has been set in the Khoja community of Bombay. The play opened in November 2004 at the prestigious Prithvi Theatre Festival and has been staged successfully in Bombay, Bangalore, Chennai and Hyderabad since then.

34. Play: Khwabon Ke Musafir

Playwright: Intizar Hussain

Director: Zia Mohyeddin

Group: National Academy of Performing Arts, Pakistan

Language: Urdu

Duration: 1 hr 20 mins

Khwabon Ke Musafir, based on a short story by the eminent Urdu writer, Intizar Hussain, deals with the clash that occurs between the different cultural lineages that migrants from different regions brought with them to Pakistan. It also looks at the new culture that started emerging in the new geographical and historical entity that Pakistan emerged as.

### 35 Play: Muaré

Concept, Direction & Performance: Marina Quesada and Natalia Lopez

Group: Marina Quesada and Natalia Lopez

Language: Spanish (with English subtitles)

Duration: 55 minutes

#### Play

'Movement and stillness' are the first in a vast game of oppositions that find their ground in the body of the characters in Muaré. Wandering around at the edge of a party, two slim, frail figures help each other between fantasies, worries, and hope. They remain in suspension, without leaving or entering. They seem trapped in a system that includes being marginalized as part of it. Muaré is like a transparent prism that rotates, sometimes slowly, sometimes fast, showing many faces of the same thing, revealing pieces of the intimacy of those who stand at the border.

### 36. Play: Chumar Pathrangal

Playwright: N.A.Muthusamy

Director: K.S.Rajendran

Group: School of Drama and Fine Arts, University of Calicut

Language: Malayalam

Duration: 1 hr 10 mins

Chumar Pathrangal is about the political, religious, and film-related posters that are all over Chennai walls. These posters play a crucial role in the lives of the people. The play tries to portray the collective dreams and desires of the society, and is not about any individual. It talks about the clash between the popular, dominating cultural voices and the new radical, critical voices in social, political and cultural circles. The intolerance inherent in the dominating culture and its way of dealing with new voices is depicted in the play via theatrical language through the body, voice and imagination of the actors.

37. Play: Sharel-Sha

Playwright : Nelladhaja Khuman

Director: Domarendra Akham

Group: Public Theatre Artists Association, Manipur

Language: Manipuri

Duration: 1 hr 10 mins

Sharen-Sha (Sacrificial Animals) is about the evil of child abduction and sacrifice, and its traumatic impact on the parents of victims. Worried about their children's security, womenfolk become 'meira paibis' during the night, holding flames and guarding the village. They pressurize the abductors to bring the kidnapped children for an open session in public. But the threatened children, unable to express their true feelings, agree to become sacrificial animals.

38. Play: Great Expectations

Group: National School of Drama Student Diploma Production

Playwright: Inspired by Charles Dickens' Great Expectations

Design and direction: Swati Mittal

Language: Hindi

Duration: I hour

Pip, an orphan, lives with his old sister and her husband. He meets an escaped convict named Abel Magwitch and helps him against his will. Magwitch is recaptured and Pip is taken care of by Miss Havisham. He falls in love with the cold-hearted Estella, Miss Havisham's ward. With the help of an anonymous benefactor, Pip is properly educated and he becomes a snob. But eventually, through a series of unfolding mysteries Pip's 'great expectations' are ruined. Finally, life makes him work as a clerk in a trading firm with his friend, and that is where he eventually finds his peace.

39. Play: Pedro Paramo: Love Stories of Our Cities Inscribed

Group: National School of Drama Student Diploma Production

Playwright: Adaptation of Juan Rulpho's short novel Pedro Paramo

Direction: Firoz Khan

Language: Hindi

Duration: 1 hour

Since the world around us has been formed because of continuous change and the rise and fall of civilizations, it is possible that our present world order may also follow the same path and get wiped out to give place to a new order. The play contains several interesting characters and is full of incidents structured around an entire world teeming with life and creatures that are in contact with our present world. The non-linearity of the text can be seen as symbolic of the ever-changing shifts and points of view in our lives, its pace, complexities, etc.

40. Play: An Autobiography of a devil

Playwright: Kakarkapudi Narasimha Yoga Patanjali

Director: Shiva

Group: National School of Drama Student Diploma Production

Language: Hindi

Duration: 1 hour

Once upon a time a devil who lives in a forest decides to write his autobiography. As he does so, the forest is visited by Gandharva who comes to eat the mahua flower with his peacock, and the autobiography is read by him. The argument between the devil and Gandharva generates four stories, after which Gandharva suggests that the devil stop writing the autobiography.

41. Play: Bisarjan

Playwright: Rabindranath Tagore

Director: Suman Mukhopadhyay

Group: Tritiyo Sutra

Language: Bengali

Gobindamanikya, Tripura's monarch, on realizing the futility of blood sacrifices, issues a ban on these unnecessary slaughters at the altar of the Goddess, which causes a general

discontent in the state that is encouraged by high priest Raghupati. In the fray is caught Jayasingha, a Rajput by birth, who has unquestionable faith in the deity and his mentor. Caught between blind faith and a mixed sense of morality, it seems that the only way he can break the stalemate is by his own sacrifice that would make possible the offering so cherished by Raghupati and would save the noble king as well.

42. Play: Archeekaal

Group: Roshan Art Centre

Playwright: Syed Yaqoob Dilkash

Director: Reshi Rashid

Duration: 1 hour and 10 minutes

Language: Kashmiri

Play

Archeekaal is all about Kashmir. Kashmir as it was in the past, Kashmir as it is now, and the future Kashmir envisioned by the people. The play highlights the Kashmir of today as viewed from all spheres of life – social, political, cultural, economic, and intellectual. It examines and explores the reasons for the present turmoil, and also tries to bridge the gap between Kashmir and the rest of the country when it shows the feelings of a Kashmiri mother for her son and also for a soldier who dies. The play stresses on peace, humanity, and unity as the only solution to the Kashmir problem.

43. Play: The Barber of Seville

Text: Pierre-Augustin Caron De Beaumarchais

Director – Éric Vigner

Group: CDDB-Theatre of Lorient, National Drama Centre, France

Language: French

Duration:

Play

The Barber of Seville is a love comedy confronting desire and feelings, reason and impulses. The plot involves a Spanish



count, Almaviva, who has fallen in love at first sight with Rosine. To ensure that she really loves him and not just his money, the Count disguises himself as a poor college student named Lindor, and attempts to woo her. His plans are foiled by Rosine's guardian, Doctor Bartholo, who keeps her locked up in his house and intends to marry her himself. The Count's luck changes after a chance reunion with an ex-servant of his, Figaro, who is currently working as a barber and therefore has access to the Doctor's home. Figaro devises a variety of ways for the Count to access Bartholo's home and talk to Rosine. After many developments, the story culminates in the marriage of the Count and Rosine.

#### 44. Play: Forest & He Who Burns

Director: Wendy Jehlen

Group: ANIKAI Dance, USA

Forest

Language: Non-verbal

Duration: 1 hour

Brother Blue's voice, sound and breath open the door to the world of the Forest. The butterfly is the gatekeeper, our god of the threshold, discovery, wonder, the space between. In the end, his breath brings us back out into the mundane, changed. Brother Blue, to whom Forest is dedicated, was a storyteller and performer of international acclaim, and one of my personal mentors.

He Who Burns

Language: Urdu, some Korean and English

Duration: 1 hour

The play is an exploration through dance, text, video, and music of the figure of Iblis (Satan) as understood in Sufi traditions. It talks about the nature of humanity's relationship with the divine, the eternal quest for unity and the illusion of duality in the human experience.

45. Play: Aroj Charitammrito

Playwright: Masum Reza

Director: Tariq Anam Khan

Group: Nattokendro

Language: Bengali

Duration: 2 hrs 30 mins

Aroj Charitammrito is a true story based on the life of Aroj Ali Matubbar – a self educated man, a philosopher, a thinker, asking questions and challenging all superstitions, as well as stories made up by religious leaders (clergymen), or the hujurs.

46. Play: All About Love

Playwright: Alexander Oles

Director: Alexey Kuzhelny

Group: Suzirya Kyiv Academic Theatre Art Studio

Language: Ukrainian

Duration: 1 hr 7 mins

The play, using classic literature and sounding sharply contemporary, unites different generations, centuries and even historical epochs in the understanding of supreme values of human life. The meaning of the performance is transmitted to the audience via an animated cartoon, a puppet show, and through pantomime and plastic drama. The performance is imbued with modern and folk Ukrainian music in contemporary adaptation, and the production uses metaphors, symbols, and allegories.

47. Play: Pueta Peralta

Director: Francisca Bernardi and Maria Pas Vicens

Group: Chile de Papel, Chile

Language: Spanish with English subtitles

Duration: 45 mins

The voice of the popular sectors of Chilean society at the end of the 19th, beginning of the 20th century was the Lira

popular, single-sheet published poems in décimas that were illustrated with simple woodcuts, commenting from a distinctive perspective on national occurrences and local events affecting the poet. One of these poets was Juan Bautista Peralta.

This is his story, the story of a poor, illiterate and blind man who became a poet, a singer and a trade union leader; and it is the history of Chile in that era, seen from the perspective of the people, from the singing to the humane and the divine.

48. Play: Sagara Kanyaka (Lady from the Sea)

Playwright: Henrik Ibsen

Director: Jyothish M.G.

Group: Abhinaya Theatre Research Centre, Kerala

Language: Malayalam

Duration: 1hr 45 mins

Play

The play, an adapted version of Ibsen's Lady from the Sea, focuses primarily on the three lead characters—Ellida Wangel, Dr. Wangel, and the stranger. This stranger, once engaged to Ellida, has a compelling power over her and has returned to take her away. The story weaves through absurdities, the lack of understanding and the constant search for meaning, selfhood and existence in human relationships.

49. Plays: Creeper

Playwright& Director: Ram Ganesh Kamatham

Group: Actors Ensemble India Forum (AEIF), Bengaluru

Language: English

Duration: 1 hr 10 mins

Creeper is a modern re-imagination of the tale of Vikram and Betal. It is about two story-tellers in the city, who have amazing stories to share, but the problem is that they don't agree on how to tell the story! The play slams this mythos into a contemporary urban setting – creating a shadowy world

that is immediately recognizable, yet bizarre and entertaining. The performance freewheels us through a modern urban landscape, with a racy text and riveting performances.

50. Play: Khatijabai of Karmali Terrace Based on Stella Kon's Emily Of Emerald Hill.

Director: Quasar Thakore Padamsee

Group: Q Theatre Productions, Maharashtra

Language: English

Duration: 1 hr 15 mins

Khatijabai of Karmali Terrace is about an orphan girl who marries into the Karmali household. We discover Khatija through her exploits and the relationships with those around her as she moves along the fascinating journey of life. Gradually Khatijabai emerges as the powerful matriarch, wrapping her family in 'the web of her providing'.

51. Play: Hamlet Machine

Group: National School of Drama Student Diploma Production

Playwright: Adapted from Heiner Muller's Hamlet Machine

Director: Anjali Shinde

Language: Hindi

Duration: 1 hour

Play

Hamlet Machine is supposed to be a historical play depicting the fall of Communism in Germany. It comprises characters from Shakespeare's Hamlet and also borrows a few situations from the original play, while departing from it in other ways. The play is about the broken dreams of revolution, motherhood, art, survival and humanity; about individuals who move with the times and those who get left behind.

52. Play: Reshmi Roomal

Group: National School of Drama Student Diploma Production

Playwright: Based on Shakespeare's Othello

Director: Prashant Parmar

Language: Hindi

Duration: 1 hour

### Play

A non-professional theatre company is rehearsing Shakespeare's Othello. The actors playing the roles of Iago and Desdemona, Narendra and Neha respectively, are a couple in real life. However, Neha has a suspicion that Narendra is involved in an extra-marital affair with Priya, who is playing the role of Emilia in the play. Because of this suspicion, Neha is assailed by doubts that disrupt the rehearsals of the play. The climax is reached during the handkerchief sequence, and Neha is finally left feeling as heartbroken as Desdemona, who was also betrayed and killed in a parallel tragic pattern.

### 53. Play: Aattramai

Group: Koothu-p-pattarai Trust

Playwrights: N.Muthuswamy, Sundara Ramaswamy,  
Ku.Pa.Rajagopalan & Siranjeevi

Director: N.Muthuswamy

Language: Tamil

Duration: 1 hr 30 mins

### Play

The entire production is a compilation of 4 short – Aattramai deals with the contrasting lives of two young two newly married women; Prasadham is about a poor policeman who wants to celebrate his daughter's birthday but lacks the money to do so; Karuvelamaram revolves around a tree that has grown in a disputed public land; and Jothidappuli is about a poor person trying desperately and unsuccessfully to get a job. The stories depict the irony and vices prevalent in our society, and strike just the right balance with their subtle and effective acting, authentic Tamil dialogues, countryside music, and tongue-in-cheek commentary.

### 54. Play: Gaddi Charan Di Kaahal Bari Si

Group: Manch-Rangmanch

Playwrights: Baldev Singh Dhindsa, Dr. Jaswinder Singh, Harpreet Sekha, Veena Verma, Surjit Patar (poet)

Direction: Kewal Dhaliwal

Language: Punjabi

Duration: 1hr 15 mins

### Play

This play is a combination of poems and short stories that tell of the lives of young, illegal immigrants. Due to several compulsions they are forced to leave their countries and move to foreign lands that they have exalted and idealized images of. However, instead of paradise-like lands of opportunities and plenty, they are faced with lives of exploitation, bad living conditions and a fugitive-like existence. The play, therefore, is the representation of the defeated hopes of such people.

### 55. Solo Performance: Sweet Sorrow

Choreographer: Preethi Athreya

Duration: 55 minutes

Language: Dance using texts in English, French, Tamil and Telugu

The theme of loss and the indulgence in pain is a most urgent story, waiting to be recounted in all its detail, if only to be exhausted in the continuous retelling of it. Combining dance, text, film, and music, Sweet Sorrow plays with the intersection of universal icons and well-known cliches about loss and longing with the more obscure personal narratives of the same. In doing so, it tries to touch the crucial 'absurd' that is at the heart of all loss.

### 56. Group Performance: Inhabited Geometry

Choreographer: Mandeep Raikhy

Collaborators: Anusha Lall, Swati Mohan, Manju Sharma, Rajat Bakshi, Sanjay Singh

Rana & Mandeep Raikhy

Language: Non-verbal

Duration: 43 minutes

Inspired by the notion of lived experience of architecture in Gaston Bachelard's Poetics of Space, Inhabited Geometry aims to define, architecturally and imaginarily, the idea of home. As an investigation of the idea of 'site,' cultural as well as architectural, and an attempt to create a new vocabulary emerging out of experiments with bharatanatyam, this piece is essentially an exploration undertaken with six dancers to paint a picture of an imaginary home. By tracing the entire process of inhabiting an architectural form – Inhabited Geometry engages with the idea of 'home' simultaneously as a tangible place and a place of dreams.

57. Play: Charandas Chor

Playwright: Habib Tanvir

Direction: Anup Hazarika

Group: Ba (The Creative Breeze), Guwahati

Duration: 1 hr 35 mins

Language: Assamese

Play

The play is about a thief who promises his guru that he will never to tell a lie. Charan attempts to show his sincerity by offering never to do four things – eat off golden plates, ride an elephant at the head of a procession, marry a queen and accept the throne of a country. The guru then tells him that since he had so generously undertaken to give up four things on his own account, he should also undertake to give up one little thing – lying – at his guru's request. The thief consents and that is how the promise comes to pass.

58. Play: Salaam India

Playwright: Nicholas Kharkongor (inspired by Pavan Verma's bestseller Being Indian)

Director: Lushin Dubey

Group: Theatre World, Delhi

Language: Hindi, English

Duration: 1 hr 30 mins

The play has four actors who portray sixteen characters altogether. Different situational excerpts from their life bring about contradictions, joy, humor, hope and aspirations that drive them. Inspired by Pavan Verma's bestseller Being Indian, four intertwined vignettes in the play explore the issues of regionalism, dowry, and the growth of technology in a traditional society. The stories cover all classes of society in contemporary India.

59. Play: Dara

Playwright / Director: Shahid Nadeem

Group: Ajoka Theatre, Pakistan

Language: Urdu

Duration: 2 hrs

Dara is about the dramatic and moving story of Dara Shikoh, eldest son of Emperor Shahjahan, who was imprisoned and executed by his younger brother Aurangzeb. Dara was not only the Crown Prince, but also a poet, painter and sufi. The play also explores the existential conflict between Dara the crown prince, and Dara the Sufi and the artist.

60. Play: Santa Maria de Iquique: Revenge of Ramón Ramón

Director: Manuel Loyola

Group: El Oraculo Theatre Company, Chile

Language: Non-verbal

Duration: 55 mins

In 1907 there was a massive killing of miners and their families in the North of Chile in which four thousand people were murdered. The play is based on the mission of a survivor worker, Antonio Ramon Ramon, who decides to avenge the death of his brother by executing General Silva Renard, who was responsible for the genocide.

61. Play: The Bitter Belief of Cotrone the Magician

Playwright & Director: Andrea Cusumano



Group: Centre for the Experimentation of Space Applied  
Dramaturgy (CeSDAS)

Language: English & Italian

Duration:

A nomadic site-specific performance, the play draws inspiration from Luigi Pirendellos's *The Giants of the Mountains*, and is a stunning visual theatre piece fusing puppetry, projections, performance and live soundscapes. The creative process extends beyond the original site, continuing to evolve throughout the duration of the project; reaching, influencing and being influenced by multiple spaces, narratives and audiences.

62. Play: *My Country, Life for Remembrance, and The Quest*

Group: Lamusica Independent Theatre Group

Director: Nora Amin

Playwrights: Eva Balzer, Saleh Saad, and Nora Amin

Language:

*My Country*: English

*Life for Remembrance*: Arabic

*The Quest*: Live music & dance

Between the search for a personal and true homeland, the struggle to survive or even to die in dignity and be remembered, and the quest to grasp the soul and find one's own transcendence, this triple bill *My Country, Life for Remembrance and The Quest* navigates between three different theatre

styles, all heavily incorporating physical expression.

*My Country* is a highly poetic and metaphoric dance theatre piece. Set between Germany,

Egypt and India, it tells a journey of a young woman who gathers pieces of

herself in different cultures to recreate her own identity.

*Life for Remembrance* is an unusual account of the incidents of Saleh Saad, a

theatre maker who died on 5 September 2005 along with almost

seventy

theatre artist in a horrifying fire in a theatre venue in Upper Egypt.

The Quest is a piece based on vocal expression and physicality, combining live music and physical and dramatic inspiration from sufism, on how to find our own spirituality within and to affirm our being

63. Play: Othello

Playwright: William Shakespeare

Director: Atefeh Arab Tehrani

Group: Indra Theatre Group, Iran

Language: Non-verbal

Duration: 1 hr 15 mins

Shakespeare's Othello, the Moor of Venice is a tragedy revolving around four central characters: Othello, his wife Desdemona, his lieutenant Cassio, and his trusted advisor Iago. The play explores the complexities and conflicts of human emotions. This performance of Othello will be performed on the basis of the physical movement of actors, in relation to their partners as well as to their own individual actions.

64. Play: Miranda

Playwright: Farrukh Dhondy

Director: Jatinder Verma

Group: Tara and Lucid Arts, UK

Language: Dance, with musical score and text in English

The play is a tale of a wannabe bollywood actress, Miranda, who joins a mysterious touring theatre company in Goa, where she meets British actor, Ferdie who she falls in love with. Farrukh Dhondy's monologue weaves questions of identity, decolonisation and gender, to produce a gentle mix of mystery and magic realism.

65. Play: The Amorous Lotus Pan

Based on the original by Shi Nai'an, the homonymous Sichuan Opera by Wei Minglun and the play by Ouyang Yuqian

Director: Professor Chen Gang

Group: Central Academy of Drama, China

Language: Chinese

Duration:

The plot traces the story of Pan Jinlian, orphaned at an early age and sold to Zhang Dahu, a rich man, who rapes her and gives her to Wu Da, a dwarf, as a punishment. Over time Pan falls in love with Wu Song, Wu Da's younger brother, who doesn't reciprocate her feelings. Finally, she gets involved with Ximen Qing, with whose help she poisons her husband.

66. Play: Makaraakshaya (The Dragon)

Playwright: Yevgeny Shvarts

Director: Dharmasiri Bandaranayake

Group: TrikonE Cultural Foundation, Sri Lanka

Language: Sinhala with English subtitles

Duration: 2 hr 10 mins

This play is a political satire aimed at totalitarianism in all forms. The plot is based on the attempt of the hero, Lancelot, to liberate people in a land suffering under the Dragon's brutal rule. However, his killing of the Dragon in a fight does not free the people; all that changes is the Burgomaster acceding to the position formerly occupied by the Dragon, and he realizes that his task is much more complex – the killing of the dragon in each one of them.

67. Bikhre Bimb

Playwright: Girish Karnad

Dir: Rajinder Nath

Group: Padatik, Kolkata

Lang: Hindi

Duration:

Manjula Sharma is not a very successful Hindi short-story writer who suddenly becomes wealthy and internationally famous by writing a best-seller in English. The question haunting

her, however, is whether in opting for the global audience, she has betrayed her own language and identity? Now, without warning, it is her own “image” that decides to play confessor, psychologist and inquisitor.

#### 68. Homage to Shyamanand Jalan

Dir: Vinay Sharma

Presented by Padatik, Kolkata

Language: Hindi

Duration:

Homage presents excerpts from 5 plays directed by Shyamanand Jalan, showcasing at least one representative work from each decade of the Padatik years. In between the staged excerpts are projected glimpses of his other directorial works and of Shyamanand the actor. Homage combines all their energies to express how Shyamanand's theatre explored a diverse range of styles and content.

#### 69. Garbage Project

By Harish Khanna, Delhi

A broad-based exploration of materiality, the project is an exploration of life in garbage by an actor, created in collaboration with other actors. Amongst other things it looks at the idea of garbage as waste, of the body as garbage or producer of garbage... in relation to the body of garbage. It will include four improvised performances based on images of lives in/and garbage from different parts of the country. Spread over four days the performances will be on the NSD campus.

#### 70. Play: What Happened? The 80\*81 findings.

By: Georg Diez and Christopher Roth

Language: English

Duration: 90 minutes

It was in the year 2010 that two researchers came up with the idea that the years 1980 and 1981 represented a major shift in

world history, the Great Transition. The play is the representation of the findings of this research that Diez and Roth called 80\*81.

71. Play: Jagadamba

Playwright: Ramdas Bhatkal

Director: Pratima Kulkarni

Groups: Aawishkar, Mumbai

Language: Hindi

Duration: 2 hrs with 10 mins intermission

The play Jagadamba tells the story of Kasturba Gandhi, a woman who neither followed Bapu blindly, nor resigned to her fate as the wife of the Mahatma. Most often, she resisted his experiments, his new ideas; but once she understood what they meant and the bigger picture behind them, she followed him wholeheartedly, devotedly even. The play traces her personal, political as well as emotional journey from Kasturba to Jagadamba.

72. Play: The Hardcore Machine (Based on Bertolt Brecht's "Buckower Elegies")

Script & Direction: András Urbán

Group: András Urbán Company, Serbia

Language: Hungarian (with English subtitles)

Duration: 50 mins

Brecht-The Hardcore Machine tells the story of a young working girl, who, before polishing her nails, lifts up a worker's glove and enters the wonderful world of ideology and corporeality. During the rehearsal process the actor only exists as a body. The body acts. Physical action evokes dramatic and historic contents. This is where the dramatic actor – he who executes and plays – enters the scene.

73. Play: Quality Street

Author: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Director: Maya Krishna Rao

Group: Vismayah, New Delhi

Language: English

Duration: 50 mins ( approx.)

Quality Street is a story of a mother and daughter, set in Lagos, Nigeria, but it can be transposed, with a few details changed, to several cities across the world. At a deeper level, it is a story that looks at issues that lie at the core of people's lives – of culture, values, relationships within a family.

74. Performance: Grey is Also a Colour

Choreographer: Navtej Johar

Group: Abhyas Trust

Duration:

Grey is Also a Colour is a dance-theater piece devised and performed by Navtej Johar. Inspired by Doris Lessing's novel The Grass is Singing, it is a story of human entanglements across class and colour boundaries. The piece examines and illustrates the theatrics of staunch social stances that are used to silently undermine, intimidate, control and steadfastly maintain class inequalities.

75. Solo Performance: Zindagi Madhur hai Kumansenu mein

Story: Abioseh Davidson Nicol

Adaptation, Design and Direction: Vageesh Kumar Singh

Language: Hindi

Duration: 50 min.

The story is about Bola, the protagonist of the story lives happily in the village Kumansenu, with her grand-daughter Asi, and is visited by her son, Meji. It portrays the beauty of life even though it depicts a society constrained in superstitions and supernatural powers. It shows the protest of a woman, almost living a life of enslavement in a male dominated society, in its own way.

76. Performance: In Vivo

Choreographer: Mickael Le Mer

Duration: 50 mins

In Vivo tells the story of the company, its doubts, its questioning, its searching. The dance is like the life of all human beings with its ups and downs, meetings and glances. In Vivo literally means 'within the living', and the performance is a living dance which does not need labels, and where the dancers enact emotions with their bodies, which when transformed into vocabulary, confirms the original identity of the company.

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## **NSD's 13th Bharat Rang Mahotsav Theatre Festival to open Festival featuring 81 productions**



## Still from Charandas Chor the Opening Play

### National School of Drama, 6th Jan 2010

The National School of Drama is one of the foremost theatre training institutions in the world and the only one of its kind in India. Set up by Sangeet Natak Academy in 1959 as one of its constituent units, it became an independent entity in 1975 registered as an autonomous organization, fully financed by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India.

The school has two performing wings; Repertory and Theatre-in-Education. In 1999, the school organized its first National Theatre Festival, which was christened Bharat Rang Mahotsav, generally held during January each year. The festival, since it is hosted by a training institute such as the NSD, in fact works as training tool, by offering drama students an opportunity to view national and international performances, on one platform. Since there are very few functioning repertories in India and many productions do not enjoy long run, the festival is a rare opportunity to see so much together.

### 13<sup>th</sup> BRM

The 13<sup>th</sup> Bharat Rang Mahotsav, marks the beginning of the New Year with another milestone for the prestigious National School of Drama (NSD), as its annual national and international theatre festival opens with concurrent shows at multiple venues in Mandi House over two weeks from 7 to 22 January 2011. The BRM or Theatre Utsav, as it is popularly known, has come to be regarded as one of the largest and most important theatre festivals in Asia.

In keeping with the tradition of presenting outstanding theatre that allows for meaningful engagement, this year also the BRM will be presenting a rich fare of 81 productions selected out of nearly 450 proposals received from across



India and from around the world. Taking forward the 'Young Experimenters' component of last year, BRM 13 also includes productions by graduates of the school in a synthesis of experience, new energy and vision.

## **Indian Component**

The 13<sup>th</sup> BRM is inaugurated this year with an energetic and lively production of Habib Tanvir's *Charandas Chor* from Assam directed by one of NSD's alumni, Anup Hazarika. The works of eminent contemporary Indian playwrights like Girish Karnad's *Bikhre Bimband* and Dharamveer Bharati's *Suraj Ka Saatwan Ghoda* are presented in striking new productions, alongside classics like Ibsen's *Lady of the Sea* (*Sagara Kanyaka*) and *Some Stage Directions for Henrik Ibsen's John Gabriel Borkman*, Alexander Pushkin's *Little Big Tragedies* and Tagore's 'A Wife's Letter' and '*Bisarjan*'. Shakespearean texts are re-explored in *Macbeth and Othello* (Reshmi Rumaal) while the human predicament in times of political turmoil is seen in *Hamlet Machine*, *Samanadraba Mami*, *Gaddi Charan Di Kaahal Bari Si*, *Sharel Sha* among others. Wishing to pay respects to Shyamanand Jalan, one of the most eminent of the 70's generation of theatre director/actors who passed away recently, we have an evening devoted to him entitled *Homage* which showcases scenes from some of Jalan's most outstanding productions produced by Padatik, Kolkata.

In dance/choreographed pieces like *Grey is Also a Colour* and *Sweet Sorrow* the focus is on inventing a movement based visual language. *Zindagi Madhur hai Kumansenu mein*, *Quality Street*, *Khatijabai of Karmali Terrace* and *Salaam India* revisit and reinterpret the received texts; While original scripts form the basis of *Before The Germination..*, *Dreams of Taleem*, *Park*, *Mathemagician* and *Tritiyo Anko* among others. From puppet plays to mime to dance/choreographed pieces to devised and experimental work in new media; the festival offers something for everyone.

## International Dimension

This year the Festival will be hosting 23 productions drawn from 20 countries – China, Pakistan, Chile, France, UK, Bolivia, Chile, Japan, Egypt, Argentina, London, Germany, Sri Lanka, USA, Poland, Bangladesh, Nepal, Serbia, Ukraine, Italy and Norway.

At the forefront of the international section this year we have three theatre productions from France. The classic opera by Beaumarchais, *Le Barbier de Seville*, will be seen in a spectacular adaptation with a French director, Eric Vigner, directing a group of Albanian actors of the National Theatre of Tirana. Also from France is *In Vivo*, a dance piece, “*Silent Words*” a mime performance by Laurent Decol, as well as a photographic exhibition on the Footsbarn Theatre.

It is for the first time that there is such a large component from Latin America. We have the opportunity to see some contemporary works with *Santa Maria de Iquique: Revenge of Ramon Ramon* and a puppet performance *Pueta Peralta* (Chile), *En un Sol Amarillo* (Bolivia), *Muare* (Argentina). The foreign component like the overall festival is as eclectic as it is diverse. From China we have “*The Amorous Lotus Pan*” based on the original Sichuan opera of the same name. *My Country, Life for Remembrance & The Quest* (Egypt), *Miranda* (UK), *He who Burns, Forest* (USA), *Surprised Body Project* (Italy/Norway) are all fine examples of physical theatre. One can also find unique conceptualization in *Ugetsu Monogatari* (Japan) and *All About Love* (Ukrainian), while plays like *Songs of Euripides*, *Brecht-The Hardcore Machine* revisit received text. From the SAARC countries we have *Khariko Ghera* (Nepal), *Khwabon Ke Musafir and Dara* (Pakistan), *Makarakshaya-The Dragon* (Sri Lanka), *Aroj Charitammrito* (Bangladesh) and *Stones and Mirrors* (Afghanistan).

# Festival in Chennai

In keeping with the practice started four years ago of sharing the fare invited for the festival at Delhi with another city, a part of the repertoire for BRM 13 will travel to Chennai with 19 of the invited productions for the Festival slated there from January 11 to 20, 2011. BRM Chennai will be presented at two venues Sir Mutha Venkatasubba Rao Concert Hall and Museum Theatre in the city.

## Other Allied Events

The Festival, as a melting point of different cultures provides a unique opportunity for enjoyment of theatre as well as professional interaction. A series of synergetic wrap around programmes that have been organized around the Festival comprises 'Meet the Director' which includes talks & interactive sessions with some of the directors/designers on Performance Language/Scenography/Set & Light Design. Three Photographic exhibitions include Abhi-Vyakti, an exhibition celebrating the actor, working methodologies of Asian theatre schools (part of Asia-Pacific Bureau of Drama Schools meet); and an exhibition on the Footsbarn Company, France. There will be other programmes like, a special performance of dance and music by Min Tanaka & Aki Takahashi, French mime by Laurant Decol, solo performances based on African themes, four improvised performances on garbage called *The Garbage Project* and a performance on *Social Gaming*. The Asia Pacific Drama Schools' Workshop and Festival will also be a part of the allied events.

## The Scale

The 81 performances and dozens of associated events in Delhi take place at seven venues – the Kamani Auditorium, the Shri Ram Centre, the LTG Theatre and the four venues within the premises of the NSD–Abhimanch, Sammukh, Bahumukh and Open Air besides its studio spaces like Abhikalp and TIE Space.

There are simultaneous performances and events spread over five to six venues each day during the two week run in Delhi and 18 productions at the two venues in Chennai during an eight day run there. BRM 13 will host around 3,000 theatre people from across India and the world. As in the past, the festival shows are expected to run to full houses, attracting nearly 70,000 spectators in Delhi and about 10,000 viewers in Bhopal.

To design, mount and coordinate a festival of this size in two cities involves a logistical feat that the NSD manages with élan because of its highly trained technical personnel, faculty and staff and the commitment they bring to the cause of theatre worldwide.

The mega event is an opportunity for the professionals, public and students alike to engage with the process and practice of contemporary theatre arts.

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## Complete Schedule Bharat Rang Mahotsava January 2011

13th BRM – Festival ([Click here to view schedule](#))

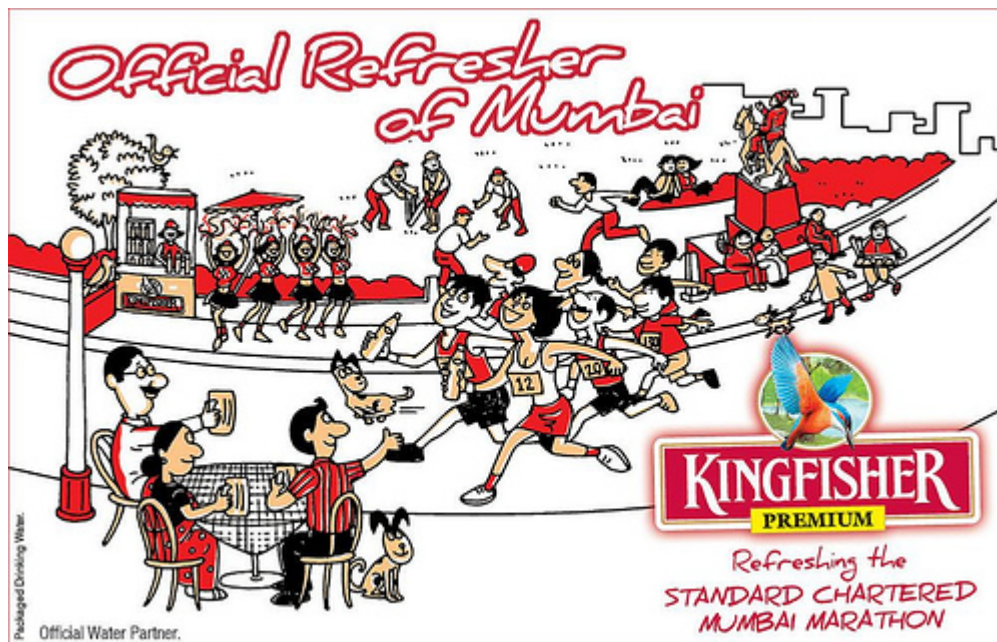


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India International Centre, 40 Max Mueller Marg, New Delhi

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# The Spirit of the Running Spirit By Neville Tuli



We did it, I did it. Mind has overwhelmed matter, delusions outlasted reasons.

I completed the half marathon at 9:14am, 21km in 2.30hrs, having never run more than 10km in my life, so pushing oneself beyond oneself as have thousands of others. One imagined the lungs and breathe would collapse first but the legs turned out more wobbly, after all I am a 'veteran' according to the marathon category, and childhood football probably took a greater toll than imagined.

It is unlikely that many would be able to have run the half marathon and have the stamina or will to go and write a few words to share with strangers, within the hour, but this need to write a few words finally became my motivation to finish the race (at the 14km point I think).

So many times the body was packing up, the knees crying, yet we dug deeper, and the body moved forward, and the mind tried to motivate itself to plug on. Initially I thought the run would be a good time for quiet introspection, to think clearly about all the issues which constitute one's infrastructure-building responsibilities. Yet, after the motivational start

with Rocky's 'Eye of the Tiger' the first two km seemed so very tough, as if even six will not be reached.

As we moved into the third km only Prithviraj from Osian's seemed capable of sustaining the journey. My Delhi staff seemed keen but had little clue about what 21km implies, but they came and competed with themselves, and are strengthened for the next challenge. After the first three km the breathe had already dried and there seemed to be no chance of completing this race by running, to walk seemed inevitable, but the mind naturally said not yet, at least reach six before your first walking step.

Then I saw a man pass me who was probably the age of what my father would have been today, and I smiled, so receiving another dose of energy. Quietly the mind kept focused, recognizing that all the strength lies within, that one has pushed on a daily basis for the last fifteen years, and so it will automatically happen now. When the legs and lungs tire, the mind will shout: not now, there is so much within, stores of energy you cannot see,

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## **Electric and Scintillating performances mark Environment Support Group's decade of engagement with environmental and social justice issues**

An electric performance of Kalaripayattu by Sree Narayana Guru Smaraka Vallabhatta Kalari Sangam (Chavakkad-Kerla, Bangalore



and Brussels) initiated the celebration of a decade of Environment Support Group's work advancing environmental and social justice initiatives. Soon this was to be followed by a scintillating recital of Odissi by danseuse Diya Sen. On a calm winter evening, when most of Bangalore was unusually quiet with most vehicles resting without fuel to run (given the week long fuel strike), folks who braved the skeletal public transport enthusiastically greeted the artistes' repertoire with gusto.



The crisp, energetic, robust and daring movements of the Kalari troupe, interspersed with many organic body movements (including one that revealed the body can be massaged with a sword) demonstrated years of discipline and practice produces such extravagant martial arts – a fitting tribute, as it were, to the spirit of upholding the wider public interest. It was akin to the effort demanded for setting afire the imagination of people in advancing public interest – tireless effort and perseverance are uncontested ingredients.





Prof. B. K. Chandrashekar, former Chairman of the Karnataka Legislative Council graced the occasion to release the Decadal Report of Environment Support Group. His argument for regarding and supporting such work as ESG's was involved in, was precise and persuasive. He narrated his experience in fighting for years to protect a public space in one of Bangalore's neighbourhoods, against a variety of powerful interests. Despite all the influence he could muster, it took him years and a Public Interest Litigation in the High Court, to ensure that the public space will be a park and nothing less. Considering that scale of effort was involved in saving but one neighbourhood park, the work of ESG, in comparison, was quite remarkable he argued. He did wonder why perceptions were so negative against NGOs when, the work that was advanced was so clearly in the wider public interest. Divergence of opinion is but a healthy process – that should not be the basis for conflict, instead efforts must be in converging different view points and perceptions to advance public interest for the benefit of this generation and generations to come.



Diya Sen greeted this message with grace, fluidity and a temperament that was characteristic of Lord Krishna's voyeurs pleasing his angry lover Radha. Purna Chandra Majhi vocalised

the concern accompanied as he was ably by Gandhi Mallik on the Pakhawaj. The tempo was set, and the romance of the evening reached a crescendo with Sunil Kant Saxena on Sitar offering soulful companionship. Sujit with the lilting sounds of his flute lifted the human spirit to dimensions unconquerable in mere words



The Celebration of the human spirit was complete. Acknowledgements flowed in plenty, and the warm and supportive audience gathered to congratulate the performers and each one of the team members of Environment Support Group for advancing past a decade in work that was challenging and often shyed away from. Every day we engage with issues of conflict. Every day we look on the other side of development and worry for those who don't get any of it. Every day we look for solutions to problems that are extremely complex – and more often than not considered not even problems. Simply because they cannot be factored in financially and economically and have a word now – externalities. In such a world where real issues are not issues, where financial scams galore crash the edifice, structure and innards of the capitalist world that has brought us teetering on the edge of climatic disaster, celebration of the deep and greater human spirit is in order.

ESG is 10 and we are happy to celebrate. We are grateful to our dear families and friends for being with us every step of

the way and helping us go on and on.... There is plenty to be done still. With your help and support we can do much much more. Thank you for coming. Thank you for writing to us with your warmest good wishes. Thank you for calling us and rewarding us with your words of support. Thank you for contributing to our collective cause, financially. Thank you for volunteering. Thank you for buying our publications and films and calendars and helping us get stronger. There are many more reasons for us to thank you..... Once more, warmest wishes for the New Year.

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## **Carlos Saura, Dharmendra, Gulzar, Rishi Kapoor get lifetime awards at MAMI**



Srinivas Sunderrajan  
receiving award from  
Aishwarya Rai



Dharmendra and Chief  
Guest Dev Anand

Mumbai, Mar 31: Veteran actor Dharmendra received the Lifetime Achievement award and Rishi Kapoor was acclaimed for his significant contribution to cinema for over 35 years at the concluding ceremony of the 10th International Film Festival, Mumbai.

Acknowledging this recognition, Rishi said at the function last night, "Usually, film industry personalities do not reveal their age but I want to say that I have not been working for 25 years I have been working for 35 years and I am proud of that."

The First Global Lifetime Achievement award was given to Carlos Saura, a renowned Spanish filmmaker, while lyricist-filmmaker Gulzar was conferred the award for outstanding contribution to Indian film music. "Each artist needs this kind of reassurance to prove that whatever he has been doing is right" Gulzar said after receiving the award.

Speaking to newsmen Mumbai Academy of the Moving Image Festival Chairman Shyam Benegal expressed confidence that this festival had now come to stay in the metropolis and this edition had been better than the previous ones.

A total of 140 films from 45 countries were showcased in the Festival held from March six to thirteen. They included 92 films showcased in the Global Vision section. The foreign and Indian retrospectives were devoted to films by Andrej Wajda

and Ritwik Ghatak respectively. The country in focus was China and the filmmaker in focus was Carlos Saura.

The Chief Guest of the event, evergreen Bollywood star Dev Anand, senior filmmaker Yash Chopra, Aishwarya Rai, and Shyam Benegal gave away the awards.

The Kodak award for technical excellence in sound recording was presented to Hitendra Ghosh who has been in the industry for more than 25 years and has worked on about 1800 films including all of Benegal.

In a new concept called 'Dimensions Mumbai', five-minute films based on different aspects of Mumbai were showcased by aspiring filmmakers under 25 years of age. A total of 82 entries had been received for this section. 'Vapsi' by S Srinivasan on the hardships a young aspiring actor faces in Mumbai bagged the top prize while Aishwarya S got the second prize for Mumbai Half Marathon and Ganesh More bagged the third prize for a film on Life in Mumbai.

The awards carrying cash components of Rs 100,000, Rs 30,000 and Rs 20,000 were sponsored by Mrs. Jaya Bachchan and given away by her daughter-in-law Aishwarya Rai Bachchan. The special jury awards were given to 'Handful of Sky' by Neha Singh and 'Patri' by Akshara Prabhakar. Renowned filmmaker and cinematographer said digital technology had done away with the 'caste system' in filmmaking and anyone could now make films.

In the Indian feature Film Competition, Darsheel Safary was awarded for playing the dyslexic child Ishaan Awasthi in 'Taare Zameen Par', Swathe Sen for playing Janki in 'Antardwand' while both the Best Film and FIPRESCI (International Federation of Film Critics) awards were bagged by the Marathi film 'Tingya' by Mangesh Hadawale on the delicate issue of farmers suicides. 'Frozen' which is the first full length feature film to be shot in Ladakh won the Special Jury Award for its director Shivaji Chandrabhushan.

Tina Ambani representing Reliance (Anil Dhirubhai Ambani Group) which sponsored the Festival, MAMI Trustee Kiran Shantaram, Manmohan Shetty, Festival Artistic Director Sudhir Nandgaonkar, Yash Chopra, Ranbir Kapoor, and his mother Neetu Kapoor, Indian Documentary Producers Association President Jahnu Barua, Amit Khanna of Reliance Entertainment, filmmaker Vinod Pande, and several other celebrities were present on the occasion. The event was conducted by television star Gaurav Kapoor and singer Mansi Scott also performed at the function with English and Hindi songs.

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## **Project Half Widows, in partnership with IAWRT and APDP – Info by Iffat Fatima, Filmmaker**



The project **"Half Widows"** is a three year media project. Which began in 2006. The project is a partnership between International Association of Women in Radio and Television (IAWRT), a forum for personal contact and professional development among women broadcasters worldwide

and the Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP) Kashmir. APDP is an association of the relatives of the victims of **Enforced Disappearances**, campaigning collectively to seek justice and to get information on the whereabouts of the missing members of their families. The project conceived and executed by Iffat Fatima is supported by FOKUS, a Norwegian based organisation which by supporting project based cooperation between Norwegian and their partner organisations in the south, aims to contribute to the improvement of economic, social and political status of women world wide.

The project is about the struggle of the family members of the disappeared persons in Kashmir who have spent vast sums of money, time, resources and energy in a legal system that has systematically failed to provide justice to the victims. Enforced disappearance is not recognized as a crime under Indian law. Specifically the project is about women whose husbands have disappeared and are missing in the more than decade old violence in Kashmir. These women known as **half widows** in Kashmir, are living in a state of limbo, suspended in a space where they lead a life of uncertainty and anxiety. There is no closure for them to pick up the threads of their lives and move on. Being young and vulnerable they are under the pressure of their family and society to stay within the framework of marriage and conform to a marital status, while as the reality is that they are without husbands. Their lives are torn apart and their status undefined, subject to Islamic legal procedures which are ambiguous and determined by local interpretations.

APDP was founded in 1994 by Parveena Ahangar whose 17-year-old son was abducted and never heard of again In 1994. Parveena filed a habeas corpus petition in the Srinagar High Court. With the help of human rights activists and lawyers more and more petitions continued to be filed. More and more family members got together, went to court together, held demonstrations together. Thus began a movement, a collective

struggle formalized as APDP. The testimonies of the members of APDP and the documentation of cases of disappeared persons in Kashmir indicate that the practice of enforced disappearance is widespread and systematic. Almost 8000 people are thought to have disappeared, some as young as 13 or 14 years old. A large number of disappearance cases remain undocumented for various reasons, including fear of reprisal allegedly by the security forces.

## **Media Documentation**

The media project seeks to document the personal experiences of these women and the stories which emerge from these experiences through the production of a documentary film. The documentary film will explore issues of memory , violence and healing and be a space for women whose voice is buried in the larger political and militaristic discourse to narrate their experiences with violence from their own perspectives. Besides a video documentary the project also includes 3 to 4 short video magazines which highlight immediate concerns and problems confronted by women as they struggle to get legal assistance and information about their family members who are missing.

However the larger objective of the project is to assist and support the APDP effort to launch a long term self sustaining information and advocacy campaign against "Disappearances" and to build awareness about its impact on women Community level participation and networking is an important component of the campaign. The process of documentation, dissemination and distribution is being undertaken through a consultative process with APDP members, a network of organisations, activists, academics and practitioners. Through workshops, and conferences APDP members are trained to acquire long term organisational and media skills to be able to carry on the advocacy campaign independently. The project raises important issues of human rights, peace and justice confronting other countries as well. It will generate material



that has international resonance as well as relevance and will urge policy makers and those who wield power to address the concerns of human rights , democracy and justice.

Source: IAWRT, Iffat Fatima

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# Pulling Strings – A review of the Ishara International Puppet Theatre Festival by Divya Raina



Daddee Pudumjee with  
his puppeteers and  
puppets

It doesn't quite matter whether one pulls strings or uses larger than life marionettes, glove or rod puppets, its pure theatre that one is watching. Quite distinct from a puppet or the *kathputli* show this form of theatre is as creative, compelling and meant for adult audiences as much as for kids. In fact **Dadi Pudumjee** has been a staunch crusader for the cause and promotion of puppet theatre for decades now. An extraordinarily talented puppet creator and manipulator, director, performer and choreographer, he along with his remarkably versatile crew of the **Ishara puppet theatre troupe**, has entertained and enabled Indian (and international) audiences to view a totally different type of performance art.

This was vividly brought out at the staging of the Spanish “Batuta” or small baton, at the recent **Ishara International Puppet theatre Festival** held at the **India Habitat Centre** in collaboration with **ICCR** and others. It was quite a treat to watch the interplay of music, lighting, spoken dialogue and most of all, the entrancing moves and gestures of the animated puppets of different shapes and sizes.

What came through clearly was the constant refrain” I love music” and also “*musica classica*”, and the entire duration of the performance was devoted to an exploration of different forms of music with accompanying puppet movement. The saxophone puppet duet was the highlight with its foot –tapping rhythm, but there were many other musical elements incorporated. It was as though there was an earnest plea in this globalised TV-corrupted world, to both young and old viewers to re-connect with “purer” forms of music than the fusion and confusion of mtv-inspired forms one generally finds today.

Did it work? For most of the audience, with its short-attention -span habits and general restlessness it was quite a novel experience. One wishes however that anxious moms insisting on ramming ‘culture’ down their offspring’s throats would dispense with their loud running commentaries which unfortunately become an unwelcome sound-track thrust upon one on such occasions.