



Natsamrat Natya Utsav has started in Delhi Theater. Amidst the fast-paced life of the city, there must be some moments of happiness and to fulfill the same, the audience can come to Natsamrat Natya Utsav which is going on at LTG Auditorium, Mandi House, New Delhi.

The first play "Fauji", written and directed by Sanjay Basliyal, was highly appreciated by the audience. The drama 'Fauji' is the story of an 80-year-old ex-serviceman (Diler Singh) from Uttarakhand, whose family has a legacy of serving the Indian Army. A news channel wants to cover their story and present it sensationally to increase their TRP ratings. Parallely, the news anchor who will cover the story (Kritika) and the cameraman (Kishore) were once in a relationship and have stopped working with each other since the breakup. They are now forced to work together on this story. As the play highlights the life of Diler Singh, a soldier who paid a great price to serve the country, it leaves a lasting impact on Kritika and Kishore's relationship. Suresh Chandra played the role of editor, Sumita Sharma played the role of Pinky, Mantu

had Prateek Rawat, Krutika, Roshan played the role of Kishore and Sanjay Basliyal, the writer and director of this play played the role of Diler Singh. P.K.Khayal conducted the lighting, Ashu conducted the music, Hardeep Singh and Mr. Om Sharma took charge of the backstage. All the actors played their roles beautifully and the audience also got engrossed in their phenomenal acting. It was staged on 16 March at 3:00 pm.

The second play of the evening was "Sakharam Binder" written by Vijay Tendulkar and directed by Vishwajeet Alexander. The play's title alludes to Sakharam who is alone, devoid of familial ties, and whose profession as a book-binder enables him to stay away from the milieu of conservative society and live a quaint life on his own terms. Vishwajeet played the role of Sakharam, Ekta played the role of Lakshmi, Krutika played the role of Champa, Shammi played the role of Faujdar and Naveen played the role of Dawood. The acting of all the actors was impressive. Yash and Sachin were in music, Archana Kumari did the arrangement and Naina was in lighting operations. The play was staged on 16 March at 4:15 pm.

Two plays were staged on the second day of Natsamrat Natya Utsav. The first play was "Kuch Tum Kaho Kuch Hum Kahe" and the second play was "Kambakht Ishq".

"Kuch Tum Kaho Kuch Hum Kahein" exemplifies excellence from the pen of Ashish Kotwal and directed by Shyam Kumar, which premiered on 17th March at 3:00 PM. Dr. Anand, closing the doors of happiness, gives life Meets Mansi who wants to be adopted. Vivek Sharma and Munmun's heart-touching banter immersed the audience in emotions. The lead actors of the drama, Vivek Sharma and Munmun, sometimes have sweet and sour banter and sometimes support each other. The performance of both of them left the audience emotional. The audience appreciated the play a lot.

In the play "Kambakht Ishq" written by Satya Prakash, it was shown that the elderly, being victims of loneliness, create a

separate world within themselves and fall ill, even though they are not ill. Two elderly people, one Kishan and the other Radha, fall ill due to their loneliness. The director of the play, Shyam Kumar, has given a very beautiful message to the society that in old age, when children become busy in their life's work, they find it difficult to find time for their parents. Then how bad the condition of those elderly people becomes.

In the drama, Sanjay Basliyal played the role of Kishan and Munmun played the role of Radha, Vivek Sharma played the role of the son and Savita Gupta played the role of the daughter, P.K. Khayal played the role of the doctor. Aman played the role of compounder. The stage managers were Sunil Rathore and Rohit Prasad Prasad, Sooraj and Lokesh were in stage props, Rajrani was in makeup, Payal was in costume, Raman Kumar and Mahendra Kumar took charge of the backstage, Aman and Vansh Rathore were in song management. Light Designed was conceptualized by Natsamrat director Shyam Kumar. This play was staged on March 17 at 4:15 pm. This Natya Utsav is still going on. On 23rd March, two plays are being staged by "Comedy Junction" and "Chandralok.Com", and on 30th there is a comedy play Kallu Nai MBBS. The festival is being held in LTG Auditorium, Mandi House, New Delhi.

Jaywardhan's Play 'Nirjan Karawas' Launched



The play **Nirjan Karawas**, written by Jaywardhan, was launched on 2 March 2024 at 4:00 pm in Delhi.

JP Singh alias Jaiwardhan has received 'Honorary Degree' from Bharatendu Natya Academy, Lucknow. He is honored with the Akademi Award for the year 2007 for playwriting by Uttar Pradesh Sangeet Natak Akademi, Lucknow. He is an expert in acting, direction and lighting concept. He has written many famous plays, including 'Urgent Meeting', 'Kissa Maujpur Ka', 'Kaalpurush', 'Hai! Handsome', 'Mayaram Ki Maya', 'Jhansi Ki Rani', 'Madhyaantar', 'Mastmoula', 'Daroga ji Chori Ho Gayi', 'Jaisa Tum Kaho', 'Akhir Ek Din', 'Karmaev Dharmah', 'Antataha', 'Gorakhdhandha', 'Gandhari', 'Khairatilal Ka Kursi Tantra', 'Paro', 'Ek Aur Meeting' and 'Babu Harishchand'. 15 plays written by him have been published, along with 6 of his children's plays have also been published. He has also made an impressive drama adaptation of Munshi Premchand's classic novel 'Godaan'. Many of his plays have also been telecast on Doordarshan and All India Radio.

Padmashree Sh. Daya Prakash Sinha, Senior Dainik Jagran Journalist Shri Anant Vijay, Akhil Bharatiya Co-Treasurer Subodh Sharma, Senior playwright Sh. Pratap Sehgal, Senior Drama Critic Sh. Anil Goyal, Senior Theater Artist Sh. Avtar

Sahni were the chief guests at the inauguration. Jaywardhan welcomed all the chief guests. Pratap Sehgal, while praising his writing, was seen saying on some issues of the play that more pages of history could have been added to it. In response to this, Jaywardhan said that the play 'Nirjan Karawas' depicts the period of solitary confinement of Maharishi Aurobindo Ghosh, that is why only one incident has been discussed in detail in it, due to which the author focuses the attention of the readers on one place. All the chief guests said about his writing that just as he wrote comic plays, he also wrote on serious subjects, which touched the hearts of the readers. The special thing is that he is an actor as well as a director, so he writes the scenes of the story more beautifully. It was also said to him that despite being so busy, he is writing many plays, which are present in the library even today and the plays written by him are being played in every corner of India.

Senior Critic Sh. Diwan Singh Bajeli, Senior Writer Sh. Hari Suman Bisht, Senior Critic Sh. Sangam Pandey, Senior Drama Director Sh. Shyam Kumar, Senior Drama Director Vashishth Upadhyay, Senior Drama Director Sh. Bhupesh Joshi, Senior Drama Director Sh. Ravi Taneja etc. participated in the audience.

Natsamrat's Theatrical Showcase: A Tapestry of Emotions Unveiled in Delhi's

Stage

Natsamrat unfolded a captivating display of theatrical brilliance, showcasing four remarkable plays. Commencing with “Kuch Tum Kaho Kuch Hum Kahen,” written by Ashish Kotwal and directed by Shyam Kumar took stage on 20th January at 6:30 pm & 7:45 pm. The narrative delves into the collision of two disparate worlds. Dr. Anand, shutting doors to happiness, encounters Mansi, aspiring to embrace life. Vivek Sharma and Munmun’s poignant exchange left the audience immersed in emotions.



Following this, “Sakharam Binder” by Vijay Tendulkar, directed by Vishwajeet Alexander, took center stage on January 21 at 3 pm & 4:15 pm.. Vishwajeet portrayed Sakharam alongside Shruti, Krutika, Nasir, and Naveen, delivering an impressive performance. The timeless narrative, dating back to 1972, resonated, with Akash handling music and lighting, Archana overseeing aesthetics, and Sangeeta managing props.

The comedic gem, "Kambakht Ishq," written by Satya Prakash and directed by Shyam Kumar, unfolded on January 26 at 6:30 pm & 7:45 pm. Offering a humorous take on the loneliness in old age, Vishwajeet, Munmun, Sanjay Basliyal, and Savita Gupta, among others, left the audience oscillating between laughter and tears. A meticulous production, featuring Sunil Rathore and Rohit Prasad as stage managers, showcased the multifaceted talents of the Natsamrat team.

Closing the theatrical extravaganza was "Chandralok.com," an adaptation of Harishankar Parsai's story, directed by Rakesh Kodinya on 28th January at 3 pm & 4:15 pm. The ensemble cast, including Munmun, Vivek Sharma, Sanjay Basliyal, Sudhir Khanna, Jagbir Choudhary, and Aman, not only evoked laughter but also conveyed a profound message through their performance. With music conducted by Shivangi and lighting envisioned by Shyam Kumar, this play added a delightful conclusion to the series.

These four enthralling plays graced The Blank Canvas (LTG Auditorium), Copernicus Marg, Mandi House, New Delhi, leaving an indelible mark on the audience.



**Unveiling the Untold:
Felicity Theatre's 'Humare
Ram' Takes India by Storm**



Felicity Theatre's unprecedented presentation of the play "Humare Ram". Today the whole of India is rejoicing over the construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya, at the same time Rahul Bhuchar brought the play " Humare Ram" to the audience. It is written by Rahul Bhuchar and Naresh Kavayan and directed by Gaurav Bhardwaj. Very beautiful music was used in the play. The songs were written by Alok Srivastava and Ramkumar Singh and composed by Udbhav Ojha and Saurabh Mehta. Well-known Bollywood singer Shankar Mahadevan, Sonu Nigam, Kailash Kher and Ashutosh Rana gave voice to the songs.

This play is an epic in a way whose words have been beautifully woven into a garland. Felicity Theater director Rahul Bhuchar played the role of Shri Ram and well-known Bollywood actor Ashutosh Rana played the role of Ravana while Harleen Kaur Rekhi played the role of Mata Sita. Danish Akhtar was seen as Lord Hanuman, Tarun Khanna as Lord Shiva and Karan Sharma as Surya Dev.



While the audience got engrossed in devotion due to Ram's dialogue, the audience applauded a lot after seeing the style of Ravana (Ashutosh Rana). While Kailash Kher's voice created magic in the drama, Ashutosh Rana's voice also created magic. The audience became engrossed in devotion with the voice of Sonu Nigam.



The special thing about " Humare Ram" is that this drama exposed many hidden incidents of Ramayana which may not be known to many people. The story started from Luv and Kush's perspective. All the scenes were shown very beautifully and the entire Ramayana was depicted in three hours. Be it the arrival of Sun God on the stage or the entry of Hanuman on the stage. Shurpanakha got a lot of applause for her acting. The light design was amazing with LEDs. The children played the role of monkeys who are very adept dancers and made their entry with a beautiful and energetic dance. Rahul Bhuchar had laid the foundation of this play two years ago, which came true today and this play got a lot of love from the audience.

The play "Hamare Ram" was staged at Kamani Auditorium, New Delhi from 25 to 28 January.

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Review of Merry Christmas(movie) in the light of Western Classical Music



I am a big fan of filmmaker Sriram Raghavan and after Andha Dhun the expectations were high. His recent film Merry Christmas did not fail to amuse me. It was a rapturous experience to see his film in theatre. Witty dialogs, on screen flirting, old world charm of Bombay (not Mumbai as he wrote in title roll) and a Hitchcockian drama in a Victorian set up is all I needed for a thorough entertainment. However, there is more to it if you see details and feel the film. The screenplay is doubtlessly taut with twists and turns every 15 minutes; there is God in details. The visuals of Victorian Gothic and Art Deco buildings of Mumbai added a splendour. Particularly for people who like Mumbai, this movie is a treat

because Bombay seeps into it as a character. With an overtone of Christmas, the choice of cityscape cannot be better than Bombay in whole of India.

I never knew Katrina Kaif has so much left in her in terms of acting and histrionics. In Bollywood and regional films of India an actress is outdated after few years being in her peak. She is generally shown and seen as a Diva and an item number. Most of the actresses are out of business before they hit mid-life. So, in that kind of background Katrina has made a comeback and what a comeback it is!! Her charm added to her free willy nature of the character and surprisingly her histrionics later on exhibited the violence and cruelty in that character. Vijay Setupathy made "Non-Acting" his acting style. His witty one liners, awkward dance and subtle expressions made my day. His method acting made it a superb watching experience. And I must mention Sanjay Kapoor, who, in a brief role, was hilarious.

The movie is a dark comedy, a Noir film where two lonely souls with chequered past and shades of grey cross paths on a Christmas night and gets locked forever. You may love or hate the ending but last 15 minutes was extraordinary. And now comes the role of Western Classical Music in creating and maintaining the mood of this film.

I have observed earlier in Andhadhun how beautifully Sriram Raghavan used Beethoven's Symphony no.5 to show the jarring visuals and rapturous moments. Similarly, the background music in "Merry Christmas" was heavily influenced by Western Classical Music. For example, during the gunshot the crescendo of Grieg's Peer Gynt Suite no 1, "In the hall of the Mountain King" superbly helped to muffle the crime. If you hear this classical music piece you will relate how the slow tempo initially is growing to a thundering crescendo eventually within few minutes. For your reference I am pasting the Youtube link below. If you see the film you can relate to what I mean.

Similarly, to add class, Maria was playing Habanera from Carmen by Bizet. Listen to the video. Ronnie was constantly saying "Oh she is a classy woman." In India, due to a colonial hangover, anything Western means sophistication and it implies that to enjoy western classical music, Opera particularly one needs good education and sophistication, which is treasured by many. So the Habanera from Carmen is a great choice to exemplify class.

And in the end Vivaldi's Winter played for almost 10 minutes to the perfection. Starting with the Pizzicato which exemplified the sprinkling of doubt in the police officer's mind, it moves on to a rise in tempo and tone, where swiftly the hidden things expose fast climaxed with the exchange of ring between two souls with tormented past. There is anxiety, hope, romance, despair, magic realism and baffle in that last 5 minutes superbly portrayed by Vivaldi's Winter. Nowhere in Bollywood I expected Vivaldi's Winter to personify the swift changes of human behaviour amidst the movie characters. Sriram Raghavan deserves a special mention for this intelligent use of western classical music to evoke and maintain feelings in a film.

Earlier I have observed use of Western Classical Music pieces in a Satyajit Ray movie or Shyam Benegal movie. For example, Gluck's Melodie from Orpheus and Euridicce was used in "Jana Aranya" by Ray and he also borrowed Mozart's Symphony no 25 in Feluda theme in "Joy baba Felunath" or Mozart Symphony "Jupiter" and Requiem mass in songs of "Hirak Rajar Desh e". Kamaleswar Mukherjee used Beethoven Symphony 5 first movement in his "Meghe dhaka tara". Shyam Benegal films like Kalyug, Trikal or Mammo used music of Beethoven and Mozart. However, in Bollywood use of Western classical music motifs are few and far. In a refreshing take, Sriram Raghavan has used Vivaldi, Grieg and Bizet in "Merry Christmas" to reflect and set the mood.

Overall, the movie "Merry Christmas" brings a point that

“Content is King” in an industry flooded with Jawaans, Pathaans and Animal. Merry Christmas is a thoroughly entertaining movie where you have to sit on the edge not to miss the details. Particularly the edgy ending was something a movie goer will remember for a long, long time. In fact, Merry Christmas opens a new year of pure filmmaking and story telling in Bollywood

_____ Biswa Prasun Chatterji.

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संस्कृति मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
CULTURE

Final Year Diploma Production

Patrick Hamilton's

GASLIGHT

गैसलाइट

A Classical Crime Thriller

Scenography & Direction
Shekhar Kanwat

Translation

Priyamvar Shastri

Sound Design

**Santosh Kr. Singh
(Sandy)**

14 January 2024
4:00 PM & 6:30 PM

Abhimanch Auditorium
NSD Campus, Bahawalpur House
New Delhi-110001

निःशुल्क प्रवेश, प्रवेश पत्र प्रदर्शन के दिन रा. ना. वि. के स्वागत कक्ष से सुबह 11:00 बजे से दोपहर 1:00 बजे तक एवं दोपहर 2:00 बजे से सायं 5:00 बजे तक प्राप्त किये जा सकते हैं।
प्रवेश पहले आओ पहले पाओ के आचार पर होगा। पृष्ठताह : 011- 23389402/23031120/21/25

Star Fades, Brilliance Shines On



The departure of Ustad Rashid Khan leaves a void in the realm of Indian classical music, casting a shadow of sorrow and emptiness that will endure for a considerable time. Rashid

Khan, synonymous with the ethereal world of 'Anya Ek Bhuban,' crafted by his resonant and masculine voice, embarked on an enchanting musical journey, seamlessly navigating from one note to another—a phenomenon known in the musical lexicon.

The mere mention of Rashid Khan conjures up a nostalgic image. Thirty-two years ago, on a chilly January evening, I left Tollyganj's studio and found solace on a roadside tea shop bench, accompanied by cinematographer Kamal Nayak and film director Arun Guhathakurta. At the other end of the bench, a young man joined us. Kamal Nayak inquired, 'Have you heard of Rashid Khan?' Back then, he wasn't yet 'Ustad Rashid Khan,' but his fame was burgeoning. Though I had encountered his name in Desh magazine's music reviews, I did not get an opportunity to experience his highly lauded singing. We struck up a conversation, and over a cup of tea, we acquainted ourselves. Politeness adorned his demeanour, and after a brief encounter, we each resumed our places. Later, I discovered that he studied music at the Music Research Academy, residing with the renowned Ustad Nisar Hussain Khan across the street.

Months after our meeting, Rashid Khan's vocal performance in an audio cassette, featuring Raag Bageshri and Desh, hit the shelves. In response to our encounter, I purchased the cassette—a delightful experience. His voice, youthful, humble, and enchanting, resonated with a subtle echo of Pandit Bhimsen Joshi's energy, Ustad Amir Khan's solemnity, and Ustad Nisar Khan's Tarana's rapid pace. Yet, amidst these influences, Rashid Khan's voice possessed a distinct identity, brimming with new energy.

In a concise span, Rashid Khan left an indelible mark on the music industry—successive gramophone records, and live concerts domestically and internationally—thrusting him into the limelight among his generation's talented musicians. Pandit Bhimsen Joshi heralded him as the future of Indian classical music. His desire to break free from the traditional 'Gharana' constraints set him on a journey to explore the

expansive world of music, incorporating Sufi influences. He ventured into creating new melodies, even lending his voice to classical songs in films, such as 'Kahe Ujari Mori Nind' and 'Tore Bina Mohe Chen Nahi.'

Rashid Khan's enthusiasm extended beyond film songs; he collaborated with popular Bengali singer Nachiketa to experimentally sing Rabindra Sangeet. Their rendition, based on Raags, with interludes featuring Ustad's 'bandis,' showcased a unique approach, distinct from previous interpretations by Pandit Ajay Chakraborty and Swagatalakshmi Dasgupta. Among his notable achievements was his Krishna Bhajan for Times Music. He often performed in duets with Pandit Bhimsen Joshi, including Bhajans. These bhajans not only reflected the influence of Joshi but also showcased the positive effects of that association.

Recognized by the government with the Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan awards, Rashid Khan achieved success, and honours, and, tragically, departed at a relatively young age—a reality difficult to accept.

Having witnessed several live performances, I regret not having had the chance to meet him except once at the Kolkata airport. A brief interaction revealed his affability, especially upon noticing 'Aakashbani' on my visiting card. Classical musicians, it seemed, felt a closer connection when reminded of Aakashbani.

Rashid Khan, initially disinterested in music as a child, imparted his musical knowledge to his son Armaan from a young age. Armaan, emerging as a talented singer and accomplished guitarist, undoubtedly carries the influence of his father.

As the stars extinguish, their brilliance magnifies in the darkness.

Captivating Acts and Compelling plays: Natsamrat's Theater Extravaganza Leaves Mumbai Spellbound

Natsamrat staged four different plays at Creative Adda Auditorium, Versova, Andheri (W), Mumbai where the plays were greatly appreciated by the audience.



The first play, "Kuch Tum Kaho Kuch Hum Kahein," written by Ashish Kotwal, was performed on January 6th at 7:00 PM at the Creative Adda Auditorium, Versova, Andheri West, Mumbai. The play revolves around two individuals, an elderly doctor, Dr. Anand, who has created a small world for himself through his profession, and a lively woman named Manasi, who enjoys life in her unique way. Despite their different perspectives on life, Dr. Anand has closed the doors to happiness, while Manasi, having endured her sorrows, strives to move forward

and embrace life. The main actors, Vivek Sharma and Munmun, displayed a captivating chemistry on stage, alternating between witty banter and providing support to each other. The behind-the-scenes team, including director Shyam Kumar, lyrics by Rakesh Kodinya, Singer Ishan Tyagi, stage manager Sunil Rathore, stage properties by Suraj Singh, make-up by Payal Rani, costume by Chhobi Saha, Sound operated by Aman and other back stage team, contributed to the success of the play.

On January 6th at 8:15 PM, the second play, "Besahara Aurat," written by Anton Chekhov and directed by Fareed Ahmed. The story, featuring Munmun in the lead role and Vivek Sharma as the bank manager, Assistant played by Jagbir Choudhary and Helper by Aman was filled with laughter and poignant moments. Stage Management by Vishwajeet, stage property by Lokesh, make-up by Raj Rani, Light Design by Natsamrat's director Shyam Kumar. The play showcased the sweet and sour exchanges between the main characters, leaving a lasting impression on the audience. Shyam Kumar, the director of Natsamrat, brought this beautiful play to the Mumbai audience.

As part of the "Fourth Mumbai Theatre Festival" by Natsamrat on January 9th, two plays were staged. The first play, based on Harishankar Parsai's story titled "Nithalla," adapted by Kuldeep Kunal & Directed by Nagender Kumar Sharma, was presented as a solo performance by own Nagender Kr. Sharma, receiving much appreciation from the audience. The story revolves around an idealistic person, Nithalla, who dedicates his life to selfless deeds, challenging the societal trend that recognizes only those who work for their own gain.



The second play, "Veer Savarkar," written, enacted, and directed by Nagendra Kumar Sharma, depicted the journey of Savarkar in the struggle for independence. The emotional portrayal of Savarkar's sacrifices left the audience moved. Both plays were presented with the support of Haryana Kala Parishad.

In conclusion, the "Fourth Mumbai Theatre Festival" organized by Natsamrat showcased a variety of plays, each leaving a distinct impact on the audience. The meticulous direction, powerful performances, and thoughtful themes made the festival a memorable experience for the Mumbai audience. Shyam Kumar, the director of Natsamrat, and the entire team received well-deserved appreciation for their efforts in bringing quality theatre to the city.