

Daniil Kharm's Play: Mondays are best for flying out of windows



Playwright: Daniil Kharms

Director: Rajiv Krishnan

Group: Perch, Chennai

Language: English

Duration: 1 hr 30 mins

The Play

A girl finds a job as a cashier in your store, turns the handle on the cash-till and dies. What do you do? Stick a mushroom in her hand and pretend she's alive. People throw themselves off windows, they leap out of cupboards, they spend maddeningly long hours in queues, they attack each other with snot and cucumbers, they fall, they sleep, they fight, they die. This is the world of Daniil Kharms. Chaotic, absurd, sometimes frightening, often incomplete. And you find that the only rational response is to laugh. The worse it gets, the more you laugh. Kharms is the master of dark laughter. It's so ridiculous, so absurd, it can't be true, right? Right?

Director's Note

Our approach to Kharms was from a state of complete unknowing. A piece of text, a thought, an idea or an image triggered off

our explorations. The entire process was a challenging one to say the least. This play represents our individual and collective response to Kharms, conceived in a true spirit of collaboration.

Puppets play an important role in this piece. The choice of working with puppets was a chance occurrence. Not being trained puppeteers we started from scratch, using storytelling as a guide. Like every piece of ours, we see this work too as a work in progress, evolving as we present it to audiences. And as much as we want to engage and provoke you, the audience, we hope that you will engage with the piece and provoke us in turn. In true Kharmsian spirit, we invert the typical theatre greeting and direct it to the audience – Break a leg!

The Director

Rajiv Krishnan is a theatre director and actor based in Chennai. His first play as a director was an adaptation of the comic satire *Accidental Death of an Anarchist* (Dario Fo) in 2000. In 2004, he organized a fortnight long festival called 'Angloscapes' focused on the Anglo-Indian community for which he co-adapted and directed a play inspired by Tennessee Williams *Glass Menagerie* in English. It was with this festival that the theatre collective Perch informally came into being.

The Playwright

Daniil Kharms (1905-1942), was an early Soviet era absurdist poet, writer and dramatist. He was often incarcerated by the Stalinist regime of his time for his unconventional and rebellious ways. His adult literature was not published during his lifetime and he was confined to writing for children. He is said to have starved to an anonymous death in the psychiatric ward of a Soviet hospital after being arrested during the siege of Leningrad in 1942. His stories defy easy characterization – they may start humorously but quickly turn dark, many featuring random acts of violence.

The Group

Perch is a theatre collective based in Chennai. It was formed by a motley bunch of actors, designers, filmmakers, journalists and others in 2008. Perch has been constantly exploring new ways of storytelling on a variety of themes from pure fantasy to contemporary Indian reality, from humour to political satire. Starting with adaptations of well-known plays and short stories, they have also explored devised work which is multilingual, collaborative and ensemble driven with a strong focus on visual design and music.

Cast & Credits

Created & Performed by Iswar Lalitha, Rency Philip, Sachin Gurjale, Vijay Ravikumar, Vinod Ravindran

Music

Abhaydev Praful

Photography

Richa

Bhavanam

Costumes

Kaveri

Lalchand

Puppets and Prop making

Iswar Lalitha, Rency

Philip, Sachin Gurjale, Vijay Ravikumar, Vinod Ravindran

Set and Light Design

Kalpana

Balaji, John V. Mathew

Production Management

Anushka Meenakshi,

Bharavi

Commissioned by The Serendipity Arts Festival

Playwright

Daniil

Kharms

Director

Rajiv

Krishnan

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Sattar Khan & Laxman Deshmukh's Play: Mahua ke Paani

Playwright: Sattar Baig & Lakshman Deshmukh

Director: Poonam Tiwari

Group: Rang Chhattisa, Chhattisgarh

Language: Chhattisgarhi

Duration: 1 hr 30 mins

The Form

Nacha is a traditional folk-theatre and a legacy of Chhattisgarh. According to some scholars the basis of this theatrical form is Gammat Nacha, which is mainly a singing form. Gammat Bhajans include expressions of emotions, humour, longing etc. The performance is conducted throughout the night and the audience enjoys it wholeheartedly. It includes singing of bhajans of Tulidas, Surdas, Kabirdas, Meera, followed by filmy Ghazals, Qawwalis and folk songs like Karma, Dadriya, Yuvapanthi, Holi etc. The performance includes all colours ranging from humour, compassion, love, anger etc.

The Play & Director's Note

This play is to encourage the audience to help in getting rid of the increasing dilemmas in the society, and build a clean and beautiful nation. It also urges those who are in the grip of an addiction, to give up the bad habit/s so that one's health, family future generation, and the society does not have to pay for one's folly. The addiction to liquor is

driving the society astray. Through this play we wish to convey that alcohol, known as 'Mahua ke Pani' (Water of Mahua) in our region, is destroying our world. Families are suffering due to this evil habit. I, Poonam Tiwari, and my team are honoured to present this play at NSD, Delhi.

The Director

Born on 13th November 1963 in Chhattisgarh, Poonam Tiwari attended school till class four. At the age of nine she started participating in the productions of Nacha parties like Dau Mandaraji Nacha Party, Jaalbandha Nacha party, Pateva Nacha party and Nishad Nacha party. While working for Champa Barsan Nacha party of Durg, she came in contact with the great thespian Habib Tanvir and from 1984 to 2005 worked under him as an actor in Charandas Chor, Mitti Ki Gadi, Mor Nau Damad Gaon Ke Nau Sasural and many other productions. She has been awarded with Dauji Mandara Samman 2005, Sharad Vairahagkar Samman 2015 by IPTA, and Dau Ramchandra Deshmukh Bahuman Samman 2020.

The Playwrights

Lakshman Deshmukh was born in a farmer's family in Village Dugatola, 10 kms from the forest of Ambagarh. He has written many songs and plays on social issues like de-addiction, dowry system, oppression of women etc. He along with Sattar Baig has adapted this play to bring awareness about the evil and ill effects of alcohol that are spreading in the society. The play focuses on the addiction of liquor, made from the fruits of Mahua tree, in tribal villages. The play has been written in Chhattisgarhi Nacha style.

The Group

Rang Chhattisa based in district Rajnandgaon (Chhattisgarh), is a folk and cultural theatre group which has been presenting plays mainly based on the folk-art form Nacha. The group prioritises social issues over commercial ventures. It has performed numerous plays including Lottery, Rajim Bhaktin, Pathshala, Mahua Ke Pani and many more, in cities like Jaipur,

Wardha, Bilaspur, Raigarh, Ajmer, Delhi, Indore, Patna, Ranchi, Guwahati etc.

Cast & Credits

Guru's Wife	Poonam Tiwari
Guruji	Sattar Baig
Sahinav	Mitr Shailender
Rajak	
Sahinav's Wife	Kumari Kaushik
Baba/Dada	Chhannu Sahu
Guruji's Daughter	Lakshmi Yadav
Friends	Divya Tiwari,
Annu	
Liquor Seller	Tejram Devangan
Bania	Rajkumar
Chauhan	
Bania's Assistant	Murad Khan
Policeman	Deva
Pallbearer (Arthi Uthane Wala)	Mahesh Sahu
Saheli	Pramila
Yadav	
Student	Chhotu
Meshram, Mahesh Sahu	
Harmonium	Limesh Shukla
Bansuri	Hemraj Sinha
Tabla	Monu Pandiya
Banjo	Chetan
Dance Director	Varsha
Dance	Jeetu Yadav
Singer (female)	Anita Jhanghel
Singer (male)	Narottam Das
Guidance	Deepak Virat
Playwright	Sattar Baig &
Lakshman Deshmukh	
Director	Poonam Tiwari

Contacts

Rangchhatisa

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Tushar Sonu Naik's Play: Veer Babruvahan

Director: Tushar Sonu Naik

Group: Naik Mochemadkar Paramparik Dashavtari Loknatya Mandal,
Maharashtra

Language: Marathi

Duration: 1 hr 40 mins

The Form

Dashavtar is a popular form of folk-art characterizing rural theatre of South Konkan region, the coastal Sindhudurg district of Maharashtra. Dashavtar is generally the presentation of different incarnations of Lord Vishnu, with 'akhyanas' (stories) from great epics Mahabharata and Ramayana, though these days more secular themes are also presented.

Dashavtar is an all-male performance. It has music, mime, colourful costumes, extempore dialogues, dance steps, and battle scenes. Dashavtar regales, instructs, and edifies the rural masses through the themes it presents. The music has harmonium, tabla or pakhawaj, and cymbals as accompanying musical instruments, and is based on the Hindustani style.

The Performance

Babruvahana, the king of Manipur, takes in his custody the horse of the Pandavas which they had sent as symbol of their supremacy over all the kings. Meghavarna, son of Ghatotkacha, and Rushiketa, son of Karna go in search of the horse but fail to find it and return. Chitrangi, mother of Babruvahana, reveals to him that he is the son of the great warrior Arjuna. Babruvahana goes to meet Arjuna, but Arjuna gets angry and insults him. This makes Babruvahana furious. He challenges Arjuna for a fight. In the battlefield Arjuna gets defeated and Babruvahana decides to behead him. Chitrangi and Ulupi, Babruvahana's stepmother order him get the divyamani, a precious stone, from the head of Shesh Nagraj, to save Arjuna and other martyrs in the battlefield.

Babruvahana goes to Shesh Nagraj, who is also his grandfather, and succeeds in getting the divya Nagamani. Meanwhile Bheema, the elder brother of Arjuna, arrives on the scene and on seeing Arjuna beheaded, fights with Babruvahana. Chitrangi and Ulupi stop them and tell him what actually happened.

All of them pray to Shree Krishna who appears and brings life to Arjuna and the others by touching the Nagamani on their heads. Babruvahana and his father Arjuna embrace each other.

Director's Note

While directing this play, I have selected the artists who are able to portray the character assigned to them. I have worked on the dialogues, costumes, make-up, and hairstyles, especially of males who perform the role of females. I thank the music director of this play for his single-handed contribution in this production.

The Director

Tushar Sonu Naik is a Matriculate. Though he is young, he has directed many plays, such as Veer Babruvahana, which is most popular among all. Most of the plays directed by him are in the traditional folk form of Maharashtra – Dashavtar.

The Group

The troupe known as Naik Mochemadkar Parmparik Dashavtari

Loknatya Mandal is headed by Sonu alias Babal Shripad Naik, and managed by his son Tushar Sonu Naik, who is also a musician.

The family resides on the picturesque sea-shore in a small village called Mochemad, in Maharashtra. Dashavtar, a traditional folk art of this area, has been practiced by the family for more than six generations. The performers and musicians of the troupe come from different villages of Sindhudurg district and a few also from the nearby state of Goa. They all are from poor, rustic, rural areas, mainly farmers, agriculturists or artists dedicated to this folk art with devotion and love. Naik Mochemadkars are frequently invited to perform their plays in annual festivals, rural fairs in the courtyards of temples, and these days even in urban areas. More than 240 performances are staged by this group every year.

Cast & credit

Ganesh	Gajanan Vengurlekar
Riddhi	Akshay Naik
Siddhi	Dipak Mayekar
Babruvahana	Nitin Asayekar
Hansadhvaja	Sudhakar Parab
Arjuna	Narayan Asayekar
Meghvarna	Nilesh Naik
Rushiket	Sagar Gaonkar
Ulupi	Ratnakar Manjarekar
Chitrangi	Mahesh Dhuri
Bheema	Krishana Naik
Shesh Nagraj	Guru Varadkar
Shrikrishana	Aatmaram Sawant
Harmonium	Rajan Gawade
Mrudang or Pakhvaj	Piyush Khandare
Cymbals	Snatosh Gudulekar
Singer	Mahadev Dalvi
Backstage Artists	Sitaram Gawade, Pravin Tandel,

Raman Parab, Harishchandra Manjarekar

Music Director

Head of the Troupe

Jayram Shripad Naik

Sonu Shripad Naik

Research

Director & Manager

Vijaykumar Phatarpekar

Tushar Sonu Naik

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Snehasish Bhattacharyay's Play: Anahuta



Playwright: Snehasish Bhattacharyay

Director: Sima Mukhopadhyay

Group: Samstab, Kolkata

Language: Bengali

Duration: 2 hrs 20 mins

The Play

Nirupam Goswami, an ex-army man, who has now become an entrepreneur, is living a contented life with his wife Sujata Goswami and son Debopam Goswami, when one afternoon all of a sudden, there appears a stranger, and intruding into their house claims to be the real Nirupam Goswami, who had fought as a Major in the Dras Sector, 237 battalion, during the Kargil War. He claims that Sujata is his wife, and says that this Nirupam Goswami is actually Mainak Ghosh, who had fought under his domination in the Kargil War. Surprised and astonished by the attitude of the 'uninvited guest', Nirupam and Sujata struggle to fight against all odds. The case is then taken to the police, who is also taken aback, when the stranger presents proof after proof. Lawyers from both the sides look into the matter, and finally, the case reaches the court.

Director's Note

I feel every director wants to work on a play that goes beyond its words and delves into a deeper philosophy of life. Anahuta (The Uninvited) compelled me to look within me while presenting it on the stage. The known tactics of executing plays went topsy-turvy while working on Anahuta. The more I faced these challenges the more I felt zealous about it. Not only was it me but the actors too went through all these challenges while playing their parts. In fact, the different selves that inhabit our being remain, for the most part of our lives, unknown, unrecognized and uninvited to the fore. When these selves come to the fore and confront us, the familiarity with life vanishes instantly. Everything legal and illegal, true and false, the victorious and the defeated, stand on an unstable ground. Here, in this play, we too have faced something unknown and been on a journey with it. That the journey of life is the only truth is what our team has tried to present through this play on stage.

The Director

Sima Mukhopadhyay (born 5 December 1959) is a director, playwright and actor from Kolkata. She made her stage debut as a child artiste with M.G. Enterprise, a professional theatre ensemble. She received Master's Degree in Drama (Acting) from Rabindra Bharati University in 1985. At present she heads Rangroop. As an actress Sima has acted in productions directed by eminent directors, beside her own. She has written twelve full-length plays, and six short-length plays for children. Besides the ones written by her, Sima has directed works of Rabindranath Tagore, Oscar Wilde, Tripti Mitra, Arthur Arbuzov, and many other world renowned writers. She is a recipient of Senior Fellowship from HRD Ministry for the year 2002, Ritwik Ghatak Smriti Puraskar, Paschim Banga Natya Akademi award, Dishari Puraskar, Kalakar Award, Bengal Shraichi Award, and Anukul Samman.

The Playwright

Dr. Snehasis Bhattacharyya, started his journey as a playwright with Swapnoparosh which was staged by Natyaranga theatre group in 2011. After that, he was selected in the International Playwrights' Workshop held the same year with the playwrights of West Bengal and Bangladesh, and the Cultural Ministry of India. He is also an actor and has performed many plays for Bangla theatre.

The Group

Samstab was formed in 1982 under guidance of Guru Sri Dwijen Bandyopadhyay. Its first production was Abhimukh, a poetic play written by Shri Navendu Sen and staged in 1983. The group has tried to encourage new, and not-too-well-known playwrights too. With Naak, Kalpomon and Dhuni Stambha, we introduced a new author Kajal Sengupta and also produced Sokratiser Jabanbandi by Dr. Sisir Kumar Das, which was later telecast through Kolkata Doordarshan.

Cast & Credits

Stranger

Sanjib Sarkar

Sujata

Amrita Mukherjee

Nirupam	Susnata Bhattacharjyay
Police Officer	Srikanta Manna
Yudhistir	Parthasarathi Chandra
Menoka	Kankabati Bandyopadhyay
Prasenjit	Ashish Mazumder
Raghabendra	Parthasarathi Sengupta
Peon	Sanjoy Das
Light	Badal Das
Music	Disari Chakraborty
Set Design	Sandipsuman Bhattacharjya
Sound	Pinaki Mukherjee
Playwright	Snehasish Bhattacharyay
Director	Sima Mukhopadhyay

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Curtain goes up on National School of Drama's 21st Bharat Rang Mahotsav



The annual theatre festival, that will open with veteran actor-director Amol Palekar's **KUSUR**, *will showcase a mix of Indian and international plays*

New Delhi, February 1: The 21st edition of the Bharat Rang Mahotsav (BRM) – the annual theatre festival organised by the National School of Drama (NSD) is all set to bring an assortment of plays, interactive sessions, and other cultural events to cheer up winter afternoons of theatre enthusiasts in the Capital.

The inaugural function for BRM 2020 kick started at the Kamani auditorium with **Panchvadyam – a South Indian devotional music**. The dignitaries present on the occasion included **Chief Guest Prof. Vidushi Rita Ganguly**, eminent theatre artist and vocalist, **Guest of Honour Dr. Mohan Agashe**, renowned theatre and film personality and **Special Guest Ms. Nirupama Kotru**, IRS, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India among others. The function was presided over by **Dr. Arjun Deo Charan**, Acting Chairman, NSD Society.

Prof. Suresh Sharma, Director In-charge, National School of Drama, welcomed the guest at the inaugural function and appreciated all the participants from National & International theatre fraternity who came all across. Also, he specially expressed his gratitude to the Actor Amol Palekar who came & graced the occasion by presenting his play at the inauguration ceremony. He also said through the years, Bharat Rang Mahotsav

has presented some masterpieces from the world of theatre. The idea is to reach out to a much wider set of audiences with works from post-modern and regional theatre. We hope to highlight the importance of theatre and plays and promote the culture of appreciating various forms of performing arts.

Chief Guest Prof. Vidushi Rita Ganguly, present at the event said “Eventual expression of human race is theatre, I give credit to all these honours that I receive to Ebrahim Alkazi. NSD treats everyone equally and in theatre everyone has their own place.”

Guest of Honour Dr. Mohan Agashe, renowned theatre and film personality who was present at the event said “theatre occupies the highest place in art forms. I am really elated to see that year after year NSD is giving this living art a stage.”

Present at the event the **Special Guest Ms. Nirupama Kotru**, IRS, Joint Secretary, and Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India said “NSD is one of the nine gems that we have in our country. We should encourage more participation and spectatorship of theatre.”

Echoing his thoughts, **Dr. Arjun Deo Charan, Acting Chairman, NSD Society** said, “Theatre brings meaning to people and the position of an actor is held highly in theatre of our country. An actor should be mindful of their own emotions and the emotions of their character and this understanding if conceived can help anyone and everyone.”

Like each year, this year too, BRM promises a diverse experience featuring a host of plays depicting various shades of emotions along with masterclasses by stalwarts from the theatre fraternity. The festival will stage 91 plays that include a combination of post-modern and regional theatre by Indian and international thespians. It will open with veteran theatre and film personality **Amol Palekar's crime-**

drama *Kusur – The Mistake* that revolves around the life of retired Assistant Police Commissioner Dandavate, whose life changes overnight when he volunteers to serve at the police control room. Besides, the festival will also showcase a mix of romance, suspense, comedy and music along with international plays, interactive sessions and allied events.

Stake holders in Artistic Practices: An Economic Model

When we hear the word stake holders, it reminds us of a company, with a marketing head looking into profits for the company. Do we see a theatre company to be functional as a profit making company, most unfortunately no! In India, with a strong tradition of socialism and the IPTA and the ideas of being the catalyst for change and activism we often fail to see a theatre company to have an economic model behind it. With increasing globalisation and now India adapting itself into a more and more global economy, theatre should also not fail to look at the most important aspect of being an economically strong and viable model. This hence will create more and more stake holders in artistic practices.

In India, the practices are dependent highly on grant giving bodies and neglect to get into even selling tickets for their shows. The management practices are highly lacking and often times publicity is given the last minute emphasis and impetus. Often one sees that it is the management students, despite their little formal training students doing a much better job at marketing and public relations. What we really

lack today is an equally strong focus on theatre management. Theatre in India should go much beyond waiting for the god in form to a government grant to arrive or to wait for a private benefactor to knock the doorsteps of the company.

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

We lack a strong focus and determination to get beyond the mechanics of staging a play and not looking at marketing in specific and general terms. This input will also be able to not keep a record of all the old audiences but also create new ones and go to places that were unexplored before. Theatre management will also make sure that designing of the publicity, posters, brochures and handouts are created in most effective manner. One can perhaps see the role of the theatre manager as the most important person as he is the chief operative officer of the theatre company. His role is that of an COO like any other important company. Its time now to hence consider this role as a pivotal one and make sure that each theatre company has the focus and determination to start raking profits. The time is now to act!

existence). Therefore an art form can induce a temporary state of diversion of one's immediate sorrow and an escape into a world of pleasure and happiness. Nataka or drama can do this more efficiently than other art form, because unlike other arts, it is both drisya and sravya, it has visual and aural appeal. It can satisfy us by graceful or spectacular senses presented on the stage, can gratify our ear or heart. This is efficient only through props that makes the experience of the audience go beyond his reality.

Andrew Sofer, in his book, " The Stage life of Props" says that, " the object must be seen as having a sign." The stage props hence has a strong presence, sometimes as strong as the actor themselves. As Felix Bossonnet sees the props they are much more than the physical presence they hold. Props have to be read between the complex relationship between the actor the text and the audience. It provides a complete whole experience of transmission of the audience into the world of the " play or krida". As Sofer sees the distinctions between the props and the characters should become more and more blurred, it should be amalgamated as one whole. The responsibility of this hence is not just within the text but by the directors as well as the actors.

Khamohsi

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

Kyu nahi gum main asoon nikalte nahi

Kya duniya ki aagosh main yese sawaar hui

ki angaar baraste hain asoon nahi

Kya aise haalaat sahi

kya sirf angaare hi ankhon ka ujala bankar rahe

Aur awaaz uski asoon

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

Abhimanyu: The Legend of a Tragic War Hero / Manohar Khushalani



Abhimanyu, is perhaps a unique character in Mahabharata whose death brings you inspiration. Pandit Radheshyam Katahvachak's ***Veer Abhimanyu***, a play engulfed in deceit, treachery, misuse of power, and politics Directed by **Hema Singh** with **NSD's** second year students had all the elements of a professional show, despite the fact that Hema intended it to be a teaching

production. Interesting thing was that for a martial play the female students were playing the roles of male soldiers. At no point did one feel that the roles should have been played by males. The performance of female actors was as aggressive and bold as was required. **Guru Salam Biswajit Singh's** Martial art training was so thorough that girls could match up to boys in the fight scenes. Also, there was rich use of elements such as dance, songs, Martial arts like *Kallari* and use of percussion and wind instruments (like nagara and dhol) to indicate the war hysteria. As the director explained, the main objective was to teach Parsi style theatre, therefore it was imperative to expose the students to all elements of it, including the melodramatic speech patterns which are so much a part of this theatre. The real challenge was to work in this style which has a concept of dramatic action and is different from contemporary theatre. The couplets and lyrical dialogues written in typical Parsi style required an understanding of rhyme, pitches, *natgiri*, gestures, postures, language and poetry. The source of Hema's inspiration was **B.M. Shah**, who made her realise that the Farsi theatre is an unusual blend of classical Sanskrit theatre, folk theater and Victorian theatre. She has gone on to become a foremost proponent of this form of theatre.

The production, thus, tried to create a bridge between contemporary realistic theatre and the traditional Parsi Theatre, reinterpreting it in such a way that audience could relate to it as a modern production.



Farsi as Parsi theatre is also called, had a great historical relevance because of its contribution to the freedom struggle. The playwrights created feelings of patriotism, love, renunciation, and kindness in public by writing double meaning dialogues which only the natives understood. It raised voice against imperial rule. At that time, many Indian mythical, historical, courageous characters that fought against injustice, were featured in Parsi theatre so that self-respect and fearlessness increases in public. 'Veer Abhimauyu' is one such epic character, whom the playwright, **Pandit Radheshyam**, brought to life. Legend has it that Abhimanyu was the re-incarnation of a son of the Moon-God- Chandra. When Chandra was asked to let his son incarnate himself on earth, he made a pact that his son will only remain on earth for 16 years, as he could not bear to be separated from him any longer than that. Abhimanyu was the most loved of all sons of the Pandavas, so much so that Draupadi was said to love him more than her own sons. Draupadi once said that if the Pandavas are not willing to wage war, then her sons led by Abhimanyu will attack and get justice for her and avenge her humiliation. Abhimanyu was trained in all types of warfare by Lord Krishna and Balrama themselves, and later by Pradyumna (Sri Krishna's son). Abhimanyu learnt the art of

breaking into the Chakravyuha when he was in Subhadra's womb. It was then Arjuna was narrating the art of breaking into Chakravyuha to Subhadra. But he did not know how to destroy the formation once he was inside, as Subhadra fell asleep while listening to the story and (Abhimanyu in her womb) could learn only half of the technique. This is the reason why he was only able to enter and break but not come out of the Chakravyuha

That was the tragedy of Abhimanyu. The matchless youth who won immortality by his shining heroism in the great Mahabharatha war. Pitted, against the mightiest of the mighty in the enemies' ranks, this warrior, barely sixteen, became the sheet-anchor of the Pandavas. The veterans ranged against him had to overcome him only by unfair means.

The production was ably supported by a competent team of theatre professionals. Souti Chakraborty's lighting highlighted the dramatic elements with a blend of light and shadeow intermixed with mood lighting. Somesh PBs training of the martial Art of **Kalaripayattu** and **Kajal Ghosh's** Co-Music Design deserve mention. In the design department Kriti V. Sharma's costumes Vishala Mahale's set gave value to the production. Kudos also to Hema's blocking of the play which created the illusion of a giant battle field. It was indeed a memorable and meaningful evening laced with spirited performances of all the actors.

What is “folk” after all? – Gouri Nilakantan

“Folk”, the ordinary, the mundane, the one without any purpose, that’s the first thing that comes to ones mind when we think of the word. Is that true, can we negate the voice of the common man, the arts belonging to the masses as just meaningless, not to be cared for? The recognition for folk arts, theatre, music, oral ballads, tales, stories now is a recognized study on its own. It is being now seen as strong discipline to be studied and understood. To categorize and delineate any dramatic performance as being folk, traditional or modern would be simply dispensing them off that can endanger our readings and interpretations for it. Our tradition has to be also be seen in through the eyes of the masses, the simple potter, the folk stories and the music of our villages, or cooking recipes and our theatrical shows all need to be studied in much more depth. While talking about theatre, all dramatic performances display set codes and conventions such as costumes, makeup, text, and use of diction prose or poetry and evolved choreography, movement or premeditated action. It can be said as one having a “traditional process” as pointed out Brynjulf Alver.

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

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

...folk drama might be present throughout a culture, employing

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

Indian theatrical tradition goes back to antiquity and is deeply rooted within local culture and consciousness. Therefore, it has its own uniqueness and structure that is truly eastern in its orientation. The theatrical traditions of India are divided into Loka dharmi (the popular), the folk, which includes Nautanki of Punjab and Swang of Himachal Pradesh and the Natyadharmi (the traditional), the classical, based on ancient texts on drama, like the Bharatanatyam. Several characteristics delineate the classical and the folk. The classical performances of India are based on a set of codified laws, such as those of the Natyashastra, but at the same time are "open" to interpretation. The Natyashastra (800 A.D.) is an ancient Indian treatise on drama, written in Sanskrit that is the foundation for not just the classical dances but also most of the theatrical dance forms prevalent in the country such as Kuttiyatam of Kerala, Ankiya Nat, Ramlila and Raslila of Uttar Pradesh and Terukootu, of Tamil Nadu and Chhau of Eastern India.

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