

RAMAYANA: FRACTURED, FIXED AND FORETOLD Oglam Presentation- Janardan Ghosh's Narration.

The Concept:

Ramayana has been told and retold over centuries but the difference lies in the way it is reiterated. Not with the perception of recounting a tale but with an intent to reinvent it to unleash the hidden secrets of this unbound narrative we attempt to retell again and again taking the artistic liberty that it affords timelessly to revisit it with an innovative perspective. The project is an enterprise to endorse the epic as a narrative that is much ahead of its times in its intrinsic potential to dislodge our linear interpretations of this colossal tale as a religious account of Hinduism. The endeavour is to re-evaluate the learn by rote method through which we have perpetually studied this epic; any change in the script is a larger than life or a utopian idea. In a country like India where the myth goes beyond the circumference of the story and becomes a 'sacred tale,' to conceive certain alterations in the script is a indeed a formidable venture. Yet, this redoubtable interpretation on our part has been an outcome of our humble initiative of making the narrative appear different and hence more thought- provoking as it raises questions on the fundamental aspects of human existence without tampering with the organic theme in a unique way. The Ramayana is fractured, fixed and foretold for an audience of today that's intelligent enough to accept variations in established Literature if it offers food for thought. This differently abled understanding of the epic cognitively sheds light on the of presence of the elements that demystifies the glory of this mythological narrative making it a poignant tale

of a King's sacrifice, struggle and his confrontation with the ultimate evil that is insurmountably challenging. Accompanying him is the divine feminine- the motherly prakriti, his consort whose worthiness being questioned every moment despite her inevitability in life is a tragic disclosure. When Nature is so serene and comforting, why do we exploit her? Is the question that resounds in every chant of the story teller who happens to have taken the onus of narrating the epic his own way without letting the cliché notions of propriety affect him. It is the kathavachna tradition that comes to the fore in the process wherein the kathavachak tries his level best to arrest the attention of the spectators who have gathered around him to witness his ability of telling a tale fascinatingly.

The alterations made in the tale are the result of an adaptation of the epic on which it is based. Nonetheless, the fact remains that these changes are made to inspire a generation of listeners to re-read the epic with an open mind without being influenced by the halo of divinity that revolves around it. This performance is towards giving Ramayana a form and shape that traverses the boundaries of conventions, religions and even Nations becomes a tale of global reality that surrounds human existence today. Our utilitarian approach towards nature, her exploitation under the garb of progress and development are universally undeniable truths that prevail in this tale of a magnanimous King who readily sacrificed everything in his life. His tales of heroism that prevail in our memory must not be confined to the deeds of valour but beneath there lies a purpose – to make the realization that the victory of good over evil comes with a price to pay. Divine Prakriti is insulted, hurt when the divine masculine shows his worthiness ascertains his valour and she ultimately chooses a silent retreat into the oblivion. Ramayana is indeed fractured at this juncture but the fact remains that it has to be fixed and again told for the generations to come and the Kathakar takes up this responsibility. Everything we see is an

illusion, it is just a dramatization of a popular tale but it aims at restructuring and reframing our often erroneous understanding of the tale as synonym of dictation of certain principles. It is therefore that often every time the tale adopts a new form and incidents do not coincide with the actual epic. Shoorpanakha becomes Mareecha and Sita Swayamvar takes place after the exile of Rama and Laxmana in the forest; only to make us comprehend that the kathakaar's choice to tell a tale remains uninterfered which opens up newer possibilities of engendering a CREATIVE PIECE- retold with a purpose: to enlighten. This is Ramayana – Fractured, fixed and foretold.

The Performative aspect:

The finer aspects of the kathakar's(Janardan Ghosh's) stage presence are intrinsically interwoven in the tale so inseparably that his gait, the gestures, the postures the expressions all depict a conceptual assertion of the Ramayana. The fluidity of the narration is indelible and the intonation is deliberately controlled to suit the parameters of excellent dialogue delivery which ought to have a thunderous proclamation of the epic coupled with a subtle yet effective volume that's verbose and yet aptly restrained. There is a performative glory inseparably blended with the musical beats of a folk rendition that invites the onlookers to participate in the performance. The Kathakar's splendid stage presence with his enormous voice modulations make the characters live in stage; needless to say- male or female. There's a quaint androgyny that Janardan Ghosh establishes on stage with his one man army – himself who appears as a reservoir of actors essaying different roles evocative of the Bahurupi artists that are used to playing diverse roles and yet one at a time. Slow and steady wins the race is the strategem that the Kathakaar deliberately adopts when he narrates simultaneously playing varied roles- Rama, Sita, Shurpanakha and above all the colossal Ravana. The entry of Ghosh defines folk narration that's charming endearing and at the same time prudent in its

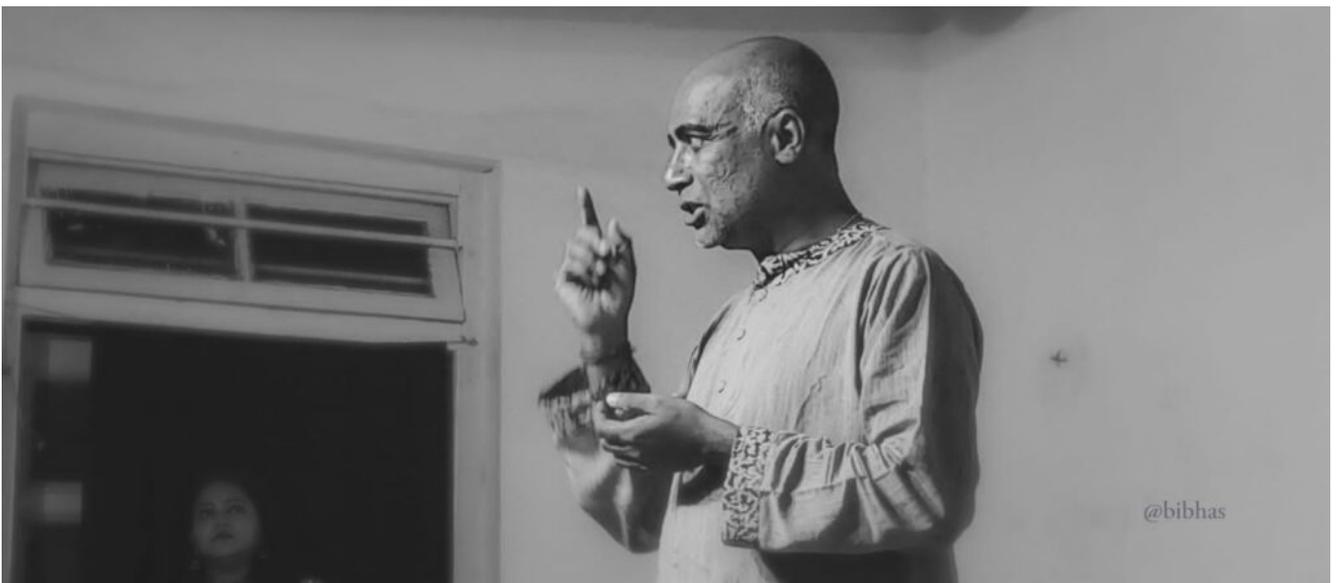
discretion of becoming stern when the narration becomes the somber from the recreational. It is a folk teller whose telling of the tale exploiting all the assets of performative aspect become more than conspicuous. He cries and groans and shouts and screams and laughs and proclaims and sits and stands and jumps and circumambulates the stage as if capturing it from all its directions. Yet he releases the stage equally well and comes back to himself as he knows the tale will speak for itself. The brilliance of a learned actor becomes visible in Ghosh's choice to be Indian in his compassionate and anxious mannerisms of flourishing a folk tale of his nation and yet intelligently global in his approach towards narrating it objectively putting up a universal concern: Eco feminism. A subject matter of relevance for all across ages, Sita... a woman of education he so confidently he says and ends it so poignantly saying and in the end she immersed herself in the earth. And we automatically question " Why? Why do we hurt her – the one who nurtures us so fondly? The divine feminine. Ghosh brings the ties together: Of Sita's separation from Rana and of her being deserted in the end: Both are aligned. Whether she got accidentally separated from him when Ravana abducted her or when he sent her away, in both cases, she is the sufferer. The performative narration impresses upon re-reading the epic independent of the notions of divinity attached to it.

Dr. Payal Trivedi

For comments(if any) please use the comment box given below.









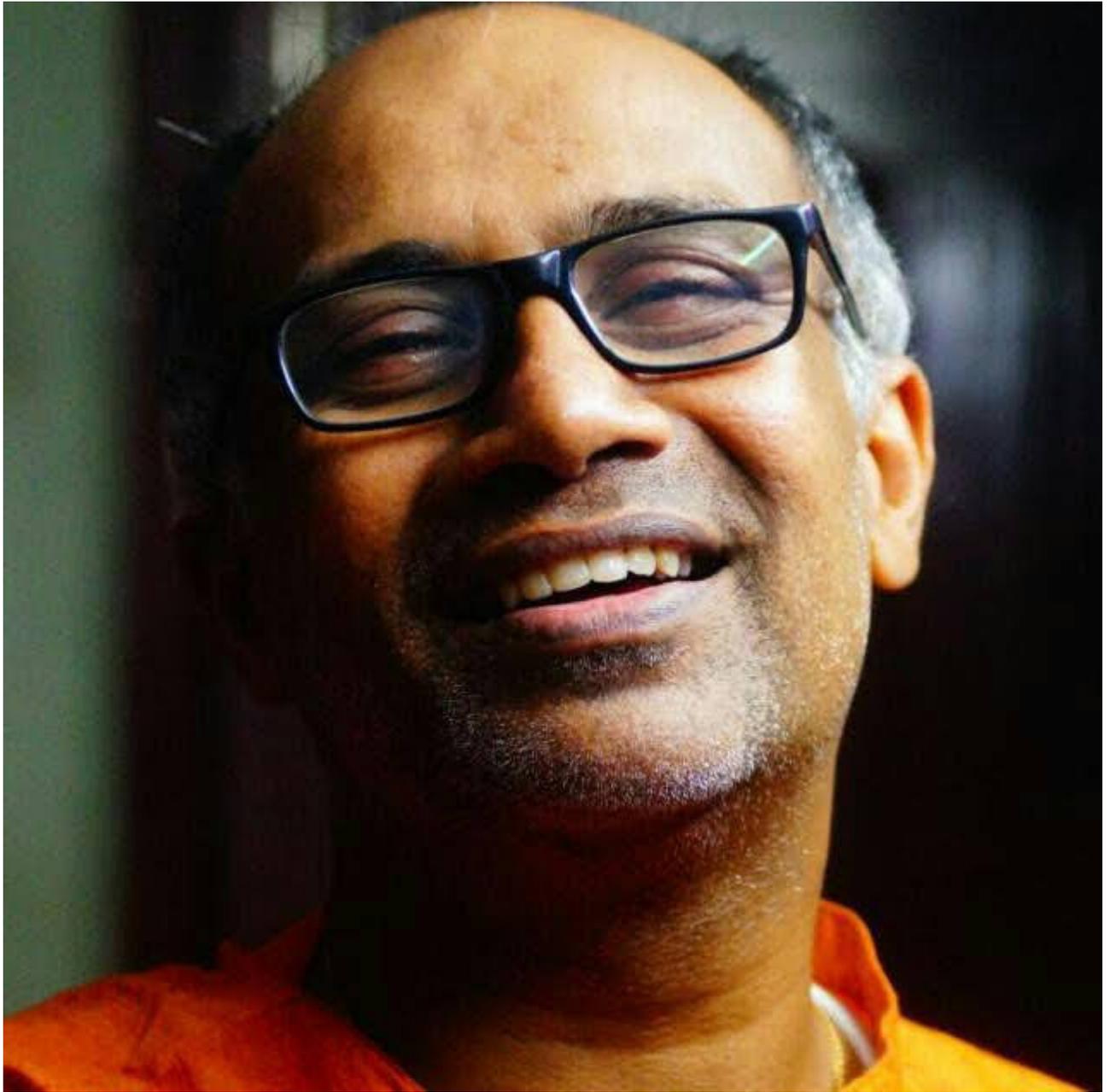
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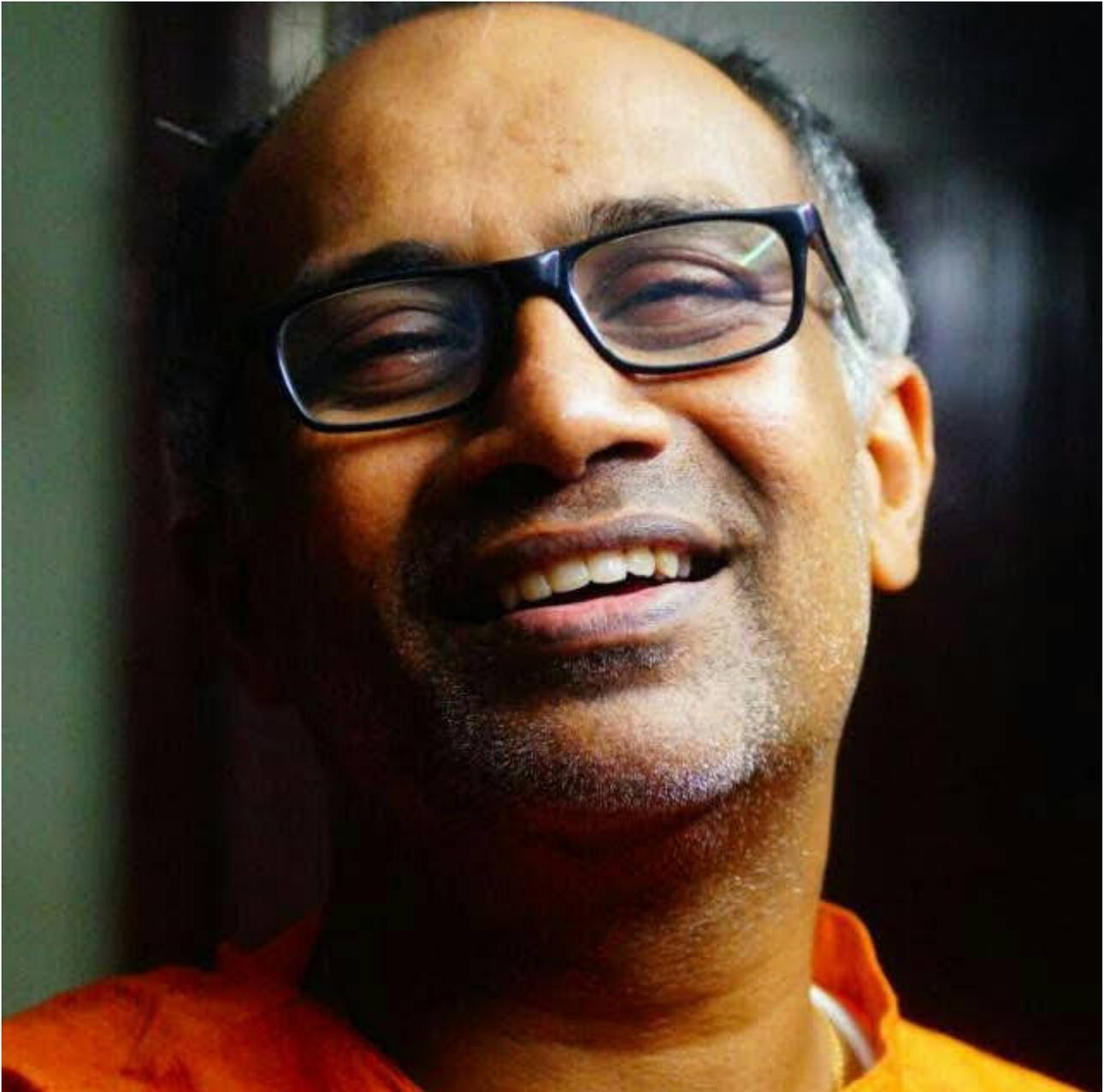


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Janardan Ghosh's Kayantar – Towards the need for Transformation



KAYANTAR- A film co-directed by Rajdeep Paul & Sarmistha Maity

The lead actor in the film, Dr Janardan Ghosh, is really versatile and multi talented. He is a performing artist, academic, theatre director, film actor, playwright, performance coach and storyteller (Katha 'Koli, a new art of storytelling) whose practice includes the use of traditional theories, contemporary performance vocabulary, and interactive media. His research-based work engages the indigenous practice methods in urban spaces exploring the perspectives of historicity, spiritual consciousness, intertextual dialogue, and body-space dynamics of myths, tales and gossips.

Kayantar- is a poignant tale of religious discrimination that leads to repenting circumstances for those that are forced to quietly endure and hence implicitly exploited to endorse conformity to the extent of losing their identities and eventually their lives. Moreover, it is a tale that has a subplot dealing with the pathos of the Bahurupi artists who beg in front of the people for their survival; their art not being recognized as a respectable profession but being condemned as a demeaning activity, pursued by those that are financially underprivileged and become nomadic thus imploring in front of the people for alms in order to make both ends meet.

The film is heart-wrenching as we see how the Bahurupi Muslim artist (played by Dr. Janardan Ghosh) dressed as the Hindu Goddess Kali appears in front of his two children; only to consecutively become crippled and hence forcefully passing on his legacy to his son who dislikes pursuing his father's profession. The son has a point. He being a Muslim roaming around in the apparel of a Hindu Goddess is disparaged by the religious stalwarts of his community, is mocked at by the children of the village and is boycotted by many conservatives as 'Bhikhari' – a pauper. These facts reiterated in an overtly painful and innately stark undertone are enough evidences to make the pangs of the young man believable and evocative of the viewers' empathy for him.

That the innocent youth who has not acquired this profession by his own choice and it has been rather forced on him comes as a harsh and undeniable truth that grills our thinking capacities to the extent of questioning all our modern theories of global indivisibilities of culture and religion. When the young lad takes an anomalous decision to choose a girl of the rival community and loses his life because of being engulfed in the holocaust of communal riots that take place in his village, our conscience gets stirred and we as viewers of the film are compelled to revise our notions of living in an industrialized, progressive world. We are made to

rethink whether the circumferences of culture, creed, race and religion only exist on national borders or are they still prevalent somewhere within our psyches and we are only ignoring these under the pretext of being the civilized community.

Within the framework of a story that so effectively becomes pertinent with the theme of universal relevance as we still find the world divided into castes and communities and people identifying themselves through their religions, there is a very intriguing story of Asia, the young girl who wishes to adorn herself as Kali and pursue her Bahurupi father's profession with confidence and dignity. The tale comes as an pleasant surprise when Asia is founded engaging herself in painting her body coal black and rejoicing to see herself in the gruesome look. It seems a woman's reclusive identification of the other dimension of the divine feminine that exists within her apparent demure image of a meek girl.

That Kali chooses Asia's body to be her abode is also a fact that demands our prudent understanding of the fact that religious differences prevail only on the superficial level as the Bahurupi keeps singing "Apanar Apni fana hole shei bhed jana jai"- Means that realization comes only when the distinction between mine and yours gets erased. Such an indubitable truth of the oneness of divinity is fondly repeated as a backdrop of the entire film makes the theme of the movie apparent- It is not by dividing but it is by uniting that humanity can realize in the oneness of this universe wherein every entity is the fragment of that supreme energy that we call God. The philosophical context in the film does not let the film lose its ties with an integral theme of gender discrimination.

Asia takes the permission of her father to dress up as Kali and pursue her profession as a Bahurupi. Nonetheless, the Bahurupi, her father, gets annoyed with her and says that he cannot allow his daughter to wander on the roads as a

prostitute. Why the man who has earned a living with the same profession disallows his daughter to follow his footsteps? The film gives us a jolt when we hear these words of the Bahurupi. If it were such a demeaning profession, why on earth did he adopt it? Was he also forced by his family to adopt it and with great reluctance he went on from door to door dressed up as Kali and asked for money from the people? The film does not answer these questions but raising these queries in our minds the film acts as a thunderbolt when we see a Muslim girl adopting her father's profession ultimately when her brother dies in the communal riots and she has to earn a living for her home ultimately as her father is crippled and is unable to do anything to make a living. Though she finally opts to become Kali, the intimidating figure of the bloodthirsty goddess who is so venomous becomes the most pensive image of pathos; she has to become Kali only to support her family and this time her father is helpless and cannot stop her even if he wants to. She walks on the railway track fearlessly continuing her journey on the route that has her brother's remnants that remind us of the gruesome ending that the young boy faced due to his unfortunate choice.

Diluting the conformist image of Kali as a fearsome goddess, Kayantar presents another facet of hers as a sad feminine figure who wanders helplessly for recognition. When she walks on the road men do not fear her ghastly appearance. They in fact dare to tease her which undermines her ferocity only to expose the truth that a woman's frightening exterior cannot dismantle the atrocities meted out to her in a man's world. She may be regarded as an epitome of Kali and the goddess may have chosen her to manifest her form but the fact remains that she is an ordinary woman confined within domestic sphere that does not allow her to operate according to her will and discretion. Her life is what a man wants it to be. She may dress up as Kali but she will never be regarded equal to the formidable goddess of the temples and the cemeteries. She will remain as an ordinary woman. When the Bahurupi tries to

disclose the truth in front of her thus refusing her to wander on the roads as Kali, it is this harsh reality that he tries to explain to her which remains unadulterated truth pertinent to all times.

That a woman is exploited under the pretext of granting her equal rights and overt sexual violence and tacit manipulation are indeed a part of this so called man's world even today are not hidden realities but are undeniable truths. Kayantar shows that if Kali wanders as an ordinary powerless woman Asia, she will be shamed. The film aptly demystifies the wrathful image of Kali and extracts the ordinary femininity in her that seeks recognition till date.

When the goddess Kali accidentally stepped on Kala- Lord Shiva as per the mythical account, she was unhappy and wailed for the fact that she had made a grave mistake of putting her feet on her husband's chest; a sinful conduct for a woman as per the conventional theories of Hinduism. It is not Kali's pathos that is underpinned in the temples when we worship her as the mother goddess. It is her ire that is being continually recognized and the red tongue that lolled accidentally out of her mouth due to her unconscious act of putting her feet on Shiva's chest is ironically regarded as a mark of her fearful image. Kayantar shows the other aspect of this horrific Kali and that is – Kali as the one that resides in the domicile of an artist who earns his morsel of food by emoting her from door to door. When the Kayantar takes place and the Bahurupi allows her to possess him, the possession is just on the level of the exterior. There is no internal possession because the artist cannot afford it. He is supposed to be submissive and not exert his redoubtable image in front of others. He is a beggar.

The film talks about the pathos of the village artists that pursue their profession only as a means of earning the basic necessities in life. With the advent of complex technologies in the realm of entertainment, these artists are deprived of

their due recognition. Kayantar – the transformation is of the body and not the soul but this is what the film seems to have intended. The ardour of transforming one's soul is explained through the restraint that the Bahurupi imposes on himself and his son who both dress up as Kali only because they have to earn money to win their bread and butter. There is no philosophical enlightenment in the process of transforming themselves. It stays at the superficial level even after the Bahurupi keeps singing the song 'Apnar Apni fana hole shei bhed jana jai- which talks about the need to escalate beyond the boundaries of time and space to realize divinity.

The song remains merely a song and the spiritual message ingrained in it is only a matter of speculation. In the end, the Muslim girl Asia adopting Kali's image does undermine religious discrimination but it does not become prominent because; the extremely painful state of a girl who takes up a vocation on account of a drastic change that occurs in her life of losing her own brother is a telling tale that completely dilutes the fury in the image she adopts and brings out the agony of an ordinary woman incarcerated in the prison of conformity that she is unable to challenge or disown.

All in all, Kayantar is a film that stimulates us to understand religion beyond the confines of the right and the wrong and urges us to revise our cliché associations of Gods and Goddesses as intimidating figures of the temples who possess their disciples that invoke them in the temple rituals. It certainly is an eye-opener to the fact that the transformation of our soul is needed but is often occluded by our senses governed by selfish motives that thwart the spiritual awakening which engenders the realization of truth.

For comments on the article please write in the box given below:

Doosra Aadmi Doosri Aurat staged to Explore the Complexities of Marriage

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दोसरा आदमी दोसरी अरत

दोसरा आदमी - दोसरी अरत



दोसरा आदमी दोसरी अरत



PASHMINA

(Hindi DRAMA)



An army martyr's parents take a poignant trip to Kashmir, in the shadow of the sorrow of their neighbour. There, accompanied by a garrulous couple, they meet a shopkeeper who has just like them lost his son. They return with a symbol of pathos, reconciliation, closure and above all hope – a shawl called Pashmina.

WRITTEN BY MRINAL MATHUR



DIRECTED BY SAJIDA SAJI



4TH June, 2023



5:00 PM ONWARDS



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पश्मिना एक हिन्दी ड्रामा है, जो एक सैन्य शहीद के माता-पिता का एक भावपूर्ण यात्रा को दर्शाता है। इस यात्रा में, वे अपने पड़ोसी के दुःख के साया में, एक चर्चालु जोड़े के साथ, एक दुकानदार से मिलते हैं, जो भी उनके लिए एक दुःखी पिता है। वे एक संकेत के साथ लौटते हैं, जो संतुष्टि, समाप्ति और सबसे ऊपर आशा है - एक शawl जिसे पश्मिना कहते हैं।

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(.....)

Im-Pact: Innovative Digital Theatre Based Corporate Training Practices



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

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

Training of the soft skills like boosting the morale of the

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

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

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

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

Theatre does not discard any action but looks at it

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

Natsamrat Theatre Festival spreads its wings to Mumbai

By **Shraboni Saha**

After establishing itself in Delhi, Natsamrat is now steadily making a mark in Mumbai as well. It successfully organised the 3rd Mumbai Theater Festival for Maharashtra audience



Natsamrat brought the Kumbh of plays for Mumbaikars i.e. 3rd Mumbai Theater Festival where five different plays were staged on May 26, 27 and 28 at Creative Adda Auditorium, Versova, Andheri West, Mumbai.

On May 26, at 6:30 pm, the play Napunsak, written by Manjul Bhardwaj, was staged and at 8:00 pm, the play Teen Bandar, written by Prabuddha Joshi, directed by Nagendra Kumar Sharma, both plays were staged.

The play Aadhi Raat ke Baad which was written by Dr. Shankar Shesh was staged on 27th May at 6:30 pm and the play Chukayenge Nahi, written by Dario-Fo and adapted by Amitabh Srivastava was staged at 8:00 pm and both the plays are directed by Chandrashekhar Sharma.

On May 28, at 7:30 pm, the play Kambakkht Ishq written by Satya Prakash was staged and the play is directed by Shyam Kumar, director of Natsamrat.

Artists from Delhi, Ambala, Mumbai presented the five different plays at the theater in Mumbai. In these plays, there was humor, adventure as well as social messages for the audience. Seeing the audience of Mumbai, it seemed as if they had a lot of love for theatre, that's why the entire auditorium was packed on all three days. Natsamrat director Shyam Kumar says that if anyone wants to give something to the society, it can be done through drama and the audience definitely pays attention to it because it does not give stress to the mind, instead it gives a beautiful message through entertainment.

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(समस्त तेरह नाटकों पर व्याख्यान एवं प्रश्नोत्तर)

महाकवि भास का नाट्य वैशिष्ट्य

भारतरत्न भार्गव





भास्व

नाट्य समग्र

अनुवाद एवं सम्पादन
भारतरत्न भार्गव



התאחדות הפועלים הישראלית היא ארגון המייצג את עובדי המגזר הציבורי-הממשלתי בישראל. הארגון הוקם בשנת 1975 תחת השם 'התאחדות העובדים הישראלית' והוא אחד מהארגונים המרכזיים בתחום זה. בשנת 1967, התאחדות הפועלים הישראלית התאחדה עם התאחדות העובדים הכללית בישראל, ובשנת 1967, התאחדות הפועלים הישראלית התאחדה עם התאחדות העובדים הכללית בישראל. הארגון מייצג את עובדי המגזר הציבורי-הממשלתי בישראל, ויש לו מעמד מיוחד. הארגון מייצג את עובדי המגזר הציבורי-הממשלתי בישראל, ויש לו מעמד מיוחד. הארגון מייצג את עובדי המגזר הציבורי-הממשלתי בישראל, ויש לו מעמד מיוחד.

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