

The Dilemma of Chhau – Problems of Being Folk by Gouri Nilakantan

A new identity are thus being assumed by the participants while there is a fair amount of continuity in the subject and it has seen some amount of stability in its dramatic content, costumes, music, plot and carefully choreographed movement. At the same Chhau can be said to be traditional as

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 Nillohit, two newcomers who wanted to join the Sangh started by Gautama Buddha and run by his disciple, Ananda. As Icchamati and Nillohit are about to enter the Sangh, a certain situation arises that takes Icchamati to the verge of violating its discipline. 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: 1 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 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.

**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.

13th BRM

The 13th 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 13th 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* 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.

Film festival – to be or not to be

Culture Cocktail (from Mid-Day, Delhi every Wednesday)

Manohar Khushalani

Film festival – to be or not to be

As the 34th International Film Festival of India drew to a close it continued to be in a debacle, thanks to the continuous indecisiveness about its character. From a fairly prestigious beginning it has been brought down to shambles because of the lack of empowerment of the people running it, starving the festival of funds and changing its location every time. Why shift the national festival to Goa? Why mix tourism with serious cinema? Why spend millions of rupees to develop infrastructure and then invest all over again in another city. These are some important questions which will have to be answered before the venue is shifted again. As far as the films are concerned it was a mixed bag as always. There is space enough only to discuss some of the films which I liked.

Paj-n-e-Asr was an Iranian film based in post Taliban Afghanistan. It was about innocence and ambition in a country ravaged by its earlier rulers and how a young woman, Agheleh (Noqleh), tries to find a future for herself and maybe even become the President of her nation. No harm in dreaming. Her admirer, a poet and a fellow refugee, in the war torn land, puts up her portraits in an abandoned palace. The film ends in a desolate landscape where she and her father have to burn the horse-cart, which once transported them, just to keep warm at night. The conservatively religious father loses his son, his grandchild, and his horse in the land which according to him was becoming increasingly blasphemous. They meet another old

man in the desert who was going to Kandahar to re-elect Moola Omar. "Too late," he is informed, "the Americans have already overthrown him." The film is directed by Samira Makhmalbus, who became the world's youngest director to participate in the official section at the 1998 Cannes Film Festival.

Undoubtedly the most talked about film in the festival, *Dogville*, directed by Lars Von Trier, is a highly stylised film, more theatre than film. The entire film is shot on a set representing a small town, Dogville, in which most of the set is drawn on the studio floor, which looks like an architectural drawing, complete with labels. Only the dimensions are missing. The central character is an exasperatingly self suffering and a stubbornly stoic woman, Grace, whose role has been played with a remarkable intensity by Nicole Kidman. Grace is on the run from Gangsters and the town shelters her at a price which goes on rising. The film is an interesting study about how seemingly respectable and apparently well meaning individuals become more and more savage. Just when the audience has had enough of the citizen's sadism, Grace gets her sweet revenge. The Head Gangster turns out to be her own father. In the entire film you never get to see the open sky, except once, when a window curtain is drawn away. This adds to the claustrophobic nature of the story.

Yes Nurse, No Nurse, Directed by Peter Kramer, is a delirious, all-singing, all-dancing romantic comedy revolves around the eccentric denizens of an Amsterdam rest home and the killjoy neighbour who wants the whole lot of them evicted. Chock full of over-the-top 1960s set design, tinted postcard tableaux and lush, split-screen visuals, the film's cheerfully rude musical numbers would have the audience tapping its feet. Based on a Dutch television show from the 1960s, *Yes Nurse, No Nurse* is the musical tale of Nurse Klivia (Loes Luca), who runs a rest home populated by a gang of lovable nutcases next door to the cranky Mr. Boordevol, who is constantly looking for a way to get Nurse Klivia and her rowdy "patients" evicted, and may

finally have found a way when a young, hunky burglar with a heart of gold (Waldemar Torenstra) moves in with them. The film ends endearingly with a change of heart of the nosy neighbour.

At the age of 84, Sri Lanka's leading director Lester James Peries returns to the international stage after an absence of almost 20 years with *Mansion by the Lake*. With 18 features to date this classic veteran filmmaker has not only brought his country to the forefront of Asian cinema, but also inspired a whole generation of Sri-Lankan film makers. The film is inspired by Anton Chekhov's Cherry orchard, and although it has been adapted to the local milieu the characters drawn from the play are mostly true to the original. The film has been shot in visually pleasing locale- in a dak bungalow next to a reservoir. The direction is tight and conservatively classical. All the emotions are neither over stated nor understated by the actors and actresses who have given taught and controlled performances.

Music in Healing Discourses on Music -6 Prateeksha Sharma



Music appeals to the emotional side of the human nature. Music stirs, births, expresses, fires, harnesses, channelizes and tempers emotions. Music precedes the development of language as a form of expression. That is because music is present in nature even before the human is born as an individual or a species. In his bid to emulate the sounds of nature man becomes musical. And yet in amputating himself from this connection with nature, in the process of socialization and civilization the human loses touch with the lyre within, coming to a point of dis-ease or an absence of ease.

Man has instinctively known forever about the healing aspects of music. Speaking about this knowledge in context of Indian music, Alain Daniélou the late Director of the International Institute for Comparative Music Studies and Documentation, Berlin, opines that "a general Sanskrit theory of music, termed *Gāndharva Veda*, was elaborated at a very early date." He continues saying that it seems that the *Gāndharva Veda* studied every use of musical sound, not only in different musical forms and systems but also in physics, medicine and magic. Music makes the human 'whole'- in harmony and in balance. Don Campbell says that bringing a body in to balance requires observing the orchestra in it's entirety, it's current condition and past experience, it's inherent strengths, it's potential for improvement. And the real genius of healing lies in teaching the body, mind, and heart to discover and play their own music-not something that has been dictated by social norms. If one is to examine healing in terms of emotion, then the process of healing involves the transformation of one kind of emotion into another. The *Natyashastra* of Bharata mentions about nine primary emotions or *rasa*-s. *Rasa* is the Permanent Mood when it is revealed through enjoyment[i]. The nine[1]accepted *Rasa*-s are: the Erotic (*Sringara*), the Comic (*Hasya*), the Pathetic (*karuna*), the Furious (*Raudra*), the Heroic (*Vira*), the Fearful (*Bhayanaka*), the Odious (*Bibhatsa*), the Marvellous (*Adbhuta*) and the Tranquil (*Santa*). The catalytic process of music is

aimed at transforming the dominant emotion into another emotion or reducing the severity of the emotional experience, in case the dominant emotion is a disease producing condition or itself an offshoot of the disease. For example sadness at one extreme becomes depression, which can in an extreme case also lead to a suicidal tendency. Music used appropriately with this emotion can aid in an expression that may not be spontaneously available to the individual due to disease related pathology.

It has been noticed that during conditions of illness, it is human tendency to revert to prayer, because of the impact faith has on the psyche, and the immune system. The greater is the patient's faith that they will get well and the more they silently pray, the lesser is their expectation from medical cures alone and also greater is the likelihood of them becoming well due to their own willpower. The reason is twofold: first, prayer takes the mind of the patient away from the disease and negative thoughts. Secondly, it gives a positive affirmation to the body's own immune system to fight the disease. Music unobtrusively becomes a catalyst in this process.

If one is to use music for therapeutic purposes, it is crucial to understand two principles: Entrainment and Isoprinciple. Entrainment is simply the principle from physics that tells us that our biorhythms tend to synchronize with the rhythm, tempo, or pulse of the music. We instinctively choose slow music when we want to calm down and faster music when we want to energize ourselves. The isoprinciple states that in order to change a person's mood with music, one must first begin with music that reflects the state he/she is in to start with. If one is feeling depressed one cannot simply put on "happy" music to change the mood. It must be done slowly and carefully.

When we mention the term music therapy we need to remember that in therapy, music is specifically used to achieve non-

musical goals. Music can both be used as an alternative, stand-alone therapy as well as a complementary therapy in addition to traditional medical procedures.

There are four levels of music therapy practice:

- Auxiliary level: All functional uses of music for non-therapeutic but related purposes;
- Augmented level: Music therapy used to enhance the efforts of other treatment modalities
- Intensive level: Induces significant changes in the client's current situation
- Primary level: Singular role in meeting the main therapeutic needs of the client.

Music therapy is an interpersonal process in which the therapist uses music and all its facets- physical, emotional, mental, social, aesthetic and spiritual- to help clients to improve or maintain help. The music used in therapy maybe specially created by the therapist or client or it maybe drawn from the existing literature in various styles and periods.[ii]

Music and Ritual Discourses on Music -5 by Prateeksha Sharma



Ritual is an innate part of the human life. Ritual whether in the form of an invocation, a sacrifice, a fast or a penance, a holy dip in a river, ringing the bells, a prayer or an *aarti* they all contribute to disciplining the mind to focus. Every spiritual and religious tradition uses music to help in focussing. Prayer brings the mind to a point of concentration, and in a one-pointed thought about the object of prayer. The object maybe the form of a diety or a formless entity, musical sounds help in making the mind still and gathering the thoughts from all the various directions the mind is usually scattered in. Therefore, spiritual music has its own special parametres and singers. When we go into a house of worship the sound of the music playing instantly snaps the chord from the noise of the world and introverts the senses.

In India, with its unique tradition of community singing in *bhajans*, *satsangs* and *sankirtan* music is the predominant element that unifies the consciousness of the participants. Even if people are unable to sing, for not knowing the language or the lyrics, they usually join in the community act with something as simple as clapping. Such community activities, which are a part of the life of a householder, especially in certain communities or the post-retirement phase of life, are a prescription to stall the modern day affliction of alienation among the elderly; which often leads to mental, physical and spiritual decay. This kind of community musico-religious programmes are also a mechanism for those who are involved to remain active, busy and involved in a meaningful social exchange- by not being solely dependent on their

families at all times. The greater is the social and physical involvement of an individual the less likely is the person to fall prey to degenerative diseases.

TO BE CONTINUED.....

GEETIKA AND MANTIKA – AN ARANGETRAM TO REMEMBER A Review by Suryakanthi Tripathi (Former DG ICCR)



A Perfect Pair

The two sisters, Geetika and Mantika Haryani, sixteen and thirteen years old respectively, had their Bharatanatyam Arangetram at the ISKON Auditorium in Delhi on 1st February 2009. For the young dancers, it was an evening to demonstrate how well they had learnt the classical dance over the past seven years.

Smt. Mala Murli of Nritya Geetanjali, who has distinguished herself as a Bharatanatyam guru, had instilled in both her students a level of confidence that allowed them to give of their best. Her own sensibility and individuality was also very evident in the dances performed by the two sisters.

The accompanying musicians enhanced the dance performance, particularly Shri K. Venkateshwaran, who had a rich voice and proved to be an able and versatile singer for the recital.

The recital followed the traditional order beginning with the Alarippu, followed by a Jatiswaram, Shabdam, Varnam, Padams and finally the Tillana.

The Varnam, as expected, was the piece-de-resistance of the evening. The dance, set to the Sanskrit composition of Maharaja Swati Tirunal and describing the ten avatars of Lord Vishnu, required skill in abhinaya, tala and in the execution of intricate adavu jatis. With their graceful movements, neat footwork and good coordination, the dancers drew the spontaneous applause of the audience more than once.

Their recital concluded with a fast-paced Tillana, in Ragam Hindolam set to Adi Talam, in which the sisters performed the complicated adavus and tirmanam with joyful élan.

The Arangetram came together in all aspects – the guru, the dancers, the musicians and the dances. The dedicated enthusiasm of both the teacher and her talented disciples was very evident that Sunday evening. Their debut on stage is something both Geetika and Mantika can justifiably be proud

of. If they continue to train and practice with the same degree of commitment, we will have, in the coming years, two very fine exponents of this great dance form.

Music Education Discourses on Music -4 By: Prateeksha Sharma



Republic Day Parade- A School Band

There are two aspects of music education- music in education and music as education. Training in music from an early age for the purpose of disciplining the mind and making a career out of some aspect of music constitutes music education. When a child begins to train in music in a systematic manner a number of changes occur in the personality of the child- from disciplining to becoming methodical, refinement of senses, time management (as the child also is involved with academic pursuits due to that age). It is a boost to the self-confidence of the individual as his/her musical ability sets

them apart from their peers and the artiste is a source of attraction for everyone around. Since music tends to be a performing art, the necessary exposure to the stage automatically makes the child confident and able to deal with issues related to shyness, introversion, and fear of public speaking. After the training phase, the next phase of the musician is to contribute to the social fabric in the same capacity- a role which maybe performed as a teacher, an entertainer, a healer, in the industry or attached to a spiritual organisation.

Music in education is a somewhat different application of music, in which music is utilised to improve the educational output of students. The main impact of music here is felt due to its ability to let students involve themselves in group musical experiences, which allow an expression of emotion in a medium other than speech. These experiences could be ranging from singing, playing musical instruments together, writing lyrics and setting them to music to making musical plays and productions and so forth. A competitive, performance oriented production with such activities has been seen to bring about both behavioural and academic improvements in healthy school going children as well as those suffering from mental handicaps, hearing handicaps and various other neurological and/or developmental disabilities. Such musical experiences not only foster socialisation, but also bring about group cohesiveness, enhancement of interpersonal skills, learning due to imitative behaviour and more adapted socially cooperative mannerisms.

TO BE CONTINUED.....

Chakras and Sound Discourses on Music -3 By: Prateeksha Sharma



In addition to our visible, gross body we also have the subtle body in the form of an energy field around it. The physical body contains the most dense and therefore visible energy. This energy continues forming layers of energy fields around the body which are not usually visible to the naked eye. This magnetic field energy that surrounds the body is called “aura”. The aura is created by the energy of the *chakras*- the psychic, whirling energy processing centres of the body. According to yogic theory, there are approximately 72,000 *nadis*, astral nerve tubes, the most important of which is the *sushumna*, the astral body counterpart to the spinal cord. On either side of it are two *nadis* known as *ida* and *pingala*, which correspond to the left and right sympathetic cords in the physical body[i]. There are six points in the body where these three *nadis* intersect and these points also correspond in location to the major nerve ganglia (cervical plexus, solar plexus, sacral plexus and so forth) located along the spine in the physical body. In healthy people, the *chakras* are vibrant and spin with vigour, while in those who are not well the chakra petals are dull and spin sluggishly, says the American Hindu priest Thomas Ashley-Farrand[ii]. Interestingly, these *chakras* respond to the sound of Sanskrit, a fact which was noticed by ancient Indian mystics with “second sight”, the ability to see clearly in the subtle realm. These outcomes were carefully written down and can be found in the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads* and the *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*. It took time before the sages arrived at the

mechanism behind the impact of Sanskrit on the *chakras*. And they concluded that the total number of petals or spokes composing those six *chakras* is fifty. Similarly, the Sanskrit alphabet consists of fifty letters, with each one corresponding to a particular petal of a *chakra*. When a *mantra* built from the language is chanted, our *chakras* vibrate in tune with the Sanskrit sounds because Sanskrit is ... “an energy-based language first and a meaning-based language second”. Not all the words of the Sanskrit *mantras* have meanings. It is the energy coming from the subtle body that provides the key to the effectiveness of the *mantra* chanting. Each *chakra* has a corresponding *Bija mantra* or sound vibration. Irrespective of who chants the *mantra*, at the sound of the *Bija mantra*, the *chakras* spin with greater energy and vigour, giving corresponding strength to the body. It is also said that the *chakras* correspond to the musical scale with each *chakra* representing one *swara* of the octave.

Human society uses music in various ways. Some of it is used in education for those who become musicians or those who endeavour to develop a fine aesthetic appreciation of life, in particular the arts, around them. It is utilized in religious ceremonies and rituals, as a means of entertainment and in imparting health to the body. Each of these applications of music is explained briefly.

Form Grace Poise

Form Grace Poise

Preminder Singh
reviews a dancer's performance



Bindu Juneja

There was a breath of fresh air in the dance world at The Habitat centre auditorium on 30th July. Bindu Juneja breezed in with a quality performance after an absence of more than 12 years from any stage in Delhi. A student of Madhavi Mudgal for more than 10 years, she married and didn't just settle down in Bhopal. She continued to dance and teach at her own dance academy '*Parn*'. She studied the Kathakali style of movement from maestro Margi Vijay Kumar. This is the style par excellence of theatre, of facial expression, of *abhinaya*. Leila Samson in her book '*Rhythm in Joy*' says 'the Kathakali dancer can, through facial expression alone, show the fall of a flower as it wanders downwards from the heavens. With his eyes alone he can measure its progress towards him. He smells its fragrance...his eyes, nose and senses are activated to reflect a myriad reactions.'

It is this that reflected in Bindu's performance and choice of pieces. Of 6 she did only one *Pallavi* (in *Raag Jait Kalyan*) and chose 3 *abhinaya* pieces to show the range and depth of her art.

The first '*Priye Charushile*' an *Ashtapadi* from the Geeta Govinda shows Krishna cajoling an angry Radha with a lot of flattery. Bindu did this with an easy grace and consummate skill and avoided the overacting that younger dancers are prone to in this *ashtapadi*.

This was followed by an *abhinaya* '*Katana Bedana Mohi Desi Madana*' a composition of the 14th century Maithili poet, Vidyapati. The love lyrics describing the sensuous love story of Radha and Krishna and the poetry and prayers dedicated to Lord Shiva form a rich tradition of folk songs still sung in the region of Mithila in Bihar. They are also ideally suited to the Odissi style where the lyricism of the poetry is reflected in the sensuousness of the dance.

Bindu confirmed her mastery of expression of the Nayika separated from her beloved as well as her understated and confident exposition of the curvilinear movements of the dance.

The penultimate piece before the Moksha showed her dramatic skills in '*Ramashtakam*' depicting the various episodes from Lord Rama's life as a son, a brother, a husband, a father, a king and as both friend and foe. Bindu's skill in the theatrical aspect of the dance owes a lot to Dr. Kanak Rele the Mohiniattam veteran, but to combine in one seamless performance the quiet elegance of her guru Madhavi, the passionate expressions of Margi Vijay and the *abhinaya* learnt from Dr. Rele we can safely say that we have another potentially great dancer in our midst who deserves much more than one performance in Delhi every twelve years..

Choreography was by Bindu and the excellent music was by Meera Rao.