Anagha Deshpande’s Play: Ved Haran

Playwright: Anagha Deshpande
Director: Saish Deshpande
Group: Abhivyaktee, Panaji
Language: Konkani & Marathi
Duration: 1 hr 15 mins

The Form
Kaalo is a popular folk-art of Goa, dedicated to the village deity and lord Vishnu. Traditionally it is performed in the mandap or matov, a roofed structure just outside the temple. Each character’s entry is announced by the Hardas through a melodious song. Kaalo is presented in two parts – Poorvarang (The first half) and the Uttararanga (the later part consisting of an episode from Puranas). The entire performance is supported by classical vocal music to the accompaniment of two Mridangas (now replaced with Pakhawaj) and a number of Jhanj i.e. cymbals.

The Play
Vedharan is a Kaalo that depicts the story of Shankasura stealing Vedas from Brahmadev. After stealing the Vedas, Shankasur comes back to his kingdom and makes his half-witted aides, Chimo and Poklo in-charge of the ‘Institute of Vedas’. This leads to a sense of discomfort and unrest amongst commoners while their political representatives struggle to use Vedas for their political gains. Shankasur annoyed with this development decides to meet his political Guru, Brihaspati, for a solution. Brihaspati informs him of the misuse of powers by his ministers and the adulteration of knowledge that is being done in the Asurnagari for selfish interests due to which Shankasur is fast losing support of his

people.
The play ends with Lord Vishnu getting the Vedas back from Shankasur, and the artists singing the traditional hymn, thus expressing the hope that each one may get an access to education which is everyone’s right.

Director’s Note
Vedharan was conceived in a special theatre festival, Lok Rang, which involved research and production of plays based on Goan folk theatre styles. It was a dream project which helped us to seek and learn the possibilities of our traditional theatre form Kaalo. The word ‘kaalo’ in Konkani means a mixture of various items, and here it refers to the blend of various theatrical elements like dance, song, music and dialogue which are aptly used in this production to weave an impressive story of misuse of powers for political gains. Vedharan , while incorporating the elements of Kaalo, has been designed for the proscenium and utilises the benefits that the modern performing space offers. While maintaining the authenticity, like the elaborate Poorvarang, the presentation later takes freedom of the theatrical reality which I feel is a step towards exploring the form.
I am grateful to Shri Vinayak Khedekar and Pt. Ulhas Velingkar who guided us during the process.

The Director
Saish Deshpande, alumnus of Kala Academy’s School of Drama and founder member of Abhivyaktee-Panaji, has designed and directed more than 100 full-length plays since 1986, comprising of professional, semi-professional, traditional and experimental productions in Konkani, Marathi, Hindi, English and Sanskrit. He is a recipient of the National Award for Programme & Technical Excellence by Prasar Bharati, Govt of India.

The Playwright
A versatile theatre personality from Goa, Anagha Deshpande has written several plays in Marathi, Hindi, Konkani and English.

Her recognized works include Teen Da, Swapnavasavadatta and Nagananda, Dashavatar Darshan and Face Off-line. Two of her plays Chitralekha and Vedharan have been published.

The Group

The cultural organization Abhivyaktee was formed in the year 1997 at Panaji by the alumnus of Kala Academy's School of Drama. Its regular activities include theatre classes and workshops. Abhivyaktee designs and produces issue based plays and theatre festivals.

Cast and Credits

Shankasur Dnyaneshwar Govekar/Raghuvir Govekar
Hardas Sachin Naik
Mahabal Abhijit Ekawde
Chhota Bhataji Anish Deshpande
Chimo Saurabh Karkhanis
Poklo Gautam Gaude
Brahmadev & Brihaspati Raghoba Parab
Vishnu Sagar Haldonkar
Narad Shounak Deshpande
Piso Abhishek Dhawaskar /Rhutvik Sawant
Ganapati & Mahamantri Raghuvir Govekar/Dnyaneshwar Govekar
Saraswati & Nartaki Prerna Palekar
Maharani Priyanka Verekar
Mantri & Chorus Shambhavi Deshpande
Rhutvik Sawant, Abhishek Dhawaskar,
Anish Deshpande,Chaitra Deshbhandari,
Sriya Bandodkar, Manjusha Bandodkar

Vocals & Taal Varad Tari and Sachin Naik
Pakhawaj Mahanand Kawlekar, Abhijit Ekawde
Set Sandip Deshpande
Lights Vaibhav Naik
Costume Anagha Deshpande
Make-up Eknath Naik
Property Manjusha Bandodkar
Choreography Priyanka Verekar

Special thanks to Shri Vinayak Khedekar, Pt. Ulhas Velingkar, Dr. Pramod Pathak, Prabhakar Sanskritik Sanstha, Caranzale

Script Anagha Deshpande
Music & Direction Saish Deshpande

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