

AKA-NANDUN by Bhawani Bashir Yasir



The Play

The play *Aka-Nandun*, which means 'The Beautiful', is based on a mystic legend, about a Hindu king who has seven daughters but no son. When he gets old he prays for a son who could inherit his kingdom. A jogi comes in his dream and blesses him with a son on the condition that he should name the son Aka-Nandun and promise to return him to the jogi when he is 12 year old.

The son is born, named Aka-Nandun, brought up with royal care, and sent to the royal Pathshala to learn Vedas and Puranas. When he is 12, the saint appears before the king. The king begs the Jogi to take his whole kingdom and wealth, but not his son. The jogi declines and orders the king to slaughter

his son, and orders the queen to cook him for his feast. When the feast is ready, he orders the queen to divide it in 11 plates – eight for ladies, one for the king, one for the saint, and the eleventh for Aka-Nandun. Then he orders the queen to call out for Aka-Nandun to enjoy the feast. The queen calls for Aka-Nandun, who, to the surprise of all, appears. The jogi disappears and all sing the glory of the jogi.

Director's Note

Kashmir has a distinctive culture, based on the fusion of Shiv-mat and Islam, which has given birth to a tolerant, mystic and socio-religious philosophy during the last seven hundred years. And this is mostly known as Kashmiriyat. *Aka-Nandun* is based on a mystic Kashmiri poetic fable, written by mystic poets and endorsed popularly, and which emphasises the highest sacrifice of ones greed, lust, power, ego and worldly luxuries, and submit to the highest authority of the Almighty. The play translates this through the folk format of Daastan with sublime actions, theatrical visuals and traditional music and dance.

The Playwright & Director

Bhawani Bashir Yasir, born at Doru-Shahabad in Anantnag district of Kashmir, is a post-graduate in Kashmiri literature, a renowned Playwright and Theatre Director, who after passing out from National School of Drama, New Delhi in 1987 with distinction in Stage Craft, preferred to go back to his state to institutionalise the theatre of Kashmir on professional standards, in line with Kashmiri sensibilities. He established EKTA in 1988, now internationally recognised as the authentic theatre institution of the state.

The Group

Ensemble Kashmir Theatre Akademi, popularly known as EKTA was founded in 1988 by Bhawani Bashir Yasir after passing out from NSD. EKTA organises a national theatre festival known as Budshah Theatre Festival, in which plays from all regional languages of the state, and special entries from rest of India are also invited. EKTA has participated in many national and international theatre festivals.

Cast & Credits:

King (Ram Gopal)

Bhawani Bashir Yasir

Queen (Sonei Maal)
Haseena Sofi

Shaheena Nazir /

Seven Princesses
Rukhsana Tantrey,

Nusrat Jalal,

Tabbasum Aslam, Iqra Binti Hassan,

Naazima Yusuf, Kousar Aejaaz,

Khushbu Bashir

Aka -

Nandun Arhaan Nisar

Tabeena Manzoor

The Hermit (Jogi)

Aamir Hussain Mir

Raj-Guru

Farooq Ahmad

Mir

Daastaango Bashir Lone

Chorus (Dancers & Singers)
Hussain,

Nisar Ahmad Rah, Mir Shaukat

Syed

Muzamil Rasool, Asrat Hussain,

Junaid

Ahmad Rather

Harmonium
(Sultanpuri)

Shaukat Bhat

Rabaab

Farooq Ahmad

Saarangi

Mohd. Amin

Dholak/Nout

Tariq Ahmad

Stage Props
& Syed Muzamil

Nisar Ahmad Rah

Costumes
Yasir / Bashir Lone

Bhawani Bashir

Light Design
Bhawani

M. Muzamil Hayat

Production Controller

Gulzar Ganaie

Stage Manager

Mir Shaukat Hussain

Associate Director

M. Muzamil Hayat

Bhawani

Music, Design & Direction

Bhawani Bashir Yasir