Sapan Kumar Acharya's CHHAU (SERAIKELLA & MAYURBHANJ)

Directors: Sapan Kumar Acharya

Group: Acharya Chhau Nrutya Bichitra, Jharkhand

Language: Non- Verbal

Duration: 1hr 15 mins

The Forms

Seraikella Chhau – Based on martial arts, the Seraikella Chhau

follows the tenets of *Natya Shastra* as propounded in our scriptures. The use of masks is its uniqueness and the dancer uses these to clarify and depict the theme of the dance. The dancer expresses different emotions, notions and ideas with the drum beats (Tal) and musical rhythms. The dance runs in three phases i.e. Sthayee (Permanent posture), Madhyala (Intermediate movements), and Drut (Faster movements). Various topics from Ramayana and Mahabharata, abstract ideas, and common social incidents form the subject matter of these dances.

Mayurbhanj Chhau – Mayurbhanj Chhau dance form has a long history. Originally a tribal dance, which originated from the forests of Mayurbhanj, Odisha, in the 18th century, it got the status of a martial art form in the 19th century.

Slowly & steadily Mayurbhanj Chhau left its martial character and got mellowed. Under the royal patronage it received proper attention & direction and showed a bright future and utmost perfection as a dance of excellent style in the field of eastern art and culture of India. Mayurbhanj Chhau is performed without masks and is technically similar to the Seraikella Chhau.

The Performances

Jatraghat – It is a musical offering that evokes the gods and marks the beginning of a Seraikella Chhau & Mayurbhanj Chhau dance performance.

Radhakrishna by Govind Mahato & Veena Choudhary (Seraikella Style)

In this particular dance composition Krishna’s mellifluous flute forms an intrinsic part of the love imagery.

Hansa by Satish Kumar Modak

This depicts the beauty of the stately swan as it swims in its

natural habitat of water.

Dandi by Niroj Kumar Mohanta & Phudan Majhi (Mayurbhanj Style)

This episode is taken from the Upanayana ceremony of a Brahmin boy.

Mayura by Sukant Acharya (Seraikella Style)

The peacock is a bird known for its grandeur and beauty. This bird of extraordinary beauty- its feelings of joy and vanity, and the qualities of grace in its movements are given an anthropomorphic representation.

Geeta by Bibhuti Bhusan Mohanta & Rajkapur Mohanta. (Mayurbhanj Style)

The dance depicts an episode from the Mahabharata, the epic based on the concept of Shrimad Bhagavad Geeta's Sainya Darshana Yoga.

The Director

Representing the fifth generation in a family of traditional performers who have significantly contributed in the evolution and development of Chhau dance, Sapan Kumar Acharya is steeped in the tradition of Seraikella Chhau. He has inherited the knowledge of this art form from his father Guru Lingaraj Acharya. He has been awarded with Junior and Senior Fellowships from Ministry of Culture, Government of India. He is a visiting faculty of Chhau at Attakalari Movements of Arts, Bangalore, an Artistic Director of Acharya Chhau Nrutya Bichitra, Seraikella, and a Teacher at Triveni Kala Sangam, New Delhi. He has been training students of both dance and theatre for the past 15 years.

The Group

Acharya Chhau Nrutya Bichitra was founded by Late Guru Lingaraj Acharya in the year 1980. Since then the institution

has been training several artists in Seraikella Chhau dance. Guru L.R. Acharya was one of the last gurus of the Purthosahi Akhada, one of the eight Akhadas of Seraikella Chhau dance schools.
Apart from training dancers, the institution has participated in various national and International dance festivals in India as well as abroad like India International Mask Dance Festival, the first international festival and seminar on Dance and Martial Arts of Asia, Yuva Mahotsava, a festival of all styles of Chhau dance, and Chidambaram and Ikeri temples. It has also been selected as one the training centers by the Sangeet Natak Akademi under its project to support to Chhau dance.

Cast & Credits

The Team: Sukant Kumar Acharya, Satish Kumar Modak, Ranjit Kumar Acharya, Shubham Acharya, Govind Mahato, Veena Choudhary, Bhibhuti Bhusan Mohanta, Rajkapur Mohanta, Niroj Kumar Mohanta, Phudan Majhi, Surendra Nath Soren, Yogesh Kumar Shankar, Bhagaban Behera, Shashadhar Acharya

Guru: Sapan Kumar Acharya

Ujjwal Chattopadhyay's EKUSH GRAM Director: Bratya Basu

Playwright: Ujjwal Chattopadhyay

Director: Bratya Basu

Group: Naihati Bratyajon, 24 Paragana

Language: Bengali

Duration: 1 hr 30 mins

The Play

The central point of the play 21 Grams or Ekush Gram is an accident around which revolve three families and lives of a few individuals. The sequence of events spins simultaneously from the past to the present and back to the past. These circular motions embody individuals merged in emotions of love-affection, lust-violence, despair-dejection, and wide-ranging gives and takes. Under the same kiosk, into the varied complexities of life penetrate many heart pulsations lub-dub..lub-dub..lub-dub…….. A compelling and unbearable rhythm of lub-dub…. this is an endless tremor. Its harmonious impact signifies the mysterious beauty of life. Barely 21 grams lub-dub..lub-dub..lub-dub..lub-dub…

Director’s Note

Naihati Bratyajon was established with an aim to present films rich in creative and theatrical content on stage. For theatrical presentation, they had resolved to choose from films produced in Bengal. The first play staged in this design was Meghe Dhaka Tara. The play premiered at University Institute Hall on 2nd January, 2016. The premier show of the second production Ekush Gram is planned on 26th March 2017 at Mohit Moitra Mancha, Paikpara. This play is based on the second film of Oscar winning Mexican director Alejandro González Iñárritu, titled 21 Grams. The essence of this theatrical production is to make the two islands of theatre and film to become mutually relevant in the great ocean of art.

The Director

Bratya Basu, is an accomplished theatre artist, a playwright and director. Basu launched his career as a dramatist and director with the play Ashaleen (1996), described by theatre critics as the first post-modernist Bengali play. His noted plays (as playwright, actor and director) thereafter include Aranyadeb, Shahar Yaar, Virus-M, Winkle-Twinkle, 17th July, Chatushkon and many more. Basu has bagged many awards and recognitions both in Theatre and Film. Some of them include Hyderabad Bengali Film Festival Award, Ritwik Ghatak Honorary Award, Kalakar Award, Shyamal Sen Memorial Award, Dishari Award, Satyen Mitra Award, Shilpayan Samman, Srestho Natya Nirman etc. Bratya Basu, is currently Hon’ble Cabinet Minister and in charge of the Ministry of Information Technology & Electronics for the state of West Bengal. He has created his own space in contemporary theatre by moving beyond its existing boundaries. He formed his own theatre group Bratyajon in 2008. The first theatrical production of Bratyajon was Ruddhasangeet (2009) which has so far staged more than a record 150 shows to packed houses.

The Playwright

Ujjwal Chattopadhyay is a professor of Economics and an eminent playwright of West Bengal who has been serving Bengali theatre for decades. Most of his plays have been produced by directors like Bibhas Chakraborty, Meghnad Bhattacharya, Bratya Basu, Soumitra Mitra, Kaushik Sen, Prokash Bhattacharya and others. Some of his remarkable plays are Akarik, Antaral, Bhrom, Antoni-Soudamini, Arabyorajani, Biley, Drohokal, Dhrubatar, Nati Kiranshasi etc. He has also adapted the works of Chekov, Tagore, Shakespeare and Kalidas.

The Group

We have formed Naihati Bratyajon by merging all the theatre groups of Naihati. On the suggestion offered by our respected playwright and director, Bratya Basu, we have decided to stage plays based on popular movies carrying social messages. Our first production, Meghe Dhaka Tara, is a well-known film of Ritwik Ghatak. We will produce several such film productions on stage in the future and present them to theatre lovers.

Cast & Credits

On Stage: Poulumi Basu, Arna Mukhopadhyay, Sumit Ray, Loknath Dey, Dyuti Halder, Partha Bhowmick, Prantik Chowdhury, Aritra Banerjee, Raktim Dutta, Partha Pratim Das, Subrata Biswas, Nantu Kundu, Mahuya Bhadra, Subham Sil, Soumadip Kundu, Ronit Paul, Rick Deb, Mou Mondal, Rupa Mazumdar, Sayni Ghosh, Shankar Dutta, Srijoni Adhikary

Light: Sudip Sanyal

Set design: Debasish Dutta

Set Making: D’Moy

Sound: Dishari Chakraborty

Sound Operator: Santonu Paul

Costume: Madhumita Dham

Make-up: Md Ali

Movement: Debkumar Pal

Logo Design: Inner Circle Advertising

Stills, Brochure & Publicity Design: Abhijit Nath

Production Assistance: Prithwish Rana

Production Control: Jitobrato Palit

Playwright: Ujjwal Chattopadhyay

Director: Bratya Basu