

Girish Karnad – Remembering A Multifaceted Mesmerising Actor, Writer, Director

He became a film actor and give a resounding performance as the school master driven mad by the kidnapping of his beautiful wife by the lustful brothers of the local Zamindar. He also gave a fine account of himself in Swami directed by Basu Chatterjee. He appeared as an actor in films and Television, not only because he could test himself in another medium but also to buy the freedom to pursue his activities in the Theatre, namely writing plays.

Girish Karnad's Play: Bhangra Bhangra Chhobi



Playwright: Girish Karnad
Translator: Srotoswini Dey
Director: Tulika Das
Group: Kolkata Bohuswar, Kolkata
Language: Bengali
Duration: 1 hr 10 mins

The Play

The play opens with Manjula Ray in a television studio, giving one of her countless interviews. Manjula is a successful Bengali writer whose first novel in English has got favourable reviews from the West. She talks about her life and her

darling husband Pramod, and fondly reminisces about Malini, her wheel-chair bound sister. After the interview, Manjula is ready to leave the studio but is confronted by an image. Gradually Manjula starts unfolding her life showing two facets of the same character. The conversations between the character on stage and the chhaya-murti go on and Manjula peels layer after layer, revealing raw emotions and complexities of the relationship between Manjula, Promod and Malini. We can relate to both Manjula and Malini... all of us being flawed in some way or the other, and that's what makes us human.

Director's Note

I wanted to explore the text of Girish Karnad's Broken Images with my own understanding of Manjula, the lady portraying two facets of the same character. Despite all her shortcomings and flaws, she did not degenerate into a stereotypical vamp. Although she had made unforgivable mistakes, wasn't there enough reason for her to exercise duplicity and betrayal? I found myself asking this question and wanting to see the larger picture through another prism. It has taken years for the Bengali stage to come up with an adaptation of the 2004 play. The Bengali translation by Srotoswini Dey Bhanga Bhanga Chhobi helped me to stage it. Theatre, I feel, should not be just entertainment. It should encourage a bit of soul searching too. I am thankful to Mr. Karnad, Srotoswini and the team of Bhanga Bhanga Chhobi of Kolkata Bohuswar to help me do just that.

The Director

Tulika Das is an actor and director of Kolkata Bohuswar. After her M.A. in Theatre, she joined Bohurupee and acted in several plays under the direction of Kumar Roy and also directed four plays, which received a lot of appreciation. In Kolkata Bohuswar, she directed Choturthir Jor, Bhanga Bhanga Chhobi, Agnipaak and Anandamath. Tulika is working with under privileged children and young adults, using theatre as a tool to build their capacity to overcome the barriers around them.

She is actively involved in Human Rights movement of people with disabilities.

The Translator

Srotoswini Dey, M.A., MPhil, is an Assistant Professor of English Language in a college of West Bengal. She is a theatre lover and is trying her best to enrich the Bengali theatre through the translation of scripts of famous playwrights who have written in other Indian languages. She has also published a book Re-reading of Vijay Tendulkar's Ghasiram Kotwal: a Critical Study of Vijay Tendulkar.

The Group

Kolkata Bohuswar was established in January 2017 in order to create and promote innovative theatre. The word 'Bohuswar' means a collective of different kinds of voices. True to its name, Bohuswar is home to individuals of different ages, genders, religious identities and places of residence. The group has produced the play Choturthir Jor, based on a story by Ismat Chughtai (selected for 8th Theatre Olympic), Bhangra Bhangra Chhobi, based on Girish Karnad's Broken Images (selected for 21st BRM), and Agnipaak, based on a play by Mahesh Dattani. The group had organised a November theatre festival (2018) along with a theatre workshop for young theatre workers with Ruchika theatre group, Delhi. The group facilitates inclusive theatre workshops for the under-privileged children in the rural areas of West Bengal.

Cast & Credits

On stage Sukriti Lahori Sinha, Piyali Guha Roy, Tulika Das

Off stage Mayukh Dutta, Monomita Chaudhury, Rashmi Natua, Sampreeti Chakraborty

Sumita Basu, Biswajit Roy, Arka Ranjan Bhattacharya, Tanmoy Das, Bobby

Kar, Arko Roy, Tapas Roy, Indrajit Mukhoty

Music Kalyan Sen Barat

Set & Light Gagandeep

Make-up Piali Samanta

Playwright Girish Karnad

Translator Srotoswini Dey

Director Tulika Das

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Girish Karnad's Play: Tughlaq



Playwright: Girish Karnad

Translator: B.V. Karanth

Director: Bharti Sharma

Group: Kshitij, Delhi

Language: Hindustani

Duration: 2 hrs

The Play

Tughlaq explores the series of events that led to the downfall of one of the most fascinating kings of Delhi, Mohammed-bin-Tughlaq. The protagonist, known for his reformist, ahead-of-times ideas had a grand vision, but his reign was an abject failure. He started his rule with great ideals of unifying India, but in twenty years his reign had degenerated into anarchy and his kingdom had become a 'kitchen of death'.

The vision of Tughlaq to unify India and keep religion out of

politics cost him dearly.

Director's Note

Muhammad bin Tughlaq wanted to build a secular state, moving his capital from Delhi to Daulatabad, a Hindu-majority city. His ideas about the economy were new but he turned into a whimsical tyrant who couldn't control the kingdom any more. The life of the people is governed and corrupted by the interaction of the saints and the politicians. Tughlaq, who pretends to be a true follower of religion, commits countless murders to retain his monarchy. The play is eerily contemporary with thirteen scenes woven around the life and times of Muhammad bin Tughlaq, the 14th century sultan of Delhi, and an authoritarian but idealistic king who disintegrates into failure in a span of twenty years. Tughlaq is noted for its symbols like prayer, sleep, game of chess and the rose which are used to heighten the effect of the play.

The Director

Bharti Sharma is a National School of Drama graduate and has been doing theatre in Delhi for last 38 years. She has acted in over fifty plays and has directed more than 35 plays. She has been awarded the Senior Fellowship by the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India. She has directed and co-produced a comedy serial for Doordarshan, directed documentaries made by Kshitij for Dept. Of Culture, Govt. of India, and has directed short-films and educational films for Deepaliya Plan Project (a social organization). She has acted in tele-films and a few episodes of the popular TV serial Bhanwar.

The Playwright

Girish Raghunath Karnad was an Indian actor, film director, Kannada writer. He is the recipient of Jnanpith Award for Kannada, the highest literary honour conferred in India. He was also active in the world of Indian cinema working as an actor, director, and screenwriter, earning numerous awards along the way. He was conferred Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan by the government of India.

The Group

Kshitij theatre group was established in 1987 by a few graduates of National School of Drama, headed by NSD alumna Bharti Sharma, with the aim of promoting Indian art and culture through theatre. Apart from producing plays it has also been organizing theatre workshops in remote areas of the country in collaboration with the Department of Culture, Govt. of India.

Cast & Credits

Tughlaq Mohit Tripathi

Sauteli Ma Bharti Sharma

Barni Lakshya Goel

Najeeb Nitin Koul

Azeez Anurag Kumar

Aazam Divyanshu Kumar

Sheikh Prabhat Mishra

Shahbuddin Akshay Malik

Ratan Singh Vishal Kasana

Ghiyasuddin Vishal Kasana

Kaka Prabhat Mishra

Mazhabi Aadmi Naveen Panday

Jawaan Sudhanshu

Shareef Lokesh Patel

Hindu Kamal Sharma

Sipahi Naveen Pandey

Hindu Aurat Priya Yadav

Jawaan Atul Pandey

Darbaan Kapil

Naqeeb Abhishant

Qareem Khan Bhartendu Pandey

Aurat 1 Ritu Sharma

Aurat 2 Shweta Gupta

Aurat 3 Shivani Arora

Dhindhorchi Lokesh, Atul Pandey, Abhishek

Ameer Umra Nitesh, Abhishek Bajpayee, Kamal, Pankaj, Sanjeev, Kapil, Jaideep, Ankit Rawal, Prakhar

Hindu Sipahi Lokesh Patel, Tarun Srivastava, Naveen Pandey, Atul Pandey, Abhishek Kamboj, Namit Singh, Ankit Raj, Vishal Kasana

Crowd Ritu, Shweta, Shivani, Naveen, Lovely, Abhishek Bajpayee, Nitesh, Kamal, Ishan Pundir, Nitin Joshi, Sanchit Agarwal, Ankush Singh, Nishant Singh, Tarun, Abhishek Kamboj, Namit, Ankit, Vishal, Bhartendu, Kapil, Lokesh, Jaideep, Ankit Rawal

Mulazim/Muslim Sipahi Ankit Raj Singh, Naveen, Atul, Bhartendu, Nitin Joshi, Abhishek, Namit Singh

Lights Himanshu B. Joshi

Music Rupesh Bhimta

Set Management Abdul Hakim

Costume Nitin, Naveen, Abhishek, Ishaan

Property Abhishek Bajpaye, Lovely, Atul

Poster/Brochure Anurag Thakur

Assistant Director Anurag, Divyanshu

Playwright Girish Karnad

Director Bharti Sharma

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Girish Karnad's Play: Nagamandal



Playwright: Girish Karnad

Translator: Sukesh Panda

Director: Nalini Nihar Nayak

Group: New Quest Repertory, Rourkela

Language: Odia

Duration: 2 hrs 15 mins

The Play

Almost all creation, be it animals, birds, trees or men, has two elemental components – male and female. Each wishes to keep the other under subjugation. Girish Karnad, in his play Nagamandal conveys that the companions should remain complementary to each other. Rani weds Apanna, who has the typical 'I am the master' role and expects his wife to submit unquestioningly to his shenanigans. Suppression of womanhood in this male-dominated society is a common phenomenon. The writer advocates gender-justice and freedom through Rani. By integrating folk tales into the play he has been able to create a drama of varied hues.

Director's Note

Trouble in the universal yet intricately delicate relationship between a man and a woman creates an imbalance, a disturbing ripple. Incorporating this social message, the play Nagamandal by Girish Karnad really fascinated me. I am able to relate to folktales and legends of such essence, since they are prevalent in my culture, land, and people. Hence I was allured to recreate this folktale. And in doing so I used many indigenous and dying art-forms of Odisha like Mayurbhanj Chhau dance, Odissi dance and song, Sambalpuri dance and songs, etc. The music is played using classical instruments, for classical

dance forms beginning with Ranapa to Odissi and Bharatnatyam. I have tried to make it a musical and choreographically expressive play, hoping it will be well received by the audience.

The Director

Nalini Nihar Nayak is a well-known theatre director, actor, designer, and music composer of Odisha. He is a trained Chhau dancer in the Mayurbhanj style and has won many awards like the Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar 2012 in the field of theatre direction awarded by Sangeet Natak Akademi, Rajiv Gandhi Professional Award, National Youth Award, Baisakhi National Excellency Award, National Natya Vibhushan, and more than 200 Government & non-Government Awards. He has acted in 85 plays, directed 41 plays throughout India and abroad. He has participated in SNA Festival New Delhi; EZCC Festival; National Youth Festival; Inter-University theatre festival; Bharat rang Mahotsav and many more.

The Playwright

Girish Raghunath Karnad was an Indian actor, film director and Kannada writer. He is the recipient of Jnanpith Award, the highest literary honour conferred in India. For four decades Karnad composed plays, often using history and mythology to tackle contemporary issues. He was also active in the world of Indian cinema working as an actor, director, and screenwriter, and earning numerous awards along the way. He was conferred Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan by the Government of India.

The Group

New Quest Repertory was established in 2003, under leadership of Nalini Nihar Nayak, with an objective to train young artists in theatre and to use their learning in professionally; to resurrect the dying art form of Odisha. It has participated in festivals organized by Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi, Yuva Pratibha Mahostav, and SNA New Delhi; and experimental theatre festivals hosted by EZCC, Kolkata; National Youth Festival by Ministry of Youth Affairs, Govt. of

India; 18th Bharat Rang Mahotsav, NSD; National Theatre Festival by Bharat Bhavan, Bhopal; Konark Festival and many more across the country besides theatre festivals by Govt. and non-Govt. organizations.

Cast & Credits

On Stage

Niranjan Acharya, Lalatendu Panigrahy, Pragyan Ranjan

Panda, Dwiti Krushna Panda, Swarup Ranjan Das, Chinmaya

Kumar Panda, Nabakishore Ghosh, Soumyaranjan Mohanty,

Pankaj Nath, Dinesh Mohanty, Surajsatapathy, Barsharani

Barik, Rashmita Das, Pinkiraninayak, Afreen Begum,

Shubhasmita Singh, Manasi Das, Tanushree Parida

Sound

Jasobanta Narayan Ray

Light

Sagar Swaroop Swain

Set

Chintamani Biswal

Make-up

Ramesh Chandra Sahoo

Music

Kailash Chandra Senapati

Props

Amit Kumar Meher

Camera

Dipankar Janah

Odia Translation

Sukesh

Panda

Playwright

Girish Karnad

Choreography, Light,
Design & Direction
Nihar Nayak

Nalini

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Watch Professor Khushlani's review of the play and interview
with directors –

<https://youtu.be/9x4IIIdxNTPU?t=124>

Girish Karnad's Play: Ghoramukho Pala



Playwright: Girish Karnad

Director: Sanjib Ray

Group: Kathakriti, Kolkata

Language: Bengali

Duration: 2 hrs 20 mins

The Play

Kapil and Devdutta of Dharmapur are the heroes of our play. One comes from a Brahmin family and the other is a blacksmith's son. Devdutta falls in love with the daughter of a gold-merchant, Padmini. He vows that if he marries Padmini, he would sacrifice his hands to Ma Kali, and his head to Rudra Dev. Eventually, Devdutta marries Padmini. They visit Ujjayini when Padmini is pregnant. Devdutta becomes furious when he discovers the intimacy between Kapil and Padmini. Sending Kapil and Padmini to the Rudra temple, he goes to the Kali temple and cuts his head off near the feet of Ma Kali. When Kapil returns, he sacrifices his life seeing his friend lying beheaded. Padmini too moves to do the same but Goddess Kali appears and stops her. Abiding by the direction of the goddess, she fixes the heads of Kapil and Devdutta, but on each other's body. Although the two friends are offered life again by the grace of Ma, their heads are transposed...

Director's Note

In 1972, Girish Karnad himself translated his play Hayavadana from Kannada into English in the eminent Theatre Journal Enact. The director of the Bengali theatre troupe Nakshatra, Shri Shyamal Ghosh requested the poet and litterateur Shri Shankha Ghosh to translate the play into Bengali at the earliest as the group was determined to stage it as their next production. Unfortunately, it was never performed by the group. Shyamal Ghosh before his demise entrusted Kathakriti to perform this play and it was revised by poet Shankha Ghosh. The present project is thus a modest endeavour of Kathakriti to accomplish the unfulfilled dream of Late Shyamal Ghosh, their preceptor.

The Director

Sanjib Ray, a retired Senior Manager in Allahabad Bank, has

directed 9 one-act and 19 full-length plays for Kathakriti. He joined Nakshatra in 1967 and worked with legends like Shyamal Ghosh, Mohit Chattopadhyay, Mamata Chattopadhyay and Navendu Sen; and later worked under the direction of Jnanesh Mukherjee and Sohag Sen. Sanjib joined the drama section of Yuvavani under Akashvani as a news reader, actor, producer and reciter in 1969. He actively participated in audio plays by Akashvani commercial broadcasting. In 1989, he formed his own group Kathakriti and has remained its President-Director. He has also been the chief editor of Kathakriti Natyapatra since its inception. He was awarded the Dishari Purashkar as Best Director twice and the Ritwick Ghatak Memorial Award also as Best Director.

Recently a book, narrating his tireless journey in theatre for the last 50 years, was published and unveiled by eminent actress Smt. Maya Ghosh. At the book launch a number of eminent personalities spoke on his excellence and benevolence.

The Playwright

Girish Karnad (May 19, 1938 – June 10, 2019) was an Indian playwright, author, actor, and film director whose movies and plays, written largely in Kannada, explore the present by way of the past.

The Group

Kathakriti has staged 9 short plays and 19 full-length plays till date under the direction of Shri Sanjib Ray. Kathakriti has also initiated audio plays, workshops and seminars on theatre, in different schools and colleges. It has also performed during the Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan under the Central Ministry. Since its inception, Kathakriti holds a drama festival every year on the occasion of its birthday. The publication Kathakriti Natyapatra is also an asset for drama enthusiasts.

Cast & Credits

On Stage

Ashok Ganguly, Nabanita Mukherjee Das, Shambhu

Sanjib Ray,

Nath Shaw,
Dipankar Haider, Bindia Ghosh, Kinjal Nanda, Parijat Das

Dance & Chorus Jayanta Ghosh,
Shraddha Chanda, Poulami Bag,
Barnamala Chatterjee, Sayani Roy, Chowdhury Laboni Sarkar,
Mithun Gupta
Singers & Accompanists Shubhadeep Guha,
Sushruta Goswami, Pritam Ghosh, Shubhajit
Dev, Susmita Sarma,
Jayanta Saha

Set Chanchal
Haider
Light & Accompanists Dipankar Dey, Ashim
Das, Arup Das
Make-up Biswajit
Halдар
Backstage Management Sourav Chatterjee, Bapi
Sarkar, Arup Kumar Deb
Team Leader Debasish Naskar

Playwright Girish Karnad
Director Sanjib Ray

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