Heisnam Tomba’s Play: Yamata Amasung Keibu Keioiba

Playwright & Director: Heisnam Tomba
Group: Kalakshetra Imphal
Language: Manipuri
Duration: 1 hr 5 mins

The Play
The play is an attempt to interweave two folktales – Yamata no Orochi from Japan, and Keibu Keioiba from Manipur. Yamata no Orochi is a serpent-dragon in Japanese myth, who has eight heads and eight tails, and its enormous body reaches across eight valleys and eight hills. It is a legendary story of how a young ingenious boy Susanoo saves a beautiful lady Kushinada from Yamata who was about to devour her. Yamata had already devoured seven of her elder sisters. In the Manipuri tale, Keibu Keioiba is a creature having half tiger and half human features. He kidnaps a young girl Thabaton, who was home alone. However, a clever old lady manages to make Thabaton’s seven brothers take revenge and save their sister.
The play highlights the virtues of sacrifice and martyrdom through the conversation between the mythical images of Japan and Manipur interwoven together to tell the stories of two hilltops.

Director’s Note
The play is an attempt to capture two different cultural tales and explore the possibilities of interpretation of these two cultures. It is an intercultural experiment of stories, music, dance and performing traditions. However, the attempt is also to give a contemporary meaning to the rich folklore of both the cultures of Japan and Manipur.

The Director & Playwright
Heisnam Tomba began his exploration of the world of theatre

with his parents, Kanhailal and Sabitri, both well-known Manipuri artists. From them he received extensive training to be a director, playwright, music director and actor-trainer. Heisnam Tomba absorbed finer nuances of these skills early in life. He has written eight plays; has directed more than ten dramas including Kshudito Pashan by Rabindranath Tagore and An Enemy of the People by Henrik Ibsen; and has been the music director for two of Kalakshetra's best known productions, Dakghar and Draupadi. He specializes in voice and movement training, and has taught at institutions in Delhi, Mumbai, Mysore, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, Guwahati, Patna, Heggodu, Bangladesh and Singapore. His versatility received recognition when he was awarded the National Sanskriti Award and Senior Fellowship by the Ministry of Culture, New Delhi. He has directed an off-beat feature film Nobap in Manipuri.

The Group

Established in 1969 by late Shri Heisnam Kanhailal, Kalakshetra Manipur has evolved a distinctive theatrical style that is predominantly non-verbal. The group is dedicated towards expressing the realities of oppression and resistance that are a part of day-to-day living in Manipur today, through plays like Pebet and Memoirs of Africa. Other major productions of the group are Tamna-Lai (Haunting Spirit), Keibu-Keioiba (Half Man-Half Tiger), Khomdon Meiroubi, Imphal '73, Izzat, Karna, Lajja, Kshudito Pashan, Draupadi, Dakghar, Samnadraba Mami (Disjointed Image), Hungry Stone and An Enemy of the People.

Cast & Credits

Yamata	Maisnam Momocha
Keibu Keioiba (1)	Kshetrimayum Priyobrata Singh
Keibu Keioiba (2)	Pangambam Tyson Meitei
Susanoo	Romario

Thoudam@Paona Iben Hanubi	Kh. Sanjukta Devi
Mapa	Ahanthem Upendro Mangang
Mama	Huidrom Holina Kushinada
	Roslin Akoijam Chanu Thaba
	Thangjam Salini Devi Mithingai
	Guru Koken Chorus
	Takhellambam Budhichandra Anantakumar Longjam Lanchingna Laishram

Light	Laishram Ibochouba
Sound Designer (Boby)	Oinam Prasanjit
Music Arranger	Moirangthem Bise
Music Operator	Moirangthem Prasanta Singh
Crafts	Ch. Kunjakeshwar
Costume	Khumanthem Sanjukta
Make-up	Huidrom Holina
Set & props	Guru Koken
Theme Picture Sketches	Wahwngbam Robin
Yamata Written by	Prof. Devraj
Translation (Manipuri)	Prof. IS Kangjam
Translation (Manipuri to Eng.)	Dr. Usham Rojio
Production Manager	Kh. Ushakanta Singh
Assistant Director	Pangambam Tyson Meitei

Production Kalakshetra Manipur

Acknowledgements Phurailatpam Nandakumar Sharma
Ningombam Jadumani

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