

Samkutty Pattomkary's Play: Adayalam

Playwright: Samkutty Pattomkary

Director: T. Suresh Babu

Group: Natakagramam Kozhikode, Kerala

Language: Malayalam

Duration: 1 hr 50 mins

The Play

Adayalam is a play based on the rape case of Bhanwari Devi. Bhanwari Devi had been employed as a 'saathin' for the Womens' Development Project, run by the Rajasthan government, for two hundred rupees a month as salary. She was brutally raped by Gujjars in front of her husband. Bhanwari, along with her injured husband, decided to file an FIR at the Bassi police station, but the policemen rejected their plea and asked for a medical certificate. The couple went for the medical certificate to many hospitals in Jaipur. The government doctor asked for the magistrate's order as a prerequisite for the medical certificate. One of the doctors even tried to rape her. After 52 hours they submit the certificate in the police station, only to be asked by the police to bring her clothes as a proof. Finally, the case reached the court and was dismissed on the grounds that upper cast men cannot rape low cast women. The judgment also questioned how her husband could be a mute spectator to his wife's rape.

Director's Note

The incident happened on 22nd September 1992, and she has been fighting for justice ever since. Bhanwari Devi, a Dalit by cast, became an icon of the women's movement when she decided to go public and fight her case following a gang rape by five upper caste Gujjar men, after her attempt to stop a nine-month

old girl-child's marriage in her village of Bhateri located 45 km south of Jaipur. Potters by profession, she and her husband have been socially boycotted after the unfortunate turn of events.

This case led to the famous verdict on women's security at work-place. The question raised by the play is "Is justice in our country in safe hands?"

The Director

T. Sureshbabu is a dedicated artist who works with the ordinary village people of Kerala and tries to empower them using theatre as a tool. He completed his degree from Arts and Science College, Kozhikode. He works as a director, scenic designer, actor and light designer in the field of drama. He is the present director of Natakagramam Kozhikode, a well-known theatre group of Kerala. He has received recognition for his work in the form of three Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Academy Awards, Natya Bushan Puraskaram, Thalassery Shyama Award, Balan K Nair Award, Bankmens Club Award, and V.T Smaraka Award. He has directed more than 100 plays in various languages. Some of his known directorial works are House of Bernard Alba, Shadow of Glen, Riders to the Sea, Arthamanartham, Perumkollan, Nayattu, Maniyara, Soap Cheap Kannadi, Suganidrakalilekk, Swapnavetta, Kozhikkariya, Orugandhavicharam and Adayalam.

The Playwright

Dr. Samkutty Pattomkary is a playwright, freelance director, designer and technical trainer in the field of theatre. Formerly, he was an executive member of the Kerala Sangeet Natak Academy, Government of Kerala. He has designed more than 350 amateur / professional theatre and dance productions in Kerala.

The Group

Natakagramam Kozhikode is a famous theatre group of Kozhikode district, Kerala which has been active for last twenty years. It endeavours to bring together various drama artists in the

villages of Kerala. The group stages its productions in the villages and conducts theatre workshops and enrichment programs all over Kerala. The group has a total of twenty five members including 11 executive members. Natakagramam is also blessed with famous artists of Kerala which includes good actors, playwrights, musicians, light designers, directors, set designers and efficient organisers. Natakagramam has exhibited more than 30 plays in Kerala.

Cast & Credits

On Stage Sudhi

Vineesh P Vasu

Shyju P Olavanna

Rajesh Kakkoor

Girish Mannur

Saju Mokavoor

Kumar G Palath

Vinod Pilassery

M V Sureshbabu

R K Jayaprakash

Mirshad Salma

Mani Alampattil

Akash

Priya Sreejith

Ajitha

Prabha

Vijayamohan

Kavitha

Stage Assistant Mohandas P M

Coordinator Madhu M

Music Sasi Pookkad

Technical Support Chanduz T

Make-up Govind S

Scenic Design Samkutty Pattomkary

Associate Director Sreeshyju. K .P

Playwright Samkutty Pattomkary

Director T. Suresh Babu

Contacts

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Nikhildas and Sagar Sathyan's Play: Mali

✖ Playwrights: Nikhildas Puranattukara & Sagar Sathyan

Director: Nikhildas Puranattukara

Group: Punchami Theatres, Thrissur

Language: Malayalam

Duration: 1 hr 15 mins

The Play

Mali is based on the folk culture of Kerala, as told through the songs and tale of the hero and the imaginary god Ayyappan. It begins with the description of a girl named Mali, and Chappan, a fighter who grew up in the jungle to defeat the hiding forces called Maravippada. Chappan learns the tactics and expertise from Vithari Mooppan and fights against Maravippada. He goes to meet his beloved Mali, but Mali asks him to come later since she is menstruating and therefore prohibited to meet anyone. Chappan is upset about this discrimination and tells her that now he will return for her only when the society gives up all such beliefs. Mali awaits his arrival, and when he doesn't return, breaks away from all social taboos and restrictions and leaves home to enter the

forest to find her love.

Director's Note

The play begins with the resistance of people towards outside forces. A number of contemporary questions have been dealt with in this play, especially the ones dealing with discrimination. Why can't a warrior have a spiritual quest? Is the reason to create superstitions and customs a deliberate attempt to keep them subdued and at a distance? The play is based on folk tales and folk songs heard from the dalits of Sabarimala Sasthav, popular in Kerala. Live music related to Ayyappan is incorporated into the play.

The Director & Playwright

Nikhildas Puranattukara has received the Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Academy Award for Best Director and Writer in 2019 for the play Mali. His children's plays have won accolades at the Kerala state youth festival during the last three years. Nikhildas has staged plays at national and international platforms like National School of Drama Theatre Festival, International Theatre Festival of Kerala, Bharat Rang Mahotsav, Rangayan Festival, Cuttack National Theatre Festival etc. He has adapted renowned writer Uroob's celebrated work Neelakuyil into a play. He was the director of Lavettam theatre camp in Perth, Australia; and Kalithattu theatre camp in Bombay. He is associated with Thrissur based theatre group Rangachetana and his own theatre group Punchami theatres. Some of his popular productions are Marathalayan, Manabave, Kunnukalkkumappuram, Palaharapanthayam, Markkadapuram etc.

The Co-Playwright

Sagar Sathyan has been active in cinema and theatre for the past few years and has made remarkable contributions to both. He has been a part of Rangachetana, a well-known theatre group in Thrissur, and has written four plays directed by Nikhildas Puranattukara. Sagar has also written the script of a Malayalam feature film Ladoo which was released last year.

The Group

Punchami Theatres is a group of young people who have been studying drama and are engaged in theatre activities. Everyone in the group finds time for theatrical work while practicing his/her routine work. Mali is the first theatre project of Punchami Theatres. It won the Best Play award at the Kerala Sangeet Natak Academy's amateur drama competition, and also the Best Actress, Best Director and Best Writing awards. A number of colleges of Kerala participate in theatre activities under the banner of Punchami Theatres. The centre of the group is in Adat, a village in Thrissur district of Kerala.

Cast & Credits

Mali	Athira
Karuthi	Anusha Bahuleyan
Mahishi	Mekha Manoj
Chappan	Anand
Vithari Mooppan	Sathyajith
Kandan	Ramkumar
Kormi	Akhilesh Paliyan
Rajavu	Ramadas
Vendoran	Sajith Alukkal
Villan	Appu K.G
Kadutha	Athul
Mallan	Kiran
Karuppan	Abhishek
Moothoru	Henson
Kappatharu	Josprakash
Vaidhyar	Vishnu
Padayali	Ramesh Ramakrishnan
Light	Dhaneshkumar
Art	Shinoj Asokan
Co-ordinator	Mejo
Music	Midhun Malayalam
Instruments	Manikandan
Make-up	Francis Chirayath

Costumes	Anjali Raman, Leela
Sathyan	
Light	Assistant Gokul
Art Assistant	Mornima Dhanesh
Assistant Director	Nijildas

Playwrights	Nikhildas Puranattukara,
Sagar Sathyan	
Director	Nikhildas Puranattukara

Contacts
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Prof. Khushalani's review of the play and interview with director –

https://youtu.be/QqWpPEQ1_KA?t=128