Arun Yumkham’s Play: Turel Wangmada

Playwright: Arun Yumkham
Director: H. Shatananda Sharma
Group: Raag Tarang Mandal, Imphal
Language: Manipuri
Duration: 1 hr 10 mins

The Play
Desperately seeking her lost spouse, a woman reaches the bank of a river. She wants to cross the river and reach the other side. A weird boatman in a strange boat ferries her across. On the other side of the river, an occultist is performing the rites of necromancy, invoking dead souls. The woman asks the sorcerer to call upon the spirit of her lost husband. The sorcerer agrees and the spirit appears. The woman tries to talk to the spirit of her spouse, but the spirit accuses her of being unchaste, and walks away to the eternal path of dead. The woman tries to drown herself but the boatman saves her. He points his finger to the golden rays of a new day in the eastern sky.

Director’s Note
In the future is an era of chaos, a catastrophic atmosphere where unpredictability is lurking everywhere. Chastity of women is a commodity. People are machines in a decaying state of sparsely populated society. In the hearts of humans, memory and pangs of separation burn like a hellish flame. Lust is not quenched even by the physical state of men and women. They are at their ugliest, maimed and tortured. Yesterday’s truth is no longer the same because of the situation created by the unexpected, drastic changes.

The Director
Hanjabam Shatananda Sharma received training from his father

in the field of traditional performing art forms (Courtyard Theatre). He learned various forms of Manipuri Dance from his aunt H. Aruna Devi (MSPA Awardee). In the field of theatre he received training from Late M. Surshen (NSD Alumnus). Under his guidance he researched on body motion and movement in the theatre for three years in FFLT. He got the opportunity to interact with FFLT director, Lokendra Arambam, participate in theatre workshops and play productions as an artist along with MC. Thoiba (Director BRT) and Shree N. Tiken (Musicologist). After a long theatrical journey Shri Sharma began his new ventures as a director.

The Playwright

Arun Yumkham, is a playwright who has been associated with various theatre groups and artists, musicians and dancers of the state. He has published two books of poetry collection in English and also a novel. He has written more than 100 radio drama scripts for educational programmes of SCERT, Manipur. Currently he is working as the Assistant Editor (Design) in local news daily Ireibak.

The Group

Raag Tarang Mandal was established in 1980 at Imphal East district of Manipur by Smt. Hanjabam Aruna Devi. Since its inception the organisation has been undertaking various cultural activities for the presentation and revival of the indigenous system of rare art forms including Manipuri folk dance and music, with its own resources. Under the leadership of H. Shatananda Sharma, a group of young talented artists, well-trained in various performing art forms, are producing stage plays for the last 10 years. The group’s play Turel Wangmada was invited to participate at the Abhinya National Theatre Festival at Hyderabad in the month of August-2016. The play has also participated in Folk Narative Art and Kangla Theatre Marathon 2017 at Uchiwa, Manipur and received the Best Director Award and bagged four awards in different categories. The organisation has been offering training courses,

demonstration of Manipur classical and traditional art forms and its allied arts.

Cast &Credits
On stage N. Lokeshwor, Ch. Basanta, Th. Roshan, W. Amarjit, M. Momocha,
L. Ananta Kumar, M. Captain, L. Birjit, H. Jamuna Devi

Stage & Setting W. Amarjit / Ch. Basanta
Costume & Make-up Arun Yumkham / Ch. Thanbi
Light Design A. Madan Sharma
Music Assistant H. Shreedhar

Playwright Arun Yumkham
Music, Design & Direction H. Shatananda Sharma

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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	Oinam Prasanjit (Boby)
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
Playwright & Director	Heisnam Tomba

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Manaobi MM’s Play: Nupigee Thamoi(Shumang Leela)

Playwright: Manaobi MM
Director: Yumnam Rajendra
Group: Peace Maker Artistes’ Association, Manipur
Language: Manipuri
Duration: 1 hr 30 mins

The Form
Shumang Leela, literally translated as Courtyard Theatre has been the mainstay of the Meiteis, the Tibeto-Burman people who have inhabited the Imphal valley since time immemorial. Originally a form of nautanki, Shumang Leela metamorphosed into full-fledged theatre over the years. A unique feature of this art form is that the audience surrounds the stage from all sides. Male artistes not only enact the roles of female characters to perfection, but also sing just like women do. The content of the leela can be comedy, folk-lore, legends or social commentaries.

The Performance
Prince Naothingkhong was the third son of emperor Urakonthouba of Manipur (568-663 AD). A stubborn young man, he ran away to the hills where he found Petanga, a beautiful girl who was the only child of Shelloi village chief. Naothingkhong married Petanga secretly and promised her that she would be the queen of Manipur when he sat on the throne. The villagers revolted and wished to kill Naothingkhong because his father was a

bitter enemy of the clan. So he escaped from the house of Petanga and sought asylum under the patronage of Khuman King. Petanga was punished by her own people and had to escape. Naothingkhong ascended the Khuman throne and married the Khuman princess. No sooner did Petanga get the news, she invoked the goddess Yumjao Lairembi and vanished with her last words of lament, “man has no power to realise true love”.

Director’s Note

The story of the play is based on legendary events of Manipur that possibly took place during 665-785 AD. The actors have worked hard to represent the age-old society and to convey the emotions of the characters during a month-long Manipuri Shumang Leela workshop. This experimental production is still in its initial stage, rather incomplete and unfinished I would say, and has a long way to go.

The Director

Yumnam Rajendra is a renowned theatre director, playwright and actor. He was trained in Manipuri theatre under the noted director Heisnam Kanhailal from 1973 to 1982. He worked as a director of Panthoibi Natya Mandir, Imphal and participated in many national and international festivals of India and abroad. He was awarded the Vayoshrestha Samman Award in 2017, Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 2007, award for sculpture in tribal wood carving art of Manipur and Junior and Senior fellowships by the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India. At present he is a visiting guru of the Department of Theatre, Manipur University of Culture.

The Playwright

Manaobi M.M. is a renowned writer of radio-plays, Shumang Leela, Manipuri film-screenplays and lyrics. He has written more than 50 plays and published above 20 plays. He is presently working as the President of Cine Writers and Playwrights Forum of Manipur.

The Group

Peace Maker Artistes’ Association, Manipur was established on 5th of August 2002 in Imphal. This association is an autonomous body and one of the leading Shumang Leela groups of Manipur. It has participated in various state, national and international festivals like 20th Bharat Rang Mahotsav 2019, 2nd Delhi International Art Festival 2008 at FICCI Auditorium organized by NSD, 8TH Delhi International Art Festival 2014 supported by Sangeet Natak Akademi at Meghdoot Theatre Complex etc. The group has produced more than 40 plays.

Cast and Credits

Naothingkhong Yumnam Arunkumar Singh
Petanga
Yumnam Milan
Keirunghangbi Senjam Deepson
Leima Naman Chaobi Bishesh Huirem
Khuman Ningthou Laishram Ibotombi Singh
Amukangoiba
Sorokhaibamibohanbi Singh
Luwang Ningthou, Pakchao Athokpam Santosh Singh
Moirang Ningthou Naorem Tamphasana Meetei
Goddess
Maibam Roshan
Soldier
Gurumayum Rajesh Sharma
Soldier
Thoudam Premjit Singh
Soldier
Thoudam Premananda Singh
Deity
Leiphrakpam Survchand

Deity
Sougrakpam Chinglennganba

Musician / Female-Vocal Linkmabam Biky
Musician / Singer
Naorem Jeetenkumar Meetei
Musician / Actor
Seramromajit
Musician / Actor
Laimujam Binoy Singh
Music Director
Moirangthem Robert Meetei

Playwright
Manaobi M M
Director
Yumnam Rajendra

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