

# Sheshpal Singh's Munshiganj Golikand urf MookBalidaan

Playwright: Sheshpal Singh 'Shesh'

Director: Atamjeet Singh

Group: Individual, Lucknow

Language: Awadhi

Duration: 1 hr 40 mins

## The Play

In 1886, the British made the Avadh Rent Act and implemented it. In the Act, the Kings and Talukedaars got the right to collect Rent. Since their tax collection was arbitrary, the poor farmers opposed this recovery and under the leadership of Baba Ramchander, this movement spread in the districts of Rae Bareli, Barabanki, Sultanpur, Pratapgarh and Faizabad. Baba Janaki Das took over from Baba Ramchander, and was later captured along with his companions and put in the Rae Bareli Jail. Till then the Kisan Sabha had been formed. In 1920 farmers gathered in Munshiganj, across the Sai River, to free their leaders from jail. The farmers were fired on and hundreds of them were killed. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru came to Rae Bareli to meet the farmers, and the District Magistrate took him into custody. The commissioner, Colonel Founteray, realizing the gravity of the incident of the Munshiganj firing, ordered the injured to be shot as well so that they do not become witnesses of the massacre. Some of the dead bodies were loaded into Ikka-Taangas and drowned overnight in the Dalmau Ganges River. For the remaining corpses, four big pits were dug in Munshiganj, and a hundred corpses each were buried in them. Munshiganj is also called the second Jallianwala incident.

Director's Note

I had read about the Munshiganj shoot-out about 30 – 35 years ago, and the writer of our Nautanki, Sheshpaal ji, had also told me about it. Since then the design of staging it has been in my mind. Since this incident was from Awadh region, the idea was that it should be performed in Awadhi language. Since I have experimented in Nautanki area, I decided to get it written in Awadhi language. I asked Sheshpaal ji to take up the responsibility of writing which he gladly accepted. In this Nautanki, about 30 young artists have rehearsed with complete dedication. It was a difficult task for city artists to memorize dialogues in Awadhi but they did well. I think this is the first full-length Nautanki written in Awadhi language.

#### The Director

A theatre group Meghdoot was formed in 1974 in Lucknow by theatre lovers and young people. Atamjeet associated himself with this group right from its inception. It was under the aegis of Meghdoot that he acted in a number of plays. In 1977, Atamjeet Singh acted in Aala Afsar. The play was in nautanki form, written Mudrarakshash and directed by Bansi Kaul.

Later Atamjeet Singh started directing nautankis independently. He has directed around 20 Nautankis; some of these are Laila Majnu, Bhaand Charitram and Shaheed Bhagat Singh. Nautanki Baje Dhindhora urf Khoon ka Rang was performed in Bharat Rang Mohatsava. Apart from acting in a few movies and T.V. Serials, Atamjeet Singh has toured countries like Finland, Norway and Pakistan on theatre projects. He has been honoured by different institutions in India, and has been awarded an Honorary Diploma by International Amateur Theatre Association. In 2003 U.P. Sangeet Natak Academy also honoured him for his contribution in the field of theatre.

#### The Playwright

Sheshpal Singh 'Shesh' was born on 20th December 1958 in village Kasna, Dist. Raebareli

He has written and directed a number of plays and nautankis

for various government and semi government offices of Uttar Pradesh. He has written full-length proscenium nautankis Shaheed Bhagat Singh and Bhand Charitram and staged them in Lucknow under the direction of Sri Atamjeet Singh.

#### Cast & Credits

Sootradhar/Ahelkaar/Grameen Sandeep Kumar, Saurabh Kumar Mishr  
Munshi Kalika Prasad/Grameen Aditya Vishwakarma

Sootradhar/Zileदार/Pagal Sujeet Singh Yadav

Mangloo/Durga/Grameen Shivakant Awasthi

Sheetlu/Binda/Grameen Manoj Singh

Grameen/Isri Kaka Adarsh Singh

Raja Veerpal Singh Gagandeep Singh

Raja Tiloi/Ram Narayan Ramesh Chandra Saini

Raja Rampal/Mayor/Grameen Ashutosh Jaiswal

Raja Arkha/Sherif Vinay Kumar Mishra

Raja Tribhuvan Devasheesh Misra

Sootradhar/Zileदार/Grameen Subham Singh Chauhan

Gayika/Baandi Shreya Awasthi

Gayika/Grameen Pallavi Singh, Shubhra Pandey

Baba Ramchander/Kedar Pandit/Grameen Vikesh Bajpai

Siphai/Grameen Sarabjeet Singh

Siphai/Grameen/Daak Babu Abhishek Yadav

Amol Sharma Harsh Jaggi

Acchi Jaan/Gayika Supriya Chaterjee

Chaprasi/Grameen Ravindra Nath Yadav

Nasrullah Khan/Grameen Shubham Tiwari

Shivbalak/Badri Narayan/Grameen Shivam Singh

Gangadeen/Grameen Avinash Kumar Singh

Ram Awtar/Grameen Gaurav Dhingra

Baba Jankidaas/Grameen/Commissioner Abhishek Singh

Nehru Ji/Grameen Akshat Sunil

Stage Design Gagandeep Singh/ Manoj Singh

Stage Décor Abhishek Singh/ Ramesh Chanra Saini

Stage Property Aditya/Shubham/Shivakant

Rehearsal In-charge Devasheesh/Rozy Dubey/ Abhishek/Sujeet

Costume Karamjeet Kaur  
Music Harsh Jaggi  
Make-up Shaheer Ahmad  
Harmonium Zubair  
Nakkara Md. Siddiqui  
Dholak Md. Imran  
Light Assistant Nitish Bharadwaj  
Light Design Devasheesh Misra  
Dance Choreography Rozy Dubey  
Presentation Controller Assistant Sujeet Singh Yadav  
Presentation Controller Sarabjit Singh

Playwright Sheshpal Singh  
Concept, Sound Design & Direction Atamjeet Singh

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# **August Strindberg's Play: Babai**



Playwright: August Strindberg  
Adapter & Director: Ishita Mukhopadhyay  
Group: Ushneek, Kolkata  
Language: Bengali

Duration: 2 hrs 10 mins

### The Play

Babai is a trans-creation of August Strindberg's *The Father*. Taking inspiration from the original, playwright Ishita Mukherjee has adapted the play into an Indian locale and has given it a relevance to the socio-economic reality of today. The play is about an extremely complex relationship between a husband and a wife, which culminates when it comes to the question of the future of their only child. Not wanting to lose her custody over the child, the wife induces suspicion in her husband's mind about him not being the real father, thus pushing the husband into an abyss of doubts, and taking over the household and making everybody believe that the husband's sanity is under question. The husband, unable to bear this painful predicament, gradually loses his mind and in the end the family, under the vigilance of his wife, sends him to an asylum. The play talks about the eternal power politics between man and woman, state and religion, and society and individual.

### Director's Note

Strindberg's *The Father* is considered as one of the finest naturalistic psychological drama. Often it is seen as a tragedy of a husband falling into the trap laid by his wife. As a woman director I have a different take on that. To me, Strindberg created sympathetic characters. He created a strong impression of male dominant society of his era which is quite relevant even today. To me, the wife is also a victim of patriarchy just like her husband is. The proof of fatherhood is instrumental to form a social-respectability which is inspired and instructed by the voice of patriarchy. I found that the play not only speaks about the gender politics but also speaks about the mistrust, unfaithfulness, loss of trust and the general lack of communication between man and society, society and politics, politics and religion, religion and concept, concept and individual.

## The Director& Playwright

Active in Bengali theatre for more than three decades, Ishita Mukhopadhyay has created her place as an important theatre director of our times. As a director, she brings a sensibility in her work that is the result of her experience as a woman. She has well-formed views about group theatre, the economy of theatre and the challenges of being political in theatre. Over the years, Ishita Mukhopadhyay has directed a host of plays of which Ghar, Kamalkamini, Gawaharjan, Khela Bhangar Khela, Kallu Mama, Ora Tinjon and Agnijatak deserve special mention. Ishita has received numerous awards as the best director, some of which are Uttam Kumar Award, Pramathesh Barua Award, All India Critics Award, All India Women Association Award, Kalaratan Award and many more.

## The Group

Ushneek was formed in 1984 by enthusiastic young theatre lovers and was registered in 1991. Till date Ushneek has produced 14 full-length plays, 5 one-act plays and 3 audio plays. Ushneek has participated in all the major theatre festivals in India like Nandikar Natya Utsav, Natya Academy Natya Utsav, Yuva Utkal International Festival, Sangeet Natak Academy festival, and 8th Theatre Olympics etc. Ushneek has travelled with its productions to almost all the major cities of India, not to mention the small towns. Besides staging plays Ushneek has also organised seminars and held workshops to enhance its capability to do better theatre. Ushneek has organised theatre workshops for mentally challenged children for two NGOs and has also worked with the male and female sex workers of Kolkata.

## Cast & Credits

Professor Dipankar Bose Debshankar Halder

Doctor Samanta Subhasish Mukherjee

Maya Srijata Bhattacharjee

Mashi Chhanda Chatterjee

Mimi Arunika Dey

Dinu Thakur Prabir Dutta  
Nakul Majhi Saptarshi Bhowmick

Light Designer Debabrata Sarkar  
Music Ablu Bhattacharjee  
Make-up Alope Debnath  
Set Designer Sanchayan Ghosh  
Sound Operation Kalyan Sarkar  
Crew Sujit Chotttopadhyay, Subhojit Bakshi,  
Chitra Dey, Shreyashi Barua,  
Ayan Debnath, Deepan Roy,  
Parthosarathi Ghosh, Arnab Acharyya,  
Sourav Ghosh Roy, Sushmita Halder,  
Soumen Halde, Pinaki Das,  
Sumitra Das, Debabrata Sarkar,  
Ritesh Kumar Mondal

Playwright & Director Ishita Mukhopadhyay

Contacts

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# **Balasubramanian G's Play: Thoothukudi Massacre 13**

Dramaturge & Director: Balasubramanian G  
Group: NSD Diploma Production, New Delhi  
Language: Hindi

Duration: 1 hr

### The Play

The play aims to give voice to the dramatic event of Tuticorin Massacre and how non-democratic practices thrive, law and order deteriorates, the high-handedness of military and security forces prevails, and the common man's life loses meaning. The play begins with the scene of protest against environmental pollution caused by a factory. The police resorts to baton charge and starts shooting at the unarmed innocent people. The play inevitably invites the audience to identify the hypocrisy of the so-called civilization in the contemporary world. The play also portrays the politics of atrocity and its ultimate purpose of acquiring power and wealth by exploiting and sacrificing the common people, who do not even understand the purpose for which they fight and die. The authoritarian body of the state and factory officials justifies this slaughter of democracy in the name of action against injustice. The people who are killed are neither the perpetrators of injustice, nor are they aware of the injustice. By showing how the authority and the management justify this massacre of innocents, the play tries to project the ambitions of the global powers to assimilate wealth and resources, and how these ambitions are realized through wars, neo-imperial political treaties and so on. The competing forces among the global powers work together but from different directions and for the same target – towards the ultimate and complete exploitation of the resources and territories of the people. Almost always, history has repeated itself in this way all around the world.

### Director's Note

The play centres on the brutal killing of unarmed innocent civilians in Tuticorin who were murdered for protesting against the toxic Sterlite Copper plant factory. The government itself seems to have ignored rules on the use of force to quash protests by firing at the heads of protesters

rather than their legs. The government killed its own people without any mercy. This shows the fascist dictatorship mentality of the so-called democratic country. The greatest political invention of mankind is nothing but democracy. It enables for the people to regulate their leaders and to overthrow them without the need for a revolution. Collecting and documenting the data from the newspaper articles about those who became the victim of this protest against the Sterlite Copper plant factory, the play is a documentary theatre form with fictional elements. The play provokes questions in the mind of common people who believe in democracy. Who ordered the policemen to fire on the protestors? Why were highly advanced weapons used to disperse the crowd and under what law was this permitted? Why was no warning given before the firing? Is it really a 'democratic' country?

#### The Director & Dramaturge

Balasubramanian G is a director, designer and dramaturge. He is also an actor, light-designer, set-designer, sound designer and projection designer. He holds a Diploma in Dramatic Arts, with Theatre Technique and Design as specialization from the National School of Drama (NSD), New Delhi, India, M.P.A. in Theatre Arts and B. Tech. in Electrical and Electronics from Pondicherry University, and Film Appreciation Course from FTII, Pune. He has participated in many theatre workshops in New Delhi, Goa and Pondicherry.

#### The Group

This play is a part of National School of Drama's graduate showcase of class 2019. It aims to provide a platform to encourage emerging theatre practitioners to share their work with a wider audience.

#### Cast & Credits

On Stage Snigdha Mondal, Suman Purthy, Melodi Dorcas, Jitu Rabha, Manoj Kumar Tapar, Sayan Sarkar, Boomisutha Das, Somnath Chatterjee

Set and Lights Sarthak Narula  
Sound and Video Saras Kumar Namdeo  
Music Marthandan, Abhishek, Prerna  
Guitarist Raman Kakkar, Sounak Karmakar  
Costume Boomisutha Das  
Properties Suman Purthy, Snigdha Mondal  
Stage Manager Harishankar Ravi  
Video Guidance Sourov Poddar  
Poster & Brochure Vishala R Mahale  
Translation Vishala R Mahale  
Carpentry Jiyual Hassan, Rizwan Ahmad  
Sound Sourov, Ahsan

Dramaturgy & Direction Balasubramanian G

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# **Atul Satya Koushik's Play: Ballygunge 1990**

Playwright & Director: Atul Satya Koushik

Group: Films & Theatre Society, Delhi

Language: Hindi

Duration: 1 hr 20 mins

## The Play

The play Ballygunge 1990 is a thriller. The place is Ballygunge, Calcutta and the year is 1990. Kartik and Vasuki had been in a passionate relationship for more than ten years, before Kartik left Vasuki behind to chase his dreams in Mumbai. Vasuki is now married to a famous painter and is living a life full of regrets and vendetta. She holds Kartik, and their failed love, responsible for her miserable life. Now she has invited him over for a coffee at her mansion. Kartik is a bit confused and happily surprised to see the same ten-year-old passion and love in Vasuki's eyes. Vasuki is unpleasantly surprised to see the same hostility and detachment in Kartik's eyes. A well-crafted plan is going to change the course of their lives forever.

## Director's Note

Having successfully presented grand historical productions, musicals, comedies and social satires, I wanted to take up a subject which has not been explored much, especially in Hindi Theatre. Suspense and thrill was for sure one genre which I personally had not seen much in my theatre viewing memory of about ten years. Therefore I coined the idea 'Ballygunge 1990' and started writing it. As I went deeper into the process of writing and designing the show, I realized that this play is more than a mere suspense plot. It is more of a love story... a story full of emotions and passion. All the regrets, complaints and vendetta that appear in the story, have roots in love which flowered between the two protagonists over a decade.

## The Director & Playwright

Atul Satya Koushik is well-known in the field of modern Hindi commercial theatre of India. An alumnus of Sri Ram College of Commerce (SRCC, Delhi) and a qualified Chartered Accountant, he also holds a degree in Law. He is in his early 30s and has already written 15 full-length theatre plays, and produced and directed them with over 700 shows in different parts of India.

Atul is a recipient of many awards including the Times Entrepreneurship Award and the Yuva Natya Nirdeshak award by Sahitya Kala Parishad. He has been one of the flag-bearers of commercial theatre in Delhi, running many ticketed shows to full houses and casting celebrities in his theatre productions. His popular productions include The Legend of Ram, Chakravyuh, Raavan Ki Ramayan, Dad's Girlfriend, Ballygunge 1990, Pajama Party, Draupadi, Wo Lahore etc. He writes his own plays and is emerging as an important modern playwright of India.

### The Group

Established in 2009, Films & Theatre Society, Delhi is one of India's leading theatre companies which has its own original scripts and in-house direction, production and marketing. The group has performed more than 700 shows of its 15 productions in over 30 cities of India. Many of its productions feature famous film, TV and theatre personalities, and put together, they offer a wide range of themes, genres and presentation styles. FTS conceptualises and organises various theatre events and art festivals, like Rang, at a large scale, bringing artists, sponsors and audience together for larger-than-life art extravaganzas.

Some of the group's popular productions are Chakravyuh, Ballygunge 1990, Raavan Ki Ramayan, Pajama Party, The Legend of Ram, Dad's Girlfriend, Wo Lahore etc. which have been staged at various prestigious festivals and platforms such as Jaipur Rang Mahotsav, Kala Ghoda Festival, Parliament House auditorium etc.

### Cast & Credits

On Stage Anup Soni

Nishtha Paliwal

Kunal Kaushik

Background Score & Music Rajesh Das

Creative Design Ashwani Kumar

Graphic Design Kunal Kumar

Production Manager Sumit Negi  
Backstage Manager Sonam Kanotra  
Music Operation Latika Jain  
Light Operation Tarun Dang  
Backstage Team Devansh Gulati, Rajeev Sachdeva  
Set maker Mohd. Gulpham  
Producer Ishaan Yadav, Aditi Chauhan  
Concept Atul Satya Koushik & Nipul Malik  
  
Playwright & Director Atul Satya Koushik

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# **Paresh Pasad Parit's Play: Mahishasur Mardini**



Director: Paresh Prasad Parit  
Group: Purulia Chhau Dance Academy, Jharkhand  
Language: Bengali  
Duration: 1 hr 15 mins

#### The Form

Chhau is a traditional dance-drama performed during the Chaitra festival (April-May) in the adjoining districts of the three bordering states of West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Ramayana and Mahabharata, as well as stories from the Puranas, and those from everyday life, are portrayed through this

masked dance form. A Chhau troupe consists of 15-20 artists. The musical instruments used are drums (dhol) and flute (shehnai).

### The Play

The performance begins with an invocation to Lord Ganesha, and then to Lord Kartikeya.

Mahishasura, a demon who has created terror in the world of the gods, has captured heaven, earth and the nether world. Goddess Durga, who rides a lion and has been bestowed upon with weapons from Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh to fight Mahishasura, after a long battle slays him.

### The Director

Paresh Prasad Parit is a well-known artist of Purulia Chhau and is popularly known as Guru Paresh Kumar. He is an M. A. in History and a trained dancer, musician, composer and choreographer who is dedicated to this art since childhood. His inspirations have been Padma Shri Gambhir Singh Mura, Padma Shri Nepal Mahto, Ustad Juru Kumar, Ustad Laal Mahto, Ustad Rasu Sahis, Ustad Gopal Suri (Mandal), and his own parents. He was trained under Chhau Guru Sudhir Kumar who is an international famed artist of Purulia Chhau. He has struggled for the preservation and promotion of Purulia Chhau in the borderlands of West Bengal & Jharkhand, hoping for a bright future of this traditional form. He has received the Fellowship for Purulia Chhau from the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India. He has also been awarded the Panchal Ratna Award from All India Cultural Association (Regd.), Chhau Guru Award, MRD cultural award, and Jharkhand Sanskritik Samman. He is a member of CCRT Regional Selection Committee under the aegis of Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India.

### The Group

Purulia Chhau Dance Academy was founded in 1985. The group is based in the village Jamdih, under Tila Panchayat, Nimdih block of Seraikela Kharsawan, a district state of Jharkhand in India and a border-land area of West Bengal. It is a troupe

and training centre aiming to preserve and promote Purulia Chhau. The dancers and musicians of the group are farmers, farm labourers and students. Although the academy is dedicated to Purulia Chhau, it actively participates in social service as well. It is registered under the Govt. of Jharkhand and empanelled under Indian Council for Cultural Relations. It has performed in cities like Delhi, Kolkata, Patna, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Ahmadabad, Gurgaon, Bareilly, Agra, Jaipur, Baripada etc. The academy has received many prizes and awards in festivals and fairs held at different places in India.

#### Cast & Credits

Lord Ganesha Swapan Machhua  
Lord Kartikeya Gunadhar Kumar  
Goddess Durga Falari Kumar  
Demon Mahishasur Dhiren Singh  
Devil Lakhindar Machhua, Parmeshwar Majhi,  
Alang Chand Kumar, Sudip Yogi  
Laxmi Gansh Karmakar  
Saraswati Gayapati Mahato  
Lion Ram Nath Singh, Ram Charan Singh  
Peacock Bhut Nath Machhua  
Dhol Dhar Kalindi  
Shahnai Shikant Kalindi  
Maracas Bibhuti Singh  
Tasa / Nagara Purna Kalindi  
Casio Bhis Dev Machhua  
Prompter Udai Mahali

Director & Group Leader Paresh Prasad Parit

#### Contacts

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# Jyoti Prasad Agarwala's Play: Manimugdha

Playwright: Jyoti Prasad Agarwala

Director: Himangshu Prasad Das

Group: Guernica Creatovista, Kamrup (Assam)

Language: Assamese

Duration: 1 hr 5 mins

## The Play

Manimugdha is the central character of our version of Rupalim, a timeless play written by Jyoti Prasad Agarwala, one of the torch-bearers of the literary and cultural field of Assam. Originally, Rupalim is a play based on the love story of a pure hearted young girl, Rupalim, who becomes a victim of the complexity of relationships and its outcome, and is brutally put to death for being in the quagmire of love, obduracy and humiliation. Battered between the psychological dilemma of good and evil, the multi-dimensional character, Manimugdha, is one of the best creations of Jyoti Prasad Agarwala and has been widely discussed. We have made an effort to cast a glance around our surroundings through the dilemma of Manimugdha.

## Director's Note

We have made an effort to depict the core theme along with a few additional scenes rather than staging the original one as it is. New dialogues have been incorporated considering the need of the hour. All the plays of Jyoti Prasad Agarwala are famous for their abundance in song and dance. We are trying to

maintain the footprints of his direction in our play Manimugdha. The music has been composed with the salient features of his songs as the backdrop. We have made a sincere effort to capture the verse-like feature in the scene depiction, complying with Jyoti Prasad's literature.

#### The Director

Himangshu Prasad Das is an alumnus of the National School of Drama. He is known for his progressive outlook and varied approach. He has tried to strike a balance between works of critical acclaim and mass appeal. He is associated with the street-play movement and has done a thousand shows of a play in various locations in a single day. A popular play written and directed by him is *Moi Shah Rukh Khan Hobo Khuju*. Himangshu has conducted many workshops and training sessions through the length and breadth of Assam. He has established a theatre village in Mirza, 50 kms from Guwahati. In 2007 he formed his own drama group Guernica. Along with theatre excellence, he also has to his credit published volumes of poetry and regular contribution to newspapers on topics of social interest.

#### The Playwright

Jyoti Prasad Agarwala was a prominent modern Assamese literature writer in the pre-independence era who created history for Assam by writing, directing, filming, editing and producing the first Assamese film *Joymoti* in 1935. He wrote a number of plays including *Sonit Kunwari*, *Lovitaa*, *Karengar Ligiri*, *Nimati Koina* etc. He composed a unique style of songs in which every song starts with the same note. This is now known as 'Jyoti Sangeet'. A humanitarian, and harbinger of new and modern thought, he is popularly known as 'Rupkonwar'.

#### The Group

Himangshu Prasad Das started his own theatre group Guernica in 2007. This group has done quite a few plays, some of which are its original productions. A very successful production of the group is *Moi Shah Rukh Khan Hobo Khuju*. The group performed

one thousand shows of a street-play in various locations in a single day. The group has a theatre village where the students have residential quarters, library and classrooms where various courses in theatre are pursued by students.

#### Cast & Credits

On Stage Narayan Baishya

Apurba Barman

Rupamjyoti Das

Pradip Kalita

Pranabjyoti Das

Ayub Ali Sarma

Paramananda Saikia

Anamika Sarania

Pranami Bora

Bandita Sarma

Mamata Das

Puja Kaibortya

Sikha Thakuriya

Off Stage Pranab Kalita, Jyoti Prasad Das, Prasanta Bora

Design & Choreography Pranami Bora

Music Design & Operator Arnab Bashistha

Light Design & Scenography Mintu Bora

Playwright Jyoti Prasad Agarwala

Director Himangshu Prasad Das

#### Contacts

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# Deepika Arwind's Play: I am Not Here

Manohar Khushalani's Video Review of the Play. I am not here is designed as an 8-step guide in how to censor women's writing, which plays out in a boxing ring. In parts dark, funny and brutal, the dance-theatre production looks at the subtle, almost-invisible and insidious ways in which women's writing has often been flicked to the fringes. The two women performers enter the boxing ring, watching and being watched,

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# 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. Sureshababu 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 Sureshababu  
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

Natakagramam Kozhikode  
Nalini Nivas, West Hill (P.O.)  
Kozhikode, Kerala – 673005  
M: +91 9495612576  
E: natakagramamkozhikode@gmail.com

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**P. Melodi Dorcas's Play:**

# Behind the Borders

Dramaturgy & Direction: Petrishia Melodi Dorcas

Group: NSD Student Diploma Production, New Delhi

Language: Non verbal

Duration: 1 hr 10 mins

## The Play

Behind the Borders discusses the issue of 'rage' in an episodic manner. Throughout the play the issues of lynching, rape, land-occupation, honour killing, and writers'-murders are depicted in a visual vocabulary. This is a new medium of narration to communicate with the audience where each scene has strong images and each image is different from every other in the scene. The music instruments used in the play have a strong interpretation to every scene, depending on how the performer's body is transforming in every scene and how the bodies that deal with different characters and craft are a part of scene. There is no backstage or green room in Behind the Borders, and the idea of bringing the backstage musicians onto the stage has its own narrative in the scene.

## Director's note

During the process, it was quite a task for us to bring out the visual language of the text we were dealing with. We started improvising each incident from the script. Each one of us came up with different ideas and we started exploring everything. As a collective, we explored different mediums during the process like sound, music, visual installation, durational images, digital narrations, drawings, five senses of the script etc. Behind the Borders is thus a production which is developed by each and every artist of this play collectively. We carried a responsibility of bringing out an ideal production, following the dramaturgy, but later we just went with the flow of the process.

## The Director

Petrishia Melodi Dorcas is a versatile artist who graduated from the National School Of Drama, Bengaluru centre, with specialization in Acting. Later she joined the National School of Drama, New Delhi and graduated with specialization in Direction in 2019. She has been working in theatre as a director and actress for the past decade. She is an active participant in social and cultural activities all over India. Currently, she is traveling all over India for her research in the field of theatre to understand the roots and cultures of different parts of India to bring out the importance of various traditional and tribal forms and their contributions to the performer's body.

### The Group

This play is a part of National School of Drama's graduate showcase of class 2019. It aims to provide a platform to encourage emerging theatre practitioners to share their work with a wider audience.

### Cast & Credits

On Stage Anmol Guliani

Bhumisuta Das

Jitu Rabha

Manoj Thapar

Snehlata Siddartha Tagde

Tamilaasi Anandhavalli

Yashaswini R / Silpi Dutta

Recorded Vocal Palin Kabak

Scenography Ramkumar Kannadasan

Property Bhandari Arun

Drawings Elan Cheziyan

Video Vishala R Mahale

Sound Mayengban Sunil Singh

Chreography Petrishia Melodi Dorcas

Lights Sarthak Narula

Poster & Brochure Partha P. Hazarika

Stage Manager Sejuti Bagchi

Music Mayengban Sunil Singh

Dramaturgy & Direction Petrishia Melodi Dorcas

Contacts

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# Mahasweta Devi's Play: Bayan

BAYAN

Writer: Mahasweta Devi

Director: Usha Ganguli

Group: NSD Repertory Company, New Delhi

Language: Hindi

Duration: 1 hr 35 mins

The Play

Based on a story by Mahashweta Devi, Bayan is that play which creates awareness about the core expression of her writing, i.e. socio-economic disparities and the different shades of human life. Bayan's Chandi Dassi is one who, at a very young age, is thrown into the work of burying dead animals. By invoking her responsibility towards the work of her ancestors, she is forced to live a life of great hardship. In time she decides to tie the knot with Malinder, a man who works in the government crematorium, and one who takes on her responsibility. However, the same Malinder later declares her to be a 'bayan' and Chandi Daasi loses all her rights to live a decent life. She starts believing that her life of inhuman exile is simply the norm.

Director's Note

In my creative journey in field of theatre, along with the works of Rabindranath, Manto, Kabir and Premchand, the works of Mahashweta Devi have also struck me with a strange sharpness and intellectual perceptiveness that moves alongside their human aspects. Even before Rudali or Ganesh Mahima. Bayan's Chandi Daasi had made a place for herself in my memory. Over the past few days, she has been helping this director search for a new vision, sometimes searching for a new theatrical language, shirking from the complexities of realism on the stage and trying to both give and take in the exchange of creative energies. For the past many years, the prop-less stage has appealed to me and attracted me for many reasons. I believe that minimalism on the stage might be able to help in the search for a new theatre vocabulary as drawn from the power of the actor's body language, the internally developed characterization the symbolic imagery on stage, and the sounds of music- and this is what I kept trying for. Chandi Daasi and her creator Mahashweta Devi and those human shapes that get lost in the darkness and then remerge with strength and burn like sparks, are the ones who have been the sources of my inspiration.

#### The Director & Adapter

Usha Ganguli, a renowned theatre activist, known for her presentations like Lok Katha, Mahabhoj , Holi , Himmat Mai, Court Martial , Rudali , Mukti , Chandalika , Manasi , Hum Mukhtara and many others.

Rangakarmee, the Theatre troupe found by Usha Ganguli in 1976, remains the most active and prolific group, performing in Hindi, not only across India but also travelling abroad extensively. Usha Ganguli is perhaps the first and only theatre Director in India to be directing a play for a Pakistan theatre group Ajoka Theatre under their two-year long programme Theatre for Peace which includes theatre festivals, workshops, seminars etc. She has received the Best Production and Best Director Award (1993-94) by All India Critic Association and Paschim Banga Natya Academy for Rudali, Best

Director Award for Lok Katha by Ritwik Ghatak Memorial Committee, Sangeet Natak Academy Award (1998), Girish Puraskar by West Bengal Govt in 2016 and several other awards from West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh State Academies. At present, apart from being the Director and President of Rangakarmee, Usha Ganguli is a member of SWAN (South Asia Women's Network) which is a wing of SAARC. She is also currently the Scholar in Residence at the Viswa Bharati University.

#### The Author

Mahasweta Devi (14 January 1926 – 28 July 2016) was an Indian Bengali fiction writer and socio-political activist. Her notable literary works include Hajar Churashir Maa, Rudali, and Aranyer Adhikar. She was honoured with various literary awards such as the Sahitya Akademi Award, Jnanpeeth Award, and Ramon Magsaysay Award, along with India's civilian awards Padma Shri and Padma Vibhushan.

#### The Group

Established in 1964 with a membership of only four persons, the Repertory Company is the regular performing wing of the School. It was set up with the dual purposes of establishing professional theatre on one hand and continuing with regular experimental work on the other. Over the years it has produced a variety of plays ranging from stylized musicals to realistic contemporary Indian drama to translations and adaptations of foreign plays. In addition, several eminent persons of national and international repute have worked with the Company, and it has performed over one hundred and eighty one plays by ninety-eight playwrights and has worked with ninety directors. Quite a few of its actors have emerged as celebrities in theatre, cinema and television. The Company has toured extensively in India and abroad. It is celebrating fifty years of its existence this year.

#### Cast & Credits

Chandi Dasi Shruti Mishra

Joshi Sampa Mandal

Jhumu Anamika Sagar  
Kali Suman Purty  
Chumki Palak Jasrotia  
Somari Sakshi Sharma  
Puti Kaki Snehalata S. Tagde  
Chorus Sampa Mandal, Anamika Sagar,  
Palak Jasrotia, Suman Purty, Aparna Menon,  
Snehalata S. Tagde, Debomita Sur  
Malinder Deep Kumar  
Bhagirath Sikandra Kumar  
Ketan Kaka Shahnawaz Khan  
Sutradhar (Debu) Ashutosh Banerjee / Shubham Pareek  
Dhuna Virendra Singh  
Ganju (Gajendra) Naveen Singh Thakur  
Budhu Manish Dubey  
Dulu Rahul Kumar  
Kali Mata, Khokan Jitu Rabha  
Mintu Parag Baruah  
Tulu Shubham Pareek / Ashutosh Banerjee  
Khokha Vishveshvar M. Gondhali

Set Design Sanchayan Ghosh  
Set Execution Ram Pratap, Manoj Kumar, Brijesh Sharma  
Music Kajal Ghosh  
Light Design & Operation Souti Chakraborty  
Light Operation & Execution Govind Singh Yadav  
Assistance Md. Suleman, Pradeep Aggarwal  
Sound Mukesh Kumar  
Costume Design Usha Ganguli  
Chief Costume Co-ordinator C.S. Bhatia  
Properties Design Dipankar Ghoshal  
Assistant Mole Kumar Jana  
Property Incharge Moti Lal Khare  
Make Up Sikandra Kumar, Shruti Mishra  
Assistance All Repertory Artists  
Tabla & Dholak Om Prakash  
Shehnai Shakti Pada Matti

Octopad Narender Kumar  
Harmonium Naveen Singh Thakur  
Production Co-ordinator Sukumar Tudu  
Stage Manager Govind Singh Yadav

Story Mahasweta Devi  
Dramatization, Design  
& Direction Usha Ganguli

#### Contacts

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