Girish Karnad’s Play: Bhanga Bhanga 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 Chugtai (selected for 8th Theatre Olympic), Bhanga

Bhanga 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

Contacts
Kolkata Bohuswar
18, Deodar Street, Kolkata- 700019
West Bengal
M: +91 9830262165, 9830872209
E: bohuswar.kolkata@gmail.com
sukritilahori@gmail.com