

Ravindra Tripathi's Play: Pehla Satyagrahi

Playwright: Ravindra Tripathy

Director: Suresh Sharma

Group: NSD Repertory Company, New Delhi

Language: Hindi

Duration: 1 hr 50 mins

The Play

Pehla Satyagrahi is about the life and struggle of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, known as Mahatma Gandhi around the world. This is the story of Mohandas's journey of truth and non-violence as well as the story of the independence of India. He fought a political war for almost twenty years in South Africa and when he returned to India, he, through his non-violent crusades like Quit India movement, Champaran Satyagraha and Dandi March, made it difficult for the British government to rule India.

Gandhi had said, "My life itself is my message." What kind of life did the Mahatma lead, what were the challenges he faced, and what were the difficulties he encountered, is what we have attempted to express and showcase through this play. Gandhi's life is larger than life and his personality quite dramatic. He was a walking and fasting saint-politician. He was spiritual and religious. And his death too was dramatic.

Director's Notes

While working on a production for the 150th birth anniversary of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, I thought of a play which brought to light incidents from his life about which we have often heard but haven't seen being presented earlier, and the younger generation of our country doesn't know about.

Ravindra Tripathy and I discussed this project. What finally emerged was a narration of the story through Sonia Schlesin, Mahadev Desai, Pyare Lal, Colin Bach and Joseph K. Dock. The

first three were associated with Gandhiji as his assistants, Joseph wrote Gandhiji's first biography, and Hermann Kallenbach was a very close friend.

I have to confess that one of the scenes in this play is fictitious (the creative liberty we are allowed to have). It is in the end where Gandhiji is interviewed by Gandhi and answers some unanswered questions to himself; the questions which till date are buried deep somewhere under the rubble of history.

The play is the story of the making of Mahatma from Gandhi. It isn't just history but also today's voice and necessity of being 'Swadeshi' and 'human'.

The Director

Suresh Sharma did PG diploma with specialization in Acting from National School of Drama in 1985.

In 1987-88 he established the only non-government repertory in the district of Mandi (Himachal Pradesh). From 1996-98 he worked as the Artistic Director of Sri Ram Centre for Performing Arts, Delhi. In 1998 he established the first non-government fully residential Theatre Academy in Mandi, Himachal Pradesh. Mr. Sharma has been felicitated by Sahitya Kala Parishad. Sangeet Natak Academy awarded Mohana, a play written and directed by him, under the Young Director's Scheme.

Playwright

Ravindra Tripathy is a senior print and TV journalist, cultural critic, playwright, satirist, documentary film-maker, columnist and editor. Tripathy has directed two documentary films and scripted a popular news-satire show Pol-Khol for Star News and ABP News. He is currently associated with Swaraj TV as consultant. He was awarded Sahityakar Samman by Hindi Akademi, Delhi in 2001.

The Group

Established in 1964 with just four members, the Repertory Company of NSD 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.

Cast & Credits

Gandhi-1 Shanawaz Khan

Gandhi-2 Raju Roy

Mahadev Deep Kumar

Pyare Lal Parag Baruah

Sonia Schlesin Aparna Menon

Meer Alam Rahul Kumar

Attendant/Duda Bhai/ Muslim Sikandra Kumar

Train Officer, Kallenbach Shubham Pareek

Mr. Duke Jitu Rabha

Rajkumar Shukla Ashutosh Banerjee

Aabha Ben/ Dani Ben Suman Purty

Manu Ben Anamika Sagar

Sushila Ben Sakshi Sharma

Kasutrba Gandhi Shruti Mishra

Brij Kishore Vishveshvar M. Gondhali

Multi-Character (Female) Sampa Mandal

Multi-Character (Male) Naveen Singh Thakur

Chorus Sampa Mandal, Sikandra Kumar, Aparna Menon, Rahul Kumar,

Sakshi Sharma, Shubham Pareek, Ashutosh Banerjee, Anamika Sagar,

Virendra Singh, Snehalata S. Tagde, Suman Purty, Manish Dubey, Vishveshvar M. Gondhali, Jitu Rabha, Palak Jasrotia

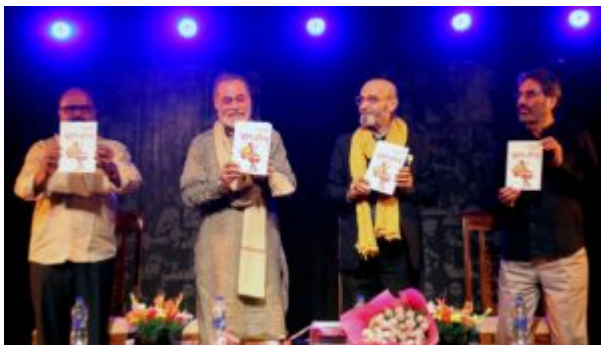
Set Design Rajesh Bahl
Set Execution Ram Pratap, Manoj Kumar, Brijesh Sharma
Light Design & Operation Govind Singh Yadav
Assistance Md. Suleman, Pradeep Aggarwal
Costume Design C.S. Bhatia
Costume Coordinator Sampa Mandal, Anamika Sagar
Sound Operation Mukesh Kumar
Sound Design Rajesh Singh
Properties In-charge Moti Lal Khare
Video Design Sourav Poddar
Music Kajal Ghosh
Tabla Om Prakash
Harmonium Naveen Singh Thakur
Key Board Kishore Kumar Malhotra
Flute Anurag Sharma
Sitar Matluf Husain
Tabla, Percussion Pankaj Banai
Dholak Sanjeev Kumar
Make-up Sikandra Kumar, Shruti Mishra
Assistance All Repertory Artists
Stage Manager Govind Singh Yadav
Production Coordinator Sukumar Tudu
Special Thanks for
Dance Choreography Bharat Sharma
Associate Director Pravin Kumar Gunjan

Playwright Ravindra Tripathy
Design & Direction Suresh Sharma

Contacts

NSD Repertory Company
Bahawalpur House
Bhagwandas Road
New Delhi – 110 001
Ph: 011 23383420
W: www.nsd.gov.in

11th Bal Sangam begins in the Capital amidst much fanfare / Manohar Khushalani



National School of Drama today inaugurated its, evergreen, much-awaited **11th Bal Sangam** – a folk & traditional performing Arts & folk Theatre festival, at the lush green lawns of the campus amid much fanfare. Watch the film made on the occasion by my Digital Media students at IIITD: Sahil Yadav, Aseem Saini & Dilnawaz Ashraf

<https://youtu.be/BtmyaJwBD2I>

```
<iframe width="560" height="315"
src="https://www.youtube.com/embed/BtmyaJwBD2I"
frameborder="0" allow="accelerometer; autoplay; encrypted-
media; gyroscope; picture-in-picture"
allowfullscreen></iframe>
```

The opening ceremony of Bal Sangam witnessed the gracious presence of Renowned Theatre Actor & Director, **Prof. Ram Gopal Bajaj**, **Prof. Suresh Sharma**, Director-in-Charge, NSD, **Abdul Latif Khatana**, Chief, TIE Co., and **Prof. (Dr.) Abhilash Pillai**, Dean-Academic.

The opening ceremony was followed by **Rangoli** – a stage performance by Folk & Traditional child artistes of India, choreographed by renowned choreographer **Shri Bharat Sharma**, who has an illustrious career spanning over three decades.

Renowned Theatre Actor & Director, **Prof. Ram Gopal Bajaj** said, *"Without relation and communication there is no world. Festival like Bal Sangam help building relationship among the children of different culture. Strong relationship and bonding lead to form a strong nation."*

Prof. Suresh Sharma, Director-in-Charge, National School of Drama said, *"I'd like to thank everyone who managed to take out their valuable time to come here and give their blessing to the participating kids. I welcome all the participants and audience to this festival. We are proud that the TIE Company has been working hard to make children know about their own culture, traditions, and values. NSD will continue taking such initiatives in the future as well."*

Mr. Abdul Latif Khatana, Chief, Theatre-in-Education said, *"Theatre-in-Education has been continuously trying to reach and touch the lives of children across the country in last three decades. Apart from folk & traditional performing arts and folk theatre, we conduct interactive workshops among participant children from different parts of the country. The experience and exposure they get at such a young age, will definitely inspire them to do something in the field of folk and traditional performing arts and folk theatre in the future."*

Prof. (Dr.) Abhilash Pillai, Dean-Academic, extended the vote of thanks to chief guest, children and the audience for taking out their time and being a part of Bal Sangam.

Bal Sangam provides the platform for young talent who have never got chance to show their talent and whose performances

have never been witnessed at national level. Long Man, Rajasthani Puppet, Behroopiya, and Magician etc. are the special attraction of the festival. Various types of art and craft workshops are also being conducted during the festival.

This year around 15 productions from 12 states are participating in the festival. Bhavesh Chau Nritye Kala Kendra Jharkhand will perform Kharsama Chaun Sholi, likewise Manipuri Folk by Thang-Ta Cultural Association Manipur, Rajasthani Lok Kala by Manganiar Group Rajasthan Rajasthan, Gotipua Dance by Aradhana Dance Academy Odisha, Bodo Folk by Sifung Harium Afad Assam, Oggudolu by Kunta Sadaiah Oggudolu Group Telangana, Kalarippayat by Hindustan Kalari Sangam Kerala, Punjabi Folk by Punjabi Folk Art Centre Punjab, Malvi Lok Nritye by Pratikalpa Sanskrit Sansthan Madhya Pradesh, Gujarati Folk Dance by Kalrav Sewa Trust Gujarat, Pasumukha (Animal Mask Dance), Kandhei Nata (Puppet Dance) Kothishala by Bichitra Barnali Natya Sansada Odisha, Tiwa by Tiwa Bhakha – Sanskriti Charcha Somittee Assam and Folk & Traditional Theatre performances will be Ram Vijay by Manjula Kalakendra Assam, “Gosian Pather” by National Bhand Theatre J & K, and Yakshagana Dance Drama by Yakshagana Kendra Karnataka.

The Bal Sangam festival is an ensemble of various performing traditional art forms presented by children, with the objective of encouraging children to continue traditional performances so as to preserve our cultural heritage in this rapidly changing world. The fanfare and hub of **Bal Sangam 2019** start from 9th November and goes on till 12th November 2019 at the New Delhi Campus of NSD at Bhagwandas Road. Timing- 4:00PM to 8:00PM. Entry to the event is free.

National School of Drama's 11th Bal Sangam to begin from 9th November



National School of Drama, the foremost theatre training institutions in the world and the only one of its kind in India today announced the commencement of its much awaited **11th edition of Bal Sangam** from **9th-12th November 2019**, in its premises. The 11th edition of the festival will showcase enthralling folk & traditional performing Arts & folk Theatre from **12 states** of India dedicated to children.



Bal Sangam, an outreach programme of **Sanskaar Rang Toli (Theatre-in-Education Company)**, in every alternate year brings forth both the heritage and legacy of traditional art forms and performances that are presented by children belonging to traditional performing families, guru-paramparas, and

institutions across the country.

The four-day cultural mela will begin on November 9th, five days ahead of the Children's Day with an inaugural performance '**Rangoli**' by folk and traditional child artistes of India, choreographed by renowned choreographer Shri Bharat Sharma, who has an illustrious career spanning over three decades. The Festival also includes folk dance, martial arts, acrobatics, street play performances and also acts like juggling, puppetry and magic shows.

To encourage eagerness in children for traditional performances, states like Assam, Odisha, Rajasthan, Manipur, Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, Telangana, Kerela, Gujarat, Punjab, Jharkhand, and Madhya Pradesh will bring to the fore the magic of folk performances and plays so that Indian cultural heritage will be preserved in this rapidly changing world.

Dr. Arjun Deo Charan, Acting Chairman, National School of Drama said, *"The festival is an ensemble of various performing traditional art forms that are presented by children. We are proud that the TIE Company has been working hard to make children know about their own culture, traditions and values,"*

Highlighting the importance of theatre and folk performances, **Shri Suresh Sharma, Director-in-Charge, National School of Drama** said *"Theatre and folk performances are a great learning medium for exploring and sensitizing children towards issues. Such activities and festivals are a wonderful platform to not just perform, but learn, travel, and share. NSD believes that theatre makes a person sensitive towards issues and an active participant of society as it boosts powers of communication. Theatre brings in all these qualities and if children are introduced to this wonderful, they become better human beings".*

Mr. Abdul Latif Khatana, Chief, Theatre-in-Education,

said, "Bal Sangam is a confluence of folk and traditional art forms performed by children. When the child artistes imbibe these folk and traditional art forms with the mastery of their art and their innocence then the performance becomes magic."

NSD authorities will be making special arrangements through various NGOs working with underprivileged children and social organisations, to reach out and invite children from not so privileged class so as to give them the due privilege to experience and be enriched by this long awaited festival of National School of Drama for children.

There will also be various types of art and craft workshops during the festival from 9th–12th November.

About National School of Drama

National School of Drama is one of the foremost theatre training institutions in the world and the only one of its kind in India. It's an autonomous organization, fully financed by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. Training in the School is highly intensive and is based on a thorough, comprehensive, carefully planned syllabus which covers every aspect of theatre and in which theory is related to practice.

About T.I.E. Co.

Sanskaar Rang Toli (T.I.E. Co.) of NSD was established on October 16, 1989, and completed 30 years of its existence. Sanskaar Rang Toli is the only theatre education resource centers in the country and has worked with around 20 thousand children till date in various workshops. It consists of a group of actor-teachers working with and performing for children. The major focus of the TIE Company is to perform creative, curriculum-based and participatory plays in schools, specially designed and prepared for children of different age groups.

The TIE Company has done more than 2000 performances in various parts of the country. More than 10 lakh children, apart from college students, teachers, parents and theatre lovers, have witnessed these plays in approximately all the states in the country as well as internationally such as Poland, China, Philippines and Japan.

The Toli began with an objective of bridging the gap between passive education and an active method of learning by doing through its performances of varied plays, Summer Theatre Workshops on self-development and social integration, Sunday Club for devising original performances with children, workshops with teachers on effective teaching-learning process. All these activities are practiced round the year as per the children's annual school calendar in Delhi and other parts of the country.