

Girish Karnad's Play: Tughlaq



Playwright: Girish Karnad

Translator: B.V. Karanth

Director: Bharti Sharma

Group: Kshitij, Delhi

Language: Hindustani

Duration: 2 hrs

The Play

Tughlaq explores the series of events that led to the downfall of one of the most fascinating kings of Delhi, Mohammed-bin-Tughlaq. The protagonist, known for his reformist, ahead-of-times ideas had a grand vision, but his reign was an abject failure. He started his rule with great ideals of unifying India, but in twenty years his reign had degenerated into anarchy and his kingdom had become a 'kitchen of death'.

The vision of Tughlaq to unify India and keep religion out of politics cost him dearly.

Director's Note

Muhammad bin Tughlaq wanted to build a secular state, moving his capital from Delhi to Daulatabad, a Hindu-majority city. His ideas about the economy were new but he turned into a whimsical tyrant who couldn't control the kingdom any more. The life of the people is governed and corrupted by the interaction of the saints and the politicians. Tughlaq, who pretends to be a true follower of religion, commits countless murders to retain his monarchy. The play is eerily contemporary with thirteen scenes woven around the life and times of Muhammad bin Tughlaq, the 14th century sultan of Delhi, and an authoritarian but idealistic king who disintegrates into failure in a span of twenty years. Tughlaq is noted for its symbols like prayer, sleep, game of chess and the rose which are used to heighten the effect of the play.

The Director

Bharti Sharma is a National School of Drama graduate and has been doing theatre in Delhi for last 38 years. She has acted in over fifty plays and has directed more than 35 plays. She has been awarded the Senior Fellowship by the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India. She has directed and co-produced a comedy serial for Doordarshan, directed documentaries made by Kshitij for Dept. Of Culture, Govt. of India, and has directed short-films and educational films for Deepaliya Plan Project (a social organization). She has acted in tele-films and a few episodes of the popular TV serial Bhanwar.

The Playwright

Girish Raghunath Karnad was an Indian actor, film director, Kannada writer. He is the recipient of Jnanpith Award for Kannada, the highest literary honour conferred in India. He was also active in the world of Indian cinema working as an actor, director, and screenwriter, earning numerous awards along the way. He was conferred Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan by the government of India.

The Group

Kshitij theatre group was established in 1987 by a few graduates of National School of Drama, headed by NSD alumna Bharti Sharma, with the aim of promoting Indian art and culture through theatre. Apart from producing plays it has also been organizing theatre workshops in remote areas of the country in collaboration with the Department of Culture, Govt. of India.

Cast & Credits

Tughlaq Mohit Tripathi

Sauteli Ma Bharti Sharma

Barni Lakshya Goel

Najeeb Nitin Koul

Azeez Anurag Kumar

Aazam Divyanshu Kumar

Sheikh Prabhat Mishra

Shahbuddin Akshay Malik
Ratan Singh Vishal Kasana
Ghiyasuddin Vishal Kasana
Kaka Prabhat Mishra
Mazhabi Aadmi Naveen Panday
Jawaan Sudhanshu
Shareef Lokesh Patel
Hindu Kamal Sharma
Sipahi Naveen Pandey
Hindu Aurat Priya Yadav
Jawaan Atul Pandey
Darbaan Kapil
Naqeeb Abhishant
Qareem Khan Bhartendu Pandey
Aurat 1 Ritu Sharma
Aurat 2 Shweta Gupta
Aurat 3 Shivani Arora
Dhindhorchi Lokesh, Atul Pandey, Abhishek
Ameer Umra Nitesh, Abhishek Bajpayee, Kamal, Pankaj, Sanjeev,
Kapil, Jaideep, Ankit Rawal, Prakhar
Hindu Sipahi Lokesh Patel, Tarun Srivastava, Naveen Pandey,
Atul Pandey, Abhishek Kamboj, Namit Singh, Ankit Raj, Vishal
Kasana
Crowd Ritu, Shweta, Shivani, Naveen, Lovely, Abhishek
Bajpayee, Nitesh, Kamal, Ishan Pundir, Nitin Joshi, Sanchit
Agarwal, Ankush Singh, Nishant Singh, Tarun, Abhishek Kamboj,
Namit, Ankit, Vishal, Bhartendu, Kapil, Lokesh, Jaideep, Ankit
Rawal
Mulazim/Muslim Sipahi Ankit Raj Singh, Naveen, Atul,
Bhartendu, Nitin Joshi, Abhishek,
Namit Singh

Lights Himanshu B. Joshi
Music Rupesh Bhimta
Set Management Abdul Hakim
Costume Nitin, Naveen, Abhishek, Ishaan
Property Abhishek Bajpayee, Lovely, Atul

Poster/Brochure Anurag Thakur
Assistant Director Anurag, Divyanshu

Playwright Girish Karnad
Director Bharti Sharma

Contacts

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Tughlaq

The Play

Tughlaq is a play about the turbulent rule of Mohammad Bin Tughlaq. The protagonist, Mohammad bin Tughlaq, had great ideas and a grand vision, but his reign was an abject failure. Tughlaq was known for his reformist ideas, one of which was shifting the capital from Delhi to Daulatabad in order to have a capital that is in the centre of his province. This play covers the consequences that followed this decision. The play dramatically highlights the importance of credibility and authenticity for a leader. The play outlines his clever plots to eliminate his opponents and ends with scenes of utter chaos and misery in the kingdom, and Tughlaq being left alone, having been abandoned by those who survived him.

Director's Note

Tughlaq is a political play. Mohammad is more about power than about an individual. Therefore the structural difference between the individual Mohammad and the political Mohammad is crucial. When Power undergoes conflict, lying within an idealistic false consciousness, the notion of nation is abandoned. The conflict between duty and the political ambition of Mohammad makes life difficult for the masses, and the very foundations of the imagination of a nation are forsaken. The play *Tughlaq*, analyses the various dimensions of 'how' or 'what' a ruler should or should not be. It is this contemporarily relevant idea that we should gather from the play than mere history.

The Director

Dr. Samkutty Pattomkary is a freelance director, designer and technical trainer in theatre. Formerly, an executive member of the Kerala Sangeet Natak Academy, Government of Kerala. Some of his plays as a script writer include *Bheemaparvam*, *Deepra Thamas (Illuminated Darkness)*, *Urubhanga Sangodom* etc. As a director, he has been associated with many plays like, *Kaalam Sakshi*, *Andha Yug*, *Ghatakarpparanma*, *Anth Nahin*, *Mahachaitra*, *Yeshodhare*, *Medea* etc. He has also designed more than 350 amateur/professional theatre and dance productions in Kerala with many leading directors from Kerala and abroad. In cinema, Dr. Pattomkary has acted for the documentary film *Nayanarude Katha*, worked as Director for the documentary film *From Hutment Colonies to Agricultural Land* and as an Art Director for movies like *Mankolangal* and English film *Tantra*. Dr. Pattomkary has received many awards, some of them being, Bank men's Art Director Award, G. Sankara Pillai Endowment Award, Thoppil Bhasi Director Award (KPAC) and School of Drama Silver Jubilee Award.

The Playwright

Girish Raghunath Karnad (born 19 May 1938) is a writer, playwright, screenwriter, actor and movie director in Kannada language. For four decades, Karnad has been writing plays, often using history and mythology to tackle contemporary issues. His plays have been translated into many Indian languages and directed by eminent theatre personalities like Ebrahim Alkazi, B.V. Karanth, Alyque Padamsee, Prasanna, Arvind Gaur, Satyadev Dubey, Vijaya Mehta, Shyamanand Jalan and Amal Allana. He is active in the world of Indian cinema working as an actor, director, and screenwriter. He is a recipient of the 1998 Jnanpith Award. He was conferred Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan by the Government of India.

The Group

'Samudaya' established in 1974, is a pioneer cultural organization. Some of its prominent proscenium plays are, Maxim Gorky's *Thayi* (Mother), Sarveshwar Dayal Saxena's *Kuri*, P. Lankesh's *Sankranthi*, H.S. Shivaprakash's *Mahachaitra*, *Kattale Daari Dura* an adaptation of Chekov's 'Ward No. 6', Mahaswetha Devi's *Rudaali* and *Neeru*, K.P. Poornachandra Thejaswi's *Jugari Cross*, *Suttikondare Sarpa* a Kannada adaptation of Ibsens' *Enemy Of The People* etc. The group has also produced many street plays like *Patre Sangappana Kole*, *Kooli Thangi*, *Belchi*, *Bhanvri Devi*, *Tippu*, *Kesari Bili Hasiru*, *Meravanige*, *Dhanvantri Chikitse* etc. as a cultural protest pertaining to the contemporary issues of the nation. In addition to the plays, Samudaya has been active in conducting seminars, book releases and national festivals too.