Tushar Sonu Naik’s Play: Veer Babruvahan

Director: Tushar Sonu Naik
Group: Naik Mochemadkar Paramparik Dashavtari Loknatya Mandal, Maharashtra
Language: Marathi
Duration: 1 hr 40 mins

The Form
Dashavtar is a popular form of folk-art characterizing rural theatre of South Konkan region, the coastal Sindhudurg district of Maharashtra. Dashavtar is generally the presentation of different incarnations of Lord Vishnu, with ‘akhyanas’ (stories) from great epics Mahabharata and Ramayana, though these days more secular themes are also presented.
Dashavtar is an all-male performance. It has music, mime, colourful costumes, extempore dialogues, dance steps, and battle scenes. Dashavtar regales, instructs, and edifies the rural masses through the themes it presents. The music has harmonium, tabla or pakhawaj, and cymbals as accompanying musical instruments, and is based on the Hindustani style.

The Performance
Babruvahana, the king of Manipur, takes in his custody the horse of the Pandavas which they had sent as symbol of their supremacy over all the kings. Meghavarna, son of Ghatotkacha, and Rushiketa, son of Karna go in search of the horse but fail to find it and return. Chitrangi, mother of Babruvahana, reveals to him that he is the son of the great warrior Arjuna. Babruvahana goes to meet Arjuna, but Arjuna gets angry and insults him. This makes Babruvahana furious. He challenges Arjuna for a fight. In the battlefield Arjuna gets defeated and Babruvahana decides to behead him. Chitrangi and Ulupi, Babruvahana’s stepmother order him get the divyamani, a

precious stone, from the head of Shesh Nagraj, to save Arjuna and other martyrs in the battlefield.
Babruvahana goes to Shesh Nagraj, who is also his grandfather, and succeeds in getting the divya Nagamani. Meanwhile Bheema, the elder brother of Arjuna, arrives on the scene and on seeing Arjuna beheaded, fights with Babruvahana. Chitrangi and Ulupi stop them and tell him what actually happened.
All of them pray to Shree Krishna who appears and brings life to Arjuna and the others by touching the Nagamani on their heads. Babruvahana and his father Arjuna embrace each other.

Director's Note
While directing this play, I have selected the artists who are able to portray the character assigned to them. I have worked on the dialogues, costumes, make-up, and hairstyles, especially of males who perform the role of females. I thank the music director of this play for his single-handed contribution in this production.

The Director
Tushar Sonu Naik is a Matriculate. Though he is young, he has directed many plays, such as Veer Babruvahana, which is most popular among all. Most of the plays directed by him are in the traditional folk form of Maharshtra – Dashavtar.

The Group
The troupe known as Naik Mochemadkar Parmparik Dashavtari Loknatya Mandal is headed by Sonu alias Babal Shripad Naik, and managed by his son Tushar Sonu Naik, who is also a musician.
The family resides on the picturesque sea-shore in a small village called Mochemad, in Maharashtra. Dashavtar, a traditional folk art of this area, has been practiced by the family for more than six generations. The performers and musicians of the troupe come from different villages of Sindhudurg district and a few also from the nearby state of Goa. They all are from poor, rustic, rural areas, mainly farmers, agriculturists or artists dedicated to this folk art

with devotion and love. Naik Mochemadkars are frequently invited to perform their plays in annual festivals, rural fairs in the courtyards of temples, and these days even in urban areas. More than 240 performances are staged by this group every year.

Cast & credit

Ganesh	Gajanan Vengurlekar
Riddhi	Akshay Naik
Siddhi	Dipak Mayekar
Babruvahana	Nitin Asayekar
Hansadhvaja	Sudhakar Parab
Arjuna	Narayan Asayekar
Meghvarna	Nilesh Naik
Rushiket	Sagar Gaonkar
Ulupi	Ratnakar Manjarekar
Chitrangi	Mahesh Dhuri
Bheema	Krishana Naik
Shesh Nagraj	Guru Varadkar
Shrikrishana	Aatmaram Sawant

Harmonium	Rajan Gawade
Mrudang or Pakhvaj	Piyush Khandare
Cymbals	Snatosh Gudulekar
Singer	Mahadev Dalvi
Backstage Artists	Sitaram Gawade, Pravin Tandel, Raman Parab, Harishchandra Manjarekar
Music Director	Jayram Shripad Naik
Head of the Troupe	Sonu Shripad Naik

Research	Vijaykumar Phatarpekar
Director & Manager	Tushar Sonu Naik

Contacts

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