

1/90

SOUTH ZONE THEATRE FESTIVAL

**PONGAL NATAK VIZHA**

12-1-1990 to 16-1-1990

at

**KAMBAN KALAI ARANGAM**

**PONDICHERRY**

Organised by

GOVERNMENT OF PONDICHERRY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

in

Collaboration with

**SANGEET NATAK AKADEMI**

New Delhi



## SOUTH ZONE THEATRE FESTIVAL

(Natya Samaroh 1989)

The Festival is part of Sangeet Natak Akademi's scheme of "Assistance to young Theatre workers". The scheme envisages four zonal festivals every year held by rotation in the states comprising the zone. The best works presented at zonal centres are brought to Delhi in a national level festival.

In the present festival four states of the South Zone would participate. They are Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Karnataka. The present Festival is jointly sponsored and organised by the Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi with the Government of Pondicherry, Education Department.



12th January 1990.

**'KONGAI THEE'**

(Tamil)

Written by : **INDIRA PARTHASARATHY.**

Directed by : **R. RAJU.**

**Synopsis :—**

This play is inspired by the greatest among Tamil classics, 'Silappadikaram'. The playwright has interpreted the epic in the contemporary context for which there is immense scope in the original work.

Kannagi, steeped in the Indian tradition, worships her husband Kovalan as god but has not learnt to love him as a man. Ultimately she finds that this very same faith has let her down. Her husband is falsely implicated as a thief and killed by the Pandya king without proper hearing. At this point, she becomes the Universal Woman, socially and politically wronged in the name of religion and tradition and raises in revolt to destroy the system. The title of the epic is significant i.e. 'The story of the anklet' 'Anklet is symbolic' representing 'innocence and Virginity'. According to an ancient Tamil ritual, a girl is supposed to remove her anklet on the first bridal night, the ritual being known as 'Silambu Kazhi Nonbu'. The anklet becomes an instrument of Fate, seeking nemesis on behalf of a woman wronged. In the concept of 'Arthanareeswara', the left side of the human body represents 'woman' i.e. 'bhoga', the right side, 'man' i.e. 'yoga'. Kannagi by plucking and throwing away her left breast to burn Madurai, uses the instrument of sexual passion as a vehicle of elemental Fury to seek natural justice.

Kovalan, a restless and alienated soul, not conforming to his caste commitments, chases his identity in artistic pursuits and epicurean life.



Maadhavi, abandoning the life of a Devadasi, falls in love with a married man, Kovalan, which proves to be her misfortune.

The King commits an error of judgment unwillingly, which accounts for his downfall.

All the characters in the play cannot be but what they are, ruled by an invincible law of Fate establishing the dictum that 'Character is Destiny'. The play reads like a Greek tragedy.

#### Director's note

'Silappadikaram', an immortal epic, belonging to the early centuries of the Christian era, has immense possibilities of interpretation according to the needs of an age. The playwright has successfully exploited the inherent potential in the epic to express a modern idea.

The Director has chosen a form that integrates with the content of the play. Women are pivotal characters in the play and although they exist individually at the beginning, but as the play progresses they begin to constitute a group and at the end universalised to speak for all classes of women, who are suppressed the world over.

Theatre exists in the present tense and reveals human truth of universal value. It transcends ideology, as ideology is abstract but whereas, truth is a concrete human experience.

#### Cast and credits

Kannagi	:	Selvi Kanmnai
Maadhavi	:	Selvi J. Srividya
Devanthi	:	Selvi Uma/M. Poonguzhali
Queen	:	Selvi A. Arulselvi
Kavunthi	:	Mrs. Jayalakshmi
Salini	:	Selvi V. Jayanthi



13th January 1990.

**SANGYA BALYA.**

(Kannada)

Directed by : **K. G. KRISHNAMURTHY.**

**Synopsis :—**

The play proposed is said to be based on a real incident that had happened almost hundred years ago. The enactment of this incident in **BAYALATA** form had been very popular in North Karnataka region and it is still one of the most significant theatrical forms being performed.

The Story-line is structured around the friendship and love-hate-affair. Sangya and Balya are two friends belonging to a rich and poor family respectively, in Bailahonagala Taluk. Erya, a merchant in the same Taluk, with a beautiful wife, Ganga, goes to Bellary for some business, asking a widow, Paramma, to look after Ganga while he is away. During this period, there takes place a village festival. Sangya is enchanted by the beauty of Ganga who has come for the festival. Sangya decided to get her, and at first tries through his friend Balya to entice Ganga but widow Paramma, who tries to blackmail Ganga to accept Sangya. At last Paramma succeeds, Sangya and Ganga make love each other in the house of Ganga.

Meanwhile, Erya, comes back to his house before time and smells that something is rotten in his house. Waiting at the door with a knife to face that situation, Sangya with the help of Ganga escapes but his headgear falls down on



the floor. Seeing the failed headgear Erya recognises that it belongs to Sangya and his two brothers, with the help of Balya the most intimate friend of Sangya, manage to murder Sangya. Finally Erya and his brothers surrender themselves to the authorities and is sentenced to capital punishment.

#### Cast and Credits

Bhagawata	: Mr. N. Huchappa Master
Chorus	: Mr. Rajendra Balehalli Mr. Jayaram Ravishankar Vasudeva
Doota/Servant/	
Poojari	: Mr. D.M. Prabakara
Balya	: Mr. Y.K. Saibaba
Sangya	: Mr. D.L. Sreekanta
Marawadi	: Mr. A.M. Shantarama
Erya	: Mr. Prakash Esu
Erapakshi	: Mr. Beerappa
Basavantha	: Mr. C.D. Veerabadrappa
Ganga	: Kum. Usha Rani
Postman	: T.H. Manjappa
Paramma	: M.S. Ashok
Percussionist	: Mr. Nagaraj
Music	: Mr. N. Huchappa Master
Choregraphy	: Mr. K.G. Krishnamurthy
Set	: Mr. Shantarama/Beerappa
Properties	: Mr. Saibaba/Prabakar
Costumes	: Susheela Kelemanee/Ashok
Lights	: Mr. Ramamurthy
Script	: The Script is based on Sangya Balya - Original Play written by Late Pattara Mastara and various version of the play.

Dr. Chandrashekar Kambar's  
interpreted version of play.

Direction : K.G. Krishnamurthy.



14th January 1990.

**KAIKUTTAPPADU**

(Malayalam)

Written by : **K.N. PANIKKAR**

Directed by : **K. KALADHARAN**

**Synopsis :—**

Basically the theme deals with the idea of generation gap. It is the recreation of the famous myth on one of the sons of Varauchi, called PERUNTHACHAN or Master Craftsman (Master Builder), a concept rather than a person, popular in the legends of Kerala.

Perunthachan belongs to a village called Uliyannoor on the side of a river where there is a temple. The temple belongs to the larger village which extends to both the banks of the river. The right side bank of the river known as Valamcherikkara in which the temple is situated is the place where Perunthachan belongs to and the left bank is known as Edamcherikkara. The people of Edamcherikkara cannot claim to have a master carpenter of Perunthachan's greatness. So they are trying to make friends with Perunthachan's son, KUTTITHACHAN. They even go to the extent of owning him as their master carpenter.

The deity of the temple is Vishnu and GARUDAN (Eagle), his vehicle is supposed to keep watch on the top of the flag staff in front of the temple.

Perunthachan is earnestly at his work giving the finishing touches to the icon of the Garudan to be mounted on the flag staff.



Perunthachan invests soul in the icon by ritual and makes the Garuda dance to his tune. The rituals are all over and the consecration of the idol on the top of the flag staff effected in the presence of the NADUVAZHI, the King of the land, and the people.

When all the groups disperse the icon of the Garudan starts dancing. This was predicted earlier by the Edamcheri group. But Perunthachan could never believe that his own creation would transcend the limits which he had prescribed. Much to his surprise and dismay the Garudan crosses the bridge and moves towards the other side. He could not contain himself. He drew out his chisel and warned the Garuda not to proceed an inch further. But Garuda was not prepared to budge, nor Perunthachan also would turn back. The son, Kuttithachan now interferes and asks his father to be calm. But the father is adamant and he holds strongly that if he had created he could destroy too. Garuda proceeds, in spite of all warnings, to the enemy's camp and Perunthachan throws his chisel at him. His one wing is broken and he falls down. The son goes to his rescue. But the son takes a crucial decision to break the idol made by his father only to recreate a new one with the same material. He dances with his own creation and walks to the enemy's camp, the left side of the river to become their master carpenter.

#### Director's Note

The burning theme of the play is the generation-gap. The archetypal memory of the fight between clans is recaptured. Perunthachan claims his descent from the celestial creator of the Universe, whereas his son is only a mortal. The son derives his self-respect and creative faculty only by virtue of his being the son of





15th January 1990.

**'DORA NEE SAAVU MOODINDI'**

(Telugu)

Written by : **M. NAGABHUSHANA SARMA**

Directed by : **RAMANA**

**Synopsis :—**

It is a play about a villain, who for the sake of authority, power and money would not hesitate to exploit any one.

Exploitation of tribals is the subject of the play. An urban cheat with a track record of deceit and murder lands up in a forest and becomes Lord by making them believe that he was sent by Mother Goddess to rule them. But as tribals came to know of his exploitation they chase him with the aid of a business-man who is also a minor leech.

The Lord starts running away in the forest. He fails to trace out his burried treasure. He is haunted by tribesman and in fear and loss of self-control he is also haunted by his subconscious nightmarish fantacies who he deceived and exploited in his early life. Finally he succumbs to his own mis-deeds.

The entire play runs as part of narrative form by tribal narrator who uses the tribal and folk form.

**Cast and Credits**

Dora	:	Amaredra
Shwkar	:	Abhishikta Varma
Old Man	:	Sesimohan
Folk Leader	:	Sarath Kumar
Veerajodu 1 (Folk)	:	Mohan



16th January 1990.

**'MANTESWAMY KATHA PRASANGA'**  
(Kannada)

Written by : **H.S. SHIVAPRAKASH**

Directed by : **SURESH ANAGALLI**

**Synopsis :—**

Neelagaras (the narrators) appear and narrate the cosmogenic myth connected with Manteswamy. They have come to Kalyana in the hope of meeting their master Basavanna, the spiritual leader of Kalyana, is also awaiting the coming of a great master Manteswamy appeared in Kalyana in the guise of an ugly old creature so as to shock orthodox people. But Basavanna recognises him and pays respects to him. Manteswamy next appears in the prosperous city of Vijayanagar. His disciple Rachappa goes into the city for alms but draws a blank. He annoys the rich people of the city, who catch and parade him humiliatingly. Manteswamy is indignant sets his assistants, the destructive goddesses (Marees) on Vijayanagar and rescues his disciple. His next appearance is in Kaginele where Manteswamy rescues a hapless girl from her cruel step-mother. He then decides to settle down in the village Boppanagowdanapura. He decides to make Kempanna, a prosperous goldsmith, into his disciple. Kempanna is reluctant and refractory. Manteswamy drives him insane and takes him on a journey through darkness to light. He imprisons his disciple in a cave of snakes for twelve years. Kempanna emerges after this ordeal as a great Yogi. Manteswamy soon learns that his time is up



when he has a vision of Kalipurusha. He foresees unspeakable horrors befalling the world. He decides to enter into Samathi in deepwell so as to ensure cosmic balance and to guide suffering humans and animals through impending disasters. He sends his disciple Siddappaji to beg from the affluent Panchala Kings of Halagur to provide him with iron implements to dig up the well. Panchalas refuse to do so and inflict a series of ordeals on Siddappaji. Siddappaji emerges victorious from all of them. Panchalas are still unrelenting. The indignant Siddappaji wreaks vengeance on them by setting Marees (the destructive goddess) on Panchalas. He returns to his Master with the necessary implements and has well dug up. Manteswamy enters the womb of the earth after warning his disciples about the horrors of Kaliyuga.

#### Director's Note

The structure of the performance combines vigorous rhythms of folk dances and narrative prose with soothing melodies of the folk songs. The acting style is traditional in that it emphasises the actors gathering the energy into himself in contrast to the Western approach of freeing oneself from gravitation. The concept of Aharya is made more pertinent to the actor than to the stage design as in Nagamandala and Yakshagana. The Kinetic property of the actor is employed instead of static settings. Festive colour characteristics of rituals are employed meaningfully. The overall attempt is to employ traditional folk techniques in a functional rather than a decorative manner.

#### Cast and Credits

V.V. Jituri : Neelagaras  
Ramesh  
M.C. Puttaraju  
H.V. Vasu

