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Central Zone Young Theatre Artists' Workshop, Delhi

Sangeet Natak Akademi has been conducting workshops for theatre artists in the past several years under its scheme of Assistance to Young Theatre Artists. The workshop consists of two phases: the first phase of the workshop provides initial training in all aspects of theatre at the state level, while the second phase offers intensive training to enable the theatre artists to decide their future course of action.

The workshops under the first phase were held at Pachmarhi, Madhya Pradesh; Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh; and Khairagarh, Chhattisgarh; with Shri Alakhnandan, Shri Sachin Tewari and Shri Satish Anand as camp directors, respectively.

In the second phase, after having conducted two workshops for the north and the east zones in Delhi and Kolkata respectively, the Akademi organized a seventy-five

days, workshop for the theatre artists from the Central Zone from 16 June to 29 August 2008 at Sanskriti Kendra, Anandgram, New Delhi. Shri Satish Anand was the workshop director and Shri Suman Kumar, the workshop co-ordinator.

The core faculty of the workshop included Shri K.N. Panikkar (Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala), Shri Ratan Thiyam (Imphal, Manipur), Dr K.D.Tripathi (Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh), Shri Bhaskar Chandavarkar (Pune, Maharashtra), Shri Rudrapasad Sengupta (Kolkata, West Bengal), Shri H. Kanhailal and Savitri H. (Imphal, Manipur), Shri Niranjana Goswami (Kolkata, West Bengal), Shri Shekhar Vaishnavi (Delhi), Shri G.S. Channi (Chandigarh), Dr Jaidev Taneja (Delhi), Shri Sachin Tewari (Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh), Shri Shashadhar Acharya (Delhi), Shri Alakhnandan (Bhopal, Madhya

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Shri Abhijit Sengupta, Secretary (Culture) awards a workshop participant at the Central Zone Young Theatre Artists' Workshop in New Delhi. On his right is Shrimati Poile Sengupta, and on his left is Shri Jayant Kastuar, Secretary, Sangeet Natak Akademi.



Pradesh), Shri H.V. Sharma (Delhi), Shri Probir Guha (Kolkata, West Bengal), Shri Kannan P. (Kerala), Shri Suresh Bhardwaj (Delhi), Shri Salin Arif (Mumbai, Maharashtra), Shri Gautam Bhattacharya (Delhi), Dr N.K. Jain (Delhi), Shri Prabhakar Bhawe (Pune, Maharashtra), Ms Amba Sanyal (Delhi), Shri Birjit Ngangomba (Imphal, Manipur), Shri Naresh Kumar (Delhi).

The participants at the workshop were Avinash Mishra, Hemand Gandharv, Lata Sangde, Prashant Kumar Gupta, Rajesh Soni, Rajkishor Patel, and Virat Sharma from Chhattisgarh; Aashish Sharma, Bhupendra Nigam, Hemant Deolekar, Jitendra Tatwal, Kamlesh Malviya, Neeraj Indrawati Kunder, Priyanka Thakur and Ravinder Kushwaha from Madhya Pradesh; Anita Gupta, Mamata Pandit, Pankaj Kumar Pandey, Rajesh, Raju Singh Chauhan, Rishi Ranjan Singh, Shah Faisal, and Vishal Kumar from Uttar Pradesh.

On the last day of the workshop on 29 August 2008, the Chief Guests Shri Abhijit Sengupta, Secretary (Culture) and Shrimati Poile Sengupta distributed the certificates to the participants at Anandgram, New Delhi. Akademi Chairman Shri Ram Niwas Mirdha, and Secretary Shri Jayant Kastuar addressed the participants.



The excerpts of plays designed, directed and enacted by the trainees included *Antim Icchayan* directed by Virat Sharma, Chhattisgarh; *Taiya Taiyyam* directed by Neeraj Indrawati Kunder, Madhya Pradesh; and *Dhurtsamagam* directed by Pankaj Kumar Pandey, Uttar Pradesh. The programme was well attended by eminent theatre personalities and the media.

Top: Shri Abhijit Sengupta, Secretary (Culture), Shrimati Poile Sengupta, Shri Jayant Kastuar (Secretary, Sangeet Natak Akademi), Shri O.P. Jain (Founder President, Sanskriti), Shri Niranjan Goswami (pantomimist), Shri Satish Anand (Workshop Director), Shrimati Kiron Bhatnagar (D.S., Drama) Shri Suman Kumar (Workshop Coordinator) with the workshop participants after the valedictory function.

Middle: *Antim Icchayan*, directed by Virat Sharma, Chhattisgarh.

Bottom: *Dhurtsamagam*, directed by Pankaj Kumar Pandey, Uttar Pradesh

Nritya Pratibha, Shimla

Nritya Pratibha is a series of dance festivals initiated by Sangeet Natak Akademi in 1985 with a view to promoting young artists and provide them national platform to perform. *Nritya Pratibha* for the northern region was held in Shimla in collaboration with the Department of Languages, Art and Culture, Government of Himachal Pradesh on 6-10 June 2008. The artists performed in the festival were from Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, and Uttaranchal. A few dancers from other States were also included for wider representation.

Prof. Prem Kumar Dhumal, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh inaugurated the festival on

6 June 2008, in the presence of Shrimati Sarveen Choudhary, Minister for Social Justice and Cooperation, Prof. Sunil Kumar Gupta, Vice-Chancellor, Himachal Pradesh University, Shri B.K. Aggarwal, Secretary, Dr Prem Sharma, Director, Department of Languages, Art and Culture, Government of Himachal Pradesh, and Akademi Secretary Shri Jayant Kastuar. The festival was well appreciated and widely covered by the electronic and print media. The programme follows:

6 June
Supriya Nayak, Delhi: Odissi
Lokesh Bhardwaj, Delhi: Bharatanatyam

Performing Artistes Centre, Imphal: Pung Cholom

Rukmini Jaiswal, Lucknow: Kathak

7 June
Dwijen Burmen & Parismita Bharali, Sri Sri Badala Padma Ata Sattrra, Narayanpur, Guwahati: Sattriya

Shloka Vaidialingam, Delhi: Kuchipudi

Ananya Mishra, Varanasi: Kathak

Sudeep A. Mohan, Trivandrum: Kathakali

8 June
Artists of Akademi's Chhau Project: Chhau (Seraikella)

Shailja Nalwade, Delhi: Kathak

Swapna Nair, Delhi: Mohiniattam

Deepa Joshi, Nainital: Kathak

Performing Artistes Centre, Imphal: Basanta Ras

9 June
Rekha Adhikari, Almora: Kathak
Asha Kumari, Gurgaon: Odissi
Deepa Shivanand, Delhi: Bharatanatyam
Mickey Verma and Vishal Kumar, Shimla: Kathak

10 June
Sangeeta Negi, Panchkula: Kathak
Bhagya Lakshmi Thyagarajan, Noida: Bharatanatyam
Pallabi De, Delhi: Kathak
Artists of Akademi's Chhau Project: Chhau (Mayurbhanj)

Top left to right: Rukmini Jaiswal (Kathak), Shloka Vaidialingam (Kuchipudi)

Below left to right: Artists of Sri Sri Badala Padma Ata Sattrra (Sattriya), Sudeep A. Mohan (Kathakali)



Nritya Sanrachna, Hyderabad

Sangeet Natak Akademi has been concerned about the choreographic works of Indian dance since its inception. Under the Akademi's Scheme 'Assistance and Support to Contemporary Works on Music, Dance and Theatre', special events like *Rabindra Natyotsava*, *Uday Shankar Shatabdi Samaroh* involving festivals of choreographic works and seminars have been organized from time to time. The scheme was introduced under the IX Plan period and is intended to provide support to experimental works of contemporary choreographers and composers.

Nritya Sanrachana — a festival of choreographic works, specially designed on the theme of 'Sankhya', the number concept — was presented at Ravindra Bharati Auditorium, Hyderabad from 21 - 25 July 2008. The event was organized by Sangeet Natak Akademi in collaboration with the Department of Culture, Government of Andhra Pradesh and Shankarananda Kalakshetra, Hyderabad.

The festival showcased choreographic works of eminent and senior choreographers of various dance disciplines including Padma Subrahmaniam, Sonal Mansingh, Raja and Radha Reddy, Bharati Shivaji, Swapnasundari and RK Singhajit Singh.

The festival was well received by the audience of Hyderabad and was extensively covered in print and electronic media.

The programme follows:

21 July

Dashvataram (Mohiniattam)

Choreographer: Bharati Shivaji, Centre for Mohiniattam, Delhi

Navarasa (Bharatanatyam)

Choreographer: Ananda Shankar Jayant, Shankarananda Kalakshetra, Hyderabad



Top: Dvaita (*Kuchipudi*) by Raja and Radha Reddy; middle: Dashvataram (*Mohiniattam*) by Bharati Shivaji; bottom left: Advaita (*Bharatanatyam*) by Padma Subramaniam; bottom right: Shoonya (*Odissi*) by Sonal Mansingh.

22 July
Ashta Nayika (Manipuri)
Choreographer: Singhajit Singh,
Nrityashram, Delhi & JNMDA, Imphal
Sapta Aavarta (Kathak)
Choreographer: Prerana Shrimali, Kathak
Kendra, Delhi

23 July
Shatrutu (Vilasini Natyam)
Choreographer: Swapnasundari, Delhi
Pancha Bhuta (Contemporary)
Choreographer: Anita Ratnam, Arangham
Dance Theatre, Chennai

24 July
Chaturveda (Kathak)
Choreographer: Rajashree Shirke, Lasya
Academy of Dance, Mumbai
Trimurti (Chhau)
Choreographer: Shashadhar Acharya,
Sangeet Natak Akademi's Chhau Kendra

25 July
Dvaita (Kuchipudi)
Choreographer: Raja-Radha Reddy, Delhi
Advaita (Bharatanatyam)
Choreographer: Padma Subramaniam,
Chennai
Shoonya (Odissi)
Choreographer: Sonal Mansingh, Delhi

Sangeet Natak Akademi Library

Digitization of print media coverage

Over the years, the Akademi library has been collecting and maintaining the valuable relevant stock of newspapers and periodicals on music, dance, drama and other performing arts and preserving them in files. With the advancement in technology, the Akademi library in the past months has started digitizing all the above information for easy access to its users. So far, fifty thousand clippings from newspapers and periodicals have been digitized.

AKADEMI'S MONTHLY PERFORMANCES IN DELHI

Traditional Puppetry / Theatre / Films / Video Reports

Porattu Natakam, the traditional theatre of Kerala

The Akademi's scheme of Promotion and Presentation of Traditional Performing Arts supports training in forms of music, dance and theatre which are in danger of extinction. Honorarium to teachers and scholarships to students are paid by the Akademi by way of incentive, the effort being to sustain these arts through the traditional teaching-learning process.

Under this scheme, a training programme in Porattu Natakam, the traditional theatre of Kerala was initiated under the guidance of Shri Mannoor Chandran. A performance of Porattu Natakam was staged on 15 July 2008 at Meghdoot Theatre-II, New Delhi.

Porattu Natakam, literally meaning 'frolicsome theatre', is performed on a stage specially erected in an open field after harvest, with a curtain separating the performers from the audience. Occasionally, these plays are performed in the temples as well.

The artists belong to the Panan caste, and are known for their excellence in singing. Like in Kathakali, the two main musicians stay at the back on the stage, who ask questions from the main actors. While replying to the questions, the actors unveil the plot of the play. The characters in the play are generally drawn from ordinary lives like washerman-washerwoman, and the stories are woven around life in the village, portraying many situations of fun, satire, and social criticism. The musical instruments used in the performance include mridangam, cymbals, drone and chaplamkatta.

Chandaini, the traditional theatre of Chhattisgarh

The artists of Bilasa Lok Kala Manch, Chhattisgarh under the guidance of Shri Somnath Yadav performed Chandaini, the traditional theatre of Chhattisgarh on 18 July 2008 at Meghdoot Theatre-II, New Delhi.

Chandaini is a form of traditional folk ballad prevalent in



Top: Chandaini, the traditional theatre of Chhattisgarh. Bottom: Porattu Natakam, the traditional theatre of Kerala.

Chhattisgarh, and is based on the love between two legendary characters, Lorik and Chanda. The princess Chanda is married to an impotent man, and falls in love with Lorik, a married man. Their subsequent elopement and the adventures they encounter form the episodes of the Chandaini. Traditional instruments like the harmonium and the tabla provide the background music.

CONSTITUENT UNITS AND CENTRES OF SANGEET NATAK AKADEMI

SATTRIYA KENDRA, GUWAHATI

Sangeet Natak Akademi set up a Centre for Sattriya Dance, Music and Theatre Traditions, named Sattriya Kendra at Guwahati on 15 July 2008.

The Akademi's project of support to Sattriya dance and allied traditions of Assam was launched in November 2002 with the objective of preserving and sustaining the tradition in its traditional context and providing for its further development. The project envisages support for training programmes in dance institutions and identified Sattras. Besides training and development of Sattriya dance and music, the project supports research, documentation and publication on the subject. An annual festival of Sattriya dance and presentation of Sattriya dance outside Assam are also featured in the project.

Documentation

Nritya Pratibha, festival of young dancers, Shimla, 6-10 June 2008. *Video* 12:25 hours. *Photographs* 350.

Training Programme on Kathputli of Rajasthan, Delhi, 11 July 2008. *Video* 2:10 hours.

Special Documentation on 'Porrattukali', Delhi, 16 July 2008. *Video* 1:00 hour. *Photographs* 50.

Chandaini, the traditional theatre of Chhattisgarh, Delhi, 18 July 2008. *Video* 1:45 hours. *Photographs* 60.

Nritya Sanrachna, a festival of choreographic works, Hyderabad, 21-25 July 2008. *Video* 12:00 hours. *Photographs* 390.

Condolence meeting on Shri Ammannur Madhava Chakyar, Delhi, 17 July 2008. *Video* 1:00 hour.

IN MEMORIAM

Sangeet Natak Akademi and its associate bodies deeply mourn the sad demise of Guru Ammannur Madhava Chakyar, the illustrious Kutiyattam maestro and Akademi Fellow.

Ammannur Madhava Chakyar



Born in 1917 in Irinjalakuda (Kerala), Ammannur Madhava Chakyar hailed from a family of Chakyars — the traditional performers of

Koothu and Kutiyattam, Kerala's Sanskrit theatre. He received training from his uncles Ammannur Chachu Chakyar, Madhava Chakyar, and from Bhagavathar Kunjunni Thampuran of the Kodungallur Kovilakam.

Guru Ammannur Madhava Chakyar made a significant contribution to the art of Kutiyattam both as an actor and teacher. He was a master of all the major roles and also prepared attaprakarams or actor's manuals for some acts and plays which were lost to contemporary Kutiyattam. He taught at Kerala Kalamandalam, Cheruthuruthy, and at Margi, Thiruvananthapuram, and subsequently set up the Ammannur Chachu Chakyar Smaraka gurukulma at Irinjalakuda.

Sangeet Natak Akademi's project aimed at the preservation of Kutiyattam, launched in 1991 was developed around him as the main guru. His creative leadership under the Akademi's national project on Kutiyattam finally led to Unesco recognizing this ancient art as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2001. Guru Ammannur's work led to the setting up of the Kutiyattam Kendra, the Akademi's national centre for Kutiyattam, in Thiruvananthapuram in 2007.

During his lifetime, the venerable Chakyar received many honours including the Award of Sangeet Natak Akademi (1979), the Padma Shri (1982), the Kalidas Samman (1992), the Fellowship of Sangeet Natak Akademi (1996), and the Padma Bhushan (2003).

Guru Ammannur Madhava Chakyar breathed his last on 1 July 2008 at his home and gurukulam in Irinjalakuda.