

Sitamma Leather Puppet
carved by made by Late
Tota Ramamurht S/o
Tota Nagabhushanam
Shadow Puppeteers
from Madhavapattanam,
Andhra Pradesh



STEPARC

Published Under Swachhta Saarthi Fellowship

PUTHALIKA PATRIKA

Mar 2022

Women's special



PUTHALIKA PATRIKA

Editors

Padmini Rangarajan

Subhasis Neogi

S K Rangarajan

Puneet Arora

Arun Bansal

In this Issue

p3-4: Editorial

p5-7: Katha Rasa: Rasalaya forms of Storytelling

p9-29: Role of Women in Indian Puppetry

P30-37: Bangarakka: The shadow of patriarchy in Tholu Bommalata

P39-42: Artist of the Month

P43-49: Puppeteer of the month

P50-53: Storyteller of the month

P54-57: Jubilation on the day of the Puppets: World Puppetry Day

P58-67: World Puppetry: The Female Touch in Croatian Puppet Theatre

P68-69: Creative Corner

P70: Nature's Lap

P71: Waste to Wealth

P72-76: UMIMA FOR Ukraine AND THE PEACE

For Subscription please contact at
puthalikapatrika@gmail.com

Published by
Sphoorthi Theatre for Educational Puppetry, Art & Craft-STEPARC
and Social Substance

Registration no 419 of 2005

www.sphoorthitheatre.comwww.sphoorthitheatre.blogspot.in<https://www.facebook.com/puppetnewsmagazine>For subscription of Puthalika Patrika contact: puthalikapatrika@gmail.comhttp://www.sphoorthitheatre.com/sphoorthi_newsletter.html

Editorial Column

I wonder, why so many DAYS are named after, celebrated, observed and so on. Initially, I thought it could be the suggestion of a FOOL to make others FOOL too. And how FOOL I was...these days has a meaningful depiction of safeguarding, protecting, conserving our nature, animals, birds, forests, waster, culture, heritage and human race for the well being of all in order to sensitize tolerance and live and at live like a "VASUDAIVA KUTTUMBAM" . March is a month of celebrations and observation of days- to start with 1st March – Zero Discrimination Day Zero Discrimination Day is celebrated globally on 1 March every year so that everyone lives life with dignity regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, skin colour, height, weight, etc. The symbol of Zero Discrimination Day is the butterfly. Firstly, on 1 March, 2014 the UN had celebrated this day. Unfortunately the discrimination among the human race across the world exists and continues. March 3 is also known as World Wildlife Day and World Hearing Day. March 8, internationally known as Women's Day. It is observed, celebrated, honoured globally every year on 8 March to celebrate the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. Also, it is an action for accelerating gender parity. Purple is the colour that symbolizes women internationally. The combination of the purple, green and white colour is to symbolize the equality of women which is originated from the Women's Social and Political



Editorial Column

Union in the UK in 1908. There are in between many other important days that I m skipping for this editorial column. Then it is my favorite day- March 20-World Sparrow Day and World Storytelling Day and International Day of Happiness. World Sparrow Day is celebrated across the world on 20 March to raise



Illustration by Rita Issac

awareness about the conservation of sparrows. This day also celebrates the relationship between people and sparrows; spread a love for sparrows,



Artwork by Subhasis Neogi

awareness about their importance in our lives, etc. March 21, is World Puppetry day, World Forestry Day, World Down Syndrome Day, World Poetry Day, March 22, World Mime Day, World Water Day, March 27, World Theatre Day...

We are blessed with wonderful art forms and rich culture-in no time we are not only losing the artists but also the art form if it is not transferred to the next generation. Connect the art from to connect the nature, addressing its issue and making meaning performance is the potential of artists in one's own medium. As performers, artists, storytellers, puppeteers can contribute in our own way by imparting peace messages using the art that benefits the human race.

Padmini Rangarajan

Rasalaya forms of Storytelling

“Katha Rasa”-a storytelling sessions with different forms of storytelling was conceived by MS. Renu Narayana-A Storyteller along with three other storytellers- Ms. Mamta Jhavar from story time with Mamta Jhavar, Ms. Meera Vishwanath from 'The Story Basket' and Padmini Rangarajan from Sphoorthi Theatre-STEPARC performed on virtual platform on March 12, 2022.

Its indeed our pride to have covered an article about Ms Meera Vishwanath under “Artist of the Month” in Puthalika Patrika August 2021 edition.

Ms. Renu Narayan- A Storyteller, Writer, Founder of 'Katha Vriksha' for Storytelling and a Trainer based in Chennai for storytelling since 2018 is a passionate storyteller and a trainer, During lockdown she has engaged children and adults in the art of Storytelling and also collaborated with many fellow storytellers from India and abroad. She also participated in National and International Storytelling Festivals. Renu has found a new interest in “Kamishibai” Storytelling and



Rasalaya forms of Storytelling

using her Butai to narrate stories form folktales all over the world.

Ms. Mamata Jhawar -. Mamta has had a fabulous journey from being a preprimary teacher in Gitanjali Devashray School in Hyderabad to a professional story teller. She believes that learning with creativity is always fun for kids as they grasp and retain things better.

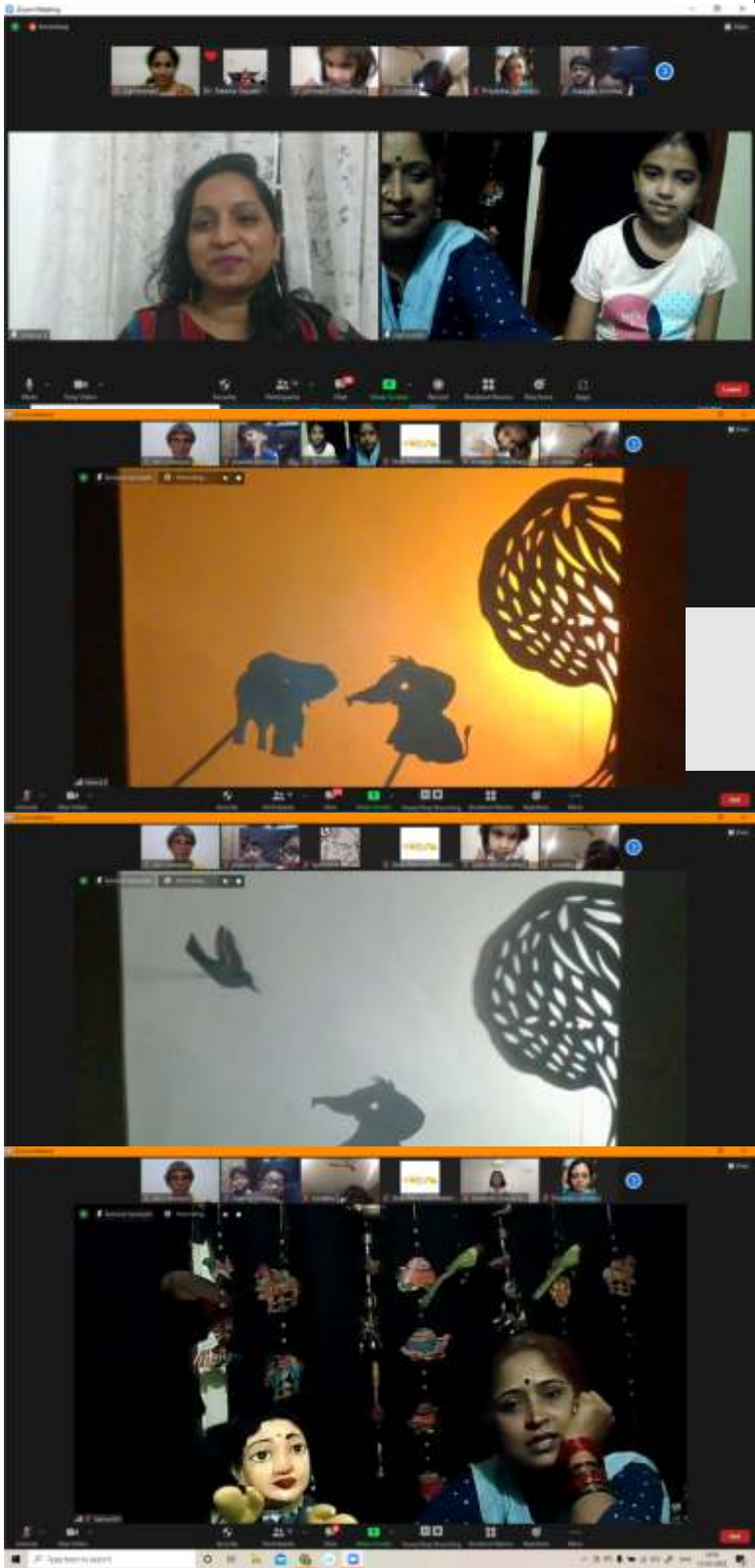
She is also a member of HYSTA - Hyderabad Story Teller Association. She has held multiple online sessions with them and has collaborated with various other story tellers all over Hyderabad to enlighten kids through her stories. Currently Mamta Jhawar is working as a story telling tutor with LITTLE MASTER. Little master is an online learning app for the age group 4-15 with hundreds of extracurricular and skill based courses like dance gardening instrumental vocals storytelling and much more. Little Master equips your child with a platform where they can find their 'thing' of passion. Let's welcome Mamta Jhawar for a fun session with her story board. She has her own YouTube channel in the



Rasalaya forms of Storytelling

name of story time with Mamta Jhawar.

Ms. Meera Vishwanath - a storyteller and puppeteer, Founder of 'The Story Basket'. She is a Post-Graduate in Literature. She has always been into stories and activities for kids. She did work in the corporate sector for a while. At that time, she volunteered with Heartfulness for 'Conscious Living' programs at schools, College-connect events through interactive Life-skills workshops at JNTU and other colleges at Hyderabad. Also, conducting summer camps with values based activities. She opened up an after-school program engaging children through Puppets, stories, sensory activities, art therapy etc. Also conducting Summer camps/shows/workshops at schools. She believes every child should have a 'Story basket'- with some toys/puppets/props for imaginative play! The power of imaginative play is impactful in developing communication, socio-emotional, problem-solving skills in a child.



First Day of the Celebrations



PNA Theatre, Chandigarh

Celebrations of World Puppetry Day

Role of Women in Indian Puppetry

Unclean to clean art form –a Paradigm Shift

Padmini Rangarajan

I got to present my paper in a National Seminar on "Role of Women in the Field of Culture" jointly organized by Department of Language and Culture, Government of Telangana And Dakshinathya Arts Academy in 2019.

Introduction:

India is believed as "the birth cradle" of Puppetry; from here she crawled, walked and travelled all over the world. Puppetry, one of the ancient folk art form emerged as a traditional entertainment. From time immemorial, the art of traditional performing arts has gone unconstrained way of presentation, which is also true with the traditional puppetry of India. Various themes, sub themes and enactment plots from mythological stories have been main sources of puppet presentation among rural folks. However, one could notice

popular legend stories of the region enacted in Puppetry as well as other folk theatre performances. These inanimate creatures be it leather or shadow puppets or operated by pulling strings come to alive by the manipulator manipulate back stage or screen.

Traditional puppet plays have always been implanted in the cultural and religious philosophies and practices of the region of origin. It is this art form from the primitive



Role of Women in Indian Puppetry

Unclean to clean art form –a Paradigm Shift

Padmini Rangarajan

age perhaps and the push from folks has given birth to this man like figure movement called 'Puppetry', which later developed into theatre form, imbibing elements of all arts form.

This art encompasses the two main elements: making and performing of puppets. Making of puppets takes into accounts like sketching-drawing, carving-moulding-sculpting, colouring-dying and costume designing-dressing in accordance with the characters which are more or less from Indian mythology. Performing aspect is the end result inclusive of narrating, singing, dancing and maneuvering of puppets.

This end aspect is the actual visibility in vibrant colours behind the screen or stage in a village setting wherein, the puppeteers uses his hands and sometimes his head which hold multiple string of mechanism to manipulate the puppets gives voice to the puppets and makes the puppet talk, sing, dance and fly.

All this is possible when a collective group of people work collectively. Hence, is the art which is nurtured and nourished by puppeteers' family comprising of both men and women.

Traditional Puppetry:

The traditional folk arts of India including puppetry are still alive in many corners of the country, as the oral textual is passed down from one generation to another through

Oral transmission or I would like to coin it as "Orality" - expressed in spoken form as



Mothe Sayamma in the centre holding the female puppet along with her family members. (On right-hand side Father-in-law- Mothe Yadgiri, Husband Mothe Ramachandra, Son Mothe Ramesh), Smt. Madhavalatha Ganji and her accompanist. Left-hand side sons Mothe Shankar, Mothe Ravi, Mothe Guru and grandson Mothe Ganesh).

Role of Women in Indian Puppetry

Unclean to clean art form –a Paradigm Shift

Padmini Rangarajan

distinct from written form. Traditional system of exchange of information and forms of communication plays an important role in development especially in rural India because rural India has abundance of wisdom, knowledge, ritualistic practices based on deep-rooted cultural norms, values and traditions that is also passed down along with the art form from one generation to another generation.



Smt Moozhikkal Pankajakshi and granddaughter
K. S. Ranjini of Nokku Vidya Pavakali

Puppetry, as an art form, not only provides entertainment but also conveys a meaningful and useful message. Over the years, it has developed into a powerful media of communication. Today, it is not merely a form of entertainment but also used as a form of communication.

Preparation of traditional Puppets in brief:

With regard to the leather puppetry of India one of the oldest art forms, also known as shadow puppets which are flat figures cut out of leather treated to a translucency. The traditional leather/ shadow puppets used to be made from deer, buffalo, sheep, goat and other hides. They undergo a long procedure of process of converting the unclean leather sheets into clean leather sheets, application of lime powder, drying, treating the leather and making it suitable for making puppets, and making into fine flat colourful figures by punching holes



Smt. Dalawai Rangamma
maneuvering puppet back stage

Role of Women in Indian Puppetry

Unclean to clean art form –a Paradigm Shift

Padmini Rangarajan

called "Jeernam"- holes of different sizes, shapes and designs which when pressed against the screen and appear as a silhouette or color shadow to the viewers sitting on the other side of the screen. However, it is the men who do drawing sketches on the prepared leather sheets.

So is the case of wooden string puppet making too. On an auspicious day, the selection of the right light wood is made and then it undergoes sacred ceremonial process of cutting and carving of puppets which is totally a men's work. Here again, the traditional colour preparation work is carried out by women which is laborious and then applied by men on the carved figures. The costume designing is also done more or less by men and women join them for assisting. In some parts of our country, one or two women are involved in background singing and voice over for female characters.

Rigidness of participation of women:

India is a rich country with complex social system which comprises of inflexible complexity of different castes, classes, creeds and tribes. This has influenced other folk art



Smt. Ratnamala Nori-Nori Art & Puppet Centre, Hyderabad



Smt. Ratnamala Nori-Nori Art & Puppet Centre, Hyderabad

Role of Women in Indian Puppetry

Unclean to clean art form –a Paradigm Shift

Padmini Rangarajan

forms of which puppetry are a branch. Puppetry having roots in native culture and belief system follows rigid practices that forbid women from participating actively. This art form predominantly claimed as Men's art with women's role going unheard and unnoticed. It was the male members of the traditional performing families are visible connected with the profession-be it in Shadow Puppet plays or Chekkabommalata or Koyya bommalata. It is the hardcore belief system prevailing



wherein, women have nothing to do with the art form or they should not touch the puppet figures or carved dolls-as women are considered "Unclean" and puppets as "Sacred figures".

A baseline study conducted on the role of women in the traditional puppeteer family in India on two major forms of puppetry-'String puppetry and Leather- Shadow puppetry', both revealed that women are not involved in the entire make of puppet building in a traditional way. In south India, in the traditional puppeteers' families, women were not involved in making puppets with the wood called string marionettes. Women are more involved in traditional colour dye preparations like- natural dyes

Role of Women in Indian Puppetry

Unclean to clean art form –a Paradigm Shift

Padmini Rangarajan

and colours which is made of soil, mud, leaves, bark of the tress, seeds and charcoal, on cloth, lapam preparation using soft lay, tamarind seeds, traditional glue, costume designing-dressing of puppets which involves stitching using needle and thread.

In Kerala, the leather puppeteers did not involve women's participation in the making of leather puppets for long time. With regard to string puppets making also women's role was/ is restricted even today in costume designing or so. They are not involved in handing the puppets during the performance.

Even today, in Rajasthan many Bhat communities who are well-known for Kathputli pradarshan do not involve women during live performance.

According to the studies, traditional puppeteers family did not allow women previously to take part actively, rather restricted them to a large extent. In Kerala according to traditional shadow puppetry play known as “Tholpavakoothu” performer Sri Ramachandra Pulavar (2010)- “Women have not even been allowed to come in contact with the puppets”, “Only the male members of the family are allowed to be connected with the profession”. “Women should not come in touch with the figures, and they are not allowed to enter the special area where the performances will go on”.

Some of the reasons women have been kept away from the form are listed below:
Many of the puppets represent gods, goddesses and apsaras (celestial beings), which are considered as sacred figures and women as customanary are not permitted to touch or perform ritualistic prayers.

According to Ramachandra Pulavar head of Tholpavakuthu in Kerala opines that as a part of Indian culture women are not allowed to work as priests in temples. Only



Smt. Pushapalatha Pulavar along with Tholpava Koothu Team members

Role of Women in Indian Puppetry

Unclean to clean art form –a Paradigm Shift

Padmini Rangarajan

men are allowed. The koothumadam [the puppet house] is also considered as a temple. The same purity of the temple should be maintained in the koothumadam. On considering why women are not allowed in the koothumadam, the lamps are considered as goddesses. This is not an official rule but it is done as part of culture.

According to Friedrich Seltman (1982), women previously had not taken part in tholpavakoothu or allowed to come in contact with puppets. It was only the male members of the family who were connected with the profession of shadow puppet play. Women have nothing to do with it; they should not touch the figures and are not allowed to enter the special area of koothumadam where the performances will go on. The reasons for women been kept away from the art form is to some extent due to the exiting custom practices under the pretext of sacredness of the temple rituals.



**Rajitha Daoughter of Padmashri Ramachandra
Pulavar along with her team**

Again, the strong beliefs of puppeteers bring "Puppets to life" during performance by the chief narrator or Sutradhar. This aspect is regarded sacred and held in high esteem. The menstrual cycle- considered as unclean cycle period of women bringing ill fate to the art form and the performer. Thus, in olden days women were not allowed to go outside from the home. So they have to sit inside the house.

According to Vishwanath Pulavar (2016), traditional tholpaavakoothu performer, Smt

Role of Women in Indian Puppetry

Unclean to clean art form –a Paradigm Shift

Padmini Rangarajan

Sathyabai Sivadas (2012) and Biju (2016), a scholar of traditional Kerala performing arts opines that "Gender and control relations disguised in the caste system".

They encountered the following reasons for restricting women from participating in the art form:

- Firstly, this traditional puppet plays performed during night hours and extends till early wee hours. Hence, women were not allowed as they had high priorities of taking care of kids and house hold chores. It was duty of the woman of the family to serve their husbands once they are back from the performance. This was then the prevailing social order of family status state of affairs.
- Secondly, Pulvar community belongs to the lower castes in caste system ladder in the society. Generally, women in general, especially belonging to lower castes were subjected to all kinds of vulnerability till early 19th century or so. This is called the "Upper Cloth Revolt or Upper Cloth Controversy". The lower caste women were not supposed to cover their breast or upper body against caste restrictions sanctioned by Travancore kingdom. The similar practice was imposed in South Tamil Nadu state like Tirunelveli and surrounding region.
- A retired senior Lecturer and Scholar Smt Sathyabai Sivadas (2012) who narrated her experience as a child. "I lived with my grandparents as my father was a Forest officer and lived far away. I was six then, for one vacation, my grandfather took me to my father's place. At the garden one dalit women was working. As soon as she



Smt. Padmamma Acharya & team members with Sutra Salaki Bombe (String-Rod Puppets) during practice session at Sri Purandara Bhavan, Mulbagal

Role of Women in Indian Puppetry

Unclean to clean art form –a Paradigm Shift

Padmini Rangarajan

saw my grandfather, she removed the thin piece of cloth that she had covered her upper body. I did not understand then and questioned my mother. She replied that was the respect towards my grandfather". She further stated that it was considered a taboo and impropriety to cover the breasts in 18th and 19th century Kerala and south Tamilnadu, India up to 1960 in Malabar areas. She



Shinde Subhadra and Shinde Venkatamma
–SNA awardee from Nimmalakunta, Anathpur District, Andhra Pradesh.

further continued that "The caste law prohibits a Nair lady to cover her breast. There are instances of cruelties inflicted upon the ladies for violating these laws. An Ezhava lady who happened to travel abroad and returned well dressed was summoned by the Queen of Attingal and her breast was cut off for covering them".

- The women were not allowed to carry pots on their hips or wear clothes that covered their breasts. Baring of chest to higher status was considered a sign of respect, by both males and females. Strict tax imposed for covering the breast and on the size of the breast. Women had no right on her own body, her body was or she was purely only for sex and had to fulfill this need of High caste men and also to men of lower caste.
- The traditional wooden puppets from Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, West Bengal and Karnataka are quite heavy to manipulate for long hours.
- Sri Mothe Jaganatham (2012) –a traditional Chekka Bommalata performer from Ammapuram, Janagoan, Telangana State, opines that training daughters there is a

Role of Women in Indian Puppetry

Unclean to clean art form –a Paradigm Shift

Padmini Rangarajan

difficulty, as once they get married they are under the authority and control of their husband and in-laws and husband. They can only continue to practice if they get approval from husband and in-laws.

- Mothe Jaganatham (2012), further continues that, night, darkness and sexual abuse are interconnected

Visible Paradigm Shift in Puppetry:

According to Sa. Vem. Ramesh (2018) – a well known writer of Telugu language and culture who opines that one prominent visible shift of women's equal participation is with the traditional shadow puppeteers of Ananthpur district of Andhra Pradesh State in India. With an exception, women were and are trained to manipulate leather puppets along with chorus and individual singing, voice rendition for female characters. Again, women also do the hole punching work and paintings on leather sheets. So is the case Jambhu Purana recitation which is done by women in Ananthpur district.



On to left-hand side is Mothe Ramachandra husband (playing maddelu drum Percussion instrument) of Mothe Sayamma in the centre, along with younger son Ravi On to right-hand side from Burugupeta, near Warangal, Telangana State

Dalawai Rangamma who is 75 years along with her husband Dalawai venkatappa introduced and trained her son Dalawai Chinna Ramana and others in this art form. Similarly, Dalawai Anusuyamma, Dalawai Pullaiyamma, Shinde Subhadra, Shinde Venkatamma from Nimmalakunta, Dharmavaram Mandal, Anantapur District



Smt. Ratnamala Nori along with her husband Mr. Nori -Nori Art & Puppet Centre, Hyderabad



Role of Women in Indian Puppetry

Unclean to clean art form –a Paradigm Shift

Padmini Rangarajan

of Andhra Pradesh State, India, during direct conversation could get to know that they are performing this art form right from childhood, though, initially joined the troupe at the back stage and repeated the song compositions and assisted the main performers. Later, they learnt making the puppets and punching holes and colouring. Finally, they started maneuvering puppets and giving voices to female characters.

They have even managed puppet performances in the absence of main male performers too. However, they did not learn to play the Maddelu-the percussion drum instrument due to lack of interests.

But now, their daughters are even learning to play the percussion instruments. These women have travelled far and wide to many countries and participated in International Puppet Festivals.

Two women shadow puppetry groups from Kerala:

The world's first and oldest as the man invented the shadow is the art form of Tholpavakuthu or Shadow Pavakuthu. The ancient art form which is still being performed as a part of the Pooram festival in Malabar Devikeshatra. The presence of women is very low in men's depletion for ages. In the Koothumadam where Bhadrakali Devi Preethi, women mostly become spectators or enjoyers. The situation is mostly seen. It is true that no female artist has ever been able to learn



Smt. Dalawai Rangamma from Nimmalakunta, Anantapur District –Shadow puppeteer in the centre, along with Sri Rakesh Mishra Director of Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology- CCMB, Hyderabad. Dalawai Pulleyamma and Shinde Subhadra on to right hand side. Dalawai Chinna Ramana (team leader) and Shinde Shivaramon to left hand side.

Role of Women in Indian Puppetry

Unclean to clean art form –a Paradigm Shift

Padmini Rangarajan

Pavakkukuthu in a traditional way and perform it in a complete manner. For the first time in history, the women's party through cultural advancement Pavanakam is in the form. Her daughter Rajitha directed the female pavakkuthu, following the instructions of the famous Tholpavakkuthu artist Padma Sri Ramachandra Pulavar. Visited various areas with the production of dolls and the presentation of Pavakkuthu, Pavakkuthu has also been presented in countries such as Singapore, Russia, Europe.

Rajitha Pavakkuthu is bringing Rajitha Pavakkuthu to the stage as part of the Kerala State Government's women safety. In this way, it is for the sake of women's upliftment of the doll through Pavanatakam. Presenting through Pavakkuum from the birth of a small child to the young age. The problem in the family faced by women and the goodness in the society came to the stage of Pavakkoothu. Penpavakothu is the



Rajitha Daughter of Padmashri Ramachandra Pulavar along with her team

work of puppet players like Rajalakshmi Aswathi, Nithya, Nivediya, Sri Nandana, Sandhya, Sandhya etc. by writing Mohammed Sulfi and music to Jasmine. The cultural and social world should be ready to reach more heights. This shift has indeed brought in lot of inclusive and also cultural diversity.

Of late, one can even find women of traditional Kerala Tolapavai Koothu making leather puppets (designing, punching holes and colouring them). Female members of Sri Ramachandra Pulavar –wife, daughter, and daughter-in-law are active part of the team in making of leather puppets.

Role of Women in Indian Puppetry

Unclean to clean art form –a Paradigm Shift

Padmini Rangarajan

Another promising woman from the Kerala State is Smt. Pushpalatha Pulavar, wife of Sri Vishwanath Pulavar. This is yet another branch of Pulavar family. She learnt the art from well known artist Sri. K L . Krishnakutty Pulavar. She is actively participating from 2000 and has accompanied the troupe both in with in India and abroad. Her expertise is in Tholpavakoothu Puppet making and manipulation of puppets. She is now training the younger generations in this art form. These two women in Kerala State are marking the change and



Pushpalatha Pulavar
head of Women's Tholpavakoothu trroupe

have started a women's wing of traditional Tholpavakoothu

K. S. Ranjini practice traditional, inherited puppetry called "Nokku Vidya Paava kali tradition"- a unique form of puppetry wherein, a miniature puppets are balanced in the space between the nose and upper lips and sometimes on the chin. The artist sits by stretching both the legs and looks up at the puppets and pulls the string of the puppet. While Ran jini carries on a folk tradition passed down to her directly from her

grandmother Padmashri Smt Moozhikkal Pankajakshi- This is atypical balancing act performance

So is the situation with the "Murugan Puppets"-a traditional string puppeteer from Kumbhakonam. The art



K. S. Ranjini performing Nokku Vidya Pavakali
Balancing of Puppet on upper lip

Role of Women in Indian Puppetry

Unclean to clean art form –a Paradigm Shift

Padmini Rangarajan

form wholly controlled and managed by men has women of the family to be part of the group.

A significant transformation is visible in Mulabagalu Town of Kolar District of Karnataka, wherein, "Sri Panduranga Bombeyaata Tanda" is a troupe solely women's troupe performing traditional string puppets of Karnataka. Smt. K. Padmamma well known as Padmavathi is the troupe leader who is 70 years and has got trained under the guidance of Sri M.R.Ranganatha Rao-renowned International Puppeteer, Sangeet Natak Academy awardee and many others.

The specialty of this troupe is all of them are women who belong to a bhajana mandali and they learnt this art two years back and are now performing at various venues.

They have learnt to perform two plays, namely- "Sri Krishna Parijatha and Sri Krishna Tulabhara".

Similarly, in one or two existing traditional puppeteer troupes of Karnataka, one or two women members of the families are accompanying the troupe during performances especially to outstation locations. This again is a positive



Smt. Padmamma Acharya & team members with Sutra Salaki Bombe (String-Rod Puppets) during practice session at Sri Purandara Bhavan, Mulbagal

transformation with the troupe of acceptance of woman/women to play their role as female puppeteers effectively.

Coming to Ammapuram traditional string Puppet troupe, near Janagoan, Telangana

Role of Women in Indian Puppetry

Unclean to clean art form –a Paradigm Shift

Padmini Rangarajan

under the leadership of Sri Mothe Jaganatham- only two women - late Mothe Gowramma-(awardee of folklorist by former Andhra Pradesh) and Chintal Venkatamma would accompany the troupe during performance. They only joined the chorus and operated harmonium for base rhythm called Sruthi.

Yet another branch of Mothe family under Mothe Shankar's from Burugupeta,

Venkatapuram mandal near Warangal, Telangana State. This is an octogenarian troop of four generations performing together. Mothe Sayamma who is Mothe Sahankar's mother accompanies the troupe during performances. So, is now Mothe Deepika who is 12 years old daughter of Mothe Shankar is getting trained. So is Cheela Shyamala (Mothe Sahnakar's sister) who is now married but is part of Mothe team. Female members of the family are actively engaged in singing, voice rendition and the present generation females are getting trained along with males of the same family in handing the puppets.

Contemporary Women Puppeteers of India:

Nevertheless, today women from both traditional families and also women interested in puppetry come under the umbrella called contemporary puppeteers of India. Women with contemporary styles are able to preserve and promote the art form by



Smt. Padmamma Acharya's team members during practice session at Sri Purandara Bhavan, Mulbagal

Role of Women in Indian Puppetry

Unclean to clean art form –a Paradigm Shift

Padmini Rangarajan

widening the utility and scope of Puppetry. Cultural renaissance of puppetry has challenged and changed views of women's roles in Indian society and of women's traditional connections with art, performance and performer to issues related to different roles of women. As a result, women in puppetry are using puppetry to revive the art form, to address some of India's most pressing social problems, to impart education, awareness campaign, in theatre and also as therapeutic value.

The efforts taken by Meher. R. Contractor (founder of Darpana Academy of Performing Arts in Ahmedabad) and Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay (social reformer) were the iron ladies and the driving



Sphoorthi Theatre Director Ms. Padmini Rangarajan along with Oxford Grammar School students at Hyderabad Book Fair, 2018 Hyderabad

force behind the renaissance of Indian handicrafts, handlooms, and theatre in independent India. They have played such a major role in the renaissance of puppetry, revival of traditional performs, experimenters, playwrights, performers, producers, designers, directors, manufacturers, and educators.

In South India, especially women puppeteers like Smt. Anupama Hoskere of Dhaatu Puppet centre, Bengaluru who works whole and sole on traditional wooden style puppetry form of Karnataka. She not only carves the wooden puppets using modern gadgets but directs the whole play from golden Sanskrit dramas of Kalisadas, Bhasa and so on.

Role of Women in Indian Puppetry

Unclean to clean art form –a Paradigm Shift

Padmini Rangarajan

Smt. SeetaLakshmi from Chennai is a puppet performer and director. She inherited the Andhra Pradesh tradition. Eventually, she has also transferred her two granddaughters.

On the other hand, there are women who have taken up this art form with much ease. Perhaps, for them, it is not an impediment. May a passion, a profession that has forced these women to take up this art form.

With pride to share Smt. Ratnamala Nori of Nori Arts and Puppet Centre and Smt. Madhavalatha Ganji from



Smt. Pushpalatha along with the team members (Son Vipin Pulavar and Husband Vishwanatha Pulavar) back stage manipulating shadow/ leather puppets

(former–Association for Promotion of Puppetry in Andhra Pradesh (APPA) to change over to Association for the Promotion of the Art of Puppetry and Arts-APPA), Hyderabad are best known women puppeteers from Hyderabad, Telangana State. They impart training in making of different kinds of puppets and also put up full fledged performances too. There are quite a few mushrooming women's who have taken up Storytelling using puppets as props in Hyderabad city.

It is a pride to be part of Sphoorthi Theatre for Educational Puppetry, Art & Craft-STEPARC to be enlisted along with these women puppeteers of India and shoulder the responsibility of taking forward this art form further ahead, make it accessible to folklorist, research scholars, inspire especially the WOMAN FOLK to be part of Puppetry and other folk theatres.

Conclusion:

For long in India, this art form has remained a formidable art playing a central role in religious rituals and villages life. Today, many traditional art forms languish on the

Role of Women in Indian Puppetry

Unclean to clean art form –a Paradigm Shift

Padmini Rangarajan

verge of extinction (puppetry art form is not an exception) and lost audiences to films, televisions and other social media channels and mobile apps.

Today it is a common phrase one can hear or talk about “Puppetry –a dying art”. Nevertheless, this art form along with other folk arts needs an industrious focal point

on preserving and progressive of the art forms.

On the one hand, when looked from modern contemporary models of performing theatres, many educated women from growing middles class are appreciating the art form and are willing to take it forward which is a positive sign of keeping the art form breathing good, whereas, on the other hand the traditional

artists are struggling to create a new innovative work performance corresponding to the tastes of the present audiences.

Indeed it is appreciable act of women puppeteers taking up the art form ahead in order to connect the urban masses with the traditional art form and also re strengthening the traditional art form by shaping it further.

Women of today are not only contributing to this rich art form but represent as puppet makers and performers on par with male. It is to inherit the traditional art, make adaptations, explore the interconnectivity, artistic and creative modules connecting the international models, for teaching, education, social cause, campaign and finally



Smt. Pushpalatha Pulavar demonstrating shadow puppets to school students

Role of Women in Indian Puppetry

Unclean to clean art form –a Paradigm Shift

Padmini Rangarajan

to entertain with message is the visible cultural renaissance. In Kerala so in other states too, there are few traditional puppet performers exist, possibly , in coming years, people and the society may accept women performing in the temple performances too.

At present Indian puppetry is in a "catch 22 situation". Dying of rigid old traditional practices and welcoming new challenges. Advent of research works, intervention of government trainings, cultural departments, and



Sphoorthi Theatre Director Ms. Padmini Rangarajan along with trainee volunteer at Lamakaan-Open cultural Space, banjarahills, Hyderabad on March 21st, 2016-on World Puppet Day & World Sparrow's Day

the boon of technological development has now opened up the doors for women to be part and parcel of the art form. Thus, this art form once considered and revered as temple art form has undergone paradigm shift by opening up clean opportunities to women of both traditional and innovative women in India.

References:

- Bhagavat, D.N. (1958). An Outline of Indian Folklore. Bombay: Popular Book Depot.
- Parmar, S. (1975). Traditional Folk Media. New Delhi: Geka Books.
- Dissanayake, W. (1977). New wine in old bottle: Can folk media convey modern message? Journal of Communication, Spring.
- Many Voices, One World (1982). New Delhi: Oxford, IBH.
- Friedrich Seltmann. 1982. 'Schattenspiel in Kerala'.
http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/43246/9/09_chapter%202.pdf

Role of Women in Indian Puppetry

Unclean to clean art form –a Paradigm Shift

Padmini Rangarajan

- Kidd, Ross (1984). The Performing Arts and Development in India: three case studies and a comparative analysis. In G. Wang and W. Dissanayake (eds). Continuity and Change in Communication systems (pp. 95-125). New Jersey: Ablax.
- Melkote, S.R. (1991). Communication for Development in the Third World: Theory and Practice. New Delhi: Sage.
- Mukhopadhyay, D. (1994). Folk Arts and Social Communication, New Delhi: Publications Division.
- Blackburn. Stuart (1996) Inside the Drama-House: Rama Stories and Shadow Puppets in South India , University of California Press
- South Asian Folklore (2003): An Encyclopedia by Margaret A. Mills, Peter J. Claus and Sarah Diamond, Editors-Rouledge New York Published.
- Ramachandra Pulavar (2010). Traditional Tholpavakoothu of Kerala state. Conversation with the Puppeteer and author, Shornur, Kerala, India, January 12.
- Pushpalatha Pulavar (2018). Direct conversation over phone.
- Orenstein, Claudia (2013) "Women in Indian Puppetry: Artists, Educators, and Activists." In Gender, Space and Resistance: Women and Theatre in India, ed. Anita Singh, 245–272. New Delhi: DK Printworld.
- Orenstein, Claudia (2015) Women in Indian Puppetry: Negotiating traditional Roles and new possibilities: Asian Theatre Journal volume 32, Number 2, Fall 2015. PP. 493-517.
- Ranganatha Rao. M. R (2018), Rangaputhali style traditional puppeteer from Karnataka, Internationally well known , (winner of Sangeet Natak Academy Award (1981), Karnataka State Rajyostava Award (2016), Craft Council of India Smt. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay Award (2017) and many more). Direct interview during field study at Mulabagalu January 12-14 2018.
- Padmamma . Acharya –Sri Panduranga Bombeyaata Tanda, Mulabagal-Direct

Role of Women in Indian Puppetry

Unclean to clean art form –a Paradigm Shift

Padmini Rangarajan

conversation with the performer and troupe members in January 12-14, 2018 and January 3-4, 2019, Bengaluru.

- Ramesh. Sa.Vem Author (2018) , Folklorist, Telugu Language and culture Studies. Direct conversation with the researcher, Hyderabad, October 18, 2018.
- Dalawai Rangamma, Dalawai Anusuyamma, Dalawai Pulleyamma, Shinde Subhadra, Shinde Venkatamma from Nimmalakunta, Pothulanagepalli Post, Dharmavaram Mandal, Anantapur District of Andhra Pradesh State, India-Direct conversation about the art from March 20, 2015 and February 22-23, 2019, Hyderabad.

Other Medias: Websites/ videos/ blogs:

- <http://vidyasury.com/2014/06/leather-puppetry-ancient-indian-art-form.html>
- <http://www.puppetindia.com/shadow.htm>
- Devika, V. R. 2001. "The Magic of Puppets." The Hindu, 29 January. <http://www.hinduonnet.com/2001/01/29/stories/09290653.htm>, accessed 21 June 2011.
- Nokku Vidya Pavakali - <https://youtu.be/g7MvLWCzZCo>
- The Lone String Puppeteer - Balancing Puppets on Lips - OMG! Yeh Mera India - https://youtu.be/BV_PAII9F8U
- <https://www.thehansindia.com/posts/index/Hans/2015-02-11/Puppeteering-to-educate-people-on-sensitive-issues/130804> (Madhavalatha Ganji)
- <https://www.deccanchronicle.com/nation/current-affairs/020917/genius-of-puppetry-draws-tourists-to-telangana.html> (Madhavalatha Ganji)
- <https://pazhayathu.blogspot.com/2009/11/kerala-women-topless-costume-in-19th.html>
- <https://sphoorthi-theatre.blogspot.com/.../bare-upper-body-as-rule-for-women-in.html>



The shadow of patriarchy in Tholu Bommalata

Bangarakka

Dr. Serena Autiero, Ruhr Universität Bochum

In the last fifty years' puppetry increasingly turned into an educational tool especially aimed at the new generations. This has been an inevitable change mostly due to the development of new forms of entertainment, urbanization and – in general – technological progress. Education, therefore, also became an important strategy for puppetry to survive, benefitting from government and institutional support. Nevertheless, when discussing the historical role of puppetry in society, we often forget that besides entertainment, education has always been an important component, especially in those South Indian traditions whose subjects can be labeled as 'sacred'.

On the occasion of Women's Month, I will offer a reflection on the use of puppetry to reinforce social roles using female characters, in particular the scandalous, explosive, rebellious Bangarakka, the ugly female jester of tholu bommalata.

Tholu bommalata is the shadow theatre tradition of the Telugu-speaking area of India (Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and bordering areas). Despite some families still actively perform, Indian shadow puppetry is an endangered art. Among several traditions, tholu bommalata puppets are definitely the most peculiar for their large



sizes. The heights of these puppets range from 120 to 180 centimetres, and at times even two meters (fig. 1).

The main plots of the plays are from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, but the epic

The shadow of patriarchy in Tholu Bommalata

Bangarakka

Dr. Serena Autiero, Ruhr Universität Bochum

stories are enriched by intermissions of comic nature. The comedy skits play an important part of the shows; scenes revolve around the misadventures of the grotesque married couple formed by the monkey-like Ketigadu (also known as Kilikayata, spelling can vary) and his wife Bangarakka, which entertain the audience with their stories, dances and witty comments.

Comedy still survives in tholu bommalata, despite the duration of the shows has shrunk from several hours over multiple days during temple festivals to just about two hours at most. Jesters are found in nearly every theatre tradition of India, and with their behavior and appearance they highlight by opposition the virtues of the heroes. In tholu bommalata, indeed, jesters represent a completely different set of values if compared to the epic heroes of the main plots.



Bangarakka has a repulsive aspect, usually wears a huge nose ring and revealing clothes (fig. 2). In the past she was represented completely naked and with enlarged sexual attributes (fig. 3). Her husband Ketigadu's appearance mocks that of a brahmin and reveals his contradicting nature (fig. 4). Bangarakka is the only female comedy character, she represents the gossipy wife of the male jester (that is the primary interlocutor to the audience and to the troupe). However, even if Bangarakka

The shadow of patriarchy in Tholu Bommalata

Bangarakka

Dr. Serena Autiero, Ruhr Universität Bochum

is a secondary character – less important than her husband – it's her scandalous behavior to fuel the action.

An important aspect of the historical development of this puppet is that Bangarakka has not always been the ugly woman we are used to see now. According to reports dating as recently as forty years ago, in some instances Bangarakka was played by a beautiful female puppet, in strong contradiction to her scandalous behavior (fig. 5). Bangarakka, delicate and pretty in appearance hides a wild nature. Her impetuous sexuality is, indeed, in striking contrast to the archetypal idea of female virtue incarnated by Sita, Rama's devoted wife. Beautiful or ugly, Bangarakka



aspires to be a nice woman and wife like the ideal Sita, but she miserably fails. One of my informants, Dalavai Kullayappa, master puppeteer and leather artist at Nimmalakunta, reports that comedy skits could feature one or two village ladies, one ugly and one beautiful; names and identifications could vary according to the artist's inspiration. The beautiful puppet played Ketigadu's girlfriend in romantic comedy intermissions, therefore we see an overlap between 'beautiful village lady' and 'ugly village lady', a clear indication of the contradicting nature of Bangarakka.

In the olden days plots were quite sexualized and interactions among puppets were

The shadow of patriarchy in Tholu Bommalata

Bangarakka

Dr. Serena Autiero, Ruhr Universität Bochum

often sexual in nature. Bangarakka was the infidel wife of her fool husband, unaware of what was going on. Bangarakka's husband often ended up raped by her lover, rape was indeed used to ignite the action, and such deplorable action was the way the alpha male puppet asserted his power. After the 1980s, rape plots disappeared from tholu bommalata, mostly as a direct consequence of the government actions towards an educational use of puppetry.

The last decades also witnessed a dramatic loss of patronage for tholu bommalata, with many puppeteers moving to other jobs (mostly agriculture) and troupes being dissolved putting to an end long-lasting family traditions. Tholu bommalata is nowadays mostly kept alive in theatres and puppetry festivals, in urban, interregional and international context; in this completely renovated habitat it was inevitable for Bangarakka and her scandalous family to undergo such twisting changes.

Jesters in tholu bommalata provide entertainment and some enjoyment as a break from the epic scenes, however, the nature of the plots and the characteristics of the puppets clearly indicates that comedy in tholu bommalata is much more than a laugh for the audience. Comic characters have liminality as their most peculiar characteristic, they remove the veil between different dimensions, setting in contact the epic dimension with the audience and with the troupe; jesters are a bridge across audience, stage, and the backstage. Jesters also 'travel' across time, they are deeply immersed in contemporary life, they know what is going on in the world, but at the same time they also enjoy the mythical past of the itihasa.

This bridging role between past and present, is also visible in the opposition between Bangarakka and Sita (as well as Ketigadu and Rama).

Bangarakka is not only ugly, she also has an absurd behavior, she does and says unspeakable things, her adultery and libertinism are socially unacceptable. It is also important to note that the rape plots ignited by her adulteries are never justified, but they are presented as deeply wrong. Comedy skits with their scandals shake cosmic energy and were believed to cause modifications to reality such as favoring rains, or



The shadow of patriarchy in Tholu Bommalata

Bangarakka

Dr. Serena Autiero, Ruhr Universität Bochum

fertility. These implications for popular culture, allow us to better understand how the audience could cope with such scandalous plots; actions as rape have always been unacceptable, puppetry was not intended to normalize such crimes.

Older puppets show exuberant sexual attributes (male jesters were provided with a huge penis which could be made erect by means of a string, Fig. 6), while nowadays only Bangarakka's flabby breast is sometimes visible but as an indication of her ugly and messy appearance, more than as a sexual connotation.



The scandalous plots, revolving around the illicit sexual conduct of Bangarakka, declined from the 70s, when puppetry started to be supported by government sponsored art groups and its role in rural and temple festivals changed. Puppetry has long been used as an educational medium, during the 70s puppetry was used as a tool for awareness campaigns about health care, hygiene, birth control. In this political and social environment shadow puppets had been de-sexualized.

However, also sexualized plots and characters had an educational role. As already mentioned, Bagarakka lives in a constant opposition to the female virtues incarnated by Sita. Both female models proposed by tholu bommalata have the specific function to educate women to respect social conventions and to be submissive, obedient, and compliant to the men in their life (fathers and brothers first, husbands later in life). In

The shadow of patriarchy in Tholu Bommalata

Bangarakka

Dr. Serena Autiero, Ruhr Universität Bochum

this respect tholu bommalata reflects the patriarchal culture predominant in India, inviting women to self-sacrifice their freedom and aspirations. Bangarakka – as well as Sita – is a woman created and put to life by men and to benefit men, her colorful shadow hides the dark shadow of patriarchal control over women and their bodies.

Bangarakka's freedom is presented as the most deviant behavior, she is an unnatural 'monster' and the only alternative the audience is offered is the hyper-virtuous submissive Sita, there are no middle ways in this opposition of female vice and virtue. This dichotomy is a way to exert control over women, the message is clear: a good woman follows social patriarchal conventions and therefore is delicate and beautiful; a bad woman does not follow such conventions and therefore is ugly and messy.

This narrative is widespread in the world and directly reconnects to the archetypal figure of the witch. The witch is a woman that goes against social rules, is strong and independent, and popular culture depicts her as deviant, ugly and disgusting. Some narratives about witches also present them as extremely beautiful but hiding horrible monstrosity inside, these beautiful witches use their charm to damage men and society. Such description perfectly fits the historical records of Bangarakka being played by a beautiful female puppet. I am not saying that Bangarakka is a witch in the popular sense of the word, but it is clear that Bangarakka is a representation of a 'monstrous' feminine power that traditional societies suppress using several weapons including the apparently harmless puppet theatre.

On International Women's Day and during the whole month of March we remember women, our battles, our victories, and our struggles; on this important occasion we have the opportunity to open our eyes on the many ways patriarchal oppression operates on us. Such awareness is a good beginning to oppose such oppression and to work toward equal rights and opportunities for every member of our society, and for this we also have to thank Bangarakka.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my profound gratitude to Dalavai Kullayappa, master

The shadow of patriarchy in Tholu Bommalata

Bangarakka

Dr. Serena Autiero, Ruhr Universität Bochum

puppeteer and leather artist at Nimmalakunta, who provided me with plenty of precious information and kindly made available for publication pictures of his puppets.

References

Autiero, S. 2013, Danzando nella luce – Il teatro delle ombre dell'India Meridionale, in G. Manna (a cura di), Il Principe e la sua ombra (Catalogue of the Exhibition, National Museum of Oriental Art 'G. Tucci', Rome), Gangemi Editore, Roma: 61-70.

Autiero, S. 2018a, Tholu Bommalata, in «Sahapedia - An Open Resource on Indian Culture and Heritage», <https://www.sahapedia.org/tholu-bommalata-telugu-shadow-puppet-theatre>

Autiero, Serena. 2018b, An Introduction to Indian Puppetry, in «Sahapedia - An Open Resource on Indian Culture and Heritage», <https://www.sahapedia.org/introduction-indian-puppetry>

Autiero, Serena. 2018c, Comedy Skits and Jester Puppets in Tholu Bommalata, in «Sahapedia - An Open Resource on Indian Culture and Heritage», <https://www.sahapedia.org/comedy-skits-and-jester-puppets-tholu-bommalata>

Autiero, Serena. 2021, Tholu bommalata: Luci e ombre di un'arte in declino, in 'Il corpo della parola. Inni, poemi e performance nell'India antica e contemporanea', pp. 197-217. Museum "Pasqualino" and University of Palermo Press.

Doyle, Sady (2019). Dead blondes and bad mothers: Monstrosity, patriarchy, and the fear of female power. New York: Melville House Books.

Foley, Kathy and Dadi Pudumjee. 2013. 'India.' Online at [https://wepa.unima.org/en/india/\(viewed on November 8, 2017\).](https://wepa.unima.org/en/india/(viewed%20on%20November%208,%202017))

Epskamp, Kees. 2006. Theatre for Development: An Introduction to Context, Application and Training. London: Zed Books.

GoldbergBelle, Jonathan R. 1984. The Performance Poetics of Tolubommalata; A South Indian Shadow Puppet Tradition. Unpublished PhD thesis, Graduate School, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

The shadow of patriarchy in Tholu Bommalata

Bangarakka

Dr. Serena Autiero, Ruhr Universität Bochum

Perricone, Rosario, Ombre di Luce, in 'Il corpo della parola. Inni, poemi e performance nell'India antica e contemporanea', pp. 219-261. Museum "Pasqualino" and University of Palermo Press.

Sorensen, Niels R. 1975. Tolu Bommalu Kattu: Shadow Theatre re: Andhra Pradesh. Journal of South Asian Literature 10 (2/4): 1-19.

Figures

Fig. 1 – Master puppeteer Dalavai Kullayappa with a large tholu bommalata puppet (Courtesy of Dalavai Kullayappa, tholubommalata and puppetry craft at Nimmalakunta).

Fig. 2 – Bangarakka, tholu bommalata leather puppet (Courtesy of Dalavai Kullayappa, tholubommalata and puppetry craft at Nimmalakunta).

Fig. 3 – Naked Bangarakka, dated to the early 20th century (Courtesy of Dalavai Kullayappa, tholubommalata and puppetry craft at Nimmalakunta).

Fig. 4 – Ketigadu, tholu bommalata leather puppet (Courtesy of Dalavai Kullayappa, tholubommalata and puppetry craft at Nimmalakunta).

Fig. 5 – Ancient leather puppet representing a beautiful woman of the type also used to play Bangarakka or 'village lady', dated to the early 19th century according to the owner (Courtesy of Dalavai Kullayappa, tholubommalata and puppetry craft at Nimmalakunta).

Fig. 6 – Two leather puppets dated to the early 20th century representing Ketigadu or other male comic characters. Their provenance is uncertain, but stylistically they belong to the tholu bommalata tradition (Courtesy of Collezione Maria Signorelli, Rome; photo: Claudia Primangeli, FocusOnPhoto).

Serena Autiero, PhD
(she/her/hers)

Research Associate @DiGA ProjectCenter for Religious
Studies (CERES), Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Germany

Celebrating World Puppetry Day

Second Day of the Celebrations



The Puppet Theatre Chandigarh

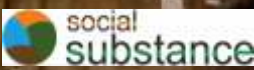
World Puppetry Day

PUPPET FESTIVAL

On 19TH March-21st March 2022



Business Need Art DANA



Artist of the Month

Rita Issac

Myself Rita Isaac, a passionate artist by nature, have never ever learned or joined any institute to learn art courses nor as subjects. And never called myself an Artist. This was just during COVID period, when I have started meditating on Art just to feel a soothing touch in the anxious n stressful moments. This was the first time when I have started



participating in Manikarnika Art Gallery Exhibition then only I knew my worth of Artwork, when President & Director Artist Kamini Baghel authenticated my Artwork and gave me recognition as an Artist. It has evoked my passion as well as my instincts. Before this I had very little practice of drawing painting. This too has helped me to enhance my interest and boosting up my morale, my creativity n happiness. It has provided me a peaceful platform whenever I find myself being involved in such activity.

If i sincerely talk to my background, I'm very much sensitive towards nature it's scenic beauty, plants, and creatures since from my childhood. Although I have studied Botany and switched to Psychology and completed my Master's degree in Psychology and



Artist of the Month

Rita Issac

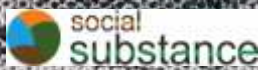


Sociology, carried on my profession as a teacher n counsellor in different private and govt. institutions and simultaneously assisted children as a hobby trainer in their leisure time classes by assisting them in various creativities. For instance, Art & craft work, music, and science n social studies projects. Not only this act of utilizing my

Artist of the Month

Rita Issac

passion by indulging myself in creativity has enhanced my Artwork but gave me immense joy n happiness and perfect contentment in life. I had been serving approximately more than eighteen years and enjoying by helping



Artist of the Month

Rita Issac

children to boost up their talents in the field of creativity. I can better express my ideas through writing as I'm a passionate poet n writer too and use to sharing my thoughts n emotions through Articles and write-ups in different magazines. So this is the message from me to all budding Artist's children from all walks of life "Always keep alive your passion your innate power pushing you to see the whole world inside you and its beauty in different forms of life to serve this planet."

Every Artist plays a different and necessary role in society, contributing to the overall health, development and wellbeing of people directly

or indirectly whether he/she is professional or passionate Artist, assists by conveying some healthy and positive message to the society through physical or in virtual form. The Artist rejuvenates the soul of human's feelings. Because an Artist has the ability to 'feel strongly', to be 'sensitive' to things and express emotions in the form of paint, gestures, or by representing his ideas n expressions with different colours on canvas. An Artist's feelings depict all dimensions of life, and his own sense of morality. Artists painting speaks all aspects of life, love, hurts, hope, feelings and emotions. According to Psychology of Art there is an easy way to counsel children and adults through "Art Therapy" for the transformation of depressed minds or those who are suffering from the bouts of insanity and mental illness or state of melancholia, any kind of despair and loneliness. This also works for healing distressing minds and for emotional healing. Through this process, we can successfully involve those children who are having aggressive behaviour and destructive minds.



Puppeteer of the Month

Rekha Vyas

Born and brought up in Mumbai, Rekha was always a creative and curious child. After completing her graduation and diploma in Early childhood education. She started working as teacher at Singapore international school. As a teacher Rekha has always been passionately associated with children. She loves the idea of making a difference to their's and their parent's lives meaningfully. As adults, we take learning / teaching for granted but it's a very

challenging profession. It requires patience and creativity to teach. Rekha have been using different ways to teach simple concepts. Her teaching experience was very satisfying and brought out the passion of creativity, drama, and art in her. During her



Puppeteer of the Month

Rekha Vyas

sabbatical after her second child's birth, she started a recreation centre for children to come together and 'simply play'. In the competitive world full of sports and activity classes, we seem to have forgotten to just come together to just play. Recreation centre was a big hit among the children and to keep them coming back, she had to come up with new ideas of playing. Thus came the idea of puppetry and storytelling. Soon she realised how powerful these skills are in building the future skills. In 2014, She created her own set of foam puppets and performed a puppet show "Ali Baba Chalis Chor" Show was loved by all age group of children. In December 2014 she started her own company named "PEPUP".

In 2015 PEPUP participated in a community street festival called "Street konnect and presented a muppet show and sold some handmade shadow theatre kits,



Puppeteer of the Month

Rekha Vyas

socks, and glove puppets. Her products and show received lot of appreciation and soon by many soon she started getting leads for shows and workshops at schools, events, and parties.

In 2016 She realised simple puppetry products can bring joy and improve child's social and cognitive skills. Keeping this in mind She designed her first product "Fun shadow theatre "and started selling it on Amazon.in. PepUp's shadow puppet theatre soon became the number one product on the site. The response confirmed the need for such skill development and since then She has designed 5 more products which are now available on Amazon and Pan India toy stores as "Shadow art kit". She also planned and added Hand shadowgraphy fun sheet in her kits and Prahalad Acharya India's Famous hand shadow artist gave her the testimonial for her products. Rekha



Puppeteer of the Month

Rekha Vyas

had a willingness to learn the art of hand shadowgraphy and Prahlad sir gave her special torches and tutorial videos to learn the art.

December 2016 Rekha shifted from Mumbai to Gurgaon (Delhi NCR) and her passion followed her. She was fortunate to get many wonderful opportunities in Gurgaon, she worked at in DPSI (IB school) as a storyteller and explored many different types of puppetry like hand puppets, marionette puppets, rod puppets, shadow puppets. Each time she entered the class with her new set of puppets, Children were thrilled. Rekha is a perfect example self-taught artist and has her own contemporary style of puppetry. She uses a combination of various kinds of puppets to present her shows.

In 2017 she joined scholastic India publishing company as a storyteller and puppeteer and travelled in more than 150 + schools in Delhi, Haryana, and nearby states with her bag full of puppets covering over 50000 students.

In 2018 She started introducing children various forms of puppetry and simple ways to narrate stories using puppets and conducted puppetry workshop for DPS teachers in Muscat.

In 2019 she was approached by Nickelodeon cartoon channel for the promotional activity of their upcoming cartoon Ting tong, and she formed a wonderful shadow story for the same.

In 2020 She performed shadow story of Three fishes at Asian biggest art and culture festival kala-ghonda festival and Pune art and culture centre Raáh

In 2020, Rekha was fortunate to



Puppeteer of the Month

Rekha Vyas



receive guidance for hand shadowgraphy from her guruji Shri. Amar Sen from Kolkata. Under his guidance Rekha got an opportunity to present hand shadowgraphy show for International Educational forum Äzerbhaijan in 2020 and

In July 2021 Rekha presented hand shadowgraphy show Ekta ki shakti "at Sangeet Natak akademi ministry of culture. Rekha is India's first female hand shadow artist and she wish to spread this rare art form in world.

In 2021 Disney channel invited Rekha as a super maker shadow artist for series "Disney imagine that" to create a shadow installation using waste products and Rekha converted an old Diwali lantern into 3 D rotating shadow installation. Once again 2021 she got the opportunity to promote Nickelodeon famous cartoon serial Paw Patrol.

In March 2021 Rekha participated in Sikkim international puppetry theatre festival and presented hand shadowgraphy show and shadow story.

In 2021 due to pandemic she got various opportunities to create corporate shows for various occasions and festivals Like family day, children's day, women;s day, Diwali, dusherra, holi, Ganesh chaturti , Independence day and republic day. She performed

Puppeteer of the Month

Rekha Vyas



for more than 35+ corporates like Kotak, HDFC, Usha, Hitachi, Avis, Fulcrum, Birlasoft, Siro, General Mills and many more.



In 2021 PEPUP got a wonderful project to create Diwali advertisement for a French MNC John Deere using kathputli string puppet and entire team created a wonderful advertisement.

In 2021 PEPUP performed for Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav for Digital India Mahotsav Azadi ka for Ministry of Electronics and IT PEPUP also organises Puppet storytelling contest for children to enhance

Puppeteer of the Month

Rekha Vyas

their skill of puppetry and storyteller. PEPUP has organised 4 international and one national puppet storytelling in Pandemic.

Rekha Vyas has won NATIONAL WOMEN'S EXCELLENCE AWARD BY THE National Academy For Art Education (Pune), Children's Times and National Economic Growth Times in the field of hand



Shadowgraphy in 2021. PEPUP is all about shadowgraphy and puppetry and Rekha Vyas is the proprietor of PEPUP since 2014. Rekha's collaboration with schools, online events companies like Bookmyshow.com, Skillbox, eventbrite and corporate event organisers helped her to continue PEPUP's work in COVID.

To know more about PepUp and Rekha Vyas click this link.

<https://card.linkconnect.in/pepup>

For more details about our services and products pls Visit our facebook and Instagram page

Our Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/PepUp.1111/>

Our Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/pepup.puppet/>

Purchase our products from Amazon.

https://www.amazon.in/dp/B07GPVMCVN/ref=cm_sw_em_r_mt_dp_0TZ7SAYFY3GMVAP8BCDM

Youtube Channel:-

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCv3sk3H9QOVHWHdYcEHY06w/>

Storyteller of the Month

Seema Karanth



Every story has an end but in life, every ending is just a new beginning. And that is how it all began. Having quit a busy corporate career in the aviation and market research industry spanning 18 years, Seema Karanth, an MBA [HR] by qualification



was on the lookout for something new, creative and most importantly, something meaningful. It was then that she was casually introduced to a certain potentially interesting field of “Storytelling” by a few common friends. Although, the concept of being a storyteller was completely new and alien, it piqued her interest and felt like just the right thing to do. Thus began the journey of exploring, finding new avenues, learning and honing the skills required for the new profession. Having trained and apprenticed under Kathalaya Academy of Storytelling before heading out to perform independently, Seema

Storyteller of the Month

Seema Karanth

realized at an early stage that Storytelling was not just about stories! That the usage of tools like Puppets and Masks and Costumes were of great importance to attract and hold the attention of the tech savvy children of the current generation. Besides, these Props made for a great way to help better retention of the values and concepts behind the story.

And thus began a new passion; of finding different ways to enhance the storytelling using innovative methods. Children's books with their wonderful illustration proved to be a trigger point. "How would it be if I could create the setting of the story along with the characters? Wouldn't it make for a better viewing experience?"

Thinking on these lines, she set about creating the scene of the story, little realizing



Storyteller of the Month

Seema Karanth

that this was an art form that is sometimes called “Still Theatre”. Scenes of a thick forest, a crowded underwater sea, a fun and lively circus stage, a library buzzing with books and children - all this and more were soon created with easily available materials like a shoe-boxes, cartons, etc., Ease of storage and portability were two key factors taken into consideration in designing these miniatures thus making them a fun, eco-friendly and viable prop that was easy to carry, store and maintain.

Another highlight of Seema's sessions is the importance given to the setting up of the perfect ambience of the

theme of story by using innovative backdrops, lighting and décor. Be it a session for children or adults, the backdrops and décor are as much a prop to the story gently urging the audience to soak in to the flavour of the theme of the session. From



Storyteller of the Month

Seema Karanth



haunted houses to jungle backdrops to festival highlights to the rustic rural set-ups, the ambience created makes for a very aesthetically attractive, unique and interesting experience for the viewer.

And that's how the cycle of storytelling continues for Seema, from finding the right stories to scripting to envisaging, creating and manipulating the relevant props and finally preserving them for another day.

Seema Karanth is a regular performer at various Libraries, Book stores, Activity centres, Schools, Colleges, Story festivals etc., besides running an online Children's Reading and Storytelling Club. She also holds workshops/sessions at colleges and in the corporate field using the art of storytelling as a tool for motivation or training. More details of her work can be seen on the social media pages of Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Podcast under the title, "Stories with Seema".

Jubilation on the day of the Puppets

World Puppetry Day

Dr. Moushumi Bhattacharjee

Across the globe we celebrate World Puppetry Day on March 21 every year to recognize puppetry as a global art form. This day aims to pay tribute to and honour the puppeteers from around the world with the objectives of using puppetry as a means of ethical aesthetic education and maintaining and safeguarding the tradition of puppetry along with its renewal. The World Puppetry Day was established in the year 2003 by UNIMA - Union Internationale de la



Marionnette which is a non-governmental organization affiliated with UNESCO and it was their initiative to use this day not only to promote puppetry arts but also to create a space for the puppet actors to come together. This day seeks to maintain and safeguard the traditions of the art of puppetry.

Puppets were born before theatre actors, is what the historians claim. Even before people started performing on stage, these in-animate players were doing a great job of entertaining a wide range of audiences from different parts of the world. In India, the origin of puppetry was traced back to the Indus Valley Civilization in 2500 B.C. Archaeologists found terracotta dolls with a detachable head capable of being

Jubilation on the day of the Puppets

World Puppetry Day

Dr. Moushumi Bhattacharjee

manipulated by a string which justifies their statement.

Tracing the roots of its practice in Assam, if we exhume into the historical data, we can find a huge gap from 8th century to the 15th century. Whatever little information we have, are mostly oral records and there exists a huge vacuum in terms of written literature. Puppets of Assam, in their long history of modest dramatic performance



continuously used innovating narratives figures that are expressed beyond any verbal language. During its journey so far the puppet never failed to adapt itself to new situations in a constantly changing world. The puppet's flexibility is the source of its life; however, this feature is acutely contrasted with the puppet being an icon image of the character or ideas it portrays. By using a puppet as a tool through which they communicate, the puppeteer is extending and redistributing the boundaries of his physical being. On one hand we have the traditional mode of Putula Naach in Assam which is still paving its way through conventional style of presentation and on another we have the contemporary groups who not only want to take this art form to new heights with innovation and technique but also aim at creating a mark for themselves in the vast and unexplored world of puppetry.

Jubilation on the day of the Puppets

World Puppetry Day

Dr. Moushumi Bhattacharjee

One such organisation is Dr. Anamika Ray Memorial Trust (ARMT), which made its debut with the art of puppetry as a part of the larger collaborative project of two-months (November and December, 2020) with UNICEF Assam titled as 'Risk communication and community engagement to promote 'COVID Appropriate Behaviour' (CAB) among children, women and urban population'. This year the trust started with its own puppet division 'ARMT Creative' and has produced a series of puppet shows (to be released soon) derived from the broad objectives of Poshan Maah as underlined by UNICEF.

Keeping in tune, this year the trust has prepared a promotional video on the importance of World Puppetry Day. It is seen that the relevance of this day is limited within the periphery of the puppet enthusiasts only. The commoners have no idea that even a day exclusively meant for the puppets also exists. So this video can turn out to be a platform for promotion of puppetry as a performing art form. The World Puppetry Day not only comes as a medium of entertainment for kids and youngsters but for people across all age groups. The observance of this day also helps in reviving the age-old tradition and to bring in fresh flavours to it.

Another organisation Surojit Academy established in the year 1997 also focusses on spreading the art of Assamese Folk Culture among the youths. Like very year this year too they organised various Puppet



shows on the occasion of World Puppetry Day by making use of Shadow Puppets, Glove puppets, Rod puppets etc. It is worth mentioning that this year the academy entered its silver jubilee year and to mark the occasion they had organised North East

Jubilation on the day of the Puppets

World Puppetry Day

Dr. Moushumi Bhattacharjee

Puppet Festival, 2022 which was held from 11th to 13th March at Guwahati. The participating troupes were Ajoy Sarma's 'Nataraj Putala Theatre' from Gondhiya Nalbari, Assam; Suresh Chandra Das' 'Maa Tripureshwari Puppet Theatre, Tripura, and Bani Kanta Barman's 'Mohkuli Putala Naach Samiti, Nalbari Assam.

For millennia, people around the world have used performing arts to convey their most important social values and cultural ideals. Puppetry being participatory in nature builds community and opens up possibilities for social change and development. The puppeteer is the conveyor and interpreter of the messages. Through his magical world of puppets he can transport the audience to a mythical time that stands still, or bring them down to

earth with lively comments on the contemporary scenario. But, the day meant only for the puppets somehow lies in oblivion because of the ignorance on the part of the audience. So this video by the ARMT would surely boost the popularity of the art form and also create awareness among its connoisseurs.



The Female Touch in Croatian Puppet Theatre

Livija Kroflin

In the 1990's Croatian puppet theatre was in crisis. The reasons for this may be found in the war, and the obvious change that took place in people's attitudes towards and experience of art and the world. The older, dedicated puppeteers began to die, and new ones were not being born. There was a painful lack of educated puppet theatre directors, designers and technologists, and as a result the specific way of thinking of puppeteers, their skills, research, bold new solutions, and real media interest were lacking.

And then new hope appeared. After several decades of cries for the organization of puppet theatre study courses, such a course was finally organized by the Art Academy in Osijek (now known as the Academy of Arts and Culture, one of the components of Josip Juraj Strossmayer University). The Academy began its independent work in the 2004/2005 academic year. Courses in acting and puppetry were organized in the Theatre Arts Department.

A very happy event occurred when one of the first generation of students, Tamara Kučinović, completed her studies of acting and puppetry at the Osijek Academy and went to study puppet theatre direction in St. Petersburg, Russia. When she returned, Croatia gained its first ever graduate in puppet theatre direction. Her undeniable natural gift, combined with the excellent results of her education, has resulted in noteworthy, well-loved and award-winning performances. She is not afraid of major topics or strong emotions. She speaks up about life and death, friendship and threats to friendship, the identity of individuals, the dangers of arrogance, and sadness, happiness and love. When she directs, she is not simply doing her job, but she has a need to say something, she knows what she wants to say and looks for ways to present it in the best possible way. In the process, she uses puppets, actors, music, light... all this helps her to tell her story and reach the hearts of her audience.

Contemporary Croatian puppet theatre today is marked by two graduate puppet theatre directors: alongside the Croat, Tamara Kučinović, there is also the Russian,

The Female Touch in Croatian Puppet Theatre

Livija Kroflin

Liudmila Fedorova. Both graduated in puppet theatre direction from the esteemed St. Petersburg State Academy of Theatre Arts. Since her return to Croatia, Tamara has worked regularly as a director in puppet theatres in Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and is employed at the Academy of Arts and Culture in Osijek, where since the 2019/2020 academic year she has been the head of the newly launched and much anticipated study course in puppet theatre direction.

Both these directors are marked by their distinctive character, self-awareness, strong individuality and originality in all their productions, meaning that they not only differ from all other directors, but each new production differs from their own previous productions.

There are few directors who show such knowledge of children's psyche, of the craft of directing, especially in processes adapted to children, and the love of directing productions precisely for small children, as Liudmila Fedorova. Liudmila's productions are close to her child audience; each of them portrays a message, but gently and unobtrusively, without obvious didactics. The plot is simple, but not cheap, the story is attractive but not obvious, the visuals are beautiful but not kitsch.

The main character in her production Lullaby for a Mouse is a mouse who invents a whole host of reasons why he does not want to



Lullaby for a Mouse-Photo Ivan Ćopljarec

go to sleep. Although this is a problem parents have and not children, children recognize themselves in the story, and the adventures with a variety of animals incarnated from objects we immediately recognize as pillows and blankets, will

The Female Touch in Croatian Puppet Theatre

Livija Kroflin

probably reduce their resistance to going to bed.

The Star is the heroine of the production of the same name, whose subject is probably very close to all children. Star, that is, desperately wants to become important and achieve something great in life, so she comes down to earth to seek her life's path. After having encounters with various animals, she realizes that she is already great and important

because she lights the way of all the animals in the forest.

The greatest success of all Liudmila's productions was achieved by the endlessly charming The Ninth Sheep using motifs that are also very close to children: a boy who cannot sleep for fear of going to school the next day. His mother advises him to use the old recipe of counting sheep jumping over a fence. The boy manages to fall asleep, just at the moment when the ninth sheep in line is about to jump over the fence. The sheep then wakes the boy up (adults will say of course that the boy only dreamed it), unhappy to have got stuck on the fence. There follows a series of amusing scenes, which inevitably lead to a happy ending – the boy goes to school without fear.

Tamara Kučinović tends more to



The Star-Photo Ivan Ćopljarec



The Ninth Sheep-Photo Ivan Ćopljarec

The Female Touch in Croatian Puppet Theatre

Livija Kroflin

include her own ideas in well-known subjects, well-known characters or even in a well-known title. In so doing, she is not afraid of serious, major and difficult subjects, and she skilfully up-dates older works, not using costumes, props or locations, but with contemporary ideas, problems and the understanding of modern man. Her productions function on several levels, and they are followed with interest by younger and older children, young people and adults. They are characterised by exceptional visual effects, brilliantly achieved atmosphere and emotional charge, which leave no one indifferent. Indeed, shedding a few tears is in no way unusual in audiences watching one of Tamara's productions. But they are cathartic tears, full of release, empathy and joy.

One particularly warm production is Frozen Songs. This is the touching and amusing story of a girl who cannot pronounce a single word (in the end we learn that this is because her mother has died) and a boy who will do everything to make her speak: he will bring her a piece of dried polar light, which he has kept since the summer in his basement, so that she is warm and has light, he will make her juice from a falling star because "it makes everything better" (and it is a long and difficult journey), he will bring her a cloud made from candy floss,

Frozen Songs-Photo Ivan upoljarec



Frozen Songs-Photo Ivan upoljarec

The Female Touch in Croatian Puppet Theatre

Livija Kroflin

sing a song he wrote for her, and he will put words that freeze in the air from the cold in a thermal box and take them to her. Through his tireless care and imaginative demonstrations of affection, he will finally succeed in opening her heart and freeing her tongue. The very



Frozen Songs-Photo Ivan Ćopljarec

demanding scenography conjures up the powerful might of nature in an area when the temperature falls to minus 400 degrees (at least according to the boy), and where words freeze in the air so it is possible to store them in a fridge, whilst the puppets are made very realistically, which may seem to be a contrast, but in fact they create synergy with the fantastic motifs of frozen words and falling stars. The educated puppeteers have also responded in a superior manner to the challenge of the demanding animation of table puppets, which are animated by two people, and sometimes even by three.

The Osijek Academy made the right move when they employed Tamara Kućinović as a teacher. She has run several courses as part of the under-graduate and graduate studies, and when a new course in puppet theatre direction was opened, she became its head. Some students have taken their final examinations under her tutorship, and in combination with the students' research and creativity, these have proved to be better than most professional productions, different both in terms of subject-matter and means of expression. I will mention a few examples.

The production The Rainbow was based on a story by Dinko Šimunović, a Croatian author from the beginning of the 20th century. The main character is a girl growing up

The Female Touch in Croatian Puppet Theatre

Livija Kroflin

in a traditional patriarchy, a very cruel environment, limited by rules. Although she was sprightly, happy and playful, which earned her the name Srna (literally "roe deer"), she was not permitted to run, jump, bathe, go out in the sun... simply because she was a girl. Since boys were allowed to do all those things, Srna's only wish was to become a boy. She heard that this was possible if you ran under the rainbow. When a rainbow appeared in the sky, she ran, and ran, and ran across the fields, until she fell into a lake and drowned. Her desperate parents understood that the tragedy had occurred as a result of her strict upbringing, and they threw themselves in the river.

It is interesting how that story from what seems today to be a distant time, left a deep impression on young people today. Those restrictions no longer exist. These young people were probably not aware of the fact that they were once very real, but they have all felt thwarted at some point in their



The Rainbow-3 Photos Ivan μpoljarec

The Female Touch in Croatian Puppet Theatre

Livija Kroflin

lives, in one way or another. The students had deep feelings and looked for a way to express them. They expressed the strictness of the environment and its rules (which, as they say, "seem to be carved in stone") by making the characters out of stone. The entire set was based on natural materials, such as water, clay and sand, and since the landscape that Šimunović describes is mainly bare, infertile and rocky, rock was also given both a descriptive and a metaphorical significance. The students did not make the puppets in the form of people, but used two pieces of stone to represent a figure. A larger stone was the body in one of the animator's hands, and a smaller stone the head in the other hand. They realized that these puppets could not perform a wide range of movements. The animation had to be minimal, but very precise and eloquent. They had to find just one movement, a sign, and accompany that movement with a sentence or phrase: an impulse, a large gesture, and one spoken phrase. In addition, the material played a role by its very nature: the sound of stones banging against one another, their weight, their speed or slowness of movement, their sharp edges or rounded edges, their hardness, fragility, and size.

Small round stones represented the boys, who were allowed to be free, but who had not yet become sharp and hard like the adults. It is interesting that they made Srna out of stones with sharp edges, by which they wanted to indicate her untimely maturity, and knowledge of the difficulties of life, as well as her sharp internal battle with herself and her environment.

Two female characters, Klara and Sava, who lived in an idyllic village where Srna was happy for a brief period because she was allowed to run about freely and jump, were made of clay. The whole village was made of soft materials: branches, soil and clay. The material indicated the affiliation of the characters to a specific place, emphasizing the idea that place determines character, and psychological characteristics were also assigned: Klara and Sava were "softer" characters than the hard "rock" of the Čardačans.

The Female Touch in Croatian Puppet Theatre

Livija Kroflin

Sound played an important role in creating the atmosphere, and also, not so frequent in the theatre, the sense of smell. The unbearable heat was recreated by the students rubbing straw in their hands, which created a sound like crickets chirping, and the smell of burning straw aroused a feeling of stuffiness and sweltering heat. Water could also be heard and seen, representing a running stream, and the sighs of the exhausted people were heard, but only a few words, such as "sweltering", "heat" and "drops of sweat". The whole time the rhythm and musicality of Šimunović's words in the story were preserved, achieved here using puppets.

One generation of students was not afraid to talk about death as their free choice of topic. They even went so far as to use the image of Death as a character! They started from scratch, writing their own text, working on the composition, the acting and the animation. According to the students' own words, they talked about how Death feels, does it ever have any free time, does it have a boss, does it choose who will die, or does time simply have its own say? They wanted to find and present the sound, smell, taste and feeling of Death.

These performances include is good, old-fashioned catharsis. The audience usually leaves in tears, they have been given something to think about, but they are happy. Happy, because they have seen a good performance.

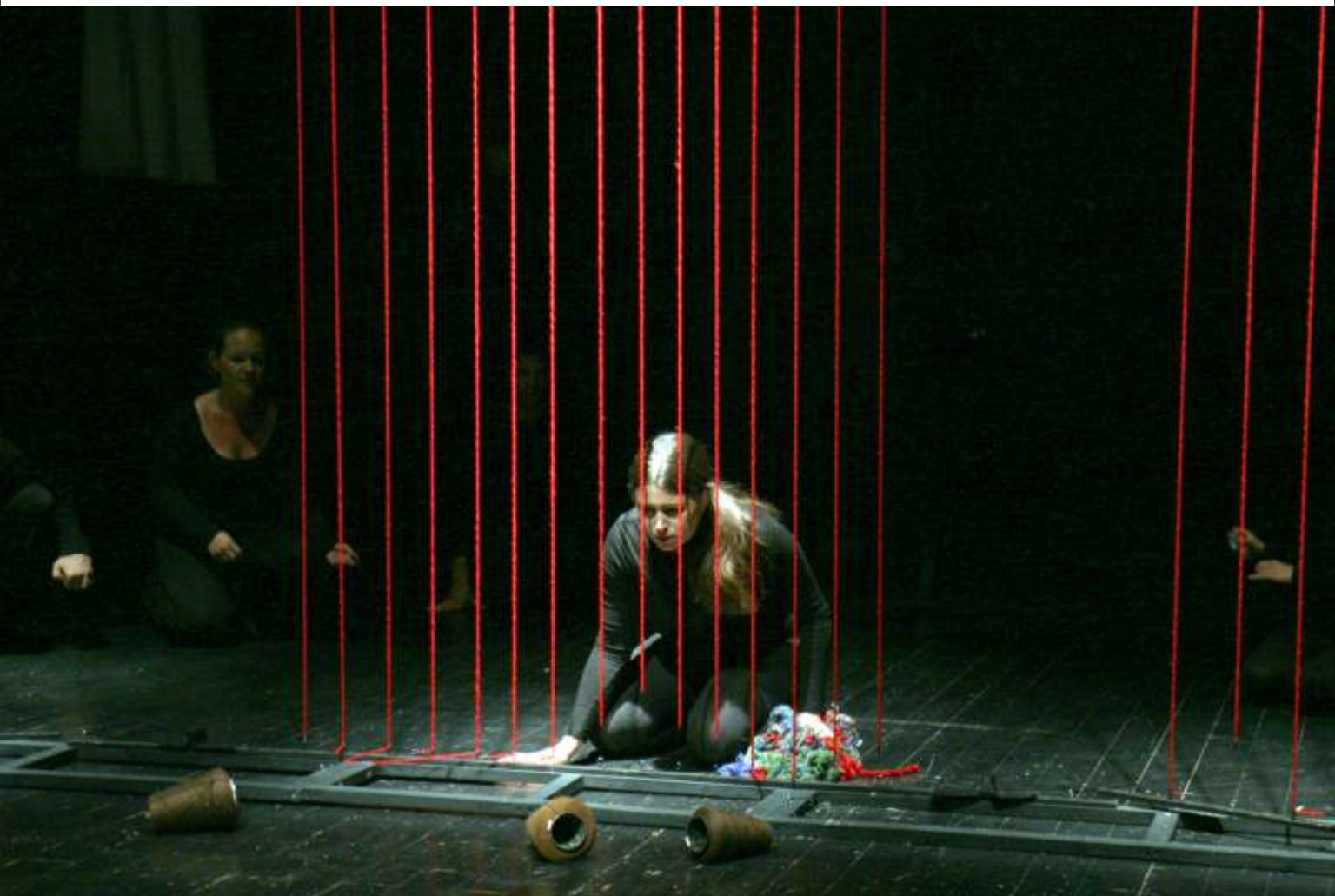
The generation that graduated in 2018 felt intensively how special the moment was, the moment when one way of life came to an end, and the uncertainty of the future. The awareness that this was their last shared project clearly aroused a feeling of nostalgia in them, which found expression in Sevdah. Sevdah or Sevdalinka is a unique form of musical expression that originated in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the tumultuous period of the Ottoman conquest of Bosnia. Some compare it to Portuguese Fado, others like to call it the Bosnian blues. Sevdalinkas mainly speak about the longing, passion and pain of love, arousing strong emotions in their listeners, who come from different religions and cultures. One of the most original

The Female Touch in Croatian Puppet Theatre

Livija Kroflin

definitions of Sevdah was given by a boy who said, "So, that's when dad sings and cries at the same time!". Young Croatian men and women created a show that included the traditional spirit of Sevdah, but at the same time proved to be wonderfully modern. The songs they chose dealt with the longing for love, the pain of love, requited and unrequited love, all types of love from maternal to erotic, joyful and painful.

The song about the birth of new love between a young man and girl is shown using threads of red wool, travelling from the actor to the actress and back, and remaining between them as a symbol of connection. The red colour symbolizes the warmth of the love, passion and fire that joins them. But the wax heart set up above the fiery



Weave me, oh my soul, Sevdah-Photo Ivan Ćopljarec

The Female Touch in Croatian Puppet Theatre

Livija Kroflin

river slowly melts and disappears, showing the breakdown of that love.

The memory of a dead mother is evoked using old shoes, animated by invisible strings, an empty rocking chair, by hanging washed sheets on a line and the audience sees the mother's

shadow behind the sheets as it fades away.

One of the most painful songs tells of a mother, weeping for her five dead sons, killed in the war. The actress holds a bunch of tangled scraps of thread in her lap. The feelings of powerlessness, despair and sorrow are aroused by her actions, such as the tightening of the threads as though in the mother's womb, tearing and unravelling them, trying to find the beginning and end of the threads.

And so on. The connection between all the scenes using the Sevdalinka was thread. It was tied, torn, set on fire and rocked. It showed the powerful connection between lovers, the umbilical cord between a mother and her child. Knitted wool at one time aroused a feeling of warmth, recalling the scarves, jumpers and socks made by our grandmothers, and at another time represented interwoven stories, creating something new from raw material. The threads seemed to come from nowhere, weaving themselves together over the entire stage, animating the whole space, apparently without any help from animators, who seemed simply to breathe life into them and then withdraw. From puppets on strings, to strings without puppets. A new technique: pure magic!

Weave me, oh my soul, Sevdah-Photo Ivan Ćopljarec

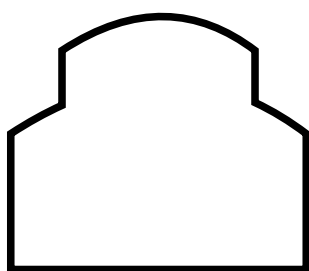


izv. prof. dr. sc. Livija Kroflin, PhD

Associate Professor
Odsjek za kazališnu umjetnost
Theatre Department
Akademija za umjetnost i kulturu u Osijeku
Academy of Arts and Culture in Osijek
091 4822 527



Creative Corner:



Use the given symbol/ figure as a reference and complete a meaningful picture



Sanya Chowdhury
St. Mary's Senior Secondary School
Maligaon, Guwahati

This is open for kids between the age group of
5 to 14 years.

Use the symbol/ figure as a reference and
complete a meaningful picture.

(Free to use colour pencils, crayons or paints)

Post the completed pictures and give full
details:

Name, Parent/s name, Age of the child, Class,
School, Place and State

Contact number to

puthalikapatrika@gmail.com

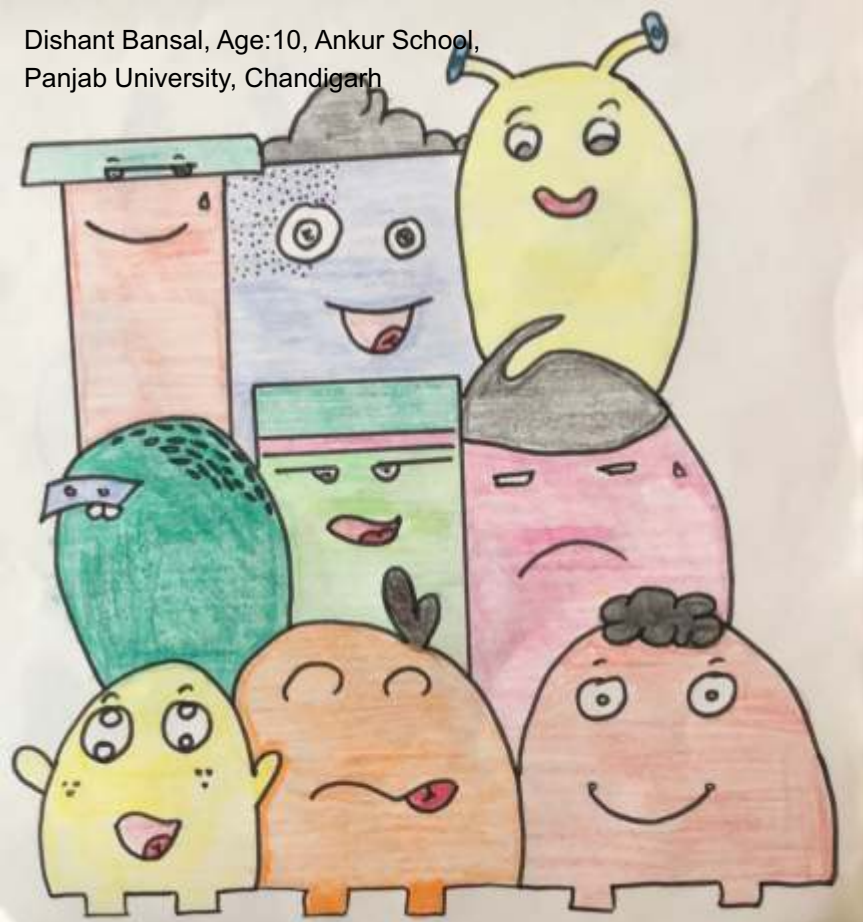
The best six will be issued e-Certificate

Final Submission Date: Apr 23, 2022

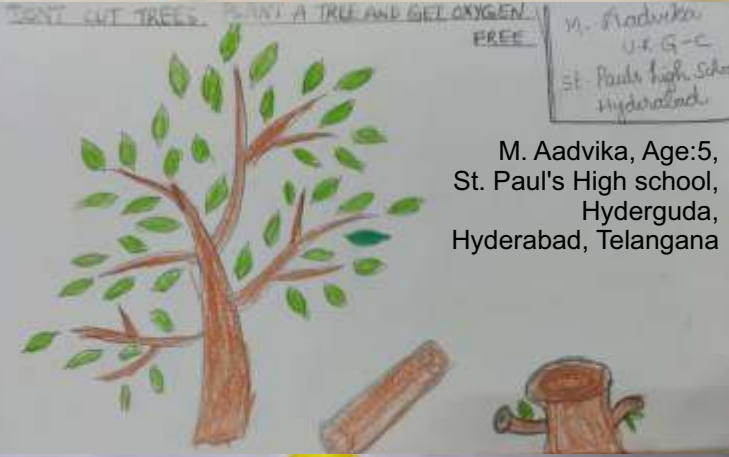


Mugil A. Age: 5, Shishya BEML Public School
Bangalore, Karnataka

Dishant Bansal, Age:10, Ankur School,
Panjab University, Chandigarh



T.Pragnan Maruthi, Age:9
Greenwood High School, warangal, Telangana



M. Aadrika, Age:5,
St. Paul's High school,
Hyderguda,
Hyderabad, Telangana



Mishty Gupta, Age:7,
Carmel Convent School, Chandigarh



Eshit Bansal, Age:13, Ankur School,
Panjab University, Chandigarh

.Jaitra, Age: 11, Meridian Uppal Branch
Hyderabad, Telangana



Last Edition's Hint

Nature's Lap



Let us take a round of Dinosaurs Park of Chhatbir Zoo

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/naturalbiodiversity>

Dr. Arun Bansal

WASTE TO WEALTH TIPS

PAPER ROLL CRAFT

Anondi Ghosh
8th, DAV Model School
Sector 15, Chandigarh
#1086 progressive enclave
Sector 50B, Chandigarh

Quilling doll Materials required:

- Quilling stripes
- Quilling needle
- Decorations (cotton lace, beads, tiny bow)

Steps:

- Start by Quilling a tight coil using the needle to make the face (15 mm circle)
- Make another slightly loose coil for the body (20mm)
- To make the body, slowly push the coil to make a cone shape
- Apply glue to the inside of the cone to make it sturdy
- use a Quilling crimper for the hair • make the eyes and mouth
- apply Decorations



UMIMA FOR Ukraine AND THE PEACE

Dear friends,

In this unexpected and terrifying situation that affects not only Ukraine but the whole Europe, even the world, UNIMA is trying to do whatever we can.

The Board has made an official statement and all the commissions and many members are helping. You can see the statement on the UNIMA website:

<https://www.unima.org/en/stop-the-war-in-ukraine/>

I wish we could do something to stop the war, to stop the killing, but unfortunately this is beyond our power. However, we can do quite a lot for the people fleeing Ukraine. I am sure we are already helping through various organizations in our respective countries. UNIMA wants to help especially puppeteers.

All the donations are very welcome.

Here are some useful links:

<https://www.unima.org/en/useful-information/emergency-aid-for-puppeteers-2/>

<https://unima.give.asia/campaign/unima-free-of-strings-fund#/>

The Humanitas Commission is doing great work. Please find their information in the attachment and you can always visit their Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/Humanitas-Commission-UNIMA-International-103290918978686>

There was an extraordinary meeting of the EC open to all the members of the commissions. Some of you wanted to attend but couldn't make it. The meeting has been recorded and here is the link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/848559000?pwd=ZmJ0td6.WkkDb6CZRzQG0dx9?startTime=1647348559000>

Access code : C^C5t0G*



WHAT CAN THE EDT COMMISSION DO?

We already have one proposal. It came from Olivia Karaolis from Australia. Here is her proposal:

I wanted to put forth a suggestion to you inspired by a project that I created during another recent event. I wonder about inviting children and young people in schools to make a puppet to express their thoughts about the world events and speak for them and for the children in our world about this catastrophic event.

Thank you, Olivia. Please go ahead with it and keep us informed!

If any of you have an idea, please share it with us.

Let us hope peace will come soon.

Best wishes,

izv. prof. dr. sc. Livija Kroflin, PhD

Associate Professor

Odsjek za kazališnu umjetnost

Theatre Department

Akademija za umjetnost i kulturu u Osijeku

Academy of Arts and Culture in Osijek

The Humanitas Commission of UNIMA calls for peace in the Ukraine!

Our hearts are with all people affected by the current unrest in the Ukraine. We stand in solidarity with our fellow puppeteers displaced by the conflict. Please be in touch with your international family, we are there for you. Some immediate contact information and advice of puppeteers who are offering support is listed below. Puppeteers please add further suggestions in the comments!

While some of this information is specific to puppeteers, we also offer below a list of contacts where any displaced Ukrainians may seek physical protection and support, in the hope that this information may be of use to you.



WHAT CAN THE EDT COMMISSION DO?

Czech republic : A message for friends from Ukraine!

Transport and boarder crossing :

- The first connection by train from the borders of Poland and Slovakia to the Czech Republic is free.

- Entry to the Czech Republic for you without a visa, all documents will be processed on the spot.

Shelter and logistics :

- Thomas Behal invites puppeteers who need help moving or finding a home to get in touch on Messenger/Facebook

- Mgr Jakub Hora, the director of Divadlo Alfa theatre proposes 6 accommadotions place in Plzen in the theatre. jakub.hora@divadloalfa.cz

- Madam Simona Chalupova, president of Unima Czech Republic invites puppeteers in need to contact her on : simona.chalupova@puppets.cz

Poland:

Stanisław Wojciechowski from Poznan invites puppeteers to make contact on Facebook or email theatremarionbrand@gmail.com

Hungary:

Puppeteers please contact Kata Csato: csato.kata@gmail.com

Romania:

There is an active Facebook group for the support of Ukranian refugees please join and contact Anastasia Staicu for support:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/unitipentruucraina/>

International links for general support

Accommodation, travel, etc.:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/hostasister/?ref=share>

ENSZ Ukrajna UNICEF:

<https://crisisrelief.un.org/t/ukraine?>



WHAT CAN THE EDT COMMISSION DO?

Hungarian support:

Children food, clothes, travel, etc.:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1151420745602883/?ref=share>

Accommodation - but here is for money:

<https://turizmus.com/.../a-szallashu-segit-az-ukrajnabol...>

The biggest hungarian group (clothes, travel, accomodation, translator):

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/994143548136400/?ref=share>

The same, but smaller group in Eger:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/4676184559152718/?ref=share>

Hungarian Ecumenical Aid Organization:

<https://segelyszervezet.hu/kampanyok/haboru-ukrajnaban/>

Baptist Charity:

<https://www.baptistasegely.hu/.../felhivas-adakozasra-az...>

Hungarian Reformed Charity:

<https://adomany.jobbadni.hu/kampanyok/38>

Catholic Caritas:

<https://www.facebook.com/200380439990895/posts/5554511284577757/?d=n>

Krisna:

<https://eteltazeletert.hu/>

UNICEF

<https://unicef.hu/veszhelyzet-ukrajnaban>

Budapest Bike Maffia:

<https://facebook.com/events/s/menekult-krizis-bike-maffia-ag/992784384993009/>

Age of Hope:

<https://m.facebook.com/ageofhopealapitvany/>

Migration Aid - voluntary



WHAT CAN THE EDT COMMISSION DO?

<https://m.facebook.com/migrationaid.org/>

Cultural House in Záhony (close to the border), they give rooms for the refugees:

<http://www.zvszk.hu/.../150-konyvtra-nyitvatartas...>

Transcarpahia:

<https://kiszo.net/.../adomanygyujtes-indult-ungvaron-a.../>

Information in Hungarian about the situation close to the border:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/873042849706314/?ref=share>

Provision of legal aid in Hungary (Amnesty): e-mail:office@amnesty.hu, phone:
+36 1 321 4799, address: 1054 Budapest Báthory utca 4. 1/2

Embassy: 0614224125, 1125 Istenhegyi út 84/b;

They can also turn to the Hungarian Helsinki Committee

<https://helsinki.hu/az-ukrajna-elleni-tamadas-es-a.../>

<https://menedek.hu/.../mi-tortenik-az-ukrajnabol...>

Csató Kata

csato.kata@gmail.com

+36 20 429 8298

Online Diploma in Puppet Therapy



PUPPET THERAPY DIPLOMA

THIRD ONLINE VERSION

APRIL - JULY 2022



EDUCATION,
DEVELOPMENT
& THERAPY COMMISSION
Education, Development & Therapy
Education, Development & Therapy
educationcommission.org www.org/education



www.munecoterapia.cl
munecoterapiachile@gmail.com

More information: munecoterapiachile@gmail.com



For Subscription please contact at

puthalikapatrika@gmail.com



Participate in **PUTHALIKA PATRIKA**

Artists, Art lovers, Parents, Teachers and Anyone Passionate towards traditional arts, visual arts and folk arts are welcome to contribute articles for Puthalika Patrika Puppetry News Magazine

puthalikapatrika@gmail.com

Published by

Sphoorthi Theatre for Educational Puppetry, Art & Craft-STEPARC
and Social Substance

http://www.sphoorthitheatre.com/sphoorthi_newsletter.html

puthalikapatrika@gmail.com

www.sphoorthitheatre.com

www.sphoorthitheatre.blogspot.in

facebook.com/puppetnewsmagazine

facebook.com/groups/socialsubstance

