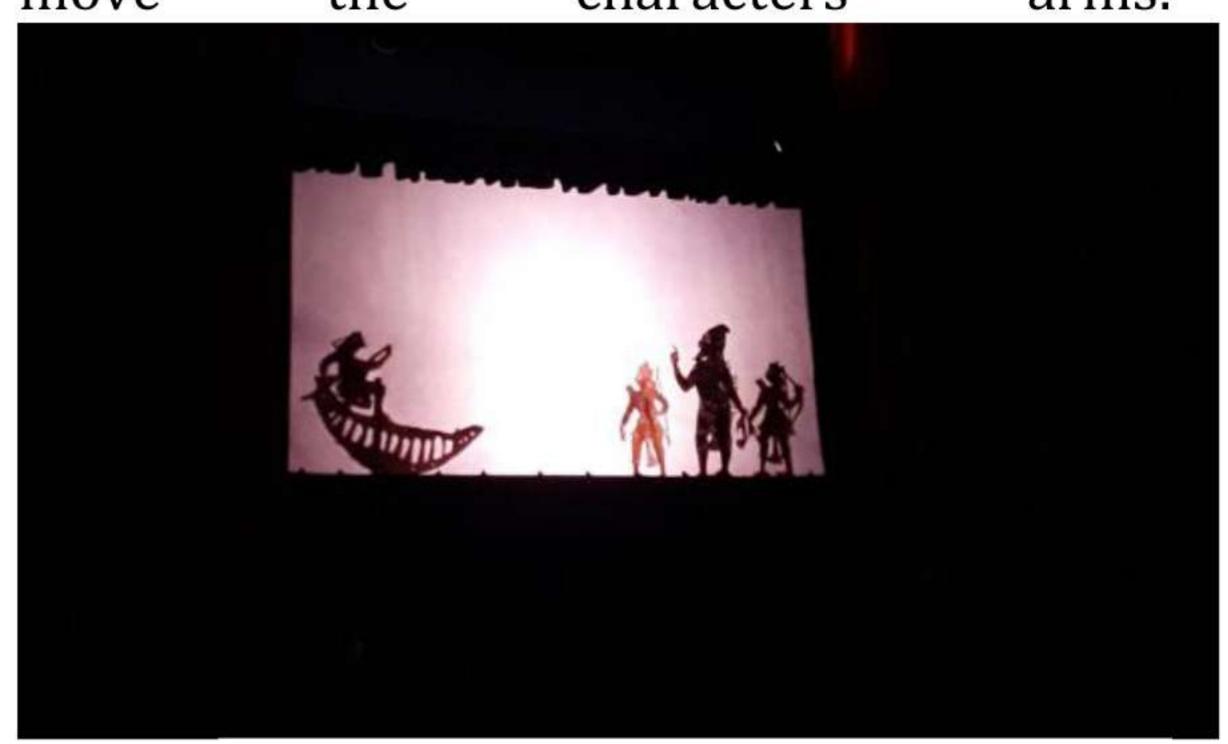


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style. The puppets have joints at the shoulders, and the shoulder joints are connected with strings inside the torso of the puppet to two rings, which are pulled to move the characters' arms.



According to an eminent scholar in Odisha puppetry Dr. Gouranga Charan Dash who opines that the shadow cast is symbolism to evil and divinity cast no shadow. Rama being a symbol of divinity cannot cast shadows, hence 'Rabana' is the hero of the Ramayana play.

Ravan Chhaya puppets are made out of deerskin varying from 6 inches to 2 feet. The puppets are not coloured, have no joints and have perforations that outline their figures and costumes. The unique feature of Ravan Chhaya the puppet form of Rabana is much larger than that of Rama with greater dramatic impact.

Puppeteers sit on the ground behind a screen. Multitasking musicians play drums, cymbals, and reed instruments, including the Indian clarinet and flute, harmonium.

The traditional puppet play of Odisha includes short satirical skits or scene sequences about class and caste structure prevailing in the society in between the epic narratives.

The real crisis of Ravana Chhaya today is the inaccessibility to leather. Ravana Chhaya puppet requires leather from deer, Blackbuck, Antelope and Wild boar. All these animals come under the Wild Life protection act.

Ever wonder what these wonderful puppets do in the nights? Do they sleep, or play or plan for next day morning? Or how to escape from from their master puppeteers? Well, such questions pushes me to explore more into the world of puppetry.

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Best Regards

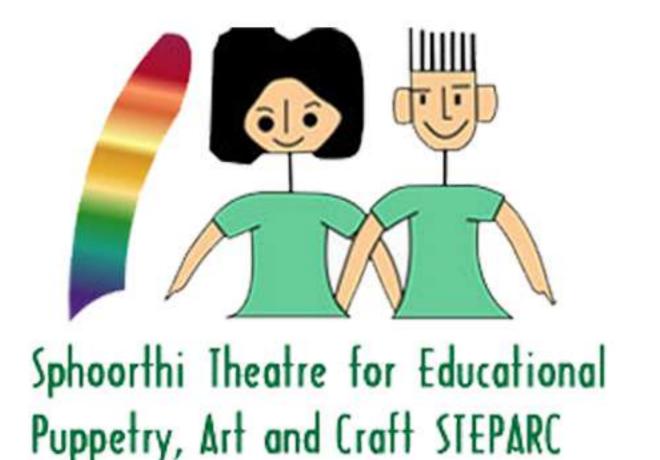
Padmini Rangarajan

#### Odisha-The land of all forms of Puppets

Odisha is the only blessed region in India where all four forms of puppetry flourish-Shadow Puppetry – popularly known as 'Ravan Chhaya', Rod Puppetry-'Kathi Kundhei nach' or 'Kundhei nata', String Puppet- 'Suta Kandhei nach or 'Danger Kandhei nach' and Glove puppet known as a 'Sakhi Kandhei nata'.

The traditional puppet performance, an amalgamation of dance, drama and songs, begins with an invocation prayer called *STHUTI* followed by the *SUTRADHARA*. Sutradhara is the stage director/narrator who introduces the episode *to* be enacted from the epics, the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, or from the *Puranas*.

String and Rod puppets carved out of wood are around 60 -70 centimeters in height and dressed in typical the Odisha



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Sri M. R. Ranganatha Rao 'Bheeshmapethamaha' of Traditional Puppetry of Karnataka



Sri Ranganatha Rao -86 years young, winner of the Sangeet Natak Academy Award (1981) and many more, revived the traditional puppetry style performed by his maternal grandfather *Sri. Narasing Rao* by renaming it as *'Rangaputhali'* style. His journey in puppetry is similar to Eklavya's training in archery in the absence of the Guru or the teacher.

A government school teacher by profession switched over to take up traditional puppet performance after meeting *Smt. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay*.

Sri Narasing Rao, who was the "Asthana" or court puppeteer in the Mysuru Palace, Mysuru. Backed by an academic background in drama and theatre and a career as a schoolteacher, it was natural for Ranganatha Rao to use puppets as a medium of expression to teach children in school.

Mr. Ranganatha Rao hails from Magadi Taluk, Ramnagar district, Karnataka. He is multi-talented; he crafts these beautiful wooden puppets and is an adept puppeteer, lyricist, music composer and storyteller. He is the Founder and the Director of 'Sri Rangaputli Kalaranga'- a Puppet theatre and training institute. He has travelled extensively all over the world. He has participated and performed at various International festivals.

The ancient art form is taking new directions and visibility. He has been an instrumental as a serious revivalists in reviving the art of Puppetry by teaching, supporting students and art lovers from all walks of life. He has crafted miniature doll theater called Rasalok, at the Bimba Art Hut in Basavangudi, Bangalore, the theater is run by a very accomplished dancer is his student. Sri Dattatreya Aralikatte, a Sangeet Natak Academy Award (2016) and founder head of "Putthali Kalaranga" (Puppet Theater), Bangalore, Smt. Anupama Hoskere- Sangeet Natak Academy Award (2018), Founder Director of Dhaatu Puppet organization, Bengaluru are his disciples. Apart from the above, he has trained and established nine puppet troupes in Karnataka.

Manjamma Jogati, Renowned Jogati Nritya performer is the Karnataka Janapada Academy Chairperson—a visible transformation

### **National Properties**

"Katha Sangraha"- Call for short stories that will be featured in Puthalika Patrika. The best Stories will be awarded and adapted for our in-house production.



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# Role of Sutradhara in Traditional Indian Puppetry

The traditional Indian Puppetry upholds similarity in the puppet performance. The must of the 'Sutradhara' – narrator/ Stage manager and 'Vidushaka' –the clown



The other commonalities are the 'Sutradhara' - narrator/ Stage manager and 'Vidushaka' -the clown characters in the puppet performances along with the interlacing of text, sound, rhythm and movement.

Sri Purandhara Dasa (1484-1564) - He was a composer, singer and one of the chief founders of South Indian classical Carnatic music. The great Haridasa of Karnataka State has composed numerous songs in a simple Kananda language on the Almighty. One such song is "Bombe atta vaiya, Brahmandave aa deva naduva". It means that 'it is a doll play of the Almighty'-who upholds all the strings and manipulates accordingly.

The classical Indian drama components: verses ,poetry, music, and dance. The importance given to the sound of the words used as dialogue rendition than the action or the narrative; thus, the performance of a classical drama was essentially an enactment of verses and poetry. In the old classic Sanskrit drama plays Prakruth language is also used.

Pakruth language known as a language of common people and Sanskrit the official language of nobles, Gods, aristocrats'. Here, the key role performed by the narrator is to enact through gestures and a comedy sequence translate the Sanskrit dialogue rendition by the characters to the audience in the language of masses.

Natyashastra of Bharatamuni, an early writer on dramaturgy describes the traits of Sutradhara. The Sutradhara is a male character, must be proficient in playing the various musical instruments and songs, should be an expert in theatrical speech, steps, and movements and roles of different characters, highly conversant with tala, rasa and bhava.

traditional the puppet performance, the Sutradhara puppet occupied the innermost place on stage in the *purvaranga* -Preplay ritualsinvocation rendition- of prayer, worshipping 'Lord Ganesha'. Then greets the audience, greets and garlands the village headman/men by inviting him on the main stage and introduces the play. It is an indication of the commencement of the play. Similarly, the Sutradhara enters at the closure of *uttaranga* – Post Play rituals.

Earlier traditional puppet play performance lasted for 6-8 hours depending upon the nature of the play and main highlights. Hence, every play had a leisure interval break during when the Sutradhara puppet welcomed the village, noble, patrons or headmen if any, who joined, the play in the middle and briefed about the play the performance.

Secondly, again, a practice that the village head and nobles honour the puppeteer troupe or individual character has enthralled the audience by presenting a sum of amount as a token of appreciation. Further, the Sutradhara Puppet here again, summons up the conclusion of the play, extends vote of thanks to the audience and village nobles and headmen if any present during the play.

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orange colour sheets and fix it to the paper cup.

9. With a thin stripe make a loop and fix it on the back of the paper cup to inset index finger. Ola!! The lion paper cup puppet is ready!!



Happy Puppet Making

### DIY Puppet making:



#### Things You'll Need:

- 1. A small size paper cup, yellow and orange colour chart paper -A4 size.
- 2. Chrome Yellow colour paint (Poster or acrylic)
- 3. Black colour sketch pen, Glue stick or glue drops.
- 4. Pair of scissors (young learners to use scissors under the supervision of adult/s).

#### Step:

- 1. Colour the paper cup with chrome yellow paint and allow it to dry.
- 2. Cut a circle to make a Lion's face using a bangle or a geometrical compass from yellow colour chart paper.
- 3. With orange colour chart cut out lion's mane- either in the shape of long strips to get hairy look or like a petal shape. Multiple layers of long strips cut to give the mane look.
- 4. Glue the long stripes or petal shaped cut all around the yellow circle.
- 5. Next, draw lion's eyes and nose.
- 6. Fix two semi circle on the top of the circle to make ears.
- 7. Stick the lion's face to the yellow cup.
- 8. Then make a lion's tail and front legs by cutting thin yellow and

#### Announcement:

Artists, Artlovers, Parents, Teachers, anyone passionate towards traditional and folk arts are welcome to contribute articles for *Puthalika Patrika Puppetry News Magazine* 

For enquiries about Storytelling, storytelling with puppets, Puppet shows, puppet making workshop and customized puppet making contact:

Editor: Padmini Rangarajan