

Estd. 1992



SANSAPTAK
(a group for theatre)



A compendium
of works done by
SANSAPTAK
based on the
works by the Bard

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

SANSAPTAK: A Group for Theatre

An avant-garde theatre group, SANSAPTAK was established in 1992, deriving its name from *Mahabharata* that means 'indomitable soldiers'. Together we believe in the motto 'Perform or Perish'!

The group has always encouraged intellect over craft, therefore, favoring experimentation and exploration by following interdisciplinary subjects, integrated curriculums and various orientation procedures and scholastic programs. Several theatre groups view us as their alma mater, taking inspiration from our multi-faceted, multi-lingual projects. All our plays are penned by the versatile playwright, author, poet, director and Guru, Sh. Torit Mitra, and have to our credit more than 500 theatre productions of over 38 plays, and still counting.

Our objective has been to present quality theatre to a discerning audience on varied themes that reflect topical concerns. We are recognised and supported by the Ministry of Culture, Sangeet Natak Akademi, Sahitya Kala Parishad and Sahitya Akademi, Govt. of India. Our group is also empaneled to ICCR.

TORIT MITRA: Guru, Playwright & Director

Born on 6th September 1956, after completing his graduation from Delhi College of Arts in 1979, **TORIT MITRA** began to practice painting professionally. Apart from being actively alinged to the literary movement the time, he became famous for his drawings with political overtures, receiving several National and International recognitions and awards.

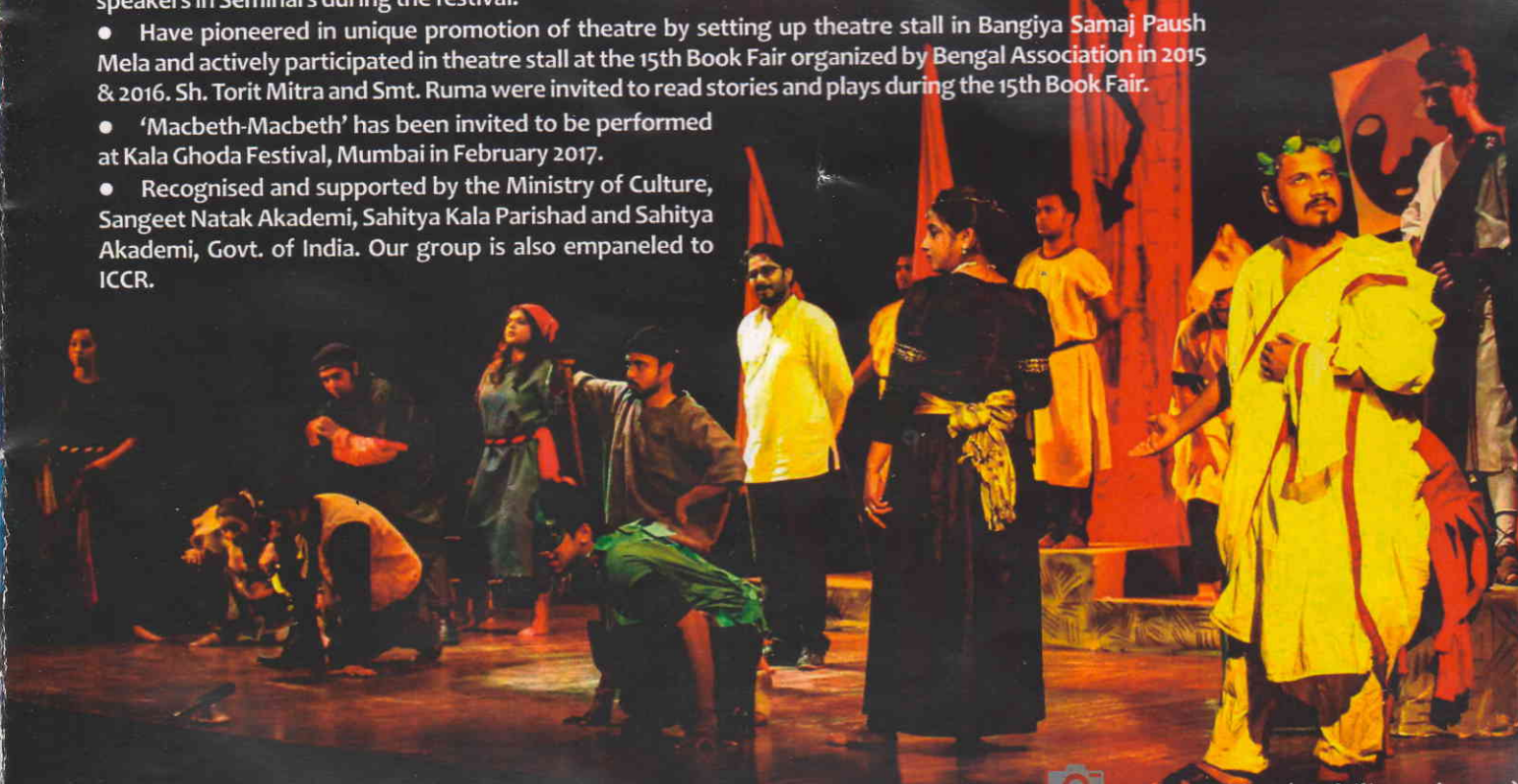
Initially, he started working in Bengali amateur theatre groups as an actor, set and poster designer. Though at the age of 21, he became the youngest playwright to receive an award in Delhi's theatre arena, he was unhappy and dissatisfied with Delhi's urban theatre practices.

Eventually, in 1992, he became one of the founding members of SANSAPTAK. From 1982 to present times, he has penned more than 38 plays, performed under his design and direction by Sansaptak and various other theatre groups. He is the author to innumerable articles, short stories and poems and has also been felicitated several times for promoting progressive developments in theatre, Arts and literature in Delhi.



Our Milestones

- Pioneers in staging experimental plays, like En Solitaire, Solo Reading Theatre, Sruti and Smriti, Willy6-Willy6 and Exile and Kingdom in auditoriums and studios alike since inception.
- Have been winning awards at Kali Bari One-Act Drama Competitions for five consecutive years since 2000.
- Performed Dakshinapath in NSD's prestigious International Drama Festival (5th Bharat Rang Mahotsav) in 2003. Since 2002, the group has been performing at NSD's Weekend Theatre.
- Was invited at Legends of India in 2005 to perform Atmadaho.
- Has been hosting its own shows at Kolkata for five consecutive years. The group has also been invited by several theatre groups like Sanglaap and festivals like International Ganga-Jamuna Theatre Festival in Kolkata.
- Mega-productions, Devanampiya, Zawal-e-Azim and Anavritt have been awarded the titles "Utkrishit Natak" (Best Play) by Sahitya Kala Parishad, Delhi Govt. and performed at the esteemed Bharatendu Natya Utsav in 2007, 2009, and 2012.
- Zawal-e-Azim was performed at the Delhi International Arts Festival 2009, under Sangeet Natak Akademi Theatre Festival.
- Have felicitated eminent theatre critics and practitioners, Sh. Diwan Singh Bajeli, Sh. Prithviraj Roy, Smt. Santwana Nigam and Dr. Vikram Chopra, for their commendable contributions to their respective fields.
- Director, Torit Mitra, was awarded as one of the best directors in Delhi and the play Garbh performed at Bharatendu Natya Utsav in 2011. He has also been felicitated by several Regional and National organizations and institutions for his extensive contribution to Indian Arts, culture and literature. Several of his plays have been performed by numerous theatre groups in the country.
- Veteran activist and President of the group, Smt. Ruma Bose, has been felicitated several times for her exceptional benefaction lent to theatre as an actor, activist and administrator. Veteran artiste, Sh. Dipankar Khan has also been felicitated for his immense contribution as an actor.
- The group hosted ELEGANCE OF IBSEN, a festival of Plays, Seminar and Exhibition, in collaboration with The Royal Norwegian Embassy in 2006 to commemorate the death centennial year of Sir Henrik Ibsen, the records of which have been placed in the archival database of www.ibsen.net, and Centre for Ibsen Studies, Oslo.
- Records and documentations including our profile, activities and performances have been placed in the archives of the esteemed Natarang Pratishthan, New Delhi.
- The group performed at National Seminar on Tagore at the invitation by Sahitya Akademi (Delhi) and Central University of Rajasthan (Kishangarh) in 2011.
- In 2013, the group hosted PANCHAM VEDIC, including a two-day bi-lingual seminar and a festival of plays for four-days showcasing our play Anavritt and renowned groups and directors - Green Room Theatre (Anjan Kanjilal), Rang Bhoomi (J. P. Singh) and Sada Arts Society (Dr. Danish Iqbal).
- Have placed our name in several National and International publications, electronic media, press reviews and have published books, 'Home & the World' and 'Hari-Bhari Khwahish Tatha Anya Natak', and our annual newsletter 'Yavanpat'.
- Under the tutelage of Torit Mitra, his plays Vasansi Jirmani, Hari-Bhari Khwahish, Na Hanyate and Macbeth-Macbeth was designed and directed by his disciple, Anjon Bose. Na Hanyate, invited by IPTA, was performed at JNU in 2015.
- Have been participating in World Theatre Day celebrations organized by Bengal Association since 2014.
- In 2015, Smt. Sreemoyee Dasgupta Bose was invited to participate in a debate catering to issues on group theatre organised by Shapno Ekhon title 'Obhimot / Abhimat / Opinion'.
- Mritashaucha was performed in Green Room Theatre's International Bengali Theatre Festival 2016 along with groups from Kolkata and Bangladesh. Sh. Torit Mitra and Sh. Anjon Bose were invited as speakers in Seminars during the festival.
- Have pioneered in unique promotion of theatre by setting up theatre stall in Bangiya Samaj Paush Mela and actively participated in theatre stall at the 15th Book Fair organized by Bengal Association in 2015 & 2016. Sh. Torit Mitra and Smt. Ruma were invited to read stories and plays during the 15th Book Fair.
- 'Macbeth-Macbeth' has been invited to be performed at Kala Ghoda Festival, Mumbai in February 2017.
- Recognised and supported by the Ministry of Culture, Sangeet Natak Akademi, Sahitya Kala Parishad and Sahitya Akademi, Govt. of India. Our group is also empaneled to ICCR.



MACBETH-MACBETH: An Overview

The play was conceptualized, written and directed by Sh. Torit Mitra, Guru, Playwright and Director of Sansaptak. In 1999, Torit Mitra came across the book 'Shakespeare-rer Shomaaj Chetanaa' (The Social Consciousness of Shakespeare) by Late Sh. Utpal Dutta, that triggered him to write the play and, eventually, completed it by early 2001. The first performance of the Bengali version was performed in 2003. Repeat shows were performed in Kolkata as well, receiving huge critical acclaim.

In 2010, the play was translated in Hindi by Sh. Abhishek Biswas and Smt. Sreemoyee Dasgupta Bose and performed in Delhi at LTG and SRC auditoriums, also winning accolades as one of the best plays performed in the Capital and, eventually, found its way in Dr. Vikram Chopra's publication 'Shakespeare: The Indian Icon' and Padmashree Dr. Utpal Banerjee's publication 'Theatre in South Asia'.

In 2016, it was directed and designed by Torit Mitra's disciple, Sh. Anjon Bose, with a new zeal. The cast consisted 4th and 3rd generation actors of the group, giving the play a novel magnitude of perception and was received with an overwhelming response by the audience.

MACBETH-MACBETH: A Synopsis of the Play

'Macbeth-Macbeth' is interpreted on a historical and political stream of consciousness about the inevitable tragedy that manifests in class conflict between monarchs and Neo-Feudal or bourgeois of that time. We see, this conflict, which made the great humanist Renaissance an inhumane exploitation of the common man. The play takes reference of the European Renaissance, where Man sees himself to be the center of the Universe, the world is his own image. The play also depicts how the West is desperate to unite with the East to expand their market and form the concept of an open market or trade system and globalization revealing the contemporary scenario.

The play begins with the trial of Macbeth, the great Shakespearean tragic hero, now a 500 year old man, sick at heart. Thereon, the play rediscovers the masked history, where Macbeth blames himself for the massacre. The title, 'Macbeth-Macbeth', refers to the two Macbeths depicted in the play; the former is ancient, the consequences of the historical movement and the later is the harbinger of change. The play draws a very thin line between the past and the present, and this is where it becomes contemporary.

The witches appear as symbols of the post modern by-products of today's society. In the original Bengali version, the witches spoke a language inspired from Sukumar Roy's famous hilarious nonsense poems. Although, in the Hindi version they have been translated, the essence has been kept intact.

The famous rhyme 'Baba black sheep have you any wool? Yes Sir! Yes Sir! Three bags full!' is heard in the play several times, which is a metaphor to the 'wool farming economy' of the Neo-Feudals. Lady Macbeth (Gruoch) who understands the changing times and foresees the coming of the new powerful class entraps the young Macbeth, motivates him to kill King Duncan (representing the feudal capitalists along with Prince Malcolm and Sir Angus) to become the fore-bringer of the change, from a capitalistic society to the society controlled by the bourgeois. They both are cursed in the prophecy of self destruction.



Few Reviews of the Group

CR PARK THEATRE GROUP LETS ARTISTES LIVE THEIR DREAMS

July 13, 2016; HT South Delhi, Hindustan Times by Snehal Tripathi

"We do theatre, we do life! These are the words that young and old members of the theatre group Sansaptak swear by every evening in a basement in Chittaranjan Park... "An artiste, is an artiste, whether he is sleeping, talking, eating, or doing nothing at all", says Torit Mitra, guru, playwright and director of Sansaptak..."

SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS IN MODERN SHADES

September 22, 2014; Delhi Jagaran City, Dainik Jagaran

"Swan of Avon' will be performed by Sansaptak theatre group from 13th to 15th November... The six plays in Hindi, Bengali and English will focus on global issues like corruption, oil wells politics, corporate world, global economy, anti-war, etc... School children will also be involved through interactive workshops..."

IMAGE OF INTENSITY

September 14, 2012; The Hindu by Diwan Singh Bajeli

"Playwright-director Torit Mitra began his career as a painter, but the shift to theatre has only broadened his canvas... He comments, "The grammar of painting and theatre are the same, the philosophy of aesthetics of both is similar... Since theatre is a live medium it is more challenging. It has a bigger and wider canvas to synthesise various art forms to create vibrant stage imagery with multiple thought currents."..."

MACBETH RE-VISITED

November 25, 2010; The Hindu

Diwan Singh Bajeli

"Macbeth-Macbeth' staged recently is a serious play on Shakespeare classic with the cast acquitting itself... staged by Sansaptak... Written and directed by Torit Mitra... It is probably the first work on the Hindi stage which analyzes Shakespeare's Macbeth against the historical backdrop in which Shakespeare worked..."

A DESI SPIN ON MACBETH

October 28, 2010; Vivacity, The Pioneer

Utpal K Banerjee

"In order to examine Macbeth under the lens of the emerging bourgeois, Torit's production used the clever ploy of parallel performance. While the performance text went on with gorgeously-costumed generals... there was a sub-text expatiated between a second, humdrum Macbeth and the puzzled rehearsal-man, on the prevailing socio-economic situation. The result was, along side the main play, quite an intriguing intellectual exercise..."

MACBETH-MACBETH

October 24, 2010; Aawaaj Blog

Amitesh (Translated from Hindi)

"Today, when questions are being asked about postmodern planning; when the memoirs of the Great Renaissance is in a fragile state; is theatre picking up and addressing such issues? I would say yes! The answer is the refreshing play by Sansaptak called Macbeth-Macbeth... written and directed by Torit Mitra..."

THE THRONE BECOMES A WHEELCHAIR

March 20, 2004; Anandabazar Patrika

Monoshij Mazumdar (Translated from Bengali)

"In Kolkata, the group performed an original play 'Macbeth-Macbeth', directed by Torit Mitra... The title of the production could have been 'Shakespeare in the light of Marxism'... King Duncan's throne is a wheelchair... In the end, the young Macbeth turns it upside down and starts rotating the wheels (much like Charlie Chaplin's 'Modern Times')..."



Macbeth-Macbeth (Hindi, 2016)

WILLY6-WILLY6: Overview & Synopses

Willy6-Willy6, performed in 2014, comprises of six micro-plays, all 'self-improvised' by individual actors, and a short neo-pop comedy play 'Into The Fools' Paradise' written by Torit Mitra's disciples, Sh. Anjon Bose and Smt. Sreemoyee Dasgupta Bose, and directed by Sh. Anjon Bose. The venture was a result of intensive actor orientation workshops and studio activities. The plays have been performed many a times, including call shows and festivals in Delhi. Public (Flash Mob) performances were also given in the vicinity of Chittaranjan Park, New Delhi.

INTO THE FOOLS' PARADISE: Shakespearean fools have been regarded as the 'educated dunces'. They were, usually, the clever peasants or commoners who used their wits onto people of higher social standing. Several scholars, especially, the French philosopher and author, Albert Camus, wrote in 'The Delirium' that fools speak the truth; he is a person who identifies with everyone else. Therefore, he is always declared an outcast. This short neo-pop comedy play is an attempt to define and redefine the roles of the Shakespearean fools (Touchstone, Falstaff, The Gravedigger and Nick Bottom) in the contemporary world. The play also includes Puck, Macbeth's witches, and the Ghost of the Christmas Past (Charles Dickens).

RICHARD III: Malicious, power-hungry, tyrant and bitter about his physical deformity; Richard III is an intense exploration of the psychology of evil and deprivation.

THE TEMPEST: The play demonstrates the dependence relationship between a coloniser and a native. It includes three characters, namely, Prospero (the ousted Duke of Milan and the coloniser of the remote island he has been exiled on), Miranda (the gentle and compassionate daughter of Prospero projected as the symbol of innocence) and Caliban (the real native of the island and Prospero's forced monstrous slave).

CORIOLANUS: Caius Martius 'Coriolanus' is a warrior, an anarchist, a politician, most importantly 'a rebel'. The play is an in-depth analysis of the intertwining concepts of war, rebellion and self-sacrifice.

IAGO: Iago is a powerful and compelling figure due to his talent for understanding and manipulating the desires of those around him by playing on the most lethal trait, that is trust.

THE IDES OF MARCH: The play portrays Julius Caesar (the Great Dictator of the Roman Republic), Marcus Antonius (his confidant and military commander) and Gaius Cassius (the conspirator to Caesar's assassination). All three characters are interwoven to bring out the intense complexities in the political and administrative implications of the Roman Empire.

THE WEeping QUEENS: The last active Pharaoh of Egypt, Cleopatra's beauty and open sexuality has been subjected to narrow perspectives. She takes the stage elevating her passion, grief and outrage. On the other hand, Gertrude, the beautiful Queen of Denmark and the mother of Hamlet, openly demonstrates her passion and desire for her son. Both choose immortality as a sign of revolt against the bickering world and historical misconstrues.



SWAN OF AVON

The 'Swan of Avon' was a project done in 2014 that celebrated the 450th Birth Anniversary of William Shakespeare. The project consisted of studio activity 'Creative Space', workshops 'Assiduous', 'Finding Willy', 'Shakespeare, Shakespeare All The Way', the performance of 'Willy6-Willy6', Exhibition, release of the 19th Annual Edition of 'Yavanpat' and a flash mob promotion.



Shakespeare, Sheakespeare All The Way

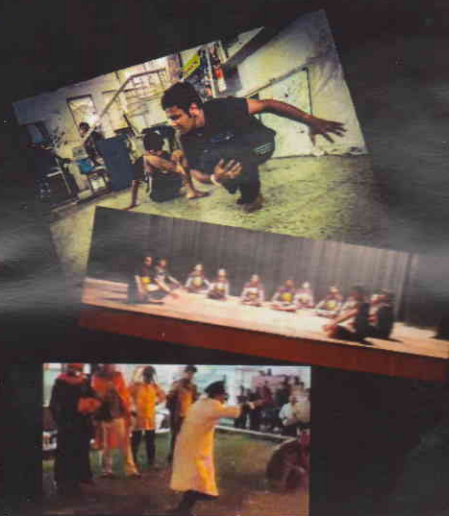
This multilingual Workshop cum Exposition was the brainchild of Sh. Torit Mitra and the result of intensive in-house workshops, namely, Assiduous, and Finding Willy and studio activity, Creative Space.

Torit Mitra wanted to step beyond the conventions of proscenium theatre and illustrate the group's maxim, 'Everyday Theatre!'. The performances, all improvised by individual actors, was first given at B.C. Pal Auditorium in 2014.

Assiduous, Creative Space, Finding Willy, Flash Mob Promotion

In-house actor orientation workshops and studio activities were undertaken to analyze, interpret and creatively present Shakespearean characters in light of contemporary socio-economical and political outlook. These were the stepping stones to 'Shakespeare, Shakespeare All The Way' and 'Willy6-Willy6'.

The Flash Mob Promotion was a series of public performances given by the group members in the vicinity of Chittaranjan Park, in an attempt to impart awareness in people regarding theatre and Shakespeare.

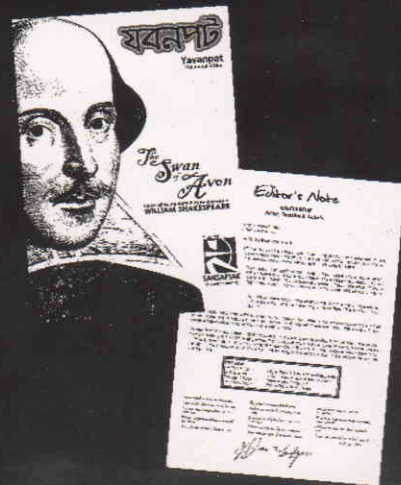


Exhibition

An exhibition was organized by the group during the show of 'Willy6-Willy6', wherein, member artistes of the group along with students of Ramjas School, and Tagore International School as well as Art students from College of Art and other institutes participated through artworks and DIY projects.

Yavanpat

It is the annual newsletter of the Group that was started in 1994 covering viewpoints, articles, essays, reports and letters by member artistes of the group, as well as other theatre activists, practitioners, academicians, and audience. The 19th edition was dedicated to Shakespeare, his life and works.



न तज्ज्ञानं न तच्छिल्पं
न सा विद्या न सा कला
नास्तौ योगो न तत्कर्म
नादयेऽस्मिन्यन्न दृश्यते

नाट्यशास्त्र

“There is no such knowledge or learning, art or craft,
or even work and spiritualism that is not found
in the sphere of theatre.”

Estd. 1992



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