

DECEMBER , 2021

VOLUME 02

The Newsletter

UNIMA PUPPETEERS TRUST



The Three Wise Men, Gaspar, Melchior and Balthasar, among traditional Latin American Christmas songs, tell us the story of when, by mistake, they did not arrive at Bethlehem of Judea, but at the home of Jesús Rodríguez, a kid in the Barrio Belén of Trujillo Alto, Puerto Rico.

Los Tres Reyes Magos, Gaspar, Melchior y Baltazar, entre canciones tradicionales navideñas, nos cuentan la historia de cuando, por error, no llegaron a Belén de Judea, sino que a la casa del niño Jesús Rodríguez en la Barriada Belén de Trujillo Alto, Puerto Rico.

WRITTEN, PRODUCED & DIRECTED BY
MANUEL MORÁN
PUPPETS BY
SHINDE CHITHAMBARA RAO

TRANSLATIONS BY Edna Lee Figueroa MUSICAL DIRECTION & ARRANGEMENTS BY Manuel Calzada VOCAL DIRECTION AND VOCAL ARRANGEMENTS BY Iván Alexander Bautista
COSTUME DESIGN AND REALIZATION BY Ingrid Hamster Harris SETS BY Manuel A. Morán LIGHTING DESIGN BY Miguel Valdeffama
VISUAL IDENTITY, ANIMATIONS & PRODUCTIONS BY George Riverón & Abdel de la Campa PRODUCTION TECH TEAM Anibal Cabello, José Rojas, Anthony Hom
PR AND PRESS Robin Carol ASSOCIATE PRODUCER & MANAGER J. Edgar Mozouh ASSOCIATE PRODUCER Richard Marino

Newsletter Highlights

Our traditional 'Tholubomma' tells a Puerto Rican Tale

'Tholpavakoothu' being animated by Robots?

Rangaputhli launches new production "Swami Vivekanand"

Tram Arts Trust hosts First International Object Theatre Festival

PepUp puppets go "Back to office"

Ishara Puppet Theatre & The Beehive, Gurgaon

Katkatha's "Arabian Nights" premiere in France

Pawan Waghmare's Online Shadow puppetry workshop

Maneesh Pachiaru's Shadow Puppet Story of Chandigarh

Tripura Puppet Theatre celebrates WORLD PUPPET DAY 2021 (A Special Report by Prabhigansu Das, Director of TPT)

News Exclusive : Koga Kamath's 'Walkthrough of Puppets towards 25 Villages'

WPD 2022 : Call for the participation

Message from the editor and the Managing trustee

AGM brief held on November 2021

DREAM OF KINGS / SUEÑO DE REYES

Written, Directed and Produced by Manuel Antonio Morán
Puppets by Shinde Chithambara Rao

OUR TRADITIONAL “THOLUBOMMA” TELLS A PUERTO RICAN TALE!



(photo in left) Shri Chithambara Rao with his father-in-law Padma Shri Dalavai Chelapathi Rao. (Photo in right) With Family members

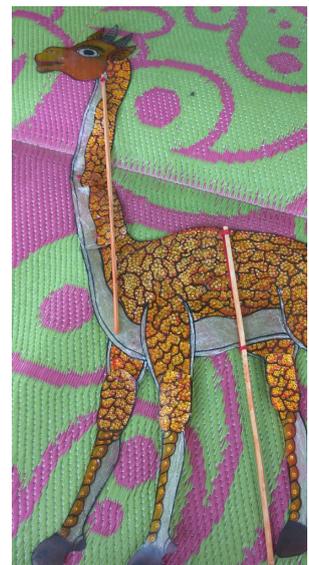
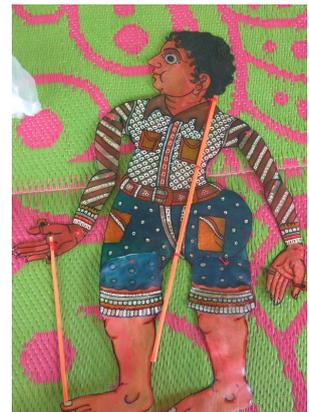
For those members who do not know Chidambar Rao (as he is known) Sindhe Chithambara Rao, is a Traditional Shadow Puppeteer from Dharmavaram, Andhra Pradesh, where the art is known as 'Tholubommalatta'. He is an artist par excellence. He is the director of the 'Shadow Puppet Forum-Chaya Natak Brundam' in the state, and he and his troupe are famous for vibrant performances not only in and around his village, but in national cultural forums, as well as at international festivals and exhibitions. Chithambara Rao is the son-in law of Dalavai Chalapathi Rao who received the Padma Shri Award in 2020 . The whole family including women and children are totally dedicated to the artform

His beautifully made leather puppet characters don't only belong to mythological stories and epics but also to modern characters. He has worked in animation collaborations where he proved his ability to create out of the box characters. This brings us to his recently commissioned Leather shadow puppets for " Dream of Kings" a production by Manuel Antonio Morán of Puerto Rico Founder and Artistic Director of SEA, Society of the Educational Arts, Inc. (www.teatrosea.org). This is indeed a promising collaboration of Indian Traditional Puppetry and Western Narrative

Chithambara Rao tells us that Dadi Pudumji helped him and his family members to understand the requirements of the Puerto Rican director 'Dadi explained to us what they wanted and we designed and made our puppets accordingly'

The result is amazing!

"We are going back to the main stage of Teatro SEA!! Yay! I am so pleased to announce my new production #DreamOfKings #SueñoDeReyes, the new Holiday show of Teatro SEA. This production is our first indoor production since the pandemic closure, almost 2 years. " says Manuel Moran. This new production includes live music, storytelling and beautiful shadow puppets made by Indian Puppet Master Shinde Chithambara Rao! Sueño de Reyes is a story that I wrote many years ago about how the Three Kings mistakenly arrive in Puerto Rico (a la Barriada Belén en Trujillo Alto) instead of Bethlehem! It is super fun!



"THOLPAVAKOOTHU", ANIMATED BY ROBOTS?



Imagine Leather puppets belonging to the traditional Tholpavakoothu style(Kerala) are being animated by robots! This is thanks to Sajeesh Pulavar and his father Lakshmana Pulavar.

Originally belonging to the traditional Tholpavakoothu form of puppetry, Sajeesh has recently experimented with tradition and modernity. To quote from the Hindu -

“ When tradition meets modernity, the result can sometimes be amazing. A puppet with robotic movements may not sound very charming but in a melding of traditional art and cutting edge technology, a shadow leather puppet in Kerala’s famous temple art Tholpavakoothu is being animated by a robot. For the first time, the famous shadow leather puppets will tell stories of the epic Ramayana with the help of robots. M. Lakshmana Pulavar and his son Sajeesh Pulavar from Harisree Kannan Tholpavakoothu Kala Kendra, Koonathara, are set to animate their leather puppets using robotics with help from Inker Robotics, owned by Rahul Balachandran. According to Lakshmana Pulavar, the most difficult part of Tholpavakoothu is the limb movements of the puppets. These are now being controlled through robotics. “We have puppets in several museums across the country. But this is the first robotic leather puppet,” said Sajeesh Pulavar, who graduated from the NSS Engineering College in Palakkad. He has turned to Tholpavakoothu full-time to preserve and promote the temple art form. “It was a dream come true for me,” said Mr. Sajeesh. Tholpavakoothu is a traditional temple art in Kerala having its roots in Palakkad and neighbouring regions. It used to be performed in the Bhadrakali temples of Palakkad, telling tales from the Ramayana. It is also known as Nizhalkkoothu and Olakkoothu.”

One can take inspiration from our Tolpavakoothu friends to experiment further with puppetry. Congratulations to Lakshmana Pulavar for winning the Kerala Folklore Award

another link of an article in Aljazeera

<https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2021/7/5/technology-meets-tradition-keralas-robotic-leather-puppets>

Also read Latest article dated Dec7th 2021 Engineer Quits Job, Uses Robotics to Save Father’s Legacy of Leather Puppetry

<https://www.thebetterindia.com/268023/traditional-leather-puppetry-tholpavakoothu-kerala-engineer-robotics-heritage/>



Congratulations to Shri Lakshman Pulavar for winning the Kerala Folklore Award

RANGAPUTHLI LAUNCHES NEW PRODUCTION

" SWAMI VIVEKANANDA "



M.R.Srinivas of Rangaputhli, Bangalore, Karnataka proudly announces the launching of their new production- Swami Vivekananda on 5th October at the Gokhale Institute of Public Affairs, Bangaluru, Excellent reviews (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zgfeH8G_FsU) provided opportunities for two more repeat performances within the span of one month.

The team also performed Ramayana Puppet show at the prestigious DakshinaChitra Heritage Museum, Chennai during Dussehra Festival followed by two more performances at the Shankara Foundation in Dussehra Festival and at Chitrakala Parishat for the cultural fest held during Diwali celebrations.

An Article has been published on Rangaputhali Puppeteers and its work in "Kala Vasudha" magazine, Lucknow.

TRAM ARTS TRUST HOSTS FIRST INTERNATIONAL OBJECT THEATRE FESTIVAL



Choiti Ghosh of TAT reports that Khidkiyaan - Tram's new Object Theatre performance created especially for the digital medium premiered before a small group of invited audiences for a zero show in October. The play will now go back to the rehearsal floor for re-work and possibly open for public in Feb/Mar 2022.

Most importantly they had the opportunity to host India's first international Object Theatre festival which was a wonderful success

THING-A-MAGIC INTERNATIONAL OBJECT THEATRE FESTIVAL OF INDIA, Digital Edition 1.0 | 25th - 28th Nov'21

Co-presented by Tram Arts Trust & CSMVS, Mumbai.

UPCOMING :-

1. Public Premiere of Khidkiyaan in Feb-March 2022
2. Opening of the 3rd play of Tram's Artists' Support Project. - 2022

PEPUP PUPPETS GO "BACK TO OFFICE"

Rekha Vyas of PepUp informs us that they have created an Advertising Project " Diwali ki Dhoom " for a French tractor manufacturing MNC John Deere.

For this jingle based 60 seconds advertising project, they used colourful string puppets and made very beautiful miniature home sets. They also presented a Ramayana shadow story and hand shadowgraphy act for a luxury car rental company Avis . This was an online family event for employees and their family. PepUp is now creating " Back to office "short videos and jokes for corporate clients as per their requirements using colourful and lively muppets.



Description

Diwali Ki Dhoom | John Deere

John Deere India

106,855 Views

Nov 2021

आपें पूरे उत्साह और खुशी से मनाएं रैसनी का त्योहार सभी को दिवाली की हार्दिक शुभकामनाएं।

ISHARA PUPPET THEATRE & THE BEEHIVE, GURGAON



They collaborated to put together a string of exciting Workshops & Shows over the past few months This included

3 ONLINE Puppet making programs that were attended by Children from all over the country

Once the COVID scare receded, they facilitated a very successful Rod Puppet making workshop and debuted Ishara's latest Puppet Theatre Performance - Aisha's Journey at two of Gurgaon's leading clubs

To know more about The Beehive:

www.thebeehive.net.in

www.instagram.com/the_beehiveggn

www.facebook.com/thebeehiveggn



KATKATHA PUPPET ARTS TRUST

ARABIAN NIGHTS 'S PREMIERE AT FRANCE

A 'Little' Report with pics from "Little"
The Katkatha Puppet Arts Trust created a new show called The Nights, based on the Arabian Nights. The show was co-produced by the Festival Mondiale Des Theatres de Marrionettes, Charleville- Mezieres, in France. This support was invaluable for the group to keep working during the lockdown.

Co-written by Delhi based Neel Chaudhuri and Bangalore based Adithi Rao, and directed by Anurupa Roy, the show explores the world of stories woven by Scherezade to stay alive for 1001 nights. Using Puppets, masks and shadows created by Mohammad Shameem, Asha and Maneesh, the play tries to explore the relationship between human bodies and puppet bodies on stage.

In September 2021 the show finally travelled to the festival in France after almost cancelling the trip. Support came in the form of Le tas de Sable , Amiens, a puppet company who supported the group through a stay location for quarantine and finding additional shows. The 21 day tour was very rewarding for the group who could be on stage after 18 months. There were 4 performances at FMTM Charleville-Mezieres and one in Quarrieu. Here are some photos of the tour from the eyes of their puppet "little".



WALKING IN THE SHADOWS...

PAWAN WAGHMARE'S ONLINE SHADOW PUPPETRY WORKSHOP

Pawan Waghmare, Puppeteer from Delhi trained under experienced and well known Puppeteers Dadi D Pudumjee and Camille Villaneuve , recently conducted a short duration shadow puppet workshop for teachers of ' I am the teacher ' organisation . The training programme covered the history , study of light and shadow ,making , manipulation of puppets and story building . The participants enjoyed the experience and are looking forward to inculcate this learning into their classrooms. This was their second workshop with Pawan comprising different set of teachers . Pawan says " It was lovely to share my knowledge with enthusiastic teachers."



MANEESH PACHIARU'S SHADOW PUPPET STORY OF CHANDIGARH

SHADOW PUPPETRY

पपेट्री शो के जरिए दिखाई चंडीगढ़ बनने की कहानी

• चंडीगढ़ को बनाओ का कहानी, कला के माध्यम से प्रस्तुत किया है, यह भी एक कलाकर्म है। यह कहानी चंडीगढ़ के निर्माण के बारे में है, जो भारत-पाकिस्तान सीमा के बीच एक अद्वितीय अंतर्राष्ट्रीय शहर है। चंडीगढ़ का निर्माण 1950 के दशक में हुआ था और इसे 'The City Beautiful' के रूप में जाना जाता है। चंडीगढ़ का निर्माण जर्मेनियन आर्किटेक्ट पिएर जेरी कुरिये ने किया था, जो भारत में आने वाले पहले आर्किटेक्ट थे। चंडीगढ़ का निर्माण भारत के स्वतंत्र होने के बाद हुआ था और इसे 'The City Beautiful' के रूप में जाना जाता है। चंडीगढ़ का निर्माण जर्मेनियन आर्किटेक्ट पिएर जेरी कुरिये ने किया था, जो भारत में आने वाले पहले आर्किटेक्ट थे। चंडीगढ़ का निर्माण भारत के स्वतंत्र होने के बाद हुआ था और इसे 'The City Beautiful' के रूप में जाना जाता है। चंडीगढ़ का निर्माण जर्मेनियन आर्किटेक्ट पिएर जेरी कुरिये ने किया था, जो भारत में आने वाले पहले आर्किटेक्ट थे।

Maneesh Pachiaru, Contemporary Puppeteer and Theatre Practitioner from Chandigarh performed 'The story of 'Chandigarh - The City Beautiful' a journey through shadow puppetry in the 12th Art & Heritage Festival by Chandigarh administration and organised by CSNA on 23 September 2021. .

Story written & narrated by J P Bhatt. Creative inputs & technical assistance by Amit Sanouria. Shadow puppets designed and performed by Maneesh Pachiaru.



Maneesh Pachiaru also attended and accomplished an Online Foundation Course on 'The Art of the Wooden Puppets' mentored by the Master Puppeteer Bernd Orgronnik, World of Puppets from Iceland. The course was held on October-November 2020.

Maneesh is an Alumni of UNIMA INDIA Foundation Course for Puppeteers (2019). He has a Masters of Performing Arts degree in Theatre Arts from the Central University of Hyderabad (2017). And has been associated with Katkatha Puppet Arts Trust, since 2018. He is also one of the founding members of the Satvik Art Society in Chandigarh established in 2013. He is also the technical editor of this newsletter.



TRIPURA PUPPET THEATRE CELEBRATES WORLD PUPPET DAY 2021

A SPECIAL REPORT BY PRABHITANGSU DAS, DIRECTOR OF TPT



Tripura Puppet Theatre celebrated World Puppet Day on 21st of March in an appropriate manner obeying Covid 19 rules. On this occasion they inaugurated 'Haripada Das Performance Space" on the rooftop of theatre building ,named after the father figure of modern puppetry in Tripura and founder of Tripura Puppet Theatre, Late Haripada Das. This initiative has been taken for regular practice, promotion and propagation of puppetry of their state. Folk art adds another dimension to the tourism of any place. We have to applaud this initiative of TPT as they are keeping the aspect of tourism in their mind.

On World Puppet Day, TPT presented "NILKOMAL LALKOMAL", from Thakurmar Jhuli , a traditional and popular fairytale of Bengal written by Dakshina Ranjan Mitra Majumder. Beautiful puppets with fascinating puppet manipulation, good background music, enchanting voice brought the show to a thoughtful dimension. They also organized two shows for the small section of viewers. The little ones as well as the adults enjoyed the shows very much. However it was requested to make the shows on regular basis. TPT reassured everyone that the performance space is created only to arrange puppet shows on a regular basis. Their motto is to propagate and spread the rich culture of our country through puppetry



NEWS EXCLUSIVE...

WALKTHROUGH OF PUPPETS TOWARDS 25 VILLAGES

Bhaskar Kogga Kamath, Of Uppinakudru Puppet Akademy,Karnataka writes to us about his remarkable "walk through of Puppets in 25 villeges of his state". This is an achievement. To quote Kamath, "Everyday we perform Choodamani-Lankadahana story, including a demonstration. As per God's grace and all your wishes we got very good response in each villege . It makes our troupe more stronger."

There are hundreds of children and adults in the audience everywhere.They came out in large numbers to appreciate this 350 year old traditional performance art.

This tour is sponsored by Dr Sudha Murthy, Chairperson,Infosys , Foundation. Bangalore.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

WORLD PUPPETRY DAY OF THE 21ST OF MARCH 2022

"The sea, once it has cast its spell, holds forever in its net of wonder"
(Jacques-Yves Cousteau)



Like every year since 2003, World Puppet Day is being organised, and this new year, the theme is "aquatic life" and marine worlds. This new edition corresponds to the need to safeguard the richness of these little-known worlds, of which the pioneer Jacques-Yves Cousteau was a diligent explorer and defender. Not only is it a question of defending and safeguarding the fragile, and the increasingly endangered diversity of life, but also of positioning ourselves, questioning and creating as artists and enthusiasts of the puppet arts.

We call upon all of you to propose video sequences of 15 to 30 seconds filmed horizontally, of your training courses, creations, shows, workshops, constructions, drawings, scenographies, and animations. From the imaginary great white whale Moby Dick to the little gold fish, from the imaginary mermaids to the reality of incredible beings such as octopuses and the tiniest micro-organisms, or the marvellous coral reefs, or the salmon that swims upstream. Aquatic life is a balance of treasures that artists and scientists have never stopped exploring. Beyond the aquarium, we invite you to dive into the unknown and the marvellous life in the waters. A great theme to work on in a workshop with children.

In parallel to your video proposals, we would like to communicate about all the events organized throughout the world on the occasion of this celebration of the puppet in all its states. We ask you dear friends, dear members, dear creators, dear centres, to communicate to us all of the events which will be organized on the occasion of this World Puppet Day, which can be held the weekend of Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 March 2022. We suggest that you share your events to give an impact even greater that it will be shared throughout the world to all our centres and our representations, but also beyond, by welcoming the initiatives of all those who want to celebrate the Art of the Puppet.

Concretely, it is a question of sharing on the UNIMA website your events planned within the framework of the 2022 edition of World Puppetry Day now, and to send us your videos before February 15, 2022. We will send you the technical details very soon.

Like every year, you will be invited to read and/or share in the form of your choosing the message written for World Puppetry Day and a great artist is already preparing the poster for the next edition, whose name we will reveal soon. You will be able to download it on the website in your language. And this year, we will also share a common logo.

We are already grateful for your enthusiasm. The success of this new edition, as of all the editions of World Puppetry Days, is the success of all of us, of our members, of our centres, of the puppet and of course of UNIMA.

Dimitri Jageneau

General Secretary of UNIMA

FROM THE EDITOR



Namaste!, Welcome to our Newsletter Two.

Thank you very much for the warm response received for our Newsletter One.

We are pleased to bring out Newsletter two with all its exciting stories for you to read. It is with a great sense of pride that we present the achievements made by all the Puppeteers, Traditional and Contemporary, both Old and Young alike. Our Indian Puppets are going places, telling western stories, getting digital, taking new shapes, form and colour! Do follow all the links provided to further appreciate their stories and commitment to their work.

It would be nice if all members share their news items on this forum as part of the family! There is a joy in sharing! Experience it!

We look forward to more participation from all members.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Ratnamala Nori

FROM THE MANAGING TRUSTEE

2021 will be remembered for the upheavals and suffering it brought. Let us try to put it behind us and welcome 2022 as a year of fuller communication and better collaboration between our community of puppeteers. Happy New Year to all.

Ranjana Pandey



AGM brief

Highlights of the Minutes... of the last Unima Puppeteers Trust India meeting held online on November 21st at 11:30 am.

18 members attended the meeting. Out of 51 members- this is not even 50%!! It was disappointing.

There was a wonderful discussion at the end. Many good suggestions were made. We share some of them here:

We all felt that there is a need for promoting and publicizing about UNIMA, as not many people know what UNIMA is all about All the information you need is on our website:<https://www.unimapuppeteerstrust.in/>

This is our humble request to all members- that whenever they perform, face an audience, do a workshop, please use this opportunity to speak about Unima and publicise it to your peers.

Fundraising

Members suggested and agreed to volunteer to give one workshop in 3 years, to raise funds for UNIMA, to help fellow puppeteers in troubled times, to organize festivals and to take care of UNIMA expenses.

(Gunduraju ji, Garima, Anurupa, Ranjana, Sajeesh, Maneesh, Subhasis Sen, Shameem have already volunteered). Others are welcome aboard.

We should form a committee of 2-3 volunteers to make an annual calendar for these workshops.

The next foundation course which is planned to take off in 2022 will require resources like space to hold a Master class or workshop. If you have a free space or you would like to host 10-15 students at your home/ studio for a master class, etc. do let us know.

All the members were informed about the outcome of “Puppeteers in Distress”, the fundraising project. 10 donors gave generous donations which have gone to help 10 Shadow Puppeteers from Tamilnadu with the help of Documentary film maker C,V. Ramani. His help is much appreciated.

All members agreed that we should have an online ‘Round table for Unima Centers in Asia Pacific region’ . The objective will be to- share, learn, collaborate and network with puppeteers from other Asian countries.