

APRIL 17-23, 2022

SUNDAY POST

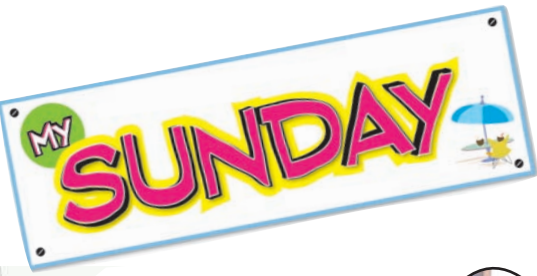
HERE . NOW



Odisha's theatre tradition

On revival path





Odisha's only nationally recognised Dhrupad singer Mukund Dev has set up Dhrupad Music Foundation in Bhubaneswar. The Balasore-born exponent, who once went for a 40-day silent music session in the Himalayas, practices Nada Yoga, also known as meditation of sound, on Sundays



With his students

Family time

Due to back-to-back music classes, I hardly get time to spend with my family. Still I manage to travel to some perfect beach destinations like Digha which is not far from my place or to Puri where ocean greets the divine.

Spiritual journey

No matter how busy I am, I always attend spiritual sessions organised by Pragyan Foundation because it helps me stay grounded and positive even in difficult times.



Addicted to riyaz

I wake up during 'brahma muhurta' and do riyaz because it helps to enhance texture, quality and modulation of my voice. Riyaz in the wee hours also does wonder for the singers.

Meditation of sound

Come what may, I never skip practicing Nada Yoga or meditation of sound which keeps my mind and soul in sync. I believe that it is the most powerful path to self-realisation. If practiced correctly it can create the union between 'I and the Absolute'.

Social obligation

I make sure to spend some time with unprivileged children and help them financially as per my ability. It helps me find inner peace and joy.



Mukund handing over relief material to a cyclone victim

RASHMI REKHA DAS, OP

WhatsApp This Week

Only on Sunday POST!

Send in your most interesting WhatsApp messages and memes received to: features.orissapost@gmail.com And we will publish the best ones

THE BEST MEMES OF THIS ISSUE

- I ate a clock yesterday. It was so time consuming.
- Marriage is a three-ring circus: engagement ring, wedding ring, and suffering.
- When I was born I was so surprised, I didn't talk for a year and a half.
- Every day I get up and look through the Forbes list of the richest people in America. If I'm not there, I go to work.

SOAKED IN DIVINITY

Dear Sir, I found last week's Sunday Post cover story 'Matter of Faith' on Jhamu Yatra ' quite engaging. Thousands of onlookers visit the Kakatpur-based Mangala temple to witness the patuas walking on fire. Being into the priesthood, I can explain the importance of Shakti cult in our state. Needless to say that Odisha has been a seat of Shakti cult since time immemorial. Shakti is believed to be the primitive cosmic energy that manifests in powerful goddesses in various names like Durga, Kali, Bimala, Sarala and Mangala representing the different creative powers. Therefore apart from Jhamu Yatra, other yatras in the honour of Shakti are held at various places such as Danda Yatra and Hingula Yatras. Throughout the lunar month Chaitra, the streets and lanes in the villages reverberate with sounds from ghanta in the worship of Shakti and the whole rituals make us fall in love with our culture.

RAJGURU DIXIT, KANTILU

LETTERS

A WORD FOR READERS

Sunday POST is serving a platter of delectable fare every week, or so we hope. We want readers to interact with us. Please send in your opinions, queries, comments and contributions to features.orissapost@gmail.com B-15, Industrial Estate, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar - 751010, Orissa. Phone (0674) 2549982, 2549948

ODISHA'S THEATRE TRADITION

On revival path

The recent commercial success of historical Odia play *Ahe Nilashaila* has rekindled a debate over whether the audience can be drawn back to the auditoriums in this age of video streaming services



A poignant moment from Odia play *Ahe Nilashaila*

BIJAY MANDAL, OP



Even my family members, former Odisha CM Nandini Satpathy and Union Defence Minister VK Krishna Menon had to buy tickets to watch my plays in the 1960s



Anant Mahapatra
Eminent theatre director

Not too many Odia plays, in recent times, have drawn the viewers to auditoriums like *Ahe Nilashaila* did last week. Adapted from *Nilashaila* and *Niladri Bijaya* – two famous novels of eminent author late Surendra Mohanty, the play was staged for four days to a packed Rabindra Mandap auditorium in Bhubaneswar. In fact, theatre lovers had to scramble for complimentary passes as all the tickets were sold out on BookMyShow shortly after the opening of ticket sale.

At a time when watching free drama shows is a common practice in Odisha, the resounding commercial success of this historic play baffled even the critics. Be it aggressive marketing strategy or the strong backing of the sponsors, the event has definitely compelled the theatre fraternity of Odisha to sit up and take note.

So, the resounding commercial success of the play has rekindled a debate whether the glorious days of ticketed theatre shows, when fans had to stand in queues to buy tickets, will make a comeback.

Summing up the sentiment, Dharendra Nath Mallick, the founder of Satabdira Kalakar, one of the

oldest theatre troupes of Bhubaneswar, believes that it may rejuvenate the theatre scene in Odisha.

The scene is quite encouraging and mood upbeat. But can it be sustained for long or this unprecedented success will remain just a flash in the pan. Here's what some eminent theatre personalities of the state have to say on the issue.

Excerpts:

'Trend must continue to become a tradition'

Eminent theatre personality **Anant Mahapatra**, who earlier had made an attempt to revive professional theatre setting up Utkal Rangamanch Trust(URT), said, "It is certainly a good sign that an Odia play was staged to a packed auditorium for four days in a row. Though I haven't seen the show, unfortunately I got to know from my troupe's artistes that they had gone on complimentary passes. So, I am not sure whether the viewers who watched the play were the true theatre lovers or they were just the invitees of the media house. No one will be happier than me if people have really bought tickets to watch the show. I

have never staged a free show in my life. Even my family members, former Odisha CM Nandini Satpathy and Union Defence Minister VK Krishna Menon had to buy tickets to watch my dramas in the 1960s."

Theatre can't survive unless viewers buy tickets to watch the shows, says Mahapatra.

Asked his opinion if *Ahe Nilashaila* has set a trend, he said, "If it's a trend, then it has to be repetitive, it has to be a continuous process. With just four successful shows, it will be more like a Yatra than a tradition of a theatre. The tradition of a theatre is not just a couple of shows, it at least needs to have 10-20 shows.

"I used to have 30 to 40 shows of one play at URT then only I would start the next one. I did about 20 plays for URT and the shows of the play used to run at least for 22 days and maximum 44 days. If they say the play has set a trend then the trend must continue to become a tradition."

'ENOUGH OF FREE THEATRE SHOWS'

Haren Sahoo, president of Odisha Natya Sangh, a confederation of nearly 150 theatre troupes of Odisha, said, "The play has certainly caused a stir among the theatre community here. But there are quite a few factors which have gone in its favour."

"First, we have to accept that Lord Jagannath is the biggest brand of Odisha. Anything connected to him is to taste success. So, when he is one of the characters along with Gajapati, it was bound to click. Sponsorship is the second and most important factor that ensures success. If a troupe gets such a big sponsor, it can spend liberally to improve the production quality which has happened in this case. So,



big sponsors, corporate houses should also come forward to promote Odia plays by supporting other theatre troupes. They are always welcome. The last factor but not the least, is the role of the media. The play got wide publicity for the past several months in print, electronic and social media platforms which generated tremendous interest among the viewers. Therefore, the media should come onboard and promote the Odia plays," added Sahoo.

However, the veteran director admitted that this play has forced the theatre community to introspect the way plays are being designed and presented to the audience at the moment.

"Abe Nilashaila proved to be an eye opener. Recently the members of Odisha Natya Sangh held an urgent meeting to discuss the issue. It was unanimously decided that now onwards every troupe would sell tickets to support the artistes and improve the quality of plays. There is also another reason behind taking



A scene from the play Nilashaila staged by Uttar Purush in 2016

this decision. Earlier, the state government used to offer 50 per cent discount on auditorium rent to the troupes for staging Odia plays and the practice has been stopped since the online booking system was introduced. While giving the discount, the government had put a clause that the troupes can't sell tickets. With no respite being offered by the government, we have decided to sell tickets to meet the expenditure and expand the canvas," signed off Sahoo.

'WE NEED TO EXPAND OUR VISION'

Asked about the secret behind the success of Abe Nilashaila, play's director Lala Biren Ray said "It was a combination of many things. But creative freedom is the most important factor that worked for this project. We had a 70-member crew and rehearsed for nearly six months and the result was there for everyone to see. The producer has not compromised on any count as the goal was to present a neat and entertaining production to the audience as they were to pay for that."

Lala, a former secretary of Odisha Natya Sangh, went on to add, "Another important factor was the subject. Many of us knew

about the Patali of the Trinity at Chilika but they were not aware about the circumstances under which the Gajapati had taken this decision. The visuals of idols being taken on hand-drawn carts to the seashore struck an immediate chord with the viewers which contributed to the success. Many people in our fraternity, who don't consider me a good director, had to eat



their words after this play. The producers are planning for repeat shows of this play as they want more and more people to know about the rich history and heritage of Odisha."

Now people associated with Odia theatre need to expand their vision and think big which is very important to execute such great ideas, he concluded.

'NILA SHAILA WAS DRAMATISED EARLIER ALSO'

Uttar Purush is the one of the oldest theatre troupes in Bhubaneswar which has groomed many theatre personalities over the years under the tutelage of stalwarts like Asim Basu, Bijoy Mishra, Rai Charan Das, Sarat Mohanty, Gourishyam Mohapatra and many others.

The troupe's present secretary Debadutta Pati, also an actor and drama director, was not ready to accept that Abe Nilashaila has set trends as such.

"This was not the first time that tickets were sold for a drama show, as claimed by a section of spirited fans across platforms. Satabdira Kalakar,

an old troupe of Bhubaneswar had been selling tickets till 2006. Similarly, eminent theatre directors Simanta Mohanty of Sabuja Natya Sanstha, Surya Mohanty of Mukti Theatre,

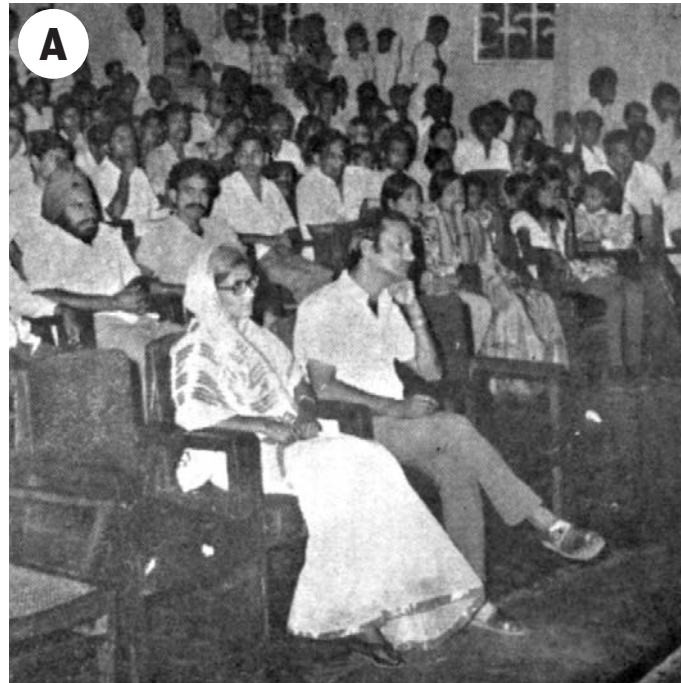


Anant Mahapatra of Utkal Rangamanch Trust and several other groups still sell tickets for their shows. Asim Basu, one of the founder members and president of our troupe, had never been for free shows.

"Unfortunately, no troupe could give this kind of publicity due to lack of resources for which they were not noticed. Playwright Bijay Satpathy also adapted the same novel of Surendra Mohanty and Uttar Purush enacted it on stage but not many remember it now," said Pati.

Asked about the euphoria created around Abe Nilashaila, he added, "The play has surely rejuvenated the theatre scene and may inspire some other big sponsors to show interest in Odia theatre. A few troupes may start selling tickets for the shows. But I am quite apprehensive if any theatre troupe can match the kind of resources used in this play."

GOLDEN DAYS OF YORE



A. Former Odisha CM Nandini Satpathy (1st from left in front row) in viewers' gallery during a theatre show at Rabindra Mandap in the 1970s



B. Double stages- one as royal court of Prithviraj Chouhan and the other for Mohd Ghori-were used in Odia play Sanjkuta staged in Rabindra Mandap in 1974. C. Theatre troupe Uttar Purush's handout for the play Jadukara which was staged for four days in a row in June 1974.

Advertisement for 'Jadukara' featuring Odia text and a stylized logo. The text includes 'ଉତ୍କଳ ପୁସ୍ତକ ମନ୍ଦିର', 'ଉତ୍କଳ ପୁସ୍ତକ ମନ୍ଦିର ପ୍ରକାଶନ', and 'ଉତ୍କଳ ପୁସ୍ତକ ମନ୍ଦିର ପ୍ରକାଶନ'.

HIDDEN PARADISE

DECORATED BY TERRACED VALLEYS, ENCHANTING HILLS AND SINGING FOUNTAINS, KORAPUT OFFERS THE PERFECT GETAWAY TO SATISFY ONE'S WANDERLUST. LITTLE WONDER THEN THAT THE HILL STATION, AFTER DARINGBADI, IS CALLED THE SECOND KASHMIR OF ODISHA



RASHMI REKHA DAS, OP

Koraput, nestled in greenery, covered with thick forests and dotted by pristine waterfalls and deep valleys, is an ideal destination if you plan to enjoy a secluded nook to escape the hustle and bustle of city life. With the world is all set to celebrate International Day for Monuments and Sites, also known as World Heritage Day, April 18, Sunday POST takes a sneak peek at a few less-travelled sites of Koraput, the second Kashmir of Odisha.

BATRISHA SINGHASAN

About 45 km away from the district, Nandapur block attracts visitors for its historical heritage. Nandapur, once the ancient capital of Jeypore kingdom, was ruled by the Suryavanshi rulers. The Batrisha Singhasan speaks volumes on the rich cultural heritage of the region. The famed Batrisha Sinhasana, a 32-step, is a well-preserved relic. Linked to the fabled throne of Vikramaditya, a legendary emperor of the Suryavanshi dynasty, Batrisha Singhasana has been a major crowd puller of the locality.

Talking about the historical significance of the place, travel blogger Prayag Samal says, "It is said that King Vikramaditya used this place for administration purposes. He used to visit this place after hunting and take rest at a small hilltop connected with 32 steps. Thus, the throne was later known as Vikramaditya's Batrisha Singhasan. He had delivered crucial judgment at this place. Apart from that relic, the 1.8-metre red

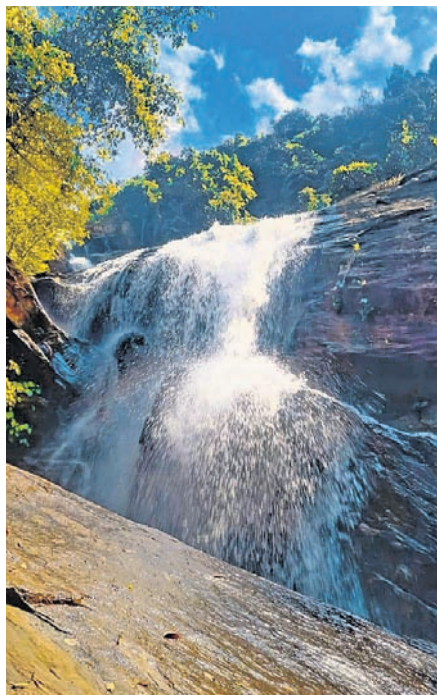


image of the Ganesh idol at the Ganesh temple is mute witness to the glorious past. The height of the idol keeps increasing over the years."

RANI DUDUMA WATERFALL

Talking about the place, Prayag says "One can find beautiful pictures of Rani Duduma waterfall if you get into my Facebook page which makes you feel like packing your bags and paying a visit right away. Located a kilometre away from Nandapur, the waterfall at Badigada village will leave you awestruck at first sight. Known as one of the highest waterfalls in India, the fall finds its origin from the River Machkund and its water is the backbone of the Machkund Hydro Electric Power Project."

About its legend, he says, "An elderly couple who used to live at Nandapur was not happy for not having a baby. Once the couple found a baby boy and baby girl playing in the forest when they had gone to collect wood. They adopted both the kids. Later, the boy became the king of Nandapur and his sister the princess. During his tenure, he won many wars and built temples like Bhairabi, Shiva, and Ganesh. It is believed that once during the Chaiti Parab the king went on a hunting expedition. In his ignorance, his sister went to the same forest and was taking a bath in Rani Duduma waterfall. Seeing his sister, he threw an arrow towards his sister to warn her about others' presence. The princess got to know that someone was watching her in this condition and she jumped from the waterfall to save her self-respect. That's why the waterfall is named as Rani Duduma. Locals also set up a temple in their memory.



Photos: Prayag Samal



BHAI BHAUNI TEMPLE

As strange as it may sound, residents of Girligumma under Dasamantpur block have been worshipping Lord Shiva and his consort Goddess Parvati as siblings at Banadurga cave but not as consorts since ages.

Talking about its legend, the temple priest Padmalochan Bisoi says, "We have heard from our ancestors that Shiva and Parvati were siblings who used to stay with their parents in a cave. Shiva and Parvati fell in love with each other and expressed their desire to live as a couple following which their father asked them to leave the cave and directed them to go to the place where the present temple exists."

Bana Durga, a stone-carved idol worshipped by the roadside, used to protect the siblings and is testimony to this interesting legend.

On the other hand Tigmanshu Narayan Bhanja, who works at a bank in Koraput, says, "I have been residing here for more than seven years. I have found that there is no specific historical background behind this tribal belief. Lord Shiva and Devi Parvati as siblings were worshipped by our ancestors since time immemorial. Thus, we are also worshipping the deities without questioning the authenticity. In the past, the idols of Lord Shiva and his consort were worshipped by the royal families of Jeypore kingdoms for centuries. The Dussehra festival of Jeypore kingdom got started only after the beating of drums at Banadurga cave in Girligumma village."

Dasvi: Yami thanks IPS officer for praising her

Yami Gautam was praised by retired IPS officer RK Vij for her portrayal of an IPS officer in her latest release *Dasvi*. In the film, Yami plays a jail superintendent.

The actress has responded to praise for her performance in her recent release *Dasvi* from a retired IPS officer. In *Dasvi*, Yami plays IPS officer Jyoti Deswal, who is working as a superintendent at a prison. Retired IPS officer RK Vij praised Yami's portrayal on social media, saying she looked "similar to our young IPS women officers."

Dasvi centres on a politician (played by Abhishek Bachchan), who lands up in jail and there, he is spurred by Yami's character to complete his Class 10. Yami has received praise for her portrayal of a cop from fans and critics alike. Retired SDGP RK Vij's praise is the latest in a long line. Vij is a former IPS officer of the 1988 batch, who retired from the force as a Special Director General of Police.

He took to Twitter to share a post from *Dasvi* that featured Yami's look in the film.



Writing the film's name in Hindi, RK Vij wrote, "A nice entertainer movie, with a meaningful social message! All three acted well and #yamigautam in uniform looked so similar to our young #IPS women officers, full of enthusiasm." Some fans echoed the officer's sentiments. One replied, "Exactly looking Fab in uniform."



Genelia wraps shoot for Mister Mummy

Actor Genelia D'Souza has finished filming for her upcoming comedy-drama film *Mister Mummy*, also starring her actor husband Riteish

Deshmukh. The film, which began production across several locations in England last month, is directed by Shaad Ali.

Taking to Instagram D'Souza wrote, "That's a wrap for

me on Mr Mummy. This was such a fun crew."

According to the makers, the film revolves around a couple, played by D'Souza and Deshmukh, with opposing choices when it comes to children.

"But destiny has something else planned for the childhood sweethearts on a mad, bumpy ride of comedy, drama," reads the official synopsis.

This will be the couple's fourth film together following their 2003 acting debut *Tujhe Meri Kasam*, *Masti* and *Tere Naal Love Ho Gaya*.

Mister Mummy is produced by T-Series and Hectic Cinema Pvt Ltd.

Ranveer to perform at IIFA 2022



Gully Boy star Ranveer Singh will deliver a live wire onstage performance at the 22nd edition of the International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) Awards 2022 May 22.

The actor's performance will serve as one of the attractions of the event which celebrates and honours the excellence in Indian cinema.

The IIFA awards which is scheduled to be held May 20 and May 21 along with the IIFA weekend will bring its global brand presence to Yas Island, Abu Dhabi. The global event will be hosted by top stars Salman Khan, Riteish Deshmukh and Maniesh Paul.

Speaking on the occasion, Ranveer Singh said in a statement, "Yas Island is like home to me, as I am the brand ambassador of such a spectacular destination! I am super thrilled to be heading there to entertain people with a performance that will be super special."

"The 22nd edition of the biggest celebration of Indian cinema - the International Indian Film Academy & Awards, is taking place in Yas Island, Abu Dhabi, and it doesn't get bigger than this! I am looking forward to a 'KHAAS' (special) IIFA experience at Yas because I know that from the hospitality to the awe-inspiring celebrations, it's going to be epic", he added.

Shahid spills beans on his next



Shahid Kapoor, who is awaiting the release of his upcoming film, *Jersey*, recently opened up about his next project titled, *Bloody Daddy* with filmmaker Ali Abbas Zafar.

Sharing some details about the movie, Shahid said that *Bloody Daddy* is a really fun movie. According to him, it is exciting and has some fantastic action. The

actor also went on to say that Ali Abbas Zafar has conceived something very exciting and hard-hitting. He added that they will hopefully release it by the end of 2022. However, if not this year, then they will definitely be trying for early 2023.

Earlier, Shahid had shared a picture of himself with the director as he announced their collaboration. He had captioned it, 'Let's get this started @shahidkapoor are you ready for a crazy, quirky, mad ride of guns & gangs.'

Style your scarves this summer



This latest summer fashion trend is not just an accessory but can also double up as a unique piece of clothing



Belt it

If you're looking for a way to add more colour and funk into your outfit, try using a scarf as a belt. Looping the scarf through your denims and

tying a cute knot in the front helps 'tie' the whole outfit together (pun intended!). Use a scarf to add contrast to your outfit, adding the colour pop you need this summer.

Summer is unquestionably a sublime time of the year for scarves to become a wardrobe essential and there is no indecision that this fun accessory can transform the look of an outfit in just a second. The options are many but just make sure you are teaming it up well. Filling your summer diaries without styling your scarves is not justified as your ways to beat the heat should be iconically stylish. Henceforth, here are some exquisite yet simple ways to play the game of scarves cool this summer –



Bandanas for the win

If Katrina Kaif is wearing a scarf as a bandana, you know it's a summer trend you have to try too. Use silk scarves to add that extra glam to your outfits, or to even hide a bad hair day (we promise no one will know!). Wear it like a bandana or make a ponytail and tie it around your hair to add some extra volume and playfulness to your hair.



Try the sleek cravat

Who said formal wear has to be boring? The cravat has for long been monopolised by men, but ladies, it's time for you to try it out too. This sleek way of adding some print and colour to your outfit is easy and no-fuss. However, if formals aren't an aesthetic you're into, try wearing a scarf with any shirt you wear, like Lily Collins, to zhuzh up your look. Pick a scarf that contrasts your outfit to make it shine.

Scarf Top

It's no surprise that wearing scarves as tops has taken the internet by storm. From folding them in half and tying a knot at the back to looping it through your bra to create a bandeau silhouette, the scarf is versatile enough to be draped in any way you want! For inspiration, take a look at these creative ways fashion influencer Komal Pandey styles two scarves as a number of different tops.



Beach cover-ups galore

Summer means beach time, and scarves can be used as a great cover-up on the beach. Not only do they add the extra oomph to your look, but also ensure you can lounge at the beach all day and then grab a meal at a beach shack without having to worry about a change of clothes. Wear scarves in the same print as your swimwear or in the same colours to make your outfit flow like the waves.

Things to keep in mind while wearing scarves

Scarves are a closet staple that can go unnoticed or ignored. But if you invest in a good scarf, it can be the star of the show. Here are a few things to keep in mind while buying scarves:

Go for eye-catching prints: There's not a lot that can compete with a glorious printed scarf. The prints will help accentuate the colours in your outfit and can also be used to draw attention to your whole look.

Keep a good mix of sizes: Scarves can only be worn in a number of ways, only if it is big enough or wide enough. Have a good variety of scarves, both long and wide, as well as short, to use them in a number of ways.

Go for silk: Silk scarves look more luxe and have the quality of being quite striking. The fabric will help shape your body and also add the oomph you're looking for.



Queen



PHOTO: KUMAR SHARAT
COSTUME DESIGN: LADYBEN BY BENORITA