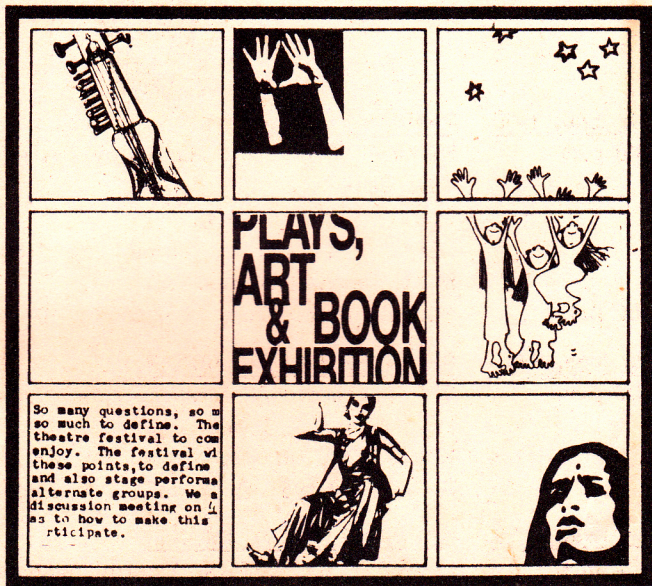


EXPRESSION

WOMEN'S CULTURAL FESTIVAL



2-5 JUNE, 1990. PRITHVI THEATRE AND
RAVINDRA NATYA MANDIR, BOMBAY.

Programme



2nd June, 1990

6.00 p.m.

PRITHVI THEATRE.

NAYIKA BHED in Hindi by Vivadi,
New Delhi.

and

MULGI ZALI HO in Marathi by Stree
Mukti Sanghatana, Bombay.

9.00 p.m.

Repeat performance of NAYIKA BHED.

3rd June, 1990

7.00 p.m.

RAVINDRA NATYA MANDIR.

VIY in Hindi by Nirakar, New Delhi.
and

KALAJATHA in Malayalam by Kerala
Sastra Sahitya Parishad, Trivandrum.

4th June, 1990

7.00 p.m.

RAVINDRA NATYA MANDIR.

LILAVATI by Cultural Centre, Madras.
and

JAGINE JAU TO in Gujarati by Majlish,
Bombay.

5th June, 1990

6.00 p.m.

PRITHVI THEATRE.

KADITHU MAYE in Kannada by Span-
dana, Bangalore.

9.00 p.m.

Repeat performance of KADITHU
MAYE.

and

ULRIKE MEINHOFF in Hindi by Ranga-
karmee, Calcutta.

An art exhibition and a book exhibition will be
held at the venue of public performances i.e.

PRITHVI THEATRE : 2nd and 5th June, 1990

RAVINDRA NATYA MANDIR : 3rd and 4th June, 1990

Seminar : "Representation of Women in different
art forms : In search of a feminist Methodology" at
Retreat House, Bandra 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.
2nd to 5th June, 1990.

[attendance to the seminar strictly by invitation.]

EXPRESSION - Women's Cultural Festival

EXPRESSION is a multi-faceted women's cultural event to be held in Bombay from 2nd to 5th June, 1990. It centres around a theatre festival and comprises of an exhibition of drawings, watercolours and graphics by women artists of Bombay and Baroda, a book display and a seminar on 'Representations of women in different art forms : in search of a feminist methodology'. This convivium of artists, activists and scholars is partly in response to a deeply-felt need to confront the realities and complexities of women's expression in traditional and contemporary art forms. However, it is more than just an expression of women's creativity. It is a reflexive endeavour attempting simultaneously a search for a methodology and a critique.



Theatre Shows

We can confidently mark our time as the era of women's consciousness. Issues regarding women's social position and their analysis have been playing a major role in our socio-political life for the last 20 years. Naturally, this environment has greatly influenced the art forms of today, especially theatre.

The EXPRESSION Theatre Festival will present plays from all over the country reflecting these concerns. Most of these plays challenge pre-conceived definitions of the representation of women in contemporary theatre. At the same time, by deriving significant forms from tradition and improvising on the established structures, these plays widen women's experiential horizons.



Synopsis of Plays

NAYIKA BHED in Hindi by Vivadi, New Delhi.

Conceived by Vivadi.

Written by Geetanjali Shri.

Directed by Anuradha Kapoor.

The play probes into the representation of women in Indian myth and literature. The main character is a woman who could be Kunti, but she could also be any woman. A woman whose relationship with men and women provide her an identity but, who is too easily seen within the roles of mother, sister, daughter, queen, prostitute and ascetic. A woman who is silent, but, whose silence contains unrealised strength and desire. It is here, in this unnamed zone, that the person in her 'lives'.

MULGI ZALI HO in Marathi by Stree Mukti Sanghata, Bombay.

Written by Jyoti Mhapsekar.

MULGI ZALI HO (A girl is born) - one of the pioneering plays produced by women's organisations in the early 80's, created history by performing over 1000 shows. The play uses traditional and folk forms and music to depict women's subordinate status within the family and humourously depicts the commercialisation of a marriage alliance.

VIY in Hindi by Nirakar, New Delhi.

Short story by Gogol.

Adapted by Achala Jain.

Directed by Anamika Haksar.

VIY centres on students of a seminary who set out on a journey, the journey of life, as it were. One of the students, Khoma Brut, meets an old woman who enters his life to take him on a journey, wholly different. But the intensity of her silent fantasy is too much for him. Unable to bear it, he destroys her.

He attempts to return to a 'normal' life. When he attends Church, he is forced to confront the fundamental conflict between his religious training and the world of nature.

This is the story on one level. At another level, it explores the man-woman relationship, which can never be fully realised because it is so grossly distorted by religion and society.



KALAJATHA in Malayalam by Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad, Trivandrum.

Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad which started as a People's Science Movement has developed into a broader democratic rights organisation. Over the last decade the group has innovated a form of theatre closely aligned to street theatre. The skits being performed, dealing with various aspects of women's oppression, have been used by the group in their consciousness raising tours.



LILAVATI by Cultural Centre, Madras.

Conceived and choreographed by Chandralekha.

LILAVATI, a dance-drama inspired by the celebrated text on Indian mathematics by Bhaskaracharya, is a visualization of certain numerical questions, posed in the highly poetic shlokas of Bhaskara. The text is addressed to Bhaskara's daughter Lilavati and is a classic attempt at transforming learning into a joyous, creative activity. LILAVATI traces the link between natya, kavya and ganita and gives numbers an imaginative, sensual form.

JAGINE JAU TO in Gujarati by Majlish, Bombay.

Written by Dario Fo & Franca Rame.

Adapted by Meenal Patel.

Directed by Madhusree Dutta.

JAGINE JAU TO (Waking Up in English translation), a one-woman play, can be called one day in the life of any working woman. On the one hand, it humourously portrays the double burden of a working woman frantically trying to strike a balance between her roles as a worker in the factory and as a mother-cum-wife-cum-maid in the family. On the other hand, it shows the destructive effect of the intrusion of inanimate gadgets. Instead of facilitating her daily life, these commodities invade her intimate space and stifle her.



KADITHU MAYE in Kannada by Spandana, Bangalore.

Written by Mamatha G. Sagara.

Directed by B. Jayashree.

KADITHU MAYE depicts the dilemmas of a dancer. Her husband who had originally fallen in love with the 'artist' in her is now determined to crush her creativity by ensnaring her in the web of domesticity. When Manasa becomes conscious of this she tries to break the shackles of marriage and motherhood in her search for freedom. On the other hand her sister-in-law who finds security and solace in her traditional roles ultimately finds that her marriage also does not last. While it is a shattering experience for the sister-in-law, for Manasa, the experience is positive and empowering.



ULRIKE MEINHOFF in Hindi by Rangakarmee,

Calcutta.

Written by Franca Rame.

Directed by Bibhas Chakraborty.

ULRIKE MEINHOFF centres around the famous 'ultra-radical' 'Meinhoff-Bader gang' trial. It is an exposition of the mysterious suicides in prison of the four main accused in the trial. The play acts as a curtain raiser to two important truths of our time - the continuing and growing fascist tendencies in the power of the state and forms of violence directed against women above and beyond the privacy of man-woman relationships into the sphere of politics.

The Art Exhibition



The impact of women's creative expression has been felt very intensely in contemporary Indian art movement, noticeably in the last two decades. Expression wishes to examine the concerns and perspectives in the works of contemporary women artists.

The exhibition presents water-colour drawings and graphics of Sheela Gowda, Prayag Jha, Shakuntala Kulkarni, Lalita Lajmi, Nalini Malani, Anjana Mehra, Navjot, Pushpamala, Nileema Sheikh, Srilekha.

The Book Exhibition

"Feminist Publishing is to publishing, what feminism is to the world: forcing people to rethink, asking questions about who makes norms, who makes canons, who decides what is real knowledge and whom it should belong to, who decides standards of objectivity etc. In doing this, it is pressing at the boundaries of what has, over the years, come to be constituted as knowledge, scholarship, academics. With the coming of such texts and publications on the world scene, the myth that literature being a gentleman's profession has been shattered once and for all; new histories have been discovered, a whole new range of writers and subjects has come to light and with such writing has come honesty. There is no longer any need to pretend that women don't exist, no longer any need for authors to hide behind male names". - Kali for Women.

EXPRESSION gives you a glimpse of this new world of newer texts, texts which have innovated and discovered feminism.

Participants :

Kali for Women, New Delhi.

Stree Lekha, Bangalore.

Third World Book Store, Goa.

The Seminar

The seminar will provide a platform to open a dialogue between artists and scholars involved with the women's question and activists engaged in raising women's consciousness at the social and political level. This dialogue, hopefully, will evolve an ideological understanding of the issues involved and its projection in the work of individual artists and organisations involved in the women's movement. The seminar also hopes to create an environment for interaction between artists of different disciplines which might lead to more complex forms of expression closer to women's experiences and desires.

Session

- 2nd June - 1. Emergence of women in the theatre trade.
- 3rd June - 2. Reclaiming women's voice in Thumri.
3. Women protagonists in modern Indian literature.
- 4th June - 4. Evolution of Visual symbols.
5. Expression of sexuality in the work of contemporary women artists.
- 5th June - 6. Problem of representation, specifically in theatre.
-

We are thankful to :

The participating theatre groups * The participating artists * The delegates to the seminar * The groups participating in the book exhibition * Centre for Education and Documentation * Maxmueller Bhavan * Retreat House.

Special thanks to Manushi and Jagori for the pictures used in the poster.

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EXPRESSION Committee consists of representatives from :

Forum Against Oppression of Women * Stree Uvach * Vacha * Y.W.C.A. * Women's Centre * Women and Media *

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