

# **NINASAM TIRUGATA:**

## **Report 2012-13**



**Vigada Vikramaraya: Tirugata 2012-13: Dir. by Manju Kodagu**



**Mukkam Post Bombilwadi: Tirugata 2012-13: Dir. by Omkar K.R.**



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### **NINASAM TIRUGATA:**

Tirugata, the itinerant theatre repertory was established in 1985. Ninasam's idea of experimenting with such a project originated in the context of the decline of the professional theatre, and the limited achievements of the amateur theatre in post-independence Karnataka. It also aimed at testing whether it was possible to supplement the overall theatre activity in the state by presenting at a wide variety of centres, productions that combined the best elements of both professional and the amateur movements. It also provided the alumni of the Ninasam Theatre Institute a platform to test their innate talents and imbibed skills. A vast network of friends and contacts made it easier to organise the tour schedules. Trained actors and technicians appointed full time and paid; rehearsals and preparations for about three months; then, a long tour of about four months, encountering varied audiences all over Karnataka -- this, on broad lines, is Tirugata.

Tirugata has every year taken three major productions of renowned classics and one children's play to centres with the minimum facilities of a 30ft. x 20 ft. stage area, power supply and accessibility by road. Financing itself almost totally independently, on gate collections, the repertory has had a predominantly rural and semi-rural audience. Most importantly it has firmly proved Ninasam's belief that such a project can take birth and continue to live, nurtured by mass support. The first and the only theatre repertory of its kind in Karnataka, it has been very successful in activating interest in theatre all over the state.



### **TIRUGATA: Consolidated Overview:**

- Features: Established in 1985; group of about 20-25 artistes who handle both onstage and offstage work and are paid equally; 3/4 plays rehearsed July-September and tour shows of the same held October-March every season; one show every 50-100 kms of travel and a performance almost every day, working out to around 120 shows in 140 days.
- Milestones: Staged about 3660 shows of 89 productions before an estimated audience of 21.39 lakhs; 80% of the shows done in taluka towns or still smaller places; has covered all districts of Karnataka, almost every year; plays done include Western, Indian and Kannada works; directors invited include both Kannada and non-Kannada figures.
- Finances: Total expenditure approx. Rs. 1,15,000 in 1985; Rs. 4,50,000 in 1995; Rs. 13,00,000 in 2002; Rs. 24,00,000 in 2010. More than 60% spent on salary. Income: Grant from DoC, GOI (35%), revenue from shows (55%) and advertisement (10%). Charges collected from hosting organizations: Rs. 3000 for 3 shows in 1985; Rs. 10,000 for 3 shows in 2002; Rs. 15,000 for 2 shows in 2010.



**Vigada Vikramaraya: Tirugata 2012-13: Dir. by Manju Kodagu**



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### **TIRUGATA: 2012-2013:**

The plays that Tirugata 2012-13 put up during its tour schedule from October 2012 to March 2013 were: (1) *Vigadavikramaraya* (Kannada play by Samsa, directed by Manju Kodagu) and (2) *Mukkam Post Bombilwadi* (Translation of the Marathi play by the Paresh Mokashi, translated and directed by Omkar K.R).

#### **Members of the Troupe:**

The Tirugata troupe this year consisted of the following members:

- |                           |                         |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Avinash Rai M.K.       | 11. Manjunatha Hiremath |
| 2. Kalani Bhajantri       | 12. Manjula K.M.        |
| 3. Chandrakala Gatti A.V. | 13. Mahesh Omborkar     |
| 4. Chandramma R.          | 14. Vineethkumar M.     |
| 5. Jayaram K.N.           | 15. Shivashankar        |
| 6. Devaraja M.R.          | 16. Sheela N. Kuruvante |
| 7. Dhananja R.C.          | 17. Satheesh P.B.       |
| 8. Praveen Kumar N.A.     | 18. Sooraj B.R.         |
| 9. Basavaraj S.           | 19. Praveenkumar        |
| 10. Manjunath C.J.        | 20. Madhusoodhan V.D.   |

All the above members are trained from the Ninasam Theatre Institute.





**Mukkam Post Bombilwadi: Tirugata 2012-13: Dir. by Omkar K.R.**

### **Plays:**

#### **1. Vigadavikramaraya** (Kannada play by Samsa, directed by Manju Kodagu).

Synopsis: This play is the most important of Samsa's works, all of which are based on the imagined history and legends of the earswhile Mysore Kingdom. As in his other plays, in this play too, Samsa depicts the dramatic intrigues in the Mysore court, and the adversaries who are waiting to attack it from outside. The play begins with the effeminate king Raja Wodeyar getting stronger, and takes a turn with him being assassinated by Dalavayi Vikramaraya, his deputy. Finally Ranadheera takes the reign and Vikramaraya is killed. This play is a classic in Kannada drama, and has seen several productions before. The present production proposed to construct this play in a physically oriented theatrical idiom.

#### **2. Mukkam Post Bombilwadi** (Translation of the Marathi play by the Paresh Mokashi, translated and directed by Omkar K.R).

Synopsis: This is a recently written farce in Marathi, and it is being translated and produced in Kannada for the first time. The play is set in pre independence India, when the second world war was being fought. Durinnng that time, Hitler, as part of his negotiations with Japan to produce the atom Bomb, is returning from his visit to Japan, and his plane crash lands in rural Maharastra. In that village, a small rural theatre troupe is peforming a mythological play, and Hitlers arrival then gets weaved into the plot of that play. As a result of all these imagined political drama, finally that village gets independence before India gets freedom. The play is a very lively mix of history and legend; reality and fantasy as well as comic and provocative.



**Playwrights Directors and Technicians:** The playwrights and directors who worked with Tirugata this year were:

- Samsa: A major Kannada playwright, who wrote most of his plays between 1915 and 1925, Samsa was born in Kollegala taluka in Mysore district. Unsuccessful in academic studies, he studied old Kannada and Sanskrit on his own and worked in various odd jobs for a livelihood. While writing plays, he did not use the contemporary Kannada; instead, modeled his theatrical language on the medieval Kannada of the inscriptions and court proceedings. He had planned more than 20 plays on the history of Mysore of which 6 were written. He was also active in theatrical productions, but as he had a persistent persecution complex, he committed suicide at an early age.
- Presh Mokashi: Paresh Mokashi started his theatre career at Theatre Academy, Pune and later turned to playwriting. *Sangita Debuchya Muli* was his first play; and *Lagna Kallol*, *Mangalavarachi Munki*, *Samudra* were his other major works. He has also worked in films and his film *Harischandrachi Factory* has got much acclaim, and was also nominated for the Oscar Award.
- Manju Kodagu: Manju Kodagu is an alumni of the Ninasam Theatre Institute and has also worked in Ninasam Tirugata as an actor. He has conducted workshops, directed plays at Ninasam and elsewhere in Karnataka, and his major productions are: *Yaro Andaru*, *Maharatri*, *Malla Gimpel*, *Marubhoomiyallondur Yana*, *Dare Devil Mustafa*, *Medea*. A few years back, he had also directed the play *Sharavana Services* for Ninasam Tirugata.
- Omkar K.R.: An alumni of the Ninasam Theatre Institute and the National School of Drama, New Delhi, Omkar has worked in India and Indonesia. His major productions so far include *Cherry Topu*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Dumb Dancer*, *Neerab Katha*, *Andha Yuga*, *Malgudi Huli* and *Chora Charanadasa*. Working as a theatre freelancer in Mumbai now, Omkar is active in theatre, films and television. He has specialised in the Rubik's Cube and has conducted several workshops based on that.



**Mukkam Post Bombilwadi: Tirugata 2012-13: Dir. by Omkar K.R.**





**Vigada Vikramaraya: Tirugata 2012-13: Dir. by Manju Kodagu**

The Tirugata troupe this year worked with the following technical experts: Gurumurthy Varadhamula, Shripada T. Bhagawath, Krishnamurthy M. M., Shrikanth G. R., Madhusudhan V., Shivaprasad K.T., Amaresh K., Ravi Murur and Vidya Hegde.

#### **Rehearsals and First Shows:**

Ninasam Tirugata began this season during April 2011, with the rehearsals of the following productions:

- *Vigadavikramaraya* (Kannada play by Samsa, directed by Manju Kodagu)
- *Mukkam Post Bombilwadi* (Translation of the Marathi play by the Paresh Mokashi, translated and directed by Omkar K.R)

The first shows of the first two productions were given for the public at Heggodu (Sagara Tq., Shimoga Dt., Karnataka) on 7th and 13th October 2012. This was during the annual Culture Festival that Ninasam organises every year. Some 550 people watched the performances each day and the shows were received very well.

#### **Travel performances:**

After these first shows, the troupe began to travel in phases, and it gave a total number of 104 performances in Karnataka.

The complete tour schedule of Tirugata during 2012-13 was as following:

## TIRUGATA SCHEDULE

| Date            | Details          | Venue                       |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>2012</b>     |                  |                             |
| Oct. 7 & 8      | First shows      | Heggodu                     |
| Oct. 9 to 13    | Tour Preparation | Heggodu                     |
| Oct. 14         | Travel           |                             |
| Oct. 15 & 16    | Shows            | Tumkur                      |
| Oct. 17 & 18    | Shows            | Bangalore (H.N.Kalakshetra) |
| Oct. 19 & 20    | Shows            | Bangalore (Rangashankara)   |
| Oct. 21 & 22    | Shows            | K.G.F.                      |
| Oct. 23 & 24    | Shows            | Chintamani                  |
| Oct. 25         | Shows            | Travel                      |
| Oct. 26 & 27    | Shows            | Ramanagara                  |
| Oct. 28-29      | Shows            | Mandya                      |
| Oct. 30         | Travel           |                             |
| Oct. 31 & Nov.1 | Show             | Melukote                    |
| Nov. 2          | Travel           |                             |
| Nov.3 & 4       | Shows            | Chitradurga                 |
| Nov. 5 & 6      | Shows            | Channgiri                   |
| Nov. 7&8        | Shows            | Davanagere                  |
| Nov. 9 &10      | Shows            | Shimoga                     |
| Nov. 11 to 16   | Holiday          |                             |
| Nov. 17         | Travel           |                             |
| Nov. 18 & 19    | Shows            | Siddapura                   |
| Nov. 20-21      | Shows            | Manchikeri                  |
| Nov. 22 & 23    | Shows            | Ankola                      |
| Nov. 24         | Travel           |                             |
| Nov. 25 & 26    | Shows            | Hubli                       |
| Nov. 27         | Travel           |                             |
| Nov. 28 & 29    | Shows            | Nidadoshi                   |
| Nov. 30 & Dec.1 | Shows            | Belagavi                    |
| Dec. 2 & 3      | Shows            | Ramadurga                   |
| Dec. 4 & 5      | Shows            | Mudhola                     |
| Dec. 6          | Travel           |                             |
| Dec. 7 & 8      | Shows            | Chadachana                  |
| Dec. 9 & 10     | Shows            | Vijapura                    |
| Dec. 11         | Travel           |                             |
| Dec. 12 & 13    | Shows            | Gulbarga                    |
| Dec. 14         | Travel           |                             |
| Dec. 15 & 16    | Shows            | Hydrabad (Out of State)     |
| Dec. 17         | Holiday          |                             |
| Dec. 18         | Travel           |                             |
| Dec. 19-20      | Shows            | Aditya Nagara               |
| Dec. 21- 22     | Shows            | Gurumatkal                  |



|                 |                        |                              |
|-----------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Dec. 23         | Travel                 |                              |
| Dec. 24 – 25    | Shows                  | Lingasooguru                 |
| Dec. 26-27      | Shows                  | Karatagi                     |
| Dec. 28 – 29    | Shows                  | Maski                        |
| Dec. 30-31      | Shows                  | Hunugund                     |
| <b>2013</b>     |                        |                              |
| Jan. 1          | Travel                 |                              |
| Jan. 2& 3       | Shows                  | Raichur                      |
| Jan 4           | Travel                 |                              |
| Jan. 5 & 6      | Shows                  | Savadatti                    |
| Jan. 7 & 8      | Shows                  | Gokak                        |
| Jan. 9          | Travel                 |                              |
| Jan. 10 & 11    | Shows                  | Gangavathi                   |
| Jan. 12         | Travel                 |                              |
| Jan. 13 & 14    | Shows                  | Donimali                     |
| Jan. 15         | Travel                 |                              |
| Jan. 16 & 17    | Shows                  | Hampi                        |
| Jan. 18         | Travel                 |                              |
| Jan. 19 & 20    | Shows                  | Dharwar                      |
| Jan. 21 to 26   | Holiday                |                              |
| Jan. 27         | Travel                 |                              |
| Jan. 28 & 29    | Shows                  | Ajjampura                    |
| Jan. 30         | Travel                 |                              |
| Jan. 31 & Feb.1 | Shows                  | Kundapura                    |
| Feb. 2 & 3      | Shows                  | Kota                         |
| Feb. 4 & 5      | Shows                  | Udupi                        |
| Feb. 6 to 8     | Workshop with students | Ujre                         |
| Feb. 9 & 10     | Shows                  | Ujre                         |
| Feb. 11         | Travel to Heggodu      | Urumane Utsava Preparation.  |
| Mar. 6,7,8,9    | Shows                  | Urumane Utsava               |
| Mar. 10         | Holiday                |                              |
| Mar. 11         | Travel                 |                              |
| Mar. 12 & 13    | Shows                  | Mudubidre                    |
| Mar. 14 & 15    | Shows                  | Karkala                      |
| Mar. 16 & 17    | Shows                  | Mangalore                    |
| Mar. 18 & 19    | Shows                  | Suratkal (Govindasa College) |
| Mar. 20 & 21    | Shows                  | Puttur                       |
| Mar. 22 & 23    | Shows                  | Suratkal (NITK)              |
| Mar. 24         | Travel                 |                              |
| Mar. 25 & 26    | Drama Shows            | Madikeri                     |
| Mar. 27         | Travel                 |                              |
| Mar. 28 & 29    | Shows                  | Rakshidi                     |
| Mar. 30 & 31    | Shows                  | Channarayapattana            |
| Apr.1 & 2       | Shows                  | Mysore.                      |



**Discussion of the Tirugata play at Ninasam Culture Course: October 2012**

### **Responses:**

The first responses for this year's Tirugata plays were received during the Ninasam Culture Course held during October 2012. In that event, some sessions were earmarked for the discussion of the plays put up at the evening cultural festival and in the regular schedule of the conference. As always, these open-house sessions were extremely lively and rewarding. The discussions consisted of responses, questions or seeking of clarifications by the participants, who came from the most diverse of backgrounds; responses and observations by resource persons and special invitees at crucial points; and a summing up by moderators or by the director.

The plays also got a very good response from the press and the public during the travel shows. There were many reports and reviews in the media, one of which is reproduced below:

Excerpt from the report of Tirugata shows: The Hindu 19 October 2012:

Ninasam Tirugata is back on its annual rounds. This time with Samsa's classic 'Vigada Vikramaraya' and a Marathi play by Paresh Mokashi, 'Mokkam Post Bombilavadi'.

Both the productions by Ninasam are period plays, yet come home with a contemporary relevance. The huge cast – a set of immensely talented actors – recast these classics into our times rather brilliantly. 'Vigada Vikaramaraya' directed by Manju Kodagu captures all the subtle shades of the Mysore rulers, the schemes and struggles.

K.R. Omkar directs 'Mokkam Post Bombilavadi', a play with weird turn of events set in pre-Independent India.



### **Outputs/Achievements:**

Here are some important pointers to the outputs and achievements of our theatre repertory, Ninasam Tirugata:

- Ninasam Tirugata is a theatre repertory working continuously from 1985 and since then it has produced plays on a regular basis and has travelled all over Karnataka and outside every year.
- An average of 500 people has watched each Tirugata performance every year between 1985 and 2012.
- Tirugata is the ONLY repertory in Karnataka which has been working on a sustained basis for almost last 3 decades.
- Ninasam Tirugata is attached to the Ninasam Theatre Institute, the only drama school working in Karnataka at present. It has been giving opportunities for the students of the Institute for advanced training as well as employment on a regular basis.



**Audience at the Tirugata premiere: October 2012**

- Ninasam Tirugata is a well conceived group which has employed 20 to 25 actors and actresses every year paying them a regular salary. It has invited theatre directors of repute from Karnataka and elsewhere for productions.
- The directors who have worked so far include Sri. B.V. Karanth, Sri. Kavalam Narayana Panikker, Prof. Fritz Bennewitz, Sri. N. Premchand, Sri. Raghunandan, Sri. Atul Tiwari and Sri. H. Kanhailal. Some of the major productions of these directors during the last 28 years has been done with this group (i.e. Sri. B.V. Karanth's *Gokula Nirgamana* which is hailed as a landmark production in Kannada Theatre recently).



- Both the press and the public have appreciated the project all through these years as the enclosed press clippings testify. Tirugata is lauded for its professional productions with high artistic merit, comparable to any major theatre repertory in India.
- It has also been noted that Tirugata has travelled and performed more extensively than any other repertory troupe in India and it has concentrated especially on the non urban audience in Karnataka.
- The organisation of the Tirugata project has been efficient and smooth all these years. Apart from maintaining proper accounts and documents, it has kept a detailed documentation of its work in photographs, slides, video and written questionnaires.



Discussion of the Tirugata play at Ninasam Culture Course: October 2012