



FestivET 2023

SILVER SPRING BLACKBOX THEATRE

8641 Colesville Road, Silver Spring, MD 20910

Ushneek of Kolkata, India

Ushneek of Kolkata, India

Suman Mukhopadhyay, India

MILITS, MI

Spotlight Columbus, OH

Houston Natua Natyogosthi, TX

Ramdhonu Natyogosthi, MD

Mandi Theatre, IL

Kushilob, DE

BHOOT

KALLUMAMA

MONCHO GAAN

DURGHATONA

BOTTOMS UP

HOIMONTI

DAMPOTYO BHALOBASA

THE ANTIDOTE

ARDHEK MAHADESHER KHOJE

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2023

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2023

Ebong TheatriX is supported in part by funding from
the Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County

arts & humanities
council of montgomery county



About Ebong TheatriX

Ebong TheatriX, a theatre group in the Washington DC area, was founded in 2014 by a group of theatre enthusiasts who believe theatre is an integral part of our lifestyle and culture, and it brings our community together. Theatre serves to bridge our passion between our vocation and avocation—what we prepared ourselves to achieve professionally and what we aspire artistically.

At Ebong TheatriX, we are all students of theatre. We focus heavily on theatre workshops to build our acting skills by constantly learning to adapt our masks and methods for the characters we portray. Ebong TheatriX members had the opportunity of participating in workshops and master classes by eminent theatre personalities, e.g., Suman Mukhopadhyay, Debshankar Halder, Kaushik Sen, Debesh Chattopadhyay, Ashish Goswami, and others.

Our scripts tell the stories of our lives—about characters that live within us—the immigrant, the artiste, the romantic, the quirky, the rebel—we pack it all. In just 9 years, Ebong TheatriX has produced 20+ plays presented at 70+ shows in 15 states in the US and 7 shows in India.

For more information on Ebong TheatriX, and our upcoming plays, please visit:

www.ebongtheatrix.org

ET Board of Directors:

Aditya Chakraborty, Arindam Ghosh, Dibyendu Paul, Mita Paul, Shampa Basu, Torsha Bhattacharya

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FestivET 2023 Schedule



Following FestivET in September 2022 and DiversET in March this year, ET is proud to present FestivET 2023—a two-day theatre festival featuring two plays and songs from the stage by renowned theater artists from Kolkata, India and plays by eminent theatre teams from six states in the USA.

Saturday, September 30, 2023

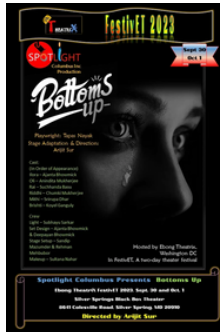
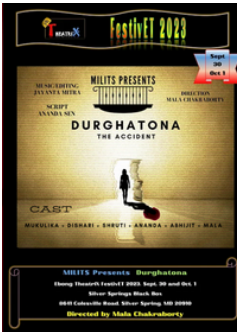
OPENING by **Suman Mukhopadhyay** of Kolkata, India

MILITS, MI presents **DURGHATONA**

Spotlight Columbus, OH presents **BOTTOMS UP**

Houston Natua Natyogosthi, TX **HOIMONTI**

Ushneek of Kolkata, India presents **BHOOT**



Sunday, October 1, 2023

Ramdhonu Natyogoshthi, MD presents **DAMPOTYO BHALOBASA**

Mandi Theatre, IL presents **THE ANTIDOTE**

Kushilob, DE presents **ARDHEK MAHADESHER KHOJE**

Suman Mukhopadhyay of Kolkata, India presents **MONCHO GAAN**

Ushneek of Kolkata, India presents **KALLUMAMA**



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Featured Plays

Durghatona (The Accident) by MILITS, MI

It is a solemn night at the Behala residence of Niladri and Kamalika, a successful physician couple. On this night three years ago, Niladri's wife Tithi died in a horrible accident. A stranger appears at the couple's doorstep and brings with her a shadow from a murky past. What really happened on that fateful night three years back? An inspector calls and suddenly nothing seems to be as they appear. The twisty tale of 'Durghatona' is loosely based on the famous British movie Chase a Crooked Shadow that was adapted later in multiple Indian language films.

Playwright: Ananda Sen **Direction:** Mala Chakraborty

Cast: Mukulika, Dishari, Shruti, Ananda, Abhijit, Mala

Music editing: Jayanta Mitra **Sound Projection:** Rupam Bhattacharyya

Bottoms Up by Spotlight Columbus, Inc, OH

Five old friends reunite after 25 years. Everyone has a story to tell. But what's so damning about these stories? What do these stories reveal? How do they affect the friendships?

Playwright: Tapas Nayak

Stage adaptation & Direction: Arijit Sur

Cast: Anindita, Suchanda, Chumki, Koyel, Srirupa, Subarna

Light: Subhayu Sarkar **Set design:** Ajanta Bhowmick & Deepayan Bhowmick

Stage setup: Sandip Mazumder

Supertitles: Saurav Roychoudhury, Pathikrit Mukherjee

Hoimonti by Houston Natua Natyogosthi, TX

Samaresh and Subho are in love with Hoimonti! They both have a socially defined place in Hoimonti's space, bitter-sweet irrelevant! Hoimonti is ill-defined and can't be labelled or pigeonholed. However, simultaneously you can sense her conflicts, contrasts and helplessness. She is being discussed! Finally, the two gentlemen, separated by a timeline, meet and say 'good-bye'.

Original story: Nilanjan Chattopadhyay

Stage adaptation & Direction: Souvik Ghose

Cast: Shubhodip & Souvik

Featured Plays



Bhoot (The Ghost) by Ushneek of Kolkata, India

The mists descending on the Darjeeling hills shroud them in a veil of mystery and forgotten pasts. Atop one such remote hill is a secluded guest house where Diptesh, a retired chartered accountant, has sought refuge from the civilized world. However, his plans are interrupted by Mohon Manohar Shobhan Sundar Murali Badan Shastri - the resident ghost of the house with a wicked sense of humor. A friendship is forged between the man and the ghost over stolen food, shared jokes and love for fried chicken and single malt. But soon such light hearted banter takes a more serious and personal tone when the two are forced to look at their own pasts - forcing them to dig deep into their soul and bare their innermost experiences. Would they survive such brutal honesty.

Script & Direction: Ishita Mukhopadhyay.

Cast: Debshankar Halder, Shubhashish Banerjee, Nandini Sen

Dampoty Bhalobasa by Ramdhonu Natyogoshthi, MD

"Dampoty Bhalobasa" is a timeless reflection of marital relationships - just as day follows night and night follows day in accordance with the laws of nature, a happy marital relationship also evolves with affection, detachment, jealousy, and love, following its own rules - all kinds of emotions come together to create a natural marital relationship. This delicate interplay of human emotions is depicted in Rainbow Theatre production "Dampoty Bhalobasa"- if you can find yourselves within it, then the play will have served its purpose meaningfully.

Written and Directed by: Tapash Ghosh. **Cast:** Mahasweta & Subha Bhattacharya

Lights: Arup Chakravarty **Supertitles:** Tamal Bhattacharya

The Antidote by Mandi Theatre, Illinois

When the past pelts stones at the future, it creates a rift, and a blow awaits to doom in. This play promises to be a moving portrayal of a crumbling familial structure. It is a profound story about duties, about lives, about children and parents, about an exhausted old man in front of his adult children. All precise, honest and well crafted.

Playwright: Neeraj Purohit & Pururava **Director:** Alka Sharma

Cast: Alka Sharma, Dalvinder Multani & Goldie Manocha

Sound: Sonya Arya. **Light:** Swati Sinha



Featured Plays

Ardhek Mahadesher Khoje by Kushilob, Delaware

What guides the underlying stream of modern life? Alienated from the closest of relations, hounded by age-old epithets of human morality and guerrilla desires alike. What is it that sustains the will to seek new horizons? The urge to push the dimensions of personal oaths and social contracts? At what cost? This short play saunters through a vignette of whirlwind relations - inseparable from each other, yet fragile. Narratives that keep throwing these questions at us, till we stumble towards the surprising but inevitable end.

Original story: Moti Nandi

Stage adaptation & Direction: Kaushik Roy Chowdhury,

Cast: Shuvam, Sneha, Nayan, Sudeshna, Som, Ritaja, Sayantan, Oindrila, Abir, Richi

Set: Sayantan Songs: Shuvam, Sharmila

Crew: Amrita, Senjuti, Srijan, Kaushik

Kallumama (Uncle Kallu) by Ushneek of Kolkata, India

The play begins with Kallu getting killed by his gang and reliving the events of his life. His narrative is tinged with sarcasm and bitterness at times, and tongue-in-cheek during other times. But listen carefully and one will hear the undercurrent of pain and suffering. Born into a decadent landholding family in Bangladesh, but orphaned by the time he turns sixteen, he is tossed into a vortex of events that make him a dreaded criminal. This play explores his life as a microcosm of the socioeconomic political situation of Bengal after partition and the creation of the "anti-social."

A Solo Performance by Debshankar Halder

Script & Direction: Ishita Mukhopadhyay

The Maestros



Suman Mukhopadhyay

Suman Mukhopadhyay is a National Award-winning film director, actor, and playwright who works with various cities and universities in the USA on Fulbright Fellowship, film festivals, lectures and theatre demonstrations. Suman's awards include National Award for Best Bengali film (Herbert), Best Director award at Philadelphia and Mexico, and Gran Prix award at Sarajevo. In addition to Herbert, Suman's notable films include Putulnacher Itikatha, Nazarband, Seshar Kobita, Asamapta, Kangal Malsat, Mahanagar@Kolkata, Chaturanga, and Posham Pa. With an early beginning at



'Kolkata's famous Chetana' theatre group led by his father Arun Mukhopadhyay, Suman created masterpiece theater productions from literary works of famous Bengali authors and adaptations of European drama. To name a few: Teestapaarer Brittanto, King Lear, Mephisto, Bisarjan, Aajker Shahjehan, and Bechara BB. Suman's Lenin Sharanite Bhanu created a sensation at the 2023 NABC.

Moncho Gaan

Ebong TheatriX is privileged to have had the opportunity to work with Suman with his local production of "Shungo Shudhu Shungo Noi" at last year's festival, and the current presentation of "Moncho Gaan" (Songs from the stage). Bengali stage theatre has a rich tradition of songs and music. The lineage came from our folk traditions where music and songs played a vital role in story telling. Bengali theatre adapted the tradition in a very creative way. While there is a huge basket of theatre songs in this genre, Suman will be presenting glimpses of past and contemporary songs.

Direction: Suman Mukhopadhyay

Vocalists: Suman Mukhopadhyay, Adrita Dutt, Arundhati Ghosh, Banhi Bhattacharya, Rashmi Dasgupta

Harmonium: Namita Kundu **Guitar:** Abhishek (Papan) Dutt

Percussion: Nirvan Sengupta



The Maestros

Debshankar Halder

Debshankar Halder, is the stage-legend and superstar of today's Bengali Theater. Since the '80s, Debshankar has acted in numerous plays with eminent groups, e.g., Nandikar, Rangapat, Natyaranga, Sudrak, Gandhar, Bratyajon, Sansriti, Blank Verse, Purbo-paschim, Mukhomukhi and Chetona, among others. An iconic actor known for his versatility, he fascinated us by playing Debabrata Biswas in 'Ruddha Sangeet', Girish Ghosh in Ek Moncho Ek Jeebon and Oedipus in King Oedipus just to name a few among the 60 plays with lead roles. Debshankar is the only actor for whom a theatre festival was held in 2010 to feature



his plays. He has been recipient of the highest award for performing arts—Sangeet Natok Academy Award from the President of India, as well as other prestigious awards, e.g., ABP Ananda Sera Bangali Award for Best Actor, Banga Bhushan, and Bengali stage centenary Star Theatre award. Currently he has 18 running plays with him as the lead in cast.

Debshankar has worked in various roles in more than 25 films, some with lead characters as well, e.g., Aleek Shukh, Maya Mridongo, and Tadonto. He anchored popular TV shows such as Happy Parents Day and Apni Ki Bolen and several TV serials, e.g., Lakhmi Kakima, Rudrabinar Obhishap, Dujone, Byomkesh, among others. He has several audio drama albums to his credit, including Shesher Kobita and Nisshongo Samrat.

In the early part of his career, Debshankar was closely associated with Nandikar's Children's Ensemble where he wrote and directed over 40 children's plays, including the much acclaimed Bhalo Manush Noigo Mora.



The Maestros

Subhasish Mukherjee

Over the last forty-five years, the prolific Subhasish Mukherjee has earned a name as an actor and has acted in more than 200 films and numerous plays. Subhasish contributed significantly to the Bengali theater through his diverse roles in numerous productions including *Ajker Spartacas*, *Lambokarno Pala*, *Kornik*, *Jharer Kheya*, *Bisharjan*, *Dragon Bodher Pala*, *Buchner*, *Ghar*, *Khela Bhangar Khela*, *Parul Bone Robi*, *Meghe Dhaka Tara*, and *Agnijatak*. He has collaborated with noted theater personalities including Jochhon Dastidar, Debkumar Bhattacharjee, Sunil Das, Shyamal Ghosh, Suranjana Dasgupta,



Ishita Mukhopadhyay, Bratya Basu and Suman Mukhopadhyay. He has worked in theater groups including *Nakshatra*, *Charbak*, *Sanbarta*, *Antarmukh*, *Binodan*, *Nirbak Academy*, *Naihati Bratyajan*, *Ushneek* and *Chetana*. He is the co-founder and current President of *Ushneek*. Subhasish's debut film was *Chhoto Bokul Purer Jatri* by Purnendu Patri. Since then, he has worked with numerous directors including Tapan Sinha, Purnendu Patri, Buddhadeb Dasgupta, Utpalendu Chakraborty, Sandip Ray, Raja Sen, Prabhat Roy, Swapan Saha, Aparna Sen, Kamaleshwar Mukhopadhyay, Bappaditya Bandhopadhyay, Suman Mukhopadhyay, and Anjan Dutta. In particular, his performances in 'Shilpantar' (Dir. Bappaditya Bandhopadhyay), and 'Herbert' (Dir. Suman Mukhopadhyay) won critical acclaim from critics and audiences, and the film *Herbert* won the National Award. He has won numerous awards including BFJA (Twice), Uttam Kumar Award, Promotesh Barua Award (Thrice), Dishari Award, All India Critics' Awards, Utpal Dutta Samman, and Zee Television Award.

The Maestros



Ishita Mukhopadhyay

Ishita Mukhopadhyay founded the theatre group Ushneek and has been the in-house director for Ushneek for almost 35 years. Ushneek performed in prestigious festivals like Nandikar National Theatre Festival, Narir Mancho Theatre festival, Cuttack International Festival, Sangeet Nataka Academy Festival, and 8th theatre Olympics to name a few. Ishita directed her first play 'Ghar', an adaptation of Jean Paul Sartre's 'The Room,' when she was just 20. She performed as an actor under the direction of Salil Bandhopadyay, Sunil Das, Manoj Mitra, Alope Ranjan Dasgupta, Wolfram Mehering and others. She received several accolades, e.g., 'Uttam Kumar Award',



'Pramathesh Barua Award', 'All India Critics Award', 'All India Women Association Award', 'Kalaratan Award' in consecutive years as best director for plays like 'Kamalkamini' and 'Gawahar jaan'. She received a Senior Fellowship from the Ministry of Culture, worked as a journalist in various reputed print media, and scripted/directed tele-series such as 'Arabya Rajani', 'Ron Ruby Runa', and documentary films such as 'Alkaap', 'Kathokatar Kato Katha'. Ishita also directed 'Kallu Mama' which will be performed by Deb Shankar Halder at this Festival.

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Nandita and Utpal Dasgupta

Dr. Arunima Ghosh

Dr. Rita & Amitabh Ghosh

Dalwinder Multani

Anupa Bhaumik & Shyamalendu Pal

Subir Sen



FestivET 2023 Crew



Festival Directors: Arindam Ghosh & Dibyendu Paul

Fund Raising: Mita Paul

Food & Logistics: Torsha Bhattacharya

Treasurer: Shampa Basu

MCs: Jashoman Banerjee, Paroma Sanyal

Brochure: Aditi Bhattacharya

Guest Team Support and Management: Aditi Bhattacharya, Banhi Bhattacharya, Mahasweta Bhattacharya, Mita Paul, Shampa Basu, Sreedatta Banerjee, Subarna Chatterjee Thakur

Light and Sound Management: Rishov Goswami

Set Construction: Abhijit Dasgupta, Saibal Dey

Stage Managers: Abhijit Dasgupta, Sudipan Karmakar

Running Crew: Adeeporshi Thakur, Anika Dasgupta, Ankush Karmakar, Aryan Dasgupta, Ayush Talukder, Ejana Sanyal, Jiyon Banerjee, Shreya Talukder

Logistics: Amalendu Thakur

Supertitle Projection: Aditi Bhattacharya, Banhi Bhattacharya, Mahasweta Bhattacharya, Nandini Sen, Sreedatta Banerjee, Subarna Chatterjee Thakur

Food Committee: Adrita Dutt, Amalendu Thakur, Anika Dasgupta, Ankush Karmakar, Arjun Dasgupta, Aryan Dasgupta, Ashit Talukder, Ayush Talukder, Ejana Sanyal, Iina Ghosh, Kaushik Batabyal, Nandini Sen, Shibani Dutta, Shreya Talukder, Sreedatta Banerjee, Subha Bhattacharya, Subhangini Chakraborty, Swati Sil

Front Desk: Banhi Bhattacharya, Chandana Basu, Ejana Sanyal, Kaushik Batabyal, Nandini Sen, Paroma Sanyal, Swapna Banerjee

Poster Exhibition, Decoration & Certificates: Adeeporshi Thakur, Jashoman Banerjee, Jiyon Banerjee, Paroma Sanyal, Shreya Talukder, Subha Bhattacharya

Ushering: Adeeporshi Thakur, Adrita Dutt, Ankush Karmakar, Arjun Dasgupta, Ayush Talukder, Ejana Sanyal, Mahasweta Bhattacharya, Rashmi Dasgupta, Subha Bhattacharya, Surajit Dasgupta

Make-up: Arunima Ghosh, Subarna Chatterjee Thakur, Swati Sil

Videography / Photography: Abhishek (Papan) Dutt

ET Recycles Team: Iina Ghosh, Eshana Mukerji, Urja Chatterjee Thakur



Kabuliwala, 2014



Bratya, 2014



Keep Your Fingers to Yourself, 2015



**Kinoo Goalar Goli
Theke Broadway, 2015**



**Love Story
No. 5, 2016**

**Ebong TheatriX showcase of
past productions**



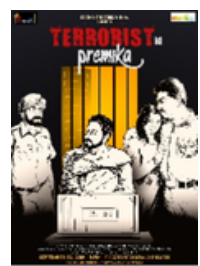
**Barita, Tui
Achish Kemon, 2016**



Mamonir Chobi, 2017



**Bidyut Esehilo
Porshu, 2017**



**Terrorist Ki
Premika, 2018**



**Kinoo Kaharer
Thetar, 2018**



Brishtir Arale, 2019



Looking Up, 2019



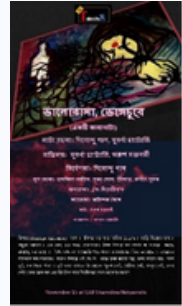
You Can't See Me, 2019



Living Doll, 2020



Chikitsa Shankot, 2020



**Bhalobasha
Bhengechure, 2020**



**Shesher
Kobita, 2021**

**Ebong TheatriX showcase of
past productions**



**PANDAmonium,
2021**



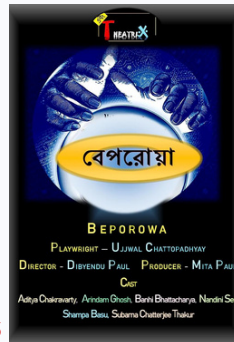
**Five Grains of Rice,
2022**



**Shunya
Shudhu
Shunya Noy,
2022**



Moncho Gaan, 2022



Beporoya, 2023

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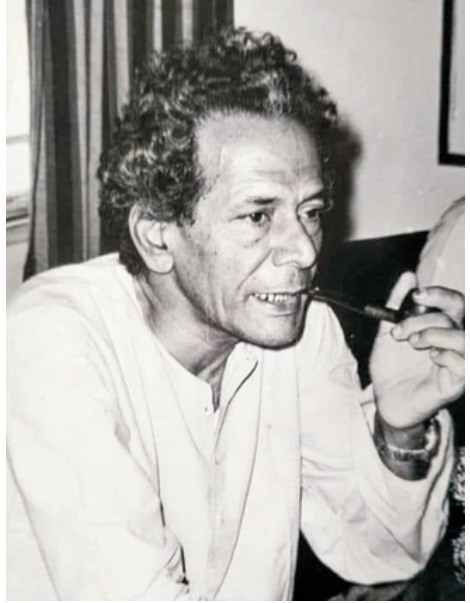




Celebrating Centurions

Habib Tanvir

Habib Tanvir, the illustrious theater director of India, was born on the 1st of September 1923 in Raipur, Madhya Pradesh. A luminary in the realm of Indian theater, Habib was a prominent figure in the Indian People's Theater Association (IPTA). His directorial journey took flight with the historic production of "Agra Bazar" in 1945. Astonishingly, nearly eight decades later, this production continues to resonate and remains relevant in the modern theatrical landscape. While he absorbed the nuances of Western theater forms during his time as a student at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in England, his heart and soul remained dedicated to the folk and marginal art form, "Naach" of Madhya Pradesh. Throughout his life, he served as a nurturing force, shaping and guiding countless young artists who would go on to make their mark in the Indian theater.



Among his most celebrated creations stands "Charandas Chor," a production from 1975. This groundbreaking endeavor featured 72 young actors and earned accolades for its brilliance. His repertoire boasts other notable works like "Mitti Ka Gari," "Kamdev Ka Apna Basant Writu Ka Sapna," "Ponga Pandit," and "Uttaramcharit." Habib Tanvir's unique ability to seamlessly blend traditional folk formats with folk stories and adaptation of ancient Sanskrit plays, redefining Indian theater and creating a new genre that drew deeply from Indian tradition while reaching out to the world at large.

His exceptional contributions were recognized with numerous awards, including the Sangeet Natak Academy Award, Kalidas Samman, and the Padma Bhushan, to name a few.

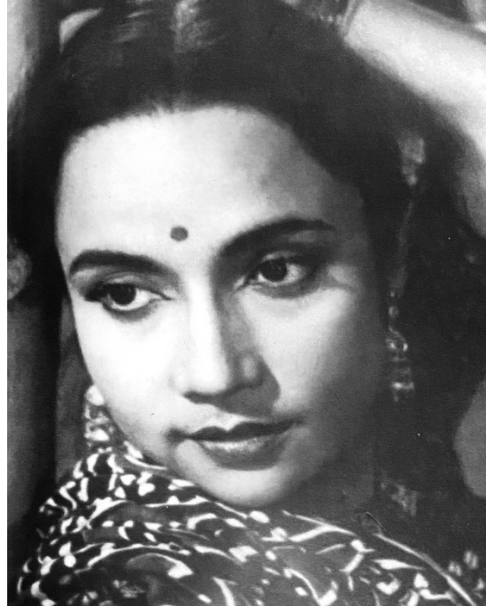
As we mark the centenary of his birth, we at Ebong TheatriX pay our heartfelt respects to this remarkable theater director-actor. His legacy remains a testament to the enduring power of art and its ability to transcend time and culture.

Celebrating Centurions



Shobha Sen

Shobha Sen, born on the 17th of September 1923, in a quaint village of Faridpur, which now resides within modern-day Bangladesh. She shines as a guiding star in the constellation of Bengali and Indian theater. In 1944, she embarked on her journey in the historical Bengali masterpiece "Nabanna," a pioneering torchbearer of Indian theater. She also took the helm as the leading lady in the groundbreaking Bengali film of 1950, Chinnomul, screenplay written by Satyajit Ray and directed by Nemai Ghosh, the first cinematic narrative woven from the haunting tragedy of the partition.



For over half a century, from 1944 until 2017, her presence graced the Bengali stage and silver screen with her portrayal of characters leaving indelible imprints on our hearts. Her life's voyage was a testament to the ideals and social consciousness championed by the movement of Gananatya Sangha. As the wife of Utpal Dutt, another titan of Indian theater, her role in his artistic odyssey reads like a fairy tale spun from the loom of destiny. In 2010, she received the prestigious Mother Teresa International Award, a testament to her enduring impact. Her unforgettable performances in plays such as Ka/Joi, Angar, Barricade, Titumir, and Tiner Talowar have carved their niches in the annals of Indian theater history.

On the centenary of her birth, Ebong TheatriX cherishes her memory, and with the deepest reverence, we pay tribute to her monumental contribution to Indian theater, for she paved the path for the actresses of future generations.



Celebrating Centurions

Tapas Sen

Tapas Sen, born on the 11th of September 1924 in Dhubri, Assam, was the pioneer of light design in Indian theatre. People often asked him the secret of his love for his craft to which he responded: "I have gazed upon the hues of the setting sun, reflected in the Brahmaputra's embrace, each day since my inception. I've witnessed the flickering candlelight upon the fisherman's vessel, swaying to the river's rhythm, the shimmering sand dunes under the full moon's gentle caress, and the nocturnal ballet of fireflies in the dark abyss. They were my tutors." He, the untaught virtuoso, ascended the



throne of Indian theater without the formality of structured tutelage. In 1940, he embarked on his luminous journey as the master of light for the production "Jwala" by Indian People's Theater Association (IPTA). Swiftly, he expanded his repertoire, embracing myriad forms of performing arts—jatra, dance drama, puppetry, and more. In plays like Raktakarabi, Char Adhyay, Kallol, Setu, Manusher Adhikare, Mohakalir Baccha, Mahatma vs Gandhi or more recent, Kashinama or Janmodeen, he wove illusions with light that shall eternally grace the annals of Indian theater. He also wove the Indian "Son et Lumière," where light and sound danced in harmonious tandem. His enchanting spell still endures in Teen Murti Bhawan, Sabarmati Ashram, Ramrekha Ghat, Maan Mandir, the Old Fort of Delhi, the majestic Red Fort, and the regal Agra Fort. Commencing with ancient techniques, it was his indomitable spirit that led the way for the dawn of modern light technology in Indian performing arts. Mere days before his demise, he bestowed his radiant touch upon the iconic Howrah Bridge, a beacon that now defines the skyline of Kolkata. On the centenary of his birth, Ebong TheatriX remembers him, and with reverence, we pay homage to his monumental contribution to the rich tapestry of Indian theater.

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