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# **binder**

Thematic Stage Reading\*  
Vijay Tendulkar's

**SAKHARAM BINDER**

Designed & Directed by | Sarbajeet Das

\*Warning: Obscene language explicit visual content not suitable for kids

We see things differently,  
We analyse them differently,  
So, we present them differently .  
We are THEATRE ON YUR OWN.

In 2015, Sarbajeet Das founded  
THEATRE ON YOUR OWN (TOYO)  
with a thought of following right processes;  
which has formed the roots of our group.

We love to make original pieces of art, and  
yet forever are inspired by classic  
literatures. We team up to present our  
understanding of the play, which may be  
different from what is, thus allowing us to  
play with our and your minds.

We believe in art, as artists and as people,  
thus supporting all pieces – race no bar,  
language no bar, form no bar. This  
approach has helped us create three distinct  
TOYO presentations



1 TOYO  
ORIGINALS  
our very own

2 CHUSKI  
NATAK KI  
our take on classics

3 TOYO  
BROTHERHOOD  
integration of art(ists)

## Current Event: CHUSKI NATAK KI/BINDER

Sakharam Binder, the protagonist, thinks he has the system by the tail and he can disregard the culture & societal values as long as he is truthful. He picks up other men's discarded women—castoff wives, who would otherwise be homeless, destitute or murdered with impunity, and takes them in as domestic servants and sex partners. He rules his home like a tin-pot tyrant, yet each woman is told that she is free to leave whenever she likes. He professes his ideology of absolute freedom and truthfulness, however...



...what he does not anticipate are the moral and emotional complications of this arrangement, which prove painfully ruinous to everyone involved. With due respect to the playwright, we have made no changes to the text in this adapted thematic staged reading. Instead of seeing this as a story of four characters, we want to show it as a mirror for us to look within ourselves, identify & accept the hypocrisy that we always carry as a first step to changing our perspective.

We have edited a few sections of the play to optimise time. Scenes 5, 6, 7 of Act 3 are not a part of this presentation w.r.t. text. Scene 2 (Act 3) is cropped, Scene 11 from Act 2 and Scene 1 from Act 3 are merged.



# OUR TAKE

We see Sakharam as a thought more than a human being. We believe his story addresses strange and complex human pathology. Like Brecht's *Mother Courage*, he exploits a corrupt system for personal advantage, and then discovers that the price of playing the game is everything he hoped to protect.

On the outside, our presentation resembles a story book with distinct images & text, but as we look in closely and repetitively, we go through a sensorial experience. Our seamless, ready-to-move-and-fix, homemade set and light design is a character in itself that stands parallel to other characters of the play. Nothing in our presentation is for the sake of it. On the contrary it provokes you to focus on the metaphors, scrutinise them and draw your conclusions.

Starting from its banning in 1974, *Sakharam Binder* has been one of the most controversial plays drawing many studies and interests. In an era of low self-awareness and self-esteem, the play questions the domination of male ego over sensibility and sensitivity.

Through *Binder*, we have explored the idea of how vulnerability and violence makes a man fascinating, importantly the way he expresses it. *Raudra Rasa* is one of the most fundamental *rasas* a human can experience according to the study of *Navarasa*. When the understanding of *Raudra Rasa* in human nature is translated into a play it not only becomes an explosive piece of art but also a thesis. The most intriguing aspect of our play is its strong yet subtle emphasis of human pettiness which is displayed through metaphoric devices.

In this play, Tendulkar has used many devices through objects, creatures, etc to depict the relationship one has with him/herself thereby reflecting the mental landscape of his characters. In our scenography and set design, therefore, we have incorporated such devices in the form of images and creative lighting that compels us to correlate the metaphors. Some of them are highlighted as under:

Sakharam is frequently shown playing a Mridangam, depicting different moods and objectification of our desires and authority.

Lakshmi's conversation with an ant is the most striking device showcasing her extreme happy/sad moods. She disconnects from reality and talks to insects instead, but fails to have a real relationship with Sakharam with whom she lives day in and out.

The scene of (and post) Ganapati Puja is introduced to project the hypocrisy from every angle and person that is involved.

Dawood is used as a dramatic device representing many moods of Sakharam and the boundary between Sakharam's outer/inner world.

While there are many such devices in the script and our play, the chief protagonist for us has been - *the human mind* - how it approaches living through complexities that exist and emerge amid the dilemmas of our lives which we are constantly drawn towards. And so the design of this play is a manifestation of mind in the form of voice and actions; the volatile relationship between mind and body - when they follow the same signals and then the times when the mind cheats one or both.



OUR TAKE

# SO FAR..





- Narrator, Champa's Husband (Body) -- MANOJ PANDEY
- Lakshmi (Body), Champa (Voice) -- FARIA FATMA
- Sakharam (Body - Act 1, Voice - Act 2&3), Dawood & Champa's Husband (Voice - Act 2&3) -- UTKARSH GAHARWAR
- Dawood (Body) - NIRAKAR PANDA
- Sakharam (Voice - Act 1, Body - Act 2&3), Dawood (Voice - Act 1) -- NIRLEK DHULLA
- Champa (Body), Lakshmi (Voice) -- DEBANJANA NATH

- Marketing Head, Assistant Director -- Faria Fatma
- Stage Manager -- Nirakar Panda
- Live Music Execution -- Ayan Biswas & Ganesh Poojari
- Set Design -- Ayan, Pragna, Preetam, Shravya, Nirakar and Sarbajeet
- Field work and Production -- Sakshi S, Chavi S, Preetam L, Hetal S, Shravya D, Gautam D, Prateek A, Surabhi G, Raj S, Gouind V, Jithin G and Vineet S.

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