

performance as resistance

countering sexual violence and impunity through art, poetry, and theatre

11-12 January 2020



Goethe-Institut /
Max Mueller Bhavan, New Delhi

Over the last year and a half, our *Stepping Stones* and *Body of Evidence* projects have collaborated with theatre groups in India (Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Delhi, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka) and in Nepal (with Panos South Asia) to develop performances, films, art and more to open up spaces where people, especially young audiences, can have discussions about sexual violence and impunity.

DAY 1: JANUARY 11, SATURDAY

2PM – 4PM

Welcome note by Dr. Berthold Franke, Regional Director Goethe-Institut / Max Mueller Bhavan South Asia

Introduction to project by Urvashi Butalia, Project Director, Zubaan and Navsharan Singh, Senior Programme Specialist, International Development Research Centre

The Memory Bill by Padmalatha Ravi

'The Memory Bill' touches upon ideas of the nation, nationalism, statehood and belonging. It addresses the nature of memory, and raises questions about trauma and why people might want to hold onto traumatic memories.

Undrapping Silence by Shilok ML

'Undrapping Silence' features various personal testimonials where Shilok undrapes sexual abuse and struggles with the sexually abused body and mind through her performance.

Zubaan by Nisha Karki from Word Warriors

'Zubaan' is a Nepali poem wherein inanimate objects speak about sexual violence. The poem expresses how victims and survivors of sexual violence wish that the inanimate objects that witnessed their assault could recount their stories in the courts of law as evidence.

followed by a conversation with Urvashi Butalia

4.30PM – 6PM

Name the Game by Anuradha HR and Sreekanth

'Name the Game' explores power and domination through the gender and caste lens, examining social and cultural impunity.

Durga Devi by Education Theatre in Nepal

'Durga Devi' is a monologue that portrays a mother fighting for justice for her daughter. The performance portrays how a mother's pain is further aggravated by insensitive journalism and social stigmas.

Nameless by Shuvangi Khadka from Word Warriors

'Nameless' is a poem about countless women who have been abused throughout history but whose names were buried by the whispers of society.

followed by a conversation with Navsharan Singh

6.30PM – 7PM

Sishako Saharma, Shilpee Theatre

'Sishako Saharma' is a forum play about the sexual violence faced by girls in their day to day life. The play revolves around two specific types of harassment: within the house by close relatives, and workplace harassment.

DAY 2: JANUARY 12, SUNDAY

11AM - 1PM

Speak up and Act by Lapdiang Artimai Syiem, Rangchirik Marak, Clyde Thangkiew and Abigail Nongsiej

'Speak up and Act' centres around sexual violence and impunity. It also touches upon oppression, stereotypes, the process of confronting memories of sexual violence, mental health, and trauma.

Knots by students of Azim Premji University

'Knots' raises various questions: where is the line between tolerance and injustice? Who decides what is just?

In the Broken Paradise by Pragati Parajuli and Yashashwi Karki from Word Warriors

'In the Broken Paradise' is a poem written from the perspective of a victim of sexual harassment who has passed away. During the poem, the audience becomes a part of the funeral for the departed as the soul speaks to them.

Private is Political Part I by Katha Ghera

'Private is Political' addresses sexual harassment in the workplace with a special focus on the theatre circuit of Kathmandu.

followed by a conversation with Laxmi Murthy and Thingnam Anjulika

2PM - 4.10PM

Allegedly by Mallika Taneja and Shena Gamat

'Allegedly' looks at the interaction of the Indian legal system with the concept of consent.

Silence No Longer: Artivism of Ashmina by Ashmina Ranjit

'Silence No Longer' is based on Ashmina's experience of being sexually assaulted as a child. The performance also looks at various ways that the pain and struggle sexual violence brings with it can be expressed.

Due Process and Legacy by Lal Poster

With a special focus on universities, this documentary looks at how the #MeToo movement raises various questions about due process, reputation, and how these factors affect the process of accessing justice for crimes of sexual harassment.

followed by a conversation with Farah Batool

4.40PM - 7PM

Open and Shut by Shabari Rao

'Open and Shut' looks at how women in positions of systemic power negotiate multiple and often opposing demands. This piece examines and complicates the idea of justice, and explores impunity within the law enforcement system.

Mungro by Surendra P. Joshi from Word Warriors

'Mungro' personifies a gavel witnessing injustice happening in front of its eyes. Being unable to do anything about it opens a floodgate of emotions in the gavel.

Private is Political Part II by Katha Ghera

Concluding discussion with Urvashi Butalia, Laxmi Murthy, Navsharan Singh, Farah Batool and Bidisha Mahanta

Acts of Remembrance by Yengkokpam Purnima Devi, Thangjam Jatishor Singh, Aheibam Chiranjit Singh and Yengkhom Boicha will be screened throughout the event. It uses text, body movements dialogue and dramatization of events to engage with the themes of sexual violence and impunity.

The English and Nepali *Alphabets of Violence and Resistance*, which debuted in December 2019, will also be on display.