

Miranda House
University of Delhi
Annual Society Activity Report (2022-2023)
Ariels, The English Theatre Society, MH.

Overview of the Society:

Ariels, The English Theatre Society, established initially as merely The English Theatre Society of Miranda House, derives its reformed name from the powerful, lively, freedom-craving spirit in William Shakespeare's 'The Tempest'. Like the same, therefore, our actors strive for physical liquidity, metamorphosis, and all the power that comes from being free in mind and spirit. Ariels restricts itself to productions on the stage, and produces a minimum of two plays every session - one full-length as their annual production, and another 20 minute affair that adapts, translates, or focuses exclusively on Shakespeare.

Session Core:

President - Rinjini Majumdar
Vice-President - Asra Malik
Production Head - Anindita Adhikari
PR Head - Pavaki Kapoor
Treasurer - Aliya Fatima

The activities of Ariels, the English Theatre Society of Miranda House, during the session 2022-23, can be divided into two subheadings - Productions, and Workshops. Here follows a comprehensive report on these activities.

Productions:

“MOONCALF” - SSI ANNUAL COMPETITION:

Note:

Shakespeare's "The Tempest" was adapted into a short fifteen minute production - "Mooncalf" - for participation in the Annual Competition organised by the Shakespeare Society of India (SSI). The adaptation presented a post-colonial take on Shakespeare's original play, with Ariel and Caliban, alone on the island, navigating their newly found freedom and making peace with it.

Cast and Crew:

Directors - Roshni Yadav, Diyasha Chowdhury, Udisha

Writer - Mudra Banerjee

Actors - Nandabala, Somedutta Chakroborty, Mudra Banerjee

Production and Backstage - Pavaki Kapoor, Aratrika Mukherjee, Ayushi Priya, Anindita Adhikari, Rajvi Singh, Pragya Ranjan, Rinjini Majumdar.

Achievements:

Best Special Effects on Stage

Best Actor - Second Runner Up (Mudra Banerjee).

Stagings:

Zakir Hussain College, 3rd February, 2023

Miranda House, English Department Fest (Renaissance Mela), 21st February, 2023.

“THE LOST LULLABY” - ANNUAL INTER-RAJPAL:

Note:

An adaptation of Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s “The Yellow Wallpaper”, and Humayun Ahmed’s “*Chokh*”, the play follows a couple’s grief and ultimate descent into psychosis. This psychological drama incorporated elements from the genres of physical and transcendental theatre, making rehearsals a more holistic and all-encompassing process.

Cast and Crew:

Directors - Titas Goswami, Rinjini Majumdar, Mudra Banerjee

Writers - Titas Goswami, Rinjini Majumdar, Mudra Banerjee

Actors - Pragya Ranjan, Rinjini Majumdar, Disha Singh, Nandabala, Sneha Jha, Rajvi Singh, Mudra Banerjee

Production and Backstage - Asra Malik, Anindita Adhikari, Ayushi Priya, Aliya Fatima, Nandabala.

Achievements:

Nil

Stagings:

St. Stephen’s College, 17th February, 2023.

“THE CANTERVILLE GHOST” - THE TEMPEST:

Note:

A modern adaptation of Oscar Wilde’s “The Canterville Ghost”, the play transforms the original story into a 1990 heist, complete with rock music, a lost jewel, gun-fights, and a lonely ghost.

Cast and Crew:

Directors - Aratrika Mukherjee, Ayushi Priya

Writers - Oscar Wilde, Unknown Online Source

Actors - Deevya Deo, Rajvi Singh, Disha Singh, Pragya Ranjan, Mudra Banerjee

Production and Backstage - Anindita Adhikari, Ayushi Priya, Asra Malik, Rinjini Majumdar, Titas Goswami.

Achievements:

NA

Stagings:

Miranda House, Annual Fest (The Tempest), 14th April, 2023.

Workshops:

THEATRE WORKSHOP - ARIELS x CRY:

The workshop was conducted from the 30th of June to the 2nd of July, 2022.

Day 1 focused on a crash course on the theory of theatre, its history, representation in cinema, and discussions around popular techniques and pop-culture.

Day 2 focused on production and its various elements, including, but not being limited to lights, sound, set-designing, colours, and symbolism.

Day 3 focused on the various elements of acting and character work.

The workshop proved especially helpful for those just starting out in theatre, and seeking to explore the various segments of this holistic art to decide their niche for themselves. The lessons on character work enabled members to approach their roles in a mature and experienced manner, leading to successful productions.

MOVEMENT WORKSHOP - MS. MANJARI KAUL:

The Ariels had the delightful experience of working with Ms. Manjari Kaul from the 18th to the 19th of October, 2022, in a movement based workshop.

The workshop enabled members to recognise the expressive abilities of their bodies, and to use them as instruments of story-telling and communication. It also instilled flexibility and liquidity in the actors' on-stage movements, proving especially helpful during the rehearsals of "The Lost Lullaby".

SCRIPT-WRITING WORKSHOP - ARIELS x BLUEQUILL - MS. MANJIMA
CHATTERJEE:

A two-day workshop on script-writing was organised jointly by Ariels, and BlueQuill, the Creative Writing Society, MH, from the 24th to the 25th of January, 2023.

The workshop taught the participants the particulars of scene and story building, including scene rhythm, pace, character development, script divisions, etc. Members emerged enriched in an understanding of both stage and paper, and the crucial transition between the two.

Other Competitions and Participation:

PLAYHOUSE - SABHA, ST. STEPHEN'S:

Ariels also participated in "Playhouse", the Production Competition held by St. Stephen's Sabha, on the 27th of March, 2023.

The participants were required to design the production (set, costume, stage lighting. etc.) of a scene from Girish Karnard's "Tughlaq". They produced a remarkable set design, complete with symbolic lighting, metaphorical colour-gradients, appropriate costumes, and planned movement blocking.

The session 2022-23 has been quite full, engaging, enlightening, and productive for The Ariels, and the members are all one step closer to an understanding of the holistic and demanding art of theatre. We hope that the coming session will be as engaging and enlightening, if not more.

Thank you,
Team Ariels.