



CONCEPT NOTE

SAARC CULTURAL FESTIVAL OF THEATRE 2021, NEPAL

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 ORIGIN OF THEATRE

The origin of the concept of 'Theatre' is as old as the beginning of the human evolution. The movement of body limbs to convey a message in an appealing manner was the root cause of every theatrical exposure in the world. There is ample evidence to showcase that man has created his own craftsman skill to appeal his brethrens, gods, and the nature in a very classic manner that the academia of theatrical elements are still found in their archives. From the ancient Egyptian pyramids to the classical Greek and Roman theatre, the mediaeval European and Shakespearean theatre in Europe was evolved from the same root and similar development is evident with regard to the Asian intervention. From Vedic chanting to the classical Sanskrit theatre there is a lineage of craftsmen and artisans who produced world renowned theatrical models identifying the socio-cultural needs and demands.

The inception of theatre therefore, is a global understanding and the purpose and the meaning is to embrace the societal needs by envisaging the commonality and common understanding. Despite the fact that the word theatre was derived from the Greek term *theaomai*, meaning "to see," it is a medium which needs the proper allocation of five senses to enjoy the real sensation of theatrical experience. However, what we need to understand is that the performance medium of "theater" has its own regional and global identities, with emerging concepts and crafting values to be evaluated and identified in retrospect of authentic and creative skills of mankind.

1.2 THEATRE IN SOUTH ASIA

It is so significant that the South Asia as one nation witnesses one of the oldest classical theatre traditions in the world. The *Vedic* literature, *Natya Sastra* and several other *silpa texts* reveal the fact that the Asian theatre had developed its theatre techniques and practices in its fullest capacity to bestow the Asian Theatre tradition. However, it is a predominant factor that each and every nation has developed its own theatre tradition portraying its authentic socio-cultural values and the craftsmanship of all times. The member states of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) must be w for this venture and therefore, the SCC extends its invitation to the esteemed member state of Nepal to host/ organize the **SAARC Cultural Festival of Theatre 2021** on the proposed dates in **Section 08** of this Concept paper, incorporating the harmonized provisions stipulated in the SAARC Cultural Centre, and delighted to witness the festival as recommended by the 12th GB meeting held on the 27th and 28th of Octobers and subsequently approved at the 58th Programming Committee of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

2. COVID-19 ADVISORY

However, in consideration of the prevailing situation faced by the entire world due to Covid-19 outbreak, the SCC so respectfully requests and recommends the dignitaries and the participants to follow all precautions to reduce the chances of being infected or spreading the disease. Further recommends taking into account measures such as social distancing, wearing mask, sanitization and etc. as stated by the World Health Organization and the concerned Ministry of the respective member state.

3. OBJECTIVES

- To accomplish the authentic cultural values bestowed through traditional theatre performances of South Asia.
- To restore, and exhibit the traditional craftsmanship embedded with traditional theatre performances of South Asia.
- Acknowledge the theatrical techniques, stage craft and management evolved through theatre performances.
- Identify the unique characteristics of theatre performances and their evolution to date in the region.
- Identify and analyze the commonalities in the South Asian region portrayed through the themes, forms, characters, stage craft etc.,
- To inspire younger generation to take up challenges in the creative and cultural field.
- To develop a data base on intangible cultural heritage of regional theatre performances as evident in the **SAARC Cultural Festival of Theatre 2021**.
- To develop and establish the research platform Asian Theatre Traditions.

4. PERFORMANCE PROTOCOL

The **SAARC Cultural Festival of Theatre 2021** as a proposition came into being at the annual governing board Meeting of SCC in 2019. Unfortunately, the scheduled programme was not held in 2020 due to Covid-19 and its nuisance and its mutilations. The Programme has been carried forward to the year of 2021, as per the approved calendar of activities of the 58th programming committee of the SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation).

While SCC is delighted to be collaborating with the member State of Nepal, it is important to ensure that the organizing this programme should not interfere with the well-being of people as the region still apt for vulnerability due to the pandemic. Thus,

the SCC recommends that the organizers of the festival and the relevant programs may strictly adhere to the health guidelines issued by the respective ministries in line with the challenges, and design a suitable program for the prevailing situation. ,

4.1 PROGRAMME FORMAT (VIRTUAL)

As the programme is scheduled to be held on **virtual mode**, the format has been realigned accordingly to match the requirements. Nominated troupe of theatrical performances shall send a pre-recorded performance in video format (**Please see: Section 6 for technical specifications**) recorded to fulfill the requirements of this programme therefore the copyrights to the ownership, digital and physical storage, and sharing video footage will remain with the SAARC Cultural Centre. Performance should be choreographed in a way that it emulates the authentic characteristics of theatre tradition of each member state so that it will reflect the diverse aspects of cultural performances along with its bodily enactments.

4.2 PERFORMANCE GUIDELINES

- i. Each member state may submit two theatrical performances (**Please refer to Section 6**) for a maximum duration of One (01) hour.
- ii. Each item must not exceed 30 minutes.
- iii. Performance can be arranged in a studio/stage as it preserves the sound quality.

5 OFFICIAL NOMINATIONS

- i. All SAARC Member States are invited to nominate two (02) theatrical performances portraying the unique elements of their theatrical performances.
- ii. The host Member State of Nepal may nominate two (02) No.s of 30 minutes long performances and one (01) full length performance to showcase the novel trends in Nepalese theatre.
- iii. Each member state will send the names of performers including the Director/s and Producer/s. A 500 word biography with a “2x2” coloured photograph with minimum 600x600 pixels must be submitted for publication purposes (**Please follow the specifications in Annex I**).

6. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

(Pre-recorded video must comply to the below mentioned guidelines)

- i. Maximum duration for all items: One (01) Hour
- ii. Duration for each item must not exceed 30 minutes.
- iii. Video files should be FHD (Full HD 1920*1080) in MP4/MOV/AVI
- iv. Recorded file should be named by a desired title that will be displayed on the screen while playing.
- vi. Name/s of the artist/s of each item must be submitted in the soft copy in a separate file folder under the same title.

7. NOMINATION PROCEDURE

Names of the nominated performances and the artistes, together with the following details must be sent to the SAARC Cultural Centre forwarded through the relevant line Ministry concerned (Cultural Affairs), and the respective Ministries of Foreign/External Affairs of the Member States, to be reached by the SAARC Secretariat, by **30th of November 2021**.

Please use the Information Sheet **(See: Annex I)** to send the soft copies of the following information regarding the nominated participants, directly to the addresses of the officials of the SAARC Cultural Centre as given below once the nominations are granted by the relevant line ministries;

- a. 500-word biography of each nominated participant of the troupe
- b. Brief description of the theme of the performance being presented (preferably with a picture)
- c. A short description (500 words) of each production must be provided for publication purposes.
- c. High-resolution photographs of the nominated participants
- d. High-resolution photographs of the troupe in performance, if available and appropriate.

Please send to:

Professor (Mrs.) Prashanthi Narangoda/ Director,
SAARC Cultural Center
director@saarcculture.org

SCC affirms its fullest cooperation to host the particular **SAARC Festival of Theatre 2021 in Neapl**, and prepared to assist in every aspect of planning, organizing, monitoring and executing of this programme.

8. DATES, DURATION AND VENUE

Final confirmation of the dates, program agenda and duration of the Programme will be announced upon confirmation of the same by the honoured host Member State of Nepal, however, the SCC proposes to conduct the aforementioned festival on the **20th of December 2021** in collaboration with the SAARC Cultural Centre. The programs will be held on **virtual mode** therefore, it will officially be displayed/ podcasted via the official website of the SAARC Cultural Center and later be telecasted over the Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation as the official virtual host partner to pay honour to the artists and the theatre performances of South Asia at no cost and as a non-profit air screening.

9 DEADLINES FOR NOMINATIONS

- i. The names of the nominated participants must reach the SAARC Secretariat no later than **30th of November 2021** along with the details of the nominated participants as requested in order to be included in the Brochure. (Any material received after this date may not be included in the official Brochure).

10 OUTCOMES OF THE PROGRAMME

- i. The theatrical performances of the region will reveal the significant factors of traditional theatre, drama and choreography of the region.
- ii. Artists and the interested scholars will be able to explore some new depths and breadths of theatrical performances of the region.
- iii. The modern artists and cultural specialist will see the possibility of enhancing and promoting the unique aspects and the elements of each theatre tradition.
- iv. The community will be aware of the rich cultural heritage of the SAARC Region portrayed through rich theatre traditions engraved in South Asian region.
- v. SCC will be able to document and develop the literary evidence of the programme by way of an exclusive brochure bearing useful information on the Theatre traditions of South Asia as one rich cultural affinity in the region.