



## Impact of ICT on Theatrical Performance

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### ***Introduction***

*Theater is considered as part of religion and entertainment in any human culture from the very beginning. It includes all other fine art forms such as, music and dance. Hence, it always gives a wholesome experience to its audience. By the time Television appeared, theater had become fairly conservative in its use of technology. At the same time, innovative art movements attempted to use video technology to express their ideas. The theater stopped being the only place that dramatic theater could take place. Technology can be used in any & every aspect of theater production. For instance, in lighting arrangements, sound affects, costumes and others. If we study the evolution of theater, we can observe that in each & every age the use of technology is present. But as the age advances, the ways & means & scope of using the technology also advances.*

***Key words:*** sophisticated displays, seasonal changes, religious celebrations

### **History of Theatre**

Theatre has its origin in the earliest part of human history, and the first form of theatre can be found in the development of dance culture. Dances were originally performed in commemoration of major events, celebrations and religious ceremonies. In the beginning, they were very informal affairs with little practice, but dancing as rituals evolved into a very sophisticated form of artistry by the 3000 BCE.

As dancing became more sophisticated with time, they were performed at every level, especially before major events such as war, seasonal changes & religious celebrations. As rituals evolved further into sophisticated displays that took on themes and styles the first development of drama took place. This type of evolution can be seen in Persians' and Asians' early civilizations.

Another major development is story-telling through theatre. As dances took on more sophistication, they took on story-lines, complicated plots and a common theme that is carried in the dance. The emerging concept of stories through dance was very important because it led to the creation of theatre. This type of dance culture evolved slowly into a new type of theatre during the Greek era, and this era saw the rise of theatre, not as a religious experience, but rather as an art form.

The biggest change in the addition of style and theme that led to the development of plays was the use of spoken words or dialogues along with song and dance.

Formal Greek theatre is renowned for its style, themes and physical constructions. Every element of modern theatre can be



traced to Greek theatre. The development of style and a system for organizing plays along scenes and acts was very important in Greek theatre, and is still something that persists in modern theatre. Finally, the Greeks were also known for their actual physical construction of theatre areas. Unlike the previous era where rituals were performed at religious centers and in preparation for battles, the Greeks created amphitheatres within every city where they would hold yearly plays and contests. Amphitheatres were large central stages that are surrounded by raised stairs for seating. They became the popular form of theatre construction for the next thousand years.

### Use of Technology

Using technology in theatre is not a new concept. Man always had a tendency even during early civilization to use whatever available in those times to quench his thirst of novelty in the art creation. For instance, when early men and women used to assemble for recreation, they used the highest technology of that time, which is fire, as an aid in their storytelling activities. Perhaps they used fire to illuminate and give life to the images of animals they drew on the cave walls.

By the 16th Century, Italian set designers had developed the use of flat scenery to depict various backgrounds. Within the next century, Opera became popular in part because the use of technology turned what had been an upper class/intellectual art form into a popular spectacle. There were instances in some plays where when one scene is changed, a house rotated out of the way

and a donkey cart with a live donkey rode across the stage.

In the 18th Century, it became possible to have a sky moving across the ceiling of a theatre. Mirror effects were used, for example to project the image of a ghost onstage.

From these stages, we have arrived at the current computer era, wherein, with the widespread use of computers, theatre has adopted a new technology.

### Latest Advancements

#### 1. Digital Theatre:

Recently, the concept of "Digital Theatre" has emerged and it is defined as "the coexistence of "live" performers and digital media, in the same unbroken space, with a co-present audience."

Digital Theatre is generally seen as having narrative content to differentiate it from Performing Art, which seeks to provoke the user into exploring an artistic statement.

Digital media is not defined through the presence of one type of technology hardware or software configuration, but by its characteristics of being flexible, mutable, easily adapted, and able to be processed in real-time. It is the ability to change not only sound and light, but also images, video, animation, and other content into triggered, manipulated, and reconstituted data which is relayed or transmitted in relation to other impulses which defines the essential nature of the digital format. Digital information has the quality of pure computational potential, which can be seen as parallel to the potential of human imagination.



## 2. VR Theatre and Computer Theatre

Both are parts of Digital theatre and involve specific types of computer media, live performers, story/words, and limited levels of interactivity.

## 3. Cyberformance

This can be included within this definition of Digital theatre, where it includes a proximal audience & can be created and presented entirely online, for a distributed online audience who participate via internet-connected computers anywhere in the world. It can be presented to a proximal audience (such as in a physical theatre or gallery venue) with some or all of the performers appearing via the internet; or it can be a hybrid of the two approaches, with both remote and proximal audiences and performers.

## 5. Virtual Theatre

A virtual theater is digital performances or media events, which are created and presented on computers utilizing intelligent agents or synthetic characters, called avatars. Often these are interactive computer programs or online conversations. Without human actors, or group audiences, these are computer multimedia interfaces allowing a user to play at the roles of theatre rather than being in theatre.

ICT can be used in innumerable ways to enhance the theatre experience. Firstly, sound effects. The computer generated sound effects are very realistic & they can be programmed to sounds like rain fall, birds chirping etc. Natural sounds, man-made sounds or any type of sounds can easily be recorded to be played during the

play which is very helpful in portraying the scenes quite naturally. Background music & songs are also composed using analogue & digital media very cost-effectively. We can find more advancements taking place in the sound amplification devices like speakers and microphones, providing the artistes, ample scope to express themselves more effectively without much strain on the stage. The combination of the effective usage of technology & the creative genius of man always go hand in hand in enhancing the theatre experience.

## Futuristic Scope

In the near future we may find that all the jobs related to theatre performances such as, lighting control, sound operation and scenic automation linked into a single department and the design engineers would take charge of the show via the wireless local area network operating within the theatre. Mics and speakers would be more powerful, smaller in size & more effective in eliminating unwanted sounds by the introduction of smaller and electronically superior RF technology.

Many also foresee that the explosive growth of the Internet as part of the future. There would be server-based sound effects libraries, from which any sound can be extracted via the internet in real time, during the performance. These are just a few samples to understand what modern technology can offer to enhance the theatre experience. Effective usage of these would definitely raise our Kannada theatre to international standards.



### Use of ICT in Kannada Theatre

Companies such as the leftist Samudaya, founded by Prasanna, emerged in the mid-'70s. Ninasam founded by K.V. Subanna and based in Heggodu is now run by his son K.V. Akshara, Bangalore University Performing Arts Department, well known for its nurturing of theatre practice and innovation.

As can be seen through the changes over the centuries, the key to sustainable theatre lies in our ability to innovate through new writing and new approaches to performance. Nurturing new writing is certainly one of the most important aspects of a continuing vibrant theatre scene. However, in the rush to be innovative in order to implement this change, we should not lose quality and above all we should not lose sight of our audience and become self-indulgent.

Can a nine-hour-long play based on a 700-page novel draw an audience in a time and age when viewers' attention span is measured in split seconds?

Yes, if the success of "Malegalalli Madumagalu", based on the eponymous magnum opus by the late Kuvempu, one of the tallest literary figures in Kannada, is anything to go by.

The play, staged by Mysore-based theatre repertory Rangayana, recently had shows on every alternate day for a month and people queued up every morning to buy tickets for evening shows. It proves that there is always an audience in Karnataka if there is a good play, says its director C. Basavalingiah, an alumnus of the National School of Drama (NSD).

Despite apprehensions that theatre might fall by the wayside with the increasing popularity of technology-driven forms of entertainment, Kannada theatre has stood firm. The number of people involved in amateur theatre with little or no monetary support or expectations remains reasonably large. On the other hand, professional theatre (called Company Nataka) also survives against all odds, particularly in the districts of northern Karnataka.

Karnad's 'Broken Images' has started off well, and has opened up a new line of debate on technology, theatre and today's human being bombarded with electronic images.

Girish Karnad's latest offering, 'Odakalu Bimba' (Kannada), there was that extra element: Technology playing such a major role for the first time in Kannada theatre, as a character.

The stage, with its large plasma TV screen, with a backdrop of rows of television sets was starkly hi-tech, an unusual setting for a Kannada play. With Girish Karnad's voice welcoming the audience came the almost-stern request for people to switch off their mobile phones. That seemed to set the stage for the playwright's latest offering that seeks to search for answers to the onslaught on the private self from technological innovations of the 21st century.

Arundhati Nag plays the character of Manjula Nayak, a not-so-successful Kannada writer who suddenly writes a best-seller in English and becomes internationally famous. The play opens with a TV interview of Manjula, the stage being a studio floor, (with the camera placed in the first row of the audience)



and the plasma TV showing this image. The interview ends, with the expectation of a bio-pic on the now-famous author. But what immediately grabs the audience's attention is her own image on the TV screen, which suddenly turns into her inquisitor, and a most interesting debate evolves between the actor on stage and the actor on the TV screen. It was about technology and an electronic image being used as an actor for the first time in Kannada theatre.

Girish Karnad said, "Ultimately theatre touches if it touches. It's theatre if there is one actor, the human element. Otherwise you could be looking at computer-generated image, a moving image on video, a hologram, a three-dimensional laser image... it must react to a human situation, otherwise it's not theatre and I'm not interested." "Technology is so enormous, you cannot ignore it. If technology takes over a play, then you do technological fireworks, as it often happens in the West End (London). But if you have seen the Lion King on stage, technology was used so beautifully. And the human element was still there. But if art loses the human, then it is not art."

A recent performance, "MASTAKABHISHEKA REHERSAL" play by H.S. Shivaprakash, directed by Suresh Anagalli and staged at Ravindra Kalakshetra is a good example of using technology in performance. Video clippings of Bahubali's Mastakabhisheka was played on a large screen where play was simultaneously happening on the stage. The actors went on performing the play relating to the present situation with the help of video clippings. The play depicts the life of Bahubali in contradiction with today's society. The

performance was a successful one and gained popularity. A complete performance with only light and sound is what proves that today's theatre is so well advanced with technology.

Barriers for the Successful use  
Ignorance

Cost and affordability

Lack of infrastructural support

Maintenance and repair

Lack of science and technology policy

Lack of government support

Lack of support for universities

### Conclusion

The emergence of the new information and communication technologies (ICTs) -- examples include the Internet, computers, interactive multimedia systems, and digital telecommunications has dramatically altered theoretical and practical assumptions about the role of communication technologies in development. Today, the role of the ICTs in developed and developing societies has become the subject of academic focus and research, regional and international seminars and conferences. As the new millennium approaches and as we contend with the expanded uses of the information superhighway, the interface between communication and development calls for serious reconsideration. Theatrical performances today are much more advanced due to the help of ICT. Though, the reach of theatre performances have tripled over the time due to the ICT and the facility it provides of reach and accessibility, in some cases, the quality of performance can be seen as being affected due to the ICT enhancements and the assistance which is provided by the various soft wares. But the merits of ICT are more



than the demerits and that is why, more and more theatres are adapting to the technology and creating shows that are extra ordinary and impactful. Technology has its own disadvantages but the fact that it makes any task to be performed in a much feasible manner is quite undeniable. Hence, ICT if used judiciously can help turn the theatre performances into memorable acts that can lead to the audience being reflective of the message conveyed in the act.

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## Human Rights and the Indian Constitution

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**Abstract:** *The concept of human rights emerged as a matter of serious concern for the whole world after the Second World War when it was first used in the charter of the United Nations and later on in various international conventions and declarations. In view of the importance of the human rights, the United Nations has established a 'Commission on Human Rights' under the chairmanship of Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt in 1946 to draft a list of human rights that are essential for safeguarding the dignity of the individual in the international scene. As Mahatma Gandhi, rightly felt, "Whatever the objectives are, one has to achieve or realize his rights, it is the primary responsibility of every individual to discharge his duties, and every one's rights would be taken care of". The Constitution makers have made a vast list of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the name of 'Fundamental Rights' under part III. It guarantees to the people equality before law, equal protection of law, freedom of speech and expression, protection of life and personal liberty, freedom of religion, rights of minorities and a number of other fundamental rights.*

**Key words:** *Human Rights, primordial rights, Universal Declaration*

### Introduction:

Human Rights are the most essential rights of human beings for living with dignity, with freedom and with honour. Without them, people cannot fully develop into human beings. The human rights and fundamental freedoms give opportunity to an individual to develop his personality in his own way. They are based on mankind's ever increasing demand for a life in which the inherent dignity and worth of a human being is always respected and protected. Thus the individual is the central subject of human rights and fundamental freedoms. They are called human rights because without these rights we cannot live as human beings. In fact 'human rights' are the modern name for what have been traditionally known as 'natural rights'. Thus they are natural, universal,

immutable and inviolable. They are the primordial rights necessary for the development of human personality. Hence it is the responsibility of the governments to protect and promote human rights.

The concept of human rights emerged as a matter of serious concern for the whole world after the Second World War when it was first used in the charter of the United Nations and later on in various international conventions and declarations. The expression "human rights" is not expressly defined in the charter of the United Nations and in other international instruments. The expression has been used in variety of meanings in accordance with the varying contents and situations.

**Evolution of Human Rights:** 'Human Rights' is a dynamic concept which has