

## MÓIN-MÓIN

REVISTA DE ESTUDOS SOBRE TEATRO DE FORMAS ANIMADAS:

TEATRO DE OBJETOS: MEMÓRIA E HISTÓRIA

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# Object theater & the indian context

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**Figure 1** – *Nostos*  
Photography: Sandipa Rakshit

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## Teatro de objetos e o contexto indiano<sup>1</sup>

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**Resumo:** O artigo reflete sobre as práticas com teatro de objetos da companhia indiana *Tram Arts Trust*, seus aprendizados e a busca por encontrar sua identidade artística. Assim, o texto dialoga com os processos criativos e os conhecimentos advindos dessas práticas.

**Palavras-chave:** Teatro de Objetos; Contexto Indiano; Processos criativos; Tram Arts Trust.

## Object theater & the indian context

**Abstract:** The article reflects on the practices with object theater of the Indian Company Tram Arts Trust, their learning and the search to find their artistic identity. Thus, the text dialogues with the creative processes and knowledge arising from these practices.

**Keywords:** Object Theater; Indian context; Creative processes; Tram Arts Trust.

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## Presentation

I have structured this article as a series of selected, practice-based reflections on the familiar discoveries and new learning that we have made within the context of India; and in the journey to finding our own voice as an Indian Object Theatre company.

The history and fundamentals of object theatre in Europe (where it was officially born) can be found in a couple of books, several writings and talks (by Christian Carrignon, Gyula Molnar, Rene Baker, Jean Luc Matteoli, Agnes Limbos...). There are writings and talks on the practices in Latin America too (Ana Alvarado, Sandra Vargas, Flavia D'Avila...). I will not repeat those, but use them as reflection board.

## The Beginning

Prior to 2011, Object Theatre did not have an ecosystem in India. While that's not surprising for a relatively new art form, it would mean that a new object theatre practitioner in India would have to primarily self-learn through doing, study, research, failures and discoveries. While simultaneously trying to create an ecosystem.

It would also mean that all the learning and discoveries carry great ownership. And they would be significantly informed by the context of the learner. (I imagine similar journeys for several instigators around the world.)

In 2010, IIM Charleville Mezieres programmed an Object Theatre masterclass with Agnes Limbos in their summer professional workshop. That masterclass opened my eyes to the quirky wonder of the art form and an ongoing love for its egalitarian, metaphorical, interpretative, multilayered language that was somehow both familiar and new. It resulted in the formation of Tram Arts

Trust—India's first company dedicated to the study and practice of object theatre— in 2011.

Things are different now. Many more people know about the art form. Artists, educators and arts based practitioners have started to imbibe object theatre within their practices, but Tram still remains the only company specializing in the art form in India.

The first production we made was 'Nostos' meaning 'homecoming' in Greek, inspired by Homer's *Odyssey*. The play majorly featured a paper pop-up book and a pre-fabricated immobile paper figure sailing on a paper boat around a plastic globe. In its journey the paper figure undergoes many trials alluding to those in the epic. The whole time it yearns to arrive at its distant home symbolized by a miniature wooden rocking chair, a miniature stool with a warm cup of tea. In the paper figure's absence, the house too undergoes gradual decay under spiders till it is wrapped up in a plastic sheet.

Fresh from the European masterclass in Object Theatre, *Nostos* carried much visual-symbolic vocabulary and aesthetics of western theatre.

### **Context and Symbolism**

The theme of 'homecoming' that the play culled out from *Odyssey* is quite universal. However, the events of the journey as shown in the play and the protagonist's reactions to them began from a classical western epic. The little paper figure protagonist, Odysseus, finds himself constantly negotiating the rivalry between Poseidon and Athena—two external God figures. In essence the two gods are in a game with each other that the human is a pawn in. This understanding of the human-divinity relationship is more complicated in the Indian context where many religions and philosophies influence each other and cohabit within today's Indians. In the Hindu philosophical tradition divinity does not remain external to the human. Who (all) is the play speaking to and what (all) is it saying? We did not know to ask ourselves this then. In a diverse, complex

country like India, this question is not easy to answer for urban artists like me whose audiences may range from cities to villages with varied contexts.

Two other realisations were, that while *Nostos* was rather Indian in its mixture of forms, materials and textures, urban Indian audiences loved the very neat, staid 'western' performativity, the European inspiration and objects in the show. The show however neglected to consider the fact that spiders do not necessarily mean decay in the Indian context, but rather omnipresent in well-lived Indian households. And while rocking chairs are recognizable enough, the specialized delicate French miniature replicas used in the show excluded a large portion of the Indian populace allowing only the urban affluent to feel a familiarity with the play.

In retrospect, however, our context may have made an importance influence in '*Nostos*' that would subsequently manifest more strongly in future work like '*Maati Katha*' (*Earth Stories*), our latest play. Throughout *Nostos*, the paper figure Odysseus focuses on his yearning for home. But in the end, the play's Odysseus deviates from Homer's Odysseus and never reaches home. Great storms and tribulations have reduced the paper protagonist to utter helplessness. When it eventually escapes entrapment, it is physically and metaphorically 'released'. The paper figure continues sailing on his boat, at peace with the idea that the journey itself is its reality and purpose. The implication is that 'home' may never arrive, but his focus has now changed. My (very Hindu) understanding of life-journeys may have influenced this shift in the view of 'homecoming', despite me being vociferously non-religious! Once started from Point A, the journey is not really meant to end at Point B. The shift in our Odysseus' perspective was significant, as his journey will henceforth be an ongoing one; taking him through a series of experiences and learnings, elevating him through each learning continuously and cyclically. (*It is also like my own journey in Object Theatre where one learns and discovers in the process, and the 'destination' is pushed to the horizon at every step!*)

I speak about these philosophies/thematics in an article on Object Theatre because by the end of it I hope to articulate how cumulative learning kept nudging

us towards an important realization --- that our Object Theatre is a continuum in our past and present cultural identities, both thematically and 'object-ly'.

### **'Object-ness'**

At the foundation of object theatre is the object itself. Objects tell (many) stories. The stories that our object-theatre have told emerged in various ways.

In the masterclass and through future study, we came to realize that the symbolisms inherently carried within the object determine what is said and communicated. For example, 'blooming flowers transforming into decayed flowers carry some meanings that can speak of a state of being. A miniature toy boat can symbolize both the idea of travel/journey and a space/location.

Many of our productions began with an external story or theme and the objects were explored to elucidate that theme. The objects, as is their way, always influenced the given story/theme heavily.

Sometimes, as in the case of Tram's second production *Bird's Eye View*, the above two happened simultaneously.

And subsequently, especially through workshop explorations, we learnt that the object could be the starting point. A single object or material can inspire an entire play. Objects can carry symbolisms that are universal and associations that are personal. But how do objects that carry many cultural/contextual understandings speak beyond its context, depending on who is the performer and who is the viewer? I will attempt to unravel this towards the end with reference to *Maati Katha*.

*Bird's Eye View* was born out of a book on wartime carrier pigeons that coincided with the sighting of a basket full of plastic toy pigeons at a local fair. The play was led by the story it wanted to tell. It deviated significantly from the foundational principle of object theatre to explore the object for what it 'is' (or its objectness) rather than what it can 'become' (or its puppetness). The play meandered between puppet theatre and object theatre. Despite being one of many such manufactured toy pigeons, this particular pigeon was special. It was

'the subject' making it less ordinary. Its ordinariness was not evoked through its qualities as the object but rather through the story it was servicing. This opened up the question of what distinguishes object theatre from puppet theatre? Do the use of objects in any way denote object theatre? A great many object theatre performances around the world anthropomorphize the object. Like in *Bird's Eye View*, which focused more on the fact that the story needed a pigeon; rather than the reality of this particular pigeon being a plastic, mass-manufactured toy with wheels instead of legs and a pull-string. My biggest regret in the play today are the giggles we would have had if we had explored the pigeon-on-wheels! Maybe we will revisit the play just for that! An exploration of the 'object-ness' of this toy may have influenced the dramaturgy?



**Figure 2** – *'Bird's Eye View'*  
Photography: Joyoti Roy

Or an object theatre performance can sometimes transform the object into something else. I remember a beautiful South Korean performance where a hand-fan was transformed into a bird due to its form and movement. While both these techniques can create powerful and evocative performances, we as new object theatre makers asked ourselves 'why a fan to denote a bird'? If the

presence of the fan in its 'fan-ness' is not justified through the performance, why use this particular object? Why not use a feather or a piece of paper or a book to denote the bird? All of these can convincingly become birds too. What does a fan bring to the table as a bird that a book or a feather or a piece of paper cannot?

Or how would a theatrical experience be enriched if the pigeon is explored both as the object & the subject?

These are now amongst our fundamental enquiries through all subsequent performances and workshops: 'Why the object?' 'Why THIS object?'

This naturally raises the enquiry of 'what ALL comprise the object-ness of an object?' What all are part of its identity? Some performances emphasize the design, form, colour, material, the family it belongs to. Some others emphasize the object's function or the purpose for which it was originally created, or that it is one of many such identical manufactured objects. Its inherent symbolism can be closely connected to its function, the personal and cultural associations it may carry.

No two objects are alike, so each object requires a separate exploration of its identity(ies).

When we started to consider all this, the questions of 'Why the object? Why THIS object' took on more complexity. What all the object 'is' became the first exploration before what it can 'become'.

### **'Object-ness and Human-ness'**

*Bird's Eye View* was also significant in realizing that stories are important in the Indian context, stories that speak both emotively and intellectually.

My initial understanding of Object theatre was as a theatre of the mind.

Object Theatre opens itself out to the viewer's interpretations. The interpretative nature of the art form pushes the audience to lean forward and actively engage with the proposed visual symbolisms; instead of simply leaning back in their seats and passively consuming the story. This is one of the reasons



I love this art form, that even bad object theatre can belong to each and every person present in the space!

We struggled, however, with 'how does one trigger the heart as well as the mind, if the viewer is primarily occupied in the intellectual activity of interpretation?'

The language of objects is symbolism. If the symbolism is too complex or if the play suddenly shifts from one symbolic language to another one without preparing any grounds, the viewer is only left in a state of confusion. If it is too simple, it leaves no impact... maybe appealing only to the heart without challenging the mind. How do we create relateability for the object's circumstance without compromising its 'object-ness'? In other words, how to build empathy for the object without anthropomorphizing it at all?

A possibility we discovered can lie in the coexistence of the illusion (of anthropomorphizing the object) alongside the breaking of the illusion (reminding the audience again and again of the reality of the object in the middle of what it was assumed to have become). The trick is that of balance. Ariel Doron's *Plastic Heroes* is such a wonderful example of this, wherein the little toy soldiers simultaneously carry the characteristics of toys and human soldiers. Sometimes their human-ness is underlined and sometimes their object-ness, but they are never mutually exclusive.

Even when they are undergoing the very human activity of Skype-ing with their families back home, the ridiculousness of the GI Joe type soldier video chatting with his Barbie wife, children and plastic dog never leave the room. Or in the scene where the soldier fantasizes about being with a woman again, the tiny two-inch plastic soldier lying at the feet of a gigantic Barbie doll triggers so much humour and empathy about the larger than life scale of his fantasy.

We continue to feel his loneliness in both the scenes while laughing through them. Ariel does anthropomorphize his toy soldiers, but creates a playful balance of scale & movement that derives both from that of the object and that of human beings. Unlike many other object theatre performances I have seen before, somehow in this play the plastic toy never had to stop being a plastic toy

in order to become a human soldier. And he never had to break away from his humanness in order to be true to its object-ness.

It could carry both identities simultaneously - not like two dissociative personalities, but rather like two arms of one being, sometimes eating from one hand, sometimes the other and sometimes with both hands. At the centre of this success, of course, is his choice of objects; the plastic toy soldiers carry their theme, realities and story deep inside them, inside Ariel and inside all of us. This play has given me much me much laughter and learning.



**Figure 3** – '*Plastic Heroes*'  
Photography: Yair Meyuhas

### **Time, space and identities are fluid**

Ariel himself in *Plastic Heroes*, like much of object theatre performers, dons many roles: sometimes the soldier, sometimes the victim of the soldier, sometimes the puppeteer of the tiger puppet, sometimes simply the handler of the object, sometimes addressing the audience. This is one of the foundational techniques espoused for Object Theatre, and it is a technique that pan-Indian theatre audiences immediately recognise as our own. All over India, folk theatre

is free from the fourth wall and the assumed realism of a theatrical performance. Identities are fluid, performers slipping effortlessly between characters and between character and storyteller. Even in classical Indian theatre, time and space exist in fluidity. Habib Tanvir, one of modern India's foremost theatre directors, twice famously articulated these deep-rooted and instinctively accepted parts of Indian dramaturgy.

Habib Saab (as he was referred to) and his repertory of folk performers (from the *Nacha* tradition of Chhattisgarh in central India) together created a modern Indian theatre – marrying modern sensibilities, content & concerns with the contents & styles of *Nacha* – creating seismic impacts on theatre, philosophy and political discourses.

The first of his articulations was during the set-design of *Charandas Chor* (Charandas the Thief), one of their most loved plays that took the Edinburgh Fringe festival as well as Indian cities, towns, villages by storm since its creation in 1975. The play's locations shift from a public street, a field, to a temple, a granary, a courtroom, a palace bedroom, a burial tomb. After many deliberations and drawings of various shifting sets designed to move between the many locations, the final design simply had a slightly raised circular platform with a sparse tree branch in the middle. The performance effortlessly flowed between scenes and locations without any breaks and the spaces blending into each other. There was no need of realism, because there is a shared cultural understanding that none is required.

The second articulation was while blocking the movement of the maid-servant in *Mitti ki Gaadi* (Little Clay Cart - a *Chhattisgarhi* adaptation of the classical Sanskrit play *Mrichhakatikam*). The queen instructs the maid to go to the garden, check for something and return post haste. In between this instruction and the maid's return, there is only one short dialogue and the scene continues in the same space, but after a time-lapse. Upon receiving the instruction, the actor playing the maid quips "*Ji, Aati Hoon*" (Ok, I will just return), simply walks a round of the stage, and returns, 'I'm back'. There was no need for any more, it is simply

understood that the maid left the room, went to the garden, time had passed, she checked what she had to and returned with the information.

The third example is a personal one from a workshop situation involving participants of different ethnicities. An Indian participant improvised a scene where the actor speaks of his dead cow and the dead cow enters stage behind him (maybe as a memory or as a simultaneous depiction of two different timelines on stage at the same time). The actor then transformed from being the owner of the cow to the cow itself, and started speaking to the audience regarding the real nature of relationship between itself and its owner... while the original dead cow is still standing behind him. At one point the two representations of the dead cow even talk to each other to confirm their stories, before the second one transforms back to being the owner... leading to a humorous reaction from the rest of us. I remember a wonderful discussion ensuing on the complexity of dramaturgical languages and emerging interpretations. These are theatres of suggestion. **Much of traditional Indian art is suggestive, not realistic.**

In an object theatre performance similarly a small table can become the sea, the road and the desert by the simple suggestive shift of a single object. The object too can simultaneously or interchangeably play 'what it is' and 'what it has become'. As can the human performer. The suggestion is enough for the human imagination.

Breaking away from character for tête-à-tête with the audiences, this fluidity of space, time and identities were immediate recognitions between Indian performance traditions that we have grown up with and the vocabulary that is laid out for object theatre.

### **Metaphorical clichés & interpretative nuances**

An ongoing enquiry has been the balance between simplicity and complexity of object metaphors. If *Bird's Eye View* raised the questions for the heart, another play *Dhaaba* raised those for the mind.

Objects carry some stock languages or clichés. These universal symbolisms are evoked for performance communication.

For example, a small doll placed on stage with a lock next to it can together communicate a situation that is easily interpreted. The past and the future situations of the doll can also be similarly depicted through easily recognizable symbolisms within objects. This simple proposition, while it communicates the doll's physical situation, does not fully encapsulate the social, political, psychological, emotional complexities / nuances of the situation, which may be necessary for the play.

Would we be able to build the complexities through the layers of the narrative and could they also be found within the techniques of object theatre? Is it a form-content dichotomy?

In Tram's 2018 production called *Dhaaba* (Highway Inn), the struggle was to encapsulate the complexity of the theme addressed through the play largely with object symbolisms and minimally through words. And also steer away from the anthropomorphic tendencies of Bird's Eye View. The premise of the play proposes a *Dhaaba* that has only ever known, cooked and sold purple brinjals/eggplants/aubergines. Everything in the *Dhaaba* is purple, including its cooks, utensils, décor and vegetables.

The *Dhaaba* has its particular social order that is depicted through a pyramid arrangement of the different types of purple brinjals. One day, unknown from where, a sack of something else drops in. Out come round brown 'dirty' things that the *Dhaaba* has never seen before. Potatoes! One by one more vegetables start to come in – red tomatoes, pink onions etc etc. And they are here to stay. All the vegetables now must coexist inside the once purple *Dhaaba*. Some vegetables come together to give birth to a mixed vegetable curry/salad, a majority of others battle for space and restoration of original order.

The broad proposition of the play is quite clear and universal and may be interpreted from various socio-political climates. A pyramid of brinjals can mean hierarchies of caste, economics, colonial, or power hierarchies of various kinds.

Incoming of new unfamiliar vegetables would broadly mean the same thing everywhere, nuanced by specificities of your location, social history etc.

The play struggled to go beyond the broad strokes of hierarchies and ‘other-ing’. For example: into the nuances of inter-hierarchical relationships. Or into shifting boundaries of tolerance. Or how personalization can be a slow but effective counter to generalizations. The difficulty, possibly, was one of balancing the universal metaphors of the objects with the personalization of individual desires and efforts.

*Dhaaba* successfully presented stock metaphors of existing and changing social orders. It evocatively presented coming together or conflicts between various groups of vegetables. It did not single out brinjals or potatoes to add layers to the thematic proposition through varied individual voices. This may have been one way to bring in thematic complexities. It requires a deeper exploration if the play is to be revisited.



**Figure 4 – ‘Dhaaba’**  
Photography: Abhisar Bose

When we speak without words, the image can have varied interpretations. In the scene where potatoes and brinjals combine, I could hear a hushed conversation in the audience. A nine-year-old daughter telling her father, “They’re

married!” The father responding “No, they have made mixed vegetables”. And the daughter insisting again, “No! They’re married!” Maybe in this art form, the complexities also lie in the viewers’ minds?

We have found object theatre to demand great egalitarianism. Placing a mere, ordinary, sometimes throwaway, object on the same pedestal as the human actor naturally requires the human being to de-centre. Object Theatre has also required us to develop ourselves to listen to the voice of the object and to value the interpretations of the viewer.

### **Wha tis ordinary?**

The paper figure Odysseus in *Nostos* was a crude sculptural object. It was certainly not an ordinary one! The toy pigeon in *Bird’s Eye View* is ordinary enough, but its treatment in the play made it quite extraordinary.

‘Ordinary’, however, has not been easy to define. In a country of such diversities like India, what is an ordinary object is a matter of consideration again and again. ‘Ordinary’ is subject to economics, religion, language, cultural histories etc. A box full of plastic ‘Made In China’ toys like in *Bird’s Eye View* may be quite extraordinary in some parts of the country. While in other parts of the country, performing *Dhaaba* with kilos of vegetables would be unpleasant. Our audience influences our objects and their metaphors.

While facilitating workshops in different parts of the country now, we only explore with objects and materials found in the location. Sometimes this can mean only ‘garbage’ collected from the streets. Here, the creative exploration focuses primarily on one of the fundamentals of Object Theatre—discovering Magic in the Mundane! Frankly, nothing else seems as important here.

Tram’s journey from 2011 to now has organically moved deeper into our context(s). One can clearly see this journey in *Nostos* (2011) and our latest play *Maati Katha* (2023).

A trailer of *Nostos* can be viewed on youtube under the search words ‘tram theatre nostos’. A trailer of *Maati Katha* can be viewed on youtube under the search words ‘maati katha tram arts trust’.

### Culture Spicificity and Unversality

*Maati Katha*, (Earth Stories), was born out of an ethnographic research project on the doll making traditions of West Bengal, a state in Eastern India. There are numerous traditions, some going back to 5000 years, with every material ordinarily available in the region from clay, wood, metal, cloth, jute, shellac, seeds, coconuts, betelnuts, grain, sponge wood etc.

The dolls carry a plethora of stories—historical, ritualistic, political, socio-cultural, communitarian, deeply personal to the artists and the communities that they live with.

In *Maati Katha*, clay dolls of Sunderbans (a unique deltaic mangrove region in the state of West Bengal) tell stories of their land. The play also uses 10 kilos of clay from where things emerge, return, re-emerge. The clay transforms into the topography of the Sunderban delta, and from these landmasses wet-clay dolls are fashioned that subsequently transform into the colourful terracotta clay dolls found in the region.

This play’s starting point or first inspiration was the object itself. The object, by virtue of what it is made of, brought in the material of clay. But these objects, unlike other post-consumer age objects, are additionally endowed by their long histories and specific contexts.

We kept asking ourselves through the rehearsal process: How do dolls and stories from Sunderbans resonate with the rest of the world?

*Maati Katha* communicates through the material ‘*Maati*’ (the Bengali meaning encapsulates clay, soil, dust, dirt, earth and land) and the objects ‘*Maatir Putul*’ (clay dolls).





**Figure 5 – ‘Maati Katha’**  
Photography: Abhisar Bose

### **Maati/ Clay/ Earth/ Land**

Clay/earth is an ordinary material found everywhere, but it has many universal and layered cultural associations ranging from territorial to spiritual.

For Bengal, *Maati* is the most abundant material and carries a multitude of implications. It carries the history of landowning, distribution & redistribution, partition, loss, reacquisition of land. It carries the contradiction of immense fertility alongside great struggles for survival. It carries the philosophical and spiritual cycles of life, decay, regeneration, rebirth. It carries rituals, poetry, art, music, livelihoods associated with the soil. For Sunderbans, it additionally means migration, survival, a perilous environment.

A Bengali audience would see all of this. A non-Bengali may see some of these associations, realise some others and see some more of their own. The material is itself so loaded, that the performer does not have to do much, we realized. The various associations that the material evokes add unspoken layers larger than the play itself.

### Maatir Putul/ Clay Dolls/ Dolls of the Earth

The clay dolls of Bengal carry all these meanings within them and more. And as is the nature of old, longstanding traditions, the dolls in the play—like the maati—are both ordinary and special. Some of the dolls created by Sunderban’s doll-artists are quite identifiable: fisherfolk, farmers, honey-collectors, woodcutters, tigers, tiger-attacks, crocodiles, shopkeepers etc. They also create dolls that are culture specific – from epics and legends of their land.

Dolls, however, are omnipresent all over the world. Doll-making, doll-playing, telling stories with dolls are primordial practices. A performance with dolls evokes this familiar practice, even if the specific doll itself is new. We attempted to open out the play by leaning heavily on the universal activities of clay-play and doll-play, and discovered within the stories of the land themes that spoke to all of us.

### Maati Katha/ Earth Stories

The moment one starts to delve into a space of deep historical and cultural contexts, not only do the objects become endowed, but the milieu of the land becomes important. The dolls depicting Sunderban’s local legends are also connected to the region’s folk performance tradition (called *Bonbibi’s Jatrapala*), which is in turn connected to the syncretic history and ecology of the region. So, how are these connected to the rest of the world?

Through the course of the play we see the doll characters recurrently faced with environmental threats: storms and cyclones, animal attacks, loss of home, land, loved ones—experiences that are universal. We also see human-induced threats – friendships destroyed, harmony & syncretism fissured. And we see their resilience, surviving and celebrating through it all.

The dolls, like the people who made them, emerge from the soil. They break off and onstage, are put back together again (with adhesive glue), again

and again. The metaphor of the clay is recurrent, ongoing and cyclical... bringing us back to the discussion in the start of this article in the section on 'Nostos'.

At the end of the play the dolls return to the soil. As do the tigers, the snake, the crabs, the deer, the trees. So do the male dolls, the female dolls, the Hindu dolls, the Muslim dolls... extending the soil metaphor to the beliefs inherent within Sunderban's stories. Beliefs that we can all relate to.

One realizes that the stories of the soil that survive from ancient times till today, do so because they continue to be relevant and have wide resonances.

The resulting performance marries the performance traditions of *Jatrapala* and musical traditions of Baul, *Bhatiyali* and *Jhumur* with contemporary object and material theatre vocabulary to tell stories that are local yet global, through objects and materials that carry meaning culturally and universally.

The other question to ask ourselves, of course, is 'What does the performance return to the land it gains so much inspiration from?' But that is another article.

### **Today...**

While reflecting on discoveries and learning, we have greater understanding of the give and take between the art that we learnt in Europe and how our context continues to inform and shape it.

The fluidity of time, space & identities in object theatre is not simply a technique. It is the nature of the object-language that flows universally, individually and culturally. The object and its metaphor(s) can never be divorced from its context. When the context is broad, it is the variety in contexts that layer the object with varied meaning. And when the context is very peculiar, the object can still find a way to speak.

This fluidity I feel has allowed practitioners all over the world to explore very, very diverse languages of the objects, a richness that we should be exchanging more. After all, our object theatre is ours when it reflects the complexity of our identities. And the world we live in.