

9 December 2012



Sahitya Akademi



Ras Kala Theatre Unit

invite you to

meet the author

Prem Prakash





With wife Raju

In the era of specialisation, it gives an extra pleasure when one comes across a litterateur who masters several areas of literature and art. Prem Prakash is creatively associated with poetry, short story, drama, criticism, direction, research and painting. These areas warrant an exacting artistic repertoire to do them justice. It's more than gratifying that Prem Prakash has not only done justice to these genres but also has enriched them through his innovative content and its creative handling. In every area of his artistic exploits, he can be credited with his master strokes.

Prem Prakash is prominently known as the exponent of serious drama in Sindhi theatre. He assigned sobriety to Sindhi stage by his ingenious stage directions and by bringing in dramas, which stirred cerebral nerves of the audience, the audience that construed drama synonymous

with a package of jokes. With the advent of his Drama Workshop in 1974, a new era of plays started in Sindhi. His plays rightly pose a challenge to directors and actors as well. He has an authoritative say in every department of dramas- in writing plays, in script writing, in direction, in stage management presenting a thoughtful movements and compositions of actors, in lighting, and in what not! Prem Prakash is the theatre person who has done several experiments in proscenium: he discarded age old traditions of conservative theatre that relied on isolation between stage and audience: at many a time his characters mingled with the audience and created an inspiring rapport between actors and viewers. Prem Prakash's play *Morchabandi* is a play that runs on untrodden tracks. *Morchabandi* acquainted Sindhi theatre with experimental drama and inspired other young theatre lovers to follow the suit. Untraditional pursuance continued with his writing a full length play *Picnic* that centres on only two characters and unravels grey as well as silver layers of their relationship. His other plays too are pleasure for those who are all for thoughtful theatre.

Prem Prakash is equally at



with Jetho Lalwani, Brij Mohan, Hiro Shewokani, Vishnu Bhatia, Indra Vaswani, Hari Dilgir, Hundraj Dukhayal, Vasdev Mohi, Harish Vaswani.

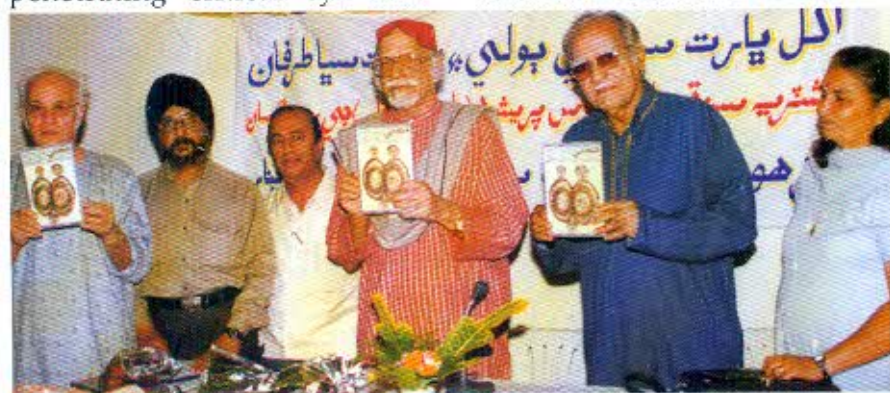
ease while adapting short stories of other renowned Sindhi writers to stage scripts. His Midas's touch elevates stories to new experience of literary catharsis. He has several collections of plays to his credit- original as well as edited ones- and has directed Hindi plays too, along with Sindhi plays. His theatre troupe has participated in many drama festivals and has won sizeable number of significant trophies.

He has equally mastered the craft of story writing wherein he has introduced wide range of subjects clubbed with creditable expression. Groundbreaking handling of subjects and a skilful weaving of the content fabric, interlock stories into pleasant patterns. His stories are more than often replete with intricately arranged narrations which sometimes seem obscure but they have interconnected mulling moods, and take the stories to some multidimensional plane. Sometimes his stories dwell on incisive satire on social state of affairs and sometimes on frustrating cultural reversals. His stories, at times, move towards interior world and reveal the deeper strata, hidden from the normaleye.

He is endowed with a penetrating critical eye that

enables him to have a deeper insight into the writings he evaluates. It comes from his insatiable appetite for reading several titles. He has penned a good number of books that consist of several articles of criticism. He is at home, be it criticism of poetry or short story or play writing or stage craft for that matter. His research treatise on the evolution of Sindhi drama also has earned a respectable place in Sindhi literary circles. It has become, undoubtedly, an authentic reference book for those who want to know/ study anything about Sindhi plays/drama.

As a poet he has etched his place by employing novel tools of expression. His poems are thought provoking and strike right on the psyche of the reader. Embodied with stimulus to readers' imagination, his poems are potent enough to arouse an emotive response without tear stirring sentimentality. His poems like 'khatu'(Letter), 'Bhagat'(Bhagat- composite Sindhi folk form comprising drama, storytelling, music, singing, etc.) are overwhelmingly taken in Sindhi literary circles, the latter being a passionate comment on Sindhi culture in modern times. Relevance of his



with Moti Prakash, Namdev Tarachandani, Kirat Babani, Thakur Chawla, Kamla Goklani.



with artists of Sindhi Drama Workshop, Ahmedabad.

poems beyond the contemporary period preserves the essence of the poems, and it's not a mean achievement in creative field.

His artistic ventures in black and white- his drawings- are centre of attraction for those who have a discriminating taste in art. He has adorned covers of more than fifty books with his drawings. His drawings- with deft strokes of black ink- have minute captivating textures that may be envy of any artist. The drawings induce us to have greater perspective of our surroundings and do not present merely a sketchy semblance of it.

Prem Prakash is also known for his Adabi Classes (Literary Discourses) on poetry, short story and criticism. He organised his first Adabi Class on Sindhi short story way back in 1986, and the second followed in the very next year. Thereafter, poetry and criticism Adabi Classes in 1989 & 1998 respectively and another short story discourse took place in 2004. In these Classes Prem Prakash proved himself a meticulous organizer. His steadfast discipline and dedication impressed one and all

and everyone experienced intellectual indulgence of rare order during these literary discourses.

Despite his mental and physical anguish due to prolonged, incurable ailment of his wife, and demanding care of his two children who are yet to settle down, this dedicated, caring husband and affectionate father continued his literary pursuit without a break, though he remained confined to four walls of his flat for years. In spite of a life that borders on grief, he never fails to pass on humour filled comments on particular piece of literature and on persons of his know. His discreet faint smile at corner of the lips is deceptive. One never knows it tends to poking fun or to approving of your point. His headgear adds three to four inches to his biological stature; but one wonders how he has compressed his literary giant in his short physique. It is not surprising that Prem Prakash, the multifaceted litterateur, is known unequivocally one and only SARDAR of Sindhi literature.



with Lakhmi Khilani



with Sunder Agnani.

A SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Poetry

Bhagat 1998

Short Stories

Villain 1977

20 (Veeha) 1992

Drama

Picnic 1974

Morchabandi 1979

Parda 1976

Piri-a-jo-Ishq 1982

Mukti, Baah

Seedapa, Pukarran 2001

Adaptation

Farishtan Ji Dunya 1982

(Mohan Kalpana)

Ashyano 2004

(Krishin Khatwani)

Kirdar 2007

(Different Story Writers)

Criticism

Sindhi Natak Ji Osar 1986

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Kavita 1988

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(1985-2010)

8 Tajarbatu Natak 1977

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Tanqeed

Krishin Khatwani: Fanu 1987

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Anku (Koonj)

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Translation

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Anthology of Gujarati 1980

Ekanki

Vijay Tendulkar/

1982

Papa Vijaiji Viyo

Others

Koonj Special Issue on 2003

Prem Prakash

Ed. Namdev Tarachandani

A CHRONOLOGY

- 1946 Born on 2nd August in Hyderabad (Sindh)
- 1947 The family settled in Jodhpur after Partition
- 1964 1st story for children published in *Fulwari*
- 1967 Co-editor *Chhdiyon* literary magazine
- 1968 B. Sc. from Gujarat University
- 1974 Co-editor *Kavita* Literary magazine
Picnic, first long play published
Pioneer and Drama Director 'Sindhi Drama Workshop',
Ahmedabad (until the date)
- 1978 Co-editor *Rachna* literary magazine
Award for *Morchabandi* drama by C.H.D., New Delhi
- 1982 Court marriage with Raju Sundrani
- 1984 Ph.D. (Arts) *Sindhi Drama 1880-1980* from Bombay University
- 1988 Member, Advisory Board (Sindhi), Sahitya Akademi
- 1999 Gaurav Puraskar, Gujarat Sahitya Akademi
Member, Advisory Board, Doordarshan
- 2000 Life Time Achievement Award – Akhil Bharat Sindhi Boli Ain
Sahit Sabha, Jaipur
Member, Advisory Board, Gujarat Sahitya Akademi
- 2001 Sahitya Akademi Award for *Bhagat* (poetry)
- 2003 Special issue – *Fun – Shakshiyata* by *Koonj*
Member, Advisory Board, Sahitya Akademi
- 2010 Life Time Achievement Award (Lit.) by NCPSSL, New Delhi



with Vasdev Mohi & Arjan Hasid.