

# THEATRE FOR TRANSFORMATION - WORKSHOP

23.08.2019 to 26.08.2019

Loyola College, Chennai



## **19-PSW BATCH**

### **DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK (SHIFT I)**

The students of MSW Shift I assembled for their first day of TFT along with their faculties – Prof. Semmalar, Prof. Gladston and Prof. Andrew at 8:20 a.m. and the day began with the introduction by Fr.Louis Arockiyaraj, the Head of the Department of Social Work, on the “Significance of TFT”. He encouraged the trainees by saying that the four-day exhilarating process of TFT is not just an one time occurrence rather, a continuous learning process that will transform the trainee to bring about a societal change.

#### **DAY 1 (23.08.2019)**

Dr. Kaleeshwaran, an eminent person in the field of alternate media platform was the trainer for students. Along with him, five other resource persons came to teach the students – different forms of folk arts. The trainer explicated the types of media namely folk, traditional, mass, alternate and printing media to communicate messages to the target audience. He conducted an ice-breaker session that warmed up the group and awakened everyone’s spirits to begin their day. Around 9:30 a.m, he engaged the students for an active learning process to stimulate presentable body language, gestures and facial expressions through classical, folk and tribal songs. These songs had “agricultural activities” as its main theme. Basic carnatic ragas were taught to increase the range and depth of voice.

He conducted a “statue exercise” training where students quickly shaped their own bodies individually and independently to create a frozen statue that represented a theme instructed by him. The crux of this task was to know how well we, the trainees, used our bodies flexibly to represent the idea that was asked upon. Four teams were divided and given the responsibility of cleaning, timing, reporting and resource mobilising. Each team was allotted with a trainer to teach the students four folk art forms namely Oyilattam, Karagattam, Paraiyattam and Kaliyal.

Dr. Kaleeshwaran explained the TENDER approach i.e., Reader-Recorder, Divider-Decider, Holder-Bolder, Spider-Speeder and Leader-Ladder required to become a leader. He simplified the nuances of four types of theatre forms – art, developmental, protest and political. These art forms can be used to

enact social issues. At the end of the session, he taught a mob street play on “humanism and unity”.With evaluations and feedback from students and resource persons, the day ended successfully.

### **DAY 2 (24.08.2019)**

The second day began with breathing and stretching exercises of body to be more flexible throughout the day. Song sheets were distributed for effective singing practice. The groups were given the opportunity of learning the other two forms of folk dance apart from what they learned in Day 1. Hence, in a day, every group learnt two art forms. In the afternoon each group staged a performance which was practised by them. In the evening, the trainer asked the groups to choose a concept on their own to enact a play using various components of theatrical nuances taught so far in the training sessions.

There was a staging of streetplay by groups for which other group members were to give their comments. It made them to be critical in evaluating their performances. The day ended with evaluation and feedback session.

### **DAY 3 (25.08.2019)**

The day began with usual breathing and stretching exercises to warm up for the day. There was reporting for previous day activities and learning followed by new assignments for each group. Each group was allotted a song that has to be prepared to perform on Day 4 in the community. Dr.Kaleeshwaran highlighted the process in which development of behaviour and attitudinal changes occur in a person i.e., from unawareness to awareness, awareness to knowledge, knowledge to skill, skill to demonstration, demonstration to re-demonstration, re-demonstration to take home, take home to call for action and call for action to interpersonal communication.

The groups were allotted a dance, a song and a streetplay to be performed on Day 4. For streetplay, each resource person trained their respective groups on topics such as “avoid plastics”, “intake of appropriate nutritional foods”, “taking care of elderly” and “consequences of draft national education policy”.

After the staging of streetplay and evaluation for the day, groups dispersed.

### **DAY 4 (26.08.2019)**

The day began with breathing and stretching exercises followed by dancing the traditional “kummi” dance for a song that the groups previously practised singing. This dance form involved clapping of the hands that synchronised with the steps and rhythm of the songs. Every group was asked to practice the

allotted song, dance form and streetplay. Post lunch, each group prepared banners and flashcards depending on the theme chosen in their respective streetplays.

Around 4 p.m. in the evening, the students along with their faculties and resource persons went to “Ayyasami hut region” in Pudupet. The students rallied along the community, inviting people to witness their awareness programme. The students staged their best streetplay, dance and song performances. Responses from the target audience was positive.

The day ended with an elaborate feedback back session among students, faculties and resource persons.

### **KEY TAKE AWAYS**

This workshop benefitted significantly, not only in terms of exploring the unexplored or hidden ability to act, but also to learn various aspects of theatre and theatrical skills. The students learnt various components of street play – the catchy phrases, songs, crisp script, loudness etc. that makes it an effective medium to reach the message to the audience. Being part of a theatrical group of Dr.Kaleeshwaran helped the students to shed their inhibitions, address their stage fears and improved their confidence level in public speaking skills through the trainers’ constant teaching. Learning from a seasoned instructor and also implement them in practice was a different experience all together. Making use of the limited resources at our disposal was another learning the students could garner from this workshop.