

SMART

STRATEGIC
MANAGEMENT
IN THE ART OF THEATRE

INDIA

AN **INDIA THEATRE FORUM** INITIATIVE
CONCEIVED AND IMPLEMENTED BY **SMART CORE TEAM**

MANAGED BY **INDIA FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS**
AND **JUNOON**

20 Years
of Celebrating
the Arts



India
Foundation
for the Arts



WHY SMART: THE CONTEXT



INDIA IS A LAND RICH IN THE ARTS, ESPECIALLY THEATRE. AS A LIVING, BREATHING PART OF INDIA'S SOCIAL FIBRE, THEATRE HAS ENTHRALLED, IMPACTED AND TRANSFORMED AUDIENCES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, THROUGH THE AGES, IN VARIOUS FORMS.

The people who create this wonderful theatre pour their heart and soul, their passion and commitment into their creations. And each of them has a larger dream and vision. Sometimes, all they need is the know-how to create a practical road map that will help them realize their dreams.

SMART aims to equip theatre practitioners with the skills and expertise necessary to build this strategic plan — practical, achievable, grounded in their specific reality. This enables the group to be more sustainable, effective, efficient, and financially viable. All this, so that they can be truly free, creatively, to let their dreams soar.

SMART: THE PROGRAMME



Strategic Management in the Art of Theatre (SMART) is India's first and

only capacity-building programme for theatre practitioners that aims to build knowledge, skills and expertise about arts management from within the Indian theatre community.

A collaborative project of India Theatre Forum (ITF), India Foundation for the Arts (IFA) and Junoon, SMART is specially designed to address theatre practitioners' need for strategic thinking and management in their work. Theatre practitioners and professional art managers collectively share their expertise, experiences and learnings through a structured pedagogic process.

SMART seeks to sharpen the thinking and working processes of theatre groups, leading them to create a 3-year strategic road map for their organisation. This road map should be one that optimizes strengths, overcomes constraints and has a significant and positive impact on the internal functioning of the organisation.

The five-month programme is conducted primarily in English and is also translated as required, through the course.



THE SMART FACTORS

SMART is special. It is a unique, perceptive and insightful programme, conceived, designed and developed by experts from across the field. Here are some of the facts that set SMART apart from any other programme in the country:

■ INDIA'S FIRST-EVER THEATRE MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAMME

Never before has there been an arts management training programme dedicatedly focused on theatre in India.

■ ADDRESSES A DIRE NEED

Urban and semi-urban contemporary Indian theatre needs professional arts management that looks at the realities of Indian theatre and responds to them to ensure the greatest possible effectiveness of theatre's reach and possibilities. SMART is a programme tailored to the context and realities of the arts in India.

■ BUILT ON INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

For the first time in India and perhaps in Asia, here is a programme that addresses the needs of theatre practice from the ground up. Informed by existing practices in India and taught by people with direct experience of working with theatre and the arts in India, SMART seamlessly blends this with wider knowledge and experience from arts management.

■ EXPERT RESOURCES

The Core Team, facilitators and mentors of SMART are leaders in their respective fields of theatre and arts management in India. The team includes reputed theatre practitioners, arts managers, pedagogues and financial experts, all of whom are dedicated to building this programme to impact our theatre world.

SMART is enriched by deep learnings from India, along with inputs from many international experts.

■ SCHOLARSHIP AND PRACTICE

Most courses tend to be tilted either in the direction of scholarship or of practice. SMART is unique in bringing the best of both approaches together, where theoretical approaches are informed by on-ground challenges and realities, and where existing practice in the field is theorized.

■ A DIY COURSE

SMART is a do-it-yourself capacity-building module that strengthens the management capacities of theatre groups. The course teaches its participants to develop and build their group's essential core values, think of sustainability, develop audiences, refine communication, improve financial management, fundraising and administration. All this culminates in a strategic plan evolved by each participating group and applicable in their own context.

■ AN AFFORDABLE PROGRAMME

SMART's course fees are highly subsidized and affordable to enable the greatest reach and impact across the country. This has been made possible by the generous support of our sponsors and donors.

SMART: THE FIRST TWO YEARS

After two years of meticulous planning and rigorous study, SMART was initiated in January 2015. Today, in December 2016, we are delighted and proud that two cohorts of theatre practitioners have enriched themselves with rich experiences, deep learnings and tremendous joy.

Over the two years, about 150 theatre groups and institutions have applied for admission to SMART. After a careful and thorough selection process, 34 groups have completed the course over the first two years (17 each year).



The course starts with an intensive, immersive 10-day residential workshop at Fireflies, a beautiful, eco-friendly space outside Bangalore. The workshop consists of all-day training and sharing sessions, followed by conversations with experts during the evenings.

After this workshop, the participants return to their own groups to evolve a 3-year Strategic Plan. Each group is assigned a mentor. After an intensive process of reflection, discussion and exploring possibilities, the participants meet again for a final two-day workshop to present, discuss and critique their plans.

SMART 2016: PARTICIPANTS

Saggheer Loadhi, Naresh Dongarwar
Apsara Iyengar, Suhail Shah
Kuljeet Singh
Ashish Paliwal, Shena Gamat
Somnath Naik, Mandar Jog
Rupali Bhawe, Prajakta Saibarde
Savitri Medhatul
K. Radhakrishnan, A. Dillibabu
Vaibhav Lokur, Swati Kulkarni
Soumendra Bhattacharya
Pramod Kale
Archana Patel Nandi
Asmita Shri
Rosemary Ishorari
Dhwani Vij, Neel Sengupta
Choiti Ghosh, Sananda Mukhopadhyay
Anuradha H.R.

AAKANKSHA BALRANGABHUMI, PUNE
APPLAUSE VADODARA, VADODARA
ATELIER THEATRE, NEW DELHI
BAREFOOT!, NEW DELHI
HAUNS SANGEET NATYA MANDAL, GOA
JACARANDA, PUNE
KALI BILLI PRODUCTIONS, MUMBAI
KATTAIKKUTTU SANGAM, KANCHIPURAM
KHULA ASMAAN, BELGAUM
MAD ABOUT DRAMA, KOLKATA
MAHARASHTRA CULTURAL CENTRE, PUNE
MEAT PUPPET COMPANY, MUMBAI
RANGVINAYAK RANGMANDAL, BAREILY
SHILLONG
THIRD SPACE COLLECTIVE, NEW DELHI
TRAM ARTS TRUST, MUMBAI
UNTITLED ARTS, BANGALORE



THE SMART TEAM 2016



■ **MILENA DRAGIĆEVIĆ ŠEŠIĆ** *Course Consultant, UNESCO Chair in Cultural Policy and Management & Professor of Cultural Policy, Cultural Management, Cultural and Media Studies at the University of the Arts, Belgrade, Serbia*

■ **SAMEERA IYENGAR** *Course Director, Facilitator & Mentor Co-Founder & Director, Junoon, Mumbai*

■ **ARUNDHATI GHOSH** *Course Co-Director, Facilitator & Mentor Executive Director, India Foundation for the Arts, Bangalore*

■ **SUDHANVA DESHPANDE** *Facilitator & Mentor, Jana Natya Manch & Studio Safdar, New Delhi*

■ **SUNIL SHANBAG** *Facilitator & Mentor, Theatre Director, Arpana, Mumbai*

■ **SWATI APTE** *Facilitator & Mentor, Director, The Arts Quotient, Mumbai*

■ **SANJNA KAPOOR** *Mentor, Co-founder, Junoon, Mumbai*

■ **SATISH ALEKAR** *Mentor, Distinguished Professor, Centre for Performing Arts, Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune*

■ **PRADEEP VAIDDYA** *Mentor, Founder, Expression Lab, Pune*

■ **MENAKA RODRIGUEZ** *Mentor, Head, Marketing and Business Development, India Foundation for the Arts, Bangalore*

■ **ASHOKE CHATTERJEE** *Course Evaluator, Former Executive Director, National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad*

■ **SHARMISTHA SAHA** *Project Coordinator, Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities & Social Sciences, IIT Bombay*

■ **DARSHANA DAVE** *Assistant Coordinator, Manager, Institutional Projects, India Foundation for the Arts, Bangalore*

■ **ASHISH MEHTA** *Production Manager, Administrator, Aaskata Kalamanch, Pune*

SMART: A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

YOU CAN HELP!

SMART is an **India Theatre Forum (ITF)** initiative. ITF is a loose and informal network of practitioners which seeks to strengthening theatre practice through various interventions. ITF hopes to create and consolidate resources for theatre practitioners and provide a common platform for those willing to take on the public responsibility of pushing for excellence and diversity in theatrical endeavour. To read more on ITF, visit www.theatreforum.in

SMART is conceived and implemented by the SMART **Core Team**, under the able guidance of **Course Consultant** Milena Dragicevic Sestic. The Core Team is comprised of individuals who are leaders in their respective fields of theatre and arts management in India: Arundhati Ghosh, Sameera Iyengar, Sanjna Kapoor, Swati Apte, Sudhanva Deshpande and Sunil Shanbag. They represent diverse practices and efforts in theatre and the arts, and come together with the shared vision of drawing on indigenous knowledge to strengthen the theatre field in India.

Managed by **Junoon**, Mumbai, an arts organisation and social enterprise that seeks to embed the richness of the arts into the lives of people across India. Through its various engagements and programmes, Junoon makes the arts accessible and weaves them into everyday life. The organisation strongly believes these immersive experiences are essential for a healthy, collective, human experience. To read more on Junoon, visit www.junoontheatre.org

Managed by **India Foundation for the Arts**, Bangalore, an independent, national, not-for-profit, grant-making organisation that supports practice, research and education in the arts in India. Set up as a Public Charitable Trust in 1993, IFA started making grants in 1995. Over the years, IFA has supported over 400 arts and culture projects through its various programmes, including an array of writers, dancers, film-makers, musicians, performers, theatre directors, sculptors, photographers, curators and researchers from across India. To read more on IFA, visit www.ifaindia.org



SPREAD THE WORD: Help SMART reach and impact theatre groups across India. Spread the word about the programme and join us in taking SMART into the heart of India, through your recommendations. Find out more at www.theatreforum.in. To stay updated on further plans, details and projects, subscribe to the SMART mailing list by writing to mehtaashishp@gmail.com.

Contribute: SMART is a highly subsidized programme. To contribute, you could

- Offer venues/spaces for the Course or meetings;
- Sponsor one or more groups to attend the course;
- Make a donation to SMART;
- Help SMART become part of your company's CSR programme.

Any support to SMART will be deeply appreciated and acknowledged. Contact mehtaashishp@gmail.com for more information.

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“It always seemed that doing theatre was like fighting the Mahabharata with a razor blade. After doing this course, I don't feel as though I have a bigger or better weapon. But, the battle does not seem as daunting as the Mahabharata anymore.”

—**PRAVEEN SHEKHAR, Backstage - Participant, Batch of 2015**

“The SMART Course was helpful for giving me space to think of new ideas for Kattaikkuttu Sangam such as how to get a bigger audience for our performances. We also thought about our personal aim for Kattaikkuttu Sangam and how that can best match Kattaikkuttu Sangam's aim. We shared our organization's story with other theater companies. We felt proud of Kattaikkuttu Sangam and all that it has accomplished in its twenty-six years.”

—**DILLIBABU, Kattaikkuttu Sangam - Participant, Batch of 2016**

“Mad About Drama and Kolkata theatre owes Sameera Iyengar for the way she has guided us on a fortnightly basis. We definitely are and have become administratively stronger, which was one of our weakest points. The best thing is how she understands us by just talking to us and reading our reports, even though she hasn't watched a single play. We are hoping for a lifetime mentorship with her.”

—**SOUMENDRA BHATTACHARYA, Mad About Drama - Participant, Batch of 2016**

“Groups are no longer content to simply survive; they want to thrive. The SMART process changes their way of looking – instead of staring at the hard wall of impossibility, they are now looking to carve out doorways of possibility.”

—**SUDHANVA DESHPANDE, Director, Actor, Jana Natya Manch - Facilitator & Mentor**

“SMART makes it possible for the ecology of theatre to learn from its own past journeys and create possible futures from its archives of memory and knowledge. For the arts to thrive on their terms in today's neoliberal context, and for artists to be able to continuously challenge, dissent, resist, and build in this environment, all independent arts practices need to address the issue of sustainability – from within.”

—**ARUNDHATI GHOSH, Executive Director, India Foundation for the Arts - Facilitator & Mentor**

“It's inspiring to see what occurs when artists' passions and creativity are combined with disciplined management practices in action. The groups I've worked with have pursued very different journeys, but have emerged with a common clarity of thought and action. It's been lovely to see how this has allowed their ambitions to soar!”

—**SWATI APTE, Director, The Arts Quotient - Facilitator & Mentor**

“As I watch the groups pull together their strategic plan, as I hear their clarity of thought and feel the strength of their sense of purpose, as I see how their instinct has become articulated and translated into a solid plan of action, I feel such a sense of humility and pride and thankfulness together. I now know these groups will go out there and unleash their possibility into the world.”—**SAMEERA IYENGAR, Co-founder & Director, Junoon - Course Director, Facilitator & Mentor**

“The most amazing thing for me, working with the dream of SMART, has been the journey – from the nagging kernel of the idea, to the coming together of such amazing, generous people in creating the course, to the unwavering support of our funders, to the openness and commitment of the participants, to realizing it all. The journey continues . . .”—**SANJNA KAPOOR, Co-founder & Director, Junoon - Mentor**

“One of the most significant aspects of the SMART programme is its connect with the active theatre and arts scene in India, and hence its familiarity with the reality of arts practice. It deepens learning and makes it a two-way flow. Facilitators and mentors learn from participating theatre companies, and vice-versa, and the cumulative effect of this learning is of great significance.”

—**SUNIL SHANBAG, Director, Arpana - Facilitator & Mentor**

“Our cultural cooperation program targets to support projects that help develop competence, professionalism, institutional development and infrastructure in a given country. Through projects like SMART, we are able to fulfill this goal, thereby helping the creative sector grow. SMART is making an important contribution to the world of theatre management by helping practitioners reimagine their work more professionally. We congratulate SMART for a successful second year of training and wish them good luck for the future”.

—**Nils Ragnas Kamsvåg, Ambassador of Norway to India**

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