

Media Release

The 11th Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards (META) Announced

Synopsis:

- **“Mein Huun Yusuf aur Yeh Hai Mera Bhai” wins Best Production; bags maximum number of awards**
- **Acclaimed Theatre personality & NSD Chairman, Ratan Thiyam presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award**

New Delhi, Friday, March 11, 2016: After a weeklong celebration of theatre in the national capital, the 11th Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards (META) concluded with a much awaited red carpet Awards Night, held at The Taj Mahal Hotel, Mansingh Road. The annual awards, which recognize excellence in theatre nationally, celebrate the intrinsic diversity and rich cultural traditions of India. The META is India's most comprehensive award and a premier honour for the theatre fraternity, awarding on-stage and off-stage talent across 14 award categories including the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Mein Huun Yusuf aur Yeh Hai Mera Bhai stole the limelight, bagging 4 awards (**Best Direction, Best Production, Best Light Design, Best Sound/Music Design**) and a Jury Special Mention for Best Actor in a Lead role (Male).

Noted theatre guru and Chairman of the National School of Drama (NSD) **Padmashree Ratan Thiyam** was conferred the **META Lifetime Achievement Award** for his contribution to Indian theatre, presented by **Shabana Azmi**. The Lifetime Achievement Award carries a prize money of Rs. 5 Lakh.

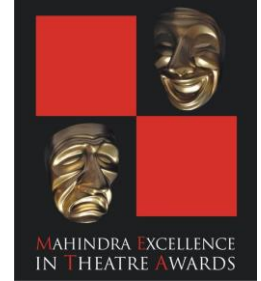
On receiving the award, **Ratan Thiyam** said, “I feel deeply honoured by this prestigious award. It's a kind of gesture of encouragement for us who are working in the field of theatre. I am happy.”

The 2016 META Jury comprised author **Kunal Basu**, actor **Kusum Haider**, director and actor **M.K. Raina**, dancer, choreographer **Tanushree Shankar** and actor, director **Sushma Seth**.

Plays in diverse Indian Languages shone at the META Awards Nights this year with **Shantanu Ghosh** and **Dyuti Ghosh** of the **Bengali** play **Haoai – The Eleventh Planet** bagging the META for **Best Actor in Supporting Role – Male & Female** respectively for their portrayals of the shy Polu and the excitable Mrinmoyee.

Best Original Script was won by **Kannada** play **Akshayambhara**, with its unique amalgamation of modern theatrical tools and the traditional Yakshagana dance theatre creating a contemporary narrative raising questions on female representation and male ownership. **Prasad Cherkady**, who plays a male actor in *streevesha* as Draupadi in Akshayambhara, won the **Best Actor in Lead Role (Male)**.

Sayalee Phatak won the **Best Actor in Lead role (Female)** for her depiction of the aggressive but troubled Mitra in search for her sexual identity in the play **A Friend's Story**, an English adaptation of Vijay Tendulkar's brilliant Marathi drama, Mitrachi Goshta.



Malayalam play **The Balcony** was awarded the **Best Costume Design** for the authenticity of the costumes which transported the audience into the world of the production and **Tamil** play **Kuhaimaravasigal** bagged the **Best Choreography Award** for the rustic quality of the movements which were well in tune with the symbolism depicted all through the play.

A unique stage adaptation of the 1920's German silent horror film, **The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari**, set inside a rundown warehouse space featuring distinctive on-stage elements won **Best Stage Design**.

The **Best Ensemble** was presented to **07/07/07** based on the legal battle to save Reyhaneh Jabbari from the gallows.

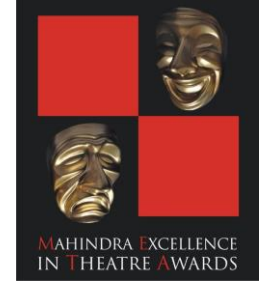
The META Awards Night was hosted by Kabir Bedi and Shivani Wazir. A spate of performances celebrated theatre's big night and enthralled the audience including Qawalli by the Niazi Nizami Brothers, Shabnam Virmani's spiritual musical journey through an exploration of Kabir's poetry, a contemporary meets classical dance performance by Goura Prema and the Natya Nectar Dance Company and award-winning actress Kalki Koechlin's chilling rendition of her poem *The Printing Machine*.

Commenting on the Awards, **Jay Shah**, Head, Cultural Outreach, Mahindra and Mahindra Ltd. said, "Every passing year of META strengthens our commitment to theatre. Seeing the astonishing levels of talent in our country and playing a role in bringing this to the nation's notice fills the Mahindra Group with immense pride and satisfaction. This year was no different - it deepened our admiration for both theatre folks and audience."

Over the past few days, theatre enthusiasts in the capital were treated with a feast of 10 nominated productions from across the country, which were showcased on the META stage this year. The bevy of topics included contemporary interpretations of mythological texts, prostitution, molestation, false executions, human-like obsession, jealousy, betrayal and search for redemption.

Commenting on META 2016 **Sanjoy Roy**, Managing Director Teamwork Arts and Producer META, said, "With every passing year META has witnessed trend-setting plays which have reflected the diversity of India and shone a light on the many issues that continue to challenge the world in these times."

~ ENDS ~



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The Mahindra Group focuses on enabling people to rise through solutions that power mobility, drive rural prosperity, enhance urban lifestyles and increase business efficiency.

A USD 16.9 billion multinational group based in Mumbai, India, Mahindra provides employment opportunities to over 200,000 people in over 100 countries. Mahindra operates in the key industries that drive economic growth, enjoying a leadership position in [tractors](#), [utility vehicles](#), [information technology](#), [financial services](#) and [vacation ownership](#). In addition, Mahindra enjoys a strong presence in the agribusiness, aerospace, components, consulting services, [defence](#), energy, industrial equipment, logistics, [real estate](#), retail, steel, [commercial vehicles](#) and [two wheeler](#) industries.

In 2015, Mahindra & Mahindra was recognized as the Best Company for CSR in India in a study by the Economic Times. In 2014, Mahindra featured on the Forbes Global 2000, a comprehensive listing of the world's largest, most powerful public companies, as measured by revenue, profit, assets and market value. The Mahindra Group also received the Financial Times 'Boldness in Business' Award in the 'Emerging Markets' category in 2013.

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For over 25 years, Teamwork Arts has taken India to the world and brought the world to India.

In countries such as Australia, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, Israel, Korea, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, UK and USA, Teamwork produces over 25 highly acclaimed performing arts, visual arts and literary festivals across more than 40 cities.

Teamwork Arts produces one of the world's largest free literary gatherings, the annual **ZEE Jaipur Literature Festival**, the **Ishara International Puppet Festival** in New Delhi, the annual **Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards (META) and Festival**, international festivals **Shared History** in South Africa, **Eye on India** in the United States of America, **India by the Bay** in Hong Kong, and many more.

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Winners

Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards 2016

Category	META 2016 Winner	Production
Life time Achievement Award	Ratan Thiyam	
Best Actor in Lead Role (Male)	Prasad Cherkady	Akshayambara
<i>Jury Special Mention</i>	<i>Ajeet Singh Palawat</i>	<i>Mein Huun Yusuf aur Yeh Hai Mera Bhai</i>
Best Actor in Lead Role (Female)	Sayalee Pathak	A Friend's Story
Best Actor in Supporting Role (Male)	Shantanu Ghosh	Haoai – The Eleventh Planet
Best Actor in Supporting Role (Female)	Dyuti Ghosh	Haoai – The Eleventh Planet
Best Director	Mohit Takalkar	Mein Huun Yusuf aur Yeh Hai Mera Bhai
Best Original Script	Sharanya Ramprakash	Akshayambara
Best Production	Mein Huun Yusuf aur Yeh Hai Mera Bhai	Mein Huun Yusuf aur Yeh Hai Mera Bhai
Best Ensemble	07 / 07 / 07	07 / 07 / 07
Best Innovative Sound /Music Design	Mohit Takalkar & Darshan Patanker	Mein Huun Yusuf aur Yeh Hai Mera Bhai
Best Costume Design	Sasidharan Naduvil	The Balcony
Best Stage Design	Deepan Sivaraman	The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari
Best Light Design	Pradeep Vaidya	Mein Huun Yusuf aur Yeh Hai Mera Bhai
Best Choreography	Dr. S. Murugabhoopathy	Kuhaimaravasigal