

About
The Festival Inauguration and Felicitation
on November 20th 2014,
and
The Kathakahani (free storytelling in 20 spaces across Bengaluru)
on November 21st-23rd 2014

It all began with the inauguration of Kathotsava 2014, an emotional evening of Kathalaya's journey of 15 years from 1998-2014. The chief guest Mr. Anmol Vellani, ex-director India Foundation for the Arts spoke about the importance of storytelling and its increasing relevance in today's world, how storytelling can be used to help children express, how it can be used to level the ground between the teacher and the student, between classes, castes, genders.

Unlike other events, this event unfolded like a story with Geeta regaling stories of Kathalaya's 15 years journey interspersed with a wonderful Kannada folksong performance by Lakshminarayan, ending with a performance of shadow play by Prahlad Acharya.

"Kiyam Kiyam Kurvi", the song of a sparrow, asking the trees for shelter, sung as a song at Lightroom by Rashmi Hari, one of Kathalaya's storytellers. Stories were narrated in different styles at 20 spaces around Bangalore reaching out to more than 700 children in 3 days as part of Kathotsava 2014. While there were themes for each day from November 21st-23rd, the styles of telling included traditional forms like the Kamsale by Savitha and Harikatha by Varshini and narrative styles with props and puppets by other tellers. While the baby turtles reached their mother following the moon at Kavade, The Toy Hive at Seshadripuram, the boy who wanted a drum at Apple of my I, The naughty elves from fairyland stories at Crossword, JP Nagar, stories travelled from Banerghatta road to Sahakarnagar and from Belandur to JP Nagar. Children drew peacocks, made spoon princesses, origami animals, wore hats, learnt about recycling, learned a Swahili song and a Janapada geete as they danced and repeated lines from the stories. One of the parents, Sundar Balasubramaniam, remarked to one of our tellers, "To have so many children (including the grown ups) in rapt attention takes quite some skill and performance, you did extremely well Anagha".

Kathotsava 2014 has just begun. The festival will bring the following events in the next three weeks

- 1) Katha Shiksha - Storytelling workshop on November 28th by Antonio Rocha, Geeta Ramanujam and Spatica Ramanujam at Ashirwad, St Mark's Road for professionals teachers and all interested in storytelling.
- 2) Katha Diwas - Storytelling performances on November 30th by Antonio Rocha, Geeta Ramanujam and Prahlad Acharya at Rangasthala Auditorium at Rangoli Metro, MG Road.
- 3) Katha Sandhya - Storytelling performances on December 5th by Antonio Rocha, Geeta Ramanujam at Atta Galata, Koramangala.
- 4) The Open Hearth - Storywood evening of tellers telling tales around lamps and would be the sunset hour to recall tales from the heart.
- 5) Intensive and Diploma courses in storytelling and Diploma in storytelling by Kathalaya Academy from December 5th – December 12th.
- 6) There will be storytelling performances and workshops at schools around Bangalore too.

About the performers --

Antonio Rocha is an award-winning storyteller whose unique blend of spoken word and mime is filled with unforgettable zany characters, realistic vocal effects and mesmerizing movements. Antonio is delighted to be performing in India for the first time.

Geeta Ramanujam, besides being an internationally renowned Storyteller, is an educator and academician. She is also the Executive Director the Kathalaya Trust and Academy for Storytelling. "People just love your style, you touch the heart the core," says Ylva Gustaffson minister of culture from Sweden. She has performed and trained over 70,000 people in the field of storytelling.

Prahlad Acharya is an internationally renowned magician, ventriloquist, shadow play artist and storyteller. A master magician, he is one of the few entertainers in the world who use only their bare hands to create an unbelievable world of light and shade.

Spatica R. has completed a course at the London International School of Performing Arts and will be the facilitator too at the workshop.

Join us in this grand celebration of Storytelling - Kathotsava 2014. Book your seats now at bookmyshow.com , indiastage.com , kathalaya@gmail.com . For details, www.kathalaya.org .