

Østfold
Internasjonale
Teater



Ghostly Acts

by Durga Bishwokarma

Welcome to Ghostly Acts!

«The ghost is not simply a dead or a missing person, but a social figure, and investigating it can lead to that dense site where history and subjectivity make social life.»

– Avery F. Gordon

Ghostly Acts explores the spectre of caste and violence, taking inspiration from Avery Gordon's book *Ghostly Matters* (2008). By invoking the figure of the ghost, the performance emphasizes how the act of living is the highest form of resistance.

Durga Bishwokarma will explore notions of caste, particularly ideas around purity and pollution. Switching between the personal, the political, and the personal-political, she will cover multiple spatial, temporal and subjective geographies to complicate the idea of identity and belonging.

The performance is an experimental piece, weaving together participatory moments, personal and archival fragments – and some ghostly acts. It also aims to destabilize the audience's easy consumption of caste narratives from an intellectual distance. As such, audience members will be involved in the performance.

One of the ways in which caste is organized is through food. Audience members will be asked to participate in preparing a meal together. Will you eat with the ghost? Most importantly, will you be willing to do some ghostly acts with the ghost?

Credits:

Concept and performance: **Durga Bishwokarma**

Artistic adviser/outside eye: **Thomas Østgaard**

Creative adviser: **Ram Krishna Ranjan**

Scenographer: **Oda Holmvik Bredvold**

Live Music: **Ulf Knudsen**

Soundtrack Music: **Øystein Elle**

Production by: **Østfold Internasjonale Teater**

Production manager: **Malin Østli**

Technical manager: **Bjørn Gunnar Otten**

Marketing & Communication: **Hilde Marthinsen, Ida Willassen**

Publikumstjenesten

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Artist's Appreciation



I am thankful to: Østfold International Theatre and Viken Fylkeskommune for the 8-month Artist internship program. This opportunity has provided me with a profound artistic space to research and explore my artistic interest in the topic that I urge to work on as an artist: art for Dalit and marginalized communities. During this program, I have been investigating the core question of why there are less artists and stories coming from oppressed/ marginalized communities in the performance field, how to develop an art for oppressed stories from a global perspective, etc.

Special thanks to the Østfold Internasjonale Teater family: Artistic director Thomas Østgaard for listening to the international social context that I brought to the table and for your artistic support towards my practice, which has motivated me to explore my personal stories openly and fearlessly. James Moore for all the creative talks and guidelines. Vilde Broen and Anna Rabenda for your special advice on paper and accounting works. (I can't believe how hard to deal with that to become an independent performer in Norway!) Hilde Marthinsen and Ida Willassen for the best marketing support. Bjørn Gunnar Otten and Øyvind Andresen for being patience with my ambiguous ideas about tech needs. Fredrik Borgund, Karoline Solbakken and Thea Færden Bringsvaerd for exchanging dialogue about arts and life. Special thanks to Malin Østli for being a supportive production manager for *Ghostly Acts*. Your energy towards the project feels like a big relief.

Big thanks to my dearest friend and a Ph.D. researcher at HDK, Valand Ram Krishna Ranjan, for your big contribution. You have supported me from collecting theory to writing work, from creative advising to title making. Thank you for your effort to come and work with me in Fredrikstad, and for being a project creative adviser. This shows that you are the backbone of the project.

Øystein Elle for producing music and donating it to my project, dearest Ulf Knudsen for being a live musician in the performance. Oda Holmvik Bredvold; it is so great to have you in the project as a scenographer. How you all engaged and shared your knowledge is a big development support.



Thank you, my husband Bikash Tiwari for frequently coming to my working space after a late-night shift, listening to my ideas, and not letting me feel alone in this process of solo art making.

Dr. Karmenlara Ely for always being a supportive teacher and your encouragement for my artistic development. Special thanks to prof. Claire Hind and Joshua Sofaer for the time in zoom meetings. Dr. Monica Motinn for active conversations about how to work on communities' stories, and Dr. Shiva Rijal for the artistic guidelines. Rosemary Kikon for sending me emails, books, and lovely cards from a far distance during the rehearsal process.

My dearest friends Mari Pitkaen, for a Sunday visit to my work-space and for your special feedback, and Inger Reidun Olsen, for a lovely lunch and conversation about dance and movement. Special thanks to journalist Wenche Marie Jacobsen for your article about my personal story in Fredrikstad Blad.

Thank you to all the audiences who will be here to support the work Ghostly Acts. And to all of the lovely supportive people out there with whom I have been exchanging my ideas but didn't put the name here, you are all in my heart.

Durga Bishwokarma