

BHILWARA NATYA PURASKAR - 2012

Overwhelming response to Third Bhilwara Natya Puraskar

New Delhi: *Tuesday, May 11, 2012*: The Bhilwara Natya Puraskar, which is a novel endeavour by LNJ Bhilwara Group to promote Hindi theatre in the country, has announced that its third edition has attracted a record number of entries this year. The Puraskar, which was constituted in 2010 is a unique effort to promote this art form, which many believe require tremendous push. Chairman Emeritus of business conglomerate LNJ Bhilwara Group, Shri LNJ Jhunjhunwala, a connoisseur of this art form, conceived of this idea along with many luminaries in this field and the initiative has earned huge applause from across the country.

The first two years were hugely successful, with the awards committee receiving many entries from across the country. The first prize of the first Bhilwara Natya Puraskar consisting of Rs 2 lakh cash and certificate went to noted theatre and film personality Manoj Joshi's play *Chanakya*, while *Main Rahi Masoom* directed by Prof Bhaskar Shewalkar received the second prize, which consisted of Rs 1 lakh as prize money. The third shortlisted play was *Ambedkar Aur Gandhi*, directed by Arvind Gaur. *Hastinapur* by KG Trivedi of the Trikarshi was the winner of the Second Bhilwara Natya Puraskar. *Ek aur Dronacharya*, directed by Prof Satish Mehta of Prayog Bhopal, theatre group was the runner up.

The jury members included Shri Jhunjhunwala; Prof Mohan Maharishi, former director National School of Drama; Shri Rajendra Bagrodia, industrialist & philanthropist; and Prof Bharat Gupta, the eminent theater theorist from Delhi University. "We sincerely hope our small contribution will go a long way in encouraging the group to scale new heights," said Shri Jhunjhunwala.

Some prominent entries received this year include *Streer Patra* directed by Seema Biswas, *Kanupriya* directed by Saurabh Anand, *Arjun ka Beta* directed by Atul Satya Koushik and *Raag Droh* directed by Bharti Sharma.

The award is given every year to two outstanding theatre productions in Hindi, preferably of original and fresh plays written in Hindi, or of any Indian language, but translated into Hindi. In a short span the Award has created a huge impact and in its second year it received 30 nominations from over 8 states including from reputed directors such as Nadira Babbar, Vijay Tendulkar, Ila Arun, Vinay Verma and Pankaj Dubey. The award recognizes not only the written script, but also the production as a whole.

The members of the award committee want this award to boost theatre. They hope this will be an inspiration to many unacknowledged groups in forgotten parts of the country. The LNJ Bhilwara Group wishes to support their passion and dedication by providing them institutional and financial support.

Shri Jhunjhunwala said, "Theatre art can set examples of holistic social and good behavior for societies. I urge upon all stakeholders to join us in this endeavor which is aimed at especially spotting and encouraging unseen talents from across the country".

Shri Jhunjhunwala has always taken a special interest in music, drama, literature and chess. Long ago in 1987, he had made a documentary on Rajasthan and its indigenous culture and tradition. The documentary won Golden Lotus Award by the then President of India. Under the patronage of Shri Jhunjhunwala, the famous director Shri Bapi Bose, had directed a play "Param Purush" based on the life of Thakur Ramkrishna Paramhansa in 2007. The play was declared as the best production of the year by Government of Delhi

