

Inauguration of the Proscenium Theatre Society Activities for 2019-20

The inauguration of the activities of Proscenium, Theatre Society of MSSW, for the academic year 2019-20 was held on 30th August 2019 at the MSSW auditorium. The event was presided over by Dr. K. Ganesh, former Associate Professor and Head of the English Department, Madras Christian College. Arista Garg of III B.Sc. welcomed the gathering. Mr. K.A. Mathew, IAS (Retd.), the Chairman of MSSW, and the Principal Dr. S. Raja Samuel were present at the event. Jannani M of III B.Sc. presented an overview of the theatre club's activities in the past academic year. A one-minute video, which had been put together by Kailash G. of I B.Sc. to showcase the effort that goes into each play production, was screened after the report. The Principal congratulated the student members and staff co-ordinator Ms. Iswarya. V. on the strides the club had made within a short span.

The chief guest of the day Dr. K. Ganesh was introduced by Lakshmi of I B.Sc. as a much sought-after research guide and an expert on theatre studies, especially Shakespeare. Dr. Ganesh then declared the forum open for the year and delivered an enlightening address on "Shakespeare in Asia." He spoke of how the legendary Bard had gone from being a symbol of colonial imposition to one of universal cultural identification and adaptation. He cited instances of modern productions of Shakespeare incorporated into folk art forms such as *theyyam* in Kerala or *therukoothu* in Tamil. He also highlighted the major role played by films in adapting and indigenising Shakespeare in the Asian context, beginning with Akira Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood* continuing up to Vishal Bharadwaj's *Haider*. The Chairman of MSSW felicitated the guest and remarked that he found the lecture eye-opening.

The MC of the day, Simone from III B.Sc., invited the audience gathered to witness a production of the prize-winning play "Exit Godot Unseen" performed by the students of B.Sc. and BSW. The team (consisting of Adhira S, Krishna V, Mikhail Juan Luker, Mokshavathi A, Nandhitha M, Shenbaga Nithila R, Srividya Lakshmi Chandran and Vijaya Gowri Mohan) re-created the magic of their earlier performance at the University of Madras. The audiences' eyes were glued to the stage from the start and the play ended with thunderous applause. One of the audience members commented that they "felt transported to the Biblical age in which the scene was set, especially when the dead person [the character of risen Lazarus] walked up to the stage from among the audience."

Earlier in the week, the team had also staged the same play at a national level theatre fest **Rangmanch 2019** conducted by Jyoti Nivas College, Bengaluru, and won special appreciation from the organisers. The Chief Guest, who was impressed with the performance, congratulated and presented the team members with certificates. Ms. Iswarya V., in her vote of thanks, acknowledged the sincerity and hard work of every team member who made the play possible and reflected on the challenges of going to Bengaluru to stage a play. The event ended with group photographs of the team with the guests, followed by the national anthem.