

KANCHUKA NAYANI DHARMASIRI

Department of Fine Arts
University of Peradeniya,
Peradeniya
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EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Comparative Literature **2014**

University of Massachusetts Amherst

Dissertation Title: *Transgressing Space and Subverting Hierarchies: A Comparative Analysis of Street Theater Groups in Sri Lanka, India, and the United States*

Committee: Professor William Moebius (Chair), Professor Jenny Spencer, Professor Catherine Portuges, Professor Priscilla Page, Ms. Andrea Assaf

MA in Comparative Literature **2012**

University of Massachusetts Amherst

Certificate in Advanced Feminist Studies **2013**

University of Massachusetts Amherst

B.A. in English **2002**

University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka
Second Class, upper division

Superior Diploma in Modern French Studies **2001**

-Diplôme Supérieur d'Études Françaises Modernes
Alliance Française of Kandy, Sri Lanka

Diploma in the French Language **1999**

-Diplôme de Langue Française,
Alliance Française of Kandy, Sri Lanka

AREAS OF RESEARCH

Political street theater and alternative theater
Modern Sri Lankan Theater
Postcolonial theory and fiction
Feminism and early Buddhist women's writing
Translation theory and performance theory
Twentieth century American theater
The representation of the Other in film

TEACHING HISTORY

**Lecturer, Department of Fine Arts,
University of Peradeniya Sri Lanka**

2013-present

Courses Co-Taught, Postgraduate courses

MA/MPhil/FNA/601: Research Methodology
MA/MPhil/FNA/602: Art and Aesthetic Theories
MA/MPhil/FNA/603: Art and Society
MA/MPhil/FNA/604: Art in Asia with Special Reference to Sri Lanka
MA/MPhil/FNA/605: Genre Differences and Genre Specifics in Arts
MA/MPhil/FNA/606: Semiotics in Art and Culture

FNA 501: Research Methods in Fine Arts
FNA 502: Theories of Aesthetics and Art Criticism
FNA 504: Introduction to Performing and Image Arts

Undergraduate courses

FNA 101: Introduction to Fine Arts
FNA 102: Introduction to Art History and Aesthetics
FNA 205: Theatre and Drama with Practical Component I
FNA 214: Theatre and Drama with Practical Component II
FNA 305: Theatre and Drama with Practical Component III
FNA 313: Theatre and Drama with Practical Component IV
FNA 315: Sri Lankan Theatre
FNA 404: Theatre and Drama with Practical Component V

Teaching Associate, University of Massachusetts Amherst

2007-2012

Courses Designed and Taught, Department of Comparative Literature

COMPLIT 121: International Short Story
COMPLIT 141: Good and Evil: East-West
COMPLIT 121: International Short Story (online)
COMPLIT 141: Good and Evil: East-West (online)

**Teaching Assistant, University Massachusetts Amherst
Department of English**

2004-2012

ENG 397DH: Alternative Theaters: Navigating the Edinburgh Fringe.
Professor Jenny Spencer, Summer study abroad program

Department of Theater

TH100: Introduction to Theater- the Politics of Performance,
Professor Megan Lewis

Department of Comparative Literature

COMPLIT 382: Cinema and Psyche, Professor Catherine Portuges
COMPLIT 151: Fictions East West, Professor Nerissa Balce
COMPLIT 131: Brave New Worlds, Professor David Lenson

COMPLIT 234: Myth, Folktales, and Children's Literature, Professor William Moebius
COMPLIT 122: Spiritual Autobiography, Professor Elizabeth Petroff

**Assistant Lecturer, Department of English
University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka**

2002-2004

Courses Designed and Taught

ENG 209: Cultural Practice and Theory
Writing Skills

Courses Co-Taught

ENG 306: Developments in Twentieth-Century British Writing (with Dr. Lilamani de Silva)
ENG 404: An Outline of Sinhala and Tamil Literature (I co-taught the Sinhala Theater section of the course with Mr. G.K. Haththotuwegama)
ENG 101: Introduction to the Study of English 1 (I taught the language component)

Visiting Lecturer, University of Peradeniya

2010

ENG 404: A Survey of Sri Lankan Literature, "Street Theatre in Sri Lanka,"
University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

Invited Lectures

"Trancreating Soranoito." Translation and Media. Department of Media, Communication and Culture, International Christian University, Tokyo, Japan.

"Use of Theatre in Education and communication." EX 2101 Principles of Human Behaviour. Department of Agricultural Extension, University of Peradeniya 2014 & 2015

"Eugène Ionesco and the Theater of the Absurd." COMPLIT 231: Comedy, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2011

"Representation of War and Displacement in Prasanna Vithanage's *Ira Mediyama*" COMPLIT 382: Cinema and Psyche, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2009

French Instructor, Alliance Française of Kandy

1998-2002

Intermediate levels 1 and 2
Beginners levels 1 and 2
Special program for economically underprivileged students in Kandy

PUBLICATIONS

Books

Streets Ahead with Haththotuwegama: A Collection of Articles by and about Gamini Haththotuwegama. Ed. Kanchuka Dharmasiri. Assistant editors. Lohan Gunaweera & Nicole Calandra. Ravaya Publications: Maharagama, Sri Lanka, 2012

Book chapters

“Voices from the Therīgāthā: Framing Western Feminisms in Sinhala Translation.”
Translating Women: Different Voices and New Horizons. Eds. Luise von Flotow & Farzaneh Farahzad. Routledge: New York, U.S.A., 2017

“Modern Theatre in Sri Lanka.” *Routledge Handbook of Asian Theatre.* Ed. Siyuan Liu. Routledge: New York, U.S.A., 2016

“From Narratives of Nations to Bloody Streets: Contemporary Sinhala and Tamil Theatre in Sri Lanka.” *Mapping South Asia through Performance.* Ed. Ashis Sengupta. Palgrave Macmillan: Hampshire, U.K, 2015

Journal Articles

“Brecht in the Streets of Sri Lanka.” *Translations.* Fondazione Universitaria San Pellegrino, Italy, 2014

“Translation and the Emergence of a Modern Sinhala Theatre in a Postcolonial Context.”
The Mercurian: A Theatre Translation Review. Vol 2. No 4, University of North Carolina, U.S.A., 2010
<http://drama.unc.edu/academic/mercurian/themercurianvol2number4.pdf>

“Taking to the Streets: Intersections of Space, Audience, and Power in the Wayside and Open Theatre” *Nethra Review.* Vol 11. No 1. International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo, Sri Lanka, 2010
<http://www.ices.lk/publications/nethra_featured4.shtml>

“Space, Audience and Power in Wayside and Open Theatre Performances.” *Tales About Hatha: Gamini Haththotuwegama Felicitation Volume.* Ed. Athula Samarakoon & Sudesh Mantilleke. Arts Council, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, 2010

Translations

Published

Thatta Gaayikaawa (French to Sinhala). *La Cantatrice Chauve.* Eugene Ionesco. Co-translator. Lohan Gunaweera. Publishers, 2016 (forthcoming)

Agni Opera. (Sinhala to English). *Opera Vinisa,* Eric Illayapparachchi. S. Godage: Colombo, Sri Lanka, 2012

Performed

Le Petit Prince. Antoine St. Exupery. (a trilingual adaptation-French, English, and Sinhala). , 2001

God. Woody Allen. (English to Sinhala), 2000

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

“Translators and Directors in a Postcolonial Context” Asian Translation Traditions.” Monash University Malaysia. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 2016

“Reflecting on the Politics and 'Neutrality' of Observation and Mediation.” Rethinking Peace Studies Conference. International Christian University, Tokyo, Japan, 2016

“Translating with Bodies and Sounds: The Multilayered Translational Process in Theatre Practice.” Plurilingualism and Orality in Translation: Conference Festival. Indraprastha College for Women, University of Delhi, New Delhi, India, 2015

"The Multilayered Process of Devising Subha" Colombo Theatre Forum for Directors, Goethe Institut, Colombo, Sri Lanka, 2015

“Theatre and Community: A Few Questions.” Colombo Theatre Forum for Directors, Goethe Institut, Colombo, Sri Lanka, 2014

“What Do You Prefer, the Hammer or the Nail? Language and Transcreations in the Wayside and Open Theatre Performances.” Crossroads Conference, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst, 2012

“No Tickets: The Wayside and Open Theatre’s Critique of the Commercialization of Theatres and Public Spaces.” American Comparative Literature Association, Brown University, Providence, 2012

“You Saw, I Saw: An Analysis of The Wayside and Open Theatre’s Performances in Public Spaces.” Spaces of Alterity Conference, University of Nottingham, Nottingham, 2011

“Everything O You Can Sell: An Exploration of The Wayside and Open Theatre’s Performances in Public Spaces.” 2011 Sri Lanka Graduate Conference, India- China Institute, the New School for Social Research, New York, 2011

“Rolling in Money!”: The Wayside and Open Theater’s Critique of Neocolonial and State Power Structures through Language and Performance.” American Comparative Literature Association, Harvard, Cambridge, 2009

“Taking to the Streets: Intersections of Space, Audience, and Power in the Wayside and Open Theater in Sri Lanka.” 30th Annual Mid-America Theater Conference (MATC), Chicago, 2009

“In the Streets: Space, Power, and the Wayside and Open Theater in Sri Lanka.” Crossroads Conference, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst, 2008

“Chekhov’s Site of Paradise and Lawrence’s Dark Apathy: Accounts of Sri Lanka by Late Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century Literary Figures.” Southern comparative Literature Association, Chapel Hill, 2007

“Ionesco in Sinhala: A Critical Investigation of the Challenges and Complications in Translating and Directing *Tatta Gayikawa*” Third Annual Binghamton Amherst Translation Conference, State University of New York, Binghamton, 2007

“Translations in Sinhala Theater.” Second Annual Translation Conference, Kandy, Sri Lanka, 2006

“Creating Feminist Dialogues.” Second Annual Binghamton Amherst Translation Conference, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst, 2006

“Translation and Sinhala Theater in a Postcolonial Context” First Annual Binghamton Amherst Translation Conference, State University of New York, Binghamton, 2005

Conference Activity

Discussant. Rethinking Peace Studies Conference. Session VI. International Christian University. Tokyo, Japan, 2016

Reviewer. iPURSE, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, 2014

Co-organizer and moderator. Colombo Theatre Forum for Directors, Colombo, Sri Lanka, 2016 & 2014

Panel Chair, Crossroads Conference, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2012

Co-organizer, Seminar: Narrativity, Performativity and the New Globality. American Comparative Literature Association, Brown University, Providence, 2012

Panel Chair, Junior Year Writing Conference, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2011

Panel Chair, Crossroads Conference, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2008

Panel Chair, Junior Year Writing Conference, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2008

Co-Organizer, Second Annual Binghamton Amherst Translation Conference, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2006

AWARDS AND HONORS

Graduate School Travel Grant, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2011

College of Humanities and Fine Arts Dissertation Fellowship, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2010

American Institute for Sri Lankan Studies Dissertation Planning Grant, 2009

Leigh Smith Memorial Prize for English, 2002

E.F.C. Ludowyk Memorial Prize, 2002

Alliance Française Scholarship, 2002

Leigh Smith Memorial Prize for English, 1999

Pettah Library Prize for English, 1999

M.F.Khan Prize for the Greatest Competence at the General Arts Qualifying Examination, 1999

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Sinhala (Native speaker)

English (Fluent)

French (Good)

Public Talks

“Disintegration of the Nation and the Family in King Lear.” Organized by the British Council and Sri Lanka Foundation, Sri Lanka Foundation, 2016

“Greek Theatre Today.” Classics Day organized by the Department of Classical Languages, University of Peradeniya, 2016

“Pigeons, Humans and Existence: Roy Anderson’s A Pigeon Sat on a Branch Reflecting on Existence.” Digital Film Academy. Sri Lanka Foundation, 2016

“Introduction to Augusto Boal’s Forum Theatre.” One-Health Conference.
Faculty of Medicine. University of Peradeniya, 2015

“Staging the Struggle: The Past and the Future of Street Drama.” Invitation to a
New Discourse. N.M. Perera Centre, Borella, Sri Lanka, 2010

“Translation and Contemporary Sinhala Theatre with a Focus on Harold Pinter’s
Ashes to Ashes.” National Library Services Council Auditorium, Colombo, Sri
Lanka, 2010

THEATER

Directing

Tatta Gaayikawa, a Sinhala adaptation of Eugène Ionesco’s *La Cantatrice
Chauve*, Sri Lanka, 2002-2017

Subha, a devised theatrical creation based on Rabindranath Tagore’s short story,
“Subha.” Performed at E.O.E.Pereira Theatre, Santinikethan, Kolkata, India,
2014-2015

365 Plays/365 Days by Susan Lori Parks. New WORLD Theater, Rooke
Theater, Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, 2007

The Zoo Story by Edward Albee, E.O.E. Pereira Theater, Peradeniya, 2002

Le Petit Prince/Punchi Kumaraya, a trilingual production of an adaptation of
Antoine de Saint Exupéry’s *Le Petit Prince* (Sinhala/French/English, adaptation
mine), Alliance Française of Kandy, 2001

Deyyo, a translation of Woody Allen’s *God*, E.O.E. Pereira Theater and
Sarachchandra Open Air Theater, Peradeniya, 2001

God by Woody Allen. E.O.E. Pereira Theater, Peradeniya, 1999

Stage Managing

Shekadii-Walaaloo: Sister Stories. A Somali community based project directed
by Andrea Assaf. Bowker Auditorium, University of Massachusetts Amherst,
2009

Ramble-Ations: A One D’Lo Show. By D’Lo, Painted Bride Art Center,
Philadelphia, 2007-2008 The Flea Theater, First National Asian American
Theater Festival, New York and Holden Theater, Amherst College, Amherst

Fronteras Desviadas/ Deviant Borders by Dora Arreola and Andrea Assaf,
Holden Theater, Amherst College, Amherst, 2005

Theater Workshops

“Leadership Building.” Faculty of Agriculture. Mahalluppallama. University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, 2014

“Space, movement, and translation.” University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, 2014

“Exploring movement and space” Wayside and Open Theatre Workshop, Sudharshi, Borella, Sri Lanka, 2011

“Teaching Theatre Practice.” A workshop for teachers. Giriulla College, Giriulla, Sri Lanka, 2010

“Theater Exercises.” Jayalath Manorathne Theater Festival. John De Silva Memorial Theater, Colombo, 2009

“Movement and Language: A workshop with a special focus on the Theater of the Absurd.” Sri Palee Campus, University of Colombo, Horana, 2009

“On Space and Movement: Effectively Using the Body and the Stage for Performance.” University of Peradeniya, 2008

“Introduction to Acting Basics and the Theater Space.” Dunuwila Mahabodhi Vidyalaya, Teldeniya, 2003

Internships and apprenticeships

Bread and Puppet Theater, Glover, Vermont, Apprentice, 2011

New WORLD Theater, Amherst, Production Intern, 2005 & 2007

Other Theater related activities

Seminar participant, Mellon School of Theater and Research at Harvard University, Cambridge, 2014

Volunteer, New WORLD Theater Intersection V, Creative Uprising(s), 2008

Production Team, New WORLD Theater Intersection IV, Re/Generations, 2006

Community Organizing and Outreach

Reviewer and translator. *Sagna*. Fine Arts Department journal.

Member. Faculty English Committee

Co-Chair, Postcolonial Studies Group, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, 2006-2007

Organization of Graduate Students in Comparative Literature (OGSCL)
Newsletter, Co-editor, 2006 & 2007

Worked in the Asian American Theater Archives and mounted an
exhibition of the Asian American Theater Archives, University of
Massachusetts Amherst, 2006

Committee Member, The Association for Commonwealth Literature and
Language Studies, Sri Lankan Branch, 2003-2004

Vice-President, Ceylon University Dramatic Society, University of Peradeniya,
Sri Lanka, 1999-2000

OTHER

Assistant, documentation and coordination of archival information for New
WORLD Theater's Project 2050, New World Theatre, 2005

Coordinator of the University activities, Intercollegiate Sri Lanka Education,
Bowdoin College, 2003

Research Assistant, to Professor John C. Holt. Conducted and translated
interviews. Did on-site illustrations, 1999-2000

PAINTING

“Untitled” An exhibition of paintings held at the Alliance Française Gallery in
Kandy, Sri Lanka, September 6-13, 2003

Selected book covers and book illustrations

Buddhist Vishnu: Religious Transformation, Politics, and Culture. John C. Holt.
Columbia University Press, 2004

Swabhawaye Swabhawayak. W.M. Gunathilake and Charitha Herath, Nipuna
Printers, Sri Lanka, 2004

Saddharma Pundarika Sutraya (A Translation of the Lotus Sutra). Gunapala
Dharmasiri. YN Printers, Sri Lanka, 2003

Divul Kumari, Chandima Wijebandara, Godage Publishers, Sri Lanka, 2002

Fundamentals of Buddhist Ethics. (third edition) Gunapala Dharmasiri, Paramita
International Buddhist Society Ltd, Singapore, 1998