

ILF SAMANVAY 2016

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The sixth edition of the IHC Indian Languages Festival was scheduled from **November 5-7, 2016**. The theme *Language as Public Action* explores the responsibility of the creative individual who speaks out in public. Urdu, Telugu, Gujarati, Santhali and Khasi were the focal languages for the festival, in addition to Hindi and English. Eminent social activist and Founder of SEWA (Self Employed Women's Association), **Ela Bhatt**, presented the inaugural address.

ILF Samanvay 2016 began with a series of curtain raising events, organized each month since June, 2016. Interestingly titled as the 'No Tongues Barred' (#ntb) conversation series, each event addressed a unique aspect of using language in a responsible and informed manner. Another vertical to ILF is the Art Articulations series which was incorporated to position art as a transformative language. With support from The Raza Foundation, an arts and culture organisation, Art Articulations was envisioned by independent critic and curator Deeksha Nath and featured seminal artists at the intersections of various artistic and critical sites.

Another interesting highlight of the festival was the thematic food festival called 'Artists as Gourmet', where Old World Hospitality brought its expertise in recreating the recommended recipes by authors, artists and other custodians of language. This food festival was run parallel to the program and offered an experience of linguistic and cultural combination. The festival included sessions, workshops, discussions, and components from languages such as the arts, music, performance, technology along with the literary. The valedictory address was presented by renowned academic, Pratap Bhanu Mehta.

The Creative Director of the 6th edition was Rizio Yohannan Raj. Co-curated by Apoorvanand.

ILF Samanvay 2016 - Curtain Raiser events

July 13

ILF Samanvay *No-Tongues-Barred Conversations: Languages of Delhi*. **Panelists:** Alok Rai, cultural commentator, Sohail Hashmi, heritage activist, Syeda Hameed, educationist. Readings by Fouzia Dastango. Launch of *ILF Samanvay Documentation Project, & Landscaping Delhi: Mapping a City's Linguistic Routes*.

Aug 11

ILF Samanvay *Art Articulations: Aesthetics of Social Engagement*. **Panelists:** Probir Gupta, Sreejata Roy, Mrityunjay Chatterjee, Aastha Chauhan. Moderator: Ravi Aggarwal.

Sept 7

ILF Samanvay *No-Tongues-Barred-Conversations Soda Politics: The Language of Sugar and Fizz* Panel discussion spurred by the release of the book *Soda Politics: Taking on Big Soda (and Winning)* by Marion Nestle, and in the context of the recent ban on liquor consumption in Bihar and the protests around the country. **Collab:** Oxford University Press

Oct 6

ILF Samanvay *Art-Articulations Apophenic Talks: Enacted Conversations*. Artists will invite audiences to experience language variously – first as gibberish and make believe created by Mithu Sen and then the production of individual narratives located in keywords produced and shared by Arnika Ahldag, Amitesh Grover and Akansha Rastogi.

ILF Samanvay

November 5-7, 2016

Theme : *Language as Public Action*

Day 1 | November 5, Saturday-session

- 10:30am-11am: **Inaugural of ILF Samanvay 2016**, Indian Languages Festival of India Habitat Centre, on the theme *Language as Public Action*.

- 11:15am-12:10pm: ***Empowerment as Verb: The Power of Voicing*** Keynote Address by **Ela Bhatt**, Founder of SEWA. Ela Bhatt's lecture will draw from her efforts to bring empowerment to women and the marginalised by making them use the active word, the verb, the term of action.

- 12:15pm-1:10pm: ***Law as language: All but the truth...?*** Panelists: **Karuna Nundy, Flavia Agnes, Upendra Baxi**. As a 'mostly' constitution-abiding nation, we have come to negotiate our lives around law. Considering, most aspects of our lives are now justice-abled, is our experience of 'truth' satisfactory or do we need to take a relook at our delivery of justice?

- 2:00pm-2:55pm: ***Conversing conflict: The Chhattisgarh Experience*** Panelists: **Ashutosh Bharadwaj, Bela Bhatia, Kalpana Kannabiran**. Convenient truths usually make the cut in conflict areas. When state clashes with the local population, communication breaks down, the panel will discuss what happens when normal life is disrupted.

- 3:00pm-3:55pm: ***Voices to Record: Khasi & Tripuri*** Panelists: **Patricia Mukhim, Pradyot Deburman**. Language is the basic tool of expression and our only way of interpreting indigenous history, culture, and tradition to the outside world. Without language we would have lost our roots and with that our identity and a sense of the " Self" vis-a-vis the other.

- 4:00pm-4:55pm: ***"What people are you?": Telugu Identityspeak*** Panelists: **Satish Chander, Satyanarayana, Sujata Surepally, Volga**. There's a conflict of identities in Telugu today. Looking at the implications of differing selves, the panel discusses whether Telugu is a divided house today.

- 5:00pm-5:55pm: ***Sexuality intersects: Searching for tongues?*** Panelists: **Abheena Aher, Dhruvo Jyoti, Gautam Bhan, Pramada Menon**. This panel explores if there is a lack of language to talk about sexuality in all its forms. The challenge lies in the creation of languages to first describe the emotions and then enable their expression in public spaces. When the other has already been created, sexuality gets pushed to be the domain of the others rather than an encompassing concern.

- 6:00pm-6.55pm: ***Mi Casa Tu Casa: Dictating Spanish*** Panelists: **José Luis Paniagua, José Rafael Pérez Concepción, Martín Suaya**. This panel discusses how the Spanish language has reflected polar emotions of conquering and being conquered. The Spanish and Argentinian stories of the language would reveal how a tongue can indeed dictate!

- 7:30pm: THEATRE | ***Mahabharata*** (English/60mins) **Dir. Anurupa Roy Writ. Anamika Mishra**. Performed by Katkatha Puppet Arts Trust.

Day 2 | November 6, Sunday-session

- 10:30am-11:25pm: ***Colliding Thought bubbles: Speaking One's Mind*** broadcast journalist **Ravish Kumar** in conversation with **Apoorvanand**. This session explores how feasible is it to speak one's mind in big media and the difficulties of speaking in our times.
- 11:30am-12:25pm: ***Gujarati Today: What Difference Does it Make?*** -- **Ghanshyam Shah, Jayesh Solanki, Jignesh Mevani, Saroop Dhruv**. This panel looks at what is perceived as the crisis of shared experience and of creativity in Gujarati.
- 12:30am-1:15pm: ***Art as imaging: Sites Under Re-construction?*** Panelists: **Anurupa Roy, Zuleikha Chaudhuri**. This panel discusses the motives and processes of artistic construction of images in a particular epoch. How does a reconstructed image become relevant to the times? Two artists with practices so different from each other discuss this question.
- 2:00pm-2:55pm: ***Indian Cinema (Right) Now: Margins in the Centre?*** Panelists: **Mihir Pandya, Piyush Mishra, Swara Bhaskar**. Stories of those in the margins are entering mainstream in a big way. This session will explore the question of caste, gender, sexuality and language of small towns becoming mainstay in Hindi cinema.
- 4:00pm-4:55pm: ***It's not just about competition: bhasha ke sansar aur sanskar*** Panelists: **Alok Rai, Francesca Orsini**. Often in the public sphere, there are issues between languages and then there's the politics between them. Some of their identity is derived from the people who speak it. This panel hopes to discuss the many aspects of language and the emphasis it places.
- 5:00pm-5:55pm: ***Speaking of Women: The Language of Control*** Panelists: **Vrinda Grover, Neha Dixit, Ritu Menon, Shubra Gupta**. This panel would be on the distortion and manipulation of language in public space (media, film, law, "culture"), especially with a view to diminishing/controlling women and their bodies, movement, speaking up, and range of choices in life.
- 6:00pm-6:55pm: ***Hum Khawateen: Women and the Urdu Wor(l)d*** A performative reading by theatre group **Raschakra**: **Alka Ranjan, Purwa Bharadwaj, Rizwana Fatima, Shweta Tripathi, Vinod Kumar**. A new performance and discussion based on the writings of Muslim women from about a century ago.

- 6:30pm-7:25pm: ***Love in Times of Fury: Young Readings from Great Indian Poems*** Student translators will be chosen from around the city of Delhi to recite poetry on love.
 - 7:30pm onwards. ***Dreams of an Indian Youth*** -- **Gorati Venkanna and Accompanying Musicians**. Being a champion of the Telangana movement, his voice represents the aspirations of the people. His songs and poetry speak of a future where the Indian youth will find their voice and discover themselves, while also contributing to the betterment of the country at large.
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Day 3 | November 7, Monday-sessions

- 10.30-11:25am: ***Can We Run From Big Media*** Panelists: **Aditya Nigam, Seema Chishti, Shailaja Bajpai**. Blogging and social media was co-opted, almost a decade ago, as a medium for news in response to the apathy of big media towards the issues of the marginalised. Most took to it to question the development model being pushed by media houses; anything that questioned it was banished and painted as 'activism' by them.
- 11am-2pm: ***How to Experience Art Critically*** -- **Art Appreciation Workshop** designed and led by **Sadanand Menon**, Culture and dance critic, Light Designer. Fee. Rs.200.
- 11:30am-12:25pm: ***Santhali: Speaking from Multiple Locations*** Panelists: **Boro Boski, Kumar Rana, Mahendra Manjhi, Munni Hembram**. Santhali, as a language, is spoken across five disparate physical spaces such as Assam, Bihar, Bengal, Jharkhand and Orissa. For a culture in transition, the struggle is both cultural and political and this session hopes to look at the transformation from oral traditions to new literature and changing modernities.
- 12:30am-1:25pm: **Ankur - Society for Alternatives in Education and Pehchan learning group**. Introducing two new language communities, this will be a curated discussion between these two groups on the shift from oral to the written word.
- 02:00pm-2:55pm: ***Enter PASSWORD: Touch the Idiom of Caste*** Panelists: **Ajita, Aniket Jawaare, Satish Deshpande**. Through this panel, we would like to question if the present way of addressing caste is the way forward or do we need an alternative language for it. Do we need to demolish the construct of caste or do we want it to remain in some viable and democratic manner?

- 03:00pm-3:55pm: ***Nation-Notions: The Great Indian Language/s*** Panelists: **Shiv Vishwanathan, Makarand Paranjape.** Anchor: **Rizio Yohannan Raj.** This panel asks how an 'Indian' may make sense of the different narratives/languages of nationalism. In a pluralistic country, can each language become a vehicle of a particular type of nationalism, or can an encompassing spirit of nationalism be injected into all forms of expression? How do these affect one's idea of citizenship?

- 04:00pm-4:55pm: ***Layers of Wounds: How Memories Unfold...*** Panelists: **Rahul Pandita, Urvashi Butalia.** How does one talk about a wound? Some opt to pick at it, some let it heal, some let it scar. All this can be done through our manner of speech too. Is there a way one can arrive at a public expression of a wound?

- 5.15pm: **ILF Samanvay 2016. *Satya: Bakwas Aur Jantantra*** Valedictory address by **Pratap Bhanu Mehta.**

- 7:30pm: THEATRE / ***Toye*** (Hindi/100mins) based on Girish Karnad's work, *Agni and Varsha* **Dir. Jyoti Dogra.** *Toye*, sanskrit word for water, is a devised piece that examines the actor's body in performance. Girish Karnad's *Agni aur Varsha* is the starting point of this exploration. The piece attempts to find a performance language invested in the body of the actor.