A Triumphant Return of ‘Rag’

Posted on

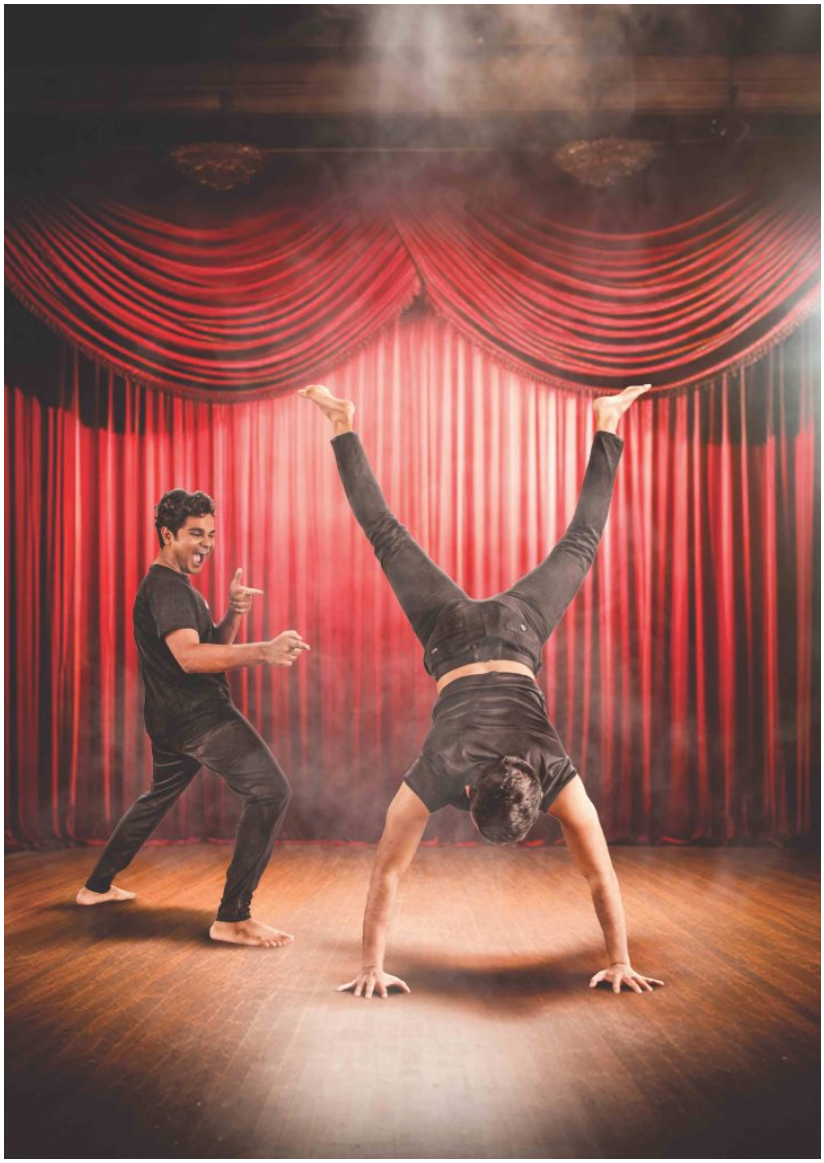
Love at First Sight.

The popular musical masterpiece ‘Rag – The Musical’ by Jehan Aloysius is coming back to the Lionel Wendt Theater in Colombo this month. This special show celebrates the 20th Anniversary of the original production, which gained international attention when it was featured by the BBC in 2012. The new version of the show has a fresh cast of singers and dancers, all trained and directed by Jehan Aloysius. The show has received great reviews and standing ovations every night since 2004.

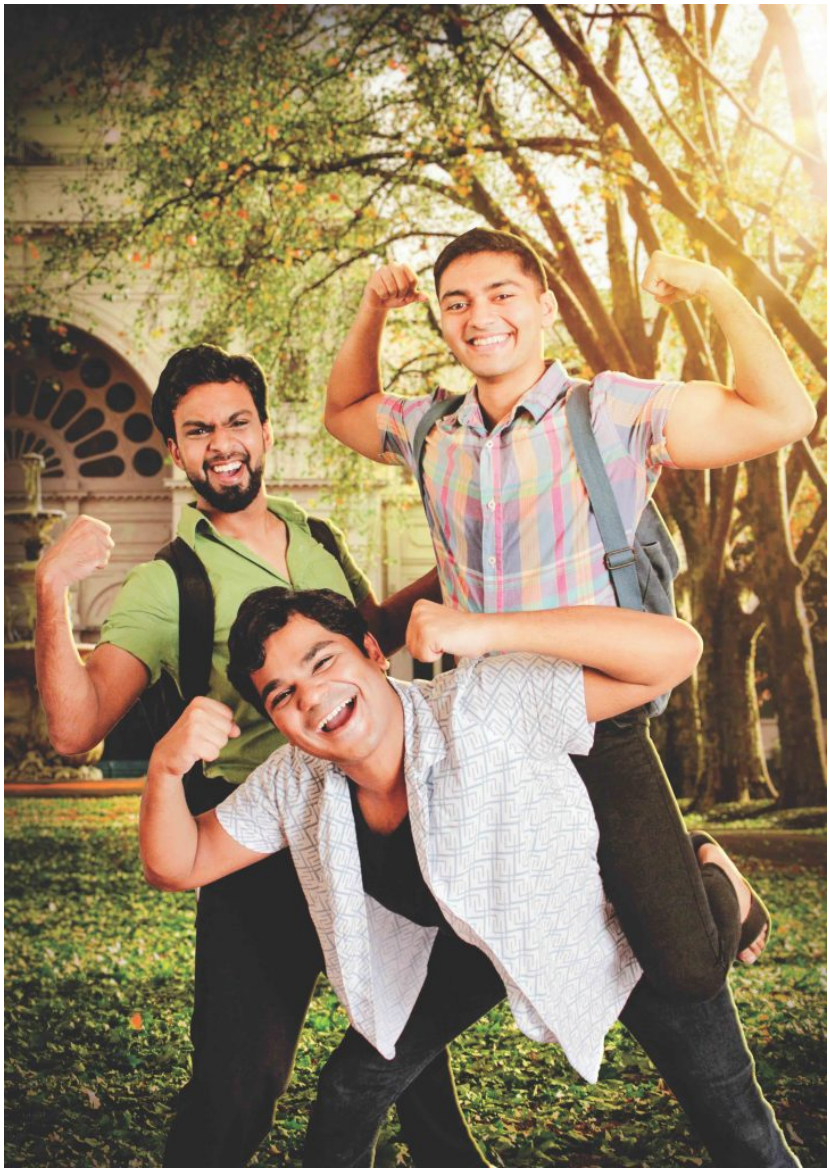
Over the last two and a half decades, Jehan has been mentoring young people, as well as training peer leaders within communities to learn creative expression. These peer leaders have utilized theater as a means to address significant social issues, including domestic violence, bullying, post-war reconciliation, and English language education.

The new Rag – The Musical features a streamlined script focusing on the original songs and music. It also has a new group of talented performers known for their singing, acting, and dancing skills. The young cast has been practicing dancing, acting, singing and even acrobatics. The director, Jehan, thinks this new group of performers, who call themselves ‘rag-a-muffins’, have improved greatly after attending many months of free training workshops and classes with him.

The talented cast of soloists includes Dion Nanayakkara (The Voice, Pyramus & Thisby, Rag), Angelo Gamage (Derana Dream Star), Milinda Randeniya (And Then There Were None), Isira Edussuriya (Julius Caesar), and others.



Rehearsing for Fresher’s Night!



The three best friends – Joseph, Thomas and Rukmal.

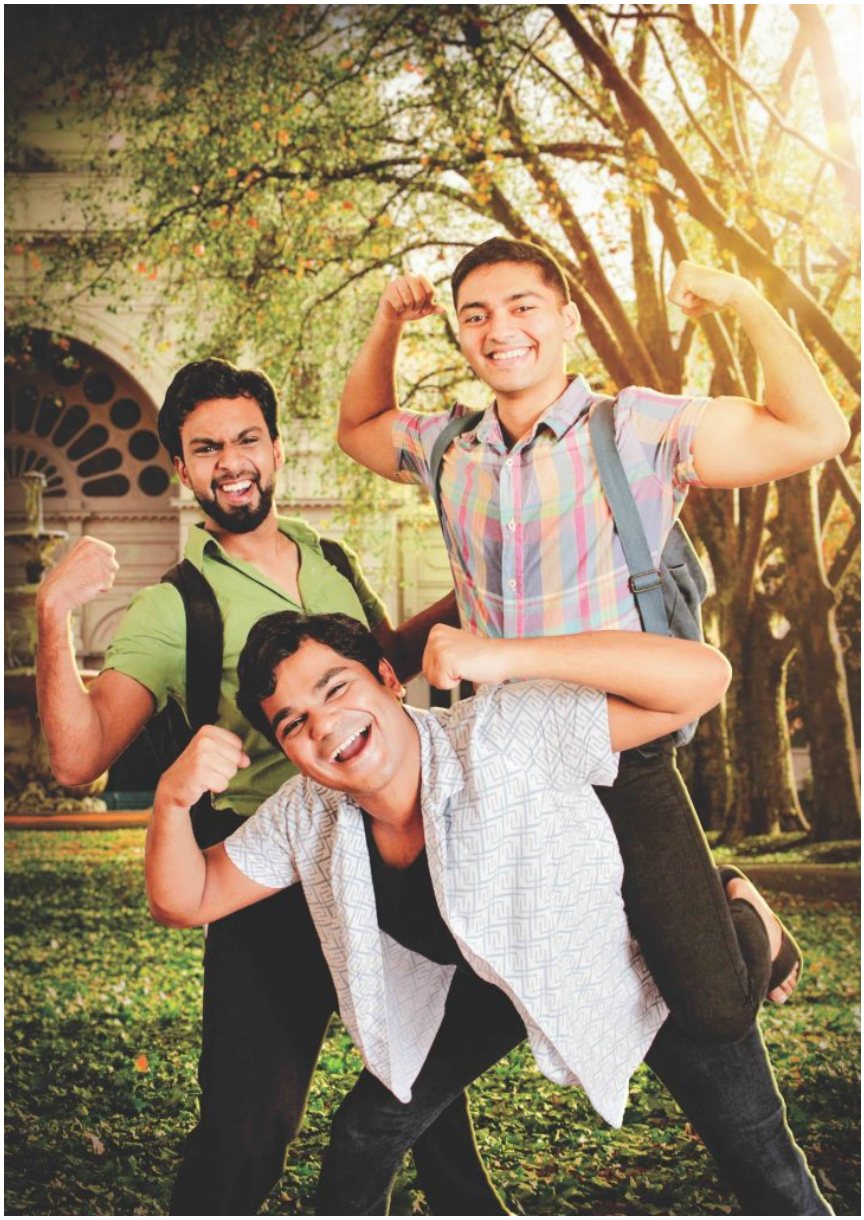
Brothers torn apart.

The musical is written, composed, and directed by Jehan Aloysius, who also handles the choreography and production design. The orchestration and musical performance are by Avanti Perera, Jehan’s long-time musical collaborator. Choral harmonies are by Deshan Cooray and Eshantha Peiris.

Jehan believes that original theater in Sri Lanka urgently needs more support and patronage to thrive and even survive. When supporting local work, one supports and develops local artistes and creativity. True patrons of the arts need to develop originality and creative expression and direct money back to the country.

Jehan adds, “One would be amazed by what our local theater practitioners can create if given the opportunity. CentreStage Productions is an amateur drama group and has contributed to local theater for over 23 years. We do this for our passion for community theatre and certainly not as a business, since the English language audiences are small, and English language theater in Sri Lanka is essentially non-profit.”

Don’t miss the spectacular new edition of Rag – The Musical by Jehan Aloysius on the 19th and 21st of July at the Lionel Wendt Theater.



The English Department Undergrads.