

Searching For His HOMELAND

GERISH KHEMANI
TELLS BINDU GOPAL
RAO HOW HE
DISCOVERED THAT
THEATRE WAS
ALWAYS HIS CALLING



“As Toni Morrison said, ‘If there’s a book that you want to read, but it hasn’t been written yet, then you must write it.’ I realized that although it is interesting working with other people, there are issues, ideas, and stories that are deeply concerning my being and I want to give them shape.” So, in March 2015, Gerish Khemani formed his own theatre group - The Blind And The Elephant.

Its first production, Ripples, a play dealing with questions of teaching and learning, was co-written and directed by Gerish, and completed 37 shows at diverse venues across Mumbai, Bangalore, and Coimbatore, drawing favourable reviews from critics, practitioners, students and general audiences alike.

The second production ‘In Search of Dariya Sagar’, co-written with Akshat Nigam, came about from Gerish’s own exploration of a community that had been displaced. “I realized it was time for me to really connect with my roots and understand where I come from.” The play, about a third-generation Sindhi, Jatin Sadarangani – a tour guide in Mumbai, expertly navigates his desire to understand his personal history, something that takes him all the way back to the days before the Partition. In Search of Dariya Sagar not only won the prestigious Hindu Playwright Award in August 2017, but was chosen among the three final shortlisted plays for Naya/Noya 2018, the first Indian Playwrights’ Festival as part of Specific 2018, organised by Feste Theatre, Prague, Brno, Czech Republic.

Gerish spent his junior college years at Jai Hind, after which he joined an engineering course. Soon enough, he realized this was not something that he wanted to do. “I went back to Jai Hind and did my Bachelor’s in Mass Media (BMM). It was wonderful because I discovered many things about myself along with my passion for theatre and acting in general. And