

Participated :  
Colombo Monodrama Festival – Sri Lanka - 2021  
Adana Theatre Festival - Turkey -2022

A Play by M.Safeer

# Love and Lock down

written by  
Prasad  
Wickramaratne



# Love and Lock down



Love and solitude are two things we experience at different phases in life either willingly or unwillingly. However at present we experience the official solitude. We experience reality of being solitude, because of the global pandemic. This creation is not about the pandemic, but a theatrical creation about inseparable link between a damsel's love and solitude. Herein her experience in solitude, loneliness, separation from dear ones, dreams, pains, pleasure, love, lust are converted to a production with expressions and minimum usage of words, movement, dance, singing and acting.

A person in a red outfit is suspended from a purple rope, hanging in the center of the frame. The background is a vibrant, abstract composition of light patterns in shades of blue, purple, and pink, creating a dreamlike atmosphere. The person's body is partially obscured by the rope and the light effects.

## Acting

## Subuddhi Lakmali

Photography

Athula Ranaraja

Stage Management

M.Shafraz / M.Sharaf

Asst.

M.Shafraz

Music

Heshan Kuruppu

Video Creations

M. Sharaf

Set & Choreography

M. Safeer

Costume

M.Safeer / A.K. Rojan

Lighting

Wasantha Kumara

Sujeewa Pathinisekara

Production Manager

Nirosh Kavirathna

## Production

Inter act Art Theatre

Translation

Dr. Lionel De Zoysa

Script

Prasad Wikramarathna

M.Safeer

## Direction

M.Safeer

This is my third decade I spend as a theatre practitioner. During these three decades, I have directed nearly 50 different types of plays and one movie. When looking back, I'm contented about the way I have progressed. Anyone will feel quite correctly the path I have tread is not something paved with roses. Yes I have come a long way on that path. Now all I have left is the thirst for more creations. I have received awards, accolades and experience through obstacles, worries, misery, sorrow, humiliation and persecution. I am a fighter who struggles for the betterment of Sri Lankan theatre. It is still the same today, as it had been in the past. Due to the hardships and obstacles faced, I could create more, even for the global theatre. With all my humility I wish to mention that I have gained recognition amongst international theatre practitioners.

Love and Lockdown is another experimental theatre Practice. Theatre for me is to carry out experiments, willingly. It happens today and will be the same in the future too. I know from the experiments I do that many young Theatre practitioners always get inspired.

The lesson the pandemic has taught me the meaning of loneliness, in other words, the experience of loneliness. I bring it to a creation in a different way. I also have a dream of showing this creation around the world. I wish it shall be a reality!

## About the Inter Act Art

Having established in 1992, the IAA is a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious group, involved in development of theatre and performing art. Its decisions are taken by representatives of afore-mentioned group. During its existence of nearly two and half decades, IAA has completed many useful activities for the theatre and theatre fraternity.

IAA team members were the pioneers in introducing Forum Theatre (Sinhala and Tamil) and Black Box Theatre to Sri Lanka, as a different dimension in theatre art. Aligning with the main objective, IAA has trained island-wide, young creators, undergraduates and corporate sector personnel, in modern trends and techniques. It is located at Sri Jayewardenepura, the administrative capital of Sri Lanka and is the second BBT South East Asia.

IAA takes pride being the owner of one and only International Theatre Festival - The Colombo International Theatre Festival - an annual event commenced in 2012, which became a turning point in Sri Lankan Theatre arena. IAA has a mini-theatre house, a Theatre Academy, a Training Centre for Private Sector Employees, a Dancing Section, a Drama Production Unit, Film and Television Production Unit and a Publication Section.

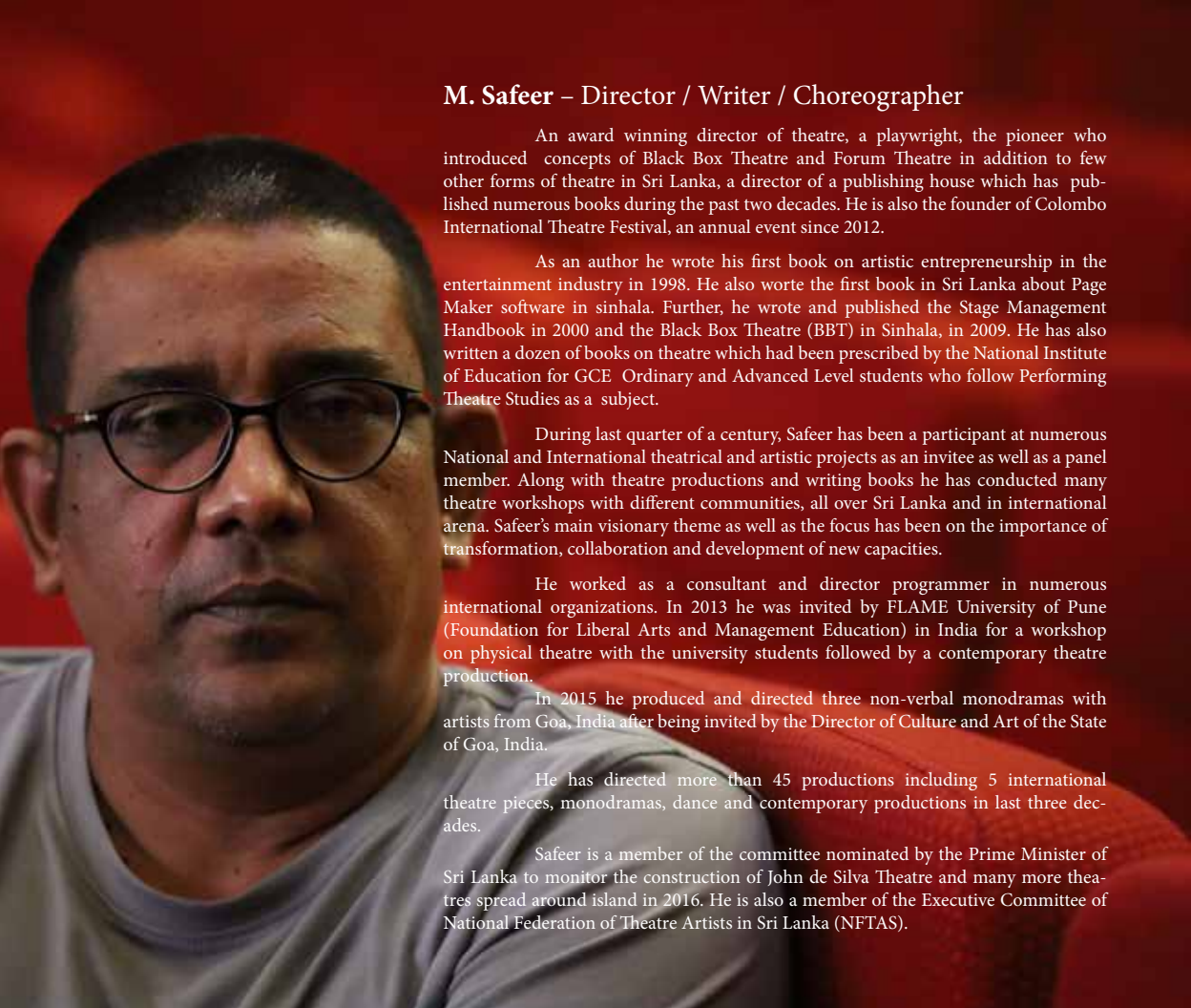
IAA organizes two alternative National Theatre Festivals and two International Theatre Festivals annually:

- a) Sri Lankan theatre festival
- b) Black Box short play festival
- c) Colombo International Theatre Festival (CITF)
- d) Colombo Monodrama Festival

Albeit being a small organization it has built a considerable relationship with the international artists/institutions through its activities.

Majority of books published by the IAA have been prescribed by the National Institute of Education as reading material for GCE Ordinary Level and Advanced Level students who follow performing arts as a subject. We at IAA collectively offer opportunities for youth of all ethnicities with creative ideologies to work to fulfill their objectives by providing basic facilities. Most of their creations have won awards at the National and International level. Furthermore, it has a News Casting Section and a web space. As part of their contribution IAA has already presented two films to the global market.





## M. Safeer – Director / Writer / Choreographer

An award winning director of theatre, a playwright, the pioneer who introduced concepts of Black Box Theatre and Forum Theatre in addition to few other forms of theatre in Sri Lanka, a director of a publishing house which has published numerous books during the past two decades. He is also the founder of Colombo International Theatre Festival, an annual event since 2012.

As an author he wrote his first book on artistic entrepreneurship in the entertainment industry in 1998. He also wrote the first book in Sri Lanka about Page Maker software in Sinhala. Further, he wrote and published the Stage Management Handbook in 2000 and the Black Box Theatre (BBT) in Sinhala, in 2009. He has also written a dozen of books on theatre which had been prescribed by the National Institute of Education for GCE Ordinary and Advanced Level students who follow Performing Theatre Studies as a subject.

During last quarter of a century, Safeer has been a participant at numerous National and International theatrical and artistic projects as an invitee as well as a panel member. Along with theatre productions and writing books he has conducted many theatre workshops with different communities, all over Sri Lanka and in international arena. Safeer's main visionary theme as well as the focus has been on the importance of transformation, collaboration and development of new capacities.

He worked as a consultant and director programmer in numerous international organizations. In 2013 he was invited by FLAME University of Pune (Foundation for Liberal Arts and Management Education) in India for a workshop on physical theatre with the university students followed by a contemporary theatre production.

In 2015 he produced and directed three non-verbal monodramas with artists from Goa, India after being invited by the Director of Culture and Art of the State of Goa, India.

He has directed more than 45 productions including 5 international theatre pieces, monodramas, dance and contemporary productions in last three decades.

Safeer is a member of the committee nominated by the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka to monitor the construction of John de Silva Theatre and many more theatres spread around island in 2016. He is also a member of the Executive Committee of National Federation of Theatre Artists in Sri Lanka (NFTAS).

## **Prasad Wickramaratne - Writer**

After completing the primary education at Dambadeniya Maha Vidyalaya named after the ancient city Dambadeniya, he continued his secondary education at Royal College, Colombo -7.

He holds a Master of Science Degree in Agriculture from Kharkov Agrarian University in Ukraine and a Masters in Customs Administration from Postgraduate Institute of Management (PIM) of Sri Jayewardenepura University. At present Prasad Wickramaratne works for Sri Lanka Customs as a Superintendent.

He took to Drama and Theater as a student. His short drama carrier came to a halt in 1987 as he left Sri Lanka for higher studies on a government scholarship. The same year he was adjudged the Best Actor in Palitha Lokupothagama's award winning drama "Kaputa Saha Kejukella" in Youth Society short drama category at the Youth Drama Festival. During his 5 year long stay abroad, he broadened his knowledge in the world of Drama and Theatre.

He had been a casual actor in experimental short films. He comes out of the self-imposed exile to write the drama script "Love and Lockdown" on M. Safer's request.



## Subuddhi Lakmali - Actress

Subuddhi Lakmali is a vocalist, actor & a voice trainer who has been working since 2007. She started her carrier as an opera artist with “Agni Opera” directed by the late veteran musician Maestro Premasiri Khemadasa and afterwards performed the leading role of the well-known play “Rathuhettakaari” directed by the veteran Director & Lyricist Lucian Bulathsinhala.

She started her carrier from the theatre & expanded her acting capacity to the silver screen as well as the television. She has been nominated as the best singer, best actor in the State Awards in Sri Lanka.

She acted in Inter Act Art production “Untouched” Monodrama directed by Sujeewa Pathinisekara and won the best performance at Sharm-El Sheikh International Theatre Festival for Youth (SITFY) Egypt in November 2021.



M. Safeer dedicated his life style for the art of theatre. That's why I have respect for him and his utmost dedication.

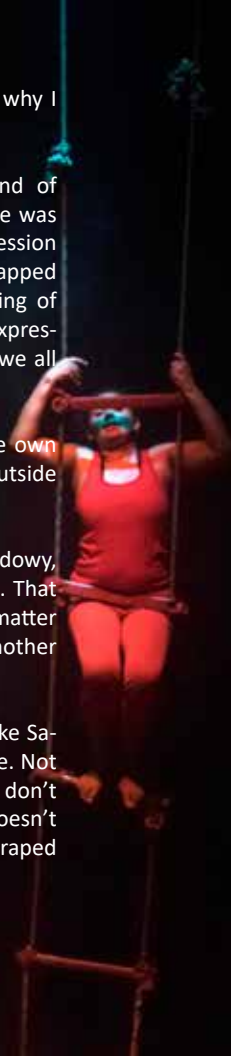
"Love and Lockdown" is a drama that gave a different kind of experience. What caught my attention more than anything else was its poetic expression. Not everyone can make a poetic self-expression without lamenting. The expression is strong here of the self-trapped one in a world of self-portrait thus frustrated, is own making of thyself, Subuddhi's performance is excellent, as she made that expression. Energetic. Subuddhi took the emotions on her own that we all felt and what she felt was then released back to us.

We are all more or less prisoners of our own worlds. We have own thoughts that are separated by lines. We are afraid to think outside that frame.

At the end, Subuddhi's expression, which comes alive and shadowy, is like the difference between our own thoughts and existence. That experiment is a new one. Love brings painful experiences no matter what the approach. Animating that common denominator is another matter.

We rarely see Monodrams. There is a love felt that someone like Sa-  
feer, who made theater his life, gave us this different experience. Not everyone can get into the depth. But Safeer did it beautifully. I don't know how Safeer's arrival will be positioned in a society that doesn't even feel the prison they are in. But I like that feeling of being scraped by an edge of a knife after watching the play.

Sumudu Chathurani  
Editor – Silumina News Paper





## The prison is not outside but within us.....

“Lock” is an Old German word for a lock or other fastening mechanism, or a space surrounded by such fastening. That is why in modern English a lock is a barrier in a canal. “To put in and lock (lock in)” (a person in a chamber) or “to imprison (lock up)” (originally the chamber or door itself) dates to the 15th and 16th

“Lockdown” came to mean prolonged incarceration of inmates in prisons or psychiatric hospitals. It was only after the 1970s that the word lockdown was used to refer to enforced isolation for security purposes. Originally, in 19th-century America, a “lockdown” was when ships were hauled in timber to keep it from falling into the river. It’s a wonderful irony that our imprisonment during the last corona season has been named after a mechanism that once ensured the reliability of outdoor travel.

However, the word ‘lockdown’, which came back to the fore with Corona, was used by artists in their works. The Indian poet “Shubrasankar Das” in his collection of poems called an “anachronous shower” uses this word to symbolize the inner imprisonment of man. Yesterday we got to see Sri Lanka’s veteran Theatre practitioner M. Safer taking this concept towards another path by doing a stage play called “Love and Lockdown”.

“Love and Lockdown” belongs to monodrama genre stage play, with a combination of two main languages, English and Sinhala. Which is, only one actress and one character are acting here. The theme of the story is the grief and pain of a young woman imprisoned by love. Trapped in a prison that she makes for herself through her own love, her efforts to get out of it was beautifully created through the play. Hanging ropes, rope swings and rope ladders are used in the stage to show the difficulty of escaping from this prison. The dramatist is able to let the audience feel the hard work that must be done for that in the difficult approach of the actress. Sometimes her attempts to jump out of the rope trap are thwarted. Falls down turns over’

We meet the actress in two forms on the stage. That is in her living form and shadow form. Using this form of shadow is a wonderful dramatic stratagem. And it is able to develop the feeling of loneliness and anxiety in the audience. The shadow strategy also succeeds in freeing the audience from the monotony throughout the play. It is a talent of the dramatist.

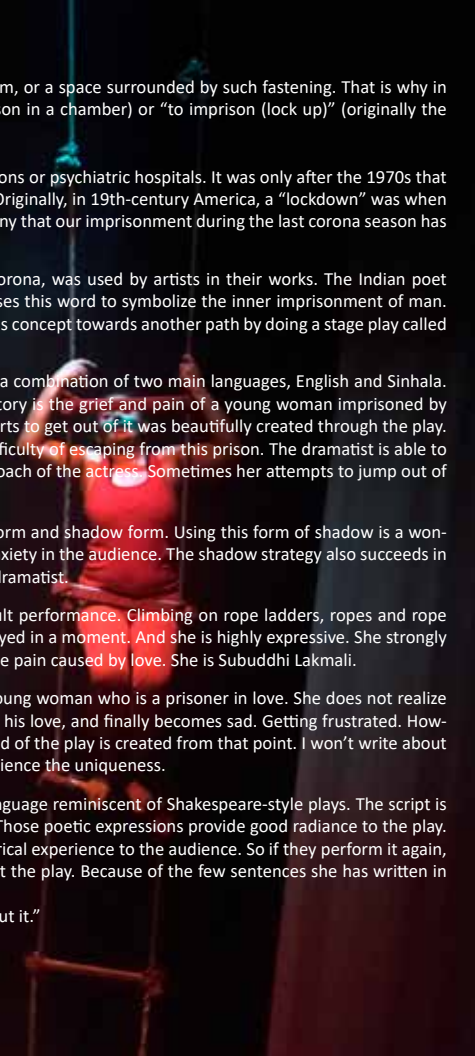
Something must be said about the actress’s effort. It’s really a difficult performance. Climbing on rope ladders, ropes and rope swings is not a simple act. There is no room for mistakes. Everything can be destroyed in a moment. And she is highly expressive. She strongly portrays all these emotions of a lonely girl, a damsel craving for love, expressing the pain caused by love. She is Subuddhi Lakmali.

As I stated earlier, the theme of this play is the self-expression of a young woman who is a prisoner in love. She does not realize that she is suffering in a prison of her own making. She waits for her lost lover, for his love, and finally becomes sad. Getting frustrated. However, towards the end of the play, she begins to realize why she is suffering. The end of the play is created from that point. I won’t write about that ending because you have to watch it yourself. At the end of it, you must experience the uniqueness.

The script and dialogues of the play have been created in a poetic language reminiscent of Shakespeare-style plays. The script is created by Prasad Wickramaratne. More attention is given to the representation. Those poetic expressions provide good radiance to the play. As a whole, Safer and his team have overall succeeded in bringing a unique theatrical experience to the audience. So if they perform it again, you should see, Love and Lockdown. I was reminded of Olga Tokarczuk throughout the play. Because of the few sentences she has written in the book, Rise of the Waves of Death.

“The prison is not outside but within us. We simply do not know how to live without it.”

**Rashmika Mandawala**  
**Author / Translator**





Stage Managers  
M. Shafray



M. Sharaf



Asst. Stage Manager  
M. Sharaz



Lighting Designers  
Wasantha Kumara



Sujeewa Pathinisekara

## INTER ACT ART

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## Technical Information (Technical Rider)

### Special requirements:

04 no's of Full length Iron pipes with cramp  
(Diameter- 1" inch (2.5cm), Length 18 feet (5.5m))

Time required for Preparation: 4 hours for set and Light

### Required Stage Measurements:

Length -8 m /Width -8 m / Height - 6 m  
(Overhead Iron Bar firmly fixed to the stage roof across the stage.)

### Lights

08 Fresnel Light

14 Profile spots - 1000 w

6 LED Color wash

02 Haze Machines or Low fog Machines

GOBO (Hill cut out) 04

Sound : 5 way Sound Setup /DVD Player or Lap out

### Projector

1 no Standard Short throw multimedia projector and VGA or HD Cable.  
(Lumens 2000 - 4000)

Video Link ; <https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/661195255>

PW - saferl&l