

Vidyasagar Metropolitan College

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
SPECIAL LECTURE SERIES

"WAITING FOR & WITH BECKETT"



Arnab Banerji

Assistant Professor of Theatre Arts
Los Angeles, CA, UNITED STATES

LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

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V I A G O O G L E M E E T

Arnab Banerji

Assistant Professor of Theatre Arts at Loyola Marymount University

Los Angeles, CA, US

Assistant Professor of Theatre Arts

Biography

Arnab Banerji received his B.A. and M.A. in English Literature from Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India. He received his Ph.D. in Theatre and Performance Studies from the University of Georgia in 2014 where he wrote a dissertation on the Bengali Group theatre in Kolkata. Arnab spent the 2014-2015 academic year as the ASIANetwork Luce Foundation Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow at Muhlenberg College where he offered introductory and advanced courses on Asian Performance. Arnab's research and reviews have appeared in Asian Theatre Journal, Theatre Journal, TDR, and South Eastern Review of Asian Studies.

Education

Jadavpur University

M.A. English Literature

Jadavpur University

B.A. English Literature

University of Georgia

Ph.D. Theatre & Performance Studies

As part of the Special Lecture Series hosted by the department, Dr Arnab Banerjee of LMU, California spoke to the students on Samuel Beckett. The lecture was entitled WAITING FOR AND WITH BECKETT and was delivered in the online mode via Google Meet. Dr Banerjee's lecture focused on Beckett's play Waiting for Godot which is a part of the UG semester 6 syllabus. Dr Banerjee emphasized the need to examine the play from a fresh perspective and not allow the bare plot and lack of dramatic action to become a deterrent in enjoying and responding to the message of the play. He spoke about the initial critical responses to the play and its steady rise to popularity despite its unconventional form and characterization.

He encouraged the students to see the play as Beckett's response to the new post

second world war reality which bore a distinct similarity to our post pandemic reality where the old world certainties were gone forever. Infact the characters of the play and their waiting should be better interpreted if we saw them as individuals trying to validate their reality in an universe which was inimical to the meaning or significance of their struggle. The fusion of these two dimensions makes the play a successful open ended modernist text with a huge scope for interpretive possibilities, which according to Dr Banerjee should not be ignored. In his final analysis he urged the students to engage with beckett's play and try to explore its tragi -comic potential and not try to pin it down to a certain pattern of traditional signification which would defeat the charm of beckett's oeuvre.

The talk ended with an enthusiastic

interactive session.