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## Indrani Mukerjea

Founder & CEO  
Indrani Mukerjea  
Enterprise  
(IME)

# INDRANI MUKERJEA

*Enterprise*

## Theatre Engine

*Purpose, Pipeline and  
Performance*

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# Indrani Mukerjea

## Enterprise

### Theatre Engine

Purpose, Pipeline and  
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Shweta Singh | The CEO Magazine

**U**nder Founder-CEO Indrani Mukerjea, IME is converting cultural conviction into repeatable stage success—spotlighting women-centric stories while formalizing a pipeline that backs promising newcomers. With Chitrangada – Ek Sashakt Naari returning this month and the brand-new Nayika Bhumika premiering in January 2026, IME's model pairs art with an operating system designed for scale.



Indrani  
Mukerjea

Founder & CEO  
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On show nights, there’s a moment just before the house lights fall when everything goes quiet: call sheets are tucked away, headsets crackle, the stage manager’s hand goes up. In that breath, execution takes over. The choreography, the lighting cues, the music beds, the countless hours of blocking—each invisible seam holds itself. And the audience only sees the story.

This kind of momentum doesn’t happen by chance; at Indrani Mukerjea Enterprise (IME), it is designed. The company’s rise is unmistakable: a clear purpose, a disciplined production cadence, and a talent flywheel that turns applause into opportunity. It’s a theatre business with a CEO’s spine.

At the centre of it all is Indrani Mukerjea, who has been recognized across literature and leadership platforms: her memoir *Unbroken* won the Best Debut Non-Fiction Award at the PragatiE Vichaar Literature Festival. She also received the REX Karmaveer Global Fellowship & Karmaveer Chakra Award (2024–25), instituted by iCONGO in partnership with the UN. In 2023 Mukerjea was named among the Top 33 Women Achievers of India by The Indian Achiever’s Club. Earlier in her career, she also appeared on *The Wall Street Journal’s “50 Women to Watch.”*

A performer-producer turned founder, Mukerjea runs IME with a CEO’s clarity: chooses material with moral weight, pairs it with exacting collaborators, and insists on rehearsal discipline, stagecraft, and seamless operations.

In her words: *“We don’t cast for one night; we invest for a season. If a story deserves a stage, a performer deserves a pathway.”*

The first staging of *Chitrangada – Ek Sashakt Naari* at Mumbai’s Royal Opera House earlier this year established the template: a Tagore classic reimagined with contemporary urgency, exacting craft, and venue discipline. In it, Tagore’s warrior-princess is reimagined not as a museum piece but as a modern question: How do strength, self-worth and tenderness coexist?

The validation has been clear: *Chitrangada* resonated, and, over the next six months, the production will return across venues in Mumbai.

**The talent flywheel—announcing Subrat Panda**

Every enduring stage company eventually answers the question: how will you keep discovering—and developing—people? IME’s answer is the talent flywheel, now formalized with its first-ever long-term artist contract.

Subrat Panda enters as a strategic milestone, not the story’s center. An Odia artist grounded in resilience and cultural devotion, he brings audience-facing polish from an aviation career where professionalism is non-negotiable. His artistic compass points naturally to the company’s repertoire: self-taught through Rabindra Sangeet, bridging Odisha and Bengal in a way that makes Tagore’s musical drama *Chitrangada* feel lived-in, not learned.

The path to IME was meritocratic: a referral from Guru Deepak Mazumdar, a rigorous audition under celebrated choreographers Tony and Madhumita Chokroborty, and then selection for the role of Arjun in the upcoming run. That role anchors his contract—a deliberate bet on promise aligned with purpose, and a signal to other first-time talents that IME is not merely a stage but a runway.

This is how a pipeline becomes policy.

**Nayika Bhumika – first showcase in January 2026**

If *Chitrangada* proved the model, *Nayika Bhumika* deepens it. Premiering January 2026, the production interprets four of Rabindranath Tagore’s stories—*Chokher Bali*, *Chandalika*, *Kabuliwala*, and *Manbhanjan*—through IME’s lens. The intent is not anthology for anthology’s sake; it’s coherence. Each piece interrogates agency, identity, and choice from a distinctly feminine point of view, while the production design keeps the evening unified—common musical motifs, a restrained visual grammar, and transitions built for pace rather than spectacle. As Mukerjea puts it:

“OUR WORK IS WOMEN-FIRST AND AUDIENCE-READY. CULTURE HAS TO BE FELT, NOT EXPLAINED—AND THAT TAKES DISCIPLINE BEHIND THE SCENES.”

By positioning *Nayika Bhumika* immediately after *Chitrangada*’s returning run, IME converts momentum into method: the same rehearsal standards, the same venue discipline, the same promise to elevate emerging performers—now across multiple roles and registers. The pipeline that brought Subrat Panda to *Chitrangada* becomes the casting backbone for the new slate, giving first-time talent a runway across titles rather than a single appearance.





Subrat Panda with Indrani Mukerjea

Community, inclusion, and a purpose that invites participation

IME’s programming choices are designed to widen the circle. Workshops and open calls feed discovery; inclusive casting ensures the stage reflects the stories’ moral core. The result is a healthy loop: audiences return for the storytelling, and early-career artists return for the craft culture. Purpose becomes a recruiting system here and is not restricted to being just a tagline.

Behind the curtain, the company runs to plan. Calendars lock early. Creative partners are briefed against clear outcomes. Tech rehearsals privilege clarity over gimmickry. Venues are selected for acoustics, sightlines, and reliable backstage operations.

Looking ahead—what success looks like from here

Under Mukerjea, Indrani Mukerjea Enterprise is turning cultural conviction into operating leverage: a flagship that returns by demand, a new production that premieres with intent, and a formal pathway that lifts promising newcomers—including Subrat Panda—into roles where they can grow. Over IME’s next successful and strategic stretch, Chitrangada will anchor the company’s momentum while Nayika Bhumika will open its first doors in January 2026, with subsequent showcases to broaden reach.

The strategy is visible and the arc is clear: purpose → pipeline → performance—a theatre company built not just to stage stories, but to scale them.

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