Theatre all the way

Schedule
August 15 — Macbeth (Chorus Repertory Theatre, Manipur)
August 16 — It's Not What You Think! (Cartel, Mumbai)
August 17 — Beyond Binary (Performance Group Tuida, Korea/India)
August 22 — Boiled Beans on Toast (The Primetime Theatre Co, Mumbai)
August 23 — Colour Blind (aRANYA, Mumbai)
August 24 — Noises Off (The Company Theatre, Mumbai)

Citizen Reviews
The Hindu MetroPlus Theatre Fest invites citizen reviews from the audience. The best review each day will win a meal for two at The Park. A selection of reviews will be published in your city’s MetroPlus. The reviews can be emailed to welcome.metro@gmail.com. Please mention your full name, address and telephone number.

Tickets
Daily tickets are priced at Rs. 600, Rs. 350 and Rs. 200 (Balcony).
Season tickets are Rs. 3,000 and Rs. 1,750.
Tickets for all shows can be purchased online at www.thehindu.com/theatrefest,
Tickets will be available at Starmark Book Store, Express Avenue; Fruit Shop on Greams Road outlets (Cathedral)
Exploring identities

A scene from the play ‘Beyond Binary’ that was performed as part of The Hindu MetroPlus Theatre Fest-2014 at Chowdiah Memorial Hall in Bangalore on Friday. – PHOTO: K. MURALI KUMAR

Staff Reporter

BANGALORE: “What are you, a man or a woman? Are you sure you are a man/woman?” These questions were thrown at the audience even before the opening of the play ‘Beyond Binary’, preparing them for the emotional journey that the remainder turned out to be. The Indo-Korean collaboration marked the unveiling of this year’s edition of The Hindu MetroPlus Theatre Fest here on Friday.

‘Beyond Binary’ intersperses biographical accounts of actor Angel Glady, who earned thunderous applause when she declared “I am a woman”) with stories drawn from the troupe Performance Group Tuida’s intensive research. Director Yosup Bae’s play explores various identities: of transgenders, homosexuals and those who simply don’t “fit in”.

Ably supported by haunting live music and lighting, multiple stories were told through dialogues in Korean, English and Tamil languages, dramatic choreography and minimal props.

Mr. Bae said that he read about the ‘Bahuchara Mata’ and the transgender festival in Tamil Nadu. “There are many Gods in India who look similar but are very different.

Can we not consider gender issues in a similar manner? Can these be defined not as dichotomous viewpoints but as various spectrums?” he asked the audience, speaking about the preparations that went into shaping the play.

Some scenes in the 90-minute play drew special attention.

The brain trying to offer a biological explanation to sexual identity and orientation, the role of the family and society in shaping them, and the inner conflict that is faced by its discovery, were among them.

‘Beyond Binary’ turned out to be a bold effort that helped bring the issue “out of the closet.”
METROPLUS

It's time for theatre

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Season tickets are Rs. 3,000 and Rs. 1,750.

Tickets will be available at Starmark Book Store, Express Avenue, Fruit Shop on Greans Road outlets (Cathedral Road, Greans Road, Anna Nagar, Besant Nagar), The Hindu Office, Anna Salai; and at the venue (between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.) from August 1.

Venue: Sir Mutha Venkatasubba Rao Auditorium
Time: 7:30 pm
Plays from across the world

Schedule

**August 15** - *Macbeth* (Chorus Repertory Theatre, Manipur) A powerful work from award-winning Manipuri playwright Ratan Thiyam that uses colour, drama, and movement to stunning effect.

**August 16** - *It's Not What You Think!* (Cartel, Mumbai) A wild romp of a play in the Italian commedia dell'arte tradition, with masks, wacky humour, and general mayhem.

**August 17** - *Beyond Binary* (Performance Group Tuida, Korea/India) A moving Indo-Korean production that uses a dramatic combination of dance, dialogue and music to tell stories of sexual identity.

**August 22** - *Boiled Beans on Toast* (The Primetime Theatre Co, Mumbai) Written by Girish Karnad and directed by Lillete Dubey, this is a funny, tender and moving take on the chaos of modern, urban life.

**August 23** - *Colour Blind* (arANYA, Mumbai) This sweet play about Tagore is directed by Manav Kaul and stars Kalki Koechlin. It brings you scenes from the poet's youth and his beautiful autumn romance.

**August 24** - *Noises Off* (The Company Theatre, Mumbai) A hilarious and naughty play within a play about a group trying to put up a sex comedy, Atul Kumar’s production has boundless energy and endless laughs.

**Tickets**

Daily tickets are priced at Rs. 600, Rs. 350 and Rs. 200 (Balcony). Season tickets are Rs. 3000 and Rs. 1750.


Tickets will be available at Starmark Book Store, Express Avenue; Fruit Shop on Greams Road outlets (Cathedral Road, Greams Road, Anna Nagar, Besant Nagar); The Hindu Office, Anna Salai and at the venue (between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.).


**Venue:** Sir Mutha Venkatasubba Rao Auditorium.

**Time:** 7:30 p.m.

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The MetroPlus Theatre Fest 2014
Venue: Sir Mutha Venkatasubba Rao Concert Hall, Time: 7:30 p.m.

Behind the walls

A searingly honest look at sexual identities

ALLAN MOSES RODRICKS

BEYOND BINARY
Performance Group Tuida
August 17

What really defines your identity? Is it you or the people around you? Tackling these questions from the perspective of sexual identity and answering it within social, religious and political contexts using music, movement and dialogue is what Beyond Binary is about.

The Indo-Korean collaboration by Performance Group Tuida explores issues of sexual orientation, taking real life stories and weaving in commentary.

Director Yosup Bae presents a uniquely personal and honest attempt at understanding the question of sexuality and the reasons for our prejudices.

The script is based on several interviews with sexual minorities across India and Korea. “We chose cases that describe different aspects of sexual identity. I requested performers to bring their personal perspective into the dialogues,” says Yosup. “I thought it’s important to show these people and their stories without any changes and without being judgmental.”

This play is not only the movement beyond the binary, but also a starting point beyond the borders that discriminate everything, explains Yosup. “I always had a question about gender boundaries between a man and a woman. This dichotomous classification troubled me.”

“I researched Indian mythology and found many stories where people cannot be categorised as either man or woman.” and I could even find many stories about love between homosexuals. I realised that Indian culture was traditionally generous in accepting sexual minorities.

I want the play to give audiences a chance to think about people who are different from us.”
Macbeth
Today 7:30 p.m.

A powerful work from Ratan Thiyam, award-winning director and the Chairperson of National School of Drama

Chorus Repertory Theatre | Language: Manipuri | Rating: For Mature Audiences

Aug 16
It's Not What You Think!
A wild romp of a play in the commedia del'arte style, with masks, slapstick and mayhem.

Carol [Mumbai]
Rating: 12 years and above

Aug 17
Beyond Binary
A dramatic Indo-Korean work with moving stories that try to define sexual identity.

Performance Group Itua (India/Korea)
Rating: For Mature Audiences

Aug 22
Boiled Beans On Toast
A funny and tender tale on urban life, written by Girish Karnad, directed by Lillete Dubey.

The Pristine Theatre Co. (Mumbai)
Rating: 15 years and above

Aug 23
Colour Blind
The man behind the poet Tagore.

Directed by Manav Kaul and starring Kaiki Koechlin.

jRaya [Mumbai]
Rating: 12 years and above

Aug 24
Noises Off
A hilarious and naughty play within a play about a failing drama group trying to put up a sex comedy.

The Company Theatre (Mumbai)
Rating: For Mature Audiences

For ticket reservations:

VENUE: Sir Venkatasubba Rao Concert Hall

TICKETS ARE PRICED AT

Rs. 600, Rs. 350 AND Rs. 200

SEASON PASS

Rs. 3,000 AND Rs. 1,750

Visit www.indianstage.in, www.bookmyshow.com, www.eventjini.com, www.ticketnew.com & www.madrasevents.in | Tickets will be available only at the venue from 10 a.m. onwards | Tickets purchased online can be redeemed at the venue

For CASH ON DELIVERY OF TICKETS, CALL +91 44 43436363 OR +91 7654028888 | HELP LINE: +91 7298191222 | METROPLUS Theatre Fest 2014
It’s Not What You Think!

Today | 7.30 p.m.

A wild romp of a play in the commedia dell’arte style, with masks, slapstick and mayhem.

Cartel (Mumbai) | Rating: 15 years and above

AUG 17

Beyond Binary

A dramatic Indo-Korean work with moving stories that try to define sexual identity.

Performance Group Taxis (India/Korea)
Rating: Suitable for mature audiences

AUG 22

Boiled Beans On Toast

A funny and tender take on urban life. Written by Girish Karnad, directed by Lillette Dubey.

The Prime Time Theatre Co. (Mumbai)
Rating: 15 years and above

AUG 23

Colour Blind

The man behind the poet Tagore. Directed by Maneck Kauf and starring Kaaki Koerchin.

aRANYA (Mumbai)
Rating: 12 years and above

AUG 24

Noises Off

A hilarious and naughty play within-a-play about a failing drama group trying to put up a sex comedy.

The Company Theatre (Mumbai)
Rating: Suitable for mature audiences

VENUE: Sir Venkatasubba Rao Concert Hall

TICKETS ARE PRICED AT ₹ 600, ₹ 350 AND ₹ 200

For ticket reservations:

VISIT WWW.INDIANSTAGE.IN, WWW.BOOKMYSHOW.COM, WWW.EVENTJINI.COM, WWW.TICKETNEW.COM & WWW.MADRASEVENTS.IN | Tickets will be available only at the venue from 10 a.m. onwards |

Tickets purchased online can be redeemed at the venue

FOR CASH ON DELIVERY OF TICKETS, CALL +91 44 43433833 OR +91 7667402888 | HELPLINE: +91 7299611222 / 6710011222
Playing this weekend

**August 16 - It's Not What You Think!** (Cartel, Mumbai) A wild romp of a play in the Italian commedia dell'arte tradition, with masks, wacky humour, and general mayhem.

**August 17 - Beyond Binary** (Performance Group Tuida, Korea/India) A moving Indo-Korean production that uses a dramatic combination of dance, dialogue and music to tell stories of sexual identity.

The following bands will be performing at the venue before the play.

**August 16**

**Kavita Thomas Trio**

Kavita Thomas is a lawyer, singer, songwriter and pianist who took her first piano lesson at the age of three and never looked back. She has founded and fronted a variety of bands and her own solo project dipping into every genre from jazz, and the blues to classic rock, neo soul, electronic, R&B and world music. She is joined by accomplished guitarist Darren Netto and drummer Neil Smith.

**August 17**

**Jake Thomas (duo)**

Jake and Joel are contemporary artistes to whom no song is off limits. Their music is a mixture of several different genres that speak directly of their life experiences and their evolution as musicians. This performance is called “6 Shades of Love”.

**TICKETS**

Daily tickets are priced at Rs. 600, Rs. 350 and Rs. 200 (Balcony).


Tickets will be available at the venue from 9 a.m. Tickets purchased online can be redeemed at the venue.

Helpline: 91-7299911222. For cash on delivery: +91 4443436363/ +91 7667402888.

**Venue:** Sir Mutha Venkatasubba Rao Auditorium.

**Time:** 7:30 p.m.

**CITIZEN REVIEWS**

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Beyond binary

Beauty, despite inequality

Consider Beyond Binary to be a theatricised elegiac version of a cinema documentary. The play fluctuates between character and actor, fact and fiction and showcases what is arguably the most tasteful breach of the fourth wall that has graced Chennai. The director was on stage for the most part, a hero of his own segments, with interludes of honest storytelling that worked in perfect harmony with the other elements of the production. The narrative was fragmented, giving us glimpses into the lives of each character, each actor and the director. Each fragment was different; some were raw and brutally honest, and some, such as the segments of dance (featuring exquisite physical performances), were filled with beautiful poetry. With a live four-piece band that added mystical lyricism, Beyond Binary proved that with a cast and crew so passionate even the ugly truth of inequality can be portrayed beautifully.

Gautama Ramesh
Kottarpuram

Beyond comfort zones

The difficulties of the ‘differrent’ genders were brought out quite boldly through a dance-drama and a set of monologue interviews. It was a bit confusing to follow the Koreans speak and also read about the subtleties, with the actors’ presence, thereby losing their stage presence. The presentation was thought-provoking at times and deserved kudos for a gripping portrayal that took us out of our comfort zones. The live music, which also provided the backdrop, and the sheer energy of the artistes stole the show. The ice-breakers at the beginning involving certain members of the audience got our attention and set the mood for a unique experience on stage.

A few situations could have been enacted instead of the abstract discourse. Probably, the scriptwriter could have explored the lighter side of the serious subject occasionally. Even so, it is rich collaboration that was evident in the exploration of a challenging subject.

Hemant Chordia P.
Nungambakkam

Heart over matter

Beyond Binary finds that soft corner within us through a brilliant performance that received no less than a standing ovation. The silhouettes of the cast slide into sheets and layers of white to share their plight. Every individual had a story for us to traverse through their individuality upheld by the symbolic use of varied chairs. Through the theatrical feast, the feather of there being various sexual orientations among a million, but acceptance by not many of us, gradually settles down on our bed of notions and superstitions; and it becomes easier to think with our hearts than reason with our brain. The team did a dynamic satire on how we are people at the end of the day and it is not about sex. After all, when we delve into science for answers, shouldn’t mythology have a fair share of its say too? With the acoustic effects seamlessly enhancing the power of each outreach and struggle, I realized with a tear in my eye that the tiled walls, in spite of handling the sensitive issues of sex, gender and people.

Ekshika Sivanathan
Nandanam
“I WOULD LIKE TO ATTRIBUTE MY SUCCESS TO MANY THINGS. TO START WITH, A FEW ROTTEN TOMATOES.”

It takes a lot to be a part of theatre.

Dreams, passion, sacrifice, agony, ecstasy.
The Hindu MetroPlus Theatre Fest is all about celebrating the true spirit of theatre. To be a part of it, please take your seat.

**VENUE**: Sir Venkatasubba Rao Concert Hall

**TICKETS ARE PRICED AT** ₹ 600, ₹ 350 AND ₹ 200

**For ticket reservations:**

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