

beyond binary

Press Dossier



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

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Tickets

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

Tickets for all shows can be purchased online

at www.thehindu.com/theatrefest,
www.eventjini.com,
www.bookmyshow.com
www.indianstage.in and
www.madrasetvent.in

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.) from August 1. Helpline: +917299911222.

Venue: Sir Mutha Venkatasubba Rao Auditorium, 7.30 p.m.

Event Sponsors

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Live From Evam

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 Gladly, 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."



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for
theatre

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Venue: Sir Mutha Venkatasubba Rao Auditorium.

Time: 7:30 pm



METROPLUS

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.

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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 per-



THINKING DIFFERENTLY A scene from *Beyond Binary*

formers 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

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

CARTEL (MUMBAI)
Rating: 15 years and above

It's Not What You Think!

AUG 17

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

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

Beyond Binary

AUG 22

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

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

Boiled Beans On Toast

AUG 23

The man behind the poet Tagore. Directed by Manav Kaul and starring Kalki Koechlin.

aRANYA (MUMBAI)
Rating: 12 years and above

Colour Blind

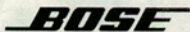
AUG 24

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

Noises Off

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VENUE: Sir Venkatasubba Rao Concert Hall

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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

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Performance Group Tuida (India/Korea)
Rating: For mature audiences

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THEATRE

FEST 2014

Playing this weekend

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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".

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Beyond binary

Beauty, despite inequality

Consider *Beyond Binary* to be a theatricised elegiac version of a cinema docudrama. 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
Kotturpuram

Beyond comfort zones

The difficulties of the 'different' 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 the subtitles, thereby missing their stage presence. The presentation was thought-provoking at times and deserves kudos for a gripping portrayal that took us outside 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 experiment on stage.

A few situations could have been enacted instead of the abstract discourse. Probably, the script writer could have explored the lighter side of



BREAKING BOUNDARIES '*Beyond Binary*' made the audience question pre-conceived notions of gender PHOTO:M.SRINATH

Message and method

Experience the world, not as a discrete binary but as a continuum with the male and female melding into one continual tapestry in various shades of colour, was the resounding message of *Beyond Binary*.

How does Bae Yosup, the director of Performance Group Tuida, say it? Through conversations, starting with questions that left some in the audience uncomfortable, to introductions that left the audience intrigued, to cameos that left everyone spellbound. The play saw its actors talk to the audience individually, in twos and threes and then together, calling out — to the Gods that made them different, to the parents that shun them, to the world that fears them — to let them be, to let them love the way they want.

Through clever stage craft, the play

conveyed the anguish of a body trapped in a confused mind forced to live in a world that sees only in binaries. Chairs as symbols of diversity, outer wear as symbols of appearances, amazing choreography that saw individuals and groups combining and breaking endlessly like the ebb and flow of ocean tides...all combined with exquisite music, fluidity of movement and dexterity of the body, making the production enthralling.

There was little need for subtitles. In fact, they distracted the eye. Just mime would have been enough. One left the theatre with an odd disquiet: "In my life, did I judge my fellow man unfairly; when will I start to embrace beauty in diversity; did I fall into the trap of the Binary; when will I see Beyond?"

C. VENUGOPAL
Annanagar

the serious subject occasionally. Even so, it a 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 slid into shears and layers of

white to share their plight. Every individual had a story for us to traverse through, their individuality upheld with 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 lump in my throat and tear-filled eyes, that director Yosup Bae and Performance Group Tuida struck the right chord with the common man, in spite of handling the sensitive issues of sex, gender and people.

EKSHIKAA SIVANATHAN
Nandanam

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FEST 2014

**“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.

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AUG 22



BOILED BEANS ON TOAST
THE PRIMETIME THEATRE CO. (MUMBAI)
RATING: 15 YEARS AND ABOVE

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

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The man behind the poet Tagore.
Directed by Manav Kaul and starring Kalki Koechlin.

AUG 24



NOISES OFF
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RATING: FOR MATURE AUDIENCES

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