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B'lore does a London

In a first-of-its-kind initiative in the country, Jagriti Theatre has announced a six-month-long theatre season in city

Gita Dutt ★★★★★

Posted On Tuesday, October 18, 2011 at 07:36:39 PM

R emember the time you missed your favourite play because you had to travel out of town or had an exam or a cold. There could be a million reasons why it's easy to miss a play in Bangalore, primarily because every show — new or old — only runs for a couple of days. If you're really lucky, it could run for a week. Unlike, say London where a show has to perform for at least a couple of months to even merit a review.

The Lion King, for instance, has been performing non-stop for the last 12 years at Lyceum theatre. You couldn't have missed it even if you tried!

If London can, why not Bangalore?

THE SEASON OF THEATRE

For the first time in India, Arundhati and Jagdish Raja, founders of Jagriti Theatre, have introduced a theatre season in Bangalore: six plays that will perform over six months, from December 2011 to January 2012. Each play will perform 18 shows, spreading over three weekends.

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When most theatre companies in city struggling to find viewers even for a week long show, it will be a challenge for Jagriti to run 18 shows continuously. The best thing about the season is that it has never been tried before and is an experiment that could create a trend, resulting in plays that may have longer runs.

GET A SEASON'S PASS

The plays that will be showcased during the season represent a wide range spanning Aristophanes' Lysistrata to Anita Nair's A Twist of Lime. What is interesting is that Jagriti is offering theatre-lovers a chance to watch all the six plays at a nominal price with a season's pass.

"We always talk how difficult it is to sustain arts in India. We at Jagriti are looking for a way to sustain the arts with the participation of the audience. If you buy a season's pass, you will be helping in sustaining the season, besides getting a chance to watch six great plays," said Arundhati Raja at the launch.

For those with unpredictable schedules, individual tickets for each play will be available at a later date, at a premium price, and there is always a risk that the best seats in the house will be taken by season's pass holders. The most expensive ticket are for the Friday-Saturday slot prices at Rs 4,200. Which is a steal, if you consider that you get to watch six plays, local and international for the price of a fancy meal in an upscale city restaurant. Weekday season's pass comes at Rs 2,500 and Sundays at Rs 3,500. Individual tickets for each play will be available at prices starting from Rs 500 for a weekday and Rs 850 for the Friday-Saturday slot.

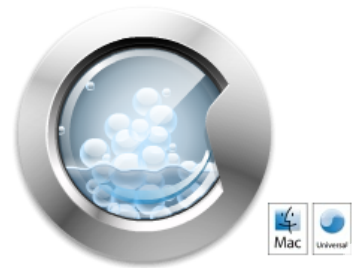
The plays for the season have been curated by Arundhati, who is also the artistic director of Jagriti, besides being a well-known performer herself.

LYSISTRATA'S ADAPTATION

Aristophanes' Greek epic Lysistrata will be directed by British theatre director Jeff Teare. The Indian adaptation of Lysistrata, a play about a woman's attempt to stop war by declaring a sex-strike, is both funny and relevant to our times. It explores what men want from war, and why they want it. And how women figure in it.

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Women figures in art

Lysistrata will feature some of Bangalore's best-known theatre actors and will inaugurate the season. The Golden Dragon from the UK was both a critical as well as a commercial success at the Edinburgh fringe festival this year.

The Interview, written by Siddharth Kumar and directed by Akarsh Khurana, was the winner of several awards at META last year. The Dreams of Tipu Sultan is a revival of one of ART's most successful plays, a historical costume drama, if it can be called that.

Written by Anita Nair, A Twist of Lime comprises three plays and three stories that are linked by irony.

The last play of the season is from the United States and is a Pulitzer prize winner and is performed in Carnival style. If you are a regular theatre goer, there's reason to rejoice. Be sure to pick up the season's pass before it sells out. If you're not really a theatre fan, this is probably the best time to check out what the fuss is all about and get a real taste of the theatre, right here in your city.

What's more, with Jagriti's new initiative, next year you might not have to go to London to watch the Lion King.

At Jagriti, Whitefield, from December 2 to June 17. Call 9845547768



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