Gender Bender moves into its 2nd edition, fiercely underlining our commitment to this issue and the surrounding public discourse. In this expanded version, we once again welcome innovative participation and challenging ideas from all over the country, strengthening a rapidly-growing network. No less than half the teasers presented in 2015 went on to become full-length performances, staged all over the country - testimony to the success of the project, which will continue into 2017.

Our gratitude to the stellar jury this year – Gautam Bhan, Kirtana Kumar, Anmol Vellani, Paromita Vohra, to our fantastic partner Sandbox Collective and, on board for the first time, The Ladies Finger.

Christoph Bertrams
Director, Goethe-Institut / Max Mueller Bhavan Bangalore
Urban Turban is a physical theatre piece directed by Dhwani Vij. It explores the everyday life of Nagina and Jasmine, the actors who play themselves. In this routine, seemingly unremarkable existence, there are remarkable stories created through their context. This is a work in progress.

Aagaaz is an arts-based organisation dedicated to creating inclusive spaces for learning, critical thought, and dialogue, towards creating a more equitable urban fabric. Engaging children and young adults across social and geographical boundaries, they question ‘what is,’ to probe ‘what could and should be.’ At the core of their work is a group of 20 young people from Hazrat Nizamuddin Basti, New Delhi.
Coloured and Choosing
Aruna Ganesh Ram
Coloured and Choosing is an immersive exploration of gender through touch. You can see. Yet you can’t. Blindfolded, you are cut out from your immediate reality. You can sense. If you choose. The body becomes the interpreter of signs, sensitive and subtle. You can box. Or you can blur. The boundaries of the masculine and the feminine. You can play. You can find. Your gender viewpoint without generalisations.

Coloured and Choosing has been devised by Lochan Baratakke, Rijul Ray, Sudha Sudanthi and Vrinda Misra, directed by Aruna Ganesh Ram.

Aruna is a performance maker based in Bangalore. Her work is immersive and sensorial, looking at unique modes of audience engagement. She runs Visual Respiration, a theatre company, and is keen on interdisciplinary collaborations to create a new performance aesthetic.
Private Parts
Avril Stormy Unger
PRIVATE PARTS

Private Parts is The Storm Factory’s immersive performance that challenges your ideas of self and others by tapping into urban India’s dependence on gender roles and forced stereotypes. It is an honest re-enactment of real life scenarios that are dark, searing, and occasionally humorous.

AVRIL STORMY UNGER

Avril is a Bangalore-based performer, choreographer and founder of The Storm Factory. She has produced numerous shows locally and worked with internationally acclaimed artists. In her solo work she focuses on experience and time-based media.
The Good Girl | Bitch Please
Deepikah R Bhardwaj
THE GOOD GIRL | BITCH PLEASE

The Good Girl | Bitch Please is a series of video installations and artworks through which the artist questions the limitations women impose on themselves and other women, including the judgements they pass, the name calling, and body shaming.

DEEPIKAH R BHARDWAJ

Deepikah majored in motion design, before working in the television industry, where she formulated strong opinions on popular culture. She has since been working on projects using typography, stop motion, and illustration. Deepikah believes that video is a powerful tool to instigate emotions and thoughts where none exist.
Rorschach Touch Working Title
Diya Naidu

GENDERBENDER 2016
The piece explores touch and intimacy to provide the audience a sensorial landscape of moving images. It invites the viewer inside, to experience what happens between two people. The pace allows the audience to watch not only the performers, but also their own reactions and interpretations. This is a work in progress.

Diya is a Bangalore-based dancer and choreographer. She has trained in jazz ballet, martial arts, and theatre. Diya has worked with The Danceworx, Rhythmosaic, Attakkalari Centre for Movement Arts, and has collaborated with artists from India and abroad. Her past work has been inspired by the cycle of life and death, memory, love and identity, and urban Indian women.
KADAK READING ROOM

Kadak Reading Room is a series of graphic narrative shorts, visual essays and illustrations. The series covers a range of themes, including growing up intersex, dealing with sexism on social media, being transgender, examining how women negotiate spaces in cities and the choices of remaining single vs getting married.

KADAK

Kadak is a collective of eight South Asian women — Akhila Krishnan, Aindri Chakraborty, Janine Shroff, Mira Malhotra, Garima Gupta, Pavithra Dikshit, Kaveri Gopalakrishnan and Aarthi Parthasarathy — who work with various forms of graphic storytelling, which provide an insight into the preoccupations of a changing subcontinent. For two pieces in this festival, Kadak has collaborated with London-based writer Valentino Vecchietti and Bangalore-based artist Renuka Rajiv.
Epiphany Illustrated Visual Poetry
Kokila
“...a universe of atoms, an atom in the universe.” —Richard Feynman

Epiphany is a set of mixed media illustrations put together in a cycle. The visual narrative liberates the artist into all the identities that she has emulated over time. It is based on a song written by her and composed by Animesh.

Kokila is a freelance illustrator and graphic designer. She works as manager-curator with the Remember Bhopal Museum. She has also founded a youth group called the Citizens Action Network. She’s interested in dialogues on consumerism, alternative education, climate, and gender.
“Change, Please.”

Morgan Campbell
“Change, Please.”

“Change, Please” draws attention to the women bus conductors of Bangalore. It links the public bus to changing dynamics between the experience of gender and the city while also celebrating the skills, knowledge and understanding of the city these women conductors have amassed.

Morgan Campbell

Morgan Campbell works at the intersection of urban planning and critical theory to interrogate forms of transportation mobility. Nayana Udayashankar, her collaborator, is a lawyer and environmentalist who experiments with participatory communication tools for dialogue and empowerment.
DOHRI ZINDAGI

Dohri Zindagi is an interpretation of a short story by Rajasthani writer Vijaydan Detha, using Rajasthani folklore, music, dance, and traditional storytelling box, or ‘kaawad’. It explores the lives of two women, bound to each other by an unusual arranged marriage. In love, the two women explore their sexuality and find gratification in each other, with the help of a ghost.

NEHA SINGH

Neha is a Mumbai-based actor, writer, director, and activist. She has worked with well-known theatre directors, and has taken her plays to theatre festivals across India. She trains children, teachers and corporate employees in drama, and has written children’s books. Neha also runs the campaign Why Loiter? which aims at making public spaces safer for women.
Revelations XX
Padmini Ray Murray
**REVELATIONS XX**

Revelations XX is an attempt to restore the forgotten histories of women who shaped this city and country, using holographs and projections on smoke. These projections, visible only in certain light and angles, are a metaphor for women’s histories that disappear — the title alludes to both the act of revealing and recovery, and to the epiphanies viewers will experience.

**PADMINI RAY MURRAY**

Padmini is an academic based at the Centre for Experimental Media at the Srishti Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Bangalore. She uses creative and critical making as a tool to extend the limits of her research, as well as to push against the limits of the status quo, especially regarding the politics of gender.
Photosynthesis By Moonlight
Varun Narain
Photosynthesis by Moonlight is an adult enactment with puppets. What if the plant world had evolved, and our minds became stationary as roots, while roots became as flexible as our minds? Would that be Queer Evolution? A botanist finds himself in a conservatory where plants are more human, and learns to see a more human cardamom, garlic and saffron plant.

Varun is a Delhi-based puppeteer whose work branches into gender and sexuality, disability, and fantasy. He discovered puppetry when he was 9. He has taught at the Mass Communications Research Centre in Jamia Millia Islamia University. Varun was the first Indian artist in residence in Switzerland facilitated by Pro Helvetia.

Gender Bender 2016
Ka’s Wardrobe
Varun Ram Kurtkoti
KA’S WARDROBE

Ka’s Wardrobe is a ritological play written and directed by Varun, performed by Mandali, the student theatre group at Srishti. Three scholars, commissioned to rewrite a textbook lesson on the creation of the universe hit a roadblock: Prajapati, the mythological hero of creation, has an identity crisis that must first be resolved.

VARUN RAM KURTKOTI

Varun is a multidisciplinary artist, writer, and musician, fusing traditional forms of storytelling with an approach that is a combination of postmodernism and formalism, creating forms of fiction that delve into the fantastique. He currently works at the Srishti Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Bangalore.
Sandbox Collective is a creative services organisation that curates, produces and tours performances. It acts as a catalyst facilitating meaningful collaborations nationally and internationally between artists, cultural agencies and arts spaces creating an innovative artistic expression.

The Ladies Finger is an online women’s magazine delivering smart & witty perspectives on politics, culture, health, sex, work & everything in between. We are fresh, positive and alive to absurdity & adventure. Our work provides vital info & hope to readers everywhere.