**Thespo 22 - Double the Dramagiri**

- **Festival Pass @ Rs 1000/-**

**Performances**
- **Miah - Boy Diaries**
  - English, Hindi, Urdu
  - A moderately Muslim musical
  - 6 PM <IST> Thu: 19 Dec/20

- **Nightmare**
  - (Marathi)
  - A satire about the difference between having ideals and living them
  - 6 PM <IST> Fri: 18 Dec/20

**Workshops**
- 16-20 Dec, 20 | Rs 499/-

**Play Readings // Talks & Discussions**
- 16-20 Dec, 20 | Entry Free

**Awards Night**
- 20 Dec, 20 | Entry Free

**Tickets On:**
- Paytm Insider
- [www.thespo.org](http://www.thespo.org) +91 2241642142

---

**About Thespo**

Thespo is a Theatre Group Youth Festival. It is a platform for young artists to showcase their talent in theatre, dance, music, and more. The festival features a variety of performances, workshops, and discussions, providing a space for creativity and networking. With a focus on inclusivity and diversity, Thespo aims to foster a community of artistic expression and appreciation.
In May 2020, three starry-eyed, young theatre enthusiasts tuned into Zoom from three corners of the country - Hyderabad, Chandigarh, & Mumbai. We were told that this was our year & Thespo 22, our child. We flipped through parenting manuals & explored standard protocol, only to realise that we were going to have to write a rulebook of our own. So, amidst a barrage of calls, emails & screenshots, an idea began brewing. What began as an exploration of the digital world in all its malfunctioning glory, has ended up strengthening our faith in the power of storytelling, community, connections & theatre.

At Thespo 22’s The First Call & several Online Open Houses, we met faces we would never have the chance to meet were it not for the mysterious powers of the internet. Sharing our lives in stories - how many sanitizer baths we have had that day, how the news is affecting us, why we love the theatre - helped us build bridges across distances. More & more young people joined Thespo Reads, the all-new Thespo Listens, the multiple virtual workshops, Theatre Bugs discussions - and before we knew it, the walls had shattered, we were all in this together. Together, we created a virtual safe space for storytelling at Thespo Tapri: Cheeni Kam Stories Zyaada! Together, we dived into the fascinating world of audio storytelling for Audio-Torium: Where Stories Find Sound. And together, we are at the cusp of something brand new - India’s first International Digital Youth Theatre Festival.

Thespo 22 began in our homes - in the homes of our amazing superhuman volunteers, from the desks of our mentors & Friends of Thespo, from the dining rooms, yards & kitchens of all the young, emerging artists who have made this year possible. From 16 to 21 December 2020, between 11AM to 11PM, we hope you will join us in this digital celebration of youth theatre & storytelling, from the comfort of your homes. Whoever you are, wherever you are, this six-day festival invites you to become part of a WE. At the festival, start your days off with a workshop. Spend your afternoons reading or listening to an intriguing play. At teatime, tune into a virtual festival tapri with your chai. Meet new faces & share a story or two before watching a collaborative piece from Brazil or the USA or Canada. Or catch a LIVE Flagship Performance by young, emerging artists from across the country. End your evening with a mundane mystery as a performer tells a story custom-made for you.

We would love for you to come along with us on this journey that surprisingly, has brought us back home. To theatre, to storytelling. To the spirit of it all. To the reason why Thespo happens year on year - that feeling of belonging to a community. In the rulebook we developed over the past few months, there is only one rule: we have to tell stories to survive, to celebrate. We have to double the dramagiri for the sake of this strange & wonderful thing we call theatre.

Anoushka Zaveri, Anushka Ghose & Sarah Minz
THESPO 22 FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

**11am**
- **BOL!**
  - Speaking Out and Speaking Up! with Sudhanva Deshpande

**12pm**
- **WORD FOR WORD**
  - Play it as you hear it with Vikram Phukan

**1pm**
- **TOTEMS & TALISMANS**
  - Creative Writing with Ram Ganesh Kamatham

**2pm**
- **THESPO LISTENS**
  - The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy

**3pm**
- **BOL!**
  - (Until 5pm)

**4pm**
- **CHAI @TAPRI** - Thespo's teatime hangout party!

**5pm**
- **UNDER-ATTACK**
  - Brazil | Sri Lanka | India

**6pm**
- **PRACTISE MIME-FOOL-NESS**
  - A mindful look at physical comedy, clown theory, and solving PROBLEMS, big and small with Peter Gould.

**7pm**
- **MAIN BEEDI PIKAR JHUTH NI BOLTA**
  - Rajasthani Hindi (Jaipur)

**8pm**
- **MIAH-BOY DIARIES**
  - English Hindi Urdu (Kolkata)

- **NIGHTMARE**
  - Marathi (Pune)

- **THE LIGHT CATCHER**
  - Hindi English (Pune)

- **THE MINISTRY OF MUNDANE MYSTERIES** (UNTIL 21 Dec)
  - English (Canada, India)

**9pm**
- **KALARIPAYATTU** - A body-mind experience with Arpit Singh

**10pm**
- **WHEN THE STAGE & STORY SING**
  - An introduction to writing musicals with Kevin Wong

**10:30pm**
- **F**
CURATORS’ NOTE

As this annus horribilis draws to a close, some respite for theatriewallahs might come in the form of Thespo’s annual youth theatre festival being reimagined in the Covid-19 era as an all-digital edition of works that are still live and immediate, but experienced remotely through our devices. It must be said, in a year when assembly of all kinds was clamped down upon, it was the steady trickle of digital offerings that kept the flag flying for theatre, not in a way that ever sought to supplant the real thing, but as a homage for what was lost.

This year’s selections for what is dubbed Thespo’s Flagship Performances understandably came from a pool of entries much truncated in numbers compared to last year’s haul. Fifty odd registrants offered up their attempts at creating theatre in which the digital interface was an irrevocable part of the storytelling, in a way that went beyond simply capturing the goings-on on stage with a camera. Even professional theatre companies were experimenting with this so-called nascent medium, although the associated technologies have been in place for years. For a generation weaned on tech, this could only be seen as an opportunity.

Youth theatre is often just a chip off the old block, and rarely heralds a changing of the guard when it comes to performance grammar or new thought. More than innovation, Thespo serves up fresh energies and vim, which can be really invigorating for a theatre scene set in its ways. The grand old proscenium most college auditoriums are facsimiles of is a handicap in itself, and allows for material that is tried-and tested rather than truly adventurous. While there were examples of the status quo being diligently documented, this year’s constraint of the delimited digital space ironically allowed groups to think outside the box as they embraced the possibilities of the medium, while keeping a sense of ‘this is still theatre’ resolutely alive.

With technology at their fingers, intrepid under-25s served up news rooms replete with footage and commentary and broadcast graphics; video-conferenced courtroom battles with a social conscience; works in which the fickle camera became a character in their own right, sometimes voyeur, sometimes chronicler and sometimes simply bearing witness. We were introduced to CCTV cameras as talking heads, to pensive introverts finally finding a voice behind the ‘anonymous’ screen. Often a Zoom window, in all its nondescript glory, allowed us to enter a world, and conversely, there were times when it allowed that world to enter ours, almost unwittingly.

What we did also discover is the journey to wokeness, while paved with good intentions, has miles still ahead. Themes of social justice, while a popular choice, rarely strayed away from the hackneyed, and when attempting to shine a light on pressing matters related to the inequities of gender or any other issue, the skin-deep treatment often proved to be counterproductive. Last year’s relatively deep field delivered more on the-nose political content — this year’s outlay was not as indicative of the millennial zeitgeist. The absence of women theatre-makers was underlined by how noticeable they were in post-show Zoom sessions where each talking head takes up equal space, because they are still the exceptions that prove the rule, and there is no indication yet that their tribe is rising.

SHIVANI VAKIL SAVANT & VIKRAM PHUKAN
Guthal’s entire existence has revolved around his obsession to get married. But something keeps getting in the way. Join two unreliable narrators as they take us on a hilarious journey looking at marriage and masculinity, and discover the true reason behind Guthal’s failed attempts.

**Director:** Chandan Kumar Jangid  
**Cast:** Lokesh Raj Kumar, Sunil Saini, Chandan Kumar Jangid  
**Technical support:** Amit Choudhary  
**On camera:** Smriti Bhardwaj
A young man starts keeping a diary to cope with the isolation of the pandemic. He writes about quitting his job, making music and exploring stand-up comedy. Interspersed with anecdotes from his late grandfather’s dusty notebooks, he takes us on an introspective journey of his world, to find what it means to him to be a Muslim in today’s day and age.

Written, directed & performed:
Atif Ally Dagman
Cartoonist Padmanabh Chandavarkar is against the removal of a neighbourhood slum. A media frenzy ensues, that somehow paints Padmanabh as the saviour of the displaced families. But was it all just a misunderstanding? Trapped between press reports & public opinion, Padmanabh finds himself in a hilarious predicament that he must get out of.
NIGHTMARE
(Marathi)

Director: Ritika Shrotri
Live editor: Yash Lonkar
Sound designer: Mukund Konde
Set designer: Shrinath Gadade
Music by: Atharva Vadke
On camera: Atharva Gokhle, Manasi Kale, & Pradnya Jamdar
A photographer takes us on a tour of the world from her little studio. Using the black & white pictures from her travels, she introduces us to characters from India, Ethiopia, Uzbekistan, Venezuela & North Korea. But the question is, which one is her favorite photograph?

Writer: Niranjan Pedanekar  
Director: Sanket Parkhe  
Performer: Ritika Shrotri  
Music by: Amogh Inamdar  
Production & Light Designer: Sanket Parkhe  
On camera: Aditya Yadav & Sanket Parkhe  
Stage managers: Aditya Yadav, Paloma, Pradnya, Sanket Parkhe, & Shreenath Gadade  
Costumes & makeup: Paloma Ghate & Pradnya Jamdar  
Live editor: Vivek Khalane & Yash Lonkar
UNDER-ATTACK

The third collaboration between Brazilian artistic director Renato Rocha and Thespo brings together the youth from India, Sri Lanka, Trinidad and Tobago, and Brazil to explore the essence of freedom, love and democracy.

Under-Attack is a multicultural and multidisciplinary digital experience infusing theatre, poetry, dance, cinema, music & technology in a non-linear structure.

Dramaturgy: Devised in collaboration with young artists from India, Sri Lanka, Trinidad and Tobago, and Brazil

Director: Renato Rocha

Cast: Aria Sharma, Gabriel, Lakshitha, Rithmaka, Robbin Singh, Sahlah, Tanvi Rao & Thilina

Crew: Harsh Shah & Nishika Mehta

📅 16 DEC '20 ⏰ 5PM - 6PM IST
The Ministry of Mundane Mysteries

TheSp in association with Outside The March brings an immersive unique experience where we take you through a week long journey. Sign up for a six-day, improvised mystery adventure that takes place entirely over the phone.

You provide us with a real mystery from your life, and we'll try to solve it.

Project Supported by: Canadian Consulate
Facilitation: Sébastien Heinš and Shannon Currie
Dramaturgs: Laya Kumar, Tanvi Kôtkar, & Vrinda Kacker
Crew: Laya Kumar, Tanvi Kôtkar
Special thanks to: Maithili Jhaveri
A story of faith, hope and sharing

Thespo in association with Get thee To the Funnery Vermont presents, a therapy group that meets over a period of six months with a well-known counsellor, to confront and be healed from incidences of domestic abuse and violence in their own lives.

**Director:** Peter Gould  
**Cast:** Candice Souza, Gouri Bhuyan, Hrishabh Kanti, Mithil Raj Goswami, Ojaswi Bhattarai & Tishya Jain  
**Crew:** Suhaani Gala
A dramatic reading in collaboration with NSDF, U.K.

Paperwalls

While a mother recounts an incident from days past, her daughter experiences phantom pains and disembodied agony. Confused yet hopeful, the daughter tries to empathise with her mother and find a way out of this feeling.

**Writers:** Flora Wilson Brown & Sharodiya Chodhury  
**Director:** Hetty Hodgson  
**Cast:** Aaina Gandhok, Aditya Tripathi, Aritro Bannerjee, and Nikita Kumar  
**Crew:** Kaushikee Gupta & Sania Lekshmi

📅 20 DEC '20  
⏰ 5PM - 6PM IST  
💰 ENTRY FREE!
WORKSHOPS

BOL!
A workshop that explores ways of speaking. Speaking up. Speaking out with Sudhanva Deshpande
16 & 17 Dec '20 \ 11AM-1PM & 3PM-5PM

Practice MIME-FOOL-NESS
A mindful look at physical comedy, clown theory and solving PROBLEMS, big and small with Peter Gould
16, 17 & 19 Dec '20 \ 6PM - 9PM

Kalaripayattu
A body mind experience with Arpit Singh
16, 17 & 18 Dec '20 \ 9PM - 10PM

When the Stage and Story Sing
An introduction to writing musicals with Kevin Wong
17, 18 & 19 Dec '20 \ 9:30PM - 10:30 PM

Word for Word
Play it like you hear it! With Vikram Phukan
18 & 20 Dec '20 \ 11AM-12:30PM

TOTEMS & TALISMANS
Finding writing inspiration in the mystical world of mythology. A creative writing workshop with Ram Ganesh Kamatham
19 Dec '20 \ 11AM - 1PM & 3PM - 5PM
OPEN EVENTS!  ENTRY FREE

Join us as we chat about all things theatre and storytelling! Come with your chai, meet new people, share a story, watch a performance or two by a fellow emerging artist - or simply drop in to say hello!

Chai @ Tapri
Thespo’s lealime hang-out party
16-20 Dec ’20
4PM-5PM IST

Thespo Listens
16 & 17 Dec ’20
2PM - 3:30PM IST

Thespo Listens is a community play listening initiative by Thespo. Join us as we listen to "The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy: Primary Phase (Dramatised)" on 16 Dec & "36 Questions - The Podcast Musical" on 17 Dec.

Thespo Reads is a participative, gender-neutral community play reading. Join us as we read "Jinhen Yakeen Nahin Tha" on 18 Dec & "Aayushyamaan" on 20 Dec.

THESPO READS
18 & 20 Dec ’20
2PM - 3:30PM IST

In conversation about street theatre with Moloyashree Hashmi & Priyanka of Jana Natya Manch, Delhi - the receiving organisation of this year’s Thespo Lifetime Achievement Award.

The Black & Red of Street Theatre
19 Dec ’20
2PM - 3:30PM IST

Goofy sun salutations (suryanamaskars), Facial exercises, music, and more! Get yo’ lightsabers (You don’t actually need one) & join us for some light stretches with BROOK GENTRY. Je-don’t want to miss this!

STAR WARS YOGA
DO THE YOGA, YODA STYLE!
19 Dec ’20
6PM - 7PM IST
INCLUSIVITY WITHIN THE THEATRE

Theatre for People with Disabilities

A panel discussion examining the inclusion of individuals with disability as performers and as audiences, the overall impact and scope.

ABOUT THE PANEL

Divya Arora - Actor and director, often credited as one of the first theatre makers and artist in India to be a wheelchair user with cerebral palsy.


Shaun Williams - Acting coach & actor with a collective experience of 20 years. He has taught at schools for children with learning disabilities, primarily focussing on the skill building aspects of theatre.

Meghana AT (moderator) - Actor/writer/production manager from Mumbai, Festival Manager at Thespo 18, & has been the production manager for shows like White Rabbit Red Rabbit and the opera Il Matrimonio Segreto. As an actor she’s worked with directors like Mahesh Dattani, Trishla Patel, Faezeh Jalali, Jeff Goldberg and others.

19 DEC ’20  5PM - 6PM IST  ENTRY FREE!
LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
JANA NATYA MANCH, DELHI

Thespo has the honour of presenting this year’s Lifetime Achievement Award to Jana Natya Manch, Delhi. Established in 1973, has over 9000 performances to its credit of 103 original street plays and 18 original proscenium plays.

Drawing from Brechtian ideas, their productions utilise the dramatic form to spark dialectical conversations around communalism, economic policy, unemployment, trade union rights, globalization, women’s rights, education system, elections, price rise etc. Owing to a strong belief that the, Janam has performed in over People's stories must be brought to them 150 towns, cities and villages of India as well as Palestine, South Africa, UK, and USA. Janam members have also led teaching and workshops sessions at multiple occasions within the country and abroad.

Since 2012, Studio Safdar - their independent space for experimentation with the arts, in Delhi - has become a melting pot for different cultures, independent thought and new ideas.
At a time when sponsorship for the arts is hard to come by, a group of theatre lovers who valued the work being done for emerging artists, decided to create a unique crowdfunding initiative called Friends of Thespo.

Over the years, this community has supported numerous Thespo activities throughout the calendar year. Made up mainly of alumni, well-wishers, and patrons, Friends of Thespo continues to support the ambitious programmes. Even in a strange year as 2020, Thespo has continued reaching out to young people, and giving them a place to perform and learn.

Anyone can become a Friend of Thespo. It’s easy!

Subscribe to this opportunity! Slabs starting from Rs 200
You also receive exclusive rewards as well as other privileges.

BECOME A FRIEND OF THESPO TODAY
WWW.THESCO.ORG/FOT
+91 9538773994

Aaryan Tandon
Abhishek Goel
Akash Mohimen
Amanda Padamsee
Aniruddha Patankar
Arjun Siva
Avantika Akerkar
Bhavna Pani
Bijoy Idicheriah Thazhethil
Christopher Samuel
Deepti Dcunha
Divyesh Vijayakar
Farrokh Mehta
Goldwin Fonseca
Harishri Babuji
K Ravikiran
Kavita Puri Arora
Navroz Seervai
Prathmi & Vishi
Priti Bakalkar
Robbin Singh
Roger Pereira
Rohit Dandwani
Ruchira Das
Sonal Gopujkar
Sundara V Siva
Varun Olimattei

AS OF 16 DECEMBER, 2020
THEATRE GROUP BOMBAY

The very first English theatre group in Bombay, first to ever perform a Shakespearean play & introduce Café Theatre in the city, first to design a terrace performance space - the journey of Theatre Group Bombay is truly, a journey of firsts. One of India’s oldest English language theatre groups, its members (Late Alyque Padamsee, Sabira Merchant, Gerson Da Cunha among others) have gone on to become legends in theatre, radio & television. Since 1944, TG has promoted new ideas and social change through their productions & events. TG continues to nurture and support entire generations of young, emerging artists through Thespo. We are ever grateful to have their support & faith. They make the dream that is Thespo, possible.

QTP is a theatre production and arts management company that specialises in creating unique & engaging experiences for live audiences. This year, as theatres and performance venues shut their doors in the wake of the pandemic, QTP attempted to take the magic of theatre to people’s homes. QTP reimagined their heartwarming play ‘Every Brilliant Thing’ for an online audience. For the Ranga Shankara Theatre Festival 2020, they presented a rehearsed virtual reading of Ron Hart’s ‘Lunch Girls’ and curated a conversation with five women producers, about what it means to produce in the 21st century.

Most recently, QTP also produced the 11th edition of Tata Literature Live! The festival hosted over 80 sessions, 150 authors & speakers, and received audiences from around the world. Every year, QTP supports and manages Thespo, and every year the movement grows, the community of young, emerging artists expands. 2020 has been an unusual year for most of us, but it is safe to say that QTP made the most of it!

Thespo
A Youth Theatre Movement

Thespo is a Youth Theatre Movement that showcases, trains, collaborates & celebrates to create a global community of young theatre professionals. Its 22nd edition, this year has been all about exploration, innovation, breaking moulds & pushing the boundaries of what is possible in the online space. Since May 2020, Thespo has hosted multiple online workshops across different areas of theatre, various community building events & shows. In October, Thespo put together two evenings of storytelling by young, emerging artists. At India’s first International Digital Youth Theatre Festival, over 25 LIVE, DIGITAL events curated, organised or performed entirely by artists under 25 are taking place over six theatre-filled days.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Theatre Group Bombay - for doubling the dramagiri all these years.

Radhika Seth, Varun Khare & everyone at PayTm Insider who have helped us host the digital festival with so much ease.

Hrishabh Kanti & Sébastien Heins for making The First Call an evening of fun, celebration and togetherness.

Freishia Bomanbehram, Himanshu Sitlani, Julianna Maria James, Kanti DeBiswas, Meghana Telang, Mohammed Lehry, Omkar Kulkarni, Rajat Tiwari, Shivraj Waichal & Tanmay Dhanania for taking us down the memory lane through engaging, live conversations.

Akash Mohimen, Bruce Guthrie, Dia Frid, Jiten Merchant, Peter Gould, Sananda Mukhopadhyaya, Shruti Sridharan, Shaun Williams & Sumit Roy for helping emerging artists hone their craft even amidst a global pandemic.

Abhishek Majumdar, Annie Zaidi, Arghya Lahiri, Achoke Kumar Nath, Laxman Gannaghe, Raghav Dutt, Ramu Ramanathan, Siddharth Kumar & Q for giving us the pleasure to perform their writing for Thespo Tapri: Cheeni Kam. Stories Zyaada!

Akash Mohimen, Asif Ali Baig & Kalliroi Tziafeta for offering their guidance to emerging storytellers as part of Thespo Tapri: Cheeni Kam. Stories Zyaada!

Abhishek Saha and Shruti Sridharan for starting us off on our storytelling journey this year.

Anshuman Jha, Divyesh Vijayakar & Freishia Bomanbehram for enriching the Thespo Tapri shows by sharing a little piece of their lives with the audience.

Shernaz Patel & Vivek Madan for helping us shape the Audio-Torium project & for their thoughtful, invaluable feedback.

Arghya Lahiri, Kedar Nimkar, Nadir Khan, Nipun Dharmadhikari & Varrun Bangera for gracefully guiding the projects of first-time audio storytellers.

Shivani Vakil Savant & Vikram Phukan for watching over 40 live digital performances & offering their unwavering support and guidance whenever we have needed it.

Shruti Sridharan, Bhushan Vikas, Neel Chaudhary & Q for devoting their time to mentor the performing teams at Thespo 22.

Asa Kuthari Chaudhuri, Sushama Deshpande, Vinay Sharma for taking time out every evening to recognise the outstanding young talent.


Himanshu Sitlani for connecting us with new people, new ideas & new stories. Nathan Carroll & Daniel Carter & everyone at Paprika Theatre for making interesting collaborations possible at the festival.

Sébastien Heins, Shannon Currie & everyone at Outside The March for helping us put together a unique show & experience.

Peter Gould, Brook Gentry & everyone at Get Thee to The Funnery, Vermont for offering us the opportunity to collaborate with them not once but four times this year.

Renato Rocha for his passion and enthusiasm to collaborate with the Thespoo community year on year.

Maithili Jhaveri and everyone at the Canadian Consulate for enabling a cross-cultural exchange of stories & ideas.

Abhishek Goel & Navroz Seervai without whose contribution, this festival wouldn’t have been possible.

Arghya Lahiri, Christopher Samuel, Nadir Khan & Vivek Madan for being the guardians of the Thespoo galaxy.

Dolly Aunty for being a constant even during the most uncertain times.

Jaanu Bhai & Raju Bhaiyya for being the backbone of Thespoo.

Mehernosh Bharucha for being a continuous pillar of strength to Thespoo.

**THE DRAMAGIRI GANG**

**Fellows:** Anoushka, Anushka, Sarah

**Friends of Thespoo Coordinator:** Preethi

**The First Call:**
Alistair, Arjun, Delraaz, Hrishabh, Mohammed, Ninad, Nishika, Parth, Preethi, Rachiit, Ranjani, Reema, Sameer, Srishti, Vedashree

**Team Tapri:**
Aathithya, Arjun, Atrrayee, Gaurav, Gouri, Hrishabh, Johnson, Krutarth, Nishika, Ojaswi, Prajesh, Prajakta, Robin, Surabhi, Srishti, Tanya, Yagya

**Thespoo 22 Festival Crew:**
Aaryan, Aastha, Abhinav, Alphonsa, Ami, Anoushka, Anushka, Arjun, Devansh, Devi, Gehna, Jash, Jeshron, Kaushikee, Khushi, Laya, Madhurima, Mohammed, Nishika, Ojaswi, Pranjal, Preethi, Ranjani, Rittika, Sameer, Sania, Siddharth, Suhaani, Swapnali, Tanay, Tanvi, Vaishnavi & Vineha

**Design Team:**
Festival identity: Saloni
Festival designs: Siddhi
Design crew: Anoushka, Gaurav, Jessica, Robbin, Sameer, Srishti, Tanay & Tanvi.