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## MUTE-ABLE: An evening with Shishir Kurup and Sheetal Gandhi

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For one weekend only, Mu Performing Arts, in collaboration with Pangea World Theater, will host two nationally renowned South Asian performing artists for their first appearances in the Twin Cities. Mute-Able: An evening with Shishir Kurup and Sheetal Gandhi, will play February 24 - 27 at The Lab Theater, 700 North First Street, Minneapolis, MN 55401.

In continuation of Mu's growth as a national voice in Asian American theater and performing arts, Artistic Director Rick Shiomi sought to bring actor Shishir Kurup and multidisciplinary choreographer and performer Sheetal Gandhi from California to Minnesota to share their perspectives with Twin Cities audiences.

"I saw both of these performances at the 2nd National Asian American Theater Festival in New

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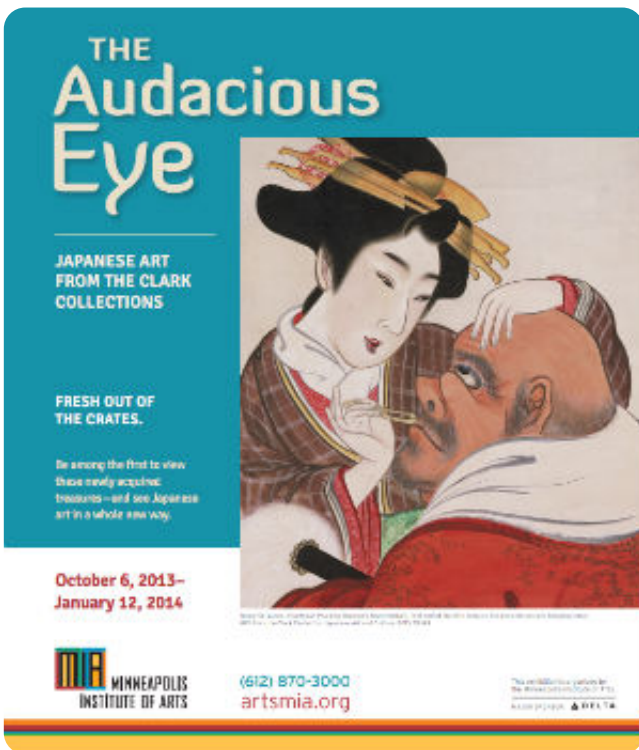
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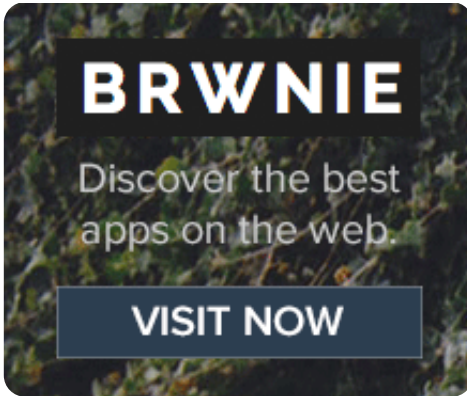
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The exhibition is part of the Minnesota State Fair. Admission is free. For more information, visit [www.artsmia.org](http://www.artsmia.org).

York in 2009,” Shiomi remembers, “and thought they would be important pieces to present here for artistic and social activist purposes.”

As the billing suggests, Mute-Able presents two very different perspectives of Indian and Indian American experience. One speaks for the voiceless minorities in a country increasingly suspect of “the Other,” and one employs the full gamut of artistic expression to weave together centuries of stories in one physical and musical tapestry.

For the first act of the evening, Shishir Kurup presents his solo work, “Sharif Don’t Like It.” An extended monologue where Kurup himself doesn’t speak a word, the piece presents an alternately hilarious and poignant picture of post 9/11 America and the fallout of the Patriot Act.



As Shiomi explains, “Shishir takes us on a journey of what it means to be held as a suspect in America.”

Following Kurup, Sheetal Gandhi combines choreography, singing, and text over an original score in *Bahu-Beti-Biwi* (translated as “Daughter-in-law, Daughter, Wife”). Inspired by old songs of North Indian women, Gandhi’s piece tells the stories of North Indian and Indian American women connecting across time and space through song and dance. Interwoven throughout is a simultaneous desire to connect with and break from tradition, drawing the audience into an intimate struggle between freedom and compromise.

In addition to bringing these two national performers to the Twin Cities, Mute-Able represents an expansion of Mu’s reach to include

South Asian performers and interests. According to Shiomí, it is an effort that he hopes will resonate with an even wider Asian American community. “Together, [Shishir and Sheetal] give us artistic insights into the South Asian experience in America.”

Performances are 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and 2:00 p.m. on Sunday. Tickets range from \$19 – \$25, and are available at [www.muperformingarts.org](http://www.muperformingarts.org) or via the Lab Theater box office at 612-333-7977, [www.thelabtheater.org](http://www.thelabtheater.org).

View an excerpt of Sheetal Gandhi’s work Bahu-Beti-Biwi online at <http://vimeo.com/5244343>.

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