

CENTERSTAGE

Chicago's Original City Guide

Venue: [Gorilla Tango Theatre](#)
1919 N Milwaukee Ave.
Chicago, IL 60647 [Map it](#)

Cost: \$10

Tickets: www.gorillatango.com or (773) 598-4549

Author

Urban Indigenous

Styles

- [Comedy](#)

Related Info:

[Official website](#)

Performances

Runs March 27, 2010-May 15, 2010

Saturday 10 p.m.

Centerstage Show Review

Reviewer: [Zev Valancy](#)

Saturday Mar 27, 2010

The Chicago sketch-comedy scene is vibrant but rarely reflects the diversity of the city. So the existence of Urban Indigenous, a multi-ethnic sketch troupe, is good news in and of itself. Unfortunately, "Code of Ethnicity," the group's first full-length show, only rarely capitalizes on its potential: there are some great laughs, but too often the clever ideas fail to pay off.

Some of the sketches hinge on the exploitation of ethnic stereotypes: the fight between Asian and Latino gangs for the loyalty of a mixed-race man, or an Asian math team captain belittling any non-Asian who wants to be on the team, and hounding the Asian man who got only a 97 on his last test. They are great setups, but too many of the jokes come from simply repeating stereotypes, without any surprises or new insights. Other sketches don't address matters of ethnicity at all, with varying results: a sketch set in an elementary school classroom is more confusing than funny, but a sketch with beverages at the grocery store arguing over which is the best was the funniest of the night. There's clearly talent in the performing and writing, but at the moment there's not enough discipline: directors Josie Dykas and Eduardo N. Martinez need to be ruthless about cutting unfunny sketches and keeping the performers at their best. In all fairness, the audience was having a raucous good time, and I hadn't had anything to drink, which might not have made me the target audience. But for such a young group, there's real potential. Hopefully in their next show, they'll live up to their funniest material and produce great shows.