



AMY COOPER

**PARTY OF THE WEEK**  
**Heyy Babyy film preview**  
 State Theatre



Charlie Col.



Debra-lee Furness.



Jessica Hooper and David Adler.

**LOWDOWN**

WHEN you think about it, this city is the natural home for Bollywood movies. They're OTT, all singing, all dancing, eye-poppingly colourful, sexy and packed with melodrama, love triangles, family feuds, bizarre coincidences, scheming villains and reversals of fortune. Just like your average night out in Sydney.

The preview of *Heyy Babyy*, the first Bollywood movie to be shot entirely in Sydney, was big, because everything about Bollywood is big. The multimillion-dollar extravaganza boasts a cast and crew of about 500 and just one of its song-and-dance numbers makes Mandi Gera look like a subdued sidekick.

For such a momentous occasion the State Theatre had been morphed into Mumbai (it's a game-old gal, the State - I've seen her dressed in drag, doused in fake snow and even filled with the entire *Bruce* crew and their bike friends in the

name of publicity) and we could hear the bhajans drone two blocks away.

There was red carpet, but not like we'd seen, this was the red carpet that keeps on giving. Halfway up we were showered with rose petals, then greeted by the drummers and dancers.

Next we were decorated with bindis by ladies in beautiful saris and only then, when we were finally at the top, came the champagne. My Indian friends tell me audiences demand value from their Bollywood movies. Anyway, I approve because it gives you something to do while the famous in front are having their photos taken.

Talking of which, Debra-lee Furness slipped in once the lights were down and left before they went up. She apparently "loves Indian cinema". I wonder if she's thinking what I'm thinking: Hugh does Bollywood. It's frighteningly plausible.

Inside was a crowd of around 200 feasting on curries, chapatis and things superior to standard party canapés. There were more dancers and pounding Bollywood music.

Our host, NSW Tourism Minister Matt Brown, and his posse were tapping their feet. So was the NSW MP for Strathfield, Virginia Judge, in a sari, and of course the large Indian contingent, including *Heyy Babyy*'s producer Anupam Sharma. I've never seen toe-tapping so early in a party.

But that was nothing. On came the film, with its stars dancing all over landmarks such as the Martin Place fountain, the Botanic Gardens and Circular Quay. There were cheers for each familiar location and whistles at all the good bits. At Bollywood movies people join in. Before long, I saw gyrating silhouettes and realised the front row was up and dancing.

From there it was just a small step to a full-blown party. Back in the lobby the music crackled right up and everyone - even the stiffest government suits - went off without restraint.

The waters bogged with their trays of masala tea. Outside on the street passers-by were dancing, too. We had become a Bollywood movie. I didn't want to go home but thought it best before a jealous lover murdered his rival and was tricked into confessing by his vengeful mother-in-law. That's always the right time to leave a party.

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Miss BEHAVING  
 Amy Cooper's log



Anupam Sharma and Khursheed Irani.



Neil Layman, Vikas Singh and Alina Sampson.



Charlie Karlstrom and Amanda Forrest.



Jubeh Akhtar and George Gevatis.



Alex Creswell and Ash Sharma.



Elsa Limburg.



Roama Randa.



Barbara Jayasinghe and Clint Draberg.



State member for Strathfield, Virginia Judge.

Pictures: JERRY DUNN