

World Culture Concert & Arts Festival

2 October 2006 - A Report

The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Australia's third annual World Concert & Arts Festival, held at Sydney Town Hall on Sunday 2nd October 2006 was yet another exotic experience for the fortunate ones. Ostensibly held on Mahatma Gandhi's Birth Anniversary, the music and dance concert with over 150 artists from cultures around the world, and an arts exhibition in fact celebrated the spirit of multiculturalism and the vibrancy of the ethnic arts community in Australia.

The confirmed VIPs for the special event included Hon Judy Hopwood MP, Member for Hornsby representing Hon Peter Debnam, Leader of the Opposition; Hon Julie Owens MP, Member for Parramatta; Kamahl; Warren Duncan, Media Officer, Community Relations Commission; Mohanakumaran, Consul, Consulate General of India; Elvira Boselli, Consul, Consulate General of Italy; Mr Guterres, Consul General of Timor; Gothami Indikadahena, Consul General of Turkey; Nick Hubble, Executive Director, Sydney Olympic Park; Mohammad Anwarzai, Ambassador of Afghanistan.

A special Souvenir magazine was brought out on the occasion which included the programme schedule, brief description of the artists, their traditional and folk performances and articles like World's Cultures, World's Religions and articles on Mahatma Gandhi. The souvenir magazine also included the messages of support and appreciation for Bhavan's multicultural activities were received from The Hon John Howard MP Prime Minister of Australia; Her Excellency, Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO.

The Hon. John Howard, Prime Minister of Australia stated "The World Culture Concert and Arts Festival provides an opportunity for professional and community artists to join together in the showcase of art, music and dance that is representative of the many cultures in Australia. The concert and arts festival coincides with the anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi and seeks to honour the Mahatma's legacy by making a meaningful contribution to strengthening community harmony and cultural understanding in Australia."

Her Excellency, Professor Marie Bashir, Governor of New South Wales mentioned "This annual event provides a joyful opportunity to celebrate the multicultural diversity of our world. This diversity is reflected today in Australia's people, and in the harmony and stability of our nation. It inspires us to reflect on so much that is fine in the Australian community. Your own group contributes much to this. A festival such as this demonstrates the humanity we share in common. It builds greater understanding and peace at an individual level which can then extend to communities and nations".

Our Sponsors and Supporters included, India Tourism Sydney, HCL, City of Sydney, State Bank of India Sydney, Small Business Guru, Sydney Morning Herald; Community Relations Commissions for Multicultural Affairs; Madan's Video Productions.



Aboriginal Traditional Welcome Dance

Performed by: Yidaki Didge and Dance Australia

Coordinated by: Les Saxby



Kuchipudi Art Academy

On of the musical trinity, Saint Dikshitar describes at length in this piece, the divine beauty and grace of the Goddess, Kamakshi of Kanchipuram. He describes her lotus like eyes, her stately and graceful gait, resembling that of Gajendra, her statuesque figure and so on. The [*Sanchari Bhavam*] in this piece depicts the Goddess, who, in order to please Lord Shiva and to be blessed with His love and affection serves Him while He is doing *tapas*. Manmada tries to cause hindrance to the *tapas* but becomes victim to the fury of Lord Shiva and is reduced to ashes. Upon the solicitations of Kamakshi, Lord Shiva brings Manmada back to life.



Performers : Shailja & Shobhna; **Coordinated by:** Dr Bharathi Reddy



Asim Gorashi & Friends

Asim Gorashi is an acclaimed musician from Sudan and plays in The Blue Nile Quartet. Through his music he took the audience in a journey to discover Afro Arabic Sudanese music.

Performers: Asim Gorashi; Daniel Godacre, Alex Masso

Geetanjali Dance School

"Peace Love and Joy" dance was presented by Geetanjali School of Dance and Performing Arts. The energetic girls demonstrated with their dance movement that to them music is "God, peace, philosophy, tradition, tolerance and kindness. In the second part they expressed music as love, passion, beauty, desire, tears and happiness. In the last part of the item music is life, laughter and joy.

Coordinated by: Sharmila Maitra



A Garden of Peace

Blue Sky Choir - World Choir

Presented vocal and instrumental musical symphony resonating the sound and message of peace on earth

Cordinated by: Sumiko Jones



Fusion of Kathak & Flamenco Classical

Namaste a form of greeting signifies the meeting of the two art forms of Kathak and flamenco which have common origins. The artform of Kathak travelled from India with the gypsies to Spain where it developed as flamenco. This piece was first performed by 'El duende Flamenco' and 'Ruchi School for Indian dance' for the pageant "Miss India Australia".

Coordinated by: Ruchi Sanghi & Susana



Kamahl - Songs of faith and Comfort

Kamahl is perhaps best known for his song *The Elephant Song*, as well as his sensitive interpretations of standards in the repertoire of popular music. He received the *Australian Father of the Year* award in 1998 and the *Order of Australia* in 2003. His first album was *A Voice to Remember*, which was released in Australia in October 1967.

Gennadi Dubinsky

Joyful Russian Songs in traditional music and style were presented by the Russian musical maestro.



Indialucia

A dance medley, with an amalgamation of such varied dance styles and music, it seems made for a cultural night promoting unity within diversity. Among the many facets of the performance include the classical North Indian dance stylings of Kathak, interspersed with elements of Spanish Flamenco, its slower tempo counterpart *silencio*, the exotic and energetic rhythms of Arabic music and an engaging and riveting Bharatanatyam finish. Comprising a cast of 15 dancers, the performance is a fitting finale encompassing varied global regions which Indian culture.

Choreographed & Coordinated by: Avanti Deshpande



Gambhir Watts
President



Avijit Sarkar
Cultural Director



Catherine Knox
Director and Master of Ceremony

Isabella, Maharishi Raval & Krish Mitra

Isabella sang Swedish songs on instrumental Indian music-Tabla and classical Hawaiian guitar.



Nupur Dance School

Presented Classical dance based on A R Rehman's Music *Bol Re Sajni*, mixed with a Semiclassical Dance from the historical *Ashoka* and also a Fusion Of Indian Classical with Aboriginal Digeree Doo

Coordinated by: Manjusha De

Chinese Dancing School of Sydney

Presented The Waist Dance of Chu (pre-Qin) dynasty and a Group Dance of Royal Court tradition of Ching Dynasty.

Coordinated by: May Wang



Punjabi Beat Bhangra Group

Presented **Giddha** a vigorous folk dance of Punjabi village women dressed up in Punjabi traditional dress, Salwar Kameez embroidered 'duppattas' and heavy jewellery which further exaggerate the movements of happiness and celebrations. Costumes: A Salwar Kameez is composed of a long colorful shirt and baggy vibrant pants. Duppatta is made of colorful pieces of cloth and wrapped around the neck like shawl.

Coordinated by: Harinder Kaur

Kerala Folk Dance

Presented a group folk dance *Kai Kottu Kali*. Kerala has a rich repertoire of folk dances of which *Kai Kottu Kali* occupies the pride of place. It is a very popular symmetric group dance performed by the women of Kerala during the festive seasons of Onam and Thiruvathira. It resembles Kummi and is simple with the Lasya element predominating throughout the dance. The costume for the dance is mundu and neriyathu which is both unique and traditional. The dance is very simple but beneath its simplicity lies a profundity of conception and a directness of expression, which are of a high artistic order.

Coordinated by: Sudhir

