

RECOMMENDATIONS

Drum concert

Yamato, a drummers' troupe from Japan will perform two concerts at 7 p.m. on April 12 and 13 at the auditorium of Osmani Memorial Hall in the city. The two concerts are being held in observance of the 30th anniversary of Japan-Bangladesh diplomatic relations. Yamato is touring South Asia. The events are jointly organised by the Embassy of Japan in Bangladesh and Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. Organisers have distributed free entry cards.

Video show

A video show on Shatchari forest by eminent dentist and bird specialist Dr. Ronald Halder will be held at the VIP lounge of National Press Club at 10:50 a.m. on April 9 (Tuesday). The show will be held as part of a seminar titled "Birds of Tanguar Haor and Shatchari forest". Renowned photographer and bird specialist Enam Ul Haq will deliver the key-note. The seminar will be organised by Bangladesh Bird Club and it will remain open to the general public. Proceedings will start from 10:30 a.m.

Folk painting

4th solo folk painting exhibition by Uttam Ghosh, is being held at the city's National Museum gallery. The show runs till April 18 from 10:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. everyday.

Photography Exhibition

To commemorate September 11 tragedy and to pay tribute to the innocent victims, a photography show sponsored by The American Centre of the U.S Embassy, opened on April 7 at the city's Drik Gallery, House # 58, Road # 15/A, Dhanmondi. The show is showcasing 27 pieces taken by renowned photographer Foel Meyerowitz from World Trade Centre site. Exhibition will stay open from 3 to 8 p.m. till April 20.

Art show

An exhibition of recent paintings by Murtaza Baseer is now being held at the city's Gallery Shilparag, House # 15, Road # 16 (new) at Dhanmondi. The show is open to all from 11:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. everyday till April 10.

Drum concert

Beats for friendship

Yamato, a drumbeaters' troupe from Japan performs for the first time in Bangladesh at the Osmani Memorial Hall in the city on April 12 and 13

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

HEAVY thumping of drums will clobber at the hearts of the audience as Yamato, a drummers' troupe from Japan will perform in Dhaka. On the second leg of their tour, Yamato members will exhibit their artistic skill of drum beating at the auditorium of Osmani Memorial Hall in the city on April 12 and 13 at 7 p.m. as part of their *Spirit tour of South Asia*. The tour will too, include drum concert or *TAIKO* in Colombo, Kolkata, Chennai and New Delhi. The Embassy of Japan and Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy are jointly organizing the events in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of diplomatic ties between

Japan and Bangladesh and the 50th anniversaries of diplomatic ties of Japan with India and Srilanka.

*Taiko*, as the word is used in Japanese for drum beating, has gained considerable popularity over the last decade or so, and the number of overseas fans for the *taiko's* heart beating sound has also rose.

It has only been three to four decades that the *taiko* have been singled out to form a performance genre of its own. *Taiko* drummers fall into two categories. The traditional group of drummers is handed down in a particular locale and they perform in rituals and rites. The second group of performers presents the beat with original



About YAMATO

"Yamato is a taiko drum troupe whose members put their hearts and souls into these extremely simple yet oddly appealing instruments to produce, as it were, the beating pulse of life", informs the brochure write-up made available to the press.

While explaining the spirit of taiko, the chart message from Yamato says, "Beginning at the birth of all living things, and lasting throughout all time, the sound of the taiko is the beat of the heart, the very heart that beats in our body today".

What they communicate through their drum ?

"As we stand in front of our drums, it is the powerful and warm rhythm of that heart beat that we reach for in our minds. The strong living pulse of all life forms, whenever and wherever they happen to be born, the total acceptance of the conditions of existence, the courageous will to live this is what we want to communicate".

Writing about their desire to perform they inform us that, "The 'heart beat' that springs from highly trained bodies of men and women dedicated to the art of the taiko will shake the earth and resound across the heavens with its sometimes delicate, sometimes dynamic sounds.

The moment the heartbeat of Yamato's taiko resonates with your heartbeat.

In that moment can be felt a living power like something new being born.

We value such moments that reinforce our desire to perform".



composition of *taiko* that have breathed new life into these traditional instruments.

Unlike drums in the rest of the world where generally the aim is to produce complex rhythmic patterns rather than volume, *taiko* are beaten one stroke at a time to create a big, strong sound. In Japan, except for a special drum called *tsuzumi*, drumsticks called *bachi* are used to strike the *taiko*.

Since Japanese prefer a strong and commanding sound, it would perhaps be more accurate to say that listeners do not hear a drumbeat with their ears rather feel its reverberations with the entire body. The audience is overwhelmed by the primitive energy and stirred to

the very depth of their souls.

In order to achieve this powerful drumbeat, the performer sinks down and assumes a stable posture and brandishes the *bachi* in a straight line.

The performers who will exhibit this special skill at the Osmani Hall are Masa Ogawa, Takeru Matsushita, Akiko Ogawa, Mika Miyazaki, Shiho Nonaka, Satomi Ikeda, Toshiaki Otawa, Tetsuro Okubo, Midori Tamai and Tomoko Kawauchi.

Japan Foundation, who are the sponsors of this series of events in Dhaka, predict very high of Yamato. It is a group whose altered trend of performance in Japan has brought new dimensions to the art of *taiko*. The members of the

group, since 1993, have traveled across 12 Asian and European countries.

The group has in their possession *odaiko*, a large drum made from a huge tree some 400 years back which will be placed at the stage of the auditorium at Osmani Memorial Hall on April 12 and 13 much to the pleasure and excitement of several hundred curious audience.

The Embassy of Japan and Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy has distributed free entry cards for the Dhaka concerts. Yamato will leave the city for Kolkata where two more concerts will be held on April 17 and 18 at the auditorium of Kala Mandir.



Award

'Lagaan' sweeps IIFA awards

AFP, Genting Highlands

INDIAN epic "Lagaan" failed to win an Oscar last month but was a clear winner at home when it swept seven film awards at India's equivalent of the Oscars here.

The film dominated the 2002 International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) Awards late Saturday, picking up best picture, best director, best actor, best story, best music director, best lyrics and best female playback singer trophies out of 13 at stake.

The country's first movie to earn an Oscar nomination in 14 years, "Lagaan" is part of a new genre of Indian movies that is changing the way Bollywood -- Bombay's Hindi-language movie factory -- works.

The 5.3-million-dollar epic tells the story of a group of villagers in the 1890s who have to play their British rulers at cricket to avoid paying a crippling "lagaan" or land tax.

"This is happiness," director Ashutosh Gowariker said after receiving his award.

Top Bollywood megastar Aamir Khan, who acted in and produced "Lagaan", was named best actor while Tabu clinched best actress award for a heart-wrenching performance as a dancer in an adult bar in "Chandni Bar."

The three-hour glitzy cere-



Indian actor Salman Khan (C) is teased by members of a Australian pop group at the IIFA Awards ceremony on April 6

mony, hosted by 2000 Miss Universe Lara Dutta, lived up to the traditional Bollywood song-and-dance routines but was somewhat a let-down as half of the winners including Aamir and Tabu were absent.

The third IIFA awards shindig -- designed to promote Indian cinema worldwide -- was held in

Malaysia as Bollywood eyes the growing Asian market after holding the previous events in London and South Africa.

Gowariker earlier said Lagaan's Oscar nomination had opened doors for Indian films to penetrate the English-speaking audience.

Out of some 1,000 films pro-

duced in India last year, he said only 25 -- including "Lagaan" -- "dared to be different, to break away from the norm and do different things."

This new breed of movies broaching on topics previously considered as taboo or conservative would change Bollywood, although he said the traditional song-and-dance routines would remain a staple.

"Music is an important genre for us. We are making movies only for India and any cross-over (in audience) is an added bonus," he told AFP.

Other top Indian directors agreed, saying Hollywood cooperation would not alter Indian films known for their lengthy production averaging three hours, song, dance and melodrama.

"Music is part of our day-to-day existence," said young director Karan Johar, whose film "Kahbi Kushi Kabhi Gham" (Sometimes Joy, Sometimes Sorrow) won two IIFA awards for best supporting actress and best male playback singer.

"I am completely in the dance mould. It's a brilliant aspect of our films. We will be singing and dancing the whole of our careers. We are proud of being Indians and the Indianness will never leave us."

Johar's 8.3-million-dollar

movie, the costliest ever churned out by Bollywood, also won six of 14 IIFA technical awards including sound recording, make-up, dialogue, art direction, background score and costume design.

The IIFA awards comprise three categories -- 13 for artistic excellence, 14 for technical excellence and special awards.

Bollywood screen legend Amitabh Bachan, the only Indian film star to be honored with a wax likeness at the Madame Tussauds museum in London, was named Personality of the Year.

The 60-year-old Bachan, who is IIFA's patron, said he was surprised by the award and paid tribute to his country's "new breed of directors who are trying to give a new face to Indian cinema."

Director Mira Nair, whose "Monsoon Wedding" took home the Golden Lion at the Venice film festival last year, was presented a special award for outstanding Indian contribution to international cinema.

But she was absent and her mother accepted the award on her behalf, telling the audience she was the "producer of the director."

Veteran actress Sadhna and "king-of-romantic" movies, producer Yash Chopra, were also honored with special awards for their invaluable contribution to



Indian dance choreographer Shaimak Dawar (R) dances at the awards ceremony

Indian cinema.

Three rising stars -- actor Arjun Rampal, model-turned-actress Bipasha Basu and Gracy Singh -- were voted Best New Faces of the Year.

The three-hour extravaganza, held at Malaysia's casino resort of Genting Highlands, saw Miss

Universe 1994-turned-actress Sushmita Sen performing a Nicole Kidman routine from Oscar-winning "Moulin Rouge."

Bollywood hunk Salman Khan stirred admiration from the crowd with his new bald hairdo and provided some comic relief when he let Australian four-member girl band Bardot rub his shaven head, saying: "Only the Aussies can do this."

Salman's antic also halted the event briefly when he hugged another bald actor Feroz Khan on his way down from the stage, leaving the 4,000-odd crowd in stitches.

The event was broadcast live to more than 20 million viewers in some 80 countries.

India annually produces about 800 films -- more than Hollywood -- and has established markets among large South Asian communities in the United States and Europe, with demand for mainstream Hindi films growing in Asia.

But Bollywood quantity is no guarantee of quality. There were only a handful of Indian megahits last year and around 100 flops.

Fashion

Vogue in Baishakh

Three-day beauty and fashion show starts in the city

CULTURE DESK

BAISHAKHI Saaj and Fashion show, a combined event of beauty tips' demonstration and fashion started at the organisation of Arial (Wahid Academy) in Dhanmondi in the city from yesterday evening.

Reputed designer Yasmin Mulk is displaying a wide range dresses for men and women. The apparel items include traditional jamdani sari, punjabi and Salwar kameez for girls and



Yasmin Mulk women of all ages.

The exhibition that includes demonstration of monsoon beauty tips from Sanjida Ahmed Soma is the maiden exhibition of hers and the second exhibition of Yasmin.

The first fashion exhibition of Yasmin Mulk was held earlier at Designers' Den in Gulshan. She took part in the annual Diwali festival at New Delhi in 2000 and received immense appreciation and compliments on her designed wears from the local visitors of India.

The exhibition at Arial ends tomorrow.



Indian superstar Amitabh Bachchan (C) performs at the IIFA awards ceremony



PHOTOS: AFP

A.R. Rehman speaks after receiving the award for Best Music Direction