

40 performers from India bring a riot of colours for Torontonians

STAFF REPORTER
Toronto

40 performers from the Film City of Mumbai are landing in Toronto from November 4 to 14, 2010 bringing with them thousands of costumes and pieces of jewellery.

"With 3,800 lavish costumes and 2,000 pieces of jewellery worth in excess of one million dollars from the Film City of Mumbai, The Merchants of Bollywood showcases all the glitz, glamour, song, dance and romance that define Bollywood," says a press release issued on the occasion.

A theatrical dance spectacular, The Merchants of Bollywood charts the history of the world's largest and most prolific film industry, and a dynasty of stars that have lit its way over generations. The production promises to be a touching tribute to the Bollywood greats of yesterday and the box-office hits of today, notably Slumdog Millionaire.

"Such a lot of enthusiasm, such energy!" says leading actor Amitabh Bachchan. "I'm sure it's going to be huge."

Inspired by the story of the Merchant family, prominent players in the Hindi film industry since the late 1920s, the production features choreography by multi-award winning Vaibhavi Merchant, granddaughter of Hiralal

Merchant, one of the most influential choreographers in Bollywood history. The music is written and arranged by Salim and Sulaiman Merchant who are known to have written music for the films Naaach and Dhoom, which sold over 500 million tickets worldwide.

Produced by Mark & Tony Brady, the elaborate production captures the essence of India, its rich and diverse culture, and its people in a world of technicolour brilliance. This two-week engagement at The Sony Centre for the Performing Arts kicks-off the North American tour of The Merchants of Bollywood which first premiered in 2005 and has since toured to more than 20 countries in Europe and Australia.

"The show comes finally to Toronto after more than 850 performances seen by over 2 million people. Bangles and beads, swirling colours in costumes and sets, this Show will excite the senses in this lavish new production that is bigger, bolder and brighter."

The production has showcased more than 850 performances in cities as diverse as London, Paris, Rome, Milan, Barcelona, Vienna, Berlin, Munich and Zurich.

"Their energy is electrifying, their movements suffused with a rush of joy and yet ruthlessly precise and the frenetic flow of onstage activity is almost non-stop. It's a high octane pleasure!" according to The Times of London

Canadian documentary explores the Wives Colony in Mississauga

RENU MEHTA
Toronto

Begumpura is a wives colony set in Mississauga, a name given to a building that houses South Asian families who have settled in Canada upon arrival from the Middle East. Over the years, thousands of families have immigrated to Canada with wives and children staying back in Canada while husbands return to Dubai, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain and other parts of the Middle East to continue their jobs. For years, families endure a singular existence living apart for years, perhaps meeting up for a few weeks once or twice a year, many making frequent trips to be together according to their individual circumstance.

While the children adjust to the new system and their new schools, it is the wives who are most affected. Now a documentary called Begumpura: The Wives Colony examines the concept of fragmented families as one of the major challenges of globalization and immigration. The documentary explores the social and psychological implications experienced by a group of South Asian immigrant wives in Mississauga, living alone with their children, while their husbands return to the Gulf for job opportunities. Learning to cope, these women have formed a unique social network, known as 'Begumpura' or The Wives Colony where they are able to offer aid and support to one another.

One such woman is documentary maker Rashmi Lamba a creative and versatile media professional with over 20 years of experience in all aspects of film and television production. Her portfolio includes documentaries, infotainment series, news coverage, commercials, public service and corporate films. Being part of the 'Begumpura, Lamba has been living alone raising her daughter as a single parent in Mississauga while her husband works in the Gulf.

"It is a lonely existence when you have

to live alone without your spouse and it is these moments that I have captured and brought to light," said Lamba.

The documentary focuses on four women, struggling and succeeding in different ways. Each woman reveals the negative implications of their split families, including the challenges of single parenting, changes in marital relationships, bureaucracy and culture. The women also share the positive outcomes, such as newfound independence and heightened feelings of self-worth. All four women make different decisions and come to different conclusions based on their own unique experiences.

According to Lamba, even the husbands lead a lonely life back in the Gulf.

"Socializing without the wife becomes less and life becomes lonely. Husbands also have to learn to do a multitude of things that they have never done before like housework and cooking, etc," she says.

The documentary will be broadcast on OMNI television in October to English and Hindi speaking audiences;

"Begumpura captures the unique networks, bonds and camaraderie demonstrated by these women, not only supporting each other emotionally and physically but helping one another to grow in their current surroundings," commented Madeline Ziniak, National vice president, OMNI Television.

BROADCAST TIMES

Begumpura:

The Wives Colony for English Language Audiences :
Sunday, October 17 at 7pm ET OMNI 2 in Ontario
Sunday, October 10 at 11 pm MT OMNI Alberta
Sunday, October 10 at 9 pm PT OMNI B.C.

Begumpura:

The Wives Colony Hindi Language Audiences:
Sunday, October 10 at 7pm ET OMNI 2 in Ontario
Wednesday, October 13 at 2pm MT OMNI Alberta
Wednesday, October 13 at 9 am PT OMNI B.C.

Canadian Government focuses on Small Business Growth

STAFF REPORTER

Ottawa

Canada has announced the launch of a private sector committee to encourage the growth of small business. Making the announcement on September 30, Rob Moore, Minister of State for Small Business and Tourism said that this new committee will provide advice to the Government of Canada on a wide range of issues of importance to small and medium-sized businesses, such as reducing red tape and improving access to federal programs and information.

"Small businesses are the engines of growth of our economy," said Minister Moore. "That is why our government is committed to working with the private sector to implement meaningful change for small businesses. Our goal is to continue to support small businesses as they create jobs in our communities and lead our country into recovery."

The Advisory Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship (ACSBE) will be a private sector committee mandated to advise the government on a wide range of issues of importance to small and medium-sized businesses, such as reducing paperwork burden and improving business access to federal programs and information. Iain Klugman, President and CEO of Communitech, a technology

association in Waterloo Region, has been selected as Chair of the Committee, selected for this role because of his extensive

experience in the public and private sectors, strong leadership skills and ongoing commitment to supporting entrepreneurship.

"I am honoured to have been chosen as Chair of the Advisory Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship," said Klugman. "This presents an exciting opportunity for small businesses to provide advice to the government on issues of greatest importance to them."

Other members include David Aisenstat (Keg Restaurants Ltd.), Harry Chemko (Elastic Path Software Inc.), Charles Desjardins (Absolunet), Linda Ford (Access Career Solutions Inc.), Sophie Forest (Brightspark), Mike Howes (DKC Sparklean), Kerry McLellan (Kinek Technologies Inc.), Corinne Pohlmann (Canadian Federation of Independent Business) and John Wall (R.J. Moving and Storage Ltd.).

The new committee will build on the work of the former Advisory Committee on Paperwork Burden Reduction, a public-private sector working group whose advice was instrumental in helping the Government of Canada achieve its goal of reducing the paperwork burden on small businesses by 20 percent.

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