

# Entertainment

## India Night '94: Aren't You Sari You Missed It?



A model is dressed in traditional wedding garb

(P. DuChemin Photo)

by Shantell Powell

If you weren't at India Night last Friday, you missed out on a lot of interesting entertainment. You missed out on the colourful clothing exhibits, the descriptive traditional dances, and the rhythmic and hypnotic sounds of East Indian music. You missed out on the delicious spicy food that would have imprisoned you in your bathroom for hours had you

eaten it. Yes folks, a mean case of Gandhi's Revenge (close cousin to the dreaded Montezuma's Revenge) was experienced by many people who attended India Night.

On a happier note, I do believe that the four hundred plus people who attended India Night gained a great appreciation for the richness and diversity of the East Indian culture. The opening

address by Mrs. Kay Nandlall talked about many different elements of the culture. Did you know, for example, that about one-fifth of all the people in the world live in or near India? Did you know that India has 1650 mother tongues and fourteen official languages? Nandlall stressed her inability to generalize all of the elements of India due to its immense cultural diversity.

This diversity was evidenced by the performances, the display tables, and by the food. Now, don't get me wrong—the food did taste terrific, even if some people suffered after. In addition to chicken curry, there was a delicious smorgasbord of chapathies, samosas, and milk burfi. But there are so many other things to talk about besides the food! Ten different tradi-

tional instruments were displayed on the music table: tabla, ghungaroo, tanpura, dholak, sitar, flute, chiplya, manjira, bulbul tarang, and the harmonium. The music played during the meal was an interesting combination of these instruments as well as ululating vocalists and untraditional drum machines and synthesizers. The clothing display table held some incredibly intricate cos-

umes, such as the phiran, lehnga-chali, sari, and dhoti. Some of these costumes take months to create, for they are covered with detailed embroidery and glass-work.

I do believe that the first half of the evening flowed the smoothest. Preeti Ramprasad and Maneesh began the night coolly and calmly, but by the time of the intermission, their calmness was beginning to fade. The heat was probably getting to them. When 420 people are confined to one room, the climate tends to get a bit tropical. The first act of the night was definitely my favourite. Anaya Gujar gave an invocation dance: a series of three dances honouring the gods. Gujar's movements on the stage were fluid, elegant, and very disciplined, showing a preoccupation with the human form with asymmetry. I was filled with vibrant green envy for her grace. The next act was a folk dance performed by Nazerene, Revathi, Jessica, Poorang, Prasad, and Vijay. This was a celebration dance about love and romance in which a man who tries to woo a fickle woman is continuously rejected until the end. This was well-choreographed, and the humour was well-received by the audience. Next up was the Indra Sabha dance by Shalini. This dance is normally performed in courtyards in front of the king of gods. It is a merge between traditional Indian dance and such modern styles as ballet. Shalini moved slowly and fluidly with intricate hand gestures.

A mock marriage was next performed. We were informed that wed-

dings need three rings: "the engagement ring, wedding ring, and suffering." The peacock dance later performed by Rashmi, Hansa, and Monika D., featured more visual story-telling. The last act before the intermission was a comedy dance performed by Akshay, Ilango, and Shrinidhi. Dressed in out-dated plaid pants and gaudy print shirts with up-turned collars, they disco-danced and break-danced to "Stayin' Alive" by the BeeGees. Yup, it was bad. Yup, it was hilarious.

After the intermission came a fashion show and sari demonstration. I couldn't hear many of the clothing descriptions over the music blaring from the speakers, but I could see the beauty of the many different costumes modelled. Before the Indian national anthem, "Jana Gana Mana," we watched three more dances: an Apache Indian song, "Arranged Marriage," by Bhaskar and Ilango, a folk dance parodying Hindu movies performed by Nazerene, Revathi, Prasad, and Vijay (great choreography here!), and "Jump around!" as performed by the energetic Mili and Sascha. One of most hilarious moments of the night was when Mili and Sascha gave the deejays a really dirty look for playing the wrong part of the song at the beginning of their act. A social followed the national anthem, but I didn't stick around. I was getting too hot, and I needed the privacy of my own toilet.

You may ask if I would recommend going to India Night. Well yes. Just be careful what you eat.

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## OCSA Welcomes the Year of the Dog

by Jethelo E. Cabilete

New Years celebrations happened twice this year, thanks to the Chinese New Year celebration that took place on Saturday, February 12. The Chinese New Year doesn't follow the Western Calendar cycle; instead following the arrival of the new moon of the Winter Solstice every year. From February 10, 1994 to January 30, 1995, people everywhere will be ruled by the sign of the Dog: more specifically the Wood Dog (or Gou in Chinese). According to Chinese Astrological myth, Buddha summoned all the animals of the world to him. Those who appeared would be rewarded by having a year named after them, under which their influence would guide the fates of humanity. In the order of their appearance, the animals that answered the summons are: Rat (Shu), Ox (Niu), Tiger (Hu), Rabbit (Tu), Dragon (Lung), Snake (She), Horse (Ma), Sheep (Yang), Monkey (Hou), Rooster (Ji), Dog (Gou) and Boar (Zhu). In addition, five elements (Metal, Water, Wood, Fire, Earth) join the animals in determining the type of year one will have. This year, most people are in for a good year, however not without some problems in the realm of finances or relationships. People born under the sign of the Dog (1910, 1922, 1934, 1946, 1958, 1970, 1982) are steadfast loyal individuals who pride themselves on their honesty and straightforward-

ness. Dog people tend to be idealistic and responsible, championing just causes and more often than not, emerging victorious. On the flip side, Dog people tend to categorize others into "friend or foe." They can also be rather pessimistic and highly critical and emotionally cold to those whom he/she dislikes. Otherwise, Dogs are stable and tough individuals who stand by their friends through thick or thin.

Traditionally, the Chinese New Year was held by families and close friends to celebrate the renewal of a new year. The Overseas Chinese Students Association, in conjunction with the Chinese Cultural Association of New Brunswick (CCANB) and Malaysian Students Society (MSS), presented this year's celebration to commemorate a long standing tradition. Barring some technical difficulties, the night was enjoyable and pleasant. The evening started at 7:45, due to the influx of many people for this special night of dinner, show and dance. Pre-show music played throughout the evening, with festive renditions of Chinese music videos accompanying it. The general atmosphere was happy and friendly, with children playing and adults talking about anything and everything. M.C.'s Brian Ho and Penelope Ng opened the evening with greetings and introductions of the guest speakers, OCSA President Stanley Chow,

UNB President Robin Armstrong and OCSA Advisor Anthony C. Lister. After the opening greetings, the food line commenced and let me tell you, the food was delicious. Curried beef, stir fried vegetables, Soya chicken and fortune cookies were just some of the delicacies that were served to the crowd that went up for seconds and thirds. The show began with the traditional Lion Dance performed by the MSS that marks the occasion as being a festival. In Chinese

folklore, dancing lions are the sign of good fortune and are invoked on the New Year to spread the fortune around. The Festival Lantern piece, performed by the CCANB children, was a lovely dance reminiscent of lantern festival celebrations. An instrumental performance was given next, by Sunny Leung on the Er-hu (a string instrument) and George Tai on flute. The music was a haunting and lifting piece, that sadly, ended too soon and was the only one played. A lucky draw provided an in-

termission between the first half of the show, and many people won prizes. The second half of the evening's show contained a diabolo spinning exhibition, by Allan Ng and Karen Wu. The diabolo is a device consisting of a spool-like object spun between two rods connected by a string. It takes skill to do the tricks on this thing, and the performers certainly knew their stuff. The end to a wonderful event was provided by the CCANB children in the form of a children's Lion Dance. This dance dif-

fers from the traditional adult version, in that this one was more playful and acrobatic. The children were positively enjoying themselves, and they received well-deserved applause that ended the evening's show. A final draw was held, and then a karaoke held for those who stayed the remaining evening. In general it was an enjoyable and good night. For those who missed this year's Chinese New Year celebration, there's always next year. Have a fun weekend!



Six dancers from the Chinese New Year Celebration at the SUB (P. DuChemin photo)