

BOLLYWOOD MUSIC GOES GLOBAL FOR CHARITY

The Qantas-SigaramTV A. R. Rahman Tour of Australia, 2005

A. R. RAHMAN, the best known music composer of India, who has popularized Bollywood music all over the world, is bringing a troupe of over 50 artistes to Australia to perform to in these parts for the first time. The tour is organized by CHARINDAA, a non profit organisation with the sole aim of raising money for charitable causes through promotion of Indian arts in Australia. The funds raised from the tour will be donated to UDAYAN, a Child Leprosy Centre in Kolkata, India. Steve Waugh, former captain of the Australian Cricket Team is the Chief Patron of UDAYAN and is a keen supporter of the A. R. Rahman tour. With his commitment to support charities like 'Save the Children' Project and his role as the United Nations Ambassador in the fight against tuberculosis, A. R. Rahman is the 'ideal artistic choice' for CHARINDAA's charitable maiden venture.

With his unique musical idiom, Rahman has changed the face of Indian film music, giving it a fresh dimension. He has had a major influence on a whole new generation of music composers in India. Until recently, Bollywood's musical styles and talents were considered too esoteric and foreign to become acceptable to audiences in non-South-Asian-countries. Rahman has been able to transcend the barriers of language, religion and culture by his gift for mixing and matching different musical traditions such as South Asian, Sufi, Irish folk, rock, reggae and ragtime. His innovative blend of the classical and modern musical forms has resulted in compositions with "searingly beautiful melodies". These compositions have a universal appeal which resonates with people from all parts of the world and all strata of society. Through creating "music without borders", Rahman, the "alchemist with music", has truly globalised Indian music, as it has never been done before. People outside India have pleasantly discovered that beneath the tabla and synthesized sitar, his music is not any more just sub-continental.

Andrew Lloyd Webber, the famous composer of many blockbuster musicals, has complimented Rahman as a "melodic genius", who has created "fresh, unconventional and vibrant music" for Webber's hit musical "Bombay Dreams" staged in West End, London and Broadway, New York. Rahman has also composed the martial score for Chinese director He Ping's Warriors of Heaven and Earth. He has conducted the world-famous City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO) to critical acclaim. Rahman has also worked on many original songs for the stage musical version of the Tolkien epic, Lord of the Rings. For this engagement, Rahman collaborated with Finnish folk group Varttina on some "14-15 songs", mostly in English and in the Elvish language Tolkien devised for the epic. With his confidence to experiment in and with new forms of music with traditions foreign to him, Rahman has produced remarkably pleasing music which is a testament to his innate musical genius.

Entering the Bollywood film world at a very young age after a stint with advertising jingles, Rahman has matured into an internationally renowned composer, a movie song writer, a musician and a music director. Combining melody and rhythm adroitly, his scintillating compositions and symphonic orchestrations have a unity and balance with a sense of wholeness rarely found in other works. Unassuming and down to earth by nature, Rahman's passion for music, while performing always brings great excitement and high energy to his concerts and audiences. In a sense, Rahman personifies the effervescent confidence of the coming of age of India and its music, in the global arena.

The musical extravaganza at the Rod Laver Arena and the Sydney SuperDome promises to be the most spectacular Bollywood show staged in Australia so far. The concert will

be a kaleidoscopic pastiche of Rahman's Bollywood scores from popular movies and pieces from his large repertoire of compositions including "The Bombay Dream".

Australians have this great opportunity to enjoy the experience of "the drama, the lights, the pyrotechnics, the dancing and the music that are all an integral part of any A.R. Rahman show". For the first time, A. R. Rahman will present the show as a 3D experience. He will perform live on stage with the other artistes and the audience will be able to see and listen to the concert like any other live concert. However, "by wearing the 3D glasses they will be able to view the screen projections that will make the artists appear as if they are coming towards the audience."

Australians who are innately generous in contributing to charities will find it gratifying that the proceeds of the concert will go a long way in giving a helping hand to improve the lives of children with leprosy.

For more information,
visit www.charindaa.org.

HUMOUR

Problem Father

"You looked troubled," I told my friend, "what's your problem?"

He replied, "I'm going to be a father."

"But that's wonderful," I said.

"What's wonderful? My wife doesn't know about it yet."

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