

KULCHA

MULTICULTURAL ARTS OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA INC

06



MEMBERS NEWSLETTER **SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER**

KULCHA: Connecting you to the world

Tout autour de la sphère!



Above: A legend of French guitar comes to Perth for one night only. Don't miss Rafael Andia's special performance at KULCHA on Friday 1 September, 8pm. Below: Premala Sangaranda will perform traditional Indian dance at the Balingup World Music Concert on Saturday 16 September, 7.30 – 11pm.



There has been a lot of activity in the KULCHA office over the past few months.

The Fremantle venue has had an equipment overhaul, with a new mixing desk and PA system being installed. The sound quality is fantastic and I'm sure you'll notice the difference next time you come to a KULCHA performance. This investment supports KULCHA's commitment to excellence in showcasing multicultural arts in Western Australia.

At the KULCHA venue during September and October you can still catch the best local and interstate talent, alongside high quality international performances – French guitar legend Rafael Andia, Scandinavian trio Faerd, Japanese koto player Nozomi Miyanishi, UK folk songsmith Wob, and the dynamic Rhythms of Sri Lanka. This exciting residency features master drummer, dancer and choreographer, Karunaratna Bandara from Sri Lanka in performances, workshops and master classes, and it is sure to be one of the highlights of the year.

KULCHA is also proud to present a world music concert in Balingup on Saturday 16 September, featuring the Joys of the Women, Balvinder Singh, Vick Ramakrishnan, Premala Sangaranda, AKWAABA, and Pascale. This event is a great example of what can be achieved through collaborative projects in regional areas, and we look forward to working with Ronald Ingram and the Big-Rat-Arts committee to present other events in the region.

Finally, I hope you can join us for Refugee Week in October. KULCHA will join forces with Project Safecom to present a series of events celebrating the contribution that refugees have made to Australian society. Check our website for full details.

Hope to see you at a KULCHA event in Spring!

Loretta Martella
GENERAL MANAGER

KULCHA's mission is to celebrate cultural diversity through the enjoyment and development of multicultural arts.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is sad to see people who have contributed a great deal to the multicultural sector moving on citing burnout as a major factor. So it is with a great deal of regret that we farewell Dr Leela De Mel as she moves on to other challenges. Leela was a good friend of KULCHA as she was with a number of other organisations in the sector. There were many times when we did not see eye to eye and neither Leela nor I were reticent in telling each other this. However, it is fair to say that these moments actually cemented our professional relationship.

This change comes at a testing time for multiculturalism. International events have conspired to bring into focus intellectual debate about the concept of multiculturalism. Add to that the fact that over the last twelve months or so we have seen seven Ministers in the State government. We have a new Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests, Tony McRae, who no doubt, will take some time to settle into the job and bring his influence to bear on the position.

Leela was the Executive Director at the Office of Multicultural Interests for a period that saw a number of significant events globally. So her commitment to achieving changes to ensure community harmony was severely tested. On each occasion, that commitment did reign triumphant. We take the opportunity to wish Dr De Mel the best of good fortune in the future and trust that we will meet in some capacity or the other in the future.

Suresh Rajan
PRESIDENT
KULCHA Board of Management



Percussionist Kanchana Karunaratna, *Colours of Skin*

ARTIST PROFILE

■ Kanchana Karunaratna



From one of his earliest memories of wanting to play the drums hanging in a Colombo market, Sri-Lankan born Kanchana Karunaratna has always felt drawn to percussion. At 9 years of age, when he found out his family were migrating to Australia, he and his brother decided to learn Sri Lankan drumming so that they could bring something to share with their new community in Australia.

“My brother and I learnt to play Kandyan and ceremonial drums with master drummer Karunaratna Bandara. We learned intensively for one year before we left for Australia. Once we arrived in Perth, we realised we were the only people from the Sri Lankan community who could play the traditional instruments so we soon ended up performing for the community. Our first show was at the North Perth Town Hall when I was 10 years old – I still have the video!”

In the years that followed Kanchana refined his drumming skills and began to incorporate more contemporary styles of percussion into his work.

“I’m inspired by the dynamics of percussion from India, Sri Lanka and Africa when given a contemporary interpretation. I was taught traditionally, but as I have not lived in Sri Lanka for many years, I interpret it in my present day cultural context. The possibilities are endless – it’s something I find very exciting.”

A civil engineer at the Water Corporation, there is a big contrast between Kanchana’s two professions – this is something he is hoping to use to his advantage with future plans to get back to Sri Lanka through work in water sanitation, giving him an opportunity to further his skills in Sri Lankan percussion.

Currently, Kanchana has several projects on the go including **Colours of Skin** with Arun Satgunasingam and tabla virtuoso Vick Ramakrishnan, and collaborative work with blues and roots brothers, Jim and Belly McClelland from Blue Shaddy. His focus at the moment however is coordinating **Rhythms of Sri Lanka** – an exhibition of traditional Sri Lankan drumming, dance and song by Sri Lankan artist on tour in October and November.

“Rhythms of Sri Lanka will be very special for me as I will be performing alongside my teacher. At 10 years of age I didn’t understand what Bandara meant when he used to ask me to recite the rhythms with my voice – I thought he was strange! Today that is fully realised and the opportunity to perform alongside the person who taught me all the years later is amazing. It gives me a sense of going home.”

Don’t miss **Rhythms of Sri Lanka** at KULCHA – see back page for details.



HARMONY EXHIBITION

Harmony, an exhibition of Indian Tribal art, will be on display at KULCHA in August and September. The exhibition captures the daily life of the Warli people – an agricultural tribe living on the border of Gujarat and Maharashtra in India.

The artist, Anahita Irani, migrated to Australia from India three and half years ago. Growing up on her Grandmother's farm, Anahita was surrounded by the Warli people and felt inspired to share their story with an Australian audience.

"These agriculturalists kept a very simple life, following the cycles of ritual and harvest," said Anahita. "After doing a workshop on Warli art in India, I was captured by the strong connection between fertility and their art. Only married women with children are allowed to paint these pictures – usually on the interiors of the huts. It is reserved for special occasions, especially marriages, and often centres on making offerings to the Goddess, Phalghat."

This is Anahita's third exhibition in Western Australia and she is delighted to have the opportunity to share *Harmony* with the Fremantle community.

"Few Australians would know about the Warli people," said Anahita. "I hope people come along to the exhibition and take from it some knowledge about their daily way of life."

Harmony is on display at KULCHA until 30 September. Weekdays 10am – 4pm FREE Entry

Harmony



Artist Anahita Irani with her work *Harmony* – an exhibition of Indian Tribal Art.



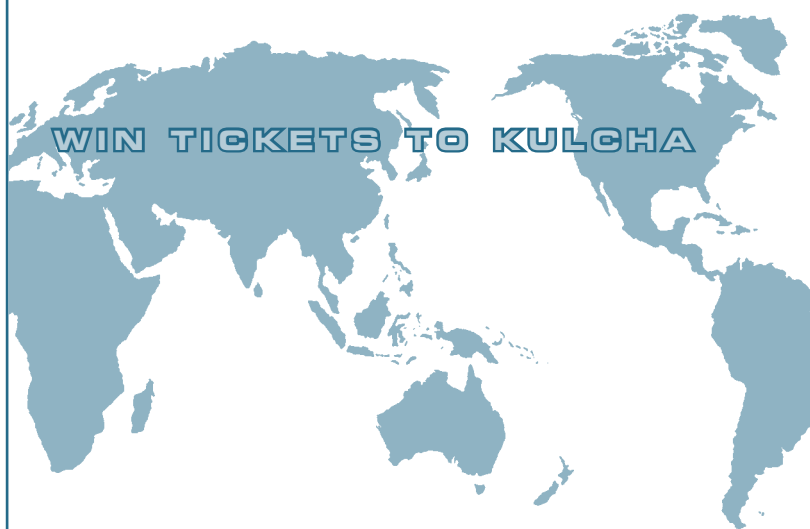
ACTORS, STAND UP!

Barking Gecko held a two-hour workshop at KULCHA in the July school holidays to give young people an opportunity to develop skills in transferring ideas and thoughts through tableau.

The workshop was designed to promote a dialogue on the issues of bullying, racism and multiculturalism and explore new possibilities for acceptance, safety and harmony among young people.

"It was awesome to see the freedom and openness that comes from kids when they explore how racism looks, feels and sounds," says Barking Gecko Project Officer, Fish Gill. "It's fun, energising work that reaches to a much deeper level to develop empathy and understanding."

A big thank you to all the children who participated in the workshop! We look forward to collaborating with Barking Gecko again.



CELEBRATE THE WORLD

Joie de vivre ... La dolce vita ... Lust au lebau ... Know how to express *Celebrate the World* in a language other than English? (Literally or conceptually). Then you could be in the draw to win a double pass to the performance of your choice. Simply email marketing@kulcha.com.au with the phrase and the language it is derived from for your chance to win one of six double passes. Winners will be posted in the next KULCHA newsletter. Good luck!



RHYTHMS OF SRI LANKA

Come and feel the rhythms of Sri Lanka with this energetic display of ritual drumming and dance in October and November at KULCHA.

This collaborative project between Colombo and Perth based Sri Lankan artists, presents a rare opportunity to experience Sri Lankan percussion and dance in its traditional style. From birth and death drumming rituals, to duelling displays and elaborate costumes *Rhythms of Sri Lanka* is certain to be one of the highlights of KULCHA's 2006 calendar.

Coordinated by local percussionist Kanchana Karunaratna, and led by Colombo-based master drummer and acclaimed dancer and choreographer, Karunaratna Bandara, Rhythms of Sri Lanka will also conduct dance and drumming workshops and a month-one master class alongside this performance residency. For more information check out www.myspace.com/islandrhythms or email drumkanchana@yahoo.com.au

Performance dates:

Friday 13 October, 8pm
Sunday 22 October, 8pm
Sunday 5 November, 8pm

Tickets: \$20 Door \$18 Presale \$16 KULCHA Members

Workshop dates:

Saturday 14 October, 1 – 2pm
Saturday 21 October, 1 – 2pm
Sunday 5 November, 1 – 2pm

Tickets: \$15



WELCOME TO THE BLUEGRASS CLUB!

The Bluegrass Club has been a big hit at KULCHA, with over 40 people coming to the last session. For something that started in a small way with little fuss, event organiser Dave Cornwell has been thrilled with the success of the club. He feels this is a direct reflection of how few opportunities exist for musicians to get together and improve their skills.

"We have always been aware that there are hundreds of instrument owners, alone at home. Without contact or shared knowledge there can be little progress," said Dave. "Our aim is to help all who love this type of music improve their playing, help them meet other players and also introduce the Bluegrass sound to a wider audience".

In a few short months the club has seen a surge in membership with people travelling great distances for their monthly opportunity to be a part of this increasingly popular get-together.

"The more the merrier," said Dave. "We don't care what level of player comes along, they will all get the help they need and come back wanting more".

Bluegrass Dates for the remainder of the year are as follows:

Tuesday 5 September, 8pm
Tuesday 10 October, 8pm
Tuesday 14 November, 8pm
Tuesday 12 December, 8pm

\$30 for 6 months membership or \$8 per event
Email: alwa@westnet.com.au



Mirrabooka djembe drum-making workshops with artist Paul Osei.

KULCHA CONNECTIONS CULTURAL CELEBRATIONS

Djembe drum making, digital storytelling, cultural costume design ... The past eight months have seen several projects implemented in Mirrabooka as part of KULCHA's Community Cultural Development program.

Western Australian artists Lorelle Sinclair, Paul Osei, Francis Italiano and Tamara Desiatov have carried out artistic skills exchanges and workshops in the Mirrabooka community as part of collaborative projects with the Department of Community Development, Anglicare, The Smith Family and the City of Stirling.

To celebrate the cultural and artistic outcomes of these projects, a community showcase will take place in Mirrabooka this September.

KULCHA would like to thank all participants, artists and project partners for the amazing work everyone has produced over the past few months. The enthusiasm from the local community has been inspiring – our Multicultural Arts Officer will certainly be kept busy with all the requests we've had for more projects!

Visit our website for details on the showcase event www.kulcha.com.au