



Media only: Amanda Williams (202) 633-0271
Elizabeth Bridgforth (202) 633-0521

Dec. 8, 2008

Media Web site: www.asia.si.edu/press

Frugal? Explore the Freer and Sackler Galleries' Free Winter Programs

Do not let the chill in the economic climate keep you from experiencing Washington D.C.'s best entertainment. The Freer and Sackler galleries offer an assortment of cultural programs that will not cost you a penny but will enhance your repertoire of performances, films and art. Highlights this winter include the return of the Musicians from Marlboro, the Freer's 13th annual Iranian Film Festival and ImaginAsia's family programs: "Beyond Space and Time," "Where the Desert Blooms" and "Down by the Sea Shore."

On Dec. 10, young participants in Vermont's annual Marlboro Music Festival return to the galleries for their first performance of the season. They will perform Mozart's String Quintet, K. 614; Mendelssohn's Octet, op. 20; and Janacek's String Quartet no. 1.

As part of the Iranian Film Festival, the Freer Gallery of Art presents Iranian films each weekend from Jan. 9, 2009, to Feb. 22, 2009. The festival commences Jan. 9, with a charming comedy by Ali Atshnani, "Banana Skin," which takes an unusual approach to death and the afterlife.

This winter, ImaginAsia offers children ages 8-14 and their accompanying adult an opportunity to explore masterpieces in the exhibitions, "Garden and Cosmos: The Royal Paintings of Jodhpur" (on view through Jan. 4, 2009) and "Seascapes." (on view through Jan. 25, 2009). After learning about the exhibitions, children can create their own palace garden and a seascape to take home.

So, bundle up and enjoy some free winter fun at the Freer and Sackler galleries!

The Freer Gallery of Art, located at 12th Street and Independence Avenue S.W., and the adjacent Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, located at 1050 Independence Avenue S.W., are on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. Hours are 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. every day, except Dec. 25, and admission is free. The galleries are located near the Smithsonian Metrorail station on the Blue and Orange lines. For more information about the Freer and Sackler galleries and their exhibitions, programs and other

events, the public is welcome to visit www.asia.si.edu. For general Smithsonian information, the public may call (202) 633-1000.

December 2008

Films

Roads to the Interior: Another Side of Japanese Cinema (Part 2)

This collection of recent films represents the flip side of Japan's high-tech, anime-inflected pop culture image. Just as famed Japanese poet Matsuo Bashō's travelogue "Narrow Road to the Interior" documents both a physical and an introspective journey, the characters in these films often find themselves on trips that are actually voyages of self-discovery. The series began in November. Presentation of "Roads to the Interior: Another Side of Japanese Cinema" at the Freer is generously supported by Toshiba International Foundation. All films are in Japanese with English subtitles.

Closing Weekend of "Roads to the Interior: Another Side of Japanese Cinema"

In person: Masahiro Kobayashi

Folksinger-turned-screenwriter-turned-filmmaker Masahiro Kobayashi is a Renaissance man whose works have won numerous awards at international film festivals. On December 12-14, he comes to the Meyer Auditorium to present three of his films.

"Bootleg Film"

Friday, Dec. 12; 7 p.m., Meyer Auditorium*

In person: Masahiro Kobayashi, director

Kobayashi's darkly comic, low-budget, improvisatory road film is about a gangster and a cop—who just happen to be best friends—on their way to the funeral of a woman who was married to one and the lover of the other. If that doesn't complicate their relationship enough, the body that turns up in the trunk of their car certainly does.

"Bashing"

Saturday, Dec. 13; 2 p.m., Meyer Auditorium*

In person: Masahiro Kobayashi, director

Yuko, the heroine of "Bashing," is a former volunteer aid worker who, after being taken hostage in Iraq, returns home to face ostracism and shame. Inspired by true events, Kobayashi's intimate drama is a searing critique of cruelty and bullying in a small Japanese town.

"The Rebirth"

Sunday, Dec. 14; 2 p.m., Meyer Auditorium*

In person: Masahiro Kobayashi, director

Kobayashi takes a starring role in this portrait of two characters—one the father of a murder victim, the other the mother of the killer—who are forced by circumstance to coexist in a small town. Daringly minimalist in style, "The Rebirth" has little dialogue and is structured according to the rhythms of its characters' daily lives, which make its emotional epiphanies seem all the more powerful.

Performances and Concerts

Five Directions: A Korean and American Avant-Garde Excursion

Tuesday, Dec. 9; 7:30 p.m., Meyer Auditorium*

Six boundary-breaking musicians from Korea and the United States join forces for this experimental work evoking the origins of the universe, the cosmic balance of ying and yang, and the five elements of creation.

Three leading lights of the New York improv scene—Ned Rothenberg (clarinets and *shakuhachi*), Erik Friedlander (cello), and Satoshi Takeishi (percussion)—are joined by Korean musicians Yoon Jeong Heo (*geomungo*/zither),

Kwon Soon kang (vocal), and Young Chi Min (*daegum*/flute and *chang-go*/drum) for this unique collaboration that blends free jazz and traditional Korean music. The concert is copresented with the Asia Society Washington Office, with support from the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism of South Korea.

Meyer Concert Series

This series is presented in memory of Bill and Mary Meyer and is supported by Elizabeth E. Meyer, Melissa and E. Bradley Meyer, the New York Community Trust—The Island Fund, Victor and Takako Hauge, and numerous additional donors.

Musicians from Marlboro I

Wednesday, Dec. 10; 7:30 p.m., Meyer Auditorium*

Pre-concert gallery tour, “Surface Beauty: American Art and Freer’s Aesthetic Vision,” 6:45 p.m.

Young participants in Vermont’s annual Marlboro Music Festival bring the excitement of the prestigious festival/gathering to the Freer with performances of Mozart’s String Quintet, K. 614; Mendelssohn’s Octet, op. 20; and Janáček’s String Quartet no. 1. Festival veteran Scott St. John, on violin and viola, is joined by emerging artists Jessica Lee, Yonah Zur, and Miho Saegusa, violin; Maiya Papach and Mark Holloway, viola; and Susan Babini and Na-Young Baeck, cello.

Tours, Talks, and Lectures

Ceramics in Mainland Southeast Asia

Collections in the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery

Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 13 and 14; 1 p.m., Sackler Sublevel 1

Join Louise Cort, curator of ceramics, in “Taking Shape: Ceramics in Southeast Asia” and learn about the museums’ first online catalogue, which centers on the Hauge Collection in the Sackler Gallery. The collection spans four thousand years and highlights ceramics made in or traded into Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Burma.

Web visitors around the world can now learn about these earthenware and stoneware objects through the triple vantage points of materials, place of production, and time. In addition to multiple color images and detailed texts, the online catalogue features a library of commissioned essays and translations, a bibliography of more than thirteen hundred citations, and an introduction to ceramic sherds housed in the Freer Gallery Study Collection. Archaeologists, curators, and collectors around the world can also add their professional comments. Go to <http://SEAsianCeramics.asia.si.edu>. The site launches Dec. 13.

ImaginAsia Family Programs

Beyond Space and Time

Saturday, Dec. 13; 2 p.m., ImaginAsia Classroom/Sackler Level 2

Discover the action-packed paintings of Indian epics and colorful visions of the universe on view in “Garden and Cosmos: The Royal Paintings of Jodhpur.” In the classroom construct a miniature diorama combining elements from these amazing paintings and your imagination.

Where the Desert Blooms

Sunday, Dec. 14; 2 p.m., ImaginAsia Classroom/Sackler Level 2

Enjoy a classroom slide show of the palace gardens at Nagaur in northern India and use an activity book to explore the exhibition “Garden and Cosmos.” Discover how artists interpreted the maharaja’s opulent gardens in their paintings, and then create your own miniature palace garden to take home.

January 2009

Films

Iranian Film Festival 2009

Part of the Freer’s 13th annual festival of Iranian films. This series is organized by Bo Smith of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, with the support of ILEX Foundation: Olga M. Davidson and Niloofar Fotouhi. This series is cosponsored by the ILEX Foundation.

“Banana Skin”

Friday and Sunday, Jan. 9 and 11; 7 and 2 p.m., Meyer Auditorium*

This engaging comedy by Ali Atshani takes a light approach to death and the afterlife. Workaholic Hamid has everything the yuppie lifestyle requires, and no time to enjoy it until a freak accident delivers him at death’s door. Welcomed by the ghosts of his just-deceased uncle and another accident victim, Hamid discovers that being footloose in the city as a prankish spirit is not such a bad deal after all. Description provided by the Gene Siskel Film Center.

“Three Women”

Friday and Sunday, Jan. 16 and 18; 2 and 7 p.m., Meyer Auditorium*

A dispute over an ancient carpet propels a grandmother, mother, and daughter into realms of mystery and mysticism in Manijeh Hekmat’s film. Mino, a museum textiles curator, makes off with the carpet, a national treasure, to save it from an unscrupulous dealer. She loses the precious antique—and her mother as well—to a mission that beckons the elderly lady from the past. Description provided by the Gene Siskel Film Center.

“Head Wind”

Friday and Sunday, Jan. 23 and 25; 2 and 7 p.m., Meyer Auditorium*

This film by Mohammad Rasoulof is a candid and searing look inside the Islamic Republic, revealing its losing battle for control over the flow of information into the country from the outside world. This remarkable film touches on one of the major post-1979 Iranian issues by examining Iran’s underground satellite, Internet and DVD culture.

ImaginAsia Family Programs

Down by the Sea Shore

Saturday, Jan. 10, 17 and 24; 2 p.m., ImaginAsia Classroom/Sackler Level 2

Sunday, Jan. 11, 18 and 25

More than a hundred years ago American artist Dwight William Tryon used pastels to capture the many moods of the sea. Today, Japanese artist Hiroshi Sugimoto takes black-and-white photographs that meld sea and sky. Discover their works in the Sackler Gallery, and then draw with pastels and charcoal in the classroom to create your own seascape to take home.

Films

Iranian Film Festival 2009

Part of the Freer's 13th annual festival of Iranian films. This series is organized by Bo Smith of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, with the support of ILEX Foundation: Olga M. Davidson and Niloofar Fotouhi. This series is cosponsored by the ILEX Foundation.

“Loose Rope”

Friday and Sunday, Feb. 6 and 8; 2 and 7 p.m., Meyer Auditorium*

Two young rural men who work at the animal market in Tehran have only 24 hours to take a large cow from downtown to the northern part of the city—or else their jobs and futures are at stake. Mehrshad Karkhani cinematically describes the contrast that exists between the south and the north of Tehran.

“Over There”

Friday and Sunday, Feb. 13 and 15; 2 and 7 p.m., Meyer Auditorium*

In this beautiful black-and-white film that explores the inner workings of a marriage, Abdolreza Kahani follows the lives of a young couple in the midst of a marital meltdown. Payman has only ten days left to return to the United States and renew his green card, but he cannot exit Iran until he legally leaves his wife with five hundred gold coins.

“Santouri: The Music Man”

Friday and Sunday, Feb. 20 and 22; 2 and 7 p.m., Meyer Auditorium*

Following a fine series of films about women, Dariush Mehrjui's latest work focuses on Ali, a popular male singer and musician. Despite his talent, Ali struggles with heroin addiction. The film flows from Ali's happier past to his troubles with the law and the emotional and physical price of his addiction.

Performances and Concerts

Iraqi Jazz Fusions: Amir ElSaffar's Two Rivers

Saturday, Feb. 7; 7:30 p.m., Meyer Auditorium*

Pre-concert gallery tour, “Arts of the Islamic World,” 6:45 p.m.

Iraqi American jazz artist Amir ElSaffar leads this cross-cultural quintet in a performance of “Two Rivers,” an original work inspired by the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, the composer's Iraqi and American heritage, and the common ground between American jazz and Iraqi classical music. ElSaffar sets the modes of Arab music to innovative grooves, free ensemble playing, and multilayered sound textures, resulting in a work that the BBC praised as “harrowing to absorb, full of as much beauty as pain.” He performs on trumpet and *santur* with Rudresh Mahanthappa, saxophone; Nasheet Waits, drums; Carlo DeRosa, bass; and Zaafer Tawil, *oud*, violin, and *dumbek*. Cosponsored with the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University

Musicians from Marlboro II

Thursday, Feb. 19; 7:30 p.m., Meyer Auditorium*

Pre-concert gallery tour, “Surface Beauty: American Art and Freer's Aesthetic Vision,” 6:45 p.m.

Young musicians from around the world who have participated in the Marlboro Music Festival join veteran Marlboro cellist Peter Stumpf in Haydn's Quartet, op. 64, no. 6; Brahms's Clarinet Quintet, op. 115; and Kodaly's Duo for Violin and Cello. Filling out the ensemble are Augustin Hadelich and Karina Canellakis, violin; Sebastian Krunnies, cello; and Romie de Guise-Langolois, clarinet. Part of the Meyer Concert Series.

Hafiz in the West: Martin Bruns, baritone; Jan Philip Schulze, piano

Wednesday, Feb. 25; 7:30 p.m., Meyer Auditorium*

Pre-concert gallery tour, "Arts of the Islamic World," 6:45 p.m.

In 1812, the translation into German of poems by the 14th-century Persian mystic Hafez sparked a wave of interest among poets and composers throughout the West, including Franz Schubert and Johannes Brahms. Martin Bruns, one of Europe's most versatile vocalists, lends his operatic baritone to songs inspired by Hafez's haunting/inspiring/stirring/intimate poetry. A winner of the New York State Metropolitan Opera Auditions, Bruns earned leading roles with the Wiesbaden, Düsseldorf and Munich opera houses and has collaborated with conductors Eric Ericson, Heinz Holliger, and Gerard Schwarz. This recital of works by Schubert, Brahms, Hugo Wolf, Adolf Jensen and Viktor Ullmann provides unique insights into the beauty of song and the influence of Hafez's Persian poetry on European composers centuries later.

ImaginAsia Family Programs

Taking Shape

Saturday, Feb. 7, 21 and 28, 2 p.m.; ImaginAsia/Sackler Level 2

Sunday, Feb. 8 and 22

Explore the exhibition, "Taking Shape: Ceramics in Southeast Asia, then create your own miniature banana leaf boat filled with tiny clay jars and travel down the rivers of Southeast Asia in search of adventure and trade.

In Any Language Love

Open House for All Ages

Saturday, Feb. 14, 12 - 4 p.m.; ImaginAsia/Sackler Level 2

Enjoy a slide show of images of love in Asian art. Learn how to create a Valentine using the collagraphic printing technique for the cover and print "love" in different Asian languages inside.

*Free tickets required for films and performances. Two tickets per person are distributed at the Meyer Auditorium one hour before the event on a first-come, first-served basis. For performances only, up to four tickets per person are available through Ticketmaster beginning at 10a.m. two Mondays before the event.

###