

November 9, 2011

Dance of the drums



SPIRIT OF KOREA Ha Yong Bu and Dulsori

Ha Yong Bu and Dulsori showcase the best of Korean culture through enchanting vocals, dynamic choreography and percussion

Date: November 16

Venue: The Music Academy

Time: 7. 30 p.m.

Energy, emotion and the sounds and movements of the primeval East lie at the heart of 'Wild Beats', by Ha Yong Bu and Dulsori. The concert showcasing Korean culture, promises to be a treat for the eyes and ears and a keepsake of the grandiosity of Korean culture.

Ha Yong Bu, recognised as a national treasure in his home country, hails from a family of Mogabi, the head of a group of entertainers whose skills have been handed down generations. Deeply influenced by his grandfather, Ha's dance techniques have, in turn, influenced renowned dancers across genres such as Pina Bausch. Unfettered and flowing, Ha's movements that speak of war and peace, harvest and hardship, and rain and sun, fuse and defuse across time and space.

Ha has collaborated with Dulsori since 2009 bringing his seamless blend of tradition and modernity to the world stage.

Dulsori, a traditional Korean arts organisation since 1984, has told stories transcending cultural barriers, through its energetic percussion and enchanting vocals. On stage it brings alive an ancient harvest ritual, celebrating the forces of Nature, through dynamic choreography and drum beats that reach back into the ancient heart of Korea.

The focus is to spread *shinmyung* — a passion and love for life — to every member of the audience.

At *The Hindu's* Friday Review November Fest, traditionalism and spectacle will merge in a repertoire that includes Pan-Gut — performers wearing headgear and ribbons play the drums while doing a dance with the ribbons, Opening and Closing Drum with magnificent sounds that awaken the globe, Sabaha — beginning with a Buddhist prayer, instrumentals, folk and modern rhythm routines.

Ha Yong Bu and Dulsori are presented by InKo Centre in association with the Korea Foundation and the Korea Arts Management Service.

Dulsori speaks about their brand of percussion and working with Ha Yong Bu.

Your band is seen as a repository of traditional Korean music. What kind of reactions do you get when you perform at home and abroad?

Our performance 'Well-Wishing Binari' is a concert presenting the unique Korean tradition of *binari*, blending traditional music with modern elements. It invites the audience to participate and fully express their energy. Regardless of cultural background or whether we perform at home or abroad, our music and passion brings us closer to the audience.

How do you arrive at a balance between Ha Yong Bu's individual performance and Dulsori's group effort?

Ha Yong Bu is not only a virtuoso dancer but Korea's national treasure. When he was five years old, he was mesmerised by his grandfather's dance performances — the dynamic rhythm of the drum, the spiritual expression of life in each motion of the shoulder and feet. Ha Yong Bu's movements portray the origin of Korean traditional dance rooted in spirituality. Dulsori has collaborated with Ha Yong Bu since 2009. Their energetic music remains the motivation for Ha Yong Bu's improvisational dance style.

There's choreography, vocals and percussion in your performances — a very visual music. How does that develop?

The unique thing about Dulsori's artistes is that all of them play more than one instrument or sing and play drums at the same time. For example, a *kayageum* (12-stringed Korean harp) player could transform into a powerful drummer and the lead singer could join the five drum dance.

Do you play other classical percussion — Afro Caribbean, Brazilian, African?

We only play music based on Korean rhythms on instruments of Korean origin. However, on world tours we usually play one local song to strike a chord with the audience.

What kind of audience are you looking for? Do you have to tailor your performance to suit each place, each audience?

Imparting a sense of energy — *shinmyung* — to the audience, is the crux of our performances. We are always surprised but happy to see how much of our energy gets translated to the audience. *Shinmyung* will remain as the core value of the spirit of the contemporary art. Therefore, Dulsori will continue breaking down stereotypical walls. India is the 52nd country where we will be performing.