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A 'Show like no other' starting Vancouver run Friday



Drums played an integral part in ancient China's rich culture. DIVINE PERFORMING ARTS

Shen Yun returns to Canada

Epoch Times Staff

A show lauded worldwide for its flawless Chinese dance, brilliant traditional costumes, and story-based dance dramas depicting

ing the spirit and essence of China's age-old culture, is coming to Vancouver.

As part of its 80-city world tour, New York-based Shen Yun Per-

forming Arts (formerly Divine Performing Arts) is set to play seven shows at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre from April 3 - 9. After Vancouver, the production will

move on to Calgary, Edmonton, and Regina.

The following are comments from audience members who have seen—and loved—the show.

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MORE ON P2



'I have a new feeling, a new sensation. It is a very thrilling show. I am deeply moved'

— Yi Seok, the last prince still living on Korean soil, a professor of history at Jeonju University



'Everything was impressive... The dances promote freedom, free speech, free will'

— Elvis Stojko, Canadian figure skater, three-time world champion, and two-time Olympic Silver medallist.



'The show is spectacular... I can only say, stunning, I must repeat again—I'm stunned'

— Dan Liu, fashion designer and creator of the Tatsuaki fashion line sold at Holt Renfrew



'I was very moved, almost to tears. It's rare to have someone move you so much'

— Eric Shumsky, acclaimed violist and son of legendary violinist Oscar Shumsky

Afghan press face warlords, Taliban threats

By GENEVIEVE LONG
Epoch Times Staff

Press freedom in war-torn Afghanistan is regressing to a Taliban-era level of restrictions, according to a recent report. Reporters Without Borders (RSF), a Paris-based press advocacy organization, visited Afghanistan in January to survey the current situation.

"Because of the deterioration of the situation, some of them feel that they are back to a sort of Taliban situation," said Vincent Brossel, Asia Director for RSF. Brossel spent a little over a week traveling throughout Afghanistan and interviewing local journalists. Brossel found that the situation is grim, and threats against working journalists are common. RSF also found that the Afghan Interior Ministry has been largely ineffective and even inactive in providing help and support.

"In fact, they [the Interior Ministry] don't take action and their investigations rarely go to the end," said Brossel, who points to the case of slain journalist Zakia Zaki. According to Brossel, she was killed by warlords and her murder was never "seriously" investigated. "Even the Interior Ministry once put pressure on her husband because he was asking for justice."

Farida Nekzad, a veteran journalist of ten years who lives and works in Afghanistan's capital city, Kabul, says the greatest danger that journalists face comes from the dual threat of warlords and the Taliban.

"Warlords and people in power will kidnap," said Nekzad by telephone from Kabul. "People cannot express their problems [through the media] because they have guns, they have power, and they don't accept the law—they have their own laws."

Nekzad was recognized for her work in late 2008 when the International Women's Media Foundation gave her a "Courage in Journalism" award.

According to the RSF report, armed opposition—especially from the Taliban—is the main perpetrator of a climate of insecurity for the press. The Taliban is known to kidnap members of the press, make threats by telephone, and has been accused of spying. The coming year does not promise to bring great improvements, especially in light of the upcoming presidential elections in August.

'The Afghan press will be exposed to every kind of danger in 2009'

"The Afghan press will be exposed to every kind of danger in 2009," a representative of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan said in the RSF report. "The security situation and pre- and post-electoral tension will require the utmost vigilance on our part."

Currently, there is no solid legal protection for Afghan journalists, although a law is under consideration by the federal government. The country is an Islamic republic where the constitution prevails, but article 130 of the constitution has become a loophole for the courts to prosecute those accused of blasphemy.

CONTINUED ON P5 WORLD



Outside the security commission hearing Wednesday, Mr. Liu, a former doctor from China, said he lost most of his life savings investing with Weizhen Tang. SUN DALI/THE EPOCH TIMES

The rise and fall of Chinese 'Buffet'

By JASON LOFTUS
Epoch Times Staff

TORONTO—Four months ago, life was good for Weizhen Tang. It was December and the so-called "Chinese Warren Buffet" was welcomed at Beijing's Diaoyutai State Guesthouse, a site traditionally reserved for visiting foreign officials.

Mr. Tang was the toast of the occasion, rubbing elbows with Chinese officials and media. It was an event celebrating "wealthy and intelligent" Chinese, and the Toronto-based investor was honoured with the "Award for Best Credibility."

But that credibility was called into question recently after investigators with the Ontario Securities Commission accused Tang of defrauding his investors of as much as \$60 million, allegedly part of a Ponzi scheme in which old investors were paid with new investors' money.

On March 17 the Ontario Securities Commission ordered that Tang and his companies cease trading so that investigators could probe the al-

legations further. On Wednesday, the commission extended that cease-trade order to Sept. 10.

Mr. Tang declined an interview from an Epoch Times reporter who visited his house on Wednesday. No formal charges have been laid. However, upwards of 200 are said to have lost their investments, each at \$150,000 or more.

Tang's rise to prominence was no less dramatic than his recent fall, according to a Chinese-language article on Tang's corporate website titled "Why Is Weizhen Tang So Capable?"

Tang was born the son of peasants in Hunan Province, China. He entered South Central Forestry College in 1978 and nine years later was sent overseas as a visiting scholar of biochemistry at a university in Ohio.

Tang came to Canada in 1990, continuing biochemistry studies at the University of Waterloo before taking up a job as a researcher at a Toronto hospital.

CONTINUED ON P2 NATION

Children 'biggest losers' in family court, says judge

Adversarial system perpetuates disputes

By JOAN DELANEY
Epoch Times Staff

A contentious access battle playing out in family court made news last week when a B.C. Supreme Court judge made the highly unusual decision of barring a mother from seeing her daughter for one year.

The ruling, which the father's lawyer called "historic," was made after the mother, known only as Ms. A, alleged that the father had

subjected the teenager to severe emotional abuse which she said endangered the child's safety.

Citing Ms. A's extreme parental alienation toward the father, Justice Donna Martinson said she was satisfied that Ms. A's allegations were unfounded and that the mother "continued to undermine the relationship between M and her father and has acted in ways that are detrimental to M's psychological healing."

Classed as a syndrome, parental

alienation occurs when divorcing parents use their children as pawns and attempt to turn them against the other parent.

"When we get into parental alienation, really what is happening is that the child becomes a weapon," says Justice Harvey Brownstone, a family court judge in Toronto.

Warring parents tearing their children apart is something Brownstone sees all too regularly. Brownstone believes family court is "a terrible place" for parents to use to resolve their custody and access issues.

"The whole justice system, including the family court system, is adversarial and is based on a win-lose mentality. But in family court there's no winning, there's only different degrees of losing, and the biggest losers are the children."

This adversarial approach is "designed to make war not peace," says Brownstone, and more often than not parents come out of the family court system "more angry with each other and more unhappy than they were when they started the court case."

CONTINUED ON P3 NATION