

The Moving Mirror



A postage stamp is not only a piece of miniature art, it is a moving mirror that catches the ever changing time in motion. The unstifled cry 'Jai Hind' still reverberates as the proclamation of India's independence in the first post-independence stamps.

One of the first Gandhi stamps, a soft pink, lovingly saying 'Bapu' in Hindi and Urdu, also remains perhaps the best postage stamp dedicated to the Father of the Nation. The search of national identity in the first rush of post independence stamps portrayed great leaders, saints, poets, monuments and icons of greatness. Almost all of them were single or double colour stamps, glorious in their sharpness and majestic in the fluidity of illustration. A remarkable aspect of Indian Philately of that time is the significant proportion of global themes reflecting our philosophy of humanity. We, therefore, see stamps on Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Maxim Gorky, Beethoven, Bertrand Russell etc.



The 25th anniversary of Independence started a new trend of multi-coloured and brilliantly designed stamps. The diaphanous veil that famously fails to conceal the Rajasthani beauty, most aptly comes with the golden prints on the 1973 Radha Kishangarh stamp. All four stamps in this series on miniature paintings heralded a glorious chapter. Another step in this direction was a series on Indian Masks (974). In the meantime, a beautiful diamond shape stamp on Kamala Nehru, the fourth of its kind (Raja Rammohan Roy 1964, Swami Rama Thirtha 1966 & Ravidas 1971) was a tribute to the diamond shape, as much as it was to Kamala Nehru's understated grace.



The story of Indian postage stamps covers important milestones, achievements and discoveries of India's history. The little bird Indian Pitta, the legendary tree Kadamba, the flamboyant Flame of the Forest, the paintings of Jamini Roy, legendary figures who shaped India's history, like Tipu Sultan, Bahadur Shah Zaffar, Sher Shah, Shivaji and Mangal Pandey, or - the stamps on Ramcharit Manas, Bhagavadgita



and 1400 Hijri, the Banyan tree, as well as, the tiny orchid, all illustrate the range and depth of themes covered by Indian postage stamps.



Stamps of 2007 were a continuation of this tradition. The most celebrated issue in 2007 was a set of six stamps on Buddha to commemorate 2550th Mahaparinirvana. Six different styles of sculptures and paintings depicting different aspects of Buddha's

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Cultural Calendar for September 2009

September 11

Bharatha Natyam Recital by Nidheesh Kumar, Post Diplomat from Bharatha Kalakshetra, India
Venue & Time: ICC 6.00 p.m.

September 14

Hindi Day Celebrations by the Hindi course students of the Indian Cultural Centre
Venue & Time: ICC 6.00 p.m.

September 16

Panel discussion on Indian cinema & Sri Lankan cinema: Questions of Identity by Ms. Sumithra Pieris, eminent film director
Discussants: Mr. Boodee Keerthisena, Film Director and Mr. Dharmasiri Bandaranayake, Film Director
Venue & Time: ICC 5.30 p.m.

September 18

Talk - Sons of Rama & Vali-Yakum according to Ramayana & Vali-Yak Mangalaya by Srilal Perera, Secretary, Sub-committee on Intangible Heritage of the National Trust of Sri Lanka
Venue & Time: ICC 6.00 p.m.

September 22

Film: Sampoom Ramayan (In Hindi)
Venue & Time: ICC 5.30 p.m. Duration: 3 hrs

September 25

Sakunthalam of Mahakavi Kalidasa (a musical dance drama sponsored by the Indian Cultural Centre and produced by the Aru Sri Art Theatre)
Venue & Time: Kularathne Hall, Ananda College, Colombo 10 at 6.30 p.m.
(Admission by invitation, contact Centre on 2500014)

September 29

Kathak dance recital by Swati Subodh Siddhartha from India
Venue & Time: ICC 6.00 p.m.

(Admission to all programmes is free and on first come first served basis except 25th September 2009 programme)



philosophy were beautifully integrated on a large miniature sheet with rich illustrations from monastery paintings as background. The year started with a stamp on Bimal Roy in January, the genius of Indian cinema who gave such timeless classics as Do Bigha Zamin, Bandini, Madhumati etc. The month of February had a set of four scented stamps on Roses. The spiritually elevating sandalwood was the first scented stamp in India and was issued in December 2006. March was memorable because of a set of four stamps on Women's Day. The maverick of melodrama, Mehboob Khan, whose Mother India is a landmark of Indian cinema also came in March. After a gap of about

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SANDESH

The monthly newsletter of the Indian Cultural Centre, Colombo

September 25
Sakunthalam of Mahakavi Kalidasa - a musical dance drama

September 2009

Shakuntala writing a letter to King Dushyanta (Her sakhis Mitrayana and Priyamvada are with her) - Raja Ravi Varma



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Past Events

16th July

Talk- Historical evidences of Ramayana & Ravana in Sri Lanka by Mr. Neil Kiriella



Mr. Neil Kiriella, Chairman, Ramayan Trail Executive Committee, Ministry of Tourism, Sri Lanka delivered a talk on Historical evidences of Ramayana & Ravana in Sri Lanka.

His lecture was illustrated by a power point presentation showcasing various sights relevant to Ramayana & Ravana in Sri Lanka. The lecture was followed by a question and answer session with the audience.

24th July

Hindustani Vocal Music Recital



Sangeeth Shasthrapathi Asith Athapathu gave a brilliant vocal music performance which captivated the audience gathered at the Centre. His recital included in raga Jog Kaunse in Vilambit & Druth kheyal, Tappa in raga Bhairavi, Thumri in raag Khamaj, Holi Geeth, Chaiti & concluded with a Bhajan. The evening was very well enjoyed by the audience gathered at the Centre.

31st July

Bharatha Natyam lecture cum demonstration



Renowned Bharatha Natyam exponent Smt. Roja Kannan gave an interesting and informative lecture cum demonstration on Bharatha Natyam at the Centre. She explained various aspects of Bharatha Natyam. She interspersed her talk with demonstrations. The evening was a treat for dance lovers.

LIBRARY

Recent Library Acquisitions

Portraits in Princely India-1700-1947

Ed. Rosie Llewellyn-Jones
Mumbai, Marg Publications, 2008, 136p.

Bharatiya Vigyan Manjusha : Treasure Trove of Ancient Indian Sciences

Sreedharan, M.S.
New Delhi, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, 2007, 942p.

Towards Freedom : Documents on the movement for Independence in India (Part 2)

Ed. Mushirul Hasan
New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2008, 1978p.

The Indian Army : An illustrated overview

Chhina, Rana T.S.
New Delhi, CAFHR, 2007, 252p.

SARNATH : the land of the enlightened one

Dr. Niharika
New Delhi, Harman Publishing House, 2007, 32p.

India's interaction with Southeast Asia (Vol.1 Part 3)

Ed. G.C. Pande
New Delhi, Centre for Studies in Civilizations, 2006, 704p.

Trade, Temple & Court : Indian Textiles from the Tapi Collection

Barnes, Ruth
Mumbai, Indian Book House(PVT)Ltd, 202, 238p.

Painted Myths of Creation : Art & Ritual of an Indian Tribe

Jain, Jyotindra
New Delhi, Lalit Kala Akademi, 1984, 100p.

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twenty years, our national parks were commemorated with a set of five stamps in May 2007, showing Bandhavgarh National Park, Bandipur National Park, Kaziranga National Park, Mudumalai National Park, Periyar National Park, coinciding with the worldwide concern on global warming and symbolizing India's eagerness to join the campaign for conservation.

2007 however, came with the memories of the most dramatic chapters of the Indian history. Nothing

witnessed in the first war of independence, 1857. The set of two stamps issued to commemorate 150 years of this event depict this cataclysmic chapter. 2007 marked the centenary of the Satyagraha Movement that started in South Africa and provided a whole new philosophy of peace and non-violence to the world. India Post issued a set of four stamps on 2nd of October, 2007 depicting four different stages that defined Gandhi's Satyagraha Movement in South Africa. As if to symbolize the link between the past and the present, a set of four stamps on Landmark Indian Bridges were also issued in this year. The very original music composer and singer, S.D. Burman, also featured in one stamp in 2007. A set of four stamps commemorating the platinum jubilee of the Indian Air Force and another set of three stamps on the fourth CISM Military World Games were two attractive issues in October 2007. However, in this year a set of four stamps on the Fairs and Festivals of India which came in the beginning of the year, showing Goa Carnival, Pushkar Fair, Sonapur Fair and Baul Fair, were highly popular. The year ended with a tribute to the outstanding genius of Indian Cinema, whose movies such as Meghe Dhaka Tara (the cloud capped star) and Ajantrik (unmechanical) continue to intrigue and inspire cinema enthusiasts i.e., Ritwik Ghatak.

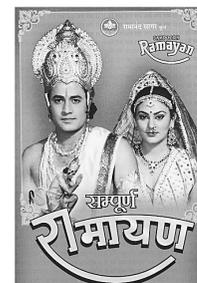
The year 2007 saw some innovations in Philately. The story of the First War of Independence came beautifully narrated in a stamp book showing the stamps, original as well as pictures, issued after Independence on this theme. The Braille stamp was another innovation perhaps the first in the world, when the stamp and First Day Cover was issued on the occasion of International Day of Disabled Persons with Braille inscriptions.

With its variety of themes, boldness of depiction and overall vibrance, Indian postage stamps continue to charm the world.



Source: India Perspectives

Films in September



Sampoorn Ramayan

Sampoorn Ramayan was the first mythological serial shown on the Indian television, created by Dr. Ramanand Sagar. The serial portrays the story of Lord Ram in a most aesthetic manner and carried a lot of devotional value. Sampoorn Ramayan gives a lesson on Deep rooted culture of India, traditions and the heritage of pure ethics and principles.