



SHEN YUN Performing Arts

Special coverage by The Epoch Times

What the Audience is Saying. . .

Epoch Times Staff

SHEN YUN PERFORMING ARTS NEW YORK COMPANY IN DAEGU, SOUTH KOREA

'The performance of Shen Yun integrates modern, high-tech stage and backdrop to display the traditional Chinese culture and arts so well, enabling the dancers to comprehend and resonate with the connotation of the program. It is inspiring and thought-provoking to the younger generations.'

— Ms. Park Youn Jin, Dance professor

SHEN YUN PERFORMING ARTS INTERNATIONAL COMPANY IN ROCHESTER, N.Y.

'How I basically dictate whether the music is good, is if it touches me. It doesn't matter the genre. And trust me, when I tell you, the music touched me. It was beautiful.'

— Santos Maximo, Music producer

SHEN YUN PERFORMING ARTS INTERNATIONAL COMPANY IN NORFOLK, VA.

'It is really nice to take a small peek at another culture and feel a part of it. Coming to something like this makes you realize that the world is much bigger than our typical circumference and that we are just all a part of life and humanity.'

— Mary Moore, Interior design student

The Epoch Times is a proud sponsor of the Shen Yun Performing Arts 2010 World Tour. For more information, please visit www.shenyunperformingarts.org.



HEARTBREAKERS: (L-R) Guitarist Scott Thurston, keyboardist Benmont Tench, singer/songwriter Tom Petty, and guitarist Mike Campbell. ROGER KISBY/GETTY IMAGES

Tom Petty Goes to the Vault in Live Offering Spanning Decades

Album Review: 'Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers—The Live Anthology'

By DAVID GONZALES

Live concert albums don't get much better than "Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers—The Live Anthology." Imagine four CDs of outstanding music by Tom Petty and his long-time band, the Heartbreakers, spread out over 48 tracks recorded in concert between 1980 and 2007. The song selections span Petty's storied career, from his breakthrough 1976 debut album to the 2006 Grammy-nominated "Highway Companion."

If it wasn't already written in stone, this album leaves no doubt that Tom Petty stands tall as one of America's premier music artists. The Heartbreakers aren't too shabby either, with various members making their own, well-respected mark in the music world, most notably guitarist Mike Campbell and keyboardist Benmont Tench.

The songs aren't arranged in

chronological order, so a song recorded in 1982 can be followed by a song recorded in 2006. For one thing, this shows how strong and consistent Petty and the band have been throughout the years. For example, one of the album's best performances, an achingly poignant version of "Southern Accents," is taken from a 2006 concert, 21 years after it was first recorded.

Petty and the Heartbreakers haven't lost a step. They certainly haven't lost their appetite for adventurousness, as evidenced by a rousing rendition of the classic "I'm a Man," taken from a 2006 Florida concert. Though "I'm a Man" was first recorded by Bo Diddley and then convincingly appropriated by bluesman Muddy Waters, Petty's speeded-up version is based on that of the groundbreaking 1960s group, the Yardbirds.

Aside from "I'm a Man," Petty and the Heartbreakers perform a num-

ber of exciting covers—displaying their wide-ranging influences and pleasures—including among others: Thunderclap Newman's "Something in the Air;" James Brown's "Good, Good Lovin';" and Them's (featuring Van Morrison) "Mystic Eyes." There's also two instrumental covers, Booker T and the MG's "Green Onions," and of all things, the theme from "Goldfinger."

An album highlight is the tender, acoustic-styled version of "Learning to Fly" played without drums and featuring beautiful guitar and piano fills, augmenting Petty's heartfelt vocals. The boys can also rock out, Exhibit A being a rousing, hard-edged performance of an apparently original song not found on any Petty album, "Drivin' Down to Georgia." While there are extended solos on a number of songs, they're never to the point of self-indulgence but add energy and depth.

The album contains some excel-

lent album tracks not often heard as well as a number of hits, including among others: "Refugee," "Breakdown," "Wildflowers," "Even the Losers," and perhaps Petty's greatest song of all, "The Waiting." After all's been said and done, "Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers—The Live Anthology" takes its place as one of the greatest live albums ever made.

If this isn't enough for you, there are also three other configurations of the album, which includes a deluxe box set containing 62 tracks on 5 CDs, a DVD of a previously unreleased 1995 documentary, and a Blu-ray disc of all 62 tracks, as well as some other goodies. There's also a vinyl deluxe box set containing seven vinyl LPs. In addition, there's a 48-track digital album available for download.

David Gonzales writes on music, and lives and works in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Hollywood Films Dubbed for India do Roaring Business

By SUREN RAO
Epoch Times Staff

MUMBAI, India—When James Cameron's magnum opus opened in India, a small overzealous group of Hindus apparently took offense to the term Avatar, which in Sanskrit means reincarnation or descent from a higher realm to a lower realm.

According to this group, they felt they had proprietary rights over the word Avatar, and to taint its meaning for the purpose of fiction on-screen could be offensive to Hindus. The controversy died a natural death when people were transported into another virtual reality world, which had no connection with Hinduism.

'Avatar' was released across India in English, Hindi, Tamil, and Telugu.

"Avatar" surprised the trade pundits and the Indian movie industry with a movie that the world is calling a phenomenon. In fact, the opening of the film in India ranked among the top 10 countries for a weekend's performances, beating the likes of traditionally better performing countries like Taiwan, Singapore, New Zealand, Sweden, Holland, and Hong Kong.

What is interesting is that "Avatar" was released across India in English, Hindi, Tamil, and Telugu. Dubbed films started to be taken seriously when the likes of "Anconda," "X-Men," and "Spider-Man" fetched higher returns in their dubbed versions compared to their English releases.

Dhiraj Shah at Big Entertainment believes that the dubbed market always had potential. "Gandhi," "Jurassic Park," and "Titanic" all did great business in their dubbed versions. Yet, it was completely overlooked until a few years back when the sheer magnitude

of the dubbed films' success begged attention," he said.

"Avatar" earned a record INR 10 million (\$216,000) for its paid previews across India—the highest for any Hollywood film ever. The film then created a record by grossing INR 67.5 million (\$1.5 million) on opening day itself, making it the biggest Friday opening for any Hollywood film in Indian history.

The epic action adventure raked in a whopping INR 220 million (\$4.75 million) in its opening weekend, which not only makes it the highest ever weekend take for a Hollywood film, but it beat "2012," "Titanic," and "Spider-Man 3" combined. The number of 3D screens has also increased from 12 screens to over 50.

Mr. Vijay Singh, CEO of Fox Star Studios in India says, "The movie is being appreciated across all age groups and languages. Even theatres in the interiors, where the film is being shown in Hindi in 2D format, have been doing fantastic business, as also theatres in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh."

And given the recent spate of Hollywood films like "Slumdog Millionaire," "X-Men Origins: Wolverine," "Ice Age 3," and "2012" beating out "Bollywood" at the box-office, looks like B-town has got some strong competition!

Warner Brothers also released "Ninja Assassin" in Hindi, Tamil, and Telugu along side its English version. The view is that English films, which have a more limited viewership in India compared to locally made films, can pull in bigger audiences if they can be delivered in languages more Indians can understand. Even people conversant with English often prefer to watch dubbed versions of English films, finding it difficult to follow American or British accents.

Sony Pictures Entertainment (India) followed a similar formula, releasing "2012" in Hindi, Tamil, and Telugu, in addition to English. The film had the second highest



'AVATAR' TAKES INDIA: Indian actor Abhishek Bachchan (L) and his wife Aishwarya Rai Bachchan smile during the Indian premiere of the film "Avatar" in Mumbai on Dec. 15. STR/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

box office take for a Hollywood film in Indian history after "Spider-Man 3" in 2007.

Mr. Singh from Fox says: "Big Hollywood films do very well in dubbed versions. If it's a big movie, then almost two-thirds of collections come from the dubbed versions. Our

biggest earnings came from 'X-Men' and 'Ice Age 3,' both of which gave us good collections. ... The market itself is growing and in the next five years, dubbed English films will contribute even more to the overall pie."

Fox Star's "Slumdog Millionaire," with

363 prints released in English and dubbed in Hindi also did very well bringing in INR 400 million (\$8.64 million) at the box office. The Hindi version, "Slumdog Crorepati," bested the English version in sales by 30 percent.

Sony Pictures Entertainment (India), which dubbed Gandhi for the first time in 1982 in six Indian languages, is now investing more in this recipe. Managing director Keru Daruwala says, "It's an old trend, which was later revived in the mid-90s with "Lost World." It has huge commercial potential now. Most metros contribute extra revenues from dubbed films, with Hindi contributing the majority share."

The next in the lineup from Sony Pictures, which is considering dubbing into Bengali too, are "The Stepfather," "Zombieland," and "Did You Hear About The Morgans?"

Smita Jha, associate director entertainment and media practices at PricewaterhouseCoopers, comments: "At 50–60 films a year, the English film market in India is not very big yet, but it is growing. Increased multiplex penetration in Tiers 2 and 3 cities, and dubbing combined with local promotions will fuel the growth of foreign films in India."

Industry experts, however, warn that not all dubbed films do well. Films with a bigger brand and star, value work. Action, horror, thriller, adventure, romance, and sex-oriented films are the best bets as they bring revenues from smaller towns. Animation and alternative content also work. A film can be dubbed for as low as \$2,000 or as much as \$150,000 to \$175,000.

While the rest of the world prefers subtitles, Indians would rather see a dubbed film. Though purists might object to the dubbed versions and find them hilarious and crass, the number of dubbed language versions of Hollywood films is likely to multiply. They are here to change the way Indians see Hollywood Films and possibly create a demand for the same aesthetics and technical finesse in their own regional films.