

Hindu music, scripture honor Maharaj at A&M

By Alan Sembera
Reporter

His Divine Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj sat cross-legged in his ornately decorated seat at stage center Friday night in the MSC. Ten disciples in orange saffron robes sat on the floor to his right.

Some of the disciples played Hindu devotional music for about 350 members of the local Indian community and their guests.

The audience listened as several of Maharaj's disciples gave their message in English and Hindi on how to achieve peace and happiness. But most were waiting for the head swami to give his message on how to achieve personal fulfillment.

Dr. Mahesh Dave of Bryan, a follower of the swami, said it is an important part of the faith to have personal contact with Maharaj.

Dave said the personal contact is a moving experience for the followers of the Bochasanwasi Swaminarayan Sanstha movement, which is based in New York.

"He is our guide right now," Dave said. "He's a true teacher who knows God — with whom God is ever present."

Maharaj came to A&M by invitation. He last visited the campus about four years ago.

Maharaj, who is from the northwestern part of India, is the leader of a movement based there which has a network of more than 1,000 centers around the world. The movement has about 35 centers in the United States.

The movement is founded on the peaceful teachings of Indian culture and the Hindu scriptures.

The growing movement, which advocates peace and non-violent change, claims a following of millions around the world. Much of its work is devoted to education campaigns and aiding the poor and needy.

Aku Patel, a follower from Houston, said Maharaj is the guru of the movement. The swami has achieved a pure state,



Pramukh Swami Maharaj sits serenely on his throne as he listens to Vivek Sagar Swami deliver a speech at the MSC Friday night.

Photo by Kathy Haveman

Patel said, and is a living example of an absolutely pure soul. Others are encouraged to follow the swami's example, Patel said.

"People have to feel it," Patel said. "It's not in just what he says or what he talks about, it's what he is. He is the intermediary between the Almighty and ourselves."

Fire destroys Dallas area wax museum

DALLAS (AP) — The man who plays Dr. Blood only regrets that he won't be able to scare the pants off 40,000 Texans the way he did last year.

But Drew Hunter says he and the Wax Museum of the Southwest in Grand Prairie eventually will return, along with their popular Halloween show that drew long lines during its nine-day run last fall.

Hunter had been completing plans for the holiday show on Friday just before he and another employee discovered a fire that eventually destroyed the museum, which had housed the largest collection of wax figures in the nation.

More than 300 figures, including a wax figure of Dr. Blood, the character that Hunter played during the Halloween shows, melted in the fire. The figures and a large collection of antiques and historic memorabilia that were destroyed may have been worth up to \$8 million, officials said.

"It's one of the things I really enjoyed doing," Hunter said. "I was sort of like a male Elvira, without some of her attributes, and I used to walk around and talk with the museum visitors."

Hunter enjoyed the show so much he began celebrating his birthday on Halloween, although it actually came a few days earlier.

But Hunter now will concentrate his efforts on trying to replace a massive collection that took 25 years to build.

The first thing he will try to find, he said, is a "first-class Elvis."

The search for new figures will be costly and time-consuming.

There are only about six groups of artists around the world that create the wax figures, Hunter said. Each statue will run about \$8,000 to \$10,000 to buy.

Hunter said wax museums are a special type of attraction, different from animated figures sometimes seen at other amusement parks.

"There's a certain fascination that keeps people coming back," he said. "It's a weird fascination that people have. It's very classic, a fear of getting locked in there after the place closes and having someone come along and throw them in a vat of wax."

What's Up

Monday

- AGGIE GOP: will have a general meeting at 8:30 p.m. in 701 Rudder.
- WILEY LECTURE SERIES: applications are due in the Student Programs Office.
- HILLEL JEWISH STUDENT CENTER: will have Rosh Ha'shanah services at 10 a.m. and a Jewish new year reception at 6 p.m. at the Rabbi's house.
- PHI THETA KAPPA ALUMNI: will meet at 7:30 p.m. in 305 Rudder.
- BLACK GRADUATE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION: will have a welcome reception for incoming black graduate students at 6 p.m. in 206 MSC.
- PHI ETA SIGMA: will meet at 7:30 p.m. in 302 Rudder.
- TAMU JAZZ BAND: will have a rehearsal at 7:30 p.m. in the Commons west piano room. A piano player is needed.
- PHYSICAL THERAPY CLUB: will meet at 7 p.m. in 164 Read.
- INTRAMURALS: entries open for horseshoe singles and billiard doubles at 8 a.m. in 159 Read.
- PLACEMENT CENTER: will have an orientation session for all December, May and August graduates at 10 a.m. in 504 Rudder through Friday.
- THE AGGIELAND: Freshmen and sophomores may take their yearbook photos from Sept. 12 to Sept. 23 at Yearbook Associates behind Campus Photo at Northgate.
- TAMU SNOW SKI CLUB: will meet at 7 p.m. in 701 Rudder.
- PI SIGMA EPSILON: will have the first pledge orientation meeting at 7 p.m. in 301 Rudder.

Tuesday

- FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIAN ATHLETES: will meet at 7:30 p.m. in the Letterman's Lounge in G. Rollie White.
- BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION: will meet to tour the College of Veterinary Medicine at 7 p.m. in 201 Veterinary Medicine Complex.
- AGGIES ABROAD: will have an organizational meeting at 7 p.m. in 402 Rudder.
- TAMU SURF CLUB: will meet at 7:30 p.m. at 710 Swiss Court.
- AGGIES FOR BARTON: will meet at 7 p.m. in 704 Rudder.
- PRE-LAW SOCIETY: Angus McSwain, former dean of Baylor Law School will speak at 8:30 p.m. in 404 Rudder.
- AGGIE TOASTERS: will meet at 8 p.m. in 102 Zachry.
- DELTA SIGMA PI: will meet at 7:30 p.m. at Clayton Williams Alumni Center to meet the chapter. Business attire is requested.
- LIBERAL ARTS SOCIETY: will meet at 7:30 p.m. in 164 Blocker.
- DEER PARK HOMETOWN CLUB: will meet at 7 p.m. in 302 Rudder.
- CHRISTIAN SCIENCE ORGANIZATION: will have a prayer meeting at 7 p.m. at the All Faiths Chapel.
- OCA-ACP: will have an informational meeting at 7 p.m. in 301 Rudder.
- MSC CEPHEID VARIABLE: will have a new member's and general meeting at 8:30 p.m. in 301 Rudder.
- TAMU COLLEGIATE FFA: will meet and have an ice cream social at 7:30 p.m. in 208 Scoates.
- MANAGEMENT SOCIETY: will meet at 7 p.m. in 153 Blocker.
- TAMU HORSEMAN'S ASSOCIATION: will meet at 7 p.m. in 115 Kleberg.
- HILLEL JEWISH STUDENT ORGANIZATION: will have a Rosh Ha'Shanah service at 10 a.m. at the Hillel Building.
- TAMU SAILING TEAM: will meet at 7 p.m. in 206 Military Sciences.
- ALL NIGHT FAIR: will have a committee meeting at 8:30 p.m. in 402 Rudder.
- A&M METEOROLOGY CLUB: will meet at 7 p.m. in the observatory of the Oceanography and Meteorology Building.
- CO-OP STUDENT ASSOCIATION: will discuss goals and elect committee chairman at 7 p.m. in 501 Rudder.
- TAMU AMERICAN MARKETING ASSOCIATION: will meet at 7 p.m. in 102 Blocker.
- AGGIE ALLIANCE: Dr. Jean Perry, president of AAHPERD will speak at 7 p.m. in 701 Rudder.
- PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR INDUSTRIAL DISTRIBUTION: will elect class representatives at 7:15 p.m. in 203 Zachry. All I.D. students are welcome.
- TAMU COMPUTER USERS GROUP: will present "Introduction to Campus Computing" at 3 p.m. in 308 Rudder.
- MULTICULTURAL SERVICES CENTER: will discuss internship opportunities for minority graduate and undergraduate students at 7 p.m. in 145 MSC.
- INTRAMURALS: entries close for table tennis singles, triathlon, 16" softball, and flag football at 5:30 p.m. in 159 Read.

Items for What's Up should be submitted to The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, no later than three business days before the desired run date. We only publish the name and phone number of the contact if you ask us to do so. What's Up is a Battalion service that lists non-profit events and activities. Submissions are run on a first-come, first-served basis. There is no guarantee an entry will run. If you have questions, call the newsroom at 845-3315.

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MSC OPAS 16 will present Rudolf Nureyev and Friends, the Paris Opera Ballet, as just one of the seven great performances on this season's Music Series. In addition to his performance here, he will host an informal reception after the MSC OPAS performance.

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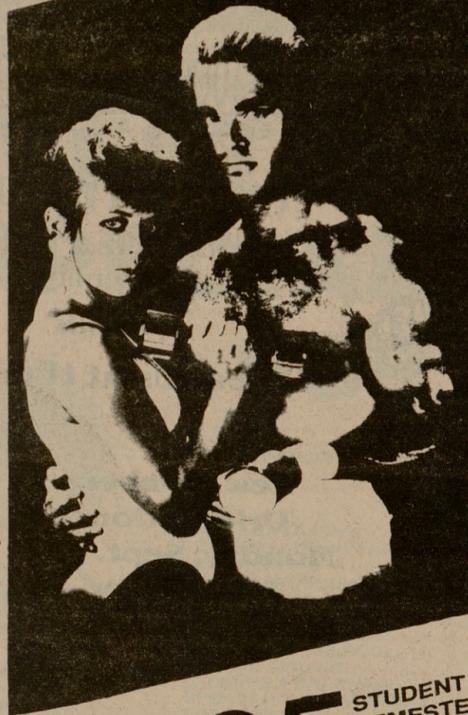
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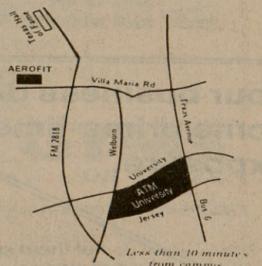
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