

ARTS COUNCIL OF MONGOLIA



Culture Naadam: Play time for everyone



Artistic Culture Naadam promotional poster

By Jessica Lumb

The word Naadam comes from the word naadah, which means to play. The traditional festival, which celebrates Mongolia's 'three games of men' (wrestling, horse racing and archery), typically divides the population into participants and spectators, the latter who spend their days hunting for the perfect khuushuur. For the past four festivals, a cultural element has been thrown into the mix and 2012 is no exception – the Arts Council of Mongolia will again run Culture Naadam at the Khui Doloon Khudag horse racing site on July 11 and 12, giving non professional sports people a chance for some play time of their own.

Culture Naadam aims to promote nomadic culture and traditions among domestic and international audiences to enhance the scope and quality of the arts and cultural services during Mongolia's

national festival. It offers unique opportunities for the contemporary to meet the historical through interactive events which introduce Mongolian customs to today's audience.

Artists and artisans will gather alongside the horses, welcoming revelers to the 'One Day of Mongolia' Arts and Crafts Village with traditional music, dance, games and crafts. Gers and tents will be set up around the site, each offering a fun look at a different aspect of nomadic life.

At the centre of this year's festival is the Giant Mongolia tent, featuring the traditional ankle bone horse racing game on a larger-than-life size scale. The game will feature a human sized hat, boots, saddle, tea pot, cup and snuff bottle, letting visitors play, have fun and be photographed with the giant cultural icons.

Another highlight will focus on Mongolian ethnic groups. Carnival type

cut-outs where the face of a character is removed and replaced by a real person will give visitors the opportunity to have their photographs taken as Khalkh, Buryat, and Zahchin families.

A tent will also be devoted to Red Jamsran, the Buddhist God of war, who is featured in Tsam dances. Children (of all ages) will be given the chance to try on and play in Tsam costumes and participate in the creative process of making masks.

Other features in the 'Tent Zone' include face and body painting by local artists, felt demonstrations (where handmade products will also be for sale) and opportunities to try archery (avoid moving targets please).

The 'Ger Zone' will include an introduction to Kazakh culture through a traditional Kazakh ger, Mongolian costumes, and calligraphy, demonstrated by a local artist who will also be offering

his work for sale.

Concerts will happen twice daily and feature performances by the best Mongolian talents and students from the Mongolian University of Arts and Culture. Listen to melodies soar and horse hooves thunder across the steppe in a unique example of humans and nature coming together.

A Naadam experience not to be missed is the 'One Day of Mongolia' Arts and Crafts Village that will be open from 11am to 6pm on July 11 and 12. Entry is free (with small costs for specific activities). Get out of town and let your inner child play – don't let the professionals have all the fun this Naadam.

Culture Naadam is organized in conjunction with METAA, Korea and Mongolian University of Arts and Culture. Please contact the Arts Council of Mongolia for more information.



Throughout Mongolia, cultural artists will perform for audiences



Children are special participants at Culture Naadam events

Khan Bank exhibits its collection of art masterpieces

The Khan Bank Art Gallery has hosted over 40 art exhibitions featuring an array of art genres since its opening in December 2007. Over the years, Khan Bank has continued to collect masterpieces by Mongolian artists, making it the largest corporate collection in the country.

The gallery is currently presenting an exhibition showcasing the best paintings of the bank's extensive art collection. The exhibition will be open from 9 am until 6 pm on week days until the end of July.

Entry to the exhibit is free.



Khan Bank takes pride in its support for Mongolian artists



Smiles galore as guests pose with Tsam Dancers

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