

Mela 2002

Contributed by Administrator
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In September 2002, the largest celebration of Pakistani art and culture ever staged outside Pakistan took place in Oslo. The objective of the festival Mela 2002 was to present the arts and cultural heritage belonging to the largest ethnic minority living in Norway as part of a bilateral cultural exchange. In a long-term perspective, the aim is to increase minorities' participation on the Norwegian contemporary art and culture scene.

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Mela 2002 was arranged by Horizon Foundation, an independent body founded by the Norwegian Arts Council and the Centennial Anniversary Norway 2005. In addition to these, many governmental and independent institutions, including the Pakistani government participated as funding collaborators

. The total budget for the festival was NOK 5,5 million.

The official inauguration took place in Oslo City Hall on Friday 6th September, in the presence of H.M. King Harald of Norway, Pakistan's Minister of Culture, The Lord Mayor of Oslo and many other dignitaries.

In addition to various collaborating venues like theatres and art galleries, the main festival arena was Rådhusplassen, the ample City Hall Square facing the harbour. Some 50.000 persons visited the different venues during the weekend, and took part in activities like concerts, theatre, poetry, literature, puppet theatre, kite flying shows, fashion catwalk, exhibitions of contemporary arts, miniature paintings, textile design, traditional handicrafts etc. In the evenings, the festival offered concerts for youths at City Hall Square as well as classical concerts for the adult audience and theatre performances.

More than 100 distinguished artists, officials and guests had come from Pakistan, England, Germany, Sweden and Denmark to take part in the festival.

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