

GUESS WHAT?



Ikke Nurjanah brings 'dangdut' to America

JAKARTA: Dangdut diva Ikke Nurjanah will be having an unforgettable month of April, as she will fly to the US to promote dangdut to locals there.

American event organizer Sireedee Entertainment is inviting Ikke to the US to hold seminars about dangdut at the University of Pittsburgh and John Hopkins University.

"After the discussions, I will hold some gigs in Washington DC, New York and Pittsburgh," said the single mother of one, as quoted by newsportal kapanlagi.com. "I will perform with a dangdut band called Cowboys, which was formed by Professor Andrew Weintraub from the University of Pittsburgh."

Ikke is the second dangdut singer ever invited by the organizer, after Rhoma Irama. According to Ikke, dangdut is starting to attract the attention of Americans, with locals increasingly holding contests and discussions there about dangdut.

"They have held many dangdut events already, and there's even one book on dangdut published there [in the US]," said Ikke. "When they sent their invitation, they told me that they wanted to explore my songs". — JP

Carrey, McCarthy announce split in tweet



LOS ANGELES: Jim Carrey and Jenny McCarthy have taken to Twitter to announce their breakup.

The two actors each tweeted Tuesday that they had ended their relationship after five years. Publicists for Carrey and McCarthy confirmed the split.

The 48-year-old Carrey and 37-year-old McCarthy each say they were grateful for the time they spent together.

McCarthy says in a statement released through her publicist that she "will always keep Jim as a leading man in my heart". She also says she would remain involved in his adult daughter's life.

Carrey tweeted that he wishes McCarthy "the very best". — AP

Oprah Winfrey snags Rielle Hunter interview



CHICAGO: Oprah Winfrey has landed the first televised interview with Rielle Hunter since former presidential candidate John Edwards first admitted two years ago that he had an affair with Hunter.

Harpo Productions said Tuesday that Hunter will appear on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* on an unspecified date.

GO magazine last month published the first interview with Hunter in which she addressed the scandal. She told the magazine the affair ended in July 2008 and that the relationship is now something "different".

She didn't say whether they are still romantically involved but said Edwards wants to be there for their 2-year-old daughter. — AP

For Uma, a competitive athlete who grew up in Kenya running around the savannas with the Masai, the extraordinary meant the extreme.

The Indian yogi first traveled to Bali to study traditional Balinese metalworking, but was soon drawn to the island's mysticism and a deep desire to taste the fruits of ultimate liberation.

Uma was just 20 when she decided to renounce modern existence to pursue an intense study of yoga and meditation in the depths of the Balinese jungle with her teacher Shunyata, or the laughing yogi. For seven years, they lived in the jungle in a house made of bamboo and stones, with no electricity or much interaction with the outside world. They practiced naked on the riverbanks — holding yoga poses for as long as three hours — drank herbal aphrodisiacs, buried their provisions underground to keep them cool, drank ritual drops of scorpion blood and ate raw garlic to build resistance.

"We rarely saw another human in the valley for at least the first few years. It was paradisaical seclusion, perfect for an extreme practice, which would have been considered insane by an outsider, but we seemed to have everything we needed in the valley without venturing out," said Uma.

Today, any physical trace of her life in the wild has now vanished with the Bali that was. The house they lived in was mysteriously burned to the ground 10 days after a large corporate hotel chain bulldozed the valley during the night. The once secluded valley is now known as the "Beverly Hills" of Bali, but when Uma dove into the esoteric and ethereal, it was considered a deeply spiritual area that many Balinese were too afraid to enter.

"It used to be like a twilight zone for mysticism. It was a stage for continuous interaction with the spirits of the land and the hangout for various other entities from different dimensions. This valley was both respected and feared by all as a place of power. Now it is respected for its property value!"

After their house was burnt down, it was time to leave the valley. Bali had changed and they needed to change too, she said.

However, yoga has always been a central focus in her life. Uma first practiced yoga with her grandfather,

UMA INDER

In the WILD

Kate Lamb

CONTRIBUTOR/UBUD

"I wanted to tear down all veils, I wanted magic, reality. I was looking for the extraordinary in an enchanted world," says Uma Inder of her ascetic decision to live in a Balinese jungle for seven years.

a strict yogi and Indian explorer, in their Hindu household in Kenya, and says she never dreamed she would meet or study with a real yogi.

But after more than 20 years of teaching, she is certainly an impressive one herself. From explaining the complexities of tantric philosophy, the meaning of pure consciousness, or the spirit world, Uma articulates her ideas with such grace, wisdom and ease that you almost forget you are discussing intangible abstractions.

It is an informed and down-to-earth attitude that is paradoxically rare in a world that has taken up yoga with a vengeance. When Uma undertook her intense study, BlackBerrys and Facebook did not exist, and neither did yoga; at least not in the phenomenal way it has manifested in the West today, where every major sporting brand is racing to market inner peace, Madonna claims it's the answer and teachers are copyrighting their own specific styles.

"I wasn't aware of anyone else doing yoga 22 years ago in the West. It was not a word you heard people talk about and you didn't really talk about your own yoga practice. When I went to America and first saw a yoga mat, I was shocked," said Uma.

Uma says she originally spoke out against the consumerist explosion of yoga, but has realized that yoga is an unstoppable force that is helping encourage people to realize the power and liberation of health and self-discovery.

"I realized that if any of us needed an opinion, of how yoga formed to be, should be, and how it was, those opinions would just be steamrolled

by the sheer force of the movement of people toward greater health. Each of these different styles is going to appeal to different people and it may not appeal to me, but I have learned to step back and make way," said Uma.

The multitude of different interpretations of yoga was recently on offer at the Bali Spirit festival, a four-day festival that included renowned yoga teachers, dancers and musicians from across the globe. Uma ran workshops at the festival in the lush surroundings of Ubud, also where she calls home, teaches yoga, runs retreats, practices traditional Odissi dance and is enjoying watching the laws of nature unfold in her 3-year-old.

In the pipeline is her KUSH Ayurvedic rejuvenation center at Ubud's Yoga Barn, which will start offering Ayurvedic services in May, something Uma believes must be intertwined with a yoga practice. She is also designing an advanced Yoga and Ayurveda teacher training course, details of which will be released on her website www.yogawithuma.com and

COURTESY OF UMA INDER

sacredarts.org.

"Ayurveda was always the support system for the yogi. It is the science of life, and the art of enjoyment as a human being. The most beautiful thing for me about Ayurveda is that it is all based on common sense. While yoga is the joy of absolute freedom and scaling new heights of consciousness, Ayurveda is about plumbing the depths of nature."

Speaking of which, were the magical heights of consciousness she sought in her twenties ever discovered?

"I realize as a co-parent of a 3 year old, surrounded by the ordinary of the mundane, that the most extraordinary miracle of all is the profound genius of the human being in its capacity to grow. It is said that even the gods are jealous of humans, for they are already perfected, and we alone have the potential to scale the depths and heights of feeling pain and pleasure as we pave the way for unlimited realizations."

Meet her in Jakarta this September ... and decide for yourself.

SLASH

Guitarist finally goes solo for new album

Christine Kearney

REUTERS/LOS ANGELES

He's been a name in rock that has stood alone for decades, but on Tuesday guitarist Slash only just released his first solo album.

Simply called *Slash*, the album features 13 original songs with a host of guest singers including rockers such as Ozzy Osbourne, Iggy Pop and Chris Cornell to more pop-orientated acts including singer Fergie and Adam Levine from Maroon 5. The first single, *By The Sword*, features singer Andrew Stockdale from the band Wolfmother.

"I just got to that point where I actually needed to do something on my own," he told Reuters this week. "It's one of the few things that I hadn't done in my musical career."

The 44-year-old, who made his name as the former lead guitarist for Guns N' Roses and parlayed that success to co-found Velvet Revolver, said he felt inspired to make the album to master his own destiny rather than relying on any particular group of musicians.

"I thought 'You know, that would be a fun thing to do, where I get a bunch of different people to guest on my record as opposed to me appearing on everybody else's records,'" he said.

Both the guitarist and fans were surprised by the crossover talent of pop singers such as Fergie, with whom Slash made a surprise appearance at a recent Black Eyed Peas concert singing a version of the Guns N' Roses song *Sweet Child O' Mine*.

"She has this amazing rock 'n' roll voice and she's sort of a closet rock 'n' roll singer," he said, adding that before now he had never performed the hit 1988 song with anyone but



REUTERS/RICK WILKING

his old band. "She's got a lot of balls. For a female rock singer she's one of the best women I've ever heard."

Even though the British-born, Los-Angeles-based guitarist, whose real name is Saul Hudson, handled most of the songwriting duties and music arranging for his album, he did not single out any one song as his favorite.

"It's all pretty much in the spirit of rock 'n' roll, even the slower songs, even the ballads," Slash said.

Regarding his other projects, Slash said Velvet Revolver would return to auditioning for a new singer and "reconvene" after he spends six months on a worldwide tour.

And as for his legacy, he downplayed his own reputation as one of the best guitarists of all time.

"I never think of the word 'legend' you know, unless somebody else says it," he said. "And then at that point it is almost laughable."

TINA FEY & STEVE CARELL

'Date Night' hits home for comic actors

Dana Ford

REUTERS/LOS ANGELES

Strip clubs? Crooked cops? A topless, muscled-up Mark Wahlberg? Not exactly typical date fare for a sweet couple from the suburbs, but for Tina Fey and Steve Carell, it seemed just about right.

The two comic actors star in upcoming movie *Date Night*, opening across the United States on Friday, in which they play a married couple from New Jersey out for a romantic evening in New York City when events spin wildly out of control.

Fey, the creator and star of television comedy *30 Rock*, and Carell, who has won legions of fans in TV's *The Office*, said the premise of *Date Night* sounded familiar because they are not too different from their characters.

"The idea that it was a married couple, who are grown people, appealed to me because I felt like... that's what we are in real life," said Fey, 39.

She and Carell, 47, are both married, both have children and both said it was easy to empathize with their onscreen couple's struggle to stay connected to each other and to the world at large as they raise a family.

In fact, specialists in human behavior have long advised couples to carve out a chunk of time for themselves, leave the kids at home and hit the town. They say just being around each other probably isn't enough to keep a romantic fire burning.

Helen Fisher of Rutgers University, who has studied the effect of novelty on relationships, said what is needed sometimes is a night that shakes things up.

"Any kind of novelty, good or bad, drives up dopamine in the brain and can push you over the threshold toward feelings of romantic love," said Fisher. "So adventurous mishaps are certainly good triggers for feelings of romance."

Claire Foster (Fey) and her husband Phil (Carell), are a couple look-



REUTERS/JESSICA RINALDI

ing for a trigger. They have two kids. Claire is a working mom and Phil an understanding husband who tries to spice up their lives by taking Claire on a date to an exclusive Manhattan restaurant.

The night begins promisingly as they snag a table by posing as another couple. What they don't know is that the other couple has a little computer flash drive that carries pictures of a bigtime politician in a compromising position.

That little drive is wanted by mobsters, who are on the run from the cops, who themselves are of dubious distinction. And what started as a nice night out, descends into a perilous, and funny, excursion into a dangerous underworld of lies, deceit, car crashes and strip clubs. Wahlberg plays a security expert whom the Fosters recruit to help.

While Carell can laugh at the adventures of Phil and Claire, he and his wife rarely get that wild on their

own "date nights".

"As most people with kids know, you pay for it if you go out late and whoop it up. The kids are up at 5:30 the next day — and so are you," he said.

Fey echoed that sentiment and said she and her husband are typically low-key when out on the town together.

"Maybe once a month, my husband and I get out. And it is — it's a massive effort to get a babysitter and if we get 10 blocks from our house, it's a miracle," she said.

And while the occasional "date night" is a good thing by all accounts, ways to keep a marriage on track can be as varied as the couple, Carell said. For he and his wife of 10 years, a little laughter goes a long way.

"We just have fun with one another and we never forget to make fun of ourselves and not take it all too seriously," he said, then smiled before adding, "and amazing lovemaking".