

HAY FESTIVALS

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FESTIVAL REPORT



HAY FESTIVAL MALDIVES

14–17 October 2010

in association with **KUONI QATAR**
AIRWAYS القطرية



ENVIRONMENT



CULTURE



MUSIC

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Thank You



MALDIVIAN PERFORMER DANCING ON SONEVA GILI



HAY FESTIVAL MALDIVES 2010

“Three years ago, this Festival would have been banned by the dictatorship, and up until today, the public have never been allowed on this, the Presidential Retreat Island of Aarah...”

THESE WERE THE WORDS OF A FORMER POLITICAL PRISONER who visited the inaugural Hay Festival Maldives which ran from 14 to 17 October 2010. With a very recent past of political and cultural suppression and facing an uncertain future on the frontline of climate change, the Maldives proved to be a unique place to bring together a collection of local and international speakers to debate cultural heritage, language, writing and the environment.

The festival launched with a free musical evening on the capital island, Male, with four local bands playing to an audience of several thousand on Thursday 14 October.

The events then moved to Aarah, the Presidential Retreat Island, and a whole series of debates, discussions, films and music were held in three venues on Friday 15 and Saturday 16 October, including Abdulla Sodiq and Habeeba Hussain Habeeb on Maldivian Folklore, Peter Godwin resonating with his stories of Mugabe, a celebration of traditional sung poetry, Raiveru, and Jung Chang with her experiences of growing up in a cultural revolution.

There was a strong climate change theme with the Environment Minister Mohamed Aslam announcing the Maldives' application to UNESCO for the designation of the entire Baa Atoll as a protected biosphere reserve. Mark Lynas, the President's Climate Change Advisor, talked about the challenges of the 10-year carbon neutral plan; Tim Smit about the Eden Project's involvement in the Maldives; and Ian McEwan discussed his award-winning novel Solar. To close the day, Paris-based Maldivian DJ Ravin whipped up a storm on Saturday evening to a sell-out audience.



JUNG CHANG

On Sunday 17 October a series of workshops was held, mainly in schools on Male, to bring students into contact with authors. Ian McEwan talked to a school group about his early work and starting out as a writer, and Monty Don ran a workshop on the island of Soneva Gili in their organic garden with 15 school children from Male.

Hay Festival Maldives represented the first time an event of its kind had ever been held in the Maldives. The Festival as a whole achieved a sell-out audience, and involved a very strong youth element.



DHIVEHI RAIVARU
PERFORMER
(TRADITIONAL
MALDIVIAN POETRY)



THE FESTIVAL IN NUMBERS

4 days

4 venues

31 events

All **2,500**
tickets
sold out



1 President's Island – opened to the public for the first time ever

Attended by **2,500** visitors, with huge participation from the local area

35 ferries to ship audiences to the President's Island

Over **95** dedicated articles online

Over **50** participating artists

Over **30** international articles in major publications

1st ever public waste recycling scheme



THE FESTIVAL IN WORDS

“THE HAY FESTIVAL IS A PLACE WHERE THE CULTURAL, political and social issues of our age are discussed, examined and explored. An up-and-coming young democracy with the most beautiful beaches on Earth; the Maldives is the perfect backdrop for Hay.”

President Mohamed Nasheed

“THE HAY FESTIVAL AT AARAH LEFT ME IN A KIND OF EXCITEMENT – a life force that gives one the ‘WOW!’ experience. Very few Maldivians actually mingle with foreigners, and vice versa. I saw that the festival helped bring them closer.” **Aminath Arif, *Minivan News***



AUDIENCE ON
AARAH ISLAND

“A FESTIVAL OF IDEAS AND CREATIVITY IS WHAT MALDIVES NEEDS, WHAT WE need. This is like a dream come true.” **Festival-goer**



TIM SMIT TALKS TO BRITISH
COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE

“THE HAY FESTIVAL: THE LITERARY institution to save the planet. The Hay Festival’s visit to the Maldives was exotic, inspiring and surprising.”

Gaby Wood, *The Telegraph*

“AS THEY HOOTED AND CHEERED his name, Ravin could be seen on stage shaking his head with amazement at what was probably one of the DJ’s most enthusiastic audiences.”

Donna Richardson, *Maldives Traveller*

“THE HAY FESTIVAL HAS HELPED TO open up the culture of the Maldives to the rest of the world.”

**Naomi Wilkinson,
*Head of Marketing, Kuoni UK***



THE FESTIVAL IN THE MEDIA

HAY FESTIVAL MALDIVES 2010 ACHIEVED A MINIMUM OF 175 pieces of media coverage, including previews and reviews in major magazines, online, and both national and regional newspapers.

INTERNATIONAL MEDIA INCLUDED:

The Daily Telegraph
Conde Nast
House & Garden

MALDIVES MEDIA INCLUDED:

Minivan News
Haveeru
Maldives Traveller
MNBC

ONLINE COVERAGE INCLUDED:

Telegraph Online, Daily Mail Online, Conde Nast Traveller, Guardian Online, UK Reuters Online, 1Travel World, EGlobal Travel News, Travel Daily Asia, Lanka Business Online, The Bookseller



THE FESTIVAL IN IMAGES



TOP LEFT TO BOTTOM RIGHT: SIGNPOSTING; DISEMBARKING ON AARAH ISLAND FOR THE FIRST TIME; DAVID AMESS MP, KAMALESH SHARMA, COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY GENERAL, FESTIVAL DIRECTOR ANDY FRYERS & DR FAIZAL, MALDIVES HIGH COMMISSIONER TO THE UK; A RAPT AUDIENCE; TIM SMIT, ANNALENA MCAFEE & IAN MCEWAN, PETER GODWIN & JUNG CHANG; MALDIVIAN BUFFET; MONTY DON; MALDIVIAN CITIZENS CONTEMPLATING AARAH HARBOUR FROM THE INSIDE.



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