AFRICANS IN INDIA
From Slaves to Generals to Rulers

THIS GROUND-BREAKING exhibition retraces the history of Africans in the Indian subcontinent from the 16th to the 20th centuries. The show features over 100 photographic reproductions of paintings and contemporary photographs documenting the lives and achievements of some of the East African diaspora in India, known as Habhis and Siddis. Generals, commanders, admirals, prime ministers, and rulers, East Africans — over the centuries — have greatly distinguished themselves in India. They have written a story unparalleled in the rest of the world — that of enslaved Africans attaining the pinnacle of military and political authority not only in a foreign country but also on another continent.

The success was theirs, but it is also a strong testimony to the open-mindedness of a society in which they were a small religious and ethnic minority, originally of low status. As foreigners and Muslims, Africans ruled over indigenous Hindu, Muslim and Jewish populations.

Besides appearing in written documents, the Africans have been immortalised in the rich paintings of different eras, states, and styles that form an important component of Indian culture. Because of their high positions, they were captured in vivid and exquisite portraits as principal subjects or in the immediate vicinity of non-African rulers.

As rulers, city planners, and architects, the Africans have left an impressive historical and architectural legacy that attest to their determination, skills, and intellectual, cultural, military and political savvy. The imposing forts, mosques, mausoleums, and other edifices they built — some more than 500 years ago — still grace the Indian landscape. The exhibition was curated by Dr Sylviane A Diouf of the New York Public Library's Schomburg-Mellon Humanities Summer Institute and Kenneth X Robbins, who is a collector and expert in Indian art.

- From 8 March to 6 May at Charles B Wang Center, Zodiac Gallery, 100 Nicolls Road, Stony Brook, NY 11794, wangcenter.org

A THIRTY GENRE
Beautiful Youth in Japan

A THIRD GENRE
Beautiful Youths in Japanese Print is devoted to a portrayal of wakashu, beautiful youths — an 'in-between' gender occupying a complex position in the social and sexual hierarchy of Edo period (1603-1868).

Four hundred years ago in Japan, a complex social structure existed with a gender involved in almost every person's biological sex position in the sexual hierarchy, and appearances were considered fundamental. To this structure were youths wakashu. Neither 'adolescences' (each a si gender), Wakahushi...

ART IN A TIME OF CHAOS
Masterworks from Six Dynasties China

THE SIX DYNASTIES period, from the 3rd to 6th centuries, was one of the most dynamic periods in Chinese art history. During this period the European Renaissance in the impact it had on artistic creativity and the celebration of individual expression.

They are the Northern Wei, Eastern Wei, Northern Qi, Western Wei, and Northern Zhou. Artworks have been borrowed from the Nanjing Municipal Museum, Nanjing Municipal Museum, and Shao Museum, Nanjing...