

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contact: Tony Baisley, Center for Spirituality & Healing, 612-624-2141
Alice Larsson, Buddha Prince Publicist, 651-224-1673

The Buddha Prince: A Journey Through the Extraordinary Life of the Dalai Lama *Free performances in New York and Minneapolis this fall commemorate Tibet's "50 Years in Exile"*

MINNEAPOLIS, MN and NEW YORK, NY (August 4, 2009)—At the request of the Dalai Lama's Office of Tibet, TigerLion Arts, a Minneapolis-based production company, will present *The Buddha Prince* in New York City's Central Park (West 103rd Street entrance) over Labor Day weekend, September 4-7, 2009. The cast and crew will then return to Minneapolis for performances in Powderhorn Park (NW corner of 15th Avenue South and East 35th Street) from September 17-21, 2009. This year's performances will honor Tibet's "50 Years in Exile," a celebration of the survival of Tibetan culture.

The Buddha Prince is an outdoor "walking play," which takes the audience on a journey through nature as scenes unfold around them. A play for all ages, *The Buddha Prince* celebrates the extraordinary life and teachings of His Holiness, the 14th Dalai Lama, and is narrated with excerpts from his own teachings and autobiographies. The play covers the Dalai Lama's early life in a free Tibet to his escape into India. Portrayed by a diverse group of 25 performers – over half of them Tibetan – the story is told with a cultural mix of physical theater, mask, puppetry and traditional Tibetan music and dance.

The Buddha Prince is free to the public, with a suggested donation. Net proceeds benefit the Tibetan American Foundation of Minnesota, the Tibet Fund and the Tibetan Community of New York and New Jersey, the play's hosts.

The Buddha Prince was created by Minnesota native Markell Kiefer (writer/director/executive producer – TigerLion Arts) as a celebration of Tibetan heritage and an offering for peace. Raised as a Tibetan Buddhist in the Shambhala Community, Kiefer received her Bachelor of Arts in Religion and Environmental Ethics from Middlebury College (Vermont) and a Master of Fine Arts in Lecoq-based physical theater from Naropa University (Colorado). After two years with Circle in the Square Theatre School in New York, she directed and performed with theater companies throughout the U.S., including the Children's Theatre Company in Minneapolis.

- MORE -

The play was first created for the Dalai Lama's visit to the Twin Cities in 2001, when it performed at the Peace Garden in Minneapolis. Since then, the play and score have been further developed and re-mounted by Kiefer and her team of collaborators, including co-producer Tyson Forbes (TigerLion Arts), in Los Angeles (2004), Minneapolis (2005) and New York City (2005), celebrating the Dalai Lama's visit to those cities.

A true example of living art, *The Buddha Prince* continues to evolve, now featuring traditional Tibetan song and dance, influenced by music composer/choreographer/performer, Tenzin Ngawang, head teacher at the Tibetan American Foundation of Minnesota, and New York-based Tibetan music composer and filmmaker, Ngawang Choephel, both of whom trained at the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts in Dharamsala, India. "This is ever evolving, living art and has always been an opportunity for me to connect with the Dalai Lama's teachings and to practice my own spiritual path while connecting with others in nature," said Kiefer. "But, above all, *The Buddha Prince* offers a message of peace. Peace that each of us can manifest and create in the world, to change the world."

The Buddha Prince performances are co-presented with the University of Minnesota's Center for Spirituality & Healing, supporting the Center's new Arts and Healing initiative.

Editor's Note: To schedule interviews, please contact Tony Baisley at baisl001@umn.edu (612-624-2141) or Alice Larsson at larssoncreative@msn.com (651-224-1673). Video clips, production and cast photos, and more information at www.buddhaprince.org

###

SCHEDULED PERFORMANCES:

New York City

Dates: September 4-7, 2009

Times: Friday at 5:30 pm

Saturday/Sunday/Monday at 2 & 5:30 pm

Location: Central Park, NYC
(West 103rd St entrance)

Minneapolis

Dates: September 17- 21, 2009

Times: Weekdays at 5:30 pm

Saturday/Sunday at 2 & 5:30 pm

Location: Powderhorn Park, Minneapolis
(NW corner of 15th Ave S and E 35th St)

WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING ABOUT *THE BUDDHA PRINCE*:

"A complex story told simply and elegantly, joyously and yet with gut-wrenching sadness. Please come back and do it again."

- Johanna Demetrakas, Producer/Editor of 2004 *A&E Biography: Richard Gere*

"Brilliantly choreographed, staged and scored...told with charm and passion."

- Academy Award winner Victoria Mudd, producer/co-writer of the award-winning film *Tibet: Cry of the Snow Lion*

"Magical...extraordinary...whimsical and thoughtful."

- Steve Capra, The New England Entertainment Digest, New York in Review Staff Writer

"The Buddha Prince is a walk in the park."

- Kristin Tillotson, Star Tribune, Staff Writer

"See The Buddha Prince in this lifetime."

- Nancy Sartor, Pulse of the Twin Cities, Staff Writer

"You will experience a different culture - one that is filled with music, dance and color."

- Elizabeth Lopez, ReviewPlays.com

"The whole play is kind."

- Peter Shay, The Philosopher's Almanac

"The flute-playing yaks are simply wonderful."

- Barbara Ellis, resident, Pasadena, CA

"Theatre at its best."

- Emily Voorhees, Writer, Elephant Magazine and Tribeca Film Festival