



## The Compassionate Mandala Tour

Celebrating HH The 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama Receiving  
The Congressional Gold Medal

Featuring Tenzin Choegyal

Presented by

Do Ngak Kunphen Ling

*Tibetan Buddhist Center for Universal Peace*

### Overview of Event

Of all the artistic traditions of Tibetan Buddhism the ritual of painting with sand is one of the most unique and exquisite. Witness the creation of this sacred art as it unfolds over the event. A series of workshops and guided meditations are also scheduled. The week will culminate with the dissolution of the mandala (a reminder of the profound Buddhist concept of impermanence) and a concert with the traditional Tibetan chanting of the world-renowned Namgyal monks from His Holiness the Dalai Lama's private monastery in Dharamsala, India and Tenzin Choegyal whose voice and musical talents are uniquely beautiful as he draws on his traditional Tibetan roots to create music which expresses his thoroughly modern life.

The powerful combination of a beautiful *concert* with traditional Tibetan monastic chanting, songs, modern rhythms and riffs, a *sand mandala creation and workshops and guided meditations* creates the 2007 *Compassionate Mandala Tour*. The Compassionate Mandala Tour will raise awareness for the beautiful Tibetan culture, the Namgyal monks exiled after the Chinese invasion of Tibet, and The Tibetan Children's Village in Dharamsala, India. Please join in this celebration.

### Audience Experience – Concert

The famed Tibetan Buddhist tradition of monastic chanting is an important part of the Tibetan musical experience. The Namgyal monks will perform their unique version of this singing technique. They will play traditional Tibetan instruments, such as 10-foot long dung-chen horns, drums, bells, cymbals and gyaling trumpets.

Tenzin Choegyal's music and its innovative composition reflect the risks he takes with rhythm and structure. Playing traditional Tibetan musical instruments and joined by the chanting monks, Tenzin successfully challenges the traditional Tibetan musical norms.

The result is an unforgettable and moving concert - perfect for all ages - filled with sounds that calm and restore the soul.



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### Audience Experience - Workshops

Workshop participants will witness the creation of an intricate and beautiful sand mandala, followed by mandala sand art workshops where they will learn to use the same traditional Tibetan tools. Guided meditations, talks on Tibetan culture and traditional Tibetan singing classes will also be offered. *Please see details below.*

### Sand Mandala Creation

The creation and destruction of the mandala is a reminder of the profound Buddhist concept of impermanence. To the exiled Namgyal monks the mandala is a particularly poignant and important ritual art form. Of all the artistic traditions of Buddhism, that ritual of painting with colored sand is one of the most unique and exquisite. In Tibetan, this art is called *dul-tson-kyil-khor*, which literally means "mandala of colored powders." Formed of a traditional prescribed iconography that includes geometric shapes and a multitude of ancient spiritual symbols, the sand-painted mandala is used as a tool for consecrating the earth and its inhabitants.

According to Buddhist history, the purpose, meanings, and techniques involved in the spiritual art of sand mandala painting were taught by Sakyamuni Buddha in the 6th-century B.C. in India. This tradition has been preserved over the past 2500 years in an unbroken transmission from master to disciple.

The Tibetan word for mandala is *kilkhor*, which means "center of the circle with exterior walls and surrounding environment." Millions of grains of brightly colored sand, placed with great skill and patience using a metal funnel called a *chak phur*, form the intricate and beautiful geometric designs of the sand mandala sacred art form.



*Mandala (kilkhor)*



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### **(Continued) Audience Experience - Workshops**

Tibetans believe that all who participate and watch the mandala process accumulate merit. The sand is traditionally made from ground precious stones. Since each grain of sand is charged with the blessings of the ritual process, the entire sand mandala embodies a vast store of spiritual energy.

Tour attendees will be able to observe these monks in creating this art form, as they painstakingly create the mandala, learn about its meaning and participate in the stirring dissolution ceremony where the design is destroyed and ritually returned to nature. Observers who are present for the destruction of this beautiful mandala describe it as moving and uplifting.

#### *Sand Mandala Workshops*

Participants in these workshops will learn about the meaning and history of the sand mandala. The Namgyal monks will teach traditional techniques using the *chak phur* to create designs with the colored sand, allowing participants themselves to experience fully both the exquisiteness and difficulty of this art form. These workshops can be adapted for any age group.

#### *Guided Meditation*

Several mornings during the tour, the monks will guide workshop participants through traditional Tibetan Buddhist meditation techniques including breathing, body placement and thought awareness. Stress and anxiety are reduced leaving participants refreshed and re-energized in a beautiful way to start the day.

#### *Tibetan Singing Workshops*

Tenzin Choegyal leads an innovative workshop in the Tibetan style of vocal projection sharing his knowledge of the technique and the stories told through songs of Tibet's nomadic people. Participants learn simple Tibetan folk songs and investigate the ancient Tibetan art of "Lama Mani" dating from the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The Lama Mani tradition is the telling of Buddhist parables through song. The songs were performed by wandering storytellers who traveled from village to village, drawing on their own often humble origins to relate to people from all backgrounds.



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### **(Continued) Audience Experience - Workshops**

#### *Painting Workshops*

The tour will also include Tibetan Thangka workshops. Thangka painting is a uniquely Tibetan tradition that evolved between the 7th and 12th centuries. A spiritual and religious expression as much as an art form, the process of learning to paint thangkas is rigorous and requires extended concentration. In this workshop, lasting several sessions, participants will learn the history of Thangka painting, the basic form requirements and brush techniques for painting a Buddha. Each workshop participant will have the opportunity to paint his or her own Buddha. Participants will need to provide their own art supplies.

#### **History of Namgyal Monastery**

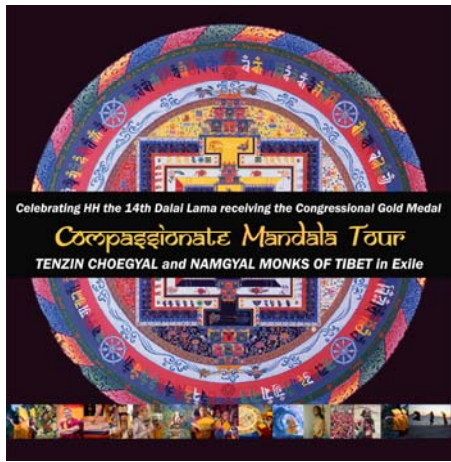
In 1575 Sonam Gyatso, the Third Dalai Lama, officially founded a monastery, which later came to be known as Namgyal Dratsang (Victorious Monastery). Since its inception, the monastery has assisted the Dalai Lamas in their public religious activities and performed ritual prayer ceremonies for the welfare of Tibet. From the beginning, the monastery has been a center of learning, contemplation and meditation on the vast and profound Buddhist treatises. Namgyal monastery is nonsectarian and maintains ritual practices and teachings of the four main lineages of Tibetan Buddhism.

#### **Namgyal Monks in Exile**

After the Chinese invasion of Tibet and the 1959 popular uprising, His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama and one hundred thousand Tibetans fled to India and Nepal, among them 55 monks from Namgyal. Namgyal Monastery was re-established just outside the residence of His Holiness in Dharamsala, India, where the Namgyal artistic and intellectual traditions are being preserved and continued today.

As it was in Tibet, the novice monks must first pass a series of challenging entrance examinations and, if accepted, undertake years of study. Because it is the private monastery of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the monks have less personal time, they require a more streamlined study program focusing on the essentials of sutra and tantra. In relation to these special requirements, His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama has introduced many innovations, including a new syllabus and program of study, which has become a model for other Tibetan monasteries.





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### **(Continued) Namgyal Monks in Exile**

In addition to the intensive program of study, students debate and are instructed in the creation of sand mandalas, butter sculpture, ritual performance, music, chanting, dance and basic literary skills in Tibetan and English. The program takes thirteen years to complete, at which time a "Master of Sutra and Tantra" degree, which is unique to Namgyal, is bestowed upon those who successfully pass the final examinations. Each monk must also complete a two to three month meditation retreat for each of the principal deities and protectors, in order to qualify to perform their rituals. The cycle of required retreats might take up to six years to complete.

### **Namgyal – Cultural Ambassadors to the West**

The opportunity to accompany the Dalai Lama on his visits abroad has enabled the Namgyal monks to participate in numerous presentations of Tibetan sacred art and dance in the United States, Europe and Japan. In the summer of 1988, monks from Namgyal Monastery created a sand mandala at the American Museum of Natural History in New York. Over 50,000 people came to watch this process during the six week demonstration.

Historically, the creation of sacred sand mandalas was always carried out in secret but the Dalai Lama has now given permission for the public to witness these sacred arts. In the summer of 1989, Namgyal monks assisted His Holiness with a Kalachakra initiation in Los Angeles. While one group of monks performed the preliminary rituals, including the creation of a sand mandala and two ritual dances, another group of four monks created a duplicate mandala at the Los Angeles Museum of Natural History.

Since then Namgyal monks have created sand mandalas at other museums and galleries, including the San Francisco Asian Art Museum, the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art at Cornell University, the IBM Gallery in New York City, setting records for attendance at many locations.

### **The Tibetan Children's Village**

Following the Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1950 and His Holiness the Dalai Lama's flight to India in 1959, it was quickly apparent that one of the most critical needs of Tibetan refugees was finding a means to care for the many children who had been orphaned or separated from their families during the arduous escape from their homeland. His Holiness promptly recognized



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### **(Continued) The Tibetan Children's Village**

that the future of Tibet and its people depended upon the younger generation. With this in mind and out of concern for the miserable conditions under which so many children were suffering, His Holiness proposed that a centre for destitute children be established in Dharamsala, India.

On 17 May 1960, fifty-one children arrived from the road construction camps in Jammu, ill and malnourished. Mrs. Tsering Dolma Takla, the elder sister of His Holiness, volunteered to look after them. Initially these children were assigned to members of the Dalai Lama's entourage, but before long the Government of India offered its assistance, renting Conium House to accommodate all the children together. At that time, the centre was under the name "Nursery for Tibetan Refugee Children."

From its humble beginning forty six years ago, Tibetan Children's Village has today become a thriving, integrated educational community for destitute Tibetan children in exile, as well as for hundreds of those escaping from Tibet in recent years. It has established branches in India extending from Ladakh in the North to Bylakuppe in the South, with over 16,178 children under its care.

Tibetan Children's Village bears an enormous responsibility for the destiny of Tibetan children. Today, young people from TCV serve the Tibetan community in different capacities and, at the same time, there are a few children who have not fared so well. In this respect, extensive efforts are being made to further improve the lives of these Tibetan children.

**The mission** of Tibetan Children's Village (TCV [www.tcv.org.in](http://www.tcv.org.in)) - an integrated charitable organization - is to ensure that all Tibetan children under its care achieve a firm cultural identity and become self-reliant and contributing members of the community and the world at large by providing:

- parental care and love to children in need.
- the best of both modern and Tibetan education.
- a competent and dedicated staff.
- a child-centered learning environment conducive to independent growth.
- learning opportunities to preserve, promote and renew the rich Tibetan cultural heritage.
- provide suitable and effective life and career guidance for social and citizenship skills.

"From the day we became refugees, our basic objective was to rise to the very place from where we have fallen down." - **H.H. the Dalai Lama**



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### **Significance of the Tour's Message**

The Compassionate Mandala tour is focused on the need for all of us to recognize the importance of compassion for our fellow humans, all other life forms, the earth and the self. During this time of intense global unrest, learning compassion is an essential avenue for peace.

**"...It is our collective responsibility to protect and nurture the global family, to support its weaker members, and to preserve and tend to the environment in which we all live." - H.H. the XIV Dalai Lama**

### **Support of Tibetan Exiled Monks and the Tibetan Children's Village**

The Compassionate Mandala tour will raise awareness for Tibetan monks in exile. Tenzin Choegyal identifies Tibetan Buddhist monasteries and takes monks on tour to create the mandalas and share their philosophy and culture. The tour will also raise awareness of the Tibetan Children's Village in Dharamsala India, the school for Tibetan refugee children that Tenzin Choegyal attended as a child.

The Compassionate Mandala tour provides a rare opportunity to meet and hear a musician and his countrymen whose immense artistic talents are matched only by their humanitarian efforts toward world peace.

### **Support Note from HH the Dalai Lama's Office in Canberra, Regarding the Australian Tour Spring 2007**

*To whom it may concern,*

*I am extremely happy to learn that The Compassionate Mandala Tour 2007 is being undertaken by Tibetan Singer Mr. Tenzin Choegyal based in Brisbane and Monks from the Tashi Lhunpo Monastery of the Panchen Lama based in South India to honor the visit of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's visit to Australia in 2007.*

*Any assistance to make their tour a success will be highly appreciated by the Tibet Information Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Australia.*

*Tenzin Phuntsok Atisha  
Representative of HH the Dalai Lama*



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### **Do Ngak Kunphen Ling Tibetan Buddhist Center for Universal Peace (DNKL)**

The Compassionate Mandala tour in the US is presented by DNKL. Under the guidance of Gyumed Khensur Rinpoche Lobsang Jampa, Do Ngak Kunphen Ling Tibetan Buddhist Center for Universal Peace, located in Redding, CT, is dedicated to providing pure and authentic teachings of the Buddha in a beautiful, rural setting. According to our tradition, Dharma teachings are always free. DNKL draws on the spiritual tradition of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the humanitarian visions of Maurice Pate.

DNKL conducts classes on Buddhist philosophy and meditation on a regular basis open to people of all religious traditions and to those with no particular religious affiliation. It offers systematic and graduated levels of training in Buddhist moral discipline, meditative concentration, and transformative wisdom so that participants can incorporate such thought and practice in their daily lives.

The center also conducts short and long-term retreats, facilitates solitary retreats, hosts public talks, spiritual festivals, and other community events where families can participate. DNKL engages in humanitarian activities such as helping Tibetan monks and children with basic education and health needs. [www.dnkldharma.org](http://www.dnkldharma.org)

### **Contact Information:**

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For more information and Tenzin Choegyal's bio please visit [www.compassionatemandala.org](http://www.compassionatemandala.org),  
[www.tenzinchoegyal.com](http://www.tenzinchoegyal.com)