



2008 World Festival of Sacred Music – Los Angeles September 13th – 28th

**The 4th World Festival of Sacred Music-Los Angeles
marked by artistic accomplishment & rich diversity of sacred heritages in our city**

For 16 days in September, the 2008 World Festival of Sacred Music–Los Angeles will present nearly a thousand artists performing in 41 sacred events of music and movement throughout Los Angeles, crossing neighborhoods and cultural, religious and ideological boundaries in the spirit of peace.

The fourth WFSM–LA will fill the city's historic landmark theaters, churches, temples and outdoor spaces with renowned international and local artists expressing many diverse forms of musical creativity, from grass-roots folk music to jazz and formal European and Asian classical traditions.

Tickets for each event are available separately. Festival information is available at www.festivalofsacredmusic.org/calendar.html.

Occurring once every three years, the WFSM–LA has become a global music destination since its inception in 1999, following a call from the Dalai Lama to mark the millennium with a message of peace, cultural understanding and spirituality. The goal was to present the festival on four continents.

Building on the success of the "Americas" festival in 1999 the Los Angeles organizing partners — the UCLA Center for Intercultural Performance, the EarthWays Foundation and the Foundation for World Arts — committed to the creation of a new festival in 2002 and every three years thereafter. In 1999, 2002 and 2005, this noncommercial, community-oriented, citywide festival had a combined estimated attendance of 120,000.

"Through music, each person in the audience can expand their definition of who they are as members of this city and go beyond the familiar, exploring the potential of intercultural and

interfaith collaboration," said festival director Judy Mitoma, a UCLA professor of world arts and cultures and director of the UCLA Center for Intercultural Performance. "Our goal is for the events to invite seemingly unconventional partnerships between professional artists and community performers and between traditional and experimental artists to encourage community building that transcends borders."

Mitoma added: "We are continually trying to build performances that encourage collaboration between artists who normally work independently. We seek to highlight artists from around the world, as well as provide meaningful contexts for local artists who work tirelessly in our own city."

The 2008 WFSM–LA will open with a gala concert on Saturday, Sept. 13, at 7 p.m. at UCLA's Royce Hall featuring a spectacular lineup of international and local artists, including Chirgilchin, Master Throat Singers from Tuva (near Mongolia); Rupayan, an eight-member Sufi and Qawwali folk music ensemble from the Thar Desert of Rajasthan, India; Waldemar Bastos, the great voice of contemporary Angola, who lives in exile in Portugal and combines Afropop, Portuguese *fado* and Brazilian influences; Emiko Susilo performing Javanese songs with American jazz guitarist Rob Levit; and the Lian Ensemble performing classical Persian music.

Concerts on Sunday, Sept. 14, will include one at the Pacific Asia Museum in Pasadena with music by Karjam Saeji, the son of nomadic yak herders in eastern Tibet, and another at Temple Kol Tikvah in Woodland Hills featuring cellist Michael Fitzpatrick.

Other concerts will feature vocalist Vanessa Paloma exploring the common ground of Arab and Jewish culture on Monday, Sept. 15, at the Barnsdall Gallery Theatre in Los Angeles; A. J. Racy and the Mystical Legacies Ensemble on Tuesday, Sept. 16, at the Nate Holden Performing Arts Center in Los Angeles; mystical Kurdish music by Heyraneh on Wednesday, Sept. 17, at the Earth and Sky Lodge in Los Angeles; Sephardic music from Stephani Valadez on Thursday, Sept. 18, at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles; Mediterranean music by Greek-born vocalist Savina Yannatou on Thursday, Sept. 18, at the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles; and Sufi music from Turkey and Pakistan by Oscar-winning Israeli composer Yuval Ron and his ensemble of Jewish, Christian and Arab musicians on Thursday, Sept. 25, at the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles.

Dance performances will include classical Cambodian dance by the Khmer Arts Academy on Sunday, Sept. 14, at the Museum of Latin American Art in Long Beach; South Indian classical dance by Mythili Prakash on Tuesday, Sept. 16, at the Nate Holden Performing Arts Center in Los Angeles; and Butoh artist Oguri on Friday, Sept. 19, at the Aratani/Japan America Theater in Los Angeles.

Choral music will take center stage when three of Los Angeles' best chorales come together for the first time on Saturday, Sept. 20, at the Warner Grand Theatre in San Pedro, offering a

varied repertoire of sacred music from Europe (Zhena Folk Chorus, performing a cappella), Asia (Philippine Chamber Singers) and the United States (Cappella Gloriana ensemble).

On Sunday, Sept. 21, events include the Los Angeles Electric 8, a group of classically trained young guitarists, which will perform works by Mendelssohn and chorales by Bach and others at the Armory Center for the Arts in Pasadena; the Los Angeles Public Library's ALOUD series' presentation of the Shakers n' Bakers, a New York-based ensemble that performs reinterpretations of Shaker "vision" songs; and the First A.M.E. Church of Los Angeles' presentation of a performance by the Brookinares Gospel Choir.

On Friday, Sept. 26, at the Fowler Museum at UCLA, the avant-garde String Theory ensemble will transform the outdoor courtyard amphitheater into a giant, playable musical instrument to make an astonishing blend of music and dance. Also on Sept. 26, Lesa Terry and the Women's Jazz Orchestra will offer a unique interpretation of symphonic and vocal sacred music at the First United Methodist Church of Santa Monica.

On Saturday, Sept. 27, West African *kora* musician Prince Diabaté, who descends from the ancestral line of Guinean griots, and Suzanne Teng & Mystic Journey will perform at the Madrid Theatre in Canoga Park. Also on Sept. 27, Italian saxophonist and vocalist Enzo Avitabile will perform at the Getty Center in Los Angeles.

The 2008 WFSM-LA will conclude with a free ceremony on Sunday, Sept. 28, from 3 p.m. to sunset on the beach south of the Santa Monica Pier. This event will feature 300 artists who will present sacred traditions from six world cultures. Among the artists scheduled to perform are Banda Juvenil Solaga from Oaxaca, Mexico, and the Pasadena Scottish Pipes and Drums Ensemble. One hundred dancers from several *halaus* in Los Angeles will chant and dance on the sands in reverence of Kanaloa, the Hawaiian deity of the ocean. Swing Brazil with Viver Brasil will lead a celebration of Yemanjá, the Afro-Brazilian sea goddess.

There will also be drummers and dancers from Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali and Ghana, who will be led by Dafra, a dance and drumming ensemble from the Mandingue tradition of West Africa. The traditional canoe of the Tongva (Ti'at Society) will be paddled beyond the breakwaters, carrying offerings to the sea and sacred blessings to the four corners of the Earth, guided by the explosive rhythms of the Agape Choir and a large community drum circle led by Christine Stevens of REMO Drums.

About the 2008 World Festival of Sacred Music—Los Angeles

Working under a broad definition of "sacred," the festival was founded on the belief that sacred music has the ability to bring forth our shared human values of peace, understanding and respect for all living things. It offers an alternative, community-oriented model to the corporate values that dominate the entertainment culture of Los Angeles and provides opportunities for people to come together and investigate issues of tolerance and diversity within Southern California's complex, urban environment. It is made possible through the shared commitment of its festival partners, which produce this event by contributing in-kind

assistance and volunteer time. With the fourth WFSM–LA, the festival establishes itself as an ongoing part of the cultural life of this community. Artists, organizers and the audience realize the community-building intention of the festival through their participation.

The World Festival of Sacred Music–Los Angeles is a project of the Foundation for World Arts; the UCLA Center for Intercultural Performance and the EarthWays Foundation. It is funded in part by the James Irvine Foundation, the Annenberg Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Ford Foundation, the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (through the Los Angeles County Arts Commission) and the City of Santa Monica Cultural Affairs Division. The festival is also supported in part by the Vesper Society, His Highness Prince Aga Khan Shia Imami Ismaili Council for the Western United States, Time Warner Cable Television (Ovation TV), KPCC, KPFK and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

LA Lens on Sacred Music

In conjunction with this year's Festival, WFSM-LA is collaborating with Los Angeles based independent filmmakers in a new program called **LA Lens on Sacred Music**. The filmmakers will be challenged to create ten short documentary films on artists performing in the 16-day festival. This year the festival received over 60 applications for the film project, creating a very diverse and talented pool of filmmakers to choose from. Finalists will select artists from the festival that they are interested in collaborating with to create a 5-7 minute documentary film. The final ten part festival series will be 70 minutes in length. Foundation for World Arts presents LA Lens on Sacred Music is produced by WFSM Director Judy Mitoma and Mark Eby of Azbri Productions; Assistant Producer Cari Ann Shim Sham.

2008 LA Lens on Sacred Music Filmmakers are: John Allen & Bella Le Nestour, Adam Ballard, Kerry Candaele, Julian Goldberger, Mischa Hedges, Aleigh Lewis, Chen-Wei Liu & Peter Valasmis, Leena Pendharkar, and Sabine Sighicelli.