PRESS RELEASE
September 13, 2004

“The Whirling Dervishes” Performance at Memorial Auditorium in Raleigh, NC

Rumi Forum for Interfaith Dialogue and Islam and Dialogue Student Association of North Carolina State University (IDSA) are proud to announce a very special event featuring “The Whirling Dervishes”. The live performance of the Whirling Dervishes of Rumi will take place at 6:00 pm on Sunday, October 3rd, 2004, at Memorial Auditorium in Raleigh. Tickets to the performance are available for purchase at the box office and through TicketMaster at (919) 834-4000 or www.ticketmaster.com.

Dr. Carl W. Ernst, UNC’s Zachary Smith Distinguished Term Professor, will deliver the keynote speech, and several special guests are expected to attend the performance, including state officials, faculty members, religious representatives of different faiths and various ethnic group representatives.

Rumi Forum and IDSA would greatly appreciate the media attention to this very unique performance, both in the form of pre-event and post-event coverage, and would be more than happy to assist the media by providing video, images, and descriptive text prior to the event.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS EVENT

The Sufi order of the Whirling Dervishes was founded in the 13th century in what is modern-day Turkey by the world-renowned Islamic scholar, philosopher and mystical poet Mevlana Jalal-al-Din Rumi, popularly known as "Rumi". The popular appeal of Rumi and his poetry expressing his philosophy of love of all creation, tolerance, and peace through love and worship of God has not diminished over the centuries. This is best evidenced by the fact that Rumi has been the number-one selling poet in the United States for the last 13 years.

The Order of the Whirling Dervishes is one branch of the vast Sufi tradition of Islam. Sufism espouses a moderate interpretation of Islam, which focuses on love, tolerance, worship of God, community development, and personal development through self-discipline and responsibility. These universal themes are very much relevant to the social and political realities of today, and the ritual Sama performed by the Order of the Whirling Dervishes has come to symbolize these values in the hearts and minds of millions throughout the world.

Sama of the Whirling Dervishes features the revolving dance of the dervishes cloaked in long white robes accompanied by spiritual Sufi music performed live on traditional instruments dating back to the time of Rumi. The dervishes are coming to Raleigh, NC from Konya, Turkey where Rumi’s world famous tomb is. The Whirling Dervishes have performed previously in various places in the United States and have received a great attention. Attendees of the performance in Raleigh will have the unique opportunity to witness this intensely spiritual and inspirational performance of the Whirling Dervishes without having to travel to Turkey.

For more information about the performance "The Whirling Dervishes", Rumi Forum or IDSA please visit www.rumiforum.org, society.ncsu.edu/islam or call 919-594-4276.

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