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Tibetan Monks Return to Create Sand Mandala and Perform *Sacred Music Sacred Dance for World Healing*

Houston, Texas, July 20, 2017—Asia Society Texas Center is pleased to welcome back to Houston the Tibetan Buddhist monks from **Drepung Loseling Monastery**. From August 10-13, the monks will construct a sand mandala and perform special ceremonies in the Center's Edward R. Allen III Education Center. During this ritual, millions of grains of sand are painstakingly laid into place in order to purify and heal the environment and its inhabitants. After its completion, the sand is swept away, symbolizing the impermanence of life.

A special performance of perform *Sacred Music Sacred Dance for World Healing* on Saturday, August 12 will complement the mandala creation. The performance will feature the monks' renowned multiphonic singing and utilize traditional instruments such as 10-foot-long *dungchen* horns, drums, bells, cymbals, and *gyaling* trumpets. Rich brocade costumes and masked dances, such as the *Dance of the Sacred Snow Lion*, will add to the splendor. This is a rare treat for Houstonians to see the monks perform. Their sellout performances at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center performances have received national acclaim, described as "remarkable" by *The New York Times* and "a universal expression of the human subconscious" by *The Washington Post*. Those looking to attend this year's performance at Asia Society are encouraged to purchase tickets early, as last year's concert was a sellout and tickets this year are again limited.

The monks' visits to Asia Society Texas Center in 2015 and 2016 drew nearly 7,000 people. Similar to previous years, this year's program will allow guests to take part in the art by completing a separate community mandala on Saturday, August 12.

All events and activities, with the exception of the Saturday performance, is free and open to the public. For more information, or to purchase tickets for *Sacred Music Sacred Dance for World Healing*, please visit AsiaSociety.org/Texas or call 713.496.9901.

Thursday, August 10

Viewing Hours: 12 pm – 6 pm

Opening Ceremony: 12 pm

The mandala sand painting begins with an opening ceremony, during which the lamas consecrate the site and call forth the forces of goodness through chanting, music, and mantra recitation. The lamas then begin the painting by drawing an outline of the mandala on a wooden platform. In the following days, they lay the colored sands using a traditional metal funnel called a *chakpur*.

Friday, August 11

Viewing Hours: 10 am – 6 pm

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Saturday, August 12

Viewing Hours: 10 am – 7 pm*

Community Mandala: 12 pm – 4 pm (while supplies last)

Guests are invited to contribute to a separate community sand painting on Saturday. Instruction will be given on how to use the chakpur to fill in the design with sand.

TICKETED PERFORMANCE:

Sacred Music and Dance: 7 pm

Presenting Sponsor: Bank of America

Robed in magnificent costumes and playing traditional Tibetan instruments, the Drepung Loseling monks perform ancient temple music and dance intended to kindle world healing. The Loseling monks are particularly renowned for their multiphonic chanting known as *zokkay* (complete chord) and are the only culture on earth that cultivates this most extraordinary vocal ability. Each of the main chantmasters simultaneously intones three notes, thus each individually creating a complete chord.

*The monks will be working on the sand mandala from 10 am to 6 pm on Saturday, August 12. The Education Center will remain open until 7 pm for visitors to view the sand mandala.

Sunday, August 13

Viewing Hours: 10 am – completion of Closing Ceremony

Closing Ceremony: 3 pm

The monks will dismantle the mandala, sweeping up the colored sands to symbolize the impermanence of life. The sand will be distributed to the audience at the closing ceremony, while supplies last.

About Asia Society Texas Center

With 12 locations throughout the world, Asia Society is the leading educational organization promoting mutual understanding and strengthening partnerships among the peoples, leaders, and institutions of Asia and the west. Asia Society Texas Center executes the global mission with a local focus, enriching and engaging the vast diversity of Houston through innovative, relevant programs in arts and culture, business and policy, education, and community outreach.

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