



**GOLDEN THREAD'S
FAIRYTALE PLAYERS** proudly present

RUMI X 7 = TALES FROM THE MASNAVI, a poetic circus extravaganza that is both entertaining and inspiring. Seven tales by the globally admired Sufi poet Rumi selected from his masterwork, the Masnavi are presented as fun-filled vignettes that fuse classical Persian poetry with circus arts and commedia dell arte. Performed by a seven-member ensemble of actors, acrobats, musicians and dancers, the fables include familiar tales such as The Elephant in Darkness and The Grammarian and Boatman, as well as lesser-known gems; together they celebrate the cycle of life and humanity's universal bond. Originally performed in the mountains of Northern Pakistan and subsequently in a mosque courtyard in Tashkent Uzbekistan, **Rumi X 7 = Tales from the Masnavi** premiered in the US in November 2011 at the Islamic Cultural Center of Northern California and is currently touring through Spring 2013.

Rumi X 7 = Tales from the Masnavi is part of Golden Thread's ground-breaking program to create innovative professional performances based on Islamic arts and ideas presented in an eclectic style fusing eastern and western traditions. Offering youth and families an opportunity to experience Islam in an inspiring and entertaining way, Golden Thread aims to provide the general public alternative images of Islam while providing the Muslim community self-affirming narratives that help connect the younger generation with their heritage's playful side.

Testimonials:

"This performance was pleasure for the eyes and heartwarming to hear the ancient Persian stories of 12th century Rumi... who reminds generations ahead of himself of the secrets of life's wisdom and love."

"This was the most inspiring ritual theater I've ever experienced!"



RUMI'S MASNAVI

is widely recognized as one of the greatest collections of Sufi poetry ever written and is revered throughout the Middle East, Central Asia, and around the world as the Quran in Persian. The thirteenth-century Sufi poet Jalal al-din Rumi composed this edifying work for the benefit of his students in the order named after him, popularly known as the whirling dervishes.

In order to convey his message of divine love and unity, he threaded together entertaining stories and allegorical homilies. Drawing from folk tales as well as sacred history, Rumi's poetry is often comic as well as spiritually profound.

The Masnavi was composed during the final years of Rumi's life. He began dictating the first book around the age of 54 circa 1258 and continued composing verses until his death in 1273. The sixth and final book would remain incomplete.

*Listen to the song of the reed
How it wails with the pain of separation:*

*Ever since I was taken from my reed-bed
My woeful song has caused men and women to weep.*



Masnavi, a calligraphic specimen from 1490,
Mevlâna mausoleum, Konya, Turkey



DIRECTOR HAFIZ KARMALI

has undertaken the development of the series, **Islam 101**, which will describe Islam's contribution to world civilization through poetry, music and the sciences.



Karmali has a special interest in cross-cultural performances with a view to showcasing indigenous performing arts of the Islamic world. To this end, he has directed *Azaan* – a court entertainment in collaboration with performers from Ismaili communities in London and Tajikistan; **Rumi x 7 = Tales from the Masnavi** sponsored by the EEC with an acting company in Uzbekistan; *Water for Life*, AKF London, in collaboration with a dance company from Gujarat; and with folk artists of Karimabad, Hunza, *Legend of the Baltit Fort* – a dance-theatre programme sponsored by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC).

Karmali trained at the American Repertory Theatre in Cambridge, MA, and has directed a wide range of productions in Europe, the Middle East and Canada. He collaborated with Golden Thread Productions in 2006 on the US premiere of *Island of Animals*, based on encyclopedic writings by Ikhwan al-Safa, Brethrens of Purity, a group of Islamic scholars.

Golden Thread's Fairytale Players engage audiences through text, movement, folk music and dance, and also create language, geography and cultural connections to the Middle East. Reflective questions are offered after the performance to discuss specific cultural traditions, locations, and characters for further understanding of the play. Fairytale Players can incorporate a post-show participatory folk dance workshop or dramatic activities designed to foster creativity, imagination and basic theatre skills. Each production includes a study guide for teaching purposes and further readings.

Production Needs: This full-scale production is best presented in natural/general light and features live and recorded music and dance. The shows are optimally enjoyed in a large indoor open space where the audience may sit in a semi-circle arrangement. The full presentation is performed by an eclectic seven-member ensemble and runs 50 minutes followed by a question and answer session and/or workshop led by the performers.

Pricing: We can partner with your organization to build a package that meets your educational, production and budget needs.

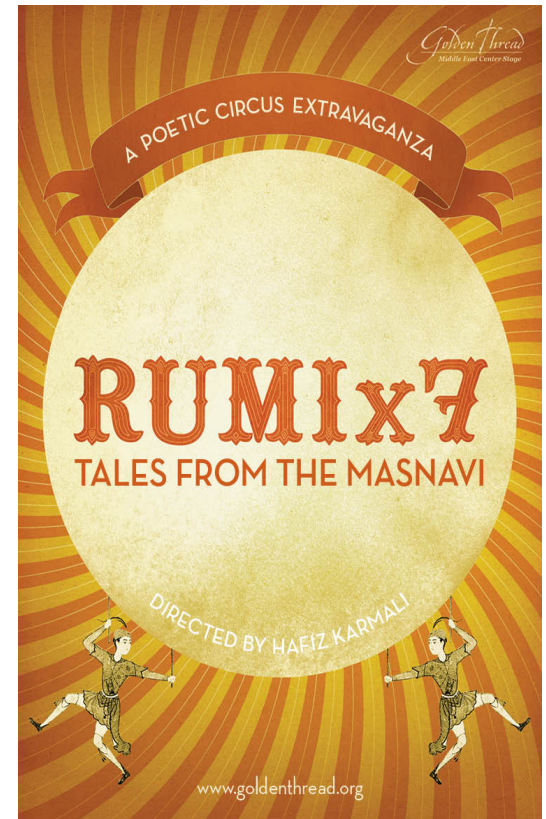
Please contact laine@goldenthread.org for pricing inquiries and for bookings.

For further information on Golden Thread, visit www.goldenthread.org or call 415.626.4061.

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Golden Thread
Middle East Center Stage



Currently Touring Through Spring 2013!

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