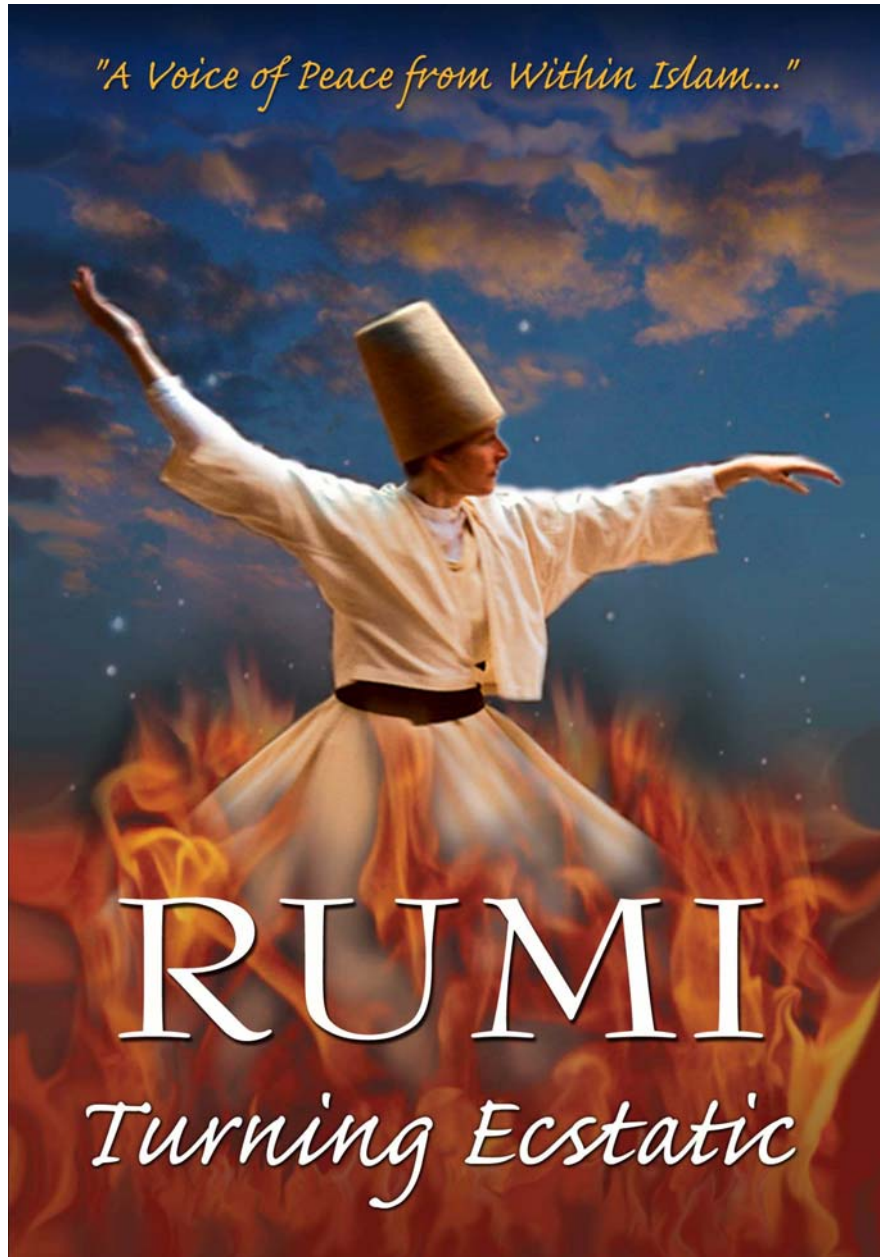


CHOICES presents a film by Tina Petrova and Stephen Roloff

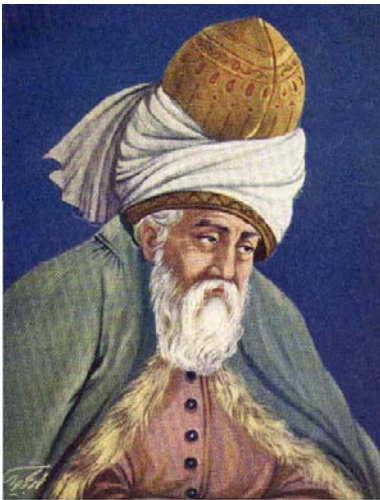


Press Kit

## About The Film

# ***RUMI - Turning Ecstatic***

## ***A Voice of Peace from Within Islam***



Mevlana Jelalludin Rumi was a 13th C. Mystic and Poet. He was born into the Persian Empire, in what is today Balkh Afghanistan and lived out his life in Konya Turkey. His two signature literary works "The Mathnawi" and the "Divani Shams i Tabriz" are considered second only in importance to the Koran, in the Middle East. In the West, he has outsold Shakespeare in the English language for 2 decades, becoming the best loved poet in America today. He is widely known as "The Shakespeare of the Soul..."

Canadian filmmaker Tina Petrova shares her own extraordinary encounter with Rumi as she leads us on a road trip of discovery across America to the shifting sands of the Middle East – illuminating Rumi's influence at work in the world today.

Scholars featured in the film include: UN award winning architect Nader Khalili, who builds emergency shelters in the Mohave Desert, the world's most popular translator of Rumi - Coleman Barks, British activist and author Andrew Harvey, the Whirling Dervishes of Turkey and Shaikh Kabir Helminski, who heads up Rumi's spiritual order in the West .

***Rumi -Turning Ecstatic*** propels the viewer deep into the heart of Sufi mysticism, with thought provoking and informative interviews, stunning stock footage from around the globe and a haunting soundtrack of ecstatic Sufi Music. There are numerous readings of Rumi's poetry throughout and a historical background of his life is given. Strong Interfaith elements make it suitable for discussion in schools.



## The Cast & Crew

**Tina Petrova:** Producer, Writer, Director



Tina has been part of the Canadian film, television and stage scene for over 20 years, as an award winning actress, a writer, producer and director.

She first studied theatre and dance at Ryerson University, later returning to study film in the mid 1990's. Her film debut "The Lost Years" garnered nationwide interest after being honored by the Golden Sheaf Awards. It was produced with the assistance of the National Film Board of Canada. She is an alumna of the Canadian Film Centre, founded by Norman Jewison.

Film critics have dubbed Tina a "driving force" and "visionary," creating works of "faith and healing." Her primary passion over the years has been jumping feet first into projects of a social justice nature, including "Secret Survivors," and "Employment Equity- the Challenge."

CBC Radio is the exclusive distributor of her radio documentary - "Rumi, spoken by Coleman Barks.

Her current projects include traveling across America on a good will ambassador tour, exhibiting and promoting Rumi-Turning Ecstatic and publishing her first book, entitled "Passion for Rumi."

**Stephen Roloff:** Director, Writer, Producer



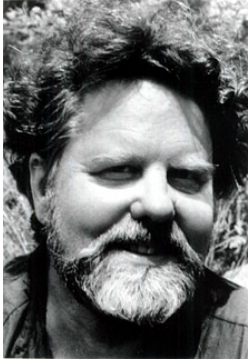
With an honors degree in Engineering from Queen's University and professional experience in Architecture, Stephen moved into the media some 18 years ago.

His work as a production designer and then producer and writer covers the creation of over 250 hours of filmed entertainment, working with clients such as Alliance Atlantis, Fireworks, Paramount, Universal, Lucasfilm Television and IMAX. Selected projects include the feature film "Foolproof", IMAX 3D "First City in Space", "Gene Roddenberry's Earth", "FX", "Traders", "Tekwar", "A Child's Christmas in Wales", "Maniac Mansion", "White Fang", "Heaven on Earth", and one rock video: the Rolling Stones' "Love is Strong". His 12 award nominations and wins include Emmy, Gemini, Ace, and Broadcast Design Awards.

Stephen has a reputation for visionary conceptual creation, inspired leadership, and technical innovation. Fascinated with the evolution (or non) of our species in general and the media in particular, he is currently working in partnership with Jim Banister (former head of New Media at Warner Brothers) on the development of a number of independent projects. [www.stephenroloff.com](http://www.stephenroloff.com)



## Coleman Barks: Author



Coleman Barks is a poet, author and Professor Emeritus, University of Georgia.

Following his first encounter with Rumi's poetry, through celebrated poet Robert Bly, Coleman began translating literal versions of Rumi's poetry into modern day verse. Today, Coleman is considered one of the

premiere translators of Rumi's poetry, with the Essential Rumi (Harper Collins 1996) topping sales of 500,000. Other titles include "The Illuminated Rumi" (with Michael Green), "The Glance", "Feeling the Shoulder of the Lion" and "Open Secret".

Coleman Barks has performed Rumi's poetry to ecstatic audiences around the world accompanied by renowned musicians. He has been featured on several PBS specials including "Fooling with Words" hosted by Bill Moyers. [www.colemanbarks.com](http://www.colemanbarks.com)

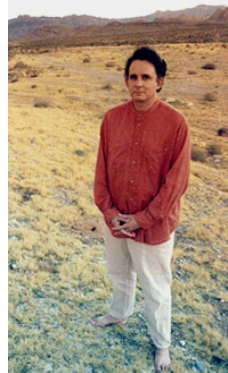
## Camille Helminski: Author



Camille Adams Helminski is the co-founder and co-director of the Threshold Society in Aptos, CA, along with her husband, Shaikh Kabir Helminski. The Threshold Society is an educational organization, dedicated to preserving and disseminating the teachings of Mevlana Jelalludin Rumi, in the

authentic Mevlevi tradition. With "The Light of Dawn" she was the first woman ever to translate a substantial portion of the Koran. Amongst her other titles are "The Mevlevi Wird," "Rumi Daylight," and Jewels of Remembrance (with Kabir Helminski). Camille has also collaborated with Refik Algan on a translation of Ahmet Hilmi's classic, Awakened Dreams. She is currently at work on a book on women in Sufism. Camille and Kabir are closely associated with Sufi teachers from other tariqats in Turkey and Syria, all of whom are committed to integrating the classical methods with modern needs. [www.sufism.org](http://www.sufism.org)

## Andrew Harvey: Author

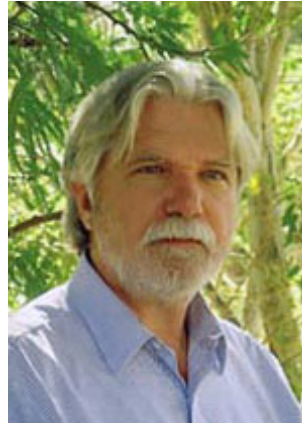


Andrew Harvey was born in India and educated at Oxford, where he became the youngest fellow of All Soul's College in its history. A prolific writer, Andrew has authored over 10 books, including "The Way of Passion" – A Celebration of Rumi, "Journey to Ladakh" and the best selling "Tibetan Book of Living and Dying" which he co-authored with Sogyal Rinpoche. Andrew has been deemed a "gentle

apocolyptarian," urging those of us on the planet who have a conscience- to "transform the spiritual bareness at the heart of Western life" to change the trajectory of devastating global consequences we are plunging into. Andrew, through his translations of Rumi's poetry and his public lectures, transmits "the urgency, passion and intensity of Rumi's message to our times-Rumi is a stern awakener and a doctor of souls... [www.andrewharvey.net](http://www.andrewharvey.net)

## Kabir Helminski: Author

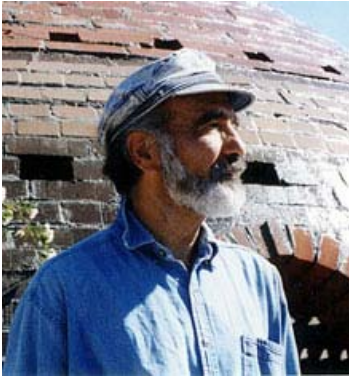
Kabir began his Mevlevi training as a student of the



late Shaikh Suleyman Loras. In 1990, he was appointed A Shaikh by the late Dr. Celaeddin Celebi of Istanbul Turkey, head of the Mevlevi (Tariqa) Order and twenty first generation descendant of Mevlana Jelalludin Rumi. Under Kabir's direction, the Mevlevi Order in North America works to apply traditional Sufi principles to the heart

of modern day Western life. Among Kabir's book titles are "Living Presence," A Sufi Way to Mindfulness and the Essential Self," and "The Knowing Heart." Together with his wife Camille, they travel around the world, leading workshops on the teachings of Rumi and presenting at conferences. [www.sufism.org](http://www.sufism.org)

## Nader Khalili: Architect



Nader Khalili, California architect and author is the mentor of Cal-Earth Institute. Inspired by the mystic poetry of Rumi in his native Persian language, he has created the Ceramic Houses and Superadobe technologies to build disaster resistant, self-help, and spiritual architecture with the universal elements of earth, water, air and fire. As a consultant to the U.N. (UNIDO) and a contributor to NASA for his designs for lunar and planetary habitation, he has received many awards and recognition for his terrestrial and space-related works. He has published five books including translations of Rumi's poetry in "Rumi, Fountain of Fire" and "Rumi, Dancing the Flame".

Khalili received his philosophy and architectural education in Iran, Turkey, and the United States. He has been a licensed architect in the State of California since 1970, and practiced both in the U.S. and abroad.

[www.calearth.org](http://www.calearth.org)

## Screenings & Film Festivals

*"Rumi- Turning Ecstatic..."* has screened in more than 14 countries to date, including a World Broadcast Premiere on **VISION TV** Canada  
Jan. 2006 Official Selection, Santa Cruz Film Festival, CA 2006 Official Selection, Portobello Film Festival, UK 2007 United Nations Headquarters Screening, NYC 2007 Official Selection, Tehran Intl Doc. film Festival, Iran 2007 World Bank Screening, Washington DC 2007

### Upcoming Screenings:

Spontos Gallery (7 Dudley Cinema) Venice Beach CA - December 2007  
IMAN Cultural Center, Los Angeles, CA- January 2008  
National Centre for the Performing Arts, Mumbai, India – January 2008  
Tel Aviv, Israel - May 2008

## Reviews & Quotes

"An engaging documentary..." - Turner Classic Movies

"Thank you for your movie! My family appreciates the excellent results. We pray for the success of this project, both in hearts, and in the world..."

- Faruk Celebi, 22<sup>nd</sup> great grandson to RUMI, Istanbul Turkey

"... a very good film..." - San Francisco Chronicle Review

"...how life can miraculously turn around, from tragedy- to ecstasy!" - Vision Magazine, San Diego

"The film that brought all the religions together..." - CAN TURK Magazine

"...this film has the power to open new windows on the soul... a wonderfully personal and sincere tribute to deep spiritual artistry..." - Mystical Movie Guide.com

" a dreamy new film..." - Toronto Star

"Two focuses of the film especially appealed to us... the meaning of the whirling ceremony (SEMA) and religious openness. Like all the great saints, Rumi was a lover of Unity ..."

- Spirituality & Practice magazine

" a Voice of Peace from within Islam..." - Afgha.com

"Petrova's fierce determination and faith over the past few years- suggests that anything is really possible, and nothing is too good to be true..." - Good Times Weekly, CA

"Tina Petrova drove off a cliff and landed on the lap of Persian 13thC Poet - Rumi." "...this film is a remarkable documentary--- with timeless passages and the mystical sensations of Sufi music-- set against the backdrop of Tina traveling from the cliff of death, to the pillow of Divine Love..." - HUUJA magazine, Caribbean

**Selection:** Best Indie Films of 2007 - Buyindie.com

**"RECOMMENDED...** this film would be an excellent tool to promote classroom discussion on issues of interfaith..." - Educational Media Reviews On-Line, 2007

### **Quotes from Educators, and Interfaith Advocates:**

"Rumi – Turning Ecstatic... is a film that carries a profound message of universal peace, and should be seen by everyone who works in the field of multi-faith. The filmmaker has captured the essence of the spirit that binds us together as one humanity, and has reflected the life and works of Rumi in a beautiful way. The visuals are stunning, the music sublime and the film captures the heart. It carries an excellent educational component and becomes a discussion board for people from various backgrounds."

*-Raheel Raza, Award Winning Author, Journalist, Interfaith Advocate, President- Forum for Learning [www.raheelraza.com](http://www.raheelraza.com)*

"Each time I view this Rumi Film of Tina Petrova, I glean deeper and deeper meaning as a Roman Catholic priest engaged in Interfaith Dialogue. It has helped me greatly to show both adults and students I deal with in seminars and workshops - the working of God's Spirit in graced men and women of every faith tradition and spirituality..."

*-Rev. Fr. Terry Gallagher, Scarboro Missions Interfaith Department*

"As a workshop facilitator, I have found "Turning Ecstatic" a powerful tool for young people attempting to envision a world of peace. Both Rumi and the story of the filmmaker speak right to the heart and longings of young people. What a beautiful, poetic, unitive and startling refreshing voice-- to ring out from the Islamic world of 800 years ago to now! The moving portrayal of Rumi's "One Song" is *brehtaking*..."

*-Kathy Murtha, Co-ordinator of Scarboro Missions Retreat Center*

"The metaphor of spinning to come to stillness, of tranquility at the heart of whirling, is apt for the hunger for peace in these chaotic times... Rumi becomes the Prophet of acceptance and Oneness in a fractured world... Tina Petrova's film opens a door to the heart, where in a particularly powerful vignette of many peoples in many styles of adoration, Rumi's "One Song" sings in many varied voices.

*-K.M. Flaherty - Award Winning Poet*

"Tina Petrova's new film on Rumi has many positive qualities- it is truly educational & informative in presenting Islam in a proper manner. Tina's life story can be enjoyed by all - it is *true* spiritual entertainment, celebrating an Interfaith Global Spirit ..."

*-Sheikh Tefvik Aydoner, Director, Canadian Sufi Cultural Centre*

'Just beyond the arguing, is a long table of companionship set, and waiting for us to sit down...' - Rumi

"The collage of images & people in praise and pilgrimage that accompany this quote in Tina Petrova's new film - is astoundingly vivid! It brings the message of unity home. The screening of this film recently on a university campus, led to profound dialogue between atheists, Muslim, Christian and Hindu students."

*-Kim G. Director of Chaplaincy Services, Ryerson University Chaplaincy Centre*

# CREDITS

**Written and Directed by**

Stephen Roloff and Tina Petrova

**Produced by**

Tina Petrova and Stephen Roloff

**Executive Producer, VisionTV**

Alberta Nokes

**Co-Executive Producer**

Eric Birnberg

***Associate Producers***

Thomas Walden and Dr. Nitin Dilawri

**Director of Photography Canada**

Tico Poulakakis

**Original Music**

David Johanns

**Original Calligraphy**

Mehrdad Shoghi

**Editor/ Post Production Supervisor**

Calvin B. Grant

**Narrated by**

Tina Petrova

**Original Artwork Courtesy of**

Michael Green

**Produced with the Assistance of**

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***Rumi: Turning Ecstatic* is distributed by:**

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To Schedule a Group Screening**

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