

**Press Release:Contact: Jerry Krell, Producer -  
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**“The Asian & Abrahamic Religions:A Divine Encounter in America”**“The Asian & Abrahamic Religions: A Divine Encounter in America,” was produced by Auteur Productions, Ltd. consisting of award-winning documentarians, Gerald Krell, Meyer Odze and Adam Krell. The documentary is being broadcast on public television stations nationwide. It was the Official selection Sun Valley Spiritual Film Festival, dedicated to the exploration of the human spirit through the medium of film and discourse.

To many Americans the Asian religions remain a mystery. Yet the presence of the Asian religions has been growing on American soil almost from the country’s beginning. Over time Asian religious practices began to influence and transform everyday life for ordinary Americans who discovered Yoga, meditation and the martial arts and healing. “The Asian and Abrahamic Religions: A Divine Encounter in America” explores the beliefs, practices and rituals of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism. Examining the similarities and differences with the Abrahamic religions, how they perceive each other, confront prejudice and stereotypes and how they can understand and respect one another.

The primary aim of the documentary is to demystify the Asian religions; the misconceptions and stereotypes that many Americans have about them, and to show the deep historical roots of the Asian religions in America. The documentary will help create a broader acceptance of religious pluralism in the United States and the world, and serve as a catalyst for interfaith dialogue, understanding and respect. The documentary is also meant to help audiences find greater understanding of these religions as ways to refine and deepen their faith in their own religions; and clarify how they define their own identity.

For decades in America formal interfaith conversations have typically involved Christians and Jews, or Christians, Jews and Muslims. Increasingly, however, adherents of these traditional “Abrahamic faiths” are becoming aware of and thoughtfully beginning to engage devout representatives of various Asian religions. In neighborhoods, in classrooms, in professional settings and in the public square, Americans are discovering the need to understand the religious values and customs of, Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, Buddhists and others. Many peoples of the western world are hard pressed to begin to understand and appreciate these seemingly strange and unfamiliar eastern religions whose presence is well established, and growing on American soil.

Prominent world renowned personalities in the documentary include: Noted author Karen Armstrong; Robert Thurman, Professor of Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Studies in the Department of Religion at Columbia University, President of the Tibet House, and The first American to be ordained a Tibetan Monk by the Dalai Lama. Diana Eck, Professor of Comparative Religion and Indian Studies at the Harvard Divinity School and Director of The Pluralism Project; famous historian Romila Thapar, winner of the Library of congress, Kluge prize; Stephen Prothero, Professor of Religion, Boston University and co-editor "Asian Religions In America.", Professor Islamic Studies Akbar

Ahmed, American University. Distinguished theologians including The Right Rev. John Bryson Chane, Bishop of Washington, Diocese of Washington; Rabbi David Rosen, International Director of Interreligious Affairs, American Jewish Committee; Professor Francis Clooney, Harvard Divinity School, Director of the Center for World Religions, and internationally revered swamis and gurus from the Asian religions.

The Asian populations in America provide a great challenge, and opportunity. We can no longer choose to ignore or simply tolerate the other. Rather we must celebrate the opportunity for interreligious understanding this brings. “The Asian and Abrahamic Religions: A Divine Encounter in America;” cuts to the very core of cross-cultural awareness. Its cogent content of religious and cultural diversity should lead to changed perspectives and changed behavior toward the other.