

April 16, 2003 – for immediate release

Presentation Explores Endangered Dance of the Himalaya
Thursday, May 1, 7:30 p.m., Max Bell Auditorium

Asian dance specialist Joseph Houseal is a man with a mission — a mission to document and help preserve the ancient dances of the Himalaya. For Houseal, the Himalaya represents a treasure trove of dance traditions – many threatened with extinction by the homogenizing pressure of 21st century culture. On Thursday, May 1, join Joseph Houseal for “Endangered Dance of the Himalaya”, a presentation featuring words, photographs, and film gathered at Tibetan monasteries in Ladakh, India. His presentation begins at 7:30 p.m. in the Max Bell Auditorium at The Banff Centre.

In 2002, Houseal received a Banff Mountain Grant from The Banff Centre to support his ongoing work. “We were invited to document the Cham dance of Ladakh, raised enough money to get a camera crew there, and ended up with 45 hours of unprecedented footage...and no more money,” Houseal explains. “Surfing the Internet late one night, the Banff Mountain Grant appeared, and I saw an organization which understood the layers of humanity that make up culture.” The grant allowed Houseal to edit his footage and to place copies at The Banff Centre and the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

In addition to Houseal’s May 1 presentation, an exhibition featuring his photographs and excerpts from his Ladakh journal will be featured in the Max Bell Building lobby from April 11 until May 2.

Joseph Houseal is executive director of Core of Culture, an organization committed to safeguarding ancient dance and endangered movement traditions. A professional dancer, he is the former artistic director of Parnassus Dancetheatre in Kyoto, Japan. Houseal received a 2000 Emmy Award nomination for his PBS program on Kabuki dance, *Ancient Elegance*.

Houseal’s lecture and exhibition is presented by Mountain Culture at The Banff Centre as part of the 2003 Mountain Speakers’ Series. Tickets are \$5.00 at the door, free to Mountain Culture members and Arts Lover passholders.

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The Banff Centre is Canada’s centre for creative excellence in the arts, leadership development, mountain culture, and conferences. Mountain Culture at The Banff Centre promotes understanding and appreciation of the world’s mountain places by creating opportunities for people to share – and find inspiration in – mountain experiences, ideas and visions.