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For Immediate Release

Moon Festival: Pan-Asian Dance Concert Celebrates Women, Motherhood & Families

Moon Festival, a mid-October holiday celebrated in nearly every Asian nation, comes to White Eagle Hall in Jersey City. On October 14th Jersey City Theater Center (JCTC) presents the Moon Festival, multicultural, interactive dance performance for the whole family.

Moon Festival – a culturally-rich Asian American dance concert that celebrates diversity, family, women and motherhood – is a collaboration between the Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company (www.nainichen.org) and Akhilandeshwari Vasudevamurthy (Akhila).

The two dance companies will perform then invite the audience to join in this ancient celebration as they invoke the power of the moon through ritualistic dance and trance-inducing rhythms. In keeping with Asian tradition, Moon Cake, a traditional Chinese delicacy where legend has it was first baked by resistance fighters during an uprising in China more than 1000 years ago – and authentic Indian Pudding – will be served.

“Both Nai-Ni and Akhila are incredible choreographers,” said Olga Levina, Artistic Director, JCTC. “*Moon Festival* is a celebration of women, motherhood and family that was found in ancient cultures. How these talented, international artists blend the history of their own cultures with modern dance truly represents the power of women across Asian cultures. Moon Festival is an enriching performance for the entire family.”

This unique and engaging dance concert features two distinct Asian celebrations of the autumnal moon. Nai-Ni Chen, a world renowned Choreographer & Dancer with deep roots in the Asian culture, will present dance pieces in keeping with the original Moon Festival – a traditional family holiday in China, Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines and Singapore. Akhila and her husband Chetan Hebbar will present traditional dance pieces choreographed in the original Bharthanatyam style that honor Karva Chauth, a one-day festival still celebrated in Northern India where Hindu villages publically celebrate friendship between women and feminine solidarity.

“We are very excited to be able to bring *Moon Festival* to White Eagle Hall,” said Chen. “This is a historic performance where we – as Asian American women artists – are working together to celebrate our collaboration and achievement over the harvest moon. Moon Festival resonates with cultures all over the world, but also has a long history of women’s empowerment and solidarity in Asia. Please bring your family and join us for this celebration.”

JCTC Dance: Moon Festival

Nai-Ni Chen/Moon Festival

- *Incense* (a Woman’s Prayer)
- *Raindrops* (“joyous girlhood”)
- *Remembrance for Jiao Li*

Akhilandeshwari Vasudevamurthy/Karva Chauth,

- *Moist Mind* (The Mysterious Connection Between the Moon & the Mind)
 - *Lotus Eyes* (Beauty & Compassion Filled Eyes of a Mother)
 - *Elegance* (Divinity & Grace of Womanhood)
 - *Bliss* (The Liberated Girl)

Jersey City
Theater Center

JCTC

JCTC Dance: Moon Festival
Sunday October 14
Doors: 3:30/Show: 4:00
Jersey City Theater Center
Merseles Studios
339 Newark Avenue
Jersey City, NJ 07302
(201) 795-5386

Press passes, additional photographs and interviews available upon request

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Moon Festival was also made possible through the generosity of Ben LoPiccolo Development Group, JCTC's Board of Directors, private donors and local Jersey City businesses.

Jersey City Theater Center, Inc. (JCTC) presents programming at Merseles Studios and White Eagle Hall. JCTC is a nonprofit, 501c3 arts organization committed to inspiring conversations about the important topics of our times through innovative and progressive performing and visual arts that celebrates diversity, bringing communities closer together and enhancing the quality of life.