

NEWS RELEASE

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Asian Arts & Culture Program at the Fine Arts Center University of Massachusetts Amherst

In collaboration with the Five College Dance Department

Sponsored by PeoplesBank

WHAT: *Three Cups of Tea* based on the best selling book by
Greg Mortenson & David Oliver Relin

WHEN: Wednesday, October 27 at 7:30PM

WHERE: Bowker Auditorium, UMass Amherst

TICKETS: Call 1-800-999-UMAS or 545-2511 for tickets or go online to
<http://www.umasstix.com/>

IMAGES: To download images relating to this press release please go
online to <http://www.fineartscenter.com/centerwide/pressRoom/>

*...the first time you share tea ...you are a stranger, the second time you take tea,
you are an honored guest, the third time you share a cup of tea, you become
family...*

—Greg Mortenson

The true story of mountaineer Greg Mortenson's inspired struggle to build schools for young girls in Pakistan is portrayed in a one-person theatrical performance on Wednesday, October 27 at 7:30 PM in Bowker Auditorium. Adapted for the stage by Wynn Handman and based on the best selling book by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin, tickets are \$15 for the general public and \$10 for students. Please call the box office at 413-545-2511 or 1-800-999-UMAS. Online at: umasstix.com.

From the first heart-stopping opening moments stranded on a mountaintop, actor Curtis Nielsen brings the audience through the very intimate journey of one man's fight against all odds to make a difference in the world. Following the journalistic style of the book, the theater piece is woven into a narrative that feels simultaneously personal and of epic consequence. Alternating between scenes in the US and Pakistan, the audience becomes aware of the lessons that can be learned from a culture that is seemingly so different from their own.

After working in the region for three years, Greg Mortenson co-founded Central Asia Institute (CAI), a registered non-profit organization. The CAI mission is to promote and support community-based education, especially for girls, in remote regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan. As of 2010, Central Asia Institute has successfully established 145 schools in Pakistan and Afghanistan, which provide (or have provided)

education to over 64,000 students. Central Asia Institute community projects continue to focus primarily in remote, underserved regions where few organizations serve.

Literature to Life, The American Place Theatre's performance-based literacy program, presents professionally staged verbatim adaptations of significant American literary works. *Three Cups of Tea* was adapted in 2009 and was officially introduced at the TimesCenter in New York City in May of 2010. The show features sixty minutes of performance and is surrounded by a pre and post show interactive discussion, the audience will explore themes of social action, intercultural understanding and perseverance.

Curtis James Nielsen who portrays Greg Mortenson has had many Off-Broadway roles including *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Proposal*, *A Lie of the Mind* (Jake), *The Good Woman of Setzuan*, *Hamlet*, *Birdbath*, *Oleanna*, *Cyrano de Bergerac* and J.P. Shanley's *Welcome to the Moon*. His television performances include *Guiding Light*, *As the World Turns* and *All My Children*. In 2008, Curtis won New York Theater Visions' "Best of Chekhov" and "Best of Season" awards for Outstanding Performance by a Male Actor for *The Proposal*.

Please see our website at <http://www.fineartscenter.com/asian/> for additional information. Tickets available online at our [secure box office](#) or by calling 1-800-999-UMAS or 413-545-2511. Downloadable high resolution photos and electronic versions of press releases for performance events are available at: <http://www.umass.edu/fac/asian/press.html>.

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