

**MYSTIC TIBET:**  
**An Outer, Inner and Secret Pilgrimage**  
A 90-minute documentary



**Synopsis**

***Discover the mysteries of Tibet, a land of vast expanse, great rivers and the world's largest mountains with Tibetan Buddhist Master Lama Zopa Rinpoche and fifty pilgrims as they travel across the high Tibetan plateau, the roof of the world, for the spiritual adventure of a lifetime.***

In 2002, a group of exceptional people from around the world signed up to explore the country that is home of the Dalai Lamas. But this was no common tourist trek. Guided by the renowned Tibetan Buddhist master Lama Zopa Rinpoche, the pilgrims found themselves engaged in a rare and powerful experience – one in which the realms of great yogis and saints were revealed and personal transformation beckoned closer each day on the trail.

This intense journey takes one directly into the culture of Tibet and its arresting, spiritually-rich landscape in a way that is not often seen.

The pilgrimage was led by the Tibetan master Lama Zopa Rinpoche, who was a native of Nepal and moved to Tibet to study Tibetan Buddhism as a child. Along with many other monks, he was forced to leave Tibet in 1959. He and his teacher, Lama Yeshe, founded the Kopan Monastery in the Katmandu Valley. Later they developed the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition, currently one of the leading Tibetan Buddhist foundations in the world with over 140 centers located in 31 countries.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche approached the pilgrimage as something much more than a normal excursion: ***“Normally when people go on pilgrimage, they are just like tourists; maybe they take some pictures, and that’s it. They don’t use the places to collect merit or to***

***meditate or to get some benefit for their minds. If it's just like sightseeing, then it won't be of that much benefit."***

With a profound well of knowledge and direct understanding of the qualities of the holy Buddhist objects and their sacred locations in Tibet, Lama Zopa was able to transform the trip into a spiritual pilgrimage of merit and benefit for the pilgrims involved, as well as for the viewers of the documentary. Lama Zopa expertly supported the conditions for transformative personal experience by leading the pilgrims to many extraordinary locations so precious to the spiritual heritage of Tibet.

These sights included the meditation caves of great masters such as Pabongka Rinpoche, Lama Tsongkhapa, and Milarepa. Other sacred sites included Ganden Monastery and the famous sacred residence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Potala Palace in Lhasa.

At each site, Lama Zopa Rinpoche performed Buddhist ceremonies, bringing the sacred sites and the holy images alive in the moment. This dramatic experience is beautifully translated to the viewer through the eye of the camera and captured in thoughtfully-edited interviews with the participants.

*Mandala Magazine* (see Reviews below) described the impact of this documentary on the viewer in the following statement: ***"Mystic Tibet vividly captures the grandeur and mystery of this life-changing journey. One feels intimately a part of the experience, seeing these holy objects that seem to live and breathe, enduring the hardships and receiving the blessings right along with the pilgrims."***

A pilgrimage such as this is extremely rare, as it is very difficult to gain access to Tibet and its holy sights under the current political regime. The knowledge and wisdom of a spiritual master such as Lama Zopa Rinpoche only magnifies the rarity and power of such a precious experience.

As one pilgrim stated, ***"A pilgrimage with Rinpoche is not sightseeing. It's like heart-seeing."*** In *Mystic Tibet*, the viewer can share this experience directly with the hearty pilgrims of this transformative documentary.

### **About Lama Zopa Rinpoche**

Lama Zopa Rinpoche was born in Thami, in the Mount Everest region of Nepal, near the Tibetan border. Lama Zopa moved to Tibet for his Buddhist training and stayed at monasteries until his escape in 1959. Upon arriving in India, Rinpoche continued his studies in Buxa Duar and there he met his teacher, Lama Yeshe. In 1976, Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa started the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (FPMT) which is an organization devoted to transmission of the Mahayana Buddhist tradition and values worldwide through teaching, meditation and community service. The FPMT is thriving with over 147 centers and projects worldwide. Please visit <http://www.fpmt.org/teachers/zopa/> for further information on Lama Zopa Rinpoche.

## **Filmmaker**

Directed, produced, filmed, written, and edited by **CHRISTINA LUNDBERG**.

Christina Lundberg is an award winning filmmaker who brings her extensive experience making documentary films to *Mystic Tibet*. Her previous work includes *Discovering Buddhism*, a 13 part series on Tibetan Buddhism hosted by Richard Gere and Keanu Reeves, and featuring His Holiness the Dalai Lama and other great lamas. She created a 26 part television series on Buddhism for Mongolia National Television which has run for three consecutive years to over 1.5 million viewers. Other projects include a video about *The Maitreya Project* which is currently translated into 9 languages and the documentary, *On the Road Home*, about a woman's spiritual journey and the holy female teachers who teach her along the way.

Ms. Lundberg's depth of understanding of Tibetan Buddhism combined with her skilled filmmaking provide a strong foundation for capturing the unique and profound dimensions of this pilgrimage and the benefits of such a holy activity with such a master as Lama Zopa Rinpoche.

## **Soundtrack**

Music by **NAWANG KHECHOG** and **MERCEDES BAHLEDA**.

Grammy-nominee Nawang Khechog is an internationally-renowned flutist, and a former Tibetan Buddhist monk. Khechog has performed over a dozen times at Carnegie Hall. His unique background of religious training and musical experience produces a haunting and evocative soundtrack for a spiritually-transformative experience.

Tibetan religious music is an integral component of the Buddhist culture so precious to this devout land. *Mystic Tibet* contains sections of traditional ceremonial music performed by the monks and nuns participating in the sacred rituals led by Lama Zopa Rinpoche and recorded directly in real time. This combination of authentic ritual music along with Nawang Khechog's unique style deepens and expands the spiritual quality of the viewers' experience.

## **Production**

Executive Producer: FPMT, INC. © FPMT, Inc., 2007

## **Movie Sponsors**

Jin Ling Kwang	Alfred Leyens	Gintaras Ziaunys
Pimporn Chavasant	Venerable Pemba	Kerry Wells
Ciaran Flanagan	Chiumin Lai	Rosella DePass
Lois Smith	Chan Yew Mun	Barbara Oquest
Eva Rolf	Doris Lim	Margot Willing
Robert Cayton	Adrian Dec	Patricia Lamb
Rafael Estrems	Anne McGrath	Kimberley Hollender
Doss McDavid	Carol Dawson	Carlo Carranza

Annelieis Van De Heijden  
Katarina Hallonblad  
Bridget Harris  
Jules Helsen  
Roy Sutherwood  
Edward Falenski  
Mark Ruggieri  
Alice Leung  
Hospice of Mother Tara  
Maria Mimosa  
Yeoh Seng Hock  
Christina Whiteside  
Carlo Carranza  
Chandrakirti Center

Yasmin Rieger  
Clarence Khoo  
Dianne Cadwallader  
Sharon Harzenski  
Alan Wells  
Teresa Froncek  
Sherlynn Leom  
O L Lee  
Beverly Vo  
Dean Saalisi  
Yeoh Li Ean  
Rafael Estrems  
Jane Sellers

Jan Von Kriegenberg  
Joe Lee  
Maitri Lau  
Wee Meng Tan  
Eivind Skjellum  
Amy Miller  
Tara Melwani  
Peter Voegele Shakya  
Kim Looi  
Gerogelin Patrick  
Cecilia Tsong  
Susan Ostertag  
Decouze Laurent

### **Watch the trailer**

Watch the low resolution video here

<http://www.fpmt.org/Mystic-Tibet/AM40Kbps.mov>

Watch the high resolution video here

<http://www.fpmt.org/Mystic-Tibet/AM300Kbps.mov>

### **Pictures**



Milarepa's  
Cave



Lama Zopa  
with Tibetans



Lama  
Zopa in  
his tent



Pilgrimages  
at the Potala



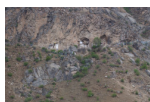
Lama Zopa  
with Maitreya



View from  
Milarepa  
Cave



Shakyamuni  
Statue at Sera



Padbonka  
Cave



Statues at  
Sera



Stupas at  
Pembo Valley



Lama  
Zopa



Christina  
Shooting  
the movie



Monks  
Playing  
horns



Pilgrims in  
the snow



Prayer flags  
at the top of  
of the pass



Milarepa  
wall  
painting



Reting  
Nunnery



Lama Zopa  
with Reting  
Nuns



Chenrezig  
Painting

## Reviews

Review from Mandala Magazine, April/May 2007

### **Mystic Tibet: An Outer, Inner and Secret Pilgrimage**

In 2002, Lama Zopa Rinpoche led fifty pilgrims from around the world on a journey to Tibet's most sacred places. Cinematographer Christina Lundberg caught this extraordinary pilgrimage on film, and the result is a stunning new documentary, *Mystic Tibet: An Outer, Inner and Secret Pilgrimage*.

The participants made pilgrimage to many holy places, including Milarepa's cave, Tsipri, and Reting Monastery (where Lama Tsongkhapa wrote the *Lam Rim Chenmo*). They did a late-night puja at the nunnery where Lama Yeshe's former incarnation was once abbess, offered lights at the Jokhang, Lhasa's most holy temple, chanted mantras to animals, and watched Lama Zopa Rinpoche – whose unbelievable compassion is evident in every word he utters, every smile and blessing he bestows – connect with the Tibetan people starved of teachers since the Chinese occupation. They hiked up unfathomable mountains and suffered altitude sickness. They took in the teachings of Lama Zopa Rinpoche and the infinite blessings of this holy land, and their hearts were transformed. As one pilgrim commented, “A pilgrimage with Rinpoche is not sightseeing. It's like heart-seeing.”

*Mystic Tibet* vividly captures the grandeur and mystery of this life-changing journey. One feels intimately a part of the experience, seeing these holy places and holy objects that seem to live and breathe, enduring the hardships and receiving the blessings right along with the pilgrims. This film is a visual and spiritual treat for the eye, the mind, and the heart. Its evocative soundtrack with music by Nawang Khechog and Mercedes Bahleda is as much a part of the film as the extraordinary landscapes, intricate icons, and devoted faces – not to mention the heroic Italian pilgrim who finished the journey on crutches!

*Many FPMT centers around the world will be showing Mystic Tibet as part of a fund-raising program. To find out where you can see this amazing movie, go to <http://www.fpmt.org>. Later in the year, the movie will be available on DVD.*