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## **NEW SCORE COMMISSIONED FOR THE ADVENTURES OF PRINCE ACHMED AT THE 2008 CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL**

Seattle – Northwest Film Forum and the Children's Film Festival Seattle have commissioned Seattle area musicians Miles and Karina to compose a new score for the animated classic *THE ADVENTURES OF PRINCE ACHMED*. The 1926 German film, from female director Lotte Reiniger, is the oldest extant feature-length animated film, and was created using kaleidoscopic silhouette-animation techniques. Nova Devonie and David Keenan have been performing as the musical duo Miles and Karina for the past 11 years, and are well known in the Seattle music world. The performances at Northwest Film Forum will take place January 25 at 8 pm (opening night film) January 27 at 1 pm, January 31 at 8 pm, and February 3 at 1 pm.

“The Adventures of Prince Achmed” is a vital part of film history and a breathtaking work of art. Created in 1926 by a 23-year old German teacher and animator named Lotte Reiniger, the film is a *mélange* of stories from *The Arabian Nights*, including the tale of an Arabian prince, an evil sorcerer, a flying horse and a captured princess. The film is made of nearly 300,000 camera shots, a meticulous triumph of imagination and animation. Jean Renoir proclaimed the film “a masterpiece,” adding that Lotte Reiniger was “born with magic hands.” Eighty intervening years have not diminished the film’s power. Says film critic Axel Howerton, “These silhouettes move with a fluidity and grace that most live dancers would have trouble imitating. This is a hypnotic and masterful piece of storytelling, and a beautiful and heartfelt message to the children in us all. The *Los Angeles Times* calls the film “visually breathtaking,” and the *San Francisco Chronicle* concurs, “There’s never been anything like it. The images, most of them gorgeously detailed silhouettes, are dazzling.” The original German nitrate prints of the film have been lost, but British and German archivists have restored the film with its spectacular pastel tinted backgrounds.

Nova Devonie and David Keenan (Miles and Karina) are uniquely qualified to compose a new score for this exquisite fairy-tale. Both are accomplished musicians and songwriters,

with two CD's to their credit, "Quirkish Delights"(2000) and "Wherego"(2006). Both albums contain a majority of original compositions. Their sound has been described as cinematic, sometimes sparse, often lush, both beautiful and playful, with much attention paid to melody and high production values. David Keenan masterfully plays guitar, violin, mandolin, and banjo. He is a full-time musician, dividing his hours between performing, composing, producing and teaching music. Nova Devonie's main instrument is the accordion, an expressive tool that she uses to frame her creative ideas. David and Nova are also both accomplished vocalists.

David and Nova toured together with the band "Ranch Romance" for five years, releasing three albums with Sugar Hill Records along the way. They then formed the duo Miles and Karina as an outlet for their many-faceted musical ideas. This has led them to a diverse range of experiences and performances in a wide array of venues, from intimate bistros to large music festivals. They regularly collaborate with Monkey Wrench Puppet Lab, providing live music during performances and original music for the ensemble's production of "Halfpenny Opera."

They both continue to play and record with several Seattle groups, including Jo Miller and Her Burly Roughnecks, Downtown Mountain Boys, the Rolling Blackouts, and Karina Musette Trio.

The commissioning of Keenan and Devonie's new score for THE ADVENTURES OF PRINCE ACHMED is in keeping with Northwest Film Forum's mission to support Northwest artists and inspire new works that raise the city's awareness of film as an art form. In addition to all its programs supporting and championing local filmmakers, Seattle has reached out to the music community in the past three years by commissioning and presenting the following ambitious and acclaimed live performances of film scores, many of which have gone on to tour nationally:

- \* TRAMP, TRAMP, TRAMP (1926) with new score composed and performed live by Danny Barnes and Robbie Fulks. Instrumentation includes banjo, tuba, electric and acoustic guitar, percussion, violin, viola, and harmonica. Barnes and Fulks subsequently performed their score in Bellingham, WA, Columbia, MO, and Chicago and Evanston, IL.

- \* PETER PAN (1924) with new score composed and performed live Leslie McMichael on Celtic, electric, and concert harps. McMichael subsequently performed her score at Roy and Edna Disney CalArts Theatre in Los Angeles, and performances are now being arranged on Vashon Island, WA; Houston, Austin, Dallas, TX; Louisville, KY, and Astoria, OR.

- \* SACRED CINEMA: THE YASUJIRO OZU RETROSPECTIVE (27 films including 10 silent films). New scores commissioned by Wayne Horvitz, Robin Holcomb, John Atkins (of 764-Hero), Elizabeth Falconer, Lori Goldston, and Aono Jikken Ensemble.

- \* TO SLEEP SO AS TO DREAM (Yume Miruyoni Nemuraitai, Japan, 1986), Aono Jikken Ensemble.

- \* THE NAKED ISLAND (Kaneto Shino, Japan, 1960), Aono Jikken Ensemble.

THE ADVENTURES OF PRINCE ACHMED, performed with live score, will be the highlight of the Opening Night Celebration of the Children's Film Festival Seattle. Tickets to this and all performances are \$10 for kids, \$15 for adults, and \$12 NWFF members. The film is recommended for ages 7 and older as it contains scenes that might disturb the most sensitive young viewers. More information, tickets, and a complete festival schedule are available at [www.childrensfilmfestivalseattle.org](http://www.childrensfilmfestivalseattle.org).

More information about Miles and Karina is available at their website, [www.milesandkarina.com](http://www.milesandkarina.com). The duo is available for interviews anytime prior to the performances. Please contact Ryan Davis, [ryan@nwfilmforum.org](mailto:ryan@nwfilmforum.org), if you are interested in speaking with them.

Images and a press kit for PRINCE ACHMED are available at <http://www.nwfilmforum.org/press/childrensfilmfestival.html>.

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