



Half Moon Sword
Traditional English Sword Dancing

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Yonina Gordon
yonina.ena@gmail.com
halfmoonsword@yahoo.com

TWENTY-FOURTH ANNUAL NEW YORK SWORD DANCE FESTIVAL TO BE HELD
FEB. 14-15 IN NEW YORK CITY

The 24th Annual New York Sword Dance Festival, sponsored by Half Moon Sword, will be held in New York City, on Feb. 14-15, 2009. The festival features 14 teams, as the performing groups are known, who will travel to New York from around the country for an exciting weekend of performances in public spaces around the city.

Sword dancing is a winter celebration practiced in the farming and coal-mining regions of northern England, where the annual visit of the local sword dancers to the village homes was thought to guarantee good luck for the year. The Festival will feature both mystical, stately longsword and vigorous rapper sword dancing, with live music on fiddle, accordion, and other instruments. In both types of sword dance, the dancers are linked in a ring by the "swords" they hold in their hands while they work as a team to weave intricate figures and patterns without breaking the circle. The dances are thought to have roots in ancient rituals, traces of which can still be seen in these present-day displays of skill. Performances will also include Morris dancing, Molly dancing, and related English folk traditions.

This year's festival will feature the "home team," Half Moon Sword, and their many guests for a weekend of exciting and crowd-pleasing entertainment. Performances will be held simultaneously in numerous libraries, museums, churches, and other public spaces. All performances are free, although there is an admission charge to enter the museums.

For more information, e-mail Yonina Gordon at yonina.ena@gmail.com or call (212) 569-4374. You may also check the team Web site at www.halfmoonsword.org, or contact the team at halfmoonsword@yahoo.com.

(More)

24th Annual New York Sword Dance Festival

SCHEDULE FOR THE 24TH NEW YORK SWORD DANCE FESTIVAL Saturday, February 14th, 2009 -- (mostly) Manhattan

9:30 a.m.

Staten Island Ferry Terminal
Whitehall Terminal at 1 Whitehall Street at South Street

1:00 p.m.

Dana Discovery Center
110th Street (between Fifth Avenue & Lenox Avenue) in Central
Park

1:00 p.m.

Jefferson Market Public Library
425 Sixth Avenue @ 10th Street

1:00 p.m.

Penn South Bldg 7A Community Room
328 W. 28th Street (between Eighth Avenue & Ninth Avenue)

1:30 p.m.

Museum of the City of New York
1220 5th Avenue @ 103rd Street

1:30 p.m.

Union Settlement
210 E. 115th Street (between Second Avenue & Third Avenue)

3:00 p.m.

Bloomingdale Branch Library
150 W. 100th Street (between Amsterdam Avenue & Columbus Avenue)

3:00 p.m.

Brooklyn Heights Library
280 Cadman Plaza West at Tillary Street, Brooklyn

3:00 p.m.

Museum of the City of New York
1220 Fifth Avenue @ 103rd Street

3:00 p.m.

Jefferson Market Public Library
425 6th Avenue @ 10th Street

3:00 p.m.

Dana Discovery Center
110th Street (between Fifth Avenue & Lenox Avenue) in Central
Park

(More)

24th Annual New York Sword Dance Festival

Sunday, February 15th, 2009 -- Brooklyn

12:30 p.m.

First Unitarian Church of Brooklyn
Pierrepont & Monroe Streets, Brooklyn

12:30 p.m.

Old First Reformed Church
126 Seventh Avenue, between Carroll and President Streets,
Brooklyn

12:30 p.m.

Brooklyn Historical Society
128 Pierrepont Street @ Clinton Street, Brooklyn

2:30 p.m.

Brooklyn Museum (auditorium)
200 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn

TEAMS ATTENDING

Candyrapper, Boston, MA
Charm City Rapper, Baltimore, MD
Cutting Edge, Washington, D.C.
Griggstown Lock Rapper Sword, Princeton, NJ
Half Moon Sword, New York, NY
Handsome Molly, Princeton, NJ
New Haven Morris and Sword, New Haven, CT
New Moon Sword, New York, NY
No Apologies Rapper, Boston, MA
Orion Longsword, Boston, MA
Still River Sword, Still River, MA
That Long Tall Sword, Northampton, MA
Vineyard Swordfish, Martha's Vineyard, MA
Wesleyan Rapper, Middletown, CT

ABOUT HALF MOON SWORD

Half Moon Sword is an all-women's sword team, which has been dancing together since 1981. Their skillful dance displays have gained them a reputation here and in England for precision and fresh interpretations of traditional dances. Doctors, lawyers, educators, writers, and mothers by day, the women of Half Moon Sword share a love of this dance form with all its ritual and mystery. The festival is their opportunity to share the excitement of sword dancing with other dancers and the public. The name Half Moon is inspired by Henry Hudson's ship, the Halve Maen. This year is the quadricentennial (400th anniversary) of Henry Hudson's voyage to North America in 1609.