

**MEMNOSYNE FOUNDATION PRESENTS
“GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT – GIFTS OF HEALING”**

HOUSTON, September 6, 2012 – The Memnosyne Foundation – dedicated to preserving and promoting cultural heritage of indigenous peoples around the world – will present the “Gifts of the Spirit – Gifts of Healing” a cultural and education project created to engage the Maori of New Zealand in research, documentation, replication, and sound recording from sacred musical instruments of their culture that are now part of the Menil Collection in Houston. The program is from September 14 through September 22, 2012.

In 2010, Maoridom visitors to the Menil Collection galleries identified several flutes highly significant for their culture. Often the arts and artifacts of indigenous people become separated from the places in which – and uses for which – they were created. For example, sacred flutes created by the Maori were originally used for traditional healing ceremonies and health practices in New Zealand.

“The Memnosyne Foundation recognized an opportunity to create a cultural bridge between the source and destination of these musical instruments,” says Coke Buchanan, director of Indigenous Cultures for the Memnosyne Foundation. “We are honored the Menil Collection will host Maori artisans, musicians, scholars and Elders from New Zealand for a week-long resident study to glean knowledge and employ technology to reintroduce the flutes to the Maoridom community in New Zealand.”

-MORE-

Maori Artifacts at the Menil Collection/Page Two

Friday, September 14th, there will be a combined VIP welcoming ceremony/reception with participation from the local Alabama – Coushatta Indian Community and the Maori delegation. This will mark the beginning of a series of events. On Saturday, September 15, Houston's Museum District Day, the Maori will offer to the public a series of workshops, dance and musical performances at the Menil.

"Gifts of the Spirit – Gifts of Healing" hopes to yield the following outcomes:

- 1) Revitalize, educate and sustain ancient traditions of healing through music for the Maori
- 2) From the Menil Collection of flutes, create a never-before recorded sound bank to sustain the traditional tone quality for ceremonies and future musical projects.
- 3) Empower the Maori to define and document their culture

"This is a journey that will be life-changing for our people," says Maori Project Manager, Rangitunoa Black of New Zealand. "Raising the vibration of our Nation through sound, and the beauty of our Indigenous Language and Practices is our ultimate goal."

ABOUT THE MAORI:

The Maori are an indigenous Polynesian people of New Zealand. The Maori origination with the settlers from eastern Polynesian, who arrive in New Zealand in several waves of canoe voyages at some time before 1300CE. Over several centuries in isolation, the Polynesian settlers developed a unique culture that became known as the Maori, with their own language, a rich mythology, distinctive crafts and performing arts. They make up 15% of the population of New Zealand and are the second-largest ethnic group, after European New Zealanders.

ABOUT THE MEMNOSYNE FOUNDATION:

The mission of the Memnosyne Foundation is to provide mankind with the means to encourage positive, peaceful global collaboration in all areas of knowledge. Additional information may be found by visiting <http://www.Memnosyne> Foundation.org

-MORE-

Maori Artifacts at the Menil Collection/Page Three

ABOUT THE CENTER FOR INDIGENOUS CULTURES:

The Center for Indigenous Cultures provides indigenous people the Means to preserve their heritage through the arts, architecture, music, dance, ceremony, the science and philosophy of mathematics, astronomy, indigenous medicine practices and languages.

ABOUT THE MENIL COLLECTION:

Considered one of the most important privately assembled collections of the twentieth century, the Menil Collection opened officially on June 4, 1987, and is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. The Menil's holdings, ranging from the prehistoric to art of the present day, are housed in a modern landmark designed by the renowned architect Renzo Piano. In the quarter-century since it opened to the public, the Menil has established an international reputation for presenting acclaimed exhibitions and producing many highly respected scholarly publications; pioneering partnerships with other cultural and education institutions across Houston, Texas and the United States; and conducting groundbreaking research into the conservation of modern and contemporary art. The Menil charges no admission fees. For more information about the Menil Collection, visit: www.menil.org.

-END-

Photographs and interviews available

PRESS CONTACTS:

John S. Shore, Shore Public Relations

214-352-5111, direct

214-738-1516, cell

ishore@shorepr.com

Vance Muse or Gretchen Sammons

Menil Press Office

press@menil.org or 713-535-3170