

Jains Honor UPF INTERNATIONAL CHAIR and Vice President for Peacebuilding

Lynn Walsh
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New York, United States—The UPF International chair and vice president were honored at an event sponsored by the Shrimad Rajchandra Mission.

On July 29, 2017, a play about the relationship between Mahatma Gandhi and his mentor was performed in the Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The drama “Yugpurush—Mahatma na Mahatma” (meaning “Mahatma’s Mahatma”) depicted the life-changing influence of Jain spiritual guide Shrimad Rajchandra on Gandhi’s spiritual development and embrace of nonviolence at a critical time in India’s history.

According to the play, Gandhi said of Shrimad Rajchandra: "This man has won my heart in spiritual matters, and no one else has ever made on me the same impression. I have said elsewhere that besides Kavi (Shrimadji), [English writer John] Ruskin and [Russian writer Leo] Tolstoy have contributed in forming my intrinsic character; but Kavi has had a more profound effect because I had come in personal and intimate contact with him."

The program was sponsored by the Jain organization the Shrimad Rajchandra Mission and its spiritual leader, Pujya Gurudevshri Rakeshbhai Jhaveri.

After the play, several dignitaries were asked to come onto the stage to receive awards for their work for peace and nonviolence. Dr. Thomas G. Walsh and Taj Hamad, the chair and vice president, respectively, of UPF International, were among the awardees.

Dr. Walsh was also one of the speakers at the event, along with Pujya Gurudevshri; Professor Rajmohan Gandhi, a grandson of Mahatma Gandhi; and H.E. Syed Akbaruddin, the permanent representative of India to the United Nations.

All the speakers expressed appreciation for the Rajchandra Mission’s humanitarian work and the play’s message about this important personal mentoring relationship and the practice of nonviolence—which is so needed in the world today.