Message from Thay Thich Phap An (Dr Pham Thu)
Director of European Institute of Applied Buddhism, Germany.

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It is a great honor for me to announce, on behalf of the Plum Village's European Institute of Applied Buddhism (EIAB) in Germany, that an exhibition of calligraphy by Thich Nhat Hanh (or Thay, as we call him, this being the Vietnamese term referring to the respected teacher) is to be held in Vancouver this August.

From interacting closely with Thay, I have had the opportunity to feel how much he enjoys and puts his love into his art. In his calligraphy there are undoubtedly some precious 'drops from the cup of Thay' mingling with the ink. I am always touched deeply by his compassionate energy, which has manifested in many aspects of his life. In each stroke of his calligraphies, you can sense the energy of mindfulness and love as well as the refreshing beauty which it embodies. Thay has often told me that his only purpose for his actions, whether it is his poetry, calligraphy, writing or his ordinary way of living such as walking, talking or even drinking a cup of tea, is to help people to touch the joy, the beauty and the peace in themselves. His calligraphies, such as 'Breathe, you are alive', 'Drink your tea', 'Darling, I am here for you', or 'Peace in oneself, peace in the world', offer us the precious art of mindful living. They can help us to light up moments of our lives and to improve the quality of our relationships with our beloved ones. Someone once said that, since Thay is such a good poet, he should spend all of his time writing poetry, but he replied that he enjoys gardening very much and that his poetry comes from this.

Thay's artistic work is a continuation of his life and manifestation. With your heart open, you can be in touch deeply with his living energy that is embedded in his calligraphy.

Thay's greatest wish is to bring the practice of peace into all paths of life. While he was still a young novice, 16 years old and facing so much turmoil in a war raged country, he saw so much suffering and, from of his foundation of love, he was inspired to do something to relieve the suffering of his human brothers and sisters. Because of his peace activities he was not allowed by either of the warring parties to go back to Vietnam. In the past many years, Thay's dream to help has gone beyond Vietnam and now has no frontiers, embracing the whole beloved earth. His books have been translated into more than 50 languages and they have helped hundreds of thousands of people all over the world. His calligraphies offer simple, concrete and practical key points from his teachings.

I wish you a lot of joy and delight in Thay's calligraphy.

Thich Chan Phap An