



# Reviews

Omaha



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## **Michael Kelly: 'Spirit' tells story of search for self**

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You can't really know another person, it is said, until you have walked a mile in his moccasins.

But what if the person you are trying to know is yourself?

Peter Buffett's amazing "Spirit - The Seventh Fire" beats to the rhythm of Indian drummers, even as it connects to the beat of the heart. In spectacular scenes on a 90-foot-wide screen, as well as in music and dance on stage, "Spirit" tells the story of a young man on a journey to find his heritage. The music is so stirring, the dancing so spectacular, that comparisons are inevitable to that popular icon of Irish culture, "Riverdance."

An earlier incarnation of "Spirit" was shown on PBS and in concert. "The idea was right," he (Buffett) said, "but the execution was wrong." Now in full flower, with music composed by Buffett and Chief Hawk Pope, "Spirit - the Seventh Fire" gets standing ovations at an air-conditioned, 750-seat tent near the Gallup University campus.

An American Indian prophecy stated that a new people would retrace the footsteps of their ancestors in search of new ways to live in harmony - a period of healing called the Seventh Fire. The 25-member cast includes handsome Brandon Oakes, a Mohawk from Toronto, in the lead role. He lives a hectic, urban life, but eventually walks in his own moccasins.

"Spirit - the Seventh Fire" is poignant, sad, uplifting, thrilling and powerful. For himself, Buffett says, it's the culmination of a long walk that began with his "fire dance" score...