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Tamziq, Scattered and Connected: A Conversation in Art by Middle Eastern and American Artists

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Background



The number of Iraqi refugees resettled in the United States has grown from only 202 in 2006 to approximately 17,000 in 2009.

Since 2007, 58,810 Iraqi refugees have arrived in the United States. This group now forms the largest refugee population in the state of Massachusetts. At the same time, a large number of veterans are returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

This project recognizes the increasing need for dialogue and exchange with and within these communities and a further need to broaden understanding of the cultural influences on our changing communities.



Artist Network

Goal: To foster a community of Middle Eastern born and American born artists in Boston.

Approaches & Activities:

- Monthly meetings to share work and ideas, such as current context in Middle East, identity, and artmaking in response to current context.
- Work with our artist contacts in Basra, Jordan, and Sulaymaniya to create opportunities for exchanges with artists to build mutual understanding, build deeper connections/insight.
- To create work for exhibit, American and Middle Eastern Artists: A Conversation.

Theater

Goal: To produce staged readings and a production of works by Middle Eastern playwrights.

- Waiting for Gilgamesh by Amir Al Azraki, a reading, June 20th, 2012
- The Bridge/The Land They Love (working title), collaborative project by Iraqi and American artists, May 17 & 18, 2013 at Fort Point Theater Channel
- An evening of short plays by two Iraqi playwrights:
 - Lysistrata in Iraq by Amir Al Azraki
 - Ishtar in Baghdad by Rasha Fadhil

A collaboration with the Fort Point Theater Channel

Goals and Approach

▪ To create an opportunity for **exploration and conversation** about the **impact of war** on:

- the communities and cultures of Iraqi and other Arabic refugees;
- the impact on education;
- the related topics of gender, human rights, story-telling and differences between American and Arabic perspectives.

▪ To use **four key strategies** to facilitate awareness and dialogue:

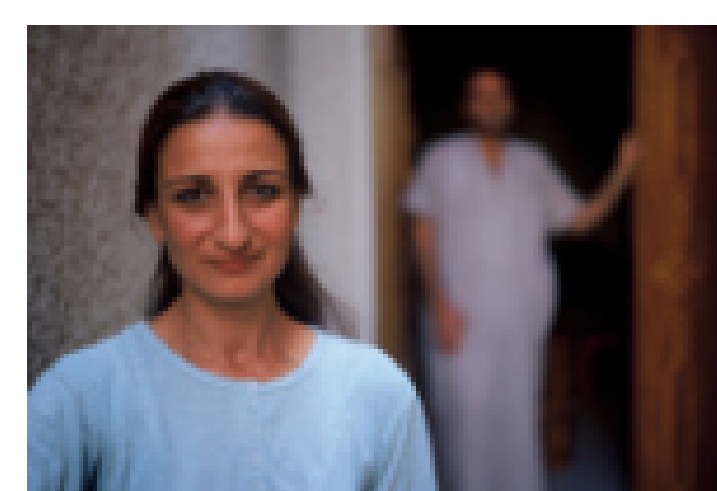
1. Artist Network
2. Exhibit and related events
3. Theater
4. Education

Exhibit and Film Screenings

American and Middle Eastern Artists: A Conversation
Featuring local and international artists from the US, Middle East and its Diaspora

March 21 - April 26, 2013
Arsenal Center for the Arts, Watertown MA

Opening Reception & Artist Panel
April 22, 2013



My Home: Your War (Iraq)

Friday, April 26, 7:00 pm
CAC, 191 Highland Ave, 6B, Somerville

An extraordinary look at the effect of the Iraq war through the eyes of an ordinary Iraqi woman. Shot in Baghdad over three years that span the time before, during and after the invasion of Iraq.

Organized by Ban Al Mahfodh, co-sponsored by Center for Arabic Culture (CAC)/Joiner Center

Education

Goal: To develop mutual understanding that goes beyond media portrayal of our respective cultures; To improve outcomes with students.

Approach: Creating collaborations for scholarly activity among educators and artists.

Sponsored By

The Office of the President of the University of Massachusetts, Robert L. Caret, PhD

Paul Atwood, William Joiner Center for the Study of War and Social Consequences,
<http://www.umb.edu/joinercenter>

The Odysseus Project, <http://www.odysseusproject.org>