

Poetry Reading and Music Concert Highlight LAND & CONFLICT

Toronto, October 23, 2009 – **Land & Conflict**, an unprecedented collaboration between the 10th **Annual Planet in Focus International Environmental Film & Video Festival**, the **International Diaspora Film Festival**, and **Voices Forward**, presents two inspiring events: a spectacular evening of music with New York City's legendary **David Amram** and a night of moving poetry curated by Palestinian-Canadian writer and activist **Hanadi Loubani**.

On **November 1**, Palestinian-Canadian writer and activist **Hanadi Loubani** hosts *Maybe: A Poetry Soiree* at Arta Gallery; and on **November 3** at Revival Bar, one of America's true Renaissance musicians, **David Amram**, offers a joyous evening of music and dance from the Middle East and around the world that celebrates reconciliation through the arts with *At Home Around the World – A Musical Mosaic with David Amram and Friends*.

Maybe: A Poetry Soiree with Hanadi Loubani
November 1st – 5:30-7:30 PM (Arta Gallery, 55 Mill Street)

Hanadi Loubani hosts *Maybe: A Poetry Soiree*. Backgrounded by Babak Salari's *Off the Wall* photo exhibition, the event is an opening reception for an art and poetry installation curated by **Hanadi Loubani** that invites the viewer to construct in/through poetry a "maybe space" of dialogic interaction between Palestinians and Israelis.

This event features poetry by Israeli political poet, author, and journalist **Yitzhak Laor** and Palestinian poet **Khalid Ali Mustafa**, and is hosted by **Dr. Izzeldin Abuelaish**, the Palestinian doctor from Gaza nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. Loubani has been involved with **Voices Forward** for the past three years. A number of her critical and creative essays appear in Fuse Magazine, Resource for Feminist Research Journal and Thamyri/Intersecting: Place, Sex and Race, Diaspora and Memory. Musician **George Sawa**, a master of Qanun, plays at this unique event. He obtained his doctorate in historical Arabic musicology at the Department of Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Toronto. He has taught graduate and undergraduate courses on medieval, modern, and religious music of the Middle East at York University, and at the University of Toronto (1982-1995), and held the Noor Visiting Professorship at York University (2006-2007).

At Home Around the World: A Musical Mosaic
with David Amram and Friends Celebrating Reconciliation through the Arts
November 3rd – 8:00 PM (Revival Bar, 783 College Street)

Musical genius **David Amram** celebrates the Canadian premiere of Teri McLuhan's *Frontier Gandhi*, that opens the International Diaspora Film Festival on November 4 at 7pm. *Frontier Gandhi* was recently named "Best Feature Documentary Film" at the Middle East International Film Festival. This event is a rare opportunity to experience an artist who counts Charles Mingus, Leonard Bernstein, Sir James Galway and Jack Kerouac among his collaborators. "Amram was multicultural before multiculturalism existed." - *New York Times*

In conjunction with Small World Music and local musicians, this mosaic will feature music from the Middle East, including Jewish, Arab, Iranian, Afghan and Pakistani influences. For over fifty years, Amram has composed orchestral and chamber music works, written many scores for Broadway theatre and film, including the scores for *Splendor in The Grass* and *The Manchurian Candidate*; the groundbreaking Holocaust opera *The Final Ingredient*; and the score for the landmark 1959 documentary *Pull My Daisy*, narrated by novelist Jack Kerouac. In addition to Amram's 12 years guest conducting the Toronto Symphony, he recently collaborated with the late Frank McCourt (*Angela's Ashes*) on *Missa Manhattan* as well as Torontonians Teri McLuhan on her *Frontier Gandhi: Badshah Khan, A Torch for Peace*.

From playing jazz French horn with Dizzy Gillespie in Cuba, conducting his own operas and concertos in New York City, playing the shanai and dumbek in Cairo Egypt and the Husai in Chendu China, at nearly age 80 Amram continues his non-stop search for musical knowledge, all of which become sources for his musical expression. For more information visit: www.davidamram.com

The **Land & Conflict** series was curated by the directors of three festivals: **Amit Breuer** (Voices Forward), **Candida Paltiel** (Planet in Focus) and **Shahram Tabe** (International Diaspora Film Festival). The series began during the Planet in Focus International Environmental Film Festival (October 21-25) and segues through to the International Diaspora Film Festival (November 1-8).

Maybe: A Poetry Soiree with Hanadi Loubani
Sunday, November 1 – 5:30-7:30 PM
Arta Gallery: 55 Mill Street, Building 9, Distillery District
Free Admission

At Home Around the World: A Musical Mosaic with David Amram and Friends Celebrating Reconciliation through the Arts
Tuesday, November 3 – 8:00 PM
Revival Bar: 783 College St. (at Shaw)

Tickets: \$25/\$20 in advance. 416-571-2150 or www.smallworldmusic.com / www.diasporafilmfest.com