



PRESS RELEASE

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Voices Breaking Boundaries' **07-08 SEASON**

Houston, TX (September 8, 2006) – Voices Breaking Boundaries 2006-07 fall starts off this year with many new changes: VBB is proud to announce that we have been accepted into the Cultural Arts Council of Houston/ Harris County/ Houston Association for the Arts' new incubator program. In mid-September, we'll be relocating our office to Allen Parkway.

VBB will start its new year with a silent auction and celebration through which VBB will provide our audience opportunities to purchase work by dynamic local, national and international artists. During Fall 06, VBB's emphasis will be on visual art—we'll present an art auction where work by exciting artists such as **Robert Pruitt, David Levinthal, Beth Secor** and **Amita Bhatt** will be available and this event will be followed by the first of our Living Room Art series.

VBB's spring season opens with a dynamic performance by Palestinian hip-hop artist **Suheir Hammad**, followed by **Un/Natural Disaster: Katrina-Kashmir** will examine issues of displacement and government responses to two natural disasters. The rest of the season is packed with film, cultural narrative conversations, and performances all centered around issues connected to health, global peace and the urgent need to address the Palestinian cause, an issue that impacts so much of the world. Since VBB will no longer have a space through which it can exhibit visual art, we are reaching back into Houston's neighborhoods and hosting living room art shows in residential homes.

"Many of us take homes for granted," says VBB Founding Director **Sehba Sarwar**. "VBB shows this season highlight the importance of homes—in strong contrast to natural disasters and border conflicts, which have generated large groups of displaced communities such as Katrina evacuees, earthquake victims and Palestinians who till today are struggling for land. This year, VBB brings to Houston the voices of these communities and links them together through our multi-media events."

A Modern La Llorona: Exploring the Mystery of Mothers Who Kill

Thursday, September 14, 2006, 6:30–8:30 pm

General admission Free

Jones Hall, University of St. Thomas, 3910 Yoakum, *Houston, TX 77006*

Arte Publico Press features Graciela Limón reading from her new novel, *Left Alive*. *MultiCultural Review* says Limón's novel is powerful and "...very few will guess the resolution of this gripping and

heartbreaking novel." Evening includes reading, book signing, wine & cheese reception. *Event cosponsored by Literal, Latin American Voices, The Consulate General of Mexico, The Center for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality, Rice University, Department of Modern and Classical Languages, University of St. Thomas and Voices Breaking Boundaries.*

jincite fall!

Thursday, October 12, 2006, 7:00 – 9:00 pm

General admission \$25

m ARCHITECTS, 1206 Nance Street, Houston, TX 77002

Breaking Boundaries invites all to **jincite fall!** VBB's fall fundraiser and silent auction. featuring the work of Anila **Agha** Gertrude **Barnstone** Alyssa **Barrineau** Amita **Bhatt** Lise **Bjorne** Fernando **Brave** Mark **Dean** Sharon **Engelstein** Robert **Graham** Eric **Hester** Paul **Hester** Leslie **Hewitt** Nadia **Khan** David **Levinthal** David **McGee** Gunjen **Mittal** Zach **Moser** Robert **Pruitt** Beth **Secor** Oskar **Sonnen** Nestor **Topchy** Jiny **Ung** and work by up & coming teen artists. Admission gets visitors drinks, light meal, and fantastic company.

Cultural Narrative: Anthony Shadid

Tuesday, November 7, 2:30 pm

General admission: Free

Rockwell Pavilion, MD Anderson Library, University of Houston, Houston 77204

<http://info.lib.uh.edu/libraries/mda.html>

Currently with the *Washington Post*, **Anthony Shadid** is a Pulitzer Prize winning journalist who has covered the war in Iraq as an Arabic speaking, un-embedded journalist based in Baghdad since before the invasion. His book *Night Draws Near: Iraq's People in the Shadow of America's War* (2005) was a *New York Times* notable book for last year and is a thorough account of the effects of invasion and occupation on ordinary Iraqis. Shadid will give a talk on his experiences as a journalist in Iraq and Lebanon. Local Houston journalists will share their experiences at this event. Shadid's book will be available for sale.

Living Room Art 1: Oskar Sonnen and Danny Kerschen

Saturday, December 9, 8:00 – 10:00 pm

General admission Free

Home of Jaspal Subhlok, 3615 Graustark, Houston, TX 77006

The Living Room Series of Visual Arts Exhibitions strikes to the core purpose of VBB's initiatives to expose artists and communities to one another in engaging ways. VBB intends to make the art experience accessible to communities of Houston with little in the means of art experiences or institutions. Just as doctors once made house calls, VBB is making house calls to Houston's neighborhoods. The first of this series features artists Danny Kerschen and Oskar Sonnen will present work in the house of Jaspal Subhlok in a party atmosphere; the show lasts for the duration of the party.

Words from Exile: Suheir Hammad

Beats from the Middle East / Rhymes from Occupied Palestine

Thursday, January 25, 2007, 8pm onward

General admission: \$5 (no one turned away)

Proletariat, 903 Richmond Ave, Houston, TX 77006

<http://www.theproletariathouston.com/directions/index.html>

Utilizing her own unique style that brought her to join the debut episode of HBO's *Russell Simmons*

Presents Def Poetry. Brooklyn-based Palestinian poet **Suheir Hammad** will fuse words and music to confront and inform about the Palestinian American experience. Hammad's accomplishments span a large gamut of literary work, from publications in periodicals such as *The Amsterdam News*, *Essence*, *STRESS Hip-Hop Magazine* and the *Middle East Report*; to anthologies *New to North America*, *Listen Up!*, *The Space Between Our Footsteps* and *33 Things Every Girl Should Know About Women's History*. Hammad has been featured on the BBC World Service and National Public Radio as well as in prisons and universities throughout the United States. Her newest book of poetry, *Zaatar Diva* (Cypher Books) is available in bookstores now. The evening includes music by **Rok Box's DJ Witness** who will play special guest **DJ Rami's** set, *Beats from the Middle East / Rhymes from Occupied Palestine*. The party will continue until the Proletariat closes! *The evening is cosponsored by The Proletariat, Arab Roots and KPFT Pacifica Radio 90.1 FM. Curated by Hadeel Assali, Hana Elshahly, Gunjen Mittal, Iman Saqr, Hahleemah Wright and VBB.*

Un/Natural Disaster: Katrina-Kashmir

Sunday, February 4, 2007, 7:00 pm

General admission \$5 (no turned away)

DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway, Houston, TX 77002

From the mountains of Kashmir to the broken levées of New Orleans, humanity struggled to survive amid unnatural disasters. **Un/Natural Disaster: Katrina-Kashmir** explores the connections between two communities on opposite sides of the globe. The event features spoken word by **Sunni Patterson**, **Kangsen Wakai** and high school student **Barbara LeBanks**; audio and video images directly from Kashmir, presented by **Renée Feltz**; a theater performance directed by **Autumn Knight**. Evening includes a short screening of *After the Storm*, a documentary on Hurricane Katrina by **Autumn Leonard** as well as a documentary on the earthquake by **Yuli Yang**, and updates by **Siddharth Shah** (Psychosocial Assistance Without Borders) and Pakistan's BBC correspondent **Aamer Ahmed Khan**. Organizations will be on hand to provide information about how you can help. This event is cosponsored by DiverseWorks and KPFT Pacifica Radio 90.1 FM. with special thanks to Surviving Katrina and Rita in Houston project, Ambreen Ali, PAKCAST and Nasir Aziz and *The News on Sunday* (Pakistan) for digital sound and images. *All proceeds from the evening will go toward relief efforts. Curated by Renée Feltz. Nicole Eugene, Autumn Knight, Nusrat Malik, Sehba Sarwar, Oskar Sonnen and Willie Wright.*

Lectura bilingüe / Bilingual Reading:

Rosario Sanmiguel con/ with John Pluecker

Jueves, 8 de marzo, 2007, 4-5:30pm / Thursday, March 8, 2007, 4-5:30pm

University of Houston, Agnes Arnold Hall, Room 444

Rosario Sanmiguel, novelista, cuentista y traductora de Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, México leerá de su obra en español. Después de que lea Sanmiguel, John Pluecker, estudiante graduado de literaturas hispánicas de la Universidad de Houston leerá de las traducciones que ha hecho de la obra de Sanmiguel.

Rosario Sanmiguel, novelist, short story writer and translator from Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, México will read in Spanish from her work. Following her, John Pluecker, graduate student in Hispanic Literatures at the University of Houston will read from his own translations of Sanmiguel's work.

This event is cosponsored by VBB.

Open Journal: *Un/Natural Disaster: Katrina-Kashmir*

March 12, 2007, noon

Broadcast through KPFT Pacifica Radio, 90.1 FM

Tune into KPFT to hear more about VBB's *Un/Natural Disaster: Katrina-Kashmir* show. VBB hosts an Open Journal on KPFT featuring some of the performances from the show and updates from several guests. Siddharth Shah (Psychosocial Assistance Without Borders) will speak about the mental health status of survivors, Zeba Shah (Development in Literacy) will bring us an update from Kashmir, and we have Katrina updates. To hear more how VBB's *Un/Natural Disaster: Katrina-Kashmir* on February 4, 2007 went click [here](#).

Houston Palestine Film Festival

May 10-13 and May 17-20, 2007

General admission TBA

Venues: TBA

The first annual **Houston Palestine Film Festival** brings an honest and independent view of Palestine and its diaspora's society, culture, and political travails through the art of film. This group of groundbreaking cinematic texts rise above the degrading stereotypes or reductively politicized depictions that are so familiar to Houstonians. A major goal of the Festival is to directly expose our local community to the perspective of artists as a first step toward circumventing the many government and media filters that pollute our understanding of Palestine and the wider region. Some of the films in this year's festival include *Waiting/ Attente* (Dir. Rashid Mashrawi) and *(Leila Khaled, Hijacker* (Dir. Lina Makboul) and confirmed venues include Museum of Fine Arts Houston and Rice University Media Center. *This festival is cosponsored by the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and Rice University Media Center, with support from the Chicago Palestine Film Festival.*

Brave Lives: Local Teens Speak Out

Date and venue TBA

General Admission Free

Local teenagers present break-dancing, spoken word, theater, visual art and much more as the end product of a month-long residency at Lee High School. Students are trained in all disciplines.

VBB also offers other programs such as education programs for teens and adults. Please visit our website for information. All events are subject to change. For more information about VBB's programming, contact Oskar Sonnen (713-524-7821 or oskar@vbbarts.org), or visit our website at www.vbbarts.org.

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