



voices breaking boundaries

crossing borders, sustaining dialogue, inciting social justice through art

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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::VBB weaves art and sociopolitical theory to create an exciting new terrain atypical of most arts organizations, educational programs, and networking opportunities::

"Some say that art and activism don't mix... but in times like these, art *must* act--and act ethically. Through a communion of diverse, kindred spirits, VBB's artist-activists refuse to stop dreaming of a better world." -*Ruben Martinez, author of Crossing Over and The New Americans*

Year Nine 2008-2009 Season

This year, our ninth, moves VBB in an exciting direction: the season will be kicked off by a new production of the Living Room Art series with a show **Brown in the Third Ward**, and a new element will be added into VBB's arts production called **East End Live Art**, produced mostly on the second Sunday of each month. **East End Live Art**, a reconnection to VBB's grassroots history, will produce a theme-based show at **Café Flores** in Houston's East End. Some of this year's theme's include the US elections, Hurricane Ike, and a revival of VBB's partnership with Arte Público Press in March 2009 in celebration of International Women's Day. All events will include a 30-minute open mic and the shows are cosponsored by Café Flores, Houston Institute for Culture and KPFT 90.1 FM,

In addition, we are starting to research, produce and present shows that will become the heart of the organization. Through this initiative, VBB Founding Director Sehba Sarwar will undertake research for a long-term project, **Pakistan Live Broadcast**, that will be presented to the community in Fall 2009-10 at multiple venues through Living Room Art (shows in people's homes) exhibitions, as well as through her blog that will give the community updates on her travel.

Aside from Sarwar's long-range project, VBB will also continue to cosponsor events presented by the **Artist Rescue Mission (ARM)**, **Houston Palestine Film Festival**, and other organizations whose work matches the VBB mission: to cross borders, sustain dialogue, and incite social justice through art.

voices breaking boundaries presents and produces **Living Room Art:**

Brown in the Third Ward

Curated by [Elia Arce](#) and [Robert Pruitt](#)

8:00 pm, Saturday Sept. 27, 2008

At the home of Ivette Roman (directly across the street from Texas Southern University)

3117 Cleburne, Houston 77004

Admission: Free

VBB opens its 2008-09 season with an exciting new **Living Room Art** new site-specific installation featuring new work by [Elia Arce](#), [Jade Cooper](#), [Robert Pruitt](#), [Ivette Roman](#), and [Sehba Sarwar](#), in a living room party, this time in the home of Ivette Roman. This version of Living Room Art will tackle race issues and by asking questions about what it means to be Brown in the Third Ward, the relationships between Brown and Black & the other Brown. In the safe environment of an open house, Third Ward members as well as Houston community members are invited to absorb the work and give their input into the issues at the open mic hosted by Robyn Anglin. Culinary artist, VBB Board Member and Third Ward resident [Nusrat Malik](#) will provide delicacies. There will be drinks for a donation. Parking at [Texas Southern University](#)

East End Live Art: After the Last Sky

A tribute reading for Palestine Poet Mahmud Darwish

6:00 pm, Friday, October 24, 2008

Café Flores, 6606 Lawndale St. Houston 77023

\$Free

VBB invites all community members to attend a reading and tribute to Mahmud Darwish, a renowned poet who passed away in August. There will be a reading of his works and a tribute to his spirit. This event is co-hosted by Houston Palestine Film Festival and *Palapala* magazine.

VBB's East End Live Art

Curated by the VBB Board.

6:00 pm, Sunday, November 9, 2008

Café Flores, 6606 Lawndale St. Houston 77023

\$Free

Voices Breaking Boundaries is pleased to announce its second East End Live Art event, held on second Sunday of every month at Café Flores located in Houston's vibrant east side. The evening includes captivating visual art and videos, thought-provoking readings, scintillating performance art and a 30-minute open mike inviting artists from our community to perform their work. Featured Artists are **Moazzam Sheikh** and **Julia Moreno Perri, aka JBeatz**.

Fundraiser for:

Pakistan Live Broadcast hosted by Mehnaz Shafi and Muzaffar Qazilbash

7:30 pm, Friday, November 14, 2008

At the home of Mahnaz and Muzaffar, 6348 Westchester Avenue, Houston 77005

\$100 per couple / \$75 per individual

Mehnaz Shafi and Muzaffar Qazilbash will join with Hosam Aboul-Ela, Surpik Angelini, Hadeel Assali, Franci Crane, Marcela Descalzi, Sissy Farenthold, Nusrat Malik, Gunjel Mittal, Michael Peranteau,

Dorothee Sauter + Josef Helfenstein, Julia Schafer, Bapsi Sidhwa, Wendy Watriss, Michael Woodson, and Mark Yzaguirre to host a gathering to support VBB Founding Director Sehba Sarwar's new project, **Pakistan Live Broadcast**, which will be produced next fall. To purchase a ticket for the fundraiser, please call the VBB office 713 524 7821.

Art League Houston and VBB present

We the People: We the People::

Writers from Iran, Palestine and Pakistan Featuring Fady Joudah, Farnoosh Moshiri, Sehba Sarwar + Bapsi Sidhwa

4:00 pm, Sunday, November 16, 2008

Houston Art League, 1953 Montrose, Houston 77006

\$Free

The Art League of Houston and VBB are joining together to present *We the People: Writers from Iran, Palestine and Pakistan*, a reading that features four award winning and nationally acclaimed writers Fady Joudah, Farnoosh Moshiri, Sehba Sarwar, and Bapsi Sidhwa. Short stories by Sidhwa and Sarwar appear in *And the World Changed: Contemporary Stories by Pakistani Women*, edited by Muneeza Shamsie and published by The Feminist Press at CUNY. *This event is cosponsored by Brazos Bookstore and The Feminist Press at CUNY.*

East End Live Art: Is this Change?

5:00 pm, Sunday, December 14, 2008

Café Flores, 6606 Lawndale Street Houston, TX 77023

\$ Free

VBB closes 2008 with a special East End Live Art Series entitled, **Is This Change?** The show features poetry and music performances by **Kim Cotton + Raj Pickens, Donna Garrett, Marlon Lizama, Raj Mankad, Marcell Murphy** and is hosted by VBB Founding Director **Sehba Sarwar**. Most of the artists have performed in the past for VBB at different times in our history at locations around the city. A special treat includes **students from Lee and Westbury High Schools** who have participated in VBB's after-school workshops on their campuses. The event also includes a thirty-minute open mic, a revival of VBB's old tradition of giving voice to all. Prior to the show there will be a wine-tasting hosted by Café Flores owner Berta Flores. *Cosponsored by Café Flores, Houston Institute for Culture and KPFT 90.1 FM.*

Objectif Magazine and VBB present

East End Live Art: RACE

5:00 pm, Sunday, February 15, 2009

Café Flores, 6606 Lawndale Street Houston, TX 77023

\$ Free

RACE is an exhibition/performance that broadly explores the different ways African Americans view race, both stated and unstated, and are held captive by these views and how these attitudes affect the social interaction between whites, blacks, and those in between. Performers include **Ameenifu, Anthony Brown, Carlandrea Clark, Hapshut Heru, Robert Hodge, and Elder Jean Wilkins**. There will be an open mic and everyone is invited to bring work to share. *This show is cosponsored by [KPFT Pacifica Radio 90.1 FM](#) [Houston Institute for Culture](#), and [Café Flores](#)*

[Arte Público Press](#) and [VBB](#) present

East End Live Art: La Voz Femenina 6

A celebration of International Women's Day

5:00 pm, Sunday, March 8, 2009

[Café Flores](#), 6606 Lawndale Street, Houston, TX 77023

\$ Free

Arte Público Press and Voices Breaking Boundaries team up again to celebrate **International Women's Day** with a reading by acclaimed Mexican author **Rosario Sanmiguel**, whose story collection, *Under the Bridge: Stories from the Border / Bajo la puente: Relatos desde la frontera*, was named to Criticas Magazine's list, Top Picks for Hispanic Heritage Month. *John Pluecker*, who translated her work from Spanish to English will also join the gathering, and the afternoon includes a short documentary on the women of Juarez produced by artist **Lise Bjorne** who will also exhibit print images. VBB co-Founders **Marcela Descalzi** and **Jacquelyn Shah** will perform new works, as will students from VBB's after-school workshop at Lee High School. VBB Founding Director **Sehba Sarwar** will host the show, and there will be an open mic for all. Bring your voices! *This show is cosponsored by KPFT Pacifica Radio 90.1 FM, UH-LULAC, El Gato, Houston Institute for Culture, and Café Flores.*

Cultural Narrative: Imran Aslam

Sunday, March 29, 2009, 6:00 pm; [Station Museum](#), 1502 Alabama, Houston 77004

Monday, March 30, 2009, 4 pm, [University of Houston](#) (Roy E Cullen, Room 102)\$ Free

VBB, in partnership with the American Institute of Pakistan Studies, brings to Houston **Imran Aslam**, a senior journalist from Pakistan, who is currently the president of GEO TV Network, the largest independent television broadcast company in Pakistan. Aslam was born in Madras and had his early schooling in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). He left Pakistan after a brief incarceration in Baluchistan during which he suffered a period in solitary confinement and was subjected to torture. In 1983, Aslam became the editor of the *Star*, an evening newspaper that blazed the trail in investigative journalism during the days of General Zia-ul-Haq. In 1990, he helped found *The News*, Pakistan's leading English language newspaper. In 2002, he was part of the team that launched *GEO*, which has, according to *The New York Times*, become a channel that 'changed the media landscape in Pakistan.' *GEO* launched in 2002 with Aslam as its President. The network has taken a position on sensitive societal and political issues and has helped to enlarge the space for discussion, dissent and debate. In November 2007, the network was shut down for over two months when General Musharraf imposed Emergency. Aslam is a political analyst and commentator and is often heard on leading international TV channels in that capacity. *This event is cosponsored by the English Department at the University of Houston, Border Crossings, KPFT Pacifica Radio 90.1 FM, and Houston Institute for Culture.*

East End Live Art: Teachers Speak Out

5:00 pm, Sunday, April 19, 2009

[Café Flores](#), 6606 Lawndale Street Houston, TX 77023

\$ Free

Often when one talks about education, the buzz is about the impact laws such as the No Child Left Behind Act which widened the gap between students and put pressure on schools, teachers and students for increasing testing scores. In this debate, we rarely hear from the teachers whose jobs are on the line based on the performance of their students. At **East End Live Art: Teachers Speak Out**, we'll hear words from teachers at Lee High School where VBB offers a teacher workshop, as well as from others. As always there will be open mic. Bring your voices and come hear and talk about the *real issues*. *Cosponsored by Café Flores, Houston Institute for Culture and KPFT 90.1 FM.*

East End Live Art: The Alternative Mothers' Day

5:00 pm, Sunday May 10, 2009

Café Flores, 6606 Lawndale Street Houston, TX 77023

\$ Free

Each year, people are pushed to celebrate holidays that have become consumer days that increase the sales for Hallmark and other companies that combine with the media to push consumers to buy. This year, VBB is hosting its first alternative Mothers' Day. Come hear mothers who are artists as they share their struggles to produce art. Names of artists will be announced soon. *Cosponsored by Café Flores, Houston Institute for Culture and KPFT 90.1 FM.*

Ongoing Project:

Pakistan Live Broadcast

researched and developed

by Sehba Sarwar

This coming winter, writer, performer and VBB Founding Director Sehba Sarwar spent a month in her home country Pakistan collecting documentation for Pakistan Live Broadcast. The show will be produced in Houston in spring 2009 by Sarwar and a team of artists and will cover ongoing events in Pakistan. The show will aim to present an alternative image of Pakistan, and to shed light on the country's struggle toward democracy and its secular residents. The video installation will include background interviews with Pakistani activists, journalists and politicians, documentary film, live performance, print images juxtaposed against life in Houston—and many other surprises.

The show will be researched, created and produced and performed by **Sehba Sarwar**. Other artists who will participate in creating the show include: playwright and television producer Imran Aslam; journalist and photographer Tehmina Ahmed; photographer and filmmaker **Eric Hester**; journalist and filmmaker **Beena Sarwar**; and theater actress **Yaksha Shah**. *Pakistan Live Broadcast committee includes Kamran Ali, Claudia Baba, Salmaan Hasan, Nusrat Malik, Muzaffar Qazilbash.*

Co-Sponsorships

Artist Rescue Mission premiers

In-Between: Iraqi Artists in Exile

By Tish Stringer

September 10, 2008, 7:30 pm

Rice Media Center, 2030 University Blvd, Houton 77005

A film screening and conversation with filmmaker Tish Stringer and two Iraqi artists. For more information, email Michael Woodson.

Houston Palestine Film Festival 3

April 2009

Daily admission \$7

Details TBA.