

NIGHT

Give Peace a Chance

Sehba Sarwar was writing about problems in Pakistan back in 1999, but few people were paying much attention. So after gathering stacks of rejection slips from agents and publishers, she formed **Voices Breaking Boundaries** to provide a forum for anyone who felt they had something they needed to say. Soon, equally passionate artists joined her ranks from places like Argentina and Korea. As their logo — an upside-down globe — indicates, the group is all about turning your view of the world upside down.

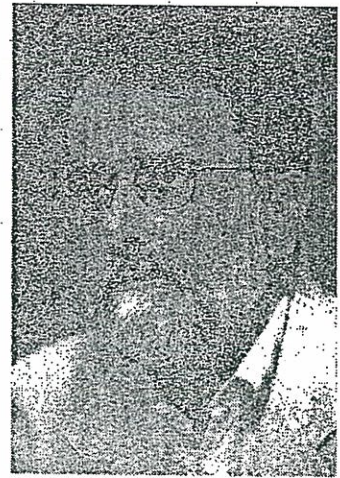
Sarwar started writing grants and attracting co-sponsors, including the Cultural Arts Council of Houston and KPFT Pacifica Radio. Audiences have grown from 30 to 300, but the group still doesn't have the resources to fly authors in for readings. For their latest September 11-inspired event, "Words for Peace," VBB was able to enlist the participation of some big names by asking the writers to call in and read live over the telephone. The audience will hear the words and voices of Jewish poet Irena Klepfisz, Palestinian-American poet Naomi Shihab Nye, Indian Booker Prize-winner Arundhati Roy and award-winning journalist Ahmed Rashid, one of the few people to have interviewed Osama bin Laden.

&

38 Calendar
45 Film
54 Art
58 Stage
59 Cafe
73 Music

DAY

Some talented locals will participate in person as well. Novelists Farnoosh Moshiri and Bapsi Sidhwa will perform, followed by the crowd favorite: the open mike, emphasis on the open. VBB board member Nusrat Malik says that "tolerance for diverse views is at an all-time low." This event is meant to "inspire understanding through powerful art forms, including music, dance, poetry and the spoken words."



Journalist Ahmed Rashid

One doubts these words will stop a war in Iraq. But for a few hours, they might at least help you imagine a future in which that region of the world finally knows peace. — Allison Norman

"Words for Peace" runs from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, September 22. \$8, \$5 for students and seniors. DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway. For more information, call 713-228-2052 or visit www.voicesbreakingboundaries.org.