

2009 Spring Season

Brooklyn Academy of Music

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Present

Muslim Voices: Arts & Ideas Youssou N'Dour

With his band
BAM Howard Gilman Opera House

June 5, 2009 at 8pm

Special guests **Hassan Hakmoun, Mouride Choire**

Quranic Reciters

Imam Shamsi Ali, Issah Lamin Yusif, Mohammed Amanul Haque

Salaam Suite

Under direction of **Amir ElSaffar**, performed by **The Ushaaq Ensemble**

June 6 at 8pm

Youssou N'Dour and *I Bring What I Love: Youssou Ndour*

A special advance screening of the documentary
I Bring What I Love (directed by Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi),
followed by a 60-minute performance by Youssou N'Dour

BAM 2009 Spring Season is sponsored by Bloomberg.

Youssou N'Dour is part of Diverse Voices at BAM presented by Time Warner Inc.

Major support for Muslim Voices: Arts & Ideas is provided by the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, The Rockefeller Foundation's New York City Cultural Innovation Fund, Robert Sterling Clark Foundation, The Ford Foundation, and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Additional Support for Muslim Voices: Arts & Ideas is provided by Carnegie Corporation of New York, The Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation, The Pluralism Fund, The Reed Foundation, Citi Foundation, Lisina M. Hoch, Blanchette Hooker Rockefeller Fund, Asian Cultural Council, Kite Foundation, Abdul Majid and Amira Zahid, Medco Energi, ArteEast, Amita and Purnendu Chatterjee, Con Edison, National Endowment for the Arts, New York Community Trust, New York State Council on the Arts, PARSA Community Foundation, Zain, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Anonymous, Cosmic Picture, Hazen Polsky Foundation, and the Moroccan American Cultural Center.

Welcome

Dear Friends,

The arts and cultural exchange programs have the unique power to create new connections between people locally and globally. On behalf of all of us at Asia Society, Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), and New York University Center for Dialogues, we are pleased to welcome you to *Muslim Voices: Arts & Ideas*—the largest, multi-venue celebration of Islamic cultures ever presented in the United States.

Muslim Voices: Arts & Ideas has been designed to share and celebrate the arts and culture of Muslim societies. Islam is the world's second-largest religion, with an estimated one billion-plus members—approximately 600,000 in New York City, with nearly 100,000 in Brooklyn alone—but many non-Muslim Americans have had only limited exposure to the faith, its civilization, diverse cultures, and traditions. Arts and culture play a vital role in helping us learn more about each other by providing new perspectives and fostering the mutual respect that leads to peaceful co-existence among people.

The idea for *Muslim Voices* emerged from preliminary conversations between Karen Brooks Hopkins, President of BAM and Mustapha Tlili, Founder and Director of New York University Center for Dialogues at conferences in Malaysia and Austria. A broader conversation in New York led to this three way collaboration among Asia Society, BAM, and NYU Center for Dialogues, with each organizing partner bringing distinct expertise to the initiative.

After three years of intensive planning and the support of our committed partners, generous funders, and tireless advisors, we are proud to share the kaleidoscopic richness of Islamic arts and culture in this ten-day festival and two-day academic and policy conference from June 5—14.

Muslim Voices: Arts & Ideas highlights the rich diversity of Muslim cultures by presenting over 300 artists, performers, cultural entrepreneurs, policy makers, and scholars from as far away as Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and as near as Brooklyn. Through this initiative, at both Asia Society and BAM you will have the opportunity to experience performances, films, exhibitions, talks, and other events, from the traditional, such as calligraphy and Sufi devotional music, to the contemporary, such as Arabic hip-hop. In addition, nine associate partners throughout New York City—American Museum of Natural History, Austrian Cultural Forum, Brooklyn Arts Council, Brooklyn Museum, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum for African Art, Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts (MoCADA), and New York Public Library, in partnership with the European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC)—offer visual arts, film, literary, and other programming.

A community souk takes place the weekend of June 6 & 7, featuring artisans and merchants from near and far. Education and humanities events will complement festival shows, enabling audiences to thoughtfully experience the full range of Islamic artistic expression within its cultural and historical context.

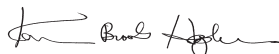
Our media partners, WNET/THIRTEEN and *The New York Times*, further extend the initiative's reach. The website, MuslimVoicesFestival.org, provides information on specific artists, partners, and participants.

The arts have the unique ability to illuminate and inspire. Throughout these ten days, we hope you will be able to sample many events, gaining new perspectives along the way—the key to creating a world of vibrant mutual engagement and respect.

Cordially,



Vishakha N. Desai
Asia Society



Karen Brooks Hopkins
Brooklyn Academy of Music



Mustapha Tlili
NYU Center for Dialogues

Program

June 5, 2009 at 8pm

Youssou N'Dour with his band and special guests

Additional performers with Youssou N'Dour

Jimi Mbaye Guitar, **Omar Sow** Guitar, **Habib Faye** Bass, **Abdoulaye Lo** Drums, **Assane Thiam** Tamar (Talking drum), **Jean Philippe Rykiel** Keyboards, **Babacar Faye** Percussion, **Birame Dieng** Vocals, **Moustapha Mbaye** Vocals, **Victoria Chidid** Backup Vocals

Quranic Recitation

Salaam Suite

Under direction of **Amir ElSaffar**

Performed by **The Ushaaq Ensemble:**

Marina Alam vocals; **Amir ElSaffar** santoor, vocals; **Dena El Saffar** joza; **Abdurahim Hamidov** dutar; **Dhafer Tawil** violin; **Faisal Zedan** percussion

June 6, 2009 at 8pm

Screening and performance

Youssou N'Dour and *I Bring What I Love: Youssou Ndour*

(2008), 102min, Egypt/France/Senegal, U.S., in Arabic, English, French, and Wolof with English subtitles. Special advance screening and live performance by Youssou N'Dour and his band.

Director/Producer **Chai Vasarhelyi**

Co-Producer **Sarah Price**

Cinematography **Nick Doob**, **Jojo Pennebaker**

Cinematography/Co-Producer **Scott Duncan Hugo Berkeley**

Editors **Jonathan Oppenheim**, **Fernando Villena**

Original Score **Martin Davich**, **James Newton Howard**

Executive Producers **Edward Tyler Nahem**, **Jennifer Millstone**, **Patrick Morris**, **Jack Turner**,

Kathryn Turner, **Miklos C. Vasarhelyi**

Featuring **Youssou N'dour**, **Fathy Salama**, **Le Super Etoile de Dakar**, **The Fathy Salama Cairo**

Orchestra, **Moustapha Mbaye**, **Peter Gabriel**

A Groovy Griot Film, In Association with 57th & Irving

Muslim Voices: Arts & Ideas presents the New York premiere of *I Bring What I Love: Youssou Ndour*.

This film is a portrait of Youssou N'Dour and the making of his Grammy Award-winning album *Egypt*—his extraordinary testament to his Muslim faith and an impassioned plea for a more tolerant view of Islam. Directed by Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi, this film profiles N'Dour with candid insight while providing a timely look at the complex place of music in Islam. *I Bring What I Love* received the Special Jury Prize at the 2008 Middle East International Film Festival. The screening will be followed by a special concert appearance by Youssou N'Dour and his band The Super Étoile.

In celebration of Muslim Voices: Arts & Ideas, the Empire State Building and Brooklyn Borough Hall will be lit green from June 5—7. The color green has many significant associations in Islam and is considered auspicious.

Who's Who

Youssou N'Dour, born in Dakar, Senegal in 1959, is acknowledged as one of Africa's most important musicians. Together with his band The Super Étoile, N'Dour offers Senegalese roots music with what the *Los Angeles Times* has called "a joyous precision." N'Dour has recorded and toured for more than 20 years, bringing world renown to a style of music known as mbalax, a fusion of popular Western music and dance—such as jazz, soul, Latin, and rock—blended with sabar, the traditional drumming and dance music of Senegal. As early as age twelve, N'Dour was performing at neighborhood religious ceremonies and community gatherings in Dakar where he received the attention that later landed him on national Senegalese radio, launching his career. Following the release of N'Dour's 1990 album *SET* (Virgin), *Rolling Stone* described N'Dour as "a singer with a voice so extraordinary that the history of Africa seems locked inside it." A prolific singer, songwriter, composer, and sometimes actor, N'Dour's music is noted for featuring Senegalese dance rhythms, melodic guitar and saxophone solos, challenging drum soliloquies and, on occasion, Sufi-inspired Muslim religious chanting. His most recent album, *Rokku Mi Rokka* (2007) ranked number 30 on *Rolling Stone's* list of the "Top 50 Albums of 2007." N'Dour has linked his creative expression with social and political causes. In 1985, he organized a concert for the release of Nelson Mandela. He has worked closely with Amnesty International, the "Live 8" concert series to end global poverty, and Intrahealth International to improve public health in developing countries.

Marina Alam (vocalist) was born in Dhaka, Bangladesh and began training in the ancient classical music tradition shared by Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan from the age of four. In Bangladesh she was under the tutelage of Ustad Phul Mohammed Khan and Shri Bari Majumdar. Afterward, she continued at Dhaka Music College. Now a respected soloist who performs and teaches throughout the New York tri-state area, she is the senior disciple of Pandit Jasraj. Alam

has a wide repertoire that includes sacred music, mostly of the Sufi tradition.

Amir ElSaffar, Iraqi-American, is an accomplished composer, santoor (Iraqi hammered dulcimer) player, singer of the Iraqi maqam, and trumpeter. He leads Safaafir, the only Iraqi maqam ensemble in the US, and is a sought after performing and touring artist and composer. Most recently, he performed at the Kennedy Center's Arabesque Festival. His critically acclaimed *Two Rivers* suite is a groundbreaking work that combines the Iraqi Maqam with modern Jazz. He has composed and performed music for theater and film including Heather Raffo's *Nine Parts of Desire* and for the soundtrack of Jonathan Demme's Oscar-nominated film *Rachel Getting Married*.

Dena El Saffar began studying the violin at the age of six. At age 19, while obtaining a classical music degree from Indiana University, she founded the group Salaam, an ensemble dedicated to performing the musical traditions of the Arab world, Turkey, and Greece. She later joined her brother, Amir, in forming the Iraqi Maqam ensemble, Safaafir. She has studied with Hamid Al-Saadi, Munis Sharifov, Mohammed Gomar, and Anwar Abudragh, and has performed with the Master Musicians of Jajouka and Youssou N'dour.

Abdulrahim Hamidov is a master of the subtle, elegant dutar, the traditional long-necked two-stringed lute from Central Asia. A recent immigrant to the US from Uzbekistan, he has had a distinguished career and has participated in Yo Yo Ma's *Silk Road* project. He appears with other master musicians on that project's Smithsonian Folkways label recording.

Dhafer Tawil, a New York based Palestinian-American, is a master of Arabic percussion with virtuoso talents on oud, violin, and qanun. He has performed with numerous musicians ranging from pop star Sting, to Arab music greats such as Simone Shaheen, Chab Mami, and Bassam Saba

Who's Who



I Bring What I Love: Yousou Ndour

to avant-garde composer/performer Elliot Sharpe, among others. Zafer has composed music for a number of films including the Oscar-nominated Jonathan Demme film *Rachel Getting Married*.

Faisal Zedan, Syrian born, is recognized as a master percussionist in the Syrian and Egyptian classical and folk traditions. He is accomplished on the riqq (tambourine), derbakki (Tabla--goblet drum), and tar (frame drum) with equal mastery, offering fellow performers and audiences a dazzling combination of virtuosity, subtlety, power, delicacy, assuredness, and humility.

The Ushaaq Ensemble

The primarily US based musicians of the ensemble, especially created to open the *Muslim Voices: Arts & Ideas* festival represent the traditions of India, Iraq, Palestine, Syria, and Uzbekistan. These musical styles differ significantly from one another, yet they share in common an approach to melody that is based on musical modes (scales) organized into complex systems, known as maqam in the Arab world and Central Asia, and raaga in Hindustani music.

This evening, the ensemble performs the Salaam suite, which incorporates traditional melodies and improvisations and combines them into a rich tapestry of sound. They are under the direction of composer/musician Amir El Saffar. Tonight is the World Premiere of *The Salaam Suite*.

Asia Society is the leading global and pan-Asian organization working to strengthen relationships and promote understanding among the people, leaders, and institutions of the United States and Asia. The Society seeks to increase knowledge and enhance dialogue, encourage creative expression, and generate new ideas across the fields of policy, business, education, arts, and culture. Through the presentation of groundbreaking museum exhibitions and cultural programs, Asia Society provides a forum for both traditional and contemporary Asian artistic expressions. The Asia Society is led by President Vishakha N. Desai. The cultural programs and performing arts are directed by Rachel Cooper. Founded in 1956 by John D. Rockefeller 3rd, Asia Society is a nonprofit educational institution with offices in Hong Kong, Houston, Los Angeles, Manila,

Who's Who

Melbourne, Mumbai, New York, San Francisco, Seoul, Shanghai, and Washington, DC. For more information visit AsiaSociety.org.

Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) is recognized internationally for its innovative programming of dance, music, theater, music-theater, opera, and film. BAM presents leading national and international artists and companies in its annual Spring Season and highlights groundbreaking, contemporary work in the performing arts with its Next Wave Festival each fall. Founded in 1983, the Next Wave is one of the world's most important festivals of contemporary performing arts. BAM Rose Cinemas features new, independent film releases and BAMcinématek—a curated, daily repertory film program. BAM also serves New York City's diverse population through a weekend concert series in BAMcafé, community events, literary series, artist talks, and a wide variety of educational programs. BAM, America's oldest performing arts center in continuous operation, has presented performances since 1861, and attracts an audience of more than 500,000 people each year. The institution is led by President Karen Brooks Hopkins and Executive Producer Joseph V. Melillo—each of whom has been associated with BAM for more than 25 years. For more information visit BAM.org.

NYU Center for Dialogues is an institution of New York University dedicated to knocking down the walls of misunderstanding between the Islamic world, the US, and other Western countries and replacing them with bridges of knowledge, mutual respect, and reason. Founded in the aftermath of the Sept 11, 2001 tragedy by Director Mustapha Tlili, the NYU Center for Dialogues has established a reputation on both sides of the Muslim-Western divide. Its conferences are widely discussed in international policy circles and its publications are used as educational materials in university classrooms, while its initiatives have contributed to new connections made at the institutional and individual levels. Tlili is a NYU research scholar and Senior Fellow at the university's

Remarque Institute. He is a former senior UN official, having served as director for communications policy at the UN Department of Public Information, director of the UN information center for France, and chief of the Namibia, Anti-Apartheid, Palestine, and decolonization programs in the same department. For more information visit centerfordialogues.org.

Zeyba Rahman develops and directs integrated cultural and educational platforms for performing, visual, and literary arts as well as film. From 1997—2007, Rahman served as a Director of Morocco's Fès Festival of World Sacred Music and its companion Fès Forum. In her capacity as the Senior Project Advisor for *Muslim Voices: Arts & Ideas*, Rahman has helped to create the project's structure, serving on the curatorial team and overseeing the project's program partnerships, while advising on marketing and media strategies. The first part of the opening night event with Quranic recitation and the Ushaaq Ensemble has been conceived by her. Based in New York City, Rahman is the Chairwoman of World Music Institute.

Muslim Voices: Arts & Ideas

To incorporate a broad spectrum of perspectives reflecting the rich diversity of the Muslim world, Asia Society, BAM, and New York University Center for Dialogues worked in consultation with four committees to design and plan *Muslim Voices*.

HONORARY COMMITTEE

Nassir Abdulaziz Al Nasser, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the United Nations
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Alison Bernstein, Vice President for Knowledge, Creativity and Freedom, The Ford Foundation
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Muslim Voices: Arts & Ideas

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Samina Quraeshi, Harvard University Fellow; author/arts consultant (Pakistan—US)
Cynthia Schneider, Cultural Coordinator, Brookings Institute Doha initiative, former US Ambassador to the Netherlands (US)
Steven Serafin, Education & Humanities Consultant (CUNY), New York
Simon Shaheen, musician (Palestine—US), Brooklyn, New York
Faouzi Skali, Founding Director General, Fes Festival of World Sacred Music and Founding Director General, Fes Festival of International Sufi Culture (Morocco)
Amira Zahid, Founder/Trustee, Dahesh Museum (Lebanon—US), New York

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Michael Gilson, Professor of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies and Anthropology, New York University
Bruce Lawrence, Professor of Islamic Studies and Director of Duke Islamic Studies Center, Duke University
Samina Quraeshi, Harvard University Fellow; author/arts consultant (Pakistan—US)
Nasser Rabbat, Aga Khan Professor of Islamic Architecture, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
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Anthony Shay, Assistant Professor of Dance and Culture, Pomona College