

PRESS RELEASE**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****May 22, 2007****Contact:** Renate Raymond, 425.519.0754 or renater@bellevuearts.org**What: *Offering Reconciliation*—Leading Israeli and Palestinian artists come together in historic art exhibition striving for peace!****Where: Bellevue Arts Museum****Dates: June 7, 2007 – August 19, 2007****Special Events: Press Preview on June 7 at 10:00 am with two members from the Parents Circle - Families Forum -- Robi Damelin and Ali Abu Awwad.**

Bellevue, WA-Israeli and Palestinian artists have come together to create the extraordinary exhibition, *Offering Reconciliation*. The exhibition was organized by the Parents Circle-Families Forum and the Association of Israel's Decorative Arts, and is the product of a project by Israeli and Palestinian Bereaved Families for Peace, Reconciliation and Tolerance.

The exhibition features 135 bowls and each artist received the same ceramic form, the “Bowl of Reconciliation,” as the base for their work that reflects stunningly diverse feelings of pain, hope, fracture and unity. The large, fragile clay bowl, which was designed by Orna Tamir-Schestowits, symbolizes the fragile relationships that tie these two cultures. In its conception, the bowl represents the connection between art and life, bringing to mind the act of serving an offering or preparing a feast to gather people together. Using the bowl, -- a common, unifying denominator -- as a basis for creation, the artists each embarked on a personal journey interpreting their views of reconciliation and mutually derived values of coexistence, pain, loss, fracture and fusion. In the completed bowls, each artist presents a unique offering of reconciliation, of peace and hope, and art instead of hostility. The works of art contain layers of history, religion and culture that express in form, color and substance, and sometimes in word

and symbol, the concept of “reconciliation” with a distinctly personal and unique voice. Each bowl embodies a longing for peace in the region and an end to the conflict.

Offering Reconciliation stirred intense public interest when it opened in Israel. It was covered extensively in the Israeli and Arab press, including Al Jazeera, Ynet, and Jerusalem Post. In its U.S. tour, Bellevue Arts Museum is the only west coast location where the exhibition will be shown. Prior to this showing the exhibition was at Brandeis University in Waltham, MA and The World Bank in Washington DC. After the exhibition at Bellevue Arts Museum, the exhibition will proceed to the United Nations in New York City, the Pomegranate Gallery in NY, and will end at the SOFA exposition in Chicago IL where Sotheby's will auction the bowls. Revenues will be used to finance ongoing educational activities in Israeli and Palestinian schools, with the goal of educating the youngest generations to bring peace to the region.

“This exhibition is a powerful and poignant expression of the power art has to heal pain. By featuring this exhibition we only deepen the Museum’s mission of the unifying effect that craft and design has on our lives.” states Michael Monroe, Director and Chief Curator of Bellevue Arts Museum. “Our focus is on showcasing exhibitions that are powerful and bring something new to the viewer’s consciousness, and feature both local artists and artists from around the world.”

An accompanying catalog has grown out of the project to tell this unique story.

Two members from the Parents Circle - Families Forum -- Robi Damelin and Ali Abu Awwad -- will accompany the exhibition with a series of education programs and guided tours for the first week of the opening. Robi’s son, David, was killed by a sniper while on military reserve duty, in March 2002. David was 28 years old, and was studying for his Masters Degree in Philosophy of Education at Tel-Aviv University. Ali was shot by an Israeli settler and was hospitalized in Saudi Arabia. While there, he received the grave news that his brother had been shot and killed by an Israeli soldier at a checkpoint at the entrance to their village. View a clip of their efforts by visiting www.encounterpoint.com

The local showing of this exhibition has been made possible by the Friends of Bellevue Arts Museum and the JTNews, the voice of Jewish Washington.

Related Programs:

June 7 – August 19, 2007

Peacemakers

Test your skill at the computer game, *Peacemakers* by Impact Games. Play as the Israeli Prime Minister or Palestinian President and your goal is to resolve the conflict in Israel/Palestine. Computer stations are available at the Museum, and personal copies of the game are available for purchase. An opportunity to understand the conflict from different perspectives.

Bellevue Arts Museum

During regular Museum hours

Free with Museum admission

Friday, June 8, 2007

Offers of Reconciliation Speaker Series:

Robi Damelin and Ali Abu Awwad from the Parents Circle - Families Forum

Address by Robi Damelin, whose son David was killed by a Palestinian sniper while guarding a checkpoint near a settlement during his army reserve service, and Ali Abu Awwad, whose brother was killed by an Israeli soldier at a checkpoint at the entrance to their village. Join us in listening to their personal experiences as they discuss the exhibition and lead a tour.

Bellevue Arts Museum Auditorium

7-8:30 pm

Free with Museum admission

Saturday, June 9, 2007

Offering Reconciliation Walking Tour

Join Robi Damelin and Ali Abu Awwad, members of the Parents Circle-Families Forum on a tour of the exhibition *Offering Reconciliation*. There will be ample time for discussion and questions.

Bellevue Arts Museum

1-2 pm

Free with Museum admission

Sunday, June 10, 2007

Offers of Reconciliation Speaker Series:

Interview with Robi Damelin and Ali Abu Awwad

Be present at a live interview with visitors from the Parents Circle-Families Forum hosted by Michael Monroe. Discussion will include the exhibition, life in Israel/Palestine, and more, with an opportunity at the end to raise your own questions.

Bellevue Arts Museum Auditorium

2:30-4 pm

Free for Museum members/\$5 non-members

More...

Friday, June 22, 2007

Offers of Reconciliation Speaker Series:

Sarah Zale, local poet and writer

A poet, teacher, and public speaker on poetry and peace education, Sarah Zale traveled to Israel and Palestine with the *Compassionate Listening Project* in November 2006. The experience resulted in a creative collection of poems, *Art of Folding*. Zale weaves her poetry and visual art into a powerful PowerPoint presentation.

Bellevue Arts Museum Auditorium

7-8 pm

Free with Museum admission

For additional programs and more information visit our website www.bellevuearts.org

The vision of Bellevue Arts Museum is to illuminate and enrich the human spirit through art, craft and design. The Museum's mission is to be the Pacific Northwest's center for the exploration of art, craft and design through exhibition, educational programs and partnerships, emphasizing the work of regional artists.

Bellevue Arts Museum is located at 510 Bellevue Way NE, Bellevue, WA 98004. The Museum is on the corner of Bellevue Way NE and NE 6th, south of Lincoln Square and directly across the street from Bellevue Square Shopping Center. Free parking is available under the Museum in our garage.

Bellevue Arts Museum website: www.bellevuearts.org, main information line is 425.519.0770.

###