WHAT DO THE WOMEN SAY?
MAKING HOME
Celebrating International Women’s Day

LOBBY ACTIVITIES
Shared storytelling led by Raeshma Razvi & Madeleine Rostami of the Shahrazad Squad

WELCOME
Sahar Assaf, Executive Artistic Director

POETRY READING
Award-winning poet Zeina Hashem Beck

DOCUMENTARY FILM PRESENTATION
An excerpt from Home Yet Far Away by filmmaker Sabereh Kashi

DRAMATIC READING
An excerpt from solo show HOME? by actor-playwright Hend Ayoub

DANCE PERFORMANCE
A sneak peek into the rehearsal studio of Leila Awadallah

MUSICAL PERFORMANCE
Oud artist and song-writer Layle Omeran
accompanied by cellist and composer Crystal Pascucci

CONVERSATION
Hend Ayoub, Leila Awadallah, Zeina Hashem Beck, Sabereh Kashi, Layle Omeran, Raeshma Rasvi and Madeleine Rostami facilitated by Humaira Ghilzai with Sahar Assaf

Tuesday, March 8, 2022 at 8pm
Brava Theater Center, San Francisco

SPONSORS

COMMUNITY PARTNERS
The Markaz Resource Center at Stanford University; Bay Area Women’s Theatre Festival; Theatre of Yugen
Hendy Ayoub is an actor and writer. Her recent theatre credits include: Brodie & Beryl/Brookly Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo with Robin Williams, as well as its previous run at Los Angeles’s Mark Taper Forum; Arena Stage’s A Thousand Splendid Suns; Kiss (Yale Repertory Theatre); Veils (world premiere, Portland Stage; Barrow Street Stage). Television credits include Homeland, Orange Is The New Black, The Looming Tower, Madam Secretary, Royal Pains, Feed the Beast, Comedy Central’s The Watch List, and recurring roles on Transparent and Damages. She appeared in the Emmy Award-winning film Death of a President and the award-winning film Private. Currently she is working on a yet to be disclosed feature film and rehearsing for her role in Noor Theater’s world premiere production of First Down in NYC. www.hendyayoub.com

Leila Awadallah (she/her) is a dancer, choreographer, and filmmaker based between Minneapolis and Beirut. Her work in movement, which centers the body and its relation to land / place / peoples, emerges from her own skin as a Palestinian, Arab-American, SWANA, Sicilian and mixed Mediterranean diasporic being. Leila’s research, process and performance is inside the swirling of this mosaic of places, while particularly focusing on Palestinian indigenous roots and resistance to settler colonialism through memories, embodiments, and dreams. She is the founder of the Body Dance project and practice which began in 2021. Leila’s current work, RANEA is supported by National Performance Network, Goethe Institute, MSAB, ARENA, Links Hall and the Arab American National Museum. She is a Jerome Fellow (2021-2023), and previously a Springboard 20/20 and Daring Dances Fellow. Leila’s work has been supported through research residencies at the Hammama Artist House and Amalgam (Lebanon), Camargo Foundation (France), Arab American National Museum (Michigan), and the Hinge Residency (Minnesota). Mentored by Ananya Chatterjea, she trained, taught and performed with Ananya Dance Theatre as a company member for 5 seasons. www.leilawadallah.com

Zeina Hashem Beck is a Lebanese poet. Her third poetry collection, O, is forthcoming from Penguin Books in July 2022. Her previous full-length collections are Louden Chanted Hearts, winner of the 2016 May Sarton New Hampshire Poetry Prize, and To Live in Autumn, winner of the 2013 Backwaters Prize. She's also the author of two chapbooks: Jabari Song, winner of the 2nd Rattle Chapbook prize, and There Was and How Much There Was, a 2016 Laureate’s Choice selected by Carol Ann Duffy. Her work has appeared in The New York Times, Poetry, Ploughshares, World Literature Today, The Southeast Review, TriQuarterly, the Academy of American Poets, and elsewhere. Zeina’s invented The Duet, a bilingual poetic form where English and Arabic exist separately and in relationship to each other. She’s the co-creator and co-host, with poet Farah Chamma, of Maqsaouda, a podcast about Arabic poetry produced by Sowt. After a lifetime in Lebanon and a decade in Dubai, Zeina has recently moved with her family to California. www.zeinahashembeck.com

Humaira Ghilizi is a writer, speaker, and Afghanistan cultural consultant. She focuses on projects that bring positive social change. She co-founded Afghan Friends Network and instituted the Sister City relationship between Hayward, California and Ghazni, Afghanistan where she has done extensive work to improve education for girls, boys, and women. Humaira is a sought-after cultural expert who has worked with notable professional theatre authors, playwrights and artists for the past ten years, utilizing her extensive knowledge of Afghan people, culture, religion, and history to bring authenticity to their creative work relating to Afghanistan and the Islamic world. Humaira shares Afghan culture and cuisine through her blog Afghan Culture Unveiled and YouTube channel. She shares the wonders of Afghanistan through stories of rich culture, delicious food, and her family’s traditions. Humaira helps people connect with stories of Afghan people, immigrants and the Islamic world on a human level because at the end of the day we are all fighting the same issues. Humaira was born and raised in Kabul, Afghanistan but her family fled the Russian invasion in 1979 and they made the Bay Area their new home. Humaira has traveled to six continents, 37 countries—including a pilgrimage to Mecca. www.humairaghilizi.com

Sabereh Kashi is an Iranian-American documentary filmmaker and editor. Her most recent work, "I'm Oakland" (2022), created in collaboration with the City, is a short documentary about an African American woman homeowner facing gentrification. She is a concept and social media developer for Shahrazad Squad, a MENASA women community space. Kashi’s debut, the 35mm documentary Lalehzar Street (2000) premiered at Fajr International Film Festival, Iran. She directed a web series about Iranian immigrant artists in North America (2008-2016). Her edito-rial work for 'Hot Doc DVA', she edited and co-wrote the ITVS documentary Our Summer in Tehran (2011), and the award-winning short Surviving International Boulevard: Domestic Sex Trafficking in Oakland (2016). Her current film, and longtime passion project, Home Yet Far Away, depicts her personal journey of searching for ‘home’ between Iran and Arts eca. She has won a Center for Cultural Innovation’s Investing in Artists award, a Berkeley Film Foundation grant, and a student Emmy Award. She was an artist resident at SFFilm and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. She co-founded Re-Present Media, a nonprofit that advocates for personal stories of under-represented communities in nonprofit media.

Layle Omeran is an interdisciplinary Yemeni-American-Immi-grant music artist currently based in Oakland, CA. A co-founder of multiple collaborative initiatives and a community-centered worker, Layle is inspired by personal stories and liminal jour-neys across spaces of identity and experience. Home, memory, belonging, and the tension between the self and the collective are all subjects of interest in Layle’s work.

Raeesha Razvi produces transformative community art and film. Her current interest lies in interpreting literary classics across cultures, genres or community praxis. In collaboration with theater company Cal Shakes, she is producing the Shahrazad Squad, a project that facilitates conversations and community amongst MENASA women creatives and change-makers, and amplifies their voices through unique content. She is also writing a contemporary screen adaptation of The Count of Monte Cristo featuring Roufieza. She holds a literature degree from Northwestern University and an MFA in Film/Video production from Columbia College

Madeleine Rostami (she/they) is an artist and educator with roots in New York and the Bay Area. Madeleine is a proud daughter of Irish and Iranian immigrant families – as a result they dedicate themselves to facilitating creative spaces for participants of diverse backgrounds. In addition to her work with the Shahrazad Squad, she’s the Artistic Associate at the Portola Valley Theatre Conservatory, spearheading accessibility and devising initiatives for theatre makers of all ages. Madeleine also serves as a writing specialist with composed, an Oakland-based organization dedicated to guiding students through college application essays. As a freelance dramaturge, they have collaborated on world premieres and workshops at theatres like Berkeley Rep (Bay Area), The Kennedy Center TYA (Washington, D.C.), and Victory Gardens (Chicago). Madeleine graduated from Northwestern University with degrees in theatre and cognitive science. If she’s not in a theatre, Madeleine can probably be found knitting her next sweater.

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Started in 1909 in the U.S., International Women’s Day (March 8) is an occasion marked by women’s groups around the world. This date is also commemorated at the United Nations and is designated in many countries as a national holiday. When women on all continents, often divided by national boundaries and by ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic and political divides, come together to celebrate their Day, they can look back to a tradition that represents at least over a century of struggle for equality, justice, peace and development.

Brava! for Women in the Arts (Sponsor) celebrates over 30 years as a professional arts organization dedicated to cultivating the artistic expression of women, androgynous people of color, youth, & other underrepresented voices.

WomenArts (Sponsor) is dedicated to increasing the visibility of women artists in all art forms. SWAY Day (Support Women Artists Now) is an international holiday designed to showcase the power & diversity of women’s creativity.