



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

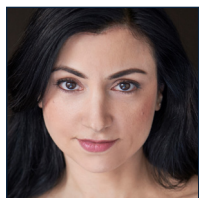
BRAVA
FOR WOMEN IN THE ARTS

Women
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COMMUNITY PARTNERS

The Markaz Resource Center at Stanford University; Bay Area Women's Theatre Festival; Theatre of Yugen

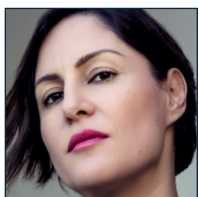
Who's Who



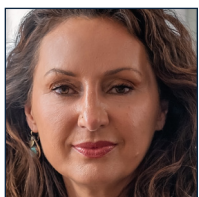
Hend Ayoub is an actor and writer. Her recent theatre credits include: Broadway's *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo* with Robin Williams, as well as its previous run at Los Angeles's Mark Taper Forum; Arena Stage's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*; *Kiss* (Yale Repertory Theatre); *Veils* (world premiere, Portland Stage; Barrington 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*. In Film, She co-starred 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.hendayoub.com



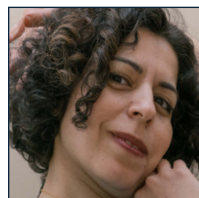
Leila Awadallah (she/her) is a dancer, choreographer, and filmmaker based between Minneapolis and Beirut. Her work in movement, which centers the body and its' relation to land / place / peoples, emerges from her own skin as a Palestinian, Arab-American, SWANA, Sicilian and mixed Mediterranean diasporic being. Leila's research, process and performance is inside the swirling of this mosaic of places, while particularly focussing on Palestinian indigenous roots and resistance to settler colonialism through memories, embodiments, and dreamings. She is the founder of the Body Watani dance project and practice which began in 2020. Leila's current work, *TER-RANEA* is supported by National Performance Network, Goethe Institute, MSAB, ARENA, Links Hall and the Arab American National Museum. She is a Jerome Hill Fellow (2021-2023), and previously a Springboard 20/20 and Daring Dances Fellow. Leila's work has been supported through research residencies at the Hammana 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.leilaawadallah.com



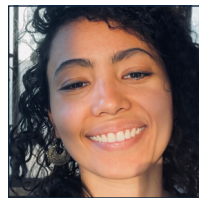
Zeina Hashem Beck is a Lebanese poet. Her third poetry collection, *O*, is forthcoming from Penguin Books in July 2022. Her previous full-length collections are *Louder than Hearts*, winner of the 2016 May Sarton New Hampshire Poetry Prize, and *To Live in Autumn*, winner of the 2013 Backwaters Prize. She's also the author of two chapbooks: *Jarabi Song*, winner of the 2016 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 *Maqsouda*, 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



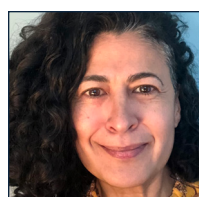
Humaira Ghilzai is a writer, speaker, and Afghanistan cultural consultant. She focuses on projects that bring positive social change. She co-founded Afghan Friends Network and instituted the Sister City relationship between Hayward, California and Ghazni, Afghanistan where she has done extensive work to improve education for girls, boys, and women. Humaira is a sought-after cultural expert who has worked with notable professional theatres 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 country right after 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.humairaghilzai.com



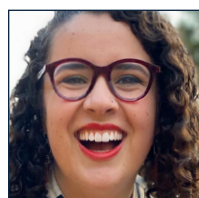
Sabereh Kashi is an Iranian-American documentary filmmaker and editor. Her most recent work, "I'm Oakland" (2022), created in collaboration with the City, is a short documentary about an African American woman homeowner facing gentrification. She is a concept and social media developer for Shahrazad Squad, a MENASA women community space. Kashi's debut, the 35mm documentary *Lalezar Street* (2000) premiered at Fajr International Film Festival, Iran. She directed a web series about Iranian immigrant artists in North America (2008-2016). Her editorial work has premiered at Hot Docs and IDFA. 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 America. 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 nonfiction media.



Layle Omeran is an interdisciplinary Yemeni-American-Immigrant 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 journeys 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.



Raeshma Razvi produces transformative community art and film. Her current interest lies in interpreting literary classics across cultures, genre 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*. Raeshma holds a B.A. in comparative literature 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 dramaturg, 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.

Program credits: Sahar Assaf (Executive Artistic Director), Nadine Bedrossian (Artistic Producer), Miranda Erin Campbell (Stream Technician), Sheila Devitt (Marketing & Engagement Manager), Linda Maria Girón (Operations Associate), Michelle Mulholland (Managing Director), Wendy Reyes (Virtual Coordinator), Heather Rastovac Akbarzadeh (FTP Program Manager), Drea Schwartz (Brava Technical Director / Lights), Carlie Algas (Brava Lead Sound Engineer), Arielle Flinkman (Brava Audio Deck Assistant).

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 differences, 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.



Founded in 1996, **Golden Thread Productions** is the first American theatre company devoted to the Middle East. Golden Thread produces passionate and provocative plays from and about the Middle East that celebrate the multiplicity of its perspectives and identities. Golden Thread is a developmental catalyst and vibrant artistic home to artists at various stages of their career. Golden Thread brings the Middle East to the American stage, creating treasured cultural experiences for audiences of all ages and backgrounds.



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



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