

BOND STREET THEATRE NEWS

Fall 2005 2 Bond Street, New York, NY 10012 tel/fax 212-254-4614 www.bondst.org

**"Ambassadors
for peace,
armed with
slapstick"**

... Daniel Simpson,
THE NEW YORK TIMES



Mahmoud Salimi and Shafiq in scene from *Beyond the Mirror*.

Exile Theatre from Afghanistan and Bond Street Theatre present the US Premiere of *Beyond the Mirror* ... an everyday story of war

After four years of traveling and performing in Afghanistan, we are happy to invite you — our friends, family, audience and well-wishers — to enjoy the fruits of our work with the Afghan Exile Theatre here in the USA.

THEATRE PROJECT, BALTIMORE

[45 West Preston St.]

November 3—13

Thu-Sat at 8 pm, Sun at 3 pm

Box Office: 410-752-8558

www.missiontix.com

THEATRE FOR THE NEW CITY, NEW YORK

[155 1st Ave. @ 10th]

November 17—December 4

Thu-Sat at 8 pm, Sun at 3 pm

Box Office: 212-254-4614

www.theatremania.com

Beyond the Mirror is a visual journey through years of war — portrayed through the myths, memories and first-hand accounts of ordinary Afghans. Traditional dance, live music, visual effects, filmed montages, and creative physicality bring this tapestry of stories to life. We are honored to have the live music of Quraishi playing the traditional Afghan rebob.

The two groups first met in the refugee areas of northern Pakistan shortly after Sept. 11th and we have been collaborating on projects for adults and children in Afghanistan ever since. Through our theatre, we hope to bridge the chasm of misinformation that separates our two countries and cultures!

Beyond the Mirror is the first US-Afghan theatre collaboration in recent history and a US premiere.

Please join us for post-performance discussions and meet our Afghan collaborators. Call us about their lecture schedule.

We thank the **National Endowment for the Arts** and you, our donors, for helping us bring these extraordinary artists to the US!

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Photo montage by Meghan Frank: Mujahideen fighter and scene from *Beyond the Mirror*.



Sasha (Boemi), Meliha (Dodona), Yavor (Tsvete) and Roland (Petro Marko) in scene depicting family violence.



Meghan Frank (Program Director, Bond Street Theatre) and Meliha Qena (Director, Theatre Dodona of Kosovo).



Jugoslav Hadzic of Dah Teatar (Serbia) provided music.



Violina Vassileva and Vesselin Boidev of Theatre Tsvete (Bulgaria) preparing props for the performance.

PERFORMING ARTISTS FOR BALKAN PEACE

From May 28 to June 12, theatre practitioners from Serbia, Albania, Bosnia—Herzegovina, Kosovo, Bulgaria, Greece, Macedonia, England and the USA, convened in Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria, to inaugurate an on-going and expandable network of performing artists devoted to cross-border cooperation, social progress and peace.

Our goal was to create a performance that would represent the most current issues of the Balkans and tour the region as a means to promote cross-border dialogue. An amazing accomplishment, five theatre directors from regions still sensitive from recent wars, succeeded in creating a fully collaborative theatre production together in two weeks, with 20 actors representing nine countries and five language groups. The process was not without its stormy moments, but certainly an exciting challenge. We all worked closely from morning until night, shared ideas, formed lasting friendships, planned future projects, and crafted a performance titled **Blood and Honey** that was presented to an enthusiastic public in Blagoevgrad and Sofia.

Bond Street Theatre and Theatre Tsvete of Sofia, creative collaborators for more than six years, co-hosted the event. In 2002, the two companies had traveled to Albania, Macedonia, Kosovo and Serbia to work with theatre groups dedicated to social progress through artistic media. The idea for the Performing Artists for Balkan Peace emerged in response to an obvious need for a forum and arena for artists to communicate and share resources. The Blagoevgrad meeting provided the opportunity for these groups and other artists to convene for the first time.

Bond Street and Theatre Tsvete worked over the last two years to bring this idea to fruition and are proud that the first Performing Artists for Balkan Peace event exceeded every expectation. We also thank the **Trust for Mutual Understanding** and **ProHelvetica Fund** for their support.

The founding members of PABP: Dah Teatar from Serbia, Teatri Petro Marko from Albania, Mostar Youth Theatre of Bosnia & Herzegovina, Theatre Boemi of Macedonia, Theatre Dodona of Kosovo, PAC Multimedia of Macedonia, Polygon Arts of UK, Theatre Tsvete and Bond Street Theatre. ♦

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Joanna Sherman—Artistic Director; Michael McGuigan—Managing Director; Meghan Frank—Program Director; Sean Nowell—Musical Director; Jill Hockett—Costume Intern; Wrenn Schmidt—Intern; Luanne Dietrich—Actor; Robert Lok—Actor; Christina Gelsone—Actor; Seth Bloom—Actor; Fred Collins—Fight choreographer; Sima Wolf—Actor, musician; Joe Schufle—Musician; Bruce Williamson—Musician; Andy Teirstein—Guest composer; Quraishi—Guest musician.

And in Other News...

Bond Street Awarded Grant for Creative Work in Afghanistan from Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

Bond Street Theatre has been awarded a \$200,000 grant from the US Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs to further its artistic relationship with Exile Theatre and extend their joint work to artists and youth across Afghanistan.

The 3-year project, called the **US-Afghan Arts Exchange and Conflict Resolution Project**, will allow the two companies to continue their mission to bring stimulating creative activities to children and young people in least served areas of the country.

The project is designed to promote the use of theatre as a tool for creative expression, conflict resolution and community dialogue. The two companies will train artists, university students and faculty in arts-based educational techniques for children.

We are thrilled to have this opportunity to spread a little joy in a country struggling with poverty, and to open new doors to the imagination and stimulate the next generation of Afghans.



Beyond the Mirror...

premiered at the **2nd Afghan Theatre Festival** this August in Kabul — the first US-Afghan theatre collaboration in Afghan history and one of few productions to include women on the stage.

We applaud the all-female group from Kunduz — pioneers who are paving the way for women's voices on the stage. The group's work was very professional yet the actors were only 14-15 years old and their Director only seventeen.

(Above) Exile Theatre's **Anisa Wahab**, one of the few women in theatre, a drummer, a former child star and still well-loved.

Japan Tour

This October, Exile Theatre and Bond Street Theatre meet in Tenri, Japan—home of the ancient Gigaku mask tradition—for a residency at **Tenri University** and performances of *Beyond the Mirror* at Tenri City Hall. The two companies then travel to Tokyo for the **Asia Meets Asia Festival**, an international event which features a wide range of contemporary Asian theatre.