

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### CARAVAN Festival of the Arts ([www.oncaravan.org](http://www.oncaravan.org))

*East / West gathering of 40 premier Middle Eastern and Western Artists using the Arts as a bridge for intercultural and inter-religious dialogue—January 28--February 3, 2010*

#### **Cairo, Egypt, January 5, 2010:**

Following on from the success of the January 2009 interfaith Art Exhibition titled “*On a Caravan: East to West Journeying Together through the Arts*” held in Maadi at St. John’s Church, a new and broader artistic initiative is scheduled called *CARAVAN Festival of the Arts*, with the theme of “*Harmony: East and West.*” The goal once again is to build bridges between East and West, Muslim and Christian, through visual art, as well as literature, film and music.

The objective of this art initiative is to use the Arts as a bridge for intercultural and inter-religious interchange, toward enhancing understanding and respect between East and West. Through this exhibition the goal is to highlight how the Arts can serve as one of the most effective mediums of encouraging friendship, deepening respect and facilitating sharing between the Middle East and the West.

**Over 40 premier Middle Eastern and Western visual artists will be participating, including a diverse range of artists ranging from one of Egypt’s leading contemporary artists, Mohammed Abl, to renowned ceramicist Mohammed Mandour, to expatriate artists Britt Boutros Ghali and Roland Prime. Each artist is submitting one piece of work that reflects the title, “Harmony: East and West,” that will then be included in the selling exhibition, of which 10 % will go to Egyptian charities. Additionally, there will be an interfaith photographic exhibition titled *Allahu Akbar / How Great Thou Art*, using the photography of the Rt Rev Dr Mouneer H. Anis, the Egyptian Anglican Bishop of Egypt.**

The exhibition will once again be under the patronage of the historic St. John’s Church / Maadi, and will take place inside the church between the dates of January 28th to February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010. St. John’s Church, founded in 1931 as the last church designed by the eminent English architect Sir Herbert Baker, who built churches from Cape Town to Cairo, serves as a unique catalyst for Christian/Muslim relations due to the local respect it has developed over the last 80 years. Today St. John’s Church (affiliated with the Episcopal/Anglican Church) serves Cairo’s international diplomatic, business, educational and NGO communities.

On January 28<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM, the festival will be opened by The Rt Rev & Rt Hon Richard Chartres, the Bishop of London, and the Grand Mufti of Egypt, Sheikh Ali Gouma.

The *literary focus* will be highlighted with the visit of best-selling Anglo-Afghan writer, Tahir Shah, (*In Arabian Nights, The Caliph’s House*), the son of the famous late Sufi writer, Idries Shah. Omar Sharif’s recent interfaith themed *film, Hassan and Morqos*, will also be shown during the Festival. A closing *musical concert* will be performed by the renowned Iraqi oud (lute) player, Naseer Shamma.

The week will be timetabled as follows:

## **OPENING NIGHT:**

**\*28 January at 7 PM (19h00)--Opening Talk** by The Rt Rev & Rt Hon Richard Chartres, Bishop of London, with Opening Remarks by Sheikh Ali Gouma, Grand Mufti, followed by the Opening Reception with all 40 artists present.

## **WEEKLY PROGRAM:**

**\*Following the Opening Night on 28 January, the Exhibition will also be open** from 10 AM--7 PM on **January 30 and February 1--3.**

**\* Literary presentation---30 January at 7 PM (19h00)---**talk and book-signing by Anglo-Afghan best-selling author **Tahir Shah**, the son of the famous Sufi writer Idries Shah.

**\* Film screening--1 February at 7 PM (19h00)**—film showing of *Hasan and Morqos* (starring Omar Sharif and Adel Emam)

**\* Music Concert---3 February at 7:30 PM (19h30) — performance by Naseer Shamma---**renowned Iraqi oud (lute) player

“Our experience has shown,” says Rev. Paul-Gordon Chandler, author, the American priest of St. John’s and patron of the CARAVAN Festival, “that art is a universal language that has the ability to dissolve the petty differences that divide us. And we take to heart the profound words of the 14<sup>th</sup> century Persian poet and mystic Hafiz, when he wrote ‘Art is the conversation...Art offers an opening for the heart. True art makes the divine silence in the soul break into applause. Art is, at least, the knowledge of where we are standing....In this Wonderland...We are partners straddling the universe.’”

The program is generating significant interest from the international media.

“Our desire through this second exhibition,” said Roland Prime, exhibition curator and a participating British artist, “is that we will see how much we all have in common and how we can enhance and deepen each other’s lives.”

The participating visual artists include:

### **Egypt & Middle East**

Mohamed Abla  
Mohamed Mandour  
Mariam Forham  
Dr. Reda Adbel Rahman  
Dr. Omar El Fayoumi  
Dr. Farid Fadel  
Soha Abou Hussein  
Sabah Naim  
Maher Ali  
Hisham El Zeiny  
Ahmed Nosseir  
Saleh Abd el-Sabour  
Salah El Meligy  
Rania El Hakim

Isolde Kadry  
Mansour Ahmed  
Naguib Mahmoud  
Randa Fakes-LoGerfo  
Asmaa Takieddine  
Samia Hosny  
Rania Anis  
Ahmed Selim

**The West**

Roland Prime  
Britt Boutros Ghali  
Hugh Sowden  
Herbert Grimm  
Julie Klimentos  
Silvia Davies  
Neil Crouch  
Cosima Lukashevich  
anne du boistesselin  
Carolyn Seaton  
Julie Oxenforth  
Connie Fiorelli  
Lucy Westwood  
Thomas Hartwell  
Emma James  
James Crabb  
Dorian Haqmoun  
Cath Barnes  
Kimberley Odekirk  
Maaïke Draper-Albers  
Marielle van der Woude

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***CARAVAN Festival of the Arts: Harmony--East and West***

Patron, Rev. Paul-Gordon Chandler

Curator, Roland Prime

[www.oncaravan.org](http://www.oncaravan.org)

[www.maadichurch.org](http://www.maadichurch.org)

For more information or to request an interview, please contact Rev. Paul-Gordon Chandler at email: [info@maadichurch.org](mailto:info@maadichurch.org), or Roland Prime at: Email: [primewestwood@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:primewestwood@yahoo.co.uk) / Tel. 010-588-1793. Photographs available upon request.