

**MULTICULTURAL, INTERFAITH EVENT SELLS OUT  
200 HOPEFULS TURNED AWAY  
EVENT PREMIERES NEW FILM: GOD AND ALLAH NEED TO TALK**

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For more information call (310) 472-7661 Julie Heifetz  
(310) 829-0837 Dr. Nur Amersi

*September 17, 2003, Los Angeles:* **The phone had been ringing off the hook.** People from all over the city of LA, and from as far away as Orange County and Santa Barbara were clamoring for tickets to attend the sold-out premiere of the documentary 'GOD AND ALLAH NEED TO TALK' which screened Sunday, Sept, 14th at Laemmle Fairfax Theatre in West Hollywood. The film was the centerpiece of a larger program which included music by local and international artists, keynote speakers from the Jewish, Christian and Muslim communities, networking, recognition of interfaith and outreach activists, and a call to action.

Congresswoman Diane Watson, the Mayor of West Hollywood Jeffrey Prang, Sheriff Lee Bacca, representatives from Councilman John Heilman's and Assemblyman Paul Koretz's office were on hand to lend their support in the 422 seat theatre booked to capacity. Some 200 people had been placed on the waiting list and other screenings were hurriedly being planned to satisfy the demand. Clearly something is in the air. **When was the last time an interfaith event sold out?**

Producer/Director Ruth Broyde-Sharone, who made the film and organized the citywide event, says the amazing response confirms how hungry people are for healing and reconciliation. "I made the film to express my own frustration," the filmmaker explained. "After our collective trauma of 9/11-- caused by Islamic extremists--we have divided ourselves to such an extent that, in the process, we have even divided God." The provocative title for her film was inspired by a billboard she saw in Hollywood, where Sunset Blvd and Hollywood Blvd. merge. The fact that we could even conceive of God and Allah as being separate, signals a dangerous state of mind that can only polarize us further and prevent us from functioning as a healthy, multi-dimensional community. People have been calling because they are weary of the present situation of unrest and divisiveness" she said, "and they are hungry for guidance on how to move past their suspicions and fears about one another."

"Los Angeles is the world's petrie dish," says Dr. Nur Amersi, a volunteer from the local Shia Ismaili Muslim community, who helped to organize the event. "Our goal is to create a community of conscious and conscientious individuals who are willing to dialogue and participate in outreach, a community that celebrates both diversity and unity, " she emphasizes. "If we can pull it off in Los Angeles, the rest of the world will want to know how we did it," Dr. Amersi predicts.

Dr. Julie Heifetz, a cultural anthropologist, also helping to coordinate the event, who served as Director for the Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department's Ethnic Art Program for eight years, notes that the enthusiastic response of the artists and performers themselves, who are still calling and want to volunteer their talents for future events, clearly demonstrates how, on every level--culturally, religiously and spiritually--the people of LA want to move forward, towards reconciliation and collaboration.

Plans are in motion to arrange screenings in West Hollywood, Irvine, Berkeley, and Santa Barbara. Producer/Director Broyde-Sharone has also received offers to "take the show on the road," to Detroit, Michigan, Naples, Florida, and Kona, Hawaii.