



PEACE X PEACE

Raise Women's Voices, Build Cultures of Peace

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Documentary “Within the Eye of the Storm” Spotlights Israeli and Palestinian Strength

Peace X Peace sponsors screenings of film and conversations with fathers whose daughters were killed by suicide bomber and Israeli military

Washington, DC, February 21-26, 2013. Screenings of *Within the Eye of the Storm*, a new documentary on the parallel stories and personal experiences of Rami Elhanan, Israeli, and Bassam Aramin, Palestinian, will be held in the DC area February 21 to February 26. Both men will be present at the screenings to tell the story of their unlikely friendship after the deaths of their young daughters, one killed by a suicide bomber, the other by an Israeli soldier.

The screenings and dialogue are sponsored by Peace X Peace. They will be in venues as diverse as the National Press Club, the Peace Café at Busboys and Poets with Theater J, the Women's National Democratic Club, American University, The Nation's Mosque of Masjid Muhammad, Dumbarton United Methodist Church, and Capitol Hill. (See page 2 of release for the full schedule)

Rami and Bassam were fighters willing to kill and be killed by one another. Yet when their enemies killed their daughters the two men did the unexpected. In grief, they set out on a journey together to humanize the enemy to stop the cycle of retaliation. At the center of the dynamics in the region, they demonstrate that peace is possible. **They are available for interviews by media.**

The two men, along with the film's director and co-producer Shelley Hermon, will be present for open discussions and “from the frontline” updates on current political and social dynamics in Israel and Palestine. Audiences will see how they became brothers instead of fighters using love and humor to face the challenges of shattered families and of societies that oppose them.

The film was nominated for “Best Debut Documentary Feature” in Israel 2012 and won “Best Contemporary Issue Film” at docMiami. Sundance Institute cited it as “a unique portrait of two men, whose conviction and friendship triumph in the face of personal sacrifice! It is a unique, beautiful story filled with love and hope.” Partners supporting the 68-minute film include France 5, People's Peace Fund, Sundance Documentary Film Fund, Makor Film Foundation, Geshar Foundation.

About Peace X Peace (“peace by peace” at www.peacepeace.org)

Peace X Peace sponsors the screenings as part of its Connection Point Initiative for communication and understanding between the West and Muslim and Arabic cultures. Founded in 2002 as the first social network connecting women to women for conversations about all aspects of peace building, the non-profit has evolved into an e-media forum and international mentorship program augmenting women's voices globally to build cultures of peace.

SCHEDULE OF SCREENINGS: in chronological order

Thursday, February 21, 7 pm – Dumbarton United Methodist Church, 3133 Dumbarton St. NW, DC

Saturday, February 23, 3 pm – American University School of International Service, Room 300, 4400 Massachusetts Ave NW

Saturday, February 23, 7:15 pm – The Nation's Mosque, Masjid Mosque, 1519 4th Street NW, DC

Sunday, February 24, 9 am – Peace Café at Busboys and Poets, in conjunction with Theater J, 2021 14th Street NW, DC

Monday, February 25, 10 am – National Press Club, 529 14th St, NW (Media and NPC members only)

Monday, February 25, 2:30 pm – Capitol Hill, Cannon Building, Room 121, sponsored by Rep. John Garamendi (D – Cal.), Independence and 1st Street SE

Tuesday, February 26, 12 lunch – Women's National Democratic Club, 1526 New Hampshire Avenue, NW (RSVP 202 232 7363 X 3003) (\$30 non-members)

Biographies of Bassam Aramin and Rami Elhanan

Bassam Aramin lives outside of Jerusalem in Anata with his family. Hearing him speak publicly in front of Israelis, it is hard to imagine he spent seven years tortured in Israeli prisons for throwing stones and hand grenades as a teenager. When released, he initiated a movement called 'Combatants For Peace,' with other Palestinian and Israeli combatants. A year later his ten-year-old daughter Abir was shot in the head with a rubber bullet by an Israeli army police soldier near her school. Three years later Bassam is still determined to meet the man who claimed her life and to seek justice, even as he meets with soldiers who have committed similar crimes. He refuses to be a victim or an aggressor, a paradox most of his community struggles to understand.

Rami Elhanan lives west of Jerusalem with his family. The son of a Holocaust survivor, he served in the army and fought in numerous wars where he lost many comrades. In 1997 his daughter Smadar was killed in a suicide bombing while walking with two school friends. Rami's life turned 180°. He chose not to avenge her death, but also refused to become just another bereaved parent painfully accepting the situation. Instead, he became a leading member of the 'The Parents Circle - Family Forum,' a group of Israelis and Palestinians who lost relatives to the conflict. For Rami hope is not a choice but a necessity. He faced a massive challenge when his son Yigal was drafted to the army. He is torn between his duties as a father and his commitment to his life mission. Rami fears his son will do the very things he is fighting so hard to prevent in others.

Biography of Shelley Hermon, Director/Co-Producer

Shelley Hermon returned to live in Israel after 25 year of living in the UK. In 1997 she was Art-Director at AD agency 'Ogilvy & Mather' Hong Kong. Since 2000 she has worked as a freelance Producer/Director/Cameraman on a range of international productions: *Home Fronts* for Channel4 UK on Ethiopian and Russian immigrants in Israel; *The Trial of Saddam Hussein* for Esteban Uyarra BBC; *77 Steps* for Ibtisam Mara'ana; and *Two Boys*, a short animation for Leonard Cohen's initiative "The Fund for Reconciliation, Tolerance, and Peace."