

Association for Bahá'í Studies–North America  
32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference  
“Religion and Social Cohesion”

29 August – 1 September 2008  
San Diego Marriott La Jolla  
San Diego, California, United States

Friday .....	3
Saturday .....	4
Sunday .....	7
Monday .....	10
Abstracts and biographical notes .....	11
Artists performing .....	34

***Important Information***

***Conference Badge*** Your conference badge is your “ticket of admission” to all sessions. You must wear it to attend conference sessions. The security personnel will not allow admittance to anyone without a badge.

***Security*** The security personnel are there to assist you. Please follow their instructions at all times. They can be identified by red ribbons on their badges.

***Promptness*** The schedule of sessions is very full. To give equal time to the speakers, the sessions must begin on time. We request your cooperation in arriving promptly.

***Cell Phones*** The ringing of mobile telephones in the audience is very disruptive to a presentation. Please turn off your cell phone or put it in “silent” mode while you are in the conference sessions.

***The Children’s and Junior Youth Program*** The Children’s Program, for ages 5 to 15, is being held in the **Los Angeles, Rancho Las Palmas** and **San Francisco** rooms on the third floor. Parents may drop off children at their program 15 minutes before the adult session starting time. Parents are asked to pick up their children promptly at the close of each session and for the lunch breaks. (Meals are not included in the children’s program.) The times for Children/Junior Youth sessions are

Friday, 29 August	10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
Saturday, 30 August	9:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
Sunday, 31 August	9:00 a.m.–6:30 p.m.
Monday, 1 September	9:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

The program of children's activities is available at the Conference Registration Table. Parents are required to sign a Medical Information and Emergency Health Care Release form and return it to the Children's Program coordinators.

*The Conference Bookstore* is operated by the Bahá'í Distribution Service of the United States. The bookstore is located in the **Irvine/Newport** rooms on the first floor and offers a wide selection of books and materials, including books and CDs by authors and artists presenting at the conference, and Bahá'í jewelry. Hours of operation are

Friday, 29 August	2:00 p.m.– 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, 30 August	9:00 a.m.– 7:00 p.m.
Sunday, 31 August	9:00 a.m.– 7:00 p.m.
Monday, 1 September	9:00 a.m.– 2:00 p.m.

*Evaluation Forms* The ABS Executive Committee asks for your assistance and cooperation in filling out the conference evaluation forms provided in your conference kit. Your feedback is very valuable to us in our continuing efforts to improve the Conference.

*Membership* In support of the Association's membership drive, we ask you to encourage your friends and Spiritual Assemblies to join the Association. Please use the membership form enclosed in your conference kit. More forms are available at the Conference Information Table.

*Audio Recordings* Conference plenary sessions will be recorded and will be available for purchase on audio CD. An order form is included in your conference kit and additional forms are available at the Conference Information Desk. Please fill out the form with your credit card number and the CDs will be mailed to you after the conference.

*Lost and Found* Lost and found articles should be reported to the Conference Registration Table. After the close of the conference, any items not picked up will be turned over to the hotel.

*Prayer Room* A room has been set aside for prayer and meditation from Friday to Sunday, 8:00 a.m.–10:00 p.m. Please check the Bulletin Board at the registration area for the room number.

*"After Hours" Arts* After each evening's program there will be an arts program held in the **Grand Ballroom (Sections D/E)** where conference attendees can socialize and enjoy listening to live music until midnight. Performing artists at the conference are encouraged to sign up to perform at these events. A sign-up sheet will be available near the Conference Registration Table.

*Networking Lunches* Check the information board for time, topics, and locations.

## *Friday, 29 August 2008*

### **10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Special Simultaneous Sessions**

<i>Salon F/G/H</i>	<b>Special Development Programme for Faculty</b> Convener: Association for Bahá'í Studies Executive Committee Chair: MICHAEL KARLBERG
10:00	Devotions Welcome and Opening Remarks Faculty Introductions Roundtable Discussion on Mentorship of Students and Young Adults
12:00 - 1:30	<i>Lunch Break</i>
1:30 - 3:00	Special Session - Details to be Announced
3:00 - 4:00	Roundtable Discussion on Contributing to Contemporary Thought in Diverse Fields
4:00 - 5:00	Roundtable Consultation on Expanding the Number, Scope, and Quality of Bahá'í Publications

### *Salon D/E* **Collaborative Workshops on Current Issues and Developments**

	<b>Interactive Workshop: The Bahá'í Writings and Collaboration in Bahá'í Studies</b> Convener: Association for Bahá'í Studies Executive Committee Chair: STEPHEN FRIBERG
10:00 - 12:00	Devotions Welcome and Opening Remarks Introduction to Text and Interactive Workshop on 'Abdu'l-Bahá's, <i>The Secret of Divine Civilization</i> RON SHIGETA and STEPHEN FRIBERG
12:00 - 1:30	<i>Lunch Break</i>
1:30 - 3:00	Issues of Interest to the Bahá'í Community where Bahá'í Studies can have an Impact Introduction STEPHEN FRIBERG The Social Forces that Create Strong Social Networks on the Web MITRA SOLOMON and MATTHEW WEINBERG The Culture of Science, the Rise of Consultation, and Collective Action RON SHIGETA The Spiritual Life of North Americans DAVID DIEHL Creating Bonds for a New and Better World: My Family and the Mosaic Program ROBERT ROSENFELD Workshop Instruction
3:00 - 3:20	<i>Break</i>

3:20 - 5:00 **Collaborative Workshops on Specific Topics**

*Salon C* The Social Forces that Create Strong Social Networks on the Web  
*Salon A/B* The Culture of Science, the Rise of Consultation, and Collective Action  
*Salon D/E* The Spiritual Life of North Americans  
*Marina del Rey* Creating Bonds for a New and Better World: My Family and the Mosaic Program

5:00 - 7:00 *Dinner Break*

***Friday Evening***

*Grand Ballroom*

7:00 **Plenary Session**  
Chair: Kim Naqvi

Devotions

Official Conference Welcome

Learning and the Unfoldment of the Bahá'í Community PAUL LAMPLE

*Salon D/E*

9:00 "After Hours" Arts  
Master of Ceremonies TARA ELLIS

***Saturday, 30 August 2008***

*Grand Ballroom*

9:00 **Plenary Session**  
Devotions

Post-Traumatic Slave Syndrome JOY DEGRUY LEARY

Creating a Mosaic: A Journey to Social Cohesion ROBERT ROSENFELD

12:00 - 2:00 *Lunch Break*

**2:00 - 5:30 p.m. Simultaneous Breakout Sessions**

*Orchids*

**Arts I**

Convener: ANNE PERRY

2:00 - 3:00 Religious and Social Forces of Unity/Division in Paintings JALALIYIH QUINN

3:15 - 4:15 "Out of the Ashes Rises the Phoenix": Precedents and Prospects of Bahá'í artists  
FARSHID SAMANDARI

- Salon H*                    **Bahá'í History & Biography I**  
 Convener: SUSAN MANECK
- 2:00 - 3:00    Social and Community Cohesion and the Growth of the Bahá'í Faith in the United States  
 ROBERT STOCKMAN
- 3:15 - 4:15    Does It Matter if It Happened? Inspirational Force versus Factual Content in Popular  
 Bahá'í Stories DAVID PIFF
- 4:30 - 5:30    Holy War and the Message and Life of Bahá'u'lláh DAN ENSLOW
- Salon D/E*                    **Bioethics & Health Sciences**  
 Convener: ELIZABETH BOWEN
- 2:00 - 3:00    Challenges of Health for All in the 21st Century ROBERT KIM-FARLEY
- 3:15 - 4:15    From Autism to Schizophrenia to Alzheimer's: Developing a Bahá'í Approach to  
 Disorders of the Mind SAMIR KOIRALA
- 4:30 - 5:30    The Effects of Prayer on Healing and Recovery: A Review of the Literature TAEED  
 QUDDUSI
- Salon A/B*                    **Family Life and Community Development**  
 Convener: TBA
- 2:00 - 3:00    Communicating Trauma to Engender Social Change: How Story-telling Can Change the  
 Personal and Social Experience of Domestic Violence  
 KATHRYN LUCATELLI, JANE TARANEH HELZER and KEMBA MAZLOOMIAN
- Salon G*                    **Gender Equality Studies I**  
 Convener: ELIZABETH WRIGHT
- 2:00 - 3:00    Literary Representations of the Spiritual Dimension to Aging  
 PHYLLIS STERNBERG PERRAKIS
- 3:15 - 4:15    Discerning Directions in Bahá'í Women's Scholarship PAULA DREWEK
- 4:30 - 5:30    Love as Heaven and Hell AUGUSTO LOPEZ-CLAROS
- Orchids*                    **International Affairs I**  
 Convener: TBA
- 4:30 - 5:30    Recently Proposed Models of World Government: Sink or Swim? MONA PARSA
- Salon A/B*                    **Joint Session: Philosophy I and Science & Religion I**  
 Convener: IAN KLUGE
- 3:15 - 5:30    The New Atheism (PANEL)  
 A Bahá'í Response to the "New" Atheism MAYA KAATHRYN BOHNHOFF,  
 LUISA PRIDDY and STEPHEN FRIBERG  
 The "New Atheism" A Bahá'í Response IAN KLUGE  
 Addressing Expected Atheist Challenges Against the Bahá'í Perspective on Science and  
 Religion DINESH SINGH
- Santa Clara*                    **Journal of Bahá'í Studies**  
 3:15 – 4:45    *Journal of Bahá'í Studies* - Information Session EDITORIAL COMMITTEE
- Salon F*                    **Psychology**  
 Convener: JASON IGHANI
- 2:00 - 3:00    Society in Transition: Reflecting on Identity, Suicide, and Well-being in Aboriginal  
 Populations TARAVAT OSTOVAR

3:15 - 4:15 Preventing Family Breakdown: Incorporating Unity into Therapy OMID POUR-AHMADI  
4:30 - 5:30 Selfless-Awareness Therapy: A God-Centered Approach to Healing and the Release of Human Potential LESLIE ASPLUND and KURT ASPLUND

*Salon A/B* **Science and Religion I** see Joint Session with **Philosophy I**

*Marina del Ray* **Science and Religion II**

Chair: RON SHIGETA

2:00 - 2:30 Introduction to the Bahá'í Faith and the Internet SESSION ORGANISERS  
2:30 - 3:00 The Bahá'í Web 2.0 - A Social Platform for Development (part 1) PAUL JAVID  
3:00 - 3:15 *Break*  
3:15 - 3:45 The Bahá'í Web 2.0 - A Social Platform for Development (part 2) PAUL JAVID  
3:45 - 4:15 The Valley of Search [Engines]: Outwardly-oriented websites (part 1) LEV RICKARDS  
4:15 - 4:30 *Break*  
4:30 - 5:00 The Valley of Search [Engines]: Outwardly-oriented websites (part 2) LEV RICKARDS  
5:00 - 5:30 Science and Religion Business Meeting

*Salon C* **Study of Religion I**

Convener: PETER TERRY

2:00 - 3:00 Centuries of Darkness and Light HAROLD ROSEN  
3:15 - 4:15 Intersections of Religion and Culture in the Bahá'í Community: A Case Study  
MARIE GERVAIS  
4:30 - 5:30 The Geography of America's Spiritual Inheritance: Seeking the Personal Soul within the Bahá'í Vision BRAD MILLER

## ***Saturday Evening***

*Grand Ballroom*

7:30

### **Plenary Session**

Presentation of Awards for Distinguished Scholarship to SOVAIDA MA'ANI-EWING and ARIANA SALVO by the Association for Bahá'í Studies Executive Committee

Art for Social Change - An Evening with the Artists

Master of Ceremonies: TBA

RED GRAMMER Singer/Songwriter

RUTH FORMAN Poet/Author/Spoken Word

BADI Rapper/Songwriter

JB ECKL & ERIC DOZIER Singer/Songwriter/Performer

*Salon D/E*

10:00

"After Hours" Arts

Master of Ceremonies BADI

## ***Sunday, August 31, 2008***

### *Grand Ballroom*

9:00      **Plenary Session**  
Devotions

Achieving Reconciliation in a Conflicting World ISMAEL VELASCO

*Little Mosque on the Prairie* As An Instrument to Promote Understanding and Social Cohesion MARY DARLING and CLARK DONNELLY

12:00      *Lunch Break*

### *Marina del Rey*

12:45 - 2:15      **Annual General Meeting of the Association for Bahá'í Studies - North America**  
*All are invited to attend, to meet the Executive Committee, and to consult about the activities and future directions of the Association*

## **2:30 - 6:30 p.m. Simultaneous Breakout Sessions**

### *Salon G*

#### **Architecture and the Built Environment**

Convener: BARBARA RUYTS for DOUGLAS RAYNOR

2:30 - 3:30      The Spiritual Engine Powering Regenerative Design TOM KUBALA

3:45 - 4:45      Does Beauty Matter in the Built Environment? BARBARA RUYTS

5:00 - 6:30      The Garden of Being and the Eternal Complementation JOHN STEERE, MICHELLE THELEN-STEERE and TIMOTHY KRAFT

### *Salon D/E*

#### **Arts II**

Convener: ANNE PERRY

2:30 - 3:30      "Heroes of the Dawn," an epic poem based on The Dawn-Breakers BRET BRENEMAN

3:45 - 4:45      Transcending our Condition: Movement and Music as a Cohesive Force Embodying the African Diaspora JANE TARANEH HELZER

### *Salon H*

#### **Joint Session: Bahá'í History and Biography II and Gender Equality II**

Conveners: SUSAN MANECK and ÉLIZABETH WRIGHT

2:30 - 3:30      In Search of Martha Root: An American Bahá'í Feminist and Peace Advocate in the Early Twentieth Century JILING YANG

3:45 - 4:45      A Westerner's Pilgrimage to Iran in early 20th Century: Martha Root's Courageous Journey GLORIA YAZDANI SHAHZADEH

5:00 - 6:00      Prophetic Vocation, Poetic Response: A Transnational Genealogy of Iranian Feminisms DAMIEN-ADIA MARASSA

### *Santa Clara*

#### **Bahá'í Language Educators**

2:30 - 3:30      The Evolution of CALL: E-mail Exchange for Motivation and Proficiency Gains SANDRA FOTOS

3:45 - 4:45      Affective Factors and the Application of Spiritual Principles in Online English Teaching DARA GAY SHAW , NAOMI ROEHRER, CILLA DRINKWATER, BOB MCILVRIDE and MAY ABHAR

<i>Salon F</i>	<b>Business, Ethics and Management Science</b> Convener: NOUSHA ETEMAD 2:30 - 3:30 Spiritual Capital–A Bahá’í Perspective ALAIN NOGHIU
<i>Salon A</i>	<b>Communication</b> Convener: AMROLLAH HEMMAT 2:30 - 3:30 A model for individual Bahá’ís to initiate interfaith dialogue and study in major cities GITY ETEMAD 3:45 - 4:45 Art of Bahá’í Translation: The Japanese Case NOZOMU SONDA
<i>Salon F</i>	<b>Education</b> Conveners: KAMILLA BAHBAHANI and MARIE GERVAIS 3:45 - 4:45 Divine Revelation as a Valid and Requisite Epistemology in Academic Research VALERIE J DAVIS 5:00 - 6:30 Forum on Social Integration through Junior Youth and Children’s Classes KAMILLA BAHBAHANI and MARIE GERVAIS
Salon H	<b>Gender Equality II</b> , see joint session with <b>Bahá’í History and Biography II</b>
<i>Orchids</i>	<b>International Affairs II</b> Convener: TBA 2:30 - 3:30 Consultation for Social Justice: a Lamp of Guidance amidst Dismal Problems SAHAR SATTARZADEH 3:45 - 4:45 How We Achieve Social Cohesion by Replacing Expediency in Managing World Affairs with A Principled Approach to Solving Global Problems SOVAIDA MA’ANI-EWING 5:00 - 6:30 Social and Economic Development: The Experience of the United Nations and Its Sister Agencies NOORA ARFAA, and DESSI DIMITROVA, AUGUSTO LOPEZ-CLAROS, NEYSAN RASSEKH
<i>Salon D/E</i>	<b>Persian Session</b> 5:00 Special talk in Persian SHAFIQEH FATHEAZAM
<i>Salon B</i>	<b>Philosophy II</b> 2:30 - 3:30 Work and World Evolution; Karl Marx in Bahá’í Perspective WOLFGANG KLEBEL 3:45 - 4:45 Living the Bahá’í Life and Existential Philosophy: A Correlation JACK MCLEAN 5:00 - 6:00 Text, Author, Reader and the Relationship with the Sacred ISCANDER TINTO
<i>Marina del Rey</i>	<b>Science and Religion III</b> 2:30 - 3:00 A Physical and Mystical View of the Upset in the World’s Equilibrium HAROLD JAVID 3:00 - 3:30 Miracles of a Different Kind; Accessible and Predictable, yet Inexplicable SABA MAHANIAN, FAHDAD FANI and FARJAM MAJD 3:30 - 3:45 <i>Break</i> 3:45 - 4:15 Western Civilization’s Cartesian-Newtonian Worldview as a Barrier to Social Cohesion JOHN FITZGERALD MEDINA 4:15 - 4:45 Developing “Spiritual DNA” as the Building Block of the New World Order of Bahá’u’lláh RAMIN MODIR MASSIHAI 4:45 - 5:00 <i>Break</i> 5:00 - 5:30 Is there a Creator? Creation and Evolution ROUHA ROSE



5:30 - 6:00 School of the Earth: Toward a Vibrant Civilization on a Healthy Planet Through Practical Education DAVID WELLMAN

*Salon C*

**Study of Religion II**

2:30 - 3:30 A Theological Analysis of the Biography of the Báb PETER TERRY

3:45 - 4:45 Unity of Religions-Key Aspect of the Lesser Peace BAHMAN NADIMI

5:00 - 6:00 The Development of a New Theory of Knowledge JOBIN ESLAHPAZIR

*Salon A*

**University Courses**

Chair: MICHAEL KARLBERG

5:00 - 6:30 Developing Courses on the Bahá'í Faith for Universities and Colleges BRADFORD BAKER, SHAHIN GODDOUSI and SHAMIM AKHAVAN, ELAINE MCCREARY, FARHAD ROHANI and FIROUZ ABBASIAN-ARDESTANI, HAROLD ROSEN, SAHAND VAFADARY

6:30 - 8:00 *Dinner Break*

*Marina del Rey*

**Collaborative Workshops on Current Issues and Developments for 2008-2009 Project Participants**

6:00 - 7:45 Follow-up from Friday Sessions - Topical Group Project Announcements TEAM LEADERS

***Sunday Evening***

*Grand Ballroom*

8:00 **Plenary Session**  
Devotions

**The 26<sup>th</sup> Hasan M. Balyuzi Memorial Lecture**

Some Observations on the Scope and Value of Bahá'í Scholarship  
HOUSHMAND FATHEAZAM

*Salon D/E*

10:00 "After Hours" Arts  
Masters of Ceremonies TARA ELLIS and BADI

# *Monday, September 1, 2008*

*Grand Ballroom*

9:00

## **Plenary Session**

Devotions

From Counting to Contributing: Moving from Participation to Partnership in the Advancement of Civilization MOJGAN SAMI

Young Scholars Panel: Scholarship, Practice, and the Five Year Plan  
NAZANIN ZARGARPOUR (chair), KAMAL SINCLAIR, ASHKAN MONFARED, ERIC HARPER,  
and JENNY WILSON

Closing musical presentation

Closing remarks: Association for Bahá'í Studies Executive Committee

## *Abstract and Autobiographical Notes*

### **Firouz Abbasian-Ardestani • Developing Courses on the Bahá'í Faith for Universities and Colleges (panel)**

FIROUZ ABBASIAN is pursuing a Master's in Fine Arts, specializing in Bahá'í Arts. He has been a faculty member at the University of Oklahoma and Pomor State University, Russia since 2002, lecturing on the Bahá'í Faith and humanities in Russia since 2002 and for Bahá'í youth since 1979.

### **Shamim Akhavan • Developing Courses on the Bahá'í Faith for Universities and Colleges (panel)**

### **Noora Arfaa and Dessi Dimitrova, Augusto Lopez-Claros and Neysan Rassekh • Social and Economic Development: The Experience of the United Nations and Its Sister Agencies (panel)**

Four practitioners of social and economic development with extensive experience in the international institutions of the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and United Nations examine the assumptions underlying conventional theory, their differences from Bahá'í conceptions of development, and examples of practice in both the Bahá'í community and United Nations contexts. There will be an opportunity to consult about involvement with the United Nations.

NOORA ARFAA currently works at the World Bank on economic development issues for Iran. She previously worked on a number of Bank projects on community development and social cohesion in Sierra Leone and Liberia, and has worked at the United Nations. She holds a Masters degree in international development and an MBA.

### **Leslie Asplund and Kurt Asplund • Selfless-Awareness Therapy: A God-Centered Approach to Healing and the Release of Human Potential**

Selfless-Awareness Therapy is introduced as a non-traditional approach to psychotherapy that explicitly acknowledges God as the ultimate source of energy and guidance for the healing and development of the human psyche. Drawing from the Bahá'í Writings for its foundation, the model applies concepts and practices from the work of Carl Rogers, Murray Bowen, Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy, and William Hatcher. It proposes that the way of being of the therapist and the spiritual dimension beyond the bio-psycho-social are paramount in the science, art and practice of psychotherapy.

KURT ASPLUND recently graduated from Bastyr University with an MA in Applied Behavioral Science (Emphasis in Systems Counseling). Building on his background in environmental science and life-long study of the Bahá'í Writings, Kurt has now focused his ecological lens on human psychological systems.

LESLIE ASPLUND, MSW, PhD has worked with the Authenticity Project, the Wilmette Institute and served as Adjunct Faculty at the University of Washington in her more than 20 years of clinical practice. Her special interests are the psychology of spirituality and the arts as a force for human and societal transformation.

**Kamilla Bahbahani and Marie Gervais • Forum on Social Integration through Junior Youth and Children’s Classes**

Children’s and junior youth classes are key vehicles for social integration, bringing together multiple actors in complex social relationships. They have the potential for sharing, mutual growth, misunderstanding, confusion, or alienation, as the processes of integration unfold. Through their activities, participants learn about the oneness of humanity, unity in diversity and collective action. The forum will present and review case studies. Participants will analyze the case studies in groups, considering the opportunities to move to further stages of growth. Finally, they will discuss how these principles bear on work in their own communities.

KAMILLA BAHBAHANI, PhD, works as a teacher, researcher and writer in the areas of education, geography, global citizenship, environmental issues, and qualitative research. She serves as co-coordinator of the ABS Education Special Interest group.

**Bradford Baker • Developing Courses on the Bahá’í Faith for Universities and Colleges (panel)**

BRADFORD BAKER is an international development professional and a graduate of the University of Washington (degrees: Human Rights, African Studies, Critical Race Theory) and has developed a working syllabus/curriculum for teaching the faith on college campus titled “A Critical Bahá’í Perspective for Social Transformation.”

**Maya Kaathryn Bohnhoff, Luisa Priddy and Stephen Friberg • Panel on the New Atheism: A Bahá’í Response to the “New” Atheism**

Characterizing religion in terms of intolerance, fanaticism and violence, the New Atheist movement has galvanized and transformed the discussion of religion, putting the “battle” between theism and atheism on the world stage and framing it as a war between blind faith and reason, emotion and intellect, and religion and science. If the “new” atheism offers long-established religious traditions a challenge, it offers the Bahá’í community a tremendous opportunity. We explore the New Atheists’ critique and look at a range of responses from other thinkers, beginning the process of offering a Bahá’í response that targets its most fundamental assumptions.

MAYA BOHNHOFF is a writer and a long-time participant in the Silicon Valley technical scene. She is a member of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America and the Horror Writers Association.

**Bret Breneman • *The Dawn-Breakers* and Social Cohesion as Conveyed by an Epic Poem Based on the Narrative**

The author of an epic poem based on “The Dawn-Breakers” will read from sections of the book-length poem entitled “Heroes of the Dawn,” discussing the parts they played in the Heroic Age of the Bahá’í Faith and the rhymed version’s derivation from Nabíl’s immortal chronicle. The presentation would attempt to show the dramatic interplay of opposing forces involved in the “dual process” of break-down and build-up that characterizes our era.

BRET BRENEMAN grew up in Hawaii, received degrees in American and English literature from Stanford

and the University of Sussex, has taught English on all levels in several countries, and is currently an adjunct professor at a community college. He has published poems, a children's book and some articles.

**Mary Darling and Clark Donnelly • *Little Mosque on the Prairie* as an Instrument to Promote Understanding and Social Cohesion.**

The executives in charge of *Little Mosque on the Prairie* will discuss the learning they have acquired in making this break-out comedy, now seen in eighty countries around the world. Undertaken as a response to the Guardian's instruction to the western believers to "establish the truth of Islam in the West," *Little Mosque* has challenged the production team both creatively and logistically. The presenters will discuss their efforts to maintain a sense of reverence in the midst of the irreverence upon which much comedy relies. They will also discuss how Bahá'í principles have informed the process of making the series.

MARY DARLING, as Westwind's CEO, is responsible for its overall vision and creative direction. She is the recipient of the International Achievement Award for Excellence & Innovation, and the Common Ground Award for Conflict Resolution & Building Understanding. Mary has served the Faith for over 25 years including as program coordinator of Louhelen Bahá'í School.

**Valerie J Davis • Divine Revelation as a Valid and Requisite Epistemology in Academic Research**

This interactive seminar will consider how the epistemological crisis in academia presents an opening for the reintroduction and re-establishment of Divine Revelation as a valid epistemology in research. It is the presenter's contention that Divine Revelation will become a requisite source in the generation of new knowledge. The presentation will assert that this crisis is no accident, and represents an outcome of the disruptive forces revealed by the Guardian. We will explore the opportunity to respond to the parallel integration process he also disclosed. A potential model for integrated research methodologies will be considered.

VALERIE J. DAVIS is completing her PhD in Human and Organization Development. She is a respected consultant who specializes in working with senior level executives and supporting change through leadership development and executive coaching. A quarter century of executive experience in global organizations has influenced her perspective on leadership challenges.

**Joy DeGruy-Leary • Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome**

The Theory of Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome suggest that centuries of slavery followed by systemic racism and oppression have resulted in multigenerational adaptive behaviors, some of which have been positive and reflective of resilience, and others that are detrimental and destructive. Dr. Leary presents facts, statistics and documents that illustrate how varying levels of both clinically induced and socially learned residual stress related issues were passed along through generations as a result of slavery.

JOY DEGRUY LEARY holds a Bachelor of Science degree in communications, a master's degree in social work, a master's degree in psychology, and a PhD in social work research. She is an assistant professor at Portland State University.

**Dessi Dimitrova • Social and Economic Development: The Experience of the United Nations and Its Sister Agencies** (see Arfaa for abstract)

DESSI DIMITROVA works in health economics and financing. Her background is in management consulting with McKinsey and Dalberg and in economic development with the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation. She holds a MPA from Princeton University, BA Bowdoin College and Business a Certificate from Dartmouth College.

**Clark Donnelly • *Little Mosque on the Prairie* as an Instrument to Promote Understanding and Social Cohesion** (see Darling for abstract)

CLARK DONNELLY, co-founder and President, WestWind Pictures, is intimately involved in the creative development and production of all its work, including comedies, lifestyle and reality programs, and documentary films. A Bahá'í since 1982, Clark has served in a variety of ways including as Auxiliary Board Member from 1993 to 1998.

**Paula A. Drewek • Discerning Directions in Bahá'í Women's Scholarship**

This presentation's purpose is to identify directions in Bahá'í women's scholarship based upon examination of articles in Bahá'í journals from the late 1930s to the present. Progress towards new models of scholarship needs to include greater numbers of women scholars as well as new approaches to scholarship if such progress is to advance. Several characteristics of Bahá'í women's scholarship will be identified and illustrated by examining women's contributions in issues of *World Order*, *The Bahá'í World*, sponsored journals of the Association for Bahá'í Studies and other sources to both track changes and indicate new directions.

PAULA DREWEK, PhD is a retired professor of Humanities at Macomb Community College in Warren, Michigan where she taught courses in arts and ideas and comparative religion. Recent community contributions have focused on interfaith initiatives and dialogue in several venues.

**Cilla Drinkwater • Affective Factors and the Application of Spiritual Principles in Online English Teaching** (see Shaw for abstract)

CILLA DRINKWATER is a copy writer and marketing specialist. She has worked as a writing tutor and instructor at the university level. She has tutored for several Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education English as a Foreign Language (EFL) courses.

**Dan Enslow • Holy War and the Message and Life of Bahá'u'lláh**

Due to the needs of defending Medina, both the Qur'an and the life of Muhammad increasingly inspire a strong warrior tradition. Bahá'u'lláh's 'Akká statements regarding abolishing holy war, and His ability to overcome all suffering, demonstrates a dramatic shift in social policy. As we consciously make this shift, and better understand Bahá'u'lláh's authority, a powerful process is set in motion to "beat swords into plowshares" in the realm of the human spirit. This session will compare Islamic and Bahá'í Teachings on war and the lives of these two Messengers to highlight the energy that is released by these changes.

DAN ENSLOW has been studying Islam since 2001, while also attending two International InterFaith Conferences on “Peaceful Management of Changing Demographics” (Manrissa, Spain) and “Religion and Peace - Best Practices” (Amritsar, India), both sponsored by Parliament of World Religion’s Golden Institute.

### **Jobin Eslahpazir • Developing a New Theory of Knowledge**

Knowing about the “other” is a major issue confronting humanity in recent times. The Bahá’í Faith offers a new way of knowledge about others by recognizing the divine essence of every human being. This “essential recognition” takes the place of the current method of knowing each other based on “fact-based knowledge”. Our approach will allow the demonstration of the realistic and pragmatic feature of religion faced with the utopian visions of different materialistic views. As a result it will constitute a new theory of knowledge based on the ideals of the Bahá’í Faith.

JOBIN ESLAHPAZIR has a master’s degree and a PhD in immunology and a master’s degree in history. He is pursuing a PhD in the Science of Religion at the University of Montreal on “The reaction of the Bahá’í community of France in the face of the persecution of the Bahá’ís of Iran”.

### **Gity Banan-Etemad • A Model for Individual Bahá’ís to Initiate Interfaith Dialogue and Study in Major Cities to Reach Prominent People**

This session presents a model for individual Bahá’ís to initiate interfaith dialogue and study in large cities, in order to become visible in major metropolitan areas of the US and to access contact with people of capacity and religious leaders. This model will help the Bahá’ís to be recognized and the Bahá’í Faith to be numbered as one of the major independent religions.

GITY BANAN-ETEMAD, professor of pediatrics, Temple University School of Medicine, has been a visiting professor to Albania, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Mongolia and China and an international traveler and speaker. She is a board member of Health for Humanity and the Interfaith Center of greater Philadelphia, and served on several Spiritual Assemblies.

### **Fahdad Fani • Miracles of a Different Kind; Accessible and Predictable, yet Inexplicable (see Mahanian for abstract)**

FAHDAD FANI has graduated from University of Washington and has a keen interest in the study of intuition and the mind.

### **Houshmand Fatheazam • Some Observations on the Scope and Value of Bahá’í Scholarship**

HOUSHMAND FATHEAZAM is from a Bahá’í family whose history dates to the Bábí era. He pioneered to Iraq in 1942, then studied literature in Tehran. He pioneered to India in 1952, serving as National Spiritual Assembly secretary from 1955 until elected to the Universal House of Justice in 1963, where he served until 2003. He has published several articles and a volume of poems.

**Stephen Friberg • Panel on the New Atheism: A Bahá'í Response to the “New” Atheism** (see Bohnhoff for abstract)

STEPHEN FRIBERG is a physicist interested in science and religion. A long time member of the ABS Science and Religion Special Interest Group, he currently serves on the Association's executive committee.

**Sandra Fotos • The Evolution of CALL: E-mail Exchange for Motivation and Proficiency Gains**

This talk presents an overview of computer assisted language learning (CALL) and discusses the history of computers, suggesting that they have enabled a major paradigm shift following Shoghi Effendi's comment on Developing technology enabling instant communication. The main types of CALL used in language classes will be discussed, including the pros and cons of distance learning, since a number of Bahá'í educational programs use this mode of instruction. Finally, research is presented on the effectiveness of e-mail exchange for promoting learner proficiency and autonomy.

SANDRA FOTOS, EdD, Professor of English, Senshu University, Tokyo, Japan, is secretary of ABS-Japan. Her research interests include bilingualism, the effects of formal instruction on language learning, and computer assisted language learning. She has published in numerous professional journals, written a number of books and contributed chapters to edited collections.

**Marie Gervais • Forum on Social Integration through Junior Youth and Children's Classes**  
(see Bahbahani for abstract)

**Marie Gervais • Intersections of Religion and Culture in the Bahá'í Community: a Case Study**

How have the principles of the Bahá'í Faith effected cultural change? Can Bahá'ís build a world community without succumbing to influences of colonialism, sexism, ethnic dominance and racism? In what ways can Bahá'í culture be perceived to emerge from front-line work with a suffering and beleaguered humanity? This presentation addresses these questions through community-member observations of cultural change indicators in several Bahá'í communities. Attempts to implement guidance and individual descriptions of barriers and successes will be examined in the light of progress towards the Universal House of Justice's vision of a culture of change, learning and encouragement.

MARIE GERVAIS, PhD is Educational Coordinator for the Northern Alberta Alliance on Race Relations (NAARR), responsible for professional development in education, human services and the corporate sector. She has presented and published in a variety of fields including peace education, workplace diversity, culture and professional practice, and religion in multiculturalism.

**Shahin Goddousi • Developing Courses on the Bahá'í Faith for Universities and Colleges** (panel)

**Eric Harper • Young Scholars Panel: Scholarship, Practice, and the Five Year Plan**

ERIC HARPER, winner of the Yamaha Young Performing Artist Award, lead singer and guitarist of the flamenco-rock band MimosA, began his education at the Conservatory in Braga, Portugal, and graduated Magna Cum Laude from Boston's Berklee College of Music. He lives in Los Angeles, working as a songwriter and composer.



**Jane Taraneh Helzer • Communicating Trauma to Engender Social Change: How Story-telling Can Change the Personal and Social Experience of Domestic Violence** (see Lucatelli for abstract)

**Jane Taraneh Helzer • Transcending Our Condition: Movement and Music as a Cohesive Force Embodying the African Diaspora**

This presentation will attempt to demonstrate the way in which the modalities of dance and music were used to create social cohesion amongst members of the African Diaspora both during and after the middle passage. Through both movement pieces and spoken word tracing an African-American woman's journey from deprecation to transcendence – the language of the body will be examined, in order, to provide a new paradigm with which to experience movement as a tool for transcending the fears and beliefs that continue to hold communities captive of deeply ingrained racial and gender constructs.

JANE TARANEH HELZER holds a Bachelor's degree in Interdisciplinary Arts from the University of Michigan. She is a principal dancer in the Ninki Nanka Drum and Dance Collective. As both a visual and somatic artist, she facilitates workshops focused on healing through the arts.

**Harold Javid • A Physical and Mystical View of the Upset in the World's Equilibrium**

In this presentation, the mathematical definition of an equilibrium combined with a story for the *Mathnavi* of Rumi brings a colorful new look at the implications of Bahá'u'lláh's statement, "The world's equilibrium hath been upset through the vibrating influence of this most great, this new World Order."

HAROLD JAVID received his PhD in Electrical Engineering from the University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign. His research was focused on modeling, control and optimization of dynamic systems. He is presently Director of Education Research Programs at Microsoft Research in Redmond, WA.

**Paul Javid • The Bahá'í Web 2.0 – a Social Platform for Development**

In this presentation the speaker will contrast traditional models of development which rely on top-down, one-size-fits-all approaches with efforts taken by Bahá'ís throughout the world to create "The Bahá'í Web 2.0 for Development", a social platform and network that encourages grassroots contributors to determine the needs of their own local communities, and design locally-relevant solutions to those problems. Drawing upon his years of experience working in the field of development in India, the speaker will provide various social and economic development "scenarios" and with audience participation, outline why worldwide solutions require a marriage between scientific methodology and religious understanding.

PAUL JAVID is an MPH and an MBA graduate student at the University of California, Berkeley. Previously, Paul spent two years as a Researcher at Microsoft Research in India investigating the role of technology in development and piloting education and healthcare initiatives for the poor in India.

### **Michael Karlberg • Special Development Programme for Faculty**

MICHAEL KARLBERG is an Associate Professor of Communication at Western Washington University and a member of the ABS Executive Committee. He has published various journal articles, and a book entitled *Beyond the Culture of Contest* (George Ronald, 2004), that explore contemporary social issues from a Bahá'í perspective.

### **Robert Kim-Farley • Challenges of Health for All in the 21st Century**

We stand at the threshold of a new era of challenges to global health confronting new diseases in a world where borders and geographic distances are increasingly irrelevant to the patterns of disease in our global village. Yet we also continue to fight many of those old diseases that are learning new tricks to foil our attempts to combat them. Our challenge is not only to address the assaults of the disease-producing microbes around us, but also to recognize that many of the causes of our ill health are increasingly related to our lifestyles and man-made changes in our environment.

ROBERT KIM-FARLEY, MD, MPH serves as the Director, Communicable Disease Control and Prevention, Los Angeles County Public Health, and as a Professor in the Departments of Epidemiology and Community Health Sciences at the School of Public Health at the University of California at Los Angeles.

### **Wolfgang Klebel • Work and World Evolution; Karl Marx in Bahá'í Perspective**

Karl Marx's social critique was based on the exploitation of human labor and alienation by religion. The philosophy of Marx's ideas is analyzed and found to not follow his own dialectic. Marx's postulatory atheism is a-historic, messianic and illogical. A true synthesis is found in the principles of the Bahá'í Faith, about work, unity, progress and evolution. Marx's contribution to the history of religion is the negation of a misunderstood religion, but his criticism, continued beyond his own thoughts towards a higher form of religion, is presented in the Bahá'í Faith.

WOLFGANG KLEBEL, born in Vienna, entered a religious order in 1954, studied Catholic Theology in Rome and Innsbruck, immigrated to the US, received a PhD from Fuller Graduate School of Psychology, then practised privately and for the California prison system. A Bahá'í since 1994, he has presented at several Irfán Colloquia.

### **Ian Kluge • Panel on the New Atheism: A Bahá'í Response**

This paper examines and critiques the ontological, epistemological and ethical premises on which "new atheist" authors like Dawkins, Hitchens, Harris and Dennett build their arguments against religion. It explores questions they raise about the nature and purpose of religion, the limitations of science, the various forms of rationalism and the meaning and role of faith. The paper shows how the Bahá'í Writings provide viable and rational replies to the "new atheist" attack.

IAN KLUGE is a poet, playwright and independent philosophical scholar from Prince George, British Columbia. He has published numerous long articles on philosophical aspects of the Bahá'í Writings, and two books on the philosophical poetry of Conrad Aiken. His plays have appeared in Vancouver, among other cities.

### **Samir Koirala • From Autism to Schizophrenia to Alzheimer's: Developing a Bahá'í Approach to Disorders of the Mind**

New technology is revolutionizing our understanding of brain disorders. We are seeing how genetics and other factors interact to alter brain function. In parallel, there is growing social awareness. Instead of hiding mental conditions as family secrets, many are acknowledging them and celebrating the contributions of people with such conditions. With oneness of humanity its foundation, the Bahá'í community should lead in developing ways in which such individuals can contribute socially and spiritually. We will discuss scientific advances and a Bahá'í approach to disorders that affect the mind.

SAMIR KOIRALA, PhD is a neuroscientist at the Children's Hospital at Harvard Medical School in Boston. Originally from Nepal, he did his PhD research at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles. His current research is identifying new genes involved in the process of brain development.

### **Timothy Kraft • The Garden of Being and the Eternal Complementation** (see Steere for abstract)

TIMOTHY KRAFT is Director of Technology for Business Development at Yahoo! Inc. in Sunnyvale, California. He holds an advanced degree in Astrophysics from the University of Arizona and a BS degree in Physics and Mathematics from Alma College. His personal interest is the relationship of science and religion.

### **Tom Kubala • The Spiritual Engine Powering Regenerative Design**

I wish to show how regenerative design is a fundamentally spiritual exercise. Using the newly completed Aldo Leopold Legacy Center in Baraboo, Wisconsin as an example, we will explore how an ego-less design process promotes the unfolding of a building that becomes a direct result of its natural, cultural and spiritual environment. We will explore how Oneness, as a spiritual reality, expresses itself through a Wholeness-based approach to making things.

TOM KUBALA is principal of The Kubala Washatko Architects, Inc. of Cedarburg, Wisconsin. TKWA embraces a design philosophy of Wholeness, where the built environment supports and enhances both human activity and natural living systems. Sustainability is a natural extension of wholeness-based thinking.

### **Paul Lample • Learning and the Unfoldment of the Bahá'í Community**

In recent years a more systematic approach to expansion and consolidation has emerged, driven by a capacity for learning through reflection on action. Such learning is central to social change. It may be understood as a response to Bahá'u'lláh's injunction to "strive to translate that which hath been written into reality and action." The presentation will examine this learning process, and consider its implications for greater coherence in Bahá'í activities, including administration, social and economic development, involvement with society, and scholarship. Also considered will be how learning unfolds in the context of infallible guidance and the role of learned individuals.

PAUL LAMPLE has been a member of the Universal House of Justice since March 2005. He served for nine years in the Office of Social and Economic Development at the Bahá'í World Centre and for two years as a member of the International Teaching Centre.

**Augusto Lopez-Claros • Social and Economic Development: The Experience of the United Nations and Its Sister Agencies** (see Arfaa for abstract)

**Augusto Lopez-Claros • Love as Heaven and Hell**

What are the prerequisites for successful male-female relationships in the modern age? What are some of the social and cultural forces that in recent decades have brought the institution of marriage under such enormous strains and what are some of the weapons that can be wielded to cope with the underlying stresses? The changing nature of men-women relations down through the ages is examined, identifying key turning points, highlighting a broad range of principles and practical examples from a diversity of sources, including the Bahá'í writings and the classics of world literature.

AUGUSTO LOPEZ-CLAROS, PhD is the founder of EFD – Global Consulting Network, a firm specializing in economic, financial and development issues. He has been Chief Economist at the World Economic Forum, and has held positions with Lehman Brothers and the IMF. More information is at [www.augustolopez-claros.net](http://www.augustolopez-claros.net).

**Kathryn Lucatelli, Jane Taraneh Helzer and Kemba Mazloomian • Communicating Trauma to Engender Social Change: How Story-telling Can Change the Personal and Social Experience of Domestic Violence**

We explore the increasingly recognized practice of self-healing through story-telling as a means of examining domestic violence within the Bahá'í community. The presence of domestic violence and its implicit veil of shame and secrecy erodes the cohesion of our communities. Drawing on the research of Richard Mollica whose innovative refugee clinic advocates self-healing through each individual's "trauma story," we present fictionalized vignettes, derived from several experiences, tracing the road of recovery from trauma to healing to social change. As trauma victims identify and share their circumstances, story-telling becomes a means of personal, then social, enlightenment and change.

KATHRYN LUCATELLI holds a bachelor's degree in sociology and anthropology from Earlham College. She is self-taught in healing the wounds of domestic violence, drawing from personal and community experience. Kathryn resides in Chicago where she is the director of Build Cambodia.

**Sovaida Ma'ani-Ewing • How We Achieve Social Cohesion by Replacing Expediency in Managing World Affairs with A Principled Approach to Solving Global Problems**

The world is beset by a series of crises that are recurring, intensifying and increasing in frequency. Yet, national and international institutions have fallen into a rut of responding reactively, haphazardly and driven by expediency. The solutions they apply are often in conflict with each other and sow the seeds of the next crisis. It is time to act proactively to forge a new systemic approach to solving these global problems first by identifying the principles that are to apply and forging universal consensus around them; second by applying them systematically to solving a broad range of problems.

SOVAIDA MA'ANI-EWING is an independent scholar, writing, lecturing and advocating in the field of collective security. She is the author of three books including the recent *Collective Security Within Reach*. She practiced law for 18 years privately and with the US State Department and has taught as an adjunct professor.

**Saba Mahanian, Fahdad Fani and Farjam Majd • Miracles of a Different Kind; Accessible and Predictable, yet Inexplicable**

The concept of miracle and inexplicability will be explored. All the basic forces of nature as well as evolution of complex life forms, while observable and accessible at some level, are inexplicable and can be viewed as miracle.

SABA MAHANIAN received his PhD degree in Mechanical Engineering from Stanford University. He enjoys reading Philosophy, History, and Evolution of Complex Systems. He is married to Fara Samadani Mahanian and has two daughters, Isar and Vesal, who are studying at UW and BCC.

**Farjam Majd • Miracles of a Different Kind; Accessible and Predictable, yet Inexplicable** (see Mahanian for abstract)

FARJAM MAJD is an engineer, computer scientist and a patent attorney who practices in Seattle, Washington.

**Damien-Adia Marassa • Prophetic Vocation, Poetic Response: A Transnational Genealogy of Iranian Feminisms**

This paper stages a comparative analysis of the creative production and critical reception of the poetry of the Bábí martyr Tahirih and the graphic novels and feature film of Marjane Satrapi tracing a genealogy of Iranian and transnational feminist practice. The valuation and criticism of their original works and those they inspire promotes reflection on the radical relationship of “poet” to “prophet” and the ways in which the shaper of language becomes shaper of the world.

DAMIEN-ADIA MARASSA holds a bachelor’s degree in African American Studies from SUNY Buffalo and is currently writing a master’s thesis on jazz and blues aesthetics in American literature for the English program of the same institution. His academic interests include feminism, diaspora studies, poetics, indigenous faith practices and philosophy.

**Kemba Mazloomian • Communicating Trauma to Engender Social Change: How Story-telling Can Change the Personal and Social Experience of Domestic Violence** (see Lucatelli for abstract)

KEMBA MAZLOOMIAN has enjoyed telling stories since she was a child. Receiving a MS in Architecture and a BA in English Literature from the University of Michigan gave her the tools to write stories about cities and the communities that inhabit them. Kemba is an architect, editor, and a published writer.

**Elaine McCreary • Developing Courses on the Bahá’í Faith for Universities and Colleges** (panel)

ELAINE MCCREARY, EdD, served at the BWC for five years and now works in strategic planning and funding of higher education. She sustains her love of learning by facilitating Bahá’í programs on social systems, lifespan, and organizational development, including a multi-disciplinary “Introduction to Bahá’í Studies” at the University of Victoria.

**Bob McIlvride and May Abhar • Affective Factors and the Application of Spiritual Principles in Online English Teaching** (see Shaw for abstract)

BOB MCILVRIDE and MAY ABHAR are a team. May is a lead conversation facilitator, and Bob a conversation facilitator and lead tutor for the Bahá'í Institute of Higher Education's English as a Foreign Language 102. Bob and May's organizational, computer, and English teaching skills prepared them for their service to BIHE.

**Jack McLean • Living the Bahá'í Life and Existential Philosophy: A Correlation**

Academic Bahá'í scholarship contains relatively little in-depth reflection on what it means to "live the Bahá'í life." This presentation aims to fill this gap by correlating a particular understanding of the self as seeker of truth who inescapably faces spiritual crises while living in the world. The "life test" either allows for a fuller integration of self and deeper understanding of the Divine or estrangement from self and God. These considerations will be made by correlating selected aspects of Bahá'í theology and spirituality with the modern western philosophy of (theistic) existentialism.

JACK MCLEAN is a private scholar living and writing in Ottawa who specializes in philosophical theology (MA History of Religions, 1972). His publications include books, articles and essays relating to spirituality and Bahá'í theology. He has recently completed a book on Shoghi Effendi's writings.

**John Fitzgerald Medina • Western Civilization's Cartesian-Newtonian Worldview as a Barrier to Social Cohesion**

Shoghi Effendi referred to Europe as the cradle of a "godless," a "highly-vaunted yet lamentably defective civilization." This civilization spawned the Cartesian-Newtonian worldview-- a pervasively materialistic view of reality that emphasizes the truth of science and the secular while ignoring or even denigrating the truth of religion and the sacred. The "irreligion" and "materialism" repeatedly condemned in the Writings are directly related to the consolidation of the Cartesian-Newtonian worldview in the West and its rapid spread throughout the globe. This prevailing Western worldview acts as a barrier to social cohesion and to the establishment of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.

JOHN FITZGERALD MEDINA is author of the book *Faith, Physics and Psychology: Rethinking Society and the Human Spirit*. He is a schoolteacher and engineer holding a BS in Mechanical Engineering and an MA in Education. Of Mexican/American Indian ancestry, he lives in San Diego with his wife and son.

**Brad Miller • The Geography of America's Spiritual Inheritance: Seeking the Personal Soul within the Bahá'í Vision**

This paper compares and contrasts Bahá'í John Huddleston's "The Spiritual Destiny of America" and American philosopher Jacob Needelman's *American Soul*, first to identify the hopeful cultural and historical strands of America's "spiritual inheritance," and then to explore America's spiritual landscape for the co-ordinates of the individual soul within the Bahá'í vision, where it must surely define the site of enkindlement and where the destiny of the world must have its impetus. Not an apology for the "individual's" role in the Five-Year Plan per se, this paper examines expressions of American culture through the corrective lens of the Bahá'í Writings.

BRAD MILLER holds an EdM from Harvard's Graduate School of Education. He wrote *Returning to Seneca Falls*, an examination of the 1848 First Women's Rights Convention. His paper, "Sacred Rites of the Nation," was presented at the 1995 ABS Conference and published by *The Journal of Bahá'í Studies* in 1996.

### **Ramin Modir Massihai • Developing "Spiritual DNA" as the Building Block of the New World Order of Bahá'u'lláh**

This presentation introduces a concept of "Spiritual DNA," based on Bahá'í revelation in harmony with science, to develop "Structures" (social, economical, etc.) for the New World Order. Drawing inspiration from writings of the Master and the Guardian a template model of a societal structure is developed. As a foundation for this model some maladies afflicting the world today is visited, such as science's attack on religion. Harmony of science and religion is fostered in this presentation. Bahá'í scholars are encouraged to take on a leadership role in developing new models for this new era.

RAMIN MODIR MASSIHAI is an investment professional from Toronto, Canada. He hold a BSc from the University of Western Ontario and an MBA from Schulich School of Business at York University. Ramin has conducted numerous presentations on various investment finance topics and the Bahá'í Faith.

### **Ashkan Monfared • Young Scholars Panel: Scholarship, Practice, and the Five Year Plan**

Dr. Monfared's presentation will explore the evolution of a self-sustaining international medical mission and be followed by discussion around the challenges encountered and potential short term and long term solutions.

ASHKAN MONFARED is a member of the Bay Area Bahá'í community and on staff at Stanford University's Department of Otolaryngology (Head and Neck Surgery) as a Neurotology-Skull Base Surgery Fellow, which is a clinical and academic position.

### **Bahman Nadimi • Unity of Religions-Key Aspect of the Lesser Peace**

This presentation will discuss the processes that are taking humanity towards that "Unity in Religion". The prerequisites for that unity, the future milestones in that process and the role of religious leaders n establishing the Lesser Peace will be discussed. It is hoped that this presentation will enable the participant to gain a fresh outlook on this subject and can enable him to better articulate the Bahá'í vision to their friends and colleagues.

BAHMAN NADIMI is an Engineer at Cisco Systems. He holds a Master's Degree in Electrical Engineering and a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Networking. He has served as a board member for the Silicon Valley United Nations chapter and as a staff for Mona Foundations. He is married with two children.

### **Alain Noghiu • Spiritual Capital - A Bahá'í Perspective**

The fact that notions such as "spiritual capital" are receiving increased attention in academic and mainstream media represents an important opportunity to re-validate the significance of spirituality and religion among academics, leaders and their organizations. In order for this notion to have lasting impact however, it needs to

be grounded in scientific and spiritual truths. This presentation will focus on shedding light on spiritual capital from a Bahá'í perspective and will suggest a measurement approach to quantify the spiritual capital of individuals leaders and their organizations.

ALAIN NOGHIU is a 4th year PhD student at the University of Delaware School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy. His research focuses on spiritual capital and its implications for leadership, ethics and policy. In the past 18 months he has presented on this at five conferences in the US and abroad.

### **Taravat Ostovar • Society in Transition: Reflecting on Identity, Suicide, and Well-being in Aboriginal Populations**

This presentation will review three sources of knowledge including Aboriginal knowledge, science of psychiatry and Bahá'í teachings to help understand the issue of self-destructive behaviours such as addiction and suicide and the concepts of personhood and well-being in Aboriginal communities. We will investigate how these three paradigms of knowledge and insight explain the origins and ways to alleviate suffering in many Native communities. Based on Bahá'u'lláh's teachings, individual and collective determinants of positive change will be discussed.

TARAVAT OSTOVAR is a Psychiatry Master student at McGill University, presently working at Douglas University Institute, a psychiatric hospital dedicated to patient care, teaching, and research. She researches suicide, transcultural and clinical psychiatry among various populations including Aboriginal people. Taravat is a Bahá'í and is actively engaged in its worldwide activities.

### **Mona Parsa • Recently Proposed Models of World Government: Sink or Swim?**

Member state representatives in past and current models of world government have often received criticism for their close affiliation with national political bodies and easy subjection to national interests. Thus, recent efforts have shown an interest in forming a world entity that will better voice the concerns of the people, as opposed to the concerns of nations. Does this model of world government, with more active civil society participation, hold more promise on the road towards establishing world order?

MONA PARSA has focused her work on international affairs and dispute resolution, acting as Legal Counsel at the California Statewide Law Enforcement Association to promote justice and amicable working-relationships within California's law enforcement agencies, and serving on the Board of Directors of the United Nations Association-Orange County.

### **Phyllis Sternberg Perrakis • Literary Representations of the Spiritual Dimension to Aging**

A number of contemporary women writers offer images of aging in which characters are motivated by life changes to revisit their pasts from a new vantage point that allows them to progress to the next stage of spiritual life. I will concentrate on *Four Souls* by Louise Erdrich in which a very old Native American couple and a younger native and white woman, old in life experience, all come to a new understanding of themselves by wearing a symbolic healing garment. I will discuss the four spiritual stages of these characters using Bahá'u'lláh's Four Valleys and Writings of the Báb.

PHYLLIS STERNBERG PERRAKIS teaches English Literature at the University of Ottawa and is co-editor of Doris Lessing Studies. She has recently edited a book on the spiritual adventures of older women in works by contemporary women writers. She has published in *The Journal of Bahá'í Studies* and is on its editorial committee.



### **David Piff • Does It Matter if It Happened? Inspirational Force versus Factual Content in Popular Bahá'í Stories**

This presentation will be part of an ongoing study of popular narrative in the Bahá'í community. The focus question is the relation a story's factual content has to its pedagogical value or inspirational valence. I will present examples of stories that circulate in the Bahá'í community, and guide a discussion of their varying effect on hearers. What is more important, that a story inspire or accurately inform? Does this importance shift according to context? Do Bahá'ís "spin" each other in an ongoing effort to foster encouragement, and does disappointment result when the facts come to light?

DAVID PIFF, PhD, Sociology of Religion, University of Copenhagen, has published a book and articles regarding the content and function of unofficial information in the Bahá'í community. He served 17 years in the Archives Office, Bahá'í World Centre Haifa, and is now a records analyst at the US National Archives, Pacific Region.

### **Omid Pour-ahmadi • Preventing Family Breakdown: Incorporating Unity into Therapy**

The dramatic increase in the rates of divorce, unwed single mothers, and runaway fathers has created patterns of adult behavior with profoundly negative consequences for children. Using the main fundamental belief of the Bahá'í faith by applying unity into the application and approaches of MTOT (Multidisciplinary Team Oriented Therapy) many families learned to maintain their harmony, unity and stability. This paper describes how MTOT was able to meet and change the needs of such a complex and common population in the world today.

OMID POUR-AHMADI, MD, has a Masters of Public Health from Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and focuses his work on families, the status of women, children's mental health and child welfare through health promotion, health education, and public health policy.

### **Taeed Quddusi • The Effects of Prayer on Healing and Recovery: A Review of the Literature**

Praying for the speedy recovery of loved ones from illness is second nature to many people. The Writings are replete with healing prayers and tablets on health and wellness. Recent scientific studies on the effects of intercessory prayer have been widely publicized and debated. We will examine these controversial studies and discuss their methods and conclusions. Comparison will be made to the Bahá'í Writings. Future directions for the study of intercessory prayer in controlled trials will be discussed.

TAEED QUDDUSI is a resident surgeon in the Dept. of Otolaryngology- Head and Neck Surgery at the University of Manitoba. He has been a member of Campus ABS throughout university. His other presentations have included "The Simpsons and Religion" and "How to Save the World in Nine Easy Steps".

### **Jalaliyyih Quinn • Religious and Social Forces of Unity/Division in Paintings**

Jalaliyyih Quinn works with the vision of an artist and inspiration gleaned from Bahá'í writings. The paintings presented at this conference represent both the cohesive vision within science and social development which are occurring simultaneously with the chaos-destruction of the old world order. Quinn's paintings are abstract/symbolic/figurative. Poetry accompanies most of the paintings

JALALIYYIH QUINN ([www.jalaliyyihquinn.com](http://www.jalaliyyihquinn.com)), MFA University of Colorado, Boulder, has held solo exhibitions/taught in the US, China, Liberia. Her paintings, contemplate the Bahá'í writings, invite meditation. In China, Quinn received several awards. After nineteen years abroad, Quinn returned to the US and lives in Colorado.

**Luisa Priddy • Panel on the New Atheism: A Bahá'í Response to the “New” Atheism** (see Bohnhoff for abstract)

LUISA PRIDDY is a community activist who has focused on prison reform, prison education, gang-related social issues, and Latino community development.

**Neysan Rassekh • Social and Economic Development: The Experience of the United Nations and Its Sister Agencies** (see Arfaa for abstract)

NEYSAN RASSEKH develops and operates senior living communities. Previously, he headed special projects at the United Nations Development Program, including initiatives in China, India, Iran and the United Arab Emirates, a book on UNDP history, and Head of State summits. He has an MBA from University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business.

**Lev Rickards • The Valley of Search [Engines]: Outwardly-oriented websites**

Most Bahá'í blogs and faculty webpages show up on Google if you type the title, the researcher's name, or a handful of Bahá'í keywords. But how do we make our webpages more findable by practitioners in the wider community? Using guidance from Shoghi Effendi, and selections from the Valley of Search, we'll see how a small amount of effort can result in websites that are much more findable for search engines like Google.

LEV RICKARDS, MA graduated from the University of Michigan School of Information in 2007, where he studied information economics and policy. As a web coordinator for the Harvard Green Campus Initiative, he has combined his interest in environmental design and information/network theory.

**Farhad Rohani • Developing Courses on the Bahá'í Faith for Universities and Colleges** (panel)

FARHAD ROHANI is Doctor of Philosophy with specialization in Marxism. He has lectured on the Bahá'í Faith and philosophy for Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í communities and at universities in Iran, America and Russia since 1970. He currently teaches in the Religious Program at the University of Oklahoma.

**Naomi Rohrer • Affective Factors and the Application of Spiritual Principles in Online English Teaching** (see Shaw for abstract)

NAOMI ROHRER is working toward a Masters in Education with a concentration in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. Her Bachelor's degree is in Spanish. She has editing experience, and teaching experience in English as a Second Language, Adult and Youth Literacy.

### **Rouha Rose • Is there a Creator? Creation and Evolution**

Evidence abounds to reveal the power of religion and its progressive nature. Evolution, to many, is an amazing demonstration of the excellence of the Creator. Does any evidence suggest that there is no God? The current argument seems to be a battle for territory between some scientists who want to publish and some religionists who interpret spiritual words literally. Self promotion and fear, both part of survival of the fittest, may be involved. There is no proof either way that satisfies everyone. But we consider it because concerned seekers may ask our position.

ROUHA ROSE, BA Sociology, MA Social Work, has volunteered in human rights, world peace, education of children and women organizations; worked in early childhood education, and now promotes early and excellent vocational education. She has been married for 60 years, has two daughters, four grandchildren and her parents and grandmother were Bahá'í.

### **Harold Rosen • Developing Courses on the Bahá'í Faith for Universities and Colleges (panel)**

#### **Harold Rosen • Centuries of Darkness and Light**

If we integrate Bahá'í developments and interpretive principles into recent world history, what light is cast on global conflict and cohesion? Might academia accept Bahá'í views of falling-rising civilizations and the catalytic power of revelation? The 19th century is viewed as the nearly invisible birth of global civilization, the 20th century as its clearly visible emergence. Geopolitical and religious factors are evaluated; global threats are viewed as evolutionary drivers. Global governance, fulfilled visions and probable cultural advances are explored-requiring new eyes, ears and voices.

HAROLD ROSEN, a lifelong student and teacher of world religion with masters degrees in religion, philosophy, and education, has authored several works on multifaith perspectives. After a 25-year career as a Unitarian minister, he became a Bahá'í interfaith educator in the Vancouver, Canada area.

### **Robert Rosenfeld • Creating a Mosaic: A Journey to Social Cohesion**

Achieving unity in diversity, a key principle of the Bahá'í Faith, has become a critical component to a community's well-being and growth. A transformational program, Mosaic Partnerships, based on a set of eight spiritual principles, pairs community leaders across race and/or ethnicity and advances them and their community along a path of trust building and social connectedness. This presentation will examine the aspects of transforming a community's culture to foster friendship, unity and intimacy. It will also share the lessons learned, challenges encountered and results achieved after implementing the program in three diverse US cities over the past seven years.

BOB ROSENFELD ([www.innovating.com](http://www.innovating.com)) is recognized globally for over 35 years of experience in the fields of organizational innovation and creating social capital. His company, Idea Connection Systems, and book, "Making the Invisible Visible: The Human Principles for Sustaining Innovation," helps organizations understand the human elements that drive innovation.

### **Barbara Ruys • Does Beauty Matter in the Built Environment?**

Everyone is impacted by the buildings that surround us, but Beauty is rarely discussed by architects.

Beauty is one of the Names of God, yet today it is often relegated to fashion magazines and Disney movie characters. Learn some of the history of beauty in architecture. What do the Bahá'í Writings say? Then engage in a lively dialogue about the use, abuse, misappropriation, ignorance, and disuse of the word "beauty" in Architecture.

BARBARA RUYS, an architect, has lectured on issues of diversity and beauty in the United States and abroad, including two ABS Conferences and several national architecture conventions. She is the owner of Plumtree Productions in San Diego, and an adjunct professor of design in San Diego.

### **Farshid Samandari • "Out of the Ashes Rises the Phoenix": Precedents and prospects of Bahá'í Artists**

This presentation considers definitive directions for "Bahá'í artists" through Writings which may vary from personal directions, particularly significant for the artists, to more specific instructions of Central Figures to their contemporary artists. Broad schematics of "Bahá'í arts" are depicted through the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh. We reflect on few examples of artistic choices made by the Central Figures of the Faith, and specifically focus on 'Abdu'l-Bahá's choice stylistic and melodic decisions in His recorded chant, and significance of each work in highlighting principles of the Faith.

FARSHID SAMANDARI currently pursues studies towards a PhD in composition. His music reflects his interest in contemporary classical vocabulary, spectral analysis, and the integration of different cultural music. He has taught in the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education and collaborated with a variety of ensembles including Vancouver Symphony.

### **Mojgan Sami • From Counting to Contributing: Moving from Participation to Partnership in the Advancement of Civilization**

When "participation" first came into the social and economic development vernacular, we saw reports of the "numbers" of women, youth or minorities included in committees or meetings. As learning deepened, questions surrounding the power over decision-making and resource allocation emerged, along with a focus on equity and justice. The division between "experts" and the "local community" began to dissolve, replaced by a new paradigm that encourages decision-making and leadership from and within local communities. How can we advance this process? What values, attitudes, skills, tools and methods will allow every individual in a community to contribute to the advancement of civilization?

MOJGAN SAMI is a social development specialist, currently pursuing her PhD. Her research is focused on social determinants of health in urban settings, with a focus on governance. She has worked in numerous countries for the World Bank, World Health Organization and the United Nations.

### **Sahar Sattarzadeh • Consultation for Social Justice: a Global Mosaic of Case Studies on Successes and Challenges**

In this session, the fundamental purpose of consultation will be discussed, and several case studies from around the world will be addressed across individual and institutional levels—both within and outside of the Bahá'í community. Bahá'í characteristics of consultation will be addressed in addition to other theoretical studies that address the challenges and barriers faced in the consultative process, especially within the community. Participants will be asked to role-play, share their personal experiences on the

consultative process, and find ways in which they can personally make use of consultation as a means for promoting social justice.

SAHAR SATTARZADEH has a MA in Social Justice in Intercultural Relations, and she is currently pursuing doctoral studies in International Education Policy at the University of Maryland, College Park. Her scholarly interests include socioeconomic development, international human rights law, educational journalism, and alternative education systems and structures.

### **Dara Gay Shaw, Naomi Rohrer, Cilla Drinkwater, and Bob McIlvride and May Abhar • Affective Factors and the Application of Spiritual Principles in Online English Teaching**

A team of Bahá'í Language Educators who have worked together providing courses for the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education will present a brief overview of research on the affective factors involved in teaching English online, and the results of a survey given to instructors, and students on the same topic. They will also provide practical illustrations of the application of spiritual principles in the delivery of online courses. Participants will be invited to engage in a discussion on the topic.

DARA GAY SHAW, EdD, teaches Master's courses in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) at the Escuela Politécnica del Litoral, in Guayaquil, Ecuador. She has over 25 years experience in her field.

### **Kamal Sinclair • Young Scholars Panel: Scholarship, Practice, and the Five Year Plan**

KAMAL SINCLAIR is a professional performing artist, artistic director, and MBA graduate, adept at balancing the creation and business of art. Her research on entrepreneurship, strategic planning, and business development led to a consulting practice that helps artists and arts organizations develop sustainable economic models for their careers and businesses.

### **Dinesh Singh • Panel on the New Atheism: Addressing Expected Atheist Challenges Against the Bahá'í Perspective on Science and Religion**

The modern-day proponents of atheism, such as Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, and P.Z. Myers, heavily rely on science-based arguments to influence the public in their favour. Given the Bahá'í Faith's position that science and religion are both complementary and essential for humanity's progress, it is clear that major conflicts will arise between atheists and Bahá'ís on these grounds as the latter perspective emerges from obscurity. The purpose of this presentation is to offer practical guidance on how to counter this challenge, based on the Bahá'í Writings and insights on the limits of science.

DINESH SINGH, PhD (University of Alberta) is a postdoctoral researcher in theoretical physics from the University of Regina, specializing in gravitation. His current projects involve data-driven approaches towards quantum gravity theory, as well as astrophysical studies of spin-gravity coupling.

### **Nozomu Sonda • Art of Bahá'í Translation: The Japanese Case**

'Abdu'l-Bahá states that translation is one of the most difficult arts and when translation of the Holy Writings is done, divine fragrance is diffused throughout. The author comes from a non-English speaking

country (Japan) where translation is an absolute necessity when it comes to international communications. Although many of the Bahá'í Sacred Writings are now translated and published in Japanese, believers often complain of difficulty with reading translations. The author explored the art of Bahá'í translation and found both wisdom and practical challenges to overcome. Discussions are made by referring to the case of Japanese translation.

NOZOMU SONDA has an academic background in psychology and English as a Second Language. He currently teaches English at universities in Japan. He also owns a private language school and a translation business. He has been working on translating Bahá'í Writings into Japanese for the last 20 years.

### **John Steere, Michelle Thelen-Steere and Timothy Kraft • The Garden of Being and the Eternal Complementation**

In this panel of varied perspectives we will explore the dual nature of “being” through the multi-dimensional metaphor of the garden. The garden represents an ordered integration of spirit and matter that can be expressed at both personal and collective levels, in being and in nature. In the course of our dialogue, we will seek to reveal how fundamental polarities between the physical and the spiritual are necessary complements, with one reflected in the other. Scripture suggests that the Gardens of the physical and spiritual realms are connected: heaven and earth, two sides of the same coin.

JOHN STEERE is an environmental planner who works as a consultant and who serves on several environmental/community non-profit boards. He is the co-author of “Restoring the Estuary” and speaks widely on green planning. He holds a BA from Harvard and MCP/MLA from UC Berkeley where he resides.

### **Robert Stockman • Social and Community Cohesion and the Growth of the Bahá'í Faith in the United States**

Membership data shows that the American Bahá'í community grew rapidly, 1894-99, 1930-45, and 1969-71 and very slowly 1900-03 and 1914-29. Growth patterns reflect the cohesion of the American Bahá'í community and ups and downs in the cohesion of American society. Times of social disruption (the Great Depression and the late 1960s) saw rapid growth. Such growth was enabled by administrative institutions and community activities (firesides, public meetings), but the latter have lost some of their effectiveness since 1972, thus necessitating a new organizational paradigm: the core activities.

ROBERT STOCKMAN has a doctorate in history of religion in the US from Harvard University. He has authored three books and various articles about Bahá'í history and theology. He is an instructor of religious studies at DePaul University in Chicago and Director of the Wilmette Institute.

### **Peter Terry • A Theological Analysis of the Biography of the Báb**

The presenter will venture a theological analysis of the biography of the Báb, seeking a text-based and reasonable understanding of various events and characteristics of His. Analysis is based on extensive study of the biography and Writings of the Báb, and closely linked to the presenter's annotated translation of the first biography of the Herald of the Bahá'í Faith, recently published by Lulu. This presentation will be linked to Nader Saiedi's book on the Writings of the Báb, and to the Ruhi book on the Twin

Manifestations of God in order to render it useful to Bahá'ís in the present epoch.

PETER TERRY is a freelance writer, scholar and singer, active professionally in the field of education and publishing. He is the author of two recently published books on Proofs of the Prophets and an annotated translation of the earliest biography of the Báb.

**Michelle Thelen-Steere • The Garden of Being and the Eternal Complementation** (see Steere for abstract)

MICHELLE THELEN-STEERE holds a Master's Degree in Clinical Counseling and is a Certified Hypnotherapist. Having worked with clients from 40 different countries, her specializations are in cross-cultural, women's, disability, and abuse issues and she specializes Bahá'í issues in this capacity.

**Iscander Micael Tinto • Text, Author, Reader and the Relationship with the Sacred**

This paper presents the relationship established between the reader, the author of a text, and the text itself, specifically, the Sacred Text, or the Writings divinely revealed by Founders of the world's religions. By referring to the Bahá'í Writings and the theories of literary critics, we will try to understand the relationship developed between the text and the reader and the implications in the individual's daily life. We also try to comprehend how the *intentio auctoris* and the *intentio operis* will influence the reader especially when referring to a sacred text which is completely different from a text written by any individual.

ISCANDER MICAEL TINTO studied psychology, education theories, human resources development and system theories applied to the firm, philosophy, science and human knowledge, and comparative religion. He is a human resources consultant and communications trainer, a member of ABS-Italy and the Board of *Opinioni Bahá'í*, and has published on human resources and Bahá'í Studies.

**Sahand Vafadary • Developing Courses on the Bahá'í Faith for Universities and Colleges** (panel)

SAHAND VAFADARY is a 4th year chemistry student at the University of British Columbia. He developed a course titled "The Bahá'í Faith and Today's World" at the university. This course was the first of its kind at UBC.

**Ismael Velasco • Achieving Reconciliation in a Conflicting World**

This paper explores the dynamics of conflict, philosophical, personal, communal and socio-political, against the backdrop of globalization, with a focus on religion's role to both foster, and overcome it. It argues that behind the Bahá'í principle of unity lies a "logic of reconciliation", by which we continuously seek, and continuously find new capacity to contain paradox, transcend contradiction, and find harmony, amongst ideas, individuals, communities and nations. Far from denying or ignoring conflict, Bahá'í writings push us to face it and find reconciliation. This process is an important contribution to the emergence, from the fractious present, of a sustainable and prosperous world order.

ISMAEL VELASCO has been active in Bahá'í scholarship for over a decade. He graduated from Edinburgh

University in history, has a professional background in social and economic development, specializing in issues of social exclusion, and has published scholarly articles and book chapters on Bahá'í scripture, history, and community development.

### **David Wellman • School of the Earth: Toward a Vibrant Civilization on a Healthy Planet through Practical Education**

The School of the Earth was launched this year in the pristine heart of Alaska. A Bahá'í-inspired school dedicated to carrying “forward an ever advancing civilization,” it follows methodologies derived from Experiential Education, Constructivism, and Inquiry-Based Learning, positioning participants as active learners pursuing answers to their own questions via videoconferences with expert commentators, group consultations, and direct experience with Planet Earth. We describe and evaluate the school's formative stages, examining successes and lessons learned.

DAVE WELLMAN is retired from a career teaching high school sciences in rural Alaska. He now manages a small Bed and Breakfast and does technology consulting. For many years, Dave and his wife, Gay, have presented service camps at their property in Alaska. Dave serves on several non-profit boards.

### **Jenny Wilson • Young Scholars Panel: Scholarship, Practice, and the Five Year Plan**

JENNY WILSON holds a MA from Columbia University and is the Assistant Director of the Foreign Fulbright Program Division at the Institute of International Education. She is responsible for administration of the Foreign Fulbright Program, collaboration with US Department of State's Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, and grant compliance.

### **Jiling Yang • In Search of Martha Root: An American Bahá'í Feminist and Peace Advocate in the Early Twentieth Century**

Martha Root (1872-1939) was an exceptional religious and spiritual activist, a leading figure in the international women's peace movement, and a new organism of a new world in the early twentieth century. This presentation represents Martha Root from three aspects: the early life of Martha Root, her four world teaching trips from 1919 to 1939, with a focus on her peace advocacy, and an investigation into her gender awareness and identity construction by reflecting on *Tahirih the Pure, Iran's Greatest Woman*, Martha Root's only book.

JILING YANG, is a PhD student in History program at Case Western Reserve University. Her Research interest is Bahá'í women in American History in the first half of the twentieth century. Yang has a MA degree in Women's Studies (2005) from Georgia State University.

### **Gloria Yazdani Shahzadeh • A Westerner's Pilgrimage to Iran in the Early 20th Century: Martha Root's Courageous Journey**

The Persian Bahá'í community of the 1930s, strengthened by the brutal persecutions of earlier years and in the face of continuing deprivations, is rejoicing in achievements such as the establishment of Bahá'í schools, Bahá'í-operated hospitals, and Bahá'í-inspired notions of equality amongst the sexes in its land; yet it is the courageous journey of a Western woman through its towns that makes the global nature of the



Bahá'í Faith a tangible reality in the hearts and minds of many in the remote corners of the country.

GLORIA YAZDANI SHAHZADEH is the mother of two and a resident of Toronto, with a background in dance and drama and keen interests in Bahá'í studies – especially in Bábí-Bahá'í history.

**Nazanin Zargarpour (chair), Kamal Sinclair, Ashkan Monfared, Eric Harper, and Jenny Wilson • Young Scholars Panel: Scholarship, Practice, and the Five Year Plan**

Panelists discuss their efforts towards developing coherence in the implementation of scholarship, practice, and the framework for action of the Five Year Plan. Presentations cover a range of fields, including medicine, music, the arts, business, and domestic and international education. Panelists present their experiences, reflections, and learning, using dialogue and other media. Time will be allotted for audience questions and reflections.

NAZANIN ZARGARPOUR, PhD, Executive Director of the Institute at Indian Hill, applied research center of the School of Educational Studies, Claremont Graduate University, integrates scholarship and best practices toward the continuous advancement of education systems. Her work is informed by Bahá'í studies and service, field experience, and her award-winning doctoral research.

*Artists Performing*

BADI ([www.myspace.com/badimusic](http://www.myspace.com/badimusic)) In a time when mainstream Hip-Hop and R&B have lost their direction, Badi has created a new compass by combining love of self, recognition of the oneness of humanity, love of God, and using the struggles in life as stepping stones. His debut album "The

Departure" (Next Movement Records), is receiving high praise from industry veterans as it unapologetically addresses the issues and struggles facing humanity.

ERIC DOZIER ([www.myspace.com/ericdozier](http://www.myspace.com/ericdozier)) fuses African-American gospel and traditional spirituals with world rhythms into music that the New York Times called "rousing". Eric's enthusiasm for gospel and blues was cultivated from an early age and he recognized gospel's potential to connect diverse peoples. He has a Public Policy Studies degree from Duke University, a Masters in Theological Studies from Duke Divinity School and completed post-graduate studies at the Landegg Academy's World Order Studies Program. His music illustrates his passion for social justice, equality, and unity. He recently released a devotional CD with JB Eckl (see below).

JB ECKL ([www.jbeckl.com](http://www.jbeckl.com)) is a musician and producer originally from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. He fell in love with music and the Bahá'í Faith as a youth, travelled extensively in Latin America, and ended up in Los Angeles where had the fortune to work with some of his greatest heroes, including WAR, Carlos Santana, Buena Vista Social Club. He has recently spent time in Mexico, Victoria, and Portland, recorded a devotional CD (Badasht Vol. 1 - While the City Sleeps 1) and is finishing his own record which was created during those travels.

TARA ELLIS ([www.myspace.com/taraellis](http://www.myspace.com/taraellis)), Los Angeles based singer-songwriter, has worked on projects ranging from commercially available to independent. From wispy to raw, her powerful, dynamic vocals mold to genres from pop-rock to R&B to devotional. She is working on a self produced Mixtape, combining old school Hip Hop lyrics, acoustic guitar, 808, hard snares and pop melodies, and will release an edgy pop rock album incorporating programmed drums and soulful, true to self, lyrics. She has recently released a devotional CD under the Crimson Group label.

KATY EVOGHLI ([www.katymusic.net](http://www.katymusic.net)) was born into a musical family. Her love for singing became apparent as they moved from Azerbaijan to Shiraz to Tehran. Pursuing her studies took her to Spain, where her first public performance was at the Casa de Cultura de Girona. She has recorded several albums in both Spanish and Persian. Her current CD "Atr-e Noor" (fragrance of the light) is a combination of soft and vital melodies in both languages.

Ruth Forman ([www.myspace.com/RuthForman](http://www.myspace.com/RuthForman)) is a highly acclaimed writer and poet, and a former teacher in the Poetry for the People program, UC Berkeley. Her first book, *We Are The Young Magicians* (Beacon Press, 1993), won the Barnard New Women Poets Prize, and a listing by the American Library Association as a 2001 Popular Paperback for Young Adults. QBR The Black Book Review described her as a writer who "not only upholds the traditions of the 'sistapoets' in whose steps [she] follows ... but also boldly blazes brand new trails."

RED GRAMMAR ([www.redgrammer.com](http://www.redgrammer.com)) is one of the premier entertainers of children and families in America. Described by Parent's Magazine as 'the best voice in children's music' Red is recognized as having set the gold standard for writing and performing music that playfully brings out the best in all of us. His award-winning recordings, numerous television appearances, unforgettable live concerts, Parent's Choice award-winning DVD, and Grammy nominated CD, "Bebop Your Best!...Music To Build Character By", have won him a place in millions of hearts.

FERRABY LIONHEART wants to be like Gene Wilder.  
He wants people to care about the planet.  
He wants people to care about other people.  
He wants a garden, and some chickens.

His 8th grade Algebra tutor had a guitar.  
Ferraby started making 4-track recordings when he was 18.  
He is pretty smart.  
But not that smart.  
He served pizzas for a little while.  
Ferraby had a rock band, but after a few years he got sick of it.  
He'd rather sing softer.  
([www.myspace.com/ferrabylionheart](http://www.myspace.com/ferrabylionheart))

JON REZIN ([www.smallroomproductions.com](http://www.smallroomproductions.com) or [www.nextmovementrecords.com](http://www.nextmovementrecords.com)) is a music producer, sound engineer, and musician. His passion for playing jazz turned into an obsession with recording and music production. In 1997, he pursued his craft to New York, working with top names in the industry in various genres. His love of the Faith encouraged him to work on numerous Bahá'í albums. He resides in Los Angeles with his wife and greatest supporter, Auntieclare. Recent projects include producing for American Idol and promoting Next Movement Records to enable exceptional Bahá'í musicians to share their message with the masses.

KELLY SNOOK ([kellysnook.blogspot.com](http://kellysnook.blogspot.com)) is a Washington DC based Producer, Musician and Rocket Scientist working for NASA. Her talents are diverse and the eclectic sense of style she brings to each production is engaging. She has worked on numerous projects Bahá'í and secular. She is currently working on a new album with Devon Gundry as well as her own album.

## **Conference Organization**

*Conference Task Force* Lisa Dufraimont, Mehrzad Khorsandi, Mehran Kiai, Kim Naqvi, Parvin Rowhani  
*Arts Program* Jon Rezin  
*Children's and Junior Youth Program* Darlene Newcomb, Atousa Monjazez  
*Conference Coordinator* Parvin Rowhani  
*Devotions* Carolyn Reynolds

*Hospitality* Fahimeh Peifer  
*Logistics* Larry Peifer  
*Photography* Dariush Nothaft  
*Program* Lisa Dufraimont, Kim Naqvi  
*Public Relations/Publicity* Jane Senour, Rezy Taheri  
*Registration* Nilufar Gordon, Hengameh Motaghed  
*Security* Russ Newcomb  
*Ushers* Eamon Daroogar  
*Stage Manager* Chris Weixelman  
*Technical Director* Geoff Cohen  
*Volunteers* Tandis Arjmand

The ABS Executive Committee extends its deep appreciation to all those who have assisted in the preparation and running of this conference. Our heartfelt thanks are also due to the many volunteers who contributed their service and have worked so hard to make this conference a success.

**With special thanks to the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of San Diego**