



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **MDC Live Arts Receives Prestigious Doris Duke Award**

#### ***Organization Will Launch Season-long Initiative Dedicated To The Muslim World***

**Miami, March, 31, 2017 – Miami Dade College's (MDC) MDC Live Arts** was one of only eleven organizations nationwide to be awarded through the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Arts (DDFIA)'s ***Building Bridges 2016-2017 Grants Program***, which sought arts- and culture-based projects that align with their goals to advance relationships, increase understanding and reduce bias between Muslim and non-Muslim communities nationwide.

MDC Live Arts will receive \$160,000 for **Ojalá/Inshallah: Wishes from the Muslim World**, a season-long initiative designed to challenge widespread assumptions concerning contemporary Muslim identity. Its 2017-2018 season will be dedicated to the presentation of Muslim and MENA artists through performances, residencies, campus-based conversations, and community workshops. The programs will span music, dance, theater, spoken word and multimedia, and will take place all around Miami. **The season line up will be announced in August 2017.**

The Spanish word "ojalá" means "I wish" or "I hope so" and derives its meaning from the Arabic phrase "insha'Allah" or "God willing." The word is a reminder of the Moorish impact on the Spanish language and Hispanic identity shared by 65% of greater Miami's 5.5 million residents. The word also represents the cross-cultural exchange that is central to the project, a process of particular relevance to Miami with its uniquely multicultural community.

"We are truly grateful to the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Arts for its support, allowing us to create programming that promotes understanding and encourages meaningful intercultural connections. For too many people, mass media representations are the principal influencers of their understandings of the Muslim world. With this project, we aim to provide alternative representations, illuminating the breadth of diversity present in the Muslim world while creating safe spaces where our community can explore commonalities that transcend differences." said **Kathryn Garcia**, executive director of MDC Live Arts.

It is readily apparent that the need for such work is more urgent than ever before: a February 2017 report from the Southern Poverty Law Center cites a 197 percent surge in anti-Muslim hate groups in 2016.

"Prejudice and division had a banner year in 2016, but this has only furthered the resolve and ambition of these organizations to advance this critical undertaking to heal our communities," said **Zeyba Rahman**, senior program officer of DDFIA's Building Bridges Program. "This year's Building Bridges grantees have proposed inventive arts-based solutions to strengthen the social fabric between American Muslims and non-Muslims for the benefit of our nation. Art and culture are among the most powerful forces to remind us that we are more alike than different."

A panel of five subject expert reviewers recommended these projects for support over a period of one to three years. Other winners include: **Bang on a Can** (Brooklyn, NY); **Boston Center for the Arts** in Boston, Mass.; **Center for Asian American Media** (CAAM) in San Francisco, Calif.; **Children's Theatre Company** (CTC) in Minneapolis, Minn.; **Duke Performances** at Duke University in Durham, N.C.; **Fells Point Creative Alliance** in Baltimore, Md.; **Lincoln Center Theater** (LCT) in New York, N.Y.; **Museum of Durham History** in Durham, N.C.; **Proteus Fund** in Amherst, Mass.; and **Young Writers Project** in Burlington, Vt.

#### **About the Building Bridges Program**

The Building Bridges Program is the grant-making arm of the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art (DDFIA), which is an extension of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (DDCF). Based in New York, the program supports national efforts to advance relationships, increase understanding, and reduce bias

between Muslim and non-Muslim communities. For more information, please visit [www.ddcf.org/what-we-fund/building-bridges](http://www.ddcf.org/what-we-fund/building-bridges).

### **About the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation**

The mission of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation is to improve the quality of people's lives through grants supporting the performing arts, environmental conservation, medical research and child well-being, and through preservation of the cultural and environmental legacy of Doris Duke's properties. For more information, please visit [www.ddcf.org](http://www.ddcf.org).

### **About MDC Live Arts**

MDC Live Arts is Miami's most eclectic performing arts series. Created in 1990 as Cultura del Lobo, MDC Live Arts has a celebrated history of bringing extraordinary national and international performing artists to Miami. The annual series presents today's most exciting artists and designs meaningful engagement between these artists, the students of MDC, and the greater community. MDC Live Arts seeks artists from across the globe who push boundaries and honor traditions relevant to Miami's diverse community, and aims to offer audiences opportunities to discover new ideas, perspectives and forms of expression. For more information, please visit [www.mdclivearts.org](http://www.mdclivearts.org).

*The Programs of MDC Live Arts are made possible with the generous support of: Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council; the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners; the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture; the National Endowment for the Arts; the City of Miami Beach Department of Tourism and Cultural Development, Office of Cultural Affairs; the Miami Beach Mayor and City Commissioners; Miami Dade County Cultural Passport in partnership with Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, and the Foundation for New Education Initiative; the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, with lead funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, with additional support from the National Endowment for the Arts; and National Performance Network (NPN) Creation Fund. MDC Live Arts is a Partner of the National Performance Network (NPN). Major NPN contributors include the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Ford Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts.*

**To learn more about MDC Live Arts**, please call 305-237-3010, or visit [mdclivearts.org](http://mdclivearts.org).

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