



مركز مساواة
لحقوق المواطنين
العرب في إسرائيل
(ج.م.)

מרכז מוסאווה
לזכויות האזרחים
הערבים בישראל
(ל.י.ר.)

Mossawa Center
The Advocacy
Center for Arab
Citizens of Israel

The Mossawa Center presents:

Palestinian Culture Month March 2012



During the month of March, the Mossawa Center, in cooperation with our partners, hosted over a dozen cultural events in celebration of Palestinian Culture Day on March 13th, a day of commemoration for Mahmoud Darwish (13 March 1941 - 9 August 2008). During his life, the poet, political activist, and author Mahmoud Darwish came to represent Palestinian culture and identity. His birthday, March 13th, has officially been recognized by the Palestinian Authority as Palestinian Culture Day.

The following are summaries of 5 main events during this month.



Opening Event to Pay Tribute to Mahmoud Darwish

Date: March 13, Palestinian Culture Day and Mahmoud Darwish's birthday

Location: Mahmoud Darwish Center in Ramallah, Occupied Palestinian Territories

Attendance: Approximately 400 people including Salam Fayad, Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority (PA), Yasser Abid Rabu, Director of the Mahmoud Darwish Cultural Center, Laila Ghanam, Governor of Ramallah and Janet Michayel, Mayor of Ramallah

Overview: The event marked the opening of the Mahmoud Darwish Cultural Center in Ramallah. The Center was built to commemorate Mahmoud Darwish's life, and thus to celebrate the Palestinian culture that he brought to the forefront in his writings and poems. The new center includes the Mahmoud Darwish gardens, theater, lecture hall, and museum; all fashioned around the tomb of the deceased historical figure. The opening was joyful, proud, and for some, a reflective experience. Flowers were placed on his tomb and lectures commenced. Darwish's poetry was inscribed on the walls of the museum. Inside the museum, Darwish's past belongings, papers of both political and poetic nature, as well as his office, are on display. The event was hosted by the PA Ministry of Culture.

"Dialogue" Gallery Opening

Date: March 23

Location: Mahmoud Darwish Cultural Center in Nazareth, Israel

Attendance: Approximately 200 people including Ramez Jaraisi, Mayor of Nazareth, Jafar Farah, Director of the Mossawa Center, and Bénédicte Frankinet, Ambassador of Belgium

Overview: Guests were given the opportunity to walk through a gallery comprised of paintings from Palestinian artists from the Galilee and the Occupied Golan Heights. Later on, there was a presentation that included speeches from Jafar Farah, Ramez Jaraisi, and Orayb Zoabi, a representative of the Mahmoud Darwish Cultural Center in Nazareth. Flowers were distributed to all the artists as they were recognized by the audience. This event was hosted by the Mossawa Center, in conjunction with the Nazareth Municipality, the Mahmoud Darwish Cultural Center in Nazareth, Anat for Art and Culture and Alwan.



Theater production of “Suhmata”

Date: March 24

Location: The Cultural Center in Kufar Qara, Israel

Attendance: Approximately 200 people including actors Misra Masri and Lotif N'wiaser, and Nazih Massarwi, the Mayor of Kufar Qara

Overview: The event opened with the delivery of speeches about Land Day, and the importance of supporting the continuation of Palestinian cultural events. A youth participant recited a series of Mahmoud Darwish's poems from memory. This was followed by an excellent and powerful theatrical performance of “Suhmata.” The play tells the story of a grandfather and his grandson who visit the location where their family's village once stood before it was destroyed in 1948. The play mixes the past with the present. In the end, the grandson obtains a newfound respect for his grandfather and his family's history. The grandfather grows to accept his grandson's Jewish girlfriend in efforts to close a chapter of his past and embrace the realities of the future. This event was hosted by the Mossawa Center, in conjunction with the Kufar Qara Local Council and Community Center.



Land Day Commemoration in Taybeh: Art Exhibit Entitled, “Land, People and Freedom”

Date: March 29

Location: Othman Abu Ras Club in Taybeh, Israel

Attendance: Approximately 100 people including Areen Abdi and Salman Natour, Coordinators of the Culture Project at the Mossawa Center, Abed Abdi, artist, and Shadi Khalilye, and Tal Ben Zvi, the curators of the exhibition.

Overview: The event displayed an exhibition of photographs that chronologically documented the events during and following the Land Day incident on March 30, 1976. During the program, there were a series of lectures about Land Day and Palestinian culture. There was also a performance of a short comedic skit, in which a girl dressed as an older Palestinian man expressed his experiences in the Syrian revolution (in the 1920s) through a dialogue with his father. This was followed by a musical performance with traditional Arabic music. This event was hosted by the Mossawa Center, in conjunction with the Tishreen Culture Reviving Association



Land Day Commemoration in Haifa: Theater Performance of “Qamar ala Bab El Sham”

Date: March 31

Location: El-Midan Theater in Haifa, Israel

Attendance: Approximately 180 people

Overview: The play featured two actors: two friends who were recently released from a twenty-year prison sentence in Israel. The men were political prisoners originally from Damascus, Syria. The story covers their friendship, their hardships, their fears, and their journey of remembering Syria, and figuring out how to return. The story is bittersweet and ends in a difficult way that reveals the challenges and tragedy of their situation.

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