



Gandhi



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Human Rights Art Festival

Silver Spring, MD

Anti-Violence Against Women Conference

City Place Mall Theater I

Saturday, April 24, 2010, 10 AM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 16, 2010

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As part of the Amnesty International Human Rights Art Festival, eight women, most of whom have personal experiences of being victims of violence against women, will gather to tell their stories. Each will discuss how they have transformed the pain of their experience into the impetus for positive change. Sadly, this issue is at epidemic proportions: one of every six American women will have been the victims of an attempted or completed rape in their lifetime.

Participants include:

Robina Niaz (Moderator): Founder of Turning Point for Women ([/www.turningpoint-ny.org](http://www.turningpoint-ny.org)) Born and raised in Pakistan, Robina migrated to the United States in 1990. In December 2004, she founded Turning Point for Women and Families and serves as its Executive Director. In September 2009, Robina was named a CNN Hero and in November 2009 she was featured as one of the 500 Most Influential Muslims by the Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Center and Georgetown University.

Angela Rose: Founder of PAVE (www.pavingtheway.net) At the age of 17, Angela Rose was abducted at knifepoint outside a suburban shopping mall and assaulted by a repeat sex-offender who was on parole for murder. After being released by her attacker, she then suffered at the hands of authorities who subjected her to blame and additional victimization. Angela turned her anger into activism and refused to be a victim. Angela's work has been recognized by CNN, NBC's *Today Show*, *Time* magazine, *The Montel Williams Show*, *The John Walsh Show*, *America's Most Wanted*, *CosmoGirl* magazine, *Girl's Life* magazine, and newspapers across the country.

Michelle Johnson Major: Founder of Be A Voice Arts (www.beavoicearts.com): In August 2008, Michelle Major's husband tried to murder her in an act of domestic violence. Before strangling her to unconsciousness, he took a butcher knife and slashed ninety-four of her paintings destroying twelve years of artistic work. In January 2009, she built Be A Voice Arts and contacted domestic violence advocates.. She is currently the master artist for an International Domestic Violence Mural.

Lyn Twyman: Founder of the Courage Network (www.couragenetwork.com) A domestic violence survivor and advocate, she grew up watching the physical, emotional and psychological abuse in the life of her parents that transferred to her, in the form of child abuse early on. Inspired by the need to understand the services available to survivors after seeing the same cycle being repeated in her family as an adult, she found a way to bring resources together and show that there is support for victims and how to find it.

Other participants:

- Maria Jose Ugalde Alcazar, Singer/Songwriter (www.myspace.com/lobalunaya)
- Angelica Harris, Author (www.AngelicaHarris.com)
- Gabrielle Senza, Installation Artist (www.gabriellesenza.com/walk-unafraid/)
- Nasrin Zoghbia, Founder, International Domestic Violence Memorial (www.dvmemorial.com)

The Amnesty International Human Rights Art Festival comprises over 400 artists and advocates involved in more than 200 events located at 40 venues. **All of the art and performances will underscore the artists' perspectives on current human rights concerns. *All are free and open to the public.***

In addition to this conference, the springtime festival will include film, theater, dance, music, poetry, visual art, digital art, a sculpture garden, dozens of workshops, book readings, performance art, flash-mob dance, Yoga and activities for children.

The complete schedule of events can be found at: www.humanrightsartfestival.com.

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