



Non-profit
Film Festival

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

WOMEN'S VOICES NOW PRESENTS:
Women's Voices from the Muslim World: A Short-Film Festival
Opening Night – Hosted by author Christina Asquith, Honors “Women Warriors” – Shoreh Agdashloo, Lara Logan, Neda Agha-Soltan and Roxana Saberi –
Charity Auction featuring the work of Shepard Fairey
Los Angeles Film School
March 17-19, 2011 in Hollywood, California

March 4, 2011, Hollywood, CA. In a decisive move to honor women whose courage and heroism have brought attention to the plight of women in Muslim-majority countries, New York based non-profit **Women's Voices Now** will honor **Shoreh Agdashloo** and journalist **Lara Logan** and the Egyptian women who saved her, Iranian political martyr **Neda Agha-Soltan** and author and former political prisoner in Iran - **Roxana Saberi** at the opening night celebration of **Women's Voices from the Muslim World: A Short-Film Festival**. *“We were so moved by the rescue of journalist Lara Logan by the Egyptian women and soldiers that we had to honor her and those brave women who rescued her,”* stated **WVN Executive Director Catinca Tabacaru** in a recent interview, *“These good Samaritans responded to a woman in danger without thinking about her ethnicity or religious affiliation. This kind of strength and humanity is what we are drawing the world's attention to through our collection of films. Through the media, we aspire to connect women of all societies under the common rights of freedom from abuse and injustice.”*

Shoreh Agdashloo: First recognized for her stellar Oscar nominated performance in **HOUSE OF SAND AND FOG**, Ms. Agdashloo has repeatedly chosen roles that have shown the plight and triumph of Muslim women. In 2009 she won an Emmy for HBO's miniseries **HOUSE OF SADDAM** and the Satellite award for **THE STONING OF SORAYA M**. Her brilliant narration of the documentary **FOR NEDA** for HBO in 2010 was just a foreshadowing of her continuing efforts to promote social change through education.

Christina Asquith (Host/Guest Speaker) - An award-winning journalist for over 14 years, Christina has written for **The New York Times**, **The Economist**, **The Christian Science Monitor**, **The Guardian** and was a staff writer at **The Philadelphia Inquirer**. Her book, **“Sisters in War: Love, Survival and Family in the New Iraq”** is based off of the 18 months she lived in and reported from Baghdad, Iraq.

Lara Logan (Honoree) – In the aftermath of the resignation of Hosni Mubarak on February 11, 2011 the American journalist lost her crew in the frenzy and was immediately swarmed by a hostile crowd that jostled her. She suffered what CBS initially called a "brutal and sustained sexual assault and beating," from which she was eventually rescued by a group of Egyptian women and soldiers. According to *The Sunday Times of London* attackers used fists and flag poles against the **CBS News Chief Correspondent**, while wounds that remained hours later were the result of "aggressive pinching." Logan is reportedly anxious to return to her post at **60 Minutes**.

Neda Agha-Soltan (Honoree) – Iranian icon, Neda Agha-Soltan was a 26-year-old Iranian

woman who was shot to death on a Tehran street in the unrest that followed the country's disputed election in June 2009. Soltan was described as an apolitical girl-next-door who loved traveling to Turkey where her hair did not have to be covered in public. Soltan became an instant symbol of the anti-government movement when a shocking video of her death was shared on social networking sites. The resulting **HBO documentary** narrated by **Shoreh Aghdashloo** touched audiences around the world and Soltan became an international symbol of freedom and peace.

Roxana Saberi (Honoree/Guest Speaker) - Roxana Saberi moved to Iran in 2003 to work as the Iran correspondent for the U.S.-based Feature Story News. She filed reports for organizations such as NPR, BBC, ABC Radio and Fox News and was working on a book about Iranian society when she was arrested on January 31, 2009. Saberi was later charged and sentenced to eight years in prison on a trumped-up charge of espionage. In May 2009, under international pressure, an Iranian court overturned the sentence, and she was released. Since her release, Saberi has joined others in bringing attention to the situation of human rights in Iran. Saberi has published in **The Washington Post**, **Wall Street Journal**, and **Chicago Tribune**; and been interviewed on news programs of organizations such as **FOX News, ABC, NBC, CBS, BBC, CNN, PRI, NPR**, and **C-SPAN**, as well as shows such as **The Daily Show with Jon Stewart**.

About the Film Festival: The Film Festival, pieces of which have been screened at the **New York University, American University, University of Michigan, Dearborn** and **Simmons College** is quickly garnering attention because of the timely relevance of its critical content to world affairs. *"By providing on-line access to a collection of relevant stories told by women of all faiths and backgrounds living in Muslim-majority countries, we are filling a void in today's available information,"* says WVN Director of Fundraising Miriam Wakim. *"These are the exact voices that are left out of traditional news sources,"* continues Wakim, *"no complete representation is possible without the participation of the exact people living that life."* In addition to themed film programs, the Festival includes exciting round-table discussions, book signings hosted by prominent authors, performance art pieces speaking to the issues addressed by the Festival and monitors playing the Festival's experimental films.

- **Shepard Fairey:** This Los Angeles-based street artist first gained attention for the renowned **Obey Giant** stencil to screen prints of political revolutionaries and rock stars. Fairey is the creative genius behind the red, white, and blue Obama campaign image that swept the globe during the Obama campaign. He has donated two limited edition, numbered prints. (photos available)
- **Charity Auction:** Pieces will be auctioned from **Shepard Fairey, Rachel Monosov, Carly Ivan Garcia** and **Yapci Ramos**.
- **Master Perfumer:** Celebrated Master Perfumer and Quantum Alchemist **Libby Patterson** from **LPO** will be showcasing scent journeys featuring flights of perfumes from the "Cradle of Civilization Collection" - Night Blooming Jasmines and Roses from the Desert.

The Festival also includes video booths streaming live messages from the American audience, as well as a Closing Night Gala.

For the complete schedule of films and events please log on to: <http://womensvoicesnow.org/events>

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