



# SYRIA MON AMOUR: Food, Home, and Healing

What Do the Women Say? 2017  
Celebrating International Women's Day



## ORDER OF EVENTS

### WELCOME

Torange Yeghiazarian, Founding Artistic Director



### PERFORMANCE

**An excerpt from *Oh My Sweet Land***

by Amir Nizar Zuabi  
directed by Torange Yeghiazarian  
featuring Nora el Samahy



### PERFORMANCE

**Vocalist Dina Zarif and harpist Amelia Romano perform three songs.**

*Farrucca*: A song about healing, compassion, and the importance of living in the present

*Gozaraan*: A song about home and the immigrant experience of losing everything

*Two Black Eyes*: A song about how beauty can be found even in times of trouble



### DOCUMENTARY

**An excerpt from *We Are Not Princesses***

by Bridgette Auger and Itab Azzam



### CONVERSATION

Reem Assil (chef, Reem's), Nora el Samahy,  
Sara Maamouri (editor, *We Are Not Princesses*), Dina Zarif with Torange Yeghiazarian



**Wednesday, March 8, 2017, at 8pm**

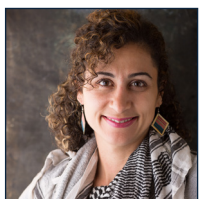
Brava Theater Center, San Francisco

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**BRAVA**  
FOR WOMEN IN THE ARTS

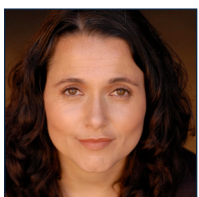
Women  
**ARTS**  
SUPPORT WOMEN ARTISTS NOW

## WHO'S WHO



**Reem Assil** founded Reem's with a passion for the flavors of Arab street-corner bakeries and the vibrant communities around them. Growing up in a Palestinian-Syrian household, Reem was surrounded by the aromas and tastes of food from the homeland and the connections they evoked of her heritage, family, and community. Before dedicating

herself to a culinary career, Reem worked for a decade as a community and labor organizer. In 2010, she traveled to Syria and Lebanon, and there, in a bakery where flatbreads were flying through the air, her vision for Reem's was born to create the experience of Arab hospitality through the street corner bakery experience. She came back and immediately enrolled herself in a baking and pastry program and has since then worked with the Bay Area's esteemed cooperative bakery Arizmendi Bakery & Pizzeria, Grace Street Catering, Local Flavors, and several local chefs.



**Nora el Samahy's** professional acting career began in 1998 as a Fairy in San Francisco Shakespeare Festival's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. She then went on to work with Campo Santo, Golden Thread Productions, Alter Theater, Aurora Theatre, Magic Theatre, foolsFURY, Traveling Jewish Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre,

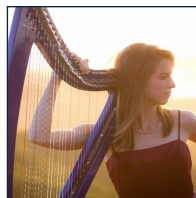
Exit Theater, Theatre Rhinoceros, Woman's Will, Shotgun Players, African American Shakespeare Company, among others. In 2013, Nora founded a performance company called Affinity Project with Atosa Babao, Beatrice Basso, and Emily Hoffman. Nora is a Pilates teacher and co-owner of studio 74 pilates with business partner Jennifer Moulton. She received her BA in psychology from Wellesley College. Love and thanks to Patrick and Ziyad.



**Sara Maamouri** is a documentary filmmaker and editor who has explored a diverse range of topics for over 14 years. Her work has touched on social, educational and political issues, from a teacher and students performing under extraordinary circumstances (*The Music's Gonna Get You Through*, 2010) and former enemies bound together through loss

and discovery (*In This Waiting*, 2011) to rebuilding a life in a former war zone (*Amal's Garden*, 2012). She co-produced and edited *A Revolution in Four Seasons*, which premiered at Hot Docs 2016 and was an honorable mention at Margaret Mead Film Festival 2016. She edited *Twice Upon a Time*, which premiered at Edinburgh Film Festival and won Best Documentary at the Lebanese Film Festival. She's currently editing *The*

*Judge*, the story of the first female Shari'a judge in Palestine directed by Erika Cohn, and *We Are Not Princesses* about Syrian refugee women in Beirut working on a production of Sophocles's *Antigone* directed by Bridgette Auger. A multi-lingual Tunisian educated in New York and California, Sara brings international sensitivity to her editing, production and story development, while building transmedia narratives to enhance and further engage a constantly evolving audience base.



A captivating harpist and songwriter, **Amelia Romano** brings unexpected colors to her playing. Creating her own style by blending dynamic rhythms and raw vocals, she produces an intimate and energizing experience that defies tradition. Her latest album titled "New Perspectives" features fiery and dynamic compositions, a tango style

Mexican Bolero, Contemporary Flamenco Music, Venezuelan Joropo, and a touch of American Blues. These compositions reflect lyrics of her personal stories of loss and love that leaves the listener clamoring for more.



**Dina Zarif** is a performer and vocalist. She has performed at many venues including SF International Arts Festival and SF Palace of Fine Arts (with La Tania Baile Flamenco). She also made costumes and performed Princess Roudabeh in the shadow play *Feathers of Fire* at Brooklyn Academy of Music, NY Metropolitan Museum, and Harvard. She

recently performed in a chamber opera *The Passion of Leyla* at San Jose Stage, *Leyla & Majnun* for Golden Thread Productions and Cal Performances at BAMPFA, and the role of Dancer/Singer in Bahram Beyzaie's *Tarabnameh*, a Persian traditional musical for Stanford Iranian Studies. Dina holds an MA in Landscape Architecture from University Of Tehran.

Started in 1909 in the U.S., **International Women's Day** (March 8) is an occasion marked by women's groups around the world. This date is also commemorated at the United Nations and is designated in many countries as a national holiday. When women on all continents, often divided by national boundaries and by ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic and political differences, come together to celebrate their Day, they can look back to a tradition that represents at least nine decades of struggle for equality, justice, peace and development.

**SWAN Day (Support Women Artists Now)** is an international holiday designed to showcase the power and diversity of women's creativity.



Founded in 1996, **Golden Thread Productions** is the first American theatre company focused on the Middle East. Golden Thread produces passionate and provocative plays from and about the Middle East that celebrate the multiplicity of its perspectives and identities. Golden Thread is a developmental catalyst and vibrant artistic home to artists at various stages of their career. Golden Thread brings the Middle East to the American stage, creating treasured cultural experiences for audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Farah Jahan Siddiqui Bullara (*President*), Artin Der Minassians (*Treasurer*), John Atwood (*Secretary*), Monica Cappuccini, Nora el Samahy, Bob Miller, Torange Yeghiazarian

### STAFF

Torange Yeghiazarian (*Founding Artistic Director*), Michelle Mulholland (*Managing Director*), Evren Odcikin (*Director of Marketing and New Plays*), Navid G. Maghami (*Art Director*)