

THE BRIDGE

***An East-West Traveling Art Exhibition launched in Paris, France
through the World Interfaith Harmony Week 2015***

*An unparalleled gathering of premier and emerging artists
focusing on what they hold in common as Muslims, Christians and Jews*

Introductory Brief

The Bridge is an interfaith East-West traveling exhibition organized and curated by [CARAVAN](#) (an interreligious peace-building arts NGO) that opened in Paris, France during the World Interfaith Harmony Week 2015. The exhibition was an immediate interfaith response by CARAVAN to the terrorist attacks in Paris of 7 January 2015 (the Charlie Hebdo and the Jewish grocery store shootings). It was critical that a high profile “creative demonstration of dialogue” be established. *The Bridge* was an exhibition put together that showcases the work of 47 premier and emerging Arab, Persian and Jewish visual artists (47 paintings) from Muslim, Christian Jewish religious backgrounds, around the theme of what “bridges” us to each other.

The slogan for *The Bridge* exhibition, taken from the "Je suis..." theme (i.e. "Je suis Charlie") in Paris following the Charlie Hebdo tragedy, was "[Je suis Le Pont](#)" (I am the bridge), giving a proactive message to the exhibition and a challenge to those who see it.... i.e. "be a bridge".

"I am the Bridge" logo



The Bridge exhibition opened on February 2, 2015 to commemorate the World Interfaith Harmony Week in Paris, France at the historic [Church of Saint-Germain-des-Prés](#), in the Latin Quarter, the oldest church in Paris. The exhibition was held in the ancient Chapel of St. Symphorian, which was used as an armory during the French Revolution.



Over 10,000 people attended the exhibition over the course of 3½ weeks from all over the world. The official opening program and reception was attended by religious, diplomatic, political and art-world dignitaries. The opening address was given by the Assistant Director-General of UNESCO, Mr. Eric Flat. *The Bridge* become a urgently needed “Encounter Point” helping to change negative stereotypes and alleviate fears toward encouraging intercultural and inter-religious friendships.



Installation of The Bridge exhibition



Viewers of The Bridge exhibition



100's of daily viewers of The Bridge Exhibition



Rev. Paul-Gordon Chandler with Sufi leader Abdel Hayy



Opening Ceremony with Religious Leaders



Assistant Director-General of UNESCO, Eric Falt, giving an address

Having been launched through the catalyst of the World Interfaith Harmony Week initiative in Paris, France, *The Bridge* exhibition will now travel on to Egypt, then to other parts of Europe (London's Trafalgar Square, Rome's The Vatican, Metz, Barcelona, etc) followed by throughout United States for an 18-month period and will be exhibited in a variety of venues (cathedrals, sacred spaces, governmental headquarters, museums, galleries, interfaith centers, etc) carrying with it the message of intercultural and inter-religious understanding and harmony around the world.

Strategic Need for *The Bridge* exhibition

Following the tragic killings in Paris on 7 January, there was a quickly growing concern that hate crimes against Muslims and Jewish people might increase. In the midst of the increasing chasm of discord and misunderstanding that exists between the Middle East and the West, and between Christians, Muslims and Jews, there was an immediate call for a new kind of movement: not of belief, or of religious unity, but one that builds on what we hold in common.

The overall goal of *The Bridge*, a strategic intercultural and interfaith visual art exhibition, is to create better understanding and build genuine relationships between individuals of different faith and cultural backgrounds. This dynamic art exhibition is an expression by a group of noted visual artists from different religious backgrounds that illustrates their ideas of how to build bridges between us all.

As *The Bridge* exhibition travels from Paris, to Egypt and then in Europe and throughout the USA, it takes with it a fundamental message of intercultural and inter-religious harmony and provides a link not only within communities but also between communities. *The Bridge* serves as a common starting point on which to build, toward seeing the development of a community that inherently respects and honors cultural and religious diversity, living and working together in harmony.

Art is not only a voice for expression, but also a means of healing. The arts have always been one of the most powerful ways to bring transformation and progress in society. *The Bridge* serves as a catalyst for diverse peoples to come together, to provide understanding and create deeper respect for each other. It also is a means to encourage new friendships to be made across religions and cultures. As the early 20th century Lebanese artist and writer, Kahlil Gibran, who profoundly bridged East and West, beautifully said: "Your neighbor is your other self dwelling behind a wall. In understanding, all walls shall fall down."

The Bridge is to be a vehicle that stimulates the development of practical models of collaboration and co-existence, toward seeing effective, tangible, and creative examples of those from Christian, Muslim and Jewish backgrounds living and working peacefully together in harmony in their respective societies to jointly enhance their communities.

The spirit of *The Bridge* resonates with the further words of Kahlil Gibran: "I love you when you bow in your mosque, kneel in your temple, pray in your church. For you and I are [children] of one religion, and it is the Spirit."

Overview

The Bridge exhibition involves 47 noted Arab, Persian and Jewish visual artists of Muslim, Christian and Jewish faith backgrounds. As a multi-religious group, the artists through *The Bridge* are making the case for using that which we have in common as the foundation for the future of our world.

In the exhibition, each artist submitted one original work of art on canvas, wood or paper (done specifically for the exhibition) addressing the theme on a set size (60x80 / 80x60cm). Each piece has with it an artist's statement about their respective piece.

In Paris, the visitors of the exhibition came from all over the world, and from Christian, Muslim and Jewish faith communities. The exhibition was attended, as mentioned above, by over 10,000 people from all segments of society. Serving as a focus for inter-religious dialogue, the *The Bridge* provided a starting point for discussion and interaction among all age groups. It served as well as a creative introduce children to cultural diversity and inter-religious understanding and the need for peace. Classes of school age children used the exhibition to teach tolerance and interreligious understanding.

Mr. Eric Falt, Assistant Director-General of UNESCO, at the official opening of *The Bridge* said the following words:

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This artistic event illustrates in an emblematic way the link between intercultural dialogue and creativity which is precisely at the heart of UNESCO's work. This event reminds us of our founding values and our *raison d'être*: "*since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed*".

I would like to commend CARAVAN for this creative initiative, *The Bridge*, that made it possible for us to witness this dialogue. Allow me to reiterate my sincere thanks to the artists and congratulations to the organizers of this exhibition.

Many hundreds of visitors to the exhibition left personal messages and comments. Below are some examples:

Selected Visitor's Comments

- The Bridge is a space to meditate and think about linking each human being with another – Jota Erre, Spain
- So many beautiful works of art. Loved the variety and the fact that many cultures/religions were all being represented on one place.
- "All is Possible" - The Bridge offers moments of humility and LOVE in appreciation for diverse expressions coming together in a sacred space in connection with and to the Beauty coming through each art form – Hala, Lebanon
- A solid bridge! It is exactly what humanity needs right now – Wafaa

- Excellent exhibit – very moving, gives cause for reflection and strengthens understanding of people.
- Thank you for this beautiful moment of tranquility and beauty – Pascale
- May we learn to deeply listen to each other to understand – DS. Denmark
- An important exhibition with some very memorable images. I look forward to seeing it again in London
- Excellent initiative. Congratulations - Catherine Pilias
- Very beautiful paintings! Magnificent exhibition
- A very good idea that warms the heart

Comments were left by people from all over the world, such as France, Brazil, Portugal, Spain, Greece, Austria, Lebanon, Egypt, Denmark, Mexico, Italy, USA, Belgium and Korea

Now, as a result of the catalytic role of the World Interfaith Harmony Week, *The Bridge* exhibition will now travel for 18 months to strategic venues that have been selected for exhibition in Europe, Egypt and the USA.

CARAVAN provides each exhibition venue of *The Bridge* exhibition with a Program Booklet offering guidance on how to exhibit the artwork, and insight and practical suggestions from its experience in hosting interfaith art initiatives around the world as to creative ways in which to maximize the use of the visual art for the local community's intercultural and inter-religious benefit (i.e. involving local artists, hosting a local interfaith arts festival, forums, lectures, concerts, film screenings, panels, etc.).

Participating Artists

The 47 artists selected for *The Bridge* cover a broad geographic area, with the majority coming from the Middle East. Participating artists include women and men, from premier contemporary artists to emerging younger artists, and that use a variety of artistic mediums, from the three primary monotheistic faith backgrounds (Islam, Christianity and Judaism) and 15 countries.

See Appendix A for a list of the Participating Artists

Background on the organizers, CARAVAN

CARAVAN (www.oncaravan.org), an international peace-building arts non-profit (NGO) that originated out of Cairo, Egypt in 2009, and is now based in Chicago, USA, has the objective of building bridges through the Arts between the creeds and cultures the Middle East and West. CARAVAN's experience has shown that the Arts can serve as one of the most effective mediums to enhance understanding, bring about respect, enable sharing, and deepen friendship between those of different faiths and cultures from the Middle East and West.

One of the flagship initiatives of CARAVAN is the globally recognized interfaith CARAVAN Exhibition of Visual Art and Festival, a unique arts initiative that brings together many of the Middle East's and West's premier and emerging artists. These CARAVAN exhibitions have resulted in unprecedented gatherings of renowned Middle Eastern and Western artists coming together to use art as a bridge for intercultural and inter-religious dialogue.

In **2013**, many thousands of Egyptians and Westerners in Cairo viewed CARAVAN's public art exhibition of painted/decorated life-size fiberglass donkeys (the donkey being a symbol of "peace and compassion" in both Islam and Christianity) involving Egypt's premier artists and noted Western artists. Then the exhibition moved to London to the world renowned St. Paul's Cathedral and was viewed by over 120,000 people. Following the CARAVAN exhibition in London the artworks were auctioned at a charity auction led by Sotheby's to raise funds for charities in Egypt serving the poor irrespective of creed.

The **2014** CARAVAN Exhibition of Visual Art brought together renowned Arab and Western artists from Muslim, Christian and Jewish faith backgrounds. With the theme *AMEN-A Prayer for the World*, the art initiative was an aspirational expression for both the people of the Middle East and the rest of the world. The 48 participating artists (30 from Egypt, of Muslim and Christian backgrounds, and 18 from the West from Jewish and Christian backgrounds) made a highly symbolic statement to the world---that they together are "praying" for peace, respect for the "other" and living and working together in harmony.

Each of the 48 artists was given a life-size fiberglass sculpture in one of four poses of prayer to paint or decorate as they wish--symbolizing the commonality of prayer, serving as a "universal bridge." Each of the four poses loosely referenced a common prayer pose from each of the main monotheistic religions (Judaism, Islam and Christianity) and the fourth reflected the revelation, peace and wonderment that "prayer" can bring to all.....thereby symbolizing human diversity, community and the many forms that "prayer" can take.

The 2014 CARAVAN exhibition opened first in Cairo, Egypt at the Museum of Modern Art with the 30 AMEN forms by the Egyptian artists. It was officially opened by the former Grand Mufti of Egypt, Sheik Dr. Ali Gomaa, Christian bishops and the Ministry of Culture. The 30 AMEN forms from Egypt then traveled to the renowned National Cathedral in Washington D.C. to join with 18 AMEN figures painted by artists in the West (from the US and Europe) for a joint exhibition at the cathedral of 48 figures. Then this unique exhibition moved to New York City's celebrated Cathedral of St. John the Divine, the largest Gothic cathedral in the world known for the arts for a two-month exhibition, drawing many thousands of visitors. The exhibition was sponsored by SODIC, a major real estate firm in Egypt. Over 200,000 people viewed the exhibition at these three venues.

Co-Curators of *The Bridge*: The exhibition is co-curated by CARAVAN founder and president, Rev. Paul-Gordon Chandler and artist Lilianne Milgrom

REV. PAUL-GORDON CHANDLER is the Founder and President of CARAVAN. An author, interfaith advocate, arts patron, social entrepreneur and a U.S Episcopal priest, who grew up in Muslim West Africa, he has lived and worked extensively throughout the Islamic world in leadership roles within faith-based publishing, relief and development agencies and churches. Most recently, he served as the rector of the Church of St John the Baptist-Maadi in Cairo (2003-

2013). He has curated exhibitions at such sites St. Paul's Cathedral, Egypt's Museum of Modern Art, Washington D.C.'s National Cathedral, and the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City.

LILIANNE MILGROM is an international artist and writer on the Arts. She was born in Paris, France and spent her formative years in Australia. She now resides in the United States. She holds a BA and DipEd from Melbourne University, and studied at the Avni Institute and the Academy of Art in San Francisco. She has exhibited extensively in solo and group shows (including the 2013 Cluj International Ceramics Biennale) and her works can be found in private and institutional collections in England, France, Switzerland, United States, Australia and Romania.

For More Information

To request more information about *The Bridge* art exhibition, please contact CARAVAN at: oncaravan@gmail.com

See Appendix B for Publicity Materials for The Bridge

APPENDIX A

Participating Artists (listed alphabetically by first name)

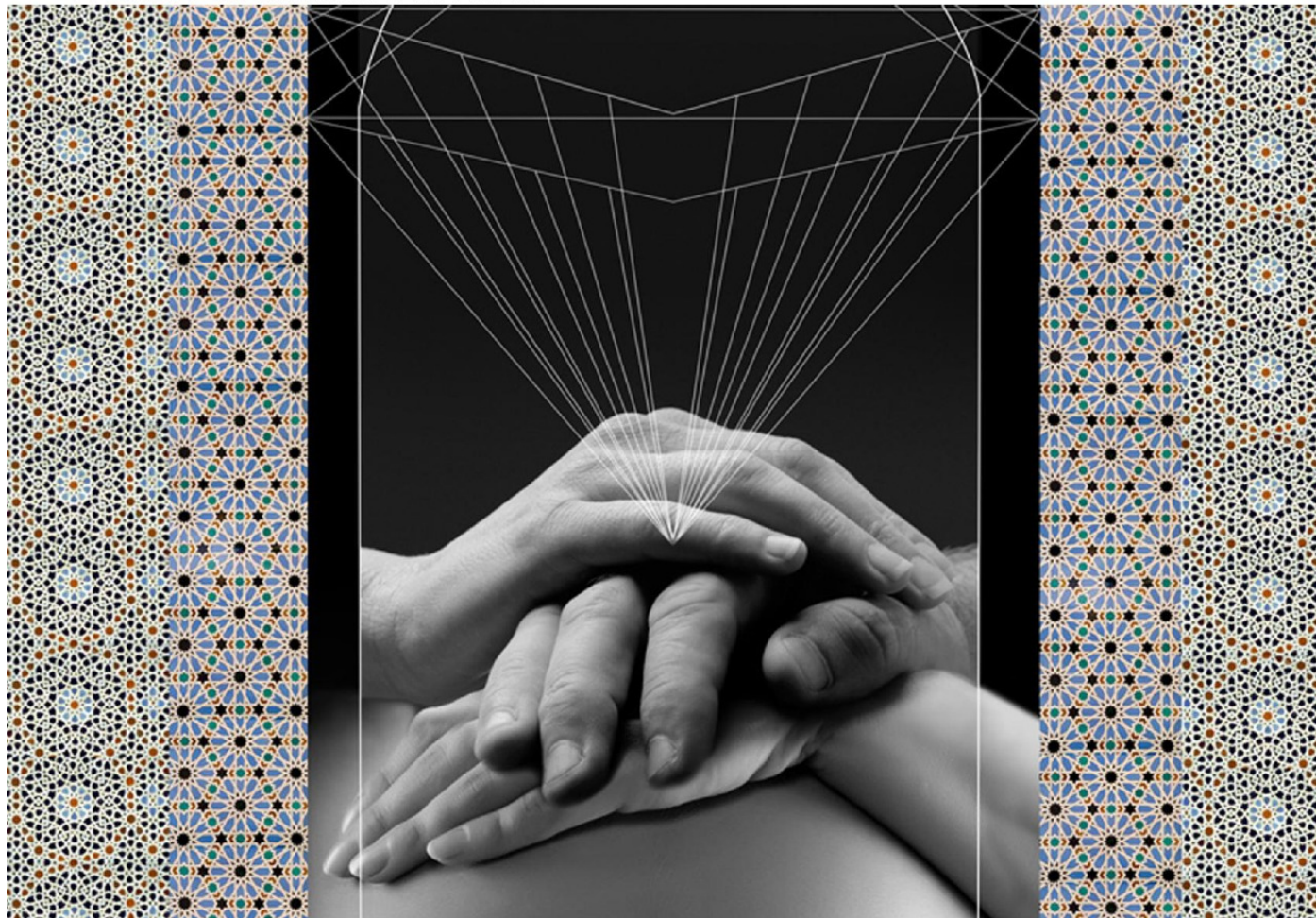
Ali Abdel Mohsen	Marie Boralevi
Asmaa Takieddine	Marwa Adel
Azadeh Ghotbi	Mohamed Abou El Naga
Britt Boutros Ghali	Mohamed Ardash
Carelle Homsy	Mohamed Monaiseer
El Zaeem	Mona EL Bayoumy
Galila Nawar	Motaaz El Emam
Gamal Ez	Myriam Boccara
Guirguis Lotfi	Naglaa Samir
Hayam Abdel Baky	Patrick Altes
Helen Zughaib	Qais Al Sindy
Hilda Hiary	Rana Chalabi
Hisham Abdallah	Rania El Hakim
Hisham El Zeiny	Reda Abdel Rahman
Hossam Sakr	Reem Hassan
Houria Niati	Ronen Siman Tov
Isabelle Bakhoum	Sacha (Schwarz)
Karim Abd El Malak	Sameh Ismael
Lilianne Milgrom	Samia Zoghلامي
Lina Mowafy	Shai Azoulay
Mai Refky	Siona Benjamin
Malak El Shazly	Valerie Rauchbach
Manal Deeb	Yasser Rostom
Marc Goldstain	

THE BRIDGE

À SAINT-GERMAIN-DES-PRÉS

UNE EXPOSITION INTERRELIGIEUSE
D'ART CONTEMPORAIN

AN INTERFAITH EAST-WEST
CONTEMPORARY ART EXHIBITION



Artwork Nagla Samir

DU 2 AU 28 FÉVRIER 2015

L'ouverture coïncide avec la Semaine d'Harmonie Interreligieuse Mondiale des Nations Unies

Église Saint-Germain-des-Prés

(dans la chapelle Saint-Symphorien)
3, place Saint-Germain-des-Prés, Paris VIème, France

Heures d'ouverture

Du Lundi au Vendredi de 17h00 à 20h00

Samedi et Dimanche de 12h00 à 20h00

www.eglise-sgp.org

ARAVAN
www.oncaravan.org



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General Invitation--English

CARAVAN invites you to



2015 CARAVAN EXHIBITION OF VISUAL ART
PAINTINGS BY PREMIER CONTEMPORARY ARAB, PERSIAN & JEWISH VISUAL ARTISTS
AT THE CHURCH OF SAINT-GERMAIN-DES-PRÉS
FEBRUARY 2 - 28

3, Place Saint-Germain-des-Prés, Paris VI*
www.eglise-sgp.org

PARTICIPATING ARTISTS

ALI ABDEL MOHSEN
ASMAA TAKIEDDINE
AZADEH GHOTBI
BRITT BOUTROS GHALI
CARELLE HOMSY
EL ZAEEM
GALILA NAWAR
GAMAL EZ
GUIRGUIS LOTFI
HAYAM ABDEL BAKY
HELEN ZUGHAIB
HILDA HIARY

HISHAM ABDALLAH
HISHAM EL ZEINY
HOSSAM SAKR
HOURIA NIATI
ISABELLE BAKHOUM
KARIM ABD EL MALAK
LILIANNE MILGROM
LINA MOWAFY
MAI REFKY
MALAK EL SHAZLY
MANAL DEEB
MARC GOLDSTAIN

MARIE BORALEVI
MARWA ADEL
MOHAMED ABOUENAGA
MOHAMED ARDASH
MOHAMED MONAISEER
MONA EL BAYOUMI
MUTAZ ELEMAM
MYRIAM BOCCARA
NAGLA SAMIR
PATRICK ALTES
QAIS AL SINDY
RANA CHALABI

RANIA EL HAKIM
REDA ABDEL RAHMAN
REEM HASSAN
RONEN SIMAN TOV
SACHA
SAMEH ISMAEL
SAMIA ZOGLAMI
SHAI AZOULAY
SIONA BENJAMIN
VALÉRIE RAUCHBACH
YASSER ROSTOM

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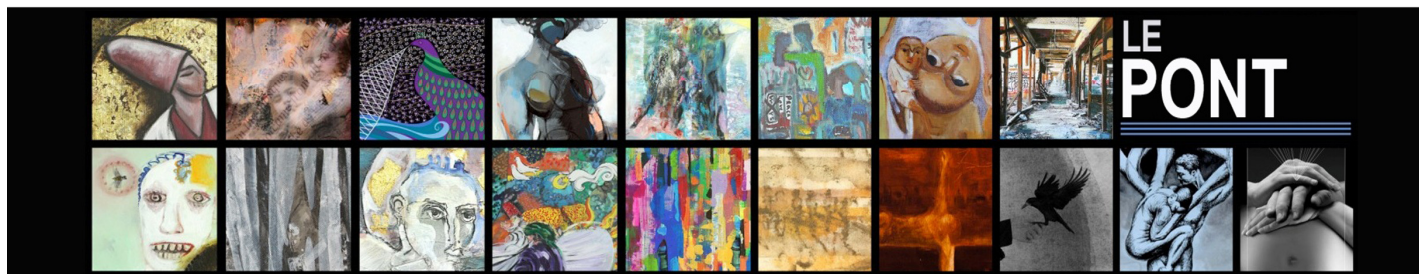


PARTNERS



WWW.ONCARAVAN.ORG

CARAVAN vous invite à



2015 CARAVAN EXPOSITION D'ART INTERRELIGIEUSE

ARTISTES VISUELS DE PREMIER ORDRES PRIMÉS DU MOYEN-ORIENT (MUSULMANS, CHRÉTIENS, JUIFS)
THÈME: QU'EST-CE QUI NOUS LIE LES UNS AUX AUTRES?

À L'ÉGLISE SAINT-GERMAIN-DES-PRÉS
DU 2 FÉVRIER AU 28 FÉVRIER

3, Place Saint-Germain-des-Prés, Paris VI*
www.eglise-sgp.org

ARTISTES PARTICIPANTS

ALI ABDEL MOHSEN
ASMAA TAKIEDDINE
AZADEH GHOTBI
BRITT BOUTROS GHALI
CARELLE HOMSY
EL ZAEEM
GALILA NAWAR
GAMAL EZ
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MOHAMED MONAISEER
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RANIA EL HAKIM
REDA ABDEL RAHMAN
REEM HASSAN
RONEN SIMAN TOV
SACHA
SAMEH ISMAEL
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WWW.ONCARAVAN.ORG

Invitation to VIP Opening Program and Reception



Sous le patronage des
NATIONS-UNIES



Le Père Benoist de Sinety,
Curé de Saint-Germain-des-Prés (Paris)
et

Le Révérend Paul-Gordon Chandler,
Directeur Exécutif de CARAVAN Arts

ont le plaisir de vous inviter,
au vernissage officiel de l'exposition

LE PONT

Une Exposition Interreligieuse d'Art Contemporain

47 artistes contemporains renommés; arabes, perses, juifs

de confession chrétienne, musulmane et juive

Dimanche 8 Février 2015
à 16h00

en l'église Saint-Germain-des-Prés

(dans la chapelle Saint-Symphorien)

3, place Saint Germain des Prés, 75006 - Paris, France

Confirmer votre présence avant le 2 Février par courriel à: caravansvpevents@gmail.com
(Invitation pour deux personnes)

Alors que s'accroît un gouffre accru de discorde et de malentendus entre Chrétiens, Musulmans et Juifs du Moyen-Orient et des pays de l'Ouest, **l'exposition Le Pont sera présentée du 2 au 28 février en l'église Saint-Germain-des-Prés**, la plus ancienne église de Paris. Le début de l'exposition coïncidera avec la **Semaine d'Harmonie Interreligieuse Mondiale des Nations-Unies**.

Sponsorisé par SODIC en Egypte, **Le Pont** est une exposition itinérante d'art Est-Ouest. Elle est organisée par **CARAVAN**, une ONG interreligieuse et interculturelle de consolidation de la paix. Elle présente le travail d'art visuel de 47 artistes contemporains renommés (47 tableaux): artistes arabes, perses, juifs issus de traditions de foi musulmane, chrétienne et juive. Par cette exposition ce groupe artistique multi-religieux cherche à mettre en valeur les ponts que nous pouvons créer et initier entre nous.

Cette exposition qui voyagera pendant 18 mois à travers l'Europe, l'Egypte et les Etats-Unis se tiendra dans différents lieux (cathédrales, musées, galeries, centres interreligieux, etc.) et se terminera à la fin de l'automne 2016.

Ces femmes et ces hommes renommés ou jeunes artistes d'arts visuels très variés proviennent des trois principales religions monothéistes et de 15 pays différents.

Le point focal est ce qui lie les artistes à travers leurs cultures et leurs religions en illustrant ainsi leur désir de créer ces ponts qui nous relient les uns aux autres.

L'exposition **Le Pont** a été conçue et réalisée, de pair, par le Rev. Paul-Gordon Chandler, Directeur de CARAVAN, et Lilianne Milgrom, artiste renommée.

À propos de **CARAVAN**

CARAVAN est une ONG des arts internationaux et interreligieux dont la mission est de créer des ponts au travers des Arts entre les religions et les cultures du Moyen-Orient et de l'Occident. Une des initiatives phares de CARAVAN est son exposition CARAVAN Exposition des Arts Visuels, reconnue mondialement. Pour de plus amples informations, www.oncaravan.org



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE BRIDGE

2015 CARAVAN EXHIBITION OF VISUAL ART

An unparalleled gathering of premier and emerging artists focusing on what they hold in common through their cultures and creeds: Christian, Muslim and Jewish

8 January 2015 (Paris, France / Cairo, Egypt / Chicago, USA)

Following the recent tragedy in Paris and in the midst of the increasing chasm of discord and misunderstanding that exists between the Middle East and the West, and between Christians, Muslims and Jews, the 7th CARAVAN Exhibition of Visual Art titled *The Bridge* will open in Paris, France at the historic Church of Saint Germain des Prés in the Latin Quarter, the oldest church in Paris, during the first week of February 2015 to commemorate the United Nations World Interfaith Harmony Week.

Through the founding sponsorship of SODIC from Egypt, *The Bridge* is an East-West traveling art exhibition organized and curated by [CARAVAN](#), an inter-religious and intercultural peace-building NGO. It showcases the work of 47 premier contemporary visual artists of Arab, Persian and Jewish backgrounds. As a multi-religious group, the artists are making the case for using that which we have in common as the foundation for the future of our world.

The Bridge will open on February 2, 2015 with a month-long exhibition in Paris, France and will then travel throughout Europe, to Egypt and the United States, and will be held in a variety of venues (cathedrals, museums, galleries, interfaith centers, etc) before closing in 2016.

As the exhibition travels, it takes with it a fundamental message of intercultural and inter-religious harmony and provides a link not only within communities but also between communities. *The Bridge* serves as a common starting point on which to build, toward seeing the development of a world that inherently respects and honors cultural and religious diversity, living and working together in harmony.

The Bridge exhibition involves a diverse range of Arab, Persian and Jewish visual artists. Participating artists include women and men, from premier contemporary artists to emerging younger artists, from the three primary monotheistic faith backgrounds and 13 countries. Each artist has submitted one original work (done specifically for the exhibition) addressing the theme "The Bridge," focusing on what they hold in common through their cultures and creeds, illustrating their ideas of how to build bridges between us all.

The Bridge is co-curated by CARAVAN Founder/President, Rev. Paul-Gordon Chandler and noted artist, Lilianne Milgrom.

About CARAVAN

CARAVAN, which originated out of Cairo, Egypt, is an international humanitarian arts NGO that focuses on building bridges through the arts between the creeds and cultures of the Middle East and West. CARAVAN's experience has shown that the Arts can serve as one of the most effective mediums to enhance understanding, bring about respect, enable sharing, and deepen friendship between those of different faiths and cultures. One of the flagship initiatives of

CARAVAN is the globally recognized interfaith CARAVAN Exhibition of Visual Art, a unique arts initiative that brings together many of the Middle East's and West's premier and emerging artists.

The 2014 CARAVAN Exhibition of Visual Art was held first in Cairo at the Museum of Modern Art, then in Washington D.C. at the renowned National Cathedral, following by in New York City at the historic Cathedral of St. John the Divine, the largest Gothic cathedral in the world. The exhibition involved 48 premier Egyptian and Western artists, from Christian, Muslim and Jewish traditions. Titled "AMEN: A Prayer for the World," the art exhibition sought to express the deep, fundamental acknowledgment of power and hope for all people. Over 200,000 people viewed the exhibition in these three venues. The 2013 CARAVAN interfaith exhibition was held first in Cairo and then at the world renowned St. Paul's Cathedral in London, attracting over 120,000 people during the five-week exhibition.

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THE BRIDGE: 2015 CARAVAN Exhibition of Visual Art / Paris: 2-28 February, 2015

Church of Saint Germain des Pres (dans La Chapelle Saint Symphorien)
3, place Saint Germain des Prés, VI, Paris, France (www.eglise-sgp.org)

Opening hours:

Monday through Friday: 17h00 to 20h00
Saturday and Sunday: 12h00 to 20h00

Website: www.oncaravan.org

Facebook—visit us at: CARAVAN Arts

Twitter: @oncaravanarts

For more information, interviews or photos, please email: oncaravan@gmail.com

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