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Unprecedented Art Exhibit Promotes Israeli-Palestinian Reconciliation; Year-long Tour includes United Nations and World Bank, launches this March at Brandeis University

Prominent Artists Join Forces to Promote Peace, Tolerance; supports bereaved families from the Middle East.

New York, NY—*Offering Reconciliation*, an exhibit of 135 ceramic plates created by prominent Israeli and Palestinian painters, sculptors, designers and photographers, will visit five U.S. cities in 2007 and will be featured in such venues as the United Nations in New York and the World Bank in Washington DC. The exhibit promotes and supports the projects of the **Parents Circle - Families Forum**, an organization of over 500 bereaved Israelis and Palestinians whose projects encourage dialogue, tolerance and reconciliation. Originally showcased in Israel last May, the exhibit in the United States will be made possible by the **Association of Israel's Decorative Arts (AIDA)** along with contributions from former World Bank President James Wolfensohn.

"*Offering Reconciliation* is a remarkable exhibit that breaks down cultural barriers and initiates a process of healing and unity," said Charles R. Bronfman, Chairman of the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies. "Throughout her life, my late wife Andy was always cognizant of the profound impact that could be made through the arts and was a passionate supporter of Israeli decorative arts specifically. By bringing this provocative exhibit to the United States, AIDA is acting as a catalyst for change and paving the way for an international discussion about peace, tolerance and reconciliation."

135 Israeli and Palestinian artists were given identical ceramic bowls – a blank palette to serve as the common denominator through which their individual expressions of pain and hope would be depicted. They each took the commission in a personal direction, infused with their own interpretation of the reconciliation narrative and the elements that derive from it: co-existence, pain and loss, fracture and unity. Each one of the artists is presenting a special bowl of reconciliation, a bowl of peace and hope, of art instead of animosity. Some of the artists represented include Aliza Olmert, wife of the Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Menashe Kadishman, Dani Karavan, Michal Rovner, and Mohammad Said Kalash. A full-color, trilingual

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catalogue published by the Parents Circle – Families Forum designed by Philippe Boulakia with an introduction by curators Orna Tamir-Schestowitz and Daphna Zmora accompanies the exhibit.

The exhibit begins its cross-country tour at Brandeis University on March 22-April 1, 2007. It will then be followed by venues at the World Bank in Washington D.C. in April; the Bellevue Art Museum near Seattle June through August; the United Nations and Pomegranate Gallery in New York in September and October; and the International Expositions of Sculpture Objects and Functional Art (SOFA) in Chicago in November where the pieces will be auctioned.

“The rich Israeli and Palestinian contribution to the arts is too often overshadowed by regional discord and violence,” said Erika Vogel, director of AIDA. “On one level, the Offering Reconciliation exhibit will expose North Americans to the many talented Israeli and Palestinian artists and their inspiring decorative works. On a much more profound level, the exhibit will show how art can be used as a source for dialogue and understanding.”

The original exhibit opened May 6, 2006, at the Ramat Gan Museum of Israeli Art and drew an unprecedented 2,200 guests that included ambassadors from around the world, politicians, and prominent members of the international and Middle East communities.

“This exhibit is a powerful expression of reconciliation by some of the leading artists in the region,” says Robi Damelin a member of the Parents Circle who helped develop the exhibit. “But equally important, this exhibit provides a new platform for us to describe how our day to day work on the ground is building reconciliation and education programs in the region. At each of the U. S. venues members of the Parents Circle will be present to speak about how their personal tragedies catalyzed them to take action for reconciliation.”

ABOUT The Parents Circle Families Forum

The Parents Circle Families Forum (PCFF) for Peace, Reconciliation and Tolerance was established in 1995 and has become a home for hundreds of bereaved Israeli and Palestinian families who have all lost immediate family members to the violence in the Middle East. PCFF is one of a handful of truly joint peace programs still functioning despite the ravages of the ceaseless conflict.

www.theparentscircle.org

ABOUT AIDA

AIDA's mission is to foster the development of contemporary decorative artists from Israel by connecting them to an international audience of galleries, institutions, and collectors. Co-founded in 2003 by husband and wife teams Andrea and Charles Bronfman, and Doug and Dale Anderson, AIDA has helped launch the careers of numerous artists from Israel. AIDA's programs include connecting artists with galleries; exhibiting works at international art fairs; providing scholarships, residencies and summer teaching position at prominent craft schools; and producing museum and gallery exhibitions.

<http://aidaarts.org>

AIDA press contacts:

Crystal Noble at (781) 487-0002, x. 14 / crystal@louderthanwords.com

Erika Vogel at (212) 931-0089 / erikavogel@aidaarts.org,

PARENTS CIRCLE press contacts:

Gon Kafri at (212) 509-2407 / gon@parentscircle.org

Betsy Kaptchuk at (617) 547-0837 / mkaptchuk@comcast.net