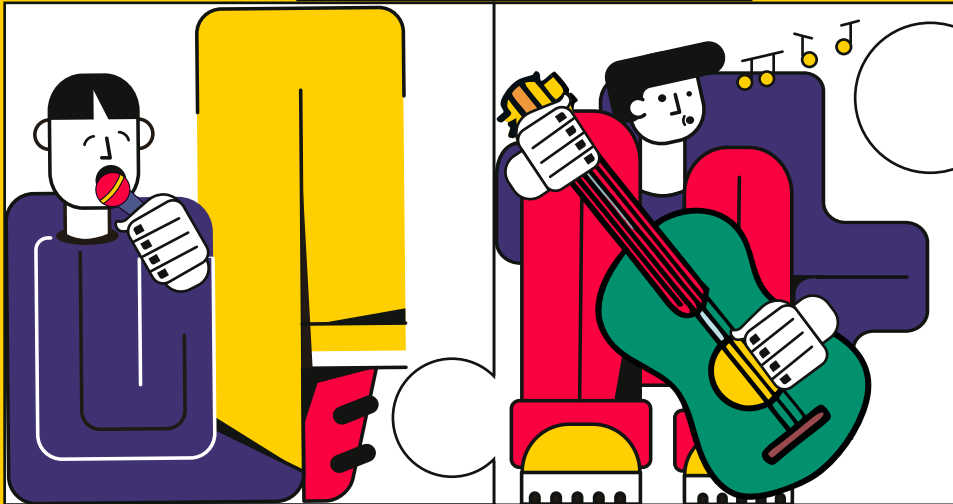
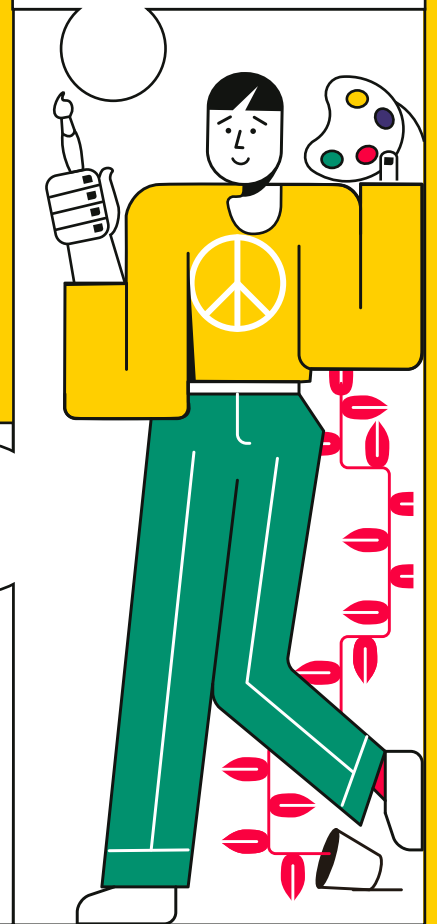
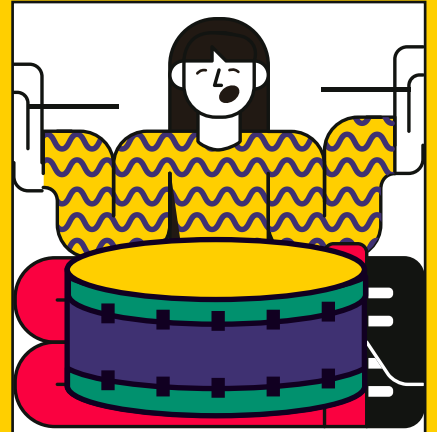
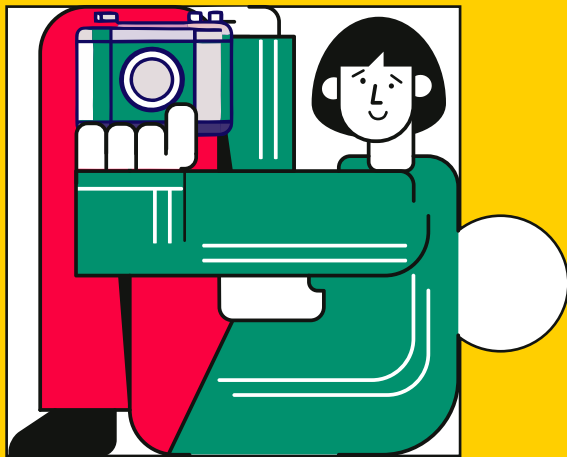


Digital Empowerment Foundation at



# REQUIEM FOR JUSTICE

19-22 September, 2024  
Amsterdam





Digital Empowerment Foundation at

# **REQUIEM FOR JUSTICE**

19-22 September, 2024  
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# THE LANDSCAPE OF HOPE NETWORK



Action for Hope is grateful for the following organizations and individuals whose contributions made this event possible: Cecilia Udden - Dawlaty - Hanan Hajj Ali - Kirsten van der Hul - May El Ibrashy - Petra Stienen - Ranwa Yehia - Sergio Chaparro



# DAY 1



## Thursday 19 September – Pakhuis De Zwijger

### 10:00 to 13:00 - The Studio - Presentations by civil society organizations from the Global South

15 members of the **Landscapes of Hope** network present their work in Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, South East Asia and the Middle East.

#### Participating Organizations

Adef (Egypt) - Ambulante (Mexico) - Digital Empowerment Foundation (India) - Codhez (Venezuela) - Ettijahat (Syria) - Filmlab Palestine (Palestine) - Haki Nawiri Afrika (Kenya) - Digital Rights Foundation (Pakistan) - Magamba Network (Zimbabwe) - ConArte (Mexico) - Megawra (Egypt) - Politikada iyilik Hali (Turkey) - In Place of War (UK) - Dawlaty (Syria) - Sawa for Development (Syria/Lebanon) - Action for Hope (Belgium)

### 10:00 to 23:00 - This is Gaza - Foyer

A display of 22 poems and literary texts written under the bombing by poets in Gaza during the period 7 October to 20 December 2023.

### 14:00 to 15:30 - Speaking Truth to Power 1 - The Studio

Panel discussion on the role of civil society in protecting freedom of expression - Moderated by Kirsten van den Hul. Panelists: Amr Abdulrahman, Dritëro Kasapi, Zineb El Rhazoui.

### 16:30 to 18:00 - Speaking Truth to Power 2 - The Studio

Panel discussion on the role of civil society in protecting freedom of expression - Moderated by Laila Hourani. Panelists: Cecilia Uddén, Mey Seifan, Mike van Graan, Osama Manzar.

### 18:30 to 20:45 - Film screening: **Mediterranean Fever** (Palestine /Germany / France / Cyprus / Qatar)

Mediterranean Fever is the Winner of the Un Certain Regard award for best screenplay at Cannes Film Festival (2022). This darkly comic feature film follows Palestinian Waleed as he battles a writer's block and depression at the same time. The film is screened in collaboration with Film Lab Palestine. The screening will be followed by a discussion with the director Maha Haj, moderated by Hanna Atallah.



# DAY 2



## Friday 20 September - Muziekgebouw

20:30 - Concert by Kayhan Kalhor (Iran) and Erdal Erzincan (Turkey)

Virtuoso musicians Kayhan Kalhor and Erdal Erzincan come together to create extraordinary Persian and Turkish improvisations for kamancheh (Persian spike fiddle) and baglama (lute) based on a shared musical language. The performance breaks down barriers between cultures and highlights their music's ancient roots in contemporary form.

# DAY 3

## Saturday 21 September - Muziekgebouw

20:30 - Concert by Simon Shaheen (USA / Palestine), Layth Sidiq (Iraq / Jordan), and Tareq Rantisi (USA / Palestine) - Opening words by Tamara Alrifai, UNRWA

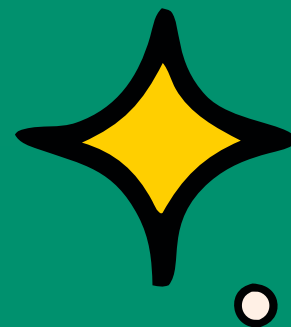
Award-winning musicians Simon Shaheen, Layth Sidiq, and Tareq Rantisi celebrate Palestinian and Arabic music in a program that features Shaheen's compositions and arrangements, including a medley of Palestinian folk songs, as well as improvisations by the three world renowned musicians.

## Saturday 21 September - Het Nationale Theater / The National Theater, the Hague

20:15 - Jogging, a play by Hanan Hajj Ali (Lebanon)

Hanane Hajj Ali, a prominent Lebanese actress, author, and cultural activist, began her career with the Hakawati Theater in 1978. Her award-winning performance, JOGGING, has toured prestigious festivals like the Avignon and Amsterdam International Theatre Festivals. Decorated as a "Knight in the Order of Arts and Letters" by the French Ministry of Culture in 2017, she also won the Gilder-Coigney prize in 2020.

# DAY 4



## Sunday 22 September - Podium Mozaïek

12:00 to 23:00 - This is Gaza - Foyer

A display of 22 poems and literary texts written under the bombing by poets in Gaza during the period 7 October to 20 December 2023.

12:00 to 13:30 - "Stories of Thyme and Saffron" - Cooking and Storytelling Show

Rasha Hilwi (Palestine / Netherlands), writer, DJ and mother and Nikita Shahabazi, activist and dancer tell stories about food recipes from their journeys in life, and share with the audience delicious tastes brought into Amsterdam from Palestine and Iran. The storytelling is led and facilitated by Naeeda Aurangzeb (Pakistan/ Netherlands)

14:00 to 15:30 - Poetry recital by : Ian Ewok Robinson (South Africa) with Charles Amblard (France) – Sarah Clancy (Ireland) – Charles Ducal (Belgium) - Foyer

Ian Ewok Robinson or Eon The Mod performs poetry with music by French composer Charles Amblard. His hip hop-influenced verse, as a Poetry Slam Champion, explores the tension of organic existence in a plastic society, challenging consumer capitalism with crafted authenticity. Eon The Mod dodges artificial intelligence with intelligent artifice.

Known for her poetry's warmth and wit, Sarah Clancy presents poetry that incorporates themes of social justice, love, nature, and more.

Appointed Belgium's first Poet Laureate in 2014, Charles Ducal presents his acclaimed, award-winning poetry.

16:00 to 18:15 - Film screening: Shayda (Australia)

In collaboration with Film Lab Palestine. Q&A with the audience moderated by Nafiss Nia. Winner of the World Cinema Audience Award at Sundance 2023, SHAYDA follows an Iranian mother who finds refuge in an Australian shelter with her daughter. During Persian New Year, her estranged husband's return jeopardizes their newfound freedom.

19:00 to 21:00 - Poetry and music

**Poetry by Nafiss Niaa (The Netherlands / Iran).**

Poetry by Nafiss Nia, an Iranian-Dutch filmmaker, poet, and cultural entrepreneur. As director of Amsterdam's Granate Foundation, she produces programs like Words That Matter, promoting cultural inclusivity in film and literature.



**Safa, Concert by Nizar Rohana (Palestine), featuring Khorshid Dadbeh (Iran).**

Palestinian musician Nizar Rohana will perform music from his new album Safa (purity), inspired by purity, kindness, and hope. He will also collaborate with sitar and tar player Korshid Dadbeh, creating a dialogue between Arabic and Persian music.

**Ne3ma, Concert by Huda Asfour (Palestine) and Alsarah (Sudan).**

“Ne3ma” is the title of a song from the Sudanese revolutionary music of the 80’s and 90’s that this collaborative project uses to highlight a repertoire that testifies to the interconnected struggles for collective liberation, and the shared history of Sudanese and Palestinian freedom quests.

22:00 to 00:00 - “Better Late”

A jam session for Amsterdam musicians who play music from Iran or Palestine





## Osama Manzar

Osama Manzar works at the cusp of Rights, Access, and Meaningful Content. He is a Senior Ashoka Fellow, British Chevening Scholar, International Visitors Leadership Program Fellow of US State Department and an Advisor to Women in Digital Economy Fund (WiDEF). After half a decade of stint in tech journalism, he founded Digital Empowerment Foundation in 2002 working on “access to rights and rights to access” ending up digitally empowering more than 35 million people till date. He was instrumental in several policies and impact activities like India’s National Digital Literacy Mission, banning FreeBasics in India, and liberalising ISP licensing through PM-WANI in India.

He has been on the boards and advisories of Women in Digital Economy Fund, APC, World Summit Awards, GNI, Barefoot College, Protsahan, MISSING, etc. and is profiled by The Hindu as “the man who travelled more than 10,000 villages”.



## Natasha Badhwar

Natasha Badhwar is an independent filmmaker, author, columnist, and media trainer based in New Delhi India. A postgraduate in Mass Communications in MCRC, Jamia Millia Islamia University, Natasha started her career as one of India’s first women camerapersons in news television. She has worked with NDTV for 13 years and resigned as Vice President, Training and Development.

Natasha leads the media team at Karwan e Mohabbat - a people’s campaign devoted to the universal values of the Indian constitution - equality, freedom, justice, and compassion. She is also associated with the Centre for Equity Studies in an honorary position as Head, Media, and Communications.

Natasha Badhwar is the author of the popular memoirs, My Daughters’ Mum, and Immortal for A Moment. Along with Harsh Mander and John Dayal, she has co-edited Reconciliation - Karwan e Mohabbat’s journey of solidarity through a wounded India. As a columnist, Natasha is best known for her 10-year long series of personal-political essays published in Mint Lounge. She currently writes a column titled “Immortal for A Moment” for The Tribune, published from Chandigarh, India. She also represents Landscapes of Hope network member in India, Karwan e Mohabbat and sits on LoH’s Advisory Committee.





## **Akanksha Ahluwalia**

Akanksha Ahluwalia, the Deputy Manager of the Comms and Media Department at Digital Empowerment Foundation, India. She holds a Bachelor's and master's degree in English literature from Delhi University, and has expertise in gender studies, analyzing misinformation and hate speech online, and understanding new media platforms through an intersectional lens, with a focus on development sector communication. Akanksha's strength lies in developing

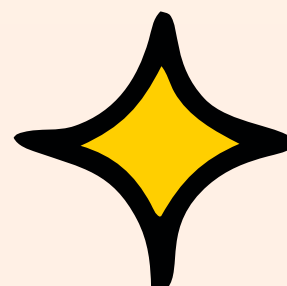
strategic communication approaches that leverage digital ingenuity while addressing paradoxes and nuances within new media platforms. She also leads efforts in crafting narratives and conducting workshops that empower marginalized voices and advance social causes within the digital sphere. Akanksha is one of the representatives of Landscapes of Hope member, Digital Empowerment Foundation.



## **Abner Manzar**

Abner Manzar is a dedicated researcher and traveler who has explored 16 countries and 28 Indian states, documenting the digital divide and development in India. Visiting over 400 villages across 50 districts, Abner has produced 18 articles, 150 short films and documentaries, and a book published by the Centre for Development Policy & Practice. His work highlights the challenges and advancements in digital access, offering valuable insights for policymakers and development

practitioners. Through his extensive documentation, Abner works towards promoting digital inclusivity and equitable development in rural India, contributing significantly to the discourse on digital transformation. He is one of the representatives of Landscapes of Hope member in India, Digital Empowerment Foundation.





**Day 1:**  
Network  
Exchange



**Day 3:**  
Cultural  
Exchange



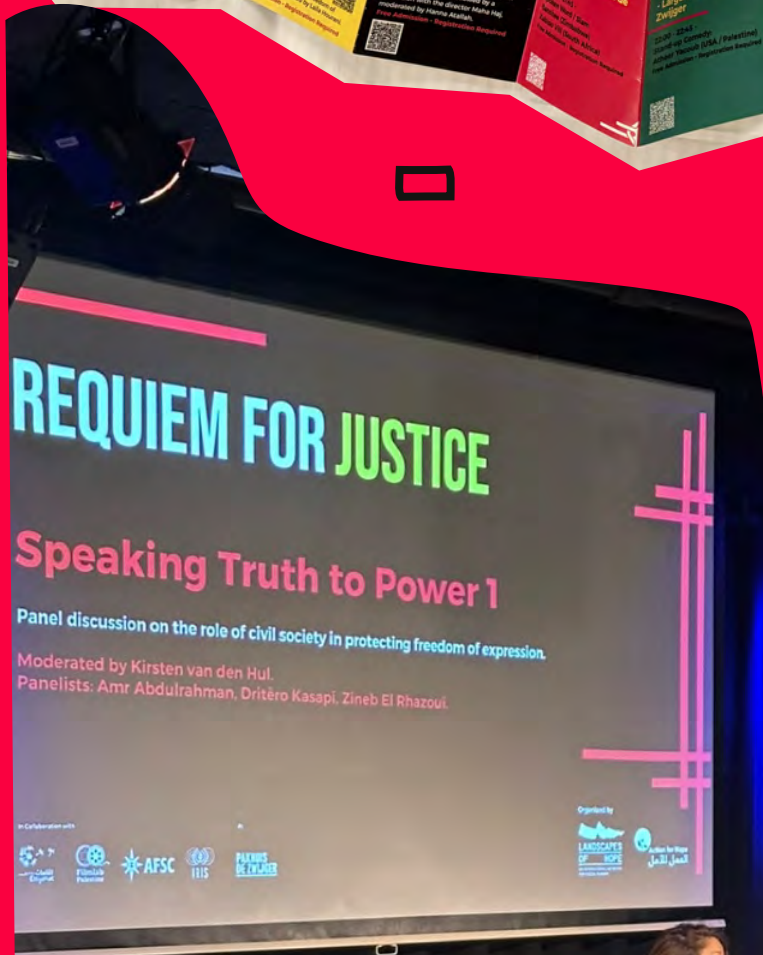
Organisations shared its work on freedom of expression and their intersectionality of marginalisation, focusing on economic disparity, gender divide, racial discrimination and the digital divide.



**Day 2:**  
Panel  
Discussion

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# INTRODUCTION

Osama Manzar, Akanksha Ahluwalia and Abner Manzar represented Digital Empowerment Foundation at the Requiem for Justice, a bi-annual arts and advocacy platform, organised by Landscapes of Hope and Action for Hope in Amsterdam, Netherlands. An annual cultural gathering of 25 network members from across the globe, it was a gathering of focused on the intersection of freedom of expression and the freedom that civil society organisations and human rights activists had fought for over many years. The platform provided an opportunity for participants to share their experiences, showcase the work that they do in the area of freedom of expression and its intersections, collaborate on new projects, and discuss the challenges and achievements in their respective fields.

The network meeting brought together members from diverse regions, each working on different aspects of freedom of expression. The discussions highlighted the global challenges of rising authoritarianism, censorship, and inequalities exacerbated by the digital divide.



The event served as a platform for civil society organisations to share their strategies for advocating freedom of expression, their struggles and an opportunity to learn from the experiences of the global network.

# NETWORK MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The first day of the Requiem initiated a network exchange where presentations were made by the network members from Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, Southeast Asia and Middle East. Each organisation shared its work on freedom of expression and their intersectionality of marginalisation, focusing on economic disparity, gender divide, racial discrimination and the digital divide. The following network members presented details of their work and discussed scope of collaboration with the other network members present:

Arab Digital Expression Foundation (ADEF), an organisation that works in the area of youth empowerment through digital literacy. They promote free expression and cultural preservation through interventions in art and technology in Egypt and the Arab region by building open knowledge and digital empowerment tools. You can check out their work at [www.adeef.xyz](http://www.adeef.xyz)

Digital Empowerment Foundation, an organisation based in New Delhi, India, shared experiences of replicating the global network model and recreating a national network with 24 organisations and individuals, and presented the initiatives of the national network across subject matters including circular economy, language preservation, cultural heritage preservation, archiving of histories of oppression, curating spaces for freedom of expression, enabling artistic expression and creating a museum of digital society chronicling 22 years of digital development at the grassroots level. You can check out their work at [www.defindia.org](http://www.defindia.org)







Ambulante is a nonprofit organisation that promotes documentary filmmaking as a tool for social and cultural transformation. They focus on bringing powerful documentaries to communities across Mexico, often in areas without access to traditional theaters. Check out their website to see their work in detail at [www.ambulante.org](http://www.ambulante.org)

The Human Rights Commission of Zulia State (Codhez) defends and promotes human rights in Venezuela, focusing on advocacy, protection,

and education for vulnerable populations, particularly in relation to food security and economic rights. Check out their website to see their work in detail at [www.codhez.org](http://www.codhez.org)

Ettijahat supports Syrian artists and cultural practitioners by providing resources, training, and funding opportunities. They aim to strengthen independent cultural expression in Syria and the Arab region. Check out their website to see their work in detail at [www.ettijahat.com](http://www.ettijahat.com)

Filmlab Palestine is a nonprofit organisation focused on reviving and promoting cinema culture in Palestine. They support filmmakers through training, production resources, and cinema-related events like the Palestine Cinema Days festival. Check out their website to see their work in detail at [www.flp.ps](http://www.flp.ps)

Haki Nawiri Afrika promotes human rights and social justice by empowering communities to engage with digital platforms and media. Their work focuses on amplifying marginalised voices and advancing digital literacy in Kenya. Check out their website to see their work in detail at [www.hakinawiriafrika.org](http://www.hakinawiriafrika.org)

The Digital Rights Foundation advocates for digital rights in Pakistan, focusing on issues such as online privacy, data protection, and digital freedom, with special emphasis on protecting women in online spaces. Check out their website to see their work in detail at [www.digitalrightsfoundation.pk](http://www.digitalrightsfoundation.pk)

Magamba Network is Zimbabwe's leading creative and digital media organisation, using arts, culture, and new media to foster activism, social change, and youth empowerment through projects like Shoko Festival and Open Parly ZW. Check out their website to see their work in detail at [www.magambanetwork.com](http://www.magambanetwork.com)



ConArte (Consejo de Arte y Cultura) promotes arts and cultural education for marginalised and incarcerated youth in Mexico, encouraging creativity, social inclusion, and personal development through various artistic programs. Check out their website to see their work in detail at [www.conarte.org.mx](http://www.conarte.org.mx)

Megawra is an architectural collective focused on cultural heritage conservation and urban development. Through their Athar Lina initiative, they engage local communities in Historic Cairo to preserve heritage as a resource for social and economic development. Check out their website to see their work in detail at [www.megawra.com](http://www.megawra.com)

Politikada İyilik Hali is a social welfare initiative in Turkey focusing on environmental advocacy, human rights, and raising social awareness. Their projects often engage citizens in sustainability and social justice causes.

In Place of War supports communities affected by conflict through creative arts and entrepreneurship. They empower local artists and cultural activists by providing tools and platforms to drive social change and build resilience. Check out their website to see their work in detail at [www.inplaceofwar.net](http://www.inplaceofwar.net)





Dawlaty works with Syrian civil society to promote democratic values and human rights. They focus on youth empowerment, transitional justice, and fostering a peaceful, inclusive society post-conflict. Check out their website to see their work in detail at [www.dawlaty.org](http://www.dawlaty.org)

Sawa for Development and Aid provides support for displaced and refugee communities in Lebanon and Syria, offering educational, health, and economic empowerment services. Check out their website to see their work in detail at [www.sdaid.org](http://www.sdaid.org)

Action for Hope offers cultural and artistic resources for displaced people and those in crisis, focusing on enabling them to express their stories and preserve their cultural heritage. Check out their website to see their work in detail at [www.act4hope.org](http://www.act4hope.org)

The session concluded with a network exchange as all organisations explored possible collaborations and increased their understanding of freedom of expression across their regions.

# REQUIEM FOR JUSTICE

## Speaking Truth to Power 2

Panel discussion on the role of civil society in protecting freedom of expression.

Moderated by Laila Hourani.

Panelists: Cecilia Uddén, Mey Seifan, Mike van Graan, Osama Manzar.



# PANEL DISCUSSIONS

The presentations were followed by a panel discussion on 'Speaking Truth to Power', a session moderated by Kristen van den Hul and focused on the role of civil society organisations in protecting freedom of expression, particularly in regions that are facing oppressive regimes, oppressive realities due to lack of access and extreme marginalisation of communities. Amr Abdulrahman, Dritero Kasapi and Zineb El Rhazoui emphasises the need of maintaining freedom of expression as a foundational human right, and discussed ways to create secure spaces for civil society organisations and human rights advocates to work in environments that become hostile.

In the afternoon panel moderated by Laila Hourani with Cecilia Udden, Mey Seifan, Mike van Graan and Osama Manzar, continued the theme of freedom of expression with organisations and individuals tackling that in developing countries. Osama Manzar from Digital Empowerment Foundation spoke about the present conditions in the digital landscape of India and the stressors that aggravate the digital divide. He shared insights of programs that have enabled communities from across the country on digital integration, digital



development, digital inclusion and entrepreneurship through digital interventions with the panel. The day ended with the film screening of Mediterranean Fever, the Winner of the Un Certain Regard award for best screenplay at Cannes Film Festival (2022).



The second day of the network meeting started with a panel discussion on the relationship between civil society organisations and their funders. The discussion moderated by Philip Himberg highlighted the need for funding in subject matters such as aligning funding goals with grassroots activism and balancing the need for financial support with autonomy in advocacy works. Participants discussed that collaboration and transparency are crucial to

strengthening civil society's capacity. The second part of the session continued the discussion on funding but focused on creating new models of cooperation between civil society organisations and national/ international funders. The day ended with the film screening of *The Teacher*, a film that was made in collaboration with one of the network members. The second day demonstrated how various forms of art can be utilised to bring attention to social issues.

# BUILDING SOLIDARITY AND PRESERVING CULTURAL HERITAGE THROUGH ART

The third and fourth day of the requiem focused on partner networking and cultural exchange for the participants. We started with a closed discussion on the work that the network members have done with the funding provided by LoH and AoH. The network members discussed their initiatives and subject-matters, bringing visual and physical aid to make the network more familiar with their work. This day also included a discussion between the network members on how the network can stay connected and enable the members with solidarity, wisdom, knowledge exchange and sub-granting. Award-winning musicians Simon Shaheen, Layth Sidiq, and Tareq Rantisi celebrated Palestinian and Arabic music in a program that featured Shaheen's compositions and arrangements, including a medley of Palestinian folk songs, as well as improvisations by the three world renowned musicians.





The day involved 'Stories of Thyme and Saffron', featuring Rasha Hilwi and Nikita Shahabazi, who shared stories of migration, displacement, and resilience through food and personal narratives. The day of film, poetry and narrative sharing created a space for reflective conclusion to the events where network members discussed the ways in which personal and cultural narratives intersect with larger global struggles for freedom and justice.

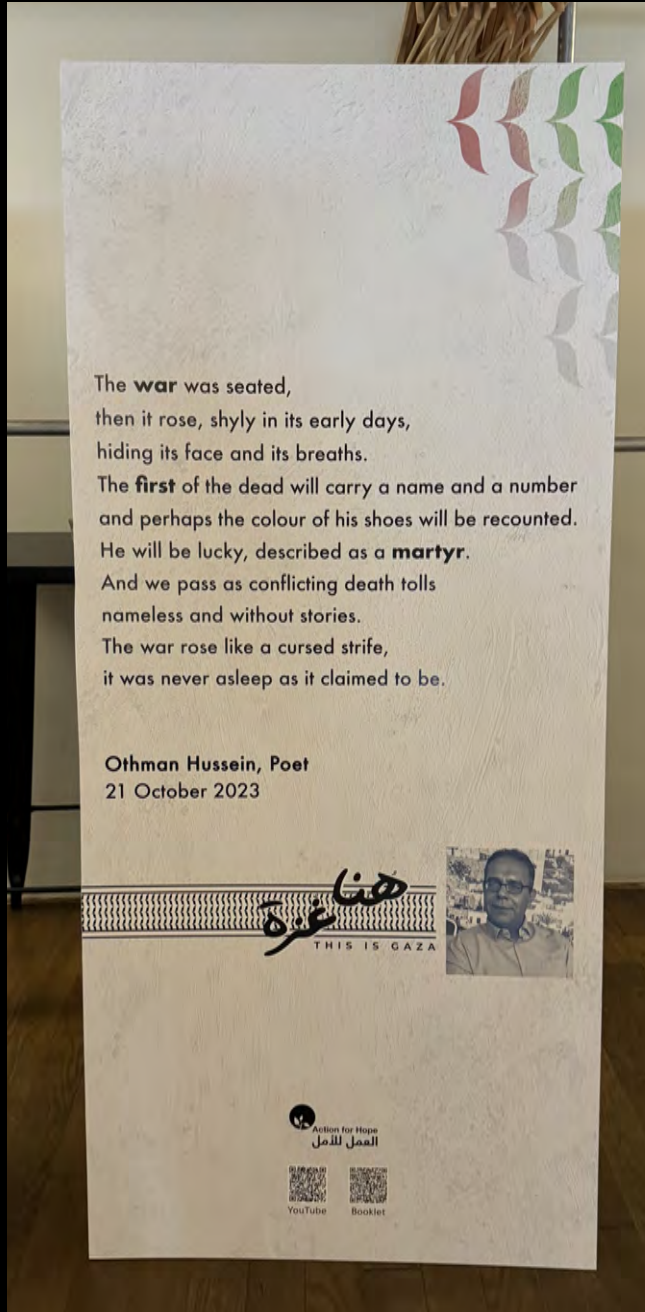
The day ended with a concert celebration featuring artists such as Nizar Rohana who performed from his new album Safa (purity), inspired by purity, kindness, and hope. He also collaborated with sitar and tar player Korshid Dadbeh, creating a dialogue between Arabic and Persian music. And ended with the performance of 'Ne3ma', a song from the Sudanese revolutionary music of the 80s and 90s and testifies to the interconnected struggles for collective liberation.



# REQUIEM FOR JUSTICE IN PHOTOS



Glimpse of the Palestine Exhibition



Art Walks of Amsterdam:  
Film Museum



Art Walks of Amsterdam:  
Film Museum



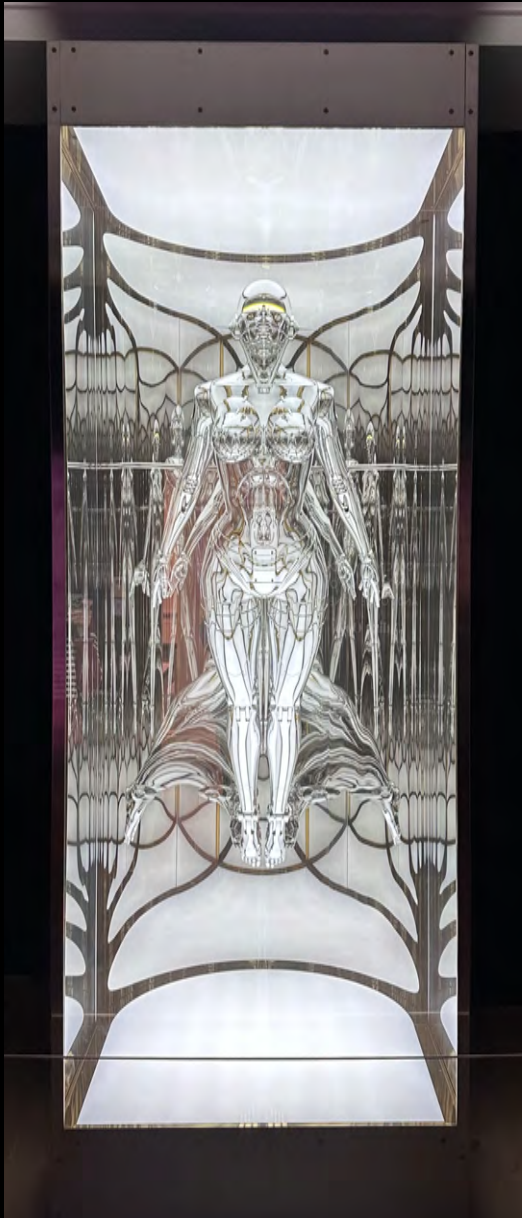


Art Walks of Amsterdam:  
Moco Museum



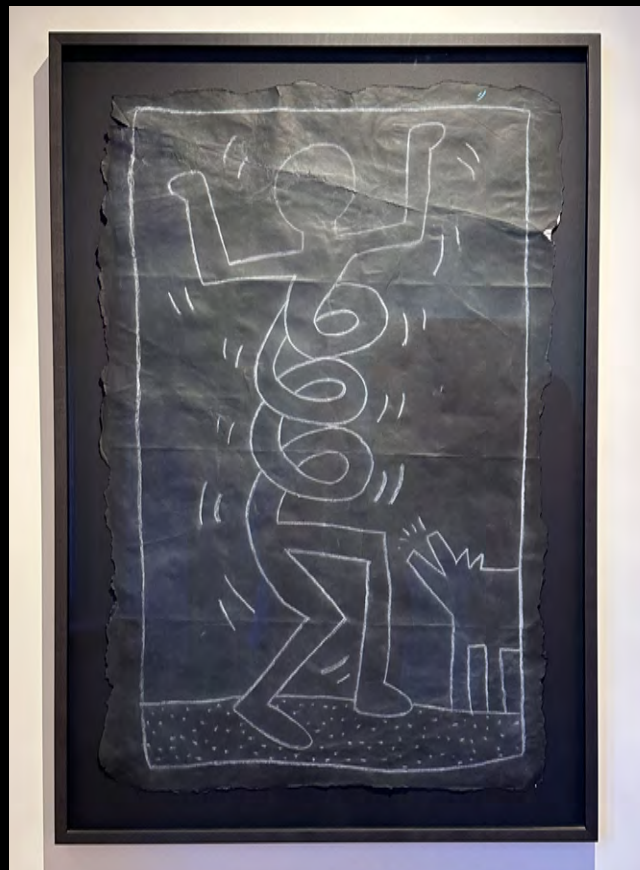
YAYO  
KUSAMA





"I'M NOT LOOKING AT YOU, I'M LOOKING AT THE LIGHT THAT IS BOUNCING OFF YOU. TURN THE LIGHTS OFF AND YOU'RE GONE."

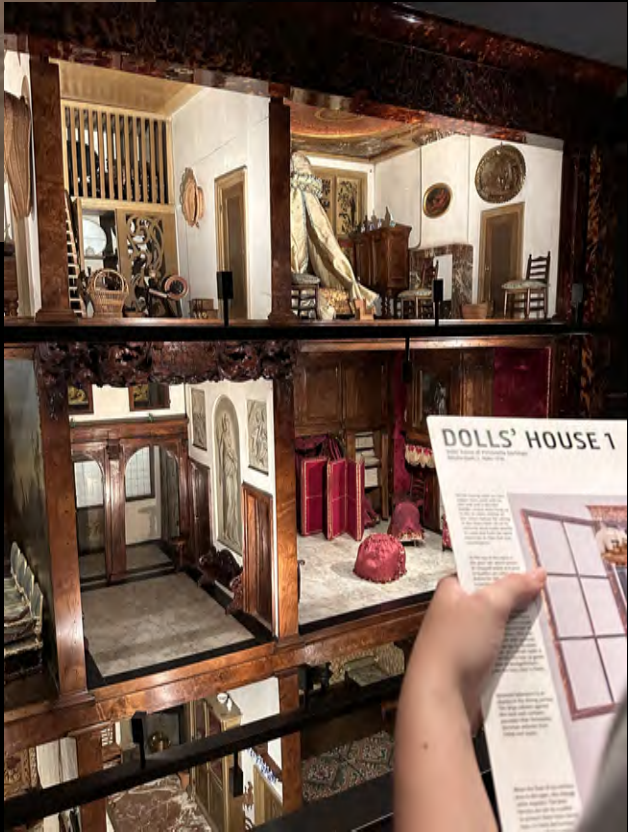
**Julian Opie**



Art Walks of Amsterdam:  
Moco Museum



Art Walks of Amsterdam:  
Rijks Museum





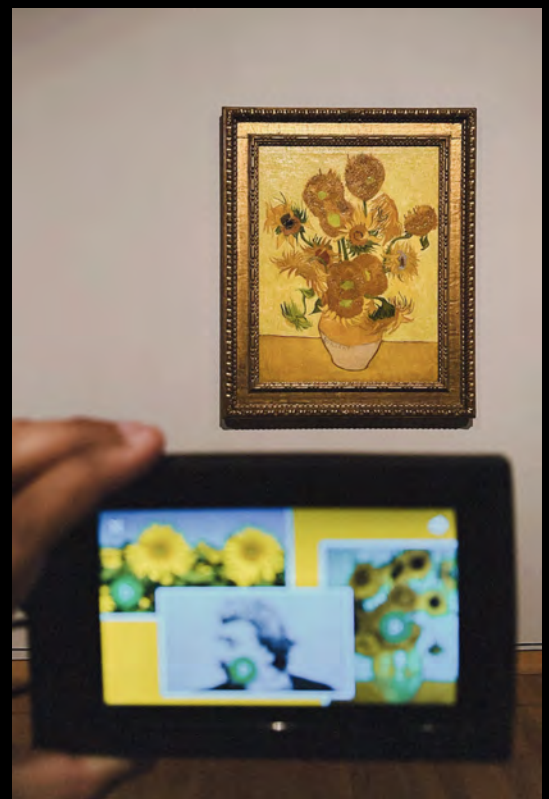


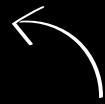
↖  
Art Walks of Amsterdam:  
Rijks Museum

Art Walks of Amsterdam:  
Van Gogh Museum



Getekende voeten in een schetsboekje van Vincent (1886)  
Drawings of feet in one of Vincent's sketchbooks





Art Walks of Amsterdam:  
Van Gogh Museum



# ACTION (POINTS) FOR HOPE

- Digital Empowerment Foundation to undertake the archival digitalisation of Requiem of Justice panels and performances.
- The network members will use digital means to share stories, progress and program updates from their organisations to ensure that the network can build, help and grow together.
- DEF will ensure that the Indian Network strengthens and add more diversity of organisations/individuals using art for social change.
- The Indian network will receive network visibility through a dedicated A-CODE newsletter that will be shared with the global network quarterly.





