



For Immediate Release

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ReOrient 2012 Festival and Forum Presents **HAFEZ MODIRZADEH AND FRIENDS** Sunday, November 18, at 7pm at Z Space

Iranian-American jazz saxophonist, Hafez Modirzadeh
is the headliner for the Closing Concert and Reception for
ReOrient 2012 Theatre Festival and Forum.

"At a time when the Middle East dominates the headlines, ReOrient aspires to forge clarity out of chaos. This timely festival incites us to look past the 24/7 media blitz to see the cycles of tragedy." —*San Jose Mercury News*.

The music of Hafez Modirzadeh is **"a radical cultural exchange"** (*New York Times*), **"achieving rare emotional impact"** (*All About Jazz*), **"thick with ideas and inspiration"** (*LA Times*), **"inclusive and compelling"** (*Downbeat*), with **"harmonies that vibrate and shimmer"** (*Chicago Reader*), in all **"a place where jazz, Middle Eastern music and the avant-garde converge"** (*Chicago Tribune*), **"unlike any other composer or musician...a composer to watch"** (*All Music Guide*).

(San Francisco) October 12, 2012 — Golden Thread Productions presents the **ReOrient 2012 [Closing Night Concert and Reception](#)** featuring **Hafez Modirzadeh and Friends**! Bay Area saxophonist, Hafez Modirzadeh who mixes Middle Eastern traditions with a modern jazz sound, will be joined by longtime collaborators **Ramin Zofonoun (piano)**, **Jamsheed Agahi (percussion)**, and **Timothy Volpicella (guitar)** for an unforgettable evening of live music that is sure to "ReOrient." Playwrights, directors and artists join us for a closing reception following the concert to mingle and celebrate this momentous occasion. **Tickets**, which include admission to the closing reception, are \$30 (\$20 for seniors and students) and can be purchased at goldenthread.org.

Based on concepts developed through more than thirty years of cross-cultural musical exploration, Modirzadeh applies his "chromodal" philosophy of music to both eastern and western traditions to create entirely new sounds. This draws upon American jazz and Persian *dastgah* heritages to represent an exciting new approach to cross-cultural musical collaboration, free of formal constraints, that layers the musical elements to create a new kind of harmonic blend. Modirzadeh's current work is a culmination of over two decades of devising original approaches to cross-cultural improvisation.

Featuring voices from Iraq, Iran, Syria, Tunisia, Egypt, England, and the U.S., Golden Thread's **[ReOrient 2012 Festival and Forum](#)** once again promises to turn San Francisco into a Mecca for innovative, spirited, and thought-provoking theatre from and about the Middle East. The ReOrient 2012 plays are diverse in style and content from writers with remarkably different backgrounds. The playwrights include MacArthur "Genius" Award winner Naomi Wallace, Middle East America Award winner and recipient of 2012



Steinberg/American Theatre Critics Circle Best New Play Award Yussef El Guindi, leading modernist Egyptian playwright Tawfiq Al-Hakim, winner of the William Saroyan Prize Silva Semerciyan, and local writers Elizabeth Benedict and Farzam Farrokhi. ReOrient 2012 performs in two series: Series A runs November 1-18, 2012 at Noh Space (2840 Mariposa St., San Francisco) and Series B runs for only two special performances November 16 and 17, 2012, at Z Space (450 Florida Street, San Francisco). Tickets for the festival are \$20 (discounts available) and can be purchased at goldenthread.org.

To add to the conversation, ReOrient Forum draws together artistic, academic, and grass roots experts to address the powerful themes brought to light by the ReOrient Festival plays. Augmenting the theatrical aspect of life in the Middle East, the ReOrient Forum promises to engage in aspects of social justice, poetic expression, politics and current events, among other topics relevant to the Middle Eastern experience. Acclaimed author and distinguished scholar of Middle Eastern studies and comparative literature, Professor Hamid Dabashi of Columbia University will kick off the Forum with a keynote address. This year's Forum features provocative panel discussions on topics such as "The Arab Spring and Its Dramatic Reverberations," "Engaged Performance: Building Dialogue Through Artistic Exchange," "From 'War on Drugs' to 'War on Terror': Parallels in Latino/Chicano and Middle Eastern American Performance," and "Comedic Counter Terrorism." Other special performances include a staged reading Yussef El Guindi's Middle East America-commissioned play MUMMY AND THE REVOLUTION (Saturday, November 17, at 2pm) and the Closing Night Concert and Reception featuring Hafez Modirzadeh & Friends (Sunday, November 18, at 7pm). Tickets are available at goldenthread.org.

Hafez Modirzadeh

From Beijing to Tehran, London to Granada, saxophonist/theorist Hafez Modirzadeh has performed and published on a cross-cultural musical approach he calls "chromodal," developed from American jazz and Iranian dastgah heritages, and allowing for an alinear improvisational practice able to incorporate multiple systems of music. This concept has been featured over the past two decades on such critically acclaimed releases as *Radif/Suite* (2010, with Amir ElSaffar on Pi Recordings), *Zaman 8* (2005, Six Degrees Records), *The Mystery of Sama* (1998, with Ramin Zoufonoun on Asian Improv Records), *The Peoples Blues* (1996, XDOT 25), and *Dandelion* and *Bemsha Alegria* (2003-07) from his own label, Disques Chromodal. His music has been described as a "radical cultural exchange" (*New York Times*), that is "inclusive and compelling" (*Downbeat*), "achieving rare emotional impact" (*All About Jazz*), and "worthy of any accolades or praise one can muster in the creative improvised music world" (*All Music Guide*). Modirzadeh's paths have crossed with numerous masters from world traditions, including Ornette Coleman, Mahmoud Zoufonoun, members of the original AACM, as well as his own generation of Asian American musical artists. A Senior Fulbright Scholar and NEA Jazz Fellow, Dr. Modirzadeh is currently a Professor of World Cultures in Music at San Francisco State University.

Golden Thread Productions is dedicated to exploring Middle Eastern cultures and identities as expressed around the globe. We present alternative perspectives of the Middle East by developing and producing theatrical work that is aesthetically varied and politically and viscerally engaging. Our mission is to make the Middle East a potent presence on the American stage and a treasured cultural experience. Through our work, we aim to create a world where the common human experience supersedes cultural and political differences. The Middle East lives inside us: as we redefine ourselves, we redefine the Middle East.