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**UH MITCHELL CENTER AWARDED \$200K GRANT TO
PROMOTE UNDERSTANDING OF MUSLIM CULTURE THROUGH ARTS**
Mitchell Center One of Only Six Institutions to Earn Building Bridges Grant

HOUSTON, Jan. 15, 2014 – The University of Houston’s Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center soon will launch a major initiative that will use art as a vehicle for expanding awareness of Muslim cultures.

The center is among only six institutions in the U.S. to receive a Building Bridges: Campus Community Engagement grant awarded by the Association of Performing Arts Presenters (APAP), which is funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art.

The \$200,000 Building Bridges grant will support the Mitchell Center’s INTERSECTIONS project. INTERSECTIONS will assemble four artists in residence, who will use their respective talents to create awareness of Muslim culture. Led by a steering committee of creative minds from Houston, these artists will connect with UH’s diverse student population through academic activities, as well as exhibitions and performances.

“The Building Bridges grant will help us show how the arts can be transformational for a university campus,” said Karen Farber, executive director of the Mitchell Center. “We can’t wait to get started with the remarkable artists that will be a part of the INTERSECTIONS initiative. We are so grateful to the Association of Performing Arts Presenters and Doris Duke foundations for their votes of confidence in the Mitchell Center and the University of Houston.”

Starting this fall, INTERSECTIONS artists in residence will participate in the Mitchell Center’s Interdisciplinary Arts courses “Art as Activism I and II.” They also will premiere works during the center’s annual CounterCurrent festival that will be held on and off campus during the spring semesters of 2015 and 2016. Participating INTERSECTIONS artists will be announced in early 2014.

The INTERSECTIONS steering committee includes a diverse collection of UH faculty members, artists and Houston arts professionals including Hosam Aboul-Ela, associate professor of English; Dina Alsowayel, associate director of Women’s Studies; Emran El-Badawi, director of Arab Studies; Nick Flynn, professor of Creative Writing; Jim Granato, director of the Hobby Center for Public Policy; Pat Jasper, director of folklife and traditional arts for the Houston Arts Alliance; Sehba Sarwar, writer and multidisciplinary artist; and Claudia Schmuckli, director and chief curator of Blaffer Art Museum.

In addition to the Mitchell Center, other Building Bridges grantees include Art2Action, Davis Performing Arts Center, the Cedar Cultural Center, LaGuardia Performing Arts Center and Wesleyan Center for the Arts.

About APAP

The Association of Performing Arts Presenters, based in Washington, DC, is the national service and advocacy organization dedicated to developing and supporting a robust performing arts presenting field and the

professionals who work within it. Our 1,500 members, from all 50 states and 34 countries, represent leading performing arts centers, municipal and university performance facilities, nonprofit performing arts centers, culturally specific organizations, foreign governments, as well as artist agencies, managers, touring companies, and national consulting practices that serve the field, and a growing roster of self-presenting artists. As a leader in the field, APAP works to effect change through advocacy, professional development, resource sharing and civic engagement. APAP is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization governed by a volunteer board of directors and led by President & CEO Mario Garcia Durham. In addition to presenting the annual APAP|NYC conference - the world's leading forum and marketplace for the performing arts (January 9-13, 2015) - APAP continues to be the industry's leading resource, knowledge and networking destination for the advancement of performing arts presenting.

About the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation

The mission of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation is to improve the quality of people's lives through grants supporting the performing arts, environmental conservation, medical research and child well-being, and through preservation of the cultural and environmental legacy of Doris Duke's properties.

About the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art

The Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art is an operating foundation funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. The mission of DDFIA is to improve the quality of people's lives through the study, understanding and appreciation of Islamic arts and cultures. Based in New York, the Building Bridges Program is a national grant making program of the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art.

About the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center for the Arts

The Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center for the Arts is dedicated to interdisciplinary collaboration across the performing, visual, and literary arts. Based at the University of Houston, the Mitchell Center commissions and produces new works, presents public performances and exhibitions, offers curriculum and scholarships, and hosts residencies with renowned visiting artists from throughout the world. The Center is home to the Mitchell Artist Lecture, an annual event featuring a pioneer in contemporary art-making, as well as CounterCurrent, an annual spring festival of new performance. The Mitchell Center forms an alliance among five departments at UH: the School of Art, Moores School of Music, School of Theatre & Dance, Creative Writing Program, and Blaffer Art Museum. For more information visit www.mitchellcenterforarts.org.

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