

# Restoring HOPE

Refugee  
Week 2012

June 17-23



NSW LAUNCH — JUNE 16, 2012

COORDINATED BY:



## **REFUGEE WEEK, 17 – 23 JUNE 2012**

Refugee Week highlights the importance of refugee-related issues, recognises the indomitable spirit of refugees and celebrates their achievements and stories. Activities to celebrate the occasion will occur across the country throughout the week. For more information visit [www.refugeeweek.org.au](http://www.refugeeweek.org.au).

## **LAUNCH PRINCIPAL ORGANISERS**

### **THE REFUGEE COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA**

The Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) is the national umbrella body for refugees and the organisations and individuals who support them. It has more than 150 organisational members and 550 individual members. They aim to promote the adoption of flexible, humane and constructive policies towards refugees, asylum seekers and displaced persons by the Australian and other Governments and their communities.

[www.refugeecouncil.org.au](http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au)

### **THE NSW SERVICE FOR THE TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION OF TORTURE AND TRAUMA SURVIVORS (STARTTS)**

STARTTS helps refugees and asylum seekers recover from their experiences and build new lives in Australia. Their services include counselling and psychotherapy, group therapy, activities and outings, camps and other specialised services for children and young people, physiotherapy, psychiatry, legal advice and community development.

[www.startts.org.au](http://www.startts.org.au)

### **FRIENDS OF STARTTS**

Friends of STARTTS supports the work that STARTTS does. They assist STARTTS by raising funds for specific services and educating the wider community about our collective responsibility to assist torture and trauma survivors to build new lives. Members of FOS raise funds and awareness for STARTTS' work, teach English to refugees, help out at camps for children and young people, raise awareness about refugee issues and organise events to celebrate refugees' lives.

[www.friendsofstartts.org](http://www.friendsofstartts.org)

### **AUSTRALIAN REFUGEE FILM FESTIVAL**

The Australian Refugee Film Festival is a volunteer, non profit organisation whose aims include facilitating the rehabilitation of trauma survivors through creative arts and film projects and to generate awareness of local and international issues related to human rights and refugees.

[www.australianrefugeefilmfestival.org](http://www.australianrefugeefilmfestival.org)

**This event could not have been held without the sponsorship and support of the following:**

*Network of Caring  
Department of Premier and Cabinet Victoria  
City of Sydney Council  
Pitt St Uniting Church  
AMES*

*Department of Health and Ageing  
NSW AMES  
Leichhardt Council  
Navitas*

## PROGRAM

- 2:00pm      Opening  
*Refreshments will be available*
- 2:15pm      Musical Performance  
*Mustafa Karami, Reza Karami, Siamak Farokhsroht and Mahour Jalili*
- 2:30pm      Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country  
*Yalda Hakim, MC*
- 2:35pm      Introduction to the Dario Palermo Refugee Art Exhibition  
*Mr Jorge Aroche, CEO, STARTTS*
- 2:40pm      Official Launch of Refugee Week  
*Paul Power, CEO Refugee Council of Australia*
- 2:45pm      Keynote address  
*Ms Nooria Wazefadost*
- 3:00pm      Presentation of the 2012 Humanitarian Awards  
*Mr Jorge Aroche, Chief Executive Officer, STARTTS*
- 3:30pm      Introduction to the Australian Refugee Film Festival  
*Mr Gary Taylor, President, Australian Refugee Film Festival*
- 3:35pm      Screening of films
- 5:00pm      Close

## 2011 HUMANITARIAN AWARD WINNERS

*Every year, as part of Refugee Week , STARTTS, in conjunction with the Refugee Council of Australia, gives Humanitarian Awards to those individuals or organisations making a difference to refugees in NSW. These awards are a chance to acknowledge and thank those who have made a significant contribution towards refugee issues in their chosen field.*

### **Refugee Community Worker (in a paid role) – Delilah Shinko**

Delilah's work assisting newly arrived refugees with their settlement needs began in 1993 with volunteer work helping newly arrived Iraqi refugees. Since then, Delilah has found employment at services such as Botany Migrant Resource Centre, Settlement Services International (SSI) and now as a Multicultural Community Liaison Officer with the NSW Police. In addition to these roles, Delilah continues to volunteer her time to help Humanitarian entrants' families on weekends and after hours, often long into the night. She is well known by her own Assyrian community as a person who never says 'No' to helping others in need.

### **Refugee Community Worker (in a volunteer role) – Santino Yuot**

Santino Yuot runs the Dinka Literacy Association, which aims to revive the Dinka language by running classes for adults and children and by engaging the community in Australia. The Dinka Literacy Association, under Santino's guidance, is reclaiming a part of people's heritage that was almost lost due to civil war and upheaval. Santino undertakes all his work at the Association as a volunteer, and works tirelessly in the background, achieving a great deal for his community but never seeking personal reward.

### **Refugee Supporter (in a paid role) – Ricci Bartels**

Over the past 30 years Ricci Bartels has worked with refugee and migrant communities across South Western Sydney in a variety of roles. She is currently the Manager of Fairfield Migrant Resource Centre and Deputy Chair of the Settlement Council of Australia, and was recently appointed a Multicultural Ambassador of Australia. Ricci contributes her considerable expertise to many boards and working groups in the sector, while at the same time working at a personal level to empower her refugee clients. Throughout her years of service she has shown great commitment to refugee issues and has advocated tirelessly for the cause with conviction and compassion.

### **Refugee Supporter (in a volunteer role) – Nizza Siano**

Nizza has been secretary for Labor for Refugees (L4R) from the time of its inception. This organisation was formed within the ALP to give voice to the ALP membership which was concerned about official Party policy toward refugees. L4R's work involves providing information and education, lobbying and organising events, all with the aim of influencing policy on refugees. As Secretary, Nizza has worked extremely hard to ensure the success of L4R and to achieve the best policy outcomes for refugees. She has conducted all her work on an entirely volunteer basis, driven by the strength of her convictions.

### **Youth - Zarina Karimi**

Zarina, a Year 11 student at Auburn Girls High School, arrived in Australia in 2007 and since that time has worked very hard to support other members of her own Afghan community. She has consistently shown maturity beyond her years through her volunteering activities helping not only her own community but also other communities to become successful citizens of Australia. She has, amongst other things, assisted people to fill in forms, volunteered as part of the Department of Education's Ethnic Schools Program, and assisted in a program to visit elderly patients at Auburn Hospital. Zarina is an outstanding role model and an inspiring young woman.

### **Media - Saber Baluch**

Over the past few years, Saber has undertaken a remarkable refugee journey. Since arriving as a refugee from Afghanistan, Saber has completed a Communications degree, worked as a trainer for community groups and started his own production company (Saber Media). This journey continues with his recent appointment to the role of Associate Editor at the SBS program 'Insight'. In all his work, Saber has an exemplary attitude to nurturing and empowering people, particularly those who have come from lived experiences of trauma. He is patient, respectful and creative, always bringing a new contribution and creating a safe space for others to participate in projects. He has that rare combination in media workers - balancing empathy, ethics and his desire to deliver a message to the world at large.

### **Legal - Anne Mainsbridge**

Anne Mainsbridge is a solicitor who until recently worked for the Public Interest Advocacy Centre as part of the Mental Health Legal Services Program. Anne provided legal support services to STARTTS clients. Refugees often have major problems accessing the legal system, and in many cases the stress of legal problems was severely exacerbating the condition of clients with existing trauma. Working closely with counsellors, Anne assisted many clients with a variety of legal issues. Her contribution was vital to the resolution of many cases, and she truly went above the call of duty to ensure that refugee clients were getting the best possible access to the law.

### **Education - Treehouse Theatre**

Treehouse Theatre has been working with young refugees since 2010. Treehouse, run by Catherine Maguire-Donvito and Ruth Hartcher-O'Brien, allows refugees to tell their personal stories, and then workshops these into drama scenes which are later performed. Through the benefits of drama, Treehouse assists in the resettlement of young refugees through the development of interpersonal skills, creativity, self-confidence, teamwork, resilience and a sense of community. Thanks to the hard work of the coordinators and the participants, performances of the "Tree of Life" are now attracting sell-out crowds in venues such as the Casula Powerhouse, and the program's reach and success is growing rapidly.

### **Public Sector - Adol Takpiny**

Adol Takpiny arrived as an eighteen year old Humanitarian Entrant in 2004, and immediately set about developing the skills required to make a difference for herself and her community. Adol is now employed as the Emerging Communities Liaison Officer within the Department of Attorney General and Justice, where for four years she has represented the views of refugee communities, and developed resources and programs for a range of different community and language groups. Adol has made an invaluable contribution to the activities of the Department and to the community more generally and in 2011 she was approached to take up the role of a Commissioner with the Community Relations Commission, testament to the high regard in which she is held by African and other communities across NSW.

### **Sport - AFL ACT/NSW Multicultural Program**

The AFL Multicultural Program was established to encourage participation and engagement of diverse communities with the game of AFL. Since 2010, the Program has been actively engaging young African refugees after concerns were raised about lack of opportunities for social inclusion in the community. The Program continues to provide a number of activities including training sessions and camps, skills development programs and umpiring sessions. A number of the players who have participated in the program have gone on to compete in local competitions, and the program has also assisted with extra activities such as community events, mentoring and general assistance to participants. Participants in the program have consistently highlighted feelings of empowerment, responsibility and inclusion as benefits of their time in the program.

### **Rural and Regional - Dr Bill Anscombe**

Dr Bill Anscombe is the Coordinator and Senior Lecturer for Social Work Programs at Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga. Dr Anscombe has exhibited a strong desire to help refugees with their education and has seemingly made it his personal mission to provide extra support to them, consistently going out of his way to help them overcome the common barriers to study. He has assisted many refugee students to enrol in and excel at the University. Additionally, Dr Anscombe has provided social support to those refugees who have no other connections in the community. He has a great belief in the potential of refugee students and has made incredible efforts to help them to realise this potential.

### **Business - Deeqo Omar**

Deeqo Omar is the founder and driving force behind Amazing Family Day Care, Sydney's first multicultural family day care service. Amazing FDC employs about 160 family day carers, almost all of whom are refugee women. Many of these women have had limited access to education and would never have approached another service provider looking for employment. Amazing FDC has given these women the support and guidance needed for them to enter the workforce, and now 80 of these women are undertaking training in Certificate III Childcare organized by Amazing FDC. All this has happened in only one year of operation, and the success of Amazing FDC demonstrates that a business started with the aim of helping others can also be a tremendously successful enterprise.





## DARIO PALERMO REFUGEE ART EXHIBITION

*The Refugee Art Exhibition was originally started by Dario Palermo for Friends of STARTTS. Since Dario passed away in 2006, the exhibition has been continued in his memory. Some examples of Dario's work are also on display in the exhibition.*

*This year's exhibition chronicles refugee artists from the last three decades. Starting with those fleeing oppression in South America in the 1980s through to the lone painting by a woman and her children currently in detention, the exhibition showcases artists who have already made a significant contribution to the Australian arts scene, through to those for whom this is their first exhibition. It is a tribute to artistic excellence and human resilience at the same time.*

### Artist Profiles

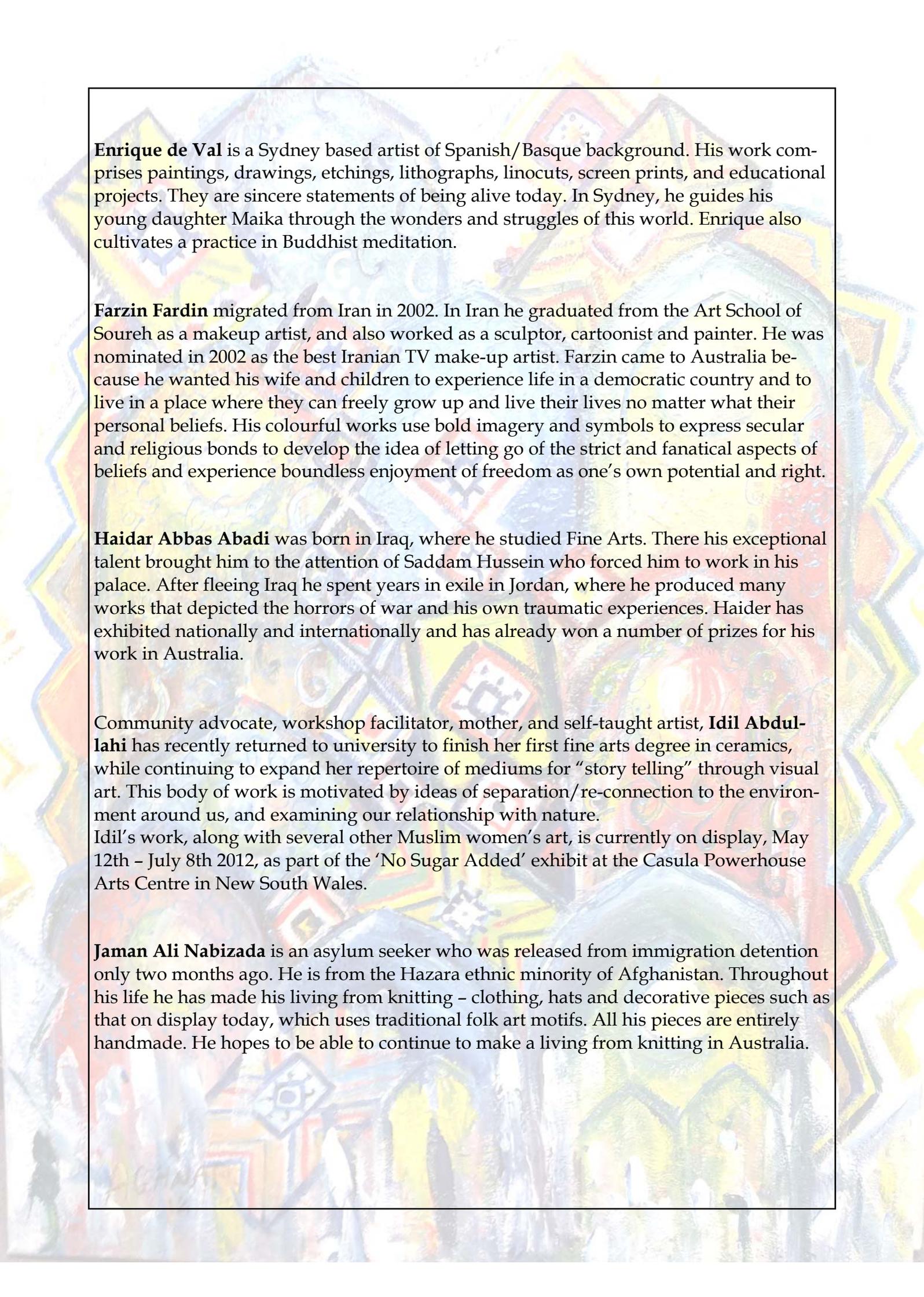
**Aghnar Niazi** came to Australia in 1994 to find a safe home for herself and her family away from the war in Iraq. She studied Fine Arts at the University of Baghdad, gained a Masters degree in 1990 and worked as a high-school art teacher for several years. In Australia she has continued to practice and develop her art, and has been involved in many community projects and art exhibitions around Sydney.

**Anton Olea** is a surrealist painter living in Sydney Australia. He was born and raised in Chile, Santiago and then came to Australia in the late 1980s. Anton has been painting for more than 25 years and has gained a much respected reputation through his artworks. Using a variation of fantastical visual imagery from the subconscious mind, unexpected juxtapositions and techniques to critique human experience and expressionism, Anton has exhibited in various locations across Sydney and the world.

**Carl Ruhinda** started drawing and making clay objects since his earliest days as a child in East Africa. Art has become a thread running through Carl's life and, inspired by his native Africa, he tries to show how art represents a universal, poetic language which is part of how humanity collectively creates new meaning and new reality in the world.

*"My art is full of references to earlier African art, including not only painting on canvases but also painting on bodies, tattoos and jewellery, rock caves, and traditional clothes. Fused in contemporary modern Art, it is focused to bring originality and a new dimension to the world of art."*

**Carlos Barrios** grew up in El Salvador where his childhood was shaped by archaeology and visits to ancient sites. At the age of six he ventured into painting and collage and discovered a strong desire to create pictures of his world. During adolescence he continued painting and drawing through the country's decade-long civil war. As an established Sydney artist, Carlos continues to find that his arts practice heightens awareness, raise questions and reveals insights.



**Enrique de Val** is a Sydney based artist of Spanish/Basque background. His work comprises paintings, drawings, etchings, lithographs, linocuts, screen prints, and educational projects. They are sincere statements of being alive today. In Sydney, he guides his young daughter Maika through the wonders and struggles of this world. Enrique also cultivates a practice in Buddhist meditation.

**Farzin Fardin** migrated from Iran in 2002. In Iran he graduated from the Art School of Soureh as a makeup artist, and also worked as a sculptor, cartoonist and painter. He was nominated in 2002 as the best Iranian TV make-up artist. Farzin came to Australia because he wanted his wife and children to experience life in a democratic country and to live in a place where they can freely grow up and live their lives no matter what their personal beliefs. His colourful works use bold imagery and symbols to express secular and religious bonds to develop the idea of letting go of the strict and fanatical aspects of beliefs and experience boundless enjoyment of freedom as one's own potential and right.

**Haidar Abbas Abadi** was born in Iraq, where he studied Fine Arts. There his exceptional talent brought him to the attention of Saddam Hussein who forced him to work in his palace. After fleeing Iraq he spent years in exile in Jordan, where he produced many works that depicted the horrors of war and his own traumatic experiences. Haider has exhibited nationally and internationally and has already won a number of prizes for his work in Australia.

Community advocate, workshop facilitator, mother, and self-taught artist, **Idil Abdullahi** has recently returned to university to finish her first fine arts degree in ceramics, while continuing to expand her repertoire of mediums for "story telling" through visual art. This body of work is motivated by ideas of separation/re-connection to the environment around us, and examining our relationship with nature.

Idil's work, along with several other Muslim women's art, is currently on display, May 12th - July 8th 2012, as part of the 'No Sugar Added' exhibit at the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre in New South Wales.

**Jaman Ali Nabizada** is an asylum seeker who was released from immigration detention only two months ago. He is from the Hazara ethnic minority of Afghanistan. Throughout his life he has made his living from knitting - clothing, hats and decorative pieces such as that on display today, which uses traditional folk art motifs. All his pieces are entirely handmade. He hopes to be able to continue to make a living from knitting in Australia.

**Juan Gimenez** was a political refugee from Uruguay and arrived in Australia in 1976. He has always lived in Sydney's Western suburbs and has been involved in a wide variety of community and multicultural projects across the area. Juan's artwork comes out of the *Constructivismo* style which takes influences from, among other places, the Maya and the Aztecs, however he tries to blend this old style with his new life in Australia to create a contemporary expression of an Australian identity.

**Juma Jafariis** of the Hazara ethnicity from Afghanistan. He studied graphic design in Tehran, but also works in photography, calligraphy, painting and sculpture. The posters on display here were created for United Nations day in Tehran, based on the first letter of the Farsi word for 'peace'.

**Karma Phuntsok** was born in Lhasa, Tibet. With his family he fled his homeland after the Chinese invasion, escaping into India as refugees. Through his school years in India he studied drawing and painting and in 1973 studied the Thangka painting technique with a master of traditional Tibetan Thangka painting in Nepal. Since then he has been making paintings based on Tibetan Buddhist deities. In 1981 Karma migrated to Australia, and now lives in the "bush" north of Kyogle with his wife and son. His paintings are collected world-wide, published in various books and magazines, and displayed in galleries such as the Art Gallery of New South Wales and the Queensland Art Gallery.

**Nawal Khatiwada** was born in Bhutan. When he was nine years old he and his family walked across the border to India and then caught a truck to Nepal. After spending seventeen years in Nepal, he came to Australia on a humanitarian visa in 2010. He has been interested in art and painting since childhood. Despite growing up as a refugee in Nepal he made a strong determination to continue my study in fine arts as a professional. Since arriving in Australia, he has further sought to pursue this study and is enrolled at TAFE to further develop his skills as he finds the cultural and artistic expression to be very different between Nepal and Australia.

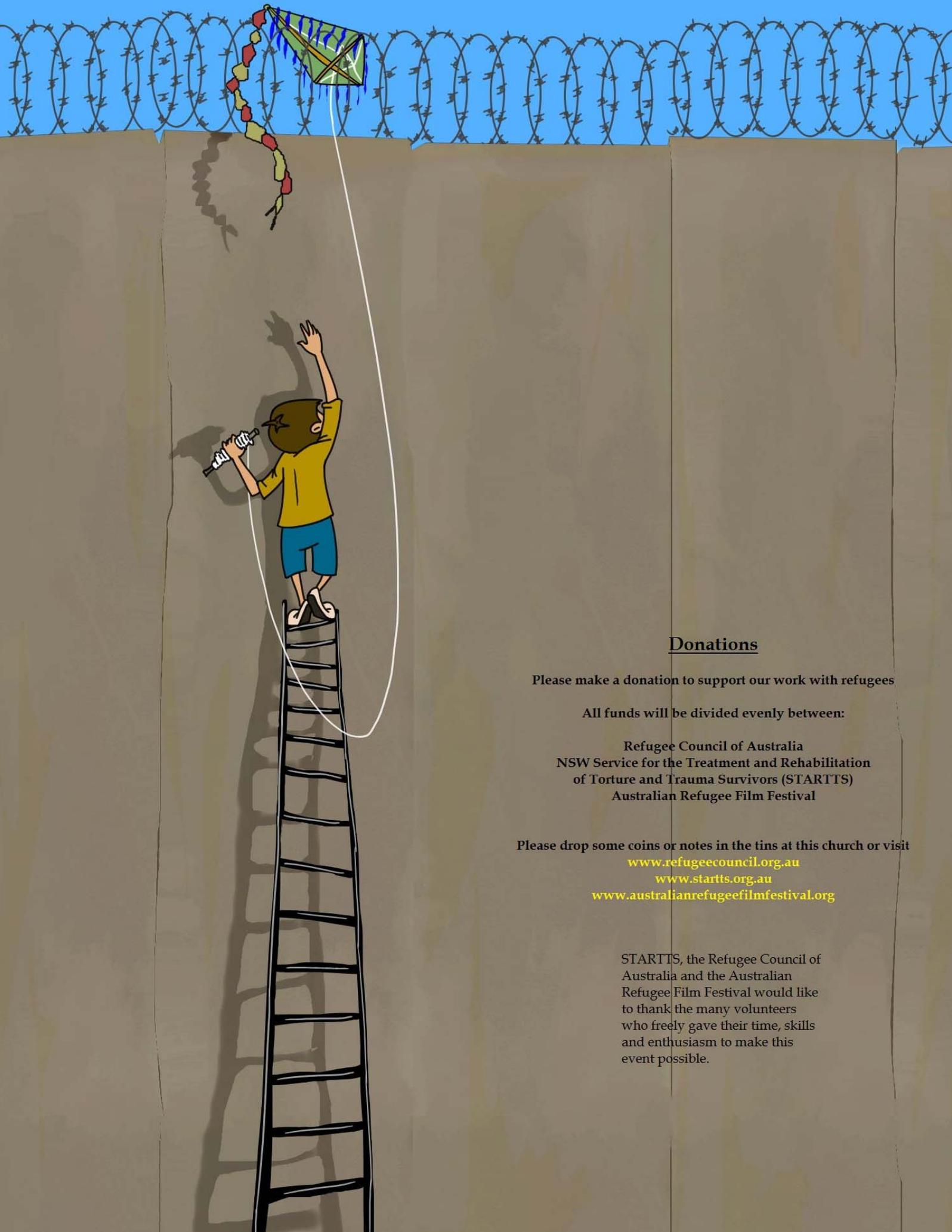
**Ramin Khorshidi** - *"Let me not beg for the stilling of my pain, but for the heart to conquer it."*

**Ranjini** is currently in indefinite detention in Villawood with her two children.

**Shazia Khadim** was born in Quetta, Pakistan and obtained her Bachelor of Fine Arts from The University of Balchistan. This series of paintings has as its theme: "The different faces of human beings".

*"This is a continuation of my previous work that was exploring optimism. Whilst working on this new series different feelings emerged and I found myself grappling with the deeper issues of the human condition. The external feelings versus the internal feelings, good versus bad and the way this is expressed on people's faces. Also we don't know what's happening behind the façade, often when we encounter the darker aspects of human beings we respond negatively. My art investigates ways we can bring light and optimism to these dark places."*

**Syed Mosawi** is currently in Year 11 at Holroyd High School. He hopes to study art after completing high school.



### Donations

Please make a donation to support our work with refugees

All funds will be divided evenly between:

Refugee Council of Australia  
NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation  
of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS)  
Australian Refugee Film Festival

Please drop some coins or notes in the tins at this church or visit

[www.refugeecouncil.org.au](http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au)

[www.startts.org.au](http://www.startts.org.au)

[www.australianrefugeefilmfestival.org](http://www.australianrefugeefilmfestival.org)

STARTTS, the Refugee Council of Australia and the Australian Refugee Film Festival would like to thank the many volunteers who freely gave their time, skills and enthusiasm to make this event possible.