BROOKLYN BEATS TO BEIRUT STREETS

Poets, artists and educators Mark Gonzales, Omar Chakaki & Nizar Wattad – collectively representing Mexico, Syria, Palestine, & the USA – offer a unique examination of identity, culture, imperialism, youth empowerment, revolution and growing up as 'other' in the United States. Despite vast differences in their upbringings, the three performers are united by a unique world-view, informed by the rapidly-evolving art form known as Hip-Hop. This street culture allowed them to transcend national identity and begin a conversation that creates community based upon lived experience.

An energetic, informative and often startling presentation in spoken-word and rhyme, 'Brooklyn Beats to Beirut Streets' traces the artists' development alongside the birth and growth of Hip-Hop, in a reading of the world through their words. This poetic performance is an intersection of cultures sharing space on a stage that gives voice to marginalized histories and challenges the audience to re-examine worldviews.

At close, the artists and audience participate in an open and honest discussion of the above issues and more, with hopes of building further bridges of understanding between individuals, cultures and institutions.

The proposed Panel consists of a dynamic, 50-minute spoken word presentation, followed by an interactive discussion with the audience. This Panel can be supplemented by presentations from other panelists to form a larger discussion on the Arts in Global Society.