

Celebrated Iraqi musician Naseer Shamma named UNESCO Artist for Peace



Naseer Shamma
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Irina Bokova, the Director-General of UNESCO, will name Iraqi composer and oud virtuoso Naseer Shamma as a UNESCO Artist for Peace in a ceremony at UNESCO Headquarters on 23 February (6.30 pm).

Mr Shamma is appointed “in recognition of his commitment to support the musical education of young people in Iraq and beyond, his unfailing efforts to promote the message of peace through his performances and his dedication to the universal ideals and aims of the Organization”.

In his capacity as a UNESCO Artist for Peace, Mr Shamma will support UNESCO’s work on education for peace among young people as well as the safeguarding of cultural heritage in Iraq and in the region.

Born in El Koute (Iraq) in 1963, Naseer Shamma is celebrated both as an oud performer and as a composer of music for film, television and the theatre. A graduate of the Baghdad Music Academy, Mr Shamma heads the Arab Oud House in Cairo, which he founded in 1999.

Through his numerous tours, discs and publications, Mr Shamma has won appreciation for the oud and for the rich repertoire of Arabic music well beyond the Arab world. He has also worked in association with leading western artists such as US jazz musician Wynton Marsalis.

Naseer Shamma is also renowned for his commitment to peace, a theme he promotes during musical performances, particularly with young audiences. He has created humanitarian associations such as "The Flower Road" and Ahlima to help children and displaced people. Since 2012, he has organized many concerts in Baghdad, particularly during the International Day of Peace celebrated on 21 September.

UNESCO Artists for Peace are internationally renowned personalities who use their influence, charisma and prestige to help promote UNESCO’s message and programmes. UNESCO works with these distinguished personalities to heighten the public’s awareness of key development issues and inform it of the Organization’s action in these fields.

Journalists wishing to cover the ceremony and concert are invited to request accreditation from:
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