

Association for Bahá'í Studies—North America  
28th Annual Conference

Spirit and  
Intellect

---

Advancing Civilization

*3–6 September 2004 • Hyatt Regency Calgary  
Calgary, Alberta, Canada*

Association for Bahá'í Studies–North America  
28th Annual Conference  
“Spirit and Intellect: Advancing Civilization”

3–6 September 2004  
Hyatt Regency Calgary  
Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Friday (Special Interest Groups) . . . . .	3
Saturday . . . . .	8
Sunday . . . . .	10
Monday . . . . .	12
Abstracts and biographical notes . . . . .	13
Artists performing . . . . .	27

***Important Information***

***Conference Badge.*** Your conference badge is your “ticket of admission” to all sessions. You must wear it to attend conference sessions. The security personnel will not allow admittance to anyone without a badge.

***Security.*** The security personnel are there to assist you. Please follow their instructions at all times. They can be identified by red ribbons on their badges.

***Promptness.*** This year the schedule of sessions is very full. To give equal time to the speakers, the sessions must begin on time. We request your cooperation in arriving promptly.

***Cell Phones.*** The ringing of mobile telephones in the audience is very disruptive to a presentation. Please turn off your cell phone or put it in “silent” mode while you are in the conference sessions.

***The Children's and Junior Youth Program.*** (Children must be preregistered to attend.) The Children's Program, for ages 5 to 15, is being held in Neilson 1-3. Parents may drop off children at their program 15 minutes before the adult session starting time. Parents are asked to pick up their children promptly at the close of each session and for the lunch breaks. (Meals are not included in the children's program.) The times for Children/Junior Youth sessions are

Friday, 3 September	9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Saturday, 4 September	9:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
Sunday, 5 September	9:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
Monday, 6 September	9:00 a.m.-12:45 p.m.

The program of children's activities is available at the Conference Registration Table. Parents are required to sign a Medical Information and Emergency Health Care Release form and return it to the Children's Program coordinators.

***The Conference Bookstore*** is operated by Unity Arts. The bookstore is located in the Gallery and offers a wide selection of books and materials, including books and CDs by authors and artists presenting at the conference, and Bahá'í jewelry. Hours of operation are

Friday, 3 September	2:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.
Saturday, 4 September	9:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.
Sunday, 5 September	9:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.
Monday, 6 September	9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

***Evaluation Forms.*** The ABS Executive Committee asks for your assistance and cooperation in filling out the conference evaluation forms provided in your conference kit and for each breakout session. Please drop off your evaluations in the containers provided or at the Conference Registration Table. Your feedback is very valuable to us in our continuing efforts to improve the Conference.

***Membership.*** In support of the Association's membership drive, we ask you to encourage your friends and Spiritual Assemblies to join the Association. Please use the membership form enclosed in your conference kit. More forms are available at the Conference Information Desk.

***Audio Recordings.*** Conference plenary sessions will be recorded and will be available for purchase on audio CD. An order form is included in your conference kit and additional forms are available at the Conference Information Desk. Please fill out the form with your credit card number and the tapes will be mailed to you after the conference.

***Lost and Found.*** Lost and found articles should be reported to the Conference Registration Table. After the close of the conference, any items not picked up will be turned over to the hotel.

☆ ***NEW FEATURE—Topic Lunches.*** If you would like to meet other people interested in a particular field or topic, sign up on the board in the Registration area—groups will meet Saturday and walk together to a nearby restaurant for lunch and discussion on the topics or fields listed.

☆ ***NEW FEATURE—Evening "Coffeehouse."*** After each evening's program there will be a coffeehouse set up where conference attendees may drink coffee, socialize and enjoy listening to live music. Performing artists at the conference are encouraged to sign up to perform at these events. A sign-up sheet will be available near the Conference Registration Table.

## ***Friday, 3 September 2004***

9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

### **Special Interest Groups**

#### ***Location***

*Imperial Ballroom 2*

#### **The Arts**

Coordinator: ANNE GORDON PERRY

9:00 a.m. Creative devotions with SUSAN LEWIS WRIGHT

9:15 a.m. Announcements/reports/*ORISON*

9:20 a.m. Arts, Development, and Humanity's Urgent Needs  
MARK GRANFAR and TAHIRIH DANESH

10:20 a.m. *Break*

10:30 a.m. "Night's Alive" Youth Art Workshop EDWARD EPP and  
MARCY MURDOCK

11:00 a.m. "Afterlives": Using a Play Reading for Devotional and  
Artistic Gatherings LINDA O'NEIL

12:00 p.m. *Lunch Break*

1:45 p.m. Creative devotions with SUSAN LEWIS WRIGHT

2:00 p.m. Mandalas: An Art of Symbolism—Visual art by MARGARET  
BREMNER

3:00 p.m. All Ladders Start in the Heart BRUCE FILSON

4:00 p.m. The Light (short story and poetry) IAN KLUGE

4:30 p.m. Consultation on the Role of the Arts in Bahá'í Communities  
and the World in General

*Imperial Ballroom 9*

#### **Bahá'í Language Educators**

Coordinator: SANDRA FOTOS

10:00–12:00 p.m. The Role of International Pioneers in Advancing  
Civilization GERALDINE GRABER

12:00 p.m. *Lunch Break*

1:30 p.m. Professional Bahá'í Partnerships in EFL DARA SHAW

2:15 p.m. The Art of Encouragement NANCY WATTERS

3:00 p.m. *Break*

3:30 p.m. Roundtable on Bahá'í-inspired Activities (Facilitator: DARA  
SHAW). Presenters: (1) NANCY WATTERS: Sticks and Stones Can  
Break My Bones and Names Can Break My Spirit; (2) JOY  
ALLCHIN: Book Presentation: *Cross-Cultural Awareness* by  
Elizabeth Gibson; (3) DARA SHAW: Making Inroads in  
Multicultural Awareness of Religious and Cultural Diversity at a  
Rural West Virginia High School; (4) JOY ALLCHIN: Teaching  
African American History and Language Skills to Middle School  
ESL Students in Greenbelt, Maryland; (5) SANDRA FOTOS: Draw  
What You Hear—A Sharing Activity

4:30 p.m. BLE SIG Annual Meeting

6:00 p.m. *Fellowship Dinner*

Friday

*Walker*

**Bioethics**

Coordinator: MARYAM VALAPOUR; Chair: RIDVAN MOQBEL

- 9:30 *a.m.* Stem Cell Research: What Is Human? What Do We Own?  
NIMA AFLATOONI and RON SHIGETA  
10:30 *a.m.* Ethical Challenges in Clinical Research Trials PAYAM  
DEGHANI and ASHLEY ROBERTS  
11:30 *a.m.* Discussion and planning

*Imperial Ballroom 5*

**Consultation and Conflict Resolution**

Coordinator: TRIP BARTHEL

- All presentations will be experiential and interactive.  
9:00 *a.m.* Introduction and Panel Discussion  
9:40 *a.m.* Global Governance and Consultation JOHN KOLSTOE  
10:50 *a.m.* Creating Empathy RAYTHEON RAWLS  
11:50 *a.m.* *Lunch Break*  
1:10 *p.m.* Beyond the Culture of Contest MICHAEL KARLBERG  
2:20 *p.m.* Consensus and Values in Large Group Process  
FELICITY EDWARDS  
3:30 *p.m.* Ethical Decision Making TRIP BARTHEL  
4:00 *p.m.* Group sharing session on individual activities and future  
of Consultation SIG

*Imperial Ballroom 7*

**Ecology**

Coordinator: JOHN STEERE

- 9:30 *a.m.* Agriculture and Religion: A Necessary Unity PAUL HANLEY  
10:15 *a.m.* Dialogue about Agriculture and Religion  
10:45 *a.m.* *Break*  
11:00 *a.m.* The Man of the Trees and the 2005 Launching of the United  
Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development  
PAUL MANTLE  
11:45 *a.m.* Dialogue on the work and legacy of Richard St.  
Barbe Baker and its implications for sustainable development  
12:15 *p.m.* *Lunch Break*  
2:00 *p.m.* Workshop: To Build the World Anew: Fostering a Bahá'í  
Approach to Education for Sustainable Development  
Facilitators: PETER ADRIANCE and JOHN STEERE

*Imperial Ballroom 1*

**Education**

Coordinator: KAMILLA BAHBAHANI

- 9:00 *a.m.* Welcome and Devotions

- 9:05 *a.m.* Education for Critical Moral Consciousness ELENA MUSTAKOVA-POSSARDT
- 9:55 *a.m.* Educating Mind and Spirit: Character Education in North American Public Schools NANCY WATTERS
- 10:40 *a.m.* *Break*
- 10:50 *a.m.* Intellect and Wisdom: The Two Most Luminous Lights in Either World BEATRIZ FERREIRA
- 11:40 *a.m.* A Changing Focus: The Trend toward Inclusion of Spiritual Content in Educational Theory and Practice DEBORAH LARIMER
- 12:25 *p.m.* UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005–2014: A Bahá'í Approach PETER ADRIANCE
- 12:30 *p.m.* *Lunch Break*
- 1:30 *p.m.* The Bahá'í Curriculum for Peace Education MARIE GERVAIS
- 2:20 *p.m.* Influence of Faith on Pedagogical Practices TRACEY SNIPES
- 3:05 *p.m.* *Break*
- 3:15 *p.m.* Transition of Methodology and Depth of Scholarship: Fifty Years of Study of Published Text Migrating to Computer-based System R. TED ANDERSON and ROBERT B. CLARK
- 4:05 *p.m.* Evolution of the Education SIG: Consultation on development

*Bannerman***International Affairs**

Coordinator: MARTHA SCHWEITZ

10:00 *a.m.*–12:00 *p.m.* All those interested in issues related to peace and conflict, international human rights, international law, world order studies and governance, international relations, international political economy, globalization, international development, international organizations, trans-national civil society, etc., are invited to come to this inaugural meeting. Students and potential mentors are particularly encouraged to attend.

*Imperial Ballroom 3***Tawaciñ Wáste Wiñ Indigenous Studies Circle**

Coordinator: PAULINE TUTTLE

Theme: “To Walk in Beauty: Balancing Spirit and Intellect in the Scholarship of Indigenous Bahá'ís”

- 8:30 *a.m.* Opening Prayers
- 9:00 *a.m.* Walking the Straight Path: Empowering Indigenous Junior Youth to Become “Outstanding Examples of Education, of Culture, and of Civilization for the Entire World” Daniel Baumgartner (Patricia Locke Scholarship Recipient) Introduced by JORDAN BIGHORN (2003 Patricia Locke Scholarship Recipient)
- 9:45 *a.m.* The Role of the Arts in Social and Economic Development LOUISE PROFEIT-LEBLANC
- 10:35 *a.m.* *Break*

Friday

10:40 *a.m.* From Heart to Breath to Song: The History and Impact of  
Aboriginal Bahá'ís in Canada—An Oral History Documentation  
Project GRETCHEN JORDAN-BASTOW and PAULINE TUTTLE  
11:20 *a.m.* Art, Pathway of the Hearts: Incorporating the Arts into  
Indigenous Study Circles MARY GUBATAYAO-HAGEN and TULI RODE  
12:10 *p.m.* *Lunch Break*  
1:00 *p.m.* Vision Statement and SIG Mandate Consultation  
1:45 *p.m.* Consultation  
3:45 *p.m.* *Break*  
4:00 *p.m.* Building Infrastructure: Introductory Overview DANIELLE LOCKE  
5:15 *p.m.* Closing prayers and song

*Herald*

**Philosophy**

Coordinator: IAN KLUGE

9:00 *a.m.* Welcome and Devotions  
9:10 *a.m.* That's "Mr. Universe" To You! ROBERT MICHELL  
10:15 *a.m.* *Break*  
10:30 *a.m.* Bahá'í Ontology: An Initial Reconnaissance IAN KLUGE  
11:35 *a.m.* Discussion and questions; Group business

*Stephen*

**Science and Religion**

Coordinator: RON SHIGETA

Theme: "Biology and Belief"

9:00 *a.m.* Prayer and Opening Comments  
9:15 *a.m.* Are We Living in a Matrix? What Can Computers Tell Us  
about God? HOOMAN KATIRAI  
9:40 *a.m.* The Universe that Didn't Know We Were Coming and the  
God Who Did DALE E. LEHMAN  
10:05 *a.m.* *Break*  
10:20 *a.m.* One Small Step for a Dog: A Vignette from the Emerging  
Scientific Discipline of Anthrozoology ALEXALI S. BRUBAKER  
10:45 *a.m.* Beauty RON SHIGETA  
11:10 *a.m.* *Break*  
11:20 *a.m.* Universal Values WILLIAM HATCHER  
12:05 *p.m.* *Lunch*  
1:05 *p.m.* *Session resumes*  
1:10 *p.m.* Special Focus Session: Biology and Belief STEPHEN FRIBERG,  
WILLIAM HATCHER, and ROBERT STOCKMAN  
2:40 *p.m.* *Break*  
2:55 *p.m.* The Attribution of Intelligence: Its Profound Social and  
Biological Implications. ROBERT MICHELL  
3:20 *p.m.* Life under the Microscope: Independent Investigation of Truth  
and the Unity of Religion and Science FREDERICK D. ECKFELD  
3:45 *p.m.* *Break*

4:00 p.m. Applying Science to the Spiritual (and Vice Versa) BEN JONES

4:25 p.m. Religion as Science WILLIAM HENRY SHARP

5:00 p.m. Dinner with speakers/review

*Doll*

### **The Study of Religion**

Coordinator: ROBERT STOCKMAN

9:00 a.m. Welcome

9:30 a.m. An Examination of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Tour of North America,  
1912 ROBERT STOCKMAN

10:30 a.m. *Break*

11:00 a.m. Ant Hills, Entropy, and Organigrams: A New Model of  
Spirituality as “Integrated Functioning” ROBERT MICHELL

12:00 p.m. *Lunch Break*

2:00 p.m. Patterns in the Life Stories of the Founders of Faith HAROLD ROSEN

3:00 p.m. The Infallibility of the Universal House of Justice: A Bahá’í  
Dialogue PETER TERRY

*Herald*

### **Campus Associations for Bahá’í Studies (CABS)**

2:00 p.m. An opportunity for members of the Campus Associations for  
Bahá’í Studies to meet together. Chair: DUNCAN HANKS

## ***Friday Evening***

*Imperial Ballroom*

7:00 p.m.

### **Plenary Session**

Chair: RIDVAN MOQBEL

Official Conference Welcome

The Special Role of the Humanities and Spiritual Traditions in  
Research and Public Policy Engagement HAROLD COWARD

8:30 p.m.

*Break*

8:45 p.m.

### ***Artistic Program***

LANA QUINN, harpist; and poetry of Rumi

REMEMBRANCE ENSEMBLE (EMILY WRIGHT, BECKY RICE, and JILL  
SIMON)

ARLEN YANCH, piano

ZOHREH GERVAIS, soprano

SUSAN LEWIS WRIGHT, singer/songwriter

ARTIN ASHRAF, flamenco guitar

Round dance

## ***Saturday, 4 September 2004***

*Imperial Ballroom*

9:00 a.m.

### **Plenary Session**

Chair: LOUISE PROFEIT-LEBLANC

Devotions

The New World Disorder: Obstacles to Universal Peace

W. ANDY KNIGHT

10:15 a.m.

*Break*

10:30 a.m.

“Sanctify Thy Heart, Illumine Thy Soul, and Sharpen Thy Sight”: Discovering Gems of Spiritual Truth NICOLA TOWFIGH

Presentation of Patricia Locke Scholarship by the ABS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

11:45 a.m.

*Lunch Break*

2:00–5:30 p.m.

### **Simultaneous Breakout Sessions**

*Herald/Doll*

#### **Knowledge, Interpretation, and Reason I**

2:00–3:00 p.m. The Clay and the Ocean: Human Knowledge and Revelation PIERRE-YVES MOCQUAIS

3:15–4:15 p.m. The Role of the Scholar in Individual Interpretation ANNE FURLONG

4:30–5:30 p.m. Correlating Spirit and Intellect in Academic Disciplines: A Conceptual Model with Practical Considerations BEHROOZ SABET

*Bannerman/Walker*

#### **Approaches to the Natural Sciences**

2:00–3:00 p.m. Can a Bahá’í Perspective and the Covenant Motivate the Progress of Science? DINESH SINGH

3:15–4:15 p.m. Dr. George Washington Carver: The Personification of Spirit and Intellect GLORIA HAITHMAN

4:30–5:30 p.m. When Bahá’í Natural Metaphors Speak Directly to the African Cultural Imagination JOSEPH NGA

*Imperial Ballroom 1*

#### **Spiritual Realities in the Workplace**

2:00–3:00 p.m. Invisible Touches NEDA NAJIBI

3:15–4:15 p.m. Beyond Servant Leadership: Applying Spiritual Values in the Workplace NOUSHA ETEMAD

*Neilson 1*

4:30–5:30 p.m. Metarhythms for Today’s World ROSEMARY B. CLOSSON and DAVID L. CLOSSON

- Imperial Ballroom 2*      **The Bahá'í Faith and North American Cultural Minorities I**  
 2:00–3:00 *p.m.* Understanding American Indians and the Bahá'í Writings  
 with an Emphasis on Urban Indians LITTLEBRAVE BEASTON  
 3:15–5:15 *p.m.* Growth and Retention in the Bahá'í Community and  
 American Indians DANIELLE LOCKE and BILL GEISSLER
- Imperial Ballroom 3*      **Community, Identity, and Learning I**  
 2:00–3:00 *p.m.* Collaborative Scholarship, Service-Learning, and Com-  
 munity Building: The Scholarly Relevance of Ruhi Study Circles  
 and Indigenous Ways of Knowing SUSAN BRILL DE RAMÍREZ  
 3:15–4:15 *p.m.* Cosmopolitanism and Contending Special Allegiances  
 STEPHANIE URIE  
 4:30–5:30 *p.m.* The Meaning of Relationship: Intellectualizing Spiritual  
 Principles for Increased Participation in Community Development  
 MARCELLA LAFEVER
- Imperial Ballroom 5*      **Uncovering Hidden Roles: Women in Bahá'í History**  
 2:00–3:00 *p.m.* Ásíyih Khánum and Bahíyyih Khánum MINA KIANI  
 RASSEKH  
 3:15–4:15 *p.m.* Sarah Farmer, Green Acre, and the 1905 Portsmouth  
 Peace Treaty ANNE GORDON PERRY
- Imperial Ballroom 7*      **The Impact of Practice on Theory**  
 2:00–3:00 *p.m.* Bahá'í Principles in Design: An Aboriginal Housing  
 Alternative ANGELA ROUT  
 3:15–4:15 *p.m.* Applying Bahá'í Principles to Research and Practice  
 TAM TRUONG DONNELLY  
 4:30–5:30 *p.m.* Counseling Strategies with the Seven Valleys  
 MICHELLE THELEN STEERE and TULI RODE
- Imperial Ballroom 9*      **Exploring the Revealed Word**  
 2:00–3:00 *p.m.* Unraveling Some Mystical Dimensions in Bahá'u'lláh's  
 earliest Post-Revelation Writings SHAHROKH MONJAZEB  
 3:15–4:15 *p.m.* A Possible Reality of the Word of God JORDAN BIGHORN  
 4:30–5:30 *p.m.* Transformation, Recognition, and Belief in Javáhiru'l-  
 Asrár RON SHIGETA
- Stephen*      **Art and the Exploration of Reality I**  
 2:00–3:00 *p.m.* Bahá'u'lláh, Science, and Science Fiction: The Quest for  
 Za'farán and a "Theory of Everything" VIVA B. TOMLIN  
 3:15–4:15 *p.m.* Great Women in the Bábí and Bahá'í Dispensation  
 SOHI RASTEGAR  
 4:30–5:30 *p.m.* Music, Astrophysics, and Spiritual Reality: An Explor-  
 ation of Musical Metaphor in the Bahá'í Writings KELLY SNOOK

Saturday/Sunday

5:30 p.m.

*Dinner Break*

*Imperial Ballroom*  
8:00 p.m.

Presentation of ABS Award for Excellence to Chad Jones

**Gala Concert**

ANAMCARA, Celtic harp trio, led by CAROLINE MACKAY, with DEBI JOHNSON and KATE GIBSON

Poetry and Dramatic presentation on Mark Tobey

ANNE GORDON PERRY

REMEMBRANCE ENSEMBLE (EMILY WRIGHT, BECKY RICE, and JILL SIMON)

EARL MCAULEY, piano

***Sunday, 5 September 2004***

*Imperial Ballroom*  
9:00 a.m.

**Plenary Session**

Chair: PIERRE-YVES MOCQUAIS

Devotions

For the Betterment of the World: The Meaning of an Ever-Advancing Civilization SUSAN STILES MANECK

Translating Knowledge into Action DAVID SMITH

The Emergence of the Design for the Bahá'í Temple for South America SIAMAK HARIRI

11:45 a.m.

*Lunch Break*

*Stephen*  
1:00–2:15 p.m.

**Annual General Meeting of the Association for Bahá'í Studies–North America**

All are cordially invited to attend, to meet the Executive Committee, and to share in consultation about the activities and future directions of the Association.

2:30–6:00 p.m.

**Simultaneous Breakout Sessions**

*Herald/Doll*

**Community, Identity, and Learning II**

2:30–3:30 p.m. Leaving the Glass Case: The Museum and the Aboriginal Encounter with Modern European Ways of Learning and Knowing LINDA YOUNG

3:45–4:45 p.m. Beyond Red Power: The Alternative Activist Approach of Dorothy Maquabeak Francis CHELSEA HORTON

*Bannerman/Walker***Exploring the Revealed Word II**

3:45–5:30 *p.m.* Inner Light and Outer Illumination: A Workshop for Reading Gems of Divine Mysteries TULI RODE, RON SHIGETA, and JOY WIECZORECK

*Imperial Ballroom 1***Defining and Evaluating Civilization**

2:30–3:30 *p.m.* Shoghi Effendi's View of an Ever-Advancing Civilization JOHN KOLSTOE  
 3:45–6:00 *p.m.* Redefining Modernity: Exploring Themes in the 2003 Letter of the Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís of Iran HOLLY HANSON, KIM NAQVI, and MICHAEL KARLBERG

*Imperial Ballroom 2***The Bahá'í Faith and North American Cultural Minorities II**

2:30–3:30 *p.m.* Breaking the Barriers in Maryland: African American Women Attorneys TAHIRIH SCHEAR SAMADANI  
 3:45–4:45 *p.m.* “With Sure and Steady Progress”: The Bahá'í Faith in South Carolina, 1937–1963 LOUIS VENTERS  
 5:00–6:00 *p.m.* The Origins of the Bahá'í Faith in Black America JEROME GREEN

*Imperial Ballroom 3***Art and the Exploration of Reality II**

2:30–3:30 *p.m.* In Search of a Voice: George Sand's *Indiana* MARY ANNE DE WOLF  
 3:45–4:45 *p.m.* Revealing the Tacit: Arts-based Research Methodology for Addressing Cultural Belief, Conviction, and Community Transformation MARIE GERVAIS

*Imperial Ballroom 5***New Models and Theory in Post-Secondary Education**

2:30–3:30 *p.m.* An Ethics of Agency: Antidote to Cynicism ROSE MOTLEY ABBOTT  
 3:45–5:30 *p.m.* Creating a Bahá'í-inspired University in the Era of Oneness TODD SMITH and DUNCAN HANKS

*Imperial Ballroom 7***Collaborative Research Online**

2:30–3:30 *p.m.* Creating the Ultimate Bahá'í Wayfarer's “Guide to the Galaxy” BRETT ZAMIR

*Imperial Ballroom 9***Spiritual Understandings of the Natural and Built Environment**

2:30–3:30 *p.m.* The Ecology of Spirit: Wilderness, Sacred Place, and the Garden in an Evolving Perspective JOHN STEERE  
 3:45–4:45 *p.m.* The Spirit of Space NOUSHIN EHSAN

Sunday/Monday

*Stephen*

**Knowledge, Interpretation and Reason II**

2:30–3:30 p.m. Reflections on Infallibility WILLIAM S. HATCHER

3:45–4:45 p.m. The Deduction Process and Its Role in Bahá’í  
Scholarship and Administration DANIEL B. LORD

*Imperial Ballroom 4*  
2:30–5:30 p.m.

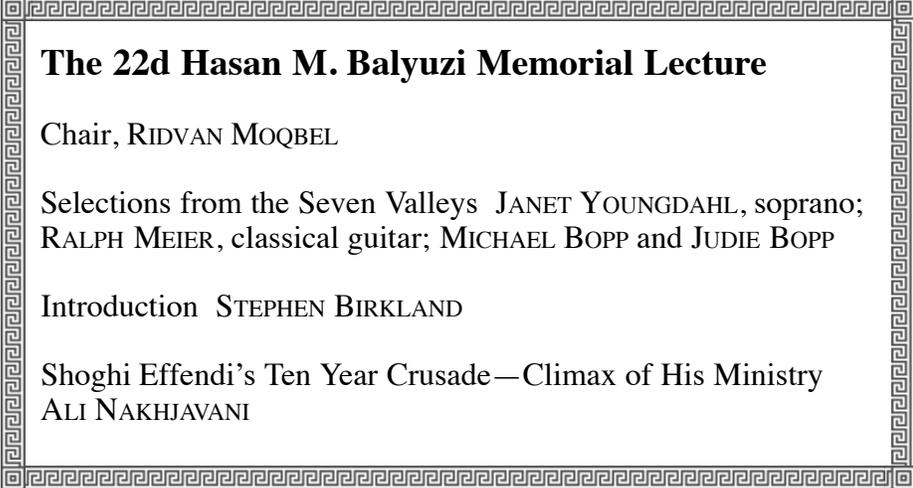
**Association for Bahá’í Studies in Persian**

Speakers: VIOLETTE NAKHJAVANI, BEHROOZ SABET

6:00 p.m.

*Dinner Break*

8:00 p.m.  
*Imperial Ballroom*



**The 22d Hasan M. Balyuzi Memorial Lecture**

Chair, RIDVAN MOQBEL

Selections from the Seven Valleys JANET YOUNGDAHL, soprano;  
RALPH MEIER, classical guitar; MICHAEL BOPP and JUDIE BOPP

Introduction STEPHEN BIRKLAND

Shoghi Effendi’s Ten Year Crusade—Climax of His Ministry  
ALI NAKHJAVANI

***Monday, 6 September 2004***

9:00 a.m.  
*Imperial Ballroom*

**Plenary Session**

Devotions

Chair: KIM NAQVI

**Panel:** The Practical Experience of Scholarship: Young Bahá’ís  
on Campus Chair: LAURA SAMAROO; Panelists: LISA DUFRAIMONT  
CINDY POITRAS-FARAHANI, and SHAHLA MAGHZI ALI

11:00 a.m.

Composition in Art: The Exercised Intelligence of the Rational  
Soul OTTO DONALD ROGERS

Closing Remarks VIOLETTE NAKHJAVANI

12:30 p.m.

*Conference Closing Ceremonies*

## *Abstracts and Biographical Notes*

### **Rose Motley Abbott • An Ethics of Agency: Antidote to Cynicism**

In simple terms, ethics is an expression of right and wrong. However, codes of ethics often address primarily the “wrongs.” In an age of materialism and cynicism, ethics has become a guard against injustice, violation of rights, and egregious excesses. However, the Revelation of Bahá’u’lláh calls on us, especially as scholars and educators, to remember the other half of the coin of ethics—the positive or good. This workshop will examine, through interactive exercises, concepts of ethics in educational literature in juxtaposition with those in the Bahá’í Writings, and the need for educators and scholars to embrace an expanded concept of ethics.

ROSE MOTLEY ABBOTT is completing a doctoral degree in adult education through Capella University. Her research interest is transformational learning and nonprofit educational programs. She celebrated her twenty-fifth anniversary as a Bahá’í in May 2004 and is the mother of two college undergraduates.

### **Shahla Maghzi Ali • The Practical Experience of Scholarship: Young Bahá’ís on Campus (Panelist)**

SHAHLA MAGHZI ALI is a PhD/JD student in jurisprudence and social policy at UC Berkeley’s Boalt Hall School of Law. She received her BA in international relations and Chinese language from Stanford University, and her MA in consultation and conflict resolution from Landegg University. She has lived and worked in China, Israel, and Siberia.

### **Littlebrave Beaton • Understanding American Indians and the Bahá’í Writings with an Emphasis on Urban Indians**

This session will be Text based as well as bring an American Indian perspective to the promise of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá: “Likewise, should these Indians be educated and properly guided, there can be no

doubt that through the Divine teachings they will become so enlightened that the whole earth will be illumined.” Shoghi Effendi also talks about the importance of bringing American Indians into the Faith. And now some fifty-seven years later the majority of American Indians live in urban settings in Bahá’í communities that are well established and well within our reach.

LITTLEBRAVE BEASTON (Tsimshian, Makah, and Greek) received her naturopathic doctorate at Bastyr University and her MEd in counseling from North Dakota State University. She has been a Bahá’í since 1969 and has experienced Reservation, rural and urban, large and small, heterogeneous and homogenous Bahá’í communities.

### **Jordan Bighorn • A Possible Reality of the Word of God**

Within our dreams and imagination of the spiritual radiance the Word of God has shed upon the world, there is an important perspective from which to garner the most “natural” understanding of such a reality. Whether or not it is the most plausible method of viewing the Word of God will be left up to the individual; however, the following question may serve as the beginning of a “methodology to spirituality”: Does the Light of the Word of God illuminate knowledge that has already been established? Or has that knowledge been produced by this Light, regardless of an individual’s acquisition and education of such?

JORDAN BIGHORN currently serves the Rapid City, SD, Bahá’í community as best he can. He has an undergraduate degree and managed a Teen Center in Seattle. However, that has all fallen away to the curiosity of the “nature” of this growing Cause, which has since then become the center of his life.

### **Susan Berry Brill de Ramírez • Collaborative Scholarship, Service-Learning and Community Building: The Scholarly Relevance of Ruhi Study Circles and Indigenous Ways of Knowing**

This presentation delineates distinguishing

features of different types of successful circles of learning where participants' growth comes from deep transformation. It proposes that learning circles are of relevance for Bahá'í scholars. Specific emphases include the role of the support network, the intellectual benefit of collaborative scholarship, the centrality of service for deep learning, the crucial role of silence for heartfelt knowing, the transforming power of the Word of God, and the integral return to the larger community through the smaller and more intimate interweaving of interpersonal relationships that help to weave together the larger fabric of our communities, nations, and planet.

SUSAN BERRY BRILL DE RAMÍREZ (Professor of English at Bradley University) teaches literary theory and Native, environmental, and women's literatures. Her published scholarship includes work on Wittgenstein, Native literatures, ethnography, and Bahá'í Studies, and she is currently working on three projects: Native women's storytelling, Bahá'í epistemology, and ethics in literature.

### **Rosemary B. Closson and David L. Closson • Metarhythms for Today's World**

Within 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Writings lie instructions for how we can live in harmony with others and, in fact, 'Abdu'l-Bahá uses music as His metaphor when describing the desired state for humankind. In this presentation we use drums experientially and metaphorically to explore the ways in which 'Abdu'l-Bahá's insights can benefit non-Bahá'ís in the process of developing community at work or in the community at large. The Bahá'í belief that humankind was "created to carry forth an ever-advancing civilization" is also the animating force for an asset-based approach to building community.

DAVID L. CLOSSON has a BA in English, and an MA and PhD in folklore from the University of Pennsylvania, and is former Director of the Florida Folklife Program. He is an accomplished percussionist and is currently Interdisciplinary Professor of Communications at Valencia Community College in Orlando, Florida.

ROSEMARY B. CLOSSON has a PhD in adult development and learning and has been exploring the application of various art forms to adult learning. She has her own consulting practice in organizational and leadership development, focused on enhancing workplace harmony for increased productivity, creativity, and wellness.

### **Harold Coward • The Special Role of the Humanities and Spiritual Traditions in Research and Public Policy Engagement**

The global problems of today's world make interdisciplinary research a necessity. While narrowly focused disciplinary work has produced much valuable knowledge, today's problems, such as the environmental crisis, are so complex in nature that a team interdisciplinary approach is required. This is as true for the sciences as it is for the humanities, and within the humanities the wisdom of the spiritual traditions make a special contribution.

HAROLD COWARD was a professor in the Department of History at the University of Victoria and founding director of the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society. His areas of concentration have been Indian philosophy and religion, Hinduism, and comparative religion. His most recent book is *Religion and Peacebuilding* (SUNY Press, 2004).

### **Mary Anne De Wolf • In Search of a Voice: George Sand's *Indiana***

Literature, throughout the ages, provides a documentation of women's struggle to both articulate and establish themselves in a world that dictates the use of language, grammar, and literary styles developed by and catering to the male. *Indiana* is just one of many novels relevant to Bahá'ís because it underlines the complexity of developing a paradigm that successfully embraces the notion of complementarity rather than competition between the sexes. This paper examines the connection between elements of gender equality/inequality in society as shown in *Indiana* and the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

MARY ANNE DE WOLF was born in Alberta and became a Bahá'í during the first of twelve years spent in the Northwest Territories. She later earned a BA in French, an MA in French literature and translation, and is currently a doctoral candidate in French literature at the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

### **Tam Truong Donnelly • Applying Bahá'í Principles to Research and Practice**

Bahá'u'lláh taught that social progression depends upon the development of both men and women. He also taught that mankind is one and “prejudice of all kinds, whether religious, racial, patriotic or political is destructive of divine foundations in man.” Thus, fostering equality between the sexes and eliminating social discrimination are two fundamental Bahá'í responsibilities. As an academic and researcher, I often wonder how to integrate these principles into my work. Drawing from my research with Canadian immigrant women, I demonstrate how I have used a research methodology that enables me to indirectly apply these Bahá'í principles to research and practice.

TAM TRUONG DONNELLY, BScN, MScN, PhD (c) is Assistant Professor, Faculty of Nursing, University of Calgary. Her PhD dissertation research examines contextual factors affecting Vietnamese Canadian women's breast cancer and cervical cancer screening practices. Her research interests include multicultural health care, mental health care, and health care policy.

### **Lisa Dufraimont • The Practical Experience of Scholarship: Young Bahá'ís on Campus (Panelist)**

LISA DUFRAIMONT, BAartsSc (McMaster), JD (Toronto), LL.M (Yale), is a doctoral candidate in the J.S.D. program at Yale Law School. Her principal areas of study are criminal law and evidence. Lisa clerked at the Ontario Court of Appeal in 2001–2002 and was called to the Bar of Ontario in 2003.

### **Noushin Ehsan • The Spirit of Space**

The feeling encountered when entering a built environment is the spirit of that space, which directly influences human behavior. Designers must become catalysts for designs that inspire. Harmony between a designer's vision, thought, and spirit cultivates a sense of holistic design. Holistic design encompasses clarity of thought, simple and proportionate form, natural light, and color harmony. It has a unified form which culminates in a positive spirit and is characterized by its aura, airiness, order, joy, and warmth. The presentation includes examples such as the Bahá'í House of Worship in India and summarizes the design elements that uplift the spirit.

NOUSHIN EHSAN, AIA, has over thirty years' international experience as an architect. She founded Accessible Architecture, which promotes spiritual and practical approaches to architecture. She has taught at London North East Polytechnic Institute and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, in Troy, New York, and served as Adjunct Professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Design.

### **Nousha Etemad • Beyond Servant Leadership: Applying Spiritual Values in the Workplace**

The integration of spirituality into the corporate value matrix is rapidly emerging as the next competitive advantage for employers in building and maintaining a workforce of quality professionals. Corporate leaders increasingly see a need to balance the “business” of leadership with the “spirituality” of leadership. While many speak in terms of “ethical,” “moral,” “principled,” or “servant” leadership, what is lacking is a spiritual leadership that goes beyond the application of minimum ethical standards. This workshop will explore how the practical application of principles outlined in the Bahá'í Writings can enable business leaders, entrepreneurs, managers, and employees to develop a more spiritual workplace.

NOUSHA ETEMAD is a manager at BearingPoint in Toronto. Her educational background is in mathematics and mechanical engineering. She is a member of the leadership team for the Bahá'í

Business Forum of the Americas (BBFA). Nousha has developed training materials and facilitated workshops on various topics.

### **Anne Furlong • The Role of the Scholar in Individual Interpretation**

Traditionally, scholars have generated or validated authoritative interpretations of Scripture. However, the Bahá'í Writings reserve authority in interpretation to explicitly named figures and institutions. This raises the question of the role of Bahá'í scholarship. According to relevance theory, the reader identifies the context which will yield the intended interpretation. The attitude of faithfulness to the Covenant entails assumptions which, without limiting the individual's freedom to interpret the Writings, provide a context in which interpretations that endanger spiritual health can be recognized and discarded, and suggest how readers can use the authorized interpretations as aids to their own investigations.

ANNE FURLONG received her PhD in linguistics from University College, London, and is Assistant Professor of English at the University of Prince Edward Island. Her research focuses on linguistics and literary interpretation. A Bahá'í since 1983, she is interested in Bahá'í Administration, Bahá'í law, and the Guardianship.

### **Bill Geissler • Growth and Retention in the Bahá'í Community and American Indians** (See page 19)

BILL GEISLER is president of Research.Net, a company specializing in Internet-based and panel interviewing. He holds a master's degree in education from the University of Massachusetts. Research.Net has conducted dozens of membership surveys for the U.S. National Spiritual Assembly as well as a range of surveys with non-Bahá'ís on the Bahá'í Faith.

### **Marie Gervais • Revealing the Tacit: Arts-based Research Methodology for Addressing Cultural Belief, Conviction, and Community Transformation**

This paper addresses the issue of hidden cultural beliefs and change to professional practice through arts-based methodology. Both benefits and drawbacks to using arts-based research methodology as it pertains to community transformation are discussed. An overview of culturally situated arts-based approaches from a multi-disciplinary perspective is presented, followed by the description of an arts-based cultural belief pilot project with in-service educators in Alberta. This topic is of particular significance to Bahá'í academics and practitioners who seek to initiate culturally based, sustained, systematic community transformation while sidestepping the resistance that anti-racism approaches to practitioner change usually encounter.

MARIE GERVAIS is a doctoral candidate in secondary education at the University of Alberta. She has written extensively about peace and moral education and is currently incorporating these interests into her dissertation, which explores the role of teacher cultural belief in the promotion of multiculturalism in Canada.

### **Jerome Green • The Origins of the Bahá'í Faith in Black America**

Diminishing the significance of conventional custom and practice, the activities which the American Bahá'í community initiated in the early 1920s—and the universalistic ideology which underscored them—allowed Black Americans to place their collective struggles within a universal context and provided them with a sense of human dignity rather than racial dignity alone. The story of how the Bahá'í Faith was introduced to Black America is, on the whole, one which describes a relative high point in the field of race relations. Ultimately, it demonstrates how the Bahá'í Faith was able to fill a fundamental socio-structural void in American society.

JEROME (Jay) Green, Jr. has recently completed a BA degree in sociology and English from Dartmouth College and is now a resident of the Triangle Bahá'í community of North Carolina. His work with the Dartmouth Honors Senior Fellowship provides much of the material for this presentation.

**Gloria Haithman • Dr. George Washington Carver: The Personification of Spirit and Intellect**

The purpose of this presentation, in addition to learning about and appreciating the life and accomplishments of Dr. Carver, is to show how he utilized the spiritual as well as intellectual aspects of his being and shared them generously with the world. It will discuss his impact and influence on many others as well as how others responded to him. He learned of the Bahá'í Faith from Hand of the Cause Lewis G. Gregory, and is reported to have stated with his usual wisdom, "You hold in your organization the key that will settle all our difficulties, real and imaginary."

GLORIA HAITHMAN received her master's degree (telecommunications) and PhD (urban studies) from the University of Southern California. She has served as a member of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Los Angeles, an assistant to the Auxiliary Board, and a singer in the World Congress choirs and Jeffrey Barnes choir.

**Duncan Hanks • Creating a Bahá'í-inspired University in the Era of Oneness**  
(See page 24)

DUNCAN HANKS is Executive Director of Canadian Bahá'í International Development Services. He worked eleven years at a Bahá'í-inspired university in Bolivia, as faculty, trainer, and director of administration, finance, and international development. He has a master's degree in international development and a bachelor's degree in administration.

**Holly Hanson, Kim Naqvi, and Michael Karlberg • Redefining Modernity: Exploring Themes in the 2003 Letter of the Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís of Iran**

The November 2003 letter of the Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís of Iran creates opportunities to engage with the public discussion over the nature of modernity and progress. While conflict over modernity is currently framed as the "clash of civilizations," the letter, which asserts the spiritual character of modernity and delineates its

characteristics, re-analyzes recent Iranian history and provides a powerful framework for evaluating present debates. While Bahá'ís have responded to the letter's thrilling assertions regarding the Faith's future in Iran, its implications for all humanity deserve attention. This panel will seek to identify and elaborate on these implications.

HOLLY HANSON is Associate Professor of History at Mount Holyoke College and author of *Landed Obligation: The Practice of Power in Buganda* and *Social and Economic Development: A Bahá'í Approach*. She was recently awarded a Faculty Research Abroad Fulbright Fellowship to research the social history of Kampala.

**Siamak Hariri • The Emergence of the Design for the Bahá'í Temple for South America**

This presentation is about the design process for the mother temple for South America, which will be completed in Santiago, Chile. The challenge was to design a sister temple to the other mother temples, while also enabling the Bahá'í Temple for South America to find its own uniqueness. Employing an energetic investigation into metaphor and sensibility, the designers allowed themselves to be guided by process, impulse, and intuition. Their aim was to achieve an interplay of seeming contradictions: stillness and movement, rootedness and buoyancy, symmetry and variousness, intimacy and monumentality, solidity and yet capable of dissolving in light.

SIAMAK HARIRI is a partner of Hariri Pontarini Architects in Toronto. A graduate of Yale University, he is an adjunct professor at the University of Toronto. His work has received many of Canada's most prestigious awards for design, innovation, process, and urban planning, and is regularly profiled in national and international architectural and design media.

**William S. Hatcher • Reflections on Infallibility**

The historical claim to possess infallible authority has often been associated with ideological dogmatism and/or attempts to buttress political power

on behalf of a certain thought system. In modern times, the notion of infallibility has been regarded with suspicion and viewed as antithetical to rational inquiry, which by its very nature acknowledges its own limitations and relativity. The present paper advances, among others, the thesis that the degree of social and intellectual progress actually exhibited in history would have been impossible without the Manifestations as points of infallible authority as well as supreme examples of rationality at work.

WILLIAM S. HATCHER is a mathematician, philosopher, and educator. He has done research and published books, articles, and monographs in the mathematical sciences, logic, and philosophy. His special interest has been the philosophical interpenetration of science and religion. His most recent publication is *Minimalism* (second edition, Juxta Publishing, 2004).

#### **Chelsea Horton • Beyond Red Power: The Alternative Activist Approach of Dorothy Maquabeak Francis**

This presentation explores the alternative activist approach of Dorothy Maquabeak Francis, a prominent First Nations Bahá'í who worked tirelessly over five decades to promote the maintenance of First Nations culture and spirituality and to foster heightened understanding and unity between native and non-native groups. Examination of Francis's life suggests that we must broaden our conceptions of activism to encompass both the grassroots and the spiritual. In addition to complicating our understanding of what has for too long been characterized as the "Red Power era," analysis of Francis's activist ambition and form similarly challenges the very contours of the highly secular Western academic frame.

CHELSEA HORTON is a master's student in the Department of History at Simon Fraser University exploring the historic Aboriginal-Bahá'í encounter in British Columbia. She hopes, through her research, to help broaden the historical record to previously silenced voices, perspectives, and alternative approaches to the pursuit of social change.

#### **Michael Karlberg • Redefining Modernity: Exploring Themes in the 2003 Letter of the Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís of Iran** (See page 17)

MICHAEL KARLBERG is Assistant Professor of Communication at Western Washington University. His research and writing focus on the relationship between communication, culture, and conflict. He is publishing a book entitled *Beyond the Culture of Contest: From Adversarialism to Mutualism in an Age of Interdependence* (George Ronald, Fall 2004).

#### **John Kolstoe • Shoghi Effendi's View of an Ever-Advancing Civilization**

Two-thirds of a century ago Shoghi Effendi described the "world commonwealth" of the future. He mentioned nearly fifty items that form the very core of civilization. The world is on course in the directions he predicted, headline news notwithstanding. Items have been divided into five categories: Economic Development, Personal Matters, Political Factors, Social Issues, and Technical and Scientific Advances. Two items are analyzed for each category. Conditions related to that statement in 1936 when the prediction was made, the changes that have taken place since, and the challenges that remain are considered in this presentation.

JOHN KOLSTOE holds a master's degree from the University of Minnesota and spent ten years in education as teacher and administrator on both the secondary and university levels. He is currently homefront pioneering in Montana while spending several months each year on the faculty of Bahá'í Academy in Panchgani, India.

#### **W. Andy Knight • The New World Disorder: Obstacles to Universal Peace**

While peace is possible, volition and systematic action is required to achieve it: it will not simply fall into the lap of humanity just because we hope for it, long for it, pray for it. Universal peace requires a transformation in the mindset of individuals, a complete overhaul of the institutions

created to facilitate cooperation and coordination amongst state/society complexes, and a redistribution of the material elements that undergird and propel those institutions and ideas. Indeed, global and sustained peace requires a fundamental shift from the existing world disorder to a new world order based on respect for the plurality of civilizations.

W. ANDY KNIGHT is McCalla Research Professor of International Relations in the Department of Political Science at the University of Alberta. He is currently editor of *Global Governance Journal: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations*. His most recent books include *Building Sustainable Peace; Adapting the United Nations to a Postmodern World: Lessons Learned*; and *A Changing United Nations: Multilateral Evolution and the Quest for Global Governance*.

**Marcella LaFever • The Meaning of Relationship: Intellectualizing Spiritual Principles for Increased Participation in Community Development**

It has been theorized that it is possible to bring about social change without using adversarial communication. Often adversarial situations involve and are exacerbated by the divergent histories, values, societal power, and communication norms of participants from varying backgrounds. The Bahá'í Faith offers spiritual principles and communication structures that can be translated into societal systems for community decision making by all community members. This presentation offers a theoretical model of communication strategies that empower co-culture participants in public dialogue and decision making, a model that pivots on the concept of relationship and expands the scope of thinking about the dialogue process.

MARCELLA LAFEVER is currently a doctoral candidate at the University of New Mexico completing her dissertation in the area of intercultural communication issues in community development. Her previous master's work involved the creation of a strategic plan within a Bahá'í community to increase the participation of members from Southeast Asia in community decision making.

**Danielle Locke and Bill Geissler • Growth and Retention in the Bahá'í Community and American Indians**

Despite the distinctive place given American Indians in the Bahá'í Faith by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, there is still only limited participation of Indian peoples in the affairs of the Faith and the standing of the Bahá'í Faith among Indians actually appears to be eroding. This presentation will use research findings to examine current issues of religious practice, identity, and retention among American Indian Bahá'ís that appear to have a bearing on ways that diversity will impact growth in a period before us that will register the most profound demographic changes in American history.

DANIELLE LOCKE is Cree from Kawacatoose First Nation, Saskatchewan, Canada. She currently lives in Wakpala District on the Standing Rock Reservation in South Dakota. Danielle holds a degree in Indian Studies from the First Nations University of Canada. She has over twenty years' experience in community development in Indian communities in Canada and the United States.

**Daniel B. Lord • The Deduction Process and its Role in Bahá'í Scholarship and Administration**

This presentation explores the nature of deduction as described in the Bahá'í writings. Research approaches to logical deduction appear rooted in logicism and rationalist philosophy. Experimental findings and certain theoretical formulations of contemporary psychologists of human reasoning, however, put such rationalistic assumptions into question. The presentation identifies some issues arising from this research and how the Bahá'í writings can shed light on them. It concludes with a discussion of deduction as applied in Bahá'í administration, with special reference to the infallibility of the Universal House of Justice.

DANIEL B. LORD, PhD, is a Bahá'í from Anchorage, Alaska. He completed graduate degrees in psychology and education at the University of Michigan, and law degrees at the University of Iowa, where he was a William S. Anderson Scholar.

**Susan Stiles Maneck • For the Betterment of the World: The Meaning of an Ever-Advancing Civilization**

The purpose of this paper is to explore the concepts of progress and civilization as seen in the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. We will begin by examining the specific terminology used and its meaning within an Islamic context. We will also examine the significance of the translation choices made by Shoghi Effendi in connection with those passages. Finally, we will compare the conceptions of civilization and progress as found in the Bahá'í Writings with how these things are perceived within the context of the Enlightenment and within Western Christianity.

SUSAN STILES MANECK is Associate Professor in the History and Philosophy Department at Jackson State University. She holds a PhD in Asian and European History from the University of Arizona. She has published several articles on women and the Bahá'í Faith for Oxford University Press, Brill Press, and State University of New York Press and has also authored a book on Zoroastrianism entitled *The Death of Ahriman*.

**Pierre-Yves Mocquais • The Clay and the Ocean: Human Knowledge and Revelation**

This presentation will first review the evolution of Western thought from a system based on the symbol to one based on the sign. The second part of the presentation will focus on what can be seen as the present chaos of knowledge, within which duality seems to be the fundamental principle. Paradoxically, some of the dichotomies and tensions that characterize current thinking signal the need for an overarching principle that would reconcile epistemological conflicts. This principle is one of unity, which can only be found in revealed knowledge, which transcends the limitations of all human knowledge and represents a common epistemological foundation.

PIERRE-YVES MOCQUAIS most recently was Dean of the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Calgary. His research interests include Quebec and French Canadian Literature, literary theory, particularly textual genetics, culture and folklore, the francophone culture of the Prairies, and the

works of Hubert Aquin. He is a member of the Auxiliary Board for Protection.

**Shahrokh Monjazez • Unraveling Some Mystical Dimensions in Bahá'u'lláh's Earliest Post-Revelation Writings**

The presentation will explore the formidability and challenges of translating Bahá'u'lláh's early poetomystical compositions into English. In doing so, certain philological aspects of His earliest known post-Hidden Declaration work, namely, the *Rash-i-'Amá'*, will be examined in light of a new, more authentic text in its original language of revelation.

SHAHROKH MONJAZEB has been a presenter at the ABS Annual Conference for over a decade. His writings and presentations focus primarily on Bahá'í Sacred Text and their literary and historical significance in the context of socio-spiritual conditions of human society.

**Neda Najibi • Invisible Touches**

This presentation addresses women in business; entrepreneurship; and values and ethics in leadership from my experience as a woman and an entrepreneur. Each business possesses performers—individuals with winning qualities or the drive/ambition to be winners and to lead the company and themselves to success. There are four ingredients that make for a successful business by incorporating spirituality into the workplace. These are real communication entailing trustworthiness, consultation, respect, and recognition in all its forms.

NEDA NAJIBI is a poet first, then a journalist, marketer, communicator, and businesswoman. She has over twelve years' experience in media and the corporate world, is a consultant in event and trade show planning, and owns a business which offers public relations and marketing services in technology and in the medical and entertainment fields.

**Ali Nakhjavani • The 22d Hasan M. Balyuzi Memorial Lecture • Shoghi Effendi's Ten Year Crusade—Climax of His Ministry**

This presentation will explore how Shoghi

Effendi prepared the Bahá'í world for the Ten Year Crusade. It will examine the twenty-seven objectives he formulated and will explain the impediments which prevented the implementation of some of those objectives. Finally, it will consider the place of the Crusade in our history as well as future developments destined to flow from it, as seen by the beloved Guardian,.

ALI NAKHJAVANI served as a member of the Universal House of Justice from its first election in 1963 until last year, when he retired. After obtaining a Bachelor of Arts degree with distinction from the American University of Beirut, he moved to Iran, where he was a member of the National Spiritual Assembly in 1950 and 1951. He and his family later lived in Uganda, and in 1961 Mr. Nakhjavani moved to Haifa after being elected to the International Bahá'í Council. He has written numerous articles on aspects of the Bahá'í Faith and has delivered many talks on its history and teachings.

**Kim Naqvi • Redefining Modernity: Exploring Themes in the 2003 Letter of the Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís of Iran** (See page 17)

KIM NAQVI is a development and economic geographer with a special interest in the historical development and mutable nature of modern economy and society. She has a BSc in biology, and an MA and PhD in development geography, and is currently an assistant professor at the University of Saskatchewan.

**Joseph Nga • When Bahá'í Natural Metaphors Speak Directly to the African Cultural Imagination**

A personal narrative of how Joseph, a first generation Bahá'í from Cameroon, was enchanted by the beauty and power of several environmental metaphors in Bahá'í Writings. He was fascinated to read that an “unlit candle, however great in diameter and tall, is no better than a barren palm tree or a pile of dead wood” because his father will simply set a barren palm tree on fire for stealing his precious farmland. Other compelling images like “followers of light” and “flowers of

one garden” informed Joseph’s spiritual outlook and cultural perception of nature—providing intriguing answers to perplexing questions.

JOSEPH NGA was raised on the open farm fields in the tropical rainforests of Cameroon where he farmed, hunted, and collected medicinal plants with his peasant parents before becoming a first-generation college student. He became a Bahá'í and earned graduate degrees in biology and International Development Studies.

**Anne Gordon Perry • Sarah Farmer, Green Acre, and the 1905 Portsmouth Peace Treaty**

After President Theodore Roosevelt invited peace delegations from Japan and Russia to come to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, to draw up a treaty to end the brutal Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05, Sarah J. Farmer invited the delegates to Green Acre and was the only woman present at the signing of the treaty. While Roosevelt won a Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts, the role of peace champion Sarah Farmer remains largely unknown. In time, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá promises, “nations and tribes will arise to praise” her. This presentation highlights the importance of Sarah Farmer and Green Acre as her legacy.

ANNE GORDON PERRY is a writer, teacher, and performing artist who teaches English and film at the University of Texas at Arlington. Her PhD is in Aesthetic Studies. She serves as editor of *ORISON*, the arts journal of the ABS Arts SIG. She is the primary author of *Green Acre on the Piscataqua*.

**Cindy Poitras-Farahani • The Practical Experience of Scholarship: Young Bahá'ís on Campus** (Panelist)

CINDY POITRAS FARAHANI is completing a joint honors BA in economics and finance at McGill University. She has received a number of awards, most recently the Jane M. Klausman Women in Business Award from the Zonta Club of Montreal. Following graduation, she will study to become licensed as a financial planner.

**Mina Kiani Rassekh • Ásíyih Khánum and Bahíyyih Khánum**

The purpose of this presentation is to foster dialogue and further research into the lives of all the early female believers of the Faith and bring a balance to the study of the history of the Faith. We begin with the historical context of women contemporary with the Holy Family, then follow the major events of Bábí and Bahá'í history from the women's perspective and concentrate on deepening our understanding of their services to the Faith. Specifically, we examine the lives of Ásíyih Khánum, the consort of Bahá'u'lláh; and Bahíyyih Khánum, His daughter.

MINA KIANI RASSEKH was born in Tehran, Iran, and educated in Jean D'Arc school and Damavand College. She moved to the United States with her family after the revolution and has served the Faith and done volunteer work in California ever since.

**Sohi Rastegar • Great Women in the Bábí and Bahá'í Dispensation**

While we sometimes decouple artistic and intellectual presentations, this presentation mixes these modes. Poetry and music is employed as part of an ongoing effort to explore the lives of great Bahá'í women. Where words alone no longer communicate, art must be employed to finish the job. We begin with an overview of Táhírih's life and work and end with recitation of her poetry. In between, we remember the great women of the Holy Family, Hands of the Cause, early believers of the West, the first woman who served on a National Spiritual Assembly, pioneers, founders of schools, and recent martyrs.

SOHI RASTEGAR is Program Director in the Engineering Research Centers Program at the National Science Foundation. Before that, he held academic positions from assistant professor to Assistant Dean for Research. He serves on the Governing Board of Payam-e-Doost, the Persian language program of the Bahá'í International Radio Service.

**Tuli Rode, Ron Shigeta, and Joy Wieczoreck •**

**Inner Light and Outer Illumination: A Workshop for Reading Gems of Divine Mysteries**

Gems of Divine Mysteries is an excellent first text to read Bahá'u'lláh in depth. Themes include the spiritual progress of the individual through stations, the role of scripture, and an outline of prerequisites to spiritual growth. Three of the book's stations—knowledge, love, and the “threshold”—are examined as a spiritual path of progress with their prerequisite: to see through your own eyes, and not the eyes of others. This workshop is designed to increase comprehension of Bahá'u'lláh's Writings by systematically breaking down complex passages from the text followed by group consultation.

**Tuli Rode • Counseling Strategies with the Seven Valleys (See page 25)**

TULI RODE is a practicing cross-cultural counselor and has worked many years with the Native American community in Oakland, California. As a Bahá'í, she has taken a great interest in teaching and educational theory within the Faith and has applied the Writings in her therapeutic work in innovative and successful ways.

**Otto Donald Rogers • Composition in Art: The Exercised Intelligence of the Rational Soul**

Central to any discourse on art is the realization that pictorial art has a long history in the spiritual, intellectual, and social life of mankind. Painting is the practice of composition—a search for images caught between the observed world and a spiritual order. These works can become objects of knowledge with the educative power of any discipline engaging the senses, the rational intellect, tradition, and inspiration. Composition is “transformation,” a gift of the Holy Spirit attracted to invention. Artistic structures are the trace of this great struggle bringing to our sight archetypal form and thus to experience its civilizing influence.

OTTO DONALD ROGERS taught at the University of Saskatchewan for twenty-nine years, becoming a full professor and later head of the Department of Art and Art History. His paintings have received

recognition in the form of national awards, inclusion in major exhibitions, and placement in some fifteen hundred collections.

**Angela Rout • Bahá'í Principles in Design: An Aboriginal Housing Alternative**

This presentation will use the design of a housing project in an Aboriginal community in Alberta to look at the processes of engagement with communities and how the spiritual values of the Bahá'í Faith can be applied. The implications of improving the housing system will be explored and one possible solution will be presented as an alternative to the current aboriginal housing strategy. The importance of Bahá'í principles, administration, and methods in social and material development within this specific context will be examined and discussed during the presentation.

ANGELA ROUT lives in Calgary with her husband Mark Hebert. She is an intern architect at Marshall Tittlemore Architects, since completing her master's in architecture at the University of Calgary. She has been a Bahá'í since a small child, which has brought joy, love, spirit, and many friends into her life.

**Behrooz Sabet • Correlating Spirit and Intellect in Academic Disciplines: A Conceptual Model with Practical Considerations**

This presentation examines a Bahá'í approach to the unity of knowledge, with implications for the scheme of the sciences and the content and process of general academic education and the conceptual core of liberal arts. (1) A comparative study identifies a historical pattern in the development of learning and scholarship in religious traditions. (2) Three stages of development in the relationship between Bahá'í thought and modern scientific and philosophical traditions and the existing disciplines of the arts and sciences are identified. (3) A preliminary index of an inter- and multidisciplinary reference system concerning four major domains of knowledge is proposed.

BEHROOZ SABET received a Doctor of Education

degree in 1987 from SUNY/Buffalo. He also has studied philosophy and economics. He has been a university professor, international lecturer, and education consultant. He has written extensively on educational, philosophical, and social themes. He was formerly Academic Dean of Landegg International University.

**Laura Samaroo • The Practical Experience of Scholarship: Young Bahá'ís on Campus** (Panel chair)

LAURA SAMAROO is completing her honors degree in political science and plans to pursue a master's in conflict resolution and peace education. She served three years on the executive committee of the Campus Association for Bahá'í Studies of the University of Alberta and is an assistant to the Auxiliary Board Member for Protection.

**Tahirih Schear Samadani • Breaking the Barriers in Maryland: African American Women Attorneys**

Little has been written about how African American women attorneys were able to break barriers and become attorneys. The life experience of two attorneys will be described. These attorneys used mentors, creativity, and risk taking to achieve success in overcoming barriers and achieving success in law school and the legal profession. Additional attention will be given to how the Teachings from the Bahá'í Faith offer tools that African American women can use in their struggle against these barriers. Selections from the Bahá'í Writings that relate to the impact of racial discrimination and the practice of law will be presented.

TAHIRIH SCHEAR SAMADANI holds a BA in African American Studies and sociology from the University of Georgia. She received her JD from the University of Maryland in 2004 and is currently doing a clerkship with Judge Diane Leasure of the Howard County Circuit Court in Maryland.

**Ron Shigeta • Inner Light and Outer Illumination: A Workshop for Reading Gems of Divine Mysteries** (See page 22)

**Ron Shigeta • Transformation, Recognition, and Belief in Javáhiru'l-Asrár**

Gems of Divine Mysteries describes the mystical journey of the seeker from the confounding contingent world to the utter transcendence of divine presence. The themes of this mystical Tablet are intriguing: the hidden powers of recognizing the Manifestation of God, the changes in the perception of the seeker who progresses in the path of truth, the behavioral syndromes which block progress of humankind. Consideration of how these themes are one theme gives insights as to how the personal mystical transformation and the act of recognition of the Manifestations are different aspects of one mystical experience encompassing both individuals and societies.

RON SHIGETA, a molecular biologist by training, has been studying the social interface between scientific and religious cultures for the last few years. Dr. Shigeta received his PhD in chemistry and structural biology from Princeton University and currently does genomic analysis for Affymetrix, a biotechnology firm in the San Francisco Bay Area.

**Dinesh Singh • Can a Bahá'í Perspective and the Covenant Motivate the Progress of Science?**

The inherent harmony between science and religion is a fundamental principle of the Bahá'í Faith. However, it is not obvious how to translate this principle into a daily routine that a professional scientist can follow in the pursuit of research ideas, particularly when it comes to sorting out worthwhile directions from those “which begin with words and end with words.” This presentation is an attempt to address this issue by closely examining certain statements from the Writings that have potential significance for addressing contemporary scientific questions, and evaluating the possible implications for increasing the current body of scientific knowledge.

DINESH SINGH is a theoretical physicist who specializes in gravitation and cosmology research at the University of Regina. He holds BSc and MSc degrees from Queen's University and the University of Regina, respectively, and received his PhD from the University of Alberta in 2001.

He recently completed a postdoctoral position at Lancaster University in the United Kingdom.

**David Smith • Translating Knowledge into Action**

DAVID SMITH has served on the Continental Board of Counsellors in the Americas since 1985. He is Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology at the University of Toronto and a staff surgeon at the Hospital for Sick Children and Humber River Hospital in Toronto.

**Todd Smith and Duncan Hanks • Creating a Bahá'í-inspired University in the Era of Oneness**

According to the Universal House of Justice “Thinkers are now faced with a challenge to achieve a synthesis, or at least a coherent correlation, of the vast amount of knowledge that has been acquired during the past century.” An opportunity now exists for Bahá'í-inspired universities to create and deliver “integrative programs” conceptualized in light of the essential oneness of reality and the harmony of reason, science, and religion. Such approaches and programs are critical for cultivating the intellectual, moral, and spiritual capacities of scholars to generate, communicate, and apply knowledge for the betterment of the world.

TODD SMITH is Director of Post-Secondary Education at Nancy Campbell Collegiate Institute and is developing a proposal for a new Bahá'í-inspired university. He co-owns a Bahá'í-inspired language school for youth and adults. He has a PhD in behavioral science and serves on the Bahá'í Council of Ontario.

**Kelly Snook • Music, Astrophysics, and Spiritual Reality: An Exploration of Musical Metaphor in the Bahá'í Writings**

We are undertaking a project to model the motions and characteristics of the planets in our solar system using sound and music, guided by Bahá'í principles of unity and harmony. The goal

of this work is to find new ways of representing, teaching, and experiencing scientific knowledge that are conducive to an increased understanding of both physical and spiritual truths. As a prerequisite to this undertaking, we examine the use of musical metaphors, such as harmony, melody, rhythm, cycles, and dynamics, in the Bahá'í Writings, as well as in past scientific, religious, and philosophical works and traditions.

KELLY SNOOK is a planetary scientist and aerospace engineer at NASA in Houston, Texas. Her area of expertise is scientific exploration of the moon and Mars using humans and robots. Kelly is also a musician, recording engineer, and producer at It's Not Rocket Science Studios, her music recording studio.

**Michelle Thelen Steere and Tuli Rode •  
Counseling Strategies with the Seven Valleys**

This presentation will explore the nature of the psycho-spiritual journey of the Seven Valleys through an innovative psychological paradigm for the spiritual and emotional healing of trauma, based on recent case studies and how they have been applied, and what the results have been in small group practice. Study participants focused on each valley, practiced its application, and realized the bounties and blessings therein. The presentation concludes with suggestions for working through the unique challenges of each Valley to access a sense of spiritual fulfillment that such deep inner work can bring to one's life.

MICHELLE THELEN STEERE, MA, CHT, consultative educator, is a co-founder of Native Intelligence. She most recently was a family counselor for at risk youth/families within the juvenile justice system, having twenty-five years experience with anger management, family counseling, and trauma-related resolution. She maintains a bilingual private practice in Berkeley, California.

**John Steere • The Ecology of Spirit:  
Wilderness, Sacred Place, and the Garden in  
an Evolving Perspective**

The importance of restoring humanity's bonds with nature is a basis for deep ecology and the

environmental movement. Less appreciated is that it serves as a motivating force for contemporary spirituality and the sense of humanity's essential unity. We explore the evolving relationship of people with nature—as seen through the mediating touchstones of “wilderness,” “sacred place,” and “the garden.” We contrast traditional Christian perspectives of humankind in exile from nature, with the ecological perspective of humanity intimately connected to it. This coincides with the Bahá'í outlook of returning to the Garden as a metaphor of God's all-inclusive love.

JOHN STEERE is a senior environmental/habitat restoration planner with The Bioengineering Group and serves on several nonprofit boards. He is the coauthor of the award-winning *Restoring the Estuary* and numerous articles on habitat partnerships. He holds a BA from Harvard College and a master's in environmental planning from UC Berkeley.

**Viva B. Tomlin • Bahá'u'lláh, Science, and  
Science Fiction: The Quest for Za'faran and a  
“Theory of Everything”**

A visual presentation, referring to Hawking, Greene, and Hubble, traces what happens when approach to the acquisition of knowledge towards a “Theory of Everything” is first through the Mirror of God. It reflects upon how this search, when embraced within the quest for Za'faran (the abode of the Beloved) allows leaps of perception and discoveries for both the physical sciences and religion. Expanding upon theories of reflection and attraction, time, dimensions, and others, it explores the existence of other worlds and how our advancement of knowledge is clearly bound up with our establishment of a considerably more moral world civilization.

VIVA B. TOMLIN, BD, AKC, MA, has spent twenty years exploring Bahá'u'lláh's methodology for acquisition of knowledge of the universe, harmonizing “scientific” and religious perception. Ms. Tomlin is completing a novel that embodies this quest for a “Theory of Everything” that addresses the impact upon the universe of God and Prophets.

**Nicola Towfigh • “Sanctify Thy Heart, Illumine Thy Soul, and Sharpen Thy Sight”:  
Discovering Gems of Spiritual Truth**

The title of this presentation is taken from a verse of Bahá’u’lláh in *Javáhiru’l-Asrár*—Gems of Divine Mysteries. This tablet was revealed in Baghdad before the revelation of the *Kitáb-i-Íqán* in Arabic. The subtitle reflects the focus of the presentation: we will explore the prerequisites for the recognition of the Manifestation of God. Bahá’u’lláh explains in *Javáhiru’l-Asrár* and other Holy Writings the mental attitude human beings have to develop, and gives practical advice on how to gain spiritual insight and to overcome obstacles to cognition. However, recognition alone is not enough; it needs to be reflected in righteous deeds.

NICOLA TOWFIGH, PhD, studied oriental studies, islamology, philosophy, and German literature, and graduated from Bochum University, Germany. She was appointed to the Continental Board of Counsellors for Europe in 2000 and is a freelance author, lecturer, and translator. She is a coauthor of *Making the Crooked Straight: A Contribution to Bahá’í Apologetics*.

**Stephanie Urie • Cosmopolitanism and Contending Special Allegiances**

Should we think of ourselves as citizens of the world and view every effort to draw narrower political boundaries as undermining universal moral progress? Martha Nussbaum proposes a strict cosmopolitanism to challenge nationalistic sentiments for their tendency to foment the worst kinds of identity struggles. However, the Writings recognize that having so-called special allegiances is a fact of moral life—a result of shared commitments, customs, and of finitude. I propose, then, that there is a respectable interdependency between special allegiances and universal ideals, as cosmopolitanism prompts dialogue regarding universals of justice making while special relations teach one how to do justice at hand.

STEPHANIE M. URIE, MDiv, is a new Bahá’í. She is a graduate of Oxford Summer Theology and Yale University where she studied ethics and served as a teaching fellow. She is an officer in

the U.S. Department of Justice and volunteers as a hospice chaplain in Vermont, where she resides.

**Louis Venters • “With Sure and Steady Progress”: The Bahá’í Faith in South Carolina, 1937–1963**

During turbulent decades that witnessed the Great Depression, the Second World War, the emergence of the Civil Rights Movement, and the beginning of the end of Jim Crow, a small but expanding group of South Carolinians defied legal barriers and social conventions to build the nucleus of a unique religious community. As small groups of Bahá’ís emerged in several South Carolina localities, they became part of a distinctive, if low-profile, new social space in which an increasingly diverse membership—blacks and whites, men and women, rural and urban dwellers—learned to study, worship, socialize, and make decisions together.

LOUIS VENTERS is a candidate for the master’s degree in history at the University of South Carolina in Columbia. His current academic focus is social transformation in the twentieth-century U.S. South. He and his wife are active participants in the Bahá’í training institute process.

**Joy Wieczoreck • Inner Light and Outer Illumination: A Workshop for Reading Gems of Divine Mysteries (See page 23)**

JOY WIECZORECK has worked as a computer consultant in the San Francisco Bay Area for twenty years. She has been studying film and video production, and has started a small company, ANISA Productions, which produces video interviews, lectures, and study classes about Bahá’í subjects.

**Linda Young • Leaving the Glass Case: The Museum and the Aboriginal Encounter with Modern European Ways of Learning and Knowing**

A narrative account and an evaluation of differences in Western European and Aboriginal ways of viewing culture and learning is the basis of this work. Intrinsically linked with the author’s experi-

ence in Residential School, separation of family, culture and language, and from learning and the reintegration of learning through personal experience and study of the Bahá'í writings and the encounter with radical critical thought upon return to formal education. It also addresses the ongoing interaction of radical critical thought, the Bahá'í Teachings, and aboriginal worldviews, which is part and parcel of the life of aboriginal Bahá'í scholars.

LINDA YOUNG, a band member of Onion Lake First Nation, lived with her great-grandparents until she had to go to Saint Anthony's Indian Residential School. Currently, Linda lives in Saskatoon with her family and is a master's student of art history at the University of Saskatchewan.

**Brett Zamir • Creating the Ultimate Bahá'í Wayfarer's "Guide to the Galaxy": Using Imagination and Collaboration in Writings-intensive Online Bahá'í Scholarship**

This presentation seeks to express the possibilities for adding or envisioning Bahá'í scholarship online through a new medium of collaborative web technology (called "wiki") and to demonstrate its use. With Bahá'í guidance, scholarship, and resources ever expanding, the need grows for a comprehensive, integrated, nonredundant, expandable and adjustable, interconnected, interdisciplinary collection of categorized and summarized, easy-to-access/digest quotations and information for any topic imaginable. Since one's contributions in this system need not be finished, and as one can consult with others while helping along and being helped with one another's projects and plans, the work is both extremely useful and fun.

BRETT ZAMIR holds an MA in TESOL, elementary and high school teaching certificates, and a BS in psychology. He has taught elementary education in the U.S. and college English and linguistics in China. His present interests include making online Writings and derivative collaborative works more accessible, functional, and interconnected.

## *Artists Performing*

ARTIN ASHRAF has performed at the Calgary Stampede Talent Show for the past four years and has won a top award there. He is studying to be a kindergarten teacher at the University of Calgary. His influences are Gipsy Kings, Jesse Cooke, and his father Sherwin Ashraf and grandfather Jadidollah Ashraf.

JUDIE BOPP, PhD, is a cofounder of the Four Worlds Centre for Development Learning, a non-governmental organization known for its principle-centered and culturally sensitive approach to development in many parts of the world. She currently serves as the chairperson of the Regional Bahá'í Council of Alberta.

MICHAEL BOPP, PhD, is a director of the Four Worlds Centre for Development Learning and has over twenty years' experience leading participatory change and development processes around the world. He is the author of *Recreating the World: A Practical Guide to Building Sustainable Communities* and serves on the Regional Bahá'í Council of Alberta.

ZOHREH GERVAIS has sung with the One Human Family Choir and Voices of Bahá, and has played viola with the Edmonton Youth Orchestra and the University of Alberta Symphony Orchestra. She studies opera at the University of Manitoba and her CD *Acquiesce* features her compositions on Bahá'í themes and prayers.

DEBI JOHNSON has studied classical music, jazz, rock, opera, musical theatre, and voice, and she has conducted choirs and ensembles for years. In addition to performing with AnamCara, Debi performs in the duo Windenharp and tours with a solo sacred program. Debi has two CDs: *A Christmas Harp of Joy* and *Harp Psalms*.

EARL MCAULEY was born in Alberta and has had a thirty-year career as a professional pianist. He studied music at the University of Lethbridge and has traveled extensively, working with Eddie Clearwater in the U.S. and CBC television in Canada. He recently released a CD with Jonathan Dixon called *Meditations on the Higher Self*.

CAROLINE MACKAY has performed in England, Switzerland, Chicago, San Francisco, and all over Canada. In the Spring of 2004 she did a three-week tour of New Zealand, celebrating her fifth CD release, *Tidings of Light*, selections from the Bahá'í Writings for harp and voice accompanied by piano, violin, and recorder.

RALPH MAIER concertizes frequently and is in demand as a soloist, accompanist, and chamber musician. He has performed in Canada and abroad, and was a finalist in the Northwest Guitar Competition and top prizewinner in the Canadian Music Competition. Ralph is currently enrolled in the doctoral program at the University of Calgary.

KATE GIBSON OSWALD holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree and an education degree from Queen's University, having trained in sculpture and photography. Music has dominated her creative outpouring and she has completed her first solo album, *Musician's Canvas*. Kate lives, creates, and teaches harp at her studio in Lake Country.

ANNE GORDON PERRY (See page 21)

REMEMBRANCE ENSEMBLE is an a capella group that sings Bahá'í sacred texts. Based in Minneapolis, Minnesota, they have recently performed at several large conferences and have been invited to offer music at the National Convention and Holy days celebrations at the Bahá'í House of Worship in Wilmette. The group has been singing together for eighteen years and has produced one recording, *Selections from The Hidden Words*. The members performing in Calgary are JILL SIMON, director, composer, soprano; REBECCA RICE, alto; and EMILY WRIGHT, soprano.

SUSAN LEWIS WRIGHT is a classically trained musician, singer-songwriter, and jazz flutist. She produces the "Women of One World" show; chairs Global Visions Arts Alliance; and is the author of *BIRD: Soul in Flight*, inspired by her song and CD, *BIRD*.

ARLEN YANCH is a second-year university student attending the University of Alberta majoring in

psychology. He has been playing piano since a child and is also an accomplished percussionist. In addition, he is an avid squash player.

JANET YOUNGDAHL, soprano, is a frequent performer of music from the baroque and medieval eras and has appeared at Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall. She holds a doctorate in music, conducts the Calgary Bach Society choir and orchestra and the Spiritus Chamber choir, and teaches music history at the University of Calgary.

### Conference Organization

*Conference Task Force* Mehran Kiai, Ridvan Moqbel, Kim Naqvi, Parvin Rowhani  
*Conference Coordinator* Parvin Rowhani  
*Deputy Coordinator* Diana Khadem  
*Arts Program* Janet Youngdahl  
*Children's and Junior Youth Program* Laura Mocquais, Kristl Wilberger, and Fariba Refahi  
*Devotions* Marya Samari  
*Hospitality* Diana Shaw, Shahpar and Shahnaz Mohtadi  
*Logistics* Jon Rotter  
*Program* Kim Naqvi  
*Public Relations/Publicity* Martha Mottahedeh, Sandra Brask, Damineh Eshraghi  
*Registration* Nilufar Gordon, Glen Little, Daphne Greene  
*Security* Aziz Khadem  
*Stage Manager* Debbie Stachnik  
*Technical Director* Geoff Cohen  
*Treasurer* Mehran Kiai  
*Ushers* Mark Hebert  
*Volunteers* Mehri Ashraf  
*Youth* Shamim Mohtadi

The ABS Executive Committee extends its deep appreciation to all those who have assisted in the preparation and running of this conference. Our heartfelt thanks are also due to the many volunteers who contributed their service and have worked so hard to make this conference a success.

With special thanks to  
 The Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Calgary