

# Media Release

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## Spoken word poetry helps us to find Common Ground

Community Arts Network in partnership with Multicultural Arts Victoria and with support from Propel Youth Arts is proud to present Common Ground – a multilingual, multi faith spoken word workshop series.

Common Ground was established by Multicultural Arts Victoria 4 years ago to build connection and understanding between young people of diverse faiths and cultures.

The FREE workshops will be facilitated by renowned poet and performance artists Abdul Hammoud, and Sukhjot Kaur Khalsa.

The Victorian based artists will be travelling to Perth specifically to lead this unique skills development workshop for CAN.

Common Ground coordinator Sukhjot Kaur Khalsa gained national recognition last year when she reached the finals of Australia's Got Talent with a breathtaking poetry performance about her experiences of being a first generation Australian 'fully Sikh' storyteller.

Abdulrahman Hammoud's career as a spoken word artist has seen him perform internationally and he is also the founder of the *Dirty Thirty* online writing platform.

Up to 20 participants from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds will be selected to join the week long, intensive workshop series to be held at the State Theatre Centre in Perth.

Common Ground will bring people together from different ethnic backgrounds and religions to explore themes such as identity, authenticity, faith, belonging, conflict and peace.

"The aim is to find the stories and experiences that bring us closer together, rather than focusing on what sets us apart," said Perth Common Ground coordinator Hamida Novakovich.

The workshops will take place from Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> to Friday 6<sup>th</sup> of October, with a public poetry performance to be held at PICA on Saturday the 7<sup>th</sup> at 2.00pm.

To register to take part in unique event:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/artist-self-care-in-cacd-practice-tickets-38031639658>

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## About the Artists



Sukhjit Kaur Khalsa is a first generation Australian Sikh, spoken word artist, educator, performer & human rights reformer based in Melbourne. Sukhjit is passionate about diversity and the importance of visibility in the performing arts and inherently merges her advocacy background with the arts. Her work predominantly provokes conversations around Australian identity, feminism, cultural confusions and the power of uncomfortable conversations. Within a short period, Sukhjit has gone from performing at the Opera House for the Australian Poetry Slam

Competition in 2014 to performing on national television for Australia's Got Talent, and most recently was a speaker at TedxUWA. She has shared the stage with renowned artists such as Missy Higgins and L-Fresh the Lion and her performances and workshops have led her to tour USA, Canada, UK and South East Asia, as well as across our very own nation.

See Sukhjit perform here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZ4PUluJlcw>

About the Abdul Hammoud is a spoken word artist based in Melbourne by way of Lebanon, a country that he is still captivated by and connects to. He teaches writing classes and workshops for schools and organizations that are looking to explore new avenues of expression. His art has taken him as close as New Zealand and as far as the United States, as well as to his beloved home country. In 2013, he became founder of The Dirty Thirty online writing platform, an ever-growing group for writers to challenge themselves every April. He is now also editor and compiler of The Dirty Thirty Anthology, an annual collection of poetry from the page he coordinates. Most of his work revolves around current issues including the constant state of war in the Middle East, racial divides, as well as the portrayal of masculinity. He is also a full time student and an avid purveyor of starting books but not finishing them.



See Abdul perform here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydNEkluM5ZA>

## About Community Arts Network (CAN)

At CAN we know that art transforms communities. We bring artists, creatives and diverse communities together to share stories, learn from each other and make inspiring art. Through this we've seen lives changes and communities strengthened.

CAN's vision is for a just, diverse and resilient society.