Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Ashland, Oregon

Local nonprofit Anima Mundi Productions brings internationally renowned Palestinian-Jordanian composer and expert on Middle Eastern music to Ashland

Anima Mundi Productions is proud to bring Dr. Shireen Abu-Khader to Ashland December 5th-7th for a planned residency, free community offerings, and a special event combining live performance of profoundly moving Middle Eastern music and the world premiere of a new concert film featuring the USUL Ensemble, founded by Dr. Abu-Khader, and created especially for the Heart of Humanity Concert Series in Ashland. This is a rare opportunity for audiences in the Rogue Valley to experience this uniquely beautiful music.

About Dr. Abu-Khader
Founder of an internationally acclaimed choir that earned a gold medal at the World Choir Games, the creator of Dozan World, a leading organization for publishing and education on Arab music, and Composer-in-Residence with the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir, Dr. Abu-Khader draws on her Jordanian and Palestinian heritage and her wide network of Middle Eastern musicians to weave a rich tapestry of sound from a region still unfamiliar to many American audiences.

Praised by *The Independent* for her pan-Middle Eastern eclecticism and her "irresistible charm" as a singer and ensemble leader, Dr. Abu-Khader is not only an acclaimed musician but also highly regarded as an academic and choral clinician.

A world premiere concert film event
Owing to unprecedented travel restrictions, Anima Mundi Productions and the USUL Ensemble have changed the format of the concert, originally planned as a live performance featuring the entire ensemble. Instead, the Ensemble has gathered in Toronto, Canada to record a special concert film under the direction of multiple award-winning Canadian-Jordanian filmmaker Mariam Momani. Anima Mundi has succeeded in bringing Dr. Abu-Khader to Ashland this December for a 4-day residency, culminating in a *live* solo performance and the world premiere of this film.

About the USUL Ensemble
The 7-member USUL Ensemble, founded by Dr. Abu-Khader, is a mixed vocal/instrumental ensemble that "celebrates and promotes the rich heritage of Middle Eastern music, bridges cultures, fosters community connection, and offers audiences a unique experience of the diversity and beauty of Middle Eastern traditions." The ensemble defines themselves as "vocalists and instrumentalists with roots across the Middle East and North America, brought together by a desire to tell stories through music. Our performances draw on classical, folkloric, and spiritual traditions from the Levant and beyond, often blending Arabic maqams with Western harmony." Their instrumentation combines European instruments with Middle Eastern instruments such as the *Qanun*.

A unique residency
During her time in Ashland, Dr. Abu-Khader will do music and cultural work in collaboration with

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local nonprofits, including BASE and Ashland Together. The general public is invited to the following events:

PUBLIC EVENT DETAILS

Shireen Abu-Khader live performance & world premiere of new Usul Ensemble concert film
Sunday, December 7 at 3:00pm at the SOU Music Recital Hall, 450 S Mountain Ave, Ashland
For more information and for tickets, please call (541) 833-3066 ext. 1 or visit www.HumanityTickets.com

Experience Middle Eastern Food & Culture
Anima Mundi Productions is partnering with Ashland Together and Chef Jacki Rosen to offer a *free* evening of Middle Eastern food, music, and cultural learning with Dr. Abu-Khader, supported by the Ashland Food Coop.

Friday, December 5, 2025 from 7:00-8:30 pm
Wesley Hall, Ashland Methodist Church
175 N. Main St. (on the corner of Laurel St. and N. Main St.)

RSVP at www.animamundiproductions.com/RSVP-2025 or by calling (541) 833-3066 (ext. 1)
This event is free but an RSVP is required as space is limited. There will be opportunities at this event to support humanitarian food aid in Palestine.

About the Heart of Humanity Series
Now in its seventh season, Anima Mundi Productions' annual concert series is dedicated to bringing world-class musicians to Southern Oregon for musical events that turn the concert hall into a space for renewed hope, communal healing, and mutual understanding.

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For further inquiries, please contact executive director Ethan Gans-Morse: 541-778-1211.