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## **Talkfest**

FORUM & TALKS

on

Saturday 27 October at the Mt Gravatt Showgrounds, Mt Gravatt

In the Main Tent

Listen to the views and personal experiences of Muslims and non-Muslims on a variety of topics ranging from Sufism and Bridge Building to Demystifying Islam and Engaging with Australia's Dispossessed.

The forum will be chaired by well known author and ABC radio personality Sandy McCutcheon and a panel made up of Dr. Mohamad Abdalla, Ms. Rashida Joseph, Ms Ruqayya Paruk and Mr. Dylan Chown.

There will be talks during the rest of the day by Imam Ahmad Ghazaleh, Janette Hashemi, Adam Bowden and Rashida Joseph.

### PROGRAMME

Presenter	Time	Topic
Imam Ahmad Ghazaleh	12.30pm – 1pm	<i>"Islam is peace: Truth Versus Myth"</i>
Ms. Janette Hashemi	1pm - 1.30pm	<i>"My journey into Islam"</i>
Ms. Rashida Joseph	1.30pm - 2pm	<i>'The Islamic Path of Sufism – What is it?'</i>
<b>FORUM:</b> Chair: Sandy McCutcheon <b>PANELISTS:</b> Dr. Mohamad Abdalla Ms. Rashida Joseph Ms Ruqayya Paruk Mr. Dylan Chown	3pm - 4pm	<i>"Building bridges and pulling down walls"</i>
Mr. Adam Bowden	4pm - 4.30pm	<i>"Dawah and the Dispossessed"</i>



## EIDFEST SPEAKERS

**Mr. Sandy McCutcheon** has spent most of his working life in either radio or theatre. He has worked as an actor and director and has written 22 plays that have been professionally produced. He is also a best-selling author. In his broadcasting career, Sandy has worked in both commercial and public radio with the highlights being his time on Double Jay and as the producer/presenter of Australia Talks Back on ABC Radio National. He has also produced radio documentaries in many parts of the world. Sandy's novels, "Peace Crimes", "Poison Tree", "Safe Haven" and "Delicate Indecencies" are all bestsellers. Sandy and his wife - photojournalist Suzanna Clarke - own a riad in the old medina of Fez in Morocco which they use as a writing retreat. Sandy divides his time during the year between Brisbane and Morocco.

**Dr. Mohamad Abdalla** is the Centre Director of the Griffith Islamic Research Unit. While Dr Abdalla specialises in the history of Islamic science, his research interest focuses on Islam in Australia, Islamic ethics, the history of Islamic civilisation, and the contextualisation of Islamic thought. Currently, he has ten PhD students working with him, including the former deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia Dato Sari Anwar Ibrahim.

**Imam Ahmad Abu Ghazaleh** was born in Syria, of Palestinian origin and lived in Jordan where he was educated in Islamic Studies, Qur'an recitation and the art of Nasheed (devotional singing). He has participated in various inter-faith symposiums and is presently the Head of Islamic Studies and the Arabic Department at the Islamic College of Brisbane.

**Ms. Rashida Joseph** converted to Islam from Catholicism in late teens. She saw the transition to Islam as an intensification of her faith. She gained graduate qualifications and travelled extensively in order to marry the streams of life and faith. She entered the Sufic path approximately 30 years ago seeing it as the heartbeat of her Islamic faith. She works in cross-cultural consultancy, training and in various projects dealing with settlement of refugee communities.

**Ms. Ruqayya Paruk** hails from South Africa. She spent one year in Syria learning Quran and Arabic, finishing her Grade 12 in Brisbane. She has been teaching at the Kuraby Madrassah for the past 3 years, teaching both children and as a teacher trainer, and will be graduating this year with a BA in Religion and Philosophy. Ruqayya is an active member of the Muslim Community and is one of the founders of the Islamic Females Association in Brisbane.

**Mr. Adam Bowden** has been an Islamic convert for 15 years and is managing director of the South Sydney Community Centre. The South Sydney Community Centre is a new initiative sponsored by The Queensland Charity and Welfare Association Inc. The Centre develops and implements mentoring and leadership programs for South Sydney Council's public housing tenants. Mentoring and leadership programs are aimed at developing Islamic based spiritual and psychological defense mechanisms, against the many social problems that exist within these public housing complexes. The South Sydney community has a large Aboriginal population and all programs are developed in accordance with local indigenous cultural sensitivities.

**Mr. Dylan (Uthman) Chown** reverted to Islam three years ago. He is a HPE teacher at the Islamic College of Brisbane. He is also Manager for BlackBase - a not for profit youth development organisation specialising in the delivery of Traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Games. BlackBase is both an acronym and a charter for what he seeks to do with his young mentors, and the communities, individuals and various Government bodies he works with. BlackBase stands for **By Looking, Asking, Creating, Konnecting - Bold Aspirations See Evolution!**

**Ms. Janette Hashemi** is founder and coordinator of the Sunshine Coast Interfaith Network (SCIN) founded in 2002. She speaks and provides Islamic information under the name of the Islamic Society of the Sunshine Coast which she founded in 1998. In 1989 she completed an intensive Islamic Studies Certificate in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, organised by the Regional Islamic Council of South-East Asia and the Pacific (RISEAP) in conjunction with the International Islamic University in Malaysia.

