

# CREATIVE LOAFING

## Soulbird hopes to build a safe nest for Iraqi artists

Atlanta musician goes to Kurdistan to make music amid chaos.

BY MARK GRESHAM — OCT. 20, 2009



R. Timothy Brady is a soft-spoken young man whose immersion in the arts and sense of moral imperative has taken him on a mission to Iraq. Last Saturday, the composer/activist left Atlanta for Erbil, the capital of Iraq's northern Kurdistan region, to establish an English-language academy where he will teach music, all under the auspices of the nonprofit Soulbird Inc., of which Brady is founder and executive director.

One minor problem: Performing music in Iraq can get you killed.

"It's been reported that 80 percent of Iraqi singers have left the country, because now all artists are targeted by terrorists and extremists for torture and murder," says Brady. "So what Soulbird is doing is opening an academy in the relatively safer Kurdistan region of Iraq, in the city of Erbil, to provide a place for artists from all over Iraq to develop and study their craft in a safe and welcoming environment."

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(Photo Courtesy R. Timothy Brady)

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