



"I'm making wonderful friends, I'm playing music. What more would I want?" asks Dirani (at a home in Flint, Mich.).

House Music

Zade Dirani hopes to enlighten Americans about Arabs, one home at a time

AGE 23
HOMETOWN Hummar, Jordan
MISSION Playing for peace

■ **Goodwill gesture:** A classically trained pianist and composer who has played for Jordan's Queen Noor and Nelson Mandela, Dirani was scheduled to perform at a friend's Maine home on 9/11. Weeks after the tragedy, he went ahead with a concert—and was moved by the warm reception. "I am an Arab and a Muslim. I was sharing pain and sorrow with the people through my music," he says.

■ **Grand tour:** Sponsored by Arab Americans, schools and churches, Dirani has

since played hundreds of "house concerts" in towns across America to help bridge the gap between cultures.

■ **Piano prodigy:** Dirani began composing as a child. "I'd tell him, 'Go do something like other kids,'" says father Ziad, an architect. "He'd say, 'Dad, later. I have to finish this.'"

■ **Today the living room, tomorrow the Grammys:** Last year Dirani's debut CD, *Zade*, reached No. 13 on *Billboard's* New Age chart. He plans to continue his American odyssey. "It's a small act of hope," he says. "Now when I'm asked about Jordan and America, it's like talking about two daughters. I can't pick a favorite." ●