



Iranian Studies at USC
A Celebration of Our Journey



OUR DREAM

To benefit the community at large by fostering greater social harmony and progress through an accurate and objective understanding of Iran and Iranian Culture.

OUR VISION

To encourage a healthy exchange of ideas inspired by academia across the globe.

OUR SOLUTION

To create an interdisciplinary Iranian Studies degree offered by USC with support from the Farhang Foundation community.

IRANIAN STUDIES AT USC

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Why IRANIAN STUDIES?

A knowledge of the Persian language along with an objective understanding of Iran's historical, cultural, and socioeconomic background will be an invaluable asset to any individual or entity active in foreign diplomacy, economics, energy, academia, or defense.

With a comprehensive Iranian Studies program at a prestigious academic institution such as USC, young Iranians in diaspora can reclaim their cultural identity. It gives them a chance to help preserve the language of their parents, grandparents, and ancestors. It makes it possible for them to learn about their rich heritage and reconnect with their roots, and more importantly, it helps to bridge the differences and strengthen communities by sharing Iran's culture, literature, and history with non-Iranians.

I don't think any student who wants to graduate with a degree in Middle East Studies can really think of him/herself as well-educated about the Middle East region without some grasp, some understanding of current Iranian culture, politics, and history.

Laurie Brand

Why NOW?

Iran, thanks to its geopolitical position, has always been a significant player in the Middle East region. As it continues to play a more active role in both regional and global economic and political arenas, the inherent advantage of cultivating a deeper understanding of its rich culture and customs becomes increasingly apparent.

So the timing seems quite perfect for this partnership between Farhang Foundation's Iranian Studies Council and USC. Together, these two entities, with the support of the community, can champion and lead on the path to greater social harmony and progress through fostering an accurate and objective understanding of Iran and Iranian Culture.

I am from China, currently living in Los Angeles. I am a student in USC's Iranian Studies program. I would love to visit Iran one day, especially interested in visiting Isfahan because after all, Isfahan is 'half the world!'

سلام. اسمم هست جیسون. من از چین هستم. الان من در لوس انجلس زندگی میکنم. و من دانشجوی فارسی هستم. یک روز میخواهم به ایران بروم، و به اصفهان بروم، چون اصفهان نصف جهان هست!

Zesheng (Jason) Chen



Why FARHANG FOUNDATION?

Farhang Foundation believes that the most immediate and enduring way to preserve Iranian heritage and honor its culture, history, and language is through education.

In 2010, with the generous and passionate support of a group of Iranian Americans who shared the same belief, Farhang Foundation's Iranian Studies Council was established.

This Council's principal task was to develop the first comprehensive Iranian Studies program at a premier private research university in Los Angeles. USC was our choice.

The most impactful way of celebrating and communicating Iran's culture is by sharing its heritage and history through education. And at its core, this is what Farhang Foundation is about. Iranian Studies at USC will be the lasting legacy of Farhang.

Haleh Emrani



Why USC?

USC is one of the most influential universities in Southern California, with a solid reputation as the training ground for global leaders, future innovators, and change agents. This university has also been the academic hub of a large number of Iranian students, professors, administrators, alumni, and donors since the early 1970s.

So when it came to choosing an academic partner for the Iranian Studies program, USC was the ideal choice. It shared our vision and ambition, and it could ensure our success. To our delight, USC eagerly welcomed our proposal.

The Iranian Studies program at USC is unique in that it offers a broader focus on medieval and modern Iran. Furthermore, as a successful private university, USC is free of the typical constraints experienced by state institutions. This means greater freedom and flexibility for the faculty and administrators to grow and adapt the program based on the students' changing needs. This is a critical advantage to help ensure the success of our program.



- Ph.D. History, University of Pennsylvania, 2020
- M.A. Social Sciences, University of Chicago, 2012
- B.S. Computer Science & Mathematics, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, 2005

We Welcome

Dr. Ciruce Movahedi-Lankarani

Farhang Foundation Chair in Iranian Studies and Assistant Professor of Middle East Studies

Dr. Movahedi-Lankarani joined USC as a Postdoctoral Scholar - Research Associate in 2021 and commenced his role as an Assistant Professor in August 2021.

Dr. Movahedi-Lankarani is the Farhang Foundation Early Career Chair in Iranian Studies in the Department of Middle East Studies at the University of Southern California. Ciruce studies modern Iran, focusing on the country's history during the mid- and late twentieth century. His work explores the entanglements of human and nonhuman factors that have shaped the development of Iranian society, particularly how the physical properties of its vast resources of fossil fuels and their attendant infrastructural assemblages have both reflected and influenced competing notions of progress, modernity, prosperity, and the environment during a time of self-conscious development.

Through archival and published sources collected primarily in Iran and the United Kingdom, he examines how domestic and international visions for natural gas, everyday experiences of its use, and concerns for the environment shaped Iranian development and politics during that time. His work reflects his interest in the inseparability of humanity and the natural world, particularly how the physical properties of gas, Iran's geology and geography, and the materiality of Iran's gas infrastructure intertwined to shape Iranian understandings of and hopes for their country's future.

Dr. Movahedi-Lankarani's research reflects not only his interest in Iranian history, but also his training and professional experience in engineering. Through those experiences he developed an interest in how people interact with technology, and on a broad level his work seeks to explore the historically contingent ways people have encountered, adopted, adapted, translated, and rejected technologies in both practical and ideational terms. In emphasizing the environmental contexts in which such events were embedded, he studies how imaginaries of technology and the environment in the Global South have had and will have profound implications for humanity and the natural world within which we are enmeshed.

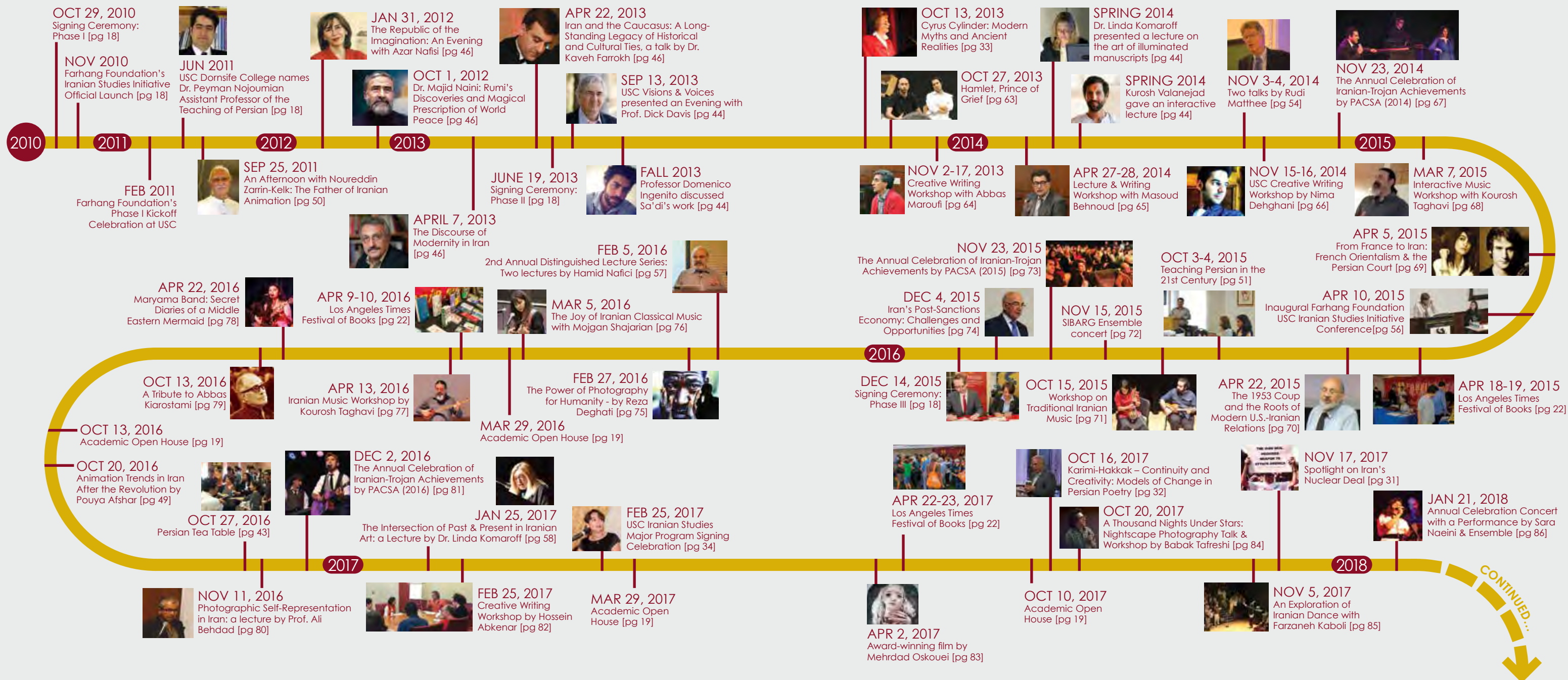
MEET TWO OF OUR GRADUATES

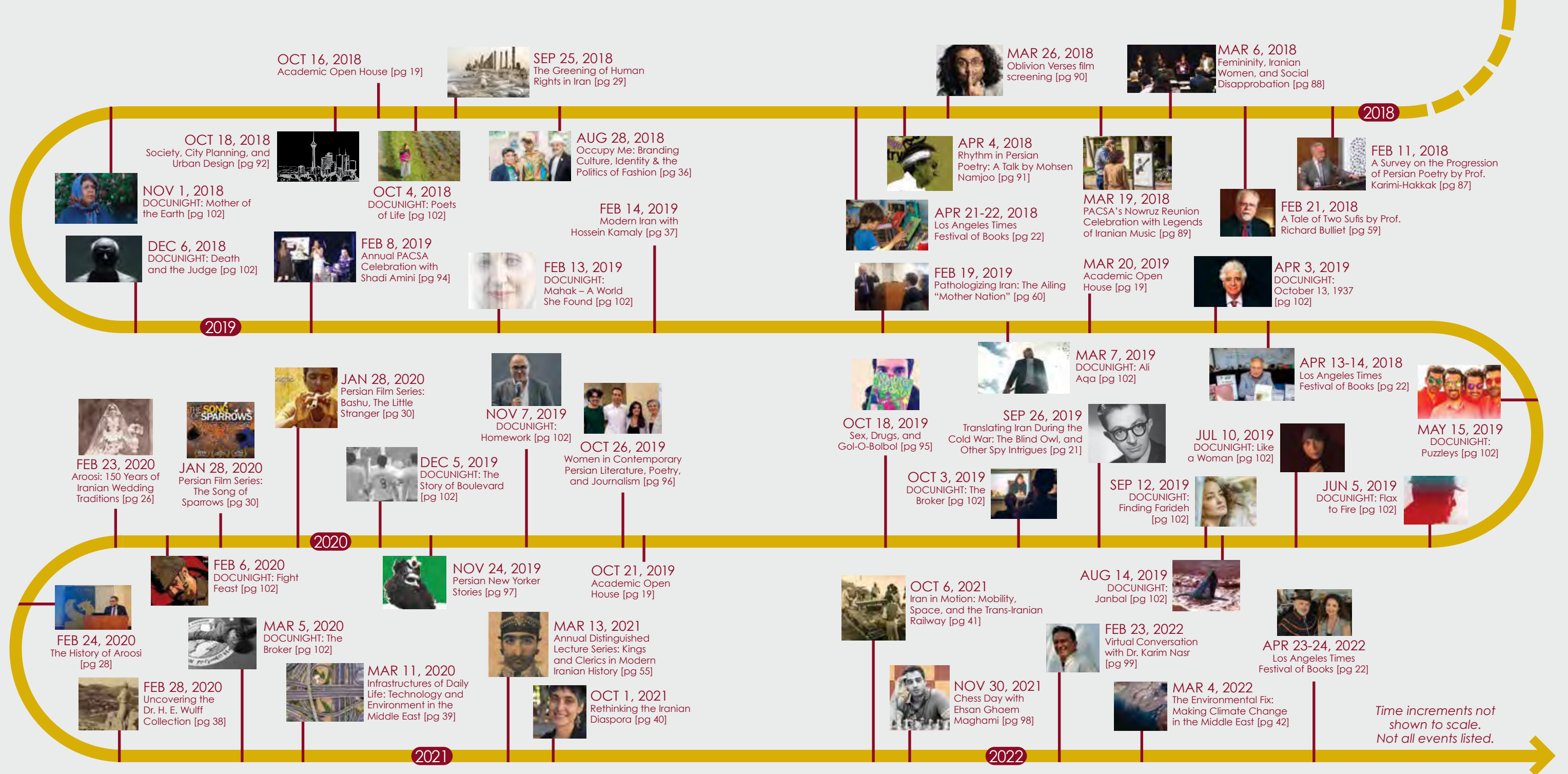
Ida is a graduate who majored in Philosophy and International Relations, with a minor in Iranian Studies. She spent a semester abroad in Istanbul. Studying in Turkey turned her into an avid fan of Turkish social media sensation Sezgin Yilmaz and led her to develop a taste for yet another flavor of strong black tea, which she plans to add to her morning routine of caffeinated drinks. She hopes to get further international work experience under her belt while attending law school. Ida is fluent in Persian and is working on her Turkish language skills.



Jason Tse graduated with a major in International Relations and a minor in Iranian Studies. It was Jason's long-standing fascination with Iran and Iranian culture that led him to study the Persian language at USC, a path that eventually culminated in his receiving the Critical Language Scholarship and the Boren Scholarship for Persian. He studied Persian intensively in Tajikistan for a year, where he developed a greater interest in Central Asia. He is interested in a career in international development post-graduation, but regardless of his future path, he is determined to one day revisit the mountains and steppes of Central Asia!

TIME LINE





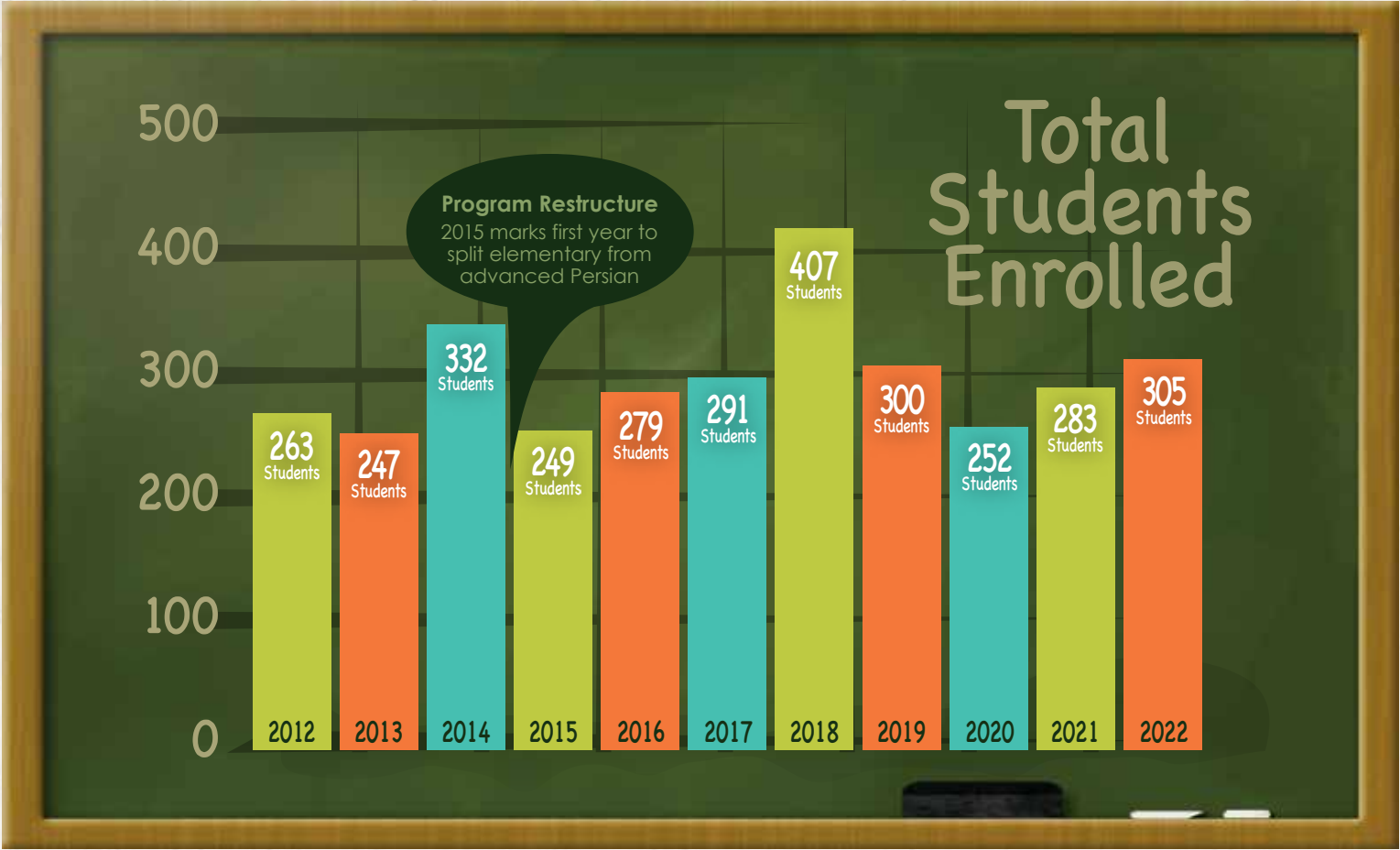
PROGRAM CLASSES

Thanks to the generous support of Farhang Foundation's Iranian Studies Initiative and our incredible donors, in Fall 2013 the Department of Middle East Studies at the University of Southern California established its first-ever Minor in Iranian Studies.

This program provides students with a solid foundation that helps them glean an advanced understanding of Iran, its history, peoples, and cultures. Starting with the antiquities and continuing through the present time, students learn about Iran's neighboring countries, especially those that participated in shaping the Persian culture, as well as the non-Persian Iranian peoples. Students finishing this program have an intermediate ability in Persian, the official language of Iran, which is also widely used in Iran's neighboring countries.

USC offers the following Persian language, upper-division Iranian Studies Initiative, and upper-division Middle Eastern Studies courses:

- ANTH 327:** Anthropology of the Middle East and Islam
- ARLT 100:** Kings and Heroes, Villains and Saints in Medieval Persian Literature
- CLAS 349:** Ancient Empires
- GESM 120:** Kings and Heroes, Villains and Saints
- GESM 130:** Surviving Climate Change in the Middle East
- HIST 180:** The Middle East
- HIST 324:** Islam in Russia and the Soviet Union
- HIST 382:** The Middle East, 500-1500
- HIST 383:** The Modern Middle East
- HIST 384:** Popular Culture in the Middle East
- IR 307:** U.S.-Iranian Relations
- IR 362:** The International Relations of the Contemporary Middle East
- IRAN 120:** Persian I
- IRAN 150:** Persian II
- IRAN 220:** Persian III
- IRAN 250:** Persian IV
- IRAN 320:** Advanced Persian I
- IRAN 325:** Business Persian
- IRAN 350:** Advanced Persian II
- MDES 201:** The Middle East: Global and Environmental Perspectives
- MDES 213:** Iran: From Antiquity to Modernity
- MDES 301:** The Global Middle East
- MDES 312:** Medieval Iran: Society and Culture
- MDES 313:** Modern Iran
- MDES 314:** Political Thought in the Middle East
- MDES 316:** The Great Muslim Empires of the Near East and India
- MDES 325:** Politics of Film and Literature in Modern Iran
- MDES 340:** The United States and the Middle East
- MDES 345:** Power and Authority in the Middle East
- MDES 401:** Environment and Politics in the Middle East
- MDES 403:** Technology, Development and Power in the Middle East
- MDES 441:** Cities of the Middle East
- MDES 461:** Topics in Ancient Iranian Languages and Cultures
- POSC 351:** Middle East Politics



STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Farhang Foundation's ISI curriculum at USC has doubled each year since inception and is projected to grow at 35% to become one of Dornsife's premier programs.

Studying Persian helps me not only become a well-educated student of International Relations, but it also gives me a deep knowledge of the country's culture and customs that allows me to be an informed global citizen.

Kaitlyn Hittelman (Student)



PROJECT PHASES

In January 2010, in response to Farhang Foundation's interest in supporting an Iranian Studies Initiative, USC proposed a multiphased program:

PHASE I	PHASE II	PHASE III
The creation of Persian language classes	The development of an Iranian Studies minor program	The establishment of an Iranian Studies major program

FUNDRAISING MILESTONES

2010	INCEPTION	Partnership between Farhang Foundation and USC	—
2011	PHASE I	Persian Language Classes with Dr. Nojournian	\$250,000
2013	PHASE II	Iranian Studies Minor Program with Professor Khafipour	\$825,000
2019	PHASE III	Iranian Studies Major Program under the Middle East Studies Program with Jr. Chair Professor Movahedi-Lankarani	\$1,500,000

The vision for the next phase of this journey is to include a senior faculty position to attract more scholars from around the world to help expand the program and establish it as an essential academic and strategic hub for all things related to Iran.

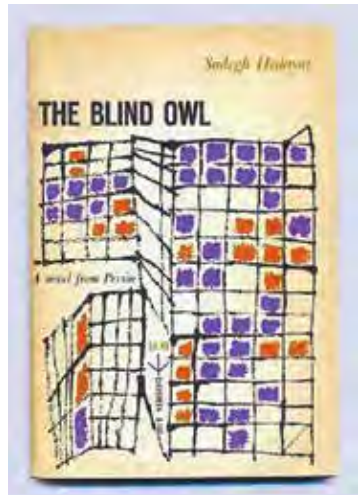


Academic OPEN HOUSE

MESP regularly hosts an Open House, giving students an opportunity to mingle with faculty and staff to learn more about the Middle East Studies Program.

- Academic Open Houses held:
- Spring 2016
 - Fall 2016
 - Spring 2017
 - Fall 2017
 - Spring 2018
 - Spring 2019
 - Fall 2019
 - Spring 2020

EVENTS & PROGRAMS



Translating Iran During the Cold War: The Blind Owl, and Other Spy Intrigues

by Kamran Rastegar

Kamran Rastegar (Professor of Arabic and Comparative Literature, Tufts University) presented a lecture entitled "Translating Iran During the Cold War: The Blind Owl, and other Spy Intrigues."

Kamran Rastegar, a professor of International Literary and Cultural Studies at Tufts University, discussed Sadegh Hedayat's *THE BLIND OWL* – the first 20th-century Iranian novel to be translated into English. The book has been described as a reflection of its author's awareness of the significant shifts that were taking place in cultural values and society.

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Dana and David Dornsife
College of Letters, Arts and Sciences
Department of Middle East Studies

IRAN THROUGH BOOKS

at the L.A. Times Festival of Books at USC

Since 2015 Farhang Foundation has presented IRAN THROUGH BOOKS annually at the L.A. Times Festival of Books at USC, the U.S.'s largest annual book festival, attended by over 70,000 visitors. It is a free event and open to the public. Farhang Foundation's aim is to present books about Iran and by Iranian authors to the attendees of this great festival.





IRAN THROUGH BOOKS





Aroosi

150 Years of Iranian Wedding Traditions

Farhang Foundation, the USC Libraries, and the USC Dornsife Department of Middle East Studies presented a crowdsourced exhibition curated by Dr. Pedram Khosronejad. AROOSI: 150 YEARS OF IRANIAN WEDDING TRADITIONS explored their great ethnic diversity, religious plurality, and cultural differences. Iranian society considers the wedding ritual and its related ceremonies and customs to be one of the most important pillars of Persian culture. Iranian families within Iran and in the diaspora celebrate the weddings of their loved ones with great joy and happiness.

This first-ever exhibit provided a remarkable cultural insight through fascinating visual art and material culture of the Iranian wedding since the reign of Naser al-Din Shah Qajar (r. 1848-1896). The exhibition covered not only the formal aspects, such as the pre-wedding documents and the beautifully ornamented marriage contracts, but also Qajar embroidered fabrics and textiles, paintings, and photographs demonstrating the diversity of wedding traditions among Iranian families. The free exhibition was on display from February 23, 2020, through August 31, 2021, at USC's Doheny Library.

Special thanks to all who participated in this exhibition by lending their wedding treasures and artifacts for this project.



The History of Aroosi

A Talk on 150 Years of Iranian Wedding Traditions

Presented in conjunction with AROOSI: 150 YEARS OF IRANIAN WEDDING TRADITIONS, this talk event was one of the first interdisciplinary academic colloquia regarding Iranian traditional weddings and related ceremonies, initiated by the Farhang Foundation, USC Libraries, and USC Dornsife Department of Middle East Studies.

Distinguished specialists related to Iran (historian, ethnomusicologist, and social anthropologist) discussed different historical, sociocultural, and performative aspects of the rich tradition of Iranian weddings during Qajar-era Iran (1796-1925).

Based on historical narratives from the autobiographies of Qajar rulers and foreign travelers, and also through the examination of the art objects and material culture of this important period in the history of Iran, speakers opened new windows and presented their fresh research findings to their audience.

FEATURED SPEAKERS:

Pedram Khosronejad (Western Sydney University): The Importance of Persian Wedding Photographs and Material Culture in Preservation of Family History

Shahla Bahavar (University of Southern California): Introduction to the USC Persian and Iranian Library Collection

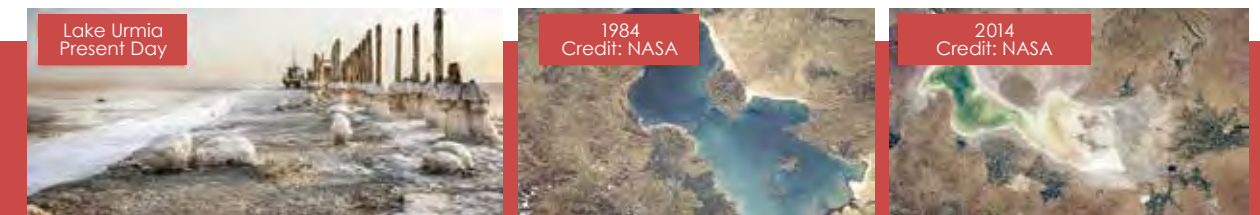
Manoutchehr Eskandari-Qajar (Santa Barbara City College): Wedding Ceremonies at the Court of the Early Qajar Shahs

Hani Khafipour (University of Southern California): Weddings in Safavid Iran as Seen by European Visitors

Amir Pourjavady (University of California, Los Angeles): Music in Persian Weddings During the Late Qajar-Era Iran

THE GREENING OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN: LAKE URMIA, ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS, AND REGIONAL GEOPOLITICS

by Dr. A. Marie Ranjbar



Dr. A. Marie Ranjbar presented her research on the nexus of human rights, politics, and environmental issues in Iran on September 25, 2018.

Dr. A. Marie Ranjbar of Ohio State University discussed the linkage between social movements, environmental justice, pro-democracy activism, and human rights in Iran. She argued the importance of "accounting for political contexts where alternative 'rights narratives' are both strategic and necessary." Drawing from her research on social movements in Iran, including a public demand for environmental protections of Lake Urmia in northwestern Iran, Ranjbar posited that environment activists have "greened human rights discourse." By appropriating a "coded language," protesters attempted to speak more openly about human rights while protecting themselves from state retaliation.

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Middle East Studies



Persian Film Series



Bashu, The Little Stranger

by Bahram Beizai

The Department of Middle East Studies screened a Persian film series during Spring 2020. First up was Bahram Beizai's BASHU, THE LITTLE STRANGER

BASHU, THE LITTLE STRANGER is writer-director Bahram Beizai's landmark film, made in 1986 and released in 1989. Set during the Iran-Iraq war, the film chronicles the adventures and experiences of Bashu, a young refugee from Khuzestan province south of Iran, as he makes his way to a northern Iranian village where he eventually finds a new home with the family of a strong-willed farm woman. Despite their differences – linguistically and culturally – Bashu and the farm woman connect through understanding and humanity. Displaced and orphaned because of the war, Bashu tells a tale of “displacement and relocation,” Beizai explains – themes that are still relevant today.



The Song of Sparrows

by Majid Majidi

The second film screening in the Department of Middle East Studies film series was Majid Majidi's THE SONG OF SPARROWS.

Director Majid Majidi's 2008 film, THE SONG OF SPARROWS, is a tale of morality in a modern contemporary world. The narrative arc follows the trials, tribulations, and eventual transformation of Karim, a simple ostrich farmer, as he struggles to support his family. During a visit to the capital city of Tehran, he stumbles upon a relatively easy way to make money by giving rides to people on the back of his motorbike. The everyday hustle, bustle, and materialism of the big city slowly transform Karim into a greedy and dishonest person. It is up to his wife and daughters to help him restore his personality and re-embrace the qualities and values that made him a good person, husband, and father. In a statement about the movie's themes, Majidi explains that “Modernization should be at the service of humanity, yet people find themselves conquered by it. The result is that with each passing day, we are becoming more distant from our own human values.”

SPOTLIGHT ON IRAN'S NUCLEAR DEAL



Roundtable discussion on November 17, 2017, on developments in Iran's nuclear negotiations under the Trump administration with Professors NAJMEDIN MESHKATI (USC Viterbi School of Engineering) and ANDREW COE (SIR).

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Continuity and Creativity: Models of Change in Persian Poetry, Classical and Modern

A talk by Professor Ahmad Karimi-Hakkak

Professor Ahmad Karimi-Hakkak (University of Maryland) joined Farhang Foundation at the USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences' Department of Middle East Studies to discuss the changes in the aesthetic system of Persian poetry based on new insights into the internal dynamics of the expressive system underlying it.



USC Dornsife
Middle East Studies Program

CYRUS CYLINDER

Modern Myths and Ancient Realities



In conjunction with Farhang Foundation's support of the Cyrus Cylinder Exhibition at the Getty Villa, Farhang sponsored a highly successful and well-attended scholarly conference on the subject at USC.

With members of the public and many students in attendance, "Cyrus Cylinder: Modern Myths and Ancient Realities" explored Persian history and the early roots of religious tolerance and human rights promoted in Ancient Persia by Cyrus the Great, as demonstrated by liberating the Jewish people from Babylonian captivity.



Moderated by Lynn Dodd (Associate Professor of the Practice of Religion at USC), the panel included an illustrious lineup of scholars: Elizabeth Carter (Chair, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at UCLA), Ryan Byrne (Research Associate, University of Texas, Austin), Bruce Zuckerman (Myron and Marian Casden Director and Professor of Religion and Linguistics at USC), and Tamara Eskenazi (Professor of Bible at Hebrew Union College).



This event served as a prelude to a panel hosted by the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism that focused on the broader global implications of the Cyrus Cylinder.



USC Iranian Studies Major Program SIGNING CELEBRATION

After successfully launching the first Iranian Studies Minor program at USC, on February 25, 2017, history was made again when Farhang Foundation signed an agreement with the university to launch the first-ever Iranian Studies Major program, a first in the school's over-130-year history.

The program was made possible by the help and support of the community and was celebrated with an official reception and fundraiser at USC attended by university dignitaries and members of Farhang's donors who helped make this dream a reality. The historic degree program officially launched in 2020.

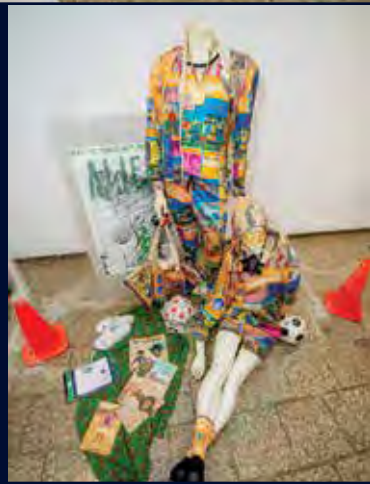




OCCUPY ME: BRANDING CULTURE, IDENTITY & THE POLITICS OF FASHION

by Hushidar Mortezaei

The USC Department of Middle East Studies presented the work of designer and artist Hushidar Mortezaie to the broader USC community through an exhibition and lecture that explored the long career of Mr. Mortezaie, who has been inspired by Iranian art and culture. The exhibition ran from August 20 to August 30, 2018 at the Helen Lindhurst Gallery of Fine Arts at the University of Southern California as part of Farhang Foundation's Iranian Studies program.



MODERN IRAN WITH HOSSEIN KAMALY

Dr. Kamaly visited with two of USC's classes in February 2019. In HIST 383 (The Modern Middle East) he discussed his book *GOD AND MAN IN TEHRAN*. In MDES 313 (Modern Iran) he led a workshop on close readings of historical documents.

Hossein Kamaly is a scholar of the Middle East who has taught at Barnard College, Columbia University. His book, *GOD AND MAN IN TEHRAN*, examines the historical processes and intellectual movements that have influenced the changing "visions of God" in Tehran over time. From the time of the Qajar and the Pahlavi dynasties through the Islamic Republic of Iran, he takes his readers on an intellectual journey to explain the country's sudden shift from modernity to religiosity.

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Department of Middle East Studies

UNCOVERING THE DR. H.E. WULFF COLLECTION

A LIFE CONTRIBUTION TO
THE STUDY OF PERSIA AND IRANIAN STUDIES

a talk by Dr. Pedram Khosronejad

The Department of Middle East Studies and USC Libraries hosted a lecture with Dr. Pedram Khosronejad of Western Sydney University on February 28, 2020. Dr. Khosronejad presented and discussed the life of a German exile, Dr. Hans , and his unique archival collection amassed in Iran from 1930 to 1960.

Dr. Khosronejad examined the importance of Dr. Wulff's collection to the study of German internees of World War II. The lecture was addressed to all who are interested in the history of craft and technology, German Internees of the World War II, and archival studies.

Dr. P. Khosronejad is an Adjunct Professor at Religion and Society Research Cluster at Western Sydney University, Australia, and a Fellow at the Department of Anthropology at Harvard University.



INFRASTRUCTURES OF DAILY LIFE:

Technology and Environment in the Middle East - The Built Environment
of Oil: Biopolitics, Oil Capitalism, and the Right to the City in Iran

by Kaveh Ehsani

Dr. Kaveh Ehsani is an associate professor of International Studies, Islamic World Studies, and Critical Ethnic Studies at DePaul University with extensive experience in international development planning and postwar reconstruction. Ehsani's biography on the DePaul University website points to his research on "the historical and contemporary impact of oil on society and politics; the historical sociology of warfare; the politics of property, land use, and water; the urban process and spatial change in Middle East cities; and the political economy and geopolitics of post-revolution Iran."

USC Libraries

USCDornsife
Middle East Studies Program

RETHINKING THE IRANIAN DIASPORA

A TRANSNATIONAL FEMINIST APPROACH TO THE QUESTION OF IDENTITY



Dr. Manijeh Moradian is an assistant professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Barnard College, Columbia University. Her talk explored the shifting politics of identity and political cultures among the Iranian diaspora in the U.S. over the last century. Moradian posits that to understand the context in which Iranian Americans "negotiate their location in the U.S.," it is vital to consider the politics of race, gender, and sexuality and their evolution throughout U.S.-Iran relations.



Iran in Motion: Mobility, Space, and the Trans-Iranian Railway

by Mikiya Koyagi

Dr. Mikiya Koyagi is an assistant professor of Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. In his book, *Iran in Motion*, Koyagi tells the stories of different individuals as they experienced the new levels of mobility made possible by the Trans-Iranian Railway. Completed in 1938, Iran's first national railway connected Tehran to the Caspian Sea in the north and the Persian Gulf in the south. By reorienting the flow of people and goods, the Trans-Iranian Railway reshaped the local, national, and transnational experiences of space among mobile individuals.

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The Environmental Fix:

Making Climate Change in the Middle East - Anthropogenic Drought and Water-Bankruptcy in Iran

by Amir AhgaKouchak

Dr. Amir AhgaKouchak is a Civil and Environmental Engineering professor at the Samueli School of Engineering, University of California, Irvine. His research focuses on hydrology, climatology, remote sensing of the environment, climate change, and water resources management, to name a few. In his talk, AhgaKouchak explained the concept of anthropogenic drought, broadly defined as drought caused or intensified by the interrelated impact of climate change, natural renewable water variability, and human activities. Warning of a future where anthropogenic drought and water bankruptcy will become more pervasive, he emphasized the importance of factoring in "human interactions" when building models to understand and manage this phenomenon.



PERSIAN TEA TABLE

On September 22, 2016, Professor Peyman Nojournian organized and hosted the very first event in the Persian language table series. These events are held on campus

and are designed to provide students enrolled in the Iranian Studies program an opportunity to practice and improve their conversational Persian.

The inaugural event included traditional Persian tea with an assortment of cookies and appetizers. More than 50 students and faculty members attended. During the event, USC Associate University Librarian Dr. Shahla Bahavar spoke about the Persian language and literature collection at USC Libraries.

The second Persian language table, held on October 27, 2017, included "Ash-e-Reshteh" with Persian cookies and "Chay-o, Nun-o, Panir." The event included recitals of Persian poetry and songs by special guests.

The Department of Middle East Studies and USC Libraries sponsored a Chai & Chill event on November 14, 2017, during which Dr. Shahla Bahavar once again presented the Persian collection at USC Libraries. Students had an opportunity to speak Persian with native speakers and enjoy Persian kabob.

VISITING PROFESSORS PROGRAM

The Iranian Studies curriculum at USC has benefited students in many ways. Through this program, students have been able to take advantage of a variety of lectures and presentations by renowned scholars and experts in the field of Iranian Studies.

Professor Khafipour's students had the opportunity to hear from the following scholars:



USC Visions & Voices presented an evening with **PROFESSOR DICK DAVIS**. Considered the finest living translator of Persian literature into English, Professor Davis had a conversation with acclaimed poet Dana Gioia, the Judge Widney Professor of Poetry and Public Culture at USC, on the great Persian poetic legacy that has inspired his life's work. Professor Davis spent a week on campus lecturing on Medieval Persian Poetry. (Fall 2013)

PROFESSOR DOMENICO INGENITO, a UCLA specialist on Sa'di, discussed Sa'di's works. Professor Ingenito teaches Classical Persian at UCLA. His research interests center on pre-Modern Persian poetry – in particular the history of lyric genres at the intersection of eroticisms and politics – rhetoric and prosody, hermeneutics, anthropology of ritual and symbolic representations, comparative literature, and translations studies. (Fall 2013)



PROFESSOR RUDI MATTHEE, who serves as the John and Dorothy Munroe Distinguished Professor of History at the University of Delaware, visited USC, sharing his insights on the Safavid period. Professor Matthee teaches Middle Eastern history with a research focus on early modern Iran and the Persian Gulf. (Spring 2014)

DR. LINDA KOMAROFF presented a lecture on the art of illuminated manuscripts, including Shahnameh miniatures. Dr. Komaroff has served as LACMA's curator of Islamic art since 1995. She is the author or editor of several books and has written numerous articles and book chapters on various aspects of Islamic art, with a special focus on the Iranian world. (Spring 2014)



KUROSH VALANEJAD, the Art Director at the Game Innovation Lab at the USC School of Cinematic Arts and the designer of the award-winning video game, *The Cat and the Coup*, about the coup that toppled Mohammad Mosaddeq's government, gave an interactive lecture. (Spring 2014)

These initiatives are quite effective in establishing a sense of community among the Iranian American USC student body as well as raising awareness of the Iranian Studies program among non-Iranians. This is why Farhang Foundation has been active on campus, sponsoring a variety of these events.

MIDDLE EASTERN FILM SERIES

The Middle Eastern Film Series offers students and the public an opportunity to attend screenings of highly acclaimed films of the region, accompanied by commentary and refreshments.

This initiative is part of USC's Middle Eastern Studies Program, coordinated by Professor Guilan Siassi and Program Assistant Camillia Shofani. The film screenings are complimentary and take place on campus.

Some of the films screened in 2015 included *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi, *The Square* by Jehane Noujaim, and *Wadjda* by Haifaa Al-Mansour.

LECTURE SERIES

Since its inception in 2011, the Iranian Studies program at USC has benefited its students by offering them a variety of lectures and presentations by renowned scholars and experts in the field of Iranian Studies.

Farhang Foundation has been a proud sponsor of a number of these presentations organized by various USC entities including Visions & Voices, as well as the Persian Academic and Cultural Student Association.

Following is a listing of these events to date:

The Republic of the Imagination: An Evening with Azar Nafisi

Azar Nafisi is the critically acclaimed author of *Reading Lolita in Tehran*, a long-running number one *New York Times* best seller published in thirty-two languages, and *Things I've Been Silent About*, also a *New York Times* best seller. A fellow at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies, she has taught at Oxford University and several universities in Tehran.

The Discourse of Modernity in Iran: A Lecture by Dr. Abbas Milani

Abbas Milani is the Hamid & Christina Moghadam Director of Iranian Studies at Stanford University and a Professor (by courtesy) in the Division of Stanford Global Studies. He was one of the founding codirectors of the Iran Democracy Project and a research fellow at the Hoover Institution.

Dr. Majid Naini: Rumi's Discoveries and Magical Prescription of World Peace

Dr. Majid Naini is one of the world's foremost Rumi scholars. He holds a PhD in Computer and Information Science & Technology from the University of Pennsylvania.

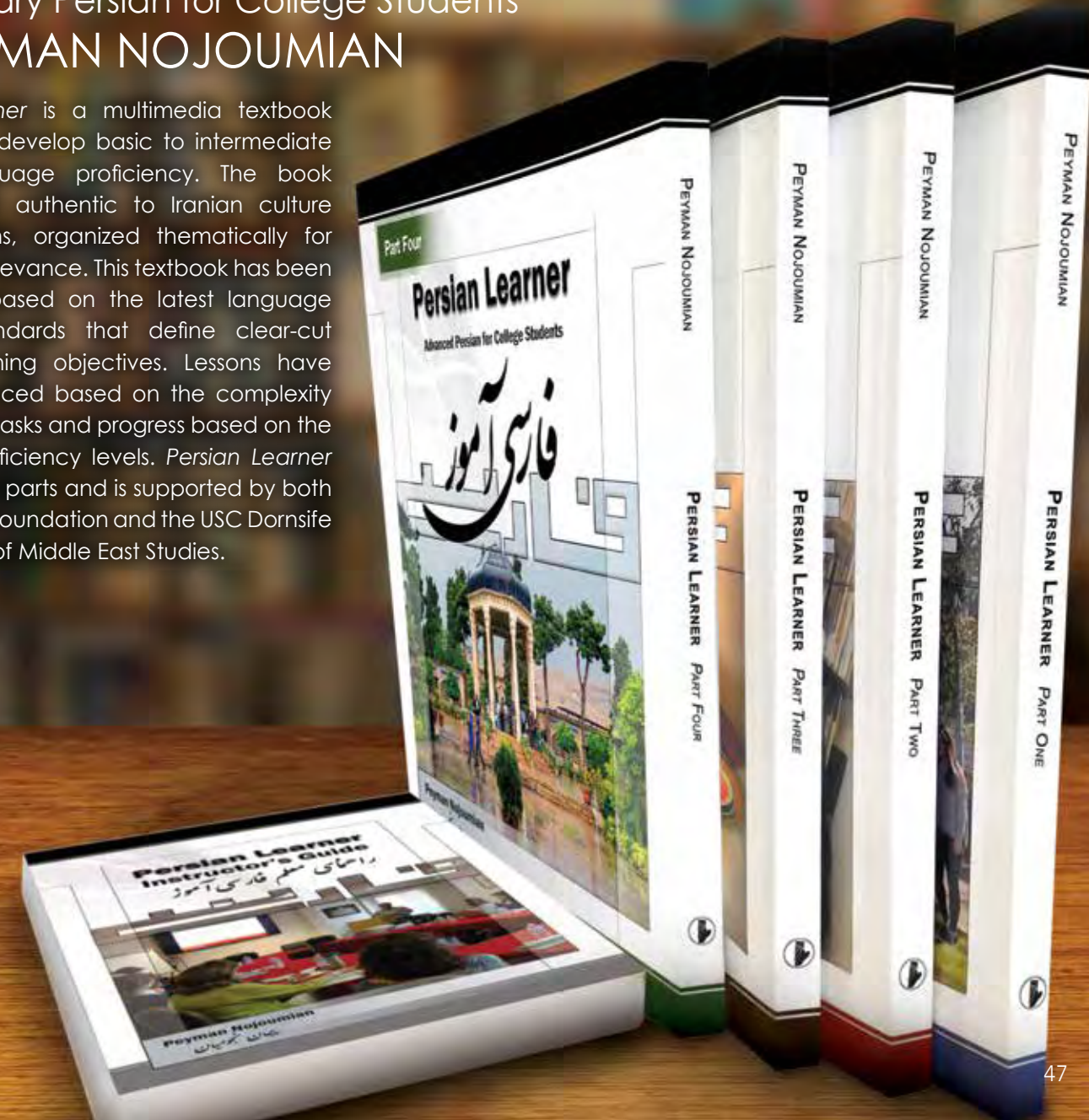
Iran and the Caucasus: A Long-Standing Legacy of Historical and Cultural Ties, a talk by Dr. Kaveh Farrokh

Dr. Kaveh Farrokh is dedicated to the advancement of Ancient Iranian and Classical Studies. An author specializing in Iranian history, he is also a frequent lecturer on Iran-related topics at the University of British Columbia. His major focus is the relationship between ancient Iran and the civilizations of the Greco-Roman world (and its European successors), India, China and the Far East, and the Arabo-Islamic world.

PERSIAN LEARNER

Elementary Persian for College Students
by PEYMAN NOJOUMIAN

Persian Learner is a multimedia textbook designed to develop basic to intermediate Persian language proficiency. The book uses content authentic to Iranian culture and traditions, organized thematically for contextual relevance. This textbook has been developed based on the latest language learning standards that define clear-cut student learning objectives. Lessons have been sequenced based on the complexity of language tasks and progress based on the intended proficiency levels. *Persian Learner* comes in four parts and is supported by both the Farhang Foundation and the USC Dornsife Department of Middle East Studies.



The
Cypress
Club is
a student
organization
founded by
Professor Khafipour
that aims to plant
trees in USC and the
surrounding areas in
honor of the beautiful
"sarv" (cypress) tree that
is prominently featured
throughout Persian poetry. The
club is on its way to becoming
a recognized USC student
organization and will soon
plant five trees dedicated
to the memory of five great
poets of Iran: Ferdowsi,
Rumi, Sa'di, Hafez, and
Jahan Malek Khatun.



THE CYPRESS CLUB



ANIMATION TRENDS IN IRAN AFTER THE REVOLUTION BY POUYA AFSHAR

The Middle East Studies Program (MESP) hosted Iranian American artist Pouya Afshar on October 20, 2016. Afshar spoke about animation trends imported and produced in Iran after the 1979 revolution.

Afshar is an alumnus of the California Institute of the Arts Character Animation department and the University of California, Los Angeles, Graduate Department of Film and Television, focusing on Animation and Digital Media.

He has exhibited his work as a visual artist throughout the world and has presented his research at universities across the United States.

Afshar is the creator, character designer, and producer of the animated series "Rostam in Wonderland" and the cocreator of the "1PA2PA" comics.

He is currently an assistant professor of art and design at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell.

An Afternoon with Noureddin Zarrin-Kelk The Father of Iranian Animation



Farhang Foundation and the Iranian Studies Council at USC were the proud cosponsors of a retrospective screening and conversation with Noureddin Zarrin-Kelk, the father of Iranian animation.

Organized by the USC School of Cinematic Arts and open to the public, this on-campus program included the North American premiere of Zarrin Kelk's 2011 film, *Bani Adam*, followed by a Q&A session and an afternoon serving of traditional Iranian tea. As part of the activities, a dinner reception was hosted by Farhang's Iranian Studies Council at USC at a private home, the night before the event. Noureddin Zarrin-Kelk, affectionately called




Noori, started his career at 16, drawing caricatures for Iranian magazines. After earning a PhD in pharmacology, he worked as an illustrator trying to change the long-held tradition of imageless textbooks in Iran. While working at Iran's Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, Noori became interested in the art of animation. In Belgium he studied animation with Raoul Servais and was soon making films for children. He has since advanced Iranian animation almost singlehandedly by founding the country's first animation school in 1974 and Iran's branch of the International Animated Film Society in 1987.



TEACHING PERSIAN IN THE 21ST CENTURY

An intensive two-day workshop for Persian instructors presented by the Palos Verdes Persian Heritage Foundation.

The workshop, in part sponsored by Farhang Foundation, was led by USC Assistant Professor Dr. Peyman Nojournian, who teaches the Persian Language courses of USC's Iranian Studies program. All participants were awarded a Certificate of Completion.

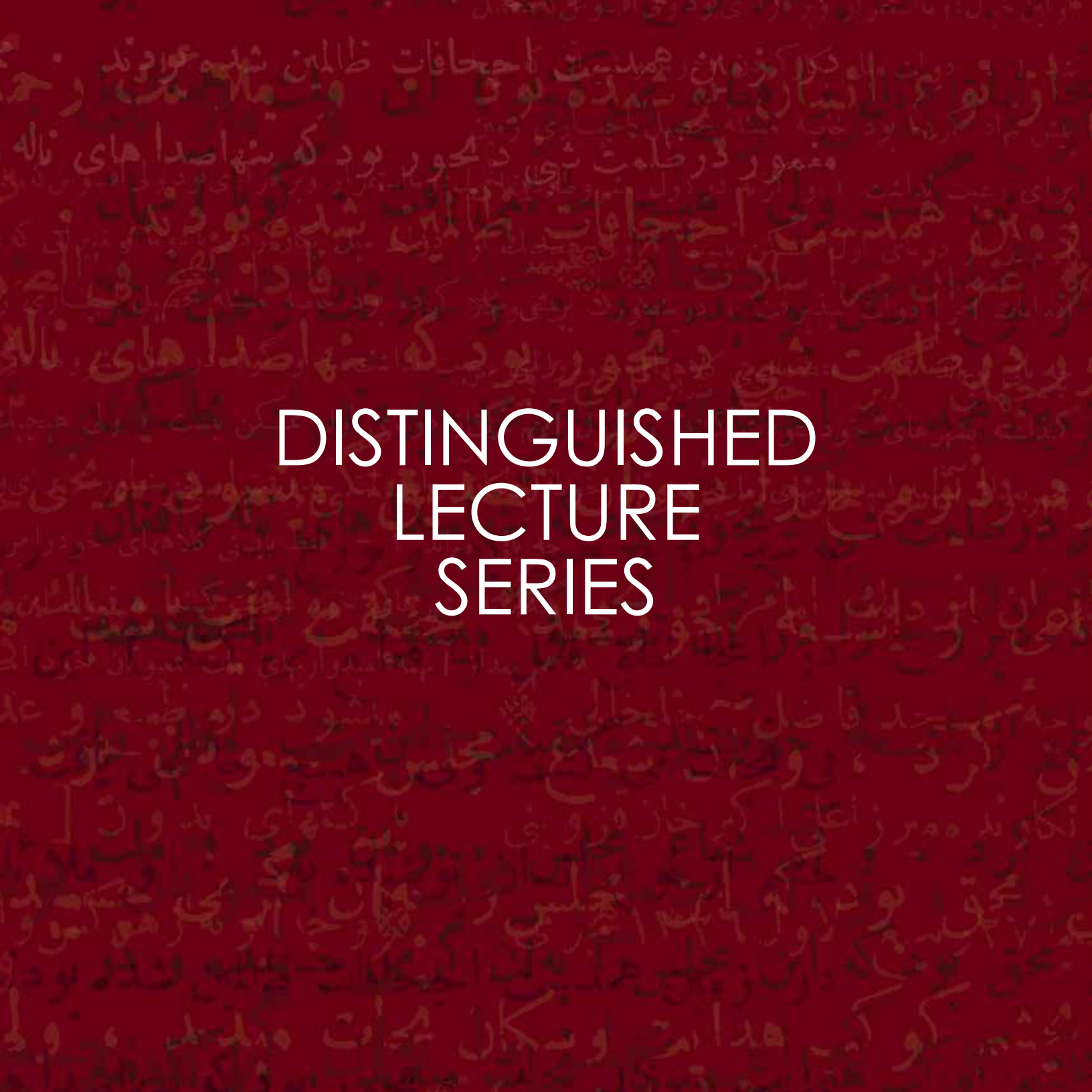


I have been very privileged to be involved in the early stages of the development of the USC–Farhang Foundation Iranian Studies Initiative. It has been a wonderful partnership dedicated to promoting the very best in academic courses and special events programming on Iranian culture, history, and language. And we have only just begun!



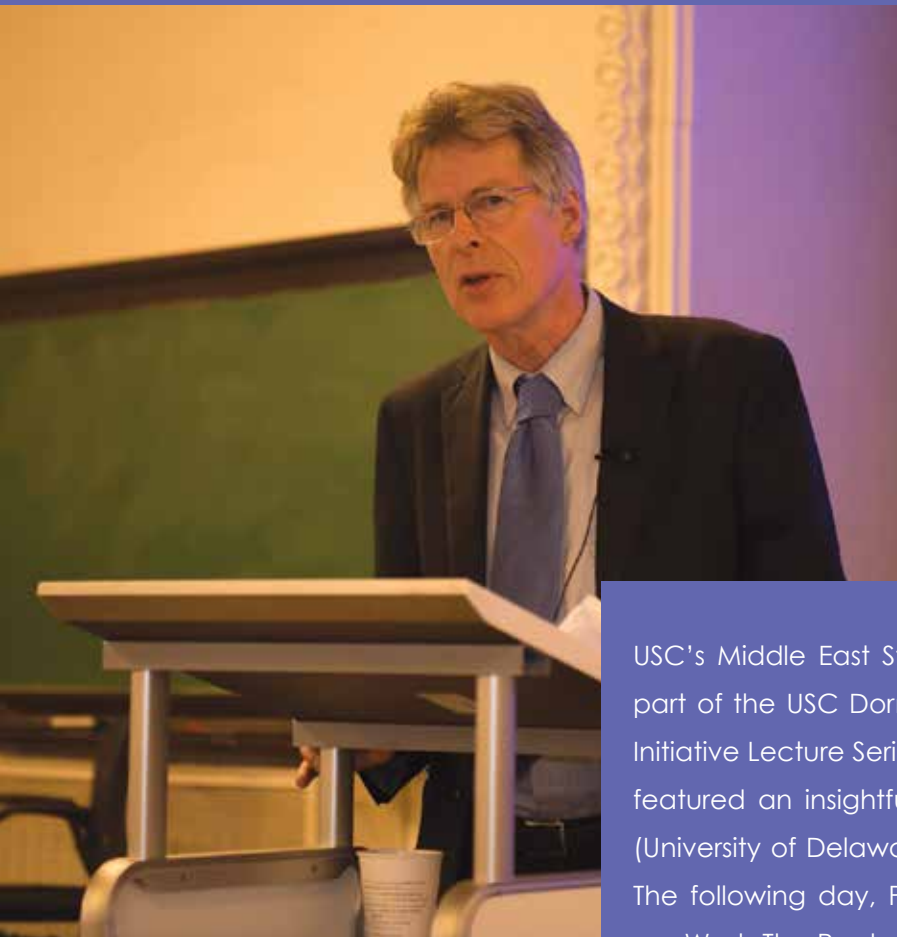
LAURIE A. BRAND

Robert Grandford Wright Professor of
International Relations and Middle East Studies
(Director, Middle East Studies Program, 2014–17)



DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES

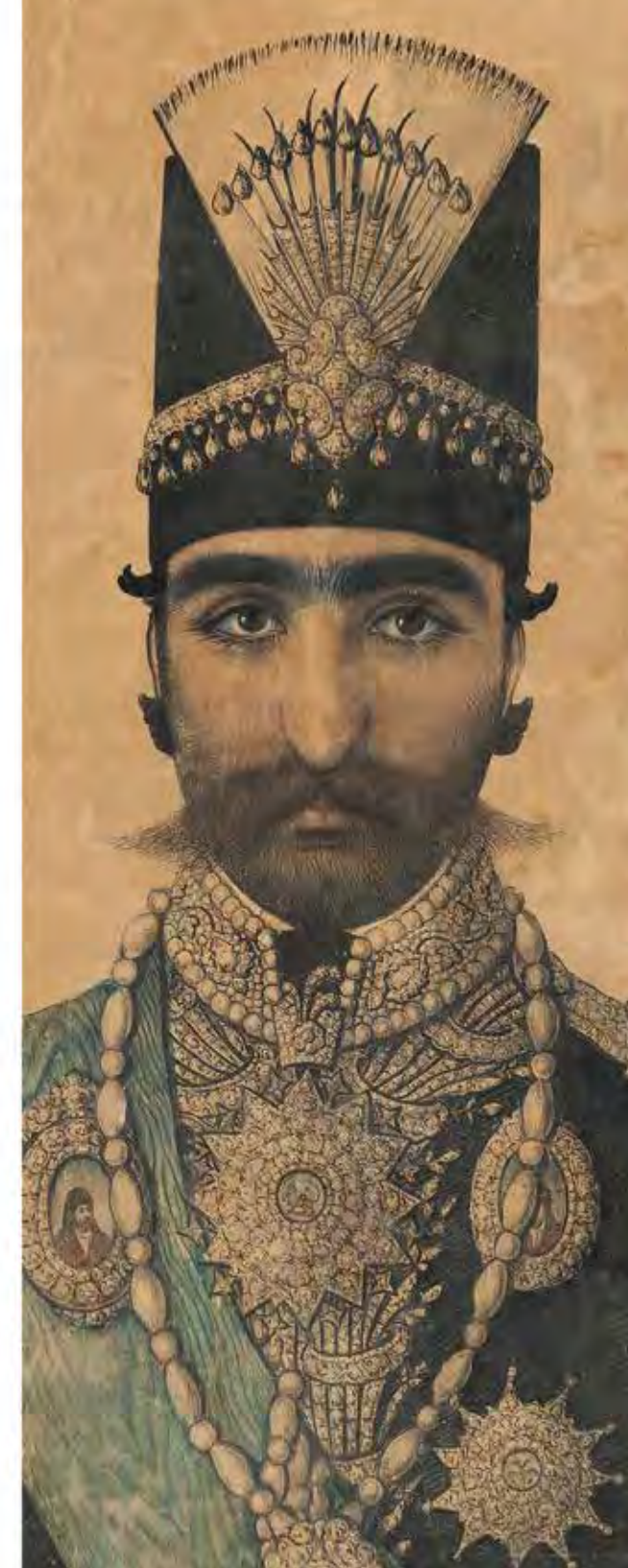
USC Dornsife – Farhang Foundation Iranian Studies Initiative **LECTURE SERIES**



USC's Middle East Studies Program presented two lectures as part of the USC Dornsife – Farhang Foundation Iranian Studies Initiative Lecture Series. "Nader Shah: Warlord or National Hero" featured an insightful presentation by Professor Rudi Matthee (University of Delaware) on Nader Shah and Karim Khan Zand. The following day, Professor Matthee presented "Neither East nor West: The Roots of the Iranian Quest for Self-Sufficiency," a lecture on the historical roots of Iran's desire to be politically and economically self-sufficient. Following the events, both lectures were made available for online viewing.



USCDornsife
Middle East Studies Program



KINGS AND CLERICS IN MODERN IRANIAN HISTORY

Our annual Distinguished Lecture Series at USC was presented online for the very first time in our long history, and it allowed more attendees to join us from all over the world.

We were honored to welcome Professor Abbas Amanat (Yale University) to our 2020 virtual lectures. Professor Amanat (BA, Tehran University, 1971; DPhil, University of Oxford, 1981) has taught and written about the early-modern and modern history of Iran, the Muslim world, the Middle East, and the Persianate world for more than three decades. He is a Consulting Editor and longtime contributor to *Encyclopedia Iranica* and is currently the Director of the Yale Program in Iranian Studies at the Yale MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies.

USCDornsife
Dana and David Dornsife
College of Letters, Arts and Sciences
Department of Middle East Studies

Inaugural Farhang Foundation USC Iranian Studies Initiative Conference IRANIAN CULTURE & DIASPORA

Farhang's ongoing commitment to Iranian Studies in the Iranian Diaspora. Top scholars were featured in the program, offering their insights in the fields of Sociology, Anthropology, Art History, Literature, Communications, and Cinematic Arts. In between morning and afternoon panels, comedian Max Amini was on hand to entertain during lunch, and the renowned Mamak Khadem and her ensemble delighted guests with a special after-dinner performance.



USC Dornsife – Farhang Foundation 2nd Annual Distinguished Lecture Series: HAMID NAFICI

USC's Middle East Studies Program presented two lectures as part of the USC Dornsife–Farhang Foundation Iranian Studies Initiative distinguished lecture series.

Dr. Hamid Naficy, professor of Radio-Television-Film and the Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani Professor in Communications at Northwestern University, presented insightful and riveting talks on the history of Iranian cinema titled *Iranian Post-Revolution Cinema: From Iconoclasm to Global Cinema* and *Iran's Mediatic Public Diplomacy with the West: War by Other Means*.

The lecture series aims to bring academic experts in Iranian culture, art, and history to USC to engage the community and share Iranian culture.



*Iranian Post-Revolution Cinema:
From Iconoclasm to Global Cinema*



*Iran's Mediatic Public Diplomacy With the West:
War by Other Means*

USC Dornsife
Middle East Studies Program

The Intersection of Past & Present in Iranian Art: A Lecture by DR. LINDA KOMAROFF

The Annual Distinguished Lecture Series at USC continued in 2017 with a special talk by Dr. Linda Komaroff, Curator of Islamic Art at LACMA. The talk focused on Iranian Art both past and present and the influences of politics, mass media, and history on contemporary Iranian art. The event was free and open to the general public.



USCDornsife
Middle East Studies Program

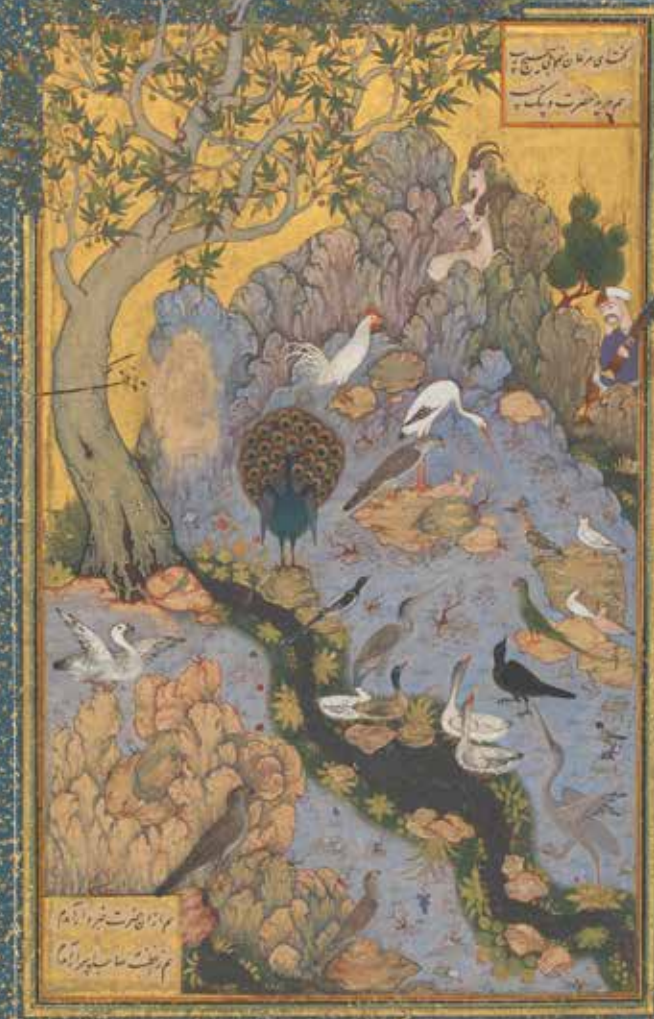
Annual USC Distinguished Lecture Series Featuring Professor **Richard Bulliet**



Farhang Foundation and the USC Dornsife Middle East Studies Program presented the annual Iranian Studies Initiative Distinguished Lecture Series. Our special guest speaker was Professor Richard Bulliet of Columbia University, who presented a lecture titled "Nishapur: A Tale Of Two Sufis."

Professor Bulliet specializes in Middle Eastern history, the social and institutional history of Islamic countries, and the history of technology.

USCDornsife
Middle East Studies Program





ANNUAL
FARHANG FOUNDATION
DISTINGUISHED LECTURE
SERIES AT USC:
Dr. Mohammad Tavakoli-Taraghi

The 2019 Farhang Foundation Iranian Studies Initiative Annual Distinguished Lecture Series at USC was held on February 19, 2019. Our special guest lecturer was Professor Mohammad Tavakoli-Taraghi of the University of Toronto, who presented a special lecture titled *Pathologizing Iran: The Ailing "Mother Nation" and Political Diagnostics*.

USC Dornsife
Middle East Studies Program



PACSA

PERSIAN ACADEMIC & CULTURAL
STUDENT ASSOCIATION
AT USC

PERSIAN ACADEMIC & CULTURAL STUDENT ASSOCIATION AT USC

PACSA is a nonprofit, nonreligious and nonpartisan association of Persian students at USC.

Founded in 2011, PACSA takes pride in being a part of a culturally diverse community at USC and in Los Angeles. PACSA takes it upon itself to give back to this vibrant community by sponsoring and organizing cultural events that will help further integrate Persian culture into the rest of the community.

PACSA events strive to create a meaningful dialogue between cultures. They include concerts, presentations, art exhibitions, theatricals, music and dance performances, film screenings, lectures, and workshops.

These events act not only as a hub for Persian-speaking students of various nationalities to socialize and unite, but also as a place for anyone who is interested to learn more about Persian culture and language.

PACSA currently consists of four active clubs: Book Club, Music Club, Movie Nights, and Lecture Nights, and it hopes to add more as it grows.

Farhang Foundation is a proud sponsor and supporter of many PACSA initiatives on the USC campus.

THE FIRST ANNUAL PERSIAN LITERATURE STUDENT CONTEST IN POETRY AND SHORT STORIES

A literary contest hosted by PACSA and sponsored by Farhang Foundation. Open to students and recent graduates worldwide, the First Annual Persian Literature Student Contest called for poetry and short story submissions written in Persian. For each category, prizes included \$250 for first place and \$100 for second place winners. Winning authors and poets were further acknowledged at an awards ceremony and had their work published in a Persian publication.



HAMLET *Prince of Grief*



PACSA presented *Hamlet, Prince of Grief*, a one-man show by the Leev Theater Group that explored the universal themes of domestic and political betrayal and death. Attracting a diverse audience of Iranians and non-Iranians, the event included a moving performance by the acclaimed actor Afshin Hashemi, followed by a poignant Q&A session.

Hamlet, Prince of Grief was written by Mohammad Charmshir. It was directed by Mohammad Aghebati and produced by Mehrnoush Aliaghaei. Farhang Foundation was a proud sponsor of this thought-provoking theatrical experience.



Creative Writing Workshop with **ABBAS MAROUFI**

A creative writing workshop at USC, led by the well-known contemporary writer Abbas Maroufi, was presented by PACSA* and sponsored by Farhang Foundation. The workshop series kicked off with a lecture followed by a reading from one of Abbas Maroufi's novels. Taking place over the course of six sessions, the program covered a number of topics including interactive writing, introduction of modern writing elements, and a comparison of different writing styles. The workshop also included two movie screenings, followed by discussions of the story elements featured within each movie.

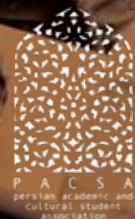
*The Persian Academic and Cultural Student Association at USC



Lecture & Writing Workshop with **MASOUD BEHNOUD**

Farhang Foundation was a proud sponsor of a lecture and two workshops by Masoud Behnoud, presented by PACSA. In his lecture, Masoud Behnoud covered a range of topics on literature and journalism in the current atmosphere of Iran. The lecture was followed by a Q&A session. Mr. Behnoud's workshops focused on topics such as Discontinuity of History in Iran and Iranian Media in Exile.

Masoud Behnoud is a prominent Iranian journalist, historian, and writer currently residing in the United Kingdom.



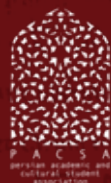


USC Creative Writing Workshop by **NIMA DEGHANI**

USC's Persian Academic and Cultural Student Association (PACSA) hosted a two-day workshop with Nima Dehghani, a multidisciplinary artist whose work explores the relations among society, politics, and audience interactions in public spaces. This innovative workshop offered students the opportunity to delve into various types of text, analyzing form, ideas, and structure.

Nima Dehghani was born in Tehran in 1986. He holds a BA with distinction from Tehran's IUST School of Architecture and an MFA from Carnegie Mellon University. He works predominantly in the medium of theater and performance art, where he elevates the audience experience by incorporating video art in his performances. Most of his work deals with social themes and addresses political challenges, often in the form of social satire.

info source: Carnegie Mellon



The Annual Celebration of IRANIAN-TROJAN ACHIEVEMENTS by PACSA (2014)



Farhang Foundation was pleased to support a delightful event in the fall of 2014, hosted by USC's Persian Academic and Cultural Student Association (PACSA) in celebration of recent achievements, including the thriving Iranian Studies minor program at USC as well as PACSA's continued growth. The evening featured music, food, networking opportunities, and a very special musical performance by the talented duo, Sara Naeini and Reza Rohani.

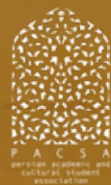


Interactive Music Workshop with **KOUROSH TAGHAVI**

Music lovers with varying skill sets had the opportunity to explore the fundamentals of Persian classical music at an interactive workshop at USC with presenter Kourosh Taghavi. The audience was introduced to the basic concepts of Persian classical music and even sang at times during the lecture. USC's Persian Academic & Cultural Student Association (PACSA) hosted this delightful and interactive program with support from Farhang Foundation.

Kourosh Taghavi was born in Gorgan, Iran, in 1965. After his migration to the United States in 1984, he began studying the Setar with Ms. Partow Houshmand-Rad. He later had the great fortune to continue his studies of the Setar and classical music of Iran with Ostad Mohammad Reza Lotfi and Ostad Hossein Alizadeh. These ongoing studies are the source of his unique approach to the art of Iranian music. Taghavi's passionate and melodic approach to music is the foundation of his many collaborations and recordings with numerous artists performing both the traditional and modern art forms of Iranian music.

info source: <http://kouroshtaghavi.com/biography>



FROM FRANCE TO IRAN: *French Orientalism & the Persian Court*

Farhang Foundation and USC's Persian Academic & Cultural Student Association (PACSA) hosted a very special recital celebrating the arrival of Western classical music in Iran by way of France more than 200 years ago. The sold-out concert featured performances by the virtuoso team of Tara Kamangar (on piano) and Virgil Boutellis-Taft (on violin).



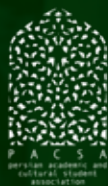


THE 1953 COUP REVISITED AND THE ROOTS OF MODERN U.S.-IRANIAN RELATIONS

USC's Persian Academic & Cultural Student Association (PACSA) hosted a talk by renowned historian Dr. Ervand Abrahamian on modern Iranian history with a focus on the 1953 coup, the basis of his highly acclaimed 2013 book, *The Coup: 1953, the CIA, and the Roots of Modern U.S.-Iranian Relations*. Farhang Foundation was proud to support such a worthwhile evening.

Ervand Abahamian (BA, Oxford University, PhD, Columbia University) is a historian of the Middle East specializing in modern Iran. He has taught at the universities of Oxford, Columbia, New York, and Princeton, in addition to the Graduate Center in the City University of New York and over forty years at Baruch College. His books have been published in English, Persian, Arabic, Turkish, Polish, and Italian. In 2011 he was elected a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

info source:
<https://www.baruch.cuny.edu/wsas/academics/history/eabrahamian.htm>



Workshop on TRADITIONAL IRANIAN MUSIC

PACSA, with the support of Farhang Foundation, organized this unique music workshop with the goal of helping audiences gain a deeper appreciation and understanding of Iran's traditional music. Part lecture and part performance, this engaging two-hour program focused on the role of Iran's culture, including its poetry, in shaping this country's traditional music.

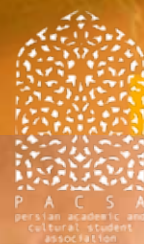
Led by Hesam Abedini (the founder of Sibarg Ensemble), the workshop intertwined segments of musical performance with Q&A sessions. Audiences were given a chance to experience a piece of music and then learn about its roots, principles, influences, and values.

Using Professor Hossein Omoumi's theories including his "Pish-Radif" method, Hesam was able to simplify the complex structure of Persian music, making it more approachable and less intimidating.





SIBARG ENSEMBLE CONCERT: PERSIAN/JAZZ IMPROVISATION



PACSA, in collaboration with Farhang Foundation, proudly presented an evening of musical enchantment with Sibarg Ensemble, a contemporary Iranian band based in Orange County. The goal of the concert was to celebrate Persian classical, folkloric, and contemporary Jazz music.

Sibarg is one of the forerunners of the modern Iranian Jazz movement, well known for the unique way it fuses Western Jazz with traditional Iranian music. Hesam Abedini formed Sibarg in 2008 while studying in the Tehran University School of Music. Since its inception, the group has been regularly performing around the world. The current "ensemble" consists of Niloufar Shiri (Kamancheh), Ebrahim Poustinchi (Tar), Kyle Motl (Double Bass), Josh Charney (Piano), Arian Khoroushi, (Percussion), with Hesam Abedini himself as the Vocalist.



The Annual Celebration of IRANIAN-TROJAN ACHIEVEMENTS by PACSA (2015)

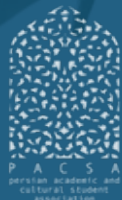
A highly anticipated and delightfully engaging evening was hosted by USC's Persian Academic and Cultural Student Association (PACSA), with the support of Farhang Foundation. An annual celebration of PACSA's recent achievements, the event also highlighted the success of USC's Iranian Studies program. The festivities included music, food, and networking opportunities, as well as special performances by Sina Salimi and Ebrahim Nabavi.



IRAN'S POST-SANCTIONS ECONOMY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES



Farhang Foundation was proud to sponsor USC's Persian Academic and Cultural Student Association's (PACSA) special lecture by Dr. Hashem Pesaran, who delivered his assessment of the current situation of Iran's economy and its prospects following the headline-making nuclear deal. The lecture was a necessary and timely addition to the discourse surrounding the potentialities and opportunities lying ahead for an economy some call the largest untouched emerging market in the world.



The Power of Photography for Humanity REZA DEGHATI

USC's Persian Academic and Cultural Student Association (PACSA) and Farhang Foundation presented an insightful and riveting talk by world-renowned photographer and explorer Reza Deghati, who discussed the power of visual media and their effect on social change and humanity's perspective. The talk was followed by a very special workshop and portfolio review for aspiring photographers, which provided a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to have Reza Deghati review and comment on their works.

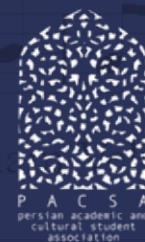


MOJGAN SHAJARIAN

The Joy of Iranian Classical Music



USC's Persian Academic and Cultural Student Association (PACSA) and Farhang Foundation presented an interactive and demonstrational lecture by one of today's most promising musical artists specializing in traditional and classical Iranian music and instruments. Mojgan Shajarian, who was trained and educated by masters of Iranian music, instructed attendees on how to appreciate and understand classical Iranian music. This was another free cultural and educational event organized by PACSA at USC and sponsored by Farhang Foundation.

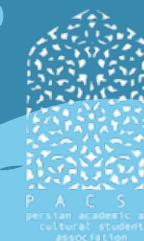


Ko nam Zen de gi

Iranian Music Workshop (Tasnif) by KOUROSH TAGHAVI

Renowned Iranian musician Kourosh Taghavi, faculty member of San Diego State University, held a workshop that provided an expressive outlet to those who enjoy Persian classical music.

During the event, students gained insight into the history of Persian classical music and learned parts of the Radif, including how to differentiate between *Dastgâhs* by playing and singing in different modes together, better known as *Tasnif-khaani*. The event was organized by PACSA and sponsored by Farhang Foundation.



MARYAMA BAND

Secret Diaries of a Middle Eastern Mermaid

Maryam Mirbagheri, aka "Maryama," headlined a nostalgic night of jazz-pop and soul arrangements of famous Persian songs at USC's Tommy's Place. The event was organized by USC's PACSA and sponsored by Farhang Foundation.



A Tribute to ABBAS KIAROSTAMI

USC's Persian Academic and Cultural Student Association (PACSA) in collaboration with Farhang Foundation held a panel discussion about the work and legacy of Iranian Filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami, featuring Jonathan Rosenbaum, Homayoun Ershadi, and Anahita Ghazvinizadeh. The discussion was followed by a screening of *Taste of Cherry* (1997), winner of the Palme d'Or at the 1997 Cannes Film Festival.

Abbas Kiarostami, 1940–2016, was the legendary Iranian filmmaker who won the admiration of audiences and critics worldwide and received more than seventy awards for his works. In addition to the Cannes Film Festival Palme d'Or for *Taste of Cherry*, he won the Cannes Film Festival Award of the Youth for *Copie Conforme* (2010) and the Chicago International Film Festival for best film for *Through the Olive Trees*, among many others.





Photographic Self-Representation in Iran

A Lecture by Professor Ali Behdad

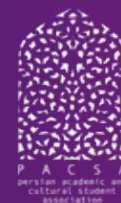


PACSA in collaboration with Farhang Foundation presented a lecture by Ali Behdad, the Charles Hillis Professor of Literature at the University of California, Los Angeles. Professor Behdad is the author of *Belated Travelers: Orientalism in the Age of Colonial Dissolution*, *A Forgetful Nation: On Immigration and Cultural Identity in the United States*, and *Camera Orientalis: Reflections on Photography of the Middle East*.

Professor Behdad explored a range of Western and Middle Eastern archival material from the

late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and offered a rich account of how photography transformed Europe's distinctly Orientalist vision into what seemed objective fact, a transformation that proved central to the project of European colonialism.

In this lecture, Professor Behdad screened a wide range of images, from late Qajar-era photographs by professional studios and amateur practitioners, to contemporary works by such artists as Bahman Jalali and Shadi Ghadirian, illustrating on the one hand how middle- and upper-class men in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries embraced photography to foreground their social status and patriarchal values, while engaging in what one might call "photo-exoticism," and how, on the other hand, the works of contemporary artists who deconstruct this patriarchal and exoticist tradition are inadvertently implicated in what he describes as "neo-Orientalism," that is, a mode of representation that perpetuates many of the old stereotypes of the Middle East through what on the surface seems a sympathetic liberal discourse.



Fifth Annual PACSA Celebration Night with Musical Guest KARMANDAN

PACSA held their 5th annual celebration with music and Persian cuisine. They continued to expand their efforts to introduce Iranian culture and heritage through a variety of cultural activities at one of the world's most diverse universities (USC), in hope of promoting cross-cultural relations between Iranians and other nationalities. The evening was highlighted by a musical performance by the talented Karmandan band.



Creative Writing Workshop HOSSEIN ABKENAR

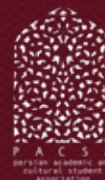
After the very successful Creative Writing Workshop by Hossein Abkenar in 2016, PACSA was excited to announce the 2nd series of this workshop (in Persian), which was held on February 25 and 26, 2017, at USC.

The workshop focused on writing styles and techniques including the structure and literary forms of surrealism, magic realism, minimalism, post-modernism, stream of consciousness, detective stories, nouveau roman, and classical.

Attendees had the opportunity to read their own writings during the workshop and get feedback from Mr. Abkenar.



Hossein Abkenar was a 2013–14 fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University and is now a City of Asylum Fellow at the Beverly Rogers, Carol C. Harter Black Mountain Institute at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. During these fellowship years, he has been working on his novel, *Darkness*. *Darkness* covers three decades in Iran's history. Hossein Abkenar was also a writing teacher at the University of Tehran and the Karnameh Institute of Arts and Culture in Iran.

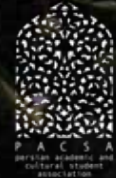


STARLESS DREAMS

Award-winning *Starless Dreams* plunges us into the lives of young teenage girls sharing temporary quarters at a rehabilitation and correction center on the outskirts of Tehran. An unforgettable cinematic portrayal of restored innocence and humanity, *Starless Dreams* is the last installment of the groundbreaking documentary trilogy *Youth Behind Bars: The Iran Trilogy*.

Considered one of Iran's most prominent filmmakers, Mehrdad Oskoui spent seven years securing access to a female juvenile rehabilitation facility on the outskirts of Tehran. The result is *Starless Dreams*, a haunting portrait of stolen childhood, and a stark testimonial of the previously unseen and unheard.





A THOUSAND NIGHTS UNDER STARS

Nightscape Photography Talk & Workshop by **BABAK TAFRESHI**



Babak A. Tafreshi is a photographer for *National Geographic* specializing in night sky imaging and is also a science communicator who bridges art and science. He is the founder of The World at Night (TWAN) program, a board member of the Astronomers Without Borders organization, and a contributing photographer to *Sky & Telescope* magazine and the European Southern Observatory. Born in 1978 in Tehran, Babak lives in Boston, but he is often on the move and could be anywhere, from the heart of the Sahara to the Himalayas or Antarctica. He received the 2009 Lennart Nilsson Award, the world's

most recognized award at the time for scientific imaging, for his global contribution to night sky photography.

In his lecture, *A Thousand Nights Under Stars*, Babak Tafreshi shares surreal scenes of the night sky across continents using images captured in the past two decades. On an adventurous photographic journey into the mysteries of night skies, Tafreshi chronicled the wonders of earth and sky as the two merge – bringing together art and science. Tafreshi also presents TWAN, an international program that involves many of the world's best nightscape photographers who document the last remaining starry skies on the planet.



An Exploration of Iranian Dance *with Farzaneh Kaboli*

Farzaneh Kaboli is a pioneer in combining Iranian folklore dance with modern choreography. Having studied at the prestigious Iranian National and Folkloric Dance Academy alongside many world-renowned dancers and choreographers, Kaboli frequently performed as a leading soloist with the National

Dance Company, both in Iran and on the international stage. After the 1979 Islamic revolution of Iran, Kaboli continued her career as an actor and choreographer, performing in both theater and cinema. For this lecture, Kaboli examined the intersection of Iranian folkloric and modern dance traditions.





Annual Celebration Concert with a Performance by **SARA NAEINI & ENSEMBLE**

To achieve our goal of promoting Middle Eastern Studies at USC to the Iranian American community living in the Greater Los Angeles area, we featured prominent vocalist Sara Naeini for our sixth annual celebration.

Sara Naeini is one of the most popular Iranian singers in recent years. Her unique mix of Persian music with jazz and rock styles mesmerized the sold-out audience.

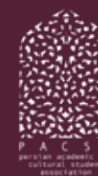


A Survey on the **Progression of Persian Poetry** by Professor Karimi-Hakkak



USC's PACSA presented a lecture by Professor Ahmad Karimi-Hakkak, a world-renowned professor of Persian language and literature, and Iranian culture and civilization.

Professor Karimi-Hakkak has written nineteen books and over one hundred major scholarly articles that have been translated into eight languages. He has also served as President of the International Society for Iranian Studies and several other professional academic organizations. The event was organized by PACSA, in collaboration with USC's Iranian Studies program and Farhang Foundation.



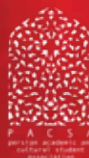
Femininity*

Iranian Women

& Social Disapprobation

The outstanding Iranian documentary *Femininity* was screened exclusively for the first time outside of Iran on March 2, 2018. The screening was followed by a panel discussion about Iranian women's social issues.

The panel featured Professors Nayerreh Tohidi (California State University, Northridge), Lisa Leeman (USC), Kevan Harris (UCLA), and Guilan Siassi (USC). The event was organized by PACSA and funded by Farhang Foundation.

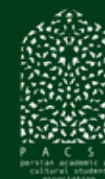


PACSA's Nowruz Reunion Celebration at USC with Legends of Iranian Music by Maryam Zandi

During the week of Nowruz in March 2018, USC's PACSA put together an innovative program throughout campus that introduced students to master musicians inside Iran.

A wonderful portrait collection was curated from photographer Maryam Zandi's collection called "Iranian Contemporary Musicians," which was exhibited in the Ivan Gallery in December. The portraits are also available in a book with the same title.

Stations were equipped with a musical piece from each of the artists featured in the series, and students were invited to listen to the music of each master to familiarize themselves with their craft.



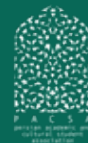
Oblivion Verses

Screening at USC



PACSA In collaboration with the USC School of Cinematic Arts and Farhang Foundation presented an exclusive screening of *Oblivion Verses*, a Venice Film Festival award winner.

The screening was followed by a Q&A session with the writer/director Alireza Khatami. Mr. Khatami was born in Iran, studied Creative Multimedia in Malaysia, and obtained a Master of Fine Arts degree in film production in the United States. He was selected in the 24th session of Cinéfondation of the Cannes Film Festival in 2012. He is also an alumnus of the Berlinale Talent Campus and the Talent Lab of the Toronto International Film Festival.



RHYTHM IN PERSIAN POETRY

A talk by Mohsen Namjoo

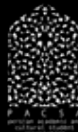
Renowned Iranian musician Mohsen Namjoo presented an insightful lecture titled *Rhythm in Persian Poetry with a Slant on Linguistic Poetry*. The riveting sold-out talk was presented by PACSA and proudly sponsored by Farhang Foundation.

Society, City Planning, and Urban Design with Dr. Ali Kiafar

USC's PACSA welcomed Dr. Ali Kiafar for a lecture titled "Society, City Planning, and Urban Design in Modern Iran."

Dr. Kiafar has a Master of Architecture and City Planning degree as well as a doctorate in urban and regional planning from USC. He has received several awards and recognitions including the Community Development Award from the American Institute of Architects and an Excellence in Teaching Award from the University of California, Riverside.

Dr. Kiafar's talk revolved around his most recent book on Iranian architecture and was followed by a book signing.



Influence of Persian Literature on Central Asian and Middle Eastern Cultures

As part of its Distinguished Lecture Series, USC's Persian Academic and Cultural Student Association (PACSA) presented a special lecture by professor Ahmad Karimi-Hakkak titled *Influence of Persian Literature on Central Asian and Middle Eastern Cultures*.





7TH ANNUAL
PACSA
CELEBRATION

WITH
فتاد
امینی
**SHADI
AMINI**



USC's PACSA presented their 7th annual celebration with musical guest Shadi Amini, her ensemble, and special guests.

The event focused on music, art, and dance in the context of womanhood and femininity.

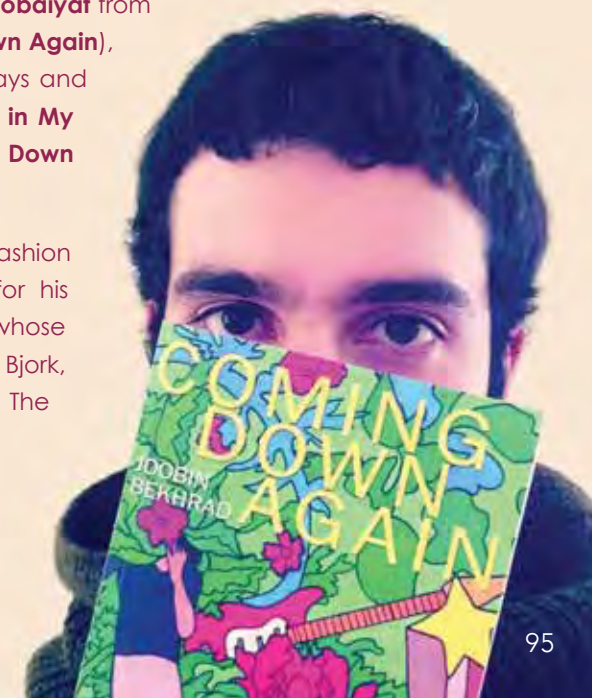
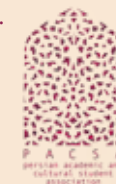


SEX, Drugs, and GOL-O-BOLBOL

Author **Joobin Bekhrad** presented a talk about cultural hybridity and his experiences growing up in the Iranian diaspora, and the ways in which they have informed his acclaimed writing. Bekhrad is the founder and former editor of *Reorient* and the Canadian Desk Editor of *Art Asia Pacific*. He has also contributed to a host of other notable publications, such as Columbia University's *Columbia Journal* (where he served as Online Guest Editor in late 2016), *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Economist*, *The Financial Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *Forbes*, *GQ*, *Paper*, *CNN*, and the *BBC*. He has been interviewed by *Newsweek*, *Monocle*, *PRI*, and the *CBC*, and has seen his award-winning writing translated into a wide variety of languages.

In addition to his many articles, he has translated Omar Khayyam's **Robaiyat** from Persian into English and has written a Tehran-set novella (**Coming Down Again**), a novel about Toronto's Iranian community (**Guguli**), a book of essays and stories about Iranian culture (**With My Head in the Clouds and Stars in My Eyes**), and four volumes of Iran-inspired poetry (**Turncoats of Paradise**, **Down the Twilit Hill**, **Elsewhere**, and **Lovers of Light**).

The event was moderated by visual interdisciplinary artist and fashion designer **Hushidar Mortezaie**, a Los Angeles-based artist known for his glamorous Iranian aesthetics, humor, and political overtones, and whose designs have been worn by such notable individuals as Brad Pitt, Bjork, and Beyoncé, and featured in publications including *Vogue Italia*, *The Huffington Post*, *W Magazine*, *The L.A. Times*, and *Artforum*.





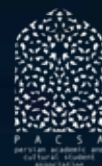
Women in Contemporary Persian Literature, Poetry, and Journalism



USC's Persian Academic and Cultural Student Association presented a speaker event focusing on Women in Contemporary Persian Literature, Poetry, and Journalism.



Esteemed speakers included journalist **Homa Sarshar**, poet **Roja Chamankar**, and scholar **Houra Yavari**. The event was moderated by poet and journalist **Mandana Zandian**.



A film by:
Hassan Solhjoui

Persian New Yorker Stories

USC's Persian Academic and Cultural Student Association presented a special screening of PERSIAN NEW YORKER STORIES with a special Q&A with the film's director, Hassan Solhjoui, moderated by Shabnam Tolouei.

Hassan Solhjoui is a senior producer at BBC World Service. He is the editor and presenter of a film showcase in the BBC Persian network. He studied cinema in Iran and the United Kingdom.





CHESS DAY

WITH IRANIAN CHESS CHAMPION
EHSAN GHAEM MAGHAMI



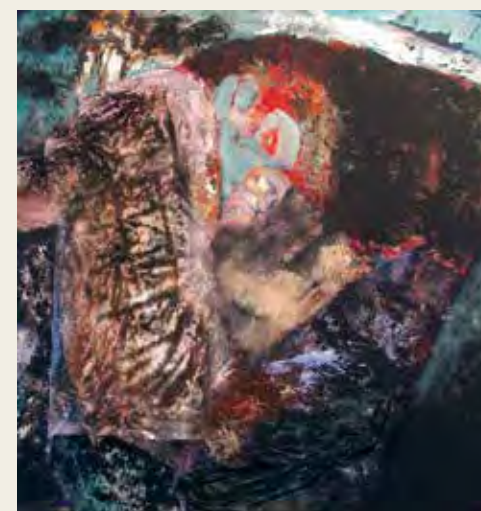
The Persian Academic and Cultural Student Association (PACSA) welcomed Mr. Ehsan Ghaem Maghami, the first Chess Grandmaster in Iran's history and the current Captain of Iran's national chess team.

A documentary screening and interactive Q&A with Mr. Ehsan Ghaem Maghami kicked off the evening. The documentary series examined the path of success and the impact of internationally renowned Iranians on their society. The event concluded with a chess exhibition with Chess Grandmaster Ghaem Maghami in a simultaneous match with a group of students from the USC Chess Club.



Virtual Conversation with Dr. Karim Nasr

A night to learn more about painting, this event was organized by the Persian Academic and Cultural Student Association (PACSA) and featured renowned Iranian painter, illustrator, writer, and sculptor, Professor Karim Nasr. Professor Nasr is the recipient of numerous accolades and awards, including a gold plaque from Bratislava and the coveted award from Tehran's Association of Illustrators. He is a regular contributor to articles on contemporary Iranian art.



To understand today – even in the harsh glare of modern problems – one needs the context of the past. One cannot understand today’s Iran without also recognizing what we all owe to and have inherited from Persia, out of which modern Iran evolved.



BRUCE ZUCKERMAN

*Myron and Marian Casden Director
and Professor of Religion and Linguistics,
University of Southern California*

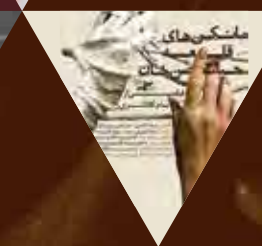
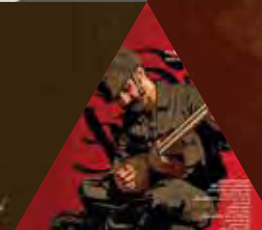
DOCUNIGHT

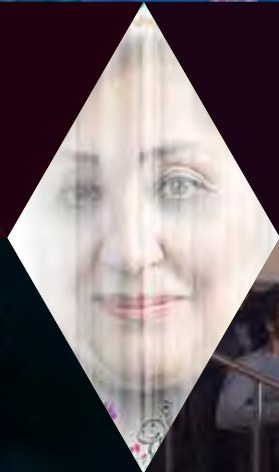


DOCUNIGHT

SCREENINGS AT USC

Farhang Foundation was proud to support USC's Persian Academic and Cultural Student Association (PACSA) in collaboration with the Kiarostami Foundation in presenting a series of documentaries as part of their DOCUNIGHT film series.





THE FREE SCREENINGS INCLUDED:

The Mother of the Earth by Mahnaz Afzali

Death and the Judge by Hassan Khademi

Mahak—A World She Founded by Mohsen Abdolvahab

Ali Aqa by Kamran Heidari

October 13, 1937 by Baktash Abtin

The Story of Boulevard & The Mannequins of Ghale Hassan Khan
by Davood Ashrafi and Sam Kalantari

Flax to Fire by Aliasghar Hajibaba

Puzzley by Mehdi Ganji

Like A Woman by Mojgan Ilanlou

Janbal by Mina Bozorgmehr and Hadi Kamali Moghadam

Finding Farideh by Kourosh Ataee and Azadeh Moussavi

The Broker by Azadi Moghadam

Homework by Abbas Kiarostami

Platform by Sahar Mosayebi

Fight Feast by Seyed Vahid Hosseini



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AN UNPRECEDENTED SUCCESS Thanks To Your Passionate Support

According to USC, the Iranian Studies program's development occurred at an unprecedented pace. It now offers multilevel courses in Persian language, Modern Iran, and Iran in the Middle Ages, as well as topics in Ancient Iranian Languages and Cultures and Persian Literature. A number of factors have driven this success:

GROWING INTEREST

USC students have shown growing interest in these courses and have demanded more from the curriculum. For example, the cap on Medieval Persian Literature has been removed twice to accommodate burgeoning demand.

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

The top-tier instructors and professors in the program have consistently received positive feedback, which catapulted the increasing enrollment rates. For instance, Professor Nojournian has a record 100% satisfaction rate on student surveys.

ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORT

The community has shown strong and enthusiastic support for this initiative, making it possible to appoint top educators and fund new courses.

Looking back, it's evident that a great many people dedicated much of their time and contributed a lot of resources to make this program at USC so successful, so quickly. We are humbled by your confidence in us and grateful for your support.

What we have accomplished together as a community has been tremendously rewarding.

It demonstrates Farhang Foundation's ability to spearhead a large-scale fundraising initiative. And more importantly, it is a testament to our community's immense generosity, vision, and passion.

While we are extremely proud of our achievements to date, we are not done yet. We must keep pushing forward. With our sights now set on Phase III of this initiative, an Iranian Studies major program at USC, we will once again be counting on your support and generosity.

The establishment of a major degree requires a greater array of diverse and comprehensive upper-division courses and ongoing related programs. A major in Iranian Studies also demands additional faculty and professors. This means that USC can create the major only when we have delivered fully on our financial commitment to them for this phase.

Once again, we are calling upon you, our friends and community, to help us reach the finish line and make the Iranian Studies program at USC a world-class educational experience that will immensely benefit students from all walks of life, safeguard our language and heritage, and forever change the study of Iran.

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How **YOU** Can Help

We are always looking to expand the Farhang Foundation family. If you are interested in joining our efforts, here are some of the ways you can help:

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to become a member of the ISI Council

DONATE

financially to support Iranian Studies at USC

VOLUNTEER

your time and talents

ATTEND

Iranian Studies Events at USC with friends and family

Visit **Farhang.org** to find out more!

Farhang Foundation is a nonreligious, nonpolitical, and nonprofit foundation dedicated to celebrating Iranian art and culture for the benefit of the community at large.



Areas of Focus



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Iranians, Iranophiles, and Iran Scholars who support the mission of Farhang Foundation and our programs by donating their time, knowledge, and financial support.

Iranian Americans

These are the custodians of one of the richest cultures in the world, who benefit from learning more about their art and culture. They are also the individuals who will later be our cultural ambassadors to the community at large.

Community at Large

We feel that Iranian art and culture can contribute positively and should be woven into the multicolored tapestry of great cultures that compose America. That's why our mission at Farhang Foundation is to celebrate and promote Iranian art and culture for the benefit of the community at large.

The Iranian Studies Initiative has brought together a forward-thinking university and a vibrant community. It has energized and invigorated our program and allowed us to imagine new horizons for Iranian Studies at USC and beyond. The commitment and dedication of those involved bodes well for the future.

RAMZI ROUGH

Chair, Department of Middle East Studies

COVER DESIGN

Design by Behzad Tabatabai of Pixsoul, Inc. Cover created using the front page of issue number 27 from the journal of *Soor-e-Esrafeel*, where Ali Akbar Dekhoda created his famed satirical political column entitled “Nonsense” (Charand Parand).

Ali Akbar Dekhoda, an Iranian scholar and philologist, is responsible for the research, organization, and publication of the largest and most comprehensive Persian language dictionary in existence. This collection bears his name: *Dekhoda Dictionary* or *Loghat Nameh-e-Dekhoda*.

PHOTO CREDITS

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