



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



Constituencies

Trustees, Council Members, Advisers & Supporters

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.



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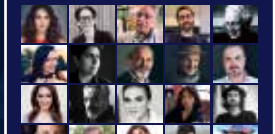
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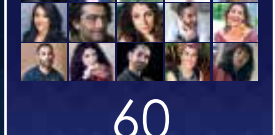
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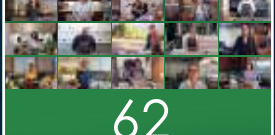
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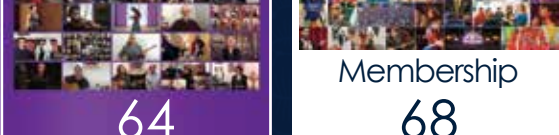
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Letter from the Chairman: Farhang's 13th Year



Dear Friends of Farhang,

As Farhang Foundation enters its thirteenth year of operation, I am proud to announce that we have continued to grow and expand the foundation's reach and impact with a new global audience of over three million members from over thirty countries.

In March 2020, as Farhang was preparing for its annual celebration of Nowruz at UCLA, where we welcome over twenty thousand visitors each year, the world was handed its most challenging and widespread health crisis in over a hundred years. In a flash, the world as we knew it changed, and we had to respond to a reality which we didn't choose and to make decisions with agility in bringing Farhang through it in a way that was courageous, honorable, and connected. With the guidance of our Board of Trustees and the flawless execution of our management team, we responded in a timely manner to the myriad challenges posed by the pandemic by canceling our in-person events and pivoting our programs and projects to a virtual format. The foundation was flexible and inventive in continuing to pursue its mission, while successfully keeping Farhang's audience engaged and entertained as the world went into a deep lockdown for the rest of the year.

Throughout 2020 and 2021, Farhang continued its online presentation of programs and initiatives in promoting Iranian art and culture, which allowed us to reach a whole new global audience. We kept our existing audience engaged, and the addition of our new national and international followers has given us an even more impactful and influential voice in conveying our mission to the world.

This year's double-issue annual report covers all our programs from 2019 through most of 2021, and I will be highlighting some of the most outstanding achievements and most impactful projects with you.

One of the major highlights of our 2019/20 year was our first-ever collaboration with **The Broad** Museum of Los Angeles. We were incredibly proud to accept The Broad's invitation to partner with them for the historic and groundbreaking first major solo exhibition by artist Shirin Neshat, **SHIRIN NESHAT: I WILL GREET THE SUN AGAIN** was the largest exhibition of the artist's thirty-

year career, and it quickly became one of the most successful exhibitions in The Broad's history.

Our summer free concert partnership with L.A.'s **Grand Performances** continued for the fifth year in a row in July 2019, as we presented the first-ever **AUDACITY OF SOUND FESTIVAL**. The all-day seven-hour immersive music event in downtown Los Angeles featured musical guests from around the world. Thanks to Farhang Foundation, we were incredibly proud to present the brilliant vocalist Sara Naeini and composer and Setar virtuoso **Masoud Rezai** as two of the major headliners of the festival.

In September 2019, we completed the **11th FARHANG FOUNDATION SHORT FILM FESTIVAL** with a beautiful award ceremony, marking the festival's most successful competition year yet. Top awards were handed out to filmmakers **Saman Salehi** and **Payman Hajibabaei** for **WIRELESS**, winner of the first prize award, followed by **Leila Khalizadeh** for **THE FRIED FISH** and **Maaman Rezaee** for **FAMILY OF TOO MANY**. The Farhang Short Film Festival is the only film festival in the world dedicated to Iranian short films. To date, Farhang Foundation has awarded over **\$200,000** to winning filmmakers from around the world.

We closed 2019 with the ever-popular **CELEBRATION OF SHAB-E YALDA** to a sold-out audience at UCLA's **Herb Alpert School of Music's Schoenberg Hall**, home of Farhang's historic Iranian music program. This annual celebration of the ancient tradition celebrating the Winter Solstice featured storytelling and poetry reading by the world's first female epic storyteller **Gordafarid**, accompanied by a musical journey throughout Iran by the incredible **Kooban Ensemble**.

We kicked off 2020 with a fantastic new exhibition in collaboration with the **USC Libraries** to present the first-ever crowd-sourced exhibition on Iranian weddings with **AROOSI: 150 YEARS OF IRANIAN WEDDING TRADITIONS**. The project explored the tremendous racial diversity, religious plurality, and cultural

differences of Iran and how the Iranian society considers the wedding ritual and its related ceremonies and customs as one of the most important pillars of Iranian culture. This was a first-of-its-kind exhibition sourced entirely with photographs and artifacts directly from the public.

As 2020 progressed and the world entered a full pandemic lockdown, Farhang developed three innovative virtual series, presenting compelling and engaging programming. The first such series was **FARHANG FLAVOR**, our newest cuisine initiative. We reached out to chefs worldwide and invited them to present virtual cooking demos influenced by Iranian cuisine. The series quickly gained popularity with weekly episodes from around the world, and to date, we have premiered forty-one episodes with over 1.1 million views worldwide.

Following the success of Farhang Flavor, we quickly launched **FARHANG PERFORMANCES**, a virtual series celebrating the performing arts. While most artists were locked up at home, this platform provided an excellent opportunity to feature some of the most compelling Iranian artists worldwide in intimate at-home performances that connected them to their fans. Farhang Performances launched in March 2020, and to date, we have premiered forty-four episodes surpassing 1.2 million views worldwide.

After the tremendous success of both Farhang Flavor and Farhang Performances, we launched **FARHANG CONNECT**, a series of live one-hour virtual talk events with influential guests in academia, the fine arts, and the performing arts. Through Farhang Connect, we have established an online library of great conversations with incredible artists, scholars, authors, and performers who have shared insights on their careers and latest projects. To date, Farhang Connect has premiered eighteen amazing episodes, and it has been seen over 500,000 times by viewers from over thirty countries.

One of our most popular annual programs is the **UCLA CELEBRATION OF IRANIAN CINEMA** at the **Hammer Museum**. Although the 2020 series was understandably canceled as an in-person event, we worked closely with the **UCLA Film and Television Archive** to present the series virtually. For the first time in the series's long history, the films were now available to be viewed online throughout the United States and Canada. This year's celebration series was attended by more audience

members than ever before, making it the most successful celebration in the thirty-plus years of the series.

Every year we look forward to celebrating Nowruz, one of the most significant and joyous events in the Iranian calendar. Unfortunately, in 2021 we couldn't resume our celebrations in person in Los Angeles and Orange Counties. Still, we were delighted to present three incredible Nowruz programs during Nowruz week to celebrate the New Year with our global audience. The celebrations kicked off with our centerpiece Nowruz program featuring musical performances from four continents by incredible artists such as **Mahdieh Mohammadkhani**, **Azad Mirzapour**, **Ramlin Ghazavi**, **Niyaz**, **Istgah Orchestra**, **Aline Ensemble**, and many more. Our great partners at the **Pacific Symphony** also presented a beautiful Nowruz concert event with special performances by **Sohrab Pournazeri**, **Sara Hamidi**, and **Shardad Rohani**. Last but not least, master **Kayhan Kalhor** presented a truly moving concert live from the desert city of Kashan honoring the legacy of the late, great **Mohammad-Reza Shajarian**. Our combined Nowruz celebrations, which were all offered online for free, were viewed by over two hundred thousand individuals to date, making this year's Nowruz one of the most viewed celebrations in our thirteen-year history.

Together we have successfully navigated one of the most challenging periods in Farhang's history, and I am pleased to share that Farhang not only continued to grow and flourish during these difficult months, but also managed to reach out and touch a whole new audience around the world. As we start to move back into in-person programming and events, we will continue to provide exceptional virtual programs online. Farhang's voice is now louder than ever before, and our mission has never been more critical than today. We are grateful for having such incredible members, supporters, artists, collaborators, and partners who have been instrumental in helping us get to this point. The future is bright, and we are looking forward to an exceptional new year that lies ahead for us all.

Hormoz Ameri
Chairman

GRAND PERFORMANCES AUDACITY OF SOUND

On July 16, 2019, Farhang Foundation was honored to once again join forces with our great partners at Grand Performances in presenting the inaugural Audacity of Sound music festival. This nonstop, immersive, and interactive seven-hour, live musical extravaganza showcased Grand Performances' joyous love for music from around the world, championing Los Angeles's deep talent pool, producing signature, one-of-a-kind collaborations telling L.A. stories – both then and now.

Farhang Foundation was proud to continue our long-running partnership with Grand Performances in showcasing Iranian music at this year's festival. The year's featured Iranian artists included vocalist **Sara Naeini**, as well as Iranian composer and Setar virtuoso **Masoud Rezai**.



SHIRIN NESHAT

I WILL GREET THE SUN AGAIN

Originated by **The Broad**, **Shirin Neshat: I Will Greet the Sun Again** was the largest exhibition to date of internationally acclaimed artist Shirin Neshat's approximately thirty-year career. The exhibition featured over 230 photographs and eight immersive video installations, offering a rare glimpse into the evolution of Neshat's artistic journey as she explored topics of exile, displacement, and identity with beauty, dynamic formal invention, and poetic grace.

Beginning with her early photograph series, **WOMEN OF ALLAH**, the exhibition features iconic video works such as **RAPTURE**, **TURBULENT**, and **PASSAGE**, monumental photography installations including **THE BOOK OF KINGS** and **THE HOME OF MY EYES**, and the global debut of **LAND OF DREAMS**, a new, multifaceted work featuring a body of photographs and two videos. Farhang Foundation was proud to be the cultural partner of this historic exhibition.

THE BROAD



Un-Private Collection: A Conversation with Shirin Neshat, Shoja Azari, and Ghasem Ebrahimian

The Broad's Un-Private Collection series presented a conversation with **Shirin Neshat**, joined by her longtime collaborators, **Shoja Azari** and **Ghasem Ebrahimian**, moderated by **Ed Schadt**, the curator of The Broad's special exhibition, **Shirin Neshat: I Will Greet the Sun Again**. **Sussan Deyhim**, a frequent musical collaborator, performed live excerpts from Neshat's films.

The Broad at ARRAY: Shirin Neshat + Garrett Bradley

The Broad and filmmaker **Ava DuVernay**'s nonprofit film collective **ARRAY** brought together Iranian-born artist **Shirin Neshat** and New Orleans-based filmmaker **Garrett Bradley** (whose films are featured in this year's Whitney Biennial) at the new ARRAY campus in Historic Filipinotown. The event began with screenings of excerpts from Neshat's new work, **Land of Dreams**, and Bradley's short film, **America**, followed by a conversation with the artists on the themes of movements and migrations across time and land, which are explored in their work.

Allegories of Flight at The Broad

Presented in conjunction with the special exhibition, **Shirin Neshat: I Will Greet the Sun Again**, **Allegories of Flight** explores the Iranian American artist's influences, including artists and filmmakers whose works embody "poetic, philosophical, and highly politically charged narratives and visual style." Neshat has stated that her own work – whether made in Morocco, Mexico, the United States, or Iran – offers more questions than answers. Mysticism is important to Neshat's practice and to Persian culture, where flight plays an important role as a metaphor for the freeing of the spirit. This event included live music, poetry readings, and performances featuring artists mining a plethora of themes found in Neshat's work and Persian literature – including resistance, healing, metaphor, and mysticism – to tell stories across a constellation of cultures and identities.

Renowned poets Natalie Diaz and Naomi Shihab Nye presented their work in Oculus Hall; Saint Abdullah and Davia Spain with Matías Anaya activated the first floor lobby space with live music; and Black Lives Matter cofounder Patrisse Cullors performed a newly commissioned performance work in the exhibition galleries.

Shirin Neshat: The Logic of Poetry

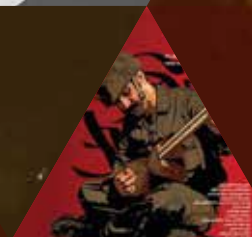
In conjunction with **Shirin Neshat: I Will Greet the Sun Again**, this event took place in the exhibition galleries, and poets, scholars, and artists across a range of media and from varied backgrounds read, performed, and reflected upon Neshat's works and delved into the universal themes of the exhibition: mysticism, metaphor, exile, politics, the natural world, feminism, and intimacy. Featured guests included (in order of appearance) **Sholeh Wolpé**, **Sahba Motallebi**, **Majid Naficy**, **Kazim Ali**, **Carolina Rivera Escamilla**, **Jazmin Garcia**, **Jennifer Saporzadeh**, **Vickie Vertiz**, **Houman Sarshar**, **Odeya Nini**, **Christopher Soto**, **Dana Washington**, and **Shonda Buchanan**.



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 Story of Boulevard & The Mannequins of Ghale Hassan Khan** by Davood Ashrafi and Sam Kalantari, **Flax to Fire** by Aliasghar Hajibaba, **Puzzle** by Mehdi Ganji, **Like A Woman** by Mojgan Ilanlou, **Janbal** by Mina Bozorgmehr and Hadi Kamali Moghadam, **Finding Farideh** by Kourosh Afaee and Azadeh Moussavi, **The Broker** by Azadi Moghadam, **Homework** by Abbas Kiarostami, **Platform** by Sahar Mosayebi, and **Fight Feast** by Seyed Vahid Hosseini.





Feasting Iranian Style: A Symposium on Food

We were proud to join forces with UC Irvine's Jordan Center for Persian Studies in presenting a series of free lectures and cuisine-tasting events featuring the history of Iranian Cuisine. The talk featured renowned scholars.

"Meat in Ancient Iran: From the Gathas of Zarathushtra to the Shahnameh of Ferdowsi"

By Dr. Touraj Daryaee – Maseeh Chair in Persian Studies – U.C. Irvine | Director, Jordan Center for Persian Studies

"Scraps from the King's Table: The Invention of the Qajar Cuisine"

By Dr. Khodadad Rezakhani – Associate Research Scholar – Princeton University

"Dining with the King: The Fine Art of Feasting at the Persian Courts"

By Dr. Linda Komaroff – Curator of Islamic Art – Los Angeles County Museum of Art

The event concluded with a Qajar-era cuisine-tasting feast by Parastoo Rezai of Maison de la Fork.



UCLA Iranian Student Group's 17th Annual Iranian Cultural Show



The UCLA Iranian Student Group's Annual Cultural Show entered its 16th year in 2019, bringing people of all cultures and backgrounds together to enjoy Iranian culture through the performing arts. This year's event featured an exclusive headlining concert by Iranian alternative rock musician Ali Azimi, who joined us from London. The event took place at UCLA's historic Royce Hall and also featured traditional dances and theatrical performances by UCLA students.



FARHANG
FOUNDATION
Celebration of
IRANIAN
CINEMA
at **UCI**

The 4th Annual Celebration of Iranian Cinema at UC Irvine was held on September 7 and 8, 2019, in collaboration with the Jordan Center for Persian Studies, and copresented by the UCLA Film & Television Archive.

The event featured the O.C. premiere of four critically acclaimed Iranian films including **Hendi & Hormoz**, **Sheeple**, **Before Summer Ends**, and **Tehran, City of Love**. This annual event presents the best in Iranian film to our Orange County audience for an exclusive weekend of cinema.





11th Annual FARHANG FOUNDATION SHORT FILM FESTIVAL Celebrating Iranian Heritage

The 11th Annual Farhang Short Film Festival Awards Ceremony was held on September 30, 2019, at UCLA's Schoenberg Hall.

The sold-out event was hosted by actress and comedian **Melissa Shoshahi**, and the top six short films of the year were screened to an audience of over five hundred. First Prize of \$10,000 was awarded to **Saman Salehi** and **Payam Hajibabaei** for their film, **Wireless**, Second Prize of \$5,000 was awarded to **Leila Khalilzadeh** for her animated film **The Fried Fish**, and Third Prize of \$3,000 was awarded to **Maaman Rezaee** for her outstanding drama **Family of Too Many**.

The Farhang Short Film Festival is the only festival in the world dedicated to celebrating Iranian short films, with over \$180,000 in cash prizes awarded to winning filmmakers from around the world. The red-carpet ceremony was followed by an after-party and reception with music by DJ **Omid Walizadeh**.

The 2019 jury panel included the legendary father of Iranian animation, **Dr. Noureddin Zarrinkelk**, Golden Globe-winning composer **Richard Horowitz**, screenwriter and playwright **Dr. Naghmeh Samini**, award-winning actor and writer **Saber Abar**, and jury chair **Mark Amin**, CEO of Sobini Films.





FOCUS IRAN³

CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO

Orange County Exhibition

Farhang Foundation in collaboration with the Craft Contemporary of Los Angeles presented the Orange County exhibition opening of **FOCUS IRAN: Contemporary Photography and Video**, a biennial juried exhibition of contemporary photography and video works established in 2015 exploring Iranian culture or heritage. The exhibition, which debuted at the Craft Contemporary in Los Angeles in January 2019, traveled to UCI's Viewpoint Gallery for the second leg of the tour. The exhibition kicked off with a special opening reception with the artists from the show, and the free show ran from October 5 to November 6, 2019.





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**.



Farhang Foundation and the Jordan Center for Persian Studies hosted the 5th Annual Mehregan Conference and Celebration at UC Irvine.

The event featured two riveting talks: "Hidden and Evident Myths in Iran's Dramatic Literature" by **Dr. Naghmeh Samini** and "Mythology in War Poetry" by **Mrs. Sayeh Eghtesadnia**.

The free event was attended by over three hundred guests and concluded with a live concert performance by **Shayandokht Abedinimanesh**, **Dara Afraz**, and **Maryam Fouladi**.



9th Annual Farhang Foundation Fundraising Gala

On November 2, 2019, Farhang Foundation hosted its 9th Annual Fundraising Gala at the historic Beverly Wilshire Hotel in Beverly Hills. The event was attended by over five hundred guests and sponsors.

The gala event featured musical performances by Kamyar and his exciting ensemble, and the night's master of ceremonies was the hilarious K-Von.

All funds raised at this annual event support Farhang Foundation's more than eighty annual programs, projects, and initiatives, including the historic new Iranian Music Degree Program at UCLA's Herb Alpert School of Music.





A film by:
Hassan Solhjou

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 Solhjou, moderated by Shabnam Tolouei.

Hassan Solhjou 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.

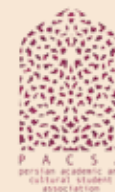


SEX, Drugs, and GOL-O-BOLBOL

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*.





MOOSH LA

Making Its Pop-Up Debut at CRAFT LA

Farhang Foundation proudly held its first Iranian pop-up dinner experience event featuring Chef Behzad Jamshidi and Sommelier Alissa Wilmina-Diaz for a multicourse, wine-paired tasting menu influenced and informed by Iranian narratives and culture. The tasty event was hosted at Chef Tom Colicchio's CRAFT Los Angeles Restaurant in Century City and was completely sold out.



2019 AFI FEST

FILM FESTIVAL

PRESENTED BY 
Audi



Farhang Foundation was proud to once again support all the Iranian films at the 2019 AFI FEST, the largest film festival in the United States. This year's highlights included the AFI FEST award winner for best Short, Sonia Haddad's **EXAM**, as well as the U.S. premiere of **SON-MOTHER** (PESAR-MADAR) by Mahnaz Mohammadi.

The AFI FEST is held at the iconic Chinese Theatre in Hollywood and attended by over seventy-five thousand moviegoers annually.



7th Annual Celebration of Shab-e Yalda

In 2019 Farhang Foundation held its 7th Annual Celebration of Shab-e Yalda (the celebration of the Winter Solstice) – an ancient Persian tradition – in Schoenberg Hall at UCLA's Herb Alpert School of Music. The night included music, poetry, and storytelling, featuring the one and only Gordafarid, the world's first female epic Story Teller (Naqal), with music by the Kooban Ensemble.





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



Red Hen Press Poetry Hour: Finding Truths and Creating Art in Exile

Iranian-American poet/writer/playwright Sholeh Wolpé and Iranian playwright Nassim Soleimanpour were joined by Nathalie Handal, editor of the groundbreaking classic *The Poetry of Arab Women: A Contemporary Anthology*, and multiple prizewinning poet Lory Bedikian for readings and conversations on bridging the gap between perceptions and reality of cultural norms. The artists dug deeply into the lives they live and the lives that people in the West imagine for them.

Nassim Soleimanpour's most recent play, *Nassim*, was performed as part of The Broad's 2020/21 Season in April 2021.





2020 Nowruz Banner Competition

Farhang Foundation's annual Nowruz Banner Competition began in 2011, and it has become a tradition that preludes Farhang's signature event. The winning design is installed on more than six hundred street poles throughout the major streets of Los Angeles during the months of February and March.

Each year, Farhang, through its Nowruz Banner Competition, reaches out to a global community of artists, illustrators, and graphic designers, enlisting their talents to create and submit original designs that capture the essence of Nowruz.



2020 WINNING DESIGN SETAREH FEYLIZADEH

This year's winning design was awarded to Iranian artist Setareh Feylizadeh from France. "Nowruz is the time for rebirth and rejuvenation; it resuscitates the oldness and brings warmth to the cold. For centuries, Nowruz has been one of the most celebrated holidays in Iranian culture. It is part of our shared recollection as far back as history can remember. For me, Qajar imagery always sparks the notion of old and new, past and present. The new year reflects these qualities as it is a time to reflect on tradition, but also instills the hope of transformation and renewal.

Participating in a competition such as this, especially one which connects us to our roots, cultures, and traditions, has been so rewarding. The ultimate prize of winning this competition is the chance to connect with another community of Persians in another part of the world through spreading the message of Nowruz, which bonds us together and brings us closer to one another."

Born in Tehran, Setareh Feylizadeh is a graphic designer and the founder of the Lozi Graphic Design firm in Paris. She started painting at an early age and focused on the arts in her formative education in Tehran. She went on to receive her Master's in Fine Art at Azad University.

In 2009 she moved to India, where she worked as a graphic designer, while also pursuing her PhD in Fine Art at Delhi University. From 1995 to 2011, her work was showcased in numerous exhibitions within Iran and India. Setareh moved to Paris in 2015, where she currently works in different fields such as graphic design, visual identity, corporate design, and visual art.



Nowruz Haft-Sîn at Westfield Century City

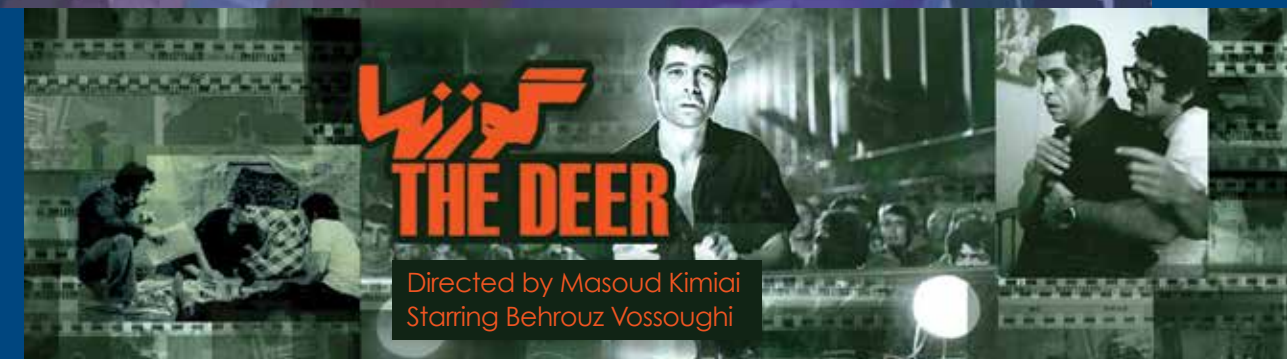
In 2020 Farhang Foundation was proud to join forces with the Westfield Century City Shopping Center to celebrate Nowruz (Iranian New Year) by displaying a beautiful grand Haft-Sîn in the atrium of the center for ten days during the Nowruz festivities. This marks the first time ever that a major shopping center in the United States officially celebrated Nowruz. Special thanks to After 8 Events for the beautiful Haft-Sîn design.



UCLA CELEBRATION of IRANIAN CINEMA

Farhang Foundation and the UCLA Library Film & Television Archive proudly presented the long-running annual celebration of the best in Iranian cinema. This year, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the films were presented online with a number of world premieres that were attended by over a thousand viewers throughout the United States and Canada, thus exposing this beloved series to more individuals than ever before.

PREMIERE FILMS INCLUDED:



A Global Destination for Art

Farhang Foundation was proud to partner with the Fowler Museum at UCLA in presenting A GLOBAL DESTINATION FOR ART in two virtual episodes focusing on accomplished Iranian artists. Artists from all over the world flock to work in Los Angeles, drawn by the energy of ingenuity and the space for experimental expression.



AMIR H. FALLAH

We were delighted to help support an artist-led walk-through of Amir H. Fallah's exhibition at Shulamit Nazarian Los Angeles, followed by a conversation with Shiva Balaghi.



ARDESHIR TABRIZI

Our second artist visit included Ardeshtir Tabrizi's colorful mixed media paintings and works on paper featuring imagery and methods that reference the rich literary and visual traditions of Iran, a country he left in his childhood.

2020 AFI FEST PRESENTED BY Audi



Farhang Foundation was proud to continue our partnership with the AFI FEST for the sixth year, supporting all the Iranian films at America's largest film festival.

This year's highlights included the U.S. premiere of Mohammad Rasoulof's award-winning film *THERE IS NO EVIL*, winner of the Golden Bear at the Berlin Film Festival. *THERE IS NO EVIL* became the most viewed foreign film at the festival.

In addition, we were also thrilled to present the premiere of *THE VISIT* by Azadeh Moussavi.

The 34th edition of the AFI FEST was presented as a virtual festival because of the ongoing pandemic. With geographic and financial barriers removed, AFI FEST 2020 attracted nearly 57,000 filmgoers to screenings of 125 films from 39 countries.



8th Annual Virtual Celebration of Shab-e Yalda

In 2020 Farhang Foundation was proud to continue our long-running tradition of celebrating Shab-e Yalda, and although this year we were not able to greet our guests in person as we usually do at UCLA's Schoenberg Hall, we were delighted to welcome over eighteen hundred guests from over thirty countries to our virtual celebrations.

The program featured storytelling by the world's first female Iranian epic storyteller GORDAFARID, as well as HAFEZ readings and storytelling by Haleh Mahboubi Gabbay, and very special musical performances by renowned musicians Shahin Shahida and the Mehrbanoo Band. We were delighted to be able to share the joys of Yalda with a truly global audience this year.



10th Annual Farhang Foundation Fundraising Virtual Gala

Farhang Foundation celebrated its 10th Annual Fundraising Gala on Saturday, November 7, 2021. This year's event was held online and was attended by over a thousand guests from over fifty countries. As part of the celebrations, Farhang Foundation reached out to three Iranian musical artists from around the globe to join us virtually with special performances dedicated to legendary Iranian performers of their choice.



Performance



Arash Avin

Tribute to
Banou Homeyra



Niaz Nawab &
Erwin Khachikian

Tribute to
Fereydoun Farrokhzad



FarAvaz

Tribute to
Ramesh and Pouran

We are thankful to all our incredible donors and sponsors
for their generosity during this challenging year.

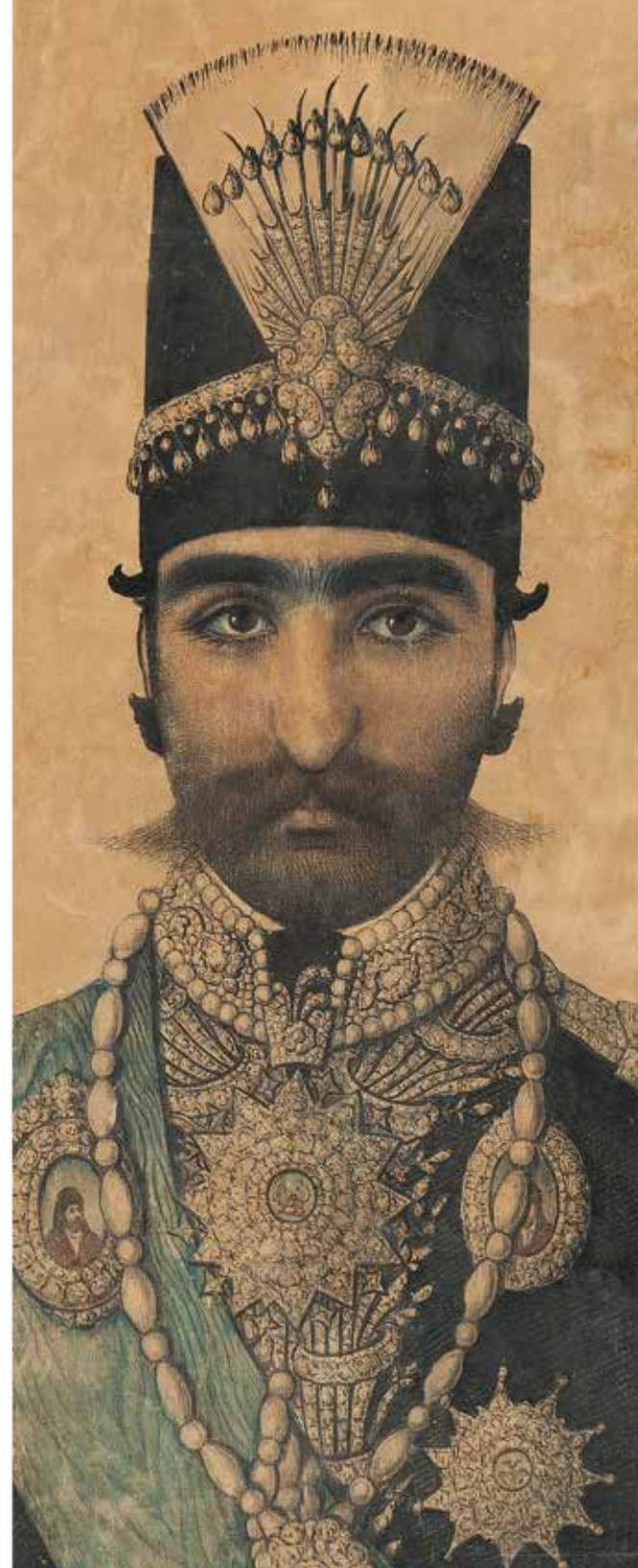
Special Thanks

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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 this year's 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.

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



With Influential Iranian Guests



We kicked off 2021 with a new virtual series in collaboration with celebrity Chef Mojdeh Eghbal in a one-hour special. The program presented a special three-course dinner menu influenced by regional cuisines of Iran, and we invited various celebrity guests to join us for an intimate dinner where they could share their personal thoughts about their cultural identity and how their Iranian background influenced them in their lives and careers.

Our debut episode featured Yara Bahonar (Renowned Violinist), Tara Grammy (Actor/Creator/Host of *Persia's Got Talent*), Farzad Kohan (Renowned Artist), Nazanin Nour (Actor/Writer/Judge on *Persia's Got Talent*), Sunny Ravanbach (White Lilac Inc.), and Ali Sabet (Renowned Artist).





12th Annual Virtual CELEBRATION OF NOWRUZ IRANIAN NEW YEAR

We were proud to be able to return to celebrating Nowruz in 2021 with the virtual 12th Annual Celebration of Nowruz. This year's free program had over fifty-five hundred registered guests who joined us for the live event. For the first time in Farhang history we were able to welcome attendees to our celebration from four continents and twenty countries, and we were extremely proud to have featured guest artists from around the world with live performances from the United States, Europe, and Iran.

Performers included: Mahdieh Mohammadkhani & Azad Mirzapour from Iran, Niyaz Featuring Azam Ali from the United States, Ramtin Ghazavi Accompanied by Davin Ghazavi from Italy, the Istgah Orchestra from Iran, the Atine Ensemble from France, Shooka Afshar from the United States, and the Melieka Fathi Dance Company from the United States. To top things off our young students from our Persian 101 After-School Program at the Los Angeles Unified School District delivered a heartwarming dance performance that they had prepared virtually as a group.

The celebrations didn't forget about our younger audience members either. Leading up to Nowruz, we created two Nowruz children's arts-and-crafts projects for our little Farhangees thanks to our Nowruz committee member Ms. Neda Rouhani, who helps our younger viewers learn how to create fun and artistic Nowruz art projects at home.





KAYHAN KALHOR LOST IN THE DESERT SKY

Farhang Foundation proudly presented this free virtual concert event gifted to all residents of Southern California. The exclusive concert by the legendary Kayhan Kalhor honoring the legacy of Mohammad-Reza Shajarian was presented as a part of Farhang Foundation's Annual Celebration of Nowruz in Orange County. Beautifully produced under the artistic direction of Master Kayhan Kalhor, it featured all-new music by Master Kalhor in memory of the passing of beloved Iranian singer and cultural icon Mohammad-Reza Shajarian.

Special guests included the stage debut of Hadi Hosseini. The concert took place in the singularly spectacular location of the Mahinestan House – which dates back to the Qajar Dynasty – in the ancient desert city Kashan, an important stop on the magnificent Silk Road that is full of history. The passing of Iran's most beloved and admired vocalist M. R. Shajarian in October 2020 has left a country in mourning and an acute emptiness in the musical landscape of Iran. Shajarian's voice was loved by over a hundred million Persian-speaking people and music lovers worldwide. He was considered a national hero, and his songs and legacy are permanently and indelibly embedded in Iranian culture.



Lost in the Desert Sky: Kayhan Kalhor Ensemble In Memory of Mohammad-Reza Shajarian was produced by Isabel Soffer and The Generators in partnership with Kayhan Kalhor.

Nowruz

With the Pacific Symphony

Farhang Foundation joined forces with the prestigious Pacific Symphony of Orange County in presenting our free annual celebration of Nowruz.

Guest artists included pianist and composer Shardad Rohani, guitarist Lily Afshar, vocalist Sara Hamidi, and the brilliant Sohrab Pournazeri improvising on the tanbour from Tehran. The virtual event was hosted by actress and comedian Melissa Shoshahi.

Special thanks to the Pacific Symphony Orchestra and musical director Carl St.Clair.



Nowruz

AT WESTFIELD CENTURY CITY

We were delighted to return to the Westfield Century City Shopping Center in 2021 for the second year in a row in presenting our Grand Haft-Sin display at one of Los Angeles's most popular shopping centers. We applaud the Westfield for recognizing the ancient tradition of Nowruz and including this celebration as part of their annual programs. Special thanks to After Eight Event Productions for another exceptional Haft-Sin design.



Nowruz Piruz

A Persian Feast
Celebrating the
Iranian New Year

Farhang Foundation and Michelin Star restaurant Knife Pleat presented Nowruz Piruz: A Persian Feast Celebrating the Iranian New Year. The five-course menu by Chef Tony Esnault and Ms. Shamsi presented guests a variety of spectacular dishes, all focusing on the various delights of the Nowruz holiday.

KNIFE PLEAT



NEW WEST SYMPHONY

Global Sounds. Local Cultures.

A TOUR OF IRAN CONCERT

Farhang Foundation and the New West Symphony joined forces in presenting **Global Sounds, Local Cultures, A TOUR OF IRAN**, as part of the Symphony's 2020-21 virtual season, which highlighted the extraordinary communities of Southern California.

The Tour of Iran program was presented under the direction of Grammy Award-Winning musical director Michael Christie and featured renowned Iranian musicians Pejman Hadadi, Masoud Rezaei, and Grammy Award Winner Hamid Saeidi, as well as two-time Grammy Award Winner Mezzo Soprano Sasha Cooke. Special guests included Choreographer Melieka Fathi and renowned Iranologist Dr. Ahmad Karimi-Hakkak.

FEATURING MUSIC BY:

KHAYAM: Seven Valleys of Love for Strings (Simorgh, Murmuration)

MOZART: Magic Flute Overture

RANJBARAN: Enchanted Garden: Joy

RAMEAU: Suite from Zoroastre

HANDEL: Xerxes: "Ombra mai fu"

GOUNOD: from the Opera "Faust"

Entr'Acte | Faites lui mes aveux (Flower Song) | Si le bonheur (When fortune beckons)

REZAEI: From album "Nothingness"

"Another Birth" | "Cold Autumn" | "Failure"

A virtual reception with Michael Christie and guest artists followed immediately after the concert.



The First Annual UCLA Iranian Music Conference Series

Our historic Iranian Music Program at **UCLA's Herb Alpert School of Music** launched its first annual music conference series under the direction of newly appointed director of the program, **Professor Farzad Amoozegar**. The series featured musicians **Sepideh Raissadat** and **Azam Ali**, who each gave compelling presentations on Iranian music.



Ms. Raissadat's presentation was titled **Within the Walls: A Temporal and Spatial Overview** of the Lives of Female Singers in Iran.

Ms. Ali's presentation was titled **An Allegory of Belief, Truth, Power, and Resistance in Art**. Taking a self-reflective approach, she examined how music serves different aspirations for a second-generation Iranian, often playing a central role in political movements: strengthening and unifying the voice of the people seeking social justice against a common adversary.

The Iranian Music Conference Series was made possible thanks to the support from the Farhang Foundation, the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music Department of Ethnomusicology, and the UCLA Center for Near Eastern Studies, with additional support from the Dean of the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music.

UCLA Herb Alpert
School of Music

OF KINGS AND PAINTINGS

Farhang Foundation and Homa Films presented the world premiere screening for **OF KINGS AND PAINTINGS**, directed by Sara Nodjoui.

OF KINGS AND PAINTINGS presented the history of the extraordinary art of Iran from 1785 to 1925. The documentary was the first film to explore the work of Iran's most significant artists of this remarkable era that straddled the transition between tradition and modernity. While offering an overview of painters and paintings of the Qajar era and its influence on Iranian artists and photographers today, the film wove together art history and Iranian history. Farhang Foundation was honored to host an exclusive live Q&A with top art experts and filmmakers: Dr. Abbas Amanat, Dr. Layla Diba, Dr. Maryam Ekhtiar, Mehran Haghighi, and Sara Nodjoui.



FARHANG CONNECT

Live Virtual Talks by Influential Iranians and Scholars of Iran

One of Farhang Foundation's post-pandemic virtual programs included the launch of Farhang Connect, a live virtual talk series featuring influential Iranians and scholars of Iran. The diverse series featured one-hour episodes, each covering a wide range of topics, including Iranian history, poetry, literature, fine arts, architecture, cuisine, and music. Farhang Foundation was proud to welcome our esteemed guests from all over the world to join us for this series.

FEATURED GUESTS INCLUDED:

Hossein Amanat	Dr. Jan P. Hogendijk	Freydoon Rassouli
Andy Baraghani	Armita Hosseini	Dr. Roya Rastegar
Behzad Bolour	Behzad Jamshidi	Omid Roustaei
Dr. Fereshteh Daftari	Dr. Ahmad Karimi-Hakkak	Dr. Houman Sarshar
Reza Deghati	Dr. Elaheh Kheirandish	Fahad Siadat
Nadia Deljou	Dr. Pedram Khosronejad	Maera Siddiqi
Naz Deravian	Moj Mahdara	Melissa Shoshahi
Melody Ehsani	Jordan Mechner	Tohi
Erfan	André Megerdichian	Dr. Alan Williams
Dr. Shazad Ghanbari	Nicky Nodjourni	Sholeh Wolpé
Tara Grammy	Nazanin Nour	Shally Zomorodi
Dr. Talinn Grigor	Roshi Rahnama	





Farhang Flavor

Celebrating the Art of Iranian Cuisine

Farhang Foundation celebrated the art of Iranian Cuisine with the launch of the extremely popular new series, Farhang Flavor. The series aimed to feature simple and easy-to-make recipes by accomplished chefs who are inspired by Iranian cuisine and ingredients. The program quickly became one of Farhang's most popular initiatives of the year with over a million views worldwide, and featuring guest chefs from Iran, Canada, Europe, and throughout the United States.



FARHANG | PERFORMANCES

Celebrating the Performing Arts

Renowned Artists Performing at Home

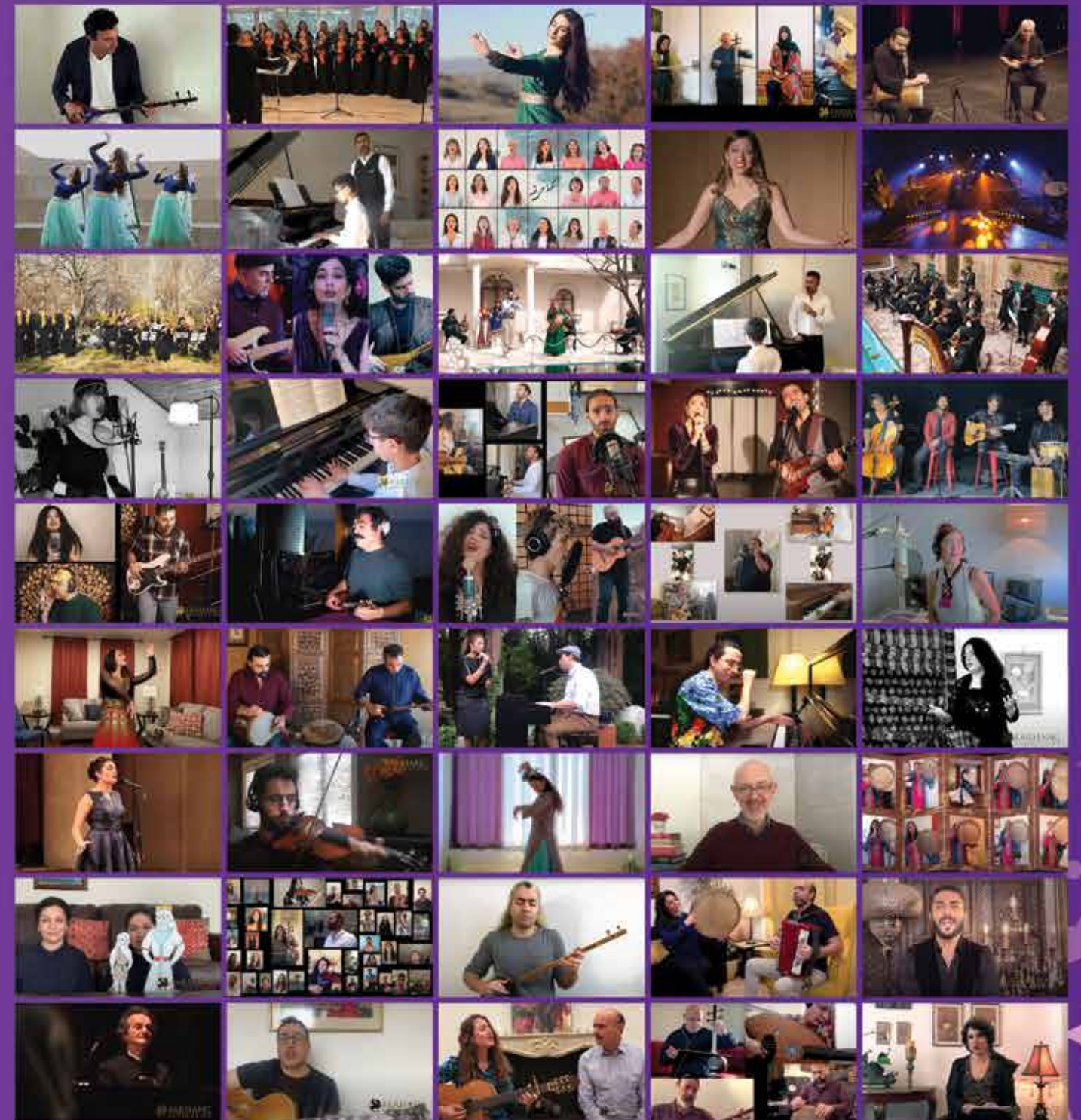
During the period of social distancing and lack of public performances, Farhang Foundation celebrated the performing arts by inviting esteemed artists from around the world to join us online with intimate performances from their homes. The series quickly achieved a large fan base and created a positive platform for both performing artists and audience members. Each week Farhang presented new premiere performances ranging from music, storytelling, and dance to poetry. We were delighted to welcome renowned artists as well as new emerging artists to join us for this exceptional program.

SPECIAL GUESTS INCLUDED:

Shayandokht Abedinmanesh
Shooka Afshar
Aidin Ahmadinejad
Tina Amy
Omid Arabian
Atine Ensemble
The Ava Choir
Arash Avin
Nazanin Badii
Darya Dadvar
Sussan Deyhim
Negar Estakhr
FarAvaz
Bahareh Fayazi
José Fernandez
Mahsa Ghassemi
Ramtin and Davin Ghazavi

Gordafarid
Pejman Hadadi
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The Istgah Orchestra
Justina
Saeed Kamjoo
Erwin Khachikian
Arezo Koochakan
The L.A. Daf Ensemble
Devin Maghen
Kaveh Mahmudiyani
Vandad Massahzadeh
The Melieka Fathi Dance Company
Azad Mirzapour
Mahdiah Mohammadkhani
Niaz Nawab
Niyaz Featuring Azam Ali

Amir Hosein Pourjavady
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Asareh Shekarchi
Arash Sobhani
UCLA's Student Iranian Music Ensemble
Kourosh Taghavi
Shahin Yusefzamani





Persian 101

Persian Language and Culture
After-School Program

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 2015, with the community's support, Farhang Foundation launched the first-ever Persian Language and Culture after-school program in partnership with local public and private schools of Southern California. This program, which is provided free of charge to participating schools, creates a platform for K-12 students to be exposed to Iran's rich and beautiful language and culture.

To date, over eight hundred students have enrolled in this free program across fourteen schools throughout Southern California.

The Iranian Studies Initiative at UCSB and Farhang Foundation presented a series of virtual talks on Iranian modern and contemporary art.

Lectures on Iranian Modern and Contemporary Art

UC SANTA BARBARA

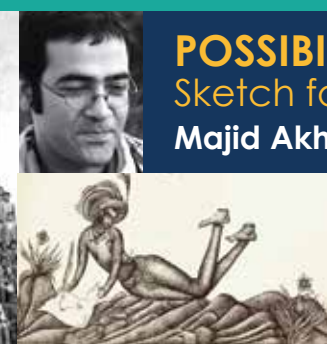
IRANIAN STUDIES INITIATIVE

This lecture series has been made possible with the generous support of the Gramian-Emrani Foundation.



PIONEERS OF NEW PAINTING IN IRAN

Dr. Alice Bombardier



POSSIBILITIES FOR IRANIAN ART: Sketch for a Theory of Historical Creativity

Majid Akhgar



SIAH ARMAJANI: A Pragmatic Deconstructivist

Ali Reza Sahaf Zadeh





Help Share Iranian Culture

Become A Member Today!

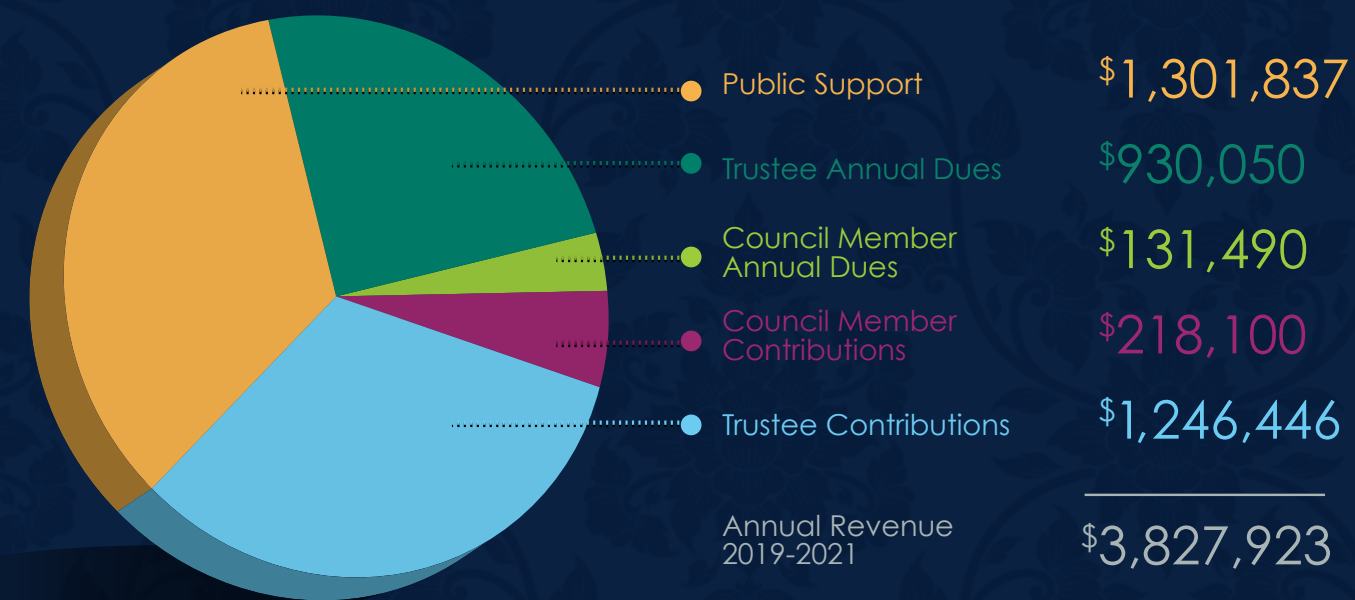
Join member-supported Farhang Foundation in this mission. Today, during uncertain times, Farhang and the artists and cultural projects we support need your backing more than ever.

So, please join today and remember, it's our Farhang!

[Farhang.org/Membership](https://farhang.org/membership)



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After all, it is our farhang...

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