

**2021–2023  
ANNUAL REPORT**



**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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Help Share Iranian Culture  
**Donate Today:** [Farhang.org/Donate](https://farhang.org/Donate)



# Letter from the Chair: Farhang's 15<sup>th</sup> Year



Dear Friends of Farhang,

*As we come together to review and celebrate Farhang Foundation's achievements over the last two years, I would like to thank you for your presence, participation, and steadfast support of our mission. You have made Farhang into the largest Iranian cultural organization in the diaspora!*

In this **Double-Issue Annual Report**, I have tried to highlight the foundation's activities to promote and celebrate Iranian arts and culture for the benefit of our global community, since 2021. During this period, we have presented various programs in visual arts, cinema, music, literature, and culture, both in-person and online, mostly through partnerships with prestigious museums, major cultural institutions, and universities. Last year alone, with over one hundred events and initiatives, Farhang Foundation managed to share Iran's rich art and culture with over six million individuals across the globe.

The **WOMAN, LIFE, FREEDOM** global movement in 2022 placed Farhang Foundation in a difficult position. Although the organization is non-political, in solidarity with our compatriots' struggles in Iran, we decided to cancel a number of our in-person gatherings but stayed true to our mission by providing an online platform for artists to express themselves. The canceled events included **Farhang Film Festival Awards Ceremony**, our **Annual Fundraising Gala**, and the celebrations of **Shab-e Yalda** and **Nowruz at UCLA**. A difficult but appropriate move in light of the social and political atmosphere of the time.

Turning to our activities, Farhang believes that the most direct and lasting way to preserve and promote Iranian history and language is through

education at all levels. In an effort to reach the youngest members of our community, in 2015 our **Community Education Outreach Council** initiated **PERSIAN 101**, the Persian Language and Culture after-school program. Working with a number of public and private K-12 schools in Southern California, Farhang offers weekly language and interactive lessons to expose students to Persian and Iranian culture, at no cost. Spread across fourteen schools in the greater Los Angeles area, more than **800 students** have participated in this program, to date.

As a complement to after-school programming, we launched a new online storytelling series titled **Farhang Stories**, targeting our younger audiences but appropriate for Farhangees of all ages. The debut episode that premiered on August 9, 2022, featured the old Iranian tale of the ROLLING PUMPKIN "Kadoo Ghel Ghele Zan" as told by the fantastic mother/daughter team of **Negar Estakhr** and **Nargol Rashidian**. This beautifully created puppet show delights those hearing the story for the first time and all reminiscing about their times with their grandparents.

In the realm of higher education, we continued our relationship with the **University of California, Santa Barbara's Iranian Studies Initiative** to present a number of virtual lectures focused on Iranian Art and literary exchanges among

Iran, Transcaucasia, Central Asia, and Russia, in the twentieth Century. In 2022, the series titled **PERSIAN LITERATURE AS WORLD LITERATURE** explored various facets of this complex interplay, featuring distinguished scholars sharing their unique perspectives with our online audiences.

Our support of academic activities continued with our Annual **Iranian Music Lecture Series** at the **UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music**. These talks featured a distinguished roster of accomplished artists sharing their thoughts with the participants. Melieka Fathi, the Artistic Director of the **Melieka Dance Company**, and Iranian American composer **Kian Ravaei** are among the past speakers.

As an important part of our historic partnership with **USC**, Farhang Foundation and **USC's Dornsife Iranian Studies Program** hosted **Professor Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet** from the **University of Pennsylvania** for the **Annual Distinguished Lecture Series**. In an insightful lecture, **BANNING AND BELONGING: IRANIANS OF THE SOUTHERN PERSIAN GULF COAST**, Dr. Kashani-Sabet covered significant topics such as identity, nation formation, and cultural production in Iran and its borderlands. In view of the relevance of the subject matter, Dr. Kashani-Sabet graciously accepted to present her lecture in a Farhang Connect episode for our online viewers.

Our activities on the USC Campus continued with our presence at the annual **L.A. Times Festival of Books** on April 23-24, 2022. Our booth, **IRAN THROUGH BOOKS**, creates an opportunity for Iranian authors and publications about Iran to participate in an event attended by over seventy-five thousand visitors each year.

Turning to our projects with museums, we partnered with the **Getty Organization** on the historic **PERSIA: ANCIENT IRAN AND THE CLASSICAL WORLD** at the **Getty Villa**. This exhibition, which has become Getty Villa's most visited in its forty-nine-year history, highlighted the rich cultural heritage of Ancient Iran and its influence on

the classical world. Over thirty museums and institutions from around the world had shared the featured artifacts. The rich programming of this historic event was coupled with the innovative summer concert series titled **PERSIA: AFTER HOURS**. The series presented sold-out performances by some of the leading Iranian musicians, becoming the first-ever concert event performed in the museum's outdoor theater. Other activities at the museum included talks, performances, workshops, and family activities throughout the run of the exhibition from April 6, 2022, through August 8, 2022.

Another successful collaboration with a major museum was our sponsorship of **TALA MADANI: BISCUITS** at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA). This first solo exhibition by an Iranian artist at one of the most visionary museums in the world was notable for being one of the largest ever undertaken by MOCA and their first in-person event since 2019.

In connection with other prestigious museums, we sponsored **AMIR H. FALLAH: THE FALLACY OF BORDERS** at the **Fowler Museum of UCLA**. A homecoming for Fallah, who earned his MFA from UCLA, the show featured over twenty-five works including paintings, sculptures, stained glass, and magazine ephemera. It explored themes central to Fallah's practice, challenging boundaries of culture, identity, diaspora, and homeland.

In August and September 2022, Farhang Foundation, **Ardeshtir Mohassess Trust**, and **Loyola University New Orleans** presented **BODY POLITICS—Celebrating Ardeshtir Mohassess's Legacy in Art and Politics** at **SPILLMAN | BLACKWELL Fine Art in New Orleans**. During this exhibition, visitors stepped into the world of Ardeshtir Mohassess, one of Iran's greatest political satirists, and enjoyed his collection of drawings, created between 1985 and 1999. In conjunction with this in-person presentation, Farhang and Loyola University New Orleans offered various talks and virtual programs, further examining the rich tapestry of Mohassess's art and life.



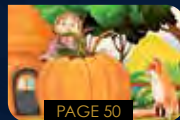
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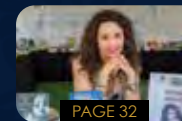
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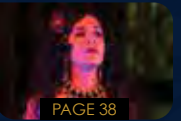
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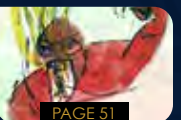
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Focusing on our cultural celebrations, over twenty-five thousand people joined us at UCLA to mark the start of the **Iranian New Year** in March 2022, after a two-year absence due to the pandemic. The festivities continued with our sponsored **Nowruz Concert with the Pacific Symphony** in Orange County for an unforgettable evening of music. As always, leading up to and throughout the season, the streets of Los Angeles were adorned with commemorative banners displaying the winning design of our annual competition. To share the spirit of the season with our global members, we complemented our in-person events with a number of online performances.

September 2022 ushered in a difficult period for all of us, affecting our programming for the months to come. In consideration of the **WOMAN, LIFE, FREEDOM** movement, we canceled our celebration of Nowruz at UCLA. Instead, we presented a series of virtual and in-person programs deemed appropriate for the times, throughout the season.

**THE NOWRUZ CONCERT: UNITY FOR FREEDOM** in collaboration with the **Pacific Symphony Orchestra** was presented at the majestic **Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall** in Costa Mesa, on March 26, 2023. The evening featured performances by the Grammy-nominated soloist **KAYHAN KALHOR** and the vocal talents of world-renowned artists **AZAM ALI** and **SUSSAN DEYHIM**. Other highlights included a beautiful performance by the prima ballerina **TARA GHASSEMIEH** and a special appearance by maestro **SHAHRDAD ROHANI** conducting the orchestra performing **JOHANN STRAUSS II: Overture to Die Fledermaus**.

To spread the spirit of the season, we collaborated with **Westfield Century City** to display a **Grand Haft-Sin** at this highly successful commercial center for the benefit of the community at large. Building on the success of this initiative, the Foundation was invited to make a similar setup at **The Beverly Center**, another major shopping destination in Los Angeles. By sharing the ancient tradition of Haft-Sin, Farhang Foundation helped visitors welcome the spring and become familiar with this beautiful age-old custom.



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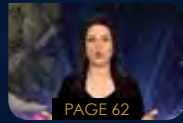
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Another result of the decisions made in recognition of the 2022 **WOMAN, LIFE, FREEDOM** movement was the cancellation of the Farhang Foundation in-person Celebration of Shab-e Yalda. Instead, we collaborated with the exceptional epic storyteller **GORDAFARID** to present the timeless **Shahnameh** tale of **THE END OF ZAHHAK** in a virtual, live production, reaching thousands across the globe. The symbolism of the story seemed appropriate to honor the essence of Shab-e Yalda, the longest night of the year, during such trying times.

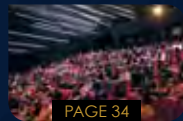
In the realm of cinema, on April 29, 2022, the highly anticipated annual **UCLA CELEBRATION OF IRANIAN CINEMA** by the **UCLA Film and Television Archive** returned to the **Billy Wilder Theater** at the **Hammer Museum** after a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic. The festival screened a number of works by Iranian filmmakers, captivating sold-out audiences over three weekends.

In addition to our annual series, Farhang Foundation served as a Cultural Partner for the UCLA Archive's exceptional presentation of three remarkable feature films by the renowned artist **Shirin Neshat**. The films included **LAND OF DREAMS** (2021), **WOMEN WITHOUT MEN** (2009), and **LOOKING FOR OUM KULTHUM** (2017), all of which made their premieres at the Venice Film Festival. A special highlight of the event was the presence of **Shirin Neshat** and **Shoja Azari**, who joined the audience in person following the screening of **LAND OF DREAMS** for an insightful conversation about the creative journey behind the film.

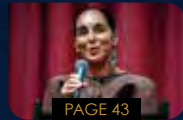
In our eighth consecutive year of working with the **American Film Institute**, Farhang Foundation supported the U.S. premiere of **HIT THE ROAD** by Panah Panahi in 2021. Our continuous participation ensures the presentation of all Iranian films at the annual **AFI FEST**, one of the most prestigious film festivals in the nation. In 2022, we supported the Los Angeles premiere of the critically acclaimed **NO BEARS** by Jafar Panahi at the landmark TCL Chinese Theatre of Hollywood. This was an homage to the artistry of Mr. Panahi, who has stayed focused on inspiring audiences with his art despite many personal and political challenges.



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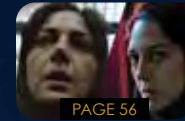
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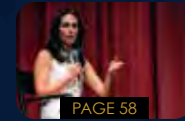
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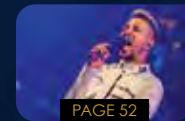
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In other film-related activities, Farhang established a new working relationship with the **Newport Beach Film Festival** by promoting all Iranian films in its 2022 lineup, including the Southern California premiere of **HOLY SPIDER**. Farhang Foundation followed this premiere by copresenting special preview screenings of this highly acclaimed film as part of its greatly anticipated Los Angeles theatrical debut. Select screenings offered an exclusive opportunity for audiences to engage in a Q&A with the director, **Ali Abbasi**, and its star **Zar Amir-Ebrahimi**, the winner of Best Actress at the Cannes Film Festival.

Another noteworthy film presentation was the premiere of **THE VOICE OF DUST & ASH**, in November 2022. This captivating documentary, directed by **Mandana Biscotti**, delves into the life and legacy of the late master **Mohammadreza Shajarian**. The film highlights the remarkable story of the acclaimed musician and features the moving original song **DUST & ASH**, featuring the voices of **Norah Jones** and **Mojgan Shajarian**, the daughter of the legendary singer. The narrative captures the essence of Shajarian's artistry, making it a tribute to his immense influence and the soulful melodies that continue to resonate across generations.

Turning to music, our annual concert at **Grand Performances** entertains many audiences of diverse backgrounds, in Downtown Los Angeles. Farhang has been sponsoring the Iranian performances at this cherished open-air free summer concert series for a number of years. Last year's featured artist was **KAMYAR**, sharing a taste of Iranian pop music with all.

On February 11, 2023, Farhang Foundation had the pleasure of presenting the inaugural concert of the **IRANSHAHR ORCHESTRA** under the direction of **Dr. Shahab Paranj**, featuring virtuoso **Sohrab Pournazeri** and soprano **Hila Plitmann** at the **Colburn School of Music's Zipper Hall**. **SONGS OF LOVE AND LOSS FOR IRAN** was dedicated to Iran and all Iranians in search of freedom. We were honored by the presence of esteemed guests and featured composers **Richard Danielpour**, **Ahmad Pejman**, and **Reza Vali**, who joined us for

this sold-out event. As always, we were grateful to the audience, whose participation makes these events successful.

In collaboration with **The Broad Stage of Santa Monica**, we presented the World Premiere of **THE CONFERENCE OF THE BIRDS** on June 18–19, 2022. This Resonance Collective production, with **Fahad Siadat** as the composer, **Sholeh Wolpé** as the lyricist, and **André Megerdichian** as the director and choreographer, beautifully brought to life the mystical journey of the Sufi, Attar, in search of the Divine.

At another special event, Farhang Foundation served as the cultural partner in presenting the world stage premiere of **THE WHITE FEATHER: AN IRANIAN BALLET TALE**, a production by INTUITV ARTSHIP and Sanaz K. Soltani. This took place on March 22, 2023, at the Barclay Theatre in Irvine, California. The principal dancers, **Tara Ghassemieh** and **Vitor Luiz**, graced the stage with their exceptional talent, accompanied by the original music composed by **Maestro Shardad Rohani**.

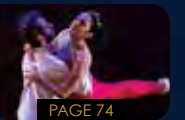
In closing, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to our passionate members, staunch supporters, inspiring artists, collaborators, and dedicated partners, who have played critical roles in making Farhang successful. As a testament to the strength of our community, Farhang continued to grow and thrive despite the difficult political and social circumstances, while staying true to its mission and purpose. Looking forward to another year of enriching programs and events, we should be proud of all we have accomplished together and set our sights on all we will achieve in the future.

*H. Emrani*

Dr. Haleh Emrani  
Chair, Farhang Foundation



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# ART IRAN CURATORIAL COMPETITION

**Farhang Foundation** and **Craft Contemporary** announced the launch of **Art Iran**, a curatorial competition and group exhibition. The open call, announced in June 2021, welcomed arts professionals with experience in developing highly focused group exhibitions centered on Middle Eastern art and culture. Entrants were asked to submit a proposal for an exhibition of visual art that evoked themes of Iranian culture and heritage, as expressed in Iran's contemporary art scene.

The submissions were reviewed by a five-member panel of distinguished jurors, including curator and scholar **Fereshteh Daftari**, curator **Maryam Ekhtiar** of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, world-renowned artist **Tala Madani**, Senior Curator Bennett Simpson of MOCA, and Craft Contemporary's former Exhibition Curator Holly Jerger.

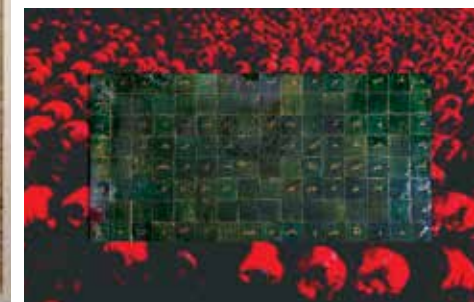


Roshanak Ghezlbash



Hoda Rahbarnik

After a lengthy review process, the jury panel unanimously voted to award the ART IRAN Curatorial Competition-winning prize to the curatorial team of **Roshanak Ghezlbash** and **Hoda Rahbarnik**. Roshanak Ghezlbash is an artist and architect currently based in Los Angeles with a double master's in architecture and design. Hoda Rahbarnik is an independent researcher and curator with a BA in graphic design, currently based in Toronto. Together they collaborated on the winning proposal for the exhibition **ART IRAN: Falling Into Language**, which will be on exhibition at Craft Contemporary from **January 27, 2024, through May 12, 2024**.



**LEFT COLUMN:** Elnaz Javani, *My Effigies*, 2020. White muslin fabric, hand sewn with black thread covering the external layer with stories in Persian & Azari calligraphy. Courtesy of the artist. Maryam Palizgir, *Identity*, detail, 2014. Installation. Cotton blanket, thread, embroidery, and ceramic, 220 x 200 x 200 centimeters. Courtesy of the artist. Taraneh Hemami, *Alphabet of Silence*.

**MIDDLE COLUMN:** Golnar Adili, *Language Landscape*. Shadi Yousefian, *Letters 30*. Courtesy of the artist and ADVOCARTSY.

**RIGHT COLUMN:** Hadieh Shafie, *Safar 1*, 2021. Color pencil on museum board, 60 x 40 inches. Courtesy of the artist. Neda Moridpour and Pouya Afshar, *Seven Conquests of Story II*.

Craft Contemporary





# 12<sup>th</sup> Annual FARHANG FOUNDATION SHORT FILM FESTIVAL AWARDS CEREMONY



The **12th Annual Farhang Foundation Short Film Festival Awards Ceremony** took place virtually on **September 25, 2021**. The event was hosted by the talented actress and comedian **Melissa Shoshahi**, who guided viewers through the festivities. During the virtual ceremony, viewers had the pleasure of watching the top six short films of the year.

**Sonia K. Hadad** received the **First Prize** of **\$10,000** for her exceptional film, **EXAM**. **Seyed M. Tabatabaei** was honored with the **Second Prize** of **\$5,000** for his captivating animated film, **LIGHT SIGHT**. **Maryam Mohajer** was awarded the **Third Prize** of **\$3,000** for her outstanding animation, **RED DRESS, NO STRAPS**.

The Farhang Short Film Festival stands as a unique event in the world, dedicated to celebrating Iranian short films. It continues to offer substantial support to filmmakers worldwide, with over **\$200,000** in cash prizes awarded. The 2021 jury panel consisted of esteemed figures from the film industry, including the award-winning actor, writer, and director **Arian Moayed**, the renowned actor and superstar **Hamed Behdad**, the accomplished director **Mehdi Karampour**, the star of "Under the Shadow," **Narges Rashidi**, the talented filmmaker **Ali Jaberansari**, and the jury chair, **Mark Amin**, CEO of Sobini Films. Their collective expertise and discernment played a pivotal role in recognizing and celebrating outstanding cinematic achievements.



# 13<sup>th</sup> Annual FARHANG FOUNDATION SHORT FILM FESTIVAL AWARDS CEREMONY



The **13th Annual Farhang Foundation Short Film Festival** marked yet another year of setting new records in competition.

This year's standout winners included **Behzad Azadi**, who clinched the coveted **First Prize** of **\$10,000** for his captivating film, **KOOSHEH: A MAN WHO CAN'T GROW A BEARD**. **Neda Assef** earned well-deserved recognition with the **Second Prize** of **\$5,000** for her suspenseful thriller, **113**, while **Mahyar Mandegar** was honored with the **Third Prize** of **\$3,000** for his surreal masterpiece, **WHITE WINGED HORSE**.

The Farhang Short Film Festival remains a singular and unparalleled event on the global stage, dedicated exclusively to celebrating the artistry of Iranian short films. It continues to provide substantial support to filmmakers from around the world, with over **\$200,000** in cash prizes generously awarded.

The esteemed 2022 jury was led by an exceptional panel of experts in the field. It featured **Lily Amir-Arjomand**, the visionary founder of Iran's influential Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults. Joining her were **Ghasem Ebrahimian**, an award-winning filmmaker and cinematographer renowned for his recent work on Shirin Neshat's **LAND OF DREAMS** and **Paul Malcolm**, the esteemed Film Programmer at UCLA Film and Television Archive, responsible for curating the long-running series, the **UCLA CELEBRATION OF IRANIAN CINEMA**. Also on the panel was **Shahram Mokri**, the trailblazing writer and filmmaker known for his groundbreaking works like **FISH AND CAT** and **CARELESS CRIME**. Rounding out this distinguished group was **Sara Nodjomi**, a prolific filmmaker, producer, and festival programmer, whose recent documentary, **OF KINGS AND PAINTINGS**, provided a profound insight into the captivating world of Qajar art.







## 11th Annual Farhang Fundraising Gala

On November 6, 2021, Farhang Foundation hosted its prestigious **11th Annual Fundraising Gala** at the iconic Beverly Wilshire Hotel in Beverly Hills, drawing an impressive gathering of over five hundred esteemed guests and sponsors.

The year's gala was a captivating evening filled with enchanting musical performances by the incredibly talented Kamyar. Guiding the festivities as the night's master of ceremonies was the compelling actress, **Tara Grammy**.

The funds raised during this annual gala play a pivotal role in supporting Farhang Foundation's diverse range of programs, projects, and initiatives, totaling over one hundred annually. Notable among these is the historic **Iranian Music Degree Program at UCLA's Herb Alpert School of Music**, which signifies a significant cultural contribution. Additionally, we are proud of the partnership between **Farhang Foundation** and the **Getty Museum** for the "**Persia: Ancient Iran and the Classical World**" exhibition, which was a record-breaking exhibition in the history of the Getty Villa. All of these were a testament to the organization's commitment to promoting Iranian culture and heritage on a grand scale.





# The Annual Iranian Music Lecture Series at UCLA

Farhang Foundation's illustrious **Iranian Music Program**, hosted at **UCLA's Herb Alpert School of Music**, continued its **Annual Iranian Music Lecture Series** with a distinguished lineup of accomplished artists. This engaging series showcased two notable presenters: **Melieka Fathi**, the Artistic Director of the Melieka Dance Company, and Iranian American composer **Kian Ravaei**. Both artists delivered insightful presentations on the rich realms of Iranian music and dance.

During her first lecture, Ms. Fathi provided artistic insights into the multifaceted world of Iranian dance. She delved into the various genres of Iranian dance, explored the intricate nuances of Iranian music, and shared the choreographic practices that currently define the Iranian dance landscape. Her second lecture took the form of a collaborative discussion with **Dr. Farzad Amoozegar**, where they jointly explored the captivating theme of **AN EXPLORATION OF RHYTHM AND MOVEMENT IN IRANIAN MUSIC AND DANCE**.

The series also featured a thought-provoking lecture titled **COMPOSING IDENTITY: NOTES FROM AN IRANIAN AMERICAN COMPOSER** by the esteemed Iranian American composer, **Kian Ravaei**. In this presentation, Ravaei delved into the complex relationship between music and identity, sharing his personal experiences in composing works that skillfully merge Western and Iranian classical music traditions. As an added highlight, students from the UCLA Strings Area joined Ravaei for a musical performance of "Family Photos" and engaged in a stimulating conversation about their experience playing music inspired by Iranian culture.

The Iranian Music Lecture Series owes its success to the support of Farhang Foundation, as well as the collaborative efforts of the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music's Department of Ethnomusicology and the UCLA Center for Near Eastern Studies. Additional support from the Dean of the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music further underscores the commitment to nurturing and promoting the vibrant tapestry of Iranian music and culture.



UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music



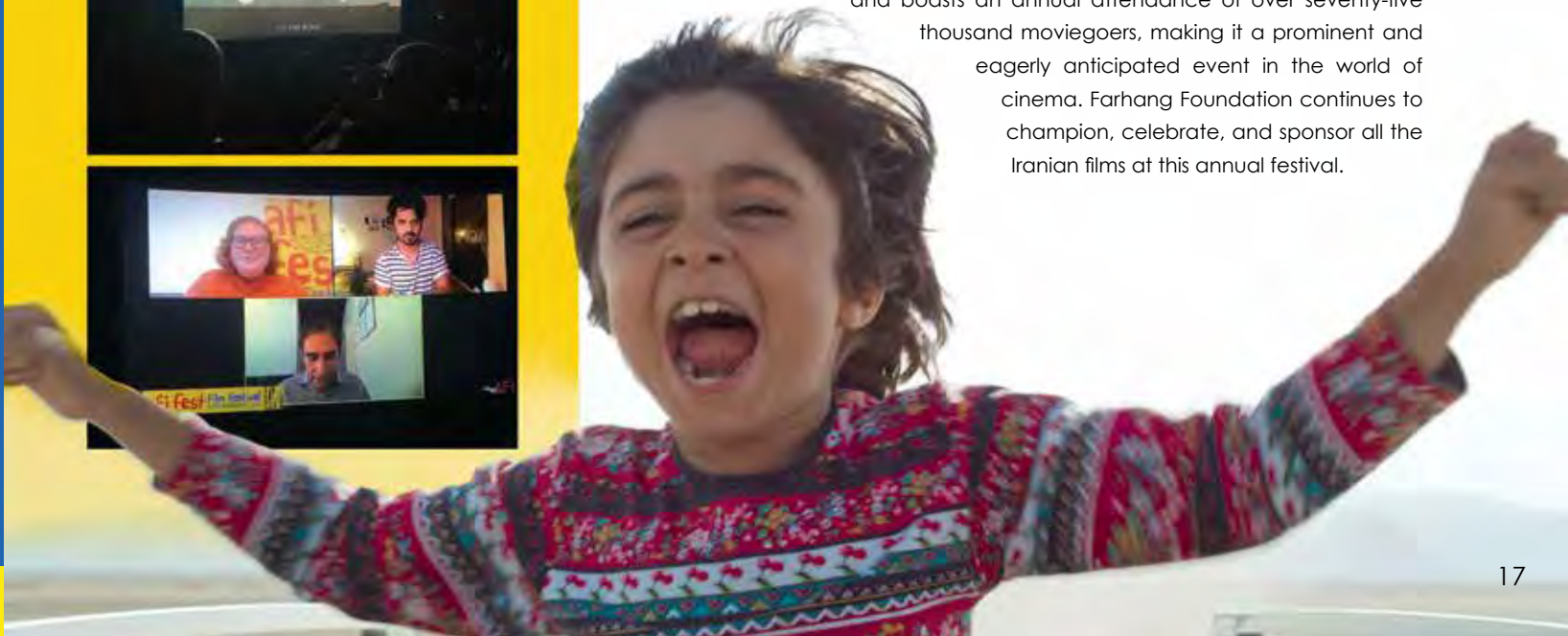
## LOS ANGELES PREMIERE HIT THE ROAD

Farhang Foundation takes great pride in its continued support of Iranian cinema showcased at the **2021 AFI FEST**, the largest film festival in the United States. This year, the festival treated audiences to the U.S. premiere of **HIT THE ROAD** (Jadde Khaki) by the talented **Panah Panahi**, which unfolded on November 13, 2021.

In this captivating debut from Panah Panahi, the son of the renowned Iranian filmmaker **Jafar Panahi** (known for works like "TAXI" and "3 FACES"), we are taken on an enthralling journey with an endearing yet somewhat frenzied family of four embarking on a mysterious road trip to an undisclosed destination. The ensemble comprises an overprotective mother, a nonchalant father, an anxious older brother, and a scene-stealing, rambunctious younger brother, all crammed into an SUV as they navigate the vast and picturesque Iranian landscape. This cinematic gem brims with charismatic performances and showcases a darkly humorous family dynamic, taking viewers on an unforgettable journey that is as profound as it is absurdist. It heralds the emergence of a bold and assured new voice in world cinema.

Following the screening, audiences had the privilege of participating in a virtual Q&A session with Mr. Panahi, providing valuable insights into his creative process and the unique vision behind his compelling film.

AFI FEST is hosted at the iconic Chinese Theatre in Hollywood and boasts an annual attendance of over seventy-five thousand moviegoers, making it a prominent and eagerly anticipated event in the world of cinema. Farhang Foundation continues to champion, celebrate, and sponsor all the Iranian films at this annual festival.





# CARELESS CRIME

U.S. Premiere

The **UCLA Film & Television Archive** and Farhang Foundation presented a special in-person screening of **Shahram Mokri's** latest feature film **CARELESS CRIME** (Jenayat-e Bi Deghat) at the **Hammer Museum's Billy Wilder Theater**.

In each of his features, Iranian writer-director Shahram Mokri bends narrative into a Möbius strip until past, present, and future seem to converge into a single moment unfolding on screen. Mokri shot both his quasi-thrillers **FISH AND CAT** (2013) and **INVASION** (2017) in a single take to build suspense and dread, his camera moving in an intricate, astonishing choreography with his ensemble casts that upends traditional rules of cinematic time and space.

In his latest, **CARELESS CRIME**, which premiered at the Venice Film Festival, Mokri's supple avant-gardism comes paired with an emergent political dimension. At the center of its kaleidoscopic structure is an arsonist plot to set fire to a movie theater while a capacity audience is watching a film. Running in parallel are a student film group organizing a controversial screening and a movie-within-a-movie about government authorities investigating an illicit film screening at a campground. All of these storylines seem to begin at different times and places, one of them explicitly "fictional," but then seem to converge over time with scenes repeated from different perspectives, intercut with historical notes about the history of cinema in Iran, including the infamous 1978 Cinema Rex fire in Abadan that killed 420 moviegoers there to see Masoud Kimiai's *Deer* (1974). A horrific act of arson, it's considered the flash point that sparked the Iranian Revolution. The attack hangs over Mokri's intricate, masterfully constructed cinematic puzzle to suggest a portrait of contemporary Iran trapped by its revolutionary history in an infinite loop of tragedy.

**UCLA  
FILM &  
TELEVISION  
ARCHIVE**



# CHESS DAY

with Ehsan Ghaem Maghami



Farhang Foundation was delighted to have sustained its longstanding commitment to supporting **USC's Persian Academic and Cultural Student Association (PACSA)**. In 2021, our collaborative efforts led to an engaging series of programs that enriched the academic and cultural experiences of the university community.

One of the highlights included a captivating talk with Iranian chess champion **Ehsan Ghaem Maghami**, followed by an interactive Q&A session. To further enhance the chess enthusiasts' experience, Mr. Ghaem Maghami engaged in a simultaneous chess match with twenty members of USC's Chess Club, creating an atmosphere of excitement and strategic prowess.

# A VIRTUAL CONVERSATION

with Prof. Karim Nasr



In addition to our chess-related activities, the programs included a thought-provoking virtual lecture by **Professor Karim Nasr**. Professor Nasr delved into the profound depths of painting as a form of art, providing valuable insights into its significance and artistic value.



These enriching programs are a testament to Farhang's ongoing commitment to fostering academic and cultural exchange, and Farhang is proud to have continued its collaboration with PACSA at USC.



VIRTUAL WORLD PREMIERE

# IMMIGRANTS' STORIES: IRANIAN AMERICANS OF SILICON VALLEY



Farhang Foundation, in collaboration with Spirit Film Productions, was honored to present a captivating virtual screening of **IMMIGRANT STORIES: IRANIAN AMERICANS OF SILICON VALLEY**, a compelling film directed by Nima Naimi, Alireza Sanayei, and Julian Gigola. This momentous occasion marked the free World Premiere of the film, extending a warm welcome to our global audience.

The Iranian American community has made remarkable strides across a diverse spectrum of professional fields, garnering international recognition for their exceptional contributions. **IMMIGRANT STORIES** artfully captures the deeply personal narratives of Iranian Americans, spanning three generations and encompassing over a dozen unique life stories. Through these immersive accounts, the film illuminates the rich tapestry of experiences and journeys that have shaped the Iranian American presence in Silicon Valley and beyond.

## POUYA AFSHAR

The Charm of the Unfamiliar  
Exhibition Viewing &  
Book Signing Reception

Farhang Foundation took immense pride in copresenting the **POUYA AFSHAR** Exhibition viewing and book signing reception in collaboration with **ADVOCARTSY** and **Craft Contemporary**. This unique event brought together art enthusiasts for an immersive in-person experience with the esteemed artist Pouya Afshar, showcasing his solo exhibition titled **THE CHARM OF THE UNFAMILIAR** at Craft Contemporary.

A diverse and engaged audience gathered at the Craft Contemporary Museum, where they had the opportunity to gain profound insights into Afshar's solo exhibition, which wove a compelling narrative of displacement, migration, and resiliency through various multimedia expressions.

Following the exhibition viewing, attendees were treated to a book signing reception featuring Pouya Afshar's limited-edition monograph titled **IN CHARACTER**. This delightful event took place in the serene and inviting ambiance of the museum courtyard, offering a unique opportunity for art enthusiasts to connect with the artist and take home a piece of his creative journey.



Craft Contemporary





# 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Virtual Celebration of Shab-e Yalda



In 2021, Farhang Foundation hosted its **9th Annual Celebration of Shab-e Yalda** virtually. This enchanting virtual presentation, which was attended by over one thousand viewers live, included a blend of music, poetry, and storytelling, a true homage to Iranian culture. The highlight of the program was the captivating presence of **Gordafarid**, a trailblazing figure and the world's first female epic storyteller (Naqal). She mesmerized the audience with her storytelling prowess, carrying forward a rich storytelling tradition.

The musical performances were equally enthralling, featuring:

The **ISTGAH Orchestra's** rendition of PORSOON PORSOON.

**Azad Mirzapour** and **Vahid Taj's** moving performance of SHABSHODEGAN.

The **Iranian Ensemble**, comprising **Pejman Hadadi**, **Saeed Kamjoo**, **Houshmand Ebadi**, **Asareh Shekarchi**, **Behnaz Behnamnia**, and **Bahareh Fayazi**, delivering a harmonious ensemble performance.

**Sara Hamidi** and **Sanaz Hamidi's** captivating presentation.

The **Ava Choir**, casting a spell with their performance of SHAB-E TOOLANI.

This event served as a beautiful and heartfelt tribute to Iranian culture, bringing together artists and performers who shared their talents and artistry with a global audience. Farhang Foundation continues to celebrate and preserve the richness of Persian traditions like Shab-e Yalda for audiences around the world.

## FARHANG DINNERS BY CHEF MOJDEH

We ushered in the year 2022 with the eagerly anticipated second episode of **FARHANG DINNERS BY CHEF MOJDEH**. This virtual one-hour spectacle, hosted by the renowned celebrity chef **Mojdeh Eghbal**, featured influential Iranian guests in an inviting Iranian dinner setting.

The program curated a delightful three-course dinner menu, artfully crafted to celebrate the diverse regional cuisines of Iran. What set this experience apart was the intimate dinner atmosphere, where an array of distinguished celebrity guests came together to share their personal reflections on cultural identity and the profound influence of their Iranian heritage on their lives and careers.

### THE ILLUSTRIOUS LINEUP OF SPECIAL GUESTS INCLUDED:

**RUDI BAKHTIAR**, a prominent journalist and radio host. **ERFAN**, the gifted musician and producer. **SAHAR GOLSHANI**, the talented sketch artist and comedian. **SARA SEYED**, the accomplished actress. **FARED SHAFINURY**, a notable composer and vocalist. **MELISSA SHOSHAHI**, a beloved actress and comedian.







## 2021 Nowruz BANNER COMPETITION

Farhang Foundation's esteemed annual **Nowruz Street Banner Competition**, initiated in 2011, has evolved into a cherished tradition that heralds the arrival of Farhang's signature Nowruz celebration. The winning design from this competition graces the cityscape of Los Angeles, adorning over six hundred street poles throughout the prominent thoroughfares during the months of February and March.

Each year, Farhang extends an open invitation to a global community of artists, illustrators, and graphic designers, inviting them to channel their creative energies into crafting and submitting original designs that encapsulate the spirit of Nowruz. Commencing on February 1 and culminating in Farhang's grand Nowruz celebration, the winning design takes center stage on numerous large street banners adorning Los Angeles streets. These banners proudly announce the arrival of spring and commemorate the world's largest Nowruz celebration.



In the latest edition of this competition, the prestigious honor of creating the winning design was bestowed upon Iranian artist **Najva Erfani**, hailing from Tehran. Her winning creation evokes a sense of joy and cultural richness. In her words, "I am thrilled that my design was selected by Farhang Foundation to help celebrate and promote this cultural treasure among Iranians as well as the community at large, and it will serve as a reminder of happy memories of our culture, the culture of peace, reconciliation, and kindness."

Erfani's design features two angelic figures with sunlit countenances, symbolizing the warmth and bright promise of Nowruz. The figure on the right holds a hyacinth, bearing glad tidings of spring with her wheatgrass skirt, which contains key elements of the Haft-Sin display. The angel on the left gracefully blows her trumpet, announcing the arrival of spring and awakening everyone from their winter slumber. The lion, an emblem deeply woven into Iranian culture, stands as a guardian imbued with wisdom and enlightenment.

Najva Erfani, born in Tehran in 1984, is a renowned Iranian painter and illustrator with a portfolio that includes album covers, murals, literary book cover art, and illustrations for children's books. Her creations draw inspiration from ancient Iranian literature, mythology, art, and culture. Erfani's artistic journey has seen her participation in over eighty group exhibitions across various countries, and she has held several solo exhibitions in Iran. Notably, she designed the album cover for Ebi's "Lalehzar" in 2020 and has illustrated more than forty book covers, including Iraj Pezeshkzad's "Mashallah Khan in the Court of Harun Al-Rasheed," showcasing her versatile and impactful contributions to the world of art and culture.



## The Annual Nowruz HAFT-SÎN DISPLAY at Westfield Century City Shopping Center

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 at the atrium for ten days during the Nowruz festivities. This marks the first time ever that a major shopping center in the United States is officially celebrating Nowruz. Special thanks to After 8 Events and Square Root Designs for the beautiful display.

**Westfield**  
CENTURY CITY







13TH ANNUAL  
CELEBRATION OF  
**NOWRUZ**  
AT UCLA

After a two-year hiatus imposed by the global pandemic, Farhang Foundation made a triumphant return to its beloved **13th Annual Celebration of Nowruz at UCLA** on March 20, 2022. This joyous occasion witnessed an incredible turnout, with over **thirty thousand** enthusiastic visitors, solidifying its status as the largest Nowruz celebration in the world.

Throughout the daylong event, attendees were treated to a rich tapestry of activities and programs that brought the spirit of Nowruz to life. The festivities included captivating live performances by an array of talented artists and groups, such as the **Ava Choir**, the **LA Daf Ensemble**, the **Melieka Dance Company**, the **UCLA Iranian Music Student Ensemble**, the **Negar Estakhr and Nargol Rashidian Puppet Show**, and the mesmerizing **Firuze Dance Company**, led by **Robyn Friend**.

The celebration also featured an exquisite and grand **Haft-Sin** display, providing a visual feast for all. Visitors had the opportunity to engage in the **Getty Villa Persia** Exhibition Mural Art project and capture memories at various photo booths. Children enjoyed specially designed programming and arts and crafts activities, while everyone savored the delights of an Iranian tea house. The air was filled with the enchanting music of **DJ Arin**, and Calligraphy by **Mohtadi Mirak** added an artistic touch to the event.

Farhang Foundation's triumphant return to the celebration of Nowruz at UCLA marked a significant moment of cultural rejuvenation, where the vibrant traditions and festivities of Nowruz were embraced by a diverse and enthusiastic audience.







## Farhang Foundation's Virtual CELEBRATION OF NOWRUZ

Farhang Foundation proudly showcased its 2022 **Virtual Nowruz Celebrations** dedicated to our global audience. The program featured a captivating lineup of performances that transported viewers into the heart of Iranian culture.

The event featured remarkable talents, including:



### ISTGAH ORCHESTRA

The **ISTGAH Orchestra**, who enthralled the audience with their rendition of **SAMANOO**, a musical performance that resonated with the spirit of Nowruz.



### THE MELIEKA FATHI DANCE COMPANY

The **Melieka Fathi Dance Company** graced the virtual stage with a captivating dance performance set to the melodic rhythms of **NOWRUZ KHOSH AMAD**, and the song **MAHANEGAR**, capturing the joy and festivity of the New Year.



### THE IRANIAN ENSEMBLE

The **Iranian Ensemble**, comprising **Pejman Hadadi**, **Habib Hoseini**, **Bashir Faramarzi**, **Maryam Tazhdeh**, and **Saeed Kamjoo**, delivered a soul-stirring performance of **ROOH-E BAHAR**, infusing the celebration with the essence of spring.

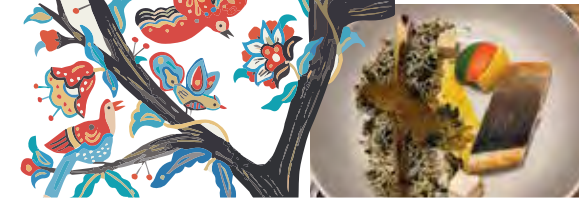


## Nowruz Piruz

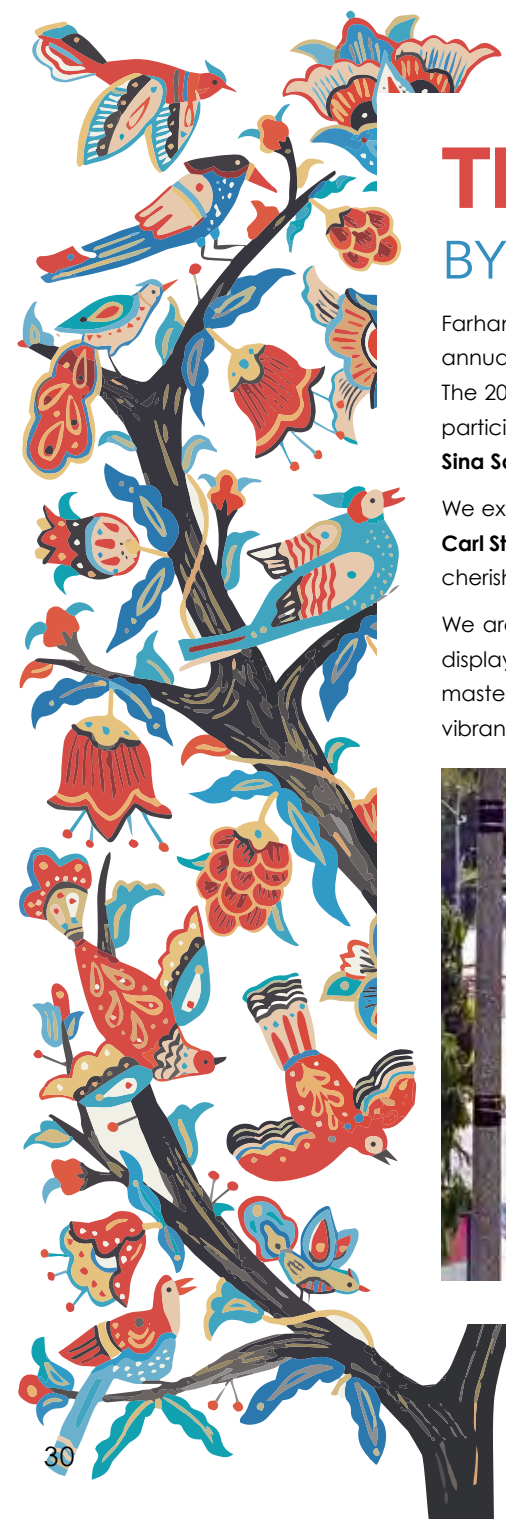
An Iranian Feast Celebrating Nowruz



In 2022 and 2023 Farhang Foundation joined forces with the critically acclaimed Michelin Star-rated restaurant, Knife Pleat, in presenting **Nowruz Piruz: An Iranian Feast Celebrating Nowruz**. The Six-Course Caviar menu by Chef **Tony Esnault** and **Ms. Shamsi Katebi** presented guests a variety of spectacular dishes, all focusing on the various delights of the Nowruz holiday.







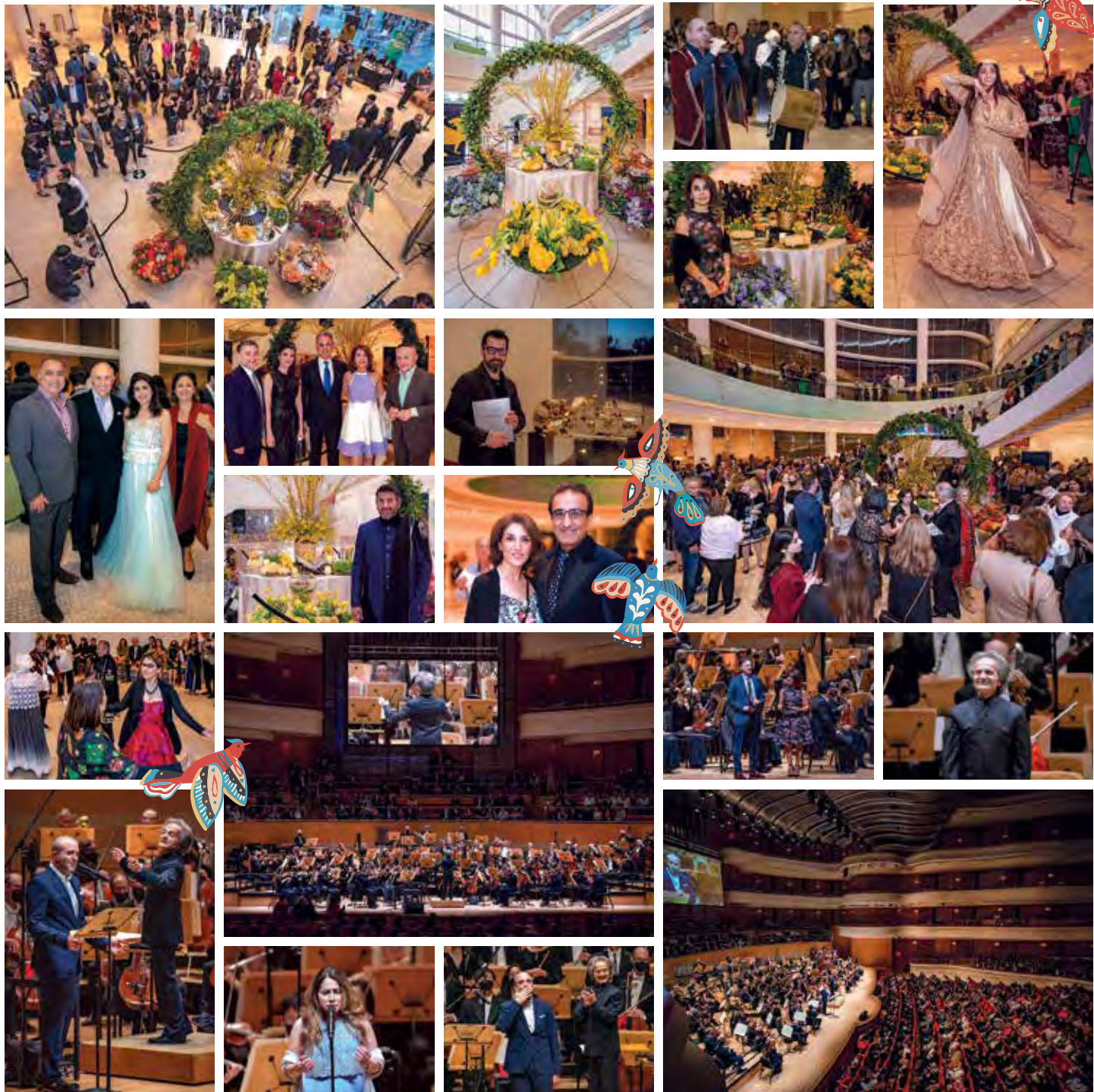
# THE NOWRUZ CONCERT

## BY THE PACIFIC SYMPHONY

Farhang Foundation and the **Pacific Symphony Orchestra** celebrated a triumphant return of the Symphony's annual **Nowruz Concert**, marking its first appearance in two years following the pandemic-induced hiatus. The 2022 instantly sold-out event was a truly unforgettable celebration, made all the more special by the participation of esteemed Iranian guest performers: **Lily Afshar**, **Shardad Rohani**, **Mojgan Shajarian**, and **Sina Sarlak**.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to the entire Pacific Symphony team, including the musical director **Carl St.Clair** and President and CEO **John Forsythe**, for their unwavering commitment to commemorating our cherished Nowruz traditions.

We are also grateful to our valued collaborators, **A Seed and Stone**, for crafting a breathtaking Haft-Sin display that added to the beauty of the occasion. Additionally, the **Melieka Fathi Dance Company's** masterful performances as part of our exclusive Nowruz pre-show enhanced the cultural richness and vibrancy of the event.





# IRAN

## THROUGH BOOKS

### Los Angeles Times FESTIVAL OF BOOKS AT USC



Farhang Foundation was thrilled to make its return to the annual **L.A. Times Festival of Books** at **USC** on April 23–24, 2022, with our engaging presentation of **IRAN THROUGH BOOKS**. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the thousands of book enthusiasts who graced our booth with their presence throughout this inspiring weekend.

We were especially grateful to our esteemed guest authors, **Omid Arabain**, **Freydoon Rassouli**, **Shilla Shakoori**, and **Sholeh Wolpé**, whose valuable contributions enriched our participation in this literary celebration. Their insights and literary prowess added depth and resonance to our presence at the festival, making it a memorable and enriching experience for all.





# UCLA Celebration of IRANIAN CINEMA



On April 29, 2022, the highly anticipated annual **UCLA CELEBRATION OF IRANIAN CINEMA** commenced with the premiere of **HIT THE ROAD**, marking the directorial debut of **Panah Panahi**. The series made a triumphant return to the **Billy Wilder Theater** at the **Hammer Museum** after a two-year hiatus imposed by the pandemic, captivating a sold-out audience.

This year's series, running through May 8, 2022, showcased ten feature film premieres by Iranian filmmakers, offering a diverse and immersive cinematic experience that resonated with audiences. We extend our sincere gratitude to the **UCLA Film and Television Archive** for their steadfast commitment to hosting this remarkable annual film series, which continues to be a vital platform for the celebration of Iranian cinema.



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# PERSIA

## ANCIENT IRAN

### AND THE CLASSICAL WORLD

#### AT THE Getty Villa Museum

Farhang Foundation took great pride in its second collaboration with the **Getty Villa** museum in presenting the remarkable exhibition, **PERSIA: ANCIENT IRAN AND THE CLASSICAL WORLD**. This captivating showcase opened its doors to the public on April 6, 2022, and continued to enchant visitors until August 8, 2022.

Spanning a millennium from approximately 550 BC to AD 650, Ancient Iran, renowned historically as Persia, held sway over western Asia. It was marked by the rule of three dynasties, presiding over an empire of unparalleled scale and intricacy. As a significant component of the Getty Museum's program, "The Classical World in Context," this exhibition delved into the artistic and cultural intersections between the competing realms of Iran, Greece, and Rome.

The exhibition features a magnificent array of artifacts, including regal sculptures, opulent luxury items, religious icons, and historical manuscripts sourced from leading museums in the United States, Europe, and the Middle East. Adding an immersive dimension to the experience, an accompanying film transported visitors to a journey through the ceremonial capital of Achaemenid Iran, Persepolis.

This exhibition offered a unique opportunity to explore the rich tapestry of Ancient Iran and its profound influence on the classical world, all within the captivating confines of the Getty Villa. This exhibition became the most attended exhibition in the forty-nine-year history of the Getty Villa. Farhang Foundation was proud to be the sole Cultural Partner of this historic project, and to once again work closely with the entire team at the Getty to help present this exhibition to the world.





# PERSIA AFTER HOURS

at the Getty  
Villa  
Museum

Farhang Foundation was profoundly honored to join forces with the **Getty Villa** and the **Iranian Music Program** at **UCLA's Herb Alpert School of Music** to orchestrate and curate a series of exclusive **PERSIA AFTER HOURS immersive experiences**, held after hours throughout the summer as an integral part of the **PERSIA: ANCIENT IRAN AND THE CLASSICAL WORLD** exhibition. Over the months of May, June, and July, a groundbreaking series of three distinct musical performances unfolded, marking a historic moment in the museum's history as it played host to capacity audiences.

*Farhang Foundation extends heartfelt gratitude to the sold-out audiences who graced all three summer events celebrating another remarkable Iranian cultural extravaganza at the Getty Villa Museum. We thank the entire staff at the Getty Villa for their unwavering dedication and hard work in bringing these extraordinary events to life.*



## Azam Ali: Persepolis At Dusk

The inaugural **PERSIA AFTER HOURS** evening ignited with an unforgettable concert featuring the exceptional **Azam Ali** and her ensemble. Azam Ali, a versatile and gifted singer, producer, and composer of Iranian origin, alongside the Iranian multi-instrumentalist and composer **Loga Ramin Torkian**, established the pioneering acoustic/electronic music group **NIYAZ**, which swiftly gained worldwide recognition. Drawing inspiration from the **PERSIA: ANCIENT IRAN AND THE CLASSICAL WORLD** exhibition, Azam and Loga curated an intimate acoustic performance that showcased a collective of extraordinary musicians. Immersive visuals graced the facade of the Getty Villa Museum, enhancing the experience, while the performance itself featured the incredible **Tara Pandya** in dance, accompanied by musicians **Kourosh Moradi**, **Miisaq Eshaghi**, **Javad Butah**, and visual artist **Jesse Gilbert**. The evening's festivities began with a pre-concert set by renowned **DJ Omid Walizadeh** and included special tours of the exhibition guided by curator Jeffrey Spier.



## FARED SHAFINURY: The Beloved

The series's second concert highlighted Fared Shafinury, a contemporary Iranian American artist, accomplished setâr virtuoso, activist, and educator. Inspired by the works of Rumi, the performance featured dances performed and choreographed by the acclaimed Miriam Peretz. Joining Fared on stage were musicians **Naghme Sarang** and **Rambod Dargahi**. Fared's performance paid homage to the timeless wisdom of Rumi, celebrating boundless love, nature's awe, and the deepest human relationships documented through centuries of classical Persian poetry. The evening commenced with an opening set by the acclaimed **DJ Shan Nash** and captivating calligraphy demonstrations by artist **Mohtadi Mirak**.

## MUSIC OF THE MYSTICS:

Mehrdad Arabifard, Shayandokht Abedinimanesh, and Khosro Ansari

## CONFERENCE OF THE BIRDS:

Sholeh Wolpé and André Megerdichian

The final performance of the series featured a mesmerizing program centered on Iranian mystic poets, featuring two premiere performances. The evening commenced with the debut of **Sholeh Wolpé** and **André Megerdichian's** contemporary presentation of Sufi mystic poet **Attar's** classic work, **THE CONFERENCE OF THE BIRDS**. The night concluded with a classical concert by master **Mehrdad Arabifard** and his ensemble, accompanied by vocalists **Shayandokht Abedinimanesh** and **Khosro Ansari**, as well as musicians **Mani Bolouri**, **Aidin Okhovat**, and **Naghme Sarang**. Special thanks were extended to **Hamed Poursaee**, **Oliver Hakim**, and **Mohtadi Mirak** for their pre-concert performances.







## PERSIA FAMILY FESTIVAL at the Getty Villa Museum

As an integral part of the **PERSIA: ANCIENT IRAN AND THE CLASSICAL WORLD** exhibition, Farhang Foundation and the Getty Villa presented a free Family Festival on April 9 and 10, 2022, allowing families to immerse themselves in the sights and sounds of ancient Iran through music, dance, storytelling, hands-on workshops, and interactive events.

During this festival, adults and children had the opportunity to create their own puppets inspired by Iranian stories, participate in the Golden Wing workshop, capture and print photos at the photo booth, enjoy mesmerizing musical performances by the **LA Daf Ensemble** and the **Melieka Fathi Dance Company**, indulge in a puppet workshops featuring **Negar Estakhr** and **Nargol Rashidian**, witness their names beautifully rendered in Persian calligraphy by **Mohtadi Mirak**, and savor the enchanting melodies of the **Kooban Ensemble** directed by **Vandad Massahzadeh**. Additionally, attendees had the chance to explore the exhibition and delve deeper into Iran's rich history.

*This event was a resounding success, with tickets selling out and over ten thousand individuals reveling in the exhibition's splendor with their families.*



## Art of the Empire: Monumental Cities of Ancient Iran

As part of the **PERSIA: ANCIENT IRAN AND THE CLASSICAL WORLD** exhibition, the Getty Villa hosted archaeologist **Dr. Ali Mousavi** of UCLA, providing a closer examination of the ancient cities that once functioned as vibrant hubs of multicultural and artistic exchange with civilizations spanning Egypt and the Mediterranean. Ali Mousavi is a Pourdavoud Research Scholar and adjunct assistant professor of Iranian archaeology in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at UCLA, and has played a pivotal role in shedding light on these ancient cities.



## Building Paradise in Iranian Gardens

As part of the **PERSIA: ANCIENT IRAN AND THE CLASSICAL WORLD** exhibition, the Getty Villa had the distinct privilege of presenting **BUILDING PARADISE IN IRANIAN GARDENS**, a lecture delivered by **Dr. Touraj Daryaee**. Dr. Daryaee, who holds the esteemed Maseeh Endowed Chair in Persian Studies & Culture and serves as the director of the Dr. Samuel M. Jordan Center for Persian Studies & Culture at the University of California, Irvine, shared his profound insights and expertise with the audience during this enlightening lecture.



## Bacchus Uncorked

The Getty Villa presented their annual **BACCHUS UNCORKED** program as part of the **PERSIA: ANCIENT IRAN AND THE CLASSICAL WORLD** exhibition. The first presentation was titled **DRINKING LIKE A PERSIAN KING**, featuring a lecture by historian **Dr. Touraj Daryaee**, who explored the historic diplomacy of wine. The second installment included lectures on **DRINKING (AND EATING) WITH GREEKS AND PERSIANS** by historian **John W. I. Lee**. The final installment was titled **ROYAL BANQUETING IN ANCIENT IRAN** and featured **Dr. Elspeth Dusinberre** from the University of Colorado, Boulder, **Dr. Henry Colburn** from Bard University, and **Dr. Layah Ziaii-Bigdeli** from UC Irvine, who all explored the cultural significance of elite Iranian banqueting in antiquity and the sumptuous objects that adorned their tables.



## Making Scents of the Ancient World: Perfumes of Persia and Mythical Beast Medallions Family Workshop

As a complement to the **PERSIA: ANCIENT IRAN AND THE CLASSICAL WORLD** exhibition, the Getty Villa presented a day dedicated to exploring scents of the ancient world, notably perfumes of ancient Iran. During this engaging and complementary drop-in workshop, visitors had the unique opportunity to delve into the history of perfume-making. They embarked on an olfactory journey, using their keen sense of smell and imagination to craft their own signature scents inspired by the aromatic traditions of ancient Iran. In addition, a family workshop on **MYTHICAL BEAST MEDALLIONS** gave visitors the opportunity to discover the ancient art of metalsmithing and to make their own mythical beast medallions like those worn by elite and royal individuals of ancient Iran.





# Lecture by Artist and Filmmaker Shirin Neshat at the Getty Villa Museum

As a distinguished component of **PERSIA: ANCIENT IRAN AND THE CLASSICAL WORLD** exhibition, the Getty Villa had the privilege of presenting a captivating lecture by the renowned artist and filmmaker, **Shirin Neshat**.

Shirin Neshat has always harnessed the power of art to frame her personal identity in tandem with sociopolitical, religious, and historical narratives. Her artistic journey has evolved organically from her nomadic and politically charged circumstances as an Iranian residing in the Western World. Throughout her career, she has employed conceptual and visual strategies to eloquently reveal the complex duality of her existence.

In this illuminating presentation, Neshat delved into the profound influences drawn from Islamic and Iranian art and architecture, encompassing both ancient and contemporary expressions. She also shared her latest work, **LAND OF DREAMS**, which provides an immigrant's perspective on America, her adopted homeland.

Shirin Neshat, an Iranian-born artist and filmmaker now based in New York, remains a trailblazer in her field. She continues to push the boundaries of artistic expression, working with media such as photography, video, and film, infusing them with highly poetic and politically charged imagery and narratives. Neshat's impact is evident through her numerous solo exhibitions at prestigious museums worldwide, including recent showcases at the Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich, the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, and The Broad in Los Angeles. Furthermore, she has directed three feature-length films: "Women Without Men" (2009), "Looking for Oum Kulthum" (2017), and most recently, "Land of Dreams" (2021). Her artistic journey is represented by Gladstone Gallery in New York and Goodman Gallery in London.



## LOOKING WITHIN NOT WITHOUT

the films of **SHIRIN NESHAT** UCLA Film & Television Archive

Farhang Foundation was honored to serve as the community partner for the UCLA Archive's presentation of three remarkable films by the renowned artist **Shirin Neshat**. The films included **LAND OF DREAMS** (2021), **WOMEN WITHOUT MEN** (2009), and **LOOKING FOR OUM KULTHUM** (2017), all of which made their premieres at the Venice Film Festival.

The screenings took place on September 23 and 30, 2022, at the illustrious **Billy Wilder Theater** of the **Hammer Museum**. A special highlight of the event was the presence of **Shirin Neshat** and **Shoja Azari** following the screening of **LAND OF DREAMS** for an insightful conversation about the creative journey behind the film. These screenings were an integral part of the **LOOKING WITHIN, NOT WITHOUT: THE FILMS OF SHIRIN NESHAT** series, featured within the Hammer Series, and Farhang Foundation was proud to be part of this enriching cinematic experience.



# THE CONFERENCE OF THE BIRDS

at the Broad Stage of Santa Monica

Farhang Foundation joined forces with **The Broad Stage** of Santa Monica in presenting the World Premiere of the stage production of **THE CONFERENCE OF THE BIRDS** on June 18 and 19, 2022. Produced by the **Resonance Collective** featuring **Fahad Siadat** (Composer), **Sholeh Wolpé** (Librettist), and **André Megerdichian** (Director and Choreographer).

This world premiere, semi-staged oratorio was based on Sufi mystic poet Attar's seminal text about the journey of the soul as it seeks union with the Divine. It featured an a cappella choir and seven soloists acting narratively and orchestrally, accompanied by dance.





# FARHANG CONNECT

Live Virtual Talks by Influential Iranians and Scholars of Iran

Watch all the current episodes  
of #FarhangConnect now  
by visiting [Farhang.org/Connect](https://Farhang.org/Connect)



## THE SAFARANI SISTERS: BODY DOUBLE

Farhang Foundation and the Morris Museum joined forces in presenting THE SAFARANI SISTERS: BODY DOUBLE, a virtual talk discussing the artists' solo exhibition at the Morris Museum.

Artists **Bahareh Safarani** and **Farzaneh Safarani**, accompanied by esteemed independent curator Roya Khadjavi and **Ronald T. Labaco**, Chief Curator of the Morris Museum, to present an insightful conversation, shedding light on the remarkable exhibition, BODY DOUBLE: The Safarani Sisters.

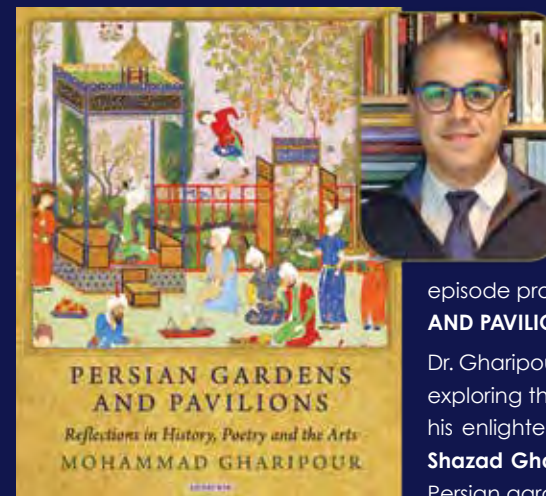
The Morris Museum took great pleasure in featuring the works of these identical twin Iranian artists in their inaugural solo museum exhibition. Attendees had the opportunity to delve into the captivating artwork of Bahareh and Farzaneh Safarani as they explored the concept of duality through their exquisite pieces.



## ANDY BARAGHANI: IN CONVERSATION WITH NAZ DERAVIDAN

Farhang Foundation was honored to host the renowned culinary superstar and author **Andy Baraghani** as a guest on Farhang Connect. Andy enthralled our audience as he delved into the essence of his debut book, **THE COOK YOU WANT TO BE**.

The insightful conversation was enriched by the presence of the fabulous author, **Naz Deravian** (author of **BOTTOM OF THE POT**), who joined Andy to explore how their shared Iranian heritage has profoundly influenced their culinary journeys and creative work in the world of gastronomy.



## PERSIAN GARDENS AND PAVILIONS: REFLECTIONS IN HISTORY, POETRY, AND THE ARTS

Farhang Foundation took great pride in extending a warm welcome to **Dr. Mohammad Gharipour** in yet another captivating episode of Farhang Connect. This episode provided a remarkable platform for the discussion of his significant book: **PERSIAN GARDENS AND PAVILIONS: REFLECTIONS IN HISTORY, POETRY, AND THE ARTS**.

Dr. Gharipour, a distinguished expert in the field, delved deeply into the rich history of Iranian gardens, exploring their designs and the myriad influences they have exerted throughout the ages. Following his enlightening lecture, the conversation was further enriched by the esteemed presence of **Dr. Shazad Ghanbari**, resulting in a thought-provoking dialogue that delved into the intricate world of Persian gardens and their profound impact on culture, history, and the arts.



## BANNING AND BELONGING: IRANIANS OF THE SOUTHERN PERSIAN GULF COAST

On March 4, Farhang Foundation had the distinct pleasure of hosting Professor **Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet** from the **University of Pennsylvania**. The focal point of Professor Kashani-Sabet's presentation was her remarkable book titled **FRONTIER FICTIONS: SHAPING THE IRANIAN NATION, 1804-1946** (Princeton University Press, 1999).

This thought-provoking work delves into the profound significance of land and border disputes in shaping identity and nationhood in Iran and its borderlands. Professor Kashani-Sabet's exploration extends to Iran's shared borders with the Ottoman Empire (later Iraq and Turkey), Central Asia, Afghanistan, and the Persian Gulf region.

At Farhang Foundation, we take great pride in facilitating intellectually stimulating conversations like these, as they play a pivotal role in fostering a deeper understanding of Iranian culture and heritage.





# BANNING AND BELONGING:

## Iranians of the Southern Persian Gulf Coast

A LECTURE BY PROFESSOR  
**FIROOZEH KASHANI-SABET**,  
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Farhang Foundation and **USC Dornsife's Iranian Studies Degree Program** presented the annual **USC Distinguished Lecture Series** by **Professor Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet** (University of Pennsylvania), **BANNING AND BELONGING: IRANIANS OF THE SOUTHERN PERSIAN GULF COAST**. Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet received her BA from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she was a Morehead Scholar. She completed her MA, MPhil, and PhD in history at Yale University. Her book, **FRONTIER FICTIONS: SHAPING THE IRANIAN NATION, 1804–1946** (Princeton University Press, 1999), analyzes the significance of land and border disputes to the process of identity and nation formation, as well as to cultural production, in Iran and its borderlands. It pays specific attention to Iran's shared boundaries with the Ottoman Empire (later Iraq and Turkey), Central Asia, Afghanistan, and the Persian Gulf region. Her book was translated into Persian by Kitabsara Press, Tehran, and released in paperback by Princeton in 2011.



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



# IRANIAN MINT

A CONTEMPORARY ART + NFT EXHIBITION

Farhang Foundation, **ADVOCARTSY**, and the emerging cutting-edge NFT marketplace **MetaMural** hosted **IRANIAN MINT**, an exclusive NFT exhibition and networking event, bridging the gap between the physical fine art realm and the NFT space.

IRANIAN MINT addressed themes of heritage, fairy tale, identity, and memory within a curation of works by artists of Iranian origin, **Pouya Afshar**, **Kourosh Beigpour**, **Ali Dadgar**, **Siavash Jaraiedi**, **Mobina Nouri**, **Hadi Salehi**, **Shadi Yousefian**, **Xāmuš**, and NFT veteran **Z-Hovak**. The interactive and unique experience showcased physical works in addition to debut mints to present a fluid connection between NFTs and the artists' traditional practice.

ADVOCARTSY    MM METAMURAL    Cultural Partner  
FARHANG FOUNDATION





## The Rolling Pumpkin

Farhang Foundation presented the debut episode of **Farhang Stories**, a series of virtual storytelling programs dedicated to our younger audience. The debut episode featured the old Iranian tale of the **ROLLING PUMPKIN** "Kadoo Ghel Ghele Zan" as told by the fantastic mother-daughter team of **Negar Estakhr** and **Nargol Rashidian** and officially premiered August 9, 2022.



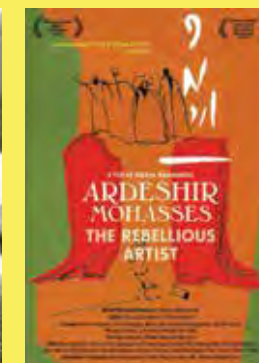
# B O D Y P O L I T I C S

Celebrating Ardeshtir Mohassess's legacy in art and politics

Farhang Foundation, the **Ardeshtir Mohassess Trust**, and **Loyola University New Orleans** presented **BODY POLITICS—Celebrating Ardeshtir Mohassess's Legacy in Art and Politics** at SPILLMAN | BLACKWELL Fine Art in New Orleans.

During this exhibition, visitors stepped into the world of **Ardeshtir Mohassess**, one of Iran's greatest political satirists, and enjoyed his collection of drawings, created between 1985 and 1999. Exhibition curator **Sara Madandar** showcased Mohassess's profound artistic legacy and explored his impact on the realms of art and politics. Through his masterful drawings, he continues to speak volumes, even beyond his passing in 2008.

In collaboration with Loyola University New Orleans, various talks and virtual programs were presented as part of the exhibition that further delved into the rich tapestry of Mohassess's art and life.





# KAMYAR at

On August 20, 2022, Farhang Foundation was honored to once again collaborate with our esteemed partners at Grand Performances in bringing a mesmerizing night of Iranian music to Los Angeles as part of the city's cherished annual free summer concert series in Downtown Los Angeles.

This year's headlining performer was none other than the remarkable artist and musician, KAMYAR. It was a concert event presented by Farhang Foundation, and it carried a special significance as it marked the return of the series after a two-year hiatus imposed by the pandemic. The best part? As always it was a 100% free event, open to all.

Farhang Foundation extends its heartfelt appreciation to Grand Performances for their unwavering dedication to featuring Iranian music as an integral part of their annual concert series. Their commitment to showcasing diverse musical traditions enriches the cultural fabric of our community.

GRAND  
PERFORMANCES







## TALA MADANI: BISCUITS

The **Museum of Contemporary Art**, MOCA, proudly presented the first-ever North American survey of the exceptional artist **TALA MADANI** in an exhibition aptly titled **TALA MADANI: BISCUITS**. This compelling showcase made its debut on September 10, 2022, and marked the first public exhibition by the museum since the 2020 pandemic lockdown. The exhibition captivated art enthusiasts until February 19, 2023, at the Geffen Contemporary at MOCA in Los Angeles.

On the opening day, September 10, Tala Madani herself graced the occasion, engaging in an enlightening in-person conversation about her body of work alongside guest curator Ali Subotnick and MOCA associate curator Rebecca Lowery. The dialogue provided a unique insight into her artistic vision and creative journey.

Later, on December 8, Tala Madani returned for another engaging in-person talk, this time in the company of the celebrated author of *LAPVONA* and *MY YEAR OF REST AND RELAXATION*, **Otessa Moshfegh**. The discussion ranged from pushing artistic boundaries and dark comedy to abject subject matter and the intricacies of the creative process.

As a testament to the success of this exhibition, it concluded its remarkable run on February 19, 2023, leaving a lasting impression on all who had the privilege of experiencing **TALA MADANI: BISCUITS**.





## Iranian Films at the 2022 NEWPORT BEACH FILM FESTIVAL

Farhang Foundation was honored to forge a new partnership with the **Newport Beach Film Festival** for their 2022 edition, where we had the privilege of presenting all the Iranian films featured in the festival's lineup.

**ALAFZAR**, directed by **Kazem Daneshi**, had its highly anticipated premiere on October 15, 2022. This captivating cinematic experience marked a significant moment in the festival's program. Additionally, on October 17, festivalgoers had the exclusive opportunity to witness the premiere of **TEHRANTO**, a compelling romantic comedy by **Faran Moradi**. Following the screening, the audience engaged in a thought-provoking Q&A session with the director, gaining deeper insights into the creative process.

The festival's final screening, held on October 18, featured the award-winning masterpiece **HOLY SPIDER** by **Ali Abbasi**, starring **Zar Amir-Ebrahimi**, **Mehdi Bajestani**, and **Arash Ashtiani**. This film left an indelible mark on audiences, capping off an outstanding showcase of Iranian cinema at the Newport Beach Film Festival.



## HOLY SPIDER

### Theatrical Preview Screening in Los Angeles

Following the triumphant premiere of **HOLY SPIDER** at the Newport Beach Film Festival, Farhang Foundation had the distinct honor of co-presenting special preview screenings of this acclaimed film as part of its highly anticipated Los Angeles theatrical debut. The screenings commenced at the Laemmle Town Center 5 in Encino and the Laemmle Royal in Los Angeles. Both screenings offered an exclusive opportunity for audiences to engage in a meaningful Q&A session with the director, **Ali Abbasi**, and the talented actress **Zar Amir-Ebrahimi** (winner of Best Actress at the Cannes Film Festival), who were both present in person to share their insights and experiences.

The success of these screenings paved the way for the film's theatrical campaign, which expanded across the United States and Canada, encompassing cities such as New York, Atlanta, Austin, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Edmonton, Glendale, Hamilton, Kingston, Miami, Montreal, Nashville, Pittsburgh, Portland, Quebec, San Antonio, San Diego, San Francisco, San Rafael, Santa Ana, Seattle, Sudbury, Toronto, Vancouver, and Washington, D.C., running from November 4, 2022, through January 27, 2023.

This award-winning cinematic masterpiece is grounded in the true story of a journalist's descent into the dark underbelly of the Iranian holy city of Mashhad. As she investigates the serial killings of sex workers by the so-called "Spider Killer," who believes he is purging the streets of sinners, the film captivates audiences with its gripping narrative and powerful storytelling.







# THE VOICE OF DUST & ASH

sing truth to power

A Film By Mandana Biscotti



## World Premiere Screening

Farhang Foundation was proud to present **THE VOICE OF DUST & ASH** by **Mandana Biscotti** from November 18 through November 24, 2023, in Los Angeles.

The film features the original song "DUST & ASH" – with music and lyrics by J. Ralph, and performed by Norah Jones and J. Ralph, featuring Mojgan Shajarian, the film subject's daughter.



# NO BEARS

A film  
by Jafar  
Panahi

film screening at **AFI FEST**



Farhang Foundation took immense pride in continuing its long-standing partnership with the esteemed **American Film Institute** for the eighth consecutive year, facilitating the presentation of all Iranian films featured at the **2022 AFI FEST**.

On November 3, 2022, a multitude of cinephiles and enthusiasts gathered to witness the highly anticipated Los Angeles premiere of the critically acclaimed film **NO BEARS** by the renowned filmmaker **Jafar Panahi**. The screening took place at the iconic TCL Chinese Theatre in the heart of Hollywood, adding to the film's prestige. It is worth noting that **NO BEARS** had previously garnered the special **Jury Prize** at the **Venice Film Festival**, a testament to its exceptional quality and impact.

It was with heavy hearts that we remembered Mr. Panahi during the screening, as he was unable to join us in person. He was notably incarcerated in Evin Prison for his involvement in the production of this and other films, despite being prohibited by the Iranian government from creating any works of art as part of his ongoing sentence. His dedication to his craft and the immense sacrifices he made to tell important stories continue to inspire and resonate with audiences worldwide.

After the successful AFI FEST premiere, Farhang Foundation proudly collaborated with **Janus Films** and **SIDESHOW** in presenting the **Los Angeles** and **New York** theatrical premiere and full run of the film as part of its 2022 Academy Awards qualification campaign.



JANUS FILMS

SIDESHOW



# Lectures on Iranian Modern and Contemporary Art

UC SANTA BARBARA

IRANIAN STUDIES INITIATIVE



Persian Heritage Foundation



This captivating series was co-organized in collaboration with the Graduate Center for Literary Research at the University of California, Santa Barbara, in partnership with the American Institute of Iranian Studies, the Persian Heritage Foundation and California Humanities, with generous support from the Gramian-Emrani Foundation. Lectures can be viewed on [Farhang.org/UCSB](http://Farhang.org/UCSB)

## 2021–22 Series

This year's series centered on the theme of **Iranian Art And Literary Exchange Between Iran, Transcaucasia, Central Asia, and Russia in the Twentieth Century.**



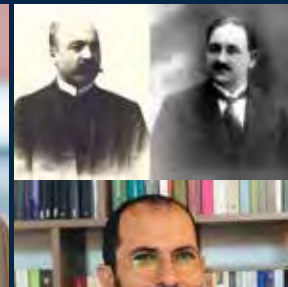
**Newspaper Poetry and Representative Politics in the Revolutions of 1905–1911** by Dr. Sam Hodgkin from Yale University



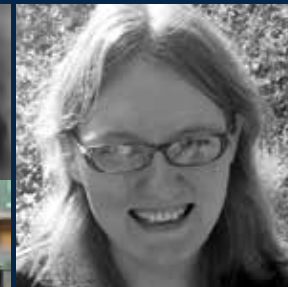
**Molla Nasreddin of Tiflis and the Diasporic Milieu That Gave Birth To It** presented by Dr. Janet Afary, hailing from UC Santa Barbara



**Constitutionalists Sans Frontières** by the esteemed scholar Dr. Touraj Atabaki, affiliated with Leiden University



**The Role of Critical Literature in Reflecting the Sociopolitical Issues of the Qajar and the Caucasus** explored by Dr. Teoman Aktan from Columbia University



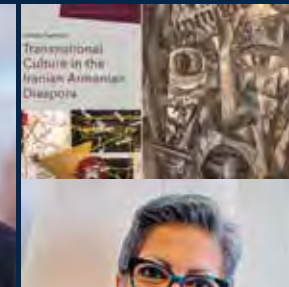
**Canon Making and Canon Breaking in the Caucasus** as examined by Dr. Rebecca Ruth Gould from University of Birmingham

## 2022–23 Series

This year's enlightening series was aptly titled **Persian Literature As World Literature.**



**The Iranian Realism of Ahmad Mahmoud** by Dr. Amir Ahmadi Arian from City University of New York



**Iranian Armenian Ancestral Flexibility, Adaptability, And Continuity, Adaptability, And Continuity** by Dr. Claudia Yachoubi from University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill



**For The Seas and The Lands Are Vast, And The People Numerous!** by Dr. Fatemeh Keshavarz from University of Maryland



**From Us Or Them To Us And Them: Bahiyyih Nakhjavani At The Threshold,** by Dr. Farzaneh Milani from University of Virginia in Charlottesville



# 10th Annual CELEBRATION OF SHAB-E YALDA Virtual Presentation

In respect for the 2022 **WOMAN, LIFE, FREEDOM** movement, Farhang Foundation made the thoughtful decision to cancel its traditional annual **Celebration of Shab-e Yalda** in person. Instead, as a meaningful tribute to Shab-e Yalda, we embarked on a collaborative presentation with the brilliant epic storyteller **GORDAFARID**.

Together, we presented the timeless **Shahnameh** story of **THE END OF ZAHHAK** in a virtual, live production that reached our thousands across the globe on December 21, 2022. This poignant and timely storytelling allowed us to honor the spirit of Shab-e Yalda while acknowledging the importance of the **WOMAN, LIFE, FREEDOM** movement.





# AMIR H. FALLAH: THE FALLACY OF BORDERS

at the Fowler Museum of UCLA

Farhang Foundation joined forces with the **Fowler Museum** at UCLA to present the first solo museum exhibition in Los Angeles by Iranian American artist Amir H. Fallah, titled **THE FALLACY OF BORDERS**. This exhibition marked a homecoming for Fallah, who earned his MFA from UCLA. Showcasing over 25 works, including large-scale paintings, sculptures, stained glass, and *Beautiful/Decay* magazine ephemera, "The Fallacy of Borders" explored themes central to Fallah's artistic practice, such as cultural inheritance, identity formation, diaspora, and homeland. The exhibition aimed to challenge and transcend the boundaries and borders that separate people, cultures, geographies, and art practices. Additionally, Fallah presented several new works as part of the exhibition.

Curated by **Amy Landau**, the Director of Education and Interpretation at the Fowler Museum, **THE FALLACY OF BORDERS** was on display from January 29 to May 14, 2023. Throughout the exhibition, various talks and walk-throughs were organized to enrich the visitor experience. One notable event was **SHARE THE MIC: AMIR H. FALLAH'S "CHANT,"** held on February 13 at the Fowler Museum. This conversation featured artist **Amir H. Fallah** and **matt dilling** from **Life Brite Neon Studio**, a renowned collective specializing in neon art, moderated by cultural historian **Shiva Balaghi**. The event was cosponsored by the UCLA Center for Near Eastern Studies.

On March 11, 2023, the Fowler Museum collaborated with city partners for **FOWLER IN THE CITY: AMIR H. FALLAH'S WAR ON WARS** at the **Shulamit Nazarian Gallery**. This off-site event included special conversations, screenings, and workshops, with a focus on Fallah's "War on Wars" series.

**Fowler**  
MUSEUM AT UCLA

Another edition of "Fowler in the City" took place on April 29, 2023, featuring a conversation with **Foroozan Shirghani** at **ADVOCARTSY**. This engaging discussion brought together Iranian American artist **Foroozan Shirghani** and **Amy Landau**, the Director of Education and Interpretation at the Fowler Museum. The event was open to the public free of charge, offering an opportunity for many to enjoy and participate in the conversation.



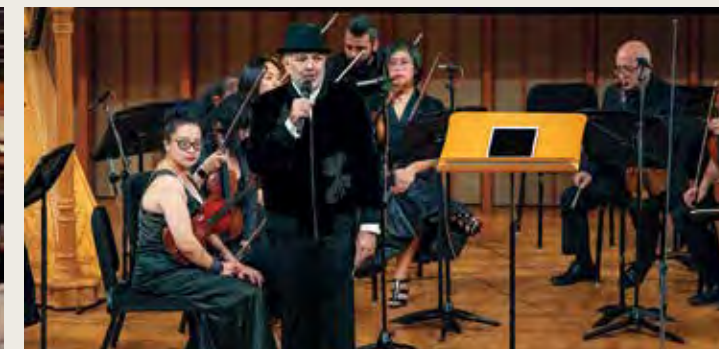


# SONGS OF LOVE AND LOSS FOR IRAN

Inaugural Concert by  
**IRANSHAHR ORCHESTRA**

Shahab Paranj • Sohrab Pournazeri • Hila Plitmann

On February 11, 2023, Farhang Foundation had the pleasure of presenting the inaugural concert of **IRANSHAHR ORCHESTRA** with musical director **Dr. Shahab Paranj** and featuring virtuoso **Sohrab Pournazeri** and soprano **Hila Plitmann** at the Colburn School of Music's Zipper Hall. **SONGS OF LOVE AND LOSS FOR IRAN** was dedicated to Iran and all Iranians searching for freedom. We were grateful to the sold-out audience who attended this event, including our esteemed guests and featured composers, **Richard Danielpour**, **Ahmad Pejman**, and **Reza Vali**.





# 2023 NOWRUZ STREET BANNERS

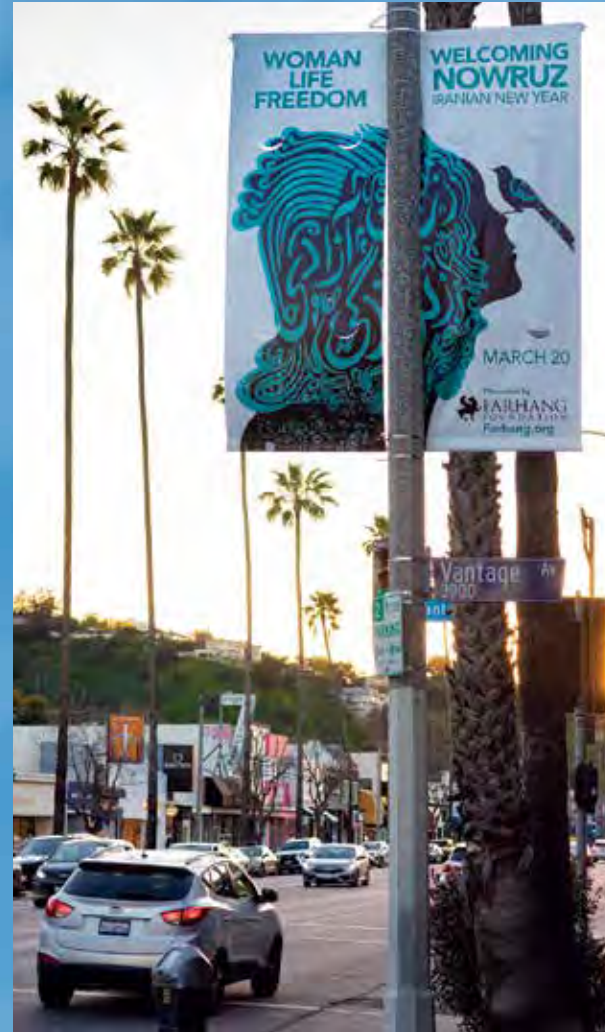
Farhang Foundation's annual Nowruz Banner Competition began in 2011, and It has become a tradition that preludes Farhang's signature event. The winning design is installed on over six hundred street poles throughout the major streets of Los Angeles throughout the months of February and March.

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. Starting on February 1, and leading to Farhang's annual Nowruz celebration, the winning design is featured on hundreds of large street banners throughout the streets of Los Angeles announcing the arrival of spring and the largest celebration of Nowruz in the world!



This year's winning design was awarded to artist Rashin Kheiriyeh, based in Washington, D.C. Rashin made Farhang history by becoming the first artist whose designs were selected for two separate Nowruz campaigns, the first being in 2017. This year's design is based on Rashin's winning public mural, which Farhang Foundation had the privilege of installing on Pico Boulevard in Santa Monica in 2021.

*"I created my design with a woman's silhouetted head in profile and a bird sitting on her nose as a symbol of hope and freedom for Iranian women. After Mahsa Amini's death, I added the slogan **WOMAN, LIFE, FREEDOM** in Persian calligraphy designed into the figure's hair and dedicated the design to Mahsa's revolution," said Rashin. "I am especially proud to have Farhang Foundation once again select my design for this year's Nowruz campaign, and I am grateful that my design and message may have a small hand in amplifying the voice of Iranians throughout Southern California."*



# NOWRUZ HAFT-SÎN DISPLAYS IN LOS ANGELES

Farhang Foundation carried forward its recently adopted tradition of setting up a magnificent **Grand Haft-Sîn** at the center of the **Westfield Century City Shopping Center**. This stunning display remained showcased from Nowruz day until Sizdeh-bedar, inviting visitors to immerse themselves in the festive atmosphere. Building on the success of this initiative, the Foundation extended the celebration to **The Beverly Center**, another highly acclaimed shopping destination in Los Angeles. By sharing the ancient tradition of Haft-Sîn, Farhang Foundation warmly welcomed visitors to embrace the spirit of Nowruz and partake in this age-old cultural practice. We are truly grateful to both Westfield Century City and the Beverly Center for their commitment in celebrating and acknowledging the ancient Iranian Nowruz festival.





# THE 2023 CELEBRATION OF NOWRUZ

PRESENTED VIRTUALLY



In 2023, Farhang Foundation made the difficult decision not to host our traditional Nowruz celebrations at UCLA. This choice was driven by the prevailing situation in Iran and in respect for the WOMAN, LIFE, FREEDOM movement. In lieu of our traditional celebrations, we curated a series of virtual programs consisting of four distinct episodes that unfolded throughout the Nowruz season.

The series commenced with **NOWRUZ E IRAN** and **NOWRUZ E JAMSHID**, both thoughtfully crafted by our longtime collaborator, **Gordafarid**. These programs served as poignant reminders of the cultural significance of Nowruz.



*Farhang Foundation remains committed to celebrating Iranian culture and heritage, and we are grateful for the support of our community throughout this meaningful season.*



## BAZR

Following these episodes, we treated our audience to a captivating live dance and music performance titled **BAZR**, presented by the **Melieka Fathi Dance Company** and featuring the extraordinary talents of Iranian rap stars **ERFAN** and DJ and music producer **DANNY ASADI**.



## THE FALL AND RISE OF ZAHHĀK

As the season drew to a close, we concluded our virtual series with an animated rendition of the **Shahnameh** story, **THE FALL AND RISE OF ZAHHAK**. This creative masterpiece was brought to life by the talented team of **Pouya Afshar**, **Kourosh Beigipour**, and **Omid Arabian**.







# NOWRUZ CONCERT

## UNITY FOR FREEDOM

PACIFIC SYMPHONY



Farhang Foundation was once again elated to continue our long-running partnership with the prestigious Pacific Symphony Orchestra of Orange County in presenting **THE NOWRUZ CONCERT: UNITY FOR FREEDOM**, performed by the Pacific Symphony Orchestra under the exceptional direction of Music Director **Maestro Carl St.Clair**. This extraordinary event featured Grammy-nominated soloist **KAYHAN KALHOR**, along with the exceptional vocal talents of world-renowned artists **AZAM ALI** and **SUSSAN DEYHIM**. Adding to the grandeur of the occasion, prima ballerina **TARA GHASSEMIEH** graced the stage, and special guest conductor **SHAHRDAD ROHANI** enriched the musical experience. This unforgettable performance took place on March 26, 2023, at the majestic **Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall** in Costa Mesa and was attended by a maximum-capacity audience.





# THE WHITE FEATHER

AN IRANIAN BALLET TALE پرسفید

Farhang Foundation served as the cultural partner in presenting the world stage premiere of **THE WHITE FEATHER: AN IRANIAN BALLET TALE**, a production by **INTUITV ARTSHIP** and **Sanaz K. Soltani** on March 22, 2023, at the **Barclay Theatre** in Irvine, California.

The audience was treated to an unforgettable evening, where they immersed themselves in the untold story of an ancient nation through the purest form of art. The performance paid homage to the rich history of art and expression in Iran, as brought to life by the **Iranian National Ballet**. The principal dancers, **TARA GHASSEMIEH** and **VITOR LUIZ**, graced the stage with their exceptional talent, accompanied by the mesmerizing original music composed by Maestro **SHAHRDAD ROHANI**.

The ballet **THE WHITE FEATHER** carries profound significance. In 1979, Iranian ballet dancers saw their art unjustly taken from them, and their final bows were never taken. Yet, the fight for the freedom of expression has persisted unwaveringly.

This Iranian ballet tale serves as a poignant narrative that follows the inner child in all of us, a universal longing to express ourselves freely. Through the lens of a child's perspective, the performance pays tribute to Iranian culture and ballet, offering a journey that traces Iran's evolution from its ancient roots to the present day. It is a testament to the enduring power of art and the human spirit.



## 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 program across fourteen schools throughout Southern California.





# Help Share Iranian Culture

Become A Member Today!

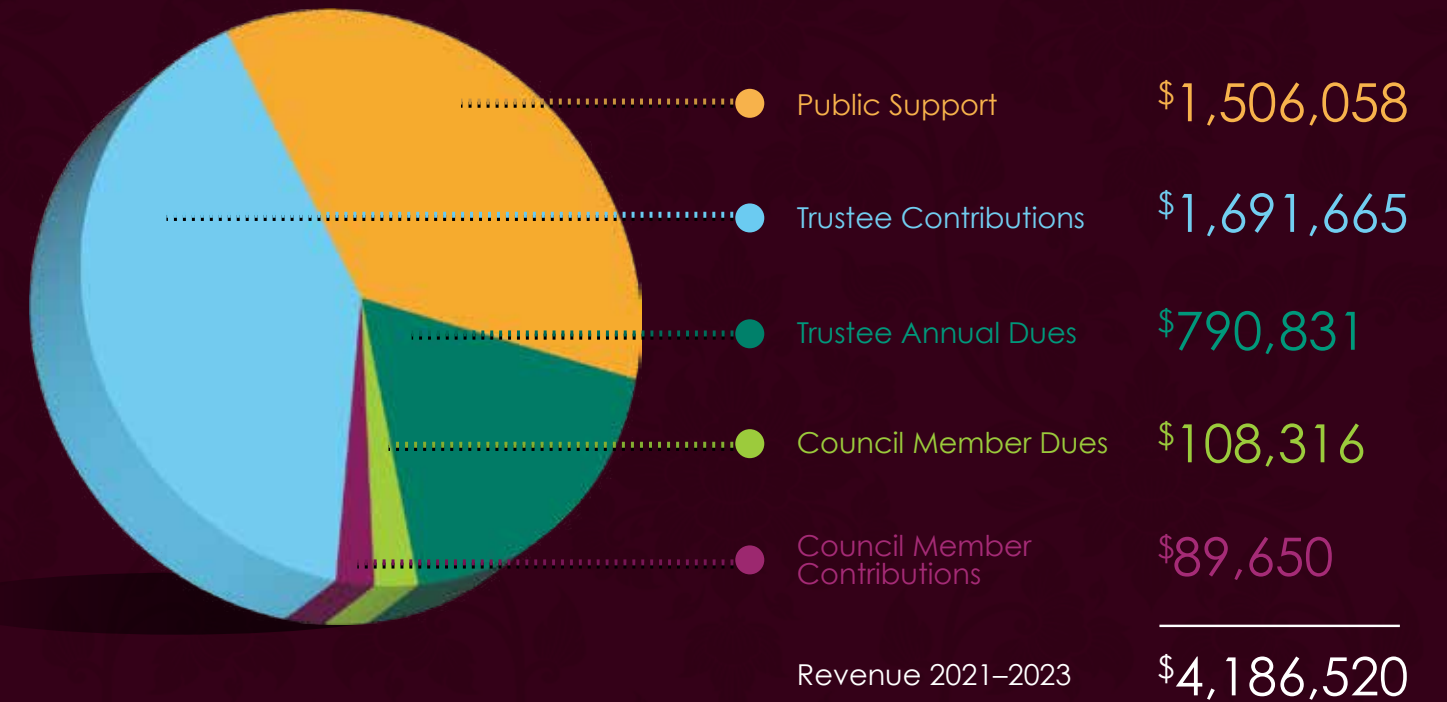
Join member-supported Farhang Foundation in this mission. Today, during uncertain times, Farhang and the artists and cultural projects we support need your backing more than ever.

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

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



## Farhang Sources of Funds 2021–2023



Please consider supporting us with a tax-deductible donation at:

**[Farhang.org/Donate](https://farhang.org/donate)**

*After all, it is our farhang...*

Contributions received within Farhang's fiscal years of April 1, 2021, to March 31, 2023.



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FARHANG  
FOUNDATION

P.O. Box 491571  
Los Angeles, CA 90049

(310) 666-1546

[info@farhang.org](mailto:info@farhang.org)

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