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Tirgan 2017

July 27 -30

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TIRGAN DONORS

We wish to extend our deepest gratitude to our generous donors. Your support allows us to reunite and celebrate Iranian Arts & culture. Thank you for your generous donations.

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JAN 10 2017

TIRGAN FRIENDS

We are inviting our circle of supporters to join us in this new chapter by becoming a Tirgan Friend and contributing through online payments of minimum \$10.00 a month. This joint effort will show off the number of Tirgan Friends and prove once more that arts and culture bring us together and make us stronger. Thank you for joining Tirgan Friends Campaign.

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Financial Report



Project Overview

Tirgan 2017 showcased Iranian art and culture through a four-day festival in Toronto – a city that rightfully prides itself in welcoming diversity. In our festival we made a deliberate effort to include contributions from various ethnic groups in Iran in as many artistic and cultural disciplines as possible, showcasing internationally acclaimed as well as local artists and performers, who celebrate Iranian heritage through music, dance, theatre, cinema, literature, history, and visual arts. Tirgan also featured Iranian cuisine and special arts and crafts presentations made available by vendor kiosks. This combination turned the festival into an engaging, educating, and entertaining experience for a wide range of audiences.

2017 was a pivotal year for our organization. In 2017 we managed to double the size and scope of the Tirgan Festival by expanding programming to the Toronto Distillery District which served as the second venue for Tirgan programming. This expansion included installation of a mobile stage for music performances, as well as, building a full set of décor/installations for our outdoor market and traditional tea house. This expansion also facilitated the expansion of our visual arts programming by allowing us to leverage a number of galleries present in the district as exhibition space.

Finally, we partnered with the Iranian American Women Foundation to host the First Iranian-Canadian Women's Leadership Conference at the Agha Khan Museum. This event was held at the same weekend as the Tirgan Festival and included a number of luminaries from the Iranian diaspora from Canada and the United States who participated in the conference and the festival.

We were pleased to have had the opportunity to share our rich heritage with the young Iranian generation, and all Iranian and non-Iranian visitors from various countries around the world who participated in Tirgan 2017. For our 2017 edition of the Tirgan Festival, we engaged a large number of artists (Over 200 individuals in total) presented a diverse array of programming in the following disciplines:

- **Music** – In order to appeal to a wide range of audiences, Tirgan always showcases performances ranging in various styles of Iranian music including traditional and folkloric to jazz, rock, fusion and electronic. Artists in the category included: Lily Afshar, Hamed Afshari, Amin Afshinmanesh, Bahram Aghakhan, Nima Ahmadi, Sara Ahmadi, Padideh Ahrarnejad, Golrokh Aminian, Mehran Aminian, Shahou Andalibi, Daniel Asadi, Ava Ayoubi, Kourosh Babai, Oriana Barbato, Sina Bathaie, Arash Behzadi, Mahsa Bigdeloo, Peter Bull, Shahrzad Dastoornejad, Golmehr Davanloo, Fariba Davody, Majid Derakhshani, Morgan Doctor, Tom Frelek, Golnar Ghazvinian, Ramiz Guliyev, Pejman Hadadi, Maziar Heidari, Lisbeth Helgesen, Habib Hoseini, Ilia Hosseini, Parastoo Hosseini, Maneli Jamal, Shahriyar Jamshidi, Y Josephine, Ali Kamali, Mohammad Kamali, Saeed Kamjoo, Kianoush Khalilian, Pedram Khavarzamani, Pooria Khorshidi, Anwar Khurshid, Alinima Madani, Reza Manbachi, Rana Mansour, Arman Masoumi, Ali Massoudi, JuanCarlos Medrano, Peyman Mesr, Arif Mirbaghi, Rostam Mirlashari, Mehrab Moghadasian, Reza Moghaddas, Sardar Mohammadjani, Sina Momtahan, Sanaz Nakhjavani, Ali Nematollahi, Pouya Nikpour, Amir Nojan, Mostafa, Nosraty, Alexei Orechin, Nicholas Otway, Pooria Pournazeri, Arzhang Rafii, Alyssa Ramsay, AmirAli Razaghi, Matias Recharte, Mehdi Rezania, Siavash Sadr Mahdavi, Araz Salek, Susan Salek, Zohreh Shahbazi, Saman Shahi, Mojgan Shajarian, Saeid Shanbehzadeh, Naghib Shanbehzadeh, Beth Silver, Heather Sita Black, Arash Sobhani, Selcuk Suna, Ziya Tabassian, Mohammad Talani, Arya Taleghani, AquaNibii Waawaaskone, Graeme Wallace, Raphael Weinroth-Browne, Zaynab Wilson, and Samaneh Zaferani.
- **Dance** – Emphasizing on internationally acclaimed artists, our programming included dance styles from ballet to folklore. Programming in this category included performances from Mojtaba Mirtahmasb, Farzad Attarjafari, Makeda Benitez, Farima Berenji, Raqib Brian Burke, Hosna Dabaghi, Soheila Dashti, Sabri Gholami, Karine Gonzalez, Mira Hunter, Arvin Javadpour, Maryam Mahmoodi, Victoria Mata, Shahrokh Moshkin Ghalam, Melissa Noventa, Lisa Odjig, Tara Shojaei, and Omid Zaroorian.
- **Theatre** – We presented our audience with a theatrical performance in both traditional storytelling and contemporary musical drama styles. Programs in this category included: “*Arash*”

an adaptation of an ancient Persian epic of Arash the Archer written by prominent Iranian playwright and film Director Bahram Beyzaie and directed by well-known Canadian director Soheil Parsa, as well as “*Mimi’s Suitcase: A Multilingual Comedy Drama*” a play by Ana Bayat which based on a true story of a displaced teenager who returns to her native Iran from her adopted Spain in the midst of the 1980s Iran-Iraq war. (There was a play for kids called *Validad the Grass Cutter*)

- **Film** – In the film category, hosted a presentation and panel discussion on a number of notable films, including: “*Valderama*” by Abbas Amini which tell the story of the challenges of a 15 year old trying to gain his identity, “*Six Centuries, Six Years*” a documentary by Mojtaba Mirtahmasb about endeavours of a group of Iranian master musicians who are trying to locate, restore and record a repertoire of compositions attributed to an historic composer, “*Hey, Humans*” a documentary by Rakhshan Banietemad about the efforts of a team of volunteer Iranian and French medical doctors who treat underprivileged child patients from all over Iran, “*Being Born*” a drama by Mohsen Abdolvahab about the challenges of an unplanned pregnancy, “*Razor’s Edge*” a documentary by Bahman Maghsoudlou about the legacy of Iranian actresses, and “*Under the Shadow*” a thriller by UK based director Babak Anvari set against the backdrop of the Iran-Iraq war.

In addition to recent films, we screened and held discussions on two classic Iranian films: “*Hassan Kachal*” by Ali Hatami (1970) and “*Raghbbar*” by Bahram Beyzaie (1971).

- **Visual Arts** – In the visual arts category we organized a number exhibitions, including “*Benevolence*” a group exhibition composed of the top 25 photos of the Tirgan 2017 Photo Contest, co-organized by CaféLitt and Tirgan teams (An Iranian arts community based in Montreal), “*The Elegance of Persia*” an exhibition of 5000 years in Iranian fashion by Farin Norouzi, and “*The Freedom Sculpture*” a large poster (approximately 3.5 m x 3.5 m) of the Freedom Sculpture intention to raise awareness about the art piece and the message it carries, “*Pomegranate Installation*” by Keyvan Fehri an exquisite outdoor exhibition of 600-700 real size ceramic pomegranates with calligraphy. In addition, we presented individual presentations of two notable artists: Masoud Keshmiri whose paintings illustrate his concern and interest in the human body and the expression of individuals’ internal and external characteristics, and works by Mahmoud Zenderoudi including 8 limited edition lithographs depicting Haft Peykar poems as well as four distinctly unique original pieces inspired by Persian calligraphy.
- **Literature & History** – Poetry and literature are prominent aspects of the Iranian culture, and as part of programming we presented works of poetry by Bahar Almasi, Bahram Bahrami, Roya Ebrahimi, Pegah Karimi, Amir Mahim, Sanaz Mosadegh, Dona Robati, Anna Sarchami, Hila Sedighi, Ida Shamlu, and Sareh Sokoot.

In addition, our 2017 programming included panel discussions and presentations on a diverse set of subjects, including: how cultures influence and change one another, Iranian revolution and the fall of shah, without borders: voices and visions of the Iranian Diaspora, Sa’di on love and morals, the power of story and diaspora writing, the works of Sadegh Hedayat and civil benevolence and equal rights for citizens.

In addition the programming schedule around our core disciplines, the Tirgan Festival included other activities aimed at engaging and entertaining the audience:

- **Children Activities** – In addition to being able to view our core programming, children enjoyed a variety of fun activities such as face painting, drawing, as well as music and other workshops.
- **Magazine** – Similar to prior years, we published the 2015 edition of the Tirgan Magazine which acted as a source of both information and entertainment. Our magazine intertwined festival events with thought-provoking articles.

- **Taste of Iran** –Taste of Iran was another attraction during the festival that featured a wide range of cuisine consisting of food and drinks from various regions in Iran offered by some of the best Iranian and afghan restaurants in Toronto
- **Iranian Tea House** – To inject a more authentic atmosphere to the festival, we included two traditional Iranian teahouses in the Harbourfront Centre and one in the Distillery District
- **Market & Crafts** – The festival attractions were rounded out by 24 booths in the market section (12 at Harbourfront and 12 at the Distillery District). Vendors in these booths presented arts and crafts, jewellery, hand-made carpets, books of English and Persian literature, sweets, dried fruits and nuts, spices, and Iranian musical instruments.

In conclusion, the Tirgan Festival aimed to present its audience with a diverse set of artistic expressions and an all-encompassing experience, and we achieved our goal by providing our audience with a well balanced mix of different art forms, complimented by other attractions placed around the festival venue.

Organizers & Key Staff

The Tirgan 2017 Festival was a joint collaboration between the Iranian Canadian Centre for Arts & Culture (ICCAC) and the Harbourfront Centre. ICCAC's festival organizing committee was structured around a number of departments encompassing various aspects of the effort (e.g. programming, marketing, operations, and public Relations) and headed by the following key volunteer staff members:

- Mr. Mehrdad Ariannejad, President & CEO
- Mr. Nima Ahmadi, Vice President
- Mrs. Maryam Eskandari, Programing Director
- Mr. Houshang Shans, Marketing and Sponsorship Director
- Mr. Behzad Farzipour, Operations Director
- Mrs. Donya Azizi, Public Relations Director

In addition to the key staff mentioned above, Ms. Parisa Khosravi, an Iranian-American author and journalist was involved in the capacity of honorary chair of the Tirgan Festival.

Artists

Due to the large roster of artists we have not included the artists' names and bios in the main body of the report. Please refer to appendix B for the full list of artists who performed in the 2017 Tirgan Festival

Competitions

In addition to regular artistic programming, our festival included both a short story and a photo competition. The tables below outline the names of the judges and winners of these competitions.

Photo Competition

Judges	Winners
Edwin Janzen	1st place: Mohsen Kaboli
Sarah Seené	2nd place: Hamed Azizikhangah
Naser Mohammadi	3rd place: Amir Mahdi Najafloo Shahpar
Mostafa Ahmadi	4th place: Neda Siami
Hamed Tabein	5th place: Es'hagh Aghaei
Afarin Rahmanifar	

Short Story Competition

Judges	Winners
Hossein Mortezaeian Abkenar	Fazeleh Farahani (1st place)
Hamed Esmailion	Marjan Fooladvand (2nd place)
Farshid SadatSharifi	Neda Kavooosifar (3rd place)
Khosrow Davami	Amir Noroozkhani (3rd place)
Baroj Akrayi	
Safdar Taghizadeh	

Community Outreach

Community involvement and outreach was one of the key enablers of our success. In our community outreach we contacted and affiliated ourselves with a large number of community groups in the Iranian-Canadian community who actively assisted us in getting the word out regarding the festival and attracting volunteers and talent to the organization. In 2017 we had over 60 organizations which we worked with to raise the festival's profile. Our list of affiliates included the following groups:

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Iranian Students' Association of Ryerson University
Iranian Association at the University of Toronto
Iranian Student Association at York University
McMaster Iranian Students' Association
Iranian Students Association of Waterloo
Columbia Iranian Students Association
Persian Students in Stockholm
Iranian Student Association University of Ottawa
Fanni Alumni Association of Ontario
Iranian Student Association – North Carolina State University
Lakehead Iranian Student Association
Iranian Association of Laval University
Persian Gulf Club
Iranian Association at OCAD
Iranian Graduate Students' Association
Sharif University of Technology Association

FOUNDATIONS

Parya Trillium Foundation
Farhang Foundation
Mehrgan Foundation
NY Persian Parade Inc.
Iranian-American Women Foundation
May Be Me
Tabestoon Festival
Edinburgh Iranian Festival
Noor Iranian Film Festival
Iran Namag
Iranian Film Festival – San Francisco
Child Foundation
Persian Arts Festival
Toronto Ukrainian Festival
Agha Khan Foundation

ARTISTIC GROUPS

Arya Entertainment Inc.
American Foundation for Contemporary Iranian Art
Baarbad Music

Small World Music
Link Music Lab
Butterfly Buzz
Queen Gallery
Diaspora Arts Connection
Kajart
Eyené Photography
McMaster Iranian Dance Association
Alangoo

COMMUNITY & PROFESSIONAL GROUPS

Behnam Foundation of Ontario
Café Litt
COHAN
Farvardin Cultural Centre
Iranian Alliance Across Borders
Iranian Canadian Congress
Iranian Canadian Real Estate Professionals
Iranian Women's Organization of Ontario
Iraniane Toronto
Magic of Persia
Persian Cultural Centre -- North Carolina
Persian Cultural Centre -- San Diego
Toronto Iranians
Yaran Group
Tir va Bad
Professional Iranian Canadian Real Estate Association
Iranian American Community Alliance
Karafarin Canada Entrepreneurship Network
American Association of Teachers of Persian
Iranian Women's Organization of Ontario
Yaran Group
Association of Iranian American Professionals
Shabeh Jomeh
Iranian American Society of New York
Persian Arts And Cultural Society of Ottawa
New York Persian Culture Centre
Rahnemood Academy
i2Canada

Audience

Our target audience for the festival consisted of the following 3 groups:

- The Iranian-Canadian community
- The general population in the Greater Toronto Area including the HRabourfront and Distillery District clientele
- Member of the Iranian Diaspora in the United States and Europe

Based on reports and crowd estimates at both the Harbourfront Centre and the Distillery District we succeeded in attracting well over 150,000 visitors to the festival.

Educational Activities

Our educational activities during the festival consisted of two main categories:

- Workshops targeting adults: These workshops covered a wide range of arts including literature, music, film and cooking
- Activities targeting children & youth: these activities consisted of introductory sessions to music, dance, cooking, theatre as well as visual arts (drawing classes).

Non-artist Involvement

The driving force behind the Tirgan Festival was an organization that was staffed by a large pool of volunteers which can be widely segmented into 2 categories:

- The core volunteer group which consisted of about 50 volunteers who were engaged and recruited close to 12 months prior to the festival and helped organize the event.
- Event volunteers who consisted of around 270 individuals (in addition to the core group) who were recruited closer to the festival and helped run the festival venue during the festival weekend.

The majority of the volunteer group were recruited from the Iranian-Canadian community in the GTA. However, our group also included volunteer staff and liaison officers who resided in other cities (both Canada and the US).

Marketing & Public Relations Approach

For our 2017 festival we adopted a multi-channel marketing which relied on a mix of paid and free marketing

- **News outlets:** we have actively engaged major news outlets (including the CBC, Toronto Life Magazine, Now Magazine, the Toronto Star, as well as the local Persian media) and the Persian services of the BBC, Voice of America, and Deutsche Welle. This resulted in the involvement for 40 media outlets, of which, 30 were active media sponsors. Finally, as part of this effort, our public relations team releases 10 press releases in the run-up to, and the duration of, the festival

- **Social networking:** social networking was our second most important channel. Our efforts in this area included:
 - ***Affiliate network: in continuation of our long term strategy*** we actively approached other community groups in the Iranian diaspora to develop an affiliate network which will allow us to reach a larger audience. This resulted in growing our affiliate network from 53 to 66, of which, the, Café Litte and the Iranian Women's Organization of Ontario were active participant festival events.
 - ***Social media outlets:*** similarly, we continued to grow our presence on major social media outlets (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, etc.) to reach a wider audience. These activities included publishing blogs, promotional videos on our YouTube and Facebook pages, and an active Twitter presence during the event.
 - ***Paid Advertising:*** our social media efforts to included paid advertising on key social media sites including Facebook.
- **Online presence:** in addition to social networking, we maintained a healthy online presence through our website (www.tirgan.ca) which is fully retooled for the 2017 festival and heavily promoted through a combination of email lists, word of mouth referrals, and search engine optimization.
- **Mobile presence:** this year our online presence included a mobile application for both Android and Apple, which served as an event guide. Our application is part of a long term strategy to maintain a connection with our audience between the festival cycles.
- **Participation in key diaspora events:** similar to prior cycles, our community outreach team participated in community events to raise awareness of the festival. In the run-up to the 2017 festival, our outreach team participated in a large number of events across the GTA.
- **Newsletters:** our public relations team maintained an email list of approximately 10,000 interested individuals and published 6 newsletters to this list. In a number of cases, these newsletters were subsequently redistributed by a number of our affiliate organizations

Programming Report:

Artists	Number of Artists	231
New Works	Number of new works created by professional Artists:	10

Locations	Harbourfront Centre , Distillery District , Aga Khan Museum
Foreign Artists	64
Local Artists	167

Type of Activity	Number of Events/activities	Number of child/Youth Participants	Number of Adult Participants	Number of Audience Members
<i>Public Activity</i> (e.g.performances, exhibitions, Screenings)	97	N/A	160,365	183,315
<i>Community Arts</i>	12	N/A	N/A	11,700
<i>Arts Education</i>	25	1400	1250	N/A

DEFINITIONS:

By ***public activity*** we mean ***professional*** artists' performances (including literary readings), exhibitions, film /media screenings and other public activity, Put professional performances for children and/or youth in arts education.

By ***arts education activity***, we mean activities (such as artists'talks, Q&As ,pre/post performance talks, facility tours,etc)or programming specifically designed for children or youth(this includes professional performances for children and /or youth) , or activity in which children or youth create work.

Community arts involve professional artists and community members collaborating in a creative activity that results in a public presentation.

By ***participant***, we mean someone who took part in hands-on activities. (For example,community arts projects,arts education or learning projects).

By ***audience***, we mean someone who attended a performance/exhibition/literary reading/screening but did not directly take part in it



Appendix A – Sponsorship Report

Weekly Festival Poster Advertisements

Circulation: 88 Feature mentioned in 4 Leading Iranian publication.

Distribution: Local Iranian store in Toronto & GTA

Name	Shahrvand 	Shahreza 	Salam Toronto 	Persian Mirror 
March,2017	4	4	4	4
April,2017	4	4	4	4
May,2017	5	5	5	5
June,2017	5	5	5	5
July,2017	4	4	4	4
Total	22 weeks	22 weeks	22 weeks	22 weeks

Sample Weekly Festival Poster



Ticketed Event Booklet Campaign

Number of Ticketed Event: 7

Number of Post Card Design: 7

Circulation: 6000

Size: 4"x 6"

Distribution: Outreach event table, Local events, Iranian Store in Toronto & GTA

Typical Design

Front



Back



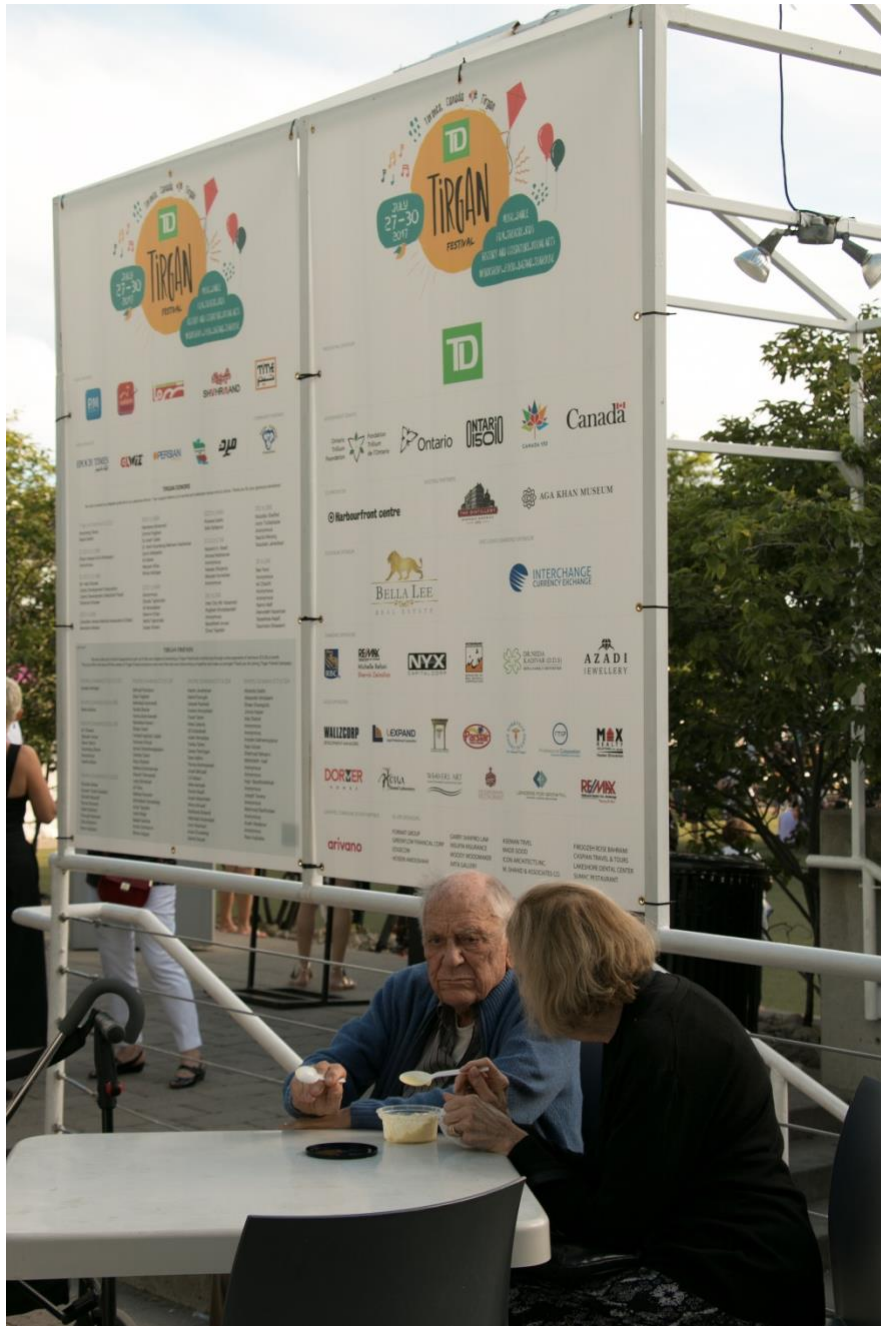


Tirgan Vinyl Banner Signs

Quantity: 40 set

Size: 560 linear foot

Distribution: Along railing and barricade in Harbourfront and Distillery District.



Join Tirgan Family Post card Campaign

Circulation: 4000

Size: 4"x6"

Distribution Channel: Outreach event table, Local events, Iranian Store in Toronto & GTA

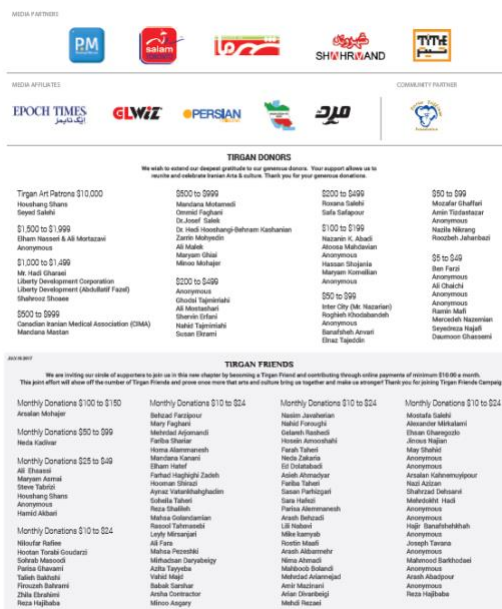
Front



Back



Circulation: 5000
Distribution: on site during 4 days of Festival
Price: Free



Tirgan Information Desk



Tirgan 2017

Tirgan Festival –Poster Campaign

Size: 12”x18”

Distribution Channel: Outreach event table, Local events, Iranian Store in Toronto & GTA

Design varies base on Tirgan marketing campaign



1st Iranian -Canadian Women's Leadership Conference

Location: Aga Khan Museum

Circulation: 430

Sample Poster: 7



Luncheon Sponsor:



Marjan Arab
Rimound Argiti

Panel Sponsors:



Pioneer Sponsors:



MOHAJER ASHJAI
Professional Corporation,
Business Lawyers

Tirgan Festival Soiree

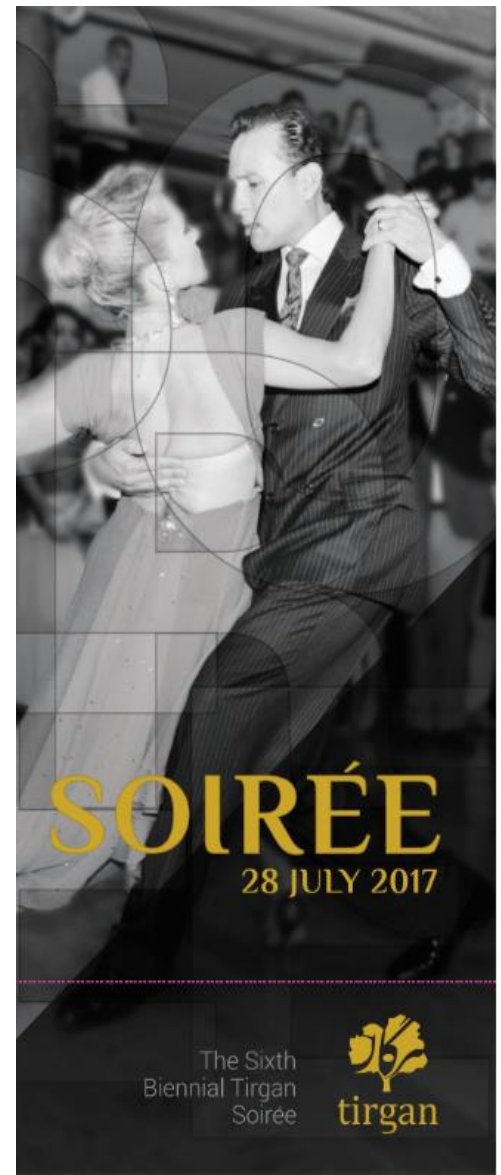
Circulation: 500

Location: Rose water Banquet Hall

Sample Poster



Sample Ticket

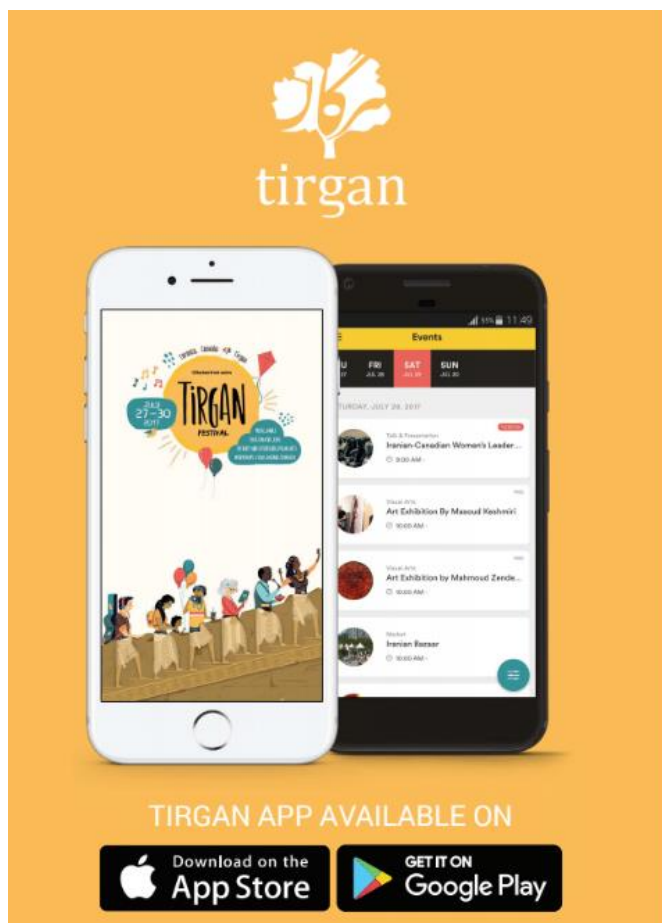


Tirgan Festival Smart Application Post Card Campaign

Activation: June 20

Circulation: 1000

Distribution: Outreach event table, Local events, Iranian Store in Toronto & GTA



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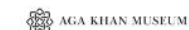
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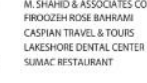
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Tirgan Festival General Post Card Campaign

Circulation: 15,000

Distribution: Outreach event table, Local events, Iranian Store in Toronto & GTA

Design varies



Tirgan Facebook Page

Number of Post: 250

Number of Members: 12,728



Tirgan Instagram Page

Number of Posts: 282

Number of Followers: 3,742



Tirgan Telegram Page

Number of posts: 60

Number of Followers:



Tirgan Visitor Guide Booklet

Circulation: 16,000

Farsi Print: 10,000

English Print: 6000

Distribution: During four days of event in Harbourfront center, Disteliry District, Aga Khan Museum



Outreach Booklet

Circulation: 2000

Distribution: Outreach event table, Local events, Iranian Store in Toronto & GTA



Tirgan Tea House

Circulation: 1000

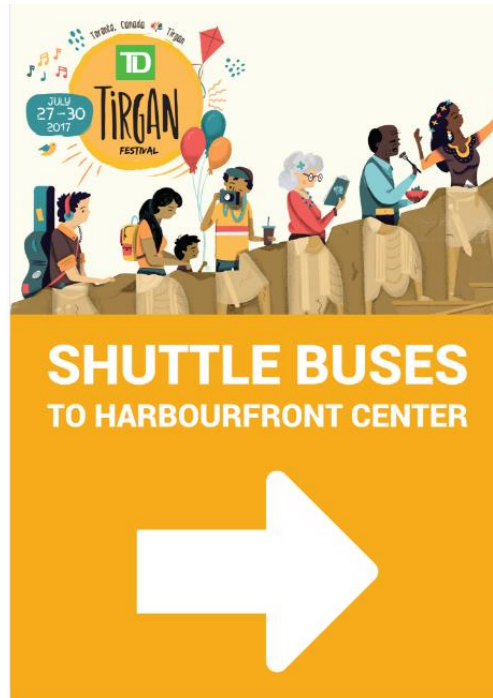
Distribution: Outreach event table, Local events, Iranian Store in Toronto & GTA



Tirgan Festival -Sign Campaign

Size: 24"x32"

Distribution: During four days of event in Harbourfront center, Distillery District, Aga Khan Museum



Tirgan Festival - Visual Arts Booklet

Circulation: 500

Distribution: Arta Gallery in Distillery District

Front



Back



Tirgan Festival -Back Drop



Tirgan Photo Exhibition Poster Campaign

Quantity: 50 Posters

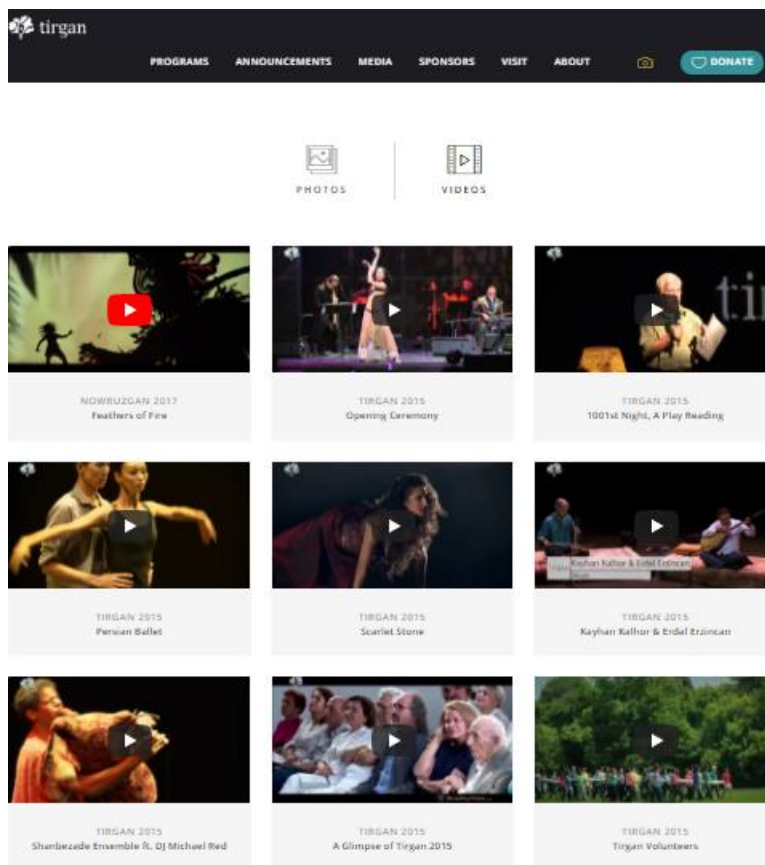


INDIRECT Marketing

Radio Javan Banner



Video



Tirgan Short Story Book

Circulation: 500

Distribution: During four days of event in Harbourfrot center, Disteliry District, Aga Khan Museum



Tirgan Merchandize

Mug:	400
T-Shirt:	1000
Key Chain:	250
Hat:	250
Pin:	250
Bookmark:	1000
1/5" button:	2500





Tirgan Website-Sponsor Page

Linked logo and name on sponsorship page

<http://www.tirgan.ca/support/>

Shuttle bus



Donation Campaign Post card



Tirgan Venue Sign

Concert Stage

Capacity: 1300 seated, 3300 seated & standing



@eventgraphers

Round Stage

Capacity: 2500



Distillery Stage

Capacity: 3000



Brigantine Stage

Capacity: 325



East Side Stage

Capacity: 500

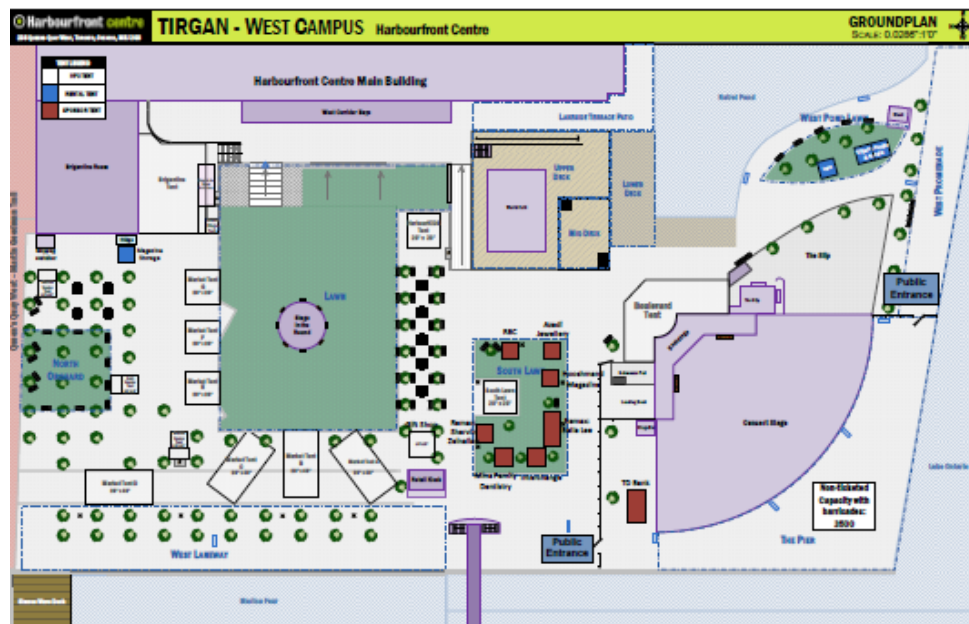


Fleck Dance Theatre

Capacity: 446



Size: 10''x10''



Emcee Announcement

Number of Repeat: 80 Performances



نباشد همی نیک و بد پایدار همان به که نیکی بود یادگار

وقت بخیر خانم ها و آقایان .

... هستیم . با آرزوی وقتی خوش از طرف جشنواره تیرگان و اسپانسرهای تیرگان 2017 خدمت تک تک شما عزیزان خیرمقدم عرض میکنم. در کمال افتخار جشنواره تیرگان 2017 به همت؛ همراهی و همدلی داوطلبان و حامیان بزرگتر و پربار تر در دو محل هاربرفرانت سنتر و دیستیلری برگزار میشود. که شما به راحتی با نصب آپلیکیشن تیرگان روی موبایلتون میتونید از جزییات این برنامه ها با خبر بشید. ضمنا " مجله تیرگان هدیه ما به شماست ؛ فراموش نکنید که موقع رفتن حتما" این یادگاری رو از ما دریافت و همراه خودتون ببرید .

Good evening and welcome to Tirgan 2017 co-produced by Harbourfront Centre. My name is _____ and I will be your host this evening. Before we begin the program, I would like to take a moment to thank our sponsors:

Grants

Ontario Trillium Foundation

Toronto 150

Toronto Arts Council

Celebrate Ontario

Ontario 150

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Radio Sedaye Iran

Salam Toronto

Shahrema

Shahrvand

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و از شما دعوت میکنیم در صورت تمایل حتماً "سری به وب سایت تیرگان بزنید و به هر میزان که انتخاب شماست تیرگان را حمایت کنید که ما ایرانی ها شایسته بهترین ها هستیم.

We would like to acknowledge and thank Harbourfront Centre partners - the Government of Canada and the City of Toronto, as well as our Corporate Site and Major partners. A thank you goes out to our year round programming partners - Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, and Toronto Arts Council. And of course, a huge thank you to the donors and patrons like all of you, whose support makes our programming possible.

And,

Kianoush Khalilian is a highly talented and accomplished Iranian musician. Today he will be improvising on the Ney to create a delightful musical experience.

کیانوش خلیلیان موسیقیدان با استعداد و شایسته ایرانی و نوازنده "نی" است. امروز در کنار شما گوش جان میسپاریم به نواى دلنشین ساز او. تشویق شایسته
بفرمایید کیانوش خلیلیان .

[Performance, then applause]

[Outro]

Thank you everyone! We hope that you enjoyed the show if you would you like to watch more beautiful performance please head over to the stage in the round for A Boundaryless Passage: Kamancello.

Stay up to date on all upcoming programming at Harbourfront Centre by visiting online at harbourfrontcentre.com.

Tirgan Promotional Items

Tirgan -Cyrus Sign Campaign



FREEDOM SCULPTURE

Designed by award-winning architect and artist **Cecil Balmond O.B.E.**, the Freedom Sculpture is a large-scale contemporary interpretation of the 2,500-year-old **Cyrus Cylinder**¹, an ancient Persian artifact widely considered to be the first declaration of human rights. The Freedom Sculpture is an historic gift to the City of Los Angeles celebrating the cultural freedom, love of diversity and spirit of inclusiveness, that this cosmopolitan city embodies.

With over a million supporters, from all across America and over 50 countries around the world, the Freedom Sculpture has become the most widely crowd-supported monumental gift in U.S. History. It stands like a "Statue of Liberty for the West Coast", in the heart of Los Angeles.

Four years in the making, the Freedom Sculpture has been an initiative led by the Farhang Foundation and the Iranian-American community in Los Angeles.

The purpose of this installation is to raise awareness about the art piece and the message it carries, which is honouring the shared humanitarian ideals of Cyrus the Great and the Founding Fathers of America.



A presentation is scheduled to be held at the Main Loft on Sat Jul 29 at 5:00 pm

Page 1 of 1



Appendix B – Artist List

Name	Genre	Country	Contribution
Melody Adhami		Canada	Special Guest
Shiva Amiri		Canada	Special Guest
Anousheh Ansari		USA	Special Guest
Fay Arjomandi		USA	Special Guest
Rudi Bakhtiar		USA	Special Guest
Bahram Beyzaie		USA	Special Guest
Nazie Eftekhari		USA	Special Guest
Behnaz Ghahramani		USA	Special Guest
Dona Ghalambor		USA	Special Guest
Maryam Ghiai		Canada	Special Guest
Ferial Govashiri		USA	Special Guest
Banafsheh Hejazi		Canada	Special Guest
Mariam Khosravani		USA	Special Guest
Parisa Khosravi		USA	Special Guest
Nooshin Meshkaty		USA	Special Guest
Bitra Milanian		USA	Special Guest
Rozita Moazemi-Farhani		Canada	Special Guest
Farhad Mohit		USA	Special Guest
Azar Nafisi		USA	Special Guest
Homa Sarshar		USA	Special Guest
Hon. Shahla S. Sabet		USA	Special Guest
Mojdeh Shamsaie		USA	Special Guest
Gelareh Zadeh		Canada	Special Guest
Foojan Zeine		USA	Special Guest
Lily Afshar	Music	USA	Performer
Hamed Afshari	Music	USA	Performer
Amin Afshinmanesh	Music	Canada	Performer
Bahram Aghakhan	Music	Canada	Performer
Nima Ahmadi	Music	Canada	Performer
Sara Ahmadi	Music	Canada	Performer
Padideh Ahrarnejad	Music	Canada	Performer
Golrokh Aminian	Music	Canada	Performer
Mehran Aminian	Music	Canada	Performer
Shahou Andalibi	Music	Canada	Performer
Daniel Asadi	Music	USA	Performer
Ava Ayoubi	Music	Canada	Performer
Kourosh Babai	Music	Canada	Performer
Oriana Barbato	Music	Canada	Performer
Sina Bathaie	Music	Canada	Performer
Arash Behzadi	Music	Canada	Performer
Mahsa Bigdeloo	Music	Canada	Performer
Peter Bull	Music	Canada	Performer
Shahzad Dastoornezhad	Music	Canada	Performer
Golmehr Davanloo	Music	Canada	Performer

Name	Genre	Country	Contribution
Fariba Davody	Music	Canada	Performer
Majid Derakhshani	Music	Canada	Performer
Morgan Doctor	Music	Canada	Performer
Tom Frelek	Music	Canada	Performer
Golnar Ghazvinian	Music	Canada	Performer
Ramiz Guliyev	Music	Azerbaijan	Performer
Pejman Hadadi	Music	USA	Performer
Maziar Heidari	Music	Canada	Performer
Lisbeth Helgesen	Music	Canada	Performer
Habib Hoseini	Music	Canada	Performer
Ilia Hosseini	Music	Canada	Performer
Parastoo Hosseini	Music	Canada	Performer
Maneli Jamal	Music	Canada	Performer
Shahriyar Jamshidi	Music	Canada	Performer
Y Josephine	Music	Canada	Performer
Ali Kamali	Music	Canada	Performer
Mohammad Kamali	Music	Canada	Performer
Saeed Kamjoo	Music	Canada	Performer
Kianoush Khalilian	Music	Canada	Performer
Pedram Khavarzamini	Music	Canada	Performer
Pooria Khorshidi	Music	Canada	Performer
Anwar Khurshid	Music	Canada	Performer
Alinima Madani	Music	Canada	Performer
Reza Manbachi	Music	Canada	Performer
Rana Mansour	Music	USA	Performer
Arman Masoumi	Music	Canada	Performer
Ali Massoudi	Music	Canada	Performer
JuanCarlos Medrano	Music	Canada	Performer
Peyman Mesr	Music	Canada	Performer
Arif Mirbaghi	Music	Canada	Performer
Rostam Mirlashari	Music	Sweden	Performer
Mehrab Moghadasian	Music	Canada	Performer
Reza Moghaddas	Music	Canada	Performer
Sardar Mohammadjani	Music	Canada	Performer
Sina Momtahan	Music	Canada	Performer
Sanaz Nakhjavani	Music	Canada	Performer
Ali Nematollahi	Music	Canada	Performer
Pouya Nikpour	Music	Canada	Performer
Amir Nojan	Music	USA	Performer
Mostafa Nosraty	Music	Canada	Performer
Alexei Orechin	Music	Canada	Performer
Nicholas Otway	Music	Canada	Performer
Pooria Pournazeri	Music	Canada	Performer
Arzhang Rafii	Music	Canada	Performer

Name	Genre	Country	Contribution
Alyssa Ramsay	Music	Canada	Performer
AmirAli Razaghi	Music	Canada	Performer
Matias Recharte	Music	Canada	Performer
Mehdi Rezanian	Music	Canada	Performer
Siavash Sadr Mahdavi	Music	Canada	Performer
Araz Salek	Music	Canada	Performer
Susan Salek	Music	Canada	Performer
Zohreh Shahbazi	Music	Canada	Performer
Saman Shahi	Music	Canada	Performer
Mojgan Shajarian	Music	USA	Performer
Saeid Shanbehzadeh	Music	France	Performer
Naghib Shanbehzadeh	Music	France	Performer
Beth Silver	Music	Canada	Performer
Heather Sita Black	Music	Canada	Performer
Arash Sobhani	Music	USA	Performer
Selcuk Suna	Music	Canada	Performer
Ziya Tabassian	Music	Canada	Performer
Mohammad Talani	Music	USA	Performer
Arya Taleghani	Music	Canada	Performer
AquaNibii Waawaaskone	Music	Canada	Performer
Graeme Wallace	Music	Canada	Performer
Raphael Weinroth-Browne	Music	Canada	Performer
Zaynab Wilson	Music	Canada	Performer
Samaneh Zaferani	Music	Canada	Performer
Mohsen Abdolvahab	Film	Iran	
Abbas Amini	Film	Iran	
Babak Anvari	Film	UK	
Rakhshan Banietemad	Film	Iran	
Bahram Beyzaie	Film	USA	
Ali Hatami	Film	Iran	
Bahman Maghsoudlou	Film	USA	
Mojtaba Mirtahmasb	Film	Iran	
Farzad Attarjafari	Dance	Canada	Performer
Makeda Benitez	Dance	Canada	Performer
Farima Berenji	Dance	Canada	Performer
Raqib Brian Burke	Dance	Canada	Performer
Hosna Dabaghi	Dance	Canada	Performer
Soheila Dashti	Dance	Canada	Performer
Sabri Gholami	Dance	Canada	Performer
Karine Gonzalez	Dance	France	Performer
Mira Hunter	Dance	Canada	Performer
Arvin Javadpour	Dance	Canada	Performer
Maryam Mahmoodi	Dance	Canada	Performer
Victoria Mata	Dance	Canada	Performer

Name	Genre	Country	Contribution
Shahrokh Moshkin Ghalam	Dance	USA	Performer
Melissa Noventa	Dance	Canada	Performer
Lisa Odjig	Dance	Canada	Performer
Tara Shojaei	Dance	Canada	Performer
Omid Zaroorian	Dance	Canada	Performer
Roshan Ahmadvand	Theatre	Canada	Performer
Ana Bayat	Theatre	USA	Performer
Katherine Belyea	Theatre	Canada	Performer
Bahram Beyzaie	Theatre	USA	
Hanieh Borghei	Theatre	Canada	Performer
Setareh Delzende	Theatre	Canada	Performer
Richard Feren	Theatre	Canada	Performer
Raha Javanfar	Theatre	Canada	Performer
Mona Ketabian	Theatre	Canada	Performer
Golshad Moradi	Theatre	Canada	Performer
Gia Nahmens	Theatre	Canada	Performer
Soheil Parsa	Theatre	Canada	
Ghazal Partou	Theatre	Canada	Performer
Banafsheh Taherian	Theatre	Canada	
HaoyanHarry Zhang	Kids	Canada	Performer
Laya Alemohammad	Kids	Canada	Performer
Golnesa Amani	Kids	Canada	Performer
Ghazal Bina	Kids	Canada	Performer
Scott Dietrich	Kids	Canada	Performer
Negar Familsabzevari	Kids	Canada	Performer
Newsha Haghgoo	Kids	Canada	Performer
Mahgol Izadi	Kids	Canada	Performer
Ann Powell	Kids	Canada	Performer
David Powell	Kids	Canada	Performer
Sara Salahi	Kids	Canada	Performer
Poliya Takmiliyan	Kids	Canada	Performer
Hossein Mortezaeian Abkenar	Literture/History	USA	Jury
Baroj Akrayi	Literture/History	Iraq	Jury
Bahar Almasi	Literture/History	Canada	Performer
Daryoush Ashouri	Literture/History	France	Performer
Bahram Bahrami	Literture/History	Canada	Performer
Khosrow Davami	Literture/History	USA	Jury
Roya Ebrahimi	Literture/History	Canada	Performer
Hamed Esmaeilion	Literture/History	Canada	Jury
Farshid Sadat Sharifi	Literture/History	Canada	Jury
Persis Karim	Literture/History	USA	Performer
Pegah Karimi	Literture/History	Canada	Performer
Homa Katouzian	Literture/History	UK	Performer
Amir Mahim	Literture/History	Canada	Performer

Name	Genre	Country	Contribution
Abbas Milani	Litreture/History	USA	Performer
Sanaz Mosadegh	Litreture/History	Canada	Performer
Dona Robati	Litreture/History	Canada	Performer
Anna Sarchami	Litreture/History	Canada	Performer
Hila Sedighi	Litreture/History	Iran	
Ida Shamlu	Litreture/History	Iran	Performer
Sareh Sokoot	Litreture/History	Canada	Performer
Safdar Taghizadeh	Litreture/History	Iran	Performer
Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi	Litreture/History	Canada	Performer
Hamid Salimian	Cooking	Canada	Performer
Hoss Zaré	Cooking	USA	Performer
Mostafa Ahmadi	Visual Arts	USA	Jury
Keyvan Fehri	Visual Arts	Canada	Jury
Edwin Janzen	Visual Arts	Canada	Performer
Yousef Kashefifar	Visual Arts	Canada	Performer
Masoud Keshmiri	Visual Arts	Iran	Performer
Sara Khanlari	Visual Arts	Canada	Performer
Naser Mohammadi	Visual Arts	Iran	Jury
Farin Norouzi	Visual Arts	Iran	Performer
Afarin Rahmanifar	Visual Arts	USA	Performer
Sarah Seené	Visual Arts	Canada	Jury
Hamed Tabein	Visual Arts	Canada	Jury
Mahmoud Zenderoudi	Visual Arts	France	Performer

SPECIAL GUESTS



Melody Adhami

Melody Adhami started her career working at the billion dollar company, Unilever, on brands like Dove, Hellmann's and Lipton. Then, she reached a fork in the road. Deep inside the row of cubicles at Unilever, she watched the first signs of a new mobile age appear. Steve Jobs launched the iPhone, unleashing a world where mobile phones can do more than make calls. Melody made up her mind. She quit her steady job to launch a company that would focus on the emerging world of mobile apps, Plastic Mobile.

Today, Plastic is a top player in the world of mobile. Its clients are some of the biggest names in the business. The work was recognized by Forrester Research as being the "poster child" for apps. The Globe and Mail even dubbed Melody as the "Queen of Apps." And in 2015, Plastic was acquired by the 6th largest global communications company, Havas.



Shiva Amiri

(Moderator) Shiva Amiri is the CEO of BioSymetrics Inc. where they are developing a unique real-time machine learning technology for the analysis of massive data in biomedicine. BioSymetrics specializes in providing optimized pipelines for complex data types and effective methods in the analytics of integrated data. Prior to BioSymetrics she was the Chief Product Officer at Real Time Data Solutions Inc., she has led the Informatics and Analytics team at the Ontario Brain Institute, where they developed Brain-CODE, a large-scale neuroinformatics platform across the province of Ontario. She was previously the head of the British High Commission Science and Innovation team in Canada. Shiva completed her Ph.D. in Computational Biochemistry at the University of Oxford and her undergraduate degree in Computer Science and Human Biology at the University of Toronto. Shiva is involved with several organizations including Lets Talk Science and Shabeh Jomeh International.



Anousheh Ansari

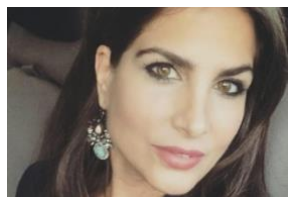
(Speaker) September 18, 2006, Anousheh Ansari captured headlines around the world as the first female private space explorer. Ms. Ansari earned a place in history as the fourth private explorer to visit space and the first astronaut of Iranian descent. An entrepreneur, Anousheh Ms. Ansari is the co-founder and chairwoman of Prodea System, a company that unleashes the power of the internet to all consumers and dramatically alters and simplifies consumers' digital living experience. Prior to founding Prodea, Ms. Ansari served as co-founder, CEO and chairwoman of Telecom Technologies, Inc. The company successfully merged with Sonus Networks, Inc., in 2000. Ms. Ansari immigrated to the United States as a teenager who did not speak English. She earned a bachelor's degree in electronics and computer engineering from George Mason University, followed by a

master's degree in electrical engineering from George Washington University. She has an honorary doctorate from the International Space University. Anousheh is a member of the X Prize Foundation's Vision Circle, as well as its Board of Trustees. She is a life member of the Association of Space Explorers and serves on the advisory board of the Teacher in Space project.



Fay Arjomandi

(Speaker) Arjomandi is currently the chairman of H2 Wellness, advisor of StudyTracks, and mimik. Prior to this, Fay was the CEO of NantMobile managing three mobile companies in 60Ghz fabless semiconductor, AR/VR platform and consumerization of healthcare platform. Prior to joining Nantmobile, Fay was the CEO & co-founder of Vodafone xone where she successfully launched Vodafone xone in Silicon Valley which has become the global incubation center of the Vodafone Group and the beta brand for Vodafone consumer in UK, Italy, Spain, Germany and Egypt. At the same time, Fay lead Vodafone Ventures, was the Chairman of Vodafone Americas Foundation and the board member of US Vodafone Group Enterprise. Prior to Vodafone, Fay was the co-founder and CEO three start-up companies L3 Technology, Mobidia, and mimik. Fay has authored 12 patents. In 2014, she was named as one of the most influential women business leader in Silicon Valley by San Francisco Business Week, and in 2006, received the distinguished Business In Vancouver's Top 40 Under 40 award presented to outstanding leaders in their chosen fields. In 2007, she was the Canadian technology and innovation representative to the White House.



Rudi Bakhtiar

(Speaker) In 1996, Rudi Bakhtiar joined CNN and held multiple positions in her 9 years at the cable news network including anchoring CNN Headline News Tonight on the CNN Headline News network. She has co-anchored CNN's Emmy nominated CNN Newsroom and worked as a dedicated correspondent for Anderson Cooper 360. She has reported on assignments from numerous countries in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, including Rwanda, Ethiopia, South Africa, Iran, Israel, and Palestine. She also anchored the start of CNN's Headline News coverage of the September 11 attacks. She had left CNN to care for her dying father after almost 10 years in cable news. In January 2006 Bakhtiar joined Fox News Channel as a general correspondent, reporting on major international news stories such as the Ahmadinejad-al-Maliki summit in Tehran in September 2006 and the trial and execution of Saddam Hussein later that year. In 2007 Fox News terminated its contract with Bakhtiar after a complaint of alleged sexual harassment. In 2008 Bakhtiar switched careers to become the first director of public relations for the Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans, an organization dedicated to building an inclusive and representative voice in the public and political arena for Iranian Americans. There she produced mini documentaries called "Profiles of Iranian Americans" which focused on the lives of successful Iranian Americans. She also created and produced the organization's signature star-studded community event "Passing the Torch of Success," before being pushed out of the organization owing to her strong stance on Iran's human rights violations.



Bahram Beyzaie

Bahram Beyzaie is a well-known Iranian critic, researcher, teacher, playwright, stage director (and producer), screenwriter and filmmaker (director, producer and editor). He was first introduced to western audiences at the age of 25, when his play was staged at the Festival du Theatre des Nations in Paris, 1963. After years of uncompromising creative work, he became Professor and Chair of the Dramatic Arts Department at Tehran University until the Islamic revolution. Presently he is a visiting professor at Stanford University, Iranian Studies Program, lecturing on topics such as Iranian Cinema, Iranian Theatre and Cinema and Mythology. Beyzaie's literary heritage, from his parents, is reflected not only in his prose writings, his plays and films but also in his own personal style and critical outlook. Besides his monographs in volumes on Iranian, Japanese and Chinese theatres and also a book on Hitchcock films, he has done extensive research on the roots of One Thousand and One Nights resulting in two monographs, Seeking the Roots of the Old Tree followed by another about the missing ancient book of Hezar Afsan [One Thousand and One Nights as it is called in its Arabic translation]. In the past five decades, Beyzaie has published more than 35 plays, some of which are translated and published in English, French, German and Portuguese and also more than 50 screenplays. Despite many obstacles imposed on his life and career he has directed seven of his plays on the stage himself and in his own personal style in Tehran. Amongst these the film version of Death of Yazdgerd is available as an example of his artistic expression and historical and cultural view. Furthermore, he has made ten feature and four short films which are: Short films: Mustachioed Uncle; The Journey; Talking with the Wind; The Speaking Carpet. Feature films: Downpour; The Stranger and the Fog; The Crow; The Ballad of Tara; Death of Yazdgerd; Bashu, The Little Stranger; Maybe Some Other Time; The Travelers; Killing Rabids; While We Are All Asleep. His theatre works are, all except for one, directed by himself and include: The Puppets, the Heritage and The Feast, King Snake, Death of Yazdgerd, Lady Aoi (by Mishima Yukio), Testament of Bondar Bidakhsh, The 1001st Night, The Passion Play of Mentor Navid Makan and His Wife Archeologist Rokhshid Farzin, and Afra or the Day Passes. In The last four years he has directed a shadow play called Jana & Baladoor and also Arash, 1001st Night and Ardaviraf's Report, all presented by the Iranian Studies of Stanford University.



Nazie Eftekhari

(Speaker) Ms. Eftekhari is the CEO and principal architect of HealthEZ and founder of The Araz Group, the first Preferred Provider Organization in the country. In fact, the term PPO was coined to describe her innovation. Her other innovations include the first medical management services, the first consolidated insurance and consumer payments to doctors and hospitals, the first healthcare consumer statement, and the first paperless statement. www.healthez.com She is a graduate of the London School of Economics and she attended the University of Southern California (UK) Graduate Program in International Relations and the University of Minnesota, MHA. She serves on the Board of Visitors of the University of Minnesota Medical School, the Board of Overseers of the University of Minnesota Carlson School of Management, the Speaker's Cabinet Leadership Circle (DCCC), and the boards of the Nonviolent Initiative for Democracy (NID) and the Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans (PAAIA). Often honored and recognized for her leadership in business and service to the community, Ms. Eftekhari most recently received the 2011 International Immigrant Achievement Award from The International Leadership Institute. In 1991 she established The Foundation for the Children of Iran, dedicated to enabling indigent Iranian children to receive life-saving health care services in the United States that are not available to them in Iran. www.childrenofiran.org Ms. Eftekhari has a son, Sahm McGlynn, and a daughter, Raz McGlynn, who are unabashedly her pride and joy.



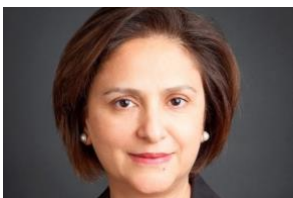
Behnaz Ghahramani

(Speaker) Ghahramani is the Vice President for Global Marketing of Luxury Collections at Ralph Lauren where she is responsible for Global Brand Strategy, Marketing, Digital and Social Media of Ralph Lauren's luxury brands (Women's Collection, Purple Label, Double RL) and licensees (Ralph Lauren Fragrances, Eyewear, Watches & Jewelry). Prior to Ralph Lauren, Behnaz was the Director of Marketing for Gucci in the Americas where she supported the brand transformation of Gucci from a luxury heritage brand to an industry leading fashion brand under Alessandro Michele. While at Gucci, she also supported the development and launch of Chime for Change, a global campaign founded by Gucci, Salma Hayek Pinault and Beyoncé Knowles Carter to raise funds and awareness for girls' and women's empowerment, with a focus on education, health and justice. Behnaz joined Gucci in 2011 after completing her MBA at INSEAD in France and Singapore, where she was the President of Women in Business at INSEAD, and the founder of the first INSEAD Women's Leadership Conference. She has been a supporter of the IAWF for several years, both as a sponsor and a speaker in New York and Los Angeles.



Donna Ghalambor

(Master Of Ceremonies) Ghalambor is the president of SophArian Consulting and Coaching, LLC. She has built a portfolio of high-net-worth clients, streamlined finances for individuals and implemented business development strategies for a myriad of small and medium-sized businesses in the past twelve years in Southern California. Her fascination with new trends in leadership development, professional and personal excellence, optimal team performance and transformational transitions led to the pursuit of her graduate studies at the University of Southern California. She has focused on identifying the psychology and mindset of a successful business and an effective leadership during her program at USC. She has complemented her academic goals with Energy Leadership Coaching credentials at the Institute of Professional Excellence in Coaching helping businesses and professionals take the leap from functional to optimal state. Alongside her career and academic endeavors, Donna has been actively engaged in her community and contributed significantly in social causes revolving around women's empowerment and professional excellence. Her leading involvements include Top Performer Coaching Program at Women Helping Women (WHW) and being a member of the Board of Directors at Iranian American Women Foundation (IAWF).



Maryam Ghiai

(Speaker) Maryam is a senior IT executive with international experience in a diverse range of sectors including the software industry, pension funds, and banking from capital markets and risk management to wealth management, retail and insurance. Maryam is a change and transformation champion and a passionate leader who has led transformational and complex technology programs in organizations such as Bank of Montreal, Ontario Teacher's Pension Plan and most recently TD Bank. She holds a bachelor's degree in Econometrics and statistics from University of Paris II (Panthéon – Assas) and a Master's degree in Money, Banking, and

Finance from University of Paris I (Panthéon -Sorbonne). She has lived and worked in 3 continents and 6 countries and is fluent in English, French and Persian. She lives in Toronto with her husband and their 3 sons.



Ferial Govashiri

(Speaker) Govashiri served as Personal Aide to the President of the United States. Ms. Govashiri began her political career in the Scheduling and Advance department in then Senator Barack Obama's Chicago presidential campaign headquarters in 2007. Following the election, she was appointed to the National Security Council (NSC) as Senior Advisor to Ben Rhodes, the Deputy National Security Advisor. Next, she served as Senior Advisor to the Chief of Staff and the Director of Visits at the NSC. In that capacity she assisted in planning President Obama's foreign travel and oversaw arrangements for heads of state visiting the White House. After five years serving with the NSC, she was appointed to serve as Personal Aide to the President in 2014. Ms. Govashiri holds a degree in Political Science from the University of California, Irvine.



Banafcheh Hejazi

(Speaker) Dr. Banafcheh Hejazi is a family physician, a professor at the Family Medicine Residency Program at the McGill University, and a documentary filmmaker. Dr. Hejazi has devoted her rewarding career to breaking various traditional taboos and helping people struggling with mental health problems to live a fulfilling life. Through her work in the field of Adolescent Medicine, Dr. Hejazi has empowered many teenagers to take charge of their mental health and lead a healthy and normal life as they step into adulthood. In 2013, Dr. Hejazi took on the ambitious project of producing a documentary to create awareness about depression among physicians. Les Médecins Pleurent Aussi documentary has been broadcasted multiple times on CBC TV and has become a mandatory component of the first-year medicine curriculum in all universities across Quebec. Among many other achievements, Dr. Hejazi is the recipient of the prestigious Diamond Jubilee Medal for her 15 years of volunteer work at Shield of Athena for family violence.



Mariam Khosravani

(Speaker) Mariam Khosravani is the founder and president of the Iranian American Women Foundation (IAWF). In 2010, she sought to assemble the expertise and accomplishments of Iranian American women around the nation and utilize them to inspire women to reach their full potential. A platform for open dialogue, the foundation creates lasting connections among leading women who pass on their wisdom and journeys to success. She has taken the Iranian American Women Foundation across the nation and now hosts its annual leadership conferences in Los Angeles, San Diego, Orange County, New York and Washington, D.C. Mariam was awarded the 2015 Ellis Island Medal of Honor by the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations (NECO) in Ellis Island, New York. According to NECO, the Ellis Island Medal of Honor is presented annually to American citizens "who have distinguished themselves within their own ethnic groups while exemplifying the values of the American way of life. The Medal of Honor ranks among the nation's most prestigious awards

and includes Nobel Prize winners and six past U.S. Presidents as past honorees. Mariam organizes and hosts the Orange County Global Women's Conference under her capacity as the Executive Director of Coastline Community College Foundation. Coastline Community College Foundation raises funds for and supports more than 18,000 students in Southern California. Driven by compassion, Mariam has assisted in the expansion of various local, national and international organizations and helped raise millions of dollars in funds for them. She serves on the Board of Directors of the Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans (PAAIA) and is a member of the Advisory Board of PBS SoCal, Orange County's PBS station. In the past, she serviced as a Community Services Commissioner for the City of Irvine, working to bring together multicultural communities. Mariam served on the Board of Directors of the Foundation for California Community Colleges and was the president and advisory board member of the Network of Iranian-American Professionals of Orange County (NIPOC) for 10 years. She also served as the Orange County United Way's Chair of Investment Council and was a board member of the Association of Fundraising Professionals.



Parisa Khosravi

(Keynote Speaker) Parisa Khosravi is the founder and president of Payam Global Strategies LLC. Khosravi recently retired from CNN after nearly three decades with the company. Throughout her career as Senior Vice President of international newsgathering, domestic newsgathering and global relations for CNN Worldwide, Khosravi led CNN's historic coverage of countless award-winning news stories. As a CNN executive for over two decades, she led CNN's key international editorial relationships and finally as the first-ever global Ambassador for CNN, Khosravi met and liaised with world leaders and decision-makers. Khosravi is a recognized authority on safety and security matters for her meticulous and decisive management of CNN's teams as they covered the world's most dangerous hotspots, conflicts and natural disasters. Khosravi is also an expert on crisis management, multiculturalism and women-in-the-workforce issues. With unrivaled commitment and passion for international news, Khosravi orchestrated CNN's largest investment in international newsgathering in its history. Khosravi will put her experience and established global relationships to use in order to make positive change happen and advance the cause of good for humanity with her new endeavor.



Nooshin Meshkaty

(Moderator) Hon. Nooshin Meshkaty is a Computer Scientist and Electronics Specialist who has built her nearly 30 year career in Aerospace Industry. She is currently a Senior Engineer and Technical Group Leader for Manufacturing and Logistics of Flight Electronics at Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL). During her tenure at JPL, she has worked on many Flight Instruments that have launched and successfully transferred science to the us. Examples include JUNO (Jupiter Polar Orbiter), Mars Curiosity (Mars Space Laboratory) and many more projected such as Mars 2020. Nooshin has also been an active member of her community. She was an elected member of the Beverly Hills School Board of Education 2005-2009, serving both as Board Member and Board President. She has been active member of many social and civil councils and committees including but not limited to Traffic and Parking Commission for the City of Beverly Hills (active position), and the Technology Adhoc Committee for the City of Beverly Hills. Nooshin also currently serves on the Board Directors for GIRL Inc., Los Angeles Chapter. Additionally, she is a member of the Education Council & Nowruz Committee for Farhang Foundation, member of Iranian American Women Foundation and member of the Visionary Women Circle.



Bitu Milanian

Bitu Milanian serves as the Senior Vice President of Global Marketing at GENBAND & Kandy, a global leader in real time communications software solutions for service providers, enterprises, independent software vendors, systems integrators and developers in over 80 countries. With nearly 20 years of marketing, branding and communications experience, Bitu has held senior-level marketing positions at various companies, including the likes of TelePacific Communications and Global Crossing. Prior to joining GENBAND, she held the top post of Executive Director for Farhang Foundation and is also the founder of the creative and consulting agency Butterfly Buzz, which she still operates as a means to continue her humanitarian work, support up and coming artists, as well as non-profits, to enable them to efficiently scale to serve more people. A passionate community organizer, Bitu is actively involved in her community, volunteering her time and expertise in support of numerous causes and organizations.



Rozita Moazemi-Farhani

(Moderator) Rozita Moazemi-Farhani is the VP of Change Management and Training for the CBRE group, the world's largest commercial real estate company, headquartered in Los Angeles. In her current position she oversees a team of 10+ change and training practitioners who globally support all of CBRE's business lines through consultative services. In her previous roles with Deloitte, she managed critical initiatives in the areas of change management, project management, technology implementation and large scale transformations across a wide range of industries. Most recently, Rozita supported the development and management of Deloitte Caribbean's talent function and acted as a strategic business partner to the firm's leaders while driving select initiatives in the human capital space. A working mother based in Toronto, Rozita holds an MBA from the Schulich School of Business, an MSc in Organizational Psychology from Kings College London (UK) and a BSc in Psychology from the University of Toronto.



Farhad Mohit

Farhad is a serial entrepreneur; most recently, the founder and CEO of Flipagram, one of the largest mobile video apps in the world. Previously, he founded Shopzilla, one of the world's largest shopping search engines, and took it from inception through profitability and a \$569 million dollar sale. Out of graduate school, he founded BizRate.com, one of the first consumer rating platforms on the internet. BizRate became a top 50 worldwide site, surveying tens of millions of people each year to provide trustworthy ecommerce ratings that helped usher in the age of online shopping. In addition to his entrepreneurial activities Farhad leads an active philanthropic life. He led the Freedom Sculpture project as a founding trustee of Farhang Foundation, is a TED Patron, and a major supporter of the Burning Man Project. Farhad holds an MBA in Entrepreneurial Management from the Wharton School, and a double Bachelor of Science in Mathematics/Applied Science and Economics with a specialization in Computing from the University of California, Los Angeles. He lives in Los Angeles with his wife Nushin and their three kids, Noor, Alaan and Sama.



Azar Nafisi

(Speaker) Azar Nafisi is best known as the author of the national bestseller *Reading Lolita in Tehran: A Memoir in Books*, which electrified its readers with a compassionate and often harrowing portrait of the Islamic revolution in Iran and how it affected one university professor and her students. Earning high acclaim and an enthusiastic readership, *Reading Lolita in Tehran* is an incisive exploration of the transformative powers of fiction in a world of tyranny. The book has spent over 117 weeks on The New York Times bestseller list. *Reading Lolita in Tehran* has been translated in 32 languages, and has won diverse literary awards, including the Prix du Meilleur Livre Étranger, Non-fiction Book of the Year Award from Booksense, the Frederic W. Ness Book Award, the Latifeh Yarsheter Book Award, the Grand Prix des Lectrices de Elle, and an achievement award from the American Immigration Law Foundation, as well as being a finalist for the PEN/Martha Albrand Award for Memoir. Azar Nafisi has written for The New York Times, Washington Post, and The Wall Street Journal. Her latest book is entitled, *The Republic of Imagination*.



Homa Sarshar

(Moderator) Homa Sarshar is a published author, award-winning journalist, writer, and media personality. She is the author of four books and the editor of eleven other volumes, including five volumes of the Iranian Women's Studies Foundation Journal and four volumes of *The History of Contemporary Iranian Jews*. Her latest book *Sha'ban Jafari* was the number one bestseller Persian book in Iran and abroad in the year 2003. From 1964 to 1978, she worked as a correspondent, reporter, and columnist for *Zan-e Ruz* weekly magazine and *Kayhan* daily newspaper in Iran. During this period, she also worked as a television producer, director, and talk show host for National Iranian Radio & Television. In 1978, Sarshar moved to Los Angeles where she resumed her career as a freelance journalist, radio and television producer, and on-air host. No stranger to the plight of many Iranian Americans, Sarshar knew first-hand the challenges of arriving as a new émigré to the United States. In 1981 she became the founding editor of *Shofar* monthly magazine, published by the newly formed Iranian American Jewish Federation to bring the Iranian Jewish community together. In 1982 as the co-producer, writer, and talk show host of *Omid Radio* she co-founded a daily AM radio broadcast for the Los Angeles based Iranian immigrant community. The show played a pivotal role in informing and educating the new community about life in the US. An established women's rights activist, in 1989 Sarshar joined the board of Iranian Women Studies Foundation, a nonprofit organization based in Boston, MA. Along with co-convening the foundation's annual conference series, she also edited five volumes of IWSF's journal during her five-year term on the board. In 1992, she published her two-volume memoir *Dar koocheh paskoocheh ha-ye ghorbat* (*In the back alleys of exile*), which provides a candid view into the experience of a first generation immigrant to the US. The title was the first publication of a Jewish Iranian memoir, one of the first Persian memoirs after the revolution published outside Iran, as well as one of the very few examples of memoir-writing by an Iranian woman at the time of its publication. Since 1993 Sarshar has been a trusted advisor by the Human Rights Watch to recommend recipients for the prestigious Hellman/Hammett Grants and many of her nominees have received the above grant. In 1995, Homa Sarshar founded the Center for Iranian Jewish Oral History (CIJOH) in Los Angeles, a nonprofit organization that gathered over 1,600 historically significant photographs and documents and recorded over 120 oral interviews with elders and leaders of the community. During its ten years of activity under Sarshar directorship, the center organized five international conferences, published five volumes of collected academic articles, and produced eight documentaries on Jewish-Iranian history and various leaders and cultural figures of the Jewish Iranian community in the 20th century. In 2006, Tel Aviv University, UCLA, and the Library of Congress each received one complete copy CIJOH's archive of documents, transcribed oral interviews, and original documentaries to be used by researchers all over the world. In 2005 philanthropist and arts advocate Homa Sarshar founded the Center for Iranian Creative Arts (CICA)-a Los Angeles based nonprofit organization, and the first of its kind. The mission of this organization is

to promote, preserve, and proliferate Iranian art, culture, and tradition in the United States through the publication of books and the production of audio visual materials, and the organization of events contributing to the advancement and promotion of humanities and creative arts. CICA is also providing social and financial support to all Iranian American artists in need to ensure that these unique talents are served in the best way possible and their lives are improved. Homa Sarshar's involvement with the arts has been a life-long passion. In addition to the above projects, over the past 35 years she has hosted and or sponsored many theatre performances and art exhibitions for Iranian-born artists as well as numerous lectures and book signings for some of Iran's most influential literary figures, among them: Academy Award nominee Shohreh Aghdashloo (actress); Jalali SousanAbadi (master miniaturist); Nader Naderpour (poet); Mahshid Amirshahi (novelist); Shahrnush Parsipour (novelist); Monirou Ravanipour (novelist); Simin Behbahani (poet); Shahrokh Moshkinghaleh (dancer / choreographer); Hadi Khorsandi (satirist); and Fereydoon Moshiri (poet). She has also been a member of the Middle Eastern Art Council for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) for different terms over the past 30 years. In this position, she has recently secured two important gifts for the museum's permanent collection. Throughout her 49-year career with Iranian and Iranian-American print, radio, and television, Sarshar has done more than 1500 interviews and has produced and anchored as many radio and television programs. She has also written, directed, and produced a collection of twenty video documentaries on exiled Iranian writers, poets, and artists, some of which have been acquired by the Library of Congress for the library's permanent audiovisual archive. Homa Sarshar has received numerous awards for her work, including the Medal for Special Achievement in Women's Rights, given by The Iranian Women's Organization of Tehran, Iran; Journalism Award: Distinguished Iranian Women by the Encyclopaedia Iranica; Commendation for Community Affairs Services by the County of Los Angeles; and 2013 Ellis Island Medal of Honor. Homa Sarshar was born in Shiraz on 1946, and raised in Tehran. She earned a BA in French literature from Tehran University; a MA in journalism from the Annenberg School of Communications, USC; and a Ph.D. (HC) in Journalism from College of Letters and Science at the American World University LA, CA. She is currently a resident of Los Angeles.



Hon. Shahla S. Sabet

(Speaker) The Honorable Judge Shahla S. Sabet is the first Iranian American Judge appointed to the Superior Court of the State of California. She was appointed by Governor Pete Wilson to the bench in San Bernardino County in 1993. Judge Sabet has presided over criminal, civil, juvenile, and family law cases for the last twenty years. Throughout her judicial career, Judge Sabet has served as a member of the faculty at the California Judges Center for Education and has taught numerous judges on the topics of judicial ethics, fairness, and equal access to the justice system. She has led seminars at the Orientation Program and the New Judges College in Berkeley, California. In 2013, Judge Sabet retired from the bench and currently sits on assignment as a retired judge under an appointment order by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of California. Judge Sabet was named Woman of the Year by the California Assembly in 1994. She has received outstanding achievements awards from the Iranian American Council of Los Angeles in 1998 and the Persian Heritage Society of London in 2000. Judge Sabet received her bachelor's degree from the University of Tehran. She then moved to the United States and earned her master's degree from UCLA in 1972 and a Ph.D. from Claremont University in 1977. She earned her Juris Doctor degree from Southwestern University School of Law in 1985. After practicing law as a Deputy District Attorney for eight years, Judge Sabet was appointed to the bench.



Mojdeh Shamsaie

Mojdeh Shamsaie studied theatre at the College of Arts and Architecture in Tehran. She has been involved in numerous film productions as actor, makeup artist, set and costume designer as well as assistant director.

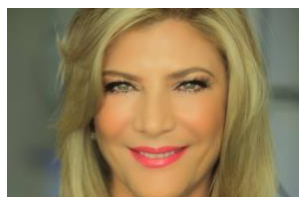
Credits in Bahram Beyzaie films include Travellers, Conversation With the Wind, Killing Mad Dogs and While We Are All Sleeping. She is the recipient of the Fajr Film Festival Crystal Simorgh award for Killing Mad Dogs (acting) and Varouzh Karimmasihi's Last Act (makeup). Theater credits include The Cherry Orchard (Roknedin Khosravi) and Lady Aoi, 1001st Night, The Passion Play of Mentor Navid Makan and His Wife Archeologist Rokhshid Farzin and Afra or The Day Passes (all directed by Bahram Beyzaie). Mojdeh was last seen in Bahram Beyzaie's Jana & Baladoor, Arash, 1001st Night and Ardaviraf's Report at Stanford University.



Gelareh Zadeh

Dr. Gelareh Zadeh, MD, PhD, FRCS(C), FAANS, is The Head of Surgical Oncology at University Health Network and also the Head of the Toronto Central Regional Cancer Program, Cancer Care Ontario. She is a neurosurgeon-scientist at the Toronto Western Hospital and Princess Margaret Cancer Centre. She has a dedicated clinical and research program in neuro-oncology and neurosurgery, she is the Chair of Wilkins Family Brain Tumor Research, Co-Director of the Elizabeth Raab Neurofibromatosis Program, and the Director of the UHN Brain Tumor Biobank.

Dr. Zadeh has a dedicated neuro-oncology and skull base practice, including a number of multidisciplinary specialized programs: skull base, brain metastases, pituitary tumors, gamma knife and neurofibromatosis clinics. In parallel, she has an active research laboratory focusing on integrated multi-platform molecular analysis of brain tumors, together with a focus on understanding molecular response to targeted therapies, such as anti-angiogenesis and metabolic inhibitors. She is also involved in a number of national and international organizations, like the WFNS, NASBS, SNO.



Foojan Zeine

(Speaker) Foojan Zeine is an international speaker, author, psychotherapist, life and executive coach. She has her Doctorate in Clinical Psychology and is a licensed marriage & family therapist. Dr. Zeine has a large private practice in Tarzana, California. Her expertise is in intimate relations and addictive behaviours. She has extensive experience treating depression, anxiety, traumas, and domestic violence. Dr. Zeine is the originator and the author of the Awareness Integration Psychotherapeutic model, which is a multi-modality approach and intervention toward minimizing depression and anxiety while improving self-esteem and self-confidence. The model was published in the International Journal for Emergency Mental Health and Human Resilience. Dr. Zeine is the founder, CEO and the Clinical Director for Personal Growth Institute, a nonprofit organization that offers psychotherapy services to the multicultural and multilingual population. Dr. Zeine has been a guest speaker in many academic and nonacademic institutions. She has given talks at UCLA, USC, Aliant University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Harvard University in Cambridge, MA. She was a guest on the Dr. Phil show in 2005. Dr. Zeine hosts a live satellite television show, Nedayeh Daroon, on Asre Emrooz TV addressing psychological issues relevant to the general public. She is a frequent guest on Voice of America International Television, GEM TV, Persian Radio, and 670 KIRN.

MUSIC



Lily Afshar

An extraordinary artist, Lily Afshar has grounded her career on a strong foundation of excellent formal education, upon which she has built an exceptional record of innovative achievements. With a bachelor's degree from The Boston Conservatory, she earned her Master of Music at The New England Conservatory and went on to study at Florida State University, where she became the first woman in the world to be awarded the degree of Doctor of Music in guitar performance. She pursued greater proficiency with summer studies at the Banff Centre for Fine Arts and the Aspen Music Festival, advanced training at Gargnano, Italy, the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena, and master classes with Andrés Segovia at the University of Southern California. Since becoming a tenured professor and head of the guitar program at the University of Memphis Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music, Afshar has received the 2000 Eminent Faculty Award, and in 2011 she was honored with the Distinguished Alumni Award from The Boston Conservatory. She conducts master classes worldwide and has released six instructional DVD's, "Classical Guitar Secrets", Vols. I & II for beginner to Intermediate guitarists, and six instructional DVD's "Classical Guitar Collection", Vols. I & II for Intermediate to Advanced guitarists. Both are released with Guitarcontrol.com. She also produced a DVD entitled "Virtuoso Guitar" featuring live performances and an interview with Mel Bay. As a performing guitarist, she has won a top prize in the Guitar Foundation of America Competition, Grand Prize in the Aspen Music Festival Guitar Competition, the Orville H. Gibson Award for Best Female Classical Guitarist, and a National Endowment for the Arts Recording Award, among others, and she was chosen as an "Artistic Ambassador" to Africa for the United States Information Agency. With her passion for going beyond the traditional guitar repertoire, contemporary classical composers have sought after her for creative collaborations resulting in notable world premieres, including works by Carlo Domeniconi, John Baur, Reza Vali, Garry Eister, Gerard Drozd, Loris Chobanian, Arne Mellnas, Kamran Ince, Barbara Kolb, Marilyn Ziffrin, David Kechley, and Salvador Brotons. Most of these can be heard on her seven CDs. Her first recording, "24 Caprichos de Goya, Op. 195" (1994) composed by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco led her to develop a unique multimedia concert combining performance and commentary along with a visual presentation of Francisco Goya's satirical black and white etchings which inspired the guitar pieces. She still receives special requests to present this unique program today. Her second recording, "A Jug of Wine and Thou," (1999) was inspired by the famous Poem of Omar Khayyam and features arrangements of Persian melodies. Afshar was now attracting the interest of international composers and her third and fourth recordings, "Possession" (2002) and "Hemispheres" (2006) feature a combined total of eight world premieres. "Hemispheres" reached No. 7 on Billboard Magazine's Chart of Top Classical Albums in 2006 and attracted the attention of National Public Radio's Robert Siegel, who featured Afshar on "All Things Considered." Next came "One Thousand and One Nights," (2012) which was recorded and released in Iran. Her sixth album and chamber recording, "Musica da Camera" (2013), featured a world premiere by Russian composer Vladislav Uspensky in addition to compositions by Niccolò Paganini and Astor Piazzolla. Her latest album, "Bach on Fire" (2014), highlights a completely unique and intricate approach to J.S. Bach's guitar compositions. The arrangements on the album were taken from her book with Mel Bay's Essential Bach: Arranged for the Guitar by Lily Afshar. Afshar's Persian heritage has given rise to some of her greatest musical innovations. Born in Iran to a musical family, she has drawn from Persian and Azerbaijani folk music traditions to create arrangements of works for the classical guitar which are as rich and beautiful as a Persian miniature. She arranged for guitar and published Five Popular Persian Ballads with Mel Bay, and is presently creating a new collection of guitar arrangements of traditional Persian and Azerbaijani songs. She has also fascinated concert goers with occasional live performance on the setar, a traditional Persian instrument which evolved over many centuries into the guitar. A true citizen of the world, Afshar's concert touring has taken her to solo, chamber music and orchestral performance venues in North and South America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. From Wigmore Hall in London to the Kennedy Center for Performing Arts in Washington, she has played before a wide range of audiences and learned to bridge gaps of culture and distance through her music. For more information, please visit www.lilyafshar.com.



Hamed Afshari

Trained by Asadollah Malek, Farhad Harati, Majid Derakhshani, and Mohammad Reza Lotfi, Hamed Afshari is considered one of Iran's finest ghaychak players at the present time. A member of Shahnaz Ensemble touring with Mohammad Reza Shajarian and Majid Derakhshani since 2007 and with Khorshid Ensemble with Majid Derakhshani since 2005 is a testament to his musical talent and his impressive qualifications. He is also one of the founders of "Chargan Ensemble", the first Persian string quartet.



Amin Afshinmanesh

Amin started learning music at the age of 10 learning Santour (Persian Dulcimer) and at the age of 12 learning Daf (Persian frame drum). He studied music under the supervision of prominent musicians such as Siamak Aghaei, Ardavan Kamkar, Pashang Kamkar, Bijan Kamkar, Masoud Habibi, Alireza Javaheri, etc. He also took piano lessons from Mrs. Afsaneh Shahsa for two years. He was almost thirteen years old when he started his cooperation with ensembles such as Vaziri (Keivan Saket) and Dalahoo (Masoud Habibi). Since that age, Amin has also performed along with several other groups throughout Iran and Canada. He won the first prize of the International Fadjr Festival along with Zhwan Ensemble (Roham Sobhani) in 2008.



Bahram Aghakhan

Bahram Aghakhan was born in 1976 in Iran. He began learning classical guitar at the age of 13 with Kayvan Mirhadi. Two years later he started his autodidactic studies in flamenco, and until 2000, he continued working on these two styles in parallel. Since 1994 he has performed in many classical and flamenco concerts including the Concierto De Aranjuez by Joaquin Rodrigo & the Double Concierto by Astor Piazzolla. So far he has released 3 albums: The Song Of Matadors recorded with flamenco musician Kaveh Nasehi, Persianas, & La Cometa Del Oriente Mediano featuring flamenco singer Raul Mico. After immigrating to Montreal, Canada in 2014, Bahram participated in the Flamenco Festival of Montreal 2014 and began accompanying flamenco dancers at La Puerta Negra (Rae Bowhay), and Studio Pleamar (Myriam Allard), as well as performing with Maestra Lina Moros. Recently in Toronto he has started collaborating with Maria Serrano flamenco dance academy.



Nima Ahmadi

Born in 1988 in Tehran in a family of artists and musicians, Nima grew up with all kinds of musical instruments around him, falling in love with the guitar and rock music in his early teen years. He spent several years training with some of the best rock & roll guitar players in Iran and later formed a band with high school friends, playing gigs in spite of all the risks and limitations on musicians in Iran.

Nima moved to Toronto with his family in 2010, studied "Visual Effects for Film and TV" at Seneca College

and has been working as a VFX compositor in a number of well-known visual effects studios. He also played in different bands and on live shows with famous Iranian artists, but his real passion was to have his own band.

They formed “Rhythm and Vibes” together with his sister Sara (singer, songwriter, piano player) and a close friend, Siavash (percussionist).

“We enjoy every minute of writing, composing and playing our own songs and it is a real thrill to watch the number of our fans grow day by day”. –Nima Ahmadi



Sara Ahmadi

Sara Ahmadi Rad was born in Tehran in 1989 in a family with great passion for art and soon she knew that music, calligraphy and theatre were what she wanted to pursue for life. She started playing the piano in her early teens under professional piano instructors. Having completed a university degree in Persian Literature in Iran, she moved to Toronto in 2012 and later studied Theatre Production at Humber College. She started her career as a scenic painter, prop builder and puppeteer in the theatre industry after her graduation in April 2015. Sara started her singing career at the age of 18, working with bands in Iran and Toronto as backup vocalist and later as a lead singer. In 2013, together with her brother Nima (singer and guitar player) and a close friend Siavash Sadr Mahdavi (percussionist), they formed “Rhythm and Vibes”.



Padideh Ahrarnejad

Padideh Ahrarnejad is a musician, arranger, composer, and educator. She plays and teaches tar, a plucked-string instrument central to Persian music. A graduate of the Tehran Art Music School and the Art University of Tehran, Padideh studied tar with major figures of Persian music, including Behrouz Hemati, Hossein Alizadeh, and Hooshang Zarif. She has been the recipient of the award for best tar player at the Fadir Music Festival in Iran several times. A member of the Iran National Music Orchestra and the Radio and Television Orchestra for 10 years, Padideh has performed around the world, bringing Persian music to countries including Switzerland, China, Kuwait, Germany, Austria, and Canada. Her compositions and arrangements have appeared on Iranian television and radio, and she was selected to write arrangement for a group of Persian Ensembles at the Rumi Festival in Oslo, Norway. She has played with the Simorg Orchestra, and was a featured soloist in the album Honarmandan Javan, organized by Hossein Alizadeh, a legendary figure in contemporary Persian Music. Since emigrating to Toronto, Canada in 2016, she has become a member of the New Canadian Global Music Orchestra, a group of elite players from different musical traditions organized by the Royal Conservatory of Music, and has performed as a soloist at the Aga Khan Museum, the “Concert for Peace” in Ottawa organized by the Iranian-Canadian Composers of Toronto, and played with the Barg Ensemble at the Sarv Academy of Music (North York) and with Avaye Andalib at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Arts. She also performs in a trio with Maziar Heidari (piano) and Pedram Khavarzamani, and in the quartet the Iranian Modal Music Ensemble. Padideh lives in Toronto.



Mehran Aminian

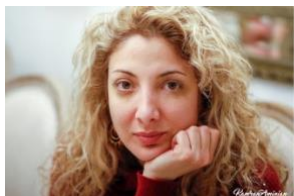
Mehran Aminian, an Iranian-Canadian lyricist, composer, and vocalist, was born in Iran in 1978. From early childhood, he was exposed to and fascinated by numerous music genres thanks to his art-loving family. Mehran started his musical career composing music for pop singers in Iran and worked with Iranian TV in a

number of projects.

He founded 'The Persis' in 2007 and exhibited his experiments in progressive rock as a bilingual album.

In addition to "The Persis", Mehran regularly writes solo tracks and performs as individual artist both in rock and pop genres.

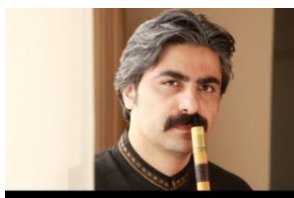
Mehran has a bachelor degree in Polymer Sciences engineering from Tehran Polytechnic.



Golrokh Aminian

Golrokh Aminian's (Khodabandehlou) love for singing and music goes back to her childhood and started by learning to play the violin; a passion she has been pursuing ever since. Before moving to Canada, she sang as a soprano at the Roudaki Hall of Tehran while studying vocal techniques with Mrs. Sanousian. She continued her singing journey here in Canada at the Royal Conservatory of Music and also studied vocal techniques and formal classical training in the field of Opera with Mrs. Norma Borrowes, a renowned opera singer. She also has a passion for poetry and derives great joy from brining her own music and poetry into life.

In 2015 she co-founded "Cultural Interchange-360", a not-for-profit organization, with Amir Rahbar, aiming to become a cross-cultural bridge, bringing people closer to each other through music. "Fridays...Farhad", a tribute to Farhad Mehrad is the latest event by CI-360 that was received excellently in 2016. Golrokh's most recent performance was in May of 2017 at the Aga Khan Museum, with a repertoire based on Hafez's poetry with an original composition.



Shahou Andalibi

(Musician, Singer, Composer and Music Teacher)

Shahou Andalibi started learning and performing Persian classical singing and Maqam music at the age 4 with his father, Iraj Andalibi, a well-known Persian musician whose work was especially appreciated amongst the Kurdish people of Iran. At the age of 6, he started playing daf with Maqam method under the supervision of great masters such as Khalifeh Mirza Agha, Khalife Karim and his grandfather, Haj Mirza Abdolsamad Andalibi who had his own style of teaching.

Pursuing his dream to become a great musician, Shahou started playing ney professionally at age 13 when only a handful of Persian musicians were able to perform this ancient instrument. His work followed by Avaye Andalib Ensemble alongside his father, Iraj Andalibi. His dedication to music as well as his desire to learn about the works of other cultures led him to start learning classical western in 1991.

Shahou obtained his Master's degree from the Art University of Tehran in 2007 specializing in Playing Iranian Musical Instrument. He has been an outstanding performer with more than 50 performances across the globe while accompanying the grandmaster Mohamadreza Shajarian and other ensembles. He is a skilful music teacher with more than 25 years of extensive experience.

The followings is the chorological history of his works performed in Iran, Europe, US, Canada, Australia, Lebanon and Turkey.

Concerts:

- Concert in memory of Halabjah in Sanandaj Theater with Avaye Andalib, 1991
- Concert in memory of his father Iraj Andalibi at the Niavaran Palace, 1993
- Collaborated with Molana Ensemble, 1996 to 2001
- Played with Shams Tambour Ensemble with Bijan Kamkar, 1998 to 2001
- Composer and conductor at Avaye Andalib ensemble, which led to many concerts in Tehran, Sanadaj, and Ramsar, 2003 – Present
- Joint Khorshid Ensemble with Master Majid Derakhshani, 2004 – Present
- Concert with Khorshid Ensemble with master Derakhshani in many cities in Iran including Tehran, Ardebil,

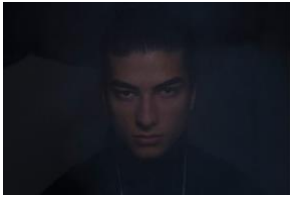
- Damghan, and Semnan and in China (Shanghai), France, and Germany, 2004 -2016
- UNESCO Concert at the Versai palace in Paris with Khorshid Ensemble, 2009
- Joint Ava Ensemble with grandmaster Shajarian and the last concert in Esfahan (Khorasgan Azad University), 2007 – Present
- Mah Ensemble with master Majid Derakhshani, 2007 – Present
- The Principle of Neyzar Music Academy with 25 teachers and over 250 students, 2007 – Present
- Shahnaz Ensemble held many concert tours in various countries including Canada, USA, Australia, Turkey, Scotland, Lebanon, and UAE, 2008 – Present
- Concert in Maniz with Grandmaster Shajarian, 2011
- Netherland Symphony Orchestra with Master Derakhshani, 2011
- Held various concert with Tal Ensemble and Master Farajalipour in Lorestan, Kurdistan, Tehran, and England. The Cadogan Hall, London, England Concert was podcasted by British Broadcast Channel (BBC), 2012
- “Didi ey Del” Concert with Grandmaster Shajarian in Los Angles, USA, 2012
- Mahbanu Ensemble with Master Majid Derakhshani in many countries including Australia, England, and Scotland. The vocals of Mahbanu Ensembles were two great female musicians namely Sahar Mohamadi, and Mahdieh Mohamadkhani, 2013
- Saadi Opera Puppet Show, Ney Player, Ferdowsi Hall, Tehran, Iran, 2015
- Concert with Khorshid Ensemble at Talar Vahdat Hall, Tehran, Iran, With Master Derakhshani as the composer, 2016
- Horaman Trio Ensemble at Wigmore Hall, London, England, With Fariborz Kiani and Arash Moradi, 2016

Albums:

- Mastan Salamat Mikonand, With Bijan Kamkar, Conducted by Master Keykhosro and Pournazeri, 1998
- Nishteman, With Naghmeh Tajadod and Maryam Ebrahimpour, Conducted by Master Keykhosro and Pournazeri, 1998
- Chupi, With Faraj Alipour, Conducted by Master Keykhosro and Pournazeri, 1998
- Sokut, With Eraj Bastami, Composed by Korosh Matin and conducted by Mohammad Jalil Andalibi, 2001
- Fasle Baran, With Alireza Ghorbani, Conducted by Mater Majid Derakhshani, 2005
- Boodan va Soroudan, With Mohammad Motamedi, Conducted by Mater Majid Derakhshani, 2005
- Lahzehaye Nab, with Hossein Reza Asadi, Conducted by Mater Majid Derakhshani, 2006
- Asmaneh, With Gholamreza Rezae, Conducted by Mater Majid Derakhshani, 2006
- Chavoshi, With Pouria Akhavas, Conducted by Mater Majid Derakhshani, 2008
- Mozhdeh Baran, With Ali Khodaei, Conducted by Mater Majid Derakhshani, 2009
- Bi Del, With Katayoun Godarzi, Conducted by Mater Majid Derakhshani, 2009
- Rendan Mast, With Great Master Shajarian “DelAvaz” Production, 2009
- Morghe Khoshkhan, With Great Master Shajarian “DelAvaz” Production, 2010
- Ahouye Vahshi, With Shahla, Conducted by Mater Majid Derakhshani, 2010
- Darya Del, With Mahdieh Mohammad Khani, Conducted by Mater Majid Derakhshani, 2011
- Khial Angiz, With Sedigh Tarif, Conducted by Mater Majid Derakhshani, 2011
- Na (Ney and Orchestra), Conducted by Mater Majid Derakhshani, 2012
- Konar, With Rahim Adnani, Conducted by Mater Majid Derakhshani, 2012
- Harir Shabnam, With Rahim Adnani, Conducted by Mater Majid Derakhshani, 2012
- Toranjestan, With Mahid Hossein Khani, Conducted by Mater Majid Derakhshani, 2012
- Nashmil Nashmil, Ghamar Ensemble, Conducted by Shahou Andalibisalem, 2013
- Khoroush, With Mojtaba Askari, Conducted by Mater Majid Derakhshani, 2013

Video presentations:

- Mara Bas, 2013
- Golrokh, 2013
- Motreb Majles, 2013
- Kheil Khan, 2013
- Ba toam, 2013
- Nasim Sahar, Composer Majid Derakhshani, 2013
- Tal, with master Farajalipour, 2013



Daniel Asadi

ASADI, a 21 year old producer from Columbus, Ohio, is dedicated to introducing a style of music he developed called Persian Trap Music. Offering a cinematically majestic sound with dauntless 808s and elaborate trap rhythms, ASADI shows his unsuspecting listeners that he can play it all live from scratch on his beat pad, the Maschine. The young producer pushes for his generation of electronic musicians to bring liveliness to their sets and to turn their controllers into instruments.

Daniel Asadi first started making Persian Trap Music when he was 16, sampling old cassettes his parents used to listen to. He started to play the Persian tar and setar, two very old and well known instruments from the Middle East. Today, he considers them as his main instruments, and incorporates them into his Persian Trap Music (PTM) as much as he can.

At the same time, Daniel was learning how to perform his music live from scratch off the Maschine, as opposed to simply 'pressing play' on a traditional DJ setup. The Maschine is a 16 channel beat/sample pad created by Native Instruments, and the company has noticed ASADI's talent, supporting and re-posting his work numerous times.

ASADI has opened for a few well known EDM artists including 7 Lions and Black Tiger Sex Machine, and is locked in for performing many major festivals and shows throughout the US, including Electric Forest 2017 and Euphoria Music Festival 2017. His track 'Throne' was released November 30th, 2016 and has reached #3 on Spotify's viral 50 charts in the United States, topping artists including Steve Aoki and The Roots.



Ava Ayoubi

(Bass tar) She was born in 1978 in Tehran and plays the Tar, Bamtar, and Piano. She studied at Tehran Music Academy and earned her B.A. in Music. She is a ten-time returning participant of the Fajr Music Festival. She has also been an active musician in concerts held in Germany, Switzerland (Buskersbern Festival) Belgium , France , China and Kuwait. Some of her other activities include collaboration with the following ensembles: Iranian National Orchestra, Dehlavi Mezbabi Orchestra, Naghmeye Kimiya, Khonya, Golbang, and Khojaste . She is also an active musician for Iran's National TV broadcasting.



Kourosh Babai

Kourosh started learning the violin at the age of 12 and he switched to Kamancheh after a few years.

As a teenager, he played in several famous traditional music ensembles and he has played many concerts and international music festivals.

He is a graduate from the Art and Architectural University in Graphics and Advertising field in Tehran and he continues being active in this field.



Oriana Barbato

Oriana Barbato is a versatile bassist with an eclectic style and a vast experience in the Toronto live music scene. This Chilean musician keeps busy playing bass for tabla soaked electronica project Rakkatak and for the urban latin flamenco fusion band Santerías, as well as offering services as a freelance musician. Past collaborations include ska/reggae super group Random Order, hip hop/reggae tour de force crew El Blanco Collective, high energy rock and rollers The Johnnys, hard rockers Cathartic and Quwwali ensemble Indiantouch. Oriana's adaptability, work ethic, and professionalism have brought her to stages across North America and Europe, where she has shared the stage and been billed alongside with world - renowned musicians such as latin/flamenco fusion act TaKiLo, Catalan cumbia group La Troba Kung Fu, Qawwali master Shahid Ali Khan, Warwick endorsed bass prodigy Jorge Campos and Juno award - winning Canadian songwriter Bif Naked.



Sina Bathaie

Sina Bathaie, composer and santur player based in Toronto is known for his unique style and approach toward Persian contemporary music. His hypnotic performances have garnered him fans from across the globe. Born in Iran, Sina started learning santur at the age 7 from his father, Master Javad Bathaie. He then followed his passion in music by practicing Persian classical repertoire (Radif) with the instrument Oud and explored the concept of rhythm by learning Tonbak (Persian Percussion).

Sina entered the world music scenes soon after moving to Canada, and got recognition by being featured at Luminato festival , In/Future, Small World Music Festival, Mundial Montreal, CBC radio Metro Morning and in festivals such as Open Mind, Quiet Strings, South Asia Calling, Aga khan Museum, ...etc. Sina also developed his own style of music through years of experimental collaboration and attending artist residencies such as the Banff Centre for Performing Art and achieved a unique sound in world fusion music which has received many positive reviews.

His first album "Sound of Silence" was recorded and produced in Montreal and has been acclaimed by music critics. Sina has also been active in movie industry and composed original music for movies such as "The horse Latitudes" and "Un royaume démenage".



Arash Behzadi

As a Canadian Iranian whose musical evolution has its beginnings in traditional Persian folk music, Arash Behzadi has shaped his unique piano compositions, transcending over time into a unique and very personal direction.

In a series of recent visits to Bali he found an unexpected inner peace and tranquility in the timeless island's ancient sacred temples, in its gentle people, its peaceful and pristine waterfalls and emerald rice fields – gentle evocative images all captured in his soon to be released video, *Peace Within*, a soothing, tranquil composition he created as a tribute to the Balinese people and their culture.

Arash's soulful searching has evolved in the last few years, spurred by a dedication to yoga along with explorations into a variety of art forms and fresh interpretations of New Age music – all in a quest for new and evocative visual metaphors to frame his musical stories and to create a platform that invites the interplay of dance, theatrical performance, film and animation.

His solo piano compositions are musical narratives that reflect the ups and down of life through deeply personal stories and transformative experiences which he invites his audience to share.

“I am an actor reliving my experiences in an intensely personal and intimate way,” he explains. “I feel the energy in the room and I respond. I want to touch the deepest part of the audience’s souls with the deepest part of *my* soul. I feel that my music is universal – it speaks to people of all ages.”

In the wake of his life changing sojourn in Bali – where he was twice invited to return to play – Arash is shaping a new path, one of healing and rejuvenation. [SEP] [SEP] “We all have places where we are stuck emotionally,” he says. “Music can open up those channels, perhaps to a place of peace and calm or to one of intense release. Music can change people’s lives.” His audiences often speak of being emotionally awakened and profoundly moved, of experiencing a sense of relief and healing.



Mahsa Bigdeloo

Mahsa received her Masters degree in Psychology from Allame Tabatabaei University. In 2009 she started playing santoor under the instructions of Maestro Ramin Safaei. She participated as a Santoor player in two videos, Booye Bahar and Ba Toam, by Rozita Yousefi.

Mahsa also received training in playing daff with Shahou Andalibi. She is taking santoor lessons with Mr. Saeed Naeimi Manesh.

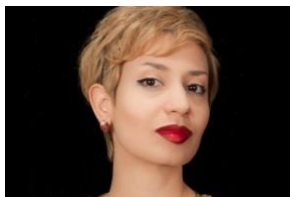
Mahsa began singing with Hoorvash Khalili and continued to learn singing techniques under the instructions of Mehdi Emami. Her focus on learning radif with Solmaz Badri is based on Taher Zadeh patterns.

Mahsa also plays dosarkotan, a percussion instrument belonging to north of Iran.



Peter Bull

Peter is a freelance bass player, composer, teacher and producer based out of Toronto. With formal training in Canada, and in New York City, he has a strong background in jazz and a foreground in just about everything else. Peter grew up in a very musical house where he encountered many types of music from Bach to the Beatles, traditional African music to The Specials, Frank Zappa, Bartok and many more. Peter currently leads his own jazz fusion quartet, Dog Leg Dilemma and collaborates with a wide range of other groups throughout the city.



Shahrzad Dastoornezhad

Shahrzad Dastoornezhad was born in Shiraz in 1985 has been working professionally in music for over 10 years. She studied music at the BIHE University and Vocals at the Komitas Conservatory. As a vocalist, she has performed in Iran, Armenia and recently in Canada with Toronto Mendelsohn Choir for one year, 2014-2015, Toronto City Opera “Die Fledermaus” for one semester, 2015. She performed with Toronto Symphony Orchestra, “Beethoven Symphony 9” in 2014; in addition she has performed Iranian pieces in “Shabhaye Duradur” in 2016 and worked with Iranian composers like Reza Vali, Loris Tjeknovarian and Dr. Rouhani.



Golmehr Davanloo

Golmehr graduated as a Pharmacist in 2007. She began training in Persian traditional vocal arts under Mrs. Mohajer's supervision in Toronto, and gained knowledge of Avaz techniques and singing.



Fariba Davody

Fariba Davody began singing at the age of 7. As a child, she competed in local talent shows impressing audiences with her natural singing abilities.

She learned music and singing from Hengameh Akhavan, Fakhri Maleki, Fereydoun Moshiri, Mohsen Keramati, Jansouz Dadbeh, Ahmad Ebrahimi, Mozafar Shafiei and Mohammadreza Shajarian and studied music theory with Hossein Alizadeh and Mohammadreza Lotfi.

She earned a BS degree in Economics and Banking, but continued her education as a musician and vocalist by taking relevant courses in Iran.

Fariba first captured the public's eyes as a vocalist with a group of musicians and singers in Iran performing classic Persian covers and donating her fees to victims of cancer and diabetes.

She later established a solo career, becoming a well-known artist attracting record producers. She founded "Avaye Mehr" music and art school in Iran, immigrated to Canada with her family in 2010, and has performed in live concerts and held singing workshops in Halifax, Montreal and Toronto since.

She has also had several concerts with Dastan Group in Halifax and Constantinople in Montreal as well as Shiraz Group in Toronto. In Addition, she has performed in festivals such as Prismatic and Multicultural.

Fariba Davody is running "Avaye Mehr" music and art school both in Iran and Canada. She is also teaching singing to children.



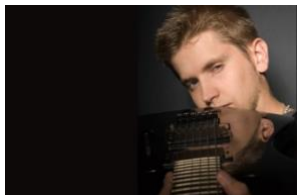
Majid Derakhshani



Morgan Doctor

Morgan first picked up drumsticks when she was 10 years old. From junior high school band to Radio City Music Hall, her career has been nothing less than expansive and inspiring. She has played over a thousand dates all over the U.S., Canada and Europe. She currently plays with Andy Kim (Arts and Crafts), Chantal Kreviazuk, Raine Maida and Rita Chiarelli. She has drummed with The Cliks (Warner/Tommyboy), Ron Sexsmith, Kevin Drew, Alex Lifeson, Feist and Sandra Bernhard. Some artists Morgan has been billed alongside—on tour throughout the U.S. and Canada—include Cyndi Lauper, B-52's, Tegan and Sara, The Cult, The New York Dolls, Indigo Girls, the Gossip, Dresden Dolls, Debbie Harry, The Stars, and plenty others.^[1]^[2]^[3]^[4]^[5]^[6]^[7]^[8]^[9]^[10]^[11]^[12]^[13]^[14]^[15]^[16]^[17]^[18]^[19]^[20]^[21]^[22]^[23]^[24]^[25]^[26]^[27]^[28]^[29]^[30]^[31]^[32]^[33]^[34]^[35]^[36]^[37]^[38]^[39]^[40]^[41]^[42]^[43]^[44]^[45]^[46]^[47]^[48]^[49]^[50]^[51]^[52]^[53]^[54]^[55]^[56]^[57]^[58]^[59]^[60]^[61]^[62]^[63]^[64]^[65]^[66]^[67]^[68]^[69]^[70]^[71]^[72]^[73]^[74]^[75]^[76]^[77]^[78]^[79]^[80]^[81]^[82]^[83]^[84]^[85]^[86]^[87]^[88]^[89]^[90]^[91]^[92]^[93]^[94]^[95]^[96]^[97]^[98]^[99]^[100]^[101]^[102]^[103]^[104]^[105]^[106]^[107]^[108]^[109]^[110]^[111]^[112]^[113]^[114]^[115]^[116]^[117]^[118]^[119]^[120]^[121]^[122]^[123]^[124]^[125]^[126]^[127]^[128]^[129]^[130]^[131]^[132]^[133]^[134]^[135]^[136]^[137]^[138]^[139]^[140]^[141]^[142]^[143]^[144]^[145]^[146]^[147]^[148]^[149]^[150]^[151]^[152]^[153]^[154]^[155]^[156]^[157]^[158]^[159]^[160]^[161]^[162]^[163]^[164]^[165]^[166]^[167]^[168]^[169]^[170]^[171]^[172]^[173]^[174]^[175]^[176]^[177]^[178]^[179]^[180]^[181]^[182]^[183]^[184]^[185]^[186]^[187]^[188]^[189]^[190]^[191]^[192]^[193]^[194]^[195]^[196]^[197]^[198]^[199]^[200]^[201]^[202]^[203]^[204]^[205]^[206]^[207]^[208]^[209]^[210]^[211]^[212]^[213]^[214]^[215]^[216]^[217]^[218]^[219]^[220]^[221]^[222]^[223]^[224]^[225]^[226]^[227]^[228]^[229]^[230]^[231]^[232]^[233]^[234]^[235]^[236]^[237]^[238]^[239]^[240]^[241]^[242]^[243]^[244]^[245]^[246]^[247]^[248]^[249]^[250]^[251]^[252]^[253]^[254]^[255]^[256]^[257]^[258]^[259]^[260]^[261]^[262]^[263]^[264]^[265]^[266]^[267]^[268]^[269]^[270]^[271]^[272]^[273]^[274]^[275]^[276]^[277]^[278]^[279]^[280]^[281]^[282]^[283]^[284]^[285]^[286]^[287]^[288]^[289]^[290]^[291]^[292]^[293]^[294]^[295]^[296]^[297]^[298]^[299]^[300]^[301]^[302]^[303]^[304]^[305]^[306]^[307]^[308]^[309]^[310]^[311]^[312]^[313]^[314]^[315]^[316]^[317]^[318]^[319]^[320]^[321]^[322]^[323]^[324]^[325]^[326]^[327]^[328]^[329]^[330]^[331]^[332]^[333]^[334]^[335]^[336]^[337]^[338]^[339]^[340]^[341]^[342]^[343]^[344]^[345]^[346]^[347]^[348]^[349]^[350]^[351]^[352]^[353]^[354]^[355]^[356]^[357]^[358]^[359]^[360]^[361]^[362]^[363]^[364]^[365]^[366]^[367]^[368]^[369]^[370]^[371]^[372]^[373]^[374]^[375]^[376]^[377]^[378]^[379]^[380]^[381]^[382]^[383]^[384]^[385]^[386]^[387]^[388]^[389]^[390]^[391]^[392]^[393]^[394]^[395]^[396]^[397]^[398]^[399]^[400]^[401]^[402]^[403]^[404]^[405]^[406]^[407]^[408]^[409]^[410]^[411]^[412]^[413]^[414]^[415]^[416]^[417]^[418]^[419]^[420]^[421]^[422]^[423]^[424]^[425]^[426]^[427]^[428]^[429]^[430]^[431]^[432]^[433]^[434]^[435]^[436]^[437]^[438]^[439]^[440]^[441]^[442]^[443]^[444]^[445]^[446]^[447]^[448]^[449]^[450]^[451]^[452]^[453]^[454]^[455]^[456]^[457]^[458]^[459]^[460]^[461]^[462]^[463]^[464]^[465]^[466]^[467]^[468]^[469]^[470]^[471]^[472]^[473]^[474]^[475]^[476]^[477]^[478]^[479]^[480]^[481]^[482]^[483]^[484]^[485]^[486]^[487]^[488]^[489]^[490]^[491]^[492]^[493]^[494]^[495]^[496]^[497]^[498]^[499]^[500]^[501]^[502]^[503]^[504]^[505]^[506]^[507]^[508]^[509]^[510]^[511]^[512]^[513]^[514]^[515]^[516]^[517]^[518]^[519]^[520]^[521]^[522]^[523]^[524]^[525]^[526]^[527]^[528]^[529]^[530]^[531]^[532]^[533]^[534]^[535]^[536]^[537]^[538]^[539]^[540]^[541]^[542]^[543]^[544]^[545]^[546]^[547]^[548]^[549]^[550]^[551]^[552]^[553]^[554]^[555]^[556]^[557]^[558]^[559]^[560]^[561]^[562]^[563]^[564]^[565]^[566]^[567]^[568]^[569]^[570]^[571]^[572]^[573]^[574]^[575]^[576]^[577]^[578]^[579]^[580]^[581]^[582]^[583]^[584]^[585]^[586]^[587]^[588]^[589]^[590]^[591]^[592]^[593]^[594]^[595]^[596]^[597]^[598]^[599]^[600]^[601]^[602]^[603]^[604]^[605]^[606]^[607]^[608]^[609]^[610]^[611]^[612]^[613]^[614]^[615]^[616]^[617]^[618]^[619]^[620]^[621]^[622]^[623]^[624]^[625]^[626]^[627]^[628]^[629]^[630]^[631]^[632]^[633]^[634]^[635]^[636]^[637]^[638]^[639]^[640]^[641]^[642]^[643]^[644]^[645]^[646]^[647]^[648]^[649]^[650]^[651]^[652]^[653]^[654]^[655]^[656]^[657]^[658]^[659]^[660]^[661]^[662]^[663]^[664]^[665]^[666]^[667]^[668]^[669]^[670]^[671]^[672]^[673]^[674]^[675]^[676]^[677]^[678]^[679]^[680]^[681]^[682]^[683]^[684]^[685]^[686]^[687]^[688]^[689]^[690]^[691]^[692]^[693]^[694]^[695]^[696]^[697]^[698]^[699]^[700]^[701]^[702]^[703]^[704]^[705]^[706]^[707]^[708]^[709]^[710]^[711]^[712]^[713]^[714]^[715]^[716]^[717]^[718]^[719]^[720]^[721]^[722]^[723]^[724]^[725]^[726]^[727]^[728]^[729]^[730]^[731]^[732]^[733]^[734]^[735]^[736]^[737]^[738]^[739]^[740]^[741]^[742]^[743]^[744]^[745]^[746]^[747]^[748]^[749]^[750]^[751]^[752]^[753]^[754]^[755]^[756]^[757]^[758]^[759]^[760]^[761]^[762]^[763]^[764]^[765]^[766]^[767]^[768]^[769]^[770]^[771]^[772]^[773]^[774]^[775]^[776]^[777]^[778]^[779]^[780]^[781]^[782]^[783]^[784]^[785]^[786]^[787]^[788]^[789]^[790]^[791]^[792]^[793]^[794]^[795]^[796]^[797]^[798]^[799]^[800]^[801]^[802]^[803]^[804]^[805]^[806]^[807]^[808]^[809]^[810]^[811]^[812]^[813]^[814]^[815]^[816]^[817]^[818]^[819]^[820]^[821]^[822]^[823]^[824]^[825]^[826]^[827]^[828]^[829]^[830]^[831]^[832]^[833]^[834]^[835]^[836]^[837]^[838]^[839]^[840]^[841]^[842]^[843]^[844]^[845]^[846]^[847]^[848]^[849]^[850]^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MTV CRIBS, MTV Total Request Live, IFC, CNN, Craig Ferguson, etc.) and live radio shows, awards ceremonies, TV and radio commercials, sold out theaters and arenas, music videos, and countless full length Albums. She also performed and won at MTV LOGO's "Artist on the Brink" Award for 2008 with The Clinks. She received a Dora nomination for her sound design for "Between Us Goddess" in 2005 and earned a Juno and Dora nomination with her work with The Toronto Tabla Ensemble in 2001. Morgan's session drumming has turned up on TV and Film Soundtracks including the CBC Metro Morning, The L Word, and Grey's Anatomy. Morgan is a big advocate of music education and teaches at Girls Rock Camp Toronto as a drum instructor and band coach.



Tom Frelek

Tom Frelek's love for music happened at an early age while listening to pop rock, rock tapes and musical soundtracks. Artists such as Elvis and The Beatles were a large part of Tom's influences early on. In 1995 bands like Silver Chair and Bush started to have a large influence on Tom as he particularly loved the sound of the heavy guitar. After seeing his first acoustic guitar, he fell in love with the instrument and started to take classical lessons which he excelled at quite quickly. He would play hard rock tunes on his classical guitar and practice every day for many hours.

Then, one mysterious day, Tom heard of the band Metallica, and specifically the song "Master of Puppets". Within the first few seconds of that heavy crunching riff, Tom's love for metal was born. Tom states, the second I heard Master of Puppets I had this huge shiver that went through my entire body as if something new and exciting had happened. This new love for metal and overall technicality sparked his interest in many other influences such as Black Sabbath, Iron Maiden, Dio, and In Flames. His love for instrumentation came heavy into play in the discovery of Paul Gilbert, Joe Satriani, Al Dimeola and John Petrucci. In 2003, Frelek went to school for Audio Engineering and quickly learned the tricks of the trade for creating and recording music. He would write and record tunes with his cousin for many months and play odd gigs here and there. The same year he formed a heavy metal band with his high school friends that would go by the name of Reverie. They recorded and played shows throughout 2007, but they are on hiatus at this moment. The album was also produced, mixed and mastered by Frelek.

After Reverie, Frelek hooked up with one of his best friends who was drumming at the time and formed a progressive metal band, Third Dynasty. This band was a big step as prog rock, Jazz and classical music came into Frelek's life. As time went on guitar playing was prominent in Tom's life; he would have a daily practice routine and start producing many styles of music for local artists. It was during this time he began writing his instrumental solo rock album, Moment Of Certainty released in March 26, 2010. It just happened naturally, as I was doing different projects at the same time. Tom is in the process of creating his second solo album that should be out later this year.

In 2015 Tom recruited Henrik Bath, Mike Lepond, and Marco Minnemann and created his new progressive metal band/project Waken Eyes. With great success the band released the album Exodus which gained much popularity. Waken Eyes are working on their follow up album in 2017.



Golnar Ghazvinian

Golnar has a BA in English. She has been receiving vocal training under Mrs. Mohajer's supervision in Toronto since 2012.



Ramiz Guliyev

Prof. Ramiz Guliyev was born in 1947 in Azerbaijan. In 1969 he graduated from the Azerbaijan State Conservatory (now Music Academy) named after Uzeyir Hadjibeyli with golden medal.

In 1974 he won the 1st prize at the Transcaucasian Competition of national instrument players and 5th All-Union Competition in Moscow, among 1200 participants. Since then he has been in great demand as a soloist and tar player (tar–Azerbaijan national instrument).

Ramiz Guliyev has given concerts in Holland, Switzerland, Germany, Japan, USA, Canada, Denmark, France, England, Israel, Poland, Russia, Turkey, India, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Tunis and also many African and Asian countries.

R. Guliyev has performed around the world with the orchestras such as the Trondheim symphony orchestra (Norway), Bern Chamber Orchestra “La Strimpellata” (Switzerland), Podlasie Opera and Philharmonic Orchestra, Lublin and Koszalin Philharmonic Orchestras (Poland), Moldova Philharmonic and State TV Radio Orchestra, State Symphony Orchestra of Russia, Academic State Orchestra of National Instruments of the Russia Broadcasting Company, Bandstand Symphony Orchestra of Russia, State Academic orchestra of the Russian national instruments named after N.Osipov, Novosibirsk and Kaliningrad Philharmonic Orchestras, Belarusian State Academic Symphony Orchestra and State Symphony Orchestra of Uzbekistan. He collaborated with many famous conductors –D.Klayner (Germany), G.Mustu (Moldova), N.Nekrasov, A. Mikhailov, . V. Andropov (Russia), V.Hagnazarov (Uzbekistan), Niyazi, R. Abdullayev, R. Melik-Aslanov, Y. Adigezalov (Azerbaijan) and others.

He has participated in several prestigious festivals, among them 3rd Samarkand International Music Festival-Symposium (Uzbekistan, 1987); International Festival of Folklore Music (USA, 1988), where he has been awarded with the “ Special Prize of UNESCO for the high skill of performance”; Annually International Music Festival “Great Silk Road” in Japan (1989) – during the 40 days of this festival R.Guliyev toured 30 cities of Japan ; Lutzern International Music Festival (Switzerland, 1999), Stavanger Music Festival (2003, Norway), International Festival of National Music (Yerusalem, 1999),” Fader Music Festival” (Iran, 2003-2007) and etc. In March of 1997 R.Guliyev performed at the concerts dedicated to the 70th jubilee of outstanding cellist and conductor M. Rostropovitch in Baku. After the concerts maestro Rostropovitch invited him to take part in the Anniversary Gala-Concert at the Grand Hall of the Moscow State Conservatory.

Besides the performing activity, prof. Ramiz Guliyev has dedicated much of his time and energy to pedagogical work at the Baku Music Academy (He started teaching in 1962).



Pejman Hadadi

World-renowned, Pejman Hadadi is considered one of the most innovative Iranian percussionists. He was born in Tehran, Iran on February 19, 1969. At the age of 10 he began studying tombak, the central drum in traditional Persian music with Master Tombak player, Assadollah Hejazi for 2 years and owes the foundation of his training to this Master’s precise teaching. He continued his training for a brief time with Master tombak player, Bahman Rajabi who exposed him to an entirely different approach of playing the instrument. Pejman tirelessly followed the various styles of famous tombak players and was captivated by such great Masters as Hossein Tehrani, Nasser Farhangfar and Morteza Ayan who influenced him greatly through their recordings. After some time, he felt drawn to the other main percussive instrument in the tradition, namely the sacred frame drum known as the Daf.

Pejman immigrated to the US in 1989 and began his professional career in 1991. After collaborating with a few different music ensembles Oshagh and Nava, he began performing with Master musician and composer, Hossein Alizadeh in several concerts in the US which led him to pursue music with more diligence. In 1995, he joined **Dastan Ensemble**, the highly celebrated and “most-forward looking Persian music ensemble” (LA

Weekly). Pejman has recorded countless critically acclaimed pioneering works with **Dastan** and continues to perform with the ensemble in some of the world's most noted concert halls.



Maziar Heidari

Maziar Heidari, a Juno Award judge, holds a Masters Degree in Conducting from the University of Toronto. He works as an Assistant Conductor for the Hart House Orchestra, as a pianist for Orchestra Toronto, as Music Director and Conductor for the ICOT Symphony Orchestra and as a freelance educator, pianist, composer and conductor in Canada. Maziar Heidari began his musical studies at the age of five, with one of Iran's most famous piano professors, Ardeshir Rohani. He completed composition lessons with Farhad Fakhreddini (a well-known Iranian composer and conductor). In 2003, Maziar was admitted to the Art University of Tehran where he studied with well-known Iranian musicians such as Ahmad Pejman, Sharif Lotfi, Hossein Dehlavi, Mostafa Pourtorab, Siavash Beizaii, as well as Tolib Shakhid, from the Moscow Conservatoire, and Khayyam Mirzazade from Azerbaijan State Conservatoire. He was a piano and orchestration tutor for the Art University of Tehran for six years. Maziar served as Composer, Assistant Conductor and pianist for the Iran National Music Orchestra for more than 10 years. He is a professional member of the Canadian League of Composers (affiliate composer) as well as SOCAN and the Canadian Music Centre (associate composer). He is also one of the co-founders of Iranian-Canadian Composers of Toronto (ICOT).



Lisbeth Helgesen

A singer-songwriter and mostly self-taught guitar-, piano- and cajon- player, Lisbeth has performed at various venues in Ontario with her own music and also as back-up vocalist and soloist with various bands. Brought up in a musical family where "everyone plays something", she moved to Canada from her native Norway at the age of 23.

While music is her main passion, languages is a second – and she is thrilled to fuse the two by also performing in Persian, a language she is currently learning. She has a keen interest and love for the art, culture, music, cuisine and people of Iran.

Lisbeth has been a member of The Persis since late 2015.



Habib Hoseini

Habib Hoseini is a Persian classical singer. He was one of the 35 young singers selected by the great maestro Mohammad Reza Shajarian among 2000 participants in an audition held by Iranian Academy of the Arts in 2007 to attend Shajarian's master classes, where he continued his studies in Persian classical music and voice training with maestro Shajarian for 7 years. Habib's singing has its roots in Persian classical and folk music. However, living in Canada has provided him with the opportunity to extend his experience in collaboration with musician from other cultures and nationalities.

Habib has recorded and performed in different ensembles as a soloist in both Iran and Canada.

He has also been invited to perform in some very outstanding musical festivals and events. He is currently working on two new albums in Persian and multicultural music.



Ilia Hosseini

Ilia Hosseini was born in 1980 in Isfahan, Iran. He started learning the Tombak from Enayatollah Moghen in his childhood, continued learning from Majid Hesabi, and later attended Bahman Rajabi's music classes. Before immigration to Canada, he was teaching Tombak in Tehran. He is now a member of "Varashan Percussion Ensemble", experimenting innovative methods of performance with Pedram Khavarzamani.



Parastoo Hosseini

Parastoo has worked radif with Hoorvash Khalili and Maestra Parisa, piano with Farman Behbood, santur with Saieed Naeemimanes, and daf with Shahou Andalibi.



Maneli Jamal

Acoustic guitarist Maneli Jamal has lived in five different countries (Iran, Belarus, Germany, USA, Canada) and moved twenty times by the time he was 18. The young artist gained a sense of musical maturity rarely seen among his peers especially when he transforms his nomadic life experiences into musical movements using extended guitar techniques. There aren't many players in his style that have Jamal's balance of power and sensitivity, nor his breadth of ideas.

His rhythmic concepts can be alternately short and dense, or explored carefully through several movements and real life stories. This becomes evident with having won countless music competitions around the world including most recently placing 1st at Canada's Soundclash Music Awards. Having been brought up in a purely artistic and musical family has contributed to shape his unique and comical story telling approach in live settings. He has already performed in 5 continents and 15 countries as a solo performer, has a signature model acoustic guitar named after him and was on the front cover of 2015 Toronto magazine (500,000 copies distributed worldwide). The world is his home and he plays from one end to the other.



Shahriyar Jamshidi

Shahriyar Jamshidi is a Kurdish Iranian Kamanche player, composer, vocalist, founder of the Dilan Chamber Ensemble and co-performer at Kamancello. A graduate of Tehran University of Art and a former artist-in-residence at Banff Centre, Shahriyar has devoted his artistic career to the preservation and transmission of the Kurdish musical heritage. He is also well known as a creative Kurdish Kamanche improviser. Shahriyar has performed at numerous Iranian music venues and had interviews and live performances on several channels including, Roudaki Hall, Kurdistan TV and The Voice of America Kurdish. Since settling in Canada in 2012, he has consistently sought new musical languages, thereby crossing cultural boundaries with his Kamanche recitals. He has already performed at Toronto's Tirgan Festival twice, International Society for Improvised Music (ISIM) in Switzerland and Canada, High-Fest in Armenia, Festival du Monde Arabe and Ontario

Contact. Shahryar's released albums are Alvanati, Call of the Mountains, A Yellow Flower. Kamancello is poised to release their groundbreaking debut full-length album later this year.



Y Josephine

Y Josephine is a Venezuelan singer/songwriter, percussionist, writer, and visual artist. She has presented and published her work throughout Venezuela, Aruba, Spain, UK and Canada. Best known for her distinct vocals and cajon-playing, Y has worked with such musicians as Rigel Michelena, Gustavo Dal Farra (El Rabo del Ojo), Joan Tena, Kabanayen and Des louns. In a 4-star review in December 2007, Edinburgh's The Skinny (magazine) said, "Y Josephine. plays guitar, somehow gets a whole drum kit out of a Peruvian fruit box, and sings in a sweet, smoky, untouchably cool voice." In addition to her work as a performing/recording artist and as a poet, Y Josephine also studied visual art at Telford College in Scotland and was recently selected to be one of the Watah School's Artists in Residence. Since 2013, Y Josephine has been recording, performing and teaching in Ontario as part of the duo Amai Kuda and Y Josephine, otherwise known as 'Y and Amai.' Their new CD, AfroSoul Volume II: MaZai, has been described by CBC's Errol Nazareth as "Earthy and rootsy and good for your ears." You can find them at www.ynamai.com, on Facebook and Youtube or check out Y Josephine's music at <https://soundcloud.com/y-josephine>. Y Josephine's latest music sensation is her new band Baoba an all-women funk-samba-latin-afro soul percussion group.



Ali Kamali

Ali Kamali is a bass player, mixing engineer and music producer. He is best known for being the bass player for the band "Kiosk", He studied applied audio recording at the Audio Recording Academy in Toronto and he is the owner of "arkwaves" Music Studio.



Mohammad Kamali

Mohammad is a Gilaki folklore vocalist and the co-founder of Kanoone Doostarane Gilan. He has performed in many cultural events, including Tirgan in Toronto and the annual Persian Festival in New York City. Mohammad collaborated with the Sarv Ensemble, Nava Ensemble, Amir Rahbar and Andalibi Ensemble.



Saeed Kamjoo

Saeed Kamjoo is an Iranian musician and composer. He graduated in Music from Tehran University and continued his studies with renowned masters such as Aredshir Kamkar, Ali Akbar Shekarchi and Master Asghar Bahari.

Kamjoo's approach to playing kamanche is based on his perception of the values inherent in classical Persian music. Combining creativity and authenticity with innovation, although his music has its roots in classical Persian music, he allows himself to explore new territories.

Kamjoo has recorded many albums and performed in numerous music festivals all around the world. He has also performed as guest artist with Parissa and Dastan Ensemble.

His most recent album "No Dawn, No Dusk" for Qheychak solo was released by Mahoor Records in summer of 2016.



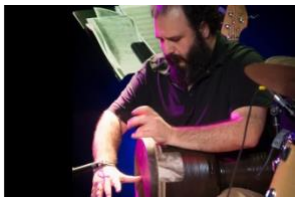
Kianoush Khalilian

Kianoush Khalilian (Ney, Persian Flute) started professional training in music with distinguished Iranian masters in 1990 and ranked first in the Ney performance competition across Iranian schools nationwide in 1995.

He ranked third in the category of musical composition in Iranian Youth Music Festival, 2009. He is a permanent member of Iranian House of Music (Khaneh Musighi Iran) since 10 years ago, and first class affiliate of the Iranian Institute of Music.

His biography has been published in the book "The Face of Iranian Artists" (Seemaye Honarmandane Iran) authored by Habibollah Nasirifar, 2008 and he has been awarded a First Rate Ney Master Teaching Certificate from the Ministry of Art and Culture of Iran. He also has a Certificate of Iranian Traditional Music (Radif navazi) from maestro Hassan Nahid.

His book, Lessons on Playing Ney, is under publication. Kianoush has performed in over 40 concerts nationwide in Iran and several international concerts including: Tirgan, Toronto Jazz Festival, Toronto Botanical Garden music festival, and Aga Khan Museum.



Pedram Khavarzamani

Pedram Khavarzamani, one of the world's foremost Iranian Tombak players, lived in France for a few years, then moved to Canada in 2014. Tombak is the main percussion instrument in classical Persian music, and Pedram is considered to be one of the most interesting players. He started to learn playing the Tombak alongside masters Kamyar Mohabbat and Bahman Rajabi. A talented student, he performed in concert with Bahman Rajabi, a duet for Tombak. Pedram founded his own Percussion-Tombak group, named VARASHAN. He released his album KOOTAH, compositions of Pedram for group of Tombak and Persian percussions, with

Hamid Ghambari, which was produced in Iran and Europe. His thrilling technique in playing Tombak coupled with his musical influences (Persian, Indian, Turkish, Jazz and more) have given him the privilege of being a very unique Tombak player. Pedram knows how to mix the traditional Iranian foundation with his own modern patterns. Through this alchemy, he creates active rhythms and new sounds. His extremely developed sense of improvisation and his ability of adaptation give a unique colour to each of his concerts. He is known as one of the finest musicians of the new generation of Persian classical music.



Pooria Khorshidi

Pooria started learning music with tombak from an early age studying under many great instructors including Majid Hesabi and Bahman Rajabi. He continued his musical journey by learning daf under the guidance of great masters such as Khalifeh Mirza Agha. He ranked second in the Fajr Music Festival of 1373 and participated in different international music festivals such as London Jazz Festival. He has been a daf instructor for Maqam method since 2008



Anwar Khurshid

Anwar is trained in Indian Classical Music and performs at the highest level. As the director of Sitar School of Toronto he has extensive teaching experience. Anwar has been performing for the last two years under prologue with Sultans of String. Anwar has collaborated in various genre bending collaborations with other great World music groups; Paul Deslauriers Band – Blues, Avani – Jazz. His song, “Ho Jamalo” won the best song amongst 18,000 entries in a world music song writing competition. After winning the Canadian folk music award his work has now been nominated for the World Music Album of the year (2017) for the JUNOs. His music was featured in Oscar-winning film Life of Pi, Love Guru as well as Kama Sutra. Performing internationally with musicians from Blues, Jazz, African, Middle Eastern and Chinese genres, Anwar’s innovative collaborations create music transcending categorization.



Alinima Madani

Alinima was born in 1974 and started playing Tombak at a young age in his hometown of Isfahan under the supervision of Majid Hesabi. Later for a period, he worked under the supervision of Meastros Naser Farhangfar and Pedram Khavarzamani. Since 2009 in Canada, he has been performing with Sarv Ensemble in several projects including Aydaneh in 2012 and in VOA Nowruz program in 2015 in addition to a number of duets in Royal Museum of Ontario at Iranian Heritage day and The Royal Conservatory at Koerner Hall, to name a few. He has also performed in some of the projects of Baarbad ensemble including the UNESCO sponsored conference “Balouch” in Brock university. Alinima is a member of Varashan ensemble and has been performing with Pedram Khavarzamani in several projects in U of T and other venues.



Reza Manbachi

Reza began his musical journey with tar and setar in 1989. Since then, he has been under the instruction of Maestros Dariush Pirniakan, Hamid Motebassem, and Tofiq Iranparvar. His experience has led him to conduct solo and duet performances with his brother Amir, as well as collaboration with experienced musicians, such as Maestros Hamid Motebassem, Hossein Behroozinia, Trichy Sankaran, Shahou Andalibi, Ed Hanley and Babak Amini.

He has also been a twice winner of “Canada Council for the Arts” grant, in 2008 and 2009.



Rana Mansour

Rana Mansour is an Iranian-American singer-songwriter and graduate of the highly-acclaimed Berklee College of Music. She began playing the piano at age 3, and singing not too long after. Singing in 8 different languages has built quite the international following for Rana. This past year, she opened for legendary Iranian singer Ebi's 50th anniversary tribute concert, performed in Istanbul, Turkey for GEM TV's annual Persian New Year program (broadcasted over 40

channels), debuted a new song on Manoto TV's hit show “Stage” (more than 50 million viewers), headlined the Chaharshanbe Soori Festival (Eldfesten) in Malmo, Sweden to an audience of 25k, and now she is back in LA recording new material and preparing for many exciting upcoming projects.



Arman Masoumi



Ali Massoudi

Ali Massoudi, born in Tehran in 1973, is a skilled percussionist who has trained under masters like Bijan Kamkar and Farhad Andalibi. He has collaborated with Tehran Symphony Orchestra as well as the Iran's National Orchestra and various popular traditional bands and has also performed in several concerts in Iran, Europe, Canada, China and Cuba. He is the author of 5 educational books for tonbak, daf and udu.

He leads the Navaye Kimia Ensemble which has had many performances in Toronto and has collaborated with Andalib, Shiraz and Barg ensembles in concerts in Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal.



JuanCarlos Medrano

Juan Carlos Medrano started his journey in Canada in 2006 when he arrived from Colombia. He was soon inspired to create a new and unique blend of the powerful folkloric rhythms and sounds of the Colombian North coast, with electronic beats, R&B, as well as pop.

His first EP, *Seeking The Truth*, was declared by Exclaim Magazine as “a truly special and upcoming talent that brought something creative and new to music in Toronto”. Later his CD, *Poco a Poco*, released in 2011, continued to display not only his ingenuity, but his talents as a session musician; playing all the drums and auxiliary percussion for the album. A graduate of Humber College’s acclaimed Bachelor of Music program, Juan Carlos has had the opportunity to share the stage with some of the top musicians in Canada, such as JUNO award winners Hilario Duran and Jesse Cook, Larnell Lewis, Mark Kelso, Roberto Occhipinti, Chendy de Leon, Luis Mario Ochoa, to name a few. The diversity of his music performance experience has allowed him to work with many different musicians in a variety of musical styles including Jazz, Latin, Funk, R&B, Pop, Rock, and Klezmir. Recently, Juan Carlos has had the wonderful opportunity to play percussion for JUNO award winner Jesse Cook for parts of his 2015/2016 “One World Tour” in the U.S. and Canada. Music education is also a passion for Juan Carlos. As a workshop leader and music director for Drum Artz’s successful “Samba Kidz” school program, he is able to travel to different schools across the GTA, sharing his excitement and love for music with kids of all ages. He and a team have also been building a new program for at-risk youth in Toronto under the name “Baru Life”. Inspired by his own experience coming from Colombia and finding his path in music, Juan Carlos knows firsthand how music can help struggling youth find purpose and focus in many aspects of their lives.

“Afro-loops” is an invigorating business that was recently developed to create live percussion and drum loops, which can be utilized by producers and DJs. These live loops offer producers and DJs the option of adding tracks to their recordings, assist during the stages of recording pre-production, or to add live percussion to their beats as an alternative to the digital options that currently exist for loop-making.



Peyman Mesr

Peyman is a decorated drummer who has started playing drums back in Iran. Peyman has performed with famous pop/rock stars as well as Canadian jazz bands. He was also awarded the Toronto drummers audition to perform at the JUNO Awards in 2005.



Arif Mirbaghi

Arif Mirbaghi is a JUNO-award winning musician, sound designer, and actor from Toronto. His creative body spans genres as disparate as folk, jazz, progressive rock, and hip hop. These endeavours have carried him across extensive tours of North America, South America, Europe, Australia, and Japan. He has earned Certified Gold records, #1 records, Dora Award nominations, and the esteem of his peers. He has created and performed award-winning theatre shows on prestigious stages like the National Arts Centre. Upcoming work includes a directorial debut at the SummerWorks Festival, where he is exploring a site-specific multi-disciplinary piece merging live music and synchronized swimming. He is grateful for the opportunity to perform at Tirgan for the Iranian community that informs and inspires his continued efforts.



Rostam Mirlashari

Rostam Mirlashari is a concert producer and the Prince of Balochi music.

With his sensual singing voice and fervent style, Rostam Mirlashari has given Balochi music an international face. His ceaseless striving for a more peaceful world has made him a concert producer with a number of unique productions behind him. Multi-cultural influences and diversity are Rostam's trademark.

Born and raised in Baluchistan, a mountainous area in southern Iran, Rostam first encountered the magic of music through his mother's lullabies. As a child, he often heard both his father and mother singing traditional folk songs, and today he still draws inspiration from these memories.

Throughout his journey across the world, Rostam has experienced many other cultures, discovered treasure troves of ancient songs and learned a variety of traditional singing techniques; something that permeates his art today, with world cultures meeting through the universal magical language of music.

In 1991, Rostam arrived in Sweden as a political refugee, immediately starting to study singing and music at Kulturama. He then continued on to higher studies at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm where Susanne Rosenberg introduced him to Swedish folk music, but it was perhaps his encounter with his countryman Abdulrahman Surizehi which was to make the greatest impression.

Abdulrahman Surizehi, who now lives in Norway, was known as the Benju master of Balochi music, and it was he who taught Rostam everything he now knows about Balochi music. Today, Balochi music is Rostam's speciality, and he is known as the "Prince of Balochi music" – even in his home country.

Inspired by this new knowledge, Rostam decided to create his first folk music band, the eight-piece ensemble Golbang (1994)(www.golbang.se), which still tours across the globe with its unique mix of music from different parts of the world.

Rostam Mirlashari has started a collaboration with the most famous artist from southern Iran, the unique musician, dancer and choreographer Saeid Shanbehzadeh and his ensemble since autumn 2016. The name of project is Afro-Iranian.

Last autumn they brought the house down at the Apollo Theatre in New York and in San Francisco! Successful and creative collaboration continues between the Paris-based musician and dancing virtuoso Saeid Shanbehzadeh and Stockholm-based singer Rostam Mirlashari (known as The Prince of Balochi Music).

Reviews:

"The singer Rostam Mirlashari must have one of Sweden's most beautiful and seductive voices." Martin Nyström, music critic for Dagens Nyheter.

"Rostam Mirlashari sings a cappella. It's incredibly beautiful and all of the notes are perfect. In the audience, we hold our breath. The music goes straight to our hearts." Review in Integration in Focus, 2012.



Mehrab Moghadasian

Mehrab started playing classical guitar at the age of 14 which was followed by taking master classes with Mr. Behdad Moghadasian. Mehrab got his first electric bass guitar at the age of 19 and has since played with different ensembles both in Tehran and Toronto. Mehrab added playing the upright bass to his musical career at the age of 22 and has performed with many jazz/fusion bands in Tehran and Toronto ever since.

Mehrab received his BA in photography from Tehran's Art University in 1994 and has been busy shooting as a commercial photographer since



Reza Moghaddas

Reza is a Toronto based record producer, sound engineer and musician. He started playing the piano when he was eight years old and later learned bass guitar. Through his teenage years he was involved with both western classical and Persian traditional music. By age 18 he focused his efforts on playing jazz, fusion and world music. He studied Applied Mathematics and Computer Science at Azad University and Computer Graphics and Animation at Cavendish College. Reza was a key member of Iran's underground rock and fusion scene in the early nineties and he played in influential bands such as Avizheh and Meera. During that time, he also helped found Bamahang Studios, Iran's first digital recording studio, where he worked with legendary musicians such as Googoosh and Maestro Shajarian. When Reza moved to Canada in 2005 he brought Bamahang Studios with him, and has since been a key member of Toronto's vibrant music scene. He has written the scores and designed the sound for various film and theatre projects, worked with directors such as Bahram Beizaei and Helena Waldmann. During his 22 years of studio work he has produced, recorded and mixed over 1000 albums and single tracks.

Reza is a board member and co-founder of Godot Art Productions, one of Toronto's leading multi-disciplinary art foundations. In 2011 Reza was nominated for the Dora Mavor award for outstanding music composition and sound design for Godot Art's production of "Homeland". He has been the technical director at "Small World Music" since 2014, where he has worked with many international artists such as Ustad Zakir Hussain and Wally Badarou. Reza is an accomplished pianist, bassist and setar player who specializes in world, fusion, jazz and classical music and has had various performances with Beat-Map, Reza Derakhshani, Mamak Khadem, Soley Vaseghi, The Circle Band and Karevan Ensemble around Canada. In 2013 he started his solo project "Bazaar Project". Bazaar is a World music album based on traditional melodies and folk motifs from the Middle East fused with jazz, ambient and electronic music.



Sardar Mohammadjani

Born in 1978 in a Kurdish region of Iran, Sardar Mohammadjani chose tar as his primary musical instrument at the age of 10. In 1997 he left his city of birth, Mahabad, to pursue his passion in music by studying at the College of Fine Arts, University of Tehran, where he also worked in the National Media of Iran. While studying under the supervision of esteemed musicians Mr. Daryosh Talaei and Darvish Reza Monazami, he took an interest in playing the oud (lute).

Sardar studied Ethnomusicology at the University of Paris. During his stay in Paris he collaborated with the Badila band and the institute Jeunesse Musicales de France (JMF). He has been part of many concerts and festivals in Canada, including Tirgan Festival. Sardar is currently continuing his professional career in Toronto.



Sina Momtahan

Sina is an autodidact producer/multi-instrumentalist, playing both classical Persian and western instruments ranging from: setar, tanbour, divan to guitar, bass, flute and the piano. ^[1]_{SEP} He began his music education from

the age of eight participating in the first series of music classes for children that used the Carl Orff method in Iran.^[1] He continued with classical piano lessons for another four years and later went on to discover new horizons on his own as a solo musician, occasionally participating in bands and musical projects. He also completed an Audio Technology MA at the University of West London and has been working actively in the studio and live sound settings since 2007.



Sanaz Nakhjavani

Sanaz is a PhD candidate in Ethnomusicology and a graduate of Tehran Conservatory of music(Honarestan Musighi) specializing in piano and kanun. She has a Bachelor of Music from Soureh Higher Education Institute in Tehran and Bachelor of Spanish Language and Literature from Allameh Tabatabai University. In 2008 she moved to Istanbul, turkey in order to improve her kanun performances skills where benefited from the mentorship of master of kanun Ahmet Meter. She finished her Mater in Turkish music from Istanbul Technical University, Conservatory of Turkish Music. Sanaz started a PhD program in Ethnomusicology at the same University in 2010. She has performed with different ensembles since 1998 in Tehran and continued taking part in concerts while she was in Istanbul where she had the opportunity of performing with different ensembles such as Mixta; Spanish music with Turkish instruments and free improvisation ensemble and duet of soprano, electronics and kanun. She has also contributed to various albums, the most important of which are, Showaname (2012), From Rey to Roum (2013) and Rehavi (2014). She currently continues her music career as a piano teacher at the Ontario Conservatory of Music and Marsman Music.



Ali Nematollahi



Pouya Nikpour

Pouya was born on November 20th 1974 in Tehran. At the age of five, with the support and persuasion of his parents, he started taking piano lessons. During high school he pursued piano and was also able to participate in a number of concerts playing classical pieces as well as his own early compositions. At the age of eighteen, Pouya took advanced courses in music composition while extending his piano skills. At the early stages of his professional career, Pouya was commissioned to write music pieces for commercial enterprises helping him gain valuable experiences in this field. During this period, he composed themes for news networks as well as providing transitional pieces for Jaame -Jam Television Network for two years. Pouya also continued his career as a professional musician having various repertoires, including jazz, while at the same time composing instrumental music. Up to now, Pouya has participated in 300 concerts in Iran and abroad. Being obsessed with sound, Pouya has pursued acquiring skills in sound engineering, mix & mastering of music to a point where he now carries out those tasks for his own compositions in addition to working with various artists and writing scores for soundtracks of local TV series.



Amir Nojan

Amir Nojan is a virtuoso setar (small unfretted Persian lute) player, based in California for the past six years. Born in Shiraz, Iran, he studied with some of the modern masters of traditional Persian music including Dariush Tala'i, Mohammad Reza Lotfi, and Jalal Zolfanoun. ^[1]He has performed many concerts in Iran, Europe, and America as a composer, soloist, improviser, and ensemble player. Amir Nojan has collaborated with renowned musicians such as Alim Qasimov and Shahram Nazeri at Stanford University. ^[2]Amir founded the first professional academy for teaching Persian music and arts named "Shiraz Arts Academy" in Northern California (San Jose).



Mostafa Nosraty



Alexei Orechin

Alexei Orechin is a steadily growing voice that saturates the listener in lucid colours and mesmerizing melodicism. Born in Belarus in 1984 and immigrating to Canada in 1992 with the collapse of the USSR. Alexei Orechin has been actively shaping the Toronto music scene with his guitar work, compositions and production since his arrival to the city in 2009 from Hamilton. His approach towards the creative process is to view the musical landscape as an open canvas, one that holds no boundaries or genre limitations. As a result you have an instrumental voice that is full of colour, individual, and inspiring. One that has graced stages with Nas, Robyn Hitchcock, Dan Weiss, Zed's Dead and taken him to USA, Mexico, Holland, and Russia. Critical acclaim has been flourishing as of late in particular with his work with Unbuttoned by CBC, Noisey, and Afropunk. Alexei holds an Honours Bachelor in Jazz Performance at University of Toronto. He was awarded the Richard Iorweth Thorman Jazz Scholarship (2011 and 2012) and the Margaret E. Read Jazz Scholarship in 2012. His debut EP the 'Alexei Orechin Poetry Quartet' garnered four nominations at the 2010 Hamilton Music Awards, a fierce and confident exploration of dynamics, rhythm and improvisation. Notable soundtrack work includes 'Beyond the Silence' and 'A Good Man Is Hard To



Nicholas Otway

Nicholas Otway (drums) grew up in Port of Spain, Trinidad where he regularly performed in several different bands. He moved to Toronto to attend college and pursue a career as a session musician in 2010. Nicholas has

performed with calypso sensations Calypso Rose (who won the World Album of the Year award [2017] at the Victoire de la Musique award ceremony in France), and Kobo Town. He has also recorded in various world renowned studios, including Metalworks and Canterbury, where he worked with Grammy nominated producers, such as Jeremy Darby. His combined experience in Trinidad and Canada gives him 16 years of experience performing in a variety of genres, such as rock, gospel, jazz, blues, funk, country, calypso and reggae, to name a few. He is often sought out for his ability to compliment a large variety of musical genres.



Pooria Pournazeri

Pooria began his initiation into Tanboor (lute from Kurdistan) at the age of 6. He then pursued his musical education with his uncle Keykhosrow Pournazeri, master of Sufi music, with whom he learned both traditional Persian and Kurdish repertoires. After years of practicing inspirational tones of thousand-year-old music, he started composing his own pieces at the age of 14 and performed for the first time at the age of 16 in a competition for the Fajr music festival in Tehran, where he won the third place.

After this significant milestone, he joined the prestigious Shams Ensemble with whom he contributed to the album “Mastan Salamat Mikonand” which remained the top-seller for a decade in Iran.

In 2009, he embarked on two major projects: He established Rivaan Ensemble with acclaimed artist Majid Pousti and Master Bijan Parvaz and created the album “Let’s Make the Earth Peaceful” within the framework of the UN’s project “Act on the Climate Change”. In 2011, he launched his first solo album recognized by the magazine Songlines and described as the best album of October 2011 in Europe.

Since his arrival in Montreal, he has been participating frequently in the creations of the Tabassian brothers and Ensemble Constantinople. Pournazeri has appeared in several musical and multidisciplinary events both in Iran and in Canada, including the opening of the Aga Khan Museum in Toronto in September, 2014. He presently works on a 4th opus.



Arzhang Rafii



Alyssa Ramsay

Described as having “marvellous facility, and extraordinary musical sensibilities”, cellist Alyssa Ramsay has performed across Canada and in Europe, focusing mainly on inspiring a love of classical music in rural communities in a chamber music setting. Most recently, she won the Regina Musical Club Competition, where she performed on January 10, 2016, as part of the Regina Musical Club Series. In addition to winning first place at The Glenn Gould School Chamber Music Competition with the Vero Piano Quartet in 2013 and second place with the Amara String Quartet in 2014, Alyssa was also a finalist in The Glenn Gould School Concerto Competition in 2013 and a winner of the Saskatchewan Music Festival Association Concerto Competition in 2012.



AmirAli Razaghi

Amir Ali Razaghi was born in 1979 in Tehran, Iran. He started taking piano lessons at the age of 12 with Emanuel Melik Aslanian and Mohsen Kouhestani while simultaneously learning music theory and music reading (solfege) from Sharif Lotfi. Three years later he began taking composition lessons from the well-known Iranian composer Ahmad Pejman. These lessons with Pejman continued until 1997 when Amir entered the faculty of music at Art University of Tehran. He graduated in 2002 with a Bachelor of Music and continued his education by completing a graduate degree in Master of Music Composition in 2007. In his pursuit of music, Amir has had the privileged opportunity to take composition lessons from the very famous composers Taleb Khan Shahidi and Khayam Mirzazadeh.

Amir started his professional career in National Iranian Television as a film composer. His collaboration with the Iranian National Television is still strong as he continues to compose for various movies and TV shows. He worked as the Assistant Professor at the Art University of Tehran as well as the University of Art and Culture of Isfahan until he moved to Canada. He is now, the musical director at Lyrical Note in Vancouver and music teacher at Sarv Music Academy in Toronto.



Matias Recharte

Matias Recharte was born in Lima. He built his first drum set out of cans and buckets at age 11 and later studied Afro-Peruvian music, eventually moving to Afro-Cuban folklore. He completed a Bachelor of Music at the Rotterdam Conservatorium after moving to the Netherlands. There, he specialized in Latin drum set and percussion, having the opportunity to share music with people from all over the world. After a couple of years back in Peru, playing and teaching, he moved with his family to Toronto, where he completed an MA in ethnomusicology and continued to perform with Latin American and Canadian artists. During this time, he met Professor Trichy Sankaran, with whom he continues to study South Indian percussion. He is currently enrolled at the University of Toronto pursuing a PhD in music education.



Mehdi Rezania

Rezania started learning santur at 13 in his hometown of Abadeh and then later studied the advanced method of playing santur in Kamkars Music Academy in Tehran under the supervision of Master Ardavan Kamkar. In 2004, he cofounded Baarbad Music with Toloe Roushenas. Baarbad Ensemble is one of the most prolific Iranian-Canadian bands in Canada. In 2007 he started studying music at York University. He has learned harmony and counterpoint under professor Art Levine, composition under professors David Mott and Michael Coghlan, Balkan music under professor Irene Markoff, West African music under Kwasi Dunyo and Anna Malnikoff and Arabic music under Bassam Shahouk.

He holds a BFA in music from York University and an MA in music composition from York University where he studied with Michael Coghlan and David Mott.

His debut album is “Salute to Sun” for solo santur released in 2011. In 2012 he founded Saba Music Series; dedicated to the artistic music of the East from Balkan to Western China with focus on Central Asia.

He has received grants from Ontario Art Council in 2011 and Canada Art Council in 2012 for his compositions. He has published a number of articles in various publications and journals including the International Journal of Contemporary Composition.



Siavash Sadr Mahdavi

Native to Iran, Siavash has been playing a wide variety of percussion instruments since the age of 8. In his homeland he was a member of a few bands and experimented with diverse styles and sounds that led to his command of unique drum and percussion rhythms. In 2008, Siavash set out on a once-in-a-lifetime journey to take up residency in Germany. Travelling around the country playing as a session musician, he found his groove in a local band. The next five years proved to be a tremendous building experience for him as he toured Europe shaping his career. In 2009 this seasoned percussionist began travelling back and forth to Toronto before finally leaving Europe for good in 2012 to make our city his new home. Siavash loves the diversity of his new home and is excited to discover good music around every corner of a city he is humbled to be a part of. It didn't take this diverse musician long before he found a place in his current band Rhythm and Vibes where he explores the exotic style of Persian Jazz Blues.



Araz Salek

Born in 1980, Araz Salek started learning Tar under the instructions of Tofigh Iranparvar in 1988. He has studied Tar and Iranian classical Radif with master musicians and Tar players such as Hooshang Zarif and Arshad Tahmasbi. Although Araz's background is heavily founded in Iranian classical music, moving to Toronto in 2005, has given him the opportunity of learning and performing with a wide range of musical traditions. He has played in many festivals in Canada and Europe, and has performed with renowned musicians such as Ross Daly, Pedram Khavarzamani, Adam Rudolph, Imamyar Hasanov, Naser Masoudi, Javad Zarabian, and the list goes on. Other than being a musician in different musical ensembles, Araz is currently the artistic director at Labyrinth Ontario, an organization dedicated to presenting seminars and musical workshops annually in Toronto.



Susan Salek

Susan is a graduate of Ryerson University with a BA, Hons. She is a member of Choir at Lawrence Park Community Church and participated in the production of their last CD in 2016 under the leadership of their Music Director, Mark Toews.

She began her involvement in music production in collaboration with Joseph Aminian the Toronto based composer, conductor and producer. Later, Susan published her first solo album called Memories of the Past, remembering some of the nostalgic pieces of the last 50 years of Persian music. This album is re-arranged by Amirali Kamali in collaboration with Mahsa Golmakani, the founder of Janna Ensemble and Mona Moradi. She has recently joined Tapestry Opera as a member of the Board of Directors. Tapestry Opera is a professional theatre and opera production that creates and produces for the Heart of Here and Now.

As an Iranian-Canadian Philanthropist she has been a supporter and a participant in numerous cultural programs in Toronto. Susan is the founder of ADP Wellness Centre which offers many programs, workshops and courses related to health and arts.



Zohreh Shahbazi

Zohreh is a daf and kamanche player. She learned daf with Masters Bijan Kamkar and Masood Habibi and kamanche with Master Ardeshir Kamkar.

She was a member of Youth Orchestra Ensemble of Vahdat Hall in Tehran, Iran.

She performed in various events of “Fajr” Annual Music Festival and was a recipient of prestigious awards. She performed in various ensembles all over Iran.

Zohreh has been teaching daf since 2003 and has established a percussion ensemble called Chameh Par.

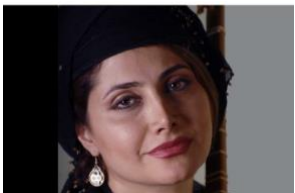
After arriving in Canada, she continued her career with various ensembles such as Rumi Canada, Jaana Band and Hasti Oryan and has performed in Tirgan 2015.



Saman Shahi

Saman holds a Masters of Composition from the University of Toronto, where he also received his Bachelor's degree with honors in Composition and Piano Performance earlier. He is a professional member of the Canadian League of Composers (affiliate composer) as well as SOCAN foundation and the Canadian Music Centre (associate composer). He is also one of the co-founders of ICOT [Iranian Composers of Toronto].

Saman is an award winning and published composer. His music has been read and performed by many ensembles and renowned performers across Canada, United States as well as France, Germany and Malaysia. His music has also been broadcast on BBC Farsi , CBC (Podcast), as well as Radio Sedaye Toronto in 2013. His scores for short films have been debuted in Asia, South America, USA and across Europe and Canada. His music was recently presented as part of Vox Novus 15 year festival in New York in 2015. His body of works include two operatic works; “Rob Ford : an Operatic life” as well as “Operatic Narration of Arash the Archer” which opened the 2013 Tirgan festival at the Westjet stage (currently Concert Stage) at Harbourfront Center in Toronto. He has been commissioned (alongside with ICOT) for two Ballet pieces by the National Ballet of Canada, one of which was titled “5 Tableaux from Khosrow and Shirin” which was performed in 2014 by the Cathedral Bluffs Symphony and Dancers of National Ballet, as well as a small chamber work that received 17 performances in 2015 by the National Ballet of Canada. Saman has recently received a Chalmers professional grant from the Ontario Arts Council, as well as a professional musician grant from the Canada Council to pursue an intensive course of Study with the world-renowned composer Behzad Ranjbaran at Juilliard school of music. Saman's orchestral music will be receiving quite a bit of attention in 2016-17 with orchestras such as Orchestra Toronto, 13th Strings (Ottawa), Windsor Youth Symphony Orchestra, Glenn Gould New Music ensemble and Sarv String Orchestra. Saman is also very active as a pianist, arranger, conductor and Tar player. He is one of the core members of Circle Music band, An Iranian fusion rock band in Toronto. He plays keyboard, piano, tar and percussion in the band.



Mojgan Shajarian

Mojgan Shajarian is an Iranian musician, painter, and graphic designer. Mojgan holds a BA in Music from Honar University in Iran and a BA in Painting and a MA in Graphic Design from Azad University in Iran. She

has studied under distinguished Iranian musicians and performed in more than 60 concerts around the world with the acclaimed Iranian master musician (her father), Maestro Mohammad Reza Shajarian and the Shahnaz Ensemble. In addition to receiving awards and high marks for her musical talents, she paints and researches the relationship between art and music. She is also a master in Persian calligraphy. Mojgan currently lives in Southern California where she teaches Persian classical singing (Awaz) and Setar to her students.



Saeid Shanbehzadeh

Saeid is a Neyanban, Neyjofti and Dammam virtuoso and an amazing dancer. His body and his instrument became united for a pure and surprising demonstration that will evoke the trance.

By the age of twenty Saied created his own music group, The Shanbehzadeh Ensemble, which won the first prize at Tehran's Fajr music festival 1990. On the other hand and at the same time, he began to conduct research and write about southern music in Iranian magazines.

His research on the ethnomusicology of the Southern region led him to collect a variety of local folkloric music of Iranian regions and create a very rich music archive. As a result of his research and his concerts, Saied is now a national and internationally well-known musician.

In 1991 he was invited to the AVIGNON Festival in France and performed for the first time on an international stage. In 1993, He performed at Theatre de la Ville of Paris. In 1996, He was invited to teach at University of Toronto for two semesters.

Two years later, he became the director and head principal at the Kish Island's house of culture and music.

In 2001 he was invited by the french Montalvo/Hervieu dance company to create the live music for the Babelle Heureuse show, which has performed more than two hundred times in France, Europe and South America.

In 2007, He was invited by La Cite de La Music of Paris to teach dance, singing and music. Saied also provided workshops in schools in partnership with Le Theatre de Chaillot, Le Louvre Museum and La Coppagnie Montalvo/Hervieu and Cite De la musique Paris.

From 2007 to 2009, he worked with Zaman Production and performed with his son Naghib, in all WOMAD festivals, Womex & Global Fest showcases.

In 2011, Saied was granted an artist residency at the Abbey De La Pree (36) by the « Pour Que l'Esprit Vive » association and annual and held global masterclasses for Iranian (classical and traditional) musicians.

In september 2014, He founded Zar International music and dance festival in Istanbul, in order to create a cultural and musical link between East and West.



Naghib Shanbehzadeh

Skillful and young percussionist and drummer, Naghib, started playing music at the very young age of three, playing music in Boushehr and Kish beside his father Saeid. He mastered many traditional and southern percussion instrument. Dammam, doholgap, pipe, kesser, timpo, from his own region and zarb from Iranian traditional music. He has been a permanent member of Ensemble Shanbehzadeh since age of 10. He has shared the stage with many great musicians of different genres, such as Manu Kodjia, Billy Cobham and Trilok Gurtu. He is also a very fine drummer and has played jazz and gospel gigs. He plays with a high level of energy, creativity, dynamics and a strong connection with other musicians at any given performance. He studies occidental percussions at Conservatoire of Cretiel in Paris.



Beth Silver

Since beginning her cello studies at the age of four, Beth Silver studied with Wendy Smith, Barbara Pepper, Simon Fryer, Rachel Mercer and Shauna Rolston at the University of Toronto, where she received the Gregor Piatigorsky Scholarship. Currently, Beth is a Master of Music scholarship candidate at McGill University in Montreal under the tutelage of Matt Haimovitz.

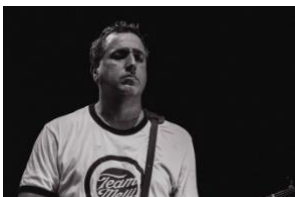
A native of Toronto, Beth has received numerous awards from the Royal Conservatory of Music, the York Region Arts Council, and the Kiwanis Festival. She is the 2014 recipient of the Ben Steinberg Musical Legacy Award, recognizing musical achievement in the Canadian Jewish community. Beth has performed in festivals across Canada, the United States and Israel, where she has had the privilege to take part as a solo musician, chamber artist, as well as an orchestral player.

Having an interest in a variety of genres, she is enthusiastic about her role in many new music projects including contemporary operas, playing with jazz and folk musicians, and incorporating other media into performances. Having a love for working with children, she is a regular programmer of children's concerts, some of which include a young people's concert at Roy Thompson Hall and concerts for Ottawa Chamber Fest. Beth performs regularly in the greater Toronto area as a soloist and chamber musician, and is excited about her prospects in Montreal that have emerged over the past two years.



Heather Sita Black

Heather Sita Black has received international acclaim for her passionate and haunting vocal performances. As one half of Ottawa's premiere dark chamber duo, The Visit, Heather has performed over 100 shows, including two European tours. Heather is a multidisciplinary artist with a natural talent for singing and painting as well as a background in performance art and dance. Most recently, she has launched a project that combines the use of electronic effects with her highly versatile vocals in a fully improvised context. In addition to performing, Heather also facilitates creative voice workshops which enable people to unlock the potential of their voices and inner musical expression.



Arash Sobhani

An architect by training, Arash Sobhani is best known as the lead singer of KIOSK music band. Born and raised in Tehran, Sobhani moved to the U.S in 2005.

As an avid architectural photographer, he has held some exhibitions in Tehran, and has published articles and essays on the topics of architecture, politics and culture in various publications in Iran.

Sobhani has also been a speaker/panelist on the topic of Iranian contemporary culture in universities such as Stanford, Harvard, Berkeley and The University of Maryland. Arash Sobhani has published 9 albums with Kiosk, and has collaborated in various live performances and recordings with artists such as Mohammad Noori, Faramarz Aslani, Ardeshtir Farah, Shidrokh Mohaghegh, Shahryar Masroor, Mohsen Namjoo, Susan Dehyim, Ramin Behna, Hooman Javid, Paul Mehling, Scott Amendola and more.



Selcuk Suna

Born in Istanbul, Turkey in 1981, Selcuk comes from a family of musicians. His father, a professor of Traditional Turkish Music at Istanbul University, and his brother, a violin player and song writer, brought Selcuk into the music scene at a very young age. Selcuk was 8 years old when he joined the children's opera in AKM (Ataturk Cultural Centre). In addition, his parents decided to get him started on the clarinet when he was 11 in order to strengthen his lungs. It was the clarinet that led Selcuk to the saxophone at age 17. By the time Selcuk was 18, he was performing on various television programs and for many famous pop musicians throughout Turkey.

In his high school years, Selcuk studied clarinet at the conservatory in Istanbul. He also won many high school vocal competitions. Selcuk was granted a full scholarship to study Jazz at Bilgi University, Istanbul, in the Jazz Performance (Saxophone) Department, which earned him a degree in Jazz Music.

Selcuk has worked with Mike Wilkins, Ricky Ford and Butch Morris. He has also played on stage with well-known artists such as Shakira. While living in Turkey, Selcuk played on a weekly late-night show for 13 years; he also played for numerous pop-stars. Selcuk plays saxophone and clarinet for countless albums, theme music, television shows, and musicals. Selcuk also participates in vocal recordings, and is very knowledgeable in composition and has composed music for the theatre.

Selcuk currently resides in Toronto, Canada as a freelance musician. He plays regularly at the Painted Lady and can be seen at various venues throughout the Greater Toronto Area. Selcuk uses a soprano saxophone, alto & tenor (all Selmer Series III), Akai & Yamaha midi sax and clarinet (Buffet RC).



Ziya Tabassian

Ziya Tabassian began playing the tombak (Iranian drum) at the age of ten. After a brief initiation period in Iran, he continued his autodidactic training in Quebec, his adopted homeland. From 1994 to 2001, he studied western classical percussion with Julien Grégoire and obtained a Bachelor's degree in interpretation from the Université de Montréal. In a residency at The Banff Centre in the winter of 2003, he explored the contemporary repertoire with Iranian percussion instruments, which was to have a lasting influence.

A tireless traveler, he is continuing his personal research in advanced courses with Bahman Rajabi (Teheran), Aziz Alami (Fez), Trichy Sankaran (Toronto), Msirli Ahmet (Istanbul), Shree Sundarkumar and Yogesh Samsi (India).

As a percussionist, Ziya Tabassian is professionally active in early music (medieval, renaissance and baroque), as well as contemporary, current and world music. He performs with several other musical groups, including the Ensemble Caprice and has performed several concerts in almost 40 countries in some prestigious festivals and concert halls. Supported by the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec and the Canada Council for the Arts, he has many albums to his credit on some major labels. He has also performed in recordings by the Kronos Quartet, Kayhan Kalhor, Mercan Dede, Hossein Omoumi, En Chordais and Lo'Jo. His first solo album, Tombak, stemming from his acoustic explorations and research on the rhythmic cycles of early Persian music, was released in 2007 on the Ambiances Magnétiques label.



Mohammad Talani

Born in Iran, Mohammad (Digital Media Director/Ensemble) is a Berkeley-based musician, actor, and videographer. He has collaborated in several fields as an actor, editor, music performer, and producer with different artists including Bahram Beyzaei, Mohsen Namjoo, Babak Jalali, and others. He joined Kiosk in 2012.



Arya Taleghani



Aqua Nibii Waawaaskone

Aqua, the singer, hand-drummer and songwriter also known as Nibii Waawaaskone (Water Flower), crafts music reflecting her deep respect for Indigenous traditions, and determination to thrive as an artist, Métis woman of Ojibwe decent and cultural activist in a contemporary context.

This duality is illustrated in her approach to songwriting. On one hand her process is one of purposeful reflection and healing, translating life's challenges into melody and verse to uplift herself and others. On the other, she is mindful of remaining open to universal energies, allowing spirit to channel music through her, unfiltered, with surprising, powerful results.

Similarly, Aqua is as committed to her individual expression and evolution as she is to giving back and sharing with others. Nibii Waawaaskone works to empower youth and women, is a longstanding facilitator of community drum circles, a partner with several Indigenous organizations, regularly collaborates with likeminded artists, and facilitates cultural workshops across Ontario.

Her most recent release, Hand Drum Stories (Feb. 2016, Tribal Spirit Music), exemplifies her holistic style of music-making, with its 13 songs symbolically honouring the 13 Grandmother moons of the traditional Indigenous yearly cycle. Aqua's previous self-produced four-song EP, Spirit Music (2014, released independently), paid tribute to the four directions and four Indigenous sacred medicines.

Nibii Waawaaskone's well-rounded artistic background also includes studies in theatre (Algonquin College) and film (Humber College), and the establishment in 2016 of the Watercolours collective with fellow co-founders Dr. Duke Redbird and Veronica Johnny, with the aim of creating multi-disciplinary works rooted in Indigenous experience to highlight water-related issues and expand the consciousness of all.

Aqua is an artist who is devoted to the integrity of her work and truly believes what Métis leader Louis Riel once said, "My people will sleep for one hundred years, but when they awake, it will be the artists who give them their spirit back."

Aqua Nibii Waawaaskone is based in Toronto.



Graeme Wallace

Graeme Wallace is a saxophonist born and raised in Toronto, Canada. Graeme found his passion for music as a young teenager while attending arts high school. This led him to achieve a Bachelor Degree of Music from Humber College. There, Graeme had the opportunity to study alongside influential saxophonists such as Pat Labarbera, Kirk Macdonald, Mark Promane, Alex Dean and performed in ensembles led by Hilario Duran, Shirantha Beddage, Will Jarvis, Tony Zorzi, Steve Mancuso and Paul DeLong. Since graduating in 2013, Graeme has been defining himself as a versatile saxophonist performing in styles ranging in jazz, funk, fusion, RnB, blues, reggae, afrobeat, pop and rock. His passion and adaptability drives his performance, giving him a

raw and captivating energy. He frequently performs live throughout the Toronto music scene in an array of bands and collaborations.



Raphael Weinroth-Browne

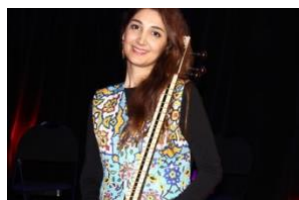
Cellist, multi-instrumentalist, and composer, Raphael is rapidly making a name for himself as an exceptionally versatile musician both in Canada and internationally. A graduate of Toronto's Glenn Gould School and a former artist-in-residence at The Banff Centre, Raphael combines polished classical technique with daring improvisation and his own unique compositional language, effortlessly blurring the lines between musical genres. He has performed twice at Nouvelle Prague, an esteemed showcase festival in the Czech Republic, as well as Wave-Gotik Treffen, the largest international gothic music festival in the world, and was recently featured as a performer at the 2014 International Cello Festival of Canada, winning second prize nationally in the Zara Nelsova competition for Canadian cellists. In May 2015, Raphael was commissioned by the Royal Conservatory of Music to compose and perform a new work for solo cello in their esteemed 21C Festival for contemporary music. Since 2009, he has composed and performed music on over 50 full-length albums (including the Juno Award-winning Woods 5: Grey Skies and Electric Light) and has appeared in professional music videos with acclaimed artists such as two-time Juno Award-winner Gowan. He is well known as an integral member and creative force in dark chamber ensembles The Visit and Musk Ox. In addition to composing and performing, Raphael is the Artistic Director of Ottawa New Music Creators, Ottawa's only concert presenter solely devoted to new music.



Zaynab Wilson

Zaynab is a natural-born traveler, an adventure seeker and has a curiosity for learning about cultures, languages and especially music from around the world. From the age of six, she began playing and performing the steelpan – the national instrument of her parents' birthplace of Trinidad and Tobago, with her traveling family band, based in Montreal. Ever since, Zaynab has continued to develop her skills as a proficient musician and has extended her list of performance instruments. At 14, she found her new musical direction in the form of the drums; this is really when she began establishing her own identity.

With music being a major part of her life, Zaynab displays her musical versatility as a drummer for international steelpan panorama competitions as well as in numerous other styles. Zaynab also performs extensively as a percussionist with various bands in Toronto and has adapted her unique cajon and percussion set up. She also performs as a singer and wears the composer-bandleader hat for her own project, MoZayic. Zaynab completed the Bachelor of Music program at Humber College in Toronto. She has toured across Canada and has performed internationally with different acts. Some of her current music projects include: Jason Wilson & the Perennials (www.jasonwilsonmusic.com), MoZayic (<http://www.mozayicmusic.com>), Little Lotus (<https://www.facebook.com/Little-Lotus-1829756267310523/>), and ZUZE.



Samaneh Zaferani

Samaneh is an Iranian musician and tar player. She studied music lessons under the supervision of many renowned Iranian musicians, namely Behrooz Hemmati, Darioush Pirniakan, Darioush Talaei and Mohammad Reza Lotfi. She got her Bachelor and Masters degrees in Music from the Art University of Tehran and was awarded twice in music festivals as asoloist. Samaneh has been working with different ensembles for about 10

years in many live performances such as Tehran Art University Ensemble, Mana Ensemble, Nowbang-e-Kohan Ensemble and also Shayda Ensemble with Mohammad Reza Lotfi as composer and leader. She immigrated to Canada in 2016 and has been collaborating with a variety of music groups in Toronto.

FILM



Mohsen Abdolvahab

Mohsen Abdolvahab was born in 1957 in Tehran. Abdolvahab is a graduate in Film Editing from the IRIB University. He began his cinematic career in 1980, editing over 30 documentary and feature films and producing 23 short documentaries and award-winning feature film documentaries, including “Lokh Mazar” (2000), “The Wives of Haj Abbas” (2001), and “The Heritage of the Sun” (2002). He was nominated, alongside Rakhshan Bani-Etemad, for the Achievement in Directing award at the Asia Pacific Screen Awards. His previous film collaborations with Bani-Etemad include, “Nargess” (1992) and “Gilaneh” (2005). Please, Don’t Disturb was his independent debut feature.



Abbas Amini

Abbas Amini was born in 1983 in Abadan, Iran and started making short films at the age of 13. In 2001 he moved to Tehran and was involved in several feature films as a director’s assistant. He then began making documentary films and became especially orientated towards social and child welfare issues. He has since directed a number of shorts and documentaries on social issues and the terrible consequences of the Iran/Iraq war. His keen interest in child welfare led him to work as a volunteer for the ‘Association for the Protection of Child Labourers’ (APCL) over the past 10 years. APCL, established in 2002 as the first NGO to focus on the issue of child labour, educates underprivileged children and improves their skills and living conditions by working on their critical problems.

“Valderama” is Amini’s first feature fiction film as a director.



Babak Anvari

Babak is a BAFTA nominated, award winning film maker based in London. His feature film debut ‘Under the Shadow’ was premiered at Sundance Film Festival in 2016. He also worked for MTV UK and Ireland as one of the directors of MTV live sessions and directed for renowned artists such as Lady Gaga, Florence & the Machine, Pixie Lott, Tinie Tempah, etc.



Rakhshan Banietemad

Rakhshan Banietemad graduated in film directing from the University of Dramatic Arts in 1980, when she made a name for herself in Iranian cinema with her film *Off the Limits*. *Nargess*, made in 1991, with its courageous subject, established Banietemad as a leading filmmaker with social concerns in Iranian cinema, and brought her not only the best directing award at the Fajr Film Festival, but also helped her to gain a strong footing for making her following films. *Yellow Canary*, *Foreign Currency*, *The Blue-Veiled*, *The May Lady*, *Under the Skin of the City*, *Gilaneh*, *Mainline*, and *Tales* are among other works by Banietemad that have earned her awards and prizes including: First Prize at the Comic Films Festival (Italy), the International Critics Award at Salonika (Greece), the prize for the Best Asian Female Director at the Delhi Film Festival, the Jury Prize at the Moscow Film Festival, the NETPAC First Prize at the Karlovy Vary Film Festival, the Jury Prize at the Las Palmas Film Festival, the Award for Best Direction from the Asian Pacific Academy, the award for the Best Script at the Venice Film Festival, and an Honorary Doctorate from London University. But this does not represent the full scope of Banietemad's filmmaking. In addition to presenting several instructional workshops, she has directed and produced important documentary films such as *To Whom Do You Show These Films?*, *Kahrizak: Four Views*, *Angels of the House of Sun*, *We Are Half of Iran's Population*, *Our Times*, *All My Trees*, and *Hey, Humans*.



Bahram Beyzaie

Bahram Beyzaie is a well-known Iranian critic, researcher, teacher, playwright, stage director (and producer), screenwriter and filmmaker (director, producer and editor). He was first introduced to western audiences at the age of 25, when his play was staged at the Festival du Theatre des Nations in Paris, 1963. After years of uncompromising creative work, he became Professor and Chair of the Dramatic Arts Department at Tehran University until the Islamic revolution. Presently he is a visiting professor at Stanford University, Iranian Studies Program, lecturing on topics such as Iranian Cinema, Iranian Theatre and Cinema and Mythology. Beyzaie's literary heritage, from his parents, is reflected not only in his prose writings, his plays and films but also in his own personal style and critical outlook. Besides his monographs in volumes on Iranian, Japanese and Chinese theatres and also a book on Hitchcock films, he has done extensive research on the roots of *One Thousand and One Nights* resulting in two monographs, *Seeking the Roots of the Old Tree* followed by another about the missing ancient book of *Hezar Afsan* [One Thousand and One Nights as it is called in its Arabic translation]. In the past five decades, Beyzaie has published more than 35 plays, some of which are translated and published in English, French, German and Portuguese and also more than 50 screenplays. Despite many obstacles imposed on his life and career he has directed seven of his plays on the stage himself and in his own personal style in Tehran. Amongst these the film version of *Death of Yazdgerd* is available as an example of his artistic expression and historical and cultural view. Furthermore, he has made ten feature and four short films which are: *Short films: Mustachioed Uncle; The Journey; Talking with the Wind; The Speaking Carpet. Feature films: Downpour; The Stranger and the Fog; The Crow; The Ballad of Tara; Death of Yazdgerd; Bashu, The Little Stranger; Maybe Some Other Time; The Travelers; Killing Rabids; While We Are All Asleep.* His theatre works are, all except for one, directed by himself and include: *The Puppets, the Heritage and The Feast, King Snake, Death of Yazdgerd, Lady Aoi (by Mishima Yukio), Testament of Bondar Bidakhsh, The 1001st Night, The Passion Play of Mentor Navid Makan and His Wife Archeologist Rokhshid Farzin, and Afra or the Day Passes.* In The last four years he has directed a shadow play called *Jana & Baladoor* and also *Arash, 1001st Night and Ardaviraf's Report*, all presented by the Iranian Studies of Stanford University.



Ali Hatami

Ali Hatami was born in Tehran in 1944. He studied at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts and started his career by screenwriting. He later on turned into filmmaking, and the first film which he directed was based on an Iranian folklore story named "*Hassan Kachal*". This film was highly welcomed by the viewers and received rave

reviews by the critics.

During his years of activity, Hatami made 15 feature films and three TV series.

Ali Hatami considered architecture as a means for better depiction of the theme of his films. Usage of traditional and ancient buildings was one of the main features of his works. The importance that he attached to architecture led him to propose the construction of cinematic town as a location for production of historical films.

The construction of the Ghazaali Cinematic Town in the vicinity of Tehran started as of 1979 upon the utmost efforts of late Ali Hatami. This cinematic town depicts the ancient Tehran in the 1920s.

Hezar Dastan (1979-1987), a highly popular TV series directed by late Hatami is considered an eternal work in the history of Iranian TV. The series was filmed in the Ghazali Cinematic Town. In 2006, Hezar Dastan was voted by the Association of Iranian movies and TV critics as the best Iranian TV series ever made.

He was directing his last film “Jahan Pahlavan Takhti”, when he was hospitalized because of cancer. He passed away in 1996 at the age of 52. On his gravestone one of the dialogues of his films is displayed.



Bahman Maghsoudlou

Film scholar and critic Bahman Maghsoudlou is the recipient of Iran's prestigious Forough Farrokhzad literary award for writing and editing a series of books about cinema and theatre. These include the widely acclaimed Iranian Cinema, which was published in 1987 by New York University's Center for Middle Eastern Studies. Maghsoudlou's activities involving international cinema further include participation as panelist, juror and lecturer at a wide variety of film festivals, as well as serving as president of the jury at the 2012 Ibn Arabi Film Festival (IBAFF) in Spain and Montreal World Film Festival, 2014. As a filmmaker he wrote, directed and produced the short documentary film Ardeshir Mohasses and His Caricatures (1972), which was shown at the Leipzig Film Festival in 1996, Ahmad Mahmoud: A Noble Novelist (2004), and Iran Darroudi: the Painter of Ethereal Moments (2010). His latest two films, the fifth and sixth in the great Iranian artist's series, are Ardeshir: The Rebellious Artist (2012), an extended update of his original film about Mohasses, and Abbas Kiarostami: A Report (2013), which is the first part of history of Iranian Cinema, premiered at Montreal World Film Festival. Having organized the first-ever Iranian Film Festival in New York in 1980, he originated the International Short Film Festival: Independent Films in Iran, which was held in October 2007 in Asian Society in New York. As a producer Maghsoudlou's films have been selected for more than 100 major film festivals and garnered many awards, and include The Suitors (Cannes, 1988), Manhattan by Numbers (Venice, Toronto, London, Chicago, 1993), Seven Servants with legendary actor Anthony Quinn (Locarno, Montréal, Toronto, 1996), Life in Fog (1998)-the single most awarded short documentary film in the history of Iranian Cinema- and Silence of the Sea, winner of six prizes, selected for more than 20 other film festivals including the Sundance Film Festival in 2004.

Maghsoudlou is currently producing and directing a feature-length documentary on The Life and Legacy of Mohammad Mossadegh. Maghsoudlou's new book, following such well-received titles as Iranian Cinema, Love and Liberty in Cinema and This Side of the Mind and the Other Side of the Pupil, is Grass: Untold Stories, a definitive account of the making of Grass: A Nation's Battle for Life, the groundbreaking documentary filmed by Merian Cooper, Ernest Schoedsack and Marguerite Harrison in Iran in 1924. He is a member of Pen American Center. A graduate in cinema studies from the City University of New York with a PhD from Columbia, Maghsoudlou lives in New York.



Mojtaba Mirtahmasb

Mojtaba Mirtahmasb was born in 1971 in Kerman, Iran. He graduated from the Art University of Tehran in 1995. The following year, he directed his first documentary film titled “Banner”, the first part of the 52-part

series titled “Children of Iran”. Since then he has made about 30 documentary films. In 1990 and around the same time as he entered university, he began his professional activities in cinema as sound manager, still photographer, editor, assistant director, and program manager for several fiction and documentary films, collaborating with prominent Iranian directors such as Parviz Kimiavi, Mohsen Makhmalbaf, Ebrahim Mokhtari and Rakhshan Banietemad. Mirtahmasb’s guild activities have been one area of his special concern in cinema. He joined Iranian Documentary Filmmaker’s Association (IRDFA) as a member in 1998. From 2004 to 2010, he served as a member of the board of directors of IRDFA for three consecutive terms and one term as the chairman of the board of directors. As a member of jury, he served in a number of festivals in Iran and abroad, and has also conducted a number of workshops on documentary filmmaking. Mirtahmasb is best known for the following films:-

Six Centuries, Six Years, 2014

This Is Not A Film, 2011 (with Jafar Panahi as co-director and co-producer)

Lady of the Roses, 2008

Home Is in Our Past, 2005 (with Hamed Mohammad Taheri as co-director)

Back Vocal, 2004

Off Beat, 2004

The River Still Has Fish, 2001

The first Presence, 1999

Banner, 1996

DANCE



Farzad AttarJafari (Farzad AJay)

Born in Tehran, Farzad has classically trained in Sama. He has studied with many teachers including Kabir Helminski, Camille Helminski (co-director of the Threshold Society, author) and Raqib Brian Burke. He has been studying mysticism and Persian mystical poetry for over 10 years. He has been part of many Sama Ceremonies and perform ances in the U.S. and Canada. He is the head of Rumi Canada and is part of the Threshold & Vancouver Rumi Society. He currently lives in Toronto.



Makeda Benitez

Makeda Benitez was introduced to flamenco at the age of five, beginning her studies at the Esmeralda Enrique Academy of Spanish Dance. She launched her professional dance career in 2014 and since then has performed in a wide variety of venues all over the GTA. She has studied in Spain with teachers such as Juan de los Reyes, Inmaculada Ortega and Ursula Lopez, also taking workshops in Toronto with artists such as Myriam Allard and Javier Latorre. She is currently an apprentice with the Esmeralda Enrique Spanish Dance Company. After graduating from Rosedale Heights School of the Arts this year, Makeda will travel to Spain to pursue her love of flamenco in an intensive program.



Farima Berenji

Farima is the founder and artistic director of the Simorgh Dance Collective (founded in 2007). She is the first Iranian woman to lead a Zikr, Sohbet, and Sema at Dargha of Yalova, Turkey and Istanbul. She has been privileged to study with great masters and at great institutions and is currently the researcher, semazen and master instructor of Tumata Organization of Turkey and studies under the Dervish Dr. Rahmi Oruç Güvenç of Turkey and Sufi masters of “Yarsan” order of Khorasan. She has appeared in scholarly documentaries hosted by National Geographic and the U.N., and has been highlighted in various international media. Farima is the recipient of the prestigious UN award. Farima’s Simorgh Dance Collective was the first Persian dance company, directed by an Iranian, to perform during a reception for US President Obama.



Raqib Brian Burke

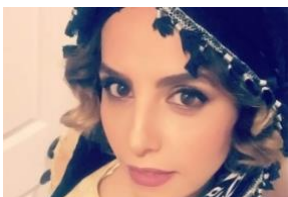
Hailing from Vancouver, Raqib has over 40 years of education and experience in Sufi Whirling and Sema. He performed in the first ever Sema Ceremony by North American dervishes in Konya, Turkey, at the tomb of M. Jalaluddin Rumi. Having attended many Sama ceremonies all around the world, Raqib is a Semazanbashi (master) of Sema (Sufi Whirling Dance Meditation), and he has trained many students such as Mira and Farzad.



Hosna Dabaghi



Soheila Dashti



Sabri Gholami



Karine Gonzalez

Karine Gonzalez is a multifaceted artist. After studying piano, music theory and ballet dance for over ten years, she naturally found her passion in Flamenco; her ideal language to express herself artistically, especially as it originates from her roots in Spain. She studied Spanish literature and wrote her master's thesis on Flamenco and called it "My Flamenco Movements".

Since 1998, she has choreographed and performed with a large variety of productions and world-famous artists, including a Sufi solo performance in Tony Gatlif's film "Vengo" beside Tomatito, Antonio Canales and Sheikh Ahmad Al Tunj, while having worked for two years with the world famous school of flamenco of Madrid under the leadership of Antonio Reyes (professor and dancer of flamenco, Nacional Ballet of España) where she joined his company for the choreographic competition of Madrid.

She met actor, dancer and choreographer Shahrokh Moshkin Ghalam in Paris, with whom she studied Sufi and diverse Persian dance styles. She has performed in many of his creations inspired by mystic Persian mythology and poetry, including "Haft Peykar", "Omar Khayam", "Dance Variation", as well as "Love Stories of the Shahnâme".



Mira Hunter

It can be argued that Mira Hunter has been whirling for most of her life. A visual artist and second-generation Sufi Mevlevi, she began her traditional training at the age of 16 with her father. She lives and works in Vancouver, BC and Brooklyn, NY



Arvin Javadpour



Maryam Mahmoodi



Victoria Mata

Victoria Mata is a Venezuelan-Canadian choreographer and dancer. Mata's career has involved self-directed training, residencies and mentorships with internationally renowned choreographers. Holding a Masters of Fine Arts in Contemporary Choreography from York University, Mata is an audacious visionary rooted in community, inspiring risk and utilizing art as a vehicle for social change, and creating spaces to voice marginalized communities. Mata was nominated as the emerging artist finalist of the Toronto Arts Foundation.



Shahrokh Moshkin Ghalam

Shahrokh Moshkin Ghalam graduated from the University of Paris VIII with a degree in History of Art and Theatre. He specialized in Middle Eastern folk and mystical dance and has a deep interest in Indian, Indonesian and Flamenco dances. Shahrokh joined the renowned "Théâtre du Soleil" in 1991 where he played lead roles in Ariane Mnouchkine's productions of "Tartuffe", "La ville parjure" and "Les Atrides". In 1997 he established the Nakissa ART Dance Company and created "A Persian Night's Dream", the "Route of the Orient", "Nostalgia or Ghasedak", the "7 Princesses" (Haft Peykar), "Omar Khayam", "Les Danses Mythologiques", "Mani the Buddha of Light", "Rumi le brûlé,". Shahrokh has also appeared in Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night" directed by Christophe Rauck; "Romeo and Juliette," directed by Lionel Briand; "The Baccantes" by Euripides, directed by Usevio Lazaro; "A Soldier's Tale", "La diva d'Auschwitz," directed by Antoine Campo, "A Streetcar Named Desire" by Tennessee Williams, directed by Phillip Adrian; and

“Kidnapping at the Seraglio” by Mozart, directed by Jérôme Deschamps and Macha Makeïef. His directorial credits include Shakespeare’s *Venus and Adonis* in Persian (“Zohreh va Manouchehr”), “Mardha va Chiz” (Men and the Thing), and “Kafané Siah” (Black Shroud). He was an official member of the “Comédie Française” from 2005 to 2012 with appearances in “Le Sicilien” by Lully-Molière, directed by Jean-Marie Villégier; “La Maison des Morts” by Philippe Minyana, directed by Robert Cantarella; and “Pedro et le Commandeur” by Felix Lope de Vega, directed by Omar Porras. His most recent creation is “Aref Nameh” a play based on Iraj Mirza’s book.



Melissa Noventa

Melissa Noventa is a dancer and ethnographer originally from Guelph, Ontario. Throughout her career she has accumulated a wide range of training, performing, and teaching experiences across classical, contemporary, urban, West African, Latin, and Afro-Caribbean dance forms, in both commercial and artistic settings. Melissa has studied and performed alongside a formidable list of distinguished artists from Canada and abroad, including some of Cuba’s premier folkloric ensembles. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Dance) with a minor in English Literature, graduating with honours from York University, and also holds an MA in dance (York University). Her research has focused on issues of embodied knowledge, body politics and Afro-Cuban folklore. Melissa has been an adjunct faculty member in the dance department at York University, teaching courses in Latin American dance. As both artist and academic, Melissa regularly performs and gives specialty workshops related to Afro-Cuban dance and culture, the African Diaspora, and embodied knowledge both in Canada and United States (SUNY Brockport, Duke University, Montréal, Newfoundland, Toronto and the surrounding GTA). In 2016, Melissa had the privilege of representing Canada, at the association of Caribbean Historians’ annual meeting in Havana, Cuba. In 2017 she traveled to Cuba again to assist—and participate in—the inauguration of “Africa: Significations”: an art exhibit hosted by New York University’s Africana House. Melissa recently completed her first Ontario Arts council grant and is currently teaching part time at City Dance Corps. She is also the artistic director of Ilédè, Afro-Cuban Drum and Dance Ensemble.



Lisa Odjig

Lisa is Odawa/ Ojibwe/ Pottawatomi Nations from Wikwemikong, Manitoulin Island, Ont. Lisa is a two time world champion hoop dancer along with six additional hoop dance championship titles won throughout Canada and the United States. Lisa is the first woman in the history of the Annual World Championship Hoop Dance contest in Phoenix, Arizona to win World Champion Hoop Dancer in the adult female and male combined adult division. Lisa has performed professionally for Queen Elizabeth II, the Prime Minister of Canada, Canada Day celebrations at Parliament Hill in Ottawa, the Winter Olympic Games in Salt Lake City, UT, Vancouver Olympic Torch celebrations in Ottawa at Parliament Hill and Toronto City Hall, the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards in Winnipeg and Edmonton, the Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards in Toronto, the Aboriginal People’s Choice Music Awards in Winnipeg, the Calgary Stampede Grand Stand shows and has performed in Italy, France, Holland, Germany, Israel, Palestine, Korea, Mexico, Jamaica and across the United States and Canada. In addition, Lisa performed with the renowned North American Indian Dance Theatre. Lisa has been a guest on television shows and talk shows such as the Today’s Show, CTV’s Canada AM, Citytv, KOCO Oklahoma City News, Aboriginal Peoples Television Network, Omni Television, just to name a few. Lisa advanced as one of the top 37 semi- finalist contestants on Canada’s Got Talent and was the featured Hoop Dancer for the Rogers Cup in Toronto. Recently, Lisa was the featured Hoop Dancer for ELLE magazine video shoot called The Movement.



Tara Shojaei



Omid Zaroorian

THEATRE



Roshan Ahmadvand

Roshan Ahmadvand works in various capacities across theatre and film. He studied Theatre Performance at Humber College, and Cinematography and Documentary Filmmaking at Sheridan College. He's been a member of the Toronto experimental theatre company Kadozuke Kollektif since 2010 where he has created and performed in a number of plays and installation projects. He has a long-standing relationship with Modern Times Stage Company where he has had the privilege of studying with Soheil Parsa through numerous workshops and productions. He is thrilled for the opportunity to participate in this Farsi production of Arash.



Ana Bayat

Ana is a theatre, film and voice-over actress fluent in Spanish, French, English and Persian. She holds a B.A. Honors in Linguistics, an M.A. in Film and a post-graduate diploma in Professional Acting and Stagecraft from England, UK. When not acting, Ana engages in creative writing, translation, interpreting and second language instruction. Ana will next be seen in the feature film *Waiting for Kiarostami* and will go on to perform *Mimi's Suitcase* at 70th Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland.



Katherine Belyea

Katherine is delighted to join Modern Times for this exciting project, her first play in another language. She hopes you are as moved by this story as she is. Other work: *Louis Riel* (National Arts Centre); *X, No Strings (Attached)* (Sunny Drake); *Faust, As You Like It* (Theatre By The Bay); *The Terrible Parents* (Cabaret Company); *Contempt, Nature of the Beast* (Safeword); *The Castle* (Red One); *Nightmare Dream* (IFT/Obsidian); and opera with Canadian Opera Company, Highlands Opera Studio, MYOpera and Opera York. Thanks to Soheil, Roshan, the cast, the production team and designers, and everyone at Modern Times and Harbourfront.



Bahram Beyzaie

Bahram Beyzaie is a well-known Iranian critic, researcher, teacher, playwright, stage director (and producer), screenwriter and filmmaker (director, producer and editor). He was first introduced to western audiences at the age of 25, when his play was staged at the Festival du Theatre des Nations in Paris, 1963. After years of uncompromising creative work, he became Professor and Chair of the Dramatic Arts Department at Tehran University until the Islamic revolution. Presently he is a visiting professor at Stanford University, Iranian Studies Program, lecturing on topics such as Iranian Cinema, Iranian Theatre and Cinema and Mythology. Beyzaie's literary heritage, from his parents, is reflected not only in his prose writings, his plays and films but also in his own personal style and critical outlook. Besides his monographs in volumes on Iranian, Japanese and Chinese theatres and also a book on Hitchcock films, he has done extensive research on the roots of *One Thousand and One Nights* resulting in two monographs, *Seeking the Roots of the Old Tree* followed by another about the missing ancient book of *Hezar Afsan* [*One Thousand and One Nights* as it is called in its Arabic translation]. In the past five decades, Beyzaie has published more than 35 plays, some of which are translated and published in English, French, German and Portuguese and also more than 50 screenplays. Despite many obstacles imposed on his life and career he has directed seven of his plays on the stage himself and in his own personal style in Tehran. Amongst these the film version of *Death of Yazdgerd* is available as an example of his artistic expression and historical and cultural view. Furthermore, he has made ten feature and four short films which are: Short films: *Mustachioed Uncle*; *The Journey*; *Talking with the Wind*; *The Speaking Carpet*. Feature films: *Downpour*; *The Stranger and the Fog*; *The Crow*; *The Ballad of Tara*; *Death of Yazdgerd*; *Bashu*, *The Little Stranger*; *Maybe Some Other Time*; *The Travelers*; *Killing Rabids*; *While We Are All Asleep*. His theatre works are, all except for one, directed by himself and include: *The Puppets*, *the Heritage and The Feast*, *King Snake*, *Death of Yazdgerd*, *Lady Aoi* (by Mishima Yukio), *Testament of Bondar Bidakhsh*, *The 1001st Night*, *The Passion Play of Mentor Navid Makan and His Wife Archeologist Rokhshid Farzin*, and *Afra or the Day Passes*. In the last four years he has directed a shadow play called *Jana & Baladoor* and also *Arash*, *1001st Night* and *Ardaviraf's Report*, all presented by the Iranian Studies of Stanford University.



Hanieh Borghei

Born in Tehran, Hanieh Borghei is very excited to be part of Modern Times Stage Company's production 'Arash'. ^[1]^[SEP]With a bachelor degree in psychology, she has always been interested in humans' behaviour and their experiences in life as well as performing art and painting. ^[1]^[SEP]After immigrating to Canada in 2015, Hanieh decided to follow her dream of becoming an actress. 'Dance of Torn Papers' written by Mohammad

Yaghoubi and directed by Aida Keikhaee was her first appearance on stage. Her second performance was based on selected works of renowned poets Forough Farrokhzad and Ahmad Shamlou, directed by Soheil Parsa in 2016 in Toronto



Setareh Delzendeh

Setareh is a multi disciplinary artist and studied theatre design in Iran. She has designed for several film productions including Protest by acclaimed Iranian director Masoud Kimiaei. She was involved in designing and editing a number of short and documentary films back home. Since her arrival in Canada in 2002, she has worked with numerous theatre, film and music companies such as Modern Times Stage Company, Pacific Opera, Canstage, Theatre Muskoka, Mercury Theatre, Mixed Theatre Company, Bamahamg studios and The Chamber Music Society of Mississauga.

Her desire to create performances that juxtapose different art disciplines led her to found Godot Art Productions in 2009 which created 3 multi disciplinary performances.

She was one of the founders and artistic directors of Tirgan Festival in 2006 and 2008.

Setareh is thrilled to work with Modern Times in Several productions since 2004.

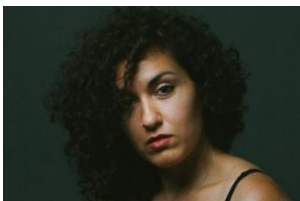


Richard Feren

Richard (composer/sound designer) has been composing music & sound designs for theatre, dance, and films since 1992. For Modern Times: Daughter of Sheherzad; Hamlet; Aurash; August 22.

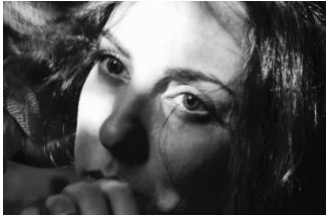
Recently: Confederation & Riel, Scandal & Rebellion (VideoCabaret); Little Pretty and the Exceptional (Factory Theatre); Cage (Soulpepper); Breath In Between (Crow's Theatre); Unholy (Nightwood); The Magic Hour (Theatre Centre); Tomorrowlove (Outside The March); A Doll's House (Soulpepper); The Body Politic (Lemontree Creations); The Testament Of Mary (Soulpepper); Life, Death and The Blues (Theatre Passe Muraille); THE 20TH OF NOVEMBER (Buddies In Bad Times); 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA (Kidoons/Wyrd Productions); The Other Place (Canadian Stage).

Other: Composed scores for six feature films and numerous shorts; won seven Dora Awards; 1999 Pauline McGibbon Award; shortlisted for the 2012 Siminovitch Prize



Raha Javanfar

Iranian-born, Toronto-based artist, Raha Javanfar, is a musician, lighting designer, projections designer, performer, and teacher. As an accomplished lighting and projections designer, she has worked for such companies as Soulpepper Theatre, Opera Atelier, Canadian Stage, National Ballet School, and Tafelmusik. She has toured extensively across Canada and the globe, and was recipient of the Siminovitch Protégé Prize in 2012. As a musician, Raha keeps busy playing full time in the Double Cuts and Zuze (violin) and leading her band, Bad Luck Woman & Her Misfortunes (vocals and bass), as well as teaching, musical directing, writing arrangements, and numerous other projects. Raha is very excited for her debut with Modern Times Theatre, and grateful for the opportunity.



Mona Ketabian

Born in Tehran, Mona Ketabian is extremely proud to take part in Modern Times Stage Company's production 'Arash'.

She started her acting career with theatre in Toronto in 2003. Some of her first works includes 'Sunday' directed by Levon Haftvan, 'Arash' & 'The Conference of the Birds' (Workshops) directed by Soheil Parsa. Some of her latest works include 'A Moment of Silence' and 'Proof' directed by Mohammad Yaghoubi. She was also one of the members of 'Circle Music Band' between 2011-2014.



Golshad Moradi

Golshad holds a bachelors degree in psychology and is a member of Sayeh Theatre Group. She started her acting career in 2007 with theatre in Tehran and since then has appeared in many different plays. She also attended a few European festivals for the play 'Words and the Man' directed by Mehdi Mashhoor and also won best actress awards for the play 'The Good Doctor' (Neil Simon) from Shamse Festival. She is delighted to be joining Modern Times Stage production 'Arash'.



Gia Nahmens

Head of Administration at Modern Times, Gia has been working as a stage/production manager/administrator in Canada for the past seven years. She is graduated from the University of British Columbia with a Major in Theatre and a Minor in Spanish Literature. She Immigrated to Canada from Venezuela in 2003. Gia has worked extensively as a Stage Manager for productions like: Tony N' Tinas Wedding (Hoarse Raven Theatre), Wild Rose (Fringe 2008/Bumpershoot 2009), The Honeymoon (Pick of the Fringe: Vancouver 2009), The Talking Stick Festival (2010&2011), and Back to You: The Life and Music of Lucille Starr (Apprentice Stage Manager: Musical Theatreworks), amongst many others. While working as a Stage Manager she realized she could start training in administration and production and dove into working with Left Right Minds Initiatives as a production assistant. This work allowed her to understand the 'backstage' of a production. In Toronto she has been working with the Flamenco community; the Venezuelan community; stage managing, producing and touring Monique Mojicas "Chocolate Woman Dreams the Milky Way"; and assisting company management for "Arrabal".



Soheil Parsa

Soheil Parsa, Artistic Director of Modern Times Stage Company-Toronto, Canada, is an award-winning director, writer, dramaturg, choreographer and teacher, whose professional theatre career spans thirty years and two continents. In his native Iran, Soheil completed studies in Theatre Performance at the University of Tehran and began a promising career as an actor and director. Arriving in Canada with his family in 1984, Soheil completed a second Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Studies at York University and then went on to establish Modern Times Stage Company, one of the most innovating theatre companies in Canada. In 1995 Soheil received a New Pioneers Award by Skills for Change for Outstanding Contribution to the Arts by a recent immigrant to Canada. Soheil's own work at Modern Times has been recognized with six Dora Mavor Moore Awards, a Chalmers Fellowship in 2002, a senior artist creation grant from the Canada Council, as well as a number of international prizes and master class requests. In 2007 and 2010 he was short-listed for the Siminovitch Prize in Theatre Celebrating Directors, the highest honour in Canadian theatre. In 2013, Soheil was awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal for his contribution as a theatre artist to Canadian society. Most recently, he has been named as the best director at the Toronto Theatre Critics awards.



Ghazal Partou

Ghazal Partou is an Iranian multidisciplinary artist, who moved to Canada in 2013. Ghazal is the recipient of Toronto Arts Foundation's 2015 TELUS Newcomer Artist Award, Persbook Contemporary Art Award, and the National Sculpture Biennial Award in Tehran. Since landing in Toronto, Ghazal has been active in more than 10 art projects as an actor, creative director, and designer. These days, her effort is to make the most out of the multicultural atmosphere of Toronto, to find an international language as an artist, and expand the limits to connect with people beyond their race, language, nationality, and ethnicity.



Banafsheh Taherian

Modern Times' Director of Development, Banafsheh has been working in the fields of marketing and event planning for over a decade now in Tehran and Toronto. Most recently she has been an Event Coordinator for International City Leaders Foundation, where she coordinated and executed an Expert Group Conference UN HABITAT III (United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development). She was also an Assistant Marketing Manager for Padika Online Marketing solutions, a Sales Representative and Marketer for Shahre Ma Magazine & ITC TV, as well as a Marketing Event Manager for Tavanmadar International Management and Exhibition Affairs.

Banefsheh is also a professional emcee, having worked most recently for the Tirgan Festival, as well as being an accomplished voice artist, with experience in numerous media platforms.

KIDS



HaoyanHarry Zhang

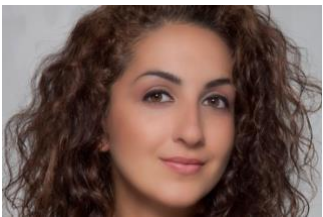
Haoyan “Harry” Zhang is an emerging dance artist and youth educator originally from Taiyuan, China. Currently a student at York University studying Film, Harry began b-boy dancing in 2013 at the Ngen Youth Centre in Hamilton, ON. Today he battles in urban hubs across the Greater Toronto Area. Harry is part of the World Serpent artist collective.



Laya Alemohammad

Laya Alemohammad, was born in 1983, Tehran, Iran. She has graduated from Islamic Azad University in Materials Ceramic Engineering, Tehran Conservatory of Music in World Class Music Teaching and Performance and also Toronto Royal Conservatory of Music as an Elementary Piano Specialist. She has been a RCM certified teacher with more than 10 years of experience in teaching piano and theory to students of various ages and levels.

Apart from music, she also has a keen interest in ceramic art. She combines her love of and expression through the arts with her scientific and artistic background. She has exhibited her works in several solo and group exhibitions in Moghadam museum and Tehran University. In addition, as an immigrant she has presented several creative cultural art workshops for children and communities to connect cultures through the arts.



Golnesa Amani

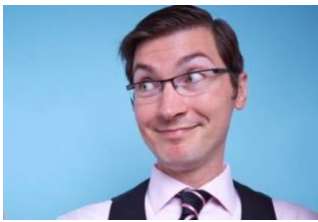
Golnesa Amani is the co-founder and executive director of Boostan Multicultural Collective. She graduated from the University of Toronto in 2013 with a Masters in French Language and Linguistics. Golnesa has trained as a classical ballet dancer for more than ten years at the Donita Ballet School. In August 2015, she was invited by the Iranian Association of Boston to participate and perform in the Second International Iranian Dance Conference in Cambridge, MA. For the past two years, she has performed with the Khorshid Khanoom Dance Group, based in Montreal. Golnesa describes herself as a project-based, social justice educator; facilitating programs that empower youth through skill-sharing and creative self-expression. She has worked in nearly one hundred elementary schools across the GTA



Ghazal Bina

Ghazal stepped on a yoga mat for the first time in her early twenties in her hometown, Tehran, while she was a philosophy student. It has become a significant part of her life for the past 10 years. It helped her grow stronger, more flexible and fearless, both on and off the mat.

She completed her 200 hour Vinyasa Flow at 889 Yoga Studio in Toronto & 300 hour Hatha & 200 hour Yoga Therapy in India. She also had the opportunity of completing Manju.P.Jois' Ashtanga Primary Series workshop in Berlin and completing a 10 day Vipassana Retreat in Lumbini (Buddha's Birth Place) in Nepal. She has been teaching privately and leading group classes in Iran, Cambodia and Canada so far for the past 4 years. In her classes, she challenges practitioners physically and mentally to help them find their inner gurus. She strongly believes that yoga is not a series of physical poses to show off your body. However the purpose of yoga is meditation, accepting the reality the way it is and learning the art of living in the moment.



Scott Dietrich

Magician, Scott Dietrich, was literally born into a family magic troupe, and has been performing since he was just a boy. For the past 6 consecutive years Scott has been voted the GTA's "Best Children's Entertainer" by the readers of City Parent Magazine. You may also recognize Scott from his time on YTV where he magically introduced your kids favourite shows.



Negar Familsabzevari

Negar hails from Hamadan, Iran. She moved to Canada in 2010 and set out to follow her dream of being a chef. She has studied and trained for almost 5 years in some of the highest rated chef and pastry schools around the world and continues pushing herself to become the best. She currently works as a sous-chef in one of the well known pastry shops in Toronto. Azar Sabzevari will help her run this workshop.



Newsha Haghgoo

Newsha Haghgoo is a 21 year-old student who is studying Civil Engineering at the University of Toronto. She loves science, art and kids. Back in her native Tehran, she had the opportunity to participate in the art and theatre classes run by Hannibal Alkhas. She continued to pursue her passion for art and participated in theatre and dance classes when she moved to Canada.

As for her work experience, she has worked as an instructor at Mini-Maker-Faire and Maker Festival for 3 consecutive years. In these events, she instructed soldering and jewelry making with 3D printing to more than 100 kids. She was also a mentor at the University of Toronto Engineering Outreach Community which holds

design competitions for kids. Newsha has also worked as an instructor at the Canada's largest STEM outreach charity which was a partnership between University of Toronto Engineering, Google Canada and Actua. In that event, she taught 7 to 14 year-old students to program their own video games. Currently, she is working at MakerKids and teaches STEM programs in Coding, Robotics and Minecraft to children. With the skill and experience that Newsha has in art, science and working with the kids, she believes that she can combine the the analytic rigour of the scientist with the creative inspiration of the artist to make an inspirational atmosphere for kids, and encourage them to be more confident and multidisciplinary.



Mahgol Izadi

Mahgol Izadi is an Academic English teacher at York University and Zumba group fitness instructor. She has been dancing Salsa, Merengue & Bachata for over 14 years and has training in Flamenco, Afro-house, Belly Dancing, Tango, Samba, and Reggaeton music. Being from Iran, her classes blend beautiful Middle Eastern rhythms with Latin, African and pop culture beats which result in exhilarating, effective, and interesting workouts. Nevertheless, the focus of her classes remains and embraces the core Latin genres. Among other things, she has performed and continues doing shows in charity events and for seniors' entertainment. In addition, she continues teaching Big and small groups as well as private dance and fitness classes.



Ann Powell

Ann Powell founded Puppetmongers Theatre in 1974 with her brother, David, and with the company she plays with puppets and creates new works for both young and adult audiences. She has toured and travelled extensively, performing Puppetmongers' plays and observing puppetry around the world, and their productions have garnered awards and critical acclaim. The company also works with other artists, such as composer R. Murray Shafer on his Palace of the Cinnabar Phoenix, and acted as the Puppetry Department for the movie, Mr Magorium's Wonder Emporium. Outside of Puppetmongers, Ann's solo show, Bed & Breakfast, was awarded a Citation of Excellence in the Art of Puppetry by UNIMA-USA, before becoming a Puppetmongers duo performance. She collaborates on projects with other theatre companies and artists, including an Arts for Peace theatre project in the former USSR with Whole Loaf Theatre and North American and Russian artists and students. Ann was a founding member of Kids Can Press publishing company and has illustrated a number of books for children published by Kids Can Press, The Womens' Press and Scholastic, including the Ms. Beaver travel trilogy by Rosemary Allison and her own story, Strange Street. As a teacher of puppetry and related theatre arts, Ann has conducted workshops and programs for youth and adults at colleges and universities, summer arts camps and libraries, conferences, puppet clubs and festivals across Canada, in the USA and the former USSR, and been involved with community engaged theatre projects in Toronto. She is also an Artist in Education, leading puppetry workshops for elementary, middle and secondary school students.

Both Ann and David are Honours graduates of the Ontario College of Art and Design, and have been making stuff and playing with it for as long as they can remember. Together they have collaborated with and made puppets and props for many theatre artists and companies. A highlight was their puppet design, construction and manipulation for R. Murray Schafer's outdoor opera extravaganza, The Palace of the Cinnabar Phoenix. Ann and David, with Johan Vandergun, were the founders of the Toronto School of Puppetry. This seasonal adult program has drawn students from across Canada, the USA and beyond since 1996. They have also taught adults at the National Puppetry Conference at the Eugene O'Neill Centre in Connecticut, and given workshops for youth and adults at colleges and universities, libraries, conferences and puppet clubs across Canada and the USA. They work with children at summer arts camps, and in the schools through the Inner City Angels and Mariposa in the Schools.



David Powell

David Powell co-founded Puppetmongers Theatre in 1974 with his sister, Ann, and with the company plays with puppets and creates new works for both young and adult audiences. Besides his work with Puppetmongers Theatre, David worked with musicians Daria Kwiatkowska and Scott Wilson, and puppeteer Mark Keetch, on the creation of a wildly experimental shadow show called Shuttle Dreams that played at the Music Gallery in Toronto. David has worked as a designer, prop and puppet maker with such artists as Linda Griffiths, Tatiana Jennings, Ida Carnivale Michael Kelly, and Chris Earle. He has also made masks for Danny Grossman Dance Company, Judy Jarvis Dance, and Civilized Theatre. David spent three months studying puppetry, music and theatre in Java and Bali on a Canada Council grant. As there was no gamelan set in Toronto at that time, on his return home he built, over the next seventeen years, a Javanese style set of nearly forty instruments. With this gamelan he gives workshops in Toronto schools. He has played with the University of Toronto's gamelan and with both Gamelan Toronto and Gong Sabrang at the Indonesian Consulate. Both York University and the University of Toronto have employed him to repair and retune their gamelan orchestras on several occasions. Both Ann and David are Honours graduates of the Ontario College of Art and Design, and have been making stuff and playing with it for as long as they can remember. Together they have collaborated with and made puppets and props for many theatre artists and companies. A highlight was their puppet design, construction and manipulation for R. Murray Schafer's outdoor opera extravaganza, The Palace of the Cinnabar Phoenix. Ann and David, with Johan Vandergun, were the founders of the Toronto School of Puppetry. This seasonal adult program has drawn students from across Canada, the USA and beyond since 1996. They have also taught adults at the National Puppetry Conference at the Eugene O'Neill Centre in Connecticut, and given workshops for youth and adults at colleges and universities, libraries, conferences and puppet clubs across Canada and the USA. They work with children at summer arts camps, and in the schools through the Inner City Angels and Mariposa in the Schools.



Sara Salahi

Sara Salahi graduated in Directing (Theatre) in 2012 from Tabriz Art University, Iran. She immigrated to Canada in 2012, and started working as a part-time journalist in 2013. Then, she decided to expand her knowledge about Cinema which led her to complete a certificate program in Film Studies at Ryerson University. She also has worked as assistant director, actress, and assistant set designer in Canada. She recently directed a short play called "Manchild Psychiatry" performed in Alumnae Theatre as part of InspiraTo Festival in June 2017. She also wrote and published a number of books; a play called "A Table for Trial", and a short story collection called "Sing into Spring". She translated a poem book called "Boats With No Passenger", and was art director for a poem book called "The Wasteland Without You". She has also worked as children drama teacher and is currently studying Theatre Production at York University.



Poliya Takmiliyan

Poliya Takmiliyan, designer, puppeteer and puppet maker graduated in Theatre from the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Tehran.

She started her career as a set designer from the very first year of the university and worked as assistant in different TV shows, TV series, and movies. Since she had a strong interest in puppet shows, she performed as a puppeteer and puppet maker at International Students' Puppet Theatre Festivals of Tehran. She was a member of a Kheymeh-Shab-Bazi group as a Narrator (Morshed) and puppet maker. She also designed and made a portable chamber to perform in the different places. They performed in the opening of International Students' Puppet Theatre Festivals of Tehran and International Children's day in the Niavaran Palace in Tehran, where they had a workshop for children to make the "Mobarak" puppet (the main character of Kheymeh-Shab-Bazi).

LITERATURE / HISTORY



Hossein Mortezaeian Abkenar

(Short story contest jury) Hossein Mortezaeian Abkenar is an Iranian writer. He earned his BA in dramatic arts from University of Tehran. Abkenar's novel, "A Scorpion on the Steps of Andimeshk Railroad Station", published in 2006, won the Mehregan Adab Award and the Hooshang Golshiri Award for the best first novel, as well as the Vaav Award for the year's most unique novel. That book has been translated into French, German, and Kurdish. He also wrote the screenplay for the film "No One Knows About Persian Cats" directed by Bahman Ghobadi and awarded the Special Jury Prize in the Un Certain Regard Section at the 2009 Cannes Film Festival. Abkenar is currently working on a novel that covers three decades in Iran's history and takes a fresh look at Iranian society- particularly women's issues, revolution, the war, political and social crisis, sex discrimination, and sexual violence – from a cultural standpoint. He is focusing on the plot design for this new novel and on researching historical facts.



Baroj Akrayi

(Short story contest jury member) Baroj Akrayi was born in Kurdistan, Iraq. After spending years as a refugee in Iran with his family, he emigrated to Sweden and eventually returned to Erbil, Kurdistan. He has published six collections of poems in Kurdish and two collections of short stories in Persian. He is also a dedicated photographer and a celebrated translator of Persian literature into Kurdish.



Bahar Almasi

Born in 1985, Bahar Almasi is an Iranian-Canadian poet, writer, and cultural activist. She made her début as a poet by publishing in Iranian youth magazines at the age of thirteen. An electrical engineer and a graduate of Knowledge, Media, Design by education, Bahar has continued to produce a wide array of works, ranging from poetry to short stories, plays, articles, translations, reports, and radio shows, published through Iranian and international outlets. She has also led and participated in various cultural events and campaigns in Toronto. Bahar Almasi has two books of poetry, Lady Gemini (2015, Canada), and Letters of Lead (2016, Iran).



Daryoush Ashouri

Daryoush Ashouri, born in Tehran in 1938, has studied at the Faculty of Law, Political Sciences, and Economics of the University of Tehran. He has worked extensively as author, essayist, translator,

encycopedist, and lexicologist. His intellectual interests cover a large domain of interdisciplinary fields from political sciences to literature, philosophy, and linguistics. His main concern is with cultural and linguistic matters of his motherland as a developing country encountering modernity. Part of his articles deal intensively with those matters. He has contributed considerably to the development of the vocabulary of the Persian language in the domains of human sciences and philosophy. These contributions are compiled in one volume as Farhang-e olum-e ensāni (A Dictionary for Human Sciences). He is author, compiler, and translator of more than 25 books. One of his main works is his hermeneutical, intertextual study of the Divan of Hafiz, Erfān o Rendi. He is translator of the works by Nietzsche, Machiavelli, Shakespeare, and others into Persian. He has been visiting lecturer at the universities of Tehran, Oxford and Tokyo. He is married with three children and lives in France.



Bahram Bahrami

Bahram Bahrami, writer and photographer, published his early works, including poems, short stories, and articles for various papers in Persian and English during the 1970's. He translated works of Samuel Beckett, Bertolt Brecht, and Yevgeni Yevtushenko. Bahrami earned a B.A. in English Literature in 1969 and was employed by the Iranian National Television as a film director after graduating from the School of Film and TV in 1971. He made documentaries for the station until 1980. Bahrami has published two collections of his own poems and has been contributing to weeklies and periodicals in Canada, U.S.A, and Iran since 1985 .



Khosrow Davami

(Short story contest jury) Khosrow Davami was born in Tehran. He completed his education in Electronic Engineering in the US and has been living in southern California since 1986, holding various positions as editor and editor in chief for Persian literary publications.

Khosrow Davami is the acclaimed writer of short story collections Parseh (Rira Publication, 1988), Panjereh (Rira Publication 1990), Hotel Morcopolo (Niloofar Publishing, 1993) and A long story, Angel Ladies (Naranjestan Publication 1995). Parseh and Hotel Marcopolo have won prizes for best short story collection



Roya Ebrahimi

Roya Ebrahimi, poet and lyricist, is a clinical psychologist by education with a passion for literature which she pursues seriously. The first edition of her book of poems "A Dictator With Brown Eyes" (Dictatori ba Chashm-ha-ye Ghahveh-ee) was very well received in Iran and got sold out in less than a month prompting a second edition. She has over 59000 followers, has taught at the university and has written for the radio.



Hamed Esmailion

(Short story contest jury member) Hamed Esmailion was born in Kermanshah, Iran and graduated in dentistry from the University of Tabriz. He has been living in Canada with his family for 7 years. He started writing professionally over 10 years ago under the mentorship of Amir Hossein Cheheltan and has published four books in Persian since: Avishan Ghashang Nist, Ghanary Baz, Doctor Datis and Gamasyab Mahi Nadarad. He has been nominated for and won literary prizes in Iran and was selected as one of the the best writers under 40, last year. He continues practicing as a dentist in Canada and loves his job.



Farshid Sadat Sharifi

(Short story contest jury) Farshid Sadat Sharifi has completed his education in Persian Literature, from BA to post doctorate at the University of Shiraz, Iran. Having published 16 books and 360 papers and articles, he is now in Canada to continue learning and is currently a visiting scholar at Mc Gill University.



Persis Karim

Persis Karim is a poet, editor and professor of English & Comparative Literature at San José State University in San José, California. She is the editor of three anthologies of Iranian diaspora literature: Tremors: New Fiction by Iranian-American Writers (2013); Let Me Tell You Where I've Been: New Writing by Women of the Iranian Diaspora; and, A World Between: Poems, Short Stories and Essays by Iranian Americans (1999). Her poetry has appeared in numerous publications including Callaloo, The New York Times, Reed Magazine, and The White Wall Review, among others. In fall 2017, she will become the director of the newly-established Center for Iranian Diaspora Studies at San Francisco State University.



Pegah Karimi

Born in 1982, Pegah Karimi has been active in acting and literature, especially poetry, since early childhood. She is an Industrial Engineer by education and a masters student at McMaster University. She writes mostly in Persian. She believes that writing is her best way to communicate with the world!



Homa Katouzian

Homa Katouzian is an economist, historian, political scientist and literary critic, with a special interest in Iranian studies. Katouzian's formal academic training was in economics and the social sciences but he concurrently continued his studies of Persian history and literature at a professional academic level. He began studying the life and works of the modern Persian writer, Sadeq Hedayat, and that of the Prime Minister of Iran in the early 1950s, Mohammad Mosaddeq, while still a faculty member in the department of economics at the University of Kent at Canterbury. Having taught economics at universities in Britain and other countries for eighteen years, he took voluntary retirement in 1986 to devote his entire time to Iranian studies. In recent years, he has been teaching and writing on classical Persian literature, in particular the 13th-century poet and writer, Sa'di. Currently based at the University of Oxford, Katouzian is a member of the Faculty of Oriental Studies and the Iran Heritage Research Fellow at St. Antony's College. He is Editor, International Journal of Persian Literature, Editor, Journal of Political Science and International Affairs, Co-Editor, AIS-Routledge Iranian studies book series, and Senior Editor, Iran Namag, A Bilingual Journal of Iranian Studies. His books in English include, The Persians: ancient, medieval and modern Iran; Sadeq Hedayat: The Life and Legend of an Iranian Writer; Sa'di: The Poet of Life, Love and Compassion; Iranian History and Politics: The Dialectic of State and Society; IRAN: Politics, History and Literature; Sa'di in Love, the Lyrics of Persia's Master Poet.



Amir Mahim

"Poetry is not part of my life, it is my whole life."

Mahim is writer and poet, host and producer of art and literary programs for Persian Radio and Television Broadcasting. He has been writing poems from an early age. His published books are:

- Khaneh va Jodaee Jahan
- Makhah Shear Begeryad
- Dar Hayahooye Sokout
- Symphony Shab



Abbas Milani

Professor Milani is the Director of the Hamid and Christina Moghadam Program in Iranian Studies, co-director of the Iran Democracy Project and a research fellow at the Hoover Institution. His expertise is U.S. - Iran relations as well as Iranian cultural, political, and security issues. Milani is the author of Modernity and Its Foes in Iran (Gardon Press, 1998); The Persian Sphinx: Amir Abbas Hoveyda and the Riddle of the Iranian Revolution (Mage, 2000); Lost Wisdom: Rethinking Persian Modernity in Iran in English (Mage 2004) and Persian (Ketob Corp. 2004); Tales of Two Cities: A Persian Memoir (Mage, 2006); The Myth of the Great Satan (Hoover Institution Press, 2010); The Shah (Palgrave MacMillan, 2011), his own Persian version of the book has also been published inside and outside Iran. Culture and Politics in Contemporary Iran (Lynne Rienner, 2015) is his most recent book, co-edited with Larry Diamond. Milani has also translated numerous books and articles into Persian and English. He has published more than 200 essays and book reviews in journals and papers



Sanaz Mosadegh

Sanaz Mosadegh is a poet, literary translator and a Research Scientist (Ph.D.) at Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) in Toronto. She was born in 1983 in Iran and graduated in Chemical Engineering (Ph.D.) from Laval University in Quebec City, Canada. Her poems are mostly written in Persian and some have been translated to English. She has also published a poetry collection in English in 2015 with H&S Media, a United Kingdom Publisher in London; and one in 2014 with Fasl e Panjom, an Iranian Publisher in Tehran. Recently, she published an anthology of the contemporary North American poetry in Iran.



Dona Robati

“I was the margin of my own text, crossed out the margin; now I am just a text.”
Dona Robati is a poet, writer (English and Farsi), journalist and a CIS Engineer.



Anna Sarchami

Anna Sarchami is a performance artist by education. She has used poetry as a medium since her first workshop with Siavash Shabanpour in 2011. Her main source of inspiration is her own feelings and relations with the surrounding world. Also, issues related to women all around the world have always been a motivation in her works both in performance and poetry.



Hila Sedighi

Born in 1985, Hila Sedighi is an Iranian poet, painter, and social activist, best known for her politically charged lyrics recited during the aftermath of highly contested 2009 presidential election in Iran. She began writing poetry at a young age and was elected as the youngest chief editor for ‘City of Children’ magazine at age fourteen. In 2002 she established the Neyestan Cultural Literary Association, holding regular poetry meetings until 2009. During the same years, she studied Law in Tehran and began her work as an activist. In 2012, Hila Sedighi was awarded the Hellman-Hammett Grant, by Human Rights Watch, for her work. Hila Sedighi will recite verses from her poems remotely.



Ida Shamlu

Ida Shamlu will remotely recite verses from Ahmad Shamlu, exclusively for Tirgan's Poetry Night event.



Sareh Sokoot

Sareh Sokoot is an Iranian-Canadian poet, translator, and activist. She co-founded The Cultural Events at York University in 2012 and founded Kaanoon Toronto in 2015. These groups have hosted numerous Persian poetry events, workshops and a book reading campaign in Canada and the US. She has pursued literature starting at a young age and has been published in numerous Iranian and international outlets. Her first book, *The Fourteen Innocents (14 Masoumeh)* was published in Berlin in 2014 and received positive feedback in Iran and Afghanistan. She writes poetry in English and Persian and has performed at many events in several cities in Canada and the US. Currently, she is writing children's books as well as her second book of poems.

In addition to literature, she has been a language tutor and a volunteer translator for a refugee centre in Toronto. She holds several degrees and certificates, including Biomedical Science and Dental Assisting.



Safdar Taghizadeh

Safdar Taghizadeh was born in Abadan in 1932 and holds a Masters degree in English Language and Literature from Tehran University. He studied Administration in England and started translating English literary works into Persian. Some of his translated works are *Anna Christie* and *The Long Voyage Home*, by Eugene O'Neill, *Tortilla Flat* by John Steinbeck, *La Ronde (Reigen)* by Arthur Schnitzler, *Death in the Woods* by Sherwood Anderson, *Modern Novels: The 99 Best* by Anthony Burgess and *Strange Pilgrims* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez. The book "*Shokoofae Dastane Kootah Dar Daheh Nakhost e Enghelab*" (*The Heyday of Short Stories During the First Decade of the Revolution*) is one of his compilations in Persian. He is one of the editors of the "*Farnhang Sokhan*" series under the supervision of Dr. Hassan Anvari.

He has served as jury in many literary competitions and has been the founder of several literary awards



Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi

Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi is Professor of Historical Studies, History, and Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations at the University of Toronto. He was the founding Chair of the Department of Historical Studies at the University of Toronto-Mississauga (2004-07), and has served as President of the International Society

for Iranian Studies (2008-10). In addition to serving as Editor-in-Chief of Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East (2001-2012), a Duke University Press journal, he was the Editor of Iran Nameh (2011-2015). He is currently the Editor-in-Chief of Iran Namag, a bilingual quarterly of Iranian Studies, and is the coeditor of Iranian Studies book series published by Routledge. In addition to three edited books, he is the author of Refashioning Iran: Orientalism, Occidentalism and Historiography (Palgrave, 2001) and Tajaddud-i Bumi [Vernacular Modernity] (Nashr-i Tarikh, 2003). He is currently completing a manuscript that explores the discursive transformation of modern Persian political language from biopolitics to spatial governance. It traces the shift from a restorative rhetoric of the medical sciences to the constructional language of engineering. Tavakoli is the recipient of two Outstanding Teacher awards from Illinois State University (1996 and 2001) and held visiting fellowships at St. Antony's College, Oxford University (1998), the Center for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (New Delhi, 1992–93); and Harvard University (1991–92). He holds a BA in political science and an MA in history from the University of Iowa, and a PhD in history from the University of Chicago.

COOKING



Hamid Salimian

Born in Iran, Chef Hamid Salimian grew up on the edge of the Caspian Sea and learned about traditional Persian cuisine amid his father's citrus orchards and dairy farm. Soon after his family relocated to Vancouver, Canada, Hamid enrolled in culinary and pastry arts at Vancouver Community College for his first formal training as a chef and graduated at the top of his class. He learned the essential skills to combine the heritage of Persian cuisine with influences of the Pacific Northwest and began to define a uniquely creative and contemporary approach. During a successful apprenticeship at Vancouver's renowned Sutton Place Hotel, Hamid trained in classic French cuisine and began to explore the world of food competition.



Hoss Zaré

Chef Hoss Zaré is a San Francisco-based chef, renowned in the culinary world for his distinctive style that reframes Iranian cuisine to heighten it while simultaneously making it more accessible to the world. He grew up on his family's century old farm in Tabriz, Iran. In 1986 he immigrated to San Francisco, where his older brother owned and operated the iconic Billboard Café. In 1989, while enrolled as a pre-med student at UC Davis, his passion for cooking would have him drive every day from Davis to San Francisco to work as a line cook at the historic Fly Trap Restaurant. This is where owner Walter Zolezzi and Chef Craig Thomas mentored Zaré to the rank of Executive Chef.

In his twenty-five year plus career, Chef Hoss Zaré has established a loyal following while at the helm of several restaurants including Aromi, Zaré Sacramento, and Bistro Zaré. After a stint in the Napa Valley, fate would bring him back to the restaurant where his culinary journey began. Chef Hoss Zaré owned and operated Fly Trap Restaurant from 2008 to 2016. During this time he began to draw from the flavors and memories of his childhood and honed his unique style. Known for his exuberant service and hospitality, or rather "Hoss-pitality", a term coined by fans and a play on his first name—he often embraces guests with Hossy-Hugs and a smile before any service.

Chef Hoss Zaré has received awards and praises, and has been the subject of several publications. Currently, he is working on a memoir and recipe book dedicated to his parents and also consulting and traveling in his spare time.

VISUAL ARTS



Mostafa Ahmadi

(Photo contest jury member) A graduate from New York Film Academy, Mostafa Ahmadi started his art work in 1989. He is a freelance film director and has collaborated with several Iranian and American famous film makers as an assistant. His last movie, Closer, was screened in Montreal's 39th World Film Festival. In his resume, Mostafa also has the translation of several stories from

famous authors such as Woody Allen and Ingmar Bergman.



Keyvan Fehri

Keyvan Fehri, ceramist, was born 1971 in Tehran, Iran. He started professional work in ceramic arts in 1989 and specialized in the reproduction of Iranian museum ceramic pieces. Keyvan uses the firing method of pottery at Marlic Mountain in Gilan, Iran, millennium B.C., the firing method of pottery and inscribed vessels from Neyshabur, Iran; a method which dates back to the 9th and 10th centuries A.D., firing of pre-Islamic grey pottery, firing and enameling technique of double-shelled Iranian vessels in Gorgan and Kashan, Iran; a technique dating to the 13th century A.D. and firing method of pottery discovered at Sialk hills in Kashan, Iran; a method which dates back to the 9th-16th centuries, A.D. He also specializes in the production and revival of Iranian lusterware. Keyvan has held numerous exhibitions all around the world and has been the recipient of many awards.



Edwin Janzen

(Photo contest jury member) Born in Winnipeg and working in Montreal, visual artist Edwin Janzen constructs fantasy scenarios and other reflections on themes of security, surveillance, media and technology. Often inspired by the Cold War period, that era's vivid visual language, as drawn from cinema, sci-fi literature, car and travel culture, space exploration and consumer electronics, appears and plays throughout his work. Edwin has exhibited his projects—which cut across various media including print, photography, digital imaging, video, installation and art books—in diverse locations across Canada. He completed an MFA at the University of Ottawa (2010), a BFA at Concordia University (2008) and a BA in history (Byzantine Empire) from the University of Manitoba (1993). Also a contract writer and editor, Edwin has written for Canadian Art, Border Crossings, C Magazine and other publications, as well as hundreds of commercial clients.



Yousef Kashefifar

Yousef's extensive experience in architectural & interior design has enhanced his skills in photography to a great extent. Not only his acting and theatrical backgrounds have been influential to his art of photography, throughout his career

Yousef has been able to express his emotions and innovative ideas through his photographs for many years since his time back at the architectural school.

His passion for photography has led him to continue his education at Ryerson University since 2014 where he is still mastering his art of photography relentlessly. Yousef has dedicated the recent several years of his career to travelling across Iran and its historical cities to capture the beauty and uniqueness of each scene from angles that normal human's eye cannot capture. He believes Iran is a lost heaven which needs to be rediscovered all over again. Yousef is currently working towards establishing an art gallery called "The Clay Town".



Masoud Keshmiri

Masoud was born in 1977 and began with his work in his childhood. It got serious in high school and this led him to choose Graphic Design as a course. Then he attended University of Tehran and earned his Bachelor Degree in Graphic Design. Later, because of his great interest in animation, he continued his education and earned his Master in Animation at the same university.

He is the winner of the first prize of the Satanic Conspiracy International Caricature Competition in the teenage and young adults section in 1993, winner of the plate of commendation from the 5th Tehran International Cartoon Biennale in the portrait section in 2001, winner of the first prize of the First Cartoon Festival for College Students in December 2001.

He has collaborated with publishers and various institutes in the field of Illustration, Graphic Design and Animation and has taught at the University in the faculty of Art.



Sara Khanlari

Sara is a dedicated wedding and special event planner/stylist. She founded Ever Thine Events in 2014. Along with a background in wedding planning, Sara also studied fashion design in Toronto. Her passion for cinema also led her to study set design with artist Iraj Raminfar in Tehran to advance her sketching, painting, and colourization skills. As a detail-oriented professional, Sara has been commissioned to design sets and spreads for various special events across the GTA.



Naser Mohammadi

(Photo contest jury member) Nasser Mohammadi is a digital photographer born in Iran. His work is mainly focused on documentary photography. He began his art activity in 1998 and he is now a photography instructor at the University of Zanzan, Iran. Naser has participated in several solo and collective photo exhibitions. He has also been a jury member in photo contests. He is compiling a

book about the variety of mosques in Zanzan, has several published photo articles in magazines, and participates in different workshops as an instructor.



Farin Norouzi

Known for her artistry and passion to work her magic to wedding gowns and couture line, she is arguably the most prominent Iranian designer to channel her zest for Iranian art heritage into an elegant and uncompromising historical costume exhibition.

Trained as a classical painter under the guidance of Morteza Katouzian, a celebrated Iranian artist, her skills in illustration, her sense of elegance and meticulous attention to detail, lead Farin to her carrier.

Her story begins with recognition of her innate talent by her friends and family. Their encouragement, her seeds of vision, individuality and originality were at the core of her decision to create a collection. The success validated her chemistry with fashion and established her as a spirited designer.

Her pilgrimage to explore the history of Persian fashion started with a commission to design costumes for Iran's booth at Dubai Global Village cultural project. Honoured to receive the first prize for her work of art, she continued her extensive research with her dedicated team of craftsmen to explore and re-create historical costumes. Her goal is to herald the magnificence of Iranian art, revive lost crafts of adorning the garments and harness the productivity of at risk communities by creating jobs.

Wholeheartedly, the exhibition is her social message to encourage young Iranians to know more about their Persian heritage and to unveil another underestimated aspect of Iran's contribution to the world of art.

Last but definitely not the least, Farin has always been inspired and encouraged by individuals who light the spark of hope in her heart with their grace and way of life, particularly Mrs. "Ziba Jahan", who has played a major role in Farin's defining moments in pursuit of her art and lifestyle.

Farin Norouzi's exhibitions have won several awards and have been showcased in Iran, France, Russia and Dubai.



Afarin Rahmanifar

(Photo Contest Exhibition Co-curator) Afarin Rahmanifar is an award winning artist, educator, and curator. She received her master of fine arts degree in Painting and Drawing from the University of Connecticut. She is currently an Assistant Professor of Art at Eastern Connecticut State University. Her artistic vision originates from intersecting points of Eastern and Western culture. Ms. Rahmanifar specializes in painting, mixed media, installation, animated motion picture, film, and Persian miniature. Afarin has exhibited extensively across the United State, China, India, and Canada. The retrospective solo exhibition of her work will be featured at SOHO20 Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, and Art Walk Gallery, Hartford, CT in 2017.

Her first curatorial practice was in 2001 as President of the Connecticut Women Artists Association. From that point forward, Afarin has curated numerous exhibitions in many different museums. Some of her recent curatorial exhibitions include, "Iranian Artist's Exhibits" at the Akus Gallery in Willimantic, Connecticut in 2010 and "Under Raw Skin" at the Art Space Gallery, also in Willimantic, Connecticut held in 2014. In 2015, Ms. Rahmanifar curated "Azadi Va Edalat" held at The Museum of Art at Oglethorpe University in Atlanta, GA. In 2016, she curated "Embodied Narratives" at the Art Space Gallery in Willimantic, CT. She is a guest co-curator at Benevolence Photography Exhibition co-Organized by CaféLitt and Tirgan biennial festival in Toronto, Canada, 2017.



Sarah Seené

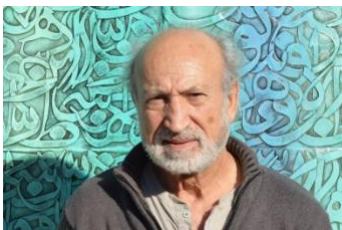
(Photo contest jury member) Sarah Seené is a French analog photographer based in Montreal, working with 35mm and instant photography. She's doing everything by hand in the darkroom (hand-processing and hand-printing). Her world is composed of a strange atmosphere, between dream and poetry, tinted with childhood and loneliness; her images being suspended in time and unreal.

She's part of The 12.12 project and World Wide Women, two international collectives of women analog photographers. She's the co-founder of a long distance collaboration project called I'll Be Your Mirror, with the American photographer Sarah Elise Abramson. Her work has been shown in about 30 exhibitions, solo and collective, in Paris, Berlin, Prague, Milan, Amsterdam, London, Montreal and New York. It's been published in several international magazines and webzines.



Hamed Tabein

(Photo contest Director) Hamed Tabein is an Iranian-born photographer based in Montreal. His speciality is documentary photography, though he also teaches, writes and translates articles about photography. He has worked and exhibited his work widely in Iran, Syria, Lebanon, Turkey, India, Afghanistan, Germany and Canada. Several solo and collective photo exhibitions, workshops, published articles including translating and compiling, and photo contest management are present in his resume. His works are a combination of art photography and photo journalism. Hamed always tries to show his world from his point of view; however, he prefers not to be known as a photojournalist.



Mahmoud Zenderoudi

Torn in 1943 in Karaj, Iran, Zenderoudi lived the major part of his life in Tehran, before moving to France in 1978. The fifth child of modest and cultivated parents, Zenderoudi was especially influenced by the artistic spirit of his mother. Zenderoudi's magnificent work first gained recognition in 1962 with an exposition at the 2nd Biennial of Tehran and later at the International Exhibition of Tehran in 1970. His first solo exhibit took place at the Tehran Gallery in 1966. Zenderoudi's unique style is strongly rooted in his Persian heritage and fervently reveals deep emotions for his country of birth, its history and his life in exile. His art is often a pilgrimage to his homeland. His use of calligraphy emphasizes shapes and lines and often defies the stringent rules of Persian calligraphy. Although it may seem that his choice of words and phrases bear meanings, they do not. The words have little or no literary significance and are purely symbols in the exercise of writing. His introduction to three dimensional painting opened the way to the use of collage in his work and allowed him to gain distance from the influence of Iranian artistic currents. Today, his work is described as "unclassifiable" as it brings together a unique combination of materials, collage and sculpture on paper. Even though Zenderoudi has been away from the art scene of his native Iran, his work is infused with the sensibilities of Iranian art and strikes a distinct chord with his Iranian audience. Zenderoudi, or as he signs his piece "Zende", has been

exhibiting his collections in the States, Europe and Africa for many years, and his style is distinct to him, and easily recognizable. He combines the “Sagha-Khaneh” technique with “pop” and classical literature. His works often provoke curiosity and lead to debate. Aside from his artistic achievements, Zenderoudi’s career began as a journalist – first as a chronicler, then producer of radio broadcasts. In 1969 he moved to television. It was only after his move to France that Zenderoudi decided to devote his life entirely to art.

