



Tirgan: Iranian Festival

July 17 to July 20, 2008

Festival Overview and Concert Listings

Presented by



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2008

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56 Forest Park Crescent
Thornhill, ON, L3T-2M7
www.tirgan.ca



This inaugural festival reveals the diversity and vitality of Persian and Iranian culture with performances from prominent international, Iranian and Canadian artists. The largest festival of its kind ever produced in North America features more than 150 artists in all artistic disciplines from Iran, the Middle East, Europe, the U.S. and Canada. **Tirgan: Iranian Festival** is a coproduction between the **Iranian Canadian Centre for Art and Culture (ICCAC)** and **Harbourfront Centre**. All events are free unless otherwise indicated. For more information visit www.tirgan.ca. Selected program highlights below:

DANCE Highlights:

Free festival performances include Canadian premieres from two internationally known dance companies (**Djanbazian Dance Company** from Los Angeles, **Saeid Shanbezadeh** based in France) and the return of France-based **Shahrokh Moshkin Ghalam's Nakissa Art Company** with a new work at a ticketed event.

Saeid Shanbezadeh is an internationally acclaimed Paris-based Iranian musician and dancer who's ensemble was the first Iranian ensemble to perform at WOMEX 2007 in Spain. The ensemble has had numerous performances in Europe, the U.S.A., Australia, New Zealand, and Iran (where they won the first prize at the "Fajr" Festival in Tehran). Shanbezadeh has collaborated with great musicians such as Billy Cobham and choreographers such as Jose Montalvo and Dominique Hervieu. The festival's featured dance collaboration was chosen as one of the top ten best dances of the world in at the 2002 European Dance Festival in Lyon and was staged over 300 times in Europe. The ensemble's performance presents a combination of live music and dance of southern Iran and French Jazz music performed by French musicians. This will be the first performance of this fusion work in Toronto. For more information visit: http://www.zamanproduction.com/en_said.php

Djanbazian Dance Company

Originally formed in 1941 the current Los Angeles based **Djanbazian Dance Company** was formed in 1992 under the direction of Artistic Director and choreographer, Anna Djanbazian. The company has toured the U.S.A. and Armenia and also competed at the 2005 Grand Prix Festival of Dance in Italy - winning awards for best Traditional Persian Folk Dance and Best Contemporary Modern Dance Choreography. For information visit: <http://www.djanbaziandance.com>

Shahrokh Moshkin Ghalam (Nakissa Art Company) - Since 1977, France-based Nakissa Art Company has produced acclaimed pieces such as *Khayam's Quarantines*, *Seven Pavilions of Love* and *Dance Variations on Persian Themes* on stages in Europe, Canada, Asia, and the U.S.A. On the borders of reality and dream, Paris-based dancer and choreographer **Shahrokh Moshkin Ghalam** brings about poetry, music, and dance to tell the story of *Arash* - an ancient mythical figure in Iran. *Arash* is the most recent addition to Moshkin Ghalam's Dance Mythology collection. For information visit <http://www.shahrokh-nakissa.com>



**** This is a ticketed event (\$25) being staged at the Enwave Theatre on Sunday July 20 at 3:30 p.m. and 5 p.m.**.**

FILM highlights:

Some of Iran 's top directors will be present in person for free screenings and discussions on the Iran 's film and visual art legacy. Confirmed screenings include offerings from Directors **Mohsen Abdolvahab / Rakhshan Bani Etemad (*Mainline*)**, **Ashgar Farhadi (*Fireworks Wednesday*)**, **Iraj Karimi (*Magic Generation*)**, **Abbas Kiarostami (TBC)**, **Dariush Mehrjui (*The Pear Tree*)** and **Naser Taghavi (*Nakhoda Khorshid*)**.

Mohsen Abdolvahab / Rakhshan Bani Etem - These Directors' 2006 film *Mainline* screened at the Toronto International Film Festival. The film centers on the relationship between a heroin-addicted daughter and her mother. The part of the daughter is played movingly by director Rakhshan Bani-Etemad's real life daughter. For information visit: **Rakhshan Bani-Etemad** - <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0051999/>; **Mohsen Abdolvahab** - <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1117275>

Asghar Farhadi - This acclaimed screenwriter and director graduated from Tehran University with a Master's Degree in Film Direction. He has had successful experiences with writing and directing in theatre, radio and in making TV series. He wrote the screenplay for Ebrahim Hatamikia's 2001 box office and critical success, *Low Heights*. In 2003, he completed his own feature film, *Dancing in the Dust*, which played at the Moscow Film Festival and won the award for Best Leading Actor, as well as the Film Critics' prize. His second feature film, *Beautiful City*, took the Best Feature Film Award at the 2004 Warsaw Film Festival, the India International Film Festival, and Moscow's Faces of Love Film Festival. *Fireworks Wednesday* is his third and most recent feature film which won many international awards including the Best Picture award at Las Palmas, Golden Hugo for Best Film in Chicago Film Festival, and Best Director award in Rabat (Morocco) and Kerala (India) Festival. In 2007, Farhadi was selected as the Best Iranian Director of the Young Generation by Directors Society of Iran. The screening will be followed by a Q&A discussion with the Director. For more information visit: <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1410815/>

Iraj Karimi - One of the most prestigious film critics in Iran, Karimi has been writing about films for more than two decades. He has published numerous articles about cinema and the relationship between cinema and literature and written novels, poetry and short stories. A graduate of Polytechnic University of Tehran, he started his career as an assistant director while writing about films. His feature debut was *Going By* (2000); since then, he has written and directed other feature films and telefilms. Karimi will present reviews as well as screening his latest films *Magic Generation*. The screening will be followed by a Q&A discussion with the Director. For more information visit: <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0439309/>



Abbas Kiarostami - One of the most influential and controversial Iranian filmmakers, is a graduate of Faculty of Fine Arts in Painting from Tehran University. He first started with painting, graphics and book illustrations and then began his film career by making credit-titles and commercials. Winner of over seventy national and international awards, Kiarostami contributed largely to the Iranian “New Wave” of the late 1960s and early 1970s. A pioneer in Iranian cinema, Kiarostami has written or directed more than twenty films. His films *Where is the Friend’s House*, *Close-Up* and *Under the Olive Trees* placed him on the International scene. He was the first Iranian director to win the Palme d’Or at the Cannes Film Festival for *Taste of Cherry*. Concurrent with his international acclaim as a filmmaker, Kiarostami has seriously pursued his passion for photography and has sustained a remarkable practice of still photography for over twenty-five years. He has had numerous exhibitions including those at MoMA and the Victoria and Albert Museum. For information visit: <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0452102/>

Dariush Mehrjui - An Iranian New Wave cinema icon, Mehrjui is regarded to be one of the intellectual directors of Iranian cinema. A graduate of philosophy from UCLA, Mehrjui made his debut in 1966 with *Diamond 33*. His second feature film, *Cow* (1969), brought him national and International recognition. His most acclaimed film, *The Cycle*, won the Fédération Internationale de la Presse Cinématographique Prize at the Berlin Film Festival in 1978. In 1981, he traveled to Paris and remained there for several years, during which time he made a feature-length dramatic documentary for French TV, *Voyage au Pays de Rimbaud* (1983). In *Hamoun* (1989), a portrait of an intellectual whose life is falling apart, Mehrjui sought to depict his generation's post-revolutionary turn from politics to mysticism. The 1990s found Mehrjui releasing films dealing with women's issues (*Banoo*, *Pari*, and *Leila*). The screening will be followed by a Q&A discussion with the Director. For more information visit: <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0576529/>

Naser Taghavi - This respected Director/Producer/Writer and Production Designer has been active in Iran and internationally since the early 1970's. His work has resulted in a Golden Palm nomination at the 1999 Cannes Film Festival. The film screening at the festival - *Nakhoda Khorshid* - won a Gold Leopard at the 1988 Locarno Film Festival. For more information visit: <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0846550/>

LITERATURE Highlights:

Mahashid Amirshahi - Three times during the festival this renowned Iranian author reads selections from her works *Abbas Khan’s Wedding* and *Dadeh Good Omen* from her published works and *Mehr Olia’s Self-Portrait* from her unpublished work. She will also have a question and answer session with the audience.

Rumi According to Rumi - Esteemed Rumi scholar **Dr. Mohamad Estelami** takes the audience on a voyage into the world of Rumi. His guide and carrier in the voyage are Rumi’s words and works of



wisdom. Dr. Estelami will also discuss the impact of Rumi on later periods and particularly current times.

Epic Poetry Recital and Performance - An hour long epic Persian language literary performance by artist **Jafar Vali** inspired by traditional stories **Recitation of Rostam** and **Sohrab** from **Book of Kings (Shahnameh)**. This two part sequel recounts the story of Rostam, a legendary warrior, in the court of the King of Samangan. It chronicles his marriage to Princess Tahmineh and his immediate departure to serve his master the King of Iran. The story “the birth of Sohrab and his quest to meet his father”, and forecloses with “the fierce fight of Rostam with his yet unidentified son, Sohrab. There will be two performances during the festival.

MUSIC Highlights:

Mohamad Reza Lotfi and **Shayda Ensemble** - When it comes to Persian music, Lotfi seems to have a Midas touch. In his hands, old neglected instrumental pieces and songs have flourished into fresh, dynamic pieces that eventually become priceless classics of Persian music. This brilliant Iranian composer, tar and setar player has influenced Persian music for more than 30 years and makes a rare live appearance. For more information visit: http://www.shayda.net/Index_4.html

*** This is a ticketed event (\$25) being staged at the SIRIUS Satellite Radio Stage on Thursday July 17 at 9 p.m. ***

Darya Dadvar - An accomplished soprano soloist and composer. Paris-based Dadvar is a graduate of the National Conservatory in Toulouse, France. She performs regularly in the U.S.A, Canada, Sweden, Germany, and the UK. Her unique vocal and compositional style mixes Persian Classical and Opera with Jazz and Blues. Also featuring **Jacy Desmond** (piano), **Steve Sheehan** (percussion) and **Susan McCarthy** (flute). For information visit: <http://www.daryadadvar.com/>

*** This is a ticketed event (\$30 and \$35) being staged at the Enwave Theatre on Saturday July 19 at 8 p.m. ***

FREE concert highlights by International artists include: **Massoud Shaari** from Iran, **Hosein Behrouzinia** from Vancouver and **Trichy Shankaran** from India (now residing in Toronto) - these three improvisational masters create an exclusive live event showcasing the highest level of improvising between to different types of Classical music from Iran and India. **Ramin Behna** is known as one of the founders of Persian Fusion Music. His **Behna Ensemble** is an Iranian group mixes Jazz, World and Electronic music with traditional Persian sounds instruments and features multi-instrumental soloist Behrang Baghaei. Los Angeles based **Lian Ensemble** presents World music with elements of Jazz and Persian Sufi music while San Francisco based **Barbod Ensemble** plays Kurdish melodies and rhythmic dance music on traditional instruments and mixes them with contemporary World music and Postmodern Jazz.



FREE concert highlights by Canadian artists include: A festival finale concert by Toronto's **Iran Choir** features the performance of Persian Folklore melodies, arranged by the conductor Kamal Taravati and his Choir ensemble and performed by some of the best Iranian singers in Toronto. The **Shiraz Ensemble** and the **Chakvak Ensemble** perform Classical music on traditional instruments. Mississauga based Alt-Rock three piece **Soul Nidus** has toured in Canada and the UK, and was featured by profile UK music media. Toronto DJs and Producers **Amir Ebrahimnia, DJ Shine, Simon Rojas** get Techno into the House with their **Technofunk Collective** while Toronto's **Cold Trap (Hamed Safi and Navid Mehr)** present Techno and Electronic music influenced by Middle Eastern and Persian melodies)presents Electronic music influenced by Middle Eastern and Persian melodies.

PANEL Discussion Highlights:

Iranian Art: Where Does It Stand Today?

Featuring **Aydin Aghdashloo, Gholamhosien Nami, Javad Mojabi, Mohammad Ehsaei, Nasser Ovissi, Farshid Mesghali, Sirak Melkonian** and **Farideh Lashai** - A group of renowned Iranian artists, critics, and experts on Iranian art present an engaging, thought-provoking, and challenging panel discussion on *Iranian Art: Where Does It Stand Today?* This event brings some of the most celebrated contemporary Iranian artists together in a discussion that presents various aspects and views on visual arts in contemporary Iran and aims at exploring the rightful place of each discipline. Moderated by **Firouzeh Athari**.

THEATRE Highlights:

Staging of "*Blind Owl*" - A play directed by Niloofar Beyzai

Canadian premiere - Enwave Theatre (In Farsi with English Subtitles)

Niloofar Beyzaie obtained her Master of Arts Degree in German literature, theatre, cinema, television, and pedagogy at Goethe University in Frankfurt . In 1994, she founded her own company **Daricheh** and started her activity as a playwright, director, light, costume, and set designer. She has directed thirteen plays such as *Marjan, Mani and a Few Minor Difficulties, Three Opinions About a Death, No Man's Land, Foreign Like You and Me,* and *Blind Owl* - that have been staged in Europe more than 200 times. Her plays focus on the subject of identity, exile, freedom and oppression, and women's political and social restrictions. She has published eight plays, forty research articles on theatre and film, and translations of over twenty articles on theatre. In 2005, Niloofar won *The World Academy of Arts, Literature, and Media* award in Dramatic Arts Category for her tireless efforts in directing and writing in theatre. Niloofar will stage a full production of the *Blind Owl* - based on a masterpiece by one of the greatest Iranian modern writers, Sadeq Hedayat. For more information visit: www.nbeyzaie.com

**** This is a ticketed event (\$30) being staged at the Enwave Theatre on July 18 at 8 p.m. and July 19 at 2 p.m.****

***The Mute Who Was Dreamed* - a play directed by Attila Pessyani**

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www.tirgan.ca



This well-known Tehran-based Iranian actor and director is bringing one of his most popular plays to Tirgan: Iranian Festival. *The Mute Who Was Dreamed* has been performed in many theatre festivals around the world (including the Edinburgh Fringe and New York 's Lincoln Center Festival) and has won prizes in and outside of Iran . The play is a deeply symbolic story of a deaf mute child and her relationship with her caregiver, told without words but in a series of images and sounds. For more information visit: <http://www.gravitas.f9.co.uk/theatre/bazi/> - For more information on Attila Pessayani visit: <http://www.itw.ir/bazi/bazimember/attila.htm>

Read a New York Times review of the work at:

<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9A0CE0D91039F93AA25754C0A9649C8B63>

VISUAL ARTS Highlights:

Throughout the entire festival the exhibition *Iranian Art Today* will feature works by artists **Abbas Kiarostami, Aydin Aghdashloo, Gholamhossein Nami, Javad Mojabi, Mohammad Ehsaei, Nasser Ovissi, Farideh Lashai, Bahram Dabiri, Sirak Melkonian, Khosrow Sinai, Khosrow Bayat, Farshid Mesghali, Reza Basiri and Morteza Momayez** among others.

Tirgan: Iranian Festival is part of *World Routes* 2008. **Harbourfront Centre** presents top Canadian and International artists in music, dance, theatre, visual arts and film at each *World Routes* weekend starting June 26 to September 1. All festivals are FREE and suitable for all ages. *World Routes* is presented by **RBC**. Visitors can also shop and eat at the **International Marketplace** and at **The World Café** nestled alongside an extensive waterfront boardwalk. For *World Routes* 2008, Harbourfront Centre engages an exploration into the idea of **borders**. Harbourfront Centre is located at 235 Queens Quay West, Toronto . For more information and to purchase tickets the public can call 416-973-4000 or visit www.harbourfrontcentre.com

Tirgan: Iranian Festival (July 17 to July 20) - CONCERT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Venue Terms for Listings Below: **SIRIUS Satellite Radio Stage (SSRS), Toronto Star Stage (TSS), Brigantine Room (BR), Lakeside Terrace (LT)**

TICKETED EVENT -- July 17 – 9 p.m. (SSRS) – **Mohamad Reza Lotfi** and **Shayda Ensemble** (This brilliant Iranian composer, tar and setar player has influenced Persian music for more than 30 years). Tickets are \$25 in advance and are now available at our box office and online.

For more information visit: http://www.shayda.net/Index_4.html

July 18 – 9:30 p.m. (SSRS) – **Massoud Shoari Trio** - Iranian master Setar player **Massoud Shoari** is joined by **Hosein Behrouzinia** from Vancouver and **Trichy Shankaran** from India (now residing in Toronto) on Mrdangam for a collaborative evening of Classical Persian and Indian improvisation.

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July 18 – 11 p.m. (BR) – **Technofunk Collective** (Toronto DJ producers **Amir Ebrahimnia**, **DJ Shine**, **Simon Rojas** get into Techno and House)

For more information visit: <http://www.myspace.com/technofunkcollective> - <http://www.technofunk.org>

July 18 - 11p.m. (BR) - **Cold Trap** (**Hamed Safi** and **Navid Mehr** present Techno and Electronic music influenced by Middle Eastern and Persian melodies)

For more information visit: <http://www.myspace.com/coldtrap> - <http://www.madexx.com/>

July 19 – 5:30 p.m. (LT) – **Shiraz Ensemble** (Canadian ensemble perform Classical Persian and original contemporary compositions on traditional instruments)

July 19 – 8 p.m (SSRS) – **Behna Ensemble** (Iranian group combines traditional instruments with Jazz and Electronic Music)

For more information visit: www.behnamusic.com >> also playing July 20 at 1:30 p.m. (SSRS)

July 19 – 8 p.m (SSRS) – **Lian Ensemble** (Internationally acclaimed Los Angeles based group make World music with elements of Jazz and Persian Sufi music)

For more information visit: <http://www.lianrecords.com/>

TICKETED EVENT -- July 19 – 8 p.m. (Enwave Theatre) – **Darya Dadvar** (Paris based Iranian vocalist and composer mixes Persian Classical and Opera with Jazz and Blues. Also featuring Jacy Desmond, Steve Sheehan and Susan McCarthy). Tickets are \$30 in advance and available at our box office.

For more information visit: <http://www.daryadadvar.com/>

July 19 – 11 p.m. (BR) – **Soul Nidus** (Mississauga based Alt-Rock three piece has toured in Canada and the UK, and was featured in profile UK music media)

For more information visit: <http://www.myspace.com/soulnidus> - <http://www.myspace.com/soulnidus>

July 20 – 2:00 p.m. (TSS) – **Barbod Ensemble** (Kurdish melodies and rhythmic dance music from the western part of Iran played on traditional instruments)

July 20 – 4:30 p.m. (LT) - **Chakvak Ensemble** (Toronto Iranian ensemble performs Persian Classical with masterful solos, improvisations and arrangements)

For more information: <http://www.chakavak.ca/> - <http://www.yorku.ca/rmanbach/chakavak/>

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