



FARHANG
FOUNDATION

2016-2017 ANNUAL REPORT



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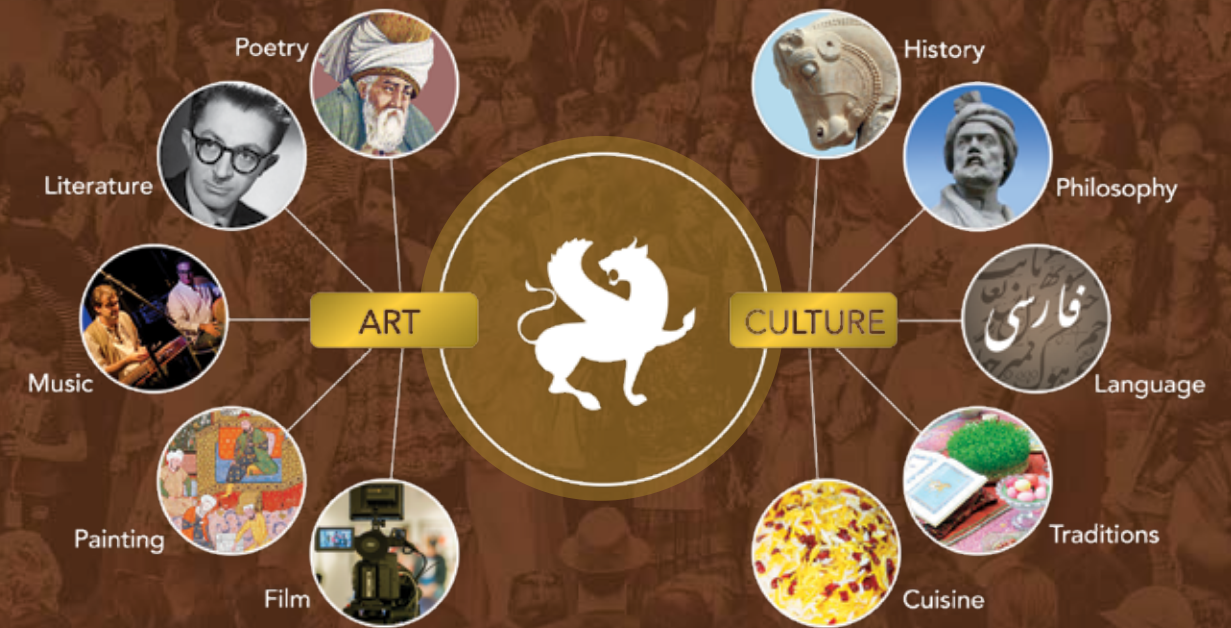
ONLY

NATIONAL BANK

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



Areas of Focus



Constituencies

Trustees, Council Members, Advisers & Supporters

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

Iranian Americans

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

Community At Large

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

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Letter from the Chairman: Farhang's 9th Year

Dear Friends of Farhang,

It is an honor for me to present to you my first chairman's annual report. It is incredibly difficult to succeed Mr. Ali Razi, whose impeccable record as a leader has made Farhang the largest and most successful Iranian cultural organization in the United States. With your support, however, our goal is to continue advancing our mission and making 'Our Farhang' even more prominent.

Last year, in our 2016/2017 season, Farhang Foundation delivered over 75 high-quality programs, performances, and events for the benefit of the community at large. I would like to review the most important of them in this letter.

One of Farhang's greatest accomplishments was the unveiling of the Freedom Sculpture, symbolizing Cyrus the Great's universal message of tolerance. The sculpture was designed by world-renowned artist, engineer and architect Mr. Cecil Balmond, and gifted to the City of Los Angeles on behalf of the Iranian-American community. The unveiling, on July 4, 2017, was attended by over 75,000 people celebrating our common values and belief in religious freedom and respect for all. The project was made possible through the support of over 1.2 million individuals from all over the world.

In its continuous support of educational programs in universities, in December 2016 Farhang Foundation signed an agreement with the University of Southern California (USC) to establish a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in Iranian Studies. This great milestone has been achieved as the third phase of a project initiated in 2010 to offer Persian language instruction, followed by a minor degree and in 2020 a major degree in Iranian Studies, for the first time in the history of USC. This great accomplishment was made possible through the generosity of you, our community.

Another major accomplishment by Farhang on the educational front was the launch of The Community Education Outreach (CEO) program in 2015, with the specific goal of overseeing all of Farhang's many educational programs for K-12. The program's crowning achievement to

date has been the launch of the Persian 101 After-School Program in public elementary schools of Southern California, offering an introduction to Persian language and culture for students K-5. Through alliances with various school districts, STAR Education, and Beyond The Bell, the program has been steadily expanding its coverage. As of September 2017, in its third year of existence, the Persian 101 After-School Program was offered in ten schools, with preparations on the way to add many others.

The University of California Irvine (UCI) minor program in Persian Studies was launched in 2015. The program is thriving with an increased number of students. Congratulations to Setareh Zareh, our first graduate from the newly established UCI Persian Studies Minor Program, made possible by Farhang Foundation and our generous donors.

Farhang's 9th Annual Celebration of Nowruz was held at our new home on the beautiful campus of the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA). Over 25,000 attended this day long celebration for all ages, making it the single largest Nowruz celebration in the world. The event featured a community costume march, children's arts and crafts, storytelling, and various musical performances throughout the day culminating in a finale closing concert by the world-renowned Mohsen Namjoo to a sold-out crowd in the prestigious Royce Hall.

For the second year in a row, our celebration of Nowruz was also held at the University of California Irvine's Claire Trevor School of Arts and was attended by over 2,000 visitors, once again showcasing that cultural and artistic programs

developed in Los Angeles also have a place in Orange County. The event featured musical programs, children's performances, dance, food, a grand Haft Sîn and a concert by Mohsen Namjoo, who continued his sold-out streak once again with the adoring Orange County audience.

Farhang continued its dedication to the cinematic arts with the 8th Annual Short Film Festival, the only festival in the world dedicated to Iranian short films. We launched the year with the announcement of one of the most prestigious Jury Panels in our long eight-year history, with legendary director Rakhshan Banietemad and leading man Bahram Radan, along with groundbreaking filmmaker Sepideh Farsi topping the prestigious panel of experts overseeing this year's festival. The festival also received more submissions than ever before from over 23 countries, and the award ceremony was attended by a sold-out audience, reinforcing the importance of this festival and the power it holds for helping promote and share Iranian filmmakers and films with the world!

For the second year in a row we continued our partnership with the prestigious AFI FEST, the most prominent film festival in the United States dedicated to international cinema. This year we had the pleasure of showcasing Asghar Farhadi's The Salesman, which went on to win the Oscar for best Foreign Language Film, as well as Mani Haghighi's visually stunning new film A Dragon Arrives. The festival was attended by both Shahab Hosseini and Mani Haghighi, and all four screenings were completely sold out.

The most successful Iranian film event in Southern California, the UCLA Celebration of Iranian Cinema returned once again with the sole sponsorship by Farhang. This year we screened 12 amazing films, which were attended by over 3,000 fans of cinema. The three-week program dedicated two days to a special tribute to legendary Iranian director Abbas Kiarostami, which included the premiere of his last short film. Other notable screenings included Life and a Day, Breath, and Starless Dreams.

The Craft & Folk Art Museum (CAFAM) and Farhang Foundation presented Focus Iran 2: Contemporary Photography and Video, the second biennial juried exhibition of contemporary photography and video works relating to Iranian culture or heritage. The exhibition featured an international selection of emerging and mid career artists from around the world who offer diverse perspectives of contemporary Iranian life. The group exhibition of 44 photographs and video works took place at CAFAM from January 29 to May 7, 2017.

Farhang partnered with Beautify Earth to launch the first ever Iranian Mural project in Southern California with a competition that received over 100 submissions from around the world. The first selected mural, by artist Farzad Kohan, was installed in July 2017 and was inspired by the great poet Saadi. Four other finalist designs have been selected, and we hope to have more murals installed in the coming year.

Our 3rd Annual Shab-e Yalda celebration was held in late December with a night of poetry and storytelling by the great Gordafarid, and a musical program dedicated to the female legends of Iranian song performed by Faezeh and Arash Avin. The event was once again sold out and a great way to launch the holiday season with the original holiday that started it all.

We look forward to continuing Farhang's dedication to Iranian culture and arts and striving to continue and expand on our extraordinary record to date.

Warmest regards,

Ahmad Gramian

Chairman
Farhang Foundation

Feathers of Fire

The Los Angeles Premiere

A visually breathtaking cinematic shadow play based on the stories of the *Shahnameh*, conceived, designed, and directed by Hamid Rahmanian in collaboration with Larry Reed and Shadowlight Productions, with original music by Loga Ramin Torkian and Azam Ali (Niyaz).

Farhang Foundation was proud to be the cultural sponsor of the Los Angeles premiere of this magnificent feast for the eyes. This action-packed performance staged the magical tale of Zaul and Rudabeh, star-crossed lovers from the 10th century Persian epic *Shahnameh* ('The Book of Kings') by Ferdowsi.

The program featured over 140 colorful shadow puppets, performers in elaborate masks and costumes, and digitally animated backgrounds seamlessly choreographed together and projected onto a cinemascope-size screen to give the audience a feeling of "live animation."

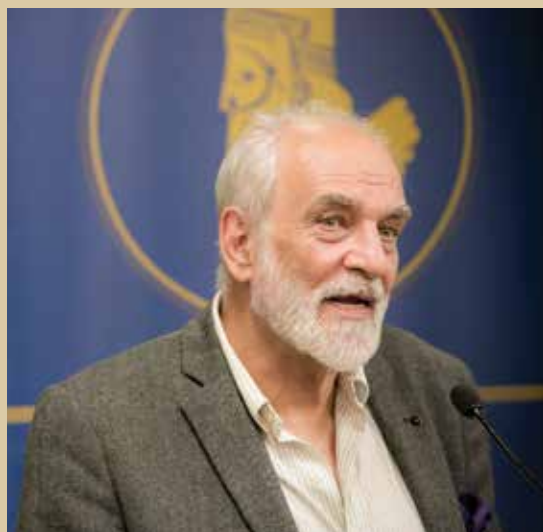
All four performances at UCLA's Freud Theater were sold out in record time.



2nd Annual Orange County Fundraising Sunset Cruise

For the second year in a row, Farhang Foundation set sail in beautiful Newport Beach harbor on board the *Eternity* cruise ship for an evening celebrating all of Farhang's many programs and initiatives in Orange County. The event featured a very special concert performance by the brilliant Rana Mansour, and all funds raised supported Farhang's Persian Studies degree program at UC Irvine, as well as many other annual events and projects, including the annual celebration of Nowruz in OC.





CONTEMPORARY IRANIAN VISUAL ARTS

A TALK BY AYDIN AGHDASHLOO

World-renowned artist, author, art critic, and art historian Aydin Aghdashloo conducted a very special talk on the audience, marketplace, and economy of Iranian visual arts from 1951 to 2016. The talk was organized by the UCI Jordan Center for Persian Studies as part of the annual Farhang Foundation Lectures in Iranian Studies at UC Irvine.



Sundance Next Fest Los Angeles Premiere of *Under the Shadow*

Farhang Foundation partnered with the Sundance Next Fest in presenting the Los Angeles premiere of the much-anticipated and multi-award-winning Iranian horror film *Under the Shadow* at the historic Ace Theater of Los Angeles.

The event was attended by the film's director Babak Anvari and star Narges Rashidi. It included a post-screening conversation with the filmmakers and legendary Hollywood director John Landis.

Under the Shadow went on to win over 18 international awards, including a BAFTA for best debut director, and was submitted to the Academy Awards by the United Kingdom as their official nominee for best Foreign Language Film, a first in Academy history.



FARHANG FOUNDATION Celebration of IRANIAN CINEMA at UCI

Co-Presented by



For the very first time, UCLA's popular annual film series debuted in Orange County at UC Irvine for two days of amazing Iranian films. The Orange County premiere event included the screenings of *Time To Love* starring Leila Hatami and Shahb Hosseini, *Hadji Sha*, starring Roya Teymourian, and *Charshanbeh 19 Ordibehest*, starring Niki Karimi.

The event featured an opening night reception with artists and patrons of the program and provided a new platform to celebrate Iranian films in Orange County. Screenings were copresented by the UCLA Film & Television Archives in collaboration with the Jordan Center For Persian Studies.



GRAND PERFORMANCES KIOSK with Special Guest ARDESHIR FARAH

For the second year in a row, Farhang Foundation joined forces with the amazing Grand Performances summer concert series to present another brilliant free Iranian concert in downtown Los Angeles.

Kiosk, one of the most influential underground rock bands to emerge since the Iranian Revolution, joined by the Grammy-nominated guitarist Arde Shir Farah, performed an unforgettable concert with stinging political satire hidden within a blues and folksy sound. The free event was the most successful concert of the entire summer series, attended by over 5,000 music lovers.



8th Annual Farhang Foundation Short Film Festival 2016

On September 24, 2016, Farhang celebrated the only annual film festival in the world dedicated to Iranian short films at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA).

This year's illustrious jury panel included Rakhshan Banietemad, Sepideh Farsi, Bahram Radan, and Jamsheed Akrami, as well as festival chair and Farhang Vice Chair Mark Amin.

With a record-breaking number of submissions from more than 24 countries around the world, this year's festival was one of the most successful in the history of the program. Iranian artists, celebrities, filmmakers, and the general public attended the award ceremony hosted by comedian Kvon.

The first place prize of \$10,000 was awarded to Ali Delkari for his touching drama *Fan*. The second place prize of \$5,000 was awarded to *The Last Tar*, an animated film by Yashin Nahani. The third place prize of \$3,000 went to *From The Eastern Lands*, an animated music video by Sarah Tabibzadeh for the band Pallett.



2016 MEHREGAN UCI CONFERENCE

— BEING PRESENT —

The second annual Mehregan Conference and Celebration was held once again in collaboration with UCI's Jordan Center for Persian Studies. Over 300 guests attended this maximum-capacity-filled free event, which featured talks by the renowned Professor Alan Williams of the University of Manchester, titled *The Many Voices of Mowlana*, as well as *Attar and His Society* by Dr. Soheila Saremi of Saddleback College.

The event concluded with a musical performance by the Traditional Persian Quartet featuring Shayndokht Abedinimanesh, Shahin Yousefzamani, Naghmeh Sarana, and Greg Ellis.



A Tribute to Abbas Kiarostami

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

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





Persian Cuisine Demo & Tasting with Ariana Bundy

The beauty and delights of Persian cuisine were celebrated and explored with celebrity chef Ariana Bundy, author of the best-selling book *Pomegranates & Roses* and star of the television show *My Persian Kitchen*, where she tries to demystify the art of Persian cuisine for the everyday cook.

The event was held at Surfas Culinary District in Costa Mesa with an in-person cooking demo, tasting, and book signing.

Ariana shared some of the beloved Persian recipes featured in her book, including Fesenjoon stew and traditional Saffron ice cream.

The sold-out event was attended by a diverse audience and fans of Persian cuisine, exemplifying the fervent community interest in such programs.



UCLA Bilingual Lecture Series on Iran

Farhang Foundation joined forces with the UCLA Iranian Studies program and the UCLA Center for Near Eastern Studies to once again present the Annual Bilingual Lecture Series on Iran, a series of free public talks exploring various aspects of Iranian culture and literature.

The nine-lecture series included:



Ups and Downs of Women's Quest for Equal Rights under the Islamic Republic of Iran

By Mehrangiz Kar



Iran-China Relations in a Changing World

By Manochehr Dorraj



Persepolis After Alexander

By Ali Mousavi



Literature: Its Existence and Its Appearance

By Ahmad Karimi-Hakkak



Contested Terrains of Iranian Culture

By Nasrin Rahimieh



Iran-Iraq War and the Creation of the "Sacred Defense Art": Painting, Graphic Design, and Cinema

Lost Souls: Photography of African Eunuchs & Female Servants in Qajar Iran

By Pedram Khosronejad



Metaphysical Subversions in Contemporary Iranian Art

By Abbas Daneshvari



Abbas Kiarostami: The Man and His Art

By Shiva Balaghi, Ahmad Karimi-Hakkak, Hamid Naficy, Nayereh Tohidi, and Ahmad Kiarostami

6th Annual Fundraising Gala

On November 5, 2016, Farhang returned to the historic Beverly Wilshire Hotel in Beverly Hills for its 6th Annual Fundraising Gala. The sold-out event was attended by over 550 guests and was hosted by comedian Max Amini, featuring the dynamic musical headliners 25 Band. The event marked the most successful fundraising gala in Farhang history! All funds raised at this event went towards supporting the more than 75 annual cultural, academic, and artistic programs and events organized by the foundation.





WINDOW HORSES

Premiere at the Los Angeles
Asian Pacific Film Fest



Farhang joined forces with the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival to present the L.A. Premiere of *Window Horses*, an animated film starring Sandra Oh, Nancy Kwan, Shohreh Aghdashloo, Navid Negahban, Omid Abtahi, and Ellen Page.

Written and directed by award-winning filmmaker Ann Marie Fleming, *Window Horses* is a film about love – love of family, poetry, history, and culture. Rosie Ming, a young Canadian poet, is invited to perform at a poetry festival in Shiraz, Iran. Once in Iran, Rosie finds herself in the company of poets and Persians who tell her stories that force her to confront her past, her Iranian father, and poetry itself.



AFI FEST 2016

For the second year in a row, Farhang Foundation joined forces with the prestigious American Film Institute in presenting Iranian films at the country's most prominent film festival dedicated to international cinema.

This year's lineup included the screening of the award-winning film *The Salesman* by Asghar Farhadi, with an in-person Q&A by the film's leading star, Shahab Hosseini. The film went on to win the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film later in 2017. The festival also included the North American premiere of *A Dragon Arrives*, the brilliant and groundbreaking film by Mani Haghighi, who was also there in-person for a Q&A session.



Photographic Self-Representation in Iran

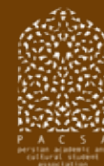


A Lecture by Prof. Ali Behdad

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

Professor Behdad explored a range of Western and Middle Eastern archival material from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and offered a rich account of how photography transformed Europe's distinctly Orientalist vision into what seemed objective fact, a transformation that proved central to the project of European colonialism.

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



Fifth Annual PACSA Celebration Night with Musical Guest Karmandan



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



4th Annual Celebration of Shab-e Yalda

We kicked off the holiday season with the original winter celebration that started it all thousands of years ago! The annual celebration of Shab-e Yalda (winter solstice), a night of music, poetry, and storytelling, was held at the Moss Theater in Santa Monica and featured storytelling and poetry reading by the world's first female epic storyteller (Naqqal) Gordafarid, followed by a concert tribute to the female legends of Iranian song performed by Faezeh with special guest vocalist Arash Avin. The program concluded with a formal reception and meet-and-greet with the artists.





The Intersection of Past & Present in Iranian Art: A Lecture by Dr. Linda Komaroff

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

USC Dornsife
Middle East Studies Program

CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP Hossein Abkenar



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

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

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



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





CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO



Focus Iran returned for its second biennial in 2017 with 44 photographs and video works that were selected by the esteemed jury panel out of the over 300 submissions from around the world.

THE JURY PANEL INCLUDED: Claudia James Bartlett (*Photo LA*), Reza Deghati (*National Geographic, Time, Newsweek*), Holly Jerger (*CAFAM*), Arpad Kovacs (*The Getty*), Steve McCurry (*National Geographic*), Ali Akbar Sadeghi, and Newsha Tavakolian.

OPENING CELEBRATION

Held on Friday January 27th at the Craft & Folk Art Museum of Los Angeles to a maximum-capacity crowd with many of the artists present. Over 3,000 visitors viewed this exhibition from January through May.

JUROR & ARTIST TALK

Photo L.A. Executive Director and Focus Iran Judges, Claudia James Bartlett and an all-female panel of artists consisting of Sanaz Khosravi, Gazelle Samizay, and Farkhondeh Tarabi discussed contemporary perspectives on Iranian life and individual art practices.

A CONVERSATION WITH ARPAD KOVACS AND RAMIN TALAIE

Exhibition juror Arpad Kovacs (*The Getty Assistant Curator of Photography*) and Ramin Talaie, photographer and cocreator of the Instagram project *Everyday Iran*, hosted a conversation on contemporary photography, social media, and the politics of producing and sharing images in the digital age.

VOICE, A PERFORMANCE BY ALI KHERADYAR

Exhibition artist Ali Kheradyar, an interdisciplinary performance artist, used the gallery as a performance space and was joined by other women from the audience who performed songs in Persian. The interactive musical experience involved the audience and was a platform for all to express their voice with the group.



4th Annual Farhang Connect

Farhang Foundation's Generations Council, dedicated to programs for young professionals under 40, held their annual Connect celebration gala at the Sofitel Hotel in Los Angeles. The event was a perfect networking event and cultural celebration, featuring a very special performance by maestros Hamid Saeidi and Mehrdad Arabi.





USC Iranian Studies Major Program Signing Celebration

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

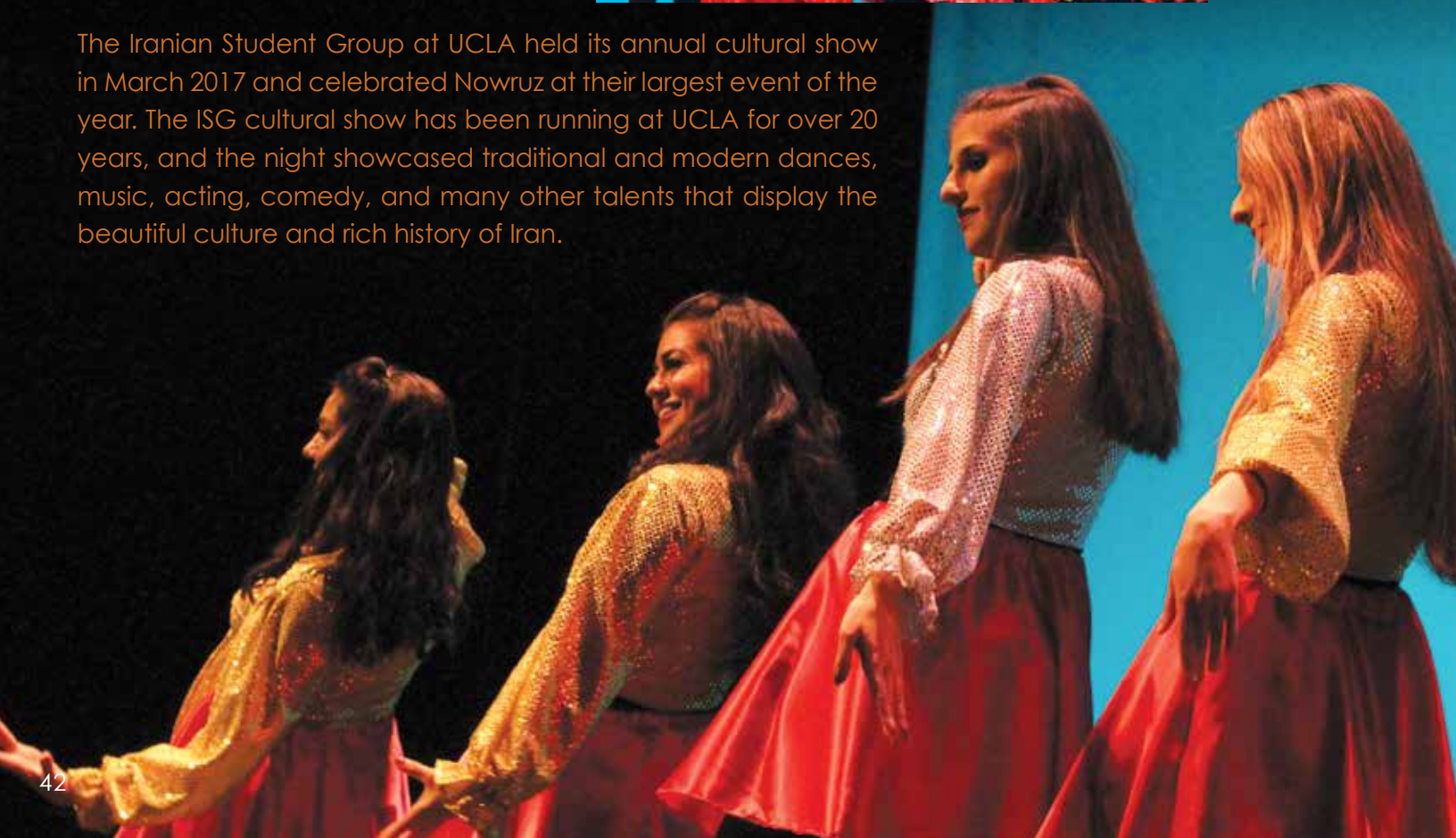
The program was made possible by the help and support of the community and was celebrated with an official reception and fundraiser at USC attended by university dignitaries and members of Farhang's donors who helped make this dream a reality. The historic degree program will officially launch in 2020.





UCLA Iranian Student Group Cultural Show

The Iranian Student Group at UCLA held its annual cultural show in March 2017 and celebrated Nowruz at their largest event of the year. The ISG cultural show has been running at UCLA for over 20 years, and the night showcased traditional and modern dances, music, acting, comedy, and many other talents that display the beautiful culture and rich history of Iran.



2017 Nowruz Banner Contest



Farhang's annual Nowruz Street Banner Competition was met with overwhelming enthusiasm by international artists with another record-breaking number of submissions in 2017. The winning design captured the spirit of Nowruz and was featured in prominent areas of Los Angeles from February 1st until March 31st. The banners announced Farhang Foundation's signature event, the annual celebration of Nowruz.

The 2017 winning design was submitted by artist Rashin Kheiriyeh, who said: "I am very excited to receive this great honor from Farhang Foundation...My Nowruz illustration was inspired by traditional Persian art. I tried to bring together traditional patterns and designs influenced by ancient Persian illustrations, with all those bright colors, fables, and storytelling feelings from my Iranian heritage, as well as my childhood memories from Iran, while incorporating Western abstraction."





marks the vernal equinox and symbolic rebirth of nature. The holiday is also observed by nearly 100 million around the world, including the U.S. and places as far-flung as Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, India, and Turkey.

The Nowruz celebration honors not only the beloved Iranian tradition, but also a universally felt spirit of friendship, family ties, and renewal. The event featured musical and dance performances by Ziba Shirazi and her Ensemble, Negar Estakhr, Mehrdad Arabi and Dafbang, the Djanbazian Dance Company, the Daneshvar Children's Ensemble, and Firuze Dance Company. Other activities included children's arts and crafts, a traditional grand Haft Sîn display by Shideh Shahraies, an annual Iranian costume parade open to all ages, and much more. The day concluded with a highly anticipated sold-out musical performance by renowned artist Mohsen Namjoo in Royce Hall, featuring special guest appearances by Sussan Deyhim (The House Is Black) and Arash Sobhani (KIOSK).



9th Annual Celebration of Nowruz at UCLA

The most colorful festival of the year marking the arrival of spring, Nowruz (the Iranian New Year), was celebrated on March 11, 2017, with an estimated audience of over 25,000, making it the largest Nowruz celebration in the world. Bringing together joyous sounds and spectacles for all to enjoy, the event was bigger than ever, as Farhang Foundation made its debut at its new home at UCLA's Royce Hall and Dickson Court, having outgrown the previous venue at LACMA.

The day long festival was free and open to the public, and is part of a tradition dating back at least 3,000 years in Iran and surrounding regions. Nowruz translates to "new day" in the Persian language. It





CELEBRATING NOWRUZ THE IRANIAN NEW YEAR



Celebrating the Iranian New Year (Nowruz) in Orange County has become one of Farhang Foundation's most popular traditions. For the second year in a row, Farhang hosted a full day of festivities at UCI's Claire Trevor School of Arts, with over 2,000 guests joining the celebration. The day-long free programs offered something for everyone, including a stunning Haft Sîn display by Le Jardin Privé, a Persian Tea Ceremony, Saaz-O-Dohol musicians, dance by the Firuze Dance Company, musical performances by the Parisa Daneshvar Children's Ensemble and the Sibarg Ensemble, as well as children's arts and crafts, calligraphy demos, and much more!

Undoubtedly one of the highlights of the day was Mohsen Namjoo's finale sold-out performance in the Claire Trevor Theatre.





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

For the third consecutive year, and thanks to the tremendous support of the generous donors who participated in our crowd-funding campaign, Farhang Foundation was once again able to present *Iran Through Books* at the country's largest book fair, attended by over 40,000 visitors. The two-day event was free to the public and helped give presence to Iranian books as well as books about Iran and/or by Iranian authors. Distinguished visiting authors and artists, including Hoda Katebi, Roxanne Varzi, Shahrnush Parsipur, Nouredin Zarrinkelk, and Ebrahim Nabavi, answered questions and signed their books for the public.



UCLA CELEBRATION of IRANIAN CINEMA

The UCLA Film & Television Archive and Farhang Foundation presented the annual UCLA Celebration of Iranian Cinema at the Billy Wilder Theater in Los Angeles. The Celebration provided a rare Look into Contemporary Iran through film.

The UCLA Film & Television Archive has annually showcased the power of films from Iran to connect people otherwise distanced by cultural, political, and national divides. In partnership with Farhang Foundation, this year's screenings offered Los Angeles the chance to experience new voices, current masters, and a special tribute to Abbas Kiarostami, one of contemporary cinema's most iconic and influential artists. Each film reflected the complex realities of contemporary Iran and the Iranian diaspora, while resonating beyond specific contexts to universal experiences that unite us all as viewers and human beings.

The celebration and opening reception began on May 6 with the Los Angeles premiere of *Life And a Day*, winner of eight awards at the 2016 Fajr Film Festival in Tehran, including the Audience Award, Best Director and Best First Film by writer-director Saeed Roostaei.

The two-day tribute to Abbas Kiarostami featured the West Coast premiere of *Finals*, a domestic drama from director Adel Yaraghi, cowritten with Abbas Kiarostami. On Saturday, May 13, audiences reveled in a rare screening of *Ten*, Kiarostami's mid career masterpiece that found him working at the height of his powers. This special screening was followed by a conversation about Kiarostami's life, work, and legacy. The tribute concluded with two west coast premieres beginning with Kiarostami's final masterpiece *Take Me Home* and *76 Minutes and 15 Seconds*, directed by acclaimed photographer Seifollah Samadian, a long time collaborator of Kiarostami.

Other highlights of the film series included *Lantouri* by writer-director Reza Dormishian, *Radio Dreams*, winner of the top prize at last year's Rotterdam International Film Festival, by director Babak Jalali, *Breath*, by writer-director Narges Abyar, *Daughter* by Reza Mirkarimi, *Hey Humans* by Rakhshan Banietemad, and *Starless Dreams*, the award-winning documentary by Mehrdad Oskouei.





FREEDOM SCULPTURE

and the L.A. FREEDOM FESTIVAL

THE FREEDOM SCULPTURE, a monumental gift to Los Angeles was unveiled on July 4, 2017, at the inaugural L.A. Freedom Festival. Representing religious freedom, cultural diversity, and inclusiveness, the monument was supported by more than 1.2 million individuals from 50 countries, and its unveiling became a significant cultural event drawing an estimated crowd of 75,000 people.

In 2017, the Freedom Sculpture broke records as the most broadly crowd-supported monumental gift in U.S. history. With support from public, and state and city officials, the monument is becoming a national landmark, prompting some to call it "the Statue of Liberty for the West Coast".





Master of Ceremonies, Max Amini kicked off the celebration before international sensation Arash performed a mini-concert that drove the audience into a frenzy. Farhang Vice Chairman, Farhad Mohit started the formal unveiling, declaring: "from this Independence Day forth, let the Freedom Sculpture be a reminder that we hold these truths to be self-evident, that religious freedom, cultural diversity, and inclusiveness are the universally shared humanitarian values that we embody in Los Angeles, uphold in California, and that truly make America great in the eyes of the whole world!"

Sculptor and creator Cecil Balmond spoke about the timeless message of human rights etched into a clay cylinder 2,500 years ago by Cyrus the Great, which inspired the cylindrical design of the Freedom Sculpture. He told the audience that his public artwork was a large-scale modern interpretation of that Cyrus Cylinder, widely considered the first declaration of human rights.

Local and state officials sent messages of support. California Governor Jerry Brown's proclamation thanked "the Iranian-American community for leading the diverse group of supporters who have come together to make this monumental gift a reality."

Councilman, Paul Koretz, in whose district the Freedom Sculpture stands, also expressed his support and presented another

proclamation, signed by all 15 Los Angeles City Council members, that recognized the monument for "highlighting American values embodied by the kaleidoscope of people and cultures who live harmoniously together in greater Los Angeles."

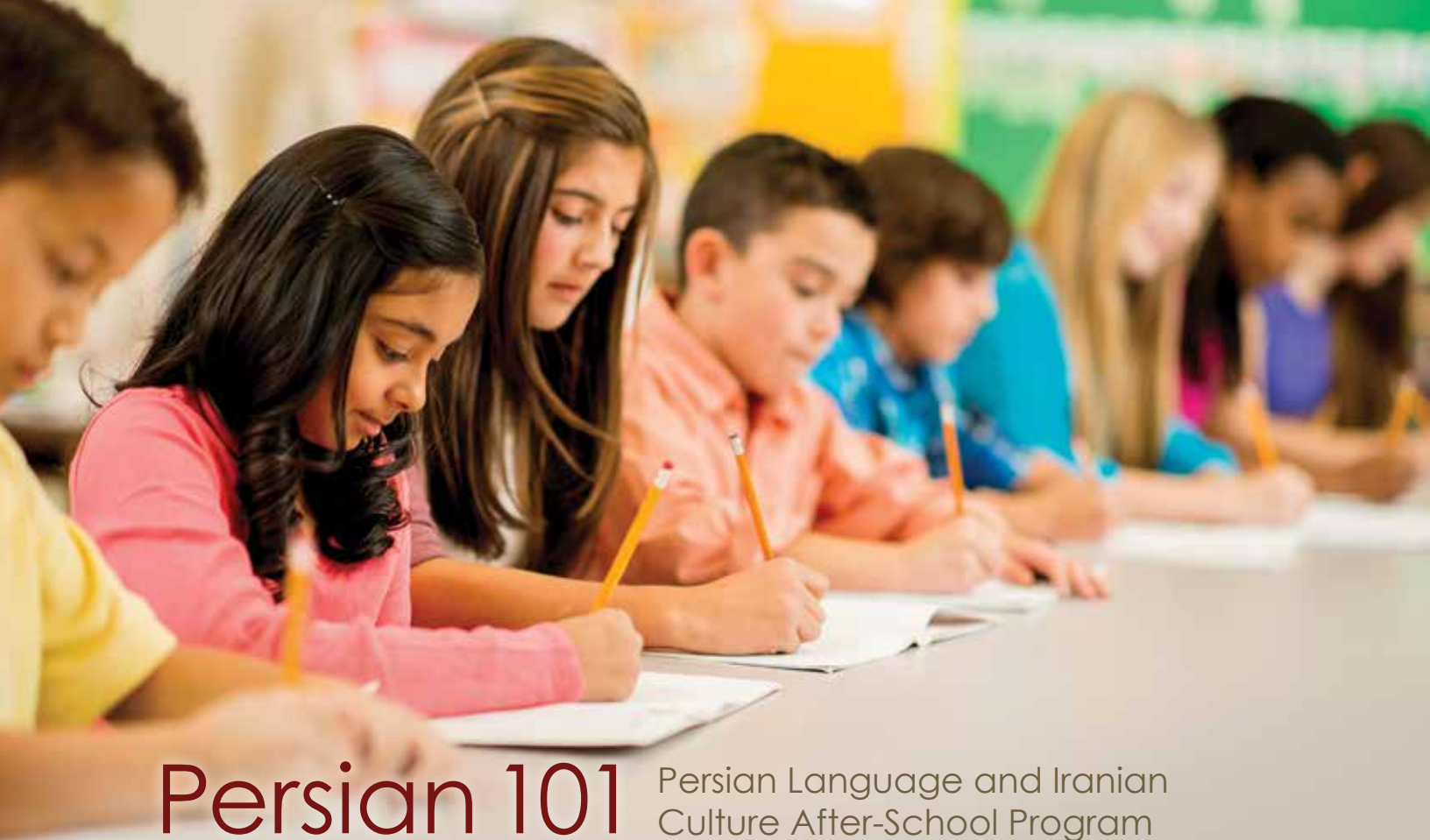
Mayor Eric Garcetti also thanked the Farhang Foundation for "this beautiful piece of art that celebrates religious freedom, multiculturalism and inclusiveness, ideals shared by people from all around the world and throughout all of history, from Cyrus the Great in Persia to America's Founding Fathers that we celebrate today."

The unveiling began at the conclusion of the formal comments and expressions of support. Lights and smoke intensified the drama as a large crane lifted the gold and navy blue drape to reveal the 16 foot high and 20 foot long, 10 ton steel public art piece underneath. The crowd gasped and fervently snapped photos of the sculpture while fireworks filled the air.

The event concluded with a performance by legendary Iranian artist, Ebi, with the audience singing along.

News crews and photographers from Associated Press, ABC, NBC, KTLA, BBC, CBS, UNIVISION, KIRN, NPR, KNX, KPCC and print publications reported on the festival. The L.A. Freedom Festival was featured the following day on the front page of *the Los Angeles Times' California*.





Persian 101

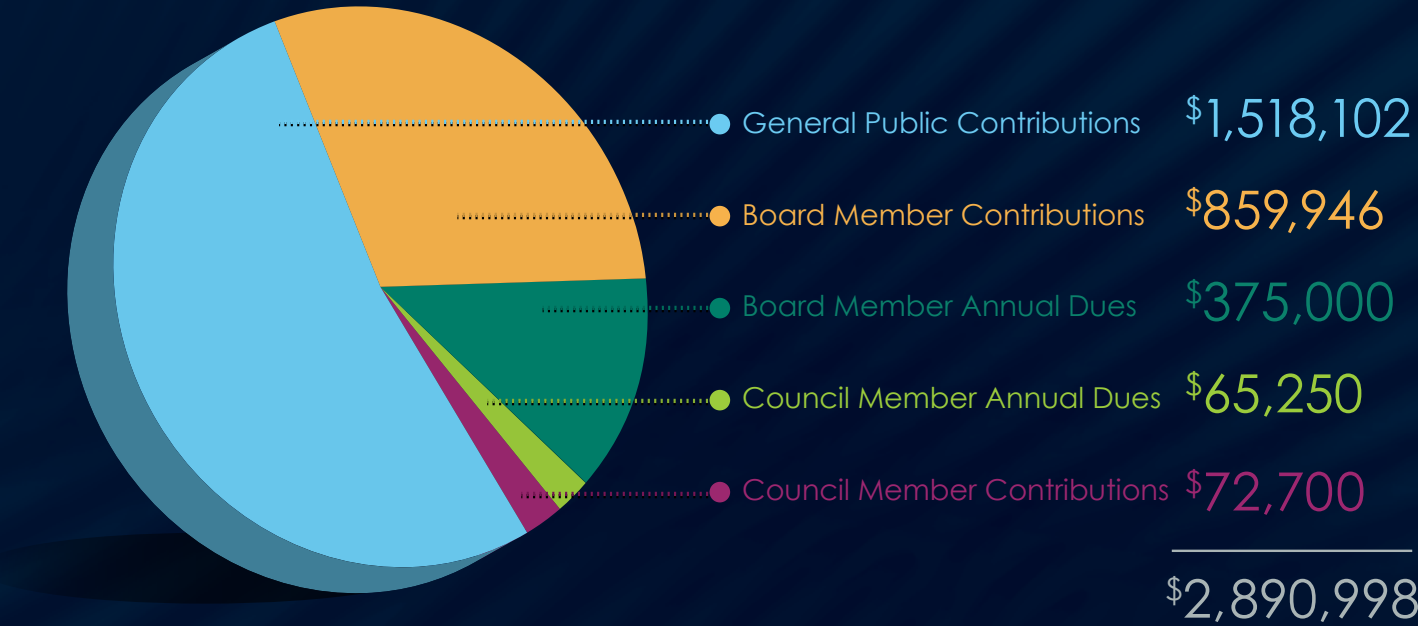
Persian Language and Iranian Culture After-School Program

Farhang's popular Persian Language and Culture after-school program, *Persian 101*, launched its third academic year in 2017 with classes in public elementary schools of Southern California. The successful program is in partnership with the Los Angeles Unified School District, Star Education, and Beyond The Bell. Classes were offered in more schools than ever before, demonstrating the demand by the community.

This year's participating schools included:

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
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| Fairburn School – Los Angeles | Serrania School – Woodland Hills |
| Hawthorne School – Beverly Hills | Warner Avenue School – Los Angeles |
| Marquez Avenue School – Pacific Palisades | Westwood School – Los Angeles |
| Nestle School – Tarzana | Wilbur School – Tarzana |

Farhang Sources of Funds 2016 – 2017



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After all, it is our farhang...

Contributions received within Farhang's fiscal year of April 1, 2016, to March 31, 2017.

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We are always looking to expand the Farhang Foundation family.

If you are interested in joining our efforts, here are some of the ways you can help:

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financially to support our programs

VOLUNTEER

your time and talents

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our events with friends and family

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