Editorial
“A TRUE STORY EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW!”

September 9
MazJobrani

Art Exhibition of Local Artists
Painting & Sculpture

IRANIANS & THE 2010 CENSUS: DID WE SHRINK??!!

BUILDING THE DREAM UPDATE
PCC NEWS

ONE TONGUE, NO TONGUE

SUMMER READING

WHOSE FUTURE IS IT ANYWAY?

SKIN CARE

THE FEAR OF MODERN ART

*Return* and Afghan-Iranian Dialogue (Page 11)
Recently I received the content of an email below and wanted to share it with you as it tells the story of women’s suffrage in our nation not long ago. Tell your children and grandchildren, girls or boys the story and help them learn to respect and appreciate the rights that followed with many sacrifices in those years. Their determination has given us, today’s women, the privilege and the right to vote. Now it’s our turn to honor their memory by making sure that we vote. Read again what these women went through for us! We can’t let all their suffering be for nothing.

“A history lesson....A TRUE STORY EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW!”

This is the story of our Mothers and Grandmothers who lived only 90 years ago. Remember, it was not until 1920 that women were granted the right to go to the polls and vote. The women were innocent and defenseless, but they were jailed nonetheless for picketing the White House, carrying signs asking for the vote. And by the end of the night, they were barely alive. Forty prison guards wielding clubs and with their warden’s blessing went on a rampage against the 33 women wrongly convicted of obstructing sidewalk traffic.

(Lucy Burns) - They beat Lucy Burns, chained her hands to the cell bars above her head and left her hanging for the night, bleeding and gasping for air.

(Dora Lewis) - They hurled Dora Lewis into a dark cell, mashed her head against an iron bed and knocked her out cold. Her cell mate, Alice Cosu, thought Lewis was dead and suffered a heart attack. Additional affidavits describe the guards grabbing, dragging, beating, choking, slamming, pinching, twisting and kicking the women.

Thus unfolded the ‘Night of Terror’ on Nov. 15, 1917, when the warden at the Occoquan Workhouse in Virginia ordered his guards to teach a lesson to the suffragists imprisoned there because they dared to picket Woodrow Wilson’s White House for the right to vote. For weeks, the women’s only water came from an open pail. Their food—all of it colorless slop—was infested with worms.

(Alice Paul) - When one of the leaders, Alice Paul, embarked on a hunger strike, they tied her to a chair, forced a tube down her throat and poured liquid into her until she vomited. She was tortured like this for weeks until word was smuggled out to the press.

(Helena Hill Weed) - Norwalk, Conn. Serving 3 day sentence in D.C. prison for carrying banner, “Governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed.”

(Pauline Adams) - in the prison garb she wore while serving a 60 day sentence.

Email sender continues: Last week, I went to a sparsely attended screening of HBO’s movie “Iron Jawed Angels.” It is a graphic depiction of the battle these women waged so that I could pull the curtain at the polling booth and have my say. I am ashamed to say I needed the reminder.

We often take our privileges for granted or forget how lucky we are to have them. “We need to get out and vote and use this right that was fought so hard for by these very courageous women. Whether you vote Democrat, Republican or Independent party - remember to vote.” We must honor their sacrifices and memory. Nothing such as carpool, getting to work, votes don’t matter, rainy day or being busy will justify not being there.

Now is the time to make sure you are a registered voter. Remember, voting is a privilege for us to honor!
Dear Friends,

This is my sixth and last year on the board of the Persian Cultural Center (PCC). PCC’s bylaws allow board members who have served 6 years to return after a year of absence, so I am sure I will return to the board in due course! Once again I have the honor of serving as President of PCC and I am looking forward to a fantastic year ahead.

The most important project we undertook in the last year was fundraising for a building to house community activities. Called “Building the Dream,” this project has evolved thanks to your input and vision. Some of you have participated in fundraising events, such as Walk-a-thons and Dance-a-thons, and others of you have given generous donations; many of you have done both. As you will see on the opposite page we have raised a considerable sum of money. Although this amount is not yet sufficient to purchase the community building we had envisioned, it is substantial enough to be encouraging and to have sent the message that we should continue our efforts.

We have realized that, during these recessionary times, it will take longer than anticipated to raise the money we need for the purchase of the building. The feedback from you in the community has been that we need to give the fundraising more time, and in the meantime, rent a smaller place to function as a “baby Center” until we purchase the building we have envisioned. We have been listening, and we have decided to adopt your suggestions! We are in the process of looking for a rental place that we can call a Center. In this place, we can hold meetings, gatherings, school events, and provide a space for community members to meet over tea and socialize. None of the money raised for the building will be used for rent. That money will be kept in its own account as our fundraising efforts continue in the next year and as people in the community begin to experience, through our “baby Center” what it might mean to have a fully-fledged Iranian-American Center that would provide even more amenities.

With that said, the Board will have a busy but exciting year ahead! Your donations will continue to be welcome over the next year until we reach our goal to purchase our own community building.

I want to end with some exciting news! Maz Jobrani, actor and comedian, has committed his support to our fundraising and will be here on September 9, 2012 to host a major fundraising event! Please save the date and look out for event information in the weeks to come. I told you it will be a fantastic year and you can hold me to that!

Warm regards,

Shaghayegh Hanson.

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Building the Dream
2nd Annual Walkathon

On Sunday, June 3rd the Persian Cultural Center (PCC) held its 2nd annual “Building the Dream” fundraiser walkathon at Mt. Carmel High School. The event was held to show community support for the establishment of a physical center to house all of its activities, including language and dance classes, concerts, lectures, art exhibits and cross-cultural activities. There were approximately 150 participants, many of whom were students who attend the Iranian school of San Diego (ISSD). Some of the children ran or walked 2 miles and medals were given to the fastest runners! The event was a success and raised close to $3,000. Thank you to all who participated!

A special thanks to the core of volunteers who helped make the walkathon a success: Mojgan Amini, Setareh Moghadam, Shahrzad Julazadeh, Sheri Kharrati, Svetlana Zyranyakova, Abdy Salimi, Shirin Abbaspour, Fariba Babakhan, Saha Sadeghi and Ali Sadr. The PCC would also like to thank the sponsors below who donated prizes and food. The PCC plans to have many more fundraisers in the coming year so stay tuned!

E-travel
Balboa Market
Sufi Restaurant
Grill House Cafe
Mahin Amini
Maryam Hair Salon and Spa
Starbucks
Rana Jamshiide
Amir Amirnovin

We sincerely thank the following for their donations:

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Solicitation of Material

Do you have an opinion on something you see here? Have you written an article that you would like us to publish? If so, we would love to hear from you! For directions on how to submit your piece, please contact PEYK- PCC’s office at: P.O. Box 500914, San Diego, CA 92150. You might find your submission printed in the next issue of Peyk!

Peyk reserves the right to edit all materials at its sole discretion. Materials submitted will not be returned to sender, even if not used, and the contributor will be deemed to have given consent and license for the reproduction and publication of such submission in Peyk magazine and/or the Peyk web site.

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BUILDING THE DREAM
You have the following donation options

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We would like to thank all of you who have contributed to the building fund so far; your vision and generosity will serve generations of Iranian-Americans and San Diegans in the future.

Add yours or a loved one's name to this list.

Abbaspour, Shirin
Abolmaali, Arya & Darya
Afshar, Dr. Pouya
Afshar, Gity and Masallah
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Akashian, Costance
Akbari, Elham
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Akbarinia/Jester, Halleh & Stewart
Amani, Ramin
Amiri, Mojgan
Amirnovin, Mahmoud
Assadian, Dr. A. R.
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Bahramsoltani, Arash (Euro Pacific Paint)
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Bvilioin Studios, Mr.Bahman
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Dadkhah, shahryar & Nazi
Dutra, Bijan
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Emami, Michael
Emami, Sina & Nahid
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Pirouzian, Mohammad Ali
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Sadre, Amirah
Safarian, Dr. Gholamreza & Narges
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Sammak, Massoud & Puneh
Shaghaghi, Hamid & Zohreh
Shaghaghi, Zarin
Shahrokhí, Romíneen
Shamloú, Bénni
Smith, Homa
Soraya, Golsa
Tahári, Hamid & Matanéh
United Technologies
Zayer, Bijan & Sholeh

All donors' names will be recognized prominently on a plaque posted at the entrance of the Center and entitled, “Founders' Circle.” In addition, at certain donation levels special recognition applies as indicated.

This Center will not only serve you, your loved ones, and the community, but it will also benefit future generations and those who want to reach out and learn about Iranian Culture and the Persian language. As an established and respected community, we owe it to ourselves, our children, and the survival of our heritage to achieve this goal.
Report of Persian Cultural Center's 2012 Annual General Meeting and Election

PCC's annual meeting and election took place on May 20, 2012 at Mt. Carmel High School in San Diego, CA. The annual report was presented and was followed by the election process for new Board of Director members. The past year’s activities were presented by Ms. Shaghayegh Hanson, PCC’s chair, the Peyk report by Mr. Sadr, the Iranian School of San Diego (ISSD) report by Ms. Fariba Babakhani- Ghazi, ISSD Vice-Principal and PCC's Vice chair, and the Financial Report by Mr. Hamid Rafizadeh, PCC’s Treasurer. A Summary of PCC’s annual report is as follows:

Board of Directors and committee members for the past year were as follows:

* Shaghayegh Hanson (President)
* Fariba Babakhani-Ghazi (Vice-President)
* Hamid Rafizadeh (Treasurer)
* Bahar Bagherpour (Secretary)
* Mojgan Amini
* Shahla Salah
* Abdy Salimi
* Golsa Soraya
* Gity Nematollahi

Advisory Board:

* Shahri Estakhry
* Saeed Jalali
* Rosita Bagheri

The Board had twelve meetings in the past year. At their first meeting, the Board elected its Executive Committee and established the following committees:

Education Committee: Ali Sadr, Fariba Babakhani and Rosita Bagheri

Arts & Culture Committee: Abdy Salimi, Maryam Iravanian, Bahar Bagherpour, Golsa Soraya, and Ali Sadr.

Educational Committee: Ali Sadr, Fariba Babakhani, Rosita Bagheri.


Membership and PR Committee: Fariba Babakhani, Shaghayegh Hanson, Ali Sadr, Shahrazd Julazadeh, Bahar Bagherpour, Hamid Rafizadeh.

Peyk Committee: Ali Sadr, Saeed Jalali, Shahri Estakhry, Bahnam Hedari, Shaghayegh Hanson, Maryam Iravanian, Shahrazd Julazadeh, Reza Khabazian, Aria Fani, Rachel Tait, Anahita Babaei.

Grants Committee: Shaghayegh Hanson, Rosita Bagheri, Fariba Babakhani, Hamid Rafizadeh, Shahrazd Julazadeh, Gity Nematollahi, Bahar Bagherpour.


Governance and Nominating Committee: Shaghayegh Hanson, Ali Sadr, Fariba Babakhani.

Finance Committee: Hamid Rafizadeh, Shaghayegh Hanson, Fariba Babakhani-Ghazi, Shahrazd Julazadeh.

Summary of Cultural Activities

During 2011-2012 PCC was not only active in organizing traditional celebrations and programs for the Iranian-American community, but also collaborated with other organizations to reach out to the community at large. PCC also continued, and will continue, to raise funds for an Iranian-American Center in San Diego that will serve the entire community.

PCC sponsored and co-sponsored the following programs:

A-PCC:
1- June 5: Walk-a-Thon at ISSD
2- June 12: End of year program at ISSD
3- June 29: Yoga class by Dr. Nahavandi at ISSD
4- July 15: Dance-a-Thon at Sufi Restaurant
5- Aug 11: Guitarist Lily Afshtar with Devine School of Guitar at NSI
6- Sept 17: Half Red and Half Yellow concert at Mt. Carmel High School
7- Nov 18: Universal Children’s day Event in collaboration with Child Foundation at Sufi Restaurant
8- Nov 19: Performance of Scarlet Stone presented by Shahrokh Mosokin-Ghalam and Shahrokh Yadegari at UCSD (based on Siavash Kasrai’s last work, Mohre-Sorkh)
9- Dec 16: Yalda Celebration at Sufi Restaurant
10- Jan 14: Jameh Daran Concert at Forum Hall UTC
11- Feb 25: Book Signing, Music and Poetry at Forum Hall UTC
12- Feb 29: One Book One San Diego Author Talk with Zohreh Ghahremani in collaboration with SD Public Library and KPBS at Jacobs Center
13- March 4: Nowruz Preparation at the Iranian School of San Diego
14- March 11: Nowruz Celebration at the Iranian School of San Diego
15- March 13: Chahârshanbeh Soori with AIAP and HOI
16- March 17: Nowruz Celebration at Hyatt La Jolla
17- March 18: Film Screening “Circumstance,” a collaboration with SD Public Library
18- March 20: Film Screening “No One Knows About Persian Cats,” a collaboration with SD Public Library
19- March 29: One Book One San Diego collaboration with KPBS and SD Museum of Art & SD Central Library
20- March 31: Spring Art Spree at UCSD collaboration with UCSD
21- April 1: Sizedeh Bedar with AIAP and HOI
22- April 8: My Dance teacher, My Mom (Dance Performance Honoring Ms. Hengameh Ayari)
23- April 9: Reading from Persian Poetry & Literature in collaboration with SD Public Library
24- April 18: Lecture by Roger Sedarat (Social Change in Modern Iran) collaboration with SD Public Library
25- April 19: Lecture (Persian Ghazal) at SDSU
26- Presentation of Haft-Seen along with literary, cultural, and historical exhibitions in seven public libraries throughout San Diego.
27- Daf classes with Ali Sad at the PCC office
28- Setar classes with Kourosh Taghavi
29- Târ classes with Ali Noori
30- Tonbak classes with Milad Jahadi
31- Yoga class with Dr. Nahavandi at 4s Ranch Public Library
B-ISSD:
The academic year 2011-12 was ISSD’s 24th year of operation. 245 students attended both branches of ISSD in the past year. The School’s Nowruz program was held on March 11, 2012, and was attended by 500 parents and family members. A variety of dance presentations, plays, music recitals, and songs were presented. Students received awards for their academic achievements. This year both branches of ISSD were held at Mt. Carmel High School.

ISSD’s first branch offers 16 classes on Sunday mornings, which are separated into three levels: Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced. ISSD also offers Persian classes for adults. Extracurricular classes such as Dance and Theatre, Tonbak and Setar have been offered as well. The second branch is held on Thursday evenings and has a total of five classes, which are also separated into three levels: Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced.

ISSD’s Persian language program is accredited by the San Diego Unified School District and the San Dieguito School District, which means that high school students can fulfill their second language requirements by taking Persian language courses at ISSD. This year, the PTA of both branches worked very hard and cooperated successfully with the teachers and administrators on issues such as curriculum and extracurricular activities. The PTA was also instrumental in helping to raise funds for the school.

ISSD was honored as a success story at PAAIA annual Passing the Torch ceremony in January. ISSD is working with a network of Persian Schools in the U.S. and other countries to exchange experiences and materials.

C- Persian Dance Academy:
More than 50 students under the supervision of Mrs. Azam Farssoudi of the Persian Cultural Dance Academy met on Sundays at ISSD Branch I. The dance students performed in the following programs:
1- PCC Nowruz Event
2- ISSD Nowruz Event
3- Spring Art Spree at UCSD

D- Building a Dream: our campaign to raise fund to create a Cultural Center continued in the past year. We have raised over $280,00.00 so far.

E- Public Relations and Community Outreach:
During the 2011-2012 operating year, PCC used its bi-monthly publication, Peyk, to reach thousands of readers. Peyk is a bilingual publication published in Persian and English. Its circulation includes San Diego, Orange and Los Angeles Counties, the Bay area, Washington DC, Maryland and Dallas and many other cities. Peyk is also available and read via the Internet on PCC’s website (www.pccsd.org/peyk or www.pccus.org/peyk).

Membership: During the 2011-2012 the Persian Cultural Center continued placing advertisements in Peyk magazine; the goal was to increase our membership. PCC issued a membership card to its members. PCC also managed to get discounts from various Iranian businesses for its members.

Public Outreach: In the past year, a number of PCC events were featured on KPBS, in San Diego, and KIRN, in Los Angeles on radio stations, and on the San Diego Arts and Sol website. These programs not only reached the Iranian-American community, but other communities who attended our featured programs.

Website: Thousands of people all over the world view the Persian Cultural Center’s Website, www.pccsd.org , and www.pccus.org . Our website has been upgraded and as a consequence our reach and exposure have increased in the last year. The PCC website provides quick access to our bi-monthly, bi-lingual magazine, our ongoing programs and activities, as well as other cultural information and events. Please refer to our website to read about PCC’s many activities and to renew your membership and make your tax deductible contributions on line.

F- The PCC Foundation—a charitable organization:
This year the foundation has raised funds for two families who are in financial crisis and have health problems. PCC is also actively supporting the “Help Katie Walk Again” campaign (details on website). PCC is further delighted to have established collaboration with Jewish Family Services for immigration assistance to those in need.

G- Other: PCC’s governance committee continues to review and improve PCC’s existing corporate documents in line with the most current best practices for nonprofit organizations.

H- Special Thank You: In closing, we would like to take this opportunity to thank Fariba Babakhani-Ghazi who is leaving us. We are grateful for the time, energy, and talents she generously gave to PCC and our community. We look forward to having her back on the PCC Board again. Board members, Hamid Rafizadeh, Golsa Soraya and Giti Nematollahi were reelected.

The following members were announced as alternate members of the Board of directors.
- Majid Nakhiiri
- Ali Taha
- Giti Nematollahi

At the first meeting of the Board of Directors held on June 6, 2012, the following members were elected to serve as the Executive Committee of PCC for one year.
- President- Shaghayegh Hanson
- Vice President- Bahar Bagherpour
- Treasurer- Hamid Rafizadeh
- Secretary- Golsa Soraya

Other members of the BOD will be leading various committees, such as: Arts and Culture, Events, Education(ISSD), Publications (Peyk), Grants, PR, Membership, and Finance.

COMMITTEES – Assignment of Committee Heads

Educational Committee: ISSD: Ali Sadr (lead), Fariba Babakhani, and Rosita Bagheri.


Membership and PR Committee: Mojgan Amini (lead), Fariba Babakhani, Shaghayegh Hanson, Ali Sadr, Shahrzad Julazadeh and Anahita Babaei.

Peyk Committee: Ali Sadr (lead), Saeed Jalali, Shahri Estakhry, Bahnam Hadari, Shaghayegh Hanson, Maryam Iravanian, Shahrzad Julazadeh, Reza Khabazian, Aria Fani, Rachel Tait.

Grants Committee: Hamid Rafizadeh(lead), Rosita Bagheri, Fariba Babakhani, Shaghayegh Hanson, Shahrzad Julazadeh, and Bahar Bagherpour.

Fundraising Committee: Shaha Salah (lead), Hamid Rafizadeh , Fariba Babakhani, Majid Nakhiiri, Ali Sadr, Shahri Estakhry and Shahrzad Julazadeh.

Charity (PCC Foundation): Shaha Salah (lead), Parisa Farahanchi- Rafizadeh, Giti Nematollahi, Abdi Salimi, and Shahri Estakhry.

Governance and Nominating Committee: Shaghayegh Hanson (lead), Ali Sadr, Bahar Bagherpour and Shaha Salah.

Finance Committee: Hamid Rafizadeh (lead), Shaghayegh Hanson, Fariba Babakhani-Ghazi, and Shahrzad Julazadeh.

If anyone wants to participate in the committees please contact PCC and ask for the head of the committee.
858-653-0336 or pcc@pccsd.org
**One Tongue, No Tongue**

**“Return” and Afghan-Iranian Dialogue**

Reviewed by Aria Fani

Merrier to speak
in one Heart than in one Tongue

—Rumi

Part of *Peyk*’s series on traditions of poetry in Central Asia, this article examines *Bazgasht* (Return), an iconic poem written by Mohammad Kazem Kazemi. *Peyk* would like to thank Dr. Hassan Sultanzadah, our reader and friend, for generously providing our columnist with his literary archives. If you would like to contribute to this series, please contact our columnist.

San Diego, California. “Hey, Afghani!” an Iranian student scoffs at his Afghan classmate. The term, often used as a pejorative epithet in Iran, is empty of associations for most Americans. It resonates meaningfully with the two of them, having evoked the narrative of Afghan suffering in Iran. The Iranian student’s condescending tone reflects the profound sense of marginality and hardship that Afghan communities have faced while living in Iran.

Kerman, Iran, November 2011. Following a law banning illegal immigrants from attending public school, an underground school is reported to have begun serving the children of Afghan residents.

Tehran, Iran. A small school for Afghan children kickstarts a project to document the lives of undocumented Afghan children in Iran. Through photography, children take an active role in capturing the environment around them, as they see and experience it.

Isfahan, Iran. Nowruz 2012. A discriminatory law banning Afghan residents from entering Sofeh Park on the New Year’s celebration’s 13th day, traditionally spent outdoors, is protested by many Iranians. The picture of three young men holding signs attacking racism, including one that reads “I am also an Afghan,” goes viral on the Internet. Authorities claim that the decision was made to ensure the “safety” of Iranian families.

Mashhad, Iran. 1991. Mohammad Kazem Kazemi writes “Bazgasht” (The Third Script), an iconic poem in the history of modern Persian literature. Today, almost every Afghan and Iranian can recite a line or two of it. Against the backdrop of two postwar societies, “Return” narrates the story of an Afghan refugee in Iran who has decided to return to Afghanistan following a period of hardship. Kazemi evokes a number of religious narratives and symbols to emphasize the common Islamic faith of Iranians and Afghans and the similar pains they have endured, in light of the Iran-Iraq War and the Afghan-Soviet conflict of the 1980s. Through ironic accusations, the poem challenges Iranians’ apathy in the face of Afghans’ suffering. The literary scholar and translator of modern Afghan verse Zuzanna Olszewska writes that Kazemi “was able to say in verse what few others had been given the right to say in a public forum and to engage in a critical dialogue with [his] Iranian counterparts and Iranian society in general.”

“Return,” first published in an Iranian newspaper, inspired a host of responses, many also composed in verse. One, “We Will Not Forget,” was written by Bijan Taraghi (1930-2010), a revered Iranian songwriter, who had not only expressed solidarity with the Afghan struggle, but also emphasized the common tongue and heart of Iranians and Afghans: “Though your child threw a stone at our window / it did not break our lasting bond.” By virtue of its great popularity, observable at poetry recitations, “Return” ignited a dialogue between two nations with a common cultural past and a multitude of recent political divisions and social scars.

The poem’s profound sincerity has contributed to its popularity beyond the borders of Iran and Afghanistan, shedding light on a community known by many almost exclusively within the context of physical labor. “Poetry and intellectualism, and not merely poverty, hard work and socio-legal marginalization, have been part of the Afghan refugee experience in Iran over the past three decades,” writes Olszewska. Many Afghan writers have been involved in poetry circles and literary organizations in the past three decades in Iran. In the city of Mashhad, the Dorr-e Dari Culture Institute holds weekly poetry readings, runs writing poetry workshops, and publishes *Khatt-e Sevom* (The Third Script), a quality literary quarterly. “Return” exemplifies and showcases the invaluable contributions of Afghan poets and writers to the Iranian literary scene.

Not all the responses to Kazemi and his work have been sympathetic. In 2011, Hadi Khorsandi (b.1943), an Iranian satirist living in the diaspora, criticized him for attending a literary event held by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei during the month of Ramadan. “At sunset, when the road’s breath is warm, you departed? No! / You came here on foot, and on foot you departed? No!” Evoking the opening lines of “Return,” Khorsandi goes on to remind Kazemi of the many writers and poets who have been incarcerated and repressed by the Islamic Republic. He views Kazemi’s presence at the event as an endorsement and legitimization of a brutal regime. “If you don’t distance yourself from this dying regime / your popularity as a poet will die soon.”

Kazemi has dedicated some of his poetry to Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the leader of the Iranian Revolution. A prominent figure in the movement known as *She’r-e Moghavemat* (Poetry of Resistance), Kazemi was among a generation of Afghan poets in Iran whose belief in littérature engagée was expressed by pledging allegiance to political parties and resisting the Soviet presence in
I stood up even as the sky broke its back, all men know me: and whether they look at me with kindness or hostility, of my laboring hands—every structure, every stone bears imprint; every mirror reflects my broken image—whose sofra, if any, was full of hunger—my bread was brick-hard. I who have only been seen on paths and roads. I who have walked struggle’s horizon, its length and length and that little girl who has no toys—she, too, will depart.

and my other leg is there. I've got a leg and a cane—there skies and skies of flight.

I am broken as I pass by you tonight humbled by your infinite heart. I know the silence of your cold nights the lone grief of loss. Like me, you’ve seen only the severed heads of stars, had not a father but his ashes, walked the streets of exile, carried burnt corpses on your shoulders. You’ve bled as I was scourged, fed on rocks as I ate seeds and water.

Though our barren land produced few grains worthy of harvest—though we broke your lasting calm—though my child threw a stone at your window—though I am guilty before the law fit for grave punishment, friends, don’t dishearten me—give me your blessing, even if it’s a lie. I’ll leave behind all that I do not have, I swear on our Imam,1 I won’t take anything other than the dust of his Heram.2

May God bless your piety and grace your lives—grant you your prayers, a skyful of blessings, fullness of your children’s piggybanks. And the bread of your enemies—whoever they are—may it turn to brick.

At sunset, when the road’s breath is warm, I’ll depart. I came here on foot, and on foot I will depart. Tonight, the spell of exile will be broken; tonight, I will wrap my empty sofra. I’ll leave behind all that I do not have, I swear on our Imam, I won’t take anything other than the dust of his Heram.3

Return

I who have walked struggle’s horizon, its length and length I who have only been seen on paths and roads I whose bread was brick-hard whose sofra, if any, was full of hunger—every mirror reflects my broken image—every structure, every stone bears imprint—of my laboring hands and whether they look at me with kindness or hostility all men know me: I stood up even as the sky broke its back, I kept faith even as they all turned to ibn Muljams.4

How can I not return? There, my refuge there, my brother’s tomb the mosque, the mihrab, the sword waiting to kiss my head.5

Here there is only the prayer’s call, there we proclaim God’s greatness. We rise.6 Here I am broken-winged, afraid of breaking again, there skies and skies of flight. I’ve got a leg and a cane and my other leg is there.

Return

Kazemi’s poem “Return,” which I co-translated with Adeeba Talukder, is in the masnavi form, with an indefinite number of rhyming couplets in an aa, bb, cc scheme. The rhyming music of the original is unfortunately lost to a significant degree in translation. The distinguished writer Mahmoud Dowlatabadi has compared the process of translation to the game of Chinese whispers. Indeed, Kazemi’s work loses not only its original music, but its cultural and historical context in this process. However, if the translation achieves the challenging task of conveying the poet’s profound, heartfelt cry of displacement and desolation, then the exercise has achieved its purpose.

Return

Afghanistan. Khomeini was popular among the members of She‘r-e-e Moghavemat not only for his attempts to inspire Shia revolutionary zeal in the region, but also for his tenet that “Islam has no borders,” a statement often quoted by Afghans in Iran.

Born in 1967 in the historic city of Herat, Kazemi is a book editor by profession, as well as a poet and literary critic. He has published extensively on poetry as well as literary criticism and movements; his books include Poetry of Resistance in Afghanistan (1991) and The Sweet Persian Tongue: Dari-Persian in Contemporary Afghanistan (2010). His Persian-language weblog is both an interactive platform and a rich, referential source for poets and poetry enthusiasts alike. He serves on the editorial board of Khat-e Sevom, and he has published and edited three collections of poetry: A Tale of Stone and Brick, I Came on Foot, and Morning in Chains.

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May God bless your piety and grace your lives, grant you your prayers, a skyful of blessings, fullness of your children’s piggybanks. And the bread of your enemies—whoever they are—may it turn to brick.

1. A cloth spread on the floor (or table) upon which one’s daily bread is served, also a symbolic item in cultural ceremonies.
2. Ghariiba means stranger and foreigner, here intended to evoke a sense of dispossession.
3. The poet evokes the story of ibn Muljam, who assassinated Ali, Prophet Muhammad’s son-in-law. ibn Muljam struck Ali with his poisoned sword while he was praying at a mosque.
4. Mihrab is the prayer niche of a mosque, akin to the altar.
5. The poet refers to the way in which Ali was assassinated—having been struck by Может быть, жаль, что я не могу ответить на ваши вопросы, но я ухожу.
6. Rising (qiam) implies both lining up for prayer and may it turn to brick.

Return

How can I not return? There, my refuge there, my brother’s tomb the mosque, the mihrab, the sword waiting to kiss my head.

Here there is only the prayer’s call, there we proclaim God’s greatness. We rise. Here I am broken-winged, afraid of breaking again, there skies and skies of flight. I’ve got a leg and a cane and my other leg is there.

Sources:

“Return” by Mohammad Kazem Kazemi, translated by Aria Fani and Adeeba Talukder, previously published in Consequence, spring 2012.

The title of the article is from Kazemi’s 2003 book Hamzabani va Bizabani (On Sharing a Tongue and Being without a Tongue; Tehran: Erfan). Kazemi describes the findings of a survey he conducted among Iranians in Mashhad, most of whom did not know the people of Afghanistan and Tajikistan speak the same language as Persian-speaking Iranians. Referenced in: Olszewska, Zuzanna (2010) “‘Hey, Afghani!’: Identity Contentions among Iranians and Afghan Refugees,” in Dispossession and Displacement, ed. Dawn Chatty and Bill Finlayson (London: British Academy), 197-214.


Please direct your questions and views to af@ariafani.com. Follow Aria’s literary blog: Alef @ ariafani.com

Peyk No. 140/ July - August 2012
With summer on our doorsteps, this time we are doing something different and special for our kids, hoping that they will enjoy cooking these recipes with their moms and dads. There is a new book out: Allergy-Friendly Food for Families: 120 Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Nut-Free, Egg-Free, and Soy-Free Recipes from the editors of KIWI magazine (Andrews McMeel Publishing). http://www.andrewsmcmeel.com/products/?isbn=1449409768

The other exciting fact about all of this is that the photos for the cover and many of these recipes were taken by Ghazalle Badiozamani, an alumnae of ISSD, now a professional photographer in New York City. Way to go Ghazalle!

More than 12 million Americans live with food allergies. This book covers not one or two, but the five most common allergens in kids, with each of the 120 recipes free of at least three allergens; most are free of all five. From the three crucial mealtimes (breakfast, lunch, dinner) to the “fun” foods families can’t live without (desserts, snacks, party treats), parents are completely covered. Most importantly, all of the recipes are easy to make and include a nutritional analysis. So Kids, roll up your sleeves and enjoy making these dishes. Here are some samples:

**Fruity Guac:** Prep time: 10 minutes, Serves 6, calories 152, protein 2 g, carbohydrates 16 g, dietary fiber 5 g

This is a sweet twist on guacamole that appeals to a kid’s sweet tooth without making you worry about sugar and unhealthy fat. If your avocados need ripening, place them in a paper bag with a banana and seal shut. Check back 12 to 24 hours later for a ripened avocado. The pomegranate seeds add a touch of tartness, but if they aren’t in season, just omit from the recipe.

1. Avocados, pitted, peeled, and diced; 2 bananas, diced; Juice of 2 limes (about ¼ cup); ½ teaspoon salt; 2 tablespoons ricotta cheese and 13/4 cup pomegranate seeds (optional)
2. In a small bowl, use a fork to mash the avocados, bananas, lime juice, and salt into a chunky consistency.
3. Add the ricotta and stir to combine. Taste and season with additional salt or lime juice, if needed.
4. Top with the pomegranate seeds, if using, and serve with your favorite whole-grain chips.

**Polenta Mini Pizzas:** Prep time 5 min; bake time 12 min; 12 mini pizzas; 66 calories per pizza; fat 2 g; protein 3g; carbohydrates 1 g and dietary fiber 1 g.

These little pizza rounds couldn’t be simpler to make—and it’s a good thing, because you might need to whip up some more. The polenta gives the pizzas a slight flavor of corn, which kids tend to like for its sweetness. You can add any of your guests’ favorite toppings, like roasted veggies, fresh herbs, or pepperoni.

1. Canola oil, for coating the pan; 1 (18-ounce) tube prepared polenta sliced into 12 rounds; ¾ cup Mighty Marinara Sauce (recipe follows) or your favorite tomato sauce; ¾ cup grated mozzarella cheese; ¼ cup grated Pecorino Romano cheese
2. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Lightly coat a rimmed baking sheet with canola oil.
3. Place the 12 polenta rounds on the prepared baking sheet. Top each with 1 scant tablespoon of marinara sauce, 1 tablespoon of the mozzarella cheese, and 1 teaspoon of the Pecorino Romano cheese.
4. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes, until the cheese is bubbly.

**Mighty Marinara Sauce:**

1 tablespoon olive oil; 1 large onion, quartered; 1 clove garlic; 1 large carrot, peeled and quartered; 1 stalk celery, quartered; 1 (28-ounce) can crushed tomatoes; Salt and 1 bay leaf

1. In a large stockpot, heat the olive oil over medium heat.
2. In a food processor, combine the onion, garlic, carrot, and celery. Process until very finely chopped.
3. Add the vegetables to the stockpot and sauté for 5 to 7 minutes, until soft and translucent.
4. Add the tomatoes and season with salt to taste. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat to a simmer and add the bay leaf. Simmer, partially covered, for about 30 minutes, until the flavors are well blended. Remove the bay leaf and serve.
Assassins of the Turquoise Palace
Roya Hakakian
Reviewed by Shaghayegh Hanson

When Noori Dehkordi left his Berlin apartment on the evening of September 17, 1992, he had no idea that it would be the last time he would see his wife or daughter. A few hours later, in a café called Mykonos, Noori was assassinated by men using machine guns and dressed in black. Three others were also killed; several others were injured. All the diners were Iranian and Kurdish opposition leaders. Dubbed as the “Berlin Massacre,” it took German prosecutors almost 4 years and 176 witnesses to finally prove that, what the media and the politics of the day were attributing to Saddam Hussein or a power struggle within the Kurdish Party, was in fact ordered by Iran’s Supreme leader. Since the Islamic Revolution, over one hundred Iranian exiles had disappeared or been killed in Europe and elsewhere. The verdict in the Mykonos case provided an answer as to why these killings had previously remained mysteries, with no clear motive or suspects. Roya Hakakian is a masterful storyteller, and she gives life to her research of archival documents and untold hours of interviews by meticulously recreating the personalities and everyday lives of the human beings involved in the unfolding drama, right down to Noori’s attire on the evening he left home for the last time. Hakakian tells us he wore “black pants and the silk sapphire shirt Shohreh had given him on his forty-sixth birthday.” Better than the most gripping “Whodunnit,” it is as though she invites us to dinner with the characters in this four-year maelstrom and has us listen to them recounting their stories in person. Agatha Christie’s charismatic Poirot could not have recreated the scene better. A page turner that satisfies the most meticulous fact-finders as well as those who require the pull of a good story well-told, this book is exactly how nonfiction should be written to charm the apathetic and reluctant into the world of politics; a truth stranger than fiction, but just as engaging. If you read anything, you must read this.

Reviewed by Shahri Estakhry:

Cutting for Stone
by Abraham Verghese
2010, Publisher: Vintage, 688 pages
Also available on Kindle and Books on Tape.
This book has been on the long list of best seller (currently #2 after 57 weeks).

You can’t help but love this novel for Verghese has that incredible magic of imagination and the power of transferring it through his penmanship. A masterful storyteller. “An astonishing, breathtaking and heartrending human epic…. A perfectly pitched, endlessly rewarding symphony of a debut novel. If you have time to read only one novel this year, make it this one.” The Star Ledger (Newark, NJ).

A prose style brilliant novel that revolves around twin brothers, Marion and Shiva Stone, born out of a tragic union between a beautiful Indian nun and a British surgeon both on a mission in Addis Ababa. Orphaned by their mother’s death at childbirth and disappearance of their father the brothers are bound together until their passion for the same woman tears them apart. When life’s circumstances after years brings Marion, Shiva and their father together it is each other they must trust and honor.

Reviewed by Aria Fani

Immerse your summer days in the infinite universe of poetry. These are some of the most inspiring poets that I have read and lived with, may their verse be a source of joy and inspiration in your life. Farzaneh Milani and Kaveh Safa’s excellent translations of Simin Behbahani’s Persian ghazals (Tehran, b. 1927) bring the voice of modern day Iran to English-speaking audiences. “A Cup of Sin” (Syracuse University Press, 1998) is wonderful selection and introduction to the most prominent lyricist of modern Persian poetry.

Mahmoud Darwish (al-Birwa, Palestine, 1941-2008-) is the most celebrated poet of modern Arabic verse. Fady Joudah’s stunning translations in “The Butterfly’s Burden” (Copper Canyon Press, 2006) bring renewed attention and admiration to Dawish’s poetry and character. It is hard not to fall in love with Darwish!

Turn to any random page in Language for a New Century (W. W. Norton & Company, 2008), and lose yourself to the delight of 400 original and unique voices from the Middle East, Central and East Asia as well as poets living in the Diaspora. This English anthology, which features poetry originally written in Persian, Arabic, Urdu, Turkish, etc, has been hailed as a “bold declaration of shared humanity and devotion to the transformative power of art.”

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The most amazing thing has happened to our family this year. I never could have anticipated such a small change would lead to calmer children and a good bit of rich family time. We decided to simplify our life so we can focus more on addressing our children’s academic, social, and emotional needs. We moved to a home closer to the boys’ school and to my office. We also took out one day of karate practice during the week from our schedule and moved it to the weekend. Additionally, in the process of moving, we got rid of the television.

As a result, our children spend more time riding their bikes, playing with one another, drawing, reading, and being creative. As a family, we eat dinner together every night and breakfast together on Saturday and Sunday mornings. We even spend more time together doing outdoor activities like shell hunting at the beach, bike riding, practicing soccer at the park, and even picking out songs we can all agree on to download from iTunes. Our oldest son, who historically has had behavior problems at school, has not had any issues since our life overhaul, and our youngest son has made leaps and bounds in his academic growth. Amazing!

Every once in a while, I feel a pinch of self-doubt when I talk to parents and find out their children are involved in multiple activities throughout the week. It is hard enough shuttling my kids to and from school, martial arts, Persian lessons, and guitar practice while also working full time and coordinating a babysitter when our schedules don’t allow us to do it all. The self-doubt begins to trickle away when I am able to refocus and remind myself it is better for our children to master a few skills rather than be a jack-of-all-trades and master of none.

It certainly is not easy to refocus, but one of the aspects of parenting I have promised myself to be purposeful in is avoiding living through my children, even when I get annoyed with them for doing nothing. They are both their own person with interests that may not necessarily align with our dreams of doing things we were unable to do in our own childhood due to circumstances of being an immigrant. In being in tune with this, I can still help them strive to be their best and find a career that suits them. Helping them follow their own passion will keep them motivated and, with the proper structure, lead to their future success and happiness.

Playing and being creative is an important factor in a child’s growth and development. So is down time and relaxation. These are fundamental to a child developing self-awareness and a sense of what he/she is interested in. I recall teaching Advanced Placement Statistics where many of my students were also taking other Advanced Placement classes and involved in sports as well as in their church. These students were extremely stressed out; if they felt their performance was less than perfect, they were devastated. So focused were they on achievement and all the things they were doing, that at a very young age they were taking life very seriously. Sadly, we know life does not necessarily become less stressful as we get older, so why start them down this path at such a young age?

There are a lot of articles available on this topic. One that provides some great tips for parents is Are you enriching or overscheduling your child? by Dr. Janet Taylor. Other resources include Overs-Scheduling: A Problem for the Child and Family found on the Cleveland Clinic Health website http://cchealth.clevelandclinic.org, and Psychology Today’s Are We Pushing Our Kids Too Hard by David Elkins.

The concept of pushing our children too hard ties back to my last column about 1.5 generation Iranian Americans as well as generational differences and the conflicts this may create. This is a topic I will continue to explore in the next issues of Peyk.
Calendar of Events

Persian Cultural Center
Tel: (858) 653-0336 • Fax & Voice: (619) 374-7335
www.pccus.org

Building the Dream
Fundraiser for an Iranian Center
Sunday September 9, 2012
with Maz Jobrani
Please save the date.

Art Exhibition of Local Artists
Painting & Sculpture

Setar workshop by Kourosn Tagnavi
Registration and info: (858) 243-6008
Tombak workshop, Info: (858) 735-9634
Daf Workshop with Ali Sadr,
Tuesdays 6 to 7:30 PM at PCC office.

Iranian School of San Diego
(858) 653-0336

ISSD Registration
Branch I
Sunday Sept. 9, 2012 at 10am-12pm
Mt. Carmel High School
9550 Carmel Mountain Road
San Diego, CA 92129

Branch II
Thur. Sept. 6, 2012 at 6-8 pm
Mt. Carmel High School
9550 Carmel Mountain Road
San Diego, CA 92129

Persian Dance Academy of San Diego
(858) 653-0336 • www.pccus.org

Dollar a Month Fund
Tel: (858) 653-0336 • www.dmfund.org
http://www.facebook.com/pages/Dollar-a-Month-Fund

Association of Iranian American Professionals (AIAP)
Tel: (858)207-6232 • www.aiap.org
Last Wednesday of each month at 6:30 PM
at Sufi Mediterranean Cuisine
5915 Balboa Ave, San Diego, CA 92111

ISTA (Iranian Student Association at UC San Diego)
visit us at www.ista.ucsd.org

House of Iran

Dar Shahr Cheh Khabar?

Tel: (619) 232-Iran Balboa Park,
Sundays 12:00-4:00pm

Iranian-American Scholarship Fund
Tel: (858) 653-0336 • www.iasfund.org

Mehrgan Foundation
www.Mehrganfoundation.org • Tel (858) 673-7000

PAAIA
Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian American
www.paaia.org

NIAC
National Iranian American Council
www.niac.org

Book Club Meeting
Last Sat. of each month
Sufi Mediterranean Cuisine
5915 Balboa Ave, San Diego, CA 92111

AI Weiwei: Zodiac Heads/Circle of Animals: Gold
Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, Downtown
Price: Included with admission
Description: These works reference a European version of the Chinese zodiac designed by Italian Jesuit Giuseppe Castiglione.

Movies in the Park - “Puss in Boots”
Visit Escondido Convention and Visitors Bureau
Location: Escondido Price: Free

Point Loma Summer Concerts - Surf City All Stars
Point Loma High School Instrumental Music Association
Location: Point Loma/ Harbor Island/Shelter Island Price: Free

San Diego Civic Youth Ballet Summer Camps
San Diego Civic Youth Ballet
Price: $105-$365
Description: Come join the fun at SDCYB! Camp consists of a daily ballet class, followed by fun outings in Balboa Park and arts and crafts!
8/20/12 – 8/24/12 On Fridays, family members are invited to come and see what the students have learned during camp week!
Camp A: Ages 4 – 6: Mornings, 9:00 am - 12:00 pm, Week 1: July 2nd - July 6th
Week 2: August 13th - August 17th, Week 3: August 20th - August 24th
Camp B: Ages 7 – 10: Afternoons, 1:00 - 4:00 pm, Week 1: July 2nd - July 6th
Week 2: August 13th - August 17th, Week 3: August 20th - August 24th
Tuition: Week 1: $105 (Four-day camp)
Week 2 & Week 3: $130 (each)
San Diego Civic Youth Ballet
San Diego’s resident classical ballet school in Balboa Park
1650 El Prado, Suite 209, Casa Del Prado Building
Register Today by calling: 619-233-3060 or visiting our office in Balboa Park
Skin Care

Summer is approaching. For many of us, that means spending more time outside – whether it’s picnicking at the park, playing volleyball at the beach, barbecuing kabobs on our patios, or simply driving back and forth from work. And for some of us, it means grilling our flesh in hopes of attaining that Dancing-With-The-Stars bronzed celebrity look. All of this equates to more fun in the sun…and exposure to its harmful rays.

Skin cancer is one of the most common types of cancer, and yet one of the most preventable. It is mostly caused by sun exposure. The more time you spend in the sun, whether you burn or not, the higher your risk. With the sun’s rays shining strong in the summertime, make sure you are doing everything you can for yourself and for your family to decrease your risk of developing skin cancer in your lifetimes.

Types of Skin Cancer

There are three main types of skin cancer, and none of them is any fun.

Non-Melanoma Types: Two of the types of skin cancer are termed “non-melanoma”—these are less aggressive and more localized. That means they tend to stay in the same spot and just grow where they are rather than “metastasize,” or spread, through the body to other locations. They are the most common types of skin cancer, thankfully, because they are easily treatable. They tend to occur on the most sun-exposed parts of the body, such as the face, arms, and legs.

Squamous Cell Carcinoma: The precursor to this type of skin cancer is called “Actinic Keratosis,” which is a slightly raised, pink, rough-textured spot on the skin.

Basal Cell Carcinoma: These tend to appear more raised, smooth, shiny, and circular, and sometimes have tiny blood vessels running through them. Tips of the ears and nose are common spots for Basal Cell Carcinomas.

Melanoma: This is the most feared type of skin cancer. Melanoma occurs when the cells producing pigment, or “melanin,” overgrow and become cancerous. It often appears as dark brown, black, or purple, but can be any color. This type of skin cancer tends to be much more aggressive with a great potential to metastasize and spread if not caught early. It can happen at any age and on any part of the body, even hard-to-see areas such as the genitals. In women, it is most common on the legs and in men on their backs.

Risk Factors

Certain patient populations are at a greater risk of developing skin cancer. These include those with:

- Light skin
- Natural blondes or redheads
- Blue, green, or hazel eyes
- Family history of skin cancer
- Having many moles

ABCDees of Melanoma

So you may have a lot of moles and spots on your skin – how do you know which one is more suspicious for melanoma? Skin spots are characterized in the following ways:

A = Asymmetry: Split the lesion in half. If the two halves don’t match, then it’s an asymmetric lesion. Asymmetric spots tend to be more suspicious than those that are symmetrical.

B = Border: Examine the border of your skin spots. Are they smooth and round? Or are they irregular? Irregular borders tend to be more suspicious.

C = Color: Non-uniform colors within the same spot are more suspicious than even-colored spots.

D = Diameter: The bigger the lesion, the riskier. The rule of thumb is that if it’s greater than the size of the tip of your pencil-eraser, then a spot is more suspicious for skin cancer.

E = Evolving: In general, however, any spot that has changed in any way should be shown to your physician. That includes anything that becomes itchy or painful in nature, or any changes you’ve noticed even in birthmarks. Melanoma can even bleed, become crusty, or swollen.

How to Prevent Skin Cancer

The bottom line is that skin cancer is mostly caused by the sun. The less time you spend in the sun, the less risk of developing skin cancer. For those of us living in Southern California, however, that may be a challenge. Here are some tips I share with my patients:

Get examined by your doctor: The first step is to make an appointment with your physician for a head to toe skin exam. Then go from there. Examine yourself: Make sure to examine your own skin using a mirror once a month. Examine everything – even the bottom of your feet and in between your toes. Keep the ABCDees of skin spots in mind as you do so. Stay in the shade: Even while outdoors, try to stay in the shade as much as possible. But remember that you still catch sun rays even in the shade. Avoid the sun’s peak hours: Avoid sun exposure during the times of the day, between 10am and 4 pm, when the sun’s rays are the strongest. Cover your body: Wear a wide-brimmed hat and cover your skin with as much clothing as comfortably possible. Apply sunscreen: Apply and re-apply that sunscreen on all exposed areas of the body every two hours while outside (the protection doesn’t last much longer than that), even while driving. When selecting a sunscreen, make sure to search for one with the following features: SPF of 30 or higher to get the strongest protection. One with the words “broad spectrum” on the label to cover both UVA and UVB rays. Containing the ingredients “titanium” or “zinc oxide” that best block the sun rays.

I’m all for having some summertime fun with the family, but safely…and not necessarily “fun in the sun.”

To contact Dr. Majd, please refer to her website at http://housecalldoctor.quickanddirtytips.com or find her on facebook at http://www.facebook.com/HouseCallDr.
Building the Dream Fundraiser for an Iranian Center

Sunday
September 9, 2012

with Maz Jobrani

Please save the date.

for more information
contact PCC office
858-653-0336
email: pcc@pccsd.org

Persian Cultural Center Presents:

Art Exhibition of Local Artists
Painting & Sculpture

Maz Jobrani
THE FEAR OF MODERN ART: WHERE DOES IT BEGIN?

“Is this art?” “I don’t get it!” “A child can do this!” “I cannot believe the museum paid for this!” … These are some of many common expressions I hear daily from students, gallery visitors, and many of my non-art historian friends. When it comes to the modern arts, these expressions of doubt position themselves in a spectrum ranging from dislike to fright. In this essay, I would like to take a closer look at what bothers us when we come upon a work of art that is far from our expectations of what an art should be.

It is useful to start with this question: where does modern art begin? Modern art begins nowhere, mostly because it begins everywhere. Modern art is nourished by many rivers, from 30,000-year-old cave paintings to the art installation in galleries of our town. Art making, like any other profession, involves the many traditions of the trade. Our ambivalence towards modern art roots in the fear of the new; anything new, whether a new pair of shoes or a new style of art, makes us uneasy, a bit wary, and doubtful. The surprise of the new has been always there.

It was in the works of Giorgione and Titian that Edouard Manet found the vital pulse for his 1863 painting, Olympia. (Figure 3.) What was shocking in Olympia was neither the figure’s nakedness, nor her fully clothed black maid, nor the symbolic wickedness of the black cat that replaced the loyalty of Titian’s dog—the shock was in yet another gaze, this time more confident, shameless, and brave. Olympia is not Giorgione’s idealized goddess or Titian’s playful bride-to-be. Olympia is a real person. One critic called her a “female gorilla,” others attacked Manet’s nonacademic painting technique. “The least beautiful woman has bones, muscles, skin, and some color. Here there is nothing.” The critics where appalled not only by the content of Manet’s Olympia, but also by its formal style. They opposed the flatness of paint on the canvas and how Manet’s work was distant from the achievements of Renaissance in chiaroscuro. Through Olympia and his other works, Manet manifested a criticism on the aesthetic values of his time. Believing that an artist should address his or her contemporary conditions in a formal style that reflects those conditions the best is at the core of Manet’s manifesto; the idea that change is the necessity of the new age and that a nineteenth century painter cannot follow the sixteenth century aesthetic values to address the problems of his time. Olympia, both as a painting and as an artist’s manifesto, became an inspiration for many artists in the twentieth century. (Figure 4.)

The reclining female nude, odalisque, is a recurrent theme throughout Western art. It has repeated so often that our eyes are accustomed to it and it has become an accepted subject matter in art. The familiarity of this theme makes the selected paintings for this essay an interesting paradigm to show the fear of the new in art. By comparing the uneasy reaction of the viewers before us towards these works in contrast to our comfort with these paintings today, it becomes apparent that a good degree of our ambivalence towards modern art is the fear of change and the new. Today these works, their themes, and their stylistic forms are accepted by us as compared to the viewers contemporary to the time of their creation. And, of course, our fear is directed towards the works new to us.

In the next column we will address our uneasiness towards Abstract art and we will try to wrestle with this question: Where is the skill in this?
Dear Readers:

As a part of our community services, we have approached some of the Iranian medical specialist in various fields to send us their information to share with the community. We appreciate the work of Dr. Reza Shirazi who spearheaded this effort. The following list is not complete by any means. If you are a Medical Doctor and would like to be added to this list, please send your information to Dr. Shirazi or directly to Peyk.

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Iranians & The 2010 Census: Did We Shrink??!!

By: Hossein Hosseini
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Last month, the much awaited results for the number of Iranians in the 2010 Census came out. Are you ready? The count is a whopping 289,465!! Say what? Ten years ago, in census 2000, we were told there are 338,000 Iranians. Did we shrink by 49,000? Now before you all get bent out of shape and, God forbid, start an "Occupy Census Bureau" movement, let me explain. Trust me; I know a thing or two about numbers as I studied Statistics and I do Market Research for a living.

Every 10 years, since 1940, there has been a census in the United States. Before Census 2010, two questionnaires were used to collect information: a “short form” with only basic questions such as age, sex, race; and a “long form” with the basic short-form questions plus about 50 additional questions on socioeconomic and housing characteristics. Only a subset of households received the long-form questionnaire—about one in every six in 2000. The long form has a question on ancestry, and that’s how we got the number 338,000 Iranians back in the year 2000. We all knew that these numbers were low and blamed it partly on Iranian immigrants being suspicious of census activities and did not want to be identified by their race.

Now fast forward to 2010 Census. For the first time, it was decided that the 2010 Census will be a short-form-only census. This is because the decennial long form has been replaced by the American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS is a nationwide, continuous survey designed to provide demographic, housing, social, and economic data every year. The ACS replaced the long form in 2010 and thereafter by collecting long-form-type information throughout the decade, rather than only once every 10 years.

Knowing that we need a more accurate count of Iranians, an organization was formed by the name of Iranians Count 2010...
Census Coalition, or ICCC for short. The idea was to ensure maximum participation by Iranian Americans in the U.S. Census. Surprisingly, for the first time ever, over 47 non-profit Iranian American organizations came together. We had great participation from Iranian media, businesses, charities and other civic organizations. Under the leadership of our own Mrs. Nadia Babayi, as partnership specialist, an aggressive marketing campaign was launched to inform Iranian Americans across the country about the importance of participating in the Census and how to accurately complete Census forms. Everyone was encouraged to answer question number 9, the race question, by marking .Some Other Race. and then write in .Iranian., .Persian., or .Iranian-American.. We waited and waited and finally, after paying the Census Bureau $3,100 (that’s the Federal Government for you), thanks to funding by PAAIA and Farhang Foundation, the special tabulation came out last month indicating that a total of 289,465 responded to the question of race in the 2010 Census by marking .x. in the .Some Other Race. Box and writing Iranian/Persian, alone or in a combination. The best way to think about this number is to say there were 289,465 people who proudly declared that they are Iranians.

There might be two reasons for this low count. First, Iranians are well blended in the American culture and no longer wish to be identified by their roots; furthermore, Iranians are still suspicious of Census activities and do not want to be identified by their race. Therefore, a great number must have checked the “white” box under the race question. The fact is, many Iranians say goodbye to the old ancestry as soon as they become U.S. citizens, especially those born in the United States. So what’s an accurate count? Remember the American Community Survey (ACS) I mentioned earlier? While it is only mailed to about 3 million addresses per year, ACS produces estimations on ancestry. Unlike the ACS, the Decennial Census reaches every household and has no margin of error. I looked at a 3 years estimate, or 9 million addresses, to get a better picture of the race/ancestry question. According to ACS for the 3 years 2008 – 2010, there is an estimated 448,722 Iranians living in the United States. Of course since this is a sample data, it has a higher margin of error, as we statisticians call it. The margin of error for the Iranian table is plus or minus 10,862. This means there might be as many as 459,584 Iranians based on the ACS data. Now if we assume there were just that many Iranians who marked their race as White, which is a reasonable assumption, then our count could be as high as 919,168.

We may never know the accurate number of Iranians living in the United States. Even the Census Bureau acknowledges that the number of Iranian Americans has historically been under-represented in Census data. Looking at the ACS data, there are some interesting facts about Iranians vs the general population that you can brag about. Here are some examples:

- People with B.S. Degree or higher 59% vs 28%
- People with Masters degree or higher 30% vs 10%
- People who entered the U.S. before 2000, are 75%
- People born outside U.S. is 65%
- Median Household Income $68,000 vs $51,000
- Are in professions such as Business, Management, Art 54% vs 36%
- Owner occupied (home-owners) 60%; Median Home Value $480,000 vs $187,000.

As many of you know most of us (48%) live in California, followed by New York/New Jersey (9.1%), Greater Washington D.C. including Virginia and Maryland (8.3%), and Texas (6.7%). However, the special tabulation data (the .other race. category, Iranian) puts the percentage of Iranians in California at a higher number of 54.3%, indicating the ICCC campaign was more effective in California. So there you have it. The number of Iranians in America is not as high as 2 millions as some people suggest and is not as low as 289,465 either. Census 2010 was still a success for the Iranian community since all organizations came together and for the first time in a long time became united under a single issue. We now have to wait until Census 2020. Till then we can count on the shameful reality show “Shahs of Sunset”. Perhaps this show may one day shine some light on us and next time we can proudly say we are .Iranians.. Until then, there are two other sources that perhaps can give you a more accurate count. They are: the Interest Section of Iranian Government in Washington D.C. and the number of people who attended Googoosh concert when she first came to the United States, as every single Iranian attended her concerts!!

Good luck getting information from either source. Trust me, I tried with no avail. In closing, these are my thoughts and analysis. I am sure there are smarter people who can discuss/analyze these number better; if you want to discuss this further, drop me a line at ocpersian@yahoo.com. Love to hear your thoughts.