Iran Heritage Foundation is the leading supporter of Iranian heritage and culture in the UK. With a mandate to promote and preserve the language, history and culture of Iran and the Persians, IHF engages with academic, institutional and cultural communities in Britain and abroad.

The organisation partners with museums, universities and artistic and scholarly institutions through the appointment of curators, the provision of grants, fellowships and scholarships, and the organisation of exhibitions and convening of conferences. IHF supports publications on subjects relating to Iran, funds the teaching of the Persian language and history at every level and holds a wide range of public, community and social events. The scope of IHF’s remit covers Ancient Persia, post-Islamic, modern and contemporary Iran.

Established in 1995, Iran Heritage Foundation is an independent, non-political, UK Registered Charity.
Management and Organisation
IHIF's mission, vision, budgets and programme scope are set and approved by the Board of Trustees, which meets four times a year. The Management Board deals with various aspects of the day-to-day management of IHIF, including administration, compliance, finance, budget, public programmes, events and development. The Advisory Board and a number of specialist committees support IHIF. These include the Academic Council and its subcommittees on grants, publications, conferences and institutional partnerships, which provide direction, set priorities, control quality and disburse the budget approved by the Trustees for academic relationships and programmes. The Events Committee organises and coordinates IHIF’s social and cultural events throughout the year. The Finance Committee manages the finances of IHIF, prepares annual budgets and statutory accounts, and provides financial reports to the Board of Trustees. The Norouz Committee organises IHIF’s annual fund-raising dinner in London on the occasion of the Iranian New Year.

Sources of Funding
Important sources of funding for IHIF include the Board of Trustees, the annual Norouz fundraising gala and contributions from individual donors and corporate and institutional sponsors.

How You Can Help
IHIF carries out much of its work through volunteers. In addition, every donation, large or small, helps to make a real difference in achieving the Foundation’s objectives. We welcome your support!

Additional information and updated news on IHIF programmes and events may be found at www.iranheritage.org and at www.facebook.com/IranHeritageFoundation
IHF HAD ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR IN 2012. One of the flagship programmes for the year was the co-sponsoring of the International Society for Iranian Studies (ISIS) 9th Biennial Conference in Istanbul. A record 500+ scholars and academics from around the world attended this most comprehensive conference. More than 250 presentations in over 125 panels covered a wide range of academic topics. The proceedings, some of which will be published in due course, make a lasting contribution to Persian and Iranian Studies.

The year under review witnessed the ongoing development of IHF’s Institutional Partners Programme, through which IHF provides much needed funding for Persian & Iranian studies to academic and cultural institutions in Britain and the United States. Our IPP partners now include SOAS and Cambridge, Edinburgh and St Andrews universities, as well as the British Library, the Victoria & Albert Museum, the British Museum and the Freer & Sackler Gallery in Washington.

We look forward to welcoming Tate Modern to this programme in 2013.

The Foundation’s Digitisation Initiative gathered further momentum through the official launch of the newly completed Golha – Flowers of Persian Song and Poetry. This major project to digitise Persian classical music and poetry has been received with critical acclaim and the website is now home to over a thousand hours of artistic performances with comprehensive search capabilities. The Golha website has already received over 2 million visitors, and has been awarded the Best Persian Music Site of the Year by Khane-ye Muzik in Iran.

Our programme to digitise Iran’s cultural heritage continues at the British Library. The process, which will involve documenting and cataloguing online most of the eleven thousand manuscripts in the collection, is now well underway. Over 1100 manuscripts have already been catalogued. The project also aims to digitise about 40 of the most important manuscripts in this collection, making them available to researchers and enthusiasts worldwide. The entire Shah Tahmasb’s copy of Nezami’s Khamsah has already been digitised, and can be viewed on the British Library’s website. A digital version of Iskandar Sultan’s illustrated pocket encyclopedia has been created and will be uploaded in the coming year.

Another 2012 initiative was the establishment of the Iranian Studies Directory. This user generated site already has 500 members and will encourage interdisciplinary collaboration among scholars and researchers of Persian and Iranian studies around the world.

IHF continues its close collaboration with IHF America, our sister cultural foundation based in the United States. Both charities joined forces to support the ISIS conference in 2012, and in 2013 IHF America is officially sponsoring the British Museum’s unprecedented and spectacular US Tour of the Cyrus Cylinder – described as the First Declaration of Human Rights. This historic object, dating back to 539-538 BC, will tour the five major museum venues in the United States. The inaugural exhibition will be at the Smithsonian in Washington, followed by the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston; the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York; the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco, and the Getty Museum in Los Angeles – offering a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see the iconic artefact.

The Foundation’s routine cultural events and programmes in 2012 included various exhibitions, lectures, festivals and workshops. During the year, our Academic Council was strengthened by the addition of three new UK members and the Council’s sub-committees continued to review the many grants, publications and conferences that we support. The IHF Advisory Committee was also enlarged, and the respective Chairs of the Council and the Committee, Professor Hillenbrand and Lord Gowrie, have both agreed to the extension of their tenures. In July 2012, Haleh Anvari joined us as the new Executive Director, a most welcome addition to the IHF family.

I join our Board of Trustees in extending heartfelt thanks to all colleagues, volunteers, partners, supporters and benefactors.

Farad Azima
Acting CEO

FINANCIAL REVIEW – 2012

The Iran Heritage Foundation completed another strong year in 2012. As in previous years, overheads were covered by contributions from Iran Heritage Foundation’s (IHF) Board of Trustees, which enabled additional income from individual donors, corporations and institutions to be applied directly towards its charitable activities. We are especially grateful to Bank Julius Baer and Ball Group PLC for their continued support.

We are also deeply appreciative of the generosity and recognition accorded by the California-based PARSA Community Foundation, whose substantial grant awarded in 2010 continues to support both IHF’s Institutional Partnership Programme (IPP) and digitisation initiatives. As a result of this, the Foundation has been able to expand its core activities to accommodate additional partnerships.

This was a transformational year for IHF. Having completed many of our multi-year academic commitments in 2011, this year we focused on strengthening our IPP and digitisation programmes which are the core of the new strategic initiatives of IHF. In line with this focus, the funding for these programmes grew by 46%.

In 2012 we engaged a full time Executive Director and further strengthened our accounting and management reporting functions. Our administrative costs as expected grew by 27%. Additionally, we moved into new premises in New Cavendish Street, kindly underwritten by the Chairman for this fiscal year.

Looking forward, 2013 is set to become another successful year, with IHF entering the year with a healthy surplus. Our heartfelt gratitude goes to our loyal, generous and expanding supporters who share IHF’s vision and help us transform that vision into reality.

Copies of the Foundation’s audited accounts are available on request, and can also be accessed through the Charity Commission’s website.

Employee Benefits

CEO Review
**IHF’s Institutional Partnership Programme (IPP)**

IHF’s Institutional Partnership Programme (IPP), now in its fourth year, provides much needed support for fellowships, teaching positions, and research centres dedicated to Iranian Studies at respected academic institutions. It also underwrites curatorial posts in Iranian art at major cultural institutions based in the UK and abroad. IHF provides multi-year funding to facilitate Iranian Studies teaching and research, focusing on the language, history, art and culture of Iran at partner institutions. In return, the partner institutions typically allocate matching funds and commit to the establishment of medium- or long-term posts. The IPP encourages academic and cultural collaboration amongst partner institutions through meetings and workshops, the exchange of visiting scholars and the sharing of best practice. The objective of the IPP is to strengthen Iranian Studies programmes within partner institutions to the point where IHF of the IPP is to strengthen Iranian Studies programmes within partner institutions to the point where IHF’s Institutional Partnership Programme will enable them to use the facilities of the museum and other institutions in the UK to further their academic research as well as to study and receive training in various aspects of museum management. The fellow for 2012 is Alexandra Magub, who started work in December 2012, in the Department of Coins and Medals. Her role is to assist Dr Vesta Sakhirsh Curtis on the Parthian coin project, a project which aims to bring together all the Parthian coins in the collections of the participating institutions. The project will produce a nine-volume publication, to form the Syllenge Numismorum Parthicum (SNP), with the British Museum team responsible for two of these. As a further outcome of the project, information about the British Museum’s extensive collection of Parthian coins will be made available through the museum’s website, including the publication of detailed descriptions and images.

**Victoria and Albert Museum**

IHF Foundation Curator of the Iranian Collections is a three-year post dedicated exclusively to the arts of Iran, focusing on enhancing the important Iranian collections through new displays, academic research and cultural events designed to give higher visibility to Iranian culture in all its forms. Her research this year was centred on carpet production in Iran in 1790–1900, in preparation for a published catalogue of the complete Persian carpet collection at the V&A. Work on this project coincided with the V&A’s development of the Cloth worker’s Textile Study Centre at Blythe House, West Kensington, due to open in 2013. The new centre will provide access to the museum’s entire study collection of 104,000 textiles, which includes 1,700 Iranian items. In 2012, Dr Carey was also part of the organising team of the “Friday Late” event held on 30 March 2012, in celebration of Norouz 1391.

**University of Cambridge**

The Iran Heritage Foundation Persian Language Lecturer is a three-year post in Persian language and culture combined with development of the extensive Persian language library at St Andrews,

**University of Edinburgh**

The Iran Heritage Foundation Persian Language Instructor represents a three-year post in the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies;

**University of St. Andrews, Institute for Iranian Studies**

The Iran Heritage Foundation Persian Language Lecturer is a three-year post in Persian language and culture combined with development of the extensive Persian language library at St Andrews;

**British Library**

The Iran Heritage Foundation Curator of Persian Manuscripts is a three-year post dedicated to the creation of an online catalogue and partial digitisation of the extensive collection of 10,000 Persian manuscripts at the British Library.

**Appointments**

**Fellowship at the British Museum**

Through this fellowship, scholars and museum curators specialising in the fields of Iranian art, archaeology and numismatics visit the British Museum, enabling them to use the facilities of the museum and other institutions in the UK to further their academic research as well as to study and receive training in various aspects of museum management. The fellow for 2012 is Alexandra Magub, who started work in December 2012, in the Department of Coins and Medals. Her role is to assist Dr Vesta Sakhirsh Curtis on the Parthian coin project, a project which aims to bring together all the Parthian coins in the collections of the participating institutions. The project will produce a nine-volume publication, to form the Syllenge Numismorum Parthicum (SNP), with the British Museum team responsible for two of these. As a further outcome of the project, information about the British Museum’s extensive collection of Parthian coins will be made available through the museum’s website, including the publication of detailed descriptions and images.

**IHF Curatorial Fellow, Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution**

In September 2012 Dr Simon Rettig joined the Freer|Sackler Gallery as the first IHF Fellow in the Arts of Iran. He has been working on a number of projects in collaboration with the Curatorial, Conservation, and Exhibitions departments. Together with the head of the department, he prepared the labels for a rotation of Persian paintings and calligraphies at the Freer Gallery (displayed in November 2012) and is responsible for the selection and labeling of the paintings, calligraphies, and objects in the next thematic rotation (May 2013). Dr Rettig has also been reviewing and editing entries on the Persian paintings and manuscripts in the permanent collections. In addition, he is working on the development of a workshop on “Cataloguing Persian Manuscripts” that will take place at the Freer and Sackler in the summer of 2013, as well as researching a monumental Qajar painting dating from the early twentieth century, which the museum is considering acquiring. With his interest and expertise in fifteenth- century painting, Dr Rettig has been looking at the Freer and Sackler collections in depth and has presented his first findings in a paper entitled, “Exhibiting Persian Manuscripts: Codicological Issues and Curatorial Challenges” in the Freer|Sackler Research in Progress series.

**IHF Curator of Iranian Art at the Victoria and Albert Museum**

In 2012, Dr Moya Carey continued her third year of work as IHF Curator of the Iranian Collections at the V&A,
for full digitisation and upload, with twenty-two of these to be completed by the end of the project year. The archive created will be a unique cultural resource, which can be enjoyed by students and lovers of Persian culture and also used as a teaching tool for Persian history, art and literature.

**Persian Language Lecturer at the University of St Andrews**

In her second year as IHF’s Persian Language Lecturer, Dr Maryam Chorbakhari has continued teaching Persian to postgraduate students eager to pursue research in Iranian Studies, and has further expanded the range of courses available at undergraduate level. The number of students taking Persian language has been steadily increasing, and they come from a range of university departments. The university hopes to be able to offer honours options for students in the third and fourth years in the upcoming academic year. The success of Persian language at St Andrews has also ensured that the university will be the first host of a three-year rolling programme of intensive Persian language courses, which has drawn interest from around the world. Funded by the British Academy, the language course will be co-taught by Dr Chorbakhari under the supervision of IHF Academic Council member Narguess Farzad, Senior Fellow in Persian at SOAS. The theme of the week-long course will be “Persian for Historians”, and will involve supplementary lectures and manuscripts work by a team of historians working at St Andrews.

**Lecturer in Persian Language and Culture at the University of Cambridge**

In his second year as the IHF Lecturer in Persian Language and Culture at the University of Cambridge, Dr Saeed Talajooy has continued teaching Persian. He concentrates on grammar but uses short stories, simple songs and comic anecdotes in a bid to improve students’ writing and speaking skills, and to enhance the cultural element within language teaching. His second-year students further benefit from the added element of literature in the programme, reading from the poetic works of such luminaries as Ahmad Shamlou, Nima Yashini, Sohrab Sepehri, as well as reading a number of works by Sadegh Hedayat, Jalal Al-e-Ahmad, and Hassan Moqaddam.

**Persian Language Instructor at the University of Edinburgh**

In line with the development of Iranian Studies at Edinburgh, Dr Azin Mostajer Haghighi joined the School of Modern Languages in January 2012 as the new IHF Persian Teaching Fellow. Having successfully completed her first year of teaching Persian language, her teaching skills, passion and enthusiasm have led her to be nominated for the Edinburgh University Students Association (EUSA) teaching award. In order to attract more students and increase interest in the Persian language, a beginner’s Persian language programme in two twenty-credit courses was launched in 2012. In addition, Edinburgh is now providing two new joint Persian Studies programmes – Persian and English Literature and Persian and Middle Eastern Studies – in a bid to expand their Persian Studies offerings even further.

**Visiting Fellow in Iranian Studies, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS)**

This Fellowship brings scholars specialising in the fields of Iranian Studies to SOAS, enabling them to benefit from SOAS’s own facilities and those of other institutions in the UK to further their academic research and publications. The Fellow for 2012 was Dr-tabsi Babouri who worked on “Safavid-Timurid (Mughal) Diplomacy”. During his tenure he was able to engage in a number of academic activities including seminar presentations, a short filmed interview, a substantial book review and an illustrated public lecture at SOAS entitled “Between Empires: Shah ´ Abbas I through the Eyes of Shahjahan Padshah I”, in which he presented a summary of his research. The new Fellow is Dr Mohammad Maljoo, and his theme of study will run from 1 January to 30 June 2013. He is a visiting academic from Iran, specialising in the economic and industrial relations in the oil industry.

**Grants**

In 2012 IHF continued its support of valuable projects related to various aspects of Iranian culture undertaken by individuals and organisations. IHF’s 2012 grants provided:

- Continuing support for three London-based community organisations active in promoting Iranian culture and the teaching of Persian language;
- Travel and research grants for four scholars for the purpose of research in various aspects of Iranian art and culture or to present papers at conferences in this subject area;
- Support towards the costs of four conferences/workshops;
- Support towards the conservation and restoration of a set of Qajar paintings belonging to two different institutions.

**Schools & Community**

Since its inception, IHF has provided long-term support to schools and community organisations engaged in the promotion of Persian language, culture and education.

**Rustam Iranian School**

This school was established in 1981 in London with the main aim of providing Persian language courses for second-generation Iranian children in the UK. After many years of dedicated service, the school has developed into what is now a centre for educational and cultural activities for the Iranian community in the UK. It is managed by a team of twenty-five professional teachers and administrators and is unique amongst all schools due to the facilities it provides for pupils and their parents.

**Library of Iranian Studies**

The Library of Iranian Studies was officially opened in London in 1991. At present, the library houses over 35,000 cultural, historical and political books for public use. Although these works include mainly Persian and other Iranian language texts, the library also houses a growing collection of foreign language books and publications about Iran. For those interested in academic research, particularly in Iran’s contemporary history, the library’s archives provide a wealth of political and cultural publications, documents, reports and statistical information. As well as being a lending and reference library, the Library of Iranian Studies also arranges lectures, seminars, exhibitions, and a range of classes for adults and children covering various aspects of Iranian culture and language.

**Kanoon Iran**

Kanoon Iran was established in 1982. It is a community organisation with a very active schedule of lectures and other educational programmes on the history and culture of Iran. Its audience is predominantly drawn from the Iranian community in London. The organisation also offers Persian language classes for children aged six and above.

**Research and Travel Grants**

Research and travel grants were awarded to the following individuals in 2012:

- Lindsay Allen – research grant to collate, digitise, analyse and present a collection of Achaemenid sculptural fragments that can be manipulated in a digital environment enabling curatorial and conservation queries to be tested against site data and sibling fragments;
- Choslam Resa Assar – travel grant to determine the weight and die axis of Parthian coins (circa 2700 BC) from the late David Sellwood Collection at the British Museum;
- Giti Norouzian – travel grant to undertake research in the UK to assist in the reconstruction and analysis of the manuscript of Ka‘la wa Dimna in the Tehran Gulistan Palace Library;
- Michael Willocks – Research and travel grant to undertake research at the archives in Kew, UK and Boston, USA, on the topic of the “White Revolution” to determine whether this was an initiative begun by Iranians or one that came about through the influence of the United States.
In 2012 grants were awarded to the following individuals in support of conferences/workshops:

- Stephanie Cronin of the University of Oxford, for a conference re-examining the long tradition of Russian/Soviet historical research on Iran and the Persian-speaking world;
- Alexander Lubotsky of Leiden University, for a two-week-long summer school in linguistics incorporating a programme on Iran including an introduction to Achaemenid, Elamite and Balochi linguistics;
- Andrew Peacock of the University of St Andrews for a conference exploring the origins and influence of the ethnic Persian dynasties ruling over much of the eastern Islamic world in the tenth century;
- Michael Pye of the University of St Andrews and Armin Yavari of IHF for a national graduate conference.

Grants were awarded to the following institutions for conservation and restoration projects on a number of Qajar paintings:

- The National Museum of Ireland for the restoration of two Qajar paintings held in its collection.
- The Georgian National Museum, Georgia, for a conservation project related to six Qajar-era paintings in the museum’s collection, which originate from Erevan Sardar Palace; and
- Michael Pye of the University of St Andrews and Armin Yavari of IHF for a national graduate conference.

The publication of specialized monographs or other works on Iranian Studies is becoming less commercially viable over time. IHF regularly subsidizes the publication of such books that demonstrate sufficient merit. The following books received IHF subsidies for publication in previous periods:

- *Iran and the World in the Safavid Age*, edited by Willem Floor and Edmund Herzig. The book presents the most recent research into the Safavid era (1501-1732). It examines the social, cultural, commercial and diplomatic relations of the Safavids with the rest of the world, shedding new light on the history of Iran’s relations with other countries and cultures, and examining the ways in which Iran was itself perceived as well as how it viewed the outside world. The book was published by I.B. Tauris.
- *Iranian-Russian Encounters: Empires and Revolutions since 1800*, edited by Stephanie Cronin. Over the past two hundred years, encounters between Iran and Russia have been both rich and complex. This book explores the myriad dimensions of the Iranian-Russian encounter during a dramatic period which saw both Iran and Russia subject to revolutionary upheavals and transformed from multinational authoritarian states typical of the twentieth. Making use of extensive family archives, Iranian, Russian and Caucasian travelogues, memoirs and newly available archives in both Iran and the countries of the former Soviet Union, the book provides essential background to current international tensions and is of particular use to students and scholars with an interest in the Middle East and Russia. The book was published by Routledge.

This seminal work by the respected French scholar, Professor Jean Perrot, Director of the Archaeological Mission of Susa, introduces an entirely new perspective on the ancient heritage of Iran, uncovering new structures and iconography that enrich our understanding of ‘Ancient Persia’. While much is known about Persepolis and the earlier palace complex of Pasargad from the reign of Cyrus the Great, very little work has been done on the extraordinary palace of Darius I at Susa. This book fills that gap, presenting information gathered from a decade of field research, with contributions by eminent historians, archaeologists, and specialists of the Achaemenid period.

The IHF has been central in bringing about the translation and publication of this book in English, to be published by I.B. Tauris in 2013.

- *The Palace of Darius at Susa* by Professor Jean Perrot is a lavishly illustrated book revealing, the extraordinary architectural complex built at the height of the glory of Darius I, King of the Persians, King of Kings, Pharaoh of Egypt. It is one of the most important buildings in the Ancient World, incorporating, as it does, both Iranian and Babylonian elements.

The publication of the above book was supported by a publication grant from the Academic Committee of the IHF.

- *Origins of Agriculture in Western Central Asia* by David R. Harris. The book addresses questions of when, how, and why agriculture and settled village life began east of the Caspian Sea. It describes and assesses evidence from archaeological investigations in Turkmenistan and adjacent parts of Iran, Uzbekistan, and Afghanistan in relation to present and past environmental conditions and genetic and archaeological data on the ancestry of the crops and domestic animals of the Neolithic period. By synthesizing for the first time what is currently known about the origins of agriculture in a large part of Central Asia, between the more fully investigated regions of southwest Asia and China, the book makes a unique contribution to the literature on transitions from hunting and gathering to agriculture. The book was published by University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.

The IHF has been central in bringing about the translation and publication of this book in English, to be published by I.B. Tauris in 2013.

- *Making Use of Extensive Family Archives: The IHF and Iran’s Cultural Heritage*, edited by Stephanie Cronin. Over the past two hundred years, encounters between Iran and Russia have been both rich and complex. This book explores the myriad dimensions of the Iranian-Russian encounter during a dramatic period which saw both Iran and Russia subject to revolutionary upheavals and transformed from multinational authoritarian states typical of the twentieth. Making use of extensive family archives, Iranian, Russian and Caucasian travelogues, memoirs and newly available archives in both Iran and the countries of the former Soviet Union, the book provides essential background to current international tensions and is of particular use to students and scholars with an interest in the Middle East and Russia. The book was published by Routledge.
In 2012 a significant array of cultural programmes were organised by or in collaboration with IHF. Highlights included:

- Ninth Biennial Conference of the International Society for Iranian Studies in Istanbul, Turkey;
- Four conferences and symposia covering a range of topics from contemporary Persian verbal culture to classical and contemporary Persian music;
- Film screenings and exhibitions;
- An exhibition opening at the British Library; and
- Fundraisers, including the traditional Norouz Gala in London.

Conferences & Lectures


The Ninth Biennial Conference of the International Society for Iranian Studies (ISIS) took place at the Conrad Hilton in Istanbul, Turkey, from 31 July to 4 August. Istanbul, in recent years has emerged as one of the most vibrant centres of intellectual and artistic creation of our time. A cosmopolitan city and a home away from home for thousands of Iranian merchants, thinkers, scholars, and political activists, many of whom played a decisive role in the shaping of modern Iran, Istanbul was a winning choice for this year’s biennial.

The conference included contributions in all fields of Iranian Studies, especially new areas of investigation and novel approaches to traditional fields. More than 250 presentations were made within the context of 125 panels on a wide range of topics in Iranian art, culture, literature and history by leading Iranian Studies scholars. Panel topics included: Achaemenid Era, Agrarian Transition, Ancient Art, Anthropology, Archaeology, Architecture, Bahaism, Christian/Safavid Relations, Cinema, Clergy, Culture and Cultural Policies, Demography, Diaspora, Economic Growth and Development, Far East/Persian Relations, Foreign Perceptions, Gender, Geography, Historiography, History from Below, Intellectual Life, Internet, Iran and the Ottoman Empire, Languages, Literature (classic, contemporary, mystic, epic), NGOs, Ottoman/Safavid Relations, Painting and Illustration, Politics and Political Culture, Public Opinion, Qur’an Era, Reconstruction, Regional Issues, Religion, Safavid Era, Safiyya Era, Sassanian Era, Science and Technology (ancient and modern), Secularism, Urban Change, Zoroastrianism.

This year’s conference was co-hosted by IHF, which sponsored the hospitality throughout the event and was closely involved in the conference programming. Two regular panels of the conference, Iranian Historiography I & II: The Turko-Mogol Period and The Politics of History in Modern Iran, were sponsored by the Foundation for which it facilitated the transportation and accommodation of the panel chairs/participants. IHF further sponsored three special workshops introducing major and very original contributions to the conference. These included "Iranian Graphic Design & Contemporary Visuality," “Philanthropy and Iranian Studies: Iran Heritage Foundation – a case study" and “Flowers of Persian Song & Music: the Golha Digitization Project.” Of special interest was a panel on Iranian cinema “Meet Me in Lalah-Zar!” attracting large audience and addressing ‘Pre-Revolutionary Tehran and the Making of a Revolutionary Pop Art’ “FilmFarsi: Public Morale in an Immoral Popular Cinema” and “The Theatrical and Quotidian Self of the Reel Persian Dancer” with lively debates and discussions on the subjects presented. A further panel of interest “Perspectives on Persian Art in..."
Istanbul Collection” sponsored by the Ilex Foundation considered some of the treasures of Persian paintings collected during the Ottoman Empire now housed in museums and libraries of Turkey.

Aside from its involvement in the conference organisation and programming, IHF had devised a special “Patrons Programme” for a select group visiting Istanbul from the United States, Europe and the Middle East. Their Programme included visits to Istanbul’s historic sites and private art collections, including the Borusan Contemporary, Sabanci Museum, as well as intellectually engaging workshops such as a roundtable entitled “Turkey and its Role in the Middle East” and “The Philanthropy and Iranian Studies”. Patrons had general access to the entire conference proceedings which introduced them to a rich array of discussions and subjects of concern in Iranian Studies.

The closing event of the conference was a cruise dinner on the Bosphorus for all conference participants, enabling the group to exchange ideas and network in a more informal environment.

“An absolutely terrific conference!”
Professor Franklin Lewis, University of Chicago

“I have attended most of the ISIS conferences over the years, and this year’s event was by far the most impressive. The dinner cruise along the Bosphorus was particularly memorable. IHF has set a very high bar indeed for future ISIS meetings.”
Professor Richard Foltz, Centre for Iranian Studies, Concordia University

Co-hosted by ISIS and IHF, and supported by Advance International Transport Inc., Balli dis Ticaret, Bank Julius Baer, Borusan Holding, Pegasus Airlines, Silk & Cashmere and Travelium, with the Biennial’s logo created by Reza Abedini. All hospitality arrangements organised by Fairkorz Fehangi and Aylin Azar, sponsored by Balli.

Javanmardi: A Persian Code of Honour
Javanmardi is a concept that is familiar to most – if not all – Iranians. However, it has received negligible interest in the Western academic world with less than a handful of books or articles written on the subject. As the first of three annual conferences on the subject, a one-day workshop was convened by Dr Lloyd Ridgeon, exploring the significance of the concept for Persian culture, in terms of identity creation and spirituality. Topics addressed included javanmardi in modern Iran, javanmardi and cultural continuity in pre-Islamic and early Islamic periods, the Zurkhaneh, Sufi-javanmardi, the masculinity crisis of javanmardi iconography in Iranian cinema and the like. The conference was well received by both academics and students, with valuable comments being made during the discussions and questions on the papers presented.

A final edited book on javanmardi based on the best articles from the annual conferences will be published in due course.

The second conference will be held in the spring of 2013 in Review

Contemporary Persian Verbal Culture Symposium – Oxford

In April 2012, the Oriental Institute of the University of Oxford organised a two-day symposium on contemporary Persian verbal culture with reference to literature, anthropology, sociolinguistics, folklore and media studies. The symposium addressed all these disciplines – defined as cultural expression through words, both written and spoken – in the Persian language today. It aimed to fill a gap in the contemporary academic literature on this topic by considering how the authors of texts in the Persian language have been at the forefront of social and political change in their countries, and have developed myriad new literary and spoken genres adapted to developments in communication technology. It showed that the literary scenes of the three major Persian-speaking countries in the world today – Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan – as well as their diasporas, are full of lively debate and activity, while popular verbal culture evolves dynamically through old and new forms, genres and media. The speakers considered the evolving social, cultural, political and technological contexts of language use and verbal genre development. The conference attracted a select line of speakers who were pioneers of Persian sociolinguistics and folklore, distinguished scholars of Persian literature, and young scholars with fresh perspectives on emerging phenomena and new media. The keynote lecture was delivered by Professor William Beeman of the University of Minnesota followed by twelve papers arranged into four panels spread over the two days.

The first day ended with a screening of a documentary film and a talk/performance by Abdi Behravanfar, an Iranian folk/blues musician.

The conference was convened and organized by Dr Zuzanna Olszewska, Junior Research Fellow in Oriental Studies at St John’s College, Oxford and took place in the college. It was supported by IHF, St John’s College Research Centre and the University of Oxford’s John Fell OUP Research Fund.

Russian Orientalism to Soviet Iranology: The Persian-speaking world and its History through Russian eyes Workshop – Oxford

The Soviet Union possessed a long tradition of Iranian Studies, a tradition it inherited from imperial Russia but transformed to suit its own historical mission. This tradition had its origins within the framework of Russian Orientalism and developed during the nineteenth century, the age of imperial expansion. After 1921, under the auspices of the new Soviet regime, Iranology grew into an extensive and well-organized field, producing large quantities of books and articles every year. Despite the reputation acquired by individual Russian scholars of Iran such as Vladimir Minorsky, this tradition of scholarship remains largely unknown in the West. Little has been translated and Russian is not conventionally seen as a language necessary for scholars of Iran. This tradition was re-examined at a two-day workshop at St Anthony’s College, Oxford, taking as its disciplinary focus Russian/Soviet historical research on Iran and the Persian-speaking world. The workshop’s objectives were to acquaint a wider audience in western Europe and the US with the work of Russian/Soviet scholars of the history of Iran and the Persian-speaking world; to initiate a discussion of possible new directions in historical research on this region opened up by the wider availability of Russian source materials; and to begin to integrate an analysis of Russian/Soviet Iranian Studies into the critique of Russian Orientalism. Scholars from Austria, England, Iran, Russia and the US attended the workshop and a number of important academic links were established which will provide a basis for the development of future collaboration.

The workshop was convened by Professor Edmund Herzig and Dr Stephanie Cronin and was supported by IHF, Roshan Cultural Heritage Foundation, and the Soudavar Memorial Foundation.
The Beauty of Classical and Contemporary Persian Music
Workshop – London
This one-day workshop convened by Jane Lewisohn introduced students, enthusiasts and connoisseurs of world music to the vibrant living tradition of both contemporary Iranian music and classical Persian music. Topics addressed included Persian poetry and music, the theory and practice of Persian music, classical Persian music’s historical background, music in the Islamic Republic of Iran today, and the use and influence of the internet on the development and diffusion of twenty-first-century Persian music. Lectures were accompanied by live musical performances as well as recorded audio and video illustration. The workshop culminated with a demonstration of the Golha Website and Digitisation Project.

Innovation and Imagination in Persian Manuscripts from Sixteenth-Century Shiraz
Lecture – London
Of the many artistic centres in Iran, perhaps none had a longer and more productive history than the city of Shiraz, capital of Fars province. Beginning in the early fourteenth century and continuing into the seventeenth century, Shirazi calligraphers, illuminators, painters and binders disregarded originality and produced vast quantities of deluxe manuscripts at a prodigious rate. This occurred to such an extent that Shirazi manuscripts were criticised as being indistinguishable from one another. To counter such perception, Dr Marianna Shreve Simpson, Director of Curatorial Affairs and Curator of Islamic Art at the Walters Art Museum, gave a lecture at the British Library. She considered the diversity and creativity of deluxe manuscripts made in sixteenth-century Shiraz through examples, particularly illustrated volumes of the Shahnameh, belonging to the British Library and other collections worldwide.

Prior to the lecture, Dr Bruno De Nicola, then IHF Curator for Persian Manuscripts at the British Library, discussed the Library’s Persian Manuscript Digitisation Project. He gave a presentation and demonstration based on the digitised copy of Shah Tahmasb’s Khamsah, which was very well received.

The lecture was organised by IHF and took place at the Brunei Lecture Theatre, SOAS.

Patriot of Persia
Lecture – London
Patriot of Persia is the biography of Iran’s former Prime Minister, Mohammad Mossadeq, whose defining act was the nationalisation of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in 1951. As a result of his role in the nationalisation of Iran’s oil, Mossadeq was reviled by the British and ultimately overthrown in a coup staged by the CIA, with the support of MI6, in 1953.

In a lecture at the Royal Geographical Society, author Christopher De Bellaigue examined Mossadeq’s actions, the coup that ousted him as Prime Minister, and the fallout that resulted from the expanded powers of the Shah. A compelling lecture based on a fascinating book, it was interspersed with some interesting and often farcical stories regarding the political life in Iran, and proved to be a great success with the audience.

Organised by the Iran Society and supported by IHF, the lecture took place at the Royal Geographical Society.

Between Empires: Shah ‘Abbas I through the eyes of Shahjah Panah Padshah I
Lecture – London
Diplomatic relations between the Safavid and Ottoman Empires have received much attention in recent literature. Under the reigns of Shah ‘Abbas I and Jahangir Padshah of the Mughal Empire, relations flourished with a unique intensity which was characterised by accommodation and amity. With the successions of Shah Safi and Shah Jahan Padshah, a new order marked by increasingly aggressive realpolitik altered this dynamic. These diplomatic relations were explored in a lecture given by Dr Saqib Baburi, IHF Visiting Fellow in 2011.

Organised by the School of Oriental and African Studies and supported by IHF.
Norouz Gala
Grosvenor House – March

IHF continues the tradition of hosting its annual Norouz Gala, now in its 17th year. The event is the major fundraising initiative for the year. In 2012, the Gala was held at the Grosvenor House Hotel, and included an address by Ina Sandmann on the importance of contributing to keeping Iranian heritage and tradition alive among the diaspora and for posterity. The evening’s entertainment was provided by the popular Iranian singer Sattar. It was an evening of celebration, with young and old dancing and enjoying themselves until the early hours of the morning.

The funds raised from the evening goes towards all IHF initiatives that are reflected in this report.
Left
Ina Sandmann
Norouz at Myriad Festival
Cambridge – March

A series of events to celebrate Iranian culture and Norouz were organized over two days as part of the Myriad Festival of the Alliance Française in Cambridge. Events included a Persian cookery class at the Alliance Française, a picnic at Parkside Federation School and a drawing competition for children with a brief talk about Norouz. The second day was dedicated to New Music from Iran, with a DJ set by Take It Eary Hospital and a performance by Alamute, with their guests Reveal and Hichkas.
Organised by Roya Arab and Alliance Française Cambridge and supported by the IHF, the event took place at various venues across Cambridge.

Friday Late: Night of Norouz
Victoria and Albert Museum – March

In March 2012, the V&A celebrated Norouz 1391 with a Friday Late event. The packed programme offered an exciting range of performances, activities and screenings and nearly 5,000 visitors, an impressive total which almost doubled V&A’s last Iranian Friday Late (held in 2004 with 2,508 visitors). Highlights of the night included contemporary artist Babak Golkar’s light installation in the gallery of Renaissance sculpture, Xanthe Gresham’s storytelling performance of Shahnameh episodes in the Paintings Gallery, and Jason Singh and Arash Moradi’s sound art performance of Attar’s Sufi poem The Conference of the Birds in the National Art Library. Iranian films were screened in different spaces around the museum, including a loop of new short films and animation by contemporary film-makers.

Friday Late is a monthly event sponsored by Mastercard. The Norouz Friday Late was sponsored in collaboration with the IHF and supported by UK Iranian Film Festival.

Tales from the Shahnameh: The Book of Persian Kings
Book Launch, London – May

The Shahnameh is a collection of stories and myths from ancient Persia, written into an epic poem by the poet Ferdowsi in the tenth century. Elizabeth Laird has beautifully retold this great epic poem for a new generation of English-speaking children helped by Shirin Adle’s exquisite illustrations to the tales.

The book was published by Janetta Otter-Barry Books at Frances Lincoln Children’s Books, sponsored by Siamack and Parita Bagheri. The book was launched at Asia House in an event that was co-sponsored by IHF.

The launch at Asia House was sponsored by Dr Siamack and Dr Parita Bagheri and supported by IHF.

An Evening of Persian Poetry
London – May

Persian poetry is famed for the richness of its heritage, with many classical poets such as Rumi and Hafez read internationally. But little is known about how contemporary Persian-language poets enrich and enliven the tradition today.

At an evening of Persian poetry, Azita Ghahreman, one of Iran’s foremost female poets of her generation, and Reza Mohammadi, one of the most exciting of a new generation of Afghan poets to have emerged since the demise of Taliban control, read from their poetry. Both poets looked at the interplay of their respective countries’ heritage and the influence on their lives of their chosen places of residence—the work of both is imbued with longing for a land left behind. This was followed by a reading of their work in translation by Maura Dooley and Nick Laird, two of the most renowned English-language poets today. There followed a reception during which the audience had further chance to talk with the poets and engage with their poetry.

Organised by IHF as part of the ‘Asia House Festival of Asian Literature’, in partnership with the Poetry Translation Centre.
Launched in 1930, Architectural Design (AD) is an influential and prestigious architectural publication. It combines the currency and topicality of a newsstand with the rigour and production qualities of a book.

The May/June 2012 issue of AD was dedicated to Iran’s long and rich architectural heritage, as well as its untapped potential for contemporary design. This issue introduced key works and key architects from across generations – at home and abroad – and highlighted the potential of historical structures for contemporary architecture.

On the occasion of the launch of this special issue, IHF organised an evening of talks and panel discussions. The talks were delivered by a new generation of Iranian architects – based both inside and outside of the country – who addressed contemporary practices in Iran resulting in designs of outstanding buildings that sustain a sense of local identity, both in terms of cultural heritage and the conservation of the environment.

Contributors to the panel discussion included Salmaan Craig, Nasrine Faghih, Homa Farjadi, Mehran Gharleghi and Amin Sadeghy, who discussed the following topics:

- What can contemporary architects learn from historic architecture in Iran at a performance and sustainability level?
- The significance of Persian gardens historically and for contemporary landscape design;
- A view from outside Iran – a presentation of Farjadi Architects’ work;
- View from inside Iran – an overview of young practices working in Iran.

The event included a reception with further lively discussions between the audience and the speakers.

The event was organised by IHF in partnership with John Wiley & Sons, publisher of Architectural Design, and took place at Asia House.

The Golha Project Launch
Istanbul – August

The award winning Golha Project website (www.golha.co.uk), sponsored by IHF, was launched to a standing ovation on 3 August 2012 at the International Society for Iranian Studies’ biennial conference in Istanbul. Since going live in August 2011, the site has had over 3,000,000 visitors from across the world; it currently has over 20,000 registered users. It was voted the Best Persian Music Website of the Year (2012) by the House of Music (Khana-yé Muzik) in Iran, where it was awarded its first prize in the field of Music. The Golha Project website is currently being used as a teaching aid for courses on Persian literature, language, comparative literature and ethnomusicology in numerous universities across Europe and North America.

Sponsored by IHF with the support of Farsa Community Foundation.

Abbas Akhavan – Study for a Garden
Exhibition, London – October

Following a ten-week residency at Delfina Foundation, Abbas Akhavan, the Toronto-based Iranian artist, opened his first London solo exhibition with a new body of site-specific artworks. Akhavan practices in a broad range of media, from site-specific installation to drawing, video and performance art. For the past five years, however, he has been engaged in researching the domestic sphere. With this new work he shifted focus onto spaces just outside the home – the garden, the backyard, and other domesticated landscapes. In conjunction with the exhibition, the artist gave a talk on Thursday 25 October 2012 at Delfina Foundation.

Following the exhibition, Akhavan’s piece Untitled Garden has now been acquired as part of the permanent collection at Waterside Contemporary Gallery.

组织 by the Delfina Foundation in partnership with Canada House Arts Trust and IHF.

Poland 3 Iran 2
A play, Amsterdam – September

At the 1976 Montreal Olympics, the best ever Polish football team played against the best ever Iranian football team. This match featured the pivotal Polish players Tomaszewski, Lato and Deyna, and for Iran the great Ali Parvin, a. k. a.”The Sultan”. This clash of talents led to a memorable game with Poland clinching a 3-2 win and going on to win the Silver medal.

A continent apart and supporting different teams, the game fascinated both Mehrdad Seyf and Chris Dobrowolski. Thirty-five years on, using that match as a backdrop and as a catalyst, the two friends discuss football, revolution, swimming, chess, love and Subbuteo.

Full of gentle humour, poignant family tales and frank historical truths, Poland 3 Iran 2 truly captures how much two people from drastically different backgrounds can have in common both locally and internationally. As part of the week-long Amsterdam Fringe Festival, the play was presented in its natural setting, a pub, rather than a theatre space. An enjoyable whistle-stop tour of monumental historic events sprinkled with banter and bizarre confessions.

The play, a collaboration between Mehrdad Seyf and Chris Dobrowolski, was presented by 30 Bird Productions at the Amsterdam Fringe Festival and was supported by the British Council and IHF.

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Mughal India: Art, Culture & Empire
Private view, British Library – November

In conjunction with the opening of the exhibition Mughal India: Art, Culture and Empire at the British Library, an event was held to publicise and fundraise for the Persian Manuscript Digitisation Project. This consisted of an evening reception, a presentation on the project, and a private viewing of the exhibition, in which the curators discussed the significance of Persianate culture in India, and the historical connection between Persian culture and language in the Mughal court.

Visit to the Oxford Bodleian Library
December

As part of IHF’s education programme for inter-university cultural expeditions, a trip was organised for ten students who currently study classical Persian poetry at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) to attend the Love and Devotion exhibition at the Bodleian library at Oxford. The exhibition was first opened last year at the State Library of Victoria in Australia. A smaller version of the exhibition is now on show at the Bodleian itself, consisting of manuscripts that were lent to the original exhibition by the Bodleian. The exhibition was accompanied by a series of lunchtime lectures.

The trip to Oxford was organised by Narguess Farzad, Senior Fellow in Persian at the Department of Languages & Cultures of the Near and Middle East, SOAS and supported by IHF.

My Iranian Paradise
Film Screening and Panel Discussion – London

My Iranian Paradise is the story of a woman and her relationship with the country she grew up in but was forced to leave. Annette Mari Olsen, one of the directors of this documentary was raised in Iran. Her father, a Danish engineer, and her mother, a Polish survivor of Stalin’s Gulag camps, met and married in Iran after the war. In My Iranian Paradise we witness a crucial time in the history of Iran from the last days of the Second World War up until the onset of the Islamic Revolution through the narrative of a western expatriate family.

Returning to Iran to seek out the scenes of her happy childhood, Olsen and her co-director Katia Forbert Peterson succeeded in showing us Iran and its present day complexities as well as capturing the longing and the nostalgia usually associated with Iranians themselves – all through Olsen’s unshakeable bond with the place and its people.

The film was screened at Asia House to a packed room and was received enthusiastically by the audience, a great many of whom were Polish nationals that had lived in Iran, and like the protagonist of the film had been forced to leave. The screening was followed by a panel discussion with the directors, and the writer Ryszard Antolak, who specialises in Iranian and Eastern European history. The discussion was led by Professor Ali M. Ansari, Director of the Institute for Iranian Studies at St Andrews University.

The event was organised by IHF and took place at Asia House.

Boys with Broken Ears
Film – Documentary

Wrestling is more than a sport in Iran; it is a way of life, deeply rooted in Iranian mythology and religion, with its own code of honour, where the wrestling champions are the trustees of their communities and considered as heroes. Wrestling has brought the greatest international acclaim for Iran at various world and regional championships, with Iran’s Olympic wrestling team winning medals at every game since 1948.

Boys with Broken Ears is a documentary following a group of young underprivileged wrestlers from different parts of Iran through the dramatic months of preparation for the biggest event of their lives – the chance to represent their country in the next world championship in Hungary. The film is an intimate portrait of their struggles to achieve their hopes and dreams, and the uncompromising future that awaits them as they sacrifice all for their love of wrestling.

The documentary will be aired on Al Jazeera English on 20 March 2013.

Co-Produced by Al Jazeera English, Golriz Kolahi and David Alamouti and directed by Nima Shayeghi. The production received seed funding and support from the IHF and Magic of Persia.
The Iranian Studies Directory (ISDirectory.org) is an initiative that aims to create a comprehensive reference and research facility for academics and scholars in the field. The ISDirectory aims to help foster global, interdisciplinary collaboration among researchers and institutions both inside and outside of Iranian studies. Currently in the first phase of its development, it is already possessed of more than 450 individual profiles, making it the largest network of its kind developed, with individuals ranging from Doctoral Candidates and Lecturers to Readers and Professors Emerita. Additionally, more than fifty organisations have also registered, ranging from the Chester Beatty Library in Ireland and the Museum of Islamic Art at the Pergamon, Berlin, to the Scandinavian Society for Iranian Studies and the National Museum of Iran. Future phases planned will incorporate a range of integrated services to enhance its usability and utility to the researcher community.

Professor Ehsan Yarshater, Professor Emeritus of Iranian Studies, Columbia University, and Founding-Editor, Encyclopaedia Iranica says:

‘Iran Heritage Foundation’s initiative to establish a site called ISDirectory.org is the realization of an excellent idea. It facilitates the finding of scholars in various fields of Iranian Studies that one may need to find. It helps easy access to the right scholar in the great variety of fields that Iranian Studies include. I have joined the Directory and hope that all scholars of Iranian Studies as well would join the Directory.’

The Directory is available for search purposes. You can register your expertise at ISDirectory.org/registration.

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