Report

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Publications
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Multidisciplinary Events
Film and performing arts
Conferences and lectures
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Management and Organisation
The Foundation’s mission, vision, budgets and programme scope is set and approved by a Board of Trustees. The annual programme is implemented under the supervision of a Management Board led by the Executive Director. Each member of the Management Board works with the Executive Director in managing the various aspects of the organisation, including matters of administration and compliance, finance and budget, and public programmes and events as well as development.

An Advisory Board, a Foundation Secretary and a number of specialist committees support the Foundation. These include the Academic Committee, which selects eligible academic and research projects and disburses the budget provided by the Trustees and the Events Committee organises and coordinates the Foundation’s social and cultural events throughout the year. The Future Generation Committee, originally founded to reach out to younger members of the Iranian community and to pursue projects reflective of the interests of the younger generation, is now aligning itself with the Management Board as part of the Foundation’s broader objectives.

Sources of Funding
Our most important sources of funding included the Norouz gala as well as contributions from trustees, corporate sponsors, donors and friends. Functions organized by the Events Committee generated further funds. No financial support was received or accepted from any government.

How You Can Help
The Foundation achieves much of its work through individuals volunteering their time. In addition, every donation, large or small, helps us to make a real difference in achieving our objectives. We welcome your support!

Additional information and updated news on our programmes and events may be also found at www.iranheritage.org and at www.facebook.com/iran.heritage.foundation
The 2009 Year-in-Review of the Iran Heritage Foundation (IHF) presents an organisation emerging from a period of consolidation and transformation stronger in its programmes and foundations for the future. Under the sage leadership of my predecessor, the Foundation adopted a modern constitution, established new and important administrative and compliance procedures, and appointed me full-time Executive Director. The Foundation continued to support numerous fellowships as well as research projects funded through its Academic Committee grants, the products of which will become apparent in 2010 and future years through events, reports and publications. It also organised and supported several important public programmes and events, the most significant of which was the major exhibition, Shah ‘Abbas: The Remaking of Iran. This event was organised by Dr Shelia Canby at the British Museum and involved a wide variety of supplemental programmes and academic conferences.

The activities of 2009 paint a picture of an IHF that remains true to its longstanding reputation of vigorous support for academic, intellectual and community projects related to the rich cultural heritage of Iran. The year’s academic pursuits involved the continued support of research projects and programmes through awards granted by the Academic Committee, all of which are announced in this annual report.

The Academic Committee was also engaged more actively in an effort to streamline the publications adopted by the Foundation by divesting its biannual exhibitions matters related to academic grants and those related to publications comprising IHF’s own publication series. Fellowships were also renewed at the Universities of Exeter, Oxford, St Andrews and at the British Museum.

The newest development in 2009 involved an initiative to formalise support for universities and museums through the Institutional Partnership Programme (IPP). The IPP seeks to facilitate the establishment of long-term positions and programmes in Iranian studies at academic and cultural institutions mainly in but not limited to the United Kingdom. This initiative will go far in ensuring the endurance of IHF’s mission as it is being implemented in some of the most established and respected institutions of the world. The Foundation will engage its partner institutions and the individuals who take on the new posts in the form of various lectures, conferences and public programmes and bring the partners together on a regular basis as part of a network of communication and collaboration for new projects and pursuits.

As the following report will attest, several interesting multi-disciplinary events in the form of exhibitions, lectures, conferences, films and performances were organised or supported by IHF on subjects representing a wide spectrum of time periods throughout the history of Iran and the Persianate world. Social events included the Foundation’s major annuall fundraiser, the Norouz Gala, and a fundraising dinner at the British Museum in support of the Shah ‘Abbas exhibition: Community support, which provides one of the most important foundations for cultural preservation, continued in the form of support at the Rostam Iranian School, the library for Iranian Studies and Kanoon Iran. To this commendable group, the Future-Generation Committee added a project to incorporate the teaching of ancient history through a Persian as well as classical lens. Other continued projects, such as the Encyclopaedia Iranica and the digitisation project of the Golha Programme Archives, reach a global audience through virtual access via the Internet. IHF intends to formalise digital and Internet related projects in 2010, as this is truly the wave of the future and will allow the Foundation’s mission to cross international boundaries more than ever before.

2010 will thus follow on the heels of 2009, benefitting from the previous year’s successful initiatives, continuing projects begun in previous years and introducing some new initiatives intended to build upon earlier improvements and successes; these will include but not be limited to a standardisation of programmes and the active base of IHF volunteers and interns and the raising of profiles for community projects and web-based and digitisation initiatives. Marking the millennium celebration of the completed versification of the Shahnameh, or Book of Kings, the national epic of Iran, by the poet Ferdowsi, IHF will also act as primary sponsor of the Fitzwilliam Museum’s autumn 2010 exhibition, Epic of the Persian Kings: The Art of Ferdowsi’s Shahnameh. While many of the year’s programmes will revolve around the Shahnameh theme, others will represent independent topics that are equally relevant to Iranian heritage at large. It was an honour for me to be invited to take a leadership position as Executive Director of the IHF in 2009. I am grateful for the privilege of serving the Foundation’s distinguished Board of Trustees and to work with such a talented group of colleagues and friends in the service of a worldwide community of Iranians and non-Iranians who support, believe in and are impassioned about Iranian culture. I would also like to extend my warmest thanks to all of you reading this report, for it is your past and continued support that ensures the endurance of this Foundation.

Ladan Akbarnia, PhD
Executive Director

Financial Review for 2009

In 2009, the Foundation experienced continued financial success in funding and program support.

A significant portion of our funds comprises multi-year contributions by members of our Board of Trustees and a select number of institutions. We are grateful for the continued support from Bank Julius Baer, Targetfollow Group and Balli Group Plc. Similar to previous years, a significant portion of our overhead costs were covered by donations from Trustees, enabling us to apply other incoming funds directly to programme support.

Despite the credit crunch, the Foundation was able to maintain a steady revenue level. Our programme costs increased significantly to support a spectacular array of programmes, including the exhibition, Shah ‘Abbas: The Remaking of Iran, at the British Museum. These were in part supported by targeted funds raised in the previous financial year.

Our administrative costs also increased significantly to allow the engagement of a full-time Executive Director. The remainder of the administrative costs were kept at exactly the same level as the previous year. We look forward to yet another successful year of partnerships with all of our stakeholders. Our heartfelt gratitude goes to our loyal, generous and expanding funding base, which shares IHF’s vision and helps transform that vision into a reality.

Copies of audited accounts of the IHF are available on request from Foundation’s secretary.

Total Administrative Expenses 113 161 192
General Public, Community, Programs, Events 88 114 356
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In 2009, IHF launched its Institutional Partnership Programme, the objective of which is to provide formalised support for two- to three-year posts in Persian language and/or arts and culture. This initiative grew out of a desire to streamline the Foundation’s historically ad hoc support for fellowships at several respected academic and cultural institutions based in the United Kingdom and abroad. IHF also means to assist these institutions in developing long term teaching positions and programmes in Iranian studies. While a number of fellowships continue to be supported on an ad hoc basis, the programme introduces a new system of support that encourages a shared investment in the future of Iranian studies at selected universities and museums. Partner institutions are engaged through a shared commitment in the creation and support of positions and programmes, with the hope that the institutions will eventually be able to sustain these initiatives on their own. The posts often fill the critical gap of Persian language instruction, but in some cases they may cover other disciplines or aim to train individuals in specialised professions such as in the curatorial or conservation fields. The Foundation aims to support a wide range of positions in terms of disciplines, time periods and subjects covered. It intends to serve as the link between these participating institutions by providing an annual forum for the sharing of ideas and practices with each other and by facilitating the creation of a regional and international network that provides a combination of options for students, fellows and faculty at the institutions as well as increased interaction and activities with the Foundation itself. The first five institutions to participate in the IHF Institutional Partnership Initiative include two museums and three universities, listed below.

**IRAN HERITAGE FOUNDATION CURATOR FOR THE IRANIAN COLLECTIONS**

**Middle East Section, Asian Department, Victoria and Albert Museum**

In 2009, Dr Moya Carey became the first Iran Heritage Foundation Curator for the Iranian Collections at the V&A. Dr Carey earned her doctorate from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, in 2001. She has worked for a number of organisations with important Iranian collections, including the Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan Collection (now part of the Aga Khan Museum Collection) in Geneva, the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin and The British Museum in London. Dr Carey has also taught at university level at Aga Khan University, SOAS, the Sotheby’s Institute and Birkbeck College. Dr Carey’s new post is the first major curatorial position at the V&A dedicated exclusively to the arts of the Iranian world.

**IRAN HERITAGE FOUNDATION CURATORIAL FELLOWSHIP**

**The Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC**

A two-year curatorial fellowship position has been created in partnership with the Freer and Sackler Galleries at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC. The post will be filled in the academic years 2010–11 and 2011–12 and will be exclusively devoted to the arts and cultures of Iran of any period. This will be the first curatorial position dedicated to training future curators of Iranian art. The IHF Curatorial Fellow will be charged with conducting research on the extensive collection at the Freer and Sackler Galleries as well as organising exhibitions and preparing a publication and major symposium with Dr Massumeh Farhad, Chief Curator and Curator of Islamic Art at this institution.

**IRAN HERITAGE FOUNDATION LECTURER IN PERSIAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE**

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

This three-year post in Persian language and culture will be filled in the academic year 2010–11. The IHF Lecturer in Persian Language and Culture will also work with the Director of the Institute for Iranian Studies to develop the Persian language library and to expand the Iranian studies programme at the University, which currently demonstrates an interest and strength in Iranian studies in the disciplines of history and anthropology, especially of the modern and contemporary periods, at both the graduate and post-graduate levels.

**IRAN HERITAGE FOUNDATION POST**

**University of Cambridge**

A three-year post related to the development of Persian studies at the University of Cambridge is also scheduled for the academic year 2010–11 and will be announced in late 2010.
In 2009, we continued our efforts to support worthy projects related to various aspects of Iranian culture undertaken by individuals and organisations. These included:

- Support of Encyclopædia Iranica, a monumental endeavour which the Foundation has supported since its inception.
- Support of three London-based community organisations, which are active in promoting Iranian culture and the teaching of Persian language.

Encyclopædia Iranica is a Columbia University project prepared by the Center for Iranian Studies. It is a historic undertaking as the most extensive compendium ever conceived on the past and present culture of the people who speak the languages of Iran as well as their contribution to the broader history of human civilization. In fact, it is the only precise and reliable work on the lands, life, culture and history of all Iranian peoples and their interactions with other societies. The project was conceived in 1973 and began at Columbia University in 1974. It is envisioned to be achieved in 25-30 volumes, of which 14 have been published to date. To ensure the completion of this monumental work, the Encyclopædia Iranica Foundation was established in 1989. From the biographies of notable men and women in every field of endeavour to descriptions of all Iranian cities and monuments, from oil installations to major banks, from Zoroastrian scriptures to Jewish shrines to Islamic rituals, from Persian classics to modern novels, from Iranian flora and fauna to Persian music and folklore, from philosophy and mysticism to Persian calligraphy and Persian and Afghan architecture, no stone is left unturned in this overview of Iranian culture and history. Iran Heritage Foundation has been a consistent supporter of the Encyclopædia Iranica Foundation since its inception.

2009 Grants

Fellowships

Iran Heritage Foundation Fellowship at the University of Exeter

The 2009–10 Iran Heritage Foundation Fellow at the University of Exeter is Dr Leonard Lewisohn. At Exeter, Dr Lewisohn teaches two language courses on elementary and intermediate Persian; these have the ultimate aim of introducing students to the riches of classical Persian literature. The University of Exeter presently has 6 students in Intermediate Persian and 10 in Elementary Persian at the IAS (Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies – University of Exeter) which demonstrates the growing interest in Iran and Persian culture in the United Kingdom. In October through December of 2009, Dr Lewisohn also taught a course entitled, ‘The History and Culture of Persia’, which covered five thousand years of Iranian history from the earliest Elamite kings down to the Islamic Republic, as well as a course entitled, ‘Sufism and Islamic Spirituality and Devotional Life’, a great deal of which was devoted to the Persian Sufi tradition.

Iran Heritage Foundation Fellowship at the University of St Andrews

Dr Pedram Khoshrooep is the Goli Rais Larizadeh Fellow of the Iran Heritage Foundation for the Anthropology of Iran at the University of St Andrews. In his doctoral thesis, Dr Khoshrooep explored themes closely related to the material and visual culture of death through an analysis of objects, artifacts and especially tombstones, as well as the techniques implied in their creation and manipulation among the Bahtiaris nomads of Iran. During his tenure, he has been involved in the organisation of the conference ‘Visual Representations of Iran’, which was largely supported by the Foundation.

Iran Heritage Foundation Fellowship at The British Museum

This fellowship brings scholars and museum curators specialising in the fields of Iranian art, archaeology and numismatics from Iran to the British Museum for periods of up to four months, enabling them to use the facilities of the Museum and other institutions in the United Kingdom to further their academic research as well as to study and become trained in various aspects of museum management. The fellow for 2009–10 is yet to be announced.

SCHOOLS & COMMUNITY

Since its inception, the Foundation has provided support to schools and community organisations engaged in the promotion of Iranian languages, 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 Iranians in the United Kingdom. After many years of devoted service, the school has developed into what is now a centre for educational and cultural activities for the Iranian community in the UK. Rustam School provides courses for children ages 5 and up. 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 50,000 cultural and political books as well as other publications for public use. Although these include mainly Persian and other Iranian language publications, 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, which contain a wealth of political and cultural publications, documents, reports and statistical information, provide an invaluable resource. As well as being both a lending and a reference library, the Library of Iranian Studies currently arranges lectures, seminars and a range of classes for adults and children covering various aspects of Iranian culture and language.

Kanoon Iran

Kanoon Iran, a community organisation with a very active schedule of lectures and other educational programmes on the history and culture of Iran, was established in 1982. Its audience consists predominantly of the Iranian community in London. The organisation also offers Persian language classes for children ages 6 and up.

Secondary School Project

The Secondary Schools Project (SSP) aims to facilitate and promote the teaching of Ancient Persia at secondary schools in the United Kingdom. Whilst there are a number of modules within GCSE Classics and GCSE Ancient History that are based on or make references to the Achaemenid Dynasty, there are few objective resources available on the subject for students and teachers. The first phase of this project
The publication of specialized monographs or other works on Iranian studies is becoming less and less commercially viable. The Foundation therefore regularly subsidizes the publication of books that demonstrate sufficient merit. Titles and projects that received subsidies in previous periods, either for publication or for preparation of publication and which were published in 2009, included the following:

- Iran in the 20th century, edited by Touraj Atabaki. This work brings together a range of rich contributions from international scholars who cover the leading themes of the historiography of 20th-century Iran.
- Sasanian Persia: The Rise and Fall of an Empire, by Touraj Darayeey. This book examines in a unique way a period of history that still holds great significance for a full understanding of modern Iran.
- In The Shadow of the King: Zill al-Sultan and Isfahan under the Qajars, by Heidi A. Walcher. This work is both a biography of one of the most colourful individuals in the history of modern Iran and a study of the social and political circumstances of late 19th-century Iran in general and Isfahan in particular.

Titles and projects in this category that were awarded grants in 2009, included:

- Adding illustrations to “Seeking Knowledge as far as China,” in Iranian Encyclopaedias in the Islamic World, 1020–1900, by Dagmar Anne Kafel.
- The creation of a website on the “Persepolis Project,” as part of the Musée Achéménide virtuel et interactif (Maxil)’s website, to create a complete online photographic documentation of the UNESCO world heritage site of Persepolis by Pierre Briant.
- The Partisan Coin Project, which aims to enter data on 1,000 coins and publications in the collection of The British Museum, by Elizabeth Pendleton.
- The creation of a database for Iranian Ilkhanid and Timurid coins of the Islamic period in the British Museum, by Paramdip Khera.
- Into Tartary: Observation and Imagination (18th Century British Travellers to Russia, Daghestan and Central Asia), by Beatrice Tessier.
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- Second String Quartet, based on the Regional Folk Music of the Bakhtiyari, by Mehdi Hosseini Rami.
- The Bakhtiari: Nomads who ruled Iran, A photographic history, by Caroline Mawer.
- The digitisation and publication of a photographic archive of Sasanian rock reliefs housed in the British Museum, by Bruno Overlaet.
- Persian Gardens and Pavilions: Reflections in Poetry, History and Painting, by Mohammad Chairpour.

RESEARCH & TRAVEL GRANTS

Research or travel grants were awarded to the following individuals in 2009:

- Theresa Stewart, for research on self-censorship and music in Iran.
- Mohammad Yusef Siddiqi, for a fieldwork study of Persian inscriptions on stone slabs of the eastern frontier of South Asia.
- Rose Edith Wellman, for research on culinary relations in creating kinship and nation in Iran.
- Azar Iaghari, to investigate modernity versus tradition in the contemporary landscape of Iran.
- James Gustafson, for research on the politics of households in late Qajar period Kerman.
- Sanaz Raji, PhD candidate, University of Leeds, to curate a film series concerning the Iranian diaspora, showcasing the emerging talent from Iranian migrant communities.

In 2009, grants were awarded to the following individuals in support of conferences, conference panels, and workshops:

- Alberto Cantera, of the Universidad de Salamanca, toward the organization of a conference in the University of Salamanca on the ‘Transmission of Holy Wisdom in Zoroastranism’.
- Maria Carney, of the V&A, for a conference panel on Islamic art and architecture at the 2010 annual conference of the Association of Art Historians in Glasgow entitled, ‘Visual Culture of the Medieval Middle East: Islamic Art Now’.
- Roger Mathews, of UCL, for a workshop on the neolithisation of Iran and its socio-cultural transformation, at the 7th International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East (ICANA) in London.
- Cameron Petrie, of the University of Cambridge, for a workshop commemorating Professor Ak Hakkani’s work at Shahdad, a major prehistoric Bronze Age centre discovered at the edge of the Dasht-e Lut, and forty years of excavations in southeast Iran.
- Sergio di Lorenzo, PhD candidate, University of Leeds, to curate a film series concerning the Iranian diaspora, showcasing the emerging talent from Iranian migrant communities.


during the second half of 2011.

PUBLICATIONS

Among Iranian writers in France

Michael Chagnon, for research on the production of illustrated manuscripts in seventeenth-century

Michel William Greg, to investigate the role of pottery in the transition from hunting to herding in the narrow geographic corridor linking the Middle East with Central Asia.

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- Sanaz Raji, PhD candidate, University of Leeds, to curate a film series concerning the Iranian diaspora, showcasing the emerging talent from Iranian migrant communities.
We... often think of Iran in terms of darkness, as if through the blackness of the veil. This is an exhibition to shine a corrective light onto that idea.

Tim Adams, The Observer

Shah Abbas—The Remaking of Iran, elegantly pulls the Persian rug from beneath the feet of the politicians, bypassing their ossified dealings with Iran to give us a vivid insight into the modern nation through the achievements of its greatest ruler, 400 years ago.

Duncan Macmillan, Scotsman

When this great prince ceased to live, Persia ceased to prosper.

Jean Chardin, French Traveller to the Safavid Court.
in the same cabinet depicted dervishes eating, drinking and washing from the same vessels. A late 17th-century Iranian dish with the design of a simple flower in white slip against a blue glaze further emphasised the inspiration Chinese porcelains provided to local potters. From the Mashhad shrine came exquisite metal works; a 17th-century lantern, an openwork ‘alam (a religious standard brought out on holy days), several engraved candle and lamp stands as well as more calligraphic works and a beautiful carpet woven of silk with intricate decorative borders, embellished with threads of silver and gold. Exquisite silk brocades were displayed in the Qom section.

The entire exhibition testified to Shah‘Abbās’ massive programme of cultural patronage and the original style he nurtured. The ‘Isfahan style’ of geometric patterns and motifs involving arabesques of stylized lotus flowers and other vegetal forms was represented in the

**The World of Shah ‘Abbās**

**Symposium**

Planned in conjunction with the special exhibition, Shah‘Abbās: The Remaking of Iran, this symposium covered the period of Shah‘Abbās the Great, who ruled Iran from 1587 to 1629, from a variety of points of view. This period is recognised as one of great importance not only for art and architecture but also for the expansion of trade into Europe and Asia, the reinforcement of Iran’s borders and the establishment of the rule of law. These and many other aspects of the reign of Shah‘Abbās were explored in the symposium. Thanks to recently discovered historical texts, some of the papers reassessed Shah‘Abbās’ place in history. Others considered the art of Iran in this period and its impact on the arts in Turkey and India. The economic, religious and legal aspects of Shah‘Abbās’ reign were also discussed. While two days could not possibly exhaust the number of topics relevant to the period of Shah‘Abbās, the symposium certainly provided a well-rounded view of this ruler’s achievements and historical legacy. Papers were presented within the context of 10 panels with some 20 scholars from France, Iran, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States of America delivering papers at this symposium.

**Takhtī and the Zurkhāneh**

**Study Session**

To coincide with the special exhibition, a study day at the British Museum offered a contemporary perspective on Iranian history, religion and culture. Museum curators and other experts discussed the significance of Takhtī and the zurkhāneh, the traditional gymnasium where wrestling and other sports were practised, its significance in contemporary Iranian art, as well as the tradition of commissioning and offering gifts to religious shrines in Iran. At the heart of this study session was a special display of Khosrow Hassanzadeh’s Takhtī, which was recently acquired by the British Museum, with the artist discussing his work. Following an introduction by curator Venetia Porter of the British Museum, Dr Lloyd Ridgeon, Reader in Islamic Studies at the University of Glasgow, talked about the zurkhāneh and its significance.
in terms of Iranian identity, discussing elements of Shi'ism, Sufism and Iranian nationalism. Independent scholar Dr Shiva Balaghi then explored representations of masculinity in contemporary Iranian art. The study session was followed by a demonstration of the traditional Iranian sport by the Zurkhaneh-ye Iran Bastan in the Great Court of the Museum.

FROM SAFAVID PERSIA TO MODERN IRAN:
CULTURE, POLITICS, RELIGION

Lecture Series
A five-part lecture series planned in conjunction with the special exhibition. Roxana Marmi gave a talk on the different forms of ‘organised mysticism’ (Sufism, Tazavis and Irfan) in contemporary Iran and explored the ways in which these types of faith are expressed upon the larger canvas of Persian piety. Robert Hillenbrand examined the nature of recreational buildings in the Safavid era, exploring the ways in which the distinctive leisured ambiance of Shah Abbas’ Safavid court was created through wood and textiles in both temporary and permanent structures. Edward Faridany explored the ways in which these types of faith are expressed upon the larger canvas of Persian piety.

Evening Debates
Empire of the mind and soul: What does modern Iran owe to Shah Abbas?
The British Museum / Guardian Public Forum. Using the exhibition as the starting point, a high-profile panel, chaired by Jon Snow, writer and broadcaster, discussed the broader issues relating to contemporary Iran. Speakers included Azadeh Moaveni, journalist and writer, Ata’ollah Mohajerani, historian, writer and former Iranian Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Elaheh Rostami-Povey, Lecturer in Development Studies at University of London, and Charles McVille, Professor of Persian History, University of Cambridge. An introduction by Neil MacGregor, Director of the British Museum, opened the debate.

Who rules Iran?
The British Museum / London Review of Books. At the London Review of Books discussion, a panel of highly regarded writers, theorists and historians critiqued democracy and identity in Iran. This event ran in conjunction with the London Review of Books, which explores the connections between literature, history, art and politics. Speakers included the historian Ervand Abrahamian, Baroness Haleh Afshar of the Department of Politics, University of York and SOAS Research Associate Ziba Mir-Hosseini.

Evening Films
The evolving role of cinema in forging national identity in contemporary Iran was explored in a series of films by acclaimed Iranian directors, all screened at the British Museum. These consisted of Crimson Gold, by Jafar Panahi, At Five in the Afternoon by Samira Makhmalbaf, Persepolis, by Marjan Sakraps and Vincent Paronnaud, Divorce Iranian Style, by Kim Longinotto and Ziba Mir-Hosseini, and The Colour of Paradise, by Majid Majidi.

SPECIAL RECEPTION AND PRIVATE VIEW BY HRH PRINCE OF WALES

The IHF paid the great privilege of hosting HRH the Prince of Wales as its guest of honour at a special reception and private view of the Shah Abbas; The Remaking of Iran exhibition at the British Museum. Vahid Alaghband, the Chairman of the IHF, accompanied by Farad Azima, Chief Executive, Ardeshr Naghshehni, Trustee and Patron, Lord Gower, Chair of the Advisory Board and Neil MacGregor, Director of the British Museum, met HRH upon arrival to the John Addis Gallery of Islamic Art and introduced the Trustees and invited Patrons. HRH then visited the exhibition accompanied by the Chairman, the Director and Dr Sheila Canby, Curator of the exhibition. HRH is known for his keen interest in the cultural and literary heritage of Iran. He commended the IHF for its exemplary partnership with the British Museum in bringing Shah Abbas; The Remaking of Iran exhibition to London.
The revolution of 1979 that brought about the Islamic Republic of Iran has produced profound yet contradictory changes in the social and cultural spheres of Iranian life. While religious ideology and revolutionary fervour remain the credo of the state, the younger generation that makes up seventy percent of the population appears neither very revolutionary nor very ideological in any classic sense. At the same time, Iran’s youth seems to be inventing a new politics for the 21st century. The encounters between religious tradition and secular modernity, between old ways of seeing and new technologies, have a long history in Iran; yet they have become more pronounced over the past thirty years as a religious state attempts to reconfigure public life at the very moment that globalization trends in ideas and images are felt inside Iran. This conference focused on such contradictory developments in the social and cultural lives of Iranians since the revolution by bringing some of the best known practitioners in the media and contemporary arts inside Iran together with academicians and theoreticians of these developments in a unique encounter. The first day focused mainly on social issues and changing values around women and young people, while the second day examined novel forms of cultural expression, including rap music and blogging. Four plenary sessions explored research on contemporary Iran (historical, theoretical and methodological issues), the visual arts, new roles for women, and music and dance. In addition, seventeen breakaway sessions covered themes as diverse as Tehran itself, entitled: Cultural Change, Journalism; Media and Blogs, Masculinities; Cinema; Comedy; Jokes and Laughter; Media, Blogs and Politics; Diasporas and Minorities; Contemporary Cinema; Stand-Up Comedy; Women’s Rights and Wrong’s; Art and Performance; Civil Society; Public Sphere and Democracy, and Urban and Rural Women.

**A Little Bit Iranian: An Anglo-Iranian Comedy Special**

The Documentary Experimental Film Center, The Cultural World Service Trust, The London Middle East Institute, Iran Heritage Foundation and supported by the BBC for Media and Film Studies at SOAS in association with the 21st century. The encounters between religious tradition and secular modernity, between old ways of seeing and new technologies, have a long history in Iran; yet they have become more pronounced over the past thirty years as a religious state attempts to reconfigure public life at the very moment that globalization trends in ideas and images are felt inside Iran. This conference focused on such contradictory developments in the social and cultural lives of Iranians since the revolution by bringing some of the best known practitioners in the media and contemporary arts inside Iran together with academicians and theoreticians of these developments in a unique encounter. The first day focused mainly on social issues and changing values around women and young people, while the second day examined novel forms of cultural expression, including rap music and blogging. Four plenary sessions explored research on contemporary Iran (historical, theoretical and methodological issues), the visual arts, new roles for women, and music and dance. In addition, seventeen breakaway sessions covered themes as diverse as Tehran itself, entitled: Cultural Change, Journalism; Media and Blogs, Masculinities; Cinema; Comedy; Jokes and Laughter; Media, Blogs and Politics; Diasporas and Minorities; Contemporary Cinema; Stand-Up Comedy; Women’s Rights and Wrong’s; Art and Performance; Civil Society; Public Sphere and Democracy, and Urban and Rural Women.

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As a supplement to the conference, where many of the main practitioners and academicians in the field of Media and Film studies explored this significant contemporary scene in Iran, there was a two-day screening of contemporary short films from Iran and the Diaspora.

Twenty-eight films were shown, covering such themes as youth, women, arts and environment.
THE RUBAIYAT OF OMAR KHAYYAM

Exhibition
The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam is a phenomenon unique in publishing history: a book of poetry published anonymously nearly 150 years ago, purporting to be the translation of an 11th-century Persian work. The text has remained almost continuously in print since its first edition in 1859 and has stimulated at least 150 illustrators to try to illuminate the verses it contains.

In conjunction with the world-wide celebration of the 150th anniversary of its first publication, a small exhibition of the Rubaiyat holdings of the British Library was mounted at the Folio Society Gallery of the British Library. This exhibition was conceived to tell the story of Omar Khayyam and showed how the translated Rubaiyat became a worldwide success, how different illustrators have approached the task of interpreting the individual themes and topics of this fascinating poem, thus providing a history of the changes in book illustration, mostly in Britain and America, over the past century and a half. The exhibitors included the first American illustrated version by the celebrated Elihu Vedder, the exquisite version jointly done by William Morris and the great Pre-Raphaelite artist Edward Burne-Jones and a facsimile of the bejeweled edition made by Sangorski & Sutcliffe, bought by an American, which sank with the Titanic on its maiden voyage across the Atlantic.

An evening of packed and diverse programmes celebrating Omar Khayyam’s meditation on life, death, happiness and the pleasures of imbibing was further organized around the exhibition and its great English translation. The evening featured readings in Persian by Lobat Vala and scholar Narguess Farzad, performance of live Persian classical music by Vida Eslali and the Saba Ensemble; a recitation of Edward Fitzgerald’s Rubaiyat by actors Emily Brun and Michael Maloney with introductions to Omar Khayyam himself by François de Blois and to Edward Fitzgerald by Tony Briggs, editor of the most recent edition of the poem.

The exhibition was organized by the British Library with the evening programme presented in association with Iran Heritage Foundation.

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Countdown
Directed by Khatereh Hanachi, Countdown was a fly-on-the-wall documentary about 18-year-old Parisa Pouladi, who is buried in her books day and night, preparing for the national college entrance exam. Along with more than a million other Iranian high school graduates, Parisa hopes high marks secure her a place in a top-notch university. Less than half of all the students taking the exam will pass. As the exam draws near, Parisa’s parents’ household — like thousands of others across the country — begins to implode.

Transit Tehran – Lecture Programme
Transit II: Lecture - Young Iran: Pictures, politics and stories
Malu Halasa, curator of the exhibition and co-editor (with Maziar Bahari) of the book Transit Tehran. Young Iran and its Inspirations gave an illustrated talk explaining the idea behind the exhibition, which was to tell the story of the transformation of Tehran through the eyes and words of Iranian artists. The talk was followed by a Q&A.

Frontier Blues
Film
Produced by Saadi Soudavar and Ginevra Elkann with backing from the Foundation, Frontier Blues is a film written and directed by Babak Jalali. The film was shot outside Gorgan (Daft-e Gorgan) and was submitted to the Cannes Film Festival where it received privileged screening. The story takes place on the northwest frontier of Iran bordering Turkmenistan, a forlorn region characterised by its sweeping steppe landscape, Caspian hinterland and an interesting mix of Turkmen, Kazakh and Fars cultures never featured in Iranian cinema until now. The film seamlessly weaves together four different stories, beautifully shot in deadpan tableaux that humorously recount the doldrums of longing and waiting (without ever reaching a particular destination) in contemporary Iran.

Film and Performing Arts
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Iranian Cinema: Gender, Nation and Narration
Film Screenings
A selection of films, focusing on the social and emotional lives of women in contemporary Iran, by pre- and post-revolutionary directors whose work has taken the cinematic world by storm, were screened in London, providing an intense and impressive insight into the repression experienced by women in Iran. The screenings included Abbas Kiarostami’s landmark Ten, which, through ten conversations between a female driver in Tehran and her passengers, explores the potential of digital technology with illuminating and exhilarating results. Other films screened included The May Lady, by Rakhshani Banet Etremad; The Hidden Half, by Tahmineh Milani; and three films by Manijeh Hemmat: Women’s Prison, Me, My Room and My Friends; and Three Women. The last three films were followed by a Q&A session with the director. The programme was convened by Dr Saeed Talajpooy, UCL Mellon Fellow.

The event was organised by the UCL Mellon Programme and supported by Iran Heritage Foundation.
**A NIGHT IN TEHRAN**

**Film Premiere and Book Launch**

‘You know nothing about our country. Come in, be entertained and learn.’ Such is the collective claim of ‘You know nothing about your country. Come in, be entertained and learn.’Such is the collective claim of ‘You know nothing about your country. Come in, be entertained and learn.’Such is the collective claim of ‘You know nothing about your country. Come in, be entertained and learn.’Such is the collective claim of ‘You know nothing about your country. Come in, be entertained and learn.’Such is the collective claim of ‘You know nothing about your country. Come in, be entertained and learn.’Such is the collective claim of ‘You know nothing about your country. Come in, be entertained and learn.’

Three films by this group were premiered in the country thirty years after the revolution, opening a window to aspects of Iran that are rarely covered in media reports about the country. One of these films was shown was Ala Mohseni’s My City Pizza, which showcases the fascination of Tehranis with pizza as something more than just food, a sign of modernity, an object of desire and a potential threat against traditional values. Another, Shahriar Siami’s Of Men and Motorcycles follows the life of Abbas, a migrant from the provinces, who, like many young Iranians, cannot land a decent job except to work on a motorcycle as a cab driver, navigating the dangerous traffic of Tehran in order to support his family. The third film, Sahar Salashehroo’s Behind the Wheel of Life, chronicles the story of another cab driver, this time a woman, and the daily struggles she faces as a single mother and divorcée. The films were produced by Maziar Bahari with the support of BBC World Service Trust. The screening in London was followed by a Q&A session with the directors, conducted by reporter Jon Snow.

The book Transit Tehran, Young Iran and Its Inspirations, the research for which was made possible by a grant from Iran Heritage Foundation, was launched in conjunction with these films. A truly insightful account of the real Iran, the Iran we never hear about the hubbub of rhetoric and allegation: This is the Iran so many of us who travel there know and both admire and think about. It is the Iran that defies politics and economics and remains somehow simply Persian.

Jen Snow, Channel Four News

A wonderfully illustrative view of Iran’s young, hip and avant garde. Westerners take note: They are here and will be heard.

Forced Zakaria, Editor of Newsweek International

The event was organized and presented by BBC World Service Trust, Panalux Media, Off Center Productions and the Prince Claus Fund Library with Curzon Cinemas, supported by Arts Council England, Garnet Publishing and Iran Heritage Foundation.

**SHIRIN**

**Film**

Kiarostami’s new film Shirin was a retelling of the classic Persian love story Khosrow and Shirin by Nezami. It offered a feast of a wholly unexpected kind for the imagination. The audience saw the film through the drama played out on the faces of the audience featured in the film itself, seen in close-up, mostly one at a time, illuminated by the flickering light of the screen. A mesmerising series of portraits of women young and old ensued, their expressions variously wistful, quizzical, amused or enraptured. The unseen film’s impassioned narration, dramatic dialogue, romantic score and evocative sound effects helped the audience reconstruct the story that was so presently absent in the film.

Organized by BFI and supported by Iran Heritage Foundation.

**DAIYA DADVAR**

**Concert**

Darya Dadvar, the talented Iranian soprano admired for her silken voice, made her London debut at the Bush Hall, delivering traditional Iranian music arranged with elements of jazz and blues: The singer was accompanied by Jacy Desmond on piano, Susan McCarthy on flute, Thomas Ostrovski on percussion and Heve de Rudolf on guitar bass. The event was also broadcasted in association with BBC Persian TV.

Organized by Ava Ltd and supported by Iran Heritage Foundation.

**IRANIAN WOMEN’S VOICES: PARI MALEKI — MAHSA VAHDAT**

**Concert**

This concert featured performances by two Iranian female music groups who are working to safeguard Persian traditional music despite the challenges of being women vocalists in modern-day Iran, where public performances by women are partially banned. Pari Maleki has been performing and teaching music since 1986 and leads the Konya Musical Ensemble while Mahsa Vahdat is a professor of the magham traditions that have formed classical Persian music.

Organized by Bar-Ax and supported by Iran Heritage Foundation.

**MONIKA JALILI: SONGS OF LOVE FROM IRAN**

**Concert**

For one night only at the Union Chapel, Monika Jalili and her ensemble of world-class musicians performed songs of love and hope by a group of talented Iranian poets and composers whose hopes, dreams and careers were extinguished by the 1979 revolution. The songs were performed in their original language of Persian, Azerbaijan and various other local dialects spoken throughout Iran. Using traditional and non-traditional instruments, Jalili’s ensemble of musicians combined their talents to present original interpretations of this music. For this performance, Jalili was joined by Megan Gould on violin, Riza Khabpour on guitar, Mayroth T. Kontanis on oud and Shame Shana on percussion.

Organized by the Mahak Charity and supported by Iran Heritage Foundation.
Conferences and Lectures

Since its inception, the Foundation has been a major supporter and organiser of conferences, seminars and lectures on various aspects of Iranian studies. During 2009, commitments were made towards the following conferences to take place in 2010—The Shahnameh and Persianate Identity, at the University of St Andrews; Ferdowsi’s Shahnameh. The Second Thousand Years, at the University of Cambridge; and Objects, Collections and Cultures, the Second Biennial Symposium to be convened by the Historians of Islamic Art Association, at the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC. Many previously planned conferences were convened in 2009. In addition to the above mentioned conferences, symposium and study day (including The World of Shah Abbas; Tahiti and the Zoroastrians, From Safavid Persia to Modern Iran: Culture, Politics, Religion, Thirty Years on: The Social and Cultural Impacts of the Iranian Revolution, Omar Khayyam, FitzGerald and the Rubáiyát), the list of academic programmes supported by Iran Heritage Foundation includes the following:

**Empires and Revolutions: Iranian-Russian Encounters since 1800**

**Conference**

From the early nineteenth century up until the present time, there have been myriad encounters between Iranians and Russians. This two-day conference explored such encounters, discussing diplomacy and foreign policy. The central objective of the conference was to widen scholarly perspective by incorporating an understanding of other types of encounters, both friendly and hostile, and whether political, economic, social, cultural or intellectual, especially as these developed beyond the official and elite levels of society. The first day of the conference was devoted to interactions between Qajar Iran and Tsarist Russia. Three sessions were held. The first, entitled Travelers and Entrepreneurs, looked at the Russian economic penetration of Iran, in the form of land purchases and concessions, at the expansion of Russian hegemony through south-central Iran from a base at Isfahan and at the Russian connections of the entrepreneur Malik al-Tujjar. The second session, called Shahs, Tsars and Officials, examined the Russian-Iranian wars of the early nineteenth century, the sensitive issue of Russian military deserts in Iran, the expatriate mission of Khosrow Mirza to St. Petersburg, which followed the murder in Tehran of the Russian envoy Cibirov, and was concluded with some fascinating photographs from the collection of the Russian consul Alexander Iyas. The final session of the day, The Transcaucasian Dimension, dealt with family networks criss-crossing both the Russian and Persian Empires and the impact on the formation of Iranian political parties with connections to Russian social democracy, particularly in Bakú. The second day of the conference, addressing Iran and Soviet and post-Soviet Russia in the twentieth century and up to the present, also consisted of three panels. The first, The Soviet Union and Iran, 1917–1947, examined the fate of Iranians in the Caucasus during the turbulent revolutionary year of 1917; the genesis of the Iran-Soviet Treaty of 1921, which was defined as a triumph of late Qajar diplomacy; and at the attitude of the Soviet Comintern towards the growing Iranian labour movement. A highlight of this session was the archive footage shown by Touyeh Atabaki, Professor of Social History of the Middle East and Central Asia at the University of Leiden, of the 1920 Congress of Peoples of the East, held in Bakú, and of the 1945–46 autonomous government of Iranian Azerbaijan. The second session, Cultural Exchanges, was devoted to the impact of Russian and Soviet influences on the development of Iranian theatre and cinema. The final session of the conference, “The Islamic Republic of Iran and Soviet and post-Soviet Russia,” attempted to draw some general conclusions and to make an assessment of the current state and likely future trajectory of Iranian-Russian relations. Papers included a discussion of the USIR as an alternative role model for Iranian modernity of Russian-Iranian attitudes towards the civil war in 1990s Tajikistan, and of the issues — especially energy and strategic concerns — which most crucially affect Iranian-Russian efforts at cooperation.

Each of the sessions included an opportunity for contributions from the floor, which led to several lively exchanges of views about the topics discussed. It was a special aim of the conference to bring together an international array of academics as this facilitated comparison of the different historical approaches and historiographical traditions prevailing in Russia, the Caucasus, Iran and the West, as well as encouraging exchanges about the more obvious issues of politics and current affairs. Seventeen scholars from Iran, Japan, the Netherlands, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America presented papers.

The conference was convened by Dr Stephanie Croom, independent scholar and organized by Iran Heritage Foundation in collaboration with the London Middle East Institute (LMEI) at SOAS and the Soudavar Memorial Fund.

**Patterns of Perfection**

**Conference**

This conference provided a rare opportunity for curators and collectors as well as people interested in Islamic and European cross-cultural connections and debates to explore the long nineteenth-century textile and carpet designs and to reflect upon the dissemination of patterns and motifs between Iran and Britain. The three principal themes explored were textile and carpet manufacture in Iran and the impact of British goods in Iranian domestic markets; the appearance of Iranian textiles and carpets in nineteenth-century Britain; and British designers and their concept of Persian pattern. The conference opened with a keynote lecture by Dr Layla Diba on Qajar Iran: Between East and West. Other contributors were Irena Koshonides, Hadi Maltaki, Vanessa Martin, Philip Sykas and Stephen Yeomt. The conference was in memory of Patricia Baker, the original organiser, who sadly passed away a year before the conference was convened.

The conference was organized by Victoria and Albert Museum in association with Iran Heritage Foundation and supported by The Association for Cultural Exchange Ltd.

**HISTORIOGRAPHY AND IRAN IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE**

**Conference**

The conference at St Andrews focused on the developments in the historiography of Iran in comparative perspective and sought to highlight a number of developments in the area by assessing the traditions of historical writing in Iran and situating them within broader trends in historiographical thought, particularly to the development of European historical narratives. Within the context of eight panels—The Early Modern Period, Nationalism and Historiography, Antiquity, The Medieval Imagination, Persia in the Early Modern imagination, Memoirs, Anarchism and its Discontents and Writing 20th Century History—were the questions addressed by 29 distinguished speakers from Austria, Germany, India, Iran, Israel, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Five keynote speeches were delivered by Professor Michael Bentley on History and Iran: the View from the West, Professor Bert Fragner on Persian Historiography.
Professor Chris Lorenz on Comparative Historiography; Professor Abbas Milani on The Shah: Methodological Problems of Biography and Professor Abbas Amanat on the Construction of Grand Narrative. The conference was convened by Professor Ali Ansari.

The conference was organized by the Institute of Iranian Studies, University of St Andrews, Centre for Transnational History, University of St Andrews and Iran Heritage Foundation.

AZARNAFISI: THINGS I’VE BEEN SILENT ABOUT

Talk and Book Launch
Azar Nafisi is a visiting Fellow and Lecturer at the Foreign Policy Institute of John Hopkins University’s School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) and author of the bestselling book, Reading Lolita in Tehran: A Memoir in Books (2004). In this latest work, published by Random House in January 2009, the author narrates the upheavals in her dysfunctional family, including her childhood sexual abuse and her father’s incarceration under the Shah on trumped-up charges of financial irregularities, setting the scene against the background of the country’s political revolution. Nafisi discussed her work with an audience at Asia House; the talk was followed by a book signing by the author.

A balanced, lucid narrative, a rich, complex account of this crucial part of Iranian history
Jean Hannah Edelstein, The Observer

Organized by Asia House in partnership with Iran Heritage Foundation and supported by Standard Chartered Private Bank, Arts Council England and The Times.

Stakeholders’ Forum
Trustees, Advisory and Management Board members and members of the Academic, Events and FGC committees convened a meeting at the Royal Automobile Club in St James’ on 23rd April to review the future strategic direction of the IHF. The Chairman and Chief Executive presented the plans for 2010 and prospects for medium term development of the Foundation. Aydin Arizadeh presented the outline of the Foundation’s ambitious project to digitise and establish an internet platform for the Golha musical collection. Kourosh Kaghazian presented the FGC’s plan for introducing the study of Ancient Persia in the British school curriculum.

Organized by Iran Heritage Foundation.
The festival of Norouz, the celebration of the new year on the first day of spring or the vernal equinox, constitutes a major part of the rich culture of Iran and the Persianate world. While its exact origins are unknown, references to it can be traced back to several thousand years predating the Achaemenid era (550–330 BCE) and is deeply rooted in the traditions of the Zoroastrian belief in the concept of rebirth and renewal of life. The ancient Iranians marked the last ten days of the solar year in a solemn ceremony of mourning (‘Farvardigan’) to signify the end of life. This was followed by the festival of Norouz which, in contrast, celebrated the rebirth of nature and life, an occasion that certainly warranted celebration and joy. One of the rock reliefs of the staircases below the great audience hall at the ruins of the Achaemenids’ seasonal palace at Persepolis depicts a procession of dignitaries on their way to the festival of Norouz, carrying ceremonial and symbolic offerings. The basis of the rituals have remained remarkably intact for several thousand years, observed by vast populations living in Iran, Turkey, Iraq, Afghanistan and Central Asia as well as the Diaspora. The significant moment that starts the New Year is when the earth goes through the spring equinox—the exact moment when the earth has completed one revolution of the sun. The tradition is continued through the setting of a special table or spread with an arrangement of specific symbolic items known as the haftsin. Our Norouz Gala is now a London tradition and is the major fundraising event for the Foundation; it is a joyous occasion and an auspicious start to the new year, with the added bonus that the contributions that support it are likewise supporting Persian heritage. In 2009, the Gala was held at the Grosvenor House Hotel. It was truly an evening of celebration, with young and old dancing and enjoying themselves up until the early hours of the morning. The centrepiece was, of course, the traditional haftsin, and the theme of the Gala featured the Safavid ruler Shah ‘Abbas to coincide with the exhibition of the same subject at The British Museum.
Continuing a longstanding tradition, we celebrate the Iranian New Year with a Gala at the Billingsgate. It is a joyous occasion and an auspicious start to the New Year. This Gala has also always been our major fundraising event.

**NO ONE KNOWS ABOUT PERSIAN CATS**

**Film**

Etiły Britton
25 March 2010

Lumiere Cinema South Kensington
31 March 2010

No One Knows About Persian Cats explores the underground music scene in Tehran which, perhaps unexpectedly, turns out to be a hotbed of rappers, metal bands and indie rockers who sport Strokes T-shirts and line their rehearsal spaces with Joy Division posters. The film is directed by Bahman Chobadi and tells the story of a young man and woman as they plan to launch a music group shortly after their release from prison and their dreams of fleeing to Europe in order to play music freely. The screening will be followed by a live performance from Take It Easy Hospital and DJ Shahram Norz.

Organized by Network Releasing and Warner Music and supported by Iran Heritage Foundation.

**THE SHAHNAMEH AND PERSIANATE IDENTITY**

**Conference**

University of St Andrews
9‒12 April 2010

A millennium after his death, the Shahnameh of Ferdowsi remains the single most important literary source of the construction and definition of Persianate identity. This conference, convened by Professor Ali Ansari, will focus on the political, social and historical legacy of the Shahnameh in the development of identities in the Persianate world as well as aspects of identity beyond ethnic or national characterizations.

Organised by the Institute of Iranian Studies, University of St Andrews and Iran Heritage Foundation.

**GARDEN OF HEAVEN**

Symposium

The Burrell Collection, Glasgow
27 March 2010

Planned in conjunction with the special exhibition of the 17th-century Persian “Wagner” Garden Carpet, this one day symposium will explore the theme of Paradise gardens in Islamic art and culture and the horticultural traditions of Iran.

Organised by the Iranian-Scottish Association and Iran Heritage Foundation.

**PERSIAN GULF. The Book will be launched at a reception in the British Museum.**

**THE WORLD OF ACHAEMENID PERSIA: HISTORY, ART AND SOCIETY IN IRAN AND THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST**

**Book Launch and Reception**

British Museum
13 April 2010

Interest and fascination in Achaemenid Persia has burgeoned in recent years, thus necessitating a new appraisal of the glorious civilization founded by Cyrus the Great and continued by his successors. The World of Achaemenid Persia: History, Art and Society in Iran and the Ancient Near East, edited by Dr John Curtis, OBE and Dr St John Simpson, fills the gap by offering a sustained and comprehensive overview of the field of Achaemenid studies by leading scholars and experts, discussing all aspects of Achaemenid history and archaeology between 550 BCE and 330 BCE, embracing the whole vast territory of the Persian Empire from North Africa to India and from Central Asia to the Persian Gulf. The book will be launched at a reception in the British Museum.

Organised by Iran Heritage Foundation.

**VISUAL CULTURE OF THE MEDIEVAL MIDDLE EAST: ISLAMIC HISTORY NOW?**

**Conference Panel**

University of Glasgow
16 April 2010

A panel discussion at the 2010 Annual Conference of AAH (Association of Art Historians) which will focus on scholarship in ‘Islamic’ or Middle Eastern art history of the medieval period, analysing the historical and current methodologies.

Organised by Dr Moya Carey and Dr Margaret Graves and sponsored by Iran Heritage Foundation.

**PEA BOY WITH ELIZABETH LAIRD**

Family Event and Workshop for Children 5-11 years of age
Asia House
15 May 2010

During her travels in Iran, Elizabeth Laird has gathered a wealth of stories. In her book, Pea Boy, she retells in her own inimitable style some of the best ones. At a family event at Asia House, the author will share some of the stories from the book with the audience. Drawing on her first-hand experience of life in Iran, she imbues her tales with colourful details that make them uniquely representative of the people who tell them and the land that they inhabit. The book has been illustrated in a delightful and offbeat manner by the gifted artist Shirin Adle. After the storytelling, there will be an interactive workshop where children will have the chance to make costumes inspired by one of the stories and be entertained by Iranian musicians.

Organized by Asia House in partnership with Iran Heritage Foundation and sponsored by Cora Sheibani and Margam Elker.

**LIFE IN IRAN – FREEDOM DEFENDED?**

Azadeh Moaveni talks about her new book and life in Iran
Asia House
7 June 2010

In her compelling 2005 book, Lipstick Jihad, Azadeh Moaveni chronicled the underground youth culture in Tehran at the turn of the millennium, writing about teenagers who embraced an ‘as if’ lifestyle and argued that grass-roots changes in Iran—from the spread of illegal satellite dishes and illegal video dealers to the popularity of blogging—would eventually alter the trajectory of that country’s history, while the demographic ascendance of a younger generation would transform the nation from below. Her new book, Honeymoon in Tehran, paints a far less optimistic portrait of the country. In this book, she uses her own experiences as a prism by which to view political developments in Tehran, thus giving us a highly personal picture of Iran’s social and political evolution. She discusses the book and her experience with Dr Dominic Parviz Brookshaw at Asia House, as part of Asia House’s Festival of Asian Literature.

Organized by Asia House in partnership with Iran Heritage Foundation.
The year 2010 marks the millennium of the completion of the Persian 'Book of Kings' (Shahnameh) by the poet Abu'l Qasim Ferdowsi. This epic poem captures the history and living legends of Iran, from the earliest times to the fall of the Persian Empire in the 7th century CE. In preserving the memory and the spirit of an heroic past, the Shahnameh continues to inspire Iranians in all areas of life and art. To celebrate this great monument of past, the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge will bring together works from the holdings of public or semi-public collections such as the British Library to the rarely seen materials from private collections. Taken together, these will provide examples of the diverse range of styles in the art of Persian book painting. A rich programme of events and educational activities for adults, children and family groups, including public lectures by leading academics, curators and conservators, workshops on Islamic calligraphy and pottery, literary readings and dramatisations, concerts of medieval Islamic music and much more is being organized around the exhibition.

Organised by the Fitzwilliam Museum in partnership with the Cambridge Shahnameh Project and Iran Heritage Foundation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Exhibition
Fitzwilliam Museum – Cambridge
11 September 2010 – 8 January 2011
The exhibition 'The Shahnameh: The Book of Kings' will bring together materials from public and semi-public collections such as the British Library to the rarely seen materials from private collections. Taken together, these will provide examples of the diverse range of styles in the art of Persian book painting. A rich programme of events and educational activities for adults, children and family groups, including public lectures by leading academics, curators and conservators, workshops on Islamic calligraphy and pottery, literary readings and dramatisations, concerts of medieval Islamic music and much more is being organized around the exhibition.

Organised by the Fitzwilliam Museum in partnership with the Cambridge Shahnameh Project and Iran Heritage Foundation.

SHAHNAMEH – THE BOOK OF KINGS: ANCIENT IRAN AND POETIC MYTH

Exhibition
Museum for Islamic Art, Berlin
3 December 2010 – 20 March 2011
UNESCO has designated the year 2010 as Millennium year of the Shahnameh. The Museum of Islamic Art in Berlin and the Berlin National Library are seizing the opportunity to introduce this literary masterpiece to the public with their world-renowned collections of Shahnameh manuscripts and miniature paintings. The exhibition will communicate the history of the epic and its literary highlights as well as the important role the Shahnameh plays for Persian national identity. Beside a thematic show of the Shahnameh 'through the ages' with masterpieces of Persian painting, the exhibition will include a collection of historical photographs and artefacts of Sasanian architecture, sculpture and silverwork to introduce the significant archaeological pre-Islamic heritage of Iran referred to continuously in this great national epic.

Organised by the Museum of Islamic Art, Berlin (DIAI) and the National Library, Berlin (SNL) and supported by Iran Heritage Foundation.

THE GOLHA PROJECT

Operational date September 2011
Golha was a series of weekly radio programmes aired on Iranian radio between 1956 and 1979 which covered the entire history of classical as well as contemporary Persian poetry, giving expression to the whole gamut of traditional Persian music and poetry. The foremost and best musicians, vocalists, literary critics, poets and announcers performed on the programmes, thus providing a unique recorded collection of the classical corpus of Persian music and poetry made in the 20th century. A digital archive of the series for access by academic researchers of Persian music and literature and the public at large was undertaken by the Endangered Archives Programme of the British Library.

The project partners.

The British Museum
The Department of Middle Eastern Studies
The Faculty of English – University of Cambridge
The Soudavar Cambridge Fund for Persian Studies

The Golha Project Foundation
Arts Council England
Asia House
Bar-Ax
BBC World Service Trust
BPI Southbank
British Library
Cambridgeshire County Council
Centre for Media and Film Studies – SOAS
Centre for Transnational History – University of St Andrews
Documentary Experimental Film Centre
Exak Arts
Garnet Publishing
Institute of Iranian Studies – University of St Andrews
Iranian Documentary Filmmakers Ass.
JBPelham
London Middle East Institute – SOAS
London School of Economics and Political Science
OFF Centre Productions
Parallax Media
Pembroke College – University of Cambridge
Prince Claus Fund
School of Oriental and African Studies
Sotheby’s
Soudavar Memorial Foundation
Standard Chartered Private Bank
The Ancient India and Iran Trust – Cambridge
The Association for Cultural Exchange
The British Institute
The British Museum
The Department of Middle Eastern Studies
FAMES – Cambridge
The Faculty of English – University of Cambridge
The Persian Department – Leiden University

Institutional and organisational partners
with whom we worked together in the implementation and execution of projects and programmes

Academic and cultural experts who shared their expertise with us and provided the professional input that ensured the high quality of our programmes and events

We appreciate the friendship and support of the following individuals in achieving our goal

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The Ancient India and Iran Trust – SOAS
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Michaela Hall
Farshad Invaripour
Nilo Ijadi
Kourosh Khaegeh
Tara Kamangar
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Grace Netto
Afsaneh Omidi
Daniela Paolini
Niray Patel
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The Endangered Archives Programme of the British Library.
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