



## NOWRUZ CONCERT: UNITY FOR FREEDOM

Sunday, Mar. 26 @ 7 p.m.

Carl St. Clair, conductor  
Shardad Rohani, conductor  
Kayhan Kalhor, kamancheh  
Sussan Deyhim, vocalist  
Azam Ali, vocalist  
Tara Ghassemieh, ballet dancer  
Pacific Symphony

This performance is  
generously sponsored by  
**Anoosheh & Alan Oskouian**  
**Farhang Foundation**  
**Cyrus Society**



Performance at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts  
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall

## PROGRAM

SHARDAD ROHANI

*Dances of Spring*

AHMAD PEJMAN

Lyrics by Loga Ramin  
Torkian

*Bid-e-Majnoon*  
*(Weeping Willow)*  
Azam Ali

AHMAD PEJMAN

Arr. by Elbert Liu

*Gole Pamchal*  
Azam Ali

SAINT-SAËNS

*The Carnival of the Animals,*  
*XIII. "The Swan"*  
Tara Ghassemieh

MAJID VAFĀDĀR

Lyrics by Haydar Reqābi,  
Arr. by Arshid Azarine,  
Orchestral Arr. by Brian  
Swartz

*Marabeboos (Kiss Me)*  
Sussan Deyhim

SHERVIN HAJIPOUR

Orchestral Arr. by John  
Leftwich

*Baraye*  
Sussan Deyhim

AKBAR MOHSENI

Lyrics by Karim Fakur, Arr.  
by Sussan Deyhim & John  
Leftwich, Orchestral Arr.  
by John Leftwich

*Elaheye Naz*  
*(Angel of Grace)*  
Sussan Deyhim

- INTERMISSION -

JOHANN STRAUSS II

*Overture to Die Fledermaus*  
Shardad Rohani, conductor

KAYHAN KALHOR

*Atashgah*  
Kayhan Kalhor

KAYHAN KALHOR

*Blue as the Turquoise Night*  
Kayhan Kalhor

## ABOUT THE CONDUCTOR



Conductor and composer  
Shardad Rohani was born  
in Tehran and educated at  
the Music Academy and  
Conservatory of Music in  
Vienna, Austria. Currently,  
Rohani is the Musical Director  
and Principal Conductor of  
the Tehran Symphony, having

served in this position since 2015. The resurrection of  
the symphony in the early 2000s has been instrumental

in connecting Tehran to the international arts community, including recent collaborations with noted conductors such as Riccardo Muti. In addition to his role as director of the Tehran Symphony (2016-20), Rohani wrote and performed the anthem for the Iran National Soccer team's appearance during the World Cup in 2018. He was also commissioned to compose the music for the opening and closing ceremonies of the 13th Asian Olympic Games held in Thailand.

An acclaimed composer and conductor, Rohani has worked with some of the top ensembles in the world including the London Symphony Orchestra, the Prague Symphony Orchestra, the Vancouver Opera Orchestra, the Austrian Chamber Orchestra, and the London Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra. He captured the attention of audiences around the world as the conductor, arranger and performer for the open-air concert "Yanni Live at the Acropolis," the second-best selling music concert video of all time. The show was simultaneously televised all around the world; more than 500 million people watched the live concert in 65 countries. His most recent project is the *Sinus Persicus Suite*, originally recorded with the London Symphony Orchestra and the London Voices at Abbey Road Studios. Over the past year, the *Sinus Persicus Suite* has been performed throughout Europe and the United States. Rohani has been the recipient of several important scholarships and awards both in Europe and the United States, including the A.K.M Scholarship (Vienna, Austria), the ASCAP Scholarship (Los Angeles, Calif.) and the Jerry Fielding Award for film composers. His recording of classical masterpieces, including all of Tchaikovsky's ballets, have received rave reviews by Japan's *In Tune* magazine.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS



**Kayhan Kalhor is an internationally acclaimed virtuoso on the kamancheh (spiked fiddle), who through his many collaborations has been instrumental in popularizing Persian music around the world and is a creative force in today's music**

**scene.** His performances of traditional Persian music and multiple collaborations have attracted audiences around the globe. He has studied the music of Iran's many regions, in particular those of Khorasan and Kordestan, and has toured the world as a soloist with various ensembles and orchestras. He is co-founder of the renowned ensembles Dastan and Masters of Persian Music. Kalhor has composed works for Iran's most renowned vocalists Mohammad Reza Shajarian and

Shahram Nazeri and has also performed and recorded with Iran's greatest instrumentalists. He has composed music for television and film and was featured on the soundtrack of Francis Ford Coppola's *Youth Without Youth* in a score that he collaborated on with Osvaldo Golijov. John Adams invited him to give a solo recital at Carnegie Hall, and he has appeared on a double bill at Lincoln Center's Mostly Mozart Festival, sharing the program with the Festival Orchestra. Kalhor is an original member of Yo-Yo Ma's Silkroad Project for whom he continues to compose for and tour with. His compositions appear on all of the Ensemble's albums. His most recent albums include *Silent City*, collaboration with Brooklyn Rider and *I Will Not Stand Alone* with santoor player Ali Bahrami Fard. Kalhor has been nominated for three Grammys and in 2017 was awarded a GRAMMY® with Yo-Yo Ma and the Silkroad Ensemble (2017).

Kayhan Kalhor, born in Tehran, began his musical studies at the age of seven under Master Ahmad Mohajer. A child prodigy on the kamancheh, he was invited at the age of thirteen to work in the Iranian National Radio and Television Orchestra, where he performed for five years. At 17, Kalhor began working with the Shayda Ensemble of the Chavosh Cultural Center, the most prestigious arts organization at the time in Iran. While performing with Shayda, he continued studying the Iranian classical repertoire (radif) with different masters. In 1991, he co-founded Dastan, the renowned Persian classical music ensemble, and in 1997 he formed Ghazal ensemble with Shujaat Husain Khan.



**Sussan Deyhim is an Iranian American composer, vocalist, performance artist, and activist.** She is internationally known for creating a unique sonic and vocal language imbued with a sense of ritual and the unknown. She was part of the national ballet company

in Iran from the age of 13 and she traveled across Iran studying with master folk musicians and dancers.

In 1976, she joined The Bejart Ballet in Europe after receiving a scholarship to attend Bejarts' performance art school Mudra where she trained in dance, music, and theater traditions as well as in classical ballet. Her music remains true to the spirit of her ancient heritage while pointing to the future with a very personal and poetic dramatic sensibility. In 1980, she moved to New York, embarking on a multifaceted career encompassing music, theatre, dance, media, and film. Deyhim's wide-ranging collaborations with leading artists from across the spectrum of contemporary art have included Ornette Coleman, Bobby McFerrin, Peter Gabriel, Bill Laswell, Richard Horowitz, Rufus Wainwright, The Blue Man

Group, and with prominent female visual artists Shirin Neshat, Sophie Calle, and Lita Albuquerque. Her composition Windfall/Beshno Az Ney was recently used by U2 throughout the U.S. and Europe.



**Azam Ali's career spans over 15 years and includes 12 collaborative and solo albums as well as two prestigious Canadian JUNO Award nominations.** She has confirmed her place as being one of the most prolific, versatile, and gifted singers

and composers on the international stage today. Born in Iran, raised in India from the age of four, and currently based in Los Angeles, Ali's most notable work is with the cutting-edge world music electronic/acoustic project Niyaz, with whom she has released four best-selling and critically acclaimed albums. All four albums have debuted at #1 on iTunes and garnered the band an incredible amount of media attention including features on NPR, The BBC, Huffington Post, and PRI. Ali continues to tour internationally with Niyaz and build on its impressive and loyal fan base worldwide.

Ali's otherworldly voice has become highly sought after by some of the biggest film composers in Hollywood and her distinctive voice and music can be heard on myriad film and television scores among which include *Thor: The Dark World*, *The Matrix Revolutions*, *Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time*, *300*, *Lara Croft-Tomb Raider*, and many more.



**Tara Ghassemieh is a Persian-American artist, dance advocate, educator, and entrepreneur.** Her work is informed by her Iranian roots and diverse experience in the performing and visual arts. She interlaces her talents in performing, creating dance for

film and stage, and teaching through INTUITV ARTSHIP, a production company and foundation she co-founded and heads. Ghassemieh tells stories that celebrate Iranian identity and inspire others to dance. The recent release of *Persian Swan* marked her film directorial debut. The short film introduces her upcoming feature film about the untold story of the Iranian National Ballet. INTUITV ARTSHIP's inaugural stage production, *The White Feather: A Persian Ballet Tale* premiered at the Irvine Barclay Theatre earlier this month.

Ghassemieh began her professional ballet career performing in American Ballet Theater's productions of *Le Corsaire*. She danced in other productions while studying at the Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School of American Ballet. Ghassemieh's professional principal dancer roles include the world premiere of *The Gatekeepers* choreographed by Andrea Schermoly, *Black Swan Pas de Deux*, George Balanchine's *Valse Fantaisie*, *Nutcracker*, *Le Corsaire*, and *White Swan Pas de Deux*. She co-choreographed *Scheherazade pas de deux*, performing at the Barclay Theater and Segerstrom Hall at the 30th Annual International Gala of the Stars.

**THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSOR:  
FARHANG FOUNDATION**

Established in 2008 in Los Angeles, Farhang Foundation is a non-religious, non-political, and not-for-profit foundation with a mission to celebrate and promote Iranian art and culture for the benefit of the community at large.



**THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSOR:  
ANOOSHEH AND ALAN OSKOUIAN**

The Symphony extends special thanks to dedicated friends of the Symphony Anoosheh and Alan Oskouian. As one of the Executive Committee Board Members at the Symphony and one of the trustees of the Farhang Foundation, Anoosheh has been tireless in her efforts to bridge Eastern and Western communities through classical music. She was the key player in the creation of the Cyrus Society as the Symphony's vehicle to bring business, community, and cultural leaders together through music.

**THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSOR:  
CYRUS SOCIETY**

Pacific Symphony gratefully acknowledges the support of The Cyrus Society, a group of business, community and cultural leaders with a passion for classical music, who may open avenues of engagement to the Iranian communities of Orange County. Cyrus Society members are generously supportive of Pacific Symphony's efforts to build long-term partnerships with the growing number of Iranian and Iranian-American leaders and residents in our region in order to support cultural celebrations and deepen understanding.