



NOWRUZ

Saturday, Mar. 23, 2024 @ 8 p.m.

Carl St. Clair, conductor
 Shardad Rohani, guest conductor
 Shahram Nazeri, vocalist
 Dennis Kim, violin
 Mahsa Vahdat, vocalist
 Ensemble performing with Shahram Nazeri:
 Pejman Hadadi, percussionist and
 ensemble leader
 Hamidreza Maleki, santur
 Sirvan Manhoobi, oud
 Kourosch Babaie, kamancheh
 Behfar Bahadoran, tar
 Pacific Symphony

This concert is sponsored by:
 Anosheh & Alan Oskouian, generous members
 of the Cyrus Society and



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

PROGRAM

SHARDAD ROHANI	<i>Spring Overture</i>
DVOŘÁK	<i>Slavonic Dance Op. 46, No. 8</i>
DVOŘÁK	<i>Slavonic Dance Op. 72, No. 2</i> Shardad Rohani, conductor
MASSENET	" <i>Méditation</i> " from <i>Thaïs</i> Feat. Concertmaster Dennis Kim
SHARDAD ROHANI	<i>Persepolis ("City of the Persians")</i> Shardad Rohani, conductor
MAHSA VAHDAT / HAFEZ <i>Arr. Atabak Elyasi</i>	"Dialogue with the Beloved" Mahsa Vahdat
ROHOLLAH KHALEGHI <i>Arr. Atabak Elyasi</i>	"Bahar e Delneshin" Mahsa Vahdat
TRADITIONAL / HAFEZ <i>Arr. Henning Sommero</i>	"The Moon of our Beloved's Face" Mahsa Vahdat
- INTERMISSION -	
TRADITIONAL <i>Arr. Shardad Rohani</i>	"Lai Lai" Shahram Nazeri
SIĀMAK FARROKHSERESHTI & SHAHRAM NAZERI	"Havaye Vatanam" Shahram Nazeri
TRADITIONAL <i>Arr. Shardad Rohani</i>	"Shirin, Shirin" Shahram Nazeri
SHAHRAM NAZERI <i>Arr. Shardad Rohani</i>	"Metamorphosis (Sheida Shodam Man)" Shahram Nazeri

Other Selections to be Announced from Stage

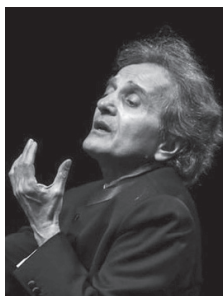


ABOUT THE ARTISTS

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.



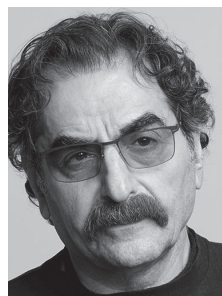
Shahram Nazeri is an Iranian master musician, singer (Maqam and Persian traditional Radifs), and composer. He is one of the most famous and well-known Iranian artists in the world.

Nazeri was born on February 19, 1952 in Kermanshah, Iran. Throughout his childhood, he was under the tutelage of the most renowned masters of Persian music including Abdollah Davami, Nourali Boroumand, and Mahmood Karimi. He has been accompanied by some of the masters of Iranian traditional music such as Jalil Shahnaz, Mohammadreza Lotfi, Hossein Alizadeh, Jalal Zolfonoun, Parviz Meshkatiyan, and Faramarz Payvar. Nazeri is a pioneering musician who has sung and composed Sufi music on Rumi's poetry as well as Persian songs on Ferdowsi's poetry.

Nazeri has produced and released more than 50 music albums so far including tens of songs that he has composed by himself. Some of his albums and songs have been the greatest of Iranian music with global fame as well.

He has established some music bands and performed hundreds of concerts in tens of countries from Japan to Brazil, some in the most famous and significant venues around the world, such as Royal Albert Hall, Carnegie Hall, Sony Centre, and Théâtre de la Ville. He has also performed in many music festivals around the world and has performed with prominent musicians and bands from different countries. According to some media experts, until now he has been one of the most influential and popular Iranian artists in the history of Iranian art.

Nazeri has received many recognitions and honors from different countries, universities, festivals, and institutions in the world, including Officer of the Order of Arts and Letters (Officier De L'ordre des Arts et des Lettres) from France, honorary doctorate, and certificate of commendation from UNESCO, University of Oxford, Stanford University, University of California, Berkeley, Columbia University, University of California, Los Angeles, University of Tokyo, Asia Society (New York), Canada Parliament and Prime Minister, Ban Ki-moon, Mevlana Foundation (Konya, Turkey), and tens more.



ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Mahsa Vahdat, an internationally acclaimed singer and musician from Iran living in the San Francisco Bay area, is dedicated to both her personal, lifelong musical and artistic path, and the greater cause of freedom of expression. Her artistic



work has offered audiences around the globe a deeper appreciation of Iranian poetry and music. With her enchanting voice deeply rooted in the heritage of her beloved country Iran, and her innovative musical expression and wide-ranging repertoire, she has fearlessly defied the bans on music and solo women singers imposed by Iranian authorities after the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979. She continues to interact with a diverse international audience that highly appreciates her art.

Vahdat has developed a highly personal style of musical expression, rooted in Iranian classical and regional music, a traditional and complex system of modes, melodic motives, and ornamentation infused with contemporary and innovative expressions and influences. Her musical expression transcends cultural and language boundaries, embracing the beauty of diversity and the universality of human sentiments.

Beyond her musical achievements, Vahdat is a passionate vocal educator and advocate for women's rights. Her life's work, in particular, empowers women by encouraging them to raise their voices.

Her performances and recording projects include collaborations with many of the world's most acclaimed musicians, including U.S. blues singer Mighty Sam McClain, the Kronos Quartet, Tord Gustavson, Teatr Zar and Grotowski institute, SKRUK Choir, Atabak Elyasi, and Bridget Kibbey.

In 2003, Vahdat and her sister Marjan started a long-lasting collaboration with the Norwegian record label Kirkelig Kulturverksted (KKV) and producer and poet Erik Hillestad. This collaboration has led to a worldwide release of a series of award-winning and critically acclaimed albums.

Vahdat's awards include the Freemuse Award (Denmark 2010), Independent Music Award (USA 2013), German Critics Award (2016), Songlines Best Album for "Traces of an Old Vineyard" (England 2015), and the Transglobal Award for the album "Placeless" with the Kronos Quartet (2019).

World-renowned, Pejman Hadadi (pictured right) is considered one of the most innovative Iranian percussionists. He was born

in Tehran, Iran on February 19, 1969. At age 10, he began studying Tombak, the central drum in traditional Persian music, with Master Tombak player Assadollah Hejazi for two years. He owes the foundation of his training to this Master's precise teaching. He continued his training for a brief time with Master Tombak player, Bahman Rajabi, who exposed him to an entirely different approach to playing the instrument. Hadadi tirelessly followed the various styles of famous Tombak players and was captivated by such great Masters as Hossein Tehrani, Nasser Farhangfar, and Morteza Ayan, who influenced him greatly through their recordings. After some time, he felt drawn to the other main percussive instrument in the tradition, namely the sacred frame drum known as the Daf. Alongside his long hours of Tombak practice, he taught himself how to play the Daf, finding great inspiration from the great Master Daf player, Bijan Kamkar, through his recordings.

Hadadi immigrated to the U.S. in 1989 and began his professional career in 1991. After collaborating with a few different music ensembles, Oshagh and Nava, he began performing with Master musician and composer, Hossein Alizadeh in several concerts



Hamidreza Maleki



Sirvan Manhoobi



Kourosh Babaie



Behfar Bahadoran

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

in the US, which led him to pursue music with more diligence. In 1995, he joined Dastan Ensemble, the highly celebrated and “most-forward-looking Persian music ensemble” (*LA Weekly*). Hadadi has recorded countless critically acclaimed pioneering works with Dastan and continues to perform with the ensemble in some of the world’s most noted concert halls.

In the year 2000, along with Behnam Samani, Reza Samani, Hakim Ludin, Javid Afsari Rad, and Morshed Mehregan, he revolutionized the first Iranian percussion ensemble, ZARBANG with whom he has performed extensively in major international festivals and prestigious concert halls in Europe, North America, and Hong Kong. His ground-breaking recordings with this ensemble include Rengineh, Middle Eastern and World Percussion, and Call to Love.

Concurrent with his activities with Dastan Ensemble and ZARBANG, Hadadi began performing and recording with various Iranian musicians and from other cultures. The impressive list of these musicians includes Hossein Alizadeh, Shahram Nazeri, Homayoun Shajarian, Kayhon Kalhor, Parissa, Shujaat Hussain Khan, Omar Faruk Tekbilek, Hossein Omoumi, Sima Bina, Salar Aghili, Ali Akbar Moradi, Hafez Nazeri, Ardeshir Kamkar, Matthaious Tsahourides, Nejati Celik, Halil Karadoumon, Yair Dalal, Imamyar Hasanov, Rajeeb Chakraborti, Adam Rudolph, Brad Dutz, Gregg Ellis, and Yuval Ron among others.

These collaborations, specifically with non-Iranian musicians, inspired him to explore and research the world of rhythm in different cultures, especially those of neighboring Iran. Being distinctively drawn to the body of rhythm in India, he began to study the Tabla for two years to understand cyclic rhythms. Learning the technique of Tabla and its different rhythmic patterns significantly influenced his methodology and attitude toward playing the Tombak.

Considered one of the most notable Iranian Tombak players, Hadadi has created a distinct signature style that has greatly impacted Tombak players of his own generation and after. One of his innovations is adding a piece of skin onto the frame of the Tombak to create variety, color, and a specific sonic atmosphere. Another one of his innovations is a new version of custom-made tunable frame drums called

Pezhvāk or Davaayer-e Kooki. These drums come in various sizes to create harmonic intervals based on the sound of percussion in traditional Persian music. Designed to be assembled on specific stands, these frame drums can be set up to be played simultaneously and with other appropriate percussive instruments like the Tombak, which adds a greater dimension to the sound and color of ensemble music. Hadadi used this combination for the first time in his concerts with Dastan Ensemble and their album *Shurideh*. Hadadi’s combination is now enjoying a wide reach and popularity among the new generation of percussive artists.

Among Pejman’s achievements is his collaboration with REMO, one of the world’s largest manufacturers of synthetic skin and percussive instruments. After years of experimentation, Pejman succeeded in finding access to a certain kind of synthetic skin, which, when placed on the frame of the Daf yielded an agreeable, authentic sound. Since his success in 2009, REMO began manufacturing the Daf with a very appealing design and quality, spreading its popularity among percussionists worldwide.

For years, concurrent with his performing career, Pejman has been very active in teaching and educating people in the arena of rhythm and percussion. He has numerous instruction manuals that await publication. He received the prestigious Durfee Foundation Master Musician Award twice for disseminating and propagating Persian music in the US. In 1999, he founded Neyreez World Music Institute in Southern California, where, for years, he taught classes alongside other notable musicians.

Since 1999, Hadadi has composed a large body of music for dance, which he has performed extensively in concert with renowned dancer and choreographer, Banafsheh Sayyad and her ensemble, NAMAHA, in Europe and North America, marking the first time Contemporary Persian dance and music were brought onto the stage.

Pejman has also been active in film music. His recordings include *Prince of Egypt* and *Prince of Persia*. He was commissioned by the Los Angeles Master Chorale and performed at Disney Hall with the Choral in 2007. He is currently a lecturer in the Department of Ethnomusicology at UCLA.