

# Life in LAMORINDA

## Persian Art in Our Libraries

By Sophie Braccini



The deer is a symbol of innocence

Picture courtesy of Hourian Gallery

Inspired by this year's Lamorinda Reads book selection, Funny in Farsi, our three libraries will display the work of local Persian-born artists. It will be worth the three-town tour to see it all.

For the full month of November the Orinda gallery will be displaying work by Iranian born artist Mohammed Hourian. Hourian will bring to Orinda about twenty five of the pieces that he usually displays in his Union Street gallery in San Francisco. Hourian has been present on

the San Francisco art scene for 25 years. He was raised in Tehran and studied and work in the ancient art of miniature since he was 12 years old. Under the tutelage of Iran's most famous miniaturist, Hourian studied this unique tradition employing arabesque, linear detail, fantasy color and delicate form, and he honed his own imaginative and original style. The quality of his paintings immediately conveys an elevated sense of whimsy and lyrical movement, balancing expert crafts-

manship and cultural precision with shimmering, transcendental images that have been aptly called "perceptual fantasy."

In the same exhibition, local publisher Nazli Monahan will display some of the artwork she collected for the exhibition: "The wonders of Persia," the first Iranian children's art show in the US that opened in 2006 at the Presidio in San Francisco.

In November in Moraga author and painter Kat Zandvakili will bring her work painted from the heart. She composes her paintings like she does her novels, working through layer upon layer of splashes of color until she reaches the joy; then wild horses and all manner of wild things come through. Born in Tehran, Kat studied painting in New York at Sarah Lawrence College and at the 92nd Street Y, and in San Francisco.

In Lafayette, from October 7th to the 25th, the Library presents "A Novel Idea," by artists from the Lafayette Gallery. For five artists at the Lafayette Gallery, it is the written word that resonates in their work. Pat Hayashi (acrylics/prints),

Sherry Smith Bell (printmaking), Sadie Cuming (jewelry), Jim Rose-nau (whimsical bookshelves) and JoAnn Lieberman (collage and assemblage) will have pieces inspired by Funny in Farsi on display.

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## Lamorinda Reads!

**Film**  
Orinda - Wed., Oct. 15 4:00 p.m.  
Come enjoy the Oscar nominated Iranian film "Children of Heaven" and Persian snacks. Located in the Garden Room.

Just for Fun! This Lamorinda Reads event will provide a basic introduction to Persian dancing with guidance provided by staff of the Shahrzad Dance Academy. Ages 10 through adult.

Moraga - Sat. Nov. 8 - 1 p.m.  
Kat Zandvakili presents one woman's artistic quest to shed the old myths and reveal her true self.

**Musical Performance**  
Orinda - Thur., Oct. 16 - 4 p.m.  
Middle Eastern percussion: musical performance for kids from nationally acclaimed performer Mary Ellen Donald.

**Pakistan in the Spotlight**  
Lafayette - Wed., Oct. 15 - 7 p.m.  
After a year of internal political change and increasing domestic violence, including the assassination of Benazir Bhutto, Pakistan remains at the center of international concerns about terrorism and nuclear proliferation. Neil Joeck, Senior Fellow at the Center for Global Security Research at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory will speak about these issues and more. Dr. Joeck is also an Adjunct Professor of Political Science at the University of California, Berkeley.

**Storytelling (for Adults)**  
Orinda - Thursday, Oct. 23 - 7 p.m.  
Come share the wise & witty stories of the Hodja Nasreddin - legendary Middle Eastern Sufi described as illogical yet logical, rational yet irrational, bizarre yet normal, foolish yet sharp, and simple yet profound. Sponsored by the Contra Costa Tale Spinners & the Orinda Library.

**Multicultural Children's Festival**  
Moraga - Thur., Nov. 6 - 3 p.m.  
Where in the world is Waldo? Look for him at the multicultural children's festival. Food, games, and crafts from around the world. Ages 5 and older.

**Funny in Farsi book discussions**  
Lafayette - Wed., Oct. 22 - 7 p.m.  
Orinda - Tuesday, Oct. 28 - 7 p.m.  
Moraga - Wed., Nov. 05 - 3:00 p.m.  
Meet others to discuss your thoughts, conclusions, reactions, likes and perhaps even dislikes about our second annual Lamorinda Reads selection.

**Henna Tattoo**  
Lafayette - Sat., Oct. 18 - 2 p.m.  
Darcy Vasudev from the Henna Lounge creates exquisite works of temporary art for everyone. This program is open for teens and adults. Limit 30 participants, so call the Lafayette Library to register at (925) 283-3872.

**Women in Contemporary Iran**  
Moraga - Thur., Oct. 23 - 2:00 p.m.  
features a talk by Dr. Mehry Astaneh who will discuss the status of Iranian women before the 1978 Islamic Revolution, women who participated in that revolution, policies toward women in the early years that followed the revolution, factors that shifted policies, and the million signature campaign.

**Lamorinda Reads! Grand Finale**  
Orinda Auditorium - Author Talk - Wed., Nov. 12 - 7:00 p.m.  
Funny in Farsi author Firoozeh Dumas visits Lamorinda for an author talk to celebrate Lamorinda Reads! 2008. Seating is available on a first come, first seated basis.

**Persian Dancing**  
Orinda - Monday, October 20 - 7 p.m.  
Moraga - Sat., Nov. 01 - 2 p.m.

**An Afternoon of Poetry Reading**

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