

# THE STORY OF NOWRUZ

نوروز، NOROOZ, NAWROUZ, NEWROZ

## 2024



Original Choreography & Scoring

داستان نوروز به روایت موسیقی، نمایش و رقص



THE  
STORY OF  
NOWRUZ

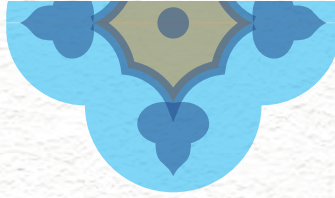
NOROOZ, NAWROUZ, NEWROZ, نوروز

2024

"The Story of Nowruz" represents one of the most ancient traditions, Nowruz, told as a live story through the universal language of movements and music, making it the very first of its kind. This adaptation will surely bring to life the treasured traditions of Nowruz while taking you on a visual journey of colors and sounds that spring brings into the homes and hearts of us all. "The Story of Nowruz" is a celebration of







spring, told through original choreography and musical composition and visual effects to showcase the artistic elements of traditional Persian and folk dances from different regions, displaying the diversity among all who celebrate Nowruz.

"The Story of Nowruz" takes you on a journey through 7 scenes that display the true meaning of the full 13 days of traditions celebrated by millions throughout the 17-plus countries that celebrate Nowruz. As winter comes to an end, there begins the hustle and anticipation of the arrival of spring, and of course, spring cleaning is a must!

We welcome our live audience of all ages and backgrounds as you are about to experience a world of enchantment which will leave you with a lasting impact. We invite you for Eid Didani (intermission) with tea, sweets, and family photos, along with a surprise gift of Eidi for all attendees.





## About Niosha International Conservatory of Arts (NICArt)

7,630 miles, 12,279 kilometers, is the physical distance between California and Iran. Culturally, the differences span thousands of years, passed down through a rich history of dance, music, theater, food, and language. Heritage is conferred onto us when we are born. What happens when we are born into a culture that is both home and also 7,630 miles away from our deeply-rooted heritage? Can we integrate and pass down the rich heritage of our ancestral homeland while embracing the culture and customs of home?

As global and domestic changes hardened the attitudes of some towards different cultures, Niosha made the decision to create a new foundation dedicated to preserving and promoting all cultural traditions and heritage in America. In January 2018, the Niosha International Conservatory of Arts (NICArt) was approved as a **501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization** with the mission of promoting the arts, culture and literature of local communities by providing access to various creative experiences such as lessons in visual and performing arts, theater production, music instruction, language classes and various art programs.

Niosha Nafei Jamali created a home for the Persian heritage of the past and the new cultural evolution at NICArt (the Niosha International Conservatory of Arts). She could see the longing for a distant homeland within her community and the desire to preserve Iranian culture and traditions in this new home. The NICArt Foundation presents modern and traditional art forms that bridge time and space, connecting people from all cultures and walks of life.







When we sit in that darkened theater or walk through a well-lit gallery, our hearts expand to explore and understand experiences different from our own. Stories shared through sight, sound, color, or spoken word help us enter journeys of introspection, and we're opened up to interpretations of life through the eyes of others. Very often, when we open up to compassion, our empathy expands, and our ability for discourse grows. Dialogue, new ideas, and understanding are all made possible through our direct interaction with art. Today, in a world where forces beyond our control can lead us into extreme or polarized places, art is needed more than ever.

Niosha International Conservatory of Arts (NICArt) is taking its role to heart. Through the promotion of the arts, culture, heritage, and traditions of communities in the Bay Area and abroad, NICArt enables the journey to bring people of all colors and creeds together, united in a shared humanity. Through our efforts, we aim to highlight harmony and togetherness that unite us all.

Art, Music, Dance  
Rhythms of Humanity  
All Unity  
All Fluidity  
All Beauty  
Joy & Purity



NICArt invites you to join our community. You can contribute to the cultural events we create through our many membership or sponsorship opportunities.



Scan Me





Raised in Iran through high school, **Niosha Nafei Jamali** came to the United States to pursue an education in Psychology and Computer Science. She won the 1992 Miss Iran pageant in Los Angeles, CA. After college, Niosha founded Niosha Dance Academy (NDA), teaching modern and traditional dance to students of all ages. Growing into one of the most prolific Iranian dance schools in the nation. NDA paved the way for Niosha and her elite performers to tour the United States, performing at festivals, professional sporting events including NBA Warriors halftime show. She took her dance academy team to one of cable television's top shows, America's Got Talent. Niosha has been featured on VOA, Manoto, "Ladies' Home Journal", "San Francisco Chronicle" and "Experience Life" Magazine. Niosha was realizing her dream of sharing the artistry of Persian dance, connecting with people from all walks of life and backgrounds.



**Niosha Nafei-Jamali**  
**Producer and**  
**Director**



In the midst of her career, Niosha's work almost ground to a halt at age 31 when she was diagnosed with Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma and given a less than 40% chance of survival. Never one to be afraid of the odds, she rallied her optimism, and refusal to quit to recover from her disease. Her family and the Iranian Bay Area community drew in tight around her, supporting her miraculous recovery and her dream lived on. Niosha was stronger and even more determined to preserve and promote her culture as a staunch community-organizer with the belief that art is the common unifier of all peoples around the world. In January 2018, Niosha International Conservatory of Arts (NICArt) was approved as a nonprofit charitable organization, celebrating cultural diversity and harmony through art, music, theater, dance, and a united humanity. In March 2022, NICArt unveiled its feature-length musical, "The Story of Nowruz", at the San Mateo Performing Arts Center. The production garnered enthusiastic praise from local leaders, including mayors and board supervisors, as well as an appreciative audience, all contributing to its resounding success. Niosha lives in the Bay Area with her husband and children, amongst the community she loves.







**Jadell Lee**  
**Assistant Director**

Professional dance educator, published author and TEDx speaker Jadell Lee brings a fresh perspective of life to audiences across the country. Lee has served as adjunct professor of dance for Seton Hill University, (2x) guest lecturer at Southern Utah University and guest master instructor for Abby Lee Dance Company. Lee has worked with American Idol Season 15 Runner Up, LaPorsha Renae, Jussie Smollett and Dance Mom's Season 8's, Sarah Georgiana. Lee has also been featured in Yahoo, Thrive Global & more, for his mental health advocacy, as well as SiriusXM. Jadell

Lee holds a Bachelor of Arts in Dance from the University of California, Riverside and is the CEO of Elevate Convention.

Lyla Rose Flashman (They/She) is joyed to be working with NICArt as the Production Stage Manager for their first collaboration together. Having received their Masters of Fine Arts in Stage Management at the University of California Irvine, they are happy to be back at their Alma Mater. Lyla Rose works closely with INTUITV ARTSHIP, as Tour Manager and Production Stage Manager, for the production of The White Feather which launches the East Coast Dance for Freedom tour this March. In addition to working on shows, Lyla Rose teaches at Chapman University as the Stage Management Instructor and mentor. After working for the New Swan Shakespeare Festival in 2022 as the Festival Assistant Stage Manager for Comedy of Errors and Pericles, they returned for the 2023 season as a Production Stage Manager of Julius Caesar and Assistant Stage Manager of As You Like It. With most creative works being in theatre and education, they are continuing to design film projects in collaboration with their film partners.



**Lyla Rose Flashman**  
**Production**  
**Stage Manager**







**Fouzhan Yousefi**  
**Project Manager**

Fouzhan Yousefi, a Bay Area native and proud Iranian-American, brings her expertise in brand storytelling and digital marketing to her role as Operations Director and Production Coordinator of The Story of Nowruz. As founder of The Muse Cloud agency, she crafted compelling brand narratives for startups, established companies, foundations, and individuals across diverse industries, building a track record of over 25 successful projects on a global scale. Since joining the NICArt team in 2019, Fouzhan has played an integral role in bringing The Story of Nowruz to life. She has been deeply involved in every aspect of the production, from its initial conception to its triumphant completion. Fouzhan holds a Bachelor of Arts in Literature and Creative Writing from the University of California, Santa Cruz. Beyond the professional, Fouzhan finds immense joy in sharing this grand artistic and cultural project with her family, friends, and community, fostering a celebration of heritage and tradition.

**Jila Saber** is a fashion designer known for her unique ideas and modern structured gowns. With over 20 years experience in the fashion industry, Jila has worked with some international brands such as Pennyblack and Solar. She established Jila Atelier in 2012 with her first Ready To Wear line featuring asymmetrical and structured pieces. Jila Atelier carries two fashion lines, Haute Couture and Ready-To-Wear. Haute Couture, Bridal, and Evening-wear are done by using the best Chantilly laces from France and the silks from Italy. All appliqués and embroideries are hand finished and lined in the Silk Charmeuse. The RTW collection is also made of high-end luxury fabrics such as novelty silks. Jila Atelier's main focus is all about Individuality and Artistic expression, making women feel unique and beautiful. Women will now have something unique to share with others.



**Jila Saber**  
**Costume Designer**





Professional dancer and choreographer Marco Mejia embraces dance to inspire, educate and uplift others throughout the United States. Trained in Contemporary, Jazz, Ballet, Hip Hop and Acrobatics, the Los Angeles native has served as guest master instructor for Millennium Dance Complex Orange County and Seton Hill University, pro-assistant for Dance Masters of America and resident instructor for Adage Dance Center. Mejia has worked with choreographers Tyce Diorio, Samuel Nelson, Erica Klein, Criscilla Anderson, Sophia Lucia, and Hannah Gallagher. Marco Mejia is procuring his Bachelor of Arts in Dance from the University of California, Los Angeles and is touring faculty with Elevate Convention.



**Marco Mejia**  
**Lead Choreographer**



**Raeeqa Shehabi-Yaghmai**  
**Singer, Vocalist**

**Raeeqa Shehabi-Yaghmai** possesses a unique fusion of versatility, strength, and sensitivity in both her singing and stage presence. She's performed roles such as Violetta (La Traviata), Nedda (Pagliacci), Mimi (La Bohème) and the title roles in Suor Angelica and Madama Butterfly with companies such as Phénix Opera, West Bay Opera, Escenia Ensemble of Mexico City, and Opera Brasov of Romania amongst others. Born and raised in Iran until the age of 19, she's an avid interpreter of Persian folk songs and melodies. She founded the Persian Melody Project in 2007

collaborating with composer David Garner and performed the songs with Oakland East Bay Symphony, and Redwood Symphony. Additionally, she's a certified relationship coach, Amazon bestselling author, award-winning dating blogger, and the founder and CEO of Dating with Confidence™ where she mentors driven, successful women to create a healthy love life that feels authentic and empowering to them. She's an avid advocate of love education which is strongly missing from the traditional academic system – as well as women empowerment. She's been featured on CBS, Blog Talk Radio, K.I.R.N. Radio, Bustle, and Elite Daily.







## Banafsheh Sayyad **Winter Queen**

Banafsheh Sayyad is an Iranian master sacred dancer, choreographer, transformational teacher, activist and founder of Dance of Oneness®. She performs and teaches internationally, initiating people into the wisdom of their bodies. Banafsheh is among the few bearers of authentic Persian dance in the world and a pioneer in creating a liberated feminine expression in Sufi dance which has been performed traditionally by men only. Her modality, Dance of Oneness® is dance as a spiritual path and science of embodiment. It is a fusion of 3 dimensions: the art of dance: rigorous technique and self-expression; healing; and wisdom teachings. With an MFA in Dance and Choreography from UCLA and a Masters in Chinese Medicine, she's dedicated to individual and collective healing and liberation through dance. Banafsheh's award-winning solo dances and ensemble work with her dance company, NAMAHA, has been presented in North America, Europe and Australia.

From Inland Dance Theater to American Ballet Theatre, Rachel's passion for dance burns bright. Trained by renowned professionals, she mastered a diverse repertoire: ballet, contemporary, jazz, tap, and musical theater. Accepted by both American Ballet Theatre and San Francisco Ballet School, her talent took center stage. In 2013, Rachel's dream unfolded with Reverence Performing Arts Academy, a haven for young dancers producing Nutcrackers, summer ballets, and musicals, showcasing classics like Swan Lake and contemporary works. She also founded "Ballet on the Beach," bringing dance to local communities. Now at Dana Point Dance, Rachel serves as Artistic Director where her choreography and technique have been lauded, earning top awards at YAGP, and has earned "Top Studio" and "Studio of Excellence" accolades. Rachel's mission is clear: inspire a love for dance, guiding students towards professional opportunities, while nurturing a well-rounded appreciation for the arts.



## Rachel Swinson, **Spring Lady**





Miriam Peretz weaves movement and ritual together to create safe, communal spaces for healing and empowered embodiment. She is a life-long dancer who has immersed herself in the study of dance forms and sacred movement practices from around the world, focusing on Central Asian dance, and the mystical practices of Sufi whirling and ritual. Miriam sees dance as a uniquely powerful means of expressing deep emotion and spiritual yearning, and therefore the perfect embodiment of prayer.

Miriam is the director of Nava Dance Collective and creator of Nava Dance, and Integral Dance, both modalities for holistic dance practice that weave traditional dance forms with somatic inquiry, embodied intention, and breath awareness. Miriam offers workshops and retreats worldwide.



Miriam Peretz  
**Nava Dance Collective**



Kourosh Babaei  
**Graphic Designer**

Since he was a child in Iran, **Kourosh Babaei** was drawn to visual arts and music. His creative abilities led him to pursue the the arts, receiving his bachelor's degree in graphic design. Later, Kourosh Babaei served as manager and shareholder of Kimia Advertising Company, overseeing the visual graphics team. Kourosh has been a dedicated collaborator with Niosha Dance Academy for a decade. In 2016, he emigrated to Canada, where he continues to work in graphics and music. His business website **[www.KouroshBabaei.com](http://www.KouroshBabaei.com)** offers a glimpse into his three decades of expertise, including offerings in graphics and printing services. As his work with *"The Story of Nowruz"* conveys, Kourosh strives to create art that elicits positive emotions, while leaving a lasting impression for all who experience it.



"The Story of Nowruz" is presented to you in 7 scenes  
(Haft-Scene)

### Scene 1- Zemestan (Winter)

Winter, with all its beauty and treasures, draws to a close, signalling the magical transition to spring. Nane Sarma, the Winter Queen, bids farewell to the season with a haunting song and dance, promising to return when the next winter arrives. A stirring sound arises from the heart of the soil – the sound of life pushing upward. Spring is on its way. Nowruz celebrates this vibrant rebirth of earth and nature.





## زمستان

زمستان با همه خاطره ها و زیبایی هایش کم کم به پایان می رسد با وجود سرمای گزنده و برف و زمین یخزده، حس امید و نوآوری در میان شاخه های درختان پوشیده شده با برف وجود دارد. در حالیکه همه با شور و هیجان با آخرین برفهای زمستان بازی میکنند، ننه سرما خانواده را بدور هم بودن در زیر کرسی دعوت میکند تا به استقبال بهار بنشینند. صدای پای بهار می آید و معنایش اینست که وقت، وقت خانه تکانی و زیر و رو کردن خانه رسیده

### **Narrator:**

Raeeka Shehabi-Yaghmai

### **Winter Queen:**

Banafsheh Sayyad

### **Dancers:**

Aubrey Martinez

Brooke Lenain

Brooklyn Rice

Isadora Stillwagon

Lynette Morales

Makenna Miller

Malani Harrell

Mollyna Zuniga

Yuki Miyata



## Scene 2 - Khāne-takānī (Spring Cleaning)

As the celebration of Nowruz nears, many traditions take place to prepare for its welcoming. One such tradition is khāne-tekānī, which translates to “shaking the house” –and shaking the house they sure do! Traditionally, homes were turned nearly upside down as a practice of cleansing the living environment. Every nook and cranny is given a thorough cleaning and refreshed for the New Year. A very customary aspect of this tradition is the washing of the rugs, windows and curtains, casting out the old years' dust. This act provided a basis for a much needed health routine. This isn't just about cleanliness, but a symbolic purification for a fresh start. The scents of hyacinths and sweet pastries soon fill the air, a fragrant sign that Nowruz is near. This deep cleaning ritual transcends Iran, echoing similar traditions of renewal in China, the U.S., and beyond. Out with the old, in with the new!

After completing these exhaustive cleaning rituals, It's time to step outside, soak up some energy from the warmth of the fire, and rejuvenate.





## خانه تکانی

به پایان سال که نزدیکتر میشویم و ماه اسفند از راه می رسد، دغدغه و شور و حال عیدهم در بین اعضای خانواده ها به وجود می آید تا برای عید همه زوایای خانه را بشورند و بسابند و خانه تکانی به لرزاندن و زیر و رو کردن همه جای خانه تبدیل میشود. شیطنتهای بچه ها و شور و شوق باهم بودن غیرمعمول نیست و به انسان حس زندگی می دهد. این رسم برگرفته از تازگی و نو شدن می باشد

افراد گرد و غبار خانه های خود را زدوده و طراوت و رونق خاصی به زندگی خود می بخشند. رایحه شادابی و پاکیزگی به فضای گرم خانه روح تازه ای می دهد. با تغییر و تحول در رفتار و افکار خود قلبهایشان را صاف و دلهایشان را از کینه ها و کدورتها تهی می کنند و نوید عشق و بذر محبت در دلهای یکدیگر می کارند و آماده پذیرایی از بهار میشوند

### Narrator:

Raeeka Shehabi-Yaghmai

### Performers:

Bahar Ghaoumi  
Isadora Stillwagon  
Lynette Morales  
Malani Harrell  
Nazmehr Marzban  
Roya Oreo  
Tara Hassanzadeh

### Lamps:

Niusha Amiri  
Parinaz pourfathi



# خانه تکانی

### Scene 3 - Chaharshanbeh Suri

Haji Firooz, the joyous herald of Nowruz, brings music and cheer to the streets. Dressed in vibrant red satin, this troubadour dances and plays the tambourine, spreading news of the approaching New Year. Like Christmas carols signal the holidays, Haji Firooz's presence fills the air with anticipation. To celebrate diversity and unity, NICArt has expanded this traditionally male role to include people of all genders and backgrounds.

### Chaharshanbe Suri: Festival of Fire

As the sun sets on the last Tuesday of the year, the ancient tradition of Chaharshanbe Suri ignites. A festival of fire jumping and purification, it's one of the most beloved Nowruz celebrations. People gather around blazing bonfires, taking turns leaping over the flames while chanting, "Give me your beautiful red color and take back my sickly paleness!" They believe fire, with its purifying power, will cleanse them of past ailments and bestow blessings for the new year.





## Ghashogh Zani: A Night of Spoons and Spirits

Alongside Chaharshanbe Suri comes the playful tradition of Ghashogh Zani (Spoon Banging). In ages past, people believed they received visits from their ancestors' spirits on the year's final day. To mimic these visits, people wrapped in blankets would roam the streets by firelight, banging pots and pans with spoons to chase away bad luck. This lively custom, much like Halloween's Trick-or-Treating, has faded in modern times, but perhaps it's time for a revival! It's fascinating that despite the distance, Iran and the U.S. share such a similar tradition.

### Performers (Haji Firooz):

Aubrey Martinez  
Brooke Lenain  
Brooklyn Rice  
Isadora Stillwagon  
Lynette Morales  
Makenna Miller  
Malani Harrell  
Mollyna Zuniga  
Yuki Miyata

### "Ghashogh-Zan"

Neesh Riaz (Haji Firooz)  
  
Niusha Amiri  
Parinaz pourfathi  
Shima Kaviani



## قاشق زنی

در این شب زنان و مردان چهره خود را با چادر نماز می پوشانند و گاه نقابی بر چهره دارن که ناشناس بمانند. آنها با قاشق بر کاسه یا قابلمه میزنند و یا بر در خانه می کوبند و اهل خانه را از آمدن خویش آگاه می کنند. اهل خانه کاسه خالی را با مشتی آذوقه یا گاهاً بجای آذوقه، پول نقد به قاشق زن پرداخت می کنند

فلسفه قاشق زنی بر این مبناست که توانگران به یاری نیازمندان میشتابند و بدین وسیله موجب خرسندی و دل شادی آنها می شوند  
آیین قاشق زنی از آنجا سرچشمه گرفته است که ایرانیان باستان معتقدند که ارواح پاک نیاکان به صورت ناشناس به دیدار بازماندگان می روند و وابستگان برای یاد بود و تجلی روح آنها خیرات و هدیه می دهند



# Chaharshanbeh Suri



## چهارشنبه سوری

جشن چهارشنبه سوری که ( کلمه "سور" در زبان فارسی به معنای سرخ بودن، نور و روشنایی است) سنتی دیرینه است که با برگزاری آن مردم با شور و هیجان به استقبال بهاری دل انگیز می روند تا در غروب آخرین سه شنبه سال با آغوشی پر از نور و گرما برای پاک کردن افکار آتشی بیافروزند، کینه ها را بسوزانند، زردی خاطرات بد را به آتش و سرخی عشق و سلامتی را از آتش بگیرند. آتش نفرت را در دلها خاموش کنند و رنگی تازه به روح و روان خود ببخشند

در همین حال و احوال، حاجی فیروز مژده رسیدن بهار را می دهد. رنگ سرخ لباس حاجی فیروز نمادی از تحول در طبیعت است

ایرانیان باستان معتقدند که آتش این عنصر سوزان مظهر پاکیزگی و یکرنگی است

هنگام تاریک شدن هوا با برپا کردن آتش ، شعله های سوزان ، شعاعی از روشنایی ایجاد می کند تا ظلمات شب را مغلوب کنند. در شب چهارشنبه سوری ۳ بوته آتش فروزان برپا می شود که هر یک نشانه ای از ۳ پند بزرگ ایرانیان باستان یعنی رفتار نیک، کردار نیک و پندار نیک است

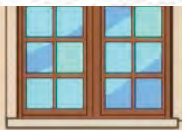


## Scene 4- Haft-Seen

A physical symbol of Nowruz is the arrangement of a Haft-Seen table or sofreh. **Haft-Seen**, is the tradition of placing 7 symbolic objects on a table whose names commence with the letter “S” in Farsi. These elements are **Sabzeh** (wheatgrass grown in a dish-re-birth), **Samanu** (sweet pudding made from wheat germ-sweetness & abundance), **Senjed** (sweet dried fruit of the lotus tree -love), **Serkeh** (vinegar-patience & cleansing), **Seeb** (apple-health & beauty), **Seer** (garlic-health & medicine) and **Somagh** (sumac-sunrise as the spice of life). Other common symbols to be placed on the table include a candle (light), mirror (self-reflection), painted eggs (fertility), goldfish (life), gold coins (wealth) and a book of wisdom or holy book, or more commonly a book of poetry by Hafez, Saadi, or Ferdosi. Just as Christmas is most recognized by a decorated tree, so is the Haft-Seen for Nowruz.

### Performers:

Nazmehr Marzban - Seeb (Apple)  
Miriam Peretz - Sabzeh (Wheatgrass)  
Jenna Anjali - Samanu (Sweet Pudding)  
Sahar Ahghari - Senjed (Dried fruit)  
Bahar Ghaoumi- Serkeh (Vinegar)  
Roya Oreo - Somagh (Spice)  
Tara Hassanzadeh - Seer (Garlic)



# Haft Seen





## هفت سین

هفت‌سین سفره ای است که ایرانیان و پارسی زبانان هنگام نوروز می‌آرایند. این سفره، منشور همبستگی در رنجها و شادیاها است و عدد هفت عددی خوش یمن و نشانه جاودانه بودن است. همه افراد خانواده با عشق، صفا، صمیمیت و پاکی در زمان تحویل سال در کنار سفره هفت‌سین می‌نشینند. رسم است که سفره را تا سیزده روز پس از نوروز نگه می‌دارند

سفره هفت سین اشاره به هفت سمبل است که با حرف سین شروع می‌شود و دارای نام پارسی هستند و ریشه گیاهی دارند که عبارتند از

- سیزه - نماد نوزایی و تولد مجدد
- سیر - نماد تندرستی و مناعت طبع
- سیب سرخ - نماد زیبایی و سلامتی
- سرکه - نماد صبر و بردباری
- سمنو - نماد قدرت و برکت
- سماق - رنگ طلوع آفتاب و نماد زندگی
- سنجد - نماد عشق جاویدان

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## Scene 5 - Bahar (Spring)

Nowruz is the Spring Equinox, when the sun rotates exactly one full circle around the earth and reaches a point where the length of night and day are equal. From this moment on, Spring begins with the official sounds of Nowruz, Sorna and Dohol, as they ignite joy and commence the arrival of spring celebrations.

Amoo Nowruz is a symbol of Nowruz and a legendary figure in Iranian folklore. Amoo Nowruz is a wise old man with white hair and beard who brings gifts to children, similar to Santa Claus on Christmas Eve. He is accompanied by Lady Spring, a blossoming beauty representing all the floral scents and beauties of Spring. Haji Firooz also sings, dances and announces the arrival of spring with a tambourine in his hand.





## بهار

در لحظه تحویل سال همه با شور و شوق به استقبال سالی نو و بهاری پرگل و شکوفه میروند. دل‌هایشان به یکدیگر نزدیکتر و با شادباش نوروزی به رقص و پایکوبی میپردازند و آرزوی سالی خوش می‌کنند

عمو نوروز، این پیرمرد افسانه‌ای با لبی خندان، ریشی سفید همراه آواز و صدای ساز و دهل با دادن عیدی، کودکان و بزرگسالان را مشتاقانه به نزد خود فرا میخواند و آنها را شاد می‌کند. عیدی نشانه عطوفت، مهربانی و رحمت یک انسان به نگاه هم نوع خود می‌باشد

نوروز مژده بیداری طبیعت و نوید بهاران را به ارمغان می‌آورد. بهار با شکوهی شگفت‌انگیز بساط سبزینه و رنگین خود را بر طبیعت بی‌جان می‌گستراند. عطر گل‌های سنبل، سوسن و یاس فضای دشت و دمن را پر می‌کند

### Lady Spring:

Rachel Swinson

### Amoo Nowruz:

Roham Shaikhani

### Sorna & Dohol:

Ruben Harutyunyan (Sorna)

Masih Salafzoon (Dohol, Daf)

### Performers:

Baran Kolehdooz

Jasmine Jacinto

Maneli Darabi



## Scene 6 - Eid Didani (Meet and Greet)

During the 13 days of Nowruz, people are expected to pay visits to nearby elders, enjoy refreshments and a brief chat, and perhaps arrive with flowers or other small gifts. Traditionally, the elders would give the young ones gold coins; nowadays, younger family members are gifted crisp new dollar bills. To pay the utmost respect to a loved one, visit them on the first day of the new year.

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**Haft-Seen Display:** Yalda Kamyab of Designs by Yalda

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**Sweets & Pastry:** Mahsa of Sweets Butterfly Boutique

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## Scene 7- Sizdah Bedar (Nature Day)

Sizdah Bedar is an Iranian festival held annually on the thirteenth day of Farvardin (the first month of the Iranian calendar), during which people spend time picnicking outdoors. It is an official holiday in Iran, known as Nature Day. During their outdoor gatherings, families dance, eat and celebrate each other and the coming new year. At the end of the picnic, the “Sabzeh”-wheat sprout- they’ve grown is discarded into a flowing river/stream taking away the bad omens of the year.

It is also customary for young single people, especially young women, to tie the leaves of the greenery before discarding it, expressing a wish to find a partner.

In addition to all the fun, “Lie of the Thirteen” is the Iranian version of the prank-playing April Fools' Day which is practiced on this day.



سیزده بدر  
Nature's Day



## سیزده بدر

در سیزدهمین روز بهار ، پس از ۱۲ روز جشن و پایکوبی به یاد دوازده ماه سال، دسته جمعی سر خوش و دلگرم به آغوش طبیعت رفته تا با صداقت و ایمان این روز فرخنده را گرامی بدارند مشهور است که واژه سیزده به در به معنای «در کردن نحسی سیزده» است. اما وقتی به معانی واژه ها نگاه کنیم برداشت دیگری از این واژه می توان داشت. «در» به جای «دره و دشت» می تواند جایگزین شود

از آیین سیزده به در باید به گره زدن سبزه (نماد گشایش کار و ارزوها به ویژه در امر ازدواج)، سبزه به رود سپردن (نماد دور کردن افکار آشفته و غبار تیرگی و کدورتها)، دروغ سیزده (مردم به شوخی به یکدیگر دروغ می گویند و سپس در پایان روز آن را فاش می کنند. پختن خوراک های گوناگون به ویژه آش رشته اشاره کرد و با رقص و پایکوبی، اندیشه های پلید را دور کرده و نماد صلح، دوستی و محبت را در دل های خود جایگزین کرد

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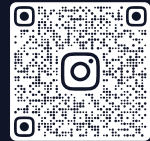
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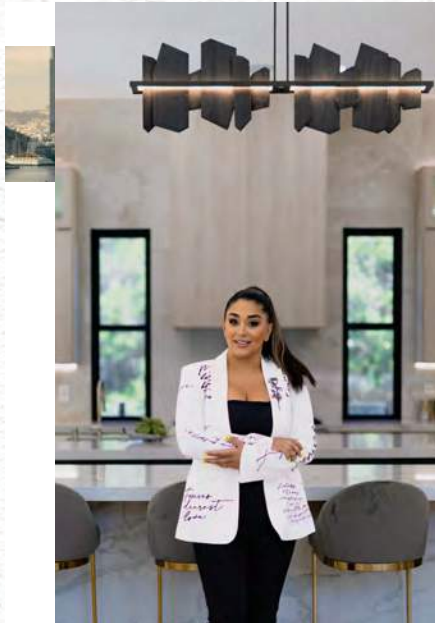
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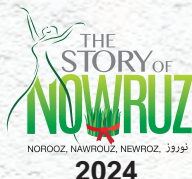
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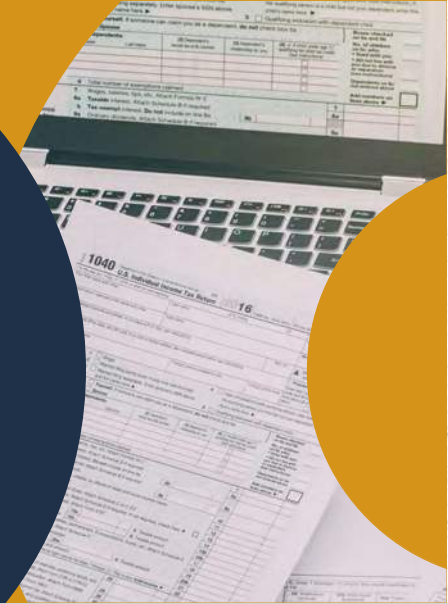
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Assistant Director:	Jadell Lee
Production Stage Manager:	Lyla Rose Flashman
Assistant Stage Manager:	Sammie Moore
Lead Choreographer:	Marco Mejia
Operations Directors:	Fouzhan Yousefi, Gitta Boroumand
Production Design Director:	Farnaz Soltani
Costume Designer:	Jila Saber of Jila Atelier
Wardrobe Lead:	Mahnaz Ebrahimian
Hair & Makeup Artists:	Arshin Yousef Asre, Anooshka Yousef Asre, Negar Nikjoo
Projection Designer:	Faraz Farnam
Projectionist:	Jacob Nguyen
Animation Team:	Mystic House of Production, Ashkan Rahgozar
Video Production:	Joseph Hovsepian and JFA studio
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Haft-Seen Display:	Yalda Kamyab of Designs_by_yalda
Sweets & Pastry:	Mahsa of Sweets Butterfly Boutique
Photography:	Samantha Zauscher, Ziba Sani, Mohammed Alothman, Negar Vijehtehrani
VIP reception:	Yalda Kamyab, Parmeh Pastry Sweet Butterfly Boutique,

**Thank you** to the Irvine Barclay Theatre's team:  
***Michelle Brouwer, Sarah Nearhoff, Tim Owens, Lu Bauer, Josh Roberts, Kevyn Gracia***

Amazing Cast of talented individuals of "The Story of Nowruz" 2024  
(In alphabetic order)

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Aryan Nabakhteh  
Aubrey Martinez  
Bahar Ghaoumi  
Banafsheh Sayyad (Winter Queen)  
Baran Kolahdooz  
Brooke Lenain  
Brooklyn Rice  
Isadora Stillwagon  
Jasmine Jacinto  
Jenna Anjali  
Lisa Tilton  
Lynette Morales  
Makenna Miller  
Malani Harrell  
Maneli Darabi  
Masih Salafzoon (Dohol, Zarb, Daf Musician)  
Miriam Peretz (Director of Nava Dance Collective)  
Mollyna Zuniga  
Nazmehr Marzban  
Neesh Riaz (Haji Firooz)  
Niusha Amiri (Niusha Gallery face painting)  
Parinaz pourfathi  
Rachel Swinson (Spring Lady)  
Raeeka Shehabi-Yaghmai (Singer)  
Roham Shaikhani (Amoo Nowruz)  
Roya Oreo  
Ruben Harutyunyan (Sorna Musician)  
Sahar Ahghari  
Shima Kaviani  
Tara Hassanzadeh  
Yuki Miyata







**NICART**

Niosha International  
Conservatory of Arts

A heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated team of selfless volunteers who readily give of their time and talent to make productions of this magnitude to come to fruition:

Azadeh Azad  
Amirnezam Samadabadi

Dean Jamali

Fardad Jay Jamali

Ghazal Hassanzadeh

Lisa Pham

Mahnaz Ebrahimian

Merat Farrokhnia

Nazanin Bakhtiari

Shadan Khaiambashi

Shahrzad Kani Ebrahimi

Susan Hardy

Suzanne Mozayeni

Amir Abadian, ISU Member

Danial Motamedi, ISU Member

Paneez Jalal, ISU Member

Rodolfo Alcala-Davalo, ISU Member

Sufie Sheikh-Bahaei, ISU Member



Our heartfelt thanks go to the dedicated artists who, though unable to join us tonight at the Irvine performance, were instrumental in their creation of "The Story of Nowruz" from its very beginning. Their contributions helped transform this vision into a reality that we share with you today.

### **Art Director**

Majid Mirfakhraei stands out as a leading Iranian art director and acclaimed production designer, boasting a remarkable portfolio that includes over 40 feature films, 15 international productions, and contributions to several prominent national TV series.



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### **Technical Director**

Kambiz Naraghi, an expert at creating immersive environments of sound and visual excellence, seamlessly combines cutting-edge technology with artistic innovation to transport audiences into captivating realms of sensory delight. Renowned for his mastery, he has spearheaded projects for major tech giants such as Facebook, Google, Apple, eBay, Cisco, and Oracle. His unique blend of artistry and technical ability has made him the driving force behind NICArt production endeavors.



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### **Music Composer**

Shahin Yousefzamani is renowned for his expertise across various music genres and has achieved international acclaim through performances with many celebrated artists. Notably, he earned the Global Music Award twice in 2019 and 2020. Additionally, he has crafted original scores for The Story of Nowruz, showcasing his versatile and award-winning musical prowess.

