



Out & About

Weekly entertainment and arts magazine of the Press-Republican.
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Iranian expression at PSU

THE

"I found the marriage of visual, musical and poetic imagery in Niloufar Talebi's work to be touching and effective, and an ideal way to discover and appreciate contemporary Iranian poetry."

Michael Tilson Thomas - Music Director, San Francisco Symphony

TRANSLATION

"An accomplished translator, Niloufar Talebi is presenting our rich Iranian tradition to the world ... I appreciate her long and valuable journey and wish her the best in her difficult job."

Shahmush Parsipur - Author of Taste and the Meaning of Night and Women Without Men

PROJECT



www.thetranslationproject.org

The understanding of poetry and prose through collaborative multi-media works

By **ROBIN CAUDELL**

Niloufar Talebi came of age in Tehran after the tumultuous 1979 Islamic Revolution.

Between 1980 and 1984, her parents' household was a haven for poets and literary dissidents. About this time of political unrest and war, she writes:

"As a teenager, I found myself surrounded by inspired poets, passionately engaged in the creation of literature that spoke to and of the humanity of the situation at hand ... poets feverishly writing, discussing or listening to Rachmaninov blaring from our gramophone. Their passion for life and commitment to literature surpassed their fear that the Islamic Police could raid our house at any time, attracted by the loud music.

"Some mornings at my house, clad in mandatory Islamic dress and on my way to school, I would tiptoe out, knowing that poets had been at work until the early morning hours and had recently collapsed from the exhaustion of all-night debates about religion, the Shah, Neruda, or fellow Iranian writers.



Photo Provided
Niloufar Talebi, director of The Translation Project.

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IF YOU GO

TUESDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

Krinovitz Recital Hall in Hawkins Hall:
► 2 p.m.: Introduction by Patricia Higgins, associate vice-president for Academic Affairs

► 2:30 p.m.: "Forough Farrokhzad: Young Revolutionary Poetess of Tehran" by Dr. Maryam Habibian

► 3:30 p.m.: Screening of Dr. Habibian's documentary "Farrokhzad, Young Revolutionary Poetess of Tehran" (15 minutes)

► 3:45 p.m.: Discussion with ques-

tion and answer period

► 5:30-7:30 p.m.: Reception at President's house

EVENING SESSION

Krinovitz Recital Hall in Hawkins Hall:

► 8 p.m.: "The House is Black," Farrokhzad's poetic documentary about a leper colony (22 minutes)

► 8:30 p.m.: "The Green Cold," on Forough's Life and Death by Nasser Saffarian (60 minutes)

► 9:30 p.m. Discussion of films with Dr. Maryam Habibian and Niloufar Talebi

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Poets: 'It was very delightful to know I could serve a greater public'

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"These were artists who lived in exile within their own country. Many years later, I still find myself enthralled by artists in exile, voluntary or not. They are the lasting voice who as E.L. Doctorow put it, '... connect the invisible to the visible ... singing the unsingable — who we are, what we are becoming.'"

This post-revolution literary salon-under-siege shaped her life and inspired her to "pay homage to those who endure" with The Translation Project.

Founded in 2003, The Translation Project is committed to excavating, preserving, translating and disseminating through books, film and multi-media presentations, contemporary Iranian literature emanating from the Iranian diaspora.

Talebi is translating the last 30 poems for "An Anthology of Contemporary Iranian Poetry Around the World" that will be published in 2008. She's also researching the anthology's introduction that traces the history of modernism in Iranian poetry.

Before she started the project, she was under the impression that Iranians outside of Iran would be familiar with the literature she was researching.

"I was doing it for the American public," said Talebi. "I was very surprised that even Iranians did not know most of



Photo Provided

Fourough Farrokhzad, one of the most famous modern poets of Iran.

these people, writers and poets I was able to discover who worked in all these countries in the world. It was a big surprise."

As a result, the anthology will be bilingual, English and Persian, and feature established as well as mid-career and emerging poets.

"It was very delightful to know I could serve a greater

public by doing this work."

The project's long-range goals include a collection of 20th- and 21st-century literature, including poetry and prose. A committee will assist in selecting the best and most accessible Persian works for translation into English as well as other languages to reach a global audience.

Talebi organized the "Multi-Media Conference on Modern Iranian Women Poets, 1950s to Present" that will be held at Plattsburgh State. Conference presenters include Dr. Maryam Habibian, an actor, artistic director, translator, writer and scholar.

Tuesday's events include a screening of Habibian's documentary "Farrokhzad, Young

IF YOU GO

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WEDNESDAY

► 12 p.m. Lunch for participants at My Greek Kitchen II

AFTERNOON SESSION

Krinovitz Recital Hall in Hawkins Hall:

► 2 p.m.: Introduction to Nasser Saffarian's film by Dr. Maryam Habibian

► 2:15 p.m.: Nasser Saffarian's film "The Mirror of the Soul" (60 minutes)

► 3:15 p.m. Screening of Niloufar Talebi's film "Midnight Approaches," based on poetry of contemporary Iranian women poets (30 minutes)

► 3:45 p.m.: Panel discussion on "Women in Iranian Culture and the Role of Poetry" with Niloufar Talebi, Dr. Maryam Habibian, Patricia Higgins, Dr. Alexis Levitin and Dr. Taher Zandi

► 5:30 p.m. Dinner at local restaurant for participants

EVENING SESSION

Krinovitz Recital Hall in Hawkins Hall:

► 8 p.m.: Dramatic Reading of Contemporary Iranian poetry by Niloufar Talebi

► 8:30 p.m.: "Contemporary Iranian Poetry" talk by Niloufar Talebi (60 minutes)

► 9:30 p.m.: Discussion of Iranian diaspora with Q&A, Niloufar Talebi

Revolutionary Poetess of Tehran." The film is based on the legendary Tehran poet and her lasting impact on Iran and its youth.

Farrokhzad's "The House is Black," a poetic documentary about a leper colony, and Nasser Saffarian's "The Green Cold," part of a trilogy on Farrokhzad's life and death, screens on Tuesday evening in Krionvitz Recital Hall.

Wednesday afternoon activities include a screening of Saffarian's "The Mirror of the Soul," a Farrokhzad trilogy film, and Talebi's "Midnight Approaches," a multidimensional DVD that includes a primer to Iranian poetry as well as six short films based on contemporary

Iranian poetry.

Wednesday evening, Talebi presents a dramatic reading of contemporary Iranian poetry with musical accompaniment. She will read anthology selections that span four generations of established and emerging writers working outside of Iran since the Islamic Revolution.

One of the major goals of The Translation Project is to foster artistic collaboration between writers, musicians, dancers, filmmakers and others.

"We do a lot of collaborative multi-media work," Talebi said.

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