

BIOGRAPHIES



Mohsen Mohammadi is a lecturer in the UCLA Department of Ethnomusicology. In addition to studying ethnomusicology, he also plays the Iranian *setar*. His Ph.D. dissertation, *Modal Modernities*, examines the formation of the Iranian modal system as an invented tradition during the Iranian modernization and nation-building. Dr. Mohammadi's publications include *Musical Souvenirs: European Transcriptions of Persian Music* and several articles featured in international journals of musicology in India, Germany, and Italy, as well as Persian journals in Iran. Among his areas of interest are music and minorities. He has researched the contributions of Armenian Iranian musicians to Iranian music, and is currently collaborating with the Milken Fund for American Jewish Music on developing research and programming on Iranian-Jewish musicians.



Nahid Pirnazar is a continuing Lecturer at UCLA where she completed her Ph.D. in Iranian Studies with an emphasis on Judeo-Persian literature. She is the founder and president of the House of Judeo-Persian Manuscripts, an academic research organization. She has edited *The Women of Shāhnāmeḥ* by Professor Khaleghi Motlagh (2012), as well as *Habib Levy: A Personal Chronicle of Jewish Life in Iran from the Late Nineteenth Century to the Islamic Revolution* (2016). She has published widely in English and Persian academic publications including, *Irano-Judaica*, *Irānsbenāsi*, *Iran Nameh*, and *Iran Nāmag*. She is also a contributor to the *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World* and the *Encyclopaedia Iranica*.



Lior Sternfeld is an Assistant Professor of History and Jewish Studies at Penn State University. He is a social historian of the modern Middle East with particular interests in the histories of Jews and other minorities of the region. His first book, *Between Iran and Zion: Jewish Histories of Twentieth-Century Iran*, examines Zionism and constitutionalism against the backdrop of Iranian nationalism. His research focuses on the development and integration of Iran's Jewish communities into the nation-building projects of the last century. Dr. Sternfeld completed his Ph.D. at the University of Texas, Austin. His current research project examines the origins of "Third-Worldism" in the Middle East.



Lillian M. Wohl is Assistant Director of Academic Research for the Milken Fund for American Jewish Music at the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music. She earned her Ph.D. in ethnomusicology at the University of Chicago. She specializes in Latin American and Jewish music, working primarily in Argentina and the U.S. From 2014 to 2017, she was Visiting Assistant Professor at the Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music at HUC-JIR in NYC. Dr. Wohl is working on her first book, *From Memory: Music, Temporality, and the Performance of Jewish Belonging in Buenos Aires*, an ethnography of the affective and performative meanings of Jewish musical memory work in socially and culturally mediated spaces of the city of Buenos Aires.

SPONSORS

The program of *Iranian Studies at UCLA*, established half a century ago, in 1963, is the largest and most comprehensive program of its kind in the Americas. It covers the entire spectrum of Iranian studies across disciplines, linguistic boundaries, and periods. Among its distinctive strengths is the focus on Old and Middle Iranian philology, ancient Iranian history and religions, archaeology, as well as the study of classical and modern Persian literature. In addition, courses in Judeo-Persian literature are regularly read in the program.

The *Lowell Milken Fund for American Jewish Music* was established in 2017 to advance the field. Building upon the work of the Milken Archive of Jewish Music (founded in 1990), which is a collection of recordings, scores, and historical materials that document the Jewish experience in America over the past 350 years, the Fund serves as an academic partner to the archive. Its mission is to accelerate knowledge of and advocate for the field of American Jewish music by contributing to research, scholarship and programs in the field at the undergraduate, graduate, and faculty levels. It is equally committed to engage new people with this wonderfully rich musical heritage by presenting free performances and symposia in the community.

Sponsored by

UCLA Iranian Studies

UCLA Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures

UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music

The Lowell Milken Fund for American Jewish Music

With the support of

The Habib Levy Visiting Professorship in Judeo-Persian Studies

The Musa Sabi Chair in Iranian Studies

The Amuzegar Chair in Iranian Studies

UCLA Iranian Studies



UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music

Lowell Milken Fund
for American Jewish Music

UCLA

TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 2019

314 ROYCE HALL

4PM

A Tribute to Morteza Neydavoud

Culminating with a musical performance of
Neydavoud compositions



Sponsored by

UCLA Iranian Studies

UCLA Department of
Near Eastern Languages and Cultures

UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music

The Lowell Milken Fund for American Jewish Music

With the support of

The Habib Levy Visiting Professorship in
Judeo-Persian Studies

The Musa Sabi Chair in Iranian Studies

The Amuzegar Chair in Iranian Studies



A Tribute to
Morteza Neydavoud

Culminating with a musical performance of
Neydavoud compositions

UCLA
TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 2019
314 ROYCE HALL
4PM

4:00–4:15

Introduction

Nahid Pirnazar (University of California, Los Angeles)

4:15–4:50

*Reclaiming Their Place in the Nation:
Jewish Iranian History in the 20th Century*

Lior Sternfeld (Penn State University)

4:50–5:25

*David's Reed: Morteza Neydavoud and the Contributions of
Iranian Jewish Musicians to the Music of Iran*

Mohsen Mohammadi (University of California, Los Angeles)

5:25–6:00

Discussion

Lillian M. Wohl (University of California, Los Angeles)

6:00–6:15

Intermission

6:15–7:00

Musical Performance

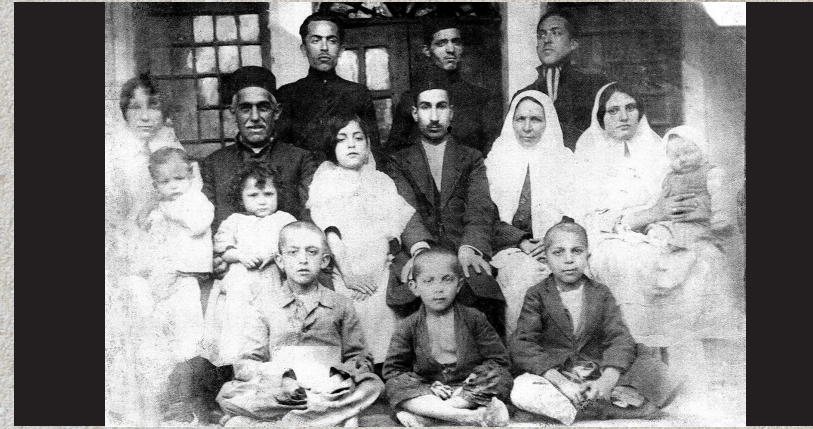
7:00–8:30

Reception*

*The Reception is kosher for Passover

Morteza Neydavoud

Morteza Neydavoud was born in Tehran to an Iranian-Jewish family in 1900. The family name of Neydavoud was established after World War I, whereupon Iranian citizens were required to declare their family names. Morteza's father, Bālā Khan, being a musician, chose a name that would reflect both the family's Jewish background and its musical heritage. *Neydavoud* translates to "the reed of (King) David."



Bālā Khan and His Family (Morteza Neydavoud, back row on the right)

Growing up in a musical household, Neydavoud and his brother, Soleyman, played the *tar*. A third brother, Musa, played first the *kamāncheb* and then the violin. Morteza's musical journey began under the tutelage of his father, but his growing talent soon required additional training. At the age of six, Neydavoud became a pupil of Āqā Hoseyn-Qoli, a master musician of the era. At the same time, Neydavoud attended the *Madreseh Alliance*, the flagship school of the Alliance Israélite Universelle.

In just a few years, Neydavoud had acquired a vast repertoire of Iranian music under the supervision of Mirza Hoseyn-Qoli who recommended that Neydavoud continue his studies with his best student, Gholām-Hoseyn Khan, better known as Darvish Khan, who had developed an innovative style of composing and performing Iranian music, which Neydavoud quickly adopted. Darvish Khan was so deeply impressed by Neydavoud's musical talent that he eventually transitioned him into the role of an instructor, co-directing other students with Darvish Khan. In 1926, upon the master's passing, the young Neydavoud opened his own music school, naming it "Darvish" in memory of his late teacher.

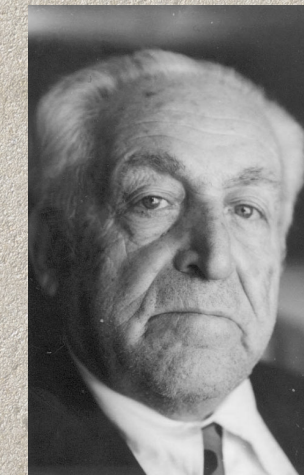


Neydavoud in performance

In that same year, the Gramophone Company decided to arrange new recordings of Iranian music, since no recordings had circulated in Iran for over a decade, thus generating a high demand for newly pressed records. In addition, Iranian society and arts had changed dramatically, making the recording of newer styles of music very desirable.

A recording session in Tehran was arranged by the Gramophone Company's local agent, Ezra Meir Hakkak & Sons, a Jewish firm based in Baghdad. The effect of this recording session was impactful: not only did Neydavoud become a recording star, but he was also directly responsible for introducing two of his former students to the music industry. These individuals, Moluk Zarrabi and Qamar-ol-Moluk Vaziri, would become the most famous singers of their time.

Rival record labels soon entered the Iranian market, expanding the musical reach of both Neydavoud on the *tar*, and his brother Musa on the violin. Their music was recorded by multiple labels, including Polyphon, Parlophon, and Baidaphon. During this time, Neydavoud also composed several songs that remain some of the most beloved in Iranian cultural memory. *Morgh-e Sahar* ("The Bird of Dawn") is one of Neydavoud's compositions that became eventually an iconic song speaking about social injustice. Another composition, *Shāb-e Man Māb-e Man* ("O! My King! My Moon!"), developed into the most famous instrumental piece of Iranian classical music.



Morteza Neydavoud

In 1940, upon the establishment of Radio Tehran, Neydavoud became a pioneer of live radio performance. The Iranian music scene, however, changed dramatically after World War II, with Iranian classical music growing more marginalized and finally being eclipsed by popular music. These changes brought Neydavoud's music career to an end, although his passion for music never diminished.

In August 1979, Neydavoud emigrated from Iran and settled in California. His last public performance took place in 1985 in Los Angeles at the age of 85. He passed away on July 31, 1990, and rests in Colma, California.

