

With the Support of the Jahangir and Eleanor Amuzegar Chair in Iranian Studies

Bilingual Lecture Series on Iran

present

Sayyad's "The Ass"

Sunday, February 16, 2014 | 5:00 PM | 147 Dodd Hall



An introduction and reading by Mary Apick and Parviz Sayyad

*Reading in Persian

Parviz Sayyad is a highly famed actor of Iranian Cinema. His first film, the comedic *Hasan Kachal* (1970), or "Hasan the Bald", is well remembered. He gained fame starring in one of the oldest Iranian TV series "OKTAPUS" playing the role of a well-mannered, diplomatic, sneaky and soft-spoken board member. His real break came with the most famous Iranian TV series "Sarkar Ostovar" when he created and played the role of a naive but street-smart country boy named "Samad". After this, Sayyad went on to star in the famous "Samad" film series (somewhat reminiscent of the American "Ernest" series). His character, Samad (or Samad Agha, as he demanded others to call him), was a prominent comedic icon of Iran during the 1970s. Other noteworthy roles include "Asdollah Mirza" in *Daii jan Napelon*.

The Iranian Revolution occurred shortly after his 7th feature length "Samad" film was released. Sayyad migrated to Los Angeles shortly after the revolution, where he continued to act, write, direct and produce. In 1983, he directed and starred in the film *Ferestadeh*, which was entered into the 33rd Annual Berlin International Film Festival.

Mary Apick is an award-winning actress. Apick began her career as a child performer in Iran. One of her earliest successes was "Octopus," a long running "Saturday Night Live" type show on Iranian television, where Mary, starting at age twelve, performed in political and satirical skits that helped change and liberalize the society. Going on to star in countless television shows, feature films and plays, Mary became one of the most popular stars in Iran. Among the many awards she received was the Moscow Film Festival Best Actress Award for "Dead End." The revolution forced Mary to flee the country and find her new home in the United States. Determined to continue her education, she graduated from the BBC School of TV Production, attended the Master's Degree Program in Directing at Cal Arts, and participated in the very first Sundance Film Institute with Robert Redford.

Mary continued her acting career in the United States by starring in several American productions, including the critically acclaimed "The Mission" and "Checkpoint." She also played featured roles in productions such as the NBC miniseries "On Wings of Eagles," and produced the MGM release "Mind Games." While working with her husband, Bob Yari, prolific filmmaker and a producer of the Academy Award winning film "Crash," Mary expanded her involvement in socially significant projects.

She has also created many projects for children, including educational videos such as "A Fairy Tale in the Forest" and "Jewel of the Night," which give the children of Iranian expatriates the opportunity to learn about and appreciate the culture of their parents' homeland. The theater has always remained Mary's greatest passion. In 2005, she wrote and starred in two socio-politically charged plays, which were presented to the 7th Annual Los Angeles Theater Festival. Both plays earned the prestigious Critics' Choice honors, and one, "Beneath the Veil," is slated for production in several cities in the United States.

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