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## MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON, CELEBRATES THE PERSIAN NEW YEAR WITH FREE PERFORMANCES AND FAMILY-FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES

### Cultural Celebration on March 22 Includes Art Making, Music, Dance and Film



Art-making activities at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

BOSTON, MA—The MFA will celebrate [Nowruz 2014: The Persian New Year Festival](#) with a day of special activities—free with Museum admission—on Saturday, March 22, 2014, from 10 am to 4:45 pm. “Nowruz,” meaning the “New Day,” refers to Persian New Year in Iranian calendars and offers a variety of unique traditions and celebrations. Although commonly observed by Iranian peoples, it is also celebrated by many other Middle Eastern nations. To mark this special day, activities at the Museum will include egg decorating, a family-friendly Story Hour about Nowruz, an opportunity to view and photograph a traditional Haft Seen (Nowruz holiday table) and Persian-inspired menu items at Taste Café and Wine Bar. In the

galleries, tours and talks will explore everything from Iranian ceramics, the influences of Nowruz and art from the ancient Near East. *Sponsored by YAS Capital Partners and YAS Foundation.*

Live performances will also form an important part of the day. At 1 and 3 pm, the Aftab Dance Group will perform a variety of classical and modern dance styles to a medley of traditional Persian songs. At noon, 1:20 pm and 2:40 pm, internationally acclaimed Persian dancer and choreographer, Banafsheh Sayyad, will join the musical ensemble, ZARBANG Trio, for an exuberant program of passionate dance and music. At 11 am, the MFA will screen *My Name is Negahdar Jamali and I Make Westerns*. In the film, director Kamran Heidari documents the difficulties of Iranian actor Negahdar Jamali, who has struggled with his family, friends, and society for 35 years to make what he enjoys most in his life: Westerns. In the afternoon, guests can meet esteemed New York-based artist Sina Goudarzi as he demonstrates the fine art of Persian calligraphy. Nowruz is one of a series of cultural celebrations held at the MFA, along with Lunar New Year (the start of a new calendar year in Asia), Juneteenth (commemorating the end of slavery in the United States) and Diwali (the Indian ‘Festival of Lights’).

**SCHEDULE OF NOWRUZ ACTIVITIES**  
*All activities are free with Museum admission*

**SPECIAL EVENTS**

**Haft Seen display**

10 am–4:45 pm, Druker Family Pavilion

Throughout the day, a traditional Haft Seen—a Nowruz holiday table—is on view for visitors to take photos with family and friends, and celebrate the New Year festival.

**Music: ZARBANG Trio and Banafsheh Sayyad**

Noon, 1:20 and 2:40 pm, Remis Auditorium

Internationally acclaimed Persian dancer and choreographer, Banafsheh Sayyad joins the renowned musical ensemble, ZARBANG Trio for an exuberant program of passionate dance and music exploring the themes of renewal and rebirth in celebration of the Persian New Year at the commencement of spring. ZARBANG features the virtuoso percussionists Pejman Hadadi and Behnam and Reza Samani on myriad Persian percussive instruments and the *Ney* (reed flute) and *Neyanban* (bag pipe).

**Dance: Aftab Dance Group**

1 and 3 pm, Edward H. Linde Gallery

The Aftab Dance Group performs a variety of classical and modern dance styles to a medley of traditional Persian songs. Aftab Dance Group is a student-run Persian Dance group consisting of members from Boston-area universities.

**Film: *My Name Is Negahdar Jamali and I Make Westerns* (Iran, 2012, 87 min.)**

11 am, Alfond Auditorium (space is limited—first come, first served)

Iranian actor, Negahdar Jamali, introduces himself the same way John Ford introduced himself to the American Film Directors' Association with *My Name is John Ford and I Make Westerns*. In this film, director Kamran Heidari documents the difficult conditions Jamali has faced in Iran over the past 35 years, and the struggles with his family, friends, and society to make what he enjoys most in his life: Westerns.

**GALLERY ACTIVITIES**

**Story Hour**

10:30—11:30 am and 2:30—3:30 pm, Gallery 176

Toddlers can enjoy stories about Nowruz celebrations.

**Art-Making Activity: Decorative Eggs**

10 am–4 pm, Druker Family Pavilion

Visitors explore art from the MFA's collection and then decorate their own Persian-inspired egg in this traditional Nowruz activity.

**Drawing in the Galleries**

11 am–3 pm, Richard and Nancy Lubin Gallery 259

Visitors can get drawing tips and ideas from an artist as they sketch in the galleries.

### **Artist Demonstration**

1 pm–4 pm, Druker Family Pavilion

A native of Iran, Sina Goudarzi demonstrates the fine art of Persian calligraphy for visitors. Involved in the calligraphy field for over 30 years, he graduated from the Iranian School of Calligraphy in Tehran in 1986 and went on to become an official instructor at the School. He currently lives, works, lectures and teaches in Brooklyn, NY.

### **Family Art Cart**

10 am–4 pm, Sharf Visitor Center

Children ages 4 and up can enjoy fun and educational activities in the Shapiro Family Courtyard with an adult.

*Family Art Cart is made possible with endowment support from the Germeshausen Foundation Fund for Youth and Family Learning, and the John and Dorothy Wilson Fund. Additional support for self-guiding materials provided by The Lowell Institute.*

## **TOURS AND TALKS**

### **Gallery Tours:**

#### ***Ceramics from Iran***

10:30 am, Sharf Visitor Center

#### ***Arts of the Safavid Empire***

1:30 pm, Sharf Visitor Center

Thematic tours with Laura Weinstein, Ananda Coomaraswamy Curator of South Asian and Islamic Art.

### **Talk: *The Influences of Nowruz***

11 am, Riley Seminar Room

Dr. Rouzbeh Yassini discusses the heritage, culture, civilizations, humanity and myths surrounding Nowruz, the Persian New Year Celebration. Visitors can explore the messages of peace and solidarity that this annual festival has brought to mankind spanning millennia.

### **Spotlight Talks: *The Influences of Nowruz***

English language tours at 1 pm, 2 pm, and 3 pm, Ancient Near East Gallery

Persian language tours at 1:30 pm and 2:30 pm, Ancient Near East Gallery

Engaging 10-minute talks highlighting works of art from the Ancient Near East.

*The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA), is recognized for the quality and scope of its encyclopedic collection, which includes an estimated 450,000 objects. The Museum's collection is made up of: Art of the Americas; Art of Europe; Contemporary Art; Art of Asia, Oceania, and Africa; Art of the Ancient World; Prints, Drawings, and Photographs; Textile and Fashion Arts; and Musical Instruments. Open seven days a week, the MFA's hours are Saturday through Tuesday, 10 am–4:45 pm; and Wednesday through Friday, 10 am–9:45 pm Admission (which includes one repeat visit within 10 days) is \$25 for adults and \$23 for seniors and students age 18 and older, and includes entry to all galleries and special exhibitions. Admission is free for University Members and youths age 17 and younger on weekdays after 3 pm, weekends, and Boston Public Schools holidays; otherwise \$10. Wednesday nights after 4 pm admission is by voluntary contribution (suggested donation \$25). MFA Members are always admitted for free. The Museum's mobile MFA Guide is available at ticket desks and the Sharf Visitor Center for \$5, members; \$6, non-members; and \$4, youths. The Museum is closed on New Year's Day, Patriots' Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. For more information, visit [mfa.org](http://mfa.org) or call 617.267.9300. The MFA is located on the Avenue of the Arts at 465 Huntington Avenue, Boston, MA 02115.*

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