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**Creating Beauty:
Zarathushti
Artists and Artisans**



PUBLICATION OF THE FEDERATION OF ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF NORTH AMERICA

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Wishing all a Great Mehergan

Fall, with the vibrant yellows and oranges and reds on colour coded leaves with a sombre sun casting long and short shadows, is the best season in Northern part of the continent and becomes the inspiration of artists to bring out their sketch pads and capture the beauty. This issue on Arts and Artisans reflects the expression of that need to be creative.

This is also the season of the Zoroastrian festival of Mehergan, as well as the celebration of thanksgiving both in Canada and the United States. Even though the pandemic does not show for any signs of abating we have much to be thankful for, our health, friendship, and the community spirit that has sustained us during these 20 months. May Ahura Mazda continue to look after us and protect us and we in turn continue to move Ahura Mazda's world towards Freshokereti.

The desire to express your innermost emotions and feelings in any media has been with humans since we lived in caves; there are sketches on cave walls of objects in our immediate environment: animals and heavenly bodies. As time passed and our desire to express grew more refined and sophisticated great pieces of art and architecture were created in the middle ages. As societies became more prosperous, art became sophisticated and rich patrons commissioned and supported the artists. The Zarthushti community has also become affluent which is reflected in this issue of the Journal. It gives you a glimpse of that creativity of the community from wood carving, to metal work, from embroidery on silk to painting on silk from dance to music. Art and music are universal languages. Our artistic co-editors Farishta Dinsha and Nairika Corbett could only scratch the surface of the artisans in the community in the limited space they had to portray them in. They have done a great job in curating the articles from these hidden jewels.

What else has happened in the Zarthushti world since we last met on the pages of the Journal.? Jehan Daruwala made history by winning the Formula 2 at Monza, Adar Poonawalla was named one of 100 most influential people in the 2021 by TIMES magazine, Zoroastrian Association of Houston held their annual



Z camp virtually for 33 children from Greater Houston area, efforts are being made, championed by the University of Toronto to install the Bronze statue of Cyrus the Great donated by Mr Abadian to the city of Toronto. There is also an effort to get the United Nations to declare October 29 as Cyrus The Great Day in the spirit of "Global Peace, Harmony, Prosperity, Joy and Love for All Mankind". A petition will be sent to sign as we need a million signatures to get this recognition adopted. Another online survey you will receive is from Gen Z and Beyond, a once-in-a-generation survey that will answer critical questions to capture a snapshot of the current global Zoroastrian community and those close to it. The survey will collect demographic, behavioural and attitudinal information. This is a once in a life time opportunity to participate in drawing a composite picture of the Zarthushti community globally. When you receive the notice you need to click on ASK FOR SURVEY and the survey will be mailed to you from SOAS who is coordinating this project for the community. You will also receive a survey from Ruzbeh Hodiwala on "Zoroasterian-by-Choice and their interactions with Zoroastrians-by-Birth", a doctoral project under Prof Almut Hintze, Zarthoshty Brothers Professor of Zoroastrianism at SOAS.

By the time you finish filling these surveys it will be time to meet again at the winter issue.

Keep safe and keep well
Dolly Dastoor Ph.D

And before you know it the summer is gone and nature abounds in its true beauty as Fall colors spread all across Canada and the United States. It is hard to believe that we are now in the last quarter of 2021. As signs of the pandemic are receding in North America, the cautious and optimistic emergence of the new normal is unfolding in front of us.

Our Dar-E-Mehrs are slowly opening up with proper protocol and adherence to all medical and health guidelines. After nearly 18 months it was a pleasure to meet with over 100 Zarathushtis at the California Zoroastrian Center in early September for the 2020 Zoroastrian of The Year Awards. Of the nearly 20 nominees from all across North America, so many of them are active at the FEZANA level, either as committee chairs, or Presidents of Member Associations or Past-Presidents. Artemis Javanshir the Co-Chair of FEZANA's Religious Education Committee was announced as the worthy winner of this Award, but every single nominee had an amazing story of what they had done and how they had served the community. I congratulate Artemis for this honor and wish her continued strength in working for our beautiful faith and community not only in Southern California but benefiting all of North America. And a big thank you to the Board of the California Zoroastrian Center for creating a platform to highlight the amazing work done by Zarathushtis in the past year and more.

After a year's hiatus, I had the opportunity to head back home to Mumbai India to participate in the Shenhshahi Muktdad and then celebrate Parsi New Year with my loved ones. The 10 days of Muktdad and the ensuing daily prayers and ritual bring a sense of connection and timelessness. As a small child I remember going with my mother to the Agiary every morning before I headed off to school, to pray for my grandmother's Muktdad. Today I go to the Agiary to welcome the fravashi of my own mother who passed away in 2018, and was accompanied a few times by my 8 year old niece. That to me is the circle of life. Celebrating Parsi New Year with family in Mumbai was the icing on the cake.

Many Dar-e-Mehrs in North America too resumed their muktdad prayers and it was gratifying to see the community return in numbers with adequate precautions and protocols in place.

The end of summer also means that it is time for our kids and youth to go back to schools and universities. It also brings about the end of yet another Scholarship cycle. This year the team led by Dolly Dastoor and Dinsha Mistree and their team of amazing judges had their task cut out for them. Over 130 applicants applied for scholarships in Academics, Arts, Sports, Culinary Arts and Music. Every year FEZANA is fortunate to give out over 70,000 USD in scholarships. For this we are forever grateful to our donors who have shown their faith in entrusting FEZANA to continue their legacy through endowed scholarships. These benefit the



youth of today as they navigate their academic and professional careers. If you would like to know more about endowing a scholarship in your or your loved one's names, please reach out to me.

By the time you read this, the 2021 Parliament of World Religions will have concluded. Under the leadership of Bakhtavar Desai and Homi Gandhi, Co-Chairs of the FEZANA Interfaith Committee and the guidance of Dolly Dastoor, FEZANA Past-President who also serves as the Vice-Chair on the Parliament's Board, FEZANA had over 30 talks selected for this edition of the PoWR. We also set up a virtual exhibition booth showcasing the community and the faith from all over the world. In true Hamazori FEZANA collaborated with other Zarathushtis from all over the world in increasing our representation and participation at this global event. My sincere thanks to everyone who spoke and participated to show the Zarathushti faith in a positive light amongst the pantheon of global religions.

An organization like FEZANA is able to do the work it does through the generosity and largesse of its members. As we come to the end of the year and you individually make your decisions to help various causes, we hope that you will consider FEZANA as one of them. If you would like to know more or have questions please reach out to me.

With the cooling of weather and everything that comes with it, I wish you a beautiful Fall season. A season filled with happiness, joy and the advancement to a new post-pandemic world.

arZan

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FEZANA UPDATE



5TH ANNUAL AGM OF FEZANA

Hosted by Sacramento Zoroastrian Association

Friday March 4th 9 AM – Sunday March 6th 2:30 PM

Pre AGM Events: Thursday March 3rd 9 AM Onwards

<https://fezana.org/2022-agm/>



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ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF HOUSTON Z-CAMP 2021 - A WEEKEND TO REMEMBER!

The Z-Camp at ZAH in person this year was again a major decision for us after the most unprecedented period full of stress and frustration that we experienced since March 2020. Eventually we decided to go ahead with all the necessary protocols and delivered another very successful Z-Camp.

INTRODUCTION

ZAH hosted the 9th Z-Camp 2021 on July 31st and August 1st at the Zarathushti Heritage and Cultural Center in Houston. The planning and preparation, started in May, was entirely organized and executed by our young adults (22-27 yrs.) with guidance and support from adults. There were 33 campers from Greater Houston and a majority of the 15 sessions were moderated/judged by young experts (25-40 yrs.) in their respective professions. Because of the pandemic there were no campers from out of state.

Health and safety were paramount for us so we put in place COVID-19 safety protocols and guidelines with a very robust four-step plan during check-in. It was to mask-up, temperature check, complete CDC questionnaire and produce vaccination record or negative test result.

Z-CAMP ACTIVITIES AND SESSIONS – DAY 1

For the first time since the beginning of the camp, we had to let go the sleepover component due to safety reasons. We started attendee check-in on Saturday, July 31st instead of the usual Friday evening. Once the campers went through their checks and breakfast, we opened the Z-Camp at 10 am sharp with a benediction by our Ervads and housekeeping announcements for the campers divided into 3 teams: the

Zoro Zebras, the Coco Puffs and the Ghela Gaadas.

They started with some team building activities besides making their DIY (do it yourself) Masks and selecting team Mascots. This was followed by a session on Yoga and Meditation where campers were introduced to these physical, mental, and spiritual disciplines. In parallel, the kid's group had some very interesting group activities including making solar ovens to bake some goodies later.

After a hearty Chinese lunch, the WZCC, Houston Chapter conducted the UN Sustainability session where the campers learnt about the 18 UN Sustainability initiatives. This was followed by an interesting presentation related to the FEZANA Ava Project currently underway as well as a short synopsis of the contributions of two Zarathushti companys and how they have been assisting preserving our Mother Earth. On completion of the session the kids were given an activity: to pick one initiative and prepare a business idea, which they did by showing tremendous business acumen. Concurrently, the kids had activities related to the important concept of preserving a healthy ocean life.

This year, due to the pandemic we had a scaled down version of the Iron Chef session which was preceded by a fitness session as well as an interesting demo of preparing Persian dishes. Once the demo was over the 3 teams were sent to their working stations to prepare a 3 course Brunch.

The campers were given a very well equipped and meticulous "Market Place" with various ingredients

like spices, condiments, veggies and fruits, carb accompaniments, etc. They prepared some terrific pancakes, mouthwatering egg dishes, exotic non-alcoholic mocktails and some Sundaes and they did that with great culinary finesse. The judges were very impressed with the creative ideas and thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Once the session was over, the campers prepared for their after-dinner session and got engaged in a very intense session on current topics like social injustice, etc. At the end of the sessions, the campers showed off their sporting skills by matching their soccer skills as well as competing in the Tug-o-War competition.

A delicious Mediterranean dinner was served and by 9.30 pm the campers had begun their mascot presentations along with some funny acts treating all present with some terrific fun. Everyone was most impressed with the creativity and innovation the teams brought forward at such short notice. The first day ended soon after.

DAY 2

The campers were back the next day and after breakfast, they started with the impossible engineering session where the campers had to build a Skyscraper that could withstand a hurricane. The teams developed some unique/innovative ideas, and the judges tested their sturdiness, resistance, height as well as the balance. Around the same time, the kid's group built their "Secret Garden" with some very creative ideas and designs.

After the campers' favorite Popeye's lunch, the campers prepared for the fashion show using tons of paper towels and various dollar stores. The



teams did an amazing job enthralling the audience with the gorgeous designer dresses and costume jewelry made from pure pearls and diamonds from Paris and South Africa (wink, wink). Whilst waiting for the results, our Sunday School Teachers were felicitated for their tremendous contributions to the Z-Camp from 2013 thru 2019 in various capacities.

Our FEZANA President, Arzan Sam Wadia who had specially flown down from New York, capped the day with some encouraging words applauding ZAH for being one of the pioneers in the North American diaspora and their spirit and ingenuity for such Zarathushti Youth and Young Adults

focused events. although for us all the campers were winners He thanked all at ZAH for the ever-present Houston-style hospitality and was looking forward to proposing this model to other FEZANA Associations. He signed off by inviting all to the next WZC2022 in New York City next year from July 1st to 4th 2022.

IT'S A WRAP!

Finally, it was time for the coveted results and the prizes were awarded although for us all the campers were true winners. The campers made some new friends and lifelong relationships. The 9th Z-Camp 2021 turned out to be a tremendous success once again due to the commitment and self-

less dedication of everyone on the team despite having to make so many adjustments due to this pandemic. A strict "No Cell No Soda" policy was enforced during the camp and each camper was charged \$30 to attend the Z-camp.

We always endeavor to devise activities and sessions that assist our kids to acquire skills and prepare them to face different challenges of life. Finally, thank you to all the donors, youth and adult volunteers, presenters, judges, panelists, parents, and our campers without whom this camp would not have been possible. Hope to see everyone in 2022!

ZAH Z-CAMP 2021 CAMPERS AND VOLUNTEERS





FRAVASHIS ON EARTH

This month the FEZANA Unity and Welfare Committee features the man behind the new YouTube series 'Our Very Own' that highlights stories of our community's unsung heroes.

The impact of inspirational stories is invaluable as it stirs our souls to greatness and motivates us to do our bit to bring more happiness into this world. It pushes us to lead better lives.

'New series – **Our Very Own**' brainchild of Sarosh Daruwalla, owner of Mazda Studios is a case in point as it showcases the work done by unsung heroes in our community and throws a spotlight on the enriching work they are doing.

A new project by Mazda Multimedia that is run by Sarosh Daruwalla and his sons Aarish and Rehan, the first three episodes (as we go to press) that have been widely circulated worldwide on social media have already created a huge impact, working its magic on the heart, mind and soul of the young and old.

While the inaugural series focused on XYZ (Extremely Young Zoroastrians) and its founder Hoshaang Gotla who is instilling an 'attitude of gratitude' amongst young Zoroastrians aged five to 15 years of age to become better individuals by inculcating Zoroastrian values of charity through service and acts of kindness.

The second episode presented by Dr Mazda Turel beautifully tells

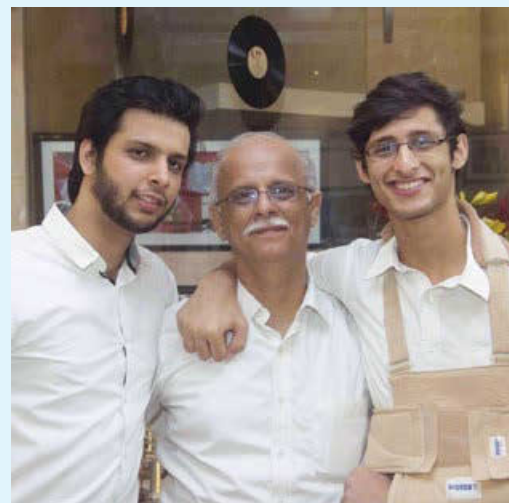
the story about Ahura Support located at Dr Dossibai and JRD Charity Trust, Masina Hospital. The sensitive narrative that gives a peek into a day at Ahura Support which houses the differently abled, is a heart-warming episode directed by Aarish Daruwalla and shot by Rehan Daruwalla on the registered charitable trust giving those with special needs a life of equal opportunities. Ahura Support Founder and Managing Trustee Hutoxi Doodhwala ends the interview with her favourite quote that says it all – "Don't offer me pity or look over with tears, don't decide who I am based on your fears, don't judge me on who you think you see, we are different but equal, you are you and I am me."

Equally captivating is the third episode that gives a glimpse at the Poster Boy of Zoroastrian Charity, Dinshaw Tamboly, the philanthropist who chairs three WZO Trusts that has changed many lives. The interview makes compelling listening and motivates us to fill our lives with selfless acts of uplifting those who are facing hardship and desperately need a helping hand.

The FEZANA Unity and Welfare Committee that also works towards helping Zoroastrians worldwide by offering support and financial aid to those who are in dire need, spoke to Sarosh Daruwalla to find out how 'Our Very Own' series was conceived and what he hopes to achieve by it.

Sarosh says that the project is all about "payback time to community members who have been very kind to our family members for the last four decades".

Elaborating on the inspirational series he says, "Being in the profession of covering all ceremonial, social & religious functions we are connected practically with all the Parsi Trusts & associations of Mumbai. We are blessed to understand the hard work put by these noble souls towards the cause of the underprivileged & deserving community members. We just wanted to showcase the positive side of these individuals & institutions to somehow influence the new young generation to carry this legacy forward through the expertise in which we are known for."



Sarosh Daruwalla and his sons Aarish and Rehan



FIELD TRIPS

Aquarium
and
Marine Drive

The Ahura Support members out on field trip to the Aquarium and Marine Drive

Sarosh says that keeping the best interest of the community forward they have lots of stories to share in the pipeline. The response has been overwhelming.

“Apart from congratulatory messages to us and our guests on the episode we have received calls not only from major cities of the world but also from small towns and village institutions requesting us to highlight their stories to put across the diaspora of our community,” he says.

We at the Unity and Welfare Committee are always amazed by the spirit of generosity of the North American Zoroastrian community every time we send out a medical appeal for our community members during their hour of need. We have many fravashis on this earth and it’s wonderful that the Mazda Multimedia team are working tirelessly to bring our everyday heroes to the forefront.

Noshir Dadrawala, CEO of Center for Advancement of Philanthropy, sums it up perfectly in the inaugural video when he says “*We have a rich legacy that our forefathers built and many in our community think that it was over with our forefathers.... but it is not. There is a lot of good that is still happening within our community. There are a lot of people who are still giving -- giving of their wealth, giving of their time, giving of their talents, they are giving of their skills. This initiative itself is a form of giving to the community. A program that will showcase the good that is being done in our community*”.

To watch the YouTube series ‘[Our Very Own](#)’ – visit Mazda Multimedia channel on YouTube. New episodes will air on the second and fourth Saturday of every month.

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HAPPINESS IS AGELESS

At SENIOR CITIZEN'S CENTRE, NAVSARI

Residents of WZO Trusts Funds Senior Citizens Centres at Navsari are very much illustrative of the adage Happiness is Ageless. Our residents are happy, not because everything is good, but because they adapt to all situations and see the good side of everything.



The week that witnessed very heavy showers most part of the day, made it difficult for our Senior Citizens to venture out for their morning walks and evening strolls.

Not deterred by the wet weather forcing them to remain indoors, our jolly band of residents got together with the Administration Team to enjoy rounds of playing Housie (Bingo) together, ending the evening fun

with freshly made Gulab Jamuns.

On another such wet day, the oldie goldies decided to substitute their regular lunch and decided to gorge on fresh Masala Dosas. The Administrative Team quickly arranged for the feast which left our residents, happy, satiated and satisfied.

Our residents know that we can only be happy as much as we make up our minds to be. Happiness is finally not how much we have but how much we enjoy our days, how much life we put into our days and not how many days we put into our lives.



Trustees & Administration
Team,

WZO Trust Funds Senior
Citizens Centre,

Navsari.



COMMEMORATING CYRUS THE GREAT

CYRUS IN THE 6IX

A project titled, *Cyrus in the 6ix* (6ix is a nickname for Toronto coined by recording artist Drake) was recently unveiled by Professor Mohamad Tavakoli, University of Toronto, and Ali Ehsassi, Member of Parliament, Canada, under the auspices of the Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Institute of Iranian Studies, University of Toronto. The project focusses on the installation of a 10-foot bronze statue of Cyrus the Great. It has been donated to the City of Toronto by Behnam Abadian for installation in a suitable public space to bring the legacy of Cyrus into a dynamic relationship with Canadian multiculturalism. The original designer of the Cyrus's sculpture was Nik Amini Sam. Behnam Abadian bought the rights to the design, made small changes and had it sculpted into a 18" statue by Chris Darga. The statue was then digitized through the latest technology into larger-than-life versions.

Kourosh-e-Kabir, known popularly as Cyrus the Great, (r. 550-529 BCE) has been widely recognized as the originator of a multi-confessional, multi-ethnic, and multi-lingual polity in the ancient world. He is hailed as a ruler who liberated Jews from captivity in Babylonia in the Old Testament. Also

praised by the Greek historians Herodotus, Xenophon, and Ctesias, the 1879 discovery of the *Cyrus Cylinder*, considered to be the earliest expression of the concept of human rights, reinforced the scholarly view of Cyrus as an exemplary ruler of the ancient world.

Following up on a productive meeting with Toronto's Mayor, John Tory, on August 23, 2021, a public discussion was hosted on September 11, 2021 to demonstrate the impressive level of public support. Representatives of diverse associations from Canada and the USA, representing multiple faiths including Zoroastrianism, Judaism, and Islam, recorded their support for the project in a video to be presented to Toronto's City Council. FEZANA as well as many of its member organizations have sent support letters to the organizers of the project to include in a packet for the Mayor and Councillors. Arzan Wadia, President, FEZANA, said on the occasion, "We are pleased to join forces on this worthy initiative with our partners at the University of Toronto, where we recently established a professorship in Zoroastrian Languages and Literature. Please consider joining North American Zoroastrians, the University of Toronto, and future generations who stand to learn through

this commemoration how Cyrus truly transformed history over millennia." *Fezana Journal* will continue to report on the development of this project in future issues.

CYRUS THE GREAT DAY, OCTOBER 29

At a global level, the Council on Persian Culture, Cyrus Society, and Cyrus Heritage Foundation have launched a petition to share with the United Nations and other international organizations to officially establish October 29 as *Cyrus The Great Day* in the spirit of "Global Peace, Harmony, Prosperity, Joy and Love for All Mankind". It is already celebrated unofficially by Iranians around the world. In Iran, celebration takes place with a gathering at the Tomb of Cyrus in Pasargadae outside Shiraz. This day commemorates October 29, 539 BCE, when Persian troops commanded by Cyrus the Great entered the city of Babylon (about 50 miles south of modern Baghdad) without encountering any resistance. His first order, recorded in the *Cyrus Cylinder*, was to release thousands of captives including Jewish people. Cyrus allowed all slaves and captives to return home, rebuild their communities, and re-establish their religious practices, or accompany him as free men to Iran.



This proclamation is regarded as the first declaration of universal human rights.

Support the petition.visit. cyrussociety.org. Various cultural and historical societies, universities and museums have supported the petition including Cyrus Heritage Foundation, Bowers Museum Persian Arts Council, and Samuel Jordan Center for Persian Studies, University of California, Irvine.



Did You Know?

Mobed Zarrir Bhandara has been practicing mobedi since the last 49 years and has performed the muktad ceremonies every year since then without a break..

During this time he has performed 30 muktad ceremonies in Southern California, 25 in his own home and the last 5 at the Atash Kadeh.

During these holy days of Muktd the following prayers are performed completely on a voluntary basis.

41 satums, (4 satums/day for 10 days plus a farewell Satum on the night of the 5th Gatha).

20 Jashans/ Afringans:

1. Afringan on Ashishwangh roj, 1 Jashan/Afringan per day for 10 days. The Hamaspathmaedhem Gahambar Jashan in the morning on the 4th Gatha.

1 Jashan on Navroze morning.

1 Rapithwin Jashan on Ardibehest roz.

1 Khordadsal Jashan on roz e Khordad.

1 Afringan was performed everyday till roz e Amordad.

10 Farokhsis (1 Farokshi/day for 10 days).

575 names were received from the community to be prayed for with 56 vases plus 1 Hama Anjuman vase

During his 49 years as a Mobed Zarrir has performed 120 Fereshteh ceremonies , 5 of them with his son Ervad Zerkxis

In addition the Vendidad Sadeh ritual is performed once a year as a fundraiser for ZAC

In 2021 Ervad Zerkxis performed 22 Baaj ceremonies (Baaj is one of the inner liturgies, a Pav Mehel ritual within the family of the Yajashne, Vendidad, and Nirangdin). *The Bui was offered to the Holy Fire (Atash Padshah) 5 times a day and after that father and son continued to offer Bui at least twice a day*

Mobed Bhandara lives 12 miles away from the ZAC Atash Kadeh , which allows him to travel to the Atash Kadeh to perform at least 2 buis everyday.





The ZAC community is the only community outside India to have this ceremony performed regularly.

Jashan for “Good Times”

On Saturday September 4th 2021, a Jashan was performed on Roj Behram Yazad to welcome the “Good Times” by Ervads Jal Birdy, Zerkxis and Zarrir Bhandara at the ZAC LA Atash Kadeh (photo right). It was attended by 201 Zoroastrians 192 attended over Zoom, from all over the world and 9 in person. This Jashan performed to invite Good Times, to shift our focus from virus to good health because where our attention goes, energy flows.

After the Jashan to welcome the “Good Time” all the 5 High Priests/Vada Dasturs came together virtually to give blessings and a message of love, peace, joy, health and prosperity to our community. The 5 high Priests were Dasturji Dr. Firoze M. Kotwal, Dasturji

Khurshed Dastur of Udwada who gave his message LIVE via Zoom, Dasturji Keki Ravji- Meherjirana, the Vada Dastur of Navsari the Dharam ni tekri the headquarters of our religion in Navsari), Dasturji Cyrus Dastur- vada Dastur of Surat, and finally Dasturji Dr. Jamasp JamaspAsa, who gave an erudite speech LIVE via Zoom.

Mobed Zarrir received many messages of gratitude for organizing this event and for his yeoman service by selflessly sacrificing hours praying for the Zarathushtis all over the world, for which the community is truly grateful.



Ervad Zerkxis Bhandara

In 2021 Ervad Zerkxis completed his bachelor's degree in Religious Studies from UC Santa Barbara in 2018, and is currently pursuing his Masters in Religious studies from Cal State Long Beach. He will be applying for doctoral programs later this year. Additionally, he is learning Avestan with Ervad Dr. Ramiyar Karanjia under the auspices of the NAMC.

(photo right father and son Ervads Zerkxis and Zarrir Bhandara)

“ZOROASTRIAN OF THE YEAR “ AWARD FOR 2021 “THE SOSHIANT AWARD”

Artemis Javanshir



The first “Zoroastrian of the Year “ was awarded to Artemis Javanshir during a Gala Sponsored by Bahram and Gilda Kasravi on Saturday September 18 at California Zoroastrian Center. This Soshiant award is created to recognize and appreciate all the volunteers putting in their time and effort into supporting our beloved community.

Congratulations to Mrs. Artemis Javanshir, the recipient of the Soshiant award which was sponsored by the California Zoroastrian Centre.

**Artemis is the Co-Chair of the FEZANA
Religious Education Committee**



IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO BUILD A SUCCESSFUL FESTIVAL OF FAITHS

AND ZAKOI IS AN IMPORTANT MEMBER OF THAT VILLAGE!



“Compassion through Action: We are in it Together.” This was the theme of our 4th Annual Cincinnati Festival of Faiths from 22nd to 29th August, hosted by EquaSion, Cincinnati’s premier interfaith organization. EquaSion, formerly known as the Bridges of Faith Dialogue, is a non-partisan civic organization founded upon interfaith dialogue that works to develop educational and community service programming to foster greater understanding, respect, compassion, inclusion, and engagement for all people and faith communities in Greater Cincinnati and beyond. Due to covid restrictions, we have been having a virtual Festival since last year. This year also, we had a week-long virtual festival of 16 programs designed and put together by an interfaith Steering Committee of 50 members representing 12 major world religions. ZAKOI as always played an important role in all aspects of the festival. We were co-sponsors with FEZANA of this year’s Festival. Bakhtavar was not only on the Steering Committee, but also on several Program committees, that designed and put these programs together. She also participated in Compassionate Conversations (<https://vimeo.com/594197672>). This year, in our Compassionate Conversations Program, we encouraged our attendees to tell us their stories on ‘GRIT’. What does it mean to have GRIT? What does resolve have to do with the work of peace and justice? What are the resources in our faith tradition that allow us to keep showing up for one another?

Ervad Dr. Faredoon N. Desai was invited to participate in the Festival’s Opening Devotional Ceremony. To see the Opening Interfaith Devotional Observance, see this video: <https://vimeo.com/594194330>

Shireen Desai was invited to participate in presenting on a Zoroastrian Wedding in the program on Wedding Ceremonies and Celebrations (<https://vimeo.com/594197080>)

Arish Antia serves on the youth Board of Beloved Community Youth, an interfaith program for youth offered by EquaSion. Arish was interviewed in the Youth program at the Festival on how he and his other fellow Board members will expand this program among the youth in the greater Cincinnati community. See him here: <https://vimeo.com/594196448>

Finally, **Havovi Desai**, a musician from our ZAKOI community, participated in the interfaith concert on the closing day of the Festival, by adding her flute music, an improv on the theme of healing, to the concert. To see the video please go here: <https://vimeo.com/594192921>

Besides all these programs mentioned above, our Festival offered several other programs. The Multifaith Calendar Orientation: A New Tool for Teaching Cultural Diversity, was an interactive workshop offered especially for teachers/educators to give them an opportunity to learn how to use this Multifaith Calendar created by the Festival of Faiths. Here’s the link to our multifaith calendar: <https://www.multi-faithcalendar.org/>

For centuries Jewish and Muslim communities coexisted throughout the Middle East, North Africa and Spain. Our program, Mystical Philosophy in the Middle ages as a Case Study for Coexistence, shed light on the cultural, religious and social commonalities that emerged as a result of this coexistence, and reveals the influences both societies had on each other.

Besides the Annual Festival of Faiths, EquaSion, has launched a new Program on Racial Justice this year. It is called a Mighty Stream (<https://www.equasion.org/a-mighty-stream-an-interfaith-initiative-for-racial-justice/>). One of the programs in our Festival this year was about this new initiative. This program, called *A Mighty Stream: An Interfaith Community of Sacred Activists for Racial Justice*, addressed the racial injustices in our



region. Here we learned how one can become a **sacred activist** in our community and discussed the tools we can adopt in our daily lives to further the cause of racial equity and eliminating bias. Please see the recording of this program here: <https://vimeo.com/594197002>

All our ZAKOI participants were great, and represented our community very well. ZAKOI is grateful to FEZANA for co-sponsoring with them at the Festival. To learn more about our Festival of Faiths and see all our programs at your leisure please go to <https://www.equasion.org/festival-of-faiths/calendar-of-activities/>, and watch all the video recordings on that webpage. ZAKOI is dedicated to joining hands with other faith communities in this region (Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky) to build bridges of peace and harmony in our communities, and we believe that **'Together, we are Stronger'**!

Submitted by Bakhtavar Desai, President, ZAKOI (Zoroastrian Association of KY, OH, & IN)

Ervad Dr. Faredoon N. Desai, giving the Zoroastrian devotional during the Opening Ceremony of the Annual Festival of Faiths in Cincinnati Ohio.



Arish Antia, who was one of the youth interviewed in the Beloved Community Youth Program on Monday, 23rd August, 2021

Shireen Desai, one of the presenters in Sacred Connections: Celebrations and Ceremonies, presenting on the Zoroastrian Wedding Ceremony.

Bakhtavar Desai, participated in story-telling on the theme of Grit in one of the Festival's Programs called Compassionate Conversations.

Havovi Desai, participated in the Interfaith Music, Song, & Dance Concert, called 'People Got To Be Free' on the closing day of the Festival.



More than just Marketing -

Meet the 8WZYC Marketing Team



Legend for the Photos : Top left to right- Ariana Doomasia, Shazneen Munshi, Xerxes Panthakee
Middle left to right- Arman Bhagwager, Delshad Forouhar, Jessica Mistry
Bottom- Arsha Dadrewalla Not in image Dalir Yazdani

The 8th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress Marketing Subcommittee's main role will be to host fundraisers, social events and spread the word of our congress through social media and other channels to encourage a large number of participants from around the globe. Our social media pages will soon be launching to spread information for the upcoming Congress so stay tuned and keep your eyes peeled! However, our role will extend far beyond simply posting. We plan on organising plenty of social events and fundraisers: these will be held virtually for now, to encourage the global Zoroastrian community and get them excited for London 2023! Meet the members of our team...

ARIANA DOOMASIA

My name is Ariana, and I am the leader of the marketing subcommittee. Currently, I am in my final year studying English at Cambridge, focusing on my exams and graduating this summer. Ever since I heard the next Congress would be held in London, I knew this would be the perfect opportunity to get more involved with my community and make a lasting impact. For me, the marketing side seemed ideal for engaging with other Zoroastrians across the world, allowing for lots of creativity as well as fun. The main priority for our subcommittee, is to spread information and build excitement in the runup to our 2023 Congress. It has been a pleasure to bond with the wonderful members of my team so far and to hear everyone's ideas for launching our marketing campaign. Watch this space!

DELSHAD FOROUHAR

My name is Delshad and I graduated from The University of Sheffield in Architecture, and I am now working as a Part I Architectural Assistant back home in Suffolk. Growing up I was surrounded with Zoroastrian culture, my grandfather being Mobed Ardeshir Forouhar, a very important role model to me and the London Zoroastrian



community. In 2020 when the pandemic hit, it felt it was the right time to really learn more about who I am, where I'm from and to help others. Joining the marketing team has allowed me to meet amazing new people, and to join with others creating ways to share our culture with the rest of the world. We hope to bring young Zoroastrians together in fun collaborative ways, and can't wait to share our events and more information about the Congress! See you soon in 2023!

ARSHAN DADREWALLA

I'm Arshan and I am currently in my final year of studying Medicine at King's College London. Having been part of the Northwest Zoroastrian Community in the UK and later on with the Young Zoroastrians in London, I have developed a strong sense of community within our religion whilst meeting fellow young Zoroastrians. Having never attended a congress before, I was excited to meet and join my subcommittee team to help develop and plan elements of the congress which I hope will be a huge success in bringing Zoroastrians together, all whilst having a great time!

XERXES PANTHAKEE

My name is Xerxes, and I am one of the co-vice Chair helping to organise the 8WY2C and attaché to the marketing committee. By trade I graduated as a Chemical Engineer, however now I am working as a Technical Business Analyst for a mid-sized bank in London. I have been a part of the Zoroastrian community here in London for as long as I can remember, but in recent years I decided to take a more active role in helping to grow and bond with our youth community. That being said, I have never been to a congress before, but am really excited to help organise what I, along with my fellow committee members, envision to be an unforgettable experience.

ARMAN BHAGWAGER

I'm Arman from Nagpur, India and have recently completed my masters from National University of Ireland, Galway where I am currently based. I now work as a sales rep in a tech start-up. From attending prayer classes and doing dance practice in the Nagpur Parsi dharamshala as a child to going to various youth events, Zoroastrian culture has played a huge part in my life, giving me a sense of community and direction. Being a part of the 8WY2C organising committee has given me a great opportunity to make some amazing Parsi friends in this part of the world. We hope to bring young Zoroastrians from around the world to come together to celebrate their religion, learn and collaborate.

DALIR YAZDANI

I am Dalir from Poland but with Persian roots and also having lived in South Africa, Greece and more. I came to the UK a few years ago in order to pursue a university degree and graduated less than a year ago. As my family worked for the embassy, we always moved a lot so I never really had the opportunity to be part of a specific Zoroastrian community, although I still had the chance to dwell on theological and historical texts as I come from a priestly family. Through participating in this congress, I hope I can change that. I hope to be able to experience the more social aspect of what it means to be a Zoroastrian and get connected with like-minded young Zoroastrians who also have one thing on their mind... how to serve the Zoroastrian community better by bringing everybody closer! It's an honour to be part of the team and I only hope that's just the beginning!

SHAZNEEN MUNSHI

My name is Shazneen and I work as a Policy and Communications Adviser to the CEO and Chairman of the Financial Ombudsman Service. As the youngest member on the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe (ZTFE) Managing Committee, I have been running our monthly Extra Young Zoroastrian (XYZ) Fun Club religious education classes for children for the past seven years. My main passion in life is making a positive difference to our treasured Zoroastrian community by engaging and bringing together our youth. I am very excited to work together with our lovely team to promote what will be an amazing event, where we will create strong lasting global friendships, nurture worldwide communal initiatives and build on the future of our religion!

JESSICA MISTRY

My name is Jess and I graduated in Law and after a few years' experience I decided to transition into the world of Human Resources. I have always considered myself extremely fortunate to have been surrounded by our Zoroastrian roots and culture whilst growing up and visiting India during summer holidays and day trips to Udvada are some of my most fond memories whilst growing up. I was keen to volunteer after hearing that the Congress will be taking place so close to home. Whilst today, this has given us the opportunity of bringing together Zoroastrians from all over the world, it has also given me the opportunity to grow and connect with my fellow Zoroastrians, whom I am so thankful to have met. Although I have never been to a Congress before, I look forward to the next two years of preparing, welcoming and meeting you all at our 8th World Zoroastrian Congress!



GEN Z AND BEYOND IS NOT JUST ANOTHER SURVEY ... OUR PRESENT CAN SHAPE OUR FUTURE

Sarah Stewart, Nazneen Engineer and Joe Turtle.

Zoroastrians are being inundated with surveys – from academics, research students and community leaders to name but a few. This is perhaps understandable since the Zoroastrian community is the focus of attention for all the wrong reasons: population figures in decline, high infertility rates, traditional customs in retreat, religious ceremonies performed less frequently, depletion of the Zoroastrian priesthood, the Zoroastrian Dari language dying out and Zoroastrian villages in Iran abandoned.

But these factors have never been quantified. They have never been examined on a global scale.

Gen Z is an opportunity to assess these factors. Through accurate statistics and better knowledge of the different Zoroastrian communities, Gen Z will tackle the important questions: why is this happening? Where is this happening? Can these trends be reversed?

Gen Z is different from other surveys. Because it is global, it will collect a wider and more varied range of information on demographics, religious life, and attitudes towards community issues. This information will

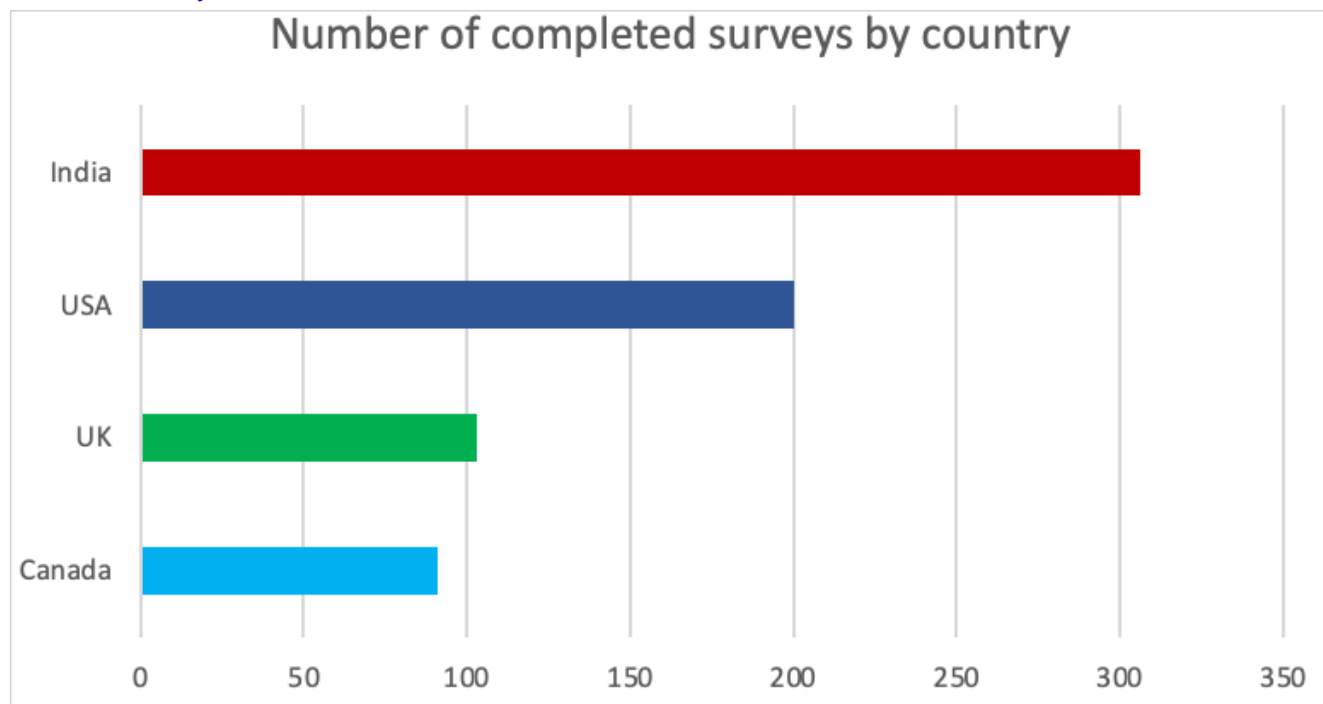
lead to a better understanding of the global community and the challenges it faces. The survey is completely anonymous.

In the short time since it launched, Gen Z has already produced some interesting and surprising results. However, while over 1600 people around the world have signed up to take the survey, we have received fewer than 300 responses from the USA and Canada. It is vital that as many people as possible take part and make their voices heard. Respondents so far have mainly been:

- in the age bracket 66-75 (17%)
- from Ontario (22%), California (17%), Texas (10%)
- people who have emigrated at some point in their lives (70%)

Please don't let survey fatigue set in before you have completed the Gen Z Questionnaire. It is unique and well worth your time.

Visit www.genzandbeyond survey and watch the 6.41 minutes video on YouTube





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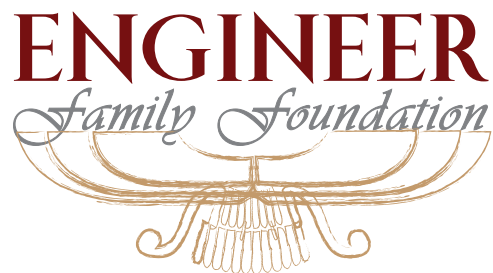
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GOOD THOUGHTS | GOOD WORDS | GOOD DEEDS



CREATING BEAUTY

Zarathushti Artists and Artisans

By Farishta Murzban Dinshaw
Guest Editor

“Without ‘art’, the earth would be ‘eh’.” Indeed, it would. Although Nature has colors, shapes, and textures that surround us with unparalleled beauty, they are transitory and difficult to capture in their variety and enormity. You cannot bring the ocean or the forest into your home, nor can you hold on to the essence of spring or the color of a rose petal. Artists and artisans, since the beginning of time as evidenced in cave paintings and rock art, allow us to experience the world around us, natural and human, through different art forms: architecture, decorative arts, performing arts, literature, visual arts, and plastic arts.

Art has a language that transcends words, even time. Music, stone, words, glass, metal scraps, pigments – they are all transformed into emotions

and memories. Ravel’s *Bolero* transports me to an intimate, hushed concert in a church in Prague; a framed peacock with its patches of uneven tension and stitches reminds me that my mother embroidered it while waiting at my brother’s bedside in a hospital in a foreign country; an impressionist landscape by Peter Colbert renews the pride of becoming a Canadian citizen, which I celebrated by purchasing my first painting by a Canadian artist.

For the Zarathushti artists and artisans featured in the issue, art is many things. It is a passion, a dream, a calling. It is a hobby, a side-business, a second career. It is a way of giving back to the community – Dilshad Posnock plays the flute with the South Asian Symphony Orchestra to promote greater cultural integration

for peace in South Asia through music; Frazan Kotwal sings Sinatra outside a hospital in Germany to cheer up COVID-19 patients and honor frontline healthcare providers. And there is another kind of giving, in which your contribution changes the playing field. This issue features two doyens of art and literature – Parichehr Namdar, who invented a patented technique of painting named “Cherism” that shows passing time, movement, and reflection, and Bapsi Sidhwa, whose debut novel *Crow Eaters* (1989) influenced countless Parsi and South Asian authors and almost singlehandedly created a subgenre in South Asian literature.

A recurring thread through the stories shared by the contributors was passing on their love of art by mentoring and teaching – Parvin Farzaneh continues

to teach sculpture, having done so for over three decades in Montreal; Rashna Homji's teaching career started when she was invited to teach at The Royal Ballet School in 1984; Roshni Dell inspires self-reflection along with creativity in the students in her art classes; Zenobia Shroff mentors younger women to boldly stand up to sexual harassment in the entertainment industry; Arzan Khambatta, a self-taught sculptor, passes on his learnings to children in schools and to those on the street. The contributors were also quick to thank their own teachers and mentors. Navroze Kotwal credits Urdu poet Sahir Ludhianvi and Shafiq Abbas, a retired Principal, for polishing his craft as an Urdu poet.

Art connects us with our history. Shernaz Cama shares the work Parzor Foundation does to preserve the quintessentially Parsi *gara sari* and asks the community to see this as a collective responsibility. Zarathustis the world over have art and artifacts adorning our homes that reflect our Persian ancestry (*farohars*, replicas of Persepolis reliefs), our sub-continental roots (beaded *torans*, chalk patterns), and the Parsis' love affair with all things British *raj* (Wedgewood, Western classical music). Sometimes the design of the houses themselves tell a story. Many of the laws discriminating against Zoroastrians in Yazd, Iran, dictated the design of the houses; they could not be higher than those of their Muslim neighbours; by law, the front door of a Zoroastrian house could only have a single hinge, so people built several doors one after the other for safety; and there were no windows (Mary Boyce, 1971). Not many of these unique clay structures are left so we are fortunate to have Zarir Najmi make it his mission to photograph them for posterity.

If art connects us with the old, it also builds links to the new. Jasmine Chapgar uses software tools to create art; Kayhan Irani shares immigrant stories in a digital space to promote an inclusive America; Firooza Aubry combines the power of music, art, and the YouTube to share her work online; Neville Rustomji envisions eco-friendly solar-powered houses.

Art is unquestionably one of the purest and highest elements in human happiness. It trains the mind through the eye, and the eye through the mind. As the sun colours flowers, so does art colour life.

— John Lubbock

And sometimes an artist combines the two – Anushka Rustomji uses contemporary chalk patterns to create installations.

Art is about change, transformation. Zerbano Gifford created the ASHA Centre to promote peaceful co-operation between people of different religions and cultures through performing and visual arts, conservation projects, personal transformation. Sharlene Bamboat uses film as a medium for activism and advocates for equitable representation of LGBTQ+ performers and artists. This issue features several second-career artists and artisans. Xerxes Wania pursues wood working after leaving the tech sector; Mali Regan had a successful career in finance and took up painting regularly after retirement.

The artists and artisans featured in this issue are a mere snapshot of the talent in the Zarathushti community. We are grateful to all those who create beauty because, as Daisetsu Teitaro Suzuki said, "The greatest productions of art, whether painting, music, sculpture or poetry, have invariably this quality - something approaching the work of God."



Farishta Murzban Dinshaw is an amateur artist who makes torn-paper collages to give as gifts to friends and family. She is an adjunct professor with the Immigration and Settlement Studies, and Criminology and Social Justice graduate programs at Ryerson University, Toronto. She also works with newcomers to raise awareness about Gender-Based Violence and mental health issues. She enjoys writing and has an eclectic collection of publications to her name including a young adult novel, "Discovering Ashavan". She is the recipient of the Eve Bunting Scholarship awarded by Highlight Foundation for their Writing for Children Program, and was the initiatory editor of "Funline", Pakistan's first English magazine for children. "Eat, Live, Pray: A Celebration of Zarathushti Cuisine" and Culture, a cookbook she edited, is available as a free download at www.fezana.org

Art: Fundamental to Human Existence

By Nairika Kotwal Cornett
Guest Editor

Art is fundamental to human expression. The possibilities and counter possibilities, arising out of a commitment to humankind's complex relationship with nature and the culture produced to articulate it, shape personal life. I moved to rhythm before I walked, I painted before I wrote and I cooed before I spoke. I am certain you did too. The universe and all within it has a proclivity towards rhythm...don't believe me? Ask your heart.

Art, its creation and consumption are not luxuries, they are necessities – defining elements of our humanity and a fundamental human right enabling everyone to develop and express his or her humanity. Art influences society by changing opinions, instilling values and translating experiences across space and time. Painting, sculpture, music, literature...are the repository of a society's collective memory.

Art is our historian. Everything we know about our past is documented through art. How do we know what our ancestors looked like? Photography or paintings! How do we know about their culture? Spoken word passed down through the ages, literature, theatre, songs, and films! How do we know what their homes looked like? Architecture! Culinary arts teach us what they ate; fabrics and fashion teach us what they wore. In essence, art reflects every important turn and imprints it for future generations.

In grade 8, my school principal Ms. Shirin Darasha, taught us social

There is no such things as creative people and non-creative people. There are only people who use their creativity and people who don't. Unused creativity just doesn't disappear. It lives within us until it's expressed, neglected to death or suffocated by resentment and fear.

– Brené Brown

studies focusing on Europe. Much of the year was devoted to understanding European history through the eyes of European artists. One particular class I will never forget was dedicated to Picasso. On a slide projector, she took us on a journey to discover his genius. When we came upon a later work of simple triangles and circles, I scoffed, "I can do this!" She stopped her teaching, slowly and deliberately made her way to me through tightly arranged desks, leaned in and said, "But you didn't." I knew then, this moment would be a guide for much of my life. To ape is easy. To be the first takes creative courage, takes commitment to discovery, necessitates action. This in essence is the artist.

Read my first statement. I will go a step further. Art is fundamental to human EXISTENCE. To best affirm this, imagine a world devoid of art. What has allowed you to survive the isolation of a pandemic? Did you take to movies, books, music, dance? Did you start getting creative with food, did you encourage your children to paint, draw, write, read? Did you redesign or rearrange your home/office/garden?

Pay attention to the rhythms of your breadth, heart and gait. Keep creating!



Nairika Kotwal Cornett is the Executive Director of the Quinlan Visual Arts Center, Gainesville, Georgia. She has spent her life embracing and working in the Arts. She has a master's degree in Business Administration and a bachelor of arts degree in Arts Management and Dance Pedagogy from Brenau University. She dedicated her first 25 years to performing and teaching ballet. Since then, she has worked in arts advocacy particularly for students in K-12 public schools. Nairika's other passions include women's rights, travel, writing poetry and community service.

Curating an Identity: The Parsi Gara

By Shernaz Cama

Embroidered garments amalgamate both tangible and intangible heritage to create identity. While the garment is tangible, the ideation, colours, design and stitches come down through memory. Parsis have become known across India and the world for their embroidered saris, specifically their *garas*. Yet, twenty years ago, when we began documenting Parsi embroidery as an art form, we often met with disbelief. We were told ‘*Garas* came from China’, there was no other explanation. Yet, having seen embroidery created by our elders, we knew this was incorrect. Two decades of published research and documentation have made the *gara* a prized possession across discerning Indian homes and among collectors and museums. Unfortunately, this has led to many Parsi families selling off heirlooms without realizing their value. The embroidery that passes for ‘*gara* embroidery’ in many Indian designer shops actually hurts the eye. It is for this reason that collecting, preserving, and cherishing our community heritage in these embroidered saris is urgently required.

Emergence of the Gara

Canton was the centre of embroidery in the 18th century when legend has it that over 200 years ago, a Parsi trader, watching craftsmen embroider a rich textile, requested them to embroider six yards of silk for his wife in India. These first pieces embroidered on satin have no borders or *pallus* and seem like yardage. These pieces carried Taoist and Buddhist symbolism because embroidery in China was a sacred art. Thus, the *gara* was born.



An early Chinese gara

However, in India, Parsi women were always distinct because of the embroidered textiles they wore and because this embroidery was on silk. The archives of the Victoria and Albert Museum provided us with the first dates of Indian Parsi embroidery and *garas*. The V&A has its origins in The Great Exhibition, 1851. Several of the exhibits were bought from the Empire to create the nucleus of the V&A collections and the earliest dated records for ‘Parsi women’s embroidery’ are from a Surat collection in 1852, while a larger archive of such embroidery was acquired in 1883. Between this period, and the varying regions of China and India, Parsi embroidery in its recent form was born.

On the other hand, Zarthushti Duzi or embroidery from Iran goes back



Surti Gara 19th Century

across millennia and its origins lie on the Silk Route linking China and the Persian Empire. Sasanian textiles used Zoroastrian emblems and Chinese stitches and Parzor is also researching these ancient links.

The original Parsi name for a fully embroidered sari was *Badhi Bhareli*. In the families who traded with China, women designed these saris by planning colours and symbols while learning the several types of satin stitch from Chinese crafts persons. Symbols from the Zoroastrian book of creation, *Bundahishn*, provide some idea of the flowers of a particular day or *roj*, used by women on their garments, while certain symbols repeated across the Zoroastrian world such as the rooster of Sarosh as a protective form were common. Since Chinese protective forms, such as the Divine Fungus is also used with the rooster, these symbols combine in Parsi embroidery. Several symbols are common across Central Asia- the Simurgh and the Phoenix both symbolize resurrection; fish for fertility, the crane for long life are found in Parsi embroidery probably from both Zoroastrian and Chinese sources.

Ongoing Research

The oldest Surti embroidery is in *aari* and fine chain stitch. We are looking for the catalogues or embroidery patterns of Pestonjee Burjorjee Dhabar who began exporting *garas* to Hormusjee & Sons from the early stages till 1939 when the trade ended. It was always an expensive trade and *garas* have never been cheap.

We have found that the oldest Parsi *garas* came from Canton and the Mohina Khyal, a self-patterned fabric is the oldest type of Chinese *gara*; however dating the fabrics - the *gajji*, the Surti Ghat and the Surti Satin - still requires research.

The historical part of studying the *gara* was the beginning of Parzor's textile research, but we were at a moment in history where Parsi women who had embroidered *garas* spoke to us of their work, but were too old to



Close up of the phoenix motif



Close up of the paisley motif

teach a new generation. We lost the *khakho* or seed pearl stitch just before the 2005 Workshop in Ahmedabad because the last practitioner of this 'forbidden stitch' went blind and could not teach the method. Fortunately, Parzor workshops in Ahmedabad, Navsari, Bombay, and Delhi made Parsi women re-look their textiles and gave us a great opportunity to document designs and stitches.

Over the years, Parsi women like Roshan Patel, Mehra Vajifdar and Manekmai Mulla taught embroidery to young ladies from aristocratic homes, Burjorji Framji Bharucha of Navsari ran *mahila vishram* or

women's development classes in embroidery for middle class women to add to their income and actually was a precursor to the Cottage Industry movement of India in the 20th century. If any readers have studied with or heard about these teachers, please contact us.

Parzor now teaches Parsi embroidery at the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) in its various branches across India. The Textile Research Centre at Leiden, The Netherlands, has documented Parsi embroidery as a distinct art form. Parzor, however, needs funding to collect unique *garas* or at least record them before they disappear. We need more information about Shameen Island in the Canton Parsi settlement as well as textile links to the Parsis of Shanghai. We need to rediscover the technique of the 'Sugar Wash', which gave a gloss to Surti satin. Paper patterns of textiles in homes need preservation and sharing, because they may contain dates and techniques.

The Challenges

Preserving our heritage craft has been a difficult journey. There is hardly any documentation in Parsi homes of the creation of *garas*, so historical dating is difficult. In our sales, we try to keep to the authentic light colors, but our non-Parsi patrons need to be persuaded to agree. Due to the necessary involvement of textile experts from all parts of the globe, private collectors have stepped in, paying higher prices to families whom we had identified.

We would be happy to join with the Ratan Tata Institute and Zoroastrian Stree Mandals to revive hand embroidered *garas*. Most important we need Parsi crafts persons and entrepreneurs to take this craft of the community into the next generation.



The ParZor Foundation

The Parzor Foundation aims to create awareness of the age-old co-existence of cultures through research and revival of India's multicultural heritage. The Parsi-Zoroastrians are a distinct thread in the tapestry of Indian culture, and PARZOR, with its special focus on Parsi-Zoroastrianism heritage, facilitates preservation and education through socio-cultural, scientific research projects, workshops, exhibitions and publications. Parzor Foundation is a not-for-profit organization following the aims and principles of UNESCO.

PARZOR CRAFTS is the revival branch of the Textile Research Module. In 2008, after a rigorous selection process, UNESCO chose one of Parzor's Hand Embroidered stoles for the Seal of Excellence Award for Year 2008. Parzor Crafts was competing with over 180 countries. The award-winning stole is pictured below.



On the left is a photograph of *gara*-inspired embroidery on a stole and purse featuring the Simurgh motif of long life and continuity. Each article created by ParZor has a small tag explaining the meaning of the design. These creations are available via email to nilouferparzor@gmail.com / WhatsApp at +91 9810152764.



Dr. Shernaz Cama teaches at Lady Shri Ram College, Delhi University. She is Founder and Honorary Director of the UNESCO Parzor Project for the preservation and promotion of Parsi Zoroastrian Culture and Heritage since 1999. Besides academic publications, she guides researchers in their work in the fields of literature, culture studies and Zoroastrianism.

Contact Parzor at shernazcama@hotmail.com or parzorfoundation@gmail.com



ASHA Centre: Unlocking Creativity

By Zerbanoo Gifford

Zerbanoo Gifford founded the ASHA Centre in 1996 in the Royal Forest of Dean in Gloucestershire. In Avesta, the word Asha means “the righteous way” and “divine justice.” Recently, 54-acres of the neighbouring Church Farm with ponds, woods, barns and 15 stables were added to the Centre. The Centre is home to a wide range of spiritual and cultural activities. It also has a large house, which is home to young volunteers who come to learn and work in ASHA’s biodynamic gardens and to offer their personal skills to the Centre and the local community. The ASHA Centre aims to be self-funding by hosting conferences, retreats, weddings, and special events such as the venue for the training of Interfaith ministers. All proceeds go towards funding ASHA’s ground-breaking work with young people. In this article, Zerbanoo shares her vision for the Asha Centre.

My vision for the ASHA Centre was to unlock the creativity, human potential and inherent goodness in people, especially the young. The Centre is in the Royal Forest of Dean, where J.R.R. Tolkien and J.K. Rowling were inspired by the magic of the forest to write their epic tales. Likewise, I have been inspired to make our ASHA gardens in the heart of the forest breath-takingly beautiful. Gardening is my art form, through which I express my Zoroastrianism, transforming a wasteland into what is now called by many a ‘paradise’.

I have also filled the ASHA Centre with my collection of Chinese embroideries, artworks, and religious statues. Our dining room walls showcase modern paintings, including portraits of the world’s inspirational women which

accompanied my book on the stories of 300 extraordinary women from 60 countries who had helped to change our world. The individual portraits were painted and put together by the gifted artist Jeroo Roy and originally displayed at the National Portrait gallery in London.

I believe the Arts have a special power to express and restore our humanity, which at this time is being threatened. As a result of our one-sided education, with its emphasis only on head-learning, social disintegration and a misuse of social media, mental illness among the young is growing to epidemic proportions. Arts heals the soul. It is also an excellent way to bring learning alive, to bring it out of the head and into the realm of experience. In this way it goes deeper and can last a lifetime.

CREATING BEAUTY: ZARATHUSHTI ARTISTS & ARTISANS



Young Zoroastrians in front of the portraits of extraordinary women.

One arts project which touched me and for which ASHA won a European best practice award, involved teenage orphans from Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Hungary, Poland and Britain. Through the ancient art of storytelling, they shared their traumatic experiences of rejection and institutionalisation. Out of this cleansing sharing and the healing of past wounds, they created a poignant coming-of-age theatre production. There was one Armenian boy present, whose parents had cruelly disfigured his face. He sang like an angel. Through the experience of sharing his extraordinary talent with others at an Open Day at ASHA



Coming of age theatre production by teenage European orphans.

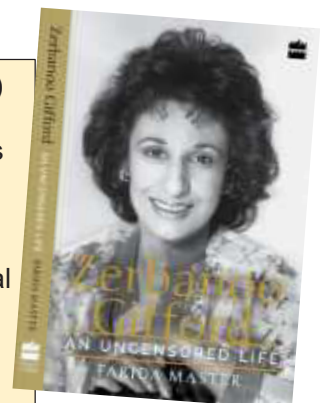
attended by the good and the great, his confidence grew, and enabled him to have the courage to go on to study at the Yerevan Conservatory. Today, music, one of the most sublime art forms, has become his career.

Art in its many splendid forms - from the performing and visual arts to embroidery, sculpture, music, gardening and any form of creative self-expression - is for me a powerful way to creatively and bravely express our higher selves. Beauty reminds me of the true nature of our souls, which is radiant. One young man who had attended a course on 'community engagement through the arts' left a wonderful message for me. He stated that 'his soul rocked at ASHA'.



Zerbano Gifford is an author, human rights campaigner, and founder of the ASHA Centre, a charity with an outstanding international track record in delivering transformative education in the fields of ethical leadership, social innovation, intercultural and interfaith understanding, sustainable development, and the performing arts. In 1982 Gifford was elected a councillor for Harrow, the first female Asian councillor to be elected for the Liberal Party. Zerbano Gifford holds the International Woman of the Year Award 2006 for her humanitarian work, which spans fifty years of grassroots and global activism.

Zerbano Gifford: An Uncensored Life by Farida Master (Harper-Collins, 2016) is a compelling biography of a human rights campaigner, philanthropist, women's champion, author and founder of the ASHA Centre - a game-changer who speaks her mind. Born in India, Zerbano Gifford moved to London at the age of four. By her early thirties she had become a pioneer for Asians in British public life. She chaired committees, advised political leaders and was the first Asian woman to stand for Parliament, having been elected onto Harrow Council. Overcoming racial attacks, political disenchantment, legal battles against the Government and a near-death experience, Zerbano's is a gripping story of a fearless woman who has held fast to the causes of equality and global justice despite all odds.





The author with Solar Thermal Panels for electricity.

Architecture deals with the art and science of buildings. The art deals with designing creative buildings or spaces and the science deals with selecting appropriate materials for a project, and the proper detailing of the various systems of a building, such as the control of air, moisture, and water through building components. An architect should have a balance between these two sides of the profession.

GREEN BUILDINGS & SUSTAINABILITY

Fossil-based energy is becoming more expensive and its effects on our environment have been shown to be harmful to our health and the ecosystem. Scarce natural resources, transportation of building materials across vast distances, and volatile organic compounds (VOC's) in building materials, are all sources of concern. Passive and active solar design strategies can address these issues. Incorporating renewable, reused, or sustainable building materials in the design are steps in the right direction. Smart framing techniques, and the use of prefabricated components can reduce on-site construction waste. Locally produced products limit the fuel used to transport the materials to the building site. These and other sustainable design practices can reduce our carbon footprint and create healthier home, work, and leisure environments. Architects and clients with vision need to address these larger issues as best as the budget allows.

THE ART & SCIENCE OF A GREEN HOME

By Neville Rustomjee

PASSIVE SOLAR DESIGN

The goal of Passive Solar Design is to reduce energy consumption without mechanical or electrical means. One of the most important and effective strategies in passive solar design is the proper orientation of a house and selection of the site. Unfortunately, this is not always possible with existing homes.

Building Material

A typical home has heat/cold loss of 25 – 35% through the walls, windows, and roof. Reducing heat and cold from entering a home means you don't have to cool the home in summer and heat it in winter as much. Materials with mass like stone, poured or precast concrete, concrete block, and brick take till evening for heat to conduct through the walls and by then the slight heat is tolerable in summer or beneficial in winter.

Other more unusual materials are adobe walls, rammed earth walls, straw bale walls, and earthships. Newer technologies include Structural Insulated Panels (SIPs), and Insulated Concrete Forms (ICFs). The more unusual materials and the newer technologies need specialized construction crews, so if you are considering them, you should use experienced contractors in these building types.

Most residential homes are constructed using 2x4 or 2x6 wood studs. For such homes, using a minimum of 2" extruded or expanded polystyrene insulation on the exterior side of the wood studs will help. Using concrete, brick, stone, or tiled floors to capture the heat from sun coming in on the south side of a home is another passive solar strategy. The sun heats the material in the day, and this heat is stored and released over time, helping to keep the home warmer during cold winter nights.

Shading

Shading can be accomplished through natural features like a hill, mountain, or trees. Generally, in the hot summer months you are trying to keep the sun/heat from entering the home in the afternoon. You are also trying to prevent cold winter winds hitting the north side of the home.

Deciduous trees can shade a house's south side in summer and yet allow sun and heat to enter in winter. Evergreen trees and bushes can be used to buffer cold breezes in winter on the house's northern side. Deep roof overhangs and horizontal overhangs/awnings on the south side help shade the windows in the hot summer months when the sun is high in the sky. Vertical louvers or fins help with controlling heat gain in winter when the sun is lower in the sky. Trellis structures, exterior window shutters and automated shutter systems also can be used.

Wind

The basic principle is to allow wind to enter the home on the windward side, circulate through the house and push the hot air out of the house through other window openings. Generally, narrow buildings tend to have better cross ventilation than deep buildings which have more interior walls that will inhibit air circulation. The shorter axis of the home should align with the prevailing summer winds i.e., the longer face of the house should face the prevailing winds.

The size and placement of windows is important for cross ventilation, as are interior walls that may block the wind from getting to the opposite side of the home. Hot air rises, so it's best to have the windward opening low and the leeward side windows high. If you are in an urban environment you need to consider security aspects of having open windows and noise and pollution entering your home. It is important to have adequate roof top attic fans, and vents in the roof eaves.

Natural Daylight

Orientation of the house will be a factor on how much natural light will enter a home. The size and locations of windows and sliding glass doors will bring in natural light that will reduce the need for using electricity for lighting. Solar tube lights and skylights can bring light into spaces away from the exterior wall. Window and glass door technology has evolved over time, from single pane windows to double and triple paned windows. LED bulbs use about 75% less energy than incandescent bulbs. Initially, the color of LED bulbs was bland, but over time the technology has been improved and a variety of colors are available.

ACTIVE SOLAR DESIGN

Solar Thermal

Solar thermal is the generation of hot water for domestic use and/or space heating. Water or a mixture of water with propylene glycol are circulated through tubes in the solar collector. Space heating can be done using radiant panels or subfloor radiant heating. If the system is just used for hot water, for a typical family of four people, generally 2 to 4 solar collectors are adequate and the cost of the system will range based on your location but should be in the \$7,000 - \$10,000 range. If the system is used to heat the house you need more solar collectors and cost can vary significantly.

Solar Photovoltaic (PV)

Solar PV systems generate electricity using the sun's energy. They are heavily dependent on solar access and roof space that is not shaded by trees or other structures. Ground mounted systems are available, but are rarer in urban environments. A typical residential home of about 2,000 – 3,000 square feet will need a 4- to 5-Kilowatt (kW) system (about 20 to 24 solar panels). The cost will vary based on your location, but generally a system of this size will be around \$16,000 - \$22,000. Grid Tied systems use the electric grid for back up on cloudy days. If the grid is down due to a wind/snow/or an ice storm, your system will also be shut down so as to not electrocute linemen working to fix the electric lines and transformers.

There are other solutions for Off-Grid systems (rural areas not connected to an electric line), DC appliances and light fixtures (more expensive) or to have a battery backed system with an inverter, so you can use standard AC appliances and light fixtures which are cheaper and more readily available. Off grid systems are more expensive, as there are more components in the system. A 4 to 5 Kilowatt (kW) off grid system would cost about \$35,000 – \$45,000.

Building Integrated Photovoltaic (BIPV) deals with the components of a building that have been engineered to incorporate solar photovoltaic technology. Due to their higher cost, they are primarily used in commercial and institutional projects, but some instances of BIPV in residential applications include solar roofing tiles and solar panels incorporated into patio or deck canopies.

Neville Rustomjee is the founder and President of ArchSol Design, PLLC. He is a Registered Architect in the state of Colorado. Neville has a Solar PV and a Solar Thermal degree and a Certificate in Electrical Installation from Red Rocks Community College. He is certified by the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP).



To find out more about solar design and Neville's work, visit www.ArchSolDesign.com



One-of-a-Kind Treasures from Trees

Xerxes Wania builds custom furniture by hand, one piece at a time. An interest that started after he sold his last company, Sidense Corp., which designed and developed memory and licensed it to technology companies, has turned into a committed hobby. Fezana Journal interviewed him about his passion for creating one-of-a-kind tables, speaker stands, even charcuterie boards.

FJ: How long have you been wood working?

XW: I have loved wood working since I was a kid, but I started it as a serious hobby after I sold my last company about three years ago. I watched a lot of YouTube videos on woodworking and wanted to try it out. It's very therapeutic and rewarding to me.

FJ: What materials do you work with?

XW: Mostly hardwood species like maple, walnut, and ash, which are all locally sourced woods native to Ontario. I use Low Volatile Organic Compounds and environmentally-friendly finishes. Once the wood is harvested, I make sure it is meticulously handcrafted with minimal waste. I'm now thinking of incorporating metals like aluminum, steel and copper into my designs.

FJ: Do you use any particular technique or style?

XW: Most of my designs have a Japanese flavor to it. I really like the challenge of this style because the Japanese hardly use screws or nails so it's all joinery with wood.

FJ: What inspires you?

XW: New techniques that challenge my capabilities. I love challenges and solving problems. I also love it when people order from all over the world and leave positive reviews of their experience. When I build stuff, I send them pictures of it being built and that is exciting for most.

FJ: How long does it take to do a typical project?

XW: It all depends. If it's a new design, it could take a week or two, mostly for planning, drawing and correcting my mistakes. If it's a design I have used before, it takes me two to four days. Majority of my work are my own designs.

FJ: Do you have a store or do you only do commissions?

XW: I have a virtual store on Etsy and web presence for Conti Wood Studio. I do not have a physical store and I don't think I will have one. I build all my pieces in Mississauga, Ontario, Canada, and can ship anywhere in the world. I have had orders from as far as Australia.



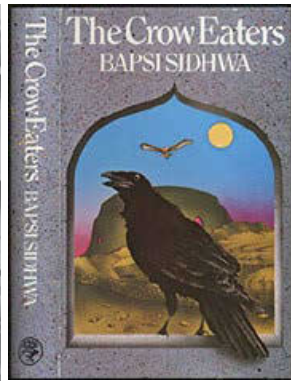
Xerxes Wania was born in Karachi, Pakistan and moved to the US and then to Canada. He has been an entrepreneur most of his career and has founded a couple of successful Hi-Tech start-ups. After exiting from his last start-up, Sidense Corp., Xerxes decided to design and build furniture at Conti Wood Studio. He also owns a dog daycare franchise, Dogtopia, in Kitchener, Canada.



Information and photos of his work are available at Conti Wood Studio on various platforms.

Celebrating 40 years of *The Crow Eaters*:

By Teresa Russo



Ten years after the publication of *The Crow Eaters*, there was an explosion of Parsi novelists. Firdaus Kanga told Sidhwa that it was only after reading *The Crow Eaters* that he felt “the diminutive Parsi community was worth writing about.” After Kanga’s publication following *The Crow Eaters*, Rohinton Mistry, Boman

Desai, Thrity Umrigar, and a few other writers from the Parsi community emerged. Sidhwa wrote in *The Minority and the Muse*: “The community is getting accustomed to seeing itself portrayed in fiction.” Faiz Ahmed Faiz, the late Urdu poet, credited Sidhwa for introducing the Parsis as main characters in literature: “... Bapsi Sidhwa has opened for us all the doors and all the windows of this world’s innermost recesses.”

Sidhwa is perhaps best known in North America for her novel, *Cracking India*, which was published in the United States in 1988 and caught the attention of Canadian filmmaker, Deepa Mehta. It became adapted into Mehta’s *Element Trilogy* as *Earth*. The book launched prior to the US debut in England as *Ice Candy Man* (1981) and received one inaccurate review, suggesting that Sidhwa’s characters emerged from Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children*. Those “rambunctiousness of

characters,” in fact, emerged from *The Crow Eaters* which was published a year before *Midnight’s Children* with the same publisher. Her characters were her own creation and an extension of the Parsi world that she first introduced to her readers in *The Crow Eaters*.

After the publication of *Cracking India*, Sidhwa received the LiBeraturepreis Prize, the Sitara-i-Imtiaz, and the “Great Immigrants: The Pride of America” prize by the Carnegie Mellon in 1991. The book also was placed on the New York Times Notable Book list. In 1992, she received the coveted Patras Bokhari Award for Literature in Pakistan, and in 2019, the novel was named on the BBC list of 100 “most inspiring novels.”

Sidhwa currently lives in Houston and appeared at the Jaipur Literature Festival in 2019 where her new essays, *Landscapes of Writing: Collected Essays of Bapsi Sidhwa* were launched, providing a window into her life, her family, and transnational living. Sidhwa also received a Lifetime Achievement Award from Teamwork Arts for her contributions to literature at that event on September 13, 2019 where the mayor of Houston also proclaimed September 13 as Bapsi Sidhwa Day in honor of all her accomplishments and great contributions to Houston.

Bapsi Sidhwa entered the spotlight forty years ago with her publication of *The Crow Eaters*, a fictional story about the Parsi Zoroastrian community. *The Crow Eaters* is set in the 1930s in India before Partition, and she intertwined the historical with fiction to memorialize a minority group. The title is from a local idiom meaning that anyone who talks too much is said to have eaten crows. She self-published the novel in 1979 and then published it with Jonathan Cape in 1980. Sidhwa was celebrated for her use of good humor, farce, and irony to highlight the idiosyncrasies of the Parsis.

In the introduction to the 2015 reissue of *The Crow Eaters*, Fatima Bhutto, the author of *Songs of Blood and Sword*, writes, “It is her warm, gregarious style that parts the curtains and allows us entry into an older subcontinent, a more complete one.”



Teresa Russo is an educator, scholar, and poet. She is the editor of *Landscapes of Writing: Collected Essays of Bapsi Sidhwa and Recognition and Modes of Knowledge: Anagnorisis from Antiquity to Contemporary Theory*. She has a PhD from the University of Toronto in comparative literature and has taught courses in the arts and humanities at American University, The Catholic University of America, the University of Toronto, and Brock University. Currently, she is a lecturer in the Material Cultures and Semiotics Program at Victoria University in the University of Toronto.

Words that Matter...to Me

By Nairika Kotwal Cornett



The author with her Dad, Navroze Savaksha Kotwal

“Why do you write in the language of the Muslims?” - a question repeatedly asked of my orthodontist, Parsi father. When not correcting enameled pearly whites, Navroze Savaksha Kotwal indulges in life’s greatest pleasures - music and poetry, specifically Urdu poetry.

Born in 1943 to a father steeped in India’s film industry, owning movie theatres and distributing some of Bollywood’s biggest Golden Era blockbusters, my Dad’s earliest memories revolve around movie premiers, song-recording studios and film stars. It isn’t Bollywood’s glamour, but lyrics of songs past, which remain. While this interview with Dad was over the phone, his eagerness on the topic was tangible.

“Dad, why write Urdu poetry?”

Urdu na Musalmaan na Hindu ki hai zabaan

Ishq o wafa ke rang ki, khushbu ki hai zabaan

Urdu is not the language of Muslims or Hindus.

It is a language full of love, faithfulness and fragrance

Mazhab ki tangiyon se isey waasta nahin,

Insaaniyat ho jismey, usi khu ki hai zabaan

Urdu has no relationship with religion.

It belongs to those full of humanity

A romantic, Dad reminisced memorizing lyrics by Sahir Ludhianvi, Mujrooh Sultanpuri, and Shakeel Badayuni,

acclaimed Urdu poets of the day, who for money wrote *ghazals* (songs) for Hindi movies. *Pyaasa*, *Baiju Bowra*, *Uran Khatola*, *Mughal-e-Azam*...Dad’s electrified voice mentions, “I was in studios when many of these songs were recorded. I was able to watch and listen to greats like Mohammed Rafi, Lata Mangeshkar, Asha Bhosle and according to me the greatest *Ghazal* singer ever, Talat Mahmood. It was love at first sound”.

Like most South Bombay boys, the Anglophile tendencies of Parsi parents and Jesuit schooling did not evade his upbringing. Classical piano, harmonica, and badminton were formally taught and yet he derived his greatest joys from being able to play Hindi songs by ear; topping his class in Hindi; delving into Urdu poetry. As a young child, I remember Dad teaching me the importance of speaking Hindi as an Indian, not a Parsi. He said this land is our home and we must speak its language like natives. It is the least we can do for the safe refuge it has given Parsis.

A fortuitous encounter with Urdu poet Sahir Ludhianvi in 1960, led to a nurturing relationship between the two - one Dad valued enough as a teenager to make three bus changes each way, from Warden Road to Versova, every Sunday for several years. Sahir taught Dad the Urdu alphabet (36 letters in all; the first 22 from Sumerian, 6 added from Arabic, 4 from Persian and 4 from Hindi) and encouraged Dad to read as much Urdu poetry as he could lay his hands on. Book stores at Mohammed Ali Road and Bhindi Bazaar became regular jaunts and the couplets of Ghalib and Jigar rolled off his lips like the names of his children.

It wasn’t until 2003 that Dad got serious about penning his own poetry. The need for orthodontic treatment brought him the daughter of a retired Principal of Anjuman Islam School, a man who, according to Dad, was language perfect. Shafiq Abbas became a tutor and mentor, sharing his vast knowledge of Urdu vocabulary and the finer points of composition. Amazed at Dad’s command over the language, he challenged him to compose. And compose, Dad did.

Dad’s writing reflects his life; full of passion and a desire to elevate the human condition. There is no formal

CREATING BEAUTY: ZARATHUSHTI ARTISTS & ARTISANS

structure to how he works. Inspiration is found in social injustices, common aspirations of people everywhere, dignity of human existence. He writes with purpose.

His love for composing Urdu poetry keeps him in the company of great contemporaries. His voice and works are heard at *mushairas* (poetic symposiums – an age-old tradition of sharing poetry from the days of the Mughals) at Anjuman Islam, National Center for the Performing Arts, All India Radio, to name a few. He has been invited to recite his works at the birth anniversaries of greats such as Jaan Nissar Akhtar and Sahir Ludhianvi. His dream of having his *ghazals* sung by a great came to fruition in 2014 when he collaborated with Anup Jalota, India's foremost living *ghazal* singer. Anup and Dad created a long-lasting working relationship. Anup's voice and top musicians from the film industry lent their talents to Dad's words. *Aashiqana* (romantic), an album of eight *ghazals* composed by Dad was born. What's next? Dad is working on independently publishing his poems.

Dad's life has been one of my greatest gifts. Words have gravity and his are my guide. I love his choice of using pen, paper and a stage to be my inner voice. Some of my favorites:

Ghazal about the terrorist attack at Taj Mahal Hotel and Oberoi (2008):

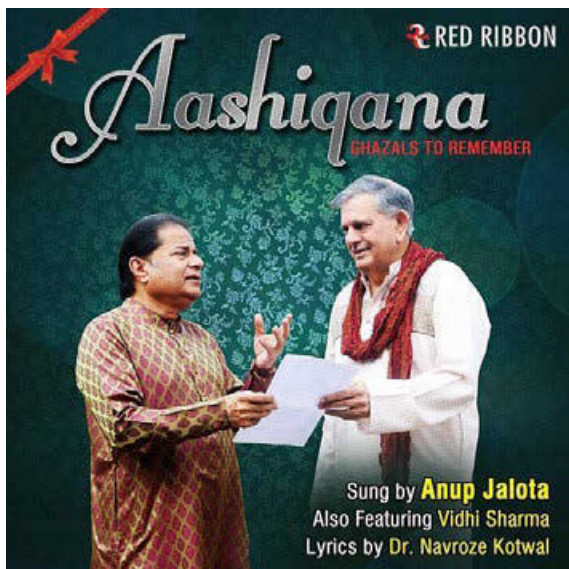
*Jalti rahi dilon mein jo yeh naar e intaqaam,
Barbaadiyon ke kisse na honge kabhi tamaam*
If the fire of revenge keeps burning in the hearts of people (Hindus and Muslims) these acts of destruction will never end

*Yun noch noch khaana, darinda sifat hai kaam,
Insaan ne kyun mita diya insaaninat ka naam*
To bite bit by bit is the work of wild animals.
Why did human beings destroy the name of humanity?

*Ab toh Khuda ke waastey jhagdein karein tamaam
Hindu ke lab pe Allah ho, Muslim pukaare Ram*
For God's sake let us put an end to these fights.
May Hindus take the name of Allah and Muslims chant Ram



And using my sons' names, Kamyaaab and Shayaan:
*Har kisi ko yeh tamanna, woh Kamyaaab ho zamaane mein,
Lekin zamaana kab tha Shayaan e shaan hamara*
(Everybody desires to be successful in this world but, has the world been worthy of our admiration)



Aashiqana: Ghazals to Remember (2014)

The CD with eight *ghazals* penned by Dr Navroze Kotwal and sung by renowned *ghazal* singer Anup Jalota was released on October 20, 2014 by noted *ghazal* singer Talat Aziz at a Diwali party hosted by Jalota. Dhiren Raichura, who regularly plays music with Anup, made music arrangements for this album.

Speaking on the occasion, Jalota said, "I am mostly known for my *bhajans* and other film songs, but even *ghazals* are close to my heart and this album is a soothing melodious treat to all my fans and music lovers."

Indian Express (October 31, 2014) Anup Jalota's releases his newest *ghazal* album. Indianexpress.com

From a Ballet Dancer's Album



Rashna Homji-Jefferies is formerly a soloist dancer with London's Royal Ballet, Principal Dancer with the Royal Opera at Covent Garden, and a senior soloist with The National Ballet of Canada. Rashna has performed various principal roles and has had the opportunity of working with many leading choreographers including Sir Frederick Ashton, Sir Kenneth MacMillan, Sir Peter Wright, Christopher Bruce, Rudolf Nureyev, Ronald Hynd, Alfredo Rodriguez, Barry Moreland and Norman Maine. Her dance partners have included Michel Denard (Paris Opera) and Stephen Jefferies (Royal Ballet) amongst others.

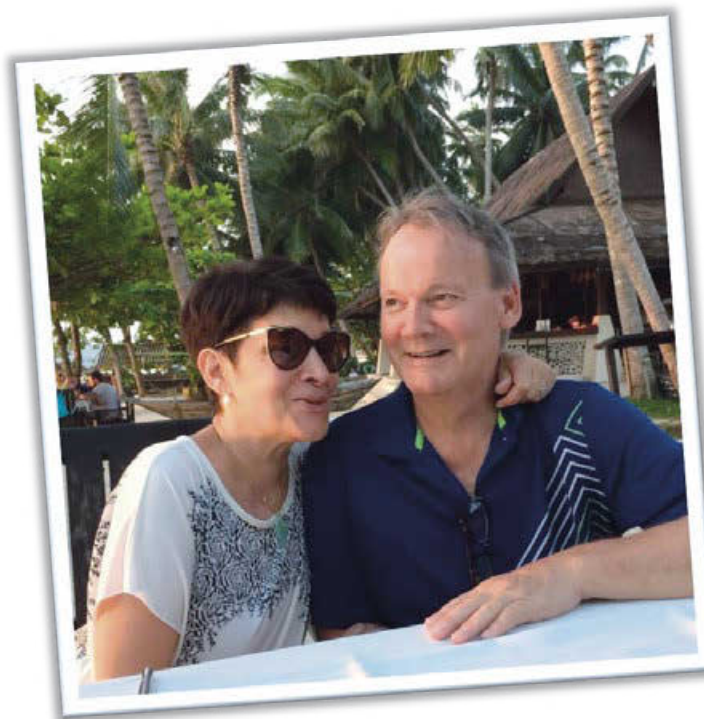
Rashna's teaching career started when she was invited to teach at The Royal Ballet School in 1984. She has also taught at The Arts Educational School in London, The English National Ballet School and Rambert Dance School. She was Lecturer of Ballet at The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts where she also staged many ballets. Companies she has taught include The National Ballet of China, Shanghai Ballet Company, English National Ballet and the Hong Kong Ballet where she was also Ballet Mistress and Rehearsal Director.

Further to her teaching experience, in 1983 with fellow dancer Jeanetta Laurence she founded Dance Directory, an agency for free-lance dancers and choreographers. This ran successfully for nine years. In 1992 she was appointed Ballet Administrator, a senior management position, for The Royal Ballet Schools (junior and senior sections). She was appointed Artistic Director for the Hong Kong Ballet Group (1997) and Dance Director for the Suzhou Ballet Theatre, which she formed alongside her husband Stephen Jefferies in 2007.

Presently, Rashna pursues a free-lance career as consultant, teacher, repetiteur and coach.



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PREVIOUS PAGE

The Girl in Solitaire

Choreographed by Kenneth Macmillan,

Rashna Homji

A recent photo

The Girl in the Invitation

Choreographed by Kenneth Macmillan, Royal Ballet

Pas deux with Stephen Jefferies - Theme Dreamer

Choreographed by Norman Maine for Granada Television.

THIS PAGE

Sleeping Beauty

National Ballet of Canada

Grosse Fugue with Stephen Jefferies

Choreographed by Hans van Manen

Rashna Homji and Stephen Jefferies

A recent photo on Facebook

Living the Dream as an Opera Singer

By Frazan Kotwal

Frazan Adil Kotwal is a baritone currently studying at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst Stuttgart, Germany. In March 2020, he made his debut as Jupiter in Offenbachs Orpheus in the Underworld in Balingen. In association with Yehudi Menuhin Live Music Now, Frazan and pianist Yu Tashiro gave a concert of encouragement in front of the Robert Bosch Hospital in 2020 to raise the spirits of COVID patients and health care workers, performing pieces from Bach to Sinatra. He shares his journey from a journalism student to an opera singer with Fezana Journal.



Frazan Kotwal on stage (Photo credit Jonas Balena)

“Don’t sing, you sound like a *raddiwala* (hawker)” “You really lack the talent” “You don’t have the standard for Europe” “Why leave a perfectly good career in order to pursue something you will never have success in?” These are just some of the things told to me at the age of 19 when I discovered that Western classical singing (Opera, Art song etc) is what my heart beat for. I am so grateful for all

the naysayers because that is what inspired me to become who I am today.

So, how does a Poona boy with no connection to classical music end up singing opera and other Western classical music in more than nine different languages? Well, my mother told me that whilst she gave birth to me in Parsi General Hospital in Mumbai, classical music was being played in the background. I genuinely think that’s where it all must have started. My entire childhood I was fascinated with music. Any kind of music. The violin is my primary instrument, but I also play the viola, cello, harmonica and a little bit of piano. Being raised in Pune allowed me to go outside into my bucolic surroundings and listen to the sounds of nature. Imitating the calls of different birds and singing at the top of my voice.

My parents gave me whatever exposure they could. In a world where parents force their children to study hard to become doctors and engineers, mine allowed me to express my creativity in any form or way. Resources were limited but they did the best they could and for that I will always be thankful. My school, Dastur School, was thankfully one of the few schools in Pune that allowed me to do anything and everything creative. They saw that I excelled in that area and always supported me. I remember singing the lead in many a musical and choir or playing the lead role in different plays. It was quite surprising to some that the shy boy who sat in the corner of his class reading a book would transform into a beast on stage. That’s really how I felt every time I went up there and still do, no matter how big the stage!

When I moved to Mumbai at the age of 18 to study Mass Media and Journalism at Jai Hind college, I discovered opera. I happened to meet Patricia Rozario (a world renowned opera singer) who heard me and encouraged me to sing in the opera at the NCPA (National Centre for Performing Arts) in Mumbai. After graduating with Honours with a Bachelor degree in Journalism and Mass

Media in 2015, I decided that I wanted to make my dream of becoming an opera singer a reality. After all, it was a combination of three of my favorite things - music, acting, and languages. What other profession could offer me such a challenge?

I naively decided to apply for the best universities in New York and Vienna, not knowing how stiff the competition really is. When I went to audition, there were hundreds of other young singers who had been training for this moment almost their entire lives. I remember these auditions just like yesterday, especially the ones in Vienna. But they saw my determination, hard work, potential and talent and accepted me. I was on top of the moon, being accepted into one of the world's most prestigious schools to study music. It couldn't get better than this. I was on cloud nine.

Coming back to India, we celebrated; everyone knew that the Parsi Dastur had got in Vienna. Alas! It wasn't meant to be. For six months, I waited for my visa. My bags packed and ready in the hallway and I heard nothing from the Austrian embassy. My visa just didn't arrive. Till today, I don't know why. It was one of the most dark and depressing periods of my life. I stopped leaving the house because every time I would go out friends would ask me why I was still in Mumbai. Well-wishers would sympathize with me and the not-so-well-wishers would mock me. But like always, life had something better in store.

I decided that I would not let a visa come in the way of fulfilling my dreams. My mother encouraged me to go to Germany, as they had always had a very high standard of music and some of the best artists come from there. I applied to different music universities. I got accepted everywhere and finally found my calling in Stuttgart. I knew from the very moment I entered the music university in Stuttgart that this was where I was meant to be. Ulrike Sonntag (world famous German Soprano to whom I owe so much of my development to) and my current teacher gave me a spot in her class and from then on there was no looking back.

Moving to Stuttgart changed my life. I was suddenly living my dream of becoming a musician. I was like a kid in a candy shop. I absorbed everything like a sponge, trying to learn everything I am taught and enjoying every moment of it. I train everyday: three hours on voice, one hour on the piano, and another couple of hours on language, translation, interpretation etc. I also feel it necessary to get my inspiration through different forms of art like painting,

reading poetry, or watching a play. Stuttgart, being a very rich cultural city, allows me to explore all these avenues. Since the past three years I have been funding myself through concerts. I have also been immensely privileged to receive many awards and scholarships; the Fritz-Wunderlich-Society prize in Kusel, a scholarship of the Christel Guthörle Foundation Reutlingen, and the Yehudi-Menuhin-Scholarship "Live Music Now". Knowing that I have the backing and support of people who help, support and nurture my goals has motivated me to work even harder.

Singing for me is something holy, in a way it's a chance for me to spread happiness. It is not something singular, it is something that is shared, something that is created amongst all of us. I am a firm believer in helping out in whatever way I can, whether that being helping other young singers from India (I currently managed to help another young baritone get accepted to study in Stuttgart) or bringing joy to underprivileged children in India. I have also organized youth music groups for the understanding and learning of classical music, and founded the "Musikkreis Gruppe" at the Goethe Institut in Mumbai and Pune. My religion has always taught me the value of giving back no matter what I have, and I always try to give back wherever I am. I have performed in children's hospice, jails, for people who have dementia, and countless old age homes here in Germany.

To all the Zarathushtis out there who are contemplating a career in the arts, especially music, just know that there will be many obstacles, money being one of them, but with passion, grit and determination you can and will make it. When I came to Stuttgart, I had no contacts or friends and now I am earning a comfortable amount just singing whilst studying. Nothing is impossible! If you have any questions or need any guidance you can always reach out to me.

Four years have gone by in Stuttgart. I recently did my graduation recital and received the highest score. I have also been accepted to continue studying for my Master's degree in opera at the same university. Currently, I am in a phase where I am earning my living just by giving concerts as a freelance singer. I have performed in private concerts in Mumbai, New York, London, Hyderabad, New Delhi, Chennai and Bangalore. There are many paths for an opera singer to go towards. I choose the toughest and the most rewarding of them all and that is to be a soloist. My dream is to become the great Zarathushthi opera singer, to perform on the world's biggest stages and venues, and to spread my love for this music all over the world. I am grateful to be well on my way towards that dream.



Bringing Joy and Beauty through Music

By Dilshad Posnock

Every artist has their own path, professional and personal lives always being closely intertwined. My journey included opportunities to study with world class professors at the Royal College of Music in London, and then as a graduate student at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh. I have performed on stage with orchestras and ensembles, both back home in India, as well as in the UK and the USA. In the last couple of years, one of my most fulfilling performance opportunities has been as Principal Flute of the South Asian Symphony Orchestra (SASO), which was founded by Ambassador Nirupama Rao. The SASO brings together musicians from nearly every country in South Asia, with some of us traveling overseas to participate. Finding common ground through music and promoting peace through the initiatives of this orchestra has been rewarding. It has been nearly three decades since I left Mumbai, and returning home for performances is something I truly cherish.

A career in music is filled with hours of practice, focus on technical ability, and a high level of competitiveness. However, as my career continues to grow, the more I am keenly aware of the deeper power and meaning behind what we all do as artists. The ability to induce joy, bring a sense of beauty, and have shared experiences in live performances are what motivate me. I am drawn to projects and performances that have a bigger purpose than simply the notes I play on stage. Our world needs healing, peace, and unity – something that has become acutely apparent in the last couple of years for a multitude of reasons. And I believe that art plays an essential role in beginning to help us find common ground and set the stage for this essential work. My home is now in Brevard, North Carolina, a beautiful mountain town outside Asheville, and home to the internationally renowned Brevard Music Center. I am actively involved in teaching and performing – as a member of the Artist Faculty of the Brevard Music Center and Brevard College, as well as a member of the Asheville Symphony Orchestra. I have grown to truly appreciate a good balance in our life here. In addition to a career in music, my family spends a lot of time outdoors, enjoying the beautiful mountains, and love to cook and eat. And yes, my Parsi roots come through strong and spicy when I'm in the kitchen!

I was born in Mumbai in a home filled with music. Music on records, (yes, record players at the time!), a lovely grand piano in the living room to explore, family members playing and practicing, and live concerts at the National Centre for Performing Arts. It seemed very natural to begin piano lessons at a young age. I switched to the flute when I was about twelve years old. The Parsi community in Mumbai has a deep love for Western classical music and most of the Western classical music organizations, ensembles, and platforms around me were founded and supported by Parsis. I was lucky enough to be a member of one of these, the Bombay Chamber Orchestra. From the time I was a teenager, I had the wonderful opportunity to perform in the orchestra, to learn, and grow my love for music in a deep and meaningful way. This was a real gift to me as a young flautist, and I am so grateful I had such a nurturing environment to discover my musical passions.

I am so grateful to have had tremendous support from my family and larger community from a young age - allowing me the time and resources to pursue my flute studies. Even though I was mostly self-taught in my earliest days, I had the guidance of my parents, the conductor of the Bombay Chamber Orchestra, and many other generous musicians to help me along the way. The wonderful Principal of my school (I am a proud alum of the JB Petit High School for Girls) was always happy to allow me to get to school late on mornings I had orchestra rehearsals, and my friends always cheered me on at concerts. When the time came for me to leave Mumbai to attend the Royal College of Music in London, I had the generous support of many Parsi foundations and trusts.



Bearing Witness to Our Lives through Digital Storytelling

By Kayhan Irani

Can a performance create community? Can a story bear witness? How can we investigate the social, cultural, and political contexts that shape our lives while healing the inner hurts that war, displacement, and separation have wrought? I am interested in offering a real opportunity for audiences to have a journey of self-discovery and reflection - a space to know yourself – through theater and theater-based learning.

My latest work, *There is a Portal*, is a participatory, digital theatre project that creates spaces for truth-telling and healing within immigrant, refugee, and diaspora communities. From the streets of Tehran during the Iranian Revolution to the buildings of

Manhattan on September 11th, from Zoroastrian tales of fleeing to India to American-style assimilation pressures, *There is a Portal* brings to life interlacing cycles of oppression, juxtaposing the personal and political, theatre and real life. It reimagines belonging, place, and human connection in a divided world. While weaving together tales that traverse time and space, I hope audiences will examine and challenge inherited notions of culture, identity, power, and legacy. And the bigger dream of the project is to offer a landing pad where young people can gather, reflect, build new connections and stand up and fly, in their own right.

I created *There is a Portal* for the scared, sensitive child who felt

incomplete and inadequate and didn't quite learn how to dance in the light of her inheritance. The light of her people. From my childhood in NYC in the 1980s and 1990s, to this day, in order for immigrants and refugees to be considered successful and integrated, we must accept a measure of erasure. Ideas of "achievement" or accomplishment were bound up with having to let go of pieces of family history, homeland, and language. I was given assimilative models of citizenship and engagement and the definitions of a "good American" that were offered never included me or my family. Those narratives were baked into every educational, cultural and community program that I participated in and I quickly

learned to let certain parts of myself melt away. And so, this project needed to start with my story as a portal to the multitude of stories that exist.

There is a Portal will expand into educational tools and materials

meant to support youth in telling their own stories as a way to take ownership of their role in creating a nation – making a place for one’s self, one’s people and histories while mending the frayed ties that exist.

Hatred is being met with rising desires for humanity and a shared commitment to justice and love.

“Del beh del, rah dareh. From my heart to yours, there is a portal.”

Kayhan Irani is an Emmy-award winning writer, a cultural activist, and a storyteller. She has trained hundreds of groups in participatory storytelling tools over 20 years, both nationally and overseas, in Afghanistan, India, and Iraq. She received a Fulbright-Nehru Senior Researcher studying Parsi embroidery with the PARZOR Project. In 2016 she was named by the Obama White House as a “Champion of Change” for her storytelling work.

SPOTLIGHT

***Naqqāli*: The Tradition of Dramatic Storytelling in Persia**



A lithographic copy of the *Shahnameh* (Bombay, 1913). commissioned by the Indian Zoroastrian Parsi community and given to the Library of Congress as a gift by the Mehrizi family. Near East Section, African and Middle Eastern Division, Library of Congress.

Naqqāli concerns telling of a story, history or non-history based, in a variety of genres. It is done either in verse or prose and accompanied by gestures and movements appropriate to the event related. This tradition was called “Gowsān” during Parthians (3rd BCE-3rd CE). “Gowsān”s (the reciters) acted as entertainers to both kings and ordinary people. Under the Sassanids (3rd-7th CE), Naqqāli was highly regarded at court, where it used to be called “Xonyāgarī”. Naqqāls were poets and musicians simultaneously. They recited stories along with playing instruments. Bārbad was the most renown Naqqāl of the Sassanid era. Following the collapse of the Sassanids, these reciters emigrated to remote areas to keep the tradition alive.

During the Ghaznavid era (10th-12th CE), the Court banned musical Naqqāli, but the tradition survived in remote areas. Later rulers were more lenient. During the Islamic period, such reciters were known by the repertory of the tales they recited. One example is,

so called, “Shāhnāmeḥ-Xān”s, who specialized in reciting tales from Shāhnāmeḥ, the great Persian epic by Ferdowsi. During the Safavid period (16th-18th CE), coffee-houses became exclusive venues for Naqqāls for at least 300 years. Up to several decades ago, coffee-houses hired Naqqāls but, unfortunately, the strong influence of Western culture and break down of the old traditions caused a decline in popularity of coffee-houses. Consequently, Naqqāl’s lost their traditional audiences.

Nowadays, the language of recited narrations is not limited to Persian; these tales are also narrated in regional dialects or languages. No Naqqāl, seasonal or professional, can earn his living just by Naqqāli. This has led to less interest in professional Naqqāli. However, they act as important guardians of folk-tales, ethnic-epics and Iranian folk music.

Read more about Naqqāli at <https://surfiran.com/naqqali-in-iran>



How to Succeed as an Ethnically Ambiguous Actor

A glowing Zenobia Shroff looks relaxed as she sits down on a Saturday afternoon to Zoom from her London hotel room. After the success of her “scene stealing role” in The Big Sick and having landed a key role in Ms. Marvel, an Original Series from Marvel Studios, the sky is the limit. In an interview with Fezana Journal, she traces her rise from theatre footlights in Mumbai to the bright lights of the Big Apple.

It all started 40-odd years ago when her mother encouraged her to step into the world of commercial print modelling. “But even before then, the renowned theatre personality Pearl Padamsee was my drama teacher in the hallowed JB Petit High School,” she says with a wry chuckle. “I was her protégé till she died.” In fact, it was Padamsee who encouraged her to head to the bright lights of New York to pursue acting. “I definitely got the message while in high school that I had this talent, but my path veered a little bit away from acting into commercial print modelling and ad films,” she reminisces, adding, “there’s a finite time for that career, 16 to 23 years, and then it is over.” Once the lure of the ad world stopped, Mumbai born-and-raised Shroff once again returned to her first love – acting. “Pearl was doing this really professional theatre piece, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, with Naseeruddin Shah, Ratna Pathak Shah, and Sabira Merchant. I was just 22 years old and I was terrified to act with such stalwarts. I remember I played a prostitute.” She adds, laughing, “I played a lot of prostitutes.”

“I also started dancing with choreographer, Shiamak Davar and dabbling in amateur theatre.” Shroff recalls being paid a mere Rs 100 per show, “which we promptly blew at Shamiana (a popular yesteryear restaurant).” Shroff says, “Shiamak Davar had us do these shows for Air India, where they paid us not in cash, but in an airline ticket to New York and back. Pearl was insistent I not waste it and the opportunity.” Shroff was at a crossroads in her life at the time, her graduate studies had ended and “ever since I was a little girl, I knew I was meant for a bigger life than South Bombay and the voice was getting bigger.” Shroff took the chance. Shroff left the comfort of her affluent Parsi, South Bombay home and with just \$500, two suitcases and a six-month visa, she came to New York’s Circle in Square acting school.

Hailing from a small, elite Zoroastrian community, whose influence on the arts is notable and extensive, Shroff attributes it to “colonial throwback”. She says, “Although

gross, but true, because of our light skin, we were very much favored by the British. We didn’t have the thick, Indian accent. We embraced them and they embraced us. The influence of Britain on Parsis remains even today... Growing up, all you heard if you had a little money was ‘*London javanu*’ (*Must go to London*). Never America. My neighbor was a huge anglophile. She only had the British kings and queens as her artwork. Our Parsi culture was and still is steeped in this Colonial hangover.” Shroff was not raised going to Parsi *nataks*. Her family favored Western classical music concerts and being good at elocution. “However, my mother actually kind of rebelled and insisted I learn Bharatnatyam (an Indian classical dance) rather than the Western ballet favored by Parsis.” Shroff is a well-trained Bharatnatyam dancer today. “We (Zenobia and her sister) did do a little piano and my sister did Western classical singing. There was just an Englishness around our Parsi-ness.” Shroff believes that this does not hold true today as in today’s India, the youngsters that are entering the film and theatre “are carving out their own identity”.

Shroff does, however, add that “a small section of the affluent, upper middle class Parsis are pro-London, but in general that time has passed. The British left in 1947,” she laughs. “The younger generation most have moved on and it’s a small few that are still stuck in the Colonial hype. I guess they can’t help it, growing up around blue pottery and Wedgewood.” Shroff admits that having lived in London the past two-and-a-half months, shooting for *Ms. Marvel*, she has realized why tea was such a big deal in her home growing up. “Chai and sandwiches and snacks, were a big deal in my home as it is with the British, but the youth as a whole are breaking away. Not our parents, but we are the last remaining generation stuck with a Colonial hangover.”

But the path has not always been easy. “I always say I was born and raised in Bombay, but I grew up in New York. New York has been my greatest teacher and New York is a

harsh teacher. I was a good Parsi girl from Bombay and thrown suddenly into a sea of sharks and my swimming wasn't very good. It was tough, but it made me the woman and actor I am. Because your acting is only as good as the life you have experienced." With a shake of her head she adds, "And I experienced a lot of life – both good and bad." Recalling those harsh teaching moments, a sombre Shroff says, "the onslaught of sexual harassment I faced was the hardest thing. And I didn't have any tools to deal with that. You're broke and you want the job and you know this is wrong and you've been asked to bare your breasts or be someone's mistress, and you don't have what it takes to be a bad ass survivor." Quoting Helen Mirren, an actress she admires, Shroff says, "Like Mirren, I would tell my younger self to learn to say 'Fuck off!'" Today, the seasoned actress is a fierce advocate against sexual harassment and mentors many young actors and actresses "to stand up to the systemic sexual harassment that is still endemic in the industry, even though the #MeToo movement shifted the needle a lot. An actress I have been mentoring in India, she was sexually harassed and bold enough to expose the guy. He was a producer and asked her on text what she was willing to do for a role. And I took the text chain and went ape-shit. Today, I am in a position to say fuck off. So, we did. And exposed him on social media."



After years of personal, professional and financial difficulties in making her way to a working actress, Shroff fell ill. She had to leave her day job and spent an entire year in bed. "I genuinely thought I would never act again." It took years for Shroff to get better. With no real diagnosis and no real money, she got caught in a vicious cycle of health and finance. And then finally, one day, the sun came out. While on vacation in Mumbai, director Sooni Taraporevala discovered her through sheer accident. And five auditions later, Shroff landed Roxanne in *Little Zizou* (2008). Owing to her fabulous performance in it, she was nominated for the Best Actress Award in the New York Indian Film Festival. Subsequently, she appeared in the movie *When Harry Tries to Marry* (2010), an independently made Hollywood movie. After that, she bagged a role in a superhit Bollywood movie *Ek Mai Aur Ek Tu* (2012), with Kareena Kapoor and Imran Khan. She

is also known for her solo show, *How to Succeed as An Ethnically Ambiguous Actor*, for which she was nominated for Best Actress. Her role as Kumail Nanjiani's mother in *The Big Sick* (2017) earned her a Screen Actors' Guild nomination and put her on the map. This led to her role in *Ms. Marvel*. As to her best moment till date, Shroff says, "although the best moment is yet to come becoming part of the Marvel universe is definitely up there in best moments."

Today, Shroff, who is in her fifties says, "I don't believe life should be only about work. A work-life balance is important. Other things are important to me now – women's issues, I'm a decent writer and orator and I would

like to get more involved in advocacy for women and children. When this Marvel movie drops, and I have a platform, I would like to use that platform for advocacy and enhance women and children's rights around the world... You see actors going up in award shows and speaking to causes like women in Afghanistan and the social media backlash they receive for taking a stand. Acting is political. Actors want to expose injustices through these stories. Acting, in the end, reflects the human experience in all its myriad forms and, at our core, actors have a strong sense of injustice. There's always a politic, whatever that politic is. In *The Big Sick*, the politic was to normalize the Muslim experience. It's very enmeshed."

A piece of advice she has for youngsters is "put in the work. Where is the work ethic today? Youngsters are too busy showing they've arrived and have this fabulous life on social media, but it's the work that comes first. And [another] thing I say to them, like agent Estelle Leonard said to Joey (in *Friends*), "Take every job you can get." There's an entitlement that the youth have today, which I didn't have. They want immediate gratification. I say take every job – small or big. Nothing comes from nothing and nothing ever will."

Zenobia Shroff is still today at her core a nice middle class Parsi girl from south Bombay, still Polly and Rusi Shroff's youngest daughter, but a lot about and around her has changed. "I will always and forever be nice. That is my primary identity. I'm still nice, I believe in nice. I don't think you have to be nasty to move forward or get ahead.

The Art of Teaching Art

By Roshni Dell



I have taught art for about 37 years now, following the footsteps of my dearly departed mother and fellow artist/teacher, beginning at the Oakville Art Society, teaching in summer art camps. I've also had years of experience teaching High School classes at various levels in Northern Ontario – art, English, music, accounting, French, drama. Upon moving south to Oakville, I was hired by Crack Pot Studios, a local pottery studio, to give workshops in ceramics.

I personally love to work in encaustic wax mediums, oil paints and acrylic gel mediums, leaning heavily into textured pieces or traditional techniques. I'm drawn to various processes depending on my own energy levels and more than often have a few works on the go. Once word got out about my paintings, I was exhibiting in Kingston, selling commissioned pieces, and being sought out to instruct small classes. Before the pandemic, my home studio welcomed about 84 people a week for small group instruction. I'm grateful for the opportunity to teach throughout the weeks of the year and am excited to offer my classes once again after the lengthy lockdowns. I teach artists aged 3-85 and my personal philosophy about art

instruction is what sets me apart. Having years experience in various school systems, it became apparent to me that with the focus on instruction being on deadlines, techniques, outcomes, scrutiny and quantifiable results, there was very little time for artists to really sink into the process, much less choose a project in whatever medium they want, articulate their own visions, and learn from their process and progress.

Focus in my studio is given to effective communication. As a teacher, I offer suggestions to aid the process, rather than complete it. I am there to support, give short instructions, and mentor the results. Art is born of the individual, and should be celebrated for its unique qualities. More often than not, there are students of various ages in the studio, and everyone is encouraged to work on projects of their own choice. As a result, there is always a fantastic pool of inspiration in the room. Oil painting, acrylic painting, watercolour painting, use of gel mediums, pencil drawing, pen drawing, ink drawing, charcoal, conte, printmaking, paper quilling, fabric arts, clay projects, small sculptures, paper making, furniture building and painting, decoration of vases, bowls, clocks, lamps, paper mâché, collage, stencils... there are no limits here. Most importantly, expenses are not spared. It can be tremendously frustrating for an artist to articulate their vision with substandard supplies. I encourage my students to work with what they wouldn't ordinarily have at their disposal using only the finest materials and usually a large scale to articulate their visions. That is the privilege of private instruction and as a result my students are tremendously proud of their completed works and have learned about the process through progress. Recently, the Ontario Zoroastrian Community Foundation reached out to request a Zoom art lesson in portrait drawing as a fundraiser and the feedback was beyond favourable.

Each and every day begins for me with a lengthy walk with my pup, a few silent meditative payers of centering and gratitude, and summoning the energy required to share my enthusiasm for others to find the joy of self-expression. The only teaching challenges met are that of those who don't trust their ability or who have been taught/told that they are somehow incapable. Nothing could be further from the truth. I would encourage everyone to undertake a project of their own choice and see for themselves how rewarding it can be.

Roshni Dell is an artist and teacher. Her current work is in mixed media with a preference for encaustic wax medium. She has attended Queen's University, The University of Western Ontario, The University of Toronto, York University, The Ontario College of Art and Design, Northern College, and The Great Basin College of Nevada. She and her brother-in-law and fellow artist, Daniel Patel, have recently joined forces to work on large commissioned projects for the new corporate offices of Medline Industries, using medical supplies and mixed media.





ARZAN KHAMBATTA

Architect by Profession, Sculptor by Choice

From “Scrupture” to “Walls”

Arzan Khambatta was born in 1966 in Mumbai. He graduated with a Bachelors in Architecture from Rachna Sansad Academy of Architecture, Mumbai. Architect by

profession and sculptor by choice as he refers to himself, Arzan started sculpting in his teens (in 1982) under the guidance of a noted artist Anand Mohan Naik. He was inspired by the works of such renowned sculptors as Adi Davierwala and Pilloo Pochkhanawala to work with steel and iron found in junkyards. One of his first works, ‘Scruptures’ gave a name to his subsequent works of art created by bending and welding together pieces of scrap metal. He sold his first piece in 1983, displayed his first commissioned sculpture ‘The Mughal’ at the Jewel of India at Nehru Center, Mumbai in 1985, and held his first public exhibition at the Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai in 1993. His works range from six-inch pieces that can be spot lit in small rooms to large sculptures reaching seventy feet in height. You can now see his work in public spaces around

CREATING BEAUTY: ZARATHUSHTI ARTISTS & ARTISANS

Mumbai, notably the dolphins at Worli and the cast bronze ZEBu bull also in Worli, as well as in corporate headquarters, hotels, and private collections in India and around the world.

He no longer works with scrap, preferring to sculpt with metal sheets, straps, rods, pipes, moulding, twisting, beating them to give the desired layered, textured effect. His latest series of 12 large-scale installations, “Walls” were exhibited in 2020 at the Gallery Art & Soul in Mumbai. This exhibition was the perfect convergence of art and architecture. The idea was inspired by the large glass facades of modern urban high-rises that allow a person to look outwards, but not inside, metaphorically speaking to the lack of self-reflection. He used graphite gray for the installations with sombre lighting to help

viewers experience the darkness and alienation that metaphoric walls can create when humanity builds walls to segregate one another based on caste, creed, religion, colour and social status.

What's Next?

Arzan has many other outlets for his creativity, dabbling in in filmmaking, photography, interior design and even stand-up comedy. His debut film ‘Decibels’, is an edgy look at noise pollution in Mumbai. He also dabbles in a number of activities like designing props and sets for experimental plays, designing trophies and teaching. He also holds workshops for children in schools and at his studio. During the lock down, he did a series of online classes on Pen N Ink Doodling, and learnt to ride the uni-cycle.

As usual, Arzan has many projects and plans on the go. He would like to take teaching and sharing his love of sculpting further by conducting workshops for corporate clients and adults who is interested in exploring metal art and sculpture as a stress buster. He is also working on a series of black and white abstract sketches which he plans to exhibit in future.

In words to leave you by, Arzan says loudly, “DO NOT SCREW UP YOUR CREATIVITY UNDER THE GUISE OF BEING PRACTICAL.”



Sculpting Movement and Luminescence

By Parvin Farzaneh



"Chariot" in bronze

My career as a visual artist spans almost five decades. I was born in Iran where I obtained a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Tehran in 1965. Over the next fifteen years, I practiced painting in both my native country and Switzerland under the guidance of several renowned artists and teachers. In the eighties, I spent several years in California, before eventually deciding to settle in Montreal, Canada.

In the early 1990s, I felt a need to explore different media in my artwork alongside oil painting. I was drawn to sculpture because it felt like a more tactile means of expression than painting. The fact that a single work can be seen from many angles, each allowing for a different interpretation was exciting and inspiring to me. I



"Swan" in glass

could feel the movement of the pieces intuitively and physically through my hands. There was something sublimely pure and simple about this way of working, uninhibited by concerns about color and light, at least in the initial phase. I began by working in wax. It is a method of producing sculptures that I continue to favor since wax is relatively malleable and almost endlessly transformable. Once a sculpture is complete, I create a rubber mold for it that is used for reproducing the work in a variety of materials such as bronze, aluminum or glass.

Bronze and glass are some of my favorite materials for sculpture. They offer a wealth of possibilities for the use of color in the ensuing phases of production when the mold is filled with the new material. This is done in a foundry where the bronze or glass are liquefied at high temperatures, poured and then allowed to cool. Bronze can be transformed with the use of a variety of patina, oxide layers that are applied to the sculpture and then fired. These layers react with the bronze to create nuanced and beautifully organic colors. There is a wonderful element of surprise in this process since it is often difficult to predict the final result accurately. Sections of the bronze can also be polished. These become reflective surfaces that transform the look of the sculpture as the surrounding light changes.



"Dream" in alabaster

Glass sculptures are created in a similar fashion as bronze; however, the process of adding color is somewhat different. Rather than only resting on the surface, the colors are incorporated into the body of the sculptures themselves. They are translucent. Here the effect of light on the sculptures is even more pronounced and dazzling. I have found that some sculptures lend themselves better to bronze and others have a more delicate feel when finished in glass.

I have also worked with marble and alabaster. I have to use heavier tools for these, so the feel of working in these materials is different from wax. Every piece of stone has its own particular look. There are often lines and various hues in the stone. One has to work according to these characteristics and this in turn inspires the form of the sculpture. Moreover, once a section has been carved away, it cannot be restored to its original state. I often find that my vision of a piece changes as I observe the effects of my carvings on the stone. In the case of alabaster particularly, the stone is translucent where it becomes thinner. There is an ephemeral quality to some of these sculptures that I find surprising and endlessly gratifying.



"Reflections" in alabaster

I draw my inspiration mostly from observing nature, light and organic forms. I seldom try to reproduce the things I see in a literally. I use my imagination and instinct to interpret my observations through my artwork. For example, my sculptures of birds and swans are rarely accurate physical representations of these creatures; they are representations of my emotional response to their movements, forms and sounds. Art in all its forms has been a constant source of love and gratification for me. Creating artwork that inspires me and others has helped me through many difficult passages in life.



Parvin Farzaneh was born in Iran. She has lived and practiced her art in Iran, Switzerland, the USA and Canada. She studied art at the University of Teheran, École des Beaux Arts de Lausanne, San Jose University (California), École de Louvre (Paris) and the Saidie Bronfman Centre (Montreal) among others. She has shown her work in both solo and group exhibitions in renowned galleries and festivals in Iran, Switzerland, France, Italy, the United States and Canada. She has also taught many sculpture workshops and courses over the past thirty years in Montreal where she is based.

In Anushka Rustomji's art, she seeks to explore themes of erasure and loss, in reference to diasporic communities. Her visual vocabulary is informed by ancient Eastern imagery, texts and traditions through which she aims to convey veiled visual narratives and ideas of creation, survival and transcendence that often haunt displaced communities and post-colonial regions.

The following are descriptions of selected artworks/ projects evocative of the chalk (limestone powder) patterns and perforated tins used in Parsi-Zarathushti homes.

Reimagining Chalk

By Anushka Rustomji

Fight or Flight (2021)

'Fight or Flight' (2021) started as a project (during the Covid pandemic) of spontaneous collages and perforation drawings, to reflect upon the fluidity of perception, the frailty of the human condition and whether our 'human-ness' makes us resist the insistent drumming of instinct (thus, a choice between flight or fight). Can our experience in times of high stress, be reduced to simple binary code when faced with issues of survival? To exist in an enclosure or face exposure? To charge or flee? To conceal or confront? Subvert or succumb. Disarray or optimism. Clarity or confusion. Black or white.

The imagery was inspired by re-examining and rearranging ancient Near-Eastern art historical tropes and depictions of power and perseverance in lithic sculptural form, which eventually have come to symbolize the passage of time, life-cycles and fragments of a shattered world- one of destruction and displacement, but also a world that is at the precipice of transformation. The work

thus alludes to the power of nature and the physical world in which we dwell- and how constructions of impenetrable mass can also demonstrate that all matter is in motion. (This series was exhibited in the show "Archival Memory" 2021, curated by Malika Abbas, at AAN Gandhara Art Space, Karachi).

'Fight or Flight (I)', collage on paper, 16 x 11.5 inches, 2021



Ready-Made Ruin, (2018)

"Ready-made Ruin" hints at a constellation of inquiries and responses which consider historical precedents, questions of context, and institutional framing, as well as the modes of production and reception around traditional cultural practices. The installation seeks to question colonial narratives of land and materiality.

The imagery present in the installation, are reminiscent of ancient sculptures and monuments that were once present in the region of Mesopotamia. The chalk carpet, depicts notions of contingency and fragility, all of which are incompatible with the monumentality that for centuries was synonymous with the sculptures and reliefs that were constructed in this region –primarily ancient Persia and Iraq. Thus, the installation also serves as an active critique of the colonial method of the physical relocation of ancient artefacts and monuments from the 'East' to the 'West' and the effect that this transportation and 'uprooting' has in relation with the idea of the appearance and disappearance of the image.

The work however, is not just a negotiation between time and timelessness or the vacillations of nostalgia; it uncovers the way diasporic relations offer a friction to and with the materiality of land itself.

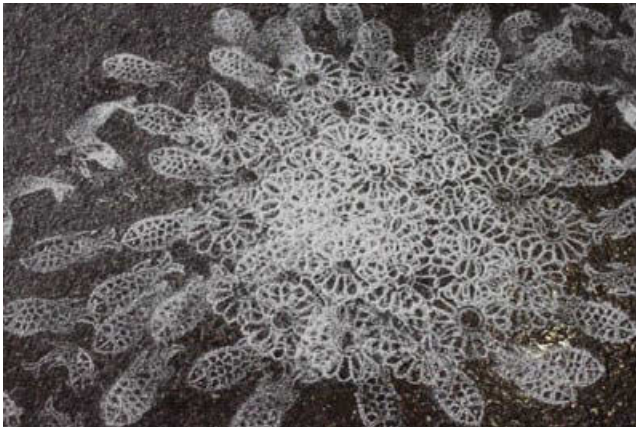
The use of powdered chalk - suggestive of ash - is an extremely unsettled material, implying that this is not an installation that can be made in another location and then transported to the gallery. The idea of a 'carpet' (an important and common object which is symbolic in Iranian households) and the act of using the metal chalk trays to execute it (which are used by Parsis and the Zarathusti community on auspicious and celebratory occasions) are both elements which are evocative of a strong traditional craft sensibility. The objects of the carpet and the metal chalk tray, when subtracted from consumer culture, become material reminders of

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tradition. Both have one common element; a search for continuity through the act of repetition.



'Ready-made Ruin', limestone powder, 5 x 7 ft, 2018, (A collaborative installation by Anushka Rustomji and Marjan Baniyadi, displayed at Taseer Art Gallery, (Lahore) for the show "Transition of Tradition")



'Ready-made Ruin' (detail)

Here and There (2018)

The installation 'Here and There' is a large-scale representation of a post-card written by my (late) grandmother in 1956, addressed to her children. The postcard has been preserved since, as a piece of family

memorabilia. While the postcard is seemingly close to the heart, its translation into an installation provides an opportunity to explore the more universal ideas of giving and receiving in human relationships. Our sense of temporal distance and proximity, bodily absence and presence, and the interpretation of language are continuously tested in this lifetime. An aged portable piece of paper which is a meaningful and arduous method of communication may live through the passages of time but do the memories, correspondence and relationships which are so fragile last as well?

The fluidity of material employed - limestone powder, cast through perforated metal trays - presents a contrast to the indelible ink on the postcard as well as the role of the object itself. The viewers were free to walk on the installation and to consider the grey areas of decay, erasure and impermanence.



'Here and There', limestone powder, 3 x 5 ft., 2019. (Displayed at AAN Gandhara Art Gallery, Karachi, as part of the show "I Love You" and other works from the AAN Collection").



Anushka Rustomji is a visual artist and educator based in Karachi, Pakistan. She graduated from the National College of Arts in Lahore with a B.F.A in 2012. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, including exhibitions that culminated out of the 'Pilotenkueche' artist residency she participated in Leipzig, Germany.



anushkarustomji

Portrait credit: Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture

Experimental Filmmaking and More

By Sharlene Bamboat

As a filmmaker and an artist, I have been screening and exhibiting my work since 2010 across Canada and internationally. I always have a few projects on the go: I recently finished my first feature film called *If from Every Tongue it Drips*, which is an experimental documentary merging Rekhti, a type of 19th century Urdu poetry, with quantum physics. The film is narrated by a Rekhti poet and her partner, who is also the camera operator. Simultaneously, through poet and camera operator's daily lives, interconnections between British colonialism, Indian nationalism and the impact of both on contemporary poetry, dance and music in South Asia is revealed. The film was created entirely long distance, almost as a call and response, between Sri Lanka, Canada and Scotland.

I tend to collaborate often, and my most regular collaboration is with Alexis Mitchell, under the name Bambitchell. We just exhibited our first international solo show at the Henry Art Gallery in Seattle, USA (February - May 2021) called *Bugs & Beasts Before the Law*. The exhibition is a culmination of a five-year project on the history of animals put on trial in Medieval Europe. The work examines the way that power



functions through Western European legal systems and who is entitled to subjectivity within that system. I like working with historical subjects, which provides an anchor for commentary on our contemporary social and political moment. I often prioritize working with people not represented in the mainstream: women, LGBTQ+, people of color.

I'm drawn to South Asian popular culture and politics across the subcontinent and the diaspora. This is heavily informed by my childhood

experiences of growing up in Karachi, Pakistan, and trips back home after immigrating to Canada. As a Parsi, I've always been drawn to our history and culture, and more recently I am exploring this through an experimental documentary about the Parsi Natak in Karachi.

There is an immense amount of time, discussion, and thought that goes into making work, centering consideration of not just creative and aesthetic concerns, but also of ethical concerns. This includes ethically representing the subject matter and people I am working with, garnering mutual respect for those I am working with both on and off camera. This means safety concerns as well as financial concerns. I work hard to ensure that everyone I work with is paid a living wage, which is not always easy to accomplish, since I often develop work with minimal budgets.

In addition to my art practice, I work as a consultant and advisor with other artists and filmmakers on their projects. I also prioritize providing mentorship to emerging women/LGBTQ+ people, who are often excluded and marginalized in the art and film worlds, to feel supported in this industry.



Sharlene Bamboat is a video and installation artist. She has screened and exhibited internationally, including: International Film Festival Rotterdam (Netherlands), Art of the Real (NYC), Addis Video Art Festival (Ethiopia), the Sharjah Film Platform (U.A.E.), Berlinale: Forum Expanded (Germany), Mantiq of the Mantis (Pakistan), Mercer Union Gallery (Toronto) and Henry Art Gallery (Seattle). Sharlene frequently works in collaboration with Bambitchell. The duo were long list recipients of the 2020 Sobey Art Award. Her website is sharlenebamboat.com

Photo Credits: Sharlene Bamboat Headshot: Yuula Benivolski/ Film Poster: Rupali Morazari



Flames (2013)

I was born in Maryamabad, Yazd, in 1960 and lived there until I was six-years-old. I then moved to Tehran to start my primary education. After finishing High School in Tehran, I went to Isfahan University to get a Bachelor's degree in Applied Physics and spent the first five years teaching in Bandar Abbas. I returned to Tehran and worked in Zoroastrian schools until my retirement. I was Vice President of Firouzbahram High School.

My first camera was a Minolta 110 pocket that my father had bought for my older brother in 1976. Now, I have two cameras - a DSLR with four lenses and the other is a compact camera. I don't use phone camera for my serious work. Around 1995, I became concerned with the destruction of cultural monuments such as old Zoroastrian houses and pilgrimage places in Yazd, known as the Clay City because of its adobe architecture. The Zoroastrian houses are unique because Zoroastrians were not allowed to build their homes higher than a man could reach so they could only build sideways or underground. The clay walls

Photos Make the Moment Eternal

By Zarir Najmi

were several feet thick to withstand attack. Another unique characteristic is there were no windows. I started photographing surviving houses. With the advent of digital cameras, things got easier, but it became less likely to find houses that retained their old texture and unique structure. I was lucky to capture some of them and published a book about them, called *Khesht bar Khesht* (Clay on Clay).

Another issue of concern was the disappearance of Zoroastrian ceremonies and rituals. I started on a journey to document as many as I could. Unfortunately, the nature of most of our Zoroastrian ceremonies has changed over time and has adapted to the influences of other cultures and religions. It is unlikely we will know the exactness of how our ceremonies were performed in the distant past.

As Zoroastrian photographers' interests in our traditions, rituals, and portraits grows and the ease of sharing what they document becomes more accessible, it is time for me to enjoy my favorites like nature and travel. This is what I currently capture through my lens and share on Instagram @zarirphotography. I also spend time teaching photography, writing article for magazines and am one of the founders of the Photo Club at the Zoroastrian Centre. My advice to young people who like photography is to think about learning photography seriously.

In order to fulfil my duty to the Zoroastrian community, I continue to contribute in the field of photography for *Amرداد*, a weekly newspaper by a Zoroastrian news agency. In 2000, I participated at the World Zoroastrian Congress, Houston, as a documenting photographer. In 2013, I held a solo exhibition of photographs of flames, before which we pray. In 2020, I published a book about Zoroastrian cultural heritage. As a freelance photographer, I hope I can be useful in preserving the cultural heritage of Iran and Zoroastrians.



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Clockwise:

1. Cover of the book, Khesht bar Khesht.

2. On Nowruz morning, she is going to visit the house of a Zoroastrian family who lost one of its members in the previous year. Yazd, Ardakan, Sharifabad Village (2008).

3. She is coming up from the basement of an old Zoroastrian clay house. Yazd, Maryamabad village (2014).

4. Dome at the pilgrimage site, Pars Banu. The painting on the dome change often, and the Farvahar has been also painted over by now.



Mali Regan: Two Lives Lived

By Leila Regan-Porter

For many people who are finding their passion and path in life, sacrificing art for a safer career is an all-too common story. But that wasn't the case for Mali Regan (née Anzalichi). Art and finance both found space in painter Mali Regan's life. "My parents, and siblings always encouraged me to draw and paint," says the now-retired Delta Airlines' senior treasury analyst. "But I chose finance as a career path and art as a hobby. And I have loved doing both."

Her parents were always open to the choices that their four children made, whether it was in their careers or in their beliefs. "Although my parents were born Muslim in Iran, we always had free discussions about religion, though we were very private about our beliefs, as we always see it as a deeply personal choice" she explains. Mali is a Zarathushti by choice, influenced by her environment and beliefs. Zarathushti faith was a pillar of many Persian traditions, as in wedding ceremonies and holidays like Nowruz, which is still recognized and celebrated as the Persian New Year. "We had full respect for the Zarathushti religion, and my brother went to Zarathushti High School in Tehran, Feerouz Bahram."

Mali pursued both math and art during her teens, learning from Maestro Mansoor Fakoor, while preparing to graduate High School in Tehran with a diploma in mathematics. "Sadly, Fakoor passed away at an early

age," she says. "His encouragement and kindness had a lot of influence on my art."

After finishing High School in Tehran, Mali followed her passion for numbers and problem-solving with a college degree in accounting. In 1970, she moved to England, where she studied for her Master in Business Administration. In 1982, she had her first child, which put a pause on her artistic endeavors while her career in finance continued to flourish. During this time, art became a useful tool in family life, with her skills at sewing and upholstery resulting in enviable clothes for herself and her children, home furnishings and refurbished antique furniture. "I always enjoyed discovering and learning new skills, especially ones that can be put to use and enjoyed by those that I love," says Mali of her multiple talents. "Making a dress for my daughter, and now my granddaughter, or giving new life to a beautiful antique chair, these are ways that art comes through in everyday life."

Eventually, after moving to America and a successful series of roles with Delta Airlines, Mali was able to return to her love of painting. "I took an early retirement in 2005 as senior financial analyst from Delta Airlines," she says. "My late husband and my children always encouraged my love of painting, and they pushed me to do what I loved. This was the opportunity for me to go back to my love of painting."



After beginning to study with Chris Didomizio in Atlanta, Mali realized the challenge of returning to a talent that had been abandoned for 30 years. “I went back to the drawing board - literally! - and studied drawing for six months before I could even pick up a paint brush again,” she recalls, regarding the practice of art. “I have to paint regularly to keep me sane and satisfied for being productive and positive. I make time for my art.” Her specialty is oil painting, both landscape and portrait and her biggest influences are impressionist artist, Renoir, John Singer Sargent and Monet. She enjoys plein air painting, which is a French expression meaning “in the open air.”

She continues to learn and take workshops with master artists, such as Nancy Franke, Bill Davidson, Quang Ho, and John Barry Raybould. James Richards has been her mentor for the past five years.

Today, Mali still finds influence of Zarathushtia in her life as well as her continuing career. “Everything I learned from Zartosht led me to be positive, look on the bright side, respect nature and love for family and friends,” she says. A look at her art confirms this, with the impressionist strokes capturing light and dark in nature and life. “I always look for inspirations in nature, city life, and people around me,” says Mali, who frequently travels around the country and the world to take photos or plein air sketches to use for her paintings. “In 2019, my brother and I went back to Iran. We travelled through ancient cities, towns and small villages (Kashan, Yazd, Abianeh, Kerman) where Zarathushtis had great influence. The belief is still in their culture and they kept this ancient religion alive. Every moment of the trip was an inspiration for my art: The light, water, strength, persistence, and beauty.

***Leila Regan-Porter** is Mali Regan’s daughter and one of her biggest cheerleaders. She lives in Denver, Colorado with her husband and daughter. She is currently the Development Manager at Bluff Lake Nature Center, but has previously had a career as a journalist and editor.*

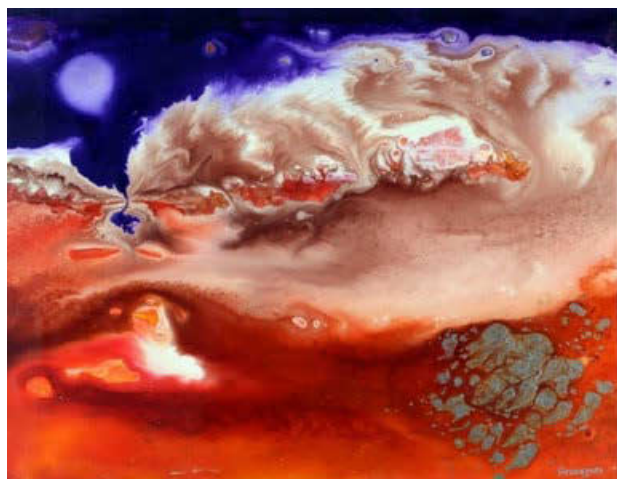


Mali Regan has created a second career in art. Originally from Tehran, Iran, she is now settled in Atlanta, Georgia, USA. She frequently shows at galleries and Scott’s Antique Market, and is available for commissions.

Her paintings are available on her website www.MaliRegan.com, as well as at Westside Market Atlanta (North Druid Hill-Toco Hill), and at Anis Cafe & Bistro in Atlanta.

 @maliregan

 Mali Regan Fine Arts



Art that Inspires and Delights

By Firooza Aubry

My First Attempt at Painting on Silk

My first experiment with silk painting started in 1987. One brushstroke on the stretched silk and I was hooked! Painting on silk is unique, utterly wonderful and quite different to anything I had done earlier - sketches, watercolours, oil and acrylic painting. I discover new techniques all the time and every painting I do is quite different, unless, of course, I am working on a series. In 1987, I copied a Monet print hanging in my room. Some of my office colleagues in Berlin had started painting silk scarves as a hobby, and a friend kindly lent me a few bottles of silk paints and a couple of brushes so that I could also give it a try. Well, painting scarves and shawls did not interest me, so I decided on copying a small print. I had not held a paintbrush since my school days and I suddenly recalled how much I loved painting. I have only painted on silk since then.

I use a combination of silk paints and acrylics to create unusual effects, and am continually discovering new techniques. Arshile Gorky said, "Abstraction allows man to see with his mind what he cannot see physically with his eyes.... Abstract art enables the artist to perceive beyond the tangible, to extract the infinite out of the finite. It is the emancipation of the mind. It is an exploration into unknown areas." This exploration into unknown worlds is what drives me to create abstract art. My inner and outer journeys, and vivid imagination, motivate me to continue on this artistic path. In my

youth, I took art courses in different styles of drawing and painting, but it is abstract art that I found the most challenging, as well as the most satisfying.

Artist Statement

I believe that the role of the artist is to create works that inspire and delight as well as evoke feelings and emotions in a viewer. When people see my work, I'd like them to just look at the painting and discover what they feel, more than what they think. I invite the viewers to travel in them, continually discovering unknown worlds and dreamscapes – approaching the paintings with imagination and an open mind. My originality is expressed by an unusual multi-layered painting style, which has nothing to do anymore with traditional silk painting. Every time I paint a new layer, the emotions, experience and impressions of the day are reflected onto the unfinished painting. The final result is the destination of an artistic journey, sometimes long and with many turns along the way.

Several of my paintings are titled "Unknown Worlds" or "Dreamscapes" for that is what they are for me. My extensive travels and life in India, Germany, and Canada have left me with vivid impressions of colours, forms and atmosphere - many still waiting to be manifested on silk. I encourage the viewer to dive into a firework of vibrant colours, and discover mysterious three-dimensional



effects. I do not wish to convey a particular message, but encourage the observer to be free in his/her own individual interpretation.

YouTube Video Project

The YouTube video project is the brainchild of my husband, Yves Aubry, who enjoys creating videos in his spare time. Together we select the paintings to pair with a particular piece of music. The videos are created by Yves and I merely give occasional feedback. The first video was published in October 2020 and new videos are posted at regular intervals, with the seventh one having been published in July 2021.

As holding exhibits became impossible in 2020, and such events appear to remain unlikely even this year, Yves felt a video series would be appreciated by those who had visited exhibits, and supported and encouraged my painting career all these years. With this YouTube project we also wished to spread a bit of colour, inspiration and cheer, all

badly needed right now! To our delight, the videos have also been viewed, and appreciated, by many who had never before seen my artwork.

What is next for me as an artist? I just hope to get the chance to hold exhibits again and continue on this artistic journey.



Firoozyves (Firooza Aubry) presently living in Brossard, Canada. She is an artist creating abstract, multi-layered paintings on silk using a combination of silk paints and acrylics. Since her first solo exhibit in Berlin, Germany, in 1989, she has held several solo shows and participated in many group events in Germany, India, and Canada.

Firoozyves' landscapes take you on a journey into unknown worlds and encourage you to dive into vibrant blues, burnt umber and yellow ochre. The eye travels along cosmic rays which are constantly changing, thus creating mysterious three-dimensional effects, depending on the light and the position of the viewer. To experience 'hearing' the paintings and 'seeing' the music, please visit her YouTube channel, Atelier Firoozyves.

In 1966, Parichehr Namdar Freydooni invented a unique multi-dimensional technique of painting in 3D/4D, which revolutionized naturalistic art. Her daughter shares the evolution of the technique with Fezana Journal.

“Passing Time, Movement, and Reflection”

By Itav Freydooni

Parichehr Namdar was born May 8, 1930 in Tehran, Iran. After completing school, she took seventh place among 700 students to be accepted to university and she chose the School of Fine Art, Tehran University. Due to her exceptional talent, she finished the first year in just five months. She graduated in 1953 and married Bahram Freydooni in 1957. After marriage, she moved to Abadan where she taught painting at the Women's Club, and taught interior and exterior designer on TV.

In 1966, she moved back to Tehran with her family. One afternoon, when she was walking with her husband observing fall's color changes and beauty of the day, she was inspired by the colors of a leaf and she started to paint again. As she started putting different colors on canvas with heavy thickness of oil color, she noticed a new movement in her painting. And this was the beginning of a unique technique in the world which shows passing time, movement, and reflection. She recalls being fascinated by things that change in nature when she was as young as four-years old – weather changing from sunny/cloudy, rainy/snowy combined with shade, a beam of light, and so on. Subsequently,

as a teenager studying art, she noticed that none of the existing paintings offered movements, dimensions, reflections, or passing time.

In 1977, Iran's Art and Culture Minister, Farrokhroo Parsa, saw one of Parichehr's paintings and took it to the New York Art Expo. After that exposure, Parichehr was invited by art galleries in Europe and the US to showcase her unique technique, but the Iran Revolution put stop to all exhibitions and travels.

In the last months of the Pahlavi Kingdom, in the summer of 1978, France invited women artists from 20 countries to Vichy. Parichehr was the only woman from Iran to participate in this Universal Art Expo. The French Chairman of Art and Culture, Monsieur Martinez told the audience in his speech about Parichehr's technique, saying that it was a completion and “a revolution in naturalistic art” which Rembrandt, Van Gogh and Georges Braque couldn't achieve in their arts. She was conferred the Gold Medal and the certificate of the Diplôme d'honneur (Diploma of Honor).



The most suitable way to see her paintings and her unique technique is from close range, walking from one side of the frame to the other side, and while you walk the half-circle front of the paintings, you can see the changes. To showcase this unique technique each painting is photographed from three different angles and the three pictures printed side by side to highlight the changes. It's not even 3D, but also 4D technique since the passing time can be felt through the paintings as well. Each oil painting with this unique technique, took Parichehr on average more than seven months to complete.

World, War and Peace - 1971

From right, two doves kissing. Front view, the birds start fighting. From left, they turn to crawling and fighting, blood dripping from their beaks. At the bottom of the painting are the prison bars.

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Five years later, she was the first female to receive the title and emblem of Cavalier Delle Arti (Cavalier of Art) and the title and emblem of Knight of Art by the Italia Accademia, and awarded the title of Maestro Academio, and given the Centauro D'Oro statue. Due to Iran's political climate, she couldn't travel to Italy to receive this recognition until 1986, when she was welcomed with a celebration, and was presented with the past awards, titles, statue, and certificates. In the photo below, Parichehr is shown holding the golden statue of the Centaur (Centauro D'Oro).

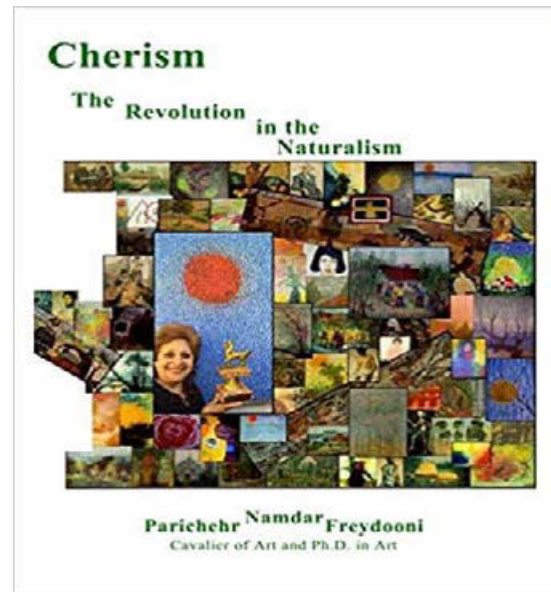


In 1984, this new and unique technique was patented and registered under the name of “Passing Time, Movement, and Reflection”. And later patented under the name Cherism. In 2012, she received the honoree Ph.D. in Art by Iran Art and Cultural Organization for her contribution to the world of art.

FEZANA, after reviewing her achievements, awarded her with the title of Daughter of Mashyani at the 7th International Zoroastrian Congress 2000

In the last decade, she was invited to open the gallery of Mirrors in Sal'tanat Abad Palace, the gallery in Moghadam Museum, the Mehraban Gallery the first

Zoroastrian Culture and Art Center in Tehran/Iran. At the Museum of Fine Art in Sa'd Abad Palace, in 2012, she exhibited her 26 paintings which showed the evolution and developments of her methods, her evolution to her New Unique Technique, collection of her paintings from before, during and after university, as well as her last painting. She called her exhibits "The Development of Naturalism".



In her 90s now, she does not paint anymore, but is active in recording her life's work. In January 2020, she launched her book “Cherism: The Revolution in the Naturalism” [Parichehr Namdar (Author), Itav Freydooni (Author), Sandra M. (Editor), Khodarahm Partovi (Illustrator), Richard P. (Translator)]. She has previously published two poetry books, two books about all her paintings and her technique call Cherism I and II. One book is the collection of her poems about Zoroastrian celebrations and ceremonies and all her articles about Zoroastrianism published in different magazine. And one book is on her culinary art and decorations. She is currently working on her life story.



Itav Freydooni was born in an art loving family. Her mother, Parichehr Namdar is the Cavalier of Art and Ph.D. in Art, and her father was Bahram Freydooni, an Electrical Engineer. In 1980, she collaborated on her mother's project “Mavandad Family Tree” which her great grandfather started the mid-1850s. She has worked as designer, production manager and auditor. She is active in the California Zoroastrian Center in Art and Ladies' group, and as a librarian. She has helped plan and volunteered in FEZANA 2018 meeting, and the 7th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress, YWZYC 2019.

Illustrations to Inspire a Love of Nature

By Jasmine Chapgar

Most of my work and hobbies are art-based, yet for unknown reasons I hesitate to call myself an artist - almost as if I haven't reached some undefinable goalpost in my mind.

Throughout life, I was encouraged to pursue art as a hobby, but not as a career... somehow, I ended up with the career anyway. My work is creating, animating, and designing games, movies and other content for an educational website for kids (sheppardsoftware.com). This free website allows math, science, geography, animals and other subjects to be learned in a fun way. It is a great fit for me, combining teaching with art/design/animation – including creating content about animals, nature, the environment and other topics I care about personally. I also create voice-overs and sound effects for the games and movies. All the art on the site is made digitally with space constraints, animation and functionality in mind. It's sort of 'art meets a puzzle' to combine different elements to make them work on a website.

I also create graphic t-shirts (and sometimes other products such as blankets, journals, tote bags,



pouches, towels, rugs, aprons and various kinds of apparel) through themed design contests and curation. My designs have been described as cute, funny, quirky or artsy. Nature and animals are a frequent subject of my designs - especially cats, a love of mine. I also try to include positive messages when possible. Over time I started winning more contests and through those contests and selection by art directors, I now have a catalog of around 150 shirts.

Originally, I created the designs digitally, using a drawing tablet. About three years ago, I had an old-school drawing revival after buying a set of quality pens, which launched a desire to draw and create art non-digitally, both because I wanted a break from the computer and because there was a renewed enjoyment of these tactile methods and art tools. Gradually, I started to incorporate the pen drawings into my shirt designs as well, which became a mix of pen and paper and digital. Over the years my interest in going back to traditional mediums has led to more experimentation with brush pens, crayons, color pencils, watercolors, and dip pens with ink. Now I use both traditional and digital tools, separately

and together. My experimenting with different tools and styles has led me to a growing interest in illustration and picture books. I have one book, *Animals in the Forest*, printed through Sheppard Software that was made digitally, and I have written and illustrated a few more children's picture books for which I hope to find a publisher, and look forward to writing and illustrating many more.



Jasmine Chapgar is a game designer, artist, and content creator for an educational website. She also designs cute, funny, and artsy graphic t-shirts, as well as other kinds of art. She is a member of the Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. View some of Jasmine's work on her website www.jasneko.com. Her book, "Animals in the Forest" is available on Amazon and her t-shirts can be found on <https://shirt.woot.com/catalog?q=%40jasneko>.

You can read more about the educational website Jasmine works for and the content she creates on page 83.

Hobbies & Side Hustles

In our community in North America, we have many talented Zarathushtis who create beauty across all art forms as a hobby or a “side hustle”. We would like to feature them in FEZANA Journal. If you would like to submit information about your hobby or artistic side-business, please write to FJeditors@gmail.com for more details.

JEWELLERY MAKING

Zara Contractor
Vancouver, BC, Canada



“Sassy Dandelion” by Joy & Sarcasm

At the beginning of Summer 2020, I found myself with what seemed like an endless amount of free time. After exhausting the more common ‘quarantine activities’ like puzzles, gardening, and baking sourdough bread, my best friend Ashley and I turned to various craft activities to pass the time. As an artist and graphic designer, respectively, it was important for us to do something with our hands. Our passion for jewellery, craft and colour soon led to making polymer clay earrings.

We researched tips and tricks online, and soon learned that what seemed like an easy hobby required lots of patience and experimentation. Needless to say, there were a lot of failed attempts. To make each earring, you must condition the clay using a pasta machine to achieve the right consistency: Overwork it, and the clay gets sticky and doesn’t cut well—underwork it, and it crumbles. The earrings then need to be cut out of the

slab of clay, baked, sanded, drilled and assembled. Depending on the intricacy of the earrings, each pair can take anywhere from 30 minutes to 3 hours to make.

Once we mastered the techniques, we were fortunate enough to be surrounded by friends and family who encouraged us to sell our earrings. We began setting up booths at local Craft Fairs and looking into sales platforms online. What started as a pastime, soon became a small side-business.

As we set up our online shop, we realized we needed a name and branding: As a graphic designer, this was easily the most rewarding part of the process. I wanted a name that would reflect our personalities, but also that our jewelry appeals to many different styles. ‘A to Z’ seemed too cliché, so we started with Ashley’s middle name: Joy. For better or worse, I don’t have a middle name, but have often been told that if I did, it would be ‘Sarcasm’. So ‘Joy & Sarcasm’ was born.

As a whole, 2020 was not without its challenges, but starting a side-hustle that was based on friendship, creativity and craft, was definitely one of the highlights of the year.

PAINTING

Dinshaw Patel
Toronto, ON, Canada

I own Eclectic Gallery, offering archival custom framing, plaque mounting, canvas stretching and other related services and repairs, but I had never painted prior to my



“The Finger” by Dinshaw Patel

50th birthday, when my late wife Jacqueline gifted me all the necessary art paraphernalia from paintbrushes to an easel and also paid towards a portrait painting course. And that was truly the beginning of a gratifying hobby. In painting, the process itself is so absorbing that it really brings the mind into the moment. It is this intense focus into the ‘immediate’ or the ‘now’ that I enjoy. I generally don’t sell my pieces. However, the odd one that I have sold from my gallery is under a pseudonym.

Often, my painting intersects with my love of Western classical music. When I do portraits of conductors, I visualize them conducting a certain piece. For Arturo Toscanini, it was Verdi’s Requiem, for Heribert Ritter von Karajan it was Mozart’s Requiem. My portrait of the Toronto Symphony conductor, Peter Oundjian, was of him conducting the Symphonie Fantastique by Berlioz. I gifted it to him and it is now hanging in his house. In appreciation, he invited me as his guest to see him conduct Brahms’ German Requiem.

Over the years, there are several projects that I consider memorable with “The Finger” being my favorite as it expresses the true me. It is a 30 x 30-inch collage on canvas of pages taken from religious books of Judeo-Christian, Zoroastrian, Islamic, and other faiths. The middle finger, with Rodin's Thinker as a central figure, symbolizes a defiant gesture against the delusional ideologies spewed by religionists. My second most precious piece is the “Parc des Corbieres” (France), facing the Atlantic and from where Cartier sailed to Canada in 1534. It is also where I sprinkled Jacqueline's ashes.

FIBRE CRAFT

Maya and Zoya Tarapore
Vaughan, ON, Canada



The first blouse made by Tara Twins

We are 21-year-old twin sisters, Maya and Zoya Tarapore. We are studying at York University in Canada. Maya is a third-year Finance student and Zoya is a third-year Psychology student.

We began our crochet and knitting journey at the age of 12 when we learned the art of crochet and knitting from our mother and aunt. Since then we were overjoyed with the skills of this form of stitching and were amazed at the countless products that we could make out of just a ball of yarn. Stitching yarn is a very therapeutic art that can help one relax by minimizing stress. Thus, not only does it give us gratification through our spectacular projects it also relieves our stress and improves our mental health

In 2020, once the pandemic began and the world shifted to staying home, we returned to Karachi, Pakistan where we had more time to further explore our passions. In doing so we began knitting and crocheting small projects. However, it wasn't until we made our first blouse that we decided to turn this passion into a small business venture. This particular blouse carries the most pride and memories as it is our only product that we made together - Maya knitted the cups and Zoya used crochet to make the rest of the blouse. Once we made this project and posted it on our private social media platforms, we started receiving positive feedback requesting us to make more tops and start selling them. We took these messages into consideration and started a business venture by the name of “Hot Knots by TaraTwins” and have been taking customized orders ever since. From there we began expanding our products to coasters, earrings, scrunchies, bikinis, bowties, headbands, purses and many more items. Not only did we expand our product line we have also incorporated a new stitching technique, macramé, into our projects. You can find our projects on the internet: @Hot_Knots on Instagram; Hot Knots on Facebook; and @Hot_Knots on TikTok.

QUILTING

Diana Dinshaw
Phoenix, AZ, United States

While I am a software developer by day and teach and perform storytelling on weekends, my hobby is quilting. About 10 years ago, soon after I moved to Phoenix, Arizona, I found a community of women that made “healing” quilts for people that were recovering from an illness and also twin-size quilts for survivors of domestic violence.

When I started meeting with the group to quilt, I would iron yards and yards

of fabric, help with “sandwiching” the quilt, and put ties in the quilts. It didn't take me long to pick up all the precise and laborious steps that go into making a quilt and I finally understood why handmade quilts at craft shows are so expensive.

The process starts like any art project, by picking colors and planning the design, which is my favorite step. My least favorite part is the ironing, measuring and cutting because of the attention and precision that is needed as the success of the whole quilt depends on it.

I have moved from simple patterns to more complicated ones over time, but my most memorable project is the one I made at the request of my sister for her 50th birthday and which I am unlikely to do again. It was a queen-size quilt with two different patterns with colors chosen to depict “Spring” on one side and “Autumn” on the other. The size itself was difficult to work with and just aligning the patterns on both sides made me vow to use plain backing on all future projects, as you can see in the photo of the most recent quilt I made.

While quilting is a labor-intensive and time-consuming hobby, it is so rewarding when the project comes together from what was once just a creative idea to a quilt that a woman at the Sojourner Center picks to bring



her warmth and comfort.

“Japanese Garden” by Diana Dinshaw

LANDSCAPING

Shahrokh Khanizadeh
St-Lazare, QC, Canada



Shahrokh Khanizadeh's garden

Prior to retiring three years ago, I was a research scientist specializing in horticultural crop and cereal breeding for Agriculture and Agri Food Canada and teaching horticultural crops and statistic at McGill University. Currently, I continue to provide consulting services within the agricultural research industry in the area of genetic improvement of horticultural crops. I am also involved with several scientific journals as Editor and Editor-in-Chief including *Archives of Phytopathology* and *Plant Protection*.

Although there is science in landscaping such as soil types and temperatures, there is also an element or art such as adhering to forms and colour to make it pleasing to the eye. I like watching plants grow and bees play an integral part in our natural

landscape. I am very committed to apiculture and keep bee hives in order to help increase the population of honey bees (which have experienced a serious decline in recent years). My time is occupied ensuring my bee hives remain healthy. The down side of my hobby is winterizing both my plants and my bee hives to ensure their survival over the cold winter months.

I have several other hobbies including the collection of rare plants, succulents and Bonsais, carpentry, and bird watching. I started gathering plants many years ago but my retirement has allowed me the time to hunt for many more unique plants to add to my collection. I am interested in exchanging plants and do it often via social media.

PARSI HANDICRAFTS ARTISANS FAIR

The members of the Bangalore Chapter of the World Zoroastrian Chamber of Commerce (WZCC), once again, rise as stalwarts to promote entrepreneurs.

In March of 2021 they promoted Foodpreneurs. This August they are promoting Parsi Artisans involved in Handicrafts. They have focused on those entrepreneurs who lack the means to advertise and promote sales of their art and craft. In addition, they have also showcased many others who are making beautiful handicrafts... embroidery, sculpture, decoupage, jewelry, paintings, etc. They are proud to showcase artisans from all over the world and are grateful to them for helping make this a pan-global event. They count on your support to promote these entrepreneurs and spread the word about their handicrafts.

For more information and to order, visit
<https://themarketplace.wzcc.org/>



Parsi Pagdis by Gulshan Kolah
Divas by Dilshad Vatcha
Crystal Bead Torans by Armin Dhamodiwala
Pendant by Tushna Karthikeyan



Personal Profile

Roshan Rivetna and her Efforts

*Toward Achieving Community Greatness
through the Spirit of Togetherness*

PERVIN RUSI TALEYARKHAN



*Vincent Van Gogh once said “great things are done by a series of small things brought together.” This philosophy so appropriately describes the successful ventures spearheaded by another great artist and influencer in our Western World:
Mrs. Roshan Rivetna.*



Reminding us in the West of our Customs from the East

Roshan was born and raised in a traditional Parsi Zarathushti family in Mumbai. As a young girl, she took classes to develop her skills in water-color painting (a sample of which is shown here) [PHOTO OF Water Color by Roshan Rivetna of her cousin Perin Cooper]. While in Mumbai, she had only a basic knowledge of the culinary arts. Roshan first traveled to the United States in 1966 with her husband, Mr. Rohinton Rivetna. As is typically required of immigrants to prosper in their new surroundings, the Rivetnas needed to assimilate into their new home in the Western world while keeping true to their roots from the East. Many will agree that maintaining our roots is easier when done together. However, in a vast continent like North America, where Parsi-Irani Zarathushtis are dispersed as far west as Alaska and as far east as Newfoundland, Canada, doing anything “together” is quite the challenge. Over the decades, though, the Rivetnas’ tremendous, admirable initiatives to overcome this challenge molded Roshan’s now-stellar reputation for her match-making efforts and her talents in the Parsi and Persian culinary and decorative arts.



From Technical Arts to the Culinary and Decorative Arts

Many of us know Roshan to be a talented artist with a passion for supporting any endeavor which strives to bring our community together. But they are often unaware that Roshan also holds impressive technical degrees. Roshan has a Masters degree in Nuclear Physics from the University of Pittsburgh and prior to that, she pursued her career in experimental nuclear physics and computer science at world-class labs and facilities like the Atomic Energy Establishment Trombay, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Bombay, Argonne National Laboratory, and AT&T Bell Laboratories in Chicago. Her strong background in systematic assessments and data analysis influenced her study of worldwide Zoroastrian demographics [*The Zarathushti World – a Demographic Picture*, FEZANA Journal, Fall 2013]. In this study, she presented data on population, intermarriages, births, deaths, etc. in our community, pointed out the concerns from the analyses, and even suggested corrective actions. This effort influenced Roshan's initiative to bring Zoroastrian singles together by starting the "Matrimonials" column in each FEZANA Journal over three decades ago, which continues to this day and was even appropriately featured in a Valentine's Day *New York Times* article on February 7, 2009 entitled "*Matters of the Heart and Faith Guide a Zoroastrian Matchmaker.*"

Over time, as the Rivetnas' continued sincerely working toward their objective to see our community thrive and prosper in North America, Roshan's talents expanded and bloomed in the culinary, decorative, and fine arts. In perpetuating our traditions and customs across generations and geographic boundaries, Roshan seemingly effortlessly manages to recreate the traditional beauty that reminds many of our lovely Zarathushti functions happening in the East. Her tasteful *hars* (garlands) and flower arrangements such as bouquets and centerpieces, and stage/chalk decorations are all often featured at traditional Zarathushti celebrations viz navjotes and weddings (a few of which are shown here)



[Photo of Gift-Wrapped Mithai Boxes]
Wedding har and bouquet designed by Roshan Rivetna





Mandap and hall decorations setup for a Navjote at the Dar-e-Mehr in Chicago; She even learned to cook and perfect Parsi and Persian delicacies, which she now enterprisingly brings to us in North America through her online “Parsi Mithai Shop” (www.ParsiCuisine.com/ParsiMithaiShop).



A vase of silk and natural flowers designed by Roshan (left) .

Achieving Impactful Results

Driven by the ever-increasing desire to keep our culture and traditions alive in North America, Roshan together with husband Rohinton facilitated our North American Parsi-Irani Zarathushti community togetherness, starting with the Association in Chicago, and later the establishment of FEZANA, WZCC (World Zoroastrian Chamber of Commerce), SSZ (Society of Scholars of Zoroastrianism), GWG (Global Working Group) and most recently the IZS (Institute of Zoroastrian Studies, as an arm of the North American Mobeds Council). On the publication front, Roshan spearheaded the establishment of this very FEZANA Journal from a fledgling newsletter in 1991 to 2005. It is now known to all as a world-class publication with each issue containing valued, well-written pieces on various aspects of Zarathushti religion and our community. Roshan served as Editor of the FEZANA Journal until 2005, when she passed the baton to the

capable hands of Dolly Dastoor. In 1990 Roshan shared the *Outstanding Zoroastrian Award* with husband Rohinton at the 7th NA Congress, for their tireless efforts to build infrastructure for our growing community in North America.

We thank and admire Roshan for her continued quest toward maintaining our community’s greatness through the spirit of togetherness.

PARSI MITHAI SHOP

"Badam-ni-Boi & More"

Super delicious snacks and mithai for your happy occasions

- * Badam-ni-boi * Badampak * Agharni-na-larva * Sali *
- * Malido * Persian Toot * Mava Cake * Macaroons *
- * Puff Pattice * Koprapak * Lagan-nu-Custard * Batasa *
- * Party Favors *



* RoshanRivetna@gmail.com * 630-340 8272 *

* www.ParsiCuisine.com/ParsiMithaiShop *



VISPI KARKARIA,

a researcher, a leader, and an entrepreneur comes to North Western University from Pune for his doctorate,



I come from a humble priestly background, and I am the only son of my parents, and with my father undergoing three major brain operations, I felt responsible from an early age. In November 2010, I finished my priestly studies and was ordained a navar. The religious studies helped me focus on my goals, gave meaning to my life, and also increased my intellectual capabilities. Since my childhood, I have always been curious about how we can apply science to make human life more comfortable, and this curiosity fueled my journey through Engineering. I started studying Engineering in a Technical school when I was 12 years old.

One of the principles which I firmly stand by, is to listen carefully, reflect upon what you have heard, decide what suits you, and at the end take action. After finishing high school in 2015, I had listened carefully to the opinions of many people to decide on my future career path. After careful introspection, I decided that pursuing a diploma in Mechanical Engineering would be the best option for me as it satisfied my desire

to study Engineering. In my diploma course, I was fortunate enough to get strong external support which helped me build a solid foundation, and ultimately, I came first in college winning a gold medal. In my diploma course, I stood first in the Western Maharashtra region, and in 2018 I was able to get admission to the prestigious College of Engineering, Pune (CoEP) where, I was able to hone my skills as a researcher, a leader, and an entrepreneur.

CHALLENGES FACED I faced challenges due to a lack of research opportunities in CoEP and fundings, but I was able to overcome those challenges with the strong support of my faculty members, family, and friends. In the end, I was able to stand first in CoEP and won a gold medal. Additionally, I had done two virtual international internships during my undergraduate studies. One was at the end of 2020 with Professor Farrokh Mistree and Professor Janet K Allen at the University of Oklahoma, USA, and another mid-2020 with Professor Sandeep Patil at the RWTH Aachen, Germany.

My interest in academic research increased during my diploma studies. In 2016, at age 16, I published my first research paper. The reason why I was so enthused with research is that it allows a person to create new products and knowledge, for the development of society. To date, I have published 11 research papers and filed 4 Indian Patents. Some of my selected research papers are “Process-Based Statistical Modeling for Ball Mill Machine to Improve Performance of Nylon Ultracapacitor”, and “A computational framework for social entrepreneurs to determine policies for sustainable development”.

The most important achievement for me was that I was successful in publishing multiple papers in my discipline, and that paved the way to a direct Ph.D. admission at the prestigious Northwestern University. I began my Ph.D. studies at Northwestern University in September 2021 and my research will be focused on Design under Uncertainty. My ultimate life objective is to lead teams to solve complex research problems and contributing to society.

Along with my academics, I was also the class representative from 2019-2021, of the entire mechanical department, and organized a national-level paper presentation competition.

Tips for success

For my fellow young friends who want to pursue a successful career, I would suggest some tips that I have learned from my journey.

Listen carefully Firstly, I would suggest that listening patiently and carefully is one of the most important skills which a person should develop because through listening one can inculcate knowledge. One should then be able to think critically about what is right for him/her and decide and act accordingly. The most powerful tool that a person has is their mind, and we must use it wisely.

Network Get connected to people and engage with them. Networking can play a very important role in our life for progress. Additionally, once you become successful, give back to your community, by helping and mentoring others to grow. I firmly believe that to be successful in this world, we need to help each other to come up in life.

Be a Leader I would like our community members to become good and noble leaders. To become a good leader, a person should always approach a challenge positively, push themselves out of their comfort zone, think from a unique perspective, and ultimately create

solutions. Good leaders always try to maintain a healthy relationship with time, because if you respect time, time will respect you.

Work-life balance is another important factor in a person's success. I would recommend all my fellow young friends to participate in extra-curricular activities in their college like sports, debate, and quiz competitions. These activities will help you to grow personally and teach you important life skills. I used to participate in the college badminton and cricket teams. These activities helped me to bolster my management and time management skills. I strongly advocate that students to have an overall development should participate in extra-curricular activities.

Be an Entrepreneur The world today is changing rapidly, and everyone needs to be updated with the current trends. To be at the top of the ladder, one needs to be curious about learning new things and create knowledge. I also firmly believe that the best time to become entrepreneurs is NOW as there are so many wonderful opportunities. Entrepreneurs are those who create economic, intellectual, and social values. I would like to end this article with a quote *"Live as if you were to die tomorrow; learn as if you were to live forever"*

TIME MAGAZINE ANNOUNCES ITS ANNUAL LIST OF THE 100 MOST INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE OF 2021

On 15th September, 2021, Time Magazine announced its annual list of 'The 100 Most Influential People of 2021', which featured CEO of Serum Institute of India (SII), Adar Poonawalla, alongside PM Narendra Modi and a few other Indians.

The Time Magazine's '100 Most Influential People' list is divided into categories - *Pioneer, Artist, Leader, Icon, Titan and Innovator*. Each category highlights personalities from across the world. The list is considered as one of the most powerful and trustworthy lists. Every entry is handpicked by editors of the magazine for their extraordinary work in the following year and appearing on the list is considered an honor

SII manufactures the Covid-19 vaccine, Covishield, which has been jointly developed by the Oxford University

and pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca. Covishield was the first vaccine to get ELIA (Emergency Use Authorization) in



India, in January. SII is the world's largest vaccine manufacturer, in terms of doses produced and sold. But this year presented a series of issues - a fire at his plant in Pune; challenges in securing necessary raw materials; and a vaccine export ban amid India's second wave of COVID-19 - which decelerated his efforts, leaving many nations scrambling to find alternate sources of vaccines. But since

May 2021 SII has almost doubled production of Covid-19 vaccines and is adding newer vaccines - including Novavax and Russia's Sputnik V - to its portfolio in the coming months.

Journalist Abhishyant Kidangoor, who had interviewed Mr Poonawalla earlier in the year commented "The pandemic is not over yet, and Poonawalla could still help end it. Vaccine inequality is stark, and delayed immunization in one part of the world can have global consequences including the risk of more dangerous variants emerging... Whether Poonawalla can right the ship this time will determine which side of history he falls on - and, more importantly, how quickly the world emerges from the pandemic."

Congratulations Mr Adar Poonawalla, the community is proud of you.

WINS FORMULA 2 AT MONZA



22 year old Jehan, is an Indian racing driver competing in the [FIA Formula 2 Championship](#) with [Carlin Motorsport](#). He was a protégé of the [Force India](#) F1 team, after being one of three winners of a «One in a Billion hunt» organized by the team in 2011. He is currently a member of the [Red Bull Junior Team](#)

Son of Khurshed and Kainaz Daruvala of Dadar Parsi Colony, Jehan attended Bombay Scottish School. He

now lives in England with his guardian visiting Mumbai every 2 months. He loves to eat Dhansak but cannot, to maintain his body weight. Jehan started Karting in 2011, at the age of 13, winning titles, as champion and vice-champion across Asia and Europe. He was coached by Rayomand Banajee who recognised his talent early on and was instrumental in laying the foundations for his future success. In 2020 Jehan became the first Indian to win the formula 2 race at Sakhir Grand Prix weekend.

On September 13, 2021 he won the 2nd Formula 2 Race. He started second, but completely dominated the field from lap 1 to win by a massive margin, winning by 6 seconds ahead of his opponents at the Italian Grand prix weekend



Jehan says winning at Monza is every racer's dream "it feels great to hear the national anthem on the top step of the podium"

On September 27, 2001 Jehan wins third in Sochi, Russia. Being on the podium again was a great feeling for Jehan.

CONGRATULATIONS JEHAN, WISHING YOU GREATER SUCCESS

DINA NAMIRANIAN

A new Neurologist in North America specializing in Peripheral Neuropathies and Myasthenia Gravis



Dr. Dina Namiranian has recently joined the Department of Neurology at the Jewish General Hospital in Montreal, Canada. She completed her medical school at Université de Sherbrooke, followed by a neurology residency at McGill University. She then pursued post-doctorate training in neuromuscular medicine at Washington University in St-Louis. Her main interests include caring for patients with peripheral neuropathies and myasthenia gravis, as well as being involved in the electromyography laboratory of the hospital and teaching trainees.

Dina is the daughter of Mitra Bahrami and Hushang Namiranian of Montreal

THE RESTOMOD BUILDER WHO WAS TOLD TO GIVE UP HIS DREAM

Rayomand Khambatta runs an incredible 1000+ BHP RestoMod fittingly called “The Kraken” through the desert sandy streets of UAE. Working out of his uncle’s warehouse Mr. Firoze Vandrewalla owner of Wings Products, that sells some of the most dependable industrial products in the region. - but it all started out with a decidedly unexotic old banger.

Mr. Khambatta’s passion for building such creations does not come from the generic hotrod parts catalogues, rather inspiration from his cousins who have crazier imaginations. “If they can think it, I can build it” is what he said. Using parts from a forklift truck or scrap junk is inspiring for him rather than shelling out big bucks. He converted an elderly Dune Buggy left for scrap, with parts from a Toyota Corolla and some kitchen equipment including a BBQ set. “For a time there I had a zero dollar budget” he claims.

Two years later in 2009 he set up this idea to build something nobody had come across from a vehicle he imported State side. “I wanted to build a car, that’s all I wanted to do,” he says

It’s fair to say that Mr Khambatta is not your average motor industry executive. The clean shaved strappy, sharply dressed 40-year-old might fit in better among the start-up industries of customization of an ever



growing automotive market here in the UAE. In fact, we were surprised to know that he had no plans to open up his own Garage, specially with regularly attracting comparisons on projects with the local crowd. Rayomand Khambatta is the son of Kersi and Nergish Khambatta of Toronto and has achieved a tremendous success in the area of Cars and Horses. He was awarded the top spot at Dubai’s Custom Car Show 2021 with Kraken.

Also his passion for Horses ever since he was 6 years old has developed in starting Horse Training Club in Dubai for adults and children,

Material for this article supplied by Mr Kersi Khambatta

The 2021 Short Story Contest for ages 14-18, highlighted the concept of Spenta Mainyu receiving entries testament to the youth's understanding of the concept in the Gathas. The first place short story was featured in the September 2020 Vol 34 No 3 of FEZANA Journal. The second place winner is offered in this issue for your enjoyment.



2021 SHORT STORY SECOND PLACE

Zeyus Spenta - Vancouver, Canada

FIGHTING FOR A BETTER WORLD

In a far-flung suburb of Bangkok, Thailand's capital city, away from the main hub of the bustling metropolis and factories, there was a unique landmark many may have missed. Situated atop one of Bangkok's famed rolling hills of the Shensi neighborhood, the playground of the rich and powerful, was a treehouse. Inconspicuously nestled amidst the pristine gardens was a small, rickety ladder stretching upwards, reminiscent of "Jack and the Beanstalk."

Those few adventurous souls who were willing to make the climb all the way up the treehouse's ladder glimpsed a stunning, unparalleled, and picturesque scene, as if it had been painted by the most esteemed of artists. The resplendent beaches mixed with the steep peaks of the hills created a panoramic view that one would never forget. The silhouette of elegant palm trees swayed with the help of a tranquil breeze, sashaying to the rhythm of the cacophony of sounds which graced Bangkok.

Inside the vendor's stalls, pots began to clang in unison, a reverberation that could rival that of a world class symphony orchestra. The mouth-watering smell of culinary spices delighted the senses, as 1930s Bangkok began to awaken. High above the hum of automobiles, where the myna and the magpies soared, there was a flurry of motion inside the treehouse, as Katie Jamshedi awakened with a start. Gazing out of the window on her 789th day in Bangkok, she still felt the thrill of the first time she had peered out from this magical perch, as the beating of her heart began to increase two-fold.

Katie was on a pursuit to travel the world and had left her native country of Canada three years ago, promising to return soon. Katie graduated with honors

in law from one of Canada's best universities. A young female lawyer in a male-dominated profession was as tough to find as a needle in a haystack. Despite her qualifications, upon graduating from college, she quickly realized that there was really no place for women in law. Therefore, Katie had decided to follow her passion: travelling the world.

When she arrived in Bangkok, she had fallen head over heels for this enchanted, dreamlike treehouse, and had decided to rent it from the government, considering it had long been abandoned. Katie searched for work, bouncing between odd jobs at the local markets. Although the country was very much in a stage of urban development, there was still no place for a female lawyer in Thailand. With development in the city burgeoning full steam ahead, there was a lack of infrastructure, such as bridges, roads, dams, and buildings. Soon, she began to take courses at a local university, focusing on becoming a civil engineer.

Katie landed an internship at 'Villenso Solutions', a boutique engineering start-up that was contracted to build a large dam across the mighty Tangsing river in Bangkok. This was the company's golden chance to make a name for themselves in the engineering world, since the rest of their projects had been on a much smaller scale.

On this particular morning, she awakened from an extremely restless sleep. All night long, she had been pondering about the logistical challenges of building a dam so close to the numerous factories that dotted the river like menacing behemoths. As she frolicked past vendors selling their wares on her way to the company office, she took in the smells of spices

and steam from their stalls, swirling around her like a nimble ghost.

Upon arriving at the office, she overheard a heated discussion in the main boardroom. “I refuse to use low-quality materials and cut corners just to save a few bucks! That is unethical and risks the integrity of this company!” exclaimed her manager and chief engineer, Jun, who seemed extremely upset. The door swung open, and Jun and Marco, the chief financial officer (CFO) of the company, walked out. There was a distinct sense of tension in the air. “Good morning,” Katie said, “have the plans we submitted for the new dam been approved by the management team?” “Ahh, good morning Katie,” muttered her boss with a heavy sigh, “we were just discussing the project. Beyond our logistical challenges, Marco wants to use *aluminum alloys* to build the dam instead of steel, and forgo the renewable resources that were originally in your plan!”

Katie was shocked: The first thing that had been ‘drilled’ into her head when she started engineering school was that when constructing large dams, steel was the right material, since most other materials did not have the tensile strength of steel and would buckle under the pressure of water.

After a long day at the firm, Katie’s mind was racing as she sauntered towards her adopted treehouse home, not even returning the friendly waves and “hellos” of passersby. She decided to make a quick detour towards the home of someone she trusted: Mobed Farrokh.

This Zoroastrian Mobed was travelling around the world, guiding people on the importance of good thoughts, good words, and good deeds as the central steering tenets of life. “Hello, Mobed Farrokh” she said. “I have come to seek guidance on something that I feel goes against my moral compass and is unethical. I would like to know what you would advise me to do, and also what Zarathustra would tell us to do if he were here with us in this very moment.” “I sense that you are extremely conflicted Katie, and I would be very happy to help you with this problem,” declared Mobed Farrokh. “Thank you. Today, my manager told me that the CFO of our company has decided to use *aluminum alloys* for the new Tangsing dam, rather than using steel, which is the proper material. I know that is a very bad idea, as it will have disastrous effects, all in the name of making a higher profit!”

“Well, what might be the effects of using aluminum alloys for the dam?” asked the Mobed. “For such a large project, aluminum alloys do not have the load bearing capacity to hold up the dam. The structure would be extremely unstable, and the dam could possibly collapse while being built, potentially killing workers! In addition, if the dam happens to buckle after it has been built, then it could potentially release a torrent of water downstream, flooding the lands of the farmers, and resulting in possible loss of

life. Additionally, the toxic pesticides and chemicals sprayed on the crops would seep into the water table, and make their way into the neighboring streams and rivers. Many people drink and bathe in this water. The contamination of the soil would make it extremely difficult for farmers to grow their crops for years to come!”

Mobed Farrokh was silent for a minute, carefully pondering his answer, until he finally spoke aloud, his words full of years of wisdom. “Katie, are you aware of Spenta Mainyu?” “I have never heard of it,” Katie replied. “Well, my child, Zarathustra speaks about it in the Gathas, and it means having a righteous and progressive mentality. It certainly includes safeguarding human lives, taking care of our environment, and having the courage to speak up when you witness wrongdoing. If Zarathustra were here right now, I am sure that he would remind you of good thoughts, good words, and good deeds. You must speak good words, true words, and let the CFO of your engineering firm know the potential disastrous consequences and impacts of his actions. You are also improving and progressing yourself towards the righteous path laid out by Zarathustra through the Gathas and Amesha Spentas!”

“I understand now” Katie said, as she was filled with grit, conviction, and determination. “We all need to work together to fight for a better world, and that starts with grassroots change. *Everyone* can be the difference they wish to see in this world, and I am ready. Thank you so much for your time, Mobed Farrokh.” “My pleasure, Katie, my pleasure.”

Striding back towards the treehouse which had won over her heart, she gazed up towards the stars. Katie knew that Zarathustra would always be cheering her on, and Ahura Mazda would guide her to make the right decisions. The next morning, Katie woke up at the crack of dawn, and ventured towards the company office. Armed with a book she had checked-out from the library the day before, she walked up the steps to the grand Victorian-influenced building. Although Katie was an intern, she did not feel intimidated, but rather invincible. She knew what she was doing was right, and her friends, family, Mobed Farrokh, Zarathustra, and Ahura Mazda would always have her back.

Katie found Marco, the CFO, in his office, busily chipping away at the mound of paperwork covering his desk. “Ahh, good morning Katie,” he proclaimed. “It’s very nice to see you here bright and early. “Good morning Marco,” Katie said. “I wanted to speak to you about the dam project.” “Yes, what’s on your mind?” “Well,” Katie continued, “I believe that if we were to use aluminum alloys for the dam, it would have some major consequences.” “Katie,” Marco said, “the decision has already been made. The use of aluminum alloys will save us thousands of

dollars.” “But Marco, that’s not the point,” she replied. “The point is that aluminum does not have the load bearing capacity to hold up such a large dam and is an *extremely* unstable structure for the project. If the dam were to collapse during construction, it would kill several workers. If the dam were to ever buckle under pressure, it would flood the farmers fields and the villages which surround the river, causing loss of life and property. The pesticides used by the farmers would be released into the water, which many people drink and bathe in. Instead of saving money, ‘Villenso

Solutions’ would not be able to survive the litigation and compensation resulting from the loss of life and property.”

There was silence, to an extent where you could have heard a pin drop. Marco seemed to be contemplating what Katie had just said, and she could almost hear the churning of wheels in his mind. Then, Katie got an idea: Use the knowledge she received yesterday from Mobed Farrokh and share it with someone else. “Hey Marco, have you ever heard of Spenta Mainyu?”

26 months later...

THE BANGKOK TIMES, September 18th, 1932 – Elisa Sember, Reporter:

“Everybody who’s anybody is here today, at the grand opening of the new Tangsing Dam. The CFO of ‘Villenso Solutions’, Marco Slaingo, is here to inaugurate the dam, which is being heralded as an extraordinary feat of engineering that will carry the torch for modern dams into the 21st century. A marvel of technology, this spectacular dam happens to be made with renewable resources, includes a passageway for fish, and is constructed with steel. Joining us for an interview is Mr. Marco Slaingo. ‘Good afternoon, Mr. Slaingo, and congratulations on a successful project from ‘Villenso Solutions.’ We at the Bangkok Times would love for you to share a few thoughts regarding this community-proud project.’

‘Yes, Ms. Sember, thank you very much. I would like to welcome the residents of Bangkok to the new Tangsing Dam, which we hope to be a beacon of what we can achieve using the proper materials, and a progressive outlook that will pave the way for development in our up-and-coming city. In addition, a big “thank you” to our newly promoted engineer, Ms. Katie Jamshedi, for her input in the planning and designing of this project. We are grateful for the progressive ideas and technologies that Katie has brought to our company. I have one question for all your readers, Ms. Sember. ‘Have you ever heard about Spenta Mainyu?’”

Biography: A Grade 8 student, *Zeyus* is an avid reader, artist, and loves learning about history. He enjoys being outdoors, playing badminton, and learning new songs on his piano. Zeyus takes pleasure in travelling, meeting new people, and sampling food from a diverse variety of cultures. He looks forward to the ZSBC Zoroastrian classes, which he finds to be a wonderful source of knowledge.



2022 Essay Contest

Age: 14-18 years

Prizes: 1st (\$300), 2nd (\$200), 3rd (\$100)

Due By January 15th 2022

500-800 Words

TOPIC: ACCORDING TO THE GATHAS CAN ONE BE A ZOROASTRIAN WITHOUT A BELIEF IN GOD?

CONTEST SPONSORED BY PARIMARZ FIROOZGAR AND ENDORSED BY CZC

SEE REQUIREMENTS, INFORMATION ABOUT TOPIC, RUBRIC, AND SUBMIT ESSAY AT [HTTP://WWW.CZC.ORG/CONTEST](http://www.czc.org/contest) AND EMAIL QUESTIONS TO [ZESSAYENTRY@YAHOO.COM](mailto:zessayentry@yahoo.com)

Looking forward to the 2022 Essay Contest designed for ages 14-18 with the topic “According to the Gathas can one be a Zoroastrian without a belief in God? Please visit www.czc.org/contest for the contest guidelines, information about God in the Gathas, and the contest rubric starting September 1, 2021 with a contest deadline of January 15, 2022. Please email your questions to zessayentry@yahoo.com.

KHORSHED JOBANI CELEBRATED HER 100TH BIRTHDAY ON JULY 11, 2021



Khorshed Jobani had lost her mother Goolkhurshid at childbirth in Quetta and her father Ardeshir, when she was quite young. She was brought up by her paternal grandfather Sheriar Jobani. She was taught Parsi traditions, prayers and cultural practices. Though she had very limited formal education, she taught herself how to stitch sudrehs, make bhakras, nankhatai and delicious achars for which she became well known in the community. She married Rustom Anary in Yazd at age 13 and soon after they moved to Pune to make sure their children had a good education. With a flair for languages, besides Dari and English, Khorshed speaks Gujarati, Hindi and Marathi. After her husband's passing she emigrated to Canada to be closer to her children who are her "pride and joy." "These days she spends most of her time in Mississauga, Ontario usually enjoying episodes of 'Family Feud' and 'Indian Idol'.

Her mantra in life has been 'trust in God, lead your life with love and peace, be tolerant, wish nothing but the best for all,'

She is a true testament that prayers, the pursuit of health and the blessings she gives and receives from Ahura Mazda keep her young in mind, body and spirit," Although the pandemic has curbed her social interactions, she continues to be active on virtual social events and online yoga classes. which she enjoys as it is set up on television for her, so she gets to see and follow better."

Her mainstay of the Zarthushti community in Toronto, She is loved by all and a great example to young and old.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY KHORSHED MUMA

Khorshif Jobani with her 3 children, their spouses, seven grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren. Ahura Mazda bless them all.

Khorshid Jobani celebrated her 100th birthday with style on the July 11 2021 but because of the lockdown only with her doting family of three children, Gulrukh, Adi and Dara, their spouses, seven grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

In addition to the traditional flower garland, her grandchildren showered her with rose petals. A champagne toast and songs by her great-granddaughters who play the guitar made the day memorable for her.

The following day the family planned a drive-by for her with friends and loved ones coming to honor her. On her roj birthday, the family started the day with a traditional milk, rice and rose petal bath followed by a hearty breakfast of sev and cake.



Happy Birthday, *Dina Aunty* Sal Mubark



Happy Birthday

DINA HOMI SETHNA

Celebrated her 107th birthday on Behram Roj, Mah Ardibehst, DOB October 31 1914 (the year the First World War started)

She is pictured here with her daughter Sunnu and son in law Farrokh Golwalla (Pakistan). Her son and daughter-in-law Godrej and Nargiz Sethna live in Dallas, Texas. Her two older brothers who lived in Mumbai, passed away some 20 years ago. She lives in the Infirmary section of Parsi General Hospital because she needs 24 hour nursing care and needs to be lifted off-and-onto her bed from a chair. She loves to eat small snacks on her own, but needs to be fed otherwise.

She loves to read which she does without glasses. When printed copies of the FEZANA JOURNAL were received she used to flip through them. Today her comprehension one can only guess, but she loves to watch videos by tapping on the 'triangle', and occasionally makes some quips on what she sees.



Maybe she is the oldest Parsi lady alive. If you know of any other lady or man as old or older, let us know, we would love to show case them in the FEZANA JOURNAL . ED.

Errvad Dr Jehan Bagli & Freny Bagli CELEBRATED THEIR 65th WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

September 2021 was an auspicious month for our Dear Jehan Bagli and his wife Freny Bagli. On September 16 the venerated and much loved couple of our community celebrated 65 beautiful and loving years of marriage together! This was matched closely with their 93rd and 94th birthdays this same month. As their son, I am in constant awe of the example of perseverance, and of the simple uncomplicated attitude they bring to their lives, to my life, and to those around them. The restrictions of the day called for a small family celebration of close in-laws, cousins, and grand cousins. Mom and Dad enjoyed a sumptuous Persian supper, and were presented with a treasure chest of memories and images from family and friends across the globe, celebrating their love together — to which many of you may have contributed. My dear late sister Shiraz and I could not have dreamed of more loving and devoted parents. We wish them many more years of love, making memories together!

Dr. Darius Bagli, your son.



BIRTHS

Ava, a girl, to Sherry and Jigish Belani, sister to Anaya, granddaughter to Sunny and Hoshi Deboo and Pushpa Belani on May 14, 2021. (ZA-Chi)

Alexander (Alex) Shahrukh Bell, a boy, to Chris and Jehan Bell on June 17, 2021. (ZA-Chi)

Arianna Joy Demehri, a girl, to Anahita and Arash Demehri, granddaughter to Shirin Mobed and late Shahryar Demehri (Yazd, Iran) and Katayoon and Meher Amalsad (Westminster, CA) in Anaheim, CA on July 27, 2021. (photo right top)



Ruth Nergesh Mistree, a girl, to Kristen Lurie and Behram Mistree, granddaughter to Yashfara and Farrokh Mistree and Alan and Lois Lurie, niece to Dinsha Mistree and Fareeza Doctor in Sunnyvale, CA on September 7, 2021. (photo right middle)



Kiyan Munshi-Ivanov, a boy, born to Pashna and Yani, brother to Variya, in New Jersey on September 15, 2021. (photo right bottom)

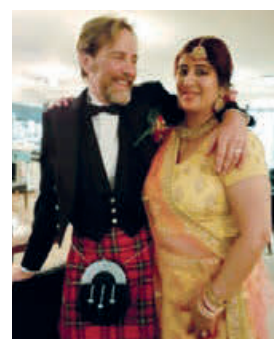
Cyrus Dinsha Mistree, a boy to Fareeza Doctor and Dinsha Mistree, brother to Hormazd, grandson to Meher & Zarir Doctor (Karachi, Pakistan) & Janet Allen & Farrokh Mistree (Purcell, Oklahoma, USA); in Palo Alto, CA, on Roj Meher, Mah Ardibehesht, October 1, 2021.

Ausheh Divecha, daughter of Shireen & Behram Divecha, granddaughter of Dinaz & Noshir Divecha and Vera & Adil Kaikobad, in Richmond, British Columbia, Canada, on September 17, 2021 navjote performed by Ervad Firdos Balsara (photo right)



WEDDINGS

Stuart Shroff, son of Behram Shroff and Reba Page to **Genesis Mullis** on May 8, 2021. (ZAGNY)



Farah Homi Mistry, daughter of Homi and Yasmin Mistry (Mumbai, India) to **Paul Douglas Gamsby**, son of Barbara and Douglas Gamsby (Guelph, ONT) in Richmond, BC on June 19, 2021. (photo right top)



Mashad Khosraviani, daughter of Khorshid and Sohrab Khosraviani to **Farzahn Tachakra**, son of Almitra and Spitman Tachakra in London, UK on June 26, 2021. (photo right bottom)

Delna Patel, daughter of Vispi and Kanizehn to **Shiamak Mehta**, son of Vistasp and Khushnum in Poona, India on July 27, 2021. (ZSO)

Sherazad Bapasola, daughter of Khursheed and Noshir Bapasola to **Stetson Bostic** on August 21, 2021. (ZAPANJ)

Cyrus Kanga, son of Roshni and Percy Kanga to **Amy Garlock** in New Jersey on September 19, 2021. (ZAPANJ (photo right)



NAVJOTES/SUDREH-PUSHI



Lyah and Rohan Batliwalla, children of Zeena Batliwalla and Arjun Varma. (ZANC) photos above

DEATHS

Olive Mobed, 96, wife of late Jehangir Mobed, mother of Jim Mobed, Parvin McDonald, Sue Arnd, sister-in-law of Parvin Mobed in Brookfield, IL on May 17, 2021. (ZA-Chi)

Dhun Parmar on May 24, 2021. (ZAGNY)

Cyrus Homi Bhote, 62, son of late Homi Meherwanji Bhote and Silloo Homi Bhote, husband of Shenaz, father of Yazata, (Michael Henry), Tiraza, and, brother of Sanaya (Neal) on June 14, 2021. (ZAPANJ)

Denny Ratanshaw Vakil, husband of late Tehmi Denny Dalal, father of Olga, grandfather of Denny (Lisa), Richard, Sergio, and David, great grandfather of Christian, Cruz on June 25, 2021. (OZCF/ZSO)

Nargis Asundaria (Toronto, ONT), mother of Villie Valodwala and Firdosh Patel, mother-in-law of Minu Valodwala, grandmother of Ruzbeh and Vabeez Valodwala, great grandmother of Perseus Valodwala in Mississauga, ONT on July 7, 2021.

Jehangir Hormusji Bativala, 95, husband of Dhun, father of Rustom (Khorsheed), England, Lyla Todywala (Sam), Florida, grandfather of Zubin, Zane, Stephan and Simone, in London, on July 11, 2021.

Zahver Morris (Setna), wife of late Fred, mother of Kurush, Murzban, Bezan in Florida on July 17, 2021. (ZAGNY)

Dhun Rohinton Dossabhoy, wife of late Rohinton Homie Dossabhoy, mother of Neville (USA), Lilly and Hilla Dossabhoy, mother-in-law of Gulshan Neville Dossabhoy (USA), sister of Perin Minoo Hirjikaka (Toronto, ONT), Fali, Katie and Merwanji Vania (Mumbai, India), sister-in-law of late Mahrugh Fali Vania (Mumbai, India) in Karachi, Pakistan on July 18, 2021. (Karachi Obituary)

Mohta Billy Engineer (ex-Lahorite), wife of Billy Engineer, mother of Freny Behram Pestonji (Australia), Hormuzd Billy Engineer (Canada), mother-in-law of Behram Pestonji and Nelly Engineer, grandmother of Anya, Behzad, and Mahveer (Australia), Nasha and Pankhil (Singapore), Farshad and Fiona (Canada), great grandmother of Jamie and Zeeva (Australia) and Norah (Singapore), sister of late Maneck Mehta and Jai Mehta (Karachi, Pakistan) in Sydney, Australia on July 20, 2021. (ZSO)

Ervad Jehangir Minocher Panthaky (Vancouver, BC), 94, husband of late Khorshed

Panthaky, father of Jasmine and Rohinton, brother of late Gool (Phiroze) Reporter, (Vancouver, BC), brother of Ervad Jal (Nergish), (Montreal, QUE), Noshir (Jai), (Toronto, ONT), Silloo (Darius) Nazir, (Ancaster, ONT), Rohinton (Najoo), (San Diego, CA), Katy (Vistasp Patel), (Toronto, ONT) in Burnaby, BC on July 29, 2021. (ZA-Quebec)

Hormozdiar Atashband, 79, son of Goshtash Atashband and Morvarid Mojgani, husband of Mehri Fereydoonzad, father of Noushin (Anoushiravan), Negin, grandfather of Arash, Shervin, and Armin, brother of late Shirin, Houshang, and Banou, brother-in-law of Farhad and Bahman in Pierrefonds, QUE on July 31, 2021.

Erach Maneksha Singpurwala, husband of Perin, brother of Persis (Adi) Kasad, Shirin (Parvez), brother-in-law of Parvez (Kashmira), Sohrab, Farrokh, uncle of Rustam (Shannon), Roshni (Ajith), Behram (Nikta), Armaiti, Dugdhova (Pehzad) in Temple, TX on August 2, 2021. (ZAPANJ)

Jamshed Mobed (Houston, TX), husband of Roshni, father of Jarafshan (Tehmus) Mistry, Jarafreen (Darius) Bharucha, Tanaz Mobed, brother of Perviz Sethna on August 7, 2021. (Karachi Obituary)

Dorabji Sorabji Engineer, 86, husband of Katie, father of Tanaz (Yezdi) Siganporia, Zubin (Nui) Engineer, grandfather of Lia and Poras Siganporia, brother of Ruby (Homi) Bhathena, Katy (Kersi) Bhathena (IL), brother-in-law of late Noshir Siganporia, uncle of Farokh (Munira) Siganporia in Hattiesburg, MS on August 10, 2021. (ZA-Chi)

Fareedoon Jalejar Patel, 82, husband of Arnavaz, father of Yasmin Pavri, Bakhtavar, father-in-law of Cyrus, grandfather of Farah, Porus in Mumbai, India on August 12, 2021. (ZAGNY)

Bahram Namiranian, son of Ardeshtir and Dolat Namiranian, husband of Farideh Khosravi, father of Sam, Houman, Triti, in Toronto, ONT on August 12, 2021.

Mehraban Akhtarkhavari, husband of Sasha, father of Mina and Kamron, in San Diego California on Sept. 7, 2021

Dr. Firoze Bamanshaw Jungalwala, 85, son of Bamanshaw and Tehmina B. Jungalwala, husband of late Khorshed Jungalwala and Cynthia Ebert, father of Ferzin (Rajan) Patel, Jehangir (Julie) and Mathew Ebert, grandfather of Davin Patel and Theodore David

MILESTONES

Jungalwala in Boston, Massachusetts, on September 16, 2021. (ZAGBA, ZAGNY)

Adel Behram Irani, (56) son of Behram and Roshan Irani (Mody Colony, Pune), brother of Meherwan, in Savannah, Georgia, USA, on September 18, 2021.

Jimmy Wadia, 73, son of Shera and Jehangir Wadia, husband of Khursheed, father of Zorast and Cyrus, father-in-law of Kate, grandfather of Nicholas, Julie and Aideen, in Queens, NY on September 22, 2021, (ZAGNY)

Keki Boman Shroff, brother of Najoo in Toronto, September 29, 2021. (ZSO)

Amy Shah (86) mother to Jahan and Meera and the sister to Roxy Fichter, Meher Nagarwalla, and

Shehn Talib in Burnaby, BC, Canada on September 29, 2021

Mahindokht Bakhtiari (Pouresfandiari), mother of Mitra and Shahram Pouresfandiari. (CZC)

Freny Engineer 92, daughter of late Goolbanoo and late Manchersha Engineer (Mumbai), sister of Roshan (late Dinyar) Jussawalla, (Toronto) aunt of Malcolm, Zubin and late Firoza Jussawalla and Delila Law, in Toronto on October 2, 2021.

Mrs. Delbar Marzbani, wife of late Marzbani Marzbani, mother of Parvin and Gohar and grandmother of Asha, Ava, Azita and Arman, in Chicago on October 27, 2021.

Matrimonials

Female, 34, 5'1", Pediatrician working in a practice in Northern California. Enjoys traveling, art, cooking, and watching movies. Interested in meeting someone with good family values, independent, honest, passionate and hardworking. Contact mightymody@gmail.com. [F21.29]

Male, 30, 6'2", Associates degree in Business. Realtor – VIP Manager of Sales in Florida. Family oriented, well-settled, loves his five nieces. Enjoys working out and sports. Contact Korra61021@gmail.com. [21.31]

FEZANA Journal will coordinate initial contacts between interested parties. We do not assume any responsibility for verifying credentials. Contact Roshan Rivetna at roshanrivetna@gmail.com.

PLEASE SEND ALL SUBMISSIONS FOR MILESTONES TO MAHRUKH MOTAFRAM TEL 425-961-0298 MAHRUKHM83@GMAIL.COM

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Obituary

Jehangir Hormusji Bativala

September 25, 1925 – July 11, 2021, Age 95

Jehangir Hormusji Bativala, who died aged 95, was among the first post war generation of Indians who came to the United Kingdom either in search of employment or education and training.

Jangoo, as he preferred to be called, came to the UK to train as an aircraft engineer, at Air Service Training (AST) in Hamble, Hampshire. He arrived in 1949 followed by a closely knit group of friends. They were all excited by the opportunities offered by expanding commercial air travel. Jangoo very much enjoyed his time at AST, with his wide circle of friends, sports activities and adventures such as a motorcycle trip on his Vincent Blackshadow to Scandinavia, extending up in Lapland by way of Helsinki to attend the Olympic Games in 1952. He was an accomplished athlete being proficient in many events particularly the 200 metre sprint clocking sub 21.5 seconds on the old cinder tracks. Jangoo commented on the Laplanders immense curiosity at their dark skin and motorcycles neither of which had been seen that far north.

Qualifying as an aircraft engineer in 1953, he was joined by his childhood sweetheart and fiancée, Dhun in 1954. They married immediately, first settling in Southend where he briefly worked for Freddie Laker's Channel Air Bridge Company before finding employment at BOAC (later British Airways) at Heathrow. He spent the rest of his working life there. Living in the shadow of Heathrow was a magnet for countless family and friends from around the world, with their home being open to all. Jangoo's kindness and generosity to so many people was a hallmark of his character.

Jangoo was born in Bombay in 1925. He came from a well respected and distinguished Parsi family. He had a wonderfully happy childhood surrounded by a band of adventurous like-minded, sometimes mischievous, group of friends and extended family. He fully participated in all activities with a particular interest in sports (athletics, football and cricket) and scouting. His interest in aviation then took him to the UK only after he became engaged to Dhun.

Jangoo settled down to married life in the UK from 1954. His Dhunki and he were together since their early teens. They have a son Rustom, and a daughter Lyla. He was a loving, caring and wonderful husband, father, uncle and trusted friend to many and whose family was the centre of his life for which he would do anything. Jangoo's life revolved around a simple philosophy of working hard, enjoying the company of all, and giving us the best opportunities. To say Jangoo lived a full and exciting life would be an understatement. From a little village in Shepperton, to Weybridge, to Birmingham, to Los Angeles, to Marbella, to Dallas, to Ealing, to Miami, and always always back to Bombay, his true home, where he felt the most comfortable and happy and where we will lay him to rest. There were many parties with family and friends plus numerous trips abroad. Our parents lived an amazing life travelling the world whilst reaping the benefits of their hard work, there was always laughter and fun in our home.

Jangoo's interests revolved around his home (DIY), gardening, sports and other interests such as photography, and boating. Despite major heart surgery at 66, Jangoo kept very active and very much involved in family life in both the United Kingdom, India and the USA. Active until recently, he fought hard until the end, finally succumbing to old age and frailty on his own terms. Jangoo is remembered as the most wonderful husband, father, grandfather and uncle caring for so many and loving his immediate family deeply. He is survived by his wife Dhun, children Rustom and Lyla, his son in law Sam, his daughter in law Khursheed, and his gorgeous grandchildren Zubin, Zane, Stefan and Simone who will all carry on his legacy of compassion, social justice, philanthropy and "musti majaa".



WZCC COLLABORATION WITH

IIT- GANDHI NAGAR & AREEZ KHAMBATTA

BENEVOLENT TRUST



The long term objective is for WZCC to identify suitable innovators for the IIT-GN six week, in-person, “Enterprise Development Program”. Candidates meeting certain criteria could then receive incubation or “proof-of-concept funding” via the Nidhi Prayas program. Candidates could also take advantage of an Equity Angel Funding opportunity from the ‘AREEZ KHAMBATTA BENEVOLENT TRUST’ ([Click here for more information](#)).

However, due to Covid-19 situation IIT-GN’s six week “Enterprise Development Program” is on hold but hopefully will be resumed in the near future.

In the meantime, IIT-GN is happy to engage with start-ups/innovators under the existing virtual programs mentioned below:

1. Business skills for entrepreneurs (MS 406) offered during the winter semester beginning in January.

2. Engineering entrepreneurship (MS 403) offered during the fall semester beginning in August.

Both the courses carry a credit of 4 each. The details of the program, admission requirements and fees etc, are available at <https://iitgn.ac.in/admissions/nondegree>. Participants are required to pay Rs 10,000 per credit. IIT-GN does not provide accommodation for these courses. Students whose families are below the Govt. poverty threshold may receive a subsidy from the ‘Areez Khambatta Benevolent Trust’

3. Nidhi Prayas (<http://iieciitgn.com/prayas/>) program to support proof-of-concept funding for hardware innovations and start-ups. Nidhi Prayas is an exciting program for early-stage entrepreneurs who get the opportunity to convert their Idea into viable products through structured mentorship and funding from IIEC.

Additionally, interested entrepreneurs can connect with IIT-GN through iiec@iitgn.ac.in for other programs of IIEC such as Incubation, pre-Incubation, and different short courses, mentor sessions, etc that IIT-GN conducts from time to time.

4. Equity Angel Funding: Existing innovators who have progressed to the Angel Funding stage may present their request along with a Business Plan to WZCC – BAC at wzccindia@on-lyne.com. Qualified applications will then be forwarded to Mr. Piruz Khambatta for consideration of Equity Angel Funding participation.

Innovators having questions may contact Edul Daver eduldaver@gmail.com

Best regards,

Edul Daver

-WZCC Global President

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Between the Covers

The Path to Self Empowerment- My Meditations with Grandma

Tenaz Sunavala

Self published on Amazon Worldwide

August 17, 2021

Pages 144, Paperback \$12.99; Kindle \$4.99

Website to purchase:

<https://tenazsunavala.com/>

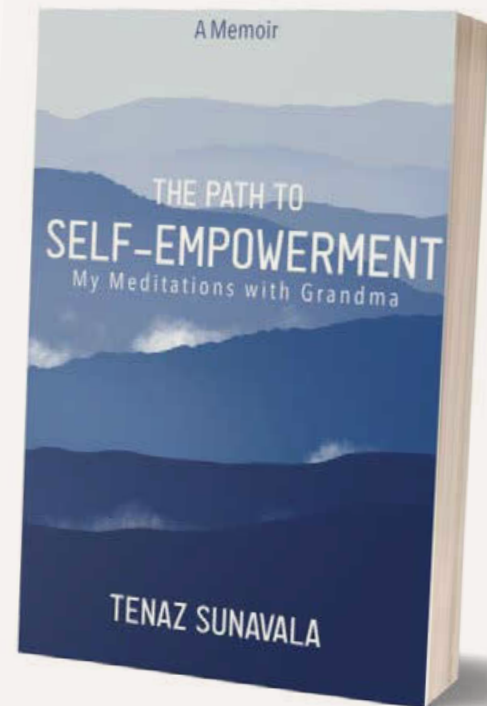
Reviewed by Dina McIntyre

"I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book. It is honest, courageous, upbeat, laced with light humor, discusses in beneficial, productive ways, a huge range of experiences, and I love Tenaz's (non-guru) interactive approach.

Although I am not into chakras, I was struck by so much that is valuable, insightful, relevant to our lives, which touched me at a deep level -- awesome and useful steps to both spiritual and practical growth as human beings. In addition to meditation, Tenaz speaks of four keys to self-empowerment: acceptance, gratitude, forgiveness, and self-love. But in addition, her whole book is a living, breathing testament to also loving, helping, and empowering each other. A very worthwhile, practical, book that helps us to break the shackles that keep us from realizing our best potential. Thank you, Tenaz! Dina G. McIntyre."

As women, we are so unique and so similar at the same time, playing so many different roles in life. Sometimes, however, we can become so wrapped up in our struggles and what life expects of us that we lose touch with our divine feminine self. We need something to remind us of our power.

Author, speaker, and mentor Tenaz Sunavala has seen life from top to bottom, both materially and spiritually. Her journey is one of profound self-discovery and wisdom. In *The Path to Self-Empowerment: My Meditations with Grandma*, Tenaz shares her life lessons and meditations, which led her to find the four keys of life: acceptance, gratitude, forgiveness, and self-love. In her debut book, she shows us how we can discover these keys for ourselves on our own path to self-empowerment. Honest, spiritual, warm, and heartfelt, *The Path to Self-Empowerment* is essential reading for women who want to step into their power.



"This book is for all those women who want to emerge as the true version of themselves and then empower others."

Dr Pearl Pastakia did her PhD on Spiritual Autobiography in the Twentieth Century, where Dasturji Dhalla's autobiography was an important part of her study. She was doubly fortunate in that her thesis supervisor was none other than Dr Coomi S Vevaina, great-grand-daughter of Dasturji M. N. Dhalla. Dr Pastakia heads the department of English in Mumbai's St. Xavier's College and is interested in studying Zoroastrian and Vedic religion.

The word, Dastur (priest), signifies, one who holds by the hand and leads. A true Dastur in that sense was Dastur Maneckji Nasserwanji Dhalla (1875-1956), High Priest of the Parsees of Karachi in the first half of the twentieth century.

He was a religious scholar and reformer of the Zoroastrian religious customs and strove to make religious faith a living force among the Parsees. His voice was effective in ushering in a critical perspective on outworn accretions upon the ancient religious traditions. Thus he led a religious renaissance, enhancing people's faith and adherence to the creed of Ahura Mazda. Dasturji Dhalla travelled all over the country and toured many parts of the world, spreading the word of God as laid down in the Avesta far and wide.

Homage Unto Ahura Mazda is a personal rendering in English poetic passages, of the scriptural passages of Avesta. It does not claim to be a translation but a collection of hymns inspired by the spirit of Zoroastrian religious belief. In his autobiography, 'Ek Atmakatha' (translated into English by Gool and Behram Rustomji: 'The Saga of the Soul'), Dasturji Dhalla describes how he used various forms of expression in a bid to preserve and propagate, the essence of Prophet Zarathushtra's message, that we are ordained to evolve and collaborate with the Divine in taking the universe towards perfection.

We live in times characterised by 'sick hurry' and 'divided aims', to quote Matthew Arnold, and works like those of Dasturji Dhalla help us to unify our consciousness and give it a centre and a focus which gives purity, strength and resilience. The anthology **Homage Unto Ahura Mazda** is a case in point. Another feature of its contemporary relevance is that it distils the magnificence of the 'Avesta vaani' into purple passages in English, so that Zoroastrians who prefer to commune with Lord Ahura Mazda in words they readily understand, will find it a welcome part of their repertoire.

The uniqueness of **Homage Unto Ahura Mazda** lies in its poetic utterances infused with the personal tone and grounded in Zoroastrian theology. On reading this collection of almost two hundred and twenty-five gem-like compositions, one learns how exalted a plane of consciousness these hymns have been composed from, tastes the strong mystic brew of divine communion, is inspired to delve deeper into devotional reading and to make a daily reading of this book a companion of one's routine.

The book is divided into three chapters, each of which is further formed into sections dealing with a particular spiritual theme. The first chapter mostly reflects on concepts central to the faith. The sub-headings clearly

speak of the central idea of each prayer: the personal relationship with Lord Ahura Mazda; Holy Zarathushtra, the Divine Yazatas, Ameshaspands, symbols of the faith, such as Fire, concepts such as righteousness, prayer, life purpose, ethics and the cultivation of the spirit. These ideas are collected under titles such as 'Life is Thy Greatest gift, Ahura Mazda', 'Life is a Blend of Contradictions' and 'Our Community'. The second chapter has a large number of hymns in which the author carries on a personal dialogue with the Divine on a variety of themes, metaphysical and devotional. The third and final chapter has prayers in which the devotee asks for evolution of the self so as to achieve a personal grace or social benefit or universally significant boon. 'Let Me Mould and Shape My Life in Zarathushtra's Likeness', 'Guide me to be Free From Bigotry, Ahura Mazda', 'Nature Mirrors Thy Face For Us, Ahura Mazda' and countless other prayers from the collection have a significant message for all of us whether Zoroastrian or not, since the environment and human spirit alike are in need of healing.

Thus, on one hand, the book has an appeal to people of all religious affiliations. On the other hand, the exaltation felt by Zoroastrians while intoning passages like those quoted below are likely to bring about a strong turn to the religion of Zarathushtra with a desire to consecrate oneself to Lord Ahura Mazda afresh, with every reading from the work:

'I will dedicate my body and mind and heart and soul unto thee. My life and my body and my soul and everything I call mine are thine. They belong to thee and thee alone. I dedicate them all to thee. I lay them at thy feet. Cheerfully and voluntarily will I offer myself up to thee. To thy care and keeping will I commit myself. Zarathushtra lived unto thee and died unto thee. So will I, most gracious God.' (From 'I Will Live for Thee Ahura Mazda All the Days of My Life')

'Religion in its origin, embraces all alike and works for unity. Institutional religion founded upon rituals and sacrifices raises barriers of socio-religious exclusiveness between man and man and becomes exclusive and divisive.' (From 'Conventional Religion Loses its Pristine Purity')

Each meditation in the anthology prompts one to lead a full life, an introspective life, a reflective life and a meaningful life.

To receive a free copy of this priceless book, please write to pervin.dastoor@gmail.com. Dasturji M. N. Dhalla's works should form a part of every private and institutional library. Fortunately, two of his works, '**Mankind, Whither Bound**' and '**Our Perfecting World**' are available on www.zoroastriansnet.com, a website hosted by Mr Yazdi Tantra.

SHEPPARD SOFTWARE

Not Just for Kids!

The screenshot shows the Sheppard Software website interface. At the top, it says 'Sheppard Software we make learning fun' with a navigation bar for 'usa | world | animals | language arts | health | science | math | preschool | brain'. Below this is a 'Popular Games' list on the left, including 'Food Chain Game', 'US States Level 1', 'Fruit Addition', 'World Game 1', 'Shapes Splat', 'Animal Diet Game', 'Preschool Games', 'The 50 States', 'Clock Splat', 'Classification Game', 'Learn World Geography', 'Animal Diet 2', 'Fractions Splat', 'Number Words', 'Europe Game 1', 'Decimal-Rounding', 'Fractions-Rescue', 'Paint & Make', and 'Colors Game'. In the center, there's a banner for 'Click here for game menu!' and 'We are converting our games for all devices! Keep checking back to see what's new!'. Below the banner are icons for 'Animals & Science', 'Preschool & Kindergarten', 'Math', 'Language Arts', 'Geography', 'Animals for Kids', 'PreK & K Animal Games', 'Animal Games for Kids', 'The Seasons Paint Activities', 'U.S. Geography Games', 'Animal Articles', 'Paint Activities', 'Health Games', 'Easy Spanish', and 'Children's Book'. On the right, there's a 'What's new?' section with 'New! 207 Games that work on phones & tablets!' and images for 'Endangered Animals Puzzles', 'PAINT + MAKE 7 environments', 'DINOSAURS NAME A SAURUS', 'CAPITALS - EUROPE MAP GAME LEVEL 1', and 'LEARN THE COUNTRIES OF EUROPE MAP TUTORIAL'.

www.sheppardsoftware.com is a free educational website with hundreds of animated games and activities to play online. Educational games can be an excellent tool that can help students of all ages with learning, practicing concepts and even starting to enjoy a topic they struggle with. The nature of games make them a fun supplement to studies. Some math-haters have become math fans as a result of playing our games!

The games cover many topics - math, science, animals, geography, grammar, pre-k /kindergarten and more. And they come in many types of games to suit different learning styles. A lot of thought was put into creating different game styles to accommodate the different ways children learn. Some are arcade-style games, simpler and slower. Some have the option to play in relaxed or timed mode.

The majority of games are for levels between toddlers/pre-k to middle school - but even high schoolers will also find math, geography and science games that could be a great supplement to their studies. The games are used daily in schools all over the US and the rest of the world. Adults often enjoy learning these topics too - many grandparents write and tell us that they are now geography experts, or they are re-learning science to talk

about it with their grandkids.

Games often include animals, colors, sound, and adventure. Here are some examples of the fun ways the games that engage kids while learning:

- Catch falling stars with adding, subtracting and multiplying
- Feed bamboo to a panda by categorizing parts of speech
- Paint a habitat and place animals there, creating the scene - exercising creativity while learning the types of animals that live there
- Place world continents and oceans on a globe.
- Place animals and plants in their places in a food chain
- Paint and create the seasons
- Pop balloons while learning skip counting
- Feed monkeys bananas while practicing easily confused words
- Locate countries or capitals on a map
- Rescue trapped animals by placing fractions on a number line
- Count and find animals in a habitat

.... with so many game types and levels, the potential for learning and fun is endless.

Playing the games is simple – go to the website and select the subject you want to explore. Select a game and play online. Hundreds of free educational games to play! www.sheppardsoftware.com

ANIMALS IN THE FOREST

Hi! I'm Jasmine, and I design and create many of the games, activities, movies and other educational content. I try to include animation, color and sounds to help make learning fun, and I took the website in this

direction when I started working for the website many years ago. I enjoy the combination of education, art, design, writing, animation, voiceovers and sounds. It's especially meaningful when we get appreciation from parents and teachers about how helpful the games are and how they have helped students with concepts they previously struggled with.

Through my work at the website I also created a picture book: Animals in the Forest. The book was adapted from a movie in a series of activities on four environments (forest, jungle, ocean and farm) - teaching young children simple facts about some of the animals that live there. I hope to inspire children with a love and appreciation of nature. One reviewer said "Great book for little ones to get them talking about nature and the common animals they see", which is very gratifying. With bright illustrations and simple language, this book is geared toward toddlers, pre-k/ kindergarten and very early readers.

If you are interested in buying Animals in the Forest for a young child in your life, it can be found on Amazon. <https://www.amazon.com/dp/1090636687>

Read more about Jasmine's art in the write-up on p. X.

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Dolly Danton Editor-in-Chief.

Date

Sept 21/2021

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GEN Z AND BEYOND



www.genzandbeyond.com

What is the Gen Z and Beyond Survey?

A global survey that answers critical questions about the Zoroastrian community worldwide.

Who can take part?

The Gen Z and Beyond Survey is open to people aged 18 and over who are related to a Zoroastrian in one of the following 3 ways:

- Have one or two Zoroastrian parents
- Have at least one Zoroastrian grandparent
- Have a Zoroastrian spouse

How can you sign-up to take the survey?

Visit the Gen Z and Beyond website and click on the SIGN UP button or scan the QR code below. Enter your email address or mobile telephone number and follow the instructions. The survey is anonymous and your contact details will be deleted after you have submitted your responses.

IMPORTANT: Sometimes the email invitation goes into the spam/junk or promotional folder, so please check there if you haven't received your invitation within two working days.

Next steps:

- Spread the word - share information about the survey with others
- Visit the Gen Z and Beyond website (www.genzandbeyond.com)
- Watch our promotional video on the website

We need as many people as possible to take part and help to build this vital resource for the global Zoroastrian community.

Sign up and make sure your voice is heard.

Sign up at www.genzandbeyond.com
or scan the QR code below

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions please email genz@soas.ac.uk or send us a message on Whatsapp at +44 20707 45146.





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