



Salam Toronto

The explicit voice of the Iranian - Canadian community of Toronto



Mehrdad Ariannejad, CEO of the Tirgan Festival. Tirgan 2011 is expected to be the world's largest Iranian festival outside of Iran. [Photo by Salam Toronto]

By Kaveh Khazra
Staff Reporter

The 2011 Tirgan Iranian Festival schedule is mostly set. Organizers of the festival released an official schedule last week detailing the performances to be expected.

Ninety per cent of the four-day event can be experienced free of charge with a few feature performances requiring the purchase of tickets.

Among the featured events are Nima Kiann's *Les Ballet Parsans*, Shahrokh Moshkin Ghalam's play *Zohreh & Manuchher*, and concerts by Rastak and Rana Farhan.

The festival will have seven main genres of art including music, dance, literature, cinema, theatre, visual arts and youth activities.

Musical performances by Hamid Motebasseem and Salar Aghili, DJ Delbar, Sepideh Raissadat, Sarv Ensemble and the Iranian National Choir are scheduled. Dance performances will be provided by Silk Road Dance Company, Kurdish House Dance Group, and Ida Saki.

During a special recognition of literary achievement, Dr. Mohamad Ibrahim Bastani Parizi and Dr. Mohammad Estelami will be honouring distinguished Iranian author Simin Behbahani. There will also be lectures on Iranian history and literature and book readings by Abbas Maroufi and Shahnush Parsipur will take place in both English and Farsi.

Four films will be featured including Bahram Beyzai's *Death of a King*, Asghar Farhadi's *Separation of Nader and Simin*, Bahman Farmanara's Canadian premier screening of *The Tall Shadows of the Wind*, and a film and subsequent Q&A by Fatemeh Motamed-Arya.

Both *Death of a King* and *The Tall Shadows of the Wind* are films that have never been screened in Iran either during the Shah's rule or the current Islamic regime's tenure.

Youth will have a chance to watch Ariel Balevi recite the story of *The Patient Stone* in English with musical accompaniments, Vida Ghahremani's puppet show performance of *The Fairy King's Daughter* as well as several dance, music and arts and crafts workshops.

More activities and events are also scheduled including visual arts, food and shopping.

Tirgan is a modernized version of an ancient festival that celebrated ethnic diversity in Iran. The revived biennial festival is hosted by the Iranian Canadian Centre for Art and Culture (ICCAC) and is said to be the largest Iranian festival outside of Iran.

Tirgan will be taking place between July 21 and 24, 2011 at the Harbourfront Centre in Toronto. The current program is subject to change. For more information, please visit www.tirgan.ca.