

Tirgan festival

Check out this fun Persian festival that explores the culture's sights, tastes and sounds

Shabnam Janet Janani
 21 July 2008 09:29

Persian art lovers won't want to miss this!

The four-day Tirgan festival explores Iranian music, dance, film, theatre, visual arts and literature at Harbourfront center's Toronto (located at 235 Queens Quay west).

Over 100 artists — some of whom are globally acclaimed — are performing more than 50 different indoor and outdoor programmes. Almost 90 per cent of the performances are free.

Don't forget to bring your kids, who can participate in different youth activities and workshops such as art and crafts, cartooning, drawing and storytelling.

Besides enjoying the performances check out the range of merchants exhibiting Iranian artifacts. Seven restaurants provide a variety of delicious foods, with vendors under the taste of Iran, which are also part of the festival — come hungry!

The Tirgan festival is a result of the success of the festival Under the Azure Dome, which happened in the spring of 2006 at Harbourfront to celebrate the Norooz-Persian New Year.



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The festival is being organized by the Iranian Canadian Center for the Art and Culture and will be end on Sunday night (July 20). There will be lots of great entertainment, including the opportunity to learn more about Persian art, culture and history while enjoying world-class entertainment.

Following are the highlighted events:

DDDance! Djanbazian-Sirius

Stage at 2:00 p.m. (Sat) and 3:00 p.m. (Sunday)

The award-winning dancing group with its artistic director and choreographer, Anna Djanbazian will present diverse folkloric of Persian dances. There are also two workshops by the group director to discuss dance education and awareness. Free event.

Sashar Zarif- Studio Theatre at 1:00 p.m. (Saturday)

"The Canadian Organization Skills for Change has named Sashar Zarif the recipient of New Pioneer Award for the Arts 2008 for being an artistic ambassador for multiculturalism and diversity in arts community." The Canadian artist with his mesmerizing dances represents many cultures. His dances are a mixer of Iranian, Indian and Azerbaijani traditional dances. Free event.

MMMUSIC! Darya Dadvar- Enwave Theatre at 8:00 p.m. (Saturday)

A remarkable composer who created her unique combination of pop and traditional Iranian music. She

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sings in various Iranian dialects, such as Azari, Kurdi and Guilaki, as well as Afghani. This is a ticketed event (\$30 and \$35, Limited tickets left).

Soul Nidus- Brigantine Room at 11:00 p.m. (Saturday)

This is the rock and roll part of the festival with the universal songs from the Stoic album. Free event.

Barbod Ensemble-Toronto Star Stage at 2:30 p.m. (Sunday)

Listen in on an amazing myriad of Kurdish melodies and rhythmic dance music. You'll feel the diversity of Persian music coming from the western part of Iran. Free event.

Theatre -Blind Owl, Directed by Niloofar Beyzai at the Enwave theatre at 2:00 p.m. (Saturday)

Based on a masterpiece by one of the prominent Iranian modern writers, Sadeq Hedayat. This is a ticketed event (\$30, Limited tickets left).

Only Sound Remains, Directed by Soheil Parsa- Brigantine Room at 6:00 p.m. (Saturday)

Parsa is an Iranian-Canadian director who established Modern Times Stage Company as one of the most exciting culturally-diverse theatre companies in Canada. In 1995, Parsa received a New Pioneers Award by Skills for Change for his contribution to the Canadian arts. Free event.

Cinema-The Pear Tree, Directed by Dariush Mehrjui- Studio Theatre at 5:00 p.m. (Saturday)

As one of the intellectual directors of Iranian cinema most of Mehrjui's films are inspired by Persian rich literature. Free event.

Visual arts-Panel Discussion with a Group of leading Artists at Miss Lou's Room at 7:00 p.m. (Saturday)

Eight internationally known visual leading artists and critics discuss the visual arts in contemporary Iran. Free event.

For more information about other programmes please check the festival website, tirgan.ca.

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