



**For Immediate Release
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Exploring Iran: An Afternoon of Iranian Culture on January 27 in Princeton

PRINCETON - The Coalition for Peace Action (CFPA), in conjunction with the local Iranian community, invites you to get a taste of Iran's vibrant culture – to meet the real people beyond today's sensational headlines - by attending an afternoon of Iranian music, literature, video, artwork, crafts and food. ***Exploring Iran: An Afternoon of Iranian and Persian Culture*** will be held **Sunday, January 27, 2008, from 3:00-5:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Princeton (UUCP)**, 50 Cherry Hill Road, just up the hill from the light at the intersection with Route 206.

The program is free and open to the public, and the venue is handicapped-accessible with ample parking. Exploring Iran is sponsored by CFPA's Peace Education Committee, and co-sponsored by UUCP and the Human Relations Council of West Windsor Township.

Exploring Iran will celebrate the country's proud and ancient Persian heritage alongside the dynamic modern culture of the 21st century. Guests will be taken on a "visual journey to Iran" through pictures and videos, and there will be a display of Iranian arts and crafts. Dr. Nahid Mozaffari, editor of the PEN Anthology of Contemporary Iranian Literature, will give a presentation of Iran's modern literary arts.

Listeners will be treated to a performance of Iranian music by Master Santur Player Bahman Kiai (pronounced kee-eye-eee). Kiai, 61, has lived in Great Neck, NY since 1988. He immigrated to the United States from Iran in 1986. He is an accomplished performer on the santur, the Persian hammered dulcimer he took up playing at the age of 4, and is also an experienced pianist. Kiai has performed at such venues as Carnegie Hall, Asia Society, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and at various cultural events in the New York region. He also takes part in programs teaching Persian music to interested Americans – all part of "establishing our Persian identity and bringing about understanding in the communities we live in," he says. By day he works as an engineer with the New York City Department of Design and Construction.

The afternoon will end with a reception featuring *A Taste of Iranian Cooking*.

The event is being coordinated by Princeton Junction resident Shapoor Vali, Associate Professor of Economics at Fordham University, and his wife Firoozeh Vali, who works in the health care field. Mr. Vali suggested the program to CFPA as an alternative to yet another "talking heads" forum on US-Iran foreign relations. The group believes that personal outreach by the Iranian community to their American neighbors may be a better way of breaking down stereotypes about the people and nation of Iran.

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