

# REVOLUTIONS & MOVEMENTS

Dupont Underground, Washington DC  
September 4-9, 2018

ARTISTIC  
FREEDOM  
INITIATIVE

Artistic Freedom Initiative & Dupont Underground Present

# REVOLUTIONS & MOVEMENTS

## ART, MUSIC AND FILM

Dupont Underground, Washington DC  
September 4-9, 2018

ARTISTIC  
FREEDOM  
INITIATIVE

SDK FOUNDATION  
FOR HUMAN DIGNITY

This dynamic and unprecedented exhibition brings together artists from around the world whose inspirational works reflect revolutions, movements, and resistance in defense of human rights. Many of the artists featured in this exhibition have themselves been persecuted or censored in their home countries for the simple act of artistic expression.

As artists are increasingly censored, imprisoned, restricted from moving freely across borders, tortured, or even killed, it is more critical than ever that we safeguard the right to free expression and zealously champion the courageous artists who exercise it. *Revolutions & Movements* is not only a celebration, it is a call to action in defense of artistic freedom.

Housed in the Dupont Underground, formerly a subterranean streetcar station and transportation hub, this exhibition features visual art from renowned and cutting-edge international artists like Ganzeer, Chitra Ganesh, Mariam Ghani, and Ram Devineni, and musical performances by revolutionary musicians Emel Mathlouthi, Marjan Farsad, Ash Koosha, Hamid Al-Saadi and Amir ElSaffar.

From the protest anthems of Emel Mathlouthi that galvanized millions during the Tunisian Revolution to the subversive concept pop art of Ganzeer, this exhibition is a rallying cry, loudly proclaiming the power of art to create positive change around the world. Offering vital perspectives on issues like freedom of expression, human and women's rights, immigration, the refugee crisis, LGBTQI rights, and social and environmental justice, these artists work across a range of disciplines to show us what resistance and revolutions look like through the creative lens.

Artistic Freedom Initiative is unwavering in its commitment to safeguard and promote freedom of artistic expression and has provided pro bono immigration representation and resettlement assistance to persecuted and censored artists, many of whom are part of *Revolutions & Movements*.

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# Artistic Freedom Initiative

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## ARTISTIC FREEDOM INITIATIVE

### Our Mission

The Artistic Freedom Initiative (AFI), a program of the SDK Foundation for Human Dignity, provides pro bono immigration representation and facilitates resettlement assistance for international artists at risk.

### Our Programs

AFI provides pro-bono legal services for at-risk artists, facilitates artist resettlement and reintegration into host communities, and promotes the works of at-risk artists globally. AFI has:

- Provided over \$350,000 in pro bono legal and resettlement services to artists from all over the world, including Iran, Syria, Uganda, Iraq, Bangladesh, India, Vietnam, Georgia & Indonesia.
- Launched a Safe Haven residency program for at-risk artists, hosted at Westbeth Artists Community and in coalition with ArtistSafety.net, Westbeth Artists Community, Residency Unlimited, PEN America and Fordham University.
- Partnered with art spaces such as Westbeth Artists Community, Queens Museum, Symphony Space, and Time Equities Art in Buildings who have donated gallery space for exhibitions and other events to help promote AFI's artists.

[artisticfreedominitiative.org](http://artisticfreedominitiative.org)

# SDK Foundation for Human Dignity

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SDK FOUNDATION  
FOR HUMAN DIGNITY

The SDK Foundation for Human Dignity is a family foundation that seeks to enhance human dignity by supporting innovative and impactful work that will lead to real social change.

The foundation funds organizations and initiatives in the areas of economic development, cross-cultural understanding, and fundamental human rights.

# Acknowledgements

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Artistic Freedom Initiative wishes to thank Dupont Underground for its collaboration on *Revolutions & Movements* and for providing a creative space to house this exhibition.

AFI also thanks the extraordinary artists who have contributed their work to this exhibition. Your inspired art and personal stories are the foundation of *Revolutions & Movements*, and are at the core of AFI's mission. Special thanks to AFI artist Iman Raad for designing the *Revolutions & Movements* festival posters.

Artistic Freedom Initiative thanks our generous donors and supporters.

# Performances & Events

Tuesday

9/4



DOORS 7:00 PM - GALLERY VIEWING  
CONCERT 8:00 PM

## MARJAN FARSAAD

Join us for an unforgettable concert to celebrate the opening of *Revolutions & Movements*.

Thursday

9/6

## ART IN REVOLUTION

DOORS 6:00 PM - GALLERY VIEWING  
PANEL DISCUSSION 7:00 PM

## ART IN REVOLUTION: A DISCUSSION ON THE STATE OF ARTISTIC FREEDOM



FILM SCREENING 8:00 PM

## FOLCS INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM COMPETITION 2018 – FINALIST FILMS

Friday

9/7



DOORS 7:00 - GALLERY VIEWING  
CONCERT 8:00 PM

## ASH KOOSHA



## EMEL MATHLOUTHI

Saturday

9/8



DOORS 7:00 - GALLERY VIEWING  
CONCERT 8:00 PM

## HAMID AL-SAADY & AMIR ELSAFFAR IRANIAN FEMALE COMPOSERS ASSOCIATION & ENSEMBLE

# Tue 9/4



DOORS 7:00 PM - GALLERY VIEWING / CONCERT 8:00 PM

## OPENING NIGHT: MARJAN FARSAAD

Born in Iran, Marjan Farsad is a visual artist and singer songwriter. Having left behind a country where women are prohibited from performing as solo vocalists before mixed gender audiences, Marjan now takes the stage to sing all over the world. She and her brilliant band lead the celebratory opening of *Revolutions & Movements*.

Woven through Marjan's ethereal songs are haunting melodies that evoke the past, and memories of her home in Iran. Her transcendent performances are set against projections of her own hand-painted animations, creating a multi-sensory experience that transports audiences to a wistful and distant time and place.

# Thur 9/6



DOORS 6:00 PM - GALLERY VIEWING / PANEL DISCUSSION 7:00 PM / FILM SCREENING 8:00 PM

## ART IN REVOLUTION: A DISCUSSION ON THE STATE OF ARTISTIC FREEDOM

In an era when artists around the world are increasingly censored, persecuted, and restricted from moving freely across borders, this provocative and timely discussion addresses the global state of artistic freedom and the undeniable power of art to shape political and social movements. We'll hear critical perspectives from at-risk revolutionary musicians Ramy Essam (Egypt) and Mai Khoi (Vietnam), as well as experts in the fields of human rights, academia, and law.

## FOLCS INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM COMPETITION 2018 – FINALIST FILMS

In 2011, Forum on Law, Culture & Society at NYU School of Law created the FOLCS Annual International Short Film Competition to invite independent and aspiring filmmakers from around the globe to submit original short films that address legal themes such as human rights, injustice, and fundamental fairness.

Join us for a screening of this year's lineup of finalists and award-winning short films, created by a diverse group of international filmmakers.

Screenings: NAMJOO (United States), Pablo (Belgium), Are You Volleyball?! (Iran), The Butterfly (Canada), Pale Mirrors (Iran), She (United States), The Fabric of America (United States)

# Fri 9/7



DOORS 7:00 PM - GALLERY VIEWING / CONCERT 8:00 PM

## ASH KOOSHA EMEL MATHLOUTHI

Join us for an incredible night of cutting-edge, revolutionary music as British-Iranian multi-disciplinary artist and musician Ash Koosha and Tunisian experimental singer Emel Mathlouthi put on transcendent, unforgettable performances.

Featured in Rolling Stone, the Guardian & VICE, Ash Koosha is a British-Iranian multi-instrumentalist composer/producer, futurist and technologist. Originally from Iran, Koosha fled the country due to restrictions on his artistic freedom. While in Iran, he planned a UNICEF-supported festival alongside a group of underground musicians. Attended by 700 people, the festival was raided by authorities. Over 200 people were arrested and Ash was jailed. Now based in the UK, Ash has released a number of electronic albums & innovative projects. His latest album *Return 0* is 15 years in the making and co-written by an artificially intelligent “auxhuman” of Koosha’s own creation. Completed in collaboration with visual artist Isabella Winthrop, Koosha’s *Return 0* revolutionizes how we experience sound, artificial intelligence, & virtual simulation.

Featured in the Guardian, Pitchfork, & NPR, Emel Mathlouthi was hailed as the voice of the Tunisian Revolution when her protest songs became the anthems of the 2010 uprising. Following a number of explosive performances, her songs were banned from the airwaves in Tunisia. With her latest album, *Ensen* (*Human*), Emel expands her sound and creates a cinematic, bold, and unique combination of electronic beats and North African rhythms. Called “a singular voice” (NPR) and “a dynamic and politically conscious performer” (BBC), Emel’s music is “epic, gorgeously ornamented” (Pitchfork *Rising*).

# Sat 9/8



DOORS 7:00 PM - GALLERY VIEWING / CONCERT 8:00 PM

## HAMID AL-SADI & AMIR ELSAFFAR IRANIAN FEMALE COMPOSERS ASSOCIATION

Based in Baghdad, Hamid Al-Saadi is the foremost performer of Iraqi Maqam music in his generation, and the only living artist who has mastered the entire Maqam repertoire in all of its variations. Instability in Iraq has placed this centuries old musical tradition in danger of extinction. Hamid’s rare performance in Washington D.C. marks the first stop on his historic tour through the U.S.

A self-improvised recitation of poetry consisting of some 100 melodies, the Maqam is the urban classical vocal tradition of Iraq. More than any other art form or cultural offering, it represents Iraq in all of its complexity. It is a repository of Iraq’s rich history, included on UNESCO’s Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Al-Saadi performs Maqam alongside Amir ElSaffar, a renown Iraqi-American composer, trumpeter, santur player, and vocalist who fuses jazz and Arabic music.

Opening for Al-Saadi and ElSaffar, the Iranian Female Composers Association (IFCA) has composed a series of contemporary classical pieces inspired by *Revolutions & Movements*. Performed by an ensemble, these original compositions include the world premiere of a piece by composer Rojin Sharafi. IFCA is revolutionary in its mission to create space for growth and empowerment for all Iranian female-identifying composers, bringing to light artistic stories that would not have otherwise had the chance to shine.

# Visual Artists



**FADI ASMAR**  
*Remembering Aleppo*

Growing up between Aleppo and Beirut, two cities torn apart by cruel wars, adds a critical flavor to how Fadi Asmar sees the world. His photography is about storytelling; stories of cultures, cities, environments. Even just one person's story can captivate his attention.

*Remembering Aleppo* is a series of black and white photographs bringing the viewer to spaces now left in ruins and devastation. The work is about people who made the old city center of Aleppo a vibrant urban space, vitalizing one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world. Today, many of these people are stigmatized as refugees. The work intends to invite the viewer to see the human element of what made Aleppo, and is a reminder of how this city was once a peaceful heritage site.

[www.fadiasmr.com](http://www.fadiasmr.com)



**NEGAR BEHBAHANI**  
*Agony; Never Ending*

Born in Tehran, Iran, multidisciplinary artist Negar Behbahani lives in Brooklyn, New York.. Her work *Agony; Never Ending* depicts the distress of women who have been forcefully encircled by an oppressor over the course of many years, though they still inhale hope, resistance and longing for opportunities.

Behbahani has exhibited videos and installations internationally and has been featured in publications such as *Art in America* and *The Huffington Post*. She is an AFI supported artist.

[vimeo.com/negarbehbahani](https://vimeo.com/negarbehbahani)



**RAM DEVINENI**  
*Priya's Shakti*  
*Parvati Saves the World*

Ram Devineni is a filmmaker and co-creator of the groundbreaking augmented reality comic book series, *Priya's Shakti*, which was named a "gender equality champion" by UN Women and hailed by the Guardian, BBC, NPR and Vogue. He recently produced "The Russian Woodpecker" which won the Grand Jury Prize at Sundance Film Festival.

The comic-book series *Priya's Shakti* was inspired by the much-publicized 2012 gang rape on a New Delhi bus, eliciting an enormous public outcry, particularly from young adults and teenagers, and demanding a challenge to the long-held patriarchal views of the role of women in modern society. The comic's power lies in its presentation of very difficult topics in an approachable and empathetic way. Using the genre of "superheroes," and creating a female superhero, provides readers with a familiarity and accessibility to these complex problems.

Ram's film *Parvati Saves the World* uses dozens of Hindu "god epic" films from the 1970s as source material. The original popular Bollywood-style films were meant as both morality tales and entertainment for a wide Indian audience. This new re-mix film followed closely the storyline of the *Priya's Shakti* comic dealing with sexual violence, playing a pivotal role in his later development of the critically acclaimed augmented reality comic book series.

Dan Goldman is the co-creator of the comic book series, *Priya's Shakti*, and writes graphic novels and comics. His 2006 web-comic, *Shooting War*, earned it an Eisner Award nomination for Best Digital Comic.

[www.priyashakti.com](http://www.priyashakti.com)



**CHITRA GANESH**  
*Guantanamo Effect, from Index of the Disappeared*

Since 2004, internationally acclaimed artist Chitra Ganesh has maintained a long-term collaboration with artist Mariam Ghani as *Index of the Disappeared*, an experimental archive of detentions, deportations, and human erasures, as well as a public platform for dialogue on related issues. *Guantanamo Effect*, part of *Index of the Disappeared*, is centered on the U.S. prison camp at Guantanamo Bay as both a reality in place and an idea in circulation. It is an interactive digital archive that traces new relationships between existing documents, and pays close attention to slippages in usage of language and definition of terms, as well as omissions, ruptures, or oddities in the records. *Guantanamo Effect* turns the notion of archive on its head by creating an interactive piece of art that is a tool for education and resistance.

For over a decade, Ganesh's multi-disciplinary works have been widely exhibited both locally and internationally, including at the Queens Museum, Museum of San Diego LA Jolla, Berkeley Art Museum, Bronx Museum, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, and Baltimore Museum. Her works are held in prominent public collections such as the Philadelphia Museum of Art, San Jose Museum of Art, Baltimore Museum, the Whitney Museum, and Museum of Modern Art.

[www.chitraganesh.com](http://www.chitraganesh.com)



**MARIAM GHANI**  
*Guantanamo Effect, from Index of the Disappeared*

Since 2004, artist, writer, and filmmaker Mariam Ghani has collaborated with Chitra Ganesh as *Index of the Disappeared*. Together, they created *Guantanamo Effect*.

Ghani's work looks at places, spaces and moments where social, political and cultural structures take on visible forms, and spans video, sound, installation, photography, performance, text and data. She has exhibited and screened at the Guggenheim, MoMA, Met Breuer and Queens Museum in New York, and the National Gallery in Washington, D.C., the Saint Louis Art Museum, the Indianapolis Museum of Art, the CCCB in Barcelona, among others.

[www.mariamghani.com](http://www.mariamghani.com)



**GANZEER**  
*Hands Up*

Living in Egypt during the Revolution, Ganzeer was one of many artists who filled the streets with murals and graffiti that spoke to the revolutionary spirit of the movement and helped to push it forward. After rising to prominence as an artist in the anarchic movement, public demands were made for the government to take action against him, placing him at risk of arrest and imprisonment. Soon after, Ganzeer left Egypt for the United States.

Hailed as "the Banksy of Egypt," Ganzeer is a maker of Concept Pop, a kind of cultural insurgency that can be seen in his wide-ranging output, be it installations, prints, paintings, videos, objects, guerrilla actions in public space, writing, and also comix. *Hands Up* is a combination of painting and animated gifs to highlight the issue of criminalizing school children, often from "ethnic backgrounds," first shown in his solo exhibition *All American*.

The New York Times called Ganzeer a "chameleon" and the Huffington Post placed him on a list of "25 Street Artists from Around the World who are Shaking Up Public Art." His work is in a number of museums and institutional collections, and his limited edition screenprints and lithographs are sold through Booklyn. His current project is a sci-fi graphic novel titled THE SOLAR GRID, which has awarded him a Global Thinker Award from Foreign Policy in 2016.

[www.ganzeer.com](http://www.ganzeer.com)



**ROYA FARASSAT**  
*A Mirror Has Two Faces*

Originally from Iran, Roya says, "I was inspired to paint the series of paintings titled *A Mirror Has Two Faces* in response to the continued acceptance of brutality that threatens the female population. Through demonized portraits, I give a voice to veiled, oppressed women who live under the constant scrutiny of a patriarchal society. I emphasize the women's lack of concrete identity by shedding light on their isolation from society. Confining the women in ornate, ink-stamped picture frames helps convey the lenticular nature of their public and private lives."

Educated at Parsons School of Design, Roya Farassat's practice includes making sculptures and painting on paper and canvas. Farassat's work has been exhibited in numerous museums, galleries and universities in United States and abroad in Kuwait and at Dubai Art Fair.

[www.royafarassat.com](http://www.royafarassat.com)



**SEÁN HANNAN (W/ BOBBY SANCHEZ, MARX, & RAE RENEGADE)**  
*Tell It Like It Is*

Seán Hannan is a conceptual artist from the Netherlands, exploring different ways of visual storytelling within the history of art. He seeks out "leaked documents," whistleblower testimonies and conspiracy theories online to gather knowledge on subjects that are not, be they true or false, "supposed" to be part of our public knowledge.

*Tell It Like It Is* is a multi-channel video installation piece in which he collaborated with 3 rappers from New York and New Jersey. Based on a series of declassified and leaked documents, and using one of the most popular musical forms of expression today, the rappers created original songs that speak to their understanding of political and corporate oppression. All three rap artists share a common interest in the idea of truth and secret power structures, informed by their diverse backgrounds and approaches (Bobby Sanchez, American from Peruvian descent, Rae

Renegade, American from Dominican descent, and Marx, American from African descent). *Tell It Like It Is* focuses on the stories these rap artists have to tell in a rapidly changing world where it seems now more than ever, the revolution needs to be televised soon. This project was completed while Hannan was in residence at Residency Unlimited in Brooklyn, New York.

[www.seanhannan.nl/](http://www.seanhannan.nl/)



**ASH KOOSHA**  
*Return 0*

Ash Koosha is a multi-instrumentalist composer/producer, futurist and technologist. He pioneered the world's first virtual reality album concept and holographic live performance at ICA London. Originally from Iran, Koosha fled the country as a result of restrictions on his artistic freedom, which included a prison sentence issued for his live performances. Now based in the UK, he recently had performances and a permanent move to Los Angeles thwarted due to Trump's travel ban. He published an open letter about the travel ban, and has been featured in publications like Rolling Stone, Pitchfork, the Guardian, and VICE.

*Return 0* is a 13-track journey of digital creation, and not in the ordinary sense we've come to understand. *Return 0* is more like a confession, admission and homage to the computer that is not merely a tool but a collaborator. The first single on *Return 0* is a piece about the mass visualization of human big data turning into a new organic digital world.

Koosha has released a number of electronic albums and innovative projects since 2015. Working with TheWaveVR, he performed his new album AKTUAL for a US audience in a virtual venue. Koosha is also known for playing the lead role in an Iranian-Cannes award winning film 'No One Knows About Persian Cats.' His album Return 0 is set to be released on September 21, 2018 via Realms.

[www.realmsbeyondrecords.com](http://www.realmsbeyondrecords.com)



**KAIRON LIU**  
*Humans as Hosts*

Kairon Liu is a visual artist and photographer from Taipei, Taiwan, and is currently based in New York. Kairon's practice reflects his observations concerning beliefs in human society through the creation of narratives, exploring different issues related to religion, disease, and universal values.

His project *Humans as Hosts* began in 2017. Together with social networks, NGOs, and health authorities, Liu conducts in-depth interviews with HIV positive individuals. In an effort to dismantle stigma and discrimination against those with HIV, Liu collaborates with his subjects to create images and texts that invite viewers to step inside a day in the life of someone with HIV, thus reflecting on the behavior, living environment and financial conditions of HIV positive individuals. Kairon Liu is currently an artist in residence at Residency Unlimited in Brooklyn, New York.

[www.kaironliu.com](http://www.kaironliu.com)



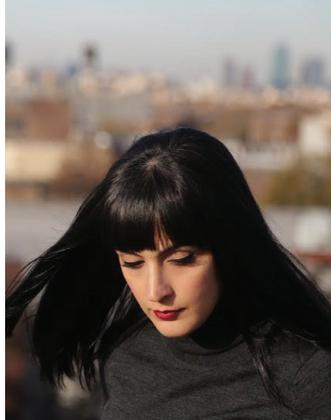
**AIDA SULOVA**  
*Once Upon a Plastic Bag*

Aida Sulova is an artist from Kyrgyzstan. With her piece *Once Upon a Plastic Bag*, Sulova launched a plastic bag clean-up campaign, raising awareness about the rampant garbage problem in Kyrgyzstan. Huffington Post named her one of 18 *Green Artists Who Are Making Climate Change & Conversation a Priority*.

Aida is a graduate of New York University and is a founder of "Kachan" Art Foundation, which promotes the engagement of the arts in learning institutions and organizes cultural exchanges between Central Asia and the world. She has conceptualized and implemented "Artystan," a public art program that promotes various public art opportunities for local artists and art organizations encouraging community engagement and participation in the arts. Most of her artwork relates to current social issues and is based on the transformative power of art.

[www.aidasulova.com](http://www.aidasulova.com)

# Musicians



## MARJAN FARSAID

Born in Tehran in 1983, Marjan is a visual artist and a singer songwriter. She works as an animator and designer and makes music as a side project. Recurring themes in Marjan's artwork and music are nostalgia, a sense yearning for the past and the things we've lost along the way. Her debut album *Blue Flowers* was released in 2014. Farsad is an AFI supported artist.



## ASH KOOSHA

In recent years, British-Iranian multi-instrumentalist composer/producer, technologist and futurist Ash Koosha has been at the forefront of many innovative projects. He realized the first fully immersive virtual reality music album where he made sound and object indistinguishable. When he was refused a visa to enter the United States for a performance, he crossed physical borders by performing live in virtual reality for a U.S. audience. Koosha created music that was alien, material, yet grounded in timeless classic aesthetics. His creations told stories that were deeply personal and yet universal: the relationship of man to himself, to the idea of himself, to machine, to future, to information.

Now Koosha is back with his most important story to date. His album *Return 0* is a 13-track journey of digital creation, co-written by his artificially intelligent "auxhuman" and completed in collaboration with visual artist Isabella Winthrop. *Return 0* is set to be released on September 21, 2018 via Realms.

[www.realmsbeyondrecords.com](http://www.realmsbeyondrecords.com)



## EMEL MATHLOUTHI

Emel Mathlouthi is an experimental singer from Tunisia. Her first album, *Kelmti Horra (My Word is Free)*, introduced her groundbreaking marriage of sounds steeped in Tunisia and electronic beats. Her recent performance with Godspeed You! Black Emperor in Brooklyn, New York follows the release of her sophomore album *'Ensen' (Human)* via Partisan Records, as well as her remix album *'Ensenity'* which featured reworks of songs from *'Ensen'* by Vladislav Delay, Free The Robots, Ash Koosha, Cubenx and other producers from around the world.

Emel's music is a cinematic, bold and unique combination of electronic beats and North African rhythms. Produced with Valgeir Sigurðson (Sigur Ros, Feist, Bjork), *'Ensen'* earned profiles from NPR Music, Pitchfork, The Fader, The Guardian, Brooklyn Magazine, Nowness, WNYC, and others.

[www.emelmahlouthi.com](http://www.emelmahlouthi.com)



## HAMID AL-SAADI

Hamid Al-Saadi is one of the foremost purveyors of the Iraqi Maqam, a revered musical tradition in danger of extinction due to instability in Iraq.

Al-Saadi's artistic, musical and scholarly journey with the Iraqi Maqam began from childhood, with Al-Saadi's avid love of the Iraqi and Baghdadi culture, the Arabic language, music and poetry. He was highly influenced by Samir 'Abdallah al-Khalidi and studied, practiced and performed the Maqam until he became one of the more renowned and highly acclaimed musicians and scholars in this subject. Al-Saadi has authored a book on the Maqam entitled, "al-maqam wo buhoor al-angham." It is one of the most comprehensive texts ever published on the Iraqi Maqam and its poetry. Al-Saadi is an AFI supported artist.



## AMIR ELSAFFAR

Iraqi-American composer, trumpeter, santur player, and vocalist Amir ElSaffar has been described as “uniquely poised to reconcile jazz and Arabic music,” (the Wire) and “one of the most promising figures in jazz today” (Chicago Tribune). ElSaffar is an expert trumpeter with a classical background, conversant not only in the language of contemporary jazz, but has created techniques to play microtones and ornaments idiomatic to Arabic music that are not typically heard on the trumpet.

Additionally, he is a purveyor of the centuries old, now endangered, Iraqi Maqam tradition, which he performs actively as a vocalist and santur player. As a composer, ElSaffar has used the subtle microtones found in Iraqi Maqam music to create an innovative approach to harmony and melody.

[www.amirelsaffar.com](http://www.amirelsaffar.com)



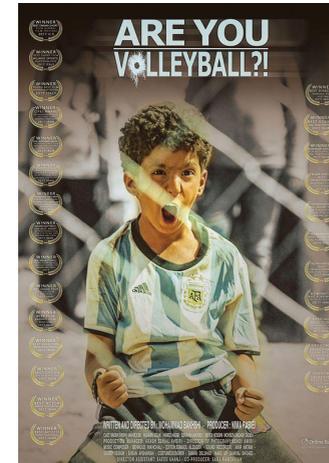
## IRANIAN FEMALE COMPOSERS ASSOCIATION

The Iranian Female Composers Association (IFCA) was established in 2017 by three female identifying Iranian composers: Anahita Abbasi, Niloufar Nourbakhsh, and Aida Shirazi. When Niloufar Nourbakhsh, IFCA's founding member, decided to fully dedicate herself to a lifetime of composition, there were few mentors that she could look up to in Iran. Though circumstances have improved for Iranian female musicians in recent years, it remains a challenging career path.

Composers Nourbakhsh, Abbasi, and Shirazi formed IFCA as a platform to support, promote, and celebrate Iranian women in music through concerts, public performances, installations, interdisciplinary collaborations, and workshops. Amidst the competitive environment of classical music, IFCA is revolutionary in creating a safe space that enables growth for all Iranian female-identifying composers. By empowering these women, the world will experience artistic stories of a new kind that would not otherwise have had the opportunity to shine.

[www.facebook.com/MUSIFCA](https://www.facebook.com/MUSIFCA)

# Filmmakers



## ARE YOU VOLLEYBALL?!

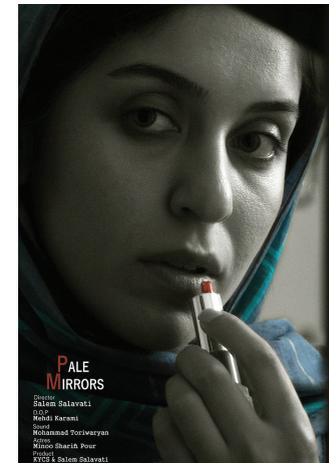
Synopsis:

A group of Arab-speaking asylum seekers arrive to an English-speaking country border where they are stopped and cannot go further. Their conflicts with border guards occur every day until a deaf-mute kid becomes a catalyst for better communication between the two groups.

Director: Mohammad Bakhshi

Country: Iran

Duration: 00:15:00



## PALE MIRRORS

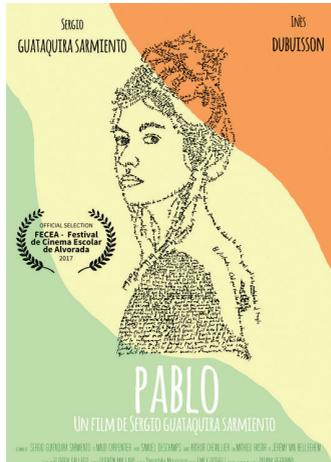
Synopsis:

A woman wants to be a mother, but her husband is incarcerated and sentenced to death. She has only 24 hours to decide if she wants to become pregnant in this complex situation, and this is her last chance.

Director: Salem Salavati

Country: Iran

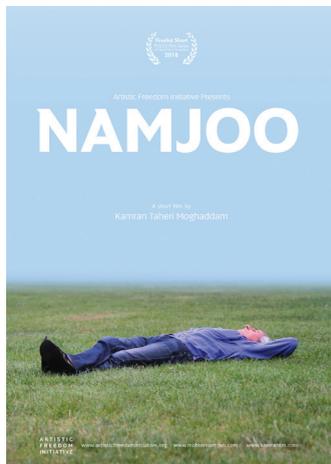
Duration: 00:15:00



## PABLO

**Synopsis:**  
Months after a violent separation, Anouk and Pablo have to meet two members of the Ministry of State at Anouk's place to have the legal authenticity of their cohabitation validated. This is very important for Pablo to be able to regularize his status as a foreigner in Belgium. He must convince Anouk to pretend to be a couple again for one hour.

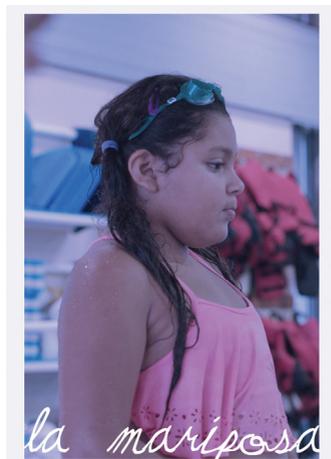
Director: Don Sergio  
Country: Belgium  
Duration: 00:16:05



## NAMJOO

**Synopsis:**  
In this short documentary film, we meet revolutionary musician Mohsen Namjoo. Namjoo fled his native Iran when the country's repressive regime made it impossible for him to create, perform, and distribute his visionary music, considered dangerously controversial by the government. In 2009, Namjoo was sentenced in absentia to five years' imprisonment for setting passages of the Qu'ran to music. Though he has been living outside of Iran for many years, he has continued to compose, record, and play his music internationally, and refuses to be silenced.

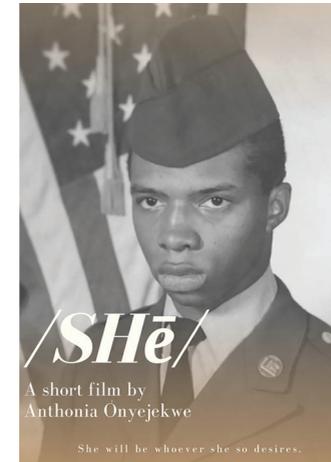
Director: Kamran Taheri Moghaddam  
Country: United States  
Duration: 00:12:16



## THE BUTTERFLY

**Synopsis:**  
Carol's family tries to accept their new life as refugees, while she struggles to pass a swimming test.

Director: Kamran Taheri Moghaddam  
Country: United States  
Duration: 00:12:16



## SHE

**Synopsis:**  
This short film follows Tanesh Nutall, a 50-year-old black transgender woman from Rahway, New Jersey. In February 2016, Tanesh was confronted by a city employee for using a women's restroom in Downtown San Francisco. Throughout the film, Tanesh seeks justice and makes amends with family members that had rejected her gender identity. "She" raises important issues about urban queer life and the emotional difficulty self-acceptance.

Director: Anthonia Onyejekwe  
Country: United States  
Duration: 00:14:35



## THE FABRIC OF AMERICA

**Synopsis:**  
It's a tough time to be an immigrant in America. Raids against new residents are on the rise, as are deportations that lead to families and communities being torn apart. Green cards are increasingly difficult to obtain, leading many people to stay in the country without proper documentation. Under our broken immigration system, thousands of people are living in fear every day, and peaceful members of society are being targeted as criminals. This film explores the many sides and issues underlying this complex and controversial topic, and shows how these issues manifest locally, in Montgomery County, Maryland.

Director: "The Fabric of America" was produced by eight high school students from Montgomery County, Maryland: Alyssa Berrios, Merry Hailegeorgies, Gabe Hoekman, Verite Igiraneza, Avi Krishan, Sophie Lucarelli, Juliet Marschall, and Juan Ortiz.  
Country: United States  
Duration: 00:07:00

## ABOUT FOLCS INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM COMPETITION

The Forum on Law, Culture & Society's annual International Short Film Competition was created in 2011. Independent and aspiring filmmakers from around the globe are invited to submit original short films on a legal theme. Entrants are free to construe this theme broadly and choose any subject in which the relationship between law, justice, and society can be fashioned into a unique visual story. The films can be about rights that have been denied, harms that have gone unaddressed, courtroom decisions that are in desperate need of an appeal, government regulations and statutes that are fundamentally unfair, or attempts to express what "justice" really means. We accept films in any genre, including documentary, animation, and drama.

If you are interested in becoming a sponsor, please contact Shervin Abachi, Director of the FOLCS International Short Film Competition by e-mail at [shervin.abachi@folcs.org](mailto:shervin.abachi@folcs.org).



[www.FOLCS.org](http://www.FOLCS.org)

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To inquire about AFI's pro bono legal and resettlement services for at-risk artists or explore collaborations, partnerships, or contributions contact AFI's Program Director, Ashley Tucker at [ashley@artisticfreedominitiative.org](mailto:ashley@artisticfreedominitiative.org)

For more information about our mission and work, visit our website at  
**[artisticfreedominitiative.org](https://artisticfreedominitiative.org)**

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