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Persian Art in Our Libraries

By *Sophie Braccini*



The deer is a symbol of innocence Picture courtesy of Hourian Gallery

Inspired by this year's Lamorinda Reads book selection, *Funny in Farsi*, our three libraries will display the work of local Persian-born artists. It will be worth the three-town tour to see it all.

For the full month of November the Orinda gallery will be displaying work by Iranian born artist Mohammed Hourian. Hourian will bring to Orinda about twenty five of the pieces that he usually displays in his Union Street gallery in San Francisco. Hourian has been present on the San Francisco art scene for 25 years. He was raised in Tehran and studied and work in the ancient art of miniature since he was 12 years old. Under the tutelage of Iran's most famous miniaturist, Hourian studied this unique tradition employing arabesque, linear detail, fantasy color and delicate form, and he honed his own imaginative and original style. The quality of his paintings immediately conveys an elevated sense of whimsy and lyrical movement, balancing expert craftsmanship and cultural precision with simmering, transcendental images that have been aptly called "perceptual fantasy."

In the same exhibition, local publisher Nazli Monahan will display some of the artwork she collected for the exhibition: "The wonders of Persia," the first Iranian children's art show in the US that opened in 2006 at the Presidio in San Francisco.

In November in Moraga author and painter Kat Zandvakili will bring her work painted from the heart. She composes her paintings like she does her novels, working through layer upon layer of splashes of color until she reaches the joy; then wild horses and all manner of wild things come through. Born in Tehran, Kat

studied painting in New York at Sarah Lawrence College and at the 92nd Street Y, and in San Francisco.

In Lafayette, from October 7th to the 25th, the Library presents "A Novel Idea," by artists from the Lafayette Gallery. For five artists at the Lafayette Gallery, it is the written word that resonates in their work. Pat Hayashi (acrylics/prints), Sherry Smith Bell (printmaking), Sadie Cuming (jewelry), Jim Rosenau (whimsical bookshelves) and JoAnn Lieberman (collage and assemblage) will have pieces inspired by Funny in Farsi on display.

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