

Franziska Buhre (ed.)

# Klangteppich V Magazin

Seit 2021 veröffentlicht Norient gemeinsam mit Klangteppich, dem Berliner Festival für Musik der iranischen Diaspora, ein Online-Special. In der Zwischenzeit hat sich diese Publikation zu einem Archiv lebendiger Perspektiven auf das zeitgenössische Muskschaffen im Iran und in der iranischen Diaspora entwickelt. Die Texte entstanden als Einladung an Künstler\*innen des Festivals und andere Autor\*innen, eigene Erzählungen und bedeutsame Historiographien vom Austausch zwischen Iran und der Welt zu vertiefen. Damit möchten wir nicht zuletzt dazu anregen, das Bewusstsein für komplexe Realitäten zu schärfen, in denen diasporische Künstler\*innen arbeiten. Die fünfte Festival-Ausgabe ist nun Anlass, eine Auswahl der bisherigen und neue Texte in einem gedruckten Magazin zu versammeln.

*Since 2021, Norient has been publishing an Online Special together with Klangteppich, the Berlin-based festival for music from the Iranian diaspora. In the meantime, this publication has developed into an archive of lively perspectives on contemporary music-making in Iran and the Iranian diaspora. The texts have been created as an invitation to festival artists and other authors to deepen their own narratives and meaningful historiographies of exchange between Iran and the world. With this Special, we want to raise awareness of the complex realities in which diasporic artists work. The fifth festival edition is now an opportunity to collect a selection of previous and new texts in a printed magazine.*

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**Klangteppich V Magazin**  
Festival für Musik der iranischen Diaspora

with contributions by Hadi Bastani, Franziska Buhre, Sophia Grobler, Amin Hashemi, Ali Kamrani, Nikan Khosravi, Matthias Küntzel, Erum Naqvi, Shayan Navab, Shabnam Parvaresh, Shaahin Peymani, Tanasgol Sabbagh, Arshia Samsaminia, and Pardis Zarghampour

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# Klangteppich V Festival for music of the Iranian diaspora

Musik verklingt und die Aufführung ist unwiederholbar. Für die Ereignisse im Raum, die ein Konzert im Austausch von Musiker\_innen und Publikum ausmachen, brennen wir. Darauf arbeiten wir hin, jedes Jahr aufs Neue.

Doch in der Auseinandersetzung mit Künstler\_innen der iranischen Diaspora wurde seit 2018 auch deutlich, dass wir unsere Begrifflichkeiten hinterfragen und Kontexte reflektieren müssen, um keine Klischees, keine eindimensionalen Erzählungen von Begegnungen zwischen Menschen aus Iran und Deutschland zu reproduzieren. Es wurde deutlich, dass immer wieder «Vermittlungsleistungen» gefragt sind: Kontexte sollten zugänglich, Positionen und Hintergründe erklärt und sichtbar gemacht werden. So lernen wir, andere Blickwinkel einzunehmen und ganz persönlichen Geschichten von Verlust, Schmerz, Neuanfang, von der Konfrontation mit Erinnerungen und Vorurteilen, von musikalischer Erbe und neugefundenen künstlerischen Verfahren zuzuhören.

So entstand der Bedarf, ein Archiv lebendiger Perspektiven auf zeitgenössisches Musikschaffen in Iran und der iranischen Diaspora anzulegen, wie wir es seit 2021 mit dem Klangteppich Special auf der Plattform für Musikrecherche [Norient.com](http://Norient.com) tun. Die Texte entstehen als Einladung an Künstler\_innen des Festivals und andere Autor\_innen, eigene Erzählungen und bedeutsame Historiographien vom Austausch zwischen Iran und der Welt zu vertiefen. Damit möchten wir nicht zuletzt dazu anregen, das Bewusstsein für komplexe Realitäten zu schärfen.

Die fünfte Festival-Ausgabe ist nun Anlass, eine Auswahl der bisherigen und neue Texte in einem gedruckten Magazin zu versammeln. Ihnen und euch wünschen wir eine anregende Lektüre.

Franziska Buhre, Initiatorin von Klangteppich und Hannes Liechti, Kurator und Redakteur [Norient](http://Norient.com)

## Klangteppich I 2018

Alireza Mehdizadeh



Festival artists 2018



Oymin Samavatie

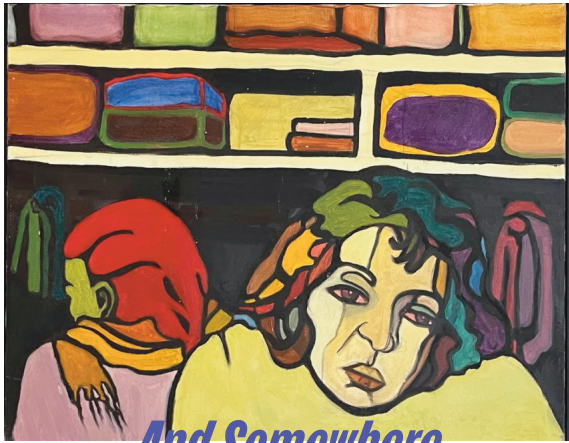


Hamid Saneily



Pari San





«Isplošeni» (1981, oil on canvas) - By Nasrin Nawab (the author's aunt)

## And Somewhere I've Heard the Screams Before

In this personal essay, the diasporan writer Shayan Navab reflects on the sounds of the Iranian revolutions of the past decades as delicate stories he has heard when listening to and watching brutal videos circulating online after the murder of Jina Mahsa Amini in September 2022. Snippets of conversations between him and his aunt Nasrin Nawab explore the role of the Iranian youth in the protests of both 2022/2023 and the 1980s. They are an honest attempt to interact with the shards of his family's heritage.

I tap the circle of my sister's Instagram story. It is a video of Mohsen Shekari's mother,<sup>1</sup> recorded in late 2022. After following her pleas, her husband's begging, and her public suffering over the past week, there she is, in front of Evin.<sup>2</sup> She has just been told of her 22-year-old son's execution. She is wailing. She is screaming. It is a sound that should not exist and could not exist elsewhere. A sound that belongs to her and her son. It is a sound no one has ever heard or will ever hear again.

Yet, as it echoes through my arms and into the depths of my mind, it is met with a horrific choir. Screams as unique as hers. An endless opera void of costumes, comedy, and climax.

In a moment, the sound has reduced me to a shell filled with the noise of crashing waves and broken lives. Hunched over my phone, the video repeats itself between clasped fingertips. I realize that this sound, despite its cruel novelty, has found a designated seat. It has sat in its place, amidst rows of pews filled with its kind. I realize it has found a familiar embrace amongst all the other screams I so often hear of, but never heard.

### The Many Sounds of Revolution

Since the murder of Jina Mahsa Amini on September 16, 2022 and the rise of the Woman, Life, Freedom movement,<sup>3</sup> Iranians outside of Iran have followed the gutsy efforts of the protestors and the violent crackdown closely. Major news channels and outlets fail to appropriately cover the situation in Iran, leaving the bulk of journalistic efforts to Iranians, their smartphones, and social media. Hence, every video that has bravely snuck and slithered past the regime's internet shutdown has been closely watched, analyzed, and shared. Amongst some of the most cherished are those that depict the fearless movement in full swing, full of the sounds of revolution: cheers as young women and girls burn hijabs, thuds of feet climbing onto cars, ecstatic rhythms as they dance in public spaces, and chants echoing the names of those that shall never be forgotten. Sounds, which if one is familiar with the Iranian context, demonstrate a bravery that is

the substance of myths and martyrdom. Then there are the grueling videos, Kian Pirfaia's mother clawing at her son's grave, Nika Shakarami's brittle voice performing with all the charm and vibrance in the world, the infamous Evin Prison in flames as gunshots ring across the capital. Luckily, the videos are blurred through my tears, but the sounds crawl through me, crystal clear. But it does not matter. These are sounds one has the duty to hear, because the pain is nothing, nothing, compared to that which is endured in Iran.

As a second-generation diasporan, a disturbing fragment of familiarity arises with every new video. I am shattered, I am nauseous, I am devastated, but I struggle to feel entirely taken by surprise. Not because I take for granted or have become accustomed to the violence that Iranians are subject to. Rather, because I have heard these videos with empty eyes. Eyes that have time and again told stories of shattered lives, so delicate and with care, as though the shards of the past might cut their lips as they speak.

(I have just deleted a paragraph. I wanted to tell one of these stories. I wanted to tell you about a time my own grandmother screamed. Though I will remain anonymous and do not plan to share this text with my family, I have not yet learned to handle these shards. I am scared I will cut someone. I am once again standing sheepishly on my tiptoes, balancing on slippers that have been thrown my way, waiting for my parents to sweep away the remnants that are too sharp for me to handle.)

<sup>1</sup> Mohsen Shekari was executed in Iran on December 8, 2022. His case is known as being the first execution in Iran as a direct result of the 2022 Woman, Life, Freedom movement.

<sup>2</sup> Evin refers to Evin Prison in Tehran. It has been used to incarcerate political dissidents since the early 1970s and is infamous as a place that exercises torture and other abuses. Due to the number of intellectuals and students housed there, a recent protest chant has been «Iran has turned into a prison; Evin Prison has turned into a university».

<sup>3</sup> «Woman, Life, Freedom» translates to «Jin, Jivan, Azadi», a chant used by the Kurdish Workers Party in Northern Syria. It has informed much of Kurdish political thought.

### A Veteran Youth

My aunt Nasrin Nawab spent some of her late teens and early twenties in Evin. She talks and paints about it. My uncle never does (at least not in front of me). My aunt has told magical stories filled with anguish and proximity.

«I can send them to you later because this picture I have here is a picture of a picture I have taken. There is a picture where if you look, you'll see there is no placard, which means no one organized this; for me that is important, it means all the kids/everyone just poured out. People came out. It's different from a protest which has been organized, where there are banners and things. Maybe in all of these, there is not one banner between all of these people. And all these high school students poured out, it is them, who from what I saw, that made up the population of the prisons.»

Here, she is describing 1981, though it sounds like she is describing these past months. I think she is describing both.

I do not believe that history repeats itself. The movement today largely revolves around and consists of youth. It is a fresh fountain of blood, painting the cracked and infertile soil. The videos show young girls at war with the senile patriarchy, gasping for breath as they are suffocated by gas and perennial oppression. From my perspective, which is as insignificant as it is distorted, every act of protest seems to revitalize a youth which at times has withered and at others is born anew.

The point here is that this youth has always been here. This youth as we see it now was born by the Islamic Regime, or maybe even earlier. In this sense, the youth that is now on the streets is fresh and full of power, but also full of wisdom and experience. Though this might be a juxtaposition, there is nothing poetic about it. We are seeing a veteran youth that has had to learn to survive and nourish itself while under the constant attack of censorship, violence, and patriarchy. A youth that repeatedly sacrifices itself in the name of the future and something younger. A youth, shoulder to shoulder with my aunt, taking the shape of a young

girl's middle finger as it says «fuck you» to the bearded men. It is a youth that we in the Global North have had the fortune not to meet. It is the youth of legends and myth, the one that one can drink from mystical fountains, that is cunning and full of brutal hope.

«I was your age during this time, I was in the fourth year of university when the revolution happened, I only realized later when I was in prison. I realized that I was one of the old ones. Everyone was actually a high schooler in prison. When I saw the pictures of today, I realized it's the same kids that are in prison, many of the people on the streets right now are also high schoolers. They mass arrested all the young kids, either at the end of high school or beginning of university.»

«I realized it's the same kids that are in prison.»

### When the Sounds Return

If it is the same kids that are in prison, then it must be the same sounds too. It must be the same men ruining the same hopes of the same youth. But obviously, it isn't. It is individual lives that are being shattered and individual girls being tortured and killed.

I merely asked my aunt to tell me stories, to tell me about the revolution and about her past. I am transfixed by this passage and these words (I wonder whether these videos will change the stories?). For me, these videos are past stories that have become digitalized in real time, with urgency and the need for action. But what are they to her? How does it feel to hear the sounds of your own youth play out on your screen? To hear that one's friends are being imprisoned and executed once again? Does she feel proud when she hears the crackle of a burning hijab and the clamor of resistance, as they pour out onto the streets without placards and fear?

Or does she feel scared?

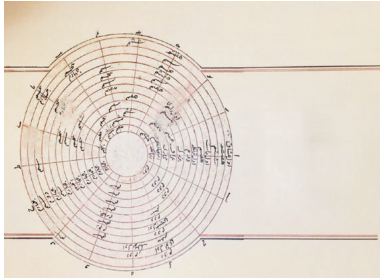
And what about Mohsen's mother?

Has she heard her scream before?



Shayan Navab is a writer focused on Iranian protest culture and his own fragmented identity. In his words, he attempts to understand the responsibility of his identity, made up of a heritage engrained with sorrow and pain but a European life of comfort, vis-à-vis the heroic youth in Iran.

# Making Persian Music More Accessible to Outsiders



The circle of scales, taken from Safi al-Din al-Urmawi's book «al-Adwār» (al-Urmawi 2019).

How can a composer of contemporary music use the micro-intervals of traditional Persian music as raw compositional material? How can we convey these micro-intervals to performers regardless of their cultural background? These are questions asked by the artist-researcher Arshia Samsaminia in both his artistic and academic work. In this article, he summarizes some of his findings and draws on the history of microtonal Persian music and its notation, beginning in medieval times.

Compositions based on Persian *dastgāh/maqām* music with its specific intervals can be challenging for performers unfamiliar with Iranian music. Performing *maqāms* on instruments whether fretless or fretted is less of a challenge for musicians well-versed in performing traditional Iranian music, because of the abundance of these intervals in this country's music, including lullabies, folk songs, popular music, and the audible media spheres. Thus, along with the experience of belonging to a certain world region, these factors can be a reason why a person's ear becomes more accustomed to these intervals.

Composing for electronics, however, can open up a way for performers with a different musical upbringing to develop an understanding of Persian *dastgāh/maqām* music by introducing the specific intervals to the computer software being used. The results of my research in this field, which I will summarize in this article, became the core of my doctoral dissertation «Composing Based on the Iranian *Maqāms* and Tunings Using HEJI Notational Systems».

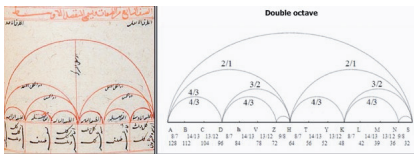
## Medieval Roots: Safi al-Din al-Urmawi

In traditional Persian music theory, as well as the music of other Islamic countries, the book of *al-Adwār* is the first extant work on scientific music theory, written by the musician and music theorist Safi al-Din 'Abd al-Mumin al-Urmawi in 1267. Al-Urmawi used the *abjad* notation, an alphanumeric code

<sup>1</sup> *Dastgāh* is the modal system in traditional Persian art music, while *maqām* is the older system of melodic modes used in traditional Arabic music.



A manuscript copy of «Risalah al-sharafiyyah fi al-nisab al-talifiyyah», one of al-Urmawi's most famous works, 18th century (photo: Adinor Collection).



Transcript of al-Urmawi's calculations from Arabic to English (photo: Adinor Collection).



Abjad letters taken from the book «Kitāb al-mūsīqī al-kabīr» (al-Fārābī 1999).

Abjad Letter	Ratio	Frequency (Hz)
1 A ( )	1/1	0,00
2 B ( - )	256/243	90,22
3 C ( z )	65536/99049	180,45
4 D ( )	9/8	203,91
5 H ( )	32/27	294,13
6 V ( )	8192/6561	384,36
7 Z ( )	81/64	407,82
8 H ( z )	4/3	498,04
9 T ( )	1024/729	588,27
10 Y ( )	262144/177147	678,49
11 YA ( )	3/2	701,96
12 YB ( - )	128/81	792,18
13 YC ( z )	32768/19683	882,40
14 YD ( - )	27/16	905,87
15 YH ( - )	16/9	996,09
16 YV ( - )	4096/2187	1086,31
17 YZ ( z )	1048576/531441	1176,54
18 YH ( z )	2/1	1200,00

The transcription of the ratios and tones taken from «al-Adwār» (al-Urmawi 1993).

in which the 28 letters of the Arabic alphabet are assigned numerical values, to create music with and without lyrics. In this way, all musical intervals were also precisely defined. However, his theory was based on Pythagorean tuning, whereas as the *maqām* evolved into the *dastgāh*, Persian instruments began using some form of temperament.

## The 24 Equally-Tempered Division of the Octave (EDO): Ali-Naqi Vaziri

In the 20th century, 700 years after al-Urmawi's theory *al-Adwār*, the composer, educator, and musician Ali-Naqi Vaziri (1887-1979) introduced a 24 equally-tempered quarter-tone scale. Vaziri was one of the first Iranian musicians who traveled to Europe to study music. In France, he studied the principles of harmony and composition, as well as the piano and violin. In his book *Musiqi-e nazari*, first published in 1934, he set forth the proposition that all the modes of traditional music could be conceived within an octave scale of 24 equidistant (tempered) quarter-tones. There are two main microtonal accidentals developed and practiced by Vaziri, influenced by Western music notation: *Sori*, which raises a tone by a quarter step up, and *Koron*, which lowers a tone by a quarter step down.

However, I believe that Persian music intervals are not as simple as explained by these accidentals suggested by Vaziri. But how can a composer of contemporary music use micro-intervals of traditional Persian music as raw compositional material instead? How can we convey them to performers regardless of their cultural background? How can these intervals be introduced to computer software to allow performers to hear the right Persian scale?

## Spectralism

I realized that a possible solution could be the systematization of the Persian *dastgāh* micro-intervals through spectralism. I tried to match the notes and ratios resulting from the harmonic series to *dastgāh* music in

Size in cent	-150	-100	-50	0	50	100	150
Accidental							
Alteration	3/4 Down	1/2 Down	1/4 Down	Natural	1/4 Up	1/2 Up	3/4 Up
	Flat koron	Flat	Koron	Natural	Sori	Sharp	Sori sharp

Accidentals proposed by Vaziri in Persian traditional music (Vaziri 1921).



Specific measurements of the tempered 24-EDO proposed by Vaziri (Khaleghi 1980).



«Ich bin eine Palme, ich brauche keine Mauer und gar keine Zäune.»  
- Ein Gedicht von Ali Kamrani (Foto: pixabay)

## Lass mich mit Hass nicht allein

In dem Gedicht für sein gleichnamiges Lied beschreibt der iranische Schauspieler und Dichter Ali Kamrani seine Erfahrungen als Einwanderer in Deutschland.

Kamrani reichte das Lied 1993 bei dem Wettbewerb «xenos - Fremde brauchen Freunde» ein. Der Wettbewerb wurde ausgelobt vom Ausländerbeauftragten des Senats der Freien Hansestadt Hamburg und gefördert durch das Bundesministerium für Frauen und Jugend, Die Göttinger Gruppe, Oskar und Vera Ritter Stiftung, sowie die Deutsche Telekom. «xenos» wurde 1994 im NDR Fernsehen live übertragen. Kamranis Lied wurde abgelehnt.

Ich bin eine Palme, ich bin eine Palme,  
Ich brauche Wasser, und viel Sonne.  
Ich bin eine Palme, ich bin eine Palme,  
Ich kenne keine Mauer und gar keine Zäune.  
Ich bin eine Palme, ich bin eine Palme,  
Ich brauche Erde, ich brauche Luft.  
Ich bin eine Palme, ich bin eine Palme,  
Ich brauche Liebe und Vernunft.  
Lass mich hier nicht eingehen,  
Ich kann keine Grenze mehr sehen.  
Du hast mich hierher gebracht.  
Ich hätte nie daran gedacht,  
Liebe am Anfang, Hass am Ende,  
Herrliche Zeiten, hässliche Wende.  
Tag ein, Tag aus, unter dem Schutz deines Hauses  
Wuchs ich über mich hinaus.  
Lass mich leben, wie ich will  
Leben und leben lassen ist mein Stil  
Ohne Liebe gehe ich ein  
Lass mich mit Hass nicht allein.

28. Juni 1993



Ali Kamrani, geboren 1962 in Teheran, ist Dichter und Schauspieler. In Teheran wirkte er mit in Theaterproduktionen von Mahmood Ostad Mohammad, Hooshang Tozai, Khojasteh Kia, Farhad Majdabadi und anderen, er schrieb Lieder u.a. für die Sängerin Nelli. 1979 zog er nach Frankfurt/Main, lernte Deutsch und bewarb sich an Hochschulen für Film und Schauspiel in Berlin, Hamburg, München und Frankfurt. Alle seine Bewerbungen wurden abgelehnt. Kamrani war Ehrengast der Podiumsdiskussion zum Rangarang Chor, die am 2. Juni 2021 im Rahmen von Klangteppich. Festival für Musik der iranischen Diaspora III als Livestream stattfand.

## Klangteppich IV 2022

Parigestan

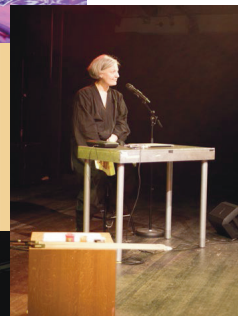


Parigestan

Parigestan



Franziska Buhre



Darzi Door / Reza Askari, Tanasol Sabzghah

