

The Ballet dance and the Secrets of Love



Jamileh Kharrazi the founder and the managing director of the Toos Foundation began her artistic activities since her childhood. She started her professional activities at the Ministry of arts and culture of the time and had the opportunity of working with many famous figures and masters. Miss. Kharrazi completed her studies in architecture and business management, today she is one of the most successful business women. Apart from her involvements in the charity organizations, she has founded the Toos Foundation recently whose intentions are to promote and introduce the arts and culture of Iran.

Last Sunday around 1000 people went to the celebration event held in Chelsea Town Hall for Lu'bat Vālā's event; however, only 700 hundred could get in and the remaining 300 hundred were left behind due to the shortage of seats. The police had to get involved due to the pressure by the admirers who wanted to get in. A few of our colleagues were also among those left behinds. Alas! The coordinators should have made exceptions and made some special reservations for Keyhan newspaper journalists. Tufiq, the program manager whose efforts for the past six months was the very foundation of this event, hoped that the

speeches would take no longer than three hours; however, that wasn't the case and the speeches, jokes, and the memories took much longer. After all, whatever was said and read was interesting.

Nima Kian was born in Tehran in 1970 at the age of 13 he started his artistic career in painting, calligraphy and graphics in the junior art college in Tehran. Shortly after he immigrated to Sweden and because of his interest in dancing, he was accepted in the ballet academy in Gutenberg. He completed his post-graduate training in ballet in France. He has a lot of experience in various areas of art, knowing 6 different languages. He founded the Iranian ballet



company with international success in 1998.

During the interval, we went back stage to talk to Mrs. Kharrazi. She and her team gave us a warm welcome despite their very busy schedule. We looked around to find a quiet corner to conduct our interviews and noticed a table with various sheets of paper and charts. Suddenly she says: "As you can see I am worried and anxious about this event, it has been reported that several unattended packages were left under the cars parked outside the hall and I am hoping that the audience and police will cooperate together so that we can all enjoy this program". We found Nima Kian in a quiet corner in the makeup room of the ballet dancers and while he was preparing his speech, we asked him for a short but memorable interview that is as follows:



Q- How long has it taken to prepare these ballets?

A-The ballets "Land of turquoise and others have taken two months for the design and choreography and three months of practice.

Q-What are your sources of inspiration for the costumes and stage design?

A-As mentioned in the program the origin of the Iranian dances existing at the present time is in the popular dances of *Rouhozi* and *Motrebi* that were traditional during the Qajar Dynasty. We also have many different styles of folklore dances that reflect the life style cultures and endemic traditions of the Iranian tribes in various parts of the country, some dances are based on spiritual ideas such as "Mawlānā, Mawlānā" which is based on Sufism.

Q-Most of your dancers are not Iranian. Do you find it difficult to explain to them the Iranian arts and culture?

A-No, The dancers who have joined the Iranian ballet company over the past 6 years have had the opportunity to as well as learning the classical ballet get acquainted with an eastern country's culture.

Q-Could you tell us where the Iranian ballet company is registered and to what extent is its international activities?

A-This company is registered and resident in Sweden and all the dancers present here

tonight are also resident there.

Q-What are the required qualifications for entry to this company?

A-Minimum 8 years experience in ballet and selection is made with interview and auditions.

Q-How often do you use Iranian dancers in your programs?

A-We do not have many Iranian dancers therefore being Iranian is not a prerequisite of admittance to the company. We teach the dancers to perform Iranian dance movements and fuse that with the classical ballet and the result is the dances on show tonight.

Q-In your opinion why is very little interest in dance amongst Iranians considering that in general the Iranians love music and dance and mostly have little or no religious convictions with no rights and political restrictions

A-This is related to the general attitude to dance. Unfortunately, in the Iranian culture, dance does not occupy a respectable position and families generally do not encourage their children to pursue a career in dancing.

Q-Do you think that the same anti-dance culture

that existed before revolution caused the total abolishment of dance in Iran after that?

A-I think that is exactly the reason - as part of the modernization in Iran, dance was also started but because of the lack of background or cultural foundation it was never approved by the general public and only remained appreciated by some elite groups of the Iranian society.

Q-During the program the opposition of religion to dance was discussed but there are

references to religion in your ballets. How do you explain this discrepancy?

A-As I mentioned earlier there is no room for culture of dance in Iran at the present time; otherwise, it would have been possible to present certain forms of dance without contradicting the ways of life. Islam as well as being the religion of the majority in Iran is also one of the many various cultures present in this country and can be reflected in different arts including ballet.

Q-I have taken much of your time Mr. Kian my last question is that in your opinion how important is ballet in the progress of the Iranian dances?

A-The effect could be one hundred percent. Ballet is the scientific language of dance and those interested in the professional dancing wherever in the world need to study the classical ballet and then it is possible to fuse it with the traditional culture such as Egyptian ballet that is reflective of their literature, ballet of China and Azarbayegan to mention a few.