

Toos Cultural Foundation presented

The rebirth of “immortal flowers” (*Gulhā-yi Jāvīdān*) in a glorious event held in London

A little less than forty years after the death of Mr. Davūd Pīrnīā a man of letters, musician, lawyer and the creator and founder of the radio

liaison with the sons and daughters of the Pīrnīā family, the lovers and admirers of the flower programmes (*Gulhā*) under the supervision of

rose from its own ashes and in a festivity event with the audience of over a thousand in the Logan Hall in London, took place, it paced out in a



programmes known as “immortal flowers”, “multi coloured flowers”, “the desert flowers” and “green leaf”, these valued souvenirs of the mystical music of Iran which were moving to become history and join the other forgotten musical collections of the world, with the initiative and effort of Toos foundation and under the management of Miss. Jamileh Kharrazi in

Mr. Dārūsh Pīrnīā the eldest son of Dāvūd Pīrnīā, Jane Lewisohn and also with the help and aids of the University of London and the Iran Heritage Foundation (*Gulhā*), like a *Qaqnūs*¹

¹Dihkhudā, *Lughat nāma*: A phoenix is a fabled bird with a colorful plumage and a tail of gold and scarlet (or purple, blue, and green according to some epic tales). It has a 1,000 year life-cycle, near the end of which it builds itself a nest of twigs that then ignites; both

world-wide path and for a duration of more than three hours the artists of the (*Gulhā*) programme illuminated and lit up a candle in the heart of their admirers and lovers.

It was a pleasing gathering. From the young Iranians who were born in this part of the

nest and bird burn fiercely and are reduced to ashes, from which a new, young phoenix or phoenix egg arises, reborn anew to live again.

world to those elders who managed to come with the aid of the wheelchairs or a walking stick, all in all, they were full of energy, as if they had been given a new strength, the memories of the old days and the period of youth were refreshed for the aged when the sound of the reed, which was being played by Muḥammad Shīrkhudā'ī and the words of Sa'di that was being sung with the voice of Rushanak echoed in the hall, saying:

What use are the flower trays

Take a page from my rose-garden

The rose lasts just five or six days

This rose-garden will be everlasting

Or

--Listen to the reed as it is grieving;

It complains of the separations

It seemed like all their heart, soul and spirits were set on fire, the words of yesterday were being connected to today's life, being parted from their beloved homeland, friends, families, neighbours and all the memories of the past which they had left behind and yet wearing their hearts on their sleeves, they travelled to a foreign country and now even the reed had no strength to portray their

inner pains and longings it was right there that the sound of their crying in spite snarled in their throats were felt, and it was not clear who is about to cry or smile. Whatever it was, it was the tears of happiness filling the atmosphere.

We were gathered in London on Sunday 26th of April 2009 with the help of an accomplished lady who was also an artist devoted to the art and mysticism. She was Naz Kharrazi, who was of course in those days a young girl with a free soul, strolling and dancing together with a



Jamileh Kharrazi

group of dancers from the ministry of art and culture in Rūdakī hall displaying an astonishing performance. However, today she has devoted her soul and wealth on the path of *Ṭarīqat*². She was

²Means "way, path, method" and refers to an Islamic religious order; in Sufism, it is conceptually

bringing the programmes of *Gulhā* into life gathering the artists to perform, yet behind the curtains, she was stressfully biting her nails worrying if something, or some words might go wrong.

Yes, I am talking about Jamileh Kharrazi, who works hard, days and months her work is continuing, not recognizing mornings and nights and in order to attain her goal, which is the restoration of arts and culture of Iran in exile she only concentrates on what she has in mind sparing no expense, be it intellectual or material. She has gathered the strength of a lover and an infatuated mentality to tackle monsters and demons of her path.

That night was the night of *Gulhā* in the memories of Dāvūd Pīrnā, and also the remembrance of other artists of the *Gulhā* programmes who had not been able to attend like 'Ahdīyya, despite their absence they did not sever their pact with Jamileh Kharrazi. Simā Binā was also one of the absentees

related to "truth", the ineffable ideal that is the pursuit of the tradition. Thus, one starts with Islamic law the exoteric or mundane practice of Islam and then is initiated onto the mystical path, through spiritual practices and guidance the aspirant seeks the ultimate truth.

also the famous singer from Isfahan Iraj, who loved to attend, but he was unable to do so, Farhang Sharif was also not there and the melody of his Tār was missed. ‘Abdul Vahāb Shahīdī was not present due to ill health. Marziyya the conspicuous Iranian singer was also not present, but her picture and voice were shown and played at some point during the programme. The night was not just the night of *Gulhā* and art; it was the night of memories of men of politics as well as art and culture. Of Mīrzā Naṣrullāh Khān Mushīr al-Dawla the first prime minister of the constitution an image was shown and the speaker spoke of Dāvūd Pīrnā emphasising that he was related to one of the trios of the politics of Iran during the constitutional movement, being the son of Ḥasan Pīrnā Mushīr al-Dawla who himself was a Dervish and the grand son of Mīrzā Naṣrullāh Khān. Davūd was a Dervish himself and a follower of Pīrnā’s ancestor who was a sage (*Pīr*), titled the “pivot of pivots” (*Quṭb al-Quṭṭāb*). Over three centuries ago he lived in the city of Nā’in away from the central power, where he practiced *Tariqat* attracting the followers of such order to join him. In literal meaning *Pīr* is

referred to a wise and broad minded person whose life devotion is reason and the love of the ancient Iran. His resting place is today in Nā’in, known as *Muṣṣalā*, which is respected by the lovers of the Truth “God”.

In truth Dāvūd Pīrnā was in love with Iran, his efforts in saving Iran’s head in the Ādharbāyjān movement was admirable his love for Ādharbāyjān was a burning fire within, the feelings of excitement and joy was embedded in prose and text in one his programmes called the March of Persian Gulf.

At a time when the tapes of the *Gulhā* programme was encountering negligence of the music authorities of today and facing extinction with the help of its lovers who had managed to save their treasures from being plundered by the outsiders, compiling and collecting the copies to be available to all, the centre of discussion was the impact of the *Gulhā* programmes and its effect on the Iranian music and the world in general. Furthermore, the masters of Iranian music such as Ṣabā, Adīb Khānsārī, Maḥjūbī, Yāḥaqī, Shīr-Khudā’ī, Najāhī, Ma’rūfī, Tajvīdī, Gulpāigānī, Khāliqī and other masters such as: Dr Ṣūratgar, Ṭāhā, Dashtī, Mu’āīrī, Furūzanfar, Ṣafā,

Kirmānshāhī, Vuthūqī and speakers of *Gulhā* and masters like Banān who were the contemporary founders of Iranian classical music were ageing and it was due to the request of Pīrnā that those artists were gathered in the programme and their works were engraved on the pages of history forever.

M. Pīrnā

Dārūsh Pīrnā and the music researcher Jane Lewisohn managed to compile 1600 of the *Gulhā* programmes these tapes were collected from the collections of Dārūsh Pīrnā, Dr Suhrāb, Dr Ṣadrī, Bizhan Farāzī and also from the music museum of Tehran town hall and the archive of radio Iran taking efforts of over three years. Subsequently, they were converted into digital records and were donated to the British Library.

Furthermore, Jane Lewisohn and Pīrnā believe that the masters who participated in the initial programmes of *Gulhā* learnt what they knew entirely different than those of today and had their works not been registered in the programme they would have been forgotten forever. *Gulhā* was a

bridge filling the gap between the pre-Net music and the post-Net music which is considered vital in the music transformation of Iran.

One of the supporters of Dāvūd Pīrnā's remembrance was Mr Ardishīr Zāhidī "an outstanding Iranian figure" who commended the efforts to erect the Iranian culture in a discussion with Mr Dārūsh Pīrnā and some of our Keyhān News paper colleagues, he also emphasised that Dāvūd Pīrnā was a blood relative and that his father had been a great teacher and guide to Mr Zāhidī both in social life and politics and holding such events is considered as a token of appreciation and keeping alive the memories of the great men and women of politics and culture of Iran.

In the 26th of April's occurrence held in London, Farrukh and Shahrukh Pīrnā "Dāvūd Pīrnā's children" were also present and Bizhan Pīrnā (The famous Mr Bizhan) who resides in Tehran had sent a message to this programme. The other

three daughters of Dāvūd Pīrnā, Parvīn Dukht, Farmīn Dukht, and Gītī Pīrnā were also unable to attend the London event.

The foundation for the "immortal flowers" (*Gulhā-yi Jāvīdān*) known as (Dāvūd Pīrnā's Heritage Foundation) registered in Maryland U.S.A with the sole purpose to preserve the culture and to expand the music, poetry and the Iranian mystical views, will soon release a collection of documentaries in mystical poetry text, prose and audiovisual records of Dāvūd Pīrnā's speech along with other artists, this effort is being supported by Mihr Publication of Iran and the assistance of the Iran Heritage Foundation with writings by Manṣūreh Pīrnā and Darūsh Pīrnā.

The margin of activities of Jamileh Kharrazi

It is worthy of mention that Miss. Jamileh Kharrazi the founder of "Toos foundation" in addition to her cultural activities and in support of the indigent has also registered a benevolent charity organisation "Kharrazi Humanitarian Foundation" (*Bunyād-i*

Nīkūkārī-i Kharrazi) whose schemes are to support the orphans in conjunction with the "Children's Company" (*Cumpāni-i Kūdak*) originally founded by Lady Bātmānqīlīch in London. "Kharrazi Humanitarian Foundation" (*Bunyād-i Nīkūkārī-i Kharrazi*) provides financial help to the Karachi orphanage where some two hundred children between the ages of two to five years old are looked after.

The charity works of Naz Kharrazi have been extended to the area of arts as well. In 1991 "Kharrazi Foundation" (*Bunyād-i Kharrazi*) commissioned the house of arts and culture of Iran in London where today over a hundred students between the ages of 6 to 60 years old learn the arts of music by various masters. In the field of aiding students "Kharrazi Foundation" (*Bunyād-i Kharrazi*) grants financial assistance to the post graduate students by sending them to Harvard University every year. Currently, a great number of those students are studying at Harvard and J.F.K University.