

Here I am Crying Far and Loud:

A Night of Iranian Literature

Featuring: Pegah Ahmadi, Mehrangiz Kar, Shahriar Mandanipour

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McCormack Family Theater



Iranian poet **Pegah Ahmadi** was born in Tehran in 1974. Translator of haiku and of the work of Sylvia Plath, and the author of books on Iranian women's poetry, Ahmadi published three volumes of her own poetry while in Iran: *On the Final G*, *Cadence*, and *These Days of Mine Are a Throat*. After her critiques of the role of the Islamic religion in the history of cruelty to women and suppression of free expression in Iran drew the wrath of government authorities, Ahmadi's published works were confiscated, she was banned from further publication, and she was dismissed from her employment. In 2009, following her involvement with the Green Movement demonstrations, she was threatened with imprisonment, and subsequently left Iran with the assistance of the International Cities of Refuge Network (ICORN). She was placed as a guest writer in the city-of-refuge site in Frankfurt, Germany. While in Germany, Ahmadi was finally able to publish a

fourth poetry book, *I Was Not Cold*. It had been refused permission for publication in Iran for seven years.

Ahmadi will be in residence at Brown for the 2011-12 academic year.

Mehrangiz Kar is a writer, attorney, and activist specializing in women's rights and family law. She is the recipient of several human rights awards, including the National Endowment for Democracy's Democracy Award (2002), the Ludovic-Trarieux International Human Rights Prize (2002), and the Human Rights First Award (2004); in addition, she sits on the board of a number of international organizations such as Human Rights Watch's Advisory Committee on the Middle East (2000-2011). She studied law and political science at Tehran University, has practiced law for over 22 years in the Islamic Republic of Iran, and has been a visiting scholar and fellow at several universities, including Harvard, Wellesley College's Newhouse Center for the Humanities, the Brookings Institute's Saban Center for Middle East Policy, and the University of Cape Town's Faculty of Law. At present she is Visiting Professor in Gender and Sexuality Studies at Brown.



Shahriar Mandanipour is regarded as one of the most accomplished writers of contemporary Iranian literature. His creative approach to the use of symbols and metaphors, his inventive experimentation with language, time and space, as well as his unique awareness of sequence and identity have made his work fascinating to critics and readers alike. His honors include the Mehregan Award for the best Iranian children's novel of 2004, the 1998 Golden Tablet Award for best fiction in Iran during the previous two decades, and Best Film Critique at the 1994 Press Festival in Tehran.

Mandanipour is the author of nine volumes of fiction, one nonfiction book, and more than 100 essays in genre such as literary theory, literature and art criticism, creative writing, censorship, and social commentary. His collections of short stories include *The Eighth Day of the*

Earth, *Violet Orient*, *Midday Moon*, *Mummy and Honey*, *Shadows of the Cave*, and *Ultramarine Blue*. He is the author of the two-volume novel, *The Courage of Love*. From 1999 until 2007, he was Editor-in-Chief of *Asr-e Panjshanbeh* (*Thursday Evening*), a monthly literary journal published in Shiraz that after nine years of publishing was banned by Iran's Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance.

His first novel to appear in English, *Censoring an Iranian Love Story*, translated by Sara Khalili and published by Knopf in 2009, was well received. *The New Yorker* named it as one of the reviewers' favorites of 2009, and NPR named it one of the best debut novels of the year. *Censoring An Iranian Love Story* is also being translated and published in 11 other languages in countries throughout the world.