

The Rockland County Music Teachers Guild Presents

Date/Time: *May 4, 2011 at 10:00 AM*

Location: *Nauraushaun Presb. Church (Tel.: 845-735-4565)
51 Sickletown Road, Pearl River, NY 10965*

Website: *<http://www.NoavaranEnsemble.com>*

Program: *Solo for the Flute
Beyond Solitude for Flute and Piano
Saddle Point for the Piano
Beyond Solitude II*

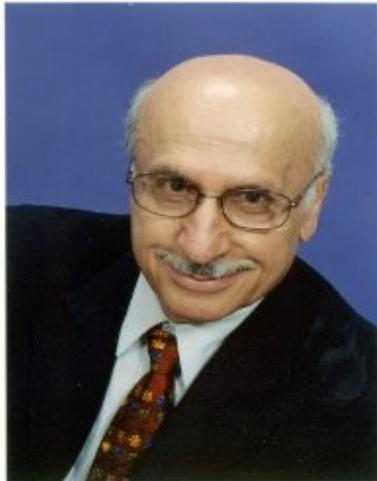
Composer: *Gregory H. Aslani*

Poetry: *Davood Rahni and Saadi*

Persian Arrangement: *Homayoon Beigi*

Persian Classical Modes: *Avaz-e Dashti, Dastgah-e Shur, and Dastgah-e Chahargah*

Performers: *Linda Wetherill (Flute)
Kristin Barone (Piano)
Katayoun Moosazadeh (Voice)
Paul Aljian (Tombak & Daf)
Nicolas Chbat (Percussion)
Homayoon Beigi (Tar)*



Gregory H. Aslani was born in 1936 in a small village near *Rasht* in the northern Iranian Province of *Gilan* by the *Caspian Sea*. He studied at *Tehran International Conservatory* of (western) Music under the tutelage of Professors *Tatiana Kharatian* for piano, *Hooshang Ostovar* for Harmony, Orchestration and Composition, and the late *Fereidoun Farzaneh* for Theory. Aslani then joined the National Iranian Radio and as a composer, arranger and pianist, while giving private lessons, some of whose students later became renowned musicians in their own rights. His abrupt immigration to the United States, in the early 1970's, opened another challenging chapter in his life. His academic scholarly training of his early twenties was augmented by graduate work at the State University of New York, Purchase College, where he was awarded a Master's degree in music (composition) under the instruction of Professor *Dary John Mizzelle*, and the beloved and inspiring Professor *Joel Thome* from the Conservatory in Music in 2007. Currently, he maintains an active piano teaching schedule for children in the Westchester, New York area. His students have gone on to study at the Juilliard School of Music, SUNY Purchase and other major schools of music in the United States. He is renowned in the community for his life-long conviction to philanthropy, volunteerism and altruism. Among his humanitarian contributions are the establishments of an elementary school and a high school at his place of birth.

Solo for the Flute

Solo for flute is a piece which was influenced by a Persian folk tune about a lovers' pilgrimage. Although it is set in a western contemporary style, it reflects upon melodies from this folklore.

Beyond Solitude for Piano and Flute

Beyond Solitude for Piano and Flute grew out of the first movement of the original version of the Beyond Solitude composition which was originally written for the flute, the guitar and the harp. Eventually, it evolved to have a life of its own, as it was adapted for the flute and the piano.

Saddle Point for the Piano

Saddle Point is a piano solo composition which conveys many transitions in melody and expression. It is a technically challenging piece, set in a contemporary style. It examines different moods and movement through these points of transition.

Beyond Solitude II

Inspired by his life-long integration of Eastern and Western cultural experiences, Greg Aslani has composed this musical piece as played through the dialogue of the two groups of performers. Persian sound (Iranian traditional microtonal scale) and Western contemporary sound are synergistically intertwined to create a peaceful ambiance of Persian music and the message of peace.

During the first interlude, about four minutes in duration, *flute* and *piano* create a bridge between the East and the West. Persian music is then progressively played by *Tar*, *Tombak*, *Daf*, percussion and vocal performance of the *Noavaran Ensemble* (www.NoavaranEnsemble.com) in conjunction with the recital of a poem by *Davood Rahni*. The latter performance is interspersed with *flute* and *piano*. The finale is a true convergence of both ensembles.

The second version of *Beyond Solitude* is an evolution of the original version which was written and performed in early 2010. In this latest version, the composer, Gregory H. Aslani, has added much more harmony and a far smoother fusion of contemporary (tonal/atonal) sounds with a specific style of microtonal Persian Classical Music. The performance draws upon from two groups of musicians: *Western Contemporary* and *Persian Classical*, who begin a two way communication. Compared to the first version, ***Beyond Solitude II*** portrays a much closer collaboration and polyphony between the two elements of the fusion.

The first movement of the piece, although written in contemporary spirit, has been immensely influenced by Persian classical melodies. It symbolizes the onset of a dialogue in the contemporary musical language with a Persian inclination to speak to the Persian Quartet. In response, the Quartet will debut its 24-division well-tempered interpretation of the *Deilaman Gousheh* of the Persian Classical *Avaz* of *Dashti*. This is followed by a dialog back and forth in the two dialects inspired to communicate with slight variations in style. The contemporary musicians take note from the rhythmic piece portrayed by their Persian counterpart, in the mother *Dastgah* of *Shur* to transit, in form, into tonality, which is turn, more compatible with the *Dastgah* of *Chahargah*. At this point, when Persian music responds with its interpretation of the opening of *Chahargah (Daramad)*, in the contemporary style an expression is conveyed with its gained experience of the dialogue, only to cut short at times to listen and gain more insight.

By the end of the piece, the comfort level increases to a level of confidence that there is no hindrance in speaking each side's dialect. In fact the conclusion proves that the two styles, with a slight flexibility, can coexist in harmony and provide a positive level of dialogue without having to set aside their respective originalities.



From Top Left to Bottom Right: Kristin Barone (Piano), Linda Wetherill (Flute), Nicolas Chbat (Percussion), Homayoon Beigi (Tar), Katayoun Moosazadeh (Voice), and Paul Aljian (Tombak & Daf)

Performers' Biographies

(see www.NoavaranEnsemble.com)

Linda Wetherill (flute) is founder/director of the International competition and festival for new music based in Tuscany and New York, and Professor of World Music, Chamber Music and Flute Studies at Adelphi University. Ms. Wetherill has toured as soloist cultural ambassador, collaborating and premiering modern composers' works and researching traditional musics since her selection by U.S.I.S to be featured recitalist for the 40th anniversary celebration in Frankfurt of German-American peace. She was the first American to be honored as featured soloist at the World Peace Festival of Langollen, Wales; and presented the first public concerts for mixed audiences by a woman in Saudi Arabia during her tours of the Middle East.

Kristin Barone (Piano) received her bachelor's degree in Piano Performance from Adelphi University in 06'. She graduated Cum Laude and also was honored with the James Gould award for Excellence in Music. Some performance highlights include: Weill Hall at Carnegie Hall, Plovdiv, Bulgaria, Steinway Hall, Performing Arts Center at Adelphi University, Lefrak Concert Hall, as well as various public schools and churches in the tri-state area. In October 2006 Kristin was invited back to Adelphi to perform Cesar Franck's Symphonic Variations for Solo Piano and Orchestra. Kristin has completed her Masters Degree (2008) in Piano Performance as well as an Artists Diploma in Chamber music (2009) from the Aaron Copland School of Music while studying with Morey Ritt.

Katayoun Moosazadeh (Vocal) has enjoyed singing from the age of 8, but she started her formal training with Persian folk music at the age of 17, under the direction of the famous vocalist, Maestro Sima Bina. She also studied the *Traditional Iranian Vocal Etudes (Radif)* for 18 months, with Maestro Fatemeh Vaezi (Parisa). In a 2005 competition at Washington D.C. (*Star Musician of Iran*) she was voted as the finalist and winner in vocal category and has since performed at the Miller Theater at Columbia University, Lincoln Center in 2009, and Adelphi University in 2010.

Paul Aljian (Percussion) has been playing Middle Eastern hand drums for over 25 years. After studying and performing a wide range of western classical and popular music, he was introduced to Persian classical music by Bahram Sadegian, with whom he has been performing on the *Daf* in the Chakavak Ensemble. He has studied hand drum playing with Glen Velez, and Persian *Tombak* with Djamchid Chemerani. He also performs Armenian music with Richard and Harold Hagopian, playing the *Daf*, the *Ghaval (Dayereh)*, and the *Riq*.

Nicolas Chbat (Percussion), originally from Lebanon, studied *Ghanaian* drumming from 1995 to 1998 when he attended the Arabic Music Retreat (intensive educational program) under the direction of Maestro Simon Shaheen. He then learned Arabic percussion theory and practice under Michel Merhej and Tim O'Keeffe. He has since been performing classical Arabic music with different ensembles in Minnesota and New York. Since 2007, he has been with the New York Arabic Orchestra under the leadership of Bassam Saba, where they most recently performed at the Symphony Space in New York City. His instruments are: Arabic *Daf*, *Riqq*, *Derbakkeh*, and *Tabl*.

Homayon Beigi (Tar) studied the Persian *Kamancheh* with the late maestro, Andranik Aroustamian, from 1983 to 1993. From 1993 to 1995 he studied the classical Persian etudes of Mirza Abdollah for the *Tar* under Reza Derakhshani. He has also self-studied the Persian *Dotar* in the style of late Maestro Haj Ghorban Soleimani since 1996. He has performed in many Persian classical and fusion venues including and several appearances at Columbia University, IBM T.J. Watson Research Center, Adelphi University, and the Bowery Poetry Club. His fusion work has involved Persian classical music with North Indian or Hindustani Music (*Tar* and *Dotar* with *Sitar* and *Tabla*), South Indian or Carnatic Music (*Kamancheh* with *Mridangam* and *Voice*), Persian popular oldies (*Tar* with *Voice*) and Contemporary American Music (e.g., *George Gershwin* on *Tar* with *Voice*).