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Farhang Foundation and LACMA Announce Nowruz Persian New Year Celebration

LOS ANGELES, CA, February 23, 2009— Farhang Foundation, a recently established non-profit organization focused on celebrating Iranian art and culture in Southern California, today announced a Nowruz (Persian New Year) Celebration at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) on March 14 and 15, 2009.

"We are grateful to LACMA for acknowledging the importance of Iranian culture in Southern California by participating in this Nowruz celebration," said Touraj Daryaei, President of Farhang Foundation. "We are hopeful that Angelenos of all ethnic backgrounds will join us in celebrating the arrival of spring while getting a taste of Iranian culture and hospitality at Nowruz, the most joyous Iranian celebration."

The two-day event is free to the public and will feature a classical Iranian dance recital by the *Djanbazian Dance Company* on March 14 in the Bing Theater and a talk on the significance and symbolism of the Nowruz tradition by Professor Amin Banani, UCLA, followed by a musical performance by *Namad Ensemble* on March 15, taking place in the LA Times Central Courtyard. The March 14 event requires tickets, which are available at LACMA, based on availability. In addition, the weekend programs will highlight Iranian cultural traditions, including a Nowruz "*Haftseen*" table.

As part of LACMA's **Andell Family Sundays** on March 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29, 12:30-3:30 p.m. the museum offers **In Celebration of the Persian New Year: Focus on Arts of Iran**. Highlighting LACMA's collection of Persian art, young visitors will be dazzled by colors, patterns, and calligraphy while words and images will come together as they design their own illuminated calligraphy inspired by the poetry of Rumi. Gallery Teachers will provide interactive tours of the Art of the Middle East galleries: Ancient and Islamic. Other family activities include story-telling from the great epic poem the *Shahnama*, which tells of the kings and heroes of ancient Iran.

"Iran has an extremely rich and diverse cultural heritage," said LACMA's Michael Govan, CEO and Wallis Annenberg Director, "one that is well-represented by our extensive collections of Persian art, both ancient and Islamic. It is our pleasure to join with Farhang Foundation in celebrating Nowruz and in sharing the traditions of this festive holiday with all of the communities that we serve."

A full calendar of the Farhang Foundation Nowruz Celebration at LACMA will be available at www.farhang.org.

About Farhang Foundation

Farhang Foundation is a non-religious, non-political and not-for-profit foundation established in 2008 to celebrate the art and culture of Iranian-Americans in its widest extent. The foundation supports academic activities in Southern California by funding university programs, publications and conferences. The foundation also supports cultural programs such as celebration of Nowruz and Mehregan, theater, dance performances, films screenings and poetry reading in Southern California. Farhang Foundation, in cooperation with various cultural and academic institutions plans major programs and exhibitions about Iran and its culture. For more info visit: www.farhang.org.

About LACMA

Since its inception in 1965, LACMA has been devoted to collecting works of art that span both history and geography—and represent Los Angeles' uniquely diverse population. Today, the museum features particularly strong collections of Asian, Latin American, European, and American art, as well as a new contemporary museum on its campus, BCAM. With this expanded space for contemporary art, innovative collaborations with artists, and an ongoing transformation project, LACMA is creating a truly modern lens through which to view its rich encyclopedic collection. For more info visit: www.lacma.org.