



FARNAZ OHADI



WORK

It is undeniably true that flamenco is a living genre that reinvents itself everyday: not only does it represent tradition and history, but it also has been able to adapt to new trends. Therefore, we can find flamenco pop, rock flamenco and all possible combinations.

It is our trademark, and it leaves a mark on all those who listen to it, as is the case with Farnaz Ohadi: born and raised in Iran, living in Canada, she has recently moved to Seville, Spain, thrilled to release 90 minutes of music in a unique style: Persian flamenco. It combines the rhythms and structures of both traditional and modern flamenco with Persian poetry.

Those familiar with flamenco will recognise similar musical forms such as *alegrías*, *soleás*, *seguiriyas* and more in her songs, while the fans of lyrical music will enjoy the cultural richness of Persian poetry.



BIOGRAPHY

Ohadi was born in Iran, where she seized every opportunity to sing with the aim of finding her true artistic voice. She learned to play the piano when she was 5, and she hasn't stopped playing it ever since. In her homeland, she organised many music productions and school choirs, in which she sang too, and she even participated in the evening call to prayer for believers, something exclusively reserved for men – except for all-female environments.

After moving to Canada, she decided to study lyrical singing and opera, with the support of Frederik Robert, and traditional Persian music, guided by Ostad Nezakaty and Tahere Falahati. What is more, she was trained as a *bailaora* (flamenco dancer) in the 90s. Her training became more intensive when she joined 'Al Mosaico Flamenco Academy' and began to learn about the delicacy and the complex nuances of this magnificent musical expression, following Cassandra's route, known as "La China" ("the Chinese"), and Oscar Nieto.



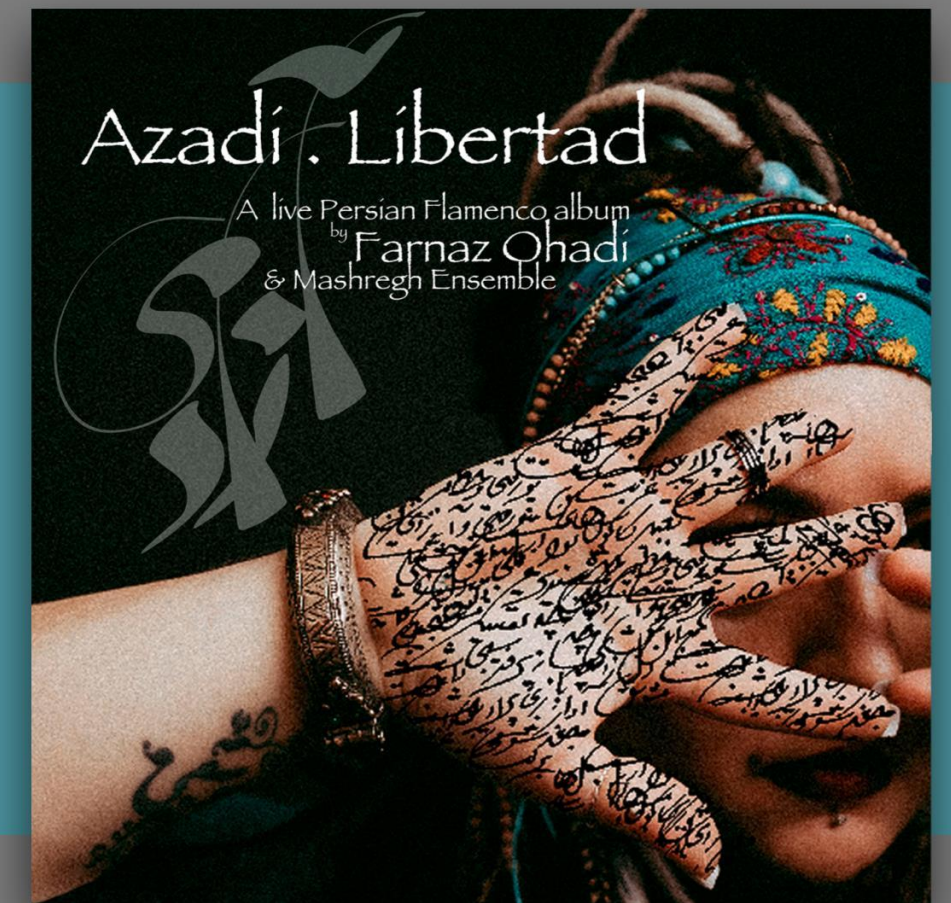
CAREER

She began to sing flamenco back in 2001 with the support of Óscar Nieto, and she almost immediately started to perform in different festivals, cultural events, and concerts in Vancouver and all-over North America. From then on, she has attended private flamenco singing lessons, she has studied the flamenco dance and has sung with a great number of artists from the United States and Spain, such as Vicente Amigo, Naike Ponce, Lucas Ortega, Esperanza Fernández, Manuel Romero, Cristina Benítez, Emilio Ochoa, and others.

Her interest in combining Persian poetry and flamenco music started in 2010, when she set herself the goal of finding her own voice, since she had to take an important decision regarding her career – whether to stay in Vancouver and continue working at a local level, imitating Spanish artists, or to move to Spain and advance her studies. After careful consideration, she thought of a third option – mixing her cultures and creating a style that combined her music and her origins. That's how she created her own language and a music form that she had been studying for more than 20 years.

Her love for music and performance led her to build a collaborative project with world-class musicians and artists from Canada and abroad, titled 'Mashregh Ensemble', which combines Persian poetry with flamenco music.





This choice led her to publish her first album, 'Bird Dance', in 2016, and her concerts album, 'Farnaz Ohadi: live in concert', in 2019. She was nominated to 'Best Solo Performer' in the Canada Folk Music Awards with the former.

Her third album, 'Azadi Libertad Live', was brought out in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

In March 2023 she will release her new single, 'Yar', along with a large-scale production music video. Her next album, 'I am Your Breath', will be launched by mid-year.

SOCIAL COMMITMENT



Throughout her artistic career, Farnaz has shown her commitment to shedding light on the complex perspective of female singers in Iran, who are forbidden to record or perform publicly for mixed audiences. Her songs always contain a social statement, either about the challenges of immigration, the love for a new country, or the artist feeling lost along the way. She is deeply thankful to her second home, Canada, as it has granted her so many opportunities.

One of her most successful songs, 'Hesar', tells the story of an immigrant who is forced to leave their home and seek another place where they don't speak the language and where everything is foreign and hostile to them. It also addresses the invisible pressure that immigrants feel to achieve immediate success to justify having moved, as well as the pressure to make money and become someone. A truly personal song, to which it is easy to feel identified. She won a grant with her music video, awarded by Music BC and the city of Vancouver. The result was a 5-minute-long animated film that has been shown in 32 film festivals all over the world (in the United States, Canada, Europe, and even Asia). She has also won 10 awards in various categories, including 'Best Animated Film' and 'Best Song in a Music Video'. Her music video was invited to participate in 32 international film festivals.



The message that she conveys is universal and reflects modern history and current societal issues very well, and for this reason she has managed to overcome language barriers and go beyond music genres in order to connect with the audience. 'I am very proud to represent the voices of Iranian women in a positive way, in contrast to how they are usually portrayed in the entertainment industry as oppressed women. We are strong and resilient creatures. Hesar addresses the resilience and fierceness in our survival instinct so beautifully.' Her lyrics focus almost exclusively on social justice, women's empowerment, and personal experiences. But they also explore the relation between Persian language and flamenco rhythm.

ABOUT HER...

Ohadi combines her Iranian heritage with her interest in Spanish culture in a beautiful way.

The Providence

I had the chance to listen to your album and I thought that it was composed and produced in such a beautiful way. Your voice is lovely, and it reminds me of Cesaria Evora: sweet but powerful. I think that the songs were chosen very wisely; my favourite is Persian Dance, which gives me some inspiration for a choreography. Best of luck in your future endeavours.

Óscar Nieto



A rich and sweet voice... The incorporation of traditional Persian instruments to her pieces highlights her exploration of the different musical forms (palos) of flamenco in a way that she flows and brings her personal authenticity to the recording. Recorded at 432 Hz, I felt a little bit of the magic in this warm, touching project. - Nancy Ruth, Spanish/Canadian recording artist.

Nancy Ruth, Spanish Canadian recording artist

What a delight was Farnaz Ohadi's Bird Dance debut. It is truly, in such a unique way, a visual and musical masterpiece. Her rich and expressive voice gives her musical poetry a sophisticated touch. The video contributes magnificently to the performance in a delightful way. Her track, Mashregh, is full of nuances and perfectly includes the emotions that it seeks. The introduction, Carmen's flamenco, adds drama and colour to the programme as a whole. From beginning to end, it is a truly emotional and enriching experience from an artistic point of view, and it should be relished for days on end.

Christine Agrawal





The true artist is a rare specimen. If you are extremely lucky, you will find an artist that has pure intentions. Fate has been kind to me because I know some of these unique individuals personally. They don't think about commercial success; but only about the rhythm that their hearts make them follow. It is a real pleasure for me to present to you the work of a person like this: 'Bird Dance' by Farnaz Ohadi. Do you remember when you were little and you believed in happy endings, goodness and the villain getting what they deserved in the end? And then, you grew up, right? You had to leave those innocent ideas behind to understand what real life actually is about. Life forces all of us to become stronger, but a part of you still wants to believe. Bird Dance takes sounds from the East and the West and blends them together in the same way that water and flour are mixed to make bread. The final result is one of a kind, and yet it slips from your ears to your heart as if it already had been present on the day of Creation. It is completely natural. It is as if both sides were meant to meet, fall for each other at first sight and become inseparable for eternity. Some songs are joyful, others will break your heart. Overall, they have a healing power. They will make you believe in happy endings again. This is not in an immature and naive fashion, but as an experienced and wise adult, with wide open eyes and a heart that refuses to harden.

Bird Dance is an album that helps you rise up and notice things. It includes a sonorous soundtrack compilation that has been delightfully organised, a union of poetry and a personal story that tells a tale from the very first chords. Ohadi's voice has been trained and is well blended with musical instruments. The two songs that catch my attention the most are 'Bird Dance' and 'Hajj', since they are the ones that best represent the group. This album is unlike any other flamenco album I have ever heard and that is particularly so because it isn't strictly a flamenco album, but it is inspired by the music that has shaped the personal and musical background of Ohadi.

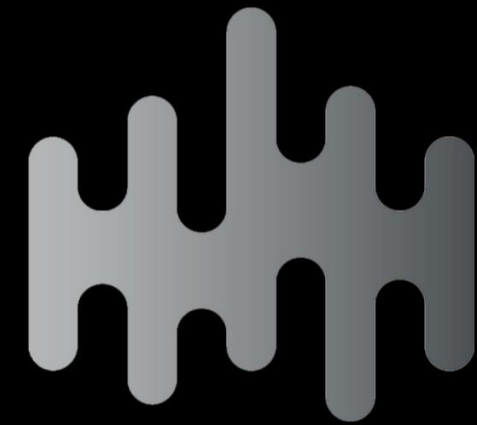
Andrea Williams



SHOW VARIATIONS AND BUDGET

1. Guitar + voice - 2000
2. Guitar + voice + percussion - 2600
3. Guitar + voice + percussion + santour - 3200
4. Guitar + voice + santour + bauzouki + bass + ney (no dance) - 4400
5. Guitar + voice + percussion + santour + bauzouki + dance + ney (persian flute) - 5000

Plus cost of travel for out of town musicians (gas min. 100 euros) + Per diem (40 euros a day) + accommodation (90 to 130 euros a night). Taxes not included



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