

# *Dancing With Love*



***Dancing With Love*** artfully showcases a spectrum of 12 unique shades of love, ranging from the earthy and grounded to the divine and transcendent. Each track weaves together a distinct musical style with the poetry of Eastern Mystic Masters, including two inspiring female spiritual leaders. Over the past few years, Dr. Afarin Mansouri has composed an outstanding collection of arias and duets for her various operas while drawing inspiration from these literary poetic works. This album is the result of a successful collaboration between esteemed Iranian-Canadian artists, including Mansouri (compositions and lead vocals), Milad Bagheri (tenor), Padideh AhrarJedad (Tar) and Ali Masoudi (Percussion), Cheryl Duvall (Piano) with Thin Edge New Music Collective- one of Canada's foremost ensembles, presenting new music. The album has been made possible through the kind support of the Ontario Arts Council and Toronto Arts Council, as well as the production work of Cultureland.

# Lead Artist and Composer



**Dr Afarin Mansour** is a globally renowned composer, and opera artist whose unique and dynamic style beautifully connects her Iranian heritage with her Western aesthetic and training. Afarin is the recipient of numerous awards and accolades for her contributions to the music and operatic community in Canada, including the prestigious Canada 150 Medal. Since 2016, Afarin's compositional focus has been the creation of innovative operas. Through her approach to opera, Afarin creates a distinctive cross-cultural experience that enables artists and audiences to connect with Eastern cultures using language, poetry, storytelling, traditional instruments, and more. In 2022 her opera *Zuleykha* won the Kathleen McMorro Music Award, and in 2020 her children's opera *Little Heart* was nominated for the Louise Applebaum Composition Award. Afarin's orchestral prelude, *Mithra, Goddess of Love and Justice*, was commissioned and performed by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra for their 100th anniversary celebrations and immediately became a symbol for the global Women, Life, Freedom movement, representing the voice of all women across the Middle East. Her cantata *Humans Arise!*, which was performed and recorded by the Prague Metropolitan Orchestra, was broadcast in 2022 by CBC Radio and Radio Farda to support the Iranian women's rights movement. This piece was selected by the program BIG CITY as one of the best CBC shows of 2022.

For more information, please visit: [www.afarinmansouri.com](http://www.afarinmansouri.com) and [www.cultureland.com](http://www.cultureland.com)

# Guest Artist



## **Milad Bagheri**, *tenor*

Toronto-based vocalist, music producer, and guest artist Milad Bagheri was born in Kermanshah, Iran. Milad has a diverse musical palette that incorporates both traditional and modern elements. His specialty is Kurdish and traditional Persian music, and he has become an expert in creating music that reflects his unique cultural background. Milad has collaborated with various artists and ensembles across a range of genres. In 2015, he made his opera debut by playing the role of Zaal in the *Roudabeh* operetta production by Ayrik Opera Ensemble, which took place in Roudaki Hall, Tehran. Milad is the co-founder and vocalist of Chaam Trio, where they produce new music inspired by Kurdish folklore. Currently, he is collaborating with different musicians in Canada as a tenor.

For more information, please visit: [@miladbagheri](#)

# Pianist



## **Cheryl Duvall**, pianist

Toronto-based pianist Cheryl Duvall has established herself as one of Canada's foremost contemporary music interpreters. A dynamic soloist and in-demand collaborator, Duvall has immersed herself in a wide variety of compositional aesthetics and collaborative endeavors. In 2012, she co-founded the "adventurous and smartly programmed" (Musicworks Magazine) chamber group Thin Edge New Music Collective, commissioning over 70 works, mounting multidisciplinary productions, touring worldwide, and collaborating with leading artists including Sarah Hennies, Linda Catlin Smith, and Ensemble Paramirabo. She has been the collaborative pianist for the Oakville Children's Choir for 15 seasons and was appointed Artistic Director of the Chamber Music Society of Mississauga in February 2022. Her debut solo recording, *Harbour*, featuring the music of composer Anna Höstman, has been featured on CBC Radio and was chosen as the #1 Modern Composition Recording of 2020 by the UK's *The Wire Magazine*.

# Music Ensemble



## ***Thin Edge New Music Collective***

Founded in 2011, Tkarón:to (Toronto)'s Thin Edge New Music Collective has emerged as one of Canada's foremost ensembles dedicated to presenting and commissioning composers of our time. Driven by an unquenchable curiosity, they've produced a vast array of innovative and intricate programs, while engaging in unique and ambitious collaborations. While engaging with internationally revered composers such as Maria de Alvear, Linda Catlin Smith, Allison Cameron, Mick Barr, Elliott Sharp, James O'Callaghan, Barbara Monk Feldman, Jessie Cox, and Ana Sokolovic, the ensemble continues to nurture emerging voices, who comprise a considerable number of their 70+ commissioned works. It's all part of their distinctly eclectic and community-oriented outlook—endeavoring to bring 20th- and 21st-century music to an ever-expanding listenership. TENMC was awarded the 2020 Friends of Canadian Music Award by the CLC and CMC.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.thinedgenewmusiccollective.com/>

# Other Musicians

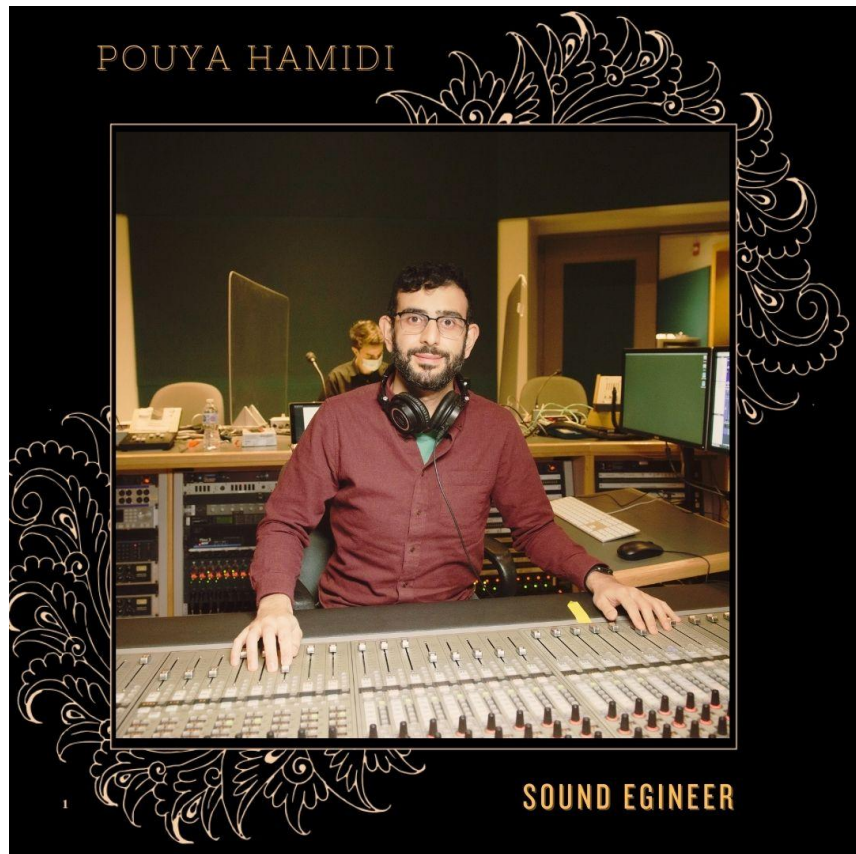


**Padideh Ahrarnejad** is a musician, arranger, composer, and educator who graduated from the Tehran Art Music School and the Art University of Tehran. Her performances have taken her across the globe, introducing audiences to the captivating sounds of Persian music in countries like China, Switzerland, Kuwait, Austria, Germany, and Canada. Since emigrating to Toronto in 2016, she has been a valued member of the New Canadian Global Music Orchestra (Kuné).



**Ali Massoudi, Eastern percussion**  
Iranian percussionist Ali Massoudi is an established performer and teacher who has toured internationally while collaborating with prominent music masters. He is the author of five training books for instruments including tombak, daf, and udu. He has performed alongside many renowned musicians, ensembles, and orchestras including the Iranian National Music Orchestra, the Tehran Symphony Orchestra, Naghmeye Kimia, Eal, Hamnavazane Mehr, Parnian, Taranome Jan, and Mahtab Rou. In addition to his impressive musical talents, he has also founded the Navaye Kimia Ensemble, a captivating ensemble that merges the distinctive sounds of Persian and Turkish music.

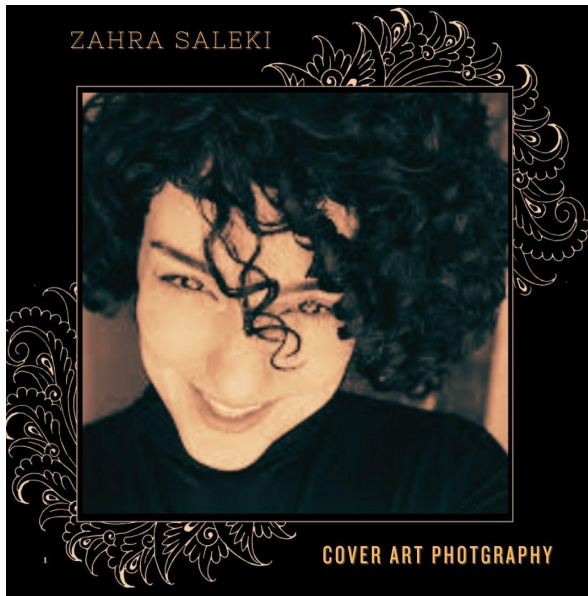
# Sound Engineer



**Pouya Hamidi**, *sound engineer*

Pouya Hamidi thrives on sharing the miracle of creativity with musicians and audiences alike. After moving to Toronto, Pouya studied piano and composition and attended the Taylor Academy at the Royal Conservatory before pursuing a double major in composition and piano at the University of Toronto. His music has been performed throughout North America. Since completing McGill's Master of Sound Recording program in Montreal, Pouya has engineered and produced dozens of recordings, including Juno-nominated albums. "I'm in awe of the power and wonder of music," he says. "Collaborating, composing, sharing the stage with fellow musicians, and feeding off their energy – it's heaven on Earth."

# Visual Artists



**Zahra Saleki:** Cover Art Photo:

<https://www.zahrasaleki.com/>



**Laleh Rasaei:** Cover Art Persian Calligraphy

<https://www.chalipa.ca/>

# Funds and Supports





# List of Poets Represented in the Album

## Track 1: Love is the Soul

Mezzo Soprano, Flute, Piano, Tar, Cello, Tombak

Poet: Shah Nimatullah Wali (15th Century) Sonnet #57

## Track 2: Hidden Existence

Mezzo Soprano, Piano, Tar, Cello, Udo, Daf, Electronic Soundscape

Poet: Rūmī (1207-1273) from Sonnet # 4 and #2195 from *Divan i Shams*

## Track 3- Astonishment

Tenor, Clarinet, Violin, Piano, Cello, Udo, Electronic Soundscape

Poet: Attar (1145-1221) Sonnet #796 from *Divan*

## Track 4- Omnipresent

Mezzo Soprano, Piano

Poet: Malek Jān Nemati (1906-1993)

Poem: All Wonders

## Track 5- Unattainable

Mezzo Soprano, Piano

Poet: Hafiz (1325-1390) Sonnet #318

## Track 6- Endless Sea

Mezzo Soprano, Tenor, Violin, Hand Pan, Percussions, Electronic Soundscape

Poet: Rabia Balkhi (10th century)

\*\*\*Known as the First Persian Female Poet\*\*\*

## Track 7- Dancing With Love

Mezzo Soprano, Alto Sax, Piano, Handpan, Cajon, Maracas

Poet: Muḥsin Fayz Kāshānī (1598-1680) Sonnet #698

## Track 8- Pain

Mezzo Soprano, Clarinet, Piano, Tar, Cello, Udo

Poet: Rūmī (1207-1273) Selected Verse from Sonnet # 2039 from *Divan i Shams*

## Track 9- Hope

Mezzo Soprano, Flute, Piano, Tar, Cello, Percussions

Poet: Hafiz (1325-1390) Sonnet #255

## Track 10- Severance

Tenor, Clarinet, Piano, Tar, Cello

Poet: Saadi (1210-1292) Selected Verses from Sonnet # 64 and #120

## Track 11- Alchemy

Mezzo Soprano, Tar, Daf

Poet: Ghadam-Ali Sarami (b.1944)

## Track 12 : A Lament for Love

Solo Flute