

Shooka Afshar

Harvard Music Award–Winning Soprano | Composer | Film Scorer
Sound Artist | Interdisciplinary Creative Director

Vocal Pedagogue | Pianist | Flutist



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PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Harvard Music Award–winning soprano, composer, film score composer, sound artist, vocal pedagogue, pianist, flutist, and interdisciplinary creative director with over two decades of professional music experience. IMDb-credited for film composition, with an extensive background in original music, experimental sound art, and narrative-driven mixed-media productions. Creator and director of interdisciplinary works presented at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and internationally, including an artist residency and performance tour in northern Italy.

ARTISTIC OBJECTIVES

- To continue composing original scores for film and visual media, combining traditional musical composition with experimental sound design, unconventional sound sources, and digital audio manipulation.
- To expand my work in large-scale, narrative-driven mixed-media productions that engage multiple senses through music, sound, theater, choreography, and visual art, addressing social injustice, women's rights, and the psychological struggles of humanity.
- To create performances that give voice to human experiences often left unheard, inspire reflection, and leave a meaningful impact on audiences—even if that impact begins by improving one person's life.
- To continue developing my career in vocal performance, vocal pedagogy, and international artistic collaboration, connecting diverse cultures and disciplines through music.

FILM COMPOSITION & FILM SCORING

- **Without Fear**, Film Score Composer, Independent short film, Los Angeles, 2026
 - Composed the score for a film addressing domestic violence against women.
- **Unwelcome Guest**, Film Composer, Short crime/thriller film, 2019
- **The Hero of Brooklyn**, Film Composer, Short film, 2017
- **Incident at the Cafe**, Co-Film Composer, 2017
 - Film composition in collaboration with another composer
- **EXTENT**, Film Composer, Ensemble Leader & Soprano, Film by the Safarani Sisters, MMAC Theater, Lincoln Center, New York, 2017
 - Composed music for the film using graphic scoring techniques and directed an eight-member musical ensemble.

IMDb Filmography: <https://www.imdb.com/name/nm10414964/>

IMDb-listed compositions: Unwelcome Guest, The Hero of Brooklyn, and Incident at the Cafe.

NARRATIVE-DRIVEN COMPOSITION & INTERDISCIPLINARY CREATIVE DIRECTION

- **Women / Immigration / Fight or Flight**, Mixed Media Opera, 2021–2023
 - Premiered & Performed Online and in Person at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston 2021-2023
 - El Nido Art Space, Los Angeles 2021-2022

Composer, Director, Choreographer & Soprano. Created a three-act dramatic work exploring women's rights, immigration, social expectations, and empowerment through original music, theater, movement, and visual storytelling, in collaboration with the Safarani Sisters - Visual Artists.
- **The Manipulation Project**, Mixed-Media Drama / Experimental Sound Art Performance, Italy, 2022
 - Casa Regis and Miagliano Theater, Biella Province (near Milan), Italy.

Composer, Artistic Director, Choreographer & Soprano. Conceived and directed a narrative-driven work about how women get into manipulative situations and how they are able to leave, integrating original music, graphic scoring, experimental sound art, dance, and theatrical performance. Led a multidisciplinary ensemble during a one month artist in residency and tour.
- **Nowrooz Stayed Untouched**, Mixed-Media Classical / Persian Song Cycle, 2019-2025
 - Premiered at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 2019
 - Farhang Foundation, Los Angeles, 2022 & 2025

Composer, Director, Choreographer & Soprano. Created a six-song production integrating original music, animation, theatrical movement, and visual storytelling, portraying the glorious days of ancient Persia and its decline into modern-day Iran, in collaboration with Xia Leilei and Xinsi Zhang (animation artists), and Joss Liao (dancer) from Rhode Island School of Design.
- **Seeking**, Interdisciplinary Music Composition & Performance, 2019
 - Iranian American Women Foundation, Harvard Club of Boston.

Composer & Soprano Soloist. Original music composition and vocal performance for an interdisciplinary artistic visual performance, directed by the Safarani Sisters.
- **Childhood**, Mixed-Media Classical / Persian Song Cycle, 2018
 - Premiered at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Composer, Director, Lyricist, Choreographer & Soprano. Created a five-song autobiographical work integrating original music, theater, visual art, and a Persian-inspired stage installation depicting childhood memories of Tehran, in collaboration with the Safarani Sisters - Visual Artists.
- **Experimental Music**, Original Composition & Performance, 2015-2019
 - Longy Laboratory, Longy School of Music, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Composer & Soprano. Composed original experimental music, both collaboratively and as a soloist at the Longy Laboratory Sessions.

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

- IMDb-credited film composer of original scores for independent drama, crime, and thriller films.
- Composer of original operas, mixed-media song cycles, experimental sound art, and interdisciplinary theatrical productions.
- Experienced in graphic scoring, experimental composition, digital sound manipulation, and narrative-driven musical storytelling.
- Artistic director and choreographer of multidisciplinary productions integrating original music, theater, dance, animation, and visual arts.
- Directed an eight-member multidisciplinary ensemble during an international artist residency and performance tour in northern Italy, 2022.
- City of Boston Certified Artist since 2017.

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

- Narrative-Driven Music Composition & Dramatic Storytelling
- Interdisciplinary & Mixed Media Composition
- Opera & Contemporary Vocal Composition
- Experimental Music Composition & Sound Art
- Graphic Scoring & Alternative Music Notation
- Digital Sound Design & Audio Manipulation
- Interdisciplinary Creative Direction & Artistic Production
- Theatrical Stage Direction & Choreography
- Ensemble Direction & Collaborative Musical Performance
- Persian Folk Music & Cross-Cultural Musical Integration
- Classical Vocal Performance & Vocal Pedagogy
- Dalcroze Eurhythmics & Music-Movement Integration

SELECTED PERFORMANCE & COMPOSITION EXPERIENCE

Choir (Soprano I),

Il Barbiere di Siviglia Opera, Boston Summer Opera Company, Boston, MA, Aug 2026,

Soloist

Villa Cimbrone, Ravello, Amalfi Coast, Italy, June 2025

Santuario di San Giovanni, Andorno, Italy, July 2025

Piedicavallo Festival, Piedi Cavallo, Italy, Aug 2024

Music Award Winner, Soloist and Honorary Invitee

Harvard Iranian Gala, Harvard, Boston, Sept 2022

Guest Speaker: President of Carnegie Mellon University

Director of an Artist in Residency, Composer, Soloist, Choreographer

The Manipulation Project Mixed Media Opera, Biella Province near Milan, Italy, 2022

Soloist and Honorary Invitee

Harvard Iranian Gala, Harvard, Boston, Sept 2019

Guest Speaker: CNN Speaker Christian Amanpour

Composer & Soloist

A Night Of Persian Folk Tunes, Clubhouse 7, Laguna Woods, CA, 2019

The Extent, MMAC Theater, Lincoln Center, NY, 2017

Yalda, Fenway Center, Boston, MA, 2012

Soloist

Online Concerts

Disney & Musical Theater Concert, 2021

Christmas Surprise Concert, 2020

Voice & Piano Duo, 2020

Persian Summer Concert Series, Lakeview Center, Irvine, CA, 2019

Turn me into a Mannequin, Iranian American Woman Foundation, NYU, NY, 2018

The Coded Birth, Institute of Contemporary Arts, Boston, MA, 2018

Persian Songs, Glimpse Of Persian Culture 27th Annual Conference, Schaumburg, IL, 2017

Boston Calling, Harvard Athletic Complex, Cambridge, MA, 2017

Persian New Year Festival, Harvard, Cambridge, MA, 2017

Persian Folk Tunes, Harvard Gala with CNN Guest Speaker Christiane Amanpour, Cambridge, MA, 2017

A DMA Dissertation Recital (Composed for me), Boston University, Boston, MA, 2014

Musical Collage (Dancer and Choreographer), Longy School of Music, Cambridge, MA, 2014

Western Classical Opera and Orchestral

Pasticcio!, Calliope Ensemble, First Unitarian Church Boston, Boston, MA, 2016

Finding A Home, Calliope Ensemble, First Unitarian Church Boston, Boston, MA, 2015

Antonio and Amadeus, Calliope Ensemble, First Unitarian Church Boston, Boston, MA, 2015

Princess in The Cunning Peasant Opera US Premier, Calliope Ensemble, First Unitarian Church Boston, Boston, MA, 2014

Memorial for Boston Marathon 2013: Beethoven's 9th Symphony, Empire State Sinfonia, Cathedral of The Holy Cross Boston, Boston, MA, 2014

Images of Fate, Calliope Ensemble, First Unitarian Church Boston, Boston, MA, 2014

A Kingdom, Calliope Ensemble, First Unitarian Church Boston, Boston, MA, 2013

AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

- **Harvard Music Award**, Boston 2022
- **Music Dedication Award** (Choir Director), Iranian Association of Boston, 2014
- **Dalcroze Summer Institute Full Scholarship**, Longy School of Music, summers of 2012 & 2013.
- **Recipient of the "18th May 2004 (FAONS) Honor" for Flute Performance** — Iran Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2004
- **Austrian Cultural Forum Flute Master Class Certificate**, Tehran, Iran, 2002
- **Austrian Cultural Forum Voice Master Class Certificate**, Tehran, Iran, 2002

EDUCATION

Longy School of Music of Bard College, Cambridge, MA

- M.M. in Classical Vocal Performance, May 2014
- Teaching Artist Certificate, May 2014
- Dalcroze Eurhythmics Studies, May 2014
- Associate Degree in Classical Vocal Performance, May 2012

La Scuola Pietro Della Valle, Italian Embassy, Tehran, Iran

- Diploma in Italian Language, May 2010

I. Azad University, Science and Research Branch, Tehran, Iran

- B.S in Applied Condensed Matter Physics, Aug 2007

CERTIFICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

- Buteyko Breathing Technique Certificate, Boston Medical Center, 2017
- Vocal Pedagogy, Voice Therapy & Laryngeal Massage Private Sessions, Boston Medical Center, 2016-2024
- Dalcroze Eurhythmics Studies, Longy School of Music of Bard College, 2010-2014

PRIVATE STUDIES

- **Voice Therapy & Vocal Pedagogy**, at Boston Medical Center, Sept 2016 – May 2025
- **Voice & Vocal Pedagogy**, with Mary McKlimeck, Sept 2016 – Aug 2017
- **Opera Coaching**, with Wolfgang Brendal, May 2013
- **Opera**, with Armineh Dermegederchian, Sept 2007- Dec 2010
- **Piano**, with Tamarah Dolidze, Sept. 2004- Dec 2010
- **Flute**, with Majid Sinaki, Sept. 1997- Dec 2009

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Voice, Piano and Flute Instructor, Sept 2014- June 2026

Chestnut Hill School of Music, Chestnut Hill, MA

Voice, Piano Instructor, Nov 2021- Jan 2025

Irvine Arts & Music, Irvine, CA

Vocal Coach, Jan 2023- June 2024

Natick High School, Natick, MA

Vocal Coach, Jan 2021- Aug 2023

Performers Academy, Lake Forest, CA

Head of the Music Department / Group Music Teacher, Jan 2020- Aug 2023

Bagche Farsi School, Brookline, MA

Musical Theater and Piano Instructor, Nov 2021- Aug 2022

Irvine Hebrew Day School, Santa Ana, CA

Voice, Piano, Flute and Toddler Music Instructor, May 2018- June 2025

Conservatory at Highlands, Newton, MA

Substitute & Assistant Teacher, Sept 2016- June 2019

Chestnut Hill School of Music, Chestnut Hill, MA

Summer Group Piano Instructor, June 2018- Aug 2019

Chestnut Hill School of Music, Chestnut Hill, MA

Substitute Musical Theater Vocal Coach, Sept 2017- June 2018

Solomon Schechter Day School, Newton, MA

Voice and Piano Instructor, Jan 2016- May 2018

Note-Worthy Experiences Studios, Sudbury, MA

Voice, Piano and Flute Instructor, Oct 2014- Aug 2016

Allegro Music School, Natick, MA

Summer Camp Musical Theater Teacher, June 2014- Aug 2016

Arlington Center for the Arts, Arlington, MA

Voice and Piano Instructor, Oct 2013- June 2015

Ivy Music Academy, Norfolk, MA

Voice and Piano Instructor, Oct 2013- Aug 2015

Music & Arts, Milford, MA.

Toddler Music Teacher, Feb 2013- May 2014

Smile Pre-School, CMCB, Boston, MA

Adult Choir Director, Sept 2011- Aug 2014

Iranian Association of Boston, Boston, MA

Private Voice, Piano, Flute and Group Music Instructor, Nov 2010- Present

Greater Boston Area, MA.

Flute Instructor, Sept 2007- Aug 2010

Malek Institute of Arts, Tehran, Iran.

Italian Instructor, Sept 2010- Present, Online and in person.

VOLUNTARY TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Aug 1995-Aug 2008: General subjects teacher for underprivileged homeless children and juvenile who live below the poverty line, Mehr Vista NGO, Tehran Iran.

Responsibilities:

- Taught basic subjects such as math, writing, painting, and music
- Invented creative fun games for very young children with extreme health issues
- Wrote productive curriculum and lessons plans for children with ADD and ADHD
- Helped process and expand writing and conversational competence for children with underdeveloped skills
- Recognized and addressed the effects of family violence and trauma through art therapy from daily drawing and painting assignments

FLUENT LANGUAGES

Farsi, English, Italian

TEACHERS

Mary McDonald Klimek
Anna Gabrieli
Karyl Ryczek
Armineh Dermegecherchian

COACHES

Wolfgang Brendel
Vanessa Schukis
Libor Dudas
Brian Moll
Daniel Wyneken
Janice Giampa

MASTER CLASSES

Renee Fleming
Wolfgang Brendel
Martin Katz
Lisa Parker