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## CD Review: SEHRANG – Ancient Storytelling Reborn In The 21st Century And Creating An Intimate Experience

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**Artist:** SEHRANG

**Title:** Dar Lahze

**Label:** self published

**Genre:** nu Iranian music/jazz

### Review by Dawoud Kringle

Despite the image the news would have us believe, Iran is a treasure trove of beauty and tradition. The flow of great music and art from the Persian people never seems to exhaust itself. The marvellous thing is that the artistic community of Iran is not content to rest on its considerable laurels; there is always new and innovative ideas contributing to the centuries of tradition. [SEHRANG](#) (a Farsi word meaning tri-colored),

the Vienna based trio of **Golnar Shahyar** (vocals), **Mahan Mirarab** (guitar) and **Shayan Fathi** (drums and percussion) proved this with their CD ***Dar Lahze***. Using elements of traditional and modern Persian music, and original lyrics and classical poetry, SEHRANG creates an intimate experience.

After an instrumental track **“Intro”** that introduced the CD, the band settled into its first song **“Noore Bade.”** The soft, inviting grooves and minimal, yet substantial instrumental framework over which Shahyar’s vocals told a story. There was something resembling elements of vintage **Oregon** and vintage **Pentangle**; yet it had a quality all its own. The lyrics, an adaptation of [Hafez](#), were delivered in a serious, yet strangely playful way; like friends walking down a village street in the evening after a few glasses of wine

The next track, **“Morghe Sahar,”** had a complicated, intricate playfulness. Yet the lyrics, [Malek o-Sho’arā’s](#)

adaptation of the work of [Morteza Neydavoud](#), were really anything but playful. Suddenly, the dance gave way to a dreamy jazz rubato with ethereal harmonies. After an excursion through this firmament, the trio returned to the original playfulness.

**“Use the Chance”** was next. A jazz drum beat and mathematical pattern gave way to a jazzy scat singing. The trio unleashed their incredible chops with a seamless flow of unison guitar/vocal lines and complex percussion. Here, the lines between jazz and Persian music were completely eliminated, and became one. The lyrics were from an old poem by [Omar Khayyam](#): “If you are drinking, drink with the wise, or with an idol or a beautiful smiling face. Drink little, rarely and secretly.” They have evidently translated the old Persian Sufi idea of **“rendi”** (indulging in questionable behavior in a secret way, unknown to those around you) into a new musical language of their own devising.

The following track, **“Moseme Gol,”** had a more easily identifiable Persian feel. The western elements were overshadowed by the poetic passion western listeners identify with music from the Middle East.

The remainder of the tracks took the listener through a wondrous experience; like a master storyteller weaving an epic tale filled with subtexts and subplots.

**Fathi's** percussion and drum work is absolutely first rate. He propels the music forward without ruining its poetics, and offers a wide spectrum of sonic texture. **Mirarab** is a brilliant guitarist, using both fretted and fretless guitar. His skillful self accompaniment and having a beautiful sense of melody and chordal harmony are the work of a master. **Shahyar's** vocals are both masterful, and utterly beautiful, with the ability to project an inner sense of the poetry.

This is a CD worth going out of your way to hear. The band blends well and functions perfectly as a unit. The entire CD shows a coherent and unified statement, yet each track is unique and never repeats itself or relies on musical trickery or redundancy. There was never a moment where the sublime artistry of the music diminished, nor did the music, for a moment, degenerate into empty display of virtuosity. SEHRANG paints picture after picture of colourful imagery, sublime metaphor, and sonic beauty. Everything they did was beautiful.

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