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YOU WON'T SEE THIS ON CNN! **EXPLORING THE OTHER: CONTEMPORARY IRAN** Through the lens of Iason Athanasiadis January 25 – March 29, 2009

How much do you really know about Iran? Do you think you have an accurate picture of the country? A shrinking world requires an expanded mind, are you ready to broaden your horizons? On January 25, 2009, CAFAM opens a timely exhibit on contemporary Iran. *Exploring the Other* offers an alternative narrative of the country famously included in the “Axis of Evil” by President George W. Bush. Through the vivid photography of international photojournalist Iason Athanasiadis, visitors will experience an Iran rarely seen in Western media. Vignettes of daily life not unlike our own are revealed in stunning color and black and white photography: Friends on a weekend ski-trip; a Tehran designer’s first fashion show; Soccer fans rooting for the home team; backstage at a rock concert. With the youth demographic rapidly growing—today, nearly 70% of Iran’s population is under 30—Iran’s traditional culture is adapting and being reinterpreted by a youth subculture that is both Western and critical of the West.

Iason Athanasiadis, an Oxford graduate and Nieman Fellow at Harvard, has spent more time than almost any other Western journalist living and working in post-revolutionary Iran. Fluent in Persian and enrolled in Iran’s only graduate program open to foreign nationals, Athanasiadis enjoyed unparalleled access to document Iranian society—especially its thriving youth culture. This groundbreaking exhibit presents an alternate view of Iran, as well as explores issues of accuracy in news reporting and the future of international journalism.

By approaching Iran from aesthetic and social viewpoints, *Exploring the Other* takes the focus off Iran's politicians and realigns it squarely on the country and its people. Athanasiadis' photographs challenge the conventional media narrative told about Iran and challenges visitors to question how media information is presented (and filtered).

Exploring the Other will be supported by a wealth of educational programming including lectures, book and poetry readings, film screenings, musical performances, and workshops—designed to provide visitors with a meaningful and more complete understanding of Iran.

***** High resolution images available *****

FUN FACTS about IRAN

Which country gave women the right to vote first: Switzerland or Iran?

* Iran granted women the right to vote in 1963. Women in Switzerland were granted the right to vote in 1971.

Which country has a larger youth population: USA or Iran?*

* Iran has a youth population (ages 5-24) that equals nearly 70% of the total population. The U.S. youth population equals just fewer than 25% of total population. (Population Reference Bureau, 2008)

About Iason Athanasiadis

Writer, photographer and television producer, Iason Athanasiadis has been covering the Middle East, Central Asia, and the southeast Mediterranean since 1999. He earned degrees in Arabic and Modern Middle Eastern Studies at Oxford University (BA) as well as Persian and Contemporary Iranian Studies at Tehran's School of International Studies (MA).

Athanasiadis lived in Iran from 2004-2007, covering conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan and Lebanon for the international media including the Times, the Christian Science Monitor, American Prospect, British Journalism Review and the South China Morning Post. He covered the 2003 invasion of Iraq from Qatar for al-Jazeera, the 2004 Athens Olympics for BBC World, and the 2006 Israeli-Hizbullah war in Lebanon as a freelancer. At the same time, his photography has been featured in solo exhibitions in Germany, Greece, Iran, and the United States, and his work published in *Der Spiegel* and the *Los Angeles Times*, among other newspapers and magazines. A native of Greece, Athanasiadis was a 2008 Nieman fellow at Harvard University. He is an Aristotle Onassis Foundation scholar and has lectured on Iran at Berkeley, Dartmouth, Harvard, MIT, Stanford, Yale and other universities. <http://www.iason.ws/>

Craft and Folk Art Museum

5814 Wilshire Boulevard

Los Angeles, CA 90036

Tel. 323-937-4230 / www.cafam.org

Museum Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday 11 am – 5 pm






Thursday 11 am – 7 pm

Saturday and Sunday 12 – 6 pm

EXPLORING THE OTHER: CONTEMPORARY IRAN through the lens of Iason Athanasiadis

January 25 – March 29, 2009

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	<p>(image1)</p> <p>Iason Athanasiadis Two young snowboarders with matching scarlet highlights throw caution to the wind as they sail on a Shah-era ski lift at Shemshak ski resort near Tehran. Islamic regulations are more laxly enforced in holiday resorts such as Shemshak and Kish Island.</p>
	<p>(image2)</p> <p>Iason Athanasiadis Wearing an Iranian flag, a Metallica T-shirt, and bandannas supporting reformist candidate Mostafa Moein, two friends attend a pre-election rally in a Tehran soccer stadium.</p>
	<p>(image3)</p> <p>Iason Athanasiadis A chador-clad lady with an antiquated analogue Pentax camera and a foreign photographer struggle for the same shot during the annual Jerusalem Day rally in central Tehran.</p>
	<p>(image4)</p> <p>Iason Athanasiadis A panoramic view of Tehran at dawn.</p>
	<p>(image5)</p> <p>Iason Athanasiadis Two women walk away from a commemoration of the feast-day of Ashura in the western town of Khorramabad. Their chadors bear a symbolic hand-print and the legend "Oh Hossayn," in reference to a 7th century martyrdom that became the foundational event in Shiism.</p>