

## Director's Note

Welcome to "Paydaayesh: A creation Project." Welcome also to the creative process developed by a team of collaborating artists and scholars, a process into which you, the audience, will now be drawn. "Creation Project" had its origins in a conversation between the creative Arts and Religious Studies Departments in 2002. These two departments decided to explore the development of a collaborative project that would involve themselves and regional artists. In December of that year about thirty artists gathered with Department members to talk about possible collaborations.

Out of this came a planning committee that, over the following three years brought to birth the idea of a performance event based on a creation story rooted in the Persian tradition as remembered by Mahmood Karimi-Hakak. Many hours were spent in the living rooms and on the porches of this committee "creating" a performance of "creation." The meetings were filmed to document this creative process.

On October 14, 2003 a twenty-minute "first run" of the incipient project was presented to the Siena community and the wider public underwritten by the continuing generous support of Dr. Richardson, the Academic Vice President and the Creative Arts Department. That audience, through observation and discussion of the multimedia performance event, took part in creating today's work. This performance was also filmed for documentary purposes. On July 30, 2004 Dr. Jim Dalton, Dr. Mahmood Karimi-Hakak and Br. Gary Maciag traveled to Toronto, Canada for the International Convention of the Association for Theater in Higher Education. They presented a panel on the Creation Project that consisted of a DVD video created by Reza Mizbani, the filmographer, together with presentations by Jim, Mahmood and Br. Gary. In the Spring of 2005 the Stage Theatre Program agreed to present what was now being called "Paydaayesh: A creation Project" in March of 2006.

Paydaayesh will be videotaped not only for historical record but also, and more importantly, for submission to producers. It is hoped that a more elaborated production will be developed and appear in one or more international theater festivals and conferences. Paydaayesh is a continuing work of progress that might help other audiences reflect on and experience an act of creation in a performance setting.

What you will be viewing tonight is the world premiere of “A Creation Project” concerning a creation that will, hopefully, be carried out of the theater and into the world. And the rest, as they say, will be history!