



⬆️ Mazdak Alipour (L) performs alongside his father, Master Faraj Alipour, at a concert in Washington, the US.  
● TASNIM

Like Luri music, country music is rooted in authentic life, nature, and popular culture. When these two geographies become intertwined, a universal and highly appealing language is born. Today, when I play a Luri melody, I still feel the same authenticity and emotion of Khorramabad flowing through me, but with a broader perspective. I feel a duty and responsibility on my shoulders to take this heritage to prestigious international universities and collaborate as a kamancheh soloist with leading orchestras around the world, so that I can be a worthy representative of the people and culture of my homeland.

**In the United States, you have tried to bring maqami music and Luri melodies to audiences in different states. How do Americans respond to Luri music? Do they genuinely connect with the music itself, or do you first have to explain the story, language, culture, and geography of Lorestan to them?**

The response of American and non-Iranian audiences has been extraordinary. Even though it has deep sorrow and emotional expression in its melodies, Luri music affects listeners without any intermediary because of its energetic rhythms. At many events, without any prior explanation, I have seen how a non-Iranian listener becomes captivated by the power and appeal of this music. However, to deepen this connection, in my new project called “Za” — which is being released both as an album and performed as a concert tour in the United States — I have taken a different approach. I have designed a coherent scenario and storyline for the project. Memorable and new pieces are connected to this storyline. Before each piece is performed, a brief explanation of its story and emotional atmosphere is given to the audience, and the text of the narration is also provided to them. The result was astonishing. The audience remains focused and excited, riveted to the performance until the very last moment. The interesting point is that at most of our concerts, approximately half of the audience consists of non-Iranian listeners. Seeing them become immersed in the story, music, and sound of the kamancheh — despite not knowing the language — proves that Luri music has tremendous potential to connect with a global audience.

**In 2025, you undertook a very different project in which you reintroduced the voice of the late Pirvali Karimi, one of the important figures in the history of Luri music, to today's audience after approximately six decades, in the form of a new work featuring the kamancheh and your own arrangement. The project also used artificial intelligence in its vi-**

**sual component. Was this experience more of a musical project for you, or an effort to save part of the historical memory of Lorestan's music? And to what extent do you consider the use of artificial intelligence acceptable in reconstructing such heritage?**

This project was far more than a musical work for me. It was a tribute and a sincere effort to keep alive the historical memory of Lorestan's music. I have always enjoyed Master Pirvali Karimi's style of kamancheh playing, and with the emergence of artificial intelligence in the visual field, I saw an opportunity to bring this historical figure closer to today's audience. I reconstructed the only surviving photograph of Pirvali and old photographs of Khorramabad, wrote a storyline and screenplay, and placed Pirvali and QorchAli together in the old neighborhoods. Choosing the piece was a major challenge, but eventually I selected a song that would complete the spirit of the image. Over Pirvali's kamancheh recording, I recorded my own kamancheh and the Dohol, and in the final section, I sang part of the melody so that the connection between generations would become tangible. The use of artificial intelligence is acceptable as long as it serves preserving the spirit of the work and transmitting its identity, rather than distorting it. I am doing everything within my ability to preserve and develop these ancient works and present them at universities and prestigious halls. The tremendous support of all Luri speakers — including our dear Bakhtiari Lurs — at concerts in the United States gives me the strength to continue striving not for personal fame or honor, but for future generations and the preservation of this ancient heritage.

**Regional music in Iran has long faced a contradiction: on the one hand, it has a great deal of audience interest and appeal, while on the other hand, many of its masters and musicians face difficult economic circumstances. In the United States, have you realized that local music can be turned into a sustainable professional and economic activity? What exists in that cultural system that we do not have in Iran?**

The main difference lies in a change in the artist's mindset and in the support structure. In the United States, music is viewed as a professional occupation. A musician here conducts himself or herself as a musician with no inflated ego. From releasing works on global platforms and teaching to performing in a bar, a small venue, or a major concert, musicians make use of every opportunity. In addition, support systems such as grants (governmental or institutional funding) exist, which cover the costs of concerts and free artists from the concern of ticket sales so that people can enjoy art at the lowest possible cost or for free. In Iran, by contrast, there are two major challenges: on the one hand, censorship and the exhausting process of obtaining permits, which consumes all the artist's energy and rehearsal time in administra-

tive follow-ups; and on the other hand, the blocking of global income-generating platforms. But alongside these issues, there is also the challenge of the artists' own attitude; unfortunately, many colleagues stay at home, wait to be invited, and criticize from the sidelines. I put my works on international platforms so that my sound and art can be heard — even if sanctions and Iran's limitations prevent full monetization in that geography — because I hope that one day it will also be heard freely in Iran. The truth is that challenges exist everywhere in the world, but sitting at home and feeling sorry for oneself gets you nowhere. An artist must build his or her own path through perseverance.

**If you were to introduce only three characteristics of Lorestan's music to an American audience so that they could understand why this music deserves to become global, which three characteristics would you choose?**

If I were to describe three unique characteristics of Lorestan's music to an American audience to demonstrate why this art has the potential to become global, they would be:  
1. Powerful, epic, and multilayered rhythms (especially asymmetrical rhythms): The rhythms of Luri music are not merely for dancing or celebration; they are rooted in epic traditions, labor, and a heroic way of life. The diverse rhythms such as Se-Pa, Sangin-Sama, and especially asymmetrical rhythms possess a magical movement and extraordinary energy that compel any listener from any

⬆️ The photo shows Mazdak Alipour (R) alongside Master Hossein Behroozinia (C) in the poster of their concert tour of the United States and Canada.  
● SOUNDCLOUD



⬆️ The poster shows the Tal Ensemble that performs under the direction of Master Faraj Alipour (C), with arrangements by Milad Alipour and conducting by Mazdak Alipour (4th-R).  
● SPOTIFY

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culture to move and participate.  
2. Deep and authentic emotional expression in the melodies: The Luri kamancheh has a direct and deeply intimate language. This music is capable of conveying the deepest human emotions, such as sorrow, love, longing, and yearning, without the need for words. This sorrowful quality and emotional expression is something that Western audiences can understand with their entire being without knowing the language or geography.  
3. A direct and living connection with nature and historical antiquity: Luri music is a mirror of Lorestan's geography, a sound that carries within it the sounds of nature, mountains, ancient rituals, and the thousands-of-years-old history of this people. This authentic and deeply rooted narrative offers the listener a musicological dimension that, in an age of modern and similar productions, appears highly valuable, fresh, and authentic to today's listener.

**And perhaps the most important question: You are the son of Faraj Alipour and have worked alongside him and in the Tal Ensemble for years, but you have now reached a stage where the next generation must recognize you as an independent musician and artist with your own voice. How do you make it happen?**

I have a very heavy responsibility ahead of me, and I think about it every day. I closely follow the tastes and listening habits of the new generation and even put myself in their place to understand how I can attract their attention to Luri music. Young people today are looking for excitement and contemporary rhythms. Luri music has tremendous potential to keep pace with contemporary arrangements without altering its essence and authenticity. To bring the younger generation into concert halls and familiarize them directly with this art, I have created a new group that performs Luri music — including melodies, vocal traditions, and even Bakhtiari Luri music — in an electronic format, with the kamancheh taking the central and leading role. In general, I am now pursuing Luri music in the United States in three separate formats:  
1. Traditional orchestra  
2. Duo performances and research-oriented performances  
3. Electronic and fusion music.  
My great goal and dream for the future is to bring this music to the stage with a large international orchestra and create a lasting work. At many performances, audiences see the Luri kamancheh for the first time, and when I tell them about its history and antiquity, they are astonished. This is the very point at which I realize that my independent path has taken shape, a path toward introducing a culture to the world.