



## 50 YEARS AGO IN THESE PAGES

“Sohrab Sepehri (1928–1980) has presented . . . some of the best poems of contemporary Persia and established himself as an authentic Eastern poet of significance. . . . As might be expected—and as Sufis have often been accused by native and foreign progressivists—the objection made to Sepehri’s poetry is that it lacks ‘social consciousness.’ If by social consciousness is meant political involvement, the objection is well made. It should be pointed out that in contemporary Iran political involvement is exceedingly difficult if not impossible, hence the predilection on the part of modern writers for the fable, allegory, and folklore. A poet of direct vision and sensibility, Sepehri bypasses even these available modes of expression. He does not need them. Lines which appear to reveal a social consciousness go so naturally with other concerns and observations of the poet as to be inseparable from them.”

—Massud Farzan, “The Neo-Sufic Poetry of Sohrab Sepehri,”  
*Books Abroad* 47, no. 1 (Winter 1973): 85, 86

**ABOVE** A SUFI IN ECSTASY IN A LANDSCAPE, IRAN, ISFAHAN, CIRCA 1650–1660.  
THE NASLI M. HEERAMANECK COLLECTION, GIFT OF JOAN PALEVSKY, LA COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART

## World Literature Today

MARCH – APRIL 2023  
Volume 97, Number 2

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & NEUSTADT PROFESSOR  
Robert Con Davis-Undiano

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR & EDITOR IN CHIEF  
Daniel Simon

MANAGING & CULTURE EDITOR  
Michelle Johnson

BOOK REVIEW & ONLINE EDITOR  
Rob Vollmar

GRAPHIC DESIGNER  
Tony Roberts

PROGRAMS & DEVELOPMENT  
Terri D. Stubblefield

CIRCULATION & ACCOUNTS  
Kay Blunck

### ADVISORY BOARD

Rilla Askew  
Nancy Barcelo  
Kyle Harper  
Jeanne Hoffman Smith  
Ed Kelley  
Alana Marie Levinson LaBrosse  
Kathy Neustadt  
Susan Neustadt Schwartz  
David Shook

### EDITORIAL BOARD

Roger Allen  
Alice-Catherine Carls  
César Ferreira  
Erik Gleibermann  
George Gömöri  
Alamgir Hashmi  
Emily D. Johnson  
Farzaneh Milani  
Tanure Ojaide  
Nii Ayikwei Parkes  
Mahtem Shiferraw  
Ilan Stavans  
Michelle Yeh

### INTERNS

Nikkie Aisha  
Tristan Breath  
Jaylen Bright  
Katie Brooks  
Karenn Brown  
Katie Burkhead  
Allison Clark  
Ian Fowler  
Kysar Hunt  
Sydney Nichols  
Horvey Palacios  
Katherine Schoeffler  
Kerry Scroggie  
Nakayla Shakespeare  
Stevi Smith  
Logan Trekel  
Ja’Nean Walker  
Peyton Winter

### CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Irene Bulla  
Kalenda Eaton  
Karlos K. Hill  
Carol Rose Little  
Marcelo Riosco  
Rhona Seidelman  
Janet Ward  
Kimberly Gail Wieser

*World Literature Today* is published at the University of Oklahoma, Norman. Postmaster: Send address changes to WLT, 630 Parrington Oval, Suite 110, Norman OK 73019-4037. Periodicals postage paid at Hanover PA 17331. Copyright © 2023 by *World Literature Today* and the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma. ISSN 0196-3570 (1945-8134 online). Subscription and advertising rates are listed on our website ([worldlit.org](http://worldlit.org)) or can be obtained through the editorial office. Phone: 405.325.4531. 2,700 copies of this issue have been prepared and distributed by the Sheridan Press at no cost to the taxpayers of the State of Oklahoma. The University of Oklahoma is an equal opportunity institution.