

## Nowruz Mubarak!

Nowruz Mubarak (Happy New Year!) from AAAWA! We are excited to begin this newsletter by sharing some exciting news: AAAWA has officially become a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization! Since our founding in 2010, we would like to thank our friends and supporters, old and new, who trusted and shared their work with us, who collaborated with us, showed up to the exhibits, the panels, the workshops, the zines, and to everyone who's contributed their talent, time, money, and who has supported us and our vision. Thank you. You've helped us grow this historic and incredible group that amplifies, connects, critiques, questions, and that, at its root, cares deeply and responsibly about our Afghan diaspora communi(TIES).

While we are reveling in this good news, we also enter into the new year with mixed feelings as the state of the world continues to trouble us, but being a part of this community sustains and inspires us. We are moved by the work of so many community organizations that are mobilizing and speaking truth to power, whether with regard to the Biden administration's violent rerouting of the Afghan people's assets, or the ongoing disregard for Afghan and Black and Brown displaced peoples throughout the world. We are also inspired by how many collectives are mobilizing to help the Ukrainian refugee crisis and are holding larger discussions about the violence of empire. We find so much hope in these efforts, and we will continue to support them as we enter the new year. Here is a recap of what we have been working on at AAAWA, and thanks to our readers for all of their support!



We Stand in Solidarity with the Many  
Displaced Peoples Impacted by Events in  
Ukraine



## The Afghan American Artists & Writers Association

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Today, we at AAWA stand in solidarity with the Ukrainian people and its diaspora, who have been impacted by the Russian state's invasion of their homeland. We recognize the millions of Ukrainians who are being subject to imperial violence at the hands of the Russian state and the thousands of displaced people who seek refuge. We hope the voices of those who are speaking truth to power will be elevated in this critical moment.

## AAAWA GoFundMe Update

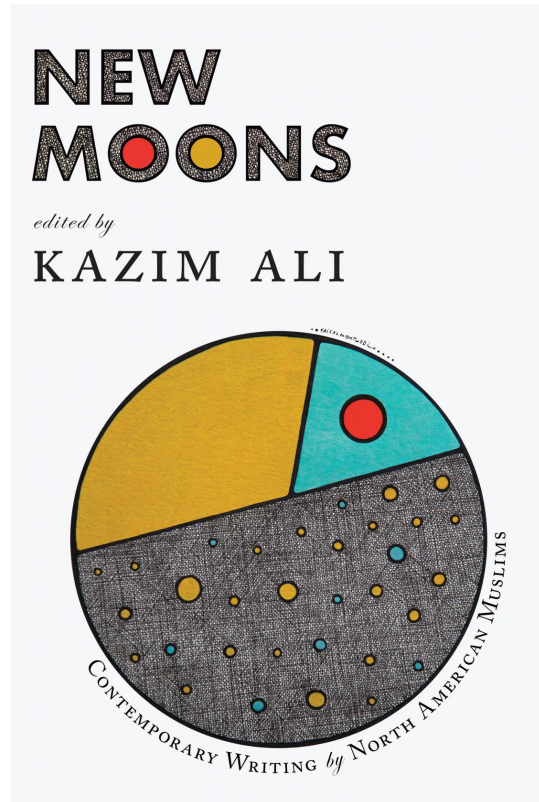
Thank you all for your support over the past seven months. We—and the families we have been assisting—cannot overstate our gratitude to each one of you who has contributed to this campaign. Together, you have helped us raise \$53,283.22 (through GoFundMe, PayPal, Venmo, and direct donations) in direct assistance to evacuate and resettle vulnerable Afghan artists, writers, and cultural and civil society workers. Below we share our latest update on our activities, including the current status of each of the families we've been assisting. Also, please note that as of January 2022, we stopped accepting new donations and formally closed our fundraiser as we completed our fundraising goals.

We have applied for Humanitarian Parole for all of the original nine families we were assisting—a total of 44 applications. Coordinated international evacuation efforts have drastically slowed, so we focused our recent work on providing direct relief to the families as they await their parole applications in country or as they resettle in a third country. As the people of Afghanistan continue to face a dire humanitarian and economic crisis, and as more than 30,000 Humanitarian Parole applications await decisions by USCIS, we will continue to call for immediate humanitarian aid, the unfreezing of assets, and more humane immigration and resettlement policies.

## AAAWA Members Publish in New Moons

Recently, AAAWA members and friends Seelai Karzai, Zohra Saed, and Leila Nadir were featured in the *New Moons Anthology* (Red Hen Press 2022, edited by Kazim Ali), which brings together the voices of North American Muslims in a collection of fiction, poetry, and non-fiction.

From RedHen Press: “The goal with this anthology is to represent that full range of contemporary expressions of Islam, as well as a full range of genres—poetry, fiction, essay, memoir, political writing, cultural writing, and of course plenty of texts which mix and match and blur all of these modes . . . the trajectories between the pieces—like that of *kismet*—will be multiple, nonlinear, abstract. The Muslim community is plural and contradictory. This collection of voices ought to be symphony and cacophony at once, like the body of Muslims as they are today.”—Editor, Kazim Ali



New Moons Anthology

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## AAAWA 2021 Recap

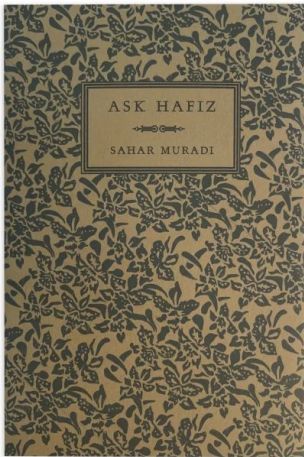
After what has been a tumultuous year for our friends, loved ones, and community, we felt it was important to recap our work around the Afghanistan crisis. Please visit [this link](#) to view **AAAWA's 2021 End of Year Review**, and resources for those who are still being impacted by the Afghanistan crisis. We appreciate your ongoing support and solidarity, and we continue to stand in solidarity with the people of Afghanistan.

## Upcoming UCLA Panel on "Media, Feminism, and Resistance Beyond Afghanistan"

On Thursday April 7th, AAAWA members Wazmah Osman and Helena Zeweri, along with scholars Mejgan Massoumi and Hosai Qasmi, will be speaking at a virtual panel discussion on the politics of feminism, media, and resistance in and beyond Afghanistan at UCLA. **To register, please click [here!](#)**

This panel discussion is part of *Afghanistan through Afghan Voices*, "a series of virtual workshops that highlights and critically engages with recent scholarship on one of the most culturally diverse regions in the world. It aims to open an inclusive and multidisciplinary space where Afghan scholars and artists come together in conversation with broad audiences to publicly reflect on their research endeavors and creative trajectories. Monthly programs include Afghan artists from around the globe in dialogue with scholars of literature, art, and history; panels featuring conversations on visual culture and media; and poetry readings in Persian/Dari, Pashto, and English" (UCLA Program on Central Asia).

## AAAWA Member, Sahar Muradi's *Ask Hafiz*, Thornwillow Press



*Ask Hafiz* is the story of one family's forced migration, but in its blend of traditional poetry and personal narrative, a kaleidoscopic text unfolds. This is the story of family, of community, and of language itself. The ancient words of Hafiz-e Shirazi, used, paradoxically, to divine the future, create an indelible link across time; a leatherbound book, smuggled across borders and oceans, maintains a precious tie to the faraway homeland.

[Ask Hafiz](#)

Afghan American Artists and Writers Association

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