



AN '04 FESTIVAL SELLOUT!
NORA'S BACK ON THE COUCH

On the
couch with
Nora Armani

**EGYPTIAN. ARMENIAN. AMERICAN.
SINGER. DANCER. POET...**

**Midtown International Theatre Festival
Workshop Theatre Mainstage**

July 22 at 7:30 pm, July 30 at 3:30 pm, Aug. 2 at 7:30 pm

www.noraarmani.com

...[a] smoothly polished and truly fascinating theatre piece. Armani gives herself the freedom to actually be herself.

—Talk in Broadway

...great actress...amazingly natural...great presence.

— Online Review London

Her persona is as inviting as the couch of her title, radiating warmth and understanding.

— Theater Mania

WITH HUMOR AND NOSTALGIA, NORA REMEMBERS THE BOSPHORUS AND ISTANBUL, PRE-1915 ANATOLIAN SUMMERS, ALEXANDRIA AND ITS PORT, NASSER'S POST-REVOLUTION EGYPT, HOLLYWOOD AND ITS FOLLIES. NOW, IF SHE COULD ONLY REMEMBER HERSELF...

On the Couch with Nora Armani

Written and performed by

Nora Armani

Directed by

François Kergourlay

PRESS CLIPS FROM THE LONDON PERFORMANCE

...written and performed with tremendous energy... great actress... amazingly natural
...has great presence.



...fluid and engaging... Frequently humorous and always humane... a self-penned script that
delivers on a number of levels.



An insightful piece of theatre. The lyrical language...reflects her linguistic talents. Armani
manages to fill the stage and gives an enlightening performance.



Nora Armani has performed the play on tour in **Los Angeles, Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, Montreal, New York** (Segal Theatre, CUNY), **Boston, Houston, Cairo** with a limited run in **London** at the New End Theatre directed by **François Kergourlay**. She performed the French version *Sur le divan avec Nora Armani* as a première preview at Salle Cortot in Paris, and later at the **Mamers** Festival of Art and Theatre, she performed it in **Lyons, Caen**, and in **Paris** at *Au Chat Noir Café Theatre*, *The National Conservatoire* of Issy Les Moulineaux as a special Gala for Mayor Santini, and at *L'Ogre de Barbarie* dinner theatre. Other performances of the English version were presented at the *October Gallery* in London, the *Poetry Café* in Covent Garden, the *London School of Economics* and *Goodenough College*. The French version of the play was broadcast live on Aligre FM Radio in Paris in July 2003. July 2004 marked the play's New York debut, this is a return engagement for MITF 2005.

Photos and additional information on

www.noraarmani.com

Press contact

Judd Hollander: (212) 242-1648 BNCHPEOP@AOL.COM

PEMART: (917) 318-2290

4 Stuyvesant Oval, 5C, NY 10009

Director's Note

Nora makes her entrance and greets us.

We are the friends she has invited tonight to whom she will recite her favorite poems and sing her favorite songs. She intends to make this evening warm, friendly and unforgettable.

She does not know that by casting her net wide, she has exposed herself to an unpredictable incident that is going to shift the course of the evening.

I will let you discover this 'coup de theatre' when you see the play.

This incident forces the actress to tell us her personal story; going back to her ancestors, her childhood and her peregrination through the different countries where she has toured and in which she has entrenched herself or grown roots.

She disregards the initial purpose of the evening.

We, her friends, become witness to a series of confessions and intimate revelations.

Nora had invited us to hear her favorite poems, instead she herself becomes the poem.

The memories that resurface along with their share of pain, revelation and regeneration, are presented in the form of a performance piece; their epic proportions mixed with the scents and spices from the old bazaar of Cairo.

The couch becomes the family couch, her grandmothers' couch, the couch of intricate words lost in the buzz of History.

And ... a journey begins, that takes us on a promenade from Cairo to New York,

From Giza to the Scottish Highlands;

From Turkey... to Armenia

The words navigate

The voice tightens then is freed

A tune erupts

And Nora narrates her spirit.

I staged this play with the curiosity of someone permanently in quest of the fine line between fiction and reality. Theatre is illusion. Nora Armani is real. But is she a real person or a character in a play? Who can tell with certainty at the end of the performance? And does it really matter for us to know? After all, theatre is but a reflection of life and therein comes its rule: to avoid all conventions or rather to reinvent them. And if Nora plays herself, it is because she has come to realise that this margin between what constitutes life and what forms a dream is no longer her concern. Or rather, it concerns her only in as much as being able to better define her identity and image today, through her life-experiences, love, disillusion and true happiness. She lives and she plays.

— François Kergourlay

Bio Notes

Nora Armani

Born in Egypt of Armenian parents and educated in England, Nora is now back in the USA, based in New York, after dividing her time between London and Paris in recent years, following a prior ten-year fling with Los Angeles.

Her repertory includes Shakespeare, Shaw, Beckett, Hammerstein and Guitry while her own creations *Sojourn at Ararat*, *Nannto Nannto*, *On the Couch with Nora Armani* and *Snowflakes in April* have earned her international tours and accolades on four continents in over twenty five cities.

Invited to Armenia to star in the films *Deadline in Seven Days* (1992), *Last Station* (1994) and *Labyrinth* (1995), she becomes cultural ambassador promoting Armenian Cinema worldwide.

In Cairo she has starred as Anna in *The King and I* on stage and on television and she has guest-starred in the Egyptian television series *The Friends*. In London, she has played Volumnia in Mehmet Ergen's production of *Plebeians Rehearse the Uprising* by Günter Grass at the Arcola Theatre, Gerald Papasian's production of Shaw's *Arms and the Man* at the Young Vic Theatre and her own *On the Couch with Nora Armani* at the New End Theatre. In Paris her stage credits include Fatima Gallère's *La Fête Virile* at the Cartoucherie – Epée de Bois, *Couples du Monde* (co-creation) *Nannto Nannto* (co-creation) and a live radio broadcast of her play *Sur le divan avec Nora Armani*. Her film credits include Catherine Corsini's *La Nouvelle Eve*, Laurent Dussaux' *Le Coeur à l'ouvrage*, Daniele Stro's *L'Ame Soeur* in the title role, Isabelle Ouzounian's, *Le Néflier: journal d'une chômeuse*, also in the title role and most recently Malik Chibane's *Voisin Voisine* (July 2005 release) and as a featured guest star in two episodes of the acclaimed BBC-TV series *Casualty* (aired June 2005).

Prizes include: *Best Actress Award* twice in Armenia (Stage and Screen) and two *Drama-Logue* awards in Los Angeles. *The California Motion Picture Golden Star* award–1985–Los Angeles. She is an Honorary Member of the National Theatre of Armenia since 1992. Her most recent award was that of *Best Actress* for her lead role on *Labyrinth* at the *Siunik Film Festival*. She holds an M.Sc. from the *University of London* and a B.A. in Sociology and Theatre (Acting and Directing) from the *American University Cairo* and *UCLA* (Los Angeles). She is currently writing on Soviet Armenian Cinema.

You may visit her website www.noraarmani.com for more information, photos, film clips and more.

François Kergourlay

François Kergourlay was born in Suresnes - France to a theatrical family. His father is an actor-playwright and his mother an actress-dancer. In 1982, he is offered a place at the *National Superior Conservatory of Dramatic Art* at that time under the directorship of Jacques Rosner. He later studies masks with Mario Gonzalez for three years. In 1991, he creates the *François Kergourlay Theatre Company*, and in 1995 he is appointed Artistic Director of the Firmin Gémier Theatre in Antony; a post he occupies for five years.

Among François Kergourlay's productions are Cahit Atay's *The Onlooker* in his own translation with Mehmet Tepe starring Philippe Demarle. *The Potocki Parades*, *The Tic-tac of the Pendulum* based on Daniil Harms' work, Léonide Andréiev's *The Thought* with Olive Combed in a translation by Lily Denis and Gogol's *The Inspector General*. He has also directed plays by Molière, Goldoni, Marivaux, Tchekhov, Maeterlinck, Feydeau, Filippo, Kohout, Prévert, Valle-inclán, the Venezuelan Mariela Romero, Yeats, Sylvie Laporte and Natacha Cashman, and, by special invitation of the State Theatre of Ankara, a Turkish translation by Lütfü Ay of Dostoyevski *Eternal Husband* from Victor Haïm's French adaptation of the work.

His professional peregrinations have taken him from Paris and its suburbs to Rennes, Limoges, Béthune, Avignon, Brest and Lorient and his productions have been seen in Central Europe, Turkey and the Middle East.

On the Couch with Nora Armani

NORA ARMANI

"...absolutely superb, exquisite and virtuoso performance.."

DramaLogue – Los Angeles – Steven Zeller

"... the deft, bedazzling Armani creates textured characters and substantial momentum."

Los Angeles Times – Ray Loynd

"...brilliantly performed by...Nora Armani, one is reminded that magic can still exist on the stage. Powerful, moving impressive and entertaining."

Herald Examiner – Los Angeles – Clifford Gallo

"...excellent work from Nora Armani..."

What's On in London – Sophia Veil

"...Moving... a long applause..."

Le Monde – Christophe Deshoulières

"...The beautiful Nora Armani..."

Weekly Variety – Emmanuel Levi

"Armani speaks her words clearly and with passion."

Daily Variety

"...knows how to blend her gorgeous voice and expertly trained body to create theatrical magic.."

LA Weekly – Pick of the Week – Tom Provenzano

"A spirited and spiritual journey....gifted actor..."

The Boston Globe – Patti Hartigan

"...performance which stirs the imagination.."

Pasadena Weekly – John C. Mahoney

"...extraordinary and moving performance."

Daily Bruin – UCLA – Tony Tran

"Splendid show."

The Scotsman - Howard Purdie

"[delivered] with force and emotion."

Le Provençal

"Nora Armani occupies the stage as a true professional."

Le Dauphiné - Olivier Grozelon

"Talented actor..."

Drama-Logue - Polly Warfield

"Appealing and skilled actor... slender Natalie Wood like beauty..."

Glendale News Press - Alan Raeburn

"From the Heart's Core."

Ararat Literary Magazine - Judy Ellis

"Extremely talented creator-performer."

Star News Today - Francis Baum Nicholson

"Highly polished performance. Linguistic flexibility."

The Gazette (Montreal)

On the Couch with Nora Armani

The North American tours and the London performances in the media:

- BBC Radio – World Service (Interview and Excerpts) 'Awraq' (Papers)
- Diaspora Music Village (London)
- Egyptian TV- Channel I
- Abu Dhabi TV (Feature story, clips and live interview via satellite)
- Le Progrès Egyptien (Egypt)
- Al Ahrām (Egypt- International Edition) 3 articles
- Al Sharq Al Awsat (London)
- Sayedati (Women's Monthly Magazine – London)
- The Egyptian Gazette (Egypt)
- The Armenian Mirror Spectator (USA)
- Aligr FM Radio (France)
- UGAB Magazine (France)
- Abaka (Canada)
- Nor Or (USA)

Awards

- Golden Star Halo Award from the Southern California Motion Picture Council, presented by Geraldine Saunders of TV's 'Love Boat'
- DramaLogue Critics' Award for Outstanding Achievement in Theatre: for Creation and Performance.
- 'Encore' DramaLogue Award for Outstanding Achievement in Theatre: for Creation and Performance

NORA ARMANI ACTRESS

SAG/Equity

Has appeared in numerous theatrical productions and many films internationally. Her stage appearances include "Nannto Nannto", "Sojourn at Ararat", and "On the Couch with Nora Armani", performance pieces of her own creation seen in over 20 cities on four continents. In addition, she has interpreted diverse roles such as Anna in "The King and I" (Cairo) & Helen Weigel in "Plebeians Rehearse the Uprising" (London).
Currently she lives in New York City.

AWARDS: "Best Actress" for her starring role in the feature film Labyrinth Siunik Film Festival 1999–Armenia
• Dramalogue Award For Performance "Encore" Dramalogue Award For Performance • California Motion Picture Golden Star Award • Two "Best Actress" Awards Film & Stage Yerevan Fest • Hon. Member: National Theatre of Armenia

FILM

LE NEFLIER
RESIDENCE MOZART
LA NOUVELLE EVE
LE COEUR A L'OUVRAGE
LE JARDIN DE KHORKOM
DELUSION
LABYRINTH
LAST STATION
DEADLINE: SEVEN DAYS
THE GAME
PINK ELEPHANT
FALLEN ANGEL

TELEVISION

Three FRIENDS
THE MAGIC OF VENICE
KAFKA & MILENA
ST.ELSEWHERE
MACGYVER

THEATRE

ON THE COUCH WITH NORA ARMANI
PLEBIANS REHEARSE THE UPRISING
ON THE COUCH WITH NORA ARMANI
NANNTO NANNTO
THE KING AND I
ORPHEUS & EURIDICE
LA FETE VIRILE
LOOK BACK IN ANGER
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING
ARMS AND THE MAN
SOJOURN AT ARARAT
(An award-winning two-person
play seen on four continents
in English & French. Now a feature film
starring Nora Armani & Gerald Papasian

COME AND GO-S.BECKETT
THE QUARTERED MAN
MEASURE FOR MEASURE
ANTHONY & CLEOPATRA

LEAD
Mrs. DIRIL
LAURENCE
MARIE
LEAD
ANNA MARIA
LEAD
LEAD
LEAD
LEAD
CO-STAR
LEAD

GUEST STAR
GUEST
MILENA
CO-STAR
GUEST

ONE WOMAN
Volumnia (Helen Weigel)
One Woman
Duo
ANNA
CARLA
DRIFA
ALLISON
BEATRICE
RAINA
SHE

FLO
MARIA/MAI
ISABELLA
ALEXAS

I.Ouzounian – G.R.E.C.- Paris
Malik Chibane- ALHAMBRA Prod.
C.Corsini – A.Goddard- Paris
L.Dussaux – A. Sarde- Paris
I.Ouzounian – G.R.E.C.- Paris
A. TEREAN – Los Angeles
BOOMERANG PROD.-FRANCE
ARMENFILM-H.KATCHATRIAN
KAMERATEATR-A.ERNJAKIAN
DIR.ANTON-MUELLER
DIR.ARA MADZOUNAIN
DIR.LAURA ARCIERO

Egyptian TV Series
PAREV PRODUCTIONS
CENTRE POMPIDOU-PARIS
MTM-DIR.VICTOR HSU
H.WINKLER

NEW END THEATRE-LONDON
Arcola Theatre- London
North American and French tours
THEATRE DES DECHARGEURS- PARIS
CAIRO- RADIO THEATRE
CTO-AGOSTO BOAL CENTRE- Paris
CARTOUCHERIE-L'EPEE DE BOIS
QUESTOR'S THEATRE-LONDON
THE GLOBE- LOS ANGELES
YOUNG VIC THEATRE-LONDON
AVIGNON FESTIVAL-FRANCE
RIVERSIDE STUDIOS-LONDON
DOUBLEDGE THEATER-BOSTON
PASADENA PLAYHOUSE
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE,D.C.
CENTAUR THEATRE-MONTREAL
THE SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE
EDINBURGH FESTIVAL FRINGE
ENSEMBLE STUDIO THEATER
LOS ANGELES THEATER CENTER
OPEN AIR THEATRE-PARIS
THE GLOBE PLAYHOUSE

TWO PERSON SHOWS: Paris, Lyon, Venice, London, Manchester, Montreal, Toronto, Los Angeles, Boston, San Francisco, New York, Manchester, Edinburgh, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Detroit, Beirut, Cairo, Nicosia, Vienne.

TRAINING ACTING: UCLA// RADA (Short courses) // American Theater Arts- Los Angeles // AUC

DANCE: Choreogr. L.Grigorovna -- Moyisyev, St. Petersburg. Modern & Folk

WORKSHOPS:Theatre Du Soleil// Yevgeny Lansko// Trevor Vibert-London// Lee Strasberg// Cirt (Yoshi Oyda)// Monika Pagneux (movement) // Elisabeth Albahaca (Grotowski- voice) // Complicity Theatre (Simon McBurney)

LANGUAGES SPOKEN: English, French, Armenian, Italian, Arabic, Hebrew (Acted In), Turkish. **DIALECTS:** RP, Standard American (New York, California, Mid-West), French, Russian, Middle Eastern, Italian, etc.

* Videotape of work available on request Height: 5'5" (1m60) Hair: Chestnut Weight: 120 lb. (55k.) Eyes: Golden Brown

Radio

Interviews, Talk Shows, Poetry and Various Readings

RADIO Méditerranée -- Paris, France
RADIO Monte Carlo - Paris, France
CAIRO Radio - Cairo, Egypt
FRANCE CULTURE - Avignon, France
RADIO NOSTALGIE - Avignon, France
EUROPE 1 - Avignon, France
RADIO McGill - Montreal, Canada
CKGM - Montreal, Canada

KPFK (Mario Casseta) - Los Angeles
KCRW (ARTS LA) - Santa Monica, CA
HARC Radio - Detroit, USA
RADIO Montmartre - Paris, France
RADIO Ayp FM - Paris, France
AUS-Australian Radio - Sydney, Australia
CCB Cambridgeshire - Cambridge, UK
BBC Cambridge - Cambridge, UK

Television:

Interviews, Talk Shows, Guest Appearances, Performances

CHANNEL 2 - ACTION NEWS - Los Angeles
CHANNEL 18 - Los Angeles (numerous appearances)
ABC TV - Los Angeles
NBC TV - Los Angeles
NILE-TV – Egyptian Satellite TV
LBC- TV - Lebanon
LEBANON TV - Lebanese TV Channel
CAIRO TV - Channel One Egyptian TV

AL ANBAA - Egyptian TV News Channel
ROTTERDAM TV - Actress of the Day - The Netherlands
SARAJEVO TV - Yugoslavia
YEREVAN TV - Armenia (numerous appearances)
OSTANKINO - Moscow
TELE ARMENIA - Los Angeles (numerous appearances)
TELERAMA - Montreal – Canada

Representation:

Barry Kolker

Carson Kolker Organization

419 Park Avenue South, Suit 606, NY, NY 10016, Tel: 212-221-1517

Hilary Gagan & Assoc.

187 Drury Lane, London WC2B 5QD, T: +44 (0) 20 7404-8794 Email: hilary@hgassoc.freemove.co.uk

In the media partial list

USA:

- Los Angeles Times–Friday December 9th, 1988
- DramaLogue–April 28th 1987 & December 8-14, 1988
- Hollywood Reporter
- LA Business Journal–Week of September 2-8 , 1991
- LA Weekly–Week of April 24-30th, 1987
- Daily Variety–December 8th, 1988 & Friday June 19, 1992
- Los Angeles Herald Examiner–Thursday December 8th, 1988
- Pasadena Weekly–December 1988
- Smithsonian–May 1988
- Star News–Monday December 5th, 1988
- The Boston Globe–Week of April 17th & Monday April 24th 1989
- The Oregonian–Wednesday February 24th & Tuesday March 2nd, 1993
- AIM–Armenian International Magazine, Aug-Sept. 1991, June 1992, Nov. 1999
- ARARAT–Summer 1989
- California Courier–May 3rd, 1990, January 28th, 1993, December 5th, 1996
- Daily Bruin–Wednesday April 6th, 1988
- Mirror Spectator–November 30th, 1996
- News Press–Wednesday December 7th, 1988

UK:

- BBC World Service–June 2002
- The Stage–July 2002
- The Camden New Journal–June 2002
- On Line Review London–June 2002
- Abu Dhabi TV–Satellite & Cable–interview and reportage 2002
- Asharq El Awsat & Sayedati–International Arabic Language Press 2002
- BBC 4 Interview–May 2000
- The Scotsman–Thursday August 28th, 1986
- Time Out–November 1995
- BBC Cambridgeshire–July 1995

- Cambridge Film Festival Daily–July 18 - 22, 1995
- Cambridge Radio–July 1995
- Echo–October 1978
- Moving Pictures–Rotterdam Daily–Thursday February 2nd, 1995
- Riverside Studios–May 1989

FRANCE:

- Le Monde–June 1990
- L'Officiel–February, 2000
- Le Quotidien de Paris–Thursday July 25th, 1991
- Echo Republicain–February 27th, 1996
- Le Meridional–July 1991
- Le Provençal–July 1991
- La Marseillaise–July 1991
- Les Echos–July 1991
- L' Olivier Festival D'Avignon–15 & 17 July 1991
- Le Dauphine–Drome/Ardeche - December 19th, 1989
- Les Nouvelles–Rambouillet - 31st January 1996 & Tuesday February 27th, 1996
- Les Nouvelles d'Armenie–April 1995 & April 1997
- Liberation–Friday 18 October 1996
- Pariscope–April 1994 & October 1996
- Gamk–February, 2000
- Achkhar–April 1st, 1995 & February 2000
- Premiere–October 1996

INDIA:

- The Hindu–India's National Newspaper–April 2000
- New India Express–April 2000
- Deepika–April 2000 (front page)
- Malayalam Daily–April 2000 (front page)
- AsiaNet–Indian TV - April 2000

HOLLAND:

- Moving Pictures Daily–Wednesday February 1st, 1995
- Festival Daily–Thursday February 2nd, 1995
- Rotterdams Dagblad (Rotterdam Daily)–Thursday February, 2nd, 1995

ITALY:

- La Repubblica–May 1994
- La Stampa–June 1998

In the media partial list continued

CANADA:

- Radio CKGM–McGill - April 2000
- The Gazette, Montreal, Friday September 23rd, 1988
- Radio McGill–September 1988
- La Presse–Montreal, Wednesday September 21st, 1988
- CKGM–Radio - September 1988
- Abaka Weekly–19th August 1991

EGYPT:

- Akhbar El Nogoum (Stars' News)–December 1996, December 1997 & Sept. 1998
- Akhbar El Yom (Daily News)–9 December 1995, 9 & 14 December 1996
- Al Ahram (The Pyramids - Daily)–9 December 1996 & 15 December 1997
- Al Cinema Wal Nas (Cinema and People)–January 3rd, 1998
- Al Folous (Money Magazine)–November 1997
- Al Gomhoureya (The Republic - Daily)–13 December 1996
- Al Wafd (The Party - Daily)–December 8th, 1996
- Al Wasat (The Milieu)–March 10th, 1997
- ART (Arab Radio & Television)–January 1998
- Channel 1, 2 & 3 Egyptian TV–December - January 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998
- Hawaa' (Eve-Women's Weekly)–January 3rd, 1998
- Le Progres Magazine–Sunday 15 December 1996
- Nile TV–Satellite Television-December 1996, December 1997
- October Magazine–March 1997
- Sot El Kahera (Voice of Cairo - Radio)–December 1996 & December 1997

LEBANON:

- Al Hayat (Life)–June 1996
- Al Watan (The Homeland)–June 1996
- Ararat–Friday, May 24th 1996
- Aztag (Sign)–1975
- Khosnag (Messenger)–1975
- LBC–Lebanese TV–January 1996
- Zartonk (Renaissance)–December 1st, 1996

TURKEY:

- Hurriyet–May 2000
- AGOS–August 8th, 1997, November 1997 & December 1997
- Jamanak–August 1997, November 1997 & December 1997
- Marmara–August 1st, 1997, November 1997 & December 1997

ARMENIA:

- Azg–Yerevan - February 1991, March 1991, May 1992, July 1993 etc.
- Ecran Magazine (Cover)–March 1991
- Gegharvesd–May 16-31, 1991
- Hayastani Hanrabadoutiun–February 1991
- Housharar–April 13th, 1991
- Radio Yerevan–February 1991, May 1992
- Respublica Armenia–23d May 1992
- Yeregoyan Yerevan–February 1991, May 1992

BULGARIA:

- Yerevan Weekly–February 6th, 1997

TUNISIA:

- Le Temps (Time - Daily)–March 3rd, 1996