

Presented by the UCR MFA for Creative Writing and Writing for the Performing Arts:

Reza Aslan and Hooman Majd: A Conversation about Politics and Culture in Iran Today

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2011

6:30 PM

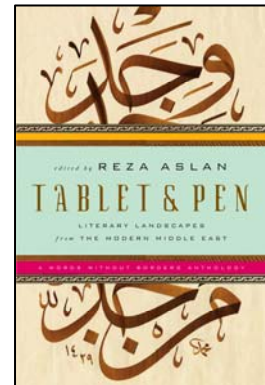
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Iranian-American authors Hooman Majd (*The Ayatollah Begs to Differ*) and Reza Aslan (*Tablet & Pen: Literary Landscapes from the Modern Middle East; No god but God*) will join Prof. Tom Lutz to discuss their unique and fascinating perspectives on the state of politics and culture in contemporary Iran.



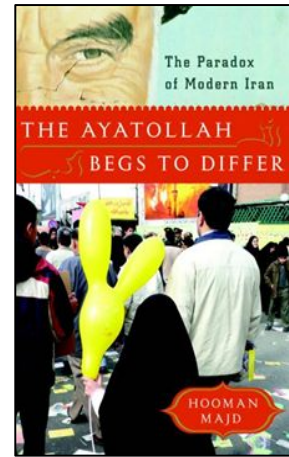
"Aslan is not only a perspicuous, thoughtful interpreter of the Muslim world but also a subtle psychologist of the call to jihad." --- *Los Angeles Times*



PROF. REZA ASLAN, born in Iran, is an internationally acclaimed writer and scholar of religions. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the Los Angeles Institute for the Humanities, and the Pacific Council on International Policy. He serves on the board of directors of the Ploughshares Fund; Abraham's Vision, an interfaith peace organization; PEN USA; and he serves on the national advisory board of the Levantine Cultural Center, building bridges between Americans and the Arab/Muslim world. Aslan's first book, *No god but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam*, has been named one of the 100 most important books of the last decade. He is also the author of *How to Win a Cosmic War* and editor of the anthology, *Tablet & Pen: Literary Landscapes from the Modern Middle East*.



"Majd's...unprecedented access over the last decade to two of Iran's most prominent politicians, provides him with a deeply informed perspective on the religion, politics and culture of Iran." --- *Los Angeles Times*



HOOMAN MAJD was born in Tehran, Iran in 1957, and lived abroad from infancy with his family, who were in the diplomatic service. He attended boarding school in England and college in the United States, and he stayed in the U.S. after the Islamic Revolution of 1979.

Majd had a long career in the entertainment business before devoting himself to writing and journalism full-time. He worked at Island Records and Polygram Records for many years, with a diverse group of artists, and was head of film and music at Palm Pictures, where he produced *The Cup* and James Toback's *Black and White*.

Majd's book *The Ayatollah Begs to Differ* was published in 2008, and his latest book *The Ayatollahs' Democracy* will be published in the Fall of 2010.

Hooman Majd has also written for *GQ*, *Newsweek*, *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *The New Republic*, *The Financial Times*, *Foreign Policy*, *Politico*, *The New York Observer*, *Interview*, *The Daily Beast*, and *Salon*, and has been a regular contributor to *The Huffington Post* from its inception. He lives in New York City and travels regularly back to Iran.



PROF. TOM LUTZ, chair of the Creative Writing Department, recently returned from an extensive journey through Iran, the Middle East and parts of Africa. He has taught at the University of Iowa, Stanford University, the University of Copenhagen, and the California Institute of the Arts. He is the author of *American Nervousness*, *1903*, *Cosmopolitan Vistas*, *Crying*, and, most recently, *Doing Nothing: A History of Loafers, Loungers, Slackers, and Bums*. He has also written many shorter works in a variety of genres.