

Pieces would be at home in hippest clubs

From CI

Like the Persian textile artists of the past, she is inspired by the colours of the landscape, although, appropriately enough, her colours include the greens, greys and blues of the North Shore as



PHOTOS BY BILL KEAY/VANCOUVER SUN

Fariba Mirzaie's creations have no straight lines, no mixed colours — 'exactly the same as nature.'

well as the yellows and reds of the desert.

Like the tribal textiles, her pieces have "no straight lines, mixed colours, no patterns — exactly the same as nature."

This doesn't mean she produces traditional tribal-style robes. Many of Mizaie's pieces would be at home at the hippest Vancouver clubs.

And *gabbeh* has an additional meaning for Mirzaie now. Along with two other local textile artists she will soon open a contemporary textile gallery in International Village called Gabbeh. Mirzaie says it is the first such gallery in Vancouver, and will be one of sever-

al galleries locating on the second floor of the formerly moribund International Village, now seeing something of a rebirth. Two fibre artists will be opening studios there as well, she says.

Mirzaie's exhibit *Historical Iranian Textiles and the Works of Fariba Mirzaie* can be seen at the Seymour Art Gallery, 4360 Gallant, North Vancouver, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. through Sept. 12. A fashion show of her work will be held Sept. 12 at 7 p.m. at the Seymour Art Gallery.

Gabbeh gallery in International Village, (best known as the home of Tinseltown), at 88 W. Pender, is scheduled to open in late September.

Iranian designer creates wearable works of art

Faribe Mirzaie's clothing has appeared in galleries, and now she's opening her own

BY LINDA BATES
VANCOUVER SUN

We don't think of elegant, original fashions as having a place in today's Iran, yet that's where North Vancouver designer Fariba Mirzaie began her career, when she was just 19.

"I started designing when I was six years old and I had my own business when I was 19, designing for manufacturers in Iran," Mirzaie said in a telephone interview from her home.

We think of Iranian women as being forever shrouded in black, but at home, Mirzaie says, women wear whatever they want — including her designs.

Fortunately, here in Canada her wearable works of art are not only worn out of the house, but found in galleries as well. Several dozen of her pieces are on display through Sept. 12 at the Seymour Art Gallery in Deep Cove.

The pieces, mostly dresses, are made from lightweight fabrics dyed and pieced together. They have an airy feeling — a group of white blouses displayed together look as if they're about to take flight.

Each piece is made individual-

ly by Mirzaie. "I do everything by myself because it's a step-by-step process," she says. "And I have to be with a piece to see. Nobody else can sew pieces for me. I'm controlling the design; I'm controlling the colour the way that I understand it, because for me it's a piece of art, not just a [dress]."

Mirzaie, 40, who came to Canada in 1996 and completed the Capilano College Textile Arts program in 1997, says she is inspired by classical Iranian textiles, three of which are on display beside her creations in the gallery.

It's hard for an observer to see the connection between the intricate formal embroidery of the classical pieces and the fanciful, free-flowing, avant-garde designs of her wall hangings and garments, but she says it's not the designs that are similar, but the thoughts behind them.

"I like the tribal textiles — called *gabbeh*. People who are weaving are ... weaving from whatever they see from the surrounding area. The way I work is the same — I'm inspired by nature."

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Fariba Mirzaie with her creations, on display until Sept. 12 at Deep Cove's Seymour Art Gallery.