

Celebrated Iranian poet Ahmad Shamlou, died

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) - Celebrated Iranian poet Ahmad Shamlou, who endured prison and self-imposed exile in pursuit of greater freedom, died Sunday after battling severe diabetes. He was 75.

Shamlou was born in Tehran on Dec. 12, 1925. He began a lifelong struggle for greater political freedom and established himself as a literary figure even before he was past his teens.

He was arrested and jailed several times under the repressive regime of the U.S.-backed shah. He left Iran for the United States in 1977. Shamlou returned after the

shah was overthrown in the 1979 Islamic revolution. He also criticized the new religious establishment, but he devoted his later life almost exclusively to literature.

In 1991, Shamlou was awarded the Freedom of Expression prize by New York-based Human Rights Watch.

Shamlou was a playwright, journalist, critic and translator. But it was his poems that set him apart in a nation where poetry is still widely read, memorized and quoted in daily conversation. Shamlou is credited with reforming Persian poetry, introducing untried ways and techniques that gave greater flight to his imagination.



Iran tries peaceful revolution

Scott Peterson Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor TEHRAN, IRAN Violence often defines pivotal moments in the Middle East, and events marking their memory have a history of turning violent, too. This weekend's effort to stage a nonviolent memorial is part of Iran's tense struggle over who will control the speed of political change in the Islamic Republic. This past year has witnessed an intensification of a vicious tug-of-war between hard-line conservative clerics and popular reformists who back the moderate President Mohamad Khatami.

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