



Dance of Torn Papers' synopsis:

Written and Directed by acclaimed playwright Mohammad Yaghoubi, Dance of Torn Papers is an award-winning episodic play; in this production, Nowadays Theatre presents two new episodes written for Toronto Fringe 2021, titled 'Birthday Present' and 'Mother'.

'Birthday Present' is a comedic yet touching look at a young man's first encounter with a sex worker. The audience gets an intimate glimpse of unrequited love and sexual politics, as this spirited young man struggles to reconcile his possessiveness with his sex-positive feminist outlook. Yaghoubi enjoyed the freedom to write this episode only after he moved to Canada. Were he to stage it in Iran, the taboo content and portrayal of sex work would make it not only a political act, but illegal to stage, putting the writer, actors, and even audience in danger of being arrested. 'Birthday Present' explores the unjust legal realities of the profession while maintaining an optimistic curiosity. It seeks to challenge audience preconceptions of sex work by examining the complex views of either party in the encounter.

'Mother' tells a story of loss and grief through the poignant lens of the maternal bond. Yaghoubi wanted to pay homage to the unique relationship of a mother and her daughter, which he has touched on in his previous works, but never highlighted in this way. 'Mother' is written for his wife, Aida Keykhaii, as a means of catharsis; the episode was inspired by watching her suffer this past year as she battled with cancer. She will be playing the role of Rozhan in both Farsi and English versions of the episode. This piece is his response to the pain his family went through. He hopes that it will bring a sense of closure to their lives and the lives of everyone currently going through a painful situation. During the era of Covid, when so many said goodbye to their families from afar, 'Mother' is a timely story emphasizing the need for connection with loved ones during fear of death.