



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Elif Shafak meets literature enthusiasts at MayFest 2005!

Elif Shafak, who surely takes her place as one of the most prominent writers of the 21st century fiction, will gather with literature enthusiasts at MayFest 2005, the annual arts and culture festival aimed at highlighting the changing face of Turkish arts.

New York-based Turkish nonprofit organization **Moon and Stars Project** will hold its seventh annual arts and culture festival from April 1 to May 31, 2005. As in earlier years, various artists from Turkey and the United States will perform this year. The festival, which features a wide scope of disciplines from theater and dance to photography and literature, will host writer **Elif Shafak** on **April 15th** at the Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies at NYU.

Shafak will read parts from her latest novel **The Saint of Incipient Insanities**, followed by a discussion, book signing, and reception.

In **The Saint of Incipient Insanities**, the hilarious and heartbreaking tale of a group of foreign graduate students and their never-ending quest for happiness and belonging, Elif Shafak asks, *Who is a real stranger – is he the one who lives in a country, knowing to belong to somewhere else, or the one who lives like a stranger in his own country, having nowhere to belong to?* and writes: *“As names adjust to a foreign country, something is always lost-be it a dot, a letter, or an accent. What happens to your name in another territory is similar to what happens to a voluminous pack of spinach when cooked-some new taste can be added to the main ingredient, but its size shrinks visibly. It is this cutback a foreigner learns first. The primary requirement of accommodation in a strange land is the estrangement of the hitherto most familiar: your name”*

In addition to her career as a notable novelist in international literature circles, Elif Shafak teaches at the Near Eastern Studies Department of the University of Arizona, where she is a professor of Turkish and Women Studies. Aimed at building cultural bridges between the United States and Turkey, Moon and Stars Project seeks to promote Turkish literature in the U.S. by hosting writer Elif Shafak at MayFest 2005.

Date: April 15, 2005

Time: 7:00 pm

Venue: Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies at NYU

50 Washington Square South (at 255 Sullivan Street)

New York, NY 10012

For additional information, please visit www.moonandstarsproject.org.

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For visuals: <http://www.moonandstarsproject.org/pressimages>