

New
Gem Discovery
 in Maine's Western Mountains



Maine Tourmaline
Come to the Source

SparHawk
 Mint Green Teal Maine Tourmaline



SparHawk
 Mint Green Teal
 Maine Tourmaline
 Crystal

Emeralds and tourmalines are found throughout the world. SparHawk Mint Green Teal is found in only one place... on the banks of the Little Androscoggin River, just 28 miles north of our Portland store.

The new SparHawk gems are cut from crystals unlike anything we have ever seen from Maine. SparHawk gems have a brilliance and clarity exceeding that of the finest emeralds. This mint green teal color is rewriting Maine gem history. This is a world-class color.

Every week we are completing new rings, necklaces, and earring designs in gold and platinum.

Finds like this go quickly. If you're considering one of these historic gems, check out this week's offerings on-line or visit our store.



SparHawk
 Mint Green Teal Cut Gems

Cross Jewelers

Jewelers to New England and Beyond Since 1908

570 Congress Street • Portland, Maine

www.CrossJewelers.com 1-800-433-2988

PW8912

©12



Watermelon Patch
Maine Tourmaline

A heart of pink, a rind of green,
 Held secure by curling tendrils
 of precious gold.

Colors, shapes, and sizes vary in infinite
 and fascinating combinations.

For a sampling and preview see our website:

www.CrossJewelers.com

We look forward to your visit so that
 you may select your favorites.

If you can't wait, (and who could with
 such a collection?) give us a call.

14K yellow gold necklace
 shown actual size

\$585.00 - \$1,085.00

now available in sterling silver
 starting at \$345.00

Cross Jewelers ©06

Eureka!



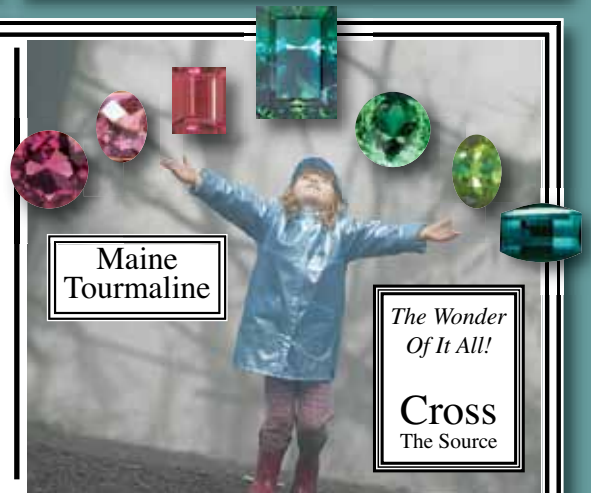
Eureka Blue

Stop in soon to see
 our newest creations.

Cross Jewelers

©10

570 Congress St. Portland, ME



**Maine
 Tourmaline**

*The Wonder
 Of It All!*

Cross
 The Source

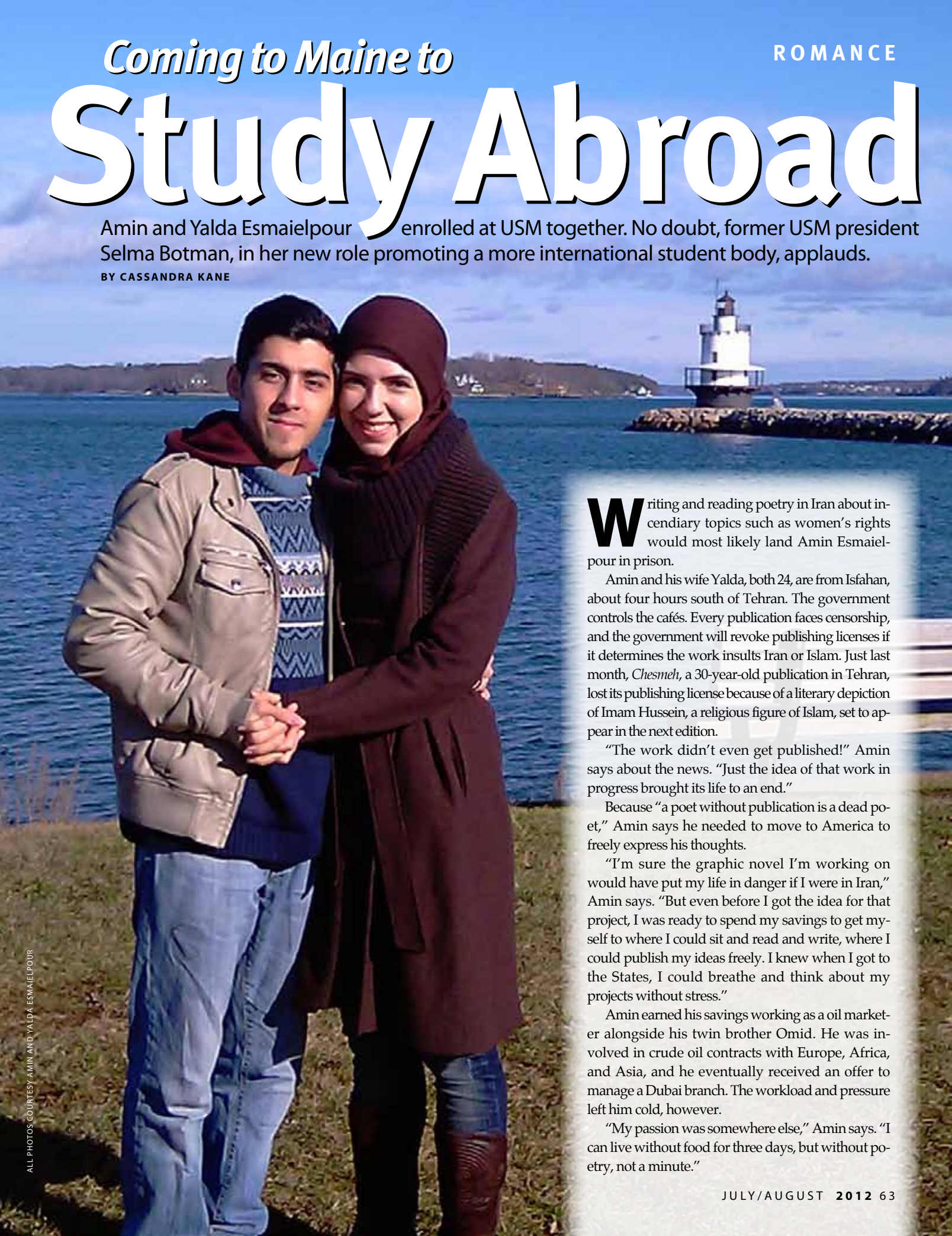
Coming to Maine to

ROMANCE

Study Abroad

Amin and Yalda Esmaielpour enrolled at USM together. No doubt, former USM president Selma Botman, in her new role promoting a more international student body, applauds.

BY CASSANDRA KANE



Writing and reading poetry in Iran about incendiary topics such as women's rights would most likely land Amin Esmaielpour in prison.

Amin and his wife Yalda, both 24, are from Isfahan, about four hours south of Tehran. The government controls the cafés. Every publication faces censorship, and the government will revoke publishing licenses if it determines the work insults Iran or Islam. Just last month, *Chesmeh*, a 30-year-old publication in Tehran, lost its publishing license because of a literary depiction of Imam Hussein, a religious figure of Islam, set to appear in the next edition.

"The work didn't even get published!" Amin says about the news. "Just the idea of that work in progress brought its life to an end."

Because "a poet without publication is a dead poet," Amin says he needed to move to America to freely express his thoughts.

"I'm sure the graphic novel I'm working on would have put my life in danger if I were in Iran," Amin says. "But even before I got the idea for that project, I was ready to spend my savings to get myself to where I could sit and read and write, where I could publish my ideas freely. I knew when I got to the States, I could breathe and think about my projects without stress."

Amin earned his savings working as a oil marketer alongside his twin brother Omid. He was involved in crude oil contracts with Europe, Africa, and Asia, and he eventually received an offer to manage a Dubai branch. The workload and pressure left him cold, however.

"My passion was somewhere else," Amin says. "I can live without food for three days, but without poetry, not a minute."

Maide for You

Your Personal Cleaning Service

- Locally owned
- Customized cleaning
- Invoicing packages available
- All major credit cards accepted
- Employee background checks
- Special care for every client
 - Flexible scheduling
 - Attention to detail
 - Fully insured



Maide for You
207-653-1837
maideforyou.com

The
MERCHANT
CO.

The
LOCAL
HAND ♦ MADE

CARDS
GIFTS
ART
PRINTS
VINTAGE
BABY
JEWELRY
HOME

CO.

656 Congress Street
Portland
207.772.8525

ROMANCE

OPENING LINES

Five years ago, in his shared room at the University of Isfahan, Amin read Thomas Hardy's novel *Jude the Obscure*. The work inspired Amin to pursue writing his own poetry.

"At the end of the novel, there were a few poems by Hardy," Amin says. "I read them and loved the language; they rhymed and had meter! The most important elements in Persian poetry I'd grown up with were there.

"I wanted to study poetry and, most importantly, contemporary poetry. For sure, America is the best option," Amin says. "People are supportive, respectful, and appreciative for others' poetry and ideas."

Since Yalda also wanted to continue studying toward a PhD in literacy education, the couple—married in Iran three years ago after



meeting as undergraduate classmates at University of Isfahan—decided to apply to graduate programs together. They looked into Arizona State, University of Massachusetts-Amherst, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and University of Southern Maine. (The couple admits at first they didn't know Maine was a state. They thought it was a part of Canada, just like everyone in California.)

They used \$15,000 of Amin's oil marketing savings, as well as family seed money, to cover application and postal fees, the costs of examinations, their trip to Kabul to obtain their three-year student visas, and their plane tickets to the U.S.

Because he's not a native English speaker, all of the creative writing programs he applied to—except USM's Stonecoast—denied Amin admission. With Yalda's acceptance to Arizona State, the couple's "feet first touched the clay of the United States of America," Amin says, in Phoenix on Decem-



PORTLAND, MAINE

- PORTLAND'S PREMIER FISH MARKET
- COURTEOUS & KNOWLEDGEABLE SALES STAFF
- WIDE VARIETY OF QUALITY FISH & SEAFOOD
- WE PACK TO TRAVEL & SHIP NATIONWIDE
 - GIFT CARDS

(207) 775-0251 or (800) 370-1790 • www.harborfish.com

9 Custom House Wharf • Portland, Maine 04101 • Mon-Sat 8:30-5:30 Sun 9:00-3:00

ber 7. But with no tuition waivers for Masters degrees, they couldn't stay financially stable in Arizona. The couple decided to move to Portland.

SCANNING LIVES

Because USM's Stonecoast MFA program is a low-residency program, Amin worked with the Multicultural Student Affairs office to enter another program to maintain full-time student status and meet student visa requirements. After speaking with Dr. Ardis Cameron, director of the American and New England Studies graduate program, Amin decided that department best complemented his pursuits.

"Between classes, an independent study in ANES, 100 pages of critical papers and poems, and 15 books to read and analyze, this semester was a lot of work," Amin says. "But Ardis's enthusiasm for the program, and the support and advice from the MFA faculty, have been so helpful."

"One of the central goals of the American and New England Studies Program is to call attention to the diversity of New England," Cameron says. "The idea that New England is historically white, Anglo, and Protestant is part of an invented New England. We're very enthusiastic to have students in our program who represent Maine's diversity."

A BREATH IN THE CAESURA

"We immediately fell in love with Maine's nature," Amin says. "It's a beautiful and inspiring place to live. The ocean and rocks are a new landscape to think and write near," Amin says.

He and Yalda found a one-bedroom apartment on Park Avenue, directly across from Deering Oaks.

"Amin adores the window and the view. It's wonderful inspiration," Yalda says. "This is our first apartment together since being married, and it's really a perfect size and good location."

The grocery store they frequent is Hannaford, a "big mystery" to the couple when they first arrived. Accustomed to small markets in Iran, the couple experienced severe option paralysis walking up and down the aisles, especially when it came time to choose yogurt.

"In Iran, there's one shop for vegetables, one for cheese, and one for bread, so the first day we didn't know what to buy," Amin says. "We just stared at the many yogurts."



Custom art glass for any application.

Custom Designs, Restorations and Repairs,
Windows, Doors, Lighting, Kitchen and Bath,
Fusing, Painting, Sandblasting, and more...

• 630 Forest Ave Portland, ME 04101 • 800.773.4154 • www.phoenixstudio.com •

Pedro's

Lunch • Dinner • Drinks

Open Year Round
Daily Happy Hour

207-967-5544
PedrosMaine.com
181 PORT ROAD, KENNEBUNK

BUY WITH CONFIDENCE

MAINE'S BEST AUCTION EXPERIENCE!

"WHAT AN INTERESTING AUCTION!
IT WAS FUN AND I GOT
JUST WHAT I WANTED."
JUDY JOHNSON, NORTHPORT

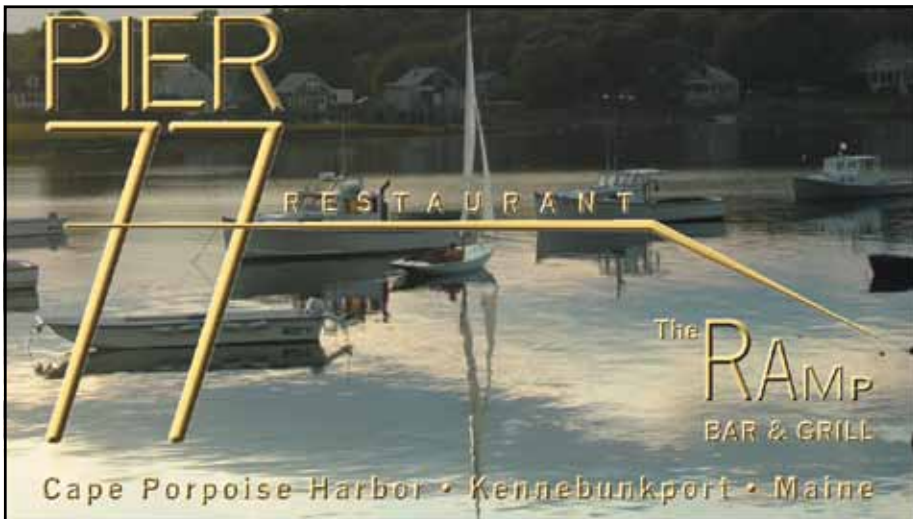


New England's Trusted
Auction & Appraisal
Professionals

Thomaston Place
AUCTION
Galleries

FREE APPRAISALS
EVERY TUESDAY
ALWAYS ACCEPTING
QUALITY CONSIGNMENTS

51 ATLANTIC HIGHWAY, THOMASTON, MAINE 04861 • 207.354.8141
www.thomastonauction.com • appraisal@kajav.com



Serving our New Summer Menu

*Open Daily
Lunch and Dinner*

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MENUS, DIRECTIONS & FUNCTION INFORMATION
207-967-8500 WWW.PIER77RESTAURANT.COM
77 PIER ROAD, CAPE PORPOISE

ROMANCE

We planned to buy only one but walked out with more than we needed without even realizing it."

Over a traditional Persian meal, Amin and Yalda explain they prefer not to be labeled as Muslim, and they appreciate the welcome they receive from those they meet.

But there's still a sense of wanting to fit in. Although Yalda doesn't wear a hijab in her home, letting her honey-colored, shoulder-length hair shine in the dim lighting of their apartment, she's considering not wearing hijab altogether so she's not defined by her religion when in public.

THE METERED LIFE

Receiving money from family in Iran is an ongoing struggle.

"Hardly, very hardly, we make ends meet," Amin says.

Although Yalda's father, a landowner in Isfahan, provides money to the couple, severe U.S. sanctions restrict most money transfers from Iran. Each successful transfer comes with a hefty \$1,000 fee.

"We have to spend money to receive money, if it even comes through," says Amin. Last month, Amin's twin brother attempted to transfer money to Amin from his bank in France.

"They had to send it to Germany, Denmark, and finally to Australia to send that via a third party," Amin says. "Seven thousand of the \$12,000 is missing up to today."

Yalda receives a graduate assistantship from the Literacy Education Department at USM that includes a tuition waiver and a monthly stipend. Amin has received \$1,000 in scholarships from the American and New England Studies and MFA departments. His tuition is \$16,000 a semester, and the couple's food, rent, and other expenses add up to about \$1,350 a month. With student visas, neither one is eligible to work outside the university. And as non-citizens, they don't qualify for state or federal aid.

In short, the lucrative diversity they bring to the table may just identify them as USM Chancellor James H. Page's and Special Assistant to the Chancellor Botman's new model students. ■

» To read poetry by Amin Esmailpour, visit portlandmonthly.com/portmag/2012/07/poet-extras.



Wicked Whooopies[®]

by Isamax Snacks Inc

Bringing Back
Childhood Memories[®]!

Featured on

Oprah

Food Network

Phantom Gourmet

Rachael Ray



WWW.WICKEDWHOOPIES.COM

1-877-447-2629

32 Main Street, Freeport, Maine 207-865-3100 • 621 Maine Avenue, Farmingdale, Maine 207-622-8860