

Life is now turning the right way for Saharnez

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MUSIC and singing has always been a secret passion for Saharnez. For so long it had to be, for her own safety.

Growing up in Iran, women were not allowed to sing or perform in public. When Saharnez was 11, police burst into her school's small musical concert and smashed all the students' guitars. She didn't pick up an instrument for several years. "I didn't want to play because I was shocked," she says, now 23 and

living in Melbourne.

Saharnez's father Majid introduced her to the music of his idols Pink Floyd. One song, Coming Back to Life, resonated: "I took a heavenly ride through our silence, I knew the moment had arrived, For killing the past and coming back to life".

"My father said to me, 'Listen to the music that changes your life, not just the music that doesn't give anything to you'. When I was around 11 or 12, I

thought, 'Life is finished, everything is black and there is no love any more'. But, every time I listened to this song, it gave me belief."

Now years later and half a world away, Saharnez is singing Pink Floyd for a new album, Sugarmill Road, produced by Gangajang and Yothu Yindi guitarist Robbie James for The Scattered People.

When Saharnez told her father, still living in Tehran, it was



FINDING HER VOICE: Iranian singer Saharnez is enjoying life in Australia.

only the second time in her life she had seen him cry. The first was when she left Iran in May 2013 for Indonesia, then went by boat to Christmas Island. Sa-

harnez spent three months in detention there and in Darwin, before arriving in Brisbane as a refugee.

"I tried to forget music a couple of times. I studied information technology. I try to run away all the time from music and arts but finally I understand that, 'No, I'm not this person. I love these things'.

"In my head, all my wish was that one day I (can) go to Pink Floyd's concert. All the love I have for Pink Floyd and their songs, the meaning of their songs ... I cannot believe I sing their songs. It's too big for me. It's amazing."