



Iran to hold festival on Qajar era monument

Tehran Times Art Desk

TEHRAN — Guardians of Shams-ol-Emareh plan to hold an art and cultural festival to highlight the Qajar era monument located in the heart of Tehran.

The secretariat of the festival has called on photographers, painters, street theater performers, cartoonists, satirists, graphic designers, and architectural designers to participate in the event, which will take place from February 16 to 20.

The festival aims to promote the monuments adjacent to the Golestan Palace with a special focus on Shams-ol-Emareh.

The festival also plans bring into focus the important historical events that have occurred at the Golestan Palace.

The impact of the Golestan Palace and Shams-ol-Emareh on the overall architectural profile of Tehran, the role and position of the Golestan Palace in public art and culture, and

the Qajar dynasty's status in Iranian history along with its weak and strong points are among the other subjects of the festival.

The organizers of the festival have said that street plays centering on Qajar era personalities, such as Mirza Taqi Khan Farahani (Amir Kabir), Sheik Fazlollah Nuri, Ayatollah Hassan Modarres, Mirza Reza Kermani, Ayatollah Mohammad-Hassan Shirazi (Mirza-ye Shirazi), Kamalolmolk, Qa'em-Maqam Farahani and Abbas Mirza, will be preferred.

The Qajar era personalities and historical events of the period should also be the central themes of satirical works that are sent to the festival.

One of the major buildings of the Golestan Palace, Shams-ol-Emareh, was constructed by order of Qajar king Nasser ad-Din Shah (1831-1896).

Shams-ol-Emareh, once Tehran's tallest



Shams-ol-Emareh, Tehran

royal building, was constructed in three stories with two towers. It was used by the king and his special guests for viewing Tehran.

Kuwaiti gallery to showcase works of Iranian artists

Tehran Times Art Desk

TEHRAN — A collection of works of art by a number of Iranian artists in various forms will be put on display in an exhibition at the FA Gallery in Kuwait in mid January.

The collection was selected by the gallery owners in Tehran, Rozita Sharaf-

jahan, director of the Tarrahan-e Azad Gallery in Tehran, told the Persian service of ILNA on Saturday.

Work by photographer Katayun Karami and painter Taha Heidari will be sent from Tarrahan-e Azad to the Kuwaiti gallery for the showcase.

Tarrahan-e Azad has also organ-

ized another show at the FA Gallery for March. Works by Karami, Jahed Sarboland, Mohammad-Mehdi Tabatabaai and Samira Eskandarfar are scheduled to be shown in the exhibit.

The FA Gallery opened on October 10, 2010 to host shows by regional and international artists.

Iranian musicians to honor lasting icon Mohammad Nuri

Tehran Times Art Desk

TEHRAN — Musicians are due to hold a commemoration ceremony in honor of the perpetual icon, the deceased solo tenor singer Mohammad Nuri in February.

Distinguished tenor Mohammad Nuri, a singer with more than 40 years in folk music, died in August 2010 at the age of 81.

In a press conference held here on Saturday, Managing director of Iran's House of Music Mohammad Sarir said that the program was scheduled to be held as the Nuri annual award, but this year due to lack of time, it will be limited to only a commemoration ceremony.

Two concerts are arranged for two nights, while those who had collaborated with Nuri will be awarded at the ceremony, said organizer of the event Mehran Farhadi.

Several documentaries on the singer along with music videos and live performances are also arranged for the three-day event from February 17 to 19, he added.

Sarir also explained that works by Nuri performed over the past six decades would be re-performed by a small group in the form of a symphony orchestra.



Mohammad Nuri performs during the closing ceremony of the 24th Fajr International Music Festival at the Vahdat Hall in Tehran on December 16, 2008. (ISNA/Mona Hubefekr)

We are planning to hold the annual award in three categories in which the best songwriter, composer, and singer would be awarded, Sarir added.

He expressed hope that the private sector would support the annual award saying, "we would like to hold the program without the support of the public sector since Nuri himself was an independent singer."

A graduate of English literature, Nuri began to teach English in different schools, but his love of music propelled him to singing. He studied Iranian vocal music with master Esmail Mehrtash, and continued with Sirus Shahrdar and Fereidun Farzaneh.

His live, sensational performances of melodies such as "Jaan-e Maryam", "Shalazar", "Wishes" and his songs in different dialects of Gilaki, Azari and Shirazi will always remain on people's minds.

His love for his homeland was made quite clear from his songs "Land of Sun" and "My Good Land". He regarded music as an international language that belongs to all nations of the world.

The performance of Carmina Burana (a scenic cantata composed by Carl Orff) with his choir at Tehran's Vahdat Hall in 2008 was truly a memorable occasion.

Major Islamic art exhibition underway in Amsterdam

AMSTERDAM (ISLAM TODAY) — "Passion for Perfection", the latest exhibition at De Nieuwe Kerk Amsterdam, showcases approximately 500 pieces from the collection of Professor Nasser D. Khalili. The exhibition features illuminated Qurans, manuscripts, paintings, textiles, ceramics, lacquerware and fine metalwork. Also on display are gold jewelry, carpets, glassware and stone and wood sculptures.

The central theme of "Passion for Per-

fection" is the beauty and exquisite workmanship of Islamic art. The Islamic world is highly diverse, geographically and culturally, and more than thirteen centuries of Islamic artistry are represented in the Khalili Collections. It includes masterpieces from all over the Islamic world: from China and India to Iran and Iraq, from Egypt and Tunisia to Turkey and Spain.

"The exhibit shows that Islamic art is a masterly expression not of a single

national culture or civilization," said Vincent Boele, curator of exhibitions for the museum, "but of many peoples joined by Islam for more than 1,400 years."

Although reflecting Islamic traditions, in this instance the term "Islamic" does not mean these pieces were created just for religious reasons; they were designed as works of art recalling local cultures and beliefs.

Passion for Perfection will be on view until April 7, 2011.

Sequels help boost foreign box office

NEW YORK (Variety) — While Christmas box office totals weren't much to celebrate, the international market delivered a degree of cheer, led by the bow of "Little Fockers", with Paramount handling overseas distribution, and Disney's 3D holdover stocking stuffer "Tron: Legacy". Both pics fought neck-and-neck for the top spot, with "Fockers" gaining a slight edge. Par estimated \$27 million for "Fockers" over the holiday sesh, while "Tron" tallied \$26.6 million at 5,475 locations in 34 territories -- or 65% of the international market. By comparison, "Fockers" debuted in 37 markets, playing at 3,933 locations.

Things might have been even rosier if most of Europe, like portions of the U.S., hadn't been blanketed in blizzard conditions, causing some plexes to close early. Still, top markets like the U.K. and France contributed hearty figures for "Fockers," while "Tron" earned slightly more than half its weekend take from Russia and outside Europe -- in Mexico and Japan.

In Blighty, "Fockers" beat the series' first pic, "Meet the Parents," by 96%, grossing a chart-topping \$7.3 million at 487 locations, while in Gaul, the third franchise installment tallied \$3 million, 20% better than the original. "Fockers,"

which reunites Ben Stiller and Robert De Niro as son and father-in-law, scored mixed reviews in France, with one critic from Le Figaro describing the pic as having "subpar jokes, but a VIP table of actors."

Gaul's holiday B.O. was decidedly American, while Italian auds supported the usual crop of local luffers over the Christmas sesh, including "Christmas in South Africa," this topped the Italo B.O. with \$8 million in its soph sesh.

"Fockers" debuted strongly in Australia, grossing \$2 million on Boxing Day (Dec. 26) -- a widely celebrated holiday in Oz.

Culture minister regards cinema as major concern of Ahmadinejad government



Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Mohammad Hosseini attends a press conference, which was held in Tehran on January 2, 2011 to explain the mission of the High Council for Cinema. (Mehr/Ashraf Tabatabaai)

Tehran Times Art Desk

TEHRAN — Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Mohammad Hosseini has said that cinematic and cultural issues are major concerns of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad during his second term in office.

In a press conference held here on Sunday, the minister said that cinema and removing the obstacles in the way of Iranian cinema are of high importance, shown by his having encouraged the administration to establish the High Council for Cinema.

"Despite the great number of programs in which President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has been involved, he insists on participating in the sessions to eliminate problems in Iranian cinema," he said.

The first meeting of the High Council for Cinema was held on Thursday, (December 30) with the president presiding over the council. The council was initiated during a government cabinet meeting on July 21, 2010 to be Iran's highest state body for making policy in cinematic affairs.

Iranian cinema, a cinema that was once world famous, is not passing through good times these days, and we hope it can regain its popularity, he added.

The council is composed of the minister of culture and Islamic guidance who acts as its president, deputy culture minister for cinematic affairs, the IRIB director, the Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization director, five cineastes and a number of other officials.

Reviewing technical equipment, construction of new movie theaters, providing life insurance for cineastes, and establishment of a cinematic organization for pursuing these issues were discussed during the first meeting.

Filmmakers Davud Mirbaqeri, Shahriar Bahrani, Masud Dehnamaki, Mohsen Ali-Akbari, Jamal Shurjeh and Masud Jafari-Jozani are the members of the council selected by the Culture Ministry and approved by the administration.

Hosseini next said that the president emphasizes continuation of the meetings, adding, "We'd better stop hesitating about the council and step in. More individuals can join the council."

"We would surely welcome any proposals by Iran's House of Cinema. The members of the council can be increased and we would like to make better use of the opinions of others," he added.

He also talked about participation of TV series directors in the high council meetings and said that cinema and TV are not separate.

Hosseini also remarked that they are aiming for unity and cohesion so that all departments collaborate with one another, "so we need to choose those who possess common viewpoint to avoid further disagreements among the members of the council."

Iranian university to hold film week in Netherlands

Tehran Times Culture Desk

TEHRAN — Tehran's Sureh University will hold an Iranian student film week in the Netherlands in 2011.

The head of Tehran's Sureh University Mohammad Roshan, Netherlands Ambassador to Tehran Cees J. Kole and several officials and scholars recently attended a meeting at Tehran's Art Bureau.

At the meeting, they decided to hold an Iranian student film week and some workshops by Iranian cineastes in Holland in 2011.

The university accompanied by the Netherlands Embassy in Tehran hosted a Dutch film week in mid October 2010.

Short films including feature, documentary, experimental, and animation and short and long documentary films went on screen and two Dutch documentary filmmakers, Pieter Fleury and Corinne van Egeraat held workshops during the event.

French center to hang paintings by Iranian artists

Tehran Times Art Desk

TEHRAN — Artworks by the Iranian painter and illustrator Pari Zanganeh will go on display during a showcase at the Jean Gagnant Cultural Center in Limoges, France.

A collection of 50 paintings and illustrations by Zanganeh will go on display at the exhibit which will run from January 5 to 26.

She previously asserted that her artworks have no definite themes and all of them are associated with her "mental and personal literature."

However she said that something is permanent in her works: "the presence of woman" and this presence just like her own life is an "actor of good and bad moments."

Born in 1977 in Isfahan, Zanganeh got her M.A. in illustration from Tehran's University of Art. She is the member of Iranian Association of Children's Books Illustrators.

WHAT'S IN ART GALLERIES

Photo

* Photos by Maryam Zandi will go on display during an exhibition at the Golestan Gallery from January 7 to 13.

The gallery is located at 42 Kamasaii St. in the Darus neighborhood.

Painting

* The Honar-e Iran Gallery is hosting an oil painting showcase by Omid Tabaroki and Borhaneddin Tabaroki.

The exhibit will run until January 15 at the gallery located at 19 Khark Ave., off Shahriar Blvd., near College intersection.

* Paintings and sculptures by Seyyed Hossein Musavinia will go on display during a showcase at the Khial-e No Gallery from January 3 to 13.

The gallery of the Saba Art and Cultural Institute can be found at Mozaffar St., off Taleqani Ave. near Felestin Square.