

News in Brief

Shams, Molana Foundation Launched

A cultural foundation named after renowned Iranian poets, Molana Jalaleddin Rumi and Shams Tabrizi was inaugurated in a ceremony on Friday in Khoy, West Azarbaijan province.

According to IRNA, the event was attended by provincial governor general, Rahim Qorbani, as well as a number of officials and literary figures.

Speaking at the event, Qorbani said, "The foundation, as a venue for the fans of Molana and his mentor Shams, seeks to introduce Azarbaijani luminaries and broaden provincial cultural activities."

He added that the entity will introduce the two poets, and the first step is to inform UNESCO officials of its activities.

The official noted that based on documents, Shams was undoubtedly buried in a mausoleum in Khoy and this has been attested by the Iranian literati.

Turkish Fest Crown for 'Buddha'

Ankara's Flying Broom Women's Film Festival jury voted to crown Iranian woman filmmaker Hana Makmalbaf's 'Buddha collapsed Out of Shame' as the best film in the event.

The film was awarded the top prize for a tacit demonstration of the borderline between death and life, by depicting the innocence of an Afghan school girl in Bamian, home to world's precious Buddha sculptures destroyed by Taliban in 2001, said IRNA.

The festival's Peace section also included three Iranian films, namely 'Gilaneh', directed by Rakhshan Bani-Etemad, 'Good Night Commander', by Ansieh Shahhosseini and 'Stray Dogs', by Marzieh Meshkini.

Ankara's annual Flying Broom International Women's Film Festival, one of the rare film festivals run to show women filmmakers' contribution to the cinema, is highly welcomed worldwide.

Eighty-nine films by 88 directors screened their products during the eight-day festival which began in Ankara on May 8.



Rohani Plans Tehran Concert

Acclaimed Iranian composer and conductor, Shahrzad Rohani is planning to perform a concert in Tehran in late May.

Rohani, who will be performing his latest compositions at the event, told IRNA that a 15-year old cellist is scheduled to accompany the group performing pieces by famous musicians, including German composer Felix Mendelssohn.

Commenting on his new album, he said, "It contains all my compositions over the past 30 years. The pieces are performed by Slovakia Symphony Orchestra conducted by myself."

His last concert was at Tehran's Vahdat Hall in 2003.

Rohani is best known for arranging and conducting the 'Yanni Live at the Acropolis', an open air concert with the London Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra in the Parthenon, Athens, Greece.

Rohani is the music director and conductor of the COTA symphony orchestra in Los Angeles. He has appeared as a guest conductor to a number of prestigious orchestras, including the London Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra, San Diego symphony and Indianapolis Symphony.



Asia-Pacific Jury Named

Australian Bruce Beresford will head the jury of the second annual Asia-Pacific Screen Awards (APSA) in November.

The event will be presented as a collaboration between CNN Intl., NESCO and the Intl. Federation of Film Producers Assns. (FIAPF), said Variety.

Iranian directors Kiumars Pourahmad, Rakhshan Bani-Etemad, Mohsen Abdolvahab, and Houman Behmanesh are the four members of the APSA's recently-launched academy.

Iranian cinema won three top prizes at the event's first edition during a ceremony in Gold Coast, Australia in November 2007.

IRAN DAILY

Published by the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA)

- Chief Editor:
Editorial Dept. Tel:
Fax:
Subscription Dept. Tel:
Advertising Dept. Phone:
Internet Add:
E-mail Add:
Printing House:

Add: Iran Cultural & Press Institute, #212 Khorramshahr Avenue Tehran/Iran

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Armenia Commemorates Ferdowsi

Commemoration ceremony for the renowned Iranian poet Hakim Abolqasem Ferdowsi was held recently in Yerevan.

According to IRIBNews, the event was held in cooperation with Iranian Cultural Center in Armenia, Association of Persian Language and Literature Enthusiasts as well as the Literature Institute of Armenia's Academy of Sciences.

Speaking at the ceremony, the academy's director, Azat Yeghiazarian, expressed the interest of Armenians in Ferdowsi's epic 'Shahnameh' (Book of the King).

Noting that parts of the epic have been translated into Armenian since the 7th century AD, he hoped that the entire masterpiece

would be rendered into Armenian.

Iranian Ambassador to Yerevan Ali Saqqaiean also said that Ferdowsi's motivation in creating Shahnameh was to consolidate the national identity of Iranians.

Armenian scholar K. Sarkissian, who was also attending the event, said, "Ferdowsi belongs to the entire world and despite Shahnameh being a national epic, it conveys humanitarian messages."

Armenian students of Persian literature recited parts of Shahnameh on the sidelines.

Iranian Cultural Center plans to release a collection of paintings featuring works by noted Armenian painter Martiros Sarya, which have been inspired by Shahnameh tales.



Majidi Laments Cinema Decline

Award-winning Iranian director Majid Majidi has said that Iranian cinema is on the decline in both at major and minor film events.

Majidi made the statement at the First Short Film Camp of Iranian Cinema which ended on Friday in Alasht, Mazandaran province, Fars News Agency reported.

"It has been three years since our cinema has lost its attraction and has turned into a cliché-ridden cinema with no actual potentials," he said.

The director regretted that Iranian cinema, which gained prosperity during the 80s and 90s, is on the decline today.

"I remember that in the 1990s, Iranian films were in the lineup for every festival held worldwide," Majidi said.

Expressing satisfaction with the presence of young filmmakers at the camp, he said, "You can breathe fresh life into Iranian cinema."

Majidi further said that filmmakers who always retain their inner child with themselves have been quite successful and they can help find a way out of the current standstill in the Iranian cinema.

The three-day camp was held in cooperation with Cinema House's Short Film Association, Alasht Municipality as well as a private bank.

Advertisement for 'FLIGHT No. 655' featuring a plane and Persian text. Includes details about an international competition for the screenplay of the film.

Weather

Weather forecast for Bandar Anzali, Khorramabad, Tehran (32^ v 18), Abu Dhabi, and Bern.