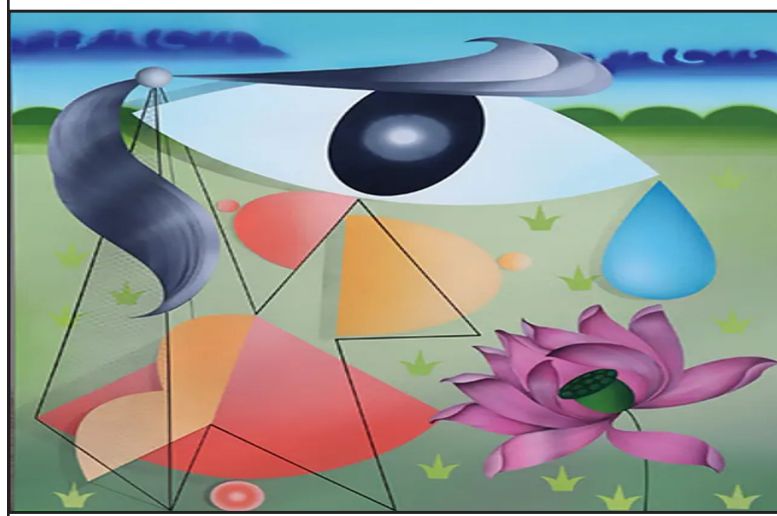


## Armory Show Hosts Iranian Contemporary Art



NEW YORK (Dispatches) -- Two galleries from Iran took part in The Armory Show last year, providing a crucial international platform amid ongoing domestic unease. Sarai Gallery, established in 2018 and based in Mahshahr, is showing a solo stand dedicated to the Iranian artist Abbas Nasle Shamloo, who is known for his somber depictions of nature and landscapes. The gallery takes part in around ten art fairs each year and is largely focused on selling internationally rather than in Iran, founder Hassan Saradipour says. "One of our main goals is to show Iranian artists and introduce Iranian talent all over the world," Saradipour says. In 2021, the gallery won the fair's Presents Booth Prize for its stand featuring works by Moslem Khezri. Saradipour says visitors are often surprised to see galleries from Iran at international fairs, particularly in the U.S. because of sanctions placed on the country in 2019. The art market is not specifically named in the U.S. sanctions, but they can complicate some aspects of operating a gallery, like wiring

money to and from international bank accounts. Taking part in so many art fairs over the years has helped Sarai Gallery and others raise Iranian artists' profiles in the international art market, Saradipour says. The Armory Show in particular is "one of the best", he says, because of its reach within the U.S. market. Hormoz Hematian, who founded Tehran-based gallery Dastan in 2012, agrees The Armory Show's position in New York allows galleries access to "so many curious and interested people who come from around the world to see art". Dastan's stand focuses on work by artists of Iranian heritage, including Nicky Nodjoumi (whom Hematian describes as "one of the legends of Iranian art"); Andisheh Avini, who also works as a senior director at Gagosian; and Reza Aramesh, a visual artist based in London. "They bring attention to traces of a really ancient culture that has a wealth of history with visual arts, and their work is an extension of that lineage," Hematian says.

## Envoy Marks Chinese New Year With Hafez Poetry



BEIJING (CGTN) -- On the occasion of the Chinese New Year, Mohsen Bakhtiar, Iranian Ambassador to China, responded to CGTN's invitation and recited a poem titled "The Scent of Spring Breeze," written by the famous poet Hafez. Season three of "Poetry Sans Frontiers" features eight guests from different countries. They will share life insights, interpret the value of dreams, praise

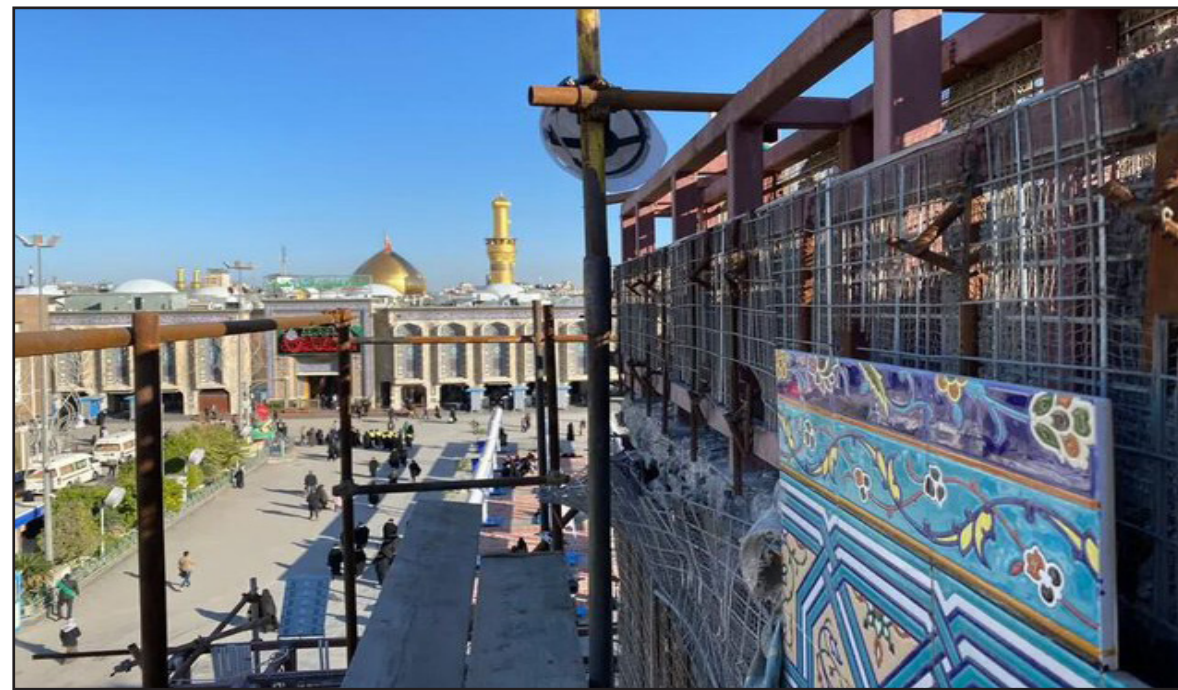
the meaning of life and express their yearning for home through poetry. Three episodes will be distributed globally on all CGTN platforms, CMG new media platforms and international platforms as global poetry activities and poetry-related documentaries, to name a few concepts, to promote emotional people-to-people exchanges among nations.

# Signed Tiles of Iranian Artists Installed at Imam Hussein Shrine

TEHRAN -- The cultural director of the Headquarters for the Development and Reconstruction of Atabat Aliyat has announced the installation of seven-color tiles signed by Iranian benefactors in the shrine of Imam Hussein (AS) in Karbala.

Al-Atabat Al-Aliyat, which is also known as Al-Atabat Al-Muqaddasa (literally meaning holy doorsteps) are the shrines of six Shia Imams which are in four cities of Iraq, namely Najaf, Karbala, Kadhimiya and Samarra.

According to Milad Javadi, the first set of seven-color tiles, which were registered with the vows of Iranian benefactors and in their names, were installed in the development plan of the shrine of Imam Hussein (AS) and in the courtyard and shabestan (underground space) of his sister Zaynab (SA) in Damas-



cus. "The documents and proofs obtained from Atabat Aliyat show that Iranian benefactors and artisans in the past centuries used to record their names on the backs of clay, doors, shrines and other architectural components of shrines. It was also a

common tradition among the craftsmen who participated in the construction of these buildings," he said. "The Headquarters for the Development and Reconstruction of Atabat Aliyat based on this long-standing tradition has pro-

vided this valuable spiritual opportunity for people by launching the 'Shrine Tile' campaign to receive vows in the development plan of the Shrine of Imam Hussein (AS) and the courtyard and the shabestan of the shrine of Hazrat Zaynab (SA)."

## Tehran Auction Reestablishes Iran's Art Connection With World

TEHRAN -- When the global art scene was on the cusp of significant developments in the 1960s, Iran was experiencing a period of artistic disconnection, neglect, and international isolation.

After decades of this detachment, the hiatus ended after the Islamic Revolution which saw connections reestablish with the world. The new generation of artists translated art books, welcomed international art magazines into the country, and hosted international art exhibitions within Iran, while Iranian artists actively participated in events and festivals around the world.

Through these endeavors, the Iranian art scene experienced a revival. However, over time, it became evident that the domestic art market was relatively modest, and Iranian artworks had limited value within the country. As a response, the Tehran Auction initiative was established.

The Tehran Auction House recently concluded its 18th public auction of modern and contemporary Iranian artworks in, with 100 out of the 110 participating artworks finding new owners.

Before the establishment of Tehran Auction house in 2012, art owners would showcase their pieces in auctions worldwide. Since then, the auction has played a key role in reviving Iran's art economy and providing social and economic recognition to art collections

The 17th auction in 2023 set a remarkable record in sales



compared to previous years, surpassing 213 billion tomans, equivalent to approximately 4.2 million dollars. Considering the current unfavorable exchange rate of the local currency against the dollar, this number is seen as a positive outcome for a local auction.

The artworks presented in last

year's auction, held in July, featured pieces from a hundred Iranian artists, both within and outside the country, including prominent contemporary figures in the art market. Leading the pack was the renowned Iranian poet and painter, Sohrab Sepehri, whose paintings fetched the highest prices in the

auction's history.

As always, Sepehri's paintings took the lead in sales. His untitled abstract landscape painting featuring a water pond, two red lily flowers, and half of a tree trunk achieved the highest bid in the auction. Another one of his paintings from a series depicting tree trunks secured the third position in terms of sales.

The Tehran Auction showcased around 86 paintings, 9 sculptures, 4 photographs, and 11 calligraphy artworks. The economic problems of the country did not stand in the way of the flourishing art trade, nor prevented affluent buyers from spending on valuable Iranian works of art.

## Picture of the Day



With the beginning of the cold season in Iran's northern regions, bee keepers transfer their apiary to Khuzestan and other provinces with temperate weather in order to produce high-quality honey.

Photo by Mehr News