

# Top Winner of Saudi Qur'an Contest Honored



TEHRAN -- A ceremony was held at Ali ibn Abi Taleb (AS) Mosque here to honor Iranian qari Yunes Shahmoradi for his great accomplishment.

Shahmoradi won the top prize in the 2nd edition of Otr El-kalam international Qur'an contest in Saudi Arabia a few weeks ago.

He received a cash prize of three million Saudi riyals for coming first in the Qur'an recitation category of the contest.

A number of Shahmoradi's Qur'an teachers as well as other Qur'an experts and Qur'an learners of the Sabil al-Rishad Qur'an School were present at the honoring ceremony.

Shahmoradi attended the Sabil al-Rishad Qur'an School.

Two groups of the Qur'an learners of the school performed choral recitations of the Holy Book at the ceremony, one group imitating the style of late Egyptian qari Abdul Fattah al-Sha'shai and the other imitating the style of another Egyptian Qur'an master Sheikh Mustafa Ismail.

There were also Qur'an recitations by a number of senior qaris attending the event.

Then several Qur'an masters took the podium to highlight Shahmoradi's achievement, his humbleness and his perseverance

and eagerness to learn the Qur'an.

Director of the Sabil al-Rishad Qur'an School noted that a large number of people have been seeking to join the school since Shahmoradi's success in winning the Saudi Qur'an competition.

The second edition of the Otr El-kalam international Qur'an competition was held as an initiative of the General Entertainment Authority (GEA).

It was launched on the first day of the holy month of Ramadan on March 23.

The competition is designed to highlight the rich diversity of cultures in the Islamic world, and the vocal methods of reciting the Qur'an and raising the call to prayer.

This year, the contest attracted 50,000 Muslim entrants from more than 100 countries, all vying for qualification.

Of the 2,116 contestants who made the cut, 36 participants (18 from Qur'an recitation and 18 specializing in the call to prayer) qualified for the final stages.

In the competition, participants demonstrate their vocal capabilities by reciting verses of the Qur'an before a jury composed of experts in recitation, phonetics and maqamat (music structures).

# Annecy Festival to Screen Nasser-al-Din Shah in Love



TEHRAN -- Directed by Ashkan Rahgozar, Iranian animation "Juliet & the King" will compete at the Annecy International Animation Film Festival in France.

The animation is about Nasser-al-Din Shah, the Iranian king, who gets an invitation to visit France. He loves Europe and always takes the chance to visit the country. While visiting a Romeo-Juliet play in Paris, he falls in love with the actress so deeply that he asks her to perform the same play in Tehran, so he could impress her and win her heart. Julie, the actress, decides to take the chance. With the help of her friend Jamal, she goes to perform in Iran, antic-

ipating progress in her career. But she suddenly finds herself among jealous court ladies, and the center of the king's attention.

Rahgozar's animation is scheduled to be screened in the Work in Progress section of the Annecy International Animation Film Festival.

Over the course of its 60 years, the Annecy Festival has established itself as a global event dedicated to animation, bringing together the most esteemed professionals from the sector to celebrate animation's creative and diverse styles and techniques.

The 2023 edition of the event is slated to be held on June 11-17.

# Folio From Shahnameh of Shah Tahmasp Fetches \$6.1 Million

LONDON (Anadolu Agency) -- Sotheby's has once again attracted attention with a multimillion-pound sale of some of the rarest and most valuable works of Islamic art.

The world-renowned auction house in London held bidding on April 26, which featured pieces that spanned from the first centuries of Islam to the early 19th century.

Benedict Carter, the head of Sotheby's Islamic and Indian art department, told Anadolu that the auction encompasses different types of material culture from across the Islamic world from Spain on the one hand, to South Asia on the other, running through the entire Middle East, North Africa, Middle East, Turkey, Iran, India, and South Asia.

He said the sale had about 135 pieces.

"Among the highlights are the two swords. They're both Indian, one from the 17th century, the other from the 18th century," he said.

"The top line is actually a single illustrated folio from probably the greatest illustrated Persian manuscripts ever produced by Shahnameh of Shah Tahmasp. That is really one of the rarest sort of single-leaf illustrations that you would find left on the market



today," he said.

The highest-priced item sold was a folio from Shahnameh of Shah Tahmasp, which depicts a battle scene from the Iran-Turan War, which sold for £4.9 million (\$6.1 million.)

The folio was a gift from Shah Tahmasp, the son of Shah Ismail, to Ottoman Sultan Selim II in 1568.

The Shahnameh manuscript made for Shah Tahmasp of Persia (1514-76) is universally acknowledged as one of the supreme illustrated manuscripts of any period or culture and is among the greatest works of art in the world.

"On top of that, there was important Qur'anic material, including single leaves from the early Islamic period from the eighth to

ninth centuries, as well as Qur'ans from Ottoman Türkiye in the 17th and 18th centuries, as well as India and Iran," said Carter.

An exceptional 17th-century Ottoman dagger with a gold inlaid blade was sold for £254,000.

There was also decorative art from the Islamic world -- principally the Ottoman period from the 18th and 19th centuries.

An Iznik "Golden Horn" vase from around 1530-1540 was sold for nearly £100,000 (\$126,000).

The auction brought in £12.5 million (\$15.7 million) with 84 lots sold, including textiles, ceramics, metalwork, and painting.

According to Carter, it is difficult to know who is really going to come out and keep bidding on the most important things.

"There are always a lot of surprises whether there are important private buyers as well as museum buyers from both the Middle East and the U.S., and Europe. I'd say that in general, though, the pattern over the last five or six years has been that the best pieces in the market, that sort of masterpieces have always been the most sought after," he said.

He said these items do seem to be getting more expensive because there is more value attached to their rarity than ever.

"So, there's definitely a sort of premium attached to the items of the most beautiful and the best condition with the most distinguished history," he added.

Islamic art has a long and rich history, stretching back more than 1,400 years from the geometric patterns of early Islamic architecture to the intricate calligraphy of Qur'anic manuscripts.

In recent years, interest in Islamic art has grown significantly, driven in part by the increasing wealth and interest of collectors from the Middle East and Asia.

Auctions like the one in London provide an opportunity for collectors and enthusiasts to appreciate and acquire unique and valuable works of art from the Islamic world.

# Vienna Festival to Screen Iranian Documentary



TEHRAN -- Iranian documentary the "Water, Wind, Dust, Bread" directed by Mehdi Zamanpour Kiasri will take part in Ethnocineca-International Documentary Film Festival Vienna.

The 25-minute documentary, which took more than a year to produce, is a delicate narrative of the life of two children named 'Abolfazl' and 'Setayesh' who experience a different life.

The documentary has been previously screened at the 18th edition of ZagrebDox, the International Documentary Film Festival and the 24th edition of

the Thessaloniki Documentary Festival in Greece, a special screening section of the 15th Miradasdoc International Film Festival in Spain and the 19th edition of the Millennium Film Festival in Poland.

The 17th edition of Austria's Ethnocineca will be held on May 4-11 in Vienna. As Austria's biggest film festival for documentary cinema and ethnographic film, Ethnocineca is dedicated to diverse realities of human life.

# 'Lopetoo' Goes to Palm Springs Festival

TEHRAN -- Iranian animation 'Lopetoo' is competing at the Palm Springs Animation Festival in the U.S.

'Lopetoo' by Abbas Askari is representing Iran at the main competition section of this year's edition of the festival.

The animation is a 3D animated piece produced by the Iran-based Soureh Cinema Organization.

The film's name is inspired by the word Kermani people of Iran use to refer to handmade toys that mothers used to make for their children in the past.

The animation is about a hospital where Dr. Saeed Kamali treats his mental patients by letting them make toys.

"A person disguised as a patient vandalizes the workshop and causes its closure. The doctor's son, Ali, tries to help his father solve the problem," a synopsis for the film reads.

The animation is on the screens in Lebanon and will start screening in Iraq and Syria soon.

The Palm Springs Animation Festival is a global competition in animation and exhibition of the world's most talented artists in the world. Each year there are awards going to 37 categories including Best Animated Fea-

ture and Best Animated Short in over 20 different styles of animation from 2D, 3D, Hand Drawn,

Painted, Watercolor, Sand, Paper, Experimental, Stop-Motions and VFX.

The fifth edition of the festival is currently underway from April 30 -- July 3, 2023.

Picture of the Day

April 30 is an important day in the history of Iran, a day that reminds of the sacrifices of the proud nation of Iran and the escape of the Portuguese invaders after 117 years of dominating the southern coasts of the country. It is named the "Persian Gulf National Day".