

Oman to Set Up Social Club for Iranian Community



Buildings on the foot of hills in Muscat

MUSCAT (Dispatches) -- Oman's Minister of Social Development Laila bint Ahmed al-Najjar has issued a ministerial decision on the formation of the Social Club for the Iranian Community, aimed at mobilizing the capabilities of its members to serve the social purposes of the members, Oman Observer reported.

The club will help members of the Iranian community in the Sultanate of Oman, who have a good reputation established among the Omani people, to strengthen the fraternal ties between

the Sultanate of Oman and the Islamic Republic of Iran in various cultural, intellectual, and social fields by organizing cultural, social, sporting and other events, it reported.

It will also strengthen the ties between the members of the community, especially the youth, with their motherland from its history, present, and future, in addition to strengthening fraternal and social ties between members of the community residing in various parts of the Sultanate of Oman, it added.

Iranian Cinema Marks 100 Years

TEHRAN -- Iranians celebrate National Cinema Day on September 12. The designation dates back to 2000. This year, the country commemorates 100 years of the Iranian cinema.

Since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Iranian cinema has made remarkable progress.

Over the years, Iranian films have explored new themes, including ethical and religious values, gaining international recognition and participating in various global film festivals, iFilm reported.

The first cinematograph machine in Iran was introduced by Mozaffar al-Din Shah in 1900, marking the inception of the Iranian cinema. The first Persian sound film, 'Dokhtar Lor' (The Lor Girl), was produced in 1933 by Ardeshir Irani.

The first Iranian cinema hall, named 'Cinema Soli', was established in 1900 in Tabriz. However, due to limited access to new films, it closed its doors in 1916.

Until 1930, no Iranian films were produced, and the few existing cinemas primarily screened Western films with Persian subtitles. The first feature-length Iranian film, 'Abi and Rabi', was created in 1931 by Ovanes Ohanian.

Pioneers of the Iranian cinema:

- First Iranian cinematographer: Mirza Ibrahim Khan Akkas Bashi (1900)
- First Iranian cinema: Grand Cinema (1926)
- First Iranian silent film: 'Abi and Rabi' directed by Ovanes Ohanian (1931)
- First Iranian sound film: 'The Lor Girl' directed by Ardeshir Irani (1933)
- First Iranian dubbed film: 'The Runaway Girl' directed by Ismael Kushan (1946)
- First Iranian female director: Shahla Riahi for the film 'Marjan' (1956)
- First Iranian cinema magazine: Iranian Film Magazine (1982), still in publication today

In 1933, the Iranian cinema experienced a significant milestone with the production of the first Iranian sound film, 'The Lor Girl' by Ardeshir Irani in Mumbai. It received a warm reception and set the stage for the creation of numerous other Iranian films. However, a series of political changes in Iran from 1936 to 1948, along with the impacts of World War II, resulted in a downturn for the budding Iranian cinema.

During this era, cinema was primarily enjoyed by the elite and select segments of society due to the limited number of theaters available in Tehran and major cities.

Additionally, there was no distinct artistic movement among film producers during this period, with the exception of Abdulhossein Sepanta, whose works stood out for their incorporation of ancient Iranian literary elements. In most cases, Iranian films were adaptations or imitations of foreign cinema.

Iran's first public cinema came into being in 1904. It was established by Mirza Ibrahim Khan Akkas Bashi. Subsequently, the inaugural official cinema venue in Iran, named 'Cinema Iran', was opened in Tehran in 1926.

In the years following 1943, the landscape of filmmaking in Iran underwent significant growth and transformation. The expansion was attributed to the establishment of numerous film companies by various investors and the rising popularity of cinema among the general public. Regrettably, this period saw a shift towards prioritizing financial returns and profits in the production of populist and light-hearted films, becoming a prevalent trend in the filmmaking industry.

Notable figures in Iranian cinema during this era included Ismael Kushan, Houshang Kavousi, and Farrokh Ghafari. Among them, Ismael Kushan played a pivotal role in shaping mainstream Iranian cinema, often referred to as Farsi films.



In 1965, the Iranian cinema experienced a remarkable period of growth in Farsi Film, highlighted by the release of films like 'Ganj-e Qarun'. Nonetheless, the surge in film production eventually led to a decline in overall quality.

In 1969, a pivotal transformation occurred in Iranian cinema with the arrival of groundbreaking films such as 'Gav' (The Cow) and 'Qeysar', giving birth to a revolutionary movement recognized as the 'New Wave of Iranian Cinema'.

Concurrently, the establishment of the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (CIDCA) in 1969 provided a favorable environment for the advancement of cultural cinema within Iran.

The collaboration between UNESCO and CIDCA, exemplified by the appointment of Nouredin Zarrinkelk as a representative to Belgium, played a significant role in elevating the cultural standards of the institute.

A cultural renaissance began to take shape among progressive filmmakers, aided by the presence of the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults. Furthermore, a decline in the public's interest in elements like violence and superficial entertainment, particularly among educated youth in Iran, collectively fostered a fresh and constructive trajectory in Iranian cinema during the years spanning from 1971 to 1978.

Sohrab Sepehri, Bahram Beyzaie, Abbas Kiarostami, Khosro Sinaee, Kamran Shirdel, Daryoush Mehrjouee, Masoud Kimiai, Ali Hatami, Amir Naderi, Fereydu Gole, Khosro Haritash, Parviz Kimiavi, and other remarkable figures were instrumental in this movement, driven by motivations beyond material gain. They laid the foundation for significant advancements in Iranian cinema in the years ahead.

Following the revolution, from 1978 to

1983, Iranian cinema experienced a profound cultural shift due to the absence of established filmmaking regulations. New laws were devised and implemented in accordance with the principles of the Islamic Republic.

In the years post-1983, filmmaking regulations were established to align with the post-revolutionary landscape. The artistic growth of filmmakers from the 1970s, such as Abbas Kiarostami, Bahram Beyzaie, Masoud Kimiai, and Daryoush Mehrjouee, had a positive impact on the trajectory of Iranian cinema. They crafted exceptional works that garnered international recognition and critical acclaim.

During this period, a new generation of filmmakers, including Ibrahim Hatamikia, Majid Majidi, and Abolfazl Jalili, brought their diverse interests to the world of filmmaking. Through dedication and rigorous study, they adeptly incorporated the nuances of this art into their work, playing influential roles during this transformative era.

Additionally, the consistent annual organization of at least one international film festival, notably the Fajr International Film Festival, held during the Persian month of Bahman in Iran, has played a pivotal role in nurturing an interest in cinema among the country's youth. This festival has also contributed significantly to the advancement of the cinematic art.

The House of Cinema stands as the largest professional organization representing the various facets involved in the production of Iranian cinema, comprising over twenty legal guilds.

Following the Iranian Revolution, Iranian cinema made a remarkable transition from the pre-revolutionary Farsi film wave to becoming a cultural movement not only within the country but also in the broader region. Despite substantial

international pressures, Iranian cinema has consistently commanded profound respect and recognition.

Movies like 'Mother', 'Sara', 'Where Is the Friend's Home?', 'Actor', 'Taste of Cherry', 'A Separation', 'Children of Heaven', 'Saint Mary', 'Muhammad The Messenger of God', 'I Want to Stay Alive', 'The Kingdom of Solomon, the Prophet', 'Shokaran', 'The Bride', 'Tenants', 'The Red Ribbon', 'The Twentieth Night', 'The Color of Paradise', 'The Glass Agency', 'The Cow', 'Mom's Guests', 'So Close, So Far Away', 'Once Upon a Time, Cinema', 'A Piece of Bread', 'Track 143', 'Chamran', 'Captain Khorshid' and 'The City of Mice' represent just a fraction of the diverse and high-quality productions of Iranian cinema since the Islamic Revolution.

Iranian cinema, despite experiencing numerous challenges, has consistently stayed true to its core path. It has achieved numerous remarkable milestones on the global stage. Some of these accomplishments include:

- Silver Bear for Best Director at the Berlin Film Festival for 'Still Life' in 1974, directed by Sohrab Shahid-Saless
- Silver Bear Award at the Berlin Film Festival for 'Stone Garden' in 1976, directed by Parviz Kimiavi.
- Best Film Award at the Three Continents Festival in Nantes, France, for 'The Runner' in 1985, directed by Amir Naderi.
- 'Children of Heaven' being selected as one of the final 5 nominees for Best Foreign Film at the 1998 Oscars.
- Golden Palm Award at the Cannes Film Festival for 'Taste of Cherry' in 1997, directed by Abbas Kiarostami.
- Golden Prize at the Tokyo International Film Festival for 'Journey to the South' in 1997, directed by Parviz Shahbazi.
- Critics' Award at the London Film Festival in 2002 for 'I Am Taraneh, 15', directed by Rasoul Sadrameli.
- Special Golden Globe Award in 2011 for 'A Separation', directed by Asghar Farhadi.
- Academy Award (Oscar) for Best Foreign Language Film in 2012 for 'A Separation', directed by Asghar Farhadi.
- Golden Crow Pheasant Award at the Kerala International Film Festival in India in 2013 for 'Parviz', directed by Majid Bazregar.
- Golden Palm Award at the Cannes Film Festival for 'The Salesman' in 2016, directed by Asghar Farhadi.
- Golden Palm Award for Best Actor at the Cannes Film Festival in 2016 for Shahab Hosseini's role in 'The Salesman'

Challenges of Comic Illustration Discussed

TEHRAN -- A meeting titled "Challenges of Comic Illustration" with a focus on 'Ashura Graphic Novel' was held here Tuesday by Iran's Book and Literature House in Cooperation with the Ketab Ara Institute.

The Iranian Association of Books for Children and Young Adults Publishers participated in the program.

It aimed to address the challenges of depicting historical-religious comic books with the authors of 'Ashura Graphic Novel' Parviz Eghbali, a faculty member of the Shahed University, and Parviz Haseli, a faculty member of the Shahed University who is also a member of the painting department of Visual Arts Center in attendance.

So far, their book 'Ashura Graphic Novel' has been translated and published in 14 languages.

The Ketab Ara Institute is the organizer of special graphic design and illustration meetings, which held training workshops in such fields as illustration, infographics, fonts, and design at the latest Tehran International Book Fair (TIBF).

The topics discussed in the meeting included the etudes and initial sketches of the 'Ashura Graphic Novel', challenges of depicting historical-religious portraits (in graphic novels, how to depict the portraits of the Shia saints in the book illustration, text and image features appropriate for comic books, point of view in the illustration of comic books, how to use the elements of Ta'zieh and Islamic painting in religious illustration, getting to know the art of illustration to create a work of art, and so on.

Stolen Van Gogh Painting Recovered



'Spring Garden, The Parsonage Garden at Nuenen in Spring' by painter Vincent Van Gogh is seen in this undated handout image on September 12, 2023.

AMSTERDAM (Reuters) -- A painting by Vincent Van Gogh that was stolen from a small Dutch museum in 2020 during a COVID-19 lockdown has been recovered, the institution which owns the artwork, said on Tuesday.

"We have incredible good news. The painting 'Spring Garden' ... is back with the Groninger Museum three and half years after the theft," the museum said in a statement.

The painting, which dates from 1884, was stolen from the Museum Singer Laren, east of Amsterdam, where it was on loan for an exhibition.

The theft took place during weeks-long lockdowns around the world as the COVID pandemic took hold.

At the time, Dutch police released security footage showing

the moment thieves broke into Singer Laren Museum on March 30, smashing glass doors, to steal the painting.

The artwork depicts the garden of the rectory at Nuenen, the small Dutch town where Van Gogh's parents lived.

"The painting has suffered but - at first sight - it is in good shape," the Groninger Museum said, adding it was now at the

Amsterdam Van Gogh Museum and it would take weeks or months before it would be returned.

"Police have been closely involved in all phases (of the recovery of the painting). The museum cannot comment on the ongoing inquiry," it said.

The museum also said Arthur Brand, a prominent Dutch art detective, had played a "key role" in the whole process.

Picture of the Day



ISNA PHOTO
Soheil Faraji

Mud therapy in vanishing Urmia Lake.

Photo by ISNA