

Iranian, Arab Artists Hold Joint Exhibition in Damascus



DAMASCUS (Dispatches) -- In the run-up to International Quds Day, Iranian and Arab artists have created artworks in Damascus for an art exhibition.

The event titled "Revenge is Inevitable" was organized by the Visual Arts Center of the Islamic Revolution Art Bureau in collaboration with two Syrian institutions. It aims to express artistic solidarity with Palestinians.

The exhibition also commemorated the Iranian military advisors and their accompanying officers who were martyred in a recent Israeli missile strike against

the consular section of the Iranian embassy in the Syrian capital city of Damascus. "Revenge is Inevitable" was held at the Yarmouk Palestinian refugee camp, underlining the themes of unity and resistance.

The participating artists, including Masoud Nejabati from Iran, alongside Arab artists from Iraq, Algeria, Palestine, and Syria, created visual arts on canvas during the two-day event.

The finished artworks were publicly unveiled on International Quds Day near the Iranian Embassy in Damascus.

Exploring Salasel Castle, Darion Creek in Khuzestan



TEHRAN -- In the heart of Khuzestan province in southern Iran lie two captivating treasures waiting to be explored: Salasel Castle and Darion Creek.

Once a grand fortress boasting intricate courtyards, towers, and gardens, Salasel Castle in the city of Shushtar now stands as a testament to ancient architecture, with only its underground chambers and Darion tunnels remaining.

Despite its weathered facade, the castle continues to fascinate visitors with its rich history and enigmatic charm.

Adjacent to Salasel Castle lies Darion Creek, an engineering marvel dating back to the era of Darius the Great.

Carved entirely by hand, this stream exemplifies ancient ingenuity and perseverance.

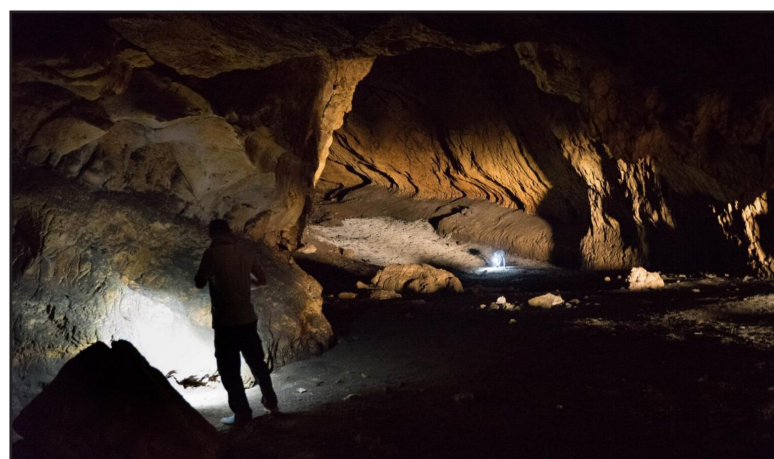
As visitors traverse its winding paths, they are transported back in time, imagining the toil and dedication of those who sculpted this waterway centuries ago.

Together, Salasel Castle and Darion Creek offer a glimpse into Khuzestan's rich past, inviting travelers to uncover the secrets of Iran's cultural heritage amidst breathtaking landscapes.

Multidisciplinary Study Suggests: First Humans Lived in Iran for 20,000 Years After Leaving Africa

SYDNEY (Dispatches) -- After waves of Homo sapiens left Africa, they left few traces of their whereabouts until they reappeared in Eurasia 20,000 years later. So where did they go in the intervening time? A study proposes that Homo sapiens outside of Africa made their home on the Persian plateau during that mysterious period.

Fossil evidence of early Homo sapiens migrations shows that members of our species moved out of Africa at least as far back as 210,000 years ago, while genetic evidence shows that a large wave of migration around 70,000 years ago was the most successful, contributing genes to all modern-day non-African people. But there is a widespread lack of Homo sapiens fossils across Eurasia between 60,000 and 45,000 years ago, prompting the researchers of the new study to investigate where modern humans went during this time.



Pebdeh Cave located in the southern Zagros Mountains. Pebdeh was occupied by hunter-gatherers as early as 42,000 years ago.

Using climate models and genetic data, the team found that the Persian plateau was the most suitable location for human occupation during this time, according to the study, published in the journal Nature Communications.

However, not everyone agrees with their findings, saying that more evidence is needed.

The Persian plateau, which the researchers defined as a population hub in a previous study, includes most of modern-day Iran as well as the Persian Gulf and Mesopotamia. The team suggests the ancestors of all present-day non-Africans lived there between 70,000 and 45,000 years ago.

The researchers previously looked at information from paleolithic Eurasian genomes and correlated these data with archaeological evidence for changes in stone tool technology. From this, they found that modern humans likely congregated in a population hub that served as the base for multiple migrations throughout Eurasia. But inferring the homeland of the population hub required the addition of a paleoclimate model, which is included in the new

study. By modeling the distribution of a hunter-gatherer Homo sapiens population and reconstructing areas that had suitable environmental conditions for human occupation between 70,000 and



Periphery of Iranian Central Plateau where humans may have concentrated for tens of thousands of years before dispersing to other parts of Asia.

45,000 years ago, the researchers figured out that the Persian plateau was the geographical location most likely able to support a population hub.

The Persian plateau also hosts known Neanderthal fossil sites whose dates overlap with the presence of Homo sapiens. "Admixture [coupling] with Neanderthals occurred during this timeframe, so it is possible that it took place inside the Hub," Leonardo Vallini, a molecular anthropologist at the University of Padua and lead author of the study, told Live Science in an email. "It is also possible, however, that the two groups were avoiding each other and the interactions were much more sporadic."

During this key period of human evolution and expansion, Homo sapiens were hunter-gatherers, Vallini explained. But within this area, people likely traded key information. The hub "might have served as an incubator for the development of cultural innovations" such as rock art and projectile weapons, the researchers wrote in the study.

However, other experts believe more evidence is needed to locate a possible

population hub. Sang-Hee Lee, a biological anthropologist at the University of California Riverside who was not involved in the study, told Live Science in an email that the new study brings up images of a dynamic center of ancestral human occupation. However, Lee wonders if the palaeoecology model is a suitable one for ancestral humans.

"Palaeoecology data from the 'Hub' rely on a single data point in Iran," Lee said, referring to the lone data point the study authors present to verify their hypothesis that the hub was a hospitable place. "Of course, an absence of evidence does not mean an evidence of absence," Lee noted.

The study authors acknowledge that more hominin fossils and climate data are necessary to validate their hypothesis.

But if the Persian plateau was indeed a population hub for tens of thousands of years, this key region is ideal for searching for both fossil evidence and palaeoecology data that could fill in the gaps in ancestral humans' migrations throughout Eurasia, the authors said in their study.

A Look at Artistic Career of Alireza Zarrin-Dast

TEHRAN -- Born in 1945 in Tabriz, Alireza Zarrin-Dast embarked on his cinematic voyage as a camera assistant in the movie 'Satan's Temptation' back in 1967.

Over the decades, he has become synonymous with brilliance behind the lens, crafting visual narratives that transcend time and space.

Zarrin-Dast's portfolio is a testament to his versatility and artistic prowess. From the drama 'White Fish Season' (2019) to 'Blood Bead' (2019) and 'Dagger and Kneecap' (2018), each frame he captures resonates with depth and emotion.

Some of the cameraman's most famous works include 'Pari' by Darioush Mehrjouee, 'The Queen' by Muhammad-Ali Basheh-Ahangar, 'Ceasefire' by Tahmineh Milani, Kioumars Pourahmad's 'Blade and Termeh', and 'Down and Out' by Hamid Nematollah.

While his footprint in cinema is profound, Zarrin-Dast has also left a significant mark on the small screen.

His mastery of visual storytelling shines through series like 'In the Eye of the Storm'.

Zarrin-Dast's contributions to the world of cinematography have not gone unnoticed. His accolades include the Crystal Simorgh for Best Cinematography at the Fajr Film Festival, awarded in 2017 for his work on 'Underwater Cypress'.

He draws inspiration from his older brother, Muhammad, a veteran director, producer, and writer, who has played a pivotal role in his cinematic journey.

In addition to his festival accolades, Zarrin-Dast's contributions have been celebrated on the international stage.

From the Best Cinematography Award at the Dhaka Film Festival for 'Superstar' to the Golden AR Award at the Italian Rimini Film Festival for 'Bicycle Rider', his impact transcends borders, cementing his status as a true visionary.

Zarrin-Dast continues to shine in each new project, bringing his unique vision and dedication to storytelling. With every scene, he creates a world where light and shadow blend seamlessly, leaving a lasting impact on the audience's hearts.



Picture of the Day



The tomb of Prophet Khalid Ibn Sinan (Khalid Nabi) in the north of Golestan province and the green area around it host many travelers every year in spring.

Photo by ISNA