

Prominent Musician Shahbazian Passes Away at 82



TEHRAN -- Fereydoun Shahbazian, a distinguished Iranian musician, composer, and conductor, passed away on Saturday at the age of 82 to respiratory issues.

Shahbazian was hospitalized in Tehran two days prior to his death. His daughter, Shiva, shared the news of his hospitalization on social media, but did not disclose the specific cause.

Born on June 11, 1942 in Tehran, Shahbazian developed a passion for music early on, influenced by his father, a student of the legendary Abolhasan Saba.

Shahbazian pursued music studies at the Tehran Conservatory of Music and became a member of the Tehran Symphony Orchestra at the age of 17.

His career spanned various

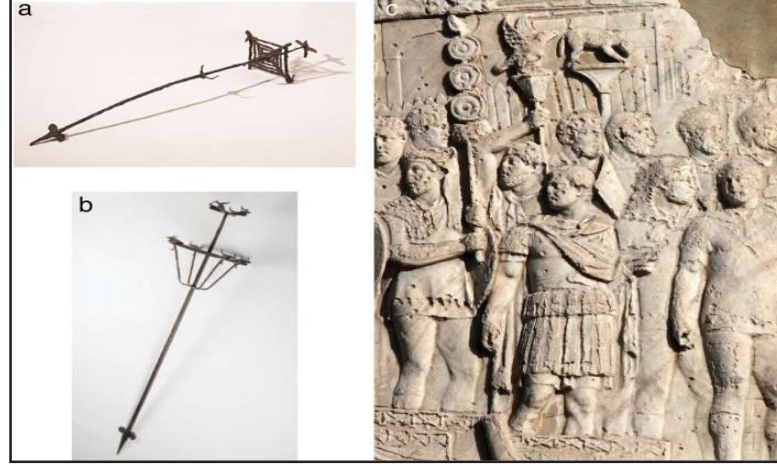
roles, including composing for the Farabi Orchestra and leading the Iranian National Orchestra from October 2016 to March 2019.

In the 1980s, he ventured into film scoring and co-founded the Music Council at Iran's national broadcaster.

Some of his notable film scores include "Life" (1997), "Hiva" (1998), "The Last Supper", "Innocence Lost" (2003), "The Fourth Child" (2012), and "Son of Fortune" (2012).

Shahbazian's remarkable contributions to Iranian music earned him a prominent place in the country's cultural history. His legacy will be remembered through his vast body of work and the impact he made on Iranian music.

Graves of Brits Fighting Against Sasanians Possibly Found



The 'stand' from Sutton Hoo mound.

LONDON (Phys.org) -- Helen Gittos, a professor of medieval history at Oxford University in the UK, has developed a new theory regarding the identity of the remains found at a famous burial site near Suffolk, England.

She has published a paper in the journal English Historical Review outlining her ideas. Called Sutton Hoo, the burial site was discovered almost a century ago, and has since that time become the subject of much debate.

Discovered in the late 1930s, Sutton Hoo (from the Old English *Sut* and *hoo*, which refers to a heel-shaped hill) was soon found to hold the remains of not just humans, but a full ship. The site has become an important excavation site for research surrounding the East Anglia kingdom during the time of the Anglo-Saxons. The site, which consists of 20 burial mounds, is near a port on the North Sea.

Items found beneath the mounds suggest that the people buried there were important, perhaps even royalty. Some suggested one or more of the graves could be the remains of a Byzantine king.

The burial sites have been dated to approximately 575 AD, a time

when the Roman Empire had already withdrawn from Britain, leaving the region to develop independently.

Prior research has shown that soldiers in Britain were recruited by the Byzantine army, which was busy fighting the Sasanians in what is now Iran.

Gittos has been studying artifacts found at the site for several years, as well as those found at other similar sites. She describes artifacts such as jewelry, silver plates and swords and shields as being of extremely high quality. She also noticed that many of the artifacts share characteristics with those found at other sites known to hold the remains of local soldiers.

She suggests the similarities are likely not coincidence; instead, it is more likely that those people who buried the men beneath the mound at Sutton Hoo revered the soldiers who had returned from fighting with the Byzantine army and regarded them as heroes, which, she further notes, would have merited a lavish funeral and burial. She also notes that recent work at the site by excavators has dashed the notion that only one man was buried with the ship.

Pure Iranian Architecture in Jumeirah

DUBAI (The National) -- At the beginning of Al Wasl Road in Dubai, not far from the famous Jumeirah Mosque and close to 2nd December Street, is a striking structure that most residents of the city are familiar with.

Officially named Imam Hussein Mosque but popularly known as the Iranian Mosque, the building is a dazzling display of Kashani, the decorative Iranian art of ceramic mosaic tiles commonly seen in holy buildings and shrines.

When he designed the mosque more than 40 years ago, architect Seyed Reza Mohit says he wanted to bring Iranian visual culture to Dubai. "I wanted to have the spirit of Iran here in Dubai," he tells The National. "Iran has some problems and sometimes tourists are afraid to come. But they go to Dubai, which is a peaceful, nice and modern place, and here they can see something very nostalgic, unique, pure and correct."

Mohit describes the building as a work of art completely enveloped in the aesthetic concepts of Iranian mosque architecture. "I wanted people to see Iranian architecture in front of them in Jumeirah in Dubai," he says.

Upon arrival, worshippers and visitors walk past iron gates and then through an outdoor tiled porch towards the mosque, which is framed by two palm trees and two minarets. A set of wide but steep steps lead to the magnificent mosque entrance – a pointed arch set within a tall rectangular block.

The pointed arch is echoed in the shape of the main wooden door and the two narrower windows flanking it. The windows' decorative mesh design repeats the mosaic patterns of the tiles. The mosque's main silhouette is



The Imam Hussein Mosque in Jumeirah, Dubai.

a linear geometric design, with no curved edges, and the dome is concealed behind the large rectangular entrance block. Despite this, the structure still feels welcoming and open.

This is because the two minarets on each side of the mosque include curved lines, small dome-like shapes and muqarnas. Muqarnas are three-dimensional decorations in Islamic architecture, similar to the shape of honeycombs, that sit in rows or tiers on top of one another. They create an overall sense of repetition and balance throughout a facade, and their curved, recessed form gives a sense of depth.

The Kashani mosaic surface, mostly blue, covers the entire exterior of the mosque and continues inside, creating a cohesive, inviting aesthetic flow. The mosque glows in an array of shades of blue through the mosaic floral and geometric designs that also include verses from the Quran.

"All the tiles which you see on this design are handmade and each one was checked by me," Mohit says. "The calligraphy, the color, the combination of the nostalgic designs of Iranian design, I

chose them and I worked with the builders and makers of the tiles in Iran to create the design."

He explains that all the tiles come from the central Iranian city of Isfahan, known for its architecture and its rich history as a centre of tile-making artistry during the Safavid dynasty.

Mohit was living and working in Dubai in the late 1970s when he was approached by an Iranian delegation to build a mosque on Al Wasl Road. Aside from being a partner at Today Engineering Consultants, he was also teaching architecture and had won awards for his work in Iran.

There was a smaller mosque on Al Wasl Road but it did not meet the needs of the community. That building was partly demolished and the current mosque is an extension of the original. It took Mohit one year to design the mosque and then another three years to finish the structure.

Imam Hussein Mosque sits in an area of 6,000 square meters with the main structure occupying 2,500 square meters. It can accommodate more than 1,000 people and contains several rooms and halls including a library.

When the mosque was conceptualized, Jumeirah and the larger Dubai city mostly consisted of low-rise, simpler buildings, Mohit recalls. His plan was to build a mosque that would not only capture the public's attention but would also represent Iran and fit into the landscape of Dubai.

The color blue became a thread that not only connected Iran and Dubai but also architecture and religion too, he says.

"Blue in Iranian cultural designs and architecture is the dominant color," he says. "The reason is that Iran is a desert. Iran doesn't have the greenery as much as Europe or somewhere else and the sea isn't close either. It's all desert. That's why in the centre of Iran, which is the main location for this type of architecture, they use blue to remind them of water."

The color blue also has great prominence in Islamic culture. It represents the sky and heavens, as well as the idea of leaving the material world behind and focusing on ascension to a higher state of self. It is considered a calming color, associated with purity, that can help worshippers relax and focus on their prayers.

Despite the differences between the UAE and Iran, Mohit saw a connection in the location of the mosque on Al Wasl Road, which he says is uniquely located between land and sea and is busy with people.

"That's why when I was designing the mosque I was thinking of monumental architecture," he says. "The worship or praying inside is the second function when I was designing. The main thing was bringing a sparkling architecture, pure Iranian architecture in the middle of Jumeirah. This was my concept."

New-Conservatism in Era of Putin Released in Persian

TEHRAN -- The book titled "Neo-Conservatism in the Era of Putin: Root Causes and Thoughts" written by Mahdi Sanaei, a former ambassador to Russia and a political advisor to the Iranian president, has recently been published in Iran.

The book presents a fresh and lesser-known narrative about neo-conservatism in the context of Putin's era. The book is out in the market in Persian language.

Released by an Iranian publishing house "Negah Moaser", the book explores the historical roots of neo-conservatism, tracing its development from the Cold War to the present, with a focus on its expression in Russia under Putin.

The 500-page book analyzes how neo-conservative ideas have shaped Russian political discourse and policies, highlighting similarities and differences with Western neo-conservatism.

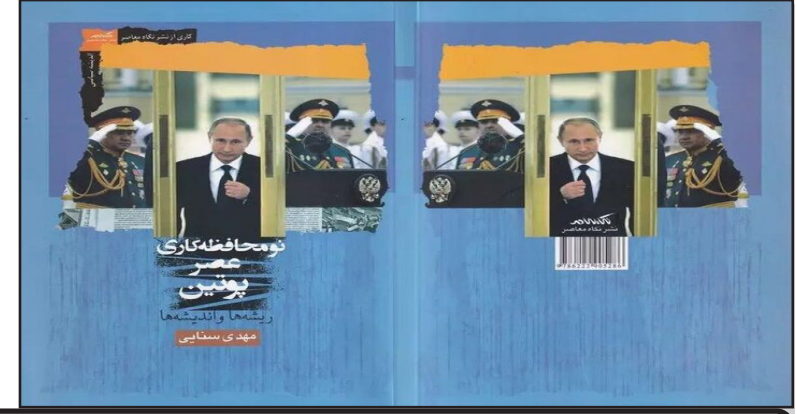
The book examines the relationship between neo-conservatism and Russian nationalism, investigating how these ideologies influence national identity and foreign policy.

It also assesses the strategies of the Putin administration that reflect neoconservative principles, such as military interventions and assertive foreign policies.

Additionally, the book critiques liberal ideologies and their perceived shortcomings, presenting

neo-conservatism as an alternative in today's global political landscape.

It evaluates the impact of neo-conservative thought on Russia's relations with the West and its broader implications for global politics.



Picture of the Day



The Chaleshtar Castle in Shahrekord, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province dates back to the Qajar dynasty. Photo by Mizan Online