

Kyrgyzstan, Iran Ink Cultural Pact to Boost Film, Arts Collaboration



BISHKEK, Kyrgyzstan (Dispatches)—Iran and Kyrgyzstan have signed a new cultural cooperation agreement aimed at expanding collaboration in film, the arts and cultural heritage, on the sidelines of the 23rd Meeting of Culture Ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

The memorandum of understanding was signed by Iranian Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Seyed Abbas Salehi and Kyrgyz Minister of Culture, Information and Youth Policy Mirbek Mambetaliev, according to Iran’s Ministry of Culture.

The agreement outlines a broad framework for cultural cooperation between the two countries through 2029, including reciprocal Iranian and Kyrgyz cultural weeks, expanded collaboration in the film sector, and exchanges of expertise on the documentation, preservation and restoration of historical and cultural heritage.

The deal also calls for greater information sharing on the registration of historical sites and initiatives promoting the two countries’ shared cultural traditions.

Salehi traveled to Bishkek on Thursday to attend the annual SCO culture ministers’ meeting, accompanied by Deputy Minister for Artistic Affairs Mehdi Shafiei.

During the visit, the Iranian minister held talks with senior Kyrgyz cultural officials, including representatives of the National History Museum and the National Library of Kyrgyzstan, as well as leaders of the country’s Orthodox Christian community. He also toured the Ata-Beyit National Memorial Complex.

In addition to bilateral meetings with fellow culture ministers, Salehi is scheduled to attend the opening ceremony of the SCO ministers’ summit, the awards ceremony of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization International Film Festival, and an official reception hosted by Kyrgyzstan’s culture minister.

The 23rd Meeting of Culture Ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is taking place in Kyrgyzstan from July 16–20, bringing together member states to discuss regional cooperation in culture, the arts and creative industries.

Javad Mojabi’s Hospital Drawings Go on Display in Tehran

TEHRAN — A collection of drawings and paintings created by Iranian writer, poet, painter and art critic Javad Mojabi during his hospitalization and medical treatment has gone on public display in Tehran, offering a visual account of creativity sustained through illness and recovery.

Titled “White Nights of the Hospital and Me,” the exhibition opened Friday, July 17, at Iranmehr Hospital in Tehran, coinciding with the reopening of the hospital’s social neuroscience lecture sessions.

The exhibition presents works Mojabi created during the days he spent receiving medical care, transforming his personal experience of illness into a body of visual storytelling.

The displayed works reflect the artist’s response to hospitalization and recovery, portraying art as a continuation of life and a means of processing physical and emotional experiences. Rather than documenting illness alone, the collection explores the relationship between the body, memory, imagination and creative expression.

The opening ceremony was accompanied by the unveiling of the book “In Search of My Hidden Self: A Neurologist’s Encounters With Philosophy, Art and Literature at the Bedside,” a publication examining the connections between medicine, neuroscience, literature, art and lived human experience.

Organizers said the book seeks to create a new dialogue between scientific research and cultural expression, focusing on how artistic and intellectual experiences intersect with medical understanding and human identity.

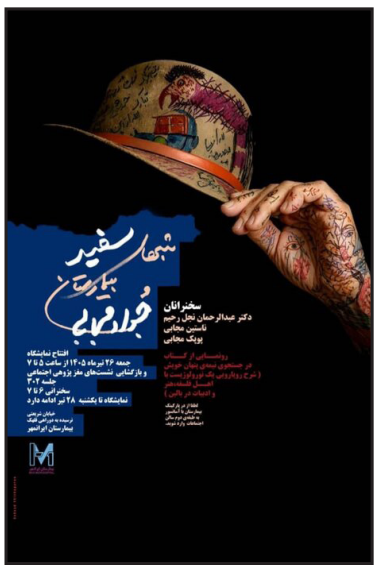
A catalogue published for the exhibition features essays by Behzad Hatam, Dr. Abdolrahman Najlerahim, Hussein Ganji and Amir Muhammad Ghasemzadeh, alongside reproductions of Mojabi’s artworks.

The opening event was attended by figures from Iran’s cultural, artistic and scientific communities and included remarks by Dr. Abdolrahman Najlerahim, Nastin Mojabi and Poupek Mojabi.

Mojabi has donated all material and intellectual rights to the artworks, allowing the collection to remain at the center not only as a public exhibition but also as part of a research project examining the relationship between art, neuroscience and personal experience.

The exhibition opened at 5 p.m. on Friday, July 17, and remained on view through Sunday, July 19, at Iranmehr Hospital in Tehran.

Mojabi, one of Iran’s prominent contemporary literary and artistic figures, was hospitalized on May 2 and underwent surgery on May 4. He has since been discharged and is recovering at home.



Sohrab Sepehri Work Sets New Benchmark Tehran Auction Shatters Records With \$464 Billion-Toman Sale

TEHRAN — The 25th edition of Tehran Auction concluded with a historic result, rewriting the record books of Iran’s contemporary art market after generating 464.266 billion tomans in total sales and selling 96 out of 100 offered works.

Held Friday night at the Parsian Azadi Hotel in Tehran, the auction exceeded expectations in a period marked by economic pressure and uncertainty, transforming what many industry observers expected to be a cautious sale into one of the most significant nights in the history of Iranian visual arts.

The final figure represented the highest total achieved by Tehran Auction since its launch in 2012 and dramatically surpassed the previous record of 147.213 billion tomans, set at the 24th edition of the auction in October 2025.

The event also established a new record for the most expensive artwork ever sold through Tehran Auction, reinforcing the strength of demand for major works by leading Parsian Azadimasters.

The 25th edition presented 100 works,



including 74 paintings, 14 calligraphic pieces, six sculptures and six pictorial carpets. Only four works remained unsold, meaning that 96 percent of the lots found buyers, an unusually strong clearance rate for a major auction.

The sale attracted 63 buyers, with eight new collectors entering the Iranian art market for the first time. According to auction data, 64 works

was Sohrab Sepehri, one of Iran’s most internationally recognized modern artists, whose painting “Ofogh-e Rafi” (“Lofty Horizon”) became the most valuable work ever sold at Tehran Auction.

The painting achieved a final price of 42.35 billion tomans, including the auction’s standard 10 percent buyer’s premium. Its hammer price reached 38.5 billion tomans, surpassing all previous individual artwork records at the auction.

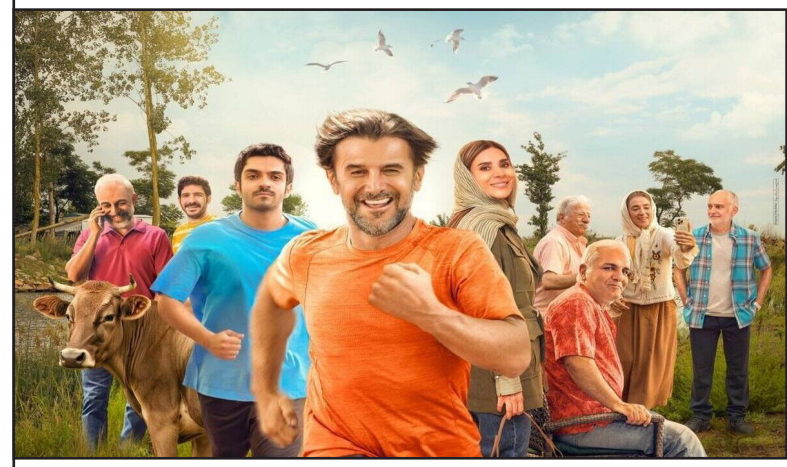
Sepehri, known for combining modernist abstraction with Persian poetic sensibility and references to nature, remains one of the most sought-after Iranian artists among collectors. His reputation has continued to grow in both domestic and international markets, where his works are considered among the defining achievements of Iranian modern art.

The record-breaking sale also highlighted the enduring commercial power of Iran’s modernist generation, whose

Sohrab Sepehri Sets New Auction Record

The undisputed star of the evening

Box Office Rebounds as Weekly Admissions Climb Past 200,000



TEHRAN -- Iran’s theatrical market posted a stronger frame in the latest reporting week, with nationwide cinemas welcoming more than 204,000 moviegoers and generating nearly 31 billion tomans in ticket sales.

According to figures released

by Cinema Shahr, theaters across the country drew 204,788 admissions during the week spanning July 11–17, while the box office reached 30.958 billion tomans, signaling a notable recovery from the previous week’s attendance.

Among exhibitors, Kourosh Cineplex once again ranked as the country’s busiest multiplex with 15,567 admissions, followed by Iran Mall Cineplex (12,037), Hadish Mall Cineplex (7,035), Honar Shahr Aftab Cinema Complex (5,412), and Azadi Cineplex (5,148).

At the box office, Soroush Sehat’s Estekhr (“The Pool”) emerged as the week’s No. 1 title, attracting 57,579 moviegoers. Kazem Daneshi’s Zende Shour (“Death Bath”) followed in second place with 41,469 admissions, while Bahman Goodarzi’s Adventure on James Bond Island rounded out the top three with 33,688 tickets sold.

The remainder of the top five included Hadi Nayeri’s Antique, which drew 13,448 admissions, and Ali Behrad’s Tehran Kena-ret (“Tehran, Another View”), with 12,279.

The latest figures represent a significant improvement over the previous reporting period,

Semnan to Host World Conference on Iranian Mosque Architecture

TEHRAN — The city of Semnan will host the World Conference on Iranian Mosque Architecture as part of efforts to introduce the county’s historical, cultural and religious capacities at the national and international levels, local officials said.

Semnan Governor Muhammad Javad Samimian said a permanent secretariat for the event will be established under the supervision of the Semnan Governorate and the county governor’s office, in cooperation with Iran’s Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts and UNESCO.

“The organization of this international conference will provide an appropriate opportunity to introduce the status of Islamic architecture and Semnan’s historical heritage, particularly the city’s Jameh Mosque, to the international community,” Samimian said.

He added that establishing the conference secretariat would facilitate integrated planning, coordination among executive bodies and the use of scientific, cultural and research capacities to ensure the successful organization of the event.

Samimian said the conference will be held in cooperation with the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts and UNESCO, adding that “making use of the capacities



Picture of the Day



People gather at a cemetery in Savadkuh, northern Iran, to commemorate deceased loved ones during the traditional Eid-e Mah-e Tabari (“Festival of the Dead”), an annual ceremony marked by prayers, charitable offerings and the distribution of local foods.

Photo by ISNA