

Iranian Culture Festival Continues in Kazan With Music, Film and Art



KAZAN, Russia -- Iran's cultural program in Russia moved to Kazan on Wednesday, bringing Iranian music, cinema, visual arts and traditional crafts to the capital of the Republic of Tatarstan as part of the Festival of Iranian Culture in Russia.

Kazan is hosting the Iranian cultural program from September 30 to October 1. The Russian state concert organization Rosconcert has included the Festival of Iranian Culture in Russia among its September programs in St. Petersburg, Moscow and Kazan.

A major feature of Wednesday's program was a concert by a 60-member Iranian musical ensemble at the Musa Jalil Tatar State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre in Kazan. Iranian officials had previously announced the performance as one of the main events marking the festival's arrival in Kazan. The theatre is one of the city's leading performing-arts institutions.

The Kazan program also highlights Iran's visual and traditional arts. Iranian artists are presenting their works at the Kazan Kremlin, accompanied by specialist workshops. The program features artists working in traditional Iranian crafts and visual arts, expanding the cultural exchange beyond music and cinema.

Registration Opens for Iran's Second Parsik Persian Proficiency Exam



TEHRAN -- Iran has opened registration for the second national Parsik Persian language proficiency exam for international students.

The National Organization for Educational Testing (NOET) said registration opened Sept. 29 and will remain open through Oct. 5. Applicants must register online and pay a registration fee of 510 million Iranian rials.

The Parsik exam assesses four Persian-language skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking. The listening and reading sections each comprise 25 multiple-choice questions. The writing section requires candidates to produce two texts, while the speaking section consists of three interview questions.

The exam is used to assess Persian-language proficiency among international students seeking to study at Iranian universities.

For undergraduate students in programs administered by Iran's Ministry of Science, Research and Technology or Ministry of Health and Medical Education, as well as students in general pharmacy, specialty and subspecialty medical programs, candidates must score at least 50 out of 100 overall, with a minimum score of 40 in each of the four sections.

For students in master's and doctoral programs, as well as general medicine (MD/MBBS) and general dentistry, the required overall score is 60 out of 100.

Under a temporary provision, applicants who score 40 out of 100 may be admitted to university centers on a conditional basis. They must retake the exam within one year and achieve the applicable final passing score before submitting the certificate to their university.

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'The Land of Angels' to Represent Iran in 2027 Oscar Race

TEHRAN -- Iran has selected Babak Khajeh-Pasha's "The Land of Angels" as its submission for the 99th Academy Awards, representing the country in the international feature film category.

The selection was announced by the Farabi Cinema Foundation, which coordinates Iran's submission to the Oscars.

Members of the selection committee included filmmaker and television personality Iraj Tahmasb, screenwriter Farhad Tohidi, cinematographer Mahmoud Kalari, producer Seyed Alireza Hussein and Muhammadreza Tashakkori.

Produced by Manouchehr Muhammadi, "The Land of Angels" is a production of Tasvir Shahr Institute and the Soureh Cinema Organization. The film premiered



at Iran's 44th Fajr Film Festival, where it won five Crystal Simorgh awards and received eight diplomas of honor, making it the festival's most decorated film.

Set against the backdrop of the

war and humanitarian crisis in Gaza, the drama follows a woman whose love and resilience lead to what the filmmakers describe as a miracle. The film combines a poetic tone with a child-centered per-

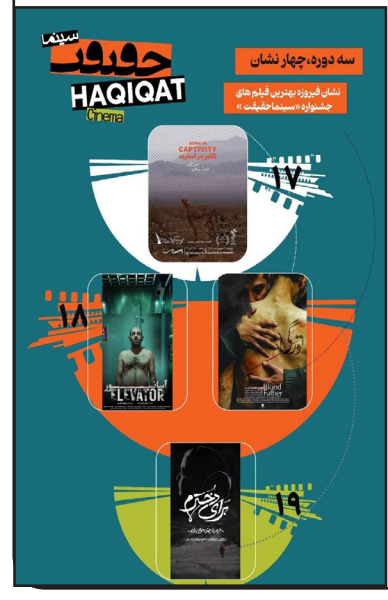
spective and features actors from several Arab countries alongside Iranian performers.

Syrian actress Sulaf Fawakherji stars, with the cast also including child actors Ali Deeb, Fatemeh Almasoumeh Zareeq, Ahoura Lotfi, Muhammad Asad, Zahra Fazel, Fatemeh Marish and Alireza Alaav.

International distribution of "The Land of Angels" is being handled by the Soureh International Department.

The 99th Academy Awards are scheduled to take place in 2027. Iran's selection will enter the Academy's international feature film submission process, with the eventual shortlist and nominees to be determined by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Cinema Vérité's Turquoise Symbol Honors Iran's Diverse Stories



TEHRAN -- The Turquoise Symbol for Best Film is the top award in the national competition at Iran's International Documentary Film Festival "Cinema Vérité," recognizing the producer or producers behind the festival's selected film.

Across the 17th, 18th and 19th editions, the honor went to four documentaries spanning radically different subjects: the struggle to preserve the endangered Asiatic cheetah, the impact of addiction on families, the difficult path of recovery and a young woman's pursuit of education.

Taken together, the films offer

a revealing look at the breadth of Iranian documentary filmmaking — and at the filmmakers' recurring effort to turn larger social questions into intimate, character-driven stories.

At the 17th edition of Cinema Vérité, the Turquoise Symbol for Best Film went to Born in Captivity, directed and produced by Mehdi Imani Shahmiri. The documentary follows Iran's controversial and difficult efforts to reproduce the endangered Asiatic cheetah in captivity.

The project initially focused on Koushki and Delbar at Tehran's Pardisan Park, but failed

to produce offspring. The cheetahs were subsequently moved to the Touran National Park in Semnan province, where the effort continued in a more natural setting.

The story eventually centered on Iran, a female cheetah that became pregnant and gave birth to three male cubs following a difficult delivery. The cubs gradually died, with the last surviving cub, Pirouz, becoming one of Iran's most recognizable animals and a symbol of the country's endangered Asiatic cheetah population.

Iranian coverage of the documentary

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Short Film on Taq-e Bostan Receives Recognition in Turkey

TEHRAN -- Iranian short film Nechir, directed by Keyvan Shamshiri, has received a festival trophy and certificate of appreciation at the 3rd Gordion International Archeofilm Festival in Türkiye after reaching the final stage of the festival's International Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Documentary Film Competition.

Shamshiri, a filmmaker and instructor affiliated with the Iranian Youth Cinema Society's Kermanshah office, was the sole Iranian representative at this year's festival. According to the festival's official selection, Nechir was among the international finalists in the archaeology and cultural heritage documentary category.

viding a platform for films exploring archaeological sites, historical civilizations and cultural heritage. The festival's theme is "Cultural Heritage," while its slogan is "Cinema Unties the Knot of the Past."

The 2026 festival was held from September 24 to 27 in Ankara and at the ancient city of Gordion in Polatli, Türkiye. The archaeological site of Gordion was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2023.

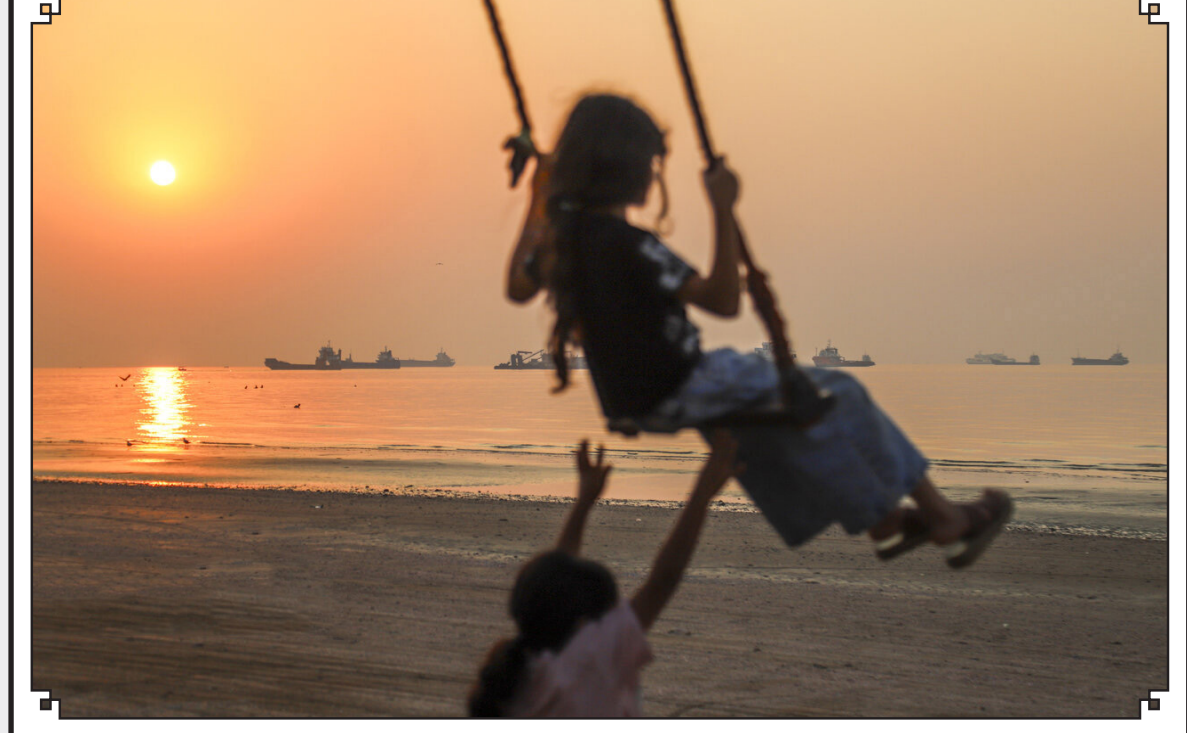
Shamshiri, born in 1982 in Kermanshah, holds a master's degree in Film Production. Alongside his work as a filmmaker and instructor, he has



published articles and other writings on cinema, and his films have been

screened at various domestic and international cultural and film events.

Picture of the Day



Children play on a swing along the Soro coast in Bandar Abbas, Iran, on September 28, 2026. Photo by ISNA