

TIBF, opportunity for Iranians to exchange ideas



IBNA - The Tehran International Book Fair (TIBF) provides a platform for individuals to express and exchange their cultural ideas, perspectives, and arts, said the director of Iran's Evaluation Council of National Artists, Writers and Poets.

Over the years, the book fair has evolved from being a simple marketplace for foreign books, primarily frequented by university students, to an unparalleled event for cultural exchange, Mohsen Parviz added.

Parviz noted that the book fair has attracted cultural delegations from various countries, and its coverage of different sections and workshops has made it a unique platform for the exchange of ideas.

The TIBF has become a significant event for cultural enthusiasts, authors, publishers, and booksellers alike.

The 34th edition of TIBF will be held from May 10 to 20.

Qorbani's Iran tour concerts to begin as of May 6



ISNA - Iran's traditional vocalist Alireza Qorbani is all set to perform concerts in several Iranian cities including Tabriz Rasht, Gilan, Kerman, Yazd, Shiraz, Tehran and Kish Island.

Qorbani's first concert is scheduled to take place in Gorgan on May 6 and 7. The concert will feature music pieces composed by Alireza Afkari and Hessam Nasser.

Qorbani, known for his soulful and captivating performances, has gained popularity both domestically and internationally. He has performed in various countries around the world and has won numerous awards for his contributions to traditional Persian music. His performances often include a mix of classical Persian music and modern elements, attracting audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

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Iran's Sa'di sculpture unveiled in Tehran

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's largest bronze sculpture of the 13th century poet Sa'di was unveiled in Tehran on Monday.

Organized by Iran's Landscape Organization and City Council of Tehran, the sculpture was revealed in a ceremony attended by Iran's Culture and Islamic Guidance Minister Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaeili, Chairman of the City Council of Tehran Mehdi Chamran, and Academy of Persian Language and Literature director Gholam-Ali Haddad-Adel, according to IRNA news agency.

Renowned Iranian sculptor Dehghan Mohammadi made the sculpture, which is installed at Sa'di Square, at the intersection of Sa'di Avenue and Jomhuriye Eslami

Avenue.

During the ceremony, Minister Esmaeili announced that the next luminary whose sculpture will be installed in Tehran is the Iranian poet Nizami.

He also stated that sculptures of other prominent figures will be unveiled and installed in other provinces to preserve Iran's identity and civilization.

Commenting on Sa'di's legacy, Gholam-Ali Haddad-Adel said that the poet is an eternal instructor of the Persian language and a teacher for those who have learned the language both in Iran and around the world.

This is why the organization responsible for teaching and promoting the Persian language worldwide is called the Sa'di Foundation, he concluded.

Street music: An ode to daily lives of pedestrians

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran is a country steeped in culture and art, and among the diverse range of artistic and cultural events that take place in the country is street music. While street music in Iran faces challenges due to political and social restrictions, it remains an important part of people's daily lives. Mehrdad Mehdi, a seasoned musician, has spent over two decades performing in the streets and has seen the evolution of street music firsthand.

His journey as a street musician is punctuated by three distinct snapshots. Following a hiatus of a year or two, Mehdi, as he tells Persian language E'temad daily, was joined by a group of musicians, primarily guitarists with a penchant for rock and blues. Their presence elicited a warm reception from the public, who identified with their musicality, a marked contrast from the first snapshot of his journey, which was characterized by an air of monotony. The ensemble expanded, resulting in a group of ten musicians, of whom eight were guitarists and one a violinist.

From 2009 to 2012, the group established a regular performance spot around Vanak Square in northern Tehran, playing a diverse repertoire that ranged from classical to western and movie music. The ensemble comprised

an accordion, a ubiquitous symbol of street music. The allure of this medium remained strong, despite the negative perceptions associated with it.

Mehdi delves deeper into his foray into street music, elaborating on his transition from an observer to an active participant. His efforts to construct a second image involved him taking to the streets, assuming the appearance of an individual from the middle echelons of society. He chose to play music from popular movies like 'Papillon,' a piece that he associates with the second snapshot of his journey. Following a hiatus of a year or two, Mehdi, as he tells Persian language E'temad daily, was joined by a group of musicians, primarily guitarists with a penchant for rock and blues. Their presence elicited a warm reception from the public, who identified with their musicality, a marked contrast from the first snapshot of his journey, which was characterized by an air of monotony. The ensemble expanded, resulting in a group of ten musicians, of whom eight were guitarists and one a violinist. From 2009 to 2012, the group established a regular performance spot around Vanak Square in northern Tehran, playing a diverse repertoire that ranged from classical to western and movie music. The ensemble comprised



a limited range of instruments, including the violin, acoustic guitar, harmonica, and Mehdi's trusty accordion. This era, marked by the group's growth and evolution, constitutes the second snapshot of Mehdi's journey as a street musician. In the third epoch, Mehdi developed a craving to acquire a comprehensive and sophisticated knowledge of accordion, comparable to that taught in European countries. Thus, he voyaged to Armenia, as at that juncture, there were no avenues for academic instruction of accordion in Iran. Throughout that phase, they conducted copious interviews, recorded videos, and imparted knowledge in the form of workshops on street music. Gradually, the street music scene shed its previous guise, and musicians no longer felt ashamed to engage in it. The third era came into being as mu-

sicians from all walks of life took to playing street music with consummate skill. These developments occurred so suddenly that, in just two years between 2012 and 2014, the number of groups in Tehran swelled by over 100. Despite the challenges faced by street musicians in Iran, the presence of street music adds to the charm of the cityscape and intersects with the daily lives of pedestrians. Mehdi believes that the only disparity between street music in Iran and its global counterpart is the degree of cultural tolerance. In leading cultural and artistic metropolises worldwide, there is greater acceptance and comprehension of street music, and macro policies align with the provision of space and opportunities, fostering cultural freedom and facilitating society's cultural advancement.

While some street musicians in Iran engage in street music to earn a living, others are passionate about culture and art and follow a set of principles. Regardless of their motivations, street music adds to cultural roots and should be a part of people's everyday lives. Mehdi regards the idea of organizing street music as meaningless and impractical as street music should be a spontaneous and integral part of people's daily lives.

He believes that the message conveyed in a street performance is more effective when people come across it in their daily lives, rather than having purchased tickets for it. Therefore, it is crucial to integrate street performances into people's lives and enable them to interact with and be affected by the message conveyed by such performances.