

Three Iranian documents added to Memory of the World

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) will add three Iranian works to its list of the Memory of the World (MoW) Program. UNESCO's Executive Board on Thursday approved Iran's proposal to add the trio.

Iran's ambassador to UNESCO said they include the entire great works of famous Iranian poet Jalal ad-Din Mohammad Rumi, also known as Molavi, (including Masnavi, Divan-e Kabir, Majales Sabe, Maktubat and Fihe-Ma-Fih – a collection of mystical sayings), documents on the history of Iran's foreign relations during the Qajar Era and documents related to Sheikh Safi Al-Din Ardabili tomb. The Memory of the World Register lists documentary heritage that has been recommended by the International Advisory Committee, and endorsed by the Director-General of UNESCO, as corresponding to the selection criteria regarding world significance and outstanding universal value. UNESCO has previously inscribed 10 Iranian works to the Memory of the World Register. A Collection of selected maps of Iran in the Qajar Era, Administrative Documents of Astan-e Quds Razavi in the Safavid Era, Al-Tafhim li Awa'il Sana'at al-Tanjim, Al-Masaalik Wa Al-Mamaalik and Bayasanghori Shahnameh are among them.

● License Holder: Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA)
 ● Editorial Dept. Tel: +98 21 88913453
 ● Editorial Dept. Fax: +98 21 88930684
 ● ICPI Publisher: +98 21 88548892, 5
 ● Advertising Dept. Tel & Email: +98 21 88500617 - irandaily@iranagahiha.com
 ● Website: www.irandaily.ir
 newspaper.irandaily.ir
 irandaily@icpi.ir
 Iran Cultural & Press Institute

Address: #22, Hosseini-Rad Alley, South of Shahid Motehary St., Vali-e Asr Ave., Tehran, Iran

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Iran to build cultural route to honor two philosophers



By Sadeq Dehqan
Staff writer

EXCLUSIVE

Iran is set to create a new cultural route, the Hekmat Highway, which will connect the birthplace and residence of Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi with the place of residence and death of Avicenna, a prominent physician and philosopher. The aim of the project is to "connect the wisdom of two great Iranian and Eastern philosophers," according to Mahmoud Shaloui, head of the National Cultural Heritage and Tourism Organization.

In an interview with Iran Daily, Shaloui explained that Hekmat Highway will cover a distance of over 140 kilometers, passing through valleys, and several cultural programs are devised for

tourists along the way. It will serve as a cultural, economic, and tourist area, connecting two of Iran's most renowned thinkers.

"Although most people know Avicenna as a skilled physician, he also had a high position in the field of philosophy and was considered the most important figure of the Mashaa'i school of philosophical thought," said Shaloui. "On the other hand, we have Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi, who was one of the great philosophers and mystics of the sixth century AH, and presented the Illuminationist school of philosophy."

Shaloui also revealed plans for the construction of a commemorative building for Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi in Sohrevard, Zanjan Province, as well as other cultural programs to mark the 101st



anniversary of the establishment of the National Cultural Heritage and Tourism Organization. Hekmat Highway is part of Iran's wider efforts to promote its rich cultural

heritage and commemorate its most celebrated figures. The organization has previously worked with municipal governments to build commemorative statues in cities,

including the statue of Ferdowsi in Tehran. "We are proud of our cultural heritage and believe that initiatives like Hekmat Highway will help us share it with the

world," said Shaloui. "We look forward to welcoming visitors to this new cultural route and sharing the wisdom of our great philosophers with them."



Arts & Culture Desk

Mahmoud Dowlatabadi, an esteemed Iranian writer, was born in Mashhad, Iran, in 1951. His oeuvre, which has garnered acclaim both domestically and internationally, encompasses a diverse array of novels, short story compilations, and plays. Among his most distinguished works are the 10-volume 'Kelidar'. Dowlatabadi's attendance at the book fair provided a forum for him to engage

with fellow literati and bibliophiles, as well as to impart his insights to the broader literary community. In his address, he expounded upon the hurdles confronting authors, particularly in Iran, where classical Persian literature enjoys a venerable legacy. "We still inhabit the realm of Hafez and Ferdowsi. Gaining acceptance here is an arduous endeavor," he remarked. "Establishing a rapport with one's readership and exercising patience is challenging."

In conversation with Tajiks: Mahmoud Dowlatabadi

Despite these obstacles, Dowlatabadi remains steadfast in his dedication to crafting and championing contemporary Iranian literature. At the fair, Dowlatabadi also had the opportunity to converse with Tajik attendees fluent in Persian. Their animated dialogue spanned a range of subjects, from modern literature to writers hailing from both Iran and Tajikistan.

Initially, one participant hesitated to engage with Dowlatabadi, as they were slated to explore the same theme in a subsequent session. Nevertheless, the conversation persisted and culminated in Dowlatabadi agreeing to reconvene with the Tajik delegation the following day.

During this encounter, Dowlatabadi broached various topics, including the evolution of his books and his incarceration experiences. He also articulated his aspiration to strengthen the bond between Iran and Tajikistan through the medium of literature. The Tajik attendees inquired about Dowlatabadi's creative process and the extent to which he incorporates the lexicon and idioms of his milieu into his work. The discourse underscored the significance of safeguarding a culture's linguistic heritage, with Dowlatabadi proposing that organizations could amass and preserve endangered vocabulary. He stressed the imperative for contemporary authors to

build upon Iran's rich literary tradition while simultaneously introducing fresh perspectives and concepts. The gathering proved immensely fruitful, with the Tajik guests expressing their gratitude and enthusiasm for the privilege of engaging with such a distinguished writer. As the celebration of the Persian language endures, events like these exemplify the unifying power of literature in bridging cultural chasms. Dowlatabadi's work continues to inspire writers and readers alike, both within Iran and across the globe. Tajik author and literary critic Muradi recently addressed the publication of Azam Rahnavard Zariab's book

"Golnar and the Mirror" in Tajikistan. During their exchange, Dowlatabadi lauded Zariab as a contemporary writer and expounded on his own method for crafting literary works that captivate and visually enthrall readers. He also illuminated his creative process, divulging that he frequently derives inspiration from personal experiences or circumstances that arise during the act of writing. In response to a query about the effects of isolation on writers, Dowlatabadi conceded that while a certain degree of solitude is essential for fostering creativity, it can also precipitate depression if not judiciously managed. Nevertheless, he remains undaunted, attrib-

uting his resilience during trying times to his indomitable spirit and psyche. Dowlatabadi also touched upon subjects such as writing habits and counsel for aspiring writers. He emphasized the importance of continuous learning and immersion in the field, cautioning against precipitous embarking on a literary career without sufficient groundwork. The conversation concluded on an uplifting note, with Dowlatabadi bestowing signed copies of his latest novel, "Doodeman," upon the attendees and expressing gratitude for their recognition of his work. Although Iranian writers enjoy considerable renown in Tajikistan, Dowlatabadi acknowledges the challenges inherent in achieving widespread popularity and hopes that future generations can glean wisdom from his journey.

Esteemed Iranian conductor Ali Rahbari graces the stage in St. Petersburg

Arts & Culture Desk

Ali Rahbari, the distinguished Iranian composer and international orchestra conductor, once again took to the stage in St. Petersburg, Russia, masterfully conducting the oeuvre of the preeminent composer of the 20th century. As reported by IRNA's music correspondent, Rahbari's performance transpired on Friday evening, May 19, at 7 p.m. local

time, within the hallowed halls of the illustrious Mariinsky Opera House in St. Petersburg. The concert, a tribute to the memory of the eminent Russian composer Igor Stravinsky, featured no soloist, with the entire program expertly conducted by Ali Rahbari. The repertoire included Stravinsky's Suites No. 1 and 2, "The Firebird," and "Petrushka." Born in June 1882 in the Lomonosov region near St. Petersburg,

Stravinsky was the third child in his family and spent his entire childhood in the city. His father was a singer at the Royal Opera of St. Petersburg, while his mother was a pianist from a young age. The family resided in close proximity to the St. Petersburg Opera concert venue, allowing Stravinsky to attend all of his father's performances. Many art connoisseurs regard Stravinsky as the most significant composer of the 20th century. He

showcased his prodigious talent and genius with the composition of "The Firebird," which catapulted him to global fame. Stravinsky then crafted "Petrushka," his second indelible masterpiece, which garnered even greater acclaim. In the previous year, Ali Rahbari was invited by the renowned Russian conductor and director of the Mariinsky Opera House, Valery Gergiev, to St. Petersburg to conduct two celebrated Russian works: Dmitri Dmitriyevich

Shostakovich's "Symphony No. 5" and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's "Scheherazade." Following this concert, Gergiev and the Mariinsky Symphony Orchestra elected to permanently appoint Rahbari as the guest conductor of the Mariinsky Opera Symphony Orchestra. The artistic director of the Mariinsky Opera House ultimately named Rahbari as the permanent conductor of the opera in July of the same year. At Gergiev's behest, it was decided that 12 distinct concerts would be held each artistic season, spotlighting works by both Western and Eastern composers. Throughout his tenure, Ali Rahbari has conducted numerous

works, garnering accolades from both audiences and the media. To commemorate the first anniversary of Gergiev's invitation to the Mariinsky Opera House, several concerts have been planned. Rahbari conducted the Mariinsky Opera Symphony Orchestra on May 19, and as with all his concerts, the performance was recorded for broadcast on Russian television. Rahbari is slated to take the stage once more with another program on June 4. Boasting three opera halls, multiple concert halls, over 400 orchestra musicians, and 250 choir singers, the Mariinsky Opera House is considered the largest music ensemble in the world.