

Tehran to host ...

The upcoming conference, as elucidated by Zolfaqar-Talab, marks a sequel to the first of its kind held four years ago. "That conference had then created a significant impact in the Muslim world, which was grappling at a time with multifaceted crises and tensions, and strived to bridge the ideological chasm amongst its constituents," he pointed out.

The conference chair noted that the goals of Sharia possess enormous potential to foster greater convergence within the Islamic world and engender a new Islamic civilization.

Moreover, the Palestinian issue has been accorded particular attention at the conference. Zolfaqar-Talab averred that, in adherence to the tenets of the Sharia, the Islamic world and its intellectuals must come to an understanding that the plight of Palestine could serve as a unifying factor for the liberation from subjugation, oppression, anti-Islamism, and arrogance.

Mahmoud Vaezi, the head of Tehran University's Faculty of Theology and Islamic Studies, who has co-organized the upcoming event, said the conference seeks to demonstrate that religion is an embodiment of peace and humanity, rather than a source of hardship and misfortune. Vaezi emphasized the significance of such programs to provide a platform for showcasing the true face of Islam to the world.

"Islam is a faith founded on the principles of peace and amity, but its enemies try to vilify it through their Islamophobic agenda."

The dean further warned that anti-Islamic forces manipulate the media to propagate falsehoods about Islam and sow seeds of discord among Islamic nations.

Encouraging dialogue and interaction, Vaezi suggested that Islamic countries need to come together and seek factual clarity instead of adopting confrontational stances.

'Motherless' awarded at Rainbow Int'l Film Festival



'Motherless,' directed by acclaimed Iranian filmmaker Morteza Fatemi, emerged triumphant at the 24th Rainbow International Film Festival in East London, garnering the Best Director Award. The festival, which took place from May 28 to June 4, showcased exceptional films from around the world, highlighting outstanding cinematic achievements.

Featuring an exceptional cast, 'Motherless' showcases the remarkable talents of Amir Aqaei, Mitra Hajjar, Pejman Jamshidi, Pardis Pour-Abedini, Ali Owji, Bitaz Aziz, Sara Mohammadi, and Fatemeh Mirzaei.

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
 Email: irandaily@icpi.ir
 Printing House: Iran Cultural & Press Institute

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

Iran Daily has no responsibility whatsoever for advertisements and promotional material printed in the newspaper.

irandaily.ir | newspaper.irandaily.ir

Vol. 7308 • Wednesday, June 7, 2023 • Price 40,000 Rials • 8 Pages

Reinterpretation of 'Esfandiar's Seven Labors' mesmerizes spectators



By Hamideh Hosseini
 Staff writer

EXCLUSIVE

Innovative reinterpretation of Ferdowsi's monumental masterpiece, 'Shahnameh' (Book of Kings), titled 'Esfandiar's Seven Labors,' has captivated audiences at Tehran's Vahdat Hall since April 26.

The production has garnered high praise, with

operas primarily revolve around the composition itself, involving the writer, lyricist, composer, and orchestra.

Considering these explanations, Parsaei emphasized that 'Esfandiar's Seven Labors' is an Iranian musical performance that lavishly incorporates visually captivating elements and offers stage designs that are both interpretive and accessible to all viewers.

literate spectators

Throughout the production, numerous

such as Rumi, Sa'di, and Khayyam in a production that was expected to solely feature Ferdowsi's words, the director clarified, "The play is an adaptation of 'Shahnameh,' in which some songs were played with a contemporary perspective on the modern human and their spiritual and psychological needs, rendering the magnum opus more relatable for today's audience. This enables the audience to establish an effective connection and engage in introspection."

Elaborating on the process of adaptation, reinterpretation, and dramaturgy, Parsaei explained, "It encompasses a theatrical journey that entails studying, analyzing, and interpreting the play for a new performance. This process takes into account the audience, time, and location, while preserving the core subject, namely, the story of 'Esfandiar's Seven Labors,' and adapting it to align with

terpretation, Parsaei stated, "In this performance, Esfandiar embarks on a heroic and mystical journey that resonates with today's society, transitioning from the realm of epic storytelling to the realm of mysticism. It is evident that the composition of songs in this work extends beyond the verses of 'Shahnameh,' necessitating a fresh amalgamation of writings by Rumi, Attar, and other Persian poets."

Amalgamation of various instruments

When asked about the incorporation of Western instruments in the musical score, Parsaei clarified, "A classical performance demands classical music. Thus, it is natural that the chosen structure by composers for creating the musical score of the play revolves around a symphony orchestra, wherein all instrumental groups and virtually all Western classical instruments are utilized.

ments by Bamdad Afshar. This unique combination resulted in a profoundly impactful composition befitting an Iranian musical performance." Parsaei revealed that negotiations are underway to stage the performance in other Persian-speaking countries such as Tajikistan, Arab countries like Oman, and various European nations. However, he acknowledged that staging such large-scale productions, with extensive set designs, stage decorations, execution facilities,

these unique challenges underscore the importance and complexity of such performances.

Manifestation of Iran's cultural identity

Furthermore, Parsaei extolled the works derived from the 'Shahnameh' as the embodiment of our cultural identity, emphasizing their extraordinary influence and captivation. This literary marvel, rooted in ancient Iranian texts and the epic story-



notable figures such as Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, Iran's Culture and Islamic Guidance Minister Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaeili, and acclaimed director Majid Majidi among the esteemed attendees. To shed light on the key factors contributing to the work's success, an Iran Daily reporter conducted an exclusive interview with the director of the production, Hossein Parsaei.

Iranian musical

When discussing the genre of the performance, Parsaei elucidated, "Opera is a fusion of music and performance, wherein visual arts converge with Western classical music, and each character is brought to life by a classical vocalist. The show features a harmonious blend of actors who sing and perform together, highlighting opera as a form of theater where music assumes a central role, and vocal pieces are masterfully executed by skilled singers.

However, it distinctively diverges from musical theater. Unlike musicals that encompass acting, choreography, stage design, and various artistic elements, such as costumes, decor, accessories, lighting, and even special visual effects,

foreign guests, who had fortunately familiarized themselves with the narrative in advance, witnessed the performance. These international spectators confirmed that the general storyline was readily comprehensible to them, allowing them to establish a profound connection with the production. Furthermore, on May 15, which marked Ferdowsi and Persian Language Commemoration Day, cultural attachés and ambassadors from various countries attended the show. Parsaei expressed how the play's executive structure, encompassing the orchestra, dance group, and stage design, captivated these distinguished guests as it derived inspiration from the epic storytelling of Ferdowsi.

Regarding the inclusion of works by other poets



current political and social conditions, geography, and the taste of an Iranian audience. Thus, in the creation of this work, in addition to directly incorporating excerpts from epic poetry, we have adapted certain aspects and delved into themes found in the poetry of Rumi and Attar." In exemplifying this rein-

Alongside Bardia Kiaras, who brilliantly conducted the orchestra, I firmly believe that a grand and epic performance of Ferdowsi's 'Shahnameh' necessitated the utilization of string, woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments, along with the incorporation of ancient rhythms and electronically composed seg-



and a multitude of musical and theatrical artists exceeding 250 individuals, requires meticulous planning and budgeting. Nevertheless, these endeavors contribute significantly to cultural exchanges between nations. The director acknowledged the distinct challenges posed by every project and highlighted the specific difficulties associated with creating musical works. With only a handful of actors possessing the versatility to both act and sing in this field, and securing the necessary funding for large-scale productions requiring the coordination and management of artists at various levels, combining music (orchestra) with performance and professional artists, the complexities of musical productions are evident. Parsaei emphasized that

telling of Ferdowsi's 'Shahnameh,' fosters a sense of unity, harmony, and shared faith among Iranians toward their sacred land.

In closing, Parsaei called upon other artists who share an interest in Iran's literary and cultural heritage, particularly the 'Shahnameh,' to create works that celebrate the country's rich literary legacy, in whichever style they find most compelling.

He also expressed his intentions to produce a performance focusing on Esfandiar's battle with Rostam. Moreover, he appealed to the government to support and motivate these artists through a comprehensive action plan, while encouraging artists themselves to understand the needs of their audiences and captivate their attention.

As the production continues to grace the stage at Tehran's Vahdat Hall, accommodating an audience of 700 per performance, Parsaei estimated that over the course of 30 days, the theatrical work attracted approximately 20,000 individuals.

'Esfandiar's Seven Labors' stands as a co-production between Owj Arts and Media Organization and Roudaki Artistic Cultural Foundation.

