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● Editorial Dept. Tel +98 21 84711226  
 ● Address 208, Khorramshahr Ave., Tehran, Iran  
 ● ICPI Publisher +98 21 88548892-5  
 ● Advertising Dept. Tel/Email +98 21 88500601/irandaily@iranagahiha.com  
 ● Website www.irandaily.ir/newspaper.irandaily.ir  
 ● Email irandaily@icpi.ir  
 ● Printing House Iran Cultural & Press Institute



# 'Cultural Diplomacy' can be achieved through translation: *Translator*

## Arts & Culture Desk

The head of the Center for Organizing Translation and Publication, Ehsanollah Hojati, emphasized that books are a powerful tool for achieving "cultural diplomacy", and that translating Iranian works can have a significant impact on international relations if done correctly. He talked about the importance of translation in promoting Iranian-Islamic thoughts and culture globally, IRNA reported. Hojati stated that the center's main goal is to introduce and promote Iranian-Islamic ideas worldwide, and to achieve this, a multilingual system will be launched soon to facilitate the translation and publication of Iranian works

in other countries. Hojati explained that the center was established in 2010, following a decree by the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution, with the aim of promoting Islamic culture and thought worldwide. He noted that the center has been working to introduce high-quality Iranian works to the world through the "reverse translation movement," which involves translating Iranian works into various languages. One of the center's key efforts is to create a network of local publishers and translators in target countries, which enables the center to provide high-quality translations that are

suitable for the target culture and language. Hojati proudly announced that the center has successfully translated and published numerous Iranian works in 30 languages, including German, English, Italian, Bosnian, Romanian, Swedish, French, and Arabic. Regarding the selection of books, Hojati explained that the center reviews published books in Iran each year and, after obtaining the necessary approvals, provides the necessary conditions for their introduction to foreign publishers and translators. He added that this effort helps create deeper and broader understanding among cultures.



However, Hojati acknowledged that the center faces challenges, including coordinating with different publishing laws in target countries and securing financial resources for large-scale projects. Despite these challenges, the center has made progress through careful planning and international cooperation.

Hojati expressed optimism about the center's future, stating that it aims to play an active role in strengthening international cultural interactions. The center is also working on a multilingual system, in collaboration with Allameh Tabataba'i University, to manage and facilitate the translation and publication of Iranian works abroad.

## Three Iranian films invited to Italy's Torino Film Festival



### Arts & Culture Desk

The 42nd Torino Film Festival in Italy will showcase three films from Iran, including one feature film, one documentary, and one short film. The festival will take place from November 22 to 30, 2024. The feature film 'The Last Act,' directed and written by Peyman Shahbod, will compete in the feature film category. The short film 'Black Scarf,' created by Alireza Shah Hosseini, will be featured in the short film

competition. Plus, the documentary 'Higher than Acidic Clouds,' directed by Ali Asgari, will be presented in the long documentary film section of the festival, ISNA reported. The Torino Film Festival is one of the largest film festivals in Italy. Over its 42 years of operation, it has become a significant reference point for both emerging and established filmmakers from around the world. 'The Last Act' is produced by Mohammad Ahmadi and tells

the story of a film and the private lives of some of its actors and crew members as they travel to a shooting location. The narrative explores how they find common threads that lead them to new meanings in life during the final shots of the film. The cast of 'The Last Act' includes Marjan Qomari, Atabak Naderi, Maryam Qasemi, Masiha Yousefi, Bahram Norouzi, Jalal Etesami, and Neda Jalali. The short film 'Black Scarf,' written and directed by Ali-

reza Shah Hosseini, poses a thought-provoking question: "Do you know anything about spiders? They eat their partners." The film features actors such as Pasha Rostami, Tara Majidzadeh, Lotfollah Saifi, Mahna Seyedi, the late Hatam Mashmooli, Javad Falahatkar, Hasti Qarib, Iraj Abedi, Nasser Ma'refat, and Arshia Cheraghi. The documentary 'Higher than Acidic Clouds,' directed by Ali Asgari, runs for 71 minutes and is presented in black and white.

## Palestinian artists plan Gaza Biennale as 'act of resistance and survival'

Palestinian artists in Gaza plan to stage a "biennale" exhibition as an act of defiance against Israel's military onslaught and to focus attention on the plight of the territory's 2.3 million people under more than 13 months of bombardment. About 50 artists from Gaza will exhibit their work within the besieged coastal strip, and are looking for art galleries to host exhibitions overseas. But in order to hold their work to the eyes of the rest of the world, the artists are facing a unique challenge: How to get their art across Israeli siege lines, The Guardian reported. About a quarter of the exhibiting artists managed to cross into Egypt earlier in the war. Of those left behind, some will try to send artworks out of Gaza with aid workers who are sporadically allowed to cross the lines; others will send material electronically in the form of pictures and video, while a few will partner with artists in the West Bank to reconstitute their art remotely. Tasneem Shatat, a 26-year-old from Khan Younis who helped come up with the idea and is a driving force behind the initiative, explained why the artists chose to emulate Venice and other major world cities in calling the proposed show a biennale. The name is also a statement of in-

tent that the biennale will be a recurring event and that Gaza and artists will still be standing in two years' time. The idea is intended as an artistic proof of life in the face of an attempt to strip Gaza's Palestinians of their humanity. It started as a conversation between artists who were seeking each other out to check their friends were still alive, and to compare notes on not just how to survive but how to continue to make art under fire and with rarely enough to eat. "The war stole a lot of things from us and the people of Gaza and it continues to steal everything and yet the world stays silent," Shatat said. "We want international institutions around the world to host these drawings and paintings and put them on display. We won't tell the stories the world already knows well, but we will tell you about the rebirth of the darkness of injustice, we will tell you about a life in the midst of death." The organisers say that, if a host is found abroad to stage a Gaza Biennale, it will be an event unprecedented in modern times: artists under siege and starving managing to stage an exhibition on the world stage. At the very beginning of the war, in October last year, Rufaida Sehwal's

house was bombed and her family had to claw their way out of the rubble to find many of their friends and neighbours lying dead on the street in the Rimal district of Gaza City. In the bombing Sehwal lost 17 years of work as an artist, and a library of nearly a thousand books, and she has been on the move, fleeing the bombing, ever since. She has been displaced seven times. "Continuing to create art in the midst of war and oppression in Gaza is not just a creative act, it is an act of resistance and survival in itself," she said. In a manifesto launching the Gaza Biennale, the artists said it represented "a creative step outside the traditional frameworks of exhibitions. It reflects the sensitivity and specificity of our situation, making it an urgent and exceptional event. At the heart of the artistic purpose is the struggle of a people to survive." The Gaza Biennale project is in its early stages and depends on the intervention of an art gallery or national museum abroad to make it a reality. But Shatat is optimistic. "All the artists' works will come out," she predicted. "They will see the light, and they will cross barriers, borders, and laws, and the whole world will see them. This is the power of art."

## 105 films vie for spot at 43rd Fajr event

A total of 105 films were submitted for consideration at the 43rd Fajr Film Festival, with producers registering their interest in the Iranian Cinema section of the event. The registration process for feature films took place over 15 days, from October 5 to 20, during which time the 105 films were put forward for consideration, ISNA reported.

As reported by the festival's public relations office, the 43rd Fajr Film Festival, directed by Manouchehr Shahsavari, is set to take place in February of this year. The festival's secretariat has begun reviewing the submitted films to ensure they meet the event's regulations, and those that qualify will be screened by the selection committee after the final versions are submitted.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist

