

Mexican prints reframe war, nationhood at Tehran museum

Arts & Culture Desk

The Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (TMOCA) mounted a rare exhibition of Mexican printmaking that traces the intertwined narratives of war, resistance and national identity, presenting works from its collection as part of its ongoing 'Art & War' series in Tehran. Titled 'Eleven Artworks by Mexican Printmakers,' the exhibition opened on May 23 in the museum's main hall, bringing together 11 works that illuminate how conflict and social upheaval have shaped modern artistic expression.

At the center of the exhibition are two significant prints from the 1920s by renowned Mexican muralists and printmakers David Alfaro Siqueiros and José Clemente Orozco. The works capture the struggles of the Mexican people during a transformative era marked by revolution and political change. They are accompanied by nine contempo-

rary prints that revisit themes of independence, collective memory and social identity through diverse artistic languages.

Crowd interest extends run Museum officials have now extended the exhibition through June 7 following public interest in the showcase.

The extension coincides with a message from Mexican Ambassador to Iran Guillermo Puente Ordorica, who welcomed the exhibition and described Mexican printmaking as a powerful vehicle for artistic expression, social communication and political reflection.

He said the tradition, shaped in the aftermath of the Mexican Revolution, had evolved beyond its aesthetic dimension to convey collective experiences, historical memory and aspirations for social justice.

Ordorica said the exhibition offered visitors an opportunity to engage with a visual tradition that reflects universal themes of

identity, resilience and human dignity. He added that its inclusion in TMOCA's 'Art & War' series fostered dialogue between different artistic traditions on the impact of conflict and crises on human experience.

"I am confident this exhibition will contribute to strengthening cultural understanding between Mexico and Iran and allow the public to appreciate the richness of an artistic tradition deeply connected to Mexico's social history," the envoy said.

The exhibition forms the third chapter of TMOCA's 'Art & War' initiative, which examines the impact of armed conflict on artistic movements and cultural discourse across the world. By revisiting works from its collection through the lens of war, the museum invites viewers to reflect on how twentieth-century artistic schools emerged from periods of upheaval and how those legacies continue to resonate today.

Curators frame the exhibition



Visitors gather in a gallery hallway featuring framed prints and banners during the 'Eleven Artworks by Mexican Printmakers' exhibition at the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art in Tehran, which runs from May 23 to June 7, 2026.

● TMOCA

within the broader role of museums as cultural bridges in a fragmented world, echoing this year's International Council of Museums theme, "Museums Unite Worlds." Through the voices of artists from Iran and abroad, the program seeks to underscore shared human experiences amid division and conflict.

The exhibition also highlights the historical significance of Mexican printmaking, often regarded as one of the most accessible and socially engaged forms of visual art. Emerging from the cultural renaissance that followed the Mexican Revolution, artists such as Diego Rivera, Orozco and Siqueiros forged a powerful visual language that



blended modernist influences with Indigenous traditions, shaping generations of politically engaged artists worldwide. Many of the contemporary works on display originate from the celebrated 'Carpeta' portfolio project launched in 2010 by Mexico's National Print Museum to commemorate the bicentenary of the country's independence and the centenary of

its revolution. TMOCA acquired Portfolio No. 22 in 2012, adding a landmark collection of Mexican graphic art to its holdings. Rich in technical innovation and patriotic symbolism, the prints on view reveal how art can transform the scars of history into enduring cultural memory, allowing distant struggles to speak across borders and generations.

Persian art puts down new roots in London

Arts & Culture Desk

The sixth Iranian Contemporary Art Biennial, titled 'With My Roots,' brought together artists from across the global Iranian diaspora at London's Mall Galleries from May 23 to 30, showcasing the growing international reach of Iranian contemporary art in one of the British capital's most prominent cultural venues.

Organized by Capital Art London and inaugurated during a private preview on May 22, the exhibition featured 182 works selected from more than 530 submissions. The final collection represented 127 Iranian artists residing in 17 countries, offering a broad survey of contemporary artistic expression shaped by cultural heritage, personal experience and global engagement, IRNA reported.

Located beside Buckingham Palace on The Mall, the gallery's exhibition spaces were transformed into a vibrant showcase of painting, photography, digital art, installation and video. The biennial sought to highlight artistic voices that move beyond technique alone to explore iden-



tity, memory and the enduring influence of Iranian culture across generations and geographies.

The event attracted a diverse audience of international visitors, collectors, art professionals and members of the Iranian community, underscoring the expanding visibility of Iranian artists on the global cultural stage and their ability to forge cross-border connections through visual storytelling.

A centerpiece of this year's edition was 'Eternal Iran,' a special exhibition dedicated to the richness and continuity of Iranian civilization. The section featured 15 works by acclaimed Iranian miniature master Hossein Ali Machiani, whose paintings reflected the elegance of classical Persian miniature traditions while engaging contemporary audienc-



Sculptures and paintings are displayed during the sixth Iranian contemporary art biennial, titled 'With My Roots,' at the Mall Galleries in London, Britain, May 22-30, 2026, featuring a collection of 182 works by 127 Iranian artists from 17 countries.

● IRNA

es through themes of cultural continuity and artistic authenticity. According to organizers, 305 works advanced to the jury stage before 182 pieces were selected for display. By bringing together emerging talents and internationally recognized practitioners from the United Kingdom, Europe, North America and the Middle East, 'With My Roots' offered a sweeping portrait of contemporary Iranian creativity and opened new avenues for cultural dialogue, artistic exchange and engagement with the global art market.

Minister calls for dynamic new role in heritage research

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Reza Salehi-Amiri called on Saturday for a sweeping overhaul of the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage and Tourism, urging the institution to prioritize archaeological excavations, future-oriented studies, and policy-driven research during a meeting with its senior managers and academics in Tehran.

Salehi-Amiri said the institute should evolve from a largely archival body into a dynamic center for strategic knowledge production, capable of addressing emerging cultural and tourism challenges while helping shape national policymaking, CHTN reported.

The minister identified systematic archaeological excavations as a key research priority, highlighting the historical and archaeological potential of western and central Iranian



provinces such as Hamedan and Qazvin.

He also called for a dedicated program to document, study, and protect Tehran's cultural heritage, with particular attention to the ancient urban centers of Rey and Varamin and other historically significant sites surrounding the capital.

Salehi-Amiri said Iran possesses more than two million manuscripts, describing the collection as a civilizational treasure that underpins the country's historical memory and scholarly traditions. He also stressed

the importance of preserving Iran's linguistic diversity, saying regional languages and dialects form an integral part of the nation's intangible cultural heritage.

Framing the institute as a cornerstone of Iran's cultural governance system, the minister urged stronger cooperation between its research departments and the ministry's specialized agencies, including the tourism sector, to improve coordination and enhance policy outcomes.

He also emphasized the need to cultivate a new generation of heritage specialists by expanding opportunities for young researchers to work alongside leading scholars and experts.

"The institute must become a reference center for knowledge production, foresight studies and scientific solutions," Salehi-Amiri said, adding that safeguarding Iran's historical memory should go hand in hand with shaping the country's cultural future.

WHO honors Iranian with 2026 tobacco control award

Social Desk

The World Health Organization (WHO) awarded its 2026 World No Tobacco Day prize for the Eastern Mediterranean Region to Abdolhossein Khosropanah, secretary of Iran's Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution, recognizing his role in advancing national strategies aimed at preventing tobacco use through cultural and educational policies.

According to an official report released by WHO on Saturday in connection with World No Tobacco Day 2026, Khosropanah was honored for helping steer Iran's tobacco control framework toward preventive and culture-based measures, elevating the issue from a primarily health-related concern to a broader social and educational prior-



ity.

A centerpiece of the initiative was the adoption of a comprehensive national document outlining challenges, strategies, executive responsibilities, and coordinated actions for the cultural and social prevention of tobacco consumption. The framework brought together educational, cultural, and executive institutions under a unified roadmap for the first time.

WHO highlighted several measures associated with the initiative, including the assignment of clear responsibilities to key ministries and public institutions, a stronger focus on prevention in schools and educational environments, and enhanced monitoring mechanisms designed to curb indirect tobacco promotion in cultural products.

The recognition coincides with WHO's 2026 World No Tobacco Day theme, "Unmasking the Appeal: Exposing Industry Tactics on Tobacco and Nicotine Products," which seeks to counter marketing strategies that target young people and promote nicotine addiction.

Behnaz Valizadeh, another prominent figure in Iran's tobacco control efforts, was also recognized for contributions in the field.