



Albert Camus (French philosopher, author, and journalist)

A true masterpiece does not tell everything.

UNDERNEATH THE SUN

Food cart soldier

By Ali Amiri*

A little past 8 on a sunny winter day in Tehran's downtown, I walked towards a young man, dressed in army pants and a blue sweater, slicing tomatoes behind a food cart. The cart was red and green with simplistic flowers drawn on the sides. To strike up a conversation, I asked what he sells.

"Potato and egg sandwich."

It was still early and the maddening commotion of Jomhuri Street was an hour or so away. Rasekh, 21, who begins his work every day at 8 and works a 12 hour shift, listened intently to my reasons for talking to him, and tried to dismiss them by saying "come on man, I'm from Afghanistan, what else can I say about myself?"

He got back to his tomatoes. I watched him in silence for a while, thinking about all the reasons he might have for reducing himself to his nationality alone. Eventually I broke the silence, asking about his childhood.

He was born to a normal family the same year the US invasion of Afghanistan began. He's lived his life being a good son, going to school and making friends before turning 18. Then, with his best friend, Muhammad Ali, and 40 other classmates, voluntarily joined the army.

"Muhammad Ali and I were inseparable," he said. Just before I could ask him where he is now, a car parked nearby and Rasekh fell silent. It was his boss, bringing fresh supplies. I stepped back and watched them unload packs of bottled water, soft drinks, boiled eggs, potatoes and a big jar of mayonnaise from the trunk. Then together they set the affairs of the cart in order before the boss drove away. He seemed like a good guy.

"He was martyred," he said with a sigh. I sensed a terrible gloom descending upon him. It turned out he was the only survivor among all of his friends and classmates. He himself was wounded as a result of a landmine explosion about a year ago. Oh, to be so young and have endured so much!

"Since I was 18 I've only seen war. And what's worse? After three years we started to lose ground, stronghold by stronghold."

He finally came to Iran 6 months ago. Since then he's been working here and there, with some employers cheating him out of his salary because of his situation. But he is happy with his current boss and has even found a new friend, Mahdi.

"I like him a lot. One day he came here and I gave him a sandwich, and we talked for hours and he was really kind. We exchanged numbers. Although he's back to his own city now, we still keep in touch and talk to each other quite often."

Thinking about his newfound friend put him in a better mood. He took a jar of pickles out of the compartment and put it on the cart. It was almost 9 and time for him to make the first sandwiches of the day.

*Ali Amiri is a guest contributor to Iran Daily who observes and narrates often unspoken stories of the ordinary people.

'Slight Pain' to present Iran at Poppy Jasper fest



IRNA

'Slight Pain', a short film by Iranian director Pouya Nabi, has entered the official selection of the 2022 annual Poppy Jasper International Film Festival (PJIFF) in the US.

Produced by Alireza Alavian, 'Slight Pain' will make its seventh international premiere at the 2022 edition of the PJIFF, ifilmv.tv reported.

The short film is the story of two young girls who team up together in a murder plan to kill one of the girl's strict stepdad.

The 25-minute-long flick stars Gilda Vishki and Marjan Eftefaian as the two main actors of the film.

'Slight Pain' is Nabi's fourth film production following 'Silent', 'Honemymoon' and 'Sleepwalkers', which all were warmly received in international film festivals.

'Slight Pain' is an adaptation of 'The Housekeeper and the Professor' by Japanese writer Yoko Ogawa.

The Poppy Jasper International Film Festival aims to "promote inclusion, diversity and women empowerment and educate people of all ages about filmmaking."

The upcoming all-virtual edition of the PJIFF is slated for April 6-13, 2022 in San Francisco.

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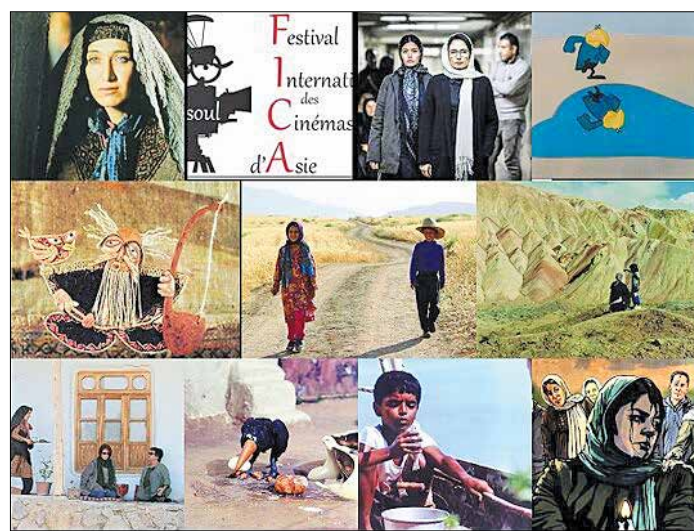


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 Editor-in-Chief: Kambakhsh Khalaji
 Editorial Dept. Tel: +98 21 88755761-2
 Editorial Dept. Fax: +98 21 88761869
 Subscription Dept. Tel: +98 21 88748800
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 Advertising Dept. Tel & Email: +98 21 88500617 - irandaily@iranagahi.com
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 Email: newspaper.irandaily.ir
 Printing House: irandaily@icpi.ir
 Iran Cultural & Press Institute

Address: Iran Cultural & Press Institute, #208 Khorramshahr Avenue Tehran-Iran

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Iranian competing films at French Vesoul festival announced



Arts & Culture Desk

A prestigious international film festival in France will host several Iranian feature films, documentaries, and animations.

The 28th edition of the Vesoul International Film Festival of Asian Cinemas in France is scheduled for February 1-8.

'No Choice,' directed by Reza Dormishian, in the competition section of feature films, 'Hit The Road,' by Panah Panahi, in the preview section, 'Asho,' by Jafar Najafi in the competition section of documentaries, and 'The Green Wave,' by Ali Samadi Ahadi, in the history section are works from Iranian cinema attending the event, ISNA reported.

'Once Upon a Time a Crow,' directed by Abdullah Alimorad, 'A Raven Who Wanted to Be the Most Powerful,' by Mohammad Ali Soleimanzadeh, and 'Sparrow and Cotton Seed,' by Morteza Ahadi Sarkani are also Iranian animations competing in the audience section of the international festival.

This year, well-known Iranian actress Leila Hatami has been selected as the head of the jury panel at the 28th edition of the Vesoul film festival. Palestinian screenwriter Soha Aref, Filipino director Zig Dulay, and Kazakh director Yerlan Nurmukhambetov are the other members of the jury panel.

Established in 1995, the goal of the Vesoul International Film Festival of Asian Cinemas is to promote the cinema of Asian territories.

SKIES OF BLUE ... CLOUDS OF WHITE



Materials and Energy Research Center, Karaj, Alborz Province

IRAN DAILY

Berlin Film Festival to take place despite pandemic

The Berlin International Film Festival will take place next month despite rising virus numbers in the country, especially in the German capital, organizers said Wednesday.

"We are aware of the challenges posed by the unpredictable course of the pandemic," the festival management said in a statement, adding that strict pandemic measures would be applied to the 72nd edition of one of the world's most famous film festivals, AP reported.

Only people who have already been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or have recently recovered from an infection will have access to the festival's grounds. In addition, a daily rapid test and masks will be required

for everyone attending. Movie theater attendance will be reduced to 50% capacity and all parties and receptions – usually an essential highlight of the film festival – will be canceled.

The opening is still scheduled for Feb. 10 and the awards will be given out a little earlier than initially planned, on Feb. 16, the German news agency dpa reported.

The festival's opening film will be "Peter von Kant" by French film director and screenwriter Francois Ozon. The movie is a free interpretation of Rainer Werner Fassbinder's film "The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant."



thehamdenjournal.com

Two folk songs composed in honor of Mirza Kuchak Khan nationally registered



Arts & Culture Desk

Two songs composed about the national hero in modern Iranian history, Mirza Kuchak Khan Jangali, were nationally registered.

The song 'Mirza Kuchak Khan' and the mournful song 'How much do you sleep in the forest?', written in the description of Mirza Kuchak Khan, were included on the list of the National Intangible Cultural Heritage, ISNA reported.

'Mirza Kuchak Khan' is the name of a folk song composed by an unknown poet in honor of the national hero. The people of the northern province of Gilan have sung this chanson many times in different styles.

The most well-known version of this ballad has been sung by the maestro Nasser Masoudi, known as 'Night-ingle of Gilan', for the end credits of a movie about the life story of Mirza Kuchak Khan.

The chanson was nationally registered at the Tuesday meeting of the National Council for the Registration of Intangible Cultural Heritage, entitled, 'Ballad of Mirza Kuchak Khan'.

During the same meeting, the mournful song 'How much do you sleep in the forest?' was also registered as the National Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The registration was done by Mostafa Pourali, a senior official at the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts.

The people of Gilan have composed this song in mourning for the martyrdom of Mirza Kuchak Khan.

Mirza Kuchak Khan (1880-1921) founded a revolutionary movement which was based in the forests of Gilan Province, northern Iran, known as the Jungle Movement. This uprising started in 1914 and remained active against internal and foreign enemies until 1921, when the movement was completely abandoned after the death of Mirza Kuchak Khan.