

Fars nomads weaving their way out of poverty

Tehran Times Art Desk

TEHRAN — These days, nomad women in the Fars region tie knots on warps in an attempt to solve financial problems in their lives.

They weave carpets to earn a living. While in the not too distant past, they used to weave carpets to flaunt their art and abilities.

In mid November, UNESCO registered the traditional skills of carpet weaving in the Fars region on its List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

However, the weavers do not receive serious support from any governmental organization.

"Each weaver can only weave 1-1.5 meter per month for a payment of 400,000-500,000 rials (about \$40-50)," Fars carpet expert Behnam Mohammadi told the Persian service

of CHN on Saturday.

"Wholesalers purchase carpets from the weavers for a low price, then sell them to businessmen for a much higher price," he added.

In addition, businessmen hire employees to work as their representatives in the region and provide the weavers with the favorite designs the businessmen are looking for, he explained.

The weavers are paid low wages and sometimes, they can't even get that, he lamented.

He said that the Ministry of Commerce and the Iran National Carpet Center are responsible for supporting the weavers.

However, a center for organizing the weavers has yet to be established, he noted.

The traditional skills of carpet



Qashqai women weave a carpet in a tent in the Sadeh Eqid region of Fars Province on September 5, 2010.

(Mehr/Es'haq Aqai)

weaving in the Fars region is mostly related to the Qashqai nomads. All tasks involved in weaving a carpet are shared by nomadic men and women and all materials used in weaving are also made and processed by them.

Wool for the carpets is shorn by men in spring or autumn. The men then construct the carpet loom -- a horizontal frame placed on the ground -- while the women convert the wool into yarn on spinning wheels.

The colors used are mainly natural -- reds, blues, browns and whites

produced from dyestuffs including madder, indigo, lettuce leaf, walnut skin, cherry stem and pomegranate skin.

The women are responsible for the design, color selection and weaving, and bring scenes of their nomadic lives to the carpet. They weave carpets without referring to a written design plan, so no two carpets woven by a weaver come out alike.

All these skills are transferred orally and by example. Mothers train their daughters to use the materials, tools and skills, while fathers train

their sons in shearing wool and making looms.

Due the weavers' limited funds for acquiring the resources necessary for weaving, certain institutes have been set up to provide raw materials, which unfortunately, lack basic standards.

"These institutes do not possess the requisite commitment to produce Iranian carpets... so they compromise the authenticity of this form of traditional artwork," Fars carpet expert Gholamreza Heidari said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Lili Afshar to hold master class in Tehran



TEHRAN — Renowned Iranian guitarist Lili Afshar will hold a master class on guitar playing techniques on December 2 at the Tehran Conservatory.

Afshar, who is in Iran for a series of concert, will hold the master class under the title of "Technique and Effects of Music on Guitar Playing Methods".

"I want to tell young guitarists that they should avoid mere imitation in playing guitar and to show them how they can reach for novel ideas and techniques during the master class," he told the Persian service of Fars News Agency.

Iranian films line up for Indian filmfest

TEHRAN — Iranian films are currently on screen at the 41st International Film Festival of India which will run until December 2 in Goa, India.

"The Day Goes and the Night Comes" by Omid Bonakdar and Keyvan Alimohammadi, "On Foot" by Fereydu Hassanpur, "Tehrui" by Nader T. Homayun are on screen at the festival.

The other films on screen are "The Qandil Mountains" by Taha Karimi, "Third Floor" by Bijan Mirbaqeri, "Evening of the 10th Day" by Mojtaba Raie, "The First Stone" by Ebrahim Foruzesh and "The Other" by Mehdi Rahmani.

Book city to hold meeting on Iran-Italy cultural affinities

TEHRAN — The Cultural Center of Tehran's Book City will hold a meeting on cultural relations between Iran and Italy on December 30.

The meeting entitled "Iran and Italy: Open Doors, an Intercultural Voyage" will be attended by several Iranian and Italian scholars.

Italian cultural attaché to Tehran Carlo Cereti, Italian professor Anna Maria Motacchi, Iranian translators Antonia Shoraka and Haleh Nazemi are some of scholars and officials who are attending the meeting.

The center is located on 3rd Ave, Bokharest St., off Shahid Beheshti Ave.

Swiss artist Bruno Monguzzi says Iran has great graphic designers

Tehran Times Art Desk

TEHRAN — Swiss graphic designer Bruno Monguzzi believes there are great graphic designers in Iran and that they should take their profession more seriously.

Bruno Monguzzi has been invited to Iran to hold an exhibit of his works in honor of his deceased Iranian friend Morteza Momayyez, known as father of Iranian graphic art.

The exhibit opened Friday at the Iranian Artists Forum where several members of the Iranian Graphic Designers Society including Ebrahim Haqiqi, Amrollah Farhadi, and Saed Meshki were taking part, the Persian service of MNA reported on Saturday.

Swiss Ambassador Livia Leu Agosti, Morteza's widow Afsaneh Momayyez and their son Anushirvan accompanied by former curator of Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art Alireza Sami-Azar were also seen among the participants.

You cannot imagine how surprised I am to see this great number of visitors here. It is an honor for me to be here, Bruno said.

"To see visual arts is my profession. Since I live in Switzerland, it is easy to travel to Italy, but for me to travel to Iran was hard. I am happy that I could make it," he said.

"Do not idolize foreign graphic designers. You have great artists right here. You just need to work together," he added.



Right to left, Iranian graphic designer Amrollah Farhadi, Swiss graphic designer Bruno Monguzzi, Swiss Ambassador to Tehran Livia Leu Agosti, Morteza Momayyez's widow Afsaneh and their son Anushirvan pose in an exhibit of Monguzzi's works at the Iranian Artists Forum in Tehran on November 26, 2010.

forum. Only once before his death did he display his photos.

Momayyez died of cancer at the age of 69 on November 26, 2005. Several months later, the Momayyez Foundation was established by his family, friends and former students to promote his works and offer training in the field of graphics.

He worked as costume designer in the production of 14 plays and two films, and designed posters for numerous Iranian movies.

He was the chairman of the board of directors of the Iranian Graphic Designers Society from 1988 and compiled six books on painting and graphic design.

In April 2004, Momayyez was honored by the International Council of Graphic Design Associations (ICOGRADA) with a lifetime achievement award.

"Norwegian Wood" director Tran cuts through language barrier

TOKYO (Reuters Life!) — Adapting a bestselling novel like "Norwegian Wood" for the cinema can be a tough task for any director, but try making the film in a language you can't speak.

That's the challenge Vietnamese-French filmmaker Tran Anh Hung faced in bringing the Haruki Murakami story of love and loss to the screen 23 years after the book enchanted millions of Japanese readers and raised the author's profile globally.

But Tran, who won the top prize at the Venice Film Festival for his 1995 film "Cyclo," said it was never an option to make Norwegian Wood outside Japan or in another language.

Tran first wrote the screenplay in French, had it translated into English and eventually Japanese, and relied on help from his producer in communicating with the actors.

"Murakami was very open and said I could adapt it in any language I wanted and in any place in the world," Tran told Reuters in an interview ahead of the film's December 11 release in Japan.

"But I said I wanted to film Japanese faces, because what attracted me in the novel is that it's Japanese," he said.

Murakami, however, was initially reluctant to allow the novel to be adapted to the big screen, and it took Tran and producer Shinji Ogawa four years to win the author's approval after a series of meetings and discussions about the script.

Bolshoi Ballet to beam live to world cinemas

PARIS (AFP) — Four performances of the Bolshoi Ballet are to be beamed live from Moscow to 300 cinema screens around the world as part of a tie-up with French movie house giant Gaumont-Pathe, the firm said on Friday.

The shows will be broadcast over a six-month period starting December 19 on cinema screens in 12 countries including the United States, Britain, Germany and France, under a partnership with Gaumont's subsidiary CielEcran.

Half a dozen opera houses and orchestras around the world -- from La Scala in Milan to the Berlin Philharmonic -- have so far followed the lead of New York's "Met", which launched an ambitious scheme of live opera transmissions at the cinema for its 2006-2007 season.

"This is the first operation on its scale for ballet," said Marc Welinski, the managing director of CielEcran, which has been broadcasting productions by the Metropolitan Opera to French cinemas since 2008.

Filed in high-definition using 10 cameras, the Bolshoi series will kick off with the "The Nutcracker" on December 19, followed by "Giselle" and "Class-Concert" on January 23, "Don Quichotte" on March 6 and "Coppelia" on May 29.

Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain and Switzerland are also taking part in the operation.



Iran to hold art week in UAE

Tehran Times Culture Desk
TEHRAN — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) will hold Iran's Art Week from November 28 to December 5.

The project aims to boost bilateral cultural and artistic ties between the two countries and to give a chance for artists to exchange their experiences and innovations, the secretary of the event Mohammad-Javad Payandeh told the Persian service of IRNA.

"There are much cultural commonality between UAE and Iran and many Iranians reside in UAE as well so that Iran's Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance and Niavaran Cultural Center decide to hold the week," he added.

He went on to say that different types of art including fine arts, music, theater and pardeh-khani (kind of Naqqali during which a morshed (mentor) stages the tragic stories of Muslim leaders) will be held during the event.

Four Iranian artists will display 50 artworks in the areas of calligraphy, Persian painting and illumination during a showcase, Payandeh said.

Tasyan band conducted by Amir Hossein Hassaninia will also perform concerts on the first four days of the week, he added.

Two Iranian theater troupes will also perform "A Girl, A Soldier" on December 4 on stage and the "Rolling Bowl" street theater during the week.



Ferdowsi Foundation to produce film on Shahnameh

Tehran Times Art Desk
TEHRAN — Iran's Ferdowsi Foundation will be launching the production of a movie on Ferdowsi's Shahnameh.

A great researcher has conducted the research work and a veteran screenwriter is currently working on the script, secretary general of the foundation Yasser Movahhedfar told the Persian service of ISNA on Saturday.

The names of the researcher and the screenwriter were not released in the news.

One of the older narrations of Shahnameh is due to be featured in a modern format of today, he said.

Movahhedfar said that the project took five years to complete and the plans are to film the project in Iran and several European countries. "We hope the project will attract international attention."

The Ferdowsi Foundation is an organization run by the public and we hope other organizations support this project financially, he concluded.