



• Sunday
• February 12, 2023
• Vol. 8126

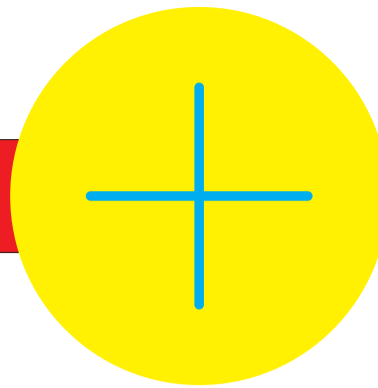
UNESCO sounds alarm over quake damage to Türkiye, Syria heritage



The UN's cultural agency UNESCO said two sites listed on its World Heritage list in Syria and Türkiye sustained damage in the devastating earthquake and warned several others may also have been hit.

IRAN NEWSPAPER

ISSN 1027-1449
Keytitle: IRAN (Tehran)
irannewspaper.ir



IRAN

Iranian Morning Newspaper

Yazd architecture helps music touch the soul: *Violin player*

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EXCLUSIVE

Once the softness and magic of music is combined with the splendor and beauty of the architecture of the sun-baked city of Yazd, it touches our souls



deeply and doubles the joy of music, said a young musician from the city of Yazd, Arash Nasser al-Memar.

A set of music videos entitled, 'Music in the City', showing the artist playing the violin on the streets and thoroughfares of the historical city of Yazd, caught considerable attention on social media.

The 27-year-old musician was awarded in the Iranian violin section at a traditional music festival held in Yazd Province in 2014.

Ever since then, he has been selected as one of the young musical talents of the province.

In this day and age, apart from teaching music, he collaborates with professional and prominent music ensembles across the country.

An Iran Daily reporter conducted an exclusive interview with the artist. The full text of the interview follows:

Tell us how you became interested in the field of music? What have you done in this field so far?

I grew up in an artistic family. My father played various musical instruments, though not very skillfully. Thus, having an artistic family was the primary reason for me to follow music from an early age. I remember my first stage performance was playing the flute at the age of seven.

I started playing the violin at the age of six, and then I added the clarinet and piano to my catalogue of self-taught skills. However, the only instrument that I learned from various music instructors in Yazd was the violin. In 2016, I started composing and arranging music and, gradually, I broadened my

experience to the point that now I have a home music studio.

I have also worked with different singers and ensembles. To name but a few, I used to play the violin in Sina Sha'bankhani band for a while; I also played the piano in Mohammad Mo'tamedi's album, 'Now That You Are Going,' composed by Farid Sa'adatmand. What's more, I have the experience of playing in a number of TV musical scores.

Likewise, I collaborated with Mustafa Ragheb, playing in several of his compositions. I was in charge of composing and arranging his song, 'I Love You,' amongst others.

When did you start creating music videos in the city of Yazd? What was the purpose of making these clips?

As a personal interest, these works started in April, 2018. It was my long-term preoccupation to perform and show my taste in arranging and playing music. I made a number of clips that went viral on the internet, and gained the support of the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Department in Yazd Province.

At first, I had picked different locations for performing the clips, and the very first music videos were filmed in the historical and traditional context of Yazd. Since it was highly welcomed by the people, I continued video clip creations with the same technique. On the other hand, I studied architecture, and the charms of Yazd architecture have always been spellbinding for me. I believe that the pure historical architecture of Yazd creates an amazing feeling in people, bringing about a double-effect on the viewer.

There are several world-renowned violinists who gained a

large audience by recording music videos in natural and historical landscapes. To what extent were you inspired by them?

I have seen these clips which basically help raise musicians to fame. In Iran, apart from a few people, including Anoushirvan Rouhani, Hossein Alizadeh, and Kayhan Kalhor, who worked hard to reach the height of their fame, the general public knows no more famous musicians. Another reason is that Iranians do not often listen to and communicate with instrumental music.

Watching other people's video clips have been highly influential on my work; however, I have tried to make by far different videos. First of all, their works have several visual effects, though my works of art are tangible and have no computer graphics.

The camera moves from the point of view of a citizen who steps into the heart of the historical city and strolls through the streets. It's as if we are watching everything through the lens of his or her eyes, and that is why most of the clips are single shot. In fact, the camera moves like a bystander inside the historical context, and its lens changes direction once encountering historical attractions. These clips were filmed with the least visual effects and lighting modification in order not to lose its sense of naturalness.

Will you continue making these video clips?

By all means! The earlier clips were made without financial support, on personal expense. However, I have recently talked with some production and broadcast companies for offering financial and professional aid, so that high quality works could be produced.

40th Iranian Nat'l Book Award ceremony held



Top publications in different categories of the 40th Iranian National Book of the Year Award and the 30th Iran's World Book Award were honored during a special ceremony at Tehran's Vahdat Hall on Wednesday.

Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi, Culture and Islamic Guidance Minister Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaeili, head of the Iranian Academy of Persian Language and Literature, Gholam-Ali Haddad-Adel, Deputy Culture and Islamic Guidance Minister for Cultural Affairs Yaser Ahmadvand, CEO of Iran's Book and Literature House Institute Ali Ramezani attended the ceremony.

The Iranian president said that scholars are responsible for protecting Iran's rich culture and civilization, adding that their most important tool is a book.

Highlighting the significance of books to preserve and transfer culture, science, knowledge, and history, Raeisi said that throughout history, oppressors always invaded libraries to destroy invaluable written works.

Iranica Desk

A boom in Iran's handicrafts market would be achieved through paying full attention to innovation and creativity of craftspeople. In fact, a significant development of the handicrafts sector, as a low-cost and high value-added industry, would help generate jobs across the country. Paying attention to the needs of the people is the main prerequisite for supplying handicrafts to the domestic and international market, IRNA reported. The handicrafts industry, which is among those on which sanctions are ineffective, can play an important role in the economic growth of the country. Moreover, great diversity is the main distinction between handmade crafts produced in Iran and other

countries. Even the handicrafts of China, with a population of over one billion, do not have such diversity. With an area of 97,500 sq km., Semnan Province is one of the largest provinces of the county. Released figures show that about 4,500 artisans are active in various branches of handicrafts in the province, including pottery, kilim-weaving, monabat-kari (wood carving), mo'araq-kari (wood inlaying), gem-cutting, traditional textile-weaving, embroidery, namad-mali (felt beating) and leather crafting. For example, the craft of namad-mali has long been practiced in various villages of Semnan Province to produce namad (a traditional rug) out of woolen fabrics by rolling and pressing them. The method of making felts is very similar in

different areas of Iran, but they sometimes vary in color, pattern, and thickness. A large number of handicraft workshops are operating in the two cities of Kalateh Khij and Mehdishahr, which have been registered as the National Craft Cities. Taneh-bafi (a type of textile weaving) of Kalateh Khij and shomareh-douzi (a type of embroidery) of Mehdishahr are well-known across the country. Thirty handicraft production skills and techniques of the province were registered on Iran's National Intangible Cultural Heritage List. The craftspeople of Semnan Province, who have successfully managed to combine science with experience, are complaining about the lack of a permanent handicraft market and the high cost of raw materials. They expect the relat-

ed authorities to be more helpful in this regard. Using the capacity of various urban organizations and departments, including municipalities and city councils, would help improve the tourism and handicraft industries. It has been among the main goals of designating some cities as National Crafts Cities. Experts believe that the establishment of handicraft exhibitions and markets would help prepare conditions for craftspeople to introduce and sell their artworks in the best possible manner. Semnan Province is located in north-central Iran. The province is divided into two parts: a mountainous region and the plains at the foot of the mountains. Semnan has a dry, moderate climate with warm summers and very cold winters.

Semnan handicrafts in need of greater attention



Namad mali
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