



Iranian children shine in French competition

Eight members of the cultural and artistic centers affiliated with Iran's Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (IIDCYA) were awarded in the International Visual Arts Competition, "Louis François" "

Bardgori and stone lion, symbol of Bakhtiari tribe



Stone lions
IRNA



Bardgori
IRNA

Iranica Desk
Iran is a rainbow of tribes, each of which has its own customs and traditions. The Bakhtiari tribe is one of the largest in the country, mostly residing in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province. Their way of life is full of beauty and wonder. They have special customs and traditions for all aspects of their lives, including mourning and celebrating, many of which are very old. Based on the Bakhtiari culture, the lion is a symbol of courage and bravery; that is why stone lions were placed on the graves of the tribe's heads or those who excelled in hunting, shooting and riding during their lifetime. This tradition is not unique to the past and is still common among the

tribe's members. Based on the position of the deceased, stone lions with various dimensions have been placed on their graves. Moreover, since a long time ago, Bakhtiari people have chosen a place known as bardgori for the burial of their dead. Bardgories were the hand-carved structures built as graves for the deceased in the heart of mountains and rocks. A number of ancient graves discovered in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province have turned into the places used by history and culture lovers for research and studies. A number of bardgories are very old and date back to the Achaemenid era. Similar structures have been identified in various parts of Iran, showing that they are not unique to the Bakhtiari tribe.

Vahed Joolaei, head of the Preservation and Revival Department of Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization, told ISNA that the bardgories were hand-carved structures built in the Middle East and other parts of the world for various purposes. "A special type of rock structure was used for the burial of the dead in some regions of Turkey and Armenia in the first millennium BCE. This architecture has been seen in various parts of the world including India," he noted. He added that studies carried out on the bardgories built in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province show that the old structures date back to Sassanid and Parthian eras. "Some of the bardgories which are very small in

size were probably used as ossuaries" he added. Referring to the use of stone lions, he said that the lion was of great significance in ancient Persia, adding that the lion motifs can be seen on pottery items dating back to the fourth millennium CE. He said the oldest stone lion discovered in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province dates back to the Safavid era. Farideh Ahmadi, an expert from the province's Cultural Heritage Organization, said that there are more stone lions found in the city of Koohrang than in other parts of the province. The sides of the lions are adorned with a sword, horse, gun, and rosary. The personal information of the deceased is carved on the back of the stone lions.

Iranian poet Abdolmalekian receives Italian Roddi Prize

Iranian poet Garous Abdolmalekian was honored with the prestigious Roddi Prize at a ceremony held in Turin, according to reports from Italian media outlets. The event featured a section titled 'Witness of Beauty 2023,' in which Abdolmalekian was recognized, as reported by the Italian media cited by IRNA on Tuesday.



Abdolmalekian, known for his minimalist style and concise language, is highly regarded as an author in Iran today, stated the source. His poems have been translated and published in French, German, English, Arabic, Kurdish, and Turkish. The poet has achieved numerous national and international awards, including his recent nomination for the Pen Prize for his anthology of translated poems, 'Lean on at this late hour' (2020). The closing ceremony of this cultural event took place on July 17, 2023. Born in 1980, Abdolmalekian currently serves as a poetry editor at Cheshmeh Publication in Tehran. Translation of the statement by the jury regarding Abdolmalekian's selection is as follows:

"Garous Abdolmalekian is one of the most prominent voices of contemporary Persian poetry worldwide. His poems and verses have not only circulated within Iran but have also made an impact in various languages. His works, which continue the grand tradition of Persian poetry spanning thousands of years, reflect the life, suffering, dreams, and destiny of a people who have always fought for peace, freedom, and equality. The book 'War, Love, Solitude' (a selection of Abdolmalekian's poems in Italian) offers an opportunity to hear the human outcry of his poetry in

Italian. Therefore, in recognition of his poetic influence and the depth of his works, as well as his social, civic, and human commitment, we present the 'Witness of Beauty' award to Abdolmalekian. We hope that poetry will once again lead us towards a more beautiful world." The book 'War, Love, Solitude' is a collection of Abdolmalekian's work in Italian, comprising selections from three of his collections: 'Cavities,' 'Middle Eastern Trilogy,' and 'Acceptance.' It was translated into Italian by Faezeh Mardani and Francesco Occhetto and published by Caraba in 2022.

special series on ta'zieh

Ta'zieh, Iran's national, religious art form



By Mahdieh Ghazvinian
Staff writer

Ta'zieh, a national and religious art form of Iran, symbolizes the harmonious coexistence of art and religion. Throughout history, ta'zieh artists have strived to uphold this religious art form. Despite facing numerous challenges, such as a brief period of obstacles in the second Pahlavi era, ta'zieh continues to thrive in Iran. Among the Ta'zieh artists, Majid Khosrovan is a notable figure, with whom we had a conversation for our special series on ta'zieh.

Born in 1989, Majid Khosrovan holds a bachelor's degree in cultural management. He currently serves as the director of the religious board of the University of Applied Science and Technology.

Khosrovan's journey into this art form began at the age of six, encouraged by his father, with his own interest guiding the way. "I was fortunate to learn from esteemed teachers such as Hashem Fayyaz and the late Rahmatollah Eskandi," he said. His first public recital was the ta'zieh 'Bazaar-e Sham' - recounting the passions of Imam Hossein's family - which he recalls with fondness, particularly the excitement he felt when the trumpets and drums were played. Khosrovan shares some of his cherished memories from performing ta'zieh. One such memory is his first performance as Hazrat-e Abdollah in the ta'zieh of Imam Hossein. He recalls the joy of showing his body, painted blood red to signify his character's martyrdom, to his family after the performance. He also fondly remembers the anticipation of attending weekly ta'zieh meetings during his childhood. Khosrovan takes great pride in his ability to evoke the events of Karbala and Ashura through

his performances. He believes that performing ta'zieh has a profound impact on a performer's behavior and morals, serving as a deterrent against committing sins. For him, ta'zieh is a priority in all situations, as it has enriched his life with love and blessings. Khosrovan expresses his preference for playing the role of Imam Hossein. He finds it spiritually fulfilling when people ask him for prayers in light of Imam Hossein's role and his ta'zieh costume. He believes that the art form conveys significant messages such as sacrifice, martyrdom, chivalry, and freedom. "Those who understand and live by these principles will undoubtedly succeed in life," he said. Since ta'zieh is a national and religious art form of Iran, Khosrovan has had the opportunity to perform the role of Imam Hossein in four European countries - Finland, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark. His performances were well-received by European audiences. He has also participated in

numerous festivals and currently serves on the board of directors of the Ta'zieh Association of Iran. His group has performed over 500 assemblies at cultural centers and universities. Khosrovan concluded our conversation with the ex-

pression of his desire for more support to promote professional ta'zieh. He urged all relevant bodies to contribute to the elevation of this art form. "I also appeal to anyone who could assist in any way to help enhance and expand ta'zieh," he said.

