

# Monthly

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# Theater promotes cultural Diplomacy



Iran Theater- One of the most important efforts of Dramatic Arts Center of Iran is to consider the theater as a powerful tool to promote cultural diplomacy, which is done with performance, education and research.

Fadjr International Theater Festival has always been a good opportunity to expand cultural communication with artists and people around the world. A Communication that breaks down language and other human barriers and creates empathy through the exchange of ideas, information, art. Theater can be a powerful tool to promote cultural diplomacy . Theater serve as powerful tools in diplomacy and international relations, facilitating cross-cultural understanding and cooperation. The art has a strong and undeniable role not only in improving cultural diplomatic relations, but also in improving economic, political and social relations.

In the last two years, Dramatic Arts Center has paid more attention to the importance of cultural diplomacy and has made efforts more than ever to establish cultural relations with other countries, especially the bordering countries, and therefore, They have invited foreign artists to Iran, sent Iranian artists to other countries to expand cultural-artistic relations and bridge nations through creativity.

#### Indigenous culture;

Global communication The importance of indigenous and Iranian culture

2 Iranian Theater Sound

will be effective in promoting Iranian culture internationally in the coming years. Because the playwrights and directors were warmly welcomed during the last two editions of Fadjr International Theater Festival. Regardless of Iranian artists who choose world-famous plays, it will promote the indigenization of the show and performance methods of Iranian theater at the international level, and will strengthen cultural diplomacy based on indigenization for more communication.

# Invitation for international artists

Invitation for international artists and theaters will never stop at the Fadjr International Theater Festival and the other theater events.

The theater troupe "Only a Portrait" directed by Uday Shafri from Oman, "Halves" by Motamed Yafee from Oman, "Black Box" directed by Majed Darandish from Iraq and "Martyrs do not go to heaven" directed by Sajjad Jozri from Iraq was honored at 2023 Mystics International (Sahebdelan) Theater Festival. Some International theater troupes participated in the 19th Tehran-Mubarak Puppet Festival and the 21st International Ritual and Traditional Festival as well.

#### Educational and research approach in international relations

The international relations of the General Directorate of Dramatic Arts improves in the 42nd Fadjr International Theater Festival with the holding workshops with

international expert and drama groups. Education and training of performance theories is one of the other programs of the General Directorate of Dramatic Arts as the cultural diplomacy. The educational approach of the 42nd Fadjr Theater Festival continued to enrich the educational environment for cultural exchange and diplomacy. The education-al workshops of the 42nd Fadjr International Theater Festival were held from 17 January to 31 January at the Karghah Namayesh , City Theater Complex: "Form-Movement" by Hayek Esrafilian from Armenia, Comparison of Grotowski's and Chekhov's acting methods" by Armen Sarkissian from Armenia, "Role and place of chorus in classical Greek plays" by Thanassis Sarantos from Greece.

Two American researchers participated in the seminar sections of FITF. An effort was made in the research department to put more emphasis on the role of research and performance studies by holding research workshops. Marvin A. Carlson and Bruce McConachie, two American researchers, participated in the research section of the 42nd Fadir International Theater Festival. Carlson and McConachie represented two studies, "Performance Studies and Decentralization of Dramatic works" and "Evolutionary and Cognitive Perspective on Enjoying International Theater Festivals".

. Education, Research and

Namayesh Publications Office held a webinar on dramaturgy with support of City Theater Complex on Wednesday, November 22,2023. A webinar on dramaturgy was held online with Michael Mark Chemers. He spoke considering the new developments in theater and performance, especially the developments related to digital technology.

#### Theater ambassadors

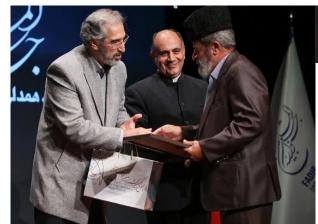
One of the rules is the meeting of the director general of Dramatic arts with foreign groups and artistic ambassadors of different countries which can facilitate cultural exchange and cooperation between nations in years and during festival days. Foreign guests and the increase of international relations have contributed in the field of tourism and attracting cultural-artistic tourists, as well as the economic growth of countries and national security.

And bilateral relations that are accompanied by cultural and artistic exchange can bring a promising perspective in the time.

Iranian artists have also went to other countries and their festivals with the cooperation of international relation department of Dramatic art center of Iran in last year. One of the best example is the Iranian play "Tik Tok" directed by Ahmad Nadafi was staged at the Lahore Theater Festival in Pakistan.

#### The role of media in cultural diplomacy

The news media that focus on delivering news to the general public and world is really important. English paper and online newsletter Voice of Iranian Theaters aims to create a bridge with the artists of other countries. It publishes the country's theater news monthly for the whole world and international ITI centers under the supervision of the General Department of Dramatic Arts. Meetings, events and expert webinars have been held during the last year, but the support of other public and private organizations is needed in order to achieve the goal of cultural-artistic diplomacy with the help of theater. Theater as a culture diplomacy is definitely the best language and way of communication to achieve peace in the midst of chaos and tensions in the world.



Iran Theater-The Fadjr Theater Festival Kicks off with the winners of four sections: "Radio Drama", "Television plays", "Play-writing" and "Research". On January 21, a grand opening ceremony of Fadjr Festival took place in Tehran in the hall of Nazerzadeh Kermani Iranshahr Theater Com-plex. The opening ceremony was attended by Mahmoud Salari (art affair deputy of the Ministry of Culture and Is-lamic Guidance), Kazem Nazari (Director General of Dramatic Arts Center of Iran), Mehdi Hamed Saghaian (the artistic di-rector of festival), Esrafil Farajollahi (CEO of Dramatic Arts Association of Iran), Gholamreza Nemati (Executive Deputy of the General Department of Dramatic Arts), Ismaeel Khalaj, Davood Fathali Baygi, Jalil Farjad, Hoshang Tavakoli, Mikael Shahrashtani, Bahram Ebrahimi, Mahmoud Farhang, Masoud Forootan, Farhad Besharti, Ayoub Aghakhani' and a group of other artists.

Prizes were awarded to the winners of four categories: "Radio Drama", "Television Plays", "Playwriting" and "Research". At the opening ceremony, the artistic director of the 42nd Fadjr International Theater Festival, Mehdi Hamed Saghaian, gave a welcoming speech. In his speech he noted the different sections of 2024 FITF.

# The 42d Fadjr International Theater Festival kicks off with celebrating artists

"In the 42nd Fadjr International Theater Festival, there is a student section, and I hope that after a long time the university theater festival will be reopen next year."

Hoshang Tavakoli, Mahmoud Salari and Mahmoud Shalowi presented Art orders-first class (PhD equivalent) to Jalil Farjad, Abolfazl Mirahmadi, Hossein Nouri, Davood Dadashi, Oom-alddin Ghasemi, Moslem Ghasemi, Manouchehr Rahimi and Mahmoud Farhang. "The Board of Art orders-

"The Board of Art ordersfirst class has a preliminary board that reviews the primary variables.", Mahmoud Salari said about Recipients of the order. He went on to say: " "It is important that main characteristics such as student training, the constant presence and lifetime of efforts are reviewed and referred to the upstream council and representatives of various and supervisory institutions, in which experts of all fields are present. And strong rules are the basis . It has a clear process, and since this Art order is equivalent to a PhD degree, the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology also supervises it."

He emphasized: "We have to keep the hope of people high . This country and its art are for the people." The first winner, diploma of honor and cash prize of the research competition were awarded to Mohammadreza Rasouli for the research "The role of theater festivals in cultural policymaking based on the theory of event policy".

The first prize, diploma of honor and cash prize went to Mohammad Mir-Aliakbari for writing the play "The Cherry Orchard" from Tehran. The National Identity Award of the 42nd Fadjr International Theater Festival afford to Ali Ghorbani, the producer of the television play "Memory Highway" for addressing the character of General Qassem Soleimani. The first prize of the festival and cash prize of the radio drama section went to Bahram Nouri for directing "Karbala Pass" from Gilan province.

## Two American researchers participated in the research seminar of FITF

Iran Theater- Marvin A. Carlson and Bruce McConachie, two American researchers, participated in the research section of the 42nd Fadjr International Theater Festival.

With the presence of a group of researchers, artists and students, a research seminar was held in the City Theater of <u>Tehran</u>.

Behrouz Bakhtiari and Sepideh Ziyai, Mohammad Reza Rasouli, Seyed Javad Roshan, Marvin Carlson and Bruce McConnachie were the researchers who gave speeches. Carlson and McConachie represented two studies, "Performance Studies and Decentralization of Dramatic works" and "Evolutionary and Cognitive Perspective on Enjoying International Theater Festivals". Marvin Carlson and Bruce McConnachie, two American researchers and Professors, paricipated with recorded videos. Carlsen talked about his research entitled "Performance studies and decentralization of dramatic text".

In his research, he stated that the theater, in a traditional way, involves a western, and spoke about the emphasis of this art on the performance of the text and the emphasis on dramatic literature. This researcher spoke from the different view of artists in this century and defined the concept of new performances and explained the difference between modern perfor-



mances and traditional performances in their approach to dramatic literature and text.

erature and text. Bruce McConachie who has been a professor at the University of Pittsburgh for more than 18 years, had published widely in American theatre history and theatre historiography. McConachie continued to perform theatrical roles and direct plays.

At the research meeting of the 42nd Fadjr Inter-

national Theater Festival, and Bruce McConachie presented the research "Evolutionary and Cognitive Perspective on Enjoying International Theater Festivals" and described the cognitive and evolutionary abilities of the audience.

According to his research, the audience can pay attention to the three main elements of the story, empathy and emotions in order to understand a theatrical performance. **Thanassis Sarantos:** 

# Iranian students' interest in learning is amazing



Iran Theater-The 42nd Fadjr International Theater Festival is holding master class workshop by famous Greek writer and director Thanassis Sarantos.

Thanassis Sarantos is very surprised to see the potential and interest of Iranian students in learning. He hopes for cooperation between Iran and Greece.

Born in Athens, he studied English Literature in Athens, Acting at the Carolos Koun Drama Theater School in Athens and Film Direction at the New York Film Academy on scholarships from the Fulbright Foundation, the Onassis Foundation and the Greek Film Centre. He worked

as an actor and assistant director under Robert Wilson at the Watermill Center (2000) and went on to perform in Wilson's production of Prometheus at the Megaron Athens Concert Hall (2001). On his return to Greece, he founded the Ithikon Akmeotaton production company, direct-ing Albert Camus' Caligula (2000), Antoine de Saint Exupery's The Little Prince (2003) and two plays by Marius von Mayenburg-The Ugly One (2008) and The Dog, the Night and the Knife (2009)-for the stage. Thanassis Sarantos has adapted, acted and direct-ed the novel "The American" by the prestigious Greek writer Alexandros

Papadiamantis and toured it in many cities and islands of Greece. (2009-2011). He said about the three-day workshop he held in Iran: "During these three days, we discussed the role of chorus in classical Greek Dramas and in modern theater"

He went on to say: "It is true that the importance of the chorus goes back to the ancient Greece, but it is definitely one of the essential elements in modern theater; because it is the chorus who convey the feelings of the actors to the audience. Their role is still important in this century." He continued: "On the first

He continued: "On the first day, we presented details about the chorus and prac-

tical exercises about the actor's cooperation with them. On the second day, we rehearsed parts of the Sophocles masterpiece Oedipus Rex with the students and they played with their instruments, and on the final day we performed this part as the result of this workshop."

The Greek artist said: "I am happy that there was this preparation for a workshop in these three days. I don't feel tired and I get energy from the students. I'm surprised to see the potential and interest in Iranian students. Besides, seeing the work of Iranian artists has excited me. We have many common cultural characteristics that can be dealt with more relationship and more detailed planning in joint projects."

Thanassis Sarantos hopes that his presence at the Fadjr International Theater Festival will be a start point for cooperation between Iran and Greece, adding: "I watched works by Iranian artists that were excellent in form, direction and content, and I enjoyed very much."

Thanassis Sarantos said: "I wanted to stage the play American at the 2024 FITF; But due to budget and lack of support from the Greek Minister, it was not possible for the troupe to participate in the stage section."

#### Alireza Nasehi: "We examine social issues in Say Nothing"

### Hossein Fadaei- Hossein:

"Social issues are not favorite theme in the play"



Iran Theater- The jury of the 42nd Fadjr playwriting competition, Seyed Hossein Fadaei -Hossein, considered the artistic, fresh and surprising approach to the subject and the technical quality of the play as one of the priorities of judging the works.

Fadjr playwriting competition is one of the sections in which 380 works applied for participation.

Writer, translator and director, Seyed Hossein Fadaei-Hossein explained about the quality of 380 plays submitted to Fadjr: "The quality of the plays was classified into three categories: weak, average and good, as in the previous years. Most of them were average works and good work was the least. This statistic suggests that Iranian theater has weakness in narrative."

He said: "The most important feature of the plays, which was not considered good, was dealing with repeated topics and they are not related to social conditions and social issues."

He expected that the playwright have the motivation to deal with new themes in a novel and fresh format with fluent language. Iran Theater- The director of street show "Say Nothing", Alireza Nasehi considers the play to examine social issues such as addiction and crime. A production of Theater troupe from Tehran, "Say Nothing" deals with social issues and addiction and crime. Stating that the show "Say Nothing" has a social theme, Alireza Nasehi said: "Many of the problems that found in the society were rooted in the family.



and this street show also deals with consequences of marrying an addict and how an addict raises a child, even sometimes the child of an addicted family does not want to live in such conditions, But society and living conditions pressure this person to say nothing , and the title of the show is inspired by this".

This artist explained about his directing method: "I tried to use the creative drama method in Say Nothing, and so I used my hands as a parent and I played the role of the child of the family." Alireza Nasehi who is a playwrith of his show added: "Considering that pantomime is a very good format for street performances, I also used this technique in this show."

# Workshop Report Prominent Greek playwright and director, Thanassis Sarantos, Shared His Experiences with Students



Iran Theater-The second session of the educational workshop "Role of chorus in classical Greek Dramas was held with emphasis on the need to update and use the drama methods of past centuries in this era.

As reported by the public relations office of the 42nd FITF, the workshop Section hosted Thanassis Sarantos the prominent Greek playwright and stage director at the three days of the festival. In a hall full of attendees, He shared his experiences.

This drama workshop on the topic of role of chorus in classical Greek Dramas and its impact on modern

theater hosted students who have a bachelor's degree in acting.

Sarantos, the Greek lec-turer of this workshop, emphasized the key role of the chorus in the theater because of the harmony and connection they create between the audience and the show.

The chorus in Classical Greek drama was a group of actors who described and commented upon the main action of a play with song, dance, and recitation. As he said in plays such as " Oedipus Rex", the first part of the trilogy "Oedipus at Colonus" and "Antigone" written by Sophocles, an

ancient Greek tragedian from the fifth century BC, the chorus have had a reputation that can still be revived with a new approach in the modern drama to convey the message and concept of the show.

On the first day of this workshop, which was held on Wednesday .Jan,24, the students discussed the role of music and singing and did some rehearsal. The second session of this educational workshop was about the practical rehearsal that was held on Thursday .Jan.25 in the City Theater of Tehran. attended The students the workshop with instruments such as tambourine, drum, string, etc. and were prepared for practical training in order to coordinate the performance with the music.

Then parts of the play "Oedipus Rex", the mas-terpiece of Sophocles, were given to the students. They practiced as a group to perform a short part of the chorus in this drama. At the end of the workshop on the second day, Thanassis Sarantos asked the students to prepare for a short performance and workshop on the third day, which will be held on Friday, Jan.26.

The workshop, "Role and place of the chorus in Classical Greek Dramas" will end on Friday with performances by Iranian students who will perform short parts of "Oedipus Rex"

Born in Athens, Thanassis Sarantos studied English Literature in Athens, Acting at the Carolos Koun Drama Theater School in Athens and Film Direc-tion at the New York Film Academy on scholarships from the Fulbright Foundation, the Onassis Foundation and the Greek Film Centre. While in New York, he worked as an actor and assistant director under Robert Wilson.

#### Hayek Esrafilian Sets course for the 2024 FITF



Iran Theater- The second educational workshop of the 42nd Fadjr International Theater Festival was held on "Form-Movement" and with Hayek Esrafilian's training about the replacing movement with dialogue to convey the concept in contemporary theater. Hayek Esrafilian, a movement coach

and theater director from Armenia, has many years of experience in pantomime and form and movement design. He won the best actor award

and also received an honorable mention for directing at 2019 Marivan Intl. Street Theater Festival.

Esrafilian explained about body language, the importance of rehearsal for believable performance, and the need for students and actors to continue basic practice for character development. The correct use of all body parts to convey the concept in the form and content was emphasized.

Esrafilian believed in practicing physical exercises to create movement and mental harmony and emphasized that artists should pay attention to the basic knowledge of the body and the correct use of movement to convey the concept even without dialogue and words.

Interview with Amir Rajabpour, Director of Fire of Love

Iran Theater- Amir Rajabpour, the director of the play "Fire of Love", thinks about his theater as a story about the conflict between love and nature.

"Fire of Love" is a production of Qazvin; which is performed in Fadjr street theater competition and according to its director, it is based on music and form. Written and directed by Amir Ra-

jabpour, it is a 23 minutes long and will be performed on Jan. 24-

25 of Bahman at 11:00 in the Razi Culture Center and at 18:00 in Rudaki open area.

"In the last few years, we have seen an increase in forest fires and volunteers to control them." Rajabpur says, "Our show also tells the story of a young wife who is a member of one of these groups and goes to the forest with the group to extinguish the fire, but unfortunately she dies. In fact, the life of a person who loves her partner and on the other hand loves the environment is told in this show.

He goes on to say: "This show is based on music and form and non-verbal, and Because of the special effects, the show should be performed at night."

# There is diversity in Iranian dramatic arts : Armen Sargsyan on Fadjr Festival and his workshop

Iran Theater- The Armenian artist and lecturer of the educational workshops at the 42nd Fadjr International Theater Festival, talks about the numerous performances of Iranian artists in Armenian festivals and, his familiarity with the dramatic arts of Iran.

The educational workshops of the 42nd Fadjr International Theater Festival are one of the most important side bars of this grand event, which is moderated by eight Iranian and foreign lecturers this year.

Educational workshops are being held with some prominent figures in the theater: Massoud Fortoon from Iran, Hayek Esrafilian from Armenia, Armen Sarkissian from Armenia, Thanassis Sarantos from Greece, Saeed Zehni, Bahram Ebrahimi, Farhad Mohandespour and Mehrdad Rayani-Makhsos from Iran.

Armenian theater director and teacher; Armen Sargsyan expresses his satisfaction with his trip to Iran after the first session of the his acting training workshop "Comparison of Grotowski's and Chekhov's acting methods" which was held on the morning of Monday, January 22 at the City Theater of Tehran. "I am happy that I organized this training workshop with a number of students and acting enthusiasts. When I de-cided to hold a workshop at Fadjr Festival, I decided to choose a topic that would be attractive to theater lovers. So I think one of the best topics about acting was to compare the acting methods of Grotevwski and Chekhov.", Armen Sargsyan says. He explains about the main subjects



raised in this workshop as well as its main topic: "The most important difference between Jerzy Grotowski 's technique and Chekhov's acting methods is that in Grotowski 's method, actions and functions are done with the actor's body, and The Chekhov's acting technique, it seeks to ground emotion through physical gesture. In fact, in this workshop, we tried to identify this difference and also the various functions that these methods create in the performance of an actor, and to experience it with each other."

The artist said about the interaction with the young students in this workshop: "holding this workshop was a good and very interesting experience for me. At the beginning, when we started the work, the students had no knowledge of my method as an Armenian director, so it took a while for them to find themselves and understand what the work and my method is like, but after a while, All of them participated and the work went well. Most of the participants were willing to talk and work with me after the end of the workshop."

This theater teacher talks about his familiarity with the conditions of theater in Iran: "Because there is a variety of performing arts in Iran, it is not possible to make a brief correct statement, but fortunately, several plays by Iranian directors have been performed in Armenian theater festivals in recent years, which are always appreciated and I have enjoyed them." Armen Sargsyan held his second training workshop on Jan, 23 in the City Theater of Tehran.

#### Absalan: FITF is one of the most prestigious festivals



Iran Theater- The director of the street show "Waters are Kind", Malek Absalan, believes that Fadjr is one of the biggest and most prestigious festivals in the world Malek Absalan who is directing the street show "Waters are kind" comes from Dehloran city, Ilam province, and his play is performed in the street theater section on January 26,27 in Rudaki area.

A veteran actor and director in cin-

ema and theater and television, Malek Absalan has participated in seventeen Fadjr Festivals. He has also won numerous awards and honorary diplomas and prizes from prestigious national and international festivals.

"This play is written by Pejman Shahvardi and based on a traditional folk tale with the theme of holy defense, it follows a martyr from a small village and his childhood to his martyrdom." He explains about the story of the show.

Performing a street show has challenges in provinces. Absalan explains: "In the province of Ilam and especially in Deholran county, due to the lack of training plateaus and theaters, only street shows are performing. In other words, this lack has become a kind of opportunity."

#### Haji-Babaie on the 42nd Fadjr Theater Festival

Iran Theater-Alireza Haji-Babaie believes that it is necessary to pay special attention to the student section in Fadjr Theater Festival. "Waiting for Godot" directed by Alireza Haji -Babaie is performing in the student section of Fadjr, which is from Azad University of Tehran. Waiting for Godot is a play by Irish playwright Samuel Beckett in which two characters, Vladimir and Estragon, engage in a variety of discus-



sions and encounters while awaiting the titular Godot, who never arrives. "Waiting for Godot was a very big project for me because Beckett's play is a very complex and difficult. ",Haji-Babaie says. He explains about the production process of the show: "I could not connect with the translations of this play so i decided to study the original and after reading, images formed in my mind. I translated the book, I found different roots of words, and so process of translating lasted for seven months. Siamak Zanjani was my cast director and consultant in this work."

Alireza Haji-Babaie reveals that "Waiting for Godot" needs a lot of time for rehersal. The play consists of several chapters. I saw different performances with different approaches of this work."

# **Hassan Moeini on His Directing Experience**

Iran Theater- The writer and director of the "Avignon", Hassan Moeini, says that his concern for the nature of theater, its origins, and its relationship with society, led to the production of a work in praise of theater.

Hassan Moeini is a stage director, playwright and the prize winner of the university theater festival, who participated in the stage competition with his latest directing experience.

A production of Tehran, The play "Avignon" written and directed by Hassan Moeini is one of the 12 works of review section of the 42nd FITF "Avignon" was already performed in the Hamon Hall and the city theater.

"The initial idea of writing "Avignon" was based on the opinions of several theorists who said about the way of performing a play and the origin of the play.', Moeini says on his play.

Hassan Moini considers "Avignon" in praise of dramatic art. The story is about a theater group that plans to prepare a play based on the play "Macbeth" to participate in the Avignon Theater Festival (Festival d'Avignon) in France. "I am interested in theater theories and I would like to write a play based on theories and the atmosphere I experienced during my student days. These were hot topics in the Faculty of Cinema and Theater, Honar University in 2013 during my studies for master degree and such subjects were favorite at Student theater festival in those years. And the debates and discussions that were discussed among theater artists, inspired me to write Avignon.", Moeini explains.

He goes on to say about hot topics in the 2010s: "In those years, many translations of theories were published, for example, international and prominent theater figures participated at the Fadjr Theater Festival. When

#### Asghar Khalili:

Fadir Festival is a showcase for Iranian Theater



Iran Theater- Asghar Khalili, a member of the selection committee of the 42nd Fadjr Theater Festival's street theater competition, said about the importance of this Fesitval: " The 2024 FITF has been the showcase of Iranian Theater since the first edition and has always created trends.

Asghar Khalili said about the

reception of artists from the street theater section: "The presented statistics show the level of reception of artists from the festival. 187 works were sent to the secretariat for the street show section. Of course, many of the submitted works were not new productions and had previously participated in other festivals. Nevertheless, there were more than fifty new works that have been prepared to participate in 2024 FITF. Our most important criterion for selecting shows was the quality of the works. The artistic director of the festival also emphasized on .and the number of works in the competition section was not raised at all.

Khalili continued: "We will see some significant works in the 2024 FITF. Of course, the street show is very dependent on the "moment" and I hope ".that theatrical troupes can be successful in performing these shows.



we saw a successful director like Amirreza Kohestani regularly went to the Avignon Festival; A festival that all artists wish to participate in, so I felt that a play could be written about this subject. Thinking about all of this led me to write a play in praise of the theater. A show that deals with the concept of performance and its relationship with the audience and circumstances, and seeks answers to questions in the process of performance and not just reaching the result.

He considered the performance method of "Avignon" to be similar to what Jerzy Grotowski offered in 1968 in the book "Towards a Poor Theatre "

Jerzy Grotowski was a Polish theatre director and innovator of experimental theatre, the "theatre laboratory" and "poor theatre" concepts. In 1950s Poland, He pioneered the idea of a theatre laboratory as a place where theatre happens through a process of experimentation. This book reveals his experiments as a crux between what we see in contemporary theatre and the rich traditions of theatrical forms from all over the world.

#### Narges Yazdi:

We must build a bridge between research and performance

Iran Theater- the manager of the research section of the 42nd Fadjr International Theater Festival, Narges Yazdi said that when we can create an ideal event that a bridge between research and performance is built.

This section has received special attention from the festival officials in recent years and efforts are being made to select the best researches to present to theater artists and art lov-



ers and to support and enrich Iranian theater.

Regarding the subject of the 2024 research section, Yazdi said: "The main topic was about theater festivals, especially the Fadjr International Theater Festival and the comparative study of this event with other festivals.

She continued: "Based on the issues raised in order to present researches, nearly 80 applicants registered to participate, and finally 50 abstracts were sent to the secretariat. 18 works were selected in the first stage; Among these, 16 researches reached us in full form and finally 3 works were introduced to be presented in the festival.

She explained about the innovative ideas section: "In this section, ideas on how to hold the Fadjr Theater Festival in the coming years were supposed to be presented. 9 ideas were sent to the secretariat, but none of them were selected by the selection board.

## Shahram Zargar:

# The play should be something more than everyday life

Iran Theater- Shahram Zargar, jury of the playwriting competition of the 42nd Fadjr International Theater Festival, stating that the play should not be only about everyday life, he considers the criteria of a good play to be the proper characterization, appropriate dialogue, and grace.

380 play were applied for participation in the playwriting competition, which Shahram Zargar, Ayoub Aghakhani and Seyed Hossein Fadaei-Hossein were the jurors of this section.

Shahram Zargar explained about this competitive section that "since there was no subject limit in the festival call, playwrights with different views and diverse topics applied and sent their works to the secretariat.

The artist clarified: "Festivals that are theme-oriented and have a specific title; They are always more successful in attracting works because the works are written for the frame-



work of the festival and its theme, and this makes the playwrights to present better works by focusing more on one theme. " He added: "Unfortunately,

He added: "Unfortunately, we did not see any promising works in this section. Only the numbers of works was large and this made the work of judging difficult."

Shahram Zargar explained about standards of judging: "No opinion is ever imposed on the jurors to review the works. And there are always basic standards and criteria in this field. A show in any form and genre should have proper characterization, appropriate dialogue and attractive content. In fact, the show should have something to say and the playwright should not just record everyday life."

He further pointed out the appropriate criteria for the play to be printed: "Since the selected plays will be published, regardless of any restrictive view, the standards of printed text were also included in the judging. Because the selected plays must also have a standard print format."

This translator and university lecturer added: "However, these works do not show our capability in the field of playwriting, and we hope that the playwrights who do not attend the festivals for any reason; They will soon write new plays to turn some of our despair into hope."

He stated that the play is a text for performance; He explained: "I think that the 42nd Fadjr International Theater Festival should be performanceoriented in the playwriting competition, and the plays should be judged based on the perfor-mance, not based on the text on paper. In choosing a play, one should pay attention to how much a text benefits from stage standards. Perhaps it is easier to judge in this way." Shahram Zargar contin-

Shahram Zargar continued: "However, The good or bad performance also depends on its director. There are directors who, with the help of performance form and creativity, produce outstanding works from weak play, and there are directors who stage a weak performance from a good play."

#### Roozbeh Hosseini on the 2024 FITF: 'The high quality of Theater shows in province is surprising'



Iran Theater- Roozbeh Hosseini, a member of the selection committee of Stage review competiton at FITF, emphasized that surprisingly, the quality of the productions in the provinces was better than the performances in Tehran.

The Iranian theater competition includes three sections: "Stage Review", "News" and "Regional Winners". Hossein Masafer Astaneh, Mahmoudreza Rahimi and

Roozbeh Hosseini were the members of the selection committee for stage Review competition.

A playwright and stage director, Roozbeh Hosseini said about the method of evaluating the applicant's performances: Many filmed stage productions were sent to the secretariat to participate in the stage review competition, but unfortunately, approximately 20% of them did not have the sufficient sound and image guality to fairly evaluate the show in terms of audio and visual.

He went on to say : "I hope that theater troupes will pay attention to the quality of the films sent from their works for next year, because due to time limitation, some works cannot be watched two or three times."

Hosseini explained about quality of performance and their theme: "The quality of the shows was relative. It can be said that

8 Iranian Theater Sound

the works were very good and very bad, and most of them were average. Average works did not offer anything new in form, content and drama. In fact, it should be said that there were works with few features, unfortunately some of them were among the shows performed in Tehran."

Roozbeh Hosseini emphasized that new stage artists choose tried rules in theater type, performance method and the cast; Therefore, they have nothing new to say in terms of form and creative content.

He said about the Positive features of the submitted works:"For all its shortcomings, the genre diversity is incredibly satisfying. We had a variety of genres and content in this section; Even with a mostly average level. This proves that the nature of our theater is not dependent on specific content or single genre. Also, we are witnessing all kinds of social, economic, cultural and indigenous approaches in different forms."

This author pointed out the gap between playwrights and theater directors: "Many theater directors do not read books at all. More than 10 publishing houses are busy publishing plays, but none of these plays which are often the respectable works of the young generation of theater writers, are performed. Young directors persistently write their own plays, or claim new forms and techniques, They look for plays performed by other directors. "The artist also clearly said about the criteria and characteristics of their selection: "According to the emphasis of the president and artistic director of FITF, in the first stage, we paid more attention than ever to the quality and then to the variety of works."

# Interview with Hamid Kakasoltani, Member of the Jury



Iran Theater-Actor, director, writer and critic of cinema and theater and lecturer, Hamid Kakasoltani with Simin Amirian and Majid Amrai, is the jurors of Faragir section, a part of the 42nd FITF.

He hopes that Faragir section will be held in Fadjr in the coming years and he thinks that for artists with disabilities, attending the festival will help improve their lives and self-confidence and understand equal opportunities in life, and if Faragir section is held in the coming years, this will have many positive social and artistic consequences.

For the first time, Faragir competition section was added to the festival and it is being held with the support of State Welfare Organization of Iran organization wirh the aim of equalizing opportunities, social gathering and maximum participation of people with disabilities.

Hamid Kakasoltani said: "Theater festivals for people with disabilities have been held for many years under the supervision and support of the

Welfare Organization. But, the general director of Dramatic Arts and the artistic director of the 42nd Fadjr Theater Festival supported so that the section was added to the Fadjr. This is a human action and one of the good features of 42nd FITF, and I must remind that we are at the beginning of a brilliant movement. And if Faragir section is held in the coming years, this will have many positive social and artistic consequences.

He further said: "The first achievement of this event is to make people aware of the conditions of artists with disabilities. These performances share the human issues and the problems and limitations of this people and create a proper connection between the general audience and the world of disabled people. Creating comfortable facilities for the disabled should be done so that they can easily attend theaters as artists and audience. There is serious attention to creating comfort facilities nowadays.

This artist pointed out that the Fajr festival performances are selected from regional festivals: "Very professional people work with people with disabilities, and I must say that I was amazed by the works, because they have used all the aesthetic elements such as music, stage and costume very professionally. As the jury, we saw a committed art from them that has a lot of social understanding and touches the emotions of the audience."

Kakasultani also explained about Drama therapy: "Theatre is an applied art ; Every art has an aesthetic dimension and You should look at the theater with the aim of entertaining the audience; But theater can be both entertaining and healing. Drama therapy use many techniques for treatment. In fact, disabled artists get together and rehearsals for a few months, it makes them come out of isolation and many of their problems are solved over time."

He considered the presence of people with disabilities in the Fadjr as an experience that makes social happiness and their family can change as well: "It helps to improve the lives of them."

## Ali -Mohamad Radmansh:

Theater can be a major breakthrough



Iran Theater- Ali -Mohammad Radmanesh is optimistic about the country's street theater and believes that this kind of show can be very helpful in various matters.

Radmanesh said about how the shows were chosen: "There was a wonderful reception from active street theater artists across the country. Submitted works can be divided into three parts; First is the works that were chosen by other festivals

and regional festivals. The second part are new productions and the third part are the works that were present in other festivals and were neglected due to the terms of the call. The full lineup has high quality. Also, some of the shows that are considered new productions can contain interesting points because they originate from the high vision and thought of their group."

Radmanesh also said about the importance of Fadjr International Theater Festival: "This festival has introduced young talents to the whole in these years. The festival and the street theater competition is very important for the artists of this fieldIt has contributed to the development of artists and played an important role in the livelihood of street theater artists. The street theater section in Fadjr festival made the researchers of street theater grow and some of them translate and write books and all this shaped the street theater. I am optimistic about the future of street theater in the country and I am sure that it can be very helpful in various matters." Mahnaz Pakdel:

"Seven Stones" is the story of human loneliness

Iran Theater-The 25-minute street show "Seven Stones" directed by Mahnaz Pakdel is performing in Fadjr, and as the director says, the show is about sacred defense, and this is a story of human loneliness and the consequences of war.

The street section of the 42nd Fadjr International Theater Festival is being held with the participation of more than a hundred shows.

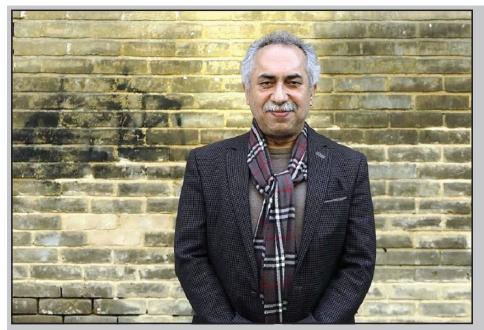
A production of Khorasan Razavi, The play "Seven Stones" by Mahnaz Pakdel and co-directed by Saeed Nazarian and Mahnaz Pakdel is one of the theater of the street competion, which looks at the loneliness of humans and the problems that war has created for the people.

Pakdel considers Fadjr International Theater Festival as a very important and inspiring artistic event.

She explains: "Our show is about a man named Saeed, whose brother was martyred in the war. He travels to different cities every year to fulfill his vow, which is to distribute water to the people, and during these trips, he also tells the story of his life. ; In fact, human loneliness and the consequences that war can create for anyone are the main themes of this work."

The street section of the 42nd Fadjr International Theater Festival is being held with the participation of more than a hundred shows.





Hossein Mosafer Astaneh on "Resurrection of Love"

Iran Theater- The musical show "Resurrection of Love" is at out of competition section of the 42nd Fadjr International Theater Festival. Hossein Mosafer Astaneh said the story begins with the scene of Rumi's dying, but he comes back to life.

"Resurrection of Love" deals with periods of Rumi's life, from childhood to love to perfection and death and resurrection, It's written by acclaimed playwright Mohammad Rahmanian and directed by Hossein Mosafer Astaneh. In response to which phase of Rumi's life was chosen to be shown in this drama, the director said: "Our play begins with the dying scene of Rumi and the curtain goes away while the character of Death is standing on Rumi's bed. What we show in "Resurrection of Love" is that Rumi comes back to life after the death." He went on to say:" The audience observes: the prayers of the disciples for the healing of Rumi, Rumi in his childhood when the Mongols attacked, when the Mongols threw the scientists into the sea, and when Rumi receives a gift from Attar of Nishapur because Attar of Nishapur saw a bright future in the face of the Rumi. He gives him one of his most important

book, Asrār-Nāma. At another point, we see the Mongols attack the city and kill the people, and in the chaos of those attacks, Rumi meets and marries Gevherkhatun, the daughter of Khwaja Lalai of Samarkand. Then Rumi goes through a boring period and he was not satisfied with teaching but did it. During this period, he met Shams-e Tabrizi. And they have a conversa-tion, we witness it with body language and in a symbolic way in the play. Rumi becomes a disciple of Shams and finds him much superior to himself."

Hossein Mosafer Astaneh explained more that when the disciples see Rumi's fascination with Shams-e-Tabrizi, they get jealous and think Shams has bewitched Rumi. They pressure Shams-e-Tabrizi to leave the city. and Rumi becomes sick and desolate, and whatever the students do is useless. The disciples search the mountains and the plains and find Shams and bring him back to Rumi.

Astaneh clarified that the musical show is non-verbal :"Resurrection of Love is a work without words based on music and chorography. Nader Rajabpour did chorography for all of the scenes and Saeed Zehni composed the music."

The play is written by a veteran stage and cinema director and playwright, Mohammad Rahmanian.

director The said about the process of writing the play: "In 2005-2006, a show was supposed to be made on the occasion of the 1000th of Rumi's birthday, and Mohammad Rahmanian received an offer from UNESCO. Then UNESCO offered me to direct the play. I said to them Mohammad Rahmanian is better than me. But Rahmanian wrote the play with me in his mind. After talking with him, we did theater rehearsals. So we previously made it in 2006 with commissioned by UNESCO on the occasion of Molana Rumi's 1000th birthday.'

#### Kajal Rastin brings "Anfal" to the festival with the slogan "No to war"

Iran Theater-The the director of "Anfal" street show, Kajal Rastin described her works as a story of the pains and sufferings of women and children who were caught in the cruel wars of the region. This year 's Fadjr International Theater Festival television added Gaza and National identity sections. "Anfal" is among 9 plays in the special Gaza section. Kajal Rastin said:" The title of the show refers to the war operations of the Baath regime against a large number of Kurdistan people in Iraq, a name that also means the spoils of war. When the women join together in the final act of play, they can win the war."

She considers all artists to be the main organizers of festivals. The director said about the slogan of her work and seven actors who have played the roles.



Amir Hamed on his directing experience "Wind, soil, blood are in my arms"

Iran Theater-Amir Hamed considered his latest work as anti-war story that promotes the message of peace. The stage show "Wind, soil, blood are in my arms" is a production of Gilan province.

The stage show "Dar Aghousham, Bad, Khak, Khoon(Wind, soil, blood are in my arms)" written and directed by Amir Hamed, which will be staged on Tuesday, January 30 at Qashghai Hall, is one of works at the Review Section, Stage category, FITF. Amir Hamed said that the play is the story

Amir Hamed said that the play is the story of a man, Zabih, a theater artist from Syria, who after completing his studies in theater abroad, plans to return to Syria and start theater activities. He wants to create a renaissance in the theater.

"His activity coincides with the arrival of ISIS in Syria, and ISIS takes this artist hostage, ISIS wants him to direct the execution scenes for them, and in the end, Zabih escapes and in this way, he lost his wife and daughter. After that, he travels from city to city and country to country and becomes a messenger of

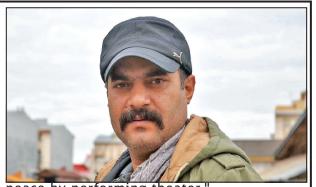




Iran Theater- Kamran Shahlaei's"A Few Messy Narratives", is performing at Fadjr stage Competition. He says that the play is about loneliness and has three episodes. The cast includes one male actor and three female actors.

Kamran Shahlaei participates in the 42nd Fadjr International Theater Festival with three plays; "Several Messy Narratives", ,"Kapotage" directed by Morteza Najafi and "Memories of a House that..." in the television play section directed by Amin Ashrafi. "A Few Messy Narratives" is co-directing by Mohammad Larati and Kamran Shahlaei and written by Kamran Shahlaei competes in the new section of stage category.

About his latest play, Shahlaei explaines: "The main theme is loneliness and the story takes place in a social comedy atmosphere. The audience will watch different phases of the life of a character played by Javad Molania in three episodes. Things happen to the main character in dealing with three women. The stories that happen in these three episodes have no connection with each other. The common feature of the episodes is the male character and the concept of loneliness."



peace by performing theater." Amir Hamed added: "I tried to create and direct the show by using two-dimensional and three-dimensional puppets, a pool of water as the sea, suitcases, and characters in Black."

He considered the festival of the regional Theater as a very good thing and added: "Holding festival for regional theater is very good because artists get the opportunity to watch the best works. If the festival of regional theater was not held, these works would not have been seen, but unfortunately, the lack of budget has caused the holding process to be compressed. I hope that this festival will be held better next year."

### Amir Amini<sup>,</sup> "Three and a Half Clowns" deals with Environmental Problems



Iran Theater- Amir Amini said that the play deals with environmental problems and introduces the audience to the wildlife rangers who were killed and the future of our land.

A production from Gilan province, "Three and a Half Clowns" written by Arezoo Alidoosti and directed by Amir Amini was performed at the 42nd FITF and it was well-received by the audience.

Amir Amini said: "This street theater had been performed at Shahrvand Festival previously and won top prize at Tabrizium National Festival."

He added: "This theater has a happy and lively atmosphere, it deals with family problems and various environmental issues, and its main story is formed from several different narratives, so that the audience can relate to the theme."

This artist pointed out the elegance in the design of the stage and costumes and decor of the play "Three and a Half Clowns":" What happens at the end of the story is the climax and while the audience is still in the happy atmosphere of the show, they suddenly face the wildlife rangers who were murdered." Amir Amini mentioned the competition and presence of famous artists in FITF.



Davood Fathali Baygi on his directing style "A Soiree with Moliere"

#### Iran Theater- Famous Iranian playwright and director, Davood Fathali Baygi comes to 42nd Fadjr International Theater Fesitval with his latest play "A Soiree with Moliere" which is performing out of competition.

"A Soiree with Moliere" deals with the sufferings that Moliere, one of the best French playwrights of the 17th century, went through after writing Tartuffe and Sadi Afshar, the veteran Iranian performer of siyah-bazi who died in 2013. Davood Fathali Baygi wanted to stage "A Soiree with Moliere" at 2013 Mubarak puppet Theater Festival but He could not prepare the play for the festival.

"A Soiree with Moliere" is performed with four female actors and 10 male actors and it's not a puppet theater anymore. The writer and director said: "One night I had an imaginary conversation with Moliere, one of the best playwrights of the 17th century in France, and this conversation turned into the play A Soiree with Moliere". He went on to say: "Moliere's plays are generally comedy and farces, and he criticizes the biases and injustices in society. He has a comedy play called Tartuffe in which he criticizes hypocrites, opportunists and demagogues. Moliere wrote this play during the Inquisition; the time when a group of institutions within the Catholic Church aim was to combat heresy, conducting trials of suspected heretics and Moliere saw how they hid themselves behind the mask of common beliefs. Because he saw the abuse of people's beliefs, he wrote "Tartuffe" inspired by an Italian play, and because he was supported by the court, he

performed his play in the court, but opportunists, hypocrites, and demagogues were questioned in Tartuffe, so they pre-vented the performance of the play. Moliere rewrote his play and this time performed it un-der the name "The Impostor", but he still faced obstacles. He was finally able to perform his play, but those opportunis-tic and double-minded people nursed a grudge against him. Fathali Baygi explained that Molière suffered from pulmonary tuberculosis, possibly contracted when he was imprisoned for debt as a young The circumstances of man. Molière's death, on 17 February 1673 became legend. He collapsed on stage in a fit of coughing and haemorrhaging while performing in the last play he had written, which had lavísh which ironically was titled Le Malade imaginaire (The Imaginary Invalid). He died without receiving the last rites because two priests refused to visit him. Moliere's life reminds me of the artists who are sometimes rejected because of the trouble and prejudice some people undermine artists and their works. This inspired me to write the play.

This Iranian drama teacher also pointed out that "A Soiree with Moliere" includes parts of the play "Tartuffe" " and Siyah-bazi. "The Soul of Moliere and Saadi Afshar, the great Siyah -Bazi performancer, appear on the stage, and although Moliere's comedy is different from Siyah- bazi comedy, the soul of Afshar playfully wanders in the process of writing the play by Moliere."

#### The Culture Minister, Mohammad Mehdi Esmaeili visited 42nd FITF

Iran Theater- Marzieh Alizadeh's" Horn" received special mention while Nesa Samavati's "Romeo B Juliet" won the jury's best Theater prize.

The closing ceremony was held with the welcome of stage artists and officials: Esrafil Farajollahi (the CEO of the Dramatic arts association), Mehdi Hamed –Saghaian: Society needs artists with disabilities.

Mehdi Hamed–Saghaian (the artistic director of Fadjr Theater Festival), Ali -Mohammad Qadri (Deputy Minister and Head of Welfare Organization), Mahmoud Salari (Art affair deputy of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance), and Kazem Nazari(the Director General of Dramatic Arts Center and ITI President of Iran).

The Minister of Culture pointed out

the reception of disabled artists in the Fadjr Faragir Section and some shortcomings and shortcomings of Halls to host these artists.

"The lack of adaptation of halls for disabled artists also causes us discomfort, and I promise that for the next year when the adaptation is done, we will hold the festival". He added: "In all the projects under construction, adaptations will be made for disabled artists. You are talented artists, the apples of our eyes. I hope to watch your artistic works in the future."

The head of the Iran Welfare Organization said that this is the first time in the history of FITF that the artists with disabilities had an opportunity to perform their works.

Then the jurors bestowed the prize.



"Romeo B Juliet" from Khomenini shar, "Kol" by Mustafa Mohammadi from Farsan and "Tral Setajusal" by Kazem Arjomandnia from Bushehr won the best plays awards and will be introduced at the closing ceremony of the 42nd Fadjr International Theater Festival.



Iran Theater- A Video- installation Romeo Castellucci's "The Third Reich" from Italy will be played online on Tuesday, January 30, 2024 at Iranshahr Theater Hall. And a web press conference will be held with the director.

It is suggested that people with heart problems, anxiety and vision problems should not watch this show. Romeo Castellucci is an Italian theatre director, playwright, artist and designer. Since the 1980s he has been one part of the European theatrical avantgarde. He has authored several theoretical essays on the art of directing. His company, Societas Raffaello Sanzio was founded in 1981.

"The Third Reich" is the image of a mandatory and imposed communication, with a violence that is accompanied by its claim to equality. Here, the language machine exhausts entire spheres of reality, as the nouns are all the same, mechanically and mass-produced, like prefabricated buildings in a knowledge from which there is no escape. All pauses are abolished, occupied. The pause, or the absence of words, becomes a battlefield following the military aggression of these words; the nouns from the dictionary, projected on the screen, are like flags planted on conquered land.

#### Morteza Najafi

on the 42nd Fadjr International Theater Festival

Iran Theater- Morteza Najafi's" Kapotage" is performing in Fadjr Stage Competition. Najafi asked the artistic directors to hold the added sections in the following years.

A prize winner of Gazvin Theater Fes-tival, "Kapotage", written by Kamran Shahlai and directed by Morteza Najafi was performed in Iranshahr Theater Complex on Jan.24.

Najafi said about the play: "I went to Kamran Shahlai, who had written sev-eral plays and he offered them and I chose "Kapotage" because of the social and modern atmosphere of the story It is about two families who have been is about two families who have been friends for many years, and now they want to go abroad for a vacation but But somethings happen and things are fall- a surreal approach.



Iran Theater- The 42nd Fadir Theater Festival hosted well-received 22 stage and street shows on Sunday, January 26.

The Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance. Mohammad- Mahdi Esmaeili visited the Fadir Festival and 14 stage theaters and 8 street theaters were performed. The culture minister watched the stage show "Seghatoleslam" by Amire Hejazi from Tabriz city. Descendants of Martyr Mirza Ali Agha Tabrizi known as Seghatoleslam were also among the audience in Sangelaj Theater Complex. He and some theater officials watched "Trauma" directed by Ahmad Soleimani in Vahdat Hall. A production from Tabriz theater troupe, The stage show "Leyli and Mainun" directed by Yaghoub Sedigh Jamali was staged in Vahdat Hall and was well received by the audience.

Nizami Ganjavi's"Leyli and Majnun" is one of the most famous love stories of classical Iranian literature, which Tabriz artists performed in Azeri language with music and choreography performance. The City Theater hosted the plays "Silent, Hamlet, Silent", "Happiness in Odessa", " Pondar Bidakhsh "and "Zirozebar" on Sunday, which was well received by the audience.

On a cold winter day, the artists performed street shows with the audience's welcome



ing apart. He went on to say:" Judgment is the main theme of the play and people can-not be judged easily. You have to walk in their shoes to understand, and since everyone has many chapters in their life, this show aims to offer that we are not allowed to judge other people." About his method in directing, he ex-plained: "The atmosphere of our show is realistic, but our play allowed us to have a surreal approach."

Mehdi Hamed –Saghaian Society needs artists with disabilities

Iran Theater- The artistic director of the 42nd Fadjr Theater Festival, Mehdi Hamed –Saghaian, pointed out the high capabilities of disabled artists and said that people with disabilities, with a strong presence in this festival, can show their skills and capabilities.

The Faragir section (special section for disabled artists) was added to the Fadjr Theater Festival for the first time with the help of the General Department of Dramatic Arts and the cooperation of the officials of the Fadjr and the efforts of the Welfare Organization. This was welcomed and received a lot of attention among disabled artists, which motivated them and gave them hope.

About the social responsibilities of officials in artistic fields, Mehdi Hamed –Saghaian declared: " Our approach is to identify, create opportunities and pay attention to vulnerable people in the society, and the presence of people who try harder to win back for the difference that ex-

ists in their bodies is a very impressive action for a large international festival."

The artistic director of FITF fond the psychological and social effects of the presence of people with disabilities in Fadjr very valuable: "This opportunity can show their status and capabili-



ties to the society, that if they have weaknesses or some disabilities in their bodies, they can show their skills with a lot of effort. And even healthy people are not able to do it." He also referred to the therapeutic effect of theater art: "When these people start working in the community and They became active in the production of artistic works, they learn that they can go through the path of healing their body and soul better with the help of art, and use theater as a form of healing."

He considered the presence of the artists with disabilities in the street section to create social happiness: "The 2024 Fadjr Festival slogan is hope, joyfulness and empathy, and when ordinary people suddenly see a street theater and people with disabilities are performing , they become hopeful."

He went on to say: "poeple with disabilities can show that they are capable of displaying their high skills and potential by attending the Fadjr festival and they can declare that the on Jan.29.

society needs their presence and thoughts. Their thoughts should not be ignored. Because they are brilliant people and can help the whole society."

The artistic director of 42nd Fadjr International Theater Festival stated that the Faragir section is competitive and: "The jurors who were chosen to bestow the prize are experts, and all them have works on people with disabilities in their portfolios and have been the jury members, experts and lecturers for many years."

lecturers for many years." At the end, Mehdi Hamed – Saghaian expressed his hope that the Faragir section will remain in the Fadjr Festival for coming years.

The Faragir section of the 42nd Fadjr Festival was held from January 21-28 in both street and stage sections, and the winners will be announced on Jan.29.

Kazem Nazari

#### 'Religious and revolutionary themes in 42nd FITF are unique'

Iran Theater- The Director General of Dramatic Arts Center and ITI President of Iran, Kazem Nazari said that the attention paid by the 42nd FITF to religious, Islamic, sacred defense and the values of the Islamic Revolution cannot be compared to any of the previous editions.

Kazem Nazari clarified the processes of holding the 42nd Fair Festival.

About the different sections of the 42nd Fajr International Theater Festival, he said:" In the provincial and regional sections and in the meetings we had with the provincial theater officials, we emphasized that the festival's policymaking council should put all its efforts into selecting works with Islamic, religious and Islamic revolution themes, and we succeeded."

Kazem Nazari Introduced plays with with religious themes, Islamic revolution and martyrs issues: "Trauma", "Rozgar Sagi Sagi/ Bad Days", "Morqe sahar ","Emergency Brake", "Ring and Well", "Apprehension", "When we were all asleep", "Sergeant", "Blood", "Circle", "Lily and the empty frame" and " Bride of Palestine".

He added: "In 42nd FITF, some unique works in the field of holy defense will be performed, which combine humor,



bravery and martyrdom of Islamic warriors."

#### The Imam Reza cultural and artistic festival of Imam Reza press conference: Exporting religious and Iranian theater to other countries



Iran Theater- At the press conference of the dra-matic arts section of the Imam Reza (AS) cultural and artistic festival, Atabak Naderi emphasized that this event, by going beyond stereotypes, can take a step towards exporting religious and Iranian theater to other countries.

At the beginning, the posters of the 17th Razavi National Theater Festival, the 14th Razavi National Children and Youth Theater Festival and the 3rd Razavi National Street Theater Festival were un-veiled with designs by Hojjat Mojarad. The Imam Reza Festival internationalization

# strategy

Kazem Nazari, Director General of Dramatic Arts, said in this ceremony: "I hope this festival will intro-duce Razavi culture to the audience in a more ef-fective and rich way. Imam Reza (AS) is respected by all Iranians. This kind Imam has dignity and man-

#### "Horn is a social satire in a fantasy mood" Marzieh Alizadeh says on her street show



Iran Theater- The director of the "Horn", Marzieh Alizadeh says that the theater deals with the concerns of a disabled person in a fantasy and surreal atmosphere as a social satire, and narrates the efforts of this disabled person

42nd Fadjr Festival. An artist from capital of Iran, Alizadeh explains that the story deals with the life and concerns of a girl with physical and movement disabilities who was able to invent a car. Alizadeh added: "Since many disabled people have to

fight many problems in order to prove themselves, this social and comedy show with humorous language has tried to show a small part of the problems of a disabled person who has many abilities.

She emphasizes that it was very important for them to be able to create a different, fantasy and surreal atmosphere that makes the work different and helps the grace of performance method to present a social satire in the fantasy atmosphere.

ners that artists can present in the best way." He went on to say: "We hope that the possibility of holding the international section of this festival with the presence of artists from Muslim and neighbor-ing countries will be provided soon, and of course other nations of the world will be able to display their works in this section." World ranking of Razavi theater

Ali Mohammad Radmanesh, the artistic direc-tor of Razavi Theater Street Festival, explained: "Street theater is a part of a large outdoor theat-er event, and what is intended here is certainly a form of events that are related to our religion and culture; A culture that is derived from the political, philosophical, historical and cultural personality of Imam Reza."

The artist continued: "What is important is the idea of street theater, that this idea is the concern of the audience. Theater deals with human moral virtues and the most important texts in the world have been written about it. From this point of view, Razavi Theater is not far from being seen by the world.

world." Thematic diversity in Razavi's shows Seyed Javad Refahi, strategic advisor to the CEO of Imam Reza Foundation (AS) also said during the meeting: "Last year, we came to the conclusion that people do not benefit from festivals and these events are held within groups. That's why we tried to pay the artists themselves to perform in their province." Saeed Zamani, Vice President of Imam Reza (AS) Foundation's promotion and distribution, said: "To-day, the Razavi Dramatic Arts Festival has reached

day, the Razavi Dramatic Arts Festival has reached an acceptable level in terms of the audience and public interest, as well as the quality of the works." He continued: "We removed the subjects of domes and garlands, vows, and healing, and we pay seri-ous attention to the moral and social life of Imam Reza (a.s.).

#### Ali Ekbatani: I tried to be with the people of Gaza with all of my heart

Iran Theater- The director of "Epilepsy", Alireza Tajik believes that there is a variety of subjects and perfor-mances in the FITF 2024 and this is one of the attractions of this year's Fadjr festival. The street theater competition of the 42nd Fadjr Theater Festival has hosted more than a hundred performances from various theater troupes from



all over the country from January 22 until February

1, 2024. This is the first time that Alireza Tajik participates in Fadjr Festival. He explains that The story of "Epilepsy is about the bombing of two schools in Borujerd city in 1986 and the killing of 68 students, includ-ing the students of the Shahid Fayazbakhsh special school. The unknown fate of Hossein, one of the stu-dents with epilepsy in this bombing, and his mother's longings are the main subject of our show.

longings are the main subject of our show. This artist goes on to say : "In Epilepsy which is performed with seven actors, we have tried to make a modern work with a more thoughtful design of space and movement, as well as moving away from the classic example of street theater.

# Mojtaba Lalehzari on his new stage directing experience

Iran Theater- The director of "Del-larzeh" (Apprehension), Mojtabi Lalehzari considers this show to be the result of the playwright's concern about forgiveness, and also deals with the fatal accident of the train from Mashhad to Yazd.

A production from Yazd city,"Del-larzeh" written by Seyed Ali Mousavian and directed by Mojtaba Lalezari is one of the 12 works that is performed at Fadjr stage sectiom. This play was previously staged in 2013 at the Plateau Art Hall in Yazd and the City Theater of Tehran. The story is about a young boy named Javad Abui who killed his friend by accident and because of a pigeon and is going to be executed, but Haj Vakili, an old Yazdi businessman who works in Mashhad, intercedes and family of the victim forgive Javad. Haj Vakili is returning to Yazd by train, the train has an accident and he dies.

Mojtaba Lalehzari directs the show with five actors including himself.

Lalehzari said: "The main intention of me and playwright, Seyed Ali Mousavian to make this show was to

Saeed Badini<sup>,</sup> "Braveheart" examines the different dimensions of General Qasem Soleimani's personality



Iran Theater- The director of the "Braveheart" street show, Saeed Badini thinks that the audience will get to know some of General Soleimani's characteristics by watching this theater.

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More than 100 theaters competes at Fadjr sections: Street competition, Special in Gaza, National Identity and Faragir section.

A production from Sistan and Baluchestan Province, the 30 minutes street show "Braveheart" directed and written by Saeed Badini is peforming for four times in the open area of Rudaki, the open area of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance building and the Razi Cultural Center.

This show narrates memories about the character of General Soleimani through the words of several hats. The writer and director said: "Before this hat achieves dream, it needs the hats of people who were companions of Soleimani at different times, such as Imad Mughniyeh, Masoud Barezani, Haj Qasem's radio operator during the Iran-Iraq war tell some memories of Qasem Soleimani and this hat narrates the different situations that these people have been with General." He explained about the atmosphere of this show: "We used some iron cans that create the situations of the show."



stage a play about humanity.

Seyed Ali Mousaviyan and I are old friends, and when he came to Yazd, I was performing his Qajar comedy Agha Delbar.

When He came to Yazd to watch the play that he was written and I was directing, the fatal accident of the train from Mashhad to Yazd happened on the morning of June 8, 2022, 50 km from Tabas.

The idea of writing Del-Larzeh came to his mind and me at the same time, and he started writing the play. Del-larzeh was first performed in Yazd and then was performed in various festivals and then the play was on stage at the City Theater of Tehran."

Morteza Zahmatkesh on the 42nd FITF



Iran Theater-The director of "Gole Bahar" street theater, Morteza Zahmatkesh stated that the quality level of the works in the 42nd Fadjr International Theater Festival has increased.

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20 works, which include seven street shows, will are performed the presence of disabled artists in Fadjr Faragir section.

The street show "Gole Bahar" written and directed by Morteza Zahmatkesh competes in the Fargair section and it was performed in open area of City Theater Complex on Jan.25.

This director said on the theme of "Gole Bahar": "This play takes a new look at the ancient ritual of Nowruz khani, a ritual that is being forgotten in the hustle and bustle of city life."

Zahmatkesh is from Gilan province. He mentioned that the show has a little siyahbazi in the performance: "As a writer, I should consider the ritual identity of Nowruz Khani, and address it in a way that is more believable for the audience"

He welcomes the addition of the Fargir section to the Fadjr as a positive and pleasant work. He declared: "I hope that the time will come when disabled artists will progress equally with professionals in all festivals, because their ability is unique"

# Ali Nassirian : An actor is a creator

Iran Theater- Ali Nassirian says that the actor is a creative artist and should not be considered only as an agent and tool of the director.

In one of its oral history programs, on the occasion of the birthday of Ali Nassirian, a veteran actor of cinema, theater and television, Cinema Museum of Iran releases parts of an interview with this artist.

Ali Nassirian ,a veteran actor of cinema, theater and television, said: "One of my lucks was that I was able to find the path I was interested in and loved in my life." He added: "I became interested in acting after watching Ta'ziyeh and ritual and traditional shows in my youth when we didn't even have television. We all saw Ta'ziyeh, but how such a show



was created interested me. I think Ta'ziyeh was created because the influence of portrayal and representation of the Karbala incident is different from its narration. " The veteran actor continued: "We

The veteran actor continued: "We lived on Shapur Street and I used to watch American movies without dubbing or subtitles at Noor Cinema on Amirieh Street. At that time, they put Intertitle on movies, they cut the movie and explained about it. That's why every time I went to the cinema, other audience would ask me if I was literate to read the Intertitle for them."

He added: "For playing roles, I refer to my own motives and views and the sense of interest and creativity that an actor should have, because the actor himself is a writer of plays and scripts. According to Roberto Ciuli, just as the director writes the story with his direction, the actor also writes, because the actor is a creator and not just an agent and tool of the director. It is true that he should pay attention to the director and listen to his words, understand, listen and have a conversation, but in my opinion, the creator of the play is the actor."

## Ehsan Maleki on his Theater "We're People too"

Iran Theater- Ehsan Maleki, the director of street show "We're People too" considered this work to be a theater about personal and social effects of poverty, the loss of livelihood.

Written by Amin Ebrahimi and directed by Ehsan Maleki, the stage theater "We're People too" competes in Fadjr Street section. It's contender in the Review Section. "We Were People" is about a family and their niece's illness. The patient is a little girl with cancer. The members of this girl's family, who are very poor and needy, try to solve their problem and do everything to cover the cost of their niece's treatment. Their problem becomes so complicated and unsolvable that the mother of the family becomes a surrogate mother to cover the expenses and the cost of her child's medicine and treatment. Then something happens.

The director said: "Amin Ebrahimi's play deals with a social concern of



our city, Kohdasht, and our province, Lorestan. Something that is a national issue, and There are livelihood difficulties and poverty; Poverty has undeniable effects on the personal and social life of all citizens. This is one of my concerns and Ebrahimi's concerns."

#### Seyed Javad Yahyavi to join Jin the genie in Tehran

Iran Theater-new casting has been

announced for a comedy show, Jin the genie. Seyed Javad Yahyavai will join the production. The show is featuring Hossein Shafiei, Massoud Baharloo, Mohammad-Hadi Atai, Elaheh Pourjamshid, Mohsen Zarabadipour, Hos-

sein Mirzaian and Hamed Lotfi. They will perform from Feb.7 at Nofel

Loshato Theater. The show narrates Amir Kabir's life in a comedic tone from the point of view of a genie named Jin in Finn's bathroom.

Mirza Taghi Khan-e Farahani, better known as Amir Kabir, was chief minister to Naser al-Din Shah Qajar for the first three years of his reign. He is widely considered to be "Iran's first reformer", a modernizer who was "unjustly struck down" as he attempted to bring "gradual reform" to Iran

Amir Kabir was murdered in Kashan on 10 January 1852. With him, many believe, died the prospect of an independent Iran led by meritocracy rather than nepotism. Parviz Fallahipoor: If the conditions are right, I will direct

Iran Theater- A theater, cinema and television actor, Parviz Falahipour said that if the play is good and has few characters, he will stage it.

Parviz Falahipour, a theater, cinema and television actor, started his career by appearing on the theater stage. He had played roles in the stage shows like "Dark Light", "King Lear", "Morgh-e-Mina", "Raz Mehr Raz Sepehr".



He received the best male actor award for acting in the lobby written by Arash Abbasi and directed by Bita Elhamian from the 29th Fadjr International Theater Festival. Falahipour mentioned his last appearance on the stage of the theater: "About 7 years ago, I went on stage in the play "Raz Mehr Raz Sepehr" written and directed by Shokrkhoda Goudarzi in the main hall of City Theater Complex, which fortunately was well received by the audience."

He continued: "I would like to act on the theater or even prepare a work as a director for stage, but directing requires peace of mind and time. Of course, if I have a suitable play with few characters, I will direct it."

# The lie became the theme of a dramatic work' Majid Araghi on how he directs "Enemy of God"



Iran Theater-Majid Araghi is among the directors in the Iranian theater competition section of the 42nd Fadjr, which considers his theater as the playwright, Emaduddin Rajablou's concern about lies, which is one of the problems of our society today.

This play, which has already been staged twice in the NofelLoshato Theater and the Sayeh Hall of the City Theater of Tehran, was well received and appreciated

by the audience in its special performance during Fadjr Festival.

"Emaduddin Rajablou, the author of the play Enemy of God, initially wrote this work in the form of two separate plays in 2022-2013 and then turned them into one play. He created this work based on one of his personal concerns; Lying, which is one of our troubles in our society", he said." Rajablou directed Enemy of God in 2016 in Gorgan city. We had started our activity together in the theater from there, but in 2019 we decided to migrate to Tehran, and considering that theater production was always one of our main concerns, we decided to choose a play that we could finance and become a quality show and that's how we went to Enemy of God again."

He went on to say: "The first episode of this show takes place in the principal's office of an elementary school, and two students have a fight over an essay paper, and both of them consider themselves the owners of it, they are interrogated in a way.

The second episode of the show takes place in the command office of the military barracks where two training soldiers had a fight with each other. And one of them claims that the senior broke his shoulder."

Hossein Ghasemi-Honar-The production of the play "Blood" motivated by the tragedies of the war in Gaza



Iran Theater- Hossein Ghasemi-Hanar said that "Blood" is a documentary about war, and They examined all the events from World War II onwards, including the Palestinian Conflicts.

The play "Blood" competes at Fadjr student and Gaza sections.

About production of "Blood", He declared: "The recent events in Gaza made me choose such a topic. Now that more than a hundred days have passed since Israel's war on Gaza, the Western media are normalizing the war in Palestine. I tried to deal with the event of war and the killing of innocents in Blood without take position and only with a humanitarian perspective. "

only with a humanitarian perspective. " He added: "Many shows have been made about the war, and it was a difficult duty to deal with it from a new point of view."

The director about the Fadjr student section: "The university festival was held every year, and many people who are working in professional theater today started their activities from the there. Fadjr Student section can make theater students to make some efforts. Unfortunately, different sections have not been defined for the student competition." Art affair deputy of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Mahmoud Salari visited 42nd FITF



Iran Theater- Art affair deputy of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Mahmoud Salari visited the City Theater of Tehran and Vahdat Hall, the main venues of the 42nd FITF.

Accompanied by Kazem Nazari, the Director General of Dramatic Arts Center and ITI President of Iran, He watched "Del-larzeh" and "Trauma" which are competing in the 42nd FITF. A production of Yazd province, "Del-larzeh" di-

A production of Yazd province , "Del-larzeh" directed by Mojtaba Lalehzari is competing in Fadjr stage section. Salari also attended the performance halls of the City Theater, visited the process of holding this artistic event and talked with the artists.

Then he and the Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Mohammad Mahdi Esmaeili, and Kazem Nazari watched the show "Trauma" produced by Hamid Nili and directed by Ahmad Soleimani at the Vahdat Hall. After the performance, Art affair deputy of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance went behind the stage to meet the actors and the production team of "Trauma" and praised them.

It is based on a group idea and was written with Ayoub Aghakhani as the supervisor of the writers' room.



#### "I hope the activities of disabled artists will increase": Mahtab Nafisi on her directing experience

Iran Theater- Jean Teulé's The Suicide Shop is inspiration for writing the play "Shop No. 13" which Mahtab Nafisi is directing in General section.

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Mahtab Nafisi hopes that the General section in Fadjr will open the doors for the disabled artists so they can continue to work.

The director of "Shop No. 13" explains about the process of writing: "The story is based on the novel "The Suicide Shop" by Jean Teule, which we rewrote it and made some change to become familiar for Iranians."

She adds: "The story follows three sisters who own a shop where suicide devices are sold, and they encourage Customers who want to commit suicide; then a girl enters the shop and changes the atmosphere and opinion of the sisters. I think this story is very similar to the conditions of our society today. Since society needs hope, I think the story is appropriate."

Nafisi explains about her cast: "The show has seven actors and we rehearsed for about a year. The cast are mostly elderly and we only have one disabled actor. These people, especially the disabled artists, are not given importance in society., and this opportunity was provided at the Fadjr, and I think it is a very good opportunity for the elderly and the disabled artists to express and display their abilities together with other people in the society. On the other hand, it increases our efforts to become more professionally and to be able to work like a normal person. "

State Welfare Organization of Iran supports the General section in the 2024 Fadjr Theater Festival. Mahtab Nafisi hopes this cooperation will create new opportunities for disabled artists to recognize in the society.



#### Afshin Zamani on the play" Nightmares of prince Ejbari"

Iran Theater-Afshin Zamani's "Nightmares of prince Ejbari" will be performed in Fadjr Iran Theater Competition. He considers his show to be a work based on Iranian historical characters with the concept of criticizing power.

A playwright and director from Tehran, Afshin Zamani compete with his new play in the review section of Iran theater competition.

"Nightmares of prince Ejbari" will be staged on Tuesday, January 23, at 18:00 and 21:00 at the Iranshahr Theater complex. "This show, which took place before Rapid or a man who had both his hands full of blood when he was born, formed a part of a trilogy based on Iranian historical characters, along with Rapid or a man...and it is a criticism of power based on a historical narrative." zamani says, "As you know, Iranians have unintentionally intertwined their lives with politics, so when I decided to perform a trilogy, my intention was to choose a concept that is similar to the daily life of Iranians, imbued with politics, but can be performed in any society and any historical period. Therefore, it seemed to me that the concept of criticism of power is a concept that is always open to talk about. These days I am practicing the third part of this trilogy which examines the life of Agha Mohammad Khan Qajar.'

He adapted the acclaimed novel Prince Ehtejab written by Houshang Golshiri to write the play Nightmares of Prince Ejbari, which was performed with the title Prince Ehtejab in 2018 at Hamon Theater.

Zamani said: "I went too far from Prince Ehtejab by exploring the nature of dramaturgy on the original play and only a few characters' names remained from the novel and new characters were created that changed path of the story."

#### Majid Eqbali

#### The holy defense genre is not about bullets and guns

Iran Theater- The director of the show "Badrieh" says that the holy defense genre is not dependent on the use of weapons, cannons and tanks; The right point of view and performance method is important to attract the audience.

With the theme of women's sacrifice during the Iran-Iraq war, the show "Badrieh" directed by Majid Iqbali

from Ahvaz, competes in the Iran Theater section of the 42nd Fadjr Theater Festival.

"The play is written by Babak Khajeh -Pasha, and I enjoyed and loved it when I read it. I wanted to direct a show about the women who sacrificed themselves during the holy defense, and I finally chose "Badrieh", Majid Eqbali says about the story and its features. He added: "This show has three actors and we had about six months for rehearsal. In this show, decor and light are combined together, and light is considered a part of decor." Eqbali also gives his idea about the genre of holy defense and the audience's reception: "Various works with theme of holy defense have been created in these years, but the point of view is important." Kazem Nazari We are looking for the development of theater for children and teenagers

Iran Theater- Kazem Nazari, director general of Dramatic arts, said that the only reason for the absence of children's and youth theater groups in the Fadjr Theater Festival was the holding of a specialized children's and youth theater festival, and the general director of dramatic arts is looking for the development of the content and form of this artistic event as well as children's and youth theater.

The Director General of Dramatic Arts Center and ITI President of Iran, Kazem Nazari, explained about Fadjr International Theater Festival and Ardakan Children and Youth Theater Festival.

He said about the absence of children's and youth theater troupes in the Fadjr Theater Festival: "Because we have a special festival in the Children's and Youth Theater and this event is held in February, this type of theater was not present in the Fadjr Theater Festival."

He continued: "Children and youth theater festival will be held in the ancient city of Yazd and Ardakan in February, and for this reason, it was decided that children's and youth theater groups would not participate in the Fadjr Festival."

Nazari declared: "Today, we have a children Theater festival, a traditional ritual festival, and a puppet theater festival. So these festivals should be held in the best way."

He emphasized: "We expect the children theater festival to develop in its own field. It should continue and make good things in terms of form and content."

# Mohammad Mehdi Esmaeili: Our slogan is cultural justice

Iran Theater-The 42nd Fadjr International Theater Festival wrapped up successfully on February 1, 2024 in Vahdat Hall. At the beginning of the ceremony the Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Mohammad Mehdi Esmaeili, went on stage and while congratulating Ten-Day Fajr ceremonies and the the 45th anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution of Iran and the Rajab, month, he thanked the artists and theater officials.

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He went on to say:" The 42nd Fadjr Theater Festival was held magnificently, powerfully and with the effective presence of artists and people. At 42nd Fadjr Festival as pervious years, regional theater artists played an important role in creating warm atmosphere for the developing theater in Iran."

The Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance added: "I thank the provinces that organized the festival of regional Theater and I am grateful to the stage artists who works in the country with minimal facilities and with many difficulties so the curtain has never fallen." He emphasized: "Cultural justice is our motto and we tried to continue this movement and we are happy that artists from different regions of the Iran, from the north to the south, worked for this movement."

About the importance of drama, He declared: "Theatre is the origin of different fields in performing arts. As much as the theater is glorious, The other arts have more glory."

The Minister of Culture explained about the student theater section of the Fadjr that this year my colleagues organized a student competition with the support of the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology. I hope the students



can improve the future of the country's theater."

He continued: "The artists with disabilities participated in 2024 FITF with the cooperation of the Welfare Organization, and we were at the service of good talents in the Faragir section and we promised to prepare the halls. We are ashamed of the shortcomings that the adaptation of the halls did not happen and we hope to see this problem solved next year."

The Minister of Culture mentioned that the 42nd Fadjr International Theater Festival dedicated a section to Gaza and it was really important. "A terrible event is happening and more than 27,000 people were killed in front of the world's consciences, most of them were children, teenagers and helpless women. This is a sad story about how the international community remains deadly silent about these tragedies."We were proud to dedicate a section named Gaza in all important festivals, and I thank the artists who accepted the responsibility. These children killers will pay for killing the oppressed and soon we will celebrate the demise of this anti-human and racist regime."

Mohammad Mehdi Esmaeili thanked the staff, art deputy and the Dramatic arts center of Iran.

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