

Orson Welles:

We're born alone, we live alone, we die alone. Only through our love and friendship can we create the illusion for the moment that we're not alone.

'The Salesman' fifth highest-grossing specialty film of 2017



Following the continuation of its release in US theaters, Iranian film 'The Salesman', directed by Asghar Farhadi, was in fifth highest-grossing specialty film.

According to IndieWire website, 'The Salesman' grossed \$3.4 million and was placed fifth among the 2017's twenty highest-grossing specialty films.

The list only includes domestic grosses for specialty films that opened in limited release in US and Canada in 2017.

Grosses include all reported grosses up to April 18, 2017. According to the list, Director Niki Caro's historical drama 'The Zookeeper's Wife' grossed \$10.6 million to take the first place.

Choirs for peace, justice

Art & Culture Desk

A Swedish musician and a choral music conductor and his crew of 35 musicians recently embarked on a 'singing visit' to Iran as part of a project, titled 'Iran-Sweden Journey of Singing', to promote peace and justice.

Eric Westberg, who was accompanied by 8,000 singers, said that choral music is considered one of the favorite activities in his country.

Westberg was born in 1955 and grew up in Sweden. He graduated in conducting choral music from the Royal College of Music in Stockholm and holds a Ph.D. in choral music. This plays a major part in his life. He has conducted several choral musical groups such as YMCA in Stockholm and



Oslo philharmonic choir. His band, 'Pitea', which was set up 27 years ago, focuses on Swedish choral music as well as religious, Swedish folklore and contemporary music with choral arrangements. Some of their works is also certain to Romanticism age.

"Once Fabian (a group member) and I were having a chat in a restaurant and he told me about his experience of a trip to Iran. He told me about the great atmosphere in Iran and of course the low costs of the trip to Iran for the group," said Westberg elaborating on his motivations for a trip to Iran. Turning to his experience in music, he noted, "I had little knowledge of Iranian choral music and had only heard one or two pieces of their music. Many of the choral music in Sweden were inspired by Swedish folk music. For instance, we play a part named 'trilo' which has immense folk culture behind it."

"In Sweden, choral music is popular. I mean people do workouts and sing choral songs and it's a hobby for them." He also pointed to the role of music in the Swedish people's lives.

Explaining his project 'Choral song for peace and justice', he said, "This is my biggest ever project. I met a professor in Australia and told him about my idea to do a project about peace. I also sent a proposal to Kofi Annan (former UN secretary general) and some other people in charge, but they didn't approve it. At that time, there were clashes in Northern Ireland in which many people lost their lives."

I wrote the lyrics and composed a musical piece about those incidents which eventually led to the approval of the proposal and we had performances in 56 countries. It was also performed by 8,000 singers in a ceremony for the new millennium in 2000."

He contended, "People all over the world are the same, and if one looks at it from this point, we would have different relations with each other."

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The eighth meeting of 'Singing Tradition' was held concurrent with performances by vocalist Ali Jahandar at Tehran's Arasbaran cultural Center.



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According to IFP, in a note posted on his Instagram page to mark Sa'di National Day (April 21) ahead of the event, Zarif told the story of the Iranian carpet as follows:

"Perhaps, the story of hanging the precious Iranian carpet which is adorned with the Sa'di's most famous poem titled 'Human Beings' on UN's wall is interesting for my friends."

"Almost all of us have read it at school that this famous poem is written above the portal of the UN. In 1982, when I first traveled to the US and visited the United Nations head-

quarters, I searched the building's every nook and cranny but I could not find the poem. Later in 1988, when I was in Geneva [Switzerland] to take part in the negotiations on the UN's Security Council Resolution 598, again, I failed to find the poem written anywhere in the European headquarters. I even asked some of my friends and more experienced people if they had seen the poem written anywhere in the buildings of the UN's headquarters, but received a negative response.

"In 2004, during the period (2002-2007) I served as Iran's permanent representative to the UN. I was informed that Mohammad Seirafian, one of the most famous carpet traders of the central Iranian province of Isfahan, had had a precious carpet, with a length and width of five meters, woven, at the center of which Sa'di's poem had been sewn with golden thread. He had voiced willingness to offer the carpet to the UN as a gift providing that they place or hang it up somewhere appropriate."

"Given the dimensions of the carpet, it was difficult to find a suitable wall to hang it up on. There were only a few walls at the UN headquarters suitable for the purpose. One was the wall on which the big 6x4 carpet given to the UN as a gift by Mohammad Mosaddeq, Iran's prime minister during 1951-1953, was hung up and the other was that of the hall in which representatives held their talks. A Chinese carpet, nevertheless, was hung up on the latter."

"Given the large number of the gifts presented to the UN and inadequate room for all of them, I inevitably, had

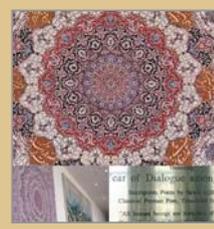
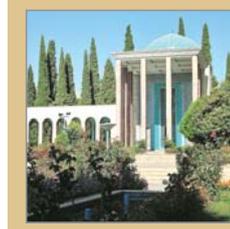
to enter into negotiations with the then UN Secretary General [Kofi Annan] to convince him to hang up the carpet on a suitable wall as a symbol for the idea of the Dialogue Among Civilizations, put forward by the then Iranian president Mohammad Khatami. Interestingly, the year 2001 was named after Mr. Khatami's idea at his proposal.

"In my later follow-ups, I was faced with a proposal by the UN to hang up the carpet on the wall adorned by the carpet presented by Mosaddeq and replace it with his gift, but I turned down the offer.

and deep humanitarian concepts of the Iranian culture. "And finally Sa'di's poem found its way into the UN." The translation of the poem reads as follows:

*Human beings are members of a whole,
 In creation of one essence and soul.
 If one member is afflicted with pain,
 Other members uneasy will remain.
 If you have no sympathy for human pain,
 The name of human you cannot retain.*

World-famous Persian poet Sa'di to be commemorated



Silence

*To the ignorant man nothing is better than silence,
 And were he aware of this he would no longer be ignorant.
 When you are not possessed of perfection or excellence,
 It is better that you keep your tongue within your mouth.
 The tongue bringeth disgrace upon men.
 The nut without a kernel is light in weight.
 The beast will not learn of this how to speak;
 Learn thou of the beast how to be silent.
 Whoever reflecteth not before he answereth,
 Will probably utter inappropriate words.
 Either adorn thy speech with the intelligence of a man,
 Or sit in silence like a dumb animal.*

"A little bit later, I learned that they intended to detach the Chinese carpet from the wall and wash it. The surface of the wall on which the Chinese carpet was hung up, had enough room for two carpets. However, the Chinese one was hung up right at its center. Nevertheless, with the assistance and thanks to the constant follow-ups of one of my good colleagues at the representative office, we eventually managed to hang up the carpet ornamented with Sa'di's poem next to the Chinese one, as you can see in the photo."

"In addition, we had Sa'di's poem translated beautifully into English and wrote it on a plate pinned on the wall next to the carpet so that viewers could both enjoy the beauty of the Iranian art and further know about the sublime, elevated

Born in Shiraz in 1194 CE, Sa'di Shirazi, is known as a Sufi master, mystic and metaphysician in the history of Persian literature. He was conferred the title 'Master of Prose and Poetry' in view of his proficiency in Persian literature, IRNA wrote.

Sa'di is best-known for his 'Bustan' (The Orchard) and 'Golestan' (The Rose Garden) which present a peculiar blend of human kindness and cynicism, humor, and resignation in the form of stories and personal anecdotes. The poet is also known worldwide for one of his aphorisms, 'Human beings are members of a whole — in creation of one essence and soul' which adorns the entrance to the Hall of Nations of the United Nations building in New York.

Weather

