



## Rare Indian coins donated to Mashhad museum

**Tehran Times Art Desk**  
**TEHRAN** — U.S.-based Indian donor Ali Azhar Arastu granted a collection of rare Indian coins to the Astan-e Qods Museum in Mashhad last week.

The collection comprises silver and copper coins, which date back to various periods of the history of India, said an official of the museum Mohammad-Baqer Kafshdar Tusi.

He noted that the oldest item of the collection is minted in 1810 in Hyderabad, India.

The collection also contains a coin bearing an image of the Charminar, a monument built by Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah in 1591 in Hyderabad, Kafshdar-Tusi added.

The Astan-e Qods Razavi Library and Museum are adjacent to the holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS).

## Werner Herzog tunes into "Piano" drama



**LOS ANGELES (Hollywood Reporter)** — Werner Herzog will write and direct "The Piano Tuner", a lush Victorian-era drama about a Brit's journey to war-torn Burma.

Based on Daniel Mason's 2002 debut novel, the Focus Features project centers on Edgar Drake, a man sent to a remote village in the late 19th Century to repair an eccentric military man's piano. Drake falls in love with a Burmese woman and her country, but as the officer wins over locals through music and medicine, things grow treacherous when his troops begin to suspect him of treason.

The German filmmaker has directed several films about men venturing into exotic locales ("Rescue Dawn", "Grizzly Man", "Fitzcarraldo"), but this will be his biggest English-language costume drama.

# "Khayyam and Putin" sells like hot cakes in Tatarstan

**Tehran Times Culture Desk**  
**TEHRAN** — The first edition of "Khayyam and Putin", a book published in Kazan, was sold out a week after its release.

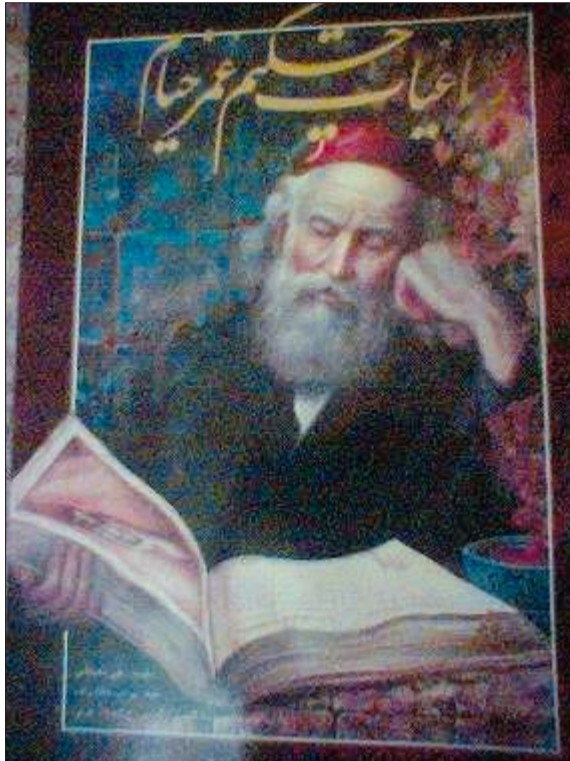
The book contains Russian translation of President Vladimir Putin's favorite quatrains by Omar Khayyam, great poet of Persian classical literature, Russia's Regnum News reported last week.

In addition, the book comprises the texts of Putin's interviews with several Russian and foreign mass media about his love and respect for Omar Khayyam.

"In my free time I study works by Omar Khayyam", Putin has said in answering a question about his spare time.

The book has been published by the World Public Forum Dialogue of Civilizations in Tatarstan with one thousand copies.

The institution plans to publish the second edition of the work in the near future.



## Tehran to host painting festival of Muslim children

**Tehran Times Art Desk**  
**TEHRAN** — Tehran is to host the 2nd International Children's Painting Festival of World of Islam, which will be holding in September.

Muslim children aged 4 to 10 are invited to submit maximum three works to the secretariat of the festival from May 21 for a month.

The works will be judged in July by a team of scholars and children book illustrators and the festival will open in September displaying the selected works. The three top winners will receive their awards during the month-long event.

This year's festival focuses on the theme "I and God" aiming to develop innovation in children and recognize gifted children of the world of Islam.

It also intends to create a cultural ground for more relationship and solidarity amongst the children.



## Spielberg can negotiate with studios May 1

**LOS ANGELES (Reuters)** — Hollywood director Steven Spielberg -- whose relationship with studio DreamWorks' parent, Paramount, has been the subject of much speculation -- will be free to negotiate linking up with other studios as of May 1, two sources familiar with the studio said on Thursday.

But Spielberg was not expected to decide whether or not to terminate his deal with Paramount until the summer, they said.

One source said it was an "absolute possibility" that Spielberg, whose upcoming "Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull" is due to open on May 23, may choose to remain with Paramount, a unit of Viacom Inc.

DreamWorks declined comment and a spokesman for Viacom was unavailable.

DreamWorks was acquired by Viacom's Paramount Pictures in 2005 for \$1.6 billion.

Spielberg and DreamWorks chairman David Geffen and co-chairman Stacey Snider have agreed to stay on with Viacom through the end of 2008, but there has been persistent speculation they may choose to leave Paramount at the end of 2008.

DreamWorks Animation SKG Inc, a separate publicly held studio run by Jeffrey Katzenberg, has its own deal to have its movies distributed by Paramount through 2012.

Various studio executives have cited rumors that Geffen and Spielberg are looking to move their studio to General Electric Co's NBC Universal.

# Clooney eyes box office touchdown with comedy

**LOS ANGELES (Hollywood Reporter)** — George Clooney is set to score at the North American box office this weekend.

While "Leatherheads" is not exactly the glitziest vehicle in his career, the 1920s sports comedy is likely to open at No. 1 with sales at least in the mid-teen millions.

Clooney, who also directed the Universal Pictures release, plays a professional football player in the sport's anarchic early days.

"Leatherheads" is tracking well with older men and women, and interest seemed to be building this week among male youngsters. Renee Zellweger and John Krasinski also star.

Other openers include the family fantasy "Nim's Island," starring Jodie Foster, Abigail Breslin and Gerard Butler, and the horror film "The Ruins."

An adaptation of a kids book by Wendy Orr, "Nim's Island" could reach the low-teen millions, which should be good enough for No. 2 or No. 3. The film comes from 20th Century Fox.

Much depends on how Sony's college kids-hit-Vegas drama "21" performs during its second round. "21" topped the domestic box office last weekend with a \$24.1 million bow, and a 50% hold would produce about \$12 million during its second outing.

DreamWorks/Paramount's "Ruins," based on Scott Smith's best-selling novel, could be limited to an opening in the mid- to high-single-digit millions.

The Weinstein Co.'s high-profile drama "My Blueberry Nights" figures among the frame's limited openers and features the film debut of jazz-pop chanteuse Norah Jones as well as performances by Jude Law, Natalie Portman and Rachel Weisz.

Also, Paramount Classics' "Shine a Light," a Rolling Stones concert film directed by Martin Scorsese, opens in 276 theaters, including 93 Imax venues.

Industry opinion is mixed on whether April will be a help or hindrance in 2008's struggle to outpace the year-ago box office totals.

Weekend comparisons from a year ago won't be particularly tough this month, but the more dour among industry handicappers view much of April's release schedule dubiously. Adding to their skepticism is a recently gloomy theatrical marketplace, with the industry box office marking year-over-year declines in six of the past seven weekends.



## Iran asks Albanian school to ban anti-Iranian film

**Tehran Times Art Desk**  
**TEHRAN** — Iran's embassy in Belgrade requested the Marubi Film and Multimedia School in Tirana to ban screening the anti-Iranian animation film "Persepolis".

The Marubi Film and Multimedia School is scheduled to screen the film animation during its spring screening program.

Iran's ambassador to Albania Ali Eqbali in a meeting with Marubi director Kujtim Cashku called "Persepolis" an anti-cultural and anti-Iranian production.

He put stress on paying respect to all the cultures and civilizations in the world and noted that the screening of the animation is incompatible with the old relationship and friendship between the two nations.

Iran's request for banning the animation was published in several dailies in Belgrade including the newspaper Shekulli.

The animation film, which is widely viewed as an anti-Iranian film in Iran, was directed by Vincent Paronnaud and Paris-based Iranian graphic novelist Marjane Satrapi.

The film, which is about an Iranian girl growing up during the final days of the last shah and the early days of the Islamic Republic, paints an unrealistically bleak image of Iran.

The film is an adaptation of Satrapi's autobiographical black and white graphic novel "Persepolis".

## Street art to adorn Tate's walls

**LONDON (BBC)** — A series of giant graffiti-style murals are to be painted on the walls of London's Tate Modern gallery for its summer season.

The works, which will adorn the river-facing wall of the building, will be created by six artists including Blu, who is interested in death.

The artworks will be displayed for three months from May 23.

A Tate spokesman said a protective coating would be placed on the wall to avoid damage when they are removed.

Other street artists involved in the project include JR from France, renowned for putting photographs of people from deprived areas of Paris onto walls in the city's affluent districts.

Sixart from Barcelona and Brazilian twin brothers Otavio and Gustavo Pandolfo will also submit ideas for the wall art.

The murals are expected to measure 15 meters by 12 meters, and will decorate the Turbine High Wall of the building, a former power station on the south bank of the Thames.

## "24" actress joins "Julia" cast

**LOS ANGELES (Hollywood Reporter)** — "24" star Mary Lynn Rajsuk has joined Amy Adams and Meryl Streep in "Julie and Julia", a movie inspired by late cooking icon Julia Child.

The Columbia Pictures film tells the true story of Julie Powell (Adams), who spent a year cooking all 524 recipes in Child's classic cookbook, "Mastering the Art of French Cuisine," and blogging about her experiences.

Rajsuk plays Powell's best friend, Helen. The film also covers Child's life in France in the 1940s and 1950s, based on her biography. Streep plays Child, and her "The Devil Wears Prada" co-star Stanley Tucci plays her husband, Paul.

Nora Ephron is currently shooting the film in New York.