

World Premiere of Taq Kasra documentary at SOAS, London

January 30, 2018 مديريت محتوا blog, Press Release

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Directed by Pejman Akbarzadeh

Produced by Persian Dutch Network, in association with Toos Foundation. Co-funded by Soudavar Memorial Foundation

London, UK [January 30, 2018] – Lady Jamileh Kharrazi, Founder and Director of the Toos Foundation, an organization devoted to the promotion and preservation of Persian culture and art — has contributed to a new documentary film created to build cross-cultural understanding through architecture.

Taq Kasra: Wonder of Architecture is the first-ever documentary film on the royal Persian residence and home to the world's largest brickwork vault. The palace stands as a symbol of third-century Persian culture and history but is now in serious danger of destruction. In an effort to preserve the cultural and historical significance of this ancient site, the Toos Foundation worked with the *Persian Dutch Network* and documentary maker Pejman Akbarzadeh to film the arch before it was potentially destroyed.

In a career spanning over five decades, Lady Kharrazi's philanthropic initiatives in developing countries have focused on building cross-cultural understanding through art, music, and architecture. "Peace is only possible through shared compassion, and connecting with the past through ancient architecture reminds us of our common human history."

Palaces may crumble, but cultural values remain

Taq Kasra is a central pillar of peace in the embattled country of Iraq. It holds cultural and religious significance to all the diverse cultures in the Middle East, but it is in danger of destruction. As Iraq rebuilds its society after decades of conflict, culturally important architecture like that found in Taq Kasra will serve as a reminder of the nation's history of peace and unity.

The new documentary film **Taq Kasra: Wonder of Architecture** celebrates Persian history in Iraq and preserves the cultural understanding that violence and oppression in the region threatens to destroy. This important film focuses on the history of the palace, which has stood for nearly two thousand years, as well as the impact it has had on scholars, poets, and artists all over the world. This critical piece of cultural preservation was created to ensure that the legacy of Taq Kasra remains intact even if the structure itself does not.

The screening was organized by the London Middle East Institute (LMEI) at SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London), a public research institution devoted to cross-cultural education in humanities, languages, and social sciences.



What:

World Premiere of "Taq Kasra: Wonder of Architecture", Followed by Question & Answer Session with Pejman Akbarzadeh (documentary maker) and Vesta Sarkhosh-Curtis (British Museum)

When:

February 1, 2018 at 7:00PM – 9:00PM