



BSEC MONTH OF CULTURE 2017

PRESS RELEASE

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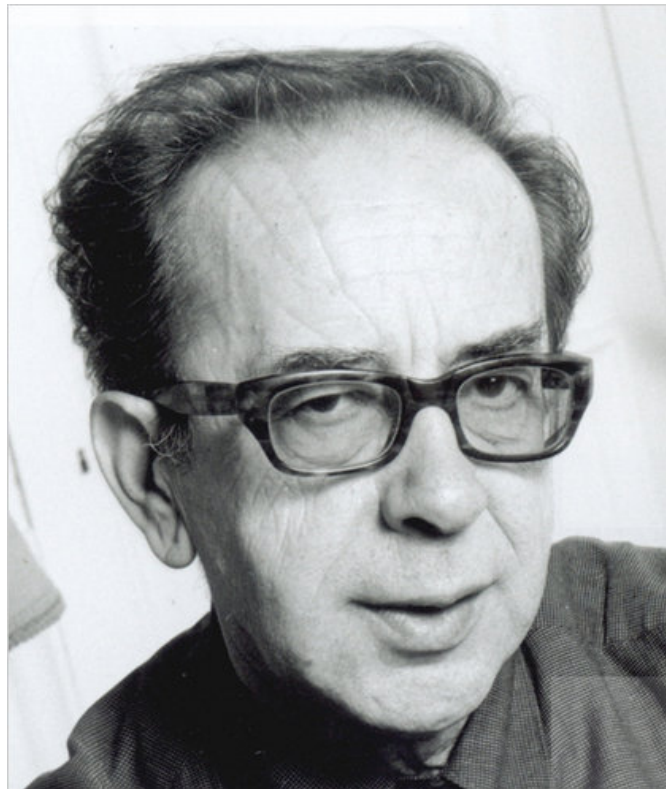
Albania

Who wrote *The General of the Dead Army*?

Ismail Kadare

Ismail Kadare is an Albanian novelist and poet, born in 1936. His work often explores Albanian history and culture with most of his novels to take place in historical moments of Albania. Notable works of Kadare are *The General of the Dead Army* (1963) which has been transferred to the big screen, *The Castle* or *The Siege* (1970), *The Great Winter* (1977), *Chronicle in Stone* (1971), *The Three-Arched Bridge* (1978), *Broken April* (1980), *The File on H.* (1981), *The Fall of the Stone City* (2008) among others. Kadare is considered the greatest modern Albanian writer.

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Ukraine

How many strings a bandura has?

Bandura

Bandura is a stringed instrument considered the national musical instrument of Ukraine. It is used mainly to accompany folk music. The bandura has an oval wooden body, a short neck attached to the soundboard in an off-center position, 4 to 8 bass strings running from the neck of the instrument to the body and 30 or more (sometimes 60) strings stretched over the soundboard. By the 15th century, the bandura had been adopted by kobzari, professional musicians who used the instrument as an accompaniment to epic ballads that narrated the stories of the Ukrainian Cossacks. At the turn of the 21st century, bandura ensembles continued to be popular in Ukraine.

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Armenia

Do you know how apricots and films are related?

Golden Apricot International Film Festival in Armenia

Golden Apricot International Film Festival became reality in Yerevan in 2004. The film festival was called so as the apricot symbolizes Armenia and it is an indispensable part of the country: a Latin name of an apricot is “prunus armeniaca” that means “the Armenian plum” and the colour of apricot is found in Armenian national flag. The Golden Apricot festival is different from other such events in the sense that it is smaller scale and more intimate, but it continues to garner international attention and respect. Golden Apricot Yerevan International Film Festival carries the theme: Crossroads of Cultures and Civilizations, promoting the dialogue. The films are presented in two international competition sections: features and documentaries.

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Serbia

Do you know in which way *Underground* there was a Palm d'Or?

Learn about Emir Kusturica

Emir Kusturica, is a Serbian director, screenwriter, actor, and producer who was one of the most-distinguished European filmmakers since the mid-1980s, best known for movies that express deep sympathies for people from the margins. His film *Time of the Gypsies* (1989) won an award for the best direction at Cannes and cemented Kusturica as a leader of European Modernist filmmaking. For his first English-language movie, *Arizona Dream* (1993) he won a Silver Bear award for direction at the Berlin International Film Festival. With his next movie, *Underground* (1995) Kusturica won his second Palme d' Or, joining a small group of directors who had twice won the top prize at Cannes. His movie *Black Cat, White Cat* (1998) was awarded a Silver Lion award for Direction at the Venice Film Festival.

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Azerbaijan

Do you know after whom did The National Museum
of Azerbaijani Literature take its name?

Nizami Ganjavi

Nizami is the greatest romantic epic poet of Azerbaijan, lived from 1140 to 1209. The five long poems, known collectively as the *Khamisa* (Quintet) or *Panj Ganj* (Five Treasures), composed by Nizami in the late twelfth century, set new standards in their own time for elegance of expression, richness of characterization, and narrative sophistication. The National Museum of Azerbaijani Literature is named after Nizami Ganjavi, one of the numerous monuments. He is considered a genius poet and thinker of Azerbaijan.

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Turkey

Who wrote *Istanbul* and *My name is Red*, winning a Nobel Prize?

Orhan Pamuk

Orhan Pamuk is a novelist, born in 1952 in Istanbul. He is one of the most distinguished contemporary writers of Turkey. He has awarded a Nobel Prize for his book *Istanbul* in 2006, among other significant literary prizes and awards. Pamuk's first novel *Cevdet Bey and His Sons* published in 1982 was followed by other great works such as *Silent House* (1983), *The White Castle* (1985), *The Black book* (1990), *My Name Is Red* (1998) and *Snow* (2002).

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Interested in learning more about the fascinating culture of the BSEC Member States?

Join the BSEC Month of Culture, organised by the ICBSS from 1-30 June 2017 and learn about the remarkable and rich cultural heritage of the BSEC region.

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About the BSEC Month of Culture:

On the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the BSEC Organisation, the ICBSS is launching a new initiative, the “BSEC Month of Culture”, a month long programme of cultural highlights from the 12 BSEC Member States (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine).

Being aware of the rich, diverse cultural heritage of the BSEC region, the ICBSS will launch the “BSEC Month of Culture”, from 1st to 30th June 2017, with the aim to promote the cultural identity of the region and enhance its visibility to the wider public.

The programme will feature online tributes on literature, music, cinema, archaeological sites and gastronomy, including short videos and photos.

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About the ICBSS: The International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) was founded in 1998 as a non-profit organisation. It has since fulfilled a dual function. On the one hand, it is an independent research and training institution focusing on the wider Black Sea region. On the other hand, it is a related body of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and serves as its acknowledged think-tank. Thus, the ICBSS pursues applied, policy-oriented research, promotes knowledge on the Black Sea region both within and outside its boundaries, and offers policy advice with the aim to foster multilateral cooperation among the BSEC member states as well as with their international partners.

For further information please contact us at email icbss@icbss.org or tel.: 210 3242321