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یلویج پژواک

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 با شرکت پژواک تماس بگیرید.
 (۴۰۸)۶۱۵-۱۰۳۰

Always bridesmaid, never bride- not yet

IranTimes: Iran maintained its perfect record at the Oscars last month—nine nominations over the years but no awards. An Iranian-American animated film director, Emud Mokhberi, and his team from France were nominated for an Academy Award for their animated short film “Oktapodi.” This was the ninth time in the last 13 years that an Iranian has received an Oscar nomination. None, however, has yet won the Oscar itself. This year’s winner in the animated short category was Kunio Kato for his



“La Maison en Petits Cubes.” The 12-minute film, which means “House of Small Cubes,” centers on an old man reflecting upon his life as floodwaters slowly rise at his home. It marked the first Academy Award nomination and win for Kato, who wrote and directed the piece. Kato’s film career was not his first choice. As a child, he wanted to be a veterinarian, but gave it up because of an allergy to cats. Similarly, Mokhberi had never even considered film work until just a few years ago when he was in his late 20s. “Oktapodi” and “La Maison en Petits Cubes” were competing against three other animated shorts: “Lavatory,” “Presto” and “This Way Up.” “Oktapodi,” which has already won 10 festival awards, was created by a team of students from the Paris-based animation school Gobelins. The team includes: Julien Bocabeille, Francois-Xavier Chanioux, Olivier Delabarre, Thierry Marchand, Quentin Marmier and Iranian-American Emud Mokhberi. Mokhberi, 36, explained that working on an animated film in France came together unexpectedly. Two years ago, Mokhberi didn’t speak any French and up until a few years before that, he had never con-

sidered animation as a possible career. “It’s not like this was a passion that I worked toward... It was unintentional,” he said. In 2001, the Iranian-born programmer had just graduated from UCLA with a degree in computer science. “I

went to a presentation given by Doug Roble [the creative director of software at Digital Domain], and loved him so much I decided to apply for a job at Digital Domain” working on films. “When I went back to UCLA, I knew what I needed to do to be successful in the industry. I understood that they wanted people who were strong technically and artistically.” When he finished his masters in computer science, he transferred to UCLA’s film school to work on a master’s in fine arts (MFA). At the time, Mokhberi’s wife—a French history student—needed to live in Paris for a year. “I advanced my candidacy so that all I needed to do was finish a film, and I could do that anywhere,” Mokhberi said. “So, the original idea was that I would work on my film in Paris.” Instead, Mokhberi applied to Gobelins. But the Parisbased program required that students be able to understand French, which Mokhberi did not know at all. Mokhberi applied for the program and then began taking intensive French classes back at UCLA. When he flew to Paris in June 2007 for the formal application pro-

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Regime making it tougher for U.S. talks

IranTimes: The Islamic Republic’s position on dealings with the United States appears to have hardened in recent days with demands that the Obama Administration change American policy before Iran even thinks about talking with it. Foreign Ministry spokesman Hassan Qashqavi: “We have no stance [on talks] until U.S. foreign policy has been totally revealed in practice. Then we would make assessments according to realities and would declare our intentions.” And Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said last month: “We are considering this offer [of talks]. It would be good if the American policy changed not only in words but in deeds. We need to wait to see the differences in Barack Obama’s policy compared to that of George Bush. If the United States makes steps toward Iran, steps in response will be made by Iran as well.” Asked what changes Iran was seeking, Mottaki said, “They know well.” President Ahmadi-nejad said in a televised interview: “For now, they [the Americans] are studying the situation. We have to wait and see what changes they make. They have to state and announce the changes they are making.... If genuine changes do not take place, relations will remain the same.” As to the changes he wants, he avoided anything concrete and specific, like the lifting of the U.S. embargo on trade with Iran. Instead he said, “Are the rights of the Afghan and Iraqi people to be officially recognized? Is this plundering economic network that is transferring nations’ resources to the other side of the world while transferring the weaknesses in its part of the world to other nations going to be rectified? Will the Security Council be reformed? Will bullying end? Instead of trying to stop nations from making progress, will they be happy with other nations progressing?” The statements were all vague and left the Islamic Republic maximum wiggle-room, as have all official statements since Obama took office last month. Officials are now emphasizing the need for changes in American policy before talks. But they have avoided stating flatly that policies must be changed before talks can begin and they have avoided presenting a clear and finite list of what policies they want changed. The remarks

last week by Qashqavi, Mottaki and Ahmadi-nejad, however, came much closer to saying there would be no talks until there were changes, albeit unspecified, in American policy. Many Iranian officials seem to think they have leverage with the Obama Administration, that Obama is so desperate for talks that they can exchange the offer of talks for policy shifts. Meanwhile, many hardliners consider talks to be an unvarnished evil and would explode in anger if any talks were actually scheduled. Others very much want talks with the United States, but are dancing around trying to figure out how to bring them off without forcing a confrontation with hardliners. Still others probably realize that Obama must offer talks to Iran to satisfy the Europeans, Russians and Chinese. Obama cannot move forward with tougher sanctions until he has tried the negotiations card. For that reason, Iranian diplomats do not want Iran to denounce talks out of hand—and Iran has not done so. It is important to note that Supreme Leader Ali Khamenehi has been silent on the whole issue of talks with the Americans. He has made numerous speeches in recent weeks. They have mostly focused on Gaza and the evils committed by Israel. He has never addressed the talks issue, thereby leaving himself maximum flexibility. While Iran has not issued a concrete list of policies it wants changed, Ahmadi-nejad and others have in the past mentioned such concrete matters as: the lifting of U.S. sanctions on Iran; the end of UN involvement in Iran’s nuclear issue; the return of all U.S. troops stationed abroad to the United States; and the reversal of American support for Israel. This is clearly a list of nonstarters. But since Iran has mentioned them only as ideas and avoided stating them as demands, the Islamic Republic preserves maximum flexibility to later make a more reasonable list of demands. The United States, however, is not likely to be open to any changes before talks. It is likely to be willing to allow Iran to raise any issues it wishes in talks—but that is entirely different from what Iran has been saying this past month.



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