



Sportsmen of Varzesh-e bostni in traditional costume, Iran

Date

1959

Primary Maker

Paul Almásy

Medium

Vintage ferrotyped gelatin silver print

Description

Pahlevani and zurkhaneh rituals is the name inscribed by UNESCO for varzesh-e bostni ("heroic sport") or varzesh-e bostni ("ancient sport"), a traditional system of athletics originally used to train warriors in Iran (Persia) and adjacent lands. It combines martial arts, calisthenics, strength training and music. Recognized by UNESCO as the world's longest-running form of such training, it fuses elements of pre-Islamic Persian culture (particularly Zoroastrianism, Mithraism and Gnosticism) with the spirituality of Shia Islam and sufism. Practiced in a domed structure called the zurkhāneh, training sessions consist mainly of ritual gymnastic movements and climax with the core of combat practice, a form of submission-grappling called koshti pahlavni.

Dimensions

Sheet: 11 3/4 × 9 1/4 in. (29.8 × 23.5 cm) Image: 11 3/4 × 9 1/4 in. (29.8 × 23.5 cm)