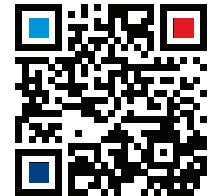


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Hope in the saddle

COMMUNITY REPORT
By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE
mai.alkhatib@gulfweekly.com

EQUINE enthusiast Haya Jamal Isa is building emotional bridges for children with autism in Bahrain through her love of horses.

The 23-year-old soon-to-be-mum has been providing equine therapy, known as 'hippotherapy' for autistic youngsters aged three to 12 since February last year, in a bid to help them improve their motor, emotional and sensory sensations that will assist them with daily challenges.

"I wanted to create something new, using my love for horses, to benefit the community," said Haya who is studying therapeutic riding online from a US Indiana university and working on the project under the guidance of the Bahrain Royal Equestrian Endurance Federation.

"That is when I thought I'd put my passion to work by being there for autistic children using hippotherapy."

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a developmental disability that can cause significant social, communication and behavioural challenges and children with autism can experience deficits in language, sensory processing and reading social cues.

Hippotherapy, which was actually developed in the 1960s and used in Germany, Austria and Switzerland as an adjunct to traditional physical therapy, has been shown to improve balance,



Haya with one of the children working on an activity



Hugging and kissing a horse

strength and motor co-ordination.

The movement of the horse affects a rider's posture, balance, co-ordination, strength and sensorimotor systems. It has also been proven to be effective in promoting language, sensory regulation as well as improving social skills as students often form an emotional bond with the horses they ride on.

According to the Autism Spectrum Disorder Foundation in the US, autistic children have difficulty bonding emotionally to others and being around horses can help improve that by brushing them, hugging them and patting them.

By learning to care for the horse, autistic children associate the care they provide with feelings and an emotional bridge is



Haya

constructed. This bond can lead to social and communication skill development with other people as well.

Riding can also help live up sensory preceptors and cognitive skills can also be enhanced through fun activities and play. For example, equine therapists have children throw coloured balls into baskets

while riding, touch their eyes, mouth and ears during a song, and identify scenes – all incorporated during riding.

Horse riding is also believed to help reduce irritability, provide calmness and even watching the other riders can be visually stimulating. Hearing the hoofs can also impact other senses.

"The children are having so much fun that they don't even realise they are participating in a therapy session," said Haya, who provides the training at Bahrain International Endurance Village in Sakhir.

"At the moment, I have two horses, one staff member and volunteers assisting in the therapy twice a week, from 4pm to 5pm. During the session, children ride the horses, groom them, feed them and even paint

them along with other fun activities.

"It brings me joy to see the children smiling and I have also seen improvement in their abilities. They have been truly benefiting from this." Sessions will start again after Covid-19 restrictions are lifted and plans are in place to restart with social distancing protocols remaining in place.

"While we are currently training at the village, my dream is to one day launch a big centre for them and there are already plans for that in the future in the same location."

At the moment, Haya and her team only specialise in caring for autistic children but she is working on catering to other needs in the future.

For details, follow @autism.eq.bh on Instagram.



GLOBAL EDUCATION
Study in the UK
SEE PAGE 2



ODE TO COMPOSER
Tickling the keys
SEE PAGE 4



ARTISTIC ALLIANCE
Yalla Habibi
SEE PAGE 5



SENSUAL SEDAN
The new S-Class
SEE PAGE 7

Smarter learning

WITH five vaccines now approved for use in Bahrain, the higher education sector around the world is on a road to recovery and Forward Learning Solutions (FLS) is looking forward to helping students on their journeys of learning.

FLS' team of dedicated academics who hold teaching positions at some of the world's leading institutions helps students gain admission to top



COMMUNITY REPORT
By NAMAN ARORA
naman@gulfweekly.com

universities in the UK and other countries overseas.

"The student is at the heart of the journey," explained Vinod Siyani, FLS director. "We offer a door-to-door concierge service, opportunities for work placements with top firms, virtual healthcare, online banking, a personal student ambassador and high-end accommodation to make sure they have everything they

need to succeed."

The team, led by Vinod, advises students on the right courses, cultivating a transnational multicultural education and preparing them to work in an environment where they will interact with people from all over the world on a daily basis.

The organisation also makes applications on behalf of students and works with Visa Facilitation Services Global to ensure visa applications are completed as required,

navigating changing systems like the post-study work visa in the UK.

FLS also works with its global partners and associates to discuss obstacles that students are facing and how to overcome them, in addition to seminars about societal and contemporary issues affecting the educational process.

As top innovative

companies look for recruits with international experience, an overseas education is a smart investment. And with FLS, students will get exclusive tuition fee discounts on selected courses as well as access to a free Masters course with their undergraduate degree.

Visit www.forwardlearningsolutions.com/contact-for-details.



Vinod



Studying in the UK



Visits were made to Construction and Civil Engineering companies on ABC Bahrain in 12 months

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Feeding the senses

GOURMET REPORT
By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE
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ONE of the kingdom's colourfully, flavourful festivals is set to enthrall food and art lovers with a series of presentations and workshops aimed at nourishing and feeding the soul, as well as highlighting heritage sites.

Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities (Baca) Food is Culture returns for its sixth consecutive year, starting Saturday, to bridge the culinary arts with other creative mediums and breathe new life into the island's cultural sites.

An array of chefs and artists have teamed up in this experimental project to offer tasty treats in an artistic atmosphere.

"Food is Culture was always one of the most innovative festivals hosted by the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities, and this year we are taking greater strides with this experimentation," said Farah Mohamad Mattar, Baca's director culture and arts of the Culture and Arts Directorate.

"While continuing to collaborate with creative and talented participants, unlike previous years, Food is Culture will be hosted over the duration of a month with each pair presenting their collaborations weekly at different cultural locations in Bahrain, adding an exquisite spatial dimension to these unique interdisciplinary dialogues.

"We continue to push the envelope and contrast



the new and exciting against the important backdrop of our history and heritage."

The chefs lined up for this year's presentations include Chef Irvin Martinez, dessert maestro Abdullah Bindayna, healthy eats Tabea Lutz, sourdough baker Layal Dana, as well as culinary artists and bakers Lara Al Abbasi and Maria Knowles.

The artists that will be showcasing original artworks and sounds while chefs dish out scrumptious servings include celebrated multimedia artist Ghada Khunji, psychedelic pop band Do You Really Like It?, the two rising fine artists Salman Najem and May Hejiri, and eco-conscious fashion designer Amal Rafie.

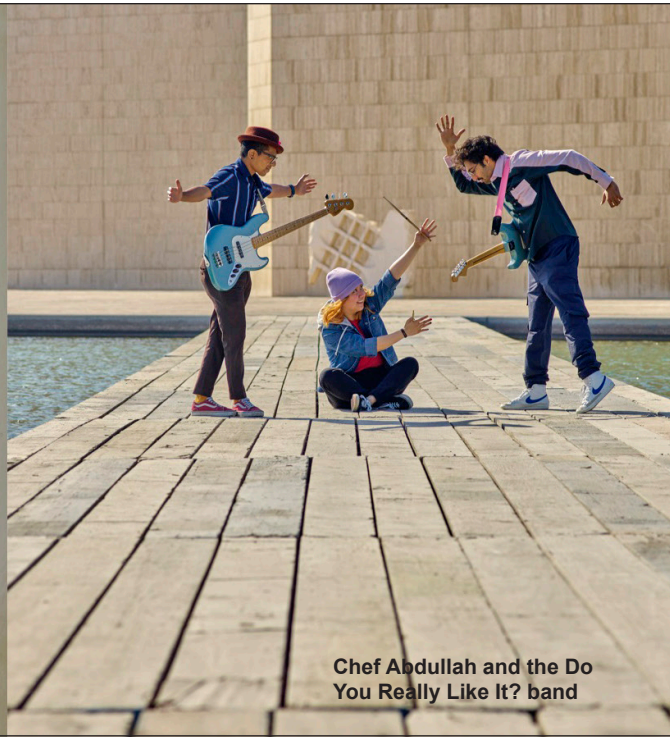
Spectators will be able to interactively engage with the topics that each chef and artist duo will explore on their presentation day and every showcase will be featured at a different

cultural location such as the Bahrain National Museum, the Pearling Path Visitors Centre, Al Jasra Handicraft Centre, Riffa Fort and the Archaeologies of Green Pavilion.

"The aim is to showcase these exquisite cultural sites and breathe new life into them by allowing these locations to become the centre of such an experimental project," added Farah.

Aside from weekly presentations, the entire process will be documented in the form of an e-book and documentary. In addition, there are a number of activities and events coinciding with the festival including a local learning platform offering a range of cooking workshops and food tours in Muharraq and Manama conducted by one of Bahrain's most prominent food bloggers, Zainab Akbar.

Zainab started her local food tours last year and they were a great success. She and her husband also started



Chef Abdullah and the Do You Really Like It? band

a 'Be in Bahrain' Instagram account where they share pictures of their tours around Bahrain.

Her aim is for people to 'Be in Bahrain' too, experience the beauty of it and, of course, eat like locals.

All these events require registration. The first will be a food tour through the old and new city of Muharraq on March 13 and the second is

a tour of Manama's souq on March 19.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, this year's events will be limited to 30 audience members and everyone must register and pay a fee of BD5 to make sure they actually show up and not take someone's spot.

For details, follow @culturebah on Instagram and visit www.culture.gov.bh to register.



EVENT SCHEDULE

Mt Fuji & 'Do You Really Like It?'

Date: Saturday (March 6)
Venue: Bahrain National Museum waterfront
Time: 6pm-8pm

Layal Dana & Amal Rafie

Date: March 13
Venue: Al Jasra Handicrafts Centre
Time: 6pm-8pm

May Alhujairi & Tabea Lutz

Date: March 20
Venue: Archaeologies of Green Pavilion
Time: 6pm-8pm

Salman AlNajem & Lara AlAbbasi and Maria Knowles

Date: March 27
Venue: Riffa Fort
Time: 6pm-8pm

Ghada Khunji & Chef Irvin

Date: April 3
Venue: Pearling Path Visitors Centre
Time: 6pm-8pm



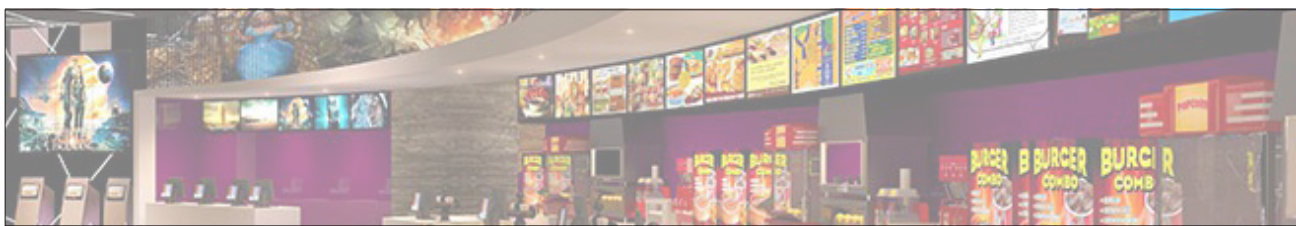
A throwback to chocolate made by Dana Abdulrahman for Food is Culture 5




مستشفى الإرسالية الأمريكية
American Mission Hospital SPC

Packages and Offers for March 2021

ANTENATAL PACKAGE Part 1: BD 170 Part 2: BD 155 Includes: Antenatal visits, Ultrasound, Blood tests, etc.	DELIVERY PACKAGE Includes: Delivery room, Midwife, Doctor, etc.	MIDWIFE PACKAGE Includes: Midwife visits, etc.	CARIES PREVENTION PACKAGE Includes: Dental check-up, X-ray, etc.	WELL WOMEN PACKAGE Includes: Gynecological exam, Pap smear, etc.
DENTAL FILLING PACKAGE Includes: Dental filling, etc.	DIETARY PACKAGE Includes: Dietitian consultation, etc.	HYPERTENSION PACKAGE Includes: Blood pressure monitoring, etc.	PHYSIOTHERAPY FOR RESPIRATORY CARDIAC Includes: Physiotherapy sessions, etc.	
DIABETES PACKAGE Includes: Diabetes management, etc.	MRI PACKAGE Includes: MRI scan, etc.	OPTIC/MOLOGY DIABETES PACKAGE - 1 Includes: Eye exam, etc.	OPTIC/MOLOGY DIABETES PACKAGE - 2 Includes: Eye exam, etc.	GLAUCOMA PACKAGE Includes: Glaucoma management, etc.
ENT PACKAGE Includes: ENT consultation, etc.	VOICE CARE ASSESSMENT PACKAGE Includes: Voice assessment, etc.	VITAMIN-D TEST Includes: Vitamin D test, etc.	IMMUNITY PROFILE PACKAGE Includes: Immunity profile test, etc.	ASTHMA PACKAGE Includes: Asthma management, etc.
PEDIATRIC SCHOOL HEALTH PACKAGE Includes: Pediatric health check-up, etc.	ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION PACKAGE Includes: Erectile dysfunction management, etc.	MALE INFERTILITY PACKAGE Includes: Male infertility management, etc.	PROSTATE PACKAGE Includes: Prostate management, etc.	BONE & JOINT HEALTH PACKAGE Includes: Bone and joint health management, etc.



Symphonic tribute



MUSIC REPORT

By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE
mai.alkhatib@gulfweekly.com

MUSICIAN
Hristina
Katsarova
is breathing new life into the work of Polish composer and virtuoso pianist Frédéric Chopin by creating her own rendition of his 24 Preludes.

Chopin's 24 Preludes, Op. 28, are a set of short pieces for the piano, one in each of the 24 keys, originally published in 1839.

They are universally recognised as some of the composer's most characteristic works that are not only quintessential of his style, but are also deeply tied with upheavals in his personal life at the time.

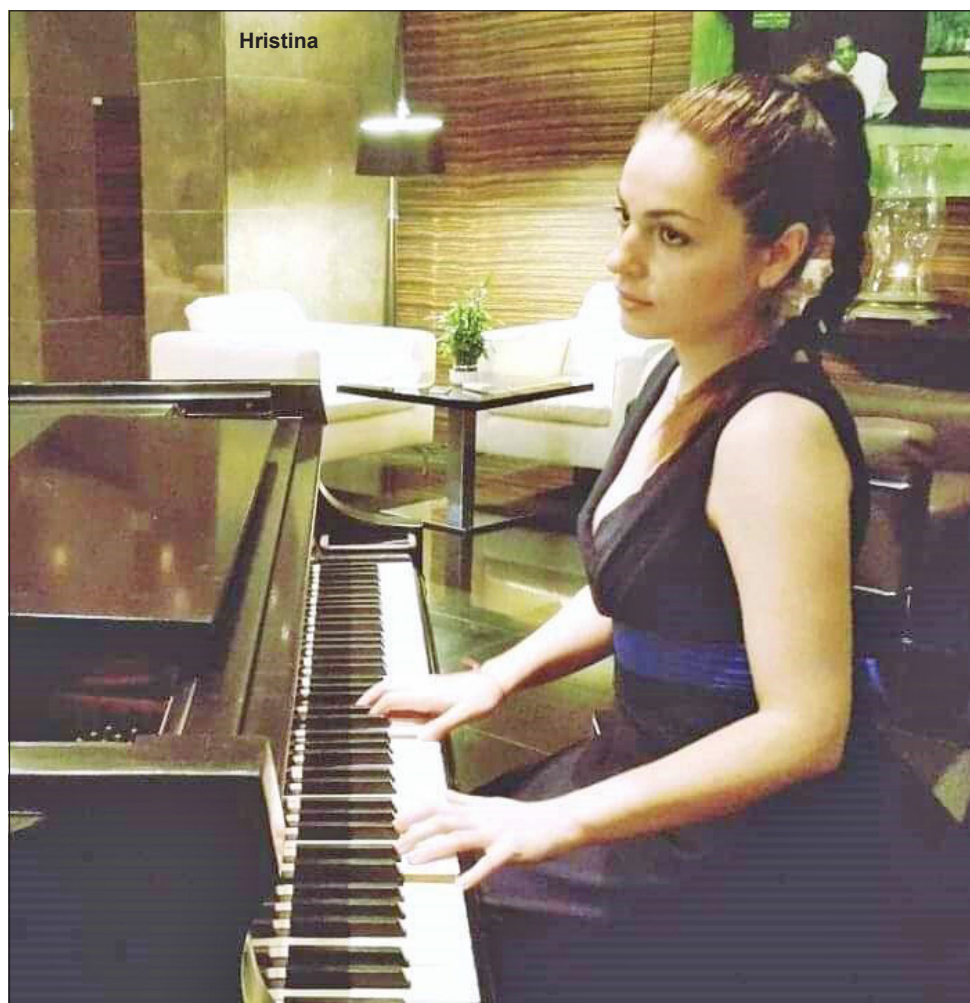
As an ode to the composer from the romantic era and a love for that genre, the 37-year-old Bulgarian professional pianist set out to release a cover of his work called *Chopin – Preludes, Op. 28* and will feature his complete set of 24.

"I've explored wide ranges of music genres throughout the years, but always found that my heart truly belonged to classical music," said the co-founder of Eighty-Eight Keys Music Academy.

"Most composers wrote music for all different instruments, but Chopin wrote mainly about the piano. He is famously known as the piano poet and a favourite to many pianists."

To start, she released a short piano piece single from his set of 24 – *Prelude No4 in E minor*.

"While I am working on recording the whole set, I decided to release this *Prelude* as a single track because of its cultural legacy," she explained. "Chopin didn't name any of the *Preludes*, but German conductor Hans von Bülow called



Hristina



it 'suffocation', due to its sense of despair.

"There are many adaptations and covers of the *Prelude* from bands like Radiohead and Led Zeppelin and the *E minor Prelude* has been used in soundtracks for famous movies such as *The Pianist*, *The Notebook* and *Star Trek*.

"The iconic composition

How Insensitive by Antonio Carlos Jobim, known as the father of Bossa nova, is also based on this prelude.

"My approach to the interpretation of Chopin's 4th *Prelude* is different as I decided to keep the tempo 'Largo' - which means to play it slowly, unlike many other popular recordings. Also, I aimed for steady

underlying pulsation in the left hand with very subtle use of rubato in the melody."

Hristina, who lives in Jannusan, has spent 600 hours working on the album and more than a few thousand hours of practice in preparation for the technical challenges that come with it.

"Each *Prelude* is a lesson from the master musician and you can find different challenges in each," she said. "By overcoming these challenges, I am hoping to grow as a musician and improve my skills on the piano."

Hristina has been tickling the ivories since the age of six. Her parents saw her fondness for music and took her for a basic assessment with a piano teacher. That's when her love for the instrument began.

"Some of my happiest childhood memories are related to music," explained Hristina who also performed with the Bulgarian Symphony Orchestra. "My dream was to be a concert pianist and I was lucky to



Hristina playing with the Bulgarian Symphony Orchestra

have parents who supported me. I started taking private piano lessons at the age of six and when I turned 12 I went to study piano in Hristina Morfova School of Music and Art."

She then completed her Bachelor's and Master's in Piano Performance at the National Academy of Music.

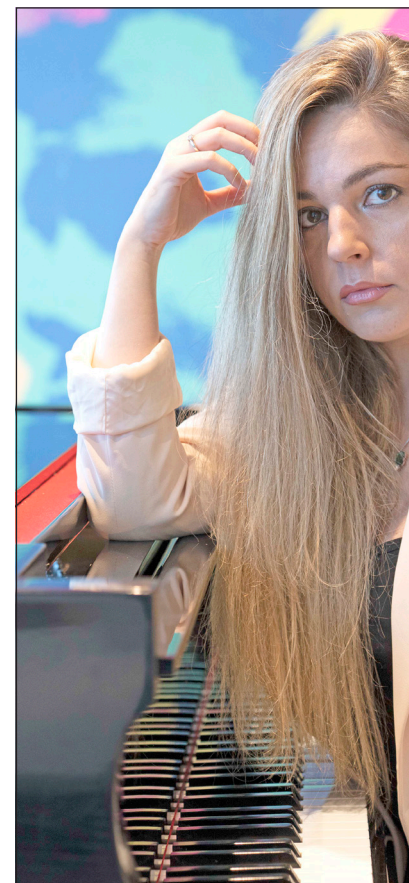
During university, she started working as a touring musician with different bands and classical ensembles. Seven years later, she was ready to settle down in a place she could call home and in 2012 she moved to Bahrain.

Today, she passes on her love for music to adults and youngsters from across the kingdom in her music academy along with her guitarist husband, Jason Swami.

As for her single and upcoming album, she hopes the listeners will let themselves feel all the nuances of emotions and let the music take them on a journey through different dimensions that will tug at the core of their senses.

She said: "I want people to feel the greatness of Chopin's genius. His music dissolves time and creates a bridge between the past the present and the future."

The single is currently available for sale on



streaming platforms such as *Amazon* and from www.hristinakatsarova.hearnow.com/, and all the proceeds from it will be used to support music education and young talents starting their musical adventure.

As she continues working on her album, she is also working on expanding her musical repertoire to include the likes of Bach, Beethoven,

Weekly



Frédéric Chopin



Cosy cushion



Colourful threads



One of the collections from Faika Al Hassa, pictured by Dilmuni Couple

Crafting tradition

Artist and designer Nathaly Jung, who believes in honouring traditional crafts, continues to highlight the island's heritage and culture by collaborating with creatives from across the kingdom, writes Mai Al Khatib-Camille.

The French-German former costume and film set designer's journey began with a 'couch-cushion-collab' with Egyptian artist Mohamed Sharkawy and that led to the launch of her Yalla Habibi design company.

The colourful collection not only had a story to tell but also captured the attention of others, which is what she had hoped for.

"When I first arrived in Bahrain in 2009, I spent a lot of time at Al Riwaq Art Gallery and became good friends with various artists including Mohamed," explained the former fashion magazine stylist.

"We often talked about the art scene in Bahrain and wondered why art seemed to be intimidating for many people here.

"I loved Mohamed's beautiful art work and saw a naive quality to it that inspired me to transpose it into embroidery.

"It was my first collaboration and the beginning of Yalla Habibi. My aim is to support and promote traditional crafts."

The first slogan for Yalla Habibi was 'Art for your Couch' as she saw it as a way to make art more accessible to all – by transposing artworks on cushions. Her account on Instagram features cushions, boxes, pouches, and trays created by her collaborations.

"I also saw my designs as a way to promote and support the weavers of Bani Jamra

Nathaly with different designs



and other local traditional crafts," said Nathaly who lives in Umm Al Hassam.

"I have been collaborating with the textile weavers of Bani Jamra for more than six years and their beautiful handwoven textiles have been an essential part of each annual collection.

"I've mainly collaborated with Saleh Al Jamri, a master weaver, over the years. I also worked on a project with the Awal Women Society, whose vocation has been to preserve the traditional silver thread embroidery, Al Naqda.

"Under the guidance of Aysa Mattar, the Awal Women Society empowers women while training them in this traditional craft and giving them an income.

"Together, we created two cushions that serve as an archive of the various traditional patterns and names of these patterns in traditional Al Naqda embroidery."

Nathaly, whose preferred medium is embroidery art, has also collaborated with other local artists including Ahmed Anan, Faika Al Hassan and Mai Almoataz to name a few and has worked with interior designers on various custom projects and

culture are tightly linked with people's identity which is why I feel it is so important to be connected to these traditional crafts and to honour them, making them part of our homes and daily lives."

She is currently working on a new jewellery collection with Tiny Om for Ramadan and she is also collaborating with Scottish textile artist Mhairi Boyle on a project that is near and dear to her heart.

"My upcoming project that has been really challenged by this pandemic is the embroidered jalabiyas made in a Palestinian refugee camp in Jerash, Jordan," said Nathaly, who studied international communication in Paris. "Mhairi and I designed simple jalabiya patterns and we were going to send them to the Jerash charity 'Hopes for Women in Education' to embroider specific Palestinian patterns. Hopefully, this project will see the light during Ramadan this year.

"The collaborative nature of my work is what brings me joy. Bringing ideas together from people with different backgrounds, skills

and cultures makes a project so much richer."

Also, last year the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities asked her to re-design and curate the gift shop at Qal'at Al Bahrain. She was thrilled to give a platform to like-minded artists and designers that collaborate with local craftsmen.

Nathaly, who finds inspiration in literature, fashion, traditional art forms, browsing antique shops and flea markets, has been surrounded by art since she was a child. She used to go to art galleries and have artists visiting her home thanks to her father, who was a fervent art lover and patron of the arts.

Being creative simply came naturally to Nathaly and while she had initially seen herself as a designer, with the support and encouragement of Bayan Kanoo and Al Riwaq Art Gallery, she created her own art. Her first group exhibition was with the Nest and she also participated in the last two editions of Art Bab.

To collaborate with Nathaly, follow @yallahabibi_bh on Instagram.



Saleh weaving

and Mozart and maybe even Béla Bartók and Claude Debussy.

"There are so many great musicians to pick from," she said. "I hope at some point that I will record a few more albums and pursue my PhD in Piano Performance. I am also considering composing and creating my own solo piece."



Scan the QR code to hear the instrumental

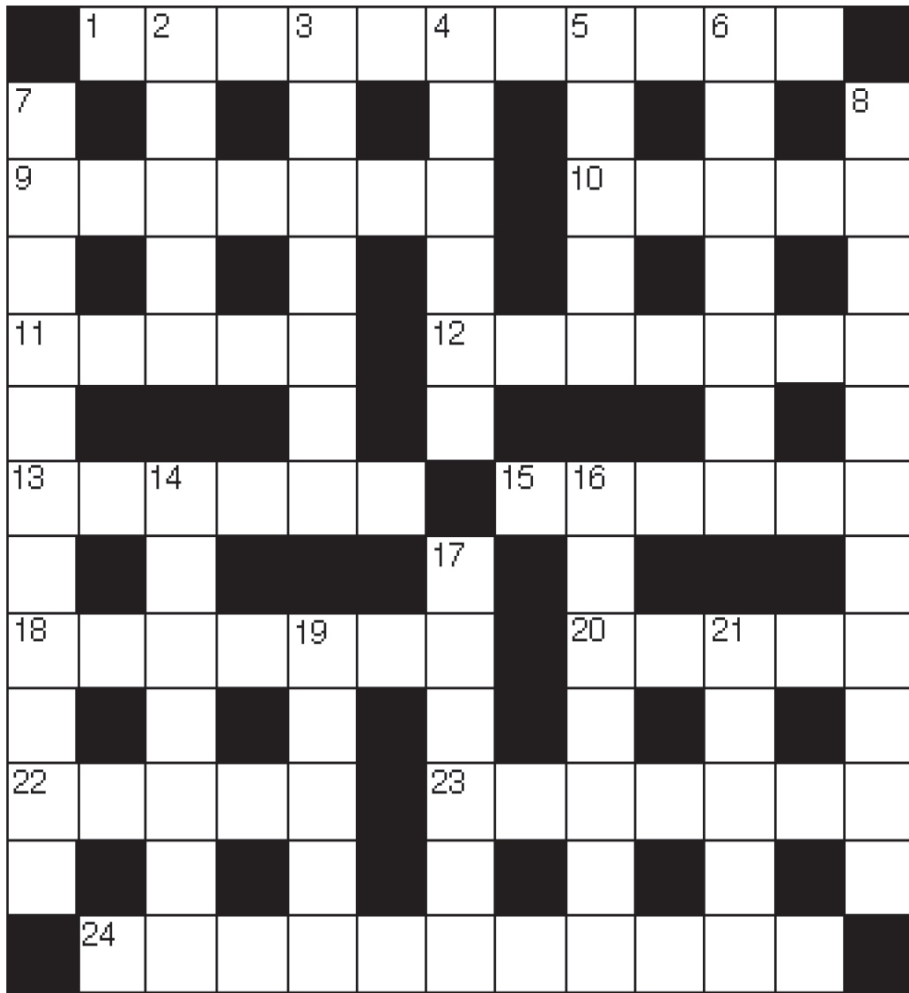
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cerebrally crust & crema

crossword break



Solutions in next week's issue.

ACROSS

1. Disappointment (11)
9. Finished work (7)
10. Guide (5)
11. Call on (5)
12. Durable (7)
13. Slim (6)
15. Equivocate (6)
18. Methodical (7)
20. Turn (5)
22. Repeated (5)
23. Chirp (7)
24. Mix (11)

DOWN

2. Ceremonies (5)
3. Extend (7)
4. Sift (6)
5. Chores (5)
6. Aperture (7)
7. Tentative (11)
8. In pieces (11)
14. Retracted (7)
16. Applause (7)
17. Method (6)
19. Scope (5)
21. Laud (5)

who, what, where, when

WHO ... shot Harry Whittington in February 2006?
WHAT ... was the title of the 2005 record album by the actor Robert Downey Jr?
WHERE ... in the North Atlantic are the districts of Cat Island, Exuma and Inagua?
WHEN ... did Maria Sharapova win her first Grand Slam singles tennis title?
WHO ... wrote the 2005 novel *Forever Odd*?
WHAT ... type of art is Banksy associated with?
WHERE ... in Africa are the cities of Sumbawanga and Arusha?
WHEN ... did the UK television presenters Richard and Judy get married?

just so

compliment

pat
eht

SAHARA

cotaxme

darn tough sudoku

So you think you're good enough at Sudoku to crack this baby? Remember, we were the first in the Gulf to bring you this bit of Japanese mayhem...so we don't kid around

Last week's sudoku

1	3	7	6	8	9	2	4	5
6	5	8	4	2	7	1	3	9
2	9	4	1	5	3	6	7	8
8	7	5	2	4	6	9	1	3
3	1	6	9	7	5	8	2	4
4	2	9	8	3	1	7	5	6
5	8	3	7	6	2	4	9	1
9	4	2	5	1	8	3	6	7
7	6	1	3	9	4	5	8	2

4	3	5	9	1	8	6	2	7
6	7	9	5	3	2	1	4	8
2	1	8	6	4	7	9	3	5
7	6	4	2	9	3	5	8	1
1	5	3	4	8	6	2	7	9
9	8	2	7	5	1	3	6	4
8	4	1	3	6	5	7	9	2
3	9	7	1	2	4	8	5	6
5	2	6	8	7	9	4	1	3

darn tough sudoku

2	9	4	1	3	5	8	7	6
8	1	3	7	4	6	9	2	5
6	5	7	2	9	8	1	4	3
9	2	6	8	1	3	7	5	4
7	3	5	9	6	4	2	8	1
1	4	8	5	7	2	3	6	9
5	7	9	6	2	1	4	3	8
3	8	2	4	5	9	6	1	7
4	6	1	3	8	7	5	9	2

Sudoku

6		3					1	
			1	2		9	3	
9	2		3				7	6
				5			9	
4					2			3
	7			9				
1	9				8		6	7
	3	2		1	7		4	
	8			4				1

Sudoku

1	6		8				5	
				2		3		
	7	8		1				4
6		4			9		1	
5				6				3
	8		2			4		9
9				7		8	3	
		5	9	8				
	1				3		7	6

Last Week's Leisure Solutions

CROSSWORD BREAK:

Across: 1 Attitude; 5 Gala; 9 Pass; 10 Assesses; 11 Guard; 12 Narrate; 13 Recrudescence; 18 Forsaken; 19 Arms; 20 Scarlet; 21 Vital; 22 Lull; 23 Admonish.

Down: 2 Traduce; 3 Insurer; 4 Disinterested; 6 Abstain; 7 Austere; 8 Metric; 13 Refusal; 14 Curtail; 15 Unable; 16 Evasion; 17 Compass.

JUST SO:

Watergate, Double cross, Cardiac arrest, A baker's dozen

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN:

Lynne Truss; Status Quo; Haiti; 1953; Starsailor; K9; Iran; 1821.

Darn Tough Sudoku

		4	2			8		7
						1	5	
		7	6		5		4	
				6		7		
	6						1	
		1		8				
	3		8		4	9		
	2	8						
4		6			1	2		

Next-gen luxury

THE newest generation of the Mercedes S-Class can now listen and talk back to its drivers and passengers, in Arabic and English.

Legendary engineering expertise and subtle understated design blend together in the seventh generation of the S-Class, the quintessential super-sedan now available in the Middle East.

The new generation of the iconic car has dived deeper into its digital transformation, with a smarter Mercedes-Benz User Experience (MBUX), which is available in 27 languages including Arabic. The optional Digital Light system analyses the road in real-time to provide a safer driving experience.

"This is where covetable luxury meets the greatest possible safety and highest level of comfort," said Mercedes-Benz Cars' chief operations officer Markus Schäfer.

"The new S-Class underpins our claim to produce the best automobile in the world."

First unveiled in 1972, the S-Class quickly became the centrepiece of the brand, bringing a heritage of craftsmanship to high society around the world.

With the seventh generation, the exterior exudes style and character, accentuated by the Digital Light headlamps.

With a short front overhang, a long wheelbase, flush-fitting door handles and a balanced rear overhang, the S-Class is designed as a classical sedan, with a touch of futurism.

Cleverly contoured surfaces and a sculpted look make this generation stand out both day and night.



MOTERING REPORT
By NAMAN ARORA
naman@gulfweekly.com

As you step inside using the retractable door handles without a key – thanks to the Keyless-Go system – the car resembles a private jet more than a four-door road beast.

Reclining and massaging rear seats, ambient lighting, heated head cushions and up to five brilliant OLED screens – separate for the driver and each of the passengers – make the S-Class the perfect long-distance companion.

Now, you and your passengers can each say "Hey Mercedes" to activate your own MBUX infotainment system and then have a chat, in English or Arabic, about the kind of drive you'd like to have.

And to help you travel comfortably while staying fit, the marquee has equipped the S-Class with the Energising Coach, which suggests appropriate vitalisation and wellness programmes based on vehicle and trip data.

The MBUX infotainment system which can be accessed from any of the OLED screens complements the Burmester 4D surround sound system and is 50 per cent more powerful, with a memory bandwidth of more than 40 gigabytes per second.

Optional new frontal airbags for rear passengers have also been introduced, along with 20 safety innovations, which hopefully you will never have to discover on the road!

The S500 4matic packs in 435 horses under the hood, capable of jumping from naught to 100 in less than five seconds. With rear-axle steering and a peak torque of 520 newton metres (Nm), the S-Class takes you where you



Exquisite exteriors

need to be, when you want to get there and how you want to arrive.

And for the environmentally conscious, this iteration of the S-Class uses more than 98kg of resource-conserving materials and another 40kg of components are made from renewable raw materials.

On the road, the highly aerodynamic design delivers top performance while ensuring optimal fuel consumption.

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March 3 - 9, 2021

Quest for more glory



SPORT REPORT

By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE
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BAHRAINI para-athlete Roba Al Omari is determined to achieve golden glory for her country this year.

The 30-year-old from Hamad Town made the kingdom proud by securing the sixth place in discus throw in the 2016 Summer Paralympics in Brazil.

Earlier this month, she secured a chance to showcase her skills at the Tokyo 2021 Summer Paralympic Games, after winning two silver medals in the Fazza International Athletics Championships for People with Determination held in Dubai.

This championship was considered a stage for the qualifying rounds for the 2021 Tokyo Games to be held from August 24 to September 5.

"While I was happy to win silver, I was more joyful about my seat in the Paralympics and this time around, I'm going for gold," said Al Omari who works in the Ministry of Youth and Sports Affairs.

"I qualified with a distance of 21m97cm when all I needed was 19m92cm.

"I am also aiming to qualify for javelin. Right now, I am short by 22cm but I still have a shot at qualifying. I have a competition in May in Switzerland and if I get a



Al Omari focused

distance of 16m88cm or more, I can qualify.

"It is such an honour to compete in the Paralympics."

According to International Paralympic Committee president Andrew Parsons, this year's Games will act as a platform to place disability at the heart of the diversity agenda and show the world why inclusion matters.

"I never felt excluded because I was always popular in school and everyone wanted to be my friend," said Al Omari.

"But, I have heard a lot of stories of those that did feel excluded. That's why every time my fellow para-athletes and I get a chance to compete on such an international scale, it shines a light on the

kingdom.

"I want people to know that we para-athletes are like everyone else. I qualified for the Paralympics just like any normal athlete that qualified for the Olympics and whether you are disabled or not, it's a big deal."

"At the moment, I am the only one that has qualified from my team but I have high hopes for the rest of the Bahraini Para Athletics team. I will be cheering them on from the sidelines in May so that they can qualify as well."

Al Omari, a paraplegic by birth, joined the Bahrain Disabled Sports Federation in 2013 during her last year at AMA University where she studied business informatics.

She had started her sporting career

in wheelchair basketball.

"I used to practise and play with boys.

"But when it was time for competitions, I would stay behind as there wasn't a girl wheelchair basketball team then.

"Now the federation is thinking of starting a team for women.

"I refused to give up and tried my hand on discus, javelin and shotput and realised I could do well!"

The rest is history.

Since then, Al Omari has taken part in several competitions clinching 25 gold, 13 silver and six bronze. Aside from Bahrain, she has competed in the UK, the UAE, Kuwait, Morocco, Indonesia, China, Brazil, Oman and South Korea.

The ambitious athlete is now

training under the guidance of Captain Hassan Muftah after the Fazza International Athletics Championships.

Performance and sports nutrition specialist Mohamed Saad of Bahrain Sports Lab has been assisting her and Mohamed Alburshaid of Fitway Kitchen has been providing her with healthy meals to keep her strength up.

Al Omari thanked Bahrain Paralympic Committee chairman Shaikh Mohammed bin Duaij Al Khalifa for making sure that the team has everything it needs to become successful.

She said: "He makes sure we are all taken care of and constantly follows up with us. He pays attention to every detail. We are so lucky to have him."

She also thanked her parents for their constant support.

"Growing up, I didn't feel any different," she said.

"My family taught me to be independent and while at first I thought they were being hard on me as a child, I realised they were pushing me to develop and grow.

"I hope to continue making them proud."

For details on Al Omari, follow @robz_01 and @bahrainnpc on Instagram.



2016 Summer Paralympics



2018 Asian Para Games in Indonesia



At the Paralympics in Brazil