November 29-December 5, 2023

BAHRAINLOURS YOURS

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SONGBIRD RETURNS

Music to our ears

SEE PAGE 2



GIFTS OF LOVE Spreading smiles SEE PAGE 3



MAKING A MARK The art of print SEE PAGES 4-5

### PHOTOGRAPHY REPORT By MAI AL-KHATIB CAMILLE mai@gdnmedia.bh

AHRAINI media specialist Ahmed Fathi Shahin, who has a passion for capturing moments in time through his lens, has snapped up a coveted award in a regional competition for his photographic prowess.

The 35-year-old's picture of members of the Bahrain Royal Endurance team and other equestrians galloping to glory has won him the Best Photography Award for 2023, granted by the Federation of Arab News Agencies.

# MCTORY IN MOTON IN

"I am honoured and humbled to be among the top photographers in the Arab world," said the *Bahrain News Agency* photographer, who currently works at the media office for His Majesty King Hamad's representative for humanitarian work and youth affairs and Royal Endurance Team captain Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa. "My image surpassed dozens of submissions from approximately 18 national Arab news agencies," he said.

"Winning this competition

was a turning point in my life. It has boosted my selfconfidence and affirmed my abilities as a photographer. "The recognition I received

from peers and professionals has further fuelled my motivation to explore new creative ideas and



capture images from unique perspectives."

A new beginning - Page 2



PULSE OF POP Music, movies & more SEE PAGE 6



## She's back!



POTLIGHT will be on Bahrain's soul singer and special needs advocate Christine Gordon tomorrow night as she takes people back in time with her musical medley from the 70s, 80s and 90s.

The mother-of-three who set up RIA Institute Bahrain — an inclusive education centre that caters to special needs students in Adliya — in 1999 with her husband Dr Emad El Attar, a chemist and fellow musician, has returned to the kingdom from the UK for a short stint...and is excited to perform at the British Club Bahrain.

"I'm really excited to be performing in a place with so many good memories," said the RIA Institute director, whose son Othmann, 27, is autistic. She has been caring for special needs children of all ages for the past 25 years and said RIA was now more focused on programmes for young adults aged 18 and above.

"I will be performing in a place I call home and the British Club has been a pillar of support to my



THROWBACK: Christine, left, with her son Othmann, third from left, and other youngsters at RIA

centre for so long. I feel so humbled that they were able to accommodate me at such short notice," added Christine who has an MBE, which stands for 'Member of the Order of the British Empire'.

"It's also so good to be back in Bahrain. I have to pass by the British Club before I go to my house. It feels so good to be greeted by many familiar faces."

Christine, who has Jamaican, Scottish, Irish, Welsh and English roots, has been spending time in the UK with her youngest daughter Mary who has been coping with a lot of anxiety.

"I need to lend my energy to her well-being," said the concerned mum who comes from a melodic background as her father Jay was a jazz musician and her mum Mary was musical.

Meanwhile, Christine said her eldest Gilan is very much like her dad, the scientist turned musician.

"I love the fact that she is living her best life with her hubby Jo in the UK," she said. "I couldn't be more proud. She really had it quite tough here but never complained."

Christine will be returning to the UK on December 5 where she supports a charity in Richmond upon Thames called Crossroads. She said their philosophy and mission statement really resonated with her and that they are a small charity dedicated to supporting the vulnerable community.

She is also pursuing her love for music whenever she can as her voice and lyrics have been used in a modern-pop single collaboration called *Fools Journey* with a UK band called Vacuum Blu. She used to entertain music lovers all over Bahrain at different fundraisers, galas and dinners.

Meanwhile, her one-hour performance at the British Club in Manama will feature an array of music including rhythm and blues and some hits from the 70s, 80s and 90s, starting at 7.30pm.

### THE PHOTO THAT CHANGED HIS LIFE

AHRAINI Ahmed Fathi Shahin worked day and night clicking nearly 200 photographs, at times even racing alongside horses, before capturing the mesmerising image that won him a top Arab honour.

The award-winning picture, *The Beginning of a Challenge*, depicts the start of an equestrian race at the Bahrain International Endurance Village in Sakhir and was taken using a Nikon D850 with a 70-200mm lens.

"It was a rainy day, with scattered clouds filling the sky and chilly winter breeze swirling around," explained Ahmed, who lives in Diyar Al Muharraq and has worked as an IT technician, multimedia designer and a web master in the past.

"I waited eagerly for the perfect moment to capture a breathtaking shot. I had been waiting for quite some time to gather the largest group of horses together. It took nearly 200 photos to finally capture the ideal moment, as I raced alongside the horses at times and they outpaced me at others.

"To achieve the desired composition, I positioned myself on the ground in the middle of the race track to capture the pyramid-like formation of the riders atop their noble steeds. The raindrops glistened on their coats, adding an



A photograph by Ahmed

ethereal touch to the scene. As they galloped gracefully, their synchronised movements created a mesmerising spectacle.

"As I gazed upon the final photograph, I felt a sense of accomplishment. It was proof that patience and perseverance could lead to capturing that one extraordinary moment that transcends time itself."

According to the Information Ministry, 'the prestigious award reflects the distinction, competence and professionalism of national cadres, which entitles them to compete at various global gatherings and clinch advanced positions, in light of the constant support the media personnel receive in order to motivate them to be more creative and distinguished in carrying out their message'.

"This award is my motivation to enter more high-level competitions in the near future, if God wills it," he added, as he thanked his *BNA* colleague and head of the photography unit Yaqoob Al Sada for encouraging him to participate. "I will work hard to achieve greater successes and develop my skills in the future, and I am excited by the opportunities ahead.

"I aim to continue embracing the art of storytelling through my work and weaving visual narratives that leave lasting impressions."

He expressed deep gratitude towards Royal Endurance Team captain Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa for allowing him and other photographers to participate in the wonderful horse activities in Bahrain and abroad.

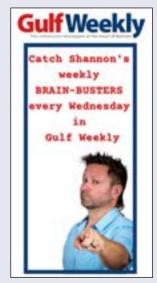
He is also thankful to Information Minister Ramzan Al Noaimi for his continued support. He has thanked all those who have contributed to the development of his skills, particularly Shaikh Nasser's media office director Tawfiq Al Salihi and *BNA*'s general director Abdullah Bouhaj.

For details, follow @ahmed\_f\_shaheen on Instagram.

#### **BRAIN-BUSTERS**

uizmaster and Radio Bahrain host Shannon Crockett, who has been entertaining people across the island with his brainteasing quiz night sessions, has offered to put Gulf Weekly readers' general knowledge to the test. Join in the fun every Wednesday with Shannon's seven brain-busters.

- 1) Which European city do croissants originate from?
- 2) What is the name of the Robin Williams movie based on a true story, where he portrays a doctor who cures children with laughter?
- 3) Which animal's baby is known as a 'cygnet'?
- 4) Who invented the colour wheel?
- 5) In Thailand, which fruit would you find with sticky rice as a dessert?
- 6) In politics, the terms



'left' and 'right' were first used during which historical event?

7) Which Arab country currently has the cheapest taxi fare in the world?

4. Isaac Newton 5. Mango 6. French Revolution 7. Egypt

1. Vienna 2. Patch Adams 3. Swan

**ANSWERS** 





# A toy to spread joy

GENEROUS group of individuals are rallying to spread merry cheer to children in need through a caring toy collection campaign, writes Mai Al-Khatib Camille.

The annual 'Festive Toy Drive' is being run by a group of volunteers working under the unregistered 'A Box of Goodness' charity for the eighth year to ensure every child has the gift of love in the form of toys this season.

"This project will benefit both local and expatriate children of all faiths in Bahrain," said Sri Lankan Malay Miranthi Dole, better known as Miro, who is the founder of A Box of Goodness and the initiative.

"The toys we collect will be shared with less fortunate children and those with learning disabilities in Bahrain, in addition to orphans. We will be accepting toy donations for children aged two to 12 and they should either be new or unused, and unwrapped.

"Last year we collected and distributed more than 200 toys and hope to be able to share more this year."

Unwrapped toy donations can be dropped off at Level Up Education Centre in Saar, Bahrain Rugby Football Club, St Christopher's Junior and Senior Schools and at



ALL SMILES: Members of the Lettuce Run ladies group, A Box of Goodness and participants at last year's charity walk.

a few other schools and locations until December 20. Interested individuals can message @aboxofgoodness on *Instagram* for drop off locations in Amwaj Islands, Juffair and Saar.

"Our aim is to spread smiles throughout Bahrain and make as many children feel loved and cherished," added Miro.

"Sharing our blessings has always been at the core of everything we do at A Box of Goodness and we intend to keep doing more work to make the world a happier and inclusive place for every child

"Children represent our future and hope, and they must be protected and provided for. It is everyone's duty in a society to make sure



REACHING OUT: Children donating toys at school

our future generations are loved, protected and cared for."

Meanwhile, Dana Zubari

who runs the popular ladies group Lettuce Run has linked up with Miro and her bighearted volunteers again to stage the Festive Charity Walk in aid of the toy drive this Saturday (December 2). It will be held at Agora by the Sea deli and bakery, located next to the Athar monument, at the King Faisal Corniche at 8.30am.

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"I hope to see all the lovely ladies, it's an amazing cause and will put so many smiles on these children's faces," said the four-time Ironman finisher, entrepreneur and social media influencer.

According to Miro, this is a free, female-only event and the public are also invited to join in for a walk, run or cycle; they only need to bring a donation of a toy.

For the past few years, the charity - which was set up in 2016 and has the support of several embassies, schools, corporations and social clubs - has been helping those in need by running food drives during Ramadan, donating food, toiletries and clothing to the needy during the pandemic, and organising birthday parties with cake and gifts for orphans.

They have also participated in beach clean-ups, collected clothing and linen for donations during winter as well as recyclable material for the Bahrain Association for Parents and Friends of the Disabled in Adliya. Funds from the recycling project then went towards purchasing wheelchairs for the needy.

For further details on the charity and event, follow @aboxofgoodness and @lettuce.run on Instagram.



**AHRAINI** sculptor and painter Jamal Abdul Rahim is showcasing his printmaking prowess in his latest exhibition in a bid to ignite people's passion for the art form.

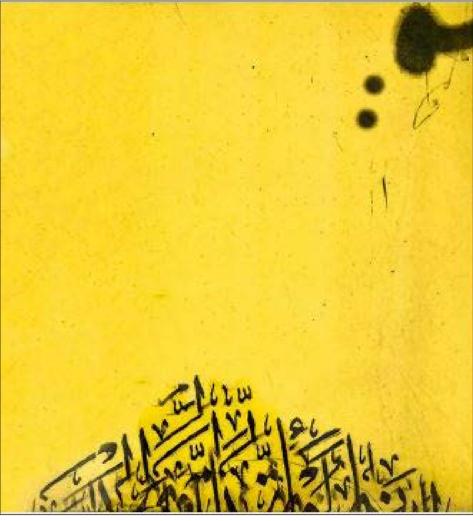
The multi-talented, selftaught artist and fatherof-three is featuring 41 pieces in a variety of sizes in 'The Art of Printmaking between Yesterday and Today' exhibit at the Bahrain Arts Society.

The event is being held under the patronage of National Arts Council chairman and society honorary president Shaikh Rashid bin Khalifa Al Khalifa.

"During 34 years of my life with the art of handmade printmaking, I have been privy to a lot of its secrets and charms," said the award-winning artist who has exhibited his work globally. His printmaking workshop, probably the largest in the Gulf, creates handmade books that have been part of many roving exhibitions all over the region.

"In this exhibition, I am presenting some of the techniques that I have been working on, in a modern vision, through my experience in this field.

"I tried to show and express my inner self and transfer all images into symbols that can be translated into the audience's souls. The exhibition creates dialogues with the art pieces as well as





psychological and emotional

During the opening night of the showcase, on November 20, Shaikh Rashid and Jamal roamed the society and discussed the works of art made using the lithography technique, woodcut or etching on copper plates, light-sensitive photopolymer material as well as monotype printing. Lithography is a planographic method of printing originally based on the immiscibility of oil and water.

"Printing is an ancient art initiated by man since the era of the caves; when man stamped his hand on

provocation."

walls," he explained. "It is the 'Art of Technique'. This art has gone through many development processes throughout the years."

Albrecht Dürer, for example, is a German painter, printmaker and theorist of the German Renaissance who played an important role in transforming printmaking from a craft into an art in the 15th century.

"He succeeded through his research to achieve complex and naturalistic designs rather than the simple illustrations that was produced during this period, continued Jamal. "This art developed with Rembrandt. He was distinguished for his use of acids for engraving and he had many experiments that led to great results."

Jamal also highlighted the works of Francisco José de Goya, a romantic painter and printmaker who was considered the most

important Spanish artist of the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

"Goya took advantage of previous etching techniques and innovated in the field of Aquatint (water-based

engraving) and dry point," he said. "In his later years, he moved to lithography (stone printing).

ople's

"It is a renewable and boundless art when it comes to technique; it coincides





### Weekly



# mprimt souls

with all new technical developments, thus enriching it. Dealing with this kind of art requires a continuous follow-up of all the new developments in this field.

"We can say that most

modern life sciences depend on printing technology, starting from the mobile devices in our hands to transmitting images from outer space.

"The technique is not







just restricted to the tools used, printing provides the artist with vast freedom to innovate and renovate his own tools to accomplish all the works of art in his mind with new concepts.

"Hence I showcased what I have achieved over the years working with different mediums of handmade artwork printmaking."

While he doesn't have any favourite pieces, one that is quite close to his heart is a large scale (300cmx500cm) Palestine-inspired print called *From the River to the Sea* 

According to Jamal, most of the visitors at his opening night were related to the art movement in our society and he has even received a lot of people after the opening day...with hopefully more to come as the exhibition runs until December 3.

"I hope more people will enjoy the exhibition," added Jamal who participated in his first joint exhibition at Al Hala Club in Muharraq in 1987.

Jamal also paints using paper and pencil, canvas, oil colours, acrylic and mixed media.

For his handmade art prints, he uses acid-free paper, special types of ink and a press machine. He has 36 handmade books and artistic collections.

For his sculptures, he uses different types of stones,

including marble and granite, as well as bronze.

He has participated in 31 individual exhibitions in

Bahrain and 30 Arab and international showcases.

Jamal has also taken part

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in many joint exhibitions, including Biennales and Triennials and has achieved 14 national and international prizes.

Not one to rest on his laurels, Jamal is currently working on a different project — a jewellery collection inspired by his sculptures and some of the poems he uses in his handmade books — which will be released soon.

Jamal is thankful for the support of his wife, Margaret Kamal, and his children Mariam, 13, Ikar, 10, and Rita, nine, as well as to Shaikh Rashid, his friends and the Bahrain Arts Society.

For further details on his work, follow @jamalarahim\_official on Instagram



BONDS: Jamal with his family

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### Pulse of Pop and particular production of the pr

AROUND THE WORLD IN MUSIC, TV, BOOKS AND MORE - BY JULIA CASSANO



### RIGHT NOTES

REATIVE Jon
Batiste has
captured one
of the busiest years
of his life in his new
documentary American
Symphony, which is
set to be released on
Netflix today.

Batiste was followed for seven months by Academy award-winning director Matthew Heinman – filming over 1,500 hours of footage for the one hour and 40 minute documentary, which showcases the highs and lows of his life in the last year.

The film depicts the troubling journey he and his partner, Suleika Jaouad, went through after finding out she was diagnosed with cancer – shortly after he was nominated for 11 Grammys.

He spoke about his own journey, navigating between the public and private lives, especially during his partner's illness and the world expecting him to be happy at all times.

In an interview with *Billboard* he said, "It's really something I've struggled with for a while. And I value parts of it as well – the idea of being able to bring folks a sense of happiness in dark times as an entertainer."

"But in general, it's been a struggle to navigate the humanity of being all those things. A lot of times, I think that's the case, which is one of the reasons why such an invasive film like this, and the vulnerability required of our family to share what you see, is something we wanted to move forward with," he added.

It was also revealed that Batiste's new ballad *It*Never Went Away will be featured in his documentary, telling the tale of enduring love between him and his partner.

### YOU KNOW T'IS THE SEASON WHEN...



in the festive spirit as Mariah Carey's All I Want For Christmas is You has made it to number one on Global Spotify list this week.

Confirming that the

holiday season is officially

here, another one of Carey's songs holds a strong position in second place on the global list, alongside Brenda Lee's Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree - which ranks in fourth.

Both of Mariah's songs

had made their way into the charts at number 37 and 40 in the UK Top 40 two weeks ago, even though it wasn't until the third week of November last year that a Christmas song appeared in the UK's charts.



TOGETHER: Batiste and his partner



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### **MotoringWeekly**

The top motoring and motorsport news



ED Bull principal Christian Horner joked after Formula One's seasonending Abu Dhabi Grand Prix that, with his team winning 21 of 22 races in 2023, there was room for improvement next year.

If the quip raised only a hollow laugh after the most dominant season ever, with triple world champion Max Verstappen setting a string of records including 10 wins in a row and 19 in total, it was because it contained an underlying truth.

Red Bull will hope to defend their titles in 2024, when there will be a record 24 races, with an even better

"This car is going to go down in the history books as a very, very special car," Horner said of the RB19. "To have won 21 races out of the 22, just missing out on Singapore, it leaves room for improvement.

"You're always looking to find marginal gains," he continued.

"It's never enough. We know our opponents, this will have motivated them more than ever to come back at us hard and nothing stands still in this sport. Everything moves so quickly.

"You could see as we weren't developing, the opposition coming closer and closer. We're going to hopefully take all of these lessons out of this car and apply it into our 20th car, RB20, next year and try and defend these two titles."

The big question on everyone's lips is how much their rivals can raise their game, as they surely will.

The final gulf between Red Bull and closest rival Mercedes was staggering - more points than the oncedominant second-placed team, who failed to win a race for the first time since 2011, managed in total.

Verstappen alone, with a record 575 points, scored more than Mercedes' 409.

Sergio Perez was eclipsed by his team mate, with plenty of speculation about his Red Bull future earlier in the year, yet still finished overall runner-up.

"He'll take a bit of time this winter to reflect on where he needs to improve and I'm sure he'll come back fighting next year," said Horner of the Mexican.

So dominant was Verstappen on Sunday, winning from pole with fastest lap, that he even delayed his final pitstop to ensure he became the first F1 driver to lead 1,000 racing laps in a season.

"There is a Mount Everest to climb in order to catch up with Red Bull," Mercedes

### RECORD \$10.6M ENTRY FEE IN 2024

AX Verstappen's recordsetting 2023 campaign is going to result in a record-setting fee for his Red Bull team.

Verstappen claimed his third world championship and racked up a record 19 victories in 22 races this year. With Red Bull also claiming the constructors' championship, the team is facing a Formula 1 entry fee of more than \$10 million for 2024.

The figure is based on F1 regulations that include a weighted fee for teams and their drivers based on the previous year's performance.

By accumulating 860 points this year, Red Bull's 2024 fee is projected to be \$10.6 million - up from the \$9.49m the powerhouse team paid in 2023. The majority of that was 'earned' by Verstappen, who accumulated a record 575 points. Teammate Sergio Perez finished second with 285.

Meanwhile, Mercedes saw its fee reduced despite finishing second in the constructors' championship because it accumulated fewer total points than in 2022.

According to *Speedcafe.com*, the biggest percentage increase belongs to Aston Martin. After paying just over \$1.46m for its 2023 entry, the team is facing a rise to \$3.57m for next year -

an increase of 244 per cent.

On the flip side is Haas, which finished last in the championship race. The team's fee will decrease 18pc to just under \$1.29m. In all, the FIA will bring in \$34m in entry fees for the 2024 season.



CELEBRATION: Verstappen with second placed Ferrari's Charles Leclerc and third placed Mercedes' George Russell

team boss Toto Wolff told reporters on Sunday.

His seven-times world champion Lewis Hamilton agreed: "Red Bull won by 17 seconds and they have not touched the car since August or July, so you can pretty much guess where they are going to be next year."

The next major rule change is not until 2026 but Formula One boss Stefano Domenicali pointed to McLaren, the most improved team after an uncompetitive start, as an example of the jump that could be made.

He also looked at the

qualifying timesheets for further support.

Despite their dominance, Red Bull took 'only' 14 poles from 22 races. The difference was that Ferrari's Charles Leclerc failed to win from any of his five while Verstappen triumphed 12 times out of 12. "You saw yesterday in (first) qualifying, 20 cars in (separated by) less than one second. So in qualifying we are very, very close. Of course race pace is different," Domenicali said.

"I think this will be the major thing we are going to see different next year."

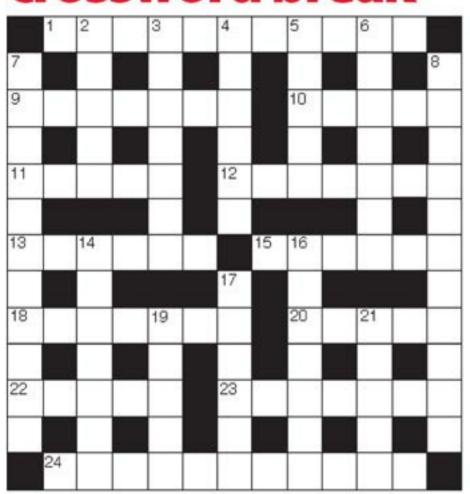
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### **Time Out**



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### 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. Tum (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

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

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darn tough sudoku

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#### 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

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN:

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

Darn Tough Sudoku

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