

Collective for a cause



COMMUNITY REPORT
By MELISSA NAZARETH
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A NEW community-based platform is hoping to raise awareness on humanitarian causes by fostering creative arts, and their first campaign shines a spotlight on the plight of Palestinians in war-torn Gaza.

Amana Creative Collective was founded by Bahrainis, Maryam Abdulla, Fatima Al Saad, Maha Al Sahhaf and Tamadher Al Fahal and Palestinian-Saudi Ramah Al Hussein. While they come from different professional backgrounds, including art, academics and design, they all share a passion to make the world a better place.

Maryam, 37, is an interior design consultant and has been volunteering on social and educational projects for 15 years, Fatima, 40, is an educator and writer, Maha, 38, is an assistant director at Kanoo Museum where she curates creative projects and 35-year-old Ramah based in the kingdom is a freelance painter specialising in contemporary art.

"Amana is a campaign-based collective and our first set of initiatives is focused on the Palestinian cause," Tamadher, an assistant professor at the University of Bahrain, told *Gulf Weekly*. "We aspire to support other regional and international causes, including war-stricken Sudan and the crises-afflicted Democratic Republic of the Congo in the future."

Amana is Arabic for 'guardians of the community, custodians of history and the ones who foster a safe space for expression'. It's the plural of the word Ameen, which is used to refer to someone faithful, honest and trustworthy.

Earlier this month, Amana



LEADING THE WAY: Tamadher, right, and Maryam, centre, overseeing the workshop

partnered with Al Riwaq Art Space to host its first public interaction at The Nest, an annual festival curated by the gallery in Gufool. The event featured an interactive art installation, a kite-making workshop for children and a movie screening, raising awareness about the crisis in Gaza and providing people of all ages a platform to express solidarity with the cause.

"We are so happy to see such proactive participation from the local community in this initiative," Tamadher said. "It was heartwarming to watch how emotionally invested people are with Gaza's situation. It's an honour to provide a platform for them to express their thoughts on the cause," the 37-year-old added.

The event also featured the screening of a movie, *Gaza is Our Home*, produced by Palestinian filmmaker Monear Shaer, depicting the sufferings of victims of the war.

Born in the US to parents who were themselves born and raised in the besieged Gaza Strip, Monear has witnessed first-hand 'the horrific differences between the privileged and the oppressed'. Devastated by the loss of 33 of his

family members and 150 more trapped in Gaza, he quit his job as a real estate videographer in November last year and set out to produce the film, which released in January.

"I am honoured to have been a part of the Amana initiative and was pleasantly surprised at the engagement of the audience and the depth of the questions asked," Monear, who had a live online Q&A session with the audience after the screening of his film, said.

"I wanted to unveil the untold and heart-wrenching realities faced by my own family. The Amana collective gave me an international outlet to have my own family's voice heard. It's

through these kinds of events that all people can come together, and share our art, share our stories, share our laughter, share our tears, share our pain, and share our humanity."

Al Riwaq representative Kawthar Al Arab also backed Amana's cause.

"The essence of The Nest lies in providing a platform and a meeting point for artists and the art community, therefore, it was a great pleasure for us to support Amana with their initiative, and to help create social impact through the art, for a cause we all believe in," Kawthar said.

Amana is planning more events in support of Palestine, including an



CREATIVE: Fatima with children during the kite-making workshop at The Nest



SOLIDARITY: Monear at an international screening of his film

independent week-long activation in May, featuring the works of 50 local and regional artists.

"We will showcase a diverse collection of artworks, from paintings to interactive installations, all focused on narrating stories of resilience from Gaza, honouring their martyrs, and manifesting a liberated Palestine," Tamadher added.

"The event will also include discussion 'circles' that offer a safe space for expression and address the importance of art in narrating history and advocating for social justice.

"Furthermore, there will be a market with products developed by the collective that are humanitarian, ethical, and community-centred."

While the revenue generated from the events is at present primarily allocated for covering the costs associated with the activities and the provision of necessary materials, Amana is exploring opportunities to work alongside charities in Bahrain or other entities that facilitate aid delivery or employ alternative methods to extend support.

For more information, follow @we.are.amana on Instagram.



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Celebration of diversity

BOOK REPORT
By MELISSA NAZARETH
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A CHILDREN'S book celebrating the differences and beauty of people is enthralling readers in Bahrain's multicultural society.

Former Bahrain resident and author Dilraz Kunnumal's creation, *We Are All Different, We Are All Amazing*, features lessons in diversity.

The 35-page book explores themes such as inclusivity, empathy and respect, inspired by Dilraz's own experiences as a mother to eight-year-old 'Ninja' Ayan and two-and-a-half-year-old Amara 'Bee' who feature in the story.

"I had been nurturing the idea for a while before I decided to write it," the 37-year-old told *GulfWeekly*. "I then self-published it, working with a team of illustrators called TullipStudio."

Dilraz has included a wide range of ideas to make a vast topic like 'diversity' as comprehensive as possible and hopes it becomes a starting point for conversations on the subject.

"There is diversity and beauty all around us, from the colour of our skin and shape of our bodies to the language we speak and religion we believe in. I have also included differences in learning abilities and neurodivergence. There is a multitude of areas we need to understand and talk about. We need to celebrate these differences while reiterating that we are all still essentially the same," the Indian communications manager working for Texas AM University in Qatar said.

An excerpt from the book reads:

"Some people can understand things quickly, Some take more time to learn and understand.

Some people just think differently,

People should not be laughed at, no matter how their minds work'.

We Are All Different, We Are All Amazing, Dilraz's third book and second children's book, comes

FAMILY: Dilraz with Sujid, Ayan and Amara



close at the heels of her release last December – *Drops of Nurture: True Stories of Love, Resilience & Community* records the breastfeeding journeys of 30 mothers, their ups and downs and strengths and vulnerabilities.

The author's debut title *See You Soon*, which hit shelves in November 2020, focuses on separation anxiety between mother and child.

"I write based on my life as a parent, my experiences, things I have learned and unlearned, and want my

children to know. And all these topics are very close to my heart, I am making resources for families like my own that will help them navigate these intricate subjects," she said.

"While I wrote the book and had a clear idea of what I wanted it to look like, the credit for building the characters, including the representations of my own children, goes to the artists at TullipStudio who did a fabulous job in bringing my vision to life," she added.

Born and raised in Bahrain,

Dilraz was exposed to cultural diversity from the start.

A 'global citizen', she believes that differences must not only be respected but also celebrated.

"In this day and age, it is absolutely important that we teach our children the value of diversity. Not just how our differences make us unique and incredible, but also how we are similar in so many ways. That's what makes our society amazing. Respect and acceptance are non-negotiable even if we



MILESTONE: Dilraz with her published works

look or talk or eat or work or think differently, and that's the crux of this book," she explained.

Dilraz laid the foundation of her writing career in the Kingdom where she attended The Indian School Bahrain. In 2014, she moved to Qatar where she lives with her husband Sujid Rehman, a marketing professional.

Motherhood inspired her to start her blog Mommy Dil

where she continues to share her journey and experiences. Dilraz visits Bahrain at least twice a year to spend time with her parents, Abdul Rahman Kunnummal and Jameela, both of whom are active in the local Indian community.

Dilraz's books are available to purchase on Amazon and Flipkart.

For more details, follow @mommydil on Instagram.

BRAIN-BUSTERS

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

1. Which number month of the Islamic calendar is Ramadan?
2. What does "O" in Irish surnames mean?
3. 'Green Street' is a road in London associated with which football team?
4. On a Monopoly board, what words are written alongside the jail square?
5. Zulu is the most spoken language in which country?
6. What is the name of



the longest river in Ireland?
7. What are male honey bees called?

1. 9th
2. Grandson of
3. West Wam United
4. Just Visiting
5. South Africa
6. Shannon River
7. Drone

ANSWERS



UNVEILED: The new book cover

Feast of flavours



GOURMET REPORT
By JAYNE HOUGHTON
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AS I stepped into the enchanting Masaya Pavilion by STC at The Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain, I was immediately captivated by the vibrant Moroccan-inspired décor, with its intricate tile work, plush seating adorned with colourful cushions, and ornate lanterns creating an ambience of elegance and cultural richness.

As I joined fellow guests in breaking the fast during Iftar, I was struck by the warmth and togetherness that embodied the spirit of community, where all come together to celebrate the holy month of Ramadan. The invite promised an evening of culinary delights and communal celebration, and it certainly did not disappoint.

As I made my way through the pavilion, I was greeted by the tantalising aromas of an array of dishes from both local and international cuisines orchestrated by The Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain executive chef Joergen Sodemann and his team.

Starting my culinary journey, I was drawn to the live carving station, where succulent slices of tender meat were expertly carved and served alongside traditional accompaniments; the whole roasted prime rib with shallot sauce melted like butter. Continuing to peruse the bountiful selection of food on offer; the aroma of spices filled the air, as I breathed in the atmospheric wonder of the transformed space.

Next, I found myself indulging in the rich and aromatic flavours of Middle Eastern cuisine at the traditional Gulf ouzi and Bahraini kebab stations. The ouzi, a fragrant rice dish with tender lamb meat and aromatic spices, was a true delight for the senses. Meanwhile, the Bahraini kebabs, grilled to perfection, offered a taste of local tradition and culinary expertise.

No Ramadan experience

MOREISH:
Turkish
doner lokum



VARIETY: An assortment of sushi



would be complete without savouring the signature Moroccan tagine, a hearty stew bursting with exotic spices and tender meats. Each spoonful was a symphony of flavours, transporting me to the bustling markets of Marrakech with its vibrant and aromatic profile.

For those craving a taste of international fare, the homemade Italian pasta and ravioli stations offered a welcome respite. The pasta was cooked to perfection

and served with an array of delectable sauces, while the ravioli with savoury fillings provided a comforting and satisfying dining experience.

Fish-lovers need not fret - I sampled a selection of exquisite and sublime sushi, with a wide spectrum of flavours.

Adding a touch of spice to the evening were the Mexican quesadilla and burrito stations, where flavourful fillings and perfectly grilled tortillas were expertly

prepared. After indulging in the savoury delights, I saved room for dessert and I advise anyone who is visiting to do the same! The date towers, mini desserts, cakes and the range of Turkish doner lokum (Turkish delight with various fillings) are an incredible feast for the eyes, and undeniably moreish.

One of the standout features was the live 'croffle' counter, where skilled chefs crafted freshly made croissant-waffle hybrids right before my eyes;

they were crispy and fluffy, with toppings ranging from sweet to savoury. I opted for a decadent combination of chocolate, mascarpone, and candied hazelnuts, perfectly capping off an evening of culinary exploration.

With each dish meticulously crafted and every detail thoughtfully curated, The Ritz-Carlton delivered an unforgettable dining experience that transcended traditional expectations.

I left feeling nourished in both body and spirit, grateful for the opportunity

to partake in such a memorable celebration.

Guests can join the breaking of the fast, Iftar, from sunset to 8pm, for BD35, and the Ghabga from 9pm to 2am for BD38.

Special rates are available for groups of 30 and more.

For more information, visit ritzcarlton.com/bahrain or call 17586499.



Scan the QR code to explore the Ritz-Carlton Ramadan pavilion

DECADENT: The dessert station at the pavilion



SWEET TREAT: A chef at the feast prepares an order of the croffle

DELICACY:
Traditional
Gulf ouzi



CARVING STATION: Whole roasted prime rib with shallot sauce

Leisure Scene

What's on guide by
Julia Cassano



GLOBAL CUISINE ON RITZ-CARLTON MENU

FOR the ultimate Ramadan experience head down to The Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain, where an array of culinary delights will leave you wanting more.

Masaya Pavilion by stc is offering guests numerous live stations, including an array of doners, Arabic ouzi, Bahraini kebab, homemade Italian pasta and ravioli, Mexican quesadilla, among other Arabic and international specialities.

Each offering has been curated to showcase the rich and diverse flavours



FLAVOURFUL: La Med's Great Indian Iftar Thali

of local and international cuisine, from sunset to 8pm, for BD35, and Ghabga from 9pm to 2am for BD38.

Meanwhile, guests can discover the true flavours of India at La Med's Great Indian Iftar Thali.

Each meal features a colourful array of enticing fares, from aromatic curries to tender tandoori and fragrant rice dishes, all paired perfectly with a glass of refreshing lassi.

It costs BD24 per person, including one glass of lassi, from Tuesday to Sunday, sundown to 8pm.

For a sweet Ramadan treat, enjoy The Ritz Gourmet Lounge and Lobby Lounge's creamy, rich cheesecakes.

Don't miss out on this limited-time offer as you savour delicious cheesecakes during the holy month for BD7, from



RICH: Cheesecake at The Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain

sundown until 11pm.

For more information or bookings, contact

17586425 or email rc.bahrz.restaurant.reservations@ritzcarlton.com.

SPECTACULAR RAMADAN FEAST AT ICONIC FOUR SEASONS TENT

CELEBRATE the spirit of Ramadan at Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay's iconic Ramadan Tent.

An array of local and international dishes, curated by executive chef Leonardo Di Clemente and his team, will have your taste buds dancing with joy. Guests can expect Bahraini dishes such as lamb ouzi and machboos, alongside international cooking stations offering Lebanese cuisine, Japanese, Moroccan, Mexican, Italian and more.

Iftar costs BD36 per person, inclusive of still or sparkling water, soft drinks, juices, Arabic coffee and Moroccan tea, and BD19 for children aged six to 12. Children below six can dine on the hotel's compliments.

Ghabga costs BD39 per person with Ramadan juices, and children aged six to 12 dine for BD20. It's complimentary for children below six years.

Guests can elevate their Ramadan experience with the tent's exclusive offer of top-of-the-line service and a full table of the best selections of mezze and mains.

The special experience, crafted by Chef Clemente, offers visitors a full table-waited service with elegant tableware, alongside set menus and a dedicated butler for ultimate comfort.

The exquisite dining affair costs BD55 per person, everyday from 9pm to 2am.

Tables can be booked for a minimum of four guests.

Meanwhile, guests can relax and melt away their stress and tension at The Spa, which offers them a 30 per cent discount on all treatments, from 7am until midnight, during Ramadan.

For more information or bookings, contact 17115500 or 17115070.



DELICACIES: An array of local and international dishes on the menu



LUMINOUS: Ramadan Tent



TASTY: A myriad of dishes at Hilton Bahrain

ARABIAN NIGHTS EXPERIENCE AT HILTON BAHRAIN

EXPERIENCE the magic and wonder of Ramadan at Hilton Bahrain's Arabian Nights.

The one-of-a-kind dining affair features a lavish buffet, live cooking stations and entertainment.

Guests will also have the chance to win exciting prizes. Iftar, from sunset until 8pm, costs BD22 net for adults and BD11 for children aged six to 12.

Ghabga, from 10pm to 1am on weekdays, and 10pm to 2am on weekends, costs BD22 net per person, and children aged six to 12 dine for BD11. Children below five dine with the hotel's compliments for both events.

For more information or bookings, contact 33692013.

MUSICAL EVENING

ARAMADAN musical evening aiming to preserve the ancient Islamic heritage is set to take place on Monday.

The Alhashemyah Band will perform at the Shaikh Ebrahim Bin Mohammed Al Khalifa Centre for Culture and Research, from 9pm to 10pm.

Since its launch in 1994, the band has performed at hundreds of religious and national celebrations, and works to consolidate Islamic meanings and concepts through the art of authentic chanting.



MELODIOUS: The Alhashemyah Band



SUMPTUOUS: Delicious dishes and tea

CREATE LASTING MEMORIES AT KHAIMAT AL KHALEEJ

THE Gulf Hotel Bahrain Convention and Spa is welcoming visitors to its spectacular Ramadan Tent, Khaimat Al Khaleej.

Get together with your family and friends and indulge in an array of spectacular dishes and cuisines, all while enjoying a beautiful ambience and live entertainment. Iftar costs BD24 per person while Ghabga costs BD22 per person on weekdays and BD24 per person on weekends.

Meanwhile, ladies can



escape the ordinary and embrace the spirit of Ramadan at Khaimat Al Khaleej's Ladies Night, where every Tuesday, they can dig into delectable dishes and create lasting memories for BD16 net per person.

For more information or bookings, call 17713000.



RGC'S MYSTICAL CHARM

ROYAL Golf Club (RGC) has lined up a one-of-a-kind Ramadan celebration, inspired by the mystical *Alf Leila wa Leila* (One Thousand and One Nights) theme.

Enjoy the culinary journey and explore the true flavours of the Holy Month as the club offers an array of delectable cuisines - from traditional Arabian delicacies to

international dishes that will leave you wanting more.

Live Arabic music will fill the air, creating a festive and vibrant atmosphere for everyone to enjoy.

Iftar, from sunset to 8.30pm, costs BD15 net per person, and Ghabga, from 9.30pm to 1am costs BD15 net per person.

For bookings, call 39007546.



BAHRAIN TIES: Millat holding the film's censor certificate in Chennai city in Tamil Nadu



ACCOLADE: Millat shares his success with N Rangaswamy

Making a mark

INTernational record-holder and former Bahrain resident Millat Ahmad is celebrating two new accolades with his debut film *Aanthai*, which was released last month, writes Melissa Nazareth.

The creative has appeared in the *London Book of World Records* and *India Book of World Records* for being the first in the history of Tamil cinema to have managed 10 roles in the same project.

Running for 95-minutes, the film will showcase Millat's many talents as actor, story writer, screenplay writer, dialogue writer, lyricist, singer, dubbing artist, choreographer, producer and co-director. Further, he has also been recognised as the 'first achiever in the film industry from Puducherry'.

The Tamil movie (Tamil is the official language of the Indian state of Tamil Nadu), is being aired now in Puducherry and will soon be available worldwide.

"When I started working on the project as a co-director with Naveen Manikandan, I was in charge of just story, screenplay, dialogue and lyrics," the former video shop owner who used

to live on Zubarah Avenue in Bahrain told *GulfWeekly*.

"One day, while we were recording a song, music director SR Ram asked me to deliver a dialogue which is part of the track. He was so impressed that he decided to retain it.

"One thing led to another and I ended up taking on the other roles as well. I had invested so much of my time and emotion in the film by then that I decided to produce it when the initial producers had to discontinue," the 52-year-old revealed.

Belonging to the psycho crime genre, the film brings to light the important topic of women's safety. It's named *Aanthai*, which means 'owl' in Tamil, because most of the story is set during the night.

"The plot features a couple who are on their honeymoon at a guest house. What happens when a psycho rapist who has been laying waste to the city ends up at the guest house? It's a suspense thriller, which will keep you on the edge of your seat," he added.

"A major highlight for me was when Puducherry chief minister N Rangaswamy congratulated me and blessed the film to be a big success,"

the healthcare professional who currently lives in Singapore with his family, often travelling to India, added.

Millat's love for story telling goes back to his college days when he worked as an assistant director in Chennai for six years. In 2021, he secured a spot in Kalam's World Records for the World's Shortest Story, comprising just five words.

Despite living in India and now in Singapore, Millat fondly remembers Bahrain and how organising events with the support of Tamil Social and Cultural Association, under the leadership of former president A Ponnuchamy, helped him lay the foundation for his many creative pursuits and achievements.

"I would love to visit Bahrain again soon," he said.

Millat's other accolades include a Guinness World Record as volunteer for the largest hospital reunion in 2016, Kalam's World Records for having the most title credits in a short film in 2021, Majulah World Records as event director of the world's smallest Tamil debate, and more.

For details, follow @ahmad.millat on Instagram.

FREEDOM SO SWEET!

BAHRAIN CINEMA CLUB – Wednesday, March 20, 7pm, Juffair

Film: *Under the Fig Trees*

Director: Erige Sehiri

Duration: One hour and 32 minutes

Cast: Fidé Fdhili, Feten Fdhili, Ameni Fdhili, Leila Ouhebi, Abdelhak Mrabti, Firas Amri.

Plot: On a hot summer day, a crew of workers – men and women, young and old – arrive at dawn at a picturesque fig orchard in northwest Tunisia. The young women steal precious moments from the foreman's watchful gaze. They joke, argue, debate, gossip, flirt, all the while painting an unhurried but riveting portrait of everyday life in the rural society, where class, gender, and circumstance often don't allow for such personal freedoms. In 2022, the film was nominated for Best Film by an Emerging Director Award at the Munich Film Festival.

For details, call Huda Tabbara on 39682323.



YOUTH: Untethered emotions abound on screen

Pulse of Pop

AROUND THE WORLD IN MUSIC, TV, BOOKS AND MORE - BY NAMAN ARORA

THE latest Netflix offering, *Chicken Nugget*, is not your typical Korean drama.

Premiering tomorrow, the show takes viewers on a bizarre yet hilarious journey, following Choi Min-ah, a woman who gets transformed into a chicken nugget.

The premise is as absurd as it sounds.

Min-ah, the daughter of a company president, stumbles upon a strange machine at her father's workplace. Mistaking it for a fatigue-relief device, she steps inside and undergoes an unexpected metamorphosis.

Enter Go Baek-joong, an intern at the company who also happens to harbour a secret crush on Min-ah. Witnessing the transformation, Baek-joong teams up with Min-ah's bewildered father, Choi Seon-man, to reverse the wacky effects of the machine.

Their quest, filled with slapstick humour and crazy situations, forms the core of the show.

Chicken Nugget isn't just about the comedic gold of a woman-turned-nugget. The show's director, Lee Byeong-heon, known for helming the record-breaking Korean film *Extreme Job*, promises a deeper layer.

As Baek-joong and Seon-man scramble to find a cure, they uncover 'unexpected secrets' within the company, hinting at a potential corporate conspiracy.

And meanwhile, Min-ah, now a perfectly golden chicken nugget, communicates through squeaks and worried expressions while her frantic father tries to shield her from hungry office workers.

The series is based on a popular webtoon of the same name, making for a built-in fanbase eager to see the quirky story come to life.

The trailer, already generating buzz online, showcases the show's visual humour.

Actress Park Min-young takes on the role of Min-ah, with veteran actor Ryu Seung-ryong portraying her flustered father.

Ahn Jae-hong, known for his comedic timing, brings Baek-joong's awkward affection to life.

Early reviews suggest *Chicken Nugget* is a laugh-out-loud riot, perfectly capturing the absurdity of the situation.

Critics also point to the show's potential for clever social commentary,



FUN DRAMA: The show is set to premiere tomorrow

IT'S FRESH OUT OF THE FRYER!

exploring themes of corporate greed and the pressures of modern life, all under the guise of a woman trapped in a chicken nugget's body.

Whether you're a K-drama aficionado or simply seeking a lighthearted escape, *Chicken Nugget* promises a unique blend of humour and intrigue.

So, prepare for some side-splitting moments and a dash of mystery when this clucking good show premieres on Netflix.

WES Anderson, a director known for his whimsical style, finally claimed his own Academy Award at the 2024 ceremony, last weekend.

After a string of eight nominations over the years, his 39-minute short film, *The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar* took home the prize for Best Live Action Short Film.

The film, based on Roald Dahl's 1977 story of the same name, bested other contenders like *The After*, *Invincible*, *Knight of Fortune*, and *Red, White and Blue*. Interestingly, Wes was absent from the ceremony when his win was announced.

In a recent interview, Wes had revealed his perspective on short films. He explained that while some are purely for his own enjoyment, others hold the same weight as his feature-length movies. He categorised the Roald Dahl adaptation as a project he invested immense energy into, similar to his full-length films.



ACTION: Benedict Cumberbatch as Henry Sugar and Ralph Fiennes as the policeman in *The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar*

WES FOR THE WIN!

Wes' journey to Oscar glory began in 2001 with his first nomination for *The Royal Tenenbaums* in the Best Original Screenplay category. Over the years, he received nods for Best Animated Feature (*Fantastic Mr Fox*), Best Original Screenplay (*Moonrise Kingdom*), and Best Animated Feature again (*Isle of Dogs*). His most decorated year was 2014 with *The Grand Budapest*

Hotel, which garnered nominations for Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Original Screenplay.

Although this is his first personal Oscar win, it's not his first association with an award-winning film. *The Grand Budapest Hotel* itself swept four Oscars in 2014, including Best Original Score, Best Production Design, Best Makeup and Hairstyling, and Best Costume Design.

DREAMY MELODIES

POP superstar Ariana Grande has garnered significant praise for her latest studio album, *Eternal Sunshine*, released on March 8, coinciding with International Women's Day.

She unveiled the album's lead single, *yes, and?* in January, which quickly ascended to the top of the charts. The singer reportedly opted against releasing further singles beforehand, encouraging fans to experience the entire project at once.

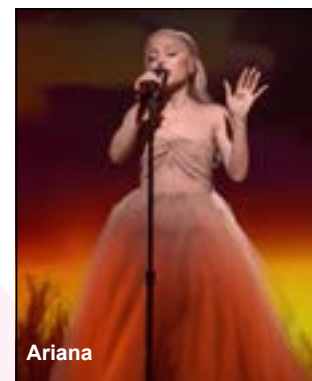
This approach appears to be successful, with critics commending the album's thematic coherence and emotional resonance.

Eternal Sunshine reportedly delves into themes of heartbreak, resilience, and ultimately, finding new love.

Reviewers suggest a departure from her signature pop sound, with a shift towards a dreamier, more introspective atmosphere.

Tracks like *Don't Wanna Breakup Again* hint at past relationship struggles, while *Eternal Sunshine* supposedly ushers in a new era of optimism.

Fans have mirrored the



Ariana

critical enthusiasm. Social media platforms are filled with positive reactions, with many praising the album's vulnerability and raw emotion. One fan lauded it on *Twitter*, stating, "Ariana dropping her best album on International Women's Day is so real."

Another described it as 'her dreamiest sounding album yet'. There's even a burgeoning online petition urging her to create a visual companion piece to complement the music.

With this album, Ariana appears to have pushed her artistic boundaries and forged a deeper connection with her fan base. While potential award recognition remains to be seen, one thing is certain: Ariana is basking in the warm glow of *Eternal Sunshine*, as it enjoys widespread critical and commercial success.

A CAPTIVATING ADVENTURE

ACCLAIMED author Téa Obreht dives into a fantastical future with her latest novel, *The Morningside*, which will be released next Tuesday.

Set in a flood-ravaged version of a coastal city, the story follows young Silvia as she navigates a mysterious new life.

Joining her mother and enigmatic Aunt Ena in a once-luxurious high-rise named The Morningside, Silvia grapples with a shrouded past and a captivating present.

The building itself holds secrets, with a reclusive artist dwelling in the penthouse amidst whispers of a hidden world.

Téa, known for her magical realist touch in novels like *The Tiger's Wife*, weaves reality and fantasy in *The Morningside*.

Silvia, yearning for connection, explores the



transformed city with a new friend, Mila, venturing into forbidden areas after dark.

As Silvia becomes obsessed with the enigmatic Bezi Duras, the line between myth and truth blurs.

The 304-page book promises to be a captivating blend of coming-of-age, mystery, and a touch of the extraordinary.

Téa fans and readers seeking a captivating adventure won't want to miss this.

MotoringWeekly

The top motoring and motorsport news

Wolff's wish!

THE Mercedes team principal has expressed his admiration for Max Verstappen, suggesting a potential future partnership with the Silver Arrows.

However, Toto Wolff, emphasises that his immediate focus is on rectifying the team's car issues before considering driver lineups for the 2025 season.

Verstappen's future at Red Bull has been a topic of speculation, with a contract extending through 2028 seemingly not quelling the rumours.

The recent departure of Lewis Hamilton to Ferrari has opened a vacancy at Mercedes, further fueling speculation of a Verstappen switch.

During the Saudi Arabian Grand Prix, Wolff addressed the potential impact of Verstappen seeking a new challenge.

While acknowledging the potential benefit for Formula 1, Wolff couldn't hide his enthusiasm for the possibility of having the reigning champion at Mercedes.



Wolff

"I'd love to have him," Wolff admitted, quickly adding, "But first we need to sort out our car. I think we owe it to our drivers, George [Russell] and Lewis, to improve the car and give them equipment that is good before dreaming about the future next year."

Mercedes' struggles with their car in recent seasons necessitate a cautious approach to driver selection for 2025.

Wolff highlights their intention to thoroughly assess options throughout the ongoing season.

"I think we are going to wait," he explained.

"We have a few interesting options, and the more we are able to assess how the season pans out, young drivers with us against slightly older ones – that's not going to be a decision which we want to take in the next few weeks, it's rather a few months depending on where it goes."

While Wolff remained tight-lipped on whether Verstappen tops his list,

he did acknowledge the Dutchman's universal appeal: "Let's word it like this – I think this is a decision that Max needs to take, and there is no team up and down the grid who wouldn't do handstands to have him in the car."

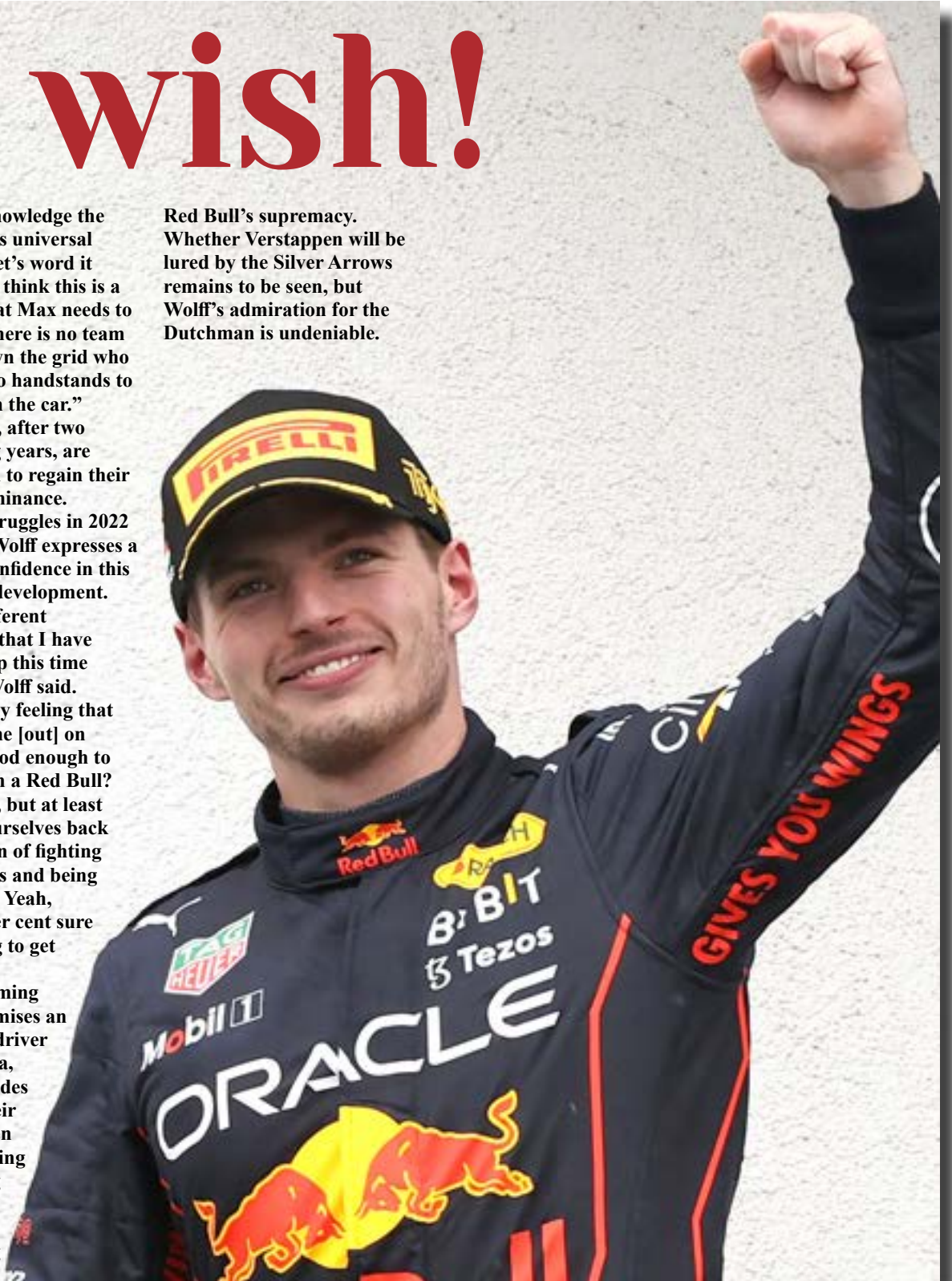
Mercedes, after two challenging years, are determined to regain their former dominance.

Despite struggles in 2022 and 2023, Wolff expresses a renewed confidence in this year's car development.

"It's a different confidence that I have in the group this time around," Wolff said. "It's just my feeling that we will come [out] on top. Is it good enough to beat Max in a Red Bull? No, it's not, but at least bringing ourselves back in a position of fighting for podiums and being right there. Yeah, hundred per cent sure we're going to get there."

The upcoming season promises an intriguing driver market saga, with Mercedes keeping their options open while focusing on building a car capable of challenging

Red Bull's supremacy. Whether Verstappen will be lured by the Silver Arrows remains to be seen, but Wolff's admiration for the Dutchman is undeniable.



YOUNG BEARMAN STEALS THE SHOW

EIGHTEEN-YEAR-OLD Oliver Bearman's ice-cool composure and stellar performance during a baptism by fire in the Saudi Arabian Grand Prix left Ferrari team principal Fred Vasseur astonished and impressed.

Catapulted into the F1 cauldron at the eleventh hour after Carlos Sainz's appendicitis drama, the fresh-faced Formula 2 driver defied all odds to seamlessly integrate into the Scuderia.

Despite minimal preparation time, Bearman displayed remarkable maturity, qualifying P11 and securing a P7 finish – a point-scoring debut in Formula 1. Vasseur commended Bearman's ability to manage pressure, particularly on the demanding Jeddah Corniche Circuit.

"He maintained a commendable

level of composure throughout the weekend," said Vasseur. "His ability to navigate such a challenging track with minimal prior running was truly impressive."

Vasseur conceded that initial concerns about potential rookie errors were dispelled by Bearman's flawless performance.

Bearman further solidified his reputation with skillful tyre management, sound race strategy, and a calculated defence against late challenges from established drivers.

Vasseur lauded it as a "fantastic display" and acknowledged Bearman's positive influence on team morale.

While this marks a significant milestone for Bearman, Vasseur emphasised the importance of maintaining focus on the ongoing

Formula 2 championship. Additionally, he will participate in further FP1 sessions with Haas this season.

Vasseur remained cautious regarding a potential 2025 seat on the grid with a Ferrari partner team, stressing the need for Bearman to prioritise his F2 campaign. However, he acknowledged the impact of the performance, stating, "There may be possibilities, but the focus needs to shift back to Formula 2 within the coming weeks."

Haas Team Principal, Ayao Komatsu, echoed Vasseur's sentiments, expressing delight at Bearman's scheduled FP1 appearances for Haas this year. Komatsu described Bearman as a "complete package" and reiterated his strong belief in the young driver's future potential.



RISING STAR:
Ferrari's Bearman
at the Saudi
Arabian Grand
Prix

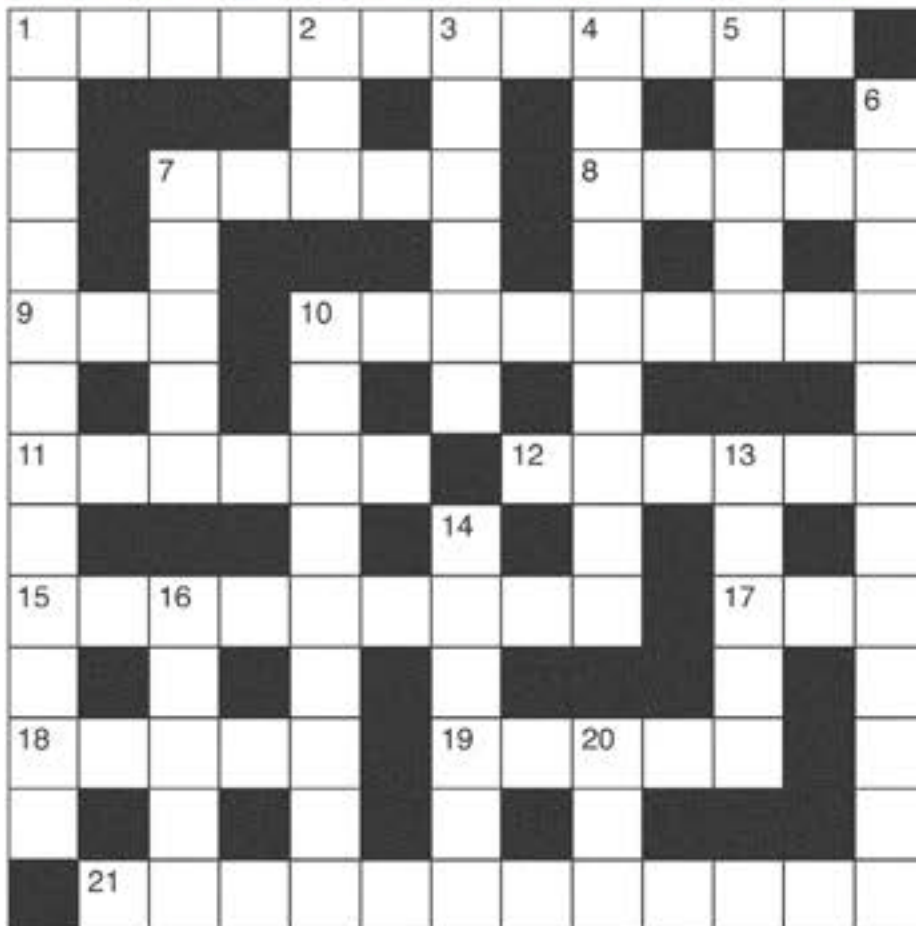
Time Out



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crossword break



Solutions in next week's issue.

ACROSS

1. Chat (12)
7. Storey (5)
8. Severe (5)
9. Bashful (3)
10. Dispel (9)
11. Deduce (6)
12. Bog (6)
15. Need (9)
17. Female bird (3)
18. Stadium (5)
19. Lazy person (5)
21. Unlawful (12)

DOWN

1. Concurrent (12)
2. Self (3)
3. Emphasise (6)
4. Evidence (9)
5. Musical drama (5)
6. Immoderate (12)
7. Lobby (5)
10. Lay waste (9)
13. Loathe (5)
14. Swimsuit (6)
16. Fishing basket (5)
20. Garland (3)

who, what, where, when

WHO ... is the lead singer with the band The Flaming Lips?
WHAT ... Arkansas-born actor claims to have a phobia of antique furniture?
WHERE ... in Africa is the lake Chott Melrhir?
WHEN ... did the Nobel Prize-winning writer Henri Bergson die?
WHO ... succeeded Nelson Rockefeller as Vice President of the US?
WHAT ... group recorded the 1969 No 1 UK single *Ob-La-Di Ob-La-Da*?
WHERE ... in Europe are the cities of Bialystok and Lublin?
WHEN ... did Albert Schweitzer win the Nobel Peace Prize?

just so

gene ration

↓
END

ME
LA



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

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

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

darn tough sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

Last Week's Leisure Solutions

CROSSWORD BREAK:

Across: 4 Probit; 8 Blithe; 9 Penance; 10 Cruise; 11 Obtain; 12 Register; 18 Uncommon; 20 Infant; 21 Pallor; 22 Mortify; 23 Blotch; 24 Readily.

Down: 1 Obscure; 2 Divulge; 3 Thesis; 5 Rhetoric; 6 Beauty; 7 Toesin; 13 Truthful; 14 Emulate; 15 Anarchy; 16 Income; 17 Wanted; 19 Oracle.

JUST SO: Three blind mice, Short and sweet, St. Bernard, The brain of Britain

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN:

Charles Manson; Blackbird; Cornwall; 1998; Daniel Clowes; Schicklgruber; California; 1959.

Darn Tough Sudoku

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