

DANCE REPORT
By MELISSA NAZARETH
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BAHRAINI dancer Abdulrahman Al Hamar aka Huey Flava won first place at the latest edition of the popular Sole DXB breaking competition in Dubai and hopes to further promote the art following its addition as a 'new sport' in the Paris Olympics this year.

Break dance is a dynamic, acrobatic street-born style performed by individuals known as b-boys and b-girls. It's a part of hip-hop culture, which originated in the African American community in the Bronx in New York City.

B-boy Huey was one of two to represent the kingdom at Sole DXB, an annual lifestyle and street culture festival, held in Dubai Design District in the UAE. The event features a range of artistic mediums including dance to create an enjoyable, educational experience.

Celebrating hip-hop culture, the 2023 edition held in December witnessed the participation of 120 dancers from countries around the world, including Bahrain, Oman, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait, Morocco, Tunisia, the US, Russia, France and the UK. Huey bagged the first place, spotlighting Bahrain's breaking scene on a regional platform.

"It was a great experience performing in an energetic atmosphere with so many other creative people," the 29-year-old told *GulfWeekly*. "Not only did I get to connect with other dancers but also to learn – the judges provided

KILLER MOVES:
Huey showcasing his talents at the latest Sole DXB



Movers & shakers

us with valuable feedback. All in all, I will cherish the experience as it pushed me to reach new heights, and offered me the opportunity to be part of such a vibrant community."

Huey got into breaking by chance in 2007 when he came across some people

throwing shapes at Andalus garden. The style intrigued him but it remained just a hobby until the day he met his hero a year later – then, there was no looking back.

"I met my inspiration (international breaking sensation) Jawhar Zitouni aka

Jazzy Zilla from Tunisia and learned a lot about dance from him. I have been breaking for 17 years and it's been an enriching experience, learning and competing," he revealed.

The Zayed Town resident is a three-time winner of the Red Bull BC One Bahrain Cypher and claimed the Middle East crown in 2018 when he bagged first place in the Red Bull BC One Cypher Middle East. In 2019, he was invited to participate in Dancesport, a competitive dance competition that's part of the Asian Games, and came fourth. Huey has also qualified for other international dance events like the popular Yalta Summer Jam in 2019 and took part in several small jams in the Gulf region.

In a double whammy, the kingdom had its proud moment when Bahraini



Mubarak aka Brookie Funk

b-boy Mubarak Salmeen aka Brookie Funk qualified in the top four at Sole DXB. He has won many local and regional competitions, including Battle Of The Year in Dubai in 2012, the Slam Fam jam in Dubai in 2017 and 2018, and the Keep It Real jam in Thailand in 2017.

Brookie Funk, also a Jazzy Zilla fan, took up the dance form after being inspired by his brother Ahmed Salmeen – one of the first generation of Bahraini break dancers. He has been practising the art for the last 17 years.

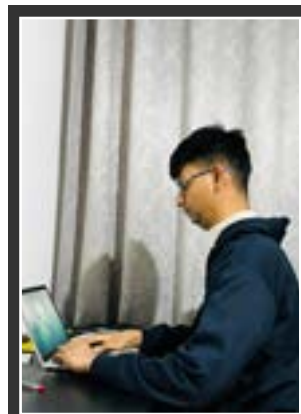
"Ahmed was one of the best but had to stop due to a car accident. That didn't deter him and he switched to music and became a DJ. He is one of my greatest inspirations," the 30-year-old explained, adding that he decided to 'carry on the tradition'.

Breaking first featured at the Summer Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires in 2018 and following its outstanding success, it was added to the Paris 2024 Olympic programme as a new sport, which has lit a spark in the hearts of local talents to represent their country on an international scale.

"Our passion for breaking has given us motivation to work hard and grow in the regional and international scenes, and having a sponsor will surely help us further to represent Bahrain in many global events and even the 2024 Paris Olympics," Brookie Funk said.

"We are focused on investing in the younger generations' growth by conducting regular classes in several schools and studios. Our goal is to have a place of our own to teach and share the positivity of hip-hop," he added.

Both Huey and Brookie Funk are actively involved with the Red Ants Army, a local 'authentic hip-hop movement' established in 2008.



ODE TO BAHRAIN
Poetry book release
SEE PAGE 2



MEXICAN MAGIC
Hilton Bahrain brunch
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Dining and night life
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FABRICS & FIBRES
Art unveiled
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STRIKE A POSE: Huey with other participants at the latest Sole DXB

Youthful verses



BOOK REPORT
By NAMAN ARORA
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FORMER Bahrain resident Arnab Sengupta has published his third book, filled with poems based on his experiences growing up as a teenager in the kingdom before moving to the UK for his higher studies.

The 18-year-old poet, who grew up in India, Bahrain and the UK, published *Luminescence: 50 Poems*, *umpTEEN Hues* recently, dealing with more mature themes than his debut book *Iridescence – 50 Poems by a Teenage Dreamer*, released in 2020.

“I think my writing deals with more mature themes now, so it has been categorised as young adult rather than kids’ poetry,” Arnab, who is currently pursuing his education in London, told *GulfWeekly*.

“My vocabulary has expanded considerably and my style has evolved, however, my introspective writing process has remained consistent.”

As *GulfWeekly* previously reported in 2020, Arnab’s first book *Iridescence* reflected four themes - the hidden world, the blues, hope and relationships.

His latest book is divided into six sections.

“From truth-revealing poems that illuminate the ‘lightbulb’ in our minds, to the poems that do ‘firefighting’ required to extinguish the fires of the world; from the ‘daydreaming’ poems that shine a light on my soul, to ‘pentapoetic’, a special section that deals with five poems that were written in the span of 30 minutes about the emotions I felt in that pocket of time; from the poems that were dedicated to the people who showed me the light like ‘fireflies’, to the poems about radiant love that burns yet soothes like the ‘sunflowers’ flourishing in the gardens of the world, these poems paint a journey from the darkness of uncertainty to the light of introspection and self-consciousness,” the young writer explained.



Arnab

“As this book was named after the phenomenon of producing light without heat, I wanted each of the sections to be named after sources of light.

“I did come up with them in hindsight, as I usually do with my poetry.

“I never limit myself to certain topics, and really write about a lot of things. Sections are made in hindsight, once the time to generalise them arrives. But the poems overlap between sections.”

Having lived in Bahrain for nearly five years, Arnab moved to the UK earlier this year with his parents.

In addition to *Iridescence*, he has also previously published a novel *NOMD – Will Five Teenagers Save the Planet Earth*.

“I write whenever an idea strikes me,” he explained, when asked about his writing habits.

“I write very often, in fact, I cannot imagine a week without writing. I find my inspiration in everyday things. In the minutiae of everyday life. I think we often ignore these ‘ordinary’ moments and simply look for beauty elsewhere, whilst all this time, the beauty was in these moments that we ignored so carelessly.

“As a writer, I want to



EXPERIENCES:
Arnab, left, with his parents in the UK



LUMINESCENCE: The book cover

capture the essence of these moments and show the world the beauty of life itself so they can appreciate it more often.

“Sadness arises, according to me, when we fail to appreciate our life.”

Arnab has won several poetry prizes, including ‘Outstanding Gen Z Poet’ by Dr Anamika, the first female poet to win the Sahitya

Akademi Award, one of the highest honours for poets in India.

He is also a musician, and has released a number of singles including *Sunflower*, *Dead End*, *One Man Show*, *Memories*, and *Secret Crush*.

Luminescence was officially launched at Harbour Hotel, St Ives, UK by James Murphy, the Europe-focused leader for Al Gore’s Climate Reality Project, alongside storyteller and researcher Serena Rosaria.

Not one to rest on his laurels, Arnab is already working on his next project, which deals with loss.

“Loss is something humans find difficult to comprehend, and how much ever we try to fix ourselves, just like we try to fix a broken pot, there’s a sliver that just is lost into the sands of time,” he explained.

“This next project tries to capture that, and deals with how to deal with loss.”

Luminescence: 50 Poems, *umpTEEN Hues* by Arnab Sengupta is now available on *Amazon*.

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 Thursday with Shannon’s seven brain-busters.

1. What does the licence plate on the DeLorean say in *Back To The Future*?
2. What type of creature is a Pacific Sea Wasp?
3. What is the original first person video shooter game?
4. Vanessa Carlton became a one-hit wonder for which 2001 song?
5. Which planet has the most moons?
6. What is the common culinary name for the pancreas of the calf or lamb?

Gulf Weekly

Catch Shannon's weekly
BRAIN-BUSTERS
every Thursday
in Gulf Weekly

7. How many time zones does China have?

- ANSWERS**
1. OUTFITIME
 2. Jellyfish
 3. Wolfenstein 3D
 4. A Thousand Miles
 5. Saturn
 6. Sweet Breads
 7. One



TEMPTING: Nachos with all the trimmings



MEXICAN: Vibrant decor



ON A ROLL: The sushi selection ready to be devoured

Food, fun & fiesta!

GOURMET REPORT
By JAYNE HOUGHTON
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As a food enthusiast and lover of all things Mexican, I was beyond excited to attend the Cinco de Mayo brunch at Hilton Bahrain on the first Friday of May.

For those who may not be familiar with the significance of Cinco de Mayo, it is a celebration of the Mexican army's victory over the French forces at the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862. While not as widely celebrated in Mexico as it is in the United States, Cinco de Mayo has become a popular holiday to commemorate Mexican culture and heritage.

Upon arriving at the brunch, my senses were immediately captivated by the vibrant decorations and lively atmosphere. The staff were all dressed in Mexican attire, adding to the festive mood of the event. Guests were also encouraged to dress up in their own Mexican-themed outfits, resulting in a colourful array of costumes throughout the sixth floor of Origin Kitchen & Culture, the hotel's all-day dining restaurant.

The highlight of the brunch was undoubtedly the food, which not only tantalised the

taste buds but also offered an authentically immersive experience. The culinary team at Hilton Bahrain have pulled out all the stops to provide a mouth-watering selection of Mexican favourites.

I started with a refreshing avocado and cucumber gazpacho, a delightful blend of creamy avocado and crisp cucumber, which served as the perfect way to kick off the meal, awakening the palate for what was to come.

The live cooking stations were a hit with the guests, offering a tempting array of options to satisfy every craving. From sizzling beef and chicken tacos, adorned with all the trimmings, to mouthwatering fajitas

and a mountain of nachos piled high with cheese and guacamole, each bite transported me to the bustling streets of Mexico which I remember fondly.

Additionally, the live spaghetti station added an Italian twist to the festivities, with a variety of freshly-made pasta and sauces to choose from. However, it was the seafood chowder ravioli that truly stole the show for me, with its delicate pasta parcels coated in a velvety white sauce, each bite bursting with rich, indulgent flavours that lingered on the palate.

The variety of mezze, salads and sushi on offer was impressive, and my friend's son devoured the crispy maki



TASTY: Tacos with beef or chicken to suit your palate

and lobster tails like it was light work. He couldn't stop raving about how fresh and delicious they were.

The dessert spread was equally splendid, with a candy floss machine, freshly-made churros, a wide variety of cakes, and Arabic sweets to satisfy every sweet tooth.

The entertainment at the brunch was top-notch, with a DJ keeping the energy high, a live band playing traditional Mexican music, and a dancer who interacted with the guests. Alongside the bountiful spread, guests can partake in different games such as 'limbo', testing their flexibility and adding a playful twist to the gathering. Additionally, the excitement peaks with

raffle prizes awaiting lucky winners, ranging from luxurious stays to exquisite dining experiences.

The atmosphere was electric, and it felt like a true fiesta. It was clear that the

Hilton Bahrain team had put a lot of thought and effort into ensuring that the brunch was a fun and memorable experience for all who attended.

The Cinco de Mayo Friday Brunch starts at 12.30pm and continues until 4pm, with a range of competitively priced options. There is a BD28net unlimited soft beverage package, and also a BD39net premium drinks package, with a running military appreciation month promotion at BD25net.

Whether you're a fan of Mexican cuisine or simply looking for a fun and family-friendly brunch experience, this event is not to be missed. I left feeling satisfied and thoroughly entertained, already looking forward to the next themed brunch at Hilton Bahrain!

For more information or reservations, call or WhatsApp 33692013.



LIVE: Band performance to accompany tasty treats



COLOURFUL: Authentic dancing at Hilton Bahrain

Leisure Scene

What's on guide by
Julia Cassano



FINEST DELICACIES ON FOUR SEASONS MENU

KICKSTART your weekend by choosing from Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay's list of exclusive events.

For the perfect day out with family, opt for the Latin American Brunch, where dishes including succulent

beef salpicon, ceviche, enchiladas, nachos, tacos and crispy churros will satisfy your taste buds.

While parents dig into the delicious creations, younger guests can explore the newly-decorated children's corner, which features a buffet, fun activities and a magician and balloon artist, tomorrow (Friday) from 1pm to 4pm.

It costs BD35 including soft drinks, BD48 inclusive of selected beverages, and BD65 with a premium beverage package and bubbly drinks. Children under six years dine with the hotel's compliments and those aged six to 12 enjoy a 50 per cent discount.

Meanwhile, Bay View Lounge invites guests to try its new additions such



DELICIOUS: Enchiladas at the hotel's Latin American Brunch

as brie and bresaola salad, seabass livornese, pappardelle cacciatora, lobster ravioli and more, from 11am to 11pm.

Elevate your Friday at CUT by Wolfgang Puck's Bubbly Brunch. Savour the finest selection of beverages and dishes made by executive chef Brian Becher and his team, alongside live music from 12.30pm to 3.30pm. It costs BD70 inclusive of free flow bubbly beverages.

Chef Becher and his team have also whipped up new and exclusive seasonal dishes, including buffalo mozzarella salad, spicy blue fin tuna tartar and Japanese Wagyu steak at CUT by Wolfgang

Puck. The lunch is offered from Monday to Saturday, from 12.30pm to 3pm, and dinner on Monday, Tuesday and Saturday, from 7pm to 11pm. It's priced as a la carte.

For a chilled night, don't miss out on Cut Lounge's happy hour menu. Guests can indulge in Wolfgang Puck's signature bites and drinks every day except Sundays, from 5pm to 7pm.

Blue Moon Lounge also offers elevated bites with special discounts during Blue Hour (5pm to 7pm) from Tuesday to Sunday.

For more information or reservations, contact 17115044 or 17115500.

EXCITING WORKSHOPS AT AL JASRA

FUN and exciting workshops covering a range of activities are back at Al Jasra Handicrafts Centre, organised by the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities.

A Traditional Chest Making Workshop will teach participants how to identify types of wood used for manufacturing chests, how to chop wood and mould accessories. The chests, popular in most Arab countries, is also used to store clothing and personal items.

The workshop will be held on Saturdays, from 10am to 12.30pm in English and Arabic for those aged 18 and above.

A Staff Palm Tree Leaves Weaving workshop will train participants in various types of staff and sewing



techniques. This art is considered traditional and is still practised in some villages in Bahrain, such as Karbabad, Al Jasra and Budaiya.

The classes will be held on Saturdays, from 10am to 12.30pm in Arabic and English for those aged 14 and above.

Another workshop will shed light on the types of wood used for manufacturing



RGC'S EPIC TREATS

RICH: A decadent cake at RGC

GET ready for the ultimate culinary experience at the Royal Golf Club (RGC) this week.

Step into Links and relish premium-quality steaks cooked to perfection. Steak Nights are held every Wednesday, from 6pm.

Guests can also satisfy their sweet tooth with the club's decadent cakes and desserts. Order your cake today at 32184647. All orders must be placed 24 hours in advance.

For the ultimate summer experience, choose RGC's epic Summer Camp. Everything from sports, dance and kindergarten activities will be offered. Even more, PGA (Professional Golfers' Association) professionals

will give youngsters the opportunity to learn some new skills. Set to begin from June 30, the camp will be held on Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday, 9.30am to 1pm, and costs BD25 per day or BD60 per week.

It also offers add-ons, including a one-hour golf season with PGA-certified coach for BD8 (one hour a week) or BD32 per month.

To register, call 33001261 or 17750777. Guests have until May 15 to enjoy a 15 per cent early bird discount and special discounts are available for RGC members as well as Riffa Views residents.

For more information or bookings, contact 39007546.

AUTHENTIC SEAFOOD FLAVOURS AT HILTON

HEAD down to the Hilton Bahrain for a week of fun and pleasure.

For the ultimate seafood adventure opt for Origin Kitchen and Culture's Seafood Night. A mouth-watering selection of fresh catches and irresistible flavours from the sea will make for an unforgettable culinary experience tonight, from 7pm to 10pm.

It costs BD32net with unlimited selected beverages and BD25net inclusive of selected soft beverages.

Guests can also enjoy a fabulous breakfast buffet, set up every morning from 6.30am to 10.30am, at Origin Kitchen and Culture. It costs BD13net per person.

For non-stop fun and live music, head down to Cocoluna lounge, from 5pm to 7pm, for BD10.

Guests can also take part in Block 44's Old School Party on Wednesdays, where classic hits and exciting vibes will leave you wanting more from 10pm to 2am.



VARIETY: Seafood Night

Ladies can avail two complimentary beverages.

The Afro Series, tonight (Thursday), offers guests live music and fun from 9pm to 2am, and a 50 per cent discount on selected beverages from 9pm to 11pm, at Block 44.

Ladies can also avail two complimentary beverages.

To dance the night away, opt for Block 44's Salsa Nights, tomorrow (Friday) from 9pm to 2am. Ladies can enjoy two complimentary beverages,

For more information or bookings, contact 33692013 or 33690081.

MAESTRO:
Dr Subramaniam



VIOLIN MELODIES

THE Bahrain Keraleeya Samajam's (BKS) Indo Bahrain Dance and Music Festival will continue this weekend, featuring numerous performances.

An Indian classical dance, with Vidya Pradeep and Anitha performing Mohiniyattam - a dance form from Kerala - will take place tonight.

This will be followed by 45-minute performances by Priyadarshini Govind and Vidhya Subramanian.

Tomorrow (Friday), the focus will be on renowned Indian violinist, composer and conductor

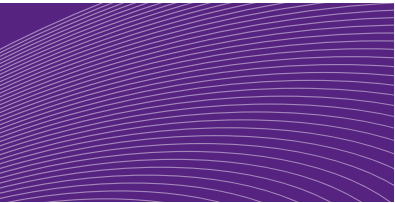
Dr Lakshminarayana Subramaniam, who will close out the festival with a classical violin recital.

"We extend a heartfelt invitation to all to join in this cultural festivity that not only entertains but also educates and enlightens," said BKS general secretary Varghese Karakkal.

The week-long festival opened on May 3.

The event is open to all and attendees are encouraged to arrive early to secure their seat at BKS Diamond Jubilee Hall in Segaya.

For more information, call 39691590 or 39617620.



WORKSHOPS CENTRE



HERITAGE: Traditional chest

ship models including Al Banoush, Al Shuai, Al Boom and Al Baghlah. Participants will learn to chop wood and create the ship model, draw and carve pieces of wood and configure ship attachments. It will be held on Saturdays, from 10am to 12.30pm in Arabic and English for those aged 14 and above.

A workshop on the Art of Decoration and Engraving on Gypsum will be held every Saturday this month, from 10am to 12.30pm. The sessions will take place in Arabic and English for those aged 14 and above.

For enquiries, email handicrafts.workshops@culture.gov.bh.

THEATRE GROUP TO SHOWCASE 10 SHORT PLAYS

A RENOWNED theatre group in Bahrain will bring theatre and comedy to life with a series of 10 short plays next week.

Guests can gear up for Manama Theatre Club's *Pint Size Comedy*, an evening of theatrical delight at the British Club (May 15) and Dilmun Club (May 17), with both shows starting at 7.45pm. Café-style seating and food service will also be offered during the performances, from 6.15pm.

Tickets cost BD8, inclusive of food and drink, and there is a BD1.500 fee for British Club non-members. They can be purchased on manama.platinumlist.net.

For more details, follow [@mctcbahrain](https://www.instagram.com/mctcbahrain) on Instagram.



ART REPORT
By NAMAN ARORA
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SIX of Bahrain's top creatives are threading the needle between the art and craft of fabric in a unique exhibition being showcased in Muharraq.

The *Beyond the Thread* group exhibition, which runs until May 30, features art pieces by Bader Al Saad, Christine Khonjie, Giuse Maggi, Hala Kaiksow, Mhairi Boyle and Noor Alwan, and is on display at the Bin Matar House under the umbrella of Shaikh Ebrahim Centre for Culture and Research.

"The artists in the exhibition have embraced textiles, fabrics and fibres as one of their primary mediums and sensitively explore material and process for artistic expression, metaphorical meaning and tool for critically questioning our environmental footprint and social impact of economic production processes," the exhibition's curator Melissa Enders-Bhatia told *GulfWeekly*.

"By so doing, the selected artists also tap into the rich textile and craft heritage in Bahrain, from the weavers in the village of Bani Jamra to the Kurar and Al Naqda embroidery traditions, the use of the indigenous palm tree for palm leaf weaving and paper making and inspiration from local Islamic architecture and embedded abstract decorative patterns.

"Fibre art has broadened the idea of what art can be and embraced the symbolism, embedded knowledge and gendered and colonial histories inherent in the medium. The artists in the exhibition show us unique interpretations of this medium through artworks created specifically for the exhibition *Beyond the Thread*."

In Bader's (Instagram: @imbaderthanthat) *So My Heart May Be At Peace* series, the needlework artist stitches together his passion for cross-stitching with his spiritual connection with the *Holy Quran*.

According to Bader, this collection encapsulates the Sufi pursuit of a peaceful soul by embodying four main characteristics: 'ekhlas' (Arabic: devotion), 'tawakul' (surrender), 'sabr' (patience),

THREADED: From left, Mhairi, Bader, Melissa, Noor and Giuse



CAVE: Christine's *Guardian* piece from her *Embroidering My Shadow* series

Weaving magic



INSTALLATION: Giuse's pieces on the left, and Mhairi's artworks on the right, framing Hala's *Rooting Systems*, centre.



DOMES: Noor's *Sacred Sanctum* piece

and 'ehsan' (excellence/doing good). These four main characteristics are then broken down into three pillars: 'alamer' (God's commands), 'alwa'ad' (God's promises), and 'al jaza'a' (God's rewards).

Meanwhile, Hala's (IG: @halakaiksow) *Rooting Systems* explores a return to land, both metaphorically and physically, and what it means to shape and be shaped by the environment.

"In this work I explore paper as a medium that can be both rigid and fluid, that can offer shelter but maintain its fragility at the same time," she explained.

"The work is then embroidered with cloth and

thread that takes its colour from the madder root that has been harvested from my garden to create the vibrant blood-red hue, that guides the audience through the work and allows them to take refuge under its lines."

Similarly, Mhairi (IG: @mhairi.boyle) has drawn her inspiration from Bahrain's natural features, building on her 2020 project *What She Sees*, which was exhibited in the Bahrain Pavilion at Expo 2020 in Dubai.

Her four-part *inLAND | COASTal* series uses natural dyes created with dried date seeds, spices and locally grown herbs as well as seaweed.

"The pieces are all hand

woven by Habib Al Rasool from Bani Jamrah, who has inherited the craft and knowledge from his late grandfather, and father Saleh Al Rasool," she added.

Noor (IG: @nooralwan) is also building on a previous work, adding to her 2021 series *Sacred Spaces*, which adapts her grandfather, Mohamed Janahi's drawings into spatial installations using embroidery on textiles.

In *Sacred Sanctum*, she is inspired by a dome in one of his earliest drawings of a mosque, and reinterprets it into a human-scale size made out of multi-coloured sheer organza and embroidery.

"The hung dome with its translucency and movement

invites people to enter and experience it within to create a fleeting space of sanctuary," she added.

Over in the *Forever* series, Italian multidisciplinary artist Giuse (IG: @fibre.e.natura) addresses the importance of repurposing salvaged materials, exploring the interplay between form and colour, experimenting with plastic materials and employing textile techniques including quilting, stitching, mending, embroidery and crocheting.

Drawing inspiration from Bauhaus textile art, she integrates simple coloured shapes to convey depth and create an illusion of dimension.

"Deliberately narrative threads, through embroidery, connect the fabric's composition, allowing abstract landscapes to emerge," she added.

Taking inspiration from her passion for prehistory, Christine's (IG: @khonjie) *Embroidering My Shadow* piece builds on nature-based myths in a style reminiscent of historic cave paintings.

"Embroidering is walking step by step on an unknown path, tying up the thread, cutting it, going forward again, and losing my way, from light to darkness, the needle tattooing a dream body," she explained.

For more details, follow [@shaikh_ebrahim_center](https://www.instagram.com/shaikh_ebrahim_center) on Instagram.

Pulse of Pop

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



PROTEST: A protester pictured above the Hind's Hall sign at Columbia University

DANCEABLE ANTHEMS

B RITISH-ALBANIAN pop powerhouse Dua Lipa has dropped her highly anticipated third studio album *Radical Optimism* after a four-year hiatus since the disco-fuelled triumph of *Future Nostalgia*.

The album, released on May 3 boasts an impressive list of collaborators, including Tame Impala's Kevin Parker and pop veteran Ian Kirkpatrick.

The artist delivers on her promise of a 'psychedelic-pop-infused tribute to UK rave culture'.

Lead single *Houdini* sets the tone with its pulsating bassline and hypnotic vocals, while *Training Season* throws in a

dose of electro-pop grit.

Tracks like *Illusion* and *Come with Me* showcase her knack for crafting catchy hooks and earworm melodies, perfect for late-night club sets.

However, some critics have found the album lacking in the depth and innovation that she established with *Future Nostalgia*.

While the production is polished and the sonic palette is diverse, the overall sound leans heavily on familiar pop formulae.

Tracks like *Don't Go Twisting My Words* and *French Exit* feel like retreads of previous hits, lacking the originality that made Dua Lipa a pop phenomenon.

Despite the mixed reviews, *Radical Optimism* is undeniably a collection of well-crafted pop anthems.

Her signature sultry vocals and confident delivery shine throughout, and the album's undeniable danceability makes it a perfect soundtrack for carefree summer nights.

Ultimately, *Radical Optimism* is a solid pop album that delivers on its promise of danceable anthems.

While it may not reach the groundbreaking heights of *Future Nostalgia*, it reaffirms Lipa's position as a pop powerhouse with a knack

for crafting infectious tunes.

Born in London to Albanian parents, Dua Lipa's musical journey began at a young age, heavily

influenced by her father's rock band background.

At 15, she returned to London with aspirations of becoming a singer, uploading covers and original songs online while working as a waitress.

Her breakthrough came with the 2015 self-titled debut album, featuring hits like *New Love* and *Be the One* establishing her signature sound: a blend of 70's disco, 80's pop, and 90's club music.

Her sophomore album, *Future Nostalgia*, cemented her status as a global pop phenomenon, winning critical acclaim and multiple awards, including three Grammys.



Album cover

SONG FOR PEACE

U S rapper Macklemore ignited social media this week with the release of *Hind's Hall*, paying homage to a Columbia University building renamed by student protesters, and tackling the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict.

The song is a powerful anthem that pays tribute to Hind Rajab, a six-year-old Palestinian girl killed by Israeli forces in Gaza.

It samples the iconic *Ana La Habibi* (Arabic: I belong to my love) by Fairouz, weaving a melancholic yet hopeful soundscape.

Macklemore, a longtime advocate for Palestinian rights, pulls no punches. The lyrics critique the status quo, questioning the perception of peaceful actions like divestment from Israel as threats. Lines like, 'The people, they won't leave/What is threatening about divesting and wanting peace?' highlight the song's core message.

More than just a condemnation of the conflict, the song celebrates student activism. Macklemore praises the protesters who occupied Columbia's



PALESTINE: Macklemore at a previous pro-Palestine rally

Hamilton Hall, forcing its renaming to 'Hind's Hall', and urges others to follow suit: 'Block the barricade until Palestine is free.'

Macklemore references police brutality, systemic oppression, and the silencing of dissent on

social media. This creates a powerful tapestry that connects the Palestinian struggle to contemporary issues in the United States.

The release comes amidst renewed tensions in the Middle East and US. Pro-Palestinian protests erupted on college campuses across the US in recent weeks, echoing the actions depicted in the song.

Macklemore announced that all proceeds from the song will be donated to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

This move further amplifies the message of solidarity with the

Palestinian people.

The song's impact is undeniable.

Though not yet available on mainstream streaming platforms, a preview clip posted on Macklemore's *Instagram* has already garnered millions of views.

"This is a powerful and necessary song," said Sarah Jones, a student activist from Georgetown University. "It's great to see an artist with such a platform use their voice to speak up for what's right."

Hind's Hall has reignited discussions about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, student activism, and the role of artists in social change.



TRIO: The series poster

HUMOUR, SUSPENSE AND IRISH CHARM

A DARKLY comedic thriller series, led by American TV star Will Forte, is unravelling its secrets on Netflix, starting today.

Created by British writer Jez Scharf, *Bodkin* promises to be a captivating blend of dark comedy and suspenseful thriller.

The seven-episode series follows a group of amateur podcasters who stumble upon a cold case while investigating local folklore in a seemingly idyllic Irish coastal town.

According to the show's creator: "*Bodkin* is a show about the

darkness that can lurk beneath the surface of seemingly perfect places. It's about the secrets we keep, the stories we tell ourselves, and the lengths we'll go to protect them."

As Gilbert (Will), Dove (Siobhán Cullen) and Emmy (Robyn Cara) delve deeper into the unsolved disappearance of three strangers, their investigation uncovers a web of secrets, hidden agendas, and a darkness lurking beneath the town's picturesque facade.

The concept of amateur sleuths dealing with a dark and unsettling mystery is reminiscent of shows

like *Only Murders in the Building* and *The Afterparty*.

While comparisons to existing shows are inevitable, *Bodkin*'s unique blend of humour, suspense, and Irish charm suggests a fresh perspective on the dark comedy thriller genre. The series has the potential to appeal to viewers seeking a show that balances suspense with witty dialogue and a touch of local flavour.

Principal photography began in West Cork in the summer of 2022, and took place over the course of six months. Other filming locations included Wicklow and Dublin.

Champion!

FROM TRUMP TO VERSTAPPEN, EVERYONE CELEBRATES NORRIS' MAIDEN WIN IN MIAMI

It is doubtful there has been a more popular winner of a Formula One race in recent years than McLaren's Lando Norris, who was celebrated by everyone, from Max Verstappen to Donald Trump, following his victory at the Miami Grand Prix on Sunday.

It was a long overdue triumph for Norris, who held the record for most podiums without a win (15), including an agonising eight runner-up finishes, in 110 grand prix making the likeable Briton easy to root for.

Even Verstappen, Red Bull's triple world champion who hates to lose and was denied a hat-trick of Miami wins by the McLaren driver, was among the first to congratulate Norris, who was mobbed by his team and crowd-surfed along pit land.

"It was a long time coming, and I'm very happy to be beaten by Lando today," said Verstappen.

"He definitely deserved it.

"It's great winning your first race. It's always quite emotional. It brings you back to all the days that you worked towards your dream of being on the podium."

Former US president Donald Trump, who visited the McLaren garage prior to the race, was delighted to back a winner, telling Norris later he was his lucky charm.

"He saw me after and he came to congratulate me,"

said Norris, who had told his grandmother before coming to Miami that he was going to win a race. "He (Trump) said he was my lucky charm because it was my win, but I don't know if he's going to come to more races."

Norris's mother and father were ecstatic, though they weren't in Miami to witness the moment.

"A big celebration," Adam Norris told *Sky Sports*. "I was working out it's probably about 900 races I've been to over the last 16 years.

"It's interesting knowing as a parent how many hours you put in, supporting them.

"I counted out 350 weekends away and all the races on different weekends. It's brilliant. So happy for him."

Anthony Hamilton, another father instrumental in the success of his son - seven-times world champion Lewis - also texted Norris with congratulations.

While Norris was long overdue for a maiden win, his wait was not the longest. World champions Jenson Button needed 113 races before his first win and Nico Rosberg 111.

Red Bull's Sergio Perez holds the record of 190 races before his visit to the top of the podium and it took Ferrari's Carlos Sainz 150 and Mark Webber 130.

Norris was still finalising plans on how he was going to celebrate his maiden victory, but he was already thinking about a second win.

"This only happens once when you take your first win. Tonight is going to be a good night," said Norris.

"I would like to say it's the start, and now we're really hungry for more. We'll keep our heads down and keep pushing."

Bahrain's sovereign wealth fund has recently taken full ownership of the McLaren Group, which builds

high-end sportscars and owns a majority stake in the McLaren F1 team. The Bahraini fund, Mumtalakat, was already McLaren's biggest shareholder.

ELATED:
Norris



LEAD: Lando Norris during the Miami Grand Prix

Proud dad sets new target for his son

WHEN Lando Norris, piloting his McLaren, finally tasted his first Grand Prix win in Miami, his father, Adam, watched from home in England, a wave of emotions washing over him, but has now already set another target for the young Brit.

"It's been a long time coming," Adam said, the weight of more than 110 races settling in. "Everyone thinks it's an overnight thing, but it's not. It's been a long journey."

He revealed he'd calculated attending roughly 900 races over the past 16 years.

Sharing a moment with Lewis Hamilton's dad, Adam acknowledged the hidden cost of their sons' dreams. "We've been through a lot," he confided. "It's interesting knowing the other parents, how many hours you put in supporting them."

While typically a fixture at the track, Lando's mum and dad were absent this time. They watched the drama unfold on TV as Lando fought back from behind, ultimately

holding off Max Verstappen. When victory was finally secured, Lando's emotions spilled over as he thanked his team, parents, and his grandma.

"People don't realise - there are a lot of bad days along with the good days and it's about five years in you think 'this is it, it's too much, too many weekends away from home, away from your family', but it makes it all worth it," Norris' dad continued, before setting his son his next target in the sport.

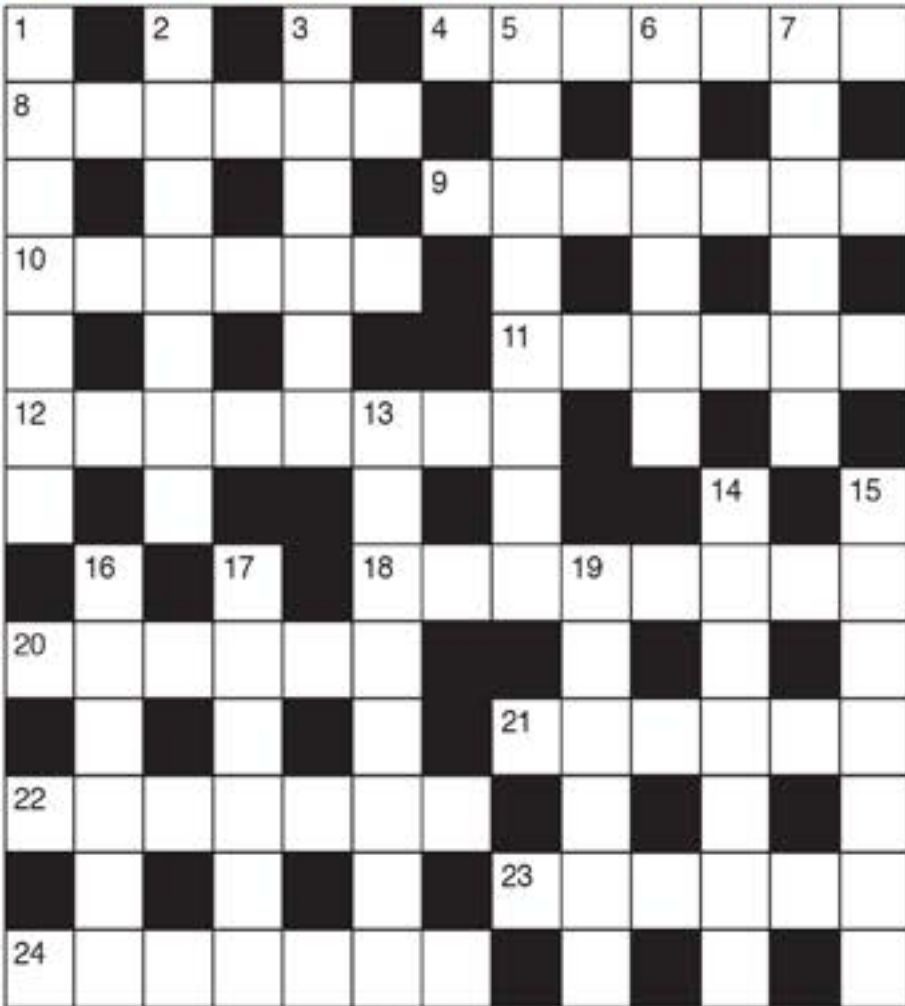
"But he's got one more thing now hasn't he - world champion!"

Time Out



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crossword break



Solutions in next week's issue.

ACROSS

- 4. Shorten (7)
- 8. Cunning (6)
- 9. Let (7)
- 10. Invisible (6)
- 11. Puzzle (6)
- 12. A missile (8)
- 18. Encumbrance (8)
- 20. Failure (6)
- 21. Distant (6)
- 22. Impart (7)
- 23. Acquits (6)
- 24. Hint (7)

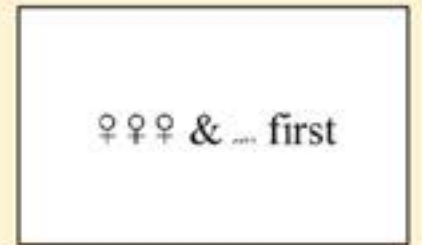
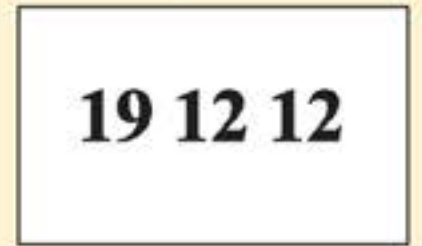
DOWN

- 1. Stunted (7)
- 2. Corrosive (7)
- 3. Stripe (6)
- 5. Official statement (8)
- 6. Sarcastic (6)
- 7. Shines (6)
- 13. Indebted (8)
- 14. Tumbler (7)
- 15. Pacify (7)
- 16. Repudiate (6)
- 17. Beneficial (6)
- 19. Profoundly (6)

who, what, where, when

- WHO ... played Colonel Oliver in the film *Hotel Rwanda*?
- WHAT ... is the least populous US state?
- WHERE ... was the actor Raymond Burr born in 1917?
- WHEN ... was The Gorbachev Foundation created?
- WHO ... wrote the 1995 stage play *Dealer's Choice*?
- WHAT ... is the largest city in the state of Montana, US?
- WHERE ... in Africa is the mountain Maromokotro?
- WHEN ... did Lord Irvine of Lairg become Lord Chancellor?

just so



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

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

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

darn tough sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

Last Week's Leisure Solutions

CROSSWORD BREAK:

Across: 1 Evangelists; 9 Low; 10 Intricate; 11 Space; 13 Nearest; 14 Fathom; 16 Pellet; 18 Sincere; 19 April; 20 Editorial; 21 Tie; 22 Destitution.

Down: 2 Vow; 3 Naive; 4 Extend; 5 Imitate; 6 Traveller; 7 Close-fisted; 8 Teetotaler; 12 Attentive; 15 Open out; 17 Resist; 19 Allot; 21 Too.

JUST SO: 1 Claudius, Fish for compliments, Hyde park corner, On par for the course

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN:

Blythe Duff; The Black Shorts; Dominica; 1977; Warren Christopher; East Caribbean dollar; North Yorkshire; 2005.

Darn Tough Sudoku

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