



COMMUNITY REPORT  
By MELISSA NAZARETH  
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**B**AHRAIN-BASED administrative executive and avid biker Judy Cabillo is set to participate in her first-ever international cycling race this month and hopes to inspire other women wanting to get fit to put pedal power to the test.

The Pulantat Loop Road Race is organised by the Guam Cycling Federation and will be its opening event of the year.

Guam is an organised, unincorporated territory of the US in the Micronesia subregion of the western Pacific Ocean, close to the Philippines.

The race will be quite a challenge for the 34-year-old who only took up cycling five years ago.

There will be three stages: one, two or four laps, with each lap being about 1.6km elevated by approximately 1,000 feet. The Filipino national will pedal for two laps, which is between 32 to 35km.

"I always wanted to participate in a race outside Bahrain and Guam is a country near to the Philippines," Judy told *GulfWeekly*.

"The race, happening on January 28, just popped up on my computer one day and I decided to join, considering it's around the same time I had planned my vacation.

"I aim to finish in two and half hours, which I know will be a challenge but I'm ready. I'm also excited to meet other cycling enthusiasts there as well as the organisers.

"Guam is a beautiful country surrounded by oceans and mountains. I'll be there for six days and look forward to touring the place, exploring its natural beauty, culture, food and more," she added.

Judy cycles at least twice a week, but in preparation for the race took to the pedals on more days. As a foodie she doesn't restrict herself to a diet and is confident that 'cycling burns the calories anyway'.

"I try to reach my goal of 30 to 40 kilometres," said the Um Al Hassam resident, who has been living in Bahrain

## PEDAL POWER



EMPOWERED:  
The Cycling Bees pose at the Athar structure that celebrates the achievements of Bahraini women.

with her uncle, aunt and cousin since 2014.

Judy started cycling in 2018 and the Covid-19 pandemic that struck the world a year later, confining millions of people indoors, further pushed her to pursue the activity more frequently.

"Covid inspired me to follow a more active lifestyle with sports and improve my work-life balance," she said. "I found cycling fun and it reinvigorated me whilst also helping me to relax."

Judy was introduced to Cycling Bees, an all-women's cycling group in

the kingdom, in 2022 and has been a part of their adventures since then.

"I had attended an event organised by Al Hilal hospital where I met a wonderful lady who introduced me to the Cycling Bees. I am an active member even today," Judy said.

The like-minded group of women meet up every Friday morning and ride around the island.

"The routes are well-planned to ensure we have adequate health and safety provisions and a safety car is always on hand to make sure

there are no accidents. The car also carries first aid items in case they're needed," she said.

"Cycling has made me stronger in body and mind. I am now more focused at work. Since I took it up, I've been more motivated to train and be aware of health and fitness."

Judy encourages those looking to improve their health to take up cycling, which she asserts will positively impact one's physical and mental well-being.

"The freedom you

experience being outdoors is just amazing," she said.

She has thanked all the ladies of Cycling Bees, especially leader of the group Sarah Alsammak, for their support.

"I would also like to express my gratitude to Rumesh Sarwan of Skate Shack Bahrain (distributor of Trek bikes in the kingdom) for their generous sponsorship of my cycling outfit for the upcoming race in Guam," she added.

For more details, follow @guamcycling and @cyclingbees on Instagram.

SPORTY: Judy poses at Arad Fort on one of her cycling adventures.



ALL SMILES: Judy at Arad Park in Muharraq.



AFTERNOON DELIGHT  
Elevating the experience  
SEE PAGE 3



ABSTRACT ALLURE  
Bahrain art gallery  
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FOOTBALL FANZONE  
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HOLA MADRID!  
New Formula 1 race  
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# Wrapped in mysteries



**BOOK REPORT**  
By MELISSA NAZARETH  
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**F**ORMER Bahrain resident Fawaz Jaleel continues to thrill mystery lovers with his much-awaited sequel in the Yohan Tytler series, set to be unveiled this month.

*Insiders Versus Outsiders* follows beloved character Yohan as he solves multiple murders set in India, against the backdrop of political events, linked to the country's contemporary history.

"I have tried to touch upon political events that are less talked about," Fawaz told *GulfWeekly*.

"The book follows a series of murders, including a literary agent and a Bollywood actor who is found dead in his house in Mumbai, and traverses the metro city and Assam," he added.

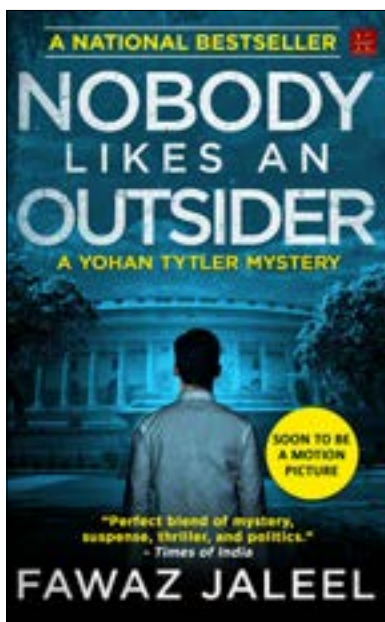
An excerpt from the book reads, "The police team, armed mostly with INSAS rifles and 7.62 FAL, and the fuel of resolve in their eyes, took their positions, strategically along the road. Yohan, his grip firm on his gun, surveyed the surroundings, his heart pounding in his chest. This was the moment they had all been waiting for—to capture Banjur Basumataray, the elusive criminal and close aide to the absconding Assam

Tiger Liberation Front (ATLF) leader, Arup Baruah. More than anything, he believed that Banjur could fill the missing pieces especially owing to his mysterious presence in the deaths of Mekhala and Siddharth.

"In the militants' camp, more than 24 hours had passed since any semblance of food had reached their starving bellies. The absence of their fellow soldiers, who had ventured into the village to investigate the disrupted supply, only added to the growing sense of unease. Banjur, weakened by hunger, lay on the makeshift bunk, his eyes betraying his desperation. The camp



**FAMILY TIME:** Fawaz, left, with mother Nasseera, father Jaleel and brother Isa on his last visit to Bahrain



leader, Neigham, approached him, a tinge of remorse etched on his face towards his prized guest whose protection was entrusted with him."

The sequel features characters from the first book, including the fierce and outspoken Ila Qureshi who is the 'muscle' of Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) lead investigator Yohan's team, the grounded and analytical right-hand man Sukumar Azaghu, who is the 'heart' of the team and CBI director veteran Jagat Verma.

In the next book, readers will be introduced to a fresh character, Gunang Gogoi,

the disciplined and studious newbie on the team.

The 250-page novel follows the immensely successful *Nobody Likes An Outsider*, which focused on a crime mystery, tracing the death of one of India's most promising young politician. It's being adapted into a film by a Bollywood-based production house and will be released this year.

"I must say that the production house has been very hands-on with the project. They keep me involved at all stages and honestly retained most of the essence from the book while adding some brilliant twists and changes in the adaptation for the big screen. Their understanding of the audience is impeccable and hence the output looks very promising.

"My first book follows Yohan and his associates as they solve the murder of a minority political leader and soon after, his personal assistant. On investigation, they discover that the deaths are linked to major events of Bihar's (the Indian state where the story is set) modern history," Fawaz added.

Fawaz's journey as a writer began during his growing years in Bahrain. He lived here with his parents and

brother, from 1997 to 2009, and attended The Asian School and then The New Indian School. His formative years were marked by active involvement in the Bahrain Keraleeya Samajam, where he first garnered recognition for his writing talent.

Currently, the 31-year-old is based out of Mumbai and Bangalore in India. In addition to handling product marketing for a European financial services firm, Fawaz actively contributes to the local literary scene, writing columns for newspapers, offering consultancy services to authors, giving lectures on publishing and related topics in schools and colleges, among other things.

He continues to visit his father Jaleel Kutty, general manager at Fine Foods, and his mother Nasseera Jaleel, a homemaker, who reside in Segaya.

Fawaz's books, both published by Kalamos Literary Services, are available for purchase on Amazon.

He has another book on the way and has, in the past, written and published short stories *From The Land of Palaces*, *Alternate Identities* and *The Legend of Birbal's Bull*.

For details, follow @fawazsays on Instagram.

## BRAIN-BUSTERS

**Q**uizmaster 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. In honour of Australia Day this Friday, Shannon has come up with a special edition of his brain-busters, to test our readers' knowledge of the Land Down Under.



1. What is the name of the constellation on the Australian flag?
2. Australia produces 95 per cent of what type of gemstone?
3. In Australian slang, what would you be doing if you were 'Chuckin a U-ey'?
4. Australia has the world's longest fence - it was first built in the 1880s to keep which animal out?
5. Who was the only

- Australian to play James Bond?  
6. What was Australia's first capital city?  
7. What was the late Steve Irwin's famous catch phrase?

1. Southern Cross
2. Opal
3. Making a U-Turn
4. Dingo
5. George Layenby
6. Melbourne
7. Crikey!

## ANSWERS

**LOVE:** Emotions run high on screen



## LOVE AND TRAGEDY

**BAHRAIN CINEMA CLUB** – Wednesday, 7pm, Juffair

**Film:** *In The Bedroom*

**Director:** Todd Field

**Duration:** Two hours and 11 minutes

**Cast:** Sissy Spacek, Tom Wilkinson, Nick Stahl, Marisa Tomei, William Mapother, Celia Weston, William Wise

**Plot:** In idyllic mid-coast Maine, the Fowler family's only son Frank comes home from his freshman year at college for summer vacation. His mother is unhappy with Frank dating soon-to-be divorced mother Natalie who is several years his senior, but Frank's father

doesn't see a problem. While Frank considers holding off his future for Natalie, her jilted husband causes them all problems until an unthinkable tragedy shakes the community to its very core. In 2002, the film was nominated for five Oscars, including Best Film, Best Actor, Best Actress and Best Supporting Actress. It was also nominated for two BAFTA Film Awards for Best Actor and Best Actress. At the Golden Globe Awards ceremony it won in the Best Actress category and got a nomination for Best Supporting Actress.

For details, call Huda Tabbara on 39682323.



# A feast for the senses

**FOOD REVIEW**  
By NAMAN ARORA  
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**N**EARLY five years of reviewing the variety of culinary options that Bahrain has to offer can be distilled to one question that I keep trying to answer: When is food just sustenance and how does it become something more?

At the Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay's weekly Friday brunch last week, I was offered a rich and resounding response, and in no less than three parts - variety, quality and unity.

But first, let's set the scene for this feast for all senses - the Bahrain Bay Kitchen, nestled beside the Bahrain Bay offering both indoor and outdoor seating, presenting the perfect opportunity to enjoy the country's breezy winters.

For this adventure, we found ourselves seated inside beside the floor-to-ceiling windows, with perfect views of the afternoon's stars - the mouth-watering food stations, the stunning live performers and the lush gardens set against gentle waves.

Although I have been fortunate to have enjoyed the brunch before, every time we go, there would be a fun and surprising addition to the spread. The sheer variety - both within the brunch and between the weekly offerings - made up the first part of the Four Seasons' response to my question.

As I chatted with the sous-chef Theofilos Chairopoulos,



**RICH FLAVOURS:** Chef Ayman carves up a slice

he highlighted the keystone of this month's brunch offerings - the fondue station.

With a variety of cheese options including Swiss Gruyère, French Comté, Italian Fontina, and more, I was offered a number of bespoke options to customise the bowl of cheesy goodness that eventually wafted over to our table.

Although the meat and pure cheese options were tempting, we went for the sublime Seafood Fondue, cooked with lobster, shrimp, scallops and salmon, all simmering in a flavourful broth with melted butter and served alongside a selection of pickled vegetables, cured meats and freshly baked bread.

As our table quickly devoured it and ordered another, Chef Theofilos filled me in as to what the brunch



**Chef Imad**

will offer next month to mark Valentine's Day.

"Throughout the month of love, the Bahrain Bay Kitchen will be introducing romantic starters like Oysters Rockefeller and heart-shaped bruschetta, as well as love potion mocktails to go with the theme," he explained.

Finishing up our appetisers with a selection of ceviche, sushi and Arabic starters

courtesy of oriental specialty Chef Tony El Khoury, who is heading the hotel's newest restaurant Byblos, we dove headfirst into the main course.

While my dining companions enjoyed the exquisite Prime Rib and the delicate Wagyu beef, I chose the crispy Korean chicken and sampled udon noodles from the Asian-inspired section.

And here, the quality of the food was on full display as each bite tangoed with our taste buds, to a symphony of sweet, spice and everything nice.

Paired with our food was a selection of winter-inspired mocktails, which also change regularly to match the theme of the overall buffet.

And finally, with our main stomachs full to the brim, our separate bellies for dessert yearned for a taste of the



**IRRISISTIBLE:** Chef Theofilos shows off the cheese fondue



**MUSICAL:** The live performers for last week's brunch

action, and we began the brave and slow pilgrimage around the sweets.

Executive pastry chef Imad Boukli walked us through some of the special desserts he had created for the buffet, ranging from a too-pretty-to-be-touched chocolate cake, delectable mousse cups, a delightful winter-berry carrot cake, and several fruit-shaped desserts, begging to be cracked open.

As we sipped on our coffees with our stomachs and souls fulfilled, enjoying the live performances, I came to appreciate the unity and harmony that makes each of these brunches happen, as teams from different restaurants come together, not just to feed their guests, but to make each diner's

experience an especially unforgettable one. And they elevate their food into a legendary journey, week after week, every Friday.

The feast takes place every Friday from 1pm to 4pm, with a number of packages - a brunch package inclusive of soft beverages, is priced at BD35, while enjoying the spread with selected beverages costs BD48 per person. There is also an exclusive bubbly package priced at BD65. Children under the age of six can enjoy the brunch with the hotel's compliments, while those aged six to 12 enjoy 50 percent savings.

For reservations, email [diningreservations.bahrain@fourseasons.com](mailto:diningreservations.bahrain@fourseasons.com) or call 17115500.

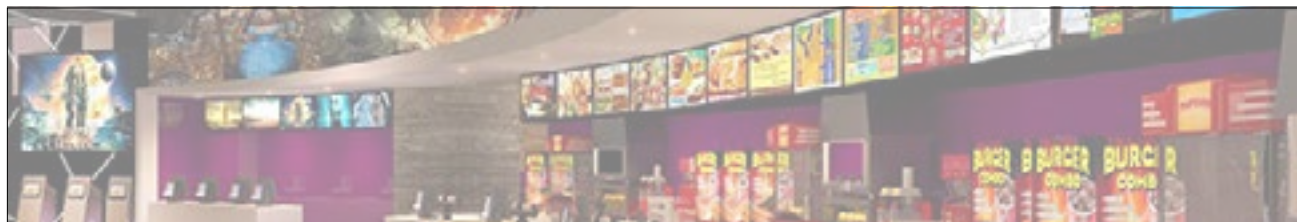


**VARIETY:** The Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay's team show off the Asian noodle station



**TREATS:** The dessert station, set up with winter-themed decorations





# Emotional expressi



## ART REPORT

By MELISSA NAZARETH  
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**B**AHRAIN-BASED artist, architect and sculptor Sudeep Deshpande is showcasing his collection of artworks that portray the complexity of relationships and emotions using his signature style of abstract designs and geometric shapes.

Sudeep's 13th solo exhibition *You and Me*, featuring a collection of his latest works and old ones, some of which haven't been previously exhibited, is being held at Bahrain Art Gallery's outlet on Exhibition Road.

"My compositions are an expression of bonding, love, attachment, affection and separation between two individuals," the 43-year-old told *GulfWeekly*. "At the same time, they depict society and its perception towards these individuals who have the conviction to survive the 'thin of time'."

Sudeep believes it's the subject matter that decides the colour palette, size or scale of the artwork, and its orientation.

"I have used a limited range of hues for this particular collection as I have portrayed relationships and emotions in their truest form, as they exist, without any improvisation. A minimalistic approach works best for this. My works are purely a self-expression of bohemian ideas and they are an honest interpretation of the world.

"The line work in my creations shows the intersection of one form into another, which represents an individual's involvement with the other and vice versa.

"I believe that emotions, moods and thoughts have their own geometry, their own lines, their own mass and their own space. Identifying the form of the mood and executing it has always been my interest and intention, and in doing so, painting becomes educational for me," the Manama resident noted.

An abstract artist who enjoys interpreting his daily life on canvas, Sudeep feels



CONTRAST:  
*Jimmy* inspired  
by clown Jimmy  
Armstrong's  
sensitive side.

relationships are a reflection of our being. The experience of human attachment and reciprocation deeply inspires his work and never fails to spark his creativity. The universal nature of his pieces, he believes, makes them relatable to a wide audience.

"*You and Me*, the exhibition's namesake artwork, is one of the creations that stands out for me. It depicts the emotions of a couple, holding on to each other, and their dynamic with the society that they exist in.

"I've used shades of green, black and ochre but there's a mix of grey in every hue, depicting grey times or phases in life.

"The human forms on the

attire of the left hand side male subject are symbolic of the responsibilities he 'wears' and feels toward his loved ones, and the hand of the female figure on the

right, resting on the man's shoulder, shows her support and willingness to stand by him," Sudeep, who owns an interior and landscape design firm in Bahrain, said.

*Separation*, another piece close to his heart, is an abstract interpretation of a broken relationship.

Sudeep believes that our emotions have personalities and this artwork personifies how a relationship might look like after separation using scattered forms as visuals.

"The medium here is a mix



Sudeep



RELATIONSHIPS: *You and Me* depicting the emotions of a couple and their dynamic with society.



JOURNEY: A couple in various phases of life.

of canvas and paper. Paper is fragile and I used it to portray 'patch-ups or compromises' in relationships.

"I feel the energy in a relationship at the brink of separation is quite alive and therefore, the colour scheme of the random geometric forms is a palette of yellows, whites and reds, depicting the vibrant bond in its final state. In contrast, the black and grey background shows finality.

"The artwork has been composed on a square canvas as opposed to any other shape to express the framed

and square nature of the situation," he added, meaning the square shape shows the rigidity of the situation.

Having an art career spanning two decades, Sudeep holds a Bachelors in Architecture from the University of Pune, in the Indian state of Maharashtra.

The 'poet by nature' arrived in Bahrain 15 years ago and is currently living in the kingdom with his wife Snigdha Deshpande and his cats.

Coming from a family of creatives, his father a sculptor



SEPARATION: Sudeep's abstract interpretation of a broken relationship.



GEOMETRIC:  
Cubes  
representing  
moments  
lived and  
attachments.

and painter and his mother, a musician, Sudeep has had an artistic upbringing and was exposed to music, poetry and visual arts from an early age.

A member of the Bahrain Writers' Circle, he has also displayed his poems at Confluence, the group's annual poetry and art exhibition held at Bahrain Financial Harbour in October. Sudeep writes poems in Hindi and Urdu languages and has won multiple accolades for



Weekly

Ons



orotation of a broken relationship.



his poetic pursuits.

He will be part of a group exhibition titled *Sailing Through Time*, next month, where he will display his creations alongside other artists in Bahrain. The collection will feature more than 45 paintings and sculptures by 11 creatives.

The solo exhibition *You and Me* will run until February 15.

For details, follow @sudeep\_deshpande3 on Instagram.

**O**VERLOOKING the northern Juffair coastline, amidst the vibrant atmosphere of the bustling city, the Hilton Bahrain has become more than just a luxury hotel; it has transformed into a football haven during the AFC Asian Cup and Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON), writes Jayne Houghton.

The five-star hotel's grandeur takes on a new dimension as it hosts an impressive Fanzone, where football enthusiasts unite to celebrate the beautiful game in an environment that is nothing short of spectacular.

From the moment we stepped into the dedicated area, the energy was palpable. The Hilton Bahrain has spared no effort in creating an immersive experience that caters to both avid football fans and casual observers alike.

One of the standout features of the Fanzone is its strategic location within the hotel premises. Placed in a spacious outdoor area, Cocoluna lounge extension is on the sixth floor, the area is adorned with a plethora of televisions and a mighty big screen at one end of the zone to ensure that every angle offers a prime view of the match. Comfortable outdoor seating with the added luxury of huge bean bags provide that extra bit of snug whilst watching the game.

The culinary offerings at the Fanzone deserve a special mention. The Hilton Bahrain has curated a diverse menu featuring football favourites such as Mexican nachos, jalapeño cheese bites, pepperoni pizza, mini beef sliders and Bavarian hot dogs. The selection of mocktails and premium drinks are served ice cold, and are a welcome refreshment whilst watching the game. The availability of themed food and beverage options adds an extra layer of excitement, allowing guests to savour the flavours of victory with every goal scored.

The pepperoni pizza, crafted with attention to quality and flavour, costs BD6 and stands out as a



COSY: A plethora of screens for your viewing pleasure

# Celebrate football at Hilton



YUMMY: Food favourites for football fans

crowd favourite. The Hilton Bahrain's culinary team has curated a delectable

pizza with a soft dough and generously layered toppings, creating a pizza experience

try. They were a moreish snack with perfectly grilled sausages on a bed of sauerkraut nestled in soft, warm buns.

Adding to the excitement within the Hilton Bahrain's Asian Cup Fanzone, the atmosphere reached a fever pitch as fans witnessed a hard-fought match between Bahrain and Malaysia. In a nail-biting encounter, Bahrain emerged victorious with a heart-stopping last-minute goal deep into stoppage time, securing a 1-0 win. The eruption of cheers and jubilation within the Fanzone mirrored the intensity on the field, as supporters revelled in the triumph of their national team.

The dramatic victory over Malaysia has set the stage for an even more riveting journey for Bahrain in the Asian Cup. As the nation celebrates the win, attention now turns to the upcoming clash with Jordan tomorrow. With hopes high and anticipation building, Hilton Bahrain's Fanzone is the perfect spot to watch the crucial match that will determine Bahrain's fate in the tournament.

Tomorrow's clash with Jordan holds the promise of more drama and suspense, and the Hilton Bahrain's Fanzone is poised to be the epicentre of emotions, once again. The anticipation of potential qualification for the knockout rounds adds an extra layer of significance to the upcoming match, turning the Fanzone into a nerve centre of support for Bahrain's national team.

The Hilton Bahrain's Fanzone has not only provided a platform for fans to enjoy the matches but has also become a communal space where the highs and lows of the Asian Cup journey are shared collectively.

As Bahrain looks ahead to the crucial encounter with Jordan, the power of football is evident in its ability to unite people from diverse backgrounds in a shared celebration of sport, pride, and national identity.

The stage is set for another unforgettable chapter in football history, and the Hilton Bahrain's Fanzone is ready to host the passionate supporters.

For more information, call 77010100.



REFRESHING: A mocktail to quench your thirst

that complements the thrilling football action.

The sliders (BD6), another culinary delight at the Fanzone, offer a perfect bite-sized indulgence. They are meticulously prepared, showcasing a symphony of flavours in each compact serving. The buns are soft and pillowy, the patties succulent, and the accompanying toppings add a burst of freshness.

For those craving a classic game-day treat, the Bavarian hotdogs (BD5) are a must-



# Pulse of Pop

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



MAGICAL JOURNEY:  
A scene from the  
*Polar Express* film

**A** HOLIDAY classic may soon have a sequel in the works.

American film and television producer and actor Gary Goetzman has said that he has his sights set on doing a sequel to *Polar Express* (2004), during an interview with *ComicBook.com*.

It has been 20 years since the first *Polar Express* was released and Gary teased that the second movie could go 'even further' regarding animation and detail.

"So, they all take time and that's okay because we don't mind things going slowly," said Goetzman.

"But that is trying to be worked out now, for sure, *Polar 2*, yes."

The 2004 animated Christmas adventure fantasy film is based on the 1985 children's book *The Polar Express*, written by Chris Van Allsburg. The movie was the first of its kind to use a digital capture style for its animation and was listed in

## RIDE AGAIN ON THE POLAR EXPRESS!

the 2006 Guinness World Records.

Digital capture style is a technology that blends real life and animation.

Set on Christmas Eve, the film tells the tale of a young boy who is coming to an age where he doubts Santa Claus' existence. That is until he boards the Polar Express, a magical train destined for the North Pole.

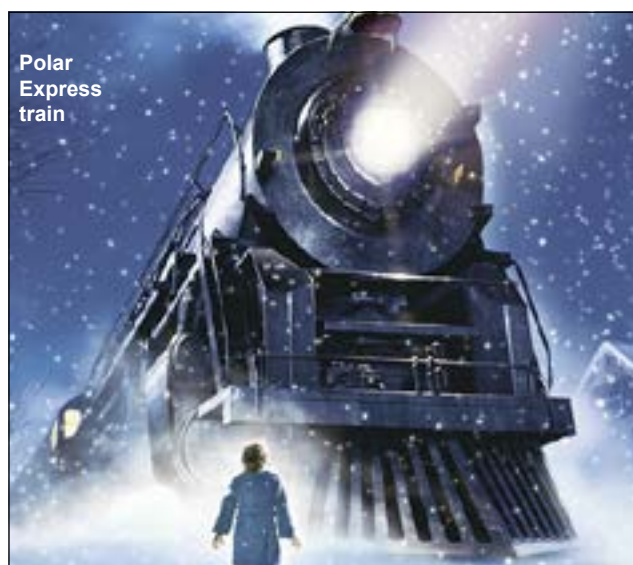
The train takes him and other young children on a magical journey to strengthen their belief in Santa Claus.

Recognised for its technological innovation,

the film which starred Tom Hanks, grossed \$314.2 million at the worldwide box office.

Other cast members included Ashly Holloway, Nona Gaye, Hayden McFarland, Peter Scolari, Jimmy Pinchak, Matthew Hall, Daryl Sabara and more.

In December 2023, fans were anxiously awaiting an official announcement about the possibility of a second film when a *Polar Express* poster began to circulate online. Although fake, the poster had sparked a frenzy, with fans hoping it was real.



Polar  
Express  
train



Dolly

## IT'S HAPPY 78, DOLLY

**C**OUNTRY legend Dolly Parton celebrated her 78th birthday in style by giving fans new songs and covers with the release of her new deluxe album.

The American singer took to her *Instagram* on Friday and shared a heart-warming post to mark the special day with her loyal fans.

"Hey fans and friends, it's my birthday so I'm going to give you a present," Dolly shared.

"I've come out with four never-released songs for my birthday, to go with the *Rockstar* album, and a few others that you may have heard before that were not on the album. I hope you enjoy them, and I hope you all have a happy birthday for me!"

*Rockstar's* deluxe version features nine new tracks such as *Rockin' it*, *Mama Never Said* and *Stay out of My Bedroom*. It also includes covers of Eddie Money's *Two Tickets to Paradise* and Eurythmic's *Sweet Dreams Are Made of This*.

In November 2023, the country star joined forces with some of rock music's most legendary artists and released her 49th solo studio album *Rockstar* with Butterfly Records and Big Machine Records. The album initially featured nine original tracks and 21 iconic rock anthems.

In its first week, the album sold more than 127,000 units which beat her initial 1993 achievement of selling 50,000 copies of her album *Slow Dancing With the Moon*.



PROUD:  
Usher with  
his awards

## BACK WITH A BANG

**U**SHER fans are anxiously awaiting the release of the star's upcoming album *Coming Home*.

The American singer's ninth studio album is set to be released on February 9, which is almost six years since his last studio album was released.

On Saturday, he tweeted, "I know it's been a minute... but y'all ready for this album? I'm so excited for you to hear it and all its greatness."

Thus far, the only details about the LP are that it has 20 tracks and that three of those have been released: *Good Good* featuring Summer Walker and 21 Savage, *Risk It All* with H.E.R.

for *The Color Purple* soundtrack and *Standing Next to You (Remix)* with K-Pop sensation Jung Kook.

The release comes just in time as Usher is scheduled to perform at the Super Bowl halftime show on February 11, meaning, his album will be released just two days before his highly-anticipated performance.

*Coming Home* is expected to feature 20 songs, including four interludes.

Widely recognised as an influential figure in contemporary R&B music, the star has received multiple awards and nominations, including eight Grammys, 35 ASCAO Awards, 18 Billboard Music Awards, eight American Music Awards and more.



# Madrid beckons

PICTURE IT: An artist's impression of the grandstand

THE Spanish city of the ‘Oso y el Madroño’ (Bear and the Strawberry Tree) has been announced as the newest addition to the Formula 1 calendar, starting in 2026, setting off a flurry of speculation about the fate of the Barcelona Grand Prix.

Yesterday, F1 announced that the Spanish Grand Prix will be held in Madrid from 2026 to 2035 following an agreement with Institución Ferial de Madrid (IFEMA) to bring an all-new circuit to the Spanish capital, incorporating both street and non-street sections.

“Madrid is an incredible city with amazing sporting and cultural heritage, and today’s announcement begins an exciting new chapter for F1 in Spain,” said F1 chief executive and president Stefano Domenicali.

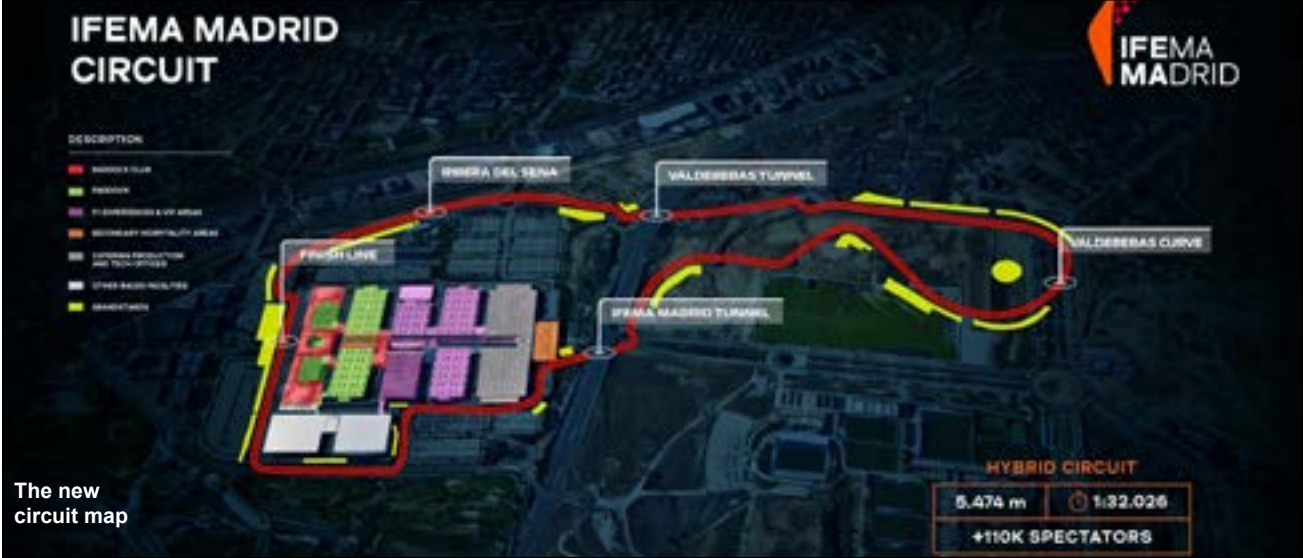
“It truly epitomises Formula 1’s vision to create a multi-day spectacle of sport and entertainment that delivers maximum value for fans and embraces innovation and sustainability.”

Built around the IFEMA exhibition centre, the anticipated 5.47km circuit will feature 20 corners, with a projected qualifying lap time of one minute 32 seconds.

It is set to host 110,000 fans per day, with plans to grow the circuit’s capacity to 140,000 per day during the first five years, making Madrid one of the largest venues on the F1 calendar.

“Modern Formula 1 cars racing on a new circuit in the Spanish capital city of Madrid is an enticing prospect,” added Fédération Internationale de l’Automobile (FIA) president Mohammed Ben Sulayem.

“As we build towards the



introduction of the FIA 2026 Formula One regulations, which have been framed with Net Zero carbon by 2030 in mind, it is pleasing to see that the local organisers have placed a sharp focus on environmental sustainability in their plans for the event.

“As is customary, the proposed circuit will be subject to FIA homologation (approval) and safety checks and calendar approval by the World Motor Sport Council.”

Located five minutes from the Madrid-Barajas Adolfo Suarez airport, it is estimated that 90 per cent of fans will be able to travel to the paddock via public transport, while those staying in nearby accommodation will be a short walk away from the venue.

In addition to the Grand Prix, fan activations will take place in Downtown Madrid. The F1 Grand Prix is expected to generate a projected €450m to the city’s economy per year.

“Our dream of hosting a major F1 event around

IFEMA has come true,” said IFEMA executive committee president Jose Vicente de los Mozos.

“We are thrilled to announce the return of F1 to Madrid after more than four decades.

“With this, Madrid wants to deep dive into the development of a new concept that combines sport and entertainment, while delivering a memorable event.”

Madrid mayor Jose Luis Martinez-Almeida noted that with the latest addition to the 2026 racing calendar, “Madrid moves into the future and joins the exclusive group of cities hosting F1 today.”

Meanwhile, experts and industry veterans have

been questioning what this might mean for the current Spanish Grand Prix being held at Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya in Barcelona, which is one of the oldest races in the world still being contested.

The first-ever Spanish Grand Prix was held more than 100 years ago, at the Catalunya circuit in 1913. However, there is no official word on the fate of the circuit, which celebrated the centenary of its first ever F1 race last year and is confirmed to be on the calendar until 2025 at least.

The new addition of Madrid will not change the 2024 F1 calendar, which was announced in July last year and will kick off in Bahrain in just over a month.

## OFFICIAL F1 CALENDAR 2024

Feb 29-Mar 2	Sakhir, Bahrain	Jul 19-21	Budapest, Hungary
Mar 7-9	Jeddah, Saudi Arabia	Jul 26-28	Spa, Belgium
Mar 22-24	Melbourne, Australia	Aug 23-25	Zandvoort, Netherlands
Apr 5-7	Suzuka, Japan	Aug 30-Sept 1	Monza, Italy
Apr 19-21	Shanghai, China	Sept 13-15	Baku, Azerbaijan
May 3-5	Miami, USA	Sept 20-22	Singapore
May 17-19	Imola, Italy	Oct 18-20	Austin, USA
May 24-26	Monaco	Oct 25-27	Mexico City, Mexico
Jun 7-9	Montreal, Canada	Nov 1-3	Sao Paulo, Brazil
Jun 21-23	Barcelona, Spain	Nov 21-23	Las Vegas, USA
Jun 28-30	Spielberg, Austria	Nov 29-Dec 1	Lusail, Qatar
Jul 5-7	Silverstone, UK	Dec 6-8	Yas Marina, Abu Dhabi



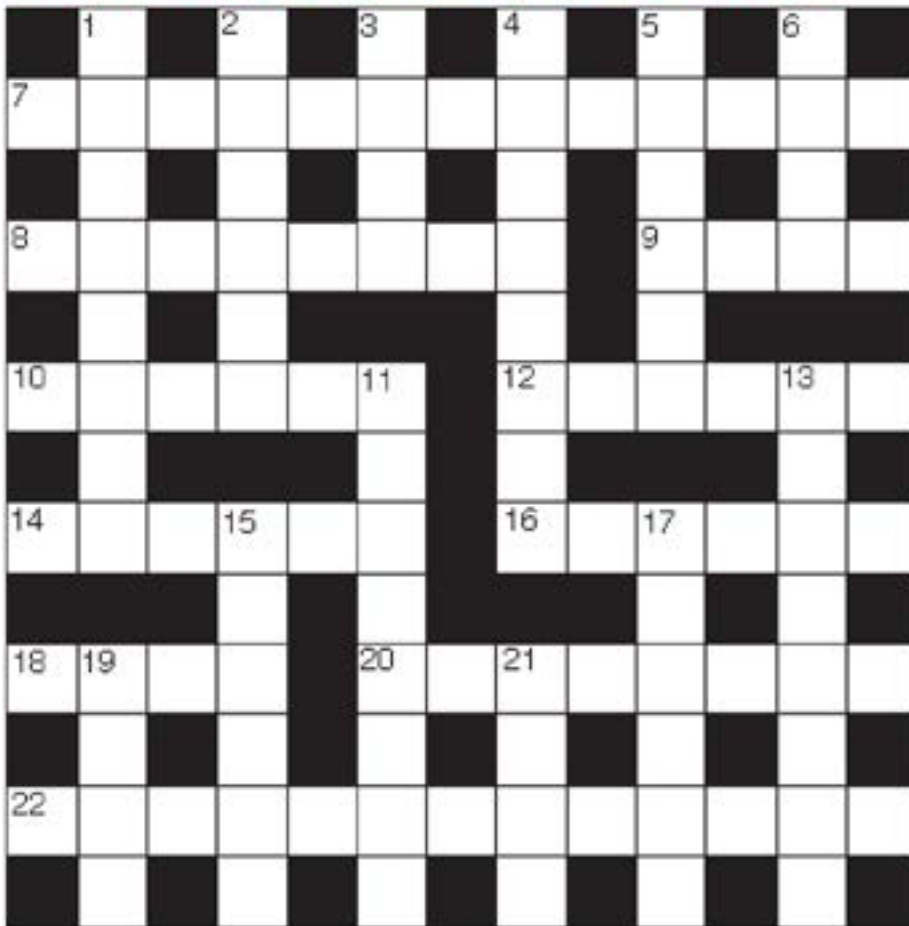
# Time Out



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## crossword break



Solutions in next week's issue.

### ACROSS

7. Defencelessness (13)
8. Mercy (8)
9. Hypocrisy (4)
10. Incentive (6)
12. Nativist (6)
14. Neglect (6)
16. Wrap (6)
18. Burlesque (4)
20. Familiar (8)
22. Rebel (13)

### DOWN

1. Construction (8)
2. Beast (6)
3. Press (4)
4. Suspension (8)
5. Serene (6)
6. Stupefy (4)
11. Former (8)
13. Lone (8)
15. Choice (6)
17. Excite (6)
19. Retain (4)
21. Labour (4)

### who, what, where, when

WHO ... wrote, directed and appeared in the 1969 short film *Rhubarb*?  
WHAT ... year is prominent on The Great Seal of the US State of Minnesota?  
WHERE ... in Asia is the state of Uttaranchal?  
WHEN ... did the Oakland Raiders first win the SuperBowl?  
WHO ... played Ted Brautigan in the film *Hearts in Atlantis*?  
WHAT ... Bob Dylan studio album features the song *Sad Eyed Lady of the Lowlands*?  
WHERE ... is Ian McEwan's novel *The Comfort of Strangers* set?  
WHEN ... did British Columbia join the Confederation of Canada?

### just so

corporal



betrayal

si n de job

## 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

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

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

### darn tough sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

### Last Week's Leisure Solutions

#### CROSSWORD BREAK:

Across: 1 Pass; 8 Unreadable; 9 Forebode; 10 Each; 12 Appear; 14 Skinny; 15 Remiss; 17 Pilfer; 18 Less; 19 Ill-treat; 21 Four-footed; 22 Even.

Down: 2 Atmosphere; 3 Sure; 4 Ardour; 5 Caress; 6 Material; 7 Mesh; 11 Conveyance; 13 Emissary; 16 Sailor; 17 Polite; 18 Left; 20 Rude.

JUST SO: Come to the fore, A case in point, The bottom of the barrel, All things being equal.

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN:

Wayne Grady; The Hours by Michael Cunningham; Wareham, Dorset; 1989; Virginia Woolf; You Don't Have To Say You Love Me; Egdon Heath; 2001

### Darn Tough Sudoku

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