

FILM REPORT
By MELISSA NAZARETH
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SCOTTISH-BAHRAINI thespian Ghazi Al Ruffai's latest thriller film *28 Years Later* is entertaining audiences worldwide, shining a bright spotlight on the kingdom's cinematic talent.

The 25-year-old, who attended St Christopher's School, is also set to star in the sequel *28 Years Later: The Bone Temple*, which will release in January next year.

28 Years Later is the third instalment in the series, following *28 Days Later* (2002) and *28 Weeks Later* (2007), and explores the second outbreak of the 'Rage' virus.

There are plans for a fifth film *28 Years Later Part 3*.

A group of survivors from the first outbreak live on a small island. When a member of the group leaves the island on a mission to the mainland, he discovers a mutation that has spread to not only the infected, but other survivors as well.

"Filming *28 Years Later* was simply wild! Everything was very tight-lipped during the audition process, so I never knew I'd be playing a key role," said the former Riffa resident who currently lives in London and brings 'Jimmy Snake' alive on the big screen.

During the initial outbreak of the virus, Jimmy (played by a different child actor) flees from his house after his family gets infected. While taking shelter at a local church, he finds his father, a local vicar, who gives him a necklace and urges him to escape, succumbing to the virus in the process.

"I make my first appearance at the end of the first film as part of the cliff-hanger, and the lead-up was intense. We had weeks of stunt training, which consisted of fight choreography, acrobatics and weaponry," he added.

Elaborating on his experience filming, the creative talent who lived in Bahrain for 19 years before moving to the UK said: "The whole thing was so surreal; I still pinch myself about it. Above all, to be directed by Danny Boyle, a true legend



ACTION: Ghazi in his element on set with other cast and crew

To be directed by Danny Boyle, a true legend that I have admired for so long, was a dream come true. Being able to work with legends such as Ralph Fiennes and Jack O'Connell was like witnessing a masterclass in acting daily.



HEROIC ADVENTURES
New book release
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EERIE: The film's poster



TOY FEVER
Labubu in Bahrain
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LEISURE SCENE
Out and about
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CONTENT CREATOR: Ghazi

that I have admired for so long, was a dream come true. Being able to work with legends such as Ralph Fiennes and Jack O'Connell was like witnessing a masterclass in acting daily. On top of that, my fellow Jimmies and I truly became a family. We all just clicked instantly that it felt like we had known each other for years."

Ghazi has always had the 'acting bug' in him and was an 'expressive' child growing up, forcing his siblings to join him and put on shows for their parents. However, he did not think it could happen. That changed during his years studying at St Christopher's School.

"At St Christopher's, I was able to explore drama in an academic setting. The drama department was incredibly supportive, and that encouragement helped me take acting a bit more seriously," he said.

However, a real turning point came when Ghazi joined the Mekan School of Speech and Drama and met its founder

and acting instructor Ruqaya Aamer, who helped him hone his craft and find his voice as an actor. "I credit so much of my growth and success to her," he noted.

The actor, who visits regularly, was in Bahrain in January this year when he visited St Christopher's and gave a talk to Year 12 and 13 drama and acting students, sharing his journey and offering tips.

After graduating school, Ghazi moved to the UK in 2018 to pursue acting professionally and trained at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama and the Guildford School of Acting. Towards the end of his studies

at Guildford, he landed an agent and it has been 'go go go' ever since.

His past projects include *Layla* (2024), and the docu-drama *Lockerbie: A Search for Truth* (2025), in which he portrayed Khaled Megrahi.

In addition to his screen work, Ghazi is a prominent content creator on social media, where his comedic and character-driven videos have built a dedicated following of more than 200,000. He is passionate about using his platform to challenge stereotypes and spotlight under-represented voices in the industry.

● See Page 5 for movie timings



PULSE OF POP
Movies, music & more
SEE PAGE 6

Silver screen sensation

Enter the world of fantasy



WORD MAGICIAN: Bader



BOOK REPORT

By MELISSA NAZARETH
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BAHRAINI author Bader Alsadeqi's new titles, *The Wayfall Kidnapping* and *His Heroic Worth*, are set to hit the shelves this month, transporting readers to a fantastic world of dwarves, elves, knights, princesses and more.

The 75-page *The Wayfall Kidnapping* is a villainous caper-crime fantasy novella – the creative talent's first attempt at the sub-genre.

"I wanted to try a story with more villain-centric characters," the 32-year-old told *GulfWeekly*, explaining his experience with the style.

"All the stories I write take place in the same fantasy world, but independent of each other, and while all have a focus on action and adventure, their characters are not necessarily all heroic. Writing a caper-crime novella added more fun and flexibility in my storytelling.

"The challenge was coming up with a more straightforward story while maintaining some fun and excitement, especially with the focus on villains as main characters. I felt this was something different, and I found the experience very enjoyable," he added.

A caper story is a type of crime fiction and unlike straight crime has elements of humour, adventure or unusual cleverness – the main character often exhibits comical idiosyncrasies and law enforcement individuals are typically incompetent.

Wayfall Kidnapping is set in the glittering city of Wayfall. The story explores a daring team of women, each with an unapologetic history involving crime,



UNVEILED: The book covers



who are brought together for a job that might catapult them to fame or to the darkness of death.

The novella is part of Bader's *Daedalusian Legends* series, which currently comprises seven titles, including the new books.

"Writing these fantasy fictions has been a journey of weaving intricate plots, crafting more or less morally complex characters, and balancing the thrills with the depth of world-building," said the IT-systems analyst and holder of a Bachelor's degree in Information

Technology and Security from NYIT.

"One of the greatest highlights has been watching the story evolve, seeing characters surprise me, twists unfold naturally, and the world take on a life of its own.

"The biggest challenge? Ensuring the mystery remains sharp while keeping the fantasy elements immersive and believable.

"I've been working on these stories for over a month or more, refining every detail to make the adventure as gripping as possible."

Blending action, adventure,

and other tropes of traditional heroic fantasy, sword and sorcery, *His Heroic Worth* is a 54-page short story and tells the tale of Prince Ronvid of Novidraken and Princess Philippa of Corniashire, who have long been betrothed – their union arranged to unite two neighbouring kingdoms.

As the day of their long-awaited wedding draws near, the young couple temporarily escapes courtly life for a private retreat.

But their idyllic getaway turns into a disaster when a vicious wyvern descends from the skies, abducting Philippa, setting the stage for 'a crucible of devotion, valour and chivalry', one that will truly test Ronvid.

Bader has been passionate about fantasy and science fiction ever since he was a young boy, which inspired him to write stories of his own. His books are a testament to his 'wild imagination', which he dreams of sharing with others.

All of Bader's books are available on Amazon.



FICTION: An action-packed read with knights, princesses and imaginary folk

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) In *Family Guy*, what is the name of the street the Griffin family live on?
- 2) Budgerigars of all sorts of colours have been developed by breeders. What colour are they in the wild?
- 3) American artist Shepard Fairey, famously created an iconic painting called *Hope*, depicting which US president?
- 4) The Canadian one dollar coin is commonly known as the 'Loonie'. What is a Loon?
- 5) What do the stripes on the American flag represent?
- 6) Tick-Tack-Toe is an



alternative name for which game?
7) What body of water lies between Egypt and Saudi Arabia?

ANSWERS
1. Spooner Street
2. Green
3. Barack Obama
4. Bird
5. The 13 original British colonies
6. Noughts and Crosses
7. The Red Sea



WORRY: Moving countries for a new job can be stressful

SPEAK YOUR MIND

CHANGE is the only constant, they say, and rightly so.

All of us have at some point or the other experienced a life transition, whether it is a trailing spouse trying to settle in a new country or a child who has had to change schools and make new friends.

Most of us have resisted when faced with similar situations, clinging on to the old and wary of what lies ahead, which can impact our mental health.

Our July Speak Your Mind topic explores 'how navigating transitions can have a negative impact on mental health'.

Write to us, in about 100

words, how you might have embraced a major life change. Email gdnnews@gdnmedia.bh by July 30 or follow @gdnonline on Instagram. The most creatively written entries will be featured in the paper – only original responses will be considered.



All dolled up!



TREND REPORT

By MELISSA NAZARETH
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LABUBU mania has reached Bahrain's shores, with fans and collectors across ages tapping into the viral trend. So, what is it about the ubiquitous monster doll that makes it so covetable? Read on to find out.

For the uninitiated, Labubu is a plush toy and figurine, which is part of 'The Monsters' series created by Hong Kong-based artist Kasing Lung.

Based on Nordic mythology, it is known for its playful, mischievous nature, has a vinyl face and no tail. Some would even say it flaunts an eerie smile that is hard to miss. Other characters in the universe include Zimomo, Tycoco, Spooky and Pato.

Introduced 10 years ago as part of a picture book series, the doll gained popularity after Pop Mart started selling it in 2019; the key ring accessory is available on their official website for more than \$100 a pop.

A selection of online and physical stores in Bahrain are also selling the toy and limited editions of it – the original ones are priced between BD18 and more than BD25 a piece, while the knock-offs can be purchased for as less as BD1.500.

It will also be available at the Bahrain Summer Toy Festival being staged at Exhibition World Bahrain, Sakhir, until August 5.



FUN: The life-sized Mega Labubu 'Tony Chopper'

Recently, social media influencers have been opening the mystery boxes they come in online, promoting the Exciting Macaron range as a handbag accessory, further boosting the doll's rise to global fame and marking its entry into the world of fashion.

Some celebrities who have been spotted with the toy dangling on their handbag are the Grammy Award-winning Rihanna, American socialite Kim Kardashian, Grammy and Brit Awards-winning Dua Lipa and Bollywood Gen Z heartthrob Ananya Panday.

With the trend sweeping across the Gulf, digital influencers and well-known personalities in the region

have also posted their love for Labubu on their social media pages.

Arab beauty brand owner Huda Kattan,

who founded Huda Beauty, also unboxed a Labubu on her *TikTok* page and, most recently, posted a reel of herself eating a 'Labubu Dubai chocolate', while putting the longevity of one of her lip products to the test.

Bahraini collector Samar Busheri, who has been collecting vintage dolls and has an online store for Labubus, observed that the trend started in Kuwait. Bahrain caught on around two months ago.

"Adults and children in Bahrain are buying Labubus now but this trend is an old one – I got mine three years ago," the graffiti artist from Manama told *GulfWeekly*.

"The adults who buy for themselves are in the age group of 18 to 40 and others buy it to make their children happy," she added.

Bahraini mother-of-one Maryam Husain believes that Labubus are a harmless little joy, and there's nothing wrong with children getting excited about it.

"But it's also a good chance to remind them that happiness isn't about buying things or always

wanting more," the 38-year-old added.

Bahrain-based Russian expatriate and artist Alexandra Novik-Khamis believes that Labubus' 'odd and slightly creepy but cute' appearance makes them highly shareable on social media.

"There is the element of exclusivity, making it a collectable," she said.

"When certain versions are limited edition or hard to find, it adds to the hype and desire," added the 36-year-old, who has always loved toys and

TRENDY: Rihanna sporting the handbag accessory



What do you think of the trend? Is it fun or is it overhyped? Write to us on gdnnews @gdnmedia.bh or follow @GDNOnline on Instagram.

miniature collectables and, though she is not a big fan of the Labubu character, she owns one and finds the popularity surrounding the toy 'fascinating'.

Like everything, Labubu also has two sides to the coin, with criticisms surrounding the hype – 'they're scary', 'they're too expensive'...

Many have tagged the trend as capitalist and feeding a culture of overconsumption, especially since it is packaged as a blind box, 'forcing' buyers to make repeat purchases until they get their desired Labubu.

The fashion world is also divided on the trend, with Sarah Jessica Parker, who is known for her style, especially after playing the lead character in the long-running series *Sex and the City*, offering an 'amused' and 'bewildered' look when asked about the ring accessories.

American personality

INTERESTING FACTS

- While Kasing was the artist behind the 'loveable' Labubu, Pop Mart chief executive Wang Ning now owns the rights to the doll.
- According to latest reports, Wang's net worth is presently \$22.7 billion, making him the 10th richest man in China.
- An original Labubu has exactly nine teeth, which helps spot the fakes like the 'Lafufu'.
- More than 300 different variations of the doll have been released since they were first made in 2019.
- The most expensive Labubu to be sold till date is the Mint Green human-sized doll, priced at more than \$150,000 due to its unique size and craftsmanship.

Alexandra Cooper, who hosts the popular podcast *Call Her Daddy*, asked the celebrity about the trend to which she responded, 'What is that?', sparking several debates that question if Labubus as an accessory are 'sophisticated' or 'polished' enough.



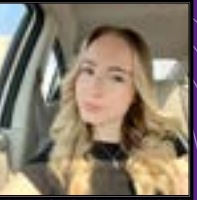
VARIETIES: From the Fall in Wild series



ACCESSORY: Chestnut Cocoa Labubu from the Exciting Macaron series

Leisure Scene

What's on guide by
Julia Cassano



REFRESHING:
Range of
beverages at
Plums



SAVOUR MORE THAN JUST THE FLAVOURS AT RITZ

THE Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain invites guests to savour an amazing summer lunch by the sea this week.

Blending fresh seasonal flavours with stunning waterfront views, La Plage's Soleil Select Lunch promises relaxing moments and exquisite cuisine in an elegant seaside setting.

The special dining experience features a refined three-course menu, inclusive of a salad, main and dessert, paired with a soft drink.

It costs BD18, inclusive of a soft beverage, and guests can enjoy a selected grape beverage for an additional BD5.

It is available everyday from noon to 4pm.

● Meanwhile, dive into a limitless exploration of fresh, expertly rolled uramaki.

Elevate your meal with a curated selection of house grape,

draught hops or signature beverages. It costs BD18.500 per person and an additional BD11 for a selected beverage package, from Sunday to Monday, 1pm to 4pm, at Thai Lounge.

● End the day by gathering with friends at Plums to unwind with refreshing drinks. Priced a la carte, it is available from Sunday to Wednesday, from 5pm to 7pm.

● Join Cantina Kahlo for a feast of bold flavours and festive vibes. Explore an array of mouthwatering dishes made with authentic ingredients, bursting with the vibrant tastes of Mexican cuisine. A resident mariachi band will add to the occasion.

The exquisite dining experience costs BD35 per person, inclusive of soft beverages, and BD45 per person with selected beverages, tomorrow, from 1pm to 4pm.

● Guests can enjoy a new season of sensational flavours at La Table Krug, where each dish is thoughtfully crafted from the finest ingredients.

Priced a la carte, the feast is available from Tuesday to Saturday, 7pm to 11pm.

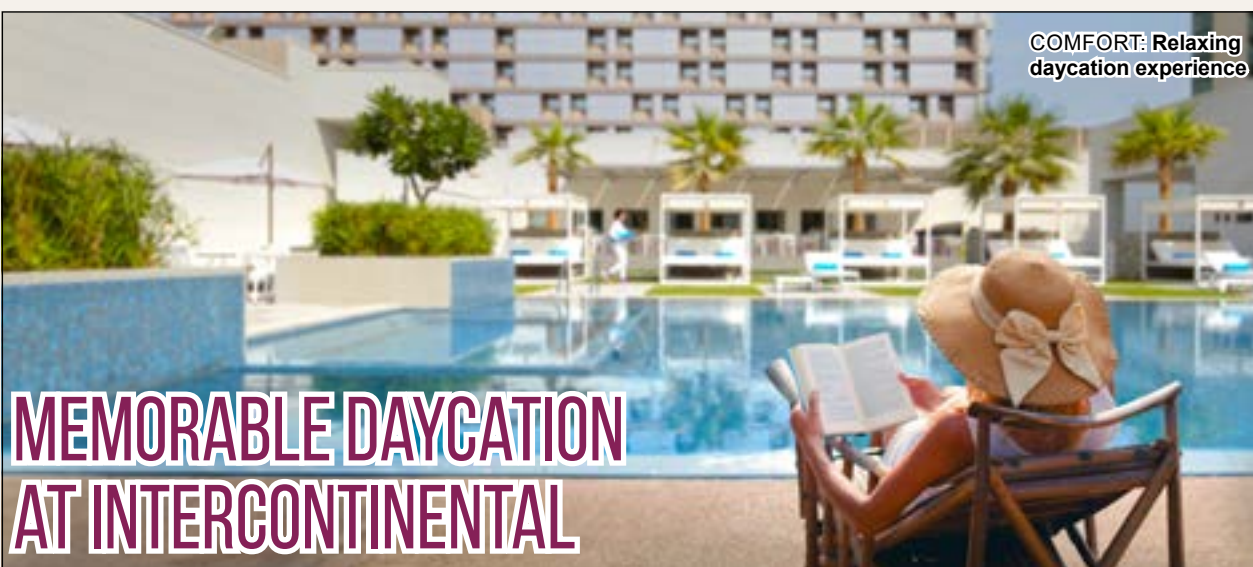
● Choose the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain for an elegant corporate dinner in a beautiful setting. The hotel offers an exclusive package, specially curated with menus, exceptional service and a refined atmosphere to impress.

Foster collaboration and spark creativity with a skilfully planned team-building exercise.

Gather your team together and experience this workshop that aims to provide a purpose-driven experience.

For more information, call 17580000, 17586499, 17586401 or email rc.bahrz.restaurant.reservations@ritzcarlton.com

COMFORT: Relaxing
daycation experience



MEMORABLE DAYCATION AT INTERCONTINENTAL

CELEBRATE 45 years of exceptional hospitality as InterContinental Bahrain presents an exclusive 'daycation' experience designed for comfort, relaxation and family enjoyment.

Available from July to September, the offer includes a floating breakfast for two adults, full access to the swimming pool for two adults and two children under six years, and up to 30 per cent off on dining and massage treatments.

It costs BD45, with daily-use room from 9am to 6pm.

● Experience the final chapter of the Gourmet Master Series with an unforgettable nine-course journey across the world's most celebrated cuisines.

This curated experience highlights the finest dishes from across seasonal tasting menus, uniting signature

techniques, premium ingredients and poetic presentation. It is available on July 23, from 7pm to 10pm, at BD42 net.

● Join Legendz SteakHouse for an elevated brunch featuring buffet stations, a la carte mains and live music. Stations include barbecue, seafood and cheese.

Visit the restaurant tomorrow, July 4, from noon to 4pm. It costs BD28net with soft beverages and BD38net inclusive of selected beverages.

Children under six dine for free, and those aged six to 12 receive a 50pc discount.

● Gather your family and friends and head down to Medzo for a warm and hearty Italian weekend feast. Enjoy unlimited pizza, pasta and salads, featuring delicious weekend specials, all served on family-style platters.

Perfect for sharing with groups of three to six, the offer includes unlimited pizza, pasta and salad, free ice cream for children, garlic bread and sharing platters for BD8.900 per adult and BD4.500 per child (under 15).

Explore the menu tomorrow and Saturday, from noon to 10pm.

● Enjoy exquisite daily menus, such as Mediterranean Monday and Tandoori Thursday, at Selections Restaurant this July and August with a summer-themed buffet rotation for just BD8.900. It is available everyday from noon to 3pm and features light bites, vibrant mains and refreshing desserts. From grilled lemon-herb chicken to tropical quinoa and panna cotta, there is something new and delicious everyday for everyone.

For more information, call 36967701.

VIBRANT SUMMER AT FOUR SEASONS

EXOTIC: Authentic flavours
at re/ASIAN CUISINE



THE Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay is welcoming guests to a lively season of summer events.

From exclusive dining experiences to family-friendly activities and relaxing seaside gatherings, the hotel has curated a diverse programme to make every moment memorable.

Indulge in delicious gelato-filled éclairs, where each one

has been handcrafted with artisanal gelato and layered with gourmet ingredients, at Bay View Lounge. Enjoy bold flavours such as black forest with cherry, banoffee with dulcely mango and more, everyday, from 11.30am until midnight, for BD7.

● Savour authentic flavours and relaxed evenings at re/ASIAN CUISINE, where Asian favourites are reimagined with a bold

Leisure Scene

Weekly Entertainment



AMBIENCE: La Plage's Soleil Select Lunch



SCRUMPTIOUS: Gelato-filled éclairs

Californian twist.

Signature dishes such as Korean Fried Chicken, Bistek Cheesesteak and more will make for an unforgettable evening.

The dining experience is available on Tuesday,

Saturday and Sunday, from 7pm to 11pm, and Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 7pm to 11.30pm. It is priced a la carte.

● Don't miss out on the ultimate tapas experience at Bay View Lounge. Ideal for

sharing, enjoy dishes such as patatas bravas, chicken croquettes and calamari with lemon jam until August 2, from 11.30am until midnight. Prices start from BD7.

● Elevate your weekend with CUT by Wolfgang Puck's Bubbly Brunch. Specially crafted by executive chef Brian Becher and his team, an array of dishes will make for a special day.

It is available every Friday, from 12.30pm to 3.30pm and costs BD70, inclusive of bubbly beverages.

● Rediscover your skin's vitality with the award-winning VIP O2 Oxygenating Facial by Biologique Recherche at The Spa.

Your journey begins with an advanced skin analysis to personalised treatment for your skin's unique needs.

Available everyday from 10am to 10pm, prices start from BD70.

● Experience the calming flow of Moon Yoga, where each session draws on the gentle energy of the lunar cycle to restore balance, clarity and inner calm, on July 10, from 6.30pm to 7.30pm. It costs BD6 per person for hotel guests and members and BD12 for outside guests.

For more information, call 17115500 or 17115046.



DELICIOUS: Meat at Brasero Atlántico

WILD ABOUT FOOD

THE Sheraton Bahrain Hotel invites guests to experience WILD Chef's Night, a special evening where Chef Doris and her team present a buffet of their most popular signature dishes.

Every Thursday, curated shareable appetisers, salads and desserts will be served to your table at the restaurant WILD, making for an unforgettable night.

The experience costs BD19.500 per person, inclusive of soft drinks, tea and coffee, from 6pm to 11pm.

● Meanwhile, nestled against the gorgeous Manama skyline, Brasero Atlántico invites guests to indulge in a unique blend of Argentinian cuisine. Chefs have masterfully prepared authentic dishes using traditional wood fire techniques, inspired by the rich heritage of the region. A beautifully curated menu, featuring organic beverage, is also available. The lounge is open from 4pm to 2am and the restaurant from 7pm to 11pm.

● Guests can also indulge in an exquisite afternoon filled with delicate pastries, freshly-baked scones

with clotted cream and homemade jams and sandwiches served with tea and coffee. It is available from July 11, everyday from 2pm to 5pm, at the Sheraton lobby and costs BD25net.

● Make your events extra special with delicious Sheraton Cakes, with 12 available flavours. Whether it is a birthday, wedding or corporate event, the handcrafted cakes will elevate any occasion.

● Also, get ready for a flavour-packed adventure at The WILD Brunch.

Indulge in premium cuisine and sip on handcrafted beverages while live entertainment electrifies the atmosphere at WILD, tomorrow, July 4, from 12.30pm to 5pm. It costs BD36net per person with soft beverages and BD46net per person with selected beverages. Ladies can enjoy the experience for a special rate of BD23.

● Enjoy WILD's daily three-course special lunch menu, featuring vibrant flavours from around the globe, from Sunday to Thursday, noon to 3pm. It costs BD10.500, including homemade iced tea.

For more information, call 17517715 or 38885408.



H EAD down to CINECO Seef to watch the latest English-language films being shown this weekend.

F1 (PG-15)

In the 1990's, Sonny Hayes was Formula One's most promising driver until an accident on the track nearly ended his career. Thirty years later, the owner of a struggling Formula One team convinces Sonny to return to racing and become the best in the world.

Actors: Brad Pitt, Damson Idris, Kenny Condon

Timings: 10.45am, 2pm, 5.15pm, 8.30pm, 11.45pm

M3GAN 2.0 (PG-15)

Two years after M3GAN's rampage, her creator, Gemma, resorts to resurrecting her infamous creation to take down Amelia, the military-grade weapon built by a defence contractor who stole M3GAN's underlying tech.

Actors: Allison Williams, Violet McGraw, Brian Alvarez

Timings: 11am, 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm, 11.30pm

BANGKOK DOG (15+)

Special agent Andrew Kang intercepts a drug shipment and goes undercover in Bangkok's criminal underworld. Posing as a cartel operative, he must gain the gang's trust, but as the lines blur, he risks losing himself and his way out.

Actors: D Y Sao, Brian lee, Bryon Bishop

Timings: 8pm, 10pm, midnight

FIGHT OR FLIGHT (18+)

A mercenary takes on the job of tracking down a target on a plane but must protect her when they are surrounded by people trying to kill them both.

Actors: Josh Hartnett, Katee Sackhoff, Charithra Chandran

Timings: 12.15pm, 2.30pm, 4.45pm, 7pm, 9.15pm, 11.30pm

28 YEARS LATER (18+)

It has been almost three decades since the 'Rage' virus escaped from a biological weapons laboratory. Still living in a ruthlessly enforced quarantine, some have found ways to exist amid the infected.

Actors: Jodie Comer, Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Jack O'Connell

Timings: 12.30pm, 5.45pm, 11pm

● Check out GDNOnline's list of the best movies to watch this weekend – today – on Instagram.

Pulse of Pop

AROUND THE WORLD IN MUSIC, TV, BOOKS AND MORE - BY RIMA ALHADDAD

A TOUCHING TALE OF TIMELESS LOVE

MAGICAL realism novel *The Art of Vanishing* by Morgan Payer has hit the shelves.

The love story follows Claire, a gallery worker, who finds herself enamoured by an artwork of Jean, who is frozen in time by his painter father Henri Matisse.

Eventually Claire discovers she can step through the frame of Jean's painting and into a bygone era, resulting in the two falling in love.

"It is a magical love story about a museum employee and the man in a masterpiece hanging on the walls,"

Morgan said in a social media post.

"It's about time and art and the ways magic might surround us in our day-to-day lives, if we take the time to stop and see it," she added.

This is the author's debut novel. Prior to this, the bookworm launched an online platform for her to share what she is reading and her life in New York City.

Morgan also pursued a career in theatrical producing, and eventually joined a book publishing company where she handles marketing and the company's social media platforms.



EXCITED: Morgan with her debut novel



FREEDOM: Kesha's album to release tomorrow

CREATING SAFE SPACES

AMERICAN pop singer Kesha's new album *Period* releases tomorrow, July 4.

This is the singer's first independent album-release through her label Kesha Records since ending her legal battle with former collaborator and producer Dr Luke, followed by her departure from his label Kemosabe Records in 2023.

It marked the end of a long chapter of her career where she was allegedly stuck in an 'unsafe and restricting environment', both mentally and

artistically.

In an interview, Kesha said that with the new project she finally felt free – both creatively and legally.

She added that her goal, while making the new music, was to create a safe space for people to feel embodied and liberated, signified through the first track titled *Freedom* as well as the release date on July 4, which marks the United States' Independence Day.

The singer's first independently released single off the album, *Joyride*, was also released

on last year's Independence Day.

"I'm really trying to embody freedom in every way possible. I'm trying to allow myself to feel what freedom feels like, because it's been almost 20 years (in the industry) for me," the 38-year-old explained.

"Freedom, by definition, is the power and the right to act and speak and think as you want to without any restraint. And it's terrifying for me to really embody full freedom, because it's the act of really embodying who you are to the fullest. And to really feel that, it starts

with safety. So, that's why creating safe spaces has been my number-one objective," she added.

Born Kesha Rose Seberty, the pop sensation was encouraged by her singer/songwriter mother Patricia 'Pepe' Seberty to pursue singing after she noticed her daughter's talent.

The Grammy-nominated artist earned a near-perfect score on her SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test) and was offered a scholarship to Barnard College.

However, she decided to pursue her musical career instead.

A WEDDING NIGHTMARE

AMERICAN action comedy *Bride Hard* is out now in theatres.

Starring Rebel Wilson, the story follows Sam, a world-class secret agent who is demoted to bridesmaid at her childhood best friend Betsy's (Anna Camp) wedding despite prioritising her job over familial and friendship duties.

However, what should have been a weekend of reconnecting and celebration turns into a death trap when armed mercenaries crash the big day.

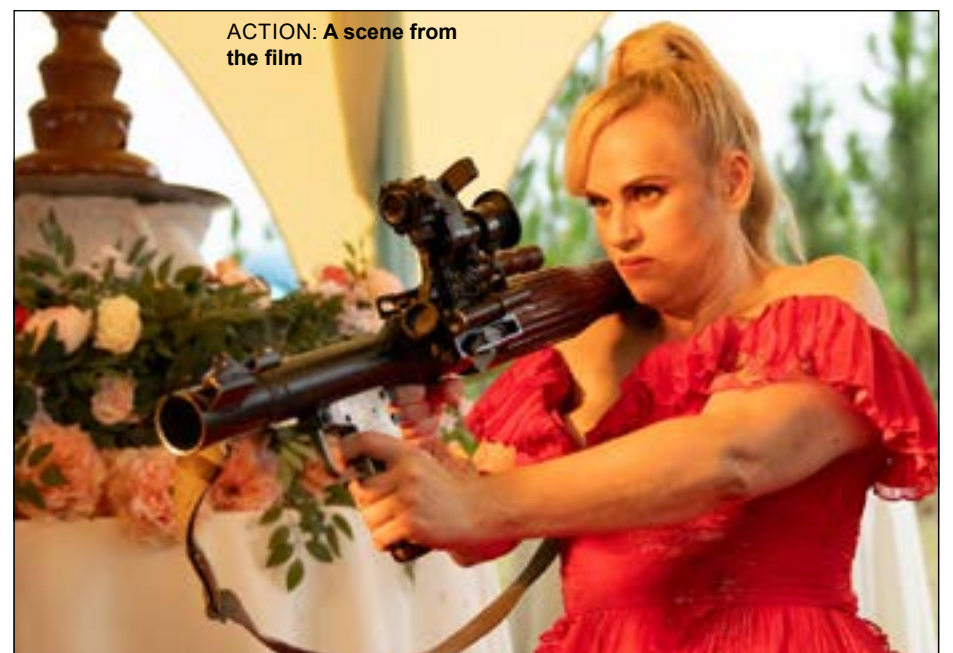
This puts Sam in a position where she is the only one who can save the bride, and her main mission being not only to take down the bad guys, but also to earn back the trust she lost along the way and learn to show up for those who matter in her life.

As the title suggests, the film is expected to combine elements of critically acclaimed movies *Bridesmaids* (2011) and *Die Hard* (1988).

In an interview, Rebel highlighted a lack of female comedies in the theatres.

"I think there still is a little bit of a perception that male-driven films are better, will perform better in the cinemas. But then, there are things that contradict that all the time, but then it never quite changes. It's still a little bit of an imbalance, even though it's getting better," she added.

"I always like to see a woman who can be funny and hardcore, and can be gross, and can be silly, and can be all of the things; that we don't have to just be that one thing," Anna added.



ACTION: A scene from the film

MotoringWeekly

The top motoring and motorsport news

All eyes on Silverstone

ALL SET: A general view of riders in action during warm-up ahead of the race



THREE BRITONS CAN WIN BUT PIASTRI HAS HIS OWN SCRIPT

THREE British winners have their sights on a home grand prix victory this weekend but Oscar Piastri could rain on that particular parade as Formula One returns to where the championship started 75 years ago.

Australia's championship leader can still count on plenty of support as a McLaren driver but much of the crowd, and certainly the 10,000 in Silverstone's sold-out 'Landstand', will be cheering more for British teammate Lando Norris.

Norris won Piastri's home grand prix in Melbourne in March, an added incentive for the Australian at Silverstone, and the pair are turning the season into a two-horse race as the campaign reaches the halfway point.

Piastri is chasing a sixth win in 12 races while Norris arrives from Austria on a high after dominating every practice session he took part in, taking pole by a huge margin and holding off his teammate to win.

The two are 15 points apart, with Red Bull's reigning four-times world champion Max Verstappen third overall but now a hefty 61 points off the lead after a first retirement of the season at his team's home track at Spielberg.

"My favourite weekend of the year," said Norris, who has yet to take back-to-back wins.

"It's already a special

circuit but to also have my family, friends, home fans and so many of the team there supporting us takes it to another level. I'll try to make sure I give the fans a wave as I drive past."

Piastri recalled he had fans chanting his name at Silverstone not so long ago.

"I am not sure I will get that again but they have always been very accepting of me. I race for a British team. I am expecting that there will be more Lando fans than there are for me but that's fair enough," he said.

If Norris's support is strong, then Ferrari's Lewis Hamilton will always be the big

sentimental favourite.

The last two races have been won by British drivers – George Russell for Mercedes in Canada and then Norris last weekend. Could Hamilton make it three and send the crowd crazy?

The 40-year-old won with Mercedes last year for a record ninth time and taking that tally into double figures, in what will be his first home appearance in the Italian team's red colours, would be something else.

Ferrari are the only top-four team without a win this season, other than Hamilton's Shanghai sprint success, and the seven-times world

champion has yet to stand on the podium for his new employers. He has also gone 13 races without a top-three finish, a career low.

On the plus side, Ferrari were second fastest in Austria with Charles Leclerc third and Hamilton fourth and a new floor seems to be doing what it was supposed to do.

Hamilton usually manages to produce something special at Silverstone, set to welcome a record half-million fans this time over the four days.

Last year he turned up after 52 races without a win and seized one of the most emotional triumphs of his extraordinary career.



WINNER: Piastri celebrates with a trophy on the podium after finishing second in the Austrian Grand Prix

Russell, on pole as Hamilton's teammate last year, also has a strong chance – particularly if temperatures cool – and will be eager to bounce back from a tough weekend in Austria.

Italian rookie teammate

Kimi Antonelli meanwhile carries over a three-place grid drop from Austria.

Britain's fourth driver, Oliver Bearman at Haas, will be targeting points while the same applies to British-born Thai Alex Albon at Williams.

F1 BOSS EXPECTS UK RACE TO BE ON CALENDAR 'FOREVER'

SILVERSTONE circuit could stay on the Formula One calendar forever with no real rival to host the British Grand Prix, the sport's chief executive Stefano Domenicali said ahead of this weekend's race.

The Italian told reporters he could not imagine a championship without Britain, home to seven of the 10 teams, but there was also no chance of the country having more than one race.

"I do believe that... Silverstone has the right characteristics to stay forever in the calendar," said Domenicali, who is set to visit Downing Street with some drivers and team bosses to meet Prime Minister Keir Starmer.

"There's no other places where you can develop such a huge event in the UK. I don't see any other places, to be honest."

Silverstone hosted the first world championship race in 1950 and has a contract until 2034. Last year it hosted the biggest crowd of any event on the calendar with 480,000 spectators.

Miami and Austria's Red Bull Ring have the longest deals, both running to 2041, and Domenicali saw no reason why Silverstone could not join them although the circuit



OPTIMISTIC: Domenicali

management had yet to seek an extension.

The meeting at Downing Street is billed as an informal celebration of the 75th anniversary of the first F1 championship race at Silverstone, but it is also a chance to raise issues the sport wants

addressed.

Domenicali said he would highlight how much the "F1 ecosystem" contributes to Britain as the beating heart of a global sport, and the risk of losing that primacy due to

restrictions on staff and movement.

Formula One figures calculate the sport brings 12 billion pounds (\$16.48bn) annually to the UK economy with 6,000 people directly employed and a further 41,000 working in a supply chain of 4,500 companies.

The Italian said visa issues post-Brexit had affected the deployment of staff from race to race around Europe, while costly and time-consuming paperwork had complicated logistics and made it harder to draw up the race calendar.

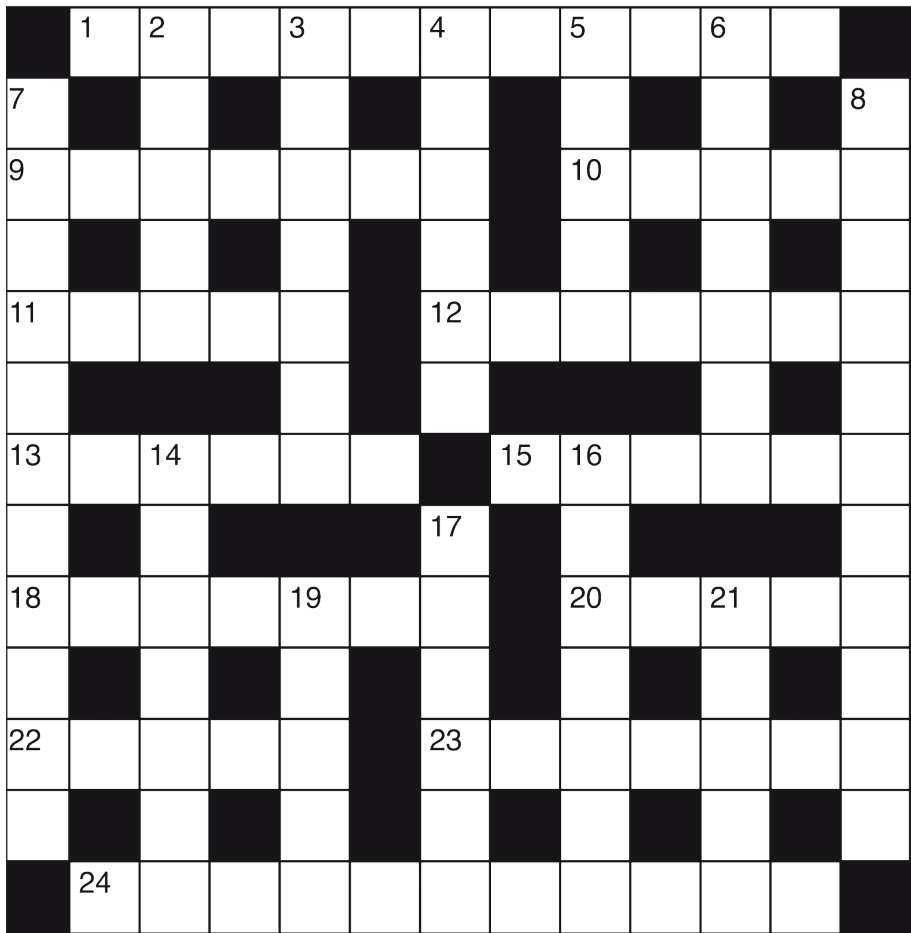
"It is impossible to think in the short term that the teams will move out from the UK because of this limitation but the teams will organise themselves maybe in a different way," he warned.

Time Out



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crossword break



Solutions in next week's issue.

ACROSS

- 1. Reckoning (11)
- 9. Cigar (7)
- 10. Nick (5)
- 11. Catch (5)
- 12. Studio (7)
- 13. Sullen (6)
- 15. Concur (6)
- 18. Sewing aid (7)
- 20. Foreign (5)
- 22. Overcome (5)
- 23. Simple (7)
- 24. Too early (11)

DOWN

- 2. Expert (5)
- 3. Apparel (7)
- 4. Deadly (6)
- 5. Taut (5)
- 6. External (7)
- 7. Applause (11)
- 8. Dryness (11)
- 14. Swagger (7)
- 16. Strew (7)
- 17. Leave (6)
- 19. Blossom (5)
- 21. Perfect (5)

who, what, where, when

WHO... won gold medals in the 5,000 and 10,000 metres at both the 1972 and 1976 Olympics?

WHAT... sort of creature is a chafer?

WHERE... is the equatorial belt within which the trade-wind zones converge?

WHEN... was John Alexander Macdonald elected prime minister of Canada?

WHAT... was the family name of the Angevin, Lancastrian, and Yorkist Kings of England (1154-1485)?

WHAT... is the capital of Qatar?

WHEN... did El Cid die?

just so

P
A
C
P
A
C
I
F
I
C

AMERICAN

t a k e
t a k e
t a k e

MOHICAN MOHICAN MOHICAN
MOHICAN MOHICAN MOHICAN
MOHICAN MOHICAN MOHICAN
MOHICAN MOHICAN MOHICAN
MOHICAN MOHICAN MOHICAN

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

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

darn tough sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

Last Week's Leisure Solutions

Across: 1 Prisoner; 5 Saga; 9 Scar; 10 Attested; 11 Rigid; 12 Brusque; 13 Intensiveness; 18 Monarchy; 19 Then; 20 Release; 21 Slate; 22 Eddy; 23 Standard.

Down: 2 Ruction; 3 Servile; 4 Establishment; 6 Antique; 7 Address; 8 Reduce; 13 Immerse; 14 Tangled; 15 Normal; 16 Nettled; 17 Shelter.

Who, What, Where, When: Henry IV; Rubidium; Forest of Arden; 1750; William Beckford; Laughing gas; Antarctica; 634.

Just So: End to end, Money well spent, Forbidden fruit, A hollow laugh

Darn Tough Sudoku

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