

Gulf Weekly

The community newspaper at the heart of Bahrain

July 31-August 6, 2025

GDNlife

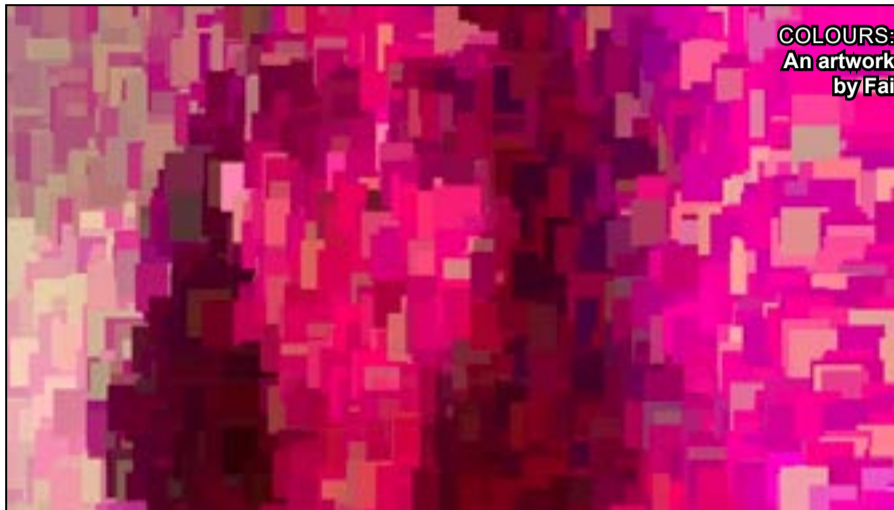
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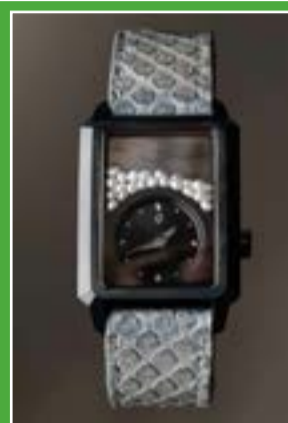
EVOCATIVE: Part of Bassam's diptych *Silent Witness*



COLOURS: An artwork by Fai



FREEZEFRAME: A visitor takes a photo of one of the exhibits from the *Vessels* project by Dr Hesham and Fatima



LATEST IN LUXURY
Qannati masterpiece
SEE PAGE 2



SONIC SHIFT
Majaz's new EP
SEE PAGE 3



LEISURE SCENE
Summertime eats
SEE PAGES 4-5



PULSE OF POP
Movies, music & more
SEE PAGE 6

ART REPORT
By MELISSA NAZARETH
melissa@gdnmedia.bh

A summer exhibition entitled *Data/Humans* is shining a bright spotlight on the co-existence of real and digital realms and the impact of the latter on our humanness.

The showcase by 21 Bahraini and international artists is being held at Al Riwaq Art Space in Gufool, as part of their residency programme, which attracted more than 130 applications spanning video, painting, photography, mixed media and sound installations.

The gallery's junior curator Shereen Fekri prepared the concept and vision, which was then co-curated by other young talents in curatorial studies group, under the guidance of Al Riwaq.

The exhibition explores the intricate and evolving relationship between the human and the digital – how data shapes our identities, influences our consciousness, and affects our capacity for consent and connection.

One of the participating international artists, Egyptian creative Bassam Nafady, is displaying *Silent Witness* – ‘a diptych that captures scenes of war and collapse, but focuses not on the destruction

Data designs



FAMILY: An artwork by Mona

ARTISTS

- Omnia Elrefaey
- Bassam Nafadi
- Turkey Alqahtani
- Thomas O'Connor
- Thanos Tsiousis
- Hayat Hasan
- Sarah Ysef
- Shazia Salam

- Sohaib Mirza
- Abbas Yousif
- Aisha Azab
- Fatima Almosawi
- Fai Ahmed

- Katerina Belkina
- Mac Andre Arboleda
- Mariam Alsadadi
- Michele Rinali
- Mona Almoataz
- Maitha Ali
- Narges Soleimanzadeh
- Dr Hesham Alammal

itself – rather, on those quietly observing it through their phones’.

“The work explores how we’ve grown detached from reality – witnessing tragedy through screens without truly engaging – and questions what happens to our sense of identity and morality when witnessing becomes a filtered, distant and ultimately powerless act,” Mr Nafady added.

Bahrain University professor

and photographer Dr Hesham Alammal and architect and design specialist Fatima Almosawi, who first met at a photography workshop, have teamed up to present *Vessels*, a visual series depicting plates and bowls from different Bahraini households, including the artists’ families.

“These plates are unique because they have unique markings under them,” Fatima explained.

“This way people could

trace the owners after sharing meals with friends and family. It’s kind of an analogue way of indexing, which we compared with machine-made memory,” the Bahraini creative added.

Dr Hesham, who specialises in data and technology, developed a machine-learning model that allows viewers to scan the vessels, which the software then classifies, based on algorithmic memory, thus juxtaposing the community’s

collective memory with new models.

Media enthusiast Shoaib Mirza is taking part with a short film, which depicts the ‘gray nature’ of artificial intelligence (AI).

“We are socially engaged creatures, who believe in validation, belonging, fear of missing out... AI is useful for us in this way but, at the same time, it can be a burden for those who use it in the wrong way, like the characters in my film,” said the filmmaker who works in the fashion retail industry.

The film was shot in eight days, across various locations in Bahrain, and is currently being screened at the exhibition.

Data/Humans will run at Al Riwaq until September 3.

METICULOUS:
Craftsmanship
at its best



Ushering in good times

BAHRAINI entrepreneur and horologist Mahmood Qannati has levelled up with two new global certifications, scaling greater heights in luxury watch-making.

The founder of multidisciplinary niche luxury French Bahraini brand Qannati Objet d'Art has earned two internationally acclaimed certifications in the field of horology – the Watch Advisor certification from the Fondation Haute Horlogerie and the Train the Trainer certification from WOSTEP (Watchmakers of Switzerland Training and Educational Programme).

Both milestones were achieved after a period of intensive training and assessment in Neuchâtel, Switzerland – the historic epicentre of fine Swiss watchmaking.

The achievement is also part of a broader personal mission to become the first Arab watchmaker of his kind in the region, and signals the launch of a new phase in the development of the horological division of Qannati Objet d'Art, celebrated for its handcrafted objets d'art that 'fuse storytelling, sacred geometry, and ancestral craftsmanship'.

The certifications further cement Mahmood's



TIMELESS:
Steeped in luxury

CREATIVE:
Mahmood



commitment to elevating the culture of horology and métiers d'art in the region, reinforcing the Maison's

distinctive identity at the intersection of Arab heritage, French artistry, and Swiss horological excellence.

As part of this next phase, Mahmood aims to establish educational foundations for horology and métiers d'art across the region.

He aims to start with programmes at institutions like Bahrain Polytechnic. He also hopes to develop the Qannati Lab into a regional centre for high-end watchmaking, miniature sculpture, and ancestral crafts – ensuring these rare

disciplines are preserved and passed on.

Qannati Lab further aims to support the emerging watchmaking and jewellery sectors in the Arab world by training a new generation of artisans and positioning Bahrain as a regional hub of excellence.

Mahmood's journey reflects a commitment to reviving ancient know-how, promoting the art of timekeeping in the Gulf, and solidifying Qannati Objet d'Art's status as a brand devoted to the art of horology.

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) Which bird has been used for thousands of years to carry messages?
- 2) Which team was Lewis Hamilton driving for when he won his first F1 World Championship title?
- 3) What is the name for an appetiser or entree item which does not require the use of a utensil to be eaten?
- 4) Which is the only British overseas territory that does not feature the Union Jack on its flag?
- 5) Captain Haddock is



- the best friend of which fictional character?
- 6) In volleyball, how many times is a side allowed to hit the ball before it must go over the net?
- 7) Who won best actor in the 2023 Oscars?

ANSWERS

1. Pigeons
2. McLaren
3. Finger Food
4. Gibraltar
5. Tin-Tin
6. Three
7. Brendan Fraser



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 August 6 or follow @gdnonline on Instagram.

Only original responses will be considered for the top submission. One winner will get a box of Raw Candy vegan chocolates as a token of our appreciation.

Together, let's keep the conversation going!

UPBEAT: The band performs at one of their shows



All eyes on the music

MUSIC REPORT
By NAMAN ARORA
naman@gdnmedia.bh

SERVING up a softer, more contemplative side of their signature Afro-Khaleeji sound, Bahraini fusionists Majaz have released the fourth single from their upcoming EP.

Titled *Aini*, the song dropped on July 25 and introduces a sonic shift for the group, which is known for its energetic, upbeat rhythms.

Built around the term of endearment 'aini' which translates in Arabic to 'my eyes' or 'my beloved' and is commonly used across Khaleeji dialects, the track embodies compassion and empathy.

"This song reveals a different side of Majaz," the band's guitarist Hameed AlSaeed told *GulfWeekly*.

"It highlights the more chill vibe of our Afro-Khaleeji sounds."

"Musically, it stands in contrast to the rest of the EP, which is much more energetic."

The lyrics in *Aini* serve a dual purpose.

On the surface, they appear as a heartfelt conversation with a loved one.

But beneath that is a



CHILL: The artwork for *Aini*

broader commentary on the gradual erosion of deep human connection in the digital age.

The double meanings throughout the song make it relatable on multiple levels, whether listeners interpret it as a love ballad or a reflection on modern disconnection.

"The song sheds light on the importance of human connection in a world where real, deep human interactions are becoming increasingly scarce, gradually losing their significance and weight amidst the ever-evolving ways through which the

age of information shapes the way we communicate," Hameed explained.

In keeping with the band's commitment to preserving and evolving Khaleeji musical heritage, *Aini* incorporates 'Sawt Shami', a rhythmic pattern rooted in 'Fann As-Sawt', an urban art form that has played a significant role in Gulf music for centuries.

While the band often experiments with Khaleeji rhythmic foundations, the use of 'Sawt Shami' in this track signals a deliberate nod to 'one of the timeless pillars of Khaleeji musical heritage',

repackaged in a modern aesthetic.

"The song was written in mid 2022 and we have also played it live in many of our shows, where it got shaped into the final version," bassist Salah Alawi added.

"The challenge was testing the song couple of times in front of the audience before hitting the studio."

The single follows *Ya Lala* (a vocable commonly used in Khaleeji culture and music as a display of joy and care-free sentiments), *Heila Hei* (a generational Bahraini phrase with no particular linguistic meaning), and *Ala Wain* (Arabic for 'to where'), which have received praise for their creative fusion of genres.

Like its predecessors, *Aini* will be part of Majaz's upcoming and as-yet-unnamed five-track EP, which is expected to be released by the end of 2025 or early 2026.

Made up of Bahrainis Hameed, Salah, cellist Jihad Al Halal, and Saudi percussionist Abdulla Faisal, the quartet is currently planning shows across the region.

Aini is now streaming on all major platforms.

Follow @majaz_music on Instagram for announcements.



ROLLERCOASTER: A creation highlighting navigating emotion

THE SPECIAL SQUAD

A new comic series, dedicated to children with special needs has been launched in Bahrain, expressing solidarity and empathy with them and their caregivers, writes Melissa Nazareth.

The Special Squad is the latest initiative of Shahzaib's Club House, a local community of differently abled people, and tackles topics like regulating difficult emotions, common apprehensions felt by differently abled individuals and pursuing ambitions against the odds, among others.

The comics are brought alive as conversations, inspired by real-life dialogues the children at the club house have had with their parents, teachers or others.

"While the comic series was born in Bahrain, its heartbeat is universal, and we're thrilled to have started it in collaboration with a creative agency in Pakistan," club house founder and director Amena Shahrukh told *GulfWeekly*.

"*The Special Squad* is a visual story world where children of determination aren't pitied or 'managed'. They take centre stage and are bold, tender, hilarious, curious and unapologetically themselves. Each comic is a real conversation. These stories reflect what really happens at Shahzaib's Club House," she added.

Amena started the club house, registered under Bahrain Mobility International, three years ago, as an extension of her personal journey with her late son, Mohammed Shahzaib Lali, who was differently abled. He died of pneumonia at the age of 21.

Talking about plans for the comic series, Amena revealed that she hopes to publish them as a book and eventually launch themed merchandise.

"We will be releasing merchandise for special children, designed to uplift, inspire and represent them like never before," she added.

To read the comics, follow @shahzaibclubhouse on Instagram.



SOLIDARITY: A conversation sparking empathy

Leisure Scene

What's on guide by
Jayne Houghton



RITZ REDEFINES ART OF CULINARY EXCELLENCE

THE Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain welcomes guests to enjoy a refined collection of dining experiences and indulgent moments across its elegant venues, each thoughtfully curated to elevate your summer.

Step into the refined world of La Table Krug, where culinary innovation meets seasonal elegance.

From Tuesdays to Saturdays, between 7pm and 11pm, guests can enjoy a new chapter of taste through an à la carte menu that celebrates fine ingredients and artistic presentation.

Over at Thai Lounge, Sundays are reserved for Ladies' Night, a stylish evening of muddled drinks at special prices and 50 per cent off on selected finger

food, exclusively for ladies. Join from 6pm to 9pm for an effortlessly chic night-out.

For a vibrant weekend celebration, Cantina Kahlo comes alive on Fridays with the Brunch Fiesta, a lively gathering of authentic Mexican flavours accompanied by festive mariachi tunes. From 1pm to 4pm, enjoy the full fiesta for BD35 per person with soft beverages or BD45 with selected beverages.

Those with a sweet tooth will find bliss in the Shibuya French Toast, served golden and warm, topped with a scoop of your favourite ice cream and paired with your preferred beverage. Priced at BD8.500, it's available daily from 8am to 10pm at The Ritz Gourmet Lounge.

Chocolate connoisseurs are invited to La Gourmandise



LUXURIOUS:
The Ritz Gourmet
Lounge

for Exquisite Indulgence, a collaboration with @mayalachocolaterie. Discover luxurious pralines

in unique flavours like Silk Pistachio, Orange Coriander, Esfahan and more. Available daily from 10am to 10pm,

starting at BD5.500.

For those planning a gathering to remember, the Villa Barbecue offers a

private beachfront setting with customised grilled delicacies prepared by dedicated chefs; perfect for family events or relaxed celebrations in the summer sun.

Guests can also rejuvenate with the exclusive Summer Intensive Care by Bastien Gonzalez, which includes a 10pc value saving on a luxury ritual featuring Black Diamond Scrub (200ml), Sensitive Feet Balm (200ml), and Heel Renaissance (75ml). Complimentary gifts include a Reverence de Bastien beach bag and a Black Diamond Scrub Touch gift voucher, redeemable with your next Bastien treatment. Offer is valid until September.

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

SIZZLING STEAKS TO DEVOUR AT INTERCONTINENTAL

PREMIUM: Cuts grilled to perfection



INTERCONTINENTAL Bahrain continues to tempt steak lovers this season with a trio of sizzling specials at Legendz SteakHouse, combining premium cuts, bold flavours and a refined dining experience that's hard to resist.

For a truly indulgent midweek treat, guests can savour the Château Briand Night, where a generous

400gm tenderloin is paired with truffle-infused mashed potatoes, grilled asparagus and a rich red grape reduction. The experience is rounded off with a complimentary glass of grape per guest, making it the perfect evening for those who appreciate fine food and elegant company. The offer is priced at BD32 for two guests and runs every Thursday from 7pm to 11pm. On Tuesdays, Tenderloin

Paillard Night offers a lighter, yet equally satisfying option. Diners can enjoy a tender grilled paillard with sautéed mushrooms, accompanied by a choice of crispy pommes frites or a fresh green salad. Optional add-ons like grilled shrimp or roasted vegetables allow guests to customise their plate to taste. The special is served every Tuesday from 6pm to 10pm, priced at BD14net.

Steak enthusiasts can wrap up the week with Flank Steak Saturday, showcasing a premium Australian flank steak grilled to perfection. Guests can mix and match their two chosen sides, and select from three sauces: chimichurri, béarnaise or peppercorn. Served every Saturday from 6pm to 10pm, this hearty dish is available for BD15net.

For more information or reservations, call 36967701.

SUCCULENT: Slice of
meaty goodness



COOL off in style with a scoop (or two) of pure indulgence at Bay View Lounge in Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay.

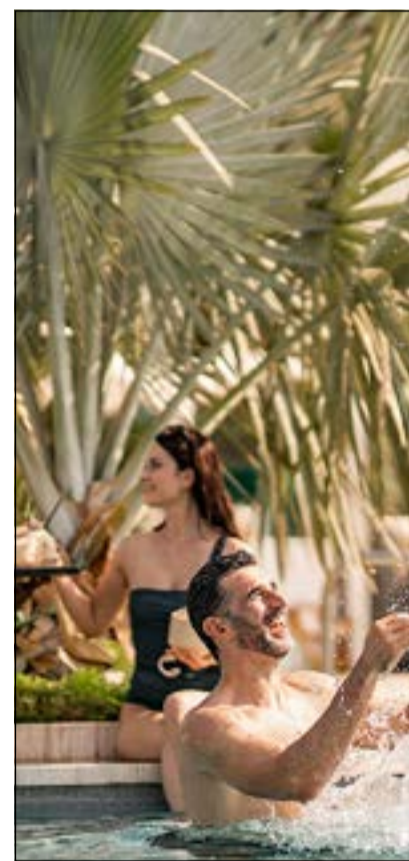
Their newest line-up of handcrafted sorbets is bursting with seasonal flair – from zingy citrus and juicy berries to tropical mango and creamy coconut. Light, refreshing and made for sunny afternoons, it's the perfect summer sweet treat served with a side of elegance. Available daily throughout August.

When day turns to dusk, the energy shifts at Azure Pool & Lounge.

Every Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 6pm, Sunset Beats takes over the beachfront. Expect relaxed DJ sessions, artfully mixed drinks, and a laid-back yet lively vibe that captures the essence of golden-hour glamour by the sea.

Up on the 50th floor, Sushi Sundays at re/ASIAN CUISINE invite guests to wind down the weekend with a curated menu of Asian favourites. From 7pm to 11pm every Sunday, enjoy signature sushi, sashimi, and crafted dishes including Crispy Shrimp Potstickers and Miso-Honey Salmon, all served with panoramic city views and an elevated atmosphere. À la carte pricing applies.

At The Spa, prepare to drift into total relaxation with the



new Summer Cooling Ritual. Designed to refresh both body and mind, this 90-minute experience begins with a soothing eucalyptus foot ritual, followed by a deeply relaxing full-body massage using cooling essential oils. A chilled eye mask and a light, rehydrating body mist complete the experience, leaving you revived and summer-ready. Available daily from 10am to 10pm, it is priced at BD95.

Escape the everyday with

Leisure Scene

Weekly Entertainment

CELEBRATIONS:
In the sun with the
Villa Barbecue



**SPLASH
OF JOY
AT FOUR
SEASONS**

FUN TIME: Around in the
pool with the Family
Wellness Day Pass

the Family Wellness Day Pass, offering the perfect blend of rest and recreation. Designed for two adults and two children, this exclusive package includes access to the spa's indoor and outdoor pools, vitality pool, steam and salt inhalation rooms, as well as the kids' waterpark and beach club.

Enjoy healthy refreshments and light bites as part of the experience, available daily for BD80 per family.

For more information or



CHILLED: Delights at the
Four Seasons

reservations, call 17115500,
17115045 or 17115046.

THIS summer, Sheraton Bahrain Hotel is serving up a sizzling medley of dining delights.

From rooftop grills and global lunch menus to artisan sweets and indulgent afternoon teas, there's a taste for every mood and moment.

Begin your culinary journey high above the city at Brasero Atlántico Bahrain, the hotel's latest showstopper perched on the rooftop with panoramic views over Manama's skyline.

Championing the art of traditional Argentine grilling a las brasas, meaning over wood fire, the venue now welcomes guests for lunch from noon to 3pm daily, with dinner following from 7pm to 11pm. The rooftop lounge is also open from 4pm until 2am, featuring a drinks menu with organic mocktails and distinctive Argentine-crafted beverages.

Meanwhile, WILD Eatery promises bold flavours and international flair with its weekday Daily Lunch at WILD, running Sunday to Thursday from noon to 3pm. This three-course journey rotates through global cuisines – think Spanish, Asian, British, Italian and Peruvian – and includes a refreshing homemade iced tea, all for BD10.500 net.

Come Thursday evening, WILD Chef's Night transforms the space into a relaxed buffet-style celebration of the chef's favourites. Diners can look forward to shareable appetisers, salads, and desserts served straight to the table. Available from 6pm to 11pm at BD19.500net per person, inclusive of soft drinks, tea or coffee.

Fridays are all about flair and flavour at The Wild Brunch, running from 12.30pm to 5pm. Expect premium sharing platters, lively entertainment and muddled signature drinks, with packages starting at BD36net for soft drinks and BD46net for the premium option. A special ladies' rate is also available at BD23net.

If a slower pace is more your style, Afternoon Tea at &More by Sheraton offers a touch of refinement every day between 2pm and 5pm.

SKILLFUL:
Hands at work at
Brasero Atlántico



SHERATON BRINGS BEST OF THE WORLD ON YOUR PLATTER

Delicate pastries, buttery scones, savoury finger sandwiches and aromatic teas or coffee are served for BD15net.

Reservations are recommended.

To round off the experience, Sheraton

Bahrain Hotel has joined forces with Maya La Chocolaterie to present handcrafted chocolates rooted in Arab heritage. Made locally using only the finest ingredients.

For more information, call 17517715 or 38885409.



DECADENT:
Desserts and
more for
Afternoon
Tea

FRIDAY BRUNCH AT DILMUN CLUB

THE Dilmun Club's popular Friday Brunch continues to delight families with a relaxed, upbeat vibe.

Brunch kicks off at 1pm and runs until 5pm, serving up a generous buffet featuring jalapeño poppers, onion bhaji, vegetable samosas, chicken pâté, and a succulent chicken carvery.

Guests can also enjoy a rotating selection of curry specials, chicken nuggets, whole pizzas made to order, a live pasta station, breakfast and salad counters, soup of the day, chips, rice, and a plentiful cheese board.

Choose the food-only package for BD12net or indulge in the all-inclusive option for BD18net, which includes a wide range of premium beverages.

Families are welcome; children under six eat for free, while older kids can enjoy the full brunch experience and use of all facilities for just BD6.

The fun extends beyond the buffet, with live music, karaoke, and evening DJ sets creating a lively backdrop. Guests can also take advantage of the heated swimming pool, darts area, kids' soft play, and outdoor play zone.

For more information or reservations, call 17690926.

A TEE-RRIFIC GAME PLAN!

STAY on top of your game this summer at The British Club with their state-of-the-art indoor golf simulator, now open daily to both members and non-members

Choose from 14 impressive virtual courses and enjoy food and drinks while you play. Off-peak sessions are available Sunday to Thursday from 8am to 5pm at BD10 per hour, while peak hours after 5pm on weekdays and all day Friday and Saturday are BD15 per hour. Each hourly rate covers up to four players. Non-members are subject to an additional BD1.500 entry fee.

For more information, call 17728245.

Pulse of Pop

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

SPOOK FEST RETURNS

EERIE: A promotional poster of the series featuring protagonist Wednesday

THE second season of supernatural comedy *Wednesday* is set to release on August 6.

The first four episodes will be available on *Netflix*, with four more ready to be aired on September 3.

The show follows Wednesday Addams (Jenna Ortega), a teenager whose parents transfer her to Nevermore Academy, a private school for 'monstrous outcasts'.

This was after she was expelled from her previous school for dumping live piranha fish into the pool – an act of revenge when the boys' water polo team bullied her brother.

In season two, fans will see the character returning to Nevermore. While developing her psychic skills, which she inherited from her mother, she finds herself facing a new tormentor and preventing her werewolf roommate Enid Sinclair's (Emma Myers) death.

"Wednesday goes into this season thinking she knows Nevermore. It's the first time she has returned to the school willingly but as soon as she gets back, nothing happens as she's expecting," show creator Miles Millar said in an interview.

"She thinks she's going to be in control, that she knows where all the

bodies are buried, and she doesn't," he added.

The new season will feature artist and actor Lady Gaga, whose song *Bloody Mary* (2011) gained popularity and was associated with the show after fans used a sped-up version to soundtrack *TikTok* edits of Wednesday's dance scene in season one.

While not much has been revealed about her role, she is expected to portray teacher Rosaline Rotwood who crosses paths with Wednesday.

"I don't want to give away anything about being part of the show, I want to keep it extra secret, but, I love Jenna,

and I really had an amazing time!" Gaga said, reflecting on her experience with her co-star.

Wednesday was originally created by American cartoonist Charles Addams, who is known for his darkly humorous characters; notably *The Addams Family*, comprising Gomez and Morticia and their children Wednesday and Pugsley.

The family originally appeared in a series of 150 standalone single-panel comics, and were later adapted into other media, including live action and animated series, films, video games and more.



Y2K: The singer's website resembling a Windows 2000 desktop

RAW RHYTHMS

GRAMMY-WINNING rock band Paramore's frontwoman Hayley Williams surprise-released her third album *Ego* this week.

The new project stands out for not following a fixed track-list or traditional format, as the songs are currently only available to stream through the singer's website hayleywilliams.net.

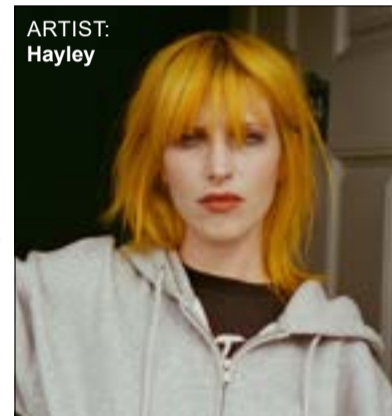
It is designed to resemble a Windows 2000 desktop with 17 audio files appearing scattered across the screen.

While the songs are completely free to stream, they are locked behind an access code, available exclusively through her hair brand Good Dye Young's mailing list. Many fans received it and then shared it on social media.

After the massive success of Paramore's 2023 album *This Is Why*, the singer expressed her desire to curate solo shows to play *Petals for Armour* (2020) and *Flowers for Vases/Descansos* (2021), which she was not able to tour for due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"I'm going to try and finally play some shows next year

ARTIST:
Hayley



that would've happened nearly five years ago now," the singer said on social media last year.

This year, however, the artist shared a voice memo that teased the possibility of a new solo release.

"Yeah, I know I said I was gonna try. I'm sorry. I can't do any (shows) right now. I want to but I accidentally started making music," she said.

UNBRIDLED ACTION

ANIMATED heist comedy film *The Bad Guys 2* is out now in theatres.

The DreamWorks animation production follows the criminal crew of animal outlaws who are trying to find trust and acceptance in their new lives as good guys. However, they are pulled out of retirement to do 'one last job' by The Good Girls, an all-female squad of criminals.

In an interview, director Pierre Perifel stated that he and his team began brainstorming for the sequel before audiences saw the first film, which released in 2022.

"We were finishing the first one and thought, 'Okay, this is good. This is fun. Let's keep going'," he said.

The *Bad Guys* are voiced by Sam Rockwell as Mr Wolf, Marc

Maron as crew leader Mr Snake, Awkwafina as the hacker and second-in-command Ms Tarantula, Craig Robinson as the master of disguise Mr Shark and Anthony Ramos as Mr Piranha, who is the group's muscle.

"There's a whole book series; these characters are so rich, and you can tell endless stories with them," Pierre added.

The franchise is loosely based on the namesake graphic novel series written by Australian author Aaron Blabey.

Pierre also noted that he is passionate to keep the franchise going, hinting at a desire to embark on making a third film.

"We're eager. There's so much more we want to do, these characters still have a lot of stories to tell," he added.



MISCHIEF-MAKERS: A scene from the film

Racing like champions

WITH McLaren dominating the top of the standings for the Formula 1 World Constructors Championship, competition between its star drivers has started to heat up, with team principal Andrea Stella saying they are both 'racing at an extremely high level'.

The team in orange delivered a commanding performance at the Belgian Grand Prix on Sunday, securing a 1-2 finish that further strengthens the defending constructors' champion team's position.

Oscar Piastri claimed his sixth win of the season at Spa-Francorchamps, with teammate Lando Norris finishing second after the pair locked out the front row.

The result marks one of McLaren's most dominant weekends yet, as they extended their lead in the Constructors' Championship and underlined their resurgence as the team to beat.

"There is very, very little between our two drivers, and this is because they are both racing at an extremely high level," Stella said.

"We're lucky at McLaren to have a driver line-up capable of competing consistently at the front.

"I think the difference will be made by the accuracy, the precision, the quality of



WINNERS: McLaren's Piastri and Norris before the race

the execution. We saw in Silverstone that an issue, a sporting issue for Oscar during the Safety Car start and the consequent penalty cost him the race.

"And somehow here, we saw that it would have always been very difficult for Lando to keep the position starting first at the Safety Car restart."

The race got underway behind the Safety Car following a rain delay, with Piastri seizing the lead from Norris on the long run to Les Combes.

The Australian maintained control throughout the race, managing tyre degradation and fending off a late push from Norris, who had switched to the hard compound in contrast to

Piastri's mediums.

Charles Leclerc finished a distant third for Ferrari, more than 20 seconds behind, underscoring McLaren's performance advantage.

The result follows a strong run of form for the boys in orange, including victories and podiums that have lifted both Piastri and Norris into serious contention for the Drivers' title, as McLaren continues to outpace traditional powerhouses such as Red Bull, Mercedes and Ferrari on most circuits.

Stella highlighted the significance of delivering results at a venue as demanding as Spa.

"To win here, with the changing conditions and the complexity of the track,

speaks volumes about where we are as a team," he said.

Despite a minor battery anomaly that affected both cars, Stella said the team managed the situation effectively.

The slight performance dip did not compromise the result, thanks to strategic decisions and the drivers' ability to adapt under pressure.

With almost half the season still remaining, McLaren's consistency and pace are turning heads across the paddock.

Once seen as outsiders in the title fight, the team has rapidly evolved into a leading force, and now holds the momentum heading into the summer break.

STRUGGLE: Antonelli



ANTONELLI PAYING PRICE FOR 'WRONG STEPS' BY MERCEDES

MERCEDES have made mistakes in developing their Formula One car and teenage Italian rookie Kimi Antonelli's struggles are a consequence of that, according to technical director James Allison.

Antonelli, 18, finished third in Canada in June for his first F1 podium but has since failed to score.

He has had two retirements since Montreal as well as 17th in a sprint race in Belgium last Saturday and then 16th in Sunday's main grand prix.

The Italian, who took a sprint pole in Miami and is the sport's youngest ever race leader, has retired four times in the last seven rounds and admitted in Belgium he was lacking confidence in the car and not driving as he would like.

"I think he's, like the rest of us, massively fed up with a string of results that are well below what we were collectively achieving earlier in the year," Allison said in an interview.

"I hope he takes some solace from the fact that we tell him, and it's demonstrably a fact, that we have taken the wrong steps with the car, making our team less competitive, and that he is paying the price for that, as is George (Russell). "If the car isn't where it

needs to be, then it will be a struggle getting through the qualifying stages in your rookie season in F1."

Allison said it was 'utterly clear' to everyone that the car needed to be better and Antonelli's fortunes would improve when it was.

"Hopefully he's listening to us as we say those reassuring words because we absolutely know that he is putting in the effort on his side of that bargain," he added.

Mercedes are third overall, 28 points behind second-placed Ferrari, with one win by Russell in Canada. Russell has been on the podium five times and is fourth overall with 157 points to Antonelli's 63.

Seven-times world champion Lewis Hamilton, whose seat Antonelli took when the Briton moved to Ferrari, showed his support for the Italian after Saturday qualifying at Spa.

"He was telling me to keep my head up, and that it's normal to have bad weekends, and to just keep believing," the Italian told reporters.

Hamilton told *Sky Sports* television he could not imagine what the rookie was going through.

"He's been doing fantastic. But to be thrown in at the deep end at 18... he hadn't even had his driving licence when he first started racing," he said.



DOMINANT: The McLaren duo in action during the race



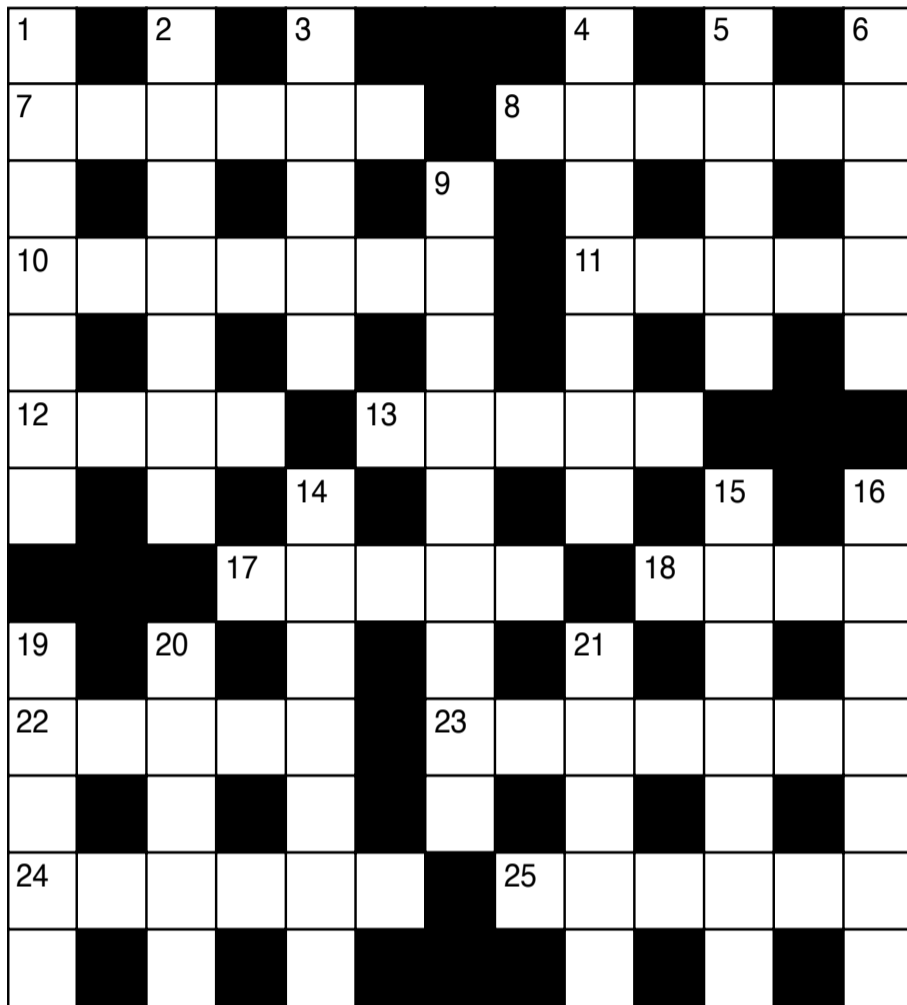
SUPPORT: Hamilton with Antonelli

Time Out



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crossword break



Solutions in next week's issue.

ACROSS

7. Clouded (6)
8. Disprove (6)
10. Train (7)
11. Loft (5)
12. Adjoin (4)
13. Fragment (5)
17. Foolish (5)
18. Agitate (4)
22. Verity (5)
23. Striking (7)
24. Offhand (6)
25. Verbose (6)

DOWN

1. Diary (7)
2. Diplomatic (7)
3. Amusing (5)
4. Escape (7)
5. Allocation (5)
6. Attain (5)
9. Unrelenting (9)
14. Road (7)
15. Spire (7)
16. Excuse (7)
19. Adhere (5)
20. Annul (5)
21. Stare fiercely (5)

who, what, where, when

WHO won the Grand National in 1986?

WHAT is a reredos?

WHERE is the mountain range housing the Khyber Pass?

WHEN did Joseph Stalin die?

WHO said 'A friend is one before whom I may think aloud'?

WHAT is the monetary unit of Guatemala?

WHERE is the Angkor Wat Temple?

WHEN was Hong Kong acquired by Britain before handing it over to China?

just so

S OFTEN S

F O E

JINX

THARE

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

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

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

darn tough sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

Last Week's Leisure Solutions

Across: 1 Irate; 4 Surmise; 8 Awkward; 9 Twist; 10 Pawn; 11 Debonair; 13 Ring; 14 Kale; 16 Redeemer; 17 Stun; 20 Alert; 21 Strange; 22 Eastern; 23 Ghost.

Down: 1 Inappropriate; 2 Askew; 3 Elan; 4 Sudden; 5 Rational; 6 Imitate; 7 Entertainment; 12 Unsettle; 13 Redress; 15 Lessen; 18 Tango; 19 Brag.

Who, What, Where, When: Bob Kane; DeLorean; Wrigley Field; 1781; R. C. Sherriff; Species of monkey; Jackson; 1515.

Just So: Man of honour, Root canal, Thick skin, Laid to rest

Darn Tough Sudoku

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