

Diversity on deck



ICONIC: The photograph depicting the diners on deck

GOURMET REPORT
By NAMAN ARORA
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BAHRAIN'S culinary heritage is taking its seat amidst top cultural destinations at Canada's Pearson International Airport, as part of an ongoing exhibition celebrating diversity.

An iconic photo of a majlis on Lake Muskoka's deck, with fresh Bahraini food cooked by Bahraini-Canadian Chef Suman Ali was recently unveiled at Terminal 3 in the Pearson International Airport in Toronto, Canada.

It is part of a series of photographs taken as part of Take Your Seat, a photojournalism initiative by father-son team Randy and Spencer VanDerStarren.

"This shoot took place on a deck at Horseshoe Lake in the summer of 2023, where we wanted to highlight how food can be a conversation starter, and that Bahraini and Khaleeji cuisine is more than just machboos (spiced chicken and rice) and harees (a seasoned savoury porridge made of wheat or bulgur mixed with meat)," the 32-year-old award-winning chef and corporate culinary executive, who splits her time between Toronto, Canada and Sanad, told *GulfWeekly*.

"Khaleeji and Bahraini food have a range of influences, including those from the South Asian diaspora, who



TEAM: From left, Randy, Chef Suman and Terrawoods Muskoka owner Rabbia Moeed

have been part of the cultural fabric since the 1930s, 1940s and earlier. In my food, I want to also include this part of our history.

"The project was also a collaboration with multiple women-owned businesses in Canada, and the diners came from all walks of life, from new Canadians to third and fourth generation citizens."

Take Your Seat has been exhibiting photographic installations in the high-traffic Toronto Pearson Airport since 2017 to humanise the airport experience, showcase world-class destinations and connect travellers to a unifying mission.

Their image of Chef Suman's bountiful Bahrain-themed meal and majlis served on the deck at Terrawoods on Muskoka

Shores Cottage and Park Resort will make her the first Bahraini/ Khaleeji artist and chef to be featured at an international level in North America.

Alongside the image is a QR code, which will provide visitors with more information about

her cooking and Bahraini cuisine.

According to Chef Suman, the meal fused Bahraini cuisine with locally sourced ingredients, from deer and lamb kebabs – her specialty – to skewers made from cedar and spruce, cooked over a fire pit, reminiscent of how food was cooked both in the desert and the North American wilderness.

Items on the menu ranged from Sabzi Ontario Harvest with heirloom carrots, wild mushrooms, sweet potato and saffron, to Bahraini Hummus with Daqoos (a garlic-flavoured tomato sauce) and Zaatir (a culinary herb from the region).

"Having grown up in East Riffa, much of my inspiration comes from the multicultural spread at the sufra (table),

PICTURE PERFECT: The photograph being installed at the airport

where we would have daal (lentils) and achar (pickle), alongside traditional Bahraini dishes – so food was always a place where divides were bridged and walls broken down," Chef Suman added.

Alongside the reveal of the photo at the Avant-Garde Toronto Gallery, Chef Suman and her collaborators were also honoured by Toronto Ward 11 city councillor Dianne Saxe, for 'producing an incredible celebration of unity through art, culture and fellowship.'

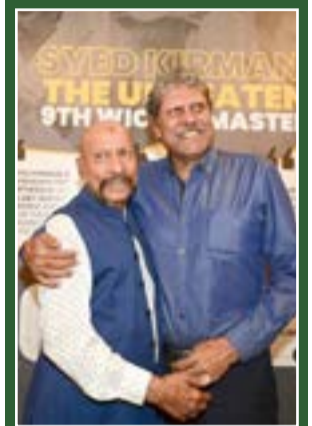
The photograph is also expected to be included in Take Your Seat's second upcoming photo book, with more details to be announced closer to the release date.

In the coming months, Take Your Seat will be coming to Kuwait, and Chef Suman also hopes to have an event in Bahrain's desert, where the photography duo can capture the ambience of the kingdom.

For more details, follow @chefsumanali on Instagram.



BEHIND-THE-SCENES: Shots of the meal being prepared on a fire pit



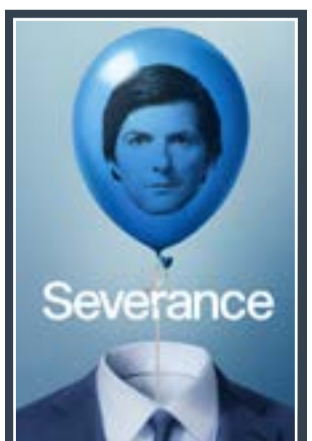
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New book release
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Dining and culture
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PULSE OF POP
Movies, music & more
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Bowled over!



BOOK REPORT
By MELISSA NAZARETH
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FORMER Bahrain resident and author Dr Debashish Sengupta's latest title, *Stumped*, has hit the shelves and documents the life of yesteryear cricketing sensation Syed Kirmani, both off the pitch and on it.

The book was officially unveiled in a star-studded event in Bengaluru, India, on December 29, the sportsman's 75th birthday, which was attended by several former Indian cricketers.

Dr Debashish, who lived in Bahrain with his family from 2019 to 2024, co-wrote the 272-page book with journalist Dakshesh Pathak from India.

Syed was a member of the Indian team that won the iconic 1983 Cricket World Cup. In 2016, he was awarded the Col C K Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award, the highest honour bestowed by the Board of Control for Cricket in India on a former player.

"I started working on *Stumped* about eight years ago and it's been a wonderful journey getting to know the man behind the cricketer," Dr Debashish, who worked at Royal University for Women during his stay in Bahrain, told *GulfWeekly*.

An ardent fan of Syed since childhood, the 50-year-old creative was looking for a guest for the launch of his book *Life of Y* when a common friend of the two introduced him to Syed.

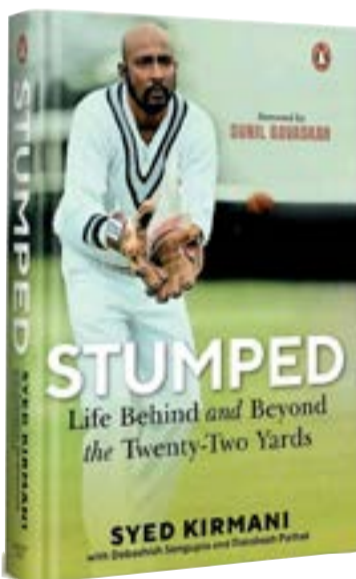
"I was 'bowled over' in our first meeting. When I went to thank him after the launch, he told me that he would like to release a biography and asked me if I would write it. I had never written biographies before but my work follows a narrative style so, I was confident and I decided to accept the project," the London-based associate professor and course leader at Portsmouth University noted.

"I suggested that he send me voice notes of stories from his childhood. I listened to them and made notes especially for factual information. I let it settle for a few days and then the words came to me."

This continued for five years, until one day, Dr Debashish got a call from Syed who said there was a journalist who might come



STAR-STUDDED: From left, Syed, Dr Debashish and former Indian captain Kapil Dev at the launch in Bengaluru



NOSTALGIC: The book cover

aboard the project.

"He could have just got him on board but he called me as I had been working on the book for the last five years," he said. "This shows the nature of the man. I accepted as Dakshesh was a brilliant addition to the team."

Stumped is divided into two sections – the biography, written by Dr Debashish, and a 'ringside view', penned by Dakshesh, who has been closely following the cricketer's career for a long time.

"We were wondering how to co-author as we had different writing styles – mine biographical and his journalistic. I then had the idea to split the book into two sections," he revealed.

"As the co-author of this

notable sportsman's story, I honestly met my worth as a writer and journalist," Dakshesh noted.

Stumped is peppered with lesser known facts about the sportsman, like he was a boxer before he got into cricket.

A poignant chapter entitled 'Best Loser' tells the story of how Kirmani lost a boxing match and was dubbed by one of the judges as the 'best loser' because he had a 'winning attitude', one that he is known to have carried with him all his life.

Also recording Syed's journey 'beyond the 22 yards', the book features many personal anecdotes.

"One day, as he was entering an event, he was greeted by many people including the security guard. Mr Kirmani stopped, put his hand on the guard's shoulder, and spoke to him before proceeding – a testament to his humility," Dr Debashish said.

"The biography features my emotional experiences and disappointments too," a candid Syed revealed, adding that he hopes readers enjoy the book.

So far, Dr Debashish has written seven books, including *Stumped*. He is set for the 'second innings' of his previously released *Life of Z*, which offers a behavioural perspective of 'Gen Z'. *Life of Y*, a similar book about millennials, was re-released last month. All three have been published by Penguin Books.

The former Reef Island resident continues to visit Bahrain where his friends live and is known for his research paper on 'motivations of young women in Bahrain volunteering during Covid-19', which bagged the Best Research Project award for 2022-23 at the Global Higher Education Awards from among more than 20 entries.

Stumped is available on Amazon.



DREAM TEAM: From left Dr Debashish, Syed and Dakshesh



PRODIGY: Edwin with his 'prized' trophies

Math master

BAHRAIN-BASED math whiz Edwin George has bagged first place in the international Gama Abacus championship, for the second consecutive year, writes Melissa Nazareth.

The fourth-grade student, who attends the New Indian School, participated in the E3 category at the highly competitive event, which saw a participation of more than 2,500 students from across the world.

The 25th edition of the contest took place at the Thrissur Indoor Stadium in Kerala, India, on January 11. Participants included students from India, Sri Lanka and other Gulf countries like Bahrain and Qatar.

"Edwin exhibited arithmetic ability from a young age, which is why we decided to register him for abacus training," father Sibin George, who works as a business unit head in the medical equipment industry, told *GulfWeekly*.

"It was during the Covid-19 pandemic and there were limited physical classes, so we opted for online. Edwin has been training for more than three years now and we're so proud of how far he has come in such a short span of time.

"While his classes are conducted over the weekend, he solves worksheets and practices during the week, striking a balance with school work," he added.

Several studies show that abacus training enhances concentration and calculation skills in children. Some even say that the increased brain

activity provides mental health benefits like reduced anxiety.

"When he was younger, Edwin used to write some numbers incorrectly like a mirror image, but since he took up abacus classes, he has been able to correct this issue thanks to the practice of speed writing numbers that the course includes," the Adliya resident, who has been living in Bahrain for the last 12 years with his wife and two sons, revealed.

The 10-year-old has also won several chess competitions, the latest being an online event where his chess academy collaborated with a non-government organisation (NGO) in Bengaluru, India.

"Edwin played against other children and adults from the NGO and won after about eight games," Sibin added.

Inspired by brother Johan, 13, who is musically inclined, Edwin has lately been exhibiting a keen interest in singing as well.

"Johan was presented the title of Kala Prathiba at the Kerala Catholic Association's Indian Talent Scan competition in 2023," Sibin said, adding that they have always encouraged their children to pursue their interests.

Sibin is a bio medical engineer by qualification and his wife Neetha is a certified microbiologist and former teacher at Al Noor International School – currently she is a homemaker.

The George family is busy preparing Edwin for an upcoming virtual abacus competition, set to take place next month.

STRIKING: An artwork from the story 'Become'



THOUGHT: An artwork from 'Imagine'



Telling tales

ART REPORT
By RIMA ALHADDAD
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UK-BASED Saudi author Leena Al Nasser unveiled her book in Manama earlier this month and is now showcasing illustrations from it at an exhibition, shining a bright spotlight on 'imaginative thinking and creativity'.

The book, *An Imaginary Place Called Home*, which is a collection of visual narratives, was launched on January 9 at Al Riwaq Art Space, where the namesake art display will be open for viewing until February 9.

The visuals have been created by Syrian illustrator Haider Al Haibie, with Leena providing the concept and the artist bringing her words alive using ink and watercolours.

The images at the



DREAMER: Leena

exhibition tackle several themes, with some taking inspiration from historical events such as the industrial revolution, and others being created from scratch.

"For our story entitled *Colour*, we had to create the characters, script and concept," Haider, 28, told *GulfWeekly*.

"I don't use references in my art, it's all imagination, which is why we think it's a pure piece of creation," he added.

"Drawing from visual memory means that instead of looking at the picture or scene and drawing it, I go out and look at things, and then draw them in the way I can remember," he explained.

Leena, 34, met Haider four years ago through her aunt, who is a professor in the Faculty of Fine Arts and Architecture at Latakia University in Syria. She showed her niece some of her students' works and



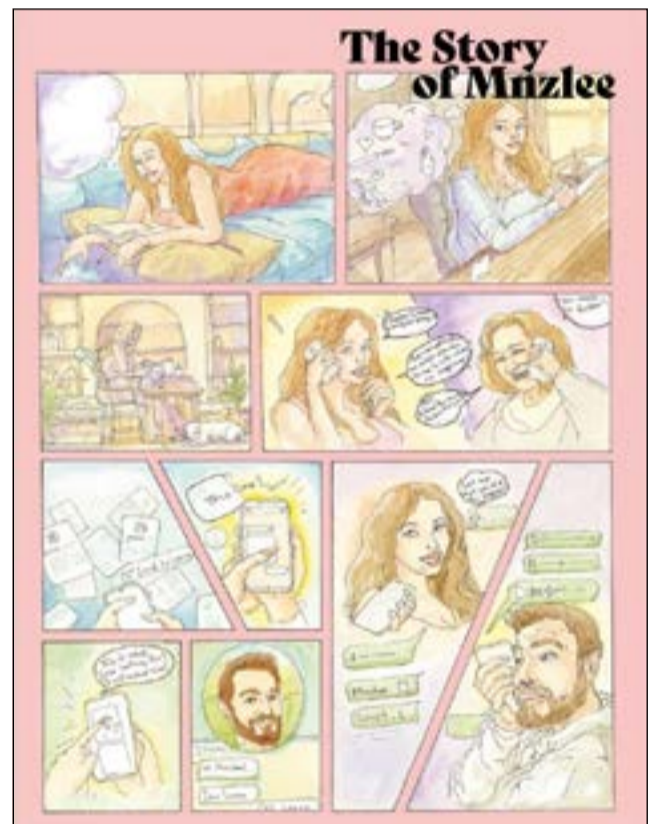
TALENT: Haider

Haider's 'imaginative' style caught Leena's attention.

According to the art and culture consultant, who is currently pursuing a master's degree in fine arts at London's Goldsmiths University, the only way the two could communicate for the collaboration was through texts and voice notes because of the war in Syria.

Leena and Haider mailed back and forth all the artwork, which is explained in 'The Story of Minzlee', displayed at the exhibition.

Leena's book was first



CRAFT: A page from 'The Story of Minzlee'

unveiled in the United Kingdom in October 2023 and has now found its way to the Arab region with the launch at Al Riwaq earlier this month.

She chose Bahrain as she believes that Al Riwaq gallery is a 'nurturing place for art' and has been enamoured by its history since its establishment in 1998.

"Writing, for me, was a visual process," she said.

"The ideas came from me collecting scraps and little pieces of drawings from old books, and I started making up stories with the limited material and creating collages.

"At first, I was just playing, I had these hilarious, ridiculous stories mixed with history because I was reading a lot at the time as well, but then I realised that there was something to this, and that's when things started coming together."

While Leena's vision was

clear, Haider explained that they needed to 'dress them up', giving each story a different visual style, some more cartoonish and others more realistic.

"Everyone can enjoy the book - a child can open it and enjoy the story and visuals, and an adult can have a better understanding of the underlying meaning," art educator Haider added.

Speaking of further mutual collaborations, Leena said she would love to transform one of her interactive artworks into an illustrated story with Haider.

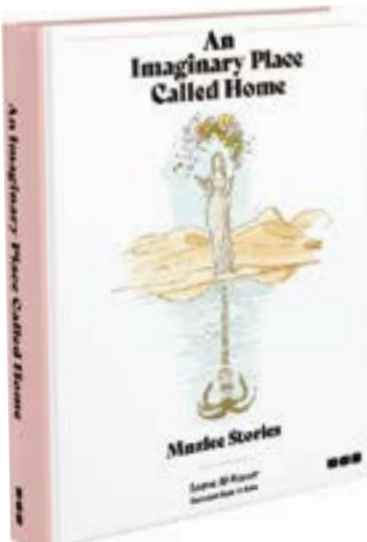
Her installation entitled *Her Majesty: Velvet Woman* is designed as a pink tent that takes the shape of a veiled woman, luring visitors to enter and read her story.

"It's my passion to tell stories of women throughout history and to creatively display them," she added.

The book is available online and at Al Riwaq.



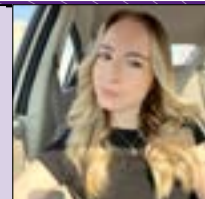
EXPRESSIVE: An artwork from 'Selves'



BECKONING: The book cover

Leisure Scene

What's on guide by
Julia Cassano



COSY:
Winter
Chalet



EXOTIC: Saturday Brunch at
Cantina Kahlo

SAVOUR THE RITZ MAGIC ON EVERY PLATE

THE Ritz-Carlton Bahrain invites guests on a culinary journey filled with enticing flavours and lively entertainment this week.

Escape to the heart of La Med, where a feast of British classics, alongside a global array of flavours, will leave you wanting more tomorrow, from 1pm to 4pm.

Immerse yourself in the iconic sites of London amidst replicas of Big Ben, the London Bridge and the red phone booth.

It costs BD33, inclusive of soft beverages, BD44 inclusive of selected beverages, and BD60 for a bubbly brunch. Children aged four to 12 dine for BD16.500.

● Meat lovers can treat

themselves to Plums Tomahawk Tuesdays, which features a perfectly cooked steak paired with a premium bottle of a grape beverage. The luxurious dining affair is sure to delight your senses, on Tuesdays, from 7pm to 11pm, for BD69.

● Meanwhile, guests can experience the magic of winter at the Winter Chalet. The charming beachside

retreat evokes the warmth of an Alpine cottage and invites you to savour roasted chestnuts, raclette, schnitzel and fondues. It's priced a la carte.

● A lively brunch experience bursting with bold Mexican flavours and authentic dishes awaits you at Cantina Kahlo. Immerse yourself in the festive atmosphere as an energetic

Mariachi band provides the perfect soundtrack for the culinary journey. It costs BD22 including soft beverages and BD35 inclusive of selected beverages on Saturday, from 1pm to 4pm.

● Kickstart the weekend with La Plage's epic Salsa Night. Dig into exquisite gourmet delicacies while enjoying captivating rhythms

and special beverages.

● Gather your friends and relish a range of beverages at Thai Lounge at a special price. Ladies can enjoy a 50 per cent discount off selected finger food items, on Sunday from 6pm to 9pm.

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



FLAVOURFUL: Saj bread wraps

FLAVOURFUL BURRITOS AND WRAPS ON THE MENU

GET ready to enjoy a range of delicious offerings and lively entertainment at the Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay this week.

Embrace the winter spirit with family and friends at Bahrain Bay Kitchen's Chalet Brunch, including fondue served straight to your table, crafted from artisanal cheeses such as Gruyère, French Comté, and Italian Fontina.

It's available tomorrow, from 1pm to 4pm and costs BD35 inclusive of soft beverages, or BD48 including a selected beverage package.

Guests can discover enticing flavours at Bay View Lounge's Wrap Fiesta, which features a range of delicious wraps and burritos. It's available until February 18, from noon to 11.30pm. A vegetarian burrito costs BD10 while it's BD12 for adana lamb durum or a fried chicken wrap, and BD14 for a lobster Thai roll.

Meanwhile, Byblos is hosting Saj Night - an ultimate dining experience that offers guests a sneak peek into the art of Saj bread making. Savour the enticing aromas and flavours of

minced meat kashkaval, muhammara and more.

It's available every Wednesday until February 26, from 6pm to midnight, and costs between BD8 and BD12.

Celebrate Byblos' first anniversary with its epic barbeque night. Dig into a thoughtfully curated spread of lamb chops, sea bass, shish tawook, lamb tikka, meat kebab and a range of side dishes until February 27, from 6pm to midnight. It's priced at BD32 per person, inclusive of soft beverages.

For the ultimate tea experience, head down to Bay View Lounge. The Chocolate Indulgence Tea, available everyday from noon to 9pm, offers guests an array of irresistible pastries and warm beverages. Regular tea is priced at BD22 while it's BD26 for royal tea.

Beverage Omakase at Blue Moon Lounge is tailored for those who appreciate artistry in every sip. The one-of-a-kind experience offers guests five beverages thoughtfully crafted by expert mixologists. Relish the drinks from Tuesday to Saturday, until 11.30pm. It costs BD36 per person.

For details, call 17115500 and 17115046.

PIZZA PARTY FUN

THE British Club Bahrain invites guests for an Italian Night on The Terrace with live entertainment.

All-you-can-eat homemade pizza and pasta with unlimited selected beverages costs BD15 for members and BD17.500 for non-members on Wednesday, from 6.30pm.

The club will also stage a Jam Night for music lovers. Entry for musicians is free and other guests must be signed in by a member, tomorrow, from 6pm.

For further information, email reception@britishclubbahrain.com or call 17728245.

TREATS GALORE

FOR a weekend filled with good food and vibes choose the Dilmun Club Bahrain.

On Mondays, the club invites guests for its Curry Night, which features any curry and a selected beverage for BD5.500.

Meat lovers can also enjoy Steak Night which offers two steaks and a bottle of a grape beverage for BD20.

The club will also host a delicious Saturday roast, featuring a full carvery buffet for BD5.500.

For reservations, contact 17690926.

Leisure Scene

Weekly Entertainment



ORCHESTRA: John and Caroline

MUSICAL SYMPHONY

THE English Chamber Orchestra Duo is set to stage a special performance tonight at the Cultural Hall in Manama.

The evening, organised in collaboration with the British Embassy as part of the ongoing Spring of Culture Festival, will feature captivating music by popular cellist Caroline Dale and renowned violinist John Mills.

Immerse yourself in the rich and dynamic melodies and the powerful interplay between the instruments, performed by the world-class musicians in a display of passion and artistry. The

concert will be held from 8pm to 9pm, and doors open at 7pm. Admission is free, but seats are limited and assigned on a first-come basis.

On Saturday, the Dar Al Riffa Al Sagheera Band will host a mesmerising evening of folklore music. It will start with Al Majilsi followed by the Al Ashouri, a celebratory performance accompanying wedding rituals. The night will conclude with Al Marowba, a lively dance characterised by its fast-paced beat, offering an energetic cultural experience.

The band will perform at Dar Al Riffa, at 8pm.

For more information visit springofculture.org.



RHYTHM: The Dar Al Riffa Al Sagheera Band



VARIETY: A beautiful spread of sushi at Seafood Night

HILTON BECKONS WITH LIVIN' LA VIDA LOCA PARTY BRUNCH

KICKSTART your weekend with a range of great offerings at Hilton Bahrain this week.

Enjoy the kingdom's ultimate Livin' La Vida Loca party brunch, which features dozens of delicious dishes and live entertainment tomorrow, from 12.30pm to 4pm, at Origin Kitchen and Culture.

It costs BD28net with unlimited soft beverages, BD39net with unlimited selected beverages and BD25net for military personnel.

Origin Kitchen and Culture will host Pan Asian Night, where guests can savour peking duck, delicious sushi and live cooking stations featuring enticing flavours from all corners of the continent.

Available on Wednesday, from 7pm to 10pm, it costs BD22net with unlimited soft beverages, and BD28 with unlimited selected beverages.

Tonight, from 7pm to 10pm, the restaurant invites visitors for its Seafood Night. The freshest catch and live cooking stations

will make for an unforgettable evening. A package with unlimited soft beverages is priced at BD28net while it's BD32net with unlimited selected beverages.

Meanwhile, Origin Kitchen and Culture will also stage its breakfast buffet from Sunday to Friday, 6.30am to 10.30am, for BD13net per person.

Late risers can also enjoy the spread on Saturday, from 6.30am to 11.30am, at the same price.

Ladies can head down to Cocoluna Lounge on Wednesday, from 7pm to midnight to enjoy three complimentary beverages.

Discover a new definition of nightlight at the Society Club, from 9pm to 2am. Tonight, the Afro Series will bring good vibes and fun from 9pm to 2am.

Guests can also savour sweet treats at Lamar, everyday from 5pm, at 50 per cent off.

For more information or reservations, contact 33692013 or 33690081.

MOVIE TIME

HEAD down to CINECO Seef to watch some of the English-language films being shown this weekend.

DEN OF THIEVES 2: PANTERA (15+)

Big Nick is back on the hunt in Europe and closing in on Donnie who is embroiled in the treacherous and unpredictable world of diamond thieves and the infamous Panther mafia, as they plot a massive heist of the world's largest diamond exchange.

Actors: Gerard Butler, O'Shea Jackson Jr, Michael Bisping

Timings: 12.30pm, 3.15pm, 6pm, 8.45pm, 11.30pm



PADDINGTON IN PERU (PG)

Full of Paddington's signature blend of wit, charm and laugh-out-loud humour, Paddington in Peru finds the beloved, marmalade-loving bear lost in the jungle on an exciting, high-stakes adventure.

Actors: Hugh Bonneville, Emily Mortimer, Julie Walters

Timings: 11am, 1.15pm, 3.30pm, 5.45pm, 8pm, 10.15pm

GRAFTED (18+)

A bright but socially-awkward exchange student takes her craving for popularity to horrifying heights.

Actors: Jess Hong, Mark Mitchinson, Jared Turner

Timings: 5pm, 11.15pm

YOU SHALL NOT SLEEP TONIGHT (15+)

A young boy is plagued by terrifying nightmares where a sinister monster lurks in his closet. To his relief, his father appears in the middle of the night, helping him confront his fears.

Actors: Milo Burgess-Webb, Agustin Olcese, Bruno Giacobbe

Timings: 1.45am, 2.45pm, 6.45pm, 10.45pm



PERFECTION: Beef steak on the grill

A PARADISE FOR MEAT LOVERS

HEAD down to the Royal Golf Club (RGC) for an array of irresistible offerings this week.

Join the club every Friday and Saturday, from noon to 5pm, for its iconic Weekend Roast, featuring a selection of beef, lamb, chicken, and all the trimmings at Slice and Repartee.

It costs BD9,500 per person, including a selected roast plate and one soda or chilled juice and BD13,500, inclusive of a selected roast plate and a selected beverage.

Links invites guests for its Steak Night on Wednesday, from 6pm.

Indulge in a selection of premium steaks cooked to perfection and enjoy a vibrant evening filled with entertainment.

Enjoy a luxurious tea experience at Links everyday from 11am to 7pm.

Royal Tea for Two offers guests an array of delightful treats in a relaxed setting .. all while overlooking the stunning views of the club.

Choose from two options - gold package,

including tea or coffee for BD15, or the platinum package, inclusive of tea, coffee or two glasses of

bubbly for BD19.

For bookings or more information, contact 39007546.

TASTY: Weekend roast



Pulse of Pop

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

PROFESSIONAL:
The *Severance* cast



THE long-awaited second season of dystopian TV series *Severance* premieres tomorrow on Apple TV+, with weekly episodes releasing until March 21.

Starring *Parks and Recreation*'s Adam Scott, *Severance* follows a team of employees at Lumon Industries, a biotechnology company founded by highly respected doctor and philosopher Kier Eagan.

The company is known for valuing work-life balance as all its newly-hired employees must go under a 'severance' procedure that surgically separates their work and personal memories, creating two versions of themselves referred to as 'innie' (in work) and 'outie' (out of work).

The procedure is ethically questioned by members of the public and eventually, raises concerns between its employees, escalating to Mark Scout (Adam) and his co-workers finding themselves on a mission to discover the true nature of their work and the consequences of the severance barrier.

The new season is set to carry on from season one's (2022) cliff-hanger finale that left fans at the edge of their seat, as the severed four main characters discover missing links between their two worlds.

Show creator Dan Erickson revealed that fans can expect the show to get even darker and more twisted.

"We very much wanted to put our heroes in a scarier place because season one ends with them poking

PRAISE KIER!

the bear," Dan said in an interview.

"They form this little rebellion, and they're able to achieve a modicum of success with it, but the question with season two was: What happens when the bear pokes back? What's the fallout of this victory that they had? I think, without giving much away, the

fallout is dire," he added.

Season one garnered highly positive critical acclaim earning a *Rotten Tomatoes* score of 97 per cent.

It also won two out of seven Primetime Creative Arts Emmy Awards nominations in 2022 for outstanding music composition for a series and outstanding main title

design, as well as two Writers Guild of America awards for drama series and new series in 2023.

It has also been announced that a third season is already in the works.

Lumon Industries is currently the first and only fictional company to be allowed a page on the app *LinkedIn*.

INTROSPECTIVE TUNES

CANADIAN rapper Malcolm James McCormick aka Mac Miller's new posthumous album *Balloonism* releases tomorrow.

The collection is set to feature 14 tracks recorded by the artist from 2013 to 2014, but were never officially released due to other projects taking precedence, according to an announcement by his family.

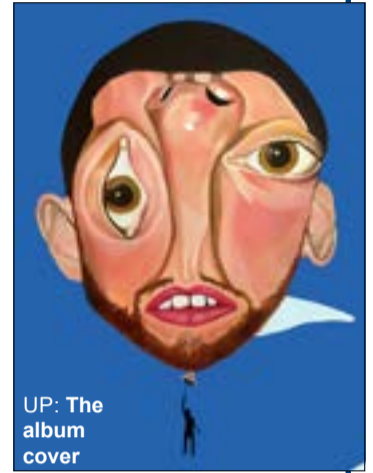
"Many of Malcolm's fans are aware of *Balloonism*, a full-length album that Malcolm created around the time of the release of *Faces* in 2014," the statement read.

Faces is a mixtape by the artist, which was received with positive criticism, and considered by many as his best work.

"It is a project that was of great importance to Malcolm, to the extent that he commissioned artwork for it, and discussions concerning when it should be released were had regularly," it said.

The cover art features a portrait of the late rapper by painter Alim Smith.

"We believe the project showcases both the breadth of his musical talents and fearlessness as an artist.

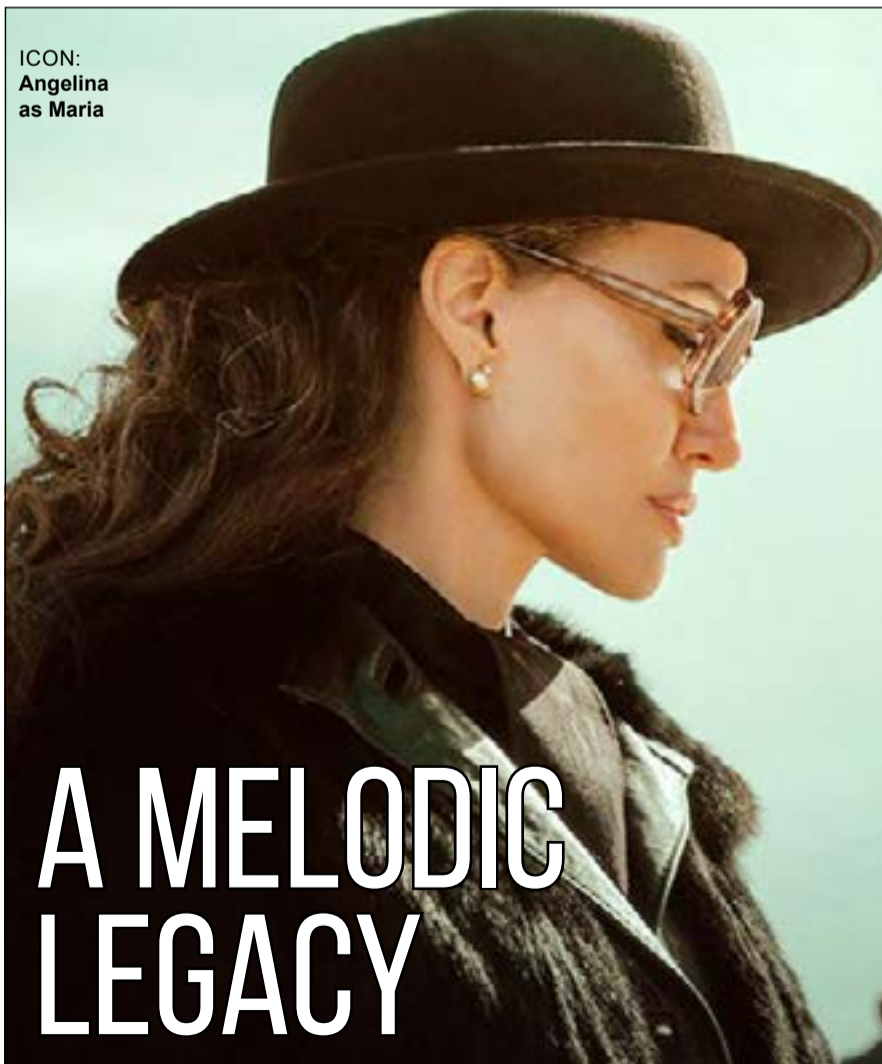


UP: The album cover

Given that unofficial versions of the album have circulated online for years and that releasing *Balloonism* was something that Malcolm frequently expressed being important to him, we felt it most appropriate to present an official version of the project to the world," the statement noted.

This is the second posthumous release following the artist's passing in 2018, *Circles* (2020) being the first, and overall, the seventh studio album in his discography.

ICON:
Angelina
as Maria



A MELODIC LEGACY

ANGELINA Jolie returns to the big screen as she stars in the biographical drama film *Maria*, out now in theatres.

Directed by Pablo Larraín and written by Steven Knight, it follows the seven days before opera singer Maria Callas's death in Paris in 1977. Callas reflects on the highs and lows of her life and career.

The movie is director Pablo's third instalment in his important 20th-century women trilogy, preceded by *Spencer* (2021) about Princess Diana and *Jackie* (2016) about Jacqueline Kennedy.

American-Greek soprano Maria was one of the most influential opera singers of her era, praised for her wide-ranging voice and singing techniques.

She spent her last years living mostly in isolation in the French capital, until she died of a heart attack at 53.

Angelina revealed that she had gone through seven months of training to sing opera for the film, which is a first in her career

as she has not sung for a film role before.

"My first time singing I remember being so nervous, my sons were there and they helped lock the door so that nobody else was coming in and I was shaky," she said.

"Pablo, in his decency, started me in a small room and ended me in La Scala (a theatre in Paris where the filming took place) so he gave me time to grow," she added.

The actress explained that she deeply cared about honouring the opera singer's legacy and her fans, and it was a priority for her to do the icon justice.

Director Pablo expressed that, through the film, he wanted to celebrate the late artist's career and artistry rather than focusing on the low points of her life and the tragedy of her death.

"I didn't want to make a dark movie about a tragic situation, but rather about a woman who spent her life singing for others, taking care of others, worrying about her relationships, and now she's ready to take care of herself and find her own destiny."

Motoring Weekly

The top motoring and motorsport news

Happy Checo

SERGIO 'Checo' Perez's downfall at Red Bull was swift, but it has not taken the Mexican star long to find peace as he considers his next career move.

Perez signed a two-year contract extension with Red Bull last June, but parted ways with the Formula 1 team just six months later following a poor second half of the 2024 season that saw him finish eighth in the driver's standings.

Perez wanted to keep his seat with Red Bull for a fifth season, but the team decided to sign 22-year-old Liam Lawson to pair with four-time world champion Max Verstappen. Perez reportedly was offered an ambassador-type role with the F1 team, but he opted to walk away from his contract.

Less than a month later, Perez said he is in a 'dream position' as he considers his next career move.

"I'm very happy with my life, very excited about what's ahead," he said at the Leon State Fair in Mexico, per *Racer.com*.

"For sure, if I receive a good, interesting (F1) project, then I'll definitely consider it and think about it. It will all come in its own time. For now, my priority in the months ahead is to have fun, do what I haven't been able to, travel, be with my family..."

"In the next six months I'll make a decision on what I want for the next step of my career."

Red Bull team principal Christian Horner said at the time that it was Perez's decision to take a break from F1, but the driver said that was not the case.

"Everything happened very quickly at the end of the season, so I didn't expect it," said Perez, who turns 35 this month.

After pursuing his F1 dream since he was six years old and spending the past 14 years living it out, Perez said he is enjoying the increased freedom in his schedule. While the 20 F1 drivers are hard at work preparing for the 2025 season, which begins in mid-March with the Australian Grand Prix, Perez is spending time with family and friends.

"It's incredible, especially at this time of year when you're already thinking about the season and you can't do anything anymore," he said. "It's really cool because I've been doing this all my life."

"This is my first year since I can remember where I can decide what to do. It can be different plans, I can go (somewhere), I can confirm a trip, I can go with my family and my children wherever I want. So the truth is it's something that I'm enjoying a lot, and I'm really looking forward to what's coming this year."

Perez has recorded six wins and 39 podium finishes since making his F1 debut in 2011. His most recent victory came at the 2023 Azerbaijan Grand Prix.

RELAXED: Sergio

BEST IN BLACK

MERCEDES will continue to carry black on their car livery in the future, team chief executive Toto Wolff said, crediting Lewis Hamilton for being instrumental in bringing the colour scheme.

Despite famously being known as the Silver Arrows, the squad opted to run their cars in black - first introduced in 2020 - as part of a stand against racism and discrimination, as well

as pledging to improve the diversity of their team.

The decision came amid global protests around the world in support of Black Lives Matter, a campaign that Hamilton had been a vocal supporter of.

A new video released by Mercedes shows Hamilton and Wolff looking back at the seven-time world champion's iconic cars from his time with the squad - ahead of his departure for Ferrari this season.

STUNNING: Mercedes' 2024 Formula One car



The Mercedes-AMG Petronas Formula 1 team boss labelled the 2020 challenger as an 'important one', adding: "That's the car that started silver, that went black."

Wolff acknowledged that the move was a 'big step' for

Mercedes, while Hamilton suggested that the car looked 'best in black - it just looks like the Knight Rider'.

"That's why we stick (with it). We're going to continue. It's what you brought," Wolff responded, according to the Formula 1 website.

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 a game of darts, which spaces will give you the highest score from one dart?
2. Which African country has a flag that's the reverse of the Irish flag?
3. What are male seals called?
4. What is the name of the African-American captain from *Brooklyn Nine-Nine*?
5. Which one country is the world's largest producer of cherries, apricots, figs, and hazelnuts?
6. Which heavy metal



7. band tours in a 747, nicknamed 'Ed Force One'?
7. Which common everyday article of clothing was not worn in the Russian military until 2007?

1. Triple 20
2. Ivory Coast
3. Bull
4. Captain Raymond Holt
5. Türkiye
6. Iron Maiden
7. Socks

ANSWERS



THE holiday season festivities have come to an end and most of us are back to the office.

Getting into work mode after an extended break can be tough, especially when we don't space it with relaxation and recreation.

Striking work-life balance is essential throughout the year, which brings us to the first topic of 2025 for *GulfWeekly's* 'Speak Your Mind' feature series:

'How does work-life balance affect your mental health?' We invite you, our family of readers, to share your views in no more than

100 words by emailing gdnnews@gdnmedia.bh or [@gdnonline](https://www.instagram.com/gdnonline) on Instagram by January 28.

Please share some anecdotes of when and how you set boundaries between your professional and personal lives.

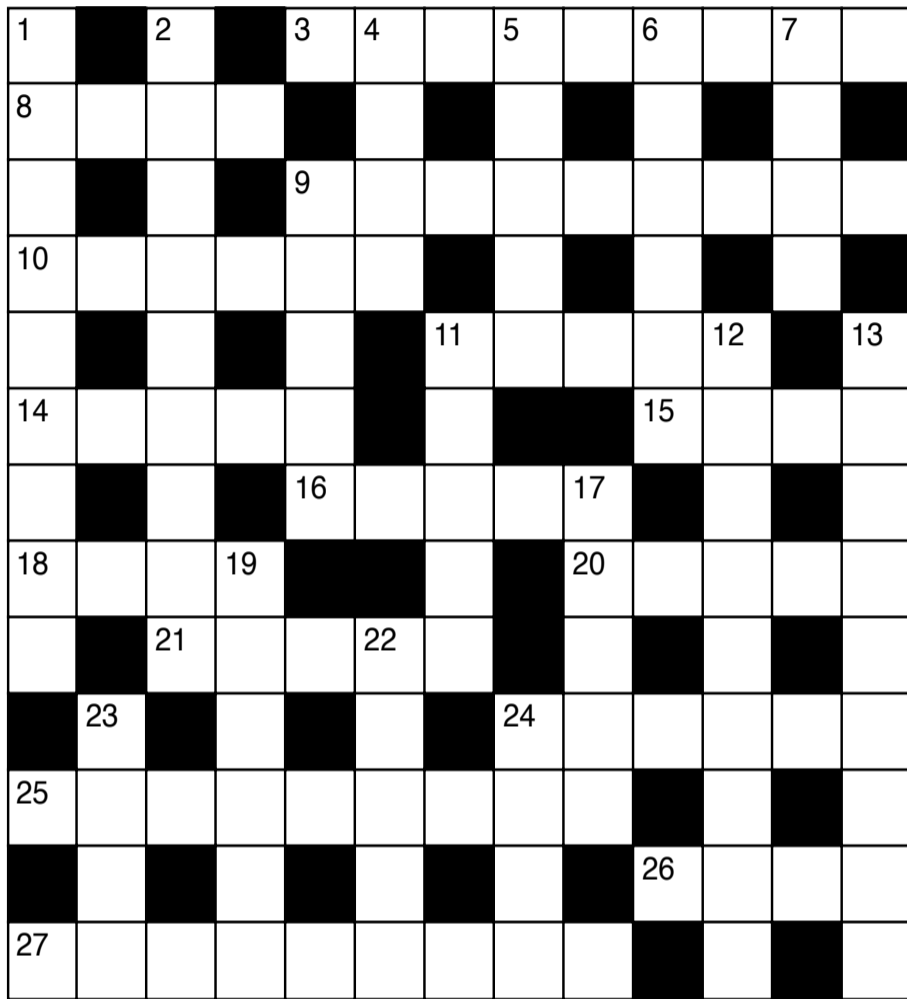
We will publish a selection of the comments received in *GulfWeekly* - only 'original' entries will be considered for the top submission and win a box of Raw Candy vegan chocolates as a token of our appreciation. Together, let's keep the conversation going!

Time Out



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 Maximizing performance and efficiency
 Dell service provider
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crossword break



Solutions in next week's issue.

ACROSS

- 3. Tendency to lie (9)
- 8. Enticement (4)
- 9. Boundary (9)
- 10. Again (6)
- 11. Sustains (5)
- 14. Periods (5)
- 15. Appear (4)
- 16. Banishment (5)
- 18. Calf meat (4)
- 20. Eye-protector (5)
- 21. Endures (5)
- 24. Shows contempt for (6)
- 25. Sorts (9)
- 26. At liberty (4)
- 27. Annoying (9)

DOWN

- 1. Aim (9)
- 2. By degrees (9)
- 4. Fencing sword (4)
- 5. Compel (5)
- 6. Drinking toast (6)
- 7. Matches (4)
- 9. Non-poetic writing (5)
- 11. Serene joy (5)
- 12. Technical drawing aid (3,6)
- 13. Stamped (9)
- 17. Bad things (5)
- 19. Lasso (6)
- 22. Sum (5)
- 23. Sport (4)
- 24. Fronded plant (4)

who, what, where, when

- WHO... became Prime Minister of Italy in 2001?
- WHAT... are blinders on a racehorse in the US?
- WHERE... in the body are your irises?
- WHEN... did the British Princess Margaret die?
- WHAT... type of creature is a loach?
- WHERE... is Burghley House?
- WHEN... did Midge Ure have his only solo No. 1 single in the UK?

just so

186x5280x60x60x24x365'

WELLINGTONS FILL FILL

g e t
 business business

gi rl

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

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

darn tough sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

Last Week's Leisure Solutions

CROSSWORD BREAK:

Across: 1 Arch; 3 Stimulus; 8 Pour; 9 Sequence; 11 Abbreviation; 13 Sleepy; 14 Obtain; 17 Apprehension; 20 Obedient; 21 Data; 22 Muster; 23 Cede.

Down: 1 Applause; 2 Crumble; 4 Thesis; 5 Mountebank; 6 Lingo; 7 Shed; 10 Jeopardise; 12 Inundate; 15 Agitate; 16 Chance; 18 Press; 19 Doom.

JUST SO: Life in the old dog, On all fours, Carte blanche, Paint into a corner
WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN: Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency; Yalta; 1927; Emma Watson; Stockholm; Northern Territory, Australia; March 1st.

Darn Tough Sudoku

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

Your work pad space