



STRIKING: A portrait from the last session at Bahrain Bay



VISUAL POETRY
Albareh art exhibition
SEE PAGE 2



EXPRESSIONS GALORE
Akkas turns one
SEE PAGE 3

COMMUNITY REPORT
By MELISSA NAZARETH
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HOMEGROWN community photography project Photos à la Chair is set to stage its next session tomorrow at Bahrain National Museum, with the underlying message of 'repurposing waste' artistically.

For the uninitiated, Photos à la Chair brings together Bahrain's creatives and enthusiasts, with artistic setups installed across the island. Co-founder and Lebanese-Canadian artist and photographer Camille Zakharia captures visitors against the backdrop, producing striking human portraits.

The upcoming session will be brought alive in the museum's sculpture garden by Bahrain-based artists: architect Latifa Al Khayat, who has used reclaimed concrete and reinforced metal bars to design her artwork, and architect Lukasz Palczynski and designer and physicist Hamad Al



INTERNATIONAL: Happy subjects posing at the setup in Cairo

Mannai who have repurposed limestone rocks as a bench for the subjects to sit on during the photoshoot. All material used is obtained by exploring various local sites.

"We have organised 23 sessions in Bahrain but this is our first with the Spring of Culture," Bahraini co-founder Ali Karimi told *GulfWeekly*.

"Our session tomorrow has a nice touch to it, using salvaged materials. Baca (Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities)

has helped with the artwork funding and material exploration," said the Bahraini architect.

Spring of Culture is Bahrain's much-awaited annual arts and culture festival, featuring Arab and international artists and acts held across the island, as well as lectures and traditional handicrafts workshops.

The seven-year-old community photography initiative has seen hundreds of collaborators and more than 1,000 attendees, not



MANAMA SUQ: All smiles at Bab Al Bahrain

just in Bahrain but also other places, including Saudi Arabia, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and, last year, Cairo in Egypt.

While the idea of the project is the same for all countries, the art and public interaction varies, which, according to Ali, is interesting to note. There are plans for a possible launch in Kuwait come autumn this year.

Ali also highlighted that

Photos à la Chair has led enthusiasts to visit Bahrain, shining a bright spotlight on the kingdom's rich cultural and artistic offerings.

"Some people missed our session in Saudi Arabia last year, and they decided to attend the following one in Bahrain," he said.

The session at Bahrain National Museum will run tomorrow from 2pm to 5pm.



LEISURE SCENE
Food & culture
SEE PAGES 4-5



PULSE OF POP
TV, movies & more
SEE PAGE 6

Living on the edge

ART REPORT
By NAMAN ARORA
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INTERWEAVING a visual narration with timeless symbols, Saudi artist Hussein Al Mohasen's latest exhibition at Albareh Art Gallery takes viewers on a journey within and beyond.

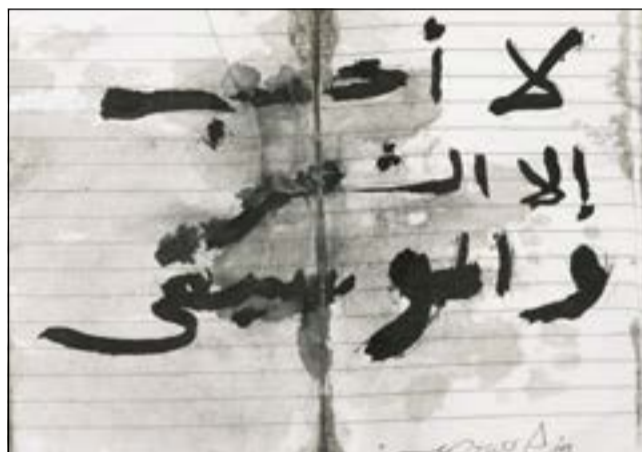
The *On The Edge of A Crumbling Cliff* exhibition opened this week at the art gallery in Adliya and highlights the Qatif-born's fascination with colour.

"My recent artwork is a visual narration inspired by poetry and my fascination with colour," the 53-year-old artist told *GulfWeekly*.

"It explores the relationship between the cerebral experiences evoked by poetic language and their translation into vibrant, colourful spaces. Through texture and bold colours, I transform my interpretation of poetic rhythm into a unique visual experience.

"By abstracting poetry inscriptions, I create palpable geographic landscapes of ridges, crevices, shadows, and light.

"My goal is to transcend reality, inviting viewers on a



INSPIRED: Hussein's work speaks of drawing inspiration from poetry and music

visual journey that expresses my thoughts and feelings of peace and the love of humanity.

"I present a colourful perspective, offering a different way of seeing and experiencing the world."

In total, around 20 of Hussein's pieces are showcased in this exhibition.

Hussein has been active in the art world in the Gulf region since his first appearance in 1999 at the Al Janadriya Festival in Saudi Arabia, and has since occupied a place alongside pioneering Saudi artists.

His work is usually characterised by a singular dialogue between the audience and the artist, filled with images 'as a series of surgical incisions, cutting open a theatre of horror and comedy into frozen frames.'

His sharp-coloured stenciled images translate into



ARTIST: Hussein

continuous and extended narratives of experiences that not only describe the world, but actively participate in it.

In his most recent body of work, the Saudi artist has moved away from abstract surfaces into symbolic and iconographic imageries, reflecting now the endless transitions of the contemporary between digital and real, political and social, private and public and the continuous transformation of the Gulf region, alternating a liquid modernity with solid traditions and histories.

His work is both conceptual and liberating, drawing on art from the public space, but executed here with the fine precision of a cartographer.

Behind the obvious



COLOURFUL: A fascination with different hues underpins Hussein's work

simplicity of his works, lurks a decades-long journey shaped by poetry from the Arab world and the complex intersections between modern spaces and personal freedoms.

His work is visually global and overcomes regional paradigms, presenting the contemporary Arab experience after the poetry and music that inspired him.

His pieces have been exhibited all over the Middle East, with his most recent solo and group exhibitions held in Bahrain, Kuwait and the UAE.

The exhibition runs until the end of the month.

For more details, follow @albarehartgallery and @hussein_almoahasen on Instagram.

BRAIN-BUSTERS

Quizmaster and *Radio Bahrain* host Shannon Crockett, who has been entertaining people across the island with his brain-teasing quiz night sessions, has offered to put *GulfWeekly* readers' general knowledge to the test. Join in the fun every Thursday with Shannon's seven brain-busters.



1. What does it mean to 'run with scissors'?
2. What word signifies a jury verdict that a criminal defendant is not guilty?
3. The Stratocaster is a model of which guitar maker?
4. Doug Engelbart was the inventor of what computer accessory?
5. What luxury brand is known for its iconic interlocking 'C' logo?
6. New York is known as the 'what' state?
7. Donald Trump was the

original host of the *Celebrity Apprentice*. When he left, who did *NBC* name as his replacement?

- ANSWERS**
1. Act recklessly
 2. Acquit
 3. Fender
 4. Mouse
 5. Chanel
 6. The Empire State
 7. Arnold Schwarzenegger



CAGED: One of Hussein's pieces

WITH Valentine's Day round the corner (February 14), it's a good time to think about how our romantic relationships affect our mental health.

They say 'two is better than one' – being in a romantic relationship can provide the comfort of companionship. However, conflict is inevitable. Our February topic: 'How has your romantic relationship affected your mental health?'



explores these ups and downs.

We invite you, our family of readers, to share your views in no more than 100 words by emailing gdnnews@gdnmedia.bh or @gdnonline on *Instagram*

by February 19. Please share anecdotes from your personal experience and how you worked around the issue – it just might be someone else's playbook!

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!

Through her lens



TAMPER-PROOF: Some of the photographs showcased in forensic bags at the Al Riwaq Art Studio

SNAP: One of the photographs captured by Ghada's Hasselblad



POISE: Ghada, centre, with two Interior Ministry officials during one of her pop-ups



PAINTING an unfiltered and raw portrait of humanity in the kingdom and beyond, Bahraini creative and photographer Ghada Khunji has captured portraits of more than 1,300 subjects in the first year of her viral Akkas Portrait Studio project.

Since she started the project in February last year, Akkas, which translates to 'photographer' in Arabic, has popped up in Youth City Bahrain, Riffa Fort and recently in Muharraq Nights, after its journey began during The Nest festival at Al Riwaq Art Space. "Akkas means photographer in Arabic. I thought it's a perfect name because 'Akks' in Arabic also means opposite that relates to old school photography of using negatives to make a positive image," she told *GulfWeekly*. "At Akkas Portrait Studio, I am dedicated to capturing portraits that focus on the essence of the individual, stripping away the noise of modernity to reveal the pure, unfiltered humanity of my subjects. "My work is a celebration of the person in their most authentic and perfect form, a testament to our shared human unity and the beauty

PHOTO REPORT
By NAMAN ARORA
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inherent in every soul." While Bahrain provides creative fodder for many photography projects, Akkas stands out for its focus on portraits and analogue photographs - each shot is captured with a Hasselblad. So far, Ghada has photographed 1,301 individuals and has no plans to stop, as she moves forward on taking people back in time with her analogue photographs in an 'age dominated by quick selfies and the fleeting nature of mobile photography.' "Each portrait I create is more than just an image; it is a declaration of life itself, a moment preserved as undeniable proof of existence," she added. "To underscore this, I present each portrait in a tamper-proof forensic evidence bag—a deliberate and symbolic choice. This packaging is a statement: you are enough, just as you are. "No one has the right to 'tamper' with your essence. These bags transform each portrait into a certified proof of life, emphasising that every individual is whole,

complete, and worthy of celebration. "I believe that every person carries a unique story, a piece of the greater human narrative that connects us all. My subjects are not merely individuals but vital threads in the intricate and unified tapestry of humanity. "Through my lens, I aim to highlight both our differences and the unbreakable bonds that unite us, celebrating the diversity that enriches us while reminding us of the universal truths we share. "I am passionate about capturing portraits of people from every walk of life, creating an extensive archive that reflects the vibrant and diverse population of Bahrain—a country bursting with individuality and culture. My mission is to document our collective identity, preserving these moments as timeless evidence of our shared journey." Another subtler message in itself is how simple her setup is - a Hasselblad X1D camera, tripod, LED lights and a chair - and Ghada has plans to soon make even the easy-to-construct studio mobile. Her directions also are simple albeit unconventional - sit in the



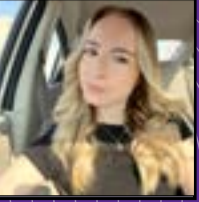
ORGANIC: Ghada aims to capture natural and neutral facial impressions with her photographs

chair however one is comfortable... and avoid over-smiling. "I feel that smiling is indicative of being aware of the camera, whereas when one does not smile it shows one's inner soul," she explained. "Every person that walks in has their own energy and that's beautifully reflected in the way they are posing, it's almost like I can read my subjects by the way they sit and pose. "Some come in and within three

minutes they are out and some stay and want to talk. Sometimes I jokingly say that it's portraits and therapy. Of course for me that makes it even more special because I get to know my subjects and it's not just a fleeting moment." In October last year, at Al Riwaq, Ghada showcased some of the shots taken in the first eight months of the project. Amongst her many special moments captured at the studio, one in particular stands out. "One of the most amazing moments that I will never forget is when a young boy peeked through my studio and saw an empty white room brightly lit and said, 'When I go through that door is it like going to heaven?'" she reminisced. "That pretty much culminates the reason why I think this is such a special project, a place like heaven when everyone is equal and loved." These days, Akkas Portrait Studio can be found at the Bahrain National Museum, as part of the ongoing Bahrain Annual Fine Arts Exhibition. For the latest updates and more details, follow @gkhunji on Instagram.

Leisure Scene

What's on guide by
Julia Cassano



EXQUISITE DINING AFFAIRS

THE Ritz-Carlton Bahrain is celebrating the season of love with an array of exclusive Valentine's Day offers on February 14.

La Med's Big Ben Valentine's Day Brunch, from 1pm to 4pm, promises a variety of dishes, all while looking over the hotel's beautiful green garden and pool area.



COSY: A romantic display at the hotel

It costs BD33, inclusive of soft beverages and BD44 with selected beverages.

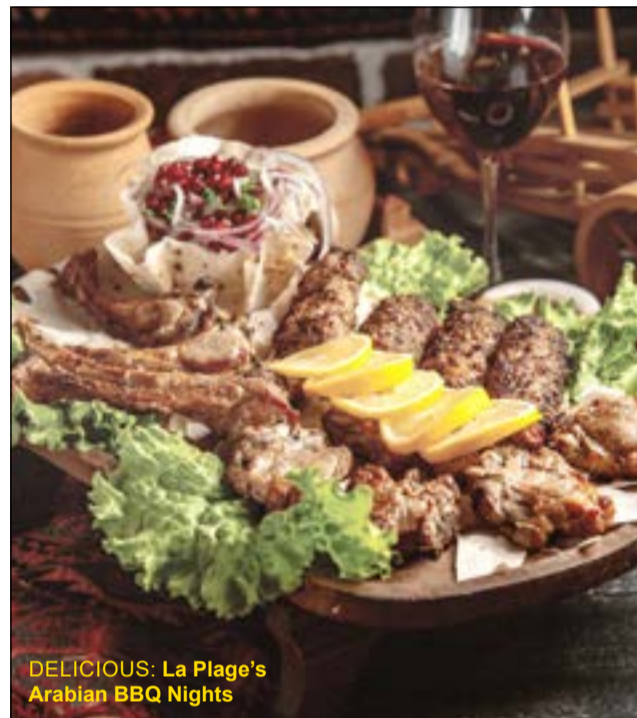
Guests can enjoy exquisite dining affairs at Nirvana, a four-course set menu for BD60 per couple; Primavera, a three-course set menu for BD88 per couple; and Plums, a three-course set menu at BD77 per couple. All offers will be valid from 7pm to 11pm.

La Table Krug will also serve a three-course set menu for BD99 per couple, from 7pm to 11pm, while La Plage offers a five-course set menu for BD80 per couple, from 7pm to midnight, and Thai Lounge invites guests for its three-course set menu, from 7pm to 11pm that includes selected beverages for three hours. It costs BD100.

Meanwhile, Cantina Kahlo will stage the ultimate Mexican Valentine's Day celebration, from 1pm to 4pm, featuring a vibrant Mariachi band and flavourful dishes.

It costs BD70 per couple, inclusive of soft beverages and BD90 per couple, with selected beverages.

The hotel plans to celebrate the month of love with Tignanello's 50th anniversary at Primavera, with an exclusive four-course menu, expertly paired with a Tuscan grape beverage. It costs BD75 for the set menu and one selected beverage, BD49 for the set menu, and BD35



DELICIOUS: La Plage's Arabian BBQ Nights

for a grape beverage.

It's available every Thursday, from 7pm to 11pm, until February 27.

Discover a symphony of flavours at La Plage's Arabian BBQ Nights. It features a buffet and a brilliant performance by an Arabic singer. It costs BD29, inclusive of soft beverages and BD34 inclusive of a selected beverage. It's being held tomorrow (Friday), from 7pm to 11pm.

Don't miss out on the hotel's annual Farmers Market, showcasing the finest local flavours and handcrafted goods. It's taking place tomorrow (Friday) and February 14, from 8.30pm to 2.30pm.

Bahraini breakfast is available at the event.

■ For more information, call 17586425 or email rc.bahrz.restaurant.reservations@ritzcarlton.com.

DILMUN FEAST

THE Dilmun Club in Saar has a week of dining delights store.

Indulge in any curry and a selected beverage on Monday at BD5.500. On Tuesdays, guests can enjoy a pie and selected beverage for BD5.

The club also hosts its steak night on Wednesday, which costs BD20 for two steaks and a bottle of a grape beverage.

The club's famous brunch will also be held tomorrow (Friday), 1pm to 5pm, along with live music. It costs BD18 inclusive, BD12 for food only and BD5 for children.

Don't miss out on the club's Saturday Roast too. Guests can enjoy a full car

buffet, from noon to 4pm for BD5.500. ■ For more information or booking, call 17690926.

A FAMILY GAL

PREPARE to be captivated by a variety of fascinating entertainment and colour

The Young Goans Club Bahrain is hosting its 'Carnival of Colours' festival on February 27, from 8pm onwards, at the Swiss International Palace Hotel in Manama.

Guests can enjoy a live band, DJ, and tasty bites and beverages with their family and friends, making for an amazing evening.

Highlights of the event include Best Mardi Gras Attire, Best Crooner and Outstanding Carnival Costume for children.

■ For more details, contact 39881933310712 or 36269228.

CELEBRATING THE MONTH OF LOVE

H EAD down to the Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay for an unforgettable dining experiences this week.

Celebrate Valentine's Day in style with a range of the hotel's exciting offerings.

Byblos has crafted a five-course menu featuring highlights such as pesto hummus, shish tawook with potato and siyadiya risotto and more. The enchanting ambience is elevated by live entertainment and a DJ playing love songs.

It's available on February 14, from 6pm to midnight. Pricing per couple ranges from BD120 to BD400, depending on the selected beverage package.

Re/Asian Cuisine and CUT by Wolfgang Puck will also stage a magical dinner on February 14, from 7pm



UNWIND: Spa treatments to help you relax

onwards. Led by executive chef Brian Becher and his talented team, indulge in a curated selection of exceptional dishes from the a la carte menu.

As you dine, enjoy the breathtaking views of Manama's glittering skyline through the restaurant's floor-to-ceiling windows.

There is a BD50 minimum spend per person.

A Month of Love Brunch is also being held at Bahrain



ROMANTIC: Setup overlooking the Manama skyline

Bay Kitchen tomorrow (Friday). Enjoy highlights such as oysters Rockefeller, smoked salmon canapés, lobster thermidor with delicious sides, and vibrant stations offering ceviche, BBQ, Asian delights and more.

It's available from 1pm to

4pm, at BD35, inclusive of soft beverages and BD48 including a selected beverage package.

Get romantic with a bespoke beachside dinner at the hotel's private beach cabana. Let the gentle sounds of the waves and the glistening skyline set the

stage for an evening of pure romance.

With three curated packages - Emerald, Sapphire, and Diamond - there is a package for everyone. It is available until June 30 and prices range from BD175 to BD400.

Don't miss out on a 60-minute aromatherapy couples' massage experience by Azure pool. Following a relaxing treatment, enjoy private access to a poolside cabana and Jacuzzi and unwind with a bottle of bubbly beverage, complemented by a delightful assortment of chocolates, macarons and mixed berries.

It costs BD280 from Sunday to Wednesday and BD295 from Thursday to Saturday and public holidays.

It's available from 7pm to 9pm and 9.30pm to 11.30pm.

■ For more information, contact 17115500.

CULTURAL TREA

KICKSTART your weekend with a range of cultural events being held as part of the ongoing Spring of Culture festival this week.

Qalali Folk Band, a Bahraini musical act that boasts a rich history stretching back more than 100 years, will stage a cultural performance, featuring traditional songs, on Saturday, at D. Muharrag, from 8pm onwards.

Rasha Omran, one of the leading poetic and intellectual voices in Syria and the Arab region, will stage a lecture at the Ibrahim Al Arrayed House (House of Poetry) on Monday (February 10), from 8pm onwards.

In addition to being a poet, Rasha has been an active cultural figure.

■ For more details, visit springofculture.org.

Leisure Scene

Weekly Entertainment



FLASHBACK: Fun at the British Club

SUPER ANNIVERSARY PARTY

DON'T miss out on the British Club Bahrain's 90th anniversary party this weekend ... and don't miss a big-screen walk down memory lane courtesy of the GDN Media's new digital edition.

The free event, open to all, features The Great British Bake Off, Family Fortunes, a British-themed bazaar, food and drink stations, inflatables, children's zones and live entertainment.

It takes place tomorrow (Friday), from

noon onwards.

For one night only, UK actor James Scarr is bringing his international touring show 'A Man Akin to Mannequin' to Bahrain. Fresh from his European tour, guests will get to experience a spontaneous and interactive show on February 13, 7.30pm. Tickets are BD7 and are available on *Platinumlist*.

■ For more information, contact reception@britishclubbahrain.com or call 17728245.

CHECK out the Royal Golf Club (RGC) for a drive to delight in Riffa Views.

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

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 - the gold package, including tea or coffee for BD15, or the platinum package, inclusive of tea, coffee or two glasses of bubbly for BD19.

■ For more information, contact 39007546.

MEAT YOUR MATCH



SUCCULENT: RGC's iconic weekend roast



MOREISH: The Royal Tea experience at RGC

A WILD SAFARI ADVENTURE AWAITS



LOVE: Valentine's Day dinner

FOR a week filled with delicious food, drinks and lively entertainment, look no further than Hilton Bahrain.

Origin Kitchen and Culture is hosting an array of events to suit all tastes.

Enjoy its Wild Safari Brunch tomorrow (Friday), from 12.30pm to 4pm.

It costs BD28net with unlimited soft beverages and BD39net with unlimited selected beverages. Military personnel dine for BD25.

Savour Peking duck, delicious sushi and live cooking stations on Wednesday, from 7pm to 10pm at Pan Asian Night. It costs BD22net with unlimited soft beverages and BD28net with unlimited selected beverages.

Tonight, guests can enjoy Seafood Night at Origin Kitchen and Culture, from 7pm to 10pm. It features an array of fresh seafood dishes at BD30net with unlimited soft beverages and BD32net with unlimited selected beverages.

Hotel visitors can enjoy a breakfast buffet, at the same location, from Sunday to Friday, 6.30am to 10.30am. On Saturday, late risers can enjoy the buffet from 6.30am

to 11.30am, at the same price. Both buffets cost BD13.

Meanwhile, Origin Kitchen and Culture will also host its Love is in the Air Valentine's Brunch, from 12.30pm to 4pm, on February 14. It costs BD28net with unlimited soft beverages and BD39 with unlimited selected beverages.

A special Valentine's Day four-course set dinner will also be hosted at the same location, from 7pm to 11pm, at BD25net per person, inclusive of a welcome drink.

Elevate the occasion, with Hilton Bahrain's exclusive staycation package, which promises an unforgettable stay. It features a one night stay, a four-course dinner, 3pm checkout, in-room breakfast and a 20 per cent discount on any treatments at Cocoon Spa, priced at BD100+++ per couple.

The spa is also offering several special promotions this month, such as a free goody bag with a couples' massage, and ladies can enjoy a 15 per cent discount on nail extensions.

Bookings depend on availability from Sunday to Wednesday.

■ For more information or bookings, contact 33692013 or 33690081.



SCRUMPTIOUS: Breakfast favourites at Origin Kitchen and Culture

MOVIE TIME

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

DOG MAN (PG)

Dog Man, half dog half man, is sworn in to protect and serve as he doggedly pursues the feline supervillain Petey the Cat.

Actors: Pete Davidson, Lil Howery, Isla Fisher

Timings: 11.30am, 1.30pm, 3.30pm, 5.30pm, 7.30pm, 9.30pm, 11.30pm

THE PROSECUTOR (15+)

Donnie Yen is back in a full circle film based on true events. He is forced to risk his own life and career to uncover the truth and bring real villains to justice.

Actors: Donnie Yen

Timings: 11.45am, 1.45pm, 3.45pm, 5.45pm, 7.45pm, 9.45pm, 11.45pm

THE GARDENER (15+)

Serge holds a state secret. He, his family and gardener Leo appear on a government death list and they attempt to stay alive.

Actors: Jean-Claude Van Damme, Michaël Youn

Timings: 12.30pm, 2.45pm, 5pm, 7.15pm, 9.30pm, 11.45pm

WEREWOLVES (15+)

A supermoon event triggered a latent gene in every human on the planet, turning anyone who entered the moonlight into a werewolf for that one night. Chaos ensued and close to a billion people died. Now, a year later, the supermoon is back.

Actors: Frank Grillo, Katrina Law, Ilfenesh Hadera

Timings: 11.15am, 4.15pm, 9.15pm

FLIGHT RISK (PG-15)

A pilot transports an Air Marshal accompanying a fugitive to trial. As they cross the Alaskan wilderness, tensions soar and trust is tested, as not everyone on board is who they seem.

Actors: Mark Wahlberg, Michelle Dockery, Tophér Grace

Timings: 11.15am, 1.15pm, 3.15pm, 5.15pm, 7.15pm, 9.15pm, 11.15pm

Pulse of Pop

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

A TALE OF FRIENDSHIP

THE fourth season of romantic drama series *Sweet Magnolias* is out now on Netflix.

Starring JoAnna Garcia Swisher, Brooke Elliott and Heather Headley, the show follows three women from South Carolina who have been best friends since childhood as they guide and support each other through the complexities of life.

The new season will find Maddie Townsend (JoAnna) Dana Sue Sullivan (Brooke) and Helen Decatur (Heather) closer than ever, navigating romantic twists and turns and the return of old foes, as the men in their lives pursue their goals and their teenage children take their first steps

to adulthood. It will also show the trio celebrating the holiday season together.

"The beating heart of this show is the deep relationship between these three amazing women and how they sustain and celebrate each other," showrunner Sheryl Anderson said in an interview.

"We're always eager to share the moments that make life special with them and through them," she added, explaining how passionate the writers, cast and crew are about the show and characters.

The series is based on the namesake bestselling novel series by American writer Sherryl Woods, who has written more than 100



BFFS: The main cast

romance and mystery titles; A cookbook based on the series was released in 2012.

The 80-year-old wordsmith has also had her Chesapeake Shores

book series adapted into a television show, which ran from 2016 to 2022.

In a past interview, she hinted that she wishes to bring more of her material

to screen.

"Dan Paulson (show executive producer) and I, and some of the writers that I've worked with have several other projects that

we're at various stages of looking at, but we're not exactly speeding along with anything. There is nothing that I can talk about yet. Stay tuned," Woods said.

WARRING KINGDOMS

ADULT animated fantasy drama film *The Witcher: Sirens of the Deep* releases on February 11 on Netflix.

It is directly based on Andrzej Sapkowski's short story titled *A Little Sacrifice*, who also wrote *The Witcher* book series.

Starring Doug Cockle as Geralt of Rivia, the movie follows the monster hunter as he unravels an age-old conflict between humans and sea people that threatens war between kingdoms.

Doug has also voiced the character for the namesake video game series, which earned him a Game Award nomination for best performance in 2015 and a Golden Joystick Award for best gaming performance in 2016.

He returned to voice Geralt following the departure of Henry Cavill from portraying the character in Netflix's *The Witcher* live action series in 2023.



HERO: Geralt in the film

"I was pleased to be asked by Netflix to voice Geralt for the animated film. I wasn't expecting that at all because I was expecting a certain other person who is associated with Netflix, the live-action *Witcher*," Doug said, jokingly hinting at fellow actor Henry Cavill whose exit was sudden and yet to be explained.

"So it was completely out of the blue, but I was very happy and I said yes straight away because any chance to

play Geralt is a good thing for me and I enjoy it so much," he added.

Joey Batey and Anya Chalotra are set to reprise their roles for the animated film as Jaskier and Yennefer of Vengerberg.

An animated spin-off of the live action series titled *The Witcher: Nightmare of the Wolf* was released in 2021, which focused on the origin story of Geralt's mentor, the witcher Vesemir.

INDIE rock artist Barteets Strange's third studio album *Horror* is set to release on February 14.

The album was produced by the artist alongside several known producers, including Grammy Award-winner Jack Antonoff, who is best known for working with Taylor Swift and, most recently, Kendrick Lamar. He is set to tackle growing fears that he faces in his daily life as a way to find a community of listeners with shared experiences.

"In a way, I think I made this record to reach out to people who may feel afraid of things in their lives," Barteets said in an interview.

"For me, it's love, locations, cosmic bad luck, or that feeling of doom that I've struggled with for as long as I can remember. I think that it's easier to navigate the horrors and strangeness of life once you realise that everyone around you feels the same. This album is just me trying to connect. I'm trying to

NAVIGATING FEAR



TALENT: Barteets

shrink the size of the world. I'm trying to feel close, so I'm less afraid," he added.

The English-born American musician released his first solo project in 2017 titled *Magic Boy*, an extended play, under the name Barteets & the Strange Fruit, and his first full-

length album *Live Forever* was released in 2020 and garnered a positive reception.

The artist also frequently remixes songs by different artists and bands, his most recent reworks including *Kyoto* by Phoebe Bridgers and *Figure 8* by Paramore.



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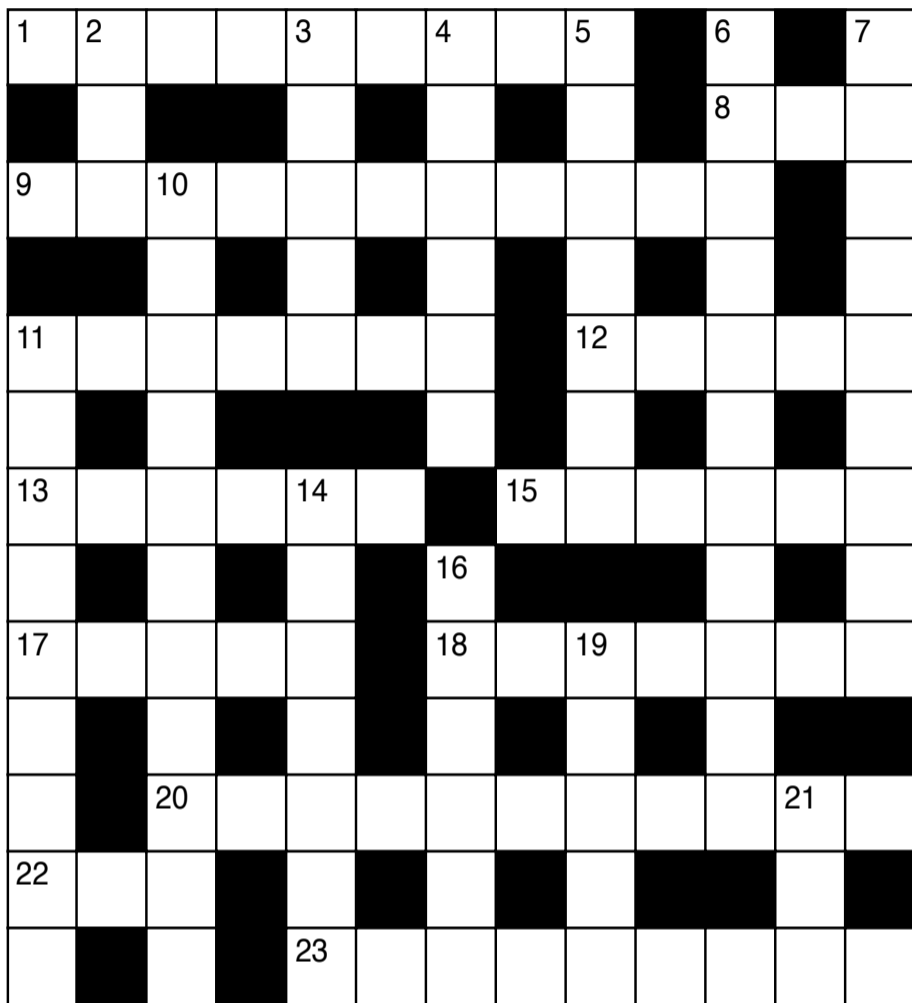


Time Out



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crossword break



Solutions in next week's issue.

ACROSS

- 1. Very pretty (9)
- 8. Mat (3)
- 9. Sympathise (11)
- 11. Zealot (7)
- 12. Scrub (5)
- 13. Notoriety (6)
- 15. Flag (6)
- 17. Happen (5)
- 18. Hobby (7)
- 20. Doubt (11)
- 22. Sailor (3)
- 23. Crisis (9)

DOWN

- 2. Self (3)
- 3. Contort (5)
- 4. Savage (6)
- 5. Communication (7)
- 6. Foreboding (11)
- 7. Unawareness (9)
- 10. Make (11)
- 11. Silliness (9)
- 14. Wonder (7)
- 16. Scanty (6)
- 19. Argot (5)
- 21. Spasm (3)

who, what, where, when

- WHO...wrote the plays Bouncers and Up 'n' Under?
- WHAT...was Sri Lanka known as before 1972?
- WHERE...in Europe would you spend a zloty?
- WHEN...did Al Pacino pick up a Best Actor Oscar for Scent of a Woman?
- WHO...wrote the children's books *Fungus the Bogeyman* and *The Snowman*?
- WHAT...type of creature is a chocolate hind?
- WHERE...in Britain are the Scott Monument and Holyrood Park?
- WHEN...did Mother Teresa die?

just so



darn tough sudoku

So you think you're good enough at Sudoku to crack this baby? Remember, we were the first in the Gulf to bring you this bit of Japanese mayhem...so we don't kid around

Last week's sudoku

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

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

darn tough sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

Last Week's Leisure Solutions

CROSSWORD BREAK:

- Across: 7 Choice;
- 8 Quaint; 10 Minster;
- 11 Thorn; 12 Ewer;
- 13 Anvil; 17 Tepid;
- 18 Earn; 22 Dwell;
- 23 Avarice;
- 24 Assent; 25 Rivals.
- Down: 1 Scamper;
- 2 Pointer; 3 Acute;
- 4 Sustain; 5 Divot;
- 6 Stone; 9 Principal;
- 14 Feeling; 15 Capital;
- 16 Intense; 19 Ideas;
- 20 Feast; 21 Tacit.

JUST SO: Three is a crowd, Trial and error, Bow and arrow, Cut corners.

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN: Robert Mugabe; Red and blue; Lansdowne Road; 1918; Diane Keaton; Black Sea; Falmouth; December 26.

Darn Tough Sudoku

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

Your work pad space ...