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HARMONY: **A previous performance by Manama Singers**

SYMPHONY BEYOND BORDERS



COMMUNITY REPORT
By MELISSA NAZARETH
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AN eclectic blend of talent, cultures and musical traditions will take centre stage today as one of Bahrain's oldest choirs, Manama Singers, performs alongside the iconic Saint Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra in a unique concert led by Maestro Waheed Al Khan.

The ensemble will present a diverse selection of songs under the baton of the renowned conductor from Muharraq.

The ticketed event will take place at Bahrain National Theatre in Manama, bringing enthusiasts from across the island under one roof for a four-part harmony featuring songs in Arabic, English, Italian and Russian.

"This is the first time I have included a harmony choir in one of my concerts," Maestro Waheed told *GulfWeekly*.

"I have been planning this for some time and I'm delighted that we have now made it a reality," he added.

The vocalist and multi-instrumentalist expressed his happiness at rehearsing with both ensembles, noting that the sessions were enjoyable.

Manama Singers is a multicultural choir formed more than 50 years ago, with over 40 active members who regularly meet to sing. The concert today will be one of their biggest events, alongside the Saint Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra, which is Russia's oldest symphony orchestra and a cornerstone of the global classical music tradition.

Joining them will be distinguished musicians from Egypt, all of whom will be led by Maestro Waheed.

"This makes the programme different from what I have presented in my previous concerts, with a wider range of colours and musical variety. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to (Manama Singers) choir co-conductors Jo and Stefan for their dedication and hard work. I look forward to a successful and memorable event," added the graduate of the Cairo Conservatoire at Egypt's Academy of Arts.



TALENT: **Maestro Waheed**

Revered for his performances across Europe and the Arab world, Maestro Waheed has also spent decades weaving the pearl-diving songs of the Gulf into the language of the classical orchestra.

Describing the experience of working with him, English expatriate and Manama Singers' co-conductor Jo Diciolla from Saar said: "Practising alongside our maestro, especially when pulling all the parts together, has been special, as has watching all the singers work hard together with dedication."

Echoing her sentiments, South African expatriate and co-conductor Stefan Els from Al Sayh said that watching the singers embrace diverse musical styles and songs has been heartwarming.

"We are excited to be singing the Arabic songs, especially the well-known ones," he added.

Indian expatriate Manoj Philip from Zinj concurred. The logistician who has been living in Bahrain for more than three decades revealed how rehearsing for the concert introduced him to a 'new musical world'.

"It has been both exciting and challenging, opening up a world that demands a fresh approach to articulation, phrasing, dynamics and expression. These elements are quite different from the musical traditions and repertoire I have been familiar with for so many years," he explained.

For her part, New Zealander and Australian Pamela Monsef from Hamala noted how a shared love for music brought them all together.

"I love the harmony, the different nationalities, and the passion we all share for music," added the creative who has been in choirs all her life.

Busaiteen resident Ovunda Chuku believes the recent rehearsals have boosted her confidence and is eager to continue learning and growing as a singer. "For me, music is not just a hobby but a source of happiness, cultural appreciation and connection with others," added the Nigerian expatriate, who began her musical journey as a child singing in her church choir.

That sense of connection also resonates with Bahrain's Husain Aseeri. Although he has been a member of the Manama Singers for only eight months, he has already come to value the strong sense of community within the choir.

Meanwhile, Swedish national Victoria Berglund, who has lived in Bahrain for six years, described her experience as 'wonderful'. "It is wonderful to learn how to sing in Arabic and to collaborate with a Bahraini composer," added the soprano from Al Qurrayya.



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New art exhibition
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Food, fun, etc.
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PITCH PERFECT



MUSIC REPORT
By MELISSA NAZARETH
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YOUNG music sensation Serena Khan has struck a high note for Bahrain, recently winning the prestigious Mayor's Award at the Baltic Voice International Music Competition in Lithuania.

The 13-year-old grade nine student at St Christopher's School, Al Raffa, was recognised for her 'extraordinary talent and exceptional artistic presence', earning the event's highest honour.

She also secured third place for her rendition of *The Climb* by Miley Cyrus, competing against more than 150 participants from 20 countries across Europe, Asia and North America.

Adding to the significance of the achievement was the trophy itself, a traditional Curonian weather vane, a symbol deeply rooted in Baltic cultural heritage.

The 14th edition of the popular children's and youth vocal music competition was held in July and featured around 300 performances.

"I feel extremely grateful for the recognition as I had been preparing for months," Serena told *GulfWeekly*.

"I had been training for 14 hours a week since January," she added, noting that balancing classwork, music practice and family time became particularly challenging in the months leading up to the competition.

The talented vocalist has lived in Bahrain since the age of one with her father Ali Khan, a private equity professional, and her mother Shazray Khan, who owns a popular preschool. The Pakistani-American family resides in Saar.

"Bahrain is a big part of my life, so being able to represent it internationally feels really special," said the young singer, who has been receiving formal vocal training since the age of three. Over the years, she has taken part in numerous singing competitions and performances across Bahrain, experiences that helped lay the foundation for her international journey. That journey began with her first overseas competition appearance in Malta in 2024 and has now led to her latest success on the European stage.

More recently, Serena added to her growing list of achievements by winning the Music Production Award at the Performist International Music Festival in Turkey, which attracted more than 100 participants.

Her father, Ali, said the family was immensely proud of her accomplishments and expressed gratitude to her teachers for their unwavering support.

> *We encourage Serena to take on challenges and accept accomplishments and defeat with humility and confidence. Even before we left for Malta, we emphasised to Serena that the trip was an opportunity to experience a large and highly competitive event, and we had no issues if she did not perform well*

"From a young age Serena has always shown a lot of confidence on stage, whether it is singing, acting, or participating in debates and public speaking," Ali said.

"We have always encouraged her to follow her passion.

"We are very thankful to Ms Natalia of Bel Canto Music and Mr Haggerty and Mr Duff at St Christopher's School for recognising her talent and helping her develop the skills and confidence needed to compete successfully at the international level."

Her mother, Shazray, said the family had always encouraged Serena to explore different interests while ensuring she never felt undue pressure, believing that a supportive environment was key to her growth.

"We encourage Serena to take on challenges and accept accomplishments and defeat with humility and confidence," she said.

"Even before we left for Malta, we emphasised to Serena that the trip was an opportunity to experience a large and highly competitive event, and we had no issues if she did not perform well. But when they announced her as the second place winner, we were elated and humbled," she recounted.

The former fashion designer commended Bahrain as a wonderful and safe place to live and pursue ones dreams.

"Bahrain has provided a wonderful and safe environment for raising Serena, with opportunities that are hard to find in many international cities. With the added resources of the music department at St Christopher's new senior school campus (in Al Raffa), we hope Serena will continue to gain recognition, further develop her talent and build an even stronger foundation for the future," she added.



WINNER: **Serena with her award at the recent competition in Lithuania**



FLASHBACK: **Three-year-old Serena presents a ballet performance at the Cultural Hall in Manama**

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 which US state are most Stephen King novels set?**
2) **How many stars are there on the national flag of China?**
3) **Which animal has the most teeth at any one time?**
4) **What is the name of the rooster on boxes of Kellogg's Corn Flakes?**
5) **Which gas-operated automatic assault rifle was developed in Russia two years after the end of WWII?**
6) **What did Zach Galifianakis call the baby in *The Hangover*?**
7) **Which famous Hollywood actor danced in the video to Fatboy Slim's 2001 pop song *Weapon of Choice*?**

ANSWERS

1. Maine
2. Five
3. Dolphin
4. Cornelius
5. AK-47
6. Carlos
7. Christopher Walken

Portraying inner worlds



ART REPORT
By MELISSA NAZARETH
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HUMAN thought, emotion, memory and perception are some of the themes that will be explored at *Landscapes of the Mind* exhibition, which opens today in Manama.

The display brings the human experience to life through art and will showcase the striking works of 18 Bahrain-based artists.

Contemporary platform Art Concept, located in Andalus Garden, Gudaibiya, is presenting the event, in collaboration with Downtown Rotana, as part of the latter's Downtown Culture Hub initiative. The programme is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, reaffirming their shared commitment to supporting talent, encouraging cultural exchange and bringing contemporary art closer to the wider community.

Speaking ahead of the event, Art Concept founder and managing director Jehan Saleh, who is also a renowned artist, highlighted the importance of creating new opportunities for creatives.

The inauguration tonight will be attended by Bangladesh Ambassador Mohammed Rais Hasan Sarower, alongside academic leader Dr Amal Jasim Al Qallaf, who has more than 30 years of experience in higher education, institutional development and community engagement.

The exhibition draws on the idea that the human mind is a 'landscape without physical boundaries', using nature as a metaphor for emotional experience. Valleys of memory, mountains of imagination, rivers of emotion, forests of thought and horizons of healing represent the shifting inner worlds that shape human experience, organisers explained.

Through abstraction, landscapes, figurative works, symbolism and mixed media, the participating artists explore themes of solitude, anxiety, resilience, hope, vulnerability, belonging and transformation. Their works offer personal interpretations of these experiences, inviting viewers to reflect on the complexities of the mind and the emotions that connect us.



LIFE-LIKE: **Salah's market place brought alive artistically**



ABSTRACT: **Sudeep's acrylic painting exploring unity in diversity**

The exhibition has been conceptualised and curated by Indian expatriate and visual artist Sudeep Deshpande, who is also exhibiting his own pieces. The architect and metal sculptor is known for his abstract practice, which explores the relationship between emotions, thoughts, form and space. As curator of *Landscapes of the Mind*, he brings together diverse perspectives to encourage reflection, empathy and greater understanding of the emotional experiences that connect us.

As a participating artist, the Adliya resident is showcasing pieces from his *Coexistence* series – a collection of abstract acrylic paintings exploring unity in diversity. Talking about his exhibits, the published poet explained that his creations reflect the complexity of human relationships and the possibility of harmony through the acceptance of differences, through dynamic gestures, interwoven forms and contrasting colours.

Also presenting abstract works, albeit in a different context, is Bahraini talent Khalil Kazerooni. His pieces explore abstract expressionism through the interplay of architectural structures, geometric configurations and expressive colour fields.

The compositions reflect an intriguing relationship between order and spontaneity, nodding to the duality of the mind, as some spectators might note. In his works, linear elements, intersecting forms and fragmented structures create a sense of depth, movement and visual complexity.



IMAGINATION: **Atamjeet's perspective of Bahrain from outer space**



ARTIST: **Salah**

The artist explains how overlapping lines, textured surfaces, gestural marks and fragmented geometric forms suggest an ongoing dialogue between structure and chaos, encouraging the viewer to navigate through its multiple visual layers, discovering relationships between forms, textures and colour.

Adding diversity to the display and presenting a different take on the theme is Atamjeet Singh Bawa from Juffair, who uses his distinct paper art to give form to imagination and perspective – two deeply interwoven elements of the mind. "My artwork *Bahrain Blues* is my interpretation of Bahrain as seen from an artist's imagination, almost as if I were an astronaut looking down at the island from space," said the Indian Information Technology professional.

"For me, Bahrain is much more than the physical shape of an island. It is a place where cultures, history and people have continually met. *Bahrain Blues* is my tribute to that identity, viewed from a perspective where borders disappear and what remains is this beautiful island surrounded by blue," he added.

Further diversifying the artistic interpretations that will be unveiled tonight is Bahrain artist Salah Sayed who captures the ideas of memory, nostalgia and identity. His pieces, steeped in the kingdom's cultural heritage, bring alive places and the human experience within them.

One of the standout artworks that he is presenting illustrates a traditional market. The colours and technique not only lend a 'life-like' touch to the piece but also draw in the viewer, offering a realistic experience.

"I like to draw the old neighbourhoods in an artistic way so that the recipient feels it and goes in its depths," the self-taught talent and former Bahrain Arts Society member explained.

"My works take the artistic nature of social, cultural and other topics such as Bahraini heritage and ancient life in Bahrain, as well as topics inspired by stories, poems or music," he added.

The exhibition is supported by Bahrain Artistic Frames Centre and will run until November 29.

Participating artists:

- **Abdulla Al Manami**
- **Adel Al Thawadi**
- **Anju Kapoor**
- **Abbasi Sarhaan**
- **Asmaa Soulami**
- **Atamjeet Singh Bawa**
- **Issa Al Nuaimi**
- **Jacqueline de Freitas**
- **Nitasha Biju**
- **Numaira Butt**
- **Salah Sayed**
- **Shreen Farid**
- **Sriparna Ghose**
- **Sudeep Deshpande**
- **Zainab Al Halwachi**
- **Thamer Al Reefy**
- **Mohamed Taha**
- **Khalil Kazerooni**

Leisure Scene



What's on guide

By Julia Cassano



PINK: **Treats at Cantina Kahlo's Ladies' Night**

JAZZ IT UP AT RITZ-CAR

THERE is no shortage of reasons to visit The Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain this week, as the hotel rolls out a tempting line-up of live music, distinctive dining experiences and an exciting culinary residency.

Settle into the laid-back charm of La Terrace as it sets the scene for an intimate Jazz Night. Guests can look forward to live performances by a saxophone artist, a welcoming terrace atmosphere and a selection of expertly crafted jazz-inspired drinks.

The event takes place tomorrow, November 6, from 6.30pm to 9pm, with food and beverages available à la carte.

Coffee lovers have something special to look forward to with a trio of Golden Créma creations, each made with Illy Créma coffee. Pair your favourite with a delicate sweet treat for an extra-special afternoon pick-me-up.

It is available daily from 8am to 11pm, with prices à la carte.

Give your midweek dining plans an Indian twist with Nirvana's Tuesday tandoor experience. The offering features an indulgent spread of vegetarian and non-vegetarian tandoori platters, accompanied by freshly baked Indian breads, signature sauces and a selection of house beverages.

Expect smoky aromas, bold spices and the unmistakable flavours of traditional Indian cooking.

The evening costs BD15 and is available from 7pm to 10.30pm.

Add a little colour to your Wednesday plans at Cantina Kahlo, where Mexican-inspired flavours and lively entertainment await. Gather your girlfriends and enjoy two selected beverages for BD10, alongside complimentary pink churros and popcorn.

With live mariachi music setting the mood, it's an invitation to enjoy a fun-filled evening with good food and great company on Wednesday from 6pm to 10pm.

Next week, food enthusiasts can look forward to an exciting culinary residency at Plums, as acclaimed Bahraini chef Tala Bashmi brings her distinctive approach to the restaurant from November 11 to January 1.

Running for eight weeks, the residency will feature a five-course tasting menu alongside a selection of à la carte dishes, available every Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 7pm.

Internationally celebrated for championing Khaleeji cuisine on the global stage, Chef Tala was named MENA's Best Female Chef by The World's 50 Best Restaurants in 2022. More about the offer on page 7 of the ***GDN***.

For bookings or more information, call 17586499 or WhatsApp 39770525.



AMBIENCE: **Outdo vibes at La Terrace**

NEW WEEKEND TRADITION

MAKE weekends memorable with Fridays at Sheraton, a new family experience where exceptional dining, engaging entertainment and quality time come together in a welcoming setting.



BITES: **Tea, cakes and pastries at the hotel**

Showcasing two distinctive culinary experiences, the hotel invites guests to savour an international brunch at WILD alongside the rich flavours and signature grilled specialities of Golestan Persian Grill.

Beyond dining, guests can spend the afternoon enjoying outdoor pool access, live entertainment, children's activities and relaxed social spaces designed for gathering with family and friends.

Thoughtfully curated for all ages, Fridays at Sheraton offers the perfect blend of great food and leisure, creating a new weekend tradition in the heart of Manama.

It is available from 12.30pm to 4.30pm and costs BD35net per person. Children aged six to 12 enjoy 50 per cent off.

Celebrate the joy of sharing with the Royal Golestan Feast, featuring an enticing selection of favourites, from premium grilled kebabs to fragrant rice specialities, including chelow zaferani, zereshk polow and sabzi polow. Hosted at Golestan Persian Grill, it is the ideal choice for family gatherings, special occasions and memorable dining moments.

To complete the experience on a sweet note, guests can enjoy complimentary homemade pistachio and saffron ice cream. The restaurant is open daily from noon to 11pm.

Take a pause from the day and indulge in a delightful afternoon tea experience at &More by Sheraton. Perfect for catching up with friends, enjoying an informal business meeting or simply treating yourself to a relaxing afternoon, this elegant offering brings together an irresistible selection of sweet and savoury delights.

Enjoy freshly baked pastries, handcrafted desserts, delicate finger sandwiches and tempting savoury bites, thoughtfully paired with a selection of premium teas and freshly brewed coffee.

Priced at BD15net per person, it is available daily from 2pm to 5pm at &More by Sheraton.

For more information and reservations contact 17533533 or WhatsApp 38885408.

TABLESIDE FEAST

INTERCONTINENTAL Bahrain has an exciting calendar of dining experiences and entertainment in store, with something to suit every taste and occasion.

For those looking to make a meal a celebration, Legendz SteakHouse invites diners for an indulgent tableside experience, where every course is thoughtfully presented for sharing and savouring.

Begin with an exquisite selection of sharing starters, including cacio e pepe croquettes, short rib sliders or crispy fried shrimp. Continue with mains such as burrata and pecorino ravioli, stuffed cornish hen, roasted salmon, and signature filet mignon café de Paris.

It is priced at BD28net with soft beverages and BD38 inclusive of unlimited selected beverages. Children under six dine for free, while those aged six to 12 dine for 50 per cent off every Friday from noon to 4pm.

Legendz SteakHouse is also setting the tone for the weekend with its Prime Time Thursday. Guests can kick back and enjoy an hour of free-flowing beverages alongside a platter of light bites, before tucking into a perfectly grilled 200g filet mignon, served with a signature sauce and side. Available 6pm to 10pm, the experience is priced at BD32net per person.

For an evening filled with Arabic sounds and a vibrant atmosphere, head to Elements Lounge for Laylah Night tomorrow, November 6. Expect signature sips and delicious bites, with two packages to choose from. Prices start at BD18 per person, including a soft beverage and one bar bite, while the BD28 package includes four selected beverages and one bar bite.

Those with a taste for a little old-school glamour can look forward to the second edition of the Jazz Bar Gala, where the elegance of the Jazz Age takes centre stage.

Guests are encouraged to embrace the spirit of Gatsby with their finest 1920s-inspired attire, with one gentleman and one lady



GATSBY: **Enjoy a night of lively music**

GOURMET BITES TO SAVOUR

SOAK in sun-drenched sea views at Aqua Vista Bahrain's Friday Social brunch, the perfect event to kick off the weekend.

Guests can enjoy gourmet brunch bites, beverages, DJ beats and more from 12.30pm to 4pm.

It costs BD17 with soft beverages and BD27 with selected beverages.

For more information and reservations, call 17177333.



ENJOY: **A brun**

Leisure Scene

Weekly Entertainment

RLTON





and a vibrant atmosphere

taking home a special prize in the best-dressed competition. Taking place on November 27, from 8pm to midnight, tickets are priced at BD28.

For more information or bookings, call 36967701.



ch experience at the hotel

CULINARY MAESTRO'S UNITE

WORLD-RENOWNED Chef Wolfgang Puck is bringing his Generational Tasting Tour to a close in Bahrain tonight, November 5, with Re/Asian Cuisine at Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay hosting the tour's final stop.



For the special occasion, the acclaimed chef will join forces with his son, Chef Byron Lazaroff-Puck, for an exclusive four-hands dining experience from 7pm onwards, combining their individual culinary perspectives with the flavours of the region, creating a menu that celebrates Bahrain's local influences.

For those looking to add a little international flair to their weekend, Bahrain Bay Kitchen is giving its Friday brunch a fresh new twist with A World of Street Food Brunch. Taking guests on a culinary journey across the globe, the experience features an array of live cooking stations serving up favourites such as Greek chicken gyros, charcoal-grilled chicken sandwiches, hearty stews and New York brisket. An international selection of desserts provides the perfect sweet ending.



UNWIND: **Bahraini Afternoon Tea at Bay View Lounge. Inset: Chef Wolfgang Puck, left, with his son Chef Bryon**

Available every Friday this month, from 1pm to 4pm, the brunch is priced at BD35 including soft beverages and BD48 with a selected beverage package. Children under six dine with the hotel's compliments, while those aged six to 12 enjoy 50 per cent savings.

For a more leisurely afternoon, Bay View Lounge presents a Bahraini-inspired afternoon tea that brings local flavours to a refined setting. Overlooking the gorgeous views of Bahrain Bay, guests can indulge in delicate pastries, halwa, freshly baked scones and tea.

Available until December 5, it is held from noon to 9pm. It costs BD24 for regular and BD28 for a royal package including one premium tea and one mocktail.

The lounge is also refreshing its menu with a selection of new additions. Highlights include Italian burrata with avocado and cherry tomato confit, slow-cooked veal, sea bass fillet and signature nachos, alongside more tempting options. The à la carte menu is available daily from 11am to 11.30pm.

Beyond its culinary offerings, the hotel is inviting guests to slow down and reconnect with Moon Yoga. Set against the beautiful backdrop of Bahrain, upcoming sessions take place on Saturday, November 7 and November 24, from 6.30pm to 7.30pm. Prices are BD6 per person for hotel guests and BD12 for outside guests.

For bookings and more information, contact 17115500.

HOLIDAY SHOPPING



VENUE: **The club building in Um Al Hassam**

THE festive season is just around the corner, and the British Club Bahrain is getting into the Christmas spirit with a series of celebrations starting with its annual Christmas Market on November 21.

Taking place from noon to 7pm, the event promises a delightful holiday shopping experience, with a variety of unique gifts, stocking fillers and handcrafted items to browse. Adding to the seasonal cheer, visitors can look forward to a special appearance by Santa Claus, as well as the chance to win a turkey in the raffle. Entry is free for all.

The celebrations continue on November 27 with the club's magical Christmas tree lighting ceremony, featuring performances by the Jazz Orchestra of Bahrain and Manama Singers. Guests can soak up the festive atmosphere while enjoying seasonal beverages and traditional mince pies as Christmas lights illuminate the club.

Entry to the tree lighting event is free for members and costs BD2.500 for non-members.

For more information, call 17728245.



STUNNING: **Views at Hawar Resort by Mantis**

ISLAND TREASURES

EXPERIENCE an unforgettable escape at Hawar Resort by Mantis, where every moment is designed to delight.

Begin your morning with a delicious breakfast at Bahri and spend the day discovering the island's natural beauty and unique experiences.

End on a delicious note with Mediterranean-inspired flavours at C-Salt, the resort's new Italian dining destination.

From island adventures to authentic flavours, every moment is an invitation to indulge.

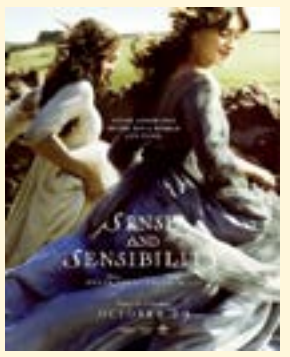


DELICIOUS: **Yummy bites and drinks**

For reservations or more information, call 32183610 or email reservations@hawarresort.com.

MOVIE TIME

ENJOY some of the English language films being screened at Cineco Seef this weekend.



SENSE AND SENSIBILITY (PG-15)

The period drama follows sisters Elinor and Marianne Dashwood as they navigate love, heartbreak and social expectations.

Actors: Daisy Edgar-Jones, Esmé Creed-Miles, Caitronia Balfe

Timings: 1.15pm, 6.15pm, 11.15pm

THE INFLUENCER PROJECT (18+)

An influencer travels to Copenhagen for a documentary about her online fame, but when an obsessive stalker begins tracking her movements, she must confront the terror and reclaim her power.

Actors: Gemma Karlsen, Eos Karlsson, Chiara King

Timings: 11am, 4pm, 9pm

THE MONGOOSE (PG-15)

Accused of a crime he didn't commit and with nothing to lose, a war hero leads law enforcement on a cross-country car chase with the help of his brothers in arms and a sympathetic public rooting for his getaway.

Actors: Liam Neeson

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

Pulse of Pop

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

FELINE AT WORK



MEOW: **A promotional poster of the film**

ANIMATED comedy film *Cat in the Hat* is out today in cinemas.

Voiced by Bill Hader, the Cat has one last chance to keep his job and prove himself to his incredibly exasperated boss.

He is given his toughest assignment as an agent of the Institute for the Institution of Imagination and Inspiration – to cheer up siblings Gabby (voiced by Xochitl Gomez) and Sebastian (Tiago Martinez), who are struggling with their move to a new town.

Loosely based on the titular 1957 children's book by Dr Seuss, the movie is said to pay homage to the original illustrations by opening with black and white visuals and gradually becoming full colour.

"The first few minutes of the movie are to remind the audience where we start and where we go," co-director Alessandro Carloni said in an interview.

"Those colours, it's the same reason why Superman is red and blue. There was a limitation, especially for the cost at the time. But Seuss found this beautiful way to navigate that," he added.

Art director Amos Sussigan recounted working on the film, which stands out for the way it treats colour.

"The best part of working on Cat in the Hat was getting the chance to work with Aidan Sugano," he said, referring to the production designer.

"He gave me the space to do my thing, specifically the colour theory, colour script and lighting for the movie. It's been awesome to be able to do that on a major animated feature film. There are all these things in animated movies where it needs to be poppy and have colour everywhere. So I feel like both Aidan and the directors, Erica Rivinoja and Alessandro Carloni, gave me a lot of space to be part of it," he noted.

The new release is intended to launch a shared universe with two other animated films: *Thing One and Thing Two*, a spin-off and *Oh, the Places You'll Go!,* an adaptation of another Dr Seuss book that will star Ariana Grande and Josh Gad. Both are scheduled to be released in March 2028.

LEGEND IN THE RING



FIGHT: **A scene from the series**

BIOGRAPHICAL sports drama *The Greatest* is out now on *Amazon Prime Video*.

The eight episodes cover the personal and professional life of late legendary boxer Muhammad Ali, portrayed by Jaalen Best.

Fresh off winning gold at the 1960 Olympics, the miniseries follows the once-in-a-generation prodigy, who has set his sights on the heavyweight championship, as he contends with newfound fame, self-doubt, family conflict and a society that is not ready for him to become his own man.

The show will also star Michael Ealy as Malcom X, the late civil rights leader who heavily influenced the young champion.

Created in collaboration with his estate, the series' executive producers include Josh Wakely, Michael B Jordan and Muhammad's widow Lonnie Ali.

In an interview, she expressed her approval of actor Jaalen Best's portrayal of her husband, saying that she knew he would be perfect from the moment she met him.

"He had that Ali aura, that Muhammad charisma, that heart and that sweetness, and he even had these little interesting idiosyncrasies that Muhammad had," she said.

Born Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr, the athlete began training as an amateur boxer at age 12, and won his Olympics gold medal at age 18 in the light heavyweight division, turning professional shortly after.

He is still considered the greatest heavyweight boxer of all time and remains a prominent figure of racial pride for African Americans during the civil rights movement and beyond. Muhammad has also been described as a hip-hop pioneer because he was famous for intimidating his opponents with rhyme schemes and spoken-word poetry.

NOSTALGIC TUNES



ROCKERS: **Kings of Leon**

AMERICAN rock band Kings of Leon drop their new album *O My Beloved* tomorrow, November 6, marking their 10th full-length record.

The 13 tracks are set to explore acoustic melodies with personal songwriting, tackling childhood, gratitude and family.

The creative process took place at a time when lead singer Caleb Followill was getting ready to join his bandmates on tour and release new songs, until he broke his foot while playing with his kids one night.

"My kids wanted to play tag because they didn't want to go to bed," he recounted.

"I went to hurdle the couch, and when I did, my back foot caught it. So, I threw my legs underneath me to try to stick the landing, and it was just heels first. It was a gnarly, gnarly break," he remarked.

During his recovery, the frontman picked up his guitar and proceeded to write new material, resulting in a different direction from what was written prior to the freak accident.

"The songs just took on a different meaning, and so all the songs that we had been working on, they no longer were as attractive to me. I feel like the whole temperature changed around us. And we realised that we're going to make something a little more significant," he explained.

Echoing his sentiment, his bandmate and brother Nathan expressed his delight at the new approach.

"I think it might be my kids' favourite record," the drummer added.

Alongside Caleb and Nathan, the outfit also consists of their brother, Jared, on bass and their cousin Matthew on lead guitar.

SportWeekly
The top sport from the kingdom and beyond

Triumphant return home



ACCOLADE: **On top of the podium with her gold medal**

BAHRAINI karateka Rawan Ebrahim Rabeea has made history after earning a Japan Karate Association (JKA) black belt at just 14 years old, becoming one of the youngest in the kingdom ever to do so, *writes* **Patrick Oliver Salomon.**

After five days of intensive preparations at the gasshuku (training camp) hosted by JKA Kuwait, Rawan was one of only three candidates who passed her first Dan (first-degree black belt) examination, conducted last month by Shihan Yuko Hirayama, a seventh Dan master instructor from the JKA Headquarters in Tokyo who is widely recognised as one of the world's highest-ranking women in her field.

Rawan had left Bahrain as a brown belt, but returned with her black belt following an extraordinary week – one in which she also bagged gold and bronze medals in a competition held the very next day following her exam.

In an exclusive interview with Gulf Weekly, Rawan, who is a member of the JKA Bahrain branch, expressed her delight in attaining her monumental achievements, especially at such a young age.

"Earning my black belt at 14 is a moment I'll never forget – it wasn't just a single grading test, it was the culmination of years of work, discipline, and pushing myself to the limit in training," said Rawan, who bagged her gold medal in Kumite (sparring) and bronze in Kata (forms) while wearing her newly earned black belt.

"When I found out I had passed my first Dan, I was absolutely thrilled and utterly speechless. At the time, it felt completely surreal, and only later did I truly realise how significant my achievement was.

"The very next day, I was on the competition floor and won my gold and bronze medals. Achieving three major milestones in such a short time felt incredible, especially in front of honored guests like the Japanese Ambassador in Kuwait, who attended the tournament. I truly cherish having those experiences at 14.

"Standing there with my first Dan black belt and two medals, I could see that every single year of work had paid off. I am immensely proud of where I've gotten to, and it certainly motivates me to see how much further I could go."

Rawan was first introduced to karate when she was five years old. Her training came to a forced pause during the Covid-19 pandemic, and only after a push from a friend did she get back into practising the popular martial art. Little did she know at the time how important that choice would become.

"I slowly lost touch with the sport and never expected to step back onto the mat, but my friend encouraged me to rejoin, initially just for fun, and ironically that same friend stopped after a month, but by then, something had changed in me," recalled Rawan, who is a year 11 student at Capital School Bahrain.

"I had discovered an interest of my own and I wanted to continue, not because someone else encouraged me to, but because I genuinely wanted to.

"As I grew older, that interest transformed into a passion, and I became increasingly dedicated to improving, competing, and challenging myself.

"It's incredible to think that a decision I made so casually led me to earn my black belt at just 14. My journey in karate has taught me that sometimes, the things that become most meaningful to us begin in the most unexpected ways."



DUO: **Rawan with instructor Shihan Hirayama prior to her exam**

Being a world-class karateka holds a deeper meaning for Rawan as she dedicates her craft and all she has achieved so far to the memory of a late loved one, which helps her maintain focus when challenges arise.

"A big part of my motivation actually comes from honouring someone very special to me who has sadly passed away," she explained. "They played a huge role in pushing me to keep going in karate, and although they are no longer here, their influence is with me every day.

"When training gets tough, or I face setbacks, I remind myself why I started and who I'm doing this for. I hope every achievement I have in the future will honour them and make them proud."

Rawan is hopeful that her achievements at such a young age can help inspire other young girls across the kingdom to pursue their dreams – no matter how unattainable they may seem at first.

"My message to young girls in Bahrain is this: don't let your age, your situation, or anyone else's expectations stop you from going as far as you can," she stressed. "You don't have to wait until you're older to do something extraordinary, and you never need permission to have big dreams.

"Karate has taught me that true strength isn't about physical force – it is about how many times you rise after falling, how you stay focused under pressure, and your drive to keep moving forward. Success is built through daily discipline, unseen sacrifices, and the courage to persist when the path gets tough."

Following her incredible successes in Kuwait, Rawan is now even more determined to continue her journey in karate, and with the backing of her loving family and the JKA Bahrain community, she is ready to reach for the stars – both on and off the mat.

"My family is absolutely fundamental to my strength – their support, belief in me, and encouragement give me the confidence to keep going, and I know I'm never going to be alone on this journey," she said.

"I'm incredibly proud of my black belt, but I value the person I have become throughout the journey just as much.

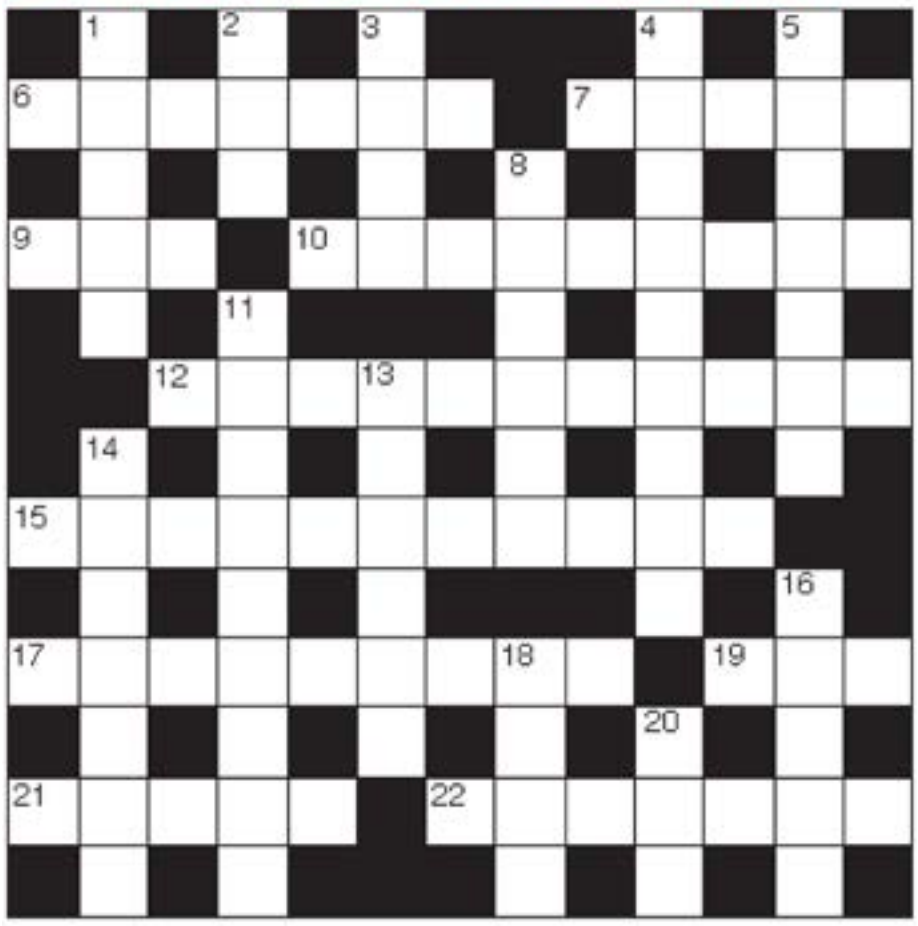
"Karate has had a massive impact on how I see myself and how I go about things outside the dojo. It's made me far more patient, far more self-aware, and has given me a real degree of confidence under pressure.

"Eventually, I want karate to shape not just what I achieve, but who I become. The medals will tell you about the victories, and the black belt will mark achievement, but my real achievement will be becoming a person who embodies karate's principles in all aspects of life and makes a real impact beyond the dojo."

Time Out

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crossword break



Solutions in next week's issue.

ACROSS

6. Slanting (7)
7. Sweetener (5)
9. Argument (3)
10. Languid (9)
12. Unrestrained (11)
15. Focus (11)
17. Chastise (9)
19. Cunning (3)
21. Spate (5)
22. Greet (7)

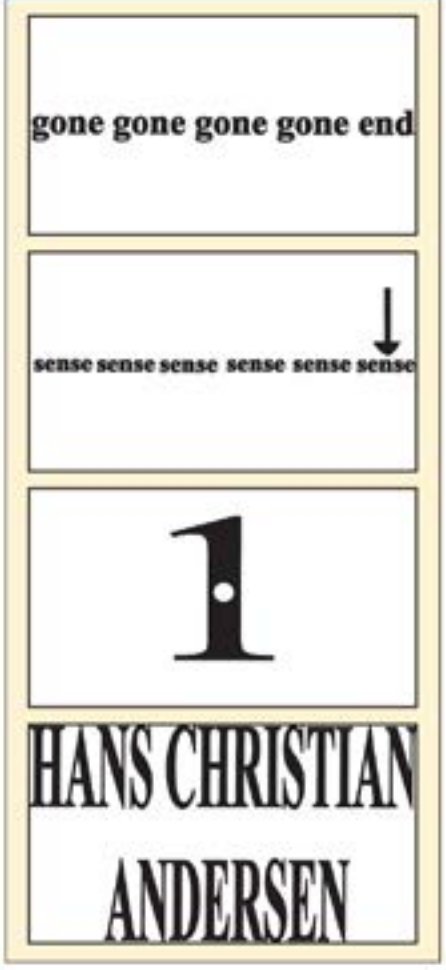
DOWN

1. Detest (5)
2. Immerse (3)
3. Rotate (4)
4. Substitute (9)
5. Spectacle (7)
8. Note (6)
11. Carrying out (9)
13. Go back (6)
14. Amiable (7)
16. Cluster (5)
18. Fastened (4)
20. Frozen water (3)

who, what, where, when

WHO ... is the UK Conservative MP for Chingford and Woodford Green?
WHAT ... does a luthier do?
WHERE ... was José Manuel Durão Barroso the Prime Minister from 2002-04?
WHEN ... was the novel *Valley of the Dolls* by Jacqueline Susann first published?
WHO ... wrote the novel *Whistle Down the Wind?*
WHAT ... word in common usage derives from the Hindi word bangla?
WHERE ... do Portsmouth FC play their home matches?
WHEN ... did the mutineers of HMS Bounty settle on Pitcairn Island?

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

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

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

darn tough sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

Last Week's Leisure Solutions

CROSSWORD BREAK:

Across: 7 Vulnerability; 8 Clemency; 9 Cant; 10 Fillip; 12 Nudist; 14 Ignore; 16 Enfold; 18 Skit; 20 Intimate; 22 Revolutionary.

Down: 1 Building; 2 Animal; 3 Iron; 4 Abeyance; 5 Placid; 6 Stun; 11 Previous; 13 Solitary; 15 Option; 17 Foment; 19 Keep; 21 Toil.

JUST SO: A soldier of fortune, Heaven on earth, High treason, An inside job

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN:

Eric Sykes; 1858; India; January 1977; Anthony Hopkins; Blonde on Blonde; Venice; 1871.

Darn Tough Sudoku

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

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