



## GDES 490: Capstone Exhibition

BY FARAH AL-SHAMALI AND SARAH KHALAF



Displayed projects during the GDES 490 Capstone Exhibition



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## Art Exhibition at Kuwait University

BY HAWRAA ASHOUR



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## My Experience at the Writing Center

BY HAWRAA ASHOUR

When I was approached to write this article, I thought of the kind of audience that would be reading it, such as former students with sessions, faculty and my fellow consultants. Immediately, I understood that if this is the audience I will have to rate me experience to, it had to be as scandalous as possible...Not. If you thought this article would be where I dish all those secrets about what I really think of your papers, and assignments then you thought wrong!

Actually, it would be my pleasure, to rate my experience in the WC, as one would restaurants. Where my menu's (schedule's) ingredients are the freshly (freshman to the WC) picked vegetables (students) from various farms (courses), all elegantly presented to me via the silver plate of TutorTrac. And then lovingly spiced up with some salt (drama), pepper (laziness), and Indian mixed spices (sheer attitude), to give an unforgettable meal (session), that scorches (burns) the taste buds (brain cells) with everlasting sensations (trauma); which often results in my suspense of animation (paralysis), and speechlessness (as in dumbfoundedness). But wait! I've yet to talk about the wondrous staff (consultants and a one Ms Rock) that make the transition of these fabulous meals (enigmatic students) ever so easy into my plate (schedule).

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Your suggestions and complaints can be forwarded at:  
[voice@auk.edu.kw](mailto:voice@auk.edu.kw)

## Of Another of Dubai's Violations

BY FARAH AL-SHAMALI

All I'm asking is why. Nepotism has ran so frightfully deep in Dubai that I am left with this solitary question. Now, my usage of the word may be out of place but is it really when you, and every other human being on the face of this queasy

planet, begins to consider how Dubai has favored lavish touristic appeal over the preservation of a *national identity* and modernizing every nook and cranny over allowing for the formation of an

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## Meeting the French Ambassador

BASMA M. AKBAR

On December 19, 2010, Professor Joseph Fiannaca, Instructor of French and Foreign Languages Coordinator at AUK, took the French 201 females' class on a field trip to meet the French Ambassador, Ms. Nada Yafi, at the French embassy in Kuwait. The group had a tour around one of the embassy's most significant sites, the Library, guided by Ms. Zaida Slaiman. After having a tour around the library's wide variety of categorized shelves from music and poetry to religion, her Excellency the French Ambassador arrived, and there began an open discussion in which the group of students drew attention to many issues related to a diplomat's personal and professional life.

The discussion started off with the girls posing some questions related to her Excellency's life. She explained that she got her Masters degree in French Literature from Sorbonne University and then earned a diploma under the title "Conference Interpreter" from the ESIT Institution in Paris. The diploma was useful to prepare her for international conferences and participations with other delegations, such as

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# GDES 490: Capstone Exhibition

BY FARAH AL-SHAMALI AND SARAH KHALAF

On Tuesday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, students enrolled in the Graphic Design 490 course presented their senior portfolio projects to the AUK community in the Multipurpose Room from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm with the opening ceremony taking place. The exhibition was also open to the public the following day from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm as students explained their creations and how they approached them to onlookers. GDES 490 students presenting capstone projects were: Danah Jbara, Ehab Mahran, Talal Al-Mutawaa, Faisal Al-Mutawaa, Fatima Al-Sughayer, Meshari Al-Muhaini, Othman Al-Othman, Abdulaziz Al-Mudhaf, Fatma Jawhar, Jassem Al-Wazzan, Mohammad Al-Wuqayyan, Mohammad Al-Aradi, Noor Makki, Shahed Al-Matrouk, and Slaiman Anbar.

As is usually done, each project was given a designated space and the designer was on hand should anyone wish something to

be clarified, be it the overall concept or a specific part of it. From paintings and posters to mannequins and innovative sculptures, diversity was definitely an apparent theme that would naturally aid students in terms of self-expression. Considering that these projects begin with but an idea that students wish to project onto virtually anyone who view them, it is remarkable to witness what they have accomplished.

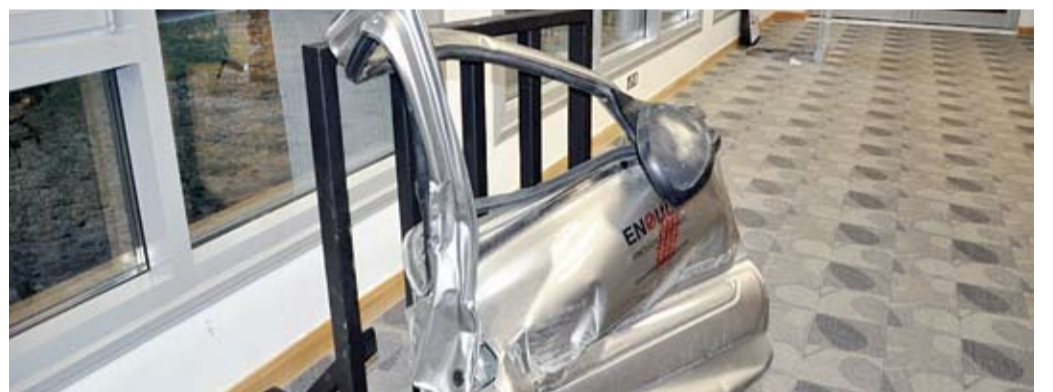
Walking around the exhibition, the range of imagination required to bring these projects to life is shone through as interests vary such as history, nationalism, fashion and fragmentation (pieces coming together to form a whole). Some were even rhetorical in nature with a goal of persuading observers to think or act a certain way. One characteristic that can be said of all projects is an unlimited amount of creativity that these students will certainly benefit from in their professional careers. Artistic

expression is a must-have in the world of graphic design and these students have certainly proven their possession of it.

Dr. Marcella Kulchitsky who instructed the class and supervised the event had this to say: "The Capstone course and its exhibition portion gives the student an opportunity to transform an idea or concept into a creative expression that communicates a message or theme. This is an important process that every graphic design student should experience before they enter the design market place. Whereas some schools (commonly referred to as cookie-cutter or vocational schools) ignore this process and emphasize the end product, AUK's GDES program expects their graduates to research, analyze, and develop a project from start to finish. This gives them a competitive edge because they are challenged to think before they begin the design process."



Displayed projects during the GDES 490 Capstone Exhibition



## THE VOICE OF AUK

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The Voice of AUK is a student-run, monthly newspaper that seeks to foster active communication among the entire campus community and keep it abreast of diverse and relevant issues by providing high-quality news and information in an academic context. Through this, The Voice also strives to heighten awareness of rights and responsibilities of membership in the AUK community. The Voice also espouses a commitment to philanthropy.

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# Meeting the French Ambassador

BASMA M. AKBAR



The French 201 female class with Professor Fiannaca



The group with her Excellency, the French Ambassador, Ms. Nada Yafi

the UNESCO, etc. She then explained that she was former French Counselor of Damascus and then Dubai, and that she has only been in Kuwait for the past two months. She really enjoys being in Kuwait as she thinks that it really differs from other places she has been to throughout her professional life. The reason being is that Kuwait has its own, unique way in preserving its culture and traditions, no matter how diverse and technologically advanced it has become.

Unlike Dubai, though it has good architecture and technology; as an Arab Emirate, it has nearly destroyed its cultural values and traditions which Kuwait still strongly maintains. In other words, she claims that Kuwait has a rich local society. She adds that the ease of living and communicating in

Kuwait with its friendly people leads to respect between one another. She then continued her discussion with defining the French culture and society. She explains that, in France, there is no difference between people of different races and ethnicities as long as there is respect to the term *secularism*, meaning to exercise one's religion without harm to others.

As an ambassador, her Excellency's goal is to represent her country in the most ideal way, in which being adapted to a new culture wouldn't mean to change her original cultural values and traditions that she was raised upon. She explains, "Our traditions transform but should always be maintained as values that we got with us from home."

Another important issue she was discussing is the difficulty of women showing their

status in a world of mostly male dominant societies, where men are still ruling. Being asked who she met so far from our female officials, Her Excellency said that she has already encountered the Kuwaiti Minister of Education, Dr. Moudhi Al-Humoud, in which she realized the importance of Kuwaiti women in our society and the strength and high status we have. She referred to Kuwaiti ladies as ladies with "good and forced personalities."

After an interesting discussion with the French Ambassador, she concluded the conversation by focusing on the importance of planning your future ahead of time, and having a broad idea on what you want to be. The young ladies then took group photos with her Excellency, and headed off to dine at Lenotre along with Monsieur Fiannaca.

*"...she got her Masters degree in French Literature from Sorbonne University and then earned a diploma under the title "Conference Interpreter" from the ESIT Institution in Paris."*

# GolfME in Conjunction with Golf Week at AUK

BY MAI OMRAN

During the week of January 3, 2011, AUK opened its doors to a new segment in the field of sports. Golf Week was held in the Multipurpose Room all week from 10am- 4pm welcoming the AUK community to a new interest in golf.

GolfME, Kuwait's first golf company, was present to showcase the sport and engage the community to take part in various golf-related activities. Golfing, chipping and putting are essential techniques needed for a golfer. The AUK community was put to the test with these skills in various competitions including: longest drive, closest to the pin, chipping and put-put.

"This is a great way to expand the horizons of the community. We got an exceeding number of the community interested who have never tried golf before," Trevor Taylor, AUK Sports Coordinator says.

Alan Wilike, retail manager at GolfME and golf professional, was on set to give the fundamentals of golf. By using authorized, user-friendly golf equipment like the snake, he was able to teach the community ways to improve their golfing skills in areas like speed and properly holding the club. AUK was eager to learn and implement the basics on the indoor driving golf simulator. Sarah Khalaf, a student at AUK, says, "It's something different for the community to try. This is my first time actually trying golf and I enjoyed it."

"I was lucky that GolfME decided to expand to a different market," says Taylor. "It is actually a great idea to introduce this sport to the youth, who can possibly play this game their entire lives. The big plan is to one day hopefully have a team and maybe, host inter-collegiate golf tournaments...inshallah!"



Organizers of Golf Week



Golfing equipment

# “Amrik” and “Rain Song” – Two Perspectives on Identity from the FA Gallery

BY NUR SOLIMAN



Fuad Cuzmar

Looking through the glass windows of the FA Gallery is very much like looking into the *vitrine* of a storybook shop. Already, as one rushes inside to take shelter from the cold night, one can see the visitors passing through the well-lit halls. There are only a few familiar faces here from the older art gallery circles; on opening night here, everyone is noticeably well-dressed, very fashionable, and some of them are even quite young; there is something new and dynamic here.

Abed al-Kadiri and Hadlen Djenidi, FA's art / fashion gallerists and consultants seem to be developing a new image for their gallery by inviting artists from places like Columbia, Norway, Belarus, Iran, and Iraq, all to display work that speak to the modern audience. Whether the response they elicit is genuine and favourable or otherwise is another matter, but there is an honesty to the art, so far, that avoids being kitschy or pointlessly sensational. Instead, there is a vibrant edge and intellectual excitement to the art that contributes to the already diverse map of Kuwait's local art scene.

The last show, “Amrik,” presented photographs by 23 South American artists who sought to depict the Arab presence in their countries, showing the history, culture, and lives of the Levantine Arabs who immigrated to South America since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. *Amrik*, as they called it, probably derived from the French *Amerique*, became the new home for these families who have since lived

there for generations.

The photos depict, among other things, people who have lived in South American for their whole lives; some even as far as four generations back. Dr. Hilário Hilal is a doctor in Uruguay and founder of the Lebanese Club, is shown in a coloured photograph sitting in his spare, gimcrack office, the old white doctor's scale to the side, the patient's chair set aside, as though we are about to seat ourselves there; his bright, quiet smile has an elegance and an old poignancy which is emphasized in the black-and-white photo where some things are in light, others in shade.

Mr. Luis Alfonso Resk, 80, is of Lebanese origin now living in Paraguay; a university professor, human-rights activist, and president of the National Commission on Human Rights of Paraguay, the photograph shows him only with bent back but with a sprightly thrust of the neck and swing of the arms as he pushes open a door and peers into the distance, the light from a window behind him framing his white head.

85-year old Mrs. Yamily Sauad de Bazas is a Syrian immigrant to Paraguay, descended from a family of farmers. In an old-fashioned flower print dress with neatly combed hair, she leans forward on the black faience balustrade looking up, as though about to speak to a neighbor, one imagines, while out of focus in the foreground are a riot of upswep flowers from the balcony where the photographer

is, suggesting the network of balconies, adjacent to one another and enclosing one another.

Fuad Cuzmar, of Palestinian descent, looks soulfully, straight-on into the camera while above him are framed pictures of his mother and father, under which hang small local ceramic plates. His sad, serious eyes look up very honestly at the camera as he sits in the very middle of the sofa, still covered with plastic, while above him loom not only the gentle portraits of his family and his ancestry, but the small painted ceramics of his new home.

Other photographs featured Leyla Younes, Heluy Exeni de Safar and others next to their handwritten recipes for *ma'mul* (rich date-filled biscuit), *Maklova* (Persian rice dish), and Arabic coffee. Each monochrome portrait of the women depicted them in their own homes, and their faces had a gentle light to them, their half-smiles genuine and not like your average Crest-toothpaste portrait smile.

One reads, once somewhere, about the Levantine immigrants in Argentina, or even the Lebanese population in Australia, but one has a usually narrow or blurred image of what life is really like for these people. Instead, the exhibition is rich with depictions of their homes, their schools, their celebrations, their dresses and clothes, their shops, churches, and mosques. The San Diego Convent of Quito is depicted in sensitive pictures depicting its marquetry panels alone; these mortised and tenoned wooden panels gleam softly in

the slanting afternoon light, recalling the artistic traditions of the Muslim world. One image of the Mosque of the Islamic Center “Custodio de las dos Sagradas Mesquitas del Rey Fahd” in Buenos Aires shows the light that spills out from the wooden balcony onto a patch of richly piled carpet like an invitation for the viewer to sit and listen, pray.

From integrating their language and own heritage, cuisine, and culture into their new home, the immigrants also introduced their religious practices of Islam and Christianity to their new communities, keeping cherished ties with the old world as they wholeheartedly embraced the new. In the words of the Ambassador of Brazil to Kuwait, Mr. Roberto Abdalla, himself a descendant of Arab immigrants, the show “helps us to show how we are a reflex of different visions of the world and how much the Arab peoples, with their millenary culture and wisdom, influenced a whole continent.”

The show preceding “Amrik” hid all faces from the viewer, and expressed a kind of exile not felt at all in “Amrik.” “Rain Song,” or “*Anshoodat al-Matar*,” also explored notions of nation and identity as from the point of pained exile and loss. Mohammed al-Shammarey, an Iraqi artist was inspired by the poem of the same title by Iraqi poet Bader Shaker al-Sayyab, and incorporated the verses in Arabic and English into washes of black, white, greys, sometimes pale tan or ochre, where the faintest images blend into great moons of black ink

or materialize into printed words in Courier type, or fragments of an old newspaper. Other paintings showed the backs of men wearing *ghutras* or women in *abayas*, gracefully painted with a poetry that gave poignancy to the war element. A veteran of both the Iran-Iraq War and the First Gulf War, al-Shammarey found deeper meaning in the poem after the wars, and the calligraphic extracts from the poems that he includes in the paintings have the sadness of exile, but this is alleviated by the elegant seamlessness of the blend between word and image, or painting and experience.

Sometimes you're not sure what the “Rain Song” itself really means, or even what it means in the context of the paintings. Some of the paintings are very poetic, tragic images of exile, such as one that is unnamed and shows faded scraps of paper blotted in and blended with the maps of pale taupe and cream-white, the papers showing incomplete forms, with printed tables, or fragments of Arabic script that end up looking like wisps of paint or smoke. Others evoke a sense of alienation, such as the way all the people in the paintings have their back facing the viewer (or is it the artist?).

And yet the great quietness and sureness of the lines and the relaxed shoulders of these mysterious men and women seem at odds with this “conflict”; even the graceful, ink-rich *nasta'liq* script seems to suggest peacefulness. Perhaps there is a poetic “hope” to the exile, after the fashion of some of Mahmoud Darwish's poetry? Al-Sayyab's verses, though dark with blood and death, and heavy with Yeats-like references to mythology, include lines like “In every drop of rain / A red or yellow color buds from the seeds of flowers / Every tear wept by the hungry and naked people / And every spilt drop of slaves' blood / is a smile aimed at a new dawn.” Perhaps it is these lines that al-Shammarey thought of when he painted the smooth, unruffled white folds of the *ghutras*; it is hard to ever know for sure.

Although there were stark differences between the two exhibitions, in their mediums, settings, backgrounds, and perspectives, there were also resonant chords in both that explored identity from untrodden paths, or at least paths not heavily explored. The photographs of “Amrik” presented a window into the vibrant, incredibly rich stories of Arab immigrants to South America, while the paintings of al-Shammarey explored identities broken with war, and with possible vague, poetic reconciliations. In a sense they add something fresh, valuable, and even hip to modern, younger audiences looking for ways to articulate the experiences of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century.

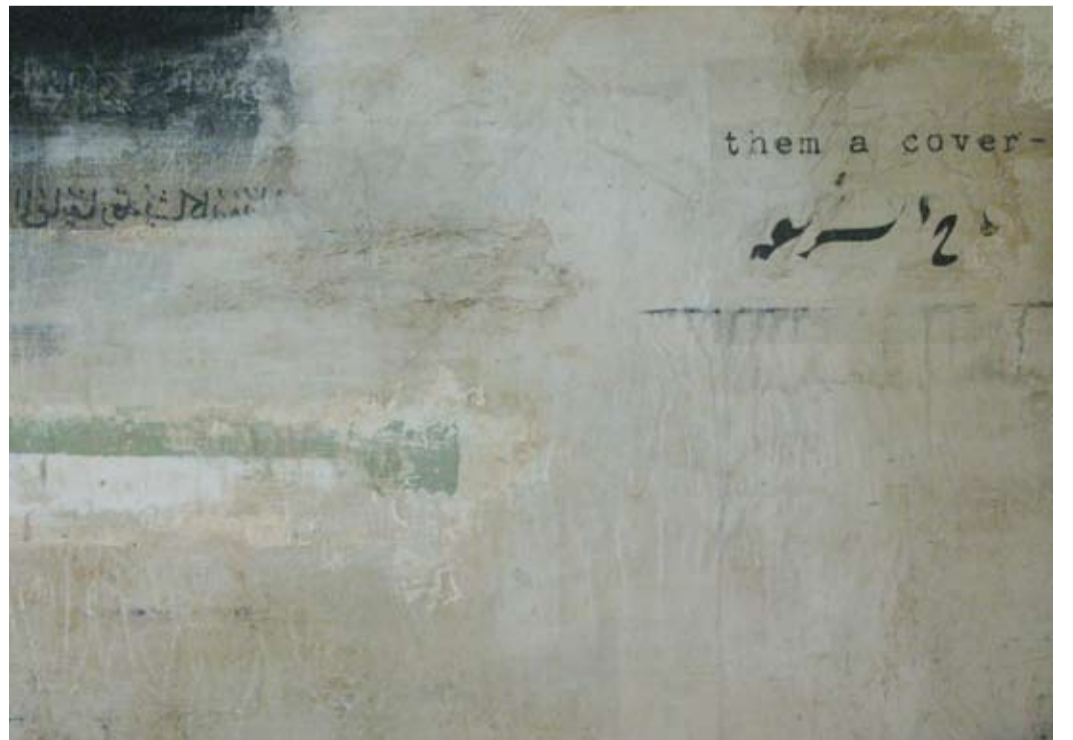
As of mid-January the FA Gallery will be exhibiting art by contemporary Iranian artists, including works by photographer Katayoun Karami and painter Taha Heidari. The FA Gallery is located in Kuwait City, facing the Gulf Road; it is in the old historic house facing the al-Amiri Hospital parking lot. The gallery is open from 10:00 am to 10:00 pm from Saturdays to Thursdays, and from 5:00 pm to 10:00 pm on Fridays. For more information, please contact gallerist Abed al-Kadiri on aalkadiri@thefagallery.com or call the gallery on 2249 8999.



People at the FA Gallery during the opening of Amrik



Rain Song painting by Iraqi artist, Mohammed Al-Shammarey



Another view of Rain Song

# Art Exhibition at Kuwait University

BY HAWRAA ASHOUR

On Wednesday the 29<sup>th</sup> of December, and part of a week-long talent exhibition, Kuwait University held an art exhibition featuring student artists. The exhibition was held in the university's main location in Shuwaikh, in the college of Social Sciences, from 9am to 2pm. This event was sponsored by the program, Blue Ribbon.

The exhibition had no precise theme, which allowed the students to feature various types of techniques, subjects and styles. This also fueled their competitive edge, as students came up with various creative interactive activities for the viewers to participate in and experience at their individual stands. For example, the student Bedour Khalid, whose twin, Hanan Khalid, was also participating in

the exhibition, provided a length of white paper, black markers and water colors for her visitors to try their hands at drawing and coloring while her twin provided several original story flipbooks for viewers to see.

Other artists such as the student artist, Thuraya Lynn, were doing on the spot sketches in pencil at their tables, while surrounded by selections of their artwork. Some students were participating as groups, with similar themed art, one of which dealt with depictions of Kuwait before the oil, ships and playing children. The student Hanan's collection held several pieces which she had painted using both hands at the same time in acrylic paint. This was a fascinating contrast to another painting at the exhibition by her twin sister, Bedour, who had

painted entirely using makeup and no other type of paint to complete the portrait. This piece was an evident attempt at an out-of-the-box medium, as most of Bedour's collection had been painted with the use of diluted watercolors that lent her works an organic and soft feel, while amplifying the effect of the smiling and optimistic characters adorning her art pieces.

In total, there were six separate artist tables, but the number decreased to five by the middle of the day, when one artist decided to take down her stand. The reason for this sudden decision appeared to be that a group of students reported the work as un-fit for public morals, and took down several art pieces whose main subject was a mermaid. This act was preformed without the presence of either the artist,

or the organizers, whom had not specified any type of rules to govern what subject matters were allowed in the gallery, nor asked to inspect the art pieces before the exhibit. When asked about this, the artist herself confirmed that there was no basis for the action, as there was no nudity in her artwork, nor was it graphic, as her art style was more close to animation style than life-like.

What was astounding to see was the support this artist gained from fellow student artists, whom also explained that they had reservations about what pieces to display, because of this very issue of art censorship.

In the last half hour before the exhibit was scheduled to close, the sponsoring group of Blue Ribbon announced that there would be a winning prize for the best art display. After a brief

introduction about the program and after the group observed all the stands, the winner of the Blue Ribbon was Bedour Khalid. It was her first time participating in an art exhibit and showcasing her work and talent and the judges complimented her new fresh style and the clear effort and thought she put into this showcase.

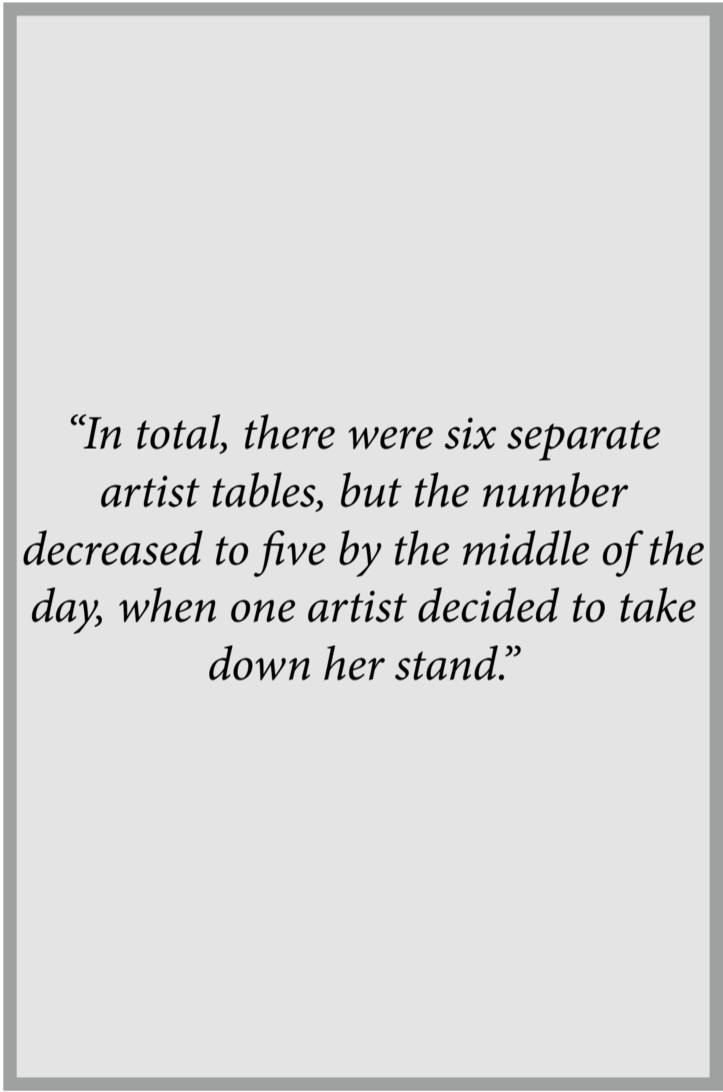
After the exhibition concluded, there was an opportunity to talk with the participating artists, one of whom, Thuraya Lynn, had this to say: "It'd be great if more art gatherings were made. That way, artists from any genre can share their passion with the audience – art savvy or not. And I'm not talking about happenings organized by universities or governmental sectors. I'm talking about my generation, students, young people like us taking the

lead. It'd be great if we could turn this thing around." Meanwhile, contestant Bedour had these wonderful words of wisdom for anyone with a passion for art: "Two years ago, I knew nothing about drawing; I only believed I could do anything I want if I put my mind to it. I just had fun expressing my feelings through color. Winning the Blue Ribbon title made me feel grateful for those who inspired me. I tear up just wanting to say thank you! Everyone, enjoy whatever it is that you love to do!"

Just as these talented artists were able to get acknowledged and discovered at KU, student artists all over Kuwait are stepping up to be noticed, each holding onto a unique style, voice and fascinating messages imbedded in their canvases.



Thuraya Lynn, A picture with words, is indeed worth thousands more.



Hanan's interactive corner

## February 22, 1290 BC

THE CORONATION OF RAMSES II, ON WHOSE FACE THE SUN'S RAYS FALL EACH YEAR IN ABU SIMBEL TEMPLE.

## February 6, 1952

KING GEORGE VI OF ENGLAND DIED. UPON HIS DEATH, HIS DAUGHTER PRINCESS ELIZABETH BECAME QUEEN ELIZABETH II, QUEEN OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND. HER ACTUAL CORONATION TOOK PLACE ON JUNE 2, 1953.

## February 8, 1587

MARY STUART, QUEEN OF SCOTS, WAS BEHEADED AT FOTHERINGHAY, ENGLAND, AFTER 19 YEARS AS A PRISONER OF QUEEN ELIZABETH I. SHE BECAME ENTANGLED IN THE COMPLEX POLITICAL EVENTS SURROUNDING THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION IN ENGLAND AND WAS CHARGED WITH COMPLICITY IN A PLOT TO ASSASSINATE ELIZABETH.

## February 15, 1933

AN ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT ON NEWLY ELECTED U.S. PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT OCCURRED IN MIAMI, FLORIDA. A SPECTATOR DEFLECTED THE GUNMAN'S AIM. AS A RESULT, CHICAGO MAYOR ANTON CERMAK WAS SHOT AND KILLED INSTEAD. THE GUNMAN, AN ITALIAN IMMIGRANT, WAS CAPTURED AND LATER SENTENCED TO DEATH.

## February 21, 1965

FORMER BLACK MUSLIM LEADER MALCOLM X (1925-1965) WAS SHOT AND KILLED WHILE DELIVERING A SPEECH IN A BALLROOM IN NEW YORK CITY.

## February 23, 1991

IN DESERT STORM, THE ALLIED GROUND OFFENSIVE BEGAN AFTER A DEVASTATING MONTH-LONG AIR CAMPAIGN TARGETING IRAQI TROOPS IN BOTH IRAQ AND KUWAIT.

## February 26, 1848

THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO PAMPHLET WAS PUBLISHED BY TWO YOUNG SOCIALISTS, KARL MARX AND FRIEDRICH ENGELS. IT ADVOCATED THE ABOLITION OF ALL PRIVATE PROPERTY AND A SYSTEM IN WHICH WORKERS OWN ALL MEANS OF PRODUCTION, LAND, FACTORIES AND MACHINERY.

## February 18, 1930

WHILE STUDYING PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN IN JANUARY, CLYDE TOMBAUGH DISCOVERED THE NINTH PLANET OF OUR SOLAR SYSTEM, PLUTO.

## February 5, 1958

GAMEL ABDEL NASSER IS NOMINATED TO BE THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE NEW UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC.

## February 16, 1959

FIDEL CASTRO BECAME PREMIER OF CUBA AFTER THE OVERTHROW OF FULGENCIO BATISTA.

## February 1, 1960

FOUR BLACK COLLEGE STUDENTS BEGAN A SIT-IN PROTEST AT A WOOLWORTH'S LUNCH COUNTER IN GREENSBORO, N.C., WHERE THEY'D BEEN REFUSED SERVICE BECAUSE OF THEIR RACE.

## February 5, 1962

FRENCH PRESIDENT CHARLES DE GAULLE CALLED FOR ALGERIA'S INDEPENDENCE.

## February 25 and 26

KUWAIT CELEBRATES ITS NATIONAL AND LIBERATION DAYS. THIS YEAR, IT COMMEMORATES ITS 50TH YEAR OF INDEPENDENCE AND 20TH YEAR OF LIBERATION.

## February 20, 1962

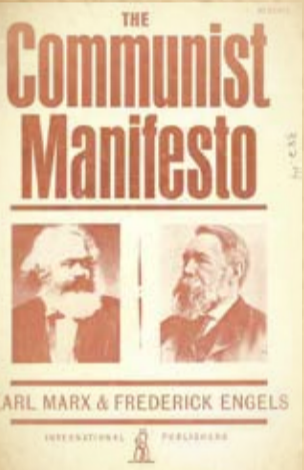
JOHN GLENN BECOMES THE FIRST AMERICAN TO ORBIT THE EARTH. A CULMINATION OF NASA'S MANNED-SPACEFLIGHT MERCURY PROGRAM, GLENN CIRCLED THE EARTH THREE TIMES IN 4 HOURS, 55 MINUTES ABOARD FRIENDSHIP 7.

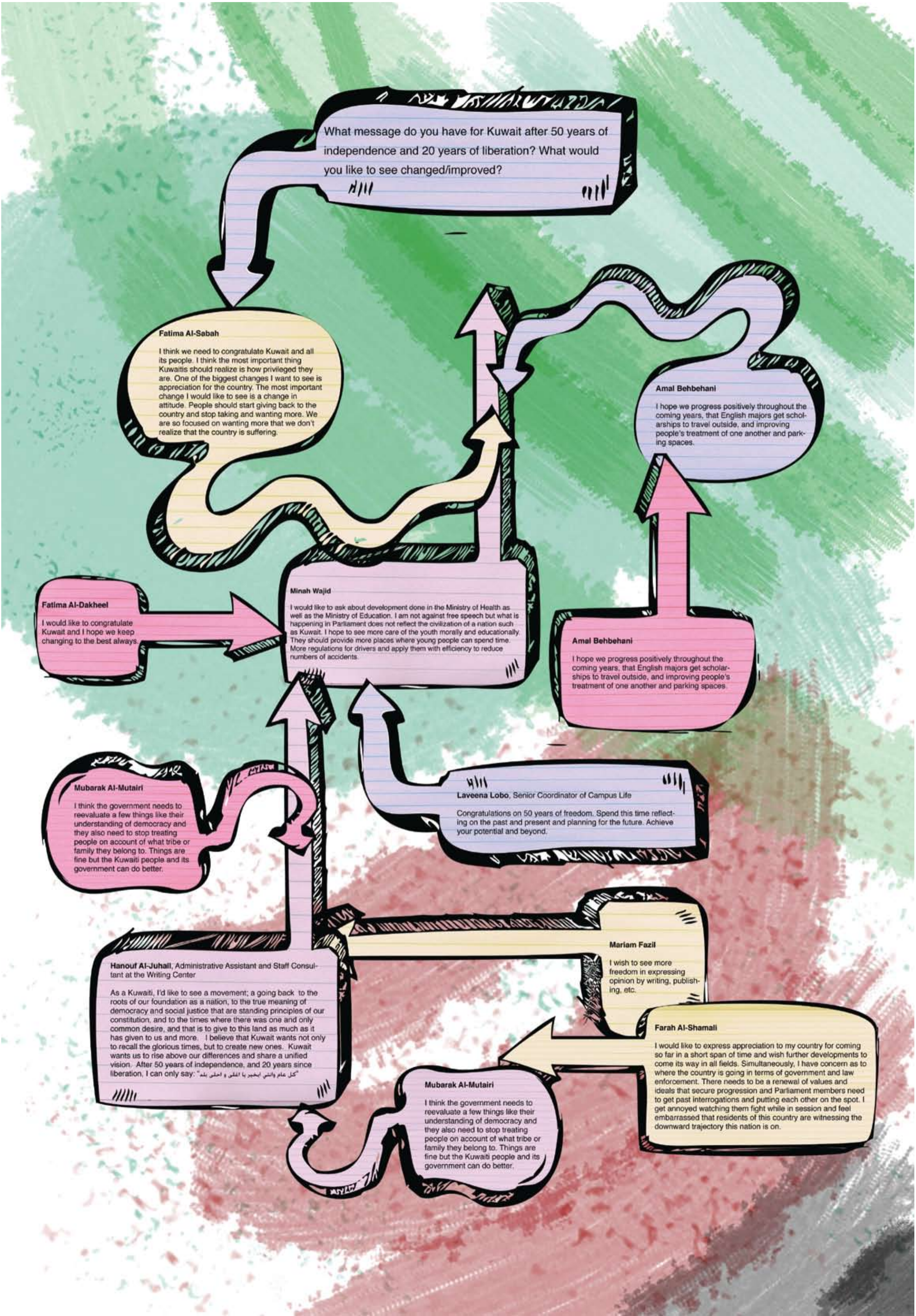
## February 11, 1979

AYATOLLAH RUHOLLAH KHOMEINI SEIZES POWER IN IRAN.

## February 26, 1979

A TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE CAST A MOVING SHADOW 175 MILES WIDE FROM OREGON TO NORTH DAKOTA BEFORE MOVING INTO CANADA.





# Of Another of Dubai’s Violations

BY FARAH AL-SHAMALI



Sammy, a 4-meter long female whale shark, being held captive.



*ecosystem?* I will not hesitate in giving you the answer because you need not mull over this one. So they have grander celebrations all year round, annual shopping festivals, a wider range of commercial attachments brought about by an insane influx of foreign investors, and a standard of living that is arguably a lot better than any other Gulf state but is this the ideal situation? I challenge anyone to look me in the eye and tell me that this *is* how to live. As I have feared, I have rambled too much in my introduction because this is what all of the afore-mentioned is and I’d like nothing more than to get to the meat of my tirade.

Why, in God’s name, is there a whale shark in the Atlantis Hotel on the Palm Jumeirah Island which they refuse to admit back into

its natural habitat? I understand that I am to feel sheepish because we’ve also kept marine animals in watery prisons but a whale shark? Out of all aquatic species, they went ahead and held an endangered one captive. The people behind this have to naturally be selective about the kinds of species held in these giant aquariums and if Kuwait is to one day commit a similar atrocity, I will stop at nothing to declare by annoyance. I hate to have to logically break it down but this, Dubai, means that a potential breeder of whale sharks is being held back from doing so. But who am I kidding? There isn’t even a sense of respect for international humanitarian law nowadays, let alone those that govern the conservation of our planet and all living things that inhabit it.

Maybe this is my literary conscience talking because I have, a few weeks ago, concluded the gargantuan epic, *Moby-Dick*, which, among many maxims, taught me to appreciate the leviathan, bone measurements and all. I know the emirate of Dubai is caught up in exuberance for having come so far in so little time but all I ask is to not do so at the expense of living organisms around it. Albeit, my request is a bit overdue. I suppose my only alternative to make peace with this issue is to directly inform you, the reader, that if you are, for any reason, in Dubai and chance upon Sammy (the name of the shark whale), ask yourself whether you’d either label his incarceration or freedom into the wild entertainment. I hope you realize there’s a right answer there.

“There isn’t even a sense of respect for international humanitarian law nowadays, let alone those that govern the conservation of our planet and all living things that inhabit it.”

# Ministry of Health, Anyone?

BY FARAH AL-SHAMALI



The Ministry of Health logo

So I was at the Qortuba Dental Clinic after experiencing episodic bouts of pain and, like any normal human being, resolved to go there and receive necessary examination and treatment. That night, I make a stop at two other dental clinics chasing after the *right* X-ray machine to produce a radiographic image because the one I was at was not supplied with one. Why do I, someone with an immense toothache, have to go on some wild goose chase late at night because the supposed Ministry of Health is negligent enough to cause this shortage?

At one point, I took out my anger on the dentist I went to see knowing full well that it wasn’t her fault but actually taking something like this up with the Ministry of Health seemingly borders on

the impractical. This is what they call the straw that broke the camel’s back but it’ll no sooner slouch over and die before we blaze a trail of modification. I am not calling for a complete uprooting in Kuwait, even though we badly need it in some areas, but I do desire for there to be an upstanding Ministry of Health that is ahead of the game because people’s lives and well-being is no laughing matter, not at all. There is no reason why I should be going from one dental clinic to the next when Kuwait is a nation equipped with several capabilities. Once concerned parties face up to their national obligation to service the people and accommodate them, there will be a change, or so I hope.

“...but I do desire for there to be an upstanding Ministry of Health that is ahead of the game because people’s lives and well-being is no laughing matter, not at all.”

# Good-bye AUK

BY LEILA MAY H. AL-METHEN



Good-bye main gate, with your guards so fierce  
That each day they greet people with smile and cheer  
Farewell half-dead grass and palm trees that are no more  
You have made glad and made my spirit soar

Good-bye smoke that decorates the halls  
Your odor is ghastly but your memories are comical  
Farewell Black Box filled to entertain  
Sometimes you succeeded; other times, it was just a pain

Good-bye Student Life who filled our inboxes by the week  
Always filled with news and information that is meek  
Farwell SSC which first years adore  
Your staff is so nice but waiting is a bore

Although we shared the campus  
And walked many days under clear sky  
I’m afraid, oh AUK, that now we must say good-bye

Mediterranean Diet Deemed the Best

BY FARAH AL-SHAMALI



Even when luxuries are right at our door step, we kick them to the curb. Our region is notorious for laying low in terms of any sort of development but why shy away from one that is already in place? As the title of this article suggests, this forsaken concession has been reckoned the most effective diet there is. Granted, from my standpoint, it may not be as frequently practiced because the people

of the Arabian Gulf have a much different lifestyle brought about by such things as generic weather patterns and landscape. Nonetheless, our countries are dotted with Mediterranean restaurants, if you will. They are commonly known as Lebanese restaurants. Most of the information we acquire about dietary lifestyles is from the United States because there is an epic quest to locate

the right one, tragic flaws and all. A recent survey conducted in the National Center of Tourism, Hospitality and Gastronomy of Marbella, Spain has shown that American citizens are most interested in the Mediterranean Diet and a high percentage of them consider it the best by far. You should know the reasons before they are shared: just think of what you'd usually order at one of these restaurants. Get

anything? Well, here they are: the olive oil, the vegetables, the carbohydrates, the fish and the balance of the food intake. Do you even remember the last time you saw an overweight Greek or Italian? It's those olives. What is even more appealing is the lack of stress associated with the Mediterranean Diet which has rendered it a symbol of the fight against anti-aging. Once carefully considered, it

will be easy to notice how other diets imitate the Mediterranean Diet and a few of them are practically identical to it. A common misconception with diets, especially in the United States, is the need to starve yourself to guarantee results. Diets must be well-rounded and alter lifestyles, not merely what you eat. You may very well know that the Mediterranean Diet is the best in world, but

here is your chance to relish in and enjoy it. We, the people of this country and those around us, have a clear advantage. I can't walk two blocks without seeing a Mediterranean restaurant and I'm not saying that's bad. Products are widely available and ready-made meals are even provided in some supermarkets. Don't follow the Mediterranean Diet – live it!

Greeting 2011 with a Galactic Smile

BY HUDA AL- RASHID



Aurora Borealis in Norway

Well, here we are in 2011! The first week of this new year seems to not have disappointed us in terms of delivering interesting events worthy of paying attention to. The world of the solar system is certainly fascinating as it is; however, having all these celestial events pile up around the start of 2011 surely makes them extra special. So, are we all on board? Because it's time for take off! Starting our galactic trip, we will take a look at a phenomenon that was clearly visible in the skies of Kuwait on Tuesday, January 4th 2011: the solar eclipse. At around 10:42 am until 1:34 pm, the Kuwaiti sky went a bit dark as the moon began shading over the sun, creating a fascinating eclipse. A few scientific facts for you all: an eclipse, in general, occurs when the sun, Earth, and moon line up enough for this phenomenon to occur. In

this case, according to "Sky and Telescope" magazine, the eclipse seems to have been partial; the degree of how deep an eclipse is depends on "how deep the full Moon plunges into or near the umbra, our planet's dark, central shadow." (Beatty 2010) However, common hazards that always seem to pop up when these events are predicted to happen are concerns about your eyes. Never try to look at an eclipse with your bare eyes, or with a pair of sunglasses; instead, you should purchase a pair of special glasses that would fully protect your eyes from any dangers that might exist. So, if in case you missed this eclipse, no worries because there are a few you might want to watch out for later on this year. According to "Sky and Telescope" magazine, the eclipses that would be visible to us from Kuwait are expected to take place on: June

15th (Total Lunar Eclipse), and December 10th (Total Lunar Eclipse). So, get your hands on your protective solar glasses soon to observe these mesmerizing phenomena first-hand. For more information, feel free to check out this website: <http://www.skyandtelescope.com/observing/highlights/112572744.html>. Our next stop will be at the galaxy's hottest star. Any guess of where we might be? That's right; we're going to the almighty sun. As you may already know, the sun's outer-atmosphere, called the corona, is almost a million degrees hotter than its surface. Reasons as to why that is have been recently clarified thanks to Japan's newly launched Hinode Spacecraft and the American Solar Dynamics Observatory. The explanations revolve around the discovery of spicules which are apparently gas particles contributing to these high temperature differences between the surface and outer-atmosphere. The importance of this discovery can lead to further explanations regarding the influence of the sun on the Earth's atmosphere. So, kudos to these new satellites for further developing the world of celestial discoveries! For more information on this issue, visit the following website: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-12136190>. Our third and final stop for this voyage will be on the icy hills of

Norway to observe fascinating, natural, neon sky-lights, also known as Aurora Borealis. According to BBC's coverage of this event, Professor Brian Cox, along with astrophysicist, Professor Mike Lockwood, are heading towards the Norwegian slopes in order to witness these first-hand. Now, the question is: how do these bright lights form and where do they come from? According to Oxford Dictionary, these lights are "natural electrical phenomena characterized by the appearance of streamers of reddish or greenish light in the sky." They form based on an interaction between atoms from Earth's upper atmosphere and charged particles from the sun. So, basically the sun released zaps of electricity which bump into earthly atoms, forming beautiful, colorful, electric lights. Pretty cool, right? Now, after explaining the corona issue earlier, maybe further discoveries involving the different temperatures can explain why these Northern Lights form. We have now come to a complete stop, and you may unfasten your seatbelts. Greeting 2011 has certainly been amazing in so many ways, and I truly wish you have enjoyed this short but extraordinary galactic voyage. So long for now, but don't forget to have a great new year filled with happiness, discoveries, and success!

Did-You-Know Facts, A Must Read!

BY FARAH AL-SHAMALI

1. There are 206 bones in the adult human body and there are 300 in children (as they grow some of the bones fuse together).
2. Flea's can jump 130 times higher than their own height. In human terms this is equal to a 6ft. person jumping 780 ft. into the air.
3. The most dangerous animal in the world is the common housefly. Because of their habits of visiting animal waste, they transmit more diseases than any other animal.
4. Snakes are true carnivorous because they eat nothing but other animals. They do not eat any type of plant material.
5. The world's largest amphibian is the giant salamander. It can grow up to 5 ft. in length.
6. The longest cells in the human body are the motor neurons. They can be up to 4.5 feet (1.37 meters) long and run from the lower spinal cord to the big toe.
7. The blue whale can produce sounds up to 188 decibels. This is the loudest sound produced by a living animal and has been detected as far away as 530 miles.
8. The largest man-made lake in the U.S. is Lake Mead, created by Hoover Dam.
9. The poison arrow frogs of South and Central America are the most poisonous animals in

- the world.
10. The first coast-to-coast telephone line was established in 1914.
11. The Stegosaurus dinosaur measured up to 30 feet (9.1 meters) long but had a brain the size of a walnut.
12. It takes approximately 12 hours for food to entirely digest.
13. Human jaw muscles can generate a force of 200 pounds (90.8 kilograms) on the molars.
14. An inch (2.5 centimeters) of rain water is equivalent to 15 inches (38.1 centimeters) of dry, powdery snow.
15. Tremendous erosion at the base of Niagara Falls (USA) undermines the shale cliffs and as a result the falls have receded approximately 7 miles over the last 10,000 years.
16. 40 to 50 percent of body heat can be lost through the head (no hat) as a result of its extensive circulatory network.
17. A large swarm of desert locusts (*Schistocerca gregaria*) can consume 20,000 tons (18,160,000 kilograms) of vegetation a day.
18. The largest telescope in the world is currently being constructed in northern Chile. The telescope will utilize four - 26 ft. 8 in. (8.13 meters) mirrors which will gather as much light as a single 52 ft. 6 in. (16 meters) mirror.

## Tips for Learning a New Language

BY: JOSE E. MANGIBIN

When I was about 13 years old, my father was assigned to work in Germany, so we left the Philippines and all went to Germany together. When we arrived at the airport in Hamburg, we heard an announcement sounding like someone was being paged, but we weren't sure as we all couldn't speak a word of German. The announcement sounded like gibberish of course as it was in German, but one word sounded vaguely familiar. Through all those mumbled phrases, we could hear the word "man GEE bin". After 10 or 15 minutes passed, I asked my dad if they were actually paging us and if they were trying to pronounce our family name. It was hard to tell since in Canada, our last name is pronounced as "MAN ji bin" while in the Philippines, our last name is pronounced as "Ma NGI bin". So we went to the nearest information booth



The school wherein I learned German, Emilie W. Stenfeld Gymnasium

and it turned out that they were paging us. After that incident, we all realized that it was imperative that we learned German. Because if we couldn't even understand our own names in German, how in the world would we be able to understand anything else?!

After getting settled, my parents immediately enrolled me in a language center called Inlingua so I could study German. I learned the basics first, such as some grammar rules, and little by little, I was learning new words. After a month or two, my parents enrolled me into a normal school called Emilie Wüstenfeld Gymnasium wherein I took some classes solely to improve my German; something similar to AUK's Intensive English

Program. These classes helped me a great deal as I learned various techniques to learn a new language, which I'd like to share with you now.

One of the first things to do when learning a new language is get the basic grammar rules covered and repeat them over and over again. As they say, "Practice makes perfect" so repeatedly learning these rules until you can do them in your sleep is the key to learning any new language at the beginning. In regards to learning grammar rules, there is no easy way to do it but to just do it. One way is to write down several practice sentences using the same rule you are trying to learn over and over again. Another way is to try using the rule in a sentence



This technique may just be the best way to inspire a person to learn a new language.

every time you get the chance. Without this step, you cannot go on to the other steps.

Once you have taken the essential grammar rules to heart, the next step would be to increase your vocabulary. The way to do this is to have a dictionary and notebook with you everywhere you go in order to find and write down new words that you come across every day. During my time in Germany, from the day I arrived until the very day I left, I had a mini-dictionary and a pocket notebook with me wherever I went which I had in my knapsack. If I was having a discussion with a friend and there was a word that I didn't

know, I would immediately look it up, write it down in German, and then write the English form of the word beside it. Also, if I was reading a book or doing an assignment that I couldn't understand, I once again looked the word up and wrote it down. After I wrote down the word, I would repeat it to myself a few times and by the end of the day, believe it or not, I would have about 20 to 30 new words. Then the next day, while taking the subway to school, I would test myself by reading the English word and then saying the German word out loud. This was one of the best ways to study for me and was also a great and productive way to use my commute time to school. In other words, the dictionary became my best friend during that phase of my learning.

The final step I would like to share with you is after you have learned the basic rules in order to get you conversing with others, then after increasing your vocabulary so your discussions could be more fruitful, just keep on talking with people in that new language. Fortunately for me, while I was taking those German classes, I was with people who all spoke different languages

so we were all forced to talk in German in order to understand one another. Another point that I would like to make about this step is you should keep on speaking the new language you're learning even when you don't really need to. For example, when a student from Ireland came to our class, we opted to speak solely in German to each other and not English so we could both get better in our new found language. Unfortunately, I haven't followed this step thoroughly enough as I haven't spoken to anyone in German for such a long time. So sadly I have forgotten most of my German, which, I believe, is such a shame.

Lastly, I would like to point out that these are not strict rules on how to learn a new language. These are only my personal techniques that helped me learn a new language that I was studying at that time. So these guidelines may work for you or may not; it's solely up to you and how you would like to apply them. But whatever the circumstance, I hope you successfully achieve your goal of studying a new language and enjoy every step of the learning process.

## Arabic at the Writing Center: A Success Story

BY GHAIIDAA HASAN

Being a teacher of Arabic Composition, I have had the good opportunity to meet and work closely with the remarkable editors at AUK's very own Writing Center. This semester, the Writing Center has offered, for the first time, its services to writers of Arabic, in addition to writers of English. I was convinced that students of Arabic composition would need help building their writing skills. Therefore, as part of class requirements, my students, all 40 of them, were asked to book several appointments with the Writing Center throughout the semester.

My students know this by now: the greatly feared WP's. From the first day of the semester, the students were asked to keep collecting their writings and re-writes in a folder called the Writer's Portfolio, and every Writer Portfolio assignment had a number. WP 1 was an open topic, WP 2 was an analysis of selected writings of Ghada Al-Samman, WP 3 was a write-a-story assignment, and WP 4 was the demanding Environmental Research in Arabic assignment. No internet sources were allowed: yes, it was that kind of assignment—the kind that makes a teacher proud. All the students were allowed to use was good old books, newspapers, and magazines for references.

To have an idea of how daunting the WP process has been both for the teacher and students, consider this: unlike English, there is no standardized way of teaching Arabic writing, and books on the subject are practically unknown. Unlike English, teaching Arabic writing has always relied heavily on simply reading high literature, hoping, in the process, for students to emulate elaborate writing styles. Furthermore, as an editor or a teacher, you are not

equipped with standardized symbols to deal with the mishaps in Arabic writing. This is especially apparent in the writings of students of Arabic composition at AUK: incorrect gender agreement, incorrect plurals, and an incorrect choice of definite versus indefinite articles, and the list goes on to about 30 writing mishaps in Arabic, some of which are specific to Arabic, and others general in nature.

Assignment after assignment, I could see measurable progress in students' writings. The more the students had sessions with the Writing Center, the more organized their writings became, more fluid and lucid as well. According to senior Writing Center editor, Ms. Hanouf Al-Juhail, "many students kept on coming back and showed great improvement." The goal of my class was to give the opportunity for students to learn Arabic composition in an atmosphere of personal growth and enjoyment, without compromising the rigid requirements of skilful writing or research. The feedback I graciously received from Ms. Hanouf was that, indeed, the assignments were interesting and creative enough for students to hone their skills, once the nature of each assignment was assimilated, especially with the help of the Writing Center's highly professional one-on-one half hour editing sessions.

I can only say that this semester of teaching Arabic writing at AUK has been taken to a new level, and this couldn't have been achieved had it not been for the efforts of the Writing Center staff. At times I indeed felt that the task of teaching Arabic composition was insurmountable. The Writing Center's efforts, with all of their full-time and part-time staff members and student editors, proved to me otherwise. I highly commend them for their professionalism first and foremost, and for their dedication, and the joy they find in teaching writing, one student at a time. A solid "A" for the AUK Writing Center—where writing makes learning happen.

paper, I realized that I ran out of words and was short on ideas. I encountered an obstacle over which I tripped. After losing balance, I searched my vocabulary and scanned my old archives of fragments. Thinking it through has lead me to a sign on some road located in the area of learning, it was called "The Writing Center." So I went there with the slightest trust that I could find help. It was a special place, located in the "A" building where the first syllable of English stands as a start-point, and where language flows smoothly from A to Z. As I walked into the room, I was enlightened by the sight of students sitting attentively all over it. They were working in small

and cozy groups. They seemed deeply engrossed in thought as they held pens and white papers. This view appeared like a storm where brains generate ideas that do not produce but rather polish good pieces of writing. The crew lead the students like an orchestra leader by letting different opinions flow out of their minds to the paper in harmony. It is like the thoughts of an orchestra playing different instruments and having just one person harmonizing the music. They inspire students to set closer bonds between words to capture the heart of the paper. After getting the help I sought, I left the room with an inspiration which has drawn the road to professional writing.

## My Experience at the Writing Center

BY HAWRAA ASHOUR

But is that really how I feel about my being in the Writing Center? Never, not even when I first started there. I always thought there was a barrier between education and work, that there would never be an easy transition from a person's recent graduation to his recent employment; something had to give. What makes us qualified to teach a generation of people, from all ages, when we barely feel we accomplished much in our life of academia

The answer lay in the Writing Center. By being there, I was able to reenact a scenario of a classroom, a work place and a social visit all in the span of 30 minutes. If this is not grueling practice, then nothing is! But back to my main point, working with other people's intellectual property is no easy task, because you need to police yourself on how much of what you offer the student's paper, is yours. When does your little input here and there become a cause for quoting and not paraphrasing? Is this what professors face every day in the classroom?

Yes it is, and I was experiencing it second hand. How does a professor feel after seeing considerable growth in a student's work? I've experienced that, the joy of a student's beaming face telling me they got an A on a paper. And the sense of devastation and depression that follows a plagiarized paper report; that too I've faced. It is an insult to the person you've chosen to steal the work of, and an insult to your reader, when you're asking them to help validate this theft.

I mentioned that the Writing Center helped me feel the dynamics of a workplace, and that is correct. I've seen little bad happen in the Writing Center from that point, and all it has done, is made my convictions

stronger, and my opinions that much more polished. I am able to consult with others without fear of judgment from my lack of experience, and able to voice my concerns and fears -as a student consultant or as a human being- and get advice and positive feedback. Most of all, my opinions mattered, my mistakes were pointed out for correction, and I was kept engaged in intellectual debate to help propel me towards more growth.

At a social level, I'd like to say that, whoever said you couldn't be friends with your boss, didn't factor the Writing Center into that study. Even friendship requires not overstepping on someone's authority and mutual respect, and once that is achieved, you are able to appreciate the people you work with. I have much thanks to a special Ms Rock, who made this entire experience worth it, just for the honor of getting to know her and hearing her wax poetics about different topics. I owe much thanks to the captain of the Writing Center's ship, without whom, we would not have managed to still be afloat, in the face of some dangerous tempests and whales. To the rest of the consultants: thank you and please treasure this experience.

This last section is to answer all those FAQs I've encountered, I hope they help:

1. The Writing Center is located in the Sciences building, second floor, room A207.
2. Please try to make an appointment first, and please have a question ready.
3. We are not an editing service, and we do not have models of ready papers to hand out. For a list of what we do, please refer to our section on the AUK website.
4. Yes you may use the stapler. Yes you may borrow a pen.

Please don't borrow papers from our printer. No, please don't print unless you have an appointment. Open labs are in the Liberal Arts building.

5. No, I cannot give you a visit confirmation paper if I have not looked at your paper. Nor can I provide one for your friend for the exact same reason.
6. What happens if you don't add in-text citation is that your paper is considered plagiarized and you get a zero on it, if you're lucky.
7. No, you may not take a call while I'm looking at your paper.
8. Everyone in the Writing Center is qualified to help you with your papers. No, I cannot recommend one.
9. I can't tell you if you paper is an A paper; only your professor can.

## Road to Professionalism



BY DANA A BANDDAR

I was walking steadily down the lane of education and once I could not finish my English

*“I’ve experienced that, the joy of a student’s beaming face telling me they got an A on a paper.”*





Voice of AUK would like to greet the AUK community and Kuwait for commemorating 50 year of independence and 20 years of liberation.

بيضُ صنائعنا سودُ وقائعنا  
خضرُ مراتبنا حمرُ مواضعنا

