Distinguished singer-songwriter and guitarist, Ruth Wyland, performed, at the American University of Kuwait on April 4th, a collection of timeless songs that tell the story of the evolution of music in the United States from some of the most influential and chart-topping artists of their time. From the days of the American Civil War where the first infelicitous in the African-American artists to address the impacted students' concerns, and complaints. Many students were outraged, as was the case with the student who had in fact earned said minor, but due to circumstances beyond their control, said minor was no longer licensed in their university. AUK alumni who have already graduated with any of the withdrawn minors on their transcripts were able to retain them. He also added the important point that the academic or character references and recommendations given by their professors would make a more lasting impression on potential graduate school programs or future employers, as they already clarify the student's interests and qualities. One professor noted, “Knowledge is not a waste;” also adding that employers or program boards would also be able to see the type of classes the student enrolled in. Despite this advice and the practical compensation of the transcript addendum, the atmosphere was one of some discontent and frustration, as it undermined the students' efforts as well as underpinning the importance of multi-disciplinary learning in a liberal arts environment such as AUK is striving to create. President Sullivan also repeated, "I am firmly, specifically, urgently asking that faculty be as flexible as possible, as students are not at fault.” While assuring the entire AUK community that no students, faculty, or staff "did anything wrong" re- gards this decision, he also suggested ways around the current problem for the present moment. He suggested that faculty advisors in the mean time try to work with their students and see if they can flexibly turn their lost minors into other minors. For instance, he addressed a senior student, majoring in English Literature – and previously minoring both in Arabic and Gulf Studies – that with the help of her advisor, she might convert her Gulf Studies minor into an INST minor. He also urged concerned students to take the initiative to see their advisors about such

A UK Gets Lesson in American Musical History

By Farah Al-Shamali

By Nur Soliman

Impact of PUC Refusal to License 8 Minors

By Var Soliman

The PUC, or the Private Universities Council of the Ministry of Higher Edu- cation, announced late last academic year that they de- cided not to approve licens- ing for 8 minors AUK had appealed for, explaining that these specific minors were not housed within licensed majors.

On the 11th of March 2010, the students affected by this decision were called to a meeting with President Tim Sullivan, Carol Ross, Associate Dean John Rus- sell, and other administrato- rs to address the impacted students’ concerns. Many students turned out at the meeting, as did a number of interested faculty and many staff members from various departments.

The minors that were im- pacted included Arabic, Business, Administration, Gulf Studies, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, PR & Advertising, Psychology, and Visual & Performing Arts. The list originally included History, but due to the fact that History was originally a licensed major (later dropped to become a concentration under International Studies), this decision was lifted from this specific minor. If AUK were to appeal for these mi- nors to be licensed, the PUC would require AUK to first appeal for majors in these disciplines. This left a good percentage of the student population without a major, and so the AUK administra- tion called a meeting and in- vited each impacted student to attend the session.

The floor was open to ques- tions, and so student after stu- dent reached the microphone and addressed the panel with their various questions, con- cerns, and complaints. Many of the students who attended the session seemed to have lost their Arabic or Psychol- ogy minors. A frequent con- cern voiced by some of the students was that all their efforts in earning their minor were all for naught. President Tim Sullivan, aided by his fellow panelists and a few professors who also put in their opinions, explained that by way of compensation, an addendum would be attached to each student’s transcript, inform- ing whoever it may concern that the student had in fact earned said minor, but due to circumstances beyond their control, said minor was no longer licensed in their uni- versity. AUK alumni who have already graduated with any of the withdrawn minors on their transcripts were able to retain them. He also added the important point that the academic or character refer- ences and recommendations given by their professors would make a more lasting impression on poten- tial graduate school programs or future employers, as they already clarify the student’s interests and qualities. One professor noted, “Knowledge is not a waste;” also adding that employers or program boards would also be able to see the type of classes the student enrolled in. Despite this advice and the practical compensation of the transcript addendum, the atmosphere was one of some discontent and frustration, as it undermined the students’ efforts as well as underpinning the importance of multi-disciplinary learning in a liberal arts environment such as AUK is striving to create. President Sullivan also repeated, “I am firmly, specifi- cally, urgently asking that faculty be as flexible as possible, as students are not at fault.” While assuring the entire AUK community that no students, faculty, or staff “did anything wrong” re- gards this decision, he also suggested ways around the current problem for the present moment. He suggested that faculty advisors in the mean time try to work with their students and see if they can flexibly turn their lost minors into other minors. For instance, he addressed a senior student, majoring in English Literature – and previously minoring both in Arabic and Gulf Studies – that with the help of her advisor, she might convert her Gulf Studies minor into an INST minor. He also urged concerned stu- dents to take the initiative to see their advisors about such
I received an invitation from a friend to attend a theater show called “We Won’t Write on a Blackboard” performed by a band called “Anthropology.” I actually went there to meet up and spend some time with my friend because I haven’t seen him in a very long time. It was located in the Graduates Association on the Gulf Road near Sharaf.

I arrived a few minutes before the show and took a few minutes to say hello to my friend, and then he showed me the way to the theater. The whole place was dark which took me by surprise. Actually, the whole event was a surprise; the place was prepared so well as though you were attending a show in France or at a better location. The decorations and lights were amazing; even the lighting in the band’s flyer that was placed on my seat. It was actually the first time I ever heard from this band. I grabbed a copy of the flyer that they had been around for some time.

The main singer, who is also the band leader, Emma, had a wonderful deep and sensitive voice and she was really awesome. All the songs that she sang were chosen from very famous poets such as: Gabran Khaleel Gabran, Mahmoud Darweesh, Elia Abi Madhi, Enrique Macias plus a few songs written by Emma herself and others. Emma sang in Arabic, English and French. We were not listening to love songs in this show. Actually, they chose some deep poets talking about emotions that might have affected their lives, also they sang about politics and war.

There were a few dances between every few songs but the one I liked the most was the salsa dancer. They also had some kind of a pop-pet show that represented characters they were talking about in their songs.

The instruments that were used were a guitar, drums and a piano. The whole show included 27 performances and it took about an hour and a half. The whole event was very well organized and so entertaining and the entire crew was made up of professionals who really loved what they were doing. I admired what they were doing; it made me realize that there is much more to life than working and studying. The biggest surprise was at the end of the show when the crew member’s names were announced. Most of them were Kuwaitis!!! Even the salsa dancer. Of course, there were people from other countries such as Lebanon, Syria and Saudi Arabia. They didn’t have any formal support or contribution; they did all this on their own.

The band started only two or three years ago which is really amazing because they look so professional and experienced. This really taught me that if you believe in something you can do it no matter what, and nothing will stop you.

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The Importance of Spanish

On the 6th of April, the Spanish Ambassador, His Excellency Don Manuel Gómez de Valenzuela, gave a lecture in English at AUK about “The Importance of Spanish Language in the World.” A large number of students, faculty members and guests were present. The Ambassador, an experienced linguist, explained the hierarchy of languages in the world where Spanish occupies a pre-eminent rank. Spanish is the official language in 21 countries. This is the second most used language in international communication, and an official language of the U.N and its organizations. The Ambassador spoke about how the Spanish language is a powerful communication tool across America, Europe, Asia and Africa, increasingly important in business as well as career matters and that over time the need to learn Spanish will continue to be on the rise.

After the lecture, His Excellency, in conjunction with the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, kindly donated for the second time a good collection of Spanish books to the AUK library to encourage the growing interest in the language and culture of Spain and the Spanish-speaking world.

This is an auspicious start for AUK’s Foreign Languages program!
Facebook: Is It Really a Worldwide Social Nightmare?

By Ronnie Rashawn

What is Facebook? When I came back from summer break during my first year at AUK, I would see everyone gossiping and saying phrases such as: “Did you see the profile picture?” “Add me on Facebook.” “Are you in a relationship or not?” “Who added me?” “Oh my God, you looked fabulous in your Facebook picture.” “You will not believe who found on Facebook!” All these phrases made me curious to get familiar with Facebook. Throughout high school, I had heard people say that Facebook was the most popular subject for students. If a student asked you to add them up on Facebook and you didn’t even have an account, their jaw would hang as if they were talking to a person who consider Facebook a blessing, others consider it damaging and useless. In the article “Facebook: Our Way Through Life” the author points out that Facebook can be a center of distraction in our lives; in addition, she argues that Facebook is addictive and why it’s so addictive and how it’s unhelpful and merely a waste of time and energy. Marwa was taken to court because her description of Facebook was not human nor will he ever be. She was not a martyr, and directed questions to the media. She was not a martyr, and the entire internet is a center of distraction in our lives. Facebook is a deadly virus that is spreading rapidly out. I believe that Facebook or any other technology that could be a double-edged sword. The entire internet is a center of distraction in our lives; Facebook is a blessing once you know how to make use of it. It doesn’t obligation an individual to stay on it for hours wasting their time and energy. It is merely a source of entertainment that one turns to when they need some time off work. Finaly, it is a way of connecting people to their loved ones all over the world. Isn’t it nice that the best blessing you could ever have? is a blessing.
The Voice of AUK

usually wear ‘abayas based upon the ket. A common dress among Muslim women is a full body garment worn in public. The same meaning in terms of dress includes two holes for the arms with the front open and it is layered over the body, the whole body is covered by a scarf. The abaya is a full body garment worn in public places. It has no face veil. It is a common dress among Muslim women. The traditional color of the abaya is black; still there are colorful abayas provided in the Kuwaiti market. They usually have a light cut and are made out of flowing fabrics, such as crepe, georgette, and chiffon. The abaya is worn over the broad Swarovski, diamonds, gemstones, and various types of precious stones. The abaya is a traditional piece of attire that are currently seen worn by young Muslim ladies to cope with the modern life. Young Muslim ladies flow, loose, over garment, worn by some Muslim women. There is a modern cut for the abaya. Some women wear abayas for cultural reasons and others for religious reasons. In addition, some women would wear a abaya as they find it more comfortable and simple to dress in. They tend to wear it in quick occasions such as shopping, running errands, walking etc. Hence, abayas are either worn for cultural or religious reasons.


QRAN versus in Sarah QURAN. It states “O Prophet! Tell thy wives and thy daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks close around them. That will be better, so that they may be recognized and not annoyed. Allah is ever forgiving, merciful.” In addition to that, Bukhari states, “My Lord agreed with me (Umar) in three things.” (2) And as regards the veiling of the women, I said “O Allah’s Apostle! I wish you ordered your wives to cover themselves from the men because good and bad ones talk to them; “So the verse of the veiling of the women was revealed” (Bukhari, v.8, n.399). Since the abaya is a long garment, likely to be loose, and covers the whole body, it is mostly required by some Muslim women. In Kuwait, there are several perspectives of abayas. Some women wear abayas for cultural reasons and others for religious reasons. In addition, some women would wear a abaya as they find it more comfortable and simple to dress in. They tend to wear it in quick occasions such as shopping, running errands, walking etc. Hence, abayas are either worn for cultural or religious reasons.


By Nada El-Badry

Everyone knows about Twilight in some shape, away or form. Whether you’ve read the series of books or seen the movies or simply heard about it, you’ve probably at least heard about it. You may also know the impact it has had on teenage girls worldwide. Suddenly Teenage girls all over the world are obsessed with the series. It wasn’t long after that girls were sighing dreamily over Edward Cullen and suddenly he is the most popular boy in their Blackberry. Girls should go for the boy who they care about over said boy and try to commit suicide when said boy leaves? I will not go on since I have not read the whole series. That’s where the twists begin: it – oh the horror – but come on. I am not saying it’s not an interesting read, but I think the fans are taking it a bit too far – especially when they begin comparing Cullenism to Christianity. Once again, I am not joking. They say that there are some “Cullenites” who are completely dedicated to Cullenismo and the books. Just as there are Christians dedicated to Christianity and the bible. Then there are some who simply watch the movies and somehow this does not make them a true Twilight fanatic – sorry, I mean Cullenite. I think if there was a line to this ridiculousness, they definitely crossed it when they began comparing this “cult” they made up to a real religion like Christianity.

How many people have taken part in this absurdity, you might wonder? The site statistics say two hundred and forty eight. That’s almost two hundred and fifty. Two hundred and fifty people believe in this! And there might possibly be more who are so disturbingly obsessed with the series than not. If you would like to read more about this fascinating “group” then you can visit their site at justinbroadcast.com. I sincerely hope that what I have said will put you off from joining if you are, in fact, a Twilight fan.

By Shaimaa Bouyabes

It has been four years since my mom passed away; she was always happy for all of us and I don’t regret any moment they gave me. I never thought that what I have said will put you off from joining if you are, in fact, a Twilight fan.

By Nada El-Badry

Kuwait enjoys intense diversity in cultural features within the country. Yet, the majority of people seen in shopping malls or in Kuwait’s main public places are currently seen wearing abayas. Among these similarities, some women have been seen wearing abayas. Lately I have wondered why abayas are worn, which led me to investigate the matter. The abaya has many different names and types such as: Abaya, burqa, jilbab, and skirts. Also, there are casual abayas that are currently worn by young Muslim ladies to cope with the modern life. Young Muslim ladies flow, loose, over garment, worn by some Muslim women. There is a modern cut for the abaya. Some women wear abayas for cultural reasons and others for religious reasons. In addition, some women would wear a abaya as they find it more comfortable and simple to dress in. They tend to wear it in quick occasions such as shopping, running errands, walking etc. Hence, abayas are either worn for cultural or religious reasons.

1 “Abayases.”<http://www.mideastweb.org/MiddleEast. N.p., n.d. Web. 24 Mar 2010.> 2 “Arabian Culture and Dress.”<http://www.ethnicdenim.com/cgi/set?. html=embed&id=14873777>. 3 The Burqa is a term “fani” to a whole new level. How? Well, readers, it seems as if they’ve made a religion out of these series. No, kids yours. Although, they aren’t officially calling themselves a religion or a cult, however, this is what their site says: “Cullenism is a mass group of people, referred to as Cullenites, who have come together to appreciate the values and ideals represented by the Twilight series. We are not a religion or a cult, but we will be comparing and discussing Twilight with religion.” They also have something called “Fana” which is held every Sunday and in which they discuss Twilight. I am sorry, but this sounds very much like a religion to me. It makes me think that a bunch of silly teenage girls have nothing better to do than to worship a character from a book. This is causing my faith in teenagers to decrease at an alarming rate. Although, once again, they seem to think differently: “We are simply fans who cherish the values of Twilight (not just how sweet Edward is; yes, because fans worship the subject of their passion and turn it into a reli- gion). That happens all the time.

All right, I don’t mean to sound judgmental or to bash the book, but what values can a book like Twilight possibly have? Vampires and Werewolves exist! Girls should go for the boy who can probably murder them! Girls should obsess over said boy and try to commit suicide when said boy leaves? I will not go on since I have not read the whole series. That’s where the twists begin: it – oh the horror – but come on. I am not saying it’s not an interesting read, but I think the fans are taking it a bit too far – especially when they begin comparing Cullenism to Christianity. Once again, I am not joking. They say that there are some “Cullenites” who are completely dedicated to Cullenismo and the books. Just as there are Christians dedicated to Christianity and the bible. Then there are some who simply watch the movies and somehow this does not make them a true Twilight fanatic – sorry, I mean Cullenite. I think if there was a line to this ridiculousness, they definitely crossed it when they began comparing this “cult” they made up to a real religion like Christianity.

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Learning to Love Higher Education

By Hashim Al-Sughayer

First of all, I want to apologize for not posting or writing any new topics. The reason is that I had a lot of things to do and haven’t had time to finish them all. I’ve been busy for a while now, but I promise that I will try to post at least once a week. Note to self: it is not a good idea to take two economic classes in one course!!

I never imagined my life to be the way it is right now. I never thought that I would love education or even love writing essays but after joining AUK I fell in love with the whole system. The American system or the American way of teaching. They have a way that makes you focus all the time and you never get bored. They make learning fun and believe me when I say that I never had fun studying! When I first started here, I was still in the IEP (Intensive English Program) and I had fun all the time; I don’t mean having fun as in not caring and not attending classes. I actually had fun in class. I enjoyed my time and did all my assignments on time and got a solid “A” in the class. And now, I’m an undergraduate student and I’m always busy, the good kind of busy. The kind every workaholic wants. Even when I’m at home, I miss college. I never thought that I would feel this way about studying. Spending time in the library was a ridiculous idea but now, I’m always there. Even if I didn’t have anything to do, I love sitting there just to read a book or write a post maybe. This feeling can’t be felt if the university that you are in doesn’t have a cool library; thank God that AUK has the coolest library.

Now, this wasn’t always the case for me. I didn’t want to continue at AUK. During my first week here, I felt that it wasn’t good enough and was in no mood to study! I just wanted the course to end so that I can withdraw. However, after the first course and finding God I did. After seeing what I can achieve and how I achieved it, I started to feel that it wasn’t that bad and I can make it. So I decided to continue and find God I did. I asked myself, why did I choose AUK? Education, I think the most important part of life. I know I didn’t realize that early on but now I know that I want to finish what I started. I know that I love studying. Even when I have a lot to do, I’m enjoying every minute of it. I look forward to going to AUK. I have discovered about myself is that I love public speaking. I love giving presentations. Sometimes I get nervous but I love challenging myself! I don’t know what will happen in the future and I don’t want to know but what I do know is that I love living the most important years of my life. I have to enjoy my college life! I need to write a book or write an essay. You won’t get bored or exhausted when you are having fun studying. I am a proud AUK student now and I thank God for this opportunity. Working hard and doing your work is all the fun I need! I even wrote this article in the library!
Celebrating Diversity during International Week

Office of Student Life

The Office of Student Life at the American University of Kuwait had organized its 5th Annual International Week from March 7th through March 11th, 2010. The International Week was a collaborative undertaking which contained numerous and diverse events, such as informational booths represented by various countries’ embassies, the Global Warming Forum, cultural foods, traditional arts and clothing. These events support the mission of the Office of Student Life by celebrating cultural diversity to reflect current issues in the world and by providing more personal development opportunities for students.

The program was executed in association with AUK clubs and organizations such as the Diplomatic Club, MUN/AUK, Al Akhdar Environmental Club, and the Entrepreneurship and Business Club. A number of volunteer students joined forces with the Office of Student Life on the diverse events that the week offered. The first day, Sunday, March 7th, 2010, was designated as Africa and Arab World Day. The day saw a variety of African and Arab countries’ embassies partake in the Country Resource Fair. Representatives from countries like Niger, Sudan, Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, the United Arab Emirates, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia were all present on campus. In addition, AUK students represented Qatar and Lebanon.

The second day, Monday, March 8th, 2010, was designated as Europe day. This day saw a variety of European countries’ embassies partake in the Country Resource Fair. Representatives from countries like France, Germany, the Kingdom of Netherlands, Czech, Poland and Azerbaijan were all present on campus. Furthermore, AUK students represented Belgium, Spain, Italy and Armenia.

The third day, Tuesday, March 9th, was designated as North and South America Day. The day witnessed representatives from the embassies of the United States of America, Canada and Argentina take part in the Country Resource Fair. In addition to these countries, Amideast organization was also present on campus.

The fourth day, Wednesday March 10th, was designated as Asia day. In this day saw representatives from embassies in Kuwait partake in the Country resources fair; countries included Russia, Pakistan.

The fifth and final day, Thursday, March 11th, was designated as the International Women’s Day. On this day saw a variety of women from different countries partake in the Country Resource Fair. Representatives from countries like France, Germany, the Kingdom of Netherlands, Czech, Poland and Azerbaijan were all present on campus. Furthermore, AUK students represented Belgium, Spain, Italy and Armenia.

The day was also a day of celebration of the women’s day the Office of Student Life had organized a performance in the Global Warming Forum. This event involved a fruitful discussion presented by Dr. Lubaba Alie an Environmental Research Scientist from Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, Ms. Sandra Al-Saleh managing partner of Equilibrium, Prof. Rally Pallain - Associate Professor of Business Administration, Dr. Ablam Alaki -Assistant Professor of English Language and Literature of the American University of Kuwait, and MUN/AUK and Al Akhdar Environmental Club representatives. The discussion panel overview the effects of global warming and climate change from a scientific, social and economic standpoint. The discussion panel also tried to offer some possible solutions to the problems caused by Global Warming.

The sixth and final day, Friday, March 12th, was designated as the Country Resource Fair. Representatives from countries like France, Germany, the Kingdom of Netherlands, Czech, Poland and Azerbaijan were all present on campus. Furthermore, AUK students represented Belgium, Spain, Italy and Armenia.

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200 Years of Chopin

By Sara Soliman

To celebrate the Chopin year, Deutsche Gram- mophon has released an album comprised of unreleased recordings of world-renowned Ar gerich's performances on the piano virtuoso, Martha Argerich. This elegant musician has been celebrated for her passion and gravity she channels into her music, and lovers of Chopin will now be delighted to hear these new, unheard-before recordings.

The album begins with a stunning rendition of the Ballade No. 5 in F minor. Argerich's performance is a masterclass in technique and expression, demonstrating her ability to bring life to a piece that is known for its challenges.

The Ballade No. 1 hints Rubinstein's fresh, lyrical tone, but there is a singular balance between the hands, the fingers light and heavy in the right places, and dem onstrating the story-telling voice of the piece with a whisper and warmth that is exclusive to Tharaud. It makes the mazurkas sound so light-hearted and strangely jolly, as Tharaud is so versatile as to jump from key to key, moving into an adagio beautifully but without losing the color of his voice in every piece. This album is an honor to the great master, tenderly recreating the brilliance and warmth with humility and honesty.

Argerich Plays Chopin - Martha Argerich

3, and Argerich playing with thrilling emotion, aggres sively striking the chords and singing out the elegant, powerful phrases amidst the violent passages in the Finale. The rumbling left-hand line which gives great weight to the excited, impassioned melody, jumping octaves and striking dissonant chords, switching hungrily between major and minor keys and cascading scales. Argerich performs with great skill, intensity and expression. Her astounding furor presents a truly singular album, revived from the artist's ascending ca reer, and proving a fitting tribute to her well-loved pieces, indeed, are well-loved. Indeed, the balance between the hands confident and assured. The drama Club has never er pretender to be producers of professional theater. The drama Club in this case, the student actors and their courage ous director) sets out to do student-run theater. Up until now, that meant Murder Mystery events and a whole lot of talking without much doing. Mr. Nayar's produc tion of "Blind!" changed that. Despite its shortcomings, "Blind!" represents the first fully student produced theatre at AUK, and I know this because I am their advisor and I did not help them with this show. Some would argue that the "hands off" approach to advising is a bit harsh or easy; however, I liken it more to teaching young hatchlings to fly—nudge them out of the nest and let them fly or fall, either way it is a learning experience. In this case, they flew, maybe not very high or very far, but their wings were fapping and they told a story complete with lights, sound, costumes, and original words penned by one of their own. In the history of AUK's stu dent organizations, never had an event that so suc cessful had been without the trappings of big corporate sponsorship or the faint scent of behind-the-scenes heavy lifting. This was simply an evening of very dedicated students coming together to tell a story. Mr. Nayar felt compelled to tell. Love it or hate it, it was the at STUDENT-theater at AUK. No matter what else "Blind!" may have been, it was a shining example of courage, commitment, and undaunted passion, which these students can pleasantly carry with them for the rest of their lives. As a theatre artist, teacher, and advisor, I could not wish for them any greater success than that.

Sand Chronicles - A Review

S and Chronicles is a manga by Hinako Ashihara. It is about life and love and new beginnings. The story is told by a 12-year-old girl called Uekusa whose life changed when her mother died after they moved to the country. She forms a bond with Daigo and two other kids, which will transform her into a completely emotionally rollercoaster throughout her life. She's always looking for a way to escape and pass the time, proving Argerich's great versatility and capability for gulling, all the while charged with her pas sion, sensitively demonstrating her ability to shine her personal light through the series, and how she tries to deal with the changes in her life. It is not all about love and "he loves me, he loves me not" situations — well, it could be mostly de scribed as that — but what is nice though is that the charac ters are shown to mature and develop throughout the series. Instead of just growing ing in age and staying the same, the characters grow in personality and charac ter, developing conscious thoughts that are different from when they were only 12 years old. It is interesting to see how the protagonist grows from being a kid to a person who deals with realistic problems. Even better is that instead of words to describe this transformation, you will see it in pictures, manga-style.

Now if this were your first discovery of manga, I would advise you to read this manga series. The drawing and plot are an ideal form of what a "shoujo" and slice of life manga would look like. The drawing itself is satisfactory, showing comical situations as well as beautiful depic tions of scenery and human emotions. Discover the real ity of the world through the eyes of a 12 year old in the "Sand Chronicles" volumes.
The Ghostly Figures of Sahin Paksoy

By Nur Soliman

I n keeping with showcasing the works of contemporary Middle Eastern artists who express something unique about their cultures, the Booshahi Gallery presented Turkish artist Sahin Paksoy last month. The works consisted mostly of letter-sized works of parcel-tinted paper; the larger works on white paper or on larger oil canvases. Judging from the texture of the paint, Paksoy used thick, water-based colors that left a bright dusty impression concealing deftly drawn black ink lines. Paksoy’s paintings almost exclusively portrayed female figures; there were perhaps less than five men in the collection. These women were mostly occupied in cafes, the hairdresser’s, or fragments of living rooms; some of them were cutting or washing other women’s hair, others were sitting with coffee and cigarettes. One or two paintings displayed women dancing gracefully to drums, while two canvases depicted women performing in the theatre, strangely marionette-like. Most of the faces, hands, and legs of the women were a thick, chalky white, only occasionally relieved by a pinkish crayon tint on their cheeks, a bright dyed crimson on their nails, and dim smudges all around their wide, tired eyes that stare dully out into space or stare indolently straight at the viewer.

The women, dressed in alarmingly gaudy shades of mustard-yellow, deep green, and purple, are drawn with a sure hand, but they are very stiff and wooden in their movements and expressions. Most of them are rather plump, with graceful curves to their arms, breasts, hips, and legs, and the sport different hair colors and styles, even green-dyed bobs. One woman, standing with a man, seemed to be slimmer and more florid like her ruddy companion. Although they had more muted, natural tones in their varied dress, they looked as uncomfortable as the rest of the figures.

There is an uncanny, discomforting feeling about the alienated, bored gaze that emanates from these women. There is a boredom that recalls some of Pannik’s characters in “The Black Book or Other Colours,” but it is taken to the extreme. One wonders where the source of this static boredom lies, where the women stiffly stand in rows of three in “dancing” motion, or where they indolently cross their legs while they sip coffee, smoke cigarettes, or let their hair be washed by tired-looking, mustached men, sometimes equally pallid in tone, sometimes with a hint of rosiness in their face. At the same time, there was a certain animation about the figures, a puppet-like movement that reminded one of the vivid illustrations or frescoes of history. Paksoy, a graduate of Istanbul’s State Academy of Fine Arts, is inspired by Ottoman miniatures and Byzantine icons, which might suggest a reason or an influence behind the brightly coloured, stiff puppet-like figures that stand out against a mute ground.

The exhibition certainly presented a unique form of depiction, with Paksoy’s pale, brightly coloured women silently narrating their personal, intimate lives with the viewer who is already alienated by their wide, languorous dark eyes or their cynical, rouged smiles. This is also by the suggestion that they belong in a past that is not too distant from where we are, but is quite disappeared.

Power of Letters - Ali Hassan at the Dar Al-Funoon

By Nur Soliman

I n April, the Dar al-Funoon showcased the works of Ali Hassan, the famous Qatari artist. The entire exhibition centered around the Arabic letter “nun” or "ن". where there were over twenty canvases depicting the single letter in diverse ways. Included as one of the great artists in Qatar by “Canvas” editor Lisa Ball-Lechgar in her article “Fresh Currents from the Gulf,” Ali Hassan has been working for over thirty-five years on painting all 28 letters of the Arabic alphabet. Some of his depictions bear the mark of a traditional calligrapher’s touch, while other works extend that and experiment with the shape, the position, and the whole character of the letter. When explaining this series in particular focused exclusively on the letter “nun,” Ali Hassan says that it is because of “the beauty, power, timelessness, and malleability of a single Arabic letter.” Abdul Kadir al-Rais, a pioneering Emirati artist based in Abu Dhabi, also written about by Ball-Lechgar, has also followed the trend of exploring the Arabic alphabet, using traditional calligraphic forms of the letters, as the letter “waw” or “وا” and infusing the whole canvas with bright, luminous colour. Hassan is different; he goes even further with experimenting with the very shape, meaning, and feel for the letter. In some paintings, for instance, he stretches out the bell-curve of the letter to become almost horizontal, with curves on either end, curling out like leaves. In other paintings, such as his ink-on-paper works, his “nun” becomes almost like simple Chinese characters, the very broad brush sweeping a textured black ink impression. It once appears at the end of a word, with a graceful bell-curve, and once in the beginning of a word, now a simple, deft stroke of the brush with an angle at the beginning.

Hassan’s techniques are creative; the works were mixed media, acrylic on canvas, excepting two ink works. He heavily applied his paint when drawing the letter, leaving a rich, textured mark, while the rest of the background was sometimes palette-knifed in a muted colour like apricot or tan. Sometimes, this was washed over with splashes of bright, colours like electric blue or violet. Otherwise, he kept his colours to blacks, blues, violets, browns, grays, as well as mineral green and ultramarine. Some of his paintings also had an element of “surprise” in them. He featured a deep, rich sienna-brown-and-crimson “nun,” the dot and the curve in gold, over a tan background. On the right edge of the canvas, there was a spot of luminous blue that changed the whole painting. Another feature of Hassan’s paintings was his use of “prints,” lace-like, undulating pattern of illegible letters. He had these printed or stenciled onto the canvas, showing through mysteriously on the “nun” itself or emerging through the canvas, almost like the secret potentiality and the beauty of articulated language. Hassan’s work is a definite thing to be seen, and is inspiring just to look at, especially up close.
By Nur Soliman

March's exhibition at the Dar al-Funoon maintained something of the traditional while also inspiring something of the experimental. Himat's art-work, in a collection entitled “Landscapes” or “Forest of Love,” combined the realms of painting and the book in a way that was truly poetic, and reflected much of the artist's interests.

Himat, an Iraqi artist born in Kirkuk in 1960, lives and works mainly in Paris. He has had numerous exhibitions around the Arab world, in Japan, France, the Netherlands, Austria, and Switzerland. He has worked with different poets, among them Adonis, André Velter, Gotaro Tsunezumi, Mohammed Bennis, and Michel Butor, on over thirty various collaborative projects. Some of his verse-collaborations were displayed at the Dar al-Funoon, in addition to his much larger, epic, and vibrant panels and other works.

The verse collections were concertinaed letters of smooth, cream-coloured hand-woven paper. On every other page, Himat wrote out Adonis' verses in a graceful hand, using thin, very carefully drawn dia-meter and punctuation marks. On the alternate folios, Himat loaded the page with bright, saturated colours, a deep turquoise and sea green, warm reds and oranges, and gamboges yellow. He painted them with a swift brush that mixed some of the colours together dynamically. Over these, he painted strange, almost hieroglyphic patterns in charcoal-coloured paint. Another concertinaed book is painted mainly in a bright blue and red, with the patterns over the blotsches of colour painted in a deeper blue. Except for an enormous folding canvas panel entitled “The Sea,” all his works were mixed media on largish sized hand-woven white paper with worn edges. “The Sez” was mostly in deep blue, the colour deepening on the lower half of the panel, while there was an edge of white on the top. The deep blue paint had – and also revealed – paper mâché flower-like sand dollars and bright stars, as well as dried rose-petals that still showed their crimson and pink through the light blue paint. There were also printed circular shapes sprinkled over the panels to suggest the dynamism of a deep sea.

The other panels were similar in pattern, with deep color coating most of the paper, with various shades of that color giving more animated texture to the composition, then alleviated by silver, gold, or thick white or black paint over it in the same patterns, almost a pictorial alphabet that wasn’t quite that yet. Many of them were in rich crimsons and red, one of them in bright varnish, entitled “Temple,” while another offered rich crimson and bronze as a background over which a charcoal and-bronze pattern was printed. Others, like the “Flowers” series also had collages; little squares of luminous blue or black over a soft, flowing Prussian blue or a lighter shade, relieved by squares of woven white paper and slightly dried pink and red rose petals which gave the effect of snow. Many others, in electric blue, warm cotton-candy pink, red, or white, were entitled “Poetry in Blue II” or “Poetry in Red” and so on, suggesting once more the mysterious, poetic link between articulation in verse and the all-mot lyrical, rhythmic patterns in Himat’s paintings. This poetic rhythm and motion that characterizes his richly coloured works may very well explain his long collaborations with poets over the world, and indeed brings to discussion to what extent poetry is really about words.

International Week from pg. 7

On the last day, The Global Village Day, students were encouraged to celebrate cultural diversity. Students represented their culture through traditionally rich elements, such as food, music, and art. A competition was held for the best country representation where the best three students were awarded prizes. The Global Village Day activities also included a traditional dress competition where the best three winners were awarded prizes.

During the Country Resources Fair, a variety of countries partook in this event. The countries had the opportunity to represent themselves to a diverse body of AUK students, faculty, and staff. This AUK body had the opportunity to ask the representative of the various embassies a large array of questions about the country. Questions related to the countries people, their history, and the tourism. Representatives also offered informational presentations. The 5th Annual International Week provided various opportunities for students to interact and engage in meaningful experiential learning activities. This allowed them to deepen their understanding and appreciation of cultural differences. The week highlighted the important role these differences play in the human experience. It also cultivated a sense of social responsibility to others, fostered cultural collaboration, and communication, as well as offered civic, personal, and organizational leadership. Its Slogan was “Celebrating Diversity.”

“Landscapes” of Iraqi Artist Himat

Himat, an Iraqi artist born in Kirkuk in 1960, lives and works mainly in Paris. He has had numerous exhibitions around the Arab world, in Japan, France, the Netherlands, Austria, and Switzerland. He has worked with different poets, among them Adonis, André Velter, Gotaro Tsunezumi, Mohammed Bennis, and Michel Butor, on over thirty various collaborative projects. Some of his verse-collaborations were displayed at the Dar al-Funoon, in addition to his much larger, epic, and vibrant panels and other works. The verse collections were concertinaed letters of smooth, cream-coloured hand-woven paper. On every other page, Himat wrote out Adonis’ verses in a graceful hand, using thin, very carefully drawn dia-meter and punctuation marks. On the alternate folios, Himat loaded the page with bright, saturated colours, a deep turquoise and sea green, warm reds and oranges, and gamboges yellow. He painted them with a swift brush that mixed some of the colours together dynamically. Over these, he painted strange, almost hieroglyphic patterns in charcoal-coloured paint. Another concertinaed book is painted mainly in a bright blue and red, with the patterns over the blotsches of colour painted in a deeper blue. Except for an enormous folding canvas panel entitled “The Sea,” all his works were mixed media on largish sized hand-woven white paper with worn edges. “The Sez” was mostly in deep blue, the colour deepening on the lower half of the panel, while there was an edge of white on the top. The deep blue paint had – and also revealed – paper mâché flower-like sand dollars and bright stars, as well as dried rose-petals that still showed their crimson and pink through the light blue paint. There were also printed circular shapes sprinkled over the panels to suggest the dynamism of a deep sea. The other panels were similar in pattern, with deep color coating most of the paper, with various shades of that color giving more animated texture to the composition, then alleviated by silver, gold, or thick white or black paint over it in the same patterns, almost a pictorial alphabet that wasn’t quite that yet. Many of them were in rich crimsons and red, one of them in bright varnish, entitled “Temple,” while another offered rich crimson and bronze as a background over which a charcoal and-bronze pattern was printed. Others, like the “Flowers” series also had collages; little squares of luminous blue or black over a soft, flowing Prussian blue or a lighter shade, relieved by squares of woven white paper and slightly dried pink and red rose petals which gave the effect of snow. Many others, in electric blue, warm cotton-candy pink, red, or white, were entitled “Poetry in Blue II” or “Poetry in Red” and so on, suggesting once more the mysterious, poetic link between articulation in verse and the all-mot lyrical, rhythmic patterns in Himat’s paintings. This poetic rhythm and motion that characterizes his richly coloured works may very well explain his long collaborations with poets over the world, and indeed brings to discussion to what extent poetry is really about words.
Waxing Poetic and The Limitations in Academic Writing

By Sara Soliman

I was one of those feeling, that, in your gory, butلاقات there, it tickles in your stomach and makes one of the somber. This was the feeling I used to get when I first answered my IGRSE exams back in high school. It was back again and this time was for the very first day I joined the Writing Center. It is definitely a part of AUK, but for me it was a whole new place, new people and a new way of writing. It embarrassed me somewhat when I received an email from a friend, who was talking about music; I had once received an email that almost exceeded a page and a half in length, and I responded with an email that almost exceeded a page. It embarrassed me, but I knew I could not write concise sentences. I decided to keep a diary and I always try to keep a diary to be able to keep a diary of my daily thoughts and to keep a diary of my daily experiences. The experience of working at the Writing Center, I have found it to be a good experience; the experience of working at the Writing Center helped me to become a better writer.

By Shabab Al-Rashidi

L ast month, the Writing Center invited some faculty members to engage in a discussion about the importance of writing. The discussion included ideas and thoughts, which may not always cross the minds of students as they compose their essays. Although all professors agreed that grammar and punctuation make up the basic components of “good writing,” they also agreed that perfecting those components does not always grant an essay substance. “Good writing always begins with a strong argument,” said Professor Christopher Oman, History and Political Science. Oman also stated that students seldom challenge the arguments presented in class and that they usually choose the “safe” way of writing by sticking to opinions with solid arguments. That’s when I knew that a student had really thought about his or her work, added Oman. The panel also included Professor Mary Queen and Professor Theresa Kleykens from the English Literature Department. Professor Queen stressed similar opinions about the definition of “good writing.” “Original thinking—that’s what I like,” Professor Kleykens said. Adding that an essay that stems from different thinking is one that brings joy to the reader and even makes a professor feel inclined to share it with the other colleagues. “It is through original thinking—it is dangerous thinking, “Kleykens says, “that a writer enables his or her audience to engage with the presented text.”

During the course of the discussion, it became apparent that the main element the professors agreed for in a written assignment is the ability of the student to build an intellectual relationship with the reader. “A good essay is one you learn though to make connections where those connections aren’t explicit,” said Professor Queen.

Another topic that the panel discussed was the role of the Writing Center and how the Consultants can enable the students to grasp the concept of “good writing.” All professors believed that the Writing Center is somewhat an extension of their own roles. They perceive the Writing Consultants as educators just as much as they are.

“Students may be intimidated to come to our offices but they wouldn’t be intimidated to come to the Writing Center so it is a way the Center’s role is kind of like my role,” said Oman.

Moreover, the panel also believed that students should be more educated about the ways in which the Writing Center could assist them in composing their assignments. “It’s not an editing studio and I always try to communicate that to my students,” said Kleykens, when addressing the misconceptions and the importance of the central meaning and the organization of the paper. The consultants stated that the Center should be viewed as a place that helps students improve their essays through teaching them that writing is a profoundly intellectual activity and assisting them in thinking more critically about their work.

“Students need to understand that the Writing Center is not a place to have conversations about reading and writing,” said Oman.

But what concerns you the most when you start writing your essay? Is it the grammar? Is it the organization of the essay? Or is it the thesis statement? As a consultant at the Writing Center, I notice that most students are concerned mostly about fixing their grammar and punctuation and the importance of the central meaning and the organization of the paper. It is essential for every student to know that the Higher Order Concerns are the most important elements in the paper. After addressing these elements, students can turn to the Lower Order Concerns.

The higher order concerns in the text appear as a color. I was told to use this main idea of the paper. HOCs include the thesis statement and the organization and the development of ideas. First of all, developing a clear thesis is very important to write a good paper. The thesis statement should indicate the essence of the piece of writing. It should explore the main points discussed in the essay. Secondly, the organization of ideas is essential to assure a smooth flow of ideas throughout the essay. There are a lot of strategies that can help with organizing the paper, such as making diagrams and outlining. These strategies help with organizing sentences in the order of the main ideas, supporting points, and minor ideas. It assists in viewing the paper’s structure clearly. Thirdly, the development of ideas is essential to add more depth to the topic discussion. Sometimes, it is difficult to come up with points that support your argument of a main idea. However, using external resources may help broaden your views.

On the other hand, the Lower Order Concerns have to do with the sentence structure level. It includes: spell-

Good Writing
A Professor’s Perspective

By Sarah Juna

I was once of those feelings, that, in your gory, but_relations there, it tickles in your stomach and makes one of the somber. This was the feeling I used to get when I first answered my IGRSE exams back in high school. It was back again and this time was for the very first day I joined the Writing Center. It is definitely a part of AUK, but for me it was a whole new place, new people and a new way of writing. It embarrassed me somewhat when I received an email from a friend, who was talking about music; I had once received an email that almost exceeded a page and a half in length, and I responded with an email that almost exceeded a page. It embarrassed me, but I knew I could not write concise sentences. I decided to keep a diary and I always try to keep a diary to be able to keep a diary of my daily thoughts and to keep a diary of my daily experiences. The experience of working at the Writing Center, I have found it to be a good experience; the experience of working at the Writing Center helped me to become a better writer.

Everyone likes a little pat on the back now and then. At AUK, we do not discourage students or penalize students for not engaging in the Writing Center; we are more than willing to work with them to improve their writing and direct them. This was all so unknown to me until I became a part of the WC.

The other Consultants and Staff members in the Writing Center were very helpful when I first joined, and were always there when I came to help me out. It felt really strange a couple of weeks working, as it was a tofuscating one on and off; in AUK but with people I had not met before. Now, it is completely different, the new environment is more family and friends. With time, all of them have become special people in my life; they all play an important role as my superiors and friends.

The journey has been a fascinating one with ups and downs; I have managed to improve with the Writing Center. When and if I am a Writing Center Consultant, I was working with the Intensive English Program. The journey until now, I have been spending the students through their essays, but HOCs and LOCs

WRITING CENTER @ AUK

The Voice of AUK

By Shabab Al-Rashidi

The higher order concerns in the text appear as a color. I was told to use this main idea of the paper. HOCs include the thesis statement and the organization and the development of ideas. First of all, developing a clear thesis is very important to write a good paper. The thesis statement should indicate the essence of the piece of writing. It should explore the main points discussed in the essay. Secondly, the organization of ideas is essential to assure a smooth flow of ideas throughout the essay. There are a lot of strategies that can help with organizing the paper, such as making diagrams and outlining. These strategies help with organizing sentences in the order of the main ideas, supporting points, and minor ideas. It assists in viewing the paper’s structure clearly. Thirdly, the development of ideas is essential to add more depth to the topic discussion. Sometimes, it is difficult to come up with points that support your argument of a main idea. However, using external resources may help broaden your views.

On the other hand, the Lower Order Concerns have to do with the sentence structure level. It includes: spell-

gramm, and punctuation. Problems of this kind occur repeatedly with people who use English as a second language. To decrease such mistakes, it is helpful to read your paper aloud after you finish each sentence or paragraph for grammar or spelling mistakes. You can also use different references to improve your grammar and spelling. It is important to notice that most students repeat the same mistakes. If you improve your grammar or spelling mistakes, you will definitely overcome them.

While you revise your paper, it is natural that you move between HOCs and LOCs. However, if you are not experienced with the revising process, it is possible to confuse your resources with HOCs then proofread from LOCs. Remember that the purpose of a good writer is to develop your piece of writing and, hopefully, it will assist you in becoming a better writer!
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