

Anti-Segregation Committee Formed

By Walah Al-Sabah

Since the segregation issue became the hot topic at AUK, people have been wondering what could be done about it. So in the beginning of March 2008, a group of strong-willed AUK students formed the Anti-Segregation Committee (ASC). With 32 current members, the committee is made up of students who are characterized by great determination to do something about segregation.

The objectives of the Anti Segregation committee include the following: the removal of partitions—the strongest point that which has arisen in the committee's deliberations on this issue is the fact that partitions are not

within AUK guidelines—, involving and encouraging students by updating them about developments that deal with the segregation issues, becoming active in the media, and finally, propagating to students the importance and impact of voting.

Headed by Areej Al-Bader, the ASC has divided itself into three sub committees: Public Relations, headed by Ala'a Al-Zamel, On/Off Campus Committee headed by Ghazwan Al-Attar, and finally, there is a Blog Committee headed by the writer of these lines.

The Public Relations Committee is responsible for setting up a booth every Tuesday for giving out ASC merchandise



such as stickers, pins, and t-shirts as well as promoting events. PR is also responsible for ASC press releases. As a reminder once again, the ASC booth is set up every Tuesday from 10 am until 4 pm on the ground floor of the Sciences Building.

The On/off Campus Committee basically is concerned about events that are segregation-related inside and outside of the AUK campus. They are responsible for organizing events inside of AUK, and covering events off campus that have to deal with the latest developments regarding the segregation issue.

Finally, there is an ASC blog. Everybody is welcome to post their segre-

gation-related opinions, articles, news, updates or even artistic work. The blog will also post reminders about the booth every Tuesday. The URL is www.antisegregation-committee.blogspot.com. To submit articles, updates, artistic work, news, or suggestions please send email to: antisegregation-committee@gmail.com.

The Anti-Segregation Committee is "FOR the students of AUK, BY the students of AUK, and ABOUT the students of AUK." With the support of the AUK student body, the ASC believes it can overcome anything that might hinder students' ability to vocalize their opinions about the segregation issue.

Coping with Cancer: AUK Student's Journey

By Dina El-Zohairy

Shoug Al-Othman joined AUK as a transfer student from the American University of Paris in Fall 2006. She is a junior double-majoring in Finance and Marketing and minoring in Economics.

At AUK, Shoug works as a tutor, a student worker on the Faculty Floor, and a teacher assistant. Moreover, Shoug is a Peer Academic Leader. Despite her busy schedule, she still finds time to spend with friends and family.

Shoug was diagnosed with Stage IV Hodgkin's Lymphoma (a type of cancer that affects the lymphatic system) in January 2008. She is currently undergoing chemotherapy in Paris.

What symptoms led you to consult a doctor in the first place?

Three years ago, I went to the doctor because I had a swollen lymph node on the left side of my neck. He said it was normal because I had caught a cold and was still on medication. "Don't worry; it will disappear when you complete the course," he said. He also prescribed me some other medication to speed up my recovery.

It's true that lymph nodes swell as a result of infection, and go back to their normal size when the infection is gone. But mine didn't!

Last January, when I returned home after tutoring some students I felt some pain next to my spleen, but slept on it think-

ing it was normal! However, I woke up in the middle of the night with severe pain in the same area and I couldn't bear it so I went to Al-Amiri Hospi-

tal and my shocking moments began after that.

When were you diagnosed with cancer and what was



AUK's Shoug Al-Othman suffers from Stage IV Hodgkins lymphoma.

your initial reaction to the diagnosis?

I went to Paris hoping they would tell me that everything was okay and I could go back home. But they requested an immediate biopsy of the nodes in my neck. I killed my time shopping with my family and having fun while I waited for the results, thinking that everything might be fine. The doctor told me from the beginning what the chances were and what disease I may be looking at. So I searched the Web a day before I got the results and that's when I knew that I had *something*, not just a normal *thing*. But in some ways I

kept on denying that this could be cancer.

I cried when I heard that what I have was truly what I feared, and even worse: Stage IV lymphoma with chemotherapy as a treatment was not really what I had expected.

I lost hope and refused to talk to anyone. I was thinking of my family, friends and studies that I would leave behind. I was angry, very angry at what I had. And what really frustrated me is that the doctor didn't know the cause of my cancer.

How many months of chemotherapy do you have ahead of you?

Because I have advanced Hodgkin's disease, I need eight months of chemotherapy. I am done with four sessions now and have 12 left (six months).

What side effects of chemotherapy do you have to cope with?

Sore mouth, hair loss, nausea, vomiting, feeling tired and sick, and a decrease in the number of blood cells. But thank God, they are all temporary.

As a patient, how much do you want to know about your condition from day to day?

I bombard the doctor with questions every session! I ask questions that might seem stupid for some, but to me they are a comfort. I want to know every detail about everything; I look at my results and scans as if I could read and understand what they say.

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The Politics of Segregation

By Nuha Al-Fadli

In its March edition, the Voice of AUK covered some recent developments in the ongoing debate over gender segregation in educational institutes. Because this issue is of such importance to the future of the American University of Kuwait the Editorial Board has decided to run a series of in-depth features on the social and political context of gender segregation in Kuwait.

When Kuwait University was established in 1966, it was hailed as a monument to Kuwait's national independence, economical prosperity and social development. Although some considered this to be the first step towards creating a modern Kuwait, others regarded it as a pending threat to the recognized local traditions and religious customs.

As Kuwait University grew in social prominence, many ultra-conservatives assumed the responsibility of challenging and moderating the university's power. Clinging to past local customs as a shield against the imminent changes that accompanied the discovery of oil, many turned their attention to opposing the influence of Kuwait University, a potent symbol of the encompassing changes overtaking Kuwait. The presence of this new institution in the midst of a conservative society aroused fear and concern. To curb the university's influ-

ence on the younger generation, many extremists turned their attention to the issue of gender segregation. Neglecting the matter of improving educational standards, the conservative parties turned to a simpler tactic, attacking the existence of co-education in learning facilities.

With Kuwait's independence in 1961, there was an increased interest in public education in general and higher education in particular. However, since Kuwait University had not yet been established, the Ministry of Education granted students scholarships as an incentive to pursue their education at international universities. Most students attended co-educational colleges in Lebanon and Egypt. In this sense, gender segregation was neither a cultural nor societal concern. Inevitably linked to the prevalent social and economic conditions of the community, education had to evolve in order for cultural development to coincide with material growth.

To meet the emerging generation's educational needs, Kuwait University was founded pursuant to an Amiri Decree which regulated the organization of higher education in Kuwait. The university first commenced functioning with two fields of study, the Faculties of Science, and Art and Education With demand

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Rekaaz: Urging Students to Hold Firm on Values

By Dina El-Zohairy

On the evening of Wednesday 19th March, a large audience of AUK students and guests welcomed Dr. Mohammed Al-Awadhi for the seventh time and Sheikh Suleiman Al-Jubailan in the Liberal Arts auditorium. Their visit to AUK represented one of a series of lectures hosted around Kuwait by Rekaaz, an independent non-profit organization, to promote its eighth regional campaign, “Firm on my Values.”

The campaign is centered on the fact that we live in a dynamic era, one whose only steady feature is change. It is therefore important for each and every one of us to identify our values, interact with them, hold on tight to them, and be aware of the factors that challenge their existence. These values stem from religion and form our unique identity. Despite the permeability of Arab society to Western values on all fronts, Samuel Huntington expresses his fear for losing America’s national identity in *Who Are We?*

The behavioral and social values that constitute the Islamic identity include dressing up appropriately, lowering one’s gaze, and saying nice things to others. Other desirable traits include justice, equality, honesty, optimism and modesty.

Those values are easier stated than lived; the majority underestimates their importance in building a sound character and a tight-knit society. Indeed, Al-Awa-

dhi touched upon some of the threats that hinder and weaken our ability to stick to our values. For example, many people use society as their benchmark, justifying bribery by its widespread practice in society. Others know little about or misunderstand the Islamic identity, or aren’t determined and confident enough to adhere to them.

The story of Najeeb Al-Zamel, which was highlighted by Al-Awadhi, is a live example of Muslims being greatly impressed by other cultures. In his article *The Day I*



Photo courtesy of www.rekaaz.com



Photo courtesy of www.rekaaz.com

Quit Praying, the Saudi writer and businessman narrates how as a high school student the ideologies of Nietzsche, Kant, and Schopenhauer fascinated him to the point of losing interest in religion. The article can be summarized in the author’s final conviction that “Prayer changes us

and we change the world.”

Why all this fuss about values? The importance of sticking to one’s values lies in their role in preserving identity, guiding individual behavior, creating a sense of security and belonging

to the larger society, and maintaining the overall integrity and independence of the society, whose members follow a common set of values and principles.

The speakers clearly pointed out the challenging task of adhering to one’s values in the present-day, where the overwhelming majority tends to go with the flow. Hence, Al-Awadhi cited the Prophet by saying that he who takes the path of the beloved Prophet Muhammad in life gets the re-

ward of 50 of the Prophet’s companions. As Al-Jubailan put it, this is an “era of trials and tribulations that undulate like sea waves.” Al-Awadhi also likened life to an examination hall, where each and every person is put to the test in several ways.

The speakers then moved on to the importance of pursuing knowledge, lack of which has contributed to the Arab and Muslim worlds’ backwardness, which in turn has produced a feeling of incompleteness. They stressed that seeking knowledge alone is not enough; if knowledge without piety constituted nobility; Iblis would have been the noblest on Earth (al-Mutanabbi).

After almost two hours of semi-preachy talk, jokes, and riddles that engaged the audience well, the two guests were awarded plaques as a token of appreciation from the SGA. The attendees also received gift bags and had the chance to get their picture taken with AUK’s “family friends.”

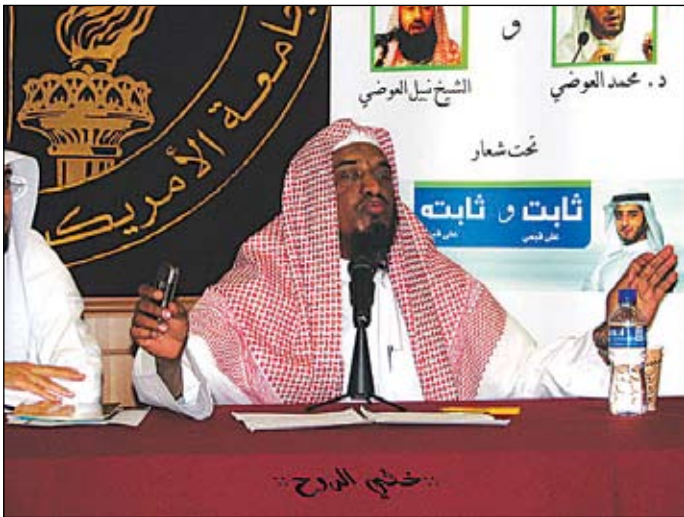


Photo courtesy of www.rekaaz.com

American University of Kuwait Signs Memorandum of Understanding with Washington State University

Salmiya, Kuwait, April 15, 2008:

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed between the American University of Kuwait (AUK) and Washington State University (WSU) in Pullman, Washington, USA.

AUK and WSU will cooperate in efforts to establish mutually beneficial cooperative and collaborative projects, programs and activities. Through this MOU, each of the two universities shall benefit the other through the allocation of mutual support and resources.

The MOU approved and signed by AUK President Marina Tolmacheva and WSU President Elson S. Floyd, is intended for an initial period of five years and can be extended by mutual consent thereafter.

American University of Kuwait is a liberal arts

institution, based on the American model of higher education. It is dedicated to providing students with knowledge, self awareness, and personal growth experiences that can enhance critical thinking, effective communication, and respect for diversity. AUK seeks to create leaders and life-long learners who aspire to the highest standards of moral and ethical responsibility in their societies.

Washington State University is a Carnegie Tier I Research University distinguished by its nationally-ranked programs in communication, American studies, sociology, environmental science, biomedical research, and dry-land agriculture.

For more information contact: Reham Al-Samerai, Editor, PR & Marketing Department, 2248399 ext 262

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Eighty Years in the Middle East

THE VOICE OF AUK

The news by students, for students.

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Opinion and Editorial Policy

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proved by the Editorial Board, in keeping with the Editorial Policy. The Voice of AUK offers no guarantee that any submission will be published.

To be considered for publication in the Voice, submissions for a given issue must be received no later than the 10th of the month in which the issue is to appear.

The views expressed in op-ed columns do not necessarily reflect those of the Voice of AUK nor those of the American University of Kuwait.

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Speilmann Discusses Mid East Media Coverage

By Dina El-Zohairy

On the evening of Tuesday, March 4th, a large group of students assembled on the library's first floor for yet another American Corner event. Visiting Fulbright Senior Specialist, Dr. Peter Spielmann, discussed American news coverage of the Middle East, drawing on his vast experience as editor on the North America desk of the Associated Press, a news service agency with 143 foreign bureaus in 97 countries.

According to Spielmann, Americans receive very little news of the Middle East and what little they get is "thin news" that portrays the Middle East as a region of unrest, unease and turmoil. He even wonders how many of them can actually tell the difference between Iraq and Iran, or Sunnis and Shiites. On the contrary, Arabs get a fairly balanced view of the U.S.

He attributes this news gap mainly to the news gathering process. Domestic news

has greater access to the audience due to the fact that overseas news meets hurdles on its way to the audience. Taking the example of AP, an overseas correspondent would forward news that's worth relaying to AP's regional bureau in Cairo, which then filters the news and sends it to AP's New York headquarters. So, news must be interesting in order to survive. Also, news takes two or three days to make it onto the U.S. wire.

Another problem is related

to escalating costs and lower advertising revenue faced by news agencies today. Foreign bureaus are expensive to operate and given the current events, the lives of foreign correspondents may be in danger. Since the Iraq war, for example, numerous reporters have been killed or kidnapped. Therefore, foreign operations are the first to suffer from rising costs. To illustrate, the number of foreign correspondents for American papers has gone down from 188 in 2002 to

141 in 2006. Also, foreign news occupied about 14% of front page coverage in 2004, almost half of what it did back in 1997. Overall, the limited number of foreign correspondents makes it difficult to perceive nuances between different events, which tend to be oversimplified.

News websites are increasingly focusing on local stories, isolating the average American person from the rest of the world. Furthermore, celebrity news

eats up news resources and international news is not highlighted, giving it little value.

With respect to Kuwait's media, Spielmann believes that there are several domestic issues that might be of interest to Americans, such as urban planning, congestion, pollution, labor policies, and immigration, which the media could keep track of and relay. He describes the media in Kuwait as growing, booming and enjoying robust advertising.



Peter Spielmann addresses AUK community members in the Multipurpose room. ©2008 AUK PR & Marketing, Photos by Fatma Khamis.



Paris in Kuwait: French Week Festival

By Nur Soliman

After playing a brilliant tune evocative of European Jazz and full of incredible improvisations on the classical clarinet, Clovis le Musicopathe flourished a second instrument from behind his back while his smiling partner continued to play tunes on his accordion reminiscent of classical French melodies such as one hears by Barbara or George Brassens. The new instrument is a simple wide-toothed comb which, when covered with a piece of paper, and when accompanied

by the accordion, the tune is actually convincingly musical. Of course, even more dazzling is his musical saw, entralling his gathered audience as he wobbles it to and fro between his legs, striking it softly with his "bow," playing Johann Sebastian Bach's lovely "Air on G String." Clovis is known for his innovative music; indeed, he is always working on creating quirky new instruments that play surprisingly well.

Clovis is not the only artist entertaining passers-by and visitors, men, women, and children alike

on that warm, sunny afternoon in the Avenues Mall. In a "celebration par excellence of French culture," hosts of Parisian street-artists straight from the artistic Place du Tertre in Montmartre – and still in their jaunty black berets – set up little stands in the middle of the mall to do detailed sketches or interesting caricatures in pencil, pen, or charcoal. Also, the melancholy singer Creve-cœur, or "Broken Heart" sang Parisian classics from the 1920s with his impassioned voice while playing his "organ de barbarie," a



Parisian street performers entertain Avenues shoppers during the French Festival. Peugeot Francofolly Kuwait Images.

version of a jukebox.

In addition to entertaining delighted crowds with perfectly Parisian songs and doing their portraits, restaurants in the Avenues Mall and the Salhiya Complex were promoted as offering French or Mediterranean cuisine; indeed, Clovis and other artists lingered playing their clarinets and accordions outside in the sunshine close to some of the Mediterranean restaurants. Also, French Week Festival also hosted a lavish, elaborate dinner at Arraya Ballroom, done

up spectacularly to recreate a sparkling Versailles theme. Also, the festival, or *Francofolly* provided a wealth of information for students in Kuwait interested in continuing their studies at French universities, or get involved in internships and training in France, including information on application, requirements, and available degrees and study programs.

French Week Festival, or *Francofolly*, is a first-time endeavor in Kuwait to create a large-scale "French culture festival," collab-

orated on by various persons and bodies, from the French Embassy to Kuwait United Company. The Festival gathered a great many large sponsors, from Kuwait Airways to the new Ibis Hotel, from Tanagra to Al-Watan newspaper and *Layalina* magazine. The Festival took place in the Avenues Mall as well as the Salhiya Complex in Kuwait City.

For more information on Peugeot French Week Festival, activities, conference, sponsors, features, and visiting artists, please visit www.frenchweekfestivalq8.com.



Peugeot Francofolly Kuwait Images.

Another Iraqi Flag Scandal

By Farah Al-Shamali

During International Week, it is customary of our university to celebrate diversity, not insult it. The very foundation on which it was initiated calls for a sense of accord and agreement. Moreover, cultural multiplicity is evident within the confines of this establishment. However, due to several internal as well as external factors, we despise what we have come to label as the “other.” I am not suggesting that this is true of all individuals, but it definitely can be said of some. Especially in a region that has transformed into a hotbed of political tension and constant unrest, it is important to value these ideals. Our environment has become conducive to inequality, coupled with an irrationality of thinking. What right does anyone have to hate another on the sole basis of their ethnic background, religious affiliation, or societal standing? None at all.

As I am becoming more and more descriptive of this growing problem, I am certain an image is being conjured in the reader’s mind - visions of war. Illogical reasoning has always been behind this occurrence and most often, nations do not project themselves enough into the future to consider the dire consequences war can bring about. I do not mean to go off on a tangent but wished to clarify this

point further.

War happens. That is an undeniable truth and no one can go back in time and prevent it. But the mistake occurs when we allow it to overshadow our principles and judge others on the basis of what their ancestors have done. I do not readily understand this reasoning.

Going back to my statement of the purpose of International Week, I would sadly like to report that we have not been the open-minded individuals we say we are. We do not practice what we preach, turning ourselves into automatic hypocrites. Whether it is known to the AUK community or not, a scandal occurred during the last day of International Week, which supposedly propagates the standards of tolerance and acceptance. The Iraqi flag was pulled down by anonymous students and stashed away somewhere unknown to the public. This had happened once before. At that time, the students who had done it explained that they were protesting against the fact that there were not Kuwaiti flags hanging on campus, while that of Iraq was up. That I can understand. Although I disagree with the method with which they presented their argument, it is still legitimate. But this time, three Kuwaiti flags were hung around the university for everyone to see. Therefore, I don’t see any reason why it was done this

year.

The Gulf war was detrimental to all parties involved, and both sides suffered traumatizing financial and humanitarian costs. There have been verbal and physical exchanges between Kuwaitis and Iraqis for some time. But we are doomed never to move forward if we do not bury the hatchet and let bygones be bygones. This act is an insult to this institution and jeopardizes the cultural variety that has come to define us. How long will this hatred continue? The Iraqi people have not exactly been guaranteed security and stability within the last forty years and still face unimaginable calamities to this very day. What about the innocent who are caught in the dissension of it all? Generalization is the enemy in this case.

It is truly saddening to witness these incidents when we are seemingly fostering liberal ideals. We are all brethren and kin and should never draw lines of distinction between one another. Let us put the past behind us and anticipate a brighter future in our region. The Western world is breaking new grounds in scientific research and technology while we remain in debate amongst one another for foolish reasons. We are fighting the wars of today with the weapons of yesterday. Clearly, it is leading us in every direction but forward.

Why is Kuwait Hated?

By Farah Al-Shamali

The other day, I was watching a local program that had to do with domestic and international problems Kuwait is facing on a daily basis. It was presented by prominent Kuwaiti lawyer, Khaled Abduljalil, who seemed quite passionate but frankly, very sarcastic, when presenting the issues. We have reached a point where nothing else but satirical remarks will bring about any change.

One concern he discussed was the inefficiency of Kuwait Airways and how passengers were made to wait for 12 hours in Cairo. He then moved on to a subject that caught my attention: Kuwaiti students in Jordan are being verbally and physically abused. I couldn’t believe it. What was to say this wasn’t a gross exaggeration? I needed evidence. And the evidence came just as that thought crossed my mind: displayed on the television were telephone recordings of two Kuwaiti students describing their traumatic experiences, and local newspapers addressing the issue. It had to be true.

Here are some of the sto-

ries: A Kuwaiti student leaving university was followed by a group of boys who lashed out at him with rude comments. When he paid no attention to them, they began to beat him. He had to go through a surgical procedure and now has twenty stitches in his head.

Whenever a poster depicting Kuwaiti enterprises, products, or personalities is seen on the street, people protest and express their discontent.

At the Friday prayer, the Sheikh, who ought to be a man of tolerance, categorizes Kuwait as the enemy and instructs listeners to avoid it.

The question that I was asking myself was: why? Why do some people hate Kuwait so much? Have we not always been a nation of peace? Have we not always been there for our Arab brothers? I do not wish to generalize and say that all Jordanians treat Kuwaitis in this way because some do not. In fact, in some cases, the Kuwaiti individual is in the wrong.

I wish to direct the reader to a much bigger picture. This is not a matter of specificity. I am not simply hurling accusations at Jordanians. I wish to approach

this from a general perspective. Kuwait has always given to countries and has not expected anything but respect in return. Why then are we constantly regarded with hatred and disgust? I could understand if Kuwait were misunderstood in distant countries but how so amongst our neighbors?

This article is more a cry of pity than a reproach of actions. As a Kuwaiti, I feel deeply hurt when I hear that our citizens are being abused for no apparent reason. It makes me wonder about Kuwait’s status elsewhere. Are anti-Kuwait sentiments felt everywhere?

I have only one thing to say to anyone who chooses to cast aspersions upon Kuwait: if you are going to judge our government and its actions, exclude the Kuwaiti people. That mistake is made often and we, the people, are left to pay the price.

However, it’s not only when our country is violated that we should rally and defend it. It should also be when we are enjoying the riches that it has provided for decades. If not then, then not ever. Otherwise, we would seem to be hypocritical.

Shades of Kuwait’s Future

By Nur Soliman

“The businessmen I found were modern Silk Road nomads, roaming by jet, train and SUV. I met not a single camel driver.”

A while back, history/science/culture writer Richard Covington wrote a lengthy, fascinating feature on the different developments and recent changes overcoming the beautiful Uzbekistan and the flourishing Kazakhstan in *Saudi-Aramco World* magazine. In a flurry of colorful, glossy photographs and miniature profiles of different Uzbek and Kazakh men and women he meets, the pages really contrast the two capitals visually. In a creative mix of his very personal, sympathetic narrative and through intense, evocative photographs by Kevin Bubrinski, Covington really engaged me with the fast-paced evolution of Kazakhstan’s sparkling Almaty and the more leisurely, traditional way of life that remains in Tashkent, capital of Uzbekistan.

As one reads the article, it is apparent that Covington is slightly unsettled by the chrome-smooth wave of modernization that swept the Kazakh capital, once known for its apples – hence the Uzbek name, “Father of Apples.” He describes with not fully disguised irony and bitterness the sleek advancement of Almaty, mentioning that the Silk Road that young boys recognize is the fashionable, modern mall that goes by the same name, glittering in the middle of Almaty. “Flush with oil and gas wealth and eager to flaunt it,” he writes, the now wealthy Kazakhs are really turning their city into a thriving commercial, cultural, and economic hub, drawing workers and specialists from Europe and the UK to other Central Asian states. Of course, Covington, not expecting such flourishing modernization, is almost relieved to visit Tashkent, “whose 11th-century name means “City of Stone.” Tashkent’s population is the largest of any Central Asian city, Covington writes, “with around 4.5 million inhabitants

in a country of 27 million.” He says with some relief that in Tashkent, the bus drives so slowly and “so deliberately [that] I can count the orange carnations growing along the rails... taking its own sweet time.”

It is interesting, this struggle for balance between two worlds, one the archaic, com-fortingly old, and simple, the other exciting, sparkling, and full of a range of possibilities. As a matter of fact, the subject has probably been harped upon and exhausted by writers world-wide, expressing different feelings on the way things have moved forward. From literature to art, from historical to religious discourse, one of the most intriguing subjects is the mutability of man bound within the inexorable progression of time and its effect on the oscillating reality of values, lifestyles, traditions, and people. Here, Covington captures that quite skillfully, combining the Uzbek vision for an independent, nationalistic, improved future, and the struggle for the retention of some of the greatest, most cherished aspects of the old life.

Reading the article reminds one of the different sights in Kuwait. The disparity is perhaps easiest to notice with some of our grandfathers who for 40 or more years in have worked in the dry, quiet Kuwait, tirelessly developing different institutions and systems and living in cool limestone homes by the coast near *Sharq*. The expression in their shining eyes—one of real appreciation mixed with equally real resentment when casting their gaze on the latest soaring, silver skyscrapers rising defiantly against the modest low horizon of sand and sea—says more than words of the changes that have come over Kuwait. Of course, the geography of the nation is not so large that one can compare two radically different provinces; indeed, clearest juxtapositions occur side-by-side in the exciting capital, Kuwait City as well as other places. It is clear, the mingling of the two realities, one seemingly receding

behind the other, or growing in defiance of change.

I find it endlessly fascinating, particularly when in the car in the middle of Kuwait City, or racing across dusty roads to reach a gleaming new bank or an awaiting taxi. How sharply and delightfully contrasting the city is: Hosts of men in perfectly pressed black suits and shiny briefcases nip smartly between dusty cars and trucks bursting with boxes of watermelons and other fruit. The polished blue-tinted windows of tall buildings flash happily in the harsh sunlight while Afghan tailors in traditional long shirts and trousers with knitted vests walk tiredly and with dignity to the nearest bus-stop or mosque. Old whitewashed residences now tanned by the sun are fashionably transformed into trendy restaurants, with pink geraniums and European faience grilles at the windows.

Some of these changes are charming and delightful, a fantastic narrative unfolding before us. Some are received with more wistfulness and almost bitterness in recollection of the past and the lyrical sparseness of the Kuwaiti landscape.

But maybe it is *not* a conflict of ideologies and approaches. Maybe the dissemination of modernization is *not* at the expense of the values and heritage that have been upheld with pride and love in many areas of Kuwait. Maybe there *is* an increased openness to beneficial foreign systems, produce, successful business models, and cultural exchange. It is really both, working together, affecting a curious synergy. Perhaps the push-and-pull relationship will remain; to be sure, that interaction is ever interesting as neither element is ever entirely subsumed by the other; rather, each continuously repels and attracts the other, creating a uniquely vibrant unity of the two.

You can access and read Covington’s article “Hearts of the New Silk Roads” online by visiting www.saudiaramcoworld.com and browsing through the J/F 08 issue.

The Disease of Sectarianism

By Ali Al-Shamali

I state to everybody who is reading this article that what is happening in this country cannot be expressed by words and was not carefully thought out in advance. It must be known to the people of this country how dangerous these sectarian schisms are. They could lead to social deterioration. We have to know if there are clandestine sources who are messing up this country to create such splits between the Sunnis and Shiites.

Since when have we had sectarianism? In the year of 1990 did not both the Sunnis and Shiites stand with each other hand to hand and heart to heart against Saddam’s aggression? How it is that now the brethren of this country are fighting against each other?

It is forbidden by religion for us to differentiate between people because of their sects or beliefs and in the end all of us are united under one religion: Islam. The lord said: “Help you one another in virtue and piety and do not help one another in sin and transgression” (5:2).

It was my aim through this article to make people aware of what is happening in some Arabic countries which to this day have not been able to stabilize and stop their emotions from controlling their reasoning and to look further into the future and foresee what could happen in the long run. It has to be taken into serious consideration that the interests of the country are above sectarian interests. May this article be a reminder in such a world of forgetfulness.

Next month: The Current Debate and Its Impact on Private Universities

Greek Rebetika with Dromos Bouzouki

By Nur Soliman

Following a lecture detailing the developments of Greek musical heritage until the 20th century by the articulate Dr. Lambros Liavas the night before, Dromos Bouzouki, a group of five Greek musicians and a singer stood before an excited audience to commemorate Greek Independence Day of the 25th March as well as celebrate one of the most modern and one of the most thrilling forms of 20th century Greek music, and that is *rembetika*, almost a continuation of Dr. Liavas' journey as he said in his introduction of the band.

Under the auspices of the Greek Ministry of Foreign and the Embassy of Greece in Kuwait, Dromos Bouzouki came from Athens and entertained a large audience for a full two hours of breath-taking performances at al-Maidan Cultural Centre. Dromos, as Dr. Liavas remarked, is Greek for "road" or "path," while also referring to the Greek modal scale. The band consisted of the enthusiastic, brilliantly talented Noah Zafirides on the bouzouki, the skilled, deep-voiced Grigoris Vassilas also playing the bouzouki, the gifted Miran Tsalikian on the little *baglamas*, Costas Tsekouras playing with boundless energy on the acoustic guitar, and Theodoros Kouelis keeping the sounds of the band together bound by his expert chords on the large contra-bass. Singing for the band was the husky-voiced, passionate Sophia Emfietzi, singing with a soulfulness that it lifted the music to greater heights. The band set out to play the music they had the most pas-

sion for, *rembetika*, performing with ever-fresh perspectives on the genre and continuing the rich heritage of the music.

Rembetika is the music of "the Greek urban underground," songs of the *Rebetes*, or people outside mainstream society, the poor and lower/middle classes struggling in the busy industrial cities and ports of Greece. As Dr. Liavas mentioned in his introduction, the music can easily be described as Greek "blues" in that it voices the anguish and struggle, the "romance, despair, passion, and melancholy" of the common man. Indeed, many strains and harmonies of the band's tunes were similar to jazz in their improvisation, or wandering notes known as "*taximi*" in Greek, and the opportunity for each member to take up the spotlight and perform his own miniature solo. The earlier forms of *rembetika* almost never fell upon high-class, refined ears, known as songs of the "rabble-proletariat."

However, the music grew and developed to fantastic heights, creating certain composition frames for dances like the *Zeimbekiko* and *Hasapika*; indeed, the music was brought to the

interest of the cultural attention of well-known, highly regarded composers like Manos Hadjidakis, Markos Vamvakaris, and Vassilis Tsitsanis. Indeed, some of the most popular Greek pieces known to the international community are *rembetika* compositions, including the evocative, instantly recognizable "Zorba the Greek" title piece which sent the whole Dar audience into delighted bursts of applause.

Some other tunes performed by the band included the rather Oriental "*Taximi Zeimbekiko*," accompanied by Vassilas' energetic singing, the melancholy, romantic then infectiously bright "*Kaixis*," or "Ferryman." One of Sophia's more sparkling pieces accompanied by robust bouzouki strains was "*Arapiko Louloudi*,"

or "Arabian Flower," while one of her most moving songs was "*Mi mou Xanaghis Pia*," or "Don't Ever Go Away Again." Some other attractive, energetic pieces were the beautiful "*Gio-ultbahar*," the robust, fast-paced, exciting "*Karavi*," and the sweet *Geitonia ton Angelon*, or "Neighborhood of Angels;" the rich, deep melody punctuated by the bright, high notes of Vassilas' bouzouki.

Dr. Liavas mentioned that Greek music, including *rembetika*, influenced neighboring musical traditions and borrowed greatly from them in return. Indeed, this was evident to some of us in the audience as certain call-response sequences between the guitar and the bouzouki recalled certain jazz principles; as Costas'

as well as his earnest, melancholic singing were slightly similar to balalaika refrains of the Balkan, or the Near-Russian Don River musical tradition. Noe Zafirides' equally beautiful, entirely unique method of singing slightly recalled the *mellisma* technique of North-Western African and Afro-American singers while some of Sophia's inflections and Zafirides' spirited strumming were powerfully reminiscent of Italian or Spanish music. Nevertheless, *rembetika* assumes a singularly expressive and uniquely enthusiastic flavor entirely its own. The intense feeling infused within the very Greek bouzouki and very national voice lend it an even greater singularity.

One may argue that such is the way of the down-to-earth,

introductory motifs were not unlike guitar motifs of Andean music; as Zafirides' bright metallic strumming recalled *sitar* improvisations; as the melancholy, impassioned music in general recalled Arabic, Persian, and Turkish. Some bouzouki improvisations, particularly by Vassilas,

honest song and dance of the "rabble-proletariat" who have gone through great struggle as the "rebeti" Greeks of Kokkinia, long-suffering refugees from Asia Minor, Pontos, and Armenia have done, also enduring temporary Nazi occupation and great hardship. As the Mayor of Nikea wrote of these champions of *rembetika*, those legendary men "[knew] how to combat and how to make merry," combining elements of joy and sorrow as was characteristic of a great many of Dromos' songs. Some of these would start slow and lilting like sorrowful Slavic/Grecian tunes, only to transform magically into a fast-paced, enthusiastic blossoming of robust melodies and forceful singing, just like "Synefiasmeni Kyriaki," or "Cloudy Sunday" sung by Grigoris Vassilas.

As a whole, the Dromos Bouzouki played with such patriotic fervor, incredible skill, and pure delight in the music that they completely captured the audience who wholeheartedly responded to the music and insisted on encores. The ensemble truly brought to Kuwait the real spirit of modern Greek music, passing on the heritage of the Grecian common musical voice, the "marriage of musical styles"—in short, the fluctuating, beautiful melodies of *rembetika*.

For more information on the Dromos Bouzouki group, visit their website www.bouzoukia-dromos.gr. For more information on future concerts or lectures at Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah, please visit www.darmuseum.org.kw.



Dromos Bouzouki Band give impassioned performance at the Dar al-Ithar. Photo courtesy of Jamal al-Bakheet, DAI.

Two Millennia of Greek Musical Heritage

By Nur Soliman

In honor of celebrations for Greek Independence Day the day after his lecture, ethnomusicologist Dr. Lambros Liavas spoke with great enthusiasm and affection to a lively, attentive audience about the oscillating developments and cultural evolution of music in Greece and the "real continuity of traditions from Ancient to Modern Greece," where until today, in the rocky hillsides and cold, verdurous cliffs of Thrace and Macedonia in the North, men and women perform fascinating rituals with the changing of the seasons to pray for blessings from God, ward off evil spirits, and pray for fruitful crops in the exact same way that their Ancient Greek predecessors did in honor of Dionysus and Apollo.

According to Dr. Liavas, Greece has one of the longest continuing musical traditions in the world, evidenced by a flute found in the region of Macedonia dated to around 4500 B.C. The Golden Age of Music, the professor added, dates from about the 8th to the early 4th century B.C., one of the greatest in early world history as appears already to have pervaded all parts of daily life, punctuated by the importance of seasons and altering depending on geography or individual society. Musical in-

struments were already highly developed in that period, along with musical theory and study of composition. Also, musical education was a strong part of any young Greek boy's education, where he was supposed to learn to play the lyre with great skill.

Dr. Lambros then introduced the cornerstone to his lecture which was to steer the rest of the discussion ahead, and that was establishing that Greek music was born with the Gods. He listed several names of Ancient Gods whose qualities were associated or attached to music. First is Apollo, the great god of music, light and truth. A number of rituals involving ancient dances and songs return to the rushing springs and rocky landscape of Delphi, where the famous oracle of Apollo resided and really shaped a good deal of Ancient Greek politics. Also there were the Muses, from whose name the very word *music* is derived. They are the daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne, goddess of memory, who served Apollo and gave inspiration to artists and musicians by virtue of the linkage between memory and their divine aesthetic gifts. Then Dr. Liavas noted Dionysus, the god of intoxication, be it by liquor or spiritual ecstasy through ritual; as well as Athena, goddess of the civilizing Arts, among other

things. "You notice, now," the professor noted, "that Greek mythology has a lot of very high symbolism... the gods themselves are symbols for the Greeks, too," concluded the professor, establishing that so ingrained was music in the consciousness of the Greeks, linked to spirituality, refinement, and intellect.

Other figures so ingrained within Greek mythology and indeed the Greek consciousness were the famed Orpheus whose otherworldly music tamed even the wildest beasts, and Pythagoras, known for basing his ideas on proportion of scale on different musical principles. The professor extended that passion for music to great Greek leaders such as the brilliant Macedonian conqueror Alexander the Great, who through his expansive world conquests "disseminated Greek music to... the world, creating great Hellenistic traditions" even unto Constantinople, where music drew heavily from the spirit of Grecian music.

As a matter of fact, great places like Constantinople and other Eastern lands maintained their strong connection to Greek performing arts even as they embraced Christianity. This concept of the continuity of Ancient Greek music was one of the central theses of Dr. Liavas'

lecture. The first example of this upholding of Ancient Greek music begins with the hymns carved upon the marble in the temple of Delphi, some of the earliest preserved in Greek musical history, singing praises to the great Apollo. This, then compared to Egyptian Coptic hymnal song is strikingly similar; indeed, the transition was so complete that the Coptic hymns follow "the exact same melody, only [with] different words for Christian music." Thus, Dr. Liavas introduced the prevailing Ancient Greek strain in modern Christian ritual of Greece as well as in song and dance.

This is not to say at all that Greek music has survived wholly intact through the millennia; indeed, there are great "discontinuities" that died out, replaced by more recent developments; however, much of "theory and practice, in singing, musical instruments, and rituals" have lived on in perhaps slightly different forms.

Indeed, what parts of Greek music have reached our world also transmute into other equally fascinating musical cultures, living on in these different geographical and social contexts. Out of the huge repository of older trends and musical traditions that have survived, it is said that 70% comes from the

Byzantines, while 10% comes to us directly from the Ancient traditions. 2 or 3% is still earlier, dating to prehistoric Greece, while the rest stems from various influences surrounding Greek lands, including Arabic, Turkish, Albanian, Balkan, Italian, and Spanish traditions.

Dr. Liavas stressed that the very criteria and qualities that identify Greek music are very often the same in Oriental music, the territory ranging "from the Danube to Indonesia," giving Greece the important cultural role of recipient and distributor of a myriad of world-wide traditions, bringing together East and West into "a cultural unity," as he put it. Looking back to the history of modal scales in music around the world, the Greek and Byzantine scales used today are similar to scales across the Balkans to India and the Near East, extending across Turkey until the western borders of China, where music takes on a different voice altogether. Thus the *dromos*, "road," or musical scale in Greece is similar to the *maqam* in Arabic and Persian music, the *mugam* of Uzbek music, and the *ragas* of Indian music.

After thus delivering a comprehensive overview of the origins of Greek music and the extent to which it spread and evolved into various forms, Dr. Liavas intro-

duced a documentary he was to show the audience, entitled *Breath of Life*, under his scientific and academic supervision, worked on by a Greek research team, documenting a journey through Northern Greece, particularly Thrace and Macedonia. Throughout the documentary, Dr. Liavas helpfully commented on different rituals, places, and songs to better inform the audience, audibly enthralled by the fascinating rituals recorded.

The main thread of the excellent documentary worked on the idea of "The Cycle of Life," as explained by Dr. Liavas, the common elements of that cycle that so envelope men and women of all times and traditions, be they Ancient polytheist Greeks and modern Christians of Greece. There are two parallel trends or cycles, one being the "seasons," – autumn, winter, spring, and summer around which occur so much of a society's activity, the other being the different stages of life, mainly birth, marriage, and death. Indeed, from the nature of the motivation for the festivals, the documentary made it clear that the entire lives of these Macedonian Greeks revolved about the fluctuating seasons and the symbols that they carry, such as birth, fertility, marriage, and death.

Visual Interpretation in Arab Painting

By Nur Soliman

With flowing eloquence and evident enthusiasm, the well-known Islamic art historian and writer Dr. Nabil F Safwat related to an enchanted audience the singular talent and imagination of the illustrator of “the most important illustrated manuscript,” the 12th century Iraqi painter and calligrapher, Yahya Al-Wasiti.

On the night of the 31st of March, Dr. Safwat succeeded in introducing one of the creative, imaginative forefathers of great Arab painting by describing some of his illustrations with a fresh perspective, allowing for greater appreciation. Indeed, so charmed was Dr. Safwat’s audience, and so thrilled with the new discoveries of sight that he had shared with them, that at the very end of the lecture, when the speaker was about to stop as his allotted time was over, both moderator and audience gently urged him to continue. Thus he continued to further amaze the audience by highlighting the true treasures of Al-Wasiti’s illustrations though they may not appear entirely so at first.

First, to understand and appreciate Al-Wasiti’s illustrations, one must learn about the *Maqamat*. They were written by Mohammed Al-Qasim Ibn ‘Ali Ibn ‘Uthman Al-Hariri (conveniently dubbed Al-Hariri of Basra) who died in 1122 in the city of Basra. Written in the 12th century, the *Assemblies*—or more appropriately *Stories*—remained a bestseller for over 3 centuries, and have been considered the greatest piece of Arabic literature second only to the Holy Qur’an for the past 800 years. It is accepted that the *Maqamat* are of superb importance to Arabs as it brilliantly reflects Arab culture, history, and people, “whimsically creating a connection between the individual human being and the whole society” as Dr. Safwat put it.

Being a mirror of Arab civilization, the book became immensely popular, resulting in copies being constantly made and illustrated. Indeed, Al-Hariri was a famous, well-loved author in his own time for his brilliant rhetoric, lucid, miraculous language, and sharp wit. Though differ-



ent in style and context, one may compare Al-Hariri’s intelligent humor to that of *Maqamat Al-Hamadhani*, or even to Charles Dickens’ *Pickwick Papers*. Featuring two main characters, the mischievous or “roguish” Abu Zaid and his accompanying narrator, Al-Harith, the book progresses through 50 stories, in which the two friends share adventures—and misadventures—and encounter different people, animals, places, and customs. In addition to authoring the *Maqamat*, Al-Hariri was also a respected official, also known as *sahib Al-khabar*.

The illustrated copy that was displayed on Dr. Safwat’s slides, he explains, were made in 1237, about 20 years before the Mongol Hordes, led by “Hulaku the Mongol,” entered Iraq in 1258 and destroyed

the vast cultural legacy that was Basra’s and Baghdad’s, so much so that “the Tigris was black and blue for months, full of the ink of sunken books” and the sky was dark with smoke from burning libraries. Luckily, some manuscripts—Al-Wasiti’s copy of the *Maqamat* included—were rescued, surviving the mass burnings and destruction, the “attack [which was] targeting what was most central to Arab culture: books.” Today, the *Maqamat* illustrated by Yahya Al-Wasiti still represents “the most important example of Arab painting, “exemplifying 13th Century manuscript illumination. According to the author of *From the Artist’s Hand*, Al-Wasiti was the leader of a “short-lived school of Arab painting [that] came to fruition in the early thirteenth century,” only to be ended shortly after the fall of Baghdad. The copy of Al-Wasiti’s *Maqamat Al-Hariri* lives now in Le Bibliotheque Nationale de France. Dr. Safwat himself is one of only 7 people—including famous Islamic art historians Grabar and Ettinghausen—who have come into physical contact with the book.

Before going on to analyze and present several illustrations, Dr. Safwat emphasized to the audience that the illustrations were in fact about 771 years old—done 250 years before the discovery of linear perspective in Italy which propelled the European Renaissance. “Al-Wasiti’s painting may seem childish and naïve,” he remarked, “but his skill largely derives from the big creative process of the Near East,” which represents a different way of arranging and indicating the element of space. Indeed, there is a complete dismissal of “the laws of perspective and *chiaroscuro*, so avidly studied in the West.” Islamic art authority Patricia Baker writes in her book, *Arab Artists in Italy*, that this

might be part of what makes Arab painting, and indeed a good deal of Islamic painting, so stunning in its uniqueness.

The book was composed of 168 leaves, 99 of which are the illustrations, while there were two elaborately done frontispieces. As well as working on these, Al-



Wasiti was also responsible for the writing, beautiful calligraphy that was just as fluid as the words themselves. In addition, the clear, smooth relationship between the narrative text and the accompanying illustrations again attests to Al-Wasiti’s creative intelligence. Dr. Safwat compared this conscious thinking as Al-Wasiti’s understanding perfectly the role of the illustration in relation to the words, “complementing them and not completing with them, the same way that *kohl* is used for the eye,” Dr. Sawfat said, “where it is not so effective by itself, but when put on the eye, is something much more beautiful.”

To finalize the presentation after discussing with great articulation a wide range of fascinating illustrations, Dr. Safwat recited in clear, refined Arabic the warmly

personal colophon of the *Maqamat*, in which Al-Wasiti, states his full name and that it was he who had “painted it and copied it.” He thus reaches out directly to the enchanted reader, praying that they find his work worthy.

An interesting discussion took place, during the Q & A session, with Dr. Safwat and Dr. Shah of the audience who eloquently discussed the validity of attributing real Arab-ness to Al-Wasiti, considering his international influences and a name of his ancestor being “Gurriha,” a clearly non-Arabic name. Dr. Safwat agreed there were—as he reiterated often in the lecture itself—immense West Indian, Chinese, and remotely Persian influences, though none of this detracted from Al-Wasiti’s Arab identity. Comparing Al-Wasiti to himself as a Turk, Dr. Safwat added that “if you could read and speak Arabic, you were considered an Arab, and so it was then.” This is indeed characteristic of ancient standards of national identity, where in Ancient Egypt, for instance, you were considered fully Egyptian if you wore the local clothes and spoke the native tongue, regardless of skin color or origin.

In the end, Dr. Safwat enlightened the audience to “look and look” as they were not conditioned to, and appreciate the singular creativity of the Arab artist in arranging space in his own way, as well his own technique for recreating the essence of Arab culture, a great many elements of which live on in the architecture, speech, behaviour, and expression of today’s Arab world. Al-Wasiti’s beautifully colored illustrations became brighter in hue and ultimately more precious to the audience after learning about the spirit of creativity that our “painter and calligrapher” possessed.



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History, Harmony, Expression, Change

By Nur Soliman

How many of you have heard a really catchy Jazz tune as you left Starbucks with your hot coffee in hand and wondered what it was called? Or wanted to hear more Louis Armstrong after hearing his moving *What a Wonderful World*? How many of you heard the Jazz piano play softly in an elegant hotel elevator or quiet little bookstore and asked yourselves, “what is this thing called swing,” as Louis Armstrong asks in a song by that name?

With the coming of April comes the prospect of clearer, sunnier weather—if, as in Kuwait, it hasn’t happened already—the Easter holiday, Spring break for eager young students, and one event that is perhaps not as well known as the aforementioned: Jazz Appreciation Month, commonly known as JAM..

In a world delightfully full of contradictions and binary elements equally real and indeed often co-existent, Jazz has emerged as a voice of ultimately true expression of these binaries bound within the unified set that is the incredible human experience, combining traditional Western instruments with incredibly unique compositional structures and approaches that have touched the hearts of people as far away from the U.S.A. as Sweden, Poland, Spain, France, Japan, Lebanon, Argentina, Italy, and Kuwait.

Thus is Jazz Appreciation an ideal opportunity for you to take the initiative and acquaint yourself with some Jazz music, or if you’re already a major Jazz aficionado and part of Kuwait’s growing “Jazz—o—phile” community, try and get others interested in the same legacy and introduce them to a fascinating history and music genre. Encourage a little brother or sister to take up the trumpet, or simply start playing some Miles Davis tracks in the car on everyone’s way home. Jazz is an ideal opportunity for discussion on creative composition and musical arrangement, as well as the increased freedom and upstaged importance of every instrument involved—indeed, the freedom

of men, black and white alike, to play, perform, and live and work side—by—side.

If you’ve ever taken interest in, say, Claudette Colvin the “mother of civil disobedience,” Martin Luther King, or Rosa Parks and their brave efforts to gain equal civil rights and better treatment for Afro-Americans, then you’ll be interested to know for instance, Duke Ellington’s way of fighting white supremacy and increased racism solely through composition of pieces like his “Symphony in Black and Blue.” Indeed, Jazz musicians were so much part of the Afro-American consciousness, be it verbally or musically, that they truly formed a goodly part of their heritage and history for the whole world to hear and play some day.

Jazz Appreciation Month strives to make clearer such struggle and effort, to make better heard the beautiful melodies and flowing ribbons of syncopation and improvisation that so characterize Jazz, Blues, Swing, and all the multiple, fluctuating, ever—interesting evolving forms of Jazz. Spearheaded six years ago in April 2002 by Branford Marsalis, brother of famed trumpeter Wynton Marsalis and saxophonist in his own right, JAM has survived for six years due to the efforts of people across America and indeed worldwide, channeling funds and creativity to ring Jazz, its heritage, beauty, legacy, and history to people young and old, and provide opportunities to learn about it as well as play their own music too.

Interesting Jazz history aside, though, why else ought you bother to listen to some Jazz? If it seems too far away from some of you, you may be interested to know how Western and North African music as well as the Muslim *athaan* and Arabic musical principles helped shape different elements of Jazz, including fluttering vibrations and running of scales called *mellisma*, and intonation and change of pitch according to writer Jonathan Curiel. It might also be interesting to most readers that with-

out Jazz and Blues, Elvis Presley would never have transformed the Afro-American Gospel music of his childhood to a completely different, energetic, attractive music we know as *Rock n’ Roll* with his “Hound Dog,” nor would Jerry Lee Lewis take up the same mission and blare into radio’s with his wild and hip “Great Balls of Fire,” without which a great deal of today’s modern Western music would never have evolved, including Rock, Heavy Metal, and Pop music.

For those of you who enjoy cool, sophisticated “chill” music, there is Jazz to accommodate that quieter taste, with numbers such as “My Funny Valentine” rendered sparkling and new by trumpeter Wynton Marsalis, “Soulful Mr. Timmons” Harry James’ romantic “Skylark,” or Benny Goodman’s “More than You Know.” And for those who want to relive the joyous Golden Age of the 1920s and 1930s, nothing could be more reminiscent than Glenn Miller’s nostalgic “Moonlight Serenade,” Jimmy Dorsey’s delightful “Tangerine,” or Fats Waller’s charming “Honey Hush.” Jazz is so generous an umbrella that a good deal of music falls under that label, some very conventional, others wildly avant-garde, all of it always interesting, most of it ever entertaining.

So even if you *have* never really cared to listen to bebop Jazz outside of your favorite café, try and devote an afternoon to browsing the CDs in the Jazz section of the nearest music store. Look out for names like Dizzy Gillespie, Ella Fitzgerald, Benny Goodman, or even Miles Davis and George Gershwin. Jazz has affected musicians and artists worldwide, and April is the best opportunity to acquaint oneself with one of the only artistic forms native to America, also one of the most unique, colorful, and eloquent forms of expression that have ever emerged out of a trumpet or clarinet to speak in such varied tones of the single, fluctuating reality that is the human experience.

Overcoming Fear of Public Speaking

By *Farah Al-Shamali*

Productivity has always been a recurring trait in many of the classes held here at the American University of Kuwait. Students constantly astound their professors with the level of work they present in class so much so that they are worthy of being showcased to the entire AUK community. English 108 or Public Speaking, as many of you may know, is a required course necessary to bolstering skills of oratory and speech. The power of words is not readily received by many students as they may have never had to be in a position where they are required to sway public opinion. However, when looking back at the 20th century, one will cite many formidable speakers who have brought about positive change to the world such as Martin Lu-

ther King Jr., Mahatma Gandhi, and Susan B. Anthony through their ability to speak powerfully and with ambition. These philanthropists wasted no time jailing themselves into the confinements of society and took action by moving the masses and breaking free.

As it had been half a century ago, there are many issues of concern that threaten the development of our people into modernity. We seem to be leading a different world characterized by backwardness and ignorance and unless we act with rapidity, we might be overwhelmed with the negativity growing around us. Therefore, we must look to the examples of renowned speakers who have been capable of steering their communities towards what they see fit because they stand with the truth, and to

that, there will never be an objection.

In his efforts to give life to such orators at our university, Professor Don Prades has participated in the Academic Showcase allowing his most talented speakers to stand before an attentive audience to address them on a solitary topic. Two types of speeches had been introduced at the showcase: impromptu, which meant that the speaker has no prior knowledge of what the subject would be, and extemporaneous, meaning having the speaker receive a list of topics of which one he or she would be obliged to speak about. Many students were anxious and fearful of their anticipated performance as they would sometimes fail to recall a particular concept and end up pausing for a substantial amount of time. Never-

theless, it must be remembered that when one speaks from the heart and with ceaseless infatuation, nothing but success will ensue. The topic at hand was the dissection of the quote: “the pen is mightier than the sword.” What had been unique about our speakers is that they each came up with plausible explanations and sometimes related them to daily life.

This tradition must continue in the coming years to let students and faculty alike know that English 108 is not just another course requirement but a pathway to greatness for students who are sincerely adamant on inspiring ideological, political, social, or cultural development in Kuwait. Someday, the power of words will welcome us to a field of dreams which we hope to never awaken from.

Student Leaders

Conference in Marrakech



MEPI Participants Fatmah Al-Qadfan, Fahad Mohammad, and Abdulla Al-Shanfa.

By *Fatmah H. Al-Qadfan*

As a follow up for the leadership training they received in the summer of 2007, five students from the American University of Kuwait attended a conference in Morocco. The five-day conference was organized by the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) and ran from 4th to 8th February with over one hundred participants from over fourteen Arab countries.

The conference was constituted of lectures and workshops that focused on ‘activism’. Panellists were inspirational men and women from the Arab and Western worlds who were directly involved in bringing about change in their societies and who worked for years to better their respective communities. The four day conference included teambuilding sessions and a site-visit to the Tigmi Women’s Society. The students met with middle-aged women who sold handicrafts to support their

families. The trip illustrated the importance of leadership and the effectiveness of cooperation within a society.

As MEPI offers grants for community service projects, the conference aimed to equip the students with the right tools to launch and maintain a project. Time was allocated each day to teach students how to develop action plans, overcome obstacles and write effective grant proposals. On the last day Dr. Evelyn Early, a publishing medical anthropologist, along with the Public Affairs Officer from the US Embassy gave their closing remarks. They later walked through the exhibition, discussing each project with the students. A closing dinner that night brought the conference to an end. The participants were encouraged to apply for the MEPI grant and as alumni of the program participants were invited to take part in upcoming regional conferences and events.

The Retention Specialist’s Insights

By *Basema Dana, Retention Specialist*

The Primary role of the Retention Specialist is to assist At-Risk students in adapting to new academic challenges, and refer them to appropriate sources of help. Students who are At-Risk possess characteristics that are likely to result in the student’s failure to graduate from college. There are numerous factors that impact these students’ overall academic achievement, including psychological, environmental, and structural societal factors. If At-Risk students are not given the appropriate attention and

support, initial difficulties can eventually lead to failure in courses, academic probation or dismissal, or withdrawal from college. Many times At-Risk students have difficulty in recognizing that a problem exists, asking for help once they realize that they have a problem, and asking for help in time for the assistance to be a benefit, therefore it is crucial for both faculty and staff to provide not only At-Risk students but all students with beneficial guidance and advice.

The Student Success Center’s Retention Specialist, uses plenty of methods when working with At-Risk stu-

dents. For example, the Specialist reviews the student’s academic record and learning history, helps students to define personal, educational, and career goals, as well as the skills needed to achieve these goals. In addition, the Specialist assesses the student’s skill level in areas identified as essential to achievement. Also helps establish the competency level that the student should strive to achieve. Moreover, identifies curricular, co-curricular, experiential, and community learning strategies that will enable students to develop these skills. Finally, Reviews and evaluates progress toward

goal achievement and skills development. Besides these methods mentioned above there is the Early Warning Program which is specifically designed to help faculty members identify students who are having academic difficulties. These students are referred to the Retention Specialist, who will then work with the student to identify the reasons for the difficulties as well as teach strategies for success.

Remember your college days can be the happiest time in your life don’t waste it repeating courses or being limited to the number of credits you can take, make this your most successful time!

The Gulf Studies Center: What It Is and What It Does

By *Fatmah H. Al-Qadfan*

Most members of the AUK community have undoubtedly heard of the Gulf Studies Center, and the Gulf Studies minor, but few really know what it is all about. In order to correct this gap in our awareness of one of AUK’s truly unique resources, the author had the following conversation with the Center’s Director, Dr. Marjorie Kelly.

What is the Gulf Studies Center?

Basically there are two parts: one part offers a minor in Gulf Studies to Kuwaiti or degree students here at AUK. The other part is for foreign students or visiting people who are not degree-seeking but want some expertise on the Gulf.

Have you seen any interest from visiting students?

We’re probably going to have our first one next semester. But it’s a lot of work to make sure there are enough courses being offered every semester so that no matter when they come, they can get the hours that they need. Hopefully we’re going to be working out some exchange programs with American universities for people who are interested in the Middle East, or in [the] business [sector] for people who want some expertise on the Middle East and cultural exposure.

Was this modeled after similar cen-

ters elsewhere in the Gulf?

Not in the Gulf. When I was doing my graduate work on a couple of different campuses in the U.S., I was very aware of how their Middle East centers operated, so this may be more on an American model than a [regional] model. I’m not sure what they do. They may be more research oriented than we are at this point in time. Most of our funds are spent bringing in speakers and organizing that kind of thing.

The standard Middle East Center in the U.S. is an exchange program that brings in speakers and scholars for a semester a-year. It arranges conferences and then publishes the proceedings. It is often the conduit for scholarships for students who are interested in the Middle East who are funded by the U.S. government. This is why the Gulf Studies Center covers the Fulbright program, and the MEPI program. So it’s a whole variety of things, a kind of a catch-all.

What sort of speakers do you plan to bring in?

My background in Islamic Studies was interdisciplinary, so I’m really emphasizing that. What I want to do this year is have one speaker who speaks to the interests of each of the four divisions. For example, Dr. Dr. Gholam Vatandoust—who was our first speaker—was dealing with women and

human rights, so that’s the Humanities aspect. I am also concerned that [AUK’s] American faculty don’t have background in the Arab world, so I’d like to bring speakers for their benefit. And there are also speakers who are of interest to the students [as] role models, so that’s another aspect I’d like to bring in.

What is your role as Director?

A variety of different things; first it’s to get [PR] materials together. I basically write them and help choose the photos and so on. I also choose the speakers, make initial contact with them and issue invitations. Then Emily [Sharpe, Coordinator of the Gulf Studies Center] does the follow-up with organizing the actual presentation.

Last November I attended the Middle East Studies Association annual meeting in Montreal. I met a lot of old friends there and told them about AUK and the Gulf Studies Center in order to get them interested in coming here when they’re passing through the region. [On the way] to Montreal, I spent some time at the Georgetown Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding. I’ve known the people who run that center for over twenty years so when they come through the region they will definitely be speakers for us—one this spring and one next fall.

And who works at the Gulf Studies

Center?

Just myself and Emily.

Will you be recruiting more people?

Emily will be leaving, so I’m definitely going to want to replace her. I’m thinking of one American and one Kuwaiti. I don’t know if it’s full-time or part-time yet, but I definitely want somebody who has contacts in the community, who knows of interesting and appropriate Kuwaiti speakers, and who could potentially help with fund-raising. The American side of things is just to have somebody who has a great command of English and can write, which is not always every American and doesn’t exclude Kuwaitis but somebody who basically performs Emily’s role and does the organizing and the writing.

Are you going to work closely with local heritage institutions, like Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah?

I don’t know what we could offer them that they don’t already do, or haven’t already done for years on their own. But I’ve become a member this year and I’ve been going to their programs for the last two years. Our interests are certainly parallel in some respects and they’ve given me ideas for speakers. There may be down the road some cooperative efforts, but [the Gulf Studies Center] is more for the campus community.

Is Gulf Studies ever going to evolve into a major?

I don’t know. That’s probably way down the road because, as you know, there have to be feasibility studies done. I think [such a program] would be a must for anybody who is interested in a career in diplomacy, or Foreign Service working in embassies because people are just going to assume you know everything about the region. We’ve got things that a lot of Middle East Centers in the States don’t have, like Dr. Lisa Urkevitch and her expertise in Gulf music, or Dr. Simon O’Meara in Islamic art. Those kinds of specialties are hard to come by in the States so this is a big advantage. Dr. Hisham Al-Awadhi has really expanded what he’s offering in history, and there are two more courses I would like to teach: one on women in Arab society and one on the Arab city. So there’s a lot that we could do, but I think we’ve got the core of a really good program.

Editor’s Note: Since this interview was conducted, Ms. Emily Sharpe has taken a new position as Executive Assistant to the Dean of Arts and Sciences. Her responsibilities have been assumed by Mrs. Kenya Purcell, who moves over from her previous posting as Program Coordinator with the Center for Continuing Education.

An Ounce of Prevention

By Dina El-Zohairy

Many of us have been touched by cancer in one way or another. But what are we actually doing to reduce our risk of getting any of the 100+ types of cancer?

Your genetic makeup, forces within your body, your lifestyle choices and your environment can all set the stage for cancer or help complete the process once started. While the exact causes of cancer are difficult to pinpoint, it is always wise to work on eliminating factors known by doctors to increase your risk of cancer, wherever possible.

As a start, if you’ve got a pack of cigarettes on you and you don’t particularly like the thought of a cancer diagnosis, visit the nearest trash can. Smoking accounts for nearly 90% of lung cancer cases—one of the most common cancers in the world. So do your body a favor and quit using tobacco, which for decades of research has been consistently associated with cancers of many sites. Even if you don’t smoke, reduce your exposure to second-hand smoke.

Also, cancer has been described as “a disease of civilization” for good reason. When the equation doesn’t balance, the

outcome isn’t favorable. When you take in more calories than you burn each day, you out-grow your clothes. On the other hand, there is strong evidence that physical activity, which in turn helps control body weight, reduces the risk of breast and colon cancer. If you’re obese, take steps to reduce your weight in accordance with your age, sex and height (BMI). Make sure you exercise for 30 minutes on five or more days every week.

Closely related to weight control is eating a balanced diet—the key to top-notch health. The American Cancer Society recommends that you eat fruits and vegetables abundantly; limit fat intake; and drink alcohol in moderation, if at all.

With summertime around the corner, the prospect of going for a swim or relaxing exposed on the beach probably sounds appealing. Be careful though, the sun is not always a friend, especially when it comes to skin cancer and especially in Kuwait! What you can do is (1) avoid the midday sun (10am-4pm) whenever possible; (2) stay in the shade if you have to go outside; (3) use sunscreen that has a SPF of at least 15; and (4) stay away from indoor tanning beds or sun-

lamps (of course there’s always the risk that some serial killer on the loose will lock you in and raise the temperature).

Feeling great and healthy should not keep you from getting screened. Because cancers are most curable with surgery or radiation before they have metastasized, early detection and treatment have obvious potential benefits. Early diagnosis is difficult for many cancers because they do not produce clinical signs or symptoms until they have metastasized.

Effective screening procedures are available for some cancers, such as the Pap test, which can effectively detect cervical cancer in its early stages. Self-examination is also important. Finally, see your doctor if you have one of those warning signals: a sore that does not heal; thickening or lump in the breast or elsewhere; obvious change in a wart or mole.

Even living a 100% healthy life can’t guarantee that you won’t get cancer, but taking preventive measures is simple and logical. Given that cancer rates are on the rise, how can you possibly have risk reduction tools at your disposal and not use them?

Coping with Cancer

continued from page 1

In what ways has your disease limited your control over your life?

Well, at the beginning I had no control at all, as if everything was crashing next to me. Because I was very active at AUK, I was disturbed that I would be losing my position as a PAL member, tutor, teacher assistant and student worker. I hated the disease so much and the things that it was doing to my life; I felt like I was losing it all. I was an honor student so what destroyed me most was that I couldn’t continue with my studies and would be one or two semesters behind my classmates.

I had always been a leader, and the only thing I couldn’t lead was my life, and this feeling almost killed me. Through this period, I looked into the eyes of my mother and I knew that I had to be stronger and fight this monster.

I contacted the university and they agreed to give me all of my classes as Independent Study. This really brought joy to my life, as if everything that had crashed before was re-building itself again. I had gained power and the news gave me a strong boost. I became much stronger after knowing that I could continue with my studies.

How has cancer changed you and how do you feel about those changes?

It changed a lot of things, starting with the type of food I eat and my lifestyle. I have learned that at any point something might happen to anyone. I was never emotionally

connected to my friends, and when I knew that I had cancer I started expressing myself much more by saying words like *I miss you too* and *I love you*. I am now connected to my family and friends more than before because at some point, I am afraid that I might not wake up the next day, so I live each day like there is no tomorrow.

I have more faith in God now. I am learning day by day from what I see in the hospital and on the streets. I now have a better understanding of life and how each and every one of us should appreciate everything we have and be thankful.

What advice can you offer others about how to deal with adverse experiences in life?

Have faith in yourself and God!

Try to find something good in yourself and stick to it. Times may get rough but never lose hope. It is okay to cry and feel sorry for yourself but don’t let that lead you. Fight with patience, not words.

Try to accept things even if they’re hard; acceptance is much better than denial. Talk about what you are going through with your friends and family; it helps ease the pain. Don’t consider losing your health a punishment; it’s an experience and a wake-up call to everything around you. You get to know people much better; it takes you far away from people who might hurt you and closer to the people who love you, and makes you a better and stronger person with a clear vision.

Keep smiling, even if it is the

wrong time, but that really keeps you from having an emotional breakdown. Don’t waste your time looking beyond the problem, search within it; your outcomes might be better than your present situation. Block yourself from everything that irritates you and think of better things that make you happy. Know that there is always someone there, watching you, listening to you, taking good care of you, and responding to your prayers: God; don’t ever lose faith in Him; be sure that he will protect you and bring you back stronger than before.

Someone once told me that “when you make a big deal out of small things they will grow, but when you just ignore them they will eventually go away.” So from this I learned that one should accept things as they are; why make a big deal and talk about small things when there are people out there with worse situations?

Love and accept who you are! I would like to take this opportunity to thank people at AUK who were and still are next to me, supporting me and pushing me for a better and easier treatment.

For everyone who has text-messaged me, called me, emailed me, and even sent me gifts.

For all of the students who still haven’t had the courage to do so, yet have asked about my condition through my friends.

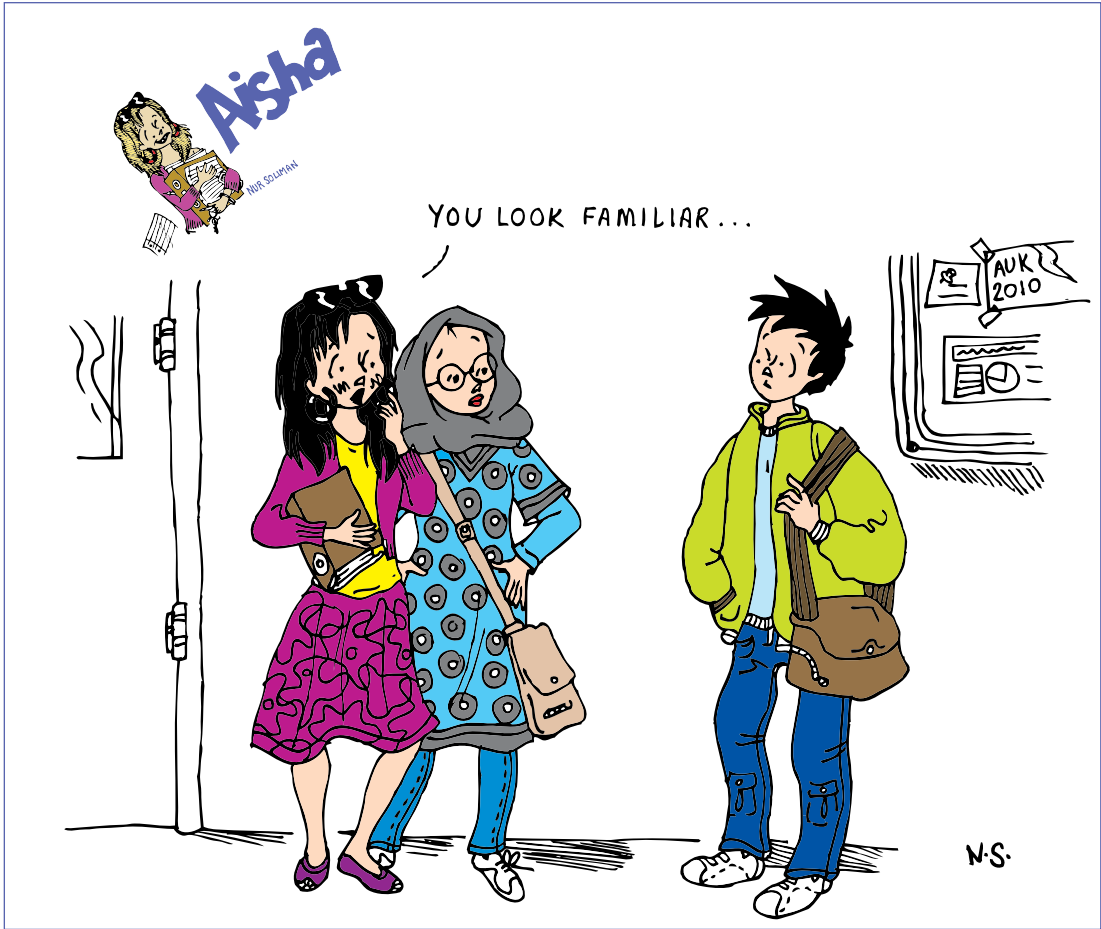
To all of the people who do not know how to structure and send a message and how to make a proper phone call, thank you for at least caring.

A Glossary

Acute	Symptoms or signs that begin and worsen quickly.
Adjuvant chemotherapy	Treatment given after the primary treatment to increase the chances of a cure. Adjuvant therapy may include chemotherapy, radiation therapy, hormone therapy, or biological therapy.
Aggressive	A quickly growing cancer.
Alopecia	Hair loss from body and/or scalp, usually temporary, as a result of chemotherapy.
Antiemetic	A medication that prevents or controls nausea and/or vomiting.
Apoptosis	Programmed cell death or suicide that is disrupted in cancer.
Benign	A non-cancerous tumor; once removed rarely recurs.
Biopsy	The removal of a tissue sample for microscopic examination to check for cancer cells.
Blood count	The number of red blood cells, white cells and platelets in a given sample of blood.
Bone marrow	The inner spongy tissue of a bone where blood cells are formed.
Carcinogen	Cancer-causing substances; e.g. benzene, ultraviolet light, Epstein-Barr virus.
Carcinogenesis	A multi-step process that includes initiation, conversion and progression by which cancers occur.
Catheter	A tube inserted into the body to inject or withdraw fluid.
Chemotherapy	The treatment of cancer with chemicals (drugs) formulated to kill cancer cells and stop their growth.
Combination chemotherapy	The use of several drugs at the same time or in a particular order to treat cancer.
Cytotoxic	Poisonous to cells. Many chemotherapy and radiotherapy regimens are cytotoxic to both healthy and cancerous cells.
In situ cancer	Early cancer that has not spread to neighboring tissue.
IM (intramuscular)	into a muscle; some anticancer drugs are given by IM injection.
Invasive cancer	Cancer that has spread beyond the layer of tissue in which it developed and is growing into surrounding, healthy tissues.
IV (intravenous)	into a vein; some anticancer drugs are given by IV injection or infusion.

of Cancer Jargon

Lymph	Clear fluid that bathes body cells and flows through lymphatic vessels.
Lymphatic system	The system of tissues and organs that produce, transport and store white blood cells called lymphocytes.
Lymph node	Small, bean-shaped organs that are situated throughout the body, with the majority in the head and neck. They contain densely packed lymphocytes, lymph fluid and connective tissue. They filter out any bacteria or viruses present in lymph and supply white blood cells to the bloodstream.
Lymphoma	Cancers born in the cells of the lymphatic system. Two main types are Hodgkin's and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.
Malignant	A cancerous tumor that can invade and destroy surrounding tissue and spread to other parts of the body.
Metastasis	Spread of cancerous cells from the primary tumor site to distant sites.
Mutation	A change in the DNA of a cell.
Myelosuppression	A fall in blood counts caused by chemotherapy and radiation therapy.
Nausea	Feeling that you are about to vomit.
Neoplasm	see tumor.
Oncogene	A mutated form of a proto-oncogene. Once activated, oncogenes cause abnormal cell growth and proliferation.
Proto-oncogene	Normal genes present in all cells that regulate normal cellular functions.
Radiation therapy	Use of high-energy radiation from x-rays, gamma rays and other sources to kill or shrink cancer cells.
Remission	Decrease or disappearance of signs and symptoms of disease.
Screening	A means of detecting a particular disease early in asymptomatic people.
Staging	A way of describing how far the cancer has spread in the body.
Tumor	An abnormal growth of tissue that may be benign or malignant.
Tumor-suppressor genes	A major class of genes that regulate and inhibit inappropriate cellular growth and proliferation.
Tumor marker	Chemicals in the blood produced by certain cancers; measuring their amount in the bloodstream is useful for monitoring response and detecting recurrence.



Spring '08 Dartmouth Intern

Office of Student Life

John Matthew Fine is a member of the Class of 2009 at Dartmouth College where he is pursuing a major in Government and minor in Arabic. At Dartmouth, John works as a research assistant for Professor Nelson Kasfir of the Government Department on a project entitled When guerillas Govern Civilians, which looks at patterns of governance by guerilla groups over civilian populations they control. Last winter he worked on health and human services policy as an intern in the Montana

Governor's office. In addition to his interest in the Middle East, John is a member of the fraternity Sigma Phi Epsilon and enjoys playing Ultimate Frisbee, hiking, and generally spending time outdoors. John is from Helena, Montana.

John will be working in the Office of Student Life, the Writing Center, and the Intensive English Program.

John will be at AUK until the beginning of June 2008. This is the seventh time AUK has had an intern join from Dartmouth College.

الاختلاط.....مهممممممممنوع

لنا نحن كطيلة حق الاختيار، ويجب أن يسمحوا لنا توصيل أصواتنا إذا كنا مع أم ضد هذا القانون ، فها نحن في الجامعة كطالبات لا يجمعنا مع زملائنا إلا كل ود واحترام ، ولا أرى في سلوكياتنا ما يُخجل منه ، ونتدأ عن عيون الناس خشية أن يرمقونا بنظراتهم ، فمن حقنا أن نواجه العالم بأفكار مفتحة ، ومن حقنا أن نمارس حياتنا بشكل طبيعي من غير مؤثرات خارجية قد تكون سلبية على نفوسنا ، ومن غير روابط وأفكار معقده لا تناسب أبناء جيل القرن 21، أقنعونا بوجهة نظركم ولنرى من حجته في النهاية هي الصائبة.

مراحل النضج فهم مصدر حدوثها ، فالسلوكيات نابعة من أخلاقيات غرست في الأنفس مستمدة من البيت والمدرسة فيما سبق ، أية شذوذ في هذه الحالة هي شوائب مترسية في نفوس هؤلاء الشباب . لا يمكن أبدا إلقاء الذنب على الجدران والصفوف بأنها سبب في انهيار العديد من القيم والأعراف بين طلبة الجامعة ، فالأنفس هي التي قابلة للتغير على حسب أهوائها ، فمنذ أنشأت الجامعة وهي تتبع النظام المختلط ليستطيعوا الطلبة التعامل فيما بينهم في محافل العمل وجميع المؤسسات المختلفة ، فليس الحل هو الفصل فالشباب سيلتقي في الشارع ، الأسواق ، المطاعم ، الوزارات والمؤسسات فالحل هو تقويم النفوس المريضة وليس فصلهم ومنع اختلاطهم في الجامعة ، فما هو رأيكم ؟

بقلم: جمانة الطبيع
هل يمكن أن نكتفي بفصل مقاعد الدراسة والصفوف والمباني المبنية من الحجر لنفصل بين البنت والولد؟ لا يمكن، لا اعتقد، مستحيل..... كلمات كثيرة بإمكانها التعبير عن رأيي الذي يرفض تقبل فكرة نابعة من "س" من البشر من الذين يحاولون فتح ملفات مغلقة منذ سنوات طويلة ليس لها أي معنى سوى لفت النظر إليهم ، فمنذ فتحت مؤسسات التعليم المختلفة ونحن نرى مدارسنا تجمع الجنسين في مرحلة رياض الأطفال ، وتفصل بينهم في المراحل الدراسية التالية ليلتقوا فيما بعد في المرحلة الجامعية بعدما يكتمل نموهم الفكري والنفسي ، فأى أحداث تحصل فيما بعد في هذه المرحلة هي أحداث يسأل عنها أفرادها لأنهم في أهم

نسمة اخيرة
قال براتراند راسل (الحياة أقصر من أن نقضيها في تسجيل الأخطاء التي ارتكبتها غيرنا في حقنا ، وفي تغذية روح العداء بين الناس)

المدينة والجلاد

قصور عيني جلادها، وإنه معرفة الحق وإنكاره، معرفة النهاية المحتومة يتبدل الأدوار، ولكنه متيقن بأنها أكثر إنسانية منه، لا يريد الآن الجلاد التفكير في المستقبل، المهم أن تستغل كل لحظة من هذه الفسحة المتاحة من الزمن ليحاول الانتصار بلمحة من انكسار أسيرته الفاتحة. يحل المساء وتُسند تلك الفاتنة رأسها على وسادة الشفقة وتلملم عذاب نهارها وتستمر في الصبر لقد تعودت على كل المحن وتعود خطاب ودها الشادي ويزيد الصوت رفع معنوياتها بالنشيد. صامدون يا غزّة، صامدون يا غزّة.

كيف ترعبه وهو الذي يربع اسمه كل القتلة والسفاحين حتى الشرطة والعدالة تخافه فلماذا تستعصي عنه ضحيته، إنه يديهما ويحرقها ويمزق ثوبها الجميل، ما السر في قوتها، من أين تستمد عزيمتها وهي السجينة التي لا تستطيع مد أطرافها إلى أي اتجاه. يحاول كسر إرادتها، يخضبها بحناء حمراء يلونها بكل الألوان يجلدّها، يطرّها، يفرّقها ولكنها تبقى كأغصان الزيتون منتصبّة ورأسها إلى السماء تنظر الضحية إلى عيني جلادها في لحظة عابرة فترى الانكسار والذل والغربة عن الوقت والزمان والمكان تقيم في

بقلم: علي خلف
تصحو تلك الجميلة على صوت عصافيرها، على أذان مساجدها وأجراس كنائسها، على حب من سكن بين أثوابها، تحاول للمة طعنات ليلتها الماضية التي مرّقت فستان عرسها الجميل ترقعه بأئين لا يسمعه غيرها تتألم ورغم النزف والدماء والحرائق تكابر في صمت، صمت هو أقرب إلى صمت الأسود الجبارة التي تنتهشها الكلاب الضالة تنظر بعزة وإباء وبأنفة المنتصر رغم العذاب إلى عيون جلادها الممسك بصوته الطويل المرتعد يحاول أن يبعد نظرة عن عيون ضحيتها الجيارة، كيف تعذبه وهو الذي يذيقها مرّ العذاب،

Legend of AUK

By Aukaeologist

They say that if you go to the library at precisely one thirty or five forty, between the H-HD and HD-HJ shelves, you will see a boy sitting there, reading. He might look at you if you have a strong enough presence. You could try to talk to him, but he will only answer to the right question or prompt. Nobody knows what those are.

The boy's name is unknown, but some people say it starts with "J", and that he answers to it. When AUK was still a kindergarten, he had attended here. He was also among the first batch and saw AUK's beginnings. Be that as it may, he never graduated. Some say he never will.

J is seen most often in the library for a good reason; he is studying hard in order to graduate, never realizing he never can. But he studies anyway... for him, it's better than going home, if that house could be called that. J's family consisted of his parents and younger brother. The three of them were killed in a car crash on Gulf Street. At the time he was still in his last year of high school and barely dealt with it. He never even met the people who hit them. Everything was arranged by his paternal uncle, who he then lived with, since his mother was an only child and he had no maternal uncles or aunts.

Although said family was not perfect, they were still far better than his uncle. J's friends, for those who met them, heard stories that did not bear repeating, and so are now lost, but show why he threw himself into university life, studying hard and playing soccer and learning the piano. He applied for a major in Economics (because he wanted to make money) and a minor in English (because he was weak

and wanted to learn).

One day in his second year during ENGL 201, J's classmate, whose name is said to be Yahya, started talking about a car accident and the laws applicable. J asked him about it and soon learned that it was Yahya's cousin who had killed his parents and brother. Although it did not harm their friendship, the soccer team suddenly stopped seeing their strongest players on the field. J's piano instructor found more mistakes among his notes. J's ECON midterm did not suffer, but his ENGL project was handed in two weeks and three days late.

When or why J stopped attending is a mystery; all we know is that he never showed up for his finals. The next semester, he was registered in all his classes according to his graduation plan, and all the previous semester's grades were what his professors thought he would get instead of Fs. That was the last semester that the system registered him. They say that he can be seen in what is now A203, struggling with MATH 103 at 8 AM. But mostly, he sits to study on the library floor, between the H-HD and HD-HJ shelves, at precisely one thirty or five forty.

Dear readers,

The Aukaeologist wants you to continue this story! So, if you've seen J in your classroom or around campus? Or you know something about him that we did not mention? Or you know that some of our current students have met him while he was still a student? Have you met any of his friends, or are you one of them? Feel free to send any information you have to voice@auk.edu.kw.

لا شيء سوى نصّ مكثف وصورة...

بقلم: اسراء الشمري

الأساسي الذي يميّز المصور المحترف من المتوسط وصولاً إلى الناس العاديين من هواة التصوير لحمل ذكرى من مكان ما . طريقة توظيف الظلال تضفي هالة حول الموضوع وتكسيه بالمطبع جمالا . ويجب الأخذ في عين الاعتبار بأن سقوط الضوء بصخب على الموضوع أو الشخص في قالب عدسة التصوير يفقده عفويته وبراعته . فعلى سبيل المثال، تشتت قوة الضوء المنساب على طفل ما تختلف عن شخص مدرك لما يدور حوله . فالطفل عادة كثير الحركة؛ لذا يتبع المصور نمط الإضاءة الخفيفة الشفافة .

فن توزيع الظلال، تشتيتها، أو تركيزها -تبعاً للموضوع- يحيلنا للوقوف عند الصور التي تستخدم فيها تقنية الأبيض والأسود، حيث لا مكان لروح ملوّنة. التصوير الضوئي بالأبيض والأسود يمنح إحساساً بالدفء للمتلقي. إضافة إلى أنه يعطي إمكانية معرفة منحي أنسياب الضوء وتوزيعه، حيث تتبع هذه التقنية استخدام الكشافات العادية بالنسبة للشيء/الموضوع المراد تصويره على عكس توظيف الألوان بالصورة والتي تستخدم فيها تقنية الشمسية العاكسة والتي بدورها تنفّرت إلى القدرة على تحديد منحي واتجاه الضوء المنساب على الموضوع.

انتقاء العدسة واقتناء عدّة أنواع ما بين عدسة طويلة وقصيرة، تعتبر ضرورة لكل مصوّر يرغب في انتهاز طريق الاحتراف في عالم التصوير الضوئي. ميزة العدسة الطويلة، تكمن في كونها قادرة على تجسيم الموضوع وتقريبه مما يعني من الاقتراب من الشيء المراد تصويره مكانياً. بمعنى، يقترب الموضوع حسيّاً، بينما العدسات القصيرة تقوم بإظهار الموضوع المُلتقط بهيئة يبدو أصغر وأبعد مما هو عليه في الواقع.

من الضروري التأكيد على فكرة أنّ الصورة وإن توافرت لها أحدث التقنيات ما بين دقة الصورة، العدسات المستخدمة، وأحدث أساليب استخدام الظل وتوزيع الإضاءة، ربّما لن تحظى على إعجاب المتلقي ورضاءه، ويفشل المصور في إيصال فكرته. في حين استخدام المصور لتقنيات بسيطة تجعله يتقوى على غيره ذوي التقنيات المتنوعة. كل ذلك مرّده لعمق إحساس المصور وإيمانه وكيفية توظيفه لما يملك من تقنيات وإن كانت تلعّى عليها روح البساطة. في ظل وجود شبكة الانترنت، أصبح للمبدعين متسع من الضوء أكثر. فهناك عدد من المواقع الالكترونية التي تنصّب جلالاً لمحبي التصوير والصور الإبداعية من شتى أنحاء العالم بالولوج إليها، والانكفاء بحال من التأمل. لدينا: www.flickr.com والذي يضم مجموعة كبيرة من الحالات الانطباعية المكثفة بصورة، بعيداً في أغلب الأحيان عن الحرف. صورة ضوئية وكفى!

كلّما لمحت، تأملت، عاينت هذه الصورة التي أعيرها حكاية روح، باغتتني عبارات مكثّفة ملوّها غيش تعكس حال الأنا التي تتفصل عن أناها فتصبح آخراً. هي خريشات لا تبحث عن شيء سوى سرور معانقة ضوء. لماذا لا يرى البعض العالم مُجرّداً خلال عدسة، بل مغبّشا دونها، وكأنهم يخشون أن يستيقظوا على خبياته الأخف وطأة؟

لهذه اللقطات والصور الإبداعية وظيفة أدبية وفنية وتكثيف لحالة إنسانية معينة. تأخذ المرء في حال من الشرود ليبحث عن شيء فيها، لرُبّما يهرب من واقعهِ إليها، أو يجد بها انعكاساً لما يعمَل في داخله. احتمالات كثيرة تدخل ضمن نطاق الممكن. كل ذلك يعتمد على الكيفية التي يتلقى بها المتلقي/التأمل. بمعنى، الزمن ومؤكد حالة الروح ما بين الاعتلال، اللمماتنية، الهدوء، والجنون -مجازاً-.

تكن جمالية الفن في تناقضه وجنونه ولربّما إدخالنا في حال من



التساؤل المستمر والتي في كثير من الأحيان تجبر الذات للاستسلام لها وتمنّي أن تُصلب التساؤلات في إغشاة ما بين صحو وعدم تماماً كمثل مخاطبة شخص في حلم. فن الصورة وكيفية تلقيها وما بعد التلقي يخلق نوعاً من محاولة كشف لهوية ملتبسة تغفو في زاوية ما، أو عند خط أفق لا مرئي ولا متواجد. أساساً في الصورة، كلّها تكمن في إعمال الخيال، ومحاولة إيجاد

تفسير. على النقيض، يكفي آخرون بالتعبير فقط عن جمال الصورة ومدى روعتها، ولا تترك أثراً سوى لتسييح رب الجمال. كل هذا يعتمد على إبداعية الروح ولا شيء آخر.

أبداعية التصوير تنفّ عن الصمت الناطق. ذلك كون البوح بالأشياء يُفقدُها ألّها، وينتقص الكثير مما تحويه من خصوصية. زاوية التقاط الصورة، التركيز على التفاصيل الدقيقة الكامنة في عمق الصورة، ومدى تركيز الإضاءة على جانب معين ومدى خفوتها. كل هذه الجوانب تساهم في رسم فكرة تدور في فلك المصور ولا أحد غيره، ويعمّق معنى يملكه المتلقي بطريقة أو بأخرى يصعب ربّما تأويلها والكشف عنها؛ ذلك لأن لكل شخص خلفية معيّنة يستقي من خلالها انطباعه الخاص عن صورة أثّرت به واستوقفته.

من فنون التصوير فن توزيع الظلال والذي يحتاج لعين تُجيد تحديد كم الضوء اللازم لإعطاء ألّ للحالة أو الفكرة ككل. حساسية العين وقدرتها على تمييز مستوى الضوء المنساب على الموضوع المراد التقاطه هي العامل

Master Planning Update



March 2008. Planning for the Ardhiya campus has been a continuous process. I would like to thank all of the administrative members and faculty members who contributed their time to this project. After working with our consulting company Option 1 for several months, I am happy to announce that all areas of AUK have agreed on the layout of the

Space Program, which includes the locations and sizes of buildings.

The next step in this process will be to work on the design phase with Option 1. We are excited to see how Option 1 will design the interiors of the buildings, and we will keep you updated on the progress of this phase.



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