

## Lebanese pop star to visit Vavavoom in The Avenues

## Especially Escada's brand ambassador Yara to greet fans in Kuwait

click

## Latest

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Department of Music and Drama is hosting a demonstration/masterclass with the German classical guitarist Friedemann at the American University of Kuwait (AUK), May 28, at 3 pm, Liberal Arts Building, Room 205. Wuttke is a gifted performer, having played with major ensembles and orchestras. Besides various concerts in Germany, he has toured in the United States and South East Asia, as well as several European metropolises. This, his first visit to the Gulf region, has been realized with the support of the German Embassy in Kuwait, in cooperation with the Dar Al Athar Al Islamiyah. The AUK performance is free and open to the public.

May 30

**TIES trip:** The TIES Center cordially invites those interested to its trip to the Historical, Vintage and Classic Car Museum, which is the first museum in Kuwait specializing in old cars on May 30th at 6:00pm. Revisit past memories or learn something new. If you love cars then this is the trip for you. Even if you don't love cars, come anyway; you will enjoy the trip. For more information/registration, please call 25231015/6 or log onto: www.tiescenter.net.

June 6

**K-Pop contest:** The Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Kuwait will organize 2013 K-POP Contest on Thursday, June 6, 2013 at 6:00 pm. The aim of the contest is to provide an opportunity to the participants to showcase their exciting talents to the audience.

Everyone is welcome to participate in the contest. Application forms can be downloaded from the Embassy's website: <http://kwt.mofa.go.kr> (Select English from the menu at the top of the page then Bilateral Relations) or visit the "Korean Culture Diwaniya" Facebook Group.

Interested applicants must send their application forms to Kuwait@mofa.go.kr by 24 May 2013.

June 15

**Nritholsav registration:** The Basil Arts, an Indian Embassy registered cultural organization, is organizing a 'group dance' competition for students, Nritholsav from April to June 2013. The 'Grand Finale' will be scheduled on Thursday, June 6, 2013 at Marina Hall, Abbasiya. The finale will be a day filled with dance and musical live concerts by famous South Indian celebrities and playback singers.

The dance items include Bharathanatyam (group), Mohiniyattam (group), Kuchipudi (group), and Cinematic (group). The teams, which are interested to take part in the competition, should register their names on or before April 15. For registration and more details, please contact on 97542844, 99019634, 96636234, 99736882 and email: basilarts@outlook.com.

## Theater &amp; Music

Aug 30

**Konkani drama:** M.A. Production is all set to present a Konkani Drama (Tiatr) "Moje Dhuvnem Kazar" to be staged on 30 August 2013 with an emotionally charged storyline, humour and music, written by M.Dias and directed by Sylvester Vaz & M.Dias to be held at Kuwait Medical Association Auditorium (near Blood Bank), Jabriya. Popular actors and singers will be flown from India including Seby de Divar - Goa's singing sensation, John D'Silva - Goa's best known comedian and character artist, Yvonne - new sensation in comedy, Fr Nevel Gracias (Well'lekar) - well known actor and writer, Sylvester Vaz - Hitman of Konkani stage, besides a few prominent well established actors and singers from the tiatrist fraternity in Kuwait. The proceeds of this drama will be sent to Old Goa Retreat Centre. Please make note in your diary to attend this must-to-see by all parents and children, and support this noble cause.

Await for more details how to obtain your entry passes or email: dias\_q8@yahoo.com Tel: +965 66698257, 99616965, 65095345, <http://goablog100.blogspot.com/2013/02/moje-dhuvnem-kazar.html>

Oct 25

**'Ami Khuxal' drama:** Goa Kala Academy award winner and versatile actor, singer and composer Braz de Parra, after staging two Konkani drama's "Nagoumo" and "Roastad" in Goa, is all set to present his Konkani tiatr in Kuwait titled "Ami Khuxal" under the banner of AVY Production Oct 25, 2013 (Friday) at the Kuwait Medical Association Auditorium - Jabriya. This drama will feature a galaxy of Kuwait-based singers and artistes as well as reputed actors from GCC countries and Goa, India. Stage and light settings with special scenes will be arranged by Unique Arts and Music by Maestro Shahu. Those interested to be part of this major production in a typical traditional tiatr format are welcome. Keep reading your favourite newspaper for further details or contact Mob: 99111786, 97847247.

## Sports

**FBL registration:** Filipino Basketball League (FBL) Registration is now open for:

\* 5'8" under - below 5'8" allowed to play

\* Open Category - 25th Conference. No height limit.

\* Men's and Women's Volleyball league 11th Conference.

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KUWAIT CITY, May 21: Lebanese pop sensation Yara, Especially Escada's Brand Ambassador for the Middle East, will make an appearance at Vavavoom in The Avenues Mall on Friday May 31st, giving her fans the once in a lifetime opportunity to meet her. Yara will be at Vavavoom from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm.

"I'm very excited to have the chance to meet my fans in Kuwait! It's such an exciting place with so much happening, and I can't wait to explore more of it," said Yara. "As a Brand Ambassador for Especially Escada, I have the pleasure of introducing the women of Kuwait to this exquisite, beautifully refined scent. It really resonates with my love of being glamorous, elegant and femi-



Yara



Especially Escada perfume

nine, and I'm sure that my fans will love it every bit as much as I do."

Yara was discovered by Lebanese composer Tarek Abou Jaoudeh, and quickly rose to fame following the release of her debut album, "Twassa Fiyeh", in 2005, which received critical acclaim in the region. "Akhedni Ma'ak", her 2006 duet with Fadi Shaker, catapulted her to international stardom.

As a vibrant young star, Yara epitomises the essence of Especially Escada, from the House of Escada. A luxurious and feminine scent, inspired by the spirit of today's joyful, spontaneous and glamorous woman, it is a refined and sophisticated perfume that aims to enhance a woman's soft femininity.

## Art



'Resigned'



'Babel'



The Dream of Freedom



Iraqi artist Mohammad Sami (right) with JAMM Gallery co-founder Sheikha Lulwa Al-Sabah (left) and Kuwaiti artist Sami Mohammed (centre).



'Prison Ghosts'

## Iraqi artist holds first solo exhibition at JAMM Gallery

## Sami's works reflect soul ravaged by war

By Cinatra Fernandes  
Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 21: A deeply evocative set of paintings by Iraqi artist Mohammad Sami is currently on display at the JAMM Gallery; the selected works act as an agonizing mnemonic for a soul ravaged by the monstrosities of war.

In his first solo exhibition in Kuwait, Sami, who currently resides in Sweden, brings in a truly avant-garde documentation of a mind still haunted by bombings and bloodshed using a process that would deem him a mad man. But what makes the artwork truly exemplary is his progression in production.

After drenching the canvas in black, Sami recedes into the confines of darkness, painting only along the lines of his imagination. "When I begin to paint, I turn out the lights. I just use a flash light in my hand so I can only see flashes of light. If I turn on the light in the room, everything disappears and I will lose the image in my mind."

He elaborates, "Once, I was invited by a school of art to paint a mural for them in Sweden. I looked at the space and asked them to blind all the windows so no light could enter. The teacher present thought I was crazy."

After this initial rendering of outlines, Sami does turn on the lights to add layer after layer to the canvas. "Each painting is made up of at least 20 layers with the black and greys followed by other colours. It is a very complicated process."

Born in Iraq in 1984, Sami graduated with a diploma from the Institute of Fine Arts in Baghdad in 2004. He comes from an artistic family and is one of ten children. He is heavily influenced by his mother, who is also an artist. "I grew up with the art and painting", he shared.

He was awarded the first prize 'Bait Al Arab of Arab League' and 'South Sinai Association' in Egypt in 1999 and won the first prize for 'Woman for Woman' by the Ministry of Culture in Iraq in 2006.

Previously, he has had four solo exhibitions that include Baghdad University and Al Wasiti Gallery in Iraq, Al Khanji Gallery in Aleppo, Syria and Dag Andersson Gallery in Norrkoping, Sweden with several group exhibitions.

## Intention

"When I was in Iraq, I didn't really have any intention of leaving my home. But in 2007, I did. The power of war forced me to leave my country. I left to Sweden and developed my experience through painting there", he told the Arab Times. Sami recounts a bedtime story his mother would read him where a group gazelles were forced to flee their forest during a fire. "So now my situation has become like the gazelles. They burned my country and I ran away. This story is always at the back of my mind that something happened to these animals and they ran away."

Sami gave up drawing the human form because the world has somehow become desensitized to its pain today. He instead

relies on the contours of wildlife and nature in distress. There in an innate sense of urgency that meets the eye but the reasons behind it can only be interpreted on closer inspection. Fear is the great motivator and displacer in play.

Sami isn't self indulgent in his use of the horrid crimson hues but is possessed with a heady defiance in bold white lines with the threat of imminent disaster ever present. There is a shock of noise in the artwork itself that isn't gratuitous in any respect. The first reaction for the viewer is a disorientation of sorts, not knowing where the painting begins and ends.

"I carry in my mind the fear of war," he states as he recounts how he couldn't sleep without a gun beside him in Baghdad. Even now in Sweden, he shares that he has trouble sleeping. "I have this fear always within me that something is coming so I reflect this in my painting, painting the shape animals as they try to run away from ogres. The ogres surround the painting; they try to eat the horses which symbolize freedom, among other things."

Moving to and living in Sweden these past six years has soothed some aspects of his life but Sami relives the horror vividly each time he paints. "Living in Sweden shaped my behaviour but they couldn't shape my mind because the voice of the people who have died there, the bombs are still there. When I paint, everything comes in my mind, reminding me."

Every artist is like a mirror that reflects the effect of their environment, he affirms. He recalls his dormant period growing up

in Iraq, "When I remember my history there, I feel like I was sleeping. I didn't have any connection with the artists and the people there or outside so I had to encourage, educate and develop all by myself."

Looking back, he suspects that other artists too were in a state of slumber. "We wanted to express our self in our paintings but we could only show broken emotions. This wasn't enough for the contemporary art. It was only later in Sweden that I realised how late I was to understand what contemporary art was."

## Encourage

When asked if he would have been able to produce work of the same calibre had he remained in Iraq, he answers, "I would've been worse. If you want to be a good painter you have to be in a good environment to encourage you. It is not enough to have good emotions or good ideas. I must show you what I have in my mind. Many artists have beautiful ideas but they cannot express it by their painting. I don't want to be in this situation, I want my painting to convey my ideas accurately. So if I decided to be an artist I will not like to be in Iraq. It is a place to make you sleep, feel pain and not develop anything."

Sami developed himself quickly when he moved to Sweden after his paintings failed to resonate with others and he was propelled by the shock of rejection. "Of course the soul and spirit is the same today as in my previous artwork", he adds.

He continues, "I developed my artworks to have more light and spirit. I changed my core subjects to the animal shapes through a lot of lines and movement to let the viewer feel the fear in the face of this animal who runs away from one disaster to another disaster, from one hiding place to another and from darkness unto darkness."

It is no wonder then that Sami would be influenced by Picasso and his Guernica, and have a fondness for the works of Francis Bacon. He also shares how he was influenced by Kuwait artist Sami Mohammad in his younger days, albeit by accident. "I was interested in painting bodies and people asked me if I knew Sami Mohammad because of the similarity in our names. Unfortunately I didn't so I looked on the internet was taken by what I saw of his work. I saw that his sculptures were very close to him. Later, people would tell me that they saw his sculptures in my paintings and that would make me very proud and happy."

Sami hopes to bother the viewer through his painting, to relay a sense of discomfort disgusted and heighten the distortion, to experience the ugliness behind the beauty. "I want to birth a new ugliness from beauty. Many artists feel too comfortable, they say paint for fun. But I cannot associate with this idea. I paint for suffering because I suffer when I paint."

The exhibition will continue until June 15, 2013 at the JAMM Art Gallery, located in the Life Center, 2nd floor, Block 2, Street 28, Industrial Shuwaikh, Kuwait.