

By Invitation



Sheikha Hala bint Mohammed Al Khalifa

Happy New Art!

January is a fresh and optimistic start to the year, at the cultural institution its month of ART. This year we celebrate the 44th edition of the Annual Art Exhibition, displaying different art disciplines under one roof. We look forward to seeing and discovering new talents and celebrate the pioneers of the art movement in our beautiful Kingdom.

This particular event brings back so many memories of when I was a young artist studying in Boston. I remember my annual submission and the sense of gratification if my works would be selected. I would be standing happy and proud to be showing alongside the masters of the like of the late Ahmed Baqer, Rashid Al Oraifi and other famous artists of Bahrain. The highlight of this exhibition for me was the honour of greeting HRH Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, the Prime Minister. Year after year we are blessed by HRH's Patronage to this art fete. Something that will never be forgotten is that loving handgrip, followed by precise questions about the work on display, that moment where HRH makes everyone feel they are the most important person in the event. Bless his loving heart, and bless his continued support for his people, community and country.

This year brings us to a special celebrated city "Muharraq: Capital of Islamic Culture". We at the Bahrain Authority for Culture & Antiquities took our main cultural events to Arad Fort. In this year's edition of the Fine Art Exhibition, we are playing on the old vs. the new - contemporary art displayed in a historic setting, gracefully linking the legacy of the past while celebrating the new innovative creative expressions.

It is an exciting time to look at new approaches to art and discover new themes that are being explored. We are very lucky to have so many creative minds, and this year submissions have many daring topics and unconventional topics.

Personally, I have been working with an amazing team at BACA on the past three editions of this exhibition, and I consider myself extremely lucky to serve not only my passion for the arts but also to be able to give new upcoming artist exposure and presence in our local art scene. In addition to the prestigious AlDanah Prize, for the winner of the art competition, we managed to create two other supporting prize categories. One is to curate a solo exhibition for the winner of the second place, at the Bahrain Art Center. This experience would be most useful to understand the process of working on a solo show with a curator. The third prize would be to send the winner to a short artist residency program in the region; this will be an incredible opportunity for exposure and experiencing another artistic and cultural scene.

For many artists in Bahrain, HE Sheikh Rashid bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Chairperson of the Bahrain Fine Art Society has been a role model and a mentor. Over the years, he has given his guidance, support and time for artists of all generations. He is a renowned artist himself, and has accomplished so much for the art scene, has managed to set an international benchmark for the quality of art made in Bahrain. HE Sheikh Rashid's vision and dedication gave many artists a chance to be recognized. The magazine ArtBahrain, under his supervision and guidance, ensured that high quality met with international standards. An excellent editorial team gives their best reviews with every new edition.

Happy New Art to all our readers! Celebrating creativity is a gift, and opening up to new creative expressions not only nourishes our soul but also allows our understanding of art & culture to grow.

Last Note: Exhibitions not be missed at Bahrain National Museum

Between Muharraq and Seville: A Bolza - Bussad Dialogue

20 January - 20 March 2018

Exploring the beauty of Arabic calligraphy and the mystery of the Arabic language, the collaboration between Bahraini artist Ebrahim Bussad and Orientalist artist based in Spain Elisabeth Bolza creates an artistic dialogue that connects East and West through a series of collage works about the city of Muharraq.

Al-Fann: Art from the Islamic Civilization from The al-Sabah Collection

19 January - 30 June 2018

The exhibition invites the public to explore the great and multifaceted nature of Islamic culture through the spectacular al-Sabah collection of Islamic Art. Broadly divided into two parts, the display illustrates a chronological progression broken into four stages (from the very beginning of the Islamic period up to and including the three great empires of the sixteenth century) and tackles themes that run transversely through Islamic art; mainly, calligraphy, geometric decoration, vegetal, figurative art and jewellery.

(Sheikha Hala bint Mohammed Al Khalifa is the Director General of Culture and Arts at the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities)

(The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the policy or position of this newspaper.)

Meet on religious violence in Italy

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Manama

Bahrain will attend a major conference on religiously motivated violence in Italy.

The International Conference on Religious Violence (ICRV-18) will be held on January 29 - February 1, under the theme "Confronting Religiously Motivated Violence".

Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments Ministry Undersecretary Dr Farid bin Yacoub Al-Meftah will lead Bahrain's delegation and address the conference on the dangers of religiously-motivated violence on the world.

He will point out the destructive role of extremists and advocates of violence who interpret sacred religious texts in a way that serves their heinous goals.

He will underline Bahrain's strides in promoting co-existence, diversity and intellectual pluralism and

combating violence, extremism and terrorism.

The ministry's delegation led Dr Al-Meftah took part in the annual conference on interfaith dialogue in the Vatican. The global event discussed the current phase of the dialogue between civilizations and religions.

Dr Al-Meftah met Pope Francis, who commended Bahrain's efforts to promote co-existence. The Holy Pontiff paid tribute to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa, hailing the royal drive to foster openness, bolster religious liberties as well as the freedom of expression and opinion.

Pope Francis hailed Bahrain's pivotal role in promoting dialogue between civilizations. Dr Al-Meftah also lauded the pioneering role played by the Vatican and the Holy Pontiff in disseminating interfaith tolerance.



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Manama

A ten-year-old boy was killed after being hit by a car in Hidd yesterday.

The incident took place near Lulu Hyper Market Road in Hidd around 3:00 pm.

The deceased has been identified as Saif Hani Muhammed, a Bahraini national.

He will be laid to rest at the Hidd graveyard after Dhuhr (midday) prayers today.

"A 10-year-old child died when a vehicle hit him in Hidd. Relevant procedures are being taken," the Ministry of Interior tweeted on the incident.

1,968 reports received via Tawasul

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Communications Director at the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning Fahad Buallay has revealed that most reports and applications directed to the Works Affairs via the National Complaints and Suggestions System 'Tawasul' during 2017 targeted the Capital Governorate.

According to Buallay, the number of applications and complaints during the year 2017 amounted to 1968 reports, with 556 reports for the Capital Governorate, 555 for the Northern governorate, 379 for Muharraq Governorate and 306 for the Southern

Governorate. Another 172 reports were related to infrastructure services. Most reports targeted the roads sector, with 1374 reports, while the sanitary sector attracted 356. There were also 238 repeated reports transferred to other government entities. The Directorate responded to 35 urgent reports, and 1933 non-urgent reports.

Buallay explained that the National System (Tawasul) ranked first as a means to communicate with the Works Affairs of the Ministry, by a percentage of 55 per cent, after which came the phone with 31pc and newspapers with 9pc, in addition to other sources like personal visits, radio, Instagram, Twitter, the email and letters (5 per cent).