

FLASHES

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE ON KNOWLEDGE AND DEVELOPMENT
BY THE MOHAMMED BIN RASHID AL MAKTOUM FOUNDATION

SEPTEMBER 2015
ISSUE 11

Museum of the Future

An incubator for ideas and a driver for innovation

ALSERKAL AVENUE

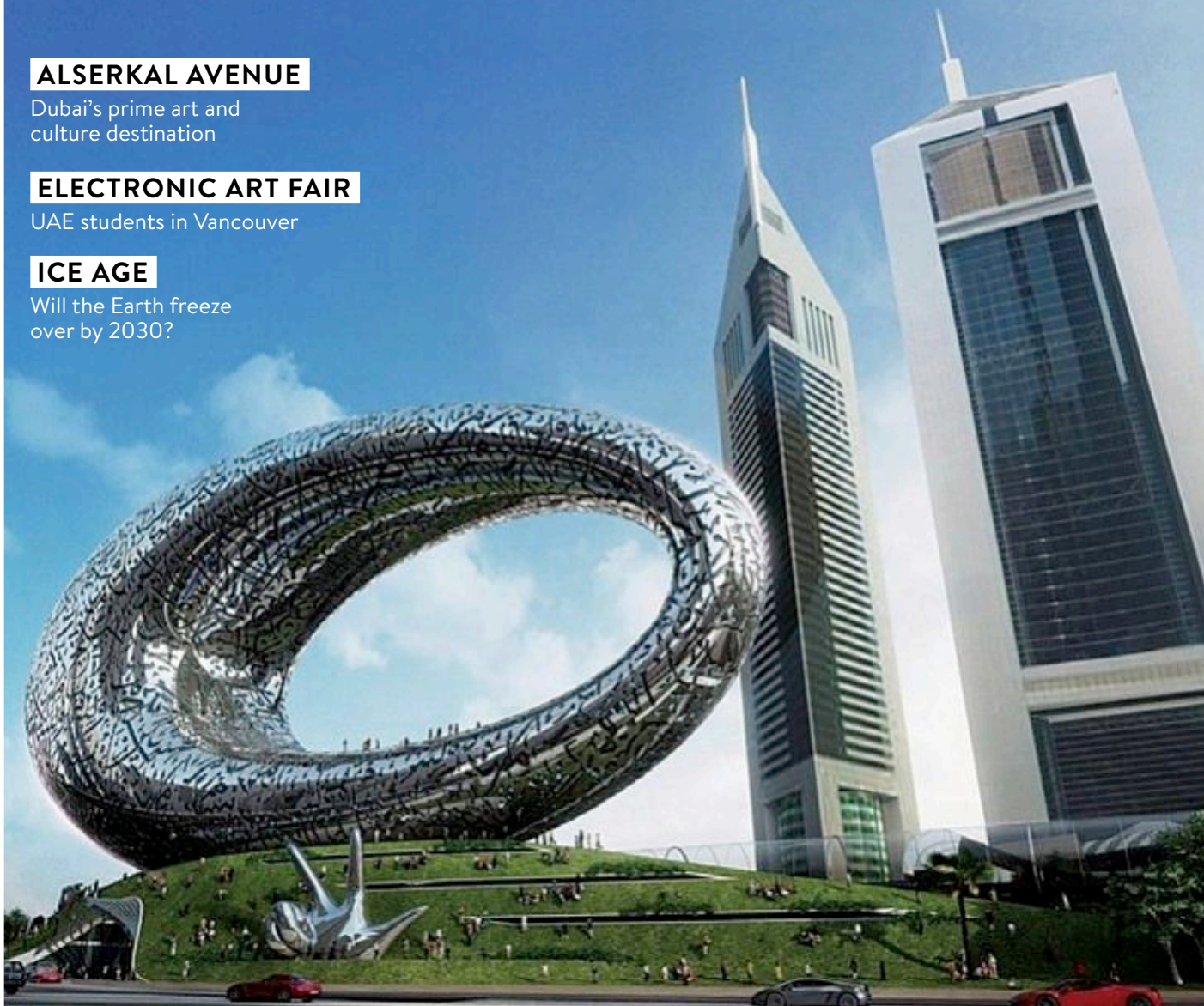
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ELECTRONIC ART FAIR

UAE students in Vancouver

ICE AGE

Will the Earth freeze over by 2030?



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CHAIRMAN

HE Jamal Bin Huwaireb

GM-MBRF HOLDING

Saif Al Mansoori

EDITORIAL BOARD

Lina Al Anani

Ibrahim Khadim

Eyad Al Jurdy

Mohammed Bin Rashid
Al Maktoum Foundation
T: +971 4 4233 444
F: +971 4 368 7777
PO Box 214444, Dubai
United Arab Emirates
www.mbrf.ae
flashes@mbrf.ae



MOTIVATE

A Motivate Connect Publication

Media One Tower,
Dubai Media City
PO Box 2331, Dubai, UAE
T: +971 4 427 3000
F: +971 4 428 02261
motivatepublishing.com
connect@motivate.ae

PUBLISHER

Chris Capstick

chris@motivate.ae

GROUP EDITOR - CONNECT

Guido Duken

SENIOR

ASSIGNMENTS EDITOR

Ingrid Valles

CONTRIBUTOR

Nusrat Ali

**GENERAL MANAGER-
PRODUCTION**

Sunil Kumar

Printed by Rashid Printers



FOREWORD

Dear Readers,

Nothing drives progress like innovation and creativity. For the next few months the UAE will be more focussed on innovating and will increase its drive to develop more novel solutions and ideas for some of the biggest – and even smallest – challenges we face.

We at MBRF believe that HH Sheikh Mohammed's Innovation Week is going to be a turning point for the nation. Not only will it spark everyone's creativity but it will also give us a chance to question – and perhaps change – firmly established processes. If you think there is a better, smarter, simpler and more innovative way to achieve a goal, tell us about it.

UNESCO recently lauded the Foundation's efforts in the establishment of

a knowledge-based society in the region and involving the Arab youth in this process. This was a proud moment for all of us at the MBRF. We are extremely honoured to have won this international accolade. Moreover, we are hugely satisfied that our efforts are yielding a positive impact and are proving to be harbingers of change.

This is not the time to rest on our laurels. The world is changing incredibly quick and we must keep pace. And this can be done only through educating our youth and inspiring them to use their education to create and innovate.

HE Jamal Bin Huwaireb

MD of the Mohammed Bin Rashid
Al Maktoum Foundation

FOUNDATION UPDATES AND INITIATIVES

INTERNATIONAL IMPACT

From Paris to Japan, MBRF's efforts are winning recognition around the world.

UNESCO lauds MBRF's Arab Knowledge Report

Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Foundation's (MBRF) *Third Arab Knowledge Report (AKR)* on Youth and Localisation of Knowledge has won the appreciation of UNESCO. The AKR is a joint initiative of MBRF and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The international organisation for education, science and culture lauded the report for the relevance it holds for the region in establishing knowledge societies and integrating youth in the development process.

The *Third Arab Knowledge Report* was the focus of discussions at a workshop jointly organised by the Foundation and UNDP at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris in June. It was attended by ambassadors, academics and youth from French universities.

Dr. Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO congratulated the Foundation and UNDP for preparing an impressive report. "The report is most relevant in the context of the ongoing efforts of the countries of the Arab region to strengthen peace and sustainable development. Such processes include the establishment of knowledge societies to which young women and men, as key social innovators and drivers of change should be central contributors," she said.

Dr. Bokova said the Arab Knowledge Report echoes the objectives of UNESCO's Operational Strategy on Youth 2014-2021, which aims



—H.E. JAMAL BIN
HUWAIREB, MANAGING
DIRECTOR, MBRF



—DR. IRINA BOKOVA,
DIRECTOR-GENERAL,
UNESCO

to create an enabling environment for an improved youth participation and engagement in global, regional and national processes related to peace and development.

Thanking the UNESCO for supporting the report, His Excellency Jamal bin Huwaireb, Managing Director of MBRF, said: "The Arab region holds immense potential considering that youth forms a major segment of the population in the region. The Third Arab Knowledge Report has identified critical issues related to youth involvement in the

transfer of knowledge. We have been discussing the issues raised in it with academics and youth, not only in the Arab region but also at the global level. We appreciate UNESCO's continued encouragement for our initiatives aimed at enhancing the role of the youth in the transfer and localisation of knowledge in Arab societies."

The workshop at UNESCO was the third in a series of workshops planned in key Arab and international capitals as part of MBRF's preparations for the second edition of the Knowledge Conference 2015. †



مؤسسة محمد بن راشد آل مكتوم
MOHAMMED BIN RASHID
AL MAKTOUM FOUNDATION



Second Knowledge Conference Announced

Building on the success of the highly acclaimed First Knowledge Conference held last year, the MBRF has announced the second edition of the Knowledge Conference will be held from December 7 to 9, 2015.

Innovation will be the key theme of this year's event, which is set to attract several knowledge experts from diverse sectors as well as diplomats and government representatives.

His Excellency Jamal bin Huwaireb, Managing Director of MBRF, said: "The second edition of the Knowledge Conference will feature innovation as the main theme in line with the directives of President His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan declaring 2015 as the Year of Innovation.

"The Knowledge Conference 2015 will have three core pillars – education, information technology and scientific research. Education has been chosen as a major pillar considering its significance to the progress and development of society. The quality of education is closely linked to social development. Building human capital is critical to achieving sustainable development and social justice to improve the quality of life of the people," he added.

"Information technology has transformed society at an unprecedented scale, and today digital media plays a key role in communications. It is therefore an important and effective element in the fields of development, and a pillar for all major projects.

"Research that led to technological and knowledge development has helped raise human capabilities. It



SECOND KNOWLEDGE CONFERENCE

07-09 DECEMBER 2015

is a pivotal area that influences development efforts, scientific and technological status, infrastructure capabilities and knowledge dissemination in any country."

The inaugural Knowledge Conference was witnessed by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai. The Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Knowledge Award, which honours an international personality for his or her contributions to the dissemination of knowledge, was launched at the Conference establishing it as an international knowledge event.

The first session of the Knowledge Conference also witnessed the launch of the *Third Arab Knowledge Report* and the start of work on the Arab Knowledge Index, an indicator that monitors the status of knowledge in the Arab world on an annual basis. ¹



More Members Join 'My Family Reads' Initiative

Dubai Statistics Centre (DSC) and Emirates Post have become recent additions to the MBRF's 'My Family Reads' initiative. This innovative reading programme aims to build a knowledge-based society by promoting the culture of reading through the delivery of knowledge packages containing a selection of books on various aspects of life.

MBRF will now distribute knowledge packs to employees of both entities. "We are keen to strengthen the process of dissemination and localisation of knowledge through projects and initiatives carried out in partnership with government agencies and institutions," said HE Jamal bin Huwaireb, Managing Director of MBRF.

"The joining of DSC and Emirates Post in 'My Family Reads' will expand the circle of beneficiaries of the initiative. The knowledge packages will reach employees and every member of their families, which will encourage the reading habit and help people gain access to knowledge from all parts of the world," he added.

HE Tariq Al Janahi, Deputy Executive Director of the DSC, also expressed pleasure at the Centre getting the



opportunity to be part of the initiative. "My Family Reads' initiative has helped preserve the Arabic language and enabled the young generations of the UAE to realise the value of our culture and civilisation,

apart from strengthening in them the concept of national identity. The partnership with MBRF will help consolidate mutual cooperation between government institutions in the field of social responsibility and not just at the level of government work," HE Al Janahi said.

For Fahad Al Hosni, Chief Executive of Emirates Post Group, participating in the programme highlights the company's commitment to the Rulers' visions. "Such initiatives foster a culture of reading, raise the level of knowledge and promote knowledge-sharing among institutions and government agencies on the one hand, as well as our employees and their families, on the other," he said. †

RTA's Knowledge Management MOU

The Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) and MBRF recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU), cementing their cooperation in knowledge management.

Signed by HE Mattar Al Tayer, Director General and Chairman of the Board of Executive Directors of the RTA, and HE Jamal bin Huwaireb, Managing Director of the MBRF, the MoU highlights RTA's keenness to acquire knowledge and realise its vision of innovation through MBRF's variety of knowledge products. The MoU includes a host of initiatives



and schemes in the field of spreading knowledge. The highlight of the memorandum is the publication of an 'Innovation in Minutes' digest. MBRF will partner with RTA in selecting the most valuable and knowledge-rich books in the field of innovation in order to summarise and present them in a stylish and attractive form. This drive is an attempt by RTA to enhance the culture of innovation and is also in response to the government's decision to designate 2015 as the UAE's Year of Innovation. †



Oriental Novels

Emirati authors Mohsin Suleiman, Alhonof Mohammed and Talal Salem have revealed the plots of the books they are writing after their visit to Japan last April under the 'Writers Exchange' category of MBRF's Dubai International Programme for Writing.

Based on their experiences in the Land of the Rising Sun, the authors present in intricate details the culture, history and social life of that country.

"The Emirati writers have a clear idea about the final form of their literary works, which summarise their experiences of life in Japan. They have dealt with topics that highlight the cultural ethics of the Japanese people, their work-life balance, as well as their poetry and theatre," said His Excellency Jamal bin Huweireb, Managing Director of MBRF.

Alhonof Mohammed's book deals with the ethics and positive behaviour displayed by the Japanese people. She describes in detail their value for time and their commitment to patience and honesty, amongst others. The book also identifies similarities between the UAE and Japan in terms of people's interests in poetry, traditional dress and national identity. Alhonof



Mohammed goes on to discuss the relationship of the Japanese with poetry in all aspects of life – such as to describe temples, the spring season, religion and theatre. Another chapter of the book harks back to the era of Emperor 'Meiji' and details how he transformed Japan from an isolated country to one of the biggest industrial nations in the world.

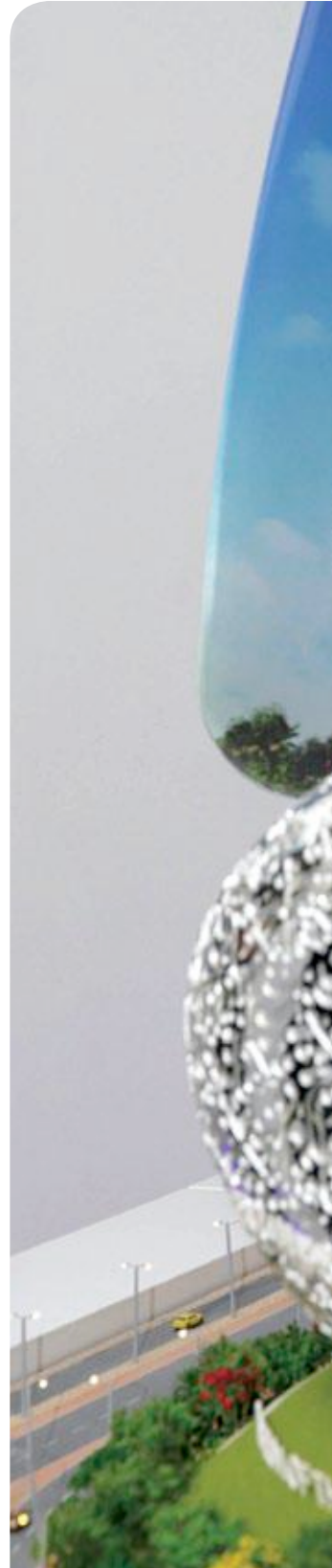
The balance of work and life is the subject of author Talal Salem's book. He also sheds light on Samurai culture and the concept of Bushido based on the doctrine of Zen. The Bushido philosophy still remains a way of life for many Japanese in spite of the challenges of modernity.

Literary works on Japanese theatre are few and far. Author Mohsin Suleiman makes this rarely talked about topic the highlight of his book. With

an aim to convey the Japanese theatrical experience to the outside world, he describes the history of Japanese theatre and its most prominent forms such as Kabuki, Kyogen and Aornacco in his book. "The book will contribute to Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Foundation's efforts to spread knowledge through the Writers Exchange category in which I had the opportunity to participate," said Suleiman.

The Writers Exchange category of the Dubai International Programme for Writing has won much appreciation from educators, literature and culture experts. Since its inception, it has actively sought to raise the level of literary capabilities of young Emirati and Arab writers, and enrich the cultural movement in UAE and the Arab world. †

2015 IS THE
UAE'S YEAR OF
INNOVATION,
AND IN THE
REMAINING
MONTHS THIS
WILL BE THE
ONLY THING
EVERYONE
WILL BE
TALKING
ABOUT







➤ In November 2015, the entire country is going to come together to produce a flood of new ideas, initiatives and innovations. From workshops and seminars to social media contests and discussions, innovating is going to become the country's buzz word. With the UAE aiming to become the most innovative nation in the world within the next seven years, the new event is aimed at helping the country keep its competitive edge in the region and boost its diversification efforts.

Under the directions of HH Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed AL Nahyan, President of UAE, 2015 was announced as the Year of Innovation by the UAE cabinet earlier this year and in keeping with that declaration, HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, UAE's Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai announced the UAE Innovation Week to be held from November 22-28 2015. During this time, the public, private and academic sectors will come together to showcase their innovations in education, health, energy, environment, space, economy and other

service sectors. It will also pit the public sector against the private sector in terms of showcasing innovation.

Innovation is the driver of progress, and governments and businesses that fail to innovate will go backwards, HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid has often warned. "Innovation today is not an option but a necessity, not a general culture but business style. Governments and companies that do not renew or innovate lose competitiveness and control. They are bound to regress," Sheikh Mohammed said.

"We have doubled our investments in innovation and in the equipment, training and education of expert national cadres, because keeping pace with the world around us requires innovative resources and an environment that is supportive of innovation."

Inventors and creative thinkers are hailing Innovation Week as the launch pad for all things pioneering and trailblazing. Emirati inventor and businessman Ahmed Al Mazroei – who has

“Innovation today is not an option but a necessity, not a general culture but business style. Governments and companies that do not renew or innovate lose competitiveness and control. They are bound to regress.”

been named UAE's top innovator by *The National*, said Innovation Week would foster new ideas and generate inventive products.

“We need to get more inventors in the UAE,” said Mr Mazroei. “Making Dubai a big-city hub for innovators will help to support all of the UAE. We need new solutions and new ideas for our country, for the UAE.”

Innovation Week is expected to become the most important destination for innovative and creative thinkers with its slew of workshops, seminars and creative laboratories – all meant to spark new ideas and re-evaluate established inventions. And with the Ruler of Dubai urging all citizens of the UAE to use social media to brainstorm inventive ideas and projects, the event will encompass everyone. HH Sheikh

Mohammed has asked the public to vote for the most innovative teachers or teaching methods, government entity, national companies and universities. Apart from recognising and rewarding innovation, these awards will further cause a qualitative shift in the culture of innovation in all institutions and sectors.

UAE and HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid have been championing innovation for a long time. In October 2014, the UAE launched a national innovation strategy. On the heels of this announcement came the declaration by the UAE Cabinet that 2015 would be the Year of Innovation. Earlier this year, the government announced the creation of a new post Chief Executive Officer of Innovation for every government department giving innovation a further boost. ↑



Emirati inventor and businessman Ahmed Al Mazroei has been named UAE's top innovator by *The National*

SEE THE FUTURE

What will the future be like? Thinkers will be able to find the answer to this timeless question at Dubai's Museum of the Future.

“The future belongs to those who can imagine it, design it, and execute it,” said HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum. “Here in the UAE we think differently. While others try to predict the future, we create it.” And this is just what the emirate will be doing at the Museum due to be completed in 2017. The Dh500 million museum is the first of its kind and will be built using 3D printing techniques and will offer visitors the opportunity to experience the future through simulations and interactive demonstrations.

The Museum of the Future will become the nucleus of innovation and creativity bringing researchers, designers, inventors and financiers under a single roof and will empower them to test, fund and market their ideas for futuristic prototypes and services. Innovative labs focusing



on health, education, smart cities, energy and transport will be part of the exhibition too. From the world's leading technology giants to fresh start-ups, the Museum will provide a global platform to demonstrate and test the latest inventions.

“The world is entering a new era of accelerated knowledge and great technological revolutions. We aim to lead in that era, not to follow and lag behind. The Museum of the Future is the first step of many to come, marking the beginning of great achievements,” said Sheikh

Mohammed at the launch.

The creation of the museum reflects Sheikh Mohammed's vision that a new approach is required for fast-moving, dynamic, and uncertain times in order to create long-lasting innovations that benefit both organisations and society. Once fully functioning, the museum will become a major centre for anticipating future trends in all scientific and technological fields, collaborating with governments from all over the world to develop solutions for their current and future work and service challenges. ↑



ISLAMIC ECONOMY'S NEW HUB

Dubai is looking to become the capital of the global Islamic economy and with the emirate recently achieving the first goal of its strategy, pole position is well within grasp.

In July this year, Dubai overtook Malaysia and London for listing Islamic bonds on its exchanges. The achievement came within two years of HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, announcing his plans to make the emirate the global capital of Islamic economy.

A study by Nasdaq Dubai reported that Sukuk (Islamic bonds) listed on Dubai's two exchanges, Nasdaq Dubai and Dubai Financial Market, rose to \$36.7bn (Dhs 134.38bn) in 2015, surpassing the three traditionally biggest sukuk centres by a wide margin – Malaysia had \$26.6bn listed on Bursa Malaysia and the Labuan free trade zone; the Irish Stock Exchange saw sukuk listings of \$25.7bn and the London Stock Exchange had \$25.1bn.

“When we launched our plan to become the world's capital of Islamic economy two years ago, some brothers had doubts. But today we have achieved the first goal even before the date we had set. We have a clear vision for our next achievement in 2020,” said HH Sheikh Mohammed.

WHAT IS THE GLOBAL ISLAMIC ECONOMY?

The Islamic economy is driven by a consumer base of 1.6 billion Muslims worldwide — a population base that is projected to grow at almost double the rate of the world's non-Muslim population. However, its impact is not limited just to the Muslim population. Islamic economy is open to all discerning consumers, citizens, and businesses from Australia to Alaska who understand the need to improve the way they consume,

produce and work with one another. It is widely seen as a way of living through products, experiences, services, processes and relationships that are halal, ethical, wholesome and family-friendly.

Thomson Reuters values the global Islamic economy at \$6.7 trillion. It is potentially the fourth largest trading bloc in the world, coming in after the United States, China and the European Union. The Reuters report also forecasts that Muslim consumers' global expenditure on the media, food, and lifestyle sectors such as cosmetics and tourism will touch \$2.47 trillion by 2018.

Clearly, Islamic economy is the flavour of the times and its demand is on a continuous rise. Owing to its principled approach and high value proposition, Islamic banking and financial services have gained popularity beyond the market of practising Muslims. Additionally, Islamic finance is seen as having an ‘inbuilt anti-crisis mode’. So, for a world reeling from the after-effects of the global financial crisis, Islamic banking offers a steadier, safer approach. Thanks to its steady growth, increasing assets and straightforward principles, Islamic economy has become an established reality within the system of global economy, a view that is also held by the UAE's leadership.

THE SEVEN SECTORS OF ISLAMIC ECONOMY

Dubai has been quick to recognise that the Islamic economy will grow to cover a sizeable portion of the world's economic activity. In HH Sheikh Mohammed's words, “Through the huge economic opportunities and the massive partnerships that it can >

create, Islamic economy can provide a key to further stability and development in our region.”

In 2013 Sheikh Mohammed tasked a select number of the emirate’s top executives to position Dubai as a world leader in Islamic finance, goods and services – within three years. At the time critics thought the vision was farfetched, but with the emirate slipping into number one position for sukuk within two years, it now seems plausible.

While leadership in global sukuk was one of the main targets set by HH Sheikh Mohammed, his vision for Dubai as the capital of the Islamic economy is of course, much wider and more comprehensive. It encompasses leadership in seven major sectors of Islamic economy including Islamic finance; the halal industry; tourism; digital infrastructure; arts; knowledge; and standardisation.

The main pillar of the three-year strategy was positioning Dubai as the centre for Islamic banking and finance. Dubai’s coming in at top position for sukuk, the emirate has now won investor confidence as well as established itself as a global platform for Islamic regulations and operations.



His Excellency
Mohammad
Abdullah Al
Gergawi, Dubai
Islamic Economy
Development
Centre (DIEDC)

DUBAI ISLAMIC ECONOMY DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

To ensure that the seven pillars of the Islamic economy were established firmly, quickly and with transparency, the Dubai Islamic Economy Development Centre (DIEDC) was set up. Chaired by His Excellency Mohammad Abdullah Al Gergawi, the main goals of the Centre are promoting Dubai regionally and globally as a main centre for shariah-compliant goods and financial

and non-financial services; building a database on Islamic economic activities and encouraging recourse to arbitration in related Islamic economic activities disputes are also among the key objectives of the Centre.

The first and only organisation of its kind in the world, DIEDC aims to creating an empowering environment for Islamic economy in Dubai through initiatives like waqf-based micro-financing institutes, a halal park for reprocessing and repackaging of halal food, formation of a global halal network, development of halal-friendly hotels, creation of Arabic and shariah-compliant technology and supporting Islamic art and architecture amongst others.

With an extensive and solid relationship with a wide range of international investors, one of the world’s best regulatory and procedural environments and a clear development plan backed by all government departments, the Centre is confident that its Islamic economy goals will be achieved before 2020.

GLOBAL ISLAMIC ECONOMY SUMMIT

In October this year, over 2000 policymakers, thinkers, and business leaders will converge in Dubai to build a road map around the key pillars of the Islamic economy. The Global Islamic Economy Summit (GIES) will run from October 5-6, and will focus on innovation, growth strategies, and the high uptake of brands and services within the Islamic economy sector as well as the pillars of Islamic economy.

GIES is held under the aegis of DIEDC and Dubai Chamber in partnership with Thomson Reuters. 2015 marks the second edition of the summit and this year’s event aims to highlight successful innovations as well as new opportunities in ethical investment, organic food, modest clothing, family-friendly travel, media, recreation trends and technology solutions.

One of the key features of the summit is the Islamic Economy Awards ceremony that recognises and rewards innovative world-class business initiatives and ideas that have contributed to the social and economic welfare of the Muslim population. To be eligible for the award, the ideas presented must prove to enhance bilateral trade and investment relations between Islamic nations and forge closer economic ties with the rest of the world towards fostering prosperity, harmony and well-being for all. In addition, the ceremony also confers a ‘Lifetime Achievement Award’ to an outstanding, influential and most importantly, an inspirational business leader who has made a



Award Ceremony
at the Global
Islamic Economy
Summit in Dubai

significant impact on the Islamic economy.

Other key highlights of GIES 2015 include an “Entrepreneurship for Impact” competition jointly organised with Dubai Silicon Oasis Authority, as well as an art exhibition showcasing new Islamic artwork and a concert celebrating Islamic artists.

DIEDC visualises that the second edition of the summit will have considerable impact on the trends within the Islamic economy sector, especially in terms of identifying and developing insights across the key segments of Islamic economy. The upcoming summit will aim to showcase some of the world’s best practices in this domain, and boost innovation and creative approaches to investment opportunities. The Centre aims to utilise the summit to create new opportunities to support our position as pioneers of the Islamic economy in the World.

WORLD ISLAMIC ECONOMIC FORUM

Dubai’s bid to become the global capital for Islamic finance received further boost when the emirate hosted the 10th World Islamic Economic Forum in October last year. Winning the right to stage the forum was a coup for the emirate, moving it away from its home in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, for only the second time in its 10-year history.

For three days, over 3000 attendees – which included Heads of State and Government, top-level CEOs, leaders and experts from the global economic arena – came together for thought-provoking discussions, plenary sessions, one-to-one meetings and exclusive networking opportunities.

Islamic finance experts said the event became a meeting point for Islam and capitalism, and where Islamic finance truly became a global concept.

NEW INITIATIVES

Recently HH Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of the Dubai Executive Council, approved a variety of initiatives proposed by the DIEDC to boost the emirate’s status as a global hub of the Islamic economy. These include the launch of the second Islamic Economy Index, as well as the third edition of the Islamic Economy Award, the second Global Islamic Economy Summit and the release of the third State of Global Islamic Economy Report.

“Dubai will be the main reference worldwide in Islamic financing in all its forms by 2020...we have accumulated experience and a clear roadmap and strategic partners inside and outside the country to achieve the directives of Sheikh Mohammed to be the main reference of the global Islamic economy,” he said.

Earlier in January, DIEDC announced plans to launch the world’s first online portal for Islamic economy. The Centre also plans to launch an international centre for governance of Islamic companies, an international centre for accreditation of halal products and a centre for Islamic governance, which will set the regulations that govern contracts and economic activities according to the principles of Sharia. Furthermore, Dubai Chamber is set to appoint a special team to work on Islamic Economy Studies and to develop report on the current state of the Islamic economy.

Last year, the DIEDC in partnership with Thomson Reuters and in collaboration with the Dinar Standard introduced the Global Islamic Economy Indicator (GIEI). GIEI presents the current development health of Islamic economy sectors across 70 core countries and the UAE, Malaysia and Bahrain lead this inaugural composite Index. 📈

THE ART AVENUE

A treasure trove of creativity awaits art lovers in Al Quoz industrial area. Flashes speaks to the man behind Dubai's new cultural address. —→

Tucked away in gritty Al Quoz, among a complex of warehouses and mechanical and industrial servicing workshops, sits Alserkal Avenue, billed as one of the city's prime arts and culture destinations. The Avenue has grown organically since 2007 to house 20 creative businesses, seven of which are contemporary art galleries, each one with its own distinct identity and each one promoting its own individual artistic programme.

This pioneering cultural project is the brainchild of Emirati businessman and art lover, Abdelmonem Bin Eisa Alserkal. Alserkal envisioned the warehouses of Al Quoz as an arts quarter and invited galleries to move in. Today the Avenue holds international acclaim for pioneering the region's cultural scene and for being at the forefront of encouraging cultural dialogue.







Photos: www.alserkalavenue.ae

Earlier this year, Alserkal Avenue announced the launch of its expansion in November 2015. The expansion will house an additional 45 creative organisations complementing Alserkal Avenue's contemporary art focus with a diversified portfolio that will include architecture, media, design, retail and F&B concepts, adding a new dimension to its current synergy. We caught up with Abdelmonem bin Eisa Alserkal to talk about his love for the arts and his vision for Dubai's burgeoning cultural district.

Was it difficult to convince art galleries to set up shop here?

The galleries and creative spaces loved the industrial, raw and organic feel of the area and so interest to come to the Avenue came naturally. The interest from international galleries in moving into MENA through Alserkal Avenue expansion reflects the growth of the region's contemporary art scene. By welcoming established international art galleries with distinct programmes, such as with the Leila Heller NY and Stephane Custot, and establishing partnerships such as Jean Paul Najjar Foundation, we will significantly strengthen the existing art infrastructure. Together with our homegrown galleries, they create a strong foundation for dialogue, collaboration and exchange – all things that Alserkal Avenue is passionate about and strongly invested in.

How important is art to social growth?

In any society, in any part of the world, art is an expression of the socio-cultural landscape and the collective artworks from a region at any given period of time are a commentary on life, its trials and triumphs. It provides a means for people from different cultures and backgrounds to understand each other and therefore grow. At Alserkal Avenue,





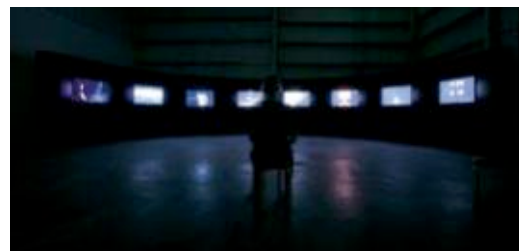
we want to lead that conversation, that exploration and that discovery of our own as well as other cultures.

How does Alserkal Avenue work to represent the diversity within the region and encourage cross-cultural exchange?

Alserkal Avenue is becoming an arts organisation, with its own homegrown programme dedicated to supporting dialogue and the production of performance, public art and social practices by artists living and working in the MENA and South Asia region. By encouraging the creation of art that is collaborative, participatory and ephemeral, Alserkal Avenue looks to further strengthen the art eco-system by ensuring artists have opportunities to make work that might not be easily supported by the regional market. As part of this commitment to regional artists, and for the first time in the UAE, Alserkal Avenue will launch live-in artists' studio spaces to support locally and regionally based talent.

What is your vision for art in Dubai? How far has it been achieved?

Dubai has changed and evolved to become a cosmopolitan city in a very short period of time with an arts scene that is fairly young, but already serving as a commercial hub regionally. International interest continues to grow, last year more than 70 museum groups attended Art Dubai. There has also been a growing interest from important international arts institutions in the MENASA region, further shaping the cultural dialogue, especially leading up to WorldExpo 2020. [f](#)





Will we be frozen?

Scientists are claiming the Earth is going to freeze over by 2030. But how true is the claim?

Climate scientists, physicists and astronomers have locked horns over a recent study that claims a mini ice age could hit the Earth in the 2030s due to reduced solar activity. The last mini ice age, known as Maunder Minimum, occurred between 1645 and 1715 and caused temperatures in northern Europe to fall dramatically, with London's River Thames freezing over during winter and sea ice extending for miles around the UK.

A new mathematical model of the sun's solar cycle by Valentina Zharkova, a mathematics professor at Northumbria University, suggests that another cold snap is headed our way after solar activity will see a "significant" drop, causing temperatures on Earth to plummet.

THE THEORY

The previous Maunder Minimum has been linked to a reduction in the number of sunspots on the sun's surface, as observed by scientists at the time. Such periods were thought to be driven by convecting waves of fluids deep within the Sun, but the new research suggests a second force

– or "wave" – is at play. And that these two waves, operating at different layers, in the sun's interiors drive solar activity. Both waves work on 11 year cycles and fluctuate between the northern and southern hemispheres of the Sun. When the waves stay in phase we see high levels of solar activity such as sunspots, and when out of phase we see low activity causing temperatures on Earth to fall.

Zharkova studied solar activity data from 1976-2008 and claims the data matches her mathematical model by 97 per cent. Based on this, her team used the model to predict how the two separate waves would behave during the next solar cycles. They found that by cycle 25, which peaks in 2022, the pair of waves would be increasingly offset. During cycle 26, covering the period 2030-2040, the two waves will be exactly out of synch causing a significant reduction in solar activity.

"In cycle 26, the two waves exactly mirror each other – peaking at the same time but in opposite hemispheres of the Sun. Their interaction

Source: www.wired.co.uk, Forbes and Newsweek

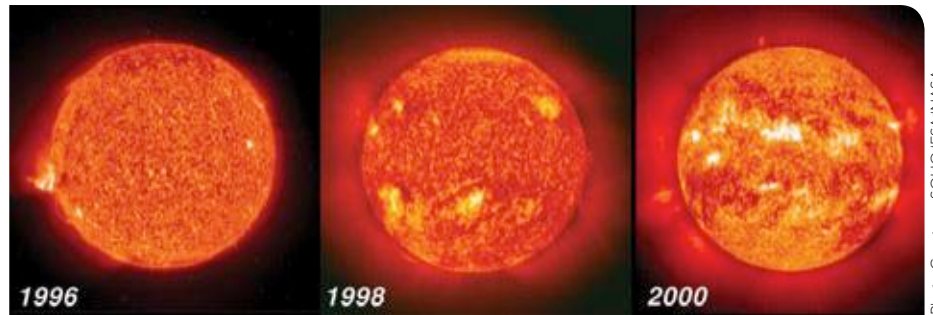


Photo Courtesy: SOHO/ESA/NASA

will be disruptive, or they will nearly cancel each other. We predict that this will lead to the properties of a 'Maunder minimum,'" Zharkova said.

THE CONTROVERSY

However some sections of the scientific community are countering Zharkova's claims. They believe that factors other than low solar output were also responsible for the last ice age experienced in the early 1700s. For instance, large volcanic eruptions sent enough ash particles into the high atmosphere to absorb and reflect sunlight back into space, cooling the planet slightly. Plus the little ice age was mostly confined to Europe rather than being a global phenomenon.

Researchers highlight that the changes predicted by Zharkova and her team aren't significant enough to impact global climate, especially compared with other factors. Solar variations do have some effects but these are localised – especially nearer the poles. But what has irked climate change specialists and physicists the most is the new research's hypothesis that the Sun is the primary driver of climate change, rather than human activity. This goes against the overwhelming consensus among climate scientists.

Real climate models include solar output (and yes, sunspots), but also carbon emissions, the El Niño and El Niña phenomena in the ocean, burning vegetation, and many other factors they argue.

Furthermore, the press statement released by the research team only announced that solar activity would "fall by 60 per cent". James Renwick, a professor at Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand and an expert in atmospheric physics, strongly disagrees.

"A decrease in solar output of one per

cent would be a very big deal for the climate system. A 60 per cent decrease would end all life on Earth, forever probably. I am kind of surprised no one much has commented on this yet or pointed out how unlikely it is," he says. Perhaps, what Zharkova and her co-authors meant, Renwick explains, was that the amplitude of the solar cycle may decrease by 60 per cent during that period. In other words, during an 11-year period in the 2030s, the two magnetic waves that produce sunspots – temporary phenomena that correlate with higher levels of solar activity – are predicted to interact in such a way as to nearly cancel each other out, causing a 60 per cent drop in the difference between peak and height solar activity, as compared with the 11-year-cycle before. This would equal a decrease in solar output of roughly 0.1 per cent, according to Renwick.

And a 0.1 per cent drop in solar output doesn't hold much significance for us. "If things played out as described in Zharkova's paper, and we did see a decrease in solar output roughly as happened in the 1700s, there would be some cooling for 20 or 30 years," according to Renwick. "But the levels of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases are so much higher now (and will be even higher in 2030) that temperatures would not drop much below where they are today. And that drop would last only until 2050 or so. Then we'd have a bounce upwards again."

Howard Diamond, the programme director for the federal US Climate Reference Network, is in agreement with Renwick. "Regionally, there may be more cooling, but overall the globe would go back for a while to conditions experienced in the first half of the 20th century," he says, hardly a period of unusual cold.

So for now we can rest assured that another ice age isn't going to sweep across the Earth. 

Above right: Comparison of three images over four years apart illustrates how the level of solar activity has risen from near minimum to near maximum in the Sun's 11-years solar cycle.



Learn the Gooru way

Winner of the The Tech Awards 2014, online learning platform Gooru is changing the way students learn.

Online learning platforms are causing a seismic shift in the way schools are teaching and students are learning. Their popularity can be attributed to the freedom they give learners in comparison with traditional schooling methods. Students can fit their schooling around their schedules plus they can customise their learning experiences going as slow or fast as they want. Without any age bars or any other kinds of pre-requisites, online platforms have also opened learning to everyone.

Egged on by the advantages of virtual learning, Dr. Prasad Ram, aka Pram, founded Gooru in 2011. Pram first developed the prototype for Gooru at Google where he was head of R&D. Pram has also been CTO for Yahoo! and contributed to the development of Google Maps, News, and Translate. Armed with these experiences, his initial vision for Gooru was to make it the 'search engine for learning'.

Today, Gooru describes itself as a non-profit

education technology start-up in Silicon Valley with a mission to honor the human right to education. It has evolved into an open platform for personalised learning. Pram calls it a free community-led platform that empowers all teachers and students with quality learning resources and real-time data.

HOW DOES IT WORK

Gooru enables teachers to find, remix, and share collections to help students reach their full potential. Learners can browse thousands of collections created by teachers, remix web and original content to create custom collections of multiple choice, true/false, fill in the blank, or open-ended questions and share collections with friends. Gooru gives teachers the ability to monitor their students engagement, comprehension, and progress and even allows them to intervene in real-time and pinpoint where students are struggling or excelling.

The platform operates on four simple premises: Discover, Organise, Teach and Study. With Gooru, both learners and educators can search for content, create their own personalised library and track progress. It also filters results to help get the appropriate content. Educators say that the use of a result filter, based on the type of results and according to the state standard, makes the Gooru experience even better.

Additionally, the learning experience is an open one – teachers and students can access as well as contribute to a dynamic catalogue of learning resources. To date, over a million questions have been contributed by teachers and that number is rising every day. Pram also points to more than 100,000 collections of open content on the site and the community they are inspiring. With an active community of teacher contributors, Gooru is focusing on making the highest-quality materials discoverable and dynamic. Looking forward, Pram sees an opportunity to provide insight so that educators and students can make informed choices with data.

Just last year, Gooru added an assessment and analytics system making the platform even more exciting. With the power of big analytics, Gooru rises from being just another education technology that is automating the teaching or learning process. It puts the teacher at the centre of the learning map, making intuitive suggestions all along. Author Jordan Shapiro likens Gooru to movie website Netflix.

Using Gooru, teachers can create shared online ‘playlists’. Then, data about how the students actually used the resources is recorded and analysed. At every interaction, the platform captures usage data, social signals and learning outcomes, which are then used to develop user profiles, inform recommendation algorithms, and provide teachers with tools to deliver personalised learning to their students. To explain, a teacher might think that his students love videos, but Gooru knows that they turn them all off after a few minutes. What’s more, the teacher might discover that the students who only watched two minutes performed just as well as the ones who watched the whole video.

In this way Gooru not only analyses usage trends but also assesses the efficacy

of available learning resources.

Pram knows that Gooru is only as strong as the catalogue of resources from which it draws. So his team built it to encourage teachers to organise resources and construct study questions and assessments that become part of Gooru’s catalogue. “Teachers are part of the development team.” Pram’s goal is not to gain a monopoly on the gigantic edtech market. Instead, he says, “We want to expand the education resources.”

Gooru has also kept its technology open to all. This means that all major mobile device manufacturers, leading publishers, key education technology providers and a host of innovative startups can – and are – developing custom apps to bring the benefits of Gooru to their users.

The Tech Museum of Innovation selected Gooru as a Laureate for The Tech Awards 2014 for its Education Award for “touching all corners of the globe in their efforts to use technology to solve some of humanity’s most urgent problems.”

THE PATH FORWARD

Currently schools in Riverside Unified, Santa Ana Unified, Val Verde Unified, Partnership to Uplift Community (PUC) Schools, and Leadership Public Schools (LPS) are part of the Gooru Schools Collaborative and have made K-12 learning open to all through Gooru. “It’s been very powerful, very exciting to see these schools come together and create a platform and support neighbouring districts,” said Pram.

The Gooru Schools Collaborative has personalisation strategies, crowd sourcing of open teaching and learning resources. Further, it is engaged in developing a learning continuum for both student and adult learners. Gooru has also digitized Santa Ana’s 80 K-12 units of study making it easy for teachers to customise the units to be responsive to the needs, interests and competencies of their students. Students are now being assigned lessons that are differentiated to their particular level or area of interest.

For the path forward, Pram is ambitious, “Airbnb owns lodging experience, Uber owns transportation experience without having to create the infrastructure for lodging or transportation. We want an open platform where everyone can innovate on learning experiences.”

FIND



BROWSE THOUSANDS OF K-12 COLLECTIONS MADE BY TEACHERS, OR SEARCH OVER 16M RESOURCES.

REMIX



REMIX COLLECTIONS AND CUSTOMISE CONTENT TO MEET YOUR STUDENTS’ NEEDS.

SHARE



SHARE COLLECTIONS WITH STUDENTS VIA MY CLASSES. LOGIN IS NOT REQUIRED TO ACCESS.

MONITOR



MEASURE YOUR STUDENTS’ ENGAGEMENT AND PROGRESS TO INTERVENE IN REAL-TIME.



Trees that aren't green

Japanese study shows that even forests can cause pollution.

For decades it has been firmly fixed in our minds that forests are good for the environment. But a recent study in Japan is challenging the theory and showing that old cedar and cypress trees are causing as much pollution as cities.

Masaaki Chiwa, the lead author of the study and an assistant professor at Kyushu University in Japan, says the pollution is not the fault of the trees but their management.

In Japan, as in other countries, natural forests usually play a significant role in maintaining water quality. Back in the 1950s

and 1960s, 60 per cent of Japanese cedar and cypress plantations were established on private land. "These are not natural forests; they were meant for commercial purposes," says Chiwa.

At the time of their planting, there was a short supply of these trees. But an increase in imports of other woods affected prices of these trees causing a fall in active plantation management. The result was overcrowded land with aging trees and little to no undergrowth.

These older plantations are now a source



of nitrogen pollution according to the study. Needles from the aging trees fall and accumulate on the plantation floor where earthworms and soil microbes decompose them returning the nutrients to the soil. New and younger plants on the forest floor then use these nutrients for their growth.

With the plantations being nearly half-a-century old, the growth of the old trees is very slow. They use fewer nutrients from the soil than younger trees, including nitrogen. Furthermore, crowding of the trees means there is too much shade to encourage new growth. Lesser new growth means lesser absorption of the excess nutrients. And since the plants are not using the nutrients, they form runoff heading to the streams causing algae blooms.

Cedar and cypress plantations account for nearly 30 per cent of the forestland in Japan, making the findings of this study significant. Chiwa and his team recommend that the plantation land be thinned and returned to a more natural forest state.

To verify that the thinning will reduce runoff, Chiwa and his team are now measuring the amount of nitrogen flowing from the plantations. "We have been measuring water quality to evaluate the effect of forest thinning on water quality including nitrogen loss."

They hope that through better management these plantations can be brought back to a less-crowded, more natural state, restoring their ability to clean water rather than pollute it. [↑](#)

Left-right: 60 per cent of Japanese cedar and cypress plantations were established on private land; China and his team recommend that the plantation land be thinned and returned to a more natural forest state..



Chip off the Old Block

Apart from physical traits and habits, children are also susceptible to inheriting anxiety and depression from their parents according to new research.

According to a new study from the Department of Psychiatry and the Health Emotions Research Institute at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, elevated levels of activity in particular areas of the brain, which are inherited from generation to generation, may set the stage for the development of anxiety and stress-related illnesses.

Dr. Ned Kalin's research group studied the behavioral patterns of rhesus monkeys – whose behaviour patterns are very similar to human beings – to arrive at the conclusion. Nearly 600 individual rhesus monkeys belonging to a multi-generational family were examined.

The team exposed the young monkeys to a mildly anxiety-causing situation, such as exposure to a stranger who does not make eye contact. During the encounter, the research team imaged the young monkeys' brains and found that individual differences in anxiety-related brain function could be explained in part by the family tree. A young monkey was more likely to experience greater anxiety, and demonstrate greater brain activity in specific neural circuits, if it had a family history of such anxiety.

Using cutting-edge brain imaging techniques, Kalin's group found that brain metabolism – a widely accepted measure of brain activity – in specific brain areas could account for a significant portion of the inherited risk of developing extreme anxiety. They found that brain function in the prefrontal-limbic-midbrain circuit was a major player in the development of early-life inherited anxiety. The prefrontal-limbic-midbrain circuit is responsible for many different functions of human emotion and action, especially in evaluating potentially threatening information to initiate anxiety-related responses.

Precise brain imaging combined with information from the inter-generational family tree, led Kalin's group to determine that brain function – not structure – was the key link between genetics and the childhood risk of developing stress-related psychiatric disease.

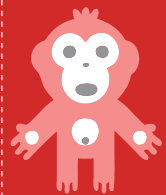


Dr. Ned Kalin

Although previous research has proved that anxiety can be inherited, the specific brain structures involved in mediating the inborn risk for these debilitating disorders was poorly understood till now. Kalin's research findings, however, are a big leap forward and can help combat depressive diseases through early intervention and patient education.

Patients who know they have a higher risk of developing breast cancer, for example, are more likely to seek regular checkups by their doctor and stay invested in their health. Similarly, if patients knew they were more likely to develop anxiety-related disorders, maybe they too would feel empowered to stay ahead of the disease by seeking counselling or lowering daily stress levels.

"Now that we know where to look, we can develop a better understanding of the molecular alterations that give rise to anxiety-related brain function," said Kalin. "Our genes shape our brains to help make us who we are." †



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FEMALE EMIRATI DESIGNERS GET BIGGER WINGS

d3, in conjunction with Zayed University, sent a contingent of female design students from the UAE to the 21st International Symposium of Electronic Art (ISEA), held in Vancouver



Arab artists are truly making waves internationally if the recent developments at the 21st International Symposium of Electronic Art (ISEA) are anything to go by. Dubai Design District, d3, put together a team of some of the UAE's most cutting-edge design students, and flew them on an educational trip to Vancouver, Canada, to participate in this year's edition of the celebrated electronic arts festival. In keeping with its agenda to nurture homegrown talent and present it to a global audience, d3, in conjunction with Zayed University, sent four designers – Maha Yousif Al Obaidli, Fatma Mohamad Al Mazrooei, Mitha Abdulhakim and Bashayer Abdelrazaq Qambar. These shining stars will also absorb their experience in Canada and on return will create artworks that reflect their exposure to this dazzling kaleidoscope of creativity. During their educational trip to ISEA 2105, the Emirati design students enjoyed meeting with some of the symposium's creatives such as multi-disciplinary artist Evann Siebens.

THE FUTURE OF ART AND DESIGN

As a key sponsor of ISEA, d3's involvement with the symposium is also allowing it to showcase to the world the creative potential of the Arab world to some of the best names in the field of electronic arts. Lindsay Miller, Managing Director of d3, said, "d3 is committed to supporting young creative talent from the UAE. These students are the future of art and design from this region, and by participating directly in a respected platform like ISEA, they will be proudly showcasing the incredible design talent that we have on offer in the Emirates."

ISEA 2015, hosted by Simon Fraser University over a six-day period, brought together more than 450 of the most innovative and exciting minds in the field to share their expertise. Mind-bending forums on research, design, new media and internet technologies were held, which offered artists the chance to collaborate more globally. Yet it is the story of our UAE whiz kids that is truly inspiring:



it goes back to a year ago, when ISEA 2014 was hosted in Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Sharjah. Back then, a project titled Our Hour experimented with bi-lingual movie posters, which until the early '80s were hand-painted in the Middle East. The project was designed to create works of art using these posters as a reference, but employing a context steeped in the students' childhood. It made for a delightful nostalgia: the posters designed for their favourite TV shows emulated the style widely exhibited back then. By digitally recreating the designs these creative girls paid homage to the evolution of typography and style in their ever-changing visual culture. The show was well received by the ISEA board and this led to their invitation to present and participate in ISEA 2015, Vancouver.

Janet Bellotto, the artistic director of ISEA 2014 and the interim dean of the College of Arts and Creative Enterprises at Zayed University, Dubai, had a vision that was forward-thinking and visionary in terms of including local talent and honing it to international levels. "ISEA is a connecting port or an umbrella to act in a number of ways," she said then. "I hope to highlight what is already going on here in the galleries, the community, the different institutions, as well as create lasting relationships with international artists. The important thing for us is getting our students involved, because they are the up-and-coming generation of artists and designers and they will need to be equipped with these tools as they enter the future; particularly with Expo 2020 around the corner. The one thing I have in mind with ISEA is that while I know very well the vibrancy and the talent and creativity coming from the UAE, many people internationally still are not aware of it. I want people to come here and experience it and have conversations about what is possible so that we can create a lasting impact for the future."

FINDING RELEVANT EXPOSURE

Women from the world of Arab art are indeed finding more relevant and sympathetic exposure across the globe. For example, the exhibition "Here and Elsewhere" held last year at the New Museum brought to New York an awe-inspiring palette of contemporary art from the Middle East and North Africa. "Even more remarkable, of the 45-plus artists on view, many shown for the first time in the United States (although they've often appeared in international exhibitions and biennials, including Documenta, Venice, São Paulo, and Sharjah) – almost half were women.



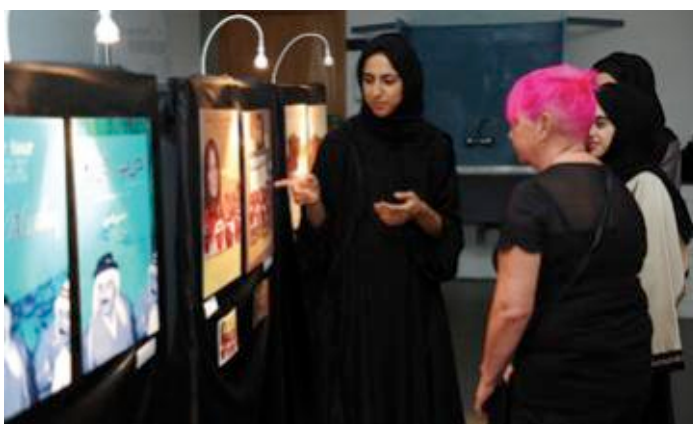
Left: Prof. Dahlia Mahmoud of Zayed University at her classes teaching one of her students.



Above: Hind Bin Bemaithan of d3 gives a talk at ISEA 2015

"It's a percentage, still rarely mustered in major exhibitions in the United States or elsewhere, that raises a number of questions," said Lilly Wei of ARTNews. "The work produced has been well received both nationally and internationally; pieces experimenting with structural yet innovative elements of Arab design have led to numerous interdisciplinary and cross-cultural collaborations. This leaves both the students and myself empowered and excited to move ahead beyond ISEA, Vancouver 2015. I look forward to developing more opportunities for our youth in cultural diplomacy through creative thinking and design," said Prof Dahlia Mahmoud, Assistant Professor of Graphic Design Zayed University College of Arts and Creative Enterprise. ↑

Below: In 2014, students from Zayed University presented examples of their work to ISEA international board members, who then invited them to ISEA 2015 in Vancouver.





SKILLED EMIRATIS

The WorldSkills Competition, held in Sao Paulo this year, hosted 27 competitors and two team leaders from the UAE. We share with you some of their experiences.





GO GLOBAL

An Emirati delegation was handed over the WorldSkills flag from its Brazilian hosts as more than 7000 participants, supporters and delegates cheered on. The flag was received by HE Mubarak Al Shamsi, the Director General of the Abu Dhabi Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training; Ali Al Marzouqi, the Director of EmiratesSkills; and two Emirati competitors, Abdulla Al Hamad and Laila Al Mahri.

In addition, the UAE team in S o Paulo boasted 27 competitors and two team leaders. This is the largest contingent that the UAE has ever sent to a WorldSkills competition.

Aside from celebrating excellence, the WorldSkills competition also brings to the forefront the importance of professional education and emphasizes its need for socio-economic change. Participants also get to engage with their contemporaries from across the globe.

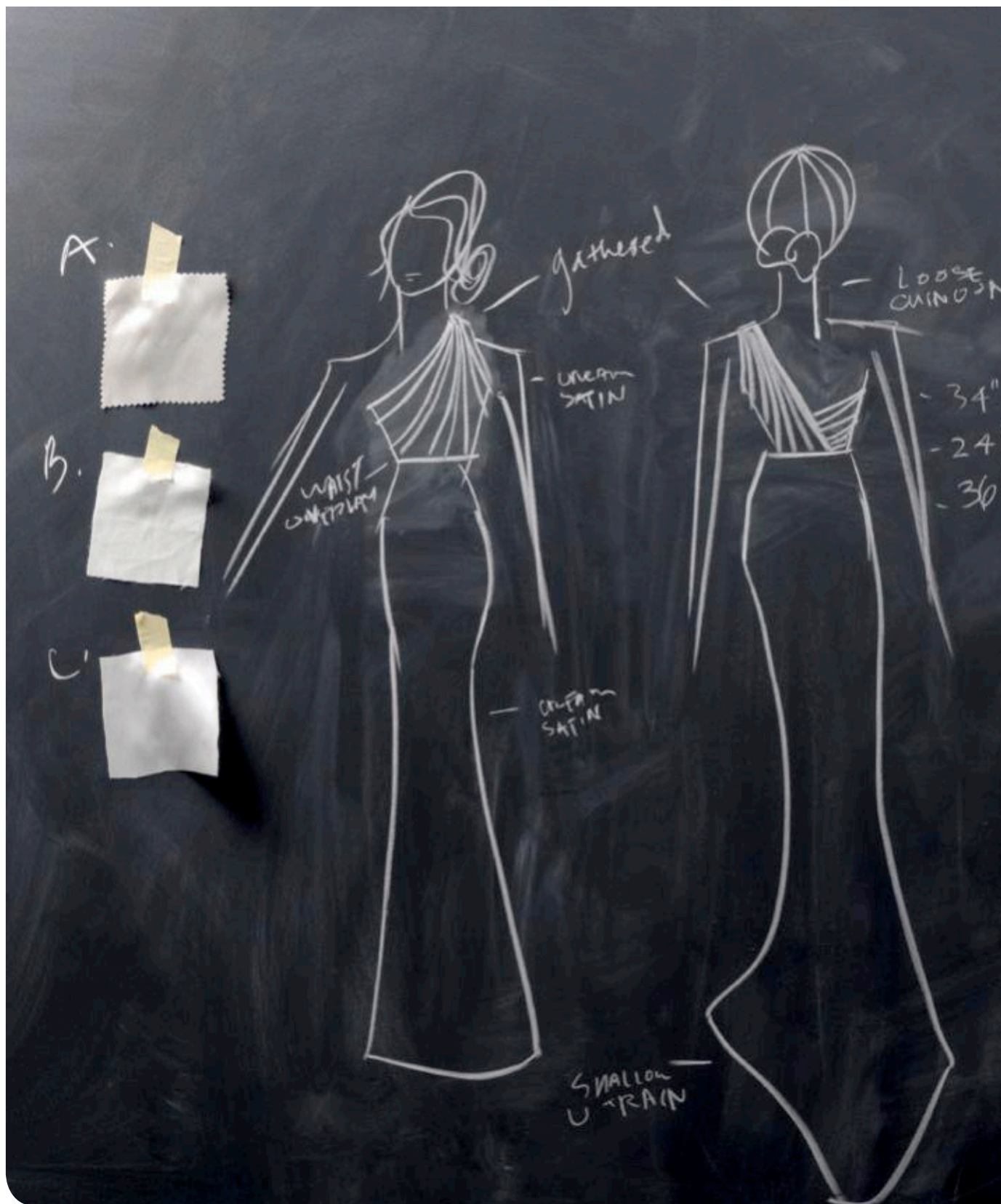
Emirati participants have picked up not only amazing skills, but have also returned enthused from the event. "Representing the UAE was a great feeling," said Khlood Al Shkeili, 21, from Abu Dhabi, who competed in the IT network systems administration category. "I learnt many many things." "People here work on the same matter with a different approach," said Mudhaffar Helal Al Shamsi, 25, from Al Ain, who competed in the aircraft maintenance category. "I may have worked on an engine one way and they came to show me another way. So we learn from each other and I see international skills."

In the meanwhile, Abu Dhabi is the venue for the WorldSkills in 2017, the first time that the event will be held in the MENA region.

"Abu Dhabi is a world-class destination and we intend to put on a world-class competition," said Aidan Jones, the chief executive of WorldSkills Abu Dhabi 2017. "I have been struck since I moved to Abu Dhabi by the dynamism of the economy and the incredible facilities that the emirate has to offer. We will deliver not just a first-rate series of competitions, but also a series of fun and interesting events alongside."

Moreover, this forthcoming event will also offer the opportunity for locals to show off the potential of the United Arab Emirates. "As an Emirati, I am excited that people from all around the world will come to see our country," said Mudhaffar Helal Al Shamsi. "We are preparing a very exciting WorldSkills so that everyone can come together and see what the UAE is."





Right: Stella McCartney is leading the way in putting sustainable practices at the heart of running her business.



ethical and environmental concerns.

Can luxury fashion be sustainable? I argue that it can, although changing the status quo is going to present serious challenges. But it must, if it is to remain in vogue and pacify its detractors.

In “Is sustainable luxury fashion possible?”, a book chapter I co-authored with Sorah Seong in *Sustainable Luxury* (published by Greenleaf Publishing), we describe three scenarios that could potentially be combined to make luxury fashion more sustainable, while upholding what fashion means to both fashion houses and their customers. The first involves institutional change by introducing a “slow fashion” mindset; the second requires a change in the processes, for example using materials that have a lower impact on the environment; the third scenario sees the state or the industry itself playing a role through regulation.

SLOW DOWN THE SEASONS

As the fashion seasons are increasing in number with pre-seasons finding their way into the fashion calendar besides the traditional Spring/Summer and Autumn/Winter collections, the issue of cyclicity becomes even more challenging. In this scenario, ensuring a more efficient management of scarce resources translates into reducing the need to change designs as often. Besides reducing the number of collections per year, designers could be encouraged to focus their creative energy on stylish designs with lasting appeal and consumers to keep their

clothes for a longer period of time.

The challenge to this proposed change is the fact that designers’ livelihoods depend on their creative talents and their creativity may be compromised if they are expected to produce more classic, timeless pieces. For this to work, the reduction in seasonality would have to be accepted at an institutional level so that all designers were behind the movement and anyone who didn’t back this drive for sustainability would be considered “not in vogue” or “so last season”. As consumers use luxury fashion to affirm their status and values (the first principle of fashion I define in my book *Unveiling Fashion*), their loyalty to designers behind the sustainability drive would demonstrate they are fashionable in terms of their eco-friendly purchases. If, however, the idea of doing away with the seasons and quashing the designs on the catwalk seems problematic, perhaps the alternative idea of innovating with materials would wash more easily.

GOING GREEN

Our second scenario proposes an alternative solution where rather than reducing the quantity, changes could be made to the process of design production, such as by using more sustainable materials, as well as reducing waste in the production process and increasing the number of recycled items.

Here the seasonal fashion cycles remain, but producers and luxury fashion groups can have an influence on how environmentally-friendly and

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“The underlying message needs to be that “sustainability adds value” in order to break away from the current mindset where unsustainable practices are acceptable in the eyes of some producers and consumers.”

ethical their brands are across their entire business model. Stella McCartney is leading the way in putting sustainable practices at the heart of running her business, The Kering Group, too, is working towards achieving an impressive set of sustainability targets across its Luxury and Sport & Lifestyle brands by 2016. Vivienne Westwood is another designer showing great interest in adopting sustainable practices and although the tipping point has yet to be reached where producers are driving innovative fashion, the appetite is growing.

Consumers need to complement the effort and be willing to pay higher prices for more sustainable clothes, but this will only happen if producers communicate with them about what measures they're taking to use greener materials. Customers care about sustainability, but only if it is explained to them and they are encouraged to see the difference in the environmental impact of the clothes they are wearing. The underlying message needs to be that “sustainability adds value” in order to break away from the current mindset where unsustainable practices are acceptable in the eyes of some producers and consumers. Depending on the rate of change in this mindset, the final scenario of upgrading the luxury fashion industry through regulation could be introduced to a greater or lesser degree.

REGULATIONS, REGULATIONS

In this final scenario, regulation – formal (state-driven, top down), or informal (by the profession itself) – would have the effect of ensuring that designers use materials that are sustainable. These would have to be industry-wide regulations and would therefore affect both low-end and high-end segments which would lead inevitably to price increases across the board. The success of the HiGG Index, created by the trade organisation, Sustainable Apparel Coalition, which allows global apparel and footwear companies to measure their environmental impact, is testament to self-regulation.

The challenge, however, for the regulation scenario is not only that fashion houses will have to convince customers to pay more for better quality products, but also that regulation may be resisted or simply ignored. Endorsement of

sustainable fashion by today's celebrities could be a way to overcome this and for customers to accept future price increases.

With all of the above scenarios, how likely is the shift to “greener” labels? While many challenges remain, not least changing the mindset of producers and luxury fashion consumers, the fact remains that sustainability is good for business. The tipping point has yet to be reached but there are encouraging signs that more and more actors in the industry are looking to put a green label on their designs. One thing's for sure – they'll wear that hat well. †



Left: Sao Paolo-based designer, in keeping with the theme of sustainable clothing, incorporated jute in her collection at the New York Fashion Week this year



FREDERIC GODART is an Assistant Professor of Organisational Behaviour at INSEAD. This article is republished courtesy of INSEAD Knowledge



THE HISTORY OF ART

The history of humanity can be easily understood through art. Here we take a look at the major art periods that have captured the moods of humanity from the 19th century to present day.

Art comprises many genres that have evolved over time at crucial moments in modern history. How and when did these art forms develop? What was the context that nurtured them? We present to you a journey of the various art forms that have influenced art as we know it today:

IMPRESSIONISM

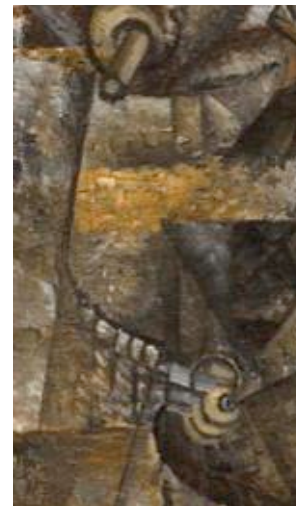
Starting in France at the end of the 19th century, and often considered the first 'movement' in modern art, Impressionism had a significant impact on art in the 20th century. The Impressionists became famous for their definitive painting style and their use of colour.

The crucial attempt to capture the precise atmosphere or weather of a particular time of day or a landscape quite literally created "a fleeting moment" in which bold strokes were chosen over detail or accurate line forms. Interestingly, the Impressionists were also inspired by the bold designs of Japanese woodblock prints, then quite a rage in France. The genre lent itself to the art

of painting outdoors – 'en plein air' was quite the norm for them given their commitment to depicting the shifting palette of nature itself, even though as the genre developed, the town and the countryside both were embraced as "landscapes". The landscape, in fact, became the Impressionists' motif of choice.

Change did not come easily to the art establishment: the culturally rigid Académie des Beaux Arts, more prone to preserving the artistic canon, was loath to the bold strokes and bright colour schemes of the Impressionists. They balked at the perceived lack of subtlety and accurate line forms. Unfortunately, as a result of this bias, many an Impressionist maverick was excluded from the Académie. But it was too late for the conservative establishment to nip this movement in the bud, for the world indeed had fallen in love with the vivacity of this new breed; Impressionism went on to become the most popular movement in the history of art.

Claude Monet (1840-1926), Pierre Auguste Renoir (1841-1919), Camille ➤



➤ Pissarro (1831-1903), Edgar Degas (1834-1917), Alfred Sisley (1839-1899) and Henri Marie Raymond de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864-1901) were some of the trailblazers from this genre.

POST IMPRESSIONISM – THE ROOTS OF MODERN ART

The popularity of impressionism came at a cost albeit: its limited scope was a sore point with the next generation of artists.

Artists such as Vincent Van Gogh, Paul Cézanne, Paul Gauguin and Georges Seurat forged a bold new direction outside the confines of this movement, laying the foundation for Post-Impressionism and for art itself in the new century. The term Post-Impressionism comes from an exhibition titled 'Manet and the Post-Impressionists', held in London and curated by English artist and critic Roger Fry in 1910-11. Yet the term itself is a misnomer: though these painters are called Post-Impressionists, they share little with their predecessors. Post-Impressionistic art emphasised the emotional, structural, symbolic and spiritual – facets that the artists felt were lacking in Impressionism.

The jewellery technique of inlaying metal surfaces with 'cloisonné' enamel colors; simplification of shapes and exaggeration of colours are some of the features associated with the Post Impressionist paintings.

CUBISM – THE FIRST STYLE OF ABSTRACT ART

In the period between 1870-1910, the Occident changed at an unprecedented speed, thus witnessing more technological advancement than in the previous four centuries. Inventions such as photography, cinematography, sound recording, the telephone, the motor car and the airplane brought dramatic changes to society. Artists struggled to find a syntax to reflect this modernity and demanded a more radical approach, a 'new way of seeing' that would mirror how technology was pushing the world of communications and travel.

It was in such a charged environment that Cubism came to the fore as a genuinely radical, abstract form of art. Developed by Pablo Picasso and Georges Braques, Cubism rejected the jaded clichés of Western art and challenged conventional modes of representation, especially with regard to "the perspective". Notable artists associated with Cubism include Juan Gris, Fernand Leger, Robert Delaunay, Albert Gleizes, Jean Metzinger, Louis Marcoussis, Marie Laurencin and Roger de La Fresnaye.

A typical Cubist painting depicts real people, places or objects, but not from a fixed viewpoint. Instead it delineated a more three-dimensional viewpoint through a composition of planes, forms and colours. Space itself is reconfigured in Cubist paintings: the front, back and sides of the subject become interchangeable elements in the design of the work.

Since the Cubists believed that the West had become intellectually bankrupt, they drew their inspiration from other cultures to revitalise their work. For example, African art had notable influence on Cubism.



Right: Vincent van Gogh - Self-Portrait



Cubism had two distinct phases. The early phase, known as Analytical Cubism, lasted from 1907 until about 1912. Here, the artist analysed a subject from varied perspectives and reconstructed it within a geometric framework. These fragmented images were brought together by using a subdued and limited palette of colours.

However, like how Impressionism became a victim of its own success, by 1912, the styles of Picasso and Braque started becoming predictable and Cubism was running short of fresh ideas. In an attempt to resuscitate the style and to pull it back from become a totally abstract art form, Picasso began to glue printed images from the 'real world' onto the surface of his still lifes. This 'collage' technique thus paved the path for the second phase of the Cubist style: Synthetic Cubism.

While Analytic Cubism showcased unified monochrome surfaces, Synthetic Cubism employed a more direct, colorful and decorative style. Cubism soon disseminated across the Continent and merged with the artistic zeitgeist of various nations. It reincarnated itself as Futurism in Italy, Vorticism in England, Suprematism and Constructivism in Russia, and Expressionism in Germany. It also influenced several of the major design and architectural styles of the

20th century and prevails to this day as mode of expression in the language of art.

FAUVISM – NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR COLOUR IN ART

At the beginning of the 20th century, two young artists, Henri Matisse and André Derain, were part of a clique of painters who enjoyed employing outrageously bold colours in their works. This group was fondly monickered 'Les Fauves' (literally translating as 'wild beasts' in French). Les Fauves believed that colour ought to express an artist's feelings about a subject, rather than merely depict it. Great artists such as Maurice de Vlaminck, Albert Marquet, Georges Rouault, Raoul Dufy and the cubist Georges Braque all contributed to Fauvism.

Fauvism was not a "formal movement" with a manifesto of rules and regulations. It was more an informal commune of artists who wished to express themselves with bold colours, simplified drawing and expressive brushwork. 'Les Fauves' simply believed that colour struck an emotional and spiritual chord with an individual and ought to be used in liberal doses. Fauvist techniques were eventually adopted and developed by the German Expressionists and their various splinter groups. Gradually Fauvism blended with the modernist art canon, but its influence in liberating the use of colour served several future generations of artists.

EXPRESSIONISM

While Impressionists focused on colour and nature, two artists Vincent Van Gogh and Edvard Munch took a radically different turn whilst using the motifs of the movement. They chose to look

Clockwise from top left:

Monet's painting 'Impression, Sunrise' (1873); Henri Marie Raymond de Toulouse-Lautrec's 'Madame Marthe X – Bordeaux'; Picasso, 'Glass of Absinthe (autumn 1911)'; Collioure, 1905; André Derain; Pablo Picasso

DID YOU KNOW

The name 'Impressionism' comes from a sarcastic review of Monet's painting, 'Impression, Sunrise' (1873). Written by Louis Leroy in the satirical magazine *Le Charivari*, the title of the review read "The Exhibition of the Impressionists"



Left and right: Salvador Dalí was Surrealism's most iconic artist; *Der Schrei der Natur* (The Scream of Nature) is the title Munch gave to this work which shows a figure with an agonised expression against a landscape with a tumultuous orange sky.
Below: Warhol's paintings of Marilyn Monroe are the most famous icons of Pop Art.

more inwards to discover a form of 'self-expression' that offered them a distinct voice in a world that they perceived as both insecure and hostile. It was this subjective search for a more personal emotional truth that led to the Expressionist art forms of the 20th century, which explored the inner canvas of the soul.

Van Gogh, for instance, used colour to express his feelings about a subject, rather than to simply depict it. His pioneering vision liberated colour as an emotional instrument in 20th century art and the energy of his brushwork became a key influence in the development of both the Fauves' and the Expressionists' style of painting. Expressionism also became a signifier for various formats of 20th century art, eventually encompassing emotionally and spiritually charged works of theatre, music and literature.

SURREALISM – THE ART OF THE UNCONSCIOUS MIND

A 20th century art movement that sought to liberate creativity from the limitations of rational thought by exploring the hidden depths of the 'unconscious mind', Surrealism ignored the rational world and created its own reality using insights of the 'unconscious mind'. Freud's book *The Interpretation Of Dreams* was a source of inspiration for many Surrealist artists.

The Surrealists believed that 'surreality' is a part of human consciousness; the fantasy and symbolism used by some of their artists, they claimed, was evidence of this. Hieronymus Bosch, Giuseppe Archimboldo, Goya, Henry Fuseli, Gustave Moreau and Odilon Redon are some artists inspired by this tradition. Yet, the quintessential surrealist is without doubt Salvador Dalí, whose work has come to symbolise Surrealism at its high noon. Other masters from the golden age of Surrealism include André Masson, Max Ernst, Joan Miro and René Magritte.



POP ART

The word 'POP' was first coined in 1954, by the British art critic Lawrence Alloway to describe a new type of art that was inspired by the imagery of popular culture. Alloway along with artists Richard Hamilton and Eduardo Paolozzi became the forerunners to British Pop art.

Across the Atlantic, pop art in United States evolved differently from its British counterpart. Abstract Expressionism was the first American art movement to achieve global acclaim but, by the mid-1950's, many felt it had become too introspective and elitist. Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg are considered trailblazers of American Pop Art. However, if there was one artist who personified Pop Art it was Andy Warhol. Starting out as a 'commercial artist', his subject matter was derived from the imagery of mass-culture: advertising, comics, newspapers, TV and the movies. Warhol epitomised the spirit of American popular culture and elevated its imagery to the status of museum art. †

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