YOUR PAGE, YOUR STAGE!

There's probably a photographer hidden in each of us, looking out for a platform. Community invites you to grab your chance and send your contributions with contact details and complete description of the images to qatarcommunity@gmail.com – PHOTO ESSAY, Page 10

Gulf Times
COMMUNITY

Cover Story

Ma the stalker

Octavia Spencer’s true crime obsession and best friendship is behind her horror star turn. P4-5

Pop Spot

German sextet Rammstein’s Untitled at no 3 on UK chart.

Page 11

Showbiz

DEAP holds largest cleanup drive in Ramadan.

Page 16
**PRAYER TIME**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fajr</td>
<td>3.13am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoroq (sunrise)</td>
<td>4.44am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zuhr (noon)</td>
<td>11.33am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asr (afternoon)</td>
<td>2.57pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maghreb (sunset)</td>
<td>6.23pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isha (night)</td>
<td>7.53pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**USEFUL NUMBERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency</td>
<td>999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worldwide Emergency Number</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kahrama – Electricity and Water</td>
<td>901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Directory</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Calls Enquires</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamad International Airport</td>
<td>40106666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor Department</td>
<td>44508111, 44406537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mowasalat Taxi</td>
<td>44588888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qatar Airways</td>
<td>444960000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamad Medical Corporation</td>
<td>44392222, 44393333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qatar General Electricity and Water Corporation</td>
<td>44845555, 44845464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Health Care Corporation</td>
<td>44933333, 4493363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qasr Assistive Technology Centre</td>
<td>44594050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qatar News Agency</td>
<td>44450205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q-Post – General Postal Corporation</td>
<td>44450333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanitarian Services Office</td>
<td>44464444</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Humanitarian Services Office (Single window facility for the repatriation of bodies)

| Ministry of Interior                   | 40253373, 40253372, 40253369 |
| Ministry of Health                     | 40253370, 40253364             |
| Hamad Medical Corporation              | 40253364, 40253365             |
| Qatar Airways                          | 40253374                       |

**Quote Unquote**

“I surround myself with good people who make me feel great and give me positive energy.” — Ali Krieger

**Community Editor**

Kamran Rehmat

**Telephone:** 44466405

**Fax:** 44350474

**NGK**

**DIRECTION:** K Selvaraghavan

**CAST:** Suriya, Rakul Preet Singh, Sai Pallavi

**SYNOPSIS:** A charismatic young man embarks on a political journey that results in a socio-political revolution.

**THEATRES:** The Mall, Landmark, Royal Plaza

**Avengers: Endgame**

**DIRECTION:** Anthony Russo, Joe Russo

**CAST:** Brie Larson, Winston Duke, Karen Gillan

**SYNOPSIS:** After the devastating events of Avengers: Infinity War (2018), the universe is in ruins. With the help of remaining allies, the Avengers assemble once more in order to undo Thanos’ actions and restore order to the universe.

**THEATRES:** The Mall, Landmark
community, trade, arts, food and incense, the
Composed of five main topics, including
of the museum owned collection in order to
FBQ Museum brings together the treasures
available from choir members or on the door
programme in September. Tickets are
the Vienna Boys Choir in Austria. Qatar
returned from workshops and concerts with
season. Qatar Youth Choir has recently

Under the context of cultural exchange,
FBQ Museum brings together the treasures of the museum owned collection in order to promote mutual understanding, recognition and appreciation between Qatar and India. Composed of five main topics, including community, trade, arts, food and incense, the exhibition takes one on a journey to explore the rich and diverse Indian cultures, the long historic links between Qatar and India, and cultural similarities between Qatar and India.

**A Choral Kaleidoscope Concert**
WHERE: Swiss International School
WHEN: June 13
TIME: 7pm onwards
Featuring Qatar Youth Choir and Qatar Junior Choir – their last concert of the season. Qatar Youth Choir has recently returned from workshops and concerts with the Vienna Boys Choir in Austria. Qatar Junior Choir will perform their concert programme in September. Tickets are available from choir members or on the door for QR60.

**ISC Skipping Rope Open Championship**
WHERE: Asthoka Hall, ICC
WHEN: June 11 – 13
TIME: 10:00am – 1:30pm
Indian Sports Centre under the patronage of Embassy of India is organising Third edition of ISC Skipping Rope Open Championship – 2019 for Speed Hop and Speed Endurance competitions. Categories include Under-12 (Boys and Girls), Under-18 (Boys and Girls) and Adults (Men and Women) – above 18 years. Entry is free. Championship is open to all Indians and students of any nationality studying in Indian Schools. Last date of entry is June 11. Further details, yoga.iscdoha@gmail.com or 55824194/55956008.

**Ballet Lessons**
WHERE: Music and Arts Atelier
WHEN: Ongoing
TIME: 4pm – 8pm
For more info e-mail at registration@atelierqatar.com or call on 33003839.

**Arabic Calligraphy Workshop**
WHERE: Right Track Consultants, Al Sadd
WHEN: Sunday – Thursday
TIME: 6pm – 8pm
Career guidance for course, country, college and entrance for students of Grade IX-XII, of all curriculum. Career assessments administered for stream preference, career test, branch preference, personality, multiple intelligence and learning styles and productivity. For more information, 55448835.

**Hobby Classes**
WHERE: Mamangam Performing Art Centre
WHEN: Wednesday – Monday
Mamangam Performing Art Centre, is a holistic performing arts institution and a one stop solution for adults as well as children looking to explore their talents in various art forms. We offer classes in contemporary, Bollywood, hip hop, Indian classical dance, music (Hindustani and Carnatic), arts and craft, karate, yoga, percussion (Chenda, Thimila, Elathalam and Madhalam), violin, harmonium, public speaking. Additional services include dance education, choreograph music videos and dance cover albums, choreograph dance musical projects, corporate workshops and events, choreograph events for schools, colleges, alumni meets and corporate and choreography events. For details, call 33407609.

**Arabic Calligraphy Workshop**
WHERE: Saturday – Wednesday
TIME: 6pm
Arabic Calligraphy workshop is back. Come and learn the artistic practice of Arabic handwriting and calligraphy at Music and Arts Atelier. The lessons will take place every Saturday, Monday and Wednesday at 6pm. For more information, contact registration@atelierqatar.com

**Dance and Instrument Classes**
WHERE: TCA Campus, Behind Gulf Times Building
WHEN: Wednesday – Monday
Learn the movements of dance styles in Bollywood, Hip Hop and also the musical instruments such as Piano, Guitar, Keyboard for adults as well kids and move in the world of music. For details, contact 66523871/31326749.

school includes Group Music lessons, Hip-hop, Ballet, Drawing and Painting, Drama Theatre & Taekwondo. Ages between 5 and 10 years old after school hours.

the resort. Only for QR280 per person.

**Summer Camp for Special Needs**
WHERE: Step by Step Centre for Special Needs
WHEN: June 30 – August 1
TIME: 8:00am – 12:30pm
During this time, all therapists and teachers will be working together, running individual, peer and group sessions within classes. The children will continue learning age-appropriate concepts, work on social skills, life skills training, arts and crafts, music, and fun activities such as water play.

**Artistic Gymnastics Classes**
WHERE: Qatar Academy Msheireb
WHEN: Ongoing
TIME: 3:15pm – 4:15pm
The Olympic sport using horizontal bar, rings and floor exercises on mats for the children from age 4 till 16.

Compiled by Nausheen Shaikh. E-mail: gtlisting@gmail.com. Events and timings subject to change
Clincher for Spencer

Octavia Spencer was frustrated with the lack of interesting characters coming her way when director Tate Taylor called with an intriguing offer: a twisted tale that would let her flex darker impulses and show off a side of herself nobody had seen before, writes Jen Yamato.

Eight years ago director Tate Taylor and actress Octavia Spencer scored the summer’s biggest sleeper hit with The Help. (She went on to win an Oscar for the best picture nominee.) Now they’ve reunited for a very different kind of surprise: the deliciously bananas Blumhouse thriller Ma, a shockingly gory R-rated thriller about a mild-mannered woman (Spencer) who turns stalker on the teens she who turns stalker on the teens she

“...Ma's becomes the go-to party spot in town, secrets from the past reveal themselves and her obsession reaches a Fatal Attraction pitch, Juliette Lewis, Missi Pyle and Luke Evans also costar as former classmates of Sue Ann’s.

“What’s really special about Ma is Octavia Spencer;” said producer Jason Blum, comparing her turn to Kathy Bates’ in Misery. “It’s very new and very different and hasn’t been done in a long time, to have an actress of that stature in a super fun, super scary R-rated movie. It’s a tour-de-force departure from type for Spencer, who was also Oscar-nominated for Hidden Figures and The Shape of Water. She gleefully cranks up the crazy in Ma, scripted by Scotty Landes and Taylor from a story by Landes, while finding surprising humanity in the character — even as she’s teetering on the brink of sanity and, in one of the film’s demented scenes, sewing the lips of a chatty teen together with a needle and thread.

“For a character like this to work, you’ve got to have empathy for her,” Taylor leans forward conspiratorially with a wink in his eye. “And feel guilty because you’re kind of … glad she’s doing some of this stuff!”

Alabama native Spencer and Mississippian Taylor first met as production assistants on the set of 1996’s A Time to Kill before moving out to LA together. The Gemini will be spending their birthdays apart (Taylor turns 50 the day he begins filming his next movie, starring Allison Janney; Spencer, back in LA from the UK where she’s been working on The Witches, jokes that she’ll be celebrating her 41st birthday “again”).

“We did good,” he smiles. “It took 25 years, little PAs driving out here. She’s in London shooting a movie — even as she’s teetering on the brink of sanity and, in one of the film’s demented scenes, sewing the lips of a chatty teen together with a needle and thread.

“For a character like this to work, you’ve got to have empathy for her,” Taylor leans forward conspiratorially with a wink in his eye. “And feel guilty because you’re kind of … glad she’s doing some of this stuff!”

Alabama native Spencer and Mississippian Taylor first met as production assistants on the set of 1996’s A Time to Kill before moving out to LA together. The Gemini will be spending their birthdays apart (Taylor turns 50 the day he begins filming his next movie, starring Allison Janney; Spencer, back in LA from the UK where she’s been working on The Witches, jokes that she’ll be celebrating her 41st birthday “again”).

“We did good,” he smiles. “It took 25 years, little PAs driving out here. She’s in London shooting a movie but we’ll still call each other in our underwear, laughing about it.”

The pair talked with The Times about their best friendship, projects and more in an interview that has been condensed and edited for clarity.

Q: Are you two indeed BFFs?

Taylor: Yes.

Q: What does that mean to you, your idea of “messy up”?

Taylor: What it meant for me was “No rules,” and that’s what’s great about the Blumhouse model. It’s really in many ways an experiment. The budgets are so low. They had just gotten this script and pitched me the idea. I read it and I came back and said, “What about Octavia?”

Q: Without spoiling the twists
ACTION: McKale Miller, left, and Octavia Spencer in the film Ma

“What’s really special about Ma is Octavia Spencer. It’s very new and very different and hasn’t been done in a long time, to have an actress of that stature in a super fun, super scary R-rated movie.”

Jason Blum, producer

Q: Octavia, how did you find the person beneath the monster that Sue Ann becomes?

Spencer: I watch all of the Investigation Channel [ID TV] ... It’s the puzzle. I’m dyslexic and I learned and stayed intrigued with reading by reading a lot of mysteries. The natural progression is to crime, and true crime for me is where I exist. It’s about solving the puzzle every night. Did I get the right man? Was I wrong? Sometimes I’m wrong, but 90% of the time, I’m right.

Taylor: She profiles people! “You see how they got that last meatball? That’s an exhibit of a behavior, there’s this one show I watch and this man would always take the last food, and what he’s actually doing is he’s going to poison it, and then he’s going to walk it back to the buffet because he knows the person who saw him.

Taylor: So there are no cultural implications.

Q: What do you consider “Murder TV”?

Spencer: I watch all of the Investigation Channel [ID TV]. It’s the puzzle. I’m dyslexic and I learned and stayed intrigued with reading by reading a lot of mysteries. The natural progression is to crime, and true crime for me is where I exist. It’s about solving the puzzle every night. Did I get the right man? Was I wrong? Sometimes I’m wrong, but 90% of the time, I’m right.

Taylor: You cast Allison Janney in Ma as Sue Ann’s terrible boss.

Spencer: Allison had just gotten this pilot called West Wing. But when you all genuinely love each other and you’re all struggling, you become family. You just want to be a part of helping everybody. So Allison’s always like, ‘I must be a part of everything you do. What am I in Ma? I said, “There’s a vet...” and she said, “OK?” It’s too damn hard not to make it fun, this business.

Q: What was a scene in which you had to use your shorthand with Octavia?

Taylor: I knew we were cooking with gas on her very first day, in the very first scene she shot, and she was really excited about it, was when Ma goes to Maggie’s [Silvers] house. Octavia said, “Get ready — I know what I’m gonna do.” And she gave her that look over her shoulder and I went, “OK, she’s in it!”

The Blumhouse model typically means a contained story and a modest budget, but relative creative freedom. Why was it important to take it back to Mississippi, your third film in the state?

Taylor: I love filming there because when you have a budget of this level you have to be resourceful. People in these poor towns in Mississippi are just starved for any kind of economic development, and they’re smart. They know: If we help them come here and give them free locations, there’s a lot of money they’re going to spend.

Spencer: And dollars in the pockets of the community. That’s what I like. We shot some scenes at Alcorn State University, and they are starting a film school. I’m excited for that... they are making it so that those young people will be able to become writers, directors, work behind the scenes.

Q: Octavia, you also starred in Luce at Sundance, which confronts race in a direct way, and executive produced Green Book. Do you consider your recent films united by common themes? What themes are important to you to put into the larger conversation?

Spencer: You know what, there’s no correlation. I chose to do Luce because we didn’t grow up with a silver spoon in our mouths. Someone — an educator, a kingmaker — could have easily chosen someone else and I would have had the complex that I was not worthy to be who I am, and to get to where I am. I choose things now for different reasons, and sometimes there are themes that sort of bleed into each other. But for me it was all about making sure that every child is treated as if they were the Luce. That every child can see their potential. And when you have people dictating that or being gatekeepers of who gets to progress, I have a problem with that. So of course I have to play the gatekeeper, so I can talk about that.

Q: At this point in your career, how do you view the power of your work?

Taylor: I think Octavia is infinitely relatable and that’s a powerful thing.

Spencer: Exactly. Taylor: “Oh, she’s a black woman from this town.” Or, “These kids grew up in this affluent, blah-blah-blah...” It’s just life.

Q: You’ve both made movies in the past that did deliberately deal with and confront race, and race in the South. Are you saying that in Ma you intentionally tried not to focus on that?

Spencer: No — I’m a black woman. But what I liked about it was this character was first written for a white woman, and he put back story in that made her right for me, but the same back story would have fit a white woman. It’s the first time that I’m not playing a character that has to be black; she just happens to be black. So this is not racially... charged.

Taylor: It’s me wanting to put my best friend in a part she’s never gotten to do, and how fun would it be if we went and did it?

Q: You cast Allison Janney in Ma as Sue Ann’s terrible boss. Did you just call all your friends up to make this movie?

Taylor: I think Octavia is infinitely relatable and that’s a powerful thing.

Spencer: I’m just feeling lucky that I get to work with my best friend on projects. It’s so lucky that great scripts are coming to me — and great scripts that I turned down for different reasons — and that I get to work at this level. If I can be an influence to anyone to pursue their dreams and know that they’re worthy, then that’s what I’m going to take from it. — Los Angeles Times/TNS
DPS-MIS organises donation drive

DPS-MIS, in association with Indian Community and Benevolent Forum (ICBF), recently organised a donation drive for the underprivileged section of the society during the holy month of Ramadan. The students of Nursery till Grade-XII participated in the drive. Around 5 tons of essential food items and other commodities were collected. The proceedings were distributed at the labour camp and Detention Centre. The aim of the drive was to develop in young minds a heart for 'giving back' and empower them with the mindset that they can make a difference.

GET-TOGETHER:

M A Shahid, President of the Management Committee of Pak Shamaa School and College (PSSC) recently organised an Iftar get-together for the staff members and the families of PSSC.

SIS organises Inter Class Elocution Competition

Junior Section of Shantiniketan Indian School (SIS) recently organised Inter Class Elocution Competition for the students of Grade I-V. The objective of the competition was focused on equity and inclusive practices, where all children were given the opportunity to participate, build on their confidence, showcase their passion and express themselves in a chorus of groups. Winners of the competition, included Grade I F, Grade II E, Grade III B, Grade IV B and Grade V E. The event was attended by Dr Subhash Nair, Principal of SIS, along with Dudley O’Connor, Vice Principal of SIS, Heena Imran Dhondne, Head Teacher, and Shalini Priya, Assistant Head Teacher.

IFTAR:

Thuvakunnu Koobayma Qatar Chapter (TKQC) recently organised an Iftar get-together at Asian Town. Around 130 members of TKQC attended the event. The event was inaugurated by Saleem Nalakath, KMCC State Committee Member. Muhammed Al Thuvakunnu presided over the event. Moossa Kalinga welcomed the gathering and Salam Veetikkal, President of KMCC Kannur District, Mohamed Poonthottam, Aboobacker Yamani and Ebrahim Musliyar offered felicitations. Ashik P proposed a vote of thanks.
GWS organises an interactive session on yoga

Gorkha Welfare Society (GWS), a Nepali community organisation, recently organised an interactive session on yoga with Dr Raju Adhikari and Ramji Adhikari, experts on Yoga and positive thinking, at The Gorkha Restaurant. The programme was chaired by Rajeshwor Dhakal, Chairman of GWS. Bimal Subedi, Nabin Pokharel, Karim Baks Miya and Hamsaraj Dhakal, Nepali community leaders, along with Chaitanya Krishna also spoke on the occasion. The event was attended by over 200 members and guests, including entrepreneurs, intellectuals, journalists and representatives from various Nepali community organisations.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Raju Adhikari and Ramji Adhikari stressed on the importance of management. Rajeshwor Dhakal urged Nepalis to participate in the yoga and positive thinking programme.

Text and photo by Usha Wagle Gautam

HIQ Community Group organises Iftar party

Hyderabadis in Qatar (HIQ) Community Group and Channel 5 recently organised an Iftar party at Indian Hyderabadi Spices Restaurant. The team of HIQ, under the guidance of Syed Rafi, organised the event. The team, included Amjad Khan, Syed Gulraiz, Mohd Yawar Hussain, Mukarram Hussain, Mohd Atif, Zeeshan Qazi, Mohd Mustafa, Mohd Ali, and Khaja Nizamuddin. The event was sponsored by Indian Hyderabadi Spices Restaurant. The event was attended by notable personalities, including Yawar Hussain, Akram Hussain, Srinivas Gadde, Khaja Nizamuddin, Siraj Ansari, Qamar Qureshi, Mohd Ashfaq and Sridhar Abbagoni.

Speaking on the occasion, Syed Rafi, Chairman of HIQ Community Group praised its team members for their contributions and long association. He also highlighted the past achievements and discussed the future plans of HIQ Community Group.

QSindhis organises 5th Annual Iftar

QSindhis, Pakistani Sindhi Community in Qatar, recently organised its 5th Annual Iftar at Waha Club Al Khor. All the members along with their families attended the event wearing Sindhi cultural attire with Ajrak.

The guest of honours at the event, included Sarwar Hussain, Head of Chancery/Second Secretary at Embassy of India; Nargis Raza Ottu, Riyaz Bakali, Manzoor Man, Arshad Hussain, Ashraf Siddiqui, Saleem Baloji, Rana Anwar Ali, Ustad Khan, Abdul Qahar, Kamran Tarkey, Kamran Bangash, Hassan Lashari, Khalil Bhatti and Jamshed Bajwa.

Asif Memon and Zeeshan Memon, Co-founders of QSindhis, welcomed the gathering. Maqsood Mangi, Muftaja Baloji, Muhammad Shaik, Wlihar Jiloo, Junaid Mahar and Atif Dogar, chief organisers, presented Ajrak to the guests and shared annual progress report and achievements of QSindhis since 2014 until 2019. Speaking on the occasion, Sarwar Hussain applauded the Pakistan’s Sindhi Community efforts to promote inter community unity. Moreover he congratulated Core Committee of QSindhis for organising an event where all the communities took part and celebrated the colours of Ramadan together.
Disneyland heads into uncharted land

The 14-acre land, the park’s largest expansion themed to a single franchise, will usher guests through its entryways from Fantasyland and Frontierland into carved tunnels that lead to grand reveals of the bustling Black Spire Outpost, writes Todd Martens.

Here’s a familiar and effective design trick often used at theme parks: Corral guests under or through a passageway that forces the crowd to narrow before a grand reveal.

Think of Disneyland’s Main Street, USA, where park-goers are shunted through a passage under a train tunnel that gives way to a romantic, turn-of-the-20th-century town and a fantastical castle. At the entrance to Disney California Adventure’s Cars Land, an archway both shadows and frames the intricate yet massive hand-sculpted and rust-hued frames the intricate yet massive archway both shadows and frames the intricate yet massive hand-sculpted and rust-hued mountain range inspired by numerous Southwest landscapes.

Star Wars: Galaxy’s Edge, opening this weekend at Disneyland in Anaheim, Calif, is no different. The 14-acre land, the park’s largest expansion themed to a single franchise, will usher guests through its entryways from Fantasyland and Frontierland into carved tunnels that lead to grand reveals of the bustling Black Spire Outpost.

“It promotes a sense of discovery, a sense of adventure, a sense of, ‘I want to go and explore. I want to go and turn the corner,’ ” says Chris Beatty, an executive with Walt Disney Imagineering, the company’s arm dedicated to theme park experiences.

The obvious similarities between Disneyland’s past and its Star Wars-led future, however, will all but end there.

Envisioned as a busy, rugged space port, Black Spire Outpost’s sheer size and activity will provide an immediate contrast to Disneyland’s quaint, homey and protective feel. Forced-perspective illusions, designed to make objects appear larger, are needed sparingly here. A centrepiece of the land is a lifelike creation of the Millennium Falcon ship, which stands at approximately 100 feet long. On Rise of the Resistance, an attraction opening this year, an auditorium-sized ship hangar will drive home the point that guests are but one speck in a larger galaxy.

Throughout, we’ll hear the roar of spaceships and musings of war. But traditional theme park trappings, character meet-and-greets, passive rides and choruses, won’t be found on Black Spire Outpost’s planet of Batuu (to reflect the rugged nature of the land, you’ll snack on turkey jerky).

Forget standing in line for a photo with Darth Vader; instead, you may find yourself attracting the attention of a bounty hunter, speaking to you not as a theme park guest but as a member of the Star Wars universe. Much of the non-essential signage will be written in the Star Wars language of Aurebesh, requiring a translation app to mimic the sensation of being a tourist on another planet.

And those who want to bring home a fancy, hand-built lightsaber need more than just a willingness to pay $200; the plan is to ask guests to provide a password to gain entry into the not-so-secret guildlike shop dedicated to saber-crafting.

Into a New Era

The Disneyland hype machine labels Galaxy’s Edge as the “most technologically advanced single-themed land ever.” Yet if it meets the vision of the Walt Disney designers who created it, Galaxy’s Edge won’t just put guests on an alien planet; it will lead theme parks into uncharted territory.

While part of an evolution that brought us the Wizarding World of Harry Potter at Universal’s Florida and Southern California parks and the Avatar-inspired land of Pandora at Walt Disney World’s Animal Kingdom, Galaxy’s Edge launches a new era of interactive theme park entertainment. If the largest criticism of theme parks is that they’re too expensive, to get the most out of Galaxy’s Edge, your desire to become an active participant, an actor, if you will, in a Star Wars narrative, will be as important as a working credit card.

“If you want to sit back and just watch the world go by that’s also fine, but I think one of the things that we know about our guests is they want more and more to lean into these stories,” says Imagineer Scott Trowbridge, whom Disney CEO Bob Iger described in a recent tweet as the ‘creator’ of Galaxy’s Edge.

“They want to get closer to these characters; they want to participate more and not just be a spectator,” Trowbridge continues.

“And so more and more we’re giving our guests opportunities to do just that.”

What Trowbridge describes isn’t entirely a wholesale rewriting of theme park rules.

Galaxy’s Edge could be viewed as a contemporary interpretation of Disneyland’s original pitch. Its opening-day attraction Snow White’s Adventures, today known as Snow White’s Scary Adventures, famously lacked Snow White; instead, guests were cast in the role of the princess. It’s a move that led to confusion: Why isn’t Snow White in her own ride? How can a guest in a vehicle on a visible track be a protagonist?

Those going to Galaxy’s Edge in its opening weeks will no doubt be primed for a new kind of interactive experience. After all, they had the foresight to book advance reservations, long ago sold out, or a Disneyland Resort hotel stay required to see the land through June 23. But Disneyland, which attracts just under 19 million per year according to recent crowd estimates, isn’t just a place for early adapters.

Will the casual theme park family, those who spend hundreds or thousands yearly to simply be entertained at Disneyland or Florida’s Walt Disney World, which opens its own Galaxy’s Edge on Aug. 29, be ready for a land that asks for audience participation?

Disney Imagineers anticipate some tweaks along the way but also believe Galaxy’s Edge will fully realise the park’s long-envisioned original thesis.
We plan, we plan, we plan, we plan and then we find out that the one thing we didn’t think about is the thing that the guest wants,” says Imagineering producer Robin Reardon. “But I think in this case you don’t need to learn anything special. It should feel like ‘Star Wars’ does in the movies. It should feel familiar. It is a village. It is a place where people live.

“We always in our theme parks try to get people to shed their outside life and come in and be able to play – to be a princess or a pirate or whatever,” she continues. “We’re creating the backdrop for them to do that. It’s easy to get a little kid to want to be a pirate. It’s maybe a little harder to get a 45-year-old dad to want to be a pirate. I think we’re going to find that in Star Wars: Galaxy’s Edge everybody is going to want to play.”

Going Trackless
The Millennium Falcon: Smugglers Run ride will depend upon it. Six guests at a time will be given a mission and assigned a role, two pilots, two gunners and two engineers. It’s a theme park ride designed for generations weaned on games. Guests will be asked to make fast friends with one another so they can play together, one pilot, for instance, will navigate the ship left to right while another will move the Falcon up and down.

While there’s only one outcome to the ride, there are variables based on how well the group works together. Smugglers Run isn’t just trackless, it’s user-directed.

“We’ve very intentionally made sure that we are play-testing with groups of people who are strangers that have a very different dynamic with one another,” says Asa Kalama, who has helped direct the interactive experiences of Galaxy’s Edge and was instrumental in the development of Smugglers Run. “By the same token,” he continues, “we’re also designing the experience so that no matter how well or how poorly anybody performs each individual role, it doesn’t feel punitive. We want to make sure that everybody walks off feeling successful, that they accomplished the smuggling run.”

Success, though, won’t always be pretty. “The ship may be totally on fire,” Kalama says.

Smugglers Run may be the most overtly interactive aspect of the land, the entirety of Galaxy’s Edge is designed as a sort of liveable board game, and Imagineers are counting on guests wanting to roll their own dice. Stormtroopers walking the land aren’t just there for photo ops, they may ask about your allegiance to the First Order and current villain Kylo Ren. And instead of parades, you’ll watch Disney’s staff, or cast members, behave as if they live on the planet. They’ll fix ships, fuss around their stores and may even gossip with guests about other Black Spire Outpost residents.

Expect the land to come with its own lingo, and it’s been hinted that a resistance fighter or two may even ask visitors for help.

Disney public relations officials cringe any time the phrase ‘role-playing’ is brought up, but Trowbridge has said the vision for the land is to allow guests to opt-in to game-like experiences that fall somewhere between simplistic choose-your-own adventure activities and live-action role-playing, or LARPing, as it’s known.

In 2014, Disneyland for instance introduced the live-action role-playing game the Legends of Frontierland. For several weeks, visitors were allowed to essentially battle for control of a fictional town set within the park’s vision of the Old West. Players could complete various tasks in the hopes of amassing little wooden tokens, “bits,” which could be used to buy land or bribe others. The team with the most land would win.

Today, Trowbridge describes Legends of Frontierland as a ‘spectacular failure.’ The game’s economy system quickly proved troublesome. It lacked rules, and therefore players made their own. Trowbridge says guests were stealing latex gloves from food stands and blowing them up to create makeshift chickens in the hopes of selling them for bits. – Los Angeles Times/TNS
Tracking the best in Qatar

Qatar is a unique place in many ways, and one of them is how it offers an endless stream of imagery to those who love beauty — both natural and man-made.

Unusual for a small country, you never run out of things to photograph: architecture, nature, birds, waterfronts, spectacular boats — whether age-old dhows or futuristic yachts.

After seven in Qatar, I’m still itching to wake up at 4am and travel anywhere in the city, while it’s still quiet, to get an interesting lighting or angle.

Today’s selection is a little different however, as it includes a few pieces where I’ve mixed a little input of my own.

For example, in the image of the dhows and the West Bay towers I tried to accentuate the contrast between old and new by adding a black and white patina effect.

My addition to the images is minimal in terms of concept, but it expresses how I see Qatar — a place that nurtures the intertwining of tradition with splashes of worldwide culture twists.

Driving around Qatar, I often experience photographer’s FOMO or “fear of missing out”: when you witness an outstanding view, a breathtaking sky but you can’t stop and store it on your camera, so instead you have to store it in your heart.

—Text and photos by Cristina Ionascu @cristina_ionascu_photo
German sextet Rammstein’s
Untitled at no 3 on UK chart

It is ten years since German Neue Deutsche Harte sextet Rammstein released their last studio album. They kept in touch with fans by touring and releasing live and compilation albums during this time. But their followers were primed and ready for new music. So it is that Rammstein’s Untitled seventh studio album has stormed straight to number three on the UK chart and given the Berlin-based band a tenth consecutive chart-topper in their homeland.

The same six members have been together since Rammstein formed in 1994. Such stability of personnel is highly unusual for any band who have been around for two decades. Yet lead guitarist Richard Z Kruspe has a simple explanation. “Rammstein follow our own rhythm,” he stated. “We take no notice of people who think we need to get a record out every two years. That’s one of the reasons why we’re still together with the same line-up. We take care of each other. If somebody needs to take the time off to do something else, we listen.”

The “something else” Richard refers to can be anything from time with family to working with other musicians on a side project. Richard actually fronts the New York-based industrial metal band EmeRige. Two of their three albums were issued during Rammstein’s hiatus from recording new music.

Richard, lead singer Till Lindemann, rhythm guitarist Paul Landers, bassist Oliver Reidel, drummer Christoph “Doom” Schneider and keyboardist Christian ‘Flake’ Lorenz initially won a contest for amateur bands. Their prize was the chance to go on tour and release live and compilation albums during this time. But their followers were primed and ready for new music. So it is that Rammstein’s Untitled seventh studio album has stormed straight to number three on the UK chart and given the Berlin-based band a tenth consecutive chart-topper in their homeland.

This was their only album which failed to top the German chart. But Herzeleid did reach number six, remained in the chart listings for 102 weeks and earned Rammstein their first platinum disc.

The band’s subsequent career has been a succession of triumphs. Their popularity quickly spread worldwide. All tickets for their concerts sell in no time and albums register platinum disc sales figures on pre-release orders alone.

But Rammstein’s career has certainly not been without controversy. Their last studio album, Liebe Ist Fur Alle Da, was initially added to the index of the Federal Department for Media Harmful to Young Persons in Germany.

Their music has also been linked to the perpetrators of the Columbine High School massacre in 1999, the Beslan school hostage crisis in 2004, the Jokela School shootings in 2007, the Ista Vista killings in 2014 and the Trollhattan School attack in 2015.

Anything can awaken radical feelings in people,” Till Lindemann suggested. “It could be a painting or a film, whatever. I’m sure it was just a coincidence that it happened to be our music. It’s important to discover what caused these people to make their decisions, how they became animals, not their taste in music.”

“Our music is made to release aggression” Christoph Schneider added. “People listening to it also need to do that. But it’s ridiculous to blame the artists when things like the shootings happen. What about the millions of people who listen to our music but would never want to harm anyone. Should we stop making hard music because some bad people might like it?”

“Our songs have no lyrical content or expressed political beliefs which could possibly have influenced the shootings,” Paul Landers insisted. “The band members have children of our own who receive only healthy and non-violent values.”

This may well be true. But while the “Untitled” cover picture of a single unit match is unlikely to cause any problems, it was a controversial cover image plus the explicit lyrics of two tracks which resulted in the future surrounding Rammstein’s previous studio album.

“We were genuinely surprised by the advisory board’s parochial sense of art,” Christian Lorenz remarked. “We also regretted their apparent inability to detect irony. We like being in the firing line of bad taste. The controversies are fun but also serve a purpose. We like audiences to grapple with our music and people have become more receptive.”

A revised version of Liebe Ist Fur Alle Da saw the album removed from the Helpful to Young Persons Index. But Rammstein continue to court controversy in a number of their videos.

The latter is true of the video accompanying their latest single, Auslander. Although the overall effect is a comedic take on German colonialism, Africa, the video and CD single cover feature objectionable photos of women.

Like almost all of Rammstein’s songs, Auslander is sung in German. This has led to the band becoming aware of the need to incorporate dynamic imagery in their videos and stage shows.

Pyrotechnics play a large part in Rammstein’s live performances. So much so that Till Lindemann qualified as a licensed pyrotechnician. “We use fire in our videos,” Richard reflected. “We also wear a variety of costumes and portray different characters in the shows and videos. But it’s all done with a sense of fun. We take our music seriously but not ourselves.”

All book-signing and other promotional events have been cancelled. Moby has also used social media to apologise to Natalie and everyone else who features in his book.

“I am the one who released the book without showing it to the people I wrote about,” he conceded. “I'm the one who posted defensively and arrogantly. I'm the one who behaved inconsiderately and disrespectfully. There is obviously no-one else to blame but me. I want to apologise again and to say clearly that all of this has been my own fault. Thank you and I’m sorry.”

Morrisey

A quote attributed to the French writer Voltaire by the English historian Evelyn Beatrice Hall reads; “I wholly disapprove of what you say and will defend to the death your right to say it.”

This is obviously a view which does not find favour among many contemporary music fans. The brutal condemnation of any British artiste who expresses support for the Conservative party or any American who praises President Trump offers clear evidence of this. There is no longer any sense of having to agree to disagree.

There were recent calls to boycott concerts and destroy records by the Canadian singer Shania Twain because she suggested in an interview that she might have voted for Donald Trump had she been a US citizen.

Morrisey has now fallen victim to a similar kind of treatment. The former Smiths singer has released a new studio album, California Son. It is a collection of covers featuring songs originally recorded by artists ranging from Joni Mitchell to Roy Orbison and Dionne Warwick to Gary Puckett & The Union Gap.

Reviews have been generally favourable but almost all of these make reference to the reason why California Son is not available in a number of British record stores. Morrisey’s crime was to wear a For Britain political party badge during several recent performances in New York. This, along with quotes which suggest far right political leanings, have seen some record stores refuse to sell his music and the Merseyrail train network remove all posters from their stations advertising On California Son.

Disapproval of what you say rules the roost nowadays in both music and everyday life. Defending your right to say it no longer seems to apply.
Wordsearch

M N R G F P J C T G V N T S
A R D S T A H T C A L A R R E
S U N B L O C K O S T U O S
F B T E S N U S P W J W S S S
V P N B I K I N I I E G S E A
W A T E R S K I C M L L L R L
A V C K Z R U G E S L G S R G
L L Z A E G R P C U Y Z Z R N
L F X V T L P C R I F U V H U
E B A R C I O X E T I O W C S
R R E T S B O L A W S N D A H
B E Q D O E L N M R H E U E C
M V O L L E Y B A L L Q L B R
U S A N D A L S W M B V W B T
C T L J G H K A P G R T H D S

POOL  SHORTS  JELLYFISH
SWEAT  TOWELS  SUNSET
RESORT  HATS  VOLLEYBALL
SWIMSUIT  SUN BLOCK  LOBSTER
BURN  UMBRELLAS  SURF
SANDALS  ICE CREAM  WATER SKI
TAN  SUNGLASSES

Codeword

Every letter of the alphabet is used at least once. Squares with the same number in have the same letter in. Work out which number represents which letter.

Adam

Pooch Cafe

Garfield

Sudoku

Bound And Gagged
Super Cryptic Clues

Across
1 Immaculate location? Not so! (8)
6 Brief immersion that may be lucky? (3)
9 Part of safari sent up (5)
10 People in boats one rams at sea (7)
11 Fresh water is provided by restaurant staff (7)
13 Celebration not completely unknown? (5)
14 Wonder if it’s Eve in disguise? (6)
15 Dealer rejected Soviet paintings? (6)
19 Singular stuff? Beat it! (5)
21 Teeth one’s seen in French resort (7)
22 Confused agitation or restful confusion (7)
23 Starters for Tokyo lunch including uncooked fish (5)
24 German article returns in colour (3)
25 Russians supplying bags for lettuce? (8)

Down
2 Father’s period for diversion (7)
3 Number three eight nine initially (3)
4 As a self-centred person, I get so worried (6)
5 Fight with club that may be recycled (5,4)
6 Odd editor gets up to object (5)
7 Female copper? (5)
8 Foxtrot by Romeo has to produce disapproving looks (6)
9 Mysterious mutation of giant mice (9)
10 Study former currency in a foreign country (7)
11 Take stock for reform in Ulster (6)
12 Cereal brought in like nuts (6)
13 A piece of furniture, right until now (2,3)
14 Like a ball in a game of golf? (5)
15 Rosie Lee held by estate agent (3)

Yesterday’s Solutions

Colouring

Answers

Wordsearch

Codeword
Violent video games can be dangerous for children

Kids exposed to violent video games are more likely to pull the trigger in real-life situations, as compared to those who do not indulge in such gaming habits, researchers have warned.

Published in the *JAMA Network Open Journal*, the study examined the effects of video games with weapons on children’s behaviour when they found gun in real-life.

The study was conducted on children aged between 8-12 years who were assigned to play three different versions of the game Minecraft.

The first version was violent and required players to kill monsters with guns while the second required players to kill monsters with swords.

The third version was non-violent, with no weapons or monsters.

After 20 minutes of game-play, the kids played with other toys in another room that included a cabinet with two disabled handguns, said the researchers.

For the findings, the team from Ohio State University in the US, included 220 children who found a gun while playing.

Nearly 62 per cent of the 76 children who played the video game with gun touched a handgun.

About 57 per cent of the 74 children who played the game with sword violence touched a gun, and about 44 per cent of the 70 kids who played the non-violent version touched a gun.

The violent versions with guns and swords were significant even after accounting for other mitigating factors such as sex, age, trait aggressiveness, exposure to violent media, attitudes toward guns, presence of firearms at home, interest in firearms and whether the child had taken a firearm safety course.

Although, the research is limited by the artificial setting of a university laboratory and Minecraft is not a very violent game with no gore, the researchers encourage gun owners to secure their firearms and reduce children’s exposure to violent video games.

— IANS
Spirtual of Ramadan

Happiness is the universal goal of people from all walks of life — be they philosophers of a high intellectual caliber or unlettered laborers — everyone strives in search of happiness and looks for ways to escape the worries of life.

However, most people achieve only partial or superficial happiness, which provides temporary relief from their problems. In order to search for everlasting happiness that will lead a person to true success, one must keep an open heart and mind, as the wise one is he who searches for the truth and adopts it immediately.

1. The most important means of happiness and the foundation of all felicity is to have sound belief and perform righteous deeds.

Allah, The Almighty, says (what means): {Whoever works righteousness (whether male or female) while he (or she) is a true believer (of Islamic Monotheism) verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment and lawful provision), and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do (i.e. Paradise in the Hereafter).} [Qura'an 16: 97]

Allah, The Almighty, promises whoever possesses sound belief and performs righteous deeds that he will have a happy life and will also be rewarded in the eternal Hereafter.

The reason for this is obvious: those who have the correct belief which leads to righteous deeds, reformed hearts and refined manners, have the basic foundation that they can refer to in any event — regardless of whether these are matters which cause joy and happiness or sorrow and dejection.

The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, described this quality of the true believers when he said: “How wonderful is the affair of the believer! All of his affairs are good and this is the case for nobody else except a believer. If he is blessed with prosperity, he thanks (Allah) and that is good for him; and if he is afflicted with adversity, he perseveres and that is also good for him.” [Muslim]

The Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, informed us that a believer’s reward would be multiplied many times over, regardless of whether what befalls him brings him joy or sorrow.

2. Keeping oneself busy in performing beneficial deeds and acquiring useful knowledge.

By doing so, one’s heart is diverted from whatever causes it grief and sorrow, to the extent that a person may completely forget his worries and unhappiness and become happy and energized.

This is something that is common to believers and others, but the believer is distinct due to his belief, sincerity, and his hope for reward while learning or performing beneficial deeds. If this deed is an act of worship, then he will receive the reward for it, and if it is a worldly task which is accompanied with a good intention, such as working for the sake of being able to worship Allah, The Almighty, better, then this will have a strong effect in removing his anxiety and grief.

3. Concentrating on the tasks at hand, not being anxious about the future and not crying over the past is another way of attaining happiness.

This is why the Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, sought refuge with Allah, The Almighty, from anxiety and sorrow. Usually, a person experiences sorrow due to what has passed and cannot be retrieved, whereas grief is due to anxiety for the future and the fear of what may happen.

A believing slave of Allah, The Almighty, should live for the current moment, focus, and exert the utmost effort to utilize his time in the best possible way. This will enable him to accomplish his tasks and forget his sorrow and grief.

When the Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, made a particular supplication or guided his nation to do so, he would also encourage them to exert efforts to obtain what they supplicated for and shun everything which might prevent the supplication from being answered. As the Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, said: “Be keen to do that which will benefit you, rely on Allah, and do not be lazy (by not exerting effort) and do not say when a problem befalls you: ‘If only I would have done such and such, then the result would have been such and such’; rather, one should say: ‘This was decreed by Allah and He does what He wills.’ Saying ‘If’ opens the gate for Satan (to cause discontent).” [Muslim] — Islamweb.net

Friends: Muslim women chat outside a mosque in Kunming, Yunnan province, China.
DEAP holds largest beach cleanup drive in Ramadan

By Mudassir Raja

Ramadan re-enkindles many good qualities in Muslims. Altruism, charity, hospitality, generosity, kindness and volunteerism to mention a few.

During the holy month of Ramadan, people from different backgrounds are seen getting involved in volunteer work in Qatar. One such activity is beach clean-up drives. The exercise demands a lot of time and energy to go to beach areas and physically collect the garbage.

It is not easy during hot Ramadan evening to go out in the open and collect the trash while you are fasting. However, the spirits of the devoted volunteers of Doha Environmental Action Project (DEAP) were not dampened by the hot weather and fasting.

“DEAP in conjunction with Nestle waters, Nestle Qatar and Qatar Museums Division of Cultural Heritage held an incredible beach cleanup recently at the Al Zubarah, a UNESCO world heritage archaeological site. Some 300 volunteers participated in the event where over 5,000 kilos of trash where collected in one hour,” said Jose Saucedo, Director of DEAP.

He added: “We started at 5pm and finished at 6pm. It was an incredible moment, to see all the volunteers living the spirit of Ramadan cleaning the beautiful beach, giving back to the community and showing some love for Qatar and nature. Yes, it was hot, and yes many of us were fasting, but none of that gets in the way for DEAP and its volunteers! Seeing all the volunteers have Iftar at the beach – on a clean beach – was quite a magical moment.”

Jose, a US national and devoted volunteer, said: “DEAP is a volunteering organisation leading the beach cleanup movement, and the fight against plastic pollution in Qatar. During the past two years, DEAP has organised as many as 115 cleanup drives across Qatar, where more than 5,300 volunteers have participated, collecting in total over 65,000 kilos of trash from Qatar’s beaches and sand dunes.

In addition to the cleanup drives Jose has been very active in the community doing over 40 school presentations in an effort to educate our youth about marine life in Qatar, plastic pollution and its impact, and what the students can do to help mitigate the problem.

He said: “Plastic pollution is a huge international problem. DEAP is determined to create a tipping point that generates a shift in behaviours that will benefit the environment and our community. The amount of trash found in our beaches and sand dunes is appalling. Worldwide every year 8 million tons of plastic ends up in the ocean. We can’t pretend nothing is happening. The time to act is here and now.”

He added: “DEAP wants to take the whole country on cleanups. We are advocating for the creation of a ‘National Beach Cleanup Day’, and for a number of actions that if implemented would make Qatar the global leader in the fight against plastic pollution and would gain international recognition for Qatar in the field of sustainability, making it a benchmark for other countries.

“If you love Qatar and nature and want to have litter free beaches and sand dunes for generations to come, join DEAP’s efforts to keep Qatar clean and support their effort to continue discovering Qatar with a purpose,” he added.

Shola Bello is a Nigerian expatriate and a dedicated volunteer working with DEAP. He said: “The recent drive was amazing and unprecedented. For the first time there were 300 volunteers turning up at one time. It was hot Ramadan evening. I along with many other volunteers was fasting. However, I was very spirited and did my work diligently.

“I am a photographer associated with the group. I collect trash and at the same time capture the photos of the volunteers during the work. I joined the group early this year. I have been in Qatar for seven years. I have found a productive way of spending my free time.

“As a Muslim, it is our duty to have cleanliness around us. In Ramadan, it becomes more prominent as we have to take care of other human beings and nature. I also enjoyed having my Iftar on the beach after doing good work.”

—— Jose Saucedo