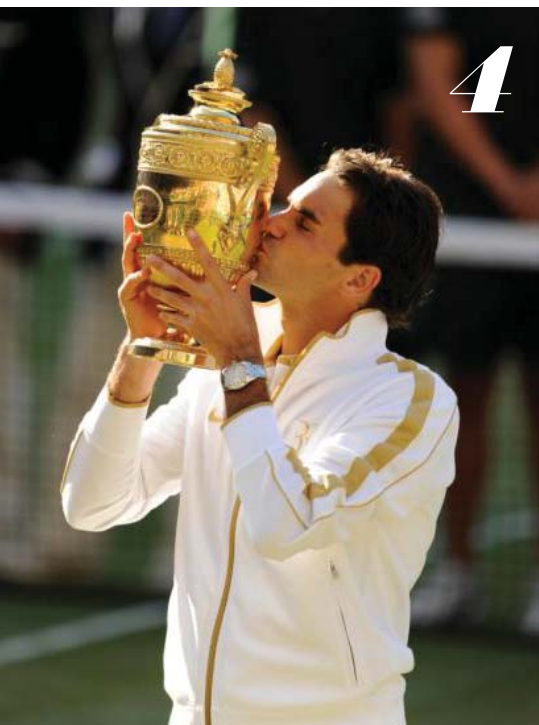


July / August 2010 CALENDAR



4

4 Tennis fans, get ready for this year's Wimbledon's men's final. Unlike British politics, there can't be two winners here. So who's it going to be: Nadal or Federer? The bets are on.

www.wimbledon.org

9 If there was one concert to go see at Lebanon's Byblos festival this year, we'd say it's 'Mashroua3 Leila', with a cast of seven musicians who all met while studying at AUB. A cross between folk and jazz, these kids deliver some of the most arresting new Arabic sounds.

www.byblosfestival.org

13 Beirut is holding its first ever art fair. 'Menasart' will include 30 artists from 30 different galleries from across the Middle East and South East Asian region. The fair lasts two days and is held at the glitzy Biel center in downtown.

www.menasart-fair.com

14 Are you a sucker for vintage handbags? Then check out Christie's vintage handbags – including some very covetable Hermes pieces – and jewellery sale. You'll be surprised with the bargains you can get. Check it out online or at Christie's South Kensington salesroom in London.

www.christies.com

16 The very unique Grace Jones is in concert in Istanbul for the annual Jazz festival. Other notable performers include Chick Corea on the 7th of July, and Tony Bennett on the 15th. In fact, the whole city will be playing jazz tunes in July, with street concerts and musical events.

www.iksv.org/caz

18 Lets admit it, we all dream of meeting a handsome polo player. If you're in the UK for the Veuve Cliquot Gold Cup, then that might be possible. Just be warned, you'll have to compete with an army of glamorous celebrities...

www.experience.veuve-clicquot.com

20-23 A recent ad campaign in Lebanon read 'My Jewel, My Right'. Meet those who believe every girl is entitled to her fair share of diamonds and rubies, at the Beirut Jewellery show at the Biel.

1-8 The finest sailing yachts compete in the waters off Palma de Mallorca today for the Kings Cup regatta.

4 Cairo opens the 4th edition of its Arabic Music festival, showcasing dozens of singers, musicians and ensembles from across the country. Check out the program at Cairo Opera House; it's on until August 8.

5 New kitchen, new cutlery, new micro-wave...why not re-do your entire kitchen in time for Eid at the Household fair in Kuwait. Today is the last day.

11 Ramadan starts today! The Holy month will end on September 9th. Update your calendars!

25-28 Istanbul Fashion week opens the season, before London, Paris and Milan. More than just catwalk shows, Istanbul fashion week is also a textile and fashion trade fair. Why not combine the event with a little weekend escape to the Ottoman capital?



4



1



9



14



16

Pucci, the pioneer THE PRINCE OF PRINTS



HOW IT ALL BEGAN...

In 1947 the Marquis Emilio Pucci came up with a revolutionary fashion-fix for a friend on the slopes of Zermatt. By chance, Harper's Bazaar editor saw it and commissioned Pucci to design a line of fashionable ski outfits for a magazine shoot.

Emilio Pucci (1914-1992) liked to do things his way. Enthralled by colour and design, the man created immediately recognizable clothes. He was one of the first to use a logo, and quickly understood he should diversify into accessories and furnishings. An avid sportsman, his first collection was actually designed for his college ski team. Things took off when he opened his first boutique in Capri, where the rich and famous bought his outfits (Jackie Kennedy and Marilyn Monroe were early converts). Now one of the jewels of Italian fashion, Pucci – the brand - recently celebrated its 60th anniversary. Like Prada, it's the ultimate Italian success story: starting off with one small boutique, it has grown into an international fashion powerhouse.

Written by Vanessa Friedman, fashion editor to The Financial Times, the book is a fascinating look into one of the great Italian fashion dynasties. Hundreds of photographs, drawings, and candid shots from the archive of the Emilio Pucci Foundation add to Friedman's text. Set in an XL format, the 10,000 limited edition covers-bound originals in Pucci fabric will be the most covetable gift this summer.

Pucci, by Vanessa Friedman, Taschen.



Top 3 books

THE CARRIE DIARIES

Forget Carrie Bradshaw from Sex and the City. It's the early 1980s, Carrie is 17 and has one year of high school left in Connecticut. Though she knows she doesn't want to end up a small town girl, she first has to overcome some life changing challenges. Filled with a cast of colourful characters, Bushnell gives us a great coming of age novel.

The Carrie Diaries, by Candice Bushnell, HarperCollins.

A HEDONIST GUIDE TO BAKU

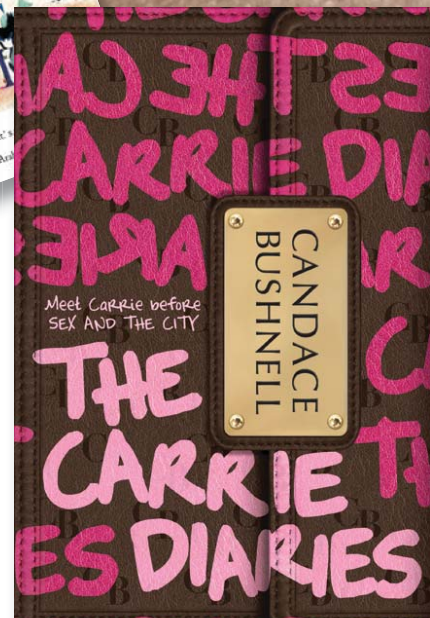
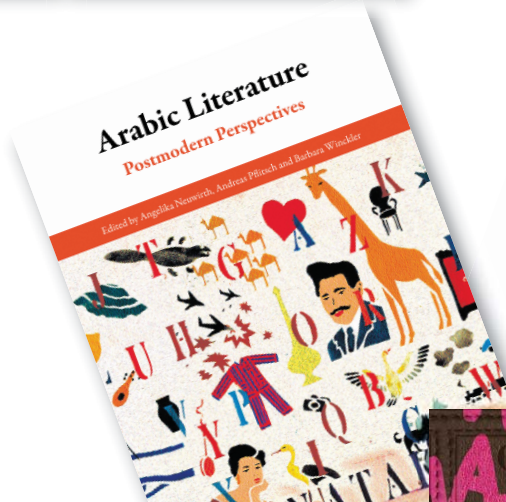
You might not have thought about it before, but Baku – Azerbaijan's capital – is the ideal cultural weekend escape if you're living in the Emirates. Once known as the Paris of Central Asia, Baku is now opening up again, after years of soviet rule. Take along this glamorous leather bound guidebook to make sure you check out the right places.

Hg2 Baku, by Ben Illis, Filmer Limited.

ARABIC LITERATURE

Reflecting on key postmodern notions with introductory prefaces, this anthology compiles works by Rabih Alameddine, Hoda Barakat, Tahar Ben Jelloun, Mahmoud Darwish, Assia Djebar and Elias Khoury. A must have for anyone interested in the Arab contemporary literary scene.

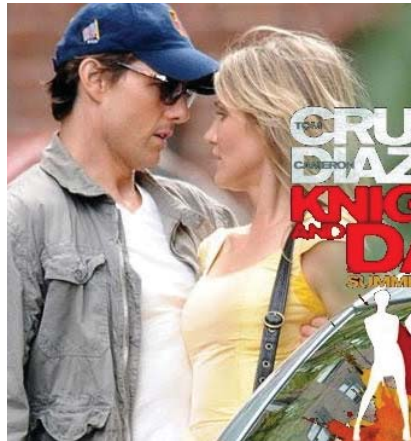
Arabic Literature, Post Modern Perspectives, edited by Angelika Neuwirth, Andreas Pflitsch and Barbaras Winckler; Saqi Books.



Knight AND DAY

WHEN JASON BOURNE MEETS SOMETHING ABOUT MARY

If you're up for a good summer laugh, then this comedy-slash-action movie starring Tom Cruise and Cameron Diaz is the one. The two play diametrically opposed characters, brought together by a blind date and a secret battery. Tom Cruise is the secret agent action hero – with some good jokes up his sleeves – while Cameron Diaz is the ditzy cute girl, with that unique sense of auto depreciation that has given her an edge over all the other beautiful Hollywood actresses since 'Something About Mary'. Together they become fugitives, jetting around the world to escape capture from a pugnacious federal agent (Peter Sarsgaard). Interestingly, this is the first time the two are back on the screen together since 'Vanilla Sky' almost 10 years ago. The movie was shot all over the planet, including Salzburg, Boston, Jamaica and Cadiz. Apparently a bullfight scene has sent an organization against the corrida up in arms. (Apparently two bulls escaped and injured onlookers causing the mayor to halt filming for a time). Directed by Peter Mangold, the man behind the terrific Johnny Cash biopic 'Walk the Line', expect an entertaining couple of hours.



CAMERON DIAZ

On Tom Cruise...

"If he wasn't Tom Cruise the movie star he would be the best stunt man in the business. He's also a very chivalrous man."

On age...

"I'm not 25 years old anymore, nor do I want to be. I wouldn't even want to go back to being 30. You know what I mean? That journey—I've done it already."

On the Radar

Shot on the Northern Iranian border with Turkmenistan, Babak Jalali's first feature film 'Frontier Blues' – which has successfully toured film festivals worldwide including Locarno, Stockholm, New York and San Francisco where it won the FIPRESCI critics – mines absurdist humour and quiet pathos from the droll routines of a group of men waiting for the promise of an unfulfilled future. Against beautiful deadpan tableaux, Jalali teases out the intense longing hidden behind his characters' stoic expressions, crafting a charming first feature film that leaves an indelible impression of a neglected corner of Iran. The film will be released through Artificial Eye in London on July 30th.



Top 3 films

LETTERS TO JULIET

A romantic comedy if you were looking for one. Amanda Seyfried plays an American tourist that lands in Verona, the town of Romeo and Juliet, where she stumbles on a love letter written in the 1950s. Seeking to unite the couple mentioned in the letter, she meets her own amorous fate in the process. With Vanessa Redgrave and Gael Garcia Bernal as supporting actors, it's an enjoyable, if not predictable movie.

SHREK FOREVER AFTER

Shrek fans be warned, this is the last instalment in the green ogre series but the first in 3D starring the same merry crew of voiceovers, including Eddy Murphy, Cameron Diaz and Antonio Banderas. Missing the days when he was still a "real ogre" rather than the domesticated green giant he's become, Shrek (Mike Myers) signs a pact with wheeler dealer Rumpelstiltskin (Walt Dohrn). Little does he know this deal cancels his very existence and turns Far Far Away into a very sad place.

TWILIGHT SAGA: ECLIPSE

While Bella's (Kristen Stewart) graduation is fast approaching, she is torn between her friendship with werewolf Jacob Black (Taylor Lautner) and her love for vampire Edward Cullen (Robert Pattinson). Meanwhile, Seattle is the backdrop to a string of murders committed by a vampire seeking revenge.



WORLD CUP TUNES

Okay, so Lebanon may not be playing in the world cup, but it still made it to the stage, thanks to its musical performers...

Somali German singer *K'naan* has joined forces with *Nancy Ajram* for the Middle East version of his *Wavin' Flag* and of course, there's Shakira's *Waka Waka*" (Time for Africa). So there you have it!



KYLIE ON

Her new album... "I'd describe it as emotional pop. It makes me think about girls getting ready to go out, putting their make-up on. It has some rave-y elements. I visualize a festival, a concert – that great rush of everyone being together."

A Kylie musical... "Yes, William Baker and I are working on getting the story written. I'm comfortable because it's not my life story; it's about the interpretation of my music."

Music GODDESS

JUST IN TIME FOR SUMMER, KYLIE TURNS INTO APHRODITE.

The Greek recession notwithstanding, it's going to be one big Toga party this summer, with Kylie Minogue's come back as Aphrodite. For her 11th album, the beautiful 41 year old is planning to take over the worlds' dance floors. Expect laser beats and disco tunes, with big pop music names like Stuart Price (Madonna and The Killers) and Kean as album contributors. Critics are saying this is a no risk album for Kylie - or Min as her friends call her - since she's doing what she does best: disco meets pop. But why change a winning formula? Fans of Kylie's single 'All The Lovers' crashed her website when a teaser was announced a couple of months ago - just too many people trying to access the song! This proves Kylie is still very much on top of her game 20 years into the business (she's even releasing her new fragrance, Pink Sparkle at the same time). Scissor Sisters singer Jake Shears, who worked on Aphrodite, confesses the first song makes him want to put up his hands in the air while the last song is the kind that has you falling in love - on the dance floor. Party animals – you were warned! Aphrodite – Parlophone.



Top 3 CDs

MARINA AND THE DIAMONDS

There's something confusing about Marina – perhaps because you feel like there's a group behind her, but it's actually just her, or because you mix her with Florence and the Machine (who picked their name first). Despite all that, her songs are the kind you find yourself singing all day to yourself. "I am not a robot, I am not a robot, oh oh oh."

The Family Jewels (Warner)

PLACEBO

For the first time since its release as a limited bonus disc in 2003, Placebo's 'Covers' is released independently. It

brings together 10 covers – featured as b-sides, radio sessions, or tribute albums – from artists as diverse as Kate Bush, The Smiths, Serge Gainsbourg and Depeche Mode. You have to like Placebo for their eclecticism. Covers (EMI/Virgin).

GORILLAZ

If you haven't got down to listening Gorillaz's latest album – do so. Aside from collaborations with Lou Reed, Kano and Snoop Dogg, it has one song recorded with the Lebanese National Orchestra along with the KGB project, Britain's best grime band. You gotta love David Alburn for his curious mind and thinking out of the box.

Plastic Beach (EMI)



ABU DHABI

A story of embroidery

300 YEARS OF WOMEN'S ART

Leading up to the opening of Saadiyat Island, Abu Dhabi's cultural arm is showing up some interesting exhibitions. Three hundred years of Islamic embroidery from Morocco to Pakistan are assembled at the Emirates Palace Gallery One. A medium often sidestepped as formal art – as it was used in so many day-to-day objects like horse saddles, prayer mats and garments – Islamic embroidery is almost exclusively the work of women. As the show's curator Isabelle Denamur explains, you come to speculate "about the life hidden behind each piece." Palestinian embroidery is perhaps the best known – no doubt due to the fact that it is so entrenched in the identity of its people, functioning as a kind of blazon (each village having its own pattern and recognizable stitching techniques), but also because it has been exhibited in many western museums, like LA's Arts and Crafts museum a couple of years ago. Ultimately it was created to celebrate the important stages of life. Palestinian women for instance would start sewing their "wedding trousseau" around the time they reached puberty. Highlights from this show include a lavishly decorated saddlecloth from Iran, some Punjabi wedding textiles and the Uzbeks' colourful yurt hangings.

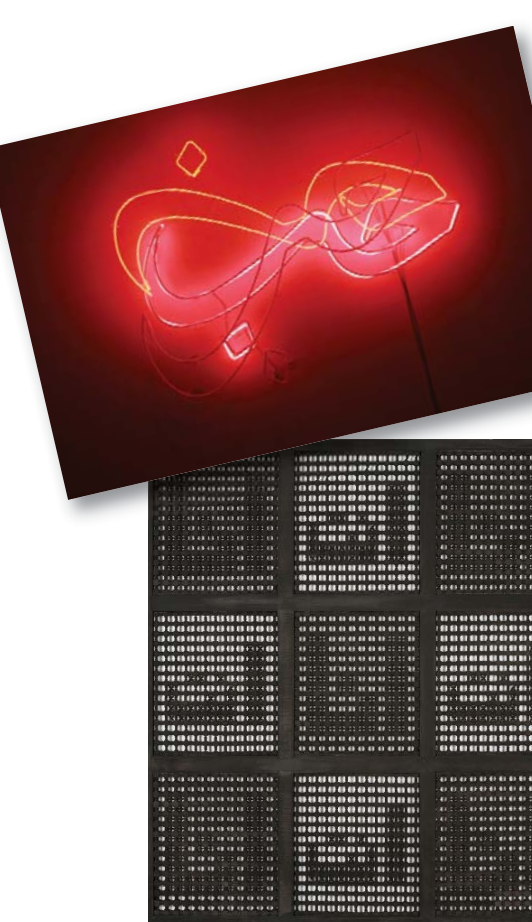
'A Story of Islamic Embroidery in Nomadic and Urban Traditions' is on show until July 28th, www.tdic.ae



HOW THE OTTOMANS SAW LONDON

Part of a project to show the strong links between Europe and the Islamic world throughout history, a unique online exhibition showing how the Ottomans shaped London and the rest of Europe through music, medicine and art was launched last month online. The site was made possible in great part by the British Council and the Khalili art collection, the largest private Islamic art collection in the world.

Check it out at www.thebookoftravels.org



Top 3 films *Dubai*

If you aren't convinced about neon art yet, then check out Algerian artist Zoulikha Bouabdellah's beautiful large-scale lights at the Isabelle Van den Eyden gallery. Using Arabic lettering to spell the word 'hobb' or love to evoke movements of the body, she creates beautifully engrossing pieces, alongside a selection of works that reference Egyptian singer Umm Kulthoum.

'Free from my Chains' runs until August 15th, www.ivde.net

London

Egyptian-German artist Susan Hefuna is famous for her mousharabieh pieces with a message. For Rose Issa's gallery, she's changed the medium, reverting to more intimate cast-bronze silver screens, watercolours and ink drawings. Not to be missed if you're in town.

'Ana: Of Dreams, Realisations and Patience' starts July 8 and runs until August 7th, www.roseissa.com

Beirut

Lebanese pop artist Zena el Khalil creates a series of collages and installations based on the propaganda flyers dropped by Israeli jets during the 2006 summer war. By cutting them up, colouring them and transforming them, she empties them of their meaning, thus creating something colourful and funny, which derides the macho and silly language of war.

'Ou Ali Mama3ou Khabar' runs until August 15th, Espace Kettaneh, Gefinor Centre.