

Al Jaw

The Artistic Journal of the Arab World



“I want to reveal the usual things that go unnoticed and put my own twist on them. What comes out from the seemingly insignificant moments is a celebration of everyday’s beauty. The extraordinary in the ordinary.”



Anass Ouaziz is a Moroccan photographer who finds the sublime in the mundane. He considers photography to be an exercise in observation and believes that stories emerge by simply paying attention. Passionate about the Atlas Mountains, his work highlights his Amazigh heritage. He won the Textile Exchange's photography competition conducted with Magnum for his project, 'Private Transmissions', and works with “Artists for Morocco” to support victims of the 2023 earthquake through his art.



YENNAYER CELEBRATED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MOROCCO

The Imazighen (plural of Amazigh, sometimes referred to as “Berbers”) are an ethnic group indigenous to North Africa, primarily in Morocco and Algeria, whose existence predates modern Arab society. However, the recognition of the Amazigh identity in Morocco has been a true fight for decades, the population facing numerous discrimination and being based in marginalised parts of the kingdom, lacking infrastructure and state services (e.g., Amazigh girls hit the highest illiteracy rate of the country).

However, since the beginning of the century, the Amazigh community has successfully won key battles, starting by the one of the recognition of Tamazigh as an official language along with Arabic, following the 2011 constitution. In May 2023, the King announced that Amazigh New Year’s Day, commonly known as “Yennayer”, was now an official paid national holiday. January 13, 2024, was therefore the first official Yennayer of the Moroccan Amazigh community, with hundreds of celebrations in the kingdom.

There is a debate regarding the origin of Yennayer. Some argue that the date symbolises the celebration of land and agriculture, others that it is the day is of commemoration of Berber king's Chachnak over Egyptian pharaoh Ramses II. Even the name of the new year varies depending on the region. "Idh Yennayer", "Idh Skas", "Hakouzah", ... One thing remains certain, we are entering the 2973rd year in the Amazigh calendar, which is ahead of the Gregorian calendar by 950 years.





**Samia Halaby in 1959., as a graduate student at Michigan State University.
Courtesy of the artist**

Cancellation of Samia Halaby's Exhibition

Palestinian artist Samia Halaby was supposed to open her personal exhibit at Indiana University on February 10. The exhibition, prepared for three years with curator Elliot Reichert, was abruptly canceled, after museum director David Brenneman informed Halaby of his fears for the safety of the artworks. The real reason for the cancellation, according to Halaby, would be her pro-Palestinian content on Instagram.



Halaby is recognized for her role in the Abstract Expressionism movement. Born in Jerusalem in 1936, she was displaced during the Nakba, and settled in the US. Her work is known for its vibrant, abstract compositions, in which she incorporates geometric elements, exploring the interplay of color, shape, and space.

There is a renewed interest in her artwork as she was a precursor of current trends with her digital abstractions. Another personal exhibition, "Samia Halaby: Eye Witness", is still scheduled at MSU Broad Art Museum on June 29.

LITERATURE, WHAT'S NEW?

A lot actually. Sharjah Poetry Festival rewarded Tunisian poet Moncef Ouhaïbi with first prize, and Morocco announced that the Marrakech Festival of African Books will start on Feb 8. And also...



Saudi Ritaj al-Hazmi, at just 15 years old, has recently achieved a 2nd Guinness World Record as the world's youngest columnist. Previously recognized at age 12 as the youngest woman to publish a series of books, she continues to slay! Al-Hazmi has especially to Saudi news media Arab News, covering various projects in the kingdom such as The Line and NEOM, key issues for the 2030 Vision plan.



Samer Nouh's first book wins Roman Gay Award in the Discovery category! "An afternoon under the snow" offers an insight into childhood in the Lebanese mountains in 2005, where traditions, stories and local legends are transmitted and continue to evolve. Samer Nouh is also a film director, and his experience in audiovisual brings a cinematic dimension to the narration. The cover was drawn by Lebanese illustrator Joseph Kai.

@abed_zagout

Khan Yunis, Gaza on October 29, 2023



Diary of Palestinian writer & minister of Culture Atef Abu Saif

Since 7 October, Atef Abu Saif has been keeping a diary in Gaza. Comma Press will publish all these chronicles, entitled "Don't Look Left: A Diary of Genocide", next February. Many of Abu Saif's diary entries were sent in the form of WhatsApp messages and voice memos to his editor.

Extract: Monday, December 20, 2023

“When I left my office in Ramallah on the afternoon of 5 October for a short work trip to Gaza, I never thought I'd be stuck there for nearly three months, in the middle of the longest and most devastating war of my life. (...) Looking back on this diary - even though it's not finished yet and I'm still living in a tent in Rafah - I find myself not wanting to remember anything. I just want to remember what life was like before the war. I don't want to remember that so many people close to me have been wiped out. I want to keep them with me, pretend they're still there.”

THE EXILE'S COOKBOOK

Medieval Gastronomic Treasures
from al-Andalus & North Africa



Ibn Razīn al-Tujībī

TRANSLATED AND INTRODUCED BY

Daniel L. Newman

“The Exile’s Cookbook” is a collection of recipes and cooking manuscripts written in the 13th century by Ibn Razin Al-Tujibi. It includes 480 recipes, including breads, stews, porridges, truffles, eggs, poultry and meat, vegetables, sweets and even a recipe for making soap! Newman, the author, claims that the Arabs introduced a range of foods and spices into European cuisine in the Middle Ages, including sugar, carrots, aubergines and cauliflower.



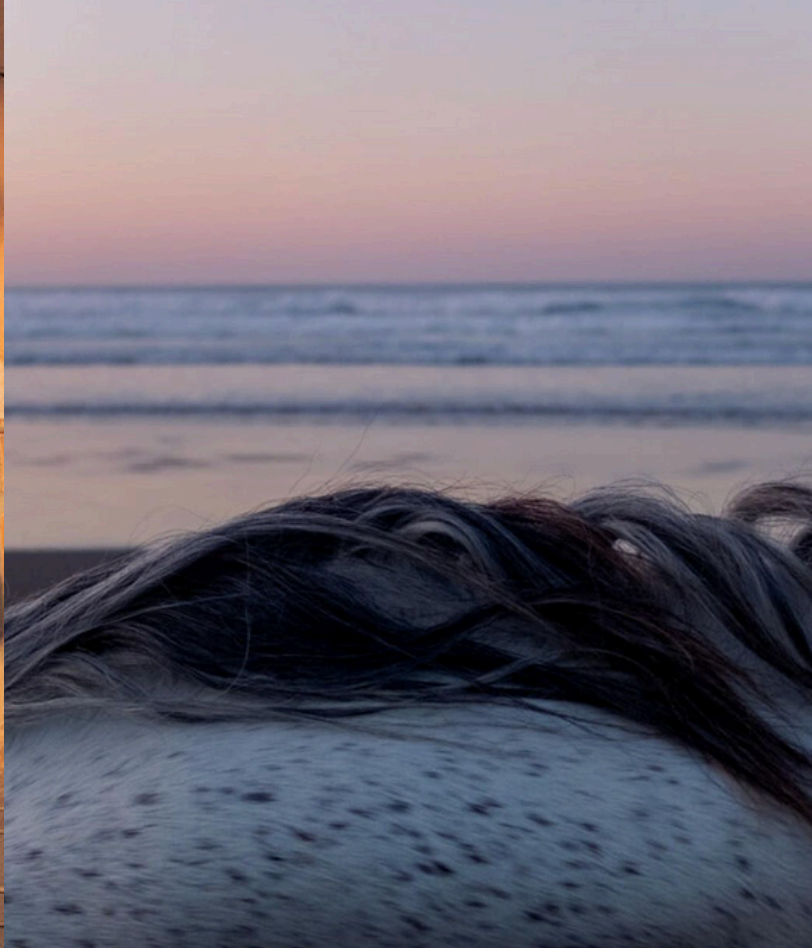
Recipe: Stuffed Cannoli, but Al-Tujibi’s way!

Knead unleavened darmak flour with only water until you get a firm dough. Wrap the dough around cane reeds, covering them entirely, and roll them on the table with the palm of the hand to smooth out the dough. Cut only the dough into small tubes and keep them apart from one another. Leave them to dry on the reeds. Then put honey in a cauldron and skim off the froth as it is heated on the fire. Mix in good-quality pounded skinned almonds and any of the usual aromatic spices you have to hand. If any of the dough breaks off, crush it and also mix it in. Thicken the mixture with honey. Then gingerly remove the dough tubes from the reeds and fry them in an earthenware pot with good-quality olive oil until they turn golden brown. When they are ready, stuff them with the above-mentioned filling and put a blanched almond at the ends of each of them. Dust with cinnamon and sugar, and then serve.

TIGRANE KAZAZIAN NEW ALBUM "STILL LOVE"

IF YOU MISSED THE INFO,
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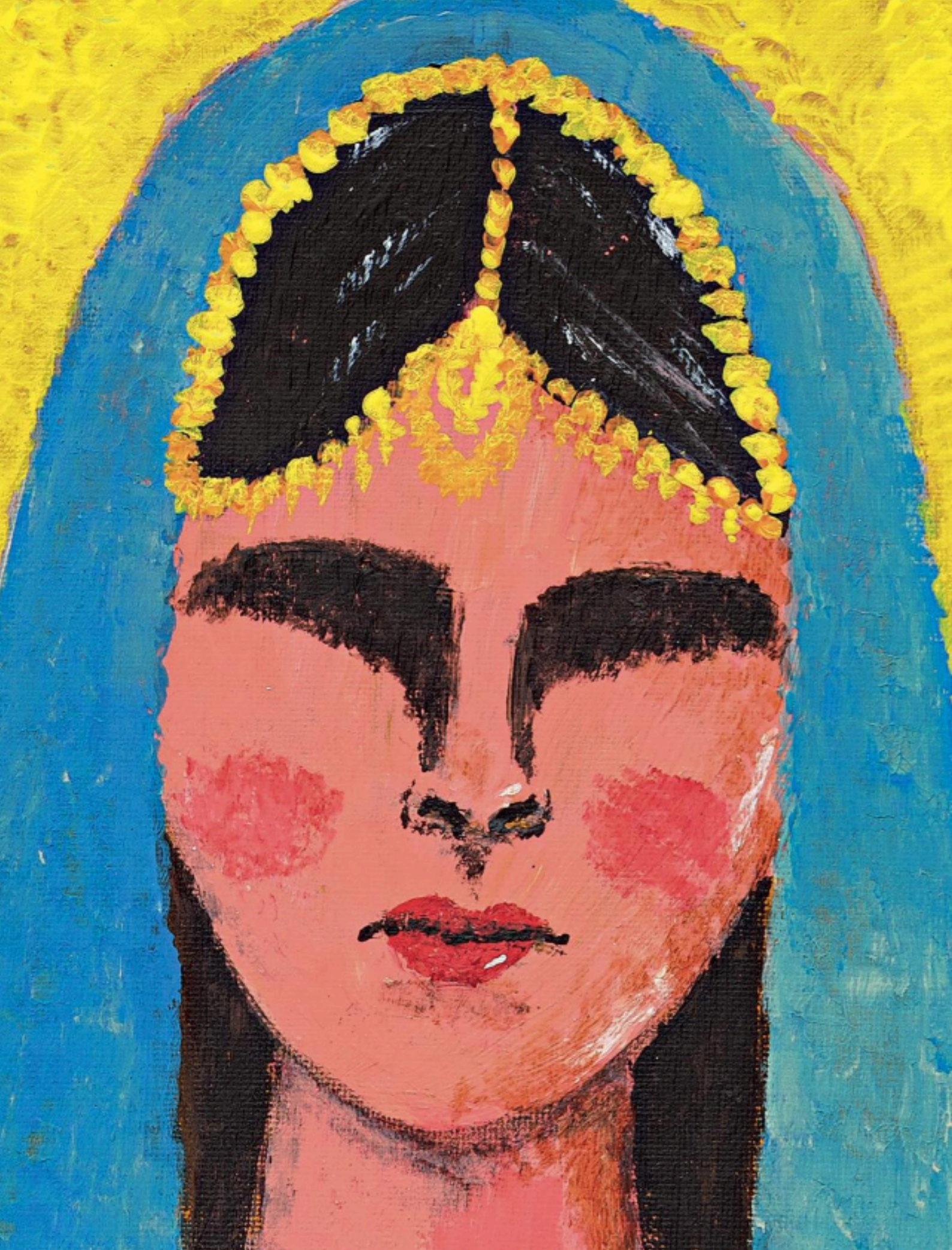


MUSTAQBAL AWARD HONOURS THREE MOROCCAN PHOTOGRAPHERS

Yassine Sellame (Old Process category) ; Rida Tabit (Mobile category) and Mehdi Ait El Mallali (Digital category)

Go check thir work at "Intersection-Human 2.0" exhibition, at TGCC Foundation in Casablanca, or on Instagram





To see: exhibition "Faces Tell Stories" by Omani artist Mariam Al Wahibi, hosted throughout January at Beit Al Zubair in Muscat

IF YOU WANNA SHINE IN SOCIETY THIS WEEK



Alex Rayes and Camille Hajjar have founded a new gallery dedicated to digital art in Beirut.

The gallery believes in the democratisation of digital art - from AI-generated images to virtual reality - and its impact on the art market.

MENA TikTok Creators Awards: Saudi Arabian Mohammed Shamsi (@iimeeto) and Egyptian Amina Hussein (@aminahussein5_) won Content Creator of the Year.

The ceremony in Dubao included performances of Youssef Ismail and special guests such as Safa Siddiqui and Zeina Khoury from Netflix TV show “Dubai Bling”.

New water springs after Al Haouz earthquake: Moroccan Minister for Infrastructure and Water, Nizar Baraka, has revealed that 69 new water sources have sprung up following 2023 earthquake, between the provinces of Al Haouz, Taroudant, Ouarzazate and Chichaoua.

Among our Readers



اللوفر أبو ظبي
LOUVRE ABU DHABI

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