

Ithraeyat Magazine

Summer 2024



Doors

Artist **Abdul Qader Al Rais**



Welcome to **Ithraeyat**, a cultural magazine produced by The King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture (Ithra). Created to inspire hearts and enrich minds, this Saudi inspired platform with an expansive international outlook captures the art scene and the culture of art by bringing together a mosaic of stories collected from across the Kingdom, the region and beyond.

Behind the scenes:

Ithraeyat is the plural of Ithra (enrichment). Magazine has its origins in the Arabic word makhzan, a storehouse. And therefore, Ithraeyat Magazine is a storehouse of unique, enriching stories.

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Letter from the **Editor:** **When One Closes, Another Opens**

By Rym Al-Ghazal

“Behind every door is a story”

— An old proverb


Whether traditional or modern, large or small, sturdy or flimsy, a door can be a simple, plain object with no distinctions or one that highlights your identity with many personalized decorations.

The front door can also capture elements of your history, the story of your home and the country you are from, and even what you may be celebrating currently: a birthday, a graduation, or even a religious holiday.

The door is both a storyteller and a keeper of secrets.

In this special edition of *lthraeyat*, we pay homage to 'doors'. Over the four years of this publication, which was born during the COVID-19 epidemic, when all doors were closed in lockdowns, the magazine helped open doors of possibilities for creatives, artists, and writers, building new bridges of cross-cultural dialogue, art, and inspirational storytelling.

In this edition, we reflect on the philosophical meaning of doors and the various artists who found inspiration in these gates to various pathways, such as the godfather of Emirati art, **Abdul Qader Al Rais**, whose colorful nostalgic art graces our cover for its 23rd edition. When one door opens, it can open many other doors.



We meet Timothy Verdon, Director of Museo dell'Opera del Duomo in Florence, Italy, and discover one of the world's oldest doors, 'The Gates of Paradise,' which are said to have been bestowed their title by one of history's greatest artists, the legendary Michelangelo, who said: **"They're so beautiful they would grace the entrance to paradise."**

Like the many colors found in nature, we feature unique voices, from important cultural figures to artists and photographers, as well as writers and poets. Each shares their creations and stories with us to reflect on and inspire us to think outside the typical door.

In an earlier age, before streets had names and buildings had numbers, the front door was the best way to identify someone's home. Each one had its own marks and designs. Some were floral or geometric, while others had heart-shaped figures or traditional items such as a coffee pot or dallah. One popular design that owes its origins to local traditions is a circle carved within a rhomboid geometric shape, known as "Ain Al Hasoud" (eye of envy), which is said to offer protection against the evil eye.

Doors were often smaller than those of today, said to force people to 'bend in humility' when entering a home. Some mosques and schools had smaller doors for this very same reason.

We thank you for joining us on this journey of pathways of possibilities, and we hope it opens doors for you and inspires you to open doors for others.

We hope you enjoy this latest 'makhzan' of enriching and unique stories.

Warmest regards,






Cover Artist:
**Serenity of Doors &
the Sensitivity of Letters**

By Rym Al-Ghazal

“The abandoned, the alone, the cracks, the curves, and the shadows all mesmerized me, and I had to capture them somehow and gently bring out the magic in them,”

— **Abdul Qader Al Rais**, Emirati artist



Abdul Qader Al Rais, the godfather of Emirati fine arts who is known for his magical mastery of kaleidoscopic color, started his childhood in colorless poverty.

“All you could find then was black and maybe just a bit of blue paint,” recalled the man whose versatility with the paintbrush for almost 60 years created masterpieces of what can best be described as magical realism.

“The abandoned, the alone, the cracks, the curves, and the shadows all mesmerized me, and I had to capture them somehow and gently bring out the magic in them,” said Abdul Qader.

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Al-Barajeel – Between reality, romanticism and magic. Artworks by **Abdul Qader Al Rais**. Courtesy of the artist.

Spotlight:

Storytelling reflections over the four years

By the Ithraeyat Editorial Team





لبدريز كبة الحسن

Emerging from the depths of a COVID-19 lockdown, when doors were closed out of protection, precaution, and fear, Ithraeyat was born. It stood as a beacon of joy and inspiration, a resolute break from the somber news of the time, harnessing the transformative power of art and storytelling.

Now over four years old, the magazine opened and continues to open doors for artists, writers, and creatives who find themselves on its pages. It also continues to inspire cross-cultural conversations through its various local, regional, and international partners.

Here, we look back at some of the stories that broke new barriers, inspired others, and continue to resonate with the public. From royals, ministers, and ambassadors to pioneers, emerging artists, and creatives from various walks of life, they have all graced the pages of Ithraeyat and told their stories through their art. Ithraeyat is a canvas for all to paint in their unique narratives.

With over 800 articles featured, it would be difficult to mention all. Therefore, here are a few who shared their art, their creativity, their motto in life, and the importance of art.

The Art of Legends—Iconic figures have passed away since they shared their art and story with Ithraeyat, whose light will always shine beyond the pages and inside our hearts. Here, we pay homage to them as we express our eternal and deepest condolences and gratitude to them.



“Art is everywhere...You can’t stop art; it will find its way to express itself...”

— The late HRH **Prince Badr Bin Abdulmohsin Al-Saud** (1949 - 2024), the legendary poet, in his last interview, shared with us a different artistic side **in the edition dedicated to the ‘Desert’ theme.**



“Every family has a love story they like to re-tell...”

— The late Princess **Diala Arslan Talhouk** (1971 - 2021), author and poet, shared a timeless love story **in the edition dedicated to the ‘Love’ theme.**





The famous camels artwork by Saudi artist **Fahad Al-Naymah**. The renowned artist who took the 'stereotypical' association of Saudi Arabia with camels to a new level of creativity, with his drawn colorful mischievous camel becoming a kind of cultural ambassador for a diverse nation.

“Trust in God, but tie up your camel...”

— A saying

The Art of Camel - A national animal is more than a symbol; it becomes a cultural ambassador, a source of inspiration for poetry, storytelling, and art. In honor of the 'Year of the Camel,' we look back some of the more **unique colorful camels** that broke **stereotypes** and graced our pages, the **historical ones that even triggered battles**, and the kind of **songs and chants camels** inspire.

The Art of Debut - It has been quite an honor to showcase a few of the artists' artworks for the first time to an audience, be it the first time in the region or the first time ever on the cover of a magazine. Be it indigenous or over 100 years old, or even a contemporary piece that captures an important time in history, art is one of the few timeless creations that keeps us intrigued about the artist's intention behind it and how it can mean different things to different people at different times.

In Ithraeyat's first edition, born in the COVID-19 era, 2020, we paid homage to isolation and the great moments of reflection, reconnection, and reinvention that it inspired. The cover art piece, titled "That Happened in the Age of Corona," was completed in over a month, with the final brush strokes dabbled just a few days before it graced our first cover.

Saudi artist from Alsharqiya **Tagreed Al-Bagshi** debuted this powerful piece in Ithraeyat magazine. Alsharqiya is also the home of Ithra and Ithraeyat.

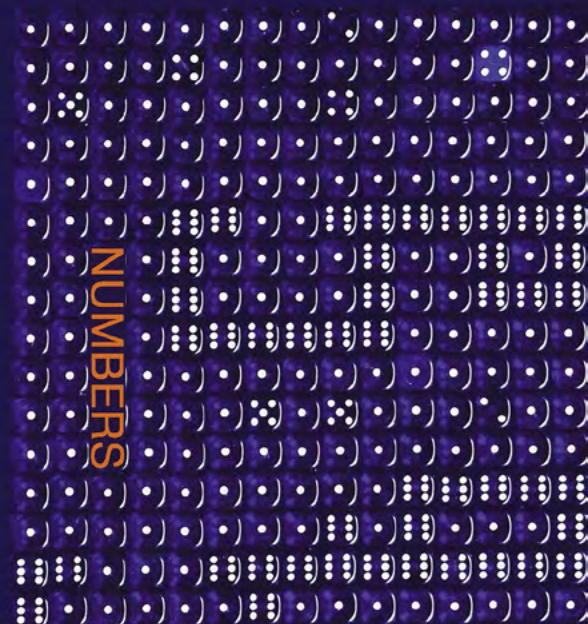
ISSUE NO. ONE



ithraeyat magazine

April 2020

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Artist: Lulwah Al Homoud

ithraeyat magazine

May 2020



The art on the cover is an exclusive debut piece by award-winning **Lulwah Al-Homoud**, who was influenced by the daily news of numbers and how – in some ways – our lives are impacted by the unpredictable outcome of a roll of dice.

The poem featured is by Abul-'Atahiyya (748-825/826), one of the earliest philosophical poets and a prolific poet of ascetics. He was also the first Arab poet of note to break with the conventions established by the pre-Islamic poets of the desert and to adopt a simpler and freer language in poetry.

The lines featured are roughly translated to:
"I am counting my days and trying to figure their sum, Ignoring not what I am calculating..."

ISSUE NO. 004



Joy
ithraeyat magazine
July 2020

In this edition, we paid homage to 'Joy' and explored its creative expression and forms. With lockdowns lifted and some travel allowed, there were reasons to celebrate at that time as the world struggled with COVID-19.

The cover features the exquisite, exclusive calligraphic art created for Ithraeyat by **Abdulrhman Al-Faiz** of the word 'Falyafrehou' [Let them rejoice] from a verse in the Holy Qur'an. He chose a rare Kufic form, an ornamental one often found in the divider section of the Qur'an, to celebrate the word and the concept of joy.



In this special edition themed the 'Desert,' we paid homage to a world of poetry, art, creativity, and contemplation, rising from within the mirage of the bareness of the sands. We had a conversation with the 'Shakespeare of the Desert,' **the late HRH Prince Badr Bin Abdulmohsin Al-Saud**, and discovered his other artistic side, one as colorful and dynamic as his poetry. The cover art piece was His Royal Highness's homage to the many faces of the desert and the peace one discovers in it as one takes respite amongst its sands. Many stories are buried in the desert.

Artist: Gibran Khalil Gibran

SKETCHES

Ithraeyat Magazine

June | July 2022

In this special edition themed 'Sketches,' we had the profound —perhaps deep in contemplation— face of a 'wanderer' by **Gibran Khalil Gibran** (1883- 1931) grace our cover. Dating to 1931, this piece has never been published on the cover of a magazine in the region. It also reveals one of the most important core characteristics of Gibran — that in the year of his death, aged 48, he painted a 'wandering' face, embodying his lifelong journey as a wandering soul, a true wanderer of words and worlds.



In celebration of Ithraeyat's third anniversary, it paid homage to the theme "Sound." What started as a subtle lifeline for artists and creatives during the peak of the COVID-19 noise — keeping them connected to the public and the public to them — has evolved into a symphony of colors, stories, and art. Ithraeyat even has its own sound, its own identity of subtle, soothing music that you hear when you visit its website, composed for Ithraeyat by Saudi musician **Nasser Al-Shemimry**. The musical composition and notes debuted on this special edition's cover.



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Comics the Middle East grew up on. Read more here: [Nine Decades of Arabic Comics](#),



Rarities from the Aramco Archives. The "Flying Camel," an Aramco airplane arrives in Dhahran. The gleaming exterior of the plane matches the beauty of its interior. Ordered from Douglas aircraft, the new DC6-B has begun to make regular flights between New York and Dhahran. Courtesy of Aramco Archives.



The Holy Kaaba Door:



Photo courtesy of King Abdulaziz Complex for Holy Kaaba Kiswah.

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Bridges:
Cross-Cultural **Conversations**

The Doors that Impressed
Michelangelo

By Rym Al-Ghazal

“Artworks like the three Florentine bronze doors can help visitors rediscover, for a moment and perhaps only vicariously, the joy of faith,”

— Timothy Verdon, Director, Museo dell’Opera del Duomo.



Doors and gates are more than just dignified objects that separate the inside from the outside; they protect our privacy, keep us safe, and provide a way in and out — they are the first and the last thing one sees as one leaves or arrives at a premise.

Doors are gateways to various possibilities, but very few doors in the world evoke such grandeur, such a deep sense of faith and majesty, as the doors of the Baptistery of Florence.

Known as the Gates of Paradise, the North and South doors — built in the 14th and 15th centuries — are doors of gold and bronze heavy in weight (and even heavier in history), with intricate stories along its panels that evoke a strong divine presence in their viewers.

The Gates of Paradise are said to have been bestowed their title by one of history’s greatest artists. “They’re so beautiful they would grace the entrance to paradise,” said the legendary Michelangelo.

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The Gates of Paradise. Baptistery of Florence, Lorenzo Ghiberti, 1425- 1452, bronze and gold.
Courtesy **Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore**, photo **Antonio Quattrone**



Double Door. Signed "Master Rustam son of Master Haji Najjar".

Northern Iran, dated 892 AH/ 1486-1487. Wood, carved. H.179cm x W. 106 cm. The Aga Khan Museum, AKM707

Bridges: Cross-Cultural Conversations **Stop, And See More**

By Dr. Ulrike Al-Khamis

In our frantic, complex world today, we rarely stop and 'see' deeply - not only with our eyes, but with our minds and hearts. Who, for one, would bother standing in front of a closed door for any longer than absolutely necessary? And yet, that door may have so many stories to tell, so many wise messages to convey.

Take this beautiful example here from the Aga Khan Museum collection, carefully constructed and carved completely by hand.

Along the top, its inscription tells us: "Abandoning the world is more righteous than any worship."

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Najdi Door in Ushaiger Village, courtesy of the Royal Institute of Traditional Arts (Wrth).

Special **Interview:** **Stories Eternalized by Doors**

By the Ithraeyat Editorial Team

“The world of door-making in Saudi Arabia symbolizes bright beginnings and carries within it many ancient tales. It is also a witness to the bounty of our land, from which we draw inspiration in everything related to values, beauty, and art.”

— CEO of the Royal Institute of Traditional Arts (WRTH), Dr. Susan bint Mohammed Al Yahya, said in an interview with Ithraeyat.

The role of architecture in Saudi Arabia was not limited to utilitarianism only but extended to the aesthetic aspect. The craft of making traditional doors represented an important part of our heritage that was passed down from one generation to the other.

These doors began to tell and immortalize stories about the diversity that our country witnessed — and continues to witness — in terms of society, the nature surrounding its raw materials, and the visual details that distinguished the doors across regions.



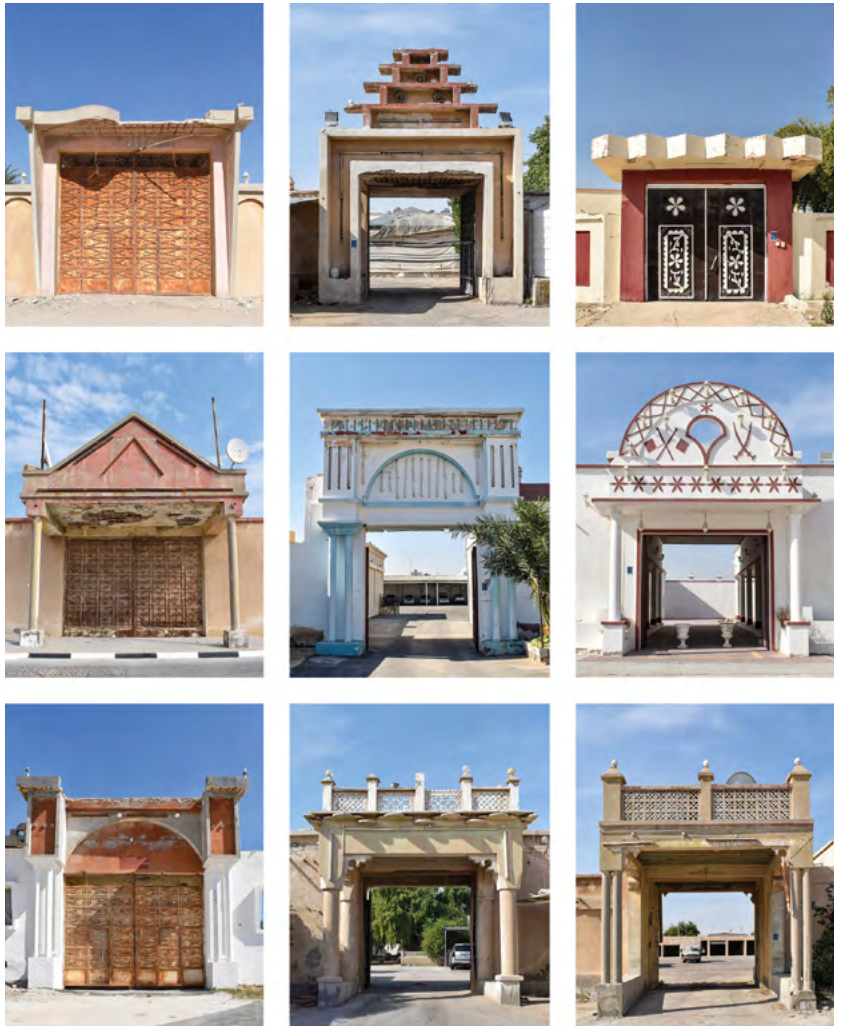
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Special Feature:

A Story of Architectural Treasures

By the Ithraeyat Editorial Team



Nine portals typical of Doha and its suburbs from Wakra to Rayyan, 1950s–1960s.
Photos by Péter T. Nagy, courtesy ©Qatar Museums.

“I believe that learning about art – or material culture in the broadest sense – can contribute to how we place ourselves in the cultural cosmos of today. In the case of Colors of the City, it consciously embraces this cosmopolitan and multi-layered heritage, narrating a historical trajectory unique in the region.”

— Peter Tamas Nagy, Co-Curator of Colors of the City.

Rich with stunning imagery of historical buildings and gates, Design Doha's Colors of the City exhibition tells the architectural story of Qatar's capital over the last 100 years. The exhibition, curated by Glenn Adamson and Peter Nagy, includes 3D models, films, photos, and interviews presenting the city's architectural transformations from before the discovery of oil to the arrival of global influences.

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Special **Feature:**
Doorway to New Worlds of Art

By the Ithraeyat Editorial Team

“Life is incredible, but it is also challenging and full of hurt. I think art can help us live better, more fully, and more at peace with ourselves and others.”

— Emilliano Valdés, curator of Bawwaba's 2024 edition, Sanación

The transformative power of healing comes to life in Art Dubai's 2024 Sanación edition of its art section Bawwaba (which means 'gateway' in Arabic). Curated by Emilliano Valdés, Chief Curator of the Medellín Museum of Modern Art and

Associate Curator for the 10th Gwangju Biennale, this edition poses possibilities for a world where the positive rays of individual healing shine ever so brightly on the world around us—creating a better society and a more hopeful collective future.

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Alhada Summer, 1974. Oil on Canvas. 100 x 120cm. Courtesy of Abstract Art Gallery.

Special **Feature:**

Preserving Artistic Echoes from the Past

By Abeer Alnemari

“If we don’t protect our own history and write it, we will lose it forever. We can’t let that happen because it carries so much of our visual memory, our identity, and who we are.”

— Basma Alshathry, Curator of Misk Art Institute’s “Echoing the Land” art exhibition

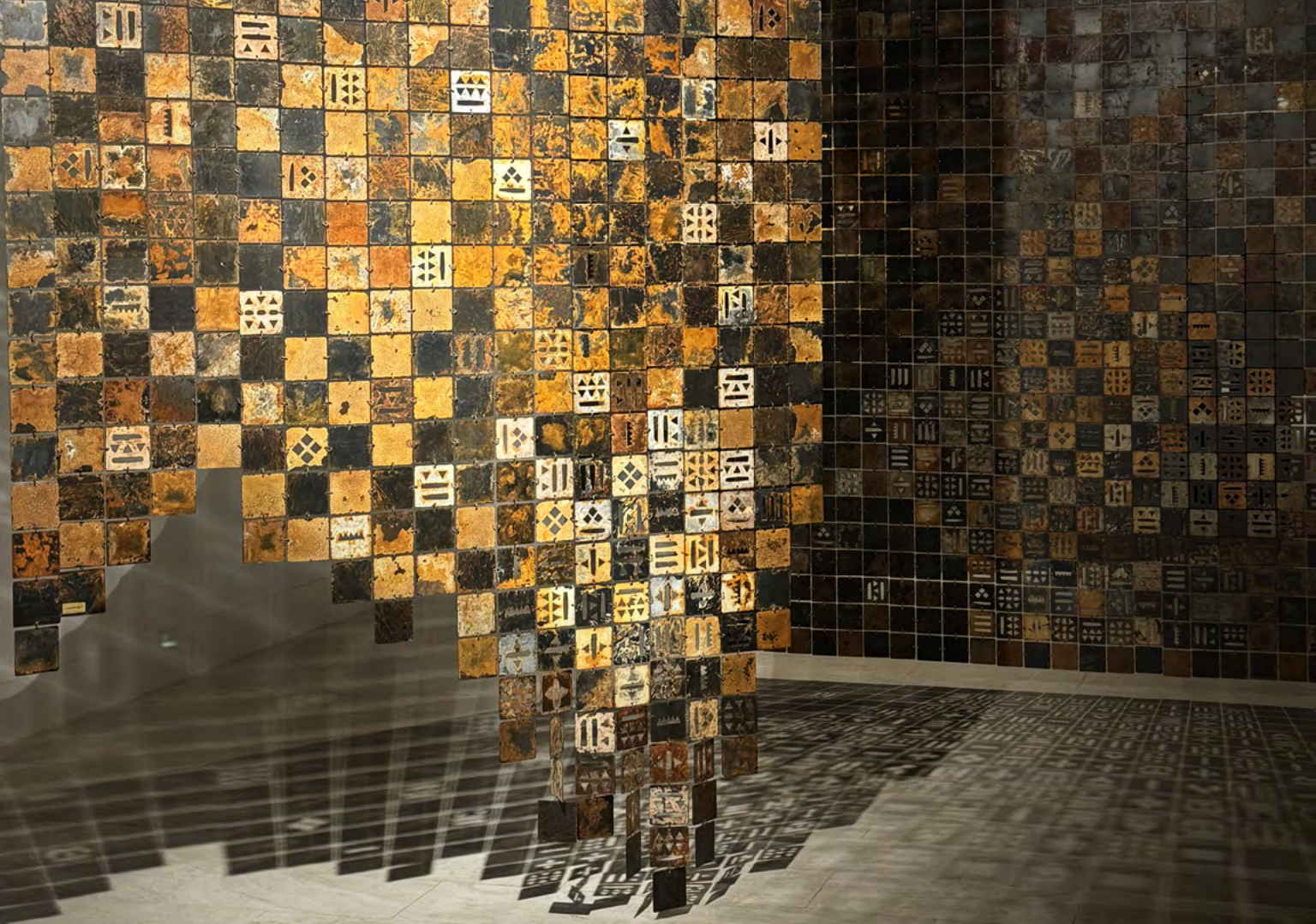
Art can be like a special door that takes us back to the past of an entire nation.

Yousef Jaha, Abdulhalim Radwi, Abdulaziz Alhammad—these are some of the first artists who initiated the Saudi art scene we see thriving today. Their artwork has done more than open

a door for today’s Saudi artists to follow in their footsteps. They’ve helped narrate Saudi history, preserve places that no longer exist, and plant visual memories into our minds for places that we haven’t lived, all so that we may know our history and preserve it for generations to come.

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Spotlight:

The Door's Secret – Artist Maisa Shaldan

By Manar Al-Mutairi


“The door serves as a dividing point between events, between here and there, between fear and hope, and between seeking and staying.”

– Artist Maisa Shaldan

Maisa Shaldan, a Saudi visual artist with Palestinian roots and recipient of the 2023 Misk Grant, is always working towards expressing the depth of time and its psychological and philosophical influences. Through her art, she explores cultural legacy, societal memory, and their human and environmental imprint. With a degree in Islamic studies and a master's in educational psychology counseling, she also works as an educational and family counselor.

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Dana Awartani, 'Come, Let Me Heal Your Wounds' (2020), Courtesy of the Diriyah Biennale Foundation, photo by Marco Cappelletti

Special **Feature:**

Finding Art After the Rain

By Abeer Alnemari

“After Rain is designed to be a multi-sensory experience that invites viewers to think about what all this art is about, and what experiencing it does to them. We not only wanted to tell the audience something through the biennale; we also wanted them to tell us something.”

— Ute Meta Bauer, Artistic Director, and lead curator of the Diriyah Contemporary Art Biennale, After Rain

Rain is an event that naturally breathes renewed life into our world. The moment that follows rainfall is one of pause and reflection—the earth is rich with rainwater, the flora is covered in delicate droplets, and the sky—as well as everything else—is vibrant with that evocative scent and color of rain.

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Special **Interview:** **Doors of Wooden Dreams**

By Hassan Albather

**“If the doors of perception were cleansed, man
would see everything as it is, infinite”**

— William Blake, English poet (1757 - 1827)

Great ventures often start with contemplation, and at the beginning of his career, Dr. Saeed Alwayel regularly pondered how much of man is bound to that which protects him from the hubbub of the world, provides shelter, and serves as an entryway to his safe personal space.

Dr. Saeed set out to study doors closely in the eastern regions of the Arabian Peninsula, examining their designs, ornamentation, and development over time, as well as the influence of the Islamic culture upon their profile and that of other cultures that engaged in commerce with the region.

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Special Guest **Columnist:**

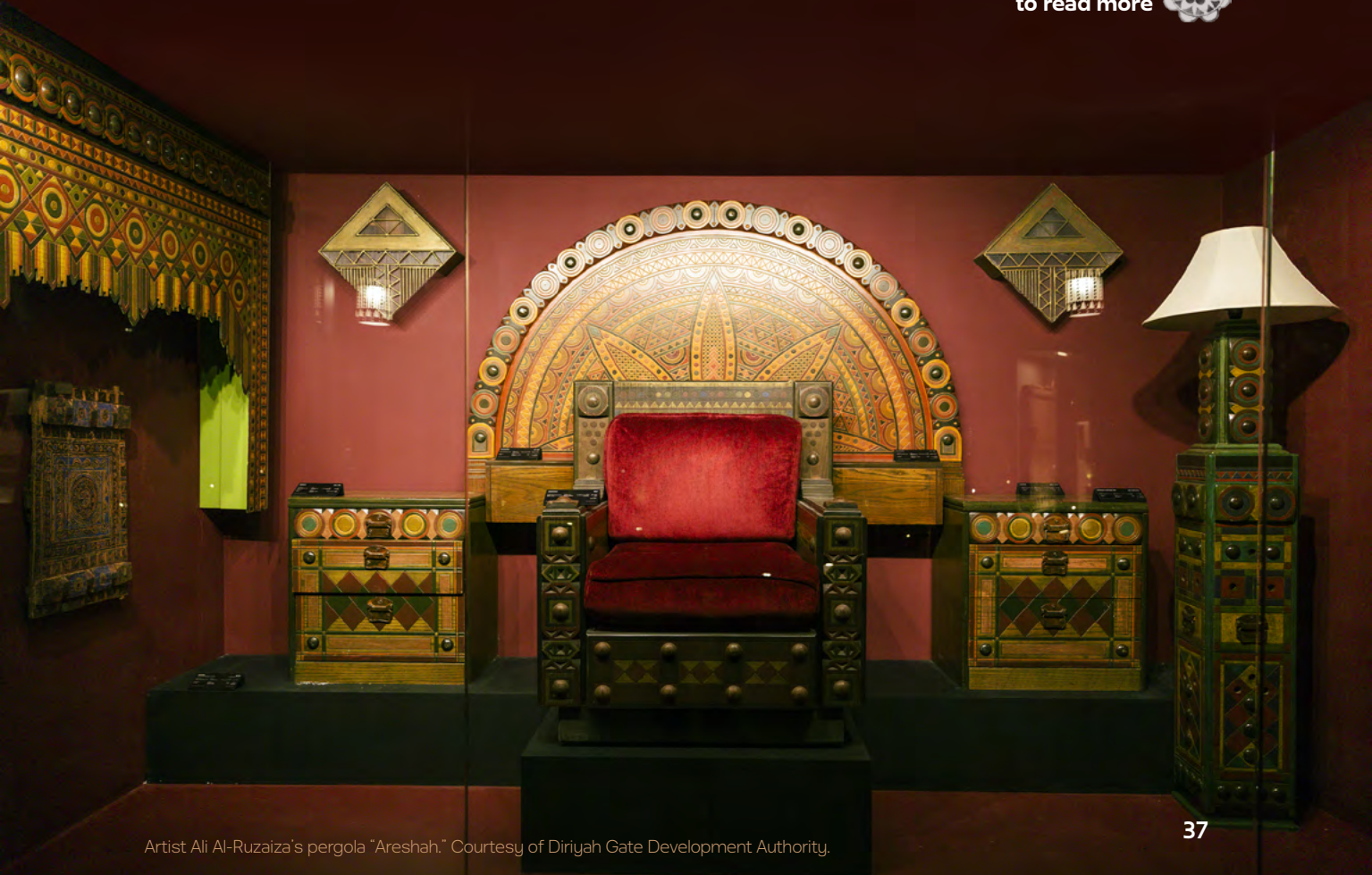
Beyond the Door

By Hayfa AlQahtani

In Saudi culture, a door is never merely a passage into a home. It symbolizes hospitality, protection, and the boundary between private and public life. The Najdi door holds deeper significance, acting as a social symbol, a window into the lives within, and a story of the house's inhabitants.

The exhibition "Beyond the Door" delved into these roles and more, narrating the story of the Najdi door, the secrets of its craftsmanship, and its enduring legacy.

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Special Guest **Columnist:**

Life Between Two Worlds: Doors and Metaphors in Cinema

By Qais Abdullatif

"Go and open the door.
Even if there's only
the darkness ticking,
even if there's only
the hollow wind,
even if
nothing
is there,
go and open the door.
At least
there'll be
a draught.."

Czech poet Miroslav Holub (1923-1998) -
"The Door"

At 10 o'clock in the evening, the mother passed by the living room to grant her son his bedtime wishes, ordering him not to stay up too late playing video games. Before she left, she asked him to make sure the door was locked from the inside. The boy did not listen to his mother's advice, stayed up past midnight, and finally fell asleep, not doing what she asked him to do. The door would remain open.

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From the **Field** – Community:

Memorializing the Doors of the Past

By Abeer Alnemari

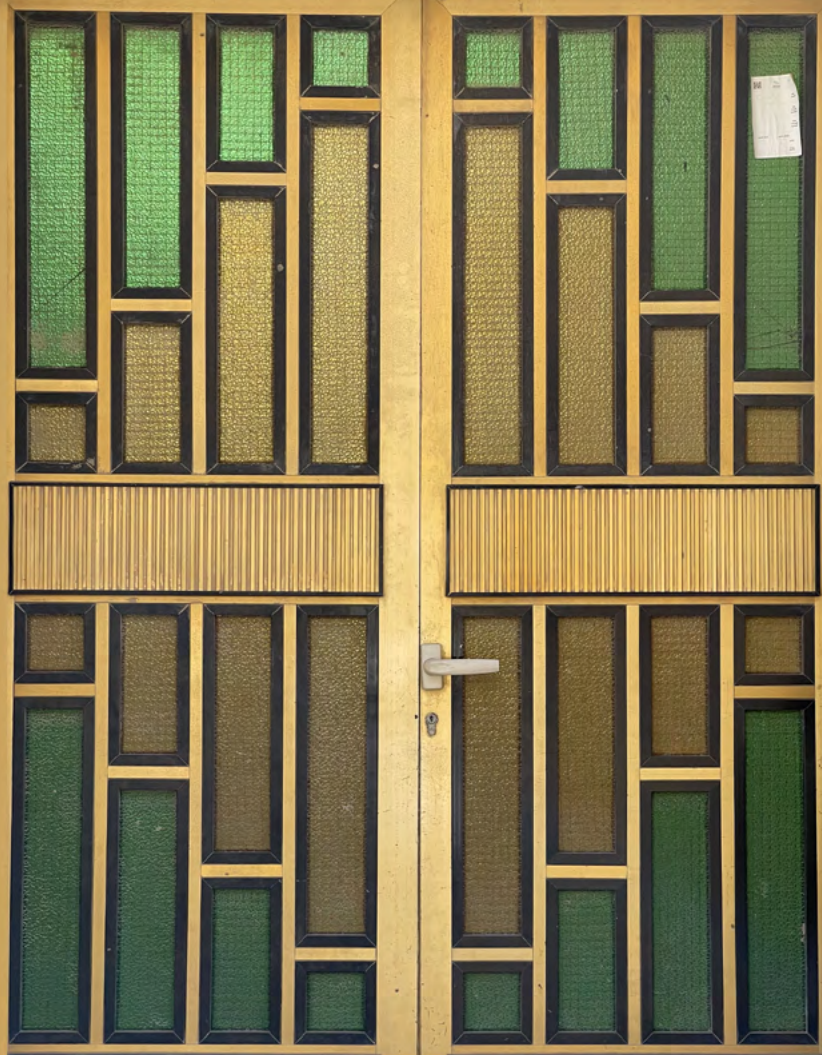
“Traditional doors in Jiddah are created and decorated very similarly to other traditional doors around the Kingdom, and even other Arab countries, but what makes the ones in Jiddah special is their simplicity”

– Artist Khulood Al-Amri

Art plays a powerful role in preserving and recording all forms of heritage. One such form is the distinctive architecture of Jiddah, the bride of the Red Sea in the western part of Saudi Arabia, which has been well-documented by all the artists, poets, and writers who grew up living and breathing in the city's charms.

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Photograph by **Omar Al-Bishi**

From the **Field** – Community: **Lens on the Door** By Manar Al-Mutairi


“Art is everywhere, we just have to observe it,”

– Omar Al-Bishi

Academic architect Omar Al-Bishi captures the essence of Saudi Arabia’s architectural heritage through the lens of his evocative photography. With a particular focus on the Eastern Province, his photography chronicles the evolution of Al-Khobar, transforming its corners and buildings into timeless works of art. Through the interplay of light and shadow, his images evoke a sense of nostalgia, capturing the essence of a bygone era.

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"Untitled" 2023 - Etel Adnan, from the "Between East and West" collection exhibited at Ithra.

Arabic Treasures:

Darwish between Death and Oblivion

By Rawan Talal

**Forgotten, as if you never were.
Like a bird's violent death
like an abandoned church
you'll be forgotten,
like a passing love
and a rose in the night . . . forgotten**

— Mahmoud Darwish (1941-2008)

Death, with its approach, turns the scales upside down, and when it passes, its sound makes many doors tremble!

The arts, including poetry, immortalize humanity. They are a crack in the nature of forgetfulness, a cornerstone in the memory of societies, and an act of resistance to the triviality of life. We write about life and death, love and sorrow, experiences and loss. We reminisce about what once was and eulogize to pick up the broken pieces of our hearts. The Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish (1941-2008) lived a hard life.

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From the **Shelves:**

When Books Open Doors

By the Ithraeyat Editorial Team

“A book is a garden carried in the pocket.”
– Chinese proverb.

Over the next few editions, we will share here books (in English and Arabic) that have changed the world by opening new perspectives, building bridges of understanding, and inspiring cross-cultural conversations.



Photo by **Mohammed H. Abualsaud**.

We hope you enjoy discovering and rediscovering these books. The same book may inspire new thoughts and a different personal story depending on the stage in life, the time, and the mindset at the time of reading.

The Little Prince

By Antoine de Saint-Exupéry



Photo by **Mohammed H. Abualsaud**.

It is one of the most translated books in the world and continues to be one of the world's most-read books, as its story is timeless and continues to teach us lessons about life and about ourselves. Published in 1943, every generation of readers finds something that resonates with them when they read about the prince who traveled to planet Earth and taught us to see the world around us through a lens of compassion, wisdom, kindness, and innocence. The author, a pilot himself, writes about a pilot who meets this strange child in a remote desert, and they exchange ideas, stories, and moments that tug at the heart and make us all pause and reflect on our own thoughts and expectations. It is a book that opened our eyes and opened the door to our hearts. Many lessons are learned, such as caring for the environment, with one of the most profound sentences written that goes: **“It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye...”**



Photo by **Mohammed H. Abualsaud**.

There are many remarkable Russian novels, too many to count. Then we have Leo Tolstoy, a literary giant with many successful and timeless books, and first and foremost, his 1867 *War and Peace*, which is considered to be one of the world's greatest novels. It remains a powerful mirror of our times, past and present, and sadly, the future, where the title captures human nature's consistent contradiction of seeking peace while launching wars, the powerful realism behind these elusive concepts, and the changes in the lives of ordinary people as they navigate times of peace and war.

War and Peace

By Leo Tolstoy

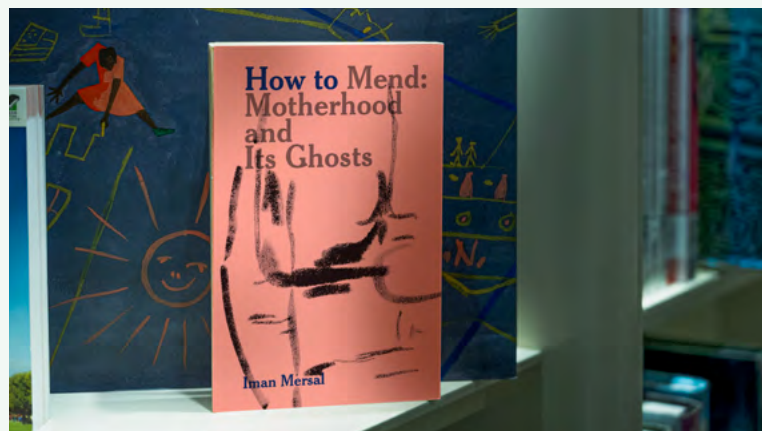
The depth of philosophical layers, together with concepts of destiny and riddled with painful realities, makes this book one of the essential literary masterpieces that open our eye to the history and stories of other cultures. Here, we find the wealth and depth of Russian culture and how history keeps repeating itself with different characters and settings, and the forgotten aftermath of the destruction of lives and the painful journey of reconstruction that follows. One such simple wisdom goes: **"There is no greatness where there is not simplicity, goodness, and truth."**

How to Mend: Motherhood and Its Ghosts

By Iman Mersal

"Guilt seems to be the feeling that unites mothers of all kinds."

Far from the imagined paradise of motherhood, Iman Mersal, through this book, opens a secret door towards the torments and wounds of motherhood. From a very personal and private experience, she opens this door in an attempt to understand her son Youssef as he is diagnosed with depression. She dissects motherhood and what surrounds it before its real formation through the experience of motherhood and then what results from it afterward. This exploration examines the questions of motherhood via the medium of photography, the presence and absence of the mother in the pictures, and the diary entries of Mersal the mother.



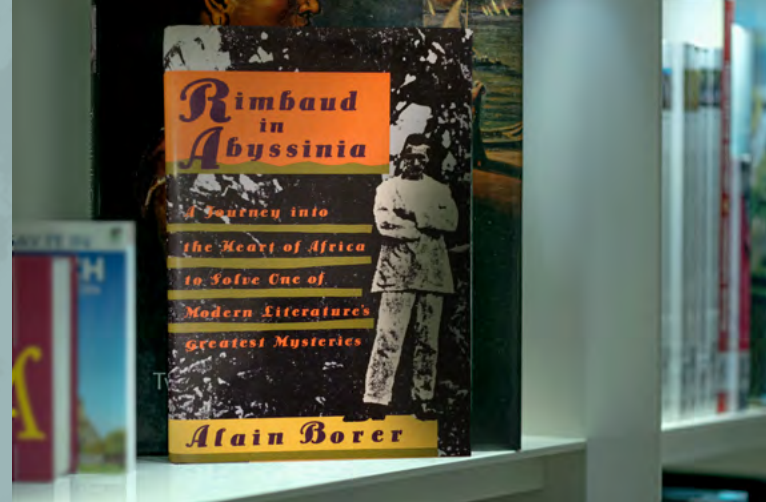
It then concludes with a path of mourning and walking in it to immortalize the feelings of the daughter who lost her mother and the grandmother who lost the daughter at some point. This book redefines motherhood as one not constrained by idealized theories, nor limited by the general collective image.

Rimbaud in Abyssinia

By Alain Borer

“Rimbaud! Rimbaud, one and only, but twice (as) great: once in poetry and once in silence.”

How can a poet who did not write poetry for more than four or five years between the ages of 16 and 20 and then abandoned writing it altogether be a name that cannot be ignored when talking about French poetry and even modern poetry in the world? The writer and poet Alain Borer does not talk about poetry in Arthur Rimbaud's life but rather opens a door to what came after that: his abandonment of poetry



and his going to trade in Harar, Abyssinia. Throughout the chapters of the book, Borer follows in Rimbaud's footsteps in Ethiopia at the same age when Rimbaud first set foot in Abyssinia, in search of his stories and what remains of them, or let's say to understand his blatant desire not to be noticed by anyone by immersing himself in a distant life in which he does not coexist with the poet within him... The desire for silence.



The Writing of the Disaster

By Maurice Blanchot

“Tragedy, for me, is that which does not see the end as its limit: that which plunges the end into tragedy.”

Maurice Blanchot did not commit himself to writing in one form or on one topic. His writing changes, grows, and takes on different colors. This different writing had an influence on post-structuralist philosophers, including Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze, Jean-Luc Nancy, and others. In *The Writing of the Disaster*, Blanchot adopted a fragmentary writing style, opening the door to redefining the disaster, which does not have a single definition in Blanchot's dictionary, but rather began to take shape in different meanings throughout his work. In Blanchot's conception

of writing, it is destined for erasure, which gives it changing connotations depending on its fate. This is why each of us can approach it with our own understanding. Is disaster what turns the world upside down? Or what spoils everything by keeping it the same? The disaster that surprises, or the disaster whose imminent arrival is felt, the incidental or the genuine? The disaster of speech, or what remains after everything is said, the ruin of speech? Dozens of doors open to redefine it without Blanchot telling us which door he took.

From the **Field**

Artistic Expressions

By the Ithraeyat Editorial Team

Join us as we explore the world of art and creativity, bringing along a group of artists who will open up our doors —and our eyes— to different types of expressions, all the while inspiring reflection, intrigue, and, perhaps, some delightful confusion.



Fatima Alsada is a Bahraini artist who likes to take viewers onto journeys of self-discovery and profound emotions. Inspired by cubism and expressionism, her art consists of bold colors and geometric shapes that explores complex themes related to growth and maturity. This self-taught artist has participated in multiple exhibitions, including notable displays at Mash Art Space and Safeya Kanoo Hub, where her work has captivated audiences and earned recognition for its raw intensity and emotional depth. Explore more of Fatima's creative art [here](#).



"Emergence - unfold," mixed media, 100X100 cm. courtesy of Fatima Alsada



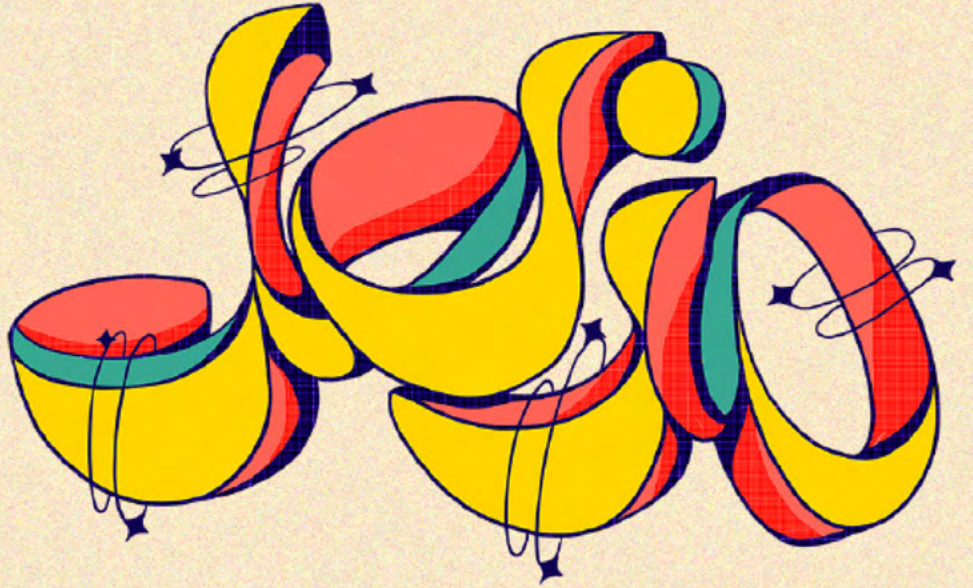
"The family," Courtesy of **Aseel Al-Yaagoub**.

With her vibrant colors and special style, the multitasking Saudi artist **Aseel Al-Yaagoub** aspires to create fresh contemporary art that blends heritage with modernity. She creates characters that translate her unique perspective on life and explores art by experimenting with different mediums and colors. The young artist participated in multiple exhibitions, such as the third edition of the "Part of" exhibition, and another one with the Saudi society of fine art. Explore more of Aseel's unique art [here](#).



"Yellow face," courtesy of **Sara Alnamlah**.

Through an intricate blend of digital collages and photography, Saudi artist **Sara Alnamlah** passionately explores the connection between identity, emotions, and visual storytelling. Sara studied visual art and printmaking at Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University and further enriched her artistic perspective through studies in creative writing at Columbia University and digital editing at the New York Film Academy. Explore more of Sara's multi-layered art [here](#).



It was experimentation and play that shaped the Egyptian artist **Waleed Abodouh's** artistic experience. As he did not only deal with words in writing but also drew them and the meanings behind them to revisit them in an unfamiliar way. This interest began in his early school years when graffiti caught his attention and made him discover his passion for the art of drawing. Years later, this interest turned into an academic specialization that was used to refine his talent. Waleed shares with the world his expressions and his bold experiments of different artistic styles and patterns, with colors that force you to stand in front of them for contemplation and discovery. Discover more of Waleed's experiences [here](#).



Qatari artist and content creator **Shaikha Al-Subaey** specializes in expressionism painting and creative writing. She started out on a mission to find meaning, and today, she is on a mission to make meaning. Shaikha believes that art is a language of feelings that can be understood by people of all races and cultures and that it is a unique and inspired medium through which she can express herself, her experiences, and her thoughts. She was awarded one of the Akhlaquna Awards by her highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser Al-Missned in 2023 for "Creating Meaningful Content and Positive Influence in Society." She has also won seven innovation and creativity awards at the level of her home country, Qatar, and at a regional level. To go on a journey to discover the art she creates, click [here](#).

From **the Vault — Homage:**

Mounirah Mosly - Portrait of a Patriot

By Fuad Al-Therman

**“Painting is my world; it allows me to
see life, with freedom as its canvas...”**

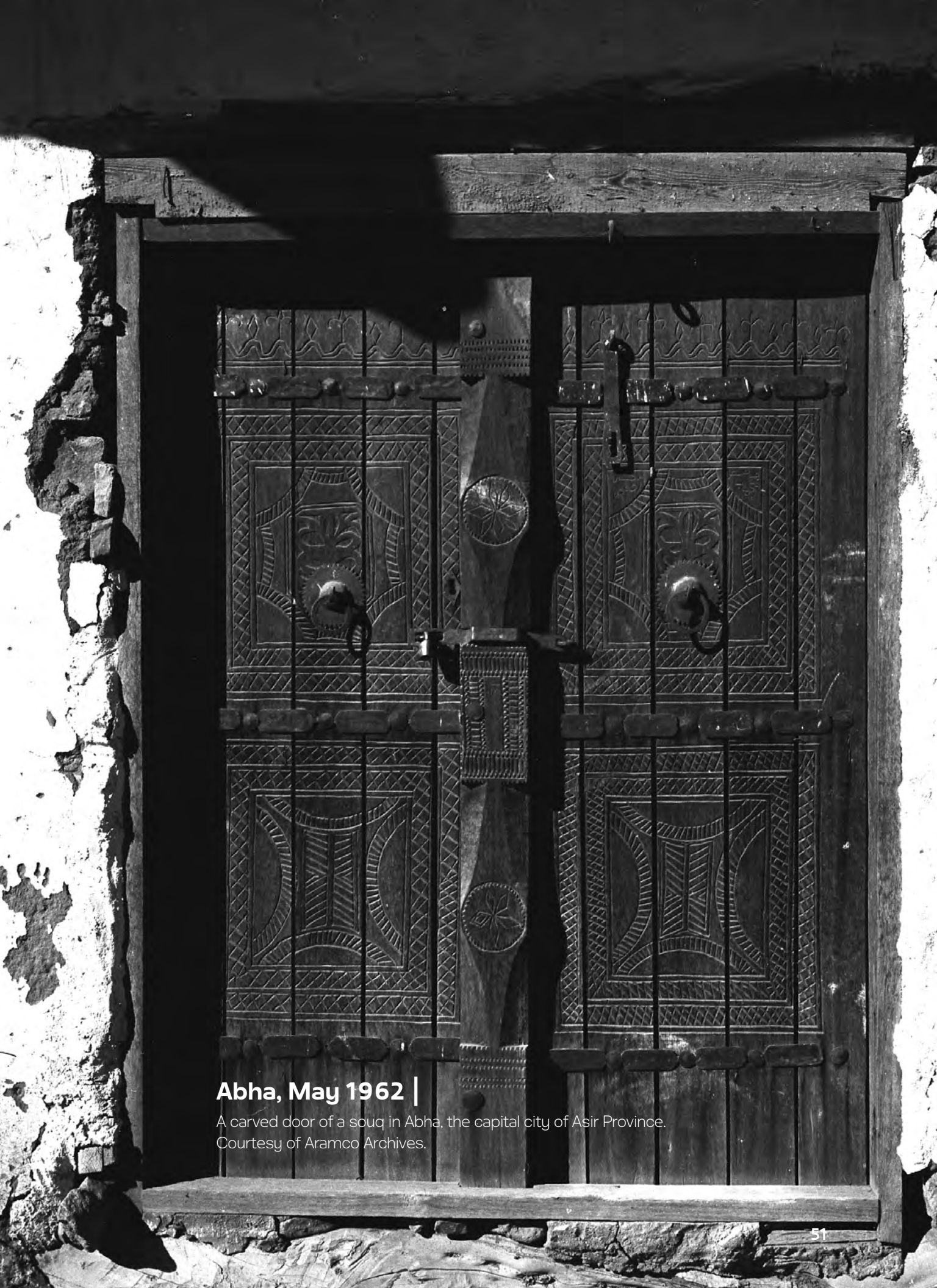
– The late artist Mounirah Mosly

Saudia Airlines honored the late artist Mounirah Mosly – may she rest in peace – in the booklet *Pioneers of the Fine Arts Movement in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*, presented by artist and art critic Abdulrahman Al-Soliman.

In addition to Mosly, the list of four pioneers included Abdulhalim Radwi, Mohammed Al-Saleem, and Safeya Binzagr. This esteemed position was achieved by this Saudi artist through her extensive and dynamic artistic journey, which has formed an important part of the Kingdom's art history.

**CLICK HERE
to read more**





Abha, May 1962 |

A carved door of a souq in Abha, the capital city of Asir Province.
Courtesy of Aramco Archives.

From the **Archives:**

When Doors Spoke

By Rym Al-Ghazal

“The carpenter’s door is broken.”

– Arabic proverb

As far back as one can imagine, there has always been some form of barrier or another to protect us from outside forces (such as weather or strangers) or to simply provide a sense of privacy.

Be it doors, fences, walls, or even nets, the sense of ‘here’ versus ‘there,’ ‘access’ versus ‘no access,’ and ‘inside’ versus ‘outside,’ creates interesting psychological dynamics of feeling protected versus feeling exposed to others and to the elements.

Here, we are privileged to go back in time and explore the various types of doors created and designed to stand out and be identified, as well as keep places safe and guarded against theft and exposure. From carved wood to metallic mesh, the styles may have changed over the years, but their sole purpose remains the same - a gate that is both a barrier and a pathway between two places.

Enjoy these **Aramco** Rarities:



Jubail, 1930s |

Doorway of an Aramco office building. Courtesy of Aramco Archives.



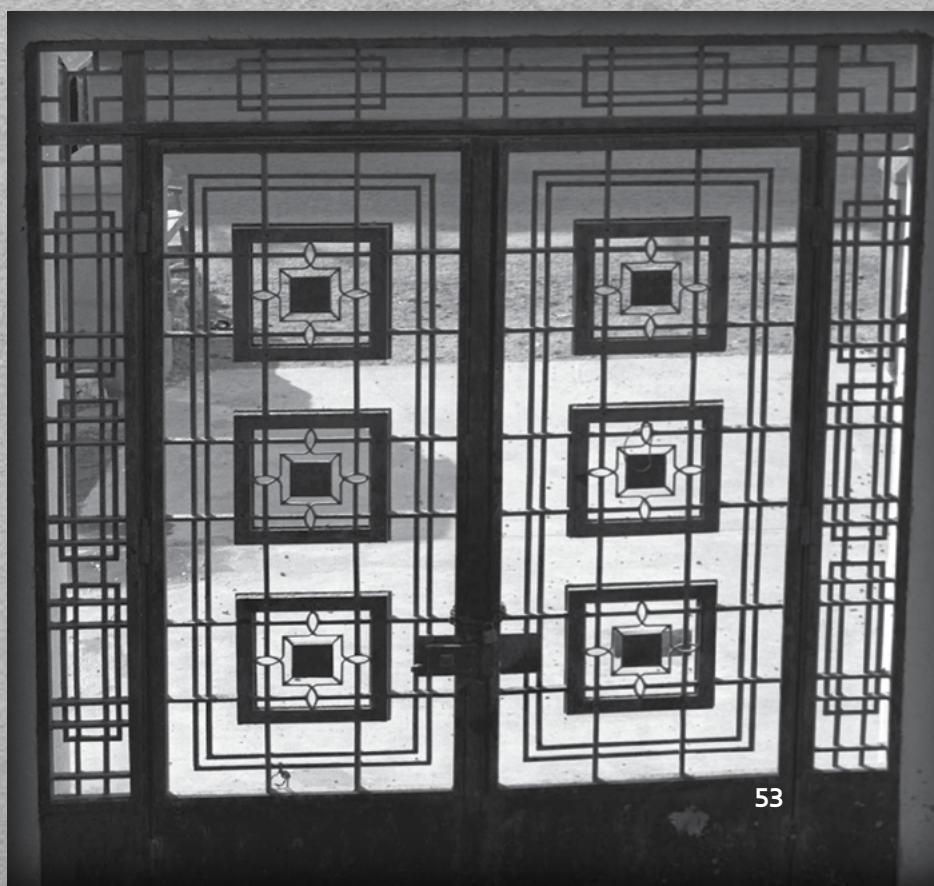
Khobar, February 1954 |

A decorative doorway and carved wooden door of a private house in Khobar. Courtesy of Aramco Archives.



Jiddah, March 1954 |

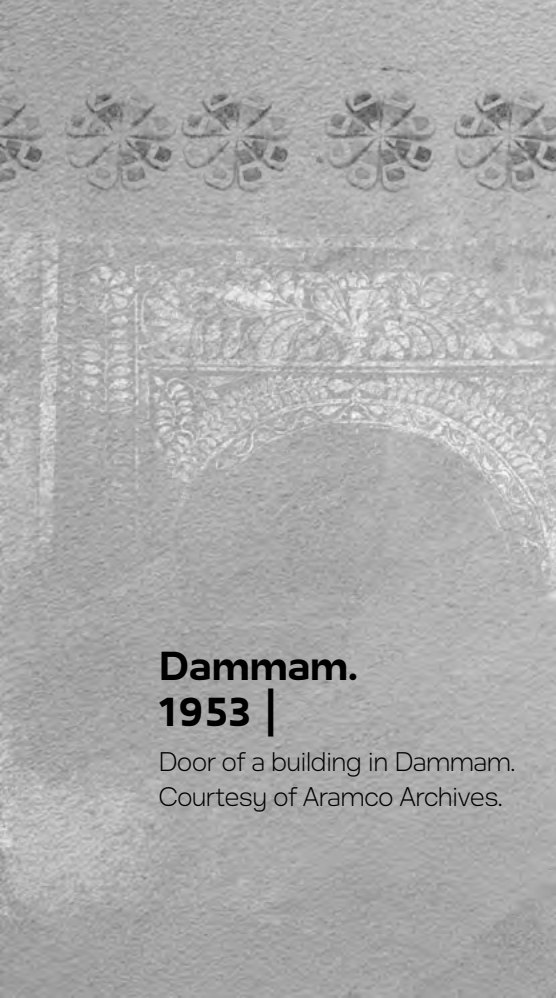
Ornate ironwork decorates the entry door in the new Ministry of Finance building in Jiddah. Courtesy of Aramco Archives.





Hofuf, April 1957 |

Typical doorway in Hofuf, showing details of carved wood and molded plaster. Courtesy of Aramco Archives.



Dammam. 1953 |

Door of a building in Dammam. Courtesy of Aramco Archives.





Jubail, 1976 |

Two houses' doors. Courtesy of Aramco Archives.



Undated |

A view of a building wall and its door. Location unknown. Courtesy of Aramco Archives.

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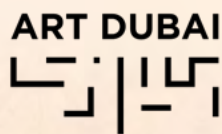
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The King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture (Ithra) is one of Saudi Arabia's most influential cultural destinations, a destination for the curious, creatives, seekers of knowledge, and more.

Through a compelling series of programs, performances, exhibitions, events and initiatives, Ithra creates world-class experiences across its interactive public spaces that bring together culture, innovation and knowledge that are designed to appeal to everyone. Connecting creatives, challenging perspectives and transforming ideas, Ithra is graduating its own leaders in the cultural field.

Ithra is Saudi Aramco's flagship CSR initiative and its largest cultural contribution to the Kingdom. Ithra's components include the Idea Lab, Library, Cinema, Theater, Museum, Energy Exhibit, Great Hall, Children's Museum and Ithra Tower. For more information, please visit: www.ithra.com

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