

A2Q

VOL 2 · ISSUE 2 · SEPTEMBER 2022

FOCI 2022

The role
of environmental
photography in tackling
climate change and
raising awareness

+ Food of Kings: Molokhia
+ Center of Excellence
+ Through the Lens with Tribe

ISSN 2833-4752



9 772833 475201

Connecting Creatives • Convening Communities • Celebrating Cultures



ISSN: 2833-4752 (Digital)

ISSN: 2833-4744 (Print)

About A2Q

A2Q (America to Qatar) is a digital magazine that spans the work of artists and the insights of experts from the United States, Qatar, and the Arab and Islamic worlds. As a digital platform serving creatives with diverse perspectives in art and culture, A2Q addresses subject matter in the aim of bridging cultural barriers and cultivating understanding. While at its core A2Q provides a voice to culture, history, and art relating to the Arab and Islamic communities around the world, A2Q also exists in recognition of the universal appeal of creative expression and the benefits of cultural convergence.

Interested in being featured in an upcoming issue of A2Q? You can submit your work as an artist, writer, or academic with the QAIC editorial team for a chance to be featured. If selected, we will contact you to begin the editorial process. More information can be found at www.qataramerica.org/A2Q.



About QAIC

The Qatar America Institute for Culture (QAIC) is an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that creates, curates, and executes programs and research that amplify the prominence of all forms of art and culture in society. QAIC cultivates artistic expression and cultural dialogue from the United States, Qatar, and the larger Arab and Islamic worlds.

QAIC serves as a vital hub to convene artists, curators, storytellers, creatives, scholars, and academics, connecting them with a global network that extends beyond its physical space in Washington DC. Through art exhibitions, educational programs, scholarly research, and cross-cultural partnerships, QAIC provides interactive experiences in an inclusive environment to celebrate and appreciate art and culture.

To learn more about QAIC, please visit our website at www.qataramerica.org.

EDITORIAL

Abdelrahman Kamel
Ali Malik
Andrew Abell
Fatima Al-Dosari
Laila Jadallah
Lyndsey Medlin

CONTRIBUTORS

Abdelrahman Kamel
Andrew Abell
Laila Jadallah
Lyndsey Medlin
Nada Darwish

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Sueraya Shaheen

QAIC CONTACT INFO

info@qataramerica.org

Front artwork by
[@MORTADAEPHOTOS](https://www.instagram.com/MORTADAEPHOTOS)

What We Do

ART

QAIC's headquarters, located in DC's popular Dupont Circle neighborhood, hosts rotating exhibitions throughout the year in our historic gallery space. Whether an innovative contemporary art installation or a sensory journey through history, these exhibitions invite visitors of all ages to explore diverse forms of art and heritage.

CULTURE

At QAIC, all are welcome to expand their knowledge of the arts and culture by participating in our regular educational programs. Our Expressions Art & Culture Talks provide audiences exclusive insight from creatives and experts on topics including horse breeding, film, and architecture. The newly launched Museum Series convenes museum practitioners not only for a behind-the-scenes look at today's museums, but also to generate dialogue about current museological trends and issues. At our hands on cultural enrichment events, audiences learn about art, culture, and the creative process by producing their own art and crafts.

EDUCATION

We invite members from our various communities to engage with us in many ways, whether through celebrations such as our iftar dinners or our annual IMPART Summit, the "Congress for Creatives." We also offer various scholarly opportunities, including fellowships and internships, throughout the year for those interested to get further involved with QAIC.

What's Inside

Letter from the Executive Director06

What We've Been Up To08

Exhibition In Depth14



Food of Kings:
Molokhia

FEATURED



Through the Lens with Tribe

An interview with Sueraya Shaheen about Photography Today



Center of Excellence

An Inside Look Into ConocoPhillips' global water sustainability center

Keeping Up With QAIC34

Color Me QAIC36

Thanks To38



Letter from the Executive Director

Dear QAIC Friends,

As summer comes to an end, we are reminded of how precious and fragile our planet is. From unprecedented droughts to flooding and wildfires, we witnessed this year a summer season that exhibited many of the environmental risks to human life. We have seen the effects of natural disasters and climate change on natural heritage sites, posing a growing threat to cultural diversity worldwide. With these challenges come opportunities to young organizations like the Qatar America Institute for Culture (QAIC) to be a platform for addressing vital subjects such as sustainability and the environment. We do believe that even art and culture organizations like QAIC have a responsibility to safeguard our planet for the sake of its cultures and peoples.

We are proud to share with you another issue of A2Q magazine, in which we explore new topics that are not only crucial for the present day, but also of the utmost importance to future generations. Through the pages of this issue, you will see how we have worked with our contributing authors and key stakeholders to creatively approach several topics that are significant to QAIC's core values. For instance, we delve into water scarcity through our "FOCI Photography Contest and Exhibition." We visit ConocoPhillips' Global Water Sustainability Center for a special interview on innovation, technology, and sustainable practices. We also

celebrate sustainable gastronomy through an interactive activity at a local community partner. Last but not least, we share our IMPART Summit's latest Artists Grants for projects depicting sustainability and the arts.

We strongly believe that we should be part of the change we want to see in the world. For positive change to happen to our beautiful earth, and to protect its rich history, cultures, and people, we aspire to positively contribute to a process much bigger than us. We believe that nonprofits like QAIC, informative publications like A2Q magazine, and enduring collaboration between the people of Qatar, the United States, and beyond can make a difference. We thank you for joining our mission to be positive changemakers, and to collectively continue inspiring, educating, and serving our communities.

Sincerely,

Fatima Al-Dosari,
Executive Director



The Smithsonian National Gallery of Asian Art - "Fashioning an Empire: Safavid Textiles"
CREDIT: QAIC STAFF

What We've Been Up To



QAIC Executive Director, Fatima Al-Dosari, speaks to attendees at the opening of the "Living Line, Living Legacy" exhibition

IFTAR CELEBRATION WITH MUSLIM AMERICAN LEADERSHIP ALLIANCE

On April 30, 2022, the Qatar America Institute for Culture (QAIC) and the Muslim American Leadership Alliance (MALA) hosted an iftar to celebrate with friends and the local community. To commence the celebration, remarks were given by Fatima Al-Dosari, Executive Director at QAIC. Following the remarks, the call to prayer, also known as the azan, was recited to break the fast.

After the azan, traditional Ramadan dishes such as Qatari machboos, tabbouleh and kafta kebabs were indulged by approximately 60 guests at QAIC's HQ. In addition to a feast of Middle Eastern foods, sweets, and henna, guests were also treated to a fireside conversation between MALA Executive Director Zainab Khan and local artist Lubna Zahid.



Attendees of the public iftar enjoy a free henna design

QAIC's Spring of Islamic Art: Between DC and NYC

QAIC CELEBRATES 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MET'S DEPARTMENT OF ISLAMIC ART

On May 5th, QAIC had the opportunity to attend a celebration hosted by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City in honor of the 10th anniversary of its galleries of the Department of Islamic Art. QAIC is a proud sponsor of the Met's Department of Islamic Art and its efforts to preserve and promote the history and heritage of Islamic and Arab art and culture for future generations of art lovers. During the event, QAIC Executive Director Fatima Al-Dosari spoke on the importance of providing visibility to cultures and traditions not widely seen in other parts of the world, which QAIC can do thanks to the continual support of our sponsors.



A snapshot of the galleries hosting the Metropolitan Museum of Art's, Department of Islamic Art

"LIVING LINE, LIVING LEGACY" CALLIGRAPHY SYMPOSIUM & EXHIBITION WITH REED SOCIETY FOR THE SACRED ARTS

On May 6th and 7th, the Reed Society for the Sacred Arts and QAIC hosted a series of events centered around QAIC's newest exhibition, "Living Line, Living Legacy." The artists featured in the exhibition also participated in the Reed Society Calligraphy Symposium held at the Qatar America Institute for Culture.

The symposium featured presentations from eminent calligraphers and curators, ending with an open roundtable discussion. Attendees of the symposium and the various workshops were awarded a certificate for continuing education in Islamic Art with a focus on Calligraphy.



Speakers at the Reed Society Calligraphy Symposium discuss several types of Arabic script

THE FREER GALLERY OF ART AND QAIC

As part of Eid Al-Fitr, the Muslim holiday marking the end of Ramadan, the Freer Gallery of Art and QAIC hosted a festive afternoon of music, food, and art to celebrate.

QAIC featured master calligraphers at work, enabled guests to take part in making their own calligraphy-inspired art, and brought in a henna artist so guests could share in the festive tradition. Visitors were able to view the various galleries at the Freer Gallery of Art, most notably the exhibition "Fashioning an Empire: Safavid Textiles" from The Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar.



QAIC Staff host a table at the Freer Gallery of Art

EXPRESSIONS ART & CULTURE TALK WITH MOHAMED ZAKARIYA

In partnership with the Reed Society for the Sacred Arts, QAIC had the privilege to sit down with American master calligrapher Mohamed Zakariya to learn about his early beginnings as a calligrapher, his personal journey with the Islamic faith and its traditions, and how as a teacher he was able to inspire a whole new generation of master calligraphers throughout the world.

QAIC also had the opportunity to exhibit several of Zakariya's and his student's work as part of the "Living Line, Living Legacy" exhibition hosted with the Reed Society for the Sacred Arts at QAIC's headquarters in Washington, DC.



Mohamed Zakariya poses with one of his students at QAIC's "Living Line, Living Legacy" exhibition

QAIC AT THE EMBASSY OF QATAR 50TH ANNIVERSARY GALA

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Qatar and the US. The occasion was celebrated on March 19 with many dignitaries, leaders, and officials coming together to mark the two countries' bi-lateral relationship. It was a historic day for both countries as they highlighted their partnership over the past half-century, noting that the celebration of this comradery coincides with significant growth in relations, cooperation, alliance, and effective communication.

To celebrate the occasion, QAIC provided a glimpse of its perfumery museum through an olfactory sensory experience as well as a custom fragrance designed by the QAIC team in honor of the anniversary.

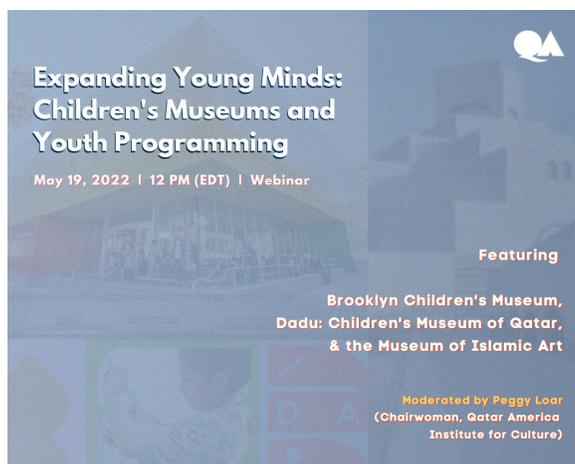


QAIC Staff demonstrate our mobile sensory experience at the Embassy of Qatar's 50th anniversary gala

MUSEUM SERIES – EXPANDING YOUNG MINDS

As part of our museum series, QAIC Chairwoman Peggy Loar explored how institutions develop their programming and exhibitions for younger demographics while simultaneously engaging parents, educators, and adults.

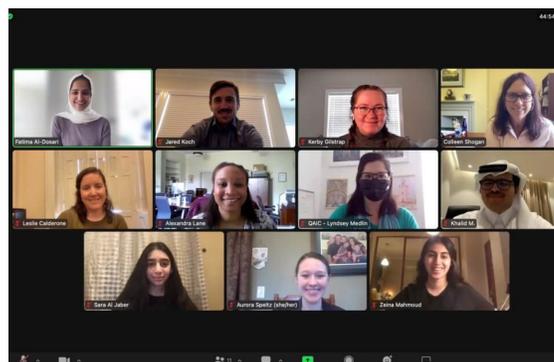
The webinar Expanding Young Minds: Children's Museums and Youth Programming featured Hana Elwell from the Brooklyn Children's Museums, Shaika Nasser Al-Nasser from the Museum of Islamic Art, and Clara Lim from Dadu, Children's Museum of Qatar.



Social media post advertising the Museum Series event

ARABIC LANGUAGE & CULTURE FELLOWSHIP

QAIC's Arabic Language & Culture Fellowship for 2022 concluded on June 3rd. Five students from Qatar Academy in Doha and Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, KY, participated in the program. QAIC teamed up with the White House Historical Association (WHHA) to translate their self-guided tours into Arabic.



A virtual meeting marking the end of the QAIC Language & Culture Fellowship for 2022

“ALIF BA” PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC DAY AT AL BUSTAN SEEDS OF CULTURE

On June 4th, the Qatar America Institute for Culture joined partner Al Bustan Seeds of Culture to celebrate the arrival of the Alif Ba exhibition in Philadelphia at the University of Pennsylvania’s, Perry World House. Attendees of the event included a diverse array of families from various backgrounds.

Attendees were able to enjoy a large number of activities ranging from learning about the art of calligraphy to taking part in cultural practices such as the art of henna native to South Asia and the Middle East, along with Tabla drum lessons that were followed by a percussion performance by musicians from the Philadelphia community.



Attendees interact with the Alif Ba exhibition



Attendees of the "Alif Ba" public day enjoy a lesson in Arabic calligraphy

IMPART ARTIST GRANTS

The challenges posed by climate change, rising pollution levels, and the destruction of vital wildlife habitats threaten the foundations which sustain us all. In light of these challenges facing communities around the world, the selected theme for the 2022 IMPART Artist Grants is “Sustainability & the Arts.”

Today, the concept of sustainability is touched upon across all spectrums of our world, from politics to modern industry to even the arts. While ensuring a path to a sustainable world will safeguard our collective future, how do sustainability and environmental stewardship influence the arts and the very manner in which we approach creative expression?



Social Media Post announcing the 2022 Theme for the Impart Artist Grants

SUSTAINABLE GASTRONOMY DAY

In observance of Sustainable Gastronomy Day and in alignment with June's theme of Environment & Sustainability, on June 16th, the Qatar America Institute for Culture team visited the Common Good City Farm, an urban farm located in Washington, DC, to celebrate and learn about sustainable practices on a local level. Located in the LeDroit Park neighborhood of Washington, DC, Common Good City Farm uses sustainable urban agricultural practices. It encompasses all parts of the food system, including food production, processing, distribution, consumption, and waste management. The QAIC team heard from two special guests that joined us at the farm, Bill Grant of QAIC's board of directors and Nate Mook of World Central Kitchen.



QAIC staff enjoy a tour of the Common Good City Farm in Washington, DC

QAIC COMMUNITY DAY EVENT

On July 23rd, Qatar America Institute for Culture opened its doors to the D.C. community to celebrate five years of the organization. Three local vendors and partners joined us: the Museum of Palestinian People, Middle East Books and More, and Ohjia Puzzles. We were also joined by two remarkable musicians, Alif Laila, who played the sitar, and Laith Alattar, who played the oud. Both artists presented various songs, led demonstrations on their instruments, and finished their sets by engaging with the audience in a Q&A. Both instruments will be featured through programming in coordination with the Cultural Crossings exhibition.

Attendees of the event could watch four 'Shorts by Shorties' films in our Arab Film House. The short films, which the U.S. Embassy in Qatar sponsored, were directed by various teenagers in high school in Doha. QAIC also offered activities such as, a spin art table, a scavenger hunt for youths, an olfactory learning experience, and multilingual storytelling read by Ahmed and Mohammed from the Museum of Palestinian People.



QAIC Community Day attendees interact with the Museum of the Palestinian People booth

CREDIT: NAME HERE



PHOTO CREDIT: @MORTADAEPHOTOS

Exhibition In Depth: "FOCI 2022: "

This year's FOCI photography contest theme focused on the importance of water in our daily lives as humanity faces ever greater water scarcity. In order to bring greater attention to this issue, this year's theme focused on how to best capture the beauty, power, and fragility of water.

We live on a pretty amazing planet, and you probably have an image in your head of a landscape that's stuck with you. Maybe you saw it in an art gallery; maybe you saw it leafing through an issue of National Geographic. Maybe you were lucky enough to visit an amazing place and snap the picture yourself! The landscape around us is awe-inspiring, and it's been inspiring artists for more than

a millennia. Museums are full of paintings by artists trying to capture the landscape around them, and with the advent of photography, it's been easier than ever.

Environmental photography is nearly 150 years old, dating to the 1870s in the United States when William Henry Jackson took part in a geological survey of the Yellowstone River and the Rocky Mountains. While

these early endeavors had more to do with finding railroad routes, they quickly became instrumental to another endeavor: the establishment of our National Parks. It was Jackson's photographs that helped to sway Congress to declare Yellowstone as the first National Park in 1872. Others soon followed into this field, most famously Ansel Adams. His images from Yellowstone and Yosemite brought environmental photography to mainstream audiences, and his work contributed to the declaration of additional National Parks such as Kings Canyon in 1940.

In 1970, the Environmental Protection Agency was established and tasked with environmental protection matters. One of their earliest and still ongoing endeavors was the hiring of freelance photographers to record the state of the environment and keep track of the efforts to improve it.

Today, environmental photography has appeal both for aesthetic appreciation and education purposes. It continues to be a powerful tool for documenting the effects of climate change and other conservation issues. Glacial photography is one niche subject area that stands as a prominent example of the detrimental effects of climate change.

Intrinsic to this field is an awareness of the relationship between humans and the natural world. The enduring power of environmental photography is simple: it is a visual medium that is easy to understand and appreciate, and frequently astounds.

This year's theme for QAIC's annual convention and reunion, "IMPART Summit: Congress for Creatives," is "Sustainability in the Arts." In line with this initiative, QAIC and ConocoPhillips have teamed up to celebrate this year's FOCI program through the lens of "World Water Week." As climate change continues to be a dominating concern for many across the globe, this year's theme will focus on water and its importance to us all as a life-giving resource. Participants will submit a wide range of photographs they think best captures the beauty, power, and fragility of water and the world's aquatic ecosystems.

Winning photographs will be printed and displayed through early 2023 at QAIC's headquarters in Washington, DC.



PHOTO CREDIT: @ALANDESIDERIO



"A water tank is towed by tractor towards the community of Ras Ein al-Auja in the Jordan Valley."

@apalestinianview



"A girl from the village of Tabaneh, near Khan Al-Ahmar, proudly shows off the running water made available to her family"

@apalestinianview



Ladakh, Kashmir

@mmuslim



"Frog Legs"

@tattelman



"Irrigating football fields prior to play"

@alandesiderio



"A Fellahah woman from the community of Al-Majaz, Masafir Yatta, opens the lid to her family's rainwater cistern."

@apalestinianview



"An abandoned well and water source formerly used by Bedouins as they crossed the desert to other parts of Qatar and nearby countries."

@nflghm



"Swimming everywhere"

@mortadoephotos



"Dry fish in dead Aquarium"

@shirazzithara



"Rest!"

@mortadoephotos

18

FEATURED

25





22



34



FOOD OF KINGS: MOLOKHIA

A dish that was once forbidden in Ancient Egypt is now an emblematic dish with variations in every country and beyond. Jute leaves are a green, gooey, and grassy-flavored vegetable unfamiliar to the Western palate. Even its name in English is not as well known unless one is a devoted gastronomist. Known as molokhia, variations of the dish exist in Egypt, Tunisia, Sudan, Yemen, Palestine, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Cyprus, Libya, Philippines, and even Japan.

In middle eastern cultures, molokhia is the dish your mom would cook at home when close friends or family visit; however, it is not the type of dish served to impress guests due to its texture, as some foodies will either hate it or fall in love with it.

The name of the vegetable molokhia stems from the word molokia, which means royalty. This vegetable has several ancient stories behind it and much controversy about its origin. variations of the dish exist in Egypt, Tunisia, Sudan, Yemen, Palestine, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Cyprus, Libya, Philippines, and even Japan.

TALES AND FOLKLORE

Many folklore tales revolve around this historic and mysteriously nutritious plant. Paintings on tomb walls depict big bowls being transported for feasts. As the story goes, around 3600 years ago, the Hykos Tribe invaded Egypt and forced Egyptians to eat the green plant. It was thought to be poisonous until the Egyptians survived and thrived from the plant. During the occupation, Egyptians were reaping the benefits, and thus it became the staple superfood everyone loved. This emblematic dish is delicious and nutritious, packed with vitamin C, E, potassium, fiber, and iron.

According to Egyptian historian Al Maqrizi, molokhia was the favorite dish of Caliph Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan. However, despite its abundance in Egypt, molokhia was banned shortly after the caliph's reign by the Fatimid ruler of Egypt in 1004 CE. The Fatimid Caliph Al-Hakim bi Amr Allah issued a decree prohibiting the consumption of molokhia. Most scholars believe the ban was due to two possible reasons: the ruler intensely craved it and wanted to save the vegetable for himself, or the second theory was due to its alleged aphrodisiac qualities. Even though the ban was eventually lifted, members of the Druze faith around the globe continued to respect the ban after the caliph's disappearance during a walk in 1021 CE. Mysteriously, he was never seen or heard from again.

Another story revolves around the Egyptian Fatimid Caliph known as Al Mu'iz Li Din Allah, who experienced health issues with his stomach during his reign from 953



TRADITIONAL ARABIC PREPARATION OF MOLOKHIA

PALESTINIAN MOLOKHIA



CREDIT: NAME HERE

A demonstration of how Molokhi is consumed in Japanese culture

CE to 975 CE. The Caliph was given so many different treatments, all of which failed. After much trial and error, the doctor recommend a soupy dish, molokhia, in hopes of feeling better. After some time had passed, he finally healed, and the term ‘Food of Kings’ was created. This story resonates with how the name of the dish would stem from the word ‘royalty’ in the Arabic language. Many years later, when King Farouq ascended the throne, he modified the name, so it was no longer reserved solely for royals.

EGYPT

So, what about this dish in modern-day Egypt? Over time, jute leaves have inspired creativity and adaptations in different regions across the country. We often hear the words, Molokhia bel Araneb (Rabbits) or Gambary (Shrimp). These two variations are the most popular in Egyptian households,

depending where they live. For instance, folks who live in Alexandria along the coast eat it with shrimp. In other areas rabbits are extremely popular and are substituted for chicken or lamb. It can also be made a vegetarian dish by substituting vegetable broth instead of the traditional meat broth. There are many options, and all are based on preference.

Egyptians are also very particular about how the leaves are prepared. The Egyptian style of preparation is to pull off the leaf’s central stem and lay them on a large piece of cloth to dry overnight after washing. Once dry, a giant rocking mezzaluna is used to mince the leaves. The next step is to boil the leaves in broth; this could be either rabbit, chicken, shrimp, or lamb. In Egypt, it is common to fry coriander and garlic separately in oil and add them to the broth while the pan is still sizzling. This process is known as “taqliyya” which literally means “frying”. The dish is commonly served with white rice and Egyptian flatbread.

NORTH AFRICA: TUNISIA

In other parts of North Africa, specifically in Tunisia, molokhia is prepared quite differently. The leaves are completely dried and then grounded into a powder. Usually, this is prepared in advance and stored in containers for later use. Molokhia is most prevalent in Tunisia during New Year's Day and special holidays as the leaf's green color signifies the beginning of a prosperous year. Unlike any other variation, this eponymous dish takes about eight hours to prepare with olive oil, tomato paste, and chunks of beef, which looks like a thick red sauce instead of the leafy or soupy versions. The dish is usually served with a French baguette to dip into the bowl.

LEVANT: PALESTINE, LEBANON, SYRIA, JORDAN

In the Levant region, places like Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria often ask if one prefers the leaves minced or whole? This is a common question heard in myriad dialects. In Palestine and Jordan, molokhia is finely chopped and would look soupy compared to their neighbors in Syria and Lebanon, who prefer the leaves to be whole, rough, and bulky. Among the different variations, Lebanese like to add vinegar and olive oil to the dish. Syrians prefer to have the onions on the side, and Palestinians say it is not authentic without olives and a slice of lemon.

JAPAN

Similar to the aforementioned countries, Japan too incorporated this dish into their cultural cuisine. Known as Moroheiya in Japan, it was not until the 1980s that linguist Kasuke Imori introduced the plant, and it became trendy due to its nutritional benefits.

The Japanese called it Cleopatra's secret ingredient to reverse aging. Moroheiya leaves were fused into several Japanese vegetable dishes, such as Ohtitashi, a popular dish that is mixed with soy sauce and blended with other vegetables. The leaves can also be tempura fried with ponzu sauce and rice. Other ways in which the Japanese have adapted Moroheiya into their palate is by converting it into green noodles or mixing it with

tea as a green powder. These leaves are grown in the summer, mainly in Okinawa, Kanagawa, and Gunma.

UNITED STATES

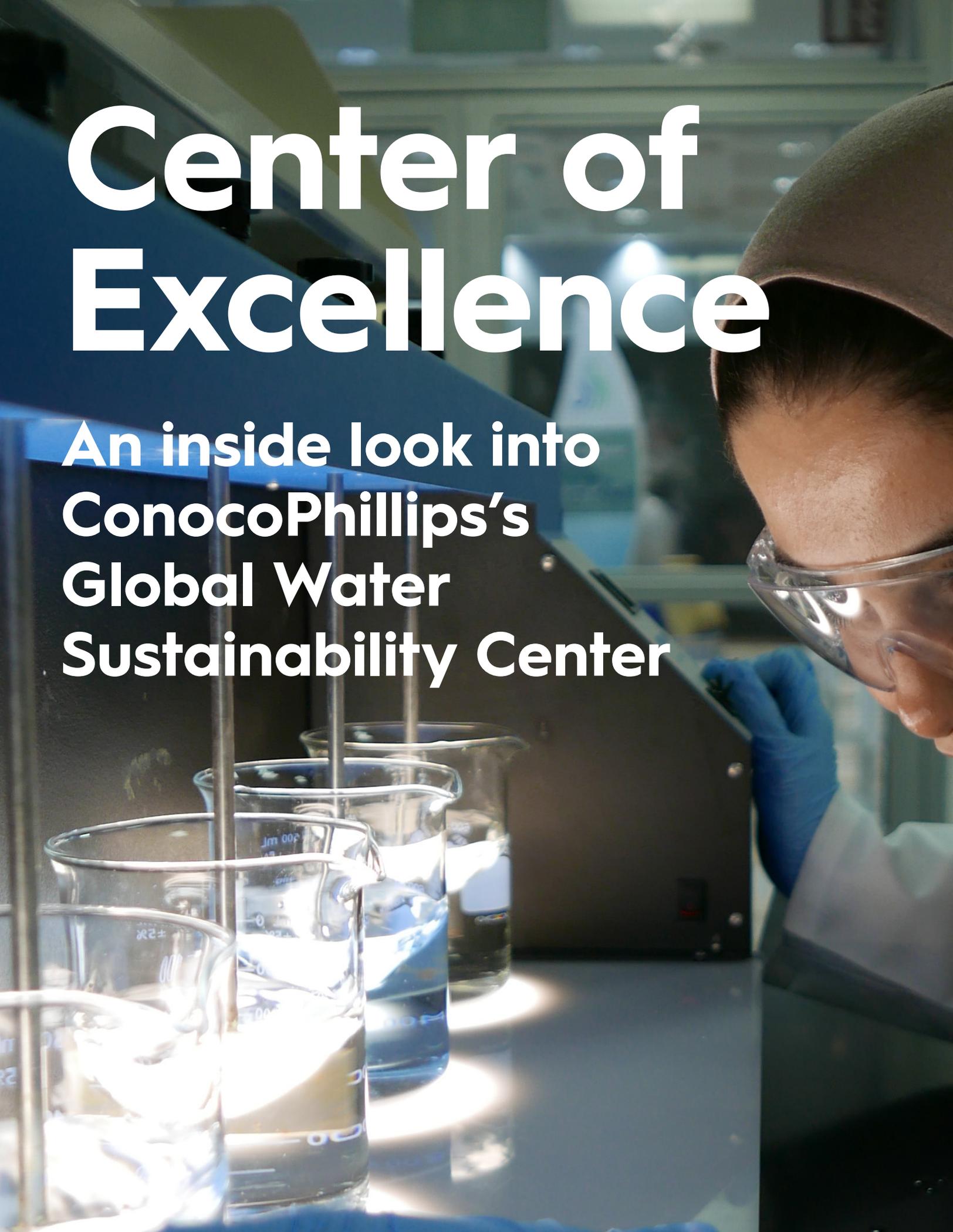
Molokhia in the United States is not as popular compared to other countries. Although it is easy to find in Middle Eastern grocery stores. Most Middle Eastern stores in the United States sell this plant frozen, which can be cooked quickly at home as a vegetarian option or with the meat of your choice.



Egyptian method of preparing and consuming Molokhia

Center of Excellence

An inside look into
ConocoPhillips's
Global Water
Sustainability Center



Water is perhaps the most important natural resource that enables life with all its variety and complexity on our planet. Such a valuable and important resource could never be taken for granted; its just use and preservation, thus, reflect the preservation of life and equal access to resources for future generations.

The core vision of ConocoPhillips Global Water Sustainability Center (GWSC) lies at the heart of such values of sustainable development. Located in the Qatar Science & Technology Park (QSTP), ConocoPhillips has been pioneering research in emerging water treatment and recycling technologies, mainly from oil and gas production as well as other projects related to industrial and municipal water sustainability. Behind their dedicated efforts towards research projects and outreach are a team of highly motivated professionals who constantly drive the institution closer to its core vision.

For this article, we spoke to Dr. Samer S. Adham, manager of the Global Water Sustainability Center so he could tell us more about the center and its contribution to the sustainable development goals of Qatar's 2030 National Vision.

// Having the ambition to serve the world is certainly the vision of GWSC. //

- Dr. Samer S. Adham

The center was established in 2010 with the core vision of being an institution for excellence in global water operations and a mission to develop innovative solutions in the treatment of by-product water of oil and gas operations. Dr. Samer stated that "having a highly specialized team working and training for one project with each other has been fundamental in capacity building in Qatar. Every time we get involved with research projects; we transfer that knowledge to our local partners many of which are local universities."



PHOTO CREDIT RIGHT: MARTIN VARGAS
PHOTO CREDIT LEFT: BAYHAS ALFAWAL

The combination of their state-of-the-art laboratories and highly specialized experts has produced groundbreaking research in the field and award-winning research projects. Each project focuses on one or more of the following challenges:

- **Reducing freshwater consumption**
- **Lowering operating costs related to water management**
- **Minimizing environmental impacts**

With more than 30 publications in various peer-reviewed journals, multiple research development and outcome awards such as the Energy Globe Award (the most important award for sustainability worldwide), and collaborative efforts with educational institutions such as Texas A&M University and Qatar University, GWSC is truly a local institution with a global impact.

With our unique position we are connected in the middle, where we have an understanding of what practical operations need, and research potential through established relationships with local and global universities.

- Dr. Samer S. Adham

GWSC is also recognized as a ConocoPhillips worldwide center of excellence in technologies of water treatment and passes on its findings to the company's global operations so its impact can reflect on global sustainability efforts.

"Our awards and peer-reviewed publications are a recognition from the industry that our work is top-notch and high quality but at the same time, we remain focused on addressing operations where we deal with unexpected issues and challenges. When we are dealing with such unknown problems, we try to come up with innovative solutions that serve the needs of our partners" said Dr. Samer.

Furthermore, as an institution that is fundamentally concerned with achieving sustainable development goals, GWSC's efforts are diversified to not only include the technical side of reusing wastewater, but also the educational element through its visitor's center. Samer stated that "In the Visitor Center, we educate children on their role in the conservation of water. The journey through the centre takes about one hour but at the end of it they learn a lot of lessons on the value of water and the need for its conservation."

The center promotes water conservation awareness at the community level, through school visits, environmental programs, and various sustainability outreach activities.

The aim is to teach the next generation practical aspects of water sustainability and preservation that they can practice daily. Over 10,000 students have visited the center and learned about the value of water and the growing need for its conservation in our society. However, it is important to note that the outreach activities are not confined to the water visitor center as GWSC actively engages with various institutes in Qatar to raise awareness on water sustainability to the general public.

At the end of our meeting with Dr. Samer, he stated he is "very pleased that the center is getting a lot of support from their top senior management corporately within ConocoPhillips from our CEO to the executive leadership team and local partners and stakeholders. The center is being supported and appreciated for our efforts of trying to give back to our community and preserve its resources."

// There are some students who came to our centre in 2010 that are now studying in university. Our team was able to find one of these earlier visitors and it was nice to hear from them about the day when they first came to our centre and the impact it had on their lives and career choice. //

- Dr. Samer S. Adham



Through the Lens with Tri

An Interview with Sueraya Shaheen about
Photography Today

The QAIC team recently had the pleasure of speaking with Sueraya Shaheen, co-founder and photo editor of Tribe to learn more about photography and her journey on creating the non-profit publication focused on documenting photography, film, and video from the Arab world. As a global platform, we learnt about Tribe's mission in creating an archive and to stimulate dialogue about both emerging and established artists who are defining their practice.

Tell us a little bit about Tribe Magazine and the digital platform?

Tribe is a non-profit publication and platform focused on photography, and moving image from the Arab world, which uses print and digital media online, to document the work of photographers as well as lens-based artists. It's a great evolving space for photographers to stay updated, see each other's work, and engage ... In essence its many things, it's a hub, to support each other in the industry, help spread the word about open calls, exhibits, see what's being shown at the festivals, art fairs and get a sense of the photography scene. Most importantly, a series of printed 'journals' creates an informal archive.

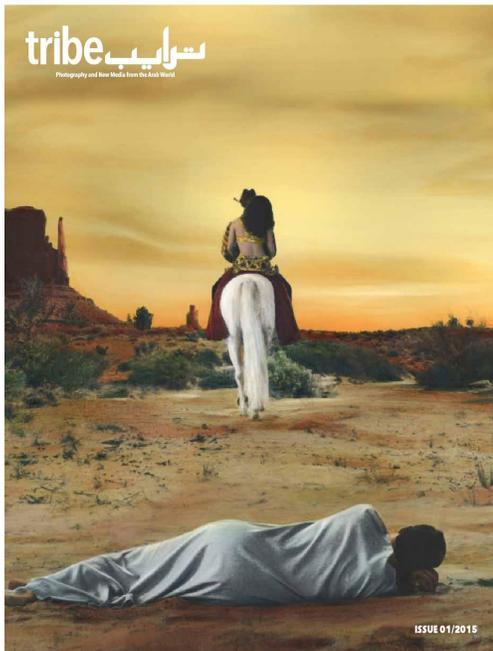
Can you tell us a bit about your background? Being born in Beirut, Lebanon to Syrian parents, how has your heritage inspired or influenced your view of the world, or more specifically, the way you perceive your surroundings as a creative?

As somebody who doesn't live in the country they were born in, nor where their parents are originally from - I think a lot of my friends and family in the same situation, deeply rooted, hold on to our own culture very tightly. Embracing where you are, sharing what you can regardless of where you live, can be a progressive experience- basically you end up creating your own spaces. I tend to seek out those who do, and support anyway I can, sometimes personally or through tribe as a platform. Cover artists pick a cause, and we support on their behalf.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY SUERAYA SHAHEEN

be

There's so much talent, so many creatives in the region, it is important to archive it all by any means possible. The magazine, and platform is only just one way.



Youssef Nabil, I Saved My Belly Dancer (2015).

What first inspired you to take an interest in photography? Are there any photographers whose work initially sparked your own desire to become a photographer?

In high school, our Arabic teacher who organized weekend photo workshops, encouraged the class to join and I really, really enjoyed it! Taking photos, developing in the darkroom turned out to be a lot of fun, and magical really. Later, in college, not doing so well in academic classes, I looked back at that and remembered the feeling of creating. Meeting art students in a different crowd, who were outgoing, colorfully dressed and talking about things that interested me, lead me to sign up for anything to do with the Arts! I transferred my art history courses and completed my degree at art school, studying the history of photography.

So, at that point I was exposed to all the very early photographers, learning about their lives and work, and to this day have a great respect for those who practice analogue. We studied in depth both the photojournalists like those who formed Magnum and the artists who put together Camera Work, a magazine that established photography as a fine art form. Both aesthetically really stood out for me and I had already fallen in love with black and white. And you know, when I was studying photography, it was not a digital practice. It was analog; so, we would have to develop film ourselves, print the images in the darkroom and I shot entirely in black and white.

In addition to being a photographer, you are also the co-founder and photo editor of Tribe Magazine, which has now transformed into a platform dedicated to photography. Could you talk about your trajectory over the years and how your relationship with photography has shifted from a personal passion into a platform for other creatives?

Later on, in life, I had the opportunity to live in Dubai for a while and traveled around the region. And I got to know a lot of the different photographers that were living there. I realized there was such a vibrant group and generation working and shooting incredible images of the world they live in, which was very different to many of the images often seen in 'the west'. I would come across photo essays and series of images and it was all so diverse.

At that early time, I would see excellent photographers, and yet very few platforms to show the work. So, I suppose creating a space was one thing that was lacking, now there are many. These days Tribe

actively seeks strategic partnerships to collaborate with and organize photography exhibitions outside the region- presented at educational venues. That is the ongoing plan, to facilitate photography to be seen by a much wider audience be it by print, online or on walls.

How has your own background shaped your pursuits of documenting and promoting photographers and creatives from the Middle East region?

I've been a photographer for decades and I speak that language ... I enjoy talking about photography and I am a good editor. There's so much talent, so many creatives in the region, it is important to archive it all by any means possible. The magazine, and platform is only just one way. To make sure the publication is in all art schools, universities and their libraries worldwide is one mission. The planned public exhibitions are usually aimed to be held at higher educational venues, like university galleries.

Photographers from the region must be included in the story/ history of photography. Already there are so many who show internationally. At this point I think I could put together some very interesting courses on contemporary photography- and probably will when I find the time!

How has your experience previously as a photographer impacted your role at Tribe as a photo editor? Do you feel like your insight as a photographer allows you to better share narratives of other creatives?

Well, I like to think so, yes! As a platform we are an informal guide and support system, available to help write/rewrite bios, and suggest edits. When we are reached out to, we do what we can to support an artist, leveling the playing field. I think it's really important to be able to talk about your work with someone who understands the visual language of photography and a lot of photographers we work with use their instincts which are equally viable. Editing is crucial, always.

Sueraya Shaheen was born in Beirut and currently lives and works in New York and Dubai. She received her BFA from the Corcoran College of Art and Design in Washington, D.C.

Her solo-exhibitions and group shows include Govinda Gallery, Washington D.C.; Kennedy Center, Washington, D.C.; Side by Side Gallery, Berlin, Germany; Salsali Museum, Dubai, UAE; and Sloan Fine Art, NY.

Her work was recently published in Arab Photography Now edited by Rose Issa and Michket Krifa. Her artist portraits illustrate the upcoming book by Sam Bardaouil and Till Fellrath Summer, Autumn, Winter ... and Spring: Conversations with Artists from the Arab World.



TWITTER PROFILE PICTURE: @SUERAYA

Can you talk about what shifts you have seen in the use of photography as a tool for documentation and art in the region? What role has photography played in allowing creatives in the region to have a voice?

I like seeing how the narrative of the so-called Middle East region shifts when you look through photographers and artists eyes, see other vantage points.

It is different and changing slowly, when you observe artists' taking photographs of the world they live in; images of their everyday life in the region in contrast with what you see in mainstream media.

It's an old cliché that is still hard to shake. However, I'm now seeing more international newspapers hiring local photographers, instead of sending someone in to cover a story, that was a slow shift.

metaverse mediums. I'm more of a classic old school photographer, you know, 2D and flat images so I would love to see that preserved, it slows you down and makes you think when you only have a few shots ... Analog and digital will always co- exist; and imagery in new media will continually evolve, just as photography has throughout time.

In the region I'm seeing exhibitions break through white wall settings, become immersive, a lot of outdoor exhibitions, that leave rules behind.

What motivates you to continue the work you do at Tribe and personally as a photographer? How do you continue to find creative inspiration after so many years of capturing various subjects?

Because it's so exciting to see a new photographer and see what they do! Since we're all using the same tool, right? It's a little magic box you hold in your hands, up against your eye- I'm curious to see how other people

“ When we are reached out to, we do what we can to support an artist, leveling the playing field. I think it's really important to be able to talk about your work with someone who understands the visual language of photography and a lot of photographers we work with use their instincts which are equally viable. ”

You have been a juror for numerous regional awards, including Qatar Museum's Tasweer Photo Festival in 2021 and 2022. As someone who has insight as to how photography is currently being represented, what do you see for the future of this artform in the region?

Digital is obviously here to stay. And while I will always respect artists who still use analog, film, which is my first love ... digital has changed the way people work. And within the digital realm, we certainly can't ignore the rising art forms in web 3, and the popularity of NFTs. I also see a lot of artists whose work is lens-based so I'm sure we will see a lot of them delve into

see things. Because, you know, sometimes I've seen the thing that they're taking a photo of, and to see it through the eyes of another beholder, watch how they play with the depth of field, it's interesting, there is a whole world there.

In my personal practice, I specialize in portraiture, and over the years I have taken well over 100 artist's portraits. It's a carry-over from befriending artists in college really, I was shooting them in their studios, and actually my thesis was called just that, 'Artists in their Studios'.

The ongoing series is called 'Encounters' and it focuses on artists from the Middle East, and has been exhibited in London (The Auction Room at Ely House),

PHOTO PROVIDED BY SUERAYA SHAHEEN



Mexico City (Andres Siegel Gallery) Houston (Barbara Davis Gallery) and Bahrain (La Fontaine Centre for Contemporary Art).

What advice can you share with aspiring photographers? With photography becoming even more accessible thanks to technological advancements, what can aspire photographers do to stand out in a space that's becoming increasingly oversaturated?

Nobody sends a portfolio anymore. I remember the day when I was working in New York at an agency and photographers would send heavy portfolios and we would flip through the tear sheets. As for advice, I say stay very close to technology and digital media. Social platforms, Instagram and Twitter are great marketing tools to utilize for visibility, to travel continents. Use it all as opportunities to open the door to other photographers, talk to each other without meeting even. Exchange ideas.

Instagram is the present and best way to build up portfolios and I think it's important to curate your

images within that medium, to get your vision across, your style, your way of working, and show it to the world.

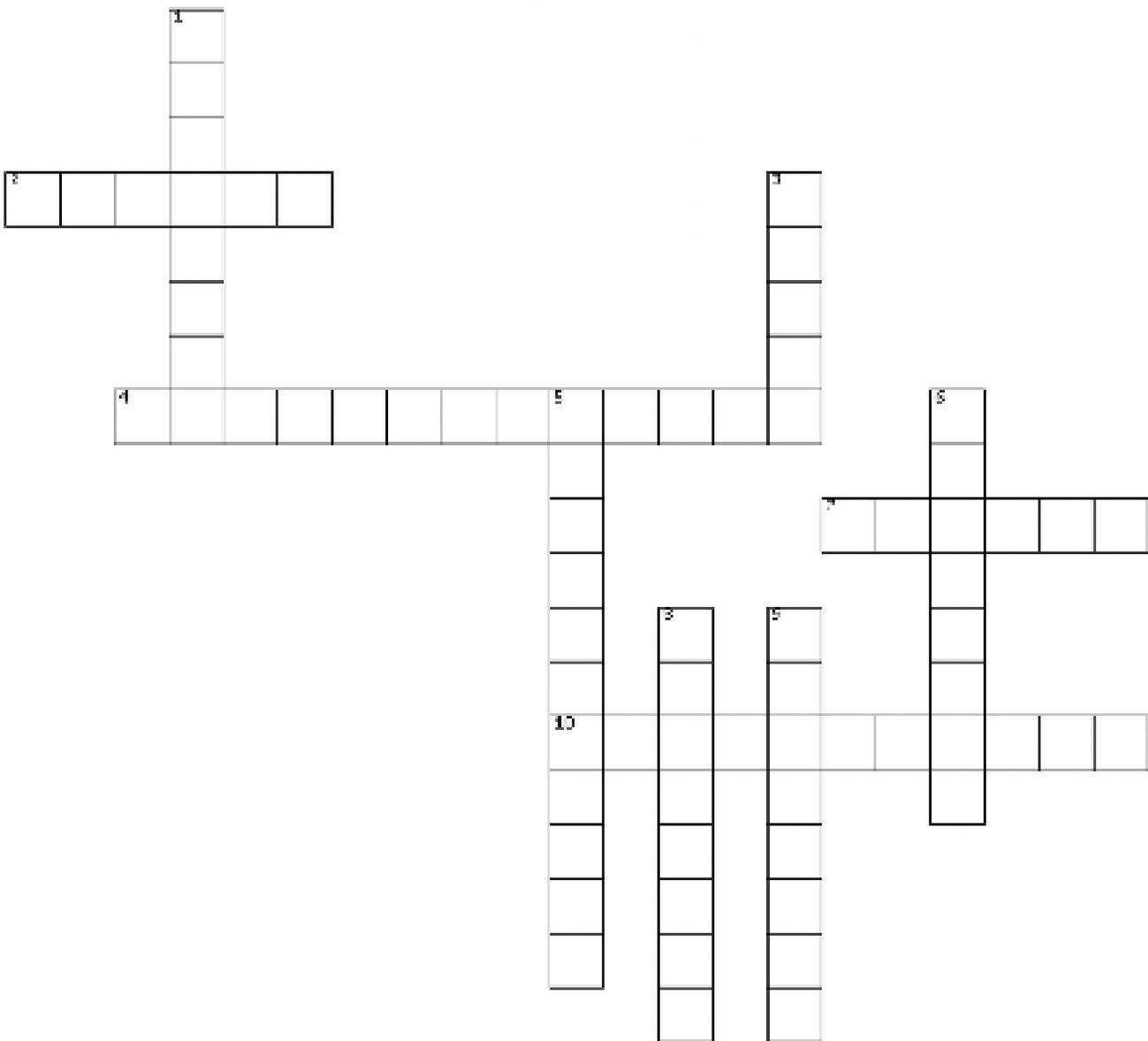
Use tools like Metapixl to tag and protect your work, price reasonably and stick to it. Give and take, it's healthy. Apply to residencies, also mentorship as I see it, supporting one another- The Arab Documentary Photo Program is excellent.

Other advice I would give is to work with editors and wordsmiths to make sure translation, grammar and wording are correct in bios and work descriptions. Talk about your work honestly and distance yourself from art speak. Stay open and curious, take yourself seriously, and MASTER YOUR CRAFT!

Keeping up with QAIC

Have you been keeping up with all of QAIC's artistic and cultural features? Test your knowledge with our crossword puzzle and find out how much you've been keeping up with QAIC.

Stumped? Follow us on social media [@QatarAmerica](https://twitter.com/QatarAmerica) for hints.



1. Zalabiya 2. Katara 3. Dance 4. Marchitecture 5. Calligraphy 6. Football 7. Sports 8. Pioneers 9. Sheraton 10. Rhode Island

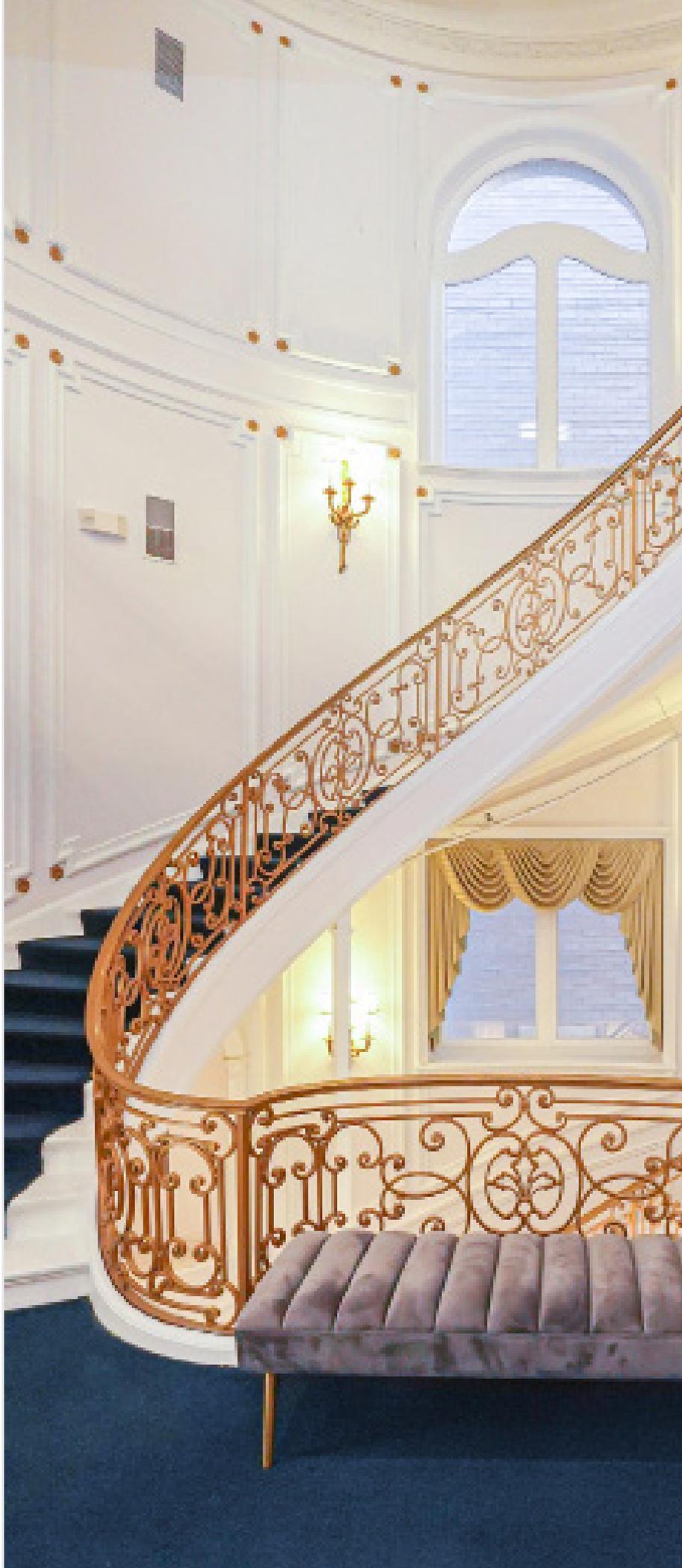
ANSWER KEY

Across

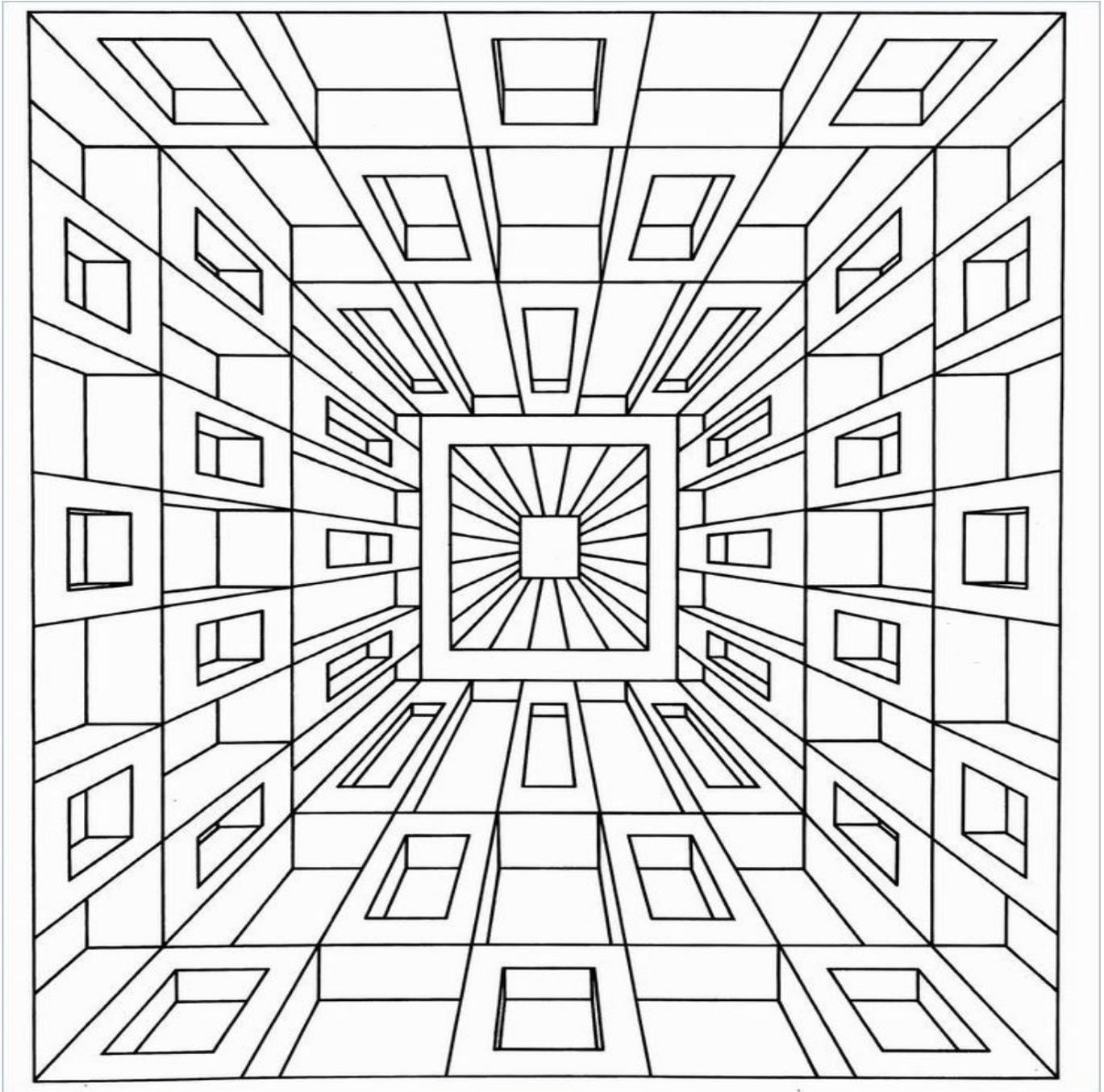
2. The *"Women of the Pandemic"* exhibition held its closing reception in Qatar's cultural village, named this
4. Established in 2018, this Qatar Museums initiative is dedicated to Qatar's architecture and urban design
7. In 2022, Generation Amazing became an independent foundation dedicated solely to social development and this ____.
10. QAIC's headquarters was previously owned by American socialite Mrs. Elizabeth H.G. Slater of this U.S. state (hint: it's the smallest state)

Down

1. To celebrate Al Naflah, QAIC hosted an open house serving this sweet popular throughout the Middle East and South Asia
3. Dana Tai Soon Burgess is a cultural ambassador with a studio in Washington, DC showcasing this type of art
5. QAIC's newest exhibition in partnership with the Reed Society of Sacred Arts, *"Living Line, Living Legacy"* focuses on this type of art
6. A major sporting event hosted in Qatar and the Middle East for the first time highlights this "beautiful game"
8. QAIC's second installment of this exhibition, "Ruwad," hosted in Washington, DC in partnership with al markhiya gallery means this in Arabic
9. Completed in 1982, this iconic hotel has become an architectural symbol in Doha's skyline and urban identity and continues its hospitality to this day



Color Me QAIC



Thanks To



THE EMBASSY OF THE
STATE OF QATAR IN
THE UNITED STATES





Join the QAIC Community!

Interested in taking your support of the Qatar America Institute of Culture further? If so, you can do this in two ways: supporting QAIC's mission and programming as an official sponsor, or joining QAIC's membership community to enhance your art and culture journey.

As a member, you become part of the extended QAIC family. With an annual membership, you will receive more exclusive experiences during some of QAIC's programs. These offerings include access to exclusive engagements with featured guests, intimate receptions with visiting artists, and other benefits – both tangible and intangible, to better serve you as a platform for cultural and creative enrichment. QAIC members are an extension of us; therefore, it is with this network of passionate individuals that we can further advance our mission of connecting creatives, convening communities, and celebrating cultures, locally and beyond. For more information, visit www.qataramerica.org/membership.

As a sponsor, your support will directly sustain and expand the programming that QAIC has to offer to its audiences in the United States, in Qatar, and around the world. Sponsors also receive unique benefits as part of their contribution, like exclusive access to QAIC events, brand exposure, and more. For more information, visit www.qataramerica.org/support-QAIC.

Your contributions and continued support will allow QAIC to remain a viable platform and partner for creatives and artists. Through QAIC's programming, artists and creatives are highlighted, which helps further their own success and cultivate peace among various peoples from around the world.



info@qataramerica.org

+1-202-800-8232

@QatarAmerica

