

Fitness

Break a sweat pedaling down an imaginary road

Indoor cycling classes add top spin with touch of soul

NEW YORK, April 18, (RTRS): Indoor cyclists routinely sweat a real river pedaling down an imaginary road, but SoulCycle classes add upper body work, and a touch of the spiritual, to their metaphorical journey.

"We do push-ups on the bike, crunches on the bike, work our obliques on the bike," said Julie Rice, who co-founded the multitasking method with Elizabeth Cutler in 2006. "You're burning between 500 and 700 calories in 45 minutes," she said, "and we've added a toning component to the cardio by adding different types of exercises on the bike."

Rice said indoor cycling had not

been updated since fitness expert Johnny G created his trademarked Spinning classes some 20 years ago.

Workout

"(SoulCycle) is an entirely different workout," she said from her New York office. "We had the idea that you can actually work your entire body on the bike."

Rice said all rides are carefully charted so with the first song you are warming up and there's a stretch and cool down at the end.

Through it all the rider, music in the ear and black-and-white photograph of a road at the back, is clipped into

the bike and pedaling relentlessly, even while working the arms with one-pound weights or resistance bands hung from the ceiling.

On the "Soul" side, classes are candlelit and led by instructors Rice describes as "more motivational speaker than drill sergeant."

On the wall is painted the mantra "Change your body, take your journey, find your soul."

Stress

"Through exercise you can relieve stress, change your day," Rice said. "When people learn to enjoy their exercise, it becomes a practice."

Pete McCall, an exercise physiologist with the American Council on Exercise, said just clipping riders in to their bikes greatly increases the lower body workout.

"Biomechanically, being hooked in you get much stronger and better leg activation," he said. "You can get more muscle force pulling the pedal up, as opposed to pushing the pedal down."

But he questions the idea of doing weights on stationary bicycles.

"Light weights for higher reps, I scratch my head about that. Light weight training is not strength training. It's aerobic training with weights. One-pound weights will not create an

overload," he said.

Muscle

McCall thinks SoulCycle's classes, only 45 minutes long, is the right duration for such a high-intensity activity.

"After 45 minutes you spend the energy stored in your body. You could start using muscle protein," he said, adding that longer sessions at that level should be supported by electrolytes in sports drink.

Because just riding a stationary bike can be boring, he applauds SoulCycle's high energy, motivational instructors, and the premium they place on customer service.

"It's a fun place, and they prepare people well. Indoor cycling gets redundant, so they're trying to mix it up," he said. "But sometimes when you try to be everything you dilute yourself."

For those hooked on SoulCycle's metaphorical journey, McCall urges caution. To engage in activity that highly intense for more than two or three times a week, he said, you risk overtraining, which can lead, paradoxically, to weight gain and sleeplessness.

"More is not necessarily better," McCall said. "If someone does SoulCycle two or three times a week and yoga two or three times a week, that, I think, is an excellent program."

The New Look

Self-taught artist develops his own style

Nawaf Al Hamli a vanguard young artist

This is the first in a series of articles on Nawaf Al Hamli, a vanguard young artist — Editor

By Lidia Qattan

Special to the Arab Times

Nawaf Al Hamli is a vanguard young artist of the new generation; born in 1976 he was still in kindergarten when his artistic inclination came to notice. One day his teacher asked her young students to sketch a scene of the sea; Nawaf promptly sketched the sea with black little fish swimming in it.

When the teacher saw the black fish she reprimanded him saying that there was no black fish in the sea. Nawaf protested he had seen one when going fishing with his father.

On the following day he came back with the photo of a black fish his father gave him; the teacher was convinced.

From early childhood Nawaf was fascinated by his grandfather's beautiful carvings on model wooden ships; a hobby he practiced till he was blinded by a splinter that penetrated his eyes while he was working. His father was also a skillful carpenter. Nawaf was fascinated by his beautiful drawing and carpentry work.

Those early influences enhanced his artistic inclination which he began to cultivate through practicing drawing, reading all about art and visiting exhibitions. Of the latter he was particularly attracted to the works of Ayoub Hussein, the renowned Kuwaiti folklorist painter and writer.

At the time Nawaf was growing up, part of the old town with its indigenous architecture and picturesque setting was still standing, but like the rest the old buildings soon disappeared under the bulldozers, clearing the ground for a new city to emerge.

What remained are few remnants of a laborious past of which he heard from his elders.

Curiosity

Though the tangible link with the past is gone it left in him a lingering feeling of curiosity that made the fading past the theme in many of his paintings.

Born at the zenith of Kuwait's golden cultural era that began in the sixties and declined toward the end of the seventies, Nawaf absorbed much of the spirit surrounding him.

His mother, happy to see him busy sketching instead of running around, and engage in dangerous sports with his friends as he grew older, provided him with anything he needed to practice his hobby. When schooling began he was an "A" student from grammar to high school; diligent and attentive in class, his preference was science.

The teenage period is an emotional and mental transition into adulthood triggered by hormones that makes the individual daring and resolute in his decision, hence are young people who react to their surrounding and spur changes.

Nawaf was fifteen years old when his mother, keen to encourage his artistic potentials at this stage of his development, enrolled him at a summer art course to flare his enthusiasm. Incidentally that was on the first of August 1990, the eve of the Iraqi invasion.

Invasion

Nawaf's first assignment was a still-life project, he had to present on the following day, so he was busy working through the night to finish it.



One of the paintings by Nawaf Al Hamli titled 'The Jahra Wedding Fire'.

Towards morning he was hearing noises going on around him, but he thought they were the cleaners emptying the trash containers, however, when he heard some shooting he went up to the terrace to see what was happening.

At first when he saw helicopters flying overhead, he wave at them thinking they were Kuwaiti, but when he realized they were Iraqi, he felt his blood boiling in his veins.

Remembering the political crisis instigated by Iraq against Kuwait, and the tension it created in town when every attempt to solve it were thwarted by the Iraqi regime, the sight of those helicopter only meant one thing to him – the Iraqi forces had invaded his country!

Without thinking it over he contacted his friends to join in protest. He was sketching the caricature of Saddam Hussein on the wall of the petrol station of his district and his companions were writing slogan, when the Iraqi soldiers came upon them gun in hand ready to shoot at them, but somehow their officer took consideration of the youngsters and let them go.

That incident and the burning flare of patriotism unleashed the artist in

him. Far from being cowed, he began sketching in his notebook everything he saw going on in town; the shooting on defenseless women in a peaceful demonstration, the burning of buildings, the clashing firing breaking out between the young heroes of the resistance and the Iraqi invaders, and he was adding to those impressions provocative caricatures of Saddam Hussein.



Nawaf Al Hamli

Intimidate

This activity almost cost his life when some Iraqi soldiers came searching his house and discovered the notebook.

Fortunately for Nawaf and his family the officer in charge was not one of the Republic Guards – the elite body of Saddam Hussein who stopped at nothing to intimidate or terrorize the civilian population. When he saw the sketches he told him quietly. "I am not going to report it, but you must destroy it!"

Realizing the near-miss of serious trouble to himself and his family, Nawaf took the advice. From that moment he became more cautious till about six months later he left the country with his family.

His mother was expecting a baby; hence her safety and the safety of her new-born it was decided to leave and go to Egypt to join their relatives.

Leaving by car their tactic of giving out free gifts and money to the soldiers enabled them to cross into Saudi Arabia without inconvenience; at their arrival in Egypt safely, Nawaf attending his first year of higher school.

Noticing his artistic potentials, his

art teacher suggested him to make a painting on the invasion, with which to join an exhibition held as part of the liberation campaign of his country. That incidentally was the first time Nawaf had ever joined an exhibition.

At his return to Kuwait in the aftermath of the liberation, Nawaf continued his higher schooling; it was then that his talent was appreciated by his art teacher, Mohammad Fuad, who encouraged him to develop his potential by often engaging him in projects.

However at graduation in 1996 with higher marks that entitled him to pursue his vocation with a scholarship in art abroad, Nawaf chose to study Avionics instead and enrolled at the Aeronautic Engineering College of Oxford from which he graduated in 2000.

While at Oxford his artistic talent was quickly recognized by his professors who told him he was in the wrong field and he should study art instead.

While he was in the UK Nawaf took every opportunity to practice his hobby, visit art museums and galleries, and reading voluminously about art and its development – from the classic Italian Renaissance to the various schools that later emerged.

After graduation from college in 2000, Nawaf began his working career at the Kuwait Civic Aviation; he also continued to practice his hobby and took courses at the Samira Al Yacoub's Institute of Plastic Arts in Jabriya, to become familiar with oil, acrylic, and water-color painting.

After two years practicing at the institute, in 2004 Nawaf was offered a teaching job at its for summer courses.

Practicing

Largely self-taught through practicing, observing and reading all about art Nawaf developed his own style verging on Neo-classicism. Steeped in symbolism and verging on philosophy and on the reality of life, his style stands in the category of the Circulism painters, a school of art founded by his countryman Khalifa Al Qattan in 1962.

Typical of a Circulism painting is "Al Jahra wedding fire." Nawaf was inspired to create on the tragic event that shook Kuwait and became the talk of town for months.

The protagonist in this wretched affair is a young wife cruelly abused by her husband; her terrible revenge, when she set on fire the tent in which the wedding party of her husband was taking place, cost the lives of many innocent people and ruined many others.

In his painting Nawaf does not condemn or criticize the lady, incongruous symbolism expressed in poetical form, he discloses the woman's suffering and terrible consequence of revenge.

Though it lacks the dramatic import of the theme it portrays that would give solidity to the work, he work nonetheless entices the beholder by the beauty of the composition.

Beauty is attractive, it is pleasant to behold, but what counts in a work of art is the mental and emotional stimulus that lingers on.

The conjoining of intellectual and emotional element in the symbols Nawaf chose for his work, imparts to it uniqueness and originality.

For art is not merely an expression of beauty and feeling, it testifies to the necessity of communication in the human soul, its spirit striving after the light of self knowledge, hence deserving of learned consideration.

To be continued

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April 28

Easter celebrations 2011: Classic Events are all set to proudly present the most awaited event of the year, Easter "celebrations 2011" on Thursday, April 28, 2011 at Crowne Plaza Hotel, Farwaniya.

With 2 of Kuwait's most stimulating DJ's (DJ Mario & DJ's John/Marlon) in attendance, special inhouse guest DJ 'Stephen' & the dynamic '2 Sharp' will glamour to the entertainment...

So ladies & gentlemen get your attire ready to compete for the illustrious title of 'classic queen' / 'king' and win fabulous prizes including air tickets, hotel stay's, gift hampers, sun glasses etc..

For more information, and invitation reservations please call Tony on 99729133, Merwyn on 66998767, Mario on 66482826, Joseph 66132697 or Vinod on 66845389. Hurry !!!! Entries limited...closing soon.

April 30

Annual Spring Gift Bazaar: Come one, come all to the event that everyone has been waiting for. It's time for the Annual Spring Bazaar! Come out for an enjoyable day of shopping and visiting with the vendors you know and love. Whether its clothes, baked goods or crafts, you are sure to find it here.

When: Saturday, April 30 from 10 am to 7 pm. Where: Safir Residence Hotel, Fintas (exit 209).

May 6

Mangalorean Day: Creative Indians Association's - 'Konkan Kalzan', Kuwait, proudly presents 'Mangalorean Day' on May 6, 2011, at the Touristic Garden, Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, Kuwait, from 3 pm onwards. Apart from ethnic food, there will be fun-games starting 3.30 pm, followed by housie at 5.30 pm. The special attraction of the day will unfold at 6 pm starring the Mandd Sobhann group from Mangalore, under the eminent leadership of the singer-composer 'Vishwa Konkani Kala Ratn' - Baab Eric Ozario will present - a fast-paced, fun-filled, exuberant and exciting 4 hours show of Baila music, titled - 'Baila Fiesta'.

The Mandd Sobhann group will feature Smt Joyce Ozario, Prakash D'Souza and Zeena Pereira, all the way from Mangalore. The local stars, Rony D'Cunha, Joy Fernandes, Ritesh Ozario, Warren D'Souza and Wanisha Fernandes will add spice to the event making it memorable. This is the first Baila show being organized in Kuwait and also the first Konkani programme being organized in the open-air. 'Baila Fiesta' will present 20 - fast, jumpy, exciting Baila numbers, old popular Baila numbers and Baila masala towards the end. It will be an unforgettable evening of good, quality and happy music for all Mangaloreans. So go ahead and mark the date on your calendar.

For more details contact 99600294, 66479357, 97556595, 99531557.

May 10

Al Taalib Scholarship 2011: Al Taalib Scholarship is a financial aid scheme for the underprivileged school students in Kuwait, sponsored by the Ministry of Awqaf in association with Islam Presentation Committee (IPC), Friday Forum and Pakistan Kuwait Welfare Association. These scholarships were given to the needy students irrespective of their religion or nationality. The process of Al Taalib Scholarship for the current academic year, 2011-12, has begun for all Indian and Pakistani schools in Kuwait.

In order to avail this scholarship, applicants are requested to collect the application forms from Al Taalib Office located in CAMS, Ahmed Al Jaber Street, Darwaza, near Warba Insurance Co, Int'l Islamic Charity Organization Building, 2nd floor, Al Shaq. The duly filled application forms shall be submitted to Al Taalib Office on or before May 10 along with all supporting documents specified in the application form.

For more information, contact 22418934 (ext 204) or 55231711.

May 12

GWS – May Queen event: The Goan Welfare Society is delighted to announce plans for the annual 'May Queen 2011' to be held at the Al-Andalus Ballroom, Crowne Plaza, Farwaniya on May 12,

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Latest

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Woogie Woogie 2011 audition: Karma Entertainment announces the much

awaited dance show 'Woogie Woogie 2011' which will be held in Kuwait on May 6, 2011. It will be bigger, better and even more exciting than ever before. Not only will we have our dancer stars of Kuwait participants, but also special celebrities to witness their talents!

Audition will be held at AIS, Hawally for Classical and group dance performances on April 23, 2011.

Final dance performance for the selected participant will be on May 6, 2011.

Other information: Forms available at Sanboub Supermarket - Salmiya, Vibes - Abbassiya and Honest Centre - Fahaaheel.

For further information please contact: 00965 66977036, 00965 99540323

Log on to: www.karma-entertainment.webs.com or mail us on:

karma.kuwait@gmail.com

For latest updates, visit our Facebook profile: Woogie Woogie Dance

April 24

French Embassy closure: The French Embassy in Kuwait will be closed on Sunday, April 24 because of Easter holidays.

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