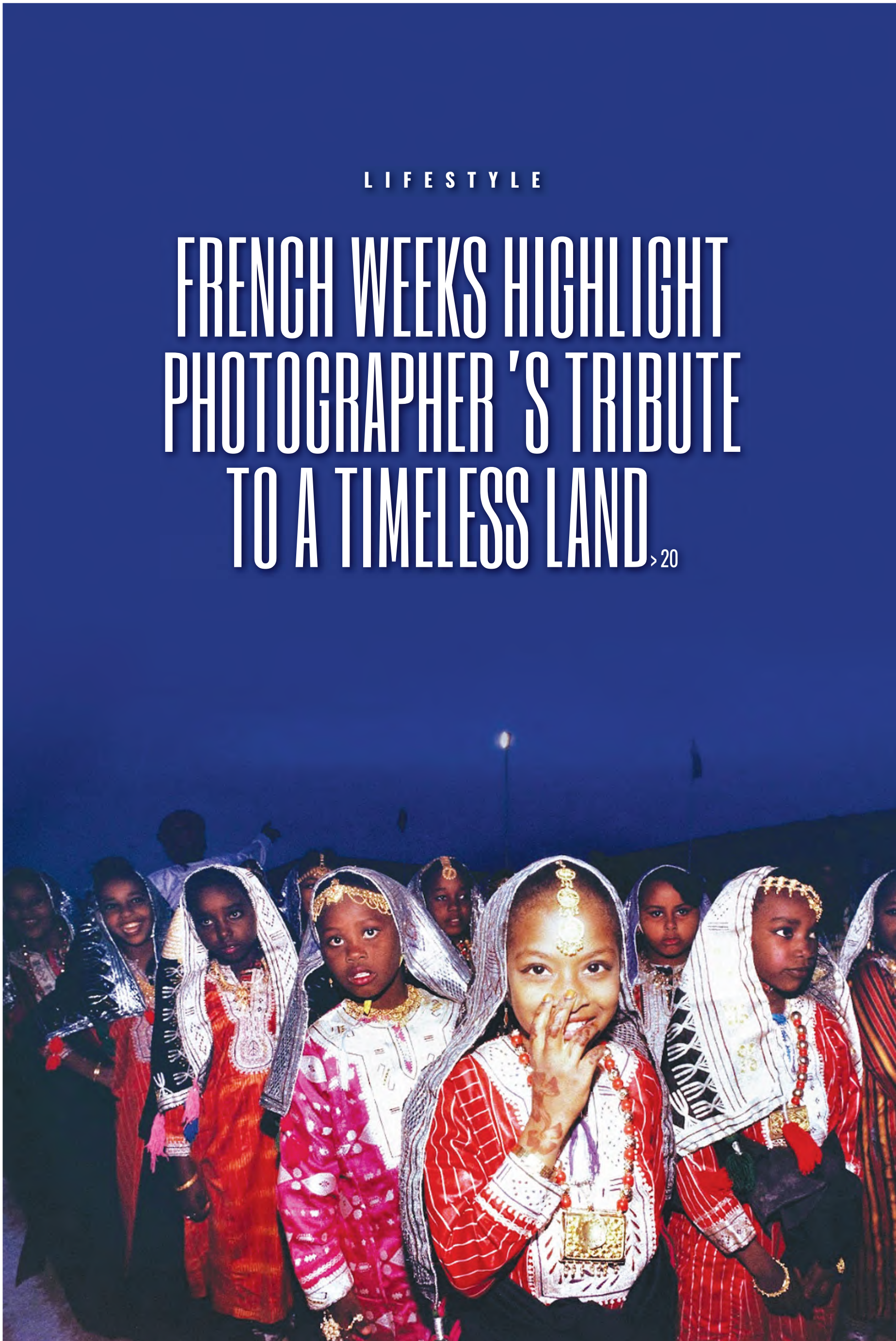


ART/LIFE

LIFESTYLE

FRENCH WEEKS HIGHLIGHT PHOTOGRAPHER'S TRIBUTE TO A TIMELESS LAND _{>20}



LIFESTYLE

Outkast, White Stripes, Cyndi Lauper among Rock Hall inductees



HIP-HOP PIONEERS Outkast and rock duo The White Stripes are among 2025's class of Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductees, the organisation announced late Sunday.

Cyndi Lauper, Chubby Checker, Soundgarden, Bad Company and Joe Cocker round out the performer slate of artists nominated into the prestigious music pantheon.

Hip hop icons Salt-N-Pepa along with rocker Warren Zevon will receive awards for musical influence, while the late record producer Thom Bell, pianist Nicky Hopkins and bassist Carol Kaye will receive the prizes for musical excellence.

The Ahmet Ertegun Award, which goes to a non-performing industry notable, is this year bestowed on Lenny Waronker, whose resume includes heading Warner Bros Records and signing Prince and R E M.

The induction ceremony — which doubles as a star-studded concert gala rife with tributes to the honourees — will be held on November 8 in Los Angeles.

It will stream live on Disney+ and will air later on the network ABC.

The inductees were announced live on ABC late Sunday on "American Idol," during a special rock edition of the long-running music talent show.

Eligible nominees into the Rock Hall must have released their first commercial recording at least 25 years prior to being nominated.

Outkast, Chubby Checker, Joe Cocker and Bad Company were all first-time nominees.

The 2024 class of inductees included Cher, Mary J Blige and Ozzy Osbourne.

For many musicians, the allure of induction goes beyond mere acknowledgment. It serves as a powerful validation of their contributions to rock and roll, and popular culture.

The Hall of Fame preserves the rich history of rock music, showcasing artists who have transformed the genre. Induction places artists in the company of music royalty, enhancing their status among peers and fans. In many cases, the heightened visibility generated by the induction ceremony leads to renewed interest in their music, boosting album sales and concert ticket demand. — AFP

QUICK FEATURES



HERITAGE

A view of a work art displayed as part of the 'Angkor Royal Bronzes' exhibition at the Guimet Museum in Paris. — AFP



ENTERTAINMENT

Bollywood actor Sooraj Pancholi attends the trailer launch of his upcoming movie 'Kesari Veer' in Mumbai. — AFP



MUSIC

US singer Lady Gaga impersonator, drag queen Penelope Jean, poses for a picture at Copacabana Beach in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. — AFP

FEATURES

BY NAJAH AL RIYAMI

AS VISITORS step through the threshold of the Stal Gallery in Muscat, they are greeted by a vivid tapestry of images that beckon them to unravel the story of Oman through the lens of French-Syrian photographer Ammar Abd Rabbo. The air thrums with anticipation, a palpable connection forming between the observer and the world captured within each frame. Abd Rabbo's photographs transcend mere visuals; they are portals that transport onlookers into the heart of Omani life — where the stones speak of ancient histories, the faces reflect the dignity of everyday existence and the landscapes hum with a silent poetry. It is an invitation to connect, to reflect and to experience a cultural dialogue rich with emotion and insight.

Organised in collaboration with the French Embassy in Oman, this exhibition is a key highlight of the "French Weeks" programme, a vibrant celebration of Franco-Omani relations through art, dialogue and exchange. This marks the first time Ammar Abd Rabbo shares his personal archive of Oman with the public, bringing forth a collection titled "Oman In My Eyes." The exhibition features 37 exquisite images, drawn from nearly three decades of his journey which began with his initial visit to the Sultanate of Oman in 1996.

The photographs encapsulate evocative portraits, traditional ceremonies, snapshots of everyday life, street photography and rare moments from national sporting events of the past. They portray not only the physical evolution of Oman but also the profound connection and affection Abd Rabbo has developed for the country. "Oman has never left me," he expresses. "Since my first journey in 1996, almost 30 years ago, this country has etched into me its lines of stone and light, its silent and dignified faces, its still poetry within movement." For Abd Rabbo, photography transcends mere documentation; it is "a kind of poetry and music" — a unique form of visual storytelling that seeks to elicit contemplation and emotional resonance.

What distinguishes this exhibition is the humanistic and lyrical perspective he employs in portraying his subjects. Abd Rabbo's art avoids the snares of spectacle and formality, opting instead to honour the quiet dignity woven into the fabric of daily life, reflecting the timeless essence of a country in transition. His photographs resonate with both personal and universal themes, encouraging viewers to pause and ponder the concepts of identity, change and memory.

Born in Damascus in 1966, Ammar Abd Rabbo's early life was spent in Libya and Lebanon before he moved to France in 1978, following the outbreak of the Lebanese Civil War. A student of political science at the Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris, he ventured into photojournalism with renowned agencies such as Sygma, Sipa Press and AFP. Over the past thirty years, his work has graced more than a hundred magazine and book covers; and found its way into leading international publications including Time Magazine, Le Monde, Paris Match, Der Spiegel and Asharq Al Awsat.

His lens has traversed a myriad of subjects, capturing the stark realities of war in Iraq, Libya, Lebanon and Syria, alongside significant global events like the Cannes Film Festival and Paris Fashion Week. Abd Rabbo's portraits of renowned figures, such as world leaders and cultural icons like Michael Jackson and Stephen Hawking, sit alongside tender depictions of ordinary people navigating extraordinary challenges. In conflict zones, he chooses to focus not on combat, but on the resilience of civilians — a perspective central to his poignant 2016 photo book *Alep, À Elles Eux Paix*.

Abd Rabbo's work has been showcased globally in esteemed institutions and cultural events, including Banksy's Dismaland in the UK, the Venice Biennale, MAXXI Museum in Rome and the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris. He has held solo exhibitions in cities like Doha, Dubai, Beirut



French Weeks highlight photographer's tribute to a timeless land



and Paris; and in 2018, he was honoured with the title of Chevalier of the French Order of Arts and Letters, recognising his meaningful contributions to the arts.

In "Oman In My Eyes," Ammar Abd Rabbo invites visitors to engage with his ongoing relationship with the Sultanate of Oman — a journey enriched by admiration, curiosity and profound emotional resonance. Each image serves as a thoughtful meditation on place and presence, offering a rare and timeless view of Oman through the eyes of a seasoned storyteller.

This exhibition promises to attract a



diverse audience — from art enthusiasts and cultural historians to photography aficionados and members of the Franco-Omani community. It pays tribute to Oman's evolving landscape while celebrating the enduring connections fostered through art and cultural exchange. Visitors are heartily invited to explore this powerful visual narrative and immerse themselves in Oman as seen through the discerning eyes of a photographer whose work resonates with both gentleness and depth.

The exhibition will be open to the public from April 27 to May 12, 2025 at Stal Gallery.