

MAGNATE

AUGUST 2026

Summer

1 Year Anniversary

*HYPE CULTURE &
THE WORLD CUP*

BlockBusters
For The Summer Heat

**SUNNY HILL
FESTIVAL**
20 26

MAGNATE

1 Year Anniversary

from the Editor

Happy anniversary! It has now been over a year since our magazine's inception. To celebrate our first year together, we have prepared this special edition. We have wandered off from regular concept, and this issue focuses on the season rather than a country. I hope you will enjoy the Summer Edition. Thank you all for your support and enthusiasm.

Sincerely,
Ahmet Ağırbaş
President

Issue 3 - August 2026

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Books by Female Authors to Read

You're also welcome to pick one of my four: *The Trees Told Me So*, *It Was the Year 2020*, *She* (in seven languages), and my latest, *#icouldhavebeenaninstapost*.

Authored by Purva Grover

Drawing up a must-read list is never easy. Books find us when we need them most — and no two readers experience the same book in the same way. We do not remain unchanged after reading; stories alter the rhythm of our thinking, soften our certainties, or strengthen our faith. Until you stumble upon the one that transforms you, you'll have to borrow my perspective. Fair warning: just as we don't agree on how to dress a pizza — some swear by onions, others insist on mushrooms, a few campaign for chicken, ketchup remains controversial, and pineapple itself sparks devotion — we're unlikely to crave the same books. With that settled, here's a list. Many are available as e-books and audiobooks, so you may "read" in whichever way nourishes you best. You're also welcome to pick one of my four: *The Trees Told Me So*, *It Was the Year 2020*, *She* (in seven languages), and my latest, *#icouldhavebeenaninstapost*.

A Year in the Life of a Complete and Total Genius — Stacey Matson

A young adult novel that adults will love just as much. Arthur Bean, a witty 13-year-old aspiring to be the world's best-selling author, narrates his year through emails, journal entries, and school assignments. Overconfident yet vulnerable, he is deeply endearing. Quirky, sassy, tender — and a gentle reminder of the courage it takes to believe in oneself.

Happier at Home — Gretchen Rubin

Can you be homesick while at home? Deeply personal and anecdotal, this is an easy yet thoughtful read filled with simple reminders: declutter gently, prioritize your health, nurture relationships. Rubin does not demand dramatic life changes. Instead, she encourages small experiments — moving a cabinet, adjusting routines, paying closer attention. Sometimes happiness is not a grand pilgrimage. Sometimes it is a small rearrangement of what already exists. And yes, anyone who is happy should read this one, too.

The Strays — Emily Bitto

A beautiful, soulful novel to consume. *The Strays* gently gathers themes of female friendship, art, motherhood, parenting, and social difference into one immersive world. At its heart is the intense friendship between two young girls, Eva and Lily, shaped by the stark contrast in their upbringings. Eva's bohemian home welcomes wandering artists — "strays" of every kind — and Lily is drawn to that freedom with longing and quiet envy. It's a novel about belonging and desire, about the blurred lines between intimacy and independence. Lyrical and quietly haunting, it lingers long after the final page.

The Lost Bookshop — Evie Woods

Looking for a cutesy read that blends reality with magic realism, wrapped in a beautiful cover? This one's for you. Set around a mysterious bookshop, this novel is filled with charming characters, unexpected twists, and quiet metaphors about bravery and belonging. For what reader doesn't love spending time in a bookshop? As one line reminds us: "There was an old musician's cliché, about how there were no wrong notes on a piano." And perhaps that, too, is a lesson for the times.

True Biz — Sara Nović

Set in a residential school for the Deaf, it follows rebellious transfer student Charlie, golden boy Austin, and headmistress February as their lives intertwine amid personal and political upheaval. Through them, we learn about Deaf culture, American Sign Language, cochlear implants, civil rights, love, and loss. The education is subtle yet powerful — you absorb history, policy, and the realities of Deaf schooling simply by paying attention. The portrayal of communication between Deaf and hearing characters is intelligent and innovative, a quiet mark of brilliance. A beautiful hardback cover; most stand unaware that "true biz" in American Sign Language means "real talk" or "for real." By the final page, you understand. This is real talk — courageous, intimate, and unforgettable.

Forty Rooms — Olga Grushin

They say don't judge a book by its cover, yet it was the cover that drew me in — a broken cup and saucer, vintage floral wallpaper blooming from within. Why forty? Grushin suggests a woman passes through forty rooms in her lifetime — bedrooms, kitchens, dorm rooms, living rooms — each marking a stage of becoming. Biblically and historically, forty is also the number of endurance and transformation. The novel follows a Russian girl who dreams of becoming a poet. Life unfolds — marriage, motherhood, migration to America — yet her dream lingers quietly, scribbled in her mind, postponed for a "right moment" that never quite arrives. A tender meditation on delay, longing, and the rooms we inhabit as we wait to step into our truest selves.



About Purva Grover

Purva Grover is an author, journalist, essayist, diarist, reader, and creative entrepreneur-educator. She is the author of *The Trees Told Me So*, *It Was the Year 2020*, *She* (translated into seven languages), and *#icouldhavebeenaninstapost*. She is the founder and editor of *The Indian Trumpet* (2013), a digital publication for Indian expatriates & global readers that chronicles the color, culture, and chaos of India. On her Substack, *Once Upon A Table* (2025), she explores memories, food, and human connections. She previously founded and edited *The Junior Trumpet* (2024–25), a monthly magazine for children and young adults, and *stories over art* (2024–25), a publication for those who find solace, inspiration, and purpose in the arts. From 2016–2023, she served as associate editor at *Khaleej Times*, one of the Gulf's most widely read English-language newspapers.

With a journalism career spanning over 19 years, Purva has worked across genres, platforms, and formats. Her work extends beyond print into podcasts, talks, theatrical collaborations (playwright & stage director), art-led projects, and interdisciplinary storytelling. As a creative educator and entrepreneur, she continues to experiment with form, audience, and narrative ownership. In 2021, she was awarded the UAE Golden Visa by the Dubai Culture & Arts Authority and honored under the People of Culture and Art—Writer category as part of the inaugural Class of Creators.

Her life is a whirlwind of headlines, deadlines, and timelines, with her words transcending traditional boundaries. She is not an influencer but a storyteller—driven by language, memory, and an enduring search for her favorite word.

She lives and writes in Dubai, UAE, where she also runs a literary society dedicated to nurturing readers and fostering community.



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When we talk about summer destinations, we often think about Turkey, Greece, Italy or even the Maldives. But we tend to skip the best places because they are not popular or they don't quite fit the "aesthetic". But sudden changes such as sporting events, fashion or pop culture can shift normal destinations into popular places.

At the 2026 World Cup, which was renowned as the first world cup with 48 teams, some teams like Uzbekistan, Jordan and Curaçao had their first participation in the history of their nations. Fans wondered and debated over which countries would be the dark horse of the tournament. Nobody could have guessed Cabo Verde. They didn't top their group in qualification nor did they have an experienced squad. But they pulled off the incredible. They fought through the group stages without a single loss. They faced off against world cup giants like Saudi Arabia and the Champions Spain. They finished second in their group and faced off against Argentina, the reigning champions. The analysts gave Cabo Verde a mere 6% win percentage. Yet they amazed the world. At the end Cabo Verde might have lost by a fraction in score, but in tourism their sudden rise was already winning.

Whilst the game against Argentina went on, in American browsers showed that phrases such as "Cape Verde vacation" went up by 5000%. Historically, a place that has been most visited by Europeans has gained its deserved value in the entire world.

Cabo Verde was historically a series of islands controlled by the Portuguese, is off the coast of Senegal and is known by its naturally green waters and complex wildlife. When the HMS Beagle landed on the shores of Cabo Verde, Darwin wrote in his private notes that the volcanic formations in these sets of islands were different from others. It is also said that these are the islands that got Darwin into geology. The country also has a distinct history. For example São Filipe Royal Fortress was built in 1593 by the Portuguese to secure the island from invaders but later was recognized by UNESCO as an Heritage Site. Also Cabo Verde was once a trade hub for slaves, thus a lot of remains of slavery are still on the island till today. One example is the Pelourinho which is a column erected in 1512. The column was used as a place where slaves were shown off to people before they got sold.



Moving on from history lets talk more about culture. Cabo Verde has a strong relationship with music, thus they have a lot of artists who have won international music awards. Cesaria Evora is the most legendary out of them. You even might have heard her in a summer club before. The famous song Yamore, which became popular in the summer of 2025 contains her voice in the lyrics. The people of Cabo Verde honored her godly hymns with a mural that sits in the heart of Sao Vicente. Cabo Verde is also known for its delicate food. The best of the best can be enjoyed in Casa Café Mindelo which sits on the bay of Sao Vicente, overlooking the ocean. It's where most poets, famous people and sailors met and dined together. Another great local restaurant is Quintal da Música. Situated in the historic Plateau neighborhood of Praia on Santiago Island, this venue offers classic Cape Verdean cuisine served alongside traditional live performances of morna and funaná.

Lastly and most importantly, for a tourist, is the beaches. Although Tarrafal Beach is tucked into the secret coast of Santiago and offers great views of volcanic sites, Santa Maria Beach is a tourist favorite with its historic pier and delicate white sand that feels like silk. The historic pier on the beach was originally built to export salt harvested from the nearby inland salt pans of Pedra de Lume. Today, it remains a bustling cultural hub where local fishermen dock daily to sell fresh catch alongside local artisan markets. Some other well known beaches include: Praia de Santa Mónica, Chaves Beach and Quebra Canela.

Whether you are drawn by the rich history of its colonial forts, the soulful rhythms of morna echoing through cafés, or the sheer beauty of its shores, Cabo Verde is no longer the Atlantic's kept secret. What began as a historic run on the football pitch has rightfully placed this resilient, culturally vibrant country on the global stage. Cabo Verde isn't just a trend born from a World Cup moment, it is a timeless destination finally receiving the world's attention. Now it's time to pack your bags for a trip that won't be forgotten. To the heart of the Atlantic!

Güney Keskinoglu



HYPER CULTURE & THE WORLD CUP

For those who don't know, hype culture is a consumer trend often defined by chasing the next "big thing". This subgenre of consumerism is often associated with streetwear brands that offer limited editions, drops (a scheduled release of new clothing, shoes, or accessories in limited quantities at a specific day and exact time), and collaborations with certain people and/or brands. In this article, we will be looking at a few collaborations that took place during the World Cup.

We have quite the list, and lot to cover. So let's get on with it. Our first collaboration is between the one and only Kylian Mbappe and Virgil Abloh (Off White). Although this isn't recent, the 2018 World Cup collab is the only cleat collab on our list. The cleats feature a striking orange shade and Off White's iconic quotations. It reads "MBAPPE" on the inside, and "VIRGIL WAS HERE" on the outside of the boot. Overall, I think the cleats go really well with the customized vibe of Abloh's shoes and Mbappe's youth really adds to the collab. What I mean by that is, it would not have felt the same with an older player like Benzema or Ronaldo, but Yamal maybe a good fit.

Next, we have BAPE. Although they are not official collaborations with the World Cup, the Trionda Jersey and Country Bape STA's are great additions to this year's streetwear wardrobe. And it seems like BAPE has made a good use of their ongoing partnership with Adidas with great products like the BAPE Japan and USA Jerseys, both using Adidas's template from previous World Cup events. Although they aren't featured on the article, you can see the Trionda Jersey, inspired by the design and colors of the WC'26 football, which is also produced by Adidas.

Now with the artist collabs. Travis Scott has put out unofficial World Cup jerseys with Nike, adding his own Cactus Jack design twist to them. This central design is used for many nations such as Brazil, England, Netherlands, USA, Croatia, and other Nike sponsored football associations. Drake's Nocta has also released an interesting collection with the Canadian National Team. The collab includes prematch gear for the team and a special collection featuring the Canadian maple leaf. A product from the collab can be seen on the left of the article.



Moving on with other national team collaborations, we have Palace with England. Palace, being a skateboard turned streetwear brand, has a bold approach on design. This is reflected greatly on the Palace x England kit. The jersey features St. George all over. This is obviously a bold interpretation of the St. George's Cross (Featured on the English Flag), and makes the jersey overly modern with a traditional twist. Another collab amid the skateboard culture is the Thrasher x Argentine. Thrasher's brave aesthetics can also be observed in the collab. The jersey has a checkered design and has Argentine Football Association logo all over the jersey. Now comes a regional collaboration between Patta and Netherlands. Patta, a streetwear brand from the Netherlands has prepared pre match gear for the national team. The design features chains and lions scattered throughout the kit. Lion of course is used since it is the coat of arms of Netherland and the symbol for the national team. Similarly, France and the USA have also hosted designers on their gear. France has collaborated with the French fashion house Jacquemus for their pre match clothing and also released a special collection together. The collection has everything from the pre match jersey to puffer jacket. It also has the French team for the advertisement material, which makes the whole thing a lot more interesting. Virgil Abloh strikes again! This time with the VAA (Virgil Abloh Archive), designing pre match gear for the USA national team. VAA's collection has different yet equally bold direction from the Off White's featuring a variety of fonts, colors and shapes on the designs.

Finally, we have a collaboration between Adidas, Kith and Lionel Messi. This special collab celebrates the 20th year of Messi's first appearance on the World Cup as well as Kith's 15th anniversary. The jersey features Messi's number 19 from his first appearance, and a crest with 15 on it to celebrate Kith's anniversary.

Summing up, athletes, international organizations and sports events have been great ways brands can connect with people, gain popularity and build a base. And this World Cup exemplifies this excellently. Let's hope the next World Cup brings us more exciting collaborations.

Ahmet
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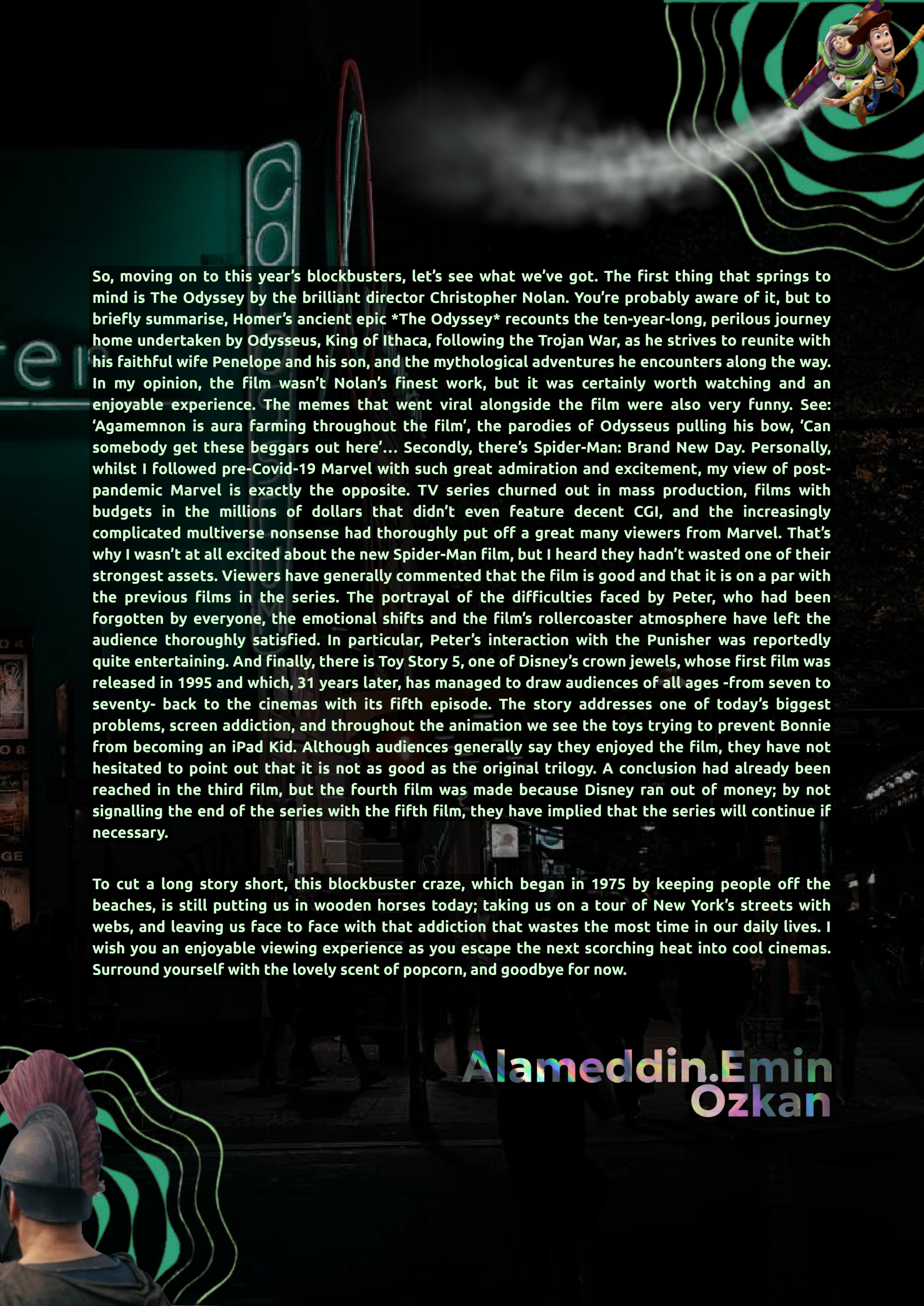
BLOCKBUSTERS

For The Summer Heat

High noon, the sun is at its highest, you'd sell your soul for a cup of cold water. But there's no need for that, because Summer of '26 invites you to watch the year's blockbusters in ice-cold cinemas. First of all, let me offer a special explanation for those wondering, 'What on earth are Blockbusters? Is it some sort of new version of Ghostbusters?' – by the way, if you don't know, there's absolutely no need to feel embarrassed, because it's a fairly new term for me too. The word 'blockbuster' actually dates back to the Second World War. Such powerful bombs were used during the war that a single one was capable of blowing up an entire city block. People saw fit to call this type of bomb a 'blockbuster'. When it comes to killing one another, aren't we just so innovative and creative, aren't we? If only we could show that same level of performance for the sake of peace. Anyway, if you're wondering how this word came to be used in the context of cinema, let me explain it like this: A film was being made and it was attracting such huge interest that the people queuing for tickets filled an entire city block. So they said, 'Why don't we find a name to describe films of this magnitude?' and they decided the word 'Blockbuster', which they already had at hand, was just right for the job.

Now that we've learnt the word, we might as well talk a little about its history. The first 'blockbuster' film to appear in history was *JAWS*, which is etched into our memories thanks to its retro, iconic theme tune consisting of just two notes. Until 1975, the summer months were considered the 'dead season' in the cinema industry, because no one in their right mind would want to spend hours in a closed, dark environment with dozens of other people in the stifling summer heat, would they? After all, there are seas to cool you down from the summer heat, or lush green parks where you can sit and sip something cold whilst spending time with your loved ones. However, in the summer of 1975, a young director named Steven Spielberg released *JAWS*, and this completely transformed the situation. For this film, Universal Studios launched an unprecedented PR campaign, releasing it simultaneously in hundreds of cinemas and flooding the television airwaves with a massive advertising campaign. As a result, people flocked to air-conditioned cinemas – incidentally, by the 1930s and 1940s, most cinemas had already been fitted with air conditioning – forming queues metres long that stretched around entire blocks. In this way, the film was recognised as the first official 'blockbuster' in history. Two years later, the film that would put many of today's releases to shame was released in the summer: *STAR WARS*. If I were to start praising Star Wars, this piece would never end, so let's keep it brief. With the release of Star Wars in the summer, people finally agreed on one thing: the summer season is when the biggest-budget, must-see films are released.



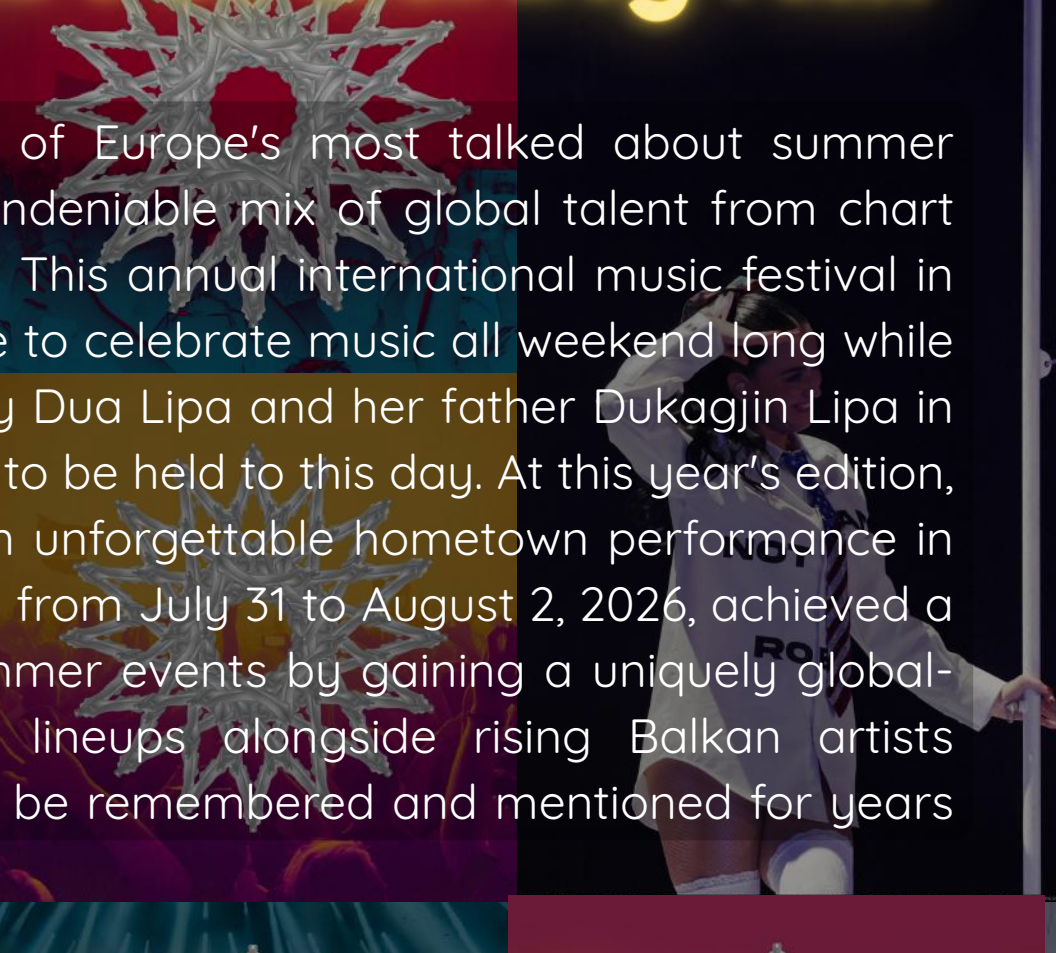
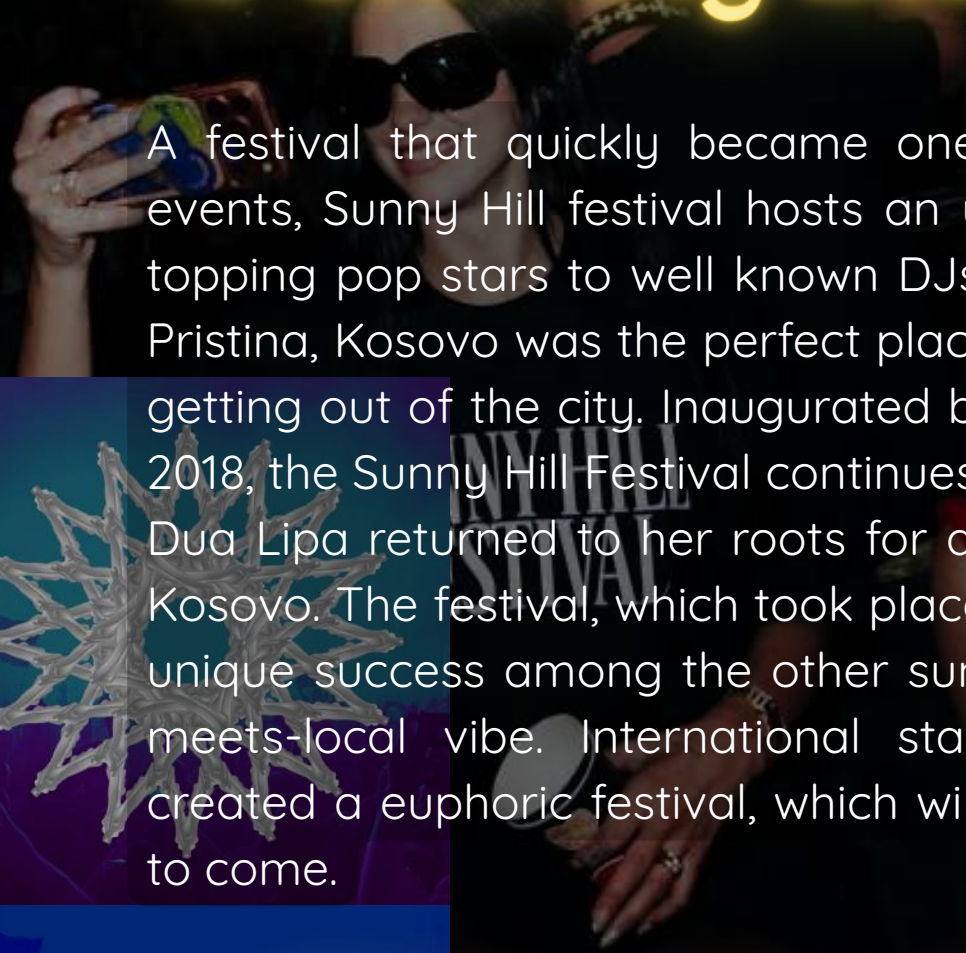


So, moving on to this year's blockbusters, let's see what we've got. The first thing that springs to mind is The Odyssey by the brilliant director Christopher Nolan. You're probably aware of it, but to briefly summarise, Homer's ancient epic *The Odyssey* recounts the ten-year-long, perilous journey home undertaken by Odysseus, King of Ithaca, following the Trojan War, as he strives to reunite with his faithful wife Penelope and his son, and the mythological adventures he encounters along the way. In my opinion, the film wasn't Nolan's finest work, but it was certainly worth watching and an enjoyable experience. The memes that went viral alongside the film were also very funny. See: 'Agamemnon is aura farming throughout the film', the parodies of Odysseus pulling his bow, 'Can somebody get these beggars out here'... Secondly, there's Spider-Man: Brand New Day. Personally, whilst I followed pre-Covid-19 Marvel with such great admiration and excitement, my view of post-pandemic Marvel is exactly the opposite. TV series churned out in mass production, films with budgets in the millions of dollars that didn't even feature decent CGI, and the increasingly complicated multiverse nonsense had thoroughly put off a great many viewers from Marvel. That's why I wasn't at all excited about the new Spider-Man film, but I heard they hadn't wasted one of their strongest assets. Viewers have generally commented that the film is good and that it is on a par with the previous films in the series. The portrayal of the difficulties faced by Peter, who had been forgotten by everyone, the emotional shifts and the film's rollercoaster atmosphere have left the audience thoroughly satisfied. In particular, Peter's interaction with the Punisher was reportedly quite entertaining. And finally, there is Toy Story 5, one of Disney's crown jewels, whose first film was released in 1995 and which, 31 years later, has managed to draw audiences of all ages -from seven to seventy- back to the cinemas with its fifth episode. The story addresses one of today's biggest problems, screen addiction, and throughout the animation we see the toys trying to prevent Bonnie from becoming an iPad Kid. Although audiences generally say they enjoyed the film, they have not hesitated to point out that it is not as good as the original trilogy. A conclusion had already been reached in the third film, but the fourth film was made because Disney ran out of money; by not signalling the end of the series with the fifth film, they have implied that the series will continue if necessary.

To cut a long story short, this blockbuster craze, which began in 1975 by keeping people off the beaches, is still putting us in wooden horses today; taking us on a tour of New York's streets with webs, and leaving us face to face with that addiction that wastes the most time in our daily lives. I wish you an enjoyable viewing experience as you escape the next scorching heat into cool cinemas. Surround yourself with the lovely scent of popcorn, and goodbye for now.

Alameddin.Emin
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A Glowing Start at Sunny Hill

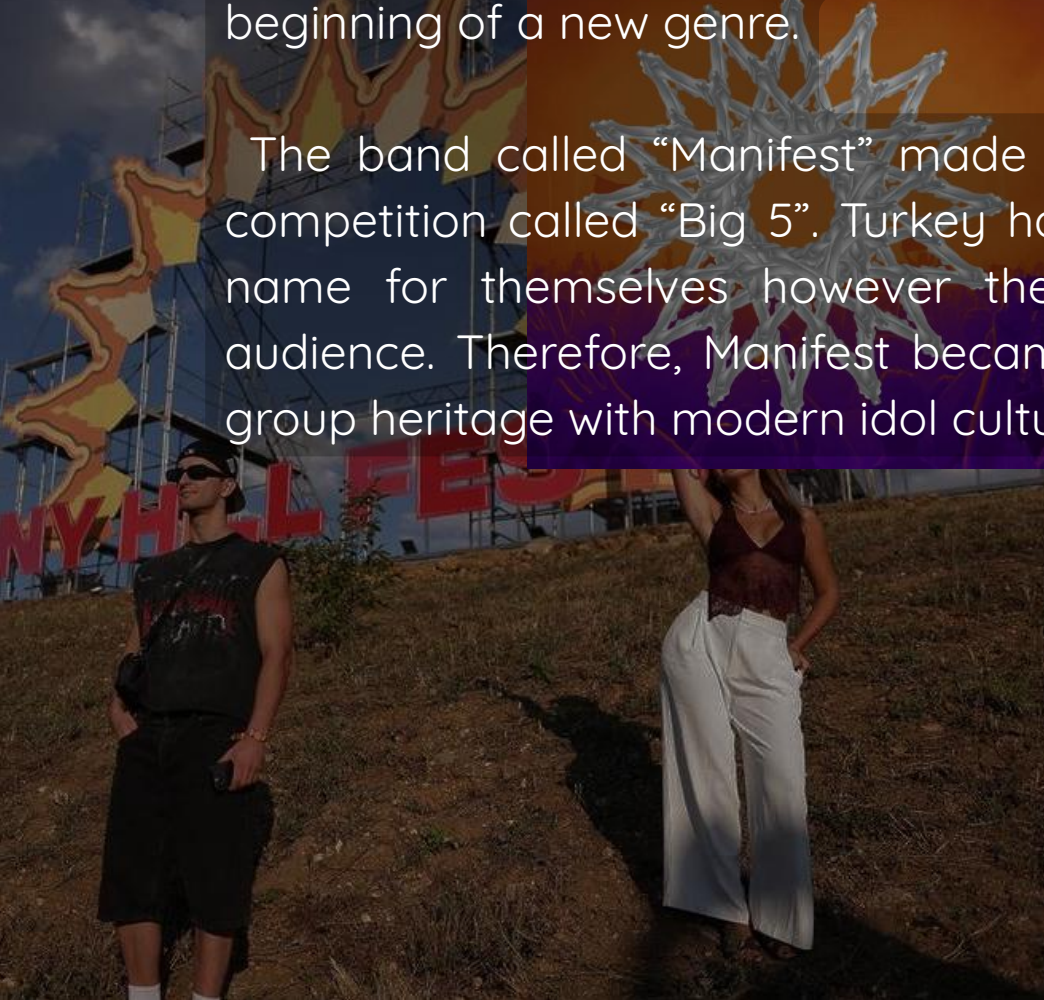


A festival that quickly became one of Europe's most talked about summer events, Sunny Hill festival hosts an undeniable mix of global talent from chart topping pop stars to well known DJs. This annual international music festival in Pristina, Kosovo was the perfect place to celebrate music all weekend long while getting out of the city. Inaugurated by Dua Lipa and her father Dukagjin Lipa in 2018, the Sunny Hill Festival continues to be held to this day. At this year's edition, Dua Lipa returned to her roots for an unforgettable hometown performance in Kosovo. The festival, which took place from July 31 to August 2, 2026, achieved a unique success among the other summer events by gaining a uniquely global-meets-local vibe. International star lineups alongside rising Balkan artists created a euphoric festival, which will be remembered and mentioned for years to come.

A New Era for Local Pop



Among the performing stars like Katy Perry and Miley Cyrus, there was a Turkish girl band that had only made their debut a year and a half ago. At first glance it reads as a commendable achievement of 6 young women who set out to make a name for themselves on the world stage. However, for Turkey, they were the beginning of a new genre.



The band called "Manifest" made their debut on February 7, 2025, with the competition called "Big 5". Turkey had some groups in the 2000s that made a name for themselves however they never attempted to achieve a global audience. Therefore, Manifest became the leading group that updated the girl group heritage with modern idol culture.

SUNNY HILL FESTIVAL

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As well as the lack of girl and boy bands for some time, another reason behind their rapid rise was the new generation's currently existing interest in global groups. By bringing the expectation in K-Pop and global groups to the local stage, they opened the door to new groups behind them and became the leader of this genre in Turkey. While the younger generation accepted and adapted to this new era rapidly, there was also a part of the country that wasn't ready for this kind of a change in pop music. So, how did this local group end up on a global stage? That's thanks to Dua Lipa's brilliant festival idea.

Music with Purpose

The idea was bringing global music to meet with Kosovo's new generation while channeling the revenue generated into local cultural and arts projects via the Sunny Hill Foundation. Dua Lipa managed to bring together Balkan and popular culture, presenting Kosovo's cultural richness to people all over the world while creating a feast of global music. Besides that, this festival has been a great opportunity for local groups to gain reputation while building a career. Hence, Manifest is one of the young, lucky, and talented groups. Even before the group reached its peak, it was welcomed on a global stage, opening a brand new door for a new path for their career. When viewed from this aspect, Dua Lipa doesn't just entertain people and provide revenue for the foundation but also she acknowledges and supports starters in her own field.

Manifest's appearance at Sunny Hill was far more than a performance, it proved that local talent can command a worldwide stage when given the space to shine. The summer of 2026 marked their international debut thanks to Sunny Hill. And Dua Lipa, once again, became the glowing star by being a generous supporter of her culture and pop music.

Nehir Naz Yilmaz

SUMMER'S MOST TALKED

Why did the Internet collectively become obsessed with Erling Haaland?

It all started with the World Cup in 2026. While the world was already familiar with the Manchester City striker's record-breaking goalscoring, the summer's 2026 FIFA World Cup pushed Haaland from a football star into a global pop-culture meme phenomenon. After a 28-year absence from the tournament, Norway relied heavily on their star striker, and he delivered on the biggest stage imaginable. Haaland racked up seven tournament goals, including a dramatic 86th-minute winner against Ivory Coast in the Round of 32, which marked his 60th international goal in just 53 appearances, making him the fastest player in football history to reach that milestone. He followed that up with a legendary two-goal performance to eliminate Brazil 2-1. Norway's fairy-tale run came to a heartbreaking end in the quarter-finals against England at Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens. Andreas Schjelderup gave Norway an early lead in the 36th minute, but England's Jude Bellingham leveled the score right before halftime. Bellingham struck again in the 93rd minute to put England ahead 2-1. Exhausted from leading his country's frontline throughout the tournament, Haaland was subbed off in the 105th minute for Jørgen Strand Larsen, watching from the sidelines as Norway's historic World Cup journey came to a close.

The magic of Haaland's rise to meme royalty lies in the paradox between who he is on the pitch and who he is on social media. While he dominates defenders like an intimidating giant, online he completely embraced his Gen Z side, earning him the viral nickname of the internet's "babygirl" and a "pretty Norwegian princess" as non-football fans fell in love with his goofy personality. His Snapchat account became the epicenter of the World Cup's viral humor. Fans tuned in daily to see what update he would drop next, whether it was riding team buses with Shrek face filters, posting low-angle nostril selfies, or replying "Ok on it" to a fan who told him to focus. In one iconic Snapchat Q&A screenshot that went completely viral, a fan messaged him asking point-blank, "Boy or girl?" to which Haaland replied, "Great question." When Google added a custom "Viking row" animation to his search results, he actively joined the joke, telling millions of followers to search his name just to see it. A lot of memes were also made after his famous walk, where he sticks his head abnormally far forward. Fans often commented things like, "Just running around undiagnosed," or, "I think he is AI." Yet on the pitch, he remained an absolute nightmare for opponents. During Norway's opening match against Iraq, a clip went viral showing Haaland sprinting 50 yards to chase down an Iraqi defender on a simple back-pass. The sight of a giant Viking charging at full speed looked straight out of a horror movie.



Beyond the World Cup goals, memes, and bromance, Haaland's style announced him as the unexpected fashion icon of the summer. Haaland completely redefined luxury sports style with his viral collection of ultra-rare Hermès Birkin bags valued at well over \$317,000. Fashion TikTok, or FashionTok, and paparazzi turned every airport arrival into a side quest, tracking his supersized Haut à Courroies (HAC) travel totes—from the \$45,500 “Endless Road” HAC 50 featuring a graphic mountain landscape to the ultra-rare \$69,500 cargo-inspired Multipocket HAC 50. Combined with his signature Dolce & Gabbana silk pajama sets and custom cowboy hats, his distinctive fashion choices helped establish him as one of football's most unexpected style figures. He also earned brand ambassador deals and sponsorships with brands such as Dolce & Gabbana, Breitling, Db, Beats by Dre, and Nike.

This chaotic energy naturally collided with his legendary, heartwarming bromance with England's Jude Bellingham. The pair formed an unbreakable bond as teenagers at Borussia Dortmund, becoming famous for viral clips of Bellingham kissing Haaland's cheek in interviews and the two of them trying to speak Chinese. When they met in the World Cup quarter-final in Miami, the internet was obsessed with the drama of two best friends having to battle for national glory. Even after Bellingham scored the 93rd-minute goal that helped send Norway home, the competitive tension vanished instantly. The two embraced in a long hug, traded shirts, and Haaland was seen gushing about his “brother” in post-match interviews.

To top off the summer of being the “Meme King,” Haaland saved his most absurd trick for the journey home. He stepped off Norway's team plane in Oslo carrying a stuffed taxidermy raccoon holding a liquor bottle under his other arm. Haaland posted a picture to Instagram with the caption, “It followed me home,” before launching a viral poll for millions of fans to name it, with “R.O.W.” — Raccoon On Wheels — taking the crown.

Whether he is intimidating players on the field or doing something meme-worthy away from it, Erling Haaland proved that he is far more than just a goalscoring Viking. In an era of overly rehearsed sports stars, his humor, unpredictability, and refusal to take himself too seriously made him the meme king of the summer and one of football's most entertaining personalities.

Karmen Gül Kocabey





Atatürk's Girls

Serve Victorious Once Again

As we came to the end of July, we also came to the end of the Federation Internationale de Volleyball's very own Volleyball Women's Nations League. The 26th of July marked our calendars as the final match of the VNL, where our brilliant girls came from a set down to defeat Brazil, and get the honor of lifting the 2026 FIVB Volleyball Nations League trophy adding to their previous victory in 2023.

Türkiye had entered the Finals having qualified sixth from the Preliminary Phase where 16 teams played 12 matches in the span of three weeks to determine playoff qualification. During the Preliminary Phase, our girls put together a run that left little doubt about their ambitions for Macau, closing out the group stage with the form and confidence of a team that knew exactly where it wanted to end up. That performance secured them a spot among the eight teams who would battle it out for the trophy in the Finals.

The knockout stage began in earnest with a quarterfinal against Canada, where Türkiye made quick work of their opponents to punch their ticket to the final four. Waiting for them in the semifinal were the tournament hosts, China and in front of a partisan home crowd, our girls delivered arguably their most complete performance of the tournament, sweeping the hosts 3-0 to book their spot in a third VNL final in program history.

Then came Brazil. World No. 2, five-time VNL runners-up, and hungry for the gold medal that had eluded them at every previous attempt. It was, by any measure, a final worthy of the occasion.





Brazil struck first, riding a red hot performance from outside hitter Ana Cristina to take the opening set 25-23. But if there is one thing this Turkish side has proven time and again, it's that a set down is far from a match lost. Türkiye leveled things up in the second, 25-23, on the back of a crucial block from Hande Baladın and a decisive kill from opposite Melissa Vargas. The third set turned into a personal showcase for Vargas, who scored 11 points alone as Türkiye edged it 26-24 , a set that shifted the entire complexion of the match. Brazil wasn't finished; they clawed back from six points down in the fourth to briefly retake the lead at 19-18. But our girls held their nerve, regained control, and setter Elif Şahin sealed the championship and the 25-21 set , with a clever second-touch tip that sent the Turkish bench into delirium.

At the center of it all stood Melissa Vargas, who was named the tournament's Most Valuable Player, an honor she also received when Türkiye claimed their first VNL title back in 2023, making her a two-time MVP of the competition. But Sunday's performance was something else entirely, even by her own lofty standards. The Cuban-born opposite finished the gold medal match with 33 points, the most anyone has ever scored in a single VNL final, in either the men's or women's competition. It wasn't just a career night, it was a night that now belongs in the record books of the tournament itself.

Vargas's fingerprints were on every stage of the comeback. She was the one who answered Brazil's opening-set statement with the leveling blow in set two. She was the one who took over set three almost single-handedly, scoring 11 of Türkiye's points as the match tilted decisively in their favor. And in the tense closing stages of the fourth set, as Brazil threatened to snatch back the momentum, it was Vargas's composure at the net that our girls leaned on to weather the storm. Along with the rest of our powerful team, a loss wasn't even a choice.

Ayşegül Sürmeli



Puzzle corner

W	F	A	B	B	V	A	C	A	T	I	O	N	A	P
U	D	J	E	I	J	Z	M	E	B	V	J	W	N	A
K	L	A	G	M	O	A	Q	X	A	O	L	F	T	D
C	C	W	A	T	E	R	M	E	L	O	N	L	A	E
H	A	W	N	G	M	Y	A	A	I	P	Q	I	L	V
L	E	P	M	U	C	A	E	S	L	Y	D	P	Y	A
S	V	O	R	Y	F	C	R	N	J	F	C	F	A	W
L	X	D	Q	A	Q	H	C	S	B	I	I	L	W	T
D	O	S	L	D	V	T	E	L	N	N	T	O	E	A
B	Y	O	W	N	T	O	C	C	O	J	A	P	H	E
C	O	V	S	A	I	L	I	N	G	A	G	S	G	H
P	L	J	J	S	O	P	J	C	G	N	I	V	I	D

SUNSCREEN
FLIP-FLOPS
ICE CREAM
SAILING
AMALFI
BODRUM

BEACH
SAND
BALI
HEATWAVE
POOL
FUN

WATERMELON
PICNIC
ANTALYA
YACHT
VACATION
DIVING

by zehra karahasan

Thank you!

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1 Year Anniversary

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