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Reading the hidden
messages between
and the environment



Self-directed groups thriving on campus

By Will Clark

As the Fall 2014 semester continues, students are looking for new challenges and new friends. Many student groups have formed to aid in helping students share interests with others. More than fifty formal groups are now operating at KAUST. These span the spectrum of interests—athletics, theater, social causes, travel and more.

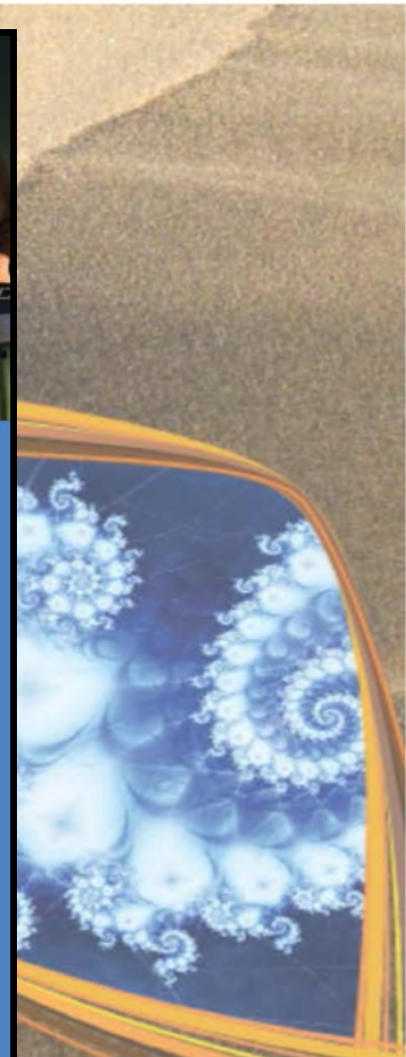
The KAUST Theater Troupe, headed by Daniel Binham, is open to anyone with an interest in theater, plays and acting. This group is pretty flexible, and is willing to take on student-penned plays—in addition to established works. In the past, they've done several of these student plays, *An Iliad*, and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*.

For those who often find themselves staring off into space, the **Amateur Astronomy Association (AAA)** might be a good fit. This student-led group holds lectures on Astronomy, and also has regular observation events at KAUST. In previous years, the AAA has held observations for special Astronomy events, such as the transit of Venus, a partial solar eclipse and a partial lunar eclipse. Since 2013, they have also worked with the Office of Enrichment Programs, to organize Astronomy workshops during WEP. Current projects for the star-gazers include regular trips to the desert for observation and Astrophotography.

The Graduate Association of Musicians (GAM) helps to connect musicians and provide a platform for students and community members to practice and perform. Graduate Affairs has been very supportive of this group and has generously provided two music rooms at the Student Center—which are well equipped with a wide range of instruments including: digital piano, acoustic, bass and electric guitars, electric drums, bongos, cajons and electric violin. Student sub-groups have formed from the main group, and play different kinds of music—pop, rock, classical and traditional Latin American folk songs, among other genres. Often, these groups are called upon to perform at events, such as the year-end gala dinner, the Tuesday Lounge and student orientations. The GAM also provides music lessons for community members, including children.

The **Underwater Photography** group has an impressive array of high-caliber photography gear. This group is open to everyone, from beginners to those with more advanced skills. In collaboration with another student group, Thuwal Divers, the Underwater Photography group has trips to Jeddah and Yanbu, and longer jaunts to Al Lith and the Farasan Islands.

For more information on all student groups — go to Graduate Events & Recreation, level 2 of the Student Center — or visit <http://kaust.collegiatelink.net>



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