Contents

3 News
10 Statue & Blue Plaque
9 Feature
12 Architecture
14 Opinion & Comment
17 AUX. Literature, Screen, Music & Audio
24 Astronomy
25 Arts in Education
30 Features
32 Events
40 Dining Out
42 Health & Lifestyle
44 Health
48 Arts & Culture
55 Property & the Home
58 Business & Finance
60 Motoring
61 Travel
62 Sport
63 Chess

Front Cover: London Stories
Courtesy of Julia Allum
juliaallum.co.uk
**Groundbreaking project uses the Underground to heat homes**

The sweltering temperatures on the tube’s Northern line will soon begin keeping homes in Islington, north London, warm throughout the colder months, under a scheme to harness the heat from the underground.

By the end of the year the project will pipe heat from the underground into hundreds of homes and businesses that are part of a heating scheme in the borough. The Islington heat network already keeps about 700 homes warm by channelling heat created in the Bunhill Energy Centre, which generates electricity, into local council housing, schools and a leisure centre. The process works via an underground fan that extracts warm air from the Northern line tunnels beneath the Energy Centre. That air travels over a series of water filled pipes, heating the liquid inside. The water is then warmed to 80°C using heat pumps, before it travels around a series of underground pipes and is transferred to communal heating system loops. However, the project doesn't just re-purpose heat. Using combined heat and power technology it also generates (greener and cheaper) electricity, that’s fed into a nearby tower block and the London Underground beneath.

As the project has so many benefits; reducing carbon emissions, cooling the Underground network, generating income through electricity sales, TfL has greenlit a feasibility study to see if it could be replicated elsewhere. The study is looking at 56 sites: disused stations and ventilation shafts across its network.

The Greater London Authority (GLA) estimates there is enough heat wasted in London to meet 38% of the city’s heating demands.

Tim Rotheray, director of the Association for Decentralised Energy, said district heating schemes were mushrooming across the UK as a low-cost tool in tackling the climate crisis. “Almost half the energy used in the UK is for heat, and a third of UK emissions are from heating. With the government declaring that we must be carbon-neutral within 30 years we need to find a way to take the carbon out of our heating system,” he said.

**Winners announced for underwater photography competition**

An image of seals swimming under an Antarctic iceberg won top international honors at the 2020 Underwater Photographer of the Year awards in Coventry on February 22nd. The competition had a record 5,500 submissions from 70 different countries.

The winning image in the Underwater Photographer of the Year competition was titled *Frozen Mobile Home* and taken by Greg Lecoeur of France.

Lecoeur said he took the image during an expedition to the Antarctic Peninsula, which is close to the southernmost points of Chile and Argentina. He was exploring and documenting the underside of an iceberg that the seals were using as shelter.

Underwater photography winners were also selected in a dozen other categories including wrecks, behaviour, portrait, and British waters.

The top domestic prize, British Underwater Photographer of the Year, was awarded to Nicholas More for a colourful shot of fish under a jetty titled *Rabbit Fish Zoom Blur*. More said to create the desired effect, he “hit the shutter and zoomed in at the same time, the flash freezing the central fish with the ambient light creating a Pop-Art like effect.”

Another category, *Portraits*, called for close-up images of underwater life. One striking portrait is *Angry Seahorse*, shot by Belgian Rooman Luc.

For images visit: [underwaterphotographeroftheyear.com](http://underwaterphotographeroftheyear.com).
Government spent billions on Brexit planning, watchdog says

The government spent at least £4.4 billion of taxpayer money on preparations to leave the European Union, the public spending watchdog said last week, the first detailed estimate of the cost of Brexit.

The National Audit Office said £1.9 billion was spent on paying government employees, £1.5 billion was spent on new infrastructure and £288 million went toward external advice. No fewer than 22,000 government officials were working on Brexit at the peak last fall.

Still, the NAO found the government had allocated £6.3 billion to pay for preparations, meaning just 70 per cent of the total funding was used. Some ministries had to supplement their funding from existing budgets, according to the watchdog’s report.

NAO head Gareth Davis said: “This report provides, for the first time, a clear picture of how much government has spent and what that money has been spent on.”

Officials had to increase training for customs officials, hire more staff to negotiate trade deals and improve infrastructure around ports to prepare for Brexit, the report said.

More than half of the money was spent by three departments: Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; the Home Office; and HM Revenue and Customs.

The NAO also said their estimate did not include future costs, such as those resulting from the UK’s £39 billion divorce deal with the EU signed in January.

Six new Blue Plaques to commemorate pioneering women

English Heritage has announced the addition of six new blue plaques for London, in a drive to address the scheme’s historic gender imbalance. Currently, only 14% of plaques honour the achievements of women or female movements.

The announcement, made ahead of International Women’s Day, named four inspirational British female icons, all of whom are set to be honoured with the iconic permanent signs.

Two of the four commemorated women were secret agents. Christine Granville, the first and longest serving female Special Operations Executive (SEO) in Nazi occupied Europe, has been honoured alongside Noor Inayat Khan; a World War II spy who became the first female Special Operations Executive (SEO) in Nazi occupied Europe.

Granville’s plaque will receive a permanent place outside the west London hotel she most often frequented. While the plaques usually commemorate a link between a famous figure and their home or place of work, Granville never occupied permanent home living quarters due to the perilous nature of her role.

The other two individual accolades go to artist Barbara Hepworth, and First World War leader and botanist Dame Helen Cowynne-Vaughan.

The final two plaques represent organisations. The National Union of Women’s Suffrage Societies will be honoured at the group’s former Westminster headquarters, while the militant women’s rights organisation, the Women’s Social and Political Union will also receive a plaque.

Anna Eavis, Curatorial Director and Secretary of the English Heritage Blue Plaques Panel, told of English Heritage’s continued efforts to address historical gender imbalances and recognise pioneering women:

“There are now more women shortlisted than men, and 2020 will see more plaques to women than we have unveiled in 20 years.”

The first plaque for a woman was for the 18th-century actress Sarah Siddons, while the most recent was erected in Chelsea for war correspondent Martha Gellhorn.

TfL plans for South Kensington

Transport for London continues to seek public comment on plans for new buildings around South Kensington station and delivery of step-free access to the District and Circle lines.

The transit agency hosted an exhibition at Imperial College London last week with Native Land, a developer, to hear feedback on the proposed development. This was the third such public meeting on the subject in addition to sessions with residents and the borough.

The proposals would dramatically alter the front of South Kensington Station along Cromwell Place, replacing the current one-storey structure with a semicircular, four-storey building.

The ground floor would house retail while the upper three would house workspace.

The proposals also call for construction of 50 new homes around the station, 35 per cent of which would be affordable, according to plans. This includes several new, mixed-use buildings being considered for the north side of Pelham Street adjacent to the station.

Accessibility is a major part of the redevelopment; TfL wants step-free access to the ticket hall and District and Circle line platforms via a new entrance off Thurloe Street. Accessibility from the station into the pedestrian tunnel would also be improved.

Inside the station, plans would refurbish the platforms and street-level shopping arcade, where shop frontages would be restored to a historic style more in line with the rest of the station.

Nicholls said: “The plans aim to provide for a high-quality contemporary development that respects its unique historical context, providing new homes, including affordable housing, and a contemporary range of shops, restaurants and workplaces.

“Through this development we are also able to complete the delivery of much-needed step-free access to the Circle and District line, improving access for all to this popular and cherished part of London.”

Materials from the exhibition at Imperial College can be viewed online at southkensingtonstation.tfl.co.uk.

Traffic watch London home football

MEN’S GAMES

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Match</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Fulham v Cardiff City</td>
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<td>QPR v Barnsley</td>
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<td>March 15</td>
<td>Tottenham v Man Utd</td>
<td>16:30</td>
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<td>Tottenham v West Ham Utd</td>
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<td>March 21</td>
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<td>QPR v Fulham</td>
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<td>Fulham v Sheffield Wednesday</td>
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<td>April 4, Arsenal v Norwich City</td>
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WOMEN’S GAMES

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<td>Fulham v West Ham FC</td>
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<td>Chelsea v Everton</td>
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<td>Chelsea v Brighton &amp; Hove</td>
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<td>Fulham v Eastbourne Town</td>
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Compiled by Fahad Redha

Subscribe & Support

KCW LONDON. See page 26 for details
Clapham Junction promoted online

The Clapham Junction Business Improvement District (BID) has launched a new consumer-facing and mobile-friendly website that is focused on promoting Clapham Junction as South West London’s destination location. The site has launched online as part of numerous initiatives being delivered by the BID.

A BID is a geographical area where business ratepayers have voted in a ballot process to invest collectively in local improvements. The Clapham Junction BID is responsible for delivering a number of strategies and innovative projects and will help to improve the trading environment for businesses, the shopping experience for residents and visitors and drive tourism in the area.

On the website, the official guide to Clapham Junction’s town centre and Battersea environments will showcase the independent businesses of St John’s Hill, the Northcote Road, the myriad of Lavender Hill and St John’s Road businesses, and Battersea Rise’s restaurant and bar scene.

The Junction, which is at the heart of Battersea, has plenty of unique experiences and newer venues to explore which the website will highlight. The online platform will feature upcoming events and local offers, provide information on businesses and services in a comprehensive A-Z directory and keep locals and visitors posted with up-to-date news, stories and the general low-down on what's happening at The Junction.

The launch is the first in a two-part digital marketing initiative implemented by the BID, with the next project focusing on developing an App. Due to launch at the end of March 2020, the App will bring benefits for local businesses and employees by offering loyalty schemes and exclusive deals for Junction employees.

“We’re delighted to deliver a new consumer-facing website that really reflects the personality of Clapham Junction and its surrounding environs, while delivering powerful functionality,” said Anthony Laban, Chair of The Junction BID. “We chose a design system that could be tailored to suit both the needs of the businesses we represent, and our residents and visitor market. In addition to promoting what The Junction has to offer, driving footfall and increasing visitors, we will be able to use the platform to really track and analyse our digital marketing and, in turn, help businesses with their future marketing.”

To discover The Junction and all it has to offer, please visit www.visitclaphamjunction.com

Julia Allum
Our front cover illustrator this month

Julia grew up in the Netherlands, studied in Cornwall and is now based in East Anglia. It is from her studio in the heart of the Norfolk broads that she creates her colourful eye-catching illustrations. In the 20 years since graduating from Falmouth College of Arts Julia has worked in a variety of media producing work for clients in advertising, publishing & packaging. It is, however only recently that she has truly found her niche with her bold graphic style. In 2017 she won the Silver Award in the Association of Illustrators and London Transport Museum’s prize for illustration, and it was this that proved to be the real turning point in her career.

Julia's design process involves layering simple geometric shapes together digitally. Space, symmetry and repetition play a big part in her work and she likes to convey ideas or places in a simple, minimalist way. Art Deco poster art has been a huge influence on her recent work; her images recreating feelings of nostalgia from this period in a unique contemporary way. (See our Front Cover).

You may have seen Julia’s striking illustrations recently around London and the Underground on posters for Transport for London and Savills. juliaallum.co.uk

No food shortages, Government states

The government is “confident” food supplies will not run out amid concerns that coronavirus will cause people to panic-buy, Health Secretary Matt Hancock has said.

Hancock told BBC Question Time on 5th March that individuals should not buy more food than they need. The government has also said it has a stockpile of important medicines and protective equipment to counter any impact the virus might have on global supply chains.

The secretary’s comments came as health officials said some patients who tested positive for coronavirus were being treated in their homes. He said: “The government has supplies of the key things that are needed. And within the food supply, we are absolutely confident that there won’t be a problem there.

“Crucially, we are working with the supermarkets to make sure that, if people are self-isolating, then we will be able to get the food and supplies that they need.”

The British Retail Consortium said retailers had “well-developed contingency plans” to deal with disruptions and changes in demand. So far, the organisation said, supply chain disruption caused by the virus had been limited and product availability is still good.

A spokesperson told the BBC: “Where appropriate, action is being taken, including securing alternative suppliers in order to avoid or minimise any impact for customers and meet the rise in demand for certain hygiene products in particular.”

Prof. Chris Whitty, the UK’s chief medical adviser, also said there was “no need” for the public to stockpile food or medicine. He added the outbreak would be a “marathon not a sprint.”

However, shops in London are already facing shortages of sanitation products including hand washes and face masks.

Shelfgate!

Photograph © Daniel Case
Royal couple marks TfL’s 20th birthday at London Transport Museum

The Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall visited the London Transport Museum on 4th March to open celebrations for the 20th anniversary of Transport for London.

The royal couple rode an electric double-decker bus from Clarence House to the museum in Covent Garden, where they were met by London Mayor Sadiq Khan and TfL staff who have led environmental and mental health schemes in the workplace.

Engineering apprentices and interns from TfL’s Stuart Ross Internship scheme, which is designed to increase diversity in the agency’s workforce, were also present.

London Transport Commissioner, Mike Brown MVO, presented the couple with personalised “Prince of Wales” and “Duchess of Cornwall” roundsels, and Prince Charles unveiled a plaque to commemorate the visit, as well.

Brown said: “It was a privilege to host Their Royal Highnesses and introduce them to some of the women and men who throughout the past twenty years have kept London moving and made this city better, cleaner and safer for everyone.”

“[..] We face more challenges during the next twenty years and beyond, including meeting the needs of our ever-growing population, which we must respond to so that transport continues to support the growth and success of London.”

The royal family has a history of marking special occasions on London’s transport network. In 1969, the Queen became the first reigning monarch to travel on the Underground when she opened the Victoria line, and in 2013, she and members of her family visited the system to mark its 150th birthday.

Westminster council rejects ‘controversial’ Holocaust memorial

A National Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre proposed for a site next to the Houses of Parliament contravenes planning rules on size, design and location, Westminster City Council has said. The council fully supports the principle of a memorial and learning centre in central London, however the local authority’s planning committee voiced concerns over the current proposal to be located in Victoria Tower Gardens.

While the final decision on the application will be made by central Government following a public inquiry, a council planning said the current proposal was not appropriate for this location.

The issues raised include:

- The potential impact on the important national heritage in the park and close by, such as existing monuments and the adjacent World Heritage site of the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Abbey.
- The loss of valuable open, public green space in a very busy and popular location (with an estimated 3.6m visits per year) if the Memorial and Learning Centre were built in a park that is not large enough to host.
- Environmental concerns such as the loss of trees or damage that may be caused to them by the new Memorial and Learning Centre.

Cllr Robert Rigby, Chairman of Planning, said:

“As a council we’re completely behind the principle of having a Memorial and Learning Centre in central London to commemorate those that lost their lives in the most heinous crimes of the 20th century. We must never let people forget the Holocaust and need to always educate future generations to stop it from ever happening again.

“We absolutely understand the emotion and the depth of feeling that this issue engenders, and we think it is right that the Secretary of State will make the final decision on this application. We will put our own and our residents’ views to him as part of the public inquiry that will inform their final decision.

“However, if it were Westminster City Council taking a decision on the application, it would have been refused on heritage grounds; the location in Victoria Tower Gardens, its size and design would cause considerable harm and would have a significant, detrimental impact on one of the few remaining green spaces in the Thames Embankment.

“We would have very likely accepted a proposal of much smaller scale in that park. But the issue is now in the Secretary of State’s hands to make the final decision and we will share the findings of the planning committee with him through the public inquiry.”

However the Government has expressed it’s complete dedication to the memorial, with Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick decrying the councils decision: “The naysayers on that project will not succeed,” said the minister.

“We will build that memorial. Let me promise you that.”

Hidden London

London Transport Museum

Step into the Hidden London exhibition at the London Transport Museum, and it’s hard to tell at first if you’re even supposed to be there.

Construction barriers cover parts of the walls, and most of the light comes from work lamps strung up with exposed wires. Dusty tools rest on the floor. Signs are hung with duct tape. This is the Tube as you would never think to see it, and that’s entirely the point.

Hidden London, which is ongoing at the museum’s Global Gallery through next January, shows visitors how abandoned Underground stations have been used in unexpected ways. The exhibit is two levels and takes about an hour to see. It is free with admission.

For instance, there is Aldwych Station, located on the Strand in Westminster and closed in the 1990s. The station has played itself or other Underground stations in more than a dozen films and television shows, including V is for Vendetta and Sherlock.

Up in Haringey, the abandoned tunnels of Highgate station have been turned into a protected bat sanctuary overrun by flying creatures from the nearby wood.

After seeing diagrams and artifacts from abandoned stations, as well as some vintage “horror-on-the-Tube” movie clips, visitors wind down a narrow, rounded staircase to a space that mimics the Underground’s bomb shelters during the first and second world wars.

Tube stations helped keep Londonders safe during wartime bombings, though in sometimes packed conditions made clear by the images and bunks on display. One original sign warns that shelter-goers must have a ticket, not valid, however, on the trains.

The Underground had other wartime uses as well. Down Street station, located in Mayfair and shuttered in the 1930s, served as headquarters for the organisation that ran Britain’s railways during WWII. Winston Churchill slept there on occasion, too.

And when The Plesey Company’s factory was bombed during the war, the company built a temporary, secret factory in new tunnels at the eastern end of the Central Line. The tunnels housed about 2,000 workers until after the war, when they went into train service.

If there is an overall message of Hidden London, it is that the Underground is vast and constantly changing. Stations in use today may not be needed in a few decades’ time.

The museum even has a pitch to visitors: “What else might these spaces be used for?” a sign near the exit reads. “If you are a budding entrepreneur with a good idea, Transport for London may be keen to hear from you.”

For more information about “Hidden London” or to book tickets, visit ltmuseum.co.uk.
H&F council launching new arts programme thanks to Mayor’s award

Hammersmith & Fulham will launch a decade-long arts programme funded by a Cultural Impact prize from the Mayor of London, the Borough has announced.

The programme, called Sounds like Hammersmith & Fulham, will train young people in music-making and event-producing with the help of industry professionals, according to the Mayor’s website. It will culminate in a music festival curated by young people.

The Borough won the £200,000 prize at the London Borough of Culture Awards earlier this month. Sutton and Haringey were also awarded £200,000 for cultural projects.

Cllr. Andrew Jones, who is also H&F cabinet member for the economy and the arts, said the grant will help the borough provide “a thriving launchpad for future music stars.”

Jones said: “We want to make H&F an international beacon for the arts which not only can our aspiring local young talent benefit from, but a place all our residents regardless of their background can enjoy and participate in.”

H&F council has been pushing for greater accessibility to the Borough’s art scene. Last fall, a new Arts Commission was formed which is made up of volunteers, arts experts, and local arts organisations. The commission will produce recommendations this summer.

According to a press release from H&F council, the Sounds like Hammersmith & Fulham programme will also help reduce knife crime and youth violence by offering all young people in the Borough a chance to get involved in the arts.

In the Mayor’s previous set of Cultural Impact awards from 2018, Lambeth Council was given £200,000 to promote the Borough’s BAME artists. A young person’s organization called ELEVATE was created, which has since supported several cultural events.

More information on H&F council’s Arts Commission and initiatives can be found at: www.lbhf.gov.uk/councillors-and-democracy

THE FUTURE OF KING’S WALK SHOPPING CENTRE

Crosstree Real Estate Partners purchased King’s Walk shopping centre at the end of 2019, with the intention to explore proposals that would improve this stretch of the King’s Road.

We would like to hear your thoughts on the future of the shopping centre site and how you feel we can improve this section of the King’s Road.

Get in touch

If you are unable to attend on one of these dates and would like further information, please get in contact:

Email: kingswalk@londoncommunications.co.uk
Website: kingswalkchelsea.co.uk
Freephone: 0800 307 7642

To let us know your thoughts on King’s Walk shopping centre, join us at:

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122 King’s Road
Chelsea, SW3 4TR

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4pm – 9pm
Thursday 19 March
12pm – 7pm
Saturday 21 March
12pm – 7pm

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Rough sleeping falls in London for the first time in six years
LDRS Jessie Mathewson

Rough sleeping in London has fallen for the first time in six years, according to Government data released on February 27. The annual snapshot found 147 fewer people sleeping on the streets of the capital in autumn 2019, compared to the previous year: down from 1,283 to 1,136 people.

Nationally, the number of rough sleepers recorded fell to 4,266, the second year of decline in a row, with big drops in the midlands and north west. But across the country, rough sleeping is still up almost 150 per cent in nine years, with almost treble the number of rough sleepers in London compared to 2010.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson has announced an extra £236 million funding to tackle rough sleeping.

Mr Johnson has also recruited Tony Blair’s former homelessness tsar Dame Louise Casey to lead a review on the causes of homelessness.

But charities have today warned that the Government’s figures “grossly underestimate” rough sleeping levels.

Lucy Abraham, of London homelessness charity Glass Door, said counting after winter shelters have opened paints a misleading picture of the problem.

She said: “We know that many of the borough-coordinated street counts took place after Glass Door and many other charities had opened their shelter doors to rough sleepers for the winter.

“These figures matter because they are used to allocate resources to tackle homelessness in London.

“Unfortunately, the Government is committed to measuring the number of people who need support around their homelessness, they need to recognise those sleeping in emergency winter night shelters.”

City Hall data paints a far bleaker picture of rough-sleeping in the capital, estimating that almost 9,000 people slept on the streets last year.

And a BBC investigation found that over the course of 2019, councils across the country recorded around 25,000 rough sleepers, more than five times today’s snapshot figure.

This is in part because of the way the Government collects data on homelessness.

Its annual survey records the number of rough sleepers on a single night each year.

Data comes from councils, who either conduct a survey on a night in October or November, or submit an estimate based on more ongoing work by charities.

It does not record people sofa-surfing, in temporary accommodation, or in hostels.

And it provides no indication of people who have slept rough in the past in a given year, or who are at risk of sleeping rough in the near future.

Responding to today’s figures, Sadiq Khan accused the Government of being “all talk and very little action”.

He said there is “an ever increasing pipeline” of people needing support in the capital.

He said: “Instead of wasting time and money with an unnecessary review, the Government should look much closer at the impact that a decade of austerity has had, not just here in London but around the country.”

But Conservative mayoral candidate Shaun Bailey, who has had to cough-surf to avoid sleeping rough in the past, welcomed the new Government funding.

He said the building more homes is “the long-term answer” to end homelessness in the city.

Mr Bailey said: “The Mayor already has the powers to build, he just needs the courage to use them and I will.

“Building more homes will let us pursue a housing-first approach to ending homelessness, so those sleeping rough can get the support they need without worrying about how to put a roof over their head.”

Mr Stewart says he’s launching a new rough sleepers unit answering directly to him, with 30 stewards coordinating work in rough-sleeping hotspots to “get behind the frontline workers”.

Spikes of illegal air pollution fall by 97% from 2016 levels

Air pollution levels in London rarely spiked above the legal limits last year, newly released data has shown, though residents continue to be exposed to unhealthy levels of toxic gas.

The capital exceeded the hourly legal limit for nitrogen dioxide, a chemical linked to lung disease, cardiovascular problems and premature death, for just over 100 hours last year. This marks a 97 percent decrease in illegal spikes from 2016, when the legal limit for nitrogen dioxide was exceeded for over 4,000 hours, nearly half the year.

Mayor Sadiq Khan said in a statement it was “undeniable” London’s “bold action” to curb pollution was improving the city’s air quality.

The law requires that toxic gas concentration stay below an average of 40 micrograms per cubic metre and that it not spike above 200 micrograms more than 18 times a year.

From 2004 to 2017 the limit on toxic air spikes was broken in the first week of the year, but in 2019, there was just one breach and it was not until July. Overall, the concentration of nitrogen dioxide has fallen by an average of 20 percent at every site monitored since 2016.

Still, average roadside air pollution in the city was above the legal limit from January to July last year, and at some sites such as Oxford Street, average levels of air pollution remained illegal even as the number of spikes there fell below the legal maximum.

The recent decline in air pollution is due in part to the city’s Ultra Low Emission Zone. Some 13,500 fewer vehicles now travel in the charging area every day.

In addition, the Mayor’s 12 low-emission bus zones have cut nitrogen dioxide out of the air around them by 90 per cent, according to a press release.

The leader of City Hall Greens said: “We still have nearly 300 schools in areas of very high pollution, schools that have so far been neglected and aren’t included in the Mayor’s school air audits.

“Simple interventions like green screens, moving the entrance of the school or keeping roads alongside schools free of traffic when pupils are arriving and leaving, can reduce exposure to pollution.

“The Mayor should make sure every school our young people attend won’t harm their health.”

Badger cull to be ended thanks to groundbreaking vaccines

Badger culling to stop the spread of tuberculosis in livestock will be phased out and replaced by a vaccine, the government announced in a significant policy u-turn. Defra, the department for the environment, has stated that trials of a cattle vaccine will take place over the next five years, with plans to vaccinate more badgers in the interim.

The first cull zones were created in 2013 in Somerset and Gloucestershire. Opponents of the cull have repeatedly made the argument that it is inhumane and ineffective, but the government has been steadfast in support of the policy.

In September 2019, badger culling was extended to 40 areas including Bristol, Cheshire, Devon, Cornwall, Staffordshire, Dorset, Herefordshire and Wiltshire. Now Defra plans to gradually phase out “intensive culling” following a breakthrough by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (Apha).

Previously it was not possible to vaccinate cattle as tests for the disease could not differentiate between vaccinated animals and those infected by bovine TB, but Apha has developed an “effective” test which can be trialled alongside the BCG vaccine.

Environment Secretary George Eustice claimed: “The badger cull has led to a significant reduction in the disease as demonstrated by recent academic research and past studies.

“But no-one wants to continue the cull of this protected species indefinitely so, once the weight of disease in wildlife has been addressed, we will accelerate other elements of our strategy, including improved diagnostics and cattle vaccination.”
Think Tank Listings
By Shaun Robinson

A selection of some of the most informative and interesting lectures and discussions scheduled for this month in London.

Royal Society of Arts
How do we make wiser judgements and choices in situations of radical uncertainty? Mervyn King, a former governor of the Bank of England, and John Kay, an economist and author, discuss the power and limits of human decision-making. 12th March 2020, 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. Great Room, Royal Society of Arts, 8 John Adam Street, WC2N 6EZ. Registration is free but required at eventbrite.co.uk.

Imperial College London
The BBC's Ghislaine Boddington hosts a panel with Dr Yves-Alexandre de Montjoye, an assistant professor at Imperial College, and Stephen Docherty, Industry Executive for Health at Microsoft UK, discussing how the NHS can leverage big data while protecting patients’ privacy. 12th March 2020, 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Lecture Theatre 200, City & Guilds Building, Imperial College Road, SW7 1AL. Registration is free but required at imperial.ac.uk.

Royal Geographical Society
A lecture explores the journey of Felicity Aston, a polar scientist who skied to the North Pole with a group of novice explorers from across Europe and the Middle East in 2018. The core purpose of the exhibition was to foster dialogue and understanding between women from Western and Arabian cultures. 13th March 2020, 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. St George’s Guildhall, 1 St George’s Courtyard, off King Street, King’s Lynn, PE30 1EU. Register at rgs.org.

Imperial College London
Petter Brodin, associate professor of Immunology at Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm, gives a talk about how “human immune systems are shaped by environmental influences early in life.” The seminar is hosted by the National Heart and Lung Institute.

Gresham College
In the decade after the execution of Charles I, his son Charles II rented a series of mansions in the Low Countries and France for use as headquarters of the exiled monarchy. Professor Simon Thurley CBE, an architectural historian, discusses these previously unknown royal ‘palaces’ and how they later impacted the culture of Restoration England. 18th March 2020, 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. Museum of London, 150 London Wall, EC2Y 5HN. Registration is not required; doors will open 30 minutes before the lecture begins. gresham.ac.uk.

The Warburg Institute
Michael Kaufmann, a professor emeritus of art history at The British Academy, discusses the impact of refugees dealers on London’s art market in the 1930s and 40s. Kaufmann himself emigrated to London from Germany in 1938 and will also draw on personal memory.

24th March 2020, 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. Warburg Institute, Woburn Square, WC1H 0AB. Registration is free but required at sas.ac.uk.

Intelligence2
From the women of the #MeToo movement, to Malala Yousafzai, to Greta Thunberg, women around the world are raising their voices as never before. Labour MP Yvette Cooper and the BBC’s Razia Iqbal discuss inspiring women’s speeches that are featured in Cooper’s new book, She Speaks: The Power of Women’s Voices. 31st March 2020, 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Cadogan Hall, 5 Sloane Terrace, SW1X 9DQ. Register at intelligencesquared.com.

Goldsmiths, University of London
Dr Elizabeth Williams chairs a panel with the UK’s only black male professor of African history, Hakim Adi of the University of Chinchester, and the UK’s only black female professor of the history of slavery, Olivette Otele of the University of Bristol, who will discuss ways to ‘decolonise’ historical thinking in 21st-century academia. 19th March 2020, 12:45 p.m. to 2 p.m. Cheynegates, Westminster Abbey. Registration is free but required at institute@westminster-abbey.org or 020 7654 491. For more information, visit westminster-abbey.org.

Gresham College
Why has the partisan memorialisation of religious atrocity in Ireland proven so durable? Alec Ryrie FBA, a professor of divinity, discusses why Ireland, more so than anywhere else in Europe, has seen such long-lasting religious wars. 1st April 2020, 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. Museum of London, 150 London Wall, EC2Y 5HN. Registration is not required; doors will open 30 minutes before the lecture begins. gresham.ac.uk.

RBKC launches scheme to support borough’s suppliers
Kensington and Chelsea has launched a two-year project to help local trade businesses bid for work with large developers and property owners. The project, called RBKC Supply Chain, is open to suppliers in property and construction trades and will be run by the borough council together with a London consulting firm. The council itself will be a buyer in the scheme to source subcontractors for local projects. Along with introducing local suppliers to buyers, the free programme includes a diagnostic review of a business and its credentials, plus guidance on how the business can maximise its potential and networking opportunities. RBKC previously ran a yearlong pilot of the supply chain scheme and saw almost 100 SMEs and 11 developers involved, according to a borough press release. About 45 local suppliers were put forward for 75 opportunities and 11 invitations to tender as a result.

To learn more about the project and ways to get involved, visit rbksupplychain.co.uk.
William Hogarth
Jim Mathieson
Chiswick High Road

Hogarth is arguably Chiswick’s most famous resident; not many people have a roundabout named after them. He was not only a fine painter, he was an expert engraver, caricaturist and social commentator, satirising the foibles of the pompous, the hypocritical and the dishonest. He was brisk, blue-eyed, manly and intelligent, with a somewhat combative head with a scar over the right eye. Leigh Hunt said he had ‘a sort of knowing jockey look.’ His wife said of him, ‘he was, it is easy to believe, a sturdy, outspoken, honest, obstinate, pugnacious little man.’ He once pummelled a fellow soundly for maltreating the beautiful drummeress whom he drew in Southwark Fair. ‘As a companion he was witty and genial, and to those he cared for, thoroughly faithful and generous.’ Hogarth’s Southwark Fair is an invaluable graphic account of the social and cultural state of the lower urban class in early eighteenth century England. He is probably more famous for his series of paintings, and subsequent prints, of The Rake’s Progress, The Harlot’s Progress and Marriage à la Mode, as well as Beer Street and Gin Lane, in which the viewer watches the decline and fall of the various characters, in these ‘moral modern subjects,’ from profligacy, to death, by murder, syphilis or madness. It was at the Foundling Hospital, that Hogarth was instrumental in forming the first public collection of pictures in this country. Long before the

National Gallery was thought of, or before the Royal Academy was born, this collection was one of the sights of London, and he started the collection by presenting his magnificent portrait of Captain Coram to the Hospital in 1740. His memorial urn in St Stephen’s churchyard, is decorated with a smiling mask, a palette and brushes, and a wreath, with an epitaph, written by his friend David Garrick:

Farewell, great painter of Mankind! Who reach’d the noblest point of Art, Whose picture’d Morals charm the Mind, And through the Eye correct the Heart. If Genius for thee, Reader, stay: If Nature touch thee, drop a Tear; If neither move thee, turn away, For Hogarth’s honour’d dust lies here.’

Jim Mathieson was the sculptor who was commissioned by the local community in a fund-raising exercise instigated by Ian Hislop, Editor of Private Eye, and David Hockney, patron of the Hogarth Millennium Fund, which raised £30,000. While a student he gained a commission to cast the crown for the Prince of Wales’s investiture at Caernarvon Castle in 1969. In a chequered career, he did some freelance work for Madame Tussaud’s, where he drew in a companion he was witty and genial, one pummelled a fellow soundly for maltreating the beautiful drummeress whom he drew in Southwark Fair. ‘As a companion he was witty and genial, and to those he cared for, thoroughly faithful and generous.’ Hogarth’s Southwark Fair is an invaluable graphic account of the social and cultural state of the lower urban class in early eighteenth century England. He is probably more famous for his series of paintings, and subsequent prints, of The Rake’s Progress, The Harlot’s Progress and Marriage à la Mode, as well as Beer Street and Gin Lane, in which the viewer watches the decline and fall of the various characters, in these ‘moral modern subjects,’ from profligacy, to death, by murder, syphilis or madness. It was at the Foundling Hospital, that Hogarth was instrumental in forming the first public collection of pictures in this country. Long before the

In a mad display of algorithmic paranoidal anonymity, Google Maps Street Scene has a photograph of the statue in Chiswick, which would surely have brought a smile to ‘the father of English painting,’ as they have blurred his face! Don Grant

Blue Plaque:
Alexander Pope
(1688-1744)

All are parts of one stupendous whole, whose body nature is and God the soul.

English Heritage honoured Alexander Pope with a Blue Plaque at Mason’s Buildings, 110 Chiswick Lane South Chiswick, London. W4 2LR. It was erected in 1996.

Pope was a foremost poet of the early 18th century excelling in satirical poems. He was a master of the heroic couplet which was a fairly new poetic form. During his time there was a continuing debate whether poetry should be natural or stick to the rules of the classical past.

Pope was born in 1688, the year of the Glorious Revolution. His father, also called Alexander, was a prosperous linen merchant in the Strand, London. His mother was the daughter of William Turner, who lived in York. They were a Roman Catholic family and were affected by the ‘Test Acts’ which prohibited Catholics from living in a ten mile radius from London, attending University or holding public office. There were a few illegal Catholic Schools and Pope attended Twyford School for a short time, but he was mostly self educated, teaching himself Latin, Greek, French and Italian. He enjoyed the Classics in their original languages.

Pope suffered from poor health, having T.B. of the spine, respiratory problems, a hunched back and severe headaches all his life. Yet, his spirit was indomitable and he was a prolific poet.

In Pastoral (published 1709) his metrical skill shone through, bringing him fame. Two years later An Essay on Criticism was published. This was a Poetic Manifesto influenced by Horace’s Ars Poetica and it came to the attention of Joseph Addison and Richard Steele. Also, it was criticised by John Dennis and others. Pope proceeded to mock Dennis in his satirical works which were often quite fierce. The Rape of the Lock (published in 1712) is a famous work in mock heroic style. It discusses greed and conspicuous consumerism in society and relates a tale about two warring aristocratic families. The Dunciad is considered to be a masterpiece. In it Pope targeted the Whig politician, Robert Walpole.

An Essay on Man, a philosophical poem refers to a system of Ethics and seeks to justify the ways of God to man.

Pope translated Homer’s Iliad and Odyssey, and produced a new Edition of Shakespeare’s works with some improvement to his metre!

He had a wide circle of loyal friends, among them were William Congreve, Samuel Garth, William Turnbull, Thomas Parnell, John Arbuthnot and John Caryll. He had long lasting friendships with two ladies, M. Montagu and Mary Blount.

In 1719 he had moved to a villa in Twickenham where he died surrounded by friends. He is buried in the nave of St. Mary’s Church in Twickenham.

In these deep solitudes and awful cells Where heav’nly - pensive contemplation dwells
And ever - musing melancholy reigns.

Quotations are from Pope’s works.

Marian Maitland

In a mad display of algorithmic paranoidal anonymity, Google Maps Street Scene has a photograph of the statue in Chiswick, which would surely have brought a smile to ‘the father of English painting,’ as they have blurred his face! Don Grant

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Chiswick
A tale of two rivers:
Nature and Man have smiled on Chiswick
By Nick Salaman

For those who have not had the good fortune to discover the place (Chiswick moss style - pronounced ‘eight’ in Old English which is fair enough), the experience can be conveniently divided into two: South Chiswick and North Chiswick. One is defined by the Thames and the other by that brimming river of life, the Chiswick High Road. The Cromwell Road Extension draws the line between them.

On the south side, nature has provided the river which seems to find the 18th Century houses of Chiswick Mall with its haunted houses and gardens so lovely that it comes lapping up the river road at high water, impudently trying to lick them (and sometimes succeeding).

Here in 1845, Mr Fuller opened Fuller’s Griffin Brewery on an eminence beside the water here, where it still brews the favourite ale best known to Londoners as London Pride.

Nearby is the mysterious island of Chiswick Eyot (pronounced ‘eight’), which so moved WB Yeats (he lived as man and boy in Chiswick) that it inspired As man and boy in Chiswick) that it inspired him to write his poem ‘The Lake Isle of Innisfree’. And, just across the lane is the 700 year old St Nicholas Church where Mary, daughter of Oliver Cromwell (he of the Road) lies buried and, some say, where Oliver himself was interred.

A couple of hundred yards further up-river, you will find Chiswick has the distinction of harbouring one of London’s only two lifeboat stations at Chiswick Qzay. Incredibly, here also in 1893, a certain Mr Thornycroft built what is variously called the 800 ton destroyer/torpedo boat, HMS Speedy, for the Royal Navy. Nearby (if you cross by Powell’s Passage, one of the spookiest walkways in London) stands the exquisite Chiswick House designed by Lord Burlington in 1747, exploring but not merely imitating the style and principles of Palladio, which offers a feast for the eyes and a glorious parkland full of follies and a lake; in Burlington’s day with the added curiosity of an elephant, but now with the extra enticements of an elegant glass café within a stone’s throw (but don’t) of Paxton’s famous conservatory. A good stroll through the generous acres of Dukes Meadows takes you to Chiswick Bridge (finishing-line of the Boat Race) where the river straightens and leads on to the riparian delights of Grove Park and Streath on the Green with its languid tow-path and its celebrated pubs and restaurants. Enough of South Chiswick. As Milton says somewhere: Popular pleasures please us then, And the busy hum of men…

The North is now tugging at your sleeve. Saying goodbye to the South and resting the eye for a moment on Hogarth’s House; the great man lived here, and his home on the edge of Chiswick House’s grounds (where it borders the M4) is well worth a visit; make your progress, rakish or otherwise, under the motorway and follow your inclinations towards that other great definer of Chiswick: the High Road and its environs.

Why is Chiswick High Road such a broad street bounded by such broad pavements? Was it a drover’s road to the metropolis? You could drive a herd of Herefords up the High Road with room to spare. Was it an adjunct to the generous promise of the garden suburb? Or was it given room to breathe after the severe bombing of the Second World War? I have not received any intelligence about it. The breadth of the road at any rate enhances the sense you get of an important and self-confident thoroughfare suggesting something of the busy-ness of an upmarket market town. Having recently moved here from Chelsea, I prefer it to the Kings Road which can seem to exist only for tourists and fashionistas, with shops of almost identical worldwide names enticing the passers-by, rather than the little individual shops and boutiques and artists’ emporia and ateliers of yesteryear.

The Chiswick High Road gets its tourists and visitors, come and see them any weekend, but the M&S Food Hall, Sainsbury’s, Tesco, distinguished restaurants like La Trompette, fashionable eateries like High Road House and the Vinoteca, and stores like Marks & Spencer, Waitrose, Sainsbury’s and Tesco seem to cater more for residents. There are four or five actual banks in the High Road. When did you last see an actual bank (I think there is one in the Kings Road.)

Then there are the designer paint suppliers, Craig & Rose, dry cleaners, hairdressers, bathroom showrooms, art galleries, antique shops like The Old Cinema, framers, shoemakers, butchers, bakers, Italian delis, charity shops, acupuncturists and so forth and more as the High Road branches out into tributaries like Devonshire Road and Turnham Green Terrace. Add flower stalls, offices of all kinds including one that lets out offices in Barley Mow Passage, famous pubs including The George & Devonshire, The Lamb and the Crown & Anchor, and two well-serviced Underground stations in Turnham Green and Gunnersbury... and you may feel that London itself, as well as the genius loci, is well served. The High Road had a cinema and is all set to get a new one this year. It boasts a thriving amateur theatre, The Tabard, located above the pub of that name designed by Norman Shaw. There is a Church designed by Gilbert Scott at Turnham Green where Chiswick even had its own battle in the Civil Wars in which the Roundhead turned back the Royalists under Prince Rupert, never to return.

There is history. There is art. Did you know that Norman Shaw and Charles Voysey, disciples of William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement, were designing and building houses here in Bedford Park in the 1890s, creating London’s first garden suburb before Hampstead’s version. Here Norman Shaw also built the church of St Michael & All Angels. Pissarro and his family lived and worked in Chiswick as did E.M. Forster. A very high count of distinguished actors and directors have made their homes here, as has the Arts Educational Trust, and there is a considerable hive of media people adding to the buzz. Perhaps the best news of all for the generous cluster of estate agents; Whitman, KFH, Borthwicks, Andrew Nunn, Winkworth and so on, as well as for residents, god bless ’em, throughout the long dither of Brexit, house prices more than held their own, even edging ever upwards.

The only downer I have about High Road Chiswick is the state of the pavements and the side roads. Hounslow Council seems oblivious to the cranky undulations of sundry footways and the cavernous wounds in the tarmac of some of the sideroads. But these imperfections merely serve to counterpoint the attractions of the whole.

Don’t let them trip you up. You can approach Chiswick any day of the week, head held high, expecting something you didn’t know. And more than that, something you didn’t know, it is just 15 minutes away from central London!

Under bare Ben Bulben’s head, In Drumcliff churchyard Yeats is laid. An ancestor was Rector there Long years ago, a church stands near. By the road an ancient cross. On limestone guariled near the spot, No marble or conventional phrase By his command these words are cut: Cast a cold eye on life, on death; Horseman, pass by.
Emerging from the riverside in Shanghai, Thomas Heatherwick Studio’s latest imaginative building complex is nearing completion. Planning permission had been granted for two conventional shopping mall blocks. Developer, Tian An China wanted something that spoke to the context of water and the adjacent park. The adventurous design of two tree-covered mountains defines a new and dramatic urban topography rooted in nature. Each of the columns supporting the building structure emerge as substantial planters, each holding several trees; thereby creating a feathered silhouette in the image of a tree topped hill. Something any landscape painter aims to capture on canvas.

Between the Mountain and the Water holds powerful and portentous symbolism in Feng Shui. Why not, if it is part of the inspiration for such original architecture?

The mixed-use building contains almost a million square feet and still steps down towards its adjoining context without resorting to overwhelming height.

Its apparent complexity conceals a regular rectilinear structural grid only apparent from an aerial view. Even the roof top plant machinery is hidden by the extensive tree planting.

Somehow, several historic buildings are incorporated with the overall scheme. It is hard to imagine how Heritage England would have responded at the planning stage in England. Well done Thomas and Tian An China, one can only foresee that 1000 Trees will become a destination meeting place as well as a magnet for shopping. The trees will also provide an element of carbon capture.

In Vienna, Ikea are reinventing urban furniture shopping to create a new model that takes account of “radically changed customer and mobility behaviours”. The new store has no parking. Access is by foot, bicycle and public transport with Ikea providing on-the-day delivery to homes. The eight-storey building is not just a furniture store; it also incorporates a 345 bed hostel with a public roof garden and restaurants. Like the coffee houses of old, it becomes a social meeting place for citizens and visitors to congregate.

The expressed white skeletal steel frame holds 160 trees on the roof top and deep balconies as well as irrigated green walls. Together with the envelope design, this reduces the potential for overheating by two degrees centigrade and generates improved air quality. Like Habitat in the 1960s, Ikea has had a profound influence on the furnishing of domestic interiors and lifestyles; now it seems to be taking on board the changing face of retailing that incorporates the impact of online shopping. This format would also seem to provide a more sustainable and social way forward for the urban pastime of consumption.

“Sustainable” is one of the most overused words of the recent decades; it means different things to different minds and some still fail to understand its overwhelming impact relative to our exploitation of planet earth. There are innumerable regulations and certifications that aim to improve and control building performance. BREEAM certification and the Code for Sustainable Homes have scoring systems that provide targets for improved insulation, air quality, daylight, water attenuation, transport etc., all valuable systems of performance measurement. Now there is the “International Well Building Institute” wellness certification. This has broader and more holistic evaluation criteria. It includes sense of community, nourishment and production of locally sourced produce, movement, recycling of materials, physical and mental health as well as all the factors that consider light, water, air, noise and overall comfort.

Design and measurement of such factors is not easy, but it is much closer to the holistic definition of real sustainability.
CHELSEA PHYSIC GARDEN

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and launch of a new bridal collection
by Bruce Oldfield

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MEMEING OF LIFE
Meme: An element of a culture or system of behaviour passed from one individual to another...

Apocalypse Now

Good news! If you’re reading this, the world hasn’t ended. Yet.

But it certainly feels like it might at any moment. Australia’s on fire, this country’s flooding, New Zealand’s eroding, The West Indies are quaking, locusts plague East Africa, land-slides in Myanmar, Ciara, Dennis and Jorge etc. batter Europe, coronavirus spreads around the world, democracies crumble to madmen and demagogues. Surely we haven’t got long to go? ‘The end is nigh or near or now.’

It’s all pretty biblical. But maybe that’s the point. In the back of our minds, this is how the world’s supposed to end, not with a bang or a whimper, but presupposed with augurs, omens and portents. So even if we might think of ourselves as well beyond scripture, it’s hard to witness the earth shrugging like this without a sense of dread. It didn’t take a bible scholar to note that the four coaches carrying ‘corona virus’ evacues from Wuhan, were called “Horseman”: like the prophesied Horsemen of the Apocalypse.

Even if few have read it, Revelations (originally in Greek: Apokaluptis), the last book of the New Testament, is embedded in the western psyche. It predicts a host of natural disasters before God eventually kills everyone and ushers in his new kingdom of righteous bores: “and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood,” (Rev 6.12) sort of thing. Mind you, it also goes on about, “A measure of wheat for a penny;” (Rev 6.6) which are way out at present crop values, so you take your pick as far as accuracy goes. Judaism hand-wrings about “the Day of the Lord” in which God causes death, destruction, and a war between Gog and Magog; which is only settled when Gog and his Ma go for family counselling. In Hinduism, Vishnu returns to battle evil on a white horse and who can forget the Mayan clock predicting the end of the world in 2012 that, as things are going, only got the last two digits confused. If you believe in such things, the omens don’t look good. But to believe there is meaning in the world’s current chaos takes something deeply human: a massive ego.

Even in our world creation stories we stick ourselves slap bang in the middle; before that, for millions of years, the centre of the solar system, and so forth. Which may be why we find it harder to conceive that the world might just as easily end in a millisecond of senseless whiny from a disinterested universe.

We’re so important we’re owed warnings, we’re so significant we’re worthy of messages from a higher power telling us of our coming doom; despite the fact that we’ll be able to do sweet far call about it.

On the one hand our human-centric sense of self-importance knows few bounds and, on the other, we’re aware of how vulnerable we are. Extinction Rebellion (XR) is the most recent movement to swell its numbers by tapping directly into the fear of an Apocalypse and the role of man in both creating and preventing it. At the end of February their young prophet, unafraid of a bit of hell and damnation rhetoric, told a crowd in Bristol that, “the world is on fire” while a fug of spliff smoke rose from Wuhan ‘corona virus’ name on the total thermometer.

If we’re not important, and our actions have little or no consequence, why should we feel guilty about them? And if we don’t feel bad about stuff, how can we be inspired to act well? The Judeo-Christian solution was simple: we’re all guilty. We’re all tainted by Adam and Eve’s original sin;

Of man’s first disobedience, and the fruit Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste Brought death into the world, and all our woe, as Milton put it. Buddhism is more direct, his first two truths are that life consists of suffering, pain and misery, and that this suffering is caused by selfish craving and personal desire.

So here’s the paradox. If we are important, then we’re responsible, and guilty, and that makes us unhappy. If we’re inconsequential, there’s no meaning to anything we do, and our right and crushed by the horror of it.

At the time of writing, South Korea is testing thousands every day, they have drive-thru testing centres which provide results in 10 minutes. In the UK, the tiny few that are getting tested currently have to wait 72 hours for results. Think how many people you can infect in 72 hours.

But consider this, the fact that we are doing so little may have less to do with Government incompetence and more to do with the fact that a proudly “out-of-box” thinker like Dominic Cummings is in 10 Downing Street. For a chap who likes to think the unthinkable, a disease that disproportionately kills Boomers and spares the young, annihilates the generation that are blocking up the job market with their damned experience and health and not retiring and sitting on all those properties, it is a disease made in heaven. “Thanks for voting Brexit, now just die.”

Apolocalypse now? It may be not the end of the world, but it will be for many. There are mad, surreal, prophesies in Revelations, but the world ending because someone in China fancied a bit of bat in their soup? Not even Nostradamus went there.
Ya Boo Sucks
By Peter Burden

It sometimes seems, in these disturbing times, that the default mode of general conversation is disparagement. Up in the hills of Shropshire where I spend much of my time (and where the KCW distribution does not penetrate), I am responsible for regular restaurant reviews that appear in a small glossy magazine called Broadsheep under the disguised byline, Mister Pernickety. Mr P, as he is affectionately known in the Marches, writes all his reviews in the third person, allowing for a more detached, oblique perspective. His reviews are meant to entertain as much as to inform (which he intends that they penetratingly should) and he has found after a decade of doing the job that it is far easier to be humorous when unequivocally disparaging an eating house than when praising it.

A quick canteen through the archives will show that the wittiest, most memorable reviews of books, plays, musicals, restaurants, or whatever have almost without exception been broadly damning: Dorothy Parker of Christopher Isherwood’s *I am a Camera*, ‘Me no Leica.’ Think of any reviews by the late and damming: Dorothy Parker of Christopher Isherwood’s *I am a Camera*, ‘Me no Leica.’ Think of any reviews by the late and damming: Dorothy Parker of Christopher Isherwood’s *I am a Camera*, ‘Me no Leica.’ Think of any reviews by the late and damming: Dorothy Parker of Christopher Isherwood’s *I am a Camera*, ‘Me no Leica.’ Think of any reviews by the late and damming: Dorothy Parker of Christopher Isherwood’s *I am a Camera*, ‘Me no Leica.’ Think of any reviews by the late and damming: Dorothy Parker of Christopher Isherwood’s *I am a Camera*, ‘Me no Leica.’ Think of any reviews by the late and damming: Dorothy Parker of Christopher Isherwood’s *I am a Camera*, ‘Me no Leica.’ Think of any reviews by the late and damming: Dorothy Parker of Christopher Isherwood’s *I am a Camera*, ‘Me no Leica.’

What does democracy mean today?
by Derek Wyatt

What does democracy mean in an always on 24/7 news cycle now that social media monopolises every agenda? What does it mean when there are factories of people by employees being engaged to disseminate elections as Russia did to the American Presidential election in 2016. And we are told that Russia is already trying to influence the end game of the Democratic primaries. You can bet they will side with Trump whoever is selected by the Democrats.

In America to stand a chance of election to being President you need access to over £100m unless you are Mike Bloomberg. He spent perhaps as much as £8bn (!) to enable his name to be on the final Democratic ticket but quit. This is an extraordinary amount of funding to which most of us do not have access. American democracy depends entirely on how rich you are and how much you can raise. This is undemocratic. It is much worse. Candidates ‘establish’ at arms length fund raising departments which are largely unaccountable.

Put those bits of information to one side. Let’s just pretend we were one of the Founding Fathers/Mothers of America in 2020. My sense is that we would insist that voting, as in Australia, would be compulsory. Since 1945, it has been rare for any President to receive more than twenty five per cent of those eligible to vote because less than fifty per cent of the American population votes. Should we keep the system as it is and be more concerned about this low turn out which is possibly the lowest of all countries who aspire to be democratic? You would think so and yet there is hardly a peep from across the pond.

Then, if you look at how a President actually wins it is not by the popular vote. This, too, is extraordinary. Instead, it is decided state by state by state. It is called the Electoral College. A value is put on the vote per state according to population and the candidate who wins the most votes per state is allocated ALL of the electoral college VOTE except in the states of Maine and Nebraska where they are assigned by proportional representation. As happened in 2016, Hillary Clinton won the popular vote but not the electoral colleges. Becoming President as we have seen with the current incumbent gives one person almost uncensured power. Trump has abused this time and time again. And yet there seems to be no way for the individual to bring a case against the President. That is because the President appoints the Supreme Court judges and when push comes to shove as we have seen they will vote not according to the truth of a case but to their political masters. This is wretched. Again, Americans shrug their shoulders. We will not hear much about this system in November when American goes to the polls. It seems likely that Joe Biden will win the Democratic nomination and I hope he selects Elizabeth Warren as his running mate. Only Elizabeth has ruled against the present system of democracy in her own country. Let’s hope she is chosen and then becomes the Vice President. That would be a first too.

When David Cameron returned from his gesture politics with the EU discussions back in 2015 (before the Referendum) he returned a little like Neville Chamberlain with not much. Not even a piece of paper. Sadly, it did for him. I liked David and thought him pretty decent and pretty fair. I had known him since the late 1990s. I bet him on beating David Davies in 2005. I thought all he had to do to carry the nation as he had done (just) with the Scottish Independence referendum was to offer one small change to the way in which MEPs work. Currently they work three weeks in Brussels and then move the ship (or rail in this case) at the most appalling costs, to spend a week in Strasbourg. Instead of that week spent on the borders of France and Germany, all MEPs would have to go back to their own parliaments to give an account of themselves. In this way national parliaments would be connected to Brussels and vice-versa. Alas.

It is not that I do not see huge problems with the UK constitution such as it is. In the December 2019 elections, the Tories received just one percent more of the total votes cast but gained a majority of over 80 in the House of Commons. This makes no sense at all either. But apart from the Lib Dems neither of the two main parties has come forward with any changes. The current undemocratic system suits them both. And yet there are different voting systems in both parties to select their own leaders! As I am fond of recalling, you could not make this up!

We are still in the age of analogue politics.
Engines in the Night
by Nick Salaman

When I have difficulty sleeping, I try to think of engines turning in the night. Their soft rhythmic pulse soothes me, their mighty murmur reassures me, and the great thing about them is that I have to do nothing to keep them running. I picture them thrumming in a place that looks like a whisky warehouse, dark and low and surrounded by pipes. They do not need my presence. I do not have to drizzle them with oil and worry about their health. They run on renewable energy. They are engines in the night. And they soon carry me away to the land of Nod.

What are these engines that turn so reliably and give me such a sense of security and calm?

They are, my friends, the engines running in some automated factory which is turning out a product I have created or helped create. Most people which is turning out a product I have running in some automated factory security and calm?

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end result is the same. Your engines can be printing presses or Archimedes Screws.

Whatever they are, it is not all plain sailing, however. Things can go wrong with engines. I once worked on the Kellogg’s account, way back in the 1960s when I was at J. Walter Thompson. We were asked by a director to come up with an alternative advertising campaign to Snap, Crackle and Pop, and a crazy Swiss art director and I had to go up to Trafford Park and see how ‘Rice Krispies’ were made. It is not a process as easy as you might think. All sorts of things can happen, and we were shown the Rice Krispies Chamber of Horrors to prove it. It was like something out of The Inferno. There were tiny, shrivelled, blackened ‘Rice Krispies’ as though a cataclysm of cosmic proportions had overtaken them as they scurried futilely for shelter. Others seemed to have fallen under a traction engine, and were struck down into wafers, pavement flat. Others still had been simply pulverized into atoms. In another corner, our guide showed us huge misshapen things that seemed to have been drawn from a nightmare. ‘Too much draught,’ was, I think, the explanation. Of course, these mutations are never allowed to get into a delicious packet. So…engines are not a pushover. And, as a person who has an engine in the night, you have other things to sort out besides the machines themselves: your partners, your accountants, your wholesalers, your retailers, your customers, the taxman, the law… But to, say, a journalist who has to be there at the keyboard tapping out pabulum, or an admiral ditto, or a shopkeeper, or farmer, or landlord, or restaurateur, the life of the man or woman who has an engine in the night seems utterly charmed, and I do recommend it if you are starting a company. Always consider (along with other desiderations like do you have an intellectual property?) whether your fledgling is going to lead you to an engine in the night.

Don’t despair if it doesn’t. Successful men and women have proved that it is possible to be happy without. But oh the joy if it does, and the rumble in the small hours as your engine in the night tells you, like the nightwatchman of old, ‘three o’clock and all’s well’.

It’s a puzzle, really, why more people don’t strive for this agreeable therapy. You don’t even need to do the marketing and selling of the product yourself. You can license your striping product for somebody else to buy into, and take a small but comforting royalty. There are plenty of ideas swimming around in the aether. All you need is a long arm and a good network. Energy is no substitute for intelligence.

“For those interested in the London ad scene of the 1960s, I can assure you that Snap, Crackle and Pop were never ousted. Our campaign was based on the theme Pop Goes the Taste! And we had a lot of fun making a film with a young student pop group, looning around Stourhead, who turned out to be, or about to be, yes, The Rolling Stones.”

Advertisements are expensive. But they’re worth it.
What do the Tudors mean to us?
By Max Feldman

You can learn a lot about a national culture from the bits of its history it chooses to celebrate. Whilst modern Britain’s most culturally vibrant and frequently invoked historical narrative is almost certainly the red white and blue heroics of the Second World War, slithering behind like the serpent in the garden is the bloody, paranoid romance of the Tudors. Even the most historically illiterate tends to remember that Henry VIII had an idiosyncratic approach to marital fidelity. However for all the executed wives and religious turmoil, it’s somewhat par for the course considering that our history contains more blood, betrayal and conquest than an entire season of Love Island. What is it about the Tudors that make them stand out to us?

Compared to some of the other monarchical heavy hitters, the Tudors were a fairly short-lived dynasty. A mere three generations for a jumped up mere family with only the most tenuous claim to the throne. By contrast their mortal enemy the Plantagenets gripped the reins of power for over 331 years, but aside from Richard III (the devil in the Tudor creation myth) they’re barely a ripple in the national conscience. Perhaps it’s because the Tudor period is where the Medieval becomes modern; under Henry and Elizabeth’s watch the last shreds of the ancient world were sloughed off, revealing the primordial shape of the modern nation blinking in the dawn. The Church of England may indeed owe its entire existence to royal overconfidence in Anne Boleyn’s ability to bear a son; but the ripple effects from Henry’s carnal profligacy ended up codifying previously unimagined ideas about keeping Church and State in two separate boxes.

Parliament, too, was transformed as a consequence of kingly lust. As a result of the long sessions, far-reaching measures, and revolutionary consequences of the Reformation Parliament (1529-1536), Parliament went from being an occasional king’s court, called for advice on great matters and for the provision of funds, to being a permanent place of political importance, a representative institution whose statutes bound everyone. Parliament “is the most high and absolute power in the realm”, Sir Thomas Smith stated in 1565, whose decisions “bindeth all manner of persons”. By 1640, devotion to its use and the sense that it was an intrinsic part of English government were so great that 11 years of Charles I’s “personal rule” were sufficient grounds for civil war.

Everything from the British Navy to the Secret Service saw their beginnings under the Tudors (indeed one of these ‘intelligencers’, the astronomer, astrologer, mathematician, alchemist and cartographer Dr John Dee, signed off his letters to Elizabeth with two zeros and a backwards long division sign, effectively making him the first 007). The Tudors are our bloody beginnings, we are of them but not like them. Perhaps this is the reason that there is enough fiction set in the time period to fill all of Britain’s landfills added together. Whilst the historical names and faces have the comforting pageantry of the past, behind the ruffs, codpieces and armour we are looking at ourselves, embroidered in rubies and blood.

The Reformation of Wolf Hall
By Max Feldman

When it comes to literature, the Tudor’s empire of paper and ink far outstrips the small wet island they ruled when they were merely flesh and blood. From fiction to nonfiction, high-brow to low, the Tudor reign outstrips the small wet island they ruled when they were merely flesh and blood. From fiction to nonfiction, high-brow to low, the Tudor reign...
Little Joe
Director: Jessica Hausner
Running Time: 145 minutes

Sixty-four years later, the premise of Jack Finney's sci-fi allegory The Body Snatchers still packs a nightmarish wallop. It's why they keep making movies, officially and unofficially, from its blueprint: No matter the era or the symbolic function, the pod people remain a potent expression of universal anxiety: that nagging fear that those in your life have changed somehow, and maybe that you're in danger of changing, too, and losing your whole identity along the way. Little Joe, the English-language debut of Austrian filmmaker Jessica Hausner, belongs to the strain of unofficial Body Snatchers spawn; it's not an adaptation of the story, but a droll art-house riff on it. Yet in its own offbeat, dryly comic, meticulously crafted way, the film comes closer than most versions to touching on the irrational dread of Finney's original scenario.

In this case, the floral menace doesn't come from outer space, but from the sterile environs of the bioengineering industry. It's a blood-red designer flower that goes off mood-improving pheromones if you diligently and properly tend to its needs. This “happy plant,” as the team at the English corporation Planthouse Biotechnologies calls it, is the brainchild of workaholic scientist Alice Woodward (Emily Watson), who's probably best known for her role as the lead actress, Alice, in the original film's history.

Hausner sets the film on the island of Alderney, circa a primeval yesterday, a monochromatic new nightmare from the writer and director of The Witch, supplies both actors with plenty of dialogue, pages upon pages of outrageous sea-shanty vernacular. But it also knows when to let those interesting faces, ornamented with spectacular tufts of hair, do the talking for them. Very early on, the filmmaker, Robert Eggers, arranges them side by side in the frame by way of introduction. Staring right into the lens, they look starved and weary and American, as though they've walked straight out of an early, faded photograph. Or maybe we've walked into one, snapped on a lonely spike of seaside rock, circa a primeval year of the 1890s.

For just shy of two hours, The Lighthouse offers little more than a war of wits and words. The film is set on the dreary coast of 19th-century Maine. It's here that a veteran lighthouse keeper, Thomas Wake (Dafoe), convenes with his new protégé, a former lumberjack named Ephraim Winslow (Pattonson), for four weeks of hard, solitary labour.

Robert Pattinson and Willem Dafoe have the kind of faces Norma Desmond waxed nostalgic about in Sunset Boulevard. Like all the stars of the silent era, they don't need dialogue; a whole movie could be hung on the topography of their features, on what Pattinson does with those haunted eyes he used to fix on Kristen Stewart and how Dafoe uses that toothy grin of his for mirth or menace. The Lighthouse, a monochromatic new nightmare, is great as a comedy of cabin fever and competitive machismo. It's perhaps a specific taste, but to the right eyes The Lighthouse shines blindingly bright.
Onward
Director: Dan Scanlon
Running Time: 112 Minutes

Just about every Pixar movie transports audiences to a shiny new world of wonder: the depths of the ocean, the deepest reaches of space, the inside of the human brain. But the key to the studio’s enduring popularity may be the way it tethers those meticulously crafted backdrops to stories of relatable emotion and experience, even when the characters are, say, hunks of sentient plastic or nightmarishly organic automobiles. Think of the original ‘Toy Story’, which uses its irresistible toy-coming-alive conceit to tell a hilariously touching buddy comedy of jealousy and reluctant friendship. One could say these movies exist at the spot where the magical and the mundane meet.

Onward, Pixar’s latest blast of spit-shined enchantment, comes close to making that core principle literal. It takes place, after all, in a literal fantasy world, filled with the kind of mythic creatures you might see gallivanting through a Tolkien or Rowling adaptation. The movie’s premise, and its central joke, is that this fairy-tale kingdom has become, centuries on and with the advent of technology, as mundane as our real world: Centaurs now chug around town in cars instead of running free, Cyclopes swipe at smartphones, and unicorns, that most cherished of imaginary critter, are so basic that their horns have been trimmed down to just points. It’s a morbid and strangely affecting plot turn. It also promises a more madcap movie than the one ‘Onward’ becomes. The film’s director, Dan Scanlon previously oversaw Pixar’s ‘Monsters University’, which was a climactic shot from ‘Back To The Future.’ This isn’t a wholly unwelcome imperative, crossing off lessons and similar “一级冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险，它像它的英雄一样迎合自己，但它的关键部分感觉有点像一个秒二冒险。
Silver Screen

Whilst London is one of the celluloid capitals of the world with a huge array of boutique and specialist cinemas, from cultural institutes specialising in foreign films to offbeat late night venues offering audience sing-a-longs. The only issue is with so much to see, it’s easy to miss films you’d love. As a result we’ve assembled a selection that should satisfy even the most voracious Silver Screen fiend.

British Film Institute Southbank
Little Joe (March 11)
Wild River (March 12)
The Garden (March 12)
We Need to Talk About Kevin (March 13)
Snowpiercer (March 14)
Tomboy (March 14)
America, America (March 15)
Caravaggio (March 15)
The Last Tycoon (March 15)
Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind (March 16)
Marry Me (March 17)
Juno (March 17)
The Deep End (March 18)
The Elephant Man (March 18)
Citizen Kane (March 30)
Dirty Harry (March 30)
For a Few Dollars More (March 30)
The Night Of The Hunter (March 31)
Raging Bull (March 31)
Belvedere Rd, Bishop’s, London SE1 8XT 020 7928 3232

whatson.bfi.org.uk/
Online/default.asp
Cine Lumiere
L’Homme de Rio
(Throughout the month)
Portobello
Grand
(Throughout the month)
Cinema Portobello
Detroit: Become Human
(Throughout the month)
Port of Call
(Throughout the month)
Cinema Portobello
Toni Morrison: The Pieces I Am
(March 18)
Radioactive
(March 20)
Cunningham
(March 24)
The Truth
(March 26)
The Painted Bird
(March 28)
The Beaches of Agnes
(March 29)
The Perfect Candidate
(March 30)
Je, Tu, Il, Elle
(March 31)
South Kensington
17 Queenstown Pl, South Kensington,
London SW7 2DTD 020 7871 3515
box.offices@institutfrancais.org.uk

Electric Cinema
Kensal Green
194 Chamberlayne Rd, Kensal Green,
London NW10 3JU 020 3011 5523
rosie@thelexicinema.co.uk

Everyman Screen on the Green
The Parapod Movie
(17th March)
Providence Pl, The Angel,
London N1 ORN 01233 504 815
talk@everymangroup.com

Genesis Cinema
Liff: The Golden Age + Q&A
(March 13)
Mother (March 16)
Unruly Bodies
(March 24)
Bacurau (March 26)
The Elephant Man
(40th Anniversary Restoration)
(March 29)
Almost Famous
(30th March)
Bethnal Green
93-95 Mile End Rd, Bethnal Green,
London E1 4UJ 020 7780 2000
info@genesis-cinema.co.uk

Lexi Cinema
Portrait of a Lady on Fire
(Throughout the month)

True History of the Kelly Gang
(Throughout the month)
Met Opera:
Der Fliegende Holländer
(14 March)
NT Encore: Black History Studies: Wax Print + Q&A
(26 March)
Cunningham (29 & 31 March)

Notting Hill
191 Portobello Road, Notting Hill,
London W11 2ED 020 7908 9696
boxoffice@electriccinema.co.uk

Olympic Studios
Birds of Prey
(Throughout the month)

Stanley Tucci Acting & Directing Workshop
(16 March)
Mishbehavior
(13 March)
ROH Live: Fidelio
(17 March)

Olympic Studios, Church
Road, Barnes SW13 9HL
020 8912 5161
boxoffice@olympiccinema.co.uk

Peckhamplex
Michael Ball & Alfie Boe: Back Together (28, 29 March)
A Quiet Place (Part II) (18th-19th March)

95A Rye Ln, Peckham,
London SE15 4ST 0844 567 2742
managers@peckhamplex.net

Prince Charles Cinema
Sound of Music Sing-A-Long
(13 March)
Memories of Murder
(Salimui Chueok)

(29 March)
Grease Sing-A-Long
(20 March)
Cats:The Jellicle Ball
(21 March)
The Greatest Showman
Sing-A-Long (22 March)

The Barbican
Preview: Cunningham + ScreenTalk
(11 March)
Afternoon Arts: The Brothers Karamazov
(12 march)
HBWFF: Opening Gala - Collective + ScreenTalk
(12 March)

Toni Morrison: The Pieces I Am
(14th March)

In My Blood It Runs + ScreenTalk with director Maya Newell
(15 March)

Cyranos de Bergerac
NT Encore (21st March)

Silk St, Barbican,
London EC2Y 8DS
www.barbican.org.uk/

Kendall Mountain Festival
UK Tour 2020 (11 March)
Carpe Diem (22 March)
Pink Flamingos (Uncut) + Mink Stole Q&A
(28 March)

107 Kingsland High St, Dalston,
London E8 2PB 020 7241 9410
admin@riocinema.org.uk

The Ritzy
Picturehouse
True Romance
(14 March)
Dune
(23 March)

Coldharbour Ln, Brixton SW2 1JG 0871 902 5747
www.picturehouses.com/coming-soon

Chesil Beach
Providence Pl, The Angel,
Notting Hill
191 Portobello Road,
Notting Hill
020 7780 2000

Lexi Cinema
Portrait of a Lady on Fire

(23, 25, 29th March)
259-260 Hardress Street, Loughborough Junction, London SE24 0HN
020 7737 6153
www.whirledcinema.com

The Whirled Cinema
The Farewell
(11,15 March)

Pain and Glory
(16-18, 22 March)
Bait
(23, 25, 29th March)

Compiled and edited by Max Feldman & Dalia Kirshenblat
For the past three years, the Luminate Festival at Kings Place has surprised music-loving audiences.

This year’s instalment of boundary-breaking acts; ranging from contemporary orchestras to shimmering electronic artists, runs until July, with most tickets priced at £15.

I spoke to Jacob Silkin, 31, the contemporary programme manager at Kings Place, and asked why he created ‘Luminate’ and the acts he was most looking forward to seeing.

Q: KCW: Who are you most excited to see/hear at ‘Luminate’?

JS: A very tough call. All the artists are exceptional live, but it’s especially exciting to present new projects. On March 27, we’re hosting our first ‘Luminate’ commission; a collaboration between NYX and Christina Vantzou performing a mixture of manipulated choral voices and modular synthesis. I was lucky enough to sit in on some of the early development of this new work and it blew me away. And then there’s Triad God on April 25, who is a New Cross-based Chinese rapper. He’s an enigma. He’s rarely performed since his first record eight years ago, but his recent album Triad stood out for me last year. And without giving too much away, the show will be wild and brilliantly theatrical.

Q: KCW: What does ‘Luminate’ mean to you?

JS: It’s a festival for new music by artists who are pushing boundaries. It’s very broad sonically; that’s the point. I wanted to make it simply about amazing live music that will challenge and inspire people. I’m very lucky to have two of the best sounding spaces in London to work with.

Q: KCW: How did you choose the acts to play?

JS: Essentially, it’s artists who I’m super excited about; those I feel are doing something bold, uncontrived and can really bring it in a live context. I have a very long, ever-evolving wish list.

Lee Ranaldo & Raul Refree at the Barbican

If ‘Luminate’ hasn’t scratched your itch for beguiling music, the new collaboration between Sonic Youth founder/guitarist Lee Ranaldo and Cataln flamenco artist Raül Refree should do the trick.

Their new album, Names of North End Women, is out now on independent West London label Mute, and they’re playing the Barbican’s Milton Court concert hall on April 7. The backbone of the haunting, atmospheric album is a mysterious reel of tape Ranaldo discovered on a second-hand Studer he purchased, complemented by piano, marimbas and their charming half-spoken/half-sung lyrics. 7.30pm. Tickets £25.

www.barbican.org.uk

From Kraftwerk to the Chemical Brothers

The party is coming to the Design Museum courtesy of a 3-D film from Düsseldorf electronic music pioneers Kraftwerk.

It all starts on April 1 when the Kensington museum looks back on 50 years of the people, art, design, technology and photography that captured and shaped the electronic music landscape. You can also step into the lights and visuals of a Chemical Brothers gig.

The exhibition travels to dancefloors from Detroit to Berlin taking in more than 400 objects along the way, including graphics from renowned designer Peter Saville. It also features electronic music legends Jeff Mills and Daphne Oram, as well as the graphics for recent Aphex Twin EP Collapse. Tickets from £16 (concs available).

www.designmuseum.org

Lunch is served at Wigmore Hall

Want to add a bit more spice to your lunchtime? Look no further than Mondays at Wigmore Hall. The Brentano String Quartet is on the menu on March 23, serving up Shostakovich’s String Quartet No. 11 (Op 122), Bruce Adolphe’s Coiled, Mendelssohn’s String Quartet No. 6 (Op 80). 1-2pm. Tickets from £14.

www.wigmore-hall.org.uk

Fulham Symphony Orchestra moves home

The Fulham Symphony Orchestra will perform their March 21 concert at St Paul’s Church in Hammersmith. The venue change for the leading London amateur orchestra comes after Hammersmith Town Hall was shut for refurbishment. The concert, conducted by Marc Dooley, will see the orchestra tackle Thomas Tallis’ choral work Spem in Alium, the Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis by Ralph Vaughan Williams and Anton Bruckner’s powerhouse 7th Symphony. 7.30pm. Tickets from £8.

www.fso.org.uk

Lovebox festival line-up announced

Bring on the summer; Lovebox is returning to Gunnersbury Park.

Headlining the June 12-14 festival will be California rapper Tyler, ‘The Creator’, as well as English electronic duo Disclosure and Georgia singer/songwriter Khalid. For the first time, the festival will be spread over three days, allowing plenty of time for other acts such as Little Simz, FKA Twigs, Snoh Aulegra, Shy FX, Sampa the Great and Hot Chip. Tickets from £72.50.

www.loveboxfestival.com

Classical

Janacek and Britten classics return to London

Leos Janacek’s compelling opera Jenůfa returns to London. But this time it’s not another signature performance by the English National Opera. Instead, head to the Royal Opera House for award-winning director Claus Guth’s first production of Jenůfa at Covent Garden since 2001. Conducted by Vladimir Jurowski, the opera runs from March 24 to April 9. Tickets from £45.

www.roh.org.uk

Meanwhile,

Benjamin Britten’s classic retelling of Henry James’ Turn of the Screw will be staged by Opera Glass Works at the iconic Wilton’s Music Hall in Whitechapel. Running from March 25 to April 4, it features musical accompaniment from an ensemble of 13 players, alongside English tenor Robert Murray. Tickets from £5.

www.wiltons.org.uk
Where to be when the world ends:
independent book shops are coming back
By May Woods

Situated in the heart of Chelsea, World’s End book shop is easy to overlook. The independent is on the small side, and rather overshadowed by its neighbours; typical glossy King’s Road outlets, dotted amongst recognisable chain brands. “We’ve existed as a beacon for second hand books and bohemian life for thirty years,” explained World’s End owner, Giles Lyon. His pride is palpable. “It’s out of character for the area now. When I was young, the area was very much independent shops. Now it’s all branding and big names.”

Speaking of names, World’s End feels fitting for a bookshop. In this instance it’s an eponym, rather than an allusion to any apocalyptic horrors which await. Yet if a *Shawn of the Dead* scenario presented, sheltering in the presence of Robert Louis Stevenson et al would be a strong bet. That is, at least, if the pub was out of reach.

With such a crisis supposedly imminent (the world is burning, etc.) the resurgence of independent bookstores suggests that it’s not just Waterstones we’ll be running for. The Booksellers Association have reported their 2020 figures: for the third year in a row, the number of indie bookshops has risen. In January, a Petersfield book shop tweeted that it had not sold a single book that day. Within hours the store was inundated with orders, requests, and supportive messages from all over the world. What seemed to indicate a flailing industry quickly proved something quite different.

As the high street withers, it feels somewhat miraculous that independent book shops are fighting back. Yet Giles is unsurprised by the upturn of his industry. World’s End, as with other indies, offers a service that Amazon simply cannot replace.

“I’ve always positioned myself as somewhere between furniture dealing, antiques and paintings” explained Giles. “Many of the books here; to me they are very much objects. They are not the sort of thing you would necessarily take on a train journey, or read last thing at night tucked up in bed. The content is valid and interesting but as much as anything they are beautiful objects, put together with a great sense of flair for art and creativity, using many different materials.”

Needless to say, rare or antiquarian books cannot be replicated online or interchanged with a Kindle. Neither can a consultative service, a factor perhaps as crucial as the books themselves.

“Buying online can be incredibly tricky, especially if people don’t have a go-to title in mind,” explained Giles. Guidance is key, as is understanding the intricacies and motivations of a purchase. In short, getting to know the customer.

The model pays off for an enterprise that bills itself as being open to all-comers, at all hours: “backpacking travellers, students who would otherwise resort to theft, honeymooners, aristocrats, autocrats, unbelievably wealthy plutocrats, (and) Essex nans with a thing for Ernest Hemingway”. The list goes on. World’s End is more specialised, and more famous, than many indie book shops. Yet the Chelsea gem offers a meaningful model for its less weathered brothers and sisters. One that prioritises community and is outspokenly non-judgemental. And one that recognises and celebrates its own magic. For every book shop is enchanting. Each holds precious keys; is the gatekeeper to a thousand curious worlds. Each is a plane ticket and an escape route, and should be celebrated, preserved, encouraged and nurtured; until the world does finally end.

Independent Bookshops in London

**Belgravia Books**
59 Ebury St, Belgravia, SW1W 0NZ
020 7259 9336
belgraviacooks.com

**Church House Bookshop**
31 Great Smith St, Westminster, London SW1P 3BN
020 7799 4064
chbookshop@hymnsam.co.uk

**St Pauls**
Morpeth Terrace, SW1P 1EP
020 7828 5582
stpauls.org.uk

**RICS London Bookshop**
Parliament Square, Westminster, London SW1P 3AD
020 7334 3776
rics.org

**Sky Books**
119 Shepherds Bush Road, W6 7LP
020 7603 5620

**Nomad Books**
781 Fulham Rd, Fulham, SW6 5HA
020 7736 4000
nomadbooks.co.uk

**P M S Bookshop**
240 King Street, London, W6 0RF
020 8748 5222

**Hurlingham Books**
91 Fulham High Street, SW6 3JS
020 7734 3436
hurlinghambooks.com

**Ash Rare Books**
43 Haron Road, London, SW17 8RE
020 8672 2263
ashrare.com

**Neil Pearson Rare Books**
2 Scout Lane, Clapham, SW4 0LA
075 0834 9122
neilpearsonrarebooks.com

**Clapham Books**
26 The Pavement, Clapham, SW4 0JA,
020 7627 2797
claphambooks.com

**Hanshan Tang Books**
Asburton Enterprise Centre, 276 Cortis Road, London, SW15 3AY
020 8788 4464
hanshan.com

**30th Century Books**
18 Lower Richmond Road, Putney, SW15 1JP
020 8788 2052
30thcenturybooks.co.uk

**Persephone Books**
59 Lamb’s Conduit St, WC1N 3NB
020 7242 9292
persephonebooks.co.uk

**Books Iconica**
91 Brick Lane, Spitalfields, E1 6QL
079 5131 8402
booksiconica.co.uk

**Mega City Comics**
18 Inverness Street, Camden Town, NW1 7HJ
020 7485 9320
megacitycomics.co.uk

**Walden Books**
38 Harwood Street, NW1 8DP
020 7267 8146
waldenbooks.co.uk

**Owl Book Shop**
207-209 Kentish Town Road, NW5 2JU
020 7485 7793
owlbookshop.co.uk

**Black Gull Books**
70 Camden Lock Place, Camden Town, NW1 8AF
020 7267 5005

**Book Mengers**
439 Coldharbour Lane, Coldharbour, London, SW9 8LN
020 7738 4225
bookmengers.com

**Clapham Books**
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020 7627 2797
claphambooks.com

**Hearne Hill Books**
289 Railton Road, Herne Hill, SE24 0LY
020 7998 1673
hernehill.org.uk

**Tales on Moon Lane**
25 Half Moon Ln, Dulwich, London SE24 9JU
020 7274 5759
talesonmoonlane.co.uk

**The Broadway Bookshop**
6 Broadway Market, Hackney, E8 4QJ
020 7241 1626
broadwaybookshophackney.com

**Pages of Hackney**
70 Lower Clapton Rd, Lower Clapton, London E5 0RN
020 8522 1452
pagesofhackney.co.uk

**Guerrilla Bookshop**
15, 11-17 Earmouth Pl, Hackney, E8 3RW
075 9535 4035
guerrillabooks.com

**Artwords Bookshop**
69 Rivington St, Hackney, EC2A 3AY
020 7729 2000
artwords.co.uk

**Foster Books**
183 Chiswick High Rd, W4 2DR
020 8995 2768
fosterbooks.co.uk

**Osterley Bookshop**
168A Thornbury Rd, Osterley, Isleworth TW7 4QE
020 8560 6206

Compiled & Edited by Fahad Redha
The Rise and Rise of Podcasts
By Anna Mackenzie

Podcasts are everywhere. As of December 2019, there are over 30 million episodes spanning over 800,000 active shows, and their popularity only continues to grow. I myself am a self-confessed podcast addict. With such a vast selection of topics and a daily update of new offerings, they have become my preferred audio accompaniment whether travelling and commuting or going for a run.

But what exactly are they and where did they come from?

A portmanteau combining the words iPod and broadcast, the term ‘podcast’ was introduced in 2004 to describe a new style of distributing audio content. Fast-forward to 2020; it’s hard to imagine a media landscape without them.

Produced in episodic series of audio files, podcasts offer a source of news and entertainment in a downloadable format for on-the-go listening. And with a wealth of creative material across all subject matters, there truly is a podcast for every mood and interest.

Whether you want to start a daily news habit, become immersed in true-crime thrillers, listen to inspirational interviews or even learn a new skill, we have compiled a handy guide to get you started.

Where can I find podcasts?

There are many digital applications that offer a vast library of podcasts to download and listen to offline.

For Apple users, the in-built Apple Podcasts app allows you to download a wealth of audio material and browse different categories, top shows and curated collections according to your tastes.

For Android, the Podcast Republic app also has handy features like live radio streaming.

If you are a Spotify user, the app has a variety of well-known and original content so you can download podcasts and keep them stored with your favourite music.

These apps are highly intuitive and easy to use: just download for free onto your mobile, tablet or laptop, and you can begin to create your own portable podcast library.

What next?

Most podcasts are free to download, with some services offering premium paid subscriptions to access even more shows and features.

You’ll find shows that update daily and weekly, with a length of listening time ranging from 10-minute updates to lengthy discussions. I once whiled a long bus journey away with a single episode that lasted over 5 hours.

If you are looking for even more original content, maybe you offer personalised recommendations from top-charting hits to undiscovered gems.

Luminary is a new platform that has a similar subscription model to Netflix. For a monthly payment of £3.99, you get access to premium shows that are not available anywhere else.

How can I choose a podcast?

You can search for podcasts by entering its name if already known, or simply entering keywords that will deliver multiple suggestions.

Once you have taken a little time to browse the vast array of podcasts on offer, you have the option of downloading individual episodes or subscribing to a series.

Individual episodes are great if you want to listen to a variety of shows about certain topics, or perhaps an interview with a specific figure.

Subscribing to a podcast means your device will automatically download the next episode and add it to your library so you don’t need to constantly update your lists. This is particularly useful for news shows and audiobook series.

Where do I begin?

A good place to start is by browsing the top shows listed in your app or looking through shows listed under certain categories.

Radio listeners will find many stations have podcasts available with highlights and full shows so you can catch up at your leisure.

News fans can find podcasts produced by most major media outlets, from the Financial Times morning bulletins to The Guardian audio long reads.

And you don’t have to listen only in English. The podcast trend has cultivated creative material from all around the world, as well as educational platforms that offer audio language courses alongside recorded lectures from institutes like University of Oxford so you can learn as you listen.

If you’re new to podcasts, it won’t take long to discover why the format has become so popular. Make your commute more productive learn a new skill or just indulge in fascinating interviews and audio documentaries: podcasts are the solution.

A Curious History of Sex
Dr Kate Lister
Unbound
456pp. Illustrated. £25

This is a quasi-serious book, which is also firmly tongue-in-cheek, but whose tongue in whose cheek? The style is definitely in-cheek, but whose tongue in whose cheek? The style is definitely in-cheek, but whose tongue in whose cheek? Roger, she says, nourished the English fact that there are only five clitoral in English. The French call this (vaginal secretion) cyprine, from and the clitmus test persisted into the nineteenth century. ‘Despite the clitoris being of female genitals, as, she maintains, its own in English. The podcast trend has cultivated creative material from all around the world, as well as educational platforms that offer audio language courses alongside recorded lectures from institutes like University of Oxford so you can learn as you listen.

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Astronomy

I enjoy the Chelsea Arts Club. Most people there are genuinely interested in the Cosmos and ask interesting and challenging questions.

But it is first and foremost an arts club and there will always be somebody who confuses astronomy with astrology. “I’m a Virgo/Taurus, will I marry my girlfriend/partner and have a happy life?” to conspiracy theorists who swear, NASA never landed on the moon, governments clearly suppress information of extra-terrestrial visitations, or that the Earth is flat etc.

Fortunately, there are bar staff at the club who understand gravity and hydrostatic-equilibrium. “Chris, Tom, and Sally, know instinctively the bottle of Largesse I ordered is not going anywhere until I’ve finished it, held firmly to the table top and the table to the floor, and so on and so forth until the centre of mass of the planet.

One question though always crops up what actually is a planet? Seems simple enough, but not so fast, there were nine, now only eight!

Pluto is downgraded to a Dwarf.

There are now Trans-Neptunium Objects (TNOs), Plutoids, Dwarfs, and over 4000 exo-planets discovered outside the solar system.

Originally, in the Greek language, planet meant wanderer (Set against the fixed background stars).

So, who and what defines a planet now?

The International Astronomical Union (IAU), gets to decide, after being debated by the world’s astronomers over a two-year period, and ultimately an agreed consensus.

It is now agreed that a planet is a celestial body that is in orbit around the Sun, has sufficient mass for its self-gravity to overcome rigid body forces so that it assumes a hydrostatic equilibrium (nearly round) spherical shape and has cleared the neighbourhood around its orbit (if any other object ventures near its orbit it will either collide with and therefore be accreted, or be ejected altogether into another orbit.

Essentially the new agreed categories are now, Planets, Dwarf Planets, and Small Solar System Bodies. Exoplanets are a category of their own.

What triggered this re-definition was the discovery of 2003 UB₃₁₃ by Mike Brown (Caltech), Chad Trujillo (Gemini Observatory) and David Rabinowitz (Yale) searching the edge of the Solar System with the Mount Palomar Observatory. It turned out to be more massive than Pluto around 2500km across, so with the discovery of ever more TNOs, it begged the question what is a planet?

2003 UB₃₁₃ is now called Eris (the Greek god of trouble and strife and belongs in the new category of Plutoids such as Pluto, Ceres, Eris, Sedna, and no doubt yet more to be added.

In January 2015 Caltech astronomers Konstantin Batygin and Mike Brown announced new research that suggests evidence of a giant planet tracing an unusual, elongated orbit in the outer solar system, based on computer simulations and mathematical modelling systems. Not direct observation. This large object they call Planet X could be responsible for the unique orbits of at least five smaller objects discovered in the distant Kuiper belt.

The Caltech scientists believe planet X may have a mass 10 times the Earth and a predicted orbit of 10,000 and 20,000 years to make one full orbit of the Sun.

Of course, any reference to predicted and not directly observed orbits lends itself to the ‘End of the Worlders and Doom merchants’, and no it’s not talking about the non-existent Nibiru, either. There are hundreds of thousands of amateur astronomers with serious quality equipment and thousands of professional astronomers for whom it would have been easily visible if it were headed in our direction.

It’s all exciting stuff; our telescopes get bigger and better, we can see further in more detail; one day we may yet track down that giant planet, be it 9 or X, or nothing.

When I got interested there was only one solar system, 9 planets, now there are already thousands, all within 100 light-years. Our galaxy is 100,000 light-years across with maybe 200,000,000 stars, that makes for an awful lot of planets, and with hopefully lots of other life forms.
How Art describes Astronomy
By Dalia Kirshenblat

Perhaps you have seen awe-inspiring photographs of nebulae, galaxies, or a glittering sky full of stars? Many of the pictures that take one's breath away, however, are not real in the sense that one would usually consider something to be real, though many are indeed accurate. In the astrophysical world, what exists in our perceivable reality does not always equal accuracy.

There are many ways to look at Mercury:

If you were to travel to Mercury and see it with your own eyes, it would most likely appear as shown in the first picture. However, that doesn’t make the second picture any less factual or accurate in the information it is presenting. The psychedelic photograph shown is exhibiting the diversity of Mercury’s surface composition. Each colour corresponds to different spectral properties of the planets’ terrains and spectral features like craters and vents.

Many astronomy photos use colours to depict things like atmospheric composition and surface features. Astronomers take images through a range of electromagnetic radiation, or different wavelengths of light. Spectroscopes allow us to see a spectrum of light, or definite colors of visible light that an object will emit. Different elements absorb different wavelengths of light. So, we can tell what elements are present in a planet’s atmosphere through the light they absorb: we are able to recognize “absorbers” like water vapour, ozone, and carbon dioxide in exoplanet (planets outside of our solar system) atmospheres.

Just as these images are not seen directly with the eyes but are converted into images portraying data for us to understand, electromagnetic sound waves, or what we consider to be “sounds of space” are not heard directly. They are data converted into audio files and played back as sound for us.

Art is used to portray what astronomy cannot with its practical considerations. Consider the exoplanetary system Trappist-1, for example:

Trappist-1 is a planetary system of 7 exoplanets orbiting an ultra-cool red star located in the Aquarius constellation 39 light years from our own solar system. All the planets in the Trappist-1 system transit their star, which means that each of the planets pass in front of their star. This allows us to observe the planets from our position on Earth. These transit observations have allowed us to discern the planets masses, densities and bulk properties. From studying the transits of the Trappist-1 planetary system, we’ve learned that the planets in the system are terrestrial, meaning they have a rocky composition.

The planets are comparable in size and mass to Earth or Venus. We can measure the temperature of the Trappist-1 star and the distances between the star and its planets, so we can determine that the planets receive a comparable amount of light to Mercury or Mars.

Based on all the information we’ve collected about Trappist-1, artists can create images like the one shown above, imagining what the planets may look like. We may never see these planets for ourselves, but we can create realistic images based on our data!

While we may not always appreciate it, art and science are linked in countless, remarkable ways. The information waiting to be unlocked in the universe is infinite, and art is an excellent tool to utilize for making sense of this complex, incredible data.

The Natural History Museum & Science Museum: Highlights & Special Exhibits
By Dalia Kirshenblat

Castles filled with skeletal displays soaring through the air. A breadth of experience featuring exotic plants and hundreds of animals journeying through time and place. Historic locomotives and automobiles clanging to the walls, steampunk clocks and floating orbs glowing with planetary imagery...

These are the kinds of sights you can expect to see at London’s Natural History Museum and Science Museum.

The Natural History Museum is perhaps best known worldwide for its outstanding collection of specimens and its extensive libraries. A research-based institute, this museum offers international collections of taxonomy and exhibits covering a range of natural science topics from earthquakes and volcanoes to human biology and paleontology. This is the perfect place to take your kids and explore the animatronics of roaming dinosaurs, or to simply wander through, gazing at displays and soaking up knowledge.

Inside the Victorian Romanesque architecture you’ll find all sorts of exciting displays, such as the latest exhibit, Paleearct, in the Images of Nature Hall. Here you can see artworks and attempts to reconstruct prehistoric animals and their habitats combining fossil material and the latest technology. This limited display brings together a range of paleo-art spanning over 40,000 years ago to the present. Perhaps the most grand piece is the largest painting in the exhibit, depicting a giant ground sloth, Megatherium americanum, painted in 1842 by George Scharf. The painting is life-sized, measuring 2.46 by 5.7m; larger than a transit van!

Just next door is the Science Museum, highlighting all kinds of different aspects of the world of science, with many interactive stations for children to learn and play. Discover stories of remarkable scientific achievement, see a wondrous film on the deep sea or space in IMAX 3D cinema, or catch one of the special exhibits featured throughout the year.

If you’ve had a grand time at the National History Museum, but are perhaps missing some astronomy in your science, then this museum is the place to be. Exploring Space is a permanent exhibit that showcases rockets, satellites, probes and landers, and other out-of-this-world objects. Here you can see real rockets suspended from the ceiling, and several life-sized replicas of probes and landers from actual missions like Titan’s Huygens Probe that landed on Saturn’s largest moon in 2005, or the Beagle 2 Mars Lander of 2003. A true sight to see is the enormous “floating” orb displayed in the center of the exhibit, which projects the latest images of our solar system.

One of the new limited exhibits you might see at the Science Museum this month is Driverless: Who is in Control? This exhibit is all about autonomous vehicles and how close we are to living in a world taken over by driverless machines. From self-driving cars to flying drones and smart submarines, this exhibition explores how seemingly futuristic technology isn’t actually that advanced and even already exists. While this may seem like the stuff of sci-fi, this technology has been around for decades and is already making its debut across the globe. This exhibition is free and open daily until October 2020.

In addition to having a permanent climate science gallery entitled Atmosphere, the Science Museum will be presenting the UK’s first exhibition on carbon capture and storage to explore solutions for greenhouse gas removal from the atmosphere in November 2020. The exhibit will engage audiences with the science of climate change and the technological challenges and solutions around the energy and food transitions that are hoping to be achieved in the next few decades. This opening will coincide with the 26th United Nations Convention on Climate Change in Glasgow. The Science Museum will be hosting a series of conferences focusing on the theory and practice of sustainable curating in the museum and heritage sectors, beginning in spring 2020.

As in all public museums in London, both of these institutions are free of charge, while you may be asked to give a voluntary donation. The world-class collections these museums have to offer are visited by millions every year, describing and exploring the science shaping our lives.

Visit the Natural History Museum website at www.nhm.ac.uk
What’s on: www.nhm.ac.uk/visit/whats-on.html.

Visit the Science Museum website at: www.sciencemuseum.org.uk
What’s on: www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/see-and-do.
Enjoy & Donate

APPEAL FROM KATE HAWTHORNE
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

ORTHOGRAPHY: the accepted way of writing words with the proper spelling, according to accepted usage.

One of the more complex and responsible tasks of being an editor is maintaining the interest levels of the constant stream of interns who spend a short time with us.

Whilst abilities and ages vary, (from 14-year olds through to MAs in journalism), their knowledge of how to use words is an interesting and infinite source of surprise. Finding ways to encourage and increase respect for the ‘word’ and the value it brings to their work can be rewarding.

The Internet has done much to deter and suppress good writing styles. In spite of it being a vital research and information platform, if we are not careful it will decimate the beauty and precision of our language and erode the imagination and writing skills of younger generations further. Too much information is being digested too swiftly. Social media is the prime culprit, fostering a lack of respect for our language and obstructing the desire to seek out better alternatives. Words and their meaning are abused daily through lack of orthography and the use of abbreviation and deviation.

Whilst we have benefited in overwhelming terms from the arrival of the Internet it is increasingly evident that this digital tsunami is undermining appetites for traditional reading and writing, endangering the benefits that attend these good practices. Contemplation, the art of thinking, discovery, respect and the value of written words, are replaced with shortcuts to knowledge via instant communication ‘skills’ and vocabulary lacking in substance.

We need to rally round, with collective responsibility to maintain and uphold one of the greatest inventions of all times ‘the written word’. Good quality journalism, lessons on the importance and use of words in print have never been more important.

WE NEED YOUR HELP
Our title has grown in content, stature, and circulation. We are constantly amazed and delighted to receive praise and accolades from readers not only in London but from all over the UK. Most people we talk to are passionate about print and reading as we are at KCW LONDON and agree vehemently that print should be encouraged to continue its important role in society especially more than ever before.

LONDON WORD ACADEMY
Through our work we encourage and attempt to re-kindle and ignite the importance of words and what they can do for young people in their future careers. The art of writing and the importance of the written word, and how it can work for them in the business world and their career, are just some of the roles they learn here.

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The good, the great, and the extra-ordinary at the Royal College of Music

By Kate Hawthorne

Professor Colin Lawson, Director of the Royal College of Music has done much to ensure the Royal College of Music remains at the top of the Educational Global Music Landscape. The talent nurtured under his fiscal and creative baton is uncompromising in its excellence.

By Kate Hawthorne

B eethoven said; "music is the electrical soil in which the spirit lives, thinks and invents. It is a higher revelation than all wisdom and philosophy". Dramatic words from an artist who loved trees more than people and believed that a great poet is a nation’s most precious jewel. He did well to describe Music this way. Music is an unquantifiable enigma. It is impossible to qualify the sentiments we gain from this most special gift.

In recognition of The Royal College Music's achievements in this field, HRH The Prince of Wales, in his 27th year as President of the Royal College of Music, conferred honours on leading names in the international music world at its historic Blomfield Building in South Kensington.

The turnout for this annual event, on March 3rd 2020, was impressive and deserved. The recipients’ backgrounds and achievements were recognised as contributors to the College’s astounding reputation. Many areas were recognised; from the RCM’s Finance Director Jas Rooprai to an 88-year fan Ken Goodwin, through to honorary doctorate recipients, conductor Sir Antonio Pappano, and tenor Jonas Kaufmann.

Prince Charles looked extremely relaxed in this musical arena, a field he obviously loves. He supports the College each year, showing enthusiasm, grace, charm and wit in his role of President.

The RCM Brass musicians played a majestic fanfare with great verve and passion when the Prince entered the Hall. They gave a flawless performance with the brass section raising the roof of the auditorium in celebration of his arrival. The whole borough must have heard it. A great start to the honours...

The recipients were warmly welcomed.

Sir Antonio Pappano, conductor and music director of the Royal Opera House has nurtured many former students as they progress from the RCM Opera Studio on to the professional stage. He commented; ‘I never would have thought from taking my Grade 1 music exam as a youngster, that I’d one day be receiving a doctorate from a world-renowned institution such as the Royal College of Music. Having this honour bestowed on me is humbling yet brings me such joy. Thank you.’

Jonas Kaufmann, described by the New York Times as ‘the most important, versatile tenor of his generation’, rose to fame through his spinto roles, most notably at the Metropolitan Opera in New York. He has won four Gramophone Awards for his operatic albums, of which Pappano conducted Verismo Arias, winning the Recital Award in 2011. So much talent in one human being is humbling.

Fellows of the RCM Music were; Director of English National Opera Martyn Brabbins, Grammy-nominated composer, Classic FM’s Composer in Residence and RCM Visiting Professor Debbie Wiseman OBE and Academy-Award-winning composer Rachel Portman OBE. Portman was the first female composer to win an Academy Award in the category of Best Musical or Comedy Score (for Emma in 1996). Rachel was the first woman to receive the Richard Kirk Award at the BMI Film & TV Awards for her contributions to film and television music.

Rachel said ‘I feel extremely humbled to be receiving this honour from the Royal College of Music. To be included alongside such esteemed giants of composers and musicians whose ranks I could only dream of aspiring to join is a very great honour.’

Debbie Wiseman said; ‘As musician I hold this conservation in high esteem, and now I have been privileged to work here as a Visiting Professor. First-class music education is the bedrock of any classical musician’s career, and I’m so proud to be associated with a college that offers the very best music education a young musician could possibly hope for. I feel extremely humbled to receive this honour from the Royal College of Music.’

88-year-old Ken Goodwin, a devoted supporter of the Royal College of Music has attended hundreds of RCM events. He was so enamoured with the music, building and people he never stopped coming back. Raised as a herdsmen he went on to become an engineer for British Aerospace. He is an ardent lover of music and travels into London regularly from his home in Hertfordshire to attend RCM concerts.

Other honorands included jazz trumpeter Mark Armstrong, pianist Elizabeth Burley, harpsichord player Terry Charlston, horn player Simon Raynor and acclaimed international pianist Kathryn Stott.

Performances by award recipients included Mezzo-soprano Emily Sierra, who won the President’s Award, harpist Bethan Griffiths, pianist Roelof Tammingh and percussionist Jess Wood. Jess Wood filled the auditorium with a vast and powerful sound piece produced on a solo drum interjecting the rhythm with unique vocal sounds. Astonishingly brave and creative, I held my breath lest I missed a second of it...

Professor Colin Lawson CBE, Director of the Royal College of Music told the guests; ‘The President’s visit is always a significant moment in the Royal College of Music’s calendar and this year we honour some exceptional musicians, including some of the biggest names in the world of opera, and two of the foremost film and TV composers of our generation. I hope our talented students continue to be inspired by the wonderful musicians we honour each year and aspire to reach similar heights of musical success.’

The Prince previewed the newly-built Royal College of Music Museum home to an internationally collection of musical instruments and music-related art which opens in summer 2020. Here HRH heard Augustin Cornwall-Irving, a David Laing Scholar studying with Jakob Lindberg, perform from the original autographed manuscript of the Welde Lute Book, an important 17th century collection of English lute works on long-term loan to the RCM Library.

The RCM is indeed our nation’s very precious jewel.
The art of debate
By Fahad Redha

So much of modern life can be traced back to the ancient Greeks. Even places as far away from Athens as Washington DC were influenced by their culture and their institutions. One of its most lasting impressions has been democracy and one of the most important parts of this is debate. Debates are important in free societies and are especially vital for both elections and court cases.

One of the most famous from the ancient world is the Mytilenian debate of 427BC. After a failed insurrection in Mytilene, the Athenians voted to execute the leaders of the uprising, as well as all of the city’s men, and to enslave the women and children. Diodotus argued for clemency with Cleon, “the most violent man at Athens” being his opponent. The latter argued that justice must prevail and that anything less would be a show of weakness. Diodotus argued that good citizens “ought to triumph not by frightening his opponents, but by beating them fairly in argument” and following a series of appeals to the Athenian audience, prevailed over his opponent.

More than two and a half millennia later, this method of debating is still used to determine guilt and do out justice, as two lawyers argue and present evidence to sway twelve jurors who will vote based on it. There are many important skills needed to be a good debater, whether you are defending someone’s freedom or fighting to have someone elected.

“If you cannot explain it simply,” according to Einstein, “you don’t understand it well enough.” It’s one thing to be able to explain the inner workings of a neutron star or complicated trade agreements to an expert in either field. But imagine you are talking to a layman. A great source of answers like this is Explain Like I’m Five on Reddit.com where people ask questions about complicated issues and others answer in simple terms that, ideally, a five-year-old would understand.

But that’s great if you are posting comments online, you can research as you are answering and even include links. Diodotus and others in his shoes didn’t have that luxury. It’s good, not just to be knowledgeable, but to be able to think on your feet. One trick that lawyers use is to find a flaw in each other’s argument. By pulling on one piece of thread you can unravel a whole tapestry. This (as well as laws against perjury) are why it’s not a good idea to lie in court! Legal Eagle is a YouTube channel where a lawyer reviews legal scenes in movies for their legal realism and critiques the fictional lawyers for their skills in, among other things, debating.

There are many, many more skills that are required to be a good debater. Listed below are some places around London where you can learn some of these skills.

London Debating Societies
Meetup Site that helps you find debate groups etc around London meetup.com
Debating London The bi-monthly public debate series run by the Great Debaters Club; free to attend and open to all. debatinglondon.com
Broke in London 6 Affordable Public Speaking/Debating Clubs In London brokeinlondon.com
Great Debaters greatdebaters.co.uk
Cogers Said to be the oldest free speech forum in the world. cogers.org
UCL Debating Society debating.org
Student Central Debate Society studentcentral.london
London Debate Society | British History british-history.ac.uk
City Students’ Union citystudents.co.uk
InnerTemple innertemple.org.uk
LSE Students’ Union bessu.com
Queen Mary Student Union (QMSU) qmsu.org
Kingston Debating Society kingstondebating.org.uk
Goldsmith Debating Society goldsmithssu.org
SOAS Debating Society soasdebatingsociety.wordpress.com
Debate Mate Improving social mobility by teaching key skills through after school debate programmes for schools in the UK. debatemate.com
London Dauphine Debate Society The Dauphine Debate Society was created to promote both French and English languages through the organisation of public speaking events. Our members love to speak their mind and enjoy discussing news and global issues over a beer (or two). london.dauphine.fr
LSBSU Debate Society lbssu.org
Middlesex University Debate Club mdx.ac.uk
BPP University bppstudents.com
London Society londonsociety.org.uk
Imperial College imperiakcollegeunion.org
New College of the Humanities nchlondon.ac.uk
Debate Chamber Academic summer school for 11-18-year-olds, debatechamber.com
Toastmasters toastmasterclub.org
BLSA London bartslondon.com/debatingandethics
Oxford Union Hosts debates oxford-union.org
Intelligence Squared World famous forum for debate intelligencesquared.com
Top 5 Universities for debating targetcareers.co.uk
Gray’s Inn – Vocolise A student-led prison debating initiative. graysinn.org.uk
Debating London The free public debate series run by the Great Debaters Club debatinglondon.com
104 London Debaters 104londondebaters.club
The importance of a voice coach
By Krissy Waite

It takes approximately 100 muscles in our lips, tongue, face and vocal box to make sound, or in other words, to speak. These tools can be utilized as early as six months old, when many infants begin forming their first words. Just like learning to play a sport or instrument, the spoken word requires muscle memory. And just as with sports and music, you may want a coach to help you fully develop your vocal range and muscles.

According to ‘SingUp.org,’ there are several physical, psychological, social and musical benefits in training your vocal cords to sing such as improved respiratory and cardiac function, better interpersonal communication, enhanced ideas of social inclusion and increased worldly education about music. However, vocal coaches are not just for singers. Specialists in the field can help with a variety of vocal issues and requests like accent and dialect reductions, speech impediments, projecting confidence, public speaking fears, and pronunciation and diction improvement. Other examples include actors auditioning for drama school, after-dinner speakers, corporate employees, barista training, or simply improving interview techniques. Medical professionals may need help with empathy in their tone for when they speak with patients, while religious leaders could benefit from learning about persuasive tone and engagement in their voice. Even sales personnel may find they are more successful in their careers after taking a few vocal lessons to make their voice more compelling.

Essentially, almost anyone can profit from vocal coaching. Younger and older individuals alike can benefit equally by learning to fully utilize their voice and to project confidence when they speak. In fact, having effective and strong communication in the workplace is essential to anyone’s career as it can help improve team building, innovation, growth and management; all traits valuable to an employer.

Phil Shaw, a vocal coach, said that while there is no specific age range at which is more beneficial to start vocal training, it can be especially empowering to younger people. He said he has noticed today’s young people becoming increasingly more introverted and believes vocal coaching can help to instill more confidence in them. “I think the more younger people become aware of sound and the potential that sound has not only to increase their confidence if it is properly channelled and becomes a part of their own enjoyment, then it can also give young people much more focus in life,” Shaw said.

Clearly, there is a psychological benefit to harnessing the full potential of your voice, but what are the medical benefits? It has long been known that singing releases endorphins (the chemicals that make you happy) into the brain, eventually making you feel energized and uplifted. However, exercising your voice also tones your abdominal muscles and diaphragm, stimulates circulation, and helps regulate your breathing which allows for better aerobic capacity. It can also allow for a release of muscle tension, which relaxes your body.

Tom Hiddleston, English Actor, says, “For myself, for a long time… maybe I felt inauthentic or something, I felt like my voice wasn’t worth hearing, and I think everyone’s voice is worth hearing. So, if you’ve got something to say, say it from the rooftops.”

Shaw trained to be a professional actor at the Webber Douglas Academy of Dramatic Art, where he progressed his career into theatre, television and film casting, and vocal coaching with actors, industry professionals, and people from many walks of life. He has a passion for acting and the spoken word, and his main objective in teaching is to help an individual become connected to and aware of their vocal and breathing apparatus as a means of personal empowerment.

One of the first things Shaw does when examining someone’s voice is a rapid evaluation of the vocal mechanism and how it is functioning. Second, and most importantly to Shaw, he establishes a goal for the individual, because this will determine the approach he takes in coaching them. For example, an actor who is preparing a Shakespeare monologue for an audition may need help adapting their voice to match the idiosyncrasy of a particular character in terms of tone, colour and pacing, whereas a person in the political or legal profession will require more speech modulation, pitch and projection work.

Shaw says that when looking for a voice coach, individuals should not only consider experience and recommendations, but also someone who they can trust, because voice coaching can be a vulnerable and self-exposing process which can pay dividends when the speaker discovers the freedom and dexterity of an uninhibited voice. “You don’t just have to be an actor to benefit from vocal coaching,” he said.

For more information about Phil Shaw and his work please visit the podcast on kcwlondon.co.uk.
From Kyoto to Catwalk:
The V&A’s love letter to the kimono
By May Woods

Exceptional fashion exhibits are the V&A’s backbone. Recently, Christian Dior: Designer of Dreams, sold out so rapidly that the show was extended for a further seven weeks. Before that, Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty, a transfer from the New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art, was widely seen as a critical success. The London museum’s newest flagship offering, Kimono: Kyoto to Catwalk, represents a thematic divergence that is no less enchanting.

In venturing away from the evitable allure of an iconic brand, Anna Jackson’s curation exists in stark contrast to the almost garish wow-factor of previous exhibits. Traditional glass display cabinets are embraced. Spring green hues complement warm creams, and plain drapes make for an air of authentic tranquillity. To rush around this exhibit verges on ignoble. Doubtlessly, the atmosphere is enhanced by the nature of the exhibits themselves.

Each garment is delicate. Some to the extent they may never again be displayed; even when returned to Japan. Each item, and there are over 300, invites a pause. Here, to look is to savour. It is as if studying a living butterfly at close range. One does not need to understand or appreciate the art of embroidery to grasp or gawp at the intricacies of these garments. Arguably, this represents Anna Jackson’s greatest success. The boundaries of esotericism are effectively broken.

In numerous respects, the kimono is fixedly ahead of its time. One 18th century piece is embroidered with lines from a romantic poem; foresight, perhaps, of the universal appeal of the slogan t-shirt. Both utilitarian and unisex, the garment does not distinguish between the masculine or feminine frame, feeding into present day considerations of sexual expression and gender fluidity. Indeed, the translation of kimono: literally ‘a thing to wear’, counters common misconceptions around the garment’s performative origins. It is the simplicity of cut that lends itself so ideally as a canvas; one upon which implication; be that political, social or sexual, has played out with immense passion and ingenuity.

While the kimono is often abstract, modern designers have produced astonishingly overt attires, often carrying clear political messages. One such example is Ishikawa Narutoshi’s kimono since the Heian period (794-1185), the chronologically structured exhibit begins in Sixteenth Century Kyoto. Here, a vibrant fashion culture developed, driven by the wealthy merchant class. While a time of unprecedented peace and prosperity meant that merchants could revel in luxury, the kimono, both on catwalks and in popular culture, is undeniable.

It is here that the V&A is able to play its celebrity trump card. Visitors have to wait for the household names, but upon arrival they come in droves. Freddie Mercury’s delicately patterned and overtly feminine kimono stands beside Jean Paul Gautier’s fabulous ensemble, made for Madonna’s Nothing Really Matters music video. Original Star Wars costumes feature opposite the iconic Bjork/Alexander Mcqueen collaboration, which illustrated the seminal Homogenic album.

Through the exquisite lens of the kimono, Anna Jackson has presented an eye-watering exploration of Japan through the ages. It is a jaw-to-the-floor, must-see celebration and preservation; of both national culture and global influence.

From Feb 29 to June 21, V&A Museum, vam.ac.uk
Embedded in the hollow alabaster head of Bes, a ferocious looking beast but benevolently the Egyptian god of fertility and protector of women, is a small receptacle designed to hold a tincture.

What on earth can it be to deserve such a splendid guardian? only kohl, the magic potion of the ancients with both beautifying and protective properties. Over millennia numerous little pots have been dug up, because everybody from pharaohs to farm hands rimmed the eyes with thick black lines of kohl. So prized was this elixir, many Egyptian corpses were buried with their jars of kohl handy for use in the afterlife. Next to the pharaoh kohl was king.

Peasantry used kohl mixed from animal fat and charcoal, but nobility used kohl made from galena, a dark grey crushed mineral form of lead sulphide mined from the mountainous regions of Sinai. Blended with soot, ground pearls and gold to add iridescence and even crushed scarab beetles for that extra glitter factor, it was perfumed with frankincense, moistened with oil and painted on with a feather or stone tool. Not only was kohl a dramatic and glamorous substance, but a very precious one; the science behind Egyptian cosmetics was so advanced that the word chemistry derives from alchemy having its toponymy or roots in Kemet meaning Egypt. We have discovered there was far more to the ancient Egyptian than with mint. Back then, as now, people worried about getting wrinkly and becoming hideous so not only was it vital to be aesthetically pleasing in order to ward off the evil eye, but comeliness and cleanliness meant holiness, making mortals closer to the gods. All ancient Egyptians paid much attention to their personal grooming. Hair was shaved to prevent lice and the wearing of braided wigs was routine, crafted from papyrus, if you were poor, to human or horse hair if you were rich. Everyone bathed religiously, afterwards slathering on oils and ointments made from melted beeswax, sesame oil, powdered almonds and cardamom to moisturise and protect. The elite wore sandals, but most went barefoot, so insect repellents and anti fungal unguents were massaged in to prevent cracked soles caused by the arid climate. As with the ancient Chinese much attention was paid to the fingernails; in the marketplace nail bars were as common as spice stalls with the pharaoh’s personal manicurist holding an esteemed and prestigious position, his title always proudly prominent on his tomb.

www.tutankhamun-london.com
Events

March 2020

BUSINESS

March 17
The National Career Guidance Show
Kensington Olympia
The National Career Guidance Show is for careers advisers, to both adults and young people, careers leads in schools and careers educators from any other setting. Free to attend, these events feature more than 200 exhibitors across the series, plus one-to-one CPD clinics organised by the Career Development Institute (CDI). Come along and improve your knowledge of careers, not only for your clients, but also for your own career growth.
020 7385 1200
Hammersmith Rd, Hammersmith, London W14 8UX
olympia.london

March 20
HR Essentials
The Office Group
Do you know what is legally required of you as a manager or employer? Do you have challenges with employees and don’t know how to resolve? Do you need to recruit but don’t know the best way?
020 781 8208
Tintagel House, 92 Albert Embankment, London, UK SE1 7TW
wandsworthchamber.org

March 19
Making Sense of EU-Exit Workshop
London Chamber of Commerce and Industry
This workshop, organised in partnership with Unsworth, aims to support businesses currently trading with the EU. Attendees will be able to test their current Brexit-readiness position and plan a roadmap of practical steps to take to ensure your business is prepared for the impending Customs requirements. There will also be an opportunity to network with other UK traders experiencing the same issues.

March 20
HR Essentials
The Office Group
Do you know what is legally required of you as a manager or employer? Do you have challenges with employees and don’t know how to resolve? Do you need to recruit but don’t know the best way?
020 781 8208
Tintagel House, 92 Albert Embankment, London, UK SE1 7TW
wandsworthchamber.org

April 7
Launch of K&C Business Awards 2020
The launch of the K&C Business Awards 2020 at the Holiday Inn Kensington Forum
020 7795 0304
97 Cromwell Road, London, SW7 4DN
kccclondon.org

DANCE & OPERA

Ongoing
Live at Lunch
Royal Opera House
Drop by for free lunchtime performances, featuring Royal Opera House artists and guest artists. Experience an exciting programme of free lunchtime performances inspired by the heritage of the Royal Opera House and its operas and ballets. Artists from

ROYAL COLLEGE OF MUSIC OPERA STUDIO

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DEBUSSY L’ENFANT PRODIGUE
RAVEL L’HEURE ESPAGNOLLE

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ROYAL COLLEGE OF MUSIC, BRITTEN THEATRE, LONDON
TICKETS £10–50
BOX OFFICE 020 7591 4314
WWW.RCM.AC.UK/RCMOPERA

RHS LONDON
SPRING LAUNCH & ORCHID SHOW
Tues 7 & Weds 8 April 2020
Late Event Tues 7 April
Orchid displays | Plant shopping | Spring bulbs
Talks & advice | Urban gardening inspiration
Sustainability & wellbeing workshops
Book now rhs.org.uk

Royal Horticultural Halls
St James’s Park / Pimlico, London Victoria
Your visit supports our work as a charity
*Not including entry to the Late Event. RHS Registered Charity No: 222879/SC038262

Free for RHS members*
The Royal Opera, Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, The Royal Ballet and a range of guest artists perform in the newly opened-up spaces of the Royal Opera House.
020 7304 4000
Bow St, Covent Garden, London WC2E 9DD
roh.org.uk

Ends March 23
La Traviata
Royal Opera House
Alfredo Germont and the courtesan Violetta Valéry fall in love at a party in Violetta’s Paris salon. Alfredo is determined to cure Violetta of her tuberculosis, and the couple leave Paris and begin a contented life in the country. But Violetta’s happiness is destroyed when Alfredo’s father Giorgio Germont pays her a visit.
020 7240 1200
Bow St, Covent Garden, London WC2E 9DD
roh.org.uk

March 25-27
BalletBoyz
Sadler’s Wells
Following their recent, triumphant shows Them/Us, Fourteen Days, Young Men, and Life, the multi-award winning BalletBoyz are back and celebrating their 20th anniversary year. Deluxe fuses the work of some of the world’s most exciting and innovative choreographers and composers. Chinese dancer and choreographer Xie Xin (TAO Dance Theatre) creates a work set to an original score by composer Jiang Shao-feng, whilst Maxine Doyle (Punchdrunk) collaborates with jazz musician and composer Cassie Kinoshii, of the Mercury-nominated SEED Ensemble.
020 7863 8000
Rosebery Ave, Clerkenwell, London EC1R 4TN
sadlerwells.com

EXHIBITIONS & AUCTIONS
Ongoing
Turn It Up: On Paradoxes
Horniman Museum
Jide Odukoya’s photographic series shows Nigeria abuzz through the lens of traditional Nigerian weddings, presented as some of the world’s most opulent ceremonies. Turn It Up: On Paradoxes deploys a critical lens to explore the paradox of parallel Nigerian worlds; contrasting cosmopolitan affluence and extravagance, with underlying economic poverty. His work focuses on global consumerism and overindulgence, Nigeria’s contagious spirit of celebration, and moments of everyday intimacy.
020 8699 1872
100 London Rd, Forest Hill, London SE23 3PQ
horniman.ac.uk

Ends April 19
Unbound: Visionary Women Collecting Textiles
Two Temple Place
Textiles and costume give us a beautiful and intensely human insight into our history. Unbound: Visionary Women Collecting Textiles celebrates seven pioneering women who saw beyond the purely functional, to reveal the extraordinary artistic, social and cultural importance of textiles.
020 7836 3715
London WC2R 3BD
twotempleplace.org

Ends May 25
Léon Spilliaert
Royal Academy
Spilliaert’s work is characterised by dramatic perspectives and a quiet luminescence. He is best known for a sequence of enigmatic self-portraits and for his atmospheric night-time scenes of Ostend. This is the first monographic exhibition of Spilliaert’s work in the UK and will showcase some 80 works on paper, from images of his home town and the coast, to later works capturing the tranquillity of the forest outside Brussels. It will bring together works from public and private collections across Belgium, France and the USA, presenting a journey through the lifetime of a remarkably insightful and unusual artist.
020 7300 8090
Burlington House, Piccadilly, Mayfair, London W1J 0BD
royalacademy.org.uk

FAIRS & FESTIVALS
March 15
Adams Antiques Fairs
Lindley Hall, The Royal Horticultural Halls
At this fair there will be antique dealers specialising in fine jewellery, silver, ceramics and paintings amongst other items. With over 140 stands, the mix is truly eclectic. There’s always a diverse array of decorative and ancient pieces, making it a totally unique event in the centre of London, minutes from Trafalgar Square and Westminster Cathedral.
80 Vincent Square, London, SW1P 2PE
adamsantiquesfairs.com

March 19
National Landlord Investment Show
Olympia
Visit the National Landlord Investment Show at any of the UK property hotspots and get unparalleled advice, meeting leading suppliers, networking and sharing knowledge with your peers. With over 69 shows to date, this show provides a proven face-to-face platform for current and prospective landlords to keep up to date with industry developments and ensure they maximise their property investments.
Hammersmith Road, Hammersmith, London W14 8UX
landlordinvestmentshow.co.uk

March 19-22
The Other Art Fair

Westminster Abbey
Palm Sunday
Sunday 5th April
8.00 am Holy Communion
10.30 am Blessing of Palms, Procession and Sung Eucharist*
3.00 pm Evensong*

Maundy Thursday
Thursday 9th April
3.00 pm Solemn Liturgy of the Passion and Death of Our Lord*

Holy Saturday
Saturday 11th April
3.00 pm Vespers and First Eucharist of Easter*

Easter Day
Sunday 12th April
8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30 am Sung Eucharist*
3.00 pm Evensong and Procession*

*Services sung by The Choir of Westminster Abbey

St Margaret’s Church
Good Friday
Friday 10th April
3.00 pm Solemn Liturgy of the Passion and Death of Our Lord*

Holy Saturday
Saturday 11th April
8.00 pm Vespers and First Eucharist of Easter*

Easter Day
Sunday 12th April
11.00 am Sung Eucharist

For visitor opening times, see westminster-abbey.org/visit-us

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MARCH 19TH 2020
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Attend the UK’s largest landlord debate hosted by Political Broadcaster Andrew Neil and featuring Michael Portillo. The debate starts at 10am and places are limited. Register FREE now and arrive early to avoid disappointment.

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Find tax advice, investment opportunities, legal, finance, products & proptech.

Meet 100’s of exhibitors & attend seminars delivered by industry experts.

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@LandlordInvestmentShow
The Old Truman Brewery
Welcome to The Other Art Fair, presented by Saatchi Art, the UK’s favourite fair to meet and buy art direct from the very best emerging artists. The 19th London edition, The Other Art Fair, Old Truman Brewery will continue to delight and inspire art lovers with a tightly curated and distinctive programme of fair features that will create a platform for the ‘unexpected’ at the fair.
91 Brick Lane, Spitalfields, London
E1 6QR
theotherartfair.com

March 29
Sam Wanamaker Festival 2020
Shakespeare's Globe Theatre
The Sam Wanamaker Festival offers a heady mix of the theatrical and comical celebrating remarkable emerging acting talents from the UK's leading drama schools and from Rutgers. Students present a selection of scenes by Shakespeare and his contemporaries, offering them the unparalleled experience of playing on the Globe stage to a packed Yard and galleries. Three days of intensive work culminate in one mighty festival finale gig.
020 7401 9919
21 New Globe Walk, Bankside, London, SE1 9DT
shakespearesglobe.com

April 4-6
National Wedding Show
Excel
With inspiration, help and advice from 200+ wedding specialists, thousands of dresses from all the leading designers and a show-stopping catwalk, The National Wedding Show is the ultimate day out for planning the perfect wedding! The show has a unique selection of top wedding specialists and suppliers, enabling you to source the products you need for your special day, all under one roof.
020 7069 5000
Royal Victoria Dock, 1 Western Gateway, Royal Docks, London
E16 1XL
excel.london

May 24
Simply Electric
Beaulieu
New for 2020, all electric and plug-in hybrid owners are invited to drive into Beaulieu on Sunday 24th May and park up within the museum complex for what promises to be a superb day out for EV owners and enthusiasts. From BMW i8s to the retro Sinclair C5, Beaulieu's Simply Electric show is set to provide a great opportunity to admire a stunning range of vehicles and to connect with fellow enthusiasts. All participants have the opportunity to be chosen as the winner of the People's Choice Award, selected by public vote. Prizes will be awarded to the winner and runners-up.
Events

olds plenty of real life activities to have a go at. Each child will be given 4 hours to explore and 50 KidZos (the local currency) to spend on activities, or work and save for their own bank card.

0330 131 3330
Shepherds Bush, Greater London, W12 7GA
kidzania.co.uk

Ends March 19
Re:Sound Choir
Polka Theatre
Each weekly session is an opportunity to make new friends, have a cuppa and sing your heart out. The group is open to everyone. There is no need to audition and no need for experience. It’s fun. It’s free. It’s yours. Sessions are after school, every Thursday at Merton Abbey Primary School. See website for more information
polkatheatre.com

April 4-19
Easter Lindt Gold Bunny Hunt
Kensington Palace
Take the family back in time and join in the hunt around the home and gardens of Queen Victoria and William III and Mary II. Pick up the Lindt Gold Bunny Hunt trail map when you arrive at palace. Follow the clues on the trail to find large golden bunny statues hidden around the palace and gardens, whilst discovering some of Kensington Palace’s famous characters from the past. Solve the challenges to win your delicious Lindt Gold Bunny chocolate reward! The hunt is designed for children aged 3-12 years old and their families. Allow 1 hour 30 mins to complete it with ease.
0333 320 6000
Kensington Gardens, Kensington, London W8 4PX
hrp.org.uk

FILM & PHOTOGRAPHY

April 16 – July 12
Barbara Hammer / Carolee Schneemann
Zabludowicz Collection
This exhibition pays tribute to the work of Barbara Hammer and Carolee Schneemann, two hugely significant artists, each born in 1939 and who died in 2019. This collaboration between Zabludowicz Collection and Julia Stoschek Collection (Düsseldorf/Berlin), includes important film, video and collage made between 1964 and 1990, with a number of pieces presented in the UK for the first time.
020 7428 8940
176 Prince of Wales Rd, London NW5 3PT
zabludowiczcollection.com

MUSIC

March 12
Bach, Mozart and Tchaikovsky with the Academy
St-Martin-in-the-Fields
The Academy of St Martin in the Fields is one of the world’s finest chamber orchestras, renowned for fresh, brilliant

GARE ST LAZARE IRELAND

HOW IT IS
(PART TWO)

BY SAMUEL BECKETT

15 Apr – 02 May
100 metres from Notting Hill Gate
Enjoy a concert of music that explores the history of the Foundling Hospital. A recital of chamber music curated and presented by Music students from Goldsmiths, University of London, drawing connections across the history of the Foundling Hospital and its philanthropic legacy. 020 7841 3600 40 Brunswick Square, London WC1N 1AZ foundlingmuseum.org.uk

March 28 Royal Choral Society performs Bach's St John Passion Holy Trinity Church The Royal Choral Society, one of the UK's oldest symphonic choirs, performs Bach's sacred tour de force, the St John Passion, which recounts Christ's final days. Packed with compelling recitatives and electrifying choruses, and verging on days. Packed with compelling recitatives and electrifying choruses, and verging on Pippa Evans Jokes and Song Brasserie Zedel Star of the Olivier Award-winning Showstopper! The Improvised Musical, BBC Radio 4's I'm Sorry I Haven't A Clue and ITV's Tonight At The Palladium, Pippa Evans presents a laughter-filled evening of songs she's written, songs other people have written and songs to be made-up on the night. 020 7734 4888 20 Sherwood Street, Soho, London, W1F 7ED brasseriezedel.com

Ends April 3 Rai the DJ Bush Theatre Love UK music? Come and join Rai the DJ in the Bush Theatre's Library Bar for a night of good vibes and even better music. Fresh from AZ Mag Live, The Official UK Black Pride Pre-Party, Rai the DJ returns to the Bush Theatre after providing the tunes at its press night for Yvette. 020 8743 5050 7 Uxbridge Rd, White City, London W12 8LJ bushtheatre.co.uk

TALKS, TOURS, & WALKS

See website for dates Houses of Parliament Guided Tour Discover the history and work of Parliament on a fun and informative tour delivered by an expert guide. Your 90-minute tour in English includes the House of Commons, House of Lords and Westminster Hall. If you have any specific accessibility requirements, please contact visitparliament@parliament.uk to ensure your needs are met. parliament.uk

Ends March 14 Theatre 503 When Max pays Ronan a visit at his restaurant in Dublin, he's determined to prove to her how far he's come, but she's got something bigger to discuss. Over the course of one wine-soaked evening, old wounds are exposed and new truths uncovered. MEAT is a story of class, consent and how modern Ireland reckons with the transgressions buried in its past. How can one couple navigate their shared history when their memories don't quite match up?

March 29 Goldsmith Student Showcase Foundling Museum Enjoy a concert of music that explores interpretations of the world's greatest orchestral music. 020 7766 1100 Trafalgar Square, Charing Cross, London WC2N 4JJ smartin-in-the-fields.org

March 24 Handel on the Move Handel & Hendrix Join Baroque ensemble Madre for an exploration of chamber music related to Handel's relocation from Germany to England, through trio and solo sonatas for flute and recorder, unaccompanied flute duets and solo harpsichord works. Madre are David Beaney (flute/recorder), Lesley Holliday (flute) and Claire Williams (harpsichord).

020 7495 1685 25 Brook Street, Mayfair, London W1K 4HB handelhendrix.org

Ends March 21 The High Table

Bush Theatre

The dresses are chosen, the venue's booked and the RSVPs are flooding in. But Tara's perfect Nigerian wedding to her girlfriend Leah is suddenly derailed when her parents refuse to attend. High above London, suspended between the stars, three of Tara's ancestors are jolted from their eternal rest. Can these representatives of generations passed keep the family together? And will Tara's decision ever get their blessing?

March 21 Not Quite Jerusalem Finborough Theatre It's 1979, and Mike, Carrie, Pete and Dave have fled grim, divided England for the sunshine, sex, beer and bagels of an Israeli kibbutz. Only to find that what was supposed to be a working holiday is more like hard labour in 100-degree temperatures. Pete and Dave soon alienate themselves with their foul-mouthed, high-spirited behaviour. Carrie desperately tries to fit in, but cannot relate to either her fellow-countrymen or the Israelis. Only Cambridge drop-out Mike seems able to articulate what it means to be young, conflicted, English, and a very long way from home. Until, that is, he meets no-nonsense kibbutznik Gila...

01223 357851 118 Finborough Rd, Kensington, London SW10 9ED finboroughtheatre.co.uk

March 28 National Theatre Running in the Dorfman Theatre from 30 March – 9 April this energetic and engaging retelling of Shakespeare’s most well-known tragedy is suitable for ages 8-12. 020 7452 3000 Upper Ground, Bishop’s, London SE1 9PX nationaltheatre.org.uk

Ends April 9 Love, Love, Love Lyric Hammersmith It’s 1967. The Beatles are performing All You Need Is Love on global TV for the very first time. Kenneth and Sandra meet. Love, Love, Love charts one couple’s journey forty years from the era of free love to the beginning of the 21st Century. Smoking, drinking, affectionate and paranoid, Kenneth and Sandra build their life and family together in a time of increasing national prosperity, when the future is always better than the past. Now they’re retired and their children grown, but why hasn’t it all worked out the way they thought? What happens when the children you think you’ve done everything for, believe you haven’t done enough? A family go to war over their personal politics in Mike Bartlett’s funny and scathing look at the opposing values of two very different generations.

020 8741 6850 Lyric Square, King St, London W6 0QL lyric.co.uk

Compiled & edited by Fahad Redha
Events

**Ewbank’s**

Surrey’s Premier Antique and Specialist Auctioneers

S mley Auctioneers holds four sales annually of Chinese Ceramics & Works of Art, and one area of collecting that has seen a remarkable rise in value since the turn of the millennium is that most revered of hardstones, jade. Jade, which encompasses nephrite and jadeite varieties, comes in a large range of colours, from black, brown, lavender, apple green, celadon and, most precious of all, white; Semley Auctioneers sold a 2-inch white jade pebble shaped snuff bottle for £23,000. Value depends on several factors including age, colour, translucency and, of course, quality of carving. Evenness of colour will also affect price, as seen in a small evenly coloured yellow jade shallow dish which brought £23,500 (although called ‘yellow’ the colour is actually a shade of green). Obviously the form of the piece is important, too; archaic designs are very sought after, evidenced by Semley Auctioneers selling a small archaistic ewer for £37,000 and a Qing Dynasty fang ding for £45,000. Animal groups are popular, too; a celadon ducks group made £35,000 and a phoenix went at £20,000. Jade is very hard and carving using the traditional method of abrasion with sand and tool was extremely laborious. The modern method of using rotary tools with diamond bits is much quicker and when executed well is hard to differentiate from the older method. A clue is sometimes found in the polish which is often very glossy on modern pieces.

Semley Auctioneers’ sales are held on Saturdays and are illustrated on no less than four separate websites, with two simultaneous live bidding platforms. Enquiries regarding consigning items for sale or valuation, either at home, at the salerooms, or at the Wimborne office should be directed to Imogen Wilby at the main Wiltshire saleroom office. For valuations and collections in the Home Counties, London or at the South Kensington office, please contact: Simon Pearce on 020 7591 0159.

**Chinese Ceramics & Works of Art**

He may look a rather severe figure but Alexander Nowell, Dean of St Paul’s for 42 years throughout Elizabeth I’s reign, had a lighter side to his nature, as the man credited with inventing bottled beer.

A cryptic letter that comes with the portrait has led to the discovery of links to Rupert Murdoch and a very public family scandal whose resolution involved the portrait being granted as a gift.

The story has unfolded as Dean Nowell’s descendants consigned this portrait of the long-lived scholar and cleric, born around 1517, who died in 1602, for sale to Ewbank’s Auctions of Surrey, who will offer it as a highlight of their three-day 30th Anniversary sale from March 18-20.

The story goes that Nowell left a bottle of beer, decanted from a barrel, on the river bank during a fishing trip, forgetting about it. He rediscovered it by chance a few days later and found it was still “perfectly drinkable”. When he opened the still-full bottle, “he found no bottle, but a gun, such was the sound at the opening thereof; and this is believed the original of bottled ale in England.”

Live online bidding is available via Ewbank’s website at: www.ewbankauctions.co.uk

**Portrait of the ‘accidental inventor’ of bottled beer comes to light at Ewbank’s**

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**Decorative Arts: 9 April**

**Contemporary Art: 9 April**

**Asian Art: 30 April**

**Vintage Fashion & Textiles: 30 April**

01483 223101
Burnt Common Auction Rooms, London Road, Send, GU23 7LN
antiques@ewbankauctions.co.uk www.ewbankauctions.co.uk

Image courtesy of Ewbank’s Auctions
No Man’s Land

A bronze plaque by Charles Sargeant Jagger entitled *No Man’s Land* that was discovered in a house clearance is going under the hammer at Special Auction Services in Newbury on Tuesday 31st March and is expected to fetch £20,000-25,000.

Jagger is one of the most celebrated sculptors of the 20th Century and following active service in World War One, he is best known for his war memorials. Examples of his work can be seen in London at the Royal Artillery Memorial at Hyde Park Corner as well as the Great Western Railway War Memorial on Platform One at Paddington Station.

*No Man’s Land* depicts a “listening post”, a technique of trench warfare in which a soldier would hide among the corpses, broken stretchers and barbed wire of No Man’s Land, in order to listen for the enemy.

“Thomas Forrester, TV Expert and Director of SAS says, “This is a hidden gem that was bought to us at one of our free Valuation Days and is sure to have a wide appeal not only to those who love Modern British Art, but also for those for whom the depiction of War is significant.”

Readers can find out more information about this item or anything else in the auction, obtain a catalogue or find out how to bid by contacting SAS on 01635 580 595 or via admin@specialauctionservices.com.

You can also follow them for more exciting news on their auctions and to find out how much this fantastic piece sells for @SpecialAuction1.
Dining Out

Charlies at Browns Hotel
Albemarle St, Mayfair, London W1S 4BP
T: 020 7493 6020
www.roccoforthotels.com

Browns is situated just north of Piccadilly on Albemarle St, right in the heart of Mayfair, and an easy stroll to most of the West End and the Theatre district. It’s a moderately busy street, and we were a little later than anticipated arriving, but it’s the mark of a truly good hotel that you can almost instantly find yourself immersed in a different world as soon as you pass through the door.

Top establishments eschew automatic doors for uniformed staff that can spot a guest who might need a little help, a suitcase transported, or in our case two slightly stressed gourmands who are very much looking forward to chilling out and spoiling ourselves for the night.

Reception? “Follow me sir, Michael, can you look after Mrs Hepburn whilst I show this gentleman to reception. Lady Astis will be arriving shortly, I’ve just had a call to say she’s on the way. Here we are sir, is there anything else I can help you with?” It’s actually quite hard to resist palming out tenners to all and sundry, but I remember just in time that I’m not an Arab potentate, or the chairman of a Footsie 100 company. There’s a bit of country house hotel old-world charm to the interior; acres of polished wood, immaculate mirrors, and the odd bit of quirky artwork that speaks of tradition and permanence in a sometimes perfidious world. Check-In’s a breeze, and we slip off to our third floor suite to grab a slice of luxury.

We had come to eat, and we did well, but the thickly cut calves liver and bacon resting on a pillow of creamy mash on the other side of the table. We had to comply. Less flatteringly, it was noted that I would be consigned to a far corner if I started to snore. I sought refuge in a glass of Champagne, and boned up on a bit of history.

Browns was the first hotel to open in London (1837) and has hosted, amongst others, Agatha Christie, Roosevelt, Napoleon III and Rudyard Kipling who reportedly wrote the Jungle Book there. I imagine he was a pretty quick writer, a good friend of the owner, or fairly well off. Alexander Graham Bell also made the first telephone call from here. Fascinating stuff, but I was reminded that our booking for Charlie’s restaurant was imminent. I think her exact words were, "get changed, NOW!" I was happy to comply.

After a not completely successful time with Heinz Becks Italian, Adam Byatt took over, installing Matthew Starling to lead the kitchen. Both have earned Michelin Stars in the past and the menu is now firmly seasonal British/modern European in focus, which is a much better fit. The interior, freshly kitted out by designer Olga Polizzi, marries bold botanical wallpaper, classical columns, wood panelling and plush velvet, with huge poppies in perfect bloom providing a splash of colour and life on the tables. On the waiters recommendation I started with some freshly sliced Moxon’s smoked salmon from the trolley, and my companion had the Kingfish ceviche, pickled rhubarb and blood orange. Warm rolls had been provided for the table, and some soda bread for the salmon, which had an intense smokiness that didn’t play second fiddle to anything. The Kingfish had an interesting subtlety, the blood orange being the first and purest flavour, followed by the beautifully prepared Caramel Crème Brûlée lingering slightly longer on the palate.

My rack of Cumbrian Lamb with aubergine, artichoke and green olive was supplemented with Cornish new potatoes and was a satisfyingly hearty plate, as was the thickly cut calves’ liver and bacon resting on a pillow of creamy mash on the other side of the table. We had to come, and we did well, washing it all down with a bottle of Rock Angel. Never one to dodge a dessert, I ordered a rather delicious Crime Caramel that allowed us to linger a little longer before coffee and a return to that fabulous bed. I was in a different world to that slightly ansty chap who had stood at the hotel entrance just a few hours earlier, and I didn’t want to go back!

Go for: high end luxury and old world charm.

David Hughes
**Mango Tree**

46 Grosvenor Pl, Belgravia, London SW1X 7EQ
T: 020 7823 1888
www.mangotree.org.uk

Nestled in the heart of Belgravia, the **Mango Tree** restaurant promises a culinary experience that is firmly rooted back in Bangkok. Whether you want to enjoy a romantic dinner or celebrate a special occasion, diners will experience pure culinary indulgence in beautiful surroundings.

The restaurant serves seasonal dishes inspired by each of the four main culinary regions in Thai cuisine: rich and mild dishes from the north, spicy food from the east, mild dishes influenced by the Chinese cooking style from the central region, and hot and spicy food from the south.

Upon arrival at the spacious venue, guests are greeted by hosts who offer a warm and welcoming service throughout the night. There is a well-rounded selection of dishes from sharing platters to speciality meats, fish and vegetable options. The à la carte menu is varied and caters to all tastes for a gastronomic journey through Bangkok. Diners can choose from flavoursome dishes like baked sea bass wrapped in a banana leaf, roasted duck on a bed of pak choi and spicy massaman curry.

To begin the meal, we opted for fish cakes and spring rolls, accompanied by delicious vegetable dumplings. The dumplings alone would have sufficed; they were beautifully presented in a wooden casket, steamed to perfection. Traditionally Cantonese, the *dim sum* selection was a surprising addition to the menu, but worked well alongside more traditional Thai dishes.

For the main course, I was happy to find a long list of vegetarian and vegan options, settling on a grilled tofu and aubergine dish with sticky rice. The tofu was silky and perfectly light with a creamy curry sauce. My companion opted for a classic and filling Pad Thai: make sure you opt for a light starter if you go for the noodle-based or fried mains.

Other menu highlights include a "surf-and-turf" sharing platter, grilled marinated sirloin of tender wagyu beef and fragrant rice dishes with steamed vegetables. If you are looking to really indulge in a taste of Thai cuisine, you can opt for the set menu, which features assorted appetisers, spicy soups and a selection of signature mains like king prawn stir fry and chicken curry. Round off your meal with light desserts such as mango cheesecake and refreshing sorbets, and don't miss the cocktail list for delicious tipples to accompany your meal.

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**Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express**

**Saturday 28th March 2020**

The Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express provides a wonderful opportunity to get out and about during the winter months, with the added bonus of steam haulage over the Northern Fells, including the spectacular Settle & Carlisle Railway.

Join us from London Euston to visit Carlisle.

There are three classes available:

- **Premier Dining** includes a full English breakfast and a four course dinner served at your seat.

- **First Class** includes morning tea or coffee with a bacon/breakfast roll, a Danish pastry and an afternoon service of tea or coffee with a savoury of the day followed by a scone with butter and jam.

- **Standard Class** includes a reserved seat usually at a table for four.

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Tables for two can be guaranteed in Premier Dining and First Class for a supplement of £25 per person (subject to availability). A buffet car is available and serves tea, coffee, snacks and light refreshments.

For more information including approximate timings please visit railwaytouring.net

The Railway Touring Company’s standard conditions of booking and travel apply. See website or brochures for details.

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**Dining & Travel Promotion**

online: www.kcw.london.co.uk

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**Mango Tree**

35 Grosvenor Pl, Belgravia, London SW1X 7EQ
T: 020 7823 1888
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Strong toned legs for summer
By Rosa Reeve

Having strong toned legs for summer is a great motivation as well as functionally great for other sporting activities. Rosa from Pilatespluswellness shares some exercises for great looking legs, but also exercises for pelvic stability and strength. Pull your belly button into your spine as you move to make sure you are engaging your core:

Lunges Static

- Stand with your feet hip width apart and take a long stride stance, so one leg forward and one back.
- Lift your heel on your back leg as you bend both your knees simultaneously to lunge down.
- As you do this imagine you are sitting on a chair under the front leg so your hips sit back as you lunge down.
- Your weight is in your front leg and the back leg is for gentle balance.
- Make sure your front knee does not go forward over your toes as shown in the photo.
- Straighten the legs to come back up.

Standing on one leg and balance whilst doing 3 moves. (mobilises your hip and works the standing leg as well as the lifted leg)

- With the band above the knees as an option. Pull your tummy in as you stand on one leg and lift the other leg into a knee fold.
- Then laterally turn the lifted leg out to the side as shown turning out from the hip joint.
- Then extend the leg back behind you. Then bring the leg forward into knee fold start position.
- Repeat this ten times on the same leg whilst balancing. Then swap legs.

Squats with leg lifts to side and back. (optional – Sissle exercise loop resistance band – comes in green and yellow)

- Start position stand with feet hip width apart with green or yellow band just above your knees.
- Squat down as if you are sitting down into a chair with your weight back into your heels as shown. Make sure you can see your toes and your knees are not over your toes.
- As you come up to standing lift your left leg out to the side whilst trying to keep length through your spine. Alternate the leg lift to the side.
- Repeat 20 times.
- Then squat down as before but as you come up lift one leg behind you and keep lifted in your chest with your tummy pulled in. Feel the back of the legs, glutes and lower back as the leg extends back. Repeat 20 times.

Call for more black men in London to donate blood

NHS Blood and Transplant is appealing for more black men to become blood donors in London.

NHSBT is appealing for more men to start giving blood, and there is a strong need for more men from the black community to donate for the first time.

There has been a significant imbalance in new donors in recent years. For example, during 2019, until the end of November, 915 black women from Greater London gave blood for the first time but only 517 black men.

Men have higher iron levels, and only men’s blood can be used for some transfusions and products. So without more men starting to give blood, blood stocks will come under increasing pressure in future years.

The gender imbalance in new donors is the same across all ethnicities and the issue is not specific to the black community. However there is already a shortage of black donors overall, which puts black patients at greater risk of transfusion reactions. People from the same ethnic background are more likely to have the same blood groups, so black patients will often get the best match from a black donor.

Men are valuable donors for two reasons.

Firstly, they have higher iron levels. Each time they try and donate, they’re less likely to be deferred for low haemoglobin levels. That helps maintain a strong donor base, which is particularly crucial for people who need hundreds or even thousands of transfusions over their lifetime, such as people with sickle cell disease, which is more common in the black community.

Secondly, women can produce antibodies during pregnancy, even during short pregnancies they don’t even know about. Antibodies are part of the body’s defence system and they make transfusions more difficult. This means men’s blood is only used for some specialist transfusions and blood products.

Only men’s blood is used for complete blood transfusions in newborn babies, and also for plasma, which is used for people who’ve had massive blood loss. NHSBT also gets 93% of its platelets from male donors; they are mostly given to cancer patients to cut internal bleeding.

Mike Stredder, the head of donor recruitment for NHS Blood and Transplant, said: “Everyone who donates is special. But we need more men to start donating blood in London this year. Blood donation is quick and easy, and your blood can be used in extraordinary ways. We need more black donors to help with the overall shortage, but we especially need more male black donors. Please give if you can; seriously ill people need you, and you will save lives.”
Genetically Modified Foods and Human Health
By Dalia Kirshenblat

Walk down the aisle of any grocery store and you will find an array of products labeled “genetically modified.” While consumers have a right to know the contents of their food, this labeling can be misleading, suggesting GMOs are inherently unhealthy because they aren’t traditionally organic.

Food labeling may seem trivial, but it impacts public views on genetic modification. The vast majority of scientists believe GMOs are safe, including endorsements from the National Academy of Sciences and the American Medical Association. However, the UK has held a strong and steady resistance to genetically modified crops since the late 1990s.

A genetically modified organism refers to any organism whose genetic material (DNA) has been altered using bioengineering techniques, or altered in a way that does not occur naturally through mating or natural recombination. Basically, scientists cut out the DNA of an organism in order to control traits. This results in the cell automatically repairing its genetic structure, except for the targeted gene. In agriculture, scientists use genetic engineering to yield traits such as producing twice the amount of crops, making crops more nutritious, or producing crops that are immune to common viruses.

Crispr is one of the more popular gene-editing tools of today. Groundbreaking 2012 work by biologists Jennifer Doudna and Emmanuelle Charpentier showed that bacterial immune systems employed a system (dubbed CRISPR) that can be repurposed to easily and precisely edit genes. (https://www.whoisbiotechnology.org/index.php/timeline/science/CRI珊Pr-Cas9)

Through Crispr, scientists first identify a gene responsible for a certain trait, and then use RNA and an enzyme to target and “edit” the gene. Next, a restriction enzyme which can sever DNA is introduced to the cell. The DNA is then cut at the targeted location via the restriction enzyme, known as Cas9 in Crispr. After this “genetic-scissor” snipping, a mutation is introduced and a trait is added by removing a gene or adding a variation. The cell then repairs its own DNA sequence, and the guide RNA and Cas9 enzyme are removed. The resulting organism can be naturally crossed with the original plant, and the DNA of the modified plant is then passed on to the rest of the crop naturally.

Scientists have not found any adverse health effects of GMO crops on consumers in the 25 years agricultural scientists have been using biotechnology to this extent. Nevertheless, genetically modified foods have been the subject of countless protests and boycotts for decades. Crispr differs slightly from other gene-editing tools, as it achieves the same effects without transferring “foreign” DNA to another organism, or using viruses or bacteria, as was the common procedure in early GMO production.

Commonly expressed concerns with GMOs include unwanted changes in nutritional content of products, the creation of allergens or toxins resulting in damage to organs, and otherwise unforeseen consequences this relatively new technology could have on the human body. The concerns of the general population do not seem to be shared by scientists, however.

GMOs and gene-editing tools like Crispr haven’t been around long enough for us to fully examine their long-term effects, but studies suggest that they pose no more health risks than the traditional crops. The probability of unintended effects from genetic engineering is consistently within the range of unintended effects that result from conventional methods of crop breeding. The differences between GMO and Non-GMO crops are negligible, falling within the range of naturally occurring variation found with traditionally bred crops.

Perhaps the study of biotechnology should be taken with a more nuanced approach rather than an unequivocal perspective. Genetically modified foods hold some risks and unknown factors, but so do all new technologies; they seem to hold no more potential risk than traditional crop yields.

Healthy Planet, Healthy You
By Krissy Waite

Veganuary is over, but that doesn’t mean we should stop thinking about our diets and their impact on the planet. Production, transport, storage, and food waste are some of the ways our diets contribute to climate change; not to mention the water and land use associated with industrial agriculture.

In 2019, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published a report stating that reducing meat consumption is essential to mitigating individual carbon footprints. Going vegan is easily the most effective way to reduce your carbon footprint and be healthier (for more information on this, please read Figure Mania at ‘kcwtoday.co.uk’/2019/vegan-mania). However, quitting all that good stuff, cold-turkey can feel drastic, so what if you want to enjoy a healthier, environmentally conscious diet, but aren’t ready to go completely animal-product free? Below are some tips to live a healthy you-healthy planet lifestyle without going completely vegan.

Meatless Mondays!
Meat products have a larger carbon impact per ounce than grain or vegetables and according to People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), one serving size of meat (3.5 ounces) on your plate is equivalent to 16 pounds of CO2 per day. By giving up meat one day a week for a year, you produce 11,482 pounds of CO2 (instead of 13,395 pounds for someone who does not). Math done by Penn State University in 2017. The health benefits of giving up meat once a week speak for themselves: ‘MeatlessMonday.com’ claims reduced risks of heart disease, stroke, cancer and type two diabetes.

Don’t be too Cheesy
Dairy products are the second largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in agriculture. According to a study by AHDB Dairy in 2012, the average carbon output for Great Britain’s milk production was 1,309g of CO2 per litre of milk. Greeneatz.com claims that eating cheese is the carbon equivalent of driving 31 miles in your car. A 2018 study by Oxford University suggests that a glass of cow’s milk has about three times more environmental impact than a glass of non-dairy milk. Simply cutting down on the amount of dairy you consume can really help the environment; this could be as simple as asking for soy in your coffee or tea.

The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine states that dairy is a major contributor to heart disease, type two diabetes and Alzheimer’s and is linked to increased risk of breast, ovarian and prostate cancers. An analysis of dairy published in the British Medicine Journal in 2015 states that dairy has little or no effect on having healthy bones. Oat, soy, almond, rice and coconut milk are all great alternatives according to the BBC.

Eat in-Season!
The majority of fruits and vegetables you see in the store are imported from elsewhere using fossil fuels. By choosing seasonal produce, meaning food that is grown and eaten in-season, you can reduce your carbon footprint by 10 percent according to CO2Living.com. Many local farmer’s markets will have fresh, seasonal produce.

The Institute of Food Research reports that nutritional value of fresh fruits and vegetables can be lost from farm to shelf. This means the vitamins, minerals and antioxidants that are essential to human health aren’t fully developed yet due to premature picking. Again, being environmentally aware of your diet and health doesn’t have to be a drastic step in your life. Starting small still has an important effect on both the Earth’s and your health.
COVID-19
(SARS-CoV-2)
A novel coronavirus
By Dr. Raj Chandok

"After I recover from the disease, I will work on the front line of the battle. The virus is still spreading, and I don't want to be a deserter."

DR LI WENLIANG quoted before his death on 7th Feb, aged 33 years, the brave and dedicated Ophthalmologist from Wuhan, who was arrested after raising concerns about the coronavirus outbreak to colleagues.

Background
Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause illnesses ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases. Previous coronavirus epidemics include the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome outbreak (MERS-CoV) which began in the Arabian peninsula in 2012 and the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome outbreak (SARS-CoV) which was first identified in Guangdong province, Southern China in 2002 and was contained by 2004. A novel coronavirus is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans.

On 31 December 2019, the World Health Organisation was informed of a cluster of cases of pneumonia of unknown cause detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China. A novel coronavirus named SARS-CoV-2 was subsequently identified from these patient samples and is responsible for the current coronavirus outbreak and respiratory disease called COVID-19. Coronaviruses are transmitted from animals to humans, SARS-CoV was transmitted from civet cats (a raccoon like animal that is a culinary delicacy for wealthy Chinese) to humans and MERS-CoV from dromedary camels to humans. We are not yet sure of the animal host of COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2).

Typical symptoms of coronavirus include fever and a dry cough that may progress to breathing difficulties, pneumonia, multiple organ failure and death in 20% of cases. The majority (80%) of healthy people who are infected will experience a mild illness. Coronavirus can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long-term conditions.

Cough etiquette
When an infected person coughs or sneezes, respiratory viruses such as coronaviruses are present in tiny droplets of their respiratory secretions. Cough etiquette involves making sure that an infected person covers their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, placing the tissue in the bin thereafter. If an infected person doesn’t have a tissue, they should not cough or sneeze into their hands, instead they should sneeze or cough into their elbow.

Effective hand washing
These droplets can then be inhaled by other people or they can be picked up by touching surfaces where the droplets have landed. The virus enters your body via your eyes, nose and mouth, so avoid touching them with unwashed hands. Washing your hands frequently and effectively or using hand gels will reduce the risk of picking up the virus.

Face masks
A defining image of this coronavirus outbreak is people wearing face masks. For non-infected people, wearing standard surgical face masks (used in operating theatres) will not prevent the transmission of coronavirus as these standard surgical masks are designed to keep droplets of saliva and nasal secretions in and not out. In general these face masks help prevent further spread of infection from those who are infected to others around them. Specialist N95 respirator masks should be worn by health care workers interacting with infected patients as they can prevent droplet transmission to the wearer, these thick masks are uncomfortable to wear for long periods. At present the medical consensus is that non-infected people should not wear a face mask in the UK. In public places, it is best to avoid walking near anyone coughing or sneezing.

Dr Raj Chandok is a General Practitioner and Health Commissioner working to deliver patient-centred, high quality Long Term Conditions care across North West London.

FRCPG FRSA MSc: MBBS DC DRCOG FFPM D Med Ed. Principal, Dr G Singh & Partners, Vice Chair NHS Ealing CGC, Honorary Professor Buckinghamshire New University

111 and advice on www.nhs.uk
As the global COVID-19 situation evolves daily, www.nhs.uk has a specific coronavirus section which is very useful.

The formal advice algorithm is as below:

Call 111 now or use the online coronavirus service that can tell you if you need medical help and advise you what to do.

Use this service if:

◆ You think you might have coronavirus.

◆ You have recently been to a country or area with a high risk of coronavirus; Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, Iran, Italy; only northern Italy (anywhere north of Pisa, Florence and Rimini), Japan, Laos, Macau, Malaysia, Myanmar (Burma), Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Tenerife; only the H10 Costa Adeje Palace Hotel, Thailand and Vietnam. (If you’ve been to one of these places in the last 14 days, find out what to do using the NHS online coronavirus service or calling 111).

◆ You have been in close contact with someone with coronavirus.

◆ Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. Call 111, stay indoors and avoid close contact with other people. Tell 111 about any recent travel and any symptoms you have. Use 111 as a first point of contact; they will tell you exactly what you need to do and where necessary, the right place to be tested.
The cutting-edge drug discovery programme outsmarting cancer evolution

Researchers at The Institute of Cancer Research, London, are poised to outsmart cancer with the world’s first anti-evolution ‘Darwinian’ drug discovery programme.

Since 2005 alone, scientists at The Institute of Cancer Research (ICR), a charity and world-leading research institution based in Chelsea – have discovered 20 drug candidates, 10 of which have entered clinical trials. One of the ICR’s drugs, abiraterone, is now standard treatment for prostate cancer on the NHS and is extending the lives of hundreds of thousands of men worldwide. However, while progress in developing targeted treatments now allows many patients to live longer with fewer drug-related side effects; some cancer cells evolve and adapt to survive and resist treatment.

To facilitate an ambitious research programme to tackle this challenge, the ICR has been constructing a state-of-the-art facility at a second site in Sutton. Due to open in the coming months, the Centre for Cancer Drug Discovery will bring together drug discovery and evolutionary scientists to explore how to outsmart cancer by using its survival instinct against itself.

The £75 million building will house a series of pioneering projects, with a focus on overcoming or redirecting the process of cancer evolution. The aim is to achieve long-term control and effective cures, just as comparable approaches have achieved with diseases like HIV.

In this revolutionary new facility, the ICR will overcome cancer drug resistance in innovative new ways, creating a new generation of treatments that will make a difference to millions of people with cancer.

CEO Paul Workman says: “With further research, we can find ways to make cancer a manageable disease in the long term and one that is more often curable, so patients can live longer and with a better quality of life.”

For more information, visit: icr.ac.uk/letsfinishcancer

‘My treatment has given me a new lease of life’

ROB LESTER, from Fife in Scotland, was working as a GP when he was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2012 at the age of 55.

The cancer had spread to his bones and he hoped to survive five years. He’s now been on the targeted drug abiraterone for around eight years.

The drug works by shutting off production of the male sex hormone testosterone, which drives prostate cancer. Discovered and developed by the ICR, abiraterone was the first treatment shown to be effective in men with advanced prostate cancer.

For Rob, the drug has been life-changing:

“When I was diagnosed with prostate cancer, I honestly didn’t think I had much of a chance.”

“Abiraterone has given me hope, not only have I survived, but I’ve been able to enjoy my life and have a great quality of life. I often don’t think about the cancer now.”

“My treatment has given me a new lease of life. Taking the tablets is very easy, and every day is a new day.”

“I’ve been able to take up things that I didn’t do before; I’ve joined a walking group and now we do walking holidays. I do things that keep me busy.”

“I would really hope to live a bit longer, live a normal life and treat the cancer as something that you cope with rather than something that you fight.”
More than a quarter of Parkinson’s sufferers initially misdiagnosed

More than one in four people living with Parkinson’s were initially misdiagnosed, new research has found. In a study conducted by Parkinson’s UK, 2,000 people were questioned about being diagnosed with the neurological condition, the symptoms of which can include involuntary shaking, slow movements and stiff muscles.

According to the poll, 26 per cent of respondents said they were originally diagnosed with a different medical condition. Around 145,000 people are diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease on an annual basis. Of the participants who received a misdiagnosis, almost half were treated for the wrongly-diagnosed condition, with 36 per cent receiving medication, 6 per cent undergoing operations or procedures and 6 per cent going through both. More than a third of those who received unnecessary treatment said their health worsened as a result.

The poll also concluded that women were more likely to be misdiagnosed than men. Moreover, misdiagnoses had a greater likelihood of occurring among patients aged between 51 and 60. Katie Goates, professional engagement programme manager at Parkinson’s UK, explained that Parkinson’s is “an incredibly complex condition with more than 40 symptoms” that “affect everyone differently”.

“One of the biggest challenges for Parkinson’s research is that there is no definitive test for Parkinson’s, and as a result we’ve heard of people being misdiagnosed with anything from a frozen shoulder or anxiety to a stroke,” Ms Goates stated.

“We are investing in vital research to find a much-needed diagnostic test but we also recognise the key role that health professionals have in helping people with Parkinson’s get the right diagnosis and treatment as soon as possible.”

While there is no cure for Parkinson’s disease, available treatments include medication, physiotherapy and occupational therapy.

Healthy communities together: funding and support

The King’s Fund and The National Lottery Community Fund (TNLCF) are joining forces to support genuine partnership-working in local areas between the voluntary and community sector, the NHS and local authorities to improve the health and wellbeing of local communities. The Healthy communities together programme will fund partnerships that must include: a voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector organisation, a local authority, an NHS organisation (including clinical commissioning groups, NHS trusts and primary care organisations).

Each partnership must cover a defined ‘place’ in England, although it is up to the partners to outline the scale of that place and how it relates to the needs they want to address together.

If you’re interested in applying, you’ll need to complete a short form to ascertain whether your partnership is eligible for the programme. You will need to confirm you have a partnership in place and demonstrate the commitment of the organisations involved at a senior level. You will also need to have a clear and shared idea of what you want to do and why.

Full details of the programme and the form to establish the eligibility of your partnership for this programme can be found on The National Lottery Community Fund website, tnlcfund.org.uk.

The deadline for submission is Friday 27 March 2020.

NHS Personal Health Budget

A personal health budget is an amount of money to support your health and wellbeing needs, which is planned and agreed between you (or someone who represents you), and your local NHS team. It is not new money, but it may mean a change in how you spend your money so that you can get the care that you need. A personal health budget allows you to manage your healthcare and support such as treatments, equipment and personal care, in a way that suits you. It works in a similar way to personal budgets, which allow people to manage and pay for their social care needs.

The right to have a personal health budget applies to people who are: adults receiving NHS continuing healthcare (NHS-funded long-term health and personal care provided outside hospital), children receiving NHS continuing healthcare, people who are referred and meet the eligibility criteria of their local wheelchair service and people who are already registered with the wheelchair service when they need a new wheelchair or specialist buggy, either because of a change in clinical needs or the condition of the current chair. These people will be eligible for a personal wheelchair budget, people with mental health problems who are eligible for section 117 after-care as a result of being detained under certain sections of the Mental Health Act (this does not include detention under section 2 of the Act).

If you are not in a group that has a right to a personal health budget, but you are interested in receiving one, speak to your local clinical commissioning group (CCG). CCGs make the arrangements for personal health budgets and are encouraged to offer them to other patient groups. Find your local CCG.

For more information visit nhs.uk

‘Electric nose’ could detect condition that may lead to oesophageal cancer

People suffering with a condition called Barrett’s oesophagus have a higher risk of oesophageal cancer. They are offered a regular monitoring to check for signs of cancer.

Barrett’s oesophagus happens when cells in the ‘food pipe’ change as a result of being exposed to digestive acids. These cell changes, known as precancerous, have the ability to spread and could turn cancerous if left untreated. Barrett’s oesophagus usually affects people with a history of experiencing gastro-oesophageal reflux disease (often called GORD).

Currently it can be diagnosed with an endoscopy. But many people with oesophageal cancer have previously never been diagnosed with Barrett’s oesophagus, meaning that their cancer diagnosis is late, giving them a lower chance of survival.

Research from the Netherlands may offer hope. They have developed a test where chemicals in the breath (known as volatile organic compounds or VOCs) are identified using sensors in an ‘electronic nose’ with the results being fed into a computer. People with Barrett’s and GORD as well as a healthy control group were tested to see if the computer could recognise the typical patterns of VOCs breathed out by people with Barrett’s oesophagus. They found that in 91% of the time, it correctly identified people with Barrett’s oesophagus and 74% of people who didn’t.

The study was carried out by Radboud University Medical Centre, Zeikhenus Bernhoven and Canisius Wilhelmina Hospital in the Netherlands. The research had no specific funding. The study was published in the peer-reviewed medical journal Gut.
Free parenting support now available in seven London boroughs

Twiston Relationships, the charity providing couple therapy in London, is introducing a new free parenting support programme in seven London boroughs, including Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster.

Research shows us that conflict between parents can have a negative effect on children’s development in terms of mental and physical health, problems at school, sleep difficulties, and in the relationships they make themselves as they grow up.

The ‘Building Relationships for Stronger Families’ course, which is funded by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), uses Twiston Relationships’ expertise with couples to support families and children. The programme is delivered in one-to-one or group sessions and addresses conflict between couples, as well as strengthening parenting skills. Parents are supported to find new ways to manage stresses and disagreements, explore patterns of behavior, and apply techniques to improve their parenting skills.

Emma Rahman, one of a team of specialist family practitioners delivering the course, explains: “Our support includes providing parents with a workbook of practical exercises to help them understand their child’s development, as well as helping them to strengthen communication in their relationship to prevent disagreements from escalating.”

Courses are free and open to all eligible parents, mothers and fathers as well as same-sex parents, and are tailored for couples who either are together or separated. Parents could be referred by a GP, social worker, teacher or early help worker. They can also enquire directly at www.twistockrelationships.org or by calling 020 7380 8288.

‘Corridor care’ becoming the norm, RCN survey finds

Patient safety is being compromised as nurses increasingly provide care in hospital corridors and other non-clinical areas, a new Royal College of Nursing survey has found.

More than 70 per cent of nurses said they care for patients in a non-designated area on a daily basis, according to the survey, while another 16 per cent said they do so at least once a week.

In all, nine in 10 nurses surveyed said the frequency of providing care in corridors has increased since last winter and that the practice is compromising patients’ safety.

Nurses said so-called “corridor care” makes it more difficult to administer urgent intravenous antibiotics; limits patients’ access to toilets; degrades patients’ privacy and dignity; and increases patient duress, especially for those with mental health problems.

Mike Adams, RCN Director for England, said it is “completely unacceptable” that patients lack access to toilets when they are stuck in hospital corridors.

Adams said: “The reasons for the increased pressure on A&E departments are many and well-known; too few staff, not enough beds to admit patients to, and a lack of social care affecting hospitals’ ability to discharge patients quickly enough.

“But as a result, nurses in emergency departments are being put under intolerable pressure to keep patients safe. Nursing staff are trained to act as advocates for their patients, and Ministers and NHS leaders must listen to what nurses have told us; patient safety is being compromised too often at present.”

The RCN has begun a campaign for safe nurse staffing across the UK calling for greater investment in nurses by government and NHS leaders, according to a press release.

In England, the college is calling on the government to restore payments for student nurses’ tuition fees and for maintenance grants to fully cover these students’ actual living costs.

Just under half of survey respondents said the term “corridor nursing” is formally used in their workplace, and another 40 per cent said it is used informally. Hospital patients are sometimes looked after in corridors if no beds can be found.

David Smith, chair of RCN’s Emergency Care Association and a former A&E nurse, said corridor care “could deter future nurses from embarking on this unique and rewarding career.”

Smith said: “As specialist emergency nurses, we are in a privileged position, as we care for people when they need help most. But we’re starting to see more and more care delivered in completely unsuitable locations, as this survey shows.

“The responses show how demoralised nursing staff feel about working in these conditions.”

Living in the Red

A report published by the Royal College of Nursing at the beginning of February entitled Living in the Red makes extremely worrying reading indeed.

The Royal College of Nursing is the largest trade union and professional body for nurses and the facts and figures presented within the report address issues such as housing, travel and childcare with data that is very clear and quite frankly shameful. It is clear that many nurses are suffering; those who are skilled, talented and trained to help others are themselves suffering.

In a society where we are told nursing is one of the most trusted and respected professions, it is worrying that many nurses who are regarded so highly by others are suffering financially and are seeking to leave the Capital. The Royal College of Nursing Report and employment figures across the Capital highlight this clearly.

London needs passionate, enthusiastic and dedicated nurses and the Government and Greater London Authority really need to take heed of the recommendations in this report.

I fully support the discounted travel recommendation in the report; in London police officers receive free Transport for London Travel. There is an understanding that officers will support with any incidents as required while travelling, whether on duty or not.

Nurses who are registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Council must adhere to the Professional Code of Conduct. Point 15 of the Professional Code states that nurses must “Always offer help if an emergency arises in (their) practice setting or anywhere else.”

Is this not the same as police officers responding to an incident when off duty?

How often do nurses and other health professionals who travel on the London transport network stop to offer support to those in need, using their talent, skills and training for the benefit of others?

As a nurse on many different occasions I have helped with situations, incidents and emergencies while traveling on London’s travel network; why is it a police officer can have free travel but I can’t?

Is it not time this matter was addressed at City Hall?

Donato Tallo
Registered Nurse and Royal College of Nursing Steward
Léon Spilliaert  
The Royal Academy,  
Sackler Galleries  
Until 25 May 2020  
Admission £14  
royalacademy.org.uk

This is certainly not an uplifting exhibition. If you want uplifting, then head downstairs to the Picasso and Paper, where there is joy aplenty. Léon Spilliaert was a loner and an insomniac, who used to walk the streets of Ostend during the night, returning to the family home to paint his dark, ponderous compositions, of lonely beaches with the odd solitary figure, leaden skies sitting heavily on the monotone, steely North Sea. He also painted ghostly self-portraits in a glass-roofed conservatory at the top of the house which doubled as his studio. Later, he took a room at the top of a house overlooking the harbour, from where he could watch the fishermen and their wives going about their business, but never in any detail. He would paint the patterns made by the sea as it ebbed and flowed, sometimes with figures, sometimes not, but always in a dramatic way, with distant lights twinkling on the horizon, which brought to mind Whistler’s crepuscular paintings of the Thames.

The exhibition is organised into four main thematic headings, the first of which is entitled Illumination, and explores his involvement with literature, theatre and book illustration, as well as his absorption in nature. Twilight focuses on his expressions of loneliness and solitude that he experienced when most of the town was sleeping and he was pacing the promenade and sea wall, or painting in his studio. Littoral displays his fascination with the liminal areas between land and sea, particularly at low tide, when the beach is a patchwork of textures. Reflection concentrates on his self-portraits. I inadvertently went the ‘wrong’ way round, heading straight on through the self-portraits, and going in a clockwise direction, as one normally does in the Sackler Galleries, and it seemed to make more sense, ending up the ‘literary’ section.

Unlike his fellow Belgian and painter, James Ensor, to whom the RA devoted a show in 2016, Spilliaert displays not one grain of wit, humour or levity. His is a very serious world of self-examination, melancholia, Symbolism, suffering and obsession, more in tune with his Scandinavian cousins up to the north. He suffered from stomach ulcers as a child, which were a contributory factor to his chronic insomnia. He tried to escape German-occupied Belgium to Switzerland during the First World War with his new wife Rachel Vergison, but they ran out of money, and had to stay in Brussels. There, he and his wife had a daughter Madelaine, and they soon moved to Karreveld, a farmland area northwest of the capital, where he walked and continued to work, but now with a skip in his step. The darkness was lifted, and his seascapes and landscapes became lighter, more colourful and less lugubrious. He loved trees, and, when they moved back to Brussels, he used to walk in the ancient Forêt de Soignes, or Sonian Forest, home to European beech and oaks, but still in a contemplative and solitary mode. His atmospheric Beech Trunks is a snowscene done in Indian ink, pencil, watercolour and coloured chalk, as are many of his works. He rarely painted in oils, and all the pictures on display involve the use of pen and ink with a wash, as well as gouache, pastels and coloured pencils.

His involvement with the Belgian literary giants like Maurice Maeterlinck, the essayist, poet and playwright, and the poet Émile Verhaeren, expanded his sphere of friends as far as the prominent Austrian writer Stefan Zweig, and the Belgian playwright Fernand Crommelynck, an avant garde dramatist, who specialised in farce and satire, and for whom Spilliaert did some moody illustrative work. His unsparing self-portraits show a young ghostly man staring back at himself, with black-rimmed eyes, haunted and hunted. But Spilliaert moves beyond symbolism. From the world of art, he borrows from Fernand Khnopff, Felicien Rops and Vincent Van Gogh, and, from the world of literature and philosophy, Edgar Allan Poe and Friedrich Nietzsche. He certainly nods towards Edward Munch in The Gust of Wind, when he places a girl standing on a balustrade with a cold and unwelcoming North Sea behind her, one pale hand trying to hold down her black skirts blown by the sea breeze and revealing a flash of white petticoat. It is only when one approaches the painting that the girl’s face reveals that she is screaming in a most primal Munchian way, adding to its enigmatic and nightmarish quality. Even in the solitary beauty of a young girl standing with her back to the wind is a study in anguish and isolation.

Don Grant
King George III’s treasured collection of military maps is published online to mark the 200th Anniversary of his death.

There is a trend today for ‘living history’ with Museums and stately homes presenting reenactments of battles lost and won long ago, actors parading about dressed as famous figures from the past in the original costumes, lighting effects making sculpture in friezes appear to be alive and *Son et Lumière* performances.

An excellent way to make history live is through the study of maps, especially military maps. They were in use at the time of the historical event and yield an unbelievable wealth of detailed information. Names of famous battles often appear together with military tactics. Maps are a brilliant source of knowledge.

King George III had a prized collection of military maps which came to the Royal Collection. He was King of Great Britain and King of Ireland from 1760 to the Union of the two countries in 1801, after which he was King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, until his death in 1820, two hundred years ago.

A popular King known as ‘farmer George’, but he was maligned for the loss of the American colonies during the American War of Independence. Maps were an important part of King George’s early life and education. Cartographic Science strongly appealed to him. He never travelled abroad, nor did he have military experience, but his vast collection of charts, maps, drawings, topographical, maritime and military prints were his passport for virtual travel from his Library at Buckingham House, now Buckingham Palace.

Highlights of his Collection include two metre wide maps of the *American War of Independence* (1775 to 1783) in which he was very interested. Also, a map of the final *Defeat of the British at the Battle of Yorktown* (1781). It is notable that this is the only known copy to survive not in the USA.

King George acquired a large collection of military maps and plans from his Uncle, Augustus, Duke of Cumberland. During the War of the Austrian Succession, the Duke led the British and Allied Armies in the Continent. There is a record of the Battle of Dettingham (1743) which was the last occasion that a British Monarch was at the head of the troops going into battle.

The Illustrated Maps in the Collection provide information of life in military campsites with details of latrines, taverns and catering supplies. A map of the *Siege of La Rochelle* during the Huguenot Rebellions of 1627 shows soldiers making merry in a tavern and one being sick. He did turn away! King George, as well as purchasing individual maps, bought large groups from other collections, e.g. in 1762 *Paper Museum of the Italian Art Patron Cassandra Dal Pozzo* was acquired for his collection. He also collected paintings, prints and Engravings. There are 500 prints showing 16th and 17th century wars in Europe. Many of these are unique.

King George III’s comprehensive collection of military maps was first listed by his Librarian, Frederick Augustus Barnard in the early 19th century. He did have help from assistants. (He would need it!). The list is bound by red leather and known as *George III Catalogue* (formerly *The Old Catalogue*). It is organised into geographical and alphabetical order. It has served its purpose well, but there are gaps in the information, e.g. locations of naval conflicts are missing. Place names in central and Eastern Europe are in 18th century form and not easily recognisable. A serious hiatus is the lack of any reference to scale for maps or measurements for objects. There are no watermarks and the lack of annotation is difficult.

However digitisation has come to the rescue! Congratulations to Dr Yolande Hodson FSA., FB Cart., who, after ten years of research has succeeded in digitising King George III’s most prized collection of military maps in time to honour the 200th Anniversary of his death.

A Herculean challenge and researchers will so appreciate her work. The maps are works of art in themselves, some are edged with carmine silk and brass rings for hanging and silk tassels for rolling. They are backed with strong linen.

The online catalogue presents the works in loose chronological order and grouped into 16 categories around conflicts. It has been attempted to give a sense of the whole work by each work, having one appearance and you look elsewhere for related material. Searching can be done by the key word i.e. all mentions of the word London and as a faceted search for place names, people and events.

Each catalogue is arranged as follows:
- Principal Creator, Geographical Heading, Title, Materials, Scale, Inventory Number, Images, People, Physical Properties, Measurements, Transcripts, Measurement and Provenance.Finally, Notes.

Each of the above is accompanied by a wealth of detail.

Let us peruse *Notes.*

Historical context of the item, names and dates of the event, and the conflict to which it belongs, principal military commanders, the outcome, the orientation of the map in the form of compass directions.

Dates are given in the new style. If the date of the item is given in the old style (until 1752 Britain’s system of dating, using the Julian Calendar was 11 days behind that of Western Europe which used the Gregorian calendar) this appears in the main transcription of the title.

The details given for scale are lengthy as are those for measurement.

Lucky researchers, no longer obliged to visit the University reading room and finding the desired book is not available and panicking to meet the deadline for its return when they eventually receive it. No more searching dusty stacks for journals or hunting in archives. No more trawling through bookshops and libraries.

Just a computer: militarymaps.rct.uk.

Marian Maitland
There was also another slightly more precise reason for such depictions, in that, if the mother died during, or shortly after, giving birth, this became a memorial for the mother’s offspring. Maternal mortality was a very real risk in those days, and even as late as 1880, the rate was 200 deaths in 10,000 births. Before the Protestant Reformation during the reign of Henry VIII, the Virgin Mary was depicted as having had a Visitation from the Angel Gabriel, with her elder cousin Elizabeth, gesturing towards each others wombs. A charming needlework panel from the early 17th century is on loan from the Ashmolean Museum, with other facsimiles of 15th and 16th century wall-paintings from around England showing the same scene.

The museum owns a splendid William Hogarth painting, The March of the Guards to Finchley, full of life, action and colourful bawdryness, with a pregnant ballad-seller centre-stage, quarrelling with another woman over a grenadier, who is looking decidedly troubled. Two of Britain’s best cartoonists of the period are also represented, namely James Gillray and Isaac Cruikshank, the Scottish caricaturist and painter, and father of George. Gillray’s satire Disgr, in Despair, depicted a somewhat robust and distraught Emma Hamilton, eight months pregnant with the child of Horatio Nelson, who is seen sailing away with his fleet. On the window seat is an open book, entitled Studies of Academic Attitudes Taken from the Life, where a younger and more lithe Emma is depicted displaying her ‘Attitudes’, tableaux vivants in which she portrayed sculptures and paintings from classical antiquity, sometimes scantily draped in veils and shawls. A second Gillray shows a pregnant servant being castigated by a grotesque, but finely-dressed, elderly gentleman, with the words, ‘... and would’st thou turn the vile Reproach on me?’, suggesting that he was the likely father. Cruikshank’s Frailties of Fashion is a satire on the short-lived fashion for women to wear ‘belly pads’ under their clothing, so as to appear to be pregnant, and includes George, the Prince of Wales with his morganatic wife, Mrs Fitzherbert, apparently ‘with child’.

The leading tragic actress Sarah Siddons frequently appeared on stage whilst pregnant, as Lady Macbeth, and portrayed on more than one occasion by George Henry Harlow, a prominent portraitist. The only problem with appearing on stage whilst pregnant was when she played the novice nun Isabella in Measure for Measure. One painting that had caused serious debate and controversy is Jan van Eyck’s 1434 Arnolfini Portrait in the National Gallery. Is the lady in the picture pregnant, or not? Scholars have been arguing the point since it was bought for the nation in 1843. In the accompanying catalogue by the curator Karen Hearn, she categorically states that it is now considered that Arnolfini’s wife is not with child. People may have thought that because of the manner in which she holds the gathered folds of her long fine wool dress over her stomach, which was merely a fashion of the day. In 2005, Marc Quinn’s Carrara marble sculpture Alison Lapper Pregnant was unveiled on the Fourth Plinth in Trafalgar Square. Alison was born with no arms and shortened legs, a condition known as ‘phocomelia’, and she was seven months pregnant, which caused a bit of a stir, as she was completely naked. A smaller version is on display. Jenny Saville has been portraying herself for years, and there is a large, overlapping charcoal and pastel drawing of herself with her daughter Electra, both nude. Others to paint themselves pregnant are Chantal Joffe, Ghislaine Howard and Paula Modersohn-Becker, while Augustus John painted his wife Ida Pregnant in a joyful full length portrait in subtle brown tones. The exhibition rounds up with high-gloss ‘fashion’ photographs of rather coy and self-conscious pregnant ladies from the covers of Vanity Fair; a trend started by Demi Moore taken by Annie Leibovitz in 1991, and unadventurously repeated by Serena Williams, Neneh Cherry and Beyoncé. One grouch about the exhibition is the ridiculously low height at which the captions are placed; the same criticism that could be levelled at the British Museum’s Troy. It seems to be an irritating curatorial trend that has insinuated itself into the current museological language.

Don Grant

Portraying Pregnancy

The Foundling Museum
40 Brunswick Square, WC1N 1AZ
Until 26 April 2020
Admission £12

T he exhibition space in the basement is a little cramped and a little claustrophobic, but there is space on the walls on the first floor to hang larger works. The subtitle of the exhibition is From Holbein to Social Media, and underlines how unrepresented this subject has been over the years. The Holbein is an exquisite chalk drawing of Sir Thomas More’s daughter Cecily from the Royal Collection, produced five hundred years ago, but it has a freshness and vitality that is timeless.

Nearly a hundred years later, the Flemish painter Marcus Gheeraerts painted a pregnant Unknown Lady in Red, which was acquired by the Tate in 1982, and it was quite fashionable to have portraits of pregnant ladies, painted precisely because they were pregnant. There was also another slightly more macabre reason for such depictions, in that, if the mother died during, or shortly after, giving birth, this became a memorial for the mother’s offspring. Maternal mortality was a very real risk in those days, and even as late as 1880, the rate was 200 deaths in 10,000 births. Before the Protestant Reformation during the reign of Henry VIII, the Virgin Mary was depicted as having had a Visitation from the Angel Gabriel, with her elder cousin Elizabeth, gesturing towards each others wombs. A charming needlework panel from the early 17th century is on loan from the Ashmolean Museum, with other facsimiles of 15th and 16th century wall-paintings from around England showing the same scene.

The museum owns a splendid William Hogarth painting, The March of the Guards to Finchley, full of life, action and colourful bawdryness, with a pregnant ballad-seller centre-stage, quarrelling with another woman over a grenadier, who is looking decidedly troubled. Two of Britain’s best cartoonists of the period are also represented, namely James Gillray and Isaac Cruikshank, the Scottish caricaturist and painter, and father of George. Gillray’s satire Disgr, in Despair, depicted a somewhat robust and distraught Emma Hamilton, eight months pregnant with the child of Horatio Nelson, who is seen sailing away with his fleet. On the window seat is an open book, entitled Studies of Academic Attitudes Taken from the Life, where a younger and more lithe Emma is depicted displaying her ‘Attitudes’, tableaux vivants in which she portrayed sculptures and paintings from classical antiquity, sometimes scantily draped in veils and shawls. A second Gillray shows a pregnant servant being castigated by a grotesque, but finely-dressed, elderly gentleman, with the words, ‘... and would’st thou turn the vile Reproach on me?’, suggesting that he was the likely father. Cruikshank’s Frailties of Fashion is a satire on the short-lived fashion for women to wear ‘belly pads’ under their clothing, so as to appear to be pregnant, and includes George, the Prince of Wales with his morganatic wife, Mrs Fitzherbert, apparently ‘with child’.

The leading tragic actress Sarah Siddons frequently appeared on stage whilst pregnant, as Lady Macbeth, and portrayed on more than one occasion by George Henry Harlow, a prominent portraitist. The only problem with appearing on stage whilst pregnant was when she played the novice nun Isabella in Measure for Measure. One painting that had caused serious debate and controversy is Jan van Eyck’s 1434 Arnolfini Portrait in the National Gallery. Is the lady in the picture pregnant, or not? Scholars have been arguing the point since it was bought for the nation in 1843. In the accompanying catalogue by the curator Karen Hearn, she categorically states that it is now considered that Arnolfini’s wife is not with child. People may have thought that because of the manner in which she holds the gathered folds of her long fine wool dress over her stomach, which was merely a fashion of the day. In 2005, Marc Quinn’s Carrara marble sculpture Alison Lapper Pregnant was unveiled on the Fourth Plinth in Trafalgar Square. Alison was born with no arms and shortened legs, a condition known as ‘phocomelia’, and she was seven months pregnant, which caused a bit of a stir, as she was completely naked. A smaller version is on display. Jenny Saville has been portraying herself for years, and there is a large, overlapping charcoal and pastel drawing of herself with her daughter Electra, both nude. Others to paint themselves pregnant are Chantal Joffe, Ghislaine Howard and Paula Modersohn-Becker, while Augustus John painted his wife Ida Pregnant in a joyful full length portrait in subtle brown tones. The exhibition rounds up with high-gloss ‘fashion’ photographs of rather coy and self-conscious pregnant ladies from the covers of Vanity Fair; a trend started by Demi Moore taken by Annie Leibovitz in 1991, and unadventurously repeated by Serena Williams, Neneh Cherry and Beyoncé. One grouch about the exhibition is the ridiculously low height at which the captions are placed; the same criticism that could be levelled at the British Museum’s Troy. It seems to be an irritating curatorial trend that has insinuated itself into the current museological language.

Don Grant
David Hockney: Drawing from Life
National Portrait Gallery
Until 28 June 2020
Admission £17-£20
npg.org.uk

In Japan, individuals certified as ‘Preservers of Important Intangible Cultural Properties’ are called ‘Living National Treasures’. We, too, have a list of these characters, and they include such luminaries as Dame Judy Dench, Julie Walters, David Attenborough, The Queen, and fellow professional Yorkshireman, Alan Bennett, who plays a sartorially drabber version of David Hockney, now Britain’s most celebrated and best-loved painter. Throughout his career, he has never parked his talent by the roadside and taken it easy, as demonstrated by a number of current portraits, self-portraits and scribbler, treating drawing as going to the mind-gym every day and working out. He resolved to do a self-portrait every day for two months, and some are certainly better than others, although it has to be said, the ones done on iPad are some of his most celebrated and best-loved painter. He has always drawn like an angel right from his earliest days, and all through art school, and it is a skill that he has never lost, like riding a bike. What Hockney has never, ever lacked is curiosity. That, and a happy-go-lucky approach to life, about which he is exuberant, and that shines through his work. So many of his works just make one smile inwardly.

There are around 150 works in the NPG exhibition, including self-portraits he made as a teenager in Bradford, drawings of his mother Laura, and a painting of his parents going on display for the first time since he made it in 1975, the artist having thought it was lost or destroyed, only to turn up in his LA studio. Nicholas Cullinan, the director of the NPG, said the drawings on display highlighted ‘Hockney’s distinctive way of observing people around him, creating an intimate visual diary of the artist’s life’. He seems never to be alone without a sketchbook, and there is a short film of him turning the pages of just one, filled up in Normandy with drawings of practically anything. He is a serial dauber and scribbler, treating drawing as going to the mind-gym every day and working out. He resolved to do a self-portrait every day for two months, and some are certainly better than others, although it has to be said, the ones done on iPad are some of his least successful works, more to do with the medium and the application than the hand that is operating it. There is a soft, unreal quality in the way the colours are laid down, a long way from the precision of pen & ink, coloured pencils, etching tools or even charcoal that he often uses.

Hockney has revisited his models he had been drawing and painting for over six decades, including Celia Birtwell, the fabric designer, Gregory Evans, his lover and subsequently curator, his printer Maurice ‘Mo’ Payne and his mother, Laura, and to celebrate this retrospective, he has re-drawn five of them, a little older, more dog-eared, more upholstered and more wrinkled than they would probably like to be reminded. He is as unrelenting in his gaze on others as he is on himself, as demonstrated by a number of current unparaphrasing charcoal self-portraits, with a ubiquitous cigarette dangling in a downturned mouth, and questing eyes looking over his spectacles, a familiar pose first seen in the 1980s. Though Hockney features in many of the drawings, he said they were not autobiographical. ‘It is not really me,’ he said laconically. ‘It’s just that I use myself as a model because I’m always around.’ There are ten new works, in a gallantamate nut-brown shade of ink favoured by Rembrandt, which are described as attempts to ‘come face to face with the ageing process’. They are among 150 exhibits, borrowed from major museums and private collectors around the world, including portraits of the artist’s parents and work created with a polaroid camera, which included his ‘joiners’, a technique developed by him and used by every self-respecting art student since. Celia is most prominent, featuring in various poses, Celia Amused, Celia in a Black Slip, Reckoning, Celia in Negligé, and a demure Celia, Nude in soft coloured pencil, reminiscent of Adrian George, who drew Hockney in pen and ink in 1976, cheekily ‘borrowing’ Hockney’s own style. Gregory gets the same treatment, although from willing model, pretty when asleep, or Gregory with Gym Socks or Gregory Sleeping Nude, he seems to tire of posing for his old friend, and one senses the old ennui creeping in. Maurice is more dignified in his portrait, self-assured, serious but pleased with his portrayal of her, jowly and bovine-eyed, a far cry from the floral beauty in floaty dresses from 50 years ago, and bovine-eyed, a far cry from the floral beauty in floaty dresses from 50 years ago, but he is as hard on himself as he is on his friends, forever searching for the truth, and never compromising.

Don Grant
British Surrealism
Dulwich Picture Gallery
Until 17 May 2020
Admission £16
dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk

When one hears about the Surrealists, one's mind instantly races across the Channel to France, Belgium and maybe down to Spain. British Surrealism sounds as incongruous as German cuisine, and yet, in 1936, Roland Penrose, himself a failed painter, organised an exhibition at the New Burlington Galleries with the critic Herbert Read and the poet David Gascoyne, called the International Surrealist Exhibition, with André Breton, the precursor of the movement, Salvador Dalí, E L T Mesens and Paul Éluard in attendance, and the participation of René Magritte, Pablo Picasso, Max Ernst, Hans Bellmer, Paul Klee, Joan Miró, Giorgio de Chirico, Marcel Duchamp and Man Ray. Some list! Amongst the British artists hanging were Henry Moore, Paul Nash, Eileen Agar, John Banting Edward Burra and Graham Sutherland, and, indeed, these artists are all represented in the Dulwich show, plus a few more, including Lethell Colquhoun, who joined the British Surrealists in 1939, but was expelled the following year for not giving up her interest in the occult. Colquhoun was famous for her sexualised portrayal of plants as male and female genitalia, which got her into a spot of bother at the Leicester Galleries in 1942. Her Pine Family is an array of truncated torsos, one female, one male and one hermaphrodite. The latter two having had their penises chopped off, and the female has had a leg severed, with a note stuck on the other limb, 'celle qui boîte', the one who limps. The hermaphrodite has a label with the legend, 'the circumcised hermaphrodite', although that is a somewhat extreme version of the procedure, and the male has had the same radical surgery, with a flag stuck in his thigh like describing the type of cheese on a board, with the name Athis, the consort of Cybele. All very mythical so far.

The exhibition starts by listing a number of 'Ancestors of Surrealism', which may surprise some visitors. Jonathan Swift, famous for his Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World with Lemuel Gulliver, Breton was tickled by the notion put forward by Swift in a pamphlet A Modest Proposal, in which he suggested that the poor people of Ireland should sell their children to the rich for them to eat. There is a classic James Gillray, with the giant Brobdignag, in the recognisable guise of George III, peering through a telescope at a furious and diminutive Napoleon in the palm of his hand. Although Henry Fuseli was Swiss by birth, the British seemed to have adopted him as their own, and there is his forceful The Weird Sisters from Macbeth. William Blake was another 'precursor', according to Herbert Read, who quoted him at great length in Surrealism, and which he edited in 1936. Richard Dadd and Lewis Carroll were other 'influencers' of the Surrealist movement, although Alice was unknown to most of the French until the early 1930s. Of the British Surrealists, there were a small number of important women painters, including Colquhoun, Edith Rimmington, Grace Pailthorpe, Emmy Bridgewater, Eileen Agar, Marion Adams and Leonora Carrington, perhaps the most celebrated of them all. Rimmington is represented by The Oneroscopist (a person who interprets dreams), depicting a bird-like figure with an elongated beak in a diving suit, possibly inspired by Dalí’s attempt to give a lecture from inside a diving suit at the 1936 exhibition, where he nearly suffocated, and was rescued by Gascoyne, who went out to fetch a spanner just in time. Agar was an exceptionally talented painter and was a favourite of Mesens. She had an intense affair with Paul Nash, who had made his name as a war artist, but found surrealism deeply liberating until he moved away from it at the beginning of the Second World War. Carrington ran away to France with Max Ernst, whom she met in London, and produced mythical and pagan scenes that expressed ideas about female sexuality, creativity and power. Colquhoun recalled Breton saying, 'qué la femme soit libre et adorée', but most of his followers were no less chauvinist for that. Among them, women as human beings tended to be ‘permitted not required.’

Francis Bacon was not invited to exhibit at the 1936 exhibition as Penrose and Read deemed him not to be ‘sufficiently surreal for inclusion,’ in addition to Breton’s deep-seated homophobia.

Like Bacon, Lucian Freud comes under the heading ‘Influenced by Surrealism’, but he objected to the fact that ‘under the laws of doctrinaire surrealism as approved by Mesens it was easy for people of no talent to produce art.’ With his strict authoritarian rules, he drove away Paullthorpe, Agar, Ruth Adams and Colquhoun. The zoologist Desmond Morris was a Johnny-come-lately to Surrealism, arriving in Paris just as the movement had moved on, and all but evaporated. Conroy Maddox is represented by a white typewriter on a velvet cushion, with tacks pointing upwards on the keys, entitled Onanistic Typewriter I, although what that has to do with ejaculation is anyone’s guess. Dorothy Parker named her parrot Onan, because he, too, spent his seed upon the ground. Maddox argued that a ‘true surrealist painting or object lay beyond interpretation,’ so that will have to suffice. Reuben Mednikoff was born in London to Russian Jewish parents, and joined up with Grace Paullthorpe to study Freudian psychoanalytical research, the results of which were praised by Breton, but the autocratic Mesens contrived to have them expelled from the British group in 1946, for not signing up to an agreement ‘not to join any other group or association, professional or other, including any secret society, other than the Surrealists.’

Henry Moore regarded himself as a Surrealist, but had to abandon the movement when he was invited upon to be a war artist, while Paul Nash ‘did not claim Surrealism himself, the movement claimed him,’ and contact with the movement encouraged Nash in his own particular manner of ‘seeing things’ and ‘intensified his perception of the object’, but he never subscribed to the ideology of the movement. Others include John Banting, who died in drunken obscurity in 1972, Graham Sutherland, who went on to become one of the most prominent figures in modern British painting, Edward Burra a stunningly original painter, Frederick Edward McWilliam, who has a single, terrifying sculpture in the show, and said, ‘I was for surrealism but not with it.’ This comprehensive exhibition rounds off with Sam Haile, Tristan Miller, Stanley Hyman, master printer, John Tunnard, John Armstrong, John Bigge, Cecil Collins, who was thrown out of the movement when it was discovered he had Christian tendencies, Oscar Mellor and Julian Trevelyan, who ended up marrying the still life painter, Mary Feddan, a darling of the Royal Academy Summer Show. Don Grant
Antiquities are from the past and Technology is from the future. They come from different points in time. Yet, the twin do meet.

The British Museum has a fine collection of treasures from Iraq (ancient Mesopotamia) and they are going on tour. They will be exhibited with photographs of new finds excavated by the British Museum and trainees taking part in the British Museum’s Iraq Emergency Heritage Management Training Scheme. The trainees learn to assess, stabilise and rescue their cultural heritage following damage by the Daesh. They learn sophisticated technological methods and it is specialised work.

The touring Exhibition, Ancient Iraq New Discoveries will take the antiquities of Iraq on a journey from the British Museum to the Great Northern Museum at Newcastle. The new finds will be studied in comparison with the BM’s existing collection and this will lead to greater understanding of Iraqi Heritage. All new finds will stay in Iraq. After Newcastle, the Exhibition will tour to the University of Nottingham, Lakeside Arts Museum. (19 September-13 December). The Exhibition is supported by the Dorset Foundation in honour of Harry M Weinrebe. It is curated by Gareth Brereton. The Exhibition will showcase research into early Mesopotamian cities through excavations at Tello in Southern Iraq and Qalatga in the North. Tello is the site of a new Sumerian Temple complex. The Sumerians flourished from 3000 to 2000 BC and they invented the first writing system in the world. A whole section of the Exhibition is devoted to this site.

In the North of Iraq a massive fort has been discovered situated near the borders of the Parthian and Roman Empires, a scene of earlier conflict, like borders throughout the ages. The site is known as Qalatga Darband and in Iraqi Kurdistan. Iraq was situated at the Eastern end of the Roman Empire. It was challenged by Parthians who embraced the culture of ancient Greece. This accounts for the many Greek finds. The city of Ur has yielded many treasures from the tombs. It was the most powerful state in Mesopotamia. It was excavated by Leonard Woolley in 1922.

There is exciting technological news from the BM where the past and the future are certainly meeting. The British Museum’s Mesopotamian Treasures have been digitised. What a colossal challenge! It is one of the earliest and most extensive online museum search platforms in the world. It started in 2013 with artefacts from UR. Abraham is thought to have come from there. Abraham’s world can be found on w3c open data standard RDF. Again, past meets the future. So much more correlation of material can be researched fast. Writing on cuneiform tablets can be linked to homes and names of inhabitants.

Antiquities in Egypt are on the move in a big way. Four ram headed sandstone sphinxes, dating 1250 BC in the reign of Rameses II, residing内容地 in close alignment with others, have been wrench set, loaded on stretchers into lorries and taken to a traffic island in Tahrir Square in Cairo. Their job is to beautify the Square. On the journey and at their new location their serene, worldly-wise expressions of ancient wisdom did not change.

Furthermore, as is widely known, treasures from Tutankhamun’s tomb in Egypt have travelled to the Saatchi Galleries in London for an Exhibition. Here the ancient artefacts meet incorporated digital content, audio and soundscape.

Finally, much movement of antiquities will continue in Egypt as a Grand Egyptian Museum opens this year which will be a teaching, scientific, history and archaeology study centre. 3,000 years of Egyptian history will move there. It will be on the Giza Plateau with the Pyramids and Great Sphinx only 2.5 km away. It will be a building of the future. The expressions of the Great Sphinx will not change, but it is a most suitable venue at the end of a journey.

There is a movement of antiquities in Italy too. Lucio Rovati has a great collection of Etruscan treasures. He and his wife, Giovanna, are building a new state of the art museum for them. They are refurbishing the old Palazzo Bocconi-Rizzoli in Milan. It will be in a futuristic style with streaming domed show-cases. The antiquities will meet architectural technological architecture at its best.

The ancient civilisation of the Etruscans occurred in Etruria in North Central Italy from around 700 BC. It was significant because from there Greek culture was transmitted and absorbed by ancient Rome. Etruscan treasures are varied and include jewellery, gold, vases all showing skilled workmanship. The wall paintings are impressive showing processions for the dead. Votive statues reveal a mastery of sculpture and approach fluidity in form.

The new Museum will be an appropriate home showing an enduring responsibility to art and culture by the Founders.

Brave ancient worlds of the past and brave new worlds of the future.

Marian Maitland
Aubrey Beardsley
Tate Britain
Until 25 May 2020
Admission £16
tate.org.uk

Aubrey Beardsley was only 25 years old when he died in Menton of tuberculosis, having had a mere 7 year career. He produced over a thousand illustrations and designs in just 5 years; a phenomenal output, when one considers the intricacy and detail involved in producing such works. He was not only a controversial figure for his outrageously decadent drawings, he was famous across Europe for his skills as a draughtsman. When he was nineteen, he went to see Edward Burne-Jones with his portfolio, and the great Pre-Raphaelite encouraged him to apply to the Westminster School of Art, where he was taught by the English painter and teacher Fred Jones, a founder member of the New English Arts Club. In Franco-Prussian terms, he could be described as being a fin de siécle enfant terrible wunderkind, and he visited Paris when he was twenty, and impressed the muralist Pierre Puvis de Chavannes. Back in England, he was commissioned by J M Dent to illustrate Thomas Mallory’s Le Morte d’Arthur, and he came to the attention of Oscar Wilde, whose play Salomé he had illustrated in the French version, and he was asked to illustrate the English version as well, which becomes an instant sensation, when it was published in February 1894.

Beardsley’s antennae were bristling to the zeitgeist of the late Victorians, whether it be the Burne-Jones craze, Japanese prints, Toulouse-Lautrec posters, book design and woodcuts by Charles Ricketts and Charles Shannon, Whistler’s Peacock Room or the spare pen and ink line drawings by Phil May. Whistler had said, ‘you can sum up black and white art in two words, Phil and May.’ Beardsley was keen to cultivate a friendship with the irascible American, but he declined, refusing a dinner invitation in Paris. He declared to Joseph Pennell, ‘Look at him! he’s just like his drawings, he’s all hairs and peacock plumes’. Beardsley drew an unflattering caricature of Whistler, with a mad dash of curly hair under his boater, a carnation in his buttonhole and pointing to his butterfly signature, which Whistler got wind of. Whistler found himself admiring Beardsley’s new Rococo illustrations for The Rape of the Lock, and when he burst into his back in London, he said, ‘Aubrey, I have made a very great mistake; you are a very great artist’, reducing Beardsley to tears, and from that moment on, he came to hold both the man and his work in great esteem.

In January 1894, he was made art editor of the Yellow Book, a new bound quarterly published by John Lane with covers ‘a flaunting yellow,’ and the thick black line used in the illustrations were as arresting as the daring French novels available in Paris, and, subsequently, London. Four issues were published to great acclaim, but, by the time the fifth was due to appear, Oscar Wilde was charged and convicted of ‘gross indecency with certain male persons.’ Because Wilde and Beardsley were linked in the public imagination, even though they had not worked together since Salomé, Beardsley was duly sacked by Alan Lane. Not to be downhearted, he went to Dieppe, where he met another publisher Leonard Smithers, and together they planned another new magazine, The Savoy, in which he produced some of his best work, and he remained with Smithers until his death three years later. British booksellers were still nervous about displaying Beardsley’s work in their windows, and The Savoy folded after just eight issues. However, he produced an even more decorative and embroidered style for illustrations to Alexander Pope’s The Rape of the Lock, followed by another gear-change to a bolder and more powerful graphic style inspired by the artwork on Ancient Greek vases for Lysistrata.

Even today, these drawings could be described as salacious, if not, downright filthy. Kenneth Clark called his work ‘a kind of catmint to adolescents.’ In an erotic comedy by Aristophanes, Lysistrata tries to convince the women of Greece to withhold sexual favours from their menfolk as a means of forcing them to negotiate a peace during the Peloponnesian War. Beardsley’s drawings combine a raunchy erotic quality with humour, but the size of some of the men’s phalluses would shame a well-hung donkey, although there are others that are more ‘handleable’. He does seem obsessed with sex, and particularly penises, which he secreted all over his illustrations, but he is also capable of portraying female beauty in a delicate and sensitive manner, as well as bawdier versions. His own sexuality is smudged, with no conclusions drawn by historians, which is odd, as he was surrounded by all sorts of ‘decadent deviants’, including Oscar Wilde and his first male lover, writer and critic Robert Ross. There are unsubstantiated rumours, spread by the sexual fantasist Frank Harris, that he had an ‘unhealthy’ relationship with his sister Mabel. Beardsley was meticulous about his dress at all times, with dove-grey suits, hats, ties, a cane and yellow gloves, and a painfully thin, willowy physique, with an elongated face and long, bony fingers. He was painted by Walter Sickert, elegantly dressed, in a Hampstead churchyard at the unveiling of a bust commemorating the Romantic poet John Keats, who also died of TB when he was 26 years old, a year older than Beardsley.

This is the first exhibition dedicated to Beardsley at Tate since 1923, and the largest display of his original drawings in Europe since the seminal 1966 exhibition at the V&A, which triggered a Beardsley revival. Gerald Scarfe has leaned a truly shocking caricature of Beardsley, standing alongside a grotesque embryonic dwarf with a cock that is three times as tall as he is, which is kept behind velvet curtains. Also on display are a number of ads for shoes and LP covers that borrow heavily on his style, including Klaus Voorman’s black and white artwork for the Beatles’ Revolver.

Don Grant
Design competition seeks ideas for home of the future

The government launched a design competition on 3rd March that seeks the public’s ideas for a “low carbon, age-friendly” home of the future.

The “Home of 2030” competition is organised by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government as well as the Design Council, the Ministry of Building Innovation and Education, the Royal Institute of British Architects and the Building Research Establishment.

It will run in three phases. First, designers have through 15th April to submit their ideas, at which point up to six will be awarded £40,000 to develop their concept for a specific site of up to 100 homes outside London. From these six designs, three will then be chosen to work with the government to explore how their ideas could be implemented in the real world.

But by December, just £2,546 were underway, putting City Hall on track for just 16,728 homes by the end of March.

Mr Khan uses three definitions for “genuinely affordable” builds:

- Shared ownership schemes to help private renters get onto the property ladder by buying part of their home
- Living rent, which cannot be more than a third of average incomes in the area
- And even more heavily discounted social rent, the Mayor’s preferred option

This contrasts with previous Mayor Boris Johnson, who defined “affordable” housing as 80 per cent of normal market rents.

But Conservative London Assembly housing spokesman Andrew Boff said Mr Khan has presided over “missed targets and sluggish progress”.

He said: “The Mayor has failed time and time again to show any urgency and recognise that housebuilding in London needs to be a sprint rather than a marathon.”

He added: “Housing starts are of course important, but so are completions.

“While we know that over the course of his term the Mayor has completed barely a third of the inadequate number of homes that he started.”

Just over 12,000 City Hall backed homes have been completed since Mr Khan took office in 2016, meaning almost two thirds of signed off projects are still unfinished.

But City Hall claims there are always more new starts towards the end of the year.

The Mayor met his house-building target last year despite having just 42 per cent underway by December, compared to 74 per cent underway this year.

And Mr Khan has improved his performance in the third quarter of the year:

He started fewer than 5,000 homes in the first six months of 2019/20, but from October to December signed off 7,762.

On this basis the Mayor claimed he was “firmly on track” to reach 17,000 new starts.

He said: “Social housing plays a vital role in binding our city together and I’m proud that councils across London have bought into my vision and helped us deliver more genuinely affordable homes for Londoners than at any time since City Hall took responsibility for social housing.

“We can’t solve the housing crisis overnight, but this shows what we can do when Londoners work together.

“Now it is time for the Government to recognise what we have achieved, step up and give us the support and funds to keep building the homes London urgently needs.”

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Making your future work
Deepening the love for what you do.

In March, the wedding fairs start anew with all the hopes of new life; spring lambs, bluebells in the woods and cooing pigeons across the city. But the wiser amongst us will nod sagely and tell us that marriage is so much more than a wedding.

Are you ready for Life’s longest holiday?
By Stephanie Hawthorne

A shocking admission from a financial journalist: despite being an editor of a leading pension magazine at the tender age of 33, I never thought about my own pension until the age of 50 when I suddenly realised, despite being a member of an excellent final salary scheme, I would retire on less than half my pay. How would I face a 50% pay cut? Now it is much worse for mid-lifers and millennials.

These days, apart from public sector workers, virtually no-one has a salary linked pension. It’s all about amassing a big stash of money or pension pot to drawdown on in your retirement or buy an annuity. And you can’t rely on the state being around to provide an adequate safety net. The full amount of a new State Pension is only £168.60 a week; that’s just over £8,750 a year. Most people get even less than that as people do not have full National Insurance contributions.

How much should you save?
Since the 2012 reforms, nearly everyone has a workplace pension. Employers have to contribute at least 3% (so don’t turn away free money). Employees contribute 5% of their income, a total of 8%, but this is not enough to fund a comfortable retirement. Most experts recommend saving between 12% and 18% of your salary if you can afford it. Another rule of thumb is to aim to amass a pension pot by the time you retire, of ten times your salary. When you get a pay rise, increase the pension contribution too.

Pension contributions are a brilliant way to cut tax. Basic rate taxpayers get a useful 20% while higher earners get at 40% or 45%; subject to strict limits. Seek financial advice if you are a higher rate tax payer. These rates may change in the future. If you anticipate a traditional career path in your chosen profession, sooner or later you will need to decide which of these three routes you pursue. Examine what you most enjoy doing, keep an eye out for opportunities to move in your preferred direction and ensure you get the training you need to deepen your capability to achieve your goals.

Many employers will require you to take psychometric assessments to better understand your personality preferences. There are a whole swathe of alternatives but I would strongly recommend Strengthfinders from Gallup which avoids the ‘introvert/extrovert’, ‘thinking/feeling’ polarities of many other assessments and focuses on innate talents which you can build to deep strengths.

Remember, whatever path you adopt, to future-proof your career, deepen your communications, presentation, influencing and collaboration skills. Access coaching to develop your emotional intelligence. But, most importantly, follow your developing interests to deepen the love for what you do. Your passion will make you more attractive and demonstrate you are motivated to make a difference wherever you work.

Choosing to deepen the love for what you do. .

Charles McLachlan
Charles is founder of FuturePerfect and the Portfolio Executive Growth Academy www.portfolioexecutive.biz
The Ministry for the Prevention of Wealth
By Doug Shanks

Like a minor public school in the fifties, the state continues its war of attrition against individuality. Eamonn Holmes is the latest IR35 scalp losing predictably enough at tier one, his defence that his is a unique offering equally predictably mocked in the tabloids.

IR35 has become the generic for measures used by HMRC to argue that one is employed rather than self-employed. IR35’s problem is there is no strategy. It’s usually possible to see the hand of the treasury behind bad tax legislation but one feels HMRC has driven IR35. It’s the Phil Neville dilemma: if that’s the answer what was the question?

Anecdotally the issue arose in the computer industry, particularly software development; one can be forgiven for hip-shooting as there is scant research into the effects of IR35 still less preparation by HMRC for its relaunch. Larger companies want the flexibility; contractors enjoy the independence. A great solution that a paranoid controlling state seeks to destroy.

When the state starts playing divide and rule you’re in trouble. IR35 has been around for a while and unless you were an independent computer consultant it got off to a slow start in the nineties. Phase two saw HMRC target what were known as John Birts, personal service vehicles espoused by the great and good. Umbrella companies that recruited the subcontractors were never a good idea, poorly implemented by organisations that all but advertised themselves as avoiders of tax, with assets and operations safely offshore, leaving firms like ours to earn a crust picking up the pieces.

Phase three of a disastrous regime that has seriously damaged the self-employed community in a world-class state-initiated own goal, is effectively a complete relaunch. The onus is now on the employer to prove that the supplier is not effectively an employee in a disastrous over-extension of the Revenue’s powers. HMRC will be devils with a new furnace.

You might ask why I’m Angry of Tooting? The self-employed community is dominated by fragile SME’s (small-medium enterprises) that doesn’t need extra taxation, administrative burdens and complex new arrangements with its clientele. Surely the government will recognise the unintended consequences of an ill-conceived tax.

The self-employed community represents roughly 15% of the working population, presumably significantly less than that of voters. It doesn’t have a voice and future historians will see it as a persecuted minority. Then there is the Hammond ivory tower envy idiocy. Self employed people need to pay the same tax as everyone else, so give them the pensions, the perks, the paid holidays, the sick leave and the job security. Get a life. You don’t hear whinging from the entrepreneurs, mould breakers, disrupters and rebels. No one grows up dreaming of being Rowntree (the head of house in ‘…’).

Remember what Mrs Thatcher taught us. A liberal tax regime collects more tax. IR35 is a dreadful solution to what was never that much of a problem. The Revenue can crow about Eamonn Holmes for now; history tells us they’ll lose on appeal.
Now in its sixth year, the Classic Car Show has secured its place as a must-see event for enthusiasts, owners, collectors, and experts alike as Olympia is transformed into a classic car lover’s paradise.

Events like this typically celebrate motoring icons and this was no exception. 2020 is the 50th anniversary of the tragic death of one of F1’s greatest legends, Bruce McLaren. To honour the mark he left on both the sport and the industry as a whole, a selection of his cars as well as priceless memorabilia, courtesy of the brand that bears his name, were on display.

One new feature for this year’s event was Car Stories where the stage featured nine of the world’s most iconic cars of all time. One of these was the Aston Martin DB4 GT Zagato. The Gaydon based firm is actually building continuation models of this classic as part of the DBZ Centenary that celebrates both 100 years of Zagato as well as 60 years of its partnership with Aston Martin. Continuation cars are the only way to get your hands on a brand-new classic car. Besides the Aston Martin, Car Stories also celebrated the Jaguar XK120, the Porsche 962C, and Duesenberg, among others.

Two off-roading milestones were also celebrated. The first is 40 years of Audi’s Quattro. The German company’s four-wheel-drive system is one of the most well-renowned systems in the business, taking Audi from rallying success to giving it a USP in the market today. A Quattro rally car driven by racing legends Stig Blomqvist and Walter Röhrl was on display at the show. This car was rebuilt after an accident at the RAC Rally with the latter at the wheel left the car badly damaged. After being fixed it became a test car for an experimental gearbox system that would go on to become Audi’s S-Tronic twin-clutch system. Since then it has featured in a number of events including the Goodwood Festival of Speed and Shelsley Walsh Hill Climb.

The other is the 50th anniversary of the Range Rover. For half a century it has come to define the luxury car market and birthed the luxury off-roader market, a segment which today threatens to drive other types of luxury cars to near extinction. Today’s Range Rover is a very different beast from the two-door that started it all. Now it has become a brand within a brand, ranging from the little Evoque, the stylish Velar, the Sport, and, the flagship of the range, the regular Range Rover.

Bentley Mulliner Bacalar marks return to coachbuilding
By Fahad Redha

Bentley has taken the wraps off the Mulliner Bacalar, its first two seater in decades. Just 12 of these will be built, each one of which has already been sold. The name comes from the Laguna Bacalar in Mexico’s Yucatan peninsula, a lake famous for its natural beauty. This is in keeping with Bentley’s strategy of taking famous landmarks, the first of which was the Bentayga launched in 2015.

The design is heavily influenced by the EXP 10 GT concept car revealed in 2019 to celebrate the winged B’s centenary. But while that car was powered by batteries, the Bacalar will be propelled by the firm’s 6.0-litre W12 engine making 650bhp. That being said Bentley does boost the car’s green credentials: “sustainable craftsmanship and ethically-sourced materials includes rice husk ash paint and 5,000-year-old Riverwood.” It goes on to say that it will be built in a carbon neutral factory, the world’s first for a luxury car.

The new car marks a return to coachbuilding for Bentley Mulliner as it announces its three-portfolio future: Classic, Collections, and Coachbuilt. Classic was introduced last year with the firm announcing that the 1929 Team Blower will be reborn with 12 supercharged 4½-litre cars to be built. Bentley Mulliner Collections will focus on bespoke derivatives of the main Bentley line-up.

But it’s the Coachbuilt arm that is the most exciting with the Bacalar being its first product. In addition to being tailored to each customer, it shares no body panel with any other Bentley model except for the Continental GT’s door handles.

But that’s where the family resemblance ends. The new car sits wider than the Continental GT with bespoke 22-inch wheels. Even the position of the Bentley badge on the rear deck is unique to this car.

Despite there being only 12, no two Bacalars will be alike. This is because Bentley will allow individual customers to further personalise their car, ranging from rare paint options, exterior treatments, and design themes.

Bentley’s Mulliner can trace its roots to the 1500s when the company being originally founded as a saddler. In the 1760s it refocused its business on coachbuilding, rising to prominence when it was commissioned to build and maintain carriages for Royal Mail. This makes it among the oldest surviving coachbuilders in the world and makes the Bacalar “the culmination of almost 500 years of expertise and heritage in the art of vehicle design.”

When the car was invented in the late 19th century, Mulliner stepped away from horse-drawn carriages. It would become known for bespoke Bentleys before eventually becoming a part of the company in 1959, much like AMG for Mercedes.

And just as AMG has since been given free reign to create its unique cars, we expect to see more Mulliner exclusives unlike anything else in the Bentley portfolio.
Where is World Rugby heading?
By Derek Wyatt

W
orld Rugby had a spectacular World Cup late last year in Japan. It was actually three weeks too long (longer than the football World Cup and the Olympics), it experienced the odd earthquake or two (Scotland and Ireland lost to Japan) as well as a hurricane which flooded pitches and led to cancelled matches. The shocks belonged to the Six Nations, only Wales and England made it to the semi-finals. Scotland were abject, Italy were in a tough group and Ireland failed to turn up but edged into the quarter finals. The team of the tournament was Japan followed by South Africa. The game of the tournament was England’s mashing of the World Cup holders, New Zealand.

Fast forward to the Six Nations tournament which looks as if it will remain incomplete as the Coronavirus circles. All Italy games have been put on hold and the final week’s matches beginning 14th March 2020 look in doubt already the Italy v England game has been postponed. The other two Wales v Scotland and France v Ireland’s will depend on how fast the virus moves. It is not looking good. Should France have beaten Scotland (08/03) and then beat Ireland at home then they will be crowned champions. The rest of the games may remain unplayed.

There is another virus circling world rugby and it begins with the initial CVC. CVC wants to buy-in to world rugby especially the Six Nations. To the chagrin of the World Rugby organisation housed in Dublin and responsible for the World Cups this is not really what they want. They want total control of the game world. The Six Nations rugby unions know that every year the demand for tickets, supporting advertising, rights costs and marketing goes up and up and up. So as CVC draws ever closer to offering these six countries mouth watering amounts possible north of £3bn over a decade, we are into a serious step change in the game.

The first is: who will write the laws? World Rugby or CVC? This is key. The second is: who will show the games? Not obviously ITV or BBC. It will be Amazon Prime, Google or Netflix or a similar online organisation. It’s goodnight for ITV and BBC as they will only show highlights. An Amazon Prime could easily offer £5bn for a ten year deal and sell this package with supporting advertising to its global client base and recoup it. This is why World Rugby is feeling so down in the mouth.

The Laws are key. What if CVC with an American based sponsor brought some of the ways in which American Football, Baseball and Basketball has made the game both easier to understand (rugby has lost the plot) and faster? With maybe four quarters stretching over two hours? This feels like a head on collision to me between the traditional lists and the radicals. It could even spell the end of the organisation of rugby union per se. CVC is actually deep down CVCRRR with one R standing for Revenues and the second for the Radicals.

The RFU is badly organised, afraid of innovation and much worse, appalling led (though the new CEO needs time). Which set of ignoramuses decided that later this year an England v Argentina game would kick off at 8pm on a Friday evening? Twickenham needs to be sold. It’s a joke. They are keen to shout out loud about the 83,000 spectators attending but the organising committee has no interest in how they will find their way home at 10pm. Imagine that number trying to access trains (how many extra will be made available at that time by SW Rail, itself a parody?).

As for the buses they will struggle to actually ferry ticket holders in from Richmond before the game as it will clash with the end the rush hour. Perhaps, you can better understand why the Six Nations wants out. In order to go forward each of the six countries needs £400–£500m to create new stadia and twenty first century transport links.

They all need to provide an underground or overground system which brings the spectator straight into the stadium, to take the game to the next step. It’s all to play.

Could Basketball be a slam dunk in Britain?
By Khalid Hassan

Basketball was created in Springfield, Massachusetts circa 1891 by a physical education instructor, James Naismith of Springfield College. His intention was to create an alternative, less injury prone sport than American football; while at the same time creating a sport for athletes to play indoors during the winters. However the game didn’t start with the spherical ball we all know today, it consisted of peach baskets and a soccer style ball.

In the United Kingdom has always been viewed as something of a poor relation, perhaps due to Victorian snobbishness over its American parentage, with football, rugby and cricket dominating all the back pages. Seemingly there has just not been enough space for basketball in the crowded landscape of professional British sport. Only founded in 1897, the British basketball league is the backbone and the highest level of play in the UK. Currently the league consists of 12 teams with professional male basketball representations from both England and Scotland and continues to expand. The league hosts two knockout competitions a year with one team coming out victorious annually. The London Lions are the current champions, winning their first ever franchise win this past season. While the Newcastle Eagles hold the record for the most championship wins for a single franchise, 7.

When asked what makes football so popular compared to basketball, former head of BBL Kevin Routledge implied it was simply a matter of cultural memory: “It’s what everyone grows up with, it’s what they play in school, it’s what their dads took them to, it’s what their granddads took them to, it’s what the culture is all about.”

This is greatly influenced by the lack of youth organisations like the American NBA’s youth training programs to help young basketball enthusiasts reach the level of skill necessary for professional play. Aside from Luol Deng, who can arguably be considered the greatest British basketball player of all time, no current NBA player has come through the British basketball system. With the UK environment also being heavily populated with every conceivable type of sport such as athletics, boxing, cycling, golf, tennis, there is indeed a great deal of competition for winning over the hearts, minds, and pockets of the British sports fan.

By contrast basketball is one of the big four sports in the USA, along with baseball, American football and ice hockey, but, although it has thrived in some European countries, it has never really grown that much in the former British Empire. Comparing the number of spectators for Champions League finals and the audience of the BBL Cup finals in 2019 shows the depth of the disparity: the first event sheltered more than 63,000 spectators, while the second one; just 9,000. However the country does seem ripe for a basketball invasion, as tickets for the 2019 NBA match between the New York Knicks and Washington Wizards at the O2 arena sold out in just 52 minutes.

To top it off the sport is extremely underfunded despite being the second-most popular sport in the United Kingdom for teenagers in disadvantaged urban areas. Hundreds of thousands of children in the UK play basketball each week, yet due to a lack of Olympic success, it is one of the worst-funded sports in the country. The men’s national team has only competed in 2 out of the 18 Olympic basketball tournaments with the last being the 2012s London Olympics which saw the team finishing 9th. As a result UK Sport, the government’s organisation for its elite sport development, gives no money to basketball at all. However this will only create a vicious cycle without the investment to spark developments and improvements. To end this, both organisations and the general public need to support their homegrown talents by attending the games, and investing in the youth leagues. This will make the sport very popular for generations to come and put Britain back on the map for upcoming Olympic tournaments.

British Basketball League Matches for March 2020
Find a full list of upcoming fixtures www.bbl.org.uk/fixtures
London Sport Award winners announced

The London Sport Awards, supported by the City of London Corporation, is the capital’s biggest celebration of grassroots physical activity and sport. The ten Award winners were announced at a glittering ceremony at the Guildhall on Friday 6 March 2020.

The Enhancing the Workforce Award was won by Coach Core (Kensington & Chelsea), a national sports coaching apprenticeship scheme, recruiting young people (16-24), who are not in education or employment (NEET) or at risk of becoming NEET, and providing them with a range of skills for sport and work.

The Technology and Innovation Award was won by Good Boost (Southwark). Using waterproof tablet computers, Good Boost delivers personalised water-based rehabilitation programmes to improve musculoskeletal health services in local communities.

The Children and Young People Award was won by Hestia’s Family Fitness Project (multi-borough). This project aims to improve the health and fitness levels of children accessing Hestia’s Domestic Abuse and Modern Slavery services, using physical activity as a tool to facilitate the recovery from abuse.

The Physical Activity for Health Award winner was Step Change Studios (Westminster). This is an organisation that provides dance in community, social care, healthcare, education and sports and leisure settings for all ages and abilities; supporting over 2,000 disabled people to participate in dance.

Volunteer of the Year was Nafisa Patel (Newham). Nafisa has developed into a vital volunteer for the cricketing community in London. Nafisa is an ECB volunteer on the South Asian Female Project and leads sessions at Newham Cricket Club.

The Sport Unites Award was won by The Golf Trust (multi-borough). The Golf Trust uses golf to inspire and empower older adults living in care homes and sheltered housing across London to lead happier and healthier lives.

The Impact of Elite Sport Award was won by West Ham United Football Club (Newham). West Ham’s Players’ Project community programme focuses on using the power of elite sport and personal storytelling to improve economic impact, social integration, help people overcome barriers.

The Business Contribution Award winner was UBS (Hackney). UBS has been changing the lives of children and young people through sport via a partnership with SportInspired. It provides volunteers to support children and young people with activities.

The Inspirational Young Person of the Year was Vanessa Nishu (Barking & Dagenham). She has been a part of Barking Salvation Army for over 15 years, fundraising to set up a youth club, organised residential trips to sporting facilities and set up a dance class for young people.

The Community Impact Award was won by Carers4Carers (Lambeth). Founded and run by carers to improve the physical and emotional wellbeing of unpaid carers and their families, Carers4Carers encourages everyone to have fun and take part regardless of their age.

Andrew’s Bridge Tips

With Andrew Robson

Perhaps you do not think East’s defensive problem is too tough. Yet every single player in my club duplicate went wrong. Cover up the West and South hands and put them to shame!

Dealer East North-South Vulnerable

West North East South

1 ♠ 1 ♥ 1 ♦ 4 ♠

Pass Pass Pass

♠ Q 8 6 ♥ J 9 8 6 ♦ 6 2 ♣ 8 7 5 4

♠ A K J 7 2 ♥ A 10 2 ♦ A Q 8 ♣ K Q 6

West led ♦ 6, dummy played ♦ 5 and you as East win ♦ Q. And now?

Playing too quickly, you might table ♦ A. If so, you have established declarer’s ♦ J 10 and dummy’s ♠ loser can be discarded. You must switch to ♠ K at trick two. That way you are sure to take four tricks; ♠ A, ♠ A Q and ♠ Q.

Declarer’s best counter on ♦ K switch from East is to duck smoothly. If East sleepily continues with a ♦, declarer can finesse ♦ J and discard dummy’s ♠ K on ♦ A. After ♦ K is allowed to win, East should cash ♦ A and wait for ♥ A.

All the participants in my duplicate said they realised their error, cashing ♦ A at trick two rather than switching to ♠ K - a split second too late. There is no prize for defending a hand in under a minute. By taking a little longer you will become even more adept at analytical thinking and thus be a better (and quicker) player in the future.

ANDREW’S TIP: Take a split second before playing any card that is not completely routine.
Believe, positives and negatives are all in the mind

At the end of January Unibet and Magnus Carlsen announced in Stockholm that they were going into partnership, with the latter announcing his excitement at such a deal. Carlsen will become a global ambassador for Unibet, and as already a ‘huge star’ will put chess on a universal level to those of poker and football which Unibet already have under their universal betting umbrella. Carlsen believes this new partnership will increase the appetite for chess from global audiences who will participate by betting on tournament results and individuals’ results. The news brought an avalanche of comments and on social media, where typical comments put forward revolved around the evidence that widespread sports betting led to corruption, with match-fixing in sport via various means. Concerned commentators asked ‘What action is the chess community taking to prevent possible corruption?’

It is early days and this story will run and run, and not least as draws in chess are invariably open to further scrutiny especially with A1 looking over one’s shoulder declaring that there was an obvious win in an end game with few pieces left on the board 68 moves further on down the line!

The British Chess Magazine’s current issue carries several articles pertinent to the future of British Chess, with one article raising questions of where it may have gone wrong given the scarcity of British players with ELO ratings over 2700, which is the magic rating that places a player into the arena with the other top elite players in the world, and who usually would be invited to play in top notch tournaments.

The article’s author GM Aleksandar Colovic opens with ‘The Grand Chess Tour’s final leg in London at the London Classic, (see my February’s column ‘Lost End Game’), at which The British Knockout Championship also ran alongside the GCT’s finale and the Chess Schools’ tournaments. Colovic states, ‘There is a curious situation in British chess when it comes to its elite players. The ELO ratings for 2019 show only one British player above 2700, and that is Michael Adams at 2701. Remember that Carlsen and Caruana are within a few points of each other, but over the 2800 mark!’

Most of the top chess countries in the world have a plethora of players over the 2700 mark and although in 2019 we had good results in several European and Olympic team events, we are very light on high individual ratings. The author goes on to state that, ‘… the other two members of the national team, David Howell and Gawain Jones, (he omits Luke McShane), have their ratings at times above and below 2700, indicating both their potential and a certain lack of stability!’ He also notes their age differences of 19 and 16 years respectively with Adams 48 years of age. Adams won the British Knockout Championship, at The London Classic, winning against Marcus Harvey, Luke McShane and David Howell; Colovic hits the button when he states that Michael Adams has been a world class player for almost 30 years, but the fact that the oldest player from the national team still cannot be overtaken at the age of 48 and remains the best player ‘is perhaps a bit worrying’. I like his understatement at this juncture! It’s more than worrying, it’s indicative of a national chess organisation that is out of kilter with present day chess organisations in most other countries, and Yes, money plays its part in this! I shall return to this subject in my next column, but it raises a flurry of questions about why we should be in this present situation with a noticeable absence of top flight players with ratings over 2700 and what should be done about it? The British Chess community at large doesn’t lack for numbers or enthusiasm, but it is weak when it comes to top flight individual representation at top flight global tournaments!

Magnus Carlsen who readily states, ‘I’m not a highly cultured guy’, took first place as the Number One Premier League Fantasy Football Player on the planet. Carlsen continued stating, ‘I don’t think I do too much different from other people during my downtime’ away from chess that is. He was accelerated to the top of the official ‘Fantasy League Premier Football’ ratings ahead of 7.3 million other contenders! This news went worldwide at the time with ‘accelerated frenzy’ on the topic of Magnus’s magic powers and what were they? Carlsen was quick to dismiss ‘personal hocus pocus’ and pointed to regularly observing large quantities with their continuous match Momentum and repetition in vast abundance! If Carlsen’s triumphs in not losing one single game in classical chess over one and a half years is impressive, to say the least, Guildford’s last loss was in 2012, since when they have won their 79 team matches, and drawn just 2! They have Momentum and repetition in vast quantities with their continuous match wins of 7-1 over 8 boards, and even single game defeats are rare. During the 2018-2019 season they had only one individual game loss. The player in question must have thought that he had really let the side down. In the current season they for example dispatched Cambridge University 8-0, and the City of London’s Barcian team 7-1. The Cambridge team can be seen in action against Oxford in the annual Varsity match held at the RAC Club, Pall Mall, Saturday, March 2nd.

Spectators are welcome, but men must wear jacket and tie, Club rules.

The following chess problem is selected from the British Knockout Chess Championship Tournament held at The London Chess Classic, Olympia 30 Nov-8 Dec 2019, between Michael Adams as white and David Howell. Adams had wins against Howell, Marcus Harvey and Luke McShane to take the title. White had just taken on 19.Bxc5.. and Black responded 19...Qxe4. White responded 20.Qg5+, protecting his Bishop and attacking g7. What was Black’s response given that his King is exposed and needs to hide! Answer upside down below.

Chess
By Barry Martin

First, absorbing by osmosis the new strategies made available by the exciting developments in computer programs, namely ‘Alpha Zero’, the Google Neural Network, the self-teaching chess program, and for the foreseeable future the best in the world. A combination of Momentum and opening novelties originally devised for the World Championship against Caruana in 2018’. He goes on to state, ‘I absolutely believe in Momentum. I think in chess, as in most other competitive areas confidence is crucial and it is also fragile. I think it is very hard to obtain and very easy to lose, or at least if you have some sense of reality’. It is from these statements by Carlsen that I formed the title of this current chess article.

If Momentum is the name of the game in staying on top then the Guildford chess team that plays in the Premier division of the 4NCL, our professional chess league, has it in abundance! If Carlsen’s triumphs in not losing one single game in classical chess over one and a half years is impressive, to say the least, Guildford’s last loss was in 2012, since when they have won their 79 team matches, and drawn just 2! They have Momentum and repetition in vast quantities with their continuous match wins of 7-1 over 8 boards, and even single game defeats are rare. During the 2018-2019 season they had only one individual game loss. The player in question must have thought that he had really let the side down. In the current season they for example dispatched Cambridge University 8-0, and the City of London’s Barcian team 7-1. The Cambridge team can be seen in action against Oxford in the annual Varsity match held at the RAC Club, Pall Mall, Saturday, March 2nd.

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