

FEBRUARY 8/9 2020

FT Weekend Magazine

**When he was 17, this man was a guard
in a Nazi concentration camp.
Now he's finally facing justice**

Tobias Buck reports



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RICARDO NAGAOKA

'There are places that look like the trailer parks of old. But many reflect a new reality'

Rana Foroohar on America's mobile-home boom, p20



'It was always going to be British art, and it was always going to be younger artists'

Angela Flowers on 50 years as a gallerist, p28



'One slice of this shamelessly retro temptress will have you going for another'

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SIMON KUPER

OPENING SHOT

Political correctness: the UK v the US



When I moved to an American university in 1993 (but it seems like last Tuesday), I came with a British predisposition to mock humourless Americans. Specifically, I was looking for absurd examples of a new American fashion I'd read about named "political correctness" - calling fat people "horizontally challenged",

short ones "vertically challenged" etc. No such restraint had existed at my British university, where "You poof!" was considered witty repartee.

But to my surprise, I found I liked American PC. The Americans I befriended were funny. They just didn't use ethnic or sexist slurs as humour crutches.

Since then, PC has evolved in both the UK and the US. Britain - and western Europe more broadly - has slowly arrived at something like the 1993 US version of PC: abuse of minorities now gets challenged. Meanwhile, though, in the liberal-left fragment of the US, an extreme form of PC - let's call it speech repression - has taken hold. It reverberates way beyond the worlds of academia, journalism and publishing, and probably helped get Donald Trump elected.

Ritualised mini-culture wars over speech repression now punctuate America's national conversation. The latest furore is over Jeanine Cummins' novel *American Dirt*, about Mexicans fleeing to the US. Cummins' assailants accused her of stereotyping Mexicans and said that a white person wasn't entitled to write about Mexico anyway. Mexican-American writer Myriam Gurba called Cummins "somebody who wants to usurp our voice", because obviously all Mexicans speak with a single voice and what counts in literature are blood-and-soil origins. Cummins' publisher, Flatiron, cancelled her US book tour after "specific threats to booksellers and the author". Gurba herself then received death threats.

Speech-repression battles typically pit young leftists against older liberals. In this enclosed ecosphere, a culturally appropriating artist can overshadow the misogynist, race-baiting president. In fact, speech repression and the rise of Trump are connected. Four in five Americans believe "political correctness is a problem in our country", according to research by More in Common, an advocacy organisation that fights extremism. "PC" (by which respondents seemed to mean controls on everyday speech) was opposed by 87 per cent of Hispanics and three-quarters of African-Americans. If PC is a problem, Trump can seem a solution. Republicans can't win elections on tax cuts for the rich or stripping people of healthcare, but they can on PC.

No wonder rightwing European culture warriors talk up every supposed outbreak over here too. And there are some genuine cases. In Germany, when Syrian migrants arrived in 2015,

most media shut down anti-immigrant viewpoints because of national taboos on saying anything that might seem racist. Britain's transgender versus "second-wave" feminist fights often feature speech repression. The Daily Mail leapt with delight on the case of Selina Todd, an Oxford history professor who focuses on feminism after she brought security guards to lectures following threats from transgender activists. London, Europe's most American-influenced city, has pockets of speech repression: a British publisher withdrew an offer for a book by a friend of mine

'Republicans can't win elections on tax cuts for the rich or stripping people of healthcare, but they can on PC'

because his sympathetic portrayal of poor immigrants' experiences supposedly amounted to "cultural appropriation".

In Britain, Boris Johnson, who still purveys the ethnic jokes of olden days, has risen in part as a self-styled resistance hero against PC. However, actual European PC is nowhere near North American levels. The Anglophone country with most Google searches for "cultural appropriation" is Canada (possibly the world leader in PC). US searches are at 82 per cent of Canadian levels; British searches at 55 per cent.

In Europe, you can mostly say what you like. You can culturally appropriate (thank God), and even be racist, sexist or homophobic. You will get pushback, and sometimes abuse, but that's not censorship. Look at the career of British philosopher Roger Scruton, who after his death last month was held up as a martyr to PC. True, he was sacked (and later reinstated) as unpaid chair of the Building Better, Building Beautiful government commission, for making arguably racist remarks. But governments are entitled to strip racists of honorary posts. Otherwise, Scruton thrived for decades in British media and universities, just as anti-Islamic polemicists Éric Zemmour and Thilo Sarrazin are best-selling authors in France and Germany. Johnson (clearly talking partly about himself) eulogised Scruton as someone "who not only had the guts to say what he thought but said it beautifully".

To grasp the transatlantic gap, read the statement by Cummins' British publisher Headline after her American troubles: "We are proud to publish *American Dirt*... We respect and acknowledge the fact that it has sparked debate about the legitimacy of who gets to tell which stories and the right to freedom of speech for everyone." As long as this kind of level-headedness prevails, European culture wars won't reach American proportions. **FT**

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simon.kuper@ft.com @KuperSimon



INVENTORY TRACEY THORN
SINGER, SONGWRITER AND WRITER

‘I’ve marched more in the past two years than I have since I was young’

Tracey Thorn, 57, formed Everything but the Girl with Ben Watt in 1982, and has also had a successful solo musical career. Her most recent album, *Record*, was released in 2018. Her first memoir, *Bedsit Disco Queen*, was published in 2013.

What was your childhood or earliest ambition?

I remember saying, in my early teens: “I want to marry a poet and live in Hampstead.” It more or less came true, although I’m frustrated at myself now for not saying: “I want to be a poet.” It was an era when girls still grew up imagining the course their lives would take via the medium of the man they married.

Private school or state school? University or straight into work?

State school - a former girls’ grammar school in Hatfield, which had gone comprehensive. Then university in Hull to study English Literature. And later, an MA in Modern English Literature from Birkbeck. I was already in the music business. I went to seminars on a Monday evening, then did a lot of my reading on the tour bus.

Who was or still is your mentor?

I’m often inspired by my friends. I gravitate towards people who are a bit different from me, perhaps represent what I’d like to be - often more self-confident, louder, bolder. So I love my friend Carol Morley, the film-maker, who is full of experience and stories and enthusiasm. She says: “Optimism is a political act” - I believe her.

How physically fit are you?

More than I’ve ever been. I despised exercise as a young person and didn’t seem to need it. Then I got older and had kids and my back packed in. So I took up Pilates and then walking, and then yoga and then the gym, and now I’m pretty fit, considering my advanced age.

Ambition or talent: which matters more to success?

If you mean worldly or commercial success, then ambition. You have to want it, and be motivated to pursue it. And if you want to sustain success, that definitely requires stamina and desire.

How politically committed are you?

I’m politically despondent. I can see the same problems as everyone else, but I can’t see any people in power who seem likely to offer solutions. Having said that, I’ve marched

more in the past two years than I have since I was young, so I must still have some kind of idealistic belief in change. And marches are good for the spirit, if nothing else.

What would you like to own that you don’t currently possess?

A new Fontaines DC album, but they haven’t made it yet.

What is your biggest extravagance?

Hotels. I love a hotel.

In what place are you happiest?

Often a hotel room, with a view of some kind.

What ambitions do you still have?

I’d like to go on a spectacular long train journey - across Russia or the Rockies or something.

What drives you on?

Excitement. The feeling I love best is the excitement of a new idea, being caught up in a new project.

What is the greatest achievement of your life so far?

It’s not a solo achievement by any means, but I’d say my family. The five of us - me and Ben [now her husband] and our three kids - have had so many happy years together.

What do you find most irritating in other people?

Pushing in when there’s a queue.

If your 20-year-old self could see you now, what would she think?

She’d be very happy that I live in London and that I’ve spent my life working as a writer and a singer. She’d be surprised about the kids, I didn’t know I wanted any. And she’d presumably be amazed that I’m still with the boyfriend I’d just met.

Which object that you’ve lost do you wish you still had?

A khaki Marc Jacobs skirt. There’s a photo in our downstairs loo of me wearing it about 15 years ago, and somehow it got lost in a clear-out. Every day I see it and think: damn.

What is the greatest challenge of our time?

Finding a way to hang on to our ability to distinguish between truth and lies.

Do you believe in an afterlife?

No.

If you had to rate your satisfaction with your life so far, out of 10, what would you score?

Ten out of 10 for unpredictability and eventfulness. Some of it I’d probably change if I could, but I can’t fault it for drama. **FT**

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Interview by Hester Lacey.

“Another Planet” by Tracey Thorn is published in paperback by Canongate

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TECH WORLD NOTES FROM A DIGITAL BUNKER

BY ELAINE MOORE IN SAN FRANCISCO



ILLUSTRATION BY PÂTÉ

Generation Rent in San Francisco

A miracle arrived in my inbox this week: an advert for a studio flat for rent in San Francisco that was light-filled, furnished and affordable. “TAKE IT” wrote the friend who forwarded the link. “But make sure you read the bit at the bottom first.”

The bit at the bottom turned out to be a caveat that the renter would have the space to themselves only “90 per cent of the time” because the owners wanted to use it for “communication classes”. I’ve lived in freewheeling San Francisco long enough to know where this was going. One graphic Google search result for the owner’s intimacy workshops later and I said goodbye to the studio.

In San Francisco it is always best to check. California’s wellness

industry has managed to entwine capitalism and spirituality so successfully that you can pay for classes and therapies in alternative lifestyles you may not know existed. At one party, I was advised that the very best cure for hangovers was not water or an aspirin but cryotherapy, an infrared sauna and a lymphatic drainage massage – total cost \$250. Down in Santa Monica, Gwyneth Paltrow’s Goop empire has produced a six-part documentary with Netflix that will show you just how seriously hallucinogens and energy healing are taken.

The cost of elite treatments is one more weird juxtaposition of extreme wealth and growing inequality in California’s cities. Housing may be the most stark illustration of this. Here in San Francisco, strict zoning laws prevent density in the city and suburbs, choking the supply of affordable new homes. An amended version of a bill – SB50 – was recently proposed to reform these

laws and enable apartment blocks to be built. It failed to get majority support in a Senate vote.

I keep hearing the same argument from locals: change the zoning laws and San Francisco will become New York. There is a fear that new building developments will wipe out the city’s charming one-family homes and replace them with forests of steel-and-glass skyscrapers. Everyone agrees there is a housing crisis. No one wants developments in their area. Nimby-ism stops new houses being built.

The undersupply of new apartments combined with an oversupply of new wealth driven by the tech industry has led to rising homelessness, displaced renters and a generation of workers with impressive sounding job titles and salaries who still share bathrooms and kitchens with roommates late into their thirties.

You might think the tech industry would put its disruptive

mind to work and come up with some solutions. Yet though companies such as Facebook and Google are building housing for their own employees and promise funds towards other developments, the tech giants have come up with disappointingly few ideas.

A few enterprising locals have given it a go. In the Tenderloin district, one start-up rents out bunk beds in shared dorm rooms for \$1,200 per month. The founder says the only people who tend to find this idea funny own their own home or live in a rent-controlled apartment, meaning they have no idea how bad the market is for other residents.

In the Mission district, I met the founder of a micro-living company that builds hardware and software that enables tenants to press a button and watch their bed rise up and disappear into the

‘One man built himself a plywood box in a friend’s living room, for which he paid \$400 a month’

ceiling – turning a teeny studio bedroom into a teeny living room. PadSplit is trying to add new space for renters by taking single-family homes and dividing them into separate apartments.

My favourite solution was a University of Chicago graduate who came to San Francisco a few years ago and built himself a plywood box in his friend’s living room, for which he paid \$400 per month. It was, he claimed, nicer than most people’s bedrooms. “I don’t think I’ll raise my family in a pod,” he told Vice magazine. “But I’m not ruling it out.”

This being San Francisco he then tried to turn his idea into a start-up – a sort of DIY version of Airbnb – before the city declared that it was in fact illegal to live in a box.

Pods, RVs, beds in ceilings and dorm rooms: tech’s answer to the crisis is to squeeze renters into ever smaller spaces. Nothing about San Francisco’s housing shortage is going to change any time soon. But I’m still glad I didn’t take that studio. **FT**

Elaine Moore is the FT’s deputy Lex editor in San Francisco



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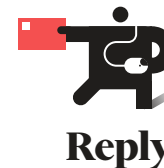
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ROBERT SHRIMSLEY THE NATIONAL CONVERSATION



Farage and the fruitcake time bomb

It is perhaps the final gloat for the Brexiters. With far too much relish for anyone who was eating breakfast at the time, Nigel Farage beamed his lascivious grin and declared that Remainers were “the fruitcakes and loonies now”.

The horror. These are supposed to be the rational people unswayed by emotion. Fruitcakes! How very dare you. And yet, we also know who he is talking about. Anyone who inhabits the major Remain circles - London, Scotland, Twitter - will know that there is a constituency out there which is not quite ready to skulk off with its metropolitan tail between its legs. Boris Johnson may be calling for a national reconciliation but hardcore Remainers would prefer a Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Daily, people rage at Brexiters, the new Brexit coins or the latest twists in the trade talks. I sympathise with those who think it a mistake but the decision has been made. (We could, I suppose, continue to bang on about the referendum and the sharp practice of Vote Leave, but at some point you turn into a football fan whining about the penalty you should have had in a long-gone semi-final.)

Aside from the gratification of turning on his opponents the phrase once used about him, Farage knows the value of diminishing his adversaries by depicting them as unhinged, the party bores of politics.

At the weekend, The Daily Telegraph ran columns still waging war on the 16 million people who did not share its world view. One was headed: “The guilty men of Remain will never be forgiven.” Another declared: “Sneering liberals’ contempt for ordinary people is the real issue facing Brexit Britain.” (No one does sneering better than a rightwinger sneering at sneering liberals, by the way. I wonder if there is a TV show in it - *The Great British Sneer Off*.)



ILLUSTRATION BY LUCAS VARELA

There is just one problem for Farage that a more reflective figure might note. He now knows that the fruitcakes can win. His side’s fruitcakes took decades to claw their way into the political mainstream. The new pro-EU fanatics have a head start. The referendum created a pro-Europeanism that did not previously exist in the UK.

Britain’s Brexiters were once the ones boring on about the deceptions in the way Britain joined the EU. For years, in small meeting rooms and private dinners, Tory MPs droned on about EU directives and treaties, and were ridiculed for their obsession. But, slowly, they captured a political party and then the agenda and then the voters.

If I were Farage, therefore, I’d worry about the fruitcakes, loonies and all those pro-Europeans nursing a grievance. There is no quick return to the EU. The only speedy path back would require an economic collapse so severe that no one who lives here should wish for it anyway.

But the fruitcakes and loonies are not going to go away. They have learnt from the Brexiters and they have demographics on their side. Brexiters know they have created a mirror image of themselves, a movement for Europe, led by obsessives, fuelled by a betrayal

myth and already close to capturing one of the two main political parties.

It will be hard going for a while. “I told you so” rarely plays well. The leaders will be marginalised and ignored but they will press on, making their argument. Of course, the smart move is not to go for an immediate demand to rejoin but to follow the Brexiters’ lead with incremental calls. Perhaps, first, they will ask for closer ties in a few areas, then a few more and then, boom, just like that friend who always secretly fancied you, they are suddenly declaring their total love.

The British will not quickly seek to reverse Brexit. Johnson has time to make a success of it - if he can. But while the wounds of the Brexit campaign may heal, the scars will remain and pro-Europeanism is now a visceral belief of a significant portion of the country’s political identity. It is as emotional for them as it was for the Brexiters.

So Farage and his allies can enjoy their moment. But the fruitcakes are going to regroup and it is up to his side now to prove they were right. If they don’t, they may find the fruitcake army is larger than they expected and all too recognisable.

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Simon Kuper’s “Before the flood” (February 1/2) serves as an example of the cultural differences between the Rhineland and the Anglo-Saxon models. Having lived in Houston, through two direct hurricanes, one sees the difference in approach from close up. I will never forget the frustration of Delft engineers trying to explain to a public from Houston and Galveston that there is a different way to handle this.

M van Hasselt, The Hague
via FT.com



@rcbregman January 30
Excellent piece by @KuperSimon about climate change and the future of my country, the Netherlands. ‘Broadly, the conundrum facing the Dutch can be distilled to a binary choice: should we stay or should we go?’

We, the Dutch, also used our control of the water to keep out the French in 1672 by strategic flooding. In relative terms, the Netherlands was one of the richest countries then. In absolute terms, it was poorer than Bangladesh today and technology more primitive. This suggests governance is the main solution for lesser-developed countries to get water under control.

Pietje Puk via FT.com

Congratulations to Tim Hayward. I’ve never read a restaurant review where I literally pick up my Oyster card and want to go straight there... Mei Mei sounds a great Singaporean food option in London.

Brown Cow via FT.com

An oft-heard argument is that while facial recognition (Gillian Tett, “You’re on camera. Smile?”, February 1/2) might be OK with a democratic government, we wouldn’t want a repressive government to inherit that system. But a repressive government wouldn’t hesitate to introduce facial recognition, while a democratic government does. Oh, the irony.
Mrs Gussie Fink-Nottle via FT.com

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As our **Culture Call** podcast returns, we talk to director **Noah Baumbach** about his Oscar-nominated *Marriage Story*. Plus: FT film critic **Danny Leigh** on all you need to know about this year’s Academy Awards; ft.com/culture-call

Quiz answers The link was women’s magazines 1. She Stoops to Conquer 2. George Best 3. Bella Swan 4. “Vogue” 5. The Lady Vanishes 6. Killing Eve 7. Cosmopolitan 8. Company B 9. Elle MacPherson 10. Red Sea **Picture quiz** Ross Perot + Rachel Weisz = Ross and Rachel

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Bruno Dey, 93, a former guard at the Nazi concentration camp at Stutthof, covers his face as he arrives in a wheelchair at the court in Hamburg

THE TRIAL OF THE CONCENTRATION CAMP GUARD

The case of former SS guard Bruno Dey could be the final one of its kind. Few survivors of the Holocaust are still alive today, and little time remains for their stories to be heard – and for the perpetrators to answer for their crimes. *Tobias Buck on Germany's race for justice. Photographs by Jasper Bastian*

The door swings open, and an old man in a wheelchair enters the courtroom. His face is hidden behind a red cardboard folder, which he holds up with a single steady hand. For additional camouflage, he wears a pair of black sunglasses and a dark, wide-brimmed hat. All eyes in the room have turned towards him but he has no desire to return their gaze.

The old man sits in silence, flanked by his daughter and his lawyer, still hiding from the camera clicking away in front of him. As the minutes tick by, nervous anticipation fills the room. The stage is set. The curtain is up. A great human drama is about to begin.

Moments later, the photographer and cameraman are told to leave the room, allowing the accused to lower the red folder and show his face. He looks younger than his 93 years, alert, with dark eyes and neatly cropped white hair. The presiding judge starts proceedings with a firm voice and a simple question.

"Can you hear me?"

"Yes," the old man says.

"Are you Bruno Dey?"

"Yes."

It is October 17 2019, the opening day of a trial in Hamburg's imposing criminal justice building that is historic in more ways than one. Dey is accused of being an accessory to a crime that took place more than seven decades ago – the murder of at least 5,230 inmates at Stutthof, a Nazi concentration camp in present-day Poland.

He was 17 at the time, and a member of the SS unit charged with administering and guarding the camps. Dey has admitted to serving as a guard at Stutthof from August 1944 to April 1945, but denies the accusation that he had any role in the murders, even as an accessory.

It is his name that appears on the charge sheet, but everyone in the courtroom knows that Dey will not be judged alone. As with all trials that examine the crimes of the Nazi regime, the Hamburg case raises questions – difficult, uncomfortable questions – that go far beyond the criminal culpability of any individual. ▶

Shelves of court files at the Central Office for the Investigation of National Socialist Crimes (the Zentral Stelle) in Ludwigsburg, near Stuttgart



◀ Dey is a rarity. There are not many potential Nazi perpetrators alive today, and even fewer who are strong enough to endure a trial lasting months. His case may well be the last of its kind, a fact that has not gone unnoticed. Dozens of journalists and observers have come to Hamburg to witness the first day of the hearings. Among them is Efraim Zuroff, director of the Jerusalem office of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, which researches the Holocaust and tracks potential perpetrators. At a time of rising anti-Semitism and resurgent nationalism, the Hamburg case, he tells me during a break, is nothing less than a “battle for Germany’s soul”.

He knows, and the court knows, that the trial of Bruno Dey is also a trial of last opportunities: a last opportunity for survivors to tell their story in a court of law, a last opportunity for an old man to seek redemption in front of a judge, and a last opportunity for Germany and its legal system to show that justice will be done, no matter how late.

The last point is a sensitive one. Germans often take pride in the way the country has faced up to its past, a collective struggle known as *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. It includes a commitment to keep alive the memory of the Holocaust, and to accept Germany’s sole and permanent responsibility for the murder of six million Jews. The crimes of the Nazis are taught at school and immortalised in monuments up and down the country. They have left modern, democratic Germany with two simple commandments: never forget, never repeat.

There is one place, however, where that moral rigour was notably absent: Germany’s criminal justice system. For much of the postwar period, Nazi perpetrators had little to fear from the country’s prosecutors and judges, many of whom had themselves served loyally under the Nazis.

Historians estimate that as many as a quarter of a million Germans were implicated in the Holocaust and other Nazi crimes. Some of the worst offenders were dealt with by Allied courts between 1945 and 1949, and by tribunals in Poland. But the bulk of cases was left to Germany, which failed miserably at the task: in total, German prosecutors launched investigations into some 170,000 suspects in the years after 1945, but only 6,700 were found guilty and sentenced. Of the 6,500 men and women who did duty in Auschwitz, only about 50 were punished by German courts. Countless Nazi perpetrators were never put on trial, and those who were often received negligible sentences. Many also benefited from pardons from the Allied occupiers and generous amnesty laws introduced by the West German government after 1949.

The reluctance to punish the greatest crime in human history is partly explained by practical considerations: prosecuting each and every German implicated in the Holocaust would have stretched the country’s justice system to breaking point. But there was also – with few exceptions – no real willingness to try: traumatised by war, the vast majority of Germans wanted to move on as quickly as possible. If there was guilt to apportion, they thought that it should fall on Hitler and the immediate Nazi leadership, not on the millions of ordinary Germans who were, as the saying went, only following orders.

Indeed, the few cases that did go to trial mostly dealt with culprits who acted with uncommon sadism. With a handful of notable exceptions, such as the 1960s Auschwitz trials in Frankfurt, no attempt was made to examine criminal responsi-

bility along the entire chain of command and shed light on the Nazi murder machine in its entirety.

Dey himself is a case in point. He never made a secret of his past, and was interviewed extensively by the police in 1982. Tens of thousands of potential culprits – guards, commanders, doctors, bureaucrats and soldiers – went to their graves as respected members of their community, without ever having to hide their face in court or spend a single day in prison. Stefan Waterkamp, Dey’s lawyer, expressed this forcefully in his opening statement: “For more than 70 years no one in Germany was interested in a simple guard who never committed any killings himself.”

The statement is intended to convey the bewilderment and sense of injustice felt by the accused. But it is not entirely true. There were always some people – both in Germany and abroad – who were interested in men like Dey, who tracked their whereabouts, delved into their records and thought hard about ways to bring them to justice. In 2009, finally, they found the right case, and the right legal argument – and old Germans with a shady past have not been safe since.

The result has been an extraordinary series of investigations, trials and convictions that has unfolded in Germany over the past decade, culminating in Dey’s case in Hamburg. They form a belated attempt to correct the dismal record of Germany’s legal system when it comes to prosecuting Nazi crimes. It is a correction that has required prosecutors to file charges, survivors to brave the witness stand, lawyers to argue and plead, and judges to hand down convictions. But that correction would never have happened had it not been for a retired judge from southern Germany, and his stubborn refusal to accept decades of legal doctrine.

The little town of Wangen is about as far from Berlin as you can travel without leaving Germany altogether. Nestling in the foothills of the Alps near Lake Constance, it is stunningly pretty, filled with colourful, perfectly restored baroque and Renaissance buildings, and surrounded by lush meadows and forests. The region is famed for producing some of the best cheeses in the country.

I have come here to meet Thomas Walther, a 76-year-old provincial judge with piercing eyes, long grey hair and dark bushy eyebrows. In the small but borderless world of lawyers who deal with Nazi crimes, Walther is something of a celebrity. But he lives modestly on the ground floor of his house on the outskirts of Wangen. We sit at his dinner table, sipping cappuccinos, and Walther tells me how he ended up hunting Nazis.

His life, he explains, took a dramatic turn just as he was preparing to retire from his job at the nearby district court. He wanted a last challenge, and when he heard that the Central Office for the Investigation of National Socialist Crimes was looking for investigators, he decided to sign up.

The *Zentrale Stelle* (“central office”), as it is commonly known, was established in 1958 to do a job that few in Germany wanted to do: track down Nazi criminals. It is housed in a former prison building, behind high stone walls, in the picturesque town of Ludwigsburg, near Stuttgart. The authority’s inner sanctum is on the ground floor, past a thick metal door and a corridor dominated by a vast map showing central Europe during the Nazi occupation.



**'I HAD TO PROVE THE SS MAN
WAS ON DUTY IN A CAMP FROM
A CERTAIN DATE TO A CERTAIN
DATE, AND THAT DURING THAT
TIME OF SERVICE, A CERTAIN
NUMBER OF VICTIMS ARRIVED'**

THOMAS WALTHER, RETIRED JUDGE

At the end of the corridor is a room filled with large metal filing cabinets: an archive - still entirely on paper - containing 720,000 names of criminals, suspects, collaborators and witnesses from the Nazi period. The authority's eight investigators act like an early-stage prosecution service: they identify likely culprits, sift evidence and then pass on their files to ordinary state prosecutors who investigate further and, if justified, file charges.

When Walther arrived in 2006, however, those moments had become increasingly rare. The then director of the Zentrale Stelle explained the problem in weary tones. "He told me: this authority will almost certainly not bring any new cases to trial. We have to demonstrate that the accused was directly implicated in the crime, and that won't be possible. The witnesses are either old or sick or dead. They don't know and they don't remember."

Over the years, German prosecutors and judges had convinced themselves that they could only go after suspects who had killed people themselves, or had served as accessories in a "concrete" killing committed by others. Put simply: they would only charge concentration-camp guard A if they could prove that A had helped murder prisoners B, C and D on a certain date in a certain place.

In a normal murder case, establishing this concrete connection was often simple enough. In the anonymous killing factories of Treblinka, Auschwitz and Sobibor, it was all but impossible. How could you prove that a guard sitting on a watchtower knew who was being murdered in the gas chamber below?

Walther thought that German prosecutors and judges had got this wrong. And he set out to prove it by going after one of the most high-profile targets still alive: John Demjanjuk. A Ukrainian-born US citizen, Demjanjuk had been sentenced to death by an Israeli court in 1988, after the judges identified him as "Ivan the Terrible", a notorious guard at Treblinka. But there was strong evidence to suggest that Demjanjuk had never been at Treblinka - prompting the Israeli Supreme Court to overturn the conviction. Demjanjuk returned to the US a free man, but soon became the target of sustained efforts by US authorities to strip him of his citizenship and deport him to Europe.

Walther became interested in the case in 2008, at a time when Demjanjuk was still fighting his extradition. It turned out that Demjanjuk had indeed served as a so-called Trawniki man, a local camp guard and auxiliary - not in Treblinka but at the extermination camp in Sobibor, in southeastern Poland. Crucially, this fact had never been disputed by Demjanjuk's lawyers during the extradition hearings.

Walther knew that it would be impossible to prove that Demjanjuk had contributed to a specific killing. So he tried a different tack: what, he asked, if the crime that Demjanjuk had aided was not a specific murder inside the camp, but the camp itself? Sobibor, Walther argued, was essentially a "factory of death". Much like a car factory, it depended on a multitude of people who were given separate tasks but who all worked knowingly towards the same goal.

The accountant, the cleaner and the security man at a car factory may not know which model is rolling off the plant on any given day, nor will they ever lay a hand on the car itself. But their contribution is vital for the success of the overall operation. That same logic, Walther thought, should apply ►



'HE WAS OPPOSED TO WHAT HE SAW THERE, AND HE DID NOT WANT IT TO HAPPEN. BUT HE SAW NO WAY FOR HIM TO PREVENT IT'

STEFAN WATERKAMP, *BELOW*, BRUNO DEY'S LAWYER



Clockwise from above: Marek Dunin-Wąsowicz, Stutthof survivor and one of the plaintiffs in Bruno Dey's case, in court with his lawyer Rajmund Niwinski; the Stutthof camp on a map of central Europe under Nazi occupation; Dey's lawyer Stefan Waterkamp; the Zentrale Stelle offices

◀ to a camp like Sobibor, whose only purpose was to murder the men, women and children who were delivered to its gates. No innocent work was done at Sobibor. Anyone and everyone who helped keep that factory in motion was an accessory to murder.

Walther would later learn that this line of reasoning had in fact already been accepted by German courts in some cases, albeit many decades ago. But it had been forgotten by the legal community, including by his colleagues at the Zentrale Stelle. Walther decided to pursue it regardless. "I had to prove that the SS man was on duty in a camp from a certain date to a certain date, and that during that time of service a certain number of victims arrived," he tells me. "And once I put all that together, I thought that should be enough to show to the prosecution that there is an urgent suspicion, which meant they had to examine: is this enough for formal charges or not?"

It was John Demjanjuk who was extradited to Germany and formally charged in 2009. In May 2011, he was sentenced to five years in prison, as an accessory to murder in 28,060 cases. He died the following year, still waiting for his appeal decision to come through. The case made legal history, opening up a path to more than half a dozen similar trials in the years that followed - including the one currently under way in Hamburg.

There was, Walther tells me, always a personal edge to his campaign. Born in Erfurt, eastern Germany, two years before the end of the war, he was too young to remember the horrors of the Third Reich. But he grew up in the knowledge that his own father had behaved with rare courage and compassion, at one point hiding two Jewish families in a shed at the end of their garden and helping them to flee the country. Walther was raised to be politically aware and socially engaged. "My father was a very combative, practising Christian. Today he would be called a do-gooder," he tells me.

His father had died many years before Walther joined the Zentrale Stelle, but he served as an inspiration all the same. Walther decided to hand over the Demjanjuk file to the Munich prosecution service on the anniversary of the Nazi pogroms that drove the two Jewish families to seek his father's help. "Every so often I hold council with him, less so now than before - maybe because I am getting closer to him. But on the trip down to Munich, with the file under my arm, I told him: 'You see, Papa? Not so bad, eh?'"

Two months after the opening of the trial, I am back in Hamburg. Bruno Dey, who has mostly been clear and lucid during cross-examination, is having a bad day. He misunderstands questions, and gives answers that do not chime with his previous statements. More often than not, his replies are either "I don't know" or "I cannot remember."

Doctors have certified that Dey is capable of following the trial but there are days when he shows his age. The presiding judge has decided to limit the two-hour hearings to no more than twice a week. A medical team is present at all times.

The ordeal, however, is not just physical. Much of the hearing has been taken up by the harrowing testimony from Stutthof survivors, whose stories stun the courtroom into silence. In mid-November, Marek Dunin-Wąsowicz, a 93-year-old Polish survivor, spends two days recounting his life in the

camp in forensic detail: the executions, the beatings, the constant fear and perpetual hunger, the wooden cart that would carry the emaciated bodies of the dead to the crematorium every morning. There was a saying at Stutthof, he remembers: "The only route to freedom is through the chimneys."

At other times, it is the prosecutors, lawyers and expert witnesses who hold the court's attention. Their subject matter is no less grim. Lead prosecutor Lars Mahnke describes in detail the deadly effect of Zyklon B on the human body, and the terrible agony suffered by the victims in the gas chamber. He highlights the appalling conditions in which sick prisoners in particular were held, with the sole aim of hastening their death. There is also a digression on the capacity of the crematorium ovens, estimated at 10-11 bodies per hour.

It is often small details that stand out - random coincidences that made the difference between life and death. In written testimony read out by her lawyer, Stutthof survivor Judy Meisel recalls standing in line in front of the gas chamber, naked, together with her mother. "When I saw the chance to run back to the barracks, my mother urged me to run. I had to leave her behind," Meisel writes. It was the last time they saw each other. Meisel was 15.

Her statement then turns directly to Dey: "Stutthof, that was organised mass murder by the SS, enabled by the help of the guards. The accused, together with other guards, was responsible for not letting anyone flee from the hell of Stutthof. He allowed my mother to be killed. And he was almost successful in helping me get killed as well."

Dey rarely shows any emotion, or any sense of personal responsibility for the horrors that unfold right in front of him. "I felt sorry for the people," he says on the third day of the trial. "But I saw no way of helping them."

There are moments when Dey appears to feel most sorry for himself. There is one revealing exchange in the first week of the trial, when he remarks that the hearings are bringing back memories that he had successfully repressed for decades. "This is not how I imagined my sunset years," he says. The complaint sounds petulant, and draws a rare rebuke from Anne Meier-Göring, the presiding judge.

The evidence builds steadily over weeks, yet the legal challenges facing the prosecution are clear. For a start, Dey never volunteered to serve at Stutthof. The only reason he put on an SS uniform was because his entire army unit was posted there in early 1944. Another complicating factor is that he was just 17 when the alleged crime took place (despite his age now, he has to be treated as a minor by the court). If nothing else, this adds weight to a question the court returns to time and again: could Dey have acted differently? Was there a way out for him?

The question is far from trivial. Camp guards typically suffered no serious consequences when they asked to be transferred. Especially towards the end of the war, requests to be posted to the front were gladly accepted. Dey argues, however, that he was officially certified unfit for combat, due to a heart problem. "He was opposed to what he saw there and he did not want it to happen," Stefan Waterkamp, Dey's lawyer, tells me after one of the hearings. "But he saw no way for him to prevent it - or for him to get away."

There is another question, one that surfaces in all late Holocaust trials: can a German court in ▶

Jens Rommel, director of the Zentrale Stelle, outside the organisation's offices in Ludwigsburg, near Stuttgart. Since taking over in 2015, Rommel has overseen a rise in new investigations. 'It really is a race against time,' he says



◀ 2020 really condemn a German teenager in 1943 for preferring the gruesome safety of camp duty over the merciless struggle with Stalin's Red Army on the Eastern Front? Can the current generation of lawyers and judges even begin to fathom the choices that Dey had to make more than three-quarters of a century ago?

"This is the core question of this trial: reproach," Waterkamp says. "He was only 17 at the time. Was there even a chance for him to get out of this situation? Could he have refused the order to serve as a guard? Even if he could have left Stutthof, did he have to know that he could have left? Did he understand that? And did he understand that his presence might have helped others commit a crime?"

This barrage of questions is likely to feature prominently when Waterkamp makes his final plea, probably not before May. But many believe they were answered long ago, by perhaps the most famous German prosecutor of the 20th century: Fritz Bauer. A secular Jew and committed Social Democrat, Bauer was persecuted by the Nazis and spent eight months in a concentration camp.

As a prosecutor in West Germany after the war, he initiated landmark cases such as the famous Auschwitz trial in Frankfurt of 1963-65. Bauer was also the man who told Israeli intelligence where to find Adolf Eichmann, the most high-profile Nazi criminal to be tried since Nuremberg. In his mind, there was no doubt that even the smallest wheel in the Nazi murder machine should face justice – and that even the lowliest SS man had the absolute duty to walk away. As he wrote in 1945: "When you are ordered to do something that is unjust, when it breaks an iron norm like the norms laid down in the 10 commandments, which everyone must know, then you must say no... That is the fundamental message that has to emerge from these trials: you should have said no."

In the decades after the war, Bauer's dictum was upheld by German courts only on rare occasions. Today, however, even some of the defendants accept it. When Oskar Gröning, the "bookkeeper of Auschwitz", stood trial in Lüneburg in 2015, he ultimately appeared to accept Bauer's dictum. Auschwitz, he told the court in his closing remarks, "was a place where one should not have taken part". He was sentenced as an accessory to murder in 300,000 cases.

Judy Meisel uses the exact same words in her statement to the Hamburg court: "I understand that it was not easy for a 17-year-old who was drafted as a guard at Stutthof to find a way not to take part," she writes. "But Stutthof was a place where one should not have taken part."

A few weeks after the opening of the Dey trial, I meet another witness of the Holocaust, in Budapest. Éva Puzstai-Fahidi is a 94-year-old survivor of Auschwitz, author of several books, and a passionate dancer who recently starred – despite her age – in an autobiographical dance film. She is also, by a strange twist of fate, the mother-in-law of Thomas Walther. The German jurist met Puzstai-Fahidi's daughter after agreeing to represent the elderly survivor in a case against a former Auschwitz camp guard. In a story that is otherwise almost relentlessly grim, their encounter offers a rare chapter with a happy ending.

Puzstai-Fahidi lives with her partner in a light-filled apartment between Budapest's main shopping street and the Danube. As soon as she starts speaking, I am transfixed, both by her story and by her voice. Her German is precise, and has the slow, melodic intonation of old central Europe, an accent that was once widely heard but has now all but vanished.

Born in 1925, Puzstai-Fahidi grew up in a secular Jewish family in the city of Debrecen in Hungary, enjoying a sheltered childhood that was gradually consumed by brutal anti-Semitism – first from the Hungarian government, then from the Nazi invaders. Along with 6,000 other Jews from the region, her family was deported to Auschwitz in the summer of 1944.

"We arrived directly at the ramp where the first selection took place. It seemed like we had landed on the moon," she recalls. "They asked us: 'How old are you?' I was already 18 at the time but there were also younger children there. They were told [by other prisoners] to lie about their age and say they are 16. Because if you said you were 14 you were automatically sent to the left side, the bad side."

Puzstai-Fahidi ended up on the right side, along with her aunt. Her mother, father and younger sister, a cousin and her newborn baby were sent to the left. She never saw them again. Her aunt too survived, but took her own life a few years after the war. "She could not live with her memories," Puzstai-Fahidi explains.

I ask her about the SS men and guards at the camp, and how prisoners viewed them at the time. "They were gods in the world," she replies. "One of them actually said this, I later read. He said: 'Above me is only God.' And it really was like that. You cannot imagine the power these people had. They could do whatever they wanted. There were no limits."

That memory of utter helplessness is perhaps the most important reason why survivors like Puzstai-Fahidi have been keen to take part in the last wave of Holocaust trials. They offer a final chance to be heard, to record the names of the dead, and to see at least one of those all-powerful SS men face justice, no matter how late. She herself travelled to Lüneburg in 2015 to give evidence against Oskar Gröning. It was, she tells me, the "most important thing I did in my life".

Why?

"Because I knew that he had behaved and felt like God. I had to be so afraid of people like him. And it is terrible to have such fear, every second of the day. That I could now speak against him in a court of law – that was simply miraculous," she says.

Dey may be the last man to stand trial in connection with the Holocaust. Or he may not. The Zentrale Stelle seems to be imbued with a fresh sense of purpose. Jens Rommel, who became director in 2015, has overseen a notable rise in new cases and investigations, as well as an increase in staff. The 47-year-old prosecutor keeps a picture of Don Quixote in his office, but insists that his own battles are anything but futile.

"The work here is very special. There is real urgency because the accused are extremely old. It really is a race against time," he tells me. Suspects must have been at least 18 years old in 1945 to merit an investigation, and they should not be older than 99 today. That effectively narrows down the search to men and women born between 1921 and 1927.



**'YOU CANNOT IMAGINE
THE POWER THE GUARDS
HAD. THEY COULD DO
WHATEVER THEY WANTED.
THERE WERE NO LIMITS'**

ÉVA PUSZTAI-FAHIDI, AUSCHWITZ SURVIVOR

With every year that passes, another year falls away. By 2026 at the latest, the Zentrale Stelle will finally be out of work.

I ask Rommel whether he ever feels frustrated by the task. For every case the Zentrale Stelle can bring today, there are thousands that could - and probably should - have been brought during the decades after 1945. Is it not unfair to go after nonagenarian defendants, most of whom operated at the lowest rung of the camp hierarchy, while so many of their senior commanders were let off the hook?

Rommel demurs. The law must be upheld, crimes must be punished - no matter what previous generations of German prosecutors and judges did. "I think our approach today is the right one: we say that the individual must take responsibility, also inside a criminal system. It was not the regime that committed crimes. It is individuals who commit crimes. And they must take responsibility for what they did."

The failure of the German criminal justice system in the years after the war is, Rommel admits, at times hard to comprehend. "But we can't simply say: they did this wrong in the past and now we will act just like them. That would be even less satisfactory."

There is, Rommel argues, a purpose to all Nazi trials - past and present - that goes far beyond weighing and punishing the individual guilt of the accused. "The most important outcome of these trials is not necessarily the just punishment of the guilty," he says. "It is that courts make clear what happened in places like Auschwitz, Treblinka and Sobibor - beyond any kind of doubt. They confront society with facts, and that can change society accordingly."

Indeed, there is a strong case that the world needs to be confronted with these facts once again. Recent years have seen a surge in far-right political sentiment, and in anti-Semitism as well. Germany is no exception. The Hamburg trial is supposed to look at events in the distant past, but the present is hard to keep out: 10 days before the first hearing, the synagogue in the German city of Halle comes under attack by a neo-Nazi gunman on Yom Kippur, the Jewish day of atonement. His failure to break down the wooden door is all that prevents a terrible massacre.

A few weeks later, I am back in the courtroom the morning after a regional election in Thuringia delivers a stunning result for the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD), which wins 23 per cent of the vote. The party's recent success is widely ascribed to popular discontent with mass migration, and in particular the surge in refugee arrivals since 2015. But some AfD leaders have also sought to draw votes by calling for a break with Germany's approach to historical memory: they want Germans to feel pride rather than remorse in their history, and try to downplay the relevance of the Nazi period.

When the time comes in Hamburg, the judges will give a verdict that will weigh the guilt of just a single old man. But they too know that much more is at stake. I think back to my conversation in Budapest, and to one of the last questions I put to Éva Puztai-Fahidi: did these trials, I wondered, not come too late?

She shook her head. "It is not too late," she said. "It is never too late." **FT**

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Tobias Buck is the FT's Berlin correspondent

WHAT IS AVAXHOME?

AVAXHOME-

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The Clackamas River
Community Cooperative,
a model of resident-owned
manufactured housing in
Portland, Oregon

The fight for America's trailer parks

As the US faces a housing crisis, mobile homes are now one of the few sources of affordable accommodation left. But many of the families that live in them are battling rich investors who see them as a financial opportunity. *Rana Foroohar* reports. Photographs by *Ricardo Nagaoka*



T

he words “trailer park” aren’t used in America any more - at least not in polite company. Manufactured housing is the preferred term for the snug and relatively inexpensive prefabricated spaces that represent “home sweet home” for the roughly 22 million Americans now living in them around the country.

Many of us know only the stereotypes: rows of dilapidated white rectangles occupied by the poor and owned by grumpy landlords only a bit wealthier than their tenants. Low-cost mortgages are not available for this kind of property.

But times have changed - and so has the manufactured housing business. There are still places that look very much like the trailer parks of old. But there are just as many that reflect a new reality. Manufactured housing is no longer about mobility (trailers that can be carted from place to place by holiday-goers or migrant workers) but about affordability. These homes look pretty much like your typical ranch house but, depending on where you live, they might cost half the price.

This makes manufactured housing a hot commodity. And this, in turn, reflects another shift. While the past several decades of

globalisation and technological development have lowered the price of most goods and services in the US, there’s been inflation in all the things that make people middle class: healthcare, education and, most important, housing.

Over the past decade, the cost of shelter has risen sharply compared with everything else - housing prices contributed a record 81 per cent to core inflation in summer 2017 and remain responsible for “the lion’s share” of all inflation in the US, according to a recent Cornell University study.

The result is an affordable housing crisis in much of America. According to one survey last year, median-priced homes are now considered technically unaffordable for average wage earners in three-quarters of the country. This is particularly true for younger people (who now hold a record amount of debt), older people on fixed incomes and renters.

Last year, Harvard’s Joint Center for Housing Studies reported that 47 per cent of people who rent in America are “cost-burdened”, meaning they spend more than 30 per cent of their income on housing. That proportion increases to 83 per cent when looking specifically at low-income renter households. Meanwhile, the amount of low-rent housing (costing \$800 per month or less) fell by about four million units between 2011 and 2017.

As a result, manufactured housing has become “one of the few sources of naturally occurring affordable housing” in the country, according to a recent study by Fannie Mae, the Washington-backed residential mortgage agency. While most residents in these communities still make less than \$50,000 a year, they include all sorts of people - from retired teachers and social workers looking to downsize and still live in the same community to snowbirds looking for a cheap part-time property in the Sun Belt, to new immigrants and younger people who need more space than they can afford in places where the jobs are.

But prospective residents aren’t the only ones who want in. The world’s richest investors do too. As older owners of mobile-home parks are retiring and selling up, big-name investors - from real estate investment trusts such as Equity Lifestyle Properties (ELS) to the Singaporean sovereign wealth fund GIC and large private equity funds such as The Carlyle Group and Apollo - have all begun buying mobile-home parks. A number



Greg and Elizabeth Lindsrom at the three-bedroom home they purchased and refurbished at the resident-owned CRCC

47%

The number of renters in America who spend more than 30% of their income on housing

‘It’s a secure, friendly community. We won’t be moving ever again’

Greg Lindsrom, CRCC resident

of smaller regional real estate investors have entered the game as well. Institutional investors accounted for 17 per cent of the \$4bn in sector transactions in 2018, up from just 9 per cent of the \$1.2bn in transactions in 2013.

Mobile-home parks are attractive to investors because of the reliable annual rate of return they provide: 4 per cent or more. This is about double the average US real estate investment trust return, according to a report by the Private Equity Stakeholder Project and two other consumer advocacy groups. The sector is also booming, with shipments of new manufactured housing units rising consistently since 2009 as people have been priced out of traditional homes.

But as big money has entered the sector, so have high-profile complaints: from tenants and activists concerned about rent spikes and poor maintenance under their new owners, to lower-income people, forced to choose between paying rent or medical costs.

Shortly after a spate of publicity last year, Democratic presidential candidate Elizabeth Warren sent letters to some of the big investors getting into the sector, citing dramatic rent increases and requesting information about their “use of predatory practices to boost profits in the communities they own”. Since then, legislators at both state and national level have been agitating for new rules that would ensure rich investors don’t end up driving tenants out - and forcing up prices in one of America’s last remaining bastions of affordable housing.

A tale of two parks

On the banks of the Clackamas river in Portland, Oregon, you’ll

find any number of \$1m homes. You’ll also find the Clackamas River Community Cooperative (CRCC), a model of resident-owned manufactured housing, filled with beautifully kept, lushly landscaped bungalow-style properties that sit on some of the most attractive land in the area. Peaceful and green, the site is only a 15-minute drive to the centre of one of America’s most desirable coastal cities.

On sunny days, residents of many ages and ethnicities will be outside tending their flowers and lawns, or walking dogs along well-paved trails that wind down to a community park with a basketball court and a swimming area on the river. “We’ve invested about \$160,000 in our green spaces,” says Kahlei Howard, a resident who takes me on a tour of the site, which is owned by the residents as a group. This is unusual - most people who live in manufactured housing parks in America typically own their home but not the land with it.

Howard, 59, is a former Milwaukee resident who downsized to the property along with her husband a few years ago. “We had a big house and a beautiful yard, but I just wanted less,” she says. Less upkeep, less space and less work to support a lifestyle she didn’t really want or need.

The same goes for Greg and Elizabeth Lindsrom, aged 50 and 45 respectively, who moved to CRCC after one of their children went to college. “My wife has multiple sclerosis, and we just wanted less house to take care of,” says Greg. The pair bought and refurbished a three-bedroom, two-bathroom property for half of what they would have paid for a traditional home. “It’s a secure, friendly community,” says Greg. “We won’t be moving ever again.”

The Clackamas park, a 76-lot property, was bought by its residents in 2012 for \$5m, with the help of ROC USA, a non-profit venture that aims to expand resident-owned manufactured housing across the country, and its local affiliate Casa. The previous owners, Michael Fingerut and his son Mike, chose to sell after the senior Fingerut decided to retire.

The CRCC residents were lucky. The Fingeruts lived nearby and had no desire to see the park go to a large corporate owner. “My dad was the original developer of this property,” says Mike. “There had been a lot of high-profile cases in Oregon of investors who bought parks and kicked people out. We had a great ▶



A manicured topiary at CRCC

22m

The approximate number of Americans who live in 'manufactured housing'

'A lot of things that the park management claimed they would do end up being done by residents'

Shelly Watson, who lives at Shadowbrook



Shadowbrook resident Shelly Watson says she was 'sold an empty package' of promises

◀ relationship with the residents and didn't want that to happen."

Julie Massa, the Casa employee on the project at the time, and ROC's president Paul Bradley, a social entrepreneur who worked on community housing for decades before founding the group in 2008, walked around the park with Fingerut. Together they met residents, many of whom had never owned their own homes before. "People were worried about what would come next," Massa says. Would the co-operative be able to manage the financial load? What would happen if there were disagreements among residents about how to run the park? How might the demographics change? (Portland is a blue city in a red state that is still struggling to adapt to economic shifts, which have brought more minorities and immigrant families to the area.) "We were trying to do three things," says Massa. "Build a co-op, do a real estate deal and, ultimately, create a community."

They succeeded, in part because the Fingeruts were patient. They had plenty of investor offers but they were willing to wait for Casa and ROC, which underwrote the loan, to organise the co-op and

orchestrate the purchase. A state tax break that waived capital gains for parks sold to residents helped bridge the gap between what the co-op and the investors could pay (the Fingeruts say they could have made up to a million dollars more from a single investor).

ROC is part of a growing national movement to help lower-income people hang on to their homes by turning older mobile-home parks - that might otherwise be sold to large investors - into resident-owned co-operatives. The non-profit and its affiliates have helped more than 17,000 owners of manufactured homes in 17 states come together to buy their parks since 1984. None has foreclosed or faced bankruptcy, despite the fact that 75 per cent of buyers were from low-income households. As a Fannie Mae report noted: "Residents of these communities were willing to go to great lengths to secure their futures."

Bradley sees this as a model to build not only housing security but a middle-class life for vulnerable Americans. Data tallied by ROC for 25 resident-owned properties over five years showed average site fee increases of only 0.86 per cent a year, compared with a national average across all manufactured home communities of 3.9 per cent. "People in these communities tend to be financially conservative," Bradley previously told the FT. "They know what it's like to live on the edge, and they don't want to."

Still, he says, "we're competing all over the place with private equity firms", which can often put up more money, more quickly, than residents. Indeed, in many states, residents aren't even entitled to know whether properties are being sold until they receive their eviction notices. That's something Bradley and other activists want to change. But to do so, they'll have to compete for prime properties with some of the richest investors in the world.

CRCC is in many ways the dream scenario for a manufactured housing park. About two minutes down the road is Shadowbrook, another manufactured housing community where you'll find a more common reality: a group of residents aged 55 and older, living on fixed incomes, who have plenty of complaints about their remote corporate owner - in this case, ELS, the Chicago-based publicly traded real estate investment trust founded by investor Sam Zell.

Even at first glance, the two communities seem different.

'The management don't talk to us. They don't seem to have time'

Shadowbrook resident Sande Quinonez

Shadowbrook is less lush, less green, filled with a mix of tidy, well-tended bungalow-style homes, and less well-kept trailers in various states of disarray. Anne Morin, 77, owns one of the former. I meet the retired schoolteacher at her cosy, carpeted two-bedroom home with a pretty deck out back. It is about half the monthly price of the smaller condo she was renting previously. "I really didn't want to live in a manufactured home park," she tells me. "That's the truth. I wanted to be nearer to the museums and theatres downtown, with everything close by. But I did it because it seemed like a really good financial idea."

That turned out to be only partly true. The cost of her home was about \$100,000; much less than a condo. But Shadowbrook's average site fees - the monthly costs paid by a manufactured home owner for the land on which their property sits - increased dramatically between 2012 and 2017, from \$638 to \$828 according to JTL Associates data. (At CRCC, where residents control the rates, average fees have remained steady at \$590.)

Morin frets about being able to afford her rent over the long term. Her trailer would cost as much as \$20,000 to move, even if she could find another space at a nearby park. "You end up being stuck," she says. Indeed, as the Fannie Mae report on manufactured housing noted, residents who can't afford to move their homes if properties are acquired by investors and rents go up may be forced to leave them altogether if they can't find a buyer. (Trailers tend to be harder to sell than a typical house, since part of the value is in the nature of the park community itself, which can vary widely.)



Carlos and Sande Quinonez at their home in Shadowbrook. The park is owned by a real estate investment trust

Morin's neighbour, 60-year-old Shelly Watson, worries about rent increases as well. She feels that she was "sold an empty package" of promises about subsidised activities and entertainment at the park, which she chose in part so that her elderly mother could have a social life while she worked. "A lot of things here that the park management claimed they would do," she says, from cleaning and repairs to social functions, "end up being done by residents."

ELS, the country's largest single owner of mobile-home parks, would dispute that. Its website touts its scale as something that allows the company to be more responsive to the needs of its residents. But those who live at Shadowbrook have for some time claimed just

the opposite. When I met them last August, there was a litany of concerns - from complaints that management was slow to deal with poor paving on streets and pavements, to erosion along the Sieben creek bank that borders the park, a problem exacerbated by leaks from decrepit pipes.

Bill Strauch, 61, who has lived in the park with his wife from 2014, tells me that since 2018 he has been complaining about pipe, drainage and erosion issues to little effect. "We moved here from California, where it was more expensive. It seemed like a good size for us, and we liked that it wasn't isolated." But almost immediately, he had issues with exposed pipes near his house that leaked into the nearby creek. Strauch says he complained, sent

a lawyer's letter and even called excavators and city officials on his own. "Nothing gets done," he says. "The ELS website [suggests] they are a big publicly traded company with the resources to handle things like this, but they don't put their money where their mouths are."

Jennifer Ludovice, a senior director at the company, noted in an email response to the FT's query about these issues that the company was looking into a paving project that, weather permitting, would be completed this spring; she also said the company "has been working to address the drainage issue outside of Mr Strauch's site".

Ludovice said that in the past two years the company's customer service phone log showed just one phone call from a Shadowbrook ►

17,000

The number of owners of manufactured homes across 17 states who have come together to buy their mobile-home parks since 1984 with the help of ROC and its affiliates

◀ resident, “indicating that residents’ needs are being raised to and addressed by community management, as well as indicating overall resident satisfaction in the community”. But the residents I speak to say it’s often difficult to make contact with management.

I heard multiple complaints at Shadowbrook about everything from a lack of cleanliness in the community pool to black mould in a resident’s home, and slow responsiveness on the part of management, according to a number of residents.

Some people have felt intimidated and been reluctant to go to the site office when they know the property manager is in, according to Sande Quinonez, a Shadowbrook resident whose husband Carlos was at one point barred from the office after a dispute over maintenance issues. Quinonez questions whether property managers might be given financial rewards for saving money.

Ludovice did not respond to a written query about the company’s compensation policies or financial practices. She did respond by email to other queries, noting that the pool was serviced twice a week by a contractor and that pH levels met Department of Health standards. On the drainage, pipe and erosion issues, she said the creek was a protected waterway and a geologist had been engaged to advise on planned improvements. Ludovice alleged that it was 79-year-old Carlos who was being “intimidating” during a conversation with the site manager (who did not personally respond to requests for a comment).

In the past few months, since I first began following the residents at Shadowbrook and asking ELS for comment, Carlos and the site manager went into mediation, according to Sande Quinonez, who says that things have improved a bit at the park since then. Her husband is now allowed in the office, more time is being spent on maintenance and a city housing official came out to discuss tenants’ rights and rent issues. Still, says Quinonez, nothing has yet been done about repairs to the pavements and streets. She says there are new sewage leaks near the clubhouse. And she still feels the relationship with management is not as good as it could be. “They don’t talk to us. They don’t seem to have time.”

Park residents seem to have a wholly different view of Shadowbrook life than their out-of-state landlords. It’s a refrain that I



Cracked asphalt on the roads at Shadowbrook

hear throughout my reporting on mobile-home communities (I have visited several, in Massachusetts and New Hampshire as well as Oregon). While local owners have an incentive to deal with maintenance, cost and safety issues, remote landlords are, well, remote. When private equity first moved into investing in single family homes after property prices dropped off a cliff following the 2008 crisis, there were also complaints about neglect and property price rises.

Investors such as Invitation Homes, formerly owned by Blackstone, have previously acknowledged that there were “bumps in the road,” and a steep learning curve before things got better. The same is true in manufactured housing. Still, as one portfolio manager at a brand-name private equity shop admits to me: “I can understand why people are concerned. It’s housing. And we’re at the end of a market cycle, with a big search for yield.” All of that makes homeowners, and politicians, worry when private equity buyers come looking at mobile-home parks in their communities.

It also underscores larger tensions in Portland and the

country at large. Who gets to own what and for how much? Should large corporate landlords be able to move poor people out of their homes at will? And what’s to be done about the growing sense that the basics of middle-class life – chiefly affordable housing – seem out of reach for so many?

The history of mobile homes

Mobile homes in America are as old as the covered wagons that took settlers west. But as a modern industry, they really took off in the second world war era as temporary housing for soldiers and, then, returning veterans and baby boomers. Typically they existed on the outskirts of urban areas. But as cities such as Portland have grown and expanded outward, the sites that these parks now sit on – land that was once fairly cheap – have become prime real estate, which is now being occupied by people paying relatively little for their housing. In the early 2000s, in the run-up to the 2008 subprime crisis, booming property values in the Portland area resulted in the sale and eventual closure of 63 mobile-home communities, displacing 2,300 households.

John VanLandingham, a legal-aid lawyer who has worked with

81%

The amount housing prices contributed to core inflation in summer 2017. They remain responsible for ‘the lion’s share’ of all inflation in the US, says Cornell University

‘People in these communities tend to be financially conservative. They know what it’s like to live on the edge, and they don’t want to’

Paul Bradley, president of ROC, a non-profit that supports resident-owned manufactured housing

Oregon landlords and tenants for decades, notes that there has been a pick-up in property turnover again in the past two years as the Portland real estate market has revived. While he says there is a wide variance in the quality of investor-run properties, from good to bad, the issue is that real estate investment trusts “can come in and spread a lot of money around”, driving up prices and site fees.

There is also concern around rising rents on private-equity-owned manufactured houses. Michael Swack, director of the Center for Impact Finance at the University of New Hampshire, has previously suggested that in some areas these have soared by as much as 15 per cent over two years.

A few cases have led to public outcries. In late 2019, after Utah-based Havenpark Capital bought several mobile-home communities in Iowa and jacked up rents by as much as 58 per cent, the local government issued a report recommending limits on private equity ownership of such housing. In January, Democratic House representatives Cindy Axne of Iowa and Ro Khanna of California introduced the Manufactured Housing Community Preservation Act, which would encourage states

'In my experience, the living environment in a tenant-owned park is virtually the same as in a well-managed park by a decent landlord'

Mike Whitty, director of the Oregon Park Managers Association

and cities to work with activists and community leaders such as ROC to keep property in the hands of residents.

That's tough for many reasons. First, there's a huge gap in the lending terms offered to individuals seeking to buy a manufactured home versus large investors wanting to purchase an entire park. While many of today's "trailers" are more or less normal single-family properties, as assets they are still considered "chattel," like boats or cars, rather than homes. This means mortgage rates can be more than 8 per cent rather than, say, 3 per cent for a single-family home or an apartment.

In some cases, government-backed loans are also benefiting big investors rather than the homeowners for whom they were originally intended. Private equity firm TPG Capital bought dozens of mobile-home communities with the help of more than \$200m in financing from Fannie Mae in 2018.

As mobile homes and private equity go head to head, the issue is becoming a topic on the 2020 campaign trail. Elizabeth Warren

visited the park in Iowa that was hit by the 58 per cent rent rise. Prosperity Now, a non-profit advocate for affordable housing, believes there will be a spate of legislation this year or next making it easier for residents to buy homes and tougher for big investors.

There are those who argue that some big companies are being unfairly vilified. Mike Whitty, director of the Oregon Park Managers Association, is a former lawyer who has lived in, owned and managed parks locally. He says: "In my experience, the living environment in a tenant-owned park is virtually the same as in a well-managed park by a decent landlord." That's most true if the landlords aren't so large that they become detached from problems, but also not so small that they don't have the capital to maintain the property well.

Ken Pryor, a representative from Oregon's State Housing Authority who has worked with residents at Shadowbrook to help mediate complaints with management, says the issues there are certainly

"threatening the livelihood of residents" but are also not the worst he's seen. "[Shadowbrook] is actually in fair shape compared to some older parks in the Portland area. It's a C plus rather than an F." But he would also say that it's not comparable to a well-run co-operative such as CRCC.

Co-operative living

A big reason for this is that co-operatives have every incentive to make improvements, since the increase in property value goes directly back to owners. That tends to increase the price and prestige of the properties. CRCC has a waiting list of people who want to purchase properties within the co-op. Because there's no profit motive beyond the maintenance of the park, the group has built up a \$125,000 reserve fund, in part from the savings that come from the community doing its own maintenance, repairs and landscaping, but also via renting extra parking spaces to workers or other residents in the area. "This is about building financial stability," says Julie Massa. "But it's also about solidarity."

Of course, resident-owned mobile-home communities can have their own challenges. They require a certain number of occupants who have the time and energy to take ownership of sometimes complicated projects, and can struggle with community board turnover.

Yet ROC, which had a record year in terms of lending and facilitating co-op purchases in 2019, expects to do even better this year. "We're scaling out and scaling deep," says Bradley, who has a vision that goes beyond collective home ownership to collective economic security. He hopes for a time when the economics of scale that allow low-income people to band together to secure multimillion-dollar real estate deals could be expanded to group purchasing of healthcare, or collective investment in things such as pensions or even on-site childcare services.

"People talk about 'trailer park kids,'" he says. "But what if you had manufactured housing communities where people were like, 'Hey, look at all the great stuff they have there! I want to live there too.'" **FT**

Rana Foroohar is the FT's global business columnist and an associate editor



Shadowbrook resident Anne Morin worries about being able to pay her rent over the long term



Angela Flowers in the Lisle Street gallery, 1970

FLOWER POWER

For 50 years, Angela Flowers has been a force in the art world, representing an illustrious 'family' of artists and building a business in her own image. She talks luck, loyalty and spontaneity with *Liz Jobey*



Flowers (centre) with gallery artists (clockwise from top left): John Loker, Brendan Neiland, Roy Ascott, David Troostwyk, Derek Hirst, Patrick Hughes, Lis Sutton and Tom Phillips, 1970

It's a scene from a movie, really. A tall blonde woman driving a dark red Chevy convertible through the streets of Soho in the late 1960s. Her name is Angela Flowers. She is preparing to open her first art gallery. Her first show will be the painter Patrick Hughes, who she will go on to represent for 48 years. Among the visitors at the opening of his exhibition are two young artists, Fionnuala Boyd and Leslie Evans, who have just begun to work together as Boyd & Evans. What Boyd remembers noticing that night was that, "Angela was willing to talk to people." A year later, in 1971, Flowers gave Boyd & Evans their first solo show. "She became our family, our mentor, our friend," Boyd says. "I've met a few extraordinary women in my life and she's definitely right up there on that list."

Next week, Flowers will celebrate 50 years in the art world. From a tiny second-floor room in London's Chinatown, she has built an international business that now supports more than 50 artists, with two galleries in London, a team in New York - which, for the past decade, has run a gallery on West 20th Street - and a new space in Hong Kong, which, despite the political upheaval there, is due to open this spring.

Although Flowers has never aspired to the kind of art-world dominance achieved by some of today's mega-galleries, such as Larry Gagosian or David Zwirner, she has built a business in her own image, based on individual taste and a particular kind of old-fashioned enthusiasm and generosity to her artists, which has made her a widely respected figure.

Over the years, her gallery business has mirrored some of the wider changes in the art world - and in some cases pioneered them. In London, it was one of the first established galleries to move east in the 1980s, taking over a huge industrial space in Hackney, and then to (partially) move back again, into a second gallery in Cork Street, more traditional art-world territory. It has embraced the widening circuit of art fairs, and in the past two decades has made a substantial investment in large-format photography, taking on artists such as ►



Invitation card for Penelope Slinger 'Opening', 1973, at Angela Flowers Gallery, Portland Mews, London



Boyd & Evans, 'Adventures of a Sleeping Man 5', 1970



With Ian Breakwell outside Lisle Street on the first anniversary of the Angela Flowers Gallery, February 1971

◀ Edward Burtynsky, Robert Polidori, Nadav Kander and Edmund Clark.

No one particular style or medium unifies Flowers' stable of international artists, which includes the sculptor Nicola Hicks, political artist John Keane and painters such as Lucy Jones and Claerwen James. But one of the qualities that has always marked out Flowers' choices is her willingness to take on young and relatively undiscovered artists and to introduce people to their work.

Two weeks before the opening of two 50th anniversary shows, Flowers is at her desk in the East End gallery in Shoreditch. Sitting opposite her is Rachel, her 46-year-old daughter, who was born with Down's Syndrome, working at her sketch pad. Rachel's talent was spotted early on. She was offered a place at art school and now exhibits and sells her work. The two have an easy rapport that speaks of a lifetime of care. Flowers, 87, has five children, 12 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. But, dressed in a turquoise tunic that matches her eyes, her short blonde hair fashionably cropped, there is little that appears grandmotherly about her.

When she set up the gallery, she had no track record in the art world. She studied music and drama at college in London and could have had a career in music, but when the course ended, her tutor told her to go home to Kent, get a job and carry on with her studies. She didn't. She was living in London and wanted to stay there. She met the fashion and portrait photographer Adrian Flowers when she was 19 and married him weeks later. Afterwards, she took on some minor acting roles, tried to revive her musical career and did a stint in advertising. But what counted was that she and Flowers had begun to collect art.

"My parents collected modern British art," she says, "and for their first holiday after the war they went to St Ives to see Barbara Hepworth and met [the sculptor] Denis Mitchell. They came back and said it was wonderful down there. So we went down with our 18-month-old first child, and Adrian started taking photographs of the artists' works, and them, and the pictures were so good they gave him work in kind as payment. And people started to think that I was in the business for some reason. It was strange."

She began with two main criteria: "It was always going to be British art, and it was always going to be younger artists."



John Keane, 'Laser Guided', 1991



Flowers Gallery 25th anniversary, 1995 (painting in background by David Hefher): back row, from left: Kevin Sinnott, Tim Lewis, Alison Watt, David Hefher, Glenys Barton, John Loker, Trevor Jones; second row: Tim Mara, Jonathan Waller, John Kirby, Jack Smith, Patrick Hughes, Derek Hirst, Angela Flowers, Stephen Chambers, Leslie Evans, Fionnuala Boyd, Andrew Stahl, Peter Howson; third row: Amanda Faulkner (standing), Nicola Hicks, Matthew Flowers, Carole Hodgson, Lucy Jones, John Keane; front: Mikey Cuddihy, Tai Shan Schierenberg

The critics were supportive, but when it came to financial backing, "Everybody said no" she recalls, indignantly. Eventually, the artist Adrian Heath, as chair of the Artists International Association, offered her the attic space in the association's building in London's Lisle Street rent-free, sharing any commission on sales.

There had been several notable women in the generation before Flowers who had run galleries in London. But even so, I wondered whether she was conscious of being part of a feminist vanguard in the 1970s, setting up her own business. "No, no," she says, quickly. "All I was interested in was my own idea. I always say it sprung from [my reaction to] the pomposity of places like the Marlborough," she adds, referring to the Bond Street gallery that ruled the London art world in the 1960s and 1970s. She radiates a level of enthusiasm and spontaneity that seems lacking in today's high-end galleries.

"Yes," she agrees, when I mention spontaneity. "I do find that lacking now. The staff like it when I come in here and jolly things up a bit, and I start singing. It's got very business-like." She pulls a face. "It's a big deal."

Big isn't necessarily Flowers' favourite size. Among the ideas she's had for the gallery over the years are a postcard show - for which artists made an original art work to be reproduced as a postcard - and a badge show, which ran along the same lines (both cards and badges are now collectors' items). Two of her initiatives that have become annual events are "Artist of the Day", in which 10 established artists each nominates a lesser-known artist whose work is exhibited in the gallery for a day, and "Small is Beautiful", an exhibition for which artists make small works that, inevitably cheaper, draw wider audiences and encourage young collectors.

In those early days, Flowers showed some risky, experimental artists such as the feminist Penny Slinger, whose show *Opening*, in 1973, dealt with food and eroticism. "Being a woman running an art gallery was unusual at that time," Slinger says, "and that alone would bestow on her the mantle of feminism, especially as she was one of the few galleries that showed avant-garde art."

When I ask Flowers how she'd decided which artists to take on, she replies, "Falling in love with the work! I'm no good at commercial." Then, frowning: "I say that, but when I look back I did quite a lot of selling. But that's where I've been very lucky in having Matthew, because he's more business-like than me." ▶



Tom Phillips, 'Square Dance', 2020

◀ Matthew is Flowers' second son, who has shared the running of the gallery since the mid-1980s. In 1989, he became its managing director and was largely responsible for its shift, in 1988, from a small space in Fitzrovia to an enormous former laundry building in Hackney. In 2002, the gallery moved nearby to its current home in Shoreditch.

Falling for artists' work, however, wasn't always a good business model. In 1970, Angela Flowers met the writer and business journalist Robert Heller. Already an art collector, he became a great support in the management of the gallery. She and Adrian Flowers divorced, and she and Heller stayed together (they married in 2003) until his death in 2012.

"In the 1980s [Heller] was very involved in helping steer me," Matthew says. "We hadn't been able to make any kind of profit until that point, and my mum's way of dealing with things, when it got tough, was to take on a new director who would pump in a little more equity. So her board of directors was expanding but we weren't really a business that could pay a load of wages." Leslie Waddington, who ran one of the most prestigious galleries in Cork Street, also advised them to charge more commission on sales. By 1987, the gallery was profitable. "That's when we started to think about the move to the East End," Matthew explains.

Rapid expansion meant that, with more artists, regular solo shows were at a premium. Some artists sold better than others. "You get a little resentment from the ones who aren't [doing so well]," Angela says. "That's when one or two artists have left, because they think they're not getting enough attention, or not selling enough, and that's been very sad, particularly for me.

"It's inevitable," she concedes, that some artists move on. "But then, artists might come back after about 20 years, and if you can stick with them, I think [it's worth it]."

One artist who strayed but then returned is the London-based painter and printmaker Tom Phillips, who had his first solo show at Flowers in 1970. The show sold out, and he stayed with the gallery into the 1970s, but then moved. "Bigger galleries beckon," he says now, "and one is tempted to show at a glamorous gallery, which hers wasn't. It was a gallery with some little energy and prestige at the time, but not big-time Bond Street glamour."

Why did he go back? "I suppose the difference is Angela was having a love affair with art, which has lasted all her life. And the other galleries have a love affair with art *and* big business."

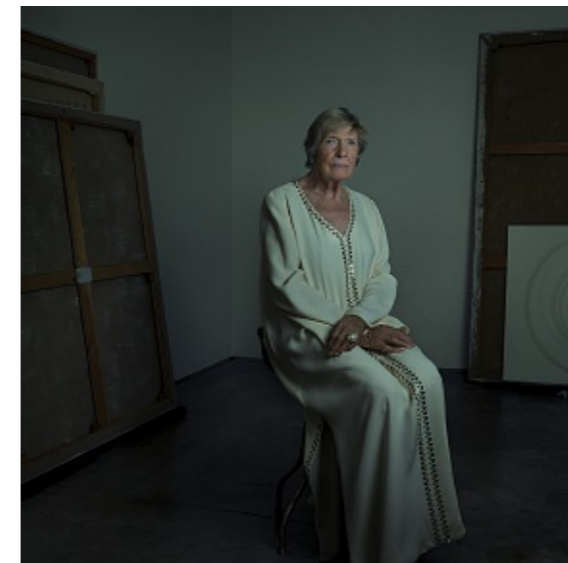


Nicola Hicks, 'Pause', at Flowers Gallery, Cork Street, 2015



Esther Teichmann, 'Untitled from Mythologies', 2015

IMAGES © THE ARTIST/COURTESY OF FLOWERS GALLERY; PHOTOGRAPHY ADRIAN FLOWERS, IMAGES COURTESY OF THE ADRIAN FLOWERS ARCHIVE



Nadav Kander, 'Angela Flowers, London', 2019

'The staff like it when I come in here and jolly things up a bit, and I start singing. It's got very business-like. It's a *big deal*'

The pattern of development across the art world over the past few decades has reflected the direction in which Flowers has steered her own business. In 1997, she opened a gallery in Los Angeles, then in 2003 moved it to New York. LA didn't really work, she says, "because we found that people still preferred to go to New York to buy". Last year, the gallery did not renew its lease on West 20th Street, and though she still retains a team there, a new location is under discussion. The new gallery in Hong Kong is part of the global shift to take advantage of wealthy Asian markets.

One of the changes happening across today's market is the gradual loosening of galleries' insistence on artist exclusivity. But Flowers has always valued loyalty. "I mean, we've actually sacked one or two artists for being unfaithful..." she says.

Matthew has a different view. "If you have three or four good galleries working on the same artist, then it helps from a marketing perspective," he says. "The artist becomes better known. Galleries don't mind sharing their artists. What they don't like is them being completely stolen from them."

The word that crops up again and again when artists talk of Angela Flowers is "family". John Keane joined the gallery in the mid-1980s. "The ethos of the gallery, certainly in those days, was like... they'd have Christmas dinners [for all the artists], you felt you were part of something."

The London-based photographic artist Esther Teichmann had her second solo show at Flowers last May. "I feel like I can try things out there," she says. "I think all the artists I know there feel that way. Nothing is out of bounds."

Back in her office, Angela Flowers has just been handed a list of every exhibition she has held, which has been compiled in preparation for the 50th anniversary. She runs her eye down it with delight and some surprise.

"Extraordinary shows! Weird! Odd things, like fashion and performance and so on... Just things I couldn't resist, I suppose." She puts the list down. "I'm longing to really study this." Then she picks it up again. "Of course," she says, scrutinising it, "if I started reading this, I'd know exactly what happened." **71**

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 "50 Years" at Flowers Gallery, Cork Street, London, runs from February 7-29; "50 x 50" at Flowers Gallery, Kingsland Road, London, runs from February 11 to March 7

A raw deal?

Raw-milk cheese has become increasingly popular. But some of its makers now find themselves under pressure to pasteurise. *Patrick McGuigan* joins the fray. Photographs by *Suzie Howell*

There are few finer sights than a cheeseboard loaded with craggy lumps of Stilton, hunks of Cheddar and gooey Camembert. But dig beneath the rind and those tempting wedges don't just tell a story of delicious harmony. The cheeseboard has become a battlefield on which artisan makers are fighting for their futures against the might of multinationals, food-safety bodies and government regulations.

At the heart of this battle is the use of raw milk. Historically, all cheeses were unpasteurised, made safe to eat through certain techniques that keep pathogens at bay, such as salting, maturation and acidification. But, as the dairy sector industrialised after the second world war, heat-treating milk to kill off bacteria (and prevent TB) became the norm. As dairy farms grew in size, cheesemakers also started to use pasteurised milk. Using this standardised base ingredient provided an extra layer of food safety.

For industrial producers making thousands of tonnes of cheese a year from milk sourced from hundreds of farms, pasteurisation is a no-brainer, wiping the

microbiological slate clean before lab-grown cultures are added to start the cheesemaking processes. The downside to this approach is that complex communities of safe bacteria that add unique flavours to cheese are also killed off.

"Raw-milk cheese is something many of us celebrate because you have such a rich diversity of aroma- and flavour-giving bacteria in the milk," says Jason Hinds of London cheese shop Neal's Yard Dairy. About three-quarters of its cheeses are made with raw milk. "It's like conducting a symphony in stereo, if you're a raw-milk cheesemaker. You don't have that same diversity in pasteurised milk. It's more of a mono sound."

The extra costs required to achieve this stereo flavour are considerable for raw-milk cheesemakers, who tend to be small, farm-based producers, carefully managing animal welfare, pastures and feed quality – a model that, advocates argue, is healthy for the environment, local economies and food culture.

This small-scale approach has found a receptive audience in the UK. According to the Specialist Cheesemakers Association, its members now make 185 different raw-milk cheeses. In 1989, when ►

Raw-milk cheeses, clockwise from far left: Stichelton, Pitchfork Cheddar, Baron Bigod, St Cera, Brightwell Ash, Sparkenhoe Red Leicester

'This debate goes to the core of the discontent society feels when our food gets manipulated'

Kris Lloyd, cheesemaker

◀ the organisation was set up, there were fewer than half that number.

It's not just Britain that is rediscovering raw-milk cheese. Australia and the US are experiencing their own raw revolutions, and there are many vociferous groups in European countries beyond the UK that champion traditional cheeses.

Yet as the global infatuation with raw-milk cheese grows, its makers find themselves facing a wall of bureaucracy and food-safety requirements that some argue are excessive and unfair. Cheesemakers in Europe are governed by food-safety regulations aimed primarily at industrial producers but with scope for flexibility when applied to small-scale makers. In reality, the rules are administered inconsistently, with artisan producers frequently falling foul of a system not designed for them. (It's not yet clear how Brexit will affect this. It will depend on how far the UK diverges from EU standards but it is conceivable that UK legislation may be influenced more by the US, which has stricter rules around raw-milk cheese.)

Dairy consultant Chris Ashby, who has trained cheesemakers in Britain since 1972, sees the sense in using pasteurised milk in many cases. "There are risks involved in using raw milk to make cheese," she says. "Pasteurisation is one way of managing those risks because it knocks out pathogens such as salmonella, E. coli and listeria. It definitely has its place, especially if a cheesemaker is relying on someone else for their milk."

Scrutiny has intensified because of recent cases of raw-milk cheeses being linked to serious illnesses. One was a listeria outbreak in the US in 2016-17 in which two people died; cheese made at Vulto Creamery in New York was blamed and the business was shut down. In 2018, seven children were hospitalised in France with E. coli linked to Reblochon cheese.

Meanwhile, in the UK, food-poisoning outbreaks linked to raw drinking milk prompted the Food Standards Agency to

launch a review of the sector in 2018. Unpasteurised liquid milk is a different product to unpasteurised cheese, with different levels of associated risk. Still, inspectors tend to be wary of anything involving raw milk.

Yet several studies strongly suggest that raw-milk cheese is safe to eat. A report published in 2018 by Food Standards Scotland found there have been only eight outbreaks of food-borne illness associated with unpasteurised cheese in the UK since 1983. To put that into perspective, in 2017 alone there were nine outbreaks of campylobacter in the UK, the majority of which came from contaminated poultry, with more than 50,000 individual cases during the same period.

One of the largest studies to examine the safety of raw-milk cheeses was conducted in 2014-16 by the US Food & Drug Administration (FDA). It analysed 1,600 raw-milk cheeses and found that fewer than 1 per cent were contaminated with pathogens, and that there was no evidence of anyone being made sick from eating them. The report also concluded that contamination may have occurred from poor product handling rather than the milk itself.

The perception among the raw-cheese community is that safety inspectors hold makers to standards not expected of other foods. According to Bronwen Percival, co-author of *Reinventing the Wheel* (a book about raw-milk cheese): "The legislation hasn't changed but people on the ground are interpreting the laws in different and more stringent ways.

"There's a 'guilty until proven innocent' approach to raw-milk cheese... Fruit and vegetables don't often get subjected to the same level of scrutiny because they are more normative. Raw-milk cheese is seen as unusual, so is subject to higher levels of scrutiny. We live in a very risk-averse society."

Finding out which foods are to blame for outbreaks is seldom easy, and authorities don't always

get it right. One case in Scotland became a rallying point for advocates of raw-milk cheese. In 2016, Dunsyre Blue, a favourite on Scottish cheeseboards, was linked by Food Standards Scotland to a fatal E. coli outbreak. South Lanarkshire council promptly impounded products made by producer Errington Cheese, which denied any wrongdoing, and a legal battle ensued. After supporters crowdfunded more than £30,000, the campaign to clear the producer ended successfully in 2018 when a landmark sheriff's court ruling absolved the company of breaching hygiene rules and awarded £254,000 in compensation.

Despite this, Errington's owner announced last August that she had stopped making Dunsyre Blue because of its damaged reputation.

In Ireland, pressure to pasteurise has seen the number of raw-milk cheeses more than halve over the past decade to just a dozen, according to Kevin Sheridan, co-founder of cheesemonger Sheridans. "It's a very complex issue," he says. "Deep within the psyche of the department of agriculture and the farming establishment is TB. The introduction of pasteurisation and central milk collection was part of the modernisation of Ireland. They were saving people's lives."

While it's perfectly legal to make raw-milk cheese in Ireland, testing requirements and onerous audits mean cheesemakers often choose to pasteurise. "It just became so bloody difficult to make raw-milk cheese," says Sheridan.

In France, there is still a culture of raw-milk cheese that is often enshrined under the EU's protected food names scheme. Big hitters, such as Roquefort and Comté, must be made with raw milk under rules designed to preserve their traditions. That said, only 10 per cent of French cheese is unpasteurised and sales are falling, according to the Association Fromages de Terroirs, which blames competition from cheap, factory-produced cheese.



Last year, conflict sparked when it was announced that the terms of the Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) protecting raw-milk Camembert de Normandie would be widened to allow pasteurised milk by 2021.

This conclusion to the "Camembert Wars" was a stunning victory for multinational producers. It was greeted with outrage in other quarters, where Camembert is seen as part of the national identity. "Camembert is emblematic for France," says Véronique Richez-Lerouge from the Association Fromages de Terroirs. "It is history and heritage, the beauty of the landscape and the old rustic breeds alive. But because it's easier and cheaper to use pasteurised milk, Camembert has become a factory product."

Richez-Lerouge launched a petition calling for the decision to be reversed, which gained more than 40,000 signatures. She also posted boxes of raw-milk Camembert de Normandie through the letterboxes of MPs at the Assemblée Nationale. "We've had letters from lots of farmers saying they feel pressure to use pasteurised milk," she says. "I am very anxious for the future." The campaign seems to have paid off, for now at least, with producers voting to overturn the decision last week.

Richez-Lerouge has found plenty of allies in the US. There, half of all small cheesemakers make at least one raw-milk cheese. Last April's Raw Milk Cheese Appreciation Day, which was established by Oldways Cheese Coalition in Boston, involved more than 700 events worldwide. "Five years ago, raw-milk cheese was seen as part of the avant-garde, but a really eclectic mix of people are now interested in it," says Carlos Yescas of Oldways Cheese Coalition.

Yet the rules are no more relaxed for US makers. Unpasteurised cheeses that have been aged for less than 60 days, such as Brie de Meaux, are banned in the US, where the FDA takes the view that their high moisture content makes them more susceptible to contamination.

(Aged cheeses by contrast are less hospitable to pathogens because they are drier and often have higher acidity levels.) The FDA has also tabled proposals that have threatened the sector, such as banning cheeses aged on wooden shelves. But these proposals have been scrapped after lobbying from the increasingly noisy raw-milk-cheese sector and from politicians including Bernie Sanders. "Cheesemakers are seeing they have power and are pushing back," says Yescas. "They are not only winning the hearts and minds of cheese lovers, but also shouting about how they are producing employment opportunities in rural areas."

In Australia, regulations are so strict that cheesemonger Will Studd once held a mock funeral for the raw-milk Roquefort in protest. Only cheeses "cooked" at higher temperatures during production and aged for at least 120 days can be made with raw milk, with numerous other food-safety hurdles also in place. Cheesemaker Kris Lloyd, who creates raw-milk cheeses such as Bolshy Buff and Greedy Goat, says: "Food has always posed a risk of contamination. To shut down something that has been historically noted as one of the oldest foods because we may get it wrong is ludicrous. This debate goes to the core of the discontent society feels when our food gets manipulated. We feel like our autonomy is being threatened."

Back in London, Hinds is hopeful for the future of raw-milk cheese after a bumper Christmas and the launch of a three-day cheese-and-wine festival co-organised by Neal's Yard. The event in King's Cross involved tastings, talks and demos, including a giant cauldron of raw milk being transformed into cheese. "When our founder Randolph Hodgson first started banging the drum for raw-milk cheese in 1979, he was a lone voice," says Hinds. "The idea of a raw-milk cheese festival was unthinkable." **FT**

Patrick McGuigan is a cheese writer and judge at the World Cheese Awards



Honey & Co Recipes



Swirl power

Do people still make marble cake? For those of us of a certain age, it was a staple of weekend kitchen-counter snacking and school-bake sales. It isn't any more and the reason is obvious: marble cake never seems to live up to its funky appearance.

It promises so much. It's two cakes in one bite! It's got chocolate! It's swirly! In reality, however, it tends to taste like one not-very-good cake - not chocolatey enough and usually overcooked.

The reason for this is because many recipes use scant amounts of cocoa powder for the brown batter and so that both batters cook all the way through, most overcompensate on the cooking time, which dries it out.

But in baking, as in life, most problems can be solved by the addition of good chocolate: white chocolate with vanilla and orange for the pale batter; dark chocolate with coffee and cinnamon for the dark one. The chocolate packs a strong flavour punch and keeps the cake moist and juicy. It also makes it last longer, though you are not likely to find out - one slice of this shamelessly retro temptress will have you going for another... and another. **FT**

By Itamar Srulovich. Recipe by Sarit Packer
honeyandco@ft.com

Dark and white chocolate marble cake

To make a large bar cake use a 2kg loaf tin

For the base batter

- 200g unsalted butter
- 380g light-brown sugar
- 3 eggs
- 350g spelt flour (or you can use plain)
- 2 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt

For the white-chocolate layers

- 120ml milk
- 100g white chocolate
- Seeds from 1 vanilla pod
- Zest of 1 orange

For the chocolate-and-coffee layers

- 120ml milk
- 100g dark chocolate
- 1 tbs cocoa powder
- 1 tsp coffee powder
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon

1 — Line a large loaf tin with some baking paper and heat your oven to 170C (fan assist).

2 — Cream the butter with the sugar in an electric mixer with a paddle attachment until it is well combined and creamy. Add the eggs one at a time, mixing between each addition, then mix in the flour, baking powder and salt. Divide the mix into two.

3 — Boil 240ml of milk and prepare bowls of white and dark chocolate with their respective flavourings. Pour 120ml of the milk on to each chocolate and rest for 10 seconds before stirring. Add each melted chocolate pot to the separate parts of batter and mix.

4 — Layer the mixes in a tin, adding a scoop of one after the other till you reach ¾ of the tin. Place in the centre of the oven and bake for 30 minutes. Rotate and bake for another 24-30 minutes or until the cake is fully set and bouncy.

5 — Remove from the oven and rest for 10 minutes before taking it out of the tin to cool. It will keep for a few days in an airtight container at room temperature.



Barbara Kruger 'Untitled (Questions)', Photograph @gangculture

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Jancis Robinson Wine

My best bordeaux ever



I have just had the pleasure of wallowing in the best bordeaux vintage I will probably ever taste: 2016. It's more consistent than 2015, as tannic as 2010 but with riper tannins, much more precise than 2009, and just more everything than most vintages.

Yes, I tasted the vintage out of barrel during the en primeur campaign back in spring 2017 but that was when the wines were only a few months old. And en primeur samples give only the most approximate idea of what the wines will eventually be like.

I much prefer the annual Southwold-on-Thames assessment of bordeaux vintages when they are three-and-a-bit years old and have settled down in bottle. The samples are kindly donated by the châteaux and driven across the Channel by veteran bordeaux wine merchant Bill Blatch, who supervises the three-day blind tasting at fine wine traders Farr Vintners' Thames-side offices in Wandsworth. Attended by about 20 journalists and merchants, it was originally held every January in Southwold. Hence the name.

The group (all male except for me) are usually hyper-critical, with not so sotto voce disparaging comments resonating round the long table at which we taste. But this year the quality of the wine seemed to stun my fellow tasters into admiring silence. Even the most modest St-Émilions, often the butt of deprecation in the past, elicited some surprised enthusiasm.

We spent the first afternoon tasting the whites, which admittedly were not the stars of the 264 wines on show. The summer was too hot and dry to produce seriously refreshing dry whites, some (but by no means all) of which seemed decidedly old-fashioned, as though they had been made simply to give proprietors something to serve with the first course. The sweet whites



As imagined by Leon Edler

2016 bordeaux bargains

Pre-tax prices per full 75cl bottle unless otherwise stated

- Ch Bouscaut Blanc, Pessac-Léognan £25 *Fine + Rare*
- Ch Doisy Védrières, Sauternes £12.08 *a half Davy's*, £26.67 *The Wine Society*
- Côte de Baleau, St-Émilion £20.83 *The Wine Society*
- Saintayme, St-Émilion £10.42 *BI Wines*
- La Chenade, Lalande de Pomerol £20.79 *Lea & Sandeman*
- Cruzelles, Lalande de Pomerol £18.33 *R&B Wines*, £210 *a dozen Farr Vintners*
- Ch Olivier, Pessac-Léognan £32.50 *inc tax Tanners*
- Ch Le Crock, St-Estèphe £24.96 *Uncorked*
- Ch Capbern, St-Estèphe £16.67 *Justerini & Brooks*, £25 *inc tax Sunday Times Wine Club*, £180 *a dozen Farr Vintners*
- Ch Meyney, St-Estèphe £21.75 *Grand Vin Wine Merchants*, £39 *(inc tax) Cambridge Wine Merchants*



Tasting notes on Purple Pages of JancisRobinson.com. International stockists on Wine-searcher.com

were notably variable: some of the less successful ones simply sugary and sticky; but the best so glorious that it seems shocking how difficult they are to sell.

After the long, hot summer of 2016, a thundery storm on September 13 kick-started the red wine grape-ripening process and seems to have produced the magic - and rare - combination of quality and quantity. The wines are delightfully ripe, which made them a pleasure to taste even at this young stage, but they also have an admirable spine of acidity and tannin, which should stand them in good stead for the long-term ageing that is the hallmark of top-quality red bordeaux.

'The wines are delightfully ripe but they also have an admirable spine of acidity and tannin'

If the lesser St-Émilions with which we started our second day of blind tasting have a fault at this stage it is that the acidity is a little too prominent. But the days of over-extraction and formulaic winemaking with an emphasis on oak and alcohol in St-Émilion are well and truly over. And some of the wines of Castillon, effectively an eastern extension of St-Émilion, withstood comparison well with their more famous neighbours when tasted blind.

The Pomerols ranged from less famous names slightly marred by under-ripe, drying tannins to some of the finest, noblest wines of the vintage.

The last day of the tasting started with an array of second wines from Pauillac châteaux, effectively those made from what failed to make the grade for the grand vin. Some were cleverly fashioned to be drunk relatively young; other blends were obviously made up of some ►

◀ of the less ripe lots of fruit. One of the old hands, Sebastian Payne of The Wine Society, muttered about these latter wines: “This is how all red bordeaux used to taste.” Thanks to dramatic improvements in vine-growing and winemaking in Bordeaux, together with much stricter selection (only the finest fruit goes into the grand vin), the better second wines can be some of Bordeaux’s better buys.

We then progressed to the Big Four - St-Estèphe, Pauillac, St-Julien and Margaux, the famous communes of the Médoc on the left bank of the Gironde. And what a joy it was. Some tasters found the tannins of the St-Estèphes a bit much, but I absolutely loved them. These were wines that truly expressed the rigour and stoniness of the appellation but all of it overlaid with fine, fully ripe, subtle fruit. And the array also included one of the most notable bargains of the vintage: Meyney was my favourite of the St-Estèphes (it was also the group’s joint favourite, tied with the widely-admired Calon-Ségur), outscoring the traditional titans of the commune, Montrose and Cos d’Estournel.

The St-Julien, well-mannered and well-balanced as always, formed a bridge between this demanding tasting and the Pauillacs. All three Léovilles shone, as well they might, with Poyferré subtler than it has been in the past. Léoville Barton, often uncompromising in youth, was outscored by its more charming stablemate Langoa Barton.

2016 was an excellent vintage for Léoville Las Cases, which in some years has been just a bit too rigid.

The Pauillacs I found more variable than some other appellations but perhaps that’s not so surprising when the commune is home to three of Bordeaux’s most expensive wines, three first growths, as well as underperformers such as Croizet Bages. The two Pichons and Les Forts de Latour, the glamorous second wine of first growth Ch Latour, all earned a top-notch score of 18 out of 20 from me with Grand Puy Lacoste, the group favourite, just half a point less on my scoreboard. All three of the first growths were superb, with Mouton (just) my favourite in this particular tasting. The fact that we opened a second bottle of Lafite because of a very slight perceived tartness on the finish of this first growth shows just how much close scrutiny is involved in the Southwold tasting.

As for the Margauxs, hardly surprisingly Palmer and Ch Margaux itself, another Médoc first growth, were quite outstanding. How blessed we were.

But perhaps the most thrilling aspect of 2016 for this value-conscious northerner is that, as was clear even at the en primeur stage, the vintage is so consistent that there are many good wines in the lower ranks. I have highlighted some of the better-value options on page 41. **FT**

More columns at ft.com/jancis-robinson

MY ADDRESSES — EXTREMADURA

JOSÉ PIZARRO, CHEF



I am from the tiny village of Talaván in Cáceres, Extremadura. My first experience of a professional kitchen – cooking at a traditional rotisserie – was in Cáceres. I have always loved the local food; it tastes like home.

— **Atrio** (above left) is a wonderful place for a special dinner. Located in the old town of Cáceres for more than 30 years, it’s a very charming restaurant with two Michelin stars and a beautiful garden. Like the building, the food has traditional foundations that can accommodate contemporary innovations. The wine cellar is also very special.

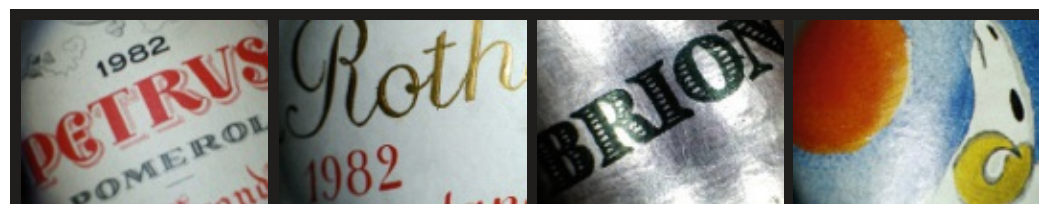
— Like many of the locals, I usually visit **El Figón** on Sundays with my family. This is a very popular traditional restaurant with a vibrant sense of community. From venison and mushrooms to fig ice cream, the enormous menu includes all of Extremadura’s classic dishes. It’s not a fancy establishment but the food and ambience are perfect.

— Famous for its Roman ruins, Merida is one of the most beautiful cities in Extremadura – and **A de Arco** is a delightful place to have lunch. From the terrace, guests can admire the Arco de Trajano, a World Heritage monument, and fabulous views of the city. Crucially, the food is equal to the excellent location.

— Back in Cáceres, I love to visit the **San Pablo convent** (above right) to buy Yemas “de las Claras”, incredible local sweets handmade by the nuns.

Spanish chef and author José Pizarro has three restaurants in London and another in Esher, Surrey. He has written five cookbooks, including “Andalusia: Recipes from Seville and Beyond”; josepizarro.com

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FT Weekend

ANNA BU KLIEWER



I'D BE LOST WITHOUT...

Oysters

These delicate creatures are tricky to work with yet there's a world of flavour inside their shells, writes *Simon Lamont*

I t wasn't love at first sight. I shucked oysters for years before I ever tasted one. Sharp knives and soft hands. Splintered shells, grit and silt. So much effort. For a morsel of viscous sea jelly? Oysters were an oddity to me, from a far-off muddy tideland.

It was 1999 and I was a teenage commis chef in Dublin. My first kitchen job: peeling roots, plating desserts and shucking bivalves. "This one just winked at me chef," I quipped as I attempted to prise open the craggy shells. The sous chef snarled back: "You'd wanna watch them pal, those are aphrodisiacs and you're butchering them!" I was an awful shucker, completely clueless.

After college, I left Ireland for Boston, where I worked in a seafood bar. Americans know how to enjoy a decent oyster happy hour and soon I could spot the difference between Malpeques and Kumamotos.

I honed my shucking method the following year, while working in the Dordogne. The restaurant closed every Sunday, the brigade would get together and a crate of Fine de Claire would appear. While the wine flowed, I would open oysters. Excellent practice. Knife in, wiggle, twist, crack, there goes the hinge. Scrape the flesh with surgical accuracy, don't

waste a scrap, don't spill a drop. Repetition makes for good shucking. I love the elegance of a French oyster. It takes two years for these little creatures to mature - and two seconds for a novice shucker to ruin them.

In my twenties, I emigrated to Cape Town, where I worked with George Jardine. He served wild Knysna Bay oysters with gels and foams, playing around with their minerality and versatility, accentuating their essence. Purists love a natural oyster, stark and unadorned, but I was learning to dress them up, opening a world of flavours. We'd pair Saldanha Bay oysters with *boerewors* straight from the braai - hot, salty, cool and spicy.

Later I was drawn to the Wright Brothers oyster house in Borough Market. I was in foodie heaven: trestled rocks from Whitstable, rare natives from Galway, beautiful pearls from Jersey, each with their own story and merroir. I had never seen such provenance.

These days, I am at Seabird in Southwark, overseeing the most extensive oyster list in Britain. There is a new generation with an appetite for one of London's oldest foods. **FT**

Simon Lamont is head of the raw bar at Seabird in London; seabirdlondon.com

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Restaurant Insider

Nicholas Lander



WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MARRON WITH BELACAN BUTTER AND VIETNAMESE MINT (LEFT) AND JASMINE RICE CREAM, STRAWBERRY GUM, DRAGON FRUIT AND VIOLET

Sunda, Melbourne

Sunda, a restaurant in Melbourne's Chinatown, intrigued me for several reasons. First of all, its name. Sunda refers to the prehistoric landmass that once linked Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore, and chef Khanh Nguyen's cooking is inspired by the region. Born in Sydney to Vietnamese parents, he worked in several of the city's top restaurants before cooking with René Redzepi when he transferred Noma from Copenhagen to Sydney in 2016. Redzepi opened Nguyen's eyes to the beauty of Australian produce.

Then there is the building: Sunda was previously a car park sandwiched between the popular Longrain restaurant and Bar Saracen. The structure lacks proper foundations, yet the space appealed to Adi Halim, who owns the nearby 19th-century Hotel Windsor. He hoped to attract younger diners and, together with architect Kerstin Thompson, he has created a restaurant with a most unusual interior.

The building is held together by scaffolding poles, interlinked

by some particularly solid wooden panels. According to Kosta Kalogiannis, Sunda's assiduous general manager, the structure is tested by safety inspectors every month.

The scaffolding provides theatre, which is important for any good restaurant. There is an open kitchen in front of two communal tables running the width of the building. Behind, a steep staircase leads to a sequence of smaller tables. The whole is dramatic, surprising and effective.

The only drawbacks are the acoustics and the menu design. Why do so many chefs and restaurateurs choose typefaces that can best be described as tiny? And why not use capital letters? They deploy only two colours at Sunda - faded black on faded grey paper.

Once my eyes had grown accustomed to the menu, its content sparked further consternation. Certain items were obviously well known, such as raw scallops, veal tartare, barramundi (Asian sea bass) and a pork cutlet. But what about kakadu plum? Bush tomato? Belacan butter? And what is a sunrise lime satay?

No matter. Everybody will be amazed regardless. The food



'The food emanating from Sunda's kitchen - which includes chefs from China, Malaysia, Vietnam and New Zealand - is astonishingly good'

Sunda
18 Punch Lane,
Melbourne, 3000
sunda.com.au
+61 3 9654 8190
Starters A\$6 to A\$16
Mains A\$25 to A\$50
Desserts A\$18 to A\$20

emanating from Sunda's kitchen - which includes chefs from China, Malaysia, Vietnam and New Zealand - is astonishingly good.

Encouraged by our waiter to share, my two companions and I selected dishes from across the region. A roti (pure India) made from rich buttermilk was paired with a Vegemite relish (pure Australia). Thin, raw scallops came topped with lemon aspen, an acidic bush fruit from Queensland, and a sweet-and-sour tamarind sauce. Best of all - to eat and to look at - was the octopus from Fremantle in Western Australia. Its red flesh was made even redder by an indigenous bush tomato sauce.

From a wine list written in the same minuscule font as the menu, we chose a bottle of Quealy 2017 Friulano, made in the nearby Mornington Peninsula (A\$64). Fortified by its freshness, we moved on to three main courses that were no less eclectic than our starters. A fillet of barramundi topped with the unlikely but very appetising combination of *lap cheong*, or Chinese sausage, and betel leaf, wild pepper; an excellent rendition of smoked aubergine and the native Davidson plum; and a pork cutlet enlivened by rainforest tamarind. A side dish of herb-fried rice was elevated beautifully by the crunchy addition of lemon myrtle and bottarga (mullet roe).

Nguyen's palate is particularly attuned to desserts and, happily, we ordered all three on offer. A jasmine rice cream was luscious, enhanced by the addition of strawberry gum. A honeycomb cake reminded me of eating a Crunchie bar as a boy. Yet the most impressive and most arresting pudding was simply described as *sunda pav*.

Enlivened by Vietnamese coffee, this round chocolate dessert came with coconut and wattleseed, the edible seed of the Australian acacia. Its allusion to pavlova - Australia's national dessert - came via the small pieces of meringue on top. These, I was told, were also meant to resemble the tectonic plates of prehistoric Sunda.

Do go, but don't forget your iPhone: for its camera but, especially, its torch. **FT**

More columns at ft.com/lander

Games



A Round on the Links by James Walton

All the answers here are linked in some way. Once you've spotted the link, any you didn't know the first time around should become easier.

1. Which play by Oliver Goldsmith, still regularly performed, opened at the Covent Garden Theatre (right) in May 1773?

2. Who was the Football Writers' Association Footballer of the Year in 1968, and remains the youngest ever winner of the award?

3. Who's the main character of the *Twilight* series of books and films?

4. What was Madonna's first number-one single of the 1990s?

5. Which 1938 Alfred Hitchcock (right) film, starring Michael Redgrave and Margaret Lockwood, was based on the novel *The Wheel Spins* by Ethel Lina White?



6. Which 21st-century TV drama is based on a series of novels by Luke Jennings?

7. In *Sex and the City*, what was Carrie Bradshaw's cocktail of choice?

8. According to the popular second world war song, to which military unit did "the boogie woogie bugle boy" belong?

9. Andrew Wakefield, who wrote the discredited 1998

Lancet article linking the MMR vaccine to autism, is now the boyfriend of which model?

10. Which body of water separates Sudan and Saudi Arabia?



The Picture Round by James Walton

Who or what do these pictures add up to?



+

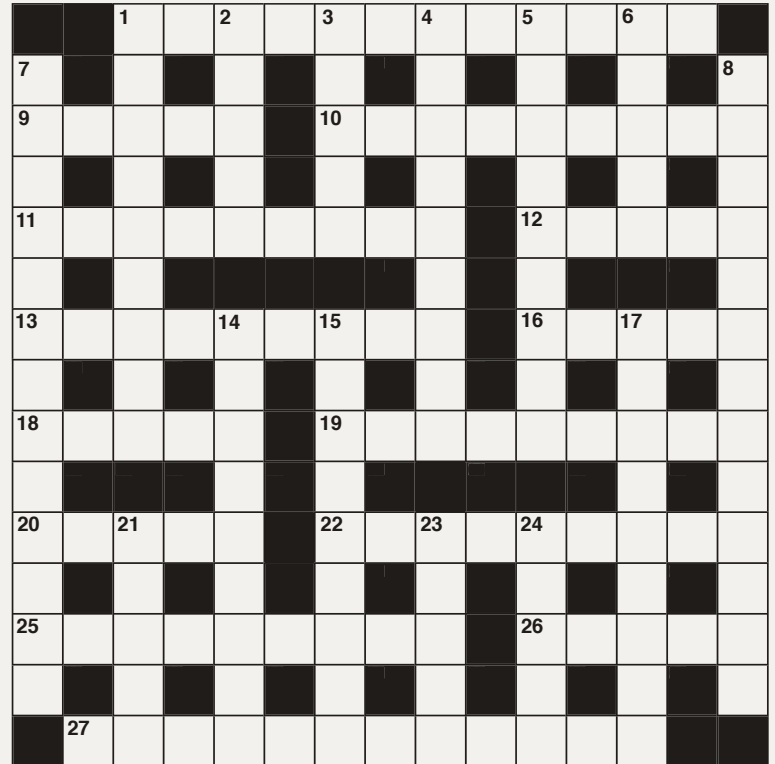


= ?

Answers page 10

GETTY IMAGES

The Crossword No 474. Set by Aldhelm



The Across clues are straightforward, while the Down clues are cryptic.

ACROSS

1 Pass for regular customers (6, 6)

9 Possessed (5)

10 South Yorkshire town and racecourse (9)

11 Have work done by others (9)

12 Ill-fated corporation which collapsed in 2007 (5)

13 Cruel (9)

16 Soil (5)

18 Beginning (5)

19 Water clock (9)

20 Basic principle (5)

22 Home for parentless children (9)

25 Bring about, initiate (9)

26 To the time when (5)

27 Cheekily (12)

2 Sound of German car starting (5)

3 Speaker's demand for alternative socialist rising (5)

4 State trooper initially seen twice going around (9)

5 Neverending classes prepared with educational excellence, primarily (9)

6 Participate in hospital department with little hesitation (5)

7 Second cartoon I'm recreating around child is black and white (13)

8 How legendary leader of division turned in a misguided way (5-8)

14 The French follow leaders of the old time native artefact (5, 4)

15 One user's upset about chlorine compound (9)

17 Brightly beam around land - it's changing (9)

21 Bury and a team from Milan (5)

23 Slice of pastry dish and outer parts of cabbage (5)

24 Mature in these times - last month, in short (5)

DOWN

1 Also put component up in old ship's bunkers (9)

Solution to Crossword No 473





GILLIAN TETT

PARTING SHOT

TikTok, teens and the dangers of fleeting fame



A couple of weeks ago, one of my teenage daughters casually mentioned that she had created a TikTok - a short video on the platform owned by ByteDance, the Chinese company - that had gained 114,000 views in a matter of days.

"A hundred and fourteen thousand?" I repeated, wondering if I had misheard.

She rolled her eyes at me. "It's not that much!" she said, proceeding to show me Instagram pictures of other kids she knows in New York whose TikToks have attracted far bigger audiences.

I pointed out that a mere 114,000 was almost four times the number of followers that I have on Twitter, even though I am a journalist in the public eye and have maintained that account for a couple of years. "Well, you're old," she shrugged, checking her phone again. The views of her video - a micro-satire on her teenage life, set to music - were still rising.

I was simultaneously impressed, alarmed and humbled - partly because although I knew TikTok existed, I didn't even fully understand what it was until a few months ago. (I guess many Financial Times readers might feel the same way if they are also members of Generation X or boomers.) But it was also because I realised that something radical, yet largely invisible, is happening on the internet - with implications we still don't understand.

When I was growing up, I took it for granted that the people who became famous enough to be listened to by a crowd had worked hard for that accolade and generally operated with the support of an institution or an established industry.

I'm thinking of the film stars I saw at the cinema and the music idols I watched on the BBC's *Top of the Pops*, as well as the more conventional figures in the public eye - politicians and business leaders. The idea that I, as a teenager in my bedroom, might suddenly communicate with 100,000 people or more, would have seemed bizarre. Just giving a speech to a hall of a few hundred fellow pupils at school was terrifying enough.

Today's kids no longer see life in these hierarchical and institutional terms. Yes, their physical worlds are often constrained by parental controls, a lack of access to the outdoors and insane over-scheduling. But despite that (or, more accurately, in reaction to that), they see the internet as a constantly evolving frontier, where it is still possible for a bold and lucky pioneer to grab some land or find a voice.

To put it another way, when The New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman declared in 2005 that the internet had made "the world flat" in economic terms (allowing competition between remote workers in Boston, Bangalore and Beijing), he was only half right. It is flattening hierarchies too, by giving power to the crowd and, sometimes, a megaphone to ordinary mortals.

Of course, "flat" does not mean egalitarian: most voices on the internet never travel beyond a relatively small network, and much of the content that goes viral on platforms such as TikTok, YouTube or Instagram does so because of unseen institutions at work (for example, a public relations team aiming to boost a celebrity's profile).

But lone actors do sometimes go unexpectedly viral, and in a manner that makes my daughter's experience seem utterly tame. Fame can suddenly appear - and then just as suddenly be taken away again, because the audience gets bored,

'Lone voices do sometimes go unexpectedly viral, and in a way that makes my daughter's experience seem utterly tame'

the platform's algorithms change or the cultural trend that a break-out video has tapped into goes out of fashion. For a teenager, social media can seem like a summer garden at dusk filled with fireflies: spots of lights suddenly flare up and then die down, moving in an unpredictable, capricious display.

Is this a bad thing? We will not know for several years. Judging from my own experience of teenagers, I suspect (or hope) that the next generation will be more cynical about the concept of fame than we were, and less trusting about the quality of information they receive online.

I also suspect that they are more politically engaged than my cohort was at a similar age, at least when it comes to researching, discussing and highlighting issues that they care passionately about, from #MeToo to climate change. They may also be creating ways for new politicians to rise through non-traditional channels.

But a world of digital fireflies is also a place that can breed populist, celebrity-focused politics; that can damage our attention span and ability to engage with complex policy issues; and can foster a dangerous sense of entitlement. Teenage fears about popularity online are fuelling narcissism, insecurity and social pressure, with damaging mental health impacts for some. (To get a sense of this, try watching *13 Reasons Why*. While so controversial that some schools have banned it, I recently sat through this TV series with my daughters; it was not just sobering viewing but sparked some important conversations as well.)

Clearly, we cannot put this genie back in the bottle. For better or worse, the next generation's expectations about communication, hierarchy and community are changing. But the challenge for their parents is how to respond. Ignore it? Get on TikTok and YouTube ourselves? Or simply gawp? If anyone has the answer, let me know - ideally in a now-so-old-fashioned email. **FT**

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