

INTERNATIONAL


**WORLD
WEEK IN REVIEW**
US to complete Afghanistan pullout in August after two decades of war

Joe Biden said the US military mission in Afghanistan would end on August 31, defending his decision to withdraw American troops after more than 20 years of fighting despite the threat of a resurgent Taliban.

"I will not send another generation of Americans to war in Afghanistan with no reasonable expectation of achieving a different outcome," the US president said. Biden said the country had completed its objectives of finding Osama bin Laden, the al-Qaeda leader, and had weakened the terrorist threat to the US mainland from Afghanistan.

The Taliban has launched numerous offensives against Afghan forces and civilians, while peace talks between the Taliban and Afghan government have failed to produce a political settlement or ceasefire.

Tokyo state of emergency rules out spectators at most Olympic events

Japan declared a Covid-19 state of emergency in Tokyo and said the Olympics would be held largely without spectators.

The International Olympic Committee insisted the games, which run from July 23 to August 8, must go ahead during a state of emergency. No fans will be allowed in Tokyo and three neighbouring prefectures. Some can attend events such as football and baseball taking place elsewhere in Japan.

Even though Japan's vaccine rollout has been stepped up, only 27 per cent of the public have had a first dose. Seiko Hashimoto, Tokyo 2020 president, said: "I am very sorry to ticket holders who will be disappointed, but this was the only choice available to us to control the spread [of coronavirus]."

Britain's Cavendish equals Tour de France record of 34 stage wins


Mark Cavendish equalled Eddy Merckx's record of 34 Tour de France stage wins. The Briton claimed his fourth win in this year's race on the 13th stage between Nîmes and Carcassonne. The 36-year-old had not won a stage on the Tour since 2016 before this year.

China aerospace boss arrested after attack on two scientists

Beijing was embarrassed after two eminent space scientists were allegedly attacked by a Chinese aerospace executive and Communist party official, sparking widespread condemnation on social media.

Zhang Tao, of China Aerospace Investment Holdings, was detained by police for alleged attacks on Wu Meirong, 85, and Wang Jinnian, 55, last month, according to the state-run Xinhua news agency.

The scientists refused to recommend Zhang for membership of the International Academy of Astronautics, said China News Weekly. Police said Zhang quarrelled with the two at a dinner, cornered Wang in a lift and kicked and punched him. Wu was allegedly knocked down trying to defend her colleague.

G20

Experts seek \$75bn to fight pandemics

Leaders urged to make big investment in public health before next crisis

DELPHINE STRAUSS — LONDON

Governments need to spend at least \$75bn over five years in a global push to avert future pandemics, according to a report presented to finance ministers and central bankers from the G20 group of nations yesterday.

A substantial increase in international funding for public health, on top of existing spending, will be essential to reset a "dangerously underfunded system", the report warned.

"We are completely unprepared. The system is set up to fail, and it will fail," said Tharman Shanmugaratnam, Singapore's former finance minister, who led

the report together with former US Treasury Secretary Larry Summers and WTO director-general Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala.

The report is backed by top bankers, economists and policymakers who were tasked by the G20 in January with finding ways to organise finance to make the world less vulnerable to pandemics. Measures based on the report could be put to G20 ministers in October.

The most urgent goal is to speed the supply of vaccines and other medical kit to countries struggling to secure them, the report found; it is also necessary to plan for Covid-19 to become endemic.

Shanmugaratnam compared existing global defences against health crises to a financial system with no agreed international standards on capital buffers or liquidity, no stress-testing or supervision, no deposit insurance and no mech-

anisms for early warning or rescue.

The report urged leaders to commit \$10bn a year to a new Global Health Threats Fund to support surveillance and research, and spur investments through public private philanthropic partnerships to ensure a rapid, global supply of vaccines, tests, treatments and personal protective equipment.

This would mean a big increase in the capacity to manufacture and deliver critical medical supplies across different geographies, with technologies that would make it possible to scale up production rapidly to meet the surge in demand during a pandemic.

There should also be a new governance arrangement, bringing together health and finance ministers and modelled on the Financial Stability Board set up after the global financial crisis.

A further \$5bn a year would be used

"We are completely unprepared. The system is set up to fail, and it will fail"

to strengthen the World Health Organization and channel funds for pandemic preparedness through the World Bank, IMF and regional lenders, which would get a stronger mandate to invest in global public goods like health and climate.

While the proposals were conceived as a defence against future pandemics, the long delays in delivering coronavirus vaccines to the developing world mean the current crisis could in practice merge into later ones, the report said.

"The world is nowhere near the end of the Covid-19 pandemic," said Okonjo-Iweala.

"We must move aggressively and immediately . . . to end this deadly crisis as soon as possible, while simultaneously scaling up efforts now to thwart the growing risk of future pandemics which represent a clear and present danger."

South Africa. Political fractures

ANC tiptoes out of Zuma's shadow

Jailing of former president presents defining moment to set the party on a new course

JOSEPH COTTERILL — JOHANNESBURG

For all the bluster that had brought South Africa to the edge of a constitutional crisis, in the end Jacob Zuma went quietly – whisked to jail in the dead of night after his own VIP protection police guards arrested him under orders from the country's highest court.

But as the former president began a 15-month sentence in the early hours of Thursday for defying a constitutional court order to appear at an inquiry into corruption, it was a landmark moment for the African National Congress that dominates the country's politics.

South Africa's ruling party ousted Zuma in 2018 and replaced him with Cyril Ramaphosa, who has slowly restored institutions plundered by "state capture" or systematic looting under his predecessor.

Only now, with his jailing, is the ANC emerging from Zuma's shadow, having faced down what it described as "counter-revolutionary calls for violence and even calls for civil war" by Zuma supporters within its ranks.

"This is quite a defining moment" for Ramaphosa, said Ralph Matheka, a political analyst. "He is at a point in history where he might set the ANC on a completely different path. It is not going to be an easy task."

For now, Africa's oldest liberation movement remains the main electoral force in South Africa, 27 years after it won the country's first democratic elections. Voters gave it over 57 per cent of the ballot in 2019 and the party retains the loyalty of much of the country's black majority against fractured opposition parties.

At the heart of its mythology is the image it presents of itself as a "leader of society", or vanguard of committed cadres who are sent out to parliament, state companies and other institutions to implement party resolutions.

Little short of a postponement because of a fierce third coronavirus wave will prevent it doing well in local elections later this year, analysts say.



Fan club supporters of former South Africa president Jacob Zuma protest in Pietermaritzburg on Tuesday
Rogan Ward/Reuters

This is despite a failing economy and the collapse of basic service delivery in many municipalities on its watch.

But Ramaphosa's battle to control the party's destiny is far from over. The ANC is riven by factions and "still has to be carefully weaned from Zuma politics" that fused party and state, Matheka said. The state capture inquiry has said that the former president easily manipulated party networks to promote cronies and hollow out institutions, from the revenue service to police and prosecutors, in order to give free rein to graft. He denies the claims, which were made by dozens of witnesses.

Ramaphosa admitted in his own testimony this year that the ANC's internal democracy collapsed into factions and the rank and file became pawns in a power struggle that made "fertile ground" for looting.

Patronage politics remain ingrained in the ANC, analysts say. The party only recently suspended Ace Magashule, an

ally of Zuma, as secretary-general after he was charged with corruption, in the most high-profile case among several investigations involving ANC members.

"Zuma's shadow will be with the ANC for some time because he remade the ANC in his image. It is going to take a lot to undo that" and reverse the former liberation party's descent into "the most blatant kleptocracy", said Sithembile Mbete, a political scientist at the University of Pretoria.

For those who came up through the Zuma era, the party has taken precedence over the state, she said. "The ANC has thrived on this conflation of the party and the state and this idea that what is good for the party is good for the state," she added.

Ramaphosa's restoration of independent institutions such as the police, prosecutors and other bodies goes some way to change this. While Zuma lashed out at "a few lawless judges" and an inquiry he said was politically motivated, Ramaphosa has allowed inde-

pendent institutions to pursue their inquiries into his predecessor. The recognition of the primacy of institutions "weakens the ANC as the leader of society . . . but it opens the way for a functional ANC to emerge," Mbete said.

The culture of impunity under Zuma began even before he took power, when state prosecutors opened his path to the presidency in 2009 by throwing out charges that he took bribes in a 1990s arms deal.

More than a decade on, a long delayed trial over those reinstated charges finally gets under way – albeit this time, he will already be a state prisoner when he appears in court later this month.

In the years between, "the biggest chunk of the electorate and the generation that is going to be active politically have grown up with a dysfunctional ANC" and never known it as a leader of society, Mbete said.

With the jailing of Zuma, she added, "there is an opportunity here for the ANC to remake itself".

Covid restrictions

Expats quit Singapore as travel and job troubles take toll

STEFANIA PALMA — SINGAPORE

Tom Meredith had just arrived in London after more than a year away when Singapore revoked the re-entry pass he needed to fly home to his wife and six-year-old twin daughters.

What should have been a short business trip in May suddenly had no return date, forcing Meredith to shuffle between family and friends' homes in the UK for weeks. "I was pretty heartbroken," the tax consultant said. "You enter that bit of shock being away from family . . . it could be an extra two weeks, two months, four months. You feel completely helpless."

Meredith was just one of the many expats locked out of Singapore when the city state imposed strict travel curbs as aggressive Covid-19 variants emerged.

For some foreign professionals, the restriction proved to be a breaking point. Frustration over travel constraints and vaccines and fears over jobs have prompted expats to abandon the island for either their home countries or other financial hubs, such as Dubai.

Uncertainty over when restrictions would "come and go and not knowing

what your life will be like in the next few months" contributed to a 31-year-old management consultant's decision to move back to Portugal.

Expats younger than 40 were at the end of the vaccination queue, with Singaporeans aged 12 to 39 given priority to reserve a job for nearly three weeks. Bookings were opened to non-Singaporeans last week.

"It's just one of many ways in which Singapore showed it's not super-friendly to expats, and that they will always prioritise their own citizens ahead of foreigners," said the consultant, who wished to remain anonymous.

A struggle to find work has also stoked expat anxiety. "If you're made redundant and you're a senior director, it's very difficult to find something for an EP [employment pass holder, who earns at least S\$4,500 (\$3,330) a month]," said Richard Aldridge at Black Swan Group, a financial services recruiter. "You have to be very flexible on what you want, to stay here."

The employment difficulties for foreign professionals coincide with a push from Singapore to reduce its reliance on foreign labour after a Covid-19 outbreak

last year in crowded dormitories housing migrant workers. The labourers, who are essential to industries such as construction, account for almost 90 per cent of the city state's caseload.

Josephine Teo, then manpower minister, in March called on companies to "strengthen their Singaporean core". Last year, Singapore raised the qualifying salary for employment passes twice.

While EP holders accounted for a quarter of Black Swan's placements in Singapore in 2019, the number in 2021 has dropped to zero. "EP is almost toxic. People with EPs are not being looked at



On the move: a jogger runs near the financial district in Singapore

initially . . . they're on the back burner for two to three months," said Aldridge.

Authorities said they reimposed restrictions in May to avoid large outbreaks. The ministry of trade and industry said it recognised "the impact of border measures on all, in particular those who need to travel for business or to reunite with family", adding it would work with those affected.

Restrictions are being relaxed after a fall in infections. But until next week, social gatherings will still be limited to five people, and only two patrons will be allowed to dine together. Music is not allowed in restaurants, so that people do not have to speak loudly, which authorities say could help spread Covid.

Some expats, however, are still moving to the city state, including from Hong Kong, which has been rattled by protests, school closures and China's imposition of a tough national security law.

Meredith finally returned to Singapore last week. But his family has considered whether they should "carry on" in the city state. In the past few months, five friends and their families have left. For now, though, he is just "very, very glad to be home".

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INTERNATIONAL

Fears of anarchy as Haiti reels from president's assassination

Residents speak of chaos in Caribbean nation beset by violence and poverty



Haitians gather outside a police station in Port-au-Prince after Jovenel Moïse was murdered by a group of mercenaries on Wednesday — Richard Pierrin/Getty Images

MICHAEL STOTT
LATIN AMERICA EDITOR

Jovenel Moïse made many enemies and few friends in four scandal-plagued years as president of Haiti.

On which side his bodyguards stood when he was gunned down at home in front of his family is yet to be determined. His supposed protectors were not reported hurt when a squad of Colombian mercenaries stormed the president's private villa in the early hours of Wednesday.

More than two dozen heavily armed attackers posed as agents from the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to gain access to Moïse's residence on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince, according to Haitian officials and video shot by witnesses.

Clips circulating on the internet appear to show the killers closing in on the house under cover of darkness in a slow-moving convoy of vehicles. Some of the attackers are walking in between the cars brandishing submachine guns and shouting in English: "This is a DEA operation. Do not shoot."

Once inside, the assassins fired at Moïse and his wife Martine. The president was found on the floor, riddled with 12 bullet wounds, and his left eye had been gouged, investigating magistrate Carl Henry Destin told *Le Nouvelliste*, a Haitian newspaper. Martine survived the attack and was flown to Florida by air ambulance for treatment.

Alarmed by the apparent lack of resistance from the president's bodyguards, the authorities have ordered the

interrogation of his security detail. Among the many unanswered questions is why the supposedly professional hit squad failed to organise a getaway.

The attack prompted international condemnation and in Haiti, consternation despite the country's endemic violence. "There's nobody in the streets," said one resident of Port-au-Prince two days after the murder. "People are in limbo right now. Whether you loved Moïse or hated him, it is the same reaction: a deep state of shock."

Although murders are common in the Caribbean nation and coups punctuate its history, no president has been assassinated in office since a mob dismembered Jean Vilbrun Guillaume Sam in 1915. That killing prompted a 19-year occupation of Haiti by US troops but Washington's reaction this time was quite different. On Thursday, it restated its position that elections should proceed this year for a new president.

In Haiti, the authorities were quick to highlight the foreign identities of the killers. Police chief Leon Charles said 26 of the 28-man hit squad were Colombian and the other two were Americans of Haitian descent. Seventeen have been arrested and at least three killed. Others are on the run.

Less clear was who ordered the assassination. "Moïse had a large number of enemies," said Laurent Dubois, a Haiti expert at the University of Virginia. "One could speculate in many different directions. I imagine this will be traced back to an internal source but it is hard to say whether we will ever really know."

Equally murky is what comes next in a country wracked by political instability, gang violence and acute poverty. "The poor people of Haiti have suffered enough," said one local businessman. "People are dying, people are hungry. The people can't take it any more. Life is too painful."

Claude Joseph, Moïse's sixth prime minister, moved quickly to assert control after the killing, imposing a state of emergency and ordering the airport and local businesses to reopen after two days in which the streets had been quiet.

'People are dying, people are hungry. The people can't take it any more. Life is too painful'

But Ariel Henry, a neurosurgeon nominated by Moïse two days before his death to take over as premier, claimed he was the legitimate leader.

Constitutional experts were foxed. Haiti has two possible legal formulas in the event of a presidential death, there is no sitting parliament to endorse a nominee and the head of the supreme court — a possible successor — died of coronavirus last month.

For now, the US and the UN are dealing with Joseph. Antony Blinken, US secretary of state, spoke to him on Wednesday and the state department repeatedly described Joseph as "the acting prime minister".

Moïse, a former banana exporter, had

shown an increasingly authoritarian streak in his final period in office, jailing opponents, ruling by decree, allowing the terms of parliamentarians and mayors to expire without fresh elections and seeking constitutional changes that would have abolished the senate, given him immunity from prosecution and cleared the way for a second term.

Violent street protests erupted in 2018 against Moïse over accusations that he and his officials had pocketed up to \$2bn from a Venezuelan subsidised oil scheme, something he denied. In April, the Catholic church warned that Haiti was "descending into hell" after seven of its clergy were kidnapped.

Bruno Maes, Unicef country representative, said Haiti was facing its worst humanitarian crisis in years because of violence by armed groups, fuel and food shortages and an upsurge in Covid-19 cases. "The number of people who need immediate humanitarian assistance is 1.1m," he said. "We cannot use the main road to the south to reach people because armed gangs are controlling it so we have to use helicopters."

International powers seem unwilling to intervene. A 13-year UN mission to Haiti ended in 2017 without bringing lasting stability. With the US on the sidelines, some fear Haiti risks drifting into violent anarchy.

"It's chaos," a foreign-educated professional living in Port-au-Prince told the *Financial Times*. "The poverty is getting worse and the government institutions no longer function. This country needs a break. We can't go on like this."

Financial reform

G20 raises pressure on global corporate tax deal holdouts

MILES JOHNSON — ROME

The world's largest economies will this weekend pile pressure on nations refusing to sign up to a global tax deal that would impose a minimum levy on multinational corporations.

G20 economy ministers and central bankers met in Venice yesterday to discuss the proposal, which was agreed by 67 nations in June and backed by 130 countries at talks hosted by the OECD in Paris earlier this month.

They are expected to formally endorse the agreement — which will force the largest multinationals to pay a global minimum corporate tax rate — in a communiqué to be released today after the meeting.

The OECD proposal also seeks to establish a system under which countries would tax some profits booked by large companies based on where they were generated.

A draft of the communiqué, leaked yesterday and verified to the FT by an official from a G20 nation, urges countries holding out on the deal to concede by the time the leaders of G20 member countries meet in Italy in October.

The wording of the communiqué has yet to be finalised, officials from several G20 countries said, but an official from one large country said the endorsement of the deal by the G20 would mean

"there was no going back". Eight countries, including Ireland, Barbados, Hungary and Estonia, have held off agreeing the 15 per cent minimum levy, which is backed by the US, China, India and most EU countries. Other holdouts include Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Kenya and St Vincent and the Grenadines. Some tax havens and investment hubs, such as the Bahamas and Switzerland, have signed up.

Peru did not originally sign up because it did not have a government in place when the agreement was made but has now done so, making 131 signatories so far.

While the political endorsement of the G20 will provide an impetus to efforts to reach a final deal, which is expected to be implemented by 2023, key technical issues remain and are unlikely to be resolved this weekend.

These include various "carve-out" agreements for some countries to encourage investment.

Another hurdle is expected to be Republican opposition in the US Congress; President Joe Biden is likely to need congressional approval for at least some elements of the proposal.

Kevin Brady, the top Republican on the House of Representatives' ways and means committee, has described the deal as "a dangerous economic surrender that sends US jobs overseas".

Environment

Green alliance delivers on speed limit pledge for Paris

VICTOR MALLET — PARIS

Paris will impose a 30kph speed limit across almost all the capital from the end of August, fulfilling a campaign promise of the left-Green alliance that runs the city and infuriating motorists already grappling with traffic jams, roadworks and the proliferation of bicycle lanes.

The move is the latest phase in a long struggle between successive Paris governments that have restricted traffic in the city centre, and motorists from the capital and its suburbs who are typically supported by rightwing politicians.

"For safety it's cool and for the environment it's cool, but at 30kph it's going to be harder to get around to work," said Mesa Gomez, a cleaning business franchisee, as he gathered equipment from his van in central Paris. "There's good and bad in this."

A taxi driver waiting for a fare nearby had no hesitation in concluding it was all bad. "The law is the law, but to go from 50 to 30 is pretty annoying," he said. "In Paris it's already really difficult to drive and to park, not to mention all the bike lanes and roadworks everywhere."

David Belliard, the Green deputy of Socialist mayor Anne Hidalgo, said the speed limit reduction would be good for safety and for the environment, and would cut noise pollution. "The challenge is to cut the presence of cars, their

speed, and their grip on the city to give space to other users," he told the *Financial Times*. "We reckon it will cut the noise nuisance by three decibels, or by half in terms of what people perceive. It's a big gain in terms of quality of life."

Only a few major avenues, such as the Champs-Élysées, will be spared, while the limit on the Boulevard Périphérique, Paris's congested ring road, would remain at 70kph for the time being.

Many big European cities, including

Two-wheel power: a cyclist on the Champs-Élysées, which is not subject to the 30kph limit



London with its 20mph zones, have cut speed limits drastically in different areas in recent years. But Paris is unusual in extending the lower limit to almost all of its streets.

Previously, traffic in just over half of the capital was limited to 30kph, though congestion means average vehicle speeds are only 15kph. "There's a kind of fantasy about how great cars are for getting around in the city that is very far from reality," Belliard said.

Pierre Chasseray, who heads a lobby group called 40 Million Motorists, complained that at 30kph cars in Paris would now be overtaken by bicycles.

Monetary policy. New strategy

ECB says it has learnt lesson on premature rate rises

Central bank resets inflation target and pledges it will tolerate slight overshoots

MARTIN ARNOLD — FRANKFURT

The last time the European Central Bank raised interest rates was just as the eurozone debt crisis began in 2011 — a move its officials now acknowledge was a big mistake.

Its first new strategy for nearly two decades, unveiled on Thursday, is designed to avoid the risk of such premature policy tightening in the future. It shifts the Frankfurt-based institution to a 2 per cent inflation target and pledges to tolerate any slight overshoots.

"We have learnt from history and we have observed what has worked and what has not worked," Christine Lagarde, ECB president, said as she presented the review's results. "Now we need to demonstrate we mean what we say."

The ECB has persistently failed to lift inflation to its previous target of "below, but close to, 2 per cent" for much of the past decade. Analysts said the new strategy would make it easier to maintain interest rates at their historic low levels for longer, to achieve its legal mandate

of price stability. "Lagarde is leaving the door open for further forceful action," said Annalisa Piazza, analyst at MFS Investment Management.

Carsten Brzeski, head of macro research at ING, said it "clearly marks a gradual trend towards more, even if it is subtle, dovishness".

By ditching its previous inflation target, the ECB aims to banish what Lagarde called "ill-founded speculation" that it preferred inflation to run below its target than above it.

While Lagarde said the bank's new target was symmetric, meaning that it "considers negative and positive deviations of inflation from the target to be equally undesirable", she added that it would be less worried about above-target inflation in certain circumstances.

She said the ECB would use "especially forceful or persistent monetary policy action" when interest rates are close to their lower limit and inflation remains below its target. The shift "may also imply a transitory period in which inflation is moderately above target".

This does not mean it will actively seek to drive inflation above its target, as the US Federal Reserve has shifted its strategy to do, to make up for a low-inflation period. Lagarde said the new ECB strategy was "very squarely" not the same as

the Fed's average inflation policy. Jens Weidmann, head of Germany's central bank and one of the ECB's more conservative council members, emphasised this yesterday, saying: "We do not make our monetary policy dependent on past target failures. Our strategy remains forward-looking and takes into account the new challenge of the effective lower limit of interest rates."



Christine Lagarde: ECB president said the bank had 'observed what has worked and what has not worked'

That leaves the Fed with a more accommodative stance than the ECB. However, inflation is higher in the US and the Fed is expected to start tightening policy sooner. The ECB's new strategy makes it more probable it will keep rates lower for longer, which is likely to push the euro down against the dollar and keep eurozone bond yields low.

"Historically, monetary policy divergence between key central banks has caused foreign exchange volatility to increase, and appreciation to occur in the currency which is tightening policy," Citigroup strategists said, predicting the

euro could fall from above €1.18 to €1.16 against the dollar.

Other ECB council members, however, said the bank's new strategy put it in a similar position to the Fed. "My interpretation . . . is that if similar shocks were hitting both the US and euro area the monetary policy reaction functions on both sides of the Atlantic would not be that far apart," said Olli Rehn, governor of Finland's central bank and an ECB council member.

The biggest question left by the ECB's announcement was what it would mean for its monetary policy as the eurozone recovers from the coronavirus. Minutes of last month's meeting of the governing council revealed that more conservative "hawks" called for asset purchases to be scaled back in response to the brighter economic outlook and improved financing conditions. More "dovish" proponents of loose monetary policy resisted.

"A broad consensus" emerged in favour of maintaining the current level of monetary stimulus being delivered by its €1.85tn pandemic emergency purchase programme, the minutes reported. That makes it likely the issue will be revived at the next policy gathering later this month, ahead of the meeting in September.

Additional reporting by Eva Szalay in London

West Africa

France to halve forces fighting Islamist militants in Sahel

VICTOR MALLET — PARIS

France will halve the number of its troops fighting Islamist militants in the Sahel region of west Africa, cutting the deployment from more than 5,000 to between 2,500 and 3,000, President Emmanuel Macron has announced.

Paris has kept its largest overseas force deployed in former colonies such as Chad, Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger since Macron's predecessor François Hollande launched an operation eight years ago to prevent Mali falling under the control of jihadists.

France had argued that by suppressing militants linked to al-Qaeda, Isis and other extremist groups, its Operation Barkhane was helping the region's inhabitants and protecting Europe from terrorism as well as a possible rise in the number of African refugees fleeing instability at home.

Yet while French forces initially defeated the jihadists in Mali, killings and violence have continued to spread across the Sahel, from northern to central Mali and into Niger and Burkina Faso. Extremist groups have taken advantage of long-running communal tensions and filled the void of largely absent governments across the region to capture vast swaths of territory.

Macron has concluded — like US President Joe Biden, who is withdrawing the

last US troops from Afghanistan — there is no end in sight to such an engagement when the governments of the countries concerned are unable to administer or even hold their own territory.

After a meeting yesterday with Niger's President Mohamed Bazoum at the Elysée Palace and by video with other Sahel leaders, Macron said the withdrawal would happen "in stages", although he did not specify how long the troop drawdown would take.

He said the closure of three French bases in Mali, including one in Timbuktu, would be completed by the beginning of next year. "This change responds to the need to adapt to the new posture of terrorist groups and to help the countries of the region take responsibility," he said.

France, which receives intelligence support from the US, will give priority to special forces operations against Islamists and will continue to co-operate with its African and international allies, though on a smaller scale than before as it winds down Operation Barkhane.

Macron said in February: "Our aim is not to fight against all the groups that might exist in the region — it would be infinite war."

France has been unable to build on its early victory in Mali in 2013 to impose long-term peace or shore up the governments of the Sahel.

INTERNATIONAL

Pandemic

Fed official warns of virus threat to recovery

Delta mutation and gaps in vaccination rollout seen as risk to global growth

JAMES POLITI — WASHINGTON
COLBY SMITH — NEW YORK

A top Federal Reserve official has warned the spread of the Delta coronavirus variant and low vaccination rates in some parts of the world pose a threat to the global recovery as she urged caution in removing monetary support for the US economy.

"I think one of the biggest risks to our global growth going forward is that we prematurely declare victory on Covid,"

Mary Daly, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, said in an interview with the Financial Times.

"We are not through the pandemic, we are getting through the pandemic."

Daly, a voting member of the Federal Open Market Committee, pointed to the struggles to contain the virus in Japan and other countries. Surging infections and lagging inoculation campaigns abroad were constraining the economic rebound and could have negative ramifications for the US, she said.

"If the global economy... can't get... higher rates of vaccination, really get Covid behind [us], then that's a headwind on US growth," Daly said. "Good numbers on the vaccinations are

terrific, but look at all the pockets where that isn't yet happening."

Daly's warning came as investors sought out safe havens in droves this week, sending US government bond prices soaring. Treasury yields have fallen sharply as a result, with the benchmark 10-year note trading at its lowest level since February. Global stocks fell on Thursday, but rebounded yesterday.

Many market participants attributed the sharp drop in Treasury yields to technical factors. But a growing chorus has expressed concern the economy will struggle to maintain the red-hot growth rates that have accompanied the reopening to date, and predicted the recent

jump in inflation would quickly fall away. "In the United States the news has been pretty positive, but the global news hasn't been all that positive," Daly said. "It's been good but it hasn't been terrific. Markets respond to those things, and that can of course lower yields because they're pricing in the risk there. What you've seen is an increasing sense of the downside risk to the global economy."

The Fed's June meeting appears to have been a catalyst for recent market moves. Central bank officials predicted they would be raising interest rates sooner and more aggressively than they had forecast earlier this year.

But Daly — considered one of the more dovish Fed officials — said there

should be no doubt the bank would stick to the framework it adopted last August. This promised a more lenient approach to temporary overshoots in inflation in the pursuit of full employment.

"Chair [Jay] Powell said this so clearly in his press conference and I think that's the light to follow here," Daly said.

Daly's comments come at a pivotal time for the Fed as it discusses removing some of the massive monetary support introduced at the start of the pandemic.

Minutes from the June FOMC meeting, released on Wednesday, showed some policymakers believed the Fed could soon start trimming its \$120bn per month of asset purchases.

See FT View

Infection surge

Lockdowns tightened as new strain sweeps across Asia-Pacific

FT REPORTERS

Governments across the Asia-Pacific region are rushing to impose tougher lockdown measures to combat the spread of the highly infectious Covid-19 Delta variant.

The sudden resurgence of coronavirus outbreaks is straining health systems and stoking public anxiety about vaccination programmes plagued by delays and supply shortages.

Indonesia is among the worst-hit countries in the region. The nation of 270m faces its deadliest outbreak since the pandemic began, as its healthcare system struggles to cope with a record number of cases.

The daily death toll has doubled over the past week to more than 1,000 and authorities have warned that the number of new infections could surge as high as 70,000 after surpassing 34,000 on Wednesday.

Many hospitals have reached capacity and are already turning patients away. The government has resorted to importing oxygen tanks from neighbouring countries as supplies are exhausted.

President Joko Widodo has extended lockdown measures in areas including Java, the main island, and Bali. But Jakarta has resisted imposing greater restrictions for fear of hurting south-east Asia's biggest economy.

Indonesia has relied on Chinese Sino-vac jabs, but the vaccination rate has been slow and beset by supply issues.

In Australia, authorities have warned that thousands of people could die unless an outbreak in Sydney linked to the Delta variant is brought under control. A two-week lockdown in the city of 5m has failed to quell a cluster of active cases, prompting a tightening of restrictions yesterday.

"We cannot live with this variant. No place on earth has unless they have their vaccination rates much, much higher than what we have," said Gladys Berejikian, premier of New South Wales. "Otherwise, it subjects the population to thousands and thousands of hospitalisations, thousands of deaths," she added.

While the death toll in these countries remains comparatively low compared with the US and UK, botched vaccination rollouts have left the public vulnerable to outbreaks.

South Korea yesterday instituted its highest level of virus-related restrictions across Seoul and the capital's surrounding areas, affecting about half the country's 52m people. "We are facing the biggest crisis with our containment efforts with the daily new cases hitting a record every day," said Kim Boo-kyum, prime minister.

Jeong Eun-kyeong, head of the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency, warned that the worst was yet to come despite signs that the vaccine drive was picking up pace.

A surge in cases in Japan forced Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga to declare a state of emergency in Tokyo on Thursday evening, which means the Olympics will be held largely without spectators. Reporting by Edward White, Song Jung-a and Kang Buseong in Seoul, Mercedes Ruehl in Singapore, Jamie Smyth in Sydney and Robin Harding in Tokyo

Covid-19. Variants

Race is on to see how far jabs curb Delta spread

Vaccines seem to limit serious illness but jury is out on their impact against transmission

DONATO PAOLO MANCINI AND JOHN BURN-MURDOCH — LONDON

As rising coronavirus infections force some countries to reimpose restrictions, scientists and drugmakers are racing to answer a crucial question: how well do the current vaccines protect against the Delta variant?

On one point, most observers agree. The leading shots, studies show, still offer strong protection against severe disease and hospital admission.

"Real-world effectiveness studies with a number of vaccines show good protection, especially against severe disease," Soumya Swaminathan, chief scientist at the World Health Organization, said.

"Real-world" analysis of 14,019 cases of the Delta variant in the UK, released by Public Health England in June, found the BioNTech/Pfizer and Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccines were, respectively, 96 per cent and 92 per cent effective against hospital admission after two doses.

Late on Thursday, Pfizer reiterated it believed its shot worked against Delta, especially after a potential third booster dose. But it added it planned to study a variant-targeted inoculation, with trials slated to start as early as next month.

The high efficacy of the shots in the UK, where the Delta variant is dominant and more than half the population has been fully vaccinated, is reflected in the current mortality rate for Covid-19 patients, which at 0.085 per cent is 20 times lower than at its peak, said Meaghan Kall, an epidemiologist at PHE.

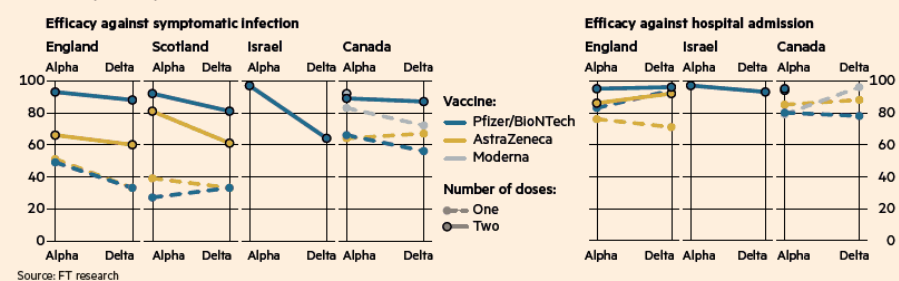
But the question of whether the vaccines remain as effective at preventing infection, and therefore transmission and spread, is more fraught.

Early figures from real-world studies in the UK in May found two doses of the Pfizer shot were 88 per cent effective at preventing symptomatic infection with the Delta variant. A month later, that was revised down to 79 per cent by Scottish researchers. Canadian scientists, using a combination of methods, on Saturday estimated the Pfizer jab was 87 per cent effective at preventing infec-



How vaccine efficacy compares against the Alpha and Delta variants

Vaccine efficacy against infection and hospital admission for each variant, by vaccine manufacturer, number of doses and country of study



Protection: the AstraZeneca vaccine being administered in Vietnam last month — Hau Dinh/AP

tion with the Delta variant. That was "comparable", they said, to the 89 per cent protection it provided against the Alpha variant, first identified in Britain.

A fourth study by Israel's health ministry, reported this week, suggested the Pfizer vaccine was much less effective against symptomatic infection with Delta, providing only 64 per cent protection. Pfizer and Israeli health officials, however, cautioned that the study was based on preliminary and highly localised infection numbers, and

had other methodological weaknesses.

The varied results reflect the difficulty of conducting real-world assessments of vaccine efficacy. During trials, scientists can select participants, monitor who receives a vaccine and who receives a placebo, then see who gets infected. Once a vaccination campaign starts, scientists lose that control, and other factors may affect who gets sick, making it harder to reach firm conclusions. "Observational vaccine study data are not randomised trial data,"

'Delta is better at finding people who aren't sufficiently immune'

Euro 2020 Italians cry foul ahead of showdown with England

MILES JOHNSON — ROME

Italy's media warmed up for tomorrow's Euro 2020 football final between Italy and England by accusing the home side of arrogance, a lack of technical quality and even being party to a dark international conspiracy.

Ahead of the match at Wembley — the first time England's men have appeared in the final of a major international tournament since 1966 — some Italian commentators cited the England fans' enthusiastic singing of "Football's coming home", a refrain written when England hosted the 1996 tournament, as evidence of misplaced overconfidence.

"We Italians believe we can lose, the English think they have to win," wrote Beppe Severgnini in the Corriere della Sera daily newspaper.

"That's why, often, we do better than them. In our attitude we mix caution, experience and superstition. Their attitude is a mixture of pride, imprudence and impatience."

He went on to point out that the Italian team, known as the *Azzurri*, have won four World Cups and one European championship, while England have won just one World Cup, 55 years ago.

"The motto that sounds in English stadiums these days should be cor-

rected: Football is coming home — but trophies, not yet," he said.

In the Domani daily, Pippo Russo noted that the chants of "Football's coming home" were ironic as they were being sung by fans of "a country that can only succeed at home", in reference to the 1966 World Cup victory, secured in another final at Wembley.

Resurrecting the more recent ghosts of Euro 1996, Giuseppe Pastore noted in Il Foglio, that "English fans are so persuaded and pervaded by the desire to raise a cup after 55 years that they amiably gloss over the origins of that song [*Three Lions*]... which was recorded to celebrate a European title they would win at Wembley that they never won, beaten on penalties in the semi-finals by Germany".

Despite this, he noted that Italy's opponents would be "a rare case of a tactically shrewd English national team" and that the English would start as the "great favourites" for the final.

Leading figures in Italian football noted the improvement of the English national side compared with previous disappointing incarnations, but did not appear particularly worried about Italy being outclassed on the pitch.

Fabio Capello, the 75-year-old highly decorated former Italian international

and coach who managed the English national team between 2008 and 2012, praised the England team's work ethic but played down their players' level of skill.

"England is an interesting team, not yet a great one," Capello said. "In the midfield, they do not have much quality, but they are all people who work."

Earlier in the week, after England beat Denmark with a controversially awarded penalty kick, La Gazzetta dello Sport, Italy's largest national sports newspaper, published an article alleging



Raheem Sterling, foreground, wins England's penalty against Denmark

an unsubstantiated conspiracy that Uefa, European football's governing body, was favouring England to help its team reach the final.

This, the article argued, was connected to the UK government having blocked plans by some large European football clubs to set up a breakaway "super league" this year, which Uefa strongly opposed. The article has since been removed from the newspaper's website.

There has also been much commentary in the Italian press about the advantage provided to England of having played almost all of their matches in London, including the final. Ironically, England's one match away from London was played in Rome — a 4-0 thrashing of Ukraine in the quarter-finals.

But Antonio Conte, who has managed both the Italian national team and Chelsea in the English Premier League, said playing a final at home could be a double-edged sword for England.

"England have been waiting for this match for ages. They have never won the European Championship and an international success has been missing since 1966," Conte said. "Wembley can be a huge boost but at the same time it can also be a ballast — the players could feel the pressure."

CDC guidance

US makes school reopening a priority as masks are ditched

MATTHEW ROCCO — NEW YORK

Vaccinated students and teachers do not need to wear masks, and schools should make reopening in the autumn a "priority", the top US health agency said in updated guidance.

The new mask recommendations released yesterday align the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's guidelines for K-12 schools with those for the general population. But they carry the caveat that administrators could mandate universal mask-wearing for students, teachers and staff based on local Covid-19 transmission rates. In May, the CDC said Americans vaccinated against Covid-19 could ditch masks in most indoor and outdoor settings.

The CDC also updated its guidance to note "the importance of offering in-person learning", even if some districts are unable to implement all Covid-19 prevention strategies that health authorities suggest.

The agency said localities should monitor the spread of coronavirus and vaccination levels in their areas to determine what health protocols would

be best for schools to implement. "Students benefit from in-person learning, and safely returning to in-person instruction in the fall 2021 is a priority," the CDC said.

The Biden administration's health guidance for schools has been a source of debate among state and local officials, some of whom argued schools did not have space to bring students back into the classroom but to be kept 6ft apart. In March, the CDC relaxed its guidance to allow desks to be closer together.

The health agency has recommended that schools keep students 3ft apart in classrooms, but if they are unable to fully reopen with social distancing, they can "layer" other health measures, such as indoor mask wearing. Based on the updated guidance, schools should maintain distancing to the extent possible, rather than exclude students from in-person learning to increase distancing.

Masks should be worn inside school buildings by unvaccinated individuals over the age of two, according to the CDC. It said people generally do not need masks when outdoors, whether they are vaccinated or not.



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FT BIG READ. CORONAVIRUS

England is set to become the first country to lift all Covid-19 restrictions even as cases are rising. Critics have condemned the plan as 'dangerous and premature'. How big a gamble is Boris Johnson taking?

By Clive Cookson and George Parker

Realistic or reckless? Cases of coronavirus are doubling every 10 days in England and hospital admissions have risen more than 50 per cent in the past week. Yet with 65 per cent of the adult population double vaccinated against the virus the government is set to lift restrictions, from social distancing to mask wearing, in a bid to restore normality.

It would make England the first country to lift restrictions in the face of exponentially rising Covid-19 cases and the decision has divided the country with some scientists suggesting it is a reckless move that threatens the health of many thousands of people.

Boris Johnson, the UK prime minister, and his new health secretary Sajid Javid argue that the next stage of the lifting of legal restrictions on July 19 can go ahead because the vaccination rollout has broken the link between infection, hospitalisation and deaths. Devolved governments in the other parts of the UK – Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland – will make their own decisions on how soon to lift restrictions.

Yet many scientists and health experts have angrily challenged the government's argument. "The world is looking at us with disbelief – a country with some of the best universities and minds acting with arrogance, yet again underestimating our adversary," says Ravi Gupta, professor of clinical microbiology at Cambridge university.

That view is echoed by Isabella Eckerle, professor of virology at the University of Geneva. Eckerle is one of 122 scientists and doctors from the UK and overseas who signed a letter in *The Lancet* condemning the government's "dangerous and premature reopening plans". She says: "The decision can only serve as a warning negative example for other European countries."

"Despite a seasonal benefit, infections are already on the rise with the new Delta variant in many countries," Eckerle adds. "It is a dangerous and irresponsible situation to fully open now, and accept high infection rates in young age groups and especially children."

With new cases running above 30,000 a day in the UK – 15 times higher than at the beginning of May – Javid said this week that the daily rate could rise to 100,000 this summer. Vaccination has cut the overall mortality rate from around 0.8 per cent last year to 0.1 per cent now but 100,000 cases are likely to cause around 3,000 hospital admissions and 100 deaths a day.

The proposed end of compulsory mask wearing on public transport and in indoor spaces has attracted criticism. "It defies logic and it's criminal frankly," Gupta says. "There will be unnecessary deaths as a direct result of that."

The risk of new variants

When Javid confirmed the plan to lift most restrictions on July 19 a cry of "hal-lelu-jah" went up from the Conservative benches in the House of Commons. Peter Bone, a veteran Conservative MP, says: "I wholly welcome this. It goes down the route of personal responsibility. It's spot on."

His response, and that of other politicians from the ruling Conservative party, exposed the growing polarisation in the UK over how to handle Covid. The side advocating a quick end to legal restrictions, which includes many Tory MPs, espouses libertarian principles. They emphasise the social, educational and economic hardship caused by lockdown as well as collateral health damage such as mental illness and neglected attention to other diseases.

'The world is looking at us with disbelief'



'There is little to be gained from delaying beyond July 19 as an exit wave [of infections] is inevitable in those not [yet] vaccinated'

Those arguing that some restrictions need to be maintained, which includes many opposition Labour MPs, stress the state's role in protecting society's most vulnerable, while emphasising the direct health effects of Covid.

Many Conservative MPs share Johnson's fear that if a full reopening does not happen this summer, when hospitals are under less seasonal pressure and schools are on summer holiday, then it might not happen until 2022. For Tory MPs in the lockdown-sceptic Covid Recovery Group, that was unacceptable.

Sir Keir Starmer, Labour party leader, has tried to adopt a tone of "constructive criticism" of the government's Covid strategy. But he described this week's move as "reckless".

Advocates of maintaining legal restrictions point to two important implications of a rapid increase in infections beyond the headline figures for hospitalisations and deaths. One is the extra opportunities they provide for the virus to mutate; the other is the growing number of people who will suffer disability for many months or even years through "long Covid".



Virologists such as Professor Richard Tedder of Imperial College London point to the emergence of new variants over the past six months, which transmit faster than the original Wuhan virus and can escape some of the protection given by current vaccines.

More infections increase the risk of even more dangerous variants evolving, Tedder says. "This view of the inherent danger in facilitating a very real increase of the infection rate is likely to be held by professional medical virologists across the UK," he adds, "I hope the health secretary will listen to this view."

Fears around long Covid have been expressed even more widely. Common symptoms include fatigue, breathing problems, insomnia and "brain fog", leaving many sufferers unable to work. "Long Covid is a serious problem, with 10-20 per cent of people, including children, who catch the virus suffering illness, disability and psychological problems for months," says clinical psychologist Julia Faulconbridge.

"That appears to have been completely neglected in [the government's] announcement," she adds.

'Little to be gained from delaying'

For now, hospitals have more immediate worries. Rising Covid cases – on top of a huge backlog of other commitments delayed by the pandemic – are already putting them under severe pressure. "We are as stretched as we have ever been," says Rachel Clarke, an NHS palliative care doctor. "Some accident and emergency departments are reporting more patients than ever before." One hospital in Leeds had to cancel cancer operations this week on the day they were due to take place, she adds, because intensive care beds were occupied by Covid patients.

Although most scientists and doctors who have spoken publicly about

Johnson's plan to unlock have been critical, some are more sympathetic.

"On balance, I think there is now a reasonable case to move from restrictions to guidance," says Raghbi Ali, senior clinical research associate at Cambridge university's MRC Epidemiology Unit. "We are now in the situation where admissions are less than a tenth of the peak and highly unlikely to reach levels seen previously given the very high vaccine uptake and effectiveness."

"There is little to be gained from delaying step 4 beyond July 19 as an exit wave [of infections] is inevitable in those who will not be vaccinated and there are some advantages of having this wave in the summer when schools are closed," Ali adds.

Israel, widely seen as an exemplar for countries relaxing restrictions after a successful vaccination campaign, has reintroduced some restrictions – including mask wearing on public transport – as the highly transmissible Delta variant drives up infection rates.

Yet some Israeli experts, such as Eyal Leshem of the Sheba Medical Center, believes the country's health ministry is being too cautious and called the approach in England "reasonable". "Most of the adult at-risk population is protected," Leshem says. "I assume the UK understands that lifting all restrictions will have a price. Some people will get sick... it will probably be [similar to] a very bad flu season."

"But then something interesting will happen: they will probably have a natural population-wide immunity," he adds. "This is different from the current Israeli approach, running after every last child to get vaccinated."

In the US many states moved faster than the UK, with some lifting Covid restrictions – including mask wearing – earlier this year. At the time case numbers were not rising fast because

England leading?

Below: Ravi Gupta, a clinical microbiologist, fears 'there will be unnecessary deaths' from the proposed end of compulsory mask wearing. But some scientists have been more sympathetic to the plans unveiled by Boris Johnson, below left

FT montage/Getty



'Long Covid is a serious problem, and that appears to have been completely neglected in [the planned lifting of restrictions]'

the Delta variant had not made significant inroads into the American population. Now some states are seeing an alarming resurgence.

In Missouri, where just 45 per cent of people have received at least one vaccine dose, several hospitals have been forced to transfer patients to other facilities. "The state has been pretty much open since after the initial wave [in early 2020]," says Alexander Garza, pandemic task force commander for the St Louis region, who describes the combination of low vaccine uptake and lack of restrictions as akin to "the wild west".

"We are going to see an increase in hospitalisations, the only question is how high does the curve go and how fast does it go," he adds.

Prospects for England and the rest of the UK are similarly uncertain. Gupta predicts an "even steeper acceleration" in cases and hospital admissions as the "visible reminders of the pandemic [fall away]" after July 19.

"The government needs to be flexible in its approach and communicate effectively with the population," he says, "instead it has shut off the route to any kind of reversal or changes in direction."

Steven Riley, professor of infectious disease dynamics at Imperial College London, is more optimistic. With schools closing and football's European Championship tournament over by then, "the net effect of everything around [July 19] may not be a dramatic increase", he says.

The political outlook is unclear too. Johnson has enjoyed a "vaccine bounce" since the start of 2021, but two recent by-election defeats to the Liberal Democrats and Labour suggest it may be fading. A mishandling of the final lifting of England's Covid restrictions could be politically costly.

Additional reporting by Oliver Barnes, Nikou Asgari and Neri Zilber

Obituary

Film star who symbolised a postcolonial, secular India

Dilip Kumar
Bollywood actor
1922-2021

In the 1957 Bollywood film *Naya Daur*, or "New Era," Dilip Kumar plays the humble driver of a village tonga, a horse-drawn carriage, whose livelihood is threatened by the arrival of a bus. The bus owner pledges to take the machine away if the tonga can best it in a race. Kumar's character wins after he and other villagers build a new road – a short-cut – between the starting point and the finish line.

Naya Daur was typical of the golden age of Hindi cinema. From the late 1940s to the early 1960s, socially-conscious filmmakers explored the growing tensions in post-independence India, as Jawaharlal Nehru, the prime minister, sought to modernise a poor agrarian society and build a new secular political culture.

As Bollywood's most versatile actor, Kumar, who died this week aged 98, embodied the ideals and aspirations of the era, starring in dozens of films with themes of valour, sacrifice, duty and thwarted love. He wrote some of his most memorable roles himself.

"Dilip Kumar stood for the kind of liberal values – syncretic values – of an India that the founding fathers were trying to create," says film critic Shubhra

Gupta, author of the book *50 Films that Changed Bollywood, 1995-2015*. "He belonged to that era of innocence, as India was being formed. The mandate was very clear – to create cinema that would cement a nation, and heal the wounds of Partition."

Kumar's death prompted tributes in both India and neighbouring Pakistan, highlighting the actor's appeal across hostile political boundaries. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan, and most living Bollywood stars praised him lavishly.

"Dilip Kumar is the only person who is accepted across India and Pakistan as an icon," says Lord Meghnad Desai, author of a book about the star. "He was one of the greatest film actors ever."

Born Mohammad Yusuf Khan in 1922 in what is today the Pakistani town of Peshawar, Kumar claimed to have fallen into acting by accident, while seeking other movie industry jobs.

In an era of highly-mannered, melodramatic performances he brought understated naturalism to the screen. He displayed an astonishing ability to convey genuine torment, prompting local tabloid press to dub him "the Trag-

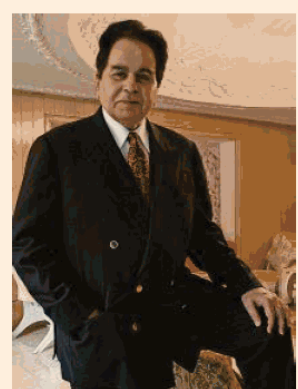
edy King." The great Indian film-maker Satyajit Ray described him as the ultimate method actor.

"He was capable of doing everything," says Gupta. "He did not have any mannerism that you could predict. He created a style of his own which was very quiet, and he was different from one movie to the other. The kind of emotions he aroused in his adoring fans was something to be seen."

Although Muslim, Kumar was advised to adopt a Hindu screen name, which was common for Muslim performers at the time. But he wore his stage identity lightly and was known to family, friends and colleagues as "Yusuf Saab".

"He took a Hindu name but everybody knew he was a Muslim," says Desai. "He was the epitome of the post-independence ideal Indian."

Off-screen, Kumar devoted time to the sociopolitical causes of the new nation. At Nehru's behest, from 1962 he lent his star power to election campaigns for the prime minister's Congress party, as well as to public welfare programmes and initiatives to promote Hindu-Muslim unity. In later years, across the border in Pakistan Kumar



Dilip Kumar was one of Hindi cinema's most versatile actors

'He created a style of his own which was different from one movie to the other'

helped Imran Khan, then still a cricket star, to raise funds for a cancer hospital. When Mumbai was rocked by Hindu-Muslim riots in 1993, his home became a command centre for relief work.

The actor was sometimes targeted for his Muslim identity. In the early 1960s his Mumbai home was raided by Kolkata police on the suspicion – unfounded – that he was a Pakistani spy.

In 1998, he was awarded Pakistan's highest civilian honour for his acting. But a year later – as India and Pakistan came to the brink of war, a right-wing Hindu politician demanded Kumar either return it or move to Pakistan. In an indignant television interview in 2000, the then septuagenarian actor said such demands "smack of fascism," and noted that the Bollywood film industry had "unfavourably stood up for cosmopolitanism and secular values".

For all his fame, Kumar remained a humble, dignified presence. "He was not a party to his own myth-making," says film-maker Mahesh Bhatt. "He looked more bewildered by the whole idea of this legendary status that was being planted on his head."

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FINANCIAL TIMES

'Without fear and without favour'

SATURDAY 10 JULY 2021

Markets reconsider the reflation trade

Fears over price rises have given way to worries about economic growth

Call it the end of the reopening euphoria. Affluent workers who rushed out, as soon as they were allowed, to fancy restaurants and cocktail bars quickly began to realise they had not saved quite so much by working from home as they thought. Similarly, markets have begun to re-evaluate how much difference the pandemic has actually made to the prospects for sustained growth in the global economy. The fears of rapidly rising inflation that dominated markets just a few weeks ago have been replaced by nervousness about growth.

Investors have this week reconsidered the so-called reflation trade: the idea that a robust economic recovery, underpinned by continuing easy money from the Federal Reserve and bumper fiscal stimulus, would boost inflation and inevitably force the Fed to raise rates faster than it had signalled. A combination of production bottlenecks – the ongoing chip shortage is holding back car manufacturing – and the spread of the more infectious Delta variant has now reduced the optimism over economic growth. Long term US Treasury yields – a reflection of inflation and growth expectations – have fallen as the bonds have sold off.

Much of the world is now looking askance at the UK, where one of the world's most successful vaccination programmes has not been sufficient to stop the Delta strain from proliferating. While Britain's government is resolutely committed to reopening, consumers and workers are likely to start voluntarily social distancing and staying away from crowded places – reducing the uplift to growth from reopening. On Thursday, Mary Daly, the president of the San Francisco branch of the Fed, said in an interview with the Financial Times that prematurely declaring victory on coronavirus is one of the greatest threats to global growth.

Nevertheless, the market moves did not suggest that investors were keen to shed risk from their portfolios. While some of the frothier parts of the market have lost their fizz – bitcoin and the so-called "meme stocks" have not recovered after price falls – other more conventional risky assets such as tech stocks and junk bonds have rallied as long term interest rates have fallen. Rather than becoming more fearful, investors have re-evaluated the prospects for future monetary tightening. Markets, which were previously more concerned about inflation, are now converging with the central bankers who said it was likely to be "transitory".

This week's market action is also a slightly delayed response to the more hawkish tone the Fed struck at its most recent rate-setting meeting last month. The forecasts of policymakers at the central bank that rates would go up sooner than they had said before have no doubt reassured some investors that the central bank will keep inflation under control, and not end up having to respond belatedly with much sharper rate rises further in the future.

Overall, though, the moves may just reflect the old aphorism that markets "do not react, they overreact". The initial response in bond markets to just a few months of higher than expected inflation was arguably overdone. The latest US wages figures pointed to month-on-month growth of only 0.3 per cent – in line with the anaemic pre-coronavirus norm. Interpreting economic statistics is difficult at the best of times; the volatility and uncertainty created by the pandemic makes it harder than ever.

Nervousness about growth and the latest sell-off of long term treasuries could similarly prove an overreaction that is corrected once again as more data about the strength of the recovery from the pandemic starts to come in.

Leaseholders must not pay for cladding crisis

A clear market failure necessitates deeper government intervention

It has been over four years since 72 people died in the Grenfell Tower blaze in west London. As the government scrambled to prevent another similar tragedy by insisting on the removal of combustible cladding on tower blocks, a housing crisis was triggered that has left as many as 2m people unable to sell properties now deemed to be unsafe.

This week, the government unveiled a suite of measures to improve building safety, as well as calling on banks to help thaw a frozen market in mortgages on high-rise flats. While a government guarantee would help banks start lending, neither step adequately addresses underlying problems or does much to seek remediation from those actually responsible.

A parliamentary committee estimated that replacing dangerous cladding and fixing other fire-safety measures in towers across the UK may cost as much as £15bn. The question is who will pay for it. One point is clear: the burden should not fall on leaseholders, who through no fault of their own now face bills that in some cases are akin to a second mortgage.

While a "polluter pays" principle seems logical, pinpointing who is to blame is fiendishly difficult, against a backdrop of collapsed developers, housebuilders that argue they complied with building standards since shown to be inadequate, a privatised regulator and councils that had limited duty of care. This amounts to a market failure that requires deeper government intervention.

Steps included in this week's bill such as a beefed-up regulator and a tougher individual accountability regime are sensible but do not go far enough. The £5bn government earmarked for removing unsafe cladding on the tallest buildings is about a third of that needed across the piece. A tax on housebuilders aiming to raise £2bn over a decade

– partly to pay for a capped loan scheme for leaseholders to fix flaws – is also too meagre, particularly for an industry that has enjoyed government largesse encouraging new homes.

Lengthening the time in which developers can be sued from six to 15 years is reasonable but does not help leaseholders facing immediate bills. It also does not capture buildings constructed before 2006. In any case, many developers fold or sit behind impenetrable offshore companies, making the odds of legal redress slim.

It is also lamentable that the government ignored protestations from backbenchers and the House of Lords during the passage of the Fire Safety Act earlier this year, and placed the ultimate burden of fixing flaws on to leaseholders. Freeholders – sometimes developers, sometimes financial institutions and other professional landlords with deep pockets – merely have to show they have taken "reasonable steps" to recoup remediation costs elsewhere before passing them to their leaseholders, under this week's bill.

Leaseholders have suggested a levy where freeholders, developers, housebuilders, manufacturers and insurers would all pay into a central pot used to fix defects. The government rebuffed this, regrettably. It has also ruled out paying for costs upfront then recouping them against parties such as cladding manufacturers, some of whom during the Grenfell inquiry were accused of gaming the system. A rethink is merited.

Before the Grenfell tragedy, successive governments have grappled with how to build enough new homes. But a failure to properly remedy historic flaws risks just as distortive an effect on the housing market. The parties arguably responsible for the cladding crisis are myriad but leaseholders are not among them.

Letters

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As the US withdraws its troops, there are fears Afghanistan may once more become the breeding ground for regional rivalries and home to extremism – Miss Peach

Counselling can be the mother of reinvention

My therapist wants me to unlearn the toxic behaviours I picked up in childhood to relieve me of my anxiety and depressive episodes. I pay her £65 a week to work through this with me.

But after reading Lucy Kellaway's article ("Can you change yourself?", Life & Arts, July 3), particularly the line, "the average age women start to ape their mothers is in their mid-30s", I considered cancelling my direct debit.

Is my therapist scamming me knowing full well I'll turn into my mother in 10 years anyway? I hope not.

Older psychological theories tell us much of our lives, personalities and behaviours are pre-determined either biologically or socially. Accepting these deterministic theories means squashing the hope and opportunity of reinvention – particularly through therapy.

Young people seeking help through counselling increased from 13 per cent in April 2020 to 23 per cent in October 2020. I imagine the numbers have only risen since. So, yes, maybe for much of our lives we just have to let it run its course. But the opportunity of reinvention is there for the taking if you are determined enough to do it.

Katie Stokes
Milford, Surrey, UK

Indian economist foretells a role for helicopter money

Edward Luce's exceptional interview with Amartya Sen ("Citizen of everywhere", Life & Arts, FT Weekend, July 3) leaves the reader begging for more.

I was fortunate to attend Professor Sen's lectures at the London School of Economics when he discussed poverty and famines – at a time when he was already a legend for students of development economics, but long before he was awarded the Nobel Prize. The simplicity and elegance of his arguments were powerful.

But his career is also a lesson in how slow the world can be to accept new ideas. I recall Sen sharing an anecdote about the BBC – which was scheduled to interview him about how governments might respond to a famine – and he said they could do worse than drop helicopter-loads of money on affected areas. The BBC worried that such a policy would cause hyperinflation and, ultimately, never ran the interview!

I am left wondering if the current generation of central bankers have drawn on insights by development economists, particularly as they employ "helicopter money" in the face of exogenous economic shocks, and whether this gives them greater

confidence in the likelihood that inflation will be transitory.

I would also have loved to learn what Sen feels about the tendency of so many to revel in ideas of building walls rather than breaking down barriers and, in particular, what he thinks about Brexit and how it may have impacted not just the UK's development, but also Europe's development.

Rajiv Dadlani
San Francisco, CA, US

'Newfangled' was old hat even to Shakespeare

Joseph Szczekowski (Letters, July 3) is wrong to list "newfangled" as an example of unattractive, ill-defined or meaningless modern words or expressions. Janan Ganesh ("The real threat to the empire of English", Life & Arts, FT Weekend, June 5) correctly used newfangled, not as an example but to describe such neologisms.

Fangle is an old English word meaning to make or create something, but newfangled often carries the sense of a fashionable frillery. It is a time-honoured term used over 400 years ago by Shakespeare in *As You Like It* (Rosalind to Orlando; Act IV, scene 1) and in *Sonnet 91*, although he may or may not have invented it.

Gavin Turner
Hanworth, Norfolk, UK

Don't count on California if Oxbridge turns you down

The international universities named in Brooke Masters' article ("New school rules", Spectrum, FT Weekend, July 3) are unlikely to have either the capacity or inclination to admit a significant increase in British-educated, UK independent school students simply because they do not get an offer from Oxford or Cambridge universities.

Within the last month for example, the University of California has announced new caps on the numbers of international students admitted to Los Angeles, San Diego and Berkeley.

Britain's independent schools looking to hire consultants to improve their students' chances of admission to a short list of elite universities might only be setting them up for rejection twice over or undermining those who would have been admitted anyway.

If counselling encourages students and parents to be more imaginative in their choices, both foreign and domestic, then it can be a force for good.

Masters' article is very strong on the reasons why this is easier said than done.

Mark Huntington
Founder, A Star Future
Prague, Czech Republic

Using Excel as a sketchpad has edge on computer code

I hesitate to question Tim Harford. However, I believe his article on Excel spreadsheets (Spectrum, June 26) has done those humble boxes a disservice.

The advantage of seeing lots of errors in your spreadsheet is that it makes the errors very easy to find. Contrast that with computer code. As long as the code is logical from the computer's perspective, it will run error-free. There may be numerous mistakes but you will never know unless you have a manual error checking system.

For us data analysts, Excel is not so much like a Swiss Army knife (Letters, July 3) as an architect's sketchpad. It is a place to outline ideas and ask questions of a subset of data in a visual way that lends itself to error-checking. From there, the analysis can be scaled up using beefier tools.

Jake Mealy
Dublin, Ireland

Contemplating the history of the 'Christian' garden

Farhad Diba (Letters, July 3) writes that "there are no 'Islamic' gardens, just as there are no Christian, Jewish or atheist gardens".

There are plenty of Christian gardens, and not only the biblical examples from Eden to Gethsemane.

The walled *Hortus conclusus*, its design and elements symbolic of the Virgin Mary, has a rich history in real gardening as well as in art and literature. Monastic gardens are carefully tended places made for Christian work and contemplation.

In a more Protestant fashion, there are private gardens that stand for the believer's spiritual journey. Mellor's Gardens in Cheshire were meant to represent *The Pilgrim's Progress*, with a marsh for the Slough of Despond, and chapel on a hill for the Celestial City.

David A McMillan
Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, UK

The day my book got lost in cyber space

A few weeks ago I experienced a problem that would make any author wince: on the day that I published my book, Amazon suffered a supply-chain glitch and thousands of copies went missing, sparking a scramble to work out where in cyber space they were. Meanwhile, the website suggested my book had not been published at all.

Thankfully, the hiccup was resolved in a couple of days. But the episode illustrates a broader point: in the 21st century we have become accustomed to relying on ultra-complex supply chains we do not understand and tend to trust these will always work.

Yet in the past year many of these supply chains have temporarily frozen, or broken down. Sometimes the consequences seem trivial: when I ordered a dishwasher, for example, delivery had been promised within a week, which has now become months.

Other glitches are more serious: Goldman Sachs estimates a shortage of computer chips will hit 169 industries this year, cutting US growth by up to 1 per cent. And doctors have warned in the BMJ that glitches in the medical supply chain affect more than just personal protective equipment and even "endanger patients".

Either way, the fact these glitches keep emerging is surprising. After all, economists warned that demand for goods and services would explode if (or when) vaccines were rolled out. Meanwhile, tech giants know us (and our ordering habits) intimately. Yet a localised shock, such as a blockage of the Suez Canal, causes spasms. And

the pandemic and recovery have made these systems go equally haywire.

Why? Part of the problem is obvious: the pandemic caused factories to shut down. However, another problem is that western manufacturers and retailers have become so addicted to chasing efficiency and price reductions that they have eroded any buffers. Or as Nada Sanders, a supply chain professor, notes on *The Conversation platform*: "As customers demand ever cheaper products delivered faster, supply chains have given up every bit of slack."

There is another, less obvious, problem: risk management systems that seem sensible for individuals can be bad for the system as a whole.

We saw this problem play out in the 2008 financial crisis when numerous institutions each decided to insure themselves against the risk of losses in their complex credit products. That was sensible on an individual level. But many of these institutions chose to use the same groups, concentrating their risks thanks to the opacity of the collective transactions. Risk was ultimately magnified.

Something similar is happening with supply chains: individual companies have been streamlining them in a way that seemed optimal – and safe – for each. But because they have often followed the same strategy, activity has been concentrated on nodes that can fail. It seems sensible that computer-chip production is concentrated in Taiwan, which develops economies of scale and

clusters of expertise, and so benefits its customers. But it is dangerous for the system as a whole.

Rigid thinking makes the problem worse. Take the British dairy industry, which has been studied by Richard Bruce at Sheffield university.

Although there was a desperate need for co-ordination when Covid first hit, it was initially difficult, not least because antitrust rules prevented companies from sharing data. The good news, says Bruce, is that in 2020 a quasi-government body stepped in to enforce a more holistic approach. Better still, Covid has prompted "lots of business and governments to rethink supply chains".

Management consultants are promoting the idea of supply chain "resilience", not just "efficiency". A "just-in-case" philosophy of contingency planning is edging out the "just-in-time" mantra. And American and European governments are trying to create more centralised supply chain databases. Blockchain may also help promote more co-ordination.

But the bad news is that it's never easy to instil a mindset shift, least of all when executives are prone to tunnel vision and the cost and consequences of excessively "efficient" supply chains are often hidden in plain sight from consumers and investors. Which, ironically, is a key theme of my (temporarily) missing books. The literary gods must have a sense of schadenfreude.

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Notebook

by Gillian Tett



Opinion

US withdrawal from Afghanistan endangers my country and the world

Fawzia Koofi

President Joe Biden's decision to pull troops from Afghanistan at such a critical juncture will have grave consequences. The decision risks not only destabilising my country, but also the region and beyond. I understand that Biden wants to end the "forever war". Yet I believe that he may not have fully considered the disastrous fallout of withdrawing at a point when we are still negotiating the foundations for a political settlement.

As an Afghan and as a woman, I fear this will set the stage for the triumph of violent extremists. All we have fought for over the past 20 years – equality between men and women, human rights, independent media, to name a few – will backslide. My country may

once more become the breeding ground for regional rivalries and home to violent extremist groups. As our history shows, conflict in Afghanistan does not stay neatly within its borders.

I want the world to know that I see history repeating itself. I grew up under communist occupation and came of age during a deadly civil war that led to the emergence and ultimately the rule of the Taliban. I know the cost of war is not just the lives that are taken from us, but also our future. War erases our hopes and dreams. If there was no war, I could have been a medical doctor. My daughters could have become engineers, entrepreneurs or political leaders. The dreams of millions of Afghans have become nightmares during this long conflict.

Every week we listen attentively to the US military as it informs us in cold mathematical terms of how its drawdown is progressing. This week, the Pentagon announced the withdrawal was 90 per cent complete. Now that the troops are almost gone, one might

assume the Taliban would return to the negotiating table in good faith. The exit of foreign troops has been one of their core demands.

Yet the opposite is happening. Since the announcement of the US withdrawal, violence and targeted killings of anyone who could challenge the extremist group have increased. Even polio vaccinators are gunned down. I myself am a victim of a failed assassination attempt. The tactic of deliberately targeting civilians shows that this is not a struggle for liberation; it is a drive to implement the extremist ideology which returned our nation to the dark ages in the late 1990s.

As a member of the Afghan government's negotiating team, I have seen how the Taliban has demonstrated little interest in a genuine political settlement since discussions started in September 2020. The group's political leaders in Qatar talk peace while their fighters are emboldened by the departure of international troops. The withdrawal has also weakened the

morale of Afghan security institutions, revealing their dependency on the US military, especially for air support. Bickering leaders in Kabul are not helping.

At the moment, there are two possible scenarios for the aftermath of the full troop withdrawal, due to be completed by the end of August.

The Taliban's leaders discuss peace while its fighters are emboldened by the departure of troops

In the first, both sides pursue military means to achieve their political objectives. There is no winner in this scenario, particularly for Afghan civilians. Violence will bring further devastation, loss of life and destruction of infrastructure, deepening our humanitarian crisis.

Taliban leaders seem to think that

their violent campaign is backed by popular support. The facts on the ground speak otherwise. Let's remember that when the Taliban were toppled in 2001, people could travel the length of my country without fear. But when the US invaded Iraq in 2003, it shifted its focus and resources away from Afghanistan and the Taliban re-emerged. Their position was strengthened by the mistakes of the US and Afghan governments.

The second scenario is the one I am hoping for. It involves the resumption of genuine peace talks leading to a political settlement under the supervision of the UN with regional support. The world – and our neighbours in particular – needs to use political leverage to help make this the only lasting option.

But while this may be the best and only choice, I fear that the door is closing. The first scenario is already playing out. The US, despite having lost its moral authority to claim it stands for women's rights, can still play a positive role by collectively working towards a

political settlement to protect the gains of the past 20 years.

It is critical that the US stays engaged in Afghanistan and provides sustained aid and military support to our security forces. Washington needs to value what a peaceful Afghanistan can bring to the world. As for the Afghan government, it's our responsibility to take ownership of our differences and work towards mending them. Our country – and its future – is our responsibility.

Finally, let's remind ourselves that the conflict in Afghanistan is not a war against an occupation or an internal squabble. It is a four-decade long conflict driven by regional rivalries, exacerbated by competing ideologies and intensified by the rise of a brand of violent extremism which led to the tragic 9/11 attacks almost 20 years ago. If Afghanistan is forgotten again, disastrous consequences undoubtedly await.

The writer is a politician, women's rights activist and member of the Afghan delegation for peace talks

Will a lifetime's devotion to the sport be enough to bring home the Euros victory he desperately wants? By Murad Ahmed

England captain Harry Kane placed the ball on the penalty spot and stepped a few paces back. Along with millions of compatriots, he took a deep breath.

It was the 104th minute of the semi-final against Denmark in the European football Championship on Wednesday night. Kane had a chance to put England in the lead at London's Wembley Stadium – and, perhaps, seal the team's place in its first major tournament final in 55 years.

Yet when Kane's initial shot was saved by Danish goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel, it seemed as if the burden of history was too much. A split second later, when the ball spilled out for the striker to tap into the net, it was redemption. "It wasn't the penalty I wanted to execute," said a relieved Kane after the match. But, he added, the winning goal was still "one of the proudest moments of my life".

If England's place in Sunday's final against Italy is based on a stroke of luck, it was also earned by a lifetime's devotion to excellence.

Kane is the head of a new model army, the product of a fresh approach to football that has abandoned the belief that the nation's manifest destiny is to reign over the world's favourite game. Instead, the rise of Kane and the team he captains is based on absorbing the advances made by other football cultures, while retaining the English bulldog spirit.

"We haven't won it yet," warned Kane. "We've got one more game to go."

Harry Edward Kane was born in 1993 in Walthamstow, east London. His father Patrick and mother Kim were obsessive fans of nearby football club Tottenham Hotspur, for which their son now plays. Spurs fans serenade him with the chant of "He's one of our own!"

The family moved to suburban Chingford, where Kane went to the same school that his idol David Beckham once attended. There, Kane met Katie Goodland. The couple married two years ago and have three children.

Hothoused in the youth systems of a number of English Premier League teams, Kane signed a scholarship contract with Spurs aged 16. Few remember him as a prodigy, though. Unlike many of his current teammates, the physically awkward Kane did not earn quick promotion into the senior side. Instead, he was sent on "loan" to a series of lower league teams.

What marked him out was an insatiable desire to improve. While at Millwall in 2012, Kane angered coaches – who thought his effort might lead to injuries – with his habit of practising long after the team's training sessions had ended.

"We no longer have street footballers," says Constantine Gontikas, a director at Millwall, of Kane's generation of academy-trained players. "They are almost deliberately created to have no distractions. [Kane] married his childhood sweetheart. He's done everything in an exemplary fashion. There is nothing remarkable about him – apart from on the pitch."



Person in the News | Harry Kane

England football captain carries a nation's hopes

Kane's work ethic was crucial in eventually cracking the Premier League, the world's most-watched domestic football contest. Multi-billion-pound broadcasting contracts have showered elite English clubs with cash, which they have spent acquiring a cast of the world's best players and coaches.

At Spurs, Kane learned tactical acumen from the Argentine former manager Mauricio Pochettino. He was surrounded by sports scientists who designed a personalised training programme that aimed, for instance, to improve his acceleration when sprinting. And he developed an unerring ability to shoot with power, precision and relatively little backlift. He has netted 221 goals for Spurs and 38 for England, on track to break scoring records for both club and country.

The former Real Madrid star player turned coach Zinedine Zidane has described Kane as "a complete player... he did not seem to be one [at first], but in the end, he is."

Off the pitch, Kane has few known vices. He enjoys playing golf. He loves to watch American football, naming his labradors after the NFL quarterbacks Tom Brady and Russell Wilson. Last year, he sponsored Leyton Orient, providing financial support to the struggling lower league east London club.

He angered coaches with his habit of practising long after the team's training sessions had ended

Alongside teammates, he has been "taking the knee" before matches in protest at racism, but has left black colleagues such as Raheem Sterling and Tyrone Mings to do the talking.

Most of all, Kane appears singularly, even boringly, obsessed with football. He's spoken of wanting to be considered among the world's best players, but to

do that, he needs to become a winner. A bucketload of goals at Spurs has not led to trophies. That frustration led Kane to indicate earlier this summer that he wants to move to a better-resourced club. Manchester City, Manchester United and Chelsea are among those believed to be willing to pay a transfer fee in excess of £100m for his services, which would make him the most expensive English footballer ever.

That would be a personal accolade of sorts, alongside the "golden boot" awards for highest goalscorer earned at the 2018 World Cup and in three separate Premier League seasons.

Kane, however, is keener on a victory whose spoils he can share with teammates and a grateful country. "I'd trade [the golden boots] in to win the Euros this summer," he said last month. "Winning a team trophy, especially for our nation, would probably be the greatest highlight in my professional career."

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Nextdoor's neighbours are not kind to strangers

John Gapper

All Consuming



When Nextdoor, the social network for neighbours to share local news and concerns, goes public at a valuation of \$4.3bn, it will trade on Nasdaq under the stock symbol KIND. The announcement this week is part of Nextdoor's effort to shed a reputation for letting some users behave in the opposite manner.

Its mission is now "to cultivate a kinder world where everyone has a neighbourhood they can rely on" and it has since 2019 warned its users against getting quarrelsome and fractious with "kindness reminders" generated by artificial intelligence that pop up if they draft something nasty. This April, it added anti-racism notifications in the US after local flare-ups over the Black Lives Matter movement.

But "kind" has twin meanings: being friendly and helpful, and a group of people who are akin to each other. The Old English word "cynd" is defined in one dictionary as "a class or race distinguished by innate characteristics" – originally nobles who were meant to behave nobly. For Nextdoor and its emerging rival Facebook Neighborhoods, there lies the rub.

Nextdoor faces the problem of all social media platforms. They link people to vast networks, unleashing a flow of information, providing entertainment and encouraging companionship, but they can accentuate the harsh side of human nature.

People gang up on others, especially strangers and those whom they dismiss, often on sketchy evidence, of being opponents or enemies. Since Facebook launched at Harvard university in 2004, a digital innovation that was intended to enable friendships can foment warring tribes.

Most neighbours have a strong incentive to get along. Homophily, or Aristotle's principle that "people love those who are like themselves", is encouraged by living nearby. As one study put it, "geography is the physical substrate on which homophily is built."

That mostly works pretty well for Nextdoor, where many discussions are about lost cats, or who knows a good electrician. My experience of the WhatsApp group for my street, the technology used in many micro-neighbourhoods, is overwhelmingly positive and sometimes heart-warming.

Many groups, whether on Nextdoor, Facebook or messaging apps, came into their own during pandemic lockdowns. Streets where people only vaguely knew their neighbours sprung to life with offers of mutual help.

Prakash Janakiraman, a cofounder of Nextdoor, argues that the network is unlike others in being built around

"utility, not affinity". You need not resemble neighbours to want to share information with them – it is useful to know others if letters go astray or you need a parking permit. The stuff of everyday life creates much of its value.

Local squabbles can spill out on Nextdoor. "I'm legally allowed to sunbathe naked in my yard. Please stop calling the police!" read a post highlighted on the "Best of Nextdoor" Twitter account. But deeper tensions arise when, as in west-erns, a stranger rides into town.

Despite its emphasis on utility, neighbours share an affinity and identity of interest, particularly when under threat. Stolen cars, flat break-ins and door-to-door scams are among the talking points on the Nextdoor group for my district. It is natural for self protection, but it stirs strong feelings.

The danger is evident in the US, where white users have posted material about seeing black people around, and warned of the supposed risks of crime. The country's history of segregation does not help – one Nextdoor guest article cites a 1949 deed on a Los Angeles home barring occupation by "any person not of the White or Caucasian race".

This was exacerbated following the police murder of George Floyd last year, when local Nextdoor moderators deleted posts backing the Black Lives Matter movement under rules against politics intruding into forums. The company changed its policy, and added anti-racism notifications.

It has recruited more volunteer mod-

Stolen cars, flat break-ins and door-to-door scams are among the talking points on the group for my district

erators, offered them anti-racist training, and put oversight of the thorniest topics in-house. Its approach is guided by Jennifer Eberhardt, a social psychology professor at Stanford university, who argues that making people slow down and think before reacting in anger or fright helps to curb hostility.

But Nextdoor has just 60m users and faces tension between caution and growth. It has fresh competition from Facebook, with its 2.85bn monthly users and predatory instincts. Facebook is rolling out Neighborhoods in some US cities, with a similar design and familiar promise to "keep interactions among neighbours relevant and kind."

Artificial intelligence can soothe some anger – Nextdoor says its prompts, based on scanning draft posts for phrases that have already been flagged, has reduced racial profiling by 75 per cent. But if machines could solve aggression, Twitter would be a calmer place.

Nextdoor's future rests on the meaning of a word. Will neighbours be kind, or be triggered by threats to their kind? An ambiguity that goes back to the Middle Ages is not easily resolved.

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Companies & Markets

FINANCIAL TIMES



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VW on track to beat pre-Covid profits with bumper first half

◆ Earnings of €11bn expected ◆ Chip shortage to hit ◆ Europe and US shine



The German carmaker benefited from strong European sales margins while its biggest market, China, suffered a slowdown in recovery— Jero Schlueter/Getty Images

JOE MILLER — FRANKFURT

Volkswagen is continuing to benefit from the bumper recovery in car sales, forecasting that it will make about €11bn in operating profits for the first six months of the year.

The preliminary figure exceeds the €10.6bn made by the carmaker in 2020, and the €9.6bn in the first half of 2019.

In a short statement, VW, the world's second-largest carmaker by volume, also reported net cash flow of about €10bn for the six months to the end of June.

But the Wolfsburg-based company, which also owns brands including Audi, Porsche and Seat, warned that the "bottleneck in semiconductor supply has shifted and will... impact us in [the second half of the year]".

Earlier this week, German car lobby VDA said it expected 400,000 fewer cars to be produced in the country in 2021, largely because of the chip shortage. VW has said it expects its own shortfall to be a "six-digit number".

In response to the global shortage of the components, VW prioritised production of high-margin premium models, it told the Financial Times, which helped cushion the financial blow.

A rise in demand for used cars also boosted profits at the company's financial services arm, it added, which offers loans to customers.

"One quarter after the other, these guys are really doing a great job," said Arndt Ellinghorst, analyst at Bernstein. "It's very refreshing to see such huge numbers from a traditional manufacturer," he added. "It's certainly harder earned than some of the Spac cash flying around these days".

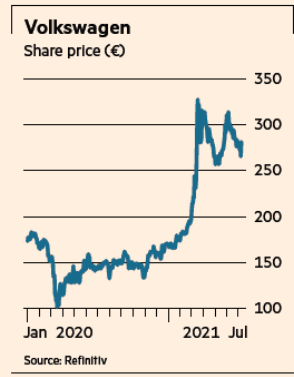
VW's figures come despite a slowdown in the car sales recovery in China, the carmaker's single biggest market. The group has also registered disappointing sales in the country of its dedicated electric vehicles, the ID.3 and ID.4, as domestic brands eat up more of the local market share.

But the company benefited from a higher proportion of deliveries in

Europe, where margins are higher than other regions, and strong sales in the US.

Last month, VW revealed that deliveries between January and May had increased by 33 per cent worldwide, compared with the previous year.

Truck brands MAN and Scania registered the strongest growth, with sales



increasing 68 per cent and 61 per cent respectively.

VW's shares rose more than 3 per cent on the latest forecast. The company is due to publish a full financial report on the first half of the year on July 29.

Separately yesterday, VW's supervisory board voted to extend chief executive Herbert Diess' contract until his 67th birthday, in October 2025.

Diess, a former BMW executive who joined the group in 2015, has masterminded the company's €35bn foray into electric vehicles. He survived two clashes with powerful unions, which resented his aggressive cost cutting measures, last year.

Last month, VW confirmed that Diess was in the room in 2015 when his predecessor was told of the existence of "Dieselgate" software that could cheat emissions tests, but said that he was "justified in trusting that the competent Volkswagen bodies and employees would... communicate with the US authorities and customers in accordance with their duties".

Bullish Global chooses Spac route for US debut

PHILIP STAFFORD — LONDON

Bullish Global, the crypto group backed by billionaires Peter Thiel, Louis Bacon and Alan Howard, has announced plans to list in New York through a Spac deal in a further sign of the industry's willingness to tap equity markets.

The digital asset group, which is managed by blockchain software company Block.one, said yesterday that it would merge with Far Peak Acquisition Corp, a blank-cheque company led by former New York Stock Exchange president Tom Farley.

The deal values Bullish at about \$9bn, a number that largely comprises the \$692m of cash held at Far Peak and the assets and investment supplied by Thiel, Bacon, Block.one and others to capitalise Bullish Global in May.

Hong Kong businessman Richard Li, German financier Christian Angermayer, Michael Novogratz's Galaxy Digital and Nomura, the Japanese investment bank, have also backed Bullish.

The move by Bullish, which plans to launch a digital asset exchange but has yet to begin trading, underscores a push by crypto investors to list projects in the US, the world's biggest equity market.

Circle, the US financial technology company behind the USD Coin stable-

coin, announced plans on Thursday to merge with a special purpose acquisition vehicle and list on the New York Stock Exchange.

Bakkt, a cryptocurrency platform majority owned by conventional exchanges behemoth Intercontinental Exchange, is also set to list following a combination with the Victory Park Capital acquisition vehicle in January. Coinbase, the exchange, also debuted on Wall Street in April.

Bullish and its backers are betting on

The crypto group, which is backed by billionaires such as Peter Thiel, is to merge with Far Peak Acquisition



the growth of decentralised finance, or DeFi, a market that has grown from about \$15bn at the start of the year to \$65bn, according to an estimate by analysts at JPMorgan in May.

The group will run a decentralised trading network, which allows users to buy and sell digital assets directly with each other and bypass intermediaries, such as an exchange or clearing houses, that impose fees. The deal is expected to close by the end of the year.

See Markets

Household goods

Electrolux chief confident inflationary wave will ebb

RICHARD MILNE
NORDIC AND BALTIC CORRESPONDENT

Inflationary pressures should subside later this year as the easing of the Covid-19 pandemic brings about a normalisation of extraordinary demand for consumer goods, according to the head of the world's second-largest home appliances manufacturer.

Jonas Samuelson, chief executive of Electrolux, told the Financial Times the Swedish group had seen the "cost and inflationary pressure on everything accelerating" but had managed to pass on the price increases to consumers.

"A lot of money has shifted from services to goods during the pandemic. That puts pressure on the production of those goods. But there is no inflationary pressure in services. When the normalisation happens there is a good case that inflation will normalise. We will have less ability to pass on cost increases quickly, but inflationary pressures should diminish too."

Consumer appliance makers' business has boomed as more people have

worked at home during the pandemic but investors and most companies are expecting a slowdown this year if the pandemic eases as vaccinations rise in Europe and North America.

Electrolux, which said in April it expected the normalisation to come in the second half of 2021, will continue to try to pass on all price increases in raw material and other costs to customers.

The debate about whether or not inflation is transitory as economies recover from the pandemic is one of the biggest facing central banks and investors globally.

Electrolux and other appliance manufacturers have struggled to meet demand in the past year because of shortages of semiconductors, problems with ocean freight and the availability of steel and plastic. "As initial lockdowns were lifted, people were rushing to buy appliances. Since then, we have been fighting to keep up," Samuelson said.

He added that the two biggest problems were with semiconductors and ocean freight, which had become "super expensive".

Airlines. Low-cost competition

Wizz challenges king of Europe's skies in battle for budget carrier crown

Hungarian operator plans to benefit from collapse of rivals as it takes on leader Ryanair

PHILIP GEORGIADIS

For years, Michael O'Leary has been king of Europe's skies. He expanded Ryanair from a low-cost upstart into the region's dominant airline by offering cheap fares through an ultra-efficient model that rivals could not match.

But when the aviation industry emerges from the pandemic, O'Leary will have competition. Hungarian carrier Wizz Air has an equally low-cost business and is set on continuing breakneck expansion and moving further into western Europe.

While the rest of their sector crumbles, O'Leary and Wizz Air chief executive József Váradi have spent the past year touting opportunities. Both airlines are taking on new aircraft, scooping up take-off and landing slots and opening new bases, while rivals with weaker balance sheets such as Alitalia and Norwegian Air Shuttle retrench or collapse.

Neither Ryanair nor Wizz Air is immune from the impact of the pandemic. They have bled hundreds of mil-

lions of euros over the past year. But their shares have recovered from heavy losses and are close to all-time highs, a sign that investors agree that low-cost is the future of European aviation.

For O'Leary it was "the greatest growth opportunity" in Ryanair's 35-year history. He expected a 20 per cent fall in short-haul seats available from rivals in Europe over the next few years.

Váradi said: "We think we are going to be a much... more competitive airline and more formidable competing force."

The scale of Wizz's ambition was revealed last week when shareholders were asked to back a plan that hands Váradi a €100m bonus if he lifts the stock from €48 to €120 over the next five years. That would give it a market capitalisation of nearly €12bn, a third smaller than Ryanair's now.

The company listed in London at €11.50 in 2015, but its shares have increased sharply as investors welcome the first serious low-cost competition to Ryanair to emerge and "the last great growth story in European aviation", according to Bernstein aviation analyst Daniel Roeska.

Váradi masterminded Wizz's growth. A background as an economist and a career at Procter & Gamble and the now defunct Hungarian flag carrier

Malév behind him, he approached US investor Bill Franke in 2004 with a plan for a regional airline. Franke, one of history's most successful aviation investors and an early backer of Ryanair, persuaded him to adopt the low-cost model, and within six weeks Váradi had presented him with a new plan.

Franke said: "I liked József. He is a smart guy, a direct guy, and we ended up making an investment. It has been a

very successful model, and we have for a private equity fund been unusually long-tenured... We are now at 17 years and it has been a significantly favourable investment."

Wizz's structure, with a London listing, Hungarian base for cheap labour and Swiss tax registration, has left it the only airline to be able to match, and in some places beat, Ryanair's model.

London-listed easyJet competes



Wizz Air claims to have the lowest unit cost in the industry — Clemens Bilan/epa-EFE

with legacy carriers at expensive airports and is not considered ultra-low-cost, while airlines such as British Airways are more reliant on long-haul and business travel.

Both Ryanair and Wizz claim to have the lowest unit cost in the industry, but Bernstein analysts believe Wizz has the edge. O'Leary calls that "bullshit" based on theoretical future fleets.

Wizz's growth has been fuelled by stimulating demand for flying and connecting cities in central and eastern Europe, where analysts see opportunities. It has moved into parts of western Europe, and has opened UK bases. But to hit his target, Váradi will have to move further onto Ryanair's turf.

"The jury is still out. Wizz is being more aggressive in bringing capacity back in this year, but they are not filling it to the extent Ryanair is," said aviation consultant Edmond Rose.

O'Leary said Wizz had a "reasonably compelling" growth story. He respected the way Váradi ran the business, and saw "niches" for Wizz. But it could not challenge his dominant position.

"To be fair, they are good on this schlock about, 'Oh, you know, we've got lower costs than Ryanair, and therefore ultimately we're going to replicate Ryanair returns over the last 20

years'... The real difficulty for the Wizz model is that they can't explain how the hell you can expand dramatically in western Europe when Ryanair is already there."

While Wizz plans to take on new aircraft to expand its fleet from about 140 to 270 planes, O'Leary has an order for more than 200 aircraft from Boeing, which he pointed out was "the same size as Wizz's whole bloody fleet" and would leave Ryanair with 600 planes by 2026.

Váradi has been briefing investors that there is space for both to grow. "I think the real question is what is going to happen to the others who don't have the cost base and the capacity to grow," he said.

"I am sure Ryanair will do great coming out of the pandemic, but I think we will be doing even better."

A question facing Wizz is whether it can preserve its low costs as it moves into western European airports, with unionisation and wages pressure, challenges Ryanair had to face as it matured.

Franke counts O'Leary as a friend, but said: "We are not intimidated." Even O'Leary believes Wizz is a better proposition for an investor than any other airline in Europe. Except one. "I would say to anybody investing in Wizz, 'Why are you not investing in Ryanair?'"

COMPANIES. WEEK IN REVIEW

Cosy coterie of directors escapes US diversity drive

The Top Line
Sujeet Indap



Scrutiny of the people that America's biggest companies choose as board directors has never been more intense.

But this focus on diversity has escaped a small but important subset of businesses. Companies in financial distress, often owned by private equity, increasingly rely on a small coterie of ex-lawyers and ex-financiers to be board members and make wrenching decisions about restructuring these troubled companies. Hedge fund and private equity fortunes are won and lost on those decisions.

Distressed debt investors have begun to complain about what they say is a limited and rather too cosy pool of directors who can be paid tens of thousands of dollars a month.

Just a handful of law firms dominate the corporate bankruptcy industry and creditors have noticed the same set of people – overwhelmingly white, middle-aged and male – are being

recycled by these lawyers to, in their estimation, do the bidding of private equity owners.

A new academic study supplies data supporting their grievance. It looked into 15 years of bankruptcy filings and identified “super repeaters” – 15 men who had been directors in multiple large bankruptcies, including one who had served in 31 different cases.

“While these directors claim to be neutral experts that act to maximise value for the benefit of creditors, we argue that they suffer from a structural bias because they are part of a small community of repeat private-equity sponsors and law firms,” the authors of the study wrote.

The explosion in private capital buyouts has also led to large, well-known US companies living outside the realm of the scrutiny that goes with a public market listing.

Last summer, a judge overseeing the

Chapter 11 case of department store chain Neiman Marcus angrily called an independent director “borderline incompetent” after he failed to clearly explain in testimony how he was investigating potential wrongdoing by Neiman’s private equity owners.

The director was an experienced bankruptcy lawyer who had then become a professional director at high-profile troubled companies.

Independent directors are powerful figures in boardrooms. Their ostensible objectivity leads to them being selected to dig into wrongdoing allegations and then ultimately lead the tense negotiations between creditors and equity holders that allow the company to reorganise.

The decisions of independent directors are also hard to challenge because they benefit from the “business judgment rule” that offers protection from lawsuits based on the

Years of filings reveal ‘super repeaters’ – men who had been directors in multiple bankruptcy cases

default assumption they have acted in the best interests of the business.

In the instance of Neiman Marcus, its owners had been accused of asset stripping that had robbed creditors. The owners ultimately settled those charges for a \$172m payment. Yet as the system is designed, Neiman’s owners chose the independent directors that were later charged with investigating them.

Yet, one “super repeater” that the FT spoke to dismissed the notion that a director could carve out a career simply by being a private equity skill. “I’ve never felt the need to compromise my moral centre. I rely on my intellectual honesty. That is what gets me the next call. I knew I was pretty good at calling balls and strikes when in one case, each of the six different sides was angry at me.”

sujeet.indap@ft.com

Boss of hyperlocal Nextdoor faces clean-up challenge

Corporate person in the news

Sarah Friar
Chief executive, Nextdoor

Growing up in Northern Ireland, Sarah Friar witnessed bombs raining down and the windows of her home shattering from the blasts.

But Friar also saw the best of human nature. In her village, which was founded by Quakers, Catholics and Protestants lived side by side. “They were still the same people, they were still incredibly involved in our lives, even though they were Catholic, we were Protestant,” Friar said.

Now, as chief executive of hyperlocal social network Nextdoor, she is trying to recreate that camaraderie, this time online.

Nextdoor has emerged as a niche platform, intended for neighbours to share local news, rate local businesses and exchange goods and services.

Friar announced on Tuesday that she will take the business public through a merger with a Khosla Ventures-backed special purpose acquisition company, raising \$686m in gross proceeds and valuing the business at \$4.3bn.

But continuing to win favour with Wall Street will mean subduing the keyboard warriors who tend towards curtain-twitching and racial profiling behind a screen. The question is whether Friar can be ruthless enough to wring out these nasty neighbours. Her advocates, such as John Hope Bryant, a Nextdoor board member who runs financial literacy non-profit Operation HOPE, have little doubt. “She is the Samurai soldier who comes in elegantly and looks like she’s dancing, but she’s just sliced you



Continuing to win favour with Wall Street will mean subduing keyboard warriors

four ways from Sunday.” Born to a nurse and a personnel manager, Friar strove to “get out and go see the world”. Few chiefs in Silicon Valley – where the genius founder myth looms large and outside heads are rare – have a more varied CV.

After Oxford, Friar worked as a mining analyst for McKinsey in South Africa. She then worked as a tech-focused equity analyst at Goldman.

It was in this role that she met her mentor, Salesforce’s Marc Benioff, who was initially furious that she had put a sell rating on his stock. But the two soon turned to regularly debating Silicon Valley trends, in good humour.

When she found herself disillusioned after the financial crisis, Friar called Benioff for advice on whether to join a start-up. Minutes later, he rang her back: “Come work with me. You’re gonna learn far more working with me than you will in any of these small companies.”

Her first stint in an operating role –

as Salesforce’s senior vice-president in finance and strategy – was quickly followed by a longer period as chief financial officer at Jack Dorsey’s payments group Square. While at Square, Friar “kept the Street pretty happy with reliable projections, and helped with the management team to create this balance with investing in the future too,” said Vinod Khosla, founder of venture capital group Khosla Ventures who launched Tuesday’s Spac. “We didn’t always agree, but we had a great time looking at these kinds of trade-offs.”

Bill Gurley, general partner at Benchmark and a Nextdoor board member, describes luring Friar to the chief role at Nextdoor in 2018 as a coup – her former company’s shares fell 15 per cent at the time. “I remember the day after it was announced, the affirmation I started getting from everyone in my network, it was, ‘How did you get her?’” he said. Today, board members paint Friar

Sarah Friar is set to take the social network public through a merger with a Khosla-backed Spac

Patrick T. Fallon/Bloomberg

as an artful communicator and workaholic; one described being bombarded with detailed briefings and board reports almost daily. Others say she is an egoless leader.

The bet on the recent Spac boom was a bold one. Friar has argued that the Spac process was simpler, shorter and more predictable than an IPO. She talked to about eight Spacs, she said, but was selective in partnering with Khosla for its “scale” and “brand”.

T Rowe Price Associates, Soroban Capital, accounts advised by Ark Invest, and existing investor Tiger Global have taken part, and Friar has skin in the game, putting in a “meaningful” amount.

Nextdoor’s community of 60m verified users generated revenues – largely from advertising – of \$123m in 2020, up nearly 50 per cent year on year. The group projects similar growth this year, of 44 per cent.

Net losses of \$75m last year are forecast to grow to \$103m this year. Moving to profitability will depend on whether the promise of hyperlocal targeting can attract brands, many of which focus ad dollars on Facebook-Google. Several ad agency executives, as well as analysts, said the platform was not on their radar. Friar has promised to mature the company’s ad offering.

Friar continues to battle brand safety concerns, and it is without irony that Nextdoor has opted to list under the ticker \$KIND. Pressed on concerns that parts of Nextdoor remained a cesspool of bad behaviour and misinformation, she offered the refrain that Mark Zuckerberg has made following scandals: “Look, we’re not perfect.” *Hannah Murphy*

BEST OF BUSINESS

Wise direct approach

British fintech Wise was valued at nearly £9bn in a direct listing in London, a coup for a UK market vying with Wall Street to attract the next wave of fast-growing tech companies.

Eschewing the traditional initial public offering, Wise opted for a direct listing in which shares in the company began trading without its raising any money.

Wise provides international money transfer and multicurrency banking services. It targets more affluent customers than remittance specialists such as Western Union and regards banks as its biggest rivals.

After a three-hour opening auction, Wise shares opened at 800p, giving the company a valuation more than double the £3.6bn (\$5bn) that it secured in a secondary share sale 12 months ago.



Some of the biggest US oil groups are racking up tens of billions of dollars in hedging losses, despite soaring crude prices, as contracts signed during last year’s crash leave them selling their output at deeply discounted prices.

Oil is trading near six-year highs of about \$75 a barrel, but almost a third of the US’s 11m barrels per day of production is being sold for just \$55 per barrel, according to IHS Markit, a consultancy.

The figures will offer comfort to the Opec cartel that rallying prices are not about to spark another market-busting surge in US shale production.

The Cyberspace Administration of China often communicated with Didi, making more than 20 requests for changes to the app

IHS Markit said that US oil hedging losses in the first half of 2021 had hit \$7.5bn, but would rise by another \$12bn if crude remained at \$75 a barrel until the end of the year. Many Wall Street forecasts suggest that it could go higher.

China’s regulator requested changes to the mapping function of ride-hailing group Didi Chuxing’s app before its US listing, fearing that it could reveal sensitive government sites.

The Cyberspace Administration of China frequently communicated with Didi, making more than 20 requests for changes to the app, which Didi implemented, said a person familiar with the matter.

The regulator caught investors by surprise when it abruptly announced on Sunday that Didi’s app had “problems of seriously violating laws on collecting and using personal information”, and ordered it to be removed from mobile app stores.

The announcement, which came less than a week after the company raised \$4.4bn in the biggest Chi-

\$7.5bn
Scale of US groups’ oil hedging losses in the first half

\$4.4bn
Sum that Didi raised in IPO before watchdog asked for changes

nese IPO in the US since 2014, caused Didi’s stock to plunge and has prompted investor lawsuits over the company’s disclosure of regulatory risks.

The number of start-ups valued above \$1bn grew rapidly in the second quarter. Private investors assigned billion-dollar valuations to a record 136 start-ups between April and June, according to CB Insights, more than the total for all of last year.

The US produced the majority, which included social calendar app IRL and financing marketplace Pipe. Asia contributed 33 during the quarter, compared with 29 for the full year in 2020.

Billion-dollar start-ups, or unicorns, have proliferated. The surge in valuations could raise renewed concerns about overheating in private tech markets, while creating difficult targets for start-up founders to meet.

Under the hood Wimbledon wild card success does not hide financial challenge

Many lower-ranked tennis players on the tour struggle to command major sponsorship income while injury or illness also weigh on earnings

Wimbledon organisers had much to celebrate. Britain’s Emma Raducanu won the nation’s hearts after reaching the fourth round. Jack Draper stole a set from world number one Novak Djokovic and Andy Murray enjoyed two victories in his first major tournament since his second hip operation in 2019.

They were all wild card entries – invites to play from the All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club, the 153-year-old organisation that runs Wimbledon.

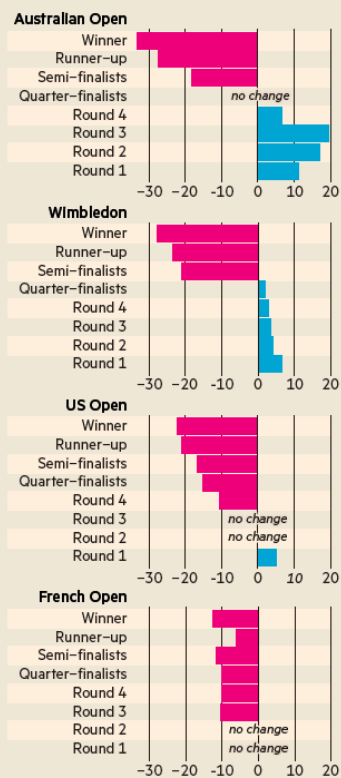
The tournament has issued nearly 650 wild cards for the singles main draws since they were introduced in 1977, with three out of four going to British players, according to Financial Times analysis. Yet only 18 of those British players have progressed beyond the second round.

But the success of a handful of wild cards does not hide the challenges faced by hundreds of players on the tour. Lower-ranked players struggle to command major sponsorship income, while injury or illness also weigh on earnings.

In 2019, the professional tennis market, including the ATP, WTA and Grand Slams, generated \$2.2bn in revenues, according to the PTPA, the male players’ association founded by Djokovic and former number 30 Vasek Pospisil. Collectively the players made just 17.5 per cent of this revenue, it says. By contrast, player wages in England’s football Premier League account for 72 per cent of total revenues. *Samuel Agini, Patrick Mathurin and Chris Campbell*

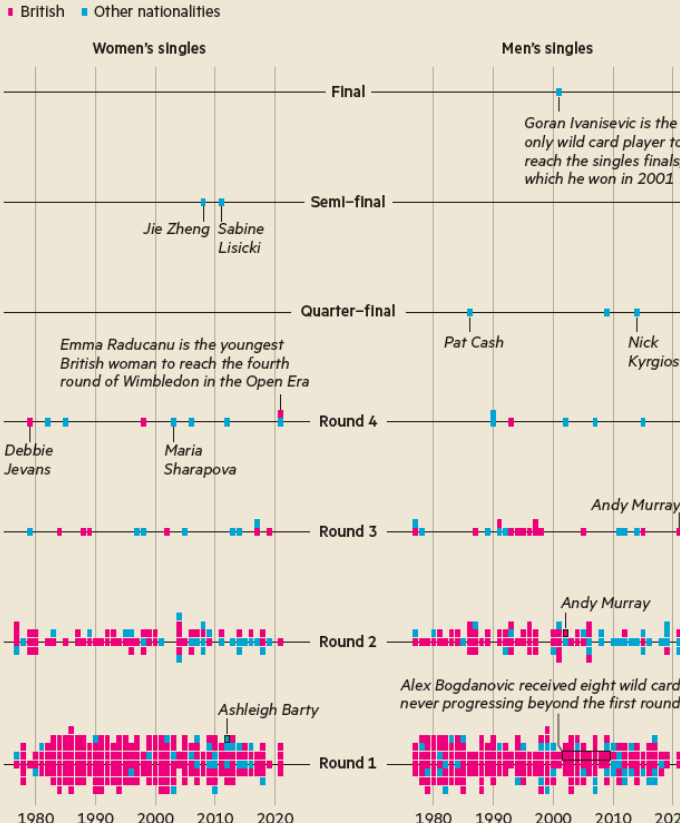
Prize money has been cut from the top and increased at the lower stages

% change in singles prize money, latest v previous tournament



Most wild card players do not win their first match

Furthest stage reached by wild card players at the Wimbledon Championships by year, 1977-2021



Source: Wimbledon; FT research

COMPANIES & MARKETS

Branson gains a head start in space race with Bezos

Lift-off this weekend for star ship enterprise seen as vital for Virgin

RICHARD WATERS — SAN FRANCISCO

It is 20 years since the first tourist ventured into space, and a decade on from when Richard Branson originally hoped to escape the bonds of Earth's gravity on a Virgin Galactic spacecraft.

But with the Virgin founder finally due to board a rocket ship this weekend and rival billionaire Jeff Bezos aiming for the heavens nine days later, a commercial space tourism industry could finally be getting close to lift-off.

Branson, 70, is scheduled to reach the edge of space over the New Mexico desert early on Sunday morning local time, riding on the VSS Unity. The winged spacecraft is set to be carried to about 50,000ft by a specially designed plane, before being released and firing its solid-fuel rocket to soar above 80km.

Branson has already signalled his intention to use the flight as the unofficial launch for Virgin Galactic's space tourism business. The company was given the green light by the US Federal Aviation Administration last month to operate a commercial service, the final hurdle to carrying up to six paying pas-

engers on each of its future flights. Branson has also sought to use the publicity generated by his personal flight to make full use of a marketing window before Bezos's own flight aboard a Blue Origin rocket.

A successful launch would open the door to fully fledged space tourism, Branson has said. It would also provide a critical shot in the arm for a venture whose fortunes have become central to the wellbeing of the entire Virgin group. Branson's stake of about 24 per cent in Virgin Galactic, currently worth just under \$3bn, has been his most important source of liquidity in a difficult period. After the company went public early last year and its shares soared, he sold \$500m worth of stock to help support Virgin Atlantic and other businesses that were hit by the pandemic.

The highly volatile share price has been closely tied to expectations of when the company will be ready to start commercial operations.

Richard Branson is set to reach the edge of space



The value of Branson's stake fell below \$1bn in May amid a protracted delay in its test schedule, before rebounding strongly after its first successful flight in two years.

A return to ticket sales following a successful flight this weekend would provide an important financial shot in the arm. They were suspended in 2014 after an accident in which Virgin's spaceship broke up soon after firing its rockets, killing a test pilot and setting its programme back years.

Based on the rate at which it burnt through cash last year, Virgin Galactic had about two-and-a-half years of cash on hand when it last disclosed its financial condition. Its next challenge will be to boost its financial reserves with renewed sales while at the same time appealing hundreds of potential astronauts who have been waiting years to fly.

Branson has said that tickets on the first flights will be sold for considerably more than the prices of up to \$250,000 that the company charged in earlier sales. The higher price would help the company start recouping its huge development costs and reflected the initial scarcity of seats, he said. More than 600 people have made payments averaging about \$130,000 each for a place in line. Another 1,000 put down \$1,000 deposits when the sales window was reopened for a brief period last year.

Virgin Galactic has already put many of the pieces in place to support its planned tourism business. They include a production line to start building a series of spacecraft, eventually reaching what Branson hopes will be a fleet of 30-40 that can carry passengers from locations around the world. The company also has a base at New Mexico's "spaceport", a \$220m taxpayer-funded development that was completed more than a decade ago on hopes that it would soon become an anchor tenant.

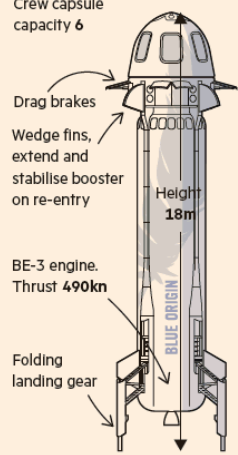
Branson's flight, evoking the appetite for risk-taking and flirtation with physical danger that has long been part of his personal brand, is now likely to set the tone for the company's marketing.

Blue Origin's spacecraft, carried on the tip of its Shepard rocket, is designed to fly free in the event of an accident, a procedure that was already triggered successfully when an unmanned test flight went wrong. VSS Unity has no such escape mechanism. Using Sunday's flight to project the adventure and excitement of space exploration could be the final master stroke in Branson's long dream of building a space business — provided Virgin Galactic's clientele also believe they will get back in one piece.

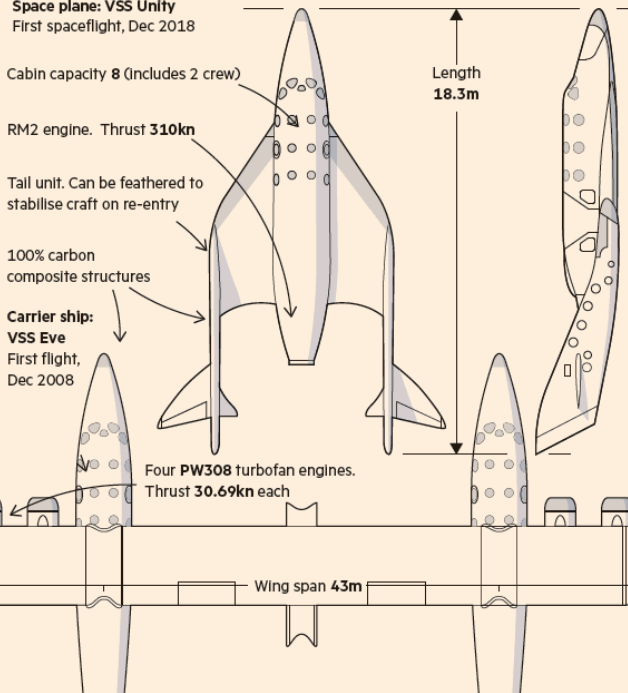
See Lex

Reusable spacecraft of Bezos and Branson

Jeff Bezos's New Shepard
First spaceflight, April 2015
Crew capsule capacity 6



Richard Branson's VSS Unity and VSS Eve (SpaceShipTwo)
A two-vehicle system
Space plane: VSS Unity
First spaceflight, Dec 2018



Mission profiles

New Shepard

Maximum apogee (altitude) reached so far 119km, July 2018

Capsule-free flight (3-4 minutes of zero gravity)

Kármán line, 100km above sea level, internationally recognised as where space begins

80.5km above sea level, where space begins as recognised by the FAA and Nasa

Free flight (3-4 minutes of zero gravity)

Maximum apogee (altitude) reached so far 82.72km, Dec 2018

Re-entry: booms are feathered for stabilisation

Boost: Unity climbs vertically at Mach 3+

Release

Unity carried to 15.2km by Eve

Glide landing: on a runway like a conventional aircraft

Lift-off

West Texas launch site 1.13km above sea level

Booster landing

Capsule landing

New Mexico launch site 1.4km above sea level

Drag brakes deploy, engine relights

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Transport

Parts supplier sees bright outlook for electric bikes in Europe

HARRY DEMPSEY

Half the pedal bicycles sold in Europe will have a motor by 2025, one of the region's biggest suppliers of electric bike parts projected.

Claus Fleischer, chief executive of Bosch eBike Systems, said electric bike sales soared during the pandemic as consumers found new ways to spend extra time and money.

With growth strongest in towns and cities, it also reflects the desire of commuters to avoid public transport and cars in an effort to steer clear of crowds and traffic snarl-ups, while using a greener way to travel.

"From our prediction, in the next three to four years, every second bike in the European core markets should be an e-bike," said the head of the private group's division that supplies batteries, motors and display systems to bike manufacturers.

Bosch's division chief expected annual growth rates in e-bike sales to return to pre-pandemic levels of 20-25 per cent, easing from annual increases in excess of 40 per cent in many European countries in 2020.

It brings forward the expected growth for motor-assisted two wheelers on the continent, particularly for people who want to commute without having to

'In the next three to four years, every second bike in the core markets should be an e-bike'

break into a sweat as they might on a pedal bike.

"We take away all the excuses of why not to cycle. If you take the excuses away, then people like to cycle longer and further," said Fleischer, whose company's core markets include Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Austria and Switzerland.

The vehicles are also relatively cheap compared with a car, with costs for an e-bike ranging between €2,000 for an entry level model and more than €10,000 for top of the range units.

After urban travel, mountain bikes and cycles for touring were the second most popular category among e-bikes.

In Europe last year, 4.5m e-bikes were sold — 34 per cent more than in 2019 or a fifth of total bicycle sales, according to the Confederation of the European Bicycle Industry.

"The e-bike is by far the most sold electric vehicle on the European market," said Manuel Marsilio, general manager of Conebi.

The value of bicycle parts and accessories produced in Europe hit €3bn in 2020, but was expected to double by 2025, said Conebi.

Fleischer said that bicycle supply chains were reshoring to Europe from Asian countries such as Taiwan, China and Vietnam. About 80 per cent of e-bikes sold in Europe last year were made in the continent.

However, he cautioned that sustained growth for e-bikes was premised on regulations and infrastructure.

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COMPANIES & MARKETS

Crypto. IPO scrutiny

Circle listing will test top stablecoin's transparency



USD Coin issuer plans Wall St debut as value of its tokens in circulation eclipses \$25bn

SIDDHARTH VENKATARAMAKRISHNAN

Circle made a big pledge this week in announcing its plans to become the first operator of a stablecoin to list on the New York Stock Exchange: chief executive Jeremy Allaire said his company would “become the most public and transparent operator of full-reserve stablecoins in the market today”.

But the US payments technology group has made the information about the reserves backing its stablecoin more opaque in recent months, removing details, tweaking language and leaving longer periods before reporting.

Allaire's commitment is likely to come under intense scrutiny as Circle goes through the process of hitting highly regulated public stock markets.

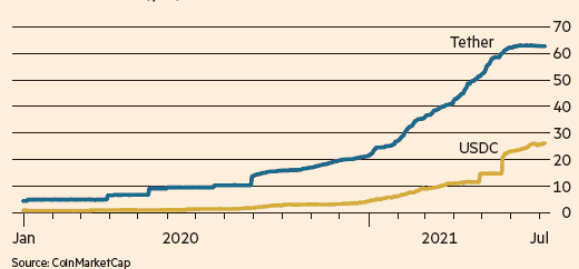
Kyle Gibson, senior staff researcher at MIT Horizon, said: “Why does the market have to wait until [a public listing] for actual transparency? What's stopped them from providing it before?”

Circle touts its USD Coin as “the future of how money moves” and makes transparency one of the digital currency's biggest virtues. Its vision is for its so-called stablecoin – which is “pegged” to the US dollar – to facilitate payments all over the world in real time.

The message is working. According to the company, the global circulation of USDCs has grown more than 3,400 per cent since January to almost \$26bn worth of coins. Traditional financial services providers and other major players in the crypto industry are jumping on board. In March, Visa unveiled a pilot scheme to use the coin to settle transactions. Hong Kong-based derivatives exchange FTX said it pays half of its remote employees in USDC. Stablecoins act as a buffer to help

USD Coin gains ground on stablecoin leader tether

Value in circulation (\$bn)



Source: CoinMarketCap

crypto traders manage the volatility in prices between digital and traditional finance and to make it easier to hop between the thousands of different crypto coins.

USDC was launched three years ago as part of a venture called Centre, a consortium comprising Circle and Wall Street-listed exchange Coinbase.

It now accounts for about 25 per cent of the stablecoin market, second behind market leader Tether, according to data from CoinGecko.

Reserves are the foundation on which a stablecoin is built. Operators say they hold sufficient reserves to guarantee every coin produced. USDC can be redeemed with US dollars, one-for-one, according to Circle.

Circle has provided monthly snapshots on USDC's reserves since 2018. Grant Thornton provides so-called attestations on these figures, which look at USDC's reserves at a moment in time but do not provide as comprehensive look as a formal audit.

These statements have evolved substantially. Until March 2020, they said USDC was backed by dollars, held in government-backed US depository institutions. After that, they said the reserves were held at institutions and “approved investments” but did not

give precise details about what those investments were. The following month it changed the wording on its website from “backed by US dollars” to “backed by fully reserved assets”.

Its reserve account report in February this year said it held \$9.3bn in custody accounts; the line was dropped completely for the March and April reports.

The only dollar amount mentioned is in relation to \$100,000 frozen at the request of law enforcement.

“I always thought that Centre were trying to play the more legitimate role,” said Rohan Grey, a law professor at Willamette university in Oregon. “I think the attestation changes are concerning.”

The publication of attestations has also become slower since December. Last year, they were typically released a couple of weeks after the end of each month. Now they take more than a month to produce with the audit for April released in early June.

A listing will, as Circle acknowledges, require it to meet the highest US regulatory accounting standards.

Allaire said the listing was an opportunity “to also provide significantly more transparency... about the reserves that back USDC”.

Grant Thornton said it could not comment on client-related matters. Centre

Square deal: Circle chief executive Jeremy Allaire is promising transparency will be key to its public listing

Eoin Noonan/Sportsfile/Getty

did not respond to a request for comment on the changes in the attestation.

Circle said in May reserves include “cash, cash equivalents and short-duration investment grade assets consistent with our regulatory requirements and supervision under US state banking laws”. The group told the Financial Times that delays in recent attestations were due to the currency's rapid growth and its availability across multiple blockchains.

“USDC has grown so fast that the accounting has likely struggled to keep up”, said Philip Gradwell, chief economist at blockchain analysis company Chainalysis.

Stablecoin reserves have become a hot-button issue in the crypto industry. The New York attorney-general concluded in February that Tether's historic claim that reserves were fully backed by US dollars at all times was “a lie”. Tether paid an \$18.5m penalty to settle the charges and did not admit wrongdoing.

In an investor presentation released this week, Circle outlined risks related to USDC including regulatory changes, taxation and the development of central bank digital currencies.

Stablecoin operators also face other challenges: they are growing so fast that their reserve holdings are stirring concerns over financial stability. Rating agency Fitch this month warned that any rush to convert crypto assets back into traditional money could force stablecoin companies to liquidate reserves, destabilising short-term credit markets.

Regulators and central banks around the world have also increasingly expressed concerns over the impact stablecoins could pose to the implementation of monetary policy, as well as the risk of market manipulation and questionable levels of consumer protection.

“The problem to me isn't the specifics of any one attestation, it's the fundamental workings of these kinds of systems,” said Grey.

‘USDC has grown so fast that the accounting has likely struggled to keep up’

Equities

SoftBank set to buy stake in Yanolja ahead of US flotation

SONG JUNG-A — SEOUL
KANA INAGAKI — TOKYO

Japanese technology group SoftBank is in talks to buy a 10 per cent stake in Yanolja, a leading South Korean hotel booking platform, ahead of the company's expected US listing, people familiar with the matter said yesterday.

The deal, in which SoftBank's Vision Fund is likely to invest about Won1tn (\$870m) in Yanolja, is expected to be signed next week, according to local media.

“Yanolja will soon receive substantial investment from SoftBank,” said one of the people familiar with the matter. “The talks are in the final stages.”

The deal, if completed, would mark SoftBank's second-biggest investment in South Korea following its \$5bn stake in Coupang, the country's leading e-commerce player.

Coupang's US listing pushed SoftBank to record profits last year as the South Korean company's valuation briefly exceeded \$100bn.

The investment in Yanolja comes as SoftBank, led by billionaire founder Masayoshi Son, faces setbacks in China, where regulators have announced an investigation into data security concerns at Didi Chuxing.

SoftBank's Vision Fund is the largest shareholder in the Chinese ride-hailing

‘Yanolja will soon receive substantial investment from SoftBank. The talks are in the final stages’

platform, whose New York-listed shares have lost more than a quarter of their value in the past week.

The Japanese group is also an investor in Full Truck Alliance, which is among US-listed companies being investigated by China's data watchdog.

Analysts said the regulatory crackdown on Chinese tech companies could prompt the Vision Fund to step up investments elsewhere.

In South Korea, Coupang is also facing public scrutiny over its business practices and work conditions.

The SoftBank investment would probably accelerate Yanolja's push for a US listing as early as 2023 to fund its expansion into other hospitality services, the people familiar with the matter said.

“If they get the SoftBank investment, they are likely to pursue a Nasdaq listing rather than a domestic IPO,” said one of the people.

Yanolja was unavailable for comment. The Vision Fund was not immediately available for comment.

The injection would also make Yanolja, which means “Hey, let's play” in Korean, the country's latest billion-dollar start-up.

The booking platform has expanded rapidly since its establishment in 2005 and posted its first operating profit last year despite coronavirus pandemic-related travel restrictions. It reported a Won16.1bn operating profit in 2020 on revenue of Won192bn.

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Equities

Bukalapak raises hopes of IPO boom with Indonesia's biggest in a decade

MERCEDES RUEHL — SINGAPORE

Indonesian e-commerce company Bukalapak is aiming to raise up to \$1.5bn for an initial public offering, in what is set to be country's biggest equity listing in more than a decade.

The online marketplace – whose investors include US technology giant Microsoft, Chinese tech company Ant Group and Singaporean sovereign wealth fund GIC – plans to raise \$1.3bn-\$1.5bn, according to a termsheet seen by the Financial Times.

Bukalapak – whose name means “open a stall” – is aiming to list on Indonesia Stock Exchange on August 6 and could be valued at as much as \$6bn, according to the documents. This would make it the biggest local IPO since 2008 and potentially Indonesia's largest listing if it hits the top end of its range.

Indonesia's internet economy has grown rapidly in the past few years as internet usage has taken off across the region. Bukalapak's deal is a crucial first test of local start-ups' ability to go public. The country of 270m people has the most unicorns – private companies valued at more than \$1bn – in south-east

Asia but so far none have tapped public markets.

That is set to change this year. Indonesia is working towards an overhaul of its listing rules to encourage more start-ups to list locally instead of heading to the US or other exchanges in Asia.

Pandu Sjahrir, IDX commissioner, said that he expected Bukalapak's IPO to encourage other technology groups to consider the stock exchange as their listing choice. The listing is a “great first step” in showing the confidence of big



Bukalapak helps millions of small stores sell their wares online

tech groups in the exchange since it had demonstrated a “willingness to listen”, Sjahrir said.

Gojek, the Indonesian super app, plans to go public later in 2021 via a dual listing in Indonesia and the US after completing its merger with Bukalapak's rival Tokopedia in May. But others are still targeting Wall Street. Traveloka, the country's answer to Expedia, is in advanced talks with Peter Thiel's Bridgetown special purpose acquisition company to list in the US.

Bukalapak's marketplace caters to the country's millions of small “mom-and-pop” stores, helping them sell their goods online. It also provides other services such as internet-bill payments and has started offering financial products such as mutual funds.

Bukalapak is one of Indonesia's earliest unicorns but it has struggled against rivals, falling behind the likes of Tokopedia and regional giant Shopee in recent years.

It posted revenues of \$95.8m, its filing says, and had 104.9m registered users in the country. It is not yet profitable but in 2020 managed to cut its net losses more than 50 per cent to \$89.5m.

Commodities

Carney shores up plan for carbon offset trading with governance body proposal

LESLIE HOOK AND BILLY NAUMAN

Mark Carney defended plans for a new market for carbon offsets with a proposal for a governance committee to oversee what the former Bank of England governor has estimated will be worth at least \$50bn by 2030.

Environmental groups have accused the Carney-led initiative of greenwashing and complained that the latest plan to address those concerns fell short.

The market initiative backed by more than 250 companies and organisations, known as the Taskforce on Scaling Voluntary Carbon Markets, released its proposals for a new governance board and new standards for trading carbon offsets.

Carbon offsets are generated by projects that reduce or remove emissions, such as afforestation.

The market for offsets – which could reach as much as \$100bn a year eventually, according to Carney – will help companies meet their net zero goals by paying for emission reductions projects elsewhere.

“Addressing greenwashing is precisely why this taskforce has been set

up, and precisely why the governance recommendations it is unveiling today are so important,” Carney said.

“The taskforce was established with the express intention of improving supply side integrity... and demand-side integrity,” he added. “Carbon markets can be catalytic in driving green innovation. This is an essential market that is coming at a critical time.”

‘So it's a question of whether you have the fox looking after the chicken coup, frankly’

Taskforce chair Bill Winters, chief executive of Standard Chartered, said that, by October, it would have in place an oversight board, a secretariat and an external expert panel.

Some board members will be independent, some will be drawn from task force sponsors such as the Institute of International Finance, and some will be market participants.

It will set criteria for the so-called core carbon principles of the offsets to be

used under the scheme. The goal of the taskforce is to expand and improve the global carbon offset market, by creating standardised commodity-like contracts that allow companies to buy and sell carbon offsets at a large scale.

At present, there is little standardisation for voluntary offsets, which can range in price from \$1 per tonne of carbon dioxide, to as much as \$1,000 per tonne of carbon dioxide sequestered at a state-of-the-art direct air capture project.

But several environmental groups said the latest proposals did not address key concerns about the climate change effects of the offsets, nor acknowledge the limits of the size of the potential offset market.

“This is a self-appointed group of people who are actually going to profit from this market,” said Charlie Kronick, senior adviser at Greenpeace. “So it's a question of whether you have the fox looking after the chicken coup, frankly.”

Several previous efforts to set up voluntary carbon offset trading on a large scale failed to deliver the environmental benefits expected.

MARKET DATA

FT500: THE WORLD'S LARGEST COMPANIES

Table with 10 columns: Stock, Price, Day, Chg, 52 Week High, Low, Yld, P/E, MCap. Lists major UK companies like AstraZenca, BP, BT, and others.

FT 500: TOP 20

Table with 10 columns: Stock, Price, Day, Chg, 52 Week High, Low, Yld, P/E, MCap. Lists top 20 UK companies.

FT 500: BOTTOM 20

Table with 10 columns: Stock, Price, Day, Chg, 52 Week High, Low, Yld, P/E, MCap. Lists bottom 20 UK companies.

BONDS: HIGH YIELD & EMERGING MARKET

Table with columns: Country, Rating, Bid, Yield, Spread. Lists high yield and emerging market bonds.

BONDS: GLOBAL INVESTMENT GRADE

Table with columns: Country, Rating, Bid, Yield, Spread. Lists global investment grade bonds.

INTEREST RATES: OIL

Table with columns: Oil, Rate, Current, Since, Last, Month, Year. Shows oil prices and interest rates.

INTEREST RATES: MARKET

Table with columns: Instrument, Rate, Current, Since, Last, Month, Year. Shows various interest rates.

BOND INDICES

Table with columns: Index, Day's change, Month's change, Year, Return, 1 year, 3 year. Lists bond indices.

BONDS: BENCHMARK GOVERNMENT

Table with columns: Country, Rating, Bid, Yield, Spread. Lists benchmark government bonds.

GLTTS: UK CASH MARKET

Table with columns: Instrument, Price, Bid, Yield, Spread. Lists UK cash market instruments.

COMMODITIES

Table with columns: Commodity, Price, Change, Month, Year. Lists various commodities.

BONDS: INDEX-LINKED

Table with columns: Index, Price, Yield, Return, Value, No of stocks. Lists index-linked bonds.

BONDS: TEN YEAR GOVT SPREADS

Table with columns: Country, Bid, Spread, Yield, Return. Lists ten-year government spreads.

GLTTS: UK FSE ACTUARIES INDICES

Table with columns: Instrument, Price, Bid, Yield, Spread. Lists UK FSE actuaries indices.

Table with columns: Commodity, Price, Change, Month, Year. Continuation of commodities table.

Table with columns: Index, Price, Yield, Return, Value, No of stocks. Continuation of index-linked bonds table.

Table with columns: Country, Bid, Spread, Yield, Return. Continuation of ten-year government spreads table.

Table with columns: Instrument, Price, Bid, Yield, Spread. Continuation of UK FSE actuaries indices table.

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Main Market table with columns for Sector, Stock Name, Price, % Change, 52 Week High/Low, and Volume. Includes sub-sections for Aerospace & Defence, Banks, Chemicals, Construction & Materials, Electronic & Electrical Equip, Financial General, Food & Beverages, Health Care & Services, Industrial General, Industrial Transportation, Leisure, Media, Mining, Pharmaceuticals & Biotech, Real Estate, Retailers, Support Services, Telecomunications, and Utilities.

AIM

AIM table with columns for Sector, Stock Name, Price, % Change, 52 Week High/Low, and Volume. Includes sub-sections for Aerospace & Defence, Banks, Chemicals, Construction & Materials, Electronic & Electrical Equip, Financial General, Food & Beverages, Health Care & Services, Industrial General, Industrial Transportation, Leisure, Media, Mining, Pharmaceuticals & Biotech, Real Estate, Retailers, Support Services, Telecomunications, and Utilities.

Investment Companies

Investment Companies table with columns for Conventional (Ex Private Equity), Stock Name, Price, % Change, 52 Week High/Low, and Dividend Yield. Includes sub-sections for Conventional (Ex Private Equity), Discretionary, and Conventional - Property.

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FINANCIAL TIMES

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FT Weekend. Investment Companies - AIM. Data provided by Morningstar. Morningstar logo.

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China billionaires/CATL: low profile, high worth

The status of Chinese billionaires can offer a useful indicator of a sector's health. Since Alibaba founder Jack Ma lost the title of China's richest man this year, tech stock prices have slid downhill. The latest mega-rich local to top China's wealth ranking is Zeng Yuqun, founder of the country's biggest electric-car battery maker, CATL.

Zeng's \$49.5bn net worth has overtaken Ma's \$48bn, say Bloomberg data. His 25 per cent stake in Contemporary Amperex Technology, known as CATL, rose 170 per cent in the past year. It benefits from the strong local sales growth of new-energy cars, which includes battery-driven ones. In June, units rose 139 per cent even as total car sales fell 12 per cent. Expect more to come. Electric cars still account for just 7 per cent of the total.

CATL has positioned itself well, with 44 per cent of the local battery market. It has continued building capacity aggressively, with the plants under construction set to double its current production potential. It is a big supplier to Tesla. But unlike rivals such as Panasonic, which relies heavily on a handful of clients, CATL has diversified. It supplies both local carmakers, such as Xpeng, and global ones such as BMW and Mercedes-Benz.

Credit for that position goes to state backing. Favourable policies and a rapid rollout of charging infrastructure have helped. It still relies on Beijing to maintain this rapid expansion. Then again, that means CATL and its dominant position hardly threatens the government's remit. That contrasts with local techs that have suffered under Beijing's scrutiny. Encouraging users to switch to a smaller e-commerce app looks a simpler prospect than getting other battery makers to build sites. China takes its 2060 carbon-neutral pledge seriously and needs all the capacity it can get.

Another positive for Zeng: he is not well known outside of China. A low profile should shield CATL from disruptive regulatory risk.

Philip Morris/Vectura: inhale seizer

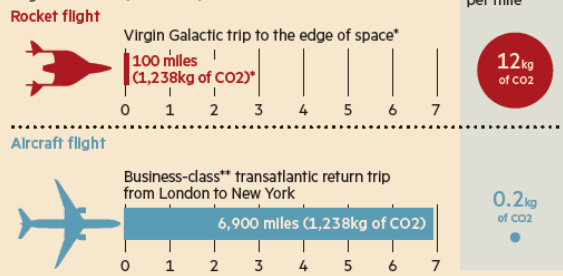
A tobacco giant moving into healthcare presents a paradox. While pharmaceuticals keep people alive, cigarettes kill them.

Philip Morris's deal to buy Vectura's outstanding shares at an enterprise value of £824m involves another apparent contradiction. The UK-based company's products include inhalers that deliver pulmonary treatments. Smokers clog their lungs with carcinogens through the same process. The big US tobacco group, like all its peers, seeks an exit route from a dying industry. It is investing some \$8bn in new technology. It therefore sees overlap between its inhalation research and that of Vectura. Savvy analysts suggest the UK group's expertise in delivering measured doses of inhalants will help new e-cigarettes from Philip Morris to pass the scrutiny of America's Food and Drug Administration.

Philip Morris hopes that by 2025 non-nicotine products will produce \$1bn of revenues, Stifel notes. That compares with a total expected to top \$38bn, S&P Global says. More than 50

Environmental impact of Virgin Galactic's space flight

Flight distances ('000 miles)



Sources: Virgin; FT calculations; International Civil Aviation Organization © FT

After years of work and billions of dollars, Sir Richard Branson and Jeff Bezos are preparing to ride their own spacecrafts to the edge of space, proving that space tourism is a viable business. Both claim green credits for their endeavours. But the power required deserves examination.

Rocket-launch emissions can include black carbon (aka soot) as well as CO2. The higher a craft flies, the more fuel is needed. The Space Shuttle required nearly 720,000kg of liquid fuel and 500,000kg of solid rocket fuel to reach space.

Suborbital space flights by both use less power. Blue Origin's reusable New Shepard uses a liquid hydrogen-fuelled engine to travel more than 60 miles above Earth. Hydrogen may not emit carbon, but its production does.

Branson's VSS Unity rocket plane is

air-launched and burns solid fuel for one minute to fly 50 or so miles above Earth.

Virgin Galactic likens a passenger's carbon footprint to a transatlantic business-class return flight.

That means about 1,238kg of CO2 per passenger, according to the International Civil Aviation Organization.

Yet journey lengths differ. A return transatlantic flight covers about 6,900 miles. Virgin Galactic's trip up and down adds up to about 100 miles. Per passenger, per mile, the CO2 emissions are 12kg of CO2 for Virgin's space trip versus 0.2kg of CO2 for the commercial airline flight.

A modest CO2 footprint for space flights results because rocket flights remain rare. If space tourism takes off, expect more scrutiny to follow.

per cent of sales should come from smoke-free product. The danger is that it grows wholesale into sectors where similarities with its core business are only superficial. Hard-pressed mature companies have a weakness for this.

Examples include engineer Marconi, which overpaid disastrously for digital start-ups, and energy retailer Centrica, which stumbled upstream. The deal value for Vectura is small enough to represent an option purchase, one that Philip Morris need not haggle over. The tobacco group, with a market value of \$153bn, has agreed a premium of 55 per cent over the undisturbed price.

Carlyle made a lower offer in May. Yesterday, Vectura shares were trading 4p above Philip Morris's fresh bid of 50p per share, reflecting hopes of a counterbid. The buyout firm will be more price-sensitive than Philip Morris. But stranger things have happened, as illustrated by the advent of the healthcare-curious cigarette maker.

Pfizer/vaccines: profit injections

The global recovery is under threat. The Delta variant has spread fast. As well as planning a trial of Delta variant vaccine in August, drugmakers argue that a third dose of the existing vaccine "may be beneficial" to maintain the highest levels of protection.

It would benefit their bottom lines. Boosters would extend the windfall, expected to generate at least \$26bn in sales this year. After a 50 per cent gross profit split with BioNTech, Pfizer is in line for a profits boost of \$7bn or more. Yet the need for such additional

shots is debatable, particularly given the worldwide shortage of jobs. The UK is planning an autumn booster campaign but scientists advising the US public health agency found insufficient data to support such a move.

A double dose remains effective at keeping people out of hospital. True, an Israel study said the jab was only 64 per cent effective at protecting against infection from the variant, compared with 94 per cent for earlier strains. But it is not conclusive. Other studies suggest this vaccine is substantially more effective, says Dr Anthony Fauci, Joe Biden's chief medical adviser.

There is a need for more protection for vulnerable groups, such as cancer patients and others with compromised immune systems. As well as boosters, the antibody cocktails produced by the likes of US biotech Regeneron may have a role. Their prospects were dimmed by vaccines' success, but they have the potential to gain blockbuster status as a preventive drug.

New evidence could tip the balance in favour of boosters. A risk of overwhelming the healthcare system remains, even where high vaccination rates have weakened the link between cases and hospitalisations.

Further, there is a real possibility that the vaccine's protection does not last as long against variants like Delta.

Politicians weighing up the case for boosters may prefer to be safe, not sorry.

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Humbling week for bond bears amid abrupt rethink

Katie Martin

The Long View

Towards the end of January, UBS asked the question that mattered most for global markets: "Bond bears have come out of hibernation, but is it too soon?"

Hibernation was possibly not the right word. Strong demand and sinking benchmark interest rates meant that yields on US government bonds, the centre of markets' universe, had been sliding pretty smoothly for close to 40 years. So, less a case of waking from a winter snooze, more a case of the resurgent undead.

In any case, six months or so later, investors appear to have decided it was indeed too soon. The Great Bond Wobble of 2021 was striking — the benchmark 10-year US government bond yield rattled as high as 1.77 per cent in late March and the first quarter was the darkest for bonds in four decades. But this week brought an abrupt rethink, leaving yields as low as 1.25 per cent, still well above the starting point of the year but a serious dent.

It is worth reliving some of the bond shock's origins and key moments.

Their safety and stability mean that government bonds love misery (among other things). So when news about vaccine rollouts late last year dangled the tantalising prospect of a return to post-pandemic normal life for the first time, that dragged them down.

The real blow, however, came from the spectre of inflation, the market's true kryptonite as it eats into the fixed rate of bond returns. The Democratic party's success in clinching control of the US Senate fired up expectations for super-charged fiscal spending. A powerful accepted wisdom developed of persistent surging growth, lasting fiscal support and a Federal Reserve that would turn a blind eye to rising price pressures.

"The narrative in January was pie in the sky, it was rainbows and fairy dust,"

said James Athey, an investment manager at abrdn, the asset manager that inexplicably changed its name this week from Aberdeen Standard Investments. (For those wondering, it is pronounced 'Aberdeen'. I don't get it either.)

In that environment, a shaky auction of seven-year US government debt in February ended up sparking a heavy drop. Ten-year yields finished the day some 0.14 percentage points higher, a huge move by the standards of the typically sedate US market.

That served as a reminder that, while US government bonds are the bedrock of global markets, they have their moments of instability under pressure.

The real blow, however, came from the spectre of inflation, the market's true kryptonite

That is a faultline that might be tested when the Fed more forcefully reels back its largesse.

Even Steven Major, HSBC's head of bond research and one of the most bullish voices on the street, said in February he was "eating humble pie". Around that time, Major bumped up his year-end forecast for 10-year yields by a quarter of a percentage point.

Now, though, as Athey notes, investors are scaling back some of the more generous expectations around fiscal spending. Inflation has picked up sharply but investors are increasingly confident that much of it appears rooted in the bottlenecks inevitable in an economy emerging quickly from lockdowns.

Crucially, the Fed has reinforced the message that its somewhat more relaxed attitude to rising prices in the post-crisis recovery does not mean it has abandoned its inflation-targeting mandate altogether. Rate-setters have



indicated that lift-off in policy rates may come somewhat sooner than they had previously anticipated.

The result is a 0.19 percentage point drop in 10-year yields to the lowest point of the past week, albeit with a small rebound yesterday.

One mystery here is precisely what sparked the rush back into bonds. Some of the supposed underlying reasons have been kicking around for a few weeks with much more limited effect.

Perhaps the most popular explanation is positioning: investors' consensus had become so strong and the reflation trade too popular. When this positioning started to unravel, the resulting pick-up in bond prices tripped up investors that were still short. These sorts of squeezes can become self-reinforcing.

Major, who is sticking to his 1 per cent 10-year yield target for the end of the year, is not convinced. "Positioning is ex-post rationalisation," he said. "It's a little bit intellectually bankrupt."

But he suggests that investors should think again about the real drivers of demand for government bonds even at times of enormous issuance. "You can flip them into cash without even moving the price. That's true liquidity," he said. "Can you do that with your house? Can you do it with crypto?"

So what next? Naturally, it takes two sides to make a market. UBS Wealth Management said this week that it still expects yields to reach 2 per cent this year while the BlackRock Investment Institute is also shying away from government bonds on the basis that skinny yields offer little cushion to compensate against shocks elsewhere in a portfolio.

Major, too, thinks the pick-up in bond prices is largely over for the time being. But he adds: "We're not going short and we haven't changed our forecasts. We have still got half a year to go."

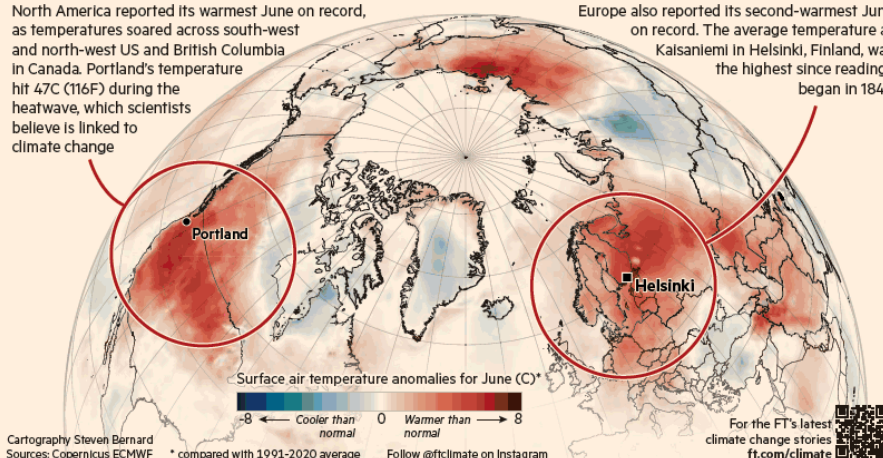
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NIKKEI Asia The voice of the Asian century

Climate change behind record-breaking temperatures in northern hemisphere

North America reported its warmest June on record, as temperatures soared across south-west and north-west US and British Columbia in Canada. Portland's temperature hit 47C (116F) during the heatwave, which scientists believe is linked to climate change.

Europe also reported its second-warmest June on record. The average temperature at Kalsanleimi in Helsinki, Finland, was the highest since readings began in 1844.



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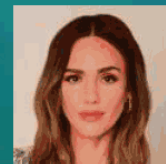
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Alone together The downsides of 21st-century dating — BOOKS, PAGE 9

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America's history wars

The battle over the founding myths did not begin with liberal activists — it was there from the start. *Simon Schama* on race, the flag and the search for the truth

On July 4, the night sky over the Hudson Valley was clear and empty. No planes, no mist, no rain, allowing fireworks to explode with spectacular brilliance. Above the towns, the whoosh and bang sounded out something more than the usual burst of patriotic glee: the soundtrack of relief, the sense of Covid in retreat, if not yet defeated.

At home, after the oohs and ahs, a miniature percussion section (our three small grandsons) marched up and down the back deck to the strains of Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever", putting their all into saucer-lid banging in time with the beat.

Absent from our family celebration — only because it's currently in London storage — is an enormous, slightly moth-eaten 19th-century Union Jack. I've been known to hang it on July 4, not as a gesture of British party-poop or to aggravate the neighbours, but because this particular neck of the woods has a fascinatingly mixed history as a theatre of the Revolutionary War.

The country around here, like all of America during the revolution, was divided into equally numbered thirds: Patriot, Loyalist and nervous neutrals. Across the river and a little way upstream, the improvised fort (actually earthworks) at Stony Point was established by the British general Clinton to control the Hudson, but was taken in a daring attack by "Mad" Anthony Wayne's force of American commandos on July 16 1779.

Closer to home, at Tarrytown, the British spy Major John André was caught, before he could reach Benedict Arnold at West Point. Documents André was carrying revealed the plan to deliver the fort to the British army and, to

Above: a girl helps carry a US flag during a Fourth of July Independence Day celebration in Washington DC — Reuters

Below: supporters of former president Donald Trump stand near Confederate and US flags as they gather for his first post-presidency campaign rally last month — Reuters



George Washington's incredulous horror, the perfidy of one of his most trusted generals.

Flags — these days, the rags of polemical rage — also have a mixed history. In 1929, the dashing aviator Opal Kunz dropped a mass of them from her plane directly over the site of the battle of Stony Point. Those were the "Betsy Ross" flags created by the eponymous Patriot upholsterer, featuring red and white stripes but with the five-pointed stars of the 13 colonies arranged in a circle to symbolise, optimistically, perpetual union.

But the Betsy Ross was preceded by the Grand Union Flag, designed by the Philadelphia milliner Margaret Manny for the new fleet of the American navy. Manny's flag had the obligatory stripes but, in place of stars, the top left canton

featured the Union Jack. But then history is a great mischief-maker, the enemy of simplicities, especially those of national allegiance. "The Star-Spangled Banner" was adopted as the American national anthem only in 1931. Prior to that, "America (My Country 'Tis of Thee)", first performed on July 4 1831, served as patriotic hymn along with "Hail Columbia".

Confusingly, its melody is that of the British national anthem. Which was, in fact, the point. The last line of the hymn of monarchist devotion is replaced by an American democratic alternative: "let freedom ring" supersedes "God save the king". But one artful contrafactum brought on another. In 1843, AG Duncan wrote a stinging, abolitionist version which begins:

My country 'tis of thee / Stronghold of slavery / Of thee I sing

The second verse is even more to the point:

My native country, thee, / Where all men are born free, / If white's their skin

The jarring discrepancy between the "self-evident" truth of human equality asserted in the Declaration of Independence and the brutal reality of America's founding being built on the backs of the enslaved is not, then, some contemporary piety of the "woke". Since Samuel Johnson acidly inquired "How is it that we hear the loudest yelps of liberty among the drivers of negroes?", this founding contradiction has never been out of view.

In 1773, Benjamin Rush published a pamphlet asking the same question: "Where is the difference between a British Senator who attempts to enslave his fellow subjects in America, by imposing taxes upon them contrary to law and justice, and the American Patriot who reduces his African brethren to slavery contrary to justice and humanity?"

The same contradiction was perhaps most famously restated by Frederick Douglass: "What to the slave is the

Fourth of July?" The serious issue of whether race is just an unfortunate asterisk to the Declaration of Independence or whether it was formative to the creation of the Union is at the heart of what has morphed into the American history wars of the present. Its mirror image in the UK asks whether colonialism was incidental or fundamental to British economic and political power.

Historians have had their say on both sides, but arguments from evidence have been sandbagged by politicians interested in making national allegiance rather than issues of economic and social equity the engine of electoral mobilisation. The result is to turn debate about what actually happened into a patriotic litmus test. Should history make you proud or ashamed? Unapologetically nationalist or penitentially iconoclastic?

The organic relationship between history and freedom lies precisely in the willingness of free states to accept their pasts, stained with wickedness as much as heroism

But history is neither in the business of self-congratulation nor self-flagellation. History is in the truth business. And if the truth should be hard to nail down in simplicities, then the least history can do is to disabuse its readers of outright falsehoods. Thus history will tell you, in irrefutable documentation and direct witness, that millions of European Jews were systematically murdered by the Nazis.

Notwithstanding the history oration delivered by Donald Trump on July 4 2019 during the tinhorn parade of military hardware, there were no revolutionary war airports for the Continental Army to seize, nor did it deliver a "total victory" at Fort Mchenry, that siege taking place in an altogether different war in 1814.

The truth indelibly and unapologetically imprinted in the Constitution of the Confederacy is that its rebellion was not fought merely for "states' rights", as

Continued on page 2

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Life

Note from the FTW editor



For millions in England, the victory in the Euros semi-final on Wednesday has inevitably evoked memories of 1966 – the last time England competed in a final in a major football tournament. It also took me back to the late 1990s, when I was working in a print newsroom and page plans were merrily torn up on deadline to adjust to late-breaking news. Normally by Wednesday night we are signing off on page proofs of *Life & Arts* – not this week. When the final whistle blew we knew we had to have an essay on football. Simon Kuper wrote through the night. The result, on page 16, is a wonderful piece.

My week has been shaped by remarkable sport. On Monday, I saw Roger Federer at Wimbledon win – and so beautifully – once more. There was a poignance to his victory. Was it his last on these courts, given his abrupt exit on Wednesday? I was also struck by the sense of limbo in the crowd. The scene was so happily near to normality and yet many had tales of isolation and Covid close to home. Now unlocking looms. For the last word on it – its wisdom or otherwise – turn to the Big Read in the main section.

The overarching theme of this edition is New York. Simon Schama writes compellingly as ever from there on America's history wars. We have on page 7 a dispatch on the New Yorkers enjoying a tourist-free summer, on page 18 a reflection on the enduring influence of Jane Jacobs, and on the back page Enuma Okoro writes a love letter to NYC as it returns to life.

Happy reading all.

Alec Russell



FT Weekend Festival – The Reawakening: Imagining a post-pandemic world. Live in the grounds of Kenwood House in London on September 4. For passes, programme and more info visit ftweekendfestival.com

Every day in a city, people fight battles for space. It's everywhere: the frenzied bidding for a broom closet in Knightsbridge, the Parisian maître d' who judges you too ugly to sit at a central table or, of vastly different moral import, police harassing young men of colour who dare venture into a rich neighbourhood. The €10 cappuccino on Venice's Piazza San Marco is the price of renting the space.

It's these battles that make urban life so stressful. After a year's pause during the pandemic, they have now returned, but in altered form. That's because space status – the value of each urban spot – has been shaken up and redistributed. The post-pandemic city will host new kinds of battles for space. Space status has soared since the 1970s when there were still jobless bohemians living in London's Soho and you could park your car on the doorsteps of flagship museums. As space has gained in value, cities have had to choose how to allocate it. Broadly, there are two approaches: you either sell it to the highest bidder (pretty much the definition of neoliberalism) or you recognise non-monetary forms of status.

For almost all of the past century, the non-monetary approach remained common. Soviet citizens needed a bureaucratic permit to move to Moscow. Even Manhattan used to be full of rent-controlled apartments allocated not so much to the poor as the well-connected. And when Jacques Chirac was mayor of Paris in the 1990s, he doled out city-owned grace-and-favour apartments to cronies. The future French prime minister Alain Juppé and some of his relatives were

What does the future hold for cities' hottest spots?

Simon Kuper

Opening shot

fortunate enough to get several (though Juppé said nothing improper had happened).

But no matter which criteria were used to allocate space, the winners were almost always high-status people – males, whites and the elderly – who generally felt entitled to them. Think of "manspreading" on the subway, SUVs pushing kids off the streets, baby boomers winning the housing market and New York City's "stop-and-frisk" policy, which disproportionately targeted black and Latino people.

Gradually, neoliberal allocation of space became the norm, especially in New York and London, but also in Beijing, which now periodically evicts so-called "low-end residents". Still, other forms of status continue to matter in cities. When the penniless octogenarian French writer Gabriel Matzneff fell into disgrace recently because of his paedophile writings, he was found to be living in a subsidised apartment on Paris's high-priced Left Bank, a tribute from the French state to his literary fame. Cities such as



Amsterdam now plan to divert apartments from their most lucrative use – as Airbnbs – and keep them for residents instead.

Even in New York, money isn't always decisive. A wonderful New York Times article from 2005 describes how the doormen of the nightclub Marquee chose which customers to admit. Large bribes didn't cut it. One tech entrepreneur was told: "Flashing a pile of cash is a complete and total admission that you don't belong here." Instead, the Marquee granted entry based on ever-changing non-monetary claims to status. From the 1990s, reported the newspaper, "waiflike beauty began trumping studied eccentricity as the main criterion".

As one doorman explained his philosophy: "My father always taught me that there are winners and losers in this world. My job is to make sure this place is full of winners." He had summed up the ideology of the modern city in a sentence.

Gentrification keeps creating high-status space, yet there is never enough

to go around. Now the pandemic has rejiggered the space status of rival forms of land. House prices have jumped, despite the trickle of residents out of cities, while demand for office and retail space has slumped. I've just been back to London for the first time since March 2020 and, months after the UK began reopening, the city centre was still so quiet that every day felt like Sunday. Wandering along a near-empty Oxford Street one morning, I was reminded of a provincial high street circa 2019.

There's an obvious trade-off here and the store group John Lewis has begun making it: it plans to turn some of its property across the UK into 7,000 rental homes. Also under pressure are the roads that occupy about 30 per cent of London's land, only 6 percentage points less than the space used for housing. In the new era of remote work and cycle lanes, that's too much asphalt.

Capitalism abhors a vacuum and, in expensive cities, space that has lost status will be reallocated to higher-status uses. This is an urban process that never stops: in the late 19th century, Oxford Street itself converted from residential and entertainment to retail.

Fifty years from now, a yuppie of the Late Anthropocene sprawled on his terrace in the November heat, gazing out over the dykes that line the Thames, will remark: "You know this building used to be a department store? Yeah, a Debenhams or something." But his date will have no idea what a department store was.

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History wars

Continued from page 1

its apologists like to pretend, but to preserve humans as property.

Article IV Section 2 of that document plainly states that "no slave or other person held to service or labor in any State or Territory of the Confederate States, under the laws thereof, escaping or lawfully carried into another shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such slave belongs".

Likewise, while it is true that the Parliament of Great Britain did indeed abolish the slave trade in March 1807, Congress had actually done the same three weeks earlier. Britain liquidated the institution of slavery itself in 1834 but on condition that obscene sums of British taxpayers' money would go to compensate former owners of the enslaved.

Come the civil war across the Atlantic, the great majority of the British political elite, including Liberal Party leaders such as Gladstone, whose family fortune was in cotton, cheered on the Confederacy. Vocal support for the Union was largely confined to radicals such as John Bright and his constituency of factory workers in Lancashire.

History casts shadows as well as light. It always has. Resistance to vain self-regard has been its working principle ever since Thucydides made the climax of his epic work not an Athenian triumph, but the city-empire's bloody comeuppance in the catastrophic expedition to Sicily.

The organic relationship between history and freedom lies precisely in the willingness of free states to accept a record of their pasts, stained with disaster and wickedness as much as heroism and achievement. Distorting the record so it becomes an exercise in the generalology of present glory is to corrupt its integrity. Best leave that to the dictators.

This is especially true of foundation myths. Fifteen years ago, in *Rough Crossings: Britain, the Slaves and the American Revolution*, I suggested (and I was by no means the first to do so) that the armed



From top: view from the Empire State Building, New York, September 2019; what may have been the first American flag, made by Betsy Ross, with the stars of the 13 colonies arranged in a circle. Sasha Arutyunova, National Archives

mobilisation of the southern colonies, its crossing of the Rubicon of separation, was, in large part, a response to fears of slave rebellions in the spring and summer of 1775.

Even before the governor of Virginia, Lord Dunmore, issued a proclamation promising liberty to slaves who joined the army of the king, alarm bells were being rung among Patriots that the unscrupulous British government would deliberately stir up both a slave insurrection as well as an armed movement of Native American tribes. No historians imagine this move was made out of the milk of humane compassion, but rather as a pre-emptive blow against the plantation economy of the rebels.

But British motives are not the point. Widespread fearfulness, close to panic, that a rising was at hand moved the colonial elites of Virginia and North and South Carolina to arm themselves, as much if not more, against an uprising of slaves and Indians as the redcoat soldiers of the king. This was what Jeffer-

son meant when, among his exhaustive inventory of crimes attributed to George III, the future president claimed that "he has excited domestic insurrections among us".

It has been one thing to maintain that the civil war was fought over race, but quite another to argue that the same question was central to its founding moment in 1775-76. The New York Times 1619 Project, with its implication that race runs like a red thread throughout American history, from the revolution to the civil war on to the Jim Crow years and the fight for voting and civil rights, outraged those on the nationalist right who believe that the job of history is first and foremost an act of national self-affirmation.

The notion that radical professors have hijacked American history to brood punitively on matters of race led Trump to launch a 1776 Commission, whose report promising to keep the national chronicle mostly upbeat and sunny became public just two days before his reluctant exit from the White House. A number of state administrations of Trumpian kidney have sought authority to monitor curricula for their proper quota of unblemished patriotic

pride: history as pom-pom waving.

Anger at the 1619 Project's emphasis on race in the history of the revolution has not been confined to the political right. Major authorities on revolutionary history denounced it for what they called shoddy scholarship and distorted use of sources. But recent works based on deep research, in particular Robert G Parkinson's *Thirteen Clocks: How Race United the Colonies and Made the Declaration of Independence*, as well as work by Alan Taylor, have produced an abundance of evidence to show unquestionably that, as Parkinson writes, "the glue that held [the Union] together was a shared fear of British agents working in tandem with enslaved and Native peoples to destroy them".

My moth-eaten Union Jack carries a piece of this chastening history in its fabric. I acquired it from a junky antique shop in Shelburne, Nova Scotia, when researching the history of the enslaved who had believed the promises of the Crown enough to flee their masters and join its army in their thousands. There were black soldiers on both sides in many of the American revolution's battles, including the decisive engagement at Yorktown. But on the conclusion of the peace in 1783, Washington demanded the return of those former slaves to their owners.

To his credit, the last British governor, Sir Guy Carleton, refused, insisting that the promise of freedom would be honoured. More than 2,000 sailed out of New York harbour along with white Loyalists to Nova Scotia where, predictably, the land promised to them, including lots around Shelburne, was either withheld or reduced to the most uncultivable and rocky soil. Disenchanted though still legally free, many went with the young John Clarkson's fleet to resettle in West Africa, in what became Sierra Leone.

The Nova Scotia flag is evidently of a later date but, when I unfurl it, the place and the history seem woven into its threadbare fabric and the picture of that surprising, sobering past comes alive in all its tragic complexity. Which is, rather than a pep pill for national happiness, what history most valuably yields.

Simon Schama is an FT contributing editor

Hemingway and the antidote to life online

A new TV series on the writer comes at a moment when we need an infusion of his restless spirit.

By Fani Papageorgiou

Do you know the good years when you're in them? Foreign correspondent, Red Cross ambulance driver during the first world war, deep-sea fisherman in the Gulf Stream, survivor of two plane crashes, big-game hunter, virile lover, friend of matadors, the man who liberated the bar at the Ritz Hotel from the Nazis – Ernest Hemingway showed us that safety is an illusion and that life is a wild adventure or nothing at all.

Since the pandemic began, days and months online have been mostly barren, a series of high doorways that lead nowhere. The time for an injection

of Hemingway's spirit is now. The six-hour series streaming now on the BBC, by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick, examines the writer's enduring influence on literature and culture, and echoes Toni Morrison's plea – don't settle for happiness.

It took the documentary makers seven years to complete the project of throwing light on Hemingway's oversized life – and contradictions – and the list is long. The mercurial writer, the body of work, the four wives, the excessive drinking, the obsession with bullfighting, the depression, the persona that fed the myth until he became a celebrity author, his dazzling success and creative destruction.

At 17, studying *The Nick Adams Stories* in my English class at school, I came to identify with the notions of initiation into adulthood and coming of age. There is something devastating

about life, Hemingway's semi-autobiographical short stories suggest, but it is a privilege to experience it all. My Greece was far away from his summers in northern Michigan, but there is no better writer for a non-native English speaker who aspires to one day master the language.

The Kansas City Star, whose style handbook demanded short, precise sentences and paragraphs, proved to be an influential training ground for Hemingway. Distrusting adjectives, he understood the value of the simple, declarative sentence, and in his economical, understated prose style he tried not only to prune language but "to write about the whole damned world".

Don't be tractable, his stories seem to tell us. Be reckless by committing to the principle. And on cue, accident prone, Hemingway suffered multiple brain injuries throughout his life.

Disobeying doctors' orders, he drank even in hospital. Martinis, daiquiris, tequila, scotch and bourbon flowed in his veins without respite.

He believed the tragedy of the bullfight was so well ordered and so strongly disciplined by ritual that it refuted any moral wrongness. Yet, self-aggrandising, he ended up becoming a controversial figure because of his dated machismo and suspicions of toxic masculinity.

I used to sit in the garden, in my Athenian suburb, poring over books and magazine photographs of Hemingway – sitting at his typewriter, in the bullfighting rings of Spain, in Cuba, Italy, in cafés in Montparnasse, on African safaris, in boats off the Florida Keys – evidence of a life lived fiercely through the body and the mind.

"Writing at its best is a lonely life," Hemingway said in his acceptance

speech for the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1954, and then echoed that in his Paris Review interview in 1958: "The further you go in writing, the more alone you are."

For years I couldn't understand how anyone could claim to be so lonely while having such a wild time. Shooting lions or driving an ambulance were beyond me but, because of him, I joined the Red Cross and trained as a nurse so I, too, could go out into the world and be useful in case of war. The problem is always what to do with life. And so it came that his muscular prose and discipline were nourished by his action-packed years.

He wrote about June twilight in the Dolomites and what it feels like trailing your hand in the water in a moving canoe, about an ageing fisherman struggling with a giant marlin off the coast of Cuba (*The Old Man and the*

Sea), about expat journalists and writers living in Paris in the 1920s (*A Moveable Feast*), about a dynamiter assigned to blow up a bridge during the Spanish civil war (*For Whom the Bell Tolls*). "He could beat anything, he thought, because no thing could hurt him if he did not care" (*The Snows of Kilimanjaro*).

So what do we keep of Hemingway? A hunter, boxer and drinker, he knew that the older you get, the more every void is the same void, yet he showed us that almost everything happens in language. In his uncluttered style, he strived to do a rather complex thing. To show how life's underlying sadness could blunt even the emotions nesting in the solar plexus, the place one feels hope or happiness.

Between pain and nothing, he chose pain, so we shed the myth but keep both his emollient and disquieting words, as well as his courage.

Lunch with the FT Isabella Tree

'One day we won't need nature reserves'

Two decades ago, she turned her family's intensively farmed estate over to nature and became the face of the rewilding movement. Over (locally caught) sea bass, the conservationist tells *Laura Battle* about bringing back biodiversity, the problem with veganism – and why cloning mammoths is a bad idea

Three weeks of glorious sunshine have broken with a deluge. A morning of persistent rain has washed away any petrichor sweetness – the sodden countryside now smells vaguely cabbagey – and thunderous clouds glower overhead.

Yet the landscape spread before Isabella Tree, as she leads the way through mud and puddles, is almost savannah-like in character. Chattering songbirds dart between outcrops of thorny scrub, herds of deer resemble antelope grazing the pasture in between and, as we pause for a second at the top of a raised wooden viewing platform, there it is: the whispered *turr-turr* of a turtle dove.

It is hard to believe that this land – part of Knepp Castle Estate, where Tree and her husband, Charlie Burrell, have developed one of the world's most daring and controversial rewilding projects – is less than 50 miles from central London. Or that just 18 years ago, the ground beneath our feet was a neat patchwork of arable fields.

After giving up conventional farming in the early 2000s, Tree and Burrell removed 70 miles of internal fences, introduced small herds of free-roaming herbivores, including English longhorn cattle and Tamworth pigs, and then stepped back to allow nature to reclaim their 3,500-acre estate.

The results were transformational: Knepp is now home to the country's largest population of rare purple emperor butterflies, 13 of the UK's 17 species of bat, and more than 600 invertebrate species; turtle doves, a bird that has seen its population plummet 96 per cent since 1970, have returned in significant numbers, with 23 singing males recorded at Knepp last year.

"It has been astonishing, beyond anyone's wildest dreams, the biodiversity," Tree says. "We know that we're restoring our soils, we've doubled our soil carbon content in less than 20 years... but without nature connectivity and land restoration, all these species at Knepp can't spill over into the surrounding landscape and colonise elsewhere because there just isn't the habitat for them."

Over the past two decades, Knepp has become something sought-after and scarce: an environmental success story. Since Tree's bestselling account of the project, *Wilding: The Return of Nature to a British Farm*, was published in 2018, she and Burrell have been approached by 75 TV and film crews looking to adapt the book.

The project's milestones now feature on the national news, while policymakers, campers and wildlife enthusiasts have rushed to visit. But the praise has been far from universal. Early on, she and Burrell were inundated by complaints from locals outraged at Knepp's hands-off approach to ragwort (the yellow wild flower which is defined as a "harmful weed" by the government but is also known to support at least 177 species of insects).

"I had a letter this week, actually, from a woman – a 'Yours sincerely, disgusted' letter – saying: 'I loved everything about your book except for the ragwort chapter,'" Tree says. More widely, there are significant numbers of farmers, and even a few conservationists, who believe that rewilding does more harm than good.

At a time when governments and communities are grappling with the intertwined crises of climate change and ecological collapse, Knepp has come to represent a beacon of hope – but also a nexus of societal and environmental conflict.

We squelch onwards as another rain shower arrives to admire some white storks perched on nests high in the trees – the results of a successful reintroduction programme, and among the first breeding pairs in the UK for more than 600 years. On the way, we chat to two of Knepp's volunteer litter pickers.



Garan Murphy

| JEREMY'S RESTAURANT | |
|--|--------|
| Borde Hill Gardens, Haywards Heath RH16 1XP | |
| Squid with pappardelle, green olive, tomato, basil | £12 |
| Chilled asparagus and almond soup | £7 |
| Lemon gnocchi with courgette flower, curd, marjoram, Swiss chard | £18 |
| Wild sea bass with scallops, heritage beetroot, watermelon, coconut bisque | £26 |
| Large sparkling water | £3.25 |
| Total (inc tip) | £74.53 |

"When lockdown was released and people were allowed out, the feedback was so amazing, people were just thrilled to be out and about," Tree says. But an increase in footfall meant a dramatic rise in litter and incidents of dogs chasing the animals. "We had 10,000 people [visit] in less than three months, and we just weren't set up for it."

It's a delicate balancing act. Tree admits she is firmly against any move to extend England's right to roam laws. "At the moment we're just hammering our tiny little nature recovery areas and wildlife... doesn't have a chance." But she is keen to promote the importance of public access to nature, and pragmatic enough to realise that Knepp depends on it.

Already, they offer a full calendar of events, from butterfly safaris (£50 per person) to rewilding workshops (£195 per person); a warden is soon to join a staff that comprises the equivalent of 49 full-time roles, and I'm shown a cluster of farm buildings that will be converted into a shop and restaurant, alongside a new car park and signposted walk.

Site visit over, we set off in the car for lunch near Haywards Heath – and Tree explains her choice of restaurant. Jeremy, the proprietor, has been a friend of the couple since the early 1990s, when he owned a pub close to Knepp.

"We used to supply him with ice-cream, cream and yoghurt back in the day when we were farming," she says. "There was one night that went down in history, when his sous chef said our delivery hadn't been on time, or something, and Charlie said it had. They got into an argument and eventually Jeremy said: 'There's only one way to work this out: you'll have to wrestle.' So he set up a circle of flaming torches in the garden, and Charlie, who was then still playing rugby, and the sous chef, who was also a rugby player, wrestled," she laughs. "I think the chef won."

Jeremy, thankfully, has mellowed into a congenial host. As Tree and I are led past tables of well-turned-out lunchers, I realise we are rather underdressed in our almost matching blue shirts and jeans.

"This feels very, very odd," she says, smiling as we settle at our table. "I don't think I've been in a restaurant or a pub for over five months." Tap water seems a bit ascetic in the circumstances and the wine list is sadly off-limits (Tree has an

afternoon Zoom meeting and I'm driving); we settle for sparkling water.

Like other companies, Knepp has taken a financial hit from the pandemic. The ecotourism side of the business, which is budgeted to turn over £800,000 this year, has made a loss of £500,000 because of the forced closure of the campsite and safari tours, although Tree is quick to acknowledge their relative good fortune.

During the first lockdown both of their adult children were at home and attention turned to the development of a new website to market pork, beef and venison from the estate, set up with the help of their son, Ned, and his girlfriend, Lia. "We ate an enormous amount of meat because they were taking beautiful photographs – they make an uncooked heart look appetising," she says. "Now the website's up and running, we can go back to vegetables!"

As if on cue, some appetisers arrive: tiny squares of (and I'll have to quote the waitress here) "tarragon and ricotta frittata, with a courgette salad and pecan crumb".

Our conversation would not endear her to many vegans, but then Tree has been here before. Three years ago she wrote a Guardian opinion piece that challenged what she saw as the oversimplification of the veganism argument and provoked a furious backlash.

"I think vegans have done an amazing thing, getting us to think about where our meat comes from," but she says, plant-based systems that use only vegetable compost depend on transporting this material from cities, where it mostly ends up, back to the countryside at a "huge carbon cost".

So what are her principles when it comes to food? "I won't eat meat, usually, unless I know I can trust the source it's from – here I know they're very good about where they source their meat from," she says. "I've chosen sea bass because it's locally caught, but there's a lot of fish I now wouldn't want to eat: cod, probably – definitely not tuna of any description."

What about squid? I ask, suddenly fearful for my starter. "Squid, I don't know," Tree replies, bobbing her head as if in deliberation, before flashing a forgiving smile. "It's a minefield! You have to have a PhD in every food item to know whether you are doing the right thing. I think that's what I was trying to get across in that article – that by simply switching from dairy to almond milk, you could be doing even more damage."

My squid, as it happens, is delicious and served with pappardelle, tomato, basil and green olive sauce – somehow much more than the sum of its parts.

"I don't like provoking just for the sake

of it, but if there's something I really think needs to be said, that is misunderstood or being misrepresented, then I just can't help myself," she says, stopping to dip her spoon into a bright green bowl of asparagus soup. "I think it's important not to let people frighten you."

Tree is straightforward, engaging and fun – far from the caricature of fey dilettantism that her detractors may wish to paint, although her background is unquestionably grand. She and Burrell moved in to Knepp Castle in their early twenties, when he inherited the estate from his grandparents.

"It was a pretty forbidding house to begin with, and Charlie's grandmother was pathologically mean, so the curtains were indestructible – even the clothes moths turned their nose up at the curtains – and they would never quite meet in the middle," she says. "We had to drag the house kicking and screaming into the 20th century."

It was a happy childhood in rural Dorset, as much as nominative determinism, that pointed Tree towards a career as a travel and nature writer, and ecologist. "I was very rebellious when I was younger and I set up a pagan alternative with my friend, at [convent school]. We had a den in the woods where we used to dress up in robes and worship deer antlers and things," she laughs. While her upbringing was the epitome of aristocratic privilege – her grandparents included the great American taste-maker Nancy Lancaster and the 10th Duke of Devonshire – Tree was always aware she had been adopted as a baby.

I ask how her life might have been different had she remained with her birth mother (whom Tree met before her early death in 2002), but it's a question she doesn't quite answer. "There's a funny sense of objectivity, I think, if you're adopted because you grow up sort of knowing your life has spun on a sixpence and you've ended up on a trajectory that's completely different to what it could have been. I think it gives you a sense of fate, you can't square it otherwise..." she says. "I'm not describing it very well."

There is a natural pause with the arrival of our colourful main courses: lemon gnocchi, with bright green pea shoots and a stuffed *tem-pura* courgette flower for me, and Tree's sea bass, with its vivid accompaniment of scallops, beetroot and watermelon.

We circle back to the issue of food, and some of the most frequent criticisms of rewilding: that by taking large swaths of land out of cultivation it threatens both food security and rural heritage. In *Wilding*, Tree highlights the enormous problem of food waste, and the fact that many farmers "like ourselves" have been driven out of business because of falling commodity prices as a result of subsidies and overproduction.

As for the cultural question, "actually, what you're seeing in Europe is that it reinvigorates those villages that are being abandoned," she says, citing Faia Brava, a community-led rewilding project in Portugal. "We've got to think in terms of novel ecosystems and how we can weave our history into a viable future."

The rewilding movement grew from a theory developed in the 1980s and 1990s which asserted that, until the megafauna of the Pleistocene era (such as mammoths, mastodons and sabre-toothed cats) began to die out, most of the planet was covered with a shifting landscape of grassland and scrub rather than closed-canopy forest, as had been the prevailing belief.

What early rewilding projects – such as the reintroduction of wolves in Yellowstone National Park, or the Oostvaardersplassen reserve in the Netherlands – sought to do was recreate those early conditions. "It's a spectrum," Tree says. "The bigger the area, the less management." At Yellowstone, there is now a complete "suite of species", while at Knepp, in the absence of an apex predator, the herbivores still need to be culled.

One logical endpoint, and already the focus of ethical debate, is the de-extinction of megafauna. "I think at the moment the idea of cloning a mammoth, it's problematic... That money could be much better spent on restoring habitat and protecting the species we have already that are about to fall off the cliff."

Back to reality: Tree has to dash to her meeting, yet another related to Knepp's campaign against plans for several new housing developments nearby. Not only

'I don't like provoking just for the sake of it, but if there's something I really think needs to be said, that is misunderstood or being misrepresented, then I just can't help myself'

are the sites home to several endangered species but, she says, are crucial as wildlife corridors connecting the estate with nearby woodland. It's an illustration of the government's conflicted approach – on the one hand developing an ambitious environment bill, and on the other aiming to relax planning rules for greenfield sites, she adds.

"I think there's also a very unhealthy relationship between developers and the Tory party, both at national and local level," Tree says.

There is no question that Knepp has an enormous advantage – its proximity to London, the fact the estate is a discrete block of land, not to mention the family's private wealth – but Tree believes that if the government's new agricultural policy is implemented well, aspects of Knepp could be adopted by functioning farms across the country.

In time, perhaps, there might even be less need for species-focused reserves. "Eventually, I see conventional conservation and rewilding being the same thing, it will be the same approach and one day we won't need nature reserves at all because we'll have connected them all, and populations will be thriving and we won't need to protect anything," Tree says, laughing as she ties a neat metaphorical bow.

So, you're an optimist? "Yeah!" she replies, before qualifying: "I am today."

Laura Battle is the FT's deputy books editor

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Style

Haute couture | Europeans and a few brave Americans came to Paris to see the new collections. By Alexander Fury

After an 18-month hiatus, the haute couture shows were staged in Paris. This was, perhaps, a dry run for a return to the fashion circus of old, pre-pandemic — a full fashion week of shows and appointments, meetings, black-tie dinners for art foundations and perfume launches, and a jaunt to Versailles. The mood seemed buoyant: the weather was great, the collections good.

Yet halcyon days were not quite back. Client attendance was cautious, quarantine restrictions in Asia limiting travel of important customers from the region. It was disturbingly easy to get a table at many popular restaurants.

"Today there will be mainly European clients. And a couple of courageous Americans," Pietro Beccari, chairman and chief executive of Dior, said before the house's couture show. A Covid-19 test result had to be flashed to be permitted backstage access. Giorgio Armani had around 50 clients at his two haute couture presentations, half the typical number; Chanel said around 40 made the trip out of the usual 150 to 180.

Balenciaga returned to couture after a 53-year absence with a much-anticipated collection by creative director Demna Gvasalia that wasn't just for show. "The ultra-high net worth individual has boomed in 2020, and is growing. We have clients that are interested in our codes, our brand, Demna's vision — at every level," says Balenciaga chief executive Cédric Charbit. "Couture is an investment."

After two couture seasons designing collections for film, Dior's Maria Grazia Chiuri says this season was about up-close intimacy. Her collection was back-dropped by a hand-embroidered installation by the French artist Eva Jospin, and filled with minuscule Grecian-style hand pleating, microscopic fabric chains and multiple hand-woven tweeds. The same fibres were used for knits.

"This material aspect is impossible to see in film," Chiuri insists, tugging at a sweater's sleeve. If the past two Dior films served to glorify Dior's evening-wear, this was grounded in daywear — which, perhaps, made it a somewhat sombre outing. But when clients come, they find an entire wardrobe here.

Wedding dresses were big, ideologically and literally: 75 metres of silk taffeta was cartridge-pleated into a bubbling salon-size Schiaparelli gown by artistic director Daniel Roseberry; Balenciaga recreated an iconic 1967 model; and, under a shower of confetti, the actress Margaret Qualley, in a satin dress, played bride at Chanel and tossed her bouquet. Bridal gowns are tradi-



The return of shows

The haute couture AW21 collections, clockwise from main: Balenciaga; Armani; Dior; Chanel; Schiaparelli; Alaïa

tional couture show-stoppers, but they're also the closest couture comes to a money-spinner: if a woman is going to spend upwards of £200,000 on a dress, it's probably for her wedding day.

Roseberry himself allowed that clients had been requesting wedding gowns, and he was happy to oblige. I'm unsure if they've been asking for denims studded with life-sized golden roses and ear lobes, or matador jackets embroidered with original 1930s threads — but those were there, too. This Schiaparelli collection was presented on static man-

nequins strung through a series of rooms, but it vibrated with life, finally fully re-energising this long-moribund fashion name with 21st-century energy.

The style of the late 1980s veered up again and again. Armani created gowns that were exuberant, light to hold but heavily ruffled and embroidered — he pinpointed his Chinese clients' taste for extravagance.

Virginie Viard's Chanel collection referenced the 1880s and the work of artists Berthe Morisot and Edouard Manet with its thick daubs of impressionistic

embroideries in intense hues; but the silhouettes were also more 1980s, with broad-shouldered tweeds, thick braid, low-notched lapels. Models in delicate Victorian lingerie bloomers and camisoles had shades of Madonna; full tulle skirts and picture hats were a touch Princess Diana. It's a period eagerly revived by 20-somethings, a golden age for French haute couture and the start of Chanel's rebirth as one of fashion's powerhouses under the late Karl Lagerfeld.

Lagerfeld exceptionally designed for two couture houses: the other, Fendi, is

now headed by Kim Jones, who showed his couture via a film directed by Luca Guadagnino. It was heavenly: women dressed in white, like de Chirico angels in a reproduction of the label's headquarters, the Palazzo della Civiltà.

The clothes themselves drew from the architecture of Rome, reproducing inlaid marbles and pietra dura mosaics through mind-boggling intense leather and embroidery, shoes balanced on heels like arched colonnades.

Jones has found his sweet spot: if his first collection fused his own British heritage with Fendi's, this was speaking pure Italian, crafting an identity for a fashion house that has, in the past, seemed trend-driven and somewhat nebulous. It's now in sharp focus — Roman, regal, but real.

"I think I've nailed it," Jones shrugged to me. He had.

More new names, more great clothes. Designer Pieter Mulier, the longtime right-hand man to Raf Simons, made his Alaïa debut on the street where the founder both lived and worked, a collection filled with memories of Alaïa rather than reproduction. It also mixed together ready-to-wear and couture, meaning there was stuff for normal peo-

The clothes drew from the architecture of Rome, reproducing inlaid marbles and pietra dura mosaics

ple to get their hands on — knits with sinuous U-bend seams over torsos, precisely tailored A-line coats, waist-cinching belts and metal-studded handbags. It had a modern, youthful energy. You felt you'd be seeing more of these clothes on the streets.

Balenciaga was a trip, a fashion geek-out at the very highest level. It was like stepping back in time: through resurrected couture salons, in absolute silence, a couture collection of total formality and rigour paraded. If its purpose was to posit an alternative to Balenciaga's contemporary history of hyper-successful streetwear, it accomplished its aim. It was impossible not to sit in those hallowed halls — fashion holy ground — and not recall legendary stories of the founder Cristóbal Balenciaga, whom Christian Dior once called "the master of us all".

"Balenciaga and couture is an effort or quest for perfection," Gvasalia says. But he played with that idea — Balenciaga's salons were "aged" with painted patina of mould and water-marks, and the clothes were twisted takes on Cristóbal classics. At first glance, the unfitted silk suits and flying saucer hats were direct throwbacks to mid-century — but embroidery seemed to be unravelling on gowns slit open in back to reveal trousers, and silk robes were permanently crumpled.

These effects were, of course, intricately and painstakingly achieved. There were even couture jeans, riveted with sterling silver, and track-suits.

"It's very much me, but also Balenciaga," Gvasalia says, by simple way of explanation. I suspect clients will love buying both.



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Jean Paul Gaultier — the remix

Chitose Abe's take on the French icon's work aims to make the brand resonate in a new era. By Alexander Fury

met her through her clothes." Jean Paul Gaultier — engineer of Madonna's conical brassiere, former co-presenter of *Eurotrash* and eternal enfant terrible, even at 69 — is talking about the heir to his fashion throne. Well, the heir for one season. She is Chitose Abe, the 56-year-old Japanese designer of the brand Sacai who, for the Autumn/Winter 2021 haute couture season, was invited to design Jean Paul Gaultier's collection and thus join an elite group of just 16 fashion houses (seven of which really matter) that create made-to-measure clothes for some of the world's richest women.

Although Gaultier — man and work — is omnipresent in this collection, both Gaultier and Abe stress this "collaboration" is actually nothing of the sort. Gaultier officially retired last January with a blowout couture show: he has given over his archives and workrooms, reputedly one of the best in Paris, to Abe for her reinterpretation, but has stayed well out of the design process.

He also divested himself of his business a while ago, first to Hermès, which took a 35 per cent stake in 1999 (later raised to 45 per cent) and then sold in 2011 to Puig. The family-owned Spanish fashion and beauty group manufacture Gaultier's fragrances — with revenues estimated at €150m-€200m — and its portfolio also includes the fashion houses Paco Rabanne and Carolina Herrera. So for Gaultier, it's not about money. Rather, it's about shaking up the brand image — an endeavour sup-



ported by Antoine Gagey, the label's general manager since early last year — and making it resonate for a new era, and a new group of fans.

Pre-show preparation being what it is, I meet the two designers a day apart. First Abe, in Gaultier's own former design studio, on the third floor of the company's headquarters in Paris, a handsome Belle Époque building that in 2002 served as the campaign headquarters for presidential hopeful Lionel Jospin. Three days before her haute couture debut, Abe is perfecting a sequence of garments on models that all look familiar. "All the looks are inspired by his iconic looks," says Abe, through a translator. "The Madonna corset," she points to a mash-up of satin and pin-stripe, straight from Madonna's "Blonde Ambition" era. "Björk" — her finger now rests to a reiteration of a famous fake-fur look worn by the Icelandic singer when she modelled in a 1994 Gaultier show inspired by Inuit culture.

"And him!" There was Gaultier's own Eurotrash-era doppelgänger in a striped sweater and kilt, their stripes and tartan actually trompe l'oeil effects crafted from organza. A bustling blue evening

gown is based on French workman's jackets, which Gaultier habitually wears these days; bomber jackets and trenchcoats are twisted into more evening gowns.

There's also a lot of pin-stripe (more shades of Madonna), which Gaultier himself wears the next day when I meet him two floors below.

Gaultier discovered Sacai's clothes in Tokyo. "A *marinière*," he says, the name of the fisherman-style blue and white striped sweater, stereotypically French, that is a part of his fashion identity. "And on the back was guipure lace. I said wow!" She was the first designer he approached to be "guest couturier" of his line (there will be others).

It's an interesting idea, and a modern one — remixing a fashion house's identity season after season. It's a notion had actually occurred to Gaultier back in 1987. The house of Jean Patou (now part of LVMH) had parted ways with its star designer, Christian Lacroix. Gaultier had worked at Patou in the 1970s, and



Left: fittings for the AW21 couture show at the Jean Paul Gaultier headquarters in Paris
Below: Jean Paul Gaultier with Chitose Abe
Micael Alves, Laura Pellissier

came up with the concept of inviting leading ready-to-wear designers to offer their point of view on Patou's couture.

This must also be an expensive endeavour for Puig. Couture is labour-intensive and low-volume; few manage to turn a profit from it. However, it syncs with Puig's "reboot" of Gaultier's fragrances, *Classique* and *Le Male*, both of which still boast positions in the top 10 best-selling fragrances in most international markets.

Each has been rebranded with savvy, youth-resonant digital campaigns — the homoerotic imagery around *Le Male*, whose bottle resembles a well-muscled man's torso, was spun out into content on Instagram around Pride month this June, aligning Gaultier with a new LGBTQ+ generation.

Gaultier's ready-to-wear arm, shuttered in 2015, was relaunched this year, the first drops trading on those patterns and his signature stripes, in a digital-first business model devised to entice millennial and Gen-Z consumers. Gaultier isn't involved in that — he has moved into what Gagey has described as an "ambassador" role, working on exhibitions and film costumes, and becoming judge of France's version of *Dancing with the Stars* later this year. "I don't want to influence," Gaultier says of Abe. "I left her free, completely free."

Although "remixing" the brand's couture serves as ideal publicity material for those entry-level fragrances, Abe didn't design the collection to be just for show. "It will be sold to couture clients," Abe asserts, as she plays with a strapless ballgown-cum-trench. "Couture and ready-to-wear are different, but I do want it to be worn." So, it seems, does Gaultier — clothes, perfume, the lot.

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Fire: the Ninth Prix Pictet Shortlist

It was a year like no other. Through months of lockdown and confinement museums and galleries remained closed; exhibitions were cancelled, and the art world carousel came to a shuddering halt. The Prix Pictet's global tour of *Hope*, now tentatively resumed, was unable to exhibit between Lausanne in September 2020 and Verona in May 2021.

Yet photographers continued to work. A resilience that the Prix Pictet celebrated with the publication of the book *Confinement*, featuring photographic responses to the crisis by 43 artists previously shortlisted for the award. At the same time, the award began its ninth cycle with the theme of *Fire*.

Over the past thirteen years the Prix Pictet screening at the Théâtre Antique has become an important part of the opening week of the celebrated Les Rencontres d'Arles photography festival in the South of France.

On Thursday 8 July, Stephen Barber, Chair of the Prix Pictet, and Isabelle von Ribbentrop, Executive Director, announced the shortlist for the ninth cycle of the prize.

The shortlist features work by 13 artists from 10 countries on 4 continents. In making their selection, the independent jury, chaired by Sir David King, praised the outstanding quality of the portfolios submitted for the award.

The winner of the ninth Prix Pictet award (CHF100,000) will be announced at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London on Wednesday 15 December 2021.

Prix Pictet *Fire* will then embark on a world tour beginning with scheduled exhibitions in Tokyo, Zurich and New York.

Work from the shortlisted artists, together with outstanding images from the wider submission, will appear in the book *Fire*, to be published by teNeues in November. The portfolios of the shortlisted artists can be viewed online at www.prixpictet.com

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Style

A very British vacation

Travel | Fashion editors *Kate Finnigan* and *Teo van den Broeke* on how to pack a smart and sensible wardrobe for variable weather

'Pack for the weather you'll be getting' *Kate Finnigan's no-nonsense guide to a British holiday wardrobe*

Thanks to years of summering in Ireland, I know the key is to pack for the weather you'll be getting, not the weather you want.

My parents now live in Donegal on the north-west coast of Ireland, on a route known as the Wild Atlantic Way. This is poetic shorthand for every kind of weather every 15 minutes: cartoonish slants of rain, racing clouds, gales and, more often than you might expect, blue sky and sunshine. It rarely gets above 27C, though, so I know that throwing in sheer floaty dresses is a waste of time.

I'm not an over-packer, but I'm not a minimalist either. The thought of being caught out in weather-inappropriate clothing makes me anxious. In my opinion, the most stylish person at any outdoor event is not the person with the coolest outfit but the person who remains warm and dry in a downpour.

So, worst-case scenario first: rainwear. The Scandinavians do it best – Norwegian Rain's Raincho (£670, pantechinonstore.com) is cashmere-lined. I also have one of the unisex Tretorn Wings jackets (high-length, PVC-free polyurethane, £80, outsidersstore.com). Brilliant in rain, it can get sweaty, so don't wear it on a climb.

On the opposite side of the weather spectrum: sun. I like to be equipped to grab any tanning opportunity. At the slightest suggestion of a ray of Donegal sunshine, I'll put on denim shorts. The Board Fold shorts from Raey, the in-house brand at Matchesfashion.com, are a good, longer length (£125, Matchesfashion.com).

If you're not a shorts type, pack white or ecru jeans because they'll work with everything, though beige chinos or cargo pants might be easier to keep clean. I have a two-year-old pair by Acne Studios, but Rag & Bone has a similar style called Angela Field (£290; net-a-porter.com). Wear with an oversized shirt in denim, cotton or linen – always useful as an extra layer over a tank. This summer I keep turning to a navy linen pyjama shirt by Rossell (on sale at £99, rossellengland.com), which has a boxy shape and softens with every wash.



You're going to want a knit to throw over everything. I favour British labels such as & Daughter and Navy Grey and have discovered Charl Knitwear, a label founded by a former Burberry knitwear designer and inspired by Norfolk fishermen. The nautical striped Chibbles (£225, charlknitwear.co.uk) is my bag and works with shorts, jeans and chinos. I'd happily wear the shirt and chinos to dinner, but I might also fold in a breezy dress in linen or cotton. I feel dreamy about the romantic Mulberry

The most stylish person is not the person with the coolest outfit but the one who stays warm and dry

dress from Kindred of Ireland (£280, kindredofireland.com), which uses locally sourced linen. They're made to order so expect to wait up to four weeks. Can't wait? The Elizabeth linen dress by British brand NRBV has a similar feel (£125, nrbyclothing.com).

Footwear? Sandals, of course. Joseph's Fussbett ankle strap sandal in black has been my shoe of the summer so far, but it's now pretty much sold out in black. The brown colourway is still available

Above: Kate Finnigan at the Desborough Sailing Club wearing Charl Knitwear's Chibbles jumper and Raey's Board Fold shorts

Right: Teo van den Broeke at Chucs Belgravia wearing a Homme Plissé suit by Issey Miyake and Jil Sander shirt

Photographs taken for the FT by Max Miechowski



(on sale at £201, joseph-fashion.com) or try Jigsaw's Ivy leather footbed slider (£99, jigsaw-online.com). I also like Ancient Greek Sandals' comfort sole sandals, which are good for a day of touring (from £100, ancient-greek-sandals.com.) Travel in trainers to save space. I like Veja's V-10 in white (£115, matchesfashion.com).

I keep coming back to white because my number one rule is don't pack the rainbow. While it is tempting to think summer equals colour – there's that British holiday tendency to go for fisherman yellow jackets and patterned wellies – I keep to a limited palette. It means everything will work together, so when the wood stove won't light you'll be able to wear all your clothes at once and still look like a fancy kind of person – obviously the top consideration.

'I now limit myself to one holdall' *Teo van den Broeke on how to curate a city-smart travel wardrobe*

Do they actually call you 'Two Suitcases Teo?'" my sister squawked across the table during dinner in Soho. The year was 2017, I had been away at the menswear shows, I was exhausted, and I was regaling her with luggage-related horror stories from my month-long trip.

The worst of said tales involved me pushing two 26kg suitcases some 3km from my hotel in Florence to the train station in 39C heat because I couldn't get a taxi. Not only did I discover on sweat-drenched arrival that my train to Milan – the last of the day – had been cancelled, but my hotel no longer had any space. "I am never packing that much crap ever again," I grumbled.

For years, when travelling to Europe for fashion weeks, I attempted to take pretty much everything in my wardrobe

on every trip. The seasonal show merry-go-round was such a judgmental ride to be on I felt assured knowing that if I wanted to sport a hot pink Marni sweater vest with some silk Armani shorts and a pair of furry Birkenstocks, then, well, I could.

However, after my 2017 overpacking debacle I realised something had to give, and I forced myself to adopt a new, lighter, brighter mode of packing. I'm a metropolitan being at heart so my trips this summer will most likely be taken to this country's cities rather than to a windswept beach. Think long lunches at Bath's celebrated Olive Tree restaurant and long drams of single malt whisky in the cosy-cum-chi-chi bars of Edinburgh's Royal Mile.

My current approach is one I learnt from a former colleague, a well-seasoned traveller who for any trip – for however long – would always pack the same roster of pieces: three white shirts, three pairs of blue drawstring suit trousers, one blue crew neck sweater, one blue blazer, one pair of white sneakers, one pair of brown lace-ups, underwear

I've not mastered the art of minimal packing, but I have made great leaps since my Florentine mishap

as required and a coat if he was going somewhere cold.

And although I've not mastered the art of minimal packing with quite the same measured gusto, I have made great leaps and bounds since my Florentine mishap. I now limit myself to one hold-all or small suitcase per trip – whether at home or abroad – and I only pack a maximum of three versions of every item: no more than three T-shirts (Maison Margiela does a smart pack of three tees in shades of ivory, bone and white, £265, farfetch.com) and, say, no more than three shirts (you can't go wrong with a threesome of Uniqlo's slim-fit Oxford button-downs, £24.95, uniqlo.com) and no more than three shoes – a pair of driving shoes from Tod's (£360, tods.com), some white tennis shoes from Grenson (£210, matchesfashion.com) and a pair of desert boots from Clark's (£115, clarks.co.uk).

If I'm going away for longer than three days I allow myself to take more than three pairs of underwear, for obvious reasons, and when it comes to a coat, a bonded cotton trench from Mackintosh (£995, mrporter.com) can be layered up or down depending on the temperature and look unimpeachably elegant.

I've also learnt that clothing from Homme Plissé by Issey Miyake is a minimal packer's dream. Impossible to crease, machine washable, ridiculously light, a suit from the brand is as comfortable to slumber in on a sleeper train to Scotland as it is smart enough to attend a meeting.

My final top tip for packing light is to roll your clothes rather than fold them. Rolling not only minimises wasted air in your suitcase but also, by some miracle of physics (there's a reason I work in fashion), it also prevents clothes from creasing as much as when they're folded. Oh, and never travel to Florence in late June, it's like swimming through lava, however little you manage to pack. Bath is much easier to work with.

Valentino ventures from couture to cosmetics

Beauty | Make-up and perfume can be lucrative for luxury labels, but wooing increasingly informed consumers is more difficult than many suspect. By *Leila Abboud*

Before Valentino launched its first make-up line, creative director Pierpaolo Piccioli shot an advertising campaign featuring models in his couture designs and made up with the new lipsticks, foundations and blushes.

There was Teddy, a blond model whose black tattoos snake up his arms, in a skinny tie that contrasted with bright red lipstick and nail polish. And Ivana, whose half-closed eyes were adorned with a smoky snakelike line design that gave her a punk vibe even in a pale aqua gown. The portraits embodied Piccioli's intention to adapt the couture spirit of the luxury brand founded in Rome in 1960 to a decidedly different market – the highly competitive, lower-priced world of cosmetics.

In Instagram posts, the designer said the beauty line had been guided by the idea of a "couture clash" that would celebrate individuality and the creative excellence of high fashion. With the positioning, Valentino Beauty hopes to stand out in beauty aisles where sector leaders L'Oréal and Estée Lauder have scientific expertise and marketing might, and new, independent, often celebrity-helmed brands surf on their novelty factor.

But whether Valentino Beauty succeeds will depend on whether it can launch new products and find its niche. When luxury brands expand into cosmetics they are no longer the leaders but the upstarts who capture only a small part of the market.

Larissa Jensen, an analyst at market

research firm NPD, says brands have to work hard to win over today's more savvy and demanding consumers, who study ingredients and perfect techniques on social media. "Designer make-up brands cannot rely solely on their names any more to ensure sales," she says. "They need to offer something more, such as refillable packaging or a commitment to inclusivity."

Luxury houses are increasingly moving into cosmetics as they seek to attract new, often younger, consumers who cannot necessarily afford a €3,000 handbag. While the trend is not new, it has picked up pace with last year's arrival of Hermès to colour cosmetics, the relaunch of Gucci's beauty line, produced under licence by Coty, and now Valentino Beauty, which launched at Selfridges and online in 10 countries in late May.

Having a line of perfume or beauty products separate from their traditional leather goods or high-end fashions is a way for luxury brands to draw people to their world without lowering prices. It preserves the exclusivity that is key to their business model.

Many Dior or Chanel perfumes retail for less than €100 (although they have more exclusive ranges that cost more), while a Hermès lipstick costs €69. The aura from the name – along with often beautiful packaging that women are proud to flash when they take the product from their handbags – combine to command much higher prices than mass-market equivalents.

Valentino spent three years getting



Above: Valentino campaign; right: Rosso Valentino lipstick, £40; Go-Clutch Miniroso, £176, valentino-beauty.co.uk

the beauty line off the ground. "It took hours of work, never-ending meetings, discussions and brainstorming," said Piccioli on Instagram. It contracted with L'Oréal for a 15-year licence to develop and market the product line, which so far includes 50 lipstick hues, 40 shades of foundation and a new perfume called Born in Roma, among others. The compacts, pencils and bottles look flashy and joyful in a red hue with gold details, such as the V logo, on the lipsticks.

"We think there is a big potential for the brand, and that it can become

almost as big as Valentino's fashion business," says Garance Delaye, global president of Valentino Beauty at L'Oréal. "We want to be a global brand in all the major categories, so skincare is part of our plans, but not right away."

The roots of luxury brands diversifying into cosmetics go back to 1921, when Coco Chanel introduced the N°5 perfume. At the time it was rare for a couture house to make its own perfume. But N°5, packaged in a plain chemist's square bottle and made of roses and jasmine grown in the south of France, would fuel Chanel's growth into one of the world's biggest luxury brands.

A century later, Chanel still earns about a third of its revenue from sales of perfumes and cosmetics, making it the privately held group's second-biggest business after fashion, according to Citigroup analyst Thomas Chauvet.

Philippe Blondiaux, Chanel chief financial officer, says: "Chanel N°5 has a halo effect for our whole brand. It's a very important business for us."

Lipstick came next. Christian Dior conceived the first Rouge Dior in 1953 as a gift he would send to loyal customers for Christmas. As luxury houses slowly expanded into perfume and beauty, two models emerged.

Companies such as Dior, now owned by LVMH, and Chanel did their own product development, manufacturing and marketing in-house and more tightly managed distribution. Others opted to license their names to experienced manufacturers such as Coty, Puig and Inter Parfums in fragrance, or L'Oréal in beauty, thus ceding much control to them in return for a percentage of annual sales.

Although Chanel does not disclose figures for its beauty and fragrance business, LVMH does and its in-house strategy has paid off in steady growth over the past decade. It owns 14 brands, including heritage houses such as Christian Dior, Givenchy and Guerlain, as well as younger brands such as Benefit and Rihanna's Fenty beauty lines. In 2010, it generated about €3bn in sales from beauty and perfume on an operating profit of €332m, and by 2019, just before the pandemic hit, that had grown to €6.8bn in sales and €683 in operating profit.

Others have stumbled, though. Burberry tried to bring its beauty business in-house in 2013 only to struggle with the cost and complexity. It opted for a licence with Coty in 2017.

Kering, the parent company of Gucci, also expressed frustration in early 2019 over the slow pace of development of the Italian brand's beauty business,

which has been under licence to Coty since the 1990s. But with Gucci Beauty's relaunch in mid-2019 with an expanded product line, including foundations and

powders, the brand has its mojo back, says Sue Y Nabi, Coty chief executive. "You need to stand out and present a vision of the world to the consumer, and convey it all with high-quality products in distinctive, beautiful packaging," says Nabi. To match the style and ethos of Gucci's creative director Alessandro Michele, the brand's beauty line "should be bewitching and magical". The products have an opulent, retro aesthetic, with lipstick cases featuring ridged gold and star patterns.

Valentino wants its beauty line to reflect the youthful vibe the house has under Piccioli, says L'Oréal's Delaye. "Valentino is about life, exuberance

and celebration," she says. Valentino has also focused on refillables to attract environmentally minded consumers, with a goal of three-quarters of sales to be in such packaging. It has also bet big on combination products with several functions.

One example is the €199 Go-Clutch, a tiny bag on a gold chain just big enough to hold a face powder and miniature lipstick. It is a nod to the tiny enamelled bags with studs Piccioli has shown on catwalks. "Inspired by the couture but more accessible," says Delaye.



Summer in the city

US | They are increasingly free to travel but many New Yorkers are choosing to stay and rediscover the joys of city living. By *Lilah Raptopoulos*

In mid-June, a photo appeared on Instagram of New York mayoral hopeful Maya Wiley with congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, maskless, hugging members of rock band The Strokes in front of hundreds of screaming fans. They were in Irving Plaza for the city's first full-capacity indoor concert in more than a year. In each post that followed, New Yorkers were adamant: "New York is back!"

The city, of course, is not fully "back" the way we remember it. Hotels are running at only 50 per cent occupancy, according to analyst STR. Broadway is still almost entirely closed, and likely to be until September, while white-collar office workers are commuting to Midtown sporadically at most.

But the culture? The culture is bursting at the seams. On June 15, governor Andrew Cuomo lifted virtually all restrictions on the state. As the country reopens, New Yorkers are finally freer to leave, taking the trips we dreamt of in quarantine. But, strangely, many young New Yorkers are instead choosing to stay and bask in the reawakening of their city. This summer, New York is a playground for New Yorkers.

"New York is never going to be like this again," one friend tells me over drinks, pulling out her phone so we can share a Google calendar. The goal is to protect as much time in the city as possible. "Every weekend we leave," she says, slightly stressed, "is a weekend we're missing the magic!"

And magic it is: one Sunday afternoon I am squeezed between hundreds of strangers at Balla! Nueva York, dancing to Justin Strauss, a 40-year fixture on the New York DJ scene. On a weekday afternoon I walk through the Whitney Museum, almost entirely free of tourists, and stand in empty rooms with Dawoud Bey's photographs of black America and Julie Mehretu's abstract maps. A guard smiles, sitting on a stool. "It's beautiful, isn't it?" he says. "The museum has been reopening like everything else, but it sure is still quiet."

On Little Island, a whimsical new park floating atop the Hudson River at 14th Street, I'm one of the more than 400,000 people to visit since it opened in May. The park cost \$260m to build and costs \$0 to visit. Families loop along the paths, speaking languages I can't place. We are all mid-photo shoot, snapping not just the view but ourselves and each other. New York now a sexy Instagram backdrop for our re-emergence.

On Saturdays from 4pm to midnight, crowds gather at Queens Night Market in Flushing's Corona Park, where independent vendors sell food and art at New York's most celebrated cultural melting pot. Visitors huddle together, bopping to old-school funk while they taste each other's Tibetan dumplings,

jhalmuri wrapped in Bengali newspaper, Portuguese *pastéis de nata* and Malaysian *kaya* toast. Vendors are bringing double their expected product and selling out.

In the Meatpacking District, an outdoor, immersive off-Broadway production has emerged called *Seven Deadly Sins*: seven 10-minute plays, each based on a sin, performed in the windows of seven empty storefronts. We listen with headphones, the beeps and sirens of the city leaking through. We laugh, whoop and wipe tears. The quality of the plays varies, but does it matter? It's live theatre on an imaginative stage, and we are shoulder to shoulder with other New Yorkers, tourists in our own town.

The re-emergence of New York is a word-of-mouth game of cat and mouse. Where do you dance? What's open until 4am? What's back?

On weekends, Vanderbilt Avenue in Brooklyn is closed to vehicles, so restaurants can spill out onto the street and musicians can perform. On the Lower East Side, bars heave. A neighbourhood

Strangers, they talk now. Sit down alone to tie your shoe and, within five minutes, you'll be in conversation

once lost to preppy white 20-somethings is now packed with people of all ages and races.

And strangers, they talk now. A lot. Sit down alone to tie your shoe and, within five minutes, you'll be deep in conversation about crypto, or therapy, or the things you bought in quarantine.

One Thursday in Crown Heights, a new live music venue and café called Wild Birds is already packed by 6pm. They opened in March 2020 and sustained themselves through the winter selling plants and wine. Co-owner Luke Bonner collects tips for the first of his three musical acts that night, an Afro-Latin jazz band. When he reaches my table I tell him I'm writing about New York reopening, and his eyes grow wide. "Don't give us too much exposure," he laughs. "We can barely keep up as it is."

One New Yorker on TikTok asks the important questions: does this summer in the city feel different for everyone, and why are people behaving like the stars of their own film? "Everyone is giving main character energy," he whispers to us, the audience in his phone. "And are y'all feeling the eye contact or is it just me? It can't just be me."

"This is one of the benefits of there not being a lot of international travel right now," says Ian Schragger, the celebrated hotelier and co-founder of Studio



Clockwise from main: late sun at Little Island, July 4; an aerial view of Little Island; The Rogers Garden in Flatbush; a comedy show at Little Island

Photographed for the FT by Ahmed Gaber
Aerial view from Alamy

54. Global cities can accidentally lose sight of their residents in favour of tourists, he tells me. "But what you're seeing now is really the New Yorkers, the quintessential New York people, ready to go mad, to take back their city, to enjoy it."

At 74, he has just reopened his Lower East Side hotel Public, with a new Peruvian restaurant, Popular, and a fresh and relevant theme: luxury for all. He tells me that our grandparents' notion of luxury means nothing any more, and the concept of scarcity is entirely outdated. The pandemic has only pushed that into clearer view.

"Luxury is being made to feel good, being treated nicely, feeling safe and having the freedom of time," he says. "And everyone is entitled to it, not just the 1 per cent." At Public, there's no man at the front desk with a glass of champagne. In fact, there's no front desk at all.

I ask him about the parallels between this and Studio 54.

"In the nightclub where I got started, you don't have a discernible product," he says. "You have the same liquor and music as everybody else. So I learnt that what you do to distinguish yourself is make people feel good. Studio 54 was successful because people felt free and protected. I would see a gay guy with tight jeans and no shirt dancing with a woman in a ballgown and a diamond tiara. Any class distinctions, demo-

graphics, age, wealth, race? Irrelevant. Everybody felt free. Everybody wanted to have a good time."

That's how I feel about New York this summer, I tell him. That fun has been somehow democratised: there's less value on exclusivity, the hierarchy has fallen away, and we've come out of this collective trauma just wanting connection. He smiles and nods. "You've hit the bullseye with that."

A 40-minute train ride from Public, in Flatbush, Brooklyn, Garnett Phillip, 44, is sitting in the corner of her bar, The Rogers Garden. Phillip is Trinidadian and Ethiopian, and her bar was inspired by the Caribbean rum bars she has always loved. "Not the high-end ones," she clarifies. "The real, local rum bars. They have the bright colours, that galvanised metal, it makes you feel good."

The bar is a pandemic success story — opened in July 2020, it has defied the odds to become one of Brooklyn's most popular new neighbourhood bars, about 15 seats inside leading out to a large garden. Covid laws required bars to serve food, so Phillip built a tiki hut in the garden and lent it to local chefs.

On Thursdays and Saturdays, fans come for the fresh lobster tails, rasta pasta and jerk chicken of Nina Laurient's D'Mix Kitchen. Before the pandemic, Laurient was a speech therapist; she now plans to do pop-ups full-time come October, and have a restaurant and food truck by the spring.

"I knew this was my passion and in the long run I'd find a way, but never at this pace," Laurient tells me. "Now sit in the hut on a Saturday, watching people come in off the street because they know the smell, and I think, wow. Look at what God has brought me. It's some-



thing from my wildest dreams."

Phillip looks tired and relieved. "That Tuesday [last month] that restrictions were lifted, I looked around my bar and got really emotional," she says. "It was packed. And it's been like that every night since. It was the dream in my head. My DJs in here playing music, live music outside, everybody dancing, singing, drinking, mingling."

She sighs. "This summer is going to be madness," she says. "It's going to be a movie. After what we've experienced, this is going to be the best summer New York City has ever had."

DETAILS

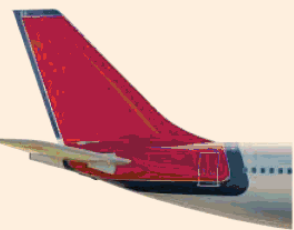
Seven Deadly Sins runs until July 25 (sevendeadlysinsnyc.com). *Queens Night Market* runs every Saturday, 4pm-midnight (queensnightmarket.com). *The Rogers Garden* in Flatbush, Brooklyn, is open 2pm to midnight (therogersgarden.com). *Wild Birds* in Crown Heights is open 4pm-2am on weekdays and 12pm-4am on weekends (wildbirdsbk.com). For details of Popular, the new Peruvian restaurant at Ian Schragger's Public hotel, see publichotels.com/eat-and-drink. Little Island is free and open from noon to 1am, but with ticketed entry; see littleisland.org. The Whitney Museum of American Art is open Thursday to Monday; tickets \$25 but with 'pay-what-you-wish' on Friday evenings (whitney.org). For details of the next Balla! Nueva York party in Williamsburg follow instagram.com/balla_nyc

During the carefree 1990s there was one flight that made even the most luxurious business class experience seem mundane. Every winter, British Airways would put on Concorde flights to Barbados, carrying 100 well-heeled passengers to the sun in style.

The £6,000 flights from London often arrived in the Caribbean earlier than they had left, thanks to the time difference, and BA staff (who sometimes carried their swimming costumes as hand luggage to help them get to the beach quicker) recall regulars including Elton John, Sting and Michael Winner. A Rolls-Royce would often be on hand to chauffeur guests to the famous Sandy Lane hotel, and trips over Christmas and New Year sold out months in advance.

While Concorde's New York service was engineered around the needs of the business traveller who wanted to jet in to sign a deal or attend a board meeting, the Barbados flights were surely the ultimate expression of high-rolling leisure travel.

Nearly 20 years since the end of supersonic passenger travel, Concorde is a sepia-tinged memory. But as the pandemic ripples through aviation and crushes corporate travel, it seems airlines' business-class products might again be commandeered by well-heeled holidaymakers.



Philip Georgiadis Business Travel

No one knows just how much business travel will be permanently lost to Zoom, tightened travel budgets and heightened environmental awareness. Estimates range from as much as half to as little as 10 per cent, but even the lower end of the range would be a problem for airlines, as margins are so much higher in the premium cabins.

That means finding people willing to pay high fares to go on holiday or visit family is suddenly more important than ever. BA's chief executive Sean Doyle has talked of "buffering" the loss of corporate clients with premium leisure travellers, while Virgin Atlantic's boss Shai

Weiss has detected the same trends. "We will maybe have to reduce prices if we are to attract premium leisure, but we will. The demand is there," he told the FT earlier this year.

Weiss should know better than most. Virgin has long traded on a glamorous jet-setting image, with bars on board its planes and a lounge at Heathrow which offers cocktails, a games room and spa. None of these perks is likely to be of particular interest to a frequent-flying lawyer hoping to catch some sleep on the way to New York. But they are pitched perfectly at leisure travellers who have splashed out and want more than convenience, good WiFi and a flatbed.

Rival airlines might not be about to risk upending their business models overnight during a pandemic to follow Virgin's lead. But look carefully and there have already been some changes. Emirates and Swiss have both unveiled premium economy cabins, which tend to be highly profitable and are aimed squarely at leisure passengers.

BA has also been experimenting, including offering lounge access to passengers flying economy if they book an expensive trip with the company's holiday arm.

Given the scarcity of people flying anywhere at the moment, there has been no word yet on whether the changes have upset the delicate equilibrium of the Terminal 5 lounges. But in

the post-pandemic world, this kind of unbundling of the premium experience is set to become more widespread. Finnair recently announced a "business light" option — essentially a cheaper business class ticket which offers no lounge access, seat reservations, WiFi, priority check-in or baggage allowance. Customers can then pay to add these extras back in. Emirates and Qatar Airways have gone down a similar route.

Paying for every convenience might seem like the antithesis of the premium

BA has talked of 'buffering' the loss of corporate clients with premium leisure travellers, while Virgin has detected the same trends

experience. In fact, it all feels a bit like a low-cost carrier. But given that many leisure passengers now choose a flight using price comparison websites such as Skyscanner or Google Flights, offering a cheaper headline price for a business-class ticket makes a lot of sense. For a price-sensitive traveller who wants the luxury experience on board but does not want to pay the full fare, it could also prove very popular.

But if airlines have to really drop their

prices to fill up their premium cabins, don't expect them to shout about it. They will try to keep pricing opaque for the very cheapest seats by packaging them up as part of holiday bookings or luxury tour packages, industry experts say.

After all, they are hoping those corporate customers with yawning expense accounts will come back to rule the roost one day.

Philip Georgiadis is the FT's acting transport correspondent

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Brazilians wait to vote during municipal elections in Rio de Janeiro, November 2020 — Sergio Alvarez/Getty Images

Stopping the rot

Essay | In an age of populism, how can the values of liberal democracy best be defended?

By Edmund Fawcett

As a learned political observer, Jan-Werner Müller crosses many borders. He writes for the academy and the broader public. As a German teaching at Princeton University, he understands Europe and the US. He is at ease with data-minded social science, the history of ideas and political philosophy.

In *What is Populism?* (2016), Müller gave a compelling account of a common but misunderstood label. With breadth of view go clarity and economy. His books are usually brisk and to the point. The latest, *Democracy Rules*, is about the shaken state of liberal democracy.

Anxieties on that score are hardly new. Hopes for democracy's rapid spread to non-democracies dwindled soon after the cold war ended. Concern for its health grew amid backsliding in existing democracies (notably Brazil, India, Turkey) or in new democracies theoretically sheltered within the EU (Hungary, Poland). The lure of "performance legitimacy" added a general worry. As exemplified by China, that is the undemocratic bargain in which illiberal, one-party control is put up with in return for broader prosperity and rising wellbeing. Its appeal stirs fears that there are other attractive norms on offer and that history may not be cheering liberal democracy on.

Against that background of worry, speculating on liberal democracy's geopolitical chances or dwelling on recent failings in countries where it was always fragile or non-existent is, in a way, the easy task. Neither are Müller's way.

Instead, he looks hard at how liberal democracy is going wrong in its historic core, Europe and the US. To judge that rightly, he sensibly insists, we need to be clear about what is valuable in liberal democracy and how well we should reasonably expect it to work.

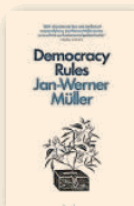
A first step is to separate fake from genuine democracy. Phoney democrats are typified by today's rightwing populists. They pose as tribunes of "the people" against "the elites", whereas they are in fact party-political "outs", elite networkers from good universities and easy backgrounds, aiming to displace the "ins".

Rightwing populism, Müller rightly thinks, is not early 20th-century fascism reborn. Yet he warns against undue relief. Populists, on present showing, are not likely to overthrow democracy, he judges. But they exploit and corrode democracy.

Genuine democrats, by contrast, accept a "hard border" of principles, which populists flout. Müller stresses three: nobody may be denied standing as a free and equal citizen; neither "nation", "people" nor "citizen" should be defined in racial or ethnic terms; and democracy requires losers, but losers, to recall a phrase of the 19th-century liberal philosopher John Stuart Mill, cannot be "blotted out", silenced and forgotten as not speaking for "the people". As a "loyal opposition" or government in waiting, they need a chance to be winners next time.

With fixed principles, however, comes fluid functioning, which brings in reasonable expectations. Democracy's watchwords, Müller writes, are "liberty, equality, uncertainty". Democracy brings disagreement, dissent and, at the limit, disobedience. It is complex and messy — too much for populists, who cannot cope with real democracy. They want an us-or-them argument, an unchanging, uniform "people's will", and winner-take-all solutions.

Müller sees the virtues of direct democracy but accepts that the representative kind, where voters send politicians in effect govern for them, is needed in complex societies with a high division of labour. Government in rep-



Democracy Rules
by Jan-Werner Müller
Farrar, Straus and Giroux \$27/Allen Lane £20, 256 pages

resentative democracy must be open, responsive and callable to account, but not so intently or continually that it cannot function. In between government and citizen, accordingly, is needed "a critical infrastructure" of parties and media that criticises and mediates.

How these vital organs are failing forms the core of the book. Key examples include the ease of forming but the difficulty of financing and sustaining new small parties. These can break the smothering effect of big party alterna-

Democrats must resist anti-democrats, with illiberal or undemocratic means if needed

tion and answer the cry that voters are not heard. For the press's part, social media spreads unchecked, unedited content. The collapse of local papers robs people of an eye on government action that touches them most directly on matters they know most about.

Having surveyed such flaws, Müller assesses recent academic work on how government might be made more "accessible, autonomous and assessable". Ideas canvassed include universal vouchers for making campaign donations, picking certain officeholders by lot and advisory citizens' assemblies, as tried with some success nationally in France and Ireland.

Ideas of the kind, it might be thought, would appeal mainly to good-government types who could make any democracy flourish if only there were more of them. Müller himself recognises that

more is amiss than corrupted institutions or rusty procedures. He stresses to begin with, only to leave aside, three underlying threats: unacceptable economic inequality and a double "secession" from shared civic life: at the top, by the rich and well connected (who can insulate themselves from common demands and pay privately when social provision falls short); and, at the bottom, by the poor and disconnected (who are too overrun by daily life for political engagement).

Those hard-eyed, quasi-Marxist thoughts are not entirely forgotten, however. Müller ties society and politics back together at the end. If social inequity together with the secession of rich and poor are to be addressed democratically, not by force or violence, then argument and procedure are the only ways. So Müller, the democrat, insists. Polarisation and tribalism, similarly, are created by politics and can be undone by politics. Better regulated parties and press are still the best way to "mobilise those at the bottom and push back against those at the top".

That sounds like sending cavalry to face tanks but *Democracy Rules* closes with a guarded hope and a wise counsel. Little poll evidence suggests that those aggrieved within democracy in Europe or the US want to replace democracy. That said, with democracy's historic capacity for self-harm in mind, his parting advice is that democrats must be ready to resist anti-democrats, with illiberal or undemocratic means if needed.

Müller is lucid, passionate and unashamedly *parti pris*. The variety of ideas, range of topics and rich factual material make the thread at times hard to follow. This fine but crowded essay could, oddly, have been longer. But the underlying message is seldom in doubt. Democracy worth the name, Müller is telling us in effect, has to be open and liberal, and liberalism, if it is not to wreck itself, must be social-minded and democratic.

Edmund Fawcett is the author of *'Conservatism: The Fight for a Tradition'*, published by Princeton

Cairo flappers

A fizzing study of Egypt's Roaring Twenties, when female stars broke free of convention to blaze a trail for women. By David Gardner

Ezbeikiya, in downtown Cairo, became the centre of the Egyptian capital's exuberant nocturnal festivities from the 1920s. To Raphael Cormack, a young British academic with a PhD in Egyptian theatre, it merits comparison with Montmartre, Broadway or Soho. Perhaps. But it certainly blurred the boundaries of faith and sect and, over time, fostered the mingling of men and women. Decadence and debauchery to some — Egypt's own "Roaring Twenties" to many others — drew a cosmopolitan crowd into a scene in which remarkable women rose frequently to the top. *Midnight in Cairo* is a fizzing tale of an under-explored period.

Starting in Ezbeikiya and flowing out to the banks of the Nile — and then to Beirut, Jaffa and Damascus, Paris and Buenos Aires — an eclectic and overlapping mix of genres and entertainment created a new public, at a time when Egypt was undergoing deep social and political change. This ancient country was trying to emerge from a post-imperial Ottoman monarchy, yet impeded by British imperialists who stunted its evolution.

At the beginning, drama troupes staged classic plays in translation. As the public demanded songs, music halls and revues proliferated, opera became popular, dancers were celebrated and singers were adored, becoming divas in a range of local and adapted styles. Later, popular fare included slapstick comic opera and ostentatiously tragic melodrama, Feydeau-esque bedroom farces and Grand Guignol. These would later still become staples of Egypt's cinema industry, which dominated the Arab world in the way Turkish productions do now.

Cormack says anyone in Cairo during the interwar heyday of its nightlife could claim "to be living in one of the great cities of the world" such as Paris, London, Berlin or New York. That is a bit overblown.

Yet Egypt's capital was a confluence of many different cultures, a Levantine melting pot with a mélange of Muslims, Christians and Jews, Syrians, Palestinians, Turks and Armenians, Italians, French and Greeks.

The great Greek poets Constantine Cavafy and George Seferis lived respectively in Alexandria and Cairo. Edward, the rakish Prince of Wales and later briefest of kings, caused a stir visiting the famous Kit Kat club to see its dancers in 1928 — and capped it by teeing off from the top of the Great Pyramid at Giza. When Egypt's film industry took off in the Arab world it first misfired by attempting a controversial life of the Prophet Mohammed. That did not happen but the director went on to make *Casablanca*.

At the centre of this story are music-hall singers, dancers and actresses who lived on the margins of polite society, but were endlessly fascinating to a louche class of rich idlers, from across the region and Europe. They were celebrities avant la lettre, who kept a yellow press busy with scurrilous tales. Often from poor backgrounds, these women came to run their own theatres, clubs, dance and acting troupes, as well as take their shows on the international road. They changed the terms of Egyptian popular culture and blazed a path for women.

One, Rose al-Youssef, founded a magazine bearing her name that survives to this day. Oum Kalthoum, a bookish, self-contained woman, wrote songs that offered a magical fusion of music and classical and modern poetry, while her film roles were legendary. When she died in 1975, the crowds thronging Cairo's streets came close to matching the vast turnout for the funeral of Gamal Abdel Nasser, the tragic pan-Arab leader who died in defeat in 1970.

It cannot have felt easy for many of them at the time. To begin with, the idea of women on stage was initially so risqué many of them appeared in men's roles; they would continue doing so to get the better songs and lines written for men. Oum Kalthoum started by singing religious songs, analogous to gospel-singing. Heckled by a raucous crowd one night, which she bravely stood up to, for her pains she was publicly slapped on stage by her father. Many prominent stars depended at various times on rich or well-connected patrons and lovers, or were victims of protection rackets. Some faded into penury or worse. Yet that so many are remembered, and their songs still heard and sung, is for a reason. So many of these women were so very great. Their sisters today often face even worse fights to reach their heights.

David Gardner is the FT's international affairs editor



Midnight in Cairo: The Female Stars of Egypt's Roaring '20s
by Raphael Cormack
Saqi £20, 352 pages

Re-educating Lucy Kellaway

The former FT journalist turns her teaching experience into a frank discussion about education. By Anna Soubry

Lucy Kellaway's mother died suddenly and unexpectedly. In her shock and grief Kellaway decided she didn't want to be a journalist any longer and that she would try to continue her mother's work. However, at 47 she felt she was too old to become a teacher.

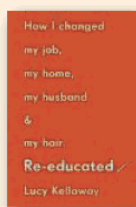
Ten years on, and mourning the death of her father, she changed her mind: age would be no barrier. What was more, she would go on to start a charity — Now Teach — and actively recruit other people in their fifties to leave their high status jobs and become teachers.

Re-educated, thankfully, is not some "life change" bible for the bored middle aged. Kellaway was a successful and

high-powered woman before she left the Financial Times (and a handsome income) after 32 years and a back catalogue of 1,032 columns. Here she writes with warmth, wit and honesty, turning her real life experiences of teaching in a Hackney school into what I hope will become a serious debate about what education is for.

It is some school. Shut down in the mid-1990s because it was so bad, it has since reopened as one of the country's first academies, funded by the state but independent of local government control. Almost half of its children qualify for free school meals but the academy now sends students to Oxford and Cambridge. While its success may be unquestionable, its methods are not. Even the principal admits it's an institution run on "positive fear". It would certainly have scared the hell out of me.

Most of my secondary education occurred in almost anarchy. My school (Hartland Comprehensive) was so bad it ended up being demolished. I was a



Re-educated: How I changed my job, my home, my husband & my hair
by Lucy Kellaway
Ebury Press £16.99
256 pages

pupil in the days when the town of Workop in North Nottinghamshire still had a coal mine and a reputation for being seriously "tough". It is a sharp contrast to Kellaway's education at Camden School for Girls, where her mother taught English and was "adored by all her students".

Kellaway begins her story of how she made it to the classroom with a rabbit punch opening line, claiming she left her husband for a strip of bright orange Corian. I say it's a claim because she and her husband had been living separately

under the large family roof in a state of marital decline for some time. In such circumstances one, or perhaps both, might have terminated the marriage by falling in love with someone else. Kellaway (no surprise) did not choose the conventional route and instead fell in love with a house — a fabulous glass and wood structure, as leaky as a sieve.

She and her husband parted amicably, and despite being told by her surveyor "Do. Not. Buy. This. House", she did. Parts of the narrative of how Kellaway came to change her job (note: not "career", as Kellaway has no ambition as a teacher other than to be the "greatest exam stickler the world has ever seen"), will be familiar to FT readers, as they are lifted in part from her continuing articles for the paper. In any event it was all new to me and it's an absorbing and delightful tale.

I, too, have changed my job — twice. After a number of years in TV I became a barrister. I was in my thirties with two small children (Kellaway's had all left

for university when she became a teacher) but given I had read law at university and almost completed my barrister training, my career change, unlike Kellaway's move, was no surprise. Sixteen years on, I became a member of parliament at the age of 51.

It's undoubtedly tough adjusting to a new way of working and, as Kellaway admits, the older you are, the more likely you are to be constantly exhausted. But she also found her new younger colleagues liberating. Now she dresses to please herself, though I doubt the school of "positive fear" permits her to teach in her new red boiler suit. After all, she was removed from the classroom for wearing backless sandals.

Re-educated offers a frank discussion about the role of school in children's lives, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Kellaway explores her own education and that of her son Arty — both of whom had a somewhat relaxed approach to exams and attainment — concluding that their well

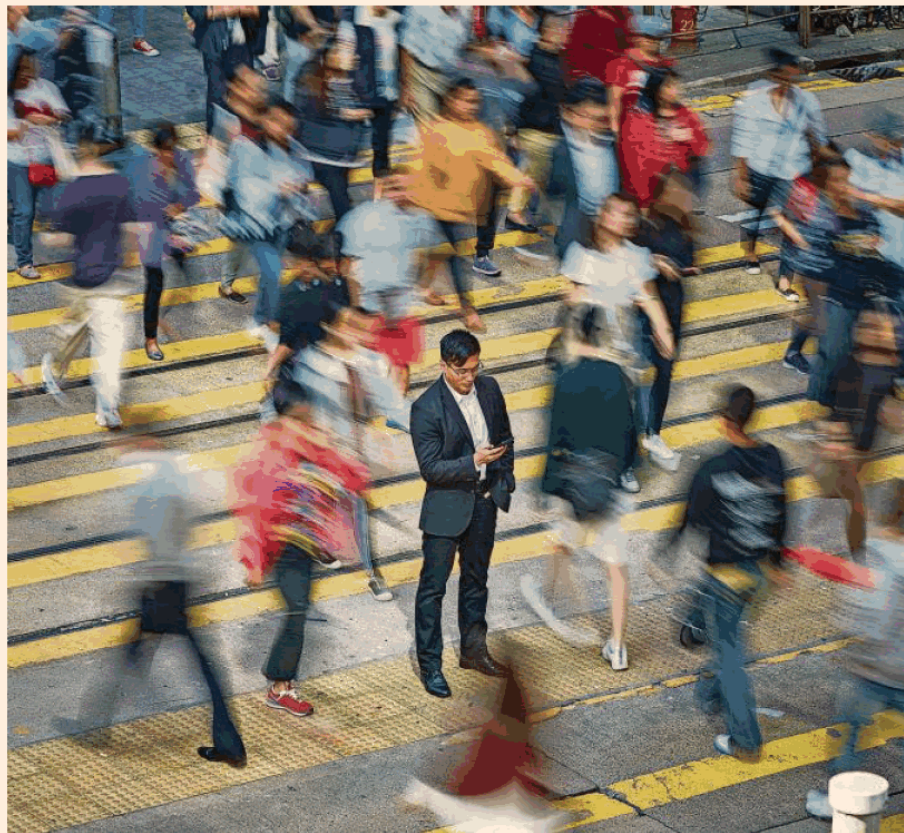
resourced background provided them with a safety net absent in the lives of most of her pupils. Having once believed the best teachers were those who could inspire and entertain, she now sees good exam results as the ticket out of poverty.

Kellaway also speaks of the "young old" (those of us aged 60-75) for whom finances and family circumstances mean more free time than ever before. Most of us are fit, if not a bit creaky, we have experience and we are likely to have decades of life ahead of us. Although, here, too, privilege comes into it. The author teaches part time and continues to contribute to the FT; she still has her safety net.

I agreed with Kellaway as much as I enjoyed her book except for this — the hair bit — the going grey. I'm all for being re-educated but for now I will stick with the dye.

Anna Soubry is a former barrister and was MP for Broxtowe from 2010-19

Left standing



Getty Images

The proliferation of relationship apps means those seeking love have never been so connected – or more alone. *Elaine Moore* on the problems with ‘Big Dating’

The problem with dating apps is that nobody seems to like them very much and yet nobody is sure how else to find a date. Most of us know someone who met their partner online and is blissfully happy. But here is a more depressing statistic: only a tenth of dating app users in the US have found a committed relationship, according to Pew research. More than half of young women have experienced some form of harassment.

Over the past decade, free mobile dating apps such as Tinder have colonised the search for love, convincing millions of people to sign up and swipe right in their quest for a partner. Meeting complete strangers for near-blind dates is no longer out of the ordinary.

Yet the digital disruption of the most personal aspect of our lives has not increased the odds of finding happiness. The world has never been more connected, or more alone. This apparent contradiction is the subject of two new books that chart the highs and lows of online dating.

American journalist Nancy Jo Sales is clear about who to blame for the modern dating malaise: tech companies. In *Nothing Personal*, she recounts how, at the age of 49, she signed up to Tinder following a break-up and was initiated into a world of creepy messages, unsolicited sexual photos and ghosting. Although she met a number of men and formed a longstanding relationship with the charmingly inconsistent Abel, the experience

Nothing Personal: My Secret Life in the Dating App Inferno

by Nancy Jo Sales
Hachette Books £28/\$14.99, 384 pages

Available: A Memoir of Sex and Dating After a Marriage Ends

by Laura Friedman Williams
The Borough Press £14.99/\$12.99, 400 pages

is often “exhausting” and “a sham”. The app is a “dehumanising haystack” of faces.

In lockdown, Sales hoped that there might be a return to conversational courtship only to find that “nothing much has changed in the dystopian world of online dating”.

Not only that but the apps seem to have put an end to the possibility of meeting a partner in the real world. “The tech industry’s colonization of dating had changed human behaviour so quickly, it seemed we were already losing the ability to connect on our own, to court and spark,” she writes.

Sales went viral for a 2015 Vanity Fair story on dating apps and hookup culture, one of the first to describe the brave new world of dating as dysfunctional. A global “techlash” in the years since then means that the idea of Silicon Valley companies as a danger to society is no longer novel. But the combination of Sales’s long-term interest and her personal experiences mean she is still able to offer original, thoughtful insights.

The result of tech’s conquest of dating,

she says, is loneliness. Over half of all adults under the age of 35 in the US say they do not have a steady romantic partner, the lowest figure since data was first collected in the 1980s.

Compare this to the financial success of the companies behind the apps. Tinder is part of Match Group, which has 44 other dating platforms including Hinge and OkCupid. Last year it reported revenue of close to \$2.5bn.

The goal of dating apps, of course, is not to help users fall in love but to make money by collecting their data and subscriptions. Constant swiping through face after face with little other context is designed to be addictive. Sales quotes a chilling blog post by OkCupid founder Christian Rudder titled “We Experiment On Human Beings!” She also traces the bro-culture origins of some of the app’s founders, including the co-founder of Match.com who secured the rights to the domain name for one of the world’s biggest porn sites.

Sales is no prude. She joins Tinder looking for both relationships and fleeting encounters. But she finds that many of the men she matches with believe the relative anonymity of online life gives them tacit permission to behave poorly. Her thesis is that dating apps are particularly bad for women. Many of the men she talks to seem wedded to a double standard that dating apps facilitate flings but that the women who engage in them deserve little respect. Perhaps, she writes, the prevalence of harassment will lead women to wonder why they

have made more strides in the public arena than the private one.

Sales, a journalist at Vanity Fair whose article “The Suspects Wore Louboutins” was made into the Sofia Coppola-directed film *The Bling Ring*, knows how to weave deep reporting into personal stories. *Nothing Personal* is both a memoir of her own romantic adventures and the rise of what she calls Big Dating.

She is so good at making the reader feel like a confidant that I doubt I will be the only one to wish they could reach in and stop her from being so polite to bad-mannered dates and to take less risks. She seems to believe that certain things – inviting strangers over to her house and eschewing safe sex – are simply part of the new online hookup culture. This is not true.

The idea that the internet is a foreign land that allows people to act in ways they would never otherwise contemplate feels old fashioned. The division between the internet and the real world collapsed a long time ago.

At the opposite end of the spectrum sits Laura Friedman Williams, whose book *Available* chronicles a joyful dive into the dating pool at the age of 46 after the end of a long marriage. There has been a rash of post-marriage, joy of dat-

The goal of dating apps, of course, is not to help users fall in love but to make money by collecting their data and subscriptions

ing app books, including British journalist Rosie Green’s *How to Heal a Broken Heart* and podcast host Helen Thorn’s *Get Divorced, Be Happy*. All tend to follow the same arc: a long-term marriage ends, bringing heartbreak and insecurity. Then comes the miraculous discovery that dating and being unshackled from wifely duties is far more fun and interesting than being married.

Williams is an amiable companion on the dating circuit, although she describes herself as someone whose previous writing credits consisted only of “countless PTA newsletters”. Before having children, however, she worked in book publishing. This means she was probably aware that explicit memoirs by women often find an enthusiastic audience. Thus the graphic stories of one-night stands and Brazilian waxes.

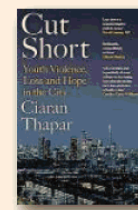
Sales offers a more thoughtful analysis of the ways in which dating apps encourage people to promote themselves as if they were their own product, an impulse that other social media platforms also exploit. She is right that users are not thinking carefully enough about the sensitive information they also share either, information that can be used by companies.

If you are newly single and considering signing up to a dating app then read Williams. If you have been on the apps for a while and wonder why you’re having a hard time read Sales. Dating apps mean that it has never been easier to meet new people but they also appear to have bred a culture of harassment and disrespect. While contemplating another bad date, Sales quotes French philosopher Paul Virilio who wrote: “When you invent the ship you also invent the shipwreck.” Dating apps have changed the search for love, but not necessarily for the better.

*Elaine Moore is deputy editor of *Lex**

Lives on the edge

A London youth worker offers a powerful account of teenage lives blighted by violence. *By Robert Wright*



Cut Short: Youth Violence, Loss and Hope in the City
by Ciaran Thapar
Viking £16.99
368 pages

Two brief but jarring sentences stand out in Ciaran Thapar’s account of his experiences as a youth worker in south London. At a secondary school near Elephant and Castle, a vulnerable, pitiful boy named Freddie is permanently excluded. After being threatened, he had brought a bread knife to school. “I would never see him again,” Thapar writes.

Then, working in Wandsworth prison, Thapar meets Abdoul, whom he had previously encountered through his voluntary work at the Jacob Sawyer Community Centre, in Brixton. A follow-up visit fails to locate him. “I never saw him again,” Thapar recalls.

The sentences are a powerful reminder that the boys of whom Thapar manages to keep track are, despite considerable challenges, lucky in some senses.

Cut Short focuses on describing vividly and often movingly how three of those boys navigate the critical, perilous years from late secondary school to early adulthood amid a surge in street violence. Demetri, Jhemar and Carl are all African-Caribbean and face differing levels of deprivation. Jhemar has to cope with his brother’s death in a stabbing. Carl briefly succumbs to the temptation to make money by selling drugs.

It is clear that Thapar is determined to help them to achieve their goals. Freddie and Abdoul stand for the thousands who miss out. The murders and stabbings that punctuate the narrative underline how high a price many pay – up to the end of May, teenagers accounted for 12 of the 50 homicides around the capital so far this year. Thapar, who grew up in west London as the son of a Punjabi doctor father and English nurse mother, looks for answers as to what might alleviate this suffering.

Cut Short is at its strongest cataloguing the lives of Thapar’s mentees. He chronicles compellingly their multiple humiliations, from strip-searches by insensitive police to confrontations with other youths for being in the “wrong” area. School performance charts posted in corridors rank pupils by academic achievement – Thapar’s mentees are used to seeing their names and pictures displayed at the bottom of such tables. One of the book’s most affecting passages recounts how, after a group has completed a successful programme at school, Thapar hires a photographer with a brief to make them “look like kings”.

While the book focuses on boys as the main perpetrators and vic-

tims of street violence, it makes a convincing case that wider society has created many of the problems. Most fundamentally, the mentees face racism – darker-skinned boys encounter more discrimination from police and teachers than lighter-skinned counterparts.

Thapar argues persuasively that they are suffering from a gutting of public services. Cuts to police budgets mean there are no longer officers tasked with getting to know the communities they serve. Centres such as Jacob Sawyer – an invented name to protect users’ privacy – have become a rarity.

The book is less sure-footed when analysing how such failings relate to wider policy. Thapar attributes the problems mainly to a drive to save taxpayers’ money and the consensus that market mechanisms should be applied to public services. He blames the Grenfell Tower fire of 2017 on a need to save money, despite the mixed evidence that cost was the decisive factor in a botched refurbishment. One public institution that Thapar describes as failing comprehensively – Wandsworth Prison – is little touched by market-driven competition. The school where he works near Elephant and Castle sounds as if it has improved significantly since a charity took over management from the public sector.

The stabbings and murders that punctuate the narrative underline the high price many pay

The crisis in England’s public sector surely has deeper, more complex roots. A decade of austerity has cleared out the older staff that provided much institutional collective memory. Vital tasks – such as enforcement of fire regulations – have been outsourced to private organisations, blurring lines of responsibility. The common factor is a collapse in the competence and self-confidence at managing the delivery of services.

Thapar’s conclusion is nevertheless sound. Like many others, he argues for a shift away from treating street violence as a criminal justice issue towards addressing it as a public health crisis. The many complex social, economic and cultural factors that encourage violence need to be addressed.

Central government policy for England is pushing in a different direction. Recent ministerial pronouncements have focused on making prison sentences longer. It is an ideological act of faith, in contradiction of experience, to believe such an approach will succeed.

Thapar sounds justifiably proud of the progress Demetri, Jhemar and Carl have made. But many more young people look doomed to follow Freddie and Abdoul in falling through society’s cracks.

Robert Wright is the FT’s social policy correspondent

The infernal roots of Britain’s industrial power

Fossil fuels forged the modern age. Two books consider the passing of coal and oil. By John Lloyd

The ancients were right. Our doom lies in the infernal regions. Fossil fuels, the compounds of petrified, gaseous or liquefied once-living organisms, now promise destruction to those modern civilisations they made.

Coal and oil, once so valued, now deal a double blow. Their continued use makes us increasingly insecure: coal-burning is the largest single human contributor to the increase of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Yet where coal, and even oil, is phased out, it destroys communities, creating what Huw Beynon and Ray Hudson call “a disenfranchised working class”.

And a digitally powered world being prepared for largely uncomprehending humanity is itself increasingly attended by forecasts of another sort of doom: the creation of a burgeoning underclass, surplus to a world of work being captured by machines. Two books are eager

contributors to the pessimism surrounding the conduct of present and future societies – a habitual default of the left. Things can only get worse.

In *The Shadow of the Mine*, Beynon and Hudson, both academics, write with authority and respect of Britain’s former mining communities. Indeed, respect is always due to miners, who performed the hardest of labours in semi-darkness and heat, a toil in conditions few not inured to it could stand for longer than an hour. Respect, however, can tip over into sentimentalisation on the part of commentators. Talking to mineworkers while covering the 1984-85 strike, was to hear a militant defence of their jobs – their livelihoods – but also frequent comments that they hoped their sons would not follow them down the pit.

Politics takes centre stage, for the miners’ unions were always highly political. They were formed in the teeth of resistance from the private coal owners, in the shadow of deaths from collapsing roofs and tunnels, with poor pay subject to cuts in periods of depression. The Miners’ Federation of Great Britain, later the National Union of Mineworkers, were federal organisations: large regions like South Wales, Yorkshire, and Durham each organised, in the 1940s, over 100,000 men. They had a large

The Shadow of the Mine: Coal and the End of Industrial Britain

by Huw Beynon and Ray Hudson
Verso £20, 416 pages

Crude Britannia: How Oil Shaped a Nation

by James Marriot and Terry Macalister
Pluto £20, 304 pages

pride, conscious of keeping overground life bright, warm and productive, the aristocracy, and among the most socially valuable, of organised labour.

As it developed, the governance of the National Coal Board became something of a joint enterprise between union and management, a class war truce which won the wary acquiescence of the many communists in union leadership. The presidency of Arthur Scargill, from the Yorkshire area, changed all that: from his election in 1982, he saw the NUM as a battering ram against the Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher, and the programme of pit closures overseen by her appointee as chair, Ian MacGregor, a Scots-born American executive with a mandate and an appetite to close mines fast. Beynon and Hudson believe he saw resistance as “insubordination”. The 1984-85 strike proved too drain-

ing: miners, first in moderate Nottinghamshire then later throughout the coalfields, trickled then flooded back to work, and the strike collapsed – as, in a few years following, did the industry. Coal mining, the feedstock of the world’s first industrial revolution, created over three centuries communities – from Fife through Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire to South Wales – of labour, struggle and a particulate kind of comradeship, a unique and often pug-nacious relationship with society ‘outside’, almost separate civilisations. Grassed-over mounds remain: soon, memories based on experience will not.



Coal miners have a cigarette break in Northumberland, c1950. — Getty Images

Coal and oil co-existed for much of the 20th century, but in its last decades – at least in the UK – the liquid drowned the rock. The two energy experts who wrote *Crude Britannia* see the oil industry as having created “a black gold empire built on financial power, political meddling and environmental destruction”. It’s hardly an adequate image of postwar Britain, but it does have force in, for example, their descriptions of corporate capture of the rights to Nigerian oil (and leaving many of the inhabitants in a polluted disaster area). The book is vivid and detailed, too, in the reshaping of Britain’s industrial landscape by the refineries, storage and miles of pipes needed to slake the thirst of a mass motoring, oil-burning economy.

The oil majors, who plunged their rigs into the North Sea from the 1970s on, are vastly rich, were often arrogant and reactionary, openly so into the 1970s and more guardedly even now. BP kept separate male-female dining rooms, the senior ones being all male. In an interview with the head of Shell’s “Scenarios Unit” Jeremy Bentham the authors learn that the scenarios include opening seven wind farms every year, while there was thought given to “reforesting something like Spain”. The authors cannily check on the company’s invest-

ments in 2018: \$2bn to be spent on renewables, or ‘new energies’, \$23bn on opening new oil and gasfields.

But – so – what to do? Both books want big change, but are careful to be vague. Marriot and Macalister end by assuring readers that “the days of oil and gas in the UK are numbered . . . and the next challenge is how the world of wind, tide and solar are to be controlled”. But they leave a question, not a programme – “How will the ownership of this common wealth shape the nation?”

The question increasingly seeks answers in the various economic and social futures now being sketched for a post-Covid world. Many of these assume a more egalitarian spirit, taking its inspiration from the example of collective and often self-sacrificing work of health, service, transport and shop workers, and from growing commentary and academic research pointing to a much more egalitarian society, one whose central economic drive is to ‘level up’. The authors of these two books endorse such a spirit. It remains, for the present, a spirit in search of a viable politics which can move us to a new level of communal living, shorn of the vast disparities among which we presently live.

John Lloyd is an FT contributing editor

Books

The *Plot* is a literary thriller in two important ways. First, it's fun for people who like in-jokes about publishing, the insecurities of authors, and terrible creative writing programmes at small US colleges. It's also a twisty page-turner (yes, I stayed up nearly all night to finish it) built on the disputed ownership of a novel, or at least the plot of one.

Our protagonist in Jean Hanff Korelitz's novel (hero is perhaps too strong a word) is Jacob "Jake" Finch Bonner, a man in love with the idea of writing fiction, but weaker on the execution of it. Such was his early determination to be a great writer that he added the "Finch" in his name as a teenager, as a "homage to the novel which awakened his love of fiction".

Deliciously, Bonner is introduced to the reader as "the once promising author of the 'New & Noteworthy' (The New York Times Book Review) novel *The Invention of Wonder*".

When *The Plot* opens in 2012, that early promise has faded and Bonner has been exiled from New York to Ripley College, in rainy Vermont, where he is

'His workshop contained not one but two women who cited Elizabeth Gilbert as their inspiration'

teaching mature students in a lower-division Master of Fine Arts creative writing course. They are all destined to fail.

Hanff Korelitz, a veteran of the literary and academic scenes herself, knows how to make them acutely funny. "His workshop contained not one but two women who cited Elizabeth Gilbert [author of the wildly successful *Eat, Pray, Love*] as their inspiration."

Among Bonner's students is a "narcissistic jerkoff", Evan Parker, who has a plot for a book all worked out and asserts confidently: "Like, Oprah will pick it for her book thing. It will be talked about on TV shows... This book, there's no way it can fail."

Bonner is sceptical but once Parker gives him a verbal summary of the plot, he has to agree. "It was new to him, as it would be new to every single person who read it, and that was going to be a lot of people." At this stage readers are teased with the originality of Parker's tale. All that we (and Bonner) can see are a few pages of manuscript about an unhappy mother and daughter trapped in mutual resentment.

Some years later, Bonner — now the manager of a hotel reinvented as an artists' colony — is out of ideas and out of luck. Then he discovers that Parker died in 2013, shortly after the Ripley course. That brilliant plot is unused.

So Bonner writes the book, justifying to himself that "he would hardly be the first to take some tale from a play or a book — in this case a book that had never been written!"

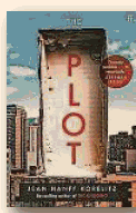
This is Hanff Korelitz's seventh adult novel, and one that would play brilliantly on screen. She has form here: *Admission* (2009) about a moral dilemma facing an Ivy League admissions officer, was adapted into a 2013



Tasia Graham

Borrowed time

This literary thriller examines the moral grey areas of plagiarism with humour, prescience and page-turning verve, finds *Isabel Berwick*



The Plot
by Jean Hanff Korelitz
Faber £8.99/Celadon Books \$28
336 pages

film starring Tina Fey. More recently, *You Should Have Known* (2014) was adapted for television as the lockdown HBO hit *The Undoing*.

As *The Plot* progresses, extracts from Bonner's multimillion-selling 2017 novel *Crib* appear as another layer to the narrative. In the reworking of Parker's idea, *Crib* is the story of Samantha, a brilliant student who gets pregnant at 15 and the daughter, Maria, she unwillingly raises while working menial jobs. It is Maria's destiny to have the glittering college career that Samantha was denied.

Now we follow Bonner into his new life: "Audiences, stacks of books, that magical 'I' beside his name on the fabled list at the back of the New York Times Book Review." Bonner can't enjoy his success, though, because of fear that he will be found out as a (sort of) plagiarist.

Sure enough, someone calling themselves "TalentedTom" (the "Ripley" reference is not lost on Bonner) starts sending emails and social media messages. "Blindsided by that big twist in *Crib*? Here's another one: Jacob Finch Bonner stole his novel from another writer."

On a visit to Parker's hometown, Bonner realises his mistake. "This had been a far more intimate theft: not

Jake's at all but one Evan Parker himself had committed." The brilliant twist in the plot is, it turns out, not fiction at all. To say much more would risk spoilers, but Bonner's life becomes a cross-country quest to uncover the real events behind Parker's storyline, while trying not to ruin his relationship with his new wife, Anna.

Hanff Korelitz is often ahead of the curve with her themes — her last book, 2017's *The Devil and Webster*, is a pre-#MeToo, pre-Black Lives Matter tale that centres on a liberal college principal struggling with student activists who threaten to undermine her reputation, while recognising their fervour as something she once shared.

The Plot is one of a handful of novels this year — including Chris Power's *A Lonely Man* and Sam Riviere's *Dead Souls* — to probe the moral grey areas around plagiarism. If Hanff Korelitz's record continues, her book may herald a new age of reckonings with plot "borrowing" and accusations that authors appropriate others' real lives. Let's hope it doesn't turn murderous.

Isabel Berwick is the FT's work and careers editor

Arctic contagion



GENRE ROUND-UP
THRILLERS

By Adam LeBor

There's an old joke about two foreign correspondents in a bar. One asks: "So what's new?" His friend replies: "I'm writing a thriller," to which the first responds: "That's amazing, neither am I." The punchline plays on the fact that many journalists dream of turning their hand to fiction, once the allure of covering wars and revolutions fades, but never quite get around to it.

In fact, thriller writing and reporting are deeply entwined. Ian Fleming and Frederick Forsyth both worked as correspondents for Reuters. Reporters, like novelists, need a fine-tuned ear for the spoken word and the ability to set a scene quickly. But perhaps the greatest boon is their ringside seat in times of crisis, a position that brings invaluable insider knowledge of how wars and diplomacy are actually conducted. This fine quartet of thrillers by current and former foreign correspondents convincingly takes the reader into the heart of the British and American establishments as they grapple with rogue weapons, double agents and terrorist plots.

Outbreak (Bantam, £12.99), by BBC security correspondent Frank Gardner, is the third outing for Luke Carlton, an operative for MI6. The story grips from the first page, as three scientists in the Arctic Circle seek shelter from a blizzard in a cabin.

Unfortunately, they have company in a man about to die from a hideous, virulent disease — and whose final convulsions spray blood, bile and mucus across the room. The contagion, British intelligence soon believes, has been engineered in Russia. But has it?

This is thriller writing of a high order — rich in convincing detail, from the workings of MI6 and 10 Downing Street to the Porton Down government laboratory. Carlton's mission takes him on an adrenalin-fuelled adventure from Norway's Arctic reaches to a nightclub in Vilnius and a man in a leather gimp suit. Gardner steadily ratchets up the tension, peppering the narrative with nuggets of expertise to make an enthralling, intelligent read.

Triple Cross (Bantam, £12.99), by Tom Bradby, an ITN correspondent perhaps now best known for his softball interview with the Duchess of Sussex, gets off to a slower start. The third volume in a series featuring Kate Hender-

son, an MI6 operative, *Triple Cross* expects knowledge of, or at least interest in, the previous two volumes.

But once it gets going the plot twists and turns with vigour as Kate, now retired, is enticed back to MI6 and the hunt for Agent Dante, a Russian mole deep in the heart of the British establishment. Henderson, whose husband Stuart has defected to the Russians, is handy in a fist-fight but vulnerable too, especially after consuming a quantity of Czech beer on assignment in Prague. The climax of the book, at the Russian-Georgian border, is nail-biting.

I have long been a fan of Dan Fesperman, especially his books featuring Vlado Petric, a Bosnian detective from Sarajevo. Fesperman skilfully mines his experience as a foreign correspondent to write smart, sophisticated thrillers. In **The Cover Wife** (Head of Zeus, £18.99), Claire Saylor is a CIA operative sent to Hamburg in 1999 to pose as the wife of an academic who has just published a controversial — and therefore dangerous — reinterpretation of the Koran.

Part of the story turns around the real life Al-Quds mosque, an unglamorous place on a busy commercial street that was once attended by several 9/11 hijackers. But for lonely Muslims such as Mahmoud, marooned in the chilly northern port, "Al-Quds offered shelter, refuge, a remedy for homesickness" — and a distraction from Esma, the woman to whom he is attracted. Claire soon discovers the deeper purpose of

Reporters, like novelists, need a fine-tuned ear for the spoken word and the ability to set a scene quickly

her mission, as she watches the mosque and its worshippers, including Mohamed Atta, a key figure in the 9/11 attacks. Claire is an engaging protagonist, dogged and brave, but it's Mahmoud's inner struggle as he is drawn into the terrorists' lives that lifts *The Cover Wife* to a higher level.

Finally, a brief mention for Humphrey Hawksley's **Man on Fire** (Severn House, £20.99), the third outing for Rake Ozenna, an Alaskan native and American Special Forces officer. When a handover in the Bering Straits between Russia and America turns into a fire fight, Ozenna is drawn into a conspiracy that could unleash a deadly new weapon.

Hawksley is a veteran foreign correspondent for the BBC and deftly moves between high-powered diplomacy, lively scene-setting and fast-paced action to make a brisk and very contemporary read. As Ruslan Yumatov, a Russian prisoner held by the Americans muses: "These people still believed power lay with governments. They had no concept of how things had changed."

Adam LeBor is author of 'The Reykjavik Assignment'

The art of survival

The Robin Hood story gets a 21st-century retelling in this gritty tale of life on the margins. By Michael Arditti



The Painter's Friend
by Howard Cunnell
Picador £16.99
288 pages

Sherwood Forest has been reimagined for the 21st century in Howard Cunnell's powerful new novel. On a heavily wooded island in the middle of an unnamed river, a community of outcasts and outsiders has sought refuge from conventional society, some living on rickety riverboats, others in tents and shacks.

Several are contemporary counterparts of the legendary Sherwood Foresters. Little John is Adam, "a blonde giant whose green eyes shone out from his battered face", and Maid Marion, Alexandra Kaplan, daughter of the island's owner, who tries to thwart her father's business schemes. Kaplan herself is the latter-day Sheriff, living in a "castellated" mansion, with an army of bailiffs, security guards and policemen at his command.

Robin Hood becomes Terry Godden, the novel's tight-lipped narrator, who declares: "There's not much I can say about myself." What he does reveal is that he was brought up by a heroin-addicted grandmother, who died when he was sixteen. He then took to the road, living with anarchists and ravers, before being both imprisoned and sectioned.

While labouring on a building site, Terry uses scavenged materials to make art works, which come to the attention of Sir Evelyn Crow, a celebrated art dealer. Crow promises him an exhibi-

tion, but when lack of interest obliges him to move the show to a smaller gallery, Terry threatens to kill him. The ensuing scandal destroys the artist's reputation and he flees to a converted lifeboat on the island.

An atmosphere of violence pervades this place, which is graphically expressed in peoples' injuries. Adam not only has a battered face but "a huge, raised, violet welt" across his

An atmosphere of violence pervades this place, which is graphically expressed in peoples' injuries

chest. Gene, a bereaved father, has "chevrons of savage and barely healed cuts... on the inside of his left arm." Stella, fleeing from domestic violence, has a badly set broken elbow.

The islanders unite to fight Kaplan's attempts both to raise the rent on moorings and evict the squatters. Terry paints their portraits on massive panels, which they hang from a bridge to publicise their protest. Stella, claiming that it is a community arts project, obtains permission from the local council for

their installation, while remaining sceptical that they're "going to change the world with a few pictures".

The creation and consumption of art are the novel's major themes. The irony is that Terry's panels may prove the islanders' salvation, but only because Crow reappears in his life and appraises their monetary value. Cunnell carefully leaves the outcome open-ended, as he does Terry's fate when he is unwittingly implicated in an act of sabotage.

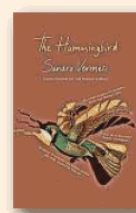
Cunnell's writing is sharp and vivid, the highly coloured verbal pictures perfectly suited to an artist narrator. Unlike Terry's vast hoardings, the author adopts an almost pointillist technique, building descriptions from discrete phrases, such as: "The miners. Six men grown old. Black suits thin as paper. Shoes with worn heels." The most sustained portrayal is that of Terry's adopted dog, Red: the finest canine characterisation that I can recall.

My major cavil is that the novel's social concern feels manufactured. Most of the characters' problems spring not from systemic injustice but from broken relationships: Terry's and Adam's inadequate parents; Stella's abusive marriage; Gene's son's death. Likewise, Terry's belief — which carries the weight of the entire novel — that by hanging the portraits on the bridge, he is providing a rare chance for the faces and stories of the excluded and dispossessed to be seen and heard is not simply sentimental but untrue.

Patronising Terry, Crow claims that "the moment is coming for marginal art". The truth is that that moment has already come: what was once considered marginal is now mainstream. The outlaws have moved out of the forest and into the citadel.

Gossamer connections

Part family saga, part unlikely romance, this novel is a towering achievement. writes Christian House



The Hummingbird
by Sandro Veronesi,
translated by Elena Pala
Weidenfeld & Nicolson £14.99
304 pages

Sandro Veronesi is today one of Italy's most successful novelists but, as a young student in Florence during the early 1980s, he trained as an architect. A flair for elaborate design still guides his hand. In architectural terms, his latest book, *The Hummingbird*, is a masterpiece of articulation.

Part fractured family saga, part unconventional romance, it arrives lauded by Roddy Doyle, Richard Ford and Jhumpa Lahiri. And it won the Premio Strega, Italy's most prestigious literary award. What might have been a folly is a towering achievement.

The novel opens in Rome in 1999 as Marco Carrera, a mild-mannered 40-year-old ophthalmologist, receives a warning that his wife has discovered his strange love pact with his childhood sweetheart, Luisa. The origins of this odd arrangement — no sex, just lingering looks and long letters — lie in an incident during a holiday on the Tuscan coast some two decades earlier. Marco's wife, however, has plenty of secrets of her own.

Marco is the titular "hummingbird", a nickname he received as a child when a hormonal imbalance temporarily stunted his growth. But the monk also alludes to his life-long equilibrium, his ability to hover while others change around him. "It takes a lot of effort and courage to keep still," he writes to Luisa.

A non-committal affair suits him perfectly. Romantic eccentricity is just one strand in a tangled narrative. Gambling dens, rock climbing, a plane crash and a teenage activist all play a part.

In a bravado exercise in chronological orientation, which demands readers' close attention, short chapters flit back and forth, from the 1970s to the near future, stopping off at key points in Marco's life. These chapters take the form of postcards, love letters, emails and telephone conversations, in addition to dreamlike passages by an omniscient authorial voice, all elegantly brought together in Elena Pala's deft translation.

Marco remains a beguilingly calm figure, whether dealing with parenthood, illness or grief he remains philosophical. In his youth, this often highlights the chaos exhibited by others, especially his suicidal sister, Irene, and his best friend Duccio (known as "The Omen" due to his frequent proximity to accidents). And then there is his estranged brother and their warring and woefully mismatched parents.

Beauty "was the spit that held his parents together", acknowledges Marco. And growing up surrounded by mid-century armchairs, Olivetti typewriters and modular bookshelves gives him "a

sense of arrogant superiority typical of Italian middle-class families in the sixties and seventies". Veronesi is as sharp as a glass of grappa on the Italian obsession with appearance.

Marco and Luisa's impossible love — heightened by distance, undiluted by everyday routine — is chronicled through its many inactions, while objects provide narrative scaffolding, emphasising episodes in the Carrera family story. In one clever sequence, Marco finds hidden significance to the gaps in his father's otherwise complete collection of science-fiction novels.

Veronesi chronicles Marco's journey from childhood to parenthood and beyond with a light comic touch, a playfulness that focuses on his protagonist's love of the quiet life: "Marco always felt justified in believing that psychotherapy was like smoking: it wasn't good enough not to do it yourself, you also had to stay away from those who did."

Central to this novel is the understanding that all relationships, from sibling bonds to long-term friendships, develop their own framework of traditions, tricks, repetitions and allowances. This invites some intriguing questions, not least whether something left unsaid amounts to a lie. It's a testament to Veronesi's competence that he can bring fun to such brooding themes.

Not since William Boyd's *Any Human Heart* has a novel captured the feast and famine nature of a single life with such invention and tenderness. Veronesi explores, with great humour, how the passage of time both expands and expunges the impact of events. And, he suggests, after the pounding of years it is only an individual's character that determines whether or not the edifice will hold.

Arts

Life&Arts



Animal spirit

Paula Rego | Tate Britain's exhibition, exploring themes of anger, loss, sexuality and a woman's response to the male tradition, shows the artist's work in all its raw power. By Jackie Wullschläger

When Paula Rego was invited to be an associate artist at the National Gallery in 1990, she refused: "The National Gallery is a masculine collection and, as a woman, I can find nothing there that would be of interest to me." A week later she changed her mind: "The National Gallery is a masculine collection and, as a woman, I think I will absolutely be able to find things there for me."

She moved into the museum's subterranean studio and painted "Time: Past and Present". It stars a child (Rego), fiercely engrossed in drawing, sitting under the indifferent gaze of a bulky man, modelled by her lover Rudolf Nassauer, in a pose reminiscent of Antonello da Messina's "St Jerome in His Study" and enclosed by the challenging walls of the museum's Old Master pictures.

Rego dazzlingly transforms Antonello's depiction of the saint's study into an inventory of her own mind at work. A painted angel awakens a "real" baby in its cot. An image of a sailor-suited boy refers to a childhood photograph of Rego's husband Victor Willing, who had recently died. A door opening to a beach floods the painting with the southern light of Rego's native Portugal. Layer by layer, Rego pierces the centuries-old hermetic masculine world of Christian Renaissance art.

As Tate Britain's thrilling new retrospective *Paula Rego* proves, no artist has more powerfully and persuasively mastered then subverted the language of male painterly tradition to express modern female interior experience.

At the Slade in 1954 – Rego was 19 – the competition subject was Dylan Thomas's *Under Milk Wood*. Rego won: she transposed the scene to her grandmother's Lisbon kitchen, peopled it with monumental, ungainly, fat-fingered female gossips and placed, foreground centre, a dish of two gleaming fried eggs – a reference to Velázquez's "Old Woman Frying Eggs" (1618).

The expertly detailed milieu suggests a Portuguese student's nostalgia in grey London. The figures herald a lifetime's flair for sensitively rendering the undeveloped female form. The ambition is towards the ruthless, exaggerated realism of Iberian painting from El Greco to Picasso; evident already is Rego's compositional genius, serving her fascination with human relationships, for multi-figure paintings, which would develop across more than six decades.

It is there in the flat cut-out shapes



and bright colours of the fragmentary 1960s collages, nodding at Pop Art but more emotionally charged. The white figure surrounded by monsters in "Manifesto (For a Lost Cause)" (1965) mourns Rego's liberal father, dying before dictatorship ended in Portugal. "The Firemen of Alijo", swirling animal-human hybrids with badger and seal heads, was inspired by barefoot, soot-blackened firemen huddled in the cold, encountered on a winter holiday at New Year 1965-66. It expressed Rego's "sense of the end of the world", but against an orange-red ground, the forms, marvels of her fluid metamorphosing draughtsmanship, surge with life.

Her father died, the family business failed, and Willing was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis that year. Rego has spoken about her complex feelings for

Willing, who was seven years her senior: the near-rape which began their relationship at a party when he ushered her into a room and demanded "take down your knickers"; the abortions, betrayals, competitiveness before and after they became married with three children, with Willing heroically committed to Rego's art as his own stalled. This is not just background; it is the autobiographical impetus of a career.

The pathos/revenge fantasy, driving Rego's portrayals of men as feeble giants – the bankrupt bridegroom collapsed, Pietà-like, across his bride in "Marriage à la Mode", after Hogarth; the corrupt priest Amaro as a big baby in a skirt curled up between nursemaids in "The Company of Women"; the sinister, oversized, slumped "The Pillowman" – goes back to the sick Willing as an emaciated, furious monkey in 1981.

Violent, cartoon-simplified, expressive, "Red Monkey Offers Bear a Poisoned Dove" (Rego is the bird, Nassauer the bear) and "Wife Cuts off Red Monkey's Tail", Rego cutting herself off from her ailing, vomiting husband, are, she says, her "most real" paintings, "closest to personal experience". Rego talks too of "wanting to harm the person you love... if you make them into animals, you can do anything can't you?" So in 1987 she painted the "Girl and Dog" series which "started everything".

In "Snare" a girl in a voluminous skirt holds down a powerless dog, his pose imitated by an upturned crab. The dog is Willing, the girl his frustrated carer Rego. Later, using her lookalike model Lila Nunes, Rego painted herself as the crouching, howling, biting "Dog Woman", and the half-nude kicked out of bed on all fours in "Bad Dog". Stark, almost hyper naturalism, achieved by greater volume and shadow, combined with fairy tale elements and urgent storytelling: the dog paintings mark the beginning of Rego as we know her.

Artistically, 1987-88 was an *annus mirabilis*. "The Maids", inspired by Velázquez in subject and texture but also by Jean Genet's tale of servant-murderers, and "The Dance", a lone stoic woman amid twirling couples on a moonlit beach, are masterpieces of late 20th-century figuration.

Rego rolled up the first to show the bed-ridden Willing – the limp coat on the door and suitcase signify his imminent departure. The second was made after he died, and justifies his generous prediction, months before, about the direction of her work: "The figures emerge from sullen paint cooing an awkward naturalism; which failure, paradoxically, leads to an uneasy success when, after all, this is not prosaic but Gothic in feeling."

Rego was still little known; "uneasy success" came with a 1988 Serpentine show, then in the 1990s and 2000s the mature artist met the political moment with originality and defiance. Frank in its realism, the "Abortion" series (1999), including schoolgirls in uniform, was made at the time of Portugal's abortion referendum. "War" (2003) recasts a newspaper photograph of

bombing in Basra with rabbit-headed victims, and is extraordinarily affecting.

Both are made in pastel, favoured by Rego from the 1990s; it plays to her graphic strength and ends ideas about the medium's ladylike delicacy: "I'm not mad about the lyrical quality of the brush. I much prefer the hardness of the stick. The stick is fiercer, much more aggressive."

She obtains from it a tough, soft shimmer that makes her surfaces as purely memorable as their subjects: the satin gold of the avenging, sword-wielding

Above, clockwise from top left: 'Bad Dog' (1994); 'The Company of Women' (1997); 'The Cake Woman' (2004); 'Time - Past and Present' (1990); 'Red Monkey Offers Bear a Poisoned Dove' (1981)

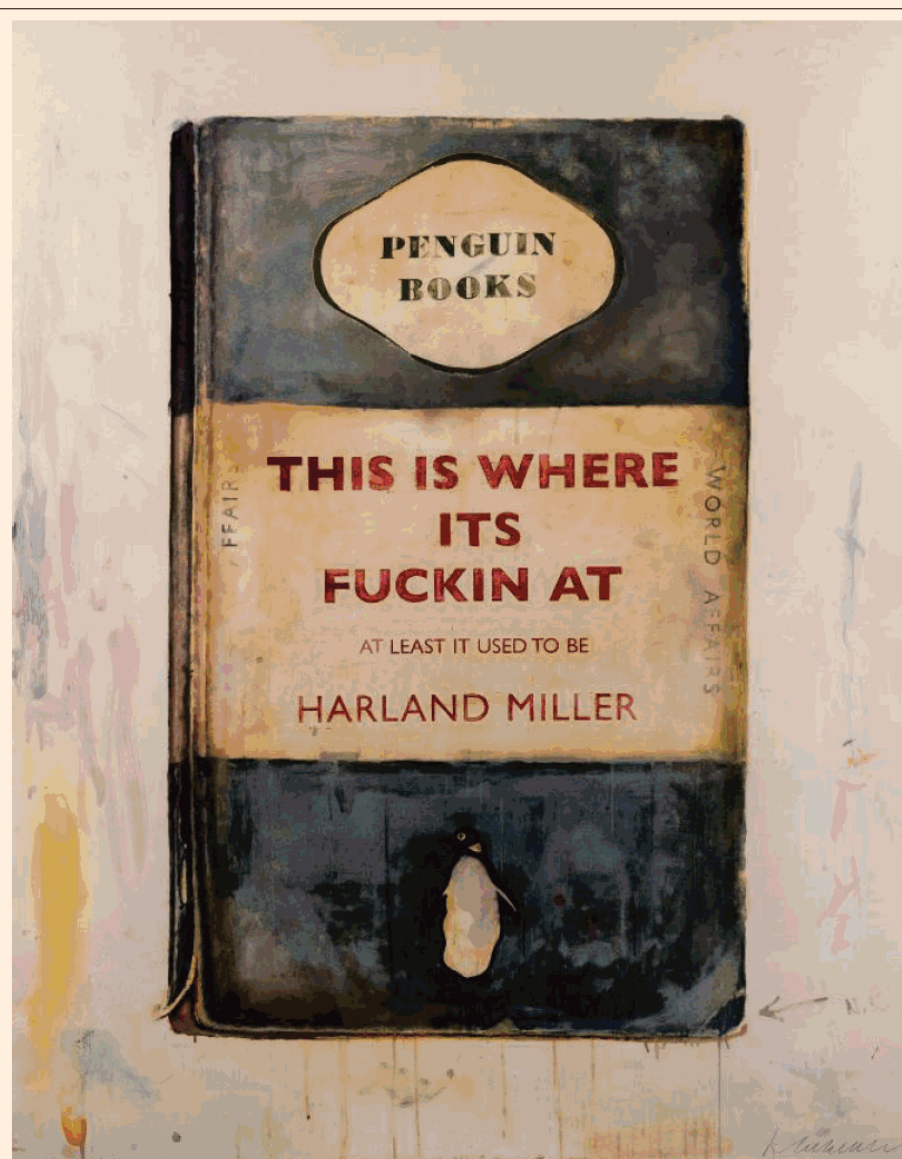
Below, from top: 'War' (2003); 'Angel' (1998)

Victoria Miro, Collection Osnich Arts, Gublerkian Foundation

woman "Angel"; the Velázquez frothy white costume of the huge "Cake Woman" with top-hatted paedophile priest in her shadow.

This is the best exhibition I have seen since the National Gallery's *Artemisia* last autumn. The scale of achievement, fuelled by transcending rage through formal inventiveness, is comparable, and so is the force of revelation about women's lives eternalised in paint.

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Arts

John McLaughlin | The jazz fusion

guitar pioneer on Miles Davis, the

blues and his lockdown-inspired

album. By Ludovic Hunter-Tilney

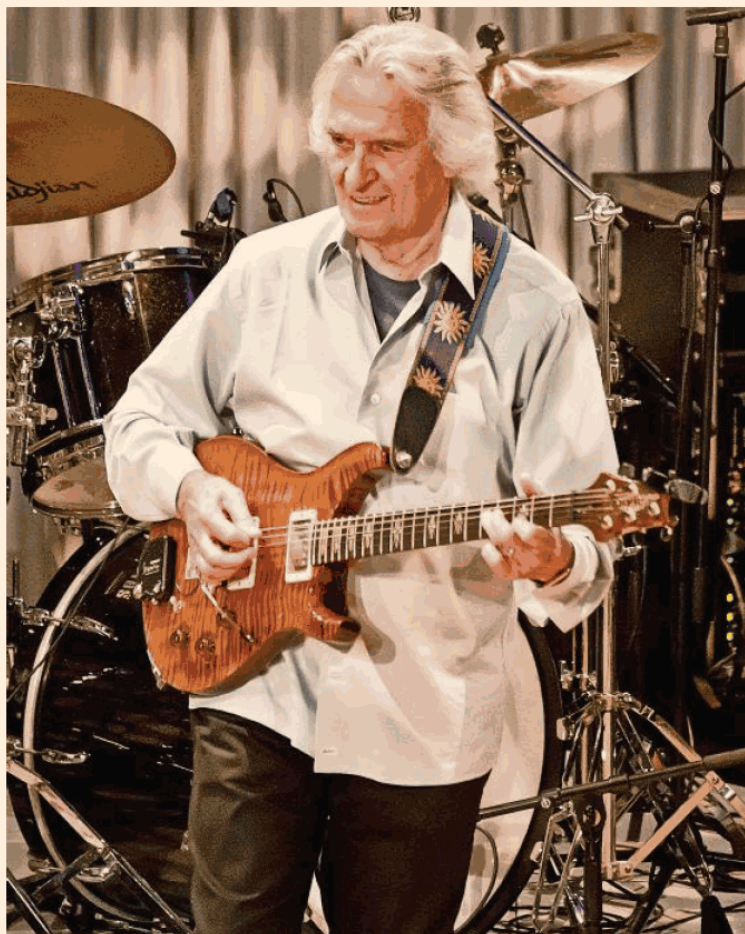
John McLaughlin is reminiscing about his first encounter with Miles Davis, just two days after the English guitarist moved from London to New York in 1969. He had been recruited for Davis's album *In a Silent Way*, an audacious exercise in what would become known as fusion – a hybridised jazz with rock and electronic elements that variously provoked scorn and adulation on its release in the summer of that year.

"Miles was like a Zen master," McLaughlin recalls. "He had this gift with his musicians. He would in one sentence knock the ordinary out of a musician's mind. Like on that particular recording, he said: 'Play it like you don't know how to play the guitar.'"

Did he mean, I suggest, unlearn what you think you know in order to access some deeper kind of knowledge? "Exactly," McLaughlin beams, like a genial Obi-Wan Kenobi. He returns to the encounter with Davis. "I was so nervous. But I just let it all go and threw caution to the wind. And that's all he wanted. I've seen him do it many times with other musicians. He would just say one thing and your whole mindset is different. I learnt so much from that."

McLaughlin is talking to me by video call from the summer house he shares with his wife Ina Behrend in Cap d'Ail, a French seaside resort along the Mediterranean coast from Monaco where they have their main home. Lauded in 1971 by rock critic Lester Bangs as cutting "a swath through the music of our time wider and more far-reaching than any guitarist since Eric Clapton", he has mastered numerous different genres, including jazz, flamenco and Indian classical music. He is as expressive with an acoustic guitar as electric, a gifted composer and improviser, and former leader of the Mahavishnu Orchestra.

He has a new album coming out, *Liberation Time*. The title refers to the



past 17 months of lockdowns and restrictions. "I felt my wings were clipped," McLaughlin says. "I really needed liberation. I was going bonkers, I needed to get that feeling of moving."

The album opens with an exuberant fanfare of jazz guitar, a curtain raiser for an alternately vigorous and reflective set of tracks. One is called "Lockdown Blues", a dashing exercise in jazz-guitar shredding and rhythmic sprightliness. No similarity is intended to the anti-lockdown song that Eric Clapton made with Van Morrison last year.

"Oh really? Eric? He has a new album?" McLaughlin says when I mention the controversial single, "Stand and Deliver". "I'm sure he's playing great on it," he says in a cheerfully ecumenical fashion on being told of the criticism Clapton received for his stance.

Liberation Time was made with a set of musicians based in places ranging from Cairo to Los Angeles, who recorded their parts separately. The music has a bustling, improvisational energy, as though McLaughlin and his collaborators were bouncing ideas off each other in the same space rather than remotely. The guitarist devised the structure of each track, but encouraged his players to go where inspiration took them.

"You can hear the chords I'm playing," he says of his instructions to them. "Don't play them my way, play them your way. I want to hear how you feel. Especially during the improvisations,

'I felt my wings were clipped. I really needed liberation. I was going bonkers, I needed to get that feeling of moving'

just be yourself. Don't play something you think I might like, I'm not interested. Even if it's crazy, that's what I want. So they had no constraints other than the structure of a piece."

Two tracks feature him playing piano, which he has not done on a recording since his 1973 joint album with fellow guitar ace Carlos Santana, *Love Devotion Surrender*. It returns him to the first instrument he learnt to play. Born in 1942, he grew up in Whitley Bay, a coastal town in north-east England near Newcastle upon Tyne. His mother was an amateur violinist. McLaughlin dutifully tried to learn the same instrument but after scraping away – "a horrible sound" – he asked to move to piano. The guitar was a cast-off from an older brother when he was 11. "I just fell in love with it. It's still a love affair today, after all these years," he says.

The youngest of five, he supplemented the classical music he learnt from his mother with Mississippi and Chicago blues records acquired by his siblings. "It was a revelation to me, this music. The freedom of the guitar and

'The purists are disappearing like the dodo'

Main: John McLaughlin live in Berlin, 2019

Top right: Miles Davis with McLaughlin in a Copenhagen studio in 1985 recording 'Aura' Frank Hoensch/Redferns; Jan Persson/Getty Images

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this black music – it just blew me away. So the record player became my favourite teacher.”

He has been a professional musician since he was 16, when he was recruited by northern English trad jazz troupe Big Pete Deuchar and His Professors of Ragtime. A move to London followed where he worked in Georgie Fame’s band as a session musician. He had a stint in Alexis Korner’s band, also a training ground for members of the Rolling Stones and bluesmen such as John Mayall and Clapton, before joining The Graham Bond Organisation with Jack Bruce and Ginger Baker, later of Cream.

“Those guys were more hardcore than Georgie Fame, the passion was definitely more intense,” he says. “It was like, let’s have some blood on stage.”

His style emerged from a distinctively British fertile crescent in the 1960s where the worlds of jazz, R&B, blues and light entertainments overlapped. McLaughlin can play with great speed and attack, in the flamboyant mode of the archetypal guitar hero, yet he also has a profoundly tuned ear for texture, the ability to immerse himself in a composition.

As well as *In a Silent Way*, he played for Miles Davis on 1970’s *Bitches Brew* and 1971’s *A Tribute to Jack Johnson*. His love of flamenco led to collaborations with Spanish maestro Paco de Lucía. He studied under Ravi Shankar in the 1970s, the foundation for a life-long involvement

Above: John McLaughlin playing with the Mahavishnu Orchestra

Below: McLaughlin at Crystal Palace, 1972 — Redferns, Michael Putland/Getty Images



“Those guys were more hardcore . . . the passion more intense. It was like, let’s have blood on stage’

in Indian music. In 1971 he founded the Mahavishnu Orchestra, whose jazz-rock fusion turned him into a chart star. “Mahavishnu” was the name McLaughlin had been given by the Indian spiritual teacher Sri Chinmoy, who was McLaughlin’s guru in the 1970s.

“For the last 55 years I have been cultivating the spirit in myself, which I still do to this day, because without that I’m dead,” he says. “The cultivation of the spirit is actually the cultivation of wonder and awe. The gigantic mystery of being alive in an infinite universe.”

The artistic enemies of his philosophy of connectedness are the purists who insist on keeping different genres of music apart.

“I have lived my entire life with these people, scathingly criticising the Mahavishnu Orchestra, for example. “This is not jazz!” But I’m happy to say the purists are disappearing, like the dodo,” he says. “Music is the real force. And if it comes from the hearts of men and women, then it’s universal.”

‘Liberation Time’ is released by Abstract Logix/Mediatarz on July 16

THE LIFE OF A SONG

PUMP IT UP

Halfway through *Unfaithful Music & Disappearing Ink*, Elvis Costello’s hefty autobiography, the songwriter recounts a conversation with Bob Dylan about a new U2 single that bore an uncanny resemblance to Costello’s barnstorming ode to hedonism “Pump It Up”.

“How could they do that to you? How could they take your song like that?” Dylan asked. It took a minute before Costello twigged that Dylan was putting him on, given that his song’s single-note barrage of words and images was itself an echo of Dylan’s “Subterranean Homesick Blues”.

Costello reflected in his book that the history of rock and roll is one of shared lineage. “U2’s ‘Get On Your Boots’ was probably to ‘Pump It Up’ what ‘Subterranean Homesick Blues’ is to Chuck Berry’s ‘Too Much Monkey Business,’” he wrote.

Back in 1978 he had a spikier response. When asked by Melody Maker about comparisons to Dylan and Neil Young, he shot back: “I don’t give a shit. I’ve already forgotten who Bob Dylan was.” That attitude was compounded in the video for “Pump It Up” as a gap-toothed, bespectacled agitator leered into the camera and stomped around on the sides of his feet like a wounded bird. It is still how many like to think of a singer who has long since abandoned his new wave shtick.

“Pump It Up” was composed one night on the fire escape of the Swallow Hotel in Newcastle upon Tyne. It is often mistaken as an anthem celebrating the joys of indulgence. But the rallying cry is hiding its true intentions.

“All it took was some gin, some tonic, some blue pills, and a red pen to write ‘Pump It Up’ during my first exposure to idiotic rock and roll decadence,” he later wrote.

“I thought myself above and beyond it, but quickly found it easier to indulge than to sit in judgment.”

Elvis Costello and the Attractions were the biggest draw on the 1977 Stiff Records bus tour of the UK that acted as a showcase for the provocative label. Yet he vied with Ian Dury and the Blockheads for star billing as their anthem “Sex and Drugs and Rock and Roll” was the obvious choice to close each show. “Pump It Up” acts as an “answer song” from Costello who endured, rather than enjoyed, the Stiff tour which lived up to Dury’s lyrics.

That much is evident in the song’s most memorable couplet: “She’s been a bad girl, she’s like a chemical. There’s no use trying to stop it, she’s like a narcotic.”

The track was captured in the studio by producer Nick Lowe. Key to the sound was the use of the Vox Continental organ. The “Connie” had

underpinned 1960s hits such as “Light My Fire” by The Doors and “The House of the Rising Sun” by The Animals but had since become unfashionable. The brittle edgy sound was, however, perfect for the Attractions’ and keyboardist Steve Nieve’s frenetic style; he was at the forefront of a revival of the Vox, with Madness, Blondie and Tom Petty among those to rediscover its kooky tones.

The Vox added intrigue to “Pump It Up”’s basic descending chromatic riff that was thrashed out on Costello’s Fender jazzmaster and underpinned by a bass that sounds like it is about to walk off. By the fade-out, the guitar is out of tune and missing strings. Costello said he was trying to keep up as his new backing band sped out of sight.

The song has served Costello as an aisle-filler at his shows ever since and has also provided an easy cover for bands looking to capture some of the Stiff attitude.

Mudhoney, the proto-grunge band, captured a wearily heavy version, while Melbourne band Automatic sounded lascivious when tackling it. Geordie rockers The Wildhearts abolished the organ in favour of a tougher guitar sound and distorted “industrial”-style vocals.

Thrash-metal veterans Exodus also pumped out a heavier version, replete with double kick pedals, with guitarist Gary Holt squeezing extra power out of the riff. Twinned with Anthrax’s hit cover of Joe Jackson’s “Got the Time”, the nexus of thrash and British new wave is fertile ground.

Status Quo recorded a likeable cover that falls into submission with their stodgy brand of boogie-woogie but Shakin’ Stevens sounds out of his comfort zone when taking it on. The riff’s rhythmic itch has also been sampled by The Beastie Boys in “Egg Man”, while Rogue Traders and Girl Talk carved out the riff and built on it.

Last month, singer Olivia Rodrigo was accused of pinching the “Pump It Up” motif for her song “Brutal”. Costello took to social media to defend her. He argued that he had used the broken pieces of other songs to craft his most enduring riff. “It’s how rock and roll works,” he said.

Nic Fildes



Elvis Costello on stage in the late 1970s — Chris Gabrin/Redferns

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Life&Arts

'There will always be an existential threat'

Gabriel Byrne | The actor talks to *Fiona Sturges* about 'War of the Worlds', his autobiography and sage advice on celebrity from Richard Burton

In 1983, Gabriel Byrne was sent on a last-minute trip to Venice to film a scene for *Wagner*, a TV series about the German composer starring Richard Burton. Byrne was at the start of his career and had landed the role of Karl Ritter, Wagner's patron. He was on welfare and living in a rundown flat in London at the time, so couldn't believe his luck at finding himself in a fancy hotel on the Grand Canal.

However, the first day's filming was calamitous, with Byrne's moustache constantly falling off. At the end of it, Burton invited him to his room for a drink, where he offered some advice: "Give it all you've got but never forget it's just a bloody movie, that's all it is. We're not curing cancer."

"This was a man I hugely respected and revered as an actor telling me: 'Be careful. This isn't real life,'" Byrne recalls now. "Because I saw what happened whenever he stepped out of the hotel. It was insane. Seventy or 100 photographers jumping over each other at five o'clock in the morning to take photographs of him." Byrne, now 71, heeded Burton's words and resolved never to allow his head to be turned by celebrity.

Their encounter is detailed in his memoir, *Walking With Ghosts*, published late last year, which contains lyrical snapshots of his life and career and reflects on his uncomfortable relationship with fame. First, though, we have the apocalypse to discuss, specifically Byrne's role in the darkly atmospheric update of HG Wells' novel *War of the Worlds*, which returns for a second series on Disney Plus next week.

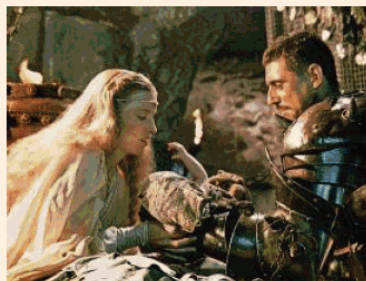
Set in the present day, the action is split between northern France and London, and follows the progress of various groups of survivors — among them Byrne's pensive neuroscientist, Bill Ward — as they search for their loved ones while dodging the homicidal aliens that have wiped out most of humanity.

Speaking over Zoom from a hotel in an undisclosed location in the UK — Byrne is filming, but isn't able to reveal what — he is warm, thoughtful and unfailingly courteous, despite his clear exhaustion after a long day's work. He read Wells' book in his teens, though it wasn't until he re-read it at university

that he absorbed its significance. "It's prophetic," he says. "And it's always relevant. When you go back to it, you see things in it that you didn't see before. There will always be some kind of existential threat [that underlines] the fragility of humankind, whether that's nuclear war or the environment. In my opinion, there are far more scary things in the world than aliens getting out of a flying saucer."

Byrne recalls the very real fear of a nuclear attack while he was growing up in Walkinstown, Dublin, in the 1950s and early 1960s. "That was the first time that people talked about the annihilation of the world, and it was a real thing that could happen next Tuesday," he says. "It wasn't something vague. There was a possibility of every single person that you knew, and every place, being obliterated. To know that at 10 or 11 years of age, it stays with you. I understood deep in myself that the world wasn't something you can depend on."

He recalls a question hanging over the



Above: the actor Gabriel Byrne

Clockwise from far left: Byrne as Bill in 'War of the Worlds'; in 1995's 'The Usual Suspects'; with Dianne Wiest in HBO's 'In Treatment'; and with Katrine Boorman in 'Excalibur' (1981) — Cig Harvey/Simon Ridgway/Fox, Alamy

filming of the first series of *War of the Worlds* in 2019. "I remember one of the crew saying: 'Who's going to believe London having empty streets, with people too afraid to go out?' And then, of course, Covid happened."

Byrne is best known for his big film roles — he made his name in the Coen brothers' mobster movie *Miller's Crossing*, and later in Gillian Armstrong's adaptation of *Little Women* (the book remains one of his favourites) and Bryan Singer's *The Usual Suspects*. Yet it was a stint on a rural Irish TV soap called *The Riordans* in the late 1970s — he played the flamboyant and handsome Pat Barry — that set him on his way.

He notes how he has witnessed big changes in how we tell and watch stories in film and TV. He recalls working on John Boorman's 1981 film *Excalibur*, in which he played King Uther Pendragon — "and I could not understand why we were there three days shooting the same scene. That was really a luxury that we had back then. But television isn't about hanging around to see what the atmosphere is like. It's about quick cuts and editing. It's just a faster-paced medium."

In 2008, Byrne starred in the HBO series *In Treatment*, about a 50-something therapist, which he starred in for three seasons. He says he would do 35 pages of dialogue every two days — "in a chair, with just one other person opposite me. That was more theatre than TV or film. It was like doing a stage play three times a week." He observes how TV networks now have more money and a faster turnover, and so are allowed to take risks, which can allow for more exciting creative decisions. But he worries about where this leaves independent filmmaking. "I remember being in a cinema in New York [recently], and there were three people there, including me. Then the other two left, and I thought: 'My God, this film has probably taken four years to get made and there's nobody watching it.'"

As a young man, Byrne found a passion for film via his grandmother, who was the first to take him to the cinema. He writes wistfully in *Walking With Ghosts* about his local picture house — "I saw sometimes 10 films a week in a fog of cigarette smoke and disinfectant... The picture house is a carpet showroom now."

Byrne was worried before he started on the book about his ability to remember the past — "but then there's this magic when you pick up the pen and find, in a way that you can't explain, that the pen connects with your unconscious". Rather than a chronological

'I remember one of the crew saying: "Who's going to believe London having empty streets, with people too afraid to go out?"'

account of his life, the book comprises a series of vignettes that hop back and forth across the decades, documenting his school days; his early years of employment during which he worked as a dishwasher, a hotel toilet attendant, a plumber and an encyclopedia salesman; and his acting career.

There are moments of trauma — he recounts the sexual abuse he endured at a Catholic seminary where he was training to be a priest — and there is humour, too. Filming *Excalibur*, he recalls the awful squeaking noise that accompanied his plunging the titular sword into the stone (the weapon was real but the rock was made of polystyrene). Elsewhere, he is caught in an earthquake during his first visit to Hollywood, and has an attack of diarrhoea after his first communion, a scene his mother later related at the Galway Film Festival.

When he's not working, Byrne lives a quiet life in Maine with his second wife, Hannah Beth King, a documentary maker, and their young daughter (he also has two children from his first marriage to actor Ellen Barkin). He compares going to Hollywood to "touching a hot stove. I touched it and then I thought: 'Jesus, do I really want this?'"

He recalls being told that, along with an agent, he would need a manager, lawyer, business manager and publicist — "and I would need a little bit of Botox to sort out the lines that were coming in on my forehead. And I was not an old man! And that's what I mean about the ways the business seduces you. It does it in ways that are almost imperceptible... Botox! You have to wonder what Burton would have made of that."

'War of the Worlds' is on Disney Plus from July 16. 'Walking With Ghosts' is published by Picador

Cannes Film Festival

FILM

Annette
Leos Carax
★★★★☆

Cannes under Covid looks, surprisingly, just like it ever did. The festival that played brinkmanship with the virus last year, then capitulated, has gone ahead with its promise to deliver, albeit delayed from its usual May. It feels the same, with busy streets and no apparent strain on its high-end boutiques, and looks the same, with a heady programme of premieres that are causing the new online ticketing system to crash every morning.

But for many there's also a certain unease in the air: the festival's venues, big and small, are opening to capacity, and the attitude to mask-wearing in local restaurants and bars is cavalier. Meanwhile, Covid testing stations flank the Palais des Festivals, where accredited attendees must literally salivate to gain a two-day bill of health.

The festival is pulling out all the stops, and it has called in many favours from friends, filling the opening-night red carpet with international stars such as Pedro Almodóvar, Jodie Foster and Bong Joon-ho, whose 2019 film *Parasite* began its journey to Oscar glory on those same famous steps. This year's curtain-raiser was a bold one, and, though it proved divisive, Leos Carax's

Annette was a very good choice

A deconstructed musical, it has a strange, staccato score by the eccentric American band Sparks, and stars Marion Cotillard and Adam Driver. It's possible that festival programmer Thierry Frémaux made his decision based on the first five minutes alone, a catchy song called "So May We Start?" in which the director, band and stars abandon the recording studio and take to the streets, roughly outlining the plot ("A tale of songs and fury / With no taboo"), before Cotillard and Driver take off in different directions, in a cab and on a motorbike, respectively.

Driver is Henry, a cult comedian whose self-flagellating stand-up sets feature no discernible jokes; Cotillard is Ann, a famous opera singer. They meet and fall in love, but by the time the title

character comes along (their baby), things are becoming fraught: Cotillard gets a glimpse of Henry's real character via a #MeToo-themed musical number in which six women ("All with similar stories") testify to his cruel nature.

In many ways, it's not too far from Carax's early films, notably *Boy Meets Girl* and *Les Amants du Pont Neuf*, but the surrealist approach owes more to his 2012 Cannes hit *Holy Motors*, an imagistic set of stories pondering human existence and identity.

Annette struggles to resolve itself, ending with a touch of anticlimax. Despite its imperfections, this dark and unusual film perfectly reflects these dark and unusual times.

Damon Wise

Festival continues to July 17, festival-cannes.com



Adam Driver and Marion Cotillard star as a comedian and an opera singer in Leos Carax's story of love and manipulation

FILM

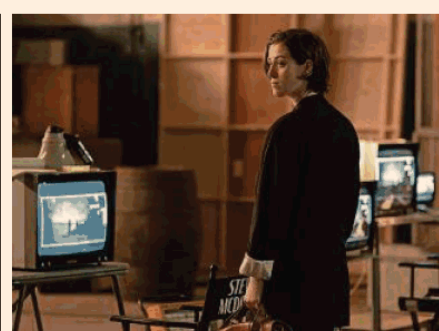
The Souvenir: Part II
Joanna Hogg
★★★★☆

Away from Cannes's official selection, the festival's most anticipated British film turns up in the Directors' Fortnight sidebar, a fitting place for the study of a moviemaker's faltering first steps.

Joanna Hogg's *The Souvenir: Part II* is an extremely satisfying sequel to her 1980s-set memoir about a naive young film student falling under the thrall of an oppressive older man, Anthony.

Following his death, we find Julie (Honor Swinton Byrne) having retreated to the chintzy safety of her rural parental home, tending her wounds and hanging on in quiet desperation between cups of tea and country walks. Parental love is mostly unspoken and served tepid. Tilda Swinton reprises her marvellous turn as Julie's plucky and practical mother, all silk scarves and spaniels, and there is a masterclass in gently scathing wit from James Spencer Ashworth as her archly patrician father. "That's mummy's first artefact," he remarks of a pot made by his wife, a budding craftswoman. Later, when it falls prey to Julie nervous fingers: "I shouldn't worry, it's only a term's fees."

This glimpse into Julie's origins goes some way to answering the film's



central question and the one that dogs Julie: how did she end up with the confidence-sapping, heroin-addicted conman Anthony? Anyone who remembers Tom Burke's monumental, glowering performance in the first film may wonder how Hogg is able to sustain the story without him. But even absent from the screen, his presence hangs over the film like a funeral shroud as Julie returns to London and endeavours to tell their story in her graduate film.

"Make a memorial for him," advises Richard Ayoade's diva-ish director on the set of his 1940s-set punk musical, where he bristles hilariously at both praise ("That's marvellously generic") and, worse still, patient notes from his earnest editor ("You're forcing me to have a tantrum"). Meanwhile on her own set, where filmmaking doubles as

therapy, Julie struggles to give direction to others while adrift herself, her stumbling speech and muddled ideas driving her crew to distraction.

"You're lost and you'll always be lost" was the terrible curse placed upon her by Anthony in the first film. Hogg is far too astute a writer to opt for anything as facile as swanlike transformation — there is no eureka moment where Julie suddenly becomes a swaggering auteur — and Swinton *Byrne*, whose first starring role was in *The Souvenir*, carries the film with a performance of deft subtlety and pleasing grace notes. Her Julie may always be hesitant, sweetly bumbling and steeped in self-doubt but, away from Anthony's shadow, she learns to wear it more lightly. The shroud is lifting.

Raphael Abraham
To July 16, quinzaine-realisateurs.com

The Art Market | Guaranteed prices boost Christie's; performance in London and Paris; Christo project to be funded by sale. By Melanie Gerlis

Auction sales were up 250 per cent in the first half of 2021, the first evidence that the industry has bounced back quickly from the impact of the Covid-19 crisis. Data from Pi-eX finds that sales at Sotheby's, Christie's and Phillips, the largest international auction houses, hit a total \$5.8bn by June 30, up from \$1.75bn in 2020.

While the gain is heavily flattered by last year's hiatus, Pi-eX finds that the total is also a smidge ahead of the \$5.77bn recorded in the equivalent period before the pandemic struck in 2019, a heartening sign for the industry. Revenue from online-only auctions almost doubled, from \$37m to \$66m between 2020 and 2021, but the real gains came from going live again, or livestreamed, with an auctioneer in view. Sales here rose from \$1.4bn to \$5.1bn.

"There is no doubt that it is the return of the live auction format on the traditional auction calendar that explains the growth in the first semester this year versus last year," says Christine Bourron, chief executive of Pi-eX. Her data found that the share of online-only auctions fell from 73 per cent in the first half of 2020 to 56 per cent in 2021. Bourron notes the increase in online bids during the live sales, a sign that digital investment continues to pay off in other ways.

There are geographic shifts below the top-line numbers. In the US and UK, sales were down 10 per cent and 22 per cent respectively between the equivalent, pre-pandemic, period in 2019 and 2021. Considerable gains were made in China, where auction sales were up 47 per cent to \$1.5bn between 2019 and 2021, and in France, where these grew 79 per cent to \$410m.

Christie's ended the London season's mash-up of Modern and contemporary art auctions on a high, making £101m at its June 30 evening sale (£119.3m with fees).

This within-estimate total contributed to what the auction house described as its "best summer season since 2017", and this time round had



Auction sales make a leap

incorporated two livestreamed auctions in Paris. The top lot was Picasso's "L'Étreinte" (1969), a painting of lovers in a passionate embrace, which sold for £12.6m (£14.7m with fees, est. £11m-£16m). In Paris, despite a technical glitch during bidding, René Magritte's "La Vengeance" (1936) sold from the collection of the late advertising magnate Francis Gross for well above its €6m-€10m estimate at €12.5m (£14.6m with fees).

The Covid-19 pandemic stymied plans last year for Performance Exchange, the first collaborative event for performance art that was due to run in London in July 2020. Despite ongoing restrictions, the inaugural event goes ahead this weekend with 10 commercial galleries putting on shows that aim to share this less-understood

Guarantees make the outcome of each auction more predictable as they establish a work's worth ahead of the live bidding, but have proved appealing safety nets to consignors.

"As in the New York sales, considered use of strong guarantees galvanised auction house teams to deliver results," says Willem-Joost de Gier, founding director of art advisers Cadell, whose clients accounted for just under a fifth of the Christie's sale.

The Covid-19 pandemic stymied plans last year for Performance Exchange, the first collaborative event for performance art that was due to run in London in July 2020. Despite ongoing restrictions, the inaugural event goes ahead this weekend with 10 commercial galleries putting on shows that aim to share this less-understood



discipline, which is increasingly a part of the output of today's artists.

Galleries from overseas that were originally included are understandably not able to join the London line-up. "We could have waited for an indefinite future but people are ready to experience art again so we decided to go ahead with the people who can," says Performance Exchange's founder and director Rose Lejeune.

Performances run between July 9 and 11 with scheduling to enable visitors to catch a few on a particular day. Some shows are drop-ins, such as Amalia Pica at König gallery, and a couple of performances will be held outside, including Helen Cammock under the bandstand of Arnold Circus (Kate MacGarry gallery). Others, such as Anna Barham's "As felt as if" (2021), require tickets to keep numbers Covid-friendly (Chelsea Space, Arcade gallery). Three UK public museum partners – Towner Art Gallery in Eastbourne, Leicester Gallery at De Montfort University and Grundy Art Gallery, Blackpool – have committed to buy work from the event. Details at performance-exchange.org.

Sotheby's will offer 25 works by Christo that chart the realisation of the late artist's final project – to cover the Arc de Triomphe in Paris in 25,000 sq m of polypropylene fabric and rope. Christo died in 2020 but his monumental wrap will still take place, between September 18 and October 5. The Sotheby's selling exhibition will coincide with the Christo show at its Paris space (opening one day before).

Christo, with collaborator and wife Jeanne-Claude, deliberately made work that could be monetised to fund their performative and experiential practice. This meant that they didn't need to rely on outside support. "Each one of our works is a scream of freedom," Christo said in a 2001 book.

Proceeds from the original works at Sotheby's will benefit the latest Paris project and will also go towards the newly established Christo & Jeanne-Claude Foundation. Sotheby's also worked with the estate in February to sell the couple's collection of 373 works, all of which sold for a total €9.2m (est. €2.8m-€4.2m).

The Arc de Triomphe wrap is "the last such project that can ever be done", says Simon Shaw, vice-chair of Sotheby's. He dates its beginnings to 1958, when the Bulgaria-born Christo arrived in Paris as a political refugee and could see the famous arch from his small room. The works at Sotheby's date from 2017 to 2020 and are "like a walk around his brain", Shaw says. Prices range from \$150,000 to \$2.5m.

Main: Picasso's 'L'Étreinte' (1969) sold for £12.6m. Right: Paul Maheke's 'Taboo Durag' (2021) is part of Performance Exchange
Christie's Images; Eoin Carey

Diversions

CHESS LEONARD BARDEN

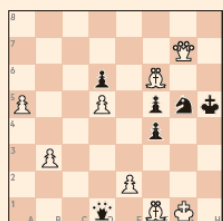
At age 58, the legendary Garry Kasparov makes a rare over-the-board cameo comeback this weekend when the \$150,000 Zagreb Grand Tour event reaches its climax in Croatia. Kasparov will be playing 18 five-minute blitz games against opponents led by the current Russian champion Ian Nepomniachtchi, who challenges for the world crown later this year.

Kasparov's games on Saturday and Sunday, nine

each day at 30-minute intervals starting 2pm BST, can be watched live at grandchessstour.org.

Kasparov is still all-time No1 in the eyes of many, among them Norway's world champion Magnus Carlsen, who will himself compete in the \$1.9m 206-player World Cup in Sochi next week.

Carlsen travels to the Crimea as the 30-year-old world champion struggles to recover from a bout of uneven form online. It is



rare for him to lose three games in a row, even at online speed chess, but it happened twice last week at the \$100,000 Goldmoney

Asian Rapid-first in his losing semi-final against world No5 Levon Aronian, then in his third place play-off against China's Ding Liren, which Carlsen still won in a speed tie-break.

2426 Colin McNab v Attila Groszpet, Denmark 1992. Black to move. Black is a piece and pawn down, while White threatens instant mate by Qxg5. How did Black manage to save the game? Solution, back page

BRIDGE PAUL MENDELSON

Small things make a big difference at the bridge table – if partner is paying attention. Take a look at the auction below and decide on South's second bid.

The bidding ran this way at most tables. Where South now bid 3C, North asked for help in spades and 3NT was bid. This always failed.

South's correct rebid is to pass. East's raise to 2S has provided the opener with extra descriptive bids, the most important of which is

10 4
 ♠ J 8
 ♡ A Q 5 3 2
 ♣ K 8 7
 ♠ A K 7 5 3
 ♡ 10 6
 ♣ K J 10 4
 ♠ 9 5
 ♠ Q 9 2
 ♡ A K 7 5 3
 ♣ A 6 4 3

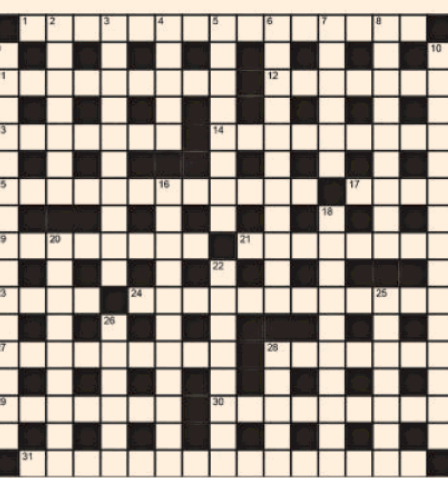
Dealer: South Game All
 North East South West
 2D 2S ?
 2D would have opened 1NT). When the bidding returns to North, he can opt to rebid 3D, which South can pass or, better, be more aggressive and double. This should show 10pts or more and a dislike for hearts, suggesting a possible penalty. At only one table did this happen, from probably the strongest pair in the room, and the

result was +500 to N/S. The key is that when your opponents are vulnerable and competing, even one down doubled scores you +200 – a result that beats any part-score your side can make. Whenever the hand seems to be misfitting, this is the option you should take. Here, South's singleton diamond and North's doubleton heart strongly suggested defending was superior to play – and so it was.

POLYMATH 1,134 SET BY BRADMAN

- ACROSS**
 1 Part of a sentence as in the first four words of "You can solve this if you try" (9,6)
 11 A person who offers praise (9)
 12 A dessert wine from Sicily (7)
 13 A barrel-shaped cheese (7)
 14 Citizens who were allies of the Romans and who were expected to support them in battle (9)
 15 Fairies or other small supernatural beings (6,6)
 17 An ethnoreligious group originating in the second millennium BCE (4)
 19 Flirtatious behaviour (8)
 21 An edition of a text with editorial annotations (8)
 23 A domestic slave in Anglo-Saxon times (4)
 24 Means for seeking advantage by attempting to discredit an opponent (5,7)
 27 Logicality and consistency within an argument or theory (9)
 28 A genus of plants that includes groundsel and ragwort (7)
 29 A salt containing the element with atomic number 41 (7)
 30 Products for artists not needed by watercolourists (3,6)
 31 Greek mathematician noted for his work on proportions (7,2,6)

- DOWN**
 2 A procedure sometimes needed in a close election (7)
 3 Like a blockhead (10)
 4 A simile or metaphor (5)
 5 An uncontrollable event regarded as being unrelated to human action (3,2,5)
 6 Correct in behaviour or etiquette (French) (5,2,4)
 7 The Angel of Death in some religious traditions (6)
 8 A sportsperson who receives rewards while appearing to be non-professional (9)
 9 An area of the Middle East good for growing crops (7,8)
 10 A large muscle extending from the middle to the lower back (10,5)
 16 A large bag that gives its name to describe a word such as brunch (11)
 18 A US city described by Longfellow as "the Queen of the West" (10)
 20 A crystalline compound extracted from the artemisia plant (9)
 22 A popular tourist attraction in Lombardy (4,4)
 25 An unknown person or a large edible fish (7)
 26 A prefix used in chemistry relating to carbon-containing compounds (6)
 28 Relating to a tribe of Franks who established themselves along the Yssel river in the fourth century (5)



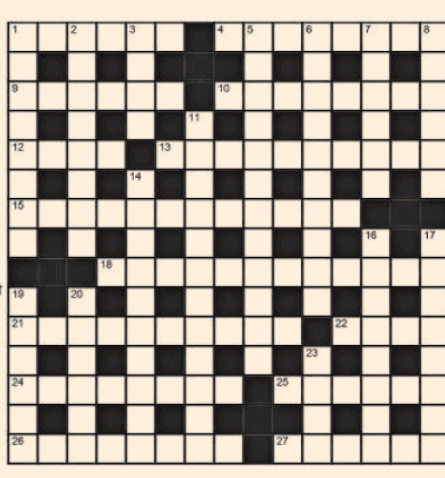
Solution Polymath 1,132

RADCLIFFE CATTALLO
 ESPERATEREMEDIES
 ABBIMNRLEST
 CAIPIRINHA GOETHE
 EEGNAAASFRR
 STIDAMILLERSTHUMB
 VRAELGBLEA
 KHOMEINTAXONOMY
 IHWAGYF
 LADYONATRIN ODIN
 LERVMAW O E
 EDROSE CORNWALLIS
 REECRSLLO
 BAREFOOTINTHEPARK
 EDUDGASERAI
 EVERLEY AEGEANSEA

CROSSWORD 16,834 SET BY JULIUS

- ACROSS**
 1 New tree shoot outside? It's that time of year! (6)
 4 Pushing around small vessels (8)
 9 Leg irons jallor finally removed – they make me cry (6)
 10 Caught husband that is following mod round boss's office (8)
 12 Express disapproval about fine cluster of threads (4)
 13 An exchange of punches in political negotiations? (5,5)
 15 Crookedness of an immortal criminal (12)
 18 Spooner's agitated, skint – this could follow a plunge (12)
 21 A French former partner reportedly viewing flat (10)
 22 Clubs withdrawing from transfer agreement (4)
 24 Vile nude sculpture exposed (8)
 25 Visiting Krakow in terribly cold time of year (6)
 26 Number functions start to satisfy an inquisitive nature (8)
 27 Fighting Julius, Resistance is getting closer (6)

- DOWN**
 1 When the curtain goes up, directs how Tim enunciates lines (8)
 2 There's quite a lot of it in Llanfair, unfortunately (8)
 3 Number of female swans flying from northern uplands (4)
 5 Steadfast auntie's night off (12)
 6 Having this, one suffers fools gladly! (5,5)
 7 One from the sub-continent turning up to help in pub (6)
 8 Guitarist leaving Turkey when it's hot (6)
 11 Time to get into mama's softer new bed? (4,8)
 14 Beating my record on titanium piercing (10)
 16 Labour left American mother Jenny oddly cut on belly (8)
 17 Charlie beginning to like more expensive clothes, he asserts (8)
 19 Fall over in Britain? (6)
 20 Conservative quits (splits/ departs) (6)
 23 Dad touring island location with listed building (4)



Solution 16,833

Solution 16,822

RECITATIONIST WELL SHINY GRASSLAND
 EEUUEGTOLEUEUEEA
 SCRABBLERS DONE MOLDOVA REALITY
 TEUEUEWGUUEUMRAPD
 PRESENTIMENT SCANDALMONGER
 GPCATINENJTNSEWEE
 RESOURCEDGOTINRECURDILLESIA
 YUEAEHRAITDEURREEM
 SICKO SUSPICION LOOSESEEDS FARE
 THBSNGTUNTELR
 ATOMICENERGY BASSOPROFUNDO
 LTRSRXHSBFEUEUDGN
 SKIN COMPROMISE ARSENIC LEESHIDE
 SUGUENGCGLASV
 TEST REYSTROKES SINCERELY RATIY

Jotter pad

Crossword competitions suspended
 Dear readers – we have suspended the Crossword and Polymath competitions while our editors work from home. We hope you continue to enjoy completing them until normal newsroom services resume.

Spectrum

Life&Arts

LONG READS | INTERVIEWS | IDEAS



England expects

For decades, *Simon Kuper* has watched the English team underperform in football tournaments. Here he charts how they reflected the wider mood of the country – and asks if their embrace of a continental style can end in victory

It remains one of the happiest snaps in postwar England's family album. On July 30 1966 at Wembley, a yellow-clad 40-year-old Queen Elizabeth hands England's captain Bobby Moore the little gold Jules Rimet trophy. She, he and it look gorgeous in the London sunshine. The stadium is awash in British union jacks, the preferred flag of England supporters in those simpler days before the union began to fray. It's the last time England ever won a trophy – an omission they want to rectify at the same ground tomorrow evening in the final of Euro 2020 against Italy.

The great English question for 55 years has been: why don't we win anymore? I have criss-crossed the globe covering England's failures from St Etienne to São Paulo, and have learnt that this debate transcends football. When people say the England team ought to win World Cups, or when they call for a more continental European playing style, or grumble about spoiled overpaid players, they tend also to be talking about the nature of England.

England's biggest matches are the modern nation's main communal experiences. Perhaps half of England's 56m people will watch tomorrow's final. By contrast, even the Queen's much-awaited Christmas speech last year drew just 8.1m British viewers. The traditional cement of the nation – churches, trade unions, social clubs of various kinds, even pubs – has been weakening for decades.

If a football match matters to that many people, it's because it's more than just a football match. The England team is the nation made flesh. Those 11 young men in white shirts who will take the knee before kick-off tomorrow are England, less individual than the sovereign, more alive than the national flag (or flags). What do the 55-year arguments about the team reveal about Englishness?

Even by 1966, the "declinist" narrative about Britain had taken hold. The idea was that an exceptional nation had lost its rightful status as a superpower. Postwar Britain was losing its empire, and was being overtaken economically by West Germany and France.

England's post-1966 footballing failures served as metaphors for national decline, especially because so many of them – in 1970, 1990 and 1996 – came against Germany, the very nation that Britain had repeatedly defeated in its superpower days. To quote the idiotic but slightly tongue-in-cheek English supporters' chant: "Two world wars and one World Cup, doodah."

With constant disappointment came a debate about how England should play. Most British males born between about 1900 and 1950 grew up in a martial tradition, worshipping soldiers rather than footballers. England teams were expected to play warrior football, built on unthinking obedience to their commander, manly tackles and brave headers. Off duty, they drank like soldiers.

Bobby Robson, born in 1933, England's manager from 1982 to 1990, was diagnosed by the football writer Brian

Glanville as obsessed with the second world war. But, to be fair to Robson, he was also obsessed with the first world war. Here he is eulogising his best player, Bryan Robson: "You could put him in any trench and know he'd be the first over the top... He wouldn't think, well, Christ, if I put my head up there it might get shot off. He'd say, c'mon, over the top."

At half-time of a game in 1989, while England's captain Terry Butcher was having his bleeding head wound bandaged, Robson told the team: "Have a look at your skipper. Let none of you let him down." Britain's tabloids, the Greek chorus of the England team, approved: "YOU'RE A BLOODY HERO SKIPPER." At the time there were two main ways of talking about football: football as war, or football as art. England managers trusted warriors like Butcher or Norman "Bites Yer Legs" Hunter over artists such as Peter Osgood or Rodney Marsh.

England's travelling supporters tended to mimic the martial tradition. Many times, covering England's games in Europe, I watched them seize the strategic heights of some unfortunate city – typically the square around the town hall – in a sort of parody of their grandfathers' invasion of Europe. They would lay out flags, chant "Ten German Bombers", and shout at passers-by: "If it wasn't for the English, you'd be Krauts." In stadiums, they would always boo the opposing team's anthem.

This nativism could sometimes be turned against Englishmen who weren't perceived as truly English. Ever since Viv Anderson became the first black man to play for England in 1978, racists have felt that the nation incarnated in the team should be white. I remember watching an England game on TV in a London pub in the early 1990s: whenever England's John Barnes got the ball, one man made monkey noises while his office mates tittered.

Meanwhile, continental European teams had developed a collectivist style of fast-passing football. It seemed to work, but Graham Taylor, England's manager from 1990 to 1993, preferred long punts and big tackles: "Our failure has not been because we have played the English way but because we haven't. Bloody football should be honest, open, clear, passionate. Part of a nation's culture, its heritage, is the way it plays its sport. And the British way is with passion and commitment."

However, Taylor's failure, culminating in defeat to Norway – all captured in the immortal fly-on-the-wall documentary *An Impossible Job* – killed off the idea of English exceptionalism in football tactics. He was replaced by the continental Englishman Terry Venables, nicknamed "El Tel" since his stint coaching Barcelona.

Ever since, the trend both in the England team and the Premier League has been towards continental passing and improved fitness. One freezing spring morning in 1996 I visited Aston Villa's training ground near Birmingham for a magazine gig involving a head-to-head computer game between a nerd and a

young Aston Villa defender named Gareth Southgate.

Southgate turned out to be a pleasant, chatty boy with a large nose. After the computer game, more general chatter ensued, and at one point Villa's assistant coach, Paul Barron, a fitness fanatic, decided to measure our body-fat percentages. Southgate took off his shirt and let Barron attach what looked like electrodes to him. Only 9 per cent of Southgate consisted of fat. "I'm glad I'm not that skinny," I said, taking off my shirt. Barron stared at my stomach. "Maybe we should just use the slap test," he said. "What's the slap test?" I asked. "Slap you in the stomach and see how long it shakes."

Southgate, still lying on the floor attached to wires, piped up politely: "Paul, this bloke has only come round to write an article." Barron told me my body fat ratio was 16 per cent. Southgate reassured me: "Just go to the gym for three hours every night for the rest of your life, and you'll be fine."

He was thinking of going into jour-

Main: England fans during the Euro 2020 semi-final against Denmark on Wednesday

Right: England's coach Gareth Southgate speaks to his players ahead of extra time – Michael Regan/Getty Images; Paul Ellis/Getty Images

nalism, and we agreed he would write a diary of the Euro 96 championship for the FT, but it never happened. That's a shame, because he turned into one of the tournament's main characters: his missed penalty in the semi-final against Germany sealed England's ritual elimination.

During Euro 96, a song emerged that remains the go-to favourite of England fans. While England were thumping the continental sophisticates of the Netherlands 4-1, the crowd at Wembley spontaneously began to sing it:

*Thirty years of hurt
Never stopped me dreaming
Football's coming home
It's coming home!*

I was sitting in the stands near the song's co-writers, the comedians David Baddiel and Frank Skinner, and they stood up, open-mouthed, entranced, realising they had written a folk anthem. The song's genius is that it combines the two contradictory beliefs held by England fans: that England always loses, and that it has a manifest destiny to triumph.

England's continental turn continued under Venables' successor Glenn Hoddle, who had been a continental-style dissident as a player. For most of the 2001-12 period England were coached by two actual continentals in Sven-Göran Eriksson and Fabio Capello. Then came Roy Hodgson, a long-term Englishman émigré who spoke fluent Swedish and Italian.

Each new coach carried a heavy burden: this mid-sized nation with a modest tradition in international football was expected to win the World Cup. Some managers were themselves so drenched in English exceptionalism that they shared the expectation.

Ron Greenwood confessed after his disappointing reign (1977-82): "Honestly thought we could have won the

World Cup in 1982." Hoddle revealed after elimination in 1998 "my innermost thought, which was that England would win the World Cup". Before the 2006 World Cup, Eriksson, probably just flattering English exceptionalism, said: "I think we will win it."

But they all lost. In June 2016, four days after the English voted for Brexit, Hodgson's team contrived to exit the European Championships against tiny Iceland – a defeat regarded by connoisseurs as the funniest of all of England's humiliations. The English Football Association then attempted its own Brexit, replacing the faux-continental Hodgson with the archetypal English manager, Sam Allardyce.

That elimination prompted the ritual



For Gareth Southgate, football isn't war, or art. It's system. He is an English moderniser

tabloid-led scapegoating of England's supposedly overpaid and overhyped players. Sometimes their wives and girlfriends are included too. These rituals of exorcism are expressions of national self-digust. Many Britons feel their country has become a perverted meritocracy with an unworthy elite. Class comes into it, too: young working-class Englishmen who become rich are often judged to have offended against the natural order, especially if they are black.

Defeat to Iceland also reheated football's own immigration debate: were there too many foreign players in the Premier League? After all, if Englishmen could barely get a game in their own league, how could they mature into internationals? Greg Dyke, then chairman of the FA, had told me in 2013: "It could be that there's just not a pathway through. There are a lot of bog-standard foreign players playing here today."

Yet football's own Brexit never happened. English clubs continued to import foreigners and, as luck would have it, Allardyce lasted only one match before he was secretly filmed talking about subverting FA regulations. Post-Brexit, his successor clearly had to be an Englishman, but there were no front-rank English football managers left. So the job went to a lesser figure whose biggest managerial prize was the tinpot League Cup.

Gareth Southgate immediately performed a reverse Brexit, constructing a team that played cold-headed continental passing football. To him, football isn't war, or art. It's system. He is an English moderniser in the tradition of Harold Wilson, Tony Blair and, indeed, Alf Ramsey, whose "scientific management" had made England probably the fittest team in 1966.

Southgate's project seems to be to turn England into a continental European side like Italy or Germany. He has binned English exceptionalism. Heading into the World Cup in Russia in

2018, whenever tabloid reporters asked "can we win it?", he would point out that the ritual question was a tad premature given that England hadn't even won a knockout match at a major tournament since 2006.

His modest, modernising internationalism won support from fans and media. To adapt TS Eliot, humankind can only bear so much reality. England's endless eliminations, coupled with the broader decline in national status, had ended up shredding the fantasy of manifest destiny.

In 2014, when the pollsters YouGov conducted surveys in 19 participating countries before the World Cup, the most pessimistic fans (jointly with Costa Ricans) were the English: only 4 per cent expected to win. By the World Cup in Russia, 7 per cent did. English exceptionalism isn't dead – it inspired some portion of the Brexit vote – but it has aged.

Southgate is currently the reigning national hero (always a fragile status), but in fact England's rise preceded him. The post-Taylor continental turn worked. The Premier League's internationalisation, far from handicapping the England side, actually helped it.

Protectionists grumble that only about a third of the players in the Premier League are English, but it would be more accurate to say that a massive one-third of players in the world's richest, most competitive league are English. That works out at more than 70 English starters per match day. That's a large enough talent pool to staff an England 11.

Competing with the best foreigners every week has improved English players. The switch from a mostly British league to a mostly foreign one can be dated to 1995, when the European Court of Justice's "Bosman ruling" allowed European players to play anywhere in the EU.

Let's compare England's performances in the era of a British league, from 1950 to 1994, to its performances since 1998. In the "British" period to 1994, England reached the quarter finals in seven out of 20 major tournaments. By contrast, in the post-1998 "international" period, when global football has been much more competitive, it has reached six quarter finals in 12 attempts. England's win percentage has also risen since the early 2000s. In short, foreign immigration seems to have improved the team. In English football at least, the "declinist" narrative is false.

During this tournament, the national debate around the England team has revolved around diversity. When England's players knelt in solidarity with Black Lives Matter before the semi-final against Denmark, a few English fans booed while a majority applauded. In England's cultural civil war between nativists and liberals, Southgate and his multi-ethnic team have chosen their side. He has spoken of "racial undertones" surrounding the Brexit campaign, and remarked that older people were "pining for something that isn't there anymore".

Certain narratives pervade international football for decades, then die. Germany used to be cast as the ugly team that slew the beautiful ones, Brazil as the "artists" of "the beautiful game", and Africans as future winners of the World Cup. England's eternal failure has been one of football's favourite stories. Should it suddenly end tomorrow, that would change the nation's sense of self.

Simon Kuper is an FT columnist

Years of hurt: the England team since 1966

1966 England win the World Cup vs West Germany. All matches played at Wembley, pictured right

1970 Lose in quarter-finals to West Germany after goalkeeper Gordon Banks taken ill

1974 Fail to qualify for the World Cup

1978 Miss qualification again after manager Don Revie leaves to coach the UAE team

1986 Lose in World Cup quarter-final to "Hand of God" goal by Argentina's Diego Maradona, below left

1988 Lose all three group games at the Euros in Germany

1990 Reach the World Cup semi-final but lose on penalties to West Germany

1994 Fail to qualify for the World Cup

1996 Euros played in



England. Another semi-final exit on penalties to Germany, below

1998 Beaten by Argentina in last 16 at the World Cup. David Beckham, below left, sent off and England lose in a penalty shootout

2006 World Cup. "Golden



Generation" team beaten on penalties by Portugal

2008 Manager Steve McClaren, below, fails to take England to Euros

2010 World Cup. Lose to Germany in last 16 after a Frank Lampard "goal" is incorrectly disallowed

2014 England finish bottom of their group at the World Cup

2018 First World Cup semi-final since 1990





▲ Esther Bubley: 'Young Woman in the Doorway of her Room at a Boarding House, Washington DC' (1945). The fact the photographer went in this room and didn't touch a thing fascinates me. In the back is a hand coming out the darkness. It's as mysterious as the portrait on the bureau. Are they the parents of the woman who seems so sad?

Women at the vanguard

An exhibition at The Met Fifth Avenue showcases

120 female photographers from the 1920s to the

1950s. Artist Tina Barney curates her highlights



▲ Yvonde Cumbers Middleton: 'Lady Bridget Poulettas "Arethuse"' (1955)

After seeing these extraordinary photographs at The Met I decided very quickly which were my favourites. Just imagine the courage, independence and uninfluenced choices these women made in this work.

I'm always drawn to an artwork by its formal qualities. Then I dive in emotionally, intellectually, dissecting the pieces of the puzzle. Usually my selections are devoid of politics, facts and history.

Portraiture is my great love but here and there I'm drawn to a landscape, an interior, a still life or an abstraction. In this show the role of art-makers in the history of art is paramount.

Tina Barney is an American artist whose large-scale photographs have been shown in museums around the world. 'The New Woman Behind the Camera' is at The Met Fifth Avenue until October 5



▲ Hildegard Rosenthal: 'Meeting Place Ladiera Porto Geral, Corner of 25 de Marco Street, Sao Paulo' (c1940). This complex street scene caught my eye because of that little window in which we see a man eating. Then there are little plays within plays on the left, centre and right and even tiny people way in the back as far as the eye can see.



▲ Ringl and Pit 'Pétrole hahn' (1951)
Ford Motor Company Collection, Gift of Ford Motor Company and John C Waddell, 1987. Courtesy Robert Mann Gallery



▲ Toshiko Okanou: 'Full of Life' (1954)
The woman on the left of this collage seems like a marble statue. Her gestures and expression can be read in so many ways as she reacts to the male figures flying off bridges. What a spectacular operatic stage set.

► Claude Cahun: 'Self-Portrait', (c1927)
Claude Cahun must have been quite a character. She was the Cindy Sherman of her time, dressing up in specific outfits and selecting expressions and attitudes she created for each self-portrait.



► Denise Bellon: 'Woman With Fanshaped Hairstyle, Foutadjallon, Guinea' (1959)
The way Denise Bellon placed this woman on a straw mat is so unusual. Where is she looking and whose hands are those on the lower right? What is the story behind the exotic fan-shaped hairstyle?



▲ Karimeh Abbud: 'Three Women' (1950s)
In real life this print is very small, the size of a postcard. These three women seem so unique, strong and sure of themselves. The way they're lined up and how they look into the camera, their clothes, the column on the left, the space between them all add up to make a strong impression.

The internet fad that's odd, even for the internet

Tech world Videos of eating and sleeping bring comfort, companionship – and a chance to judge

Mukbang videos always start with the food. Heaps of bright red crab legs or bowls of glistening noodles sit close to the camera. Behind them, the video creator nods and smiles at the viewer before leaning in and taking a bite.

Watching strangers eat is one of the weirder spectacles on the internet – simultaneously gross and mesmerising. There is a format. Some creators chat, others play jaunty music and speed up their film. Many say nothing at all but exaggerate the sounds of chewing,

cracking or swallowing to create an autonomous sensory meridian response in their viewers.

If that sounds unappealing, it will come as a surprise to hear how popular the trend is. Videos with the hashtag "whateatinaday" have been viewed more than 7bn times on TikTok.

Twitch has an entire category called "Social Eating" on which people livestream themselves cooking and eating. The trend is so popular in China that President Xi Jinping has identified it as counterintuitive to the country's fight against food waste.

Mukbang, which comes from South Korea, simply translates as "eating broadcast". But it has become better known as a sort of extreme sport in which people binge huge quantities of food. Some videos are practically Boschian, with splatters of ranch and hot wing sauce all over the table and influencers gasping as they try to finish a bowl of spicy fire noodles or the entire Domino's pizza menu.

Stunts are, of course, the internet's bread and butter. Why should food on the internet be any different? One woman has become famous on TikTok for making "sandwiches" from raw green peppers, cream cheese and

bagel seasoning. On YouTube, there are hundreds of videos in which people try to follow a supermodel's diet for the day. Influencers make videos that show every meal and snack they consume, aware that many of their followers want to look just like them.

The backlash to these aspirational eating diaries are the videos that deliberately make a virtue of being humdrum. British TikTok star Eden Harvey has amassed more than 2m followers with her daily "eat with me" videos, in which she records herself having a one-sided conversation while eating her dinner, pausing to allow viewers to answer her questions.

The food is com-

forting in its ordinariness: spaghetti bolognese, sandwiches and chicken Kiev. Harvey's fanbase of viewers often seems skewed towards those who struggle with food issues. Her success is an indication of just how many people, particularly young people, have a difficult relationship with what they eat.

But even if that's not the case, there is something appealing about knowing what another person eats every day. This is not a new phenomenon. One of the most vivid illustrations of life in the 17th century comes from diarist Samuel Pepys's description of his meals. There is the venison pasty that "stunk like a devil" and the "pretty" dinner with stewed carp and neats' tongues.

Years later, English housewife Nella Last's wartime diaries are memorable for her make-do recipes, including margarine created from milk, salt and corn flour. Whenever I buy potatoes, I think of the legend that Jackie Onassis's diet consisted of a single baked potato each day, stuffed with caviar and sour cream.

It is not unusual to be interested in the

minutiae of someone else's life either. See the success of Vogue's online videos showing famous women putting on their make-up and the livestreams of people sleeping or revising homework for hours. Website Refinery29 has found success with its money diaries, in which readers record their exact spending habits over the course of a week. There is a sense of companionship in seeing the banal details of another person's life – plus the chance to judge.

What the internet has done is allow more people the ability to film their daily routines and upload the results, sharing them with a bigger audience than ever before. Part of the appeal is nosiness. But many of the videos are also designed to make it feel as if the viewer is with a friend. Watching someone eat online seems to help some viewers feel less alone. Dining is a social activity, after all. Perhaps it makes sense that this side of our social lives is moving online, along with everything else.

Elaine Moore is the FT's deputy Lex editor



Spectrum

We must face facts – even the ones we don't like



Tim Harford

Undercover economist

The recent unsettling footage of England's chief medical officer Chris Whitty being grabbed and harassed in a central London park brought to mind many things. There were the similar scenes of BBC journalist Nicholas Watt being pursued, surrounded and abused at a protest in Westminster. Darker still, there was the murder of the MP Jo Cox during the Brexit campaign five years ago.

But I was also reminded of the square root of two.

Two and a half thousand years ago, followers of Pythagoras believed that the constants of the universe were constructed of whole numbers. The Pythagoreans were wrong. One such constant is a simple diagonal across a square – the square root of two. But there are no two whole numbers which, as a fraction, give us the square root of two. 32 isn't far off. 107 is closer. But you can give up on finding the exact fraction.*

None of this should cause much alarm, except perhaps to the long-suffering editors and typesetters of this column. Yet the Pythagoreans were extremely perturbed by the simple demonstration that a basic constant could not be expressed as a fraction of whole numbers. So perturbed, in fact, that it is said the mathematician Hippasus was murdered by being thrown overboard while at sea as a punishment for discovering the truth.

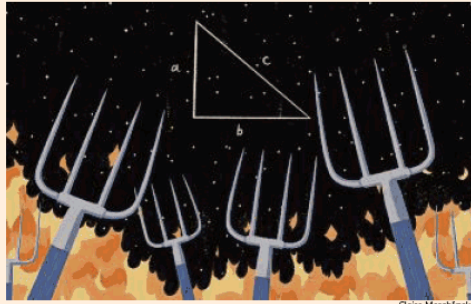
We don't know much about Hippasus, and the evidence that he was

killed for this little proof is rather patchy. But perhaps the legend has lived on because it serves as a cautionary tale. When a society persecutes people for telling the truth, it is a short step from losing its collective mind.

The totalitarian regimes of the 20th century give us the starkest examples of such insanity. Stalin persecuted genetics researchers in the 1930s and ostentatiously praised the scientist Trofim Lysenko when he claimed that genetics was a "bourgeois perversion" and geneticists were "saboteurs". The resulting crop failures killed millions. For an encore, Stalin ordered the killing of the statistician in charge of the 1937 census, Olimpiy Kvitkin. Kvitkin's crime was that his census revealed a fall in population as a result of that famine. Telling that truth could not be forgiven.

In May, the great crop scientist Yuan Longping died at the age of 90. He led the research effort to develop the hybrid rice crops that now feed billions of people. Yet in 1966, he too came very close to being killed as a counter-revolutionary during China's cultural revolution.

In western democracies we do things differently. Governments do not execute scientists; they sideline them. Late last year, *Undark* magazine



Clare Merchinsky

Ultimately the respect for facts – and those who research or report them – has to come from all of us

interviewed eight former US government scientists who had left their posts in frustration or protest at the obstacles placed in their way under the presidency of Donald Trump.

Then there are the random acts of hostility on the street and the death threats on social media. I have seen Twitter

posts demanding that certain statisticians be silenced or hunted down and destroyed, sometimes for doing no more than publishing graphs of Covid-19 cases and hospitalisations.

Even when this remains at the level of ugly intimidation, it is horrible to hear about and must be far worse to experience. It is not something we should expect a civil servant, a vaccine researcher or a journalist to have to endure. And it would be complacent to believe that the threats are always empty.

What can be done? We can demand better from our leaders. Trump never tired of winking his approval at violence against journalists; we can but hope that future presidents refrain.

In September 2019, Boris Johnson was dismissive of complaints from MPs who had received death threats. The solution, he said, was Brexit. He has been much quicker to support Whitty, but it seems that his opposition to

intimidation and harassment is rather more conditional than one might wish.

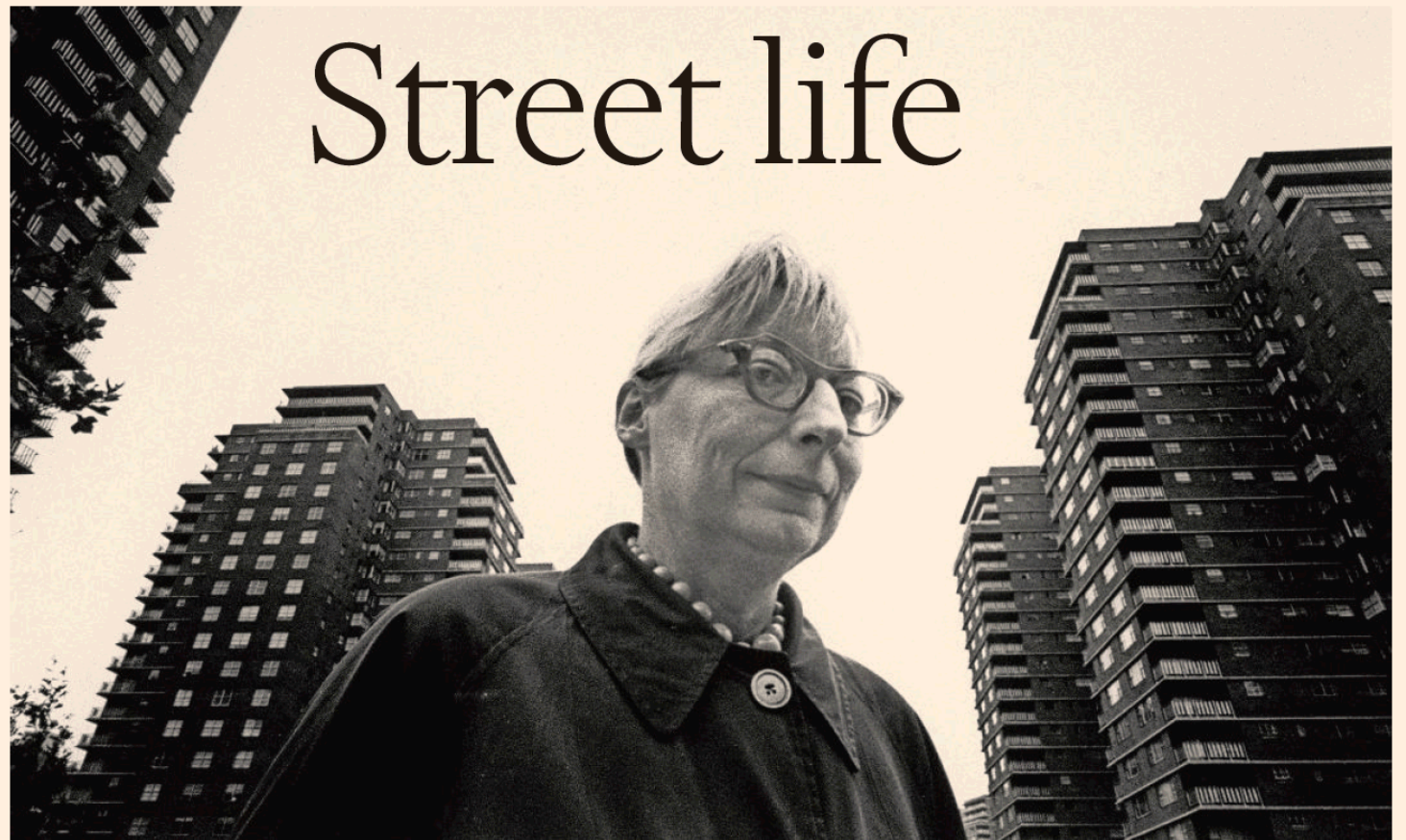
While a firmer moral lead from our politicians would help, ultimately the respect for facts – and those who research or report them – has to come from all of us. The facts are sometimes unpleasant: Brexit creates trade barriers between large neighbouring economies. Carbon dioxide emissions are seriously altering the climate. Sars-Cov-2 is much more dangerous than seasonal flu, and cases are rising dramatically in the UK.

It would be nice if none of these things were true, but the vast majority of us are adult enough to accept the evidence, the expert judgment of those who gather that evidence and the honesty of those who report it.

The message can be infuriating, but let's not throw the messenger overboard.

* Prove it, you say? Assume a whole-number fraction, $\frac{a}{b}$, does equal $\sqrt{2}$. Let's also assume that $\frac{a}{b}$ is the simplest possible fraction, with a and b sharing no common factors. Rearranging $\frac{a}{b} = \sqrt{2}$ gives us $2b^2 = a^2$. That means a^2 is an even number, which implies four things: a is also even, and therefore $a^2/2$ is also even, and therefore b^2 is even, and therefore b is even. Alas, we began by assuming that $\frac{a}{b}$ was the simplest possible whole-number fraction, but we've just proved that $\frac{a}{b}$ is the ratio of two even numbers and therefore the fraction could be simplified by dividing both of them by two. This contradiction shows that our original assumption – that a and b exist at all – must be wrong.

Sixty years after Jane Jacobs wrote 'The Death and Life of Great American Cities', Rana Foroohar on why it's more relevant than ever as cities emerge from isolation and rethink their very meaning



Street life

Above: writer and activist Jane Jacobs on the streets of New York
Bob Cornell/Getty Images

In 1958, urban activist Jane Jacobs wrote a piece for *Fortune* magazine entitled "Downtown is for People". Like *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, the now-classic book she published three years later, it was a call to action for those who care about cities. "This year is going to be a critical one for the future of the city," she wrote, a year that would set their character for "generations to come".

We are at one of those Jacobian pivot points now. In New York, where I live, the city is coming to life again. Parks are packed, restaurants are full and moods are up. But so are housing prices and crime, something true in a number of American metropolitan areas. Parts of the city that used to be known for luxury condos and spendy foreigners are deserted. Suddenly, unfashionable areas are booming. The highest price jump in the city over the course of the pandemic has been in humble Windsor Terrace, a small Irish-Italian neighbourhood just steps from my own, where nurses and firemen are slowly but surely being pushed out by cable talk-show hosts and designers.

It's as if the never-ceasing change that is New York's quintessential characteristic has been suppressed for months and is now bursting forth, in ways both good and bad.

The shape of the urban landscape has changed, and it will change further. Pandemics do that. Roughly 40 per cent of the 900,000 jobs lost have come back, but many restaurants, shops and offices remain shuttered. Yet streets once clogged with traffic now overflow with patrons of overbooked eateries spilling on to the sidewalk in covered spaces that remind us all of Parisian cafés. Many of us hope this – along with musicians that practise outside in the park, less crowded commutes and working from home – will last.

Crime is a different story. For the first time since 1993, crime – not just policing – was an issue in last month's mayoral primaries, reflecting anxiety over spiking violence. May statistics from the New York Police Department tell a frightening tale: the overall crime index in the city is up 22 per cent year on year, driven by a 46.7 per cent increase in robberies and a 35.6 per cent increase in grand larceny. The number of people shot almost doubled. The previous month's numbers were even worse: crime grew more than 30 per cent compared to the previous year, and shooting incidents tripled. This mirrors increases in violent crime

rates in some other American cities.

Why is this happening? Some of it is surely related to the fact that the pandemic simply pushed many people to the breaking point – economically, physically, emotionally and culturally. The Black Lives Matter movement, which had a huge presence in my neighbourhood before Covid-19 via joyful rallies and marches complete with music and dancing, has completely tipped the tables on policing, putting every cop on notice that brutality is no longer tolerated. This is, needless to say, good.

Police are also wary. With media scrutiny following the death of George Floyd and police reform a moving target, many are obsessed with protocol: how to use force, how to touch a subject (or not), even exact word choice. The uncertainty and wariness this creates for cops on the beat is a reason many officers and citizens I've spoken with believe criminals feel emboldened.

All of it underscores a sense of division. We have taken off our masks. But we remain alienated from each other and unsure about the future. What will our city look like in a few years? What should it look like?

Jacobs would have had a lot to say about that. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* was published in 1961 as a protest against the vision of the "rationalist" planners of the 1950s and 1960s who wanted urban areas to be simplified, beautified and made more efficient. Like predecessors such as Ebenezer Howard, the 19th-century English urbanist who developed the first garden cities, they believed cities could, in fact, be planned. Howard's suburbs had prescribed commercial centres, meticulously designed belts of green space, even a maximum number of residents. American planners working in big cities, meanwhile, took

inspiration from Le Corbusier, building towering skyscrapers set above the hustle and bustle of ground-level shops. Students of Howard and Le Corbusier both believed that population density was a problem to be solved.

Jacobs felt just the opposite: density was crucial to the magic of city life. To isolate urban dwellers from each other was to reduce friction, and friction is exactly what made cities places that you wanted to be. While people such as Howard were justified in looking

Jacobs felt density was crucial to the magic of city life. To isolate urbanites from each other was to reduce friction, which is what made cities places that you want to be

around industrial-era London in 1898 and not liking what they "smelled or saw or heard", his planned cities were, in her view, "really very nice towns if you were docile and had no plans of your own and did not mind spending your life among others with no plans of their own. As in all Utopias, the right to have plans of any significance belonged only to the planners in charge."

Jacobs wasn't one to mince words. Before she died, I found myself on the sharp end of her tongue while fact-checking a story on urban planning at *Forbes* magazine, where I was a cub reporter. But she saved the really tough stuff for her *bête noire*, Robert Moses, the man who pretty much built modern New York City. He gave us bridges and highways such as the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, on which I have spent roughly a third of my life in traffic between home and the airport. He also cut the city off from

large swaths of its waterfront, creating dead zones that took years and untold billions to rehabilitate.

Rationalists such as Moses wanted to remake cities, in particular downtown areas, to counter falling retail sales, eroding tax bases, failing mass transit and rising crime. It didn't work, at least in New York. By the 1970s, Son of Sam dominated headlines, white "flight" to the suburbs had begun and President Gerald Ford had refused to offer New York a bailout during its 1975 fiscal crisis, which sparked the *Daily News* headline: "Ford to City: Drop Dead".

Moses, as biographer Robert Caro has written, was all about power. Jacobs was about people. She believed cities, like their residents, were biological systems that could only be understood in the context of "organised complexity, like the life sciences". There were dozens of interrelated happenings going on in any one place at any given time. "The variables are many," she wrote in her 1961 book, "but they are not helter-skelter; they are interrelated into an organic whole." Like the parable of butterfly wings that create a tsunami on the other side of the world, pushing slightly on one factor could shift the entire system.

She believed that citizens kept each other safe as much, if not more, than police did. "The first thing to understand is that the public peace – the sidewalk and street peace – of cities is not kept primarily by the police, necessary as police are. It is kept primarily by an intricate almost unconscious network of voluntary controls and standards among the people themselves, and enforced by the people themselves." It was, however, a system that required trust.

In the "garden city" suburbs that Jacobs despised, trust came in the form of homogeneity and tribalism. In large and diverse urban areas, it came from the casual contact with strangers that

was the heart of the "intricate sidewalk ballet" of her own Greenwich Village.

On her stretch of Hudson Street, she would make her appearance a little after eight "when I put out the garbage can, surely a prosaic occupation, but I enjoy my part, my little clang, as the droves of junior high school students walk by the centre of the stage dropping candy wrappers..." Later on there were the other "rituals of morning", such as Mr Halpert unlocking the laundry handcart from its mooring to a cellar door, Joe Cornacchia's son-in-law stacking out the empty crates from the delicatessen, the barber bringing out his sidewalk folding chair and Mr Goldstein arranging the coils of wire that proclaim the hardware store is open.

I recognise this ballet from my own neighbourhood. Like Cornacchia, my local bodega owner keeps keys for acquaintances who want to use our place when we're away. He tells me when my 14-year-old son, who stops in for soda, has fallen in with the wrong group of friends. My hairdresser, two blocks away, lets me run home without paying if I've forgotten cash and I'm in a rush. I'll get him next time. The old ladies in their curlers monitor the street from their folding lawn chairs. My next-door neighbour, a septuagenarian who has lived in the house since she was a child, can tell me in which decade and exactly how the previous owners repaired the gutters. It's Pete Hamill's Brooklyn. Literally. He spent some of his own childhood in a flat across the street.

Why does this trust still exist in places like my block? In part because this neighbourhood was, until recently, free from extremes. When I traded in a three-bedroom flat on Finchley Road in north London for my home in Park Slope Brooklyn in 2007, I did so in part because I knew I could send my children to state school, live near a



Awesome Sauce

Patricia Niven

Recipes | *Itamar Srulovich* lauds *Sarit Packer's*

summer-infused version of a barbecue dip

Every summer has its own distinct character, its own markers that make it different. Maybe it's a scent or a song, a trinket you wear or a new friend.

The soundtrack of this summer came to us from a crime drama and we can't seem to shake it. A seven-minute acid techno track, it has a slow humming beat and a warm, warped baglama refrain that makes you feel like you're in a taxi in Istanbul on the way to an

underground nightclub in Berlin via the echoing canyons of Petra.

We have it on repeat all the time, from our sweaty bike commute in the morning to when we make dinner with the sun slanting in through the kitchen window. We will get it out of our systems by about October and move on to something else. And when we hear that song again a few years from now, we'll remember the summer of 2021.

Sounds and mood sorted, we can turn to flavour. This is the taste of our sum-

mer and it's the best barbecue sauce we've ever had. Between home and work, we have a batch going every day. We char apricots with tomatoes, chillies, alliums and aromats. It livens up our cheese sandwiches and bolsters salad dressings, we dip chips in it and serve it with hot roasted vegetables and cold-dressed meats.

But it shines brightest on our grills. We marinate halloumi cheese, lean pork, fatty beef or any part of a chicken (wings for summer eating at its finest), baste with more during cooking for that deep char and shiny gloss, and then serve extra on the side for dipping. It has it all. It is hot, fruity, sweet, smoky, sour, savoury and captures that most elusive, most-coveted flavour of all: summer.

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Apricot barbecue sauce

To make about 700g sauce (enough for two or three meals)

8 apricots — about 450g, halved and stones removed
8 large cherry tomatoes (or use 4 plum tomatoes, about 300g)
1 whole red chilli
1 whole green chilli
8 spring onions (about 80g)
1 whole head of garlic cut through the middle
60g demerara sugar (or dark brown)
100ml muscatel or cidre vinegar
A small bouquet of thyme and sage tied together (about four sprigs each)
1 tbs Worcestershire sauce
1 tsp salt

Method

1. Set the grill on your oven to full heat or, better still, use a barbecue.
2. Place the apricot halves, tomatoes, chillies, spring onions and cut garlic



head on a large flat tray, then put it directly under the grill to char the top (or you can grill over your barbecue). Don't add any oil — just let the heat scorch the tops. Grill for 10–15 minutes, depending on the heat of your oven.
3. Squeeze out the cloves of garlic, discard the skin, then scrape all the vegetables into a saucepan and add the

sugar, vinegar and herb bouquet. Set on a medium heat, stir well and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and cook slowly, stirring occasionally for about 20 minutes until the mix thickens.
4. Remove the herb bouquet and discard. Add the Worcestershire sauce and salt, then cook for four more minutes. Remove from the heat, and use a stick blender to blitz into a paste. If you aren't using the sauce right away, store it in a sterilised jar while it is still hot and seal the jar immediately. It will keep well in the fridge for a couple of weeks.

Serving suggestion

Mix eight wings with 200g of barbecue sauce, transfer to a roasting tray and sprinkle with a little salt. Fry in the oven on 220C for 25 minutes, remove and serve with extra sauce on the side for dipping. All with "Stil" by Acid Arab playing on your speakers.

green space, have easy access to libraries, hospitals and shops, and use public transportation.

This "diversity of uses" still exists in many outer boroughs, but it is harder to find in many neighbourhoods in Manhattan which, like prime central London or the most expensive parts of any number of other global cities, have become extremely bifurcated in recent years. There are too many "landmark" buildings owned mainly by absentee investors from Russia or the Gulf and too many incoherent new developments like Hudson Yards which are inconvenient for public transport and financially unattainable for the majority of New Yorkers.

Former mayor Michael Bloomberg once called New York City a luxury product. Jacobs would have seen that as a warning sign. To her, cities that were the biggest or best at anything were often sowing the seeds of their own demise. "Monopolistic shopping centres and monumental cultural

centres cloak, under public relations hoo-haw, the subtraction of commerce, and of culture too, from the intimate and casual life of cities," she wrote. Iconic buildings needed to be used like key chess pieces — sparingly. They took up too much air and reduced complexity, which was, in her view, at the heart of successful neighbourhoods, where each part serves the whole.

Her own preference in architecture was for a mix of old and new, commercial and residential, with short blocks that allow for close contact and enough people both living and working locally to offer supply and demand. It's the 15-minute city, to use a phrase by Paris mayor Anne Hidalgo. More Brooklyn, less Manhattan.

The living neighbourhood, as opposed to the overly perfect static one, was emerging as a trend here before the pandemic. Now it's getting a tailwind thanks to altered working and commuting patterns, which may become permanent. Work from home

isn't going away — a lot of people want it and it will save employers money on commercial leases. In New York, available commercial space is already at 17 per cent, a three-decade high. (The national average is 18 per cent.) Leases are long, which means the hit won't be short and sharp, but slow and sustained, over years.

That will surely decrease tax revenue for the city, but it may also create more opportunities for the kind of mixed-use diversity Jacobs would have approved of. Demand for industrial space, warehouses and logistics centres is picking up. Aside from large multifamily apartment dwellings, for which demand plummeted during the pandemic, the residential market in many parts of New York is up. I expect that places like Brooklyn, Queens and even the Bronx and Staten Island will increasingly become their own economic ecosystems, rather than vassals to Manhattan.

This is a good thing, and pressure to

try and stem it by luring big headline employers should be resisted. Jacobs would have been quite happy, for example, that Amazon eventually nixed New York City as a choice for its secondary headquarters. She was a huge critic of cities making linear deals in which tax benefits were traded for headline job gains. It was intuition on her part, but research has since shown her to be right. While such business subsidies have tripled in the US since the 1990s, studies have proven that most of the deals cut by cities for brand name employers have turned out to be a net negative. The initial job gains can't offset the tax hit which results in

Cities, like people, are messy. They go through ups and downs. New York may have some tough years before it springs back

a degradation of the public services and human capital that employers were attracted to in the first place.

Jacobs believed that it was "the smallness of big cities" that made them so desirable. "A metropolitan centre comes across to people as a centre largely by virtue of its enormous collection of small elements, where people can see them, at street level," she wrote. She would have loved the outdoor cafés that now fill New York's streets and the creativity evidenced by all the small businesses that have found ways to survive the past 15 months.

She was, after all, an urban optimist and would have shaken her head at the post-pandemic predictions of big city demise. These lines, from her work in 1961, seem particularly resonant today: "Vital cities have marvellous innate abilities for understanding, communicating, contriving and inventing what is required to combat their difficulties. Perhaps the most striking example of this ability is the

effect that big cities have had on disease. Cities were once the most helpless and devastated victims of disease, but they became great disease conquerors. . . . The surplus wealth, the productivity, the close-grained juxtaposition of talents that permit society to support advances" such as the science that brought us a successful Covid vaccine in a year "are themselves products of our organisation into cities, and especially into big and dense cities."

Cities, like people, are messy. They go through ups and downs in their lives. New York may have some tough years before it springs back. And yet, she asked rhetorically on the last page of her book, "does anyone suppose that answers to any of the great questions that worry us today are going to come out of homogenous settlements?"

The answer seems to me as clear as the sky over Prospect Park.

Rana Foroohar is the FT's global business columnist

In search of low-alcohol reds

Jancis Robinson

Wine

Unlike North America's west coast, Europe has had an unusually damp and changeable summer so far. This has kept vignerons on their toes, many spraying like mad to ward off mildew. But based on recent European summers, it seems likely July and August will be hot and dry. Sunburn has become a problem for grapes as well as people in places as far from the equator as Germany.

If this summer turns out to be as hot as usual in Europe, those of us who drink wine and do not live in an air-conditioned cocoon are unlikely to find heavy, potent reds at the top of our wish list. Chilled whites and fashionable pinks are more likely to fit the bill. Yet because there comes a time when only red will do, I thought I'd suggest a few low-alcohol, often chillable, red wines. But what counts as low-alcohol nowadays?

High-alcohol wines were fashionable in the 1990s and early 2000s, especially in California where growers were encouraged to keep grapes on the vine so long that their sugar content soared and so too the resulting wines' alcohol levels. At least many Californian vineyards enjoy much cooler nights than, say, Bordeaux, but in Bordeaux the effect of increasingly warm summers has been a dramatic rise in wine potency.

Live-ex, the London-based fine-wine trading platform, prides itself on the amount of data it has amassed in its 20-year history. Because of the heavy demands of post-Brexit documentation, last year Live-ex started to log the

In Bordeaux, the effect of ever-warmer summers has been a dramatic rise in wine potency

alcohol levels of all the wines it trades and recently highlighted certain trends.

The company says it recorded the alcoholic strength of 35,000 wines provided in its vendors' paperwork and then checked 20,000 of them against what was written on labels in its warehouse. In its presentation of the results, wines were grouped by decade, starting with the 1990 vintage up to 2019.

What is clear is that of the five regions studied, California still produces wines with the highest alcohol levels, 14.6 per cent on average. For the wines that Live-ex trades (which tend to be the most expensive), average alcohol levels in Piedmont and Tuscany come next at just over 14 per cent. Then comes Bordeaux at about 13.8 per cent and Burgundy at 13.3 per cent.

But while average alcohol levels in California have been falling slightly recently, and in Burgundy and Italy have remained pretty constant this century, they have risen spectacularly in Bordeaux: from an average of 12.8 per cent in the 1990s to 13.8 per cent in 2019, in a region once famous for providing appetising, digestible wines.

Whereas in the 1970s, 10.5 per cent or 11 per cent might have been considered low-alcohol, today I

consider any wine with 12.5 per cent or less on the label to qualify. Because wines this low in alcohol are relatively rare, I have asked for suggestions from fellow wine writers on my website. I expected to find a few suitable candidates in our Loire and Beaujolais tasting notes, for example, but even here alcohol levels have been rising, thanks to ever-warmer summers. (I also tried a couple of no-alcohol reds but cannot recommend them.)

What's interesting and unexpected is how many of these low-alcohol wines come from parts



Leon Eder

of the world we associate with hot summers, and therefore with very ripe grapes and particularly alcoholic wines: Greece, South Africa and Australia. In Greece, high-elevation vineyards, where cool nights slow grape-ripening, tend to be the reason alcohol levels are low. In Australia (and for some California producers) there is a vogue for picking grapes relatively early to produce low-alcohol wines, a reaction to the turbocharged wines of the recent past.

All of the South African candidates below are based on Cinsault, which at one time was the country's most-planted red wine grape and is now relatively inexpensive. This may partly explain why it appeals to new wave Cape winemakers: they rarely own their own vineyards and have to buy grapes. Like their Australian counterparts, they are keen to moderate alcohol levels but, to judge from these wines, Cinsault seems able to yield satisfying, fruity wines even at low-alcohol levels.

A selection of summer reds

All are either 12 per cent or 12.5 per cent unless stated otherwise.

interesting fruit. From \$25.99 widely available in the US

LANGUEDOC

Mas Seren, Etincelle Nomade 2020 IGP Cévennes Certified organic blend of peppery Syrah and Cinsault from the hills above the Languedoc flatlands. £13.50 Stone, Vine & Sun

Alain Chabanon, Campredon 2017 Languedoc Fully mature, unoaked blend of Syrah, Mourvèdre and Grenache. £25 Dynamic Vines

ITALY

Brezza 2020 Dolcetto d'Alba Utterly Piemontese and one of the most appealing Dolcettos to have come my way. It's delicate rather than trying to be a barrel-aged Barbera. £15.49 Strictly Wine

Villa Cordevigo, Classico 2017 Bardolino Pinot Noir-like fresh, light red from Lake Garda that my colleague Tamlyn Currin liked so much she gave it a score of 17 out of 20. From €7.81 in Italy

PORTUGAL

Filipa Pato & William Wouters, DNMC Baga 2019 Bairrada Baga is the defiantly firm, characterful red wine grape of Bairrada and Filipa Pato is the daughter of the leading light of this northern wine region. Wouters is her sommelier husband. £16.95 Wine & Greene, £17.25 Bar Douro

Azores Wine Company, Tinto Vulcânico 2018 IGP Açores An extraordinary combination of history and geography in a glass. Organic blend of grapes from the windswept vineyards of the mid-Atlantic volcanic archipelago that is the Azores. £23 Amathus Drinks

CALIFORNIA

Birichino, Bechthold Vineyard Old Vines, Vignes Centenaires Cinsault 2018 Mokelumne River Cinsault again — from a vineyard in Lodi planted in 1886. Very eloquent and full of pure,

SOUTH AFRICA

Waterkloof, Seriously Cool Cinsault 2019 Stellenbosch The back label on this organic wine, a favourite on JancisRobinson.com since 2013, urges, "drink me cool but take me seriously". I can see why they say to drink this sweet, gentle wine cool; it probably needs the lower temperature to keep it refreshing. Lowish acid and low tannin but a great, easy choice for those who seek a low-alcohol red that can be enjoyed without food. £10.79 Rannoch Scott

Rail Cinsault 2019 Coastal Region Aged in a mix of concrete and old oak with bright, piercing red-cherry fruit. Very round and appealing. A wine to drink pretty young — and coolish — but it is awfully pretty already. This would make a delightful red aperitif, but arguably too light to match with emphatic foods. £19.50 Wine Direct, £95 for six bottles in bond Jeroboams

Radford Dale, Thirst Cinsault 2020 Stellenbosch Old bushvines are unirrigated and produce a succulent wine described as "joyous" by my colleague and fellow Master of Wine Julia Harding. Very obviously designed to be enjoyed lightly chilled. £11.80 VINVM

Natte Valleij Cinsaults A range of stunning wines from different South African wine regions produced on a historic estate that specialises in this variety. £19.99 Museum Wines

AUSTRALIA Mac Forbes, Healesville Syrah 2018 Yarra Valley This producer has championed low-alcohol wines. We loved the 2016 but have not tasted the 2018, which is only 11.5 per cent. £28 The Wine Society

For four more summer reds from New Zealand and Greece visit ft.com/jancis-robinson



SNAPSHOT

'Parklife' (2021) by Sophia Spring

During London's long pandemic year, British photographer Sophia Spring took to the green spaces of the capital, capturing locals reconnecting with nature in the quiet of lockdowns. *Parklife* is a "love letter" to these spaces, which make up close to a fifth of the city's footprint and have offered sanctuary to its 8.9m inhabitants. Spring's work depicts city folk

reconnecting with lovers, family and friends in these scenic spaces, encouraging those previously ensnared by fast living to cherish the quiet, the slow and the sentimental. **Cheyenne Darko**

'Parklife' by Sophia Spring is available from July 15, published by Hoxton Mini Press

A love letter to New York City

Enuma Okoro

The Art of Life



The last love letter I wrote to a person was years ago, to acknowledge the ending of a relationship. It was a mix of sentiments. Wistful thoughts caught in the still-warm glow of pleasures enjoyed, but also candid recognitions of missteps and incompatibilities. To write the letter was to honour the life and the death of the relationship, and to acknowledge the ways in which I was affected and altered by it. Love letters can hold a vast array of feelings that speak to the oscillating joys and pains of the living, ever-changing relationships we have with others.

A couple of weeks ago, New York City's 122-year-old luxury department store Bergdorf Goodman launched a citywide campaign inviting anyone to write a love letter to NYC. A public call to recognise the fuller reopening of the city's museums, Broadway shows and restaurants by way of epistolary tribute. Life-long New Yorkers as well as top designers, actresses, musicians and models have all scribbled lines about their relationship with and love of the city.

I have been so charmed by this campaign because I know how different places can pirouette into the heart until you're left dizzy with love for their streets, their social culture, their lifestyle. I also know how different cities can elicit different sides of one's personality, just as in human relationships.

I could write a sensuous love letter to Paris, a city that brings out an attentiveness in me, a deep awareness of all my senses. Yet it would be peppered with acknowledgments of unrequited love, because it is not a city I feel deeply welcomed in. I could write a letter of nostalgic adoration to Abidjan, a city in which I played openly and safely as a child, darting around environs I knew like the back of my hand, a city that taught me how to slip tongues between languages and how to dream in accents, holding multiple identities with unquestioned ease.

What's especially poignant about the Bergdorf campaign is its potential to help people wanting to reclaim their sense of belonging in spaces that may have felt foreign and frightening over the past 16 months. And sharing some of these letters publicly could help create a powerful communal narrative suggesting that we're all in this together, remembering and redefining our cities and our lives within them.

It makes me wonder how we might benefit from indulging this seemingly playful practice of penning love letters to the places in our lives that have shaped or sheltered us in some way.

I flew into JFK airport two days before the first lockdown in March 2020 and have not left New York since then. Having spent the previous five years between Europe and Africa, I

I know how places can pirouette into the heart until you're left dizzy with love for their streets

spent most of the pandemic trying to decide if I would stay in New York whenever the world reopened. A few weeks ago I signed a lease for the foreseeable future. I'm choosing this relationship for now, and here's my love letter to mark it.

Dear New York,

I've come and gone from you since the day you welcomed me into the world at that hospital in Manhattan. As a kid living here with my Nigerian parents, you taught me that you can be a home for all types of people from all types of backgrounds and places. Still I left you for a while, snuggled up in other cities, flirting shamelessly with other countries, thinking about committing to other continents. But you always held a place for me, letting me race back and jump into your arms every few months without asking for any explanations. Queens, Brooklyn, Manhattan: I've dug into your boroughs

like a mole seeking refuge, trying to figure out my way in the world again.

You don't hold grudges. You shrug, laughing, open-mouthed and say in that accent of yours, "Honey, I'm just happy to see ya."

You're funny like that. Unpredictable but reliable at the same time. You're moody with your sweltering Julys and your frigid Februaries. You're wild and unconventional. You make space for all of us and try to get us to do the same for each other. I pass an episcopal church in Midtown and see people waiting on the sidewalk for a free meal, clutching their worldly possessions in backpacks and plastic bags. It's not easy, but you try to take care of your own.

I don't shield my eyes any more from your other lovers. The rich ones and the poor ones, the famous ones and the hungry ones, the ones loving you in ways foreign to me. I saw one dancing on 9th and 50th the other day when I was walking to Penn Station. Swirling in the streets with glazed eyes and a peppered beard, serenading me with Marvin Gaye, and offering me a healing I wanted nothing to do with. You shelter us all.

You're hard and abrasive one day, generous and full of opportunities the next. You can turn a cheek and blush with the quiet graceful beauty of Gramercy Park. You can flash a full-toothed grin, crazy boisterous like Times Square. But when I'm down and doubting I just have to turn a corner and you're whispering words of encouragement as I scurry along. Last week I found three love notes stamped on your concrete streets, all in the space of 10 blocks. You told me to "be proud." You told me to "keep dreaming till it's your reality." You said, "It's just love."

You're relentless with your affirmations even through the grit and grime. You're whole and broken, just like everyone else. Your glamour is real magic, a trick for our aching eyes. You have so many ways to massage my penchant for wonder. So many ways to revive my sunken spirits. So many ways to keep me believing in you. And in me.

Enuma Okoro writes weekly for Life & Arts

The war that film forgot

Janan Ganesh

Citizen of nowhere



François Truffaut denied the very possibility of an antiwar film. Put telegenic actors in uniform and you are halfway to tacit glamorisation. Well-lit explosions do the rest. *Jarhead*, in which soldiers watch an almost erotic screening of *Apocalypse Now*, makes the point in meta style.

Perhaps it was the great auteur's rule that put the industry off in at least one contemporary instance. Relative to its duration, the war in Afghanistan might be the most under-dramatised since the dawn of the moving picture. Not just Korea and Vietnam but each venture into the Gulf received more Hollywood treatment. We are poorer for the omission. No recent event better teaches the subversive thought that despair is sometimes justified.

There was no plausible response to 9/11 that kept the Taliban and its deadliest guests in place. At the same time, the prospect of securing a land that had confounded two empires was fanciful. What you are left with is the most eminent case in my lifetime of a perfect problem: one to which there is no good answer. It could not be left alone and it could not be left alone.

The most eminent case, but not the only. Here is one nearer to home. The plight of deindustrialised towns from Ohio to Yorkshire, besides the direct victims, a threat to liberal democracy. Yet there is no large speculation of which I am more sure than this: in most cases, nothing will work.

Governments must try, as have five or

six successive UK ones. The occasional Pittsburgh will raise hopes. But the majority of places that emerged for one extractive or manufacturing purpose will struggle to outlive it. Inaction and successful action are more or less equally far-fetched.

If "hope" has limits, if some crises are intractable, it is easier to break the news to victims (better placed than most to be realistic) than their would-be saviours. I have spent long enough on the journalistic trail of the governing classes to sense that voters misread them. It is not malice or arrogance that

This is what the big screen's neglect of Afghanistan comes down to: the modern incapacity for despair

defines that world so much as naivete. There is less disdain for the masses than overconfidence in what policy can do for them against mulish, foot-dragging reality. Tony Blair, a naïf who is still taken for a Machiavel, is the most Utopian case in point.

It is something that marks their inner lives, which comprise too much zeitgeist nonfiction about rebooting the west or whatever and not enough Naipaul, Chesterton and Waugh. The timelessness of social problems, the perverse consequences of change, the role of futility in human affairs: it is possible to be sublimely educated and

screened from these verities. The summer reading lists that do the rounds at this time of year are themselves unreadable.

My own trade is complicit. Unsigned editorials give newspapers an essential cohesion and identity. They often pique the officials of sovereign states into writing in. They are stimulating to author. But they also work on the premise that all problems have answers: that Angela Merkel, say, must "do" such and such. Having seen the sausage being made in two newspapers of world fame, I know that no editorial that throws its hands up at the insolubility of an issue would run. Yet there are times when no editorial would be truer. Immigration from desperate, fast-growing countries to smaller, legitimately change-averse rich ones is the next in line. We will try very hard to suggest that something can be done.

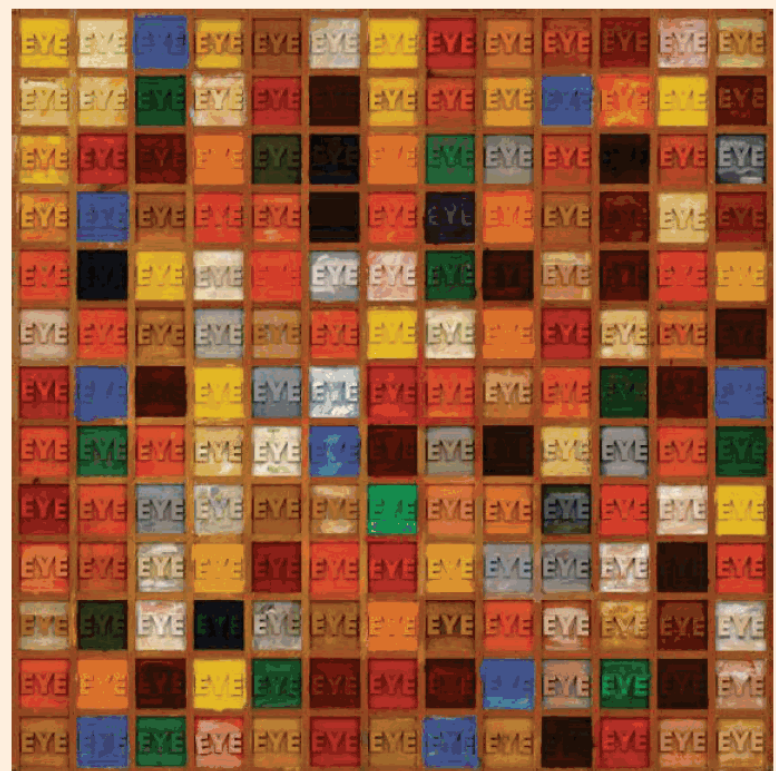
This, in the end, is what the big screen's relative neglect of the Afghan war comes down to. The modern incapacity for despair. Most wars connote glory (the second world war) or folly (Iraq), either of which is a guide to future action. This one was not a teachable moment so much as an extended riddle. It was right to go in and it was hopeless to go in. We have to leave and it is rash to leave. As didactic a medium as film was always going to be at a loss with such ambiguity. The rest of us are in for much more of it.

Email Janan at janan.ganesh@ft.com

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in the 1980s — the environment that shaped Boris, David Cameron and others. We will also be talking sex and consent in the age of #MeToo with authors Amia Srinivasan and Katharine Angel. And Robin Lane Fox joins us to ask

if you can grow a garden that is both beautiful and sustainable. There will be wine tastings, food demos, live poetry and music. For passes, programme and more info visit ftweekendfestival.com

House & Home

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The road to Rome The glamorous villas of the Appian Way – ITALY PROPERTY PAGES 3 & 4

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'You could say that all gardens are psychoactive, in that they're designed to change how we feel. But some take that idea more literally than others – mine, for example.' By Michael Pollan

Every garden tells a story, a tale about nature written by our species and starring an obliging cast of plants. In our time, most of these stories are idylls of one kind or another, with the plants chosen for their beauty or fragrance or outward form, but always for their willingness to gratify human desire and do our bidding. Happy endings are the rule. It wasn't always this way. There was a time, before the industrial revolution lulled us into believing that the human conquest of nature was real and something to celebrate, when gardens told much more ambiguous stories about nature. The medieval and renaissance "physic garden" was less concerned with the beauty of plants than with their spooky powers: whether to heal or poison, they could change us in some way, whether in body or in mind.

Even today, long after the environmental crisis has rendered the phrase "the control of nature" impossible to deploy without irony, our gardens remain more concerned with celebrating our power than that of the plants in them. I suppose we will always go to the garden to idealise our relationship to nature, but lately I've been looking to my garden to do something a little different, something a bit more like the old physic gardens. I've begun to pay more attention to the invisible chemistries percolating through it than to its outward forms and pleasures. You could say that all gardens are psychoactive in one way or another, in that they're designed to change how we feel. But some take that idea more literally than others.

Take mine. Yes, what you first see as you come through the gate are flowering



of flowering plants, including members of the citrus family, produce caffeine in their nectar. This came as a surprise, since caffeine is a defence chemical, a toxin evolved to poison pests and discourage other plants from germinating nearby. But the genius of plants is such that they can deploy the same chemistry to attract or repel, please or poison, depending on their objectives.

It seems honeybees exhibit a preference for blossoms that offer them a shot of caffeine, and are more likely to recall and reliably return to the flowers that supply it. Caffeinated nectar thus improves the performance of pollinators, which means that caffeine does for bees the same thing it does for us: make us more focused and efficient workers.

Yet the benefits flow mainly to the plants, since the bees are so avid for caffeine they will return to blossoms long after they've been depleted of nectar, cutting into honey production. It's an eerily familiar story: a credulous animal drugged by a plant's clever neurochemistry to act against its interests.

Gardening gives a sense of independence – from the grocer, the florist and, for some of us, the drug dealer

So I am not the only animal in this garden with an interest in plant drugs. But for me, ingesting them is not the point. (Or at least not the whole point.) When I first grew cannabis and opium poppies 30 years ago, it was mainly to see if I could do it. Deep down, I suspect that many of us gardeners regard ourselves as minor alchemists, transforming the dross of compost and water and sunlight into substances of beauty and power. Could I make a powerful intoxicant, a psychedelic or a painkiller without purchasing anything (other than a packet of seed), leaving the property or setting up a chemistry lab? One of the greatest satisfactions of gardening is the sense of independence it can confer – from the greengrocer, the florist, the pharmacist and, for some of us, the drug dealer.

The intoxicating garden

plants and tasty things to eat – another garden telling that comforting old story in which nature gratifies human desires for beauty and nourishment. But look a little closer and you will spot, mixed in with the others, a group of plants that have a very different agenda and speak to a more ambiguous desire: to alter human consciousness.

This season I'm growing opium poppies (papaver somniferum); wormwood (Artemisia absinthium), the source of thujone, the alleged hallucinogen in absinthe; cannabis (which it is now legal to grow in California); morning glory, tobacco and three

species of mescaline-producing cacti that go under the common name San Pedro or Wachuma: trichocereus pachanoi, t. bridgesii and t. macrogonus. Wanting to add caffeine to the collection of psychoactive molecules being synthesised in my garden, I recently added a tea plant (camellia sinensis).



Though it turns out that caffeine is already being produced in my garden by my lemon tree, albeit in quantities too small to be of any use to me. Researchers recently discovered that several species

I sense you, reader, wondering about the whole question of legality. It's complicated – and slightly different in the US and the UK. According to Nell Jones, the head of plant collections at the Chelsea Physic Garden in London, with a few notable exceptions, "You can grow whatever you like as long as you don't prepare it as a drug." The exceptions are cannabis, khat and coca, the cultivation of which require a licence from the government that only an institution is likely to secure.

In my American garden, all of the psychoactive plants currently in residence are legal to grow here in California, with one unsettling caveat: it is a felony to grow papaver somniferum with

Continued on page 2

(Clockwise from main) Michael Pollan at home in Berkeley, California; a cannabis plant; close-up of the leaves; mescaline-producing cacti and other plants; a lemon tree, which produces caffeine. Photographed for the FT by Cayce Clifford

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The lighting is on the wall



Luke Edward Hall

Questions of taste

We have just bought a 15th-century cottage which only has wall light fittings – no pendants – as there are too many beams and low ceilings. I need many, many replacements for the faux wood fittings left by the previous owner. I have sourced a few lovely vintage pieces but would like options for chic new wall lights.

An interesting conundrum. I enjoy sourcing antique and vintage lighting too, but it can be a difficult and lengthy process to kit out an entire house with old fittings alone. Also, sometimes you might want a run of a particular style, which can prove frustrating if you come across, say, a perfect antique picture light but you're after six matching ones for a room.

So, where to look for new alternatives? I'm a big fan of the English Lamp Company, which sells handcrafted reproduction lights in Georgian, Victorian, Edwardian and Art Nouveau styles. You name it, they've got it, from cut-glass and prismatic shades to desk, library and standard lamps, hallway lanterns and picture lights. The website is pleasingly old-fashioned and easy to use. No pop-up videos or whizzing graphics here, just a well-organised catalogue. The prices are good, too.

I like its shell wall sconce which, like many of the other offerings, can be ordered to fit a bulb or a candle. And it comes in three metal finishes. I like its Dutch bracket too – the delicately paired-back scrolling arm and candle bulb would suit an ancient, rickety and beam-filled cottage delightfully. But it's



Vaughan's Chetham library light is based on a 1950s French design

not all frilly cut glass: its elegant swan neck gas bracket with coolie shade (I love a coolie shade) would work in a contemporary interior just as well as a period one.

I personally love the idea of a mix of lighting styles in your 15th-century cottage. Of course, classic picture lights and elegant sconces will work beautifully, but I would throw in some contemporary fittings to create a sense of exciting contrast. Utilitarian spaces in particular – kitchens, pantries, corridors – can definitely take cleaner, simpler fittings.

So, sidestepping reproductions for the moment, look to Original BTC for good-quality and well-designed lighting. Original BTC makes its fittings across six factories in the UK, but it is very much an international company and supplies more than 85 countries. Its Hector wall light is a classic. The white ceramic shade is smart and beautifully shaped, and would give a contemporary touch to a bedroom, say, when used as a bedside lamp.

My other favourites? The Hampton wall light with its globe-shaped shade would contrast wonderfully with a wonky old bathroom, and I like the Miniature Ship's Well wall light, which could be just the ticket in a small space such as a downstairs loo.

On the other side of the pond, South Carolina's brilliant Urban Electric Company makes elegant, contemporary and highly original lighting. Craftsmanship is the name of the game here, and its fittings come with a lifetime guarantee.

I am a fan of many of the company's wall lights, but I am particularly enjoying the Hand Sconce V.2, which features an opal glass shade that would provide a lovely, glowing light. It is witty and whimsical.

I do not usually like lights and door knobs shaped like human limbs – I find them a bit creepy, unless we're talking about real arms and hands and candelabra, à la Jean Cocteau. However, this hand-shaped fitting is certainly cute, not creepy. The Mazarine light, in comparison, has a crisp, tailored appearance, and comes with a perforated metal shade

Mix new with antique. Miniature scale, maximum atmosphere: High Gothic melodrama on a budget

Pooky's Dracool is Luke's favourite choice for a period property



that can be painted any RAL colour.

What else? Vaughan is my absolute go-to when it comes to new lighting with a traditional feeling. Its catalogue of fittings is exemplary, particularly in the swing-arm department. Swing-arm wall lights can be a good choice for bedside lamps, particularly if you're short on space in smaller bedrooms (often the case in cottages).

Its Preston Swing Arm light is based on a 19th-century example from the company's archives and features a rectangular backplate. I like the Chetham Library light, too, based on a 1950s French number, that comes with a spun-metal shade.

Last, look to Pooky for some fantastic, well-priced fittings. The range is huge and covers all bases: traditional, contemporary, refined, decorative. A good number of practical things, and the odd charmingly wacky thing. I love its Single Astor light, with an exquisite diagonal backplate and satisfying detailing.

I hope this list might give you some initial inspiration to mix a good selection of new pieces with your antique finds. My favourite fitting of them all? The Dracool is one of my top wall fittings on Pooky's website. It's all ebony and gold wood and convex glass, with a single candleholder. Miniature scale, maximum atmosphere: High Gothic melodrama on a budget!

If you have a question for Luke about design and stylish living, email him at lukeedward.hall@ft.com. Follow him on Instagram @lukeedwardhall

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FT Weekend Festival



The FT Weekend Festival returns to London's Hampstead Heath on September 4 – the first time it has been held live since 2019.

Speakers on the House & Home stage will include FT columnists Luke Edward Hall and Robin Lane Fox, and broadcasters Trevor Phillips and Loyd Grossman, among others. For more details, visit ftweekendfestival.com.

House & Home Unlocked

FT subscribers can sign up for our weekly email newsletter containing guides to the global property market, distinctive architecture, interior design and gardens. Go to ft.com/newsletters

Intoxicating garden

Continued from page 1

the intent to manufacture a narcotic. How would the authorities prove such an intent? Well, one way would be if your seed pods have been slit by a razor; the milky sap the pods bleed is opium. Another would be if you were in possession of an article explaining how simple it is to turn poppy seedpods into a mild narcotic tea (simply crush and soak them in hot water) or laudanum (soak them in vodka instead).

However, if your sole purpose is to admire the ephemeral tissue-thin blossoms or the stately seed pods, you should have nothing to worry about. Though you might want to dispose of this article before any visits from the police.

The status of San Pedro is slightly different: it is legal to grow these handsome columnar cacti, no matter your intentions. However, the moment you begin cutting up and cooking a chunk of the cactus (slowly simmer a stock from its flesh and drink a cup or two of that, or so I've been told) you are guilty of manufacturing mescaline, a felony that in the US carries a prison sentence of five to 20 years. Peyote, the other mescaline-producing cactus, is straight-out illegal to grow or possess in the US, which is the only reason I don't grow this lovely pin-cushion-shaped cactus.

The same is currently true for psilocybin mushrooms, except in a handful of jurisdictions – including Oakland, Santa Cruz, Denver, Oregon and Washington, DC – that have recently decriminalised "plant medicines". I look forward to the day when my city of Berkeley follows suit, allowing me to expand my psychoactive garden to include peyote and magic mushrooms.

It is already legal to grow small quantities of cannabis in California (as it is in 18 other states), and although I have yet to see cannabis seedlings for sale in the nurseries I frequent, you can find them in some of the licensed pot dispensaries. This spring I bought a single clone of a hybrid called "Brr Berry" for \$30. The description of this cultivar had a slightly different flavour from the sort of catalogue copy gardeners are accustomed to. Indeed, it will be opaque to anyone who isn't a connoisseur of cannabis flowers, which few gardeners would grow strictly for their looks or scent – the buds resemble small turds glazed with psychoactive hoar frost.

"This lady is icier than an electrified ice-cream cone, cooler than a polar bear's toenails and frostier than a snowman's snowballs. Brrrr! With such a



(From top) 'Merely to gaze at a poppy is to feel dreamy'; 'magic' mushrooms; morning glory; (right) flowering tobacco

Cayce Clifford; Andrew Hasson/Alamy; Getty Images; Tom Meaker/Alamy

frosty exterior, it's hard to believe that she has such a sweet centre, but if you get close to her you will notice that her core is nothing but bubblegum, sweet berries and acetone; a strangely intoxicating combination that is sure to excite your senses and put a little tingle in your jingle."

My cannabis plant hasn't yet thrown any buds, but I must say it is a handsome and hard-to-miss character in the garden, its seven-fingered pattern of deeply serrated leaves by now as iconic as any leaf on earth. I have not met another plant that grows so lustily or is quite so avid for sunlight and water. It has a drive for life few plants can match.

The one that comes closest is the tobacco plant, a powerful psychoactive that we westerners unjustly demonise. Unable to find seeds for Nicotiana tobacum or rustica, I planted the more common and floriferous *syvestris*, whose tubular white blossoms perfume the evening air in summer. But the elephantine leaves of the original tobacco plants, their undersides sticky with nicotine resin, deserve a place in the psychoactive garden, in spite of the plant's evil reputation. Long before

European colonists transformed this New World native into a lethal addiction, tobacco was revered by indigenous peoples as a sacred medicine with the power to purge ill health and evil spirits.

Tobacco's double identity – at once a medicine and a poison, depending on context – goes to the heart of the paradoxical story that the psychoactive garden wants to tell. Since they can't locomote, plants have had to master biochemistry both to defend themselves and to attract the attention of animals who would disseminate their genes. Plants produce all manner of poisons, but as Paracelsus, the Swiss Renaissance medical pioneer, famously observed, "the dose makes the poison". Many of the dangerous alkaloids plants manufacture to defend themselves do other, more interesting things at low doses, including changing the texture of animal consciousness. There it is, right in the middle of the word

intoxicate: toxic. Why this ambiguity? Perhaps because plants have learnt over the course of their evolution that simply killing your pests outright is not necessarily the best strategy. A lethal pesticide would soon select for

resistant members of the pest population, rendering it ineffective. How much cleverer to invent molecules that merely mess with the minds of animals, disorienting or distracting them or ruining their appetites. This is precisely what a great many plant alkaloids – including caffeine, mescaline, morphine and nicotine – reliably do.

We humans have been the greatest beneficiary of this sophisticated chemical warfare – and I say that fully aware that the use of psychoactive plants can end badly. The opiates produced by papaver somniferum can be curse or a blessing. But there is something in us that isn't satisfied with everyday normal consciousness, and seeks to change it or even transcend it from time to time, despite the risks. How amazing is it that a chemical invented by a plant – a plant I can grow in my garden! – should turn out to be one of the molecular keys to human consciousness?

Does welcoming this age-old dance of plant neurochemistry into the garden change our experience of it, even if we don't partake? It can. Merely to gaze at a poppy is to feel dreamy, to judge by

Impressionist paintings, or the experience of Dorothy and friends, interrupted on their journey through Oz when they passed out in a field of scarlet poppies. It's hard to look at a cannabis plant in full flower without feeling the stir of something psychoactive. One doesn't necessarily have to ingest these plants in order to register some of their power.

Yet imagine what could become of our gardens, and our relationship to them, if we won the right not only to grow but to prepare and take these psychoactive plants into our bodies, so that they might change our minds every now and again. I can attest to the fact that plants appear different when under the influence – in my experience, their agency and their subjectivity become blazingly apparent.

One might argue that the legal and moral ambiguities shadowing the psychoactive garden lend it a certain edginess. I'd happily trade that for a greater measure of horticultural freedom. To me, the very idea of a criminal plant seems wrong. Using plants to alter the textures of consciousness is a practice as old as our species, an essential part of our relationship to the natural world. What better, safer or more interesting place to explore the possibilities of that relationship than in our gardens?

"This is Your Mind on Plants" by Michael Pollan, Allen Lane £20/Penguin Press \$28

The home in 50 objects #50: teddy bear, c1909

Early in the pandemic, teddy bears began popping up in windows. The mass teddy bear hunt, inspired by Michael Rosen's book *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*, was a welcome distraction for locked-down children.

A traditional gift at birth, teddy bears are a universal symbol of comfort whose virtues need little extolling. Even those who find them mawkish cannot deny their incontrovertible benefits.

A teddy can help children express feelings, develop imagination and form attachments, say psychologists. They fill a void when parents are

absent and, as transitional objects, are imbued with a metaphysical essence.

So when damaged, a replacement won't do. My sister clung to her beloved, bedraggled bear even when a single eye remained and all the stuffing had migrated to one arm. The teddy bear is one item in our throwaway society that is not disposable.

Adult passions run deep too. Dudley, the little boy who received this Steffy bear in 1909, kept him into his nineties. A 2017

study found that four in 10 of American adults have held on to their bears, while a UK study in 2019 reported that one-third of Britons still sleep with theirs.

In his verse autobiography *Summoned by Bells*, John Betjeman described his bear, Archibald Ormsby-Gore: "Whose ample forehead I could wet with tears, Whose half-moon ears received my confidence, Who made me laugh, who never let me down. I used to wait for hours to

see him move, Convinced that he could breathe."

In the 20th century, emotion and comfort began to be understood as part of a child's development. Children's literature softened, with gentler stories supplanting nightmarish fairy tales. Enter AA Milne's dim but loveable Pooh, followed by Rupert, Paddington et al.

Why "teddy" bears? One day in 1902, President Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt was out hunting but, having no luck, his guides tied a bear to a tree for him to shoot. He refused this cruel act. A Brooklyn toymaker,

Morris Michtom, created "Teddy's Bear" in honour of his kindness.

Another cuddly politician was "Iron Lady" Margaret Thatcher. Documents published after her death revealed her unlikely penchant: "PM retains great affection for Humphrey, a teddy bear some 50 years old." She reportedly said that collecting them was "a very sensible hobby" for an MP, given the extracurricular interests of some MPs. Advice that came, alas, decades too early for Matt Hancock to heed.

Rosalind Sykes museumofthehome.org.uk Watch for a new series in September



On the road to 'la dolce vita'

Italy property | Rome's ancient

Appian Way is a bucolic oasis with a glamorous past now luring buyers in search of peace. By *Hannah Roberts*



Cinema greats such as Gina Lollobrigida and Roberto Rossellini bought villas with sweeping gardens

when most Romans were confined to apartments.

"Of course life still changed, but when you have that space you are still able to sunbathe, garden and exercise. You don't feel a lockdown as much."

Now, after a period of stagnation, interest seems to be stirring as buyers seek gardens and outdoor space following the lockdowns.

Diletta Giorgolo Spinola, of Sotheby's International Realty, notes a recent uptick in inquiries and viewings: "Twenty years ago, prices were through the roof, but it has been a bit slow for many years. Now people want green space but close to the city."

Daniilo Orlando, Savills associate in Rome, agrees: "Many customers who previously wanted a penthouse in the centre are considering villas, as long as it is near the amenities."

The most desirable addresses in the Appian Way begin at Porta San Sebastiano, the largest gate through the old Roman city walls. About 3km further out, another popular stretch has a scattering of good restaurants and coffee bars.

Along the road shaded by umbrella pines, ancient Roman tombs puncture the route like billboards. Wild flowers grow high on either side. Cyclists in Lycra dodge Italian families eating their lunch, and occasional flocks of sheep are driven from field to field. Centuries of carts

have worn tracks in the cobbles.

Ultra-high-net-worth buyers find the Appian Antica's location near Ciampino airport convenient for their private jets. Last year, Silvio Berlusconi, media tycoon and former Italian premier, moved his Roman base from the city centre to his villa on the Appia Antica, which he had loaned to the film director Franco Zeffirelli for 20 years.

The neighbourhood's peak prestige came in the 1970s and 1980s, when the likes of fashion designer Valentino

Continued on page 4

The first and most famous of the ancient Roman roads that fanned out into the empire, Via Appia Antica, built in the 4th century BC, once connected the capital with the Adriatic and its distant colonies.

Revived by 19th-century Pope Pius IX, it fell into disrepair and was damaged in the second world war when it was used to move troops. But today the home stretch of the Appian Way, lined with catacombs, temples and monumental tombs, is a protected area and oasis in the city, beloved of joggers, cyclists and families who stroll along its original basalt flagstones at weekends.

For decades, the road and surrounding streets have been aspirational addresses for Romans, but demand for property in the neighbourhood has ebbed and flowed with the city's fortunes.

In the heyday of the *Dolce Vita* era, cinema greats such as Gina Lollobrigida and Roberto Rossellini bought or built villas with sweeping gardens and long, winding driveways.

Central to its appeal is its proximity to the city centre, while still feeling like the countryside. In 2019, Dominique Billa,



(Clockwise from main) The Appia Antica, built by the Romans in the 4th century BC, is now a protected area for walkers and cyclists; Italian actress Gina Lollobrigida at her villa in 1960; a four-bedroom villa with pool, €2.65m; Roman tombs and monuments line the route

Stefano Valeri/Alamy; Alamy; Pierluigi Praturio/Reporters Associati & Archivio/Mondadori Portfolio via Getty Images; Adam Eastland/Alamy



who owns a food-tour business in Rome, returned to the Appia Antica, where she grew up, after living in London and New York.

"It's the best of both worlds, perfectly located. In 15 minutes you are at the Circus Maximus and in 20 minutes in the centre, but it's pure countryside. You see sheep and cows every day and you have so much space and privacy."

With gardens typically measuring more than 3,000 sq m, and some parks 10 times that size, she says the inhabitants weathered easier than most Italy's strict 2020 lockdown,

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House&Home

i / BUYING GUIDE

Property tax is 9 per cent, or 2 per cent on a primary residence.

An agency fee of between 3 and 8 per cent is shared between buyer and seller.

Pre-pandemic, there were, on average, 33 flights a day from London to Rome.

Continued from page 3

Garavani bought villas here, but a decade of economic crisis in Italy has meant reduced demand for luxury homes and a stagnant market.

"It lost a bit of its flavour. Some villas were converted into wedding venues, which has made it less exclusive," says Celeste Oliphant, a property consultant in Rome.

With some owners reluctant to drop prices, villas can remain on the market for years.

Naturally, buying in what is effectively an open-air archaeological museum has its challenges. Most properties need renovation and you cannot renovate, paint your house or put in a

'If you buy here it is because you are fascinated by history and want to live and breathe the history of Rome'

pool without permission from the ministry of culture: "You cannot even put up a car park shelter," says Oliphant.

"Of course, there are criteria to respect in an archaeological park. But those who buy here have already taken that into consideration. If you buy here it is because you are fascinated by history, and want to live and breathe the history of Rome," says Orlando.

With rigid building restrictions and homes often remaining in the same family for generations, there is little on the market at any one time.

"A villa on the Appia Antica is a unique trophy asset. There is a very limited finite number," he adds.

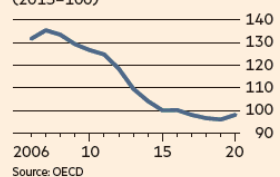
The flipside of the privacy and seclusion is that burglaries have been frequent over the years. These days, many residents subscribe to security services that tour the area.

Italy's property market was badly knocked by the downturn after the



Last year, Italian house prices grew at their fastest rate since the financial crisis

Change in average real price (2015=100)



Source: OECD

2008 global financial crisis, and prices in big cities remain 30 per cent lower.

On the Appian Way, asking prices have fallen from about €10,000-€12,000 per sq m to €6,000-€8,000 per sq m, according to Orlando. Villas that previously had asking prices of €10m-€15m are now priced at €4m-€5m, says Oliphant, with some small villas now relatively affordable, available for €1m-€2m.

Buyers are both Italians and foreigners, according to Sotheby's agents who have made recent sales to American, French and Romans.



Italy's property market has never fully recovered from the 2008 financial crisis; asking prices for villas on the Appia Antica have fallen from €10m-€15m to €4m-€5m — *Silvia Stevens/Alamy, Getty Images/Stockphoto*

Prices stabilised in 2017 and had begun to recover when the pandemic froze sales. Since the first wave of the pandemic ended, there have been signs of a recovery.

Italy's house price index increased by 1.9 per cent in 2020 compared with the year before, according to statistics bureau ISTAT, the most since 2010. And Italy is hoping that prime minister

Mario Draghi will be able to kickstart the country's stagnant economy after being allocated the lion's share, €209bn, of the EU's €1tn post-pandemic economic recovery package of loans and grants.

The so-called Draghi effect has already contributed to a sharp fall in Italian government borrowing costs, which feed through to lenders and help those looking for loans.

Draghi is working on a series of reforms to improve the Italian legal system and public administration, whose inefficiencies can deter foreign property buyers, and to increase international investor confidence, by stimulating growth of a predicted 4.2 per cent this year.

Italy brought in a flat tax for foreigners of €100,000 a year in 2017 and the number of wealthy foreigners has been doubling every year. In 2019, the last year data was available, there were 420 who had taken up the policy. Draghi has promised further tax reforms this year.

While it is unlikely that an influx of millionaires will see Appia Antica return to its former glories, a resurgence in trust could mark an upturn in the ancient street's fortunes.

PROPERTIES FOR SALE

APPIA ANTICA



▲ Villa, Appia Antica Park, €2.65m

A four-bedroom villa with five bathrooms located inside the Appian Way

Regional Park — the second-largest urban park in Europe, behind Losiny Ostrov National Park in Moscow. The property, which has about 230 sq m of interior living space on a third-of-an-acre plot, dates back to 1850. Arranged over two floors, the home has a unique interior design, with wood panelling, columns, busts, trompe l'oeil and bathrooms draped in marble. The home also has a large, covered outdoor pool. Available through Engel & Völkers.



▲ Villa, €6.7m

A five-bedroom, nine-bathroom villa on the Appia Antica.

The property, which measures 860 sq m, comes with a 5,660 sq m garden, planted with mature trees. The main villa, which is arranged over two floors, has a large, open living area with wooden flooring and floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the garden. One annex of the villa is currently used as an office space. The property also has a large outdoor pool, outdoor dining areas and a 160 sq m gazebo in the grounds, as well as a five-a-side football pitch. The villa is being marketed by Lionard Luxury Real Estate.

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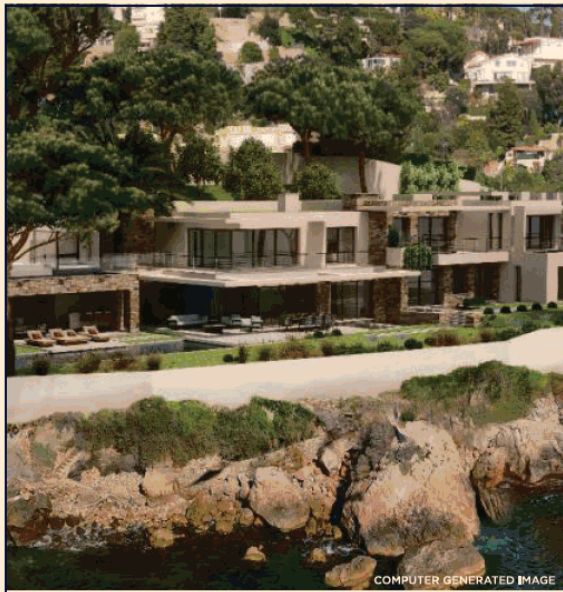
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Hot property

UK national parks

By Maria Crawford

► House, Holne, Devon, England, offers over £850,000

Where In Dartmoor National Park, almost equidistant from Plymouth and Exeter, with both cities being about 25 miles or a 40-minute drive away. Exeter airport is a few miles further and offers domestic and European flights, while direct trains from Exeter to London take from 2h 10m.

What A Grade II-listed, thatched house on 1.6 acres. It has three bedrooms, two of which are en suite and each accessed by their own staircase, and a library that leads to a terrace with views across Dartmoor towards Sharp Tor.

Why The distinctive house, called Tumbly, was designed by a pupil of Edwin Lutyens. Two detached thatched garages, original period features and a sectioned garden with mature shrubs and trees all add to the property's charm.

Who Knight Frank



◀ Estate, Redlynch, Wiltshire, England, offers over £18m

Where In the New Forest, 10 miles from Salisbury and 90 miles south-west of London. Southampton and its airport are within 30 minutes by car, with flights to Europe as well as private aircraft facilities.

What A Grade I-listed, seven-bedroom Jacobean house. A Grade II-listed stable yard features an additional five-bedroom house; there is also a farmhouse and three cottages.

Why The property is set on 366ha of park, wood and farmland, along with lawns, lakes and paddocks.

Who Strutt & Parker



◀ Cottage, Bala, Gwynedd, Wales, £745,000

Where In Snowdonia, the biggest of Wales's three national parks. Liverpool and Manchester's International airports are each less than two hours away by car.

What An extended five-bedroom house that is built mostly in Welsh stone and has been modernised

sensitively with slate hearths, slate and wooden floors and exposed timbers. There is also a stone barn.

Why The peaceful setting. The house is reached by a lane and then a track that crosses farm and woodland before even reaching the drive. The elevated position and modern extension make the most of views across the national park.

Who Jackson-Stops



▲ House, Ballintuil, Perthshire, Scotland, offers over £550,000

Where Ten miles from the Cairngorms, the UK's northernmost national park. Perth and Dundee are 45 minutes by car. Perth airport offers private facilities and Dundee serves London City and Belfast.

What A 466 sq m house, currently with six bedrooms but with

potential for nine. Its origins can be traced as far back as the mid-16th century. Additions were made in the late 19th century and the house is now due for refurbishment.

Why Four acres of grounds include mature gardens, a paddock and an old coach house and stables with potential for conversion into a three-bedroom house.

Who Savills



◀ House, Buxton, Derbyshire, England, £1,995m

Where In the spa town of Buxton in the Peak District. Manchester Airport is 22 miles, 40 minutes by car. Macclesfield, 12 miles away, has direct trains to London (1h 50m).

What A 19th-century house with seven en-suite bedrooms plus a one-bedroom basement, two-bedroom coach house and one-bedroom cottage.

Why As well as being on the edge of the Peak District national park, the house overlooks Buxton's Pavilion Gardens, 23 acres of Victorian landscaped splendour.

Who Savills

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Should you buy a modern or a period property?



James Max

On the market

The character and price growth prospects of period homes are attractive but a new-build has modern fittings, solar panels and walls in the right place



Illustration by James Fryer

There are nearly 30m homes in the UK. More than a third were built before the second world war and are roughly considered "period"; nearly two-thirds were built after and are roughly considered "modern". The question is: which is the better buy?

In the same way that someone who likes salt and vinegar crisps will never accept cheese and onion as the superior flavour, there's no right or wrong answer – it just happens that, in the UK at least, buyers tend to pick a lane and stick to it.

This is not a sensible way to go about buying a house. You should at least consider both options – and you may be surprised by what you find. Until recently I'd always thought that period properties were more attractive and characterful, and offered better prospects for price growth. Then I broke all my own rules and bought a three-year-old home for my city base.

It was a revelation. All the rooms are the right shape, the bathrooms have modern fittings and I can hold my arms out in the shower without touching the walls. The windows keep out the weather and keep in the heat. There's underfloor heating and solar panels on the roof. And the space flows.

I didn't need to move any walls, the kitchen is already a diner as well, and all the wiring is neatly in conduits should I need it. Televisions can go on the walls without a spaghetti of cables and there is just the right amount of soft-closing drawer space for all my shoes and socks.

Aesthetically, while the front of the house may not be everyone's idea of a masterpiece, from the back, it looks fantastic: a cathedral of glass and metalwork contrasting with brick, stone and styled metal flashings. Sold!

So, that's it? Modern houses are better because you get more for your money, they're cheaper to run, offer more flexible space and will help save the environment from catastrophe?

Well, no, actually. It's not that simple. If a period house had been available with the same space as my new home, and in the same location, and for the same price, despite all the accoutrements, I would have – perhaps irrationally – gone for that.

Nearly all of the positives listed above could have been retrofitted into an older home: but the cost would have been incredible.

It used to be the case that if you bought a Victorian or Georgian town

house it would always rise faster in value than anything you could build in its place. The abundance of original features, from sash windows to original fireplaces, could not be replicated. If you liked that sort of thing, you bought period; if not, you went modern.

But our lifestyles have changed so much in recent years that now older properties will either require major surgery to make them suitable, or have had that work already done to them – sometimes badly and in need of expensive unpicking.

So, do the economics still stack up? Any rise in property price for a period home will need to be significant to compensate for all that work: and do you really have the time and energy to adapt it to the way you want it to be?

Context matters too. If rural life appeals – as it has to many since the start of the pandemic – are you really going to accept as your bucolic idyll a modern box built in the 1970s with low ceilings and plastic-framed windows? I'd expect not. But you might be tempted by a new barn conversion. The trend has been under way for decades but only in recent years have architects got this right, managing to use salvaged elements or layouts to

Older properties will either require major surgery to make them suitable, or have had that work done badly and need expensive unpicking

create entirely new properties that nevertheless "feel" old: with grand entrances, wonderful kitchen diners, bedroom suites with en suite wet rooms and traditional fireplaces.

Then again, a period house that's converted into flats will often be a compromise with wasted spaces, poor sound and heat insulation and a range of flaws that either require a very expensive conversion or a lot of tolerance on the part of the inhabitant.

In one converted flat I lived in, every time I had a shower, the neighbour downstairs would bang the ceiling because the pump interfered with her Wi-Fi. And in another, if my dog got upset and barked, the noise would be matched in ferocity by the texts I received from the Rottweiler – sorry, I mean neighbour – next door. Modern, purpose-built apartments tend to have a better layout and noise insulation.

But before you rush out and buy a modern flat, what about the service charges? Are there cladding or leasehold conditions to consider? If the flat is new, are you paying a huge new-build premium? If the flat is more than 10 years old, is there a proper sinking fund for repairs? The upkeep – even for a supposedly "low-hassle" modern home – can still be wildly expensive.

Thinking of "modern" as one type of property is also misleading. Fashions change quickly. Mid-century designs have become popular recently, providing features and a style of their own – but much of the construction from the 1980s to the early 2000s suffered a taste bypass. Since about 2005, there seems to have been a revolution in housebuilding. Aside from recent horror stories about fire safety and building quality issues, the higher quality of design has changed the market view of what to buy and where to live – especially at the high end.

Yet, I'd still suggest that period properties have the edge over modern ones – if you have the budget to update them sensitively. But you should never discount a property because it's not from an architectural period you covet. As with my recent purchase, you might well be surprised when it ticks off all your other requirements. My favourite crisps may be cheese and onion but if they're not available? I'll happily scoff a bag of salt and vinegar.

James Max is a radio presenter and property expert. The views expressed are personal. Twitter: @thejamesmax

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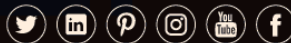
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A walled garden is always a magical place, full of surprises," says the architect Fiona McLean. As founding partner of McLean Quinlan, she has designed a single-storey home that hides behind a wall perpendicular to a Georgian kitchen garden. This 400 sq m property in Devon presents an austere brick facade, with an oriel window and discreet openings that invite you to peer in to the secret world within.

Cross the threshold, through the barely-there front door, and the realm beyond is an elegant mix of textures – sawn oak, clay walls – and a restrained, earthy palette. It has been shortlisted for 2021's Royal Institute of British Architects South West Regional Awards.

Hugh Pearman, former editor of the RIBA Journal, describes the four-bedroom house with a central courtyard as a modern-day Roman villa. But unlike a design by Vitruvius, this interior courtyard isn't open-air. Triple-glazed skylights with external shades protect a winter garden from the elements. Reclaimed terracotta floor tiles, clean lines and light-filled, open spaces create a sense of serenity; part gallery, part home.

"Triple-glazed skylights" might give a clue that this house is not just an attractive piece of architecture but one built to the rigorous low-energy Passivhaus standard. It was one of three very different finalists in last month's Passivhaus Awards. The home, known simply as Devon Passivhaus, demonstrates that following the technical strictures of the standard needn't preclude creative flair.

McLean referred to historic maps during the design process. A "virtual path" through the house follows the line of an original gardener's path to a gateway in the walled garden. "It's like a secret passageway to a paradise garden," she says.

The walls of this project are airtight and extremely well insulated. The home built for retired software engineers Eileen and Nigel Dutt needs barely any "active" heating to maintain a comfortable interior temperature of 21C. "On a freezing day with no sun, the house only loses around 1.5C with no heating," says Nigel.

The Dutt's have lived here for two years. One air-source pump warms water for underfloor heating, using just 1,200kWh a year, the same energy a single radiator would use in two months.



Larch Corner, designed by LEAP – Mark Sidall

'Like a modern-day Roman villa'

Architecture | A home in Devon built to low-energy

Passivhaus principles – and others like it – can help countries hit their climate targets, writes *Paul Miles*

Passivhaus buildings typically need 90 per cent less space heating than average. Warmth comes from passive solar gain and the waste heat produced by appliances and occupants.

Low heating demand coupled with 36 photovoltaic panels means that Devon Passivhaus harnesses 40 per cent more power than it uses, even with its private sewage plant and borehole.

"The performance figures for the first two years show that the house is carbon negative – half a tonne annually – energy positive, and running cost

negative, so we like to think of it as a power station and a bank," says Nigel. The couple's net income from selling surplus power at 5p a unit was about £100 for 2020. By comparison, annual running costs for their previous similarly sized home nearby amounted to about £4,000 annually.

Overheating has only been a problem when the house is unoccupied. "I've learnt to store chocolate in the fridge when we're away," says Nigel. "If we're at home on very hot days we simply open windows and doors and



(Above) Devon Passivhaus, designed by McLean Quinlan; (right) the 1950s Hampshire house retrofitted to EnerPHit standards by Ruth Butler – Jim Stephenson; Peter Langdown



close blinds to keep out the sun and it's very comfortable."

The property is the first Passivhaus project by McLean Quinlan, a mother and daughter practice that specialises in single-family homes. "We've always been keen on low-energy design but previous clients have been wary of the Passivhaus standard, thinking that it means you can't open windows, but in this case the clients knew all about Passivhaus," says McLean.

Despite high-tech kit – including a thermal store of "phase change mate-

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Corner's cross-laminated timber walls and ceilings, innovative blown wood-fibre insulation (its first use in the UK) and Siberian larch cladding all sequester far more carbon than the embodied emissions from the concrete foundations. Solar panels provide power for an air-source heat pump. The award judges were "impressed by the low embodied carbon and use of renewables".

"The Passivhaus standard massively reduces carbon emissions by cutting a building's operational energy requirements," says the project's architect, Mark Siddall of Lovingly Engineered Architectural Process, or LEAP. "But the next vital step is to pay attention to a building's embodied carbon and this is precisely what Larch Corner does."

Siddall was "thrilled" that Larch Corner is the most "draught-free" house in the UK and third most draught-free



retrofitting is essential if we're to reduce carbon emissions." The clients moved out for seven months while work – costing £2,000 per sq m – progressed. However, says Butler, it is possible to do a step-by-step retrofit with the occupants present.

The detached house was clad in insulated render, insulation was inserted below a new, slightly raised floor, and the property was made airtight and triple glazed. Its main glazed facade faces south with new bifolding doors on to the garden. Overheating during summer will be prevented with a newly planted arbour, providing shade.

"Solar gain", derived from glazing that faces the equator, is often thought of as the crux of Passivhaus design. But, says Butler, "a retrofit to Passivhaus standard doesn't need to rely on the property facing south". This house now maintains a comfortable 18C-20C year round with just one small electric radiator of 1500W, about the same power as a hairdryer.

"Originally, as a 1930s house, it would've been 'one room, one function' with a draughty lobby inside the front door. After a deep retrofit, you'll have the same comfort standard across the whole house and can enjoy more open-plan living," says Butler.

The UK Passivhaus Award judges "saw the potential replicability of this retrofit approach for cavity-walled buildings, common in the UK".

The third finalist was a single-storey three-bedroom, 162 sq m new home, all in timber, in Warwickshire. Larch

The house maintains 18C-20C with one small electric radiator of 1500W, the same power as a hairdryer

in the world. Last month it was announced as the winner of the UK Passivhaus Awards 2021 in the small projects category after a vote from nearly 500 industry members of the UK Passivhaus Trust.

"It's 244 times more airtight than building regulations require and 13 times more than required by Passivhaus," he says. "The whole house has a leakage area less than the size of a penny."

Such airtightness is one of the most important criteria of Passivhaus design but one that leads to common misunderstandings. It doesn't mean you can't open windows, just that there are no unwanted draughts. Even with all the windows closed, fresh air is constantly drawn into the home, filtered and warmed (if needed) to a comfortable temperature.

"The mechanical ventilation and heat recovery unit provides about 0.4 air changes per hour," says Siddall. "In Larch Corner, assuming four occupants, this is equivalent to 300 'baths' of fresh air per person per hour."

Faced with the challenge of both a climate crisis and Covid, homes built – or retrofitted – to the Passivhaus standard can provide a breath of fresh air.

rial" that heats water for up to five days after charging with surplus solar energy – there is one simple feature this modern home lacks compared with older properties and some of McLean Quinlan's previous projects: a fireplace.

"A fireplace is hopeless in a Passivhaus," says McLean. "It's just a hole in the ceiling [affecting airtightness]. You can get around it by installing a small sealed wood burner but you end up overheating and having to open all the windows." The Duttas are divided about whether they miss a fireplace. "I suggested we get a log burner screensaver for the TV," says Nigel.

This year's biennial Passivhaus Awards were the first since the UK declared a climate emergency in May 2019.

"There has been a sharpened awareness of the complexity, scale and speed

at which we need to act," says Yogini Patel, of the UK Passivhaus Trust. "Passivhaus buildings . . . help deliver net-zero targets by drastically slashing energy and subsequent carbon emissions from buildings."

The first UK home built to Passivhaus standard was in 2009. There are now estimated to be 1,500.

The judges commended Devon Passivhaus for its "contemporary and tactile scheme" delivered by a team who were mostly designing their first Passivhaus. Some might argue that at nearly three times the size of the average four-bedroom detached house in the UK, it is an overly large property for two; that sustainability also means using less stuff.

Another finalist was a retrofit that transformed a draughty 1930s Hampshire house of 144.4 sq m into a

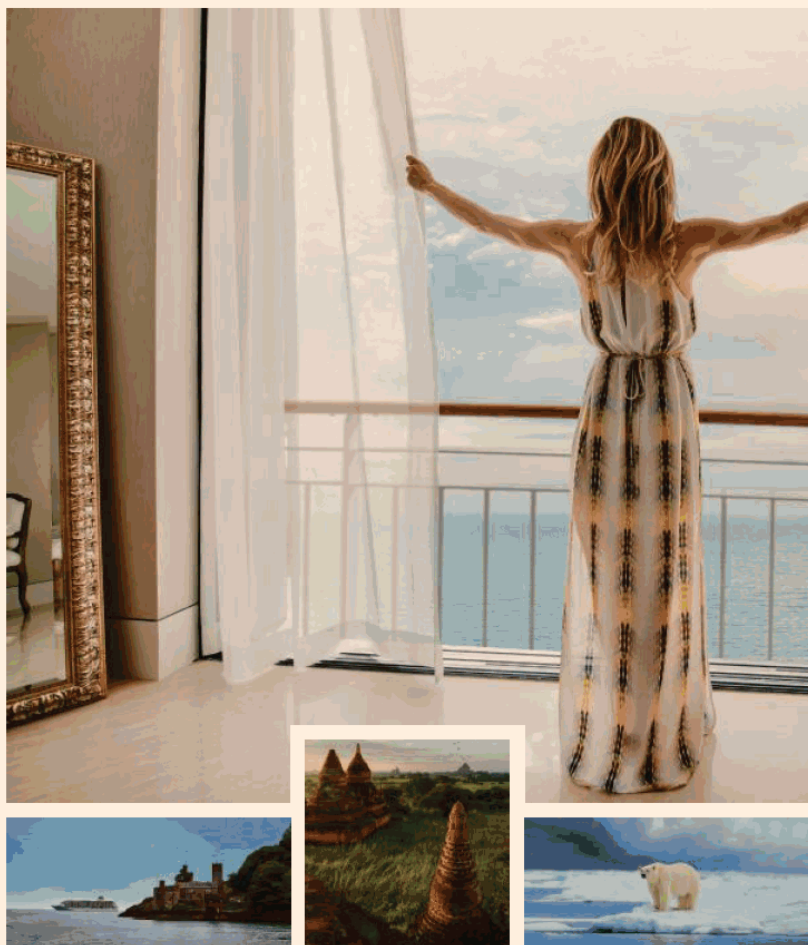


Light-filled, open spaces create a sense of serenity at the Devon Passivhaus

Jim Stephenson, Nigel Dutt

comfortable, light-filled open-plan home. It was the first Passivhaus retrofit – a standard called EnerPHit – for architect Ruth Butler.

"It's the most onerous deep retrofit standard there is," she says. "The UK has notoriously old building stock and



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Magnificent midsummer

A dry May, then a cool and cloudy June, have benefited the British garden, with peonies, roses, geraniums and foxgloves outdoing themselves

Look on this weekend as the garden's half term. The first half begins in April and the end of the second is postponed by current non-winters until mid-November.

For a month in Britain the conditions for gardening have been heavenly. Count yourselves blessed, new gardeners won in the months of lockdown. You have had a dream of a beginning.

I know not everybody has, whether in hot, dry Canada, the north-west of the US or in parts of France hit by "une chaleur étouffante". In Britain, long memories make me quick to fear the worst. While bedding out in the first days of June, I saw a blood-red full moon and thought fearfully of 1976: it barely rained in that grim summer from early June until late September. Fortunately, this year's ominous moon came to nothing. Just as the young tobacco plants were wilting, the rain arrived and the cool returned, bringing the loveliest weeks for summer gardening since the mid-1980s.

There have been so many winners, but I have to pick on peonies. Their season has lasted extra-long without great heat to rush them through it. They have loved the combination of a dry May and a cool mid-June. They remain essential choices for gardens, especially urban ones, as they will grow well in light shade. Between my peonies in a new bed I have sunk pots of martagon lilies to pick up the baton when the peonies' flowers fade. They are now coinciding.

The important thing when planting a peony is not to set it lower than the previous level of soil in which it has been growing. It will probably be bought in a pot, so this level is easy to see, but if it is bare rooted, a soil mark will show at the point where the roots joined the upper stems. If peonies are planted too deeply, they are reluctant to flower.

Well-prepared soil is essential too, enriched with plenty of compost and if possible, rotted manure. Put some Growmore fertiliser in the bottom of the hole you dig for them and, in their early years, try to feed the plants monthly in the growing season with fertiliser dissolved in water, phostrogen being my mainstay. A well-fed peony is twice as good as some of mine. Try the wonderful double-flowered white Festiva Maxima with red flecks in the flowers, the late-flowering pink double Sarah Bernhardt and, if you can find it, my favourite, Kelways Glorious, a heavenly shade of double white tinged with lilac pink.

Roses have been having such a superb year that they need no further comment. Cool days with intermittent cloud have kept them at their peak for so much longer. Until two years ago, I had been slow to discover that the ideal companion for shrub roses is one of the hardy geraniums, the aptly named Blue Cloud. Single flowered and a pale sky blue, it is amazingly easy to grow. It is not invasive. It grows about 2ft high and radiates outwards from a central clump of roots. After flowering,



(Clockwise from main) Blue Cloud geranium with Felicia roses; Dalmatian digitalis; Sarah Bernhardt peony
GAP Photos/Martin Hughes-Jones; GAP Photos/Jonathan Buckley; GAP Photos/FH Greenmedia



Robin Lane Fox

On gardens

While I ate an excellent slice of chocolate cake, bees enjoyed their own tea party on a Blue Cloud geranium

all of its top growth should be cut back to ground level, encouraging the plant to produce tidy new leaves and a few more flowers later in the year.

On my travels to other gardens, open under the National Garden Scheme, I have noticed how there too, Blue Cloud is beset by bees. They love its open flowers. While I ate an excellent slice of fresh chocolate cake, feeling virtuous for helping the nation's nursing and health charities, recipients of the profit, beside me bees galore were enjoying their own tea party on one of these geraniums. Plant Blue

Cloud and add some catmint elsewhere in the garden. In June your bee-conscience can then rest easy. I counted 23 bees, most of them bumbles, on one Blue Cloud in full glory. It is not a "native" plant. It arose as a chance seedling in a garden, probably from the excellent blue geranium Orion. Bees do not prefer native pollen.

A good year is a prompt for the next one. Early July is the peak viewing time for campanulas, the other great companions to midsummer roses and flower borders. Every garden should have blue and white Campanula persicifolia, one of those beauties which then self-seeds into clever places and never fails. The clumps of leaves at the base of the 2ft-tall stems can be divided whenever the weather is cool and redistributed round the garden.

They have such charm. If you have yet to embark on their path, use this week to sow a packet of their seed in a box of well-watered seed compost and expect it to germinate, even outdoors, within three weeks if kept away from cats. The seedlings can then be pricked out into another box, four or five to each row, and potted on in late August

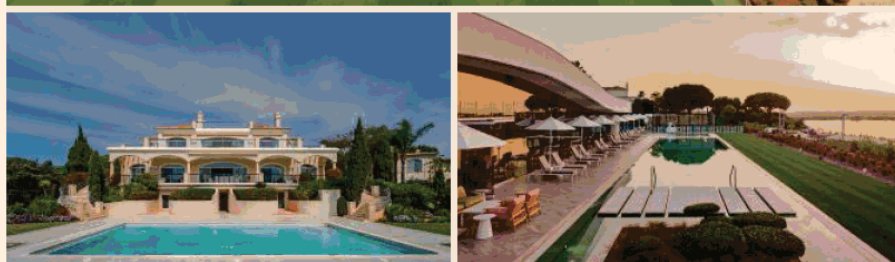
to make next season's crop of bellflowers. Once Campanula persicifolia is in the garden, it is fully perennial, an essential ingredient in any plan that combines formality of design with informality of planting.

In the slow approach of summer twilight, foxgloves have been magnificent too. Like me, they dislike hot summers and so they have flowered and lasted in prime condition. Bees bumble on from Blue Cloud to foxgloves and squeeze into their foxy flowers before rounding off on catmint: there is no need to worry about other plants being "good for pollinators" or not.

Last year I emphasised the value of foxgloves for any garden's all-important vertical line. I then sowed a packet of Dalmatian digitalis, one of the best selections with flowers that still look glove-like. They have been excellent this past month and I recommend a sowing of them now by all newish recruits who want to move on to plant propagation. Foxglove seed is very fine, so it should not be covered with yet more soil when scattered on a firmed-up, pre-watered seed compost in a seed box. Leave it on the surface, pressed into the soil, and keep it watered occasionally from a watering can with a fine rose on it to make a gentle spray. The seeds will germinate even faster than the campanulas.

Among summer's shrubs, meanwhile, deutzias have been outstanding. I am a great supporter of these white or pink-flowered beauties, mainstays for June and July. They have no scent, but bees love them too. My recent winners are pure white Deutzia monbeigii, commemorating a French Catholic missionary in China, and Pride of Rochester, commemorating Rochester, New York, not Jane Eyre's lover. Pride of Rochester grows about 5ft high and wide and has the most subtle variation of pink buds and hanging pink-white flowers. All deutzias are extremely easy to grow in any good soil.

Near the end of the drought in May and early June I encountered a cluster of undergraduates, just released from evensong in the college chapel. I asked them near our deutzias whether they could pray usefully for rain or whether they were too wicked. "Both," they replied with relish and within hours, were followed by a clouding of the sky and the welcome return of rain. Even in miserable lockdown, the student body still commands a hearing.



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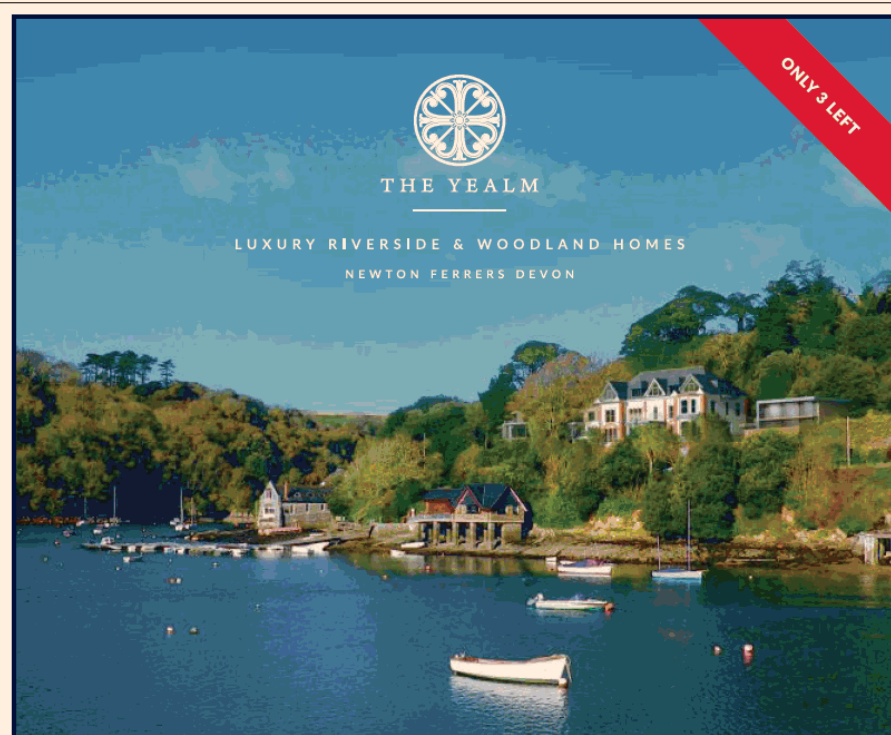
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ORIGINATION BY Dexter Premedia

It is telling that, having been at *How To Spend It* for nearly two years now, I find myself preoccupied by jewels? The rocks illuminated by the actress Phoebe Dynevor as part of Louis Vuitton's new high-jewellery range by Francesca Amfitheatrof are unimaginably spectacular ("Diamond of the Season", page 28). Look closely at the cover image and you'll see that the 10.07-carat centrepiece of the Star du Nord necklace adorning the *Bridgerton* star's neck is in the quatrefoil star cut patented by the brand. Featuring between 61 and 77 facets, the cut is described by Amfitheatrof as a "holy grail" for jewellers, firstly because it makes a case for the house's extraordinary expertise, but also because it allows clients to identify a stone's provenance at a glance.

Finding the technical skill that makes this possible has been but one aspect of Amfitheatrof's focus since joining Louis Vuitton. The other is pure showmanship. In the world of high jewellery, Louis Vuitton is still something of a rookie, and so to establish the brand's status she and Michael Burke, the CEO, are acquiring the biggest and most expensive stones. These include the baseball-sized Sewelo diamond, a 1,758-carat whopper reported to be the second-largest rough diamond ever mined. It also includes myriad other diamonds and coloured gemstones, some of which have been used here.

The house's jewellery ambitions are unvaulted. In recent interviews, Burke has readily identified jewellery as "one of the highest-growth categories we have". This latest collection, *Bravery*, made up of 90 pieces, has been designed to honour the 200th anniversary of Louis Vuitton's birth. Like the brand's founder, and all its métiers, it encapsulates Vuitton's legendarychutzpah as well as his unapologetic vision to be among the best.

In stark contrast to the capabilities of Vuitton, the designers of Beirut have this year faced an extraordinary challenge simply to stay afloat. A year after the port explosion that devastated much of the city's creative centre and ateliers, and amid financial crises, writer Gilles Khoury follows the jewellers, designers and craftspeople who have made it their mission to stay open in the city, keep their businesses operational and offer beauty in a landscape where, it could be argued, there is little to be found ("Our future is in Beirut", page 38). As we have seen in other countries, creative endeavours such as luxury or fashion are often rendered low-priority when it comes to the broader question of urgent financial aid. These designers echo a universal message when they claim that while luxury may not be a first necessity it is still an invaluable source of optimism as well as a vital part in any economic wheel.



LUXURY MAY NOT BE A NECESSITY, BUT IT IS A SOURCE OF OPTIMISM

Some may delight in material pleasures. Others derive enjoyment from pushing their bodies to the limits by cycling over mountain passes, running up sheer cliff faces and swimming in freezing streams. In "River Deep, Mountain High" (page 36), Fergus Scholes, adrenaline junkie, adventurer and – arguably – masochist, admits himself to an exhausting four-day itinerary in the Dolomites designed to shake him to the core. Courtesy of the Rosa Alpina Hotel & Spa, he embarks on a punishing schedule of Ironmanish endeavour, largely in the interests of survival, from what I can discern. Such extreme sportsmanship will always seem anathema to someone like myself who would prefer to traverse the Dolomites at something like a gentle stroll. But as an experience in how to spend it... like a maniac, this Alpine "holiday" makes for an awe-inspiring read. ■ HTSI @jellison22
For the best of *How To Spend It* straight into your inbox, sign up to our newsletter at ft.com/newsletters

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AMANDA KHO

The Hong Kong-based photographer works across lifestyle, portraiture and still life, all of which came into play when she was shooting this week's *Aesthete*, gallerist Arthur de Villepin: "What I appreciated the most was his energy. I felt this was someone who knew how to enjoy life. I sensed it in his space – family portraits, a bathroom with a carpet, a palm tree – there was a level of openness that was refreshing."



THOMAS LOHR

The photographer enjoys exploring genres from fashion to landscapes and has published four books, including *View Point* (2020) in collaboration with artist Olu Odukoya, which documents the street outside his flat in lockdown. For this week's issue he shot *Bridgerton* star Phoebe Dynevor in Louis Vuitton's new high-jewellery collection: "I really enjoyed working with Phoebe. She is sweet, funny and totally down-to-earth."



GILLES KHOURY

Living between Beirut and Paris, the writer tackles Lebanese culture and society in his column for *L'Orient-Le Jour* and is working on a new book about Beirut with photographer Oliver Hadlee Peach. For us, he looks at designers reviving the city's creative community. "It was important for me to work on the piece because I believe at a time of such collapse, the people – and the creatives – are the threads that keep the country together."

PHOTOGRAPHS: ALEXANDRE GURKINGER, MARIU ANDRE

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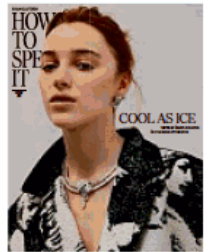
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Photography by THOMAS LOHR
Styling by ISABELLE KOUNTOURE

Phoebe Dynevor wears LOUIS VUITTON cotton/viscose coat, €4,800, and white-gold and diamond La Star du Nord necklace and earrings, both POA and from the Bravery collection

Below left: SAINT LAURENT BY ANTHONY VACCARELLO leather Jane 105 boots, £1,940, and metal, glass and resin earrings, £1,160

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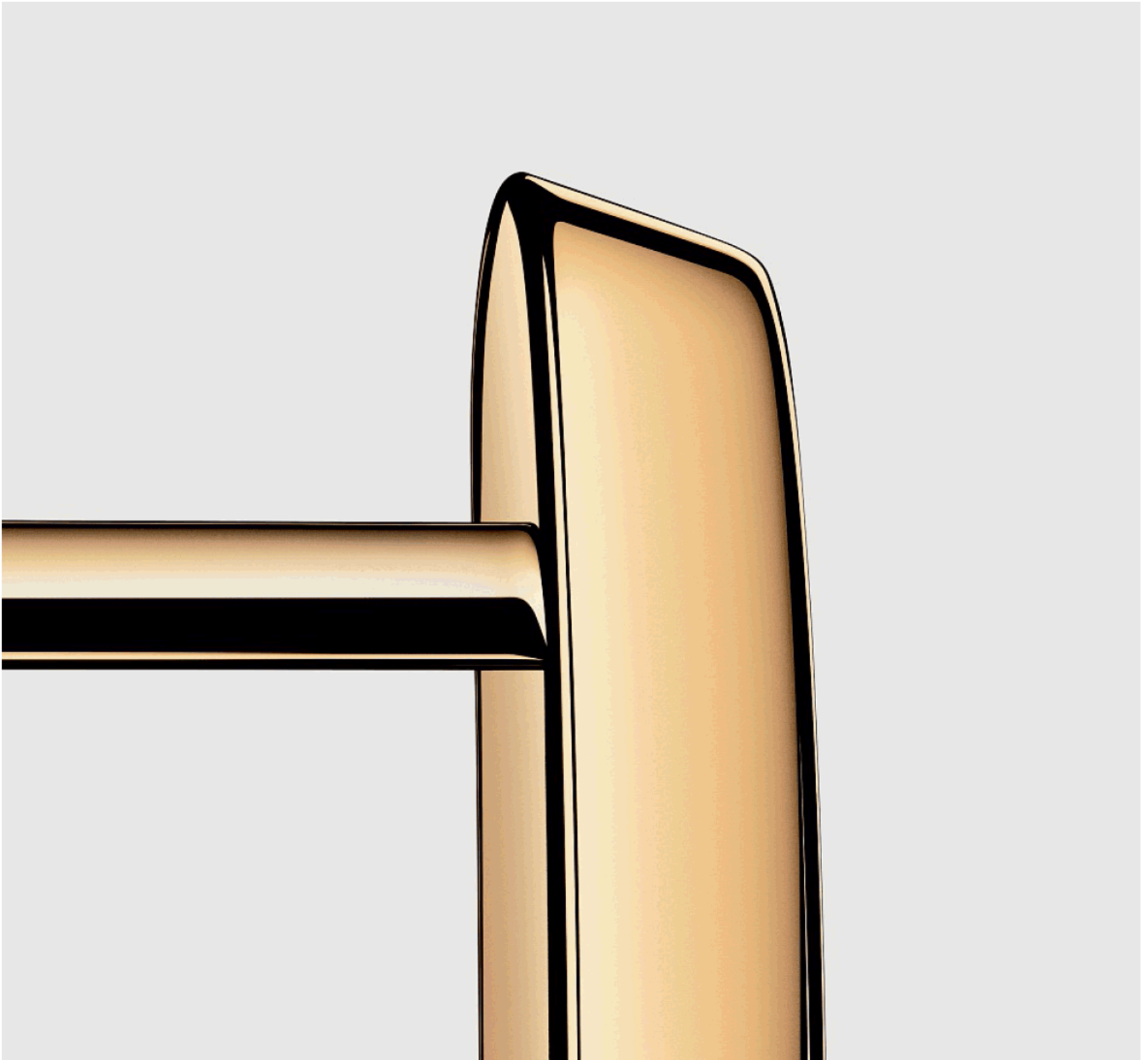
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All travel, exhibitions and events are being disrupted by the spread of coronavirus. Information published in the magazine may be susceptible to change.

PHOTOGRAPHS: ANDREW NJUNING; HEROLDIAN ART CONCEPTS; JAMES HOLLISON; KENNY WHITTLE





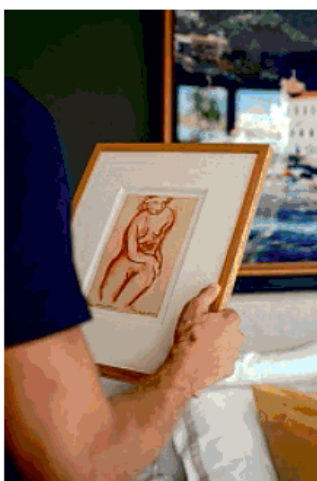
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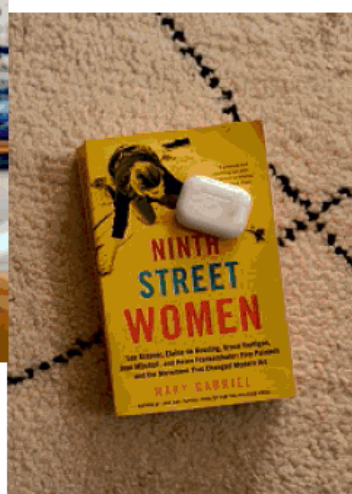
Arthur de Villepin

The Hong Kong-based gallerist and curator gifts guitars, dreams of Ischia – and goes running with Van Gogh

INTERVIEW BY ROSANNA DODDS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMANDA KHO



Above: Arthur de Villepin at home in Hong Kong. Left: *Sans Titre*, 1949, by the Chinese-French artist Zao Wou-Ki. Below: his favourite recent reads include Mary Gabriel's *Ninth Street Women*



by English artists either from Cornwall or who made their home there – Barbara Hepworth, Ben Nicholson, Terry Frost. Wallis was self-taught and his style is very simplistic. I love the way he painted the sea. We always talk about modern art emerging from Paris, but so many artists moved from London and gathered in Cornwall during the war. Their stories are amazing.

MY PERSONAL STYLE SIGNIFIER depends on where I am. My background is multicultural – I was born in the US, raised in India and studied in the UK. What I love about style is how it changes according to different cities. When I go to New York, for instance, I might wear a T-shirt and boots – maybe even a hat. I usually shop at vintage stores when I'm there; my favourites are What Goes Around Comes Around and Stock Vintage, which focuses on American menswear from the 1930s to the 1960s. In Hong Kong, I dress more smartly – I might wear a Tom Ford suit paired with Vans. For downtime, I like classic activewear pieces by Acne Studios.

THE LAST THING I BOUGHT AND LOVED was a small photo by Brassai. He is famous for capturing 1920s Paris by night and much of his work depicts lovers or people in bars, but this image is of a dog's head drawn on a napkin. The drawing was a gift from Picasso to Dora Maar, who had lost her beloved dog. Every time they went to a restaurant, Picasso would draw her dog on a napkin to cheer her up. I love that story, and I love that Brassai recorded one of these moments with this photo.

AND ON MY WISHLIST is a small painting by Alfred Wallis. I've always been fascinated

THE BEST GIFT I'VE GIVEN RECENTLY is a 1967 Fender Jaguar electric guitar to my sister, Marie. She's an artist, but before that she was in rock bands. I've always been interested in how she relates her paintings to music. She already has a few guitars but it's never enough.

AND THE BEST GIFT I'VE RECEIVED RECENTLY is a painting by Korean artist Myonghi Kang, who I've known for more than 10 years and is the subject of our latest exhibition at Villepin, the gallery I co-founded with my father, Dominique. She gave me a painting called *Sky*, which is about how she looks at nature. She always paints in the wild, secluded from everyone.

THE BEST BOOK I'VE READ IN THE PAST YEAR is *Ninth Street Women* by Mary Gabriel. It's about the New York art scene in the 1940s and '50s from the perspective of five female artists: Lee Krasner, Elaine de Kooning, Grace Hartigan, Joan Mitchell and Helen Frankenthaler. I found it so interesting to revisit history through their lens, and you realise there was a lot happening in the shadows of other successful artists from that period such as Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning.

THE PLACE I CAN'T WAIT TO GO BACK TO is Sant'Angelo on the south coast of the island of Ischia, off Naples. I usually go every summer. The food is amazing, and the few

restaurants there will always remember you when you return each year. You feel isolated from the whole world – I love it.

AND THE BEST SOUVENIR I'VE BROUGHT HOME is Harley, my dog. I got him from a shelter on Hong Kong Island. I only went there to look, but I couldn't stop thinking about him on my way back to Lantau, where I live. He's changed my life. There's no resentment with dogs – they'll always be there for you.

MY STYLE ICON is the late French fashion designer Emanuel Ungaro, who was a family friend. More than anything, I admired his attitude and the way he curated his life. Naturally, he was elegant, but it was more about how he wanted to live. And that is what I would consider style.

IN MY FRIDGE YOU'LL ALWAYS FIND lemons to have in hot water every morning, Dijon mustard and then pecorino, pancetta and tomatoes – the ingredients for my favourite dish, pasta all'amatriciana. I like my food spicy, so I'll usually have a bottle of Tabasco hanging around as well.

THE LAST MUSIC I DOWNLOADED was "Zombie" by Fela Kuti, the Nigerian Afrobeat artist. I love that he was so socially engaged – he used his music as a weapon. I want to dance every time I hear his songs.

THE GADGET I COULDN'T DO WITHOUT is a pair of Apple AirPods Pro. Hong Kong is like New York – there's noise everywhere, all day. These allow me to shut down and find silence in an instant. And, of course, I also use them to listen to music. £249, apple.com

THE LAST ITEM OF CLOTHING I ADDED TO MY WARDROBE was a warm pair of socks by John Smedley, from Mr Porter. This might sound ridiculous at this time of year, but I chose a pair that I usually wear during the winter in Paris. Travelling is really on my mind at the moment. £12.50, mrporter.com

AN OBJECT I WOULD NEVER PART WITH is a small artwork on paper by the Chinese-French artist Zao Wou-Ki, which he gave me when I was 18. I put it in *Friendship & Reconciliation*, my first exhibition in Hong Kong. A few people asked me how much it was, but I'd never sell it. Gifts from artists are things that you should cherish the most.

THE GROOMING STAPLE I'M NEVER WITHOUT is Scent One: Hinoki by Monocle and Comme des Garçons, which is inspired by hinoki soaking tubs at the Tawaraya, Kyoto's best ryokan. It's fresh, woody and full of character. £80 for 50ml, monocle.com

MY WELLBEING GURUS are my friends, who I join up with most Sundays for a big run along the catchwater in Lantau, which is surrounded by nature. Otherwise I run with my podcasts. Sometimes I come back and say, "I've just had a run with Van Gogh." It makes me feel I'm learning at the same time, and pushes me to keep a steady pace.

IF I DIDN'T LIVE IN HONG KONG, THE CITY I WOULD LIVE IN is Rome. I'm crazy for



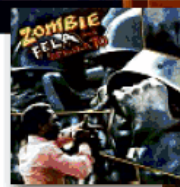
GIFTS FROM ARTISTS ARE THE THINGS YOU SHOULD CHERISH THE MOST

Rome. For me, it's all about the food. There are two main restaurants I love there: Trattoria al Moro, a family restaurant near the Trevi Fountain, and Pizzeria da Baffetto, which I think serves the best pizza in the city.

MY FAVOURITE WEBSITES are mostly related to my work. I use Artprice to check on the market, ARTnews for updates and, of course, Christie's and Sotheby's. I also love a site called history.com for fascinating takes on the subject, such as a recent piece about Josephine Baker, the Jazz Age entertainer employed by the French Resistance to collect information on Nazi Germany.

AN INDULGENCE I WOULD NEVER FORGO is wine. The thing I like most is the people behind the labels. When I first arrived in Hong Kong, I started a wine company called Pont des Arts with a friend of mine. Sometimes the winemakers I work with run châteaux that are worth a fortune, but they're so down-to-earth because they're dependent on the wine, which is dependent on nature. My current favourites are Pomerol 2016 from Château La Conseillante and Abbaye de Morgeot 2014, which was made in collaboration with Etienne de Montille in Chassagne-Montrachet. pontdesarts-wine.com

IF I WEREN'T DOING WHAT I DO, I'd be a diplomat, which is what my father started off doing. I studied international relations and politics at the University of Bath, and I love the idea of understanding different cultures and bringing people together. ■ HTSI



Above: the last track he downloaded. Left: his grooming staple, Scent One: Hinoki by Monocle and Comme des Garçons Right: de Villepin at home. Below: his John Smedley socks from Mr Porter. Below left: wines by Pont des Arts, which de Villepin co-founded



TABASCO – ONE OF HIS FRIDGE STAPLES



Top left: de Villepin on the terrace of his Lantau home. Above: with another work of art by Zao Wou-Ki. Left: the gadget he can't do without – Apple AirPods Pro



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Images courtesy of London Art Week exhibitors Galerie Canesso (left) and Kállos Gallery (right)

THE FIX



PHOTOGRAPHS: HEROLDIAN ART CONCEPTS. ILLUSTRATION: WILLIAM LUZ

INTERIORS

ME, MY SHELF AND I

Are you a decorative peacock? *Aimee Farrell* looks at how social media has captured an obsession with the stylish home

Above: a "still life" corner curated by Katharina Herold, art consultant and stylist

PENKRIDGE CERAMICS SHELL AND NUT, £280, AT PENTREATH & HALL



For so long, fashion has been the main way we communicate taste," says Austin Moro, product designer and co-founder (with Eliza Dabron) of the fragrance brand Moro Dabron. "But now that everyone has been spending so much more time at home, the conversation has shifted. It has become more about conveying your personality through your interior aesthetic." At its most intimate, this domestic self-expression is being played out on a small scale on shelves, tables and mantelpieces through decorative accessories and ornaments that are as thoughtfully arranged as any gallery space.

While these personal tableaux of figurines and found objects might once have been seen only by house guests, they're now shared for a mass audience with an appetite for interior inspiration. Well-executed compositions are saved, studied and emulated to the extent that, arguably, these miniature *mise-en-scènes* have evolved into their own art form – a kind of social media still-life. "Everyone is putting so much more thought into creating curated corners in their homes," agrees Eliza Dabron. "There was a time when people would just take a quick, natural snap of a shelf at home, but now everything is so considered."



Above: Egyptian objects in the London apartment of antiques dealer Robert Kime. Below: shelves arranged by the designer Bridie Hall



The duo apply the same approach to visualising their products using @moro_dabron as their moodboard. Here, their candles, which come in unglazed boat-necked ceramic vessels – referencing the late and legendary florist Constance Spry’s highly collectable designs for the Fulham Pottery – are thoughtfully presented alongside 18th-century tapestries and antique vases. Everything is executed with the spare, pure spirit of the still-life artist. “We try to capture this static moment of perfection,” says Moro of the imagery, which draws on Vermeer and the British painter William Nicholson. “It motivates people to want to recreate it in their own homes.” Their Spry-style potteries have ignited a flurry of posts from florists and decorators doing just that – particularly as the original vessels now sell for thousands of pounds at auction.

Over the past year, demand for diminutive decor and home accessories has increased, notably giving rise to a new breed of Insta-seller catering to a penchant for vintage and antique objects. “Instead of spending money on going out to supper, people have been buying jugs,” says Charlie Porter of Tat London (@Tat.london), where, she says, there has been a surge in purchases of small, fun but otherwise impractical knick-knacks. “Getting that piece of oddity for your home is a real tick,” she adds. “There’s this cultural oneupmanship when it comes to what you’re buying and what pieces you’ve found.”

The designer Bridie Hall sees this proliferation of decorative peacocking as

“I TRY TO THINK ABOUT MY HOME AS A SERIES OF STILL LIVES”

an attempt to reclaim dominion over our lives in a somewhat chaotic world. “It’s about taking control of your environment,” she says. “People are finally getting around to buying the piece they’ve wanted for ages but couldn’t justify. It gives you that shot of energy.” Together with the architectural designer and interior decorator Ben Pentreath, Hall is the co-owner of the beloved Bloomsbury store Pentreath & Hall, a cornucopia of decorative eye candy. “Sales have been absolutely mad,” says Hall, noting that more unusual objects and curios such as the vivid renderings of fruits, vegetables and conkers from Penkridge Ceramics, and quirky



Above: a window at Christie’s styled by Katharina Herold. Right: objects on a mantelpiece at François Halard’s Arles home

Staffordshire dogs, once ignored, are now swiftly selling out. “There’s been a very noticeable shift towards whimsy,” she says. The impulse to share these finds with followers appears irresistible, but despite the new technology it is not a novel concept. “Artists have always surrounded themselves with objects that creatively spur them on. Think of all the Dutch still-life painters and the way that has filtered down through the years to places such as Charleston or Kettle’s Yard,” says Hall. “Those midcentury artists lived beautifully while they worked, and then captured it



TAT LONDON 19TH-CENTURY GLAZED JUG, £77

PHOTOGRAPHS: BRETT WOOD FOR CABANA MAGAZINE 2019; JOHANNA MACLENNAN; KATY BEVIDGE; OLLIE TOPHINSON (2); ILLUSTRATIONS: WILLIAM LUZ

through paintings or photographs. Even the Grand Tour entailed aristocrats lugging stuff back from around the world to display in their homes as a way of showing off their knowledge, experience and aesthetic sensibilities.”

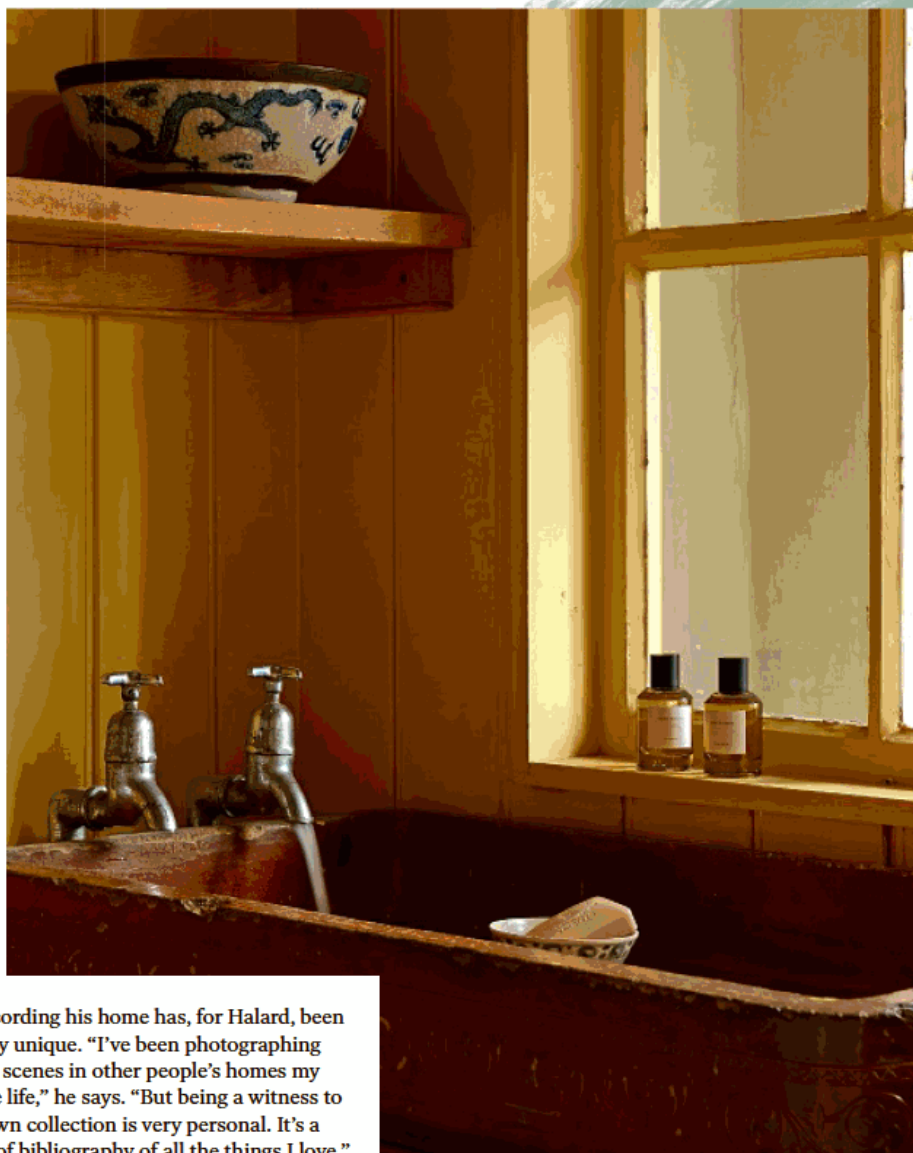
Swanking aside, Hall finds the act of creating the perfect vignette as creatively satisfying as making the obelisks, intaglio cases and alphabet pots for which she is known. “I love the way you can control how the eye moves around the room,” she says of the visual journey evoked in the store – and her own nearby home – by shifting around her collections of Victorian shells or replica Pantheon plaster reliefs. “Everything is chosen with the same eye, which creates a natural cohesion. You just play around until you find a pleasing little arrangement. For me, it’s a form of escapism that deeply connects you to the past.”

THIS SENSE OF HISTORY is key to creating an assemblage. Take the Arles home of the renowned interiors photographer François Halard. Testament to a life well spent, Halard’s mantelpiece displays everything from Japanese vases and classical sculpture to Cy Twombly artworks. This ever-evolving array of objects is informed by 40 years spent training his visual eye while photographing the homes of everyone from Yves Saint Laurent to Antony Gormley. It was only last year, during lockdown, that he turned his camera on his own interior, sharing vignettes from his 18th-century *hôtel particulier* on social media. These posts were an addictive daily dose of design that evolved into an exhibition of Polaroids that went on show at Avignon’s Lambert museum and formed a Libraryman book entitled *56 Days In Arles*. Each is masterfully composed, and there’s a synchronicity between Halard’s Polaroids and his original Insta posts. “My favourite format has always been the square,” he says. “It creates a more abstract moment – both share the same instantaneousness.”

There’s much to be gleaned from Halard when it comes to the art of display. “When I look at the house I try to think about it as a series of still lifes,” he says. “So that everywhere you look, you find these moments of interest, not just for the pictures, but for my own eye.” The process



FRANCES PALMER CELADON VASE, £415, AT PENTREATH & HALL



of recording his home has, for Halard, been utterly unique. “I’ve been photographing these scenes in other people’s homes my entire life,” he says. “But being a witness to my own collection is very personal. It’s a kind of bibliography of all the things I love.”

It’s a sentiment that’s also shared by the interior decorator and antiques dealer Robert Kime. “Someone could write a

“SOMEONE COULD WRITE A HISTORY OF ME THROUGH OBJECTS”

history of me through objects,” says the lifelong collector, who began dealing at a young age. The art of arranging his unique finds, for Kime, is utterly instinctive. “If I put something very expensive next to something modest it helps both of them,” he says. “Everything has its own identity that you don’t get to uncover until you put it with something else.” More than a question of taste, it’s about revealing what an object symbolises that matters most to him. This is evident in his London apartment, which Kime put together in just three days – although it immediately looked as though it had been there 20 years – and hasn’t touched since. “Once something has a place, it has a place,” he says.

The art consultant and stylist Katharina Herold takes a much more transitory approach with the assemblages she conjures in her historic Hamburg apartment. Shared with her followers under the moniker *@Heroldian_Journal*, they’re a way to communicate with a clientele who charge her with filling their homes with nuanced art and antique finds. “Creating these vignettes has become a real tool in my work. It’s a way for clients to imagine these things in their own spaces,” says Herold, who also works alongside her father, Rainer

MAISON BALZAC LOULOU GLASS VASE, £75, AT PENTREATH & HALL



Herold, a specialist in northern German art at Galerie Herold in Hamburg.

“Unconsciously, the idea of still life is always in my head,” she says. “When I create these scenes it’s like painting with objects.” Herold’s arrangements can include anything from a midcentury rattan lamp to an ancient Greek vessel, a 19th-century framed coral fan or an art nouveau glass box – all in a single frame. So for those looking to try their hand, what’s the secret? “There has to be a story behind every object,” concludes Herold. “Each of the objects feeds off, and speaks to, one another. I might select something for its appearance, but ultimately it’s the story and history that brings meaning to your home.” Let the *Wunderkammer* commence. ■HTSI

Top: an image showcasing the deliberately spare visual language of the scent brand Maro Dabron. Above: MORO DABRON ceramic Of Gardens scented candle, £135, at selfridges.com



THE FIX

BEA BONGIASCA GOLD, SILVER AND ENAMEL EARRINGS, £295



JEWELLERY

CANDY CRUSH

This enamel and lacquer jewellery looks good enough to eat, says *Kate Finnigan*

Sweet candy colours and pastel hues, bolts of blue, stripes of neon, red hearts, pretty florals and cute fruits... Jewellery has taken on a colourful feel of late.

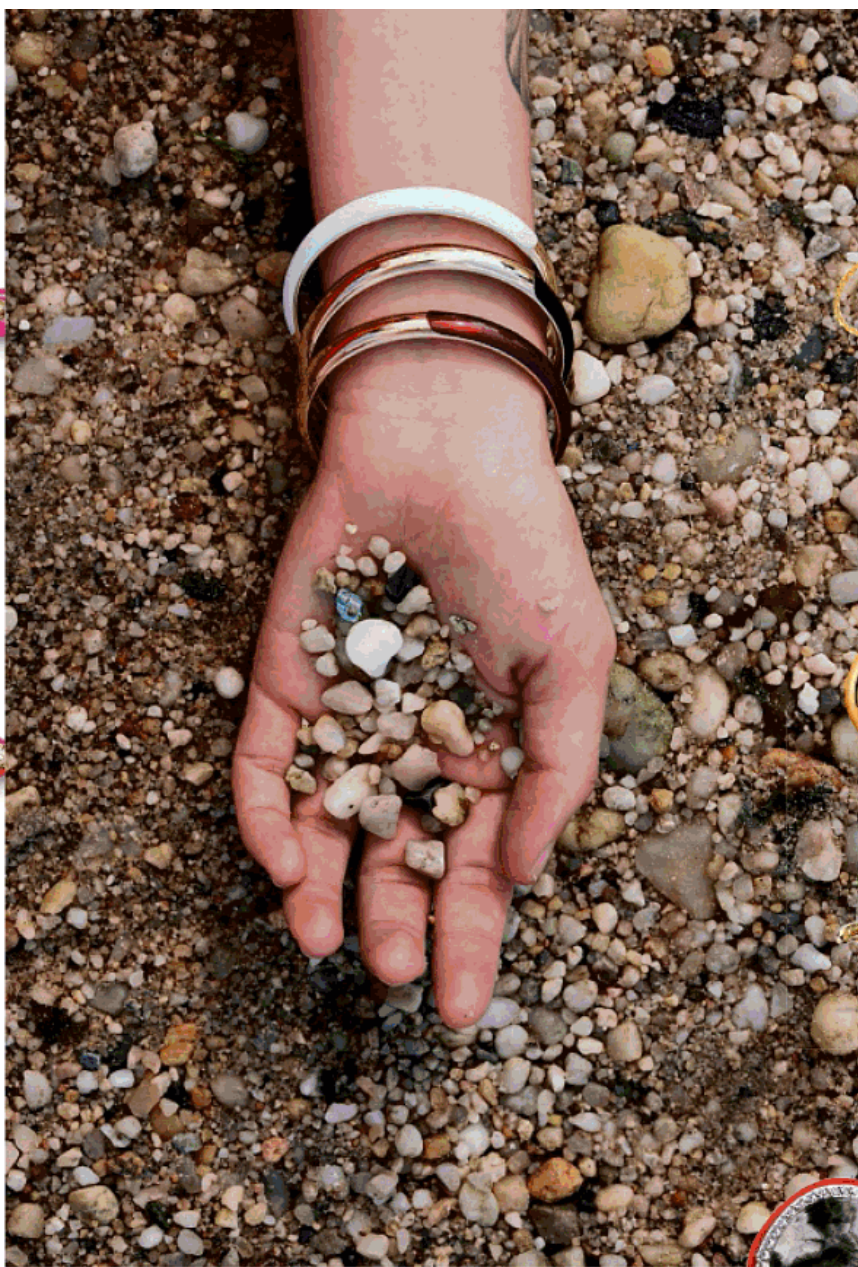
To celebrate 10 years of Repossi's Berbere collection – the minimalist rings that creative director Gaia Repossi calls an “everlasting signature” – the Italian jewellery house is launching a new range of bands called Berbere Chromatic Cities. Each uses different coloured enamel to represent each place: the London ring is painted with bright double-decker-bus-red lacquer, while the Tokyo style features a cool matcha-green alongside a band of pavé diamonds.

One of the world's foremost enamel jewellers is British designer Alice Cicolini, known for her modern take on the craft of minakari, which dates back to 1500BC. This month sees the launch of her Jacobean collection, inspired by the geometric ceiling patterns of the Red Fort in Lahore and Hampton Court Palace, which uses rose petal-pink enamel alongside pavé diamonds.

Cicolini has a long established partnership with the studio of Kamal Kumar Meenakar, the Indian master craftsman, and also works with a British master jeweller in Hatton Garden. Her 2012 Memphis collection, with its joyful graphic stripes, was something of a landmark in modern enamel jewellery. Her latest collection is much more intricate: “I like pushing the boundaries of the technology we use,” she says. “The Indian body of work we make is completely handmade, but the Memphis pieces are created in 3D CAD.



REPOSSI PINK-GOLD, DIAMOND AND LACQUER BERBERE CHROMATIC TOKYO RING, ¥438,900 (ABOUT £2,844)



Right: GABRIELA HEARST rose-gold and vitreous enamel bangles, POA. Left: MELISSA KAYE pink-gold, enamel and diamond Ada bracelet, £8,750, at net-a-porter.com

The 3D printing tech – where you print waxes that are then cast into gold – has significantly changed. What you see in these pieces, small decorative flowers and small patterns, would have been impossible even a year and a half ago.”

So much fun can be had with enamel. Jaipur-based Amrapali's Holi collection uses traditional techniques to create striking flower petals for rings and earrings, while in New York, Nina Rundsorf's signature sliced stones are surrounded with slicks of fire-engine red or mustard. Rundsorf calls it “adding a fresh coat of paint” to the jewels. In Paris, Charlotte Chesnais's stackable rings and wavy hoops bring pared-back sophistication to the genre, while in Milan Bea Bongiasca's mismatched flower earrings are like beautiful felt-tip doodles come to life. Gabriela Hearst uses glass enamel for its sleek bangles, as does British brand Ferian, with a collection of rings in colours chosen for their emotional significance – coral red for courage, faith and love, and pool blue for tranquillity and truth.

For many of the larger houses, the use of enamel or lacquer – which are low-cost materials in the grand scheme of jewellery making – is often contrasted with higher-value stones. Victoire de Castellane, the creative director of Dior's fine jewellery department, is

a master of this mix: see the brand's playful Milly Carnivora ring, launched in 2008, which uses green, pink and blue lacquer to create the petals of a flower, in which a two-carat diamond is the centrepiece; similarly in the large Diorette ring an aquamarine is encircled by a hand-lacquered garland of blooms, butterflies and ladybirds.

“IT ADDS PERSONALITY AND EVOKES A SENSE OF HAPPINESS”

This idea is taken to the extreme at Boodles, where delicate strips of enamel accent some of the rings in the brand's latest high-jewellery collection, and at Bulgari, where enamel has long been used as detailing in the house's Serpenti pieces.

Browns Fashion has gone big on enamel jewellery recently, stocking the bright and textured pieces of Yvonne Léon, Alison Lou's tiny enamel rainbow studs and Marla Aaron's signature customisable locks, which have been updated with neon stripes this season. For the store's womenswear buying manager, Hollie Harding, it's the juxtaposition of enamel or lacquer with precious metal that hits the spot. “The contrast between the opposing materials is so interesting and unconventional. It adds so much personality and statement to jewellery, along with evoking a sense of happiness,” she says. “Customers are loving the bright colours. They provide a small flash of positivity.” ■ HTSI

JESSICA MCCORMACK X HAAS BROTHERS ENAMEL SNAKE WRAP RING, POA



AMRAPALI GOLD AND ENAMEL HOLI COLOUR BRACELET, £585



Second from top: CHARLOTTE CHESNAIS vermeil and enamel Inner Naho Colours earrings, £335. Above: BULGARI gold, sapphire and enamel bracelet-watch, c1965. Left: NINA RUNSDORF enamel and diamond Grey Slice ring, \$6,500

ALISON LOU GOLD AND ENAMEL SINGLE RAINBOW EARRING, £225



Below: DIOR JOAILLERIE diamond, aquamarine, amethyst, sapphire, garnet and lacquer Diorette ring, £15,200



Above: YVONNE LEON gold, diamond and enamel hoop earrings, £1,285. Right: MARIA AARON gold and enamel Medium Lock charm, £850

THE FIND

SMART INVESTMENT

This watering can is best in glass

EDITED BY CLARA BALDOCK
PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAM GOODISON



&KLEVERING 1l glass watering cans in green or yellow, £42, spicerandwood.co.uk

THE FIX

STYLE

POLITICAL, TO A TEE

The “body billboard” tells the story of our times, says *Kin Woo*



CHOOSE EARTH X EARTHRISE, £25

STERLING RUBY DEATH ANGEL, \$3,500

The protest, political or statement T-shirt is experiencing a renewed and shifting moment of popularity. Over the past year T-shirts have been used to signpost everything, from political allegiances to supporting favourite restaurants struggling to survive, and as a way of raising funds. One abiding image from the awards ceremonies last season was of the actresses Regina King and Uzo Aduba receiving their respective Emmys wearing T-shirts emblazoned with the face of Breonna Taylor. Supreme's T-shirt with Takashi Murakami raised more than \$1m for Covid-19 relief efforts, while US brand Fear of God raised \$100,000 from the proceeds of its “GF” shirt – made in tribute to George Floyd – for his youngest daughter, Gianna.

But these T-shirts are also a crucial means of self-expression at a significant time. “T-shirts have become part of our identities,” says Kim Hastreiter, co-founder of *Paper* magazine and new community art project The New Now, who has an archive of over 400 T-shirts that she's been collecting for more than 30 years. “It's an analogue, tangible way for people to communicate who they are.” She also adds: “A good message T-shirt is like a historical marker that can tell the stories of the times they were created.”

Hastreiter's interest in the power of T-shirts stems from memories of her mother wearing her “Impeach Nixon” T-shirt in the early '70s. It was then that the graphic T-shirt – with messages extolling Black Power and the anti-Vietnam war movement – became a form of expression so effective that *The New York Times* dubbed the T-shirt “the medium for a message”.

The turbulent year we've just lived through often feels like a flashback to 1968, a year marked by high-profile murders (of Martin Luther King Jr and Robert Kennedy), racial tensions and protests, a fiercely fought US presidential election and even a flu pandemic. As the Black Lives Matter protests grew to become the biggest grassroots demonstration of civil unrest in a generation,

Right: NO MORE PLASTIC, DAS MOT and SAMAR SERAGUI DE BUTTAFOCO T-shirt, €65. Far right: Lewis Hamilton wears a T-shirt in tribute to Breonna Taylor



so protest T-shirts gained new currency as activists took to the streets, amplifying their message through the slogans on their chests. This year has seen T-shirts supporting other causes, from “Stop Asian Hate” to “Choose Earth” (£25, with all profits going to indigenous leaders across Brazil).

Dennis Nothdruff, co-curator of the exhibition *T-Shirt: Cult – Culture – Subversion* at the Fashion and Textile

Museum in 2018 says all T-shirts have their place, even when they might be controversial. He points to Maria Grazia Chiuri's 2016 debut at Dior, which featured a slogan T-shirt reading “We Should All Be

“WE FEEL VOICELESS... AND PROTEST T-SHIRTS GIVE YOU A VOICE”

Feminists”, a reference to Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's TED talk. “I can see where people think it's a marketing exercise but she got people really talking about it and it elevated the discussion around feminism,” he says. While a T-shirt may be the most basic garment, “it can also be the most powerful body billboard or way to verbalise one's beliefs and politics”. With Grazia Chiuri, “it set out her stall as the new designer at Dior and her feminist beliefs”.

FEW DESIGNERS HAVE been able to stoke controversy through the medium of T-shirts as mischievously as Katharine Hamnett. Over the years, the designer has promoted messages like “Choose Life”, “Worldwide Nuclear Ban Now” and “Cancel Brexit”, and recently partnered with sustainable fashion designer Patrick McDowell to make a capsule collection of jackets and T-shirts (from £110) printed with the word “HELP” designed to highlight the negative effects of Brexit on the fashion industry. “We feel voiceless under the present government and protest T-shirts give you a voice,” she says. “The tragedy is that they are even more relevant now than they were when I started making them, 39 years ago.”

For Hamnett, grabbing attention with a T-shirt is only the first step. “We haven't done our bit until we've effected change,” she says. “We need to write to our MPs. We must follow it up with action otherwise it's a waste of time.”

Recently, artists have also taken up the baton, creating politicised T-shirts as collectable artworks. Sterling Ruby's one-off handcrafted pieces are considered part of his catalogue raisonné: his Death Angel T-shirts (\$3,500) are juxtaposed with the covers of some of his favourite books, including Hannah Arendt's *On Violence*, Audre Lorde's *The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle The Master's House* and James Baldwin's *Dark Days*. These works are equal parts “exercises in appropriation, hybrids of politicised language and highly designed fonts”, he says. “These are all things that I wore when I was younger. It's a reminder of where I came from, my earliest group of friends and how it shaped my working process as an artist today. I made these pieces during a politically dark, yet also hopeful time.”

Of course, there's also the option to make a statement T-shirt all of one's own. JJ Hudson (better known by his nom de plume, Dr Noki) has been chopping, slashing and collaging “brand subversions” (such as reworking the GAP logo to say “Gay” or hybridising Adidas tracksuits with heavy-metal T-shirts) ever since he was a student at Edinburgh College of Art. Now his influence can be seen in a new generation of designers such as Max Allen, Claire Barrow and Matty Bovan (with whom he's collaborating on a capsule collection later this year) who share his passion for sustainability, recycling and make-do-and-mend. But a punk DIY ethos remains his overriding principle. He implores: “You can custom-build new ideas – things those brands can't give you. Don't buy me – copy me! Turn your bedroom into your own atelier.”

I still have my first (and only) attempt at customisation – a screenprint of the singer Aaliyah I did after her death. Ultimately, “the T-shirt is about communication”, agrees Nothdruff. “It's a really basic way of telling the world who and what you are.” T-shirts tell the story of who we are, what we care about and what needs to change – now more so than ever. ■HTSI



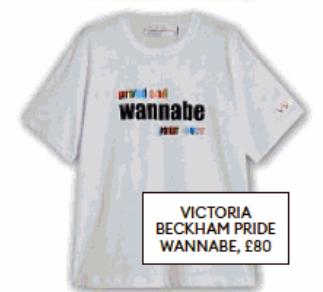
VERSACE X LADY GAGA, \$250, BENEFITTING MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR LGBTQIA+ YOUTH



SUPREME X TAKASHI MURAKAMI, \$60

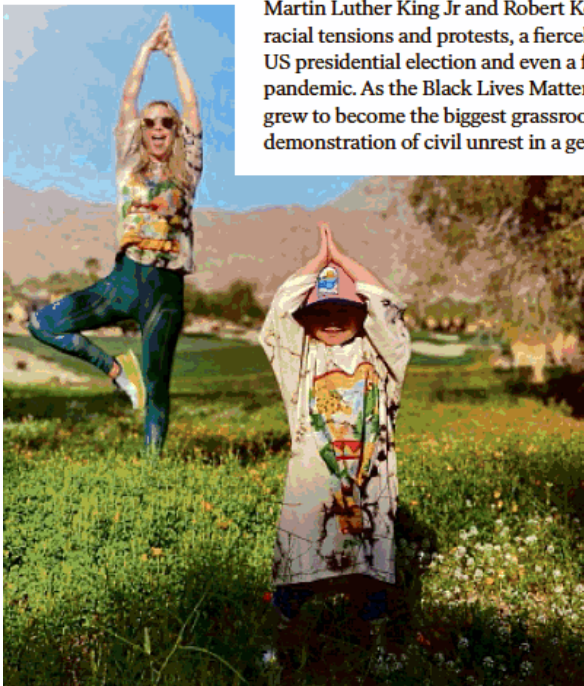


KATHARINE HAMNETT X PATRICK MCDOWELL, FROM £110



VICTORIA BECKHAM PRIDE WANNABE, £80

Below: Kate Hudson and daughter Rani Rose wear STELLA McCARTNEY x GREENPEACE Rainforest T-shirt, £325. Bottom right: demonstrators at a “Stop Asian Hate” rally in March



ILLUSTRATIONS: WILLIAM LUZ; PHOTOGRAPHS: DAN ISTITENE - FORMULA 1 VIA GETTY IMAGES; ROBERT WEDEMEYER; @STELLA McCARTNEY



Y/PROJECT
ruched
leather tote
bag, £411,
farfetch.com



JUNYA
WATANABE
Man
tapered-
leg crop
jeans, £438,
farfetch.com



LAURA MERONI Drapé ottoman
by Bartoli Design, £5,120,
artemest.com



MICHAEL KORS
COLLECTION
cashmere ribbed
sweater, £525,
net-a-porter.com



TIFFANY & CO
Elsa Peretti
18ct-gold mesh
scarf necklace,
£25,800



VIVIENNE
WESTWOOD
wool jacket,
£800, matches
fashion.com



JIMMY CHOO leather
Ocean draped-
detail sandals, £675,
farfetch.com



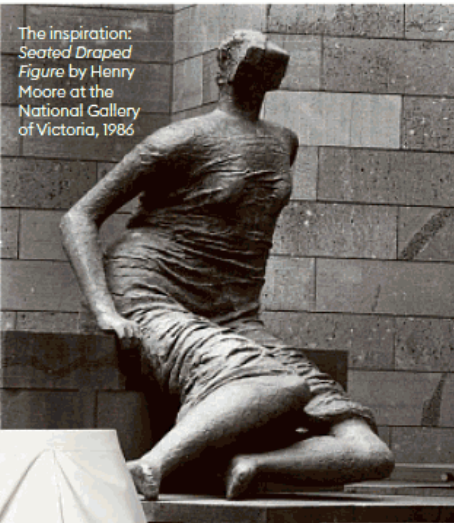
A BY ARTURO
ALVAREZ
stainless-steel
Tempo
Vivace ceiling
light, £490,
amara.com



SOPHIE
BILLE
BRAHE
gold and
diamond
Sandro
Nuit single
earring,
£12,075



PACO RABANNE
mesh skirt, £2,320



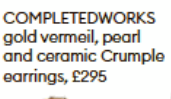
The inspiration:
*Seated Draped
Figure* by Henry
Moore at the
National Gallery
of Victoria, 1986

SHOPPING
**INTO THE
FOLD**

Go with the flow in these draped
pieces. By *Aylin Bayhan*



GIORGIO
ARMANI
pre-owned
asymmetric
silk dress, £861,
farfetch.com



COMPLETEDWORKS
gold vermeil, pearl
and ceramic Crumple
earrings, £295



TASAKI
WATERFALL
white-gold,
South Sea
pearl and
diamond
ring, POA



BRANDON
MAXWELL
layered crepe
trousers, £723,
net-a-porter.com



VENINI
FAZZOLETTO
glass Opalino
vase, £306, store.
wallpaper.com



ACANTHUS STUDIO
ROMA steel, concrete
and leather Titano
lamp, £5,610,
artemest.com



GALLERIA
ROMANELLI
bronze
Fortunata
sculpture,
£8,420,
artemest.com



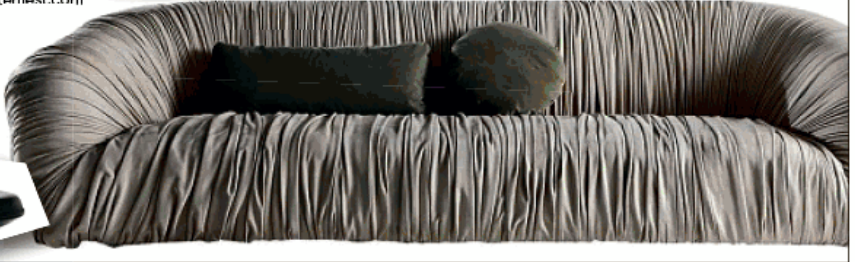
GIANFRANCO FERRE
pre-owned 1990s
pinstripe swimsuit,
£362, farfetch.com



FENDI draped
metallic knitted
minidress, £1,390,
net-a-porter.com



BALENCIAGA
leather Drapy
mules, £595,
farfetch.com



LAURA MERONI
Drapé leather sofa,
£23,280, 1stdibs.com

PHOTOGRAPH: PETER RAE/FARFAX MEDIA VIA GETTY IMAGES



BENNETT WINCH

HANDMADE IN ENGLAND

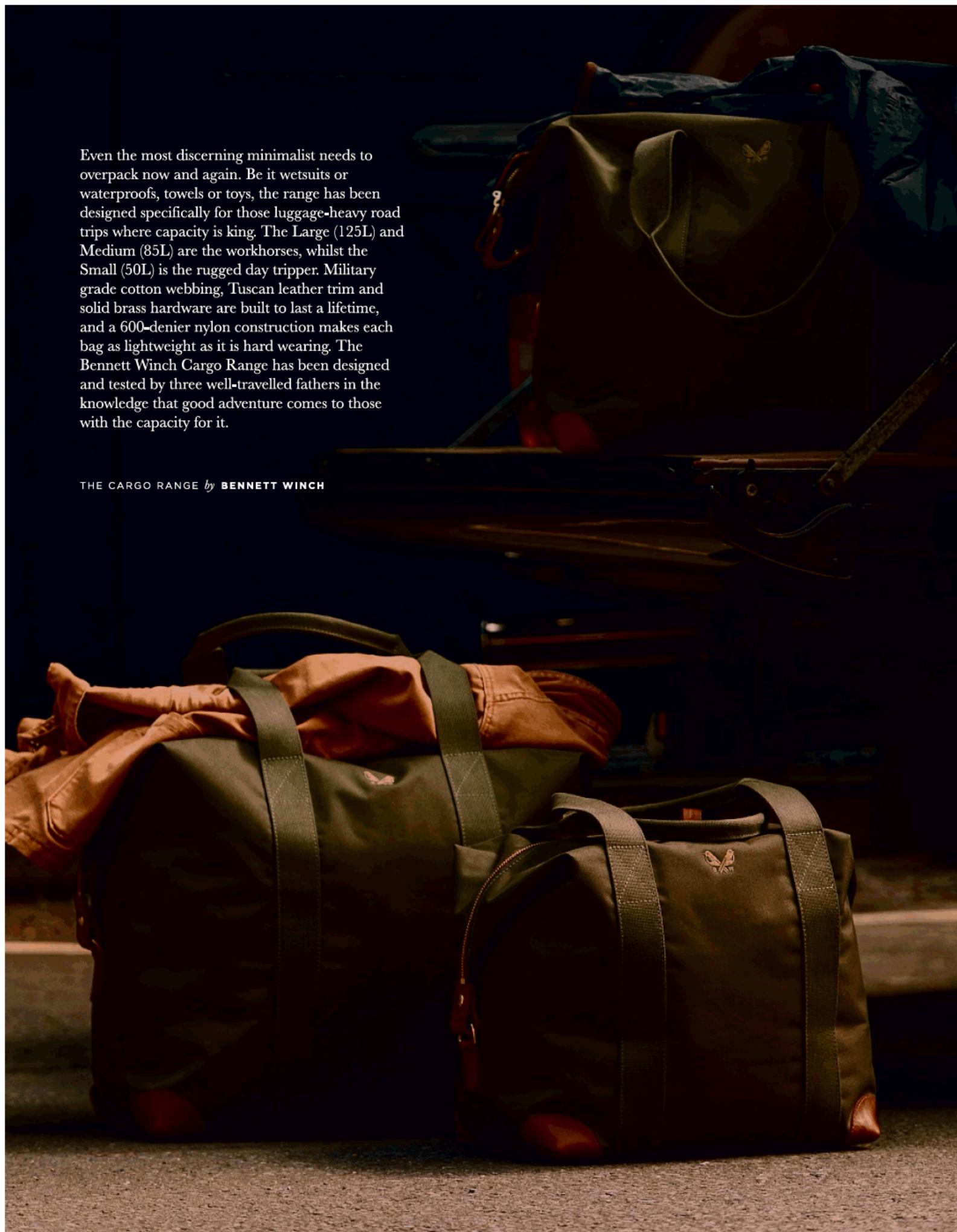
WWW.BENNETTWINCH.COM

The capacity for adventure

Since starting the brand in 2014, all three founders have become fathers. In doing so we found ourselves faced with a new design challenge; the art of transporting an expanded flock and its associated cargo. Introducing the Bennett Winch Cargo Range.

Even the most discerning minimalist needs to overpack now and again. Be it wetsuits or waterproofs, towels or toys, the range has been designed specifically for those luggage-heavy road trips where capacity is king. The Large (125L) and Medium (85L) are the workhorses, whilst the Small (50L) is the rugged day tripper. Military grade cotton webbing, Tuscan leather trim and solid brass hardware are built to last a lifetime, and a 600-denier nylon construction makes each bag as lightweight as it is hard wearing. The Bennett Winch Cargo Range has been designed and tested by three well-travelled fathers in the knowledge that good adventure comes to those with the capacity for it.

THE CARGO RANGE *by* BENNETT WINCH



“Let’s make gin SEXY”

The fashion photographer Mert Alas’s new passion project is designed to “ignite” you. Alice Lascelles has the first taste

It’s a hot Monday morning in June and Mert Alas, the Turkish half of fashion photography’s most dynamic duo Mert & Marcus, is feeling a little fragile. “I’m sorry,” he apologises, leading me through to the drawing room of his Hampstead home, “but a dear friend of mine was in town last night and we stayed up late drinking shots!”

That friend, it transpires, was Madonna. But the fact that the Queen of Pop was sitting on his velvet sofa less than 12 hours ago is not what Alas is excited about – his besties are all weapons-grade A-listers. It’s the fact that she was drinking his new creation, Seventy One Gin. “She normally only drinks Dom Perignon Rosé,” he says, wide-eyed, “so to see her drinking my gin was just incredible.”

Alas is no stranger to high-octane glamour. Over the past 30 years, his ultra-polished, almost hyper-real portraits of actresses, models and musicians have graced countless style magazine covers and fashion campaigns: there’s Kiera Knightley smoking a cigarette; Natalia Vodianova adrift in a room flooded with water; and Kate Moss in bondage gear.

That spirit of decadence, of hedonistic playfulness, is at the heart of his gin too. “Nighttime has always been a really important time for me. I love dressing up, enjoying a drink in a beautiful glass and talking to creative,

interesting people,” he says. “And yet I feel like we’ve come to an era when nightlife is almost viewed as a sin – we don’t talk about it. With this gin, I wanted to make the evenings desirable again.”

It would be easy to dismiss Seventy One Gin as just another off-the-peg celebrity drinks brand, but Alas is at pains to stress his involvement in its creation from beginning to end. “When I decide to do something I commit, I submit. I don’t know any other way.”

Conceived by Alas, with spirits supremo Stephen Wilson – the brains behind Johnnie Walker Blue Label, Tanqueray Ten and Ciroc vodka – on the team, and

“WITH THIS GIN I WANTED TO MAKE THE EVENINGS DESIRABLE AGAIN”

blessed by rockstar perfumer Dominique Ropion, Seventy One Gin looks and sounds a lot like a perfume. And that’s because in many ways it is. Blended, like a scent, from individually distilled botanicals including Queen of the Night – a rare cactus flower that blossoms in the North American desert for just one

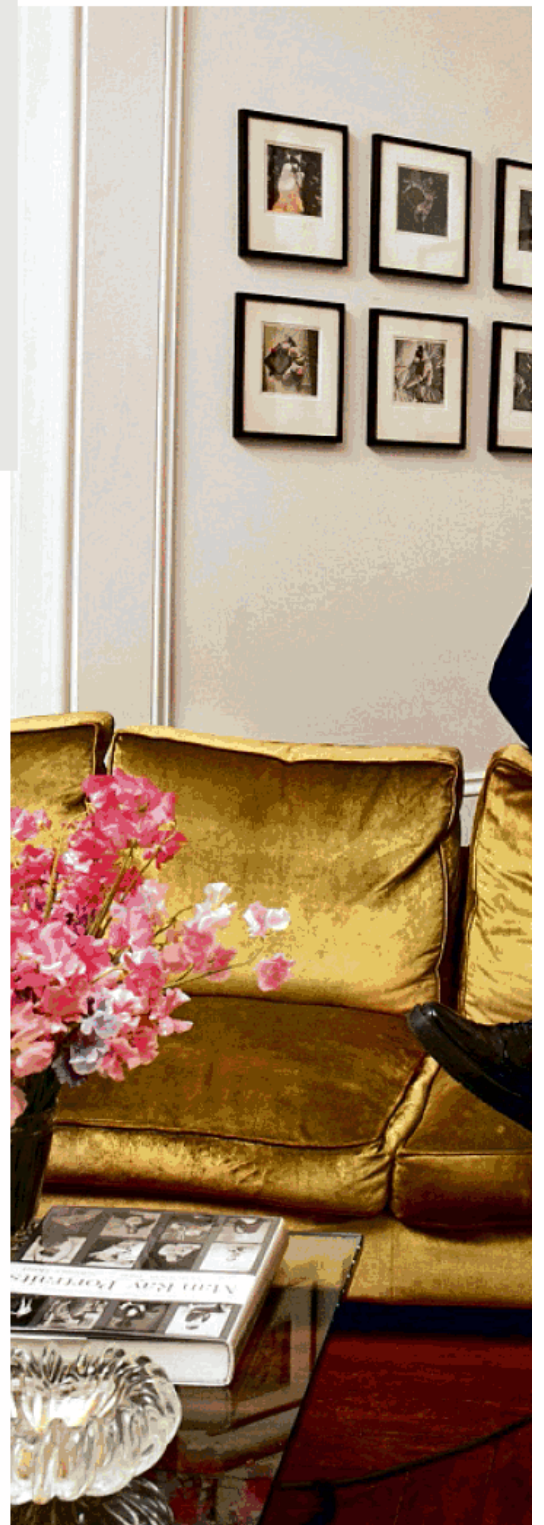
night a year – aged for 71 nights in three types of oak cask, and sealed in a bottle that wouldn’t look out of place on Coco Chanel’s dressing table, this £140 amber gin is the liquid equivalent of haute couture.

“I first became interested in gin in my 30s,” says Alas, now 50. “I tried so many of them and over time I became a real critic. I’d be like, ‘Ahh, too much cardamom in this one’, or ‘They should dial up the juniper on that.’” He started visiting distilleries to find out how gin was made. “I saw them putting all the different botanicals into the still in one go, and I thought, ‘Why do they do it like that? Why can’t a gin be constructed botanical by botanical?’”

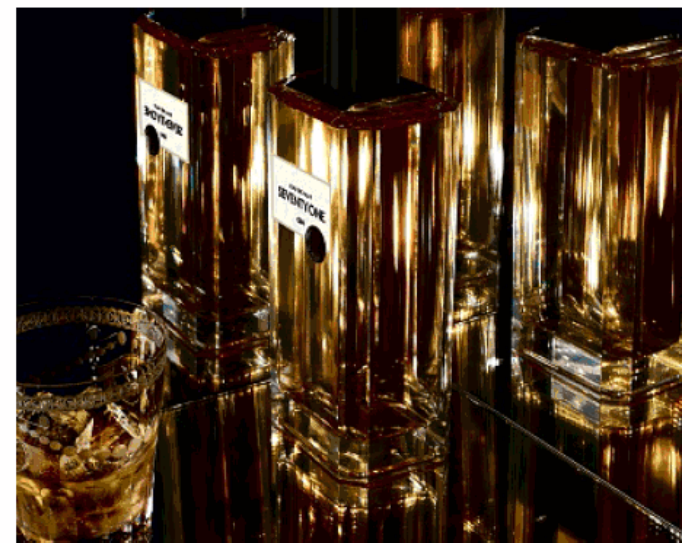
Alas has always preferred his gin neat or on the rocks, rather than with a mixer. And he began to wonder if there was a way to create a blend with a richer, rounder profile that was more suited to sipping. “When I was growing up in Ankara my family would often take roasted hazelnuts from the winter, put them in a barrel and fill it with gin and sugar and it would become more of a liqueur,” he recalls. “And that sweeter taste and darker colour has always been linked with gin in my mind. In a way I guess I was chasing a sort of idea from my childhood.”

He began to flesh out a concept for a gin. Then, three years ago, he and his business head Tasso Ferreira met the straight-talking master distiller Stephen Wilson – and the dream started to become a reality. “Up to that point, every distiller I spoke to had treated the idea as ‘just another project’, but Steve was really excited,” Alas says. “I said to him, ‘I’ll only do this if I can do it properly, which means being part of everything, learning about it, understanding it.’ And he totally got that. He had so many ideas and gave us so much guidance. And all the way he kept pushing – but he was pushy in a good way!”

As a fledgling flavour scientist, Wilson had spent five years working in Grasse, France – the spiritual home of modern perfumery. So he was well acquainted with the language of scent. “A lot of the ingredients used in perfumery are not that dissimilar to the botanicals used



Above and below: Seventy One Gin, £140. Left: Kate Moss photographed by Mert and Marcus in 2020





Left: Mert (on right) and his business head Tasso Ferreira. Right: Natalia Vodianova shot by Mert and Marcus in 2012



in gin," he says. "The difference is that perfume companies treat every single ingredient, each botanical, in there with unbelievable respect. They take it, they research it, they distil it and they create an absolute, an essence. It's created like liquid gold. And then they bring an artist into the mix – the perfumer – who looks at all those notes and composes a perfume. We wanted to do it like that."

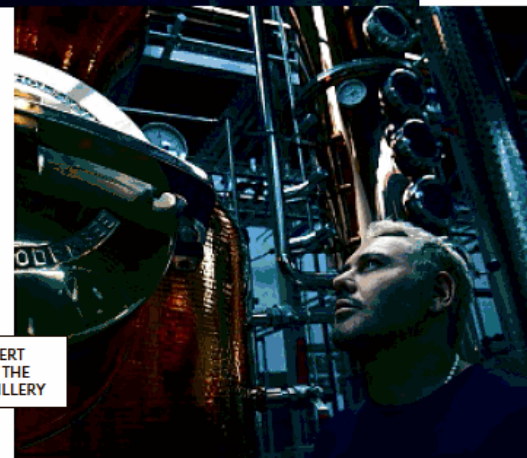
Alas and Ferreira started by constructing a backbone of traditional gin botanicals – juniper, coriander, angelic and lemon – which they then layered up with grapefruit peel, earthy wild ivy from Albania, Damask roses and a hint of bitter Ecuadorian cinchona. The final, sensual flourish, was the addition of Queen of the Night. "I think of it like a desert version of jasmine," says Alas. "It's more earthy and raw, less cute."

Not every botanical they tried made the cut. "At one point I said, 'Oh, I'm Turkish, let's try sumac', and Steve said, 'No, that's a terrible idea'. I did anyway and it was awful!" laughs Alas.

"IT'S CREATED LIKE LIQUID GOLD"

In order to achieve a rounder, sweeter profile closer to the gin liqueurs of Alas's childhood, they aged the gin in a mix of virgin Spanish oak, sherry casks and French oak. That time in cask gives the gin depth and warmth, as well as its amber colour.

Last but not least, they spike the gin with Ecuadorian Guayusa tea leaves to give the whole thing a caffeinated lift. "I wanted to get away from this whole idea of 'mother's ruin'," says Alas. "This is a gin designed to wake you up and get ignited for the night." It took around 700 different samples, and several years of tasting, for them to arrive at the final recipe. "We tortured



MERT AT THE DISTILLERY

Steve, literally!" says Alas. "Then, one night we finally said, 'That's it! This no longer tastes like gin, it tastes like something completely unique.'"

With the recipe complete, Alas took it to IFF master perfumer Dominique Ropion, the man Frédéric Malle once dubbed "the most skilled perfumer working today". His verdict? "I have always found Alas's style of photography fascinating, almost dreamlike, very sexy, eroticised even," says Ropion. "I figured, when you create such beautiful photos, and go into a hedonistic venture, it's bound to be beautiful too."

Aesthetically, Seventy One Gin is a real statement piece. The octagonal, deco-style glass bottle – designed by Alas – looms over the table like an outsized scent flacon or decanter. And it weighs a tonne. "I was inspired by art deco architecture, jewellery, crystal formations," says Alas. "I said, 'Let's make it sexy!'"

In a tribute to Alas's hero Oscar Wilde, a pair of ornate Regency-style drinking vessels is being launched alongside the gin – a delicate little stemmed shot glass and a capacious rocks glass for sipping the gin on ice.

Alas and Ferreira won't reveal how much money they've invested in the project thus far – but I get the sense that a few starry friends have helped them out. The first run of the gin will be 3,000 bottles – a quantity that someone with 1.5m Instagram followers should have no trouble shifting.

In the long run, Alas hopes to use the brand as a fundraising platform for up-and-coming artists. "I want it to be about giving back, as well as just having a good time," he says. Expect to see more announcements on that front later in the year.

For now, though, he is focused on getting the gin into the hands of his friends, and behind his favourite bars. "Dukes Bar in London, or Chateau Marmont, would be amazing," he says. That would be a long shot by most people's standards – but something tells me he might just be in with a chance. ■HTSI seventyonegin.com



Left: selecting botanicals for Seventy One Gin

PHOTOGRAPHS: MERT ALAS (5), MERT AND MARCUS (2)



This page: LOUIS VUITTON
cotton T-shirt, €390, silk/
polyamide tiered skirt, €3,600,
and white-gold and diamond
La Star du Nord necklace,
bracelet, earrings and ring



Diamond of the season

Phoebe Dynevor captivated audiences in 19th-century period romp *Bridgerton*. Now the British actress is letting her own personality shine. Interview by *Kate Finnigan*.

Photography by *Thomas Lohr*. Styling by *Isabelle Kountoure*

How bittersweet to become a sudden star during lockdown. Phoebe Dynevor, who plays ingénue Daphne in the sexy Georgian TV series *Bridgerton*, became overnight famous during the most claustrophobic time in recent history. Her delicate features are now globally familiar and her Instagram following shot to more than 2.5m. But the 26-year-old hasn't been able to try on her fame in a public way; instead, like the rest of us, she has had to stay home.

Now she is emerging out of that cocoon into the spotlight of public recognition. "It is really surreal," Dynevor says. "I feel like I'm having a double whammy. Even being with my friends last weekend, I thought it was weird to get back into the real world anyway and then there's also [the new fame]. I still feel like no one knows who I am, but then I'm recognised." And she doesn't mind, she hastens to add. "People are always so lovely and sweet. I think because the show brought a lot of joy in lockdown, they're always good interactions."

In a way, it's surprising she is recognised, given that people have only really seen her wearing 19th-century-Empire-waist gowns, long satin gloves and tiaras. "Yes, I think when people see me out they are somewhat surprised that I don't dress like Daphne," she says. "Like, 'Is she really wearing Nike Air Force 1s?'"

Today, on a rare day off during filming of the second series of *Bridgerton*, Dynevor is sans sneakers and instead adorned with Louis Vuitton's new high-jewellery launch, Bravery. It's a collection worthy of the grandeur of Daphne (some of the pieces cost in the millions), yet is modern enough to look comfortable on the young actress. Behind the camera, Dynevor radiates with the same sweet, sculpted beauty and swan-like neck seen on screen. "Jewellery on her just sings," says Francesca Amfitheatrof, Louis Vuitton's artistic director of jewellery and watches. "You need to be enough of a person to carry it. I think that jewellery is the one accessory or object that we wear that has a way of rubbing off on you something that's mythical, something that goes above and beyond."

Bravery is a homage to the man Vuitton, in the 200th anniversary year of his birth, and comprises 90 pieces. The lead attraction, the Le Mythe necklace, is an engineering masterpiece that, by removing its various parts, can be worn in 12 ways. It also boasts an LV monogram flower (an impressive trio of sugar-loaf sapphires and an emerald) and six Louis Vuitton star-cut diamonds, which the house has been working on for three



Left: LOUIS VUITTON cotton/viscose coat, €4,800, and white-gold and diamond L'Élan Vital necklace and earrings

years. “It’s like the holy grail of jewellery to have a diamond cut that is recognisable from afar,” says Amfitheatrof. “How do you brand a diamond? How do you make a diamond recognisable from 10 tables away?”

Likewise, *Bridgerton* is a brand with a distinctive and all-consuming world around it, a world in which all the sex and gossip and drama are iced in bright, fondant colours in an over-the-top millennial prettiness, setting it apart from other period costume shows. To watch it during the dull grey days of lockdown was to feel both stimulated by and nostalgic for a time we never knew. “I was excited to wear everything,” says Dynevor of the costumes. “Every dress was beautiful, but I really loved the day dresses in particular. There’s one in episode six when Daphne is in the garden picking lavender and there are little purple flowers on her dress. That attention to detail was incredible. There were some dresses I think I wore only to walk down a corridor and then I’d be in something completely different – so fabulous,” she laughs.

Although she says she “lucked out” by only having to wear a half-corset (unlike some of the other actors), the costumes were a significant part of her transformation into the role of “diamond of the season”, as she is dubbed in the show. Working out how to hold herself and wear the wardrobe was all part of the six weeks of preparation, including choreography, 19th-century etiquette and horse riding that she undertook alongside co-star Regé-Jean Page, who plays Simon Basset, and who has, to the disappointment of millions, decided not to return for an encore. “The wardrobe completely changes the way you carry yourself, and it really does do 80 per cent of the work for you. In real life – and my director said this to me the other day – I sort of stomp

“EVERY TIME I FINISH A JOB I SEEM TO WANT TO DRESS IN TOTALLY THE OPPOSITE WAY TO THE CHARACTER”

into rooms. I’m always wearing boots or trainers, but as soon as I got into costume for Daphne – the little tiny-heeled pumps and the way the dresses flow at the back – it makes you stand up straight and sort of flow. It makes you want to lift your head up.”

All the better for showing off the costume jewellery, made in the on-set workshops by a team of jewellers. “Daphne’s never without a pair of beautiful earrings or a necklace. There was a real obsession with necklines and collar bones at the time,” says Dynevor. “They wanted to draw the eye to the neck, so I’d always have beautiful matching earrings and a necklace. In episode four, when Prince Friedrich gives Daphne a highly valuable necklace that she then tears off – that was the most spectacular one. It’s so funny, people talking about my neck acting really makes me laugh.” (There are YouTube montages dedicated to Dynevor’s active neck and throat.) “I don’t think I’m a neck actor in other things,” she says wryly. “But in *Bridgerton*, particularly with the way the corset sits and the attention on the neck, it makes you hold your shoulders a certain way.”

It’s a quality that didn’t escape the notice of Louis Vuitton, with which she has since become a “friend”. “Regal sounds manufactured as a word, but you have to have something in you that means you can carry high jewellery and Phoebe really does,” says Amfitheatrof of Dynevor’s affinity with her statement pieces. “It’s important that it’s on the right person and important for our clients to know how a piece of jewellery will affect them and give them a certain strength and power.”

Dynevor, who grew up in Manchester and now lives in a flat near Hampstead Heath, has acting in her blood. Her mother is the veteran Coronation Street actress, Sally Dynevor; her father, Tim Dynevor, is a TV scriptwriter. She started acting in 2009, when she was 14 and won a role in the fifth series of the long-running BBC show *Waterloo Road*. She has starred in period pieces before – *The Musketeers*, *The Village* and *Dickensian* – and says it’s the joy of her job to experience the dress of different eras: “It’s what I love most about it.” But it does impact her real-life wardrobe. “Every time I finish a job I seem to want to dress in totally the opposite way to the character. Before *Bridgerton* I was a little bit of a flowy-dress girl, but I’ve now definitely steered away, without really consciously doing it, from the feminine stuff.” To assert her own personality? “Yes, because you do lose yourself. Especially with something like *Bridgerton*, when it was five months of shooting every day. You show up in tracksuit bottoms because you’re not leaving till 8pm and you’re wearing a wig. So I’d wash my hair on Friday night and have one day of being myself before the wig went on again and suddenly you’re thinking, ‘Wait, who am I? What do I wear in real life?’ It’s bizarre.”

Before she went back to the series, she shot a film, *The Colour Room*, about the English ceramic artist Clarice Cliff. “That was great because it was so different to *Bridgerton*, a different time – the 1920s – and such a different character. Clarice was so outward-facing, such a creative. The way I played her is that she didn’t have any awareness of her appearance, didn’t even think about it, and I loved that. During the pandemic, none of us looked in the mirror really, so it was fun to be able to channel that into the role and not feel any pressure to look a certain way. Daphne is the complete opposite. She’s aware of herself in every way, but it has been nice stepping back into her shoes and being able to prance around and look good.”

With an actress as a mother, I imagine, there must have been a certain glamour in the house when she was growing up, but Dynevor dismisses the idea. “In real life my mum was always a dungaree wearer, which probably rubbed off on me a lot. Work for her was the dressy time, not home, and I always thought that was kind of cool.” Her paternal grandmother, Shirley, who also worked in television, was the fashion influence. “She always looked divine and still does. It was always one piece of really beautiful jewellery, a pearl necklace or pretty earrings. Always a flash of something – gold on her eyelids and a pop of colour.”

Dynevor’s own personal style is something she’s still working to define. “When I was growing up, the look was all quite flamboyant – big make-up, the little dresses and the heels. I did love the glamour of going out and had a couple of years when there was a lot of make-up and false eyelashes. But I think you have to go to the extremes to know what you like and then pull it back. Even today I’m still figuring it out,” she says. “Especially now, being in the public eye, seeing photographs of my outfits and thinking, ‘Oh... next time I... should not wear that,’” she laughs. “I’m definitely having a big learning experience.” ■HTSI

This page: LOUIS VUITTON wool/
silk and glass-bead dress,
€8,000, and platinum, gold,
diamond and emerald L'Aventure
earrings and ring

Hair, James Rowe at Bryant
Artists. Make-up, Georgina
Colville at Management + Artists.
Manicure, Michelle Class at LMC
Worldwide. Photographer's
assistants, Harry Hawkes and
Max Hayter. Digital operator,
Denis Schlovsky. Stylist's
assistants, Zoë Sinclair and
Aylin Bayhan. Production,
Rosco Production



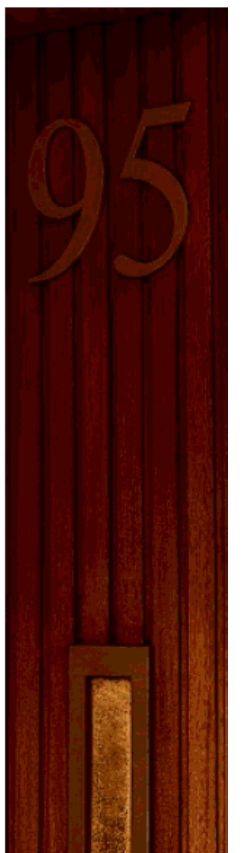
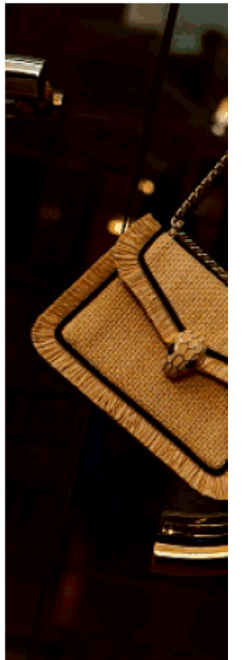
RING MY BELL

Going out out? Step into the season with 1970s-inspired accessories. Photography by *Kenny Whittle* Styling by *Aylin Bayhan*

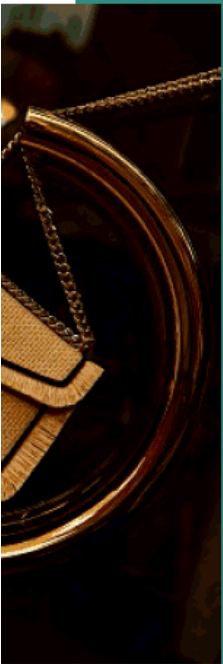


Above, clockwise from top: HERMES leather Essentielle riding crop, £1,050, swift leather Birkin 30 bag, £8,240, beechwood and pig-bristle soft body brush, £150, and leather quilting jumping boots, £2,060

Left, clockwise from top right: CHANEL patent goatskin purse, £2,020, embroidered silk handbag, £9,180, velvet vanity purse, £2,020, and checkers board, £5,015

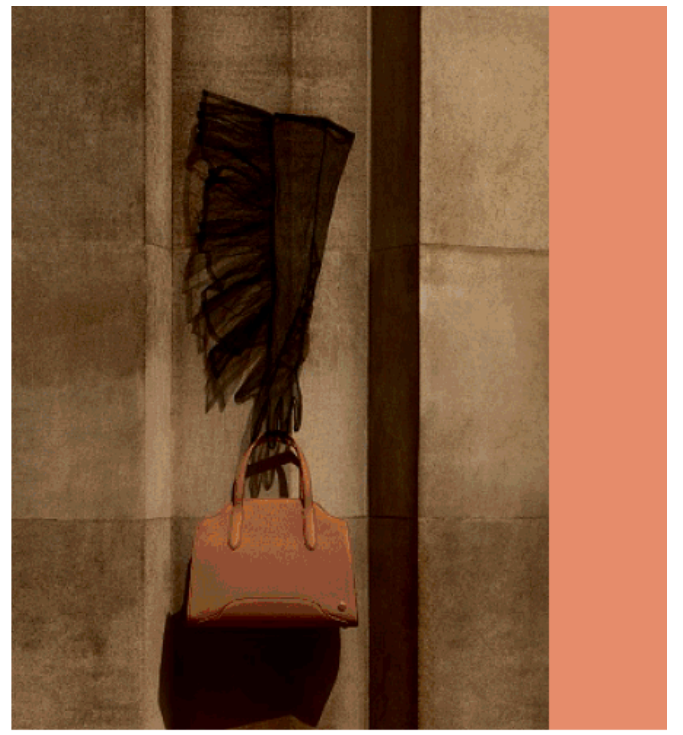


Right: FENDI leather Baguette 1997 bags, £2,100 each, and skateboard, £980, from the Summer Capsula 2021 FF Vertigo collection. Below: BULGARI raffia, leather, brass, enamel and onyx Serpenti Diamond Blast bag, £1,650. Bottom: DOLCE & GABBANA leather and wood wedges, £683



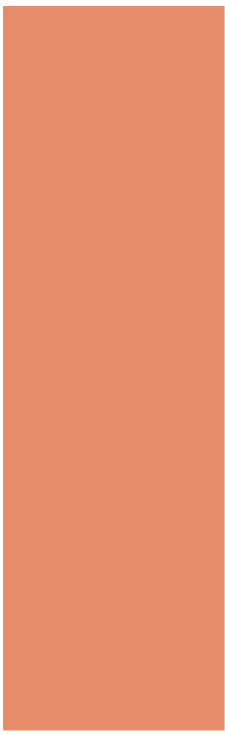


Above: PRADA leather small tote bags, £1,300 each, and nylon padded headband, £310



Below: GIORGIO ARMANI suede and leather 2004 bag, £1,550





Above left: LORO PIANA matte leather Sesia Bag M, £2,975. T LABEL deadstock tulle gloves, £150. Below left: DIOR leather 30 Montaigne bag, £2,500 each. Right: LOUIS VUITTON leather Silhouette ankle boots, £850



Above: GUCCI straw-effect fabric and leather small embroidered Jackie 1961 bag, £2,110, and leather gloves, £355



RIVER DEEP MOUNTAIN HIGH

Fergus Scholes psychs up for a new breed of extreme but ultra-luxe adventure in the Dolomites. Photography by James Mollison



The fixed safety lines and ladders of the via ferrata wind their way up to the 2,400m summit of Col dei Bos. I step into the climbing harness, contemplate the 500m of near-vertical limestone rock and feel my courage falter. As lighthearted conversation turns to a more matter-of-fact briefing, Diego Zanesco – half mountain goat, half silver fox and 100 per cent cool customer – settles my nerves. He's one of the most respected guides here in the Alta Badia region of the South Tyrol, with more than 30 years of experience under his belt, and you can feel it. I clip the carabiner on, grip the cable and get down to business.

It is day one of four in the Dolomites, where I am a guest at Rosa Alpina Hotel & Spa in San Cassiano – a legendary property, equal parts luxury chalet and rustic mountain lodge, with a multi-Michelin-starred destination restaurant, St Hubertus. It joined the Aman stable of hotels and resorts last year, but the Pizzinini family, its founding owners, remain a constant presence here: Hugo Pizzinini, the third-generation scion, was on hand to personally welcome me with a spaghetti carbonara when I rolled in from Venice at 10.30pm.

I am staying to test-run Aman's new programme of multi-day extreme sports retreats, aimed at guests with a thirst for ultra-physical adventures layered with all the luxuries you'd expect from these hotels: massages, expert guides, fine cuisine and finer spas. Each retreat is tailored to leverage its respective landscape to the fullest: a desert-mountain adventure in Morocco, a triathlon through the

rainforest of Phuket, ocean challenges on a private island in the Philippines, and, here in the Dolomites, serious alpine adventures. Though the daily activity plans are fairly hardcore, everything is fairly minutely customisable to suit ability, length of stay, weather conditions and how you're feeling on the day.

My predilection for endurance sports perfectly matches the terrain and its mountain traditions, so running, cycling and swimming are the mainstays of my itinerary. They vary in intensity and duration: some truly limit-pushing, others much more pleasurable, with doses of via ferrata thrown in for alpine adrenaline.

The Alta Badia region is a particular hotspot for road cycling, with several stunning mountain passes. The Giro d'Italia is a regular visitor, and the Maratona dles Dolomites starts and finishes a stone's throw from Rosa Alpina. With an international field of 9,000 entrants taking part, it strings together several passes into one epic ride, covering 138km and gaining 4,230m in elevation. (To put that into context, a ride of that distance in England would typically have around one third as much climbing.) It's the kind of challenge that I'm seeking. The Rosa Alpina equips me with a Pinarello – a top-spec, ultra-lightweight Italian carbon road bike (in Ferrari red, naturally) and issues me with a guide, Franz Wieser – a tall, reedy 26-year-old who looks every bit the champion cyclist. Regardless of the activity, it seems, the hotel is ready with expert athletes to both instruct and push the guests.

The initial two-way buzz of conversation soon becomes a Franz monologue – I barely manage monosyllabic replies between gulping breaths as I realise my morning rides around Richmond Park have been laughably insufficient compared to the challenge of these endless, winding, uphill

climbs. The shorter, exhilarating descents seem ever shorter. After four hours, with five substantial passes in the legs and the strain of being unacclimatised to the altitude, I am utterly shattered. But the scenery – huge peaks and hulking massifs all around – is genuinely epic.

At a crossroads, Franz offers me two choices: turn left, to cut the ride by around 30km; or right, to commit to the monstrous Passo Giau. At 19.9km long, with an average of 9.3 per cent gradient and 29 hairpin bends, it's a prospect to give even the most seasoned cyclist the nerves. Two hours – and the expenditure of every ounce of energy and grit in my body – later, the challenge is complete. It is one of the most daunting of my stay, but it's a bucket list-proportioned adventure.

I AM SHATTERED. BUT THE SCENERY – HUGE PEAKS AND HULKING MASSIFS – IS EPIC

On day two, my upper body gets a work out with an open-water lake swim. For this, we drive west, past the city of Bolzano, to a secluded private garden fronting onto Lake Caldaro. Diego, cool as ever, shadows me in a rowboat. With the sun on my back and the water at 21°C, the 2km swim in millpond-flat conditions is exactly the welcome, physiologically balancing tonic it has been calculated to be. With every inhale, I glimpse the lush green of the surrounding fruit trees and

snow-covered peaks, aware the entire time it is a world away from the packed swimming lanes of the 25m indoor pool I'm used to.

Trail running is the other order of the day in these parts; for mine, I am joined by Pizzinini himself and his restaurant director and head sommelier, Lukas Gerges, on a fairly advanced circular route from the hotel. With the fatigue of the previous three days suffusing my legs – and evident in my gait – our guide, Samuele Majoni, a multiple title-holder here, keeps a just-gentle-enough pace and after a three-hour push, with a via ferrata thrown in for good measure, we head down a hidden valley to enjoy a lunch of crispy polenta, pork sausages and a cheeky Kaiserschmarrn in the sun at Scotoni, one of the Val Badia's most loved mountain huts.

Beyond the expert guides and training, the Rosa Alpina difference is in these indulgences. Each day holds the most welcome punctuation in the form of a long spa treatment: alpine herbal massages with anti-inflammatory arnica for muscle-pain relief, and Thai massages to work out stiffness. Refuelling is elevated to a whole different level: I am welcomed back after each excursion with homemade sourdough, speck and horseradish – a simple but delicious (and complex carb-rich) local dinner – typically followed by fresh pasta and local sparkling wine. The gastronomic highlight is St Hubertus, Rosa Alpina's celebrated fine-dining restaurant. Norbert Niederkofler and his young team run a remarkably ordered kitchen, where at his butcher-block chef's table I enjoy the first three of an 11-course menu, with wine pairings, that begins at 7pm and wraps up at midnight.

What makes the four days feel so special is this balance of limit-testing and indulgence. Exert, relax, repeat – to the extreme. A mountain high indeed. ■HTSI



Clockwise from above: the author running over Forcella Salares, with a view down the valley and the Scotoni mountain hut. An early morning 2km swim in the waters of Lake Caldaro. The trail run up to Sass de Stria. The 11-course "Cook The Mountain" menu at St Hubertus. Mountain guide Diego Zanesco prepares Scholes for the via ferrata. Opposite page: on the Sella massif, with the Val Gardena valley behind



Are you game?

FIVE ADVENTURE CHALLENGES ON SCHEDULE FOR 2021-2022

HAUTE ROUTE VENTOUX 1-3 October 2021

€799

hauteroute.org

Haute Route offers near-professional-level cycling events to amateurs, and this three-day event covers 288km with 8,100m of climbing up the famous "Giant of Provence" that is Ventoux.

SOURCE TO CITY NEW YORK 1-4 October 2021

\$2,447

sourcetocity.com

Run (or hike if you prefer), bike and kayak your way down the entire length of the mighty Hudson River, traversing all 300 miles in this fully supported event.

ULTRA X MEXICO 6-13 November 2021

£1,495

ultra-x.co/mexico

Set in the Sierra Madre mountains, this supported five-day stage ultra-marathon covers 250km, with 11,835m of elevation gain, as you run through the colossal Copper Canyons.

BIRKEBEINERRENNET 19-21 March 2022

Nkr1,525 (about £128)

birkebeiner.no

Each year, Norway's legendary 54km cross-country ski race crosses two mountain ranges through breathtaking wilderness, finishing in the Olympic village of Lillehammer.

EXPEDITION AFRICA 31 March-10 April 2022

From R30,000 (about £1,508)

expafrica.net

Teams of two or four mountain-bike, trek and kayak on a rural 500km unmarked route through the wilderness of Lesotho, a country encircled by South Africa.

“Our future is in Beirut”



One year after the blast that destroyed the city's artistic centres, *Gilles Khoury* meets the Lebanese designers who believe that recovery and beauty will always be entwined

Left: an abandoned home in Achrafieh, photographed by James Kerwin following the blast in August last year. Opposite page: Rabih Kayrouz with his latest collection, photographed by Bachar Srour





I will start healing the day my city starts healing,” says Rabih Kayrouz, his eyes wandering over the iridescent Mediterranean. The Lebanese fashion designer was in his atelier in the neighbourhood of Gemmayze, a mile away from the Port of Beirut, when an explosion tore through the city on 4 August last year. Caused by the ignition of 2,750 tonnes of ammonium nitrate, which had been improperly stored there since 2013, the blast destroyed much in its path. Within a split second, the business that Kayrouz had been growing over the past 20 years was devastated; he was also severely wounded. For someone like Kayrouz, who is so entrenched in this city, it’s clear that it will take much longer to start recovering from the trauma. But despite everything, the designer’s atelier – where he now stands – has been rebuilt, and he has created temporary solutions for the Lebanese arm of his business.

To continue functioning in a country where nothing functions is in itself a miracle. However, such resilience should come as no surprise. Kayrouz was always a pioneer in his field. In 1995, after pursuing his studies in Paris, he came back to Beirut, then considered “the city of possibilities”, he says. “The war had ended a few years before, and a creative scene was being fuelled by the desire to simply do things.” Since 2009, the designer has had one foot in Paris, home to his prêt-à-porter business, and one foot in Beirut, where 12 employees focus on custom-made orders. Even in October 2019, when Lebanon’s latest economic crisis hit, instead of investing his efforts solely in Paris, Kayrouz rolled up his sleeves and explored ways to make his business viable. “It’s something that I find hard to explain, but no matter what happens in Lebanon, the minute I land here, I just feel like giving.”

Following the blast, he participated in raising almost \$400,000 via the United for Lebanese Creatives fund. The organisation helped rebuild spaces for some of the young designers of Starch foundation, an NGO he co-founded

“BEIRUT WILL REMAIN A SOURCE OF WISDOM AND CULTURE. PEACE WILL PREVAIL”

in 2008 with designer Tala Hajjar to launch emerging Lebanese designers. On a professional level, Kayrouz revisited his business model from scratch: “What matters the most to me today is to adapt to the economic crisis Lebanon is going through. One could think that fashion doesn’t make sense any more, but I’d rather look at it differently. Why couldn’t we keep on creating clothes, while integrating a new system of execution that would fit those hard times and be respectful towards our clients?”

The designer conceived special collections sourced from deadstock fabric, fully produced in Lebanon and sold in “lollars” (US dollars within Lebanon’s collapsed banking system, which depositors have been blocked from accessing or transferring abroad, or can withdraw only in local currency at a low rate). Those items “take into account the financial difficulties of our clientele, allow them access to some beauty, and also support the families of the employees at Maison Rabih Kayrouz.” He continues: “But all of this is more crisis management than a long-term roadmap. It’s just a solution to stay in Beirut, and help it as much as we can.”

Kayrouz is one of many creatives determined to help the city thrive again. Fashion designer Elie Saab, who is also based between Paris and Beirut, is donating a contribution from the sales of his fragrance Le Parfum throughout 2021 to Unicef’s programme to help vulnerable girls in Lebanon. A group of jewellers, including Gaëlle Khouri and Noor Fares, donated designs to a fundraiser hosted by retailer Auverture, which raised more than €51,000 for the Lebanese Red Cross and Lebanese Food Bank.

But more striking are the efforts being deployed by creatives to keep businesses alive and stay inspired in an environment where beauty is not considered a priority. “In these difficult moments, luxury is not a first necessity, but it is part of the vital economical wheel of any society,” says jeweller Selim Mouzannar. His business is based in Tabaris, among the worst-hit neighbourhoods; his shop and atelier were badly damaged in the blast. “You can destroy the walls, but you cannot change the spirits,” he says. The Kant quote “Optimism is a moral duty” is plastered on the windows of his new workshop, which has since been rebuilt. His decision to stay is not solely because relocating seems logistically and financially impossible, but because the city provides him with creative stimuli. “Beirut will remain a source of wisdom and culture and freedom; justice and peace will prevail. Beirut is my city and we are the real peaceful resistance. I am here to stay.”

That’s also the case for furniture and homeware label Bokja, which recently extended its distinct, patchworked aesthetic into ready-to-wear, which is all locally produced. “Our future is in Beirut,” say co-founders Huda Baroudi and Maria Hibri. “We owe it to our team of artisans to continue our growing legacy in craft, preserving an age-old tradition, a language that would otherwise begin to dwindle. A strong local presence is paramount. It is during these fragile times in the country that our roots sink deeper; we don’t plan to jump ship anytime soon.”

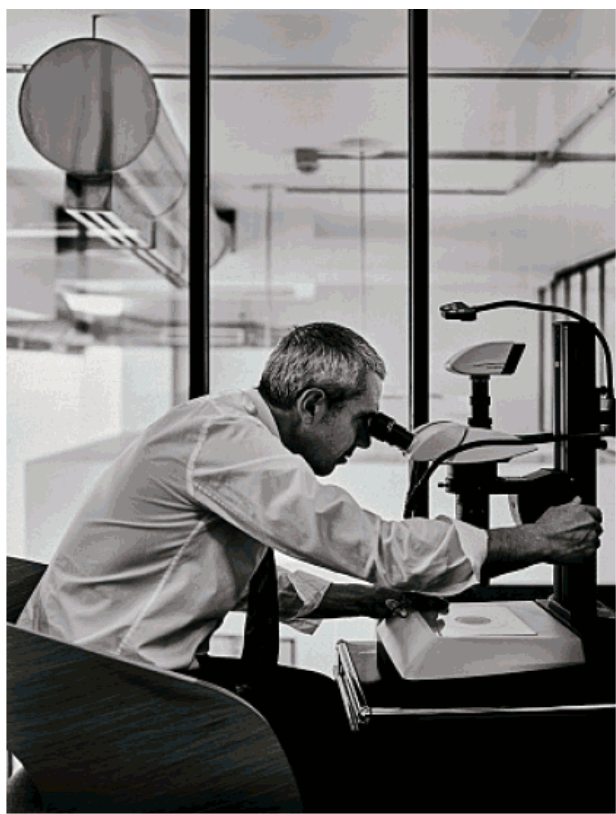
Both Baroudi and Hibri were quick to place their skills at the service of the people following the blast. “We immediately transformed the showroom into a community centre, offering it to local organisations on the ground which can dispense aid. As dedicated menders and fixers, we offered to repair and re-upholster damaged home goods from the most affected areas. A signature suture was used to stitch the pieces back together by our team of specialised artisans. Our aim was to offer a message of hope through preserving snippets of people’s homes.”

Even younger creatives, who were already struggling to sustain their businesses amid the successive crises, took part in rebuilding. Tatiana Fayad and Joanne Hayek, the co-founders of accessories and clothing brand Vanina, found their ateliers and store in Gemmayze completely in ruins, but started reconstructing the spaces the very next day. “We cannot fall” was their motto. The two women, both in their 30s, hold the reins of a social enterprise that encompasses a network of 70 women artisans. “Today, more than ever, we are determined to continue expanding our brand internationally, grow our local network of creation, and support our family of artisans.”

This is indicative of a broader issue that Cynthia Merhej, creative director and founder of fashion brand Renaissance Renaissance, explains: “As soon as the blast happened, I had to relocate to Paris, as it was impossible to have my business in Beirut, with the destruction of the banking system and the country’s infrastructure.” From there, Merhej started a GoFundMe for three Beirut creative businesses she knew would be left out of the recovery effort. “For me it was extremely important to help these creatives and business owners, because I could not see any future for our country if we did not have creative people in it and driving it. We successfully raised €50,000 and distributed the funds equally amongst the three recipients. It was the fastest way to raise money and get it to them, even though it was extremely difficult to do that with all the issues with the banks.”

That said, Merhej is as committed as her elders to stay rooted, at all costs, in Lebanon. “I am keeping my atelier in Beirut and I will finally be able to travel there this summer, to work on creative development,” she continues. “It’s important for me to still find ways to support our local fashion economy there. I hope once the pandemic is over, I will be able to go back and forth much more.”

This year, Merhej’s brand Renaissance Renaissance reached the semi-finals of the LVMH Prize. Proof, if needed, that even from afar, and against all the odds, this intrepid “young guard” of fashion will always manage to keep their country on the map. And give hope to a possible, and much brighter, future for Lebanon. ■HTSI



Right: Selim Mouzannar in his studio. Far right: SELIM MOUZANNAR pink-gold, diamond and tanzanite ring, \$3,650, and bracelet, \$13,020, and pink-gold, diamond and rhodolite ring, \$7,260



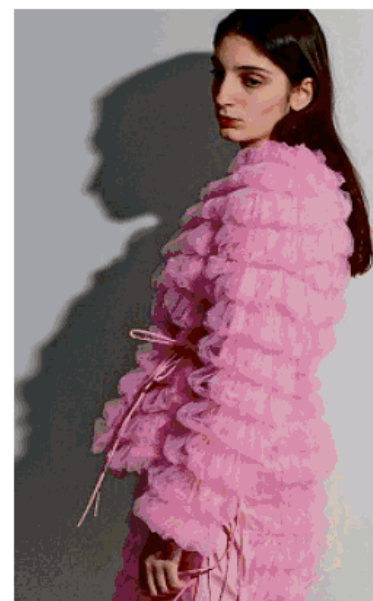
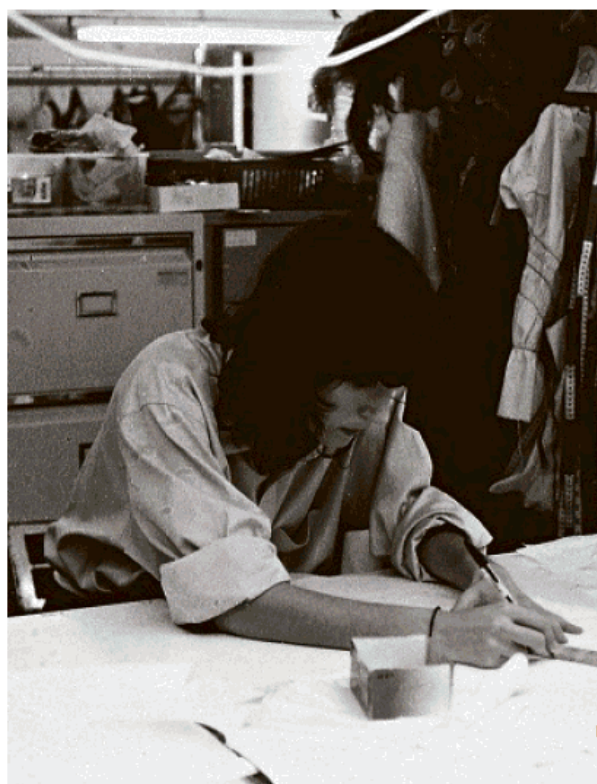
Right: Rabih Kayrouz's latest collection and (below right) outside his atelier in Beirut, photographed by Bachar Srou



“LUXURY IS NOT A FIRST NECESSITY, BUT IT’S A PART OF THE VITAL ECONOMIC WHEEL”



Above: BOKJA Casablanca Bow dress, \$1,100. Opposite page: the front of a mansion on Surssock Street, Beirut, photographed by James Kerwin



Above: RENAISSANCE RENAISSANCE tulle and silk outfit, POA. Left: Cynthia Merhej, the brand's founder and designer



Three jets to watch



SPIKE AERONAUTICS S-512
 Passengers 18
 Speed Mach 1.6
 Altitude 50,000ft
 Range 6,200 nautical miles
 Cost \$120m



VIRGIN GALACTIC
 Passengers 19
 Speed Mach 3
 Altitude 60,000ft+
 Range Not yet available
 Cost Not yet available



BOOM OVERTURE
 Passengers 88
 Speed Mach 1.7
 Cruise altitude 60,000ft
 Range 4,250 nautical miles
 Cost \$200m

LHR to JFK in under two hours?

The race is on to create the first supersonic passenger plane since Concorde. *Ollie Williams* checks out the main contenders

ILLUSTRATION BY CARLO APOSTOLI

If I'm going to buy a multimillion-dollar asset or hire a senior executive, I'm going to shake his hand. I'm going to look into his eye. I'm going to have dinner with him."

Vik Kachoria, the founder, president and CEO of Spike Aerospace, is setting out his expectations for the future of supersonic air travel, a concept many assumed had vanished in 2003 when Concorde was retired. Formerly employed in mergers and acquisitions in an investment bank on Wall Street, Kachoria is bullish about the future of the face-to-face meeting and the consumer demand for making day trips in one of his private jets, which will cost more than \$100m.

Despite scepticism about the potential for supersonic air travel – the cost, the culture, the environmental damage – Kachoria is one of the investors putting his faith, and money, in the future of a new breed of super-planes. Besides Spike, whose planned S-512 will carry 18 passengers and travel at Mach 1.6 (more than one-and-a-half times the speed of sound), Virgin Galactic is working on a commercial passenger jet that will transport up to 19 people at Mach 3 – that's 2,300mph and a flight time from New York to London of less than two hours. Boom Supersonic's Overture will carry 65 to 88 passengers at a speed of Mach 1.7. Russia's United Aircraft Corporation has joined forces with a UAE-owned investment company to develop a plane. And Japan's Aerospace Exploration Agency is talking about a hypersonic jet with 100 seats that could fly at Mach 5 and cross the Pacific in two hours.

And yet the challenges are many: one of the biggest potential players in the supersonic private-jet market, Aerion, has already thrown in the towel. Despite a \$11.2bn

sales backlog for its AS2 jet (including orders from NetJets and backing from Boeing and GE Aviation), it closed down its operations citing funding issues earlier this year.

Will there truly be a demand for such machines? In addition to passengers flying to business meetings or on holiday, Kachoria imagines his jet will be useful to mid-ranking employees or engineers. Say you have a car factory where something goes wrong on the production line: "You're losing \$100m a day and you need a specialist engineer fixing that problem right now. You do the math, that's an awful lot of money if the problem is not fixed." Then there will be those who just want to show off. Private jets have always had bragging rights, but a supersonic private jet? "It's a fantasy for some," says Kachoria.

Fantasy indeed. Aerion's AS2 had a price tag of \$120m. Spike's S-512 will cost around the same. By contrast the most spacious private jet on the market today, Gulfstream's G700, costs \$78m. Then there is the upkeep. Maintenance is going to be "at least double what the Gulfstream private jets are because you're burning the engines at a much higher temperature and much higher pressure", says Kachoria. A Gulfstream can cost anything from \$1m to \$3m a year to maintain – and that's excluding fuel, which will be a significant cost when travelling supersonic.

But the biggest issue is less a matter of price and more a question of physics. Concorde could only ever fly supersonic over the sea. The noise that the plane created when it passed the sound barrier was so loud that it was banned from supersonic flight over land in the US. Lockheed Martin, working in tandem with NASA, thinks it has found a solution with its X-59 QueSST prototype. A demonstration model will take to the air in 2022, and the aim, says Lockheed Martin, is to establish "an acceptable commercial supersonic noise standard and address current regulations banning commercial supersonic travel over land". The plan is to create a noise that is less a boom and more "a gentle

IT IS LESS A SONIC BOOM AND MORE 'A GENTLE THUMP'

thump" (at 66 decibels, the X-59 should sound no louder than a car door being slammed shut next door).

If the supersonic ban is repealed in the US, that would open up some of the world's most popular private routes. At least an hour could be shaved off the New York to Los Angeles route. And trials in the US could convince other regulators that supersonic travel in their airspace is safe. While many countries have not banned supersonic passenger jets, any new aircraft would still need regulatory approval. That would be critical to travellers in Asia and the Middle East, where private jet usage in particular is growing rapidly. To further reduce noise both outside and in, Spike has also designed its S-512 without passenger windows. Instead, LCD screens run right down each side of the plane, which can be used for work and entertainment, or, the showstopper, to provide an unbroken view of the sky outside the plane, virtually opening its walls onto the roof of the world.

BUT MAKING SUPERSONIC AIRCRAFT more efficient is about more than merely reducing noise. If private-jet and frequent flyers are already under fire because of their carbon footprint, then what of executives flying supersonic to Dubai for lunch? Some supersonic aerospace firms have foreseen this future PR disaster and have pledged to go carbon-neutral. Once its S-512 is in the air, Spike wants to start work on a "hybrid" supersonic jet before developing a liquid hydrogen model. Virgin Galactic's jet will have engines designed in collaboration with Rolls-Royce that use "state-of-the-art sustainable aviation fuel", it says.

Boom is talking about Overture flying on commercial routes as soon as 2029. United Airlines has an agreement to purchase 15 supersonic jets from Boom Supersonic. Blake Scholl, the founder and CEO of Boom, believes a gap in the market has opened up after airlines spent the past year retiring large Boeings and Airbuses. "People's tolerance for long, painful flights has gone down," he says. Yes, business travel might take a while to return, but leisure travel will bounce back: "You don't want to go on vacation on Zoom. You don't want to fall in love over Zoom." ■ HTSI

PHOTOGRAPHS: GETTY IMAGES (6); SPIKE AVIATION; VIRGIN GALACTIC

SON ET LUMIERE

There's a syndrome interior designers refer to as ceiling acne. It typically occurs when someone has several recessed spotlights and then decides it would be cool to add a bunch of ceiling speakers. I'm not normally a huge fan of ceiling speakers because up above doesn't sound to me the right place for music to be coming from, other than background music in shops.



But I have to hand it on several counts to British startup Zuma which has made downward-firing audio not only acceptable, but really good, by cleverly combining LED ceiling spots with some truly exceptional speakers.

The Zuma speakers are so good that you won't even need a concealed subwoofer behind a sofa. You can even configure your Zuma lights to act as the sound system for your TV, so no need for a sound bar.

Smart Bezels launching later this year will include features like movement sensors and smoke detectors. Four to six Zuma lights are enough for a sizeable room. The lighting warmth and intensity as well as the audio is controlled through an app. Nothing not to love here. *Zuma Lumisonic, £375 per unit, zuma.ai*

ROUTE ONE PORTABLE 5G

With the 5G phone network building up nicely but not used a lot – the need for 5G on a phone, for instance, is extremely limited – the opportunity to hijack 5G for all your home and office internet needs is there for the taking.

Netgear's newest portable router, the Nighthawk M5, offers internet speeds of up to 1Gbps where the 5G is up and running, but also works on 4G, which can give a more than adequate 40-50Mbps. Importantly, too, the M5 pumps out WiFi 6, the newest version, so can keep as many as 32 devices online simultaneously.



The M5 is rechargeable (13 hours of use per charge) but obviously works plugged into the mains, too. So if you were using it in, say, a holiday home (and 5G is often available and barely used in rural-ish areas), all the family's and friends' internet needs, including gaming and high-end video streaming, can be dealt with easily without the need for fixed lines.

The M5 is one of those unglamorous black boxes that can nonetheless quietly semi-revolutionise home and work life. *Netgear Nighthawk M5, £739.99, netgear.co.uk*

COOL BEANS

Jura's new Z10 coffee machine shares all the excellent qualities of earlier Jura machines I have tested, but packs one magnificent new – and unique – feature, which will make this the summer of the iced latte macchiato.

Along with the wide range of hot espresso-based drinks the machine will make, it boasts a patented cold extraction process that speeds up the laboriously slow business of pulsing cold water over coarse coffee grounds at high pressure to make cold espresso.

The smoothness of that first latte macchiato I made with the Z10 was unforgettable, but bear in mind that you need a good supply of ice on hand to make sure it's perfectly chilled. Also, if you like to play barista at home, I should warn you that Jura's models are all press-button, so there's no manual portafilter to clunk into place with a flourish. Right across the range of recipes, however, the Jura coffee is every bit as good as any I've tasted from more professional-looking home espresso makers. *Jura Z10, from £2,145, uk.jura.com*



For more of Jonathan's reviews, visit [@thefuturecnic](https://ft.com/htsi)

GADGETS

Do the twist

An app-connected Rubik's cube for next-gen puzzlers – and more

WORDS BY JONATHAN MARGOLIS

If you'll forgive me the namedrop, I was taught to solve the Rubik's Cube by Dr Ernő Rubik himself. We met at his studio in 1985 to discuss how, in still communist Hungary, he had managed to sell tens of millions of the puzzles internationally without getting arrested or having his assets confiscated.

It was a fascinating political story about how the country was liberalising while still in the Soviet bloc. It was also a fascinating lesson in puzzle solving, even if I'd already forgotten how to do it within about 10 minutes. I still have the cube he gave me somewhere, but today my cat would probably solve it faster than me.

Enter, then, this app-connected cube, which is perfect for both experienced "cubers" and beginners. The first thing that struck me about the GoCube was what a delightful, smooth, fluent mechanism it has. It moves quickly, with 48 magnets in the corner pieces helping it click satisfyingly

into place. Early Rubik's Cubes, I seem to remember, were mechanically clumsy and prone to locking up. The GoCube is a delight to handle and ideal for what is now called "speedcubing" even if you don't exploit its tech prowess.

But the electronic innards, with a whole bunch of six-axis smart sensors and an inertial measurement unit in action, make the GoCube formidable. You sync it up – ideally to a tablet on a stand rather than a phone – and get a real time, full-3D representation on the screen in front of you of the cube you're holding. Twist the cube and every move appears with imperceptible time lag on-screen.

That's clever, but then it starts teaching you exactly how to solve the cube in as few as 21 twists, setting higher-level problems for more experienced puzzlers, pitting you in real time against other cubers around the world (thanks, but no thanks) and ranking you against experts.

I got nowhere near the world record solution time of 3.47 seconds and was happy to complete the cube in 40 times that, which was nowhere near enough to get onto the GoCube global leaderboard. But I will continue in the pretence that it was Dr Rubik that taught me cubing in Budapest rather than a clever app and a teched-up cube. ■HTSI



DETAILS
GoCube £79.99, smartechnology.com



The world is full of luxury hotel bars with big-ticket whisky lists – lists created, all too often, with an eye on the bottom line, rather than any real heart. So when one of my favourite whisky writers, *World Atlas of Whisky* author Dave Broom, mentioned he was working on a new hotel bar in Braemar, my ears pricked up. When he added that it was in gallerists Hauser & Wirth's hotel The Fife Arms, and designed by Russell Sage, my ears pricked up even more: it sounded like a dream team.

And Bertie's is a gem. Furnished in the style of a sumptuous Edwardian library, and lined floor-to-ceiling with 365 back-lit whiskies that suffuse the room with an amber glow, this 15-seater lounge looks more like a liquid installation than a bar – a place to hole up on dark nights when the Highland rain is lashing down outside.

The whisky list Broom has created is naturally dominated by Scotland – but it features drams from all over the world, grouped by style rather than place of origin, to make the whole thing more navigable. “Doing it like this allows you to show commonalities and differences between different distilleries and regions and countries, and open up whole new conversations about whisky,” says Broom. “It’s not dumbing it down. Far from it – it actually takes you on a deeper dive.”

In the “Fragrance” section, a meadow-y Linkwood 12yo (£9) from Speyside rubs shoulders with Hakushu 12yo, a cool green single malt from the Japanese Alps (£22.50); in “Fruity” a luscious wine-cask-aged malt from



Above and left: the whiskies at Bertie's Bar at The Fife Arms

GLENDULLAN SPEYSIDE SINGLE MALT



THE REAL THEATRE IS IN THE BOTTLES – ALL CLOSE ENOUGH TO TOUCH

Starward in Australia is contrasted with a 17yo malt (£32.50) from Royal Lochnagar, a historic Highland distillery just a stone's throw from the hotel.

Broom has given unusual prominence to grain whisky – more often the unsung hero of Scotch blends. “Grain whisky is often dismissed as the Scottish answer to vodka – but it can be absolutely delicious and full of flavour,” he says, picking out a Cambus 29yo (£26) that’s all “runny honey and baked banana”.

The list is peppered with rarities from distilleries no longer in production: Littlemill, Rosebank, Mosstowie and the storied Islay distillery Port Ellen. But it also features young drams from some of the world's newest producers: Cardrona in New Zealand and Torabhaig on Skye.

Bertie's is a real destination bar – yet almost half of the whiskies in it are priced at under £10 a dram: “It was really important for me to have that element of affordability,” says Broom, “so that people feel free to experiment.”

The bar also does whisky cocktails and posh bar snacks and a quartet of whiskies matched with different types of caviar. But the real theatre is in the bottles around you – all of them close enough to touch.

Broom is working with The Fife Arms to curate a series of house whiskies too, in partnership with the indie bottler Adelphi. I wonder, given their artistic connections, whether Hauser & Wirth might be planning a specially commissioned label for them, à la Mouton Rothschild? “We have been talking to our artists about creating something for Bertie's,” says Iwan Wirth. “But it will not be a label as I think artist labels are passé. What we are doing is looking at bottles as sort of sculptures.” He won't reveal more, for now, except that he hopes to have something to show the world in about 12 months' time. Just the excuse, if it were needed, to start planning a return visit. ■HTSI

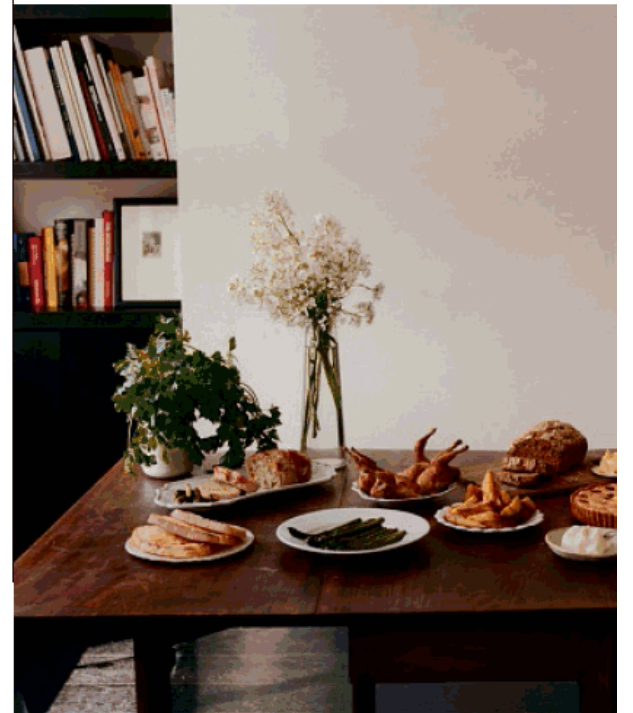
@alichelascelles

DRINKING

Grains of wisdom

Bertie's Bar at the Fife Arms in the Highlands is a whisky-lover's dream come true, writes *Alice Lascelles*

Right: Max Rocha in his kitchen in London. Below: dishes include Guinness bread and butter, asparagus and new oil, and raspberry and almond tart



ILLUSTRATIONS: WILLIAM LUZ. PHOTOGRAPHS: SIM CANEY-CARKE (2)



QUAIL, CHIPS AND MAYONNAISE

Naturally, his father and sister have weighed in on the design ("everything from the building to the aprons to the music") and the 45-50 cover dining room, which overlooks Regent's Canal, is bright and airy with white walls, an open kitchen and a large refectory table at one end. On the wall hangs a photograph by Perry Ogden (a family friend) from his "Pony Kids" show from 1999, which Rocha remembers seeing as a kid.

The ethos of this place also feels personal to Rocha, who talks about it almost like a refuge for him and his staff.

Rocha hasn't always had the easiest time. Up until seven years ago, he worked in the music industry. The stress got to him, he quit and was diagnosed with depression. Making soda bread one day, he found the kneading helped him get out of his head. His mother enrolled him on a baking course, which convinced him he wanted to spend the rest of his life in a kitchen. "Food saved me" is how he puts it now. Soon he landed a job at Skye Gyngell's Spring, followed by stints at St John Bread and Wine and The River

"THIS PLACE IS AN ODE TO MY GRANDMA CECILIA"

Cafe. Working as a line chef gave him the confidence to "be my own person for the first time in my life," he says, not just his father's son or sister's brother.

But his family had concerns. Restaurants are high-pressure environments. Despite his obvious commitment, Rocha was repeatedly burning out. The turning point came working under Farokh Talati, head chef at St John Bread and Wine, who supported and encouraged him. "Farokh is the reason I'm here," says Rocha. "I learned from him how to treat staff, be kind and listen to how people are actually feeling."

Applying those lessons, Café Cecilia will open for breakfast and lunch only (and build up to dinner) so staff can maintain some sort of work-life balance. Having assembled his "dream team" of former colleagues, he says simply: "I feel safe. They understand the food I want to cook and respect me as a chef. I just want to make this place work and have a happy career."

Rocha has already drafted menus for the coming year according to what's seasonal. Breakfast dishes include white pudding and brown sauce, house sausage, borlotti beans and fried eggs, and a "beautiful bacon sandwich". Several lunch plates are inspired by Rocha's early years in Dublin. "We grew up eating a lot of ham," he says. Hence the Middlewhite collar with braised chard, and ham hock and chutney sandwiches.

The Irish influence doesn't end there. On asparagus, you find delicate curls of coolea, a smooth, Gouda-like cheese from Cork, while the dressed crab comes on Guinness bread, which is hearty and sweet from treacle in the dough. This also turns up on the breakfast menu with seven-minute eggs or toasted with preserves, as well as crumbled into ice cream for a delicious lunchtime dessert. You can order Guinness by the pint too.

Of the dishes I try, my favourite is the house terrine (a pork, apricot and pistachio version) with semi-jammy apricots and plenty of sweet/savoury/salty flavour. It's so appealing I give up rationing myself in the face of other dishes to simply dive in. I also fall hard for the raspberry and almond tart, which is buttery, biscuity and indisputably lovely. These, it turns out, are Rocha's favourite dishes too. "I like the process of making a terrine," he says. "Lining the tin. Cooking it in a bain-marie. You feel like a real chef. And I love making tarts. I mean, I love it. There is nothing I enjoy more." He recalls something said by his former boss at St John, Fergus Henderson, that how you feel shows in the food. Judging by these, Rocha is having a ball. ■HTSI

@ajesh34

EATING

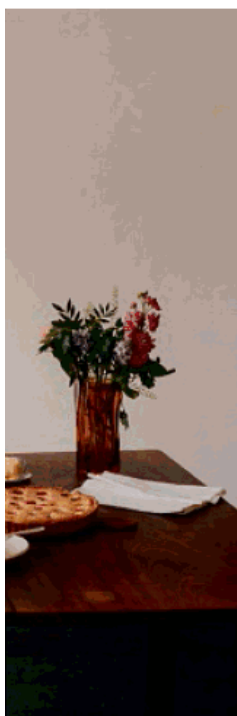
Hour of knead

Dublin-born Max Rocha conquered depression by baking soda bread. Now he's bringing his positivity to an Irish-themed canteen. By *Ajesh Patalay*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW NUDING

Don't count on seeing Max Rocha front of house at Café Cecilia in Hackney when it opens in mid-August. "I'll be in the kitchen," he insists. "I don't want anyone to see me. I just want to cook. That's where I'm happiest." No laps of honour for this 31-year-old chef-patron. And yet this place is so personal, you can't help seeing him wherever you look.

Take the name. Cecilia was his grandmother, the late mother of his fashion designer father, John Rocha. "My dad grew up in a council estate in Hong Kong, one of seven brothers and sisters," he says. "Cecilia saved up money with her poker buddies to get Dad a plane to London, where he studied fashion and made a success of his life. This restaurant is an ode to her." Cecilia is also the middle name of his fashion designer sister, Simone.



Above: Rocha's pork and apricot terrine

HOW I SPEND IT



CHRIS BLACKWELL ON BACKGAMMON

ILLUSTRATION BY EMILIE SETO

I started playing backgammon with my parents at the age of eight or nine. I loved everything about the game: the tactility of the pieces, the civility of it, spending time with friends. While I loved all games as a child, backgammon was my favourite. I still play at least once a week – and sometimes every day if time allows – and I've played all over the world: at Annabel's in Mayfair, on beaches, you name it. Anywhere that I sleep I have a board nearby.

When I was growing up in the 1950s in Montego Bay, the card game canasta was very big. My mother was always playing and there were times when I never got fed because the games would last for hours and there was often gambling involved. She also loved to play backgammon – and swim – at Ian Fleming's villa, GoldenEye, on the north coast of Jamaica, where friends like Errol Flynn and Noël Coward often gathered. After Fleming's death, I wanted to buy the property for her, but I wasn't in the best place financially, so I asked Bob Marley if he wanted to buy it. He didn't feel the vibe. A few years later, I was able to purchase the home myself and now run it as a hotel. It felt like there was a kind of serendipity at work.

Backgammon is a game of skill and chance, and in life I very much believe in luck, the roll of the dice.

I walk a lot and I love that there is always the random opportunity to take a different path. I do that in the hope of seeing or learning something new. I have always been like that in all facets of my life, including backgammon, and feel that I've been very lucky overall. Some of my best relationships – with Bob Marley and the Wailers, for example, whom I met by chance when they were stranded in England after a show – have been formed with a bit of luck. I was asked to scout bands in Birmingham in 1965 and heard a voice that sounded like Ray Charles, but higher pitched. It ended up being Steve Winwood. I was just lucky to have been selected to scout that day, or I would have never met him.

Over the years I've bought many tables and sets, but my most prized one was purchased from Hugh Hefner's backgammon club/disco, Pips, in LA in the late 1960s.

IT'S A GAME OF CHANCE, AND IN LIFE I VERY MUCH BELIEVE IN THE ROLL OF THE DICE

Pips was named for the 24 points on the backgammon board, and Hefner was very passionate about the game, though I never had the chance to play with him. This particular set is huge and painted in the striking red and green colours of Gucci. The pieces are also quite large – 1.5in diameter – which makes it even more unusual.

I went to the club one day, saw it and thought it was incredible, so I ordered one on the spot. It's currently at my country house in England and really is the game at its best.

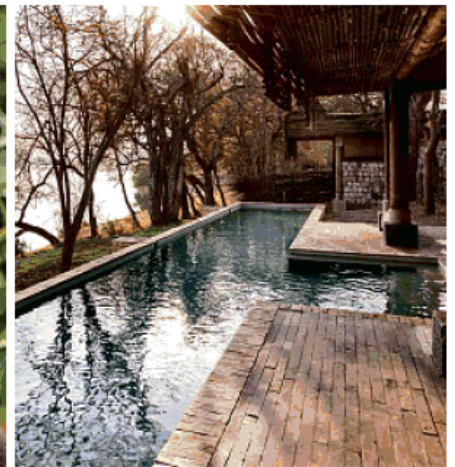
Another favourite takes pride of place in the Fleming villa. It's designed with handpainted peacocks, and everyone who stays plays on that board. Another board I cherish is the one given to me by my late wife, Mary Vinson. It is a beautiful leather table. You take the top off to reveal the board. One day when I was cleaning out the apartment, inside the drawer was a letter from Mary to me. I left it there for safekeeping, and it still remains. This board is currently in my New York apartment and during Covid it was busy. I'd play, drink coffee and have cake every evening, stopping only to clap for the healthcare heroes at 7pm.

Ultimately, it is the company that makes the game so special and GoldenEye – and Jamaica in general – has seen a lot of action over the years. Prior to Covid, I'd play with our guests at Bizot Bar and we also used to host a tournament at my other resort Strawberry Hill; I look forward to being able to do these things again. Worthy opponents over the years have included everyone from Grace Jones to Princess Michael of Kent. I enjoyed long games with the late Broadway producer Terry Allen Kramer in New York, on Harbour Island and in London – and Dennis Hopper was an entertaining competitor too. The only place I've lived where I didn't play backgammon at all was in Miami; people there were more interested in looking at women in bikinis than concentrating on a board game.

I've played every day since returning to Jamaica after lockdown. My girlfriend beat me solidly the whole time we were in New York; she was on a lucky streak and it was unbelievable to both of us. That's the luck of the dice. ■HTSI

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TRÉSOR COLLECTION

KAIA'S CHOICE

Surrounded by fashion from a very young age, Kaia Gerber is no stranger to the modelling world. While following her famous mother onto the most exclusive runways and photoshoots, she is now choosing to walk a unique path, bringing her own sense of style and personality to the role. It's a family passion, with a very bright future.



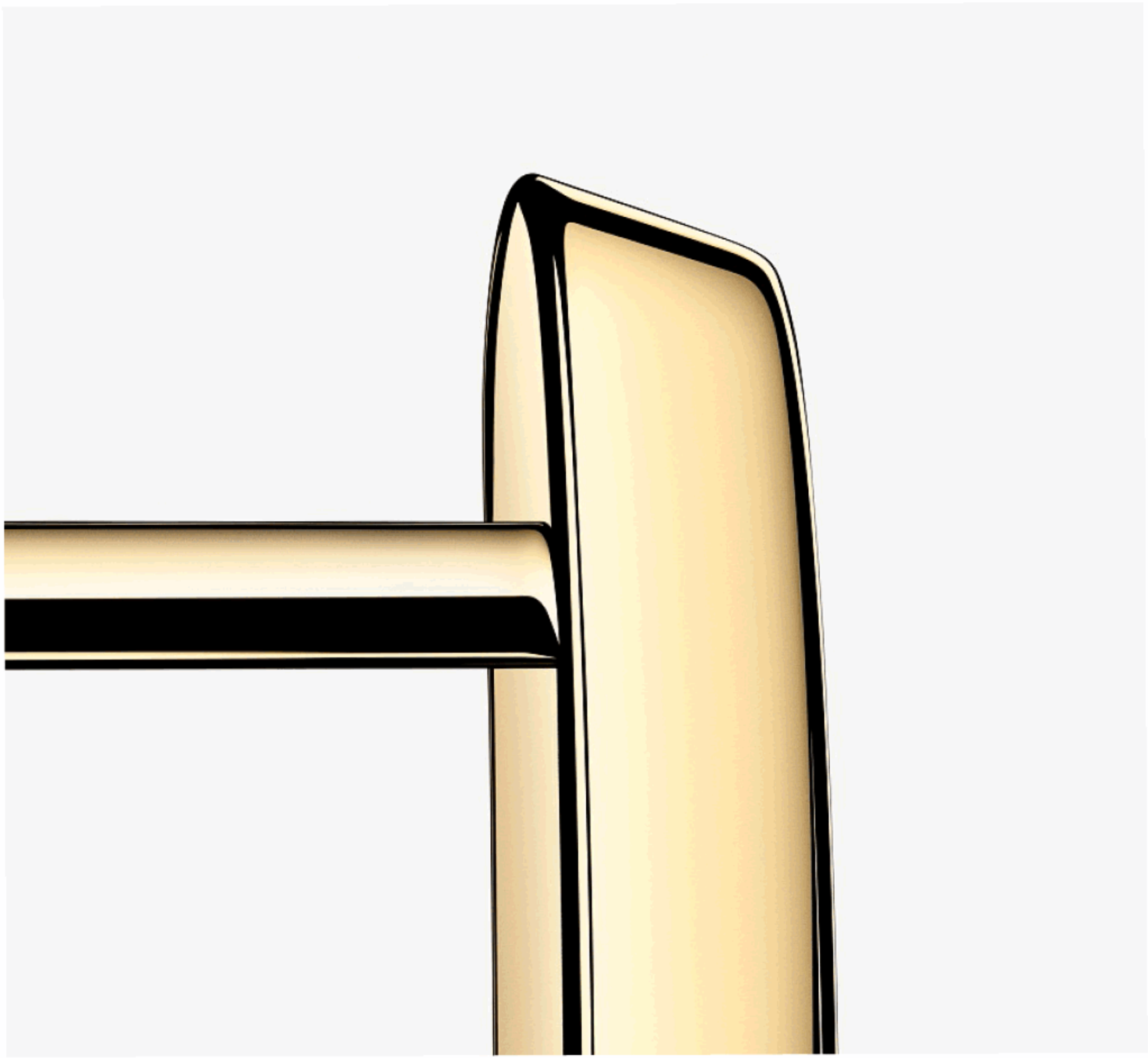
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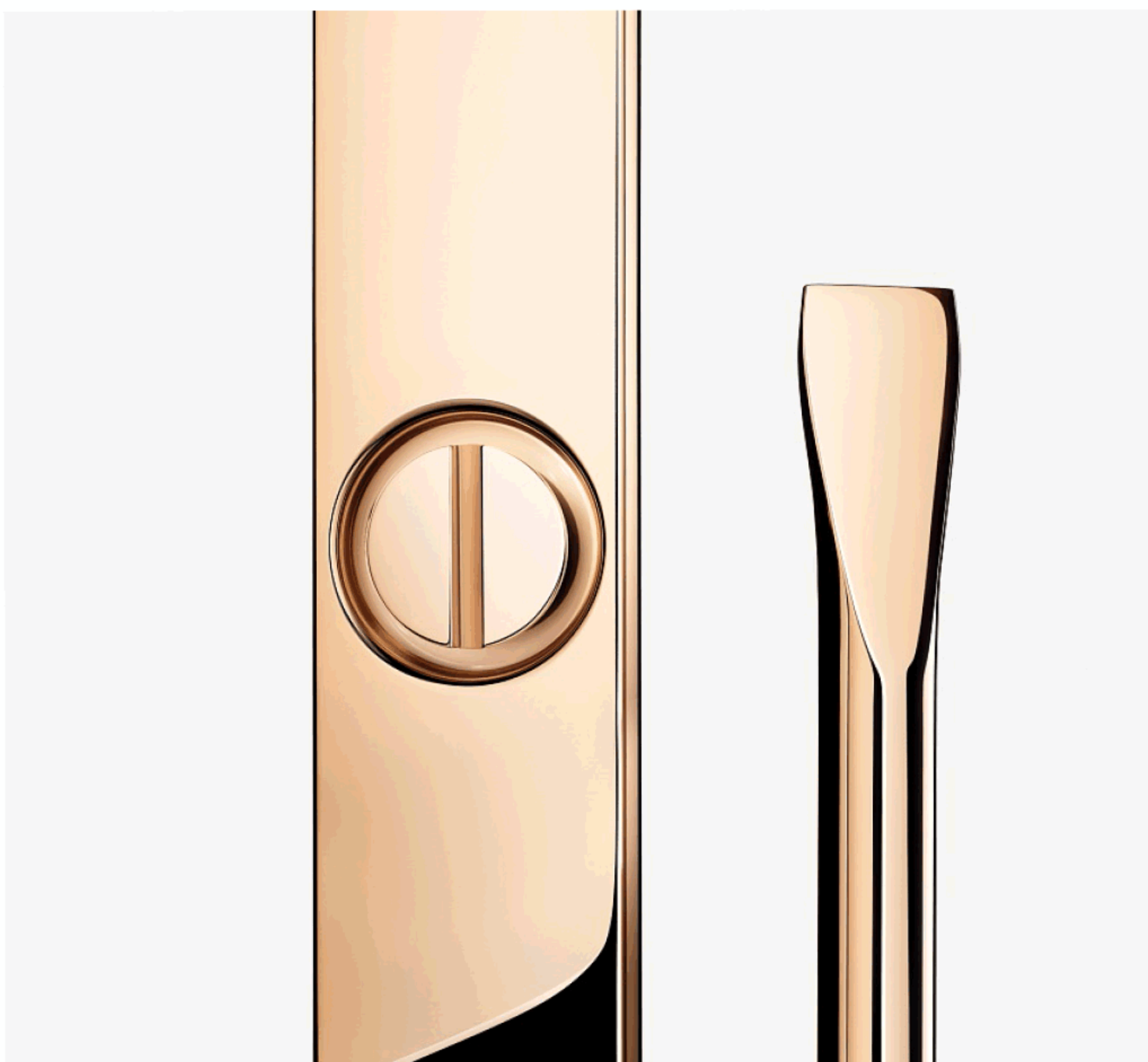
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Bed: Vindö | Fabric: Designers Guild Glenville Oyster | Vindö Carpet:
Light Beige | Bed Linen: Storm Pebble | Bedside Table: Holme Black

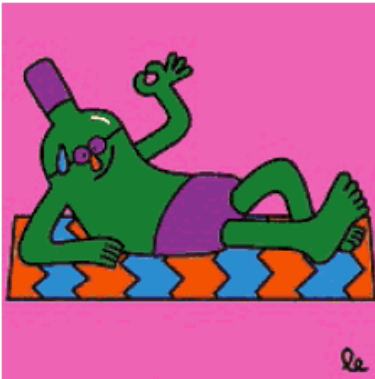


CARPE DIEM BEDS
SWEDISH LUXURY



'Imagine the courage, independence and uninfluenced choices these women made to create this work'

Tina Barney, p30



'In Bordeaux, the effect of ever-warmer summers has been a dramatic rise in wine potency'

Jancis Robinson, p41

'This is the taste of our summer, and it's the best barbecue sauce we've ever had'

Honey & Co, p38



FT Weekend Magazine

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Cover photograph by Cole Barash looking over the East River to midtown Manhattan from Pulaski Bridge

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SIMON KUPER

OPENING SHOT

How the fight over space status will redefine city life



Every day in a city, people fight battles for space. It's everywhere: the frenzied bidding for a broom closet in Knightsbridge, the Parisian maître d' who judges you too ugly to sit at a central table or, of vastly different moral import, police harassing young men of colour deemed to be in the wrong neighbourhood. The €10 cappuccino on Venice's Piazza San Marco is the price of renting that space.

It's these battles that can make urban life so stressful. After a year's pause, they have now resumed, but in altered form. That's because space status – the value of each urban spot – has been shaken up and redistributed. The post-pandemic city will host new kinds of battles for space.

Space status has soared since the 1970s when there were still jobless bohemians living in London's Soho and you could park your car on the doorsteps of flagship museums. As space has gained value, cities have had to choose how to allocate it. Broadly, there are two approaches: you either sell it to the highest bidder (pretty much the definition of neoliberalism) or you recognise non-monetary forms of status.

For almost all of the past century, the non-monetary approach remained common. Soviet citizens needed a bureaucratic permit to move to Moscow. Even Manhattan used to be full of rent-controlled apartments allocated not so much to the working poor as to the well-connected. And when Jacques Chirac was mayor of Paris in the 1990s, he doled out city-owned grace-and-favour apartments to cronies. The future French prime minister Alain Juppé and some of his relatives were fortunate enough to get several (though Juppé said nothing improper had happened).

No matter which exact criteria were used to allocate space, the winners were almost always high-status people – males, whites and the elderly – who generally felt entitled to them. Think of “manspreading” on the subway, SUVs banishing kids from the streets, baby boomers winning the housing market and New York City's “stop-and-frisk” policy, which disproportionately targeted black and Latino people.

Gradually, neoliberal allocation of space became the norm, especially in New York and London, but also in Beijing, which now periodically evicts so-called “low-end residents”. Still, other forms of status continue to matter in cities. When the penniless octogenarian French writer Gabriel Matzneff fell into disgrace recently because of his paedophilic writings, he was found to be living in a subsidised apartment on Paris's high-priced Left Bank, a tribute from the French state to his literary fame. Cities such as Amsterdam now plan to divert apartments from their most lucrative use – as Airbnbs – and keep them for residents instead.

Even in New York, money isn't always decisive. An undying New York Times article from 2005 describes how the doormen of the nightclub

Marquee chose which customers to admit. Bribes didn't cut it. One tech entrepreneur was told: “Flashing a pile of cash is a complete and total admission that you don't belong here.” Instead, the Marquee granted entry based on ever-changing non-monetary claims to status. From the 1990s, reported the newspaper, “waiflike beauty began trumping studied eccentricity as the main criterion”. One doorman explained his philosophy: “My father always taught me that there are winners and losers in this world. My job is to make sure this place is full of winners.” He

‘No matter which criteria were used to allocate space, the winners were almost always high-status people’

had summed up the ideology of the modern city in a sentence. (For more from New York, see this week's cover package.)

Gentrification keeps creating high-status space, yet there is never enough to go around. Now the pandemic has rejiggered the space status of rival forms of land. House prices have jumped, despite the trickle of residents out of cities, while demand for office and retail space has slumped. I've just been back to London for the first time since March 2020 and, months after the UK began reopening, the city centre was still so quiet that every day felt like Sunday. Wandering along a near-empty Oxford Street one morning, I was reminded of a provincial high street circa 2019.

There's an obvious trade-off and the store group John Lewis has begun making it by planning to turn some of its property across the UK into 7,000 rental homes. Also under pressure are the roads that occupy about 30 per cent of London's land, only 6 percentage points less than the space allotted to housing. In an era of remote work and cycle lanes, that's too much asphalt.

Capitalism abhors a vacuum and, in expensive cities, space that has lost status will be reallocated to higher-status uses. This is an urban process that never stops: in the late 19th century, Oxford Street itself converted from residential and entertainment to retail. Fifty years from now, a yuppie of the Late Anthropocene sprawled on his terrace in the November heat, gazing out over the dykes that line the Thames, may remark: “You know this building used to be a department store? Yah, a Debenhams or something.”

Meanwhile in the distant neighbourhood where I was staying, which possessed very little space status in the 1950s when Rod Stewart and the future founders of The Kinks were growing up there and still doesn't even have a Tube station, the average home now costs £1.02m, up 19 per cent since 2019. **FT**

.....
simon.kuper@ft.com [@KuperSimon](#)



INVENTORY SARKODIE, RAPPER

‘I want to change a lot of things for the generations to come’

Sarkodie, 33, is one of Africa’s most successful rappers, the first Ghanaian to win the BET Award for Best International Act: Africa, and the winner of the Vodafone Ghana Music Award 2019 for Artiste of the Decade. His albums include *Rapperholic*, *Sarkology* and *Mary*.

What was your childhood or earliest ambition?

To be a doctor. I wanted to help people.

Private school or state school?

University or straight into work?

Junior and senior high school back home in Ghana. Then a degree in graphic design at IPMC [College of Technology]. In Africa, entertainment is seen as more of a hobby than a profession, so that’s why I studied graphic design. But I always felt it was going to be very hard for me to sit in an office – I like to move. Music wasn’t part of the plan. But I had a very dark time when I was a child – I lived with someone who was a very bad person. That made me very reserved. Then I fell in love with rap. I channelled my energy into writing music. It was like therapy. I started doing rap battles and I was beating everyone I challenged. That made me feel I could do music.

Who was or still is your mentor?

Different people for different inspiration. Obrafour, this legend back home in Ghana who raps in Twi, our native language. And beyond just music, Jay-Z. His blueprint is what I’m following. I don’t need to meet him. Him winning guides me and shows me how I can stretch this.

How physically fit are you?

Left to myself, I wouldn’t do too much, but I have to be fit – I’m on stage at least two hours. I go to the gym because I have to.

Ambition or talent: which matters more to success?

Ambition. A lot of people who have zero talent are making it way bigger than people with serious talent. It’s what you put your mind to.

How politically committed are you?

I don’t care about political parties – I care about my country and about putting people first. That’s why I sometimes get tied up in politics. Honestly, truthfully, I want everybody to be OK. I want our hospitals to work, I want our roads to work,

I want our systems to work. I get worried and I vent about it.

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

The power to change people’s situations for the better.

What’s your biggest extravagance?

Real estate.

In what place are you happiest?

At home with my wife and my kids. I can let everything go and be honestly happy.

What ambitions do you still have?

I want to give back to the entertainment industry that made me Sarkodie. I want to change a lot of things for the generations to come – I want them to have smooth sailing. That’s my top box to tick.

What drives you on?

In my job, the feedback from the fans. I feel I have people who care about me, people who love me. Not to brag, but I have one of the biggest fan bases – I’m like a lifestyle to them, this isn’t just about me. As a person, I will never quit until I’m dead – I can’t let go. I don’t know where I got that from, but it’s who I am.

What is the greatest achievement of your life so far?

My family: my daughter, my son, my wife. Being able to provide for my family. That’s priceless.

What do you find most irritating in other people?

Negative energy – people who want to kill the whole vibe. I can’t deal with that.

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

“I can’t wait to meet you!”

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

There’s nothing coming to me for this question.

What is the greatest challenge of our time?

We are selfish. We are in a situation where everybody’s trying to shield what they have. The challenge is to open up and factor other people in as well. The bigger picture is: we all have to survive.

Do you believe in an afterlife?

It could make sense, but with no serious proof, I honestly don’t know.

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

9.99. Nothing is perfect. **FT**

Interview by Hester Lacey.

Sarkodie’s new album

“No Pressure” is out now

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ROBERT SHRIMSLEY THE NATIONAL CONVERSATION

Living with Covid after the grand reopening

We must learn to live with the virus. We must take personal responsibility. Freed from the shackles of the law and the sanctions of four-figure fines, the government is setting England free once more to laugh in the face of Covid and hope that it doesn't laugh back in ours.

I suspect the government is roughly right in its thinking. Sooner or later we have to reclaim normality and what better time than when the number of daily cases doubled in a fortnight? I mean, if we waited until they were lower again it wouldn't be sporting, would it? And in fairness to the prime minister, we can hardly learn to live with the virus if there's not much of it about.

But even though I broadly agree with the reopening (I really can't see the argument for nightclubs but, then again, I never could), the new slogans are already beginning to grate. "Hands, face, space" may have been tiresome but it was at least informative.

What are we to make though of "Learn to live with it", which, as a piece of advice, boils down to little more than "Stop whining". Actually, it looks like the message is: "With the most vulnerable jabbed, we are going for herd immunity. Learn to live with it." Except the first part was mysteriously left off official communications. The attitude underpinning "Learn to live with it" is essentially "Shit happens", a brave position since when shit happens to the electorate, it tends to happen to the government too.

Even if the argument is valid, the advice is not entirely helpful. It is not, for example, a line I would feel any confidence advocating in regard to housework. As the plates pile up in the sink, I'm not sure I would do well telling my wife that we have to learn to live with dirty crockery.

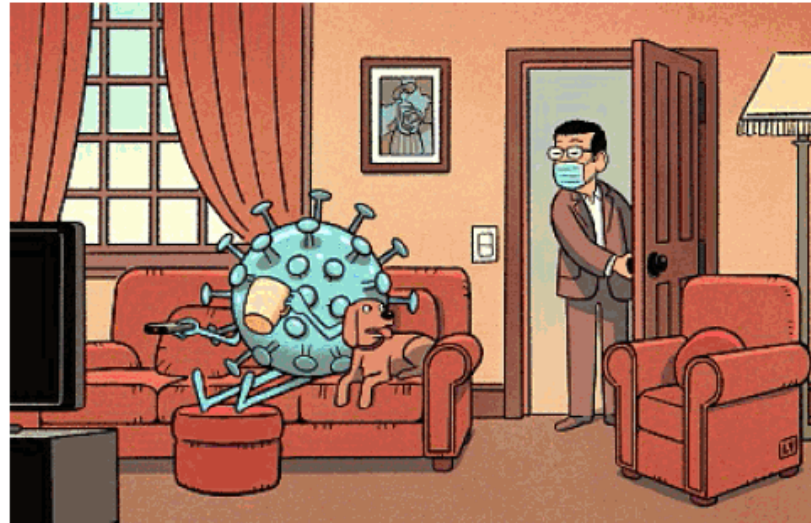


ILLUSTRATION BY LUCAS VARELA

We do not generally "learn to live" with burglary. Although, on reflection, that does often seem to be the police's approach. Nor is home secretary Priti Patel learning to live with illegal immigration or offering people-smugglers the patently sensible advice to show some personal responsibility.

This is where the other asinine slogan comes in. It may indeed be time for us to take back personal responsibility and, for most of this crisis, the true story has been of people trying to follow the rules - those people outside government, anyway. But in my experience, those who need to be told this are the ones least likely to exercise it. Already, trains and shops are sprinkled with people whose idea of personal responsibility is to wear a face mask but not over their nose.

And how ready do I feel to count on the personal responsibility practised by the kind of self-regarding heroes who brag about refusing the vaccine and think their refusal to don a mask places them on a par with Soviet dissidents or the French resistance?

In many cases, personal judgment is entirely appropriate. I do not have to go into a crowded pub if it bothers me (though the

staff have no option). I can be as careful as I feel I need to be in social interactions. But many have no choice about using the Tube, and there seems no good reason for removing the mask requirement on public transport. The problem here is that the responsibility we are asked to take is not for our own person but for someone else. Those who remain fearful are having to rely on those who do not.

So even if you think, as I do, that the government is not wrong to remove most restrictions, it might be a nice example of the responsibility it espouses to accommodate a few lingering rules in those areas where people are dependent on the consideration of others. Yes, it is an imposition, but the existence of government itself is a recognition that unchecked personal responsibility is rarely enough for good order.

Meanwhile, in the spirit of constructive criticism, I'd like to offer an alternative slogan for the new era of personal responsibility: "Covid's still with us. Don't be a git." **FT**

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As your article "Northern Ireland's teens take to the streets" (July 3/4) highlights, it's fairly easy to live life in NI without coming into contact with "the other side", especially in these working-class and deprived areas. Obviously, this is completely unsustainable - no political entity can really be stable where large numbers of its residents grow up living parallel lives. A serious push towards cross-community education needs to happen. **Malatrou via FT.com**

Re "How Britain's private schools lost their grip on Oxbridge" (July 3/4). As someone who went to a highly selective London public school and recently left Oxbridge, I can tell you that 50 per cent or more of admissions from the school to Oxbridge were either not very clever at all or were clever but had no real academic interest in their subject, meaning Oxbridge was basically a rubber stamp for their job in finance/law. I don't think we should shed many tears if Oxbridge is slowly finding more capable candidates to take their place. **BigWilzb via FT.com**

Fiona Millar @schooltruth July 3
So sorry for all you private school parents who aren't now getting your children into Oxbridge. There is probably a great state school down the road you know.

Re Gillian Tett's "The truth is out there... I guess" (July 3/4). We might be better off learning how to communicate with intelligent life on earth. Whales, dolphins, various terrestrial mammals, some birds and octopuses all demonstrate sentience and shared communication. It's questionably intelligent to imagine communicating with lifeforms we haven't even met when learning to communicate with the non-humans on our own planet would be such an obvious warm-up exercise. **Fourier via FT.com**

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FT Globetrotter has launched a brand new guide to Singapore, celebrating the joys of the Garden City with expert advice on eating and drinking, exercise, cultural activities and much more. We're looking for your best Singapore tips too. Submit them at ft.com/globetrotter/singapore

Quiz answers: The link was Welsh geography 1. Monmouth Rebellion 2. John Cowper Powys 3. Deed Heeburn 4. Barry Humphries 5. Cardigan 6. Newport Pagnell 7. Captain Flint 8. Earl of Snowdon 9. David Gower 10. Hey fever Picture quiz: June Brown + Windsor Davies + Brown Windsor

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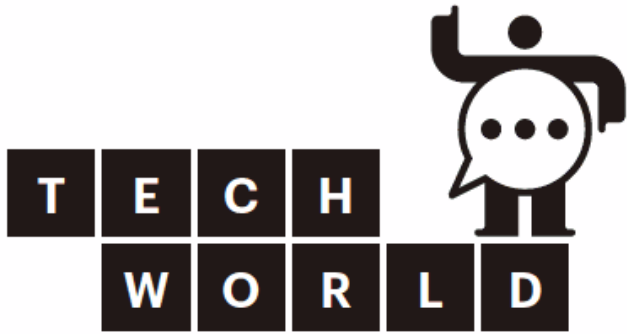
When Karl Marx told the world's workers they had nothing to lose but their chains, he could have been talking about the original proletarian mode of transport: the bike. Coincidentally, cycling was the inspiration for the new C63 Sealander Elite chronometer. Not only does the smart pop-out crown stop it digging into your wrist when you're riding, but the super-light titanium case makes it effortless to wear. Though Karl would have surely loved these utilitarian features, we think its sleek design is more 'Wiggins' than 'Marx'.

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BY ELAINE MOORE

The internet fad that's odd even for the internet

Mukbang videos always start with the food. Heaps of bright red crab legs or bowls of glistening noodles sit close to the camera. Behind them, the video creator nods and smiles at the viewer before leaning in and taking a bite.

Watching strangers eat is one of the weirder spectacles on the internet – simultaneously gross and mesmerising. There is a format. Some creators chat, others play jaunty music and speed up their film. Many say nothing at all but exaggerate the sounds of chewing, cracking or swallowing to create an autonomous sensory meridian response (ASMR) in their viewers.

If that sounds unappealing, it will come as a surprise to hear how popular the trend is. Videos with the hashtag “whatieatinaday” have been viewed more than seven billion times on TikTok. Twitch has an entire category called “Social Eating” on which people livestream themselves cooking and eating. The trend is so popular in China that President Xi Jinping has identified it as counterintuitive to the country’s fight against food waste.

Mukbang, which comes from South Korea, simply translates as “eating broadcast”. But it has become better known as a sort of extreme sport in which people binge huge quantities of food. Some videos are practically Boschian, with splatters of ranch and hot wing sauce all over the table and influencers gasping as they try to finish a bowl of spicy fire noodles or the entire Domino’s pizza menu.

Stunts are, of course, the internet’s bread and butter. Why



ILLUSTRATION BY PATE

should food on the internet be any different? One woman has become famous on TikTok for making “sandwiches” from raw green peppers, cream cheese and bagel seasoning. On YouTube, there are hundreds of videos in which people try to follow a supermodel’s diet for the day. Influencers make videos that show every meal and snack they consume, aware that many of their followers want to look just like them.

The backlash to these aspirational eating diaries are the videos that deliberately make a virtue of being humdrum. British TikTok star Eden Harvey has amassed over two million followers with her daily “eat with me” videos, in which she records herself having a one-sided conversation while eating her dinner, pausing to allow viewers to answer her questions.

‘Videos with the hashtag “whatieatinaday” have been viewed more than seven billion times on TikTok’

The food is comforting in its ordinariness: spaghetti bolognese, sandwiches and chicken kiev. Harvey’s fanbase of viewers often seems skewed towards those who struggle with food issues. Her success is an indication of just how many people, particularly young people, have a difficult relationship with what they eat.

But even if that’s not the case, there is something appealing about knowing what another person eats every day. This is not a new phenomenon. One of the most vivid illustrations of life in the 17th century comes from diarist Samuel Pepys’ description of his meals. There is the venison pasty that “stunk like a devil” and the “pretty” dinner that included stewed carps and neats’ tongues.

Years later, English housewife Nella Last’s wartime diaries are memorable for her make-do recipes, including margarine created from milk, salt and corn flour. Whenever I buy potatoes, I think of the legend that Jackie Onassis’ diet consisted of a single baked potato each day, stuffed with caviar and sour cream.

It is not unusual to be interested in the minutiae of someone else’s life either. See the success of Vogue’s online videos showing famous women putting on their make-up and the livestreams of people sleeping or silently revising homework for hours at a time. Website Refinery29 has found success with its money diaries, in which readers record their exact spending habits over the course of a week. There is a sense of companionship in seeing the banal details of another person’s life – plus the chance to judge.

What the internet has done is allow more people the ability to film their daily routines and upload the results, sharing them with a bigger audience than ever before. Part of the appeal is nosiness. But many of the videos are also designed to make it feel as if the viewer is with a friend. Watching someone eat online seems to help some viewers feel less alone. Dining is a social activity, after all. Perhaps it makes sense that this side of our social lives is moving online, along with everything else. **FT**

Elaine Moore is the FT’s deputy Lex editor

Jean Dubuffet Brutal Beauty

17 May – 22 Aug

★★★★★
The Guardian

★★★★★
The Independent

★★★★★
The Telegraph

Jean Dubuffet, *The Erosogonist One (Erosogonist)*, July 1954, Private Collection, © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2021. Photograph by Joseph Casso Jr. courtesy Pace Gallery


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The recent unsettling footage of England's chief medical officer Chris Whitty being grabbed and harassed in a central London park brought to mind many things. There were the similar scenes of BBC journalist Nicholas Watt being pursued, surrounded and abused at a protest in Westminster. Darker still, there was the murder of the MP Jo Cox during the Brexit campaign five years ago.

But I was also reminded of the square root of two.

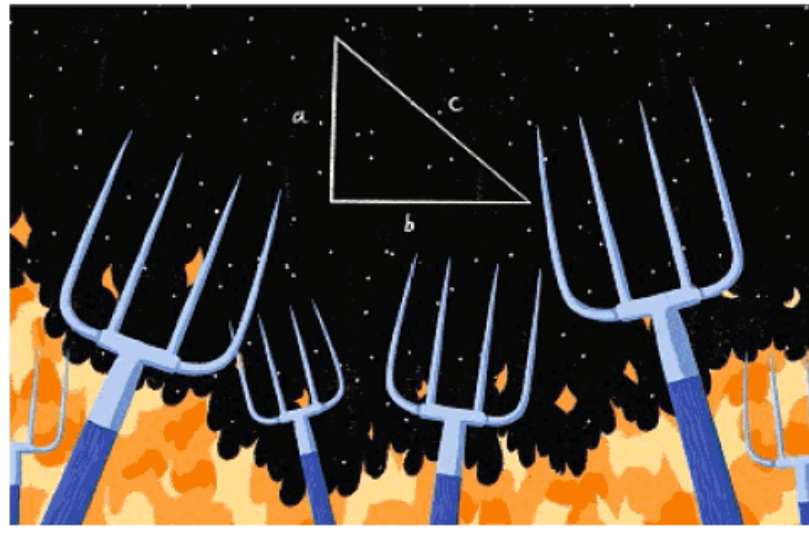
Two and a half thousand years ago, followers of Pythagoras believed that the constants of the universe were constructed of whole numbers. The Pythagoreans were wrong. One such constant is a simple diagonal across a square - the square root of two. But there are no two whole numbers which, as a fraction, give us the square root of two. $\frac{3}{2}$ isn't far off. $\frac{10}{7}$ is closer. But you can give up on finding the exact fraction.*

None of this should cause much alarm, except perhaps to the long-suffering editors and typesetters of this column. Yet the Pythagoreans were extremely perturbed by the simple demonstration that a basic constant could not be expressed as a fraction of whole numbers. So perturbed, in fact, that it is said the mathematician Hippasus was murdered by being thrown overboard while at sea as a punishment for discovering the ghastly truth.

We don't know much about Hippasus, and the evidence that he was killed for this little proof is rather patchy. But perhaps the legend has lived on because it serves as a cautionary tale. When a society persecutes people for telling the truth, it is a short step from losing its collective mind.

The totalitarian regimes of the 20th century give us the starkest examples of such insanity. Stalin persecuted genetics researchers in the 1930s and ostentatiously praised the scientist Trofim Lysenko when he claimed that genetics was a "bourgeois perversion" and geneticists were "saboteurs". The resulting crop failures killed millions. For an encore, Stalin ordered the killing of the statistician in charge of the 1937 census, Olimpiy Kvitkin. Kvitkin's crime was that his census revealed a fall in population as a result of that famine. Telling that truth could not be forgiven.

In May, the great crop scientist Yuan Longping died at the age of 90. He led the research



TIM HARFORD

THE UNDERCOVER ECONOMIST



We must face facts - even the ones we don't like

effort to develop the hybrid rice crops that now feed billions of people. Yet in 1966, he too came very close to being killed as a counter-revolutionary during China's cultural revolution.

In western democracies we do things differently. Governments do not execute scientists; they sideline them. Late last year, Undark magazine interviewed eight former US government scientists who had left their posts in frustration or protest at the obstacles placed in their way under the presidency of Donald Trump.

Then there are the random acts of hostility on the street and the death threats on social media. I have seen Twitter posts demanding that certain statisticians be silenced or hunted down and destroyed, sometimes for doing no more than publishing graphs of Covid-19 cases and hospitalisations.

Even when this remains at the level of ugly intimidation, it is horrible to hear about and must be far worse to experience. It is not something we should expect a civil servant, a vaccine researcher or a journalist to have to endure. And it would be complacent to believe that the threats are always empty.

What can be done? We can demand better from our leaders.

Trump never tired of winking his approval at violence against journalists; we can but hope that future presidents refrain.

In September 2019, Boris Johnson was dismissive of complaints from MPs who had received death threats. The solution, he said, was Brexit. He has been much quicker to support Whitty, but it seems that his opposition to intimidation and harassment is rather more conditional than one might wish.

While a firmer moral lead from our politicians would help, ultimately the respect for facts - and those who research

I have seen Twitter posts demanding that certain statisticians be hunted down and destroyed - for doing no more than publishing graphs of Covid-19 cases

or report them - has to come from all of us. The facts are sometimes unpleasant: Brexit creates trade barriers between large neighbouring economies. Carbon dioxide emissions are seriously altering the climate. Sars-Cov-2 is much more dangerous than seasonal flu, and cases are rising dramatically in the UK.

It would be nice if none of these things were true, but the vast majority of us are adult enough to accept the evidence, the expert judgment of those who gather that evidence and the honesty of those who report it.

The message can be infuriating, but let's not throw the messenger overboard. **31**

** Prove it, you say? Assume a whole-number fraction, $\frac{a}{b}$, does equal $\sqrt{2}$. Let's also assume that $\frac{a}{b}$ is the simplest possible fraction, with a and b sharing no common factors. Rearranging $\frac{a}{b} = \sqrt{2}$ gives us $2b^2 = a^2$. That means a^2 is an even number, which implies four things: a is also even, and therefore $\frac{a}{2}$ is also even, and therefore b^2 is even, and therefore b is even. Alas, we began by assuming that $\frac{a}{b}$ was the simplest possible whole-number fraction, but we've just proved that $\frac{a}{b}$ is the ratio of two even numbers and therefore the fraction could be simplified by dividing both of them by two. This contradiction shows that our original assumption - that a and b exist at all - must be wrong.
Tim Harford's new book is "How to Make the World Add Up"*

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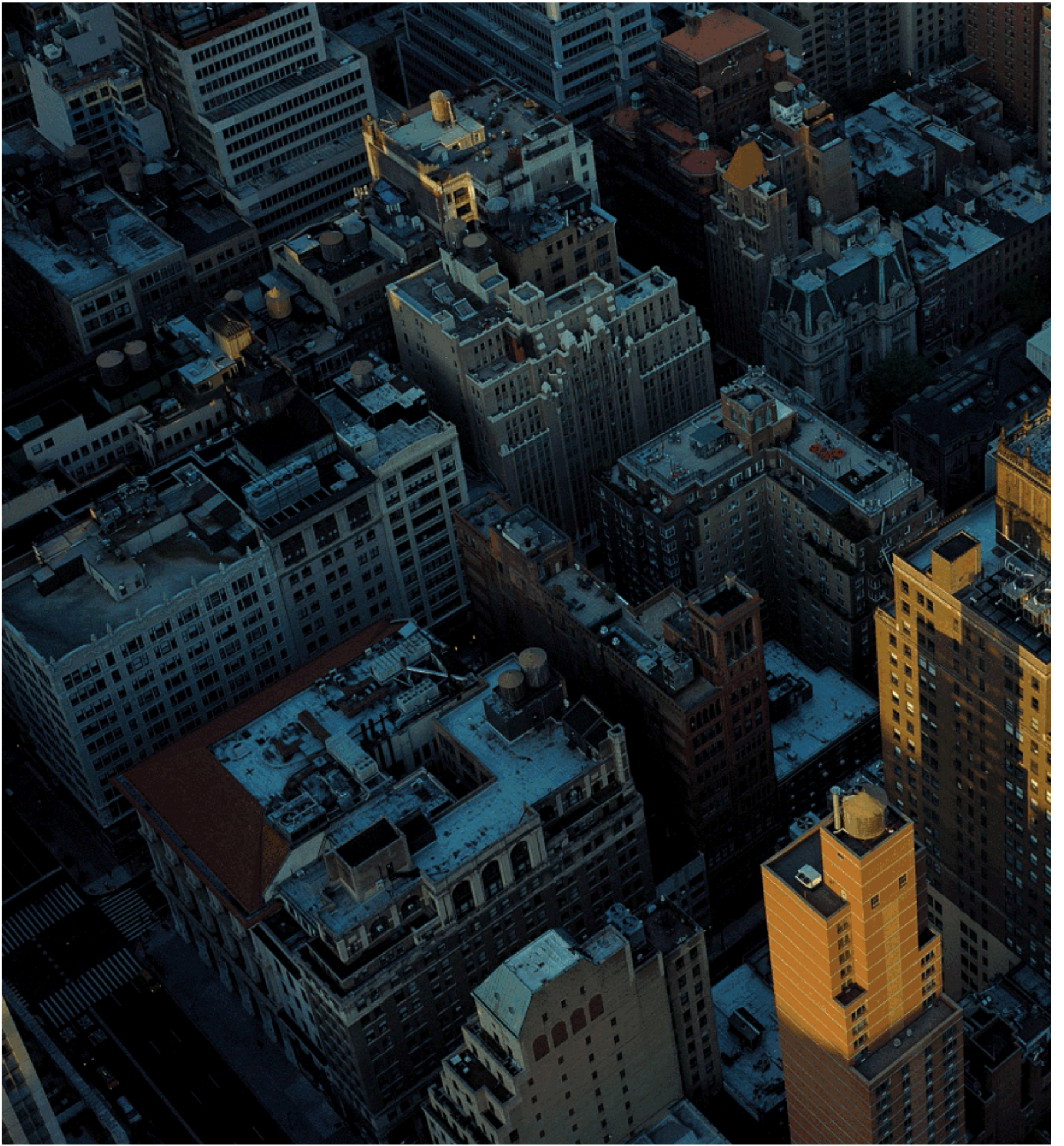
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SASHA ARUTYUNOVA



NEW YORK DISPATCHES

22 Simon Schama on mischief-making and American history

26 Rana Foroohar rereads Jane Jacobs 60 years later

30 Tina Barney takes us to the Met Fifth Avenue

FREEDOMSONG

What is the retelling of the American Revolution for? Not to absolve or admonish, chide or coddle. History, writes *Simon Schama*, is the search for truth in all its terrible complexity. Photograph by *Sasha Arutyunova*

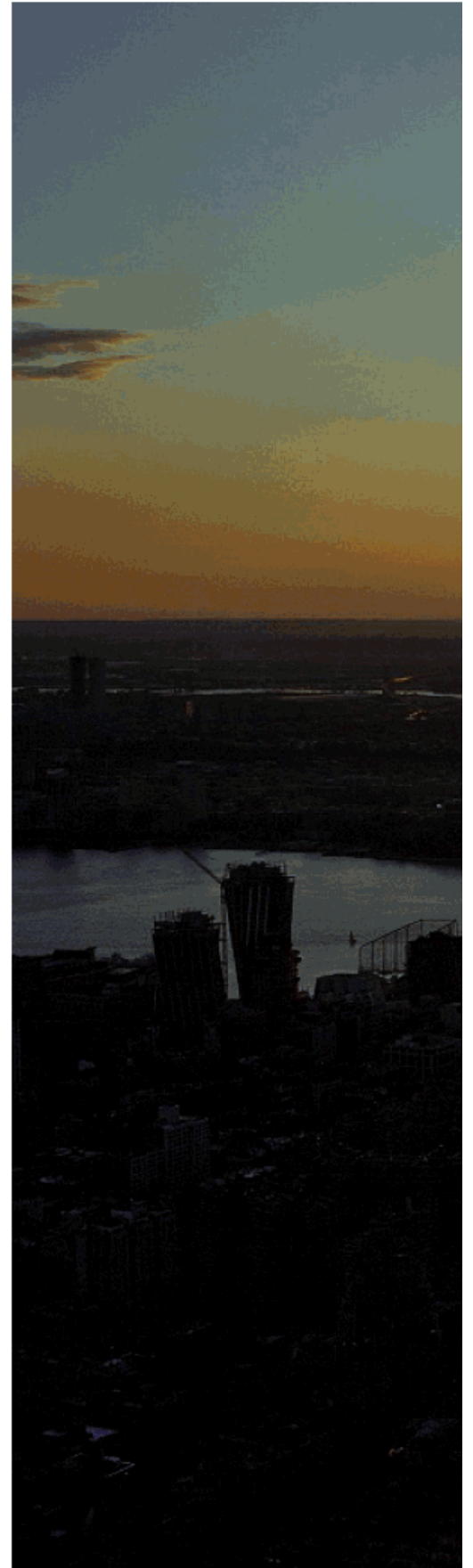
View from the Empire State Building, New York, September 7 2019

On July 4, the night sky over the Hudson Valley was clear and empty. No planes, no mist, no rain, allowing fireworks to explode with spectacular brilliance. Above the towns, the whoosh and bang sounded out something more than the usual burst of patriotic glee: the soundtrack of relief, the sense of Covid in retreat, if not yet defeated. At home, after the oohs and ahs, a miniature percussion section (our three small grandsons) marched up and down the back deck to the strains of Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever", putting their all into saucepan-lid banging in time with the beat.

Absent from our family celebration - only because it's currently in London storage - is an enormous, slightly moth-eaten 19th-century Union Jack. I've been known to hang it on July 4, not as a gesture of British party-pooping or to aggravate the neighbours, but because this particular neck of the woods has a fascinatingly mixed history as a theatre of the Revolutionary War.

The country around here, like all of America during the revolution, was divided into equally numbered thirds: Patriot, Loyalist and nervous neutrals. Across the river and a little way upstream, the improvised fort (actually earthworks) at Stony Point was established by the British general Clinton to control the Hudson, but was taken in a daring attack by "Mad" Anthony Wayne's force of American commandos on July 16 1779. Closer to home, at Tarrytown, the British spy Major John André was caught, before he could reach Benedict Arnold at West Point. Documents André was carrying revealed the plan to deliver the fort to the British army and, to George Washington's incredulous horror, the perfidy of one of his most trusted generals.

Flags - these days, the rags of polemical rage - also have a mixed history. In 1929, the dashing aviator Opal Kunz dropped a mass of them from her plane directly over ▶





◀ the site of the battle of Stony Point. Those were the “Betsy Ross” flags created by the eponymous Patriot upholsterer, featuring red and white stripes but with the five-pointed stars of the 13 colonies arranged in a circle to symbolise, optimistically, perpetual union. But the Betsy Ross was preceded by the Grand Union Flag, designed by the Philadelphia milliner Margaret Manny for the new fleet of the American navy. Manny’s flag had the obligatory stripes but, in place of stars, the top left canton featured the Union Jack.

But then history is a great mischief-maker, the enemy of simplicities, especially those of national allegiance. “The Star-Spangled Banner” was adopted as the American national anthem only in 1931. Prior to that, “America (My Country ’Tis of Thee)”, first performed on July 4 1831, served as patriotic hymn along with “Hail Columbia”. Confusingly, its melody is that of the British national anthem. Which was, in fact, the point. The last line of the hymn of monarchist devotion is replaced by an American democratic alternative: “let freedom ring” supersedes “God save the king”. But one artful contrafactum brought on another. In 1843, AG Duncan wrote a stinging, abolitionist version which begins:

*My country 'tis of thee
Stronghold of slavery
Of thee I sing*

The second verse is even more to the point:

*My native country, thee,
Where all men are born free,
If white's their skin*

The jarring discrepancy between the “self-evident” truth of human equality asserted in the Declaration of Independence and the brutal reality of America’s founding being

built on the backs of the enslaved is not, then, some contemporary piety of the “woke”. Since Samuel Johnson acidly inquired “How is it that we hear the loudest yelps of liberty among the drivers of negroes?”, this founding contradiction has never been out of view. In 1773, Benjamin Rush published a pamphlet asking the same question: “Where is the difference between a British Senator who attempts to enslave his fellow subjects in America, by imposing taxes upon them contrary to law and justice, and the American Patriot who reduces his African brethren to slavery contrary to justice and humanity?” The same contradiction was perhaps most famously restated by Frederick Douglass: “What to the slave is the Fourth of July?”

The serious issue of whether race is just an unfortunate asterisk to the Declaration of Independence or whether it was formative to the creation of the Union is at the heart of what has morphed into the American history wars of the present moment. Its mirror image in the UK asks whether colonialism was incidental or fundamental to British economic and political power.

Historians have had their say on both sides, but arguments from evidence have been sandbagged by politicians interested in making national allegiance rather than issues of economic and social equity the engine of electoral mobilisation. The result is to turn debate about what actually happened into a patriotic litmus test. Should history make you proud or ashamed? Unapologetically nationalist or punitively iconoclastic?

But history is neither in the business of self-congratulation nor self-flagellation. History is in the truth business. And if the truth should be hard to nail down in simplicities, then the least history can do is to disabuse its readers of outright falsehoods. Thus history will tell you, in irrefutable documentation and direct witness, that millions of European Jews were systematically murdered by the Nazis. Notwithstanding the history oration delivered by Donald Trump on July 4 2019 during the tinhorn parade of military hardware, there were no revolutionary war airports for the Continental Army to seize, nor did it deliver a “total victory” at Fort Mifflin, that siege taking place in an altogether different war in 1776. The truth indelibly and unapologetically imprinted in the Constitution of the Confederacy is that its rebellion was not fought merely for “states’ rights”, as its apologists like to pretend, but to preserve humans

as property. Article IV Section 2 of that document plainly states that “no slave or other person held to service or labor in any State or Territory of the Confederate States, under the laws thereof, escaping or lawfully carried into another shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such slave belongs”.

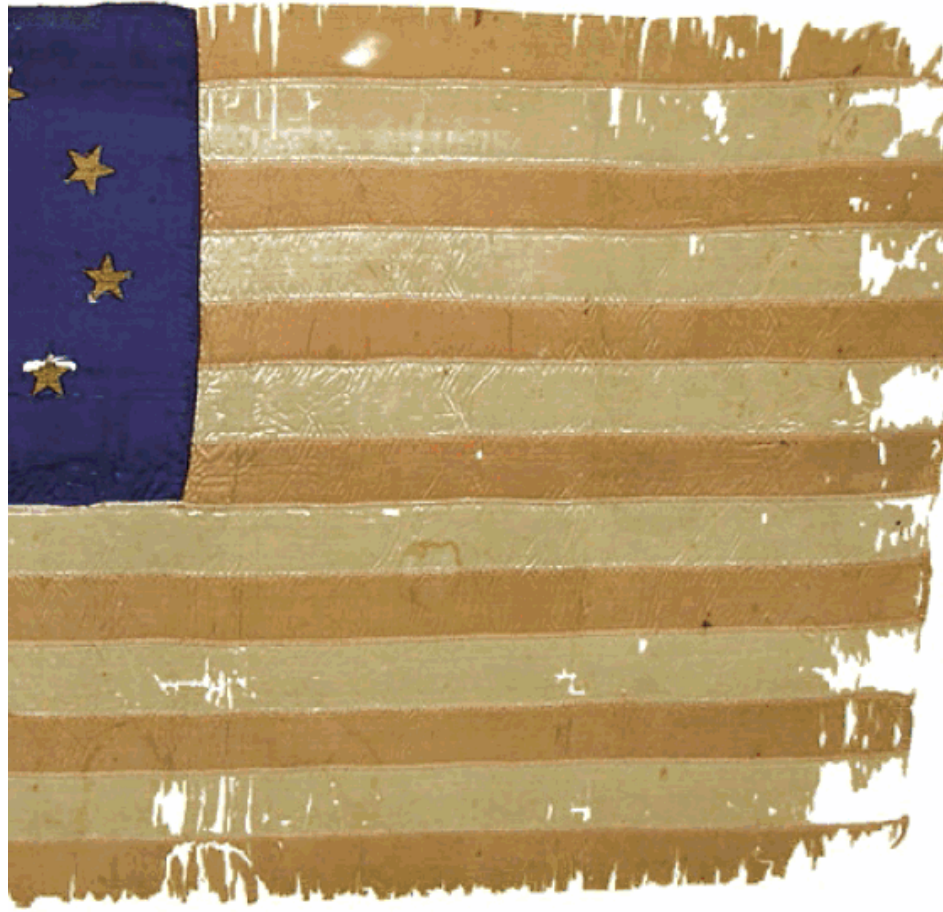
Likewise, while it is true that the Parliament of Great Britain did indeed abolish the slave trade in March 1807, Congress had actually done the same three weeks earlier. Britain liquidated the institution of slavery itself in 1834 but on condition that obscene sums of British taxpayers’ money would go to compensate former owners of the enslaved. Come the Civil War across the Atlantic, the great majority of the British political elite, including Liberal Party leaders like Gladstone, whose family fortune was in cotton, cheered on the Confederacy. Vocal support for the Union was largely confined to radicals like John Bright and his constituency of factory workers in Lancashire.

History casts shadows as well as light. It always has. Resistance to vain self-regard has been its working principle ever since Thucydides made the climax of his epic work not an Athenian triumph, but the city-empire’s bloody comeuppance in the catastrophic expedition to Sicily. The organic relationship between history and freedom lies precisely in the willingness of free states to accept a record of their pasts, stained with disaster and wickedness as much as heroism and achievement. Distorting the record so that it becomes an exercise in the genealogy of present glory is to corrupt its integrity. Best leave that to the dictators.

This is especially true of foundation myths. Fifteen years ago, in *Rough Crossings: Britain, the Slaves*

What may have been the first American flag, made by Betsy Ross, with the stars of the 13 colonies arranged in a circle





**THE ORGANIC RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN HISTORY AND
FREEDOM LIES PRECISELY IN THE
WILLINGNESS OF FREE STATES
TO ACCEPT THEIR PASTS,
STAINED WITH WICKEDNESS
AS MUCH AS HEROISM**

and the American Revolution, I suggested (and I was by no means the first to do so) that the armed mobilisation of the southern colonies, its crossing of the Rubicon of separation, was, in large part, a response to fears of slave rebellions in the spring and summer of 1775. Even before the governor of Virginia, Lord Dunmore, issued a proclamation promising liberty to slaves who joined the army of the king, alarm bells were being rung among Patriots that the unscrupulous British government would deliberately stir up both a slave insurrection as well as an armed movement of Native American tribes. No historians imagine this move was made out of the milk of humane compassion, but rather as a pre-emptive blow against the plantation economy of the rebels.

But British motives are not the point. Widespread fearfulness, close to panic, that a rising was at hand moved the colonial elites of Virginia and North and South Carolina to arm themselves, as much if not more, against an uprising of slaves and Indians as the redcoat soldiers of the king. This was what Jefferson meant when, among his exhaustive inventory of crimes attributed to George III, the future president claimed that “he has excited domestic insurrections among us”.

It has been one thing to maintain that the Civil War was fought over race, but quite another to argue that the same question was central to its founding moment in 1775-76. The New York Times 1619 Project, with its implication that race runs like a red thread throughout American history, from the Revolution to the Civil War on to the Jim Crow years and the fight for voting and civil rights, outraged those on the nationalist right who believe that the job of history is first and foremost an act of national self-affirmation.

The notion that radical professors have hijacked American history to brood punitively on matters of race led Trump to launch a 1776 Commission, whose report promising to keep the national chronicle mostly upbeat and sunny became public just two days before his reluctant exit from the White House. A number of state administrations of Trumpian kidney have sought authority to monitor curricula for their proper quota of unblemished patriotic pride: history as pom-pom waving.

Anger at the 1619 Project’s emphasis on race in the history of the revolution has not been confined to the political right. Major

authorities on revolutionary history denounced it for what they called shoddy scholarship and distorted use of sources. But recent works based on deep research, in particular Robert G Parkinson’s *Thirteen Clocks: How Race United the Colonies and Made the Declaration of Independence*, as well as work by Alan Taylor, have produced an abundance of evidence to show unquestionably that, as Parkinson writes, “the glue that held [the Union] together was a shared fear of British agents working in tandem with enslaved and Native peoples to destroy them”.

My moth-eaten Union Jack carries a piece of this chastening history in its fabric. I acquired it from a junky antique shop in Shelburne, Nova Scotia, when researching the history of the enslaved who had believed the promises of the Crown enough to flee their masters and join its army in their thousands. There were Black soldiers on both sides in many of the American revolution’s battles, including the decisive engagement at Yorktown. But on the conclusion of the peace in 1783, Washington demanded the return of those former slaves to their owners.

To his credit, the last British governor, Sir Guy Carleton, refused, insisting that the promise of freedom would be honoured. More than 2,000 sailed out of New York harbour along with white Loyalists to Nova Scotia where, predictably, the land promised to them, including lots around Shelburne, was either withheld or reduced to the most uncultivable and rocky soil. Disenchanted though still legally free, many went with the young John Clarkson’s fleet to resettle in West Africa, in what became Sierra Leone.

The Nova Scotia flag is evidently of a later date but, when I unfurl it, the place and the history seem woven into its threadbare fabric and the picture of that surprising, sobering past comes alive in all its tragic complexity. Which is, rather than a pep pill for national happiness, what history most valuably yields. **34**

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*Simon Schama is an
FT contributing editor*





STREET LIFE

Sixty years ago, Jane Jacobs wrote her manifesto 'The Death and Life of Great American Cities'. It's especially relevant today as major cities emerge from isolation and rethink their very meaning, writes *Rana Foroohar*

Writer and activist Jane Jacobs on the streets of New York

In 1958, urban activist Jane Jacobs wrote a piece for *Fortune* magazine entitled “Downtown is for People”. Like *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, the now-classic book she published three years later, it was a call to action for those who care about cities. “This year is going to be a critical one for the future of the city,” she wrote, a year that would set their character for “generations to come”.

We are at one of those Jacobian pivot points now. In New York, where I live, the city is coming to life again. Parks are packed, restaurants are full and moods are up. But so are housing prices and crime, something true in a number of American metropolitan areas. Parts of the city that used to be known for luxury condos and spendy foreigners are deserted. Suddenly, unfashionable areas are booming. The highest price jump in the city over the course of the pandemic has been in humble Windsor Terrace, a small Irish-Italian neighbourhood just steps from my own, where nurses and firemen are slowly but surely being pushed out by cable talk-show hosts and designers.

It’s as if the never-ceasing change that is New York’s quintessential characteristic has been suppressed for months and is now bursting forth, in ways both good and bad.

The shape of the urban landscape has changed, and it will change further. Pandemics do that. Roughly 40 per cent of the 900,000 jobs lost have come back, but many restaurants, shops and offices remain shuttered. Yet streets once clogged with traffic now overflow with patrons of overbooked eateries spilling on to the sidewalk in covered spaces that remind us all of Parisian cafés. Many of us hope this – along with musicians that practise outside in the park, less crowded commutes and working from home – will last.

Crime is a different story. For the first time since 1993, crime – not just policing – was a major issue in last month’s mayoral primaries, reflecting anxiety over spiking violence. May statistics from the New York Police Department tell a frightening tale: the overall crime index in the city is up 22 per cent year on year, driven by a 46.7 per cent increase in robberies and a 35.6 per cent increase in grand larceny. The number of people shot almost doubled. The previous month’s numbers were even worse: crime grew more than 30 per cent compared to the previous year, and shooting incidents tripled. This

mirrors increases in violent crime rates in some other American cities.

Why is this happening? Some of it is surely related to the fact that the pandemic simply pushed many people to the breaking point – economically, physically, emotionally and culturally. The Black Lives Matter movement, which had a huge presence in my neighbourhood before Covid-19 via joyful rallies and marches complete with music and dancing, has completely tipped the tables on policing, putting every cop on notice that brutality is no longer tolerated. This is, needless to say, good.

Police are also wary. With media scrutiny following the death of George Floyd and police reform a moving target, many are obsessed with protocol: how to use force, how to touch a subject (or not), even exact word choice. The uncertainty and wariness this creates for cops on the beat is a reason many officers and citizens I’ve spoken with believe criminals feel emboldened.

All of it underscores a sense of division. We have taken off our masks. But we remain alienated from each other and unsure about the future. What will our city look like in a few years? What should it look like?

Jacobs would have had a lot to say about that. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* was published in 1961 as a protest against the vision of the “rationalist” planners of the 1950s and 1960s who wanted urban areas to be simplified, beautified and made more efficient. Like predecessors such as Ebenezer Howard, the 19th-century English urbanist who developed the first garden cities, they believed that cities could, in fact, be planned. Howard’s suburbs had prescribed commercial centres, meticulously designed belts of green space, even a maximum number of residents. American planners working in big cities, meanwhile, took inspiration from Le Corbusier, building towering skyscrapers set above the hustle and bustle of ground-level shops. Students of Howard and Le Corbus-

ier both believed that population density was a problem to be solved.

Jacobs felt just the opposite: density was crucial to the magic of city life. To isolate urban dwellers from each other was to reduce friction, and friction is exactly what made cities places that you wanted to be. While people such as Howard were justified in looking around industrial-era London in 1898 and not liking what they “smelled or saw or heard”, his planned cities were, in her view, “really very nice towns if you were docile and had no plans of your own and did not mind spending your life among others with no plans of their own. As in all Utopias, the right to have plans of any significance belonged only to the planners in charge.”

Jacobs wasn’t one to mince words. Before she died, I found myself on the sharp end of her tongue while fact-checking a story on urban planning at *Forbes* magazine, where I was a cub reporter. But she saved the really tough stuff for her *bête noire*, Robert Moses, the man who pretty much built modern New York City. He gave us bridges and highways such as the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, on which I have spent roughly a third of my life in traffic between home and the airport. He also cut the city off from large swaths of its waterfront, creating dead zones that took years and untold billions to rehabilitate.

Rationalists such as Moses wanted to remake cities, in particular downtown areas, to counter falling retail sales, eroding tax bases, failing mass transit and rising crime. It didn’t work, at least in New York. By the 1970s, Son of Sam dominated head-

lines, white “flight” to the suburbs had begun and President Gerald Ford had refused to offer New York a bailout during its 1975 fiscal crisis, which sparked the famous *Daily News* headline: “Ford to City: Drop Dead”.

Moses, as biographer Robert Caro has written, was all about power. Jacobs was about people. She believed that cities, like their residents, were biological systems which could only be understood in the context of “organised complexity, like the life sciences”. There were dozens of interrelated happenings going on in any one place at any given time. “The variables are many,” she wrote in her 1961 book, “but they are not helter-skelter; they are interrelated into an organic whole.” Like the parable of butterfly wings that create a tsunami on the other side of the world, pushing slightly on one factor could shift the entire system.

She believed that citizens kept each other safe as much, if not more, than police did. “The first thing to understand is that the public peace – the sidewalk and street peace – of cities is not kept primarily by the police, necessary as police are. It is kept primarily by an intricate almost unconscious network of voluntary controls and standards among the people themselves, and enforced by the people themselves.” It was, however, a system that required trust.

In the “garden city” suburbs that Jacobs despised, trust came in the form of homogeneity and tribalism. In large and diverse urban areas, it came from the casual contact with strangers that was the heart of the “intricate sidewalk ballet” of her own Greenwich Village.

On her stretch of Hudson Street, she would make her appearance a little after eight “when I put out the garbage can, surely a prosaic occupation, but I enjoy my part, my little clang, as the droves of junior high school students walk by the centre of the stage dropping candy wrappers...” Later on there were the other “rituals of morning”, such as Mr Halpert unlocking the laundry hand-

cart from its mooring to a cellar door, Joe Cornacchia's son-in-law stacking out the empty crates from the delicatessen, the barber bringing out his sidewalk folding chair and Mr Goldstein arranging the coils of wire that proclaim the hardware store is open.

I recognise this ballet from my own neighbourhood. Like Cornacchia, my local bodega owner keeps keys for acquaintances who want to use our place when we're away. He tells me when my 14-year-old son, who stops in for soda, has fallen in with the wrong group of friends. My hairdresser, two blocks away, lets me run home without paying if I've forgotten cash and I'm in a rush. I'll get him next time. The old ladies in their curlers monitor the street from their folding lawn chairs. My next-door neighbour, a septuagenarian who has lived in the house since she was a child, can tell me in which decade and exactly how the previous owners repaired the gutters. It's Pete Hamill's Brooklyn. Literally. He spent some of his own childhood in a flat across the street.

Why does this trust still exist in places like my block? In part because this neighbourhood was, until recently, free from extremes. When I traded in a three-bedroom flat on Finchley Road in north London for my home in Park Slope Brooklyn in 2007, I did so in part because I knew I could send my children to state school, live near a green space, have easy access to libraries, hospitals and shops, and use public transportation.

This "diversity of uses" still exists in many outer boroughs, but it is harder to find in many neighbourhoods in Manhattan which, like prime central London or the most expensive parts of any number of other global cities, have become extremely bifurcated in recent years. There are too many "landmark" buildings owned mainly by absentee investors from Russia or the Gulf and too many incoherent new developments like Hudson Yards which are inconvenient for public transport and financially unattainable for the majority of New Yorkers.

Former mayor Michael Bloomberg once called New York City a luxury product. Jacobs would have seen that as a warning sign. To her, cities that were the biggest or best at anything were often sowing the seeds of their own demise. "Monopolistic shopping centres and monumental cultural centres cloak, under public relations hoohaw, the subtraction of commerce, and of culture too, from the intimate and casual life of cities,"

View of Manhattan and the Brooklyn Bridge from the bank of the East River in Dumbo, Brooklyn



she wrote. Iconic buildings needed to be used like key chess pieces – sparingly. They took up too much air and reduced complexity, which was, in her view, at the heart of successful neighbourhoods, where each part serves the whole.

Her own preference in architecture was for a mix of old and new, commercial and residential, with short blocks that allow for close contact and enough people both living and working locally to offer supply and demand. It's the 15-minute city, to use a phrase popularised by Parisian mayor Anne Hidalgo. More Brooklyn, less Manhattan.

The living neighbourhood, as opposed to the overly perfect static one, was emerging as a trend here before the pandemic. Now it's getting a tailwind thanks to altered working and commuting patterns, which may become permanent. Work from home isn't going away – a lot of people want it and it will save employers money on commercial leases. In New York, available commercial space is already at 17 per cent, a three-decade high. (The national average is 18 per cent.) Leases are long, which means the hit won't be short and sharp, but slow and sustained, over years.

That will surely decrease tax revenue for the city, but it may also create more opportunities for the kind of mixed-use diversity Jacobs would have approved of. Demand for industrial space, warehouses and logistics centres is picking up. Aside from large multifamily apartment dwellings, for which demand plummeted during the pandemic, the residential market in many parts of New York is up. I expect that places like Brooklyn, Queens and even the Bronx and Staten Island will increasingly become their own economic ecosystems, rather than vassals to Manhattan.

This is a good thing, and pressure to try and stem it by luring big headline employers should be resisted. Jacobs would have been quite happy, for example, that Amazon eventually nixed New York City as a choice for its secondary headquarters. She

JACOBS FELT DENSITY WAS CRUCIAL TO THE MAGIC OF CITY LIFE. TO ISOLATE URBANITES FROM EACH OTHER WAS TO REDUCE FRICTION, WHICH IS WHAT MADE CITIES PLACES THAT YOU WANTED TO BE

was a huge critic of cities making linear deals in which tax benefits were traded for headline job gains. It was intuition on her part, but research has since shown her to be right. While such business subsidies have tripled in the US since the 1990s, studies have proven that most of the deals cut by cities for brand name employers have turned out to be a net negative. The initial job gains can't offset the tax hit which results in a degradation of the public services and human capital that employers were attracted to in the first place.

Jacobs believed that it was "the smallness of big cities" that made them so desirable. "A metropolitan centre comes across to people as a centre largely by virtue of its enormous collection of small elements, where people can see them, at street

level," she wrote. She would have loved the outdoor cafés that now fill New York's streets and the creativity evidenced by all the small businesses that have found ways to survive the past 15 months.

She was, after all, an urban optimist and would have shaken her head at the post-pandemic predictions of big city demise. These lines, from her work in 1961, seem particularly resonant today: "Vital cities have marvellous innate abilities for understanding, communicating, contriving and inventing what is required to combat their difficulties. Perhaps the most striking example of this ability is the effect that big cities have had on disease. Cities were once the most helpless and devastated victims of disease, but they became great disease conquerors... The surplus wealth, the productivity, the close-grained juxtaposition of talents that permit society to support advances" such as the science that brought us a successful Covid vaccine in a year "are themselves products of our organisation into cities, and especially into big and dense cities."

Cities, like people, are messy. They go through ups and downs in their lives. New York may have some tough years before it springs back. And yet, she asked rhetorically on the last page of her book, "does anyone suppose that answers to any of the great questions that worry us today are going to come out of homogenous settlements?"

The answer seems to me as clear as the sky over Prospect Park. **FT**

Rana Foroohar is the FT's global business columnist

WOMEN AT THE VANGUARD

A new exhibition at The Met Fifth Avenue showcases the work of 120 groundbreaking female photographers from the 1920s to the 1950s. We asked artist *Tina Barney* to curate her highlights

After seeing these extraordinary photographs at The Met, I made up my mind very quickly which were my favourites. Just imagine the courage, independence and uninfluenced choices these women made to create this work.

I'm always drawn to specific artwork on the basis of its formal qualities. Then I dive in emotionally and intellectually, dissecting the pieces of the puzzle. Usually my selections are devoid of politics, facts and history.

Portraiture is my great love but here and there I'm drawn to a landscape, an interior, a still life or an abstraction.

In this show the role of women and what they achieved as mark-makers in the history of art is paramount.

Tina Barney

RINGL AND PIT
'PETROLE HAHN', 1931





FORD MOTOR COMPANY COLLECTION, GIFT OF FORD MOTOR COMPANY AND JOHN C WADDELL, 1987. COURTESY ROBERT MANN GALLERY



KARIMEH ABBUD
'THREE WOMEN', 1930S

In real life this print is very small, the size of a postcard. These three women seem so unique, strong and sure of themselves. The way they're lined up and how they look into the camera, their clothes, the column on the left, the space between them all add up to make a strong impression.



CLAUDE CAHUN
'SELF-PORTRAIT',
CIRCA 1927

Claude Cahun must have been quite a character. She was the Cindy Sherman of her time, dressing up in specific outfits and selecting expressions and attitudes she created for each self-portrait.

**YEVONDE CUMBERS
MIDDLETON**
"LADY BRIDGET POULETT
AS "ARETHUSA", 1935

This print is so exotic compared with other coloured prints I've seen. The border with delicately painted little fish is a charming finishing touch.





HILDEGARD ROSENTHAL
 'MEETING PLACE LADEIRA
 PORTO GERAL, CORNER OF
 25 DE MARCO STREET,
 SAO PAULO', CIRCA 1940

This visually complex street scene caught my eye mostly because of that little window in which we see a man eating. Then there are little plays within plays on the left, centre and right of the set and even tiny people walking way in the back as far as the eye can see.



ESTHER BUBLEY
 'YOUNG WOMAN IN THE
 DOORWAY OF HER ROOM
 AT A BOARDING HOUSE,
 WASHINGTON DC', 1943

The fact that the photographer went into this room in a boarding house and didn't touch a thing fascinates me. Way in the back of the image is a hand coming out of the darkness resting on the laundry rack. This is as mysterious as the portrait on the bureau on the right and makes you wonder if this couple are the parents of the young woman in the foreground who seems so sad.

INSTITUTO MOREIRA SALLES. © HILDEGARD ROSENTHAL/ACERVO; NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON; NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON. © OKANOUÉ TOSHIKO

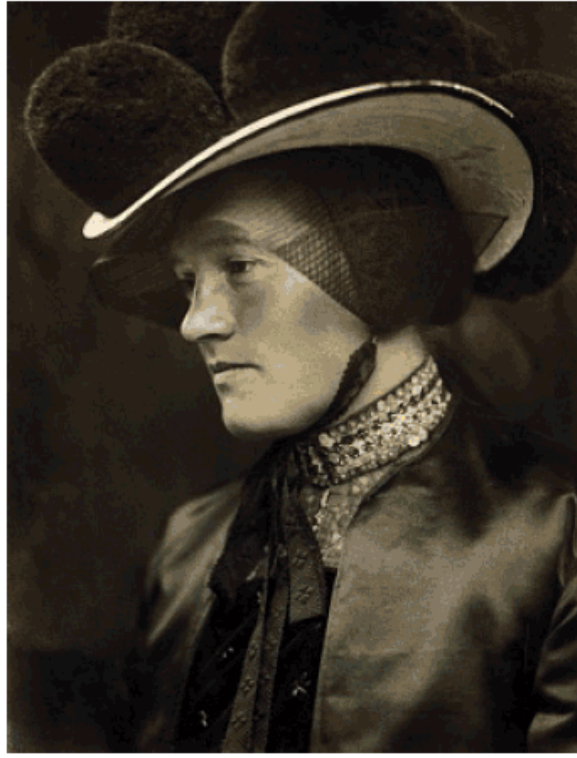


TOSHIKO OKANOUE
‘FULL OF LIFE’, 1954

The woman on the left of this collage seems like a marble statue. Her gestures and expression can be read in so many ways as she reacts to the male figures flying off bridges. What a spectacular operatic stage set.

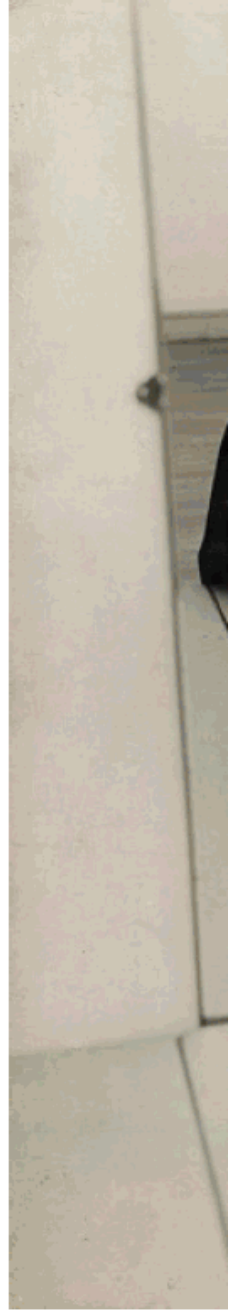
ERNA LENDVAI-DIRCKSEN
‘YOUNG WOMAN FROM
THE GUTTACH VALLEY,
BLACK FOREST’,
BEFORE 1934

What does this hat
signify? What are those
pom poms made of?
Is it fashion? Is it ritual?
Is it tradition?



DENISE BELLON
‘WOMAN WITH FAN-
SHAPED HAIRSTYLE, FOUTA
DJALLON, GUINEA’, 1939

The way Denise Bellon
placed this woman on a
straw mat is so unusual.
Where is she looking
and whose hands are
those on the lower
right? What is the story
behind the exotic
fan-shaped hairstyle?



Tina Barney is an American artist whose large-scale photographs have been exhibited in major museums around the world

'The New Woman Behind the Camera' is at The Met Fifth Avenue until October 3, metmuseum.org



FLORENCE HENRI
'SELF-PORTRAIT', 1928
+
DORA MAAR
'BOY WITH A CAT', 1934

I paired these two portraits together for formal and narrative reasons. I liked the rectangular shapes in both images and also the visual back-and-forth game between the positioning of the

subjects' hands and the props. The metal balls, the cat, the door knob, the half-legible sign, the panelled floor and its reflection – all hold the viewer's attention endlessly.



Honey & Co Recipes



Awesome sauce

Photographs by Patricia Niven

Every summer has its own distinct character, its own markers that make it different. Maybe it's a scent or a song, a trinket you wear or a new friend.

The soundtrack of this summer came to us from a crime drama, and we can't seem to shake it. A seven-minute acid techno track, it has a slow humming beat and a warm, warped baglama refrain that makes you feel like you're in a taxi in Istanbul on the way to an underground nightclub in Berlin via the echoing canyons of Petra.

We have it on repeat all the time, from our sweaty bike commute in the morning to when we make dinner with the sun slanting through the kitchen window. We will get it out of our systems by about October and move on to something else. And when we hear that song again a few years from now, we'll remember the summer of 2021 and its particular feel.

Sounds and mood sorted, we can turn to flavour. This is the taste of our summer and it's the best barbecue sauce we've ever had. Between home and work, we have a batch going every day. We char apricots with tomatoes, chillies, alliums and aromats. It livens up our cheese sandwiches and bolsters salad dressings, we dip chips in it and serve it with hot roasted vegetables and cold-cured meats.

But it shines brightest on our grills. We marinate halloumi cheese, lean pork, fatty beef or any part of a chicken (wings for summer eating at its finest), baste with more during cooking for that deep char and shiny gloss, and then serve extra on the side for dipping. It has it all. It is hot, fruity, sweet, smoky, sour, savoury and captures that most elusive, most coveted flavour of all: summer. **FT**

By Itamar Srulovich. Recipe by Sarit Packer

Apricot barbecue sauce

To make about 700g sauce (enough for two or three meals)

- 8 apricots – about 450g, halved and stones removed
- 8 large cherry tomatoes (or use 4 plum tomatoes, about 300g)
- 1 whole red chilli
- 1 whole green chilli
- 8 spring onions (about 80g)
- 1 whole head of garlic cut through the middle
- 60g demerara sugar (or dark brown is fine too)
- 100ml muscatel or cider vinegar
- A small bouquet of thyme and sage tied together (about four sprigs of each)
- 1 tbs Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp salt

1 – Set the grill on your oven to full heat or, better still, use a barbecue.

2 – Place the apricot halves, tomatoes, chillies, spring onions and cut garlic head on a large flat tray, then put it directly under the grill to char the top (or you can grill over your barbecue). Don't add any oil – just let the heat scorch the tops. Grill for 10-15 minutes, depending on the heat of your oven.

3 – Squeeze out the cloves of garlic, discard the skin, then scrape all the vegetables into a saucepan and add the sugar, vinegar and herb bouquet. Set on a medium heat, stir well and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and cook slowly, stirring occasionally for about 20 minutes until the mix thickens.

4 – Remove the herb bouquet and discard. Add the Worcestershire sauce and salt, then cook for four more minutes. Remove from the heat and use a stick blender to blitz into a paste. If you aren't using the sauce right away, store it in a sterilised jar while it is still hot and seal the jar immediately. It will keep well in the fridge for a couple of weeks.

Serving suggestion

Mix eight wings with 200g of barbecue sauce, transfer to a roasting tray and sprinkle with a little salt. Roast in the oven on 220C for 25 minutes, remove and serve with extra sauce on the side for dipping. All with "Still" by Acid Arab playing on your speakers.



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Imagining a post-pandemic world



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Sarah Gilbert
Covid vaccine designer



Roula Khalaf
FT editor



Inua Ellams
poet

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Jancis Robinson Wine



In search of low-alcohol reds

Unlike North America's west coast, Europe has had an unusually damp and changeable summer so far. This has kept vignerons on their toes, many spraying like mad to ward off mildew. But based on recent European summers, it seems likely that July and August will be hot and dry. Sunburn has become a problem for grapes as well as people in places as far from the equator as Germany.

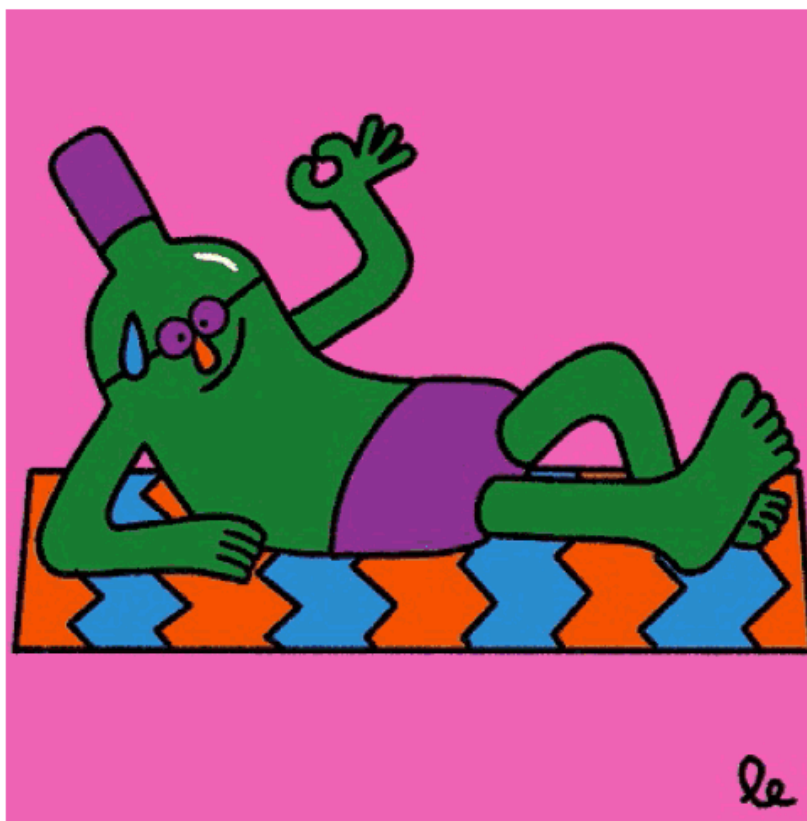
If this summer turns out to be as hot as usual in Europe, those of us who drink wine and do not live in an air-conditioned cocoon are unlikely to find heavy, potent reds at the top of our wish list. Chilled whites and fashionable pinks are more likely to fit the bill. Yet because there comes a time when only red will do, I thought I'd suggest a few low-alcohol, often chillable, red wines.

But what counts as low-alcohol nowadays?

High-alcohol wines were fashionable in the 1990s and early 2000s, especially in California where growers were encouraged to keep grapes on the vine so long that their sugar content soared and so too the resulting wines' alcohol levels. At least many Californian vineyards enjoy much cooler nights than, say, Bordeaux, but in Bordeaux the effect of increasingly warm summers has been a dramatic rise in wine potency.

Liv-ex, the London-based fine-wine trading platform, prides itself on the amount of data it has amassed in its 20-year history. Because of the heavy demands of post-Brexit documentation, last year Liv-ex started to log the alcohol levels of all the wines it trades and recently highlighted certain trends.

The company says it recorded the alcoholic strength of 35,000 wines provided in its vendors' paperwork and then checked 20,000 of them against what was written on labels in its warehouse.



As imagined by Leon Edler

In its presentation of the results, wines were grouped by decade, starting with the 1990 vintage up to 2019.

What is clear is that of the five regions studied, California still produces wines with the highest alcohol levels, 14.6% on average. For the wines that Liv-ex trades (which tend to be the most expensive), average alcohol levels in Piedmont and Tuscany come next at just over 14%. Then comes Bordeaux at about 13.8% and Burgundy at 13.3%.

But while average alcohol levels in California have been falling slightly recently, and in Burgundy

In Bordeaux, the effect of ever-warmer summers has been a dramatic rise in wine potency

and Italy have remained pretty constant this century, they have risen spectacularly in Bordeaux: from an average of 12.8% in the 1990s to 13.8% in 2019. This in a region once famous for providing appetising, digestible wines.

Whereas in the 1970s, 10.5% or 11% might have been considered low-alcohol, today I consider any wine with 12.5% or less on the label to qualify. Because wines this low in alcohol are relatively rare, I have asked for suggestions from fellow wine writers on my website. I expected to find a few suitable candidates in our Loire and Beaujolais tasting notes, for example, but even here alcohol levels have been rising, thanks to ever-warmer summers. (I also tried a couple of no-alcohol reds but cannot recommend them.)

What's interesting and unexpected is how many of these low-alcohol wines come from parts of the world we associate with hot summers, and therefore with very ripe grapes and particularly alcoholic wines: Greece, South Africa and Australia. In Greece, high-elevation vineyards, where cool nights slow grape-ripening, tend to be the reason alcohol levels are low. In Australia (and for some California producers) there is a vogue for picking grapes relatively early to produce low-alcohol wines, a reaction to the turbocharged wines of the recent past.

All of the South African candidates overleaf are based on Cinsault, which at one time was the country's most-planted red wine grape and is now relatively inexpensive. This may partly explain why it appeals to new wave Cape winemakers: they rarely own their own vineyards and have to buy grapes. Like their Australian counterparts, they are keen to moderate alcohol levels but, to judge from these wines, Cinsault seems able to yield satisfying, fruity wines even at low-alcohol levels. ▶

A selection of summer reds

All of the following selections are either 12% or 12.5% unless stated otherwise.

LANGUEDOC

- **Mas Seren, Etincelle Nomade 2020 IGP Cévennes**
Certified organic blend of peppery Syrah and Cinsault from the hills above the Languedoc flatlands.
£13.50 Stone, Vine & Sun
- **Alain Chabanon, Campredon 2017 Languedoc**
Fully mature, unoaked blend of Syrah, Mourvèdre and Grenache.
£25 Dynamic Vines

ITALY

- **Brezza 2020 Dolcetto d'Alba**
Utterly Piemontese and one of the most appealing Dolcettos to have come my way. It's delicate rather than trying to be a barrel-aged Barbera.
£15.49 Strictly Wine
- **Villa Cordevigo, Classico 2017 Bardolino**
Pinot Noir-like fresh, light red from Lake Garda that my colleague Tamlyn Currin liked so much she gave it a score of 17 out of 20.
From £7.81 in Italy

PORTUGAL

- **Filipa Pato & William Wouters, DNMC Baga 2019 Bairrada**
Baga is the defiantly firm, characterful red wine grape of Bairrada and Filipa Pato is the daughter of the leading light of this northern wine region. Wouters is her sommelier husband.
£16.95 Wine & Greene,
£17.25 Bar Douro
- **Azores Wine Company, Tinto Vulcânico 2018 IGP Açores**
An extraordinary combination of history and geography in a glass.

Organic blend of local grapes from the windswept vineyards of the mid-Atlantic volcanic archipelago that is the Azores.
£23 Amathus Drinks

GREECE

- **Lyrarakis Liatiko 2020 PGI Crete**
Youthful, fresh, aromatic wine made from Crete's own red wine grape whose wines can be quite chewy in youth.
\$18.99 Compass Wines, Washington state
- **Methymnaeos Chidriotiko 2019 PGI Lesbos**
Chidriotiko is a variety local to the island of Lesbos and makes wines light in both colour and alcohol but with no shortage of character. Certified organic.
€14.90 House of Wine, Greece

- **Chatzivaritis, Carbonic Negoska 2020 PGI Slopes of Palko**
Pure crushed mulberries with an attractive bite of light tannin on the dry finish that follows an opulent palate. Most unusual and pleasing. Quintessential picnic wine? But take your ice pack.
£23.50 Maltby & Greek and other Independents in UK, France, Germany and Greece

CALIFORNIA

- **Birichino, Bechthold Vineyard Old Vines, Vignes Centenales Cinsault 2018 Mokelumne River**
Cinsault again – from a vineyard in Lodi planted in 1886. Very eloquent and full of pure, interesting fruit.
From \$25.99 widely available in the US

SOUTH AFRICA

- **Waterkloof, Seriously Cool Cinsault 2019 Stellenbosch**
The back label on this organic wine, a favourite on JancisRobinson.com since 2013, urges, "drink me cool but take me seriously". I can see why they say to drink this sweet, gentle wine cool; it probably needs the lower temperature to keep it refreshing. Lowish acid and definitely low tannin but a great, easy choice for those who seek a low-alcohol red that can be enjoyed without food.
£10.79 Rannoch Scott

- **Rail Cinsault 2019 Coastal Region**
Aged in a mix of concrete and old oak with bright, piercing red-cherry fruit. Very round and appealing. A wine to drink pretty young – and coolish – but it is awfully pretty already. This would make a delightful red aperitif, but is arguably too light to match with very emphatic foods.
£19.50 Wine Direct, £95 for six bottles in bond Jeroboams

- **Radford Dale, Thirst Cinsault 2020 Stellenbosch**
Old bushvines are unirrigated and produce a succulent wine described as "joyous" by my colleague and fellow Master of Wine Julia Harding. Very obviously designed to be enjoyed lightly chilled.
£11.80 VINVM

- **Natte Valleij Cinsaults**
A range of stunning wines from different South African wine regions produced on a historic estate that

specialises in this variety.
£19.99 Museum Wines

AUSTRALIA

- **Mac Forbes, Healesville Syrah 2018 Yarra Valley**
This producer has championed low-alcohol wines. We loved the 2016 but have not tasted the 2018, which is only 11.5%.
£28 The Wine Society

NEW ZEALAND

- **Forrest Estate, The Doctors' Pinot Noir 2019 Marlborough**
Only 9.5% and deliberately grown and picked to be as low in alcohol as possible, though it's definitely a bit tart.
£13.90 Gerrard Seal

For full tasting notes, scores and suggested drinking windows see Purple Pages of JancisRobinson.com and for international stockists see Wine-searcher.com



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JOIN THE ELITE Pioneering and award-winning Limassol Marina has been completed.

The first superyacht marina on the island, an undisputed iconic landmark for the city of Limassol, has been completed. The delivery of its final phase apartments at "Castle Residences", the crown jewel of the Marina, signifies the end of the project's development and the maturity of a remarkable success story for Cyprus.

Now the beating heart of the city centre, Limassol Marina has played an integral role in changing the face of Limassol over the past decade, while also improving the image of the island on a global scale. Beyond upgrading the surrounding area, boosting local businesses, and creating new jobs, it has firmly positioned Cyprus on the nautical yachting map and acted as the catalyst for new initiatives in the nearby district, ones that are bringing a higher calibre of tourism, investors, companies, and professionals to the island. It continues to have a positive impact on the economy, and celebrates unprecedented achievements, including over €500 million in property sales, 50 nationalities of buyers, more than 7,000 yacht arrivals since its opening - including 275 world-famous superyachts, the largest measuring 111m and 143m - and over 4,000 daily visitors in the dining and shopping area. The ground-breaking project has changed the national landscape for a broad range of sectors and is a leading example of the scope of our capabilities.

General Manager, Nikiforos Pampakas, has been at Limassol Marina from the initial stages of its conceptualisation: "We are so proud of what the whole team has achieved - we did it! Seeing our vision become a reality is heart-warming and hugely gratifying. This pioneering project proves that with vision, hard work and strategic implementation, even the most challenging goals can be achieved. I would like to express my sincere thanks to the project's shareholders for their unwavering commitment to this project; the architects, partners, consultants, and customers, as well as all the people who have worked here over the years. Their service, passion

and dedication have contributed to our success on this incredible journey!"

An overall investment value of €400 million, the Blue Flag and Five Gold Anchor Platinum Marina has set new standards for the high-end real estate market, yachting and entertainment over the years. It has sold more than 90% of its 285 unique residential properties and has long been established as one of the most prestigious addresses in Cyprus and the wider Mediterranean region. It is the only development offering "living on the sea" ready to move in apartments and villas surrounded by water; only a limited number of properties is available for sale. The exclusive apartments at "Castle Residences" are situated on a private island, accessed by a bridge, with breathtaking panoramic views of the Marina, the Mediterranean Sea, and the city of Limassol. The "Island Villas" are characterised by

innovative architectural ingenuity and include their own private swimming pool with yacht berth(s) attached to their beautifully landscaped gardens. This privileged residential community enjoys a range of high-quality facilities and amenities, retail, leisure and cultural options, a first-class spa and gym, sandy beach and beach bar, high-tech berthing facilities, property management, rental, and concierge services. Quite literally, everything the residents or berth-holders need is on their doorstep.

For more information about Limassol Marina, or to book your private viewing of the ready to move in properties, please visit www.limassolmarina.com, call +357 25 020 020 or email the Limassol Marina team at info@limassolmarina.com.



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Games



A Round on the Links

by James Walton



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

1. Which rebellion was ended by the Battle of Sedgemoor in 1685?

2. Whose 1932 novel *A Glastonbury Romance* made much of the town's links with King Arthur and the Holy Grail?

3. Who made only one other film appearance – 15 years later – after starring as the football-playing love interest in *Gregory's Girl* (1981)?

4. Whose comic creations include Sandy Stone, Neil Singleton and Sir Les Patterson?

5. What type of clothing is also the title of the first single released from Taylor Swift's lockdown album *Folklore*?

6. Which motorway service station is approximately five miles from Milton Keynes (left)?

7. In Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, what's the name of Long John Silver's parrot (below)?

8. What title was Antony Armstrong-Jones given after marrying Princess Margaret?

9. Who captained the England cricket team to 10 consecutive Test defeats in the mid-1980s?

10. Which medical condition is also the title of a Noël Coward play?



The Picture Round

by James Walton

Who or what do these pictures add up to?



+



= ?

Answers page 12

GETTY IMAGES

The Crossword

No 547. Set by Aldhelm



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

ACROSS

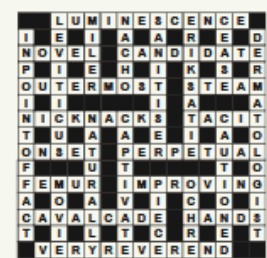
- 1 Transfer, swap over (6)
- 4 Having no knowledge (8)
- 9 Build, put up (5)
- 10 Abundance (9)
- 11 Torn rags (7)
- 12 Lifeless (7)
- 13 Per person (4)
- 14 Lipstick, blusher, eg (8)
- 17 After-dinner drinks (8)
- 19 Young deer (4)
- 22 Organise again, reassemble (7)
- 24 Educator (7)
- 25 State (9)
- 26 Bring upon oneself (5)
- 27 Gestured with the shoulders (8)
- 28 Peril, risk (6)

DOWN

- 1 Peat's crumbled around little flower (5, 3)
- 2 Indicate different line's the same (9)
- 3 Vessel with ceramic top, say (6)
- 5 Try to disarm an army, initially, stirring up kind individual (4, 9)
- 6 Rich musical work with number involved in lute arrangement (7)
- 7 Bail arranged with one defendant's plea (5)
- 8 Very sensitive nurse (6)
- 10 Over the hill there's rock – mapper is working around it (4, 4, 5)
- 15 Three teas and a dance (3-3-3)

- 16 Type of light red taken after popular French one (8)
- 18 Giving a price for amazing outing following queen (7)
- 20 Reptile, in short, found on American flower (6)
- 21 Mixed paint with a sheen (6)
- 23 Hopeless case in hearing one rejected (5)

Solution to Crossword No 546





GILLIAN TETT

PARTING SHOT

The day my book got lost in cyberspace



A few weeks ago I experienced a problem that would make any author wince: on the very day that I published my book, Amazon suffered a supply-chain glitch and thousands of copies went missing. That sparked a scramble to work out where in cyberspace they were – or, more accurately, in which warehouse they were sitting. Meanwhile, the website suggested that my book had not been published at all.

Thankfully, the hiccup was resolved in a couple of days. But the episode illustrates a much bigger point: in the 21st century we have all become accustomed to relying on ultra-complex supply chains we do not understand and tend to trust these will always work.

Yet in the past year many of these supply chains have temporarily frozen, or broken down, and remain troubled, even today. Sometimes the consequences seem trivial: when I recently ordered a dishwasher, for example, the website promised to deliver it within a week, which has now been amended to months.

Other glitches are more serious: Goldman Sachs estimates that a shortage of computer chips will hit 169 industries this year, cutting American growth by up to 1 per cent. And doctors have warned in the BMJ that glitches in the medical supply chain affect far more than just personal protective equipment and even “endanger patients”.

Either way, the fact that these glitches keep emerging is surprising. After all, economists have warned for months that demand for goods and services across the economy would explode if (or when) vaccines were rolled out. Meanwhile, tech giants also know us (and thus our potential ordering habits) intimately. Yet a sudden localised shock, such as a temporary blockage of the Suez Canal, causes spasms. And the Covid-19 pandemic and recovery have made these systems go equally haywire.

Why? Part of the problem is obvious: the pandemic caused factories to shut down. However, another problem is that western manufacturers and retailers have become so addicted to chasing efficiency and price reductions that they have eroded any buffers or spare inventories in the system to absorb shock. Or as Nada Sanders, a supply chain professor, notes in a recent essay on The Conversation platform, “As customers demand ever cheaper products delivered faster, supply chains have given up every bit of slack.”

There is another, less obvious, problem: risk management systems that seem sensible for individuals can be bad for the system as a whole.

We saw one version of this problem play out in the 2008 financial crisis when numerous different institutions had each decided to insure themselves against the risk of losses in their complex credit products. That was

sensible on an individual level. But many of these institutions chose to use the same groups, concentrating their risks thanks to the opacity of the collective transactions. Risk was ultimately magnified.

Something similar is happening with supply chains now: individual companies have been streamlining them in a way that seemed optimal – and safe – for each. But because they have often followed the same strategy, activity has been concentrated on nodes that can falter or fail. It seems sensible that computer-chip production

In the 21st century we have all become accustomed to relying on ultra-complex supply chains we do not understand

is concentrated in Taiwan, which develops economies of scale and clusters of expertise, and so benefits its customers. But it is dangerous for the system as a whole.

Rigid thinking makes the problem worse. Take the British dairy industry, which has been studied by Richard Bruce, a lecturer in supply chain accounting and finance at Sheffield university. This is organised into three separate supply chains, around hospitality, liquid milk and processed products. Although there was a desperate need for co-ordination when Covid first hit, it was initially difficult, not least because antitrust rules prevented companies from sharing data.

The good news, says Bruce, at least for British milk, is that in 2020 a quasi government body stepped in to enforce a more holistic approach to milk supply chains. Better still, the Covid problems have prompted “lots of business and governments to rethink supply chains” and not just for milk.

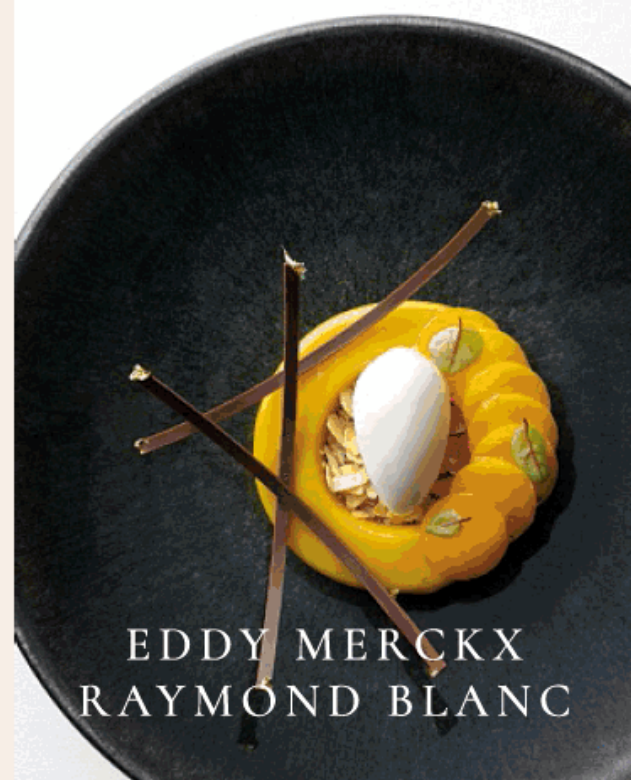
Management consultants, for example, are promoting the idea of supply chain “resilience” in the face of shocks, not just “efficiency”. A “just-in-case” philosophy of contingency planning is edging out the “just-in-time” mantra. And American and European governments are trying to create more centralised supply chain databases, particularly for things such as medical supplies. Bottom-up digital innovations, such as blockchain, may also help promote more co-ordination.

But the bad news is that it’s never easy to instil a mindset shift, least of all in a world where company executives are prone to tunnel vision and where the cost and consequences of excessively “efficient” global supply chains are often hidden in plain sight from consumers and investors. Which, ironically, is a key theme of my (temporarily) missing books. The literary gods must have a sense of schadenfreude. **FT**

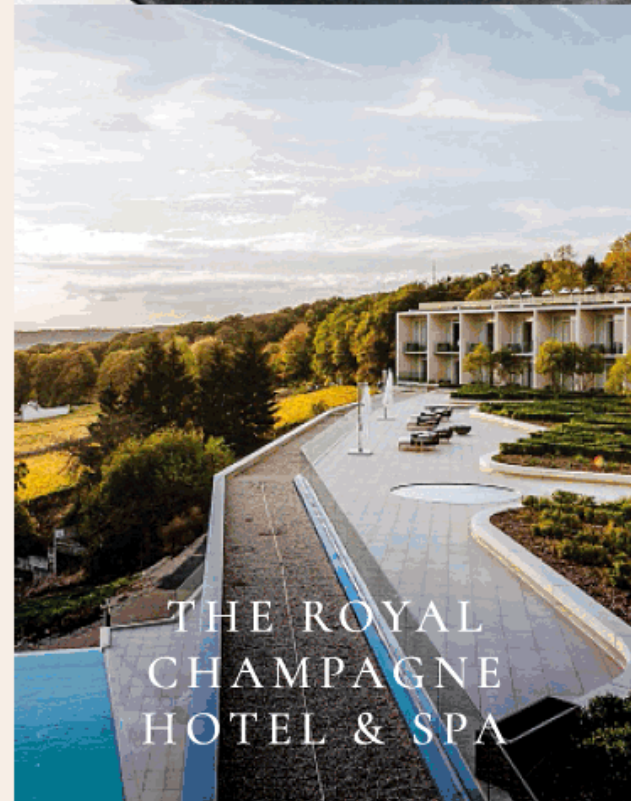
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