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Biden declares America 'on the move' as hiring beats forecasts

• 850,000 jobs created in June • Lockdown easing fuels growth • Wages rise to attract staff

COLBY SMITH — NEW YORK
LAUREN FEDOR — WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden hailed "historic progress" in America's recovery from the pandemic as the US economy created 850,000 jobs in June, with unrelenting demand for workers spur-

ring a jump in recruitment.

Non-farm payrolls data yesterday came in well above economists' expectations of 720,000 jobs created for the month, surpassing the upwardly revised 583,000 gain posted in May and an unexpectedly weak 278,000 new hires in April.

"We have now created over 3m jobs

since I took office, more jobs than have ever been created in the first five months of any presidency in modern history," Biden said at the White House after the data release. "This is historic progress, pulling our economy out of the worst crisis in 100 years."

Despite the increase in payrolls, the biggest in 10 months, the unemployment rate ticked up slightly to 5.9 per cent from 5.8 per cent the month before.

"It was a solid report, [one] you would hope for given the reopening has continued to gather pace," said Lee Ferridge, head of macro strategy for North America at State Street Clobal Markets

ica at State Street Global Markets.

The June report landed at a critical

juncture for the US economy. Easing lockdown measures and generous government stimulus programmes have fuelled a robust rebound in growth this year. US consumer prices have in turn surged as supply chain constraints have hampered some businesses' ability to meet red-hot consumer demand.

Crippling labour shortages have also hamstrung employers, as childcare constraints and fears about catching Covid-19 dissuaded people from returning to the workforce.

Some businesses blame unemployment benefits for holding up the jobs recovery, prompting several Republican-leaning US states to slash aid.



Yesterday's data surpassed the 583,000 gain posted in May Companies have begun raising wages and handing out perks to attract new staff. Yesterday's report suggested those measures have balanced some of the market mismatches. "Instead of workers competing with each other for jobs that are scarce, employers are competing with each other to attract workers," Biden said. "Put simply, our economy is on the move."

Despite June's gains, US employment remains far below its pre-pandemic levels. More than 9m people are still unemployed, compared to 5.7m in February last year.

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Can you change yourself? Lucy Kellaway

LIFE & ARTS



Master of the dark arts

How Teneo spun out of control COMPANIES



The end of opulence What next for London's

HOUSE & HOME





Trump's 'eyes and ears' under pressure to flip

What will Allen Weisselberg do next?
That is the crucial question for
prosecutors following their claims this
week that executives' income has been
concealed at the Trump Organization.
They say perks amounted to \$1.7m for
the man who has described himself as
Trump's 'eyes and ears' and hope the
prospect of prison will persuade him to
turn. But Weisselberg, who pleaded
not guilty, is a loyal lieutenant hired by
the ex-president's father 48 years ago.
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Didi shares tumble as Beijing's cyber watchdog launches data investigation

YUAN YANG — BEIJING

China's cyber security regulators have launched an investigation into Didi, sending the ride-hailing group's shares plummeting just days after it launched the year's biggest initial public offering in New York.

The Cyberspace Administration of China made the announcement yesterday evening, Beijing time, on Didi's third morning of trading in New York after it raised at least \$4bn in the IPO.

Despite the record fundraising, Didi kept the occasion low key, without celebrating on its domestic Weibo social media channel, organising a press conference, or taking part in a bell-ringing ceremony in New York.

The CAC said the investigation was in order to "safeguard national data security and protect national security", and

STOCK MARKETS

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Euro Stoxx 50

FTSE All-Share

FTSE 100

CAC 40

Nikkei

MSCI World \$
MSCI EM \$
MSCI ACWI \$

S&P 500

that Didi must stop registering users for the probe's duration to "comply with the cyber security investigation work and prevent risks from spreading".

Didi told the Financial Times it would "actively comply" with the investigation and "completely inspect our cyber security risks under the guidance" of the authorities. Its shares opened down 11 per cent yesterday in New York.

"This is a signal for big tech companies, warning them of the importance of data security and personal data protection," said Wang Congwei, a partner at Beijing Jingshi law firm.

China's cyber security reviews are new measures launched last year in order to protect what it sees as "critical information infrastructure", a broad category including transport providers and big database systems. One aim is to prevent critical data leaks.

According to Chinese regulations, an investigation can last up to 30 business days, with extensions of 15 additional business days for complex cases. Didi has more than 377m users and 13m drivers annually active in China, meaning that it stores a significant amount of user data that could lead it to be considered critical information infrastructure.

The platform not only gathers data on trips and user locations but, following a passenger safety scandal, also records audio during every journey.

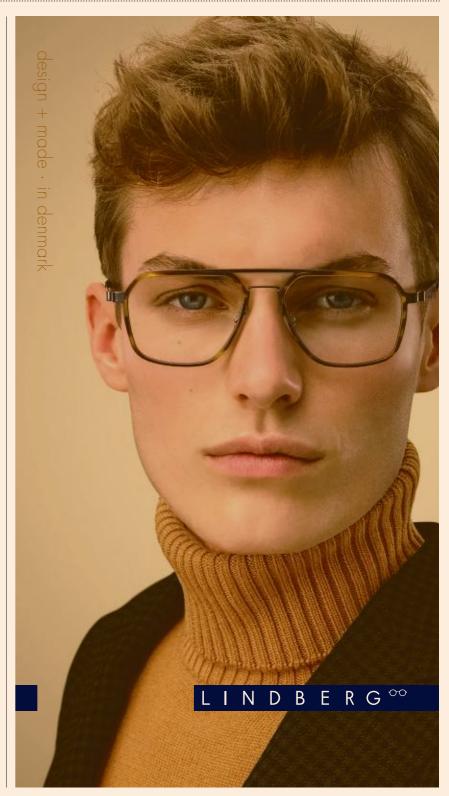
The company has not yet faced a major publicly known data leak. Following passenger murders in 2018, Didi was reprimanded for not sharing more data. That debacle underlines tension in Beijing between demands for more datasharing and calls for data security. Additional reporting by Nian Liu

Race to build champions page 8

World Markets

			CURREN	CIES					INTEREST RATES			
Jul 2	prev	%chg		Jul 2	prev		Jul 2	prev		price	yield	chg
4339.31	4319.94	0.45	\$ per €	1.184	1.187	£ per \$	0.726	0.726	US Gov 10 yr	147.44	1.44	0.00
14592.64	14522.38	0.48	\$ per £	1.378	1.378	€per£	1.164	1.161	UK Gov 10 yr		0.70	-0.01
34740.76	34502.51	0.69	£ per €	0.859	0.861	¥ per €	131.831	132.376	Ger Gov 10 yr		-0.24	-0.03
1763.14	1759.63	0.20	¥ per \$	111.315	111.540	£ index	81.508	81.718	Jpn Gov 10 yr	117.03	0.04	-0.01
4081.02	4078.89	0.05	¥ per £	153.430	153.702	SFr per £	1.273	1.274	US Gov 30 yr	112.99	2.05	0.00
7123.27	7125.16	-0.03	SFr per €	1.094	1.097				Ger Gov 2 yr	105.79	-0.67	-0.01
4065.95	4062.45	0.09	€ per \$	0.844	0.843							
6552.86	6507.83	0.69										
15650.09	15603.81	0.30	соммог	DITIES						price	prev	chg
28783.28	28707.04	0.27							Fed Funds Eff	0.06	0.07	-0.01
28310.42	28827.95	-1.80				Jul 2	prev	%chg	US 3m Bills	0.05	0.05	0.00
3028.20	3017.23	0.36	Oil WTI \$		7	74.84	75.23	-0.52	Euro Libor 3m	-0.55	-0.55	0.00
1368.22	1374.64	-0.47	Oil Brent	\$	7	75.81	75.84	-0.04	UK 3m	0.08	0.08	0.00
721.82	719.97	0.26	Gold \$		178	31.50	1763.15	1.04	Prices are latest for edition	Data pro	vided by Mo	rningstar

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INTERNATIONAL



WEEK IN REVIEW

South Africa judges sentence former president Zuma to 15-months' jail

South Africa's constitutional court sentenced former president Jacob Zuma to 15 months in jail for defying its order to attend an inquiry into corruption.

South Africans had long thought the culture of impunity in the ruling African National Congress would never cease. Zuma's nine-year presidency was embroiled in multiple scandals, notably claims he helped the Guptas, a business family, "capture" the state and loot its resources.

He was implicated by dozens of witnesses at a commission of inquiry into corruption. He denies wrongdoing, as do the Guptas. Zuma walked out of his testimony and belittled the constitutional court. Zuma has until tomorrow to hand himself in, otherwise the police will seek to arrest him.

Ex-Catalan leaders attack Spanish court demand for €5.4m repayment

Former Catalan leaders have condemned demands by Spain's court of auditors to repay €5.4m in regional government funds that it alleged they wrongly used to promote independence.

A statement issued by 41 officials, including former heads and ministers of the Catalan government, said the court demands contravened their constitutional right to freedom of expression.

Pedro Sánchez, Spain's prime minister, hopes to improve relations with the Catalan administration and last week pardoned nine jailed separatist leaders. But the audit court demands risk undermining his appeal for "dialogue and understanding" over the dispute and campaigning by separatist leaders which led to an illegal referendum in 2017.

Garcia narrows Adams' lead in **New York City mayoral race**



published on Wednesday showed Kathryn Garcia pictured centre, even closer to frontrunner Eric Adams than a botched tally on Tuesday that thrust the race into chaos. The latest count gave Adams a slightly reduced lead of 14,755 votes over Garcia, with roughly 124,000 absentee ballots still to be counted.

Pandemic disrupts efforts to crack down on human trafficking

The pandemic interrupted efforts to curb human trafficking globally and created an environment in which such criminals could "flourish", according to a US state department report.

Traffickers "capitalised" on the shifting priorities of law enforcement in response to the pandemic as well as mass job losses, the department said. Officials assessed 188 countries' anti-trafficking initiatives.

"People who were pushed into dire economic circumstances by the pandemic became more vulnerable to exploitation," said Antony Blinken, secretary of state. "And as more people spent hours online for school and work, traffickers used the internet to groom and recruit potential victims."

Merkel offers hope for UK travellers

Chancellor says double jabbed Britons will soon be able to visit Germany

GEORGE PARKER — LONDON

Angela Merkel has said that Britons with two Covid-19 jabs would be able to travel to Germany "in the foreseeable future" without having to go into quarantine, after farewell talks with Boris Johnson.

Meanwhile, the UK prime minister said after meeting the German chancellor he was "very confident" that British travellers given an Indian-made Oxford/AstraZeneca jab would not face problems this summer, after it emerged the EU travel passport scheme does not recognise it.

Johnson pressed Merkel at the meet-

ing at his Chequers country retreat yesterday to drop her hardline stance towards British travellers, who currently have to quarantine for two weeks, regardless of their vaccination status.

Merkel unsuccessfully tried at a European Council meeting last month to persuade other EU countries to adopt similar measures to stop the spread of the Delta variant, which is dominant in the

But speaking after a largely amicable meeting, at which Merkel addressed the British cabinet by video link, the German chancellor said the Delta variant was now also spreading quickly in her

"We are continually reviewing our travel restrictions," she said, adding that in the foreseeable future people with two jabs would be able "to travel again without having to go into quarantine".

Johnson, who paid tribute to Merkel's contribution as German chancellor since 2005, said: "It seems as if progress is being made." He noted that the UK also had tough restrictions on Germans travelling to Britain.

'We are

reviewing

our travel

restrictions'

Angela Merkel

Speaking at a joint press conference, Johnson insisted there would "not be a problem" for millions of British travellers vaccinated with an AstraZeneca jab produced by the Serum Institute of The jab, known as Covishield, is said

by vaccine experts to offer the same protection as the British-made one, but the company has not sought to secure its approval from the European Medicines Downing Street said the UK's medi-

cines regulator had shared its data on the jab with its European counterpart.

EU member states can be flexible

within the EU travel scheme by allowing travellers with vaccines approved by the continually World Health Organization, which has listed Covishield.

The meeting between Johnson and Merkel marked a new phase in British diplomacy, as Britain tries to strengthen bilateral links with individual EU member states after Brexit.

The two sides agreed to hold annual joint cabinet meetings and to bolster exchanges in areas such as culture and energy. The German chancellor referred to the British leader as "dear Boris" and said it was time to "open a new chapter in our relationship".

Merkel, on her 22nd visit to Britain as chancellor, is stepping down in the autumn and urged both the UK and EU to be "pragmatic" in finding answers to the disagreements over post-Brexit trade in Northern Ireland.

North Korea. Secretive state

Slim Kim stirs speculation over health

Regime's stability under fresh scrutiny after leader's recent absence and loss of weight

EDWARD WHITE — SEOUL

The ultimate challenge for spies and analysts studying North Korea is accurately assessing the health of Kim Jong Un, the 37-year-old leader of the secretive state.

Kim appeared on state television in recent weeks after a long absence and looked noticeably thinner. This sparked a frenzy of speculation among North Korea watchers from Seoul to Washington. If the leader suddenly fell ill, it could set off a power struggle for control of an arsenal of nuclear and chemical

The episode exposed the ramifications of a leadership contest in Pyongyang and the deterioration of intelligence agencies' understanding of North Korea during the pandemic, which has added to the secrecy that envelopes the

Kim's health is "the biggest wild card" in assessing stability in North Korea, said Sue Mi Terry, a former CIA analyst who briefed former US presidents George W Bush and Barack Obama on North Korea and who is now a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies think-tank. "And with him not having any kind of succession plan, it is a high impact scenario . . . the interest is extremely high."

Kim succeeded his father Kim Jong Il as leader in 2011 and is known to like alcohol and cigarettes. The Kim family also has a history of diabetes and heart disease and foreign governments have long looked for any clues to their health. No one knew whether Kim's slimmeddown appearance indicated a healthy or ominous change, said Terry.

The recent uncertainty marks a stark change from 2018 and 2019, when Kim embarked on a series of overseas summits, meeting Chinese president Xi Jinping, Russian leader Vladimir Putin and then US president Donald Trump. The flurry of diplomacy gave spies unprecedented opportunities to see him.

At that time, the 1.75m tall Kim was assessed as weighing about 136kg,



Now and then: according to a biography of the North Kim Jong Un Korean leader by Anna Fifield. He was has shed pounds classified as severely obese. But there between were limits to spies' ability to glean February, left, more data on those trips. The state of and June - Korean the leader's health is so secret that when he travels abroad, he uses a special toilet so that samples cannot be gathered by

> foreign agents, Fifield noted. The pandemic has exacerbated the challenge of assessing the state of Kim's health and raised more questions. North Korea clamped down on travel and trade in January 2020 and scores of foreign diplomats and aid workers based in Pyongyang have left the country.

The number of international exchanges with the country fell from 398 in 2018, including more than 200 diplomatic exchanges, to just two last year and none in 2021, said NK Pro, a North Korea-focused information service.

"We're back to not knowing. It is actually worse . . . There is nobody going in and out. It is now even more closed off than normal," said Terry.

The border controls and a crackdown

on internal travel have battered the economy and led to food security problems. Kim this week warned of a "grave incident" related to the pandemic and ordered a reshuffling of top cadres.

"Kim probably fears that his adversaries may seek to exploit these as opportunities to weaken his power or, worse, manoeuvre for regime change," said Soo Kim, an analyst at the Rand Corporation think-tank and former CIA analyst, adding that he might be worried that any deterioration in his health could signal weakness to the world.

Analysts are also trying to establish what the domestic handling of Kim's physical transformation signifies. North Koreans were said to be worried that his weight loss was a sign of the leader's suffering, according to state media.

Rachel Lee, a former US government analyst and expert on Pyongyang's propaganda, said that after North Koreans started talking about the leader's appearance, authorities "decided to indirectly acknowledge it and use it to highlight Kim's sacrifice and hard work

for the people". Lee added that this reflected a change in leadership style, economic management and propaganda under Kim, with an increase in transparency and public engagement.

She pointed to multiple occasions where state television had shown Kim limping or walking with a cane, and his public acknowledgment of policy

"Whereas North Korea was reluctant to acknowledge or address issues publicly, under Kim Jong Un, it has tended to acknowledge and tackle them publicly, head-on," she said.

Some cautioned against misreading. "It can . . . send a false alarm to policymakers, potentially leading to decisions that are irreversible or undermine our interests," said Rand's Soo Kim.

Further clouding the picture was a photo on state media this week that showed cigarettes and an ashtray on the leader's desk. Ri Sol Ju, Kim's wife, complained to South Korean envoys in 2018 that "she couldn't get him to give up smoking", according to Fifield.

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Lions open South Africa rugby tour amid third Covid wave

SAMUEL AGINI — LONDON JOSEPH COTTERILL — JOHANNESBURG

The British and Irish rugby team will play the first game of their six-week tour of South Africa today, despite an escalating coronavirus outbreak in the host country that forced the entire Springboks squad to self-isolate.

The quadrennial tour by the Lions, made up of the best players from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, is the most anticipated clash in this year's rugby calendar and among the most lucrative events in the sport's schedule.

Although concerns over playing toplevel sport in a pandemic put the tour in doubt, organisers pressed ahead with the three international games and five warm-up matches.

The tour provides income not only to the four rugby unions that share ownership of the Lions, but also the host country. This cash is needed after 18 months of financial struggles and pandemic upset. The last Lions tour to New Zealand in 2017 was worth NZ\$245m to its gross domestic product, according to New Zealand Rugby, which made a NZ\$33.4m profit that year.

"They'll do anything they possibly can to make it happen," said Steve Martin, global chief executive of the M&C Saatchi Sport & Entertainment agency. "Because it's only once every four years, they've got to capitalise on it."

Yet in a sign of anxiety surrounding the tour, the games will be in empty stadiums. This means no paying home supporters and none of the thousands of British and Irish fans who normally travel to watch a Lions series, and who provide a huge boost to the host nation's economy. More than 342,000 seats were filled in 2017 and almost 26,000 visitors travelled to New Zealand to watch.

Mark Alexander, president of the South African Rugby Union, the domestic governing body, told local media this week that the Lions tour would go ahead but that it "would be ridiculous to host spectators when we're in the crisis". Yet all club and amateur rugby games are suspended amid a third wave focused on the economic hub, Gauteng.

Recorded daily new cases in South Africa have hit 13,000 in recent days and hospitals are filling up, with the wave believed by epidemiologists to be driven by the Delta variant originally from India. On the day the Lions arrived this week, South Africa entered its second most severe lockdown including night curfews and an alcohol sales ban.

Brian Moore, the broadcaster who played for the Lions in 1989 and 1993, said the authorities had been forced into a tough decision. "It was either some version of this or nothing. Especially given the statements from South Africa about their financial situation, it almost had to go ahead," he said.

The Lions believe that testing, social distancing, mask wearing, sanitisation and the absence of fans would help pro-



Ready to roar: Lions players arrive in Johannesburg on Monday

tect their "bio-secure bubble". "The South African government and our own medical advisory group are happy for the tour to continue," the Lions said.

Rescheduling the matches would have been costly and challenging because of the sport's congested calendar. Organisers also resisted switching to the UK, where fans have this week been watching the Euro 2020 football event and Wimbledon tennis championships.

Moore said this would have been the best solution: "The safety of everyone involved has to be a concern [and] that unfortunately is not a given."

He added: "If they can pull off a compelling and competitive series, it will show the strength of the Lions brand."

Preparations of the home side, whose last competitive match was the 2019 World Cup final win over England, have also been disrupted. The Springboks were forced to cancel training and put their squad into self-isolation last weekend after three players tested positive, although practice has since resumed.

Even with the Lions tour going ahead, Jurie Roux, SARU chief executive, has warned that rugby in the country was walking a "financial tightrope".

INTERNATIONAL

Heatwaves raise doubts on whether humanity is ready for warmer planet

Built environment will need to adapt if temperatures seen in US and Canada become 'new normal'

HANNAH MURPHY — PORTLAND, OREGON RICHARD WATERS — SAN FRANCISCO

When Caleb Coder helped set up an emergency shelter in the US city of Portland in February, the aim was to provide a place of refuge during what was a brutal winter storm.

Five months later, the same Sunrise Center building is being used for the exact opposite reason: as a haven from the devastating and record-shattering heatwave that this week crippled not just the state of Oregon but much of the US Pacific Northwest and Canada.

"People were literally crawling to the Sunrise Center because it was so hot. They were vomiting, burnt and dehydrated," said Coder, whose Cultivate Initiatives supports the city's vulnerable populations.

"Hundreds of people came through because we had water stations, misters and a shower truck", as the temperature reached 47C (116.6F). "Had Sunrise not been there . . ." he trailed off. "It was life-saving.

The unprecedented heatwave in the typically mild region that has claimed hundreds of lives in British Columbia, and dozens in Oregon and neighbouring Washington state, is the latest in a growing list of extreme weather events that have struck globally.

Recently, Australia, California and Siberia have all experienced deadly wildfires caused by extreme heat. In Death Valley, California, it reached a fear-inducing 53.2C (127.7F) last month, a record high for June.

The increased frequency of such weather events raises serious questions over whether humanity is prepared for the consequences of global warming, and whether society can feasibly recalibrate for a warmer planet.

The US, in particular, has suffered a savage combination of heatwaves, droughts and wildfires in recent years, putting huge strain on its power grid.

In Canada, British Columbia has endured record temperatures, with the town of Lytton reaching a high of 49.6C (121.3F) on Tuesday, the day before its residents evacuated as raging wildfires devastated the town.

"There is an emerging consensus that this is some kind of new normal," said Dr Jennifer Vines, lead health officer for Oregon's tri-county region. As well as this heatwave, she pointed to the February "snowpocalypse" and wildfires last year that hugely polluted the city's air.

"How are we going to structure ourselves in our responses, given the intensity, the frequency and the sense of urgency that we've faced literally every few months over the past year?"

The blistering temperatures in the US and Canada this week were caused by an atmospheric high-pressure zone known as a "heat dome". These conditions arise when the jet stream, a band of fast-moving air high in the atmosphere, develops



Health alert: locals try to keep their temperatures cooling centre in Portland, Oregon, on Monday while outside, dry ice is used to chill bottled water

a large wave pattern, which keeps the dome locked in place.

Scientists are studying whether climate change is contributing to the jet stream's unusual behaviour. Global warming has pushed up the planet's average temperature, which is about 1.2C warmer now than in 1850. Heatwaves are also becoming much more extreme due to this wider warming trend.

On the ground in the north-western US this week's heatwave has claimed some 80 lives in Oregon and at least 20 in Washington, according to officials, figures that are likely to climb in coming days. In Canada, the number of dead is believed to be in the hundreds.

The weather event laid bare the vulnerabilities of critical city infrastructure and the operations of local businesses. The streetcar service in Portland had to be suspended for several days this week after its cables began to melt in the heat. In Washington, roads began to crack, and fridges at a local Subway sandwich

chain simply stopped due to the heat.

The soaring temperatures came as much of the US west coast was preparing for yet another severe wildfire season. About half the acreage destroyed by wildfires in the west in recent years had been traced to the effects of rising temperatures caused by climate change, said Brad Udall, a climate research scientist at Colorado State University.

The heat has also intensified a 20-year "mega-drought" that has brought a deepening water crisis to the region. The Colorado river, a vital source of water for the residents of California, Arizona and Nevada as well as farmers, has dropped by a fifth since 2000. "There are agricultural users who won't get enough water. It's a harsh reality," Udall said.

'How are we going to transition our [cities and industries] to live in a much hotter

world?'

The increasingly common disruption has left many US cities and industries pondering if and how they can manage inevitable future events.

"How are we going to transition our built environment to live in a much hotter world?" said Kristie Ebi, a University of Washington professor who studies the impact of climate change on human health.

She said the everyday systems we rely on to live needed to be "designed to run in a lot hotter environment.'

She pointed out that most of the effort to deal with climate change in the Pacific Northwest had been focused on cutting greenhouse gas emissions rather than adapting to accommodate the changing climate, and now there was a pressing need to focus on the latter.

The transition would probably mean more demand for construction materials and methods that can withstand extremes, she added, as well as air conditioning. However air conditioning, an intensive user of energy, contributes to global warming. Yet this week in Portland, such units were impossible to buy.

the stores, they'd sold all of them," said Shamshulla Sharafi, a taxi driver who said he worked in the heatwave because his car – unlike his home – had aircon.

"You couldn't find air conditioners in

In fear of another heatwave, he described the conditions: "It was like someone throwing fire on your face." Additional reporting by Leslie Hook in

See Opinion

'Lone wolf' attack

Hong Kong police officer stabbed on China party anniversary

NICOLLE LIU — HONG KONG

A Hong Kong man died after stabbing a police officer and then himself in a case the city's security chief described as "a lone wolf terrorist attack", as China's Communist party marked the centenary of its founding.

The attack late on Thursday evening, which left the officer in a serious condition, occurred despite an overwhelming security operation in the Asian financial centre to prevent any protests.

"I strongly condemn this kind of violence," said Carrie Lam, Hong Kong chief executive. "These behaviours are clearly directed at the stability of our society."

The attack came despite the government's success in extinguishing Hong Kong's protest movement through mass arrests of activists and the introduction of a national security law last year.

Analysts said the incident would be used to justify a further crackdown as Beijing seeks to bring the city to heel after mass demonstrations in 2019 to protect freedoms guaranteed to the city after its 1997 handover to China.

The 28-year-old officer was stabbed in Causeway Bay, the usual gathering point for protests. The 50-year-old suspect then stabbed himself in the chest with the same weapon and was certified dead after being sent to hospital. Videos showed him lying in a pool of blood at the scene.

Chris Tang, Hong Kong's secretary for security, vowed to target those who "advocated violence, incited hostility, hatred towards society and country", which he said were the primary factors behind the incident.

Experts said even though the man's motivation was not clear, the case would be seen by authorities as evidence they had not done enough to quell Hong Kong's anti-government movement.

"It was such an important day for the regime, [yet] with so many measures there are still problems," said Ray Yep, a political scientist at City University of Hong Kong.

Others said pro-Beijing politicians would seek to equate the stabbing with the wider pro-democracy movement. "This may be used as an argument for the tight controls under the national security law, or perhaps even an expansion of its application," said Ian Chong, a professor of political science at the National University of Singapore.

Separately, police found flammable objects that were thrown at Government House, Lam's residence, and arrested at least 19 people for acts including distributing seditious publications and possession of weapons.

The incidents came after a mass ceremony in Beijing to mark the party's founding in 1921. Thursday also marked the 24th anniversary of Hong Kong's 1997 handover from the UK to China.





Global tax deal Domestic legislation holds key to success of accord

 $\mathbf{EMMA}\ \mathbf{AGYEMANG} - \mathtt{COPENHAGEN}$ CHRIS GILES AND JONATHAN WHEATLEY

After years of complex talks, 130 countries have agreed to radically alter the way companies are taxed worldwide, but some detail remains to be decided and domestic legislation completed, and nations are still holding out.

The deal was concluded at the OECD in Paris on Thursday after the G7 group of leading economies reached an agreement last month. It will introduce a global minimum corporate tax rate of at least 15 per cent and grant countries new rights to tax large companies based on where they earn their revenues, rather than where they are located.

The minimum rate is likely to raise more than \$150bn in additional taxes a year, and a further \$15bn to \$17bn annually will be generated by the jurisdictional change, according to the OECD.

Only the world's largest companies with annual revenue exceeding €20bn and pre-tax profit margins of at least 10 per cent will be affected by the jurisdictional change. They will pay tax on 20 to 30 per cent of the profits they make, over and above the first 10 per cent of profits as a share of revenues.

A mandatory dispute resolution regime will be introduced to prevent nations from arguing; a move business had pushed for. The deal confirmed a minimum rate of at least 15 per cent will apply to companies with annual revenue of €750m or more. Countries can choose to apply it to all companies.

The holdouts

Just two weeks ago many countries were

refusing to sign up, prompting highlevel arm twisting by the US, which reinvigorated the stalled global talks earlier this year with fresh proposals. Reluctant parties included China, Argentina, Saudi Arabia, Russia and Turkey.

Barbados, Estonia, Hungary, Ireland, Kenya, Nigeria, Sri Lanka and St Vincent and the Grenadines, pictured, held out; several are tax havens which will substantially lose out. Peru abstained.

The refusal of three EU members is embarrassing for Brussels and could pose a practical problem. The European Commission plans to introduce the agreement into EU law but tax dir-

ectives require unanimity; it is unclear whether the refuseniks will veto it.

Irish finance minister Paschal Donohoe said yesterday he wished to "continue to engage" and "cooperate" with the talks but it was "a matter of huge national sensitivity" and "there was not enough

clarity or information . . . to sign". Aisling Donohue, a tax partner at Andersen in Ireland, said: "Usually when there's a global consensus, we tend to fall into line."

Winners and losers

The jurisdictional change will most affect countries that host many multinationals' headquarters. Research by Michael Devereux and Martin Simmler of the University of Oxford's Saïd Business School estimated that about 64 per cent of the rise in jurisdictional tax receipts would come from US-based firms, with 45 per cent from tech companies.

Companies excluded include financial services and those in extractive industries. London's success in winning the financial services exemption will reduce the total profits affected by about half, Devereux and Simmler estimated.

But countries that host the headquarters of many multinationals will be the biggest beneficiaries of the global minimum tax, in particular the US. Companies excluded from the minimum tax include shipping groups and those that receive incentives to invest in tangible

assets like factories and machinery. Tax havens will lose most as the deal allows countries to levy a top-up tax on com-

panies that have not paid the minimum rate in each jurisdiction that they operate in, wiping out the advantages of channelling revenues via low-tax jurisdictions.

Some developing coun-

tries have complained the deal does not bring them enough tax. Logan Wort, executive secretary of the African Tax Administration Forum, which advises governments there, said "probably at least 15 countries" that signed up had done so with reservations. The deal "may not be perfect" but "it is certainly going to make a hell of a boost to [the ratio of] tax to GDP, to total revenues, and . . . to collect what we were never able to before".

Unresolved questions

The global agreement will supersede the

national digital taxes which some countries have already introduced, but it is not clear when they will give these up.

The deal promised "appropriate coordination" but tax experts warned it would not be straightforward, as each country needs to legislate. In the US, for example, President Joe Biden must seek congressional approval for at least some parts of the agreement, and Republicans are likely to oppose it.

Some countries are reluctant to withdraw their taxes until the US legislative process has succeeded.

The extent to which other tax incentives are covered by the pact is unclear. Ross Robertson, international tax partner at BDO, said regimes such as patent boxes, which offer lower effective corporate tax rates for research and development activities, could be affected.

Dan Neidle, a partner at law firm Clifford Chance, said that if such incentives remained under national control, multinationals would still choose to base themselves in jurisdictions with the most generous regimes. "The more leeway you have, the more opportunity for arbitrage," he said.

Next steps

The deal will be discussed at the meeting of G20 finance ministers next week in Venice, then at the G20 leaders' meeting in Rome in October. Technical talks will continue at the OECD to thrash out the remaining details.

Each country must enact the final deal through domestic legislation next year and the changes are due to come into force in 2023.

Additional reporting by Laura Noonan

Southern Africa

Dozens feared dead in Eswatini following crackdown on dissent

JOSEPH COTTERILL — JOHANNESBURG

A government crackdown on pro-democracy protests in Eswatini, Africa's last absolute monarchy, has killed dozens after soldiers fired live rounds at protesters, according to activists with banned opposition parties.

King Mswati III has deployed the army as the landlocked kingdom of 1.5m that was formerly known as Swaziland has been swept by its biggest and most violent demonstrations in years.

Wandile Dludlu, secretary-general of the People's United Democratic Movement, estimated that about 40 people had since been killed and more than 400 wounded by gunshots, rubber bullets and beatings.

An official count was not yet possible but "all hospitals are full, wards are over-pouring", after soldiers used "not just live rounds but military bullets" against protesters, Dludlu said.

Neighbouring South Africa earlier this week called for "total restraint" by the security forces and said it was concerned about reported loss of life and destruction of property.

There has long been simmering discontent in Eswatini over the rule of Mswati, who has reigned since 1986 with absolute control over parliament under an electoral system that bans political parties. Protests ignited last month after the death in mysterious circumstances of Thabani Nkomonye, a 25 year-old law student, and an alleged police cover-up.

The government must allow "the opening of the political playing field" by unbanning parties and replacing a 2015 constitution that is "as good as a love letter to the king", Dludlu said.

As the unrest mounted last week, the government banned petitions by citizens to their local MPs, closing off one of the autocratic system's few outlets for dissent. Themba Masuku, the acting prime minister, has told people to email their grievances.

The government said on Thursday that it was yet to receive official reports of deaths. It warned that it would "continue not to tolerate the looting, arson, violence, and all other forms of criminality".

Thokozani Kenneth Kunene, general secretary of the Eswatini communist party, also estimated the dead at about 40. The government "don't care how many are killed", he added.

Masuku denied martial law had been declared but said the government "had to call in the army to protect critical national infrastructure" and enforce rules to limit coronavirus infections.

This week, the government imposed a curfew starting at 6pm, ostensibly as part of pandemic restrictions. Alongside the curfew "there were huge numbers of soldiers and police in a joint operation on the streets . . . by all definitions, that is martial law," Dludlu said.

"It is now openly clear that it is brutality and violence that has been sustaining the system," Kunene added.

INTERNATIONAL

Latin America

Latest variant's odd mutations puzzle scientists

Lambda, first identified in Peru, is spreading but its rate of contagion is unclear

 ${\bf CLIVE\ COOKSON}-{\bf LONDON}$ GIDEON LONG — BOGOTA

Lambda, the latest coronavirus variant to draw the World Health Organization's attention, is worrying officials in Latin America and puzzling scientists because of its "unusual" set of mutations.

Formerly known as C.37, Lambda was first detected late last year in Peru, and has since spread to 27 countries, including the UK. Public Health England this week said it had been identified "across" the country, although the number of cases it had identified remained small.

Pablo Tsukayama, a doctor in molecular microbiology at the Cayetano Heredia university in Lima, Peru's capital, said when medics first noted the variant in December, it accounted for one in 200 samples. But by March, "it accounted for about 50 per cent of samples in Lima and now it's about 80 per cent. That would suggest its rate of transmission is higher than other variants," he said.

According to the WHO, Lambda made up 82 per cent of new Covid-19 cases in May and June in Peru, which has the world's highest coronavirus mortality rate. In neighbouring Chile, it accounts for almost a third.

Scientists, however, remain uncertain whether Lambda mutations make it more transmissible. "At the moment there's no evidence to suggest it's more aggressive than other variants," said Jairo Méndez Rico, an adviser on emerging viral diseases at the Pan-American Health Organization. "It's possible that it has a higher rate of contagion but more work needs to be done on it."

The WHO in June named Lambda as

the seventh "variant of interest" so far. The global health body believes such

strains are less of a threat than its four "variants of concern" - Alpha, Beta, Gamma and Delta originally detected in the UK, South Africa, Brazil and India respectively - but says they still need close monitoring. On June 23, PHE in the UK designated Lambda a variant under investigation "due to international expansion and several notable mutations". PHE stressed there was no evidence Lambda caused more severe disease or rendered vaccines less effective.

"One reason why it is hard to make sense of the threat from Lambda, using computational and lab data, is that it has rather an unusual set of mutations, compared with other variants," explained Jeff Barrett, director of the Covid-19 Genomics Initiative at the Wellcome Sanger Institute in the UK. A lack of genetic sequencing facilities in Latin America had made it difficult to know the extent to which Lambda was driving the region's outbreaks.

Lambda has a unique pattern of seven mutations in the spike protein that the virus uses to infect human cells. Researchers are intrigued by one mutation called L452Q, similar to the L452R mutation believed to contribute to the high infectiousness of the Delta variant.

Monica Acevedo and colleagues at the University of Chile, Santiago, studied the effect of Lambda on viral infectivity using blood samples from healthcare workers who had received two doses of China's CoronaVac vaccine. Their results, revealed on Thursday, suggest Lambda is more infectious than Gamma and Alpha and better able to escape vaccination antibodies. "Our data show for the first time that mutations present in the spike protein of the Lambda variant confer escape to neutralising antibodies and increased infectivity," they wrote.

Criminal indictment. Tax perks



Trump defenders man ramparts as New York fires opening salvo in probe

Pressure rises on CFO to help inquiry, but rightwing pundits criticise a 'nothingburger'

JOSHUA CHAFFIN — NEW YORK

Hiding executives' income was such an established practice at Donald Trump's family business, according to New York prosecutors, that it kept two sets of ledgers for the purpose: one with an executive's stated pay to report to the tax authorities; another that tallied all the extra perks surreptitiously paid for by the company.

For Allen Weisselberg, the Trump Organization's longtime chief financial officer, those "off the books" perks ran to more than \$1.7m over a 15-year period, according to a criminal indictment unsealed in a New York court on Thursday. They included things such as his grandchildren's school tuition, rent for a luxury apartment, two Mercedes car leases and a flatscreen television.

For the Trump Organization, there was the benefit of reducing its own payroll taxes, which are tied to employee compensation, prosecutors alleged.

"This is not a standard practice," Carey Dunne, a top assistant to Cyrus Vance, the Manhattan district attorney, told reporters. "This was a secret and audacious illegal payment scheme."

Through a blitz of statements, Trump's lawyers derided the case as yet another "nothingburger", to borrow a term from Don Jr.

"This is all they have?" asked Ronald Fischetti, Trump's lawyer. "In my 50 years of practice, I have never seen this office bring a case like this and, quite frankly, I am astonished."

While New York City was being ravaged by "subway slashings, gun violence and hate crimes", the Trump Organization said, Vance had spent millions of dollars to bring a case over fringe benefits. "Make no mistake, this is not about the law; this is all about politics."

On Fox News, meanwhile, presenters and guests took turns taking umbrage. "The Democrats have a good reason for ignoring violence in the streets," said anchor Jesse Watters as he introduced a primetime segment on the case. "They've been busy perverting the criminal justice system to get the Trump Organization."

The question is what a jury will make of the case and what Weisselberg will do. The loyal lieutenant who has described himself as Trump's "eyes and ears" pleaded not guilty after entering the courthouse through a back entrance on Thursday morning.

With the threat of prison time looming, Vance and Letitia James, the New York attorney-general, are hoping the double ledgers and other evidence they have uncovered will persuade the 48year veteran of the Trump Organization - a man who was hired by Trump's father, Fred - to break with the former president and aid their investigation.

"I don't see how you can't take this seriously," said Daniel Horwitz, a former prosecutor in Vance's office who now leads the white collar law practice at McLaughlin & Stern. "This was not a

'[The fact that there were] two sets of separate books, that's pretty close to a smoking gun'

case of a year or two of taxes unpaid on a car. This was a scheme, according to the indictment, perpetuated for well over a

In light of the allegations, Horwitz predicted reputable businesses would be reluctant to deal with the Trump Organization.

Daniel Hemel, a law professor at the University of Chicago, who specialises in tax issues, also saw heft in Vance's case. "The fact that the Trump Organization was maintaining two sets of separate books, that's pretty close to a smoking gun," he said, likening the case to that of the late Leona Helmsley, the infamous "Queen of Mean". Helmsley spent 19 months in prison after then-US attorney Rudolph Giuliani accused her in 1989 of fraudulently billing millions of dollars of home renovations to her husband's property company to avoid taxes.

"It's almost like a playbook on differ-

ent ways to commit tax fraud," Adam Kaufmann, another veteran of Vance's office now in private practice, said of the actions described in the indictment.

Like others, he noted Weisselberg's alleged position as both the orchestrator and beneficiary of the scheme, and believed his title as chief financial officer would also make it difficult to plead ignorance on tax and accounting

One of the more contentious elements in the indictment is a grand larceny charge. Prosecutors argued that Weisselberg's alleged fraud allowed him not only to avoid paying taxes but to claim more than \$94,000 in federal tax refunds over the years, which he was not owed. In essence, they called that a form of property theft, stiffening the potential sentence he could face. But some lawyers dismissed that as a stretch, and predicted the charge would ultimately be tossed out by the judge.

Even so, that would still leave behind other vivid elements of the indictment likely to resonate with jurors, according to Mark Zauderer, a defence lawyer. In addition to the double ledgers, for example, prosecutors also alleged that Weisselberg and his wife claimed not to be residents of New York City in order to avoid local taxes. All the while, they were the sole occupants of a Trump apartment on Riverside Boulevard.

"It is easy to lose sight of the fact that these are serious charges with significant penalties, and the supporting facts alleged in the indictment are easy for jurors to understand," Zauderer said. "And they are likely to generate resentment in the hearts of jurors who don't benefit from the kind of tax schemes alleged by the district attorney and the grand jury."

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Euro 2020 Eriksen collapse galvanises Denmark

RICHARD MILNE — OSLO EMMA AGYEMANG — COPENHAGEN

An unfancied Danish team overcomes adversity and captures hearts on the way to European football glory.

It happened in 1992 when Denmark

unexpectedly won the European Football Championship despite only being drafted into the tournament at the last minute. Twenty-nine years later, after the trauma of seeing star player Christian Eriksen suffer a cardiac arrest in the opening game, could it happen again for the Scandinavian nation?

"What happened with Eriksen will become part of our national narrative. In Denmark, everybody is talking about this being another '92," said Lykke Friis, a former government minister who was on her way to Baku in Azerbaijan to watch today's quarter-final against the Czech Republic. "That fairytale summer is on everybody's minds."

The image of Denmark's players surrounding the prone Eriksen as he received electric shocks and CPR on the pitch in Copenhagen will be one of the defining moments of Euro 2020. Friis called it a "galvanising event", something that caused a nation as well as neutral supporters to fall in love with the team.

Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg, Denmark's midfielder, described the tournament as "a rollercoaster". When they returned to the field against Finland after Eriksen collapsed, "we played with our hearts and tried to do everything to make ourselves and the country proud".

The 1992 victory remains the highwater mark for Danish football. The team had failed to qualify but were

called up barely a week before the tournament kicked off to replace Yugoslavia, who were excluded due to the Balkans war. Denmark went on to beat Germany in the final, an event Friis called "a Hans Christian Andersen adventure" for the nation of 5.8m people.

Nikoline, a bartender in Copenhagen, was just two when Denmark won, and said her parents would often tell her she would never know how great a feeling that was. "Now it could happen," she said, describing the current atmosphere as a "national party".

After Eriksen's near-death experience (he is now recovering) nobody had any expectations for the team, she said: "People felt like if they go out it's fine, as long as everybody lives."

But since the initial loss to Finland, the team's performances have got better and better. They shocked Belgium by scoring first, before eventually losing to one of the favourites for the title.

The final group match against Russia was tense, before Denmark found their gear to seal an emphatic 4-1 victory. They also scored four without reply against Wales to reach the quarterfinals. "You can really feel the patriotism building," said Nikoline.

A group of three men in the Copenha-



gen bar – watching neighbours Sweden crash out of the competition this week showed how Denmark's success has snowballed. Frederik, a 31-year-old sports journalist, is such a fan he has already bought a semi-final ticket due to his belief that "this team are the real deal". He has urged friends to buy replica Danish football shirts for months.

Soren, a 31-year-old engineering student, said the matches had helped him and others feel pride in the red-andwhite Danish flag after years of watching it be co-opted by the nationalist right. Drinking companion Anders, a 32year-old IT worker, wished he had listened to Frederik and bought a shirt, now sold out in most shops.

The sense of "unity" after Eriksen's heart scare and the "intense" feeling that Denmark could go all the way again have drawn him in. Frederik chipped in: "You don't see a team that wants it as much and fights for it as hard as we do."

Hojbjerg stressed that Denmark "have not done anything yet" and still have to beat the Czechs and either England or Ukraine to reach the final.

But he conceded there were similarities between today's team and that of 1992. Both have a Schmeichel in goal — Peter 29 years ago, his son Kasper today - as well as solid defenders and exciting attackers such as Brian Laudrup in 1992 and Mikkel Damsgaard now. He said: "There's togetherness, values of 'one for all and all for one', this pride of

playing for your country." The Czechs should prove tougher than Wales. Still, the feeling of unity gives Danes optimism. Hojbjerg added: "Really being able to feel the love, it reminds us all why we started playing football in terms of joy and the passion."

FT BIG READ. INVESTMENT

Watchdogs have clamped down on Binance, one of the world's largest cryptocurrency exchanges, as they move to tighten the sector's porous border with conventional financial markets. But will they succeed?

By Adam Samson and Brooke Masters

hangpeng Zhao's company
Binance is everywhere and
yet based nowhere. The
cryptocurrency exchange
has processed trillions of
dollars in trades this year as it transfers
digital and conventional money around
the world through affiliates. And yet it
has no headquarters.

Incorporated in the Cayman Islands, the company has grown at extraordinary speed into a leading player in the fledgling industry. But the 44-year-old Canadian-Chinese mogul's empire is now attracting intense scrutiny from global watchdogs grappling with new financial entities that act in many jurisdictions but are rooted in none.

Binance has led a peripatetic life since its founding by Zhao, who goes by the moniker "CZ", in China four years ago. The company shifted its operations after a crackdown by Chinese authorities in 2017. After it landed in Japan, regulators warned in 2018 it was conducting unauthorised cryptocurrency trading in the country. Malta's then prime minister Joseph Muscat welcomed Binance with open arms that year, but in 2020 its financial regulator proclaimed that despite the company's operations in the EU state, it was not responsible for regulating the exchange.

Zhao, whose wealth was valued by Forbes at almost \$2bn when bitcoin was on the ascent in March, insists the company has no formal headquarters. "You have to have an entity, you have to have a headquarter, you have to have a bank account. All of those things don't need to exist for blockchain companies," he told a crypto conference in 2020. He did not respond to a request to be interviewed for this article.

Regulators on three continents are clamping down on the company, one of the world's biggest cryptocurrency exchanges by volume, as they attempt to police the porous border between the largely freewheeling crypto sector and the more tightly-regulated conventional financial market.

The UK's Financial Conduct Authority last week banned a regulated affiliate called Binance Markets Limited from offering any traditional financial services that fall into the regulator's remit. It also said the group was not authorised to conduct crypto asset business within Britain's borders and warned consumers that transactions with unregistered companies are generally not covered by investor protection schemes.

The move by the UK regulator follows a warning from Japan last month that mirrored the concerns first expressed in 2018. And it comes as the company is preparing to pull out of Ontario following a broader crackdown by the province's Securities Commission. The Cayman Islands Monetary Authority said on Thursday that Binance is not authorised to run a crypto exchange there, and is "investigating" whether any of its operations are based in the tax haven. Yesterday Thailand became the latest country to take action, filing a criminal complaint against the company for allegedly operating without a licence.

While the organisational charts of most companies resemble a pyramid, with a headquarters at the top and subsidiaries below, Binance's is more like a hydra, with semi-autonomous units operating around the world. In Europe, Zhao-owned companies in London and Vilnius, which are not regulated as financial firms, help pump hard currency on and off the main Binance exchange through deals with UK-based payments processors.

Binance says it is rapidly hiring more compliance staff and using advanced



The great crypto crackdown

'Crypto
exchanges
are the
frontier
between the
dark web and
the regulated
fiat world.
The FCA
should be
congratulated
for putting
the fear of
God in
others'

\$5.4_{tn}

transactions

this year

processed by Binance

Funds moved on to

allegedly criminal

enterprises in 2019

Binance from

tools to block any potential illicit activity from its systems. "We take our legal obligations very seriously and have worked hard to build a robust compliance programme," it said in a statement to the Financial Times.

The regulatory offensive against the company and some of its affiliates comes as financial supervisors around the world worry that money from illegal drugs, ransomware and other crimes is washing back into the legitimate banking system through unmonitored links with crypto. "Crypto exchanges are the frontier between the dark web and the regulated fiat world," says Tom Keatinge, a financial crime expert at the Royal United Services Institute. "The FCA should be congratulated for cracking down on Binance and putting the fear of God in others."

Regulatory limits

Yet the UK's intervention has had limited practical effect. Binance.com customers briefly lost access to sterling withdrawals and some UK customers said their bank transfers to the exchange had been blocked, but consumers could still add or remove euros from the system, or take their digital coins off Binance's platform directly.

Still, the Binance clash is a taste of things to come, say anti-money laundering experts. With evidence dating back to 2015 that terrorists and criminals were using crypto to move money around, the Financial Action Task Force, which spearheads the global fight against dirty money, called for a clampdown in 2019. Fifty-two countries and territories now regulate "virtual asset service providers", and six have banned them outright.

"Crypto has been the wild west of the financial services sector, and to a large extent it still is," says David Lewis, FATF's executive secretary. "We are not looking to close down these currencies. We are looking to support responsible innovators and create a level playing field. There is still a lot of regulatory arbitrage going on."

The crypto anti-money laundering rules, launched in 2019, require companies to prove they can screen out criminal customers and flag up suspicious transactions. Regulators agree that most money laundering still goes through cash, ordinary bank accounts and shell companies, but they don't want digital exchanges to provide criminals with another avenue.

Banks already spend billions on antimoney laundering controls, with mixed success; now crypto providers face the

No more 'wild west': the Financial Action Task Force's David Lewis says it aims to 'support responsible innovators'



same demands. It will drive up costs but could also broaden the sector's appeal.

"To be regulated adds a layer of credibility to the industry. Not only will your money be safe, but it will have more credibility that we are trying to stop financial crime," says Peter Oakes, a former Irish banking regulator who now works in fintech. "It's better to have 30 per cent more overhead from risk and compliance costs than zero revenue."

Compliance matters

Some customers appear to appreciate that attitude. Since the Binance crackdown was announced, Bitstamp, a Luxembourg-regulated rival that boasts of its "mature approach", has seen a 138 per cent rise in new customer applications, says chief executive Julian Sawyer.

Binance itself has struggled at times to keep its compliance function on par with its sweeping operations, in the view of several people directly familiar with the group's practices. Those operations include leveraged trading in digital coins such as bitcoin and ether, futures, options, savings, lending and stock tokens. The company has processed \$5.4tn in "spot" crypto transactions this year, according to crypto and blockchain research group TheBlockCrypto.

An employee at a financial firm that used to connect Binance to traditional markets says that while the exchange "talks a big game on anti-money laundering and know-your-customer" rules, it was "resistant to throwing human resources at compliance issues" preferring to automate its controls. His company ultimately cut ties with Binance over fears that it was "not a great advert for the [crypto industry]".

Two people familiar with Binance's operations say that as its business has boomed, it has often lacked the resources and practices needed to handle thousands of transactions.

The company denies this, saying that it is "categorically untrue" that it lacks sufficient compliance capacity and that it is continuing to invest in its compliance programme.

Binance Markets Limited, which is controlled by Zhao, attempted to set up a "ringfenced" exchange in the UK that would have allowed for trading in digital tokens against the euro and sterling. But it pulled its application in May after the FCA demanded "exhaustive disclosure" and hundreds of pages of documents related to anti-money laundering controls, according to a person familiar with the matter.

Binance says it has "consistently invested in its compliance efforts . . . including using some of the top

Above: Binance
CEO Changpeng
Zhao says
blockchain
bled
companies do
not need
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says

currency on and off the Binance exchange through deals with UK-based payments processors

FCA bans on the sale of crypto-based derivatives 'force consumers to look offshore where they won't be given the same level of protection' [regulation technology] tools and vendors in the space and making strong hires". The group adds that it has doubled the size of its compliance and law enforcement team, which now numbers in the "hundreds", over the past year.

The FCA says that more than 90 per cent of the virtual exchange companies that initially tried to meet its standards to become registered crypto firms have withdrawn their applications. "It is a tough process and a lengthy process," says Ryan Moore, chief executive of Mode, which secured its registration last week after working with the watchdog for nearly two years.

Some crypto advocates argue that the regulatory crackdown will have unintended consequences. They particularly cite FCA bans on the sale of cryptobased derivatives. "It's forcing consumers to look offshore where they won't be given the same level of protection," says Nick Jones, who runs Zumo, a UK crypto platform that is in the formal FCA registration process.

Others say that tighter enforcement will bolster confidence and help the sector grow. "Firms that have nothing to hide should embrace this opportunity to enhance confidence in their business by seeking registration and appropriate oversight," the chief Ontario regulator Grant Vingoe said recently.

One UK-based user of the Binance exchange takes a similar view. He plans to keep using the platform but is worried that if interventions by regulators became a "regular occurrence [forcing operators to] flip virtual headquarters from one place to another in a cat 'n' mouse game" he might need to rethink.

"Crypto is enough of a casino without having to also worry about the real money part of the equation," he adds.

Additional reporting by Joshua Oliver and Robin Harding

My travels with Donald Rumsfeld



ne of my most incongruous memories of covering Donald Rumsfeld, who died this week at the age of 88, was watching the US defence secretary receive a lesson in Irish revolutionary history at the Shannon airport bar.

Returning from a trip to China, we had stopped at Shannon to refuel. Telling him that it was rude not to drink with an Irishman in his own country, I convinced Rumsfeld to join the reporters and aides for a drink.

As Rumsfeld drank Irish coffee, the barman explained how one of the

reporters had committed a sin by ordering a "Black & Tan" — the name given to a controversial British police unit during the Irish war of independence, but a drink in the US. It was a light-hearted moment for someone whose own gaffes frequently landed him in trouble.

During his career. Rumsfeld served in

During his career, Rumsfeld served in myriad roles, including as a congressman, Nato ambassador and White House chief of staff to Gerald Ford, who later made him defence secretary. When George W Bush appointed him to the same role in 2000, Rumsfeld made history by having been both the youngest and oldest Pentagon chief — and the only person to hold the role twice.

Bush appointed Rumsfeld both because of his security credentials but also because as chief executive of GD Searle, a pharmaceutical company, he had earned plaudits for effectively restructuring a big organisation, and Bush wanted someone to reform the Pentagon. But he was cast into a very

different role after the 9/11 terror attacks, which led to the US invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq.

By the time I started covering Rumsfeld in 2004, the Iraq war was almost a year old. The jubilation that had come with the capture of Saddam Hussein was morphing into frustration as a potent insurgency arose across the country.

After being feted for the speed at which the US had toppled Saddam, Rumsfeld became the poster child for everything that was going wrong in Iraq, much of which was due to a lack of planning and insufficient US troops.

Yet even before Iraq descended into a treacherous quagmire, he would deflect hard questions with his verbal dexterity. In a city of egos, he stood out as someone who was so confident that he would never accept blame.

When widespread looting swept Iraq, his response was: "Freedom is untidy" and "stuff happens". Insurgents were "dead-enders". When a soldier asked

why the US had been so slow to armour its Humvees, he replied: "You go to war with the army you have." In approving controversial interrogation techniques for Guantánamo Bay, Rumsfeld, who used a standing desk, scribbled: "I stand for 8-10 hours a day. Why is standing limited to 4 hours?"

As US defence secretary, he stood out as someone who was so confident he would never accept blame

A former Navy pilot and wrestling champion at Princeton, Rumsfeld was hyper competitive. An avid squash player, he made his aides play hard ball — a form of the game that requires less running to give him an advantage — and would playfully post the score on his office door when he won.

While it was hard to separate the man from the defence secretary, Rumsfeld had charm and wit. But he also had a dark streak that saw him bully people, including his generals. His skill as an infighter led Richard Nixon to describe him as a "ruthless little bastard".

him as a "ruthless little bastard". I experienced his abrasiveness on a trip to north Africa when he castigated me over a blog that, he claimed, made it sound like he travelled in luxury. When a reporter later joked that Rumsfeld was scared to play me at squash, he exclaimed disdainfully: "What, this jackass who wants to be Financial Times food editor?" (I had interviewed him for Lunch with the FT just before the trip.) The real reason for his anger, I later learned, was that I had written that the military doctor distributed sleeping pills to the press corps on the plane. He never let me travel with him again.

But while Rumsfeld, as the former CEO of a drug company, was very worried about the optics of giving out the

sleep aides, he showed little concern about his image when it came to the treatment of Guantánamo detainees, or the fact that Iraq had none of the weapons of mass destruction that the US said justified the fateful invasion.

One of his most vocal critics was Senator John McCain, who said he would "go down in history as one of the worst secretaries of defence". He is often compared with Robert McNamara, the Vietnam war-era defence secretary, who also entered the public pantheon of villainous defence officials. Yet, unlike McNamara, who later showed some remorse, Rumsfeld never showed regret for the Iraq war, which claimed the lives of almost 500,000 people and left the country in chaos from which it has yet to recover.

Whether Rumsfeld ever expressed remorse in private will remain, in his own words, "a known unknown".

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FINANCIAL TIMES

'Without fear and without favour'

SATURDAY 3 JULY 2021

The housing challenge facing central banks

Monetary policy is ill-placed to fix a property crisis

House prices are rising across the world at a hair-raising pace: in the US at their fastest rate for three decades while the UK has experienced the quickest growth rate for 17 years. Prices in Germany, which missed much of the past four decades of rising house prices, have surged. Not even Italy and Japan, where house prices have been moribund for decades, have completely missed out.

The causes are well-rehearsed. Richer workers, saving money at home, have wanted something different. The possibility of remote or at least hybrid working has led plenty of urban office workers to imagine the possibility of living somewhere with a lot more outdoor space — prices have risen fastest in areas that offer larger gardens or access to beauty spots.

Rising prices are a result not only of a lockdown-induced shift in priorities. Central bankers have played a role by lowering interest rates and buying up assets in a bid to keep financial markets functioning and workers employed. Many people will have been relieved to see house prices hold up: falls in prices hurt consumer confidence and developers' appetite to build, as well as banks' balance sheets.

But now the surge in prices feeds into the next set of challenges facing the technocrats, including hitting their inflation targets. Fannie Mae, the federal housing association that guarantees some mortgages, argues that unlike during the 2000s prices will feed into rents and, eventually, general inflation. It is a risk to financial stability too: Eric Rosengren, the president of Boston Federal Reserve, has argued that the danger of the housing boom turning into a bust is similarly a risk to keeping inflation at target.

Others worry about inequality. Mortgages might be affordable for homeowners, thanks to low interest rates, but renters need bigger deposits before

they can buy. That means years of scraping excess funds together while paying rent. New Zealand has told its Reserve Bank to think about the impact of its monetary policy decisions on keeping house prices sustainable. Dallas Fed chair Robert Kaplan has warned about institutional investors overpaying and squeezing out ordinary buyers — a concern he shares with antigentrification activists in Berlin.

Making house prices the overriding objective of monetary policy would mean allowing general consumer prices to fall. The impact of overly tight monetary policy on wages and unemployment could mean home buying is put further out of renters' reach.

Nevertheless, some initiatives might have a small impact on the housing market. The Reserve Bank of New Zealand has reintroduced leverage restrictions, reducing the size of mortgages relative to the value of a house — a policy that has a marginal impact on prices. Rosengren suggests the Fed should begin any tapering of its quantitative easing programme of asset purchases by reducing the rate at which it buys mortgage-backed securities, rather than government debt. This may also help, though it is unlikely to solve the problem on its own.

Ultimately, governments must take responsibility - firstly by removing policies that deliberately boost demand. It may be too challenging for politicians to end the favourable tax treatment of owning relative to renting, but ending direct subsidies such as the UK's help-to-buy scheme would be a first step to getting housing markets under control. In the longer run, the route out is to encourage building while making renting a more secure and attractive option. Central bankers might attract the blame but this is one problem they cannot bear the responsibility for solving.

Lego gives a lesson in corporate innovation

 $The \ toy maker's \ recycled \ plastic \ bricks \ are \ a \ worthy \ achievement$

Lego already has one rare achievement to its name. In an age when parents must wheedle and cajole their children away from digital distractions, the Danish company's plastic bricks remain a beloved physical toy. But that tangible presence is a mixed blessing: parents who love the time away from screens as well as the company's progressive Scandinavian values — the bricks encourage creativity and some of the sets, at least, are unisex — are less keen on filling the planet their children will grow up in with even more plastic.

Now the company has another feather in its cap. Lego — whose name comes from the Danish for "play well" — has put substantial investment into redeveloping its most basic product line. Last week it revealed it had found a way to create the iconic bricks from recycled plastic bottles, having already replaced the plastic used in a few other parts with a plant-based alternative in 2018. By 2030, it aims to remove oil from its supply chain altogether.

The company's aim to make its product line more environmentally friendly is not just a cynical response to market pressure. The private, family-owned company is doing well — outstripping its rivals Mattel and Hasbro. Since it almost went bankrupt in 2003, sales have soared. Consumers may worry about plastic pollution, but not yet enough to deny children toys.

enough to deny children toys.

The Lego situation is unique. Publicly traded companies do not always have the same luxury of being able to experiment and invest in areas that promise long-term benefits for little immediate short-term return. But there are universal lessons in three important areas.

First, anticipation. The near-death experience of the early 2000s obliged Lego to think carefully about how to harness the forces ripping through business, notably digitalisation and

globalisation. Having missed the craze for Lego-like computer game Minecraft, it caught up with its own games and Lego-branded movies, while at the same time betting on growth (and manufacturing plants) in emerging markets. The group is now looking at how it can use augmented reality to enhance the play experience and pressing ahead with expansion of retail stores in China.

It is not easy to ride shifting social norms, but it can be done. Lego's Danish compatriot Orsted reinvented itself from a struggling state-owned oil and gas company to a leading wind farm operator.

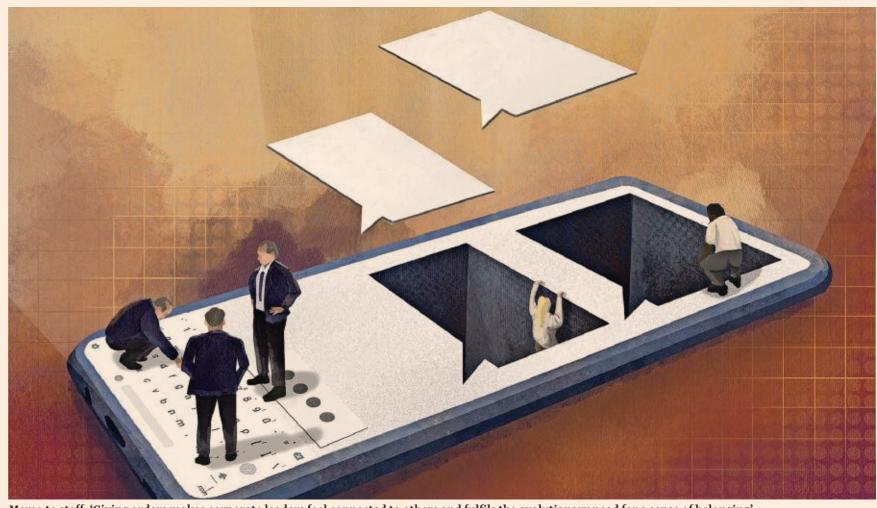
Second, innovation. Finding a new purpose for single-use plastic is another demonstration of how, with sufficient resources and ingenuity, it is possible to solve or at least mitigate environmental problems. Other examples range from reducing the cost of renewable energy to making meatless, but still tasty, burgers. Lego's innovation is not an easy scientific task. The bricks need to grip in exactly the right way and combine with the company's back catalogue of kits.

Finally, communication. Lego has a reputational head-start over most businesses because parents and grandparents still associate its products with happy childhood memories. But tastes change, and attitudes to products can swing within a few tweets from unquestioning support to disapproval.

Lego's recycled brick is still a prototype, which it hopes to deploy in a couple of years. But by broadcasting its virtuous move away from oil-based plastic now, it is laying down a layer of reassurance that the box of preloved Lego bricks in the attic will still be an acceptable plaything generations hence. Other companies that depend on fossil fuels must wish they could draw on a similar bank of goodwill.

Letters

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Memo to staff: 'Giving orders makes corporate leaders feel connected to others and fulfils the evolutionary need for a sense of belonging' - Ewan White

Slowing down or logging on is the climate choice for Gen Z

It was with mixed feelings that I read about the case for switching to ereaders ("Carbon counter: read 'em and weep", Lex, June 26). Having grown up in the Canary Islands, I also might wager how the slow-culture hacienda owner in Paul Richardson's transporting elegy to La Palma ("Spotlight on La Palma", Life & Arts, June 26) would feel about the implied conflict between slowing down and logging on.

Since moving from London to Delhi a

decade ago my weekend ritual of a double espresso and a print copy of the FT Weekend has become more a source of mild anxiety than a calming tonic

The logistics of receiving our hallowed paper found me pacing the garden scanning for any sign of the "last-mile" delivery agent. Entreaties to move online were met with that usual canard from people of my generation: "It's just not the same." Then, when

Covid hit and physical deliveries stopped altogether, I had no choice.

And what about our kids? When my 6-year-old demanded a Kindle to match his elder brother's, the debate - now realigned as "eco-warrior vs less screen time" — became more fractious. Especially knowing their tablet games (or Euro 2020 football scores in my case) are a distracting double-click away.

Before we decide books are the new

cigarettes it's worth reflecting on the interplay between attitude and acts and the decelerated values we may wish to inculcate for a more balanced planet.

For now, we still have a long way to go. In this household we have currently the worst of both worlds; he got his Kindle to avoid a (localised) meltdown, but he isn't allowed to use it much.

Ishaan Ahuja

New Delhi, India

Medieval wool boss could

do with a spreadsheet

history of the spreadsheet (FT

I found Tim Harford's article on the

Magazine, June 26) fascinating but

be recorded as a debit to the cash

the opposite transactions were

rows, 63 columns and very few

functions. I told him it was an

recorded as in the article?

paused at the discussion of Francesco

di Marco Datini's wool purchases. If he

spent 100 florins on wool wouldn't that

account, and "assets" credited with 100

florins. Would Datini's books balance if

My introduction to VisiCalc was

interesting game but I could not see

probably in 1979 when an early adopter

friend showed me the version with 254

Misery isn't a precondition for cities to be creative

I do not usually ventriloquise longdead figures, but reading Janan Ganesh's "A city can die of liveability" (Life & Arts, FT Weekend, June 26), I had to imagine Virginia Woolf, who understood women's needs in the early 20th century, firmly saying "no".

Cities have historically been creative centres yet also centres of misery and death, but there's no evidence these elements are linked.

In a world of existential problems and falling birth rates we need to see talents developed, not potential swamped by financial desperation, poor housing, endless commuting and disease. In a city of pocket parks, active transport, clean air, flourishing local shops and universal basic income, there's the potential for all to flourish, to the benefit of all.

And as for the intellectual output of Vienna, a city of beauty and liveability, unsurprisingly it is a global centre of "systems thinking" — an integrated academic approach perfectly in line with its way of life. Its artistic creativity and openness is also notable, to my eyes, leaving London far in the shade.

Natalie Bennett Green Party Peer, House of Lords

London SW1, UK

Spain's 'Islamic' gardens owe a debt to Persia

Thank you for your interesting article on Tom Stuart-Smith ("It brings balm to our souls", FT Weekend, June 26). The term "Islamic" should not however be applied to gardens. There are no "Islamic" gardens, just as there are no Christian, Jewish or atheist gardens.

The Arab invaders of Persia emanated from desert areas, where gardens were rare due to the lack of water. The Persians had much earlier devised their *qanat* system of drawing water from the mountains to the plains. This enabled the formation of the so-called "paradise" gardens (from Old Persian meaning "paradise" as well as "garden"). The other classical form of the Persian garden is the chahar bagh (literally "four garden") or the quadripartite design. Thus, Bridgewater, Stuart-Smith's latest public project, being tripartite, does not fall into the category.

There were of course Persians among the Arab invaders of Spain. Some were put to developing gardens such as at the Alhambra in Granada, in Cordoba and the Great Mosque garden of what is now Almería, or other typically Persian gardens of early Spain.

Farhad Diba

Marbella, Spain

Asterix devotee enjoys a cruciverbalist's reward

I remember being told in 1979 by a humourless Latin master that reading an Asterix book during prep was not an acceptable use of my time. I am very pleased to report that, after more than 40 years, my persistence with the works of René Goscinny, the Asterix writer, and the illustrator Albert Uderzo, has been rewarded by instant recognition of the answer to 19 down of the Polymath crossword 1132 (Life & Arts, FT Weekend, June 26). My thanks to Falcon for the immense satisfaction this has given me.

William Seccombe Hong Kong

Wartime is a dry run for a non-consumer society

I am signing up as a recruit with Gillian Tett ("I'm recruiting for the war on waste", Spectrum, June 26). I was born in wartime Britain. My earliest memories are of air raids, gas masks — and rationing! Nothing went to waste. I have no problem moving to a non-consumer society — it is in my nature. I hope others will join me in supporting Tett and her eco-warriors. Pat Rogers

Riverside, CT, US

Correction

much practical use!

Michael Wray

Sonoma, CA, US

• We apologise to Christopher Forbes, vice chairman of the media company Forbes, for referring to him as the late Christopher Forbes in a reference in an article on June 26 to his purchase in 1985 of a Ch Lafitte (sic) 1787 Pauillac at Christie's, London, for the then-record sum of £105,000.

The search for ET can teach us all

Notebook
by Gillian Tett



Earlier this year, I found myself at a meeting in the Pentagon, the vast headquarters of the American military apparatus, when I spotted a striking sign on a door. It seemed to indicate the office was dedicated to research into UFOs. Security was tight, and yet I asked, "Is that a joke?"

I did not get a clear response. But in late June, a Pentagon report revealed that officials have been studying sightings of UFOs — or, as they prefer to call them, UAPs (unidentified aerial phenomena) — for many years.

Of 144 UAP sightings between 2004 and 2021, only one can be attributed to a normal object (a deflated balloon). "[We] currently lack sufficient information in our data set to attribute incidents to specific explanations," the report concluded.

Speculation about top-secret Russian, Chinese or even American technology, not to mention the wilder theories about aliens, has run rampant since. But amid all the chatter, the US government has also been studying how we might communicate with aliens if they did show up.

US government efforts to look for aliens are well known to sci-fi devotees. Seti (search for extraterrestrial intelligence) employs 100 scientists from its base in Mountain View, California, part of Silicon Valley.

What is less well known is that Seti is also working with archaeologists, anthropologists and other social scientists on the assumption that should we find somebody, we might want to say hello. Much of this is

secretive, but in 2014 Nasa published a report, "Archaeology, Anthropology and Interstellar Communication", which makes for fascinating reading. "To move beyond the mere detection of such intelligence, and to have any realistic chance of comprehending it, we can gain much from the lessons learned by researchers facing similar challenges on Earth," said a foreword by Douglas Vakoch, a clinical psychology professor emeritus at the California Institute of Integral Studies, who was then "director of interstellar message composition" at Seti.

"Like archaeologists who reconstruct temporally distant civilisations from fragmentary evidence, Seti researchers will be expected to reconstruct distant civilisations separated from us by vast expanses of space as well as time," he noted.

In practical terms, this meant that the Seti team had analysed how archaeologists failed to interpret Mayan and Egyptian texts to see how to decode unfamiliar signals. They had pondered how ancient Greek culture transmitted signals into modern European thought and looked at how the anthropologist Ruth Benedict tried to "decode" Japanese culture for the US government during the second world war.

The research also explored mistakes made when anthropologists and archaeologists first encountered Neanderthal fossils, most notably by presuming that this branch of humanity walked in a stooped fashion as indicated by the excavation of

bones. (It turned out those bones were from an arthritic individual.)

All of which led the Seti researchers to conclude that they cannot use auditory signals to communicate since "the factors affecting the propagation of sounds could vary so much from planet to planet", noted cognitive scientist William Edmondson. Nor, he added, can they use symbols since "symbolic communication — in which the connection between sign and signified is arbitrary — is intrinsically limited".

Instead, the group favours sending pictures of Earth into outer space or using maths-based signals. But while prime numbers are presumed to be a universal construct, Vakoch has stressed that it would be dangerous to assume that numbers are perceived in a universal manner.

None of this casts any light on UAPs. Nor does it address the potential downsides of making contact, as described by many of those who fear that alien beings would not only be technologically superior, but also likely to wipe out humans.

Futile or not, I find it oddly cheering that part of the government has been devoted to thinking about the near-unthinkable and with an admirably interdisciplinary approach. And even if we never find any extraterrestrial life, the search for it helps to foster a debate about what it is that enables humans to communicate with other "alien" humans, across time and space on our own planet. Right now, that is badly needed — with or without any UFOs.

Opinion

It feels lonelier at the top with everyone working from home





Memo from the CEO

To all employees of Global Cryptobank

s I sit here on the 84th floor of our magnificent New York headquarters, inaugurated only three years ago but now practically empty, I want to share my feelings with you all. I have reflected carefully since the outrage that followed my previous memo, calling on you to return to work or face the consequences.

I am not the only boss who is frustrated by employees hoping to carry on working from home, or somewhere else entirely. James Gorman, chief executive

of Morgan Stanley, has told his staff to be back at their desks by September 6: "If you want to get paid New York rates, you work in New York. None of this 'I'm in Colorado . . . and getting paid like I'm sitting in New York City," he said.

Quite right, James: it is called Labor Day, after all. But people now seem to regard it as provocative for CEOs to talk this openly, despite the progress of vaccination. The staff of Washingtonian magazine launched a day-long protest in May after Cathy Merrill, its chief executive, wrote that homeworking could make employees less valuable and easier to let go. The pandemic has turned some folks very touchy.

So, I consulted with Alison, our global head of human resources, as well as Nisha, my personal therapist, before starting this memo. I also engaged in a long and insightful discussion with our management committee on Zoom, in which I explained my thoughts and eagerly sought their opinions. I am the boss but I am part of the Global Cryptobank team, and I value honesty almost as much as making money. Their feedback was heartfelt and unanimous: "Don't do it, Bob," they pleaded. "The last time you spoke your truth about our colleagues refusing to come back, it was a diplomatic disaster that Alison has only just smoothed over." Mike, global head of dogecoin trading, was quite candid. He said to me:

"Bob, some of us have been worried

about you lately. Are you losing it?"

That is a great question, expressed with the bluntness that we so appreciate from Mike on the trading desk, and I want to respond. The answer is, maybe. It is lonely at the top and it has been lonelier since this tower cleared out. I don't know how many of you have visited the executive floor but if you ever return, you should come up. It has terrific views.

I have a telescope here, designed by one of our Silicon Valley clients and made with innovative night vision technology. Sometimes, at the end of the long, solitary working day, I use it. Gazing down on the expensive apartments in Tribeca where some of you live, thanks to our generous bonuses, I see bankers on video calls with cameras switched off, sipping wine.

I have started to wonder what is the point of my job, apart from the \$35m that I was paid last year? If I am called chief executive officer but cannot behave like a chief or take executive decisions, the only part of the role left is

'I have started to wonder what is the point of my job, apart from the \$35m that I was paid last year?'

officer, which means being in the office. It might be OK if others were too, but some days it is only me and Joe, the guy on the door, and he is 84 floors below.

The other day, I read an interesting study of the psychology of leaders. It said that, although the job can be isolating – people often suck up to us, do not speak openly, that kind of thing — we don't actually feel lonely at the top. Giving orders makes us feel connected to others and fulfils the evolutionary need for a sense of belonging. That sure made sense to me.

The study quotes a great speech by William Deresiewicz to the US Military Academy at West Point, and you know how we CEOs love to compare ourselves with military heroes. "Solitude means being alone, and leadership necessitates the presence of others — the people you're leading," he said. Bill's a literary essayist and English professor, but I think he gets it.

Do you spot the problem? Leadership "necessitates the presence of others" and you are not present. That makes my job less fulfilling and offers me fewer opportunities to exert power, so I end up lonely. It is an executive lose-lose. I know it is hard to empathise with the CEO and you have your own challenges, no question. But that is how I see it.

I had to break off from writing this memo just now to call into an emergency meeting of the board. It seems that word has gotten round: perhaps I was not the only one with whom Mike was so candid. I am happy to share with you that the board endorsed my proposal that you all be told to report back to the office soon. It also decided that this would be an appropriate time for leadership transition.

My lawyers are now negotiating my severance deal, including accelerated vesting of my stock options, and I feel highly energised, sensing many opportunities ahead. When I return from the Hamptons in September, our roles will be reversed. You will be in the office and I will be at home in my apartment on Central Park, along with the telescope I am taking as a leaving present.

My family is fortunate to have a roof deck with a clear view all the way downtown to the Global Cryptobank tower. So when you finally reach your desks in the fall, I'll be seeing you.

Sincerely, Bob

john.gapper@ft.com

Ethiopia's leader is tarnishing his reformist reputation as violence spreads in the Tigray region, writes David Pilling

ew leaders have seen their reputation fall so far and so fast as Abiy Ahmed. Two years ago, Ethiopia's prime minister was being feted as a peacemaker and reformer. At the age of 43, he won the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize for emptying his country's jails of political prisoners, making peace with opposition groups and ending a state of war with neighbouring Eritrea.

That was then. Now Abiy stands accused of pursuing a conflict in Ethiopia's northern region of Tigray that has unleashed a horror of rape, massacres and ethnic cleansing. After months of fighting, the spectre of famine hangs over Tigray in a country where two decades of impressive economic development had appeared to banish the threat of starvation.

Washington, which until recently had embraced Abiy as a moderniser, has dropped him like a stone. It denounced the war in Tigray – which Abiy branded as a "law and order operation" against a "criminal clique" - and imposed sanctions. After eight months of fighting, the Tigray People's Liberation Front this week marched back into Mekelle, the provincial capital, marking a devastating military reversal in a war that Abiy had vowed would be over in weeks.

It is a momentous journey for a man born in a small town in Oromia, a former independent state far from the centre of Ethiopian power. His father was an Oromo farmer and a Muslim. Abiy was his 13th child by his fourth wife. The Oromo, who make up roughly 35 per cent of Ethiopia's 117m people, had long felt marginalised, having been colonised at the end of the 19th century by Emperor Menelik II. Yet as a child his mother had told him that, despite his humble beginnings, one day he would be "a king of Ethiopia".

Gifted at school and speaking both Afaan Oromo and Amharic, Abiy fought as a child soldier in the last stages of the guerrilla uprising to overthrow Ethiopia's Soviet-backed Derg regime. Tigrayan fighters led the rebellion and Abiy added Tigrinya to his linguistic armoury. He also spoke English and later earned a masters degree in "transformational leadership" from London's Greenwich University.

After the Derg fell in 1991, Abiy worked in intelligence and communications, becoming a senior figure in the feared security apparatus.

The TPLF dominated power for the next 27 years as the leading member of the four-party Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front. Though it oversaw rapid development, it ran a police state. For many Ethiopians it was intolerable that Tigrayans, who make up about 6 per cent of the population, should wield so much power. Tensions boiled over in 2018 after years of protests in which thousands were killed.

The ruling EPRDF looked for a new leader. It alighted on Abiy, by now a parliamentarian, who as an Oromo could perhaps help cool ethnic tensions. Initially, Abiy did not disappoint. Speeches in which he admitted to the regime's use of torture electrified the country. After



Person in the News | Abiy Ahmed

The Nobel peace laureate at war

meeting Isaias Afwerki, the Eritrean dictator, he concluded a lightning peace that set off scenes of jubilation as longseparated families reunited.

Yet even at the height of "Abiymania", some warned of character flaws. One acquaintance said that, ever since his mother's prophecy, Abiy had possessed a messianic quality. A devout Pentecostalist, he consulted God but rarely heeded earthly counsel. He prized his physical strength, boasting of having seen off an attempted coup by impressing soldiers with his press-ups.

In an interview with the FT in 2019, there were hints he was intoxicated with power. Showing off his slick office refurbishment, he said he had transformed it from "hell to paradise", promising to do the same for Ethiopia. If he achieved that, he said, "whether I like it or not, you will magnify my name".

Things began to deteriorate when ethnic rivalries, long suppressed by the EPRDF, erupted, displacing 2m people. In Abiy's home region of Oromia there was a backlash. "Many Oromo feel he has a nostalgia for the imperial days," said Merera Gudina, chairman of an Oromo opposition party, citing Abiy's praise of Menelik II and Emperor Haile Selassie.

Meanwhile, a battle was brewing with the TPLF. Abiy purged Tigrayans and targeted Tigrayan-dominated state

He boasted of having seen off an attempted coup by impressing soldiers with his press-ups

enterprises accused of rank corruption. Last year, he postponed parliamentary elections, citing Covid, and branded the

poll that went ahead in Tigray as illegal. Abiy started calling the TPLF "hyenas". Last November, he ordered troops into Tigray after the TPLF attacked a federal army base. Though he initially denied it, soldiers from Eritrea, Ethio-

pia's old enemy, also crossed the border along with Amhara militia, committing some of the war's worst atrocities. Abiy lashed out at foreigners who condemned the war, saying they failed to understand that the TPLF had fanned the flames of ethnic hatred and needed to be stopped.

As war dragged on, Abiy looked increasingly isolated, though his Prosperity party is likely to win parliamentary elections as results trickle in after voting last month. Abiy's war in Tigray is popular among some Ethiopians, who blame the TPLF for years of repression. Many opposition leaders are back in jail.

"War makes for bitter men. Heartless and savage men," Abiy said in his Nobel prize lecture. This week, as the TPLF moved on Mekelle and international alarm grew about the situation in Tigray, he declared a ceasefire. For the man who won the Nobel Prize only to go to

war, it is far from clear what comes next.

david.pilling@ft.com

How heatwaves became climate change's silent killer

Friederike Otto

t is hardly news any more that heat records are being broken every summer. We knew this would happen in a warming world - and so it has.

What is striking about the news coverage of the heatwave that has recently scorched parts of North America, is a general hesitancy to link it to climate change. This is particularly galling when science has shown that every heatwave we experience is now made more intense by human-induced global warming. Every single one. Including this week's.

The most dramatic alterations in extreme weather events caused by human-caused climate change are in the rate and intensity of heat and cold extremes. Cold weather extremes are declining in frequency while heat extremes are increasing dramatically, with dire consequences for society.

It would have been virtually impossible for several devastating recent heatwaves to occur at the magnitude they did without climate change. Take the one in Japan in 2018, which hospitalised tens of thousands of people, or the one in Siberia in 2020, which caused wildfires and melted permafrost. Research by our team found this was at least 600 times more likely to have happened because of human-caused changes. We are still working on quantifying the effect of climate change during the heatwave this past week, but we anticipate similar results.

What to look for here is the order of magnitude. Climate change has also led to an increase in heavy rainfall in many parts of the world. For example, the downpour associated with the deadly Hurricane Harvey in 2017 was made about three times more likely because of global warming. Similarly, droughts in some parts of the world, for example in Cape Town, are becoming correspondingly more likely.

These changes are dramatic because our societies have adapted to a very stable climate over centuries. But they are far, far smaller than what we will see for changes in heatwaves.

Turning a one in 100 years flood into a one in 50 years flood is a big problem. But rendering a one in 100 years event into an annual occurrence will not just make summers in rich nations uncomfortably hot. Such heatwaves threaten decades of development gains, and pose a clear danger to the social and economic welfare of communities and countries around the world.

While the global elite has been busy ignoring or actively denying humancaused climate change, the problem has worsened. These devastating heat events prove science to be correct. The price is being paid by those who always pay - people who have less access to information, people who have to work outdoors, people who live in poor-

quality housing, people who can't afford insurance — in short, those who have profited the least from improved living standards in a fossil-fuelled society. Today with crazy record tempera-

tures in North America, the heat makes the news. Preliminary death tolls account for a few morbid headlines, but the illustrations that accompany these articles are largely of happy people at the beach, children licking ice creams.

This isn't just a memorable summer heatwaves are a silent killer. People rarely drop dead on the street, but die quietly in their poorly insulated and unair conditioned homes.

If records are kept, these avoidable deaths become a visible statistic only months after the event. In many parts of the world these statistics do not even exist, rendering heatwaves, their increasing intensity and victims entirely invisible.

But even if we know the numbers, we rarely discuss the role that our contribution to climate change plays in forcing them higher. Flood risks and storm surges have immediate economic costs, which can be included in insurance premiums. They have thus increasingly reached the awareness of the finance sector. Heatwaves, though, are rarely mentioned in finance or in insurance, because their economic costs are harder to assess. We know heatwayes kill and we know and have known for a long time that climate change increases the odds of heat. What we now also know is just how much of a game changer this really is.

People rarely drop dead on the street, but die quietly in their poorly insulated and un-air conditioned homes

New attribution studies show how emissions from those companies and countries which have profited most from fossil fuels have led to specific deaths. This powerful new evidence fills a crucial gap identified in recent attempts to force polluting countries and companies to pay for losses and damages through the courts. This will also be under discussion at the UN climate talks in Glasgow later this year. Courts have proved a powerful lever in the past. With the help of scientific evidence, they could become a force to actually build resilience in our communities.

Will such numbers help politicians and industry take the crucial step from declaring climate emergencies to actually acting to prevent them? We scientists can now provide hard data that allows us to link extreme weather events directly to human-caused climate change. But facts alone will not lead to resilient societies if those in charge of them continue to shirk their responsibilities.

The writer is associate director of the Environmental Change Institute at the University of Oxford

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Alibaba duo unlock fortunes with stock pledges to banks

◆ Ma and Tsai borrow against shares◆ Wide variety of credit extended



Jack Ma, centre, and Joe Tsai, right, have pledged stock to banks including UBS and Goldman Sachs since Alibaba listed in the US in 2014 – Scott Eells/Bloomberg

RYAN MCMORROW — BEIJING

Jack Ma and Joe Tsai have pledged chunks of their combined \$35bn stake in ecommerce group Alibaba in exchange for significant loans from investment banks, company documents

The share pledges, made to banks including UBS, Credit Suisse, Goldman Sachs and others, were undertaken by offshore companies controlling more than half of the two billionaires' stakes in Alibaba, which totalled 5.8 per cent as of December.

Share pledging is risky, and most US companies limit its use by executives. Any forced selling of pledged stock can exacerbate the fall of a company's share price. This can be precipitated by margin calls.

"You'd want to know what the potential impact is if there was a forced sale," said Nigel Stevenson, an analyst at Hong Kong-based GMT Research.

But while US companies are required to disclose share pledges by executives — as Elon Musk at Tesla has done — foreign groups listed there, such as Alibaba, are under no obligation to do so.

The documents seen by the FT did not disclose the amounts of Ma and Tsai's pledges but the pair have repeatedly turned to borrowing against their stock since Alibaba listed in the US in 2014.

Ma and Tsai, Alibaba's two largest individual shareholders, have used the loans to unlock vast personal fortunes tied up in the group's shares.

Global banks have extended a wide variety of credit to Ma and Tsai. Tsai's Gulfstream 650ER private jet is mortgaged to Credit Suisse. The Swiss bank, which brought Alibaba to market, also extended credit during the IPO run-up to an offshore shell company later linked to Ma's purchase of a lavish house in Hong Kong's elite Peak district and a new plane the same model as Tsai's.

Alibaba said that Ma "and his affiliates" currently did not have any loans outstanding collateralised by Alibaba shares, while Tsai's loans outstanding backed by shares were "easily manageable" with "prudent loan-to-value ratios to provide [a] substantial cushion against triggering a margin call". The group said pledging shares for loans was part of "ordinary financial planning to provide liquidity and diver-

The documents seen by the FT did not sification without having to sell shares in Alibaba".

Ma stepped down as executive chair of Alibaba in 2019 while Tsai remains executive vice-chair.

Ma and Tsai's interests in Alibaba are held mainly through five offshore companies: JC Properties, JSP Investment, Parufam, PMH Holding and APN Ltd.

APN has made the biggest known single pledge of Alibaba stock at 400m

'You'd want to know what the potential impact is if there was a forced sale'

Nigel Stevenson, GMT

shares. But rather than in exchange for a loan, this was part of guarantees made to Japan's SoftBank and Yahoo after Ma carved out Alibaba's payments unit Alipay — now part of his fintech Ant Group — from the ecommerce company.

Ma's wife Cathy Ying Zhang, who has taken Singaporean citizenship, has been instrumental in his dealings. Records show that two offshore holding companies of which Zhang is the

sole director, JSP Investment and JC Properties, hold 60 per cent of the couple's Alibaba stake.

Altogether, Zhang's two holding companies for Alibaba shares have made more than a dozen asset pledges to investment banks for loans extended to a web of offshore companies.

In addition, Zhang is the sole shareholder of a Hong Kong company Ma used to buy a château and vineyards in France and has power over the Jack Ma Philanthropic Foundation, business records show. She has signed off on cheap loans from Goldman Sachs to Enbao Asset Management, Ma's family office.

The records seen by the FT made clear that Alibaba's American Depositary Shares had been pledged for loans from Morgan Stanley and Credit Suisse, while Goldman referred to pledged American Depositary Shares, and UBS reported pledged "securities" and other assets.

Credit Suisse, Morgan Stanley, Goldman Sachs and UBS declined to comment.

Additional reporting by Hudson Lockett and Joe Leahy in Hong Kong

GSK rejects Elliott push to overhaul its leadership

DONATO PAOLO MANCINI — LONDON

GlaxoSmithKline's board has backed current chief executive Emma Walmsley, rejecting demands from Elliott Management to appoint new directors and determine whether she should continue in the job.

In a statement yesterday, GSK said the board "strongly believes" Walmsley is the "right leader" of the "New GSK", which will be created after the pharma group's consumer healthcare division is spun off.

It said it "fully" supported the actions taken by her and the management team, adding that all were subject to rigorous assessment of performance.

"Under Emma's leadership, the board fully expects this team to deliver a step-change in performance and long-term shareholder value creation through the separation and in the years beyond," it said, adding that "focus and stability are now critical".

GSK also rejected the suggestion that the consumer healthcare business should be sold rather than spun off, saying that "feedback from a significant proportion" of shareholders had shown that investors wished to own the company as a listed entity.

Elliott, the activist investor that the Financial Times revealed in April had built a multibillion-pound stake in the UK-based drugmaker, had on Thursday

called for new directors and for a process to determine whether Walmsley should hold on to her job. Elliott criticised "years of under-management" and poor share performance.

Shares in the company have underperformed rivals, and observers have said the performance of its vaccines business during the Covid-19 pandemic, against that disease and others, has been lacklustre. But key GSK shareholders M&G and Royal London Asset Management have publicly backed the current management.

 $GSK\,confirmed\,last\,month\,it\,would\,go$

Emma Walmsley has shrugged off concerns about her leadership, saying instead that she is a 'change agent'



ahead with plans to spin off its consumer health division next year, creating a "New GSK" focused on innovative biopharma. Walmsley has previously shrugged off concerns about her leadership and insisted she is a "change agent".

The company also said it had conducted an "extensive search" to appoint a chief executive-designate for the consumer healthcare division. It said the process was nearing completion, with an announcement expected in "due course".

Technology

Krishna cements position at IBM after heir apparent quits

RICHARD WATERS — SAN FRANCISCO

The executive widely seen as heir apparent at IBM has stepped down in a broad management shake-up, as the US computer maker's board threw its backing behind current chief executive Arvind Krishna to complete an attempted overhaul.

Jim Whitehurst, the former chief executive of Red Hat, had been put in pole position to take the top job after IBM agreed to pay \$37bn for the open-source software company in 2017. He was later named IBM's president, a title the company usually reserves for its next CEO.

The news of his departure wiped 4 per cent from IBM's stock price yesterday. However, Krishna, who had been seen by many on Wall Street as a transitional chief executive, painted the move as a doubling-down on IBM's current path under his leadership. "He's done amazing for us, but he wasn't going to be here forever," he said of Whitehurst. Speaking in an interview with the Financial Times, he added: "Acquired CEOs normally last a year or two."

The IBM boss suggested that Whitehurst had been in the running to succeed him but that any hopes of taking over in the near term had been dashed as the company's board backed him to carry through the next stage in IBM's overhaul. Krishna pointed to the fact that the board had named him chair as well as chief executive earlier this year as a sign of its backing for him.

Krishna was the architect of the Red Hat acquisition, a bet-the-farm deal designed to give IBM a stronger position in the cloud computing business against giants such as Amazon Web Services and Microsoft.

A former head of research, Krishna championed the Red Hat purchase under former CEO Ginni Rometty, before taking over the top job himself in April last year. The succession was welcomed on Wall Street as a sign that IBM was focusing more on core technology, though he was widely seen as a stand-in at the top until the board was ready to elevate Whitehurst, who had previously spent 12 years running Red Hat.

The management revamp announced yesterday was designed to make the company "much more execution focused and much more technology focused," Krishna said. He added that Whitehurst had agreed to continue as an advicer

Technology. Rise of China

Didi's Liu in drive for global clout as Beijing races to build tech champions

Ride-hailing app's president plays vital role as dealmaker, firefighter and public face

CHRISTIAN SHEPHERD — BEIJING

After a Didi driver was murdered by his passenger in the central province of Hunan in 2019, Jean Liu, president of the ride-hailing app, flew to the scene to console his family.

Later, on Weibo, the microblog, she admitted feeling "weak and scared" when making the trip and wrote: "We beg that you all give us another chance to make amends, so that we might emerge from this cocoon as a butterfly."

The 43-year-old's role as a firefighter and dealmaker for Didi paid off this week, as it made the biggest debut on Wall Street for a Chinese company since Alibaba's initial public offering in 2014.

The company's dominance in ridehailing in China makes it especially exposed to regulatory crackdown. The authorities have issued regular warnings over everything from safety to potential antitrust probes for price-fixing and unfair pay for drivers. Yesterday, just two days after its IPO, it came under fire from cybersecurity regulators, who said they wanted to investigate its data practices.

While Didi's founder and chair, Cheng Wei, cuts a low profile, Liu has long been the public ambassador for Didi, often the sole woman on her panels at technology conferences and delivering speeches on China's tech scene, as well as on diversity and sustainability.

She is central to Didi's push to become a "truly global" company, a goal that dovetails with Beijing's desire to build tech champions.

In a speech to the Asia-Pacific Economic Forum in November, Liu said that Didi intended to differentiate itself from ride-hailing peers by avoiding a "cookie cutter" approach to entering new countries.

"Lots of western companies take a one-size-fits-all approach," she said.

In China, she has 10m followers on Weibo, often meets drivers, and personally responds to complaints about the company.

After graduating with computer science degrees from Peking and Harvard universities, she joined Goldman Sachs,

where she worked for more than a decade in Hong Kong. She left her position as head of Goldman Sachs Asia to join Didi in 2014, as the company faced an expensive war of attrition with rivals Kuaidi Dache and Uber.

In interviews with Chinese media, Liu



Jean Liu's open, personal tone has helped Didi endure storms — Kim Kyung-Hoon/Reuters

has described how she originally came to know Cheng and Didi as part of Goldman's efforts to invest in the next generation of Chinese tech start-ups, but never landed the deal.

Instead, Cheng took her up on an offer she made as a joke over dinner: if she could not invest in Didi, she might as well come and work for the company.

But in September 2015, Liu sent a company-wide email saying that she had had surgery for breast cancer and was feeling in good health. For many employees, it was the first they had heard of her illness.

A year later, she would tell Didi's annual meeting that it felt like she had "just found a runway and was ready to take-off when a clap of thunder suddenly grounded [me]".

Liu has spoken about how her choice to join Didi was in part inspired by her father, Liu Chuanzhi, founder of Lenovo Group, the largest maker of laptops, which spurred its advance by acquiring IBM's laptop division in 2005.

She is not the only Liu of her generation to leave a mark on China's

tech landscape. At the height of Didi's cash-burning price war with Uber, Liu had to compete with her cousin, Liu Zhen, a former Silicon Valley lawyer who was head of strategy at Uber China at the time.

The stand-off ended with Didi acquiring Uber's China business in exchange for a 12.8 per cent stake in Didi and a board seat for Travis Kalanick, Uber's founder and then chief executive.

Arguably, neither of the cousins lost. After leaving Uber China, Liu Zhen joined ByteDance as China chief. She helped Zhang Yiming, another softly spoken tech founder, turn his company into China's most valuable start-up.

Jean Liu played a similar role for Didi.

In her first year at the company as chief operating officer, she was instrumental in securing investment of Rmb7bn from Tencent, SoftBank, Alibaba and Apple.

As part of that dealmaking, she

hosted Tim Cook, Apple's chief executive, in Beijing. She argued that the two were a good fit, because Didi's holding company, Xiaoju Kuaizhi, translates as "little orange".

Equities. Nasdaq listing

Robinhood IPO prospectus offers first look at financials



Five of the most revealing numbers as brokerage readies

hotly anticipated flotation

MADISON DARBYSHIRE - NEW YORK MILES KRUPPA — SAN FRANCISCO

Robinhood has radically reshaped the brokerage industry with a free and easy-to-use app that has pulled new retail investors into the market en masse but, as a private company, its own finances have been closely guarded.

That changed on Thursday with the publication of the prospectus for its initial public offering, which provided the first comprehensive look at the underpinnings of its business, earnings and potential risks for investors.

Average revenue per customer

Robinhood has come under fire for what one regulator called the "gamification" of investing – the use of rewards, bonuses, push notifications and other prompts on its app, which encourage frequent trading from customers.

Critics say it targets vulnerable retail investors by making stock trading into a gambling-like game.

But it also appears to be effective. The prospectus shows that investors on the platform are trading larger amounts, and more often, than ever.

Robinhood's revenue per user increased 65 per cent to \$137 in the first

Equities

quarter of 2021, up from almost \$83 a customer with a funded account in the same period in 2020.

Robinhood makes more money the more its customers trade. The number of funded accounts on the platform rose from 5.1m at the end of 2019 to 12.5m at the end of last year, and surged again to 18m at the end of March. Investors who joined in 2020 deposited 45 per cent of the money on the platform.

Payment for order flow

Robinhood's core business relies on a controversial practice known as payment for order flow, or PFOF.

The brokerage sells customer trades to market makers, such as Citadel Securities, who in return promise to execute the trade at, or at better than, current market prices.

In 2020, Robinhood made almost \$720m selling customer trades, accounting for 75 per cent of its revenue. That portion grew to 81 per cent in the first quarter this year.

PFOF helps brokers offer commissionfree trading to customers but it is banned in the UK and Canada, and the US Securities and Exchange Commission is reviewing it. SEC chair Gary Gensler has raised concerns that it does not result in best execution for customers.

Any regulatory change could damage Robinhood's business model, the prospectus acknowledges. While other brokerages such as TD Ameritrade and

Chinese liquor stocks suffer hangover

after Communist party centenary

Charles Schwab also sell user trades, it makes up less than 10 per cent of their revenues, according to BrokerChooser.

Cryptocurrency trading

Cryptocurrency trading proved lucrative for Robinhood during the recent boom. It said crypto leapt to account for 17 per cent of revenues in the first quarter, up from 4 per cent in the quarter before. Customers traded about \$88bn in cryptocurrencies through Robinhood in the first three months of this year.

As a result, assets under custody in cryptocurrencies at the end of the quarter were more than 24 times greater than a year earlier, at \$11.6bn.

Robinhood warned that a substantial portion of the increase in activity was in dogecoin, a joke currency championed by Elon Musk. The company said Dogecoin trading accounted for 34 per cent of crypto revenues in the first quarter.

Regulatory investigations

Robinhood has repeatedly run afoul of regulators. The prospectus named seven US state and federal bodies investigating the company and revealed previously unknown inquiries.

These included one by the California attorney-general's office and a lawsuit from New York state's Department of Financial Services over anti-money laundering and cyber security issues which Robinhood said would probably result in a financial penalty of at least

Green for go: a free and easy-to-use app has allowed Robinhood to attract a new generation of

retail traders

\$10m. On Wednesday, the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority levied on Robinhood its highest ever fine, \$70m, for causing "widespread and significant harm" to customers over more than five years. In the prospectus, Robinhood said Finra's investigation was ongoing and it expected more penalties.

The SEC and state regulators are also investigating its platform outages, communication with customers, and errors in displaying user account balances.

Meanwhile, almost 50 class-action lawsuits and three individual customer actions have been filed against Robinhood for suddenly imposing restrictions on the trading of "meme stocks" including GameStop at the height of an investor frenzy in January.

Cash cushion

Robinhood was forced to impose the trading curbs when it couldn't put up enough of its own money to back customer trades. In order to restore trading, the company scrambled to raise \$3.5bn in convertible debt in a matter of days.

It had amassed \$4.8bn in cash and cash equivalents on its balance sheet as of the end of March, the prospectus shows. In April, it secured a \$2.2bn revolving line of credit that can be used to finance margin loans and other trading activities.

The cash cushion and credit facility could help Robinhood meet deposit requirements with clearing houses in the event of another trading spike.

Asset management

UK pension schemes waste billions, study finds

CHRIS FLOOD

UK pension schemes are wasting billions of pounds each year paying fees to underperforming asset managers, according to a study that highlights the weak value for money delivered to retirement savers.

Asset managers in the UK have been required to make detailed disclosures about their fees and charges since 2019 after the Financial Conduct Authority, the City regulator, found that poor data transparency standards were preventing institutional investors from making accurate value for money comparisons.

Wide variations in the costs and performance of 11,500 funds and mandates sold by 420 asset managers to defined benefit pension schemes were identified by ClearGlass, a specialist data provider.

Chris Sier, founder and chief executive of ClearGlass, said cost savings of about £6bn a year could be achieved if UK defined benefit pension schemes halved the total fees of 0.65 per cent paid on average each year to asset managers.

"The scope for improvement is significant," said Sier, a former policeman who was hired as an unpaid adviser with a brief to strengthen disclosure standards by the FCA in 2017.

UK DB pension schemes look after about £1.7tn in assets on behalf of 9.9m members, according to the Pension

'The risk of a worse outcome is much greater for smaller pension schemes'

Protection Fund, the lifeboat for collapsed retirement schemes.

The total cost of buying asset management services for DB pension schemes varied between just 0.09 per cent a year up to 2.63 per cent, ClearGlass found.

The smallest pension schemes with less than £100m in assets paid the widest range of fees but delivered weaker returns on average than their larger peers. Smaller pension schemes also provided a wider range of performance outcomes.

"The risk of a worse outcome is much greater for smaller pension schemes. They can't afford to hire investment consultants to provide advice and they don't have good governance compared with larger pension schemes," said Sier.

A DB pension scheme could save 0.61 percentage points a year by switching from a diversified growth manager ranked in the bottom quartile for costs to a rival in the top quartile while also achieving an improvement in returns.

This would translate into an annual saving of £613,000 for a £100m diversified growth mandate and also bring an 8.5 percentage point increase in performance.

Asset managers in the UK have had to publish yearly value for money reports since 2019 after years of complaints by investors about high fees and poor returns. But the reports have sparked concerns that investment companies are "marking their own homework" to put themselves in a flattering light.

Equities

harm' to

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customers

fine for

and

London regains top slot in European share trading from rival Amsterdam

Chinese stocks suffered their worst day in three months in the wake of the ruling Communist party's centenary celebrations as investors offloaded shares in local makers of liquor and beer.

HUDSON LOCKETT — HONG KONG

The CSI 300 index of Shanghai- and Shenzhen-listed stocks tumbled 2.8 per cent yesterday, its biggest one-day fall since March, as expectations that Beijing would prevent falls ahead of the anniversary gave way to nerves about the country's economic outlook.

The sell-off came after the centennial celebration of the CCP's founding on Thursday, at which 70,000 people gathered in central Beijing to take part in a carefully choreographed ceremony during which President Xi Jinping lauded his party's accomplishments.

Chinese stocks were calm ahead of the centenary, which traders put down to expectations that authorities would support markets until the event ended.

Among the biggest fallers were Kweichow Moutai, the world's largest liquor producer, whose spirits are a mainstay of official festivities in China, which dropped 4.4 per cent. Tsingtao Brewery,

maker of a popular beer brand, fell 5.5 per cent. CICC, a state-backed Chinese investment bank, tumbled 6.2 per cent.

"The fireworks are over," said Louis Tse, managing director of Hong Kongbased brokerage Wealthy Securities. Now that the celebrations were over,

he added, traders' attention had pivoted to potential headwinds for the global economy.

"For the second half we know inflation is just around the corner and an interest rate hike [by the US central



Shares in the maker of popular beer brand Tsingtao fell 5.5 per cent

bank] after that," Tse added. "People are taking profits now and I'm not sur-

Andy Maynard, a trader at investment bank China Renaissance in Hong Kong, a Chinese brokerage, said there was little to suggest Beijing had intervened to support equity markets during the lead-up to the centenary but investors had expected more supportive rhetoric from Xi's keynote address.

The speech made little mention of measures to support the economy or markets and instead focused on the party's role in fostering the "great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation".

"The disappointment was from the fact that there was no concrete narrative around economy and markets," Maynard said. Shenzhen's technology-focused ChiN-

ext fell 3.5 per cent. In Hong Kong, the Hang Seng China Enterprises index dropped 2.3 per cent as the broader Hang Seng stumbled almost 2 per cent. Offshore investors also piled out of

Chinese shares, with those trading through Hong Kong's market link-ups with Shanghai and Shenzhen selling a net Rmb8.6bn (\$1.3bn).

PHILIP STAFFORD

London reclaimed its status as Europe's largest centre for share trading from Amsterdam last month, following the resumption of trading Swiss equities in the UK capital.

An average of €8.9bn of share deals were done on London-based exchanges and trading venues in June compared with €8.8bn on venues based in the Netherlands, according to data from Cboe Global Markets. It was the first time London had been the most active destination since leaving the single market in January.

London's share of a regional market where around €40bn of deals are done has steadily risen in recent months as investors take advantage of a reestablished trading link with Switzerland. The move, begun in the first week of the year, was the first significant split from EU policy on financial services.

The switch, first reported by Bloomberg, provides an early boost for the City as chancellor Rishi Sunak prepares changes to London's share trading rules to make the capital more competitive.

The landscape for share trading on

the continent following Britain's departure from the EU has already been reshaped. Previously, banks and fund managers across the bloc would often funnel their deals through London.

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ft.com/markets

Brussels ruled EU institutions could no longer trade shares through London after Brexit. The bulk of that business went to Amsterdam in January.

More than €6.4bn of transactions left

'Over half of all IPO capital raised has been by technology and consumer internet companies'

the City overnight in search of a legally compliant home. Britain, which accounted for around a third of average daily trading volumes in Europe, dropped to about a fifth of total market share, according to data from Big xyt.

London venues have also reclaimed a 30 per cent share of trading in Swiss blue-chip stocks, after the countries recognised each other's stock exchanges as having equivalent standards in February. Trading was shut off in 2019 when the UK complied with a ban imposed by Brussels on EU member states, but changed its rules after exiting the bloc.

London was the busiest exchange for capital raisings outside the US and Greater China in the first half of the year, raising more than £27bn, the most since 2014, outstripping Frankfurt, Amsterdam and Paris. Activity has increased following the listings of 49 companies.

"Over half of all IPO capital raised [in London] has been by technology and consumer internet companies using public markets to support the next stage of their growth," said Charlie Walker, head of equity and fixed income for primary markets at London Stock Exchange Group.

London's share trading market is set to diverge further from EU counterparts after plans laid out by the Treasury this week. The UK wants to allow investors more flexibility to trade away from the stock exchange. It plans reforms for "dark pools", where fund managers trade large blocks of shares without disturbing the price on the market, and lightly regulated private venues run by banks and high-frequency traders. The EU wants to clamp down on these.

Teneo strives to pick up the pieces after master of 'dark arts' spins out of control

Adroit adviser to CEOs falls victim to his own reputational crisis after claims of drunken misconduct

ANDREW EDGECLIFFE-JOHNSON, ARASH MASSOUDI, ORTENCA ALIAJ, JAMES FONTANELLA-KHAN AND SUJEET INDAP

It took Declan Kelly and Doug Band just a decade to build Teneo into what they could call, with only a little of the PR men's trademark topspin, "the world's pre-eminent CEO advisory firm".

With unmatched political and corporate connections, they were trusted to protect the reputations of some of the world's most powerful chief executives. The fees they managed to charge — as much as \$1m per month — left rivals slack-jawed with envy.

Yet it has taken just six months for Teneo to hit two reputational crises of its own, costing both co-founders their jobs and casting doubt over the future of an expansionist 1,250-person consultancy into which private equity firm CVC has poured \$450m.

First to quit was Band, a former aide to Bill Clinton, who helped launch the Clinton Global Initiative, a series of annual meetings at which politicians and business leaders gathered to pledge action on global challenges.

In December he gave an interview to Vanity Fair describing his bitter break-up with the Clintons. Having watched him lean on his Clinton ties to build Teneo, friends and former acquaintances saw that as extraordinarily reckless for a man paid to advise others on controlling their message.

By Tuesday morning this week, Kelly was gone too, resigning five days after the Financial Times published allegations that the 53-year-old had drunkenly touched several women at a fundraising party without their consent.

Global Citizen, the charity with which Kelly's business interests became intertwined, had already ousted him from its board within hours of the May 2 event.

Three people aware of the matter say Kelly is alleged to have inappropriately touched six women there and say his conduct prompted at least one complaint. Kelly and Global Citizen would not confirm the details, and the charity's investigation has yet to conclude.

Highlighting the blurred worlds of philanthropy and elite business, the Global Citizen board is led by Christopher Stadler, the CVC executive responsible for its investment in Teneo.

A third Teneo co-founder, chief operating officer Paul Keary, took over as chair and chief executive on Tuesday, but he has never had Band's political ties or Kelly's talent for wooing A-list CEOs. With its best-connected and most silvertongued founders gone, employees, clients and rivals have been left unsure what will happen to Teneo now.

For Kelly, who had done more than any of them to build the firm, it was a stunning fall. And it happened on the very day Teneo was supposed to be celebrating its 10th anniversary.

The news of Kelly's resignation echoed from Wall Street to County Tipperary, where he grew up in the village of Portroe. His brother, Alan Kelly, is leader of Ireland's Labour party and a

Bill Clinton

leaves the White

House in 2001.

Doug Band had

served as an

aide. Below,

Declan Kelly

hurler Willie

Connors at a

with Tipperary

match in Dublin.

Teneo sponsors

the side - Sharon

former cabinet minister.

The Irish Independent wrote of the "local boy made good" from a family that, in Kelly's account, had been so poor that he was selling potatoes by the side of the road aged five and had no running water at home until he was seven. Today, the local hurling team is

sponsored by Teneo.

Kelly's Irish roots gave him a valuable network when he landed in New York with Financial Dynamics, a consultancy to which he had sold his own PR firm in 2000. By 2008, he was the youngest person to receive the American Irish Historical Society's gold medal, usually reserved for those who make unique contributions to Irish-American society. A year later, then secretary of state Hillary Clinton appointed him the US economic envoy to Northern Ireland.

The connections he and Band had to the Clintons were an even bigger draw in 2011, when they established Teneo, Latin for "I hold" or "I possess".

Clinton camp friction

The Clinton Global Initiative was in full swing that year, drawing the likes of Queen Rania of Jordan and Barack Obama to its annual meeting in midtown Manhattan alongside the CEOs who networked, struck deals and made high-minded pledges. Kelly and Band set up an office two doors down from Clinton's at the Sheraton Hotel, pitching Teneo's services to the assembled executives.

Band had left the Clinton Foundation in 2010 and Teneo immediately named Clinton a senior adviser, lining up speaking fees that added up to seven figures. But the former president had no share of Teneo's growing profits, which became one of several sources of friction



In Kelly's account, he had been so poor that he was selling potatoes by the side of the road aged five

'I've been part of the three-way marriage between him and a CEO and I know he has charm in spades'

between Band and the Clinton camp, people familiar with all three men say.

Emails revealed via WikiLeaks showed that Chelsea Clinton, the former first daughter, was soon complaining about Teneo "hustling" for business at CGI's not-for-profit events.

Its founders disputed that notion, but the young firm was soon identified as an efficient conduit for chief executives angling for a spot on the CGI stage, where they could discuss topics such as their efforts to operate more sustainably and advance women's prospects.

Band defended himself in a memo to the Clinton Foundation in November 2011, writing: "I have sought to leverage my activities, including my partner role at Teneo, to support and raise funds for the Foundation."

Teneo's clients such as Allstate, Barclays Capital and BHP Billiton had stepped up their giving, he said. And it had "created and secured" paid speeches by the ex-president to UBS, Ericsson and others.

The founders signed up Tony Blair as an adviser, giving them an ability to open doors on both sides of the Atlantic that no rival PR firm could match.

Teneo's first public event featured Blair, Clinton and his successor George W. Bush on stage with Andrew Liveris, then CEO of Dow Chemical, who would become an important source of fees for Teneo and later a special adviser.

The marriage of Band's political connections and Kelly's corporate communications experience was so successful that Teneo became known as a lucrative

retirement home for former politicians and CEOs wondering what to do after losing power. In Washington it can call on retired general Ray Odierno and former members of Congress such as George Mitchell and Paul Ryan. Lord William Hague, the former foreign secretary, and Amber Rudd, the one-time home secretary, are on its UK payroll.

With the Clinton relationship, and the Clintons' own power, waning, Teneo pivoted to the Trump administration, hiring former adviser Jason Miller, who later resigned after sending abusive Twitter messages about a politician.

Teneo tapped Kelly's Irish connections, bringing on board Brian O'Driscoll, the rugby player who is one of Ireland's most recognised sportsmen. And in Canada, former prime minister Brian Mulroney can contact prospective clients on its behalf.

Big-name clients

Among the former CEOs used to pitch Teneo to their peers are Ginni Rometty, who left IBM last year, and Ursula Burns, the former Xerox chief. Another senior adviser is Gabrielle Sulzberger, whose various board roles include being treasurer of Time's Up, a foundation that campaigns against sexual harassment and discrimination.

Between them, they have helped attract clients including Boeing, Coca-Cola, GE, the London Stock Exchange, Starbucks and Tesco. Teneo's basic fee can stretch to \$250,000-\$1m per month, even before any premium for handling a crisis or a deal, according to several people familiar with the matter who say this is markedly above what rivals charge.

Saudi Arabia paid Teneo almost \$2.5m over two years for advice on the rollout of Neom, a futuristic desert city, according to US lobbying disclosures.

Consultants who competed with Kelly for clients, and chief communications officers who saw the process play out inside their companies, said the pitch was simple. He or his big-name advisers would approach a CEO and tell them that they were getting bad advice from their in-house and external teams.

"I've been part of the three-way marriage between him and a CEO and I know he has charm in spades," one communications chief said of Kelly. "He tends to woo and entrance new CEOs in particular, who are unsure of their position and don't know whether they can trust their own people."

The lengths to which Kelly and his team could go to aid CEOs in high-pressure moments were set out in a Delaware trial that concluded last year.

The case stemmed from Anthem's \$54bn bid for rival health insurer Cigna, which was announced in 2015 but blocked on antitrust grounds in 2017, leaving Anthem facing a possible \$1.85bn termination fee.

As both sides went to court accusing the other of breaching their agreement, it turned out that all was not as it seemed. The Delaware judge, Travis Laster, found that Cigna's management, its law firm and Teneo had conducted a "covert communications campaign" to sabotage the deal after the insurer became upset that its CEO would be sidelined at the merged company.

Declan Kelly,

and fellow

co-founder

family that

when they

president

established

Doug Band had

connections to

Bill Clinton and

proved a draw

Teneo in 2011.

The former US

became a senior

adviser before

friction arose

between them

above,

Laster concluded that Teneo was "skilled in the darker arts of influencing the media and public discourse".

A Teneo executive, Stephen Cohen, had developed a "leak strategy" where Cigna would officially remain positive on the deal while feeding reporters the opposite message using leaked documents, the court filings said.

Teneo also went hunting for a back issue of Cigar Aficionado magazine whose cover featured Anthem CEO Joseph Swedish smoking. Cigna and Teneo believed that sharing the picture would "hurt his credibility as a health-care CEO", Laster wrote.

Kelly was in repeated contact with Cigna's chief David Cordani throughout the assignment, the court record says.

When Anthem later tried to ingratiate itself with the new Trump administration to get the deal approved, Kelly "instructed Cohen to work with contacts at a lobbying firm to 'kill this immediately," according to Cohen's tes-

timony, quoted in the judge's ruling.

A shareholder lawsuit has since accused Teneo of "aiding and abetting" a breach of fiduciary duty by Cigna, describing the firm as "black ops style consultants" hired to "derail the deal".

Teneo plans to contest the claims.

In another incident, Occidental Petroleum took legal action against Teneo for

\$1m Upper level of Teneo's basic monthly fee, above rivals'

\$19_m

Price paid by
Kelly and his wife
for a property in
East Hampton

switching sides during a \$50bn-plus takeover battle, the FT revealed in June 2019. Teneo had been advising Occidental on its efforts to buy rival Anadarko but was accused of dropping its client to work for Chevron after the larger US oil group entered the bidding war.

Occidental, which ultimately fended off Chevron, resolved the matter through private arbitration without revealing the terms of a settlement with Teneo, according to people with knowledge of the incident.

Sharp elbows and charm

Band and Kelly supplied sharp elbows, powerful networks and ample charm, which made them rich. In 2019, Kelly and his wife were able to buy an East Hampton property that cost \$19m.

But Teneo's growth was also fuelled by private equity and debt. In 2014, BC Partners invested an undisclosed sum. It sold out in 2019 to CVC Capital Partners, which paid \$350m for a majority stake valuing the firm at \$700m.

Yet, even as CVC was negotiating the investment, some partners who were $% \left(\frac{1}{2}\right) =\frac{1}{2}\left(\frac{1}{2}\right) =\frac{1$

concerned that Teneo could damage the private equity firm's reputation were handed fresh ammunition.

In 2019, a leaked email showed the then head of Teneo's UK operation reprimanding staff for behaving like "a bunch of clubbing teens".

"Over the last few weeks, we have had: Someone get drunk and throw up over the carpet (they've apologised, but still); Someone — I can't put this any less bluntly — poo in the shower; Someone mess their underwear and leave it for the cleaner," Gordon Tempest-Hay told employees, according to Guido Fawkes, the UK politics blog.

CVC's deal team led by Stadler and Daniel Brand, its US financial services head, did not secure unanimous backing for the investment but ultimately convinced enough partners to press

The wider PR industry has been booming since Teneo opened its doors, but with CVC's deep pockets behind them, Kelly and Band could expand faster than their peers through acquisitions.

They snapped up smaller PR firms such as London's Blue Rubicon and StockWell, and announced an investment this March in WestExec, the geopolitical risk consultancy co-founded by Michèle Flournoy, a former senior Pentagon official.

This year, CVC put in another \$100m to help Teneo acquire Deloitte's UK restructuring business, a \$279m deal that will bring Teneo's revenues close to \$400m and leave its debt at more than six times its earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation, according to Moody's.

But the completed deals reveal only part of Teneo's ambition. According to two people familiar with the matter, it broached a potential deal with US management consultancy Kearney, before being rebuffed. Others say it also approached Hakluyt, the strategic adviser founded by former UK intelligence officers, and has twice pursued an acquisition of Sard Verbinnen, the New York financial communications firm, also to no avail.

Teneo completed the Deloitte deal on June 1, more than four weeks after Kelly's drunken concert appearance. But it kept details of his behaviour to such a tight circle that Deloitte staff, like most Teneo employees they were about to join, had no idea of what was to come until they read the FT's reporting.

Teneo may have launched on the coattails of the Clinton Global Initiative, but those events ended as they faced critical scrutiny during Hillary Clinton's unsuccessful 2016 presidential campaign. Kelly soon found an even more attractive stage for his clients.

Global Citizen, which aims to enlist ordinary people in efforts to end extreme poverty by 2030, stages highprofile concerts that mix the worlds of music, activism and business.

Continued on page 11





Continued from page 10

Brands including Johnson & Johnson and Procter & Gamble signed up to support one event in 2019, for example, at which fans could see Usher or Janelle Moná for free if they signed petitions, called politicians or took other actions to promote the UN's global sustainability goals.

If the Clinton Global Initiative was an earnest talking shop, up there with the World Economic Forum's annual meeting in Davos or the Aspen Ideas Festival, Global Citizen's concerts were earnest and fun.

The CEOs on Teneo's roster gained access to the celebrities on Global Citizen's stages and a chance to show their socially responsible sides to the young, idealistic audiences that it drew. Kelly himself gained a prominent platform, generating flattering coverage for his firm. And Global Citizen, in turn, was given access to the resources of the executives in his contacts book.

In an email to one client before last April's "Together at Home" fundraiser, for example, Teneo suggested that the occasion "provides an opportunity for you and your company to show support for the global Covid-19 response". Ways to do so, it said, included in-kind donations, advertising support or a \$500,000 payment towards the event's production costs.

On May 2, the logos of Cisco, Citigroup, Delta Air Lines and Teneo itself provided the backdrop to the celebrity red carpet for another Global Citizen event in Inglewood, California. "Vax Live" was billed as "a concert to reunite the world", and featured a shirt-sleeved Prince Harry hailing medical workers' sacrifices during the pandemic.

Inappropriate behaviour

Selena Gomez presented, Jennifer Lopez performed and Joe Biden and Kamala Harris sent video messages. And at an exclusive party offstage, "Kelly became inebriated and behaved inappropriately towards some women and men at the event", as a spokesperson for him put it this week.

Recollections of behaviour several people around Kelly described as "messy" differ. Some people close to Global Citizen do not recognise Teneo's reference to Kelly behaving inappropriately towards men. In their recollection, the only men who were offended were upset at seeing him touching women.

At least one employee reported to Global Citizen that Kelly had touched inappropriately a woman who works for the charity, a person familiar with the situation said. One person added that Kelly had touched a celebrity speaker without her consent. The celebrity did not comment when contacted by the FT.

His conduct shocked enough attendees for Global Citizen to act quickly. The charity met the day after the concert and removed Kelly from its board. It launched an internal review into what had happened and hired a law firm to conduct an outside investigation.

Global Citizen did not wait for that probe to conclude to cut its ties to Teneo. It marks a bitter end to a partnership between Kelly and Hugh Evans, the charity's CEO, which the Sunday Times once likened to that between Bob Geldof and Midge Ure, the stars who launched the Live Aid fundraising concerts in

CVC's Stadler may have straddled Global Citizen and Teneo but he did not force Kelly out from the PR firm. Stadler, who denied claims in a 2016 lawsuit that he had groped employees at the private equity firm, declined to comment.

Once the FT had published details of Kelly's drunken behaviour last Thursday, however, it soon became clear that the fallout could go well beyond his relationship with Global Citizen. By the next day, General Motors had dropped the

As other clients called Teneo to find out what was going on — and why they were only learning about it from the press — the fear of further losses sent the firm's crisis communications experts into overdrive.

Kelly had had one terrible night, they told callers, but had apologised to everybody he offended and signed up for treatment to help him commit to sobriety. Teneo could not have told clients sooner, they added, because most of its own people had known nothing until the FT report broke.

Several close colleagues said that they had never seen any indication that their boss had a problem with alcohol. "I didn't know and I feel I would have known," said a person close to him.





Jennifer Lopez performs at the May event in California where Declan Kelly's conduct shocked attendees. Among former CEOs used to pitch Teneo to their peers were Ginni Rometty, left, and Ursula Burns, right

loomberg Alex Fynn/Bloomberg

Eamonn Coghlan, the former Irish senator best known for his Olympic athletics career, told the FT he had not discussed the matter with any of his fellow Teneo advisers. But he had known Kelly for "about 15 to 20 years", and had "never, ever" witnessed or heard of him hurting anyone.

"I've seen many athletes and others 'locked out of their minds', as we say in Ireland," said the former world record holder in the indoor mile. "He's made a bit of a show of himself, but he did not kill anybody. He did not rape anybody. It was a venial sin, rather than a mortal sin."

'A bad occurrence'

Burns, the former Xerox CEO, similarly told the New York Times: "This is a friend of mine who definitely had a bad occurrence - and he has to deal with that, and he's dealing with that as we go forward." In April, Burns set up a new private equity business with Kelly and two other partners called Integrum.

PR is a people business, raising the risk for any investor that its assets will decide to defect to a competitor or set up their own firms. But, even hours before he quit, Kelly's closest colleagues hoped that he and his firm could weather the storm.

"Clients have been, almost to the client, extremely supportive. Not because Declan's a striking, handsome, articulate guy: they've been supportive because this firm does good work," said one senior adviser, who called the media interest "salacious" and "not reasonable".

Joseph Swedish,

Cordani, CEO of

dispute showed

which Kelly and

Teneo could go

the lengths to

ex-CEO of

and David

Anthem, top,

Cigna. Their

Kelly did not resign until Monday evening, as outlets including the New York Post's gossipy Page Six column bombarded Teneo with questions and allegations.

"We were being told that he's going to take time off to deal with his [drinking] issue, and then come back on after Labor Day, and then all of that changed in the last 12 hours," said a senior managing director at Teneo on Tuesday.

As Kelly quit, saying he was taking responsibility for "an inadvertent, public and embarrassing mistake" but complaining of "a campaign against the reputation of our firm", one UK client said

simply: "It's the right outcome." A man who had risen by generating positive coverage and playing to CEOs' anxieties about bad press sinking their careers had been brought down by headlines he could not control. PR professionals, like journalists, are taught that "you never want to be the story", one rival observed.

The attention Kelly and Band drew meant that Teneo was intimately identified from the start with its two most recognisable leaders. Without them, clients' willingness to pay the premium fees is at risk, according to insiders at the firm and bankers and lawyers who deal with Teneo regularly.

In his parting statement, Kelly himself said: "Teneo will remain the best in the world at what it does, a firm whose success has been driven by three virtues: hard work, decency and compassion."

But one senior managing director said his exit was "sort of a litmus test as to

'He was very aggressive. Some didn't like that. But he was effective and CEOs wanted him, not others'

whether the brand is bigger than the man. We are confident we can pull it off. But if we have three, four, five or six high-profile client defections in the coming weeks or months, the mood will change dramatically."

A top Wall Street banker who worked with and against Kelly said that the chances of Teneo thriving without its polarising leader were slim. "He was the firm, in many ways. He was the energy behind it. He was very aggressive. Some didn't like that. But he was effective and CEOs wanted him, not others."

Within hours of Kelly's exit becoming public, those people he had hired or acquired were publicly trying to put the most positive gloss on the situation. Some told reporters that Kelly no longer brought in anything like the 40 per cent of revenues he accounted for before CVC bought in; others contacted clients with reassuring messages about its "deep bench" of experienced advisers.

But privately Kelly continued to divide even his own staff. Some who spoke to the FT remained sympathetic. But three senior people said there was feverish infighting among insiders angered by his failure to be more upfront.

Kelly had told some top executives in early May that he was ceding some responsibilities to deal with unspecified health problems. Only a handful had known the real reason.

"He had a stable of experts who could have dealt with this in a more effective way; instead he opted for a cover-up," said one executive.

"It was an unrecoverable mistake to keep his top lieutenants in the dark," echoed another.

Their mood mixed a sense of betrayal and fear for what might come next, with several senior figures questioning the firm's future without Kelly and Band.

"Paul is an operations guy, he doesn't have the Rolodex, it's just a fact," said a third insider, speaking like his colleagues on condition of anonymity because this was one matter they were not authorised to discuss with the press.

Even as he advised clients on how best to burnish their reputations, Kelly sometimes seemed his own best client. He has a personal website that describes his honours and charitable work and links to flattering headlines such as: "US Irish businessman vows to eradicate global poverty in \$350 billion plan."

Some of his reputation management skills were still in evidence on Tuesday. Kelly's own website had changed the tenses on his biography to describe him as Teneo's former CEO. But there was a hint of a hoped-for second act in the following line, still written in the present tense: "Declan is a trusted adviser to many of the world's leading CEOs and corporations."

On Teneo's site, meanwhile, the biography page that once touted his accomplishments just returned the terse message: "Not found."

Additional reporting by Sara Germano and Amanda Chu in New York and Michael O'Dwyer in London

BEST OF BUSINESS

Burst of dealmaking

• Private equity groups have had their busiest six months since records began, striking deals worth more than \$500bn and helping propel mergers and acquisitions activity to an all-time high.

Buyout groups have announced 6,298 deals since the beginning of January, worth \$513bn even before counting a \$34bn deal for the medical supply company Medline, the strongest half-year result since at least 1980, according to figures from data provider Refinitiv.

Wider dealmaking continued at a frenzied pace, with transaction volumes hitting an all-time high of

\$1.5tn this quarter, the fourth consecutive quarter in which it has topped \$1tn in a rebound in activity since the early days of the pandemic.



Nissan has unveiled plans for the UK's first large-scale battery factory, handing

the country's car industry a needed boost as it races to prepare for the era of electric vehicles.

The £1bn investment will safeguard the future of the company's plant in Sunderland, where the factory will be built with supplier Envision AESC.

Nissan has promised to build a new electric vehicle at its existing plant.

With the UK banning petrol and diesel vehicle sales from 2030, the sector is under pressure to establish infrastructure, including supply of batteries, to produce electric cars at scale and protect jobs.

• United Airlines has placed an order for 270 jets, the biggest in its history, in a bet on a resurgence of premium travel.

Mubadala is poised to launch two Spacs and a Dubai asset manager is raising \$200m to target mergers with Middle East groups

The Chicago-based company said it was ordering 200 Boeing 737 Maxes and 70 Airbus A321neos and expected to create 25,000 jobs by 2026 linked to the order.

United's plans are the latest signs of divergence between US and European airlines' strategies.

As the pandemic ebbs in the US, more US carriers are placing orders, but European rivals are still looking to conserve cash.

Low-cost carrier Ryanair was one to buck the European trend in December with an order for 75 Boeing 737 Max jets with a list price of \$22bn.

• Associated British Foods, Primark's parent, said sales had risen above pre-pandemic levels as restrictions lifted and people rushed to refill wardrobes with clothes for social occasions.

JD Sports, which has made a string of acquisitions during the pandemic, raised full-year profit guidance on "enhanced levels of consumer demand".

The bullish announcements from the two British groups came hours after US retailer Gap announced it would close all of its 81 stores in the UK and Ireland

£1_{bn} Scale of Nissan's investment in a large-scale UK

battery plant

Number of jets ordered as the pandemic ebbs

270

and remain only available online in the countries, putting roughly 1,000 jobs at risk.

 Investor mania for special purpose acquisition companies is accelerating in the Gulf, where Abu Dhabi sovereign fund **Mubadala** is poised to launch two Spacs and a Dubai-based asset manager is raising \$200m to target mergers with companies in the Middle East.

Regional financiers have for months been planning an expansion into the booming market for blank-cheque companies, which first list on a stock market before searching for a company with which

Mubadala had been approaching potential investors for two Spacs focusing on technology and healthcare, said people briefed on the meetings.

Interest in Spacs has slowed in recent months after some disappointing share price performances and increasing regulatory scrutiny in the US.

In the Gulf, however, investors have worried about missing out on gains.

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On Wall Street

Let's please stop calling dollars 'fiat money'



Brendan Greeley



ometimes it's possible to simplify something too much. More than a decade ago, Ben Bernanke, then chair of the Federal Reserve's Board of Governors, sat down for an interview with 60 Minutes, the television show that important Americans call when they have important things to say.

Bernankewas explaining how the Fed had responded to the financial crisis. When he got to the asset purchase programmes, the host asked whether the Fed was spending taxpayers' money.

"It's not tax money," Bernanke said. "The banks have accounts with the Fed, much the same way that you have an account in a commercial bank. So to lend to a bank, we simply use the computer to mark up the size of the account that they have at the Fed."

The host asked him whether the Fed had been printing money. "Well," said Bernanke, "effectively."

Hewasn'twrong, of course. He's Ben Bernanke. You might disagree with his policy choices but he certainly knows how money is created. That quote from 60 Minutes, though, still comes up often more than a decade later. When Bernanke simplified what the Fed does, he confirmed for a lot of people the deeply mistaken idea that the Fed simply magics up dollars out of nothing and then, by fiat, says: "There. That's money."

There's a problem with the word "fiat." We use it to describe our current monetary system. Then we teach undergraduates that the word comes from the Italian for decree, or edict. We

tell them that fiat money is a social convention. It has value because the government says it does, and everyone agrees. Cameron Winklevoss, cofounder of crypto exchange Gemini, says that "all money is a meme". That's what hewas taught at Harvard while he was doing the other thing he's famous for.

This is unfortunately not at all how money works. The first description I could find of money as "fiat" comes from John Stuart Mill, the English philosopher, in Principles of Political Economy. Mill proposed a hypothetical: suppose a government began paying salaries in a paper money that couldn't be converted on demand into silver or gold. The value of that money, he wrote, "would depend

Cameron Winklevoss. co-founder of crypto exchange Gemini, says 'all money is a meme'

on the fiat of the authority". Well, yeah. If the US Department of the Treasury were to print up carnival tickets, spend them into the economy and call them dollars, the value of those dollars would depend on the fiat of Congress. But that's not what the Treasury does, and that's not whatadollaris.

If you live in the US, the dollars you use most often in your daily life are bank dollars. Your bank creates them when it loans you money, then deposits them in your account.

Bank dollars don't have value just because your bank says they do. Your bank has regulators poking into its books to make sure those loans are sound assets with decent returns. And your bank pays premiums to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation to guarantee your deposits. If bank dollars are just a social convention - a meme - then your mortgage is just a meme, too. Now, take the Fed. It's just a special bank. Like Bernanke said, commercial banks have deposit accounts at the Fed.

When the Fedlends them money, it marks up their accounts with dollars we call reserves. And, just like when the commercial banks lend you money, those reserves are a liability for the Fed.

But there's a crucial part of the process that didn't make it into 60 Minutes: when the Fed marks up those accounts, it's also buying assets. It swaps, one for one: reserves for assets.

When we say the Fed is printing money, we imply that there was nothing, and now there is something. Tada! But again, that's not at all what happens. The Fed has to buy something. Usually it's a Treasury bill but in an emergency it can be a more questionable asset. Then the Fed credits back reserves. To believe those reserves are just a meme, you have to believe the assets are just a meme. But they aren't. Don't take my word for it. The Fed's assets provide a return every year, lean years and fat years, without fail.

OK. Nowlet's do the Department of the Treasury. It has an account at the Fed, too, but it cannot just magic dollars out of its account. The Treasury can put dollars in its account collecting taxes, or by selling Treasury bills. There is no fiat, no decree. There is no money printer, anywhere. It's all transactions on a balance sheet, assets for liabilities.

Now: you may believe that all those mortgages and credit card loans are meaningless assets. You may believe the USgovernment will not be able to collect enough taxes to roll over those Treasury bills. If you are right, then yes, the dollar has no value. But we're still not talking about trusting anyone's fiat. We're talking about credit analysis. So, please: let's stop calling it fiat money. Let's start callingitwhatitis: credit money.

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The day in the markets

What you need to know

 Wall Street stocks at all-time high after US jobs data beat forecasts Core government bonds rally on both sides of the Atlantic Oil price hovers near highest levels in

two-and-a-half years

Stocks on Wall Street hit an all-time high yesterday after the closely watched US jobs numbers were better than expected, signalling that the world's largest economy was emerging from the pandemic at a robust pace.

The US labour market added 850,000 positions in June, beating economists' expectations of 720,000 new jobs and substantially above the 583,000 in May.

Wall Street's S&P 500 and tech-heavy Nasdag Composite built on records hit earlier this week with both benchmarks up 0.5 per cent at lunchtime in New York.

The employment reading was not, however, too strong to suggest the US Federal Reserve would be tempted to rein in its pandemic-era stimulus that has underpinned asset prices.

"The US jobs figures couldn't have delivered better news for Wall Street," said Danni Hewson, analyst at AJ Bell, calling this a "goldilocks" moment for markets — "not too hot, not too cold". Hewson added: "Enough new jobs to confirm the economy is on a roll, [but] enough jobless to give the Fed's current strategy a warm hug."

Jay Powell, Fed chair, has vowed to keep the bank's monetary policy supportive until the labour market has recovered from the pandemic.

Accompanying the rise in stocks was a modest rally in government bonds with



the yield on 10-year US Treasuries sliding 4 basis points to 1.44 per cent. The yield on the equivalent German Bund fell by the same margin to minus 0.24 per cent.

The region-wide Stoxx Europe 600 and Frankfurt's Xetra both slipped 0.3 per cent while London's FTSE 100 was flat.

"We think that the European market is really benefiting from euro depreciation," said Bastien Drut, chief thematic macro strategist at CPR Asset Management, referring to a month-long rally for the dollar against peers.

The euro, which was steady at \$1.1841 yesterday, is down more than 3 per cent against the dollar since the start of June. Drut said another tailwind for European equities is the composition of the

towards cyclical stocks that benefit more from the region reopening. Oil prices hovered near their highest level for two-and-a-half years after officials at the Opec+ meeting of crude-

continent's bourses, which are weighted

producing nations failed to reach an agreement on production output. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, and the US marker West Texas

Intermediate were steady at about \$75 a barrel. Siddharth Venkataramakrishnan

Decoupling of commodities and EM stocks offers taste of things to come



or investors in emerging markets, the playbook has been a familiar one for decades: when commodities prices go up, so do emerging market stocks and vice versa.

The logic is simple: the emerging world is where (most) commodities come from. If you are bullish or bearish on global growth, you feel the same about commodities and EM stocks.

But this year the narrative has changed. As a post-Covid recovery became visible late last year, both sets of assets surged. Between early November and late January, the S&P GSCI commodity index and the MSCI Emerging Markets equity index each gained about 25 per cent.

Since then, commodity prices have risen another 30 per cent, while EM stocks have flatlined.

One simple explanation is that there is less reason than there used to be for EM stocks and commodities to rise and fall together. The days when the MSCI EM index was dominated by commodity producers in Latin America are long gone. Today, companies in China, Taiwan, South Korea and India make up threequarters of the index.

Tech in particular dominates. Information technology stocks are 20 per cent of the MSCI benchmark. However, Daniel Salter of Renaissance Capital, an EM and frontier market equity specialist, says their true weight is almost twice that much.

By his calculations, including tech companies in sectors such as

communications services and consumer discretionary, tech makes up 38 per cent of the index. That compares with less than 5 per cent for

energy and 9 per cent for materials. Nevertheless, commodities and EM stocks have, until recently, moved in tandem. That may simply be a reflection of investors' appetite for risk. But there are real world reasons, too.

Often, the driver for both sets of assets has been China. China's resilience to the pandemic might suggest this narrative was still alive.

But concerns over shaky finances in parts of China's economy have once again showed up on investors' radars. Beijing has increased its scrutiny of the country's \$17tn credit market, making financial stability once again the priority over economic growth.

'How can we make forecasts when we get this scale of outsized surprises on US data?'

With the world's second-biggest economy unlikely to power ahead as before, the impetus behind both commodity prices and EM stocks has slowed. Thankfully for commodity producers, the US and President Joe Biden's stimulus spending has stepped in to keep demand on the boil.

"A Chinese slowdown would normally be reflected in softer commodity prices," said Ian Beattie, fund manager at Nedgroup Investments. "But there has been an offsetting boost from the Biden stimulus package and the economic reopening in the US and Europe."

A global recovery led by the US and Europe should be good for EM exporters in general. But that prospect is undermined by the associated threat of inflation and rising interest rates.

Businesses For Sale

"You can tell a really positive macro story with the opening of the global economy, a return of tourism, the potential for a new commodity boom," said Mary-Therese Barton, head of emerging debt at Pictet Asset Management. "But on the other hand, we would probably struggle to find a strong structural growth story."

She describes markets as overshadowed by uncertainty, which has been exacerbated by data surprises from the US. "Everyone is expecting surprises," she said. "But how can we make forecasts when we get this scale of outsized surprises on US data? If surprises are anticipated, what does that mean for volatility?"

She is not alone in expecting a bumpy ride. Simon Quijano-Evans of Gemcorp Capital says investors have been thrown not only by the quantity of economic data surprises and the confusion caused by unprecedented base effects but by what for many is the new experience of inflation.

EM stocks, he says, have been stalled by the uncertainty gripping risky assets in general, from the S&P 500 to crypto. Investors in developed countries, he says, appear ready to put the pandemic behind them. But the global picture is uneven with cases still high in parts of South America and the possibility of new variants a continuing danger until the global vaccine rollout matches that of the rich world. The decoupling of commodities and EM stocks, he says, is a pre-taste of what's to come.

"I am pretty sure there are going to be a lot of surprises that we are not thinking about now because we have not been faced with this situation before," he said. "Many of us thought 2021 was going to be easier than 2020. But dealing with the spillover effects of Covid-19 in the real economy will last at least into 2022."

jonathan.wheatley@ft.com

Markets update

		0			*2	
	US	Eurozone	Japan	UK	China	Brazil
Stocks	S&P 500	Eurofirst 300	Nikkei 225	FTSE100	Shanghai Comp	Bovespa
Level	4339.31	1763.14	28783.28	7123.27	3518.76	127003.69
% change on day	0.45	0.20	0.27	-0.03	-1.95	0.16
Currency	\$ index (DXY)	\$ per €	Yen per \$	\$ per £	Rmb per \$	Real per \$
Level	92.652	1.184	111.315	1.378	6.482	5.054
% change on day	0.059	-0.253	-0.202	0.000	0.282	0.818
Govt. bonds	10-year Treasury	10-year Bund	10-year JGB	10-year Gilt	10-year bond	10-year bond
Yield	1.443	-0.237	0.041	0.702	3.084	8.967
Basis point change on day	0.230	-2.800	-1.330	-1.300	-0.100	-65.200
World index, Commods	FTSE All-World	Oil - Brent	Oil - WTI	Gold	Silver	Metals (LMEX)
Level	476.93	75.81	74.84	1781.50	26.26	4124.70
% change on day	0.26	1.45	1.75	1.04	1.92	-0.65
Vesterday's close apart from: Curr	oneige = 16,00 CMT, CCD Payer	con All World Oil = 17:00 Ch	AT, Cold Cilvor = London nm	fix Pand data supplied by T	ullett Broken	·

Main equity markets





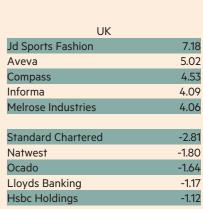


Biggest movers

ops	Oracle	2.72
	Regeneron Pharmaceuticals	2.43
	Carmax	2.30
	Chipotle Mexican Grill	2.18
Downs	Int Business Machines	-4.28
	Coty	-2.79
	Nov	-2.33
	Charles Schwab (the)	-2 32

Luiozonic	
Jeronimo Martins	3.9
Edf	3.2
Stmicroelectronics	2.2
Airbus	2.1
Endesa	2.0
B. Sabadell	-3.6
Caixabank	-2.5
Societe Generale	-2.4
Fresen.med.care	-2.2
Evonik Industries	-2.1
Raced on the constituents of the ETSE Eur	rofirst 700 Eurozon

Furozone



All data provided by Morningstar unless otherwise noted

Wall Street

Biopharma group **Alector** soared after signing a deal with GlaxoSmithKline to co-develop an experimental treatment for a range of neurodegenerative illnesses, including Parkinson's and Alzheimer's. The group will receive \$700m upfront

and up to \$1.5bn in potential milestone payments, profit sharing and royalties. J Alexander's Holdings, which is

behind restaurants such as Redlands Grill and Stoney River Steakhouse, rallied on its merger with SPB Hospitality, a franchiser of steakhouses, pizza and craft-beer venues.

Under the terms of the deal, which valued the group at \$220m, shareholders received \$14 a share, representing a 14 per cent premium on Thursday's close.

A space race between two billionaires sent Virgin Galactic rocketing. Sir Richard Branson's bid to beat Jeff

Bezos's Blue Origin to space saw Virgin Galactic announce its first fully crewed space flight for July 11. Bezos's first human flight is scheduled for a week later on July 20.

delivered 201,250 vehicles in the second quarter, beating analyst expectations. Co-founder Elon Musk tweeted: "Congrats Tesla Team on over 200,000

car [sic] built & delivered in Q2, despite

many challenges!!" Ray Douglas

Tesla rose after the electric carmaker

maker lowering its full-year forecast for organic revenue growth to about 17 per cent, compared with a previous range of between 17 per cent and 20 per cent.

London

Online gaming business Kindred Group rallied on news that it was buying the remaining 66.6 per cent of outstanding shares in Relax Gaming, which supplies poker, bingo and casino content to the Malta-based buyer. The transaction valued Relax at up to €320m on a cash

The deal was expected to generate annual run-rate synergies of €8m within the next three years, "driven by lower investment needs and reduced cost of sales", said Kindred,

Europe

and debt-free basis.

Finnish industrial-valves manufacturer Neles Oyj jumped after announcing that it had agreed to merge with Valmet Oyj, which supplies services to the pulp, paper

and energy industries. After the deal, Neles investors would hold about 18.8 per cent of shares in the combined company, which would have

had net sales of about €4.3bn in 2020, said the Vantaa-based group. A profit warning sent Ambu tumbling,

with the Danish medical equipment

The Ballerup-based group said that the pandemic had resulted in "slower recovery of elective procedures . . . and shipment delays". Ray Douglas

Video game developer Team17 rallied on news that it was buying StoryToys, a publisher of educational entertainment apps for children, for \$26.5m, with a further maximum payment of \$22.5m on delivery of certain targets.

The deal prompted Shore Capital to raise its rating for Team17 from "hold" to "buy", saying that the purchase was "opening up a new vertical and potential demographic" for the Wakefield company.

Team17 said it expected the deal to be immediately earnings accretive, leading to returns "well above the cost of capital".

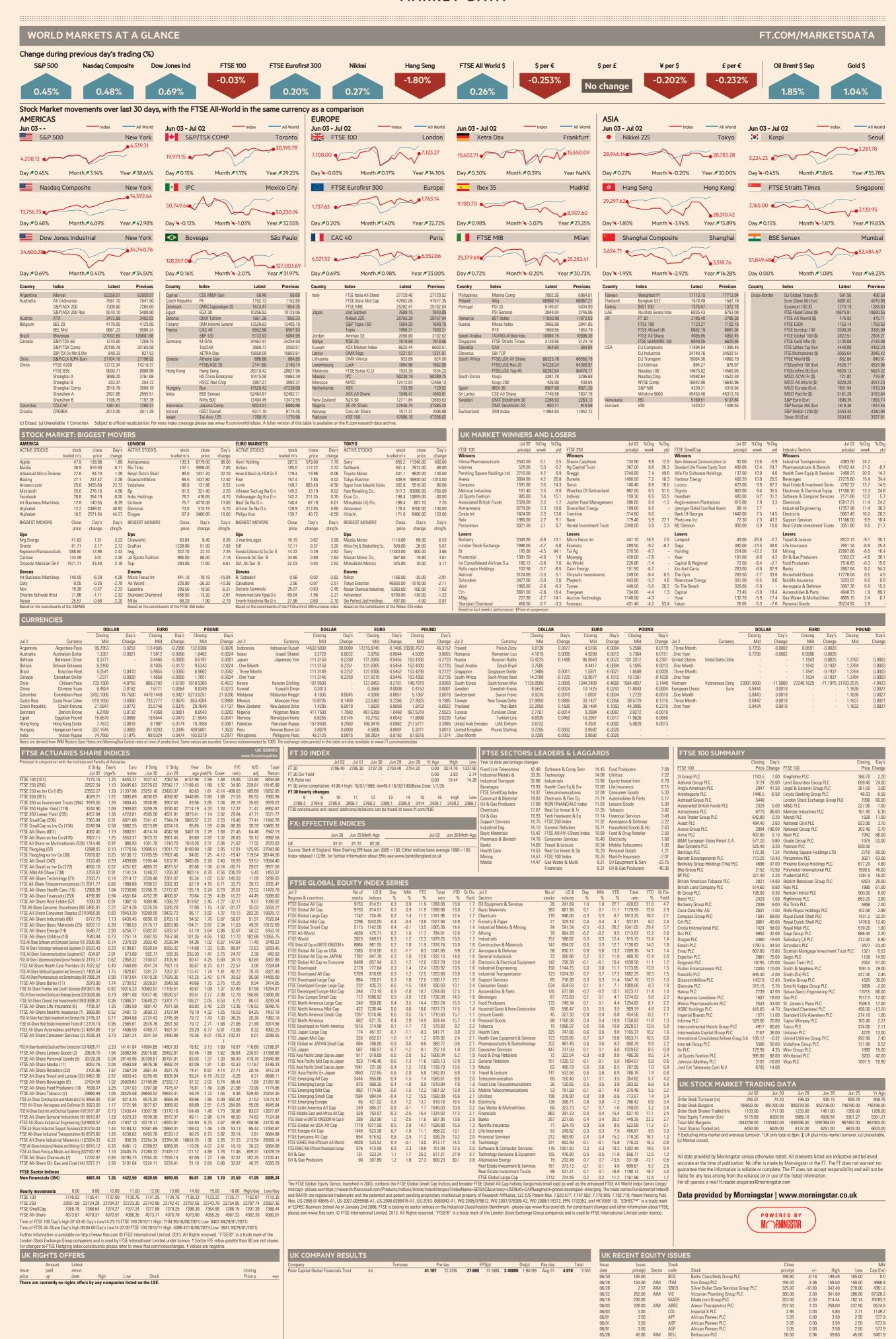
A ratings upgrade helped lift Informa, with Berenberg revising up its view on the exhibitions organiser from "hold" to "buy". "Having lagged other 'reopening' trades, we think Informa now offers solid upside on a 12-month view," said the broker, which also raised the London group's target price.

Restrictions that have hit large trade shows were being eased, meaning there was a "potential for a strong recovery" for Informa in 2022, said analysts.

A watchdog's approval for one of its drugs helped boost Diurnal Group, which said the UK Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency had granted a marketing authorisation for Efmody, a treatment for an inherited condition that affects the adrenal glands. Ray Douglas

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MARKET DATA



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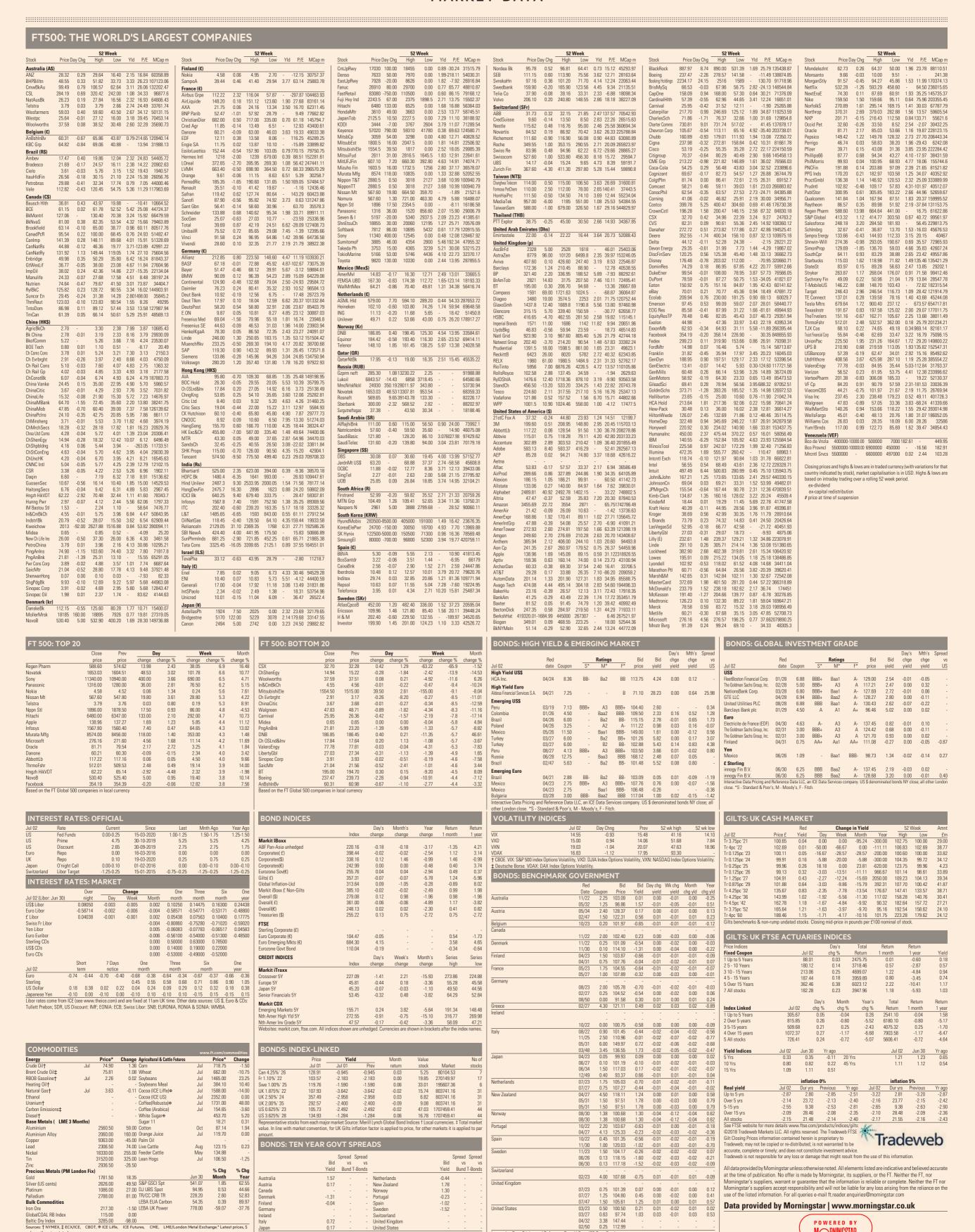
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MARKET DATA





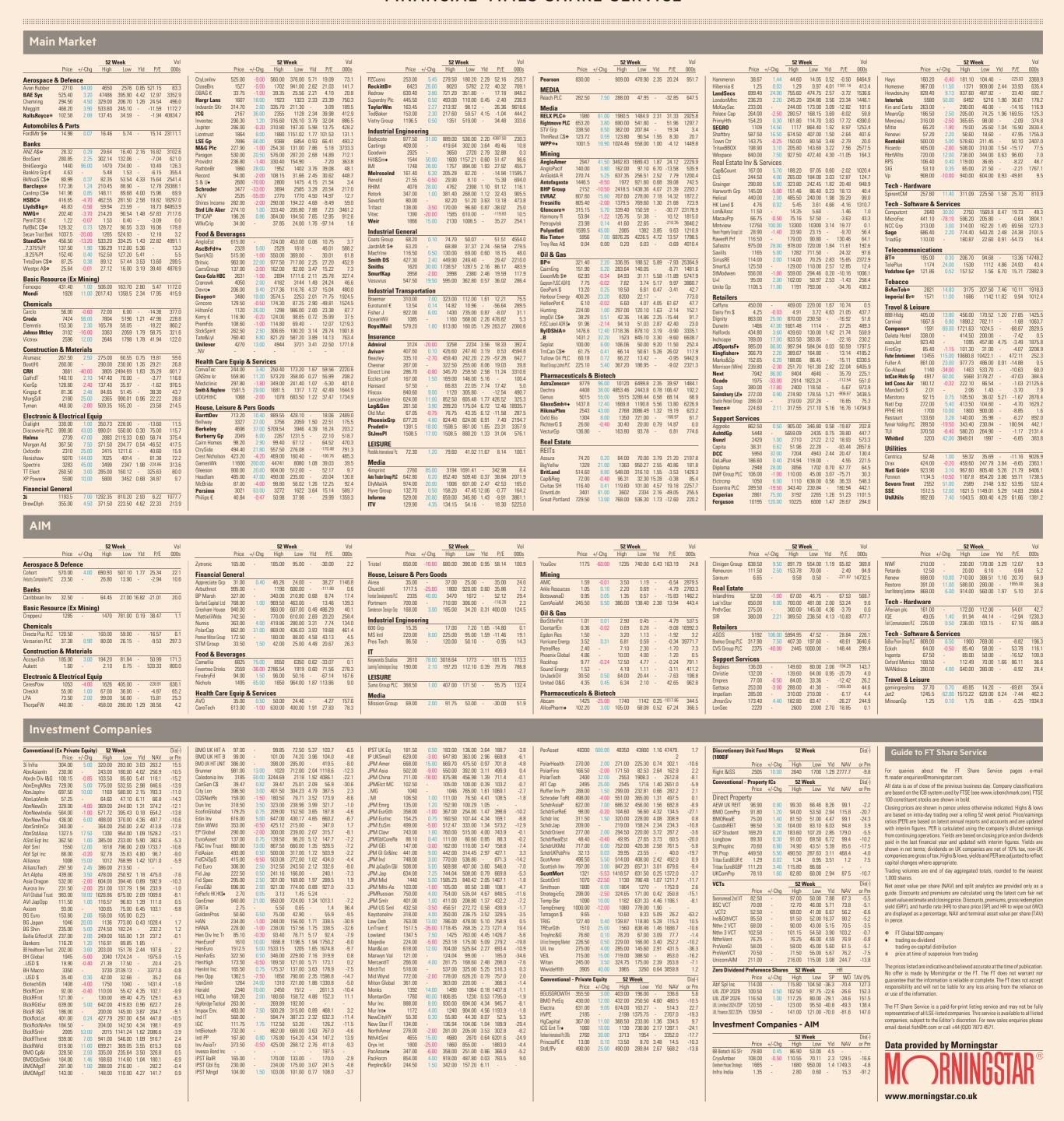
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Wizz Air/CEO pay: first-class rewards

Well-paid fund managers boast about the cost efficiency of the groups they invest in. Yet they have generally been happy to cover the high pay that boards give to CEOs. That has emboldened UK-listed airline Wizz Air to promise its chief executive, Jozsef Varadi, a maximum £100m payout.

But attitudes are shifting. Double the proportion of FTSE 100 shareholders voted against CEO remuneration this year than last. The argument that great performance justifies sky-high pay has lost ground. "Averaging up" of CEO pay means it is now wildly out of whack with ordinary incomes. Performance has not improved commensurately. Last year, FTSE 100 CEOs received 73 times the median pay of their staff, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy said.

There is some evidence that chief executive pay growth has peaked as a result. Their wages have dipped to £2.85m this year, says Deloitte. That sits well below the £3.8m average from the 2010-18 period, suggest data from the think-tank High Pay Centre.

Independent JD Sports shareholders ousted remuneration committee head Andrew Leslie this week in protest against the hefty payouts for executive chair Peter Cowgill. Even ultra-chilled US shareholders are quibbling more. They have doled out 50 per cent more "low vote" pay approvals this year than last, say Farient Advisors. But at 25, the number of companies remains low.

Wizz stipulates that its share price must double to £120 over five years for its chief to pocket £100m. On 2020 data, that would put his remuneration multiple to median employee pay at a whopping 3,139 times. Founder Varadi has a good chance of hitting the jackpot. The shares have more than tripled over the past five-year period.

Understandably, Wizz's board wants to keep Varadi as long as possible. Yet, such steep pay can only infuriate the airline's other stakeholders. When overgenerous incentive schemes pay out, turbulence is inevitable.

Mitsubishi Electric: resigned to cover-ups

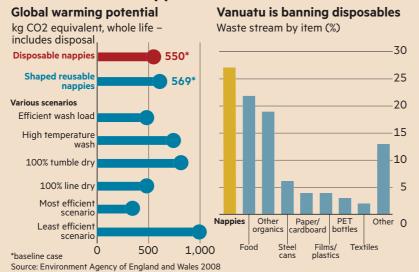
Mitsubishi Electric's chief has announced his resignation. The company has admitted that it falsified inspection data going back to the 1980s. Takeshi Sugiyama's departure may not be enough to resolve deeprooted problems at the industrial group, which is capitalised at \$30bn.

Secret corporate malpractice, also highlighted by a vote-rigging scandal at Toshiba, is a recurring problem in Japan, where standards of public behaviour are high. This week the business was hit by two back-to-back reports on falsified inspection data, one for air-conditioning equipment and another for parts used in train brakes. A computer program was used to generate some of the numbers.

Investors have a sense of déjà vu. Last year, Mitsubishi Electric was found to have shipped substandard car radio receivers to the EU. Three years ago, it sold rubber products that failed to meet several standards. There have

been a string of other scandals, too. Yet the shares fell just 7 per cent this week. The modest decline reflects the

Carbon counter/nappies: it all comes out in the wash



Going green is a murky business. Consider the newborn baby, who will get through some 5,500 nappies or diapers before being toilet trained at two-and-a-half. Scale that up for 140m babies born this year and you get 770bn nappies for 2021's cohort.

Good for business — the nappy market may exceed \$71bn next year. Less so for the environment.

Yet eco-conscious parents opting for reusable diapers may not be saving the planet. Assume six daily nappy changes and an electricityguzzling 60 degree washing machine cycle every second day and you get up to 569kg of CO2. Add in a similar number of cycles in a tumble drier, necessary in small flats or rainy climes, and it stacks up to 815kg. That compares with 550kg for disposables, according to the go-to survey by the

the terries, check the caveats. Subsequent studies, including by the UN and Zero Waste Europe, conclude that reusable is better, reducing the carbon footprint by as much as That partly reflects developments

Environment Agency. Before ditching

in reusable nappies, now available in fabrics such as bamboo, and more efficient washing. Vanuatu plans to ban disposables altogether, reflecting a proportionately high burden of waste in some developing countries

Reusables still leave a chunky footprint, especially where power is coal fired and water scarce. A cleaner at least in one respect — alternative comes from rural China: kaidangku, or open crotch pants.

New parents in the west need not fret. They are also available on Etsy.

fact that such embarrassments are not unusual for Japanese groups. Toyota, Nissan, Hitachi and Takata have also incubated them. Jaded investors are inured to cover-ups that go wrong.

The issue with a consensual culture is that if everyone is to blame, then no one person carries the can. Retribution at the related auto equipment division was limited to a feeble voluntary 5 per cent cut of one month's salary.

Returns on capital and equity have declined every year for the past three years. The shares, trading on a forward earnings multiple of 15 times, have lagged behind the Nikkei 225 Average.

Sugiyama's move means finally a top manager has taken responsibility for a flawed culture. But a cynic would say that getting caught remains the biggest risk in the eyes of bosses involved in cover-ups. There have been too many false dawns on corporate governance in Japan to hail Sugiyama's departure, or the Toshiba scandal, as a turning point.

Heatwave investment: pool cues

Swimming pool companies are making a splash. In the US, interest in backyard pools shot up last year as the pandemic shut down public centres. Record high summer temperatures have helped sustain the surge. Also propping up demand: uncertainty surrounding overseas travel and holiday hotspots.

With staycations likely for 2021, the pool sales boom has driven related stocks to new heights. In US regions with rising summer temperatures, pools may, meanwhile, become standard features of higher-priced

homes. Investors looking to take the plunge should be aware the market has already priced in near-term growth.

Louisiana-based Pool Corp, the world's biggest distributor of pool parts and supplies, has more than doubled in market value to \$18.6bn over the past 16 months. It is trading at a steep 38 times forecast earnings, says S&P Global. It generated a record \$3.9bn in revenue in 2020. The current year looks likely to bring another revenue jump. Distributors initially sold down existing inventory rather than buying new products. Demand has since rippled down the supply chain.

London-based Pentair, which makes pool pumps, cleaners and automation systems, gets the majority of its revenue from the US. Its shares have almost tripled from their March 2020 lows. Rival equipment manufacturer Hayward Holdings is up 51 per cent since it went public in March. It reported a near one-fifth jump in sales last year and expects these to increase as much as 45 per cent in 2021.

Barring another pandemic-related lockdown, the sharp spike in sales last year and this year are unlikely to repeat. However, climate change should ensure demand remains steady.

After the fun of their first pool party, new owners have to knuckle down to a routine of mandatory maintenance. That will be reflected in sales of pool parts like pumps and chlorine tablets.

Even so, investors should wait for valuations to moderate before diving in.

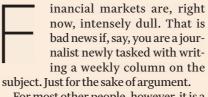


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Market calm offers blissful relief after storms of 2020

Katie Martin

The Long View



For most other people, however, it is a blessed relief. In March last year, when the pandemic really hit and markets were in meltdown, people outside the tight financial community were much more focused on keeping themselves and their families safe, and procuring tinned food, than fretting about equity

But that volatility has a real-world impact, as the Bank of England recently reminded us in a blog post. "Financial markets reflect changes in the economy. But sometimes they amplify them too," the central bank said. In other words, markets can make bad situations worse, jacking up costs of financing for anyone trying to raise new debt or equity.

To illustrate the point, the blog casts us back to the events of spring last year when markets were forced to swallow an enormous wave of economic disruption from global lockdowns in one gulp. The price of risky assets, unsurprisingly, collapsed.

Structural and technical issues in trading and fund management quickly made that collapse self-reinforcing.

Derivatives market participants were frequently required to post much larger chunks of collateral to counterparties demands that reached a crescendo around the middle of March 2020. This triggered more selling. More thought on how collateral requests are calculated, with an eye on reducing the impact of vicious cycles stemming from them, might be worthwhile, the blog suggests.

In addition, many funds were forced in to liquidations. Funds, especially those focused on corporate bonds, received a surge in redemption requests. Meeting those requests as

quickly as promised was tough for funds with hard-to-sell underlying assets. At the peak, net outflows hit 5 per cent of assets under management for corporate bond funds in March, the biggest wave of requests since the global financial crisis. Again, for those funds, the only answer was: sell bonds, fast.

Leveraged bets by hedge funds, highly lucrative in the good times but quickly heavily damaging in bad, also hurt, as did intense stress among banks that facilitate trading across a range of asset

All this warrants "further investigation" the blog says, if we are to avoid similar grim situations with potential

'Financial markets reflect changes in the economy. But sometimes they amplify them too'

real-world effects in future. Last time around, only heavy-handed intervention from central banks stopped the rot.

March 2020 was an extreme example of stress, for sure. Still, with that period etched in such recent memory, it is reassuring, in a way, that nothing even remotely close to typical levels of volatility are in play now. This keeps financing costs strikingly low and gives the global economy the breathing space to recover from the shock of the pandemic.

How quiet is it? Well, the S&P 500 benchmark index of US stocks moved more than 1 per cent in either direction in a single day only twice in the whole of June. Even then, it dropped and then jumped by a similar degree on consecutive days, so it was roughly a wash. New highs are close to a daily occurrence, but they arrive in tiny increments.

In currencies, the tone is similarly sleepy. "It is not uncharitable to suggest [major currency] ranges for the year have been paltry", wrote Deutsche Bank macro strategist Alan Ruskin.

"It is still plausible that the euro might record its narrowest annual range against the dollar since the fall of Bretton Woods," he said. The common European currency is probably on track for "a similar ignominious record" against the yen. Even typically livelier trades, like the Australian dollar against the yen, are also in a deep slumber.

And all this before the traditional summer lull kicks in.

Even cryptocurrencies, generally a reliable source of loopy unpredictability, are asleep. After a dramatic halving in the price of bitcoin earlier this year, prices have settled into a tight range around \$33,000 a pop. Some true believers say the second Crypto Winter has set in, similar to the long slow period after the last milder boom and bust in

That, of course, could change with a single tweet from Elon Musk. But back in the world of more established asset classes, barring a serious inflation shock or Delta variant curveball, upbeat stability seems to be the outlook for the coming months.

In part, says Karen Ward, chief market strategist for Europe at JPMorgan Asset Management, that is because of the faith among investors in central banks' willingness to cushion shocks. "Also, we are still in a holding pattern," she said. The big question around how long inflation sticks around, and how pronounced it proves to be, will take months to answer. "The data are not going to add any information on that story" any time soon, she said. "It could be the end of the year before we know."

Enjoy the silence. It is "kinda dull", as one commenter put it to Bank of America's analysts. "But you don't sell a dull market."

katie.martin@ft.com

FTWeekend

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The Reawakening: Imagining a post-pandemic world





Sarah Gilbert creator of the AstraZeneca vaccine and Oxford University professor of vaccinology



Amia Srinivasan Oxford University professor of social and political theory



Max Richter composer and pianist

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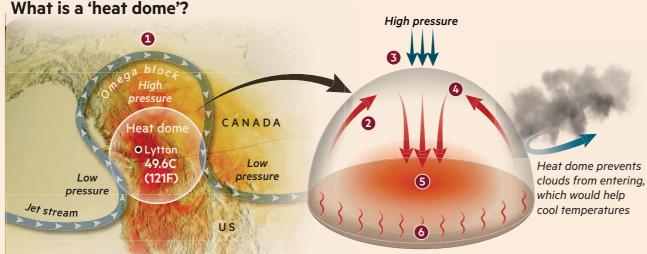
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- 1 Warm Pacific air gets trapped in jet stream, forming 'omega block' loop
- 2 Warm air expands upwards
- 3 High pressure forms a dome that prevents warm air from escaping
- 4 High pressure forces warm air back to the ground Visual journalism: Steven Bernard
- Sources: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; FT research

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S Warm air compresses as it sinks, releasing more heat

6 Heat causes ground to lose moisture, creating further warming and increasing likelihood of wildfires

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Can you change yourself?

As the pandemic prompts many to reassess their life choices and consider new careers, journalist-turned-teacher Lucy Kellaway draws on her own experience

to argue that reinventing yourself is more difficult than you might hope

ack in the age of enforced walking, when the only way to see anyone was to do circles around the local park, I went on a walk with a friend I hadn't seen for a while. As we trudged, I started saying something about having reinvented myself – but she cut me off.

How you can reinvent yourself, she asked, when you didn't invent yourself in the first place?

This was just the sort of clever-dick thing I might have said myself, prereinvention, when I was still a sarky newspaper columnist.

But now, here I was, living proof that at the end of your sixth decade it was perfectly possible to change your life entirely – to move house, split with your husband, stop dyeing your hair and quit being a journalist to become a teacher. As a result of having done all

Several times a day, I endured the humiliation of failing publicly in front of 30 hostile teenagers

that, I told my friend, I seemed to have become a slightly different person.

You can't change who you are, she said. And in any case, she went on, the big decision to change my career was less momentous than I made out as all I was really doing was returning to the family fold. My mum was a teacher and my dad an academic, so if I became one too, that was about as remarkable as when my old classmate at school, Emma Thompson, the daughter of two actors, opted to join them on the stage.

This was a downer. If she was right it not only meant my supposed reinvention was a sham but cast doubt on all the millions of other people who, fed up with having spent the past 15 months staring at a green dot at the top of their computer screens, have either reinvented themselves — or are considering it. A record 4m Americans left their jobs in April and, if a survey by Microsoft is

Illustration by **Andy Edwards**

Below: Lucy Kellaway at her London teaching job in 2017 — Anna Gordon

to believed, 40 per cent of all workers everywhere are considering throwing in the towel and doing something else.

As we started our second lap, I gave my friend chapter and verse on exactly how my new life had made me different and mainly nicer. In my old one I was paid to interview famous people and developed a technique that involved handing my subjects a noose and waiting for them to put their heads into it -

and often requires patient, repeated applications to have any effect at all, but nevertheless seems a worthwhile thing to be doing. It stands to reason that this radical shift in what I do, why I do it, and who I do it with must have left some mark on my character.

I can also make a strong case for having acquired some humility as a result of having been taken down a peg or 10. As a journalist I was good at what I did (even though I didn't always feel it at the time) but for the first two years as a teacher I was shockingly poor. Several times a day, I endured the humiliation of failing publicly in front of 30 hostile teenagers. I used to stand there, sweating heavily and trying to look dignified while a 13-year-old girl called out: "Miss, I could learn this better from watching a video."

Even now, I have to listen politely as colleagues 35 years my junior tell me off for failing to have taken a register or input data correctly. If that doesn't make one humbler, I said, I don't know what does.

I remember interviewing Jonathan

Franzen to discover that the man who is so smart about the foibles of people in his novels is so clueless about his own. He told me he found one percenters sickening – but when I pointed out that he was one himself, he corrected me: "I am a poor person who has money." It seems I'm just like Franzen – only he's a

better writer. I now see that by focusing on goody-

goody things like niceness and humility I was looking for the wrong thing. I didn't change career to become a better person, exactly. I changed career because I was not only fed up with my job but fed up with myself.

The test of success of my "reinvention" is whether changing career has

Continued on page 2





On Monday night, with a slightly heavy heart, I headed off to the new south London campus of the Royal College of Art. It was my first evening "work" invitation in 15 months. Had I not vowed to renounce that old routine and live a simpler, less frenetic existence?

Four hours later, after an inspiring tour of the RCA's whizzy new premises, and dinner with artists, designers, scientists and publishers by the Thames, I found myself walking home humming with ideas, whether on the future of the arts or life and leadership in the social media age – and vowing to go out more . . .

If my Monday volte face is any guide, I sense that we face a battle to keep to our lockdown vows of rethinking how we run our lives. In this week's cover essay, Lucy Kellaway takes on the cult of reinvention and briskly as ever skewers her target.

For more spiritual guidance on how to live, turn to page 7 for a mesmerising interview with Amartya Sen, the great Indian moral philosopher and economist, a "life-long campaigner for a more noble idea of home and the world".

An early mentor, the late Bill McPherson of the Washington Post, used to stress that good writing was all about details. Our piece from Belfast on Page 14 testifies to that: it brims with diamond-stud, if dispiriting, quotes. On a brighter note, I was reminded on Monday night of the universal nightmarish dilemma facing bosses, whether of a gallery, bar or business: drafting the lockdown memo. It is hard but also rich with comic potential. I refer you to John Gapper's oped in the main section, a mock post-Covid note from a chief executive to their troops. Happy reading – and good luck drafting. Alec Russell I arrived at Wimbledon shortly after 11am. There it was again, the 13.5-acre oasis of pastured perfection. Yet as soon as I set eyes on it, I was sent the other way. Up a hill. To the tail of a very long snake of people.

Apparently the gates hadn't been opened on time. Hundreds of ticketholders ended up walking more than a mile, in a circle. Inside, the tennis started without us. Many certainties have been shaken by the pandemic but had the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club really forgotten how to organise a queue?

So, yes, the return of Wimbledon had a few slips. The most consequential ones were literal: Serena Williams, Novak Djokovic and Andy Murray all crashed to the grass, undone by the damp surface. "It's so dangerous," grumbled Murray. But neither he nor Williams, whose fall ended her participation, nor indeed anyone else, complained much. "I don't mind falling more if the result is winning a match," said Djokovic.

Whether you're queueing outside or slipping on court, you can't stay mad at Wimbledon for long. To me, the tennis tournament is the greatest sports competition on Earth. Even more than football's European championship, it makes me proud to be English. It is national tradition with international talent. It is exclusive but accessible. It is passionate but only occasionally tribal. It is successful but rarely commercial (and, yes, I know the official towels cost £35).

You can lament the flaws of England's ruling classes - their failure to plan for Brexit and Covid, their inability to break the straitjacket of history or you can come to SW19 and delight in a microcosm where those flaws are not decisive.

Wimbledon represents an England that just works. We have other institutions: the monarchy, Westminster, the Underground. None runs nearly as smoothly as the Championships. There's the discipline of the ball boys and girls, the efficiency of the ground teams, the politeness of the honorary stewards. There's the umpires' ability to hush a crowd simply by saying "thank you". There's the fact that the strawberries are picked on the same day they are eaten.

Once upon a time, Wimbledon was used as an analogy for Britain's economic strengths, notably the City you could host the best players from around the world, even if none of them belonged to you. Last year it became a model for another reason. The club revealed it had been paying pandemic insurance since the 2003 Sars outbreak. The insurance had cost £26m over 17 years, and yielded a £174m payout when the tournament had to be cancelled. Every other organisation wished it had been as prescient.

Even so, the pandemic marked the first time since 1877 that the tournament had not happened, outside of world wars. Tennis had to return in 2021, not least because Williams, Murray and Roger Federer were not getting any younger.

Officially Wimbledon is not going ahead as normal: it is a pilot gathering in the government's Events Research Programme. This means some brave volunteers have to drink Pimm's in the name of scientific research. I managed to pluck up the courage.

Capacity started on Monday at just 50 per cent, and will gradually increase until the finals weekend, when 15,000 spectators will be allowed in Centre Court. It will be the first Grand Slam since the start of the pandemic to play at full capacity; it may also be the last Slam to be disrupted by coronavirus.

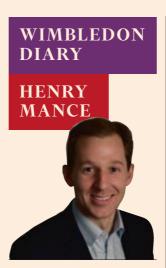
as hit-and-miss as Murray's youthful

running aground, while concerned onlookers willed Normally tickets for Wimbledon are them to safety



Andy Murray serves against Nikoloz Basilashvili on Wimbledon's Centre Court in the first round on Monday — Bob Martin-Pool/Getty Images

Service resumes



drop shots. This year there was no advance ballot for tickets (the 2020 ballot has been rolled over to 2022), and no on-the-day queue for tickets, because of social distancing. This meant lots of seats were available online to those who remembered to register. A friend just clicked on "Sunday July 11" and got men's finals tickets. Where's the fun in that? I suggested he at least camp in his garden for a night to feel like he'd earned them.

Spectators have to show proof of two vaccinations or a recent negative test. But, thankfully, Covid protocols are not a big part of the experience. If anything, the reduced capacity makes things rather pleasant. The mask-wearing is, ahem, sporadic. On the first day, Centre Court began with a standing ovation for Sarah Gilbert, co-creator of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine.

The tennis story is one of ageing

champions. Rafael Nadal, who despite being best on clay always saw winning on grass as his bigger achievement, is absent through injury. Several others, however, wanted to add one last episode to arguably tennis's greatest era. Williams won her first singles title in 2002 (before the invasion of Iraq), Federer in 2003 (before José Mourinho had ever managed in English football). They came again.

As someone approaching 40 myself, I would love to report that the old-timers rolled back the years. More often, they rolled back their eyes and knees and ankles. Federer – the man, the Adonis - hasn't lost in the first round since 2002. He was only spared that indignity this time when his opponent withdrew from injury after a fall. Williams lasted barely five games, until a slip ruined her hamstring. She tried to keep playing, almost immobile on the baseline, her serve reduced to a mere 91mph. It was painful to watch.

Even Djokovic looked vulnerable, losing his first set in the Championships to a British player, Jack Draper,

who got barely half his first serves in. Murray, on a remarkable comeback from hip surgery, needed five sets and countless verbal outbursts — to beat the world number 151, Oscar Otte, on Wednesday night.

The big players normally go through the first few rounds like whales feeding on krill. Federer, Williams and Murray were more like whales running aground, while concerned onlookers willed them to safety.

Wimbledon evolves. It pushed out the one-dimensional big servers by reducing the pressure of the balls. It dealt with the weather, through roofs on Centre Court and No. 1 Court. It adapted to the era of TV fandom, with the big screen on Henman Hill. Technology, in the form of VAR, complicates the joy of football, but tennis's Hawk-Eye challenges add to the fun.

But how will the tournament swallow the loss of Federer, Williams, her sister Venus, and more? With difficulty. Tennis has few known personalities. One of them is Nick Kyrgios, the mercurial 6ft 4in Australian, who was playing for the first time since the Australian Open. Kyrgios talks to himself ("great serve, Nick, great serve!"), to his opponent ("too good, well played"), and to the umpire. Most of the time, he's really talking to the crowd. "Guys, for you watching at home, it should be fast in here," he said, during one changeover. "It should be fast - that's grass court tennis. They've made it slow. This isn't grass any more . . . Start watering it . . . Make it a grass court again, will you please? Thanks."

It helps that Kyrgios has the game to back up his talk but, in truth, the crowd is easily impressed. If only more players realised that no flicker of personality goes unrewarded. "I like grass, I love England, I like English people," Williams's opponent, Aliaksandra Sasnovich, who almost no one wanted to win, said in her post-match interview. "I'll try to make you happy!" She was cheered off.

Crowds make sport - we know that after months of empty stadiums. But, selfishly, what do you gain from watching sport in person? In an age of staying at home, the question has to be asked. Sat on your sofa, you'll probably have a better view. You get finegrain detail from a high-definition TV. You can channel-hop to the best match of the day.

But going to Wimbledon is always worth it. Every time I'm there, I am reminded not how big the stage is, but how small. A tennis court is just a tennis court. It doesn't get any bigger, whoever's playing.

On the outside courts at Wimbledon, the players are surrounded by bustle and noise that would cause amateur club players to demand a let. Often no one is cheering them on, except their coach; sometimes not even the coach is there.

Lose in the first round of the singles, and you get £48,000 in prize money (enough to buy 1,371 official towels). It's a job. But these players were the best in their class, their town, often their entire country. It's a dream. They arrive hoping that they might break into the elite, that all those lonely practice sessions were worth it.

Every summer that there is a World Cup or a European Championship, Wimbledon struggles for relevance. There's no competing with football. About 10m UK viewers watched Djokovic beat Federer in the 2019 final; more than 27m watched England beat Germany on Tuesday. I confess I sneaked out of Centre Court to watch that game on a stranger's iPad.

Wimbledon is not perfect. The hierarchies of members, debenture holders and Royal Box don't sit well with everyone. The crowds are very white. The flowers are very vanilla. But after the past 18 months, can we not just savour the good bits?

In a pause in play, a steward asked my wife how bad the queue had been. She shrugged, and said it was out of his control. He paused, and replied: "Oh no, we do try to control everything." They really do. And, by and large, they succeed.

Henry Mance is the FT's chief features writer

Can you change?

Continued from page 1

made me less so. The good news is that it has - and then some. This is because, for the first time in my life, my work has given me a complete break from myself. I am so busy setting detentions and marking exam scripts that there is no time for even the briefest contemplation of my navel.

Last week I sent out another questionnaire to several hundred ageing professionals who have retrained as teachers through Now Teach, the charity I cofounded, asking how "reinvention" had been for them. I wanted to know how they felt. Unchanged? More fulfilled? Less tired of themselves? Nicer, even?

Admittedly, the survey was biased as it only went to those who have stuck with teaching and not to the 15 per cent who found it so awful/stressful/difficult/knackering they ended up quitting. But even so, the results were pleasing. Of the 85 per cent who are still at it, fourfifths said they felt different as a result.

Prolonged exposure to the lives of children, many of whom are poor or otherwise disadvantaged, turns out to have a marked effect on former bankers (or journalists, come to that): they vari-

ously felt more compassionate, more patient, warmer and much less enamoured by riches - in other words, they

Quite possibly their friends and family would disagree, but even so there may be something else at work here the cause and effect may run the other way. One teacher said he had not become nicer since switching careers; he had become a teacher because he had got nicer already.

This would make him the same as all

older people everywhere. Psychological studies from all over the world show that everyone gets more altruistic with age. It's called the "maturity principle": the average 65-year-old is more generous, more agreeable and less neurotic than the average 20-year-old. (This might even explain why my friends can't see any improvement in me because they are benefiting from the maturity principle too.)

Federer, Williams

and Murray were

more like whales

In my survey, I did not presume to ask the new teachers if they were happier. I don't like being asked this myself as I never know how to answer it. Happiness is so fragile that talking about it tends to destroy it. But many volunteered an answer anyway. Teaching, they said, despite all its privations, was making them more content.

> "I'm more exhausted," said one. "I no longer have time to go to the gym. And I'm making more inroads into my wine collection than before. But, overall, I'm definitely happier."

Though I agreed with almost everything they said (especially with the man who said he'd turned into an officious stickler for rules as a result of the sheer quantity of reprimands he issued daily) there was one



For three decades I tried to be unlike my bookish leftwing parents. Now I am galloping back to the beliefs I was born with

thing that struck a particular chord. "I've become more authentic," said one Now Teacher. "I've moved closer to the essence of me," said another, while a third wrote: "I'm more in tune with

Once upon a time I would have thought this insufferable twaddle. I've written whole columns about the flatulence people emit on the subject of authenticity. But, this time, I know exactly what they mean and couldn't agree more.

Every day as I walk nto school, even when it is pouring with rain and I'm badly prepared for a double period first thing with my least favourite class, it feels the right thing to be doing. Not

right in a moral way, just the right thing for me. There are other things in my life that feel right in much the same way. Gardening. Having grey hair. Always having dirt under my fingernails. Being wildly enthusiastic. Buying things in auction sales. Eating McVitie's chocolate digestives last thing at night.

These things have a common denominator: my mother.

For the first three decades of my working life I tried to be as unlike my bookish leftwing parents as possible, starting off in an investment bank and embracing the values of the free market. Four years ago, when mum had been dead for a decade and dad a fortnight, I did a sudden and unplanned about-turn and proceeded to gallop back towards the beliefs I was born with. There is a study showing the average age women start to ape their mothers is in their mid-30s, which means I was a quarter of a century late but, boy, am I making up for lost time.

I break off writing to answer the door to the postman who is bearing my latest eBay package — some vintage William Morris linen Chrysanthemum fabric of a sort that mum introduced me to when

It turns out my friend was right on all counts. There is very little agency in my story of reinvention — but I'm not sure how much this matters. I no longer care if I am a better person: it occurs to me that, deep down, mum may not have been much nicer than I am. My sole guide on how to live and how to be happy now is to try to be like the wirily enthusiastic, white-haired teacher my mum was. And the beauty of this ambition is that, having taken the plunge and become a teacher, I need do no more conscious reinventing. All the rest is happening anyway, all of its own accord.

Lucy Kellaway is an FT contributing editor and co-founder of Now Teach, an organisation that helps experienced professionals retrain as teachers. Her new book 'Re-educated: How I changed my job, my home, my husband and my hair'is published this week by Ebury Press

Lunch with the FT Matteo Salvini

'Italians would not

vote for us if we were extremists'

Admirer of Putin, friend to Le Pen, the populist politician is now part of Italy's unlikely coalition government. Over tuna tartare in Rome, he talks to *Miles Johnson* about working with Draghi, his hardline stance on immigration — and his conversion to believing in a strong EU

hortly after Matteo Salvini strides into our private Roman dining room, I begin to worry that our intimate lunch may collapse into an extended meet and greet.

We are inside the Terrazza Borromini, a luxurious restaurant overlooking the Piazza Navona. Above us is a rooftop bar unironically named "The Great Beauty" after Paolo Sorrentino's Oscar-winning portrait of the crumbling decadence of Roman high society.

Inside, a parade of ferociously tanned and exquisitely dressed men and women bustle through the corridor towards their tables — and some of them are very keen on getting face time with the Italian politician whose followers call him "Il Capitano". A powerful television executive sticks his head around the door, followed by a female presenter. Salvini exchanges pleasantries and the pair leave, with the TV boss reassuring that his companion is "very beautiful without the mask on".

This rarefied world of air-kissing socialites in the heart of the Italian capital might seem an improbable milieu for the populist who has made his career by lambasting the establishment and spent his early years in politics heaping scorn on the corruption of "thieving Rome".

Yet Salvini's League is back in power as part of the emergency unity coalition led by Mario Draghi, the former European Central Bank president. The new Draghi government is staunchly pro-EU (Salvini once toured Italy wearing a T-shirt with the slogan "no more euro"), aligned with Nato (Salvini has long expressed his admiration for Vladimir Putin) and allied with the new Biden administration (Salvini was a Maga-hatwearing Donald Trump supporter).

So is Salvini a man transformed? Is the politician this newspaper once described in an editorial as "a barbarian" (he responded at the time: "better to be a barbarian than a slave") now a creature of the establishment?

"The world has changed," says the 48-year-old senator. "Europe has changed, the world has changed, the United States has changed, the economic dynamics have changed. We have certain values, and those remain."

Sitting across from me is the archetype of the modern European populist - a seductive showman who can pirouette from firebrand to everyman in the blink of an eye. Two years ago, he appeared on the brink of becoming Italy's prime minister, an outcome that would have put the staunch ally of France's far-right leader Marine Le Pen in charge of the EU's third-biggest economy. Few in Italy would have imagined this rise possible back in 2013, when he became leader of the then marginal Northern League, remoulding the party from a northern separatist outfit into a pan-Italian nationalist movement based on raging against Brussels and campaigning to deport illegal migrants.

Then, in the summer of 2019, at the pinnacle of his popularity, Salvini brought down his own coalition government — from a beach party, mojito in hand. The then interior minister demanded a snap election and asked Italians to grant him "full powers", provocatively choosing the same phrase that Mussolini had used in his first speech after taking power in 1922. The gambit failed: his rivals outmanoeuvred him, forming a new coalition, and he was exiled to opposition.

Before that mis-step, he had made an art form of calibrating his rhetoric — and outfits — to his audience. There



have been outings of "Fireman Salvini", dressed in a full firefighter's outfit, and "Law and Order Salvini", wearing a police jacket. There has also been "Machine Gun Salvini", spraying off shots from an automatic weapon and "Hard Hat Salvini", demolishing a Mafia-owned villa in a digger.

Last year, just before Covid-19 struck, we were introduced to "Left Bank Salvini", in spectacles and a turtleneck. The Salvini before me is dressed in a sharp dark suit, waistcoat and tie, and a crisp white shirt. The head waiter comes in to flash Salvini his own green suit lining, the colour of the League party. "I always wear this when you come," he says, beaming with pride at his VIP guest.

Salvini enquires about the off-menu options and is offered up a platter of tuna, salmon, *caponata* (a Sicilian dish made of chopped aubergine, olives and tomatoes) and *stracciatella*.

Salvini is on a diet, informing the waiter he can't eat pasta or cheese. He eventually opts for a tuna tartare, momentarily tempted by a side of fried fish before thinking better of it. I, resolutely not on a diet, pick the *mezze maniche* pasta with eggplant, tomatoes, salted ricotta and swordfish.

s a result of the Covid crisis, Italy's public debt has ballooned to an all-time high, and it has jettisoned previously strict budgetary rules imposed by Brussels. For Salvini, this is a vindication of his long-held views and a rebuttal to those who are shocked that he has pledged support to Draghi, the personification of the European technocratic elite. "It is clear that Europe is changing for the better by equipping itself with new tools and new rules, and we must accompany it," he says. "Covid has forced European institutions to listen to us. We hope that Covid has taught everyone that austerity doesn't work".

So what does he make of his depiction outside Italy as an extremist? At home the League describes itself, as "centre right", a label most of the national media endorses. Abroad Salvini is frequently called "far right". He bristles at the tag. "It is a mislabel because the Italians are not a population of extremists, much less racists. We govern much of the country, and they would not vote for us if we were extremists. There is a lot of laziness on the part of the foreign press, because on the eco-

and troubling history with racism of either the explicit or dog whistle variety. In 2013 Roberto Calderoli, a League senator, compared Cécile Kyenge, Italy's first black cabinet minister, to "an orang-utan". Calderoli was not sanctioned by the party and remains a League senator to this day.

Salvini, Salvini responded at the time that politicians such as Kyenge should not be

Salvini responded at the time that politicians such as Kyenge should not be criticised for being "beautiful or ugly, or because they are models or orang-utans, but because they are pawns of a design that wants to erase identities, diversities, histories".

nomic front we are absolutely liberal."

credentials, his desire to cut taxes and

boost growth and employment. But

lurking behind this is the League's long

Salvini is keen to stress his economic

Salvini himself only last year knocked on the door of an Italian-Tunisian family during a regional election campaign and, in front of a large press pack, accused their son of being a drug dealer. Salvini delivers the old trope of reactionary political movements, arguing to me that his party the League cannot be racist because it has black members.

For at least a fifth of the electorate, including some of the southerners his party once reviled, all of this is neither here nor there. While the League has fallen from the highs of 2019, it remains, narrowly, the most popular party in Italy. Should elections be held tomorrow, Salvini would be among the favourites to become prime minister.

Once Draghi has left office (he is expected to step down before the next elections), surely Salvini wants to be prime minister? He gives a classic politician's answer, saying he approaches politics with "ambition, because those in life and in work who do not have ambition don't believe in what they do. But I do not live for this."

And what about previous comments, five years ago, that Italy would take the radical step of ditching the euro? "I repeat," he says, slightly tetchily, "even before Covid the economic situation had changed, and after Covid the world has also changed, so right now our priorities at a European level are not the currency but the economic and financial rules and the possibility to invest and spend".

The nature of the working relationship between Salvini, whose average daily Twitter output consists of pictures of him eating Nutella one moment and angry posts about migration the next, and Draghi, who has no social media accounts at all, is intriguing. He says he speaks regularly with Draghi about the Italian economy, and believes that the country — which has not grown in real terms since the turn of the millennium - can boom as it emerges from Covid and embarks on an ambitious reform programme. Economists are forecasting Italy could grow this year at the fastest rate since the late 1980s.

In Salvini's telling, the development from northern separatist to Draghi

loyalist is all part of a political evolution. The nativism is the same, but the geographic scale has expanded.

He joined his party aged 17, becoming a Milan city councillor aged 20. When he was a young activist, refusing in disgust to shake the hand of Italy's president, the great enemy was Rome and southern Italy. Later, as party leader, it was migration and meddling from Brussels. Now, he says a strong Europe is the best way of protecting Italy's way of life.

"Italy is Italy because it has 8,000 different municipalities, with different dialects, different cuisines," he says. "My idea of Europe is a Europe of the people, not a European superstate but a union of diversity and community".

ur waiter returns to ask if

we are enjoying our food. Salvini, clearly ravenous, has demolished his plate of raw fish. My pasta is delicious, the rich tomato sauce and the ricotta clinging to each strand. Salvini has given in to his urge for a side of fried fish, and he requests a portion.

We turn to Trump and Putin. Trump's election in 2016 transformed Salvini from a domestic figure to the internationally recognised face of European populism. He adopted the slogan "Italians First" and was cast as a European addition to the new cadre of global strongmen laying siege to the established international order.

So how does he feel about Trump now? He salutes the former US president's fiscal and security policies and his record on the economy and cutting taxes, and on stressing the need to control immigration, before neatly pivoting. "The Americans voted, and when the people vote they are always right," he says, stressing the desire to cultivate "equally good relations with Biden".

And what of his deep admiration of Putin, given that the new Draghi government has declared its unwavering commitment to supporting Nato? Salvini has travelled regularly to Russia and repeatedly called for economic sanctions on the country to be lifted.

"I am an absolute supporter of the Atlantic alliance and believe the future is the west," he says. "I believed, and I still believe, that having diplomatic relations with Russia is an intelligent thing, but not because they seduced me, or gave me money, but because I know many Italian entrepreneurs who would like to work more with Russia."

The "money" he refers to are allegations that the League took money from Putin. Salvini has always staunchly denied taking "even one rouble".

"There have been five years of investigations without finding anything," he says. "There is nothing to find."

We return to immigration. It was the European migration crisis of 2015 that Salvini expertly exploited to build a national platform and overtake the ageing Silvio Berlusconi's fading Forza Italia party on the Italian right. He says he has never been against immigrants but has campaigned to stop illegal immigration into Italy, which he argues affects the country far more than most other EU members due to its geography.

But he has long exaggerated the situation as an emergency (the number of

arriving migrants has fallen sharply since 2015), and repeatedly and falsely linked migration to rising crime. As interior minister he passed tough new rules on asylum, and he is facing a trial in Sicilian court for blocking the arrival of a migrant rescue boat when in office in 2019. Surely there is a way to talk about migration that is more humane, less inflammatory? "I hope so," he says. "I can be silent [on immigration] if the problems are solved elsewhere. If they implement, for example, the [2019] Malta agreement to redistribute those who land here, if there were repatriations to Nigeria, to Pakistan. Europe, unfortunately, has done very little on this, and even Draghi has noticed".

Children born in Italy to foreign parents are not guaranteed the right to be recognised as Italian. Salvini has long been a staunch defender of the "jus sanguinis" citizenship policy based on Italian blood, not your place of birth. This policy means a person born anywhere in the world with an Italian great-grandparent can obtain an Italian passport, but someone born in Italy to foreign parents must often wait until they are 18 years old. The children of immigrants risk growing up never feeling accepted as Italian. Is this, I ask him, fair?

"In my opinion it is fair that anyone can choose [to become Italian] at 18," he replies. Salvini disputes that this sort of policy makes Italy inhospitable for immigrants. "In Italy we have about five

'Covid has forced European institutions to listen to us. We hope that Covid has taught everyone that austerity doesn't work'

million foreigners who are very well integrated," he says.

As we sip our espresso Salvini insists he has been mischaracterised by the media. "Many people that I meet who don't know me say that I am very different from what the television and newspapers portray," he says. And what is that, I ask?

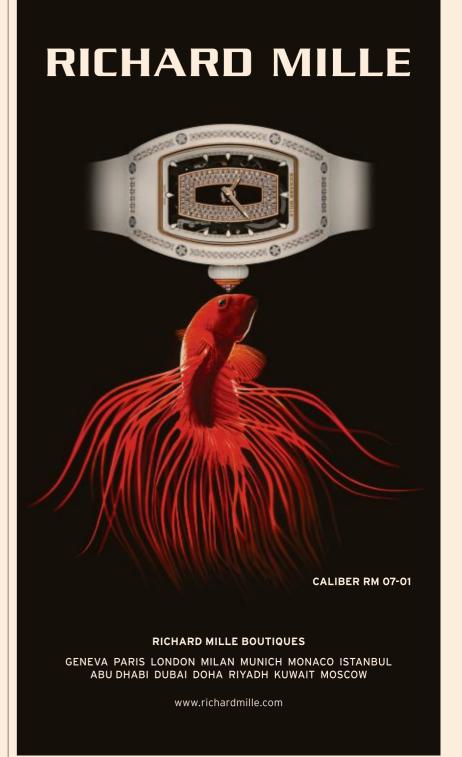
"They paint a picture of an extremist, a racist, a fascist, a Nazi, an egotist. I am simply a normal person, lucky, 48 years old, accomplished, with children I love, a job I enjoy, and good common sense".

He says he has to leave to attend an important political meeting. He is in talks with Berlusconi over merging the League with the former prime minister and media tycoon's Forza Italia. If he succeeds, Salvini could dominate the Italian right for years.

As we get to our feet I wonder if he will achieve what he craves: to convince the world he is no barbarian, but rather a mainstream politician. Would the absorption of the League be a success for European centrist politics, or a disaster?

I think again about which version of Salvini I have met. Perhaps he is correct, the world is changing, and he is changing with it. Or, more likely, I haven't really met the man at all but just another one of his costumes.

Miles Johnson is the FT's Rome correspondent



Style

Menswear | In Paris, few

labels held physical shows,

but designers were ready to

party. By Alexander Fury

o fashion shows help sell a dream? When well done, yes. But although restrictions have been eased, and numerous fashion houses are planning to present to live audiences for the haute couture season in July, only a handful of labels opted to do so for the menswear spring/summer 2022 shows, with Dior and Hermès by far the most established.

The past year has proved that fashion

The past year has proved that fashion shows are not essential to businesses. Many designers didn't mention hankering after physical showcases while presenting their collections via film or photography. They had simpler desires, it seems. "All I want to do is to go to a nightclub and play really loud music," said Louis Vuitton's artistic director of menswear, Virgil Abloh, ahead of unveiling his collection.

A few hours before, Jonathan Anderson — who designs under his own name and for LVMH brand Loewe — also listed nightclubbing as one of the experiences denied the youth of 2021. Both used bright colour, energetic cuts and sportswear to evoke the idea of raving, safely, in their garments.

Which, oddly, echoes the power of a fashion show — people gathering to experience something live. However, since large-scale shows could be a thing of the past, designers are adapting. Abloh's and Anderson's work translates perfectly to new media — Louis Vuitton's spring/summer 2022 menswear video has now reached 150m views.

So fashion shows aren't essential — neither are expensive clothes. But both are, at their best, achingly desirable. Veronique Nichanian's clothes at Hermès are invariably whisper-soft in their subtlety, and video can't capture the magic of seeing her clothes in the flesh.

She held her show *en plein air* in the courtyard of the Mobiler National. An outdoor show had the pro of a mask-free audience but the con of real-life weather. Just before it began, the heavens opened, demonstrating the water-repellent properties of Nichanian's technical clothing, and spotting a few pieces of five-figure suede outerwear.

No matter, this collection was great and Hermès ingeniously integrated technology via enormous screens that broadcast models live to a global audience, as well as to those huddled in the rain in the 13th arrondissement.

The screens highlighted charming details, such as the metallic green of a zip-puller on a pair of canvas shorts, worn below a mouliné cashmere cardigan fading from peach through to watermelon pink, that could have been lost but make these clothes feel so special.

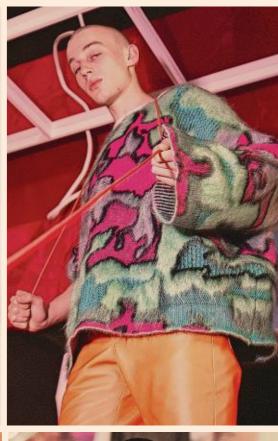
Admittedly, the audiences who will see these details number a few hundred: but the magic translates to retail. Nichanian's work has immense hanger appeal. You'd notice those zips. Nicha-















Tailoring's bright future

Clockwise from left: Hermès; Courrèges; Louis Vuitton; Jil Sander; Loewe; Dior x Travis Scott; Lanvin nian also arguably pioneered the new mood of haute casual in fashion: which translates to items such as blouson jackets in crocodile and shorts in goatskin and loads of cashmere knits. It has also been the prevalent fashion mood for the past 12 months as designers have shied away from suits, given that many may never be in the office again.

So it was surprising there was something of a tailoring revival in Paris: Bruno Sialelli at Lanvin showed desirable slouchy styles in Duran Duran pastels and couture fabrics; Luke and Lucie Meier of Jil Sander showed "one and a half"-breasted tailored coats that looked much less tricksy than they sound; and Riccardo Tisci's Burberry (showing digitally from London, but at the same time as Paris's fashion week) hacked the sleeves off blazers to empha-

sise beefed-up biceps and macho brawn.
One of the most compelling came from Space Age label Courrèges, where Nicolas Di Felice, an affable Belgian who knows what he is doing, resurrected the house's menswear with slick, sharp, youthful tailoring at its heart, including white coats with clinical precision and collarless Beatles-ish single-breasted jackets. At 38, Di Felice seems to have interpreted the Courrèges menswear line so he can wear it himself, which means these clothes are down

Powerhouses Louis Vuitton and Dior made the most insistent argument for the return of suiting, albeit by evolving them with slouchy volumes, sports-influenced detailing and eye-watering colour combinations that made them seem more like performance gear for a

pop star. And perhaps that is the future of the suit, as dress-up clothes rather than a professional expectation.

Virgil Abloh, who once worked with Kanye West, always brings a sense of occasion and flamboyance to his clothes — tailored suits and tracksuits alike. "The business is classic tailoring," Abloh said. "There's a tradition to uphold."

But neither suits felt traditional, with tracksuits trimmed in leather and tailoring in neon green, or cyclamen, or white with scalloped edges like little

teeth nibbling at the body.

"Dior is about tailoring," stated Dior's Kim Jones — and it proved the linchpin, albeit in peyote-induced hues such as mauve, burnt ochre, juicy aloe green and blush pink. Bright suits, in case you haven't figured, are next season's big thing in Paris. The silhouette comprised

slouchy flared trousers and slender shoulders, jackets fastening high — and it was a mark of Jones's skill that the shape leapt out, despite the giant fibreglass cacti.

Jones partnered with musician Travis Scott to create a collaborative line, fusing Jones's design skills with Scott's personal taste. "Thank God he has good taste," Jones said before the collection made its debut to a live audience under a multihued LED sky and a set that morphed from a French rose garden to a cacti-studded American desert (Scott was born in Houston, Texas).

Jones's version of the saddle bag was reworked by Scott (it was doubled), and Jones's revival of the 1960s Dior logo print was reworked to spell "Jack", inspired by Scott's record label Cactus Jack. It was deftly done, beautifully realised, fresh and exciting.

And outside, thousands of screaming teenagers thronged the Dior venue trying to get a peek at their idol — and were probably suddenly interested in a French luxury goods house that didn't register on their radar before. They may also now want a neon suit. Simple.

Gossip Girl is back — and full of zoomer fashion

Report Will the relaunched teen show have the same impact in our TikTok world? By Fawnia Soo Hoo

ich beautiful people, champagne-soaked parties and free flowing scandal: you'll find all these in *Gossip Girl*. However, it's the fashion worn by the show's high schoolers in Manhattan's wealthy Upper East Side that caused a frenzy, both when the show first aired in 2007, and now with the 2021 continuation.

From the start, returning costume designer Eric Daman intended to ignite trends through a "campy," heightened and heavily accessorised vision - like a living fashion editorial. "But we never really thought it was going to turn into the wildfire that it did," says Daman, who assisted Patricia Field on Sex and the City early in his career. The private school It Girl Serena van der Woodsen (Blake Lively) and Queen Bee Blair Waldorf (Leighton Meester) carried their school supplies in Lady Dior, Brooks Brothers and Valentino bags and wore luxury labels like Alberta Ferretti and Armani to swill cocktails in Manhattan's toniest establishments.

Daman also reinvigorated preppy menswear by stylising tailored three-piece suiting. "The men watching then saw Chuck Bass [Ed Westwick], as this \$300-glass-of-whiskey-swirling billionaire bad boy in pink and bow-ties and dressing in a way that we hadn't seen," says Daman, who continued to

influence our perceptions of onepercenters on the TV drama *Billions* set in the hedgefund world.

Whether in aspirational teen dramas such as Aaron Spelling's *Beverly Hills*, 90210, soaps like *Dynasty*, or HBO's *Succession*, the lives and wardrobes of the wealthy are endlessly fascinating. And on *Gossip Girl*, in which the immaculately outfitted teens' exploits are exposed and manipulated by the titular all-knowing narrator (voiced by an alsoreturning Kristin Bell), fashion is intentionally another compelling character. It was another era, though, when the coveted demographic of women aged 18-to-34 were still seeking inspiration in magazines and shopping in-store.

In 2008, a New York Times headline screamed: "Forget Gossip, Girl; The Buzz is About the Clothes." Fashion label Tory Burch, whose pieces were often featured, reported an increase in sales after episodes aired. Jessica Morgan, co-founder/co-editor-in-chief of online magazine "Go Fug Yourself," recalls Blair's headband signature look: "Nobody else was wearing them at the time, and then she did. Suddenly at Fashion Week, there were a ton of junior editors milling around in headbands of their own."

Gossip Girl shook up the trends of the late aughts, such as ubiquitous leggings (cue Blair's now-famous "tights are not pants!" admonishment), and created new ones with elevated takes on prepschool plaids and bold-hued hosiery worn with skirts.

"Gossip Girl came in and took a very specific moment of pop culture — when the internet was making celebrities of socialites, and people in general were





of the new
'Gossip Girl' on
set in New York
City; left:
Leighton
Meester and
Blake Lively
blazed a fashion
trail in the
original series in
2007 — Getty Images;
Alamy Stock Photo

Above: the cast

becoming more brand-aware about fashion — and moulded it into something forward-looking," says Morgan.

The landscape has vastly shifted into 2021. This decade's target youth audience is accustomed to style content on Instagram and TikTok. Zoomers are style and brand conscious, but value

transparency, authenticity and social responsibility. So will *Gossip Girl* still make the same fashion and cultural impact — beyond its established millennial fanbase?

The continuation, from the original co-creators Josh Schwartz and Stephanie Savage, and showrunner Joshua

Safran, arrives with a diverse cast and stories, unlike the first, to address topical issues and experiences. Characters are engaged in social justice activism, mental health is discussed and sexual and gender fluidity is the norm. "If they know that their audience is Gen Z, the show is spot-on to embed social issues," says trend forecaster Geraldine Wharry. "But not in a performative way. That's another thing: Gen Z is fairly plugged into authenticity versus performance."

Daman highlights gender neutral and fluid fashion: entertainment scion and Instagram influencer Julien, played by Jordan Alexander, has already gone viral in oversized button-ups, varsity sweaters and cycling shorts. Max (Thomas Doherty) rules the members-only club in Harry Styles-esque lace and floral flounce shirts. "That's incredible that we can even have the discussions and that it's available to kids, viewers and fans to see clothing and gender boundaries," says Daman.

In a bid to be more sustainable, he sourced vintage clothes, which reflect newcomer Zoya (Whitney Peak)'s socially conscious beliefs (and modest budget as compared to her profligate peers) and resonates with Gen Z's shopping habits and interest in early-2000s fashion. "I feel like I'm buying the same Fendi baguette bag that I was getting for Sarah Jessica Parker," laughs Daman. "I just keep repeating these classics."

Taking his original vision to a new level, he outfitted the new cast in private school branded Saint Laurent and Balmain jackets and JW Anderson, Loewe and Dior bookbags. The costume closet features his trademark mix of heritage, buzzy contemporary and high street

labels: Dior, Givenchy, Mugler, Ralph Lauren, Markarian and River Island.

The costuming also supports and showcases black, indigenous or people of colour-owned brands, including LaQuan Smith, Bode, Wales Bonner, Telfar, Philadelphia Printworks, Noah and Monse. The premiere's showdown takes place during a spectacular Christopher John Rogers runway for his Spring 2021 collection. The brief clip teased in the trailer boosted searches on Lyst for the 2019 CFDA/Vogue Fashion Fund winner by 14 per cent in the two weeks following.

Immediately following the cast lounging on the Metropolitan Museum of Art steps in November 2020, countless "where to buy" stories for Alexander's white Schutz boots published online. Lyst noted a sharp rise in searches for varsity jackets in June (up 19 per cent to June 20 compared to May), which is typically a slow month otherwise. Once paparazzi photos of the young cast filming scenes hit the wire, online and social media sleuths instantly spot and disseminate the wardrobe credits.

"Jordan will step out of her trailer, paparazzi will catch the outfit and the fans are ID-ing the bag within 10 minutes," says a bewildered Daman. "The turnover of it is mind-blowing." With social media and online reach instantaneous and international, the trickledown sartorial effect is guaranteed to jet-set quickly out of Manhattan.

Gossip Girl 2.0 is already repeating history by creating trends and moving sales numbers. However, this time around, it's happening before audiences have even met the characters or their salacious stories. xoxo, Gossip Girl.

t first sight, Orford is an English village idyll, all charm and order, its green meticulously mown, roses sprawling over its Georgian red-brick cottages, dog-walkers smiling and saying hello. "Do you know that man?" my London-bred four-year-old asked when I greeted a passing stranger — he now disarms every grownup he sees with a casual "hi".

Sailing boats zigzag on the River Ore, which hugs the village before it corkscrews inland. Families catch crabs at the end of the quay. The newspaper kiosk has an honesty box, there's a country market on Saturdays selling chutneys, cakes and crafts, and — pre-Covid — sea shanties rang out from the Jolly Sailor pub.

But you don't have to dig very deep to find mystery and intrigue bubbling beneath the surface of this historic Suffolk spot, an important medieval port before longshore drift pushed it from the open sea. My favourite piece of local folklore is the tale of the Wild Man of Orford. I first heard it on a tour of Orford's 12th-century castle keep — it and the Norman church tower over the village like sunflowers. During Henry II's reign, when the castle was built, fishermen caught a hirsute, naked man in their nets. When he wouldn't speak, they threw him in the castle, poked and prodded him and hung him upside down, but still he didn't utter a word. Eventually, the merman was cast back into the harbour and away he swam.

Sutton Hoo, where the buried Anglo-Saxon ship, grave of a mystery king, was discovered (and dramatised in Netflix's recent *The Dig*), is 10 miles west of Orford. Closer still is Rendlesham Forest, where, in 1980, American servicemen reported seeing strange lights hovering over the pine forest and professed them to be UFOs.

"One of the joys for a writer living in Orford is that the line between what is true and what is fictitious is very hard to define," the author and screenwriter Anthony Horowitz, who has a home here and has set several books in the area, told me. And the greatest concentration of mysteries lies across the river, on a peninsula called Orford Ness.



The largest vegetated shingle spit in Europe, Orford Ness was, for most of the 20th century, a top-secret Ministry of Defence test site. Pioneering aviation, radio communications and weaponry, including the atomic bomb, were developed on what locals dubbed the "Island of Secrets", its perimeter patrolled by burly men with dogs. "Orford Ness has it all, the cold war, the invention of radar, rumours about the bouncing bomb and the stealth bomber being tested, mysteries about dead bodies being washed up," says Horowitz. "It's like living in the middle of a Robert Harris or an Enid Blyton or both. It's an extraordinary landscape and endlessly fascinating."

The only flying objects here now are the birds. The Ness was decommissioned in 1971 and for two decades was used by villagers as a rather risky — given the unexploded ordnance — playground and picnic spot. Since the National Trust bought it in 1993, the focus has turned to nature conservation and visitors, who must book tickets in advance, are confined to a number of designated footpaths. Marsh harriers, barn owls, lapwings and avocets now nest in the many crumbling buildings; supersized hares and tiny deer roam the marshland and shingle.

The Ness was closed to visitors in 2020 because of Covid, and despite having come to Orford many times, I've never set foot on it. When I heard that the abandoned buildings and odd animals were being joined by a series of art installations this summer — a project called *Afterness* curated by Artangel, an organisation that places conceptual art in unusual places — I booked in for a preview.

After crossing the river in the small ferry, I call at the Ness's Information Centre, where a vintage MOD sign prohibits "photography and sketching". I'm given a headset with recordings of poems by Ilya Kaminsky and encouraged to listen to them as I walk between the artworks. I prefer to buy a booklet to read later and focus on the Ness's own melancholy soundtrack: the baying wind, gulls shrieking, the crunch of pebbles underfoot, and, when I cross to the other side of the peninsula, the sea.

The air feels heavy; you can sense the murky history here, and when I catch sight of an aluminium bramble waving through the window of an disused military building, thorns glinting, I assume it's a relic of the Ness's top-secret past. Then I see the tangled briar sculpture it belongs to inside, the work



FTWeekend

England | With new art installations, a derelict cold war military base and a medieval village rich in

folklore, Orford offers a very different take on the British seaside holiday. By Kate Maxwell

of artist Alice Channer. As I walk towards it, a hare of *Alice in Wonderland* proportions leaps in front of me, hops rapidly through a patch of pink and yellow poppies and disappears into the shingle. Soon after, I spot a deer so small it looks as if it's been tumble-dried.

There's a lot on the Ness for the three physical *Afterness* artworks to compete with — the decaying test buildings, control boxes rusting on the walls, wires swinging from the ceilings; the lumps of shrapnel on the shingle that plants have adopted as flowerpots. The most successful installation and complement to the eerie environment is Tatiana Trouvé's *The Residents*. Trouvé has filled leaky Lab 1 with discarded belongings: books, shoes, and suitcases. As I wonder

Right and below: details of Tatiana Trouvé's artwork 'The Residents', part of the 'Afterness' exhibition which opens this weekend in Orford Ness's disused military buildings. Photographed for the FT by **Daniel Castro**





whose she imagines them to have been and what they've fled, I realise that the books are not made of paper, but marble; the shoes and suitcases are bronze.

If conceptual art, mermen and military secrets aren't reasons enough for a stay in Orford, there's also fantastic food. After making the five-minute boat trip back to the quay, I cycle to Butley River, where scenes from *The Dig* were filmed, to meet Bill Pinney, who has worked for Pinney's, the oyster and smokery business his father started, for the last half-century.

Pinney's emblem is the Wild Man of Orford; its restaurant, the Butley Orford Oysterage, is a low-key spot with marble-topped tables and a chalkboard menu. Every meal I've had here has been memorable. In addition to the local oysters, my must-orders are the nutmeg-spiced potted crab and a fat, juicy, skate wing, swimming in brown butter sauce and capers.

As well as sole, bass and those delicious skate, Bill Pinney has fished weapons from the river, including, in 1970, a British mine the size of a mooring buoy. "We called out bomb disposal and they blew it up on the marsh," he tells me. "It went off with a really good crack."

After pointing out his rock oyster beds, he plucks a purified oyster from a tank and knifes it open for me. It is plump and sweet, so tasty on its own, in fact, that I wonder why I've been adding lemon juice and tabasco all this time.

Orford's other gourmet destination is a relative newcomer. Serial hobbyist and semi-retiree Chris Brennan started selling his sourdough loaves at Orford's country market a decade ago; the proceeds funded a new fence at Orford primary school. When the fence had been paid for and a 15th-century building became available in the centre of the village, he and his daughter, Joanna, decided to go professional, and Pump Street Bakery, now a multiple awardwinner, was born.

The company has become best known for its single-origin chocolate, which sells internationally (there's a shop opposite the bakery), but there are queues down the street for the pink bakery, an Instagram star and popular pit-stop for the herds of Mamils (middle-aged men in Lycra) who cycle flat Suffolk. The star pastries, which should really be eaten only after a lengthy

bike ride, are the almond croissants. More pudding than breakfast, they're made the traditional French way, from dayold croissants soaked in Armagnac and filled with frangipane.

Pump Street's flaky sausage rolls and square quiches make great picnic food,





lands aroun Ness; River Tearc Pump Bake cotta villag Orfor Photo for the Danie Garci

From main: the landscape around Orford Ness; the Riverside Tearoom; the Pump Street Bakery; a cottage in the village of Orford. Photographed for the FT by Daniel Castro Garcia

socially distant, summer schedule planned, including performances by Rufus Wainwright and the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Simon Rattle. The venue is also adding an outdoor facility, called the Dome Stage, offering free, daytime concerts—it will have, says chief executive Roger Wright, "a sort of festival feel."

The reopening of the main concert hall, which has views over the Alde, has been an emotional experience for everyone, Wright says. "Seeing musicians reconnecting with audiences is really touching," he says, recalling the reaction of the Nash Ensemble, who performed to a large crowd for the first time in 10 months on June 5. "Oh my goodness!" they said as they went on, "that's the sound of a live audience!"

Wherever you go around Orford, make time for a walk from the quay, along the north bank of the river in the direction of Aldeburgh. You'll pass the Riverside Tearoom, which does a steady trade in sausage and egg sandwiches, and Orford Sailing Club, where the masts of the boats outside jangle tunefully in the wind, before the marsh

'One of the joys of Orford is that the line between what is true and what is fictitious is very hard to define'

Writer Anthony Horowitz

appears on your right, the mercurial sky reflected in its pools. If you're lucky, you might see a dainty avocet or redshank picking its way through the mud.

From here, there's a clear view of the Ness's Stranger Things structures over the river: the pagodas, used for atom bomb testing; the brick box labs and sinister shingly mounds. This footpath is also my favourite run, and if I go early enough, I don't see a single other soul. I turn around when I'm level with Cobra Mist − a vast, windowless spy station used by the Americans to snoop on the Soviets, now, like everything else on the spit, disused — and double back through farmland towards the village, where I often pass a dozen swans sitting in a field. The first time I saw them, I did a double take. Now that I'm used to Orford's idiosyncrasies, I keep on running.

Kate Maxwell's first novel, 'Hush', will be published by Virago in May 2022

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Where to stay: The Crown & Castle (crownandcastle.co.uk; doubles from £160) has a central Orford location and restaurant serving fish from Pinney's — Room 31 has a terrace overlooking Orford Castle. Suffolk Secrets (suffolk-secrets.co.uk) manages 22 holiday properties in Orford, ranging from a two-bedroom fisherman's cottage to a six-bedroom, Grade II-listed house

Where to eat: Butley Orford Oysterage is on Market Hill, see *pinneysoforford.co.uk*. For Pump Street Bakery, see *pumpstreetchocolate.com*

Music and art: Tickets for 'Afterness' are booked through the National Trust, as are visits to the Ness, see *nationaltrust.org.uk*. Tickets cost £12, or £4.50 for National Trust members, which includes the ferry crossing and access to the 'Island of Secrets' exhibition. For details of the summer programme at Snape Maltings see *snapemaltings.co.uk*

and my family and I often take them to the thumbnail sandy beach at Iken Cliff, a 10-minute drive from Orford, where the River Alde's banks become wide and reedy, seals laze on the mudflats and you can swim at high tide.

Across the estuary is Iken's ancient, part-thatched St Botolph's Church, where an intricate Saxon cross was discovered in 1977. From here, you can walk to Snape Maltings, an arts complex set in Victorian buildings originally used to malt barley for beer, which has been home to Benjamin Britten's Aldeburgh Festival since 1967. The site now includes not only music venues but shops, cafés and art galleries, as well as sculpture by Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth and Ryan Gander — my children have found the latter's make excellent climbing frames — all backed by fields of golden reads.

fields of golden reeds.

After a year of stop-and-start programming, Snape has a packed, if

★ FTWeekend 3 July/4 July 2021

Travel

n the rooftop of Gracy's, a new brasserie and member's club in a baroque 16th-century palazzo, blazers, florals and linen are the order of the day. Rakish coowner Greg Nasmyth, an English media scion turned philanthropist and Liberal Democrat donor, is doing the rounds, while Malta's Eurovision star Destiny sings smooth Aretha Franklin covers as the sun sets behind the dome of Valletta's St Paul's Cathedral.

The vibe is somewhat disturbed, though, when peroxide-haired hotelier and former derivatives entrepreneur Mark Weingard appears in a shark print Bathing Ape T-shirt, heavily branded Dsquared jeans and studded Philipp Plein trainers. "This is a bit fucking nice, isn't it?" he remarks through the zip in his black face mask, followed by a loud Mancunian cackle.

On first glance, Weingard seems an



anomaly in honey-coloured, Unescolisted Valletta, built with sandstone and faith by the Catholic Knights of the Order of St John, who famously rebuffed the Muslim Ottoman Empire in the Great Siege of Malta in 1565. Today, the narrow peninsula on Malta's east coast is a place of romantic ancient buildings with olive-green *gallarija* balconies — becalmed after a tumultuous history of being tossed around between the Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Romans, Arabs, Normans, French and British.

As the owner of the Iniala Harbour House, a 23-room hotel overlooking the Grand Harbour that opened late last year, Weingard has become an unlikely ringmaster for a thrusting new Valletta — more about superyachts and tasting menus than Tefl students and weary cruise passengers. "When I first came here, it was like the city was stuck in time," Weingard says of his first visit in 2013. "I saw a city that was like the best bits of Venice, Dubrovnik and Havana, but didn't have a single decent high-end boutique hotel."

His €20m renovation of four 16thcentury townhouses reeks of ambition from the hotel's gold Riva speedboat to its rooftop ION restaurant, which already has a Michelin star and will be helmed for the summer by Alex Dilling, former chef at Mayfair's two-starred The Greenhouse. The quirkily masculine interiors were created by a team of designers that included Turkish studio Autoban (also responsible for the Manchester Stock Exchange hotel and Joali Maldives) and there's a simmering tension between buttoned-up old Valletta and louche new money. In the 155-sq metre penthouse suite, the hot tub is overlooked by an austere St Paul on the facade of the church next door.

In my suite, the freestanding bath looks straight over the harbour to the ancient city of Birgu, where I can see little painted wooden *luzzu* boats drifting



New vistas on Valletta

Malta | With Michelin stars, superyachts and swish new boutique hotels,

a reinvigorated capital is ready for the tourists to return, writes *Toby Skinner*

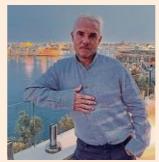


past Roman Abramovich's 162-metre yacht, *Eclipse*.

Weingard, a long-time hotel enthusiast who opened the curvily space-aged Iniala Beach House in Phuket in 2014, isn't the only entrepreneur to have spied opportunity and tax benefits in beautiful but unloved Maltese spaces. Spurred on by Valletta's 2018 stint as European Capital of Culture, and splashy architecture projects such as Renzo Piano's parliament and city gate, more than 40 boutique hotels are said to have opened in the past five years - like the eightsuite palazzo Casa Ellul and Cugo Gran Macina, a Design Hotels member opened in 2018 by German property developers the Von Der Heyden Group.

> Having had no Michelin stars until 2020, Malta now has five, including Under Grain, a slinky basement restaurant at Rosselli, another smart design hotel that opened near Ini-

alain 2019.
Few incomers have invested in Malta like Weingard, who decamped here from Barcelona in 2013, partly to escape Spain's wealth tax.



Clockwise from main: the view from Iniala Harbour House; Mark Weingard; Valletta's harbour; a bedroom at Iniala

i / DETAILS

Malta is open to tourists but is operating a 'traffic light' system with varying requirements for testing or vaccination based on their country of residence, see visitmalta.com for more

Toby Skinner was a guest of Iniala Harbour House (inialamalta.com) where suites start from €350 per room per night. Air Malta (airmalta.com) flies from London Heathrow to Malta six times a week From the penthouse of his own home two vast baroque townhouses dotted with incongruous items, including a Philipp Plein chair made entirely of plush teddy bears — he points to some particulars of his Maltese empire. There's the 14,000-sq metre office block he owns in modern St Julian's, where many of Malta's gambling companies and financial businesses are based, and the training pitches of Valletta FC, sponsored by Iniala. Weingard also has a five per cent stake in Manoel Island, a leafshaped island between Valletta and Sliema, where there are plans to turn the ancient fort into a cultural centre, and he hopes to turn the island's archfronted former quarantine hospital into a hotel. "It will be the place in Malta, if not Europe," he says.

Weingard's restless ambition, which lately includes bringing the Spanish racquet sport of padel to the UK, seems to stem partly from an unconventional life story. Ever since his taxi driver father died in a car crash aged 36, he's had a curious relationship with death. Having left Manchester to become a successful derivatives trader, he was late to work at the Twin Towers on September 11 2001. In 2002, he'd set up his own derivatives trading platform in Singapore when his long-time partner Annika Linden died in the Bali bombings, leading him to set up a Bali-based charitable foundation in her name. Two years later, he was at home in Phuket when the tsunami struck; he clung to the roof as his home was destroyed beneath him. "It's strange that I'm here because I was always convinced I'd die at the same age as my dad," he said. "It's easier to take risks if you think you're going to die. But I keep surviving."

The same might be said of Malta, which is famous not only for the Great Siege, but for enduring relentless bombing in 1942. As the only Allied base between Gibraltar and Alexandria, the

Maltese held on as 6,700 tonnes of bombs were dropped, resulting in the whole country being awarded the George Cross.

Malta has always been an outlier of sorts. Its three rocky islands of Malta, Comino and Gozo – just over a hundred miles south of Sicily - don't have beaches to rival the Balearics, or the epic landscapes of the Canaries. Instead, it has tended to trade on a mish-mash history, which has left shipwrecks for divers to discover and evocative walled cities such as the "Silent City" of Mdina, or the Cittadella on go-slow, god-fearing Gozo. A thriving cottage film industry has built up around its ancient streets, which stood in for Israel, Cyprus, Lebanon, Greece, Italy, Palestine and Spain in Steven Spielberg's Munich.

Malta has also had to survive a pandemic. Tourist numbers have fallen by more than 80 per cent since March 2020 but there is, at last, a sense of returning optimism. The country has run the most comprehensive vaccination programme in Europe, with 63 per cent now fully vaccinated. Last week it was added to the UK government's "green list", meaning returning tourists do not have to quarantine — an important step given Britons represented more than a third of its visitors in 2019.

'I saw a city like the best bits of Venice, Dubrovnik and Havana but it didn't have one decent boutique hotel'

One morning, we take a jaunt up the coast in The Lady in Blue, a shimmering 135-foot superyacht owned by Carblu Malta, a new yacht charter company. As we head out of the harbour, past the Ricasoli fort where *Gladiator* was filmed, managing director Jamie Houston explains Malta's appeal. "We looked at Italy, Sicily and Greece, but from Malta you can get to most of the Mediterranean in a few days. Most of all, you're based in this jaw-dropping harbour, where you can almost see these layers of history like the strata of a rock."

It's not the only new business betting on good times coming. The superyacht drops anchor at Buġibba, a drab concrete tourist resort near the north of Malta. The seafront McDonald's has been hollowed out and turned into the Maltese branch of Beefbar, the beach club concept that was born in Monaco and now has locations from Paris to Mykonos and São Paulo.

With a familiar design that falls somewhere between boho Tulum and stripy Cote d'Azur, the poolside cabanas house girls with cat-eye sunglasses and men in Orlebar Brown trunks, nodding to languidly bass-y lounge music. The scene could be in Mykonos or Bodrum, but business has been so good since opening last summer that the franchise's Maltese owner Jean-Paul Testa is planning to bring in more global brands, including French bakers Ladurée and Nikki Beach, the American beach club concept.

Beyond the cabanas, I can just about see the white uniforms of the staff on The Lady in Blue, and across to St Paul's Island, where a huge statue on the cliff marks the spot where St Paul swam to shore after being shipwrecked. I see speedboats heading round the coast to the Blue Lagoon, a magical stretch of turquoise on Comino. In new-old Malta, it feels like the good times are coming again.

POSTCARD FROM . . . PORTUGAL

i / DETAILS

For more on visiting the area see: visitalgarve.pt.
Portugal is currently open to tourists from the EU
and countries including the US, UK, China and
Japan; for details of entry see visitportugal.com

aria, her baskets full of doughnuts and with a handkerchief to wipe her brow, checks to see if I know where my teenage son is. I don't but I know she does.

That's because the Brazilian, who cheerily pounds the sand all summer selling her *bolas de Berlim*, has kept an eye on my children and their cousins every August for most of their lives. The teenagers, who these days tower over her, now roam as far as she does.

The population of family members on our Algarve beach ebbs and flows

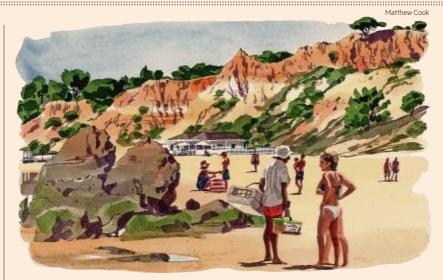
but at any given point in August I can count at least 50 children and as many adults who belong to us. Four generations have inhabited this same patch of sand each summer for nearly

half a century.

The communal holiday was never planned: an uncle who grew up nearby picked the best beach at a time when the Algarve was being discovered by Portuguese and international tourists. The rest of us and our growing families followed — my family of four, who moved away to south Cambridgeshire 20 years ago, come the furthest.

The red, orange, white and gold cliffs of the Falésia (Portuguese for "cliff") coastline sweep almost uninterrupted 7km west of Vilamoura. Our beach is the Praia do Barranco das Belharucas, named after the bee-eating birds that nest in the ravines. The coastline's "last rock" stands part way down the beach, bathed by the tides, to divide Portugal's southern region between its rocky western coast and its sandy eastern beaches.

The beach is our playground and it feels like a village: everybody has their own spot under a shade or parasol, which Jorge will have set up and reserved for us, while Paulo and his family at the Golfinho ("dolphin") restaurant keep us in coffee, snacks, cocktails, wine, juices, ice creams and clams. A wave from the beach can be enough to reserve a table for a late lunch of feijoada de gambas, while the staff know to lay the chairs in a row in front of the television for the latest Sporting Lisbon or Benfica game. The family takes up residence from early morning and often until the wee hours;



Four generations of our family have inhabited this same patch of sand each summer for nearly half a century

a midnight moonlit walk to Vilamoura for an ice cream is a regular treat.

Low tide reveals the rocks that offer a passage to the beach next door, Olhos d'Água, where a freshwater spring bubbles up into quicksand puddles. They give the beach, and the fishing village behind it, their name: it means eyes of water or watery eyes.

Olhos d'Água retains its roots, with its colourful boats pulled up above the high water mark and nets drying in front of blue beach huts. But the years of tourism have made their mark.

Spanish hotel groups have built multi-storeyed complexes into the hillside while holiday homes with pools have taken over from the simple dwellings the early tourists rented from fishermen by the month. The night horizon reflects the shift: no longer is it ablaze with the lights of hundreds of fishing boats, a mere handful twinkle here and there.

My pile of holiday books cannot rival the gossip and stories told at the water's edge, with the sea, sand, swimwear and surf providing the cornerstone of much of the chatter. Ricardo passes by to sell us a cold drink while another merchant lays out his stock of bikinis and colourful beach wraps. As the sun withdraws, the courts and pitches are marked out in the sand for the evening games of football and volleyball.

We have wandered down the Algarve's coastline and meandered through its whitewashed villages, taking day trips to the white sands of the islands in the nature reserve of Ria Formosa and eating grilled sardines in the alleyways of Olhão. We have trekked in Alvor and driven through dirt tracks to the naturist beaches of the west and on to Lagos and the windswept westernmost point of Cape St Vincent.

But this is the best place to be. Anibal Cavaco Silva, once Portugal's prime minister and president (and a local), concurs and often brings his family down for a swim or to share in a birthday celebration.

Last year we had to quarantine on our return home to the UK but our decision to go was never in doubt. You see, our year is not complete without time spent on this patch of sand, surrounded by cousins.

The air and water are warmer than in the west and the sea calmer. Some days the difference in temperature between Olhos d'Agua and Sagres can be as much as 10C. The beach has spoilt my children for other seaside holidays and they feel unfulfilled if they have missed summer in Portugal.

And so the family history repeats itself: just as my husband spent his teenage summer days in a tightknit foursome with his cousin and two brothers, so does my son. This year, as one of our cousins has become a grandfather, we look forward to introducing Maria and her *bolas* to the next generation of beach babies.

Sarah Provan

Sarah Provan is the FT's deputy editor of Breaking News



Books

t took 20 minutes to manoeuvre Amartya Sen from his Harvard home to a restaurant at the Charles Hotel two minutes around the cor-

ner. At 87, Sen's mind remains as sharp as when he won the Nobel memorial prize in economics in 1998. But his body is painfully frail.

In 2018, Sen underwent 90 days of radiation therapy to treat prostate cancer. He suffered from mouth cancer as a student in Kolkata in the early 1950s. His Indian doctors gave him a one in seven chance of surviving beyond five years. He confounded them all.

Much like Vladimir Nabokov's dental agony, Sen's memoir, *Home in the World*, published in the UK next week, is pockmarked with Sen's life-long physical ailment. In more ways than one, his life has been a triumph of mind over matter.

Dressed in a tweedy shirt and a billowing bright yellow Harvard raincoat, Sen's inimitable appearance is completed by what looks like a Lenin cap, minus the red star. It is a drizzly summer day in Cambridge, Massachusetts. "That's Amartya Sen," I heard more than one person remark as we shuffled across the hotel foyer.

Sen has had one knee replaced but is not yet robust enough to replace the other, which means he is constantly unbalanced and suffers cramps from poor circulation. Only his cerebrally sunny demeanour seems unscarred. "I haven't lost any of my teeth," Sen tells me with a lopsided grin.

It is hard to know where to begin with Sen's life — the epitome of the globetrotting intellectual-scholar. He established a new way of thinking about development — as much a rights-based political endeavour as an economic one.

Home in the World, which begins in colonial India, which gained independence when he was 14, stops in 1963. This is before his major work on the economics of famine, social choice theory, the capability approach — Sen was an inspiration behind the UN's human development report — gender equity and a career at the summit of western and Indian academia.

The first non-white head of a Cambridge college when he became master of Trinity in 1998, he has taught at Harvard, Oxford, Delhi, the London School of Economics and brief spells at too many more to mention. He was also the first head of India's Nalanda University, the moribund Buddhist institution (arguably the world's first university), which was founded by Emperor Ashoka in the third century BC and brought back into existence in 2014.

Very little of this happened before 1963. Yet, minus one or two romantic dramas, his memoir presages all that was to follow. Sen, who has been married three times and has two children from each of his first two marriages, tells me it might be impolitic to write a second that would touch on their lives. He has been married since 1991 to Emma Rothschild, the distinguished historian who now holds a chair at Harvard. It seems that one volume will have to suffice. "I am so glad finally to get this book off my hands," says Sen.

His odyssey is by no means complete. He plans to write monographs on various pet themes. These include the future of higher education, which would include spicy critiques of Harvard's administrative shortfalls. The university's managers, whom Sen mischievously likens to the autocratic British 'Joe Biden showed a lot of willingness to take on the world . . . Then he seemed to weaken a bit'



Citizen of everywhere

Interview | Nobel Prize-winning economist Amartya Sen talks to

Edward Luce about his early life in India, the tainted legacy of

British imperialism and his ongoing efforts to create a fairer world

Above: Amartya Sen photographed at home for the FT by Tony Luong Raj, spend more time with donors than scholars. "They are too distant from the academia they are supervising," he says. "As master of Trinity, I had lunch with every undergraduate."

Given Sen's close familiarity with America, he is surprisingly reluctant to speculate on the origins of western populism, although he rates America's outlook as less dire than India's. "Joe Biden showed quite a lot of willingness to take on the world in the first couple of weeks," he says. "Then he seemed to weaken a bit." Sen is particularly exercised by Biden's unwillingness to further investigate Donald Trump.

Another topic is the importance of gender equity. The early parts of Sen's book cover his education at Shantiniketan, an ashram-like retreat in West Bengal founded in the 19th century by the father of Rabindranath Tagore, the Bengali poet and Nobel Prize winner for literature, who gave Sen his first name, which means "immortal" in Sanskrit. Sen's grandfather was a close friend of Tagore's.

The school — which was largely unaffected by the great 1943 Bengal famine

that killed more than 2m people and inspired Sen's Nobel-cited study on how starvation is caused by income inequality rather than food shortages — was remarkably progressive. Girls and boys were treated equally.

It was at Shantiniketan that Sen decided he was an atheist, which, he is keen to underline, is a noble and accepted strand of thought in the Hindu tradition. Yet if someone forced him to choose, he would take Buddhism ("the philosophy of Buddha, which was secular — not the religion").

Sen resigned from Nalanda in 2015 after Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist BJP had taken office and blocked money to a university that it suspected was anti-Hindu. Modi's government denied Nalanda permission to celebrate Buddha's birthday, even though the philosopher-prince gave the world a creed that was quintessentially Indian.

A few years ago, Sen was to appear on the BBC's *Hard Talk* programme and noticed he was described on the teleprompter as a "Hindu scholar". "I said: 'Are you going to take this off, or shall I leave?' They took it out." The title of Sen's book is drawn from a Tagore novel, *The Home and the World*, which is about the complexities of India's struggle against western domination that was also immortalised in a Satyajit Ray movie of the same name. To Sen, the title evokes the secular, intellectually curious and tolerant climate in which he was raised. Sen recalls visitors to the ashram included Eleanor Roosevelt, Chiang Kai-shek and, of course, Mohandas Gandhi, who was murdered

by a Hindu nationalist.

Today's Indian rulers, Sen fears, are attempting to stamp out its tradition of openness. The BJP is rewriting history to excise the secular legacy of the early Moghuls, such as Akbar, who had as many Hindus at court as Muslims, and, of course, Ashoka, who preached tolerance for all beliefs.

"India has a long history of pluralism that is now under threat," says Sen. "Akbar's court was thriving in the late 16th century when they were burning heretics in Rome's Campo di Fiore." Sen attaches some of the blame to VS Naipaul, the late Nobel Prize-winning Trinidadian Indian, who depicted the history of India's Muslim dynasties as a dark night of temple-razing oppression. "What Naipaul wrote was absolute nonsense," says Sen. "A complex story has been simplified by a group of very determined people."

Sen's story as a cosmopolitan in the world has not lessened his sense of Indianness. Though he has lived abroad since 1971, he only has an Indian passport. Before the pandemic, he would

visit Shantiniketan up to five times a year, where he keeps a house (aided by a life-long right to free first-class travel on Air India — a massive perk that followed his Nobel award).

In the past few years, a heated debate has erupted about the legacy of British imperialism. Sen's view is that India took a lot from Britain — "the powerful journalistic tradition", "parliamentary debate" and "Shakespeare's English". But such upsides came in spite of the British empire, "which, at best, gave India very little of value", rather than because of it. "You have to separate the two," says Sen. "The empire denied India its freedoms."

When Sen arrived at Cambridge in 1953, his landlady, Mrs Hangary, worried that his brown skin would stain the bath tub. By the end of his tenancy, she had become a campaigner for racial equality. "She went from racist to jihadi for equality," says Sen, chuckling. "I adored Mrs Hangary."

Almost half a century later, Sen became master of the college that gave the world Isaac Newton, Lords Byron and Tennyson, John Dryden, Bertrand Russell, Jawaharlal Nehru and Ludwig Wittgenstein. Tony Blair called Sen personally to persuade him to take the job. At the college meeting to decide the next master, the chair said: "Sen is the only person this year whom we might someday consequently regret not having elected." Sen, chuckling, adds: "This was considered a ringing endorsement. It was a masterclass in English understatement."

The walls of his living room, to which, at glacial speed, we have long since returned, display a life of the mind. There are portraits of John Rawls, the Harvard political philosopher, who was

'What Naipaul wrote was nonsense. A complex story has been simplified by very determined people'

arguably the most influential liberal theorist of the late 20th century, and Willard Van Orman Quine, the linguistic philosopher, each of whom were close friends (both painted by Rawls's wife, Margaret). There is a Halo light that Sen uses for Zoom. And there is a painting of Nalanda university by a Chinese artist. Somewhere in the house I imagine there must be the ancient bicycle that Sen used to traverse West Bengal while researching the famine.

Looking around, it strikes me that Sen is more than an economist, a moral philosopher or even an academic. He is a life-long campaigner, through scholarship and activism, via friendships and the occasional enemy, for a more noble idea of home — and therefore of the world. In this age of identity politics, this Bengali savant refuses to be defined by labels. "Home and the world are the same thing for me," he says. "It always was." Our colour, our religion, our gender, our nationality — these are mere facets of our complex selves.

Noticing I am late for my flight, I urge Sen not to show me to the door. It would take too long to get there. "That's an astute observation," he responds as he waves goodbye from what looks like a philosophical repose.

Edward Luce is the FT's US national editor

The rise and rule of Brazil's Bolsonaro

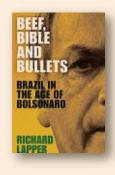
A sweeping and balanced look at what the populist administration tells us about the nation. By Oliver Balch

orget Erdogan. Forget Orban.
Forget Modi. Long before the
rest of the world caught the
populist bug, Latin America
was hard at work perfecting
the art. Perón, Chávez, Ortega: here,
crowd-pleasing caudillos rule.

Step forward Jair Bolsonaro, the latest in this colourful yet contentious tradition. A low-profile congressman for decades, the gaffe-prone former soldier surprised everyone (even perhaps himself) by springing from nowhere to win Brazil's 2018 election.

So, how exactly did he do it? And, more importantly, what does the rise and rule of his nationalist, pro-business, chauvinist, environmentally sceptical administration tell us about modern Brazil? Both are questions that Richard Lapper, a former FT Latin America editor, tackles with admirable distance and balance — qualities rare within the ultra-polarised Brazil of today.

Not that Lapper pulls punches in *Beef, Bible and Bullets*. Up front, the author muses on whether Bolsonaro qualifies as a fascist. Many of the textbook attributes are there: arch social conservatism, strong militaristic leanings, a



in the Age of Bolsonaro by Richard Lapper Manchester University Press £20/ \$29.95, 296 pages

Beef, Bible and

Bullets: Brazil

worrying penchant for authoritarianism (as a congressman, he once advocated for Brazilians to raise their right arms during the national anthem).

What is lacking, Lapper concludes, is any sense of administrative order or political project. The sense is that Bolsonaro could just drag Brazil back to its anti-democratic past, yet he just lacks the organisational competence to do so.

The shambles of Bolsonaro's government lurks throughout this incisive book, from the spike in Amazonian deforestation to ham-fisted treatment of China (Brazil's largest trading partner). Such bungling has come home to roost with the Covid-19 pandemic. The president's initial response to testing: "I am not going to walk around with my tail between my legs."

Yet, it's the ineptitude of Brazil's political class that really explains his rise. With an understanding born from years of observing Brasilia's power plays, Lapper lays out in statistic-heavy detail how deals get made and backs get scratched.

By 2018, a combination of economic mismanagement, political cronyism, and straight-out corruption — descriptions of which occupy the book's first half — had slowly discredited Brazil's established parties, especially the left-leaning Workers party. The scene was set for someone to sweep in Trump-like to deal with the dross. Suddenly, Bolsonaro's political isolation — caused by his "bizarre" views and lack of a fixed party affiliation — looked like shrewd manoeuvring. The "outsider" candidate, ready and waiting.

This book's value lies in its determination to take Bolsonaro seriously. Not



President Bolsonaro at a motorcycle rally in Rio, May – JC Pereira/Agnews/Backgrid

Bolsonaro the man, but Bolsonaro the phenomenon. Here, Lapper covers the president's savvy use of social media (managed largely by his sons) and his reputation for authenticity (read: "boorishness"). But he also looks beyond, to the fears and frustrations that lie beneath the carnival caricature of a nation at play.

As the book's title flags, it's a journey that takes him in three main directions: to the agribusiness lobby set on putting Brazil to the plough; to the neo-Pentecostal churches bent on protecting family values; and to the gun-toting militias committed to cleaning up the streets (and controlling the drug trade).

It also offers a welcome change in pace. Fewer pundits and pollsters; more punters on the doorstep. In one notable encounter, for example, we meet Crisnel Ramalho, a former logger turned gold digger living in a backwater Amazonian town. His view on the environment? "It's a joke." On the Indigenous? "Still here, ignorant, rotting away". Did he vote for Bolsonaro? Yes, "with pleas-

ure . . . and I'm not sorry".

Each group for its own reasons recognises Bolsonaro as a man who sympathises with their concerns and shares their prejudices. Here was a leader who wouldn't pander to lily-livered environmentalists or defenders of minority rights.

The picture that emerges is of a Brazil starkly at odds with the progressive, rainbow nation pushed on the world

since the return of democracy in 1985. Bolsonaro did not create this other, less likeable Brazil. Nor will it always be in ascendancy (impeachment threats are never far away).

The book finishes all too abruptly. Lapper's reluctance to speculate on where the Bolsonarian circus show might be heading is evident, yet regret-

table. In the spirit of his subject matter, readers have forgiven — perhaps even enjoyed? — some opinion-laden speculation. Back in the real world, however, Brazil's dark underbelly has come out of the shadows. Addressing its flaws first requires understanding its foundations. *Beef, Bible and Bullets* marks an earnest attempt to do just that.

"Thank you, again, for everything you and Vitsœ have done for us over the years. If only each shelf could talk..."

So wrote Marta, a customer since 2004.

Her shelving system started out modest – and has grown over the years. It travelled with her across London, to Valencia, and now Amsterdam. Every time she needs help, she speaks with her personal Vitsœ planner, Robin.

In fact, this is the fifth time she has bought from Vitsæ ... and we're fairly sure it won't be the last.

Marta has been able to buy an extra shelf or two when needed, while Robin has replanned her shelving to fit her Spanish walls and her Dutch huis. He's even sent her more packaging to protect her shelves when moving to each new home.

You could say that over the years their relationship has become one of friendship. Marta knows she is valued as a customer and trusts the advice she is given.

If your shelves could talk, what would they say?

Design Dieter Rams Founded 1959 vitsoe.com



You can't say that

A look at two millennia of censorship shows how the instincts of kings and

courtiers match those of today's information gatekeepers. By *John Kampfner*

ouis XV's Council of State decreed death for anyone who stirred up emotions. And why not? After all, Louis the Beloved, France's second longest-serving monarch, was only doing what past rulers had done—controlling what people wrote, said and heard.

The first officially recorded instance of state censorship is said to be in Rome in the second century BC, when texts citing Pythagorean philosophy were denounced as subversive. A bonfire was prepared by *victimarii*, slaughterers whose day job was to perform animal sacrifices.

In his captivating sprint through two millennia of censorship, Eric Berkowitz chronicles some of the more bizarre and egregious episodes, while explaining that the human instinct to suppress speech has rarely waned. Indeed, the issue is possibly as fraught now as it has ever been. Habits have not changed; only the technology has.

Where is the line to be drawn on the contested territory of free speech and offence?

In so doing it has provided unbridled opportunities for the abuse of speech, the whipping up of hatreds and the manipulation of information.

Throughout history, all forms of speech deemed to undermine the sanctity of kings could lead to execution in a variety of excruciating forms. Any discussion of military weakness was beyond the pale, any form of mockery too. To cast doubt on Elizabeth I's ability to conceive was to incur the wrath of the authorities; in early 19th-century America, the House of Representatives was forbidden from debating the inalienable right to own slaves. Sometimes it was just a matter of timing. The strangulation and then burning of William Tyndale in 1536 for translating the New Testament into English came a few years before Henry VIII broke with Rome.

The powerful believed that information, put in the wrong hands, would inexorably lead to social strife. Censors



Dangerous Ideas: A Brief History of Censorship on the West, from the Ancients to Fake News by Eric Berkowitz The Westbourne Press £20, 384 pages

'Roundel with Allegorical Scene of Book Burning', c1520-30 — Sepia Times/Universal Images Group/Getty Images

ANCEROUS

IDEAS

implementers of state power, but their knowledge of the issues involved and of their own societies sometimes fell short. Das Kapital evaded the Russian censor because Marx's economic analysis was considered too difficult for the proletariat to understand. The lower orders were also seen as licentious by nature. Sexual material was permitted for educated men, not for the fairer sex. "Exposing them to such content would rouse in them a slumbering dragon of lust, to the destruction of family, home and all that is well and good in

Yet censorship invariably leads to attempts at circumvention. Once bans had been imposed on *libellés*, scurrilous and often sexually charged satire that was all the rage in France, they were secretly published in the Netherlands and slipped back over the border.

society," writes Berkowitz.

Free speech is often seen as a means to an end. In the past few centuries, writes

Berkowitz, "we see increasingly muscular pushes to open unrestrained debate, often led by groups seeking power, only to see those same parties often slamming the door shut once their political objectives were realized". Revolutionaries and reactionaries are, he suggests, equally culpable.

The McCarthyism of 1950s America marked perhaps the last throes of a rightwing establishment seeking to hold back the tide. Now, the author contends, "many on the Left have come to look to governments to impose censorship – against pornography and sexism, against racist, hate, and offensive speech, against fake news, and against the excesses of the wealthy and of industry". Berkowitz reminds readers the US First Amendment provides some grandly crafted words but few tools with which to address the issue. The

"clear and present danger" test, as defined by Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes in 1919, became the template for American jurisprudence. Shouting "fire" in a crowded room was regarded as the one,

and sometimes only, reason to prosecute wrongful speech. Other countries have invariably enacted much wider restrictions. In recent decades that has stumbled against the right to individual dignity as applied more forcefully by European courts. Dangerous Ideas provides ample examples of cultural particularities. Yet the author seldom ranges much beyond Europe and America. Which brings us to the

present era of Donald Trump's lying, Russia's hacking and China's industrial-scale assault on dissent. The final chapter, on the seismic contemporary challenge, provides a useful examination of the dilemmas but few solutions. A decade ago, when I ran the freedom of expression organisation Index on Censorship, I worried about what I saw as the tendency of liberals to advocate press curbs, to elevate the taking of offence into a quasi universal human right. Free speech, I insisted, was not the same as good speech.

These debates have become ever more acrimonious and difficult to navigate. How can internet giants be better regulated? Where is the line to be drawn on the contested territory of free speech and offence? Berkowitz wonders whatever happened to "the readiness to tolerate obnoxious opinions". Or to put it more immediately: was it right to ban Trump from social media? And if so, was that because he is a danger, a liar or a bigot? These are the same questions that kings and courtiers have always grappled with.

John Kampfner is author of 'Why the Germans Do it Better: Notes from a Grown-Up Country' (Atlantic)

Revolving doors

A history of Avon highlights the critical role played by the company's female sales force, writes Judith Evans



Ding Dong! Avon Calling!: The Women and Men of Avon Products, Incorporated by Katina Manko OUP \$34.99 336 pages

n the 1890s, a young travelling book salesman working doorto-door in the eastern US tried out a new method. After branching out into perfumes, David McConnell began recruiting women to market the products in

their own communities.

Unlike the largely male, sometimes disreputable, peddlers who hawked brushes, Bibles and vitamins, McConnell's female recruits would cultivate a respectable

image, building on their rural social networks to sell the products of what he called the California Perfume Company.

McConnell's innovations were the bedrock of what would become one of America's largest cosmetics companies, known from 1939 as Avon and giving rise to a cultural icon, the demurely glamorous "Avon lady". Katina Manko's

Ding Dong! Avon Calling! — named after the group's famous ad campaign — traces the company's development in tandem with a gradual push for middle-class women's economic independence.

The growth of the business was powered by a self-employed female sales force, and crucial to these efforts were recruiters such as Lela Eastman. A divorced mother promoted from sales, Eastman royed the American

female sales force, and crucial to these efforts were recruiters such as Lela Eastman. A divorced mother promoted from sales, Eastman roved the American west, earning in 1928 a then princely salary of \$140 a month. "I went on the road when they said they wanted me. If I would have had to crawl, I would have gone," she later told an interviewer.

Yet Eastman's single-mindedness and success were rare. Few saleswomen were promoted to recruiter, and most reported minimal

sales before quitting.
In the 1910s and
1920s, annual turnover of salespeople
approached 90 to
100 per cent,
Manko reports.

Avon lady Valerie Holmes with her cosmetics, 1969 Daily Mail/Shutterstock Presaging today's gig economy, a fragmented workforce was unaware that others were similarly disenchanted. "What would have happened had the thousands of women who quit CPC each year known how common their experiences of failure and low sales levels were?" she asks.

Yet Avon itself rode high for much of the 20th century, ditching earlier household product lines to harness the growing popularity of colour cosmetics and branching into urban and suburban markets. In 1982 it sold \$3bn of products.

While the company paved the way for Tupperware parties and multilevel marketing models like those of Herbalife and Amway, it remained loyal to McConnell's door-to-door model, which served it well until the onset of ecommerce.

Manko's book details the delicate cultural line that Avon trod, especially in the prewar years. Its literature portrayed women who combined no-nonsense business sense with family responsibilities. Saleswomen were addressed with evangelical exhortations to self-reliance. "All success lies within one's self and not in external conditions," said the company's 1915

"Instructions for general agents".

Such declarations would have rung hollow with the black potential recruits and customers against whom the company openly discriminated in the early 20th century. Avon took until 1999 to appoint a female chief executive.

Manko, an academic who has also worked as an archive assistant for Avon — now owned by Brazilian group Natura — provides a meticulous chronicle of Avon's development; I would have welcomed a little less internal detail in her sometimes repetitive account. But it also offers a valuable window into women's social history and US consumer culture.

In 1972, Manko recounts, a female Avon executive named Patricia Neighbors opened a meeting of male regional managers by complimenting them on their suits "and how wonderful they looked", in an echo of how these men addressed female subordinates. Unfortunately, a colleague later noted, "all it did was make the men angry". Yet today's female workforce owes something to Neighbors, and to all her colleagues who seized Avon's limited opportunity and ran with it.

Judith Evans is the FT's consumer industries correspondent

A new draft of history

Tony Barber is impressed by the tale of how antiquaries recast the way Britain came to respect its national past

ritish history between the 1780s and 1840s is conventionally depicted as a time of industrialisation and expanding overseas empire. Amid explosive population growth, urbanisation and land enclosures, the country emerged, in Benjamin Disraeli's words, as the "workshop of the world".

Strikes, riots and political unrest prompted Catholic emancipation, reforms to working conditions in factories and an extension of the franchise. Abroad, Britain recovered from the loss of the American colonies and a quarter of a century of war with France to become the world's largest imperial power.

In her impressive and stimulating book, Rosemary Hill alludes to these well-known trends but places her focus on a different, often overlooked aspect of the era. At its heart, *Time's Witness* is a social and intellectual history that pays tribute to the role of antiquaries in recasting the way that British people understood and came to respect their distant national past. Hill seeks to rescue the antiquaries from "the condescension of posterity", where most have undeservedly languished for 150 years or more, and in that she succeeds admirably.

Antiquaries were a mixed bunch. In an age before history became a specialised academic discipline, some were rigorous scholars who broke ground in making extensive use of primary sources, including non-written materials. One was John Lingard, author of a history



Time's Witness: History in the Age of Romanticism by Rosemary Hill Allen Lane £25 416 page

of England from the Roman invasion to the Glorious Revolution that is still worth reading today. Others, such as Walter Scott, the most influential novelist of his era, made liberal use of their imaginations to reinterpret the events and traditions of centuries past. Still others, such as the Allen brothers, selfstyled Jacobite heirs to the throne, were hoaxers and yet sometimes capable of serious historical inquiry.

The antiquaries were people with a passion for recovering the country's past — more diligent, on the whole, than the 18th-century amateur enthusiasts who preceded them, but not professional enough in the eyes of the full-time academics who were beginning to replace them by the mid-19th century.

Some of the antiquaries' achievements are truly remarkable. Thanks to the efforts of England's Society of Antiquaries, the Bayeux Tapestry was preserved and restored.

Sharon Turner, an Anglo-Saxon specialist, ensured that the early medieval epic poem *Beowulf* was printed for the first time. Joseph Ritson, a Shakespeare critic, compiled what is still the fullest collection of the Robin Hood stories and legends.

Hill, a visiting professor at the University of York and fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, makes the important point that the 1789 French revolution was a "moral and intellectual shock" that, for

many Britons, challenged the idea of history as a narrative of steady progress.

In France, as medieval art and architecture were associated in the Revolutionary era with Catholicism and the deposed monarchy, churches, royal tombs and the clergy came under attack. In Britain, "Enlightenment confidence in the better judgment of succeeding generations was giving way to respect for the integrity of historical artefacts, whether material or literary," she writes.

The vandalism of religious property in France caused large amounts of stained glass, carved wood, choir stalls, statues and other valuable objects to come into the hands of English auction houses and art dealers. Isidore Taylor, a French author whose father was English, protested that the works of art had not been put in British museums for the public to admire, but "have gone to decorate a few country houses or aristocratic parks where they play at the Middle Ages à la Walter Scott".

Antiquaries meanwhile began the laborious task of dating and classifying medieval English architecture. A fashion developed for neo-Gothic churches and public buildings, including the Palace of Westminster, reconstructed after a fire in 1834. The "tide of taste for the olden times" touched absurd heights in 1839 when 100,000 people, mostly dressed in period costume, gathered at an Ayrshire estate to re-enact a medieval tournament.

The antiquaries of this era were brilliant and eccentric, generous and pedantic, right and wrong. Some were plagiarists and a few went mad. "Such things, however, are not unknown among the academic historians who succeeded them," Hill says wryly. She writes with sympathy of them all.

Tony Barber is the FT's Europe editor

Luther's legacy

The writer of a master biography of the Protestant reformer returns to examine the darker aspects of his life. By Suzannah Lipscombe

head of the *Lutherjahr* of 2017 that marked half a millennium since Martin Luther (perhaps) nailed his 95 theses to that church door in Wittenberg, Lyndal Roper published a magisterial biography of the reformer. Now she returns with a sort of rejoinder that raises the tricky and timely question of how we commemorate heroes with flaws.

Living I Was Your Plague begins with Luther's physical self, arguing that there was no other non-ruler whose face became so instantly and universally familiar. Roper suggests that the proliferation of Luther portraits by Lucas Cranach was critical to the success of the Reformation.

She charts Cranach's shift from an early portrait of a thoughtful Luther to one in which his pronounced jawline, dimpled chin and broad cheekbones are just as recognisable, but his deep-set eyes appear untroubled by ambiguity or complexity. This simplified image of Luther became a brand.

The image projected masculinity. "You could," Roper notes, "write a history of the Reformation through Luther's facial hair" — from tonsured monk via hirsute fugitive to the stubbled virility of his later years. The Reformation marked a moment of change in masculine ideals with celibate monks rejected in favour of procreative patriarchs. Luther's maleness expressed itself in the intellectual pugilism of his "quill fights" and by turns in bullying



Living I Was Your Plague: Martin Luther's World and Legacy by Lyndal Roper Princeton \$29.95/£25 296 pages

and jolliness, but even the latter, she suggests, was his "way of shutting women up".

Roper questions Luther's character and legacy with the same anti-authoritarianism that animated her subject, combining acuity with wit and levity, just as Luther did — though with fewer obscenities. But it is those obscenities that Roper, Regius Professor of History at the University of Oxford, has in mind, as she grapples with how to understand an intellectual in the context of their whole self, conscious and unconscious, warts and all.

Beneath the gruff exterior, Luther was tormented by temptations, anxieties, melancholy, illnesses, bad dreams and diabolic visitations. On waking from his usual rough nights, he dispatched the Devil by telling him to "lick my arse!"

This was Luther's normal register. He was preoccupied by obscenity and obsessed with scatology. Combined with his talent for boiling ideas down and giving them a name, his insults were coarse and witty. He dubbed Prince Heinrich of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel "Hans Wurst" (or "Jack Sausage") and Johannes Cochlaeus "the vulva". To Pope Paul III he gave the epithet "ass-fart Pope".

"Luther," Roper writes, "thought in binaries." The Pope was the Antichrist, and Cranach's extraordinarily graphic propaganda for the Reformation carries Luther's ideas. The pontiff is shown as a woman with a hideously enlarged vagina being breathed into by two demons, while monks are defecated by she-devils and tumble upside-down to the ground, their habits falling over their heads, exposing their genitals.

The viciousness of Luther's antipapalism explains the book's title. Luther wrote the words, "Living I was your plague, O Pope; dead, I will be your death" in chalk on the wall on the eve of his death in 1546. The bitter (ultimately erroneous) prophecy was publicised in his funeral sermon and came to be thought of as his motto. In proclaiming the assured success of his legacy, Luther was masking his real fear that the Council of Trent, which had begun a year earlier, would obliterate the church he had founded.

But his fears do not justify his nasty capacity for hate speech. Roper takes seriously the challenge posed to intellectual history by Luther's vile and virulent anti-Semitism and asks soberly how integral this strand of Luther's thought has been to Lutheranism. She concludes that Luther's peculiarly corporeal anti-Semitism "leached . . . into the legacies of his Church".

Roper's unflinching and insightful—albeit rather episodic—book is a tale for our times. In just one place—when judging the success of the 2017 exhibitions by the curious measure of how far they created a collective experience—does it feel anything but very strong.

It reveals much of the modernity of Luther's medium: his use of visual culture, his habit of nicknaming his enemies, and his lasting catchphrase. He saw himself as a pestilence; Roper reveals the great theologian as both *vir* and virus.

Suzannah Lipscomb is the author of 'The Voices of Nîmes: Women, Sex, and Marriage in Reformation Languedoc'

t can take just two novels to establish a writer as one of the most individual minds of their generation. Anuk Arudpragasam's award-winning debut, The Story of a Brief Marriage (2016), heralded him as an author who could tackle big subjects - in this case, the wrenching civil war that tore Sri Lanka apart for two and a half decades with a striking gift for meditative philosophy. With his new novel, a revelatory exploration of the aftermath of war, Arudpragasam cements his reputation.

Written in long, slow discursions, A Passage North presents the conflict as a dismembering of the collective self of the nation, aside from the more obvious brutalities. It centres on Krishan, a young man working for an NGO in present-day Colombo, who decides on impulse to make a journey to the far north of Sri Lanka to attend the cremation of his grandmother's former caretaker, Rani. Through the course of the novel's three sections - "Message", "Journey" and "Burning" - this deceptively simple story is told via Krishan's memories and philosophical musings.

As his train travels through "wide landscapes of salt flats and palmyra trees, the copper-coloured dirt roads of the Vanni and the tracts of hard, dry earth that made up most of the peninsula", Krishan's own thoughts travel back and forth. He is preoccupied by thoughts of Rani's depression, caused by the loss of her two children in the long grinding war, and his past relationship with Anjum, an activist with whom he fell in love while living in Delhi some years before.

Memories of horrifying videos — "trophy footage" that was smuggled out of conflict zones and now resides in archives — that brought the impact of the civil war home to Krishan are interspersed with soaring recitations to himself of old Tamil myths and Sanskrit poems filled with love and longing.

Arudpragasam, 33, was born in Colombo during the first decade of the insurgency in which Sri Lanka's Tamil population and the island's Sinhalese inhabitants witnessed pogroms and mass slaughter, mob violence and shattering losses of life.

For his generation, whether they were personally free of war's intimate terrors or not, the conflict has never wholly vanished. Its repercussions tear like shrapnel through the memories and the lives of survivors, long after the guns have been silenced, the bombs have stopped falling.

Krishan, obsessed with the massacres that devastated the north-east, becomes "more and more possessed by guilt for having been spared". The journey he undertakes is a way for him to break away from a life of sterile comfort, and to make peace with the truth of war.



Longshadows

Anuk Arudpragasam's second novel offers an oblique but deeply felt

account of the aftermath of Sri Lanka's civil war. By *Nilanjana Roy*



A Passage North by Anuk Arudpragasam

The effect of Arudpragasam's long sentences and page-long paragraphs is one of deep immersion: "It was the fact, above all, that sudden or violent deaths could occur not merely in a war zone or during race riots but during the slow, unremarkable course of everyday life that made them so disturbing and so difficult to accept, as though the possibility of death was contained in even the most routine of actions, in even the ordinary,

It often seems like a refusal to embrace amnesia – a refusal to believe the whitewashed record

unnoticed moments of life," he writes, early in the book.

It calls to mind the work of WG Sebald who, in works such as The Emigrants and On the Natural History of Destruction, examined the long shadows cast by the Holocaust and the second world war. Both authors approach the nightmare terrain of conflict obliquely at times, and through documentary fiction in other instances, demanding that the reader not only acknowledge the horrors that people endured, but reflect more deeply on the ways in which the survivors are left changed.

Like Sebald, Arudpragasam's writing often seems like a refusal to embrace amnesia – a refusal to believe the whitewashed record or to put the war and its aftermath in the past.

The final section of A Passage North is a vivid, 78-page account of a village cremation, with its rituals of open, emotionally performative mourning.

A long goodbye to Rani takes place at an amber-orange funeral pyre near a lake frequented by butterflies and dragonflies, and it is here that Arudpragasam's narrator finds a refuge of sorts. "Even if it was easier for most people to pass over these wounds in silence, suppressing their memories of the world they'd helped construct and the violence that had destroyed it, even so people would remain who insisted on remembering . . . ".

Arudpragasam reminds us, with this extraordinary and often illuminating novel, that there will always be people forced to remember because they "simply couldn't accept a world without what they'd lost".

Nilanjana Roy is an FT columnist

The rhythm and beauty of Barcelona

Migrants, footballers and tycoons all feature in this mercurial writer's richly involving novel, writes Anthony Cummins



Barcelona Dreaming by Rupert Thomson Corsair £16.99 224 pages

n 2014, Rupert Thomson told an interviewer that, despite widespread praise for his nine previous novels, it was becoming economi-

cally unsustainable for him to write fiction. A range of factors were cited, including the credit crunch, which had further dented the already dwindling advances on offer to a so-called "midlist" author who was neither a household name nor a headline-grabbing first-timer.

One thing went unmentioned, however. Thomson never writes the same novel twice: readers essentially encounter him afresh with each new book. Take any three of his titles - *Soft* (1998), for instance, a rompy send-up of the advertising industry, or Death of a Murderer (2007), which imagined the last days of the serial killer Myra Hindley, or Secrecy (2013), a historical novel set in 17thcentury Italy — and they might be the work of three different authors. There is no such thing as "Thomsonesque"; his 2020 book, *NVK*, published under the pen name Temple Drake, was a centuryhopping vampire yarn. Has this creative restlessness made it hard to secure a stable audience?

The sense persists, for readers who have followed Thomson since his 1987 debut, *Dreams of Leaving*, that he still hasn't received due recognition (despite his nightmarishly surreal novel The Insult, about a man's sudden blindness, featuring among David Bowie's 100 must-read books, which the musician shared with fans in 2013). His new novel Barcelona Dreaming is another left turn, comprising three linked tales set in Barcelona during the mid-to-late 2000s.

It begins with the story of a romance between Amy, an English divorcee who owns a gift shop, and Abdel, a young undocumented Moroccan. When she comes to his aid after discovering him in tears one night outside her apartment block, he repays the favour by cooking her a meal. The two embark on an intense sexual liaison, stunning Amy's middle-class friends — not to mention her grown-up daughter, arrived on an ill-timed visit from England.

The narrative, told by Amy, draws power from our growing sense that there is another story going on besides hers; even as we root for the protagonist, jolted out of her mid-life indirection, we want to know more about Abdel. We read what attracted Amy to Barcelona was "the beach every weekend in summer, the mountains in the winter - and restaurants and bars that stayed open all night". Abdel's history is more painful; gradually we realise to what extent, as the difference in status between "expat" and "migrant" grows increasingly stark with the alarming intervention of Amy's elderly neighbour.

The second story takes a more leisurely turn. Nacho, another divorcee, is an alcoholic jazz pianist who unexpectedly finds himself giving private Spanish lessons to FC Barcelona's Brazilian star Ronaldinho. Interest in this section is sustained by Thomson's audacity in turning this living figure into a fictional character. Shown at his magical peak but also on the wane, the player functions as a kind of objective correlative for the book's wistful sense of how dizzying highs give way to plummeting lows. As Ronaldinho offers Nacho advice about his Brazilian girlfriend and her increasingly surly son, the story's sweet comedy is reminiscent of the Ken Loach film Looking for Eric, in which the retired footballer Eric Cantona consoles a suicidal postal worker.

Ronaldinho functions as a correlative for the book's sense of how dizzying highs turn to plummeting lows

While Thomson's soberly controlled cadences and conscientiously described setting (he used to live in Barcelona) give the novel a veneer of traditional literary realism, uncannier notes repeatedly shatter the frame; no one around Nacho believes that he actually knows Ronaldinho. Otherworldly elements come to the fore in the final story, which takes the form of a Gothic-tinged encounter with Barcelona's criminal underworld, as Jordi, an underpaid translator of French fiction, falls in with a shady tycoon surrounded by rumours of sordid goings-on.

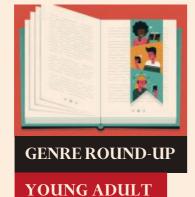
At sentence level, Barcelona Dreaming is precise and unshowy. You wouldn't cherry-pick a standout line; its effects are steadily cumulative. If the jeopardy of the opening section is never quite matched, the book offers an abundance of other pleasures, not least its discreet seeding of recurring background characters and motifs, which lends depth and unity. It adds to the kaleidoscopic quality of a tender, involving and slyly intricate novel that, with its shifts of focus and mood, captures the multiplicity of a city and its people.

Off-grid in a New York blackout

ook dedications are an artform in themselves. They've developed from the simple "To My Mother" formula to mission statements and lavish encomia. Lately there's been a whole new level of affirmation. Take Ace of Spades by Faridah Àbíké-Íyímídé (Usborne, £8.99) for example: "For all the black kids drowning in the sunken place, desperately trying to claw their way out, this book is for you." And for her mum.

Devon and Chiamaka are the only black pupils at the elite Niveus Private Academy, but that's seemingly the only thing they have in common. Chiamaka is the high-flying Senior Head Prefect, an admired and envied straight-A student who has left nothing to chance in her quest for success. "It's about looking the part, having the best grades and dating the right people . . . it's either kill or be killed." Devon, a gifted musician, believes in keeping his head down. Then a troll known only as "Aces" targets them both, leaking Devon's sex video with another boy, and spreading evil falsehoods that Chiamaka's so-called friends are only too happy to believe.

As the disinformation gains traction, they realise that far from being welcomed at Niveus, Devon and Chiamaka are simply being set up to fail. The conspiracy widens to the point of implausibility, yet the plot conveys an underlying emotional truth about what it feels like to be locked in a system



By Suzi Feay

that constantly undermines you. Kacen Callender intends Felix Ever After (Faber, £7.99) "For trans and nonbinary youth: You're beautiful. You're important. You're valid. You're perfect." Felix Love, black, queer and trans, lacks self-worth and even a firm sense of identity. He knows he should be grateful that his father is supportive and has even paid for top surgery and hormone therapy, despite occasionally "deadnaming" him. But Felix still worries; he knows he's not a girl, but sometimes he doesn't feel like a boy either, and he's struggling on his art course. There seems to be nowhere he can turn for help.

Here too, anonymous trolling and social-media hacking plays a significant role. Felix receives a string of taunting, transphobic messages from "grandequeen69", and jumps to the conclusion that former friend Declan is behind it. Concealing his own identity, Felix

begins to exchange messages with the unsuspecting boy, but finds the exercise far more emotionally compelling than the revenge he originally planned. Impulsive, confused, flawed yet likeable, Felix is a remarkable portrait of adolescence in flux.

"To Black kids everywhere: your stories, your joy, your love, and your lives matter. You are a light in the dark" is the joint declaration of the six authors of Blackout (Electric Monkey, £7.99). A heatwave has caused a power outage in New York, and young people across the city are forced to make new plans and forge unexpected alliances.

Young people across the city are forced to make new plans, forge unexpected alliances

Quarrelling exes Kareem and Tammi reluctantly make their way home together in Tiffany D Jackson's chapters, while Tammi's brother Tremayne is stuck in a darkened subway car on the verge of a panic attack, observed by JJ, a classmate who's too embarrassed to intervene (Nic Stone's contribution). Ashley Woodfolk's creations, Nella and Joss, are helping out in an old peoples' home, and flirting like crazy, while Angie Thomas brings on a busload of unruly children from Jackson, Mississippi, and their "Karen-ish" white teacher

Mrs Tucker. Nicola Yoon's segment concerns a philosophically minded cabbie who's ferrying the unappreciative Grace to the Brooklyn block party where the storylines will converge.

The collaboration, which also involved Dhonielle Clayton, took shape over the pandemic and gave rise to its message that wonderful things can happen when normal life is put on hold.

Simply and movingly, Manjeet Mann dedicates The Crossing (Penguin, £7.99) to "the millions of Sammys". Sammy is a teenage Eritrean migrant trying to avoid brutal military service by paying traffickers to get him to Europe. His narrative mirrors that of Natalie, a gay girl living in Dover with her father and older brother Ryan. Their mother died before she could complete her dream of swimming the Channel, so Nat vows to take up the challenge, raising money for migrants in the process.

Like Mann's previous book, Run Rebel, The Crossing is written in verse, and instead of presenting Nat and Sammy's narratives in alternating chapters, Mann runs them together, with phrases in bold indicating the thoughts they uncannily share even though they've never met. As events move towards a climax and their bond intensifies, the sentences break down altogether and white space takes over. At this point, the formal experimentation becomes more distracting than affecting, but despite this Mann pulls off a

shattering conclusion.

The false poet

An ingenious novel about privilege, poetry and public vilification.

By Jonathan McAloon

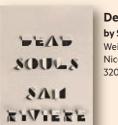
has elements of plagiarism," the poet Sam Riviere said last year in an interview about his current collection, which repurposed automatically generated translations of the Roman poet Martial; "this is something that other cultures have been

t seems to me that all writing

more comfortable with, while we repress it". In his debut novel *Dead Souls*, Riviere has turned a career-long preoccupation with intellectual property into a stifling fictional world. In a futuristic London, a crisis in publishing has led to the

use of a set metric of authenticity. Authors of derivative or appropriated work are vilified publicly for "crimes against originality". Poetry, presumed to contain more essential truthfulness than prose, is raised to the level of valuable commodity; contemporary poets are becoming, against stereotype, not just culturally visible

but wealthy too. The unnamed narrator of Dead Souls is a poetry magazine editor and failed poet who exhaustively keeps track of his sector: "the appointments and expulsions, feuds and alliances, coronations, cancellations, deaths, debuts, all those who had been overlooked and all those who had been overrewarded, not to mention the



Dead Souls by Sam Riviere Weidenfeld & Nicolson £16.99 320 pages

force and temperature of the various currents of favour and fatigue". During an arts festival he hears about, then meets, a poet who seems to have experienced almost all of the above. Solomon Wiese has achieved quick success, twice, only to be found guilty of unoriginality and ostracised by the literary community twice.

Over a night in a Travelodge bar, during an unparagraphed rant that merges with the narrator's own tirade, Wiese reveals what about the state of the world and the arts drove him to steal the work of other authors.

Dead Souls is a thought experiment that feels at once entirely original and entirely indebted. Riviere's methods are partly an allusion to the Nikolai Gogol novel that gives the book its title, in which a conman uses the names of dead peasants still registered as living in order to imply large property holdings.

There are also shades of Lars Iyer's Spurious trilogy (in which philosophers grapple with the contemporary irrelevance of academic philosophy) and OK, Mr Field (about an injured concert

pianist troubled by his lack of emotional intelligence) by the poet Katherine Kilalea. The latter two authors are heavily influenced by the Austrian novelist Thomas Bernhard, whose style and tone Riviere apes with such fluency - whole chunks of context and unwieldy monikers repeated as refrains, mirrored phrases, the joins between layers of narrative visible within long sentences — that it seems central to his comment on authenticity.

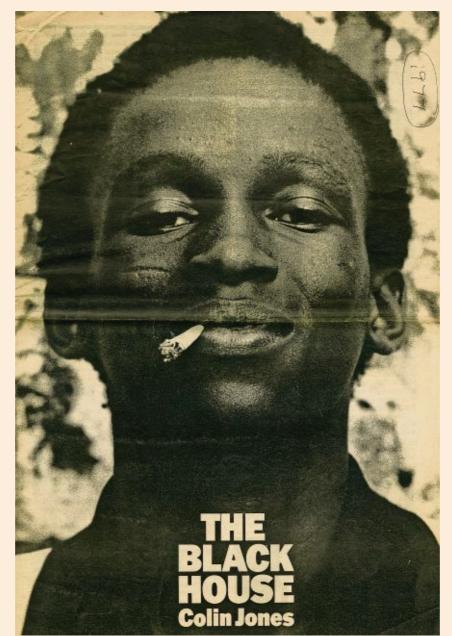
A novel ostensibly about the poetry world written by a respected poet, makes for an echo chamber as well as a mirror game. But Riviere's knowingness about this is part of the performance; had the surface-level topic been completely unfamiliar to me, I'd still have been laughing loud and often at the author's exuberance.

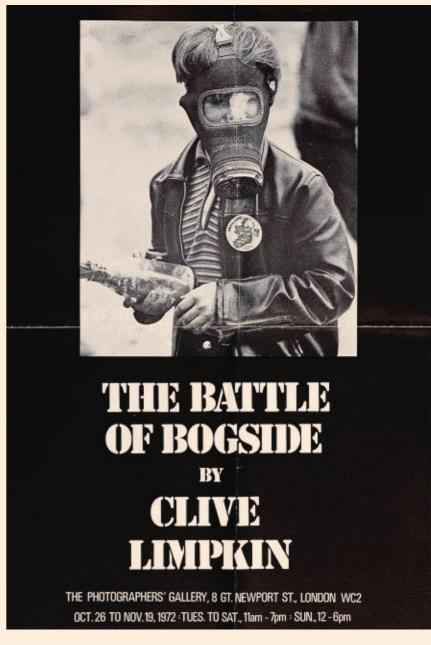
Some distance from the subject may allow for closer contact with Riviere's subtext and true preoccupations: our contemporary moment; the way privilege works in the arts sector; social media outrage and "public excoriation".

Everyone in Dead Souls is culpable on some level. The skewed wisdom of each speaker, already full of cynicism and silliness, is tainted by this culpability, which is then effectively transferred to the reader. Just as Solomon Wiese transfers his story to the unnamed narrator. "One monstrosity becomes much the same as another." Only the absurd shade of the book's rage and its ingeniousness makes this all somehow bearable.

Arts Life&Arts







Fifty years of the camera's greatest hits

Photographers' Gallery | This birthday exhibition chronicles the medium's evolution both as an art and as a documentary form. By Jackie Wullschläger

> in a former Lyons café in Covent Garden. Note the name: "photographers", not "photography". Sue Davies wanted to give a forum to artists who worked with the camera at a time when no institutions in the UK, not even the avantgarde ICA, reckoned them artists at all.

> Run on a shoe string (Bill Brandt once ble way possible" she said.

tion. At Ramillies Street, a four-part

series of historical surveys begins with "Photojournalism: a worthy art for a new gallery"; focuses on fashion, mixed media approaches and the digital revolution will follow in the summer and autumn. Meanwhile online, 50 Exhibitions in 50 Years is an utterly engrossing decade-by-decade account of greatest hits, full of memories for early visitors.

MoMA New York had shown photography since 1933, and France's Rencontres d'Arles was already a showcase for the new, but in London, "to find a place that loved photography, it was absolutely exhilarating to go in there" recalls Martin Parr. The dark spaces and monochrome aesthetic felt excitingly countercultural: the young gallery was growing up with Britain in transformation. So these two shows together unfold far more than the gallery's own story: they chronicle photography's evolution as a documentary and art form, and how its developments charted, even shaped, social and political change.

In the 1970s, the gallery profiled David Bailey at Vogue, but also cool as a cucumber is a close-up of a black face with a white cigarette, and a pair of black men leaning confidently out of the frame from a Holloway Road doorway -Colin Jones's seminal series "The Black House", its radical text suggesting that "today's younger blacks no longer seek to merge with white society, but to emphasise their racial difference through language, speech and dress".

Next comes 1980s social comedy -Parr's moodily atmospheric "Bad Weather" elevates grey days, drizzle and British stoicism to a ghostly realism/surrealism. The misty bus stops and glistening pavements, scurrying figures and black domes of umbrellas, are comforting, familiar, but the background was a dividing nation, class and

gender battles, emerging activism. An extraordinary juxtaposition here is "Striking Women: Communities and Coal" in 1985 – Izabela Jedrzejczyk's robust Durham miners' wives in soup kitchens and on picket lines, Imogen Young's high-spirited lesbian and gay "Support the Miners" party in Neath, south Wales - alongside nudes by metropolitan feminists such as Helen Chadwick and Jo Spence in "The Body Politic: Re-Presentations of Sexuality" in 1987.

By the 1990s, the gallery was reflecting a globalised art world. It began the decade with the inaugural survey of Sebastião Salgado's environmental and industrial black-and-white epics, the heaven of nature and man-made hell on earth of sites such as Brazil's Serra Pelada gold mine: thousands of workers, ant-like, pouring up and down the steep, barren rockface; seen in close-up, the skeletal, mud-caked bodies seem to have walked out of Goya or Bosch.

Then, one after another, the major late 20th-century American woman photographers had first UK shows here: Francesca Woodman's raw and delicate experimental images of her young body disappearing into mirrors and sheets; Catherine Opie's aggressive high-colour sequences of trans people in regal poses, and self-portraits as her alter ego, butch tattooed truck driver Bo, in "Altered States of America"; innocent and knowing Sally Mann, as controversial for snapshots of her naked children as for recording corpses rotting in the sand

The overall narrative of both parts of Light Years, that photographs are fundamental to the making and contesting of history, feels visceral and potent – the freezing of moments which time and chance have filtered as iconic. But if this is a constant, half a century has also wrought perhaps the deepest transformation of all - that plurality of images has been matched by diminishing faith in their authenticity and efficacy.

"Photojournalism: a worthy art for a new gallery", concentrating on the gallery's early years, is thus a deeply nostalgic account. Featuring Robert Capa and Andre Kertesz, Davies' inaugural exhibition in 1971 - entrance fee "4/- (20 n p)" - was called "The Concerned Photographer" and was a simple, almost well-mannered plea for social engagement: "the Concerned Photographer finds much in the present unacceptable which he tries to alter", curator Cornell Capa wrote. The same year "Scoop, Scandal and Strife", curated by Sunday Times editor Harold Evans, exploring newspaper photographs as a history of

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THE PHOTOGRAPHERS' GALLERY

'In London, to find a place that loved photography, it was exhilarating to go in there,' recalls Martin Parr

country to stadium rock wasn't

instigated by Prince himself, but by

"great events . . . seen embedded in today's trivia", wondered "how it must have been to read over the breakfast table . . . of the Russian Revolution". Evans showcased the Daily Mirror's front page, 7 April 1917, of tumultuous street scenes, "first photographs to reach England of the lightning revolution in Petrograd".

Fast forward to a Photographers' Gallery exhibition in 2000: Boris Mikhailov is on the streets with the *bomzhes*, the homeless and dispossessed, often nude, diseased or drunk, their expressions zoned-out — casualties of the Soviet Union's break up. For "Case History", Mikhailov washed, fed, paid and posed many subjects in his modest Kharkov flat, and his unflinching, bleak, complicated images do not shrink from turning the gaze on himself - and us - as exploiting viewer. The ambivalence is worlds away from the earnest optimism of "The Concerned Photographer".

Doubt — of purpose and authenticity — in the digital age is the photographer's 21st-century challenge; it is connected to scepticism of political authority, to fracturing cultural identities. Pathetically resembling a stuffed animal, a white tiger, genetically modified in an Arkansas "selective inbreeding" project, paces a concrete platform in a tiny wire enclosure in the poster image for "An American Index of the Hidden and Unfamiliar", Taryn Simon's UK debut in 2007. (A Tate solo show followed in 2011). From the arenas of nuclear security (radioactive capsules at a storage facility), cryptopreservation (corpses held in gleaming white pods), plastic surgery, airport customs depots, death rows, Simon composed an inventory of America through what is concealed, using a large format view camera - open, direct.

How to read this cabinet of curiosities? Is Simon informant or voyeur, campaigner or tabloid sensationalist? Photographers, as these exhibitions distil, thrive by being all these things, and The Photographers' Gallery has marvellously given them space and voice.

To Feb 12022, thephotographersgallery.org.uk

Top, left to right, posters from 'Light Years': 'Five Years with the Face' (1985); Colin Jones's 'The Black House' (1977); Clive Limpkin's 'The Battle of Bogside' (1972)

Right, from top: Sebastião Salgado's black-and-white epic (1990); George Rodger and David Goldblatt

The Photographers' Gallery Archive

n 1971, a young secretary at London's Institute of Contemporary Arts lost her temper with her "very snooty" bosses, and walked out to found The Photographers' Gallery

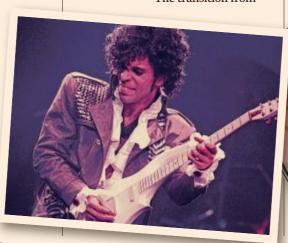
slipped Davies a £50 contribution), her gallery, the first in Britain dedicated to the medium, was pioneering by decades Tate's first photography show took place in 2003 – and without pretension: "our aim is to broaden the understanding of photography in the most enjoya-

Light Years: The Photographers' Gallery at 50, just launched, is a double celebra-

> gospel spirit, one that dismantled any false dichotomies between "black" soul music and "white" guitar-led rock.

> Yet "Purple Rain" was initially conceived as a country-inflected duet with Fleetwood Mac's Stevie Nicks, who turned it down, saying Prince's vision for it was "too much" for her. All that's left of its country origins is the evocative title, which Prince lifted from the song "Ventura Highway" by folkrock group America.

The transition from



Below: Prince on his 'Purple Rain' tour in 1984

Wendy Melvoin, 19-year-old guitarist in his backing band, The Revolution. During rehearsals, she hit on the indelible opening chords, inspiring Prince to take the song in a completely different direction. After six hours of practice and experimentation, "Purple Rain" was all but written. The recording was a similarly intense and spontaneous affair. The version of the track that made it on to the album was in fact the first time Prince ever played it for an audience — and the first time Melvoin performed live with the band. On a sweltering

Minneapolis night, the crowd stood in hushed reverence throughout the song's 13 minutes (a third verse was cut), perhaps recognising that they were witnessing a piece of pop history. The performance was later recreated and mythologised as the climactic scene in Prince's film, fittingly called Purple Rain.

After Prince came a deluge of covers.

Etta James, Gregory Porter and Kwaye mined the soulful undercurrents of the original in smooth, honeyed versions, while London Grammar took a paredback approach in their cool, crystalline rendition. Kelly Clarkson, Jessie J and Celine Dion chose to make the most of the song's lung-busting potential. Though not quite as vocally supple, Bruce Springsteen's effort didn't lack emotive resonance in his live tribute following Prince's death in 2016.

Elsewhere, guitar heroes Jeff Beck and Eric Clapton picked up the gauntlet left by Prince with his searing solos, while Maroon 5's Adam Levine unexpectedly proved he's also a nimble axe-wielder. Dwight Yoakam brought the song back to its country origins with a jaunty bluegrass iteration.

Yet nobody watching Prince's 2007 Super Bowl halftime show could imagine the song belonged to anyone else. Drenched in a sudden downpour and bathed in lurid lighting, he found himself in purple rain, a performer at the peak of his powers. It was as if he had organised the weather himself.

Dan Einav

More in the series at ft.com/life-of-a-song

THE LIFE **OF A SONG** PURPLE RAIN

a downpour of purple rain would probably be a portent of imminent environmental cataclysm. For Prince, who wrote the enigmatic ballad about a violet, violent torrent, the phenomenon "pertain[ed] to the end of the world . . . when there's blood in the sky" - which doesn't sound like something people should be bathing in, as the lyrics suggest. But the song would also serve as an augury of

eteorologically speaking,

Prince's arrival as a musical force. Which isn't to say that "Purple Rain", released in September 1984, was Prince's breakthrough. His previous album, 1999, had garnered widespread critical acclaim and given him the platform to star in a film - an unabashed career vehicle in which he

played an up-and-coming Minneapolis musician. Sound familiar?

But with "Purple Rain", Prince definitively transcended his reputation as an outré, oversexed provocateur who knew his way around a catchy R&B groove. This wasn't a song engineered to get listeners to dance, but one that would leave them rooted to the spot amid an aural storm of surging vocals, guitar solos and rumbling strings.

The track marked the emergence of Prince as rock royalty, and served as a rebuke to his detractors. Three years earlier, he had been subjected to abuse by a hostile, racist LA crowd, who balked at seeing a playfully epicene black performer open for The Rolling Stones. Now here he was delivering an arena hit for the ages: a rock anthem devoid of machismo, a power ballad stripped of histrionics. Pervasive throughout is an almost numinous

From top: The

perform at the

Festival, Oxford,

Specials share a

pizza backstage

at Hurrah's, New

York, in 1980

Specials

Cornbury

in 2019; The

11

Arts

erry Hall is talking about "Ghost Town", the skapunk number one single that became the spectral soundtrack to UK race riots exactly 40 years ago. He is horrified by how the boiling-point lyrics of The Specials' masterpiece resonate again.

"'Ghost Town' is still relevant because it's a lot worse now," he says. "When it was written there was a rightwing British government. Now it's the same, but with Black Lives Matter and a virus." His shoulders hunch, he seems to deflate. "You would have thought things would have moved on. But they haven't.

"Love music, hate racism," he deadpans, mock-parroting a British music industry campaign slogan. "It's not enough. Love music, fight racism. You have to fight it."

The Specials fought racists — often literally. At the height of their success at the febrile dawn of the Thatcher era, neo-Nazis regularly targeted their frenetic gigs. Hall, the lugubrious frontman, was at the vanguard. He describes diving off the stage to stop fights.

"It got really extreme," he says. "We were playing with Madness in a university town somewhere, we walked off-stage and there were casualties all over the dressing room. People who had been cut and slashed. It looked like an emergency room. It was heartbreaking, the last thing we wanted to see."

The Specials' overtly leftwing stance inducted a generation into the politics of economic decline, tensions between police and urban black communities, and so-called "sus" stop-and-search laws that traumatised young black people. Just a month before the release of "Ghost Town" in June 1981, crowds of far-right thugs battled with police and thousands of anti-racism protesters outside Coventry Cathedral.

But the band and their 2 Tone record label offered more than bleak social commentary. With multiracial line-ups, dynamic live shows and Jamaican skapunk fusion, they were a glimpse of what could be achieved when black and white people worked together.

Today, 62-year-old Hall — droll, reflective, a little weary — has returned to the city as curator of *Home Sessions*, four days of music, spoken-word events and DJ sets and a centrepiece of celebrations for Coventry City of Culture 2021. The city won the title, which brought in more than £18.5m in government funding, over 11 other candi-



'We had to really fight for it'

Music | The Specials' Terry Hall

talks to *Helen Barrett* about rock,

politics and curating a programme

for Coventry City of Culture 2021

dates, partly on the strength of its diversity. "I want to get it right," says Hall. "It's a pretty big responsibility."

He has delivered a thoughtful, multicultural, politically engaged programme, including Roni Size & Dread MC, The Pop Group with Dennis Bovell, The Libertines and actor Maxine Peake.

Some events will be staged in the ruins of Coventry's medieval cathedral, razed by the Luftwaffe and kept as a memorial. Hall will perform his first solo show in "I don't know, 25 years?" in Coventry's new cathedral, Basil Spence's 1962 monument to postwar optimism and reconciliation. "I begged them to let me play there," he says. "I can't perform miracles, though this is probably a good place to do it."

Over at the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum is a major exhibition on the history of 2 Tone, the Coventry record label founded in 1979 by Jerry Dammers with the purpose of transcending racial divides in music (Dammers, who wrote "Ghost Town", was founder, keyboardist and the main creative force behind The Specials). Like the label's roster — The Selecter, The Beat, early Madness — the exhibition is entertaining, hectic and politically charged.



Are bands political now? Some, says Hall. But "we had to really fight for it; I don't see that fight so much any more. I've seen my kids grow up online and it makes them lazy. That's their world. You have a few friends online and you download music and you don't have to leave the house, or really do anything.

"Now if you form a band, the online access is big. But I'm not sure it's a great way to do things."

Hall, guitarist Lynval Golding and vocalist Neville Staple left The Specials after "Ghost Town" to form the poppier Fun Boy Three, and Hall has continued to record. The Specials have endured in various line-ups, and Hall reformed a version in 2009 with some of the band's original members, to sold-out tours. The current line-up, touring again in August, features Golding and bassist Horace Panter.

The risk, of course, was that The Specials would become a nostalgia act. But their 21st-century output remains deeply defiant. A 2019 album *Encore* includes "10 Commandments", a track with guest vocalist Saffiyah Khan, a young British-Asian woman who confronted far-right crowds in Birmingham. And "BLM", a disturbing track in which Golding narrates a lifetime on the receiving end of racism, is as dark, uncomfortable and bleak as "Ghost Town".

Dammers, whose films and ephemera form much of the 2 Tone exhibition, has not joined. Many fans would love to see

'But I don't hate anyone. Well, maybe a few people. But no one who's been in The Specials'

him with The Specials again — what are relations like? "We don't talk any more. And that's sad for me," says Hall. In the past, Dammers claimed to have been excluded from reunion projects. Hall disputes that, and their estrangement appears irresolvable. "But I don't hate anyone. Well, maybe a few people. But no one who's been in The Specials."

Coventry and other post-industrial British cities have been ravaged by the pandemic. Much is riding on its City of Culture programme. Hiring Hall as curator is a smart move. Despite the rifts and the decades that have passed since "Ghost Town", The Specials' gigs keep selling out. Organisers will be hoping that Hall will bring that weight and appeal. Perhaps, from fans' perspective, The Specials concept — black and white musicians; clear, unambiguous politics; defiance — is more enduring than the band's individual members.

Could multiracial cultural movements such as 2 Tone happen in 2021, with our digitised music culture and the sharp divides of identity politics? "I don't see *any* movements happening," says Hall. "Istill long for The Specials."

July 29-August 1, coventry 2021.co.uk



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Arts

he good news regarding my interview with Tino Sehgal, the British-born, Berlinbased artist whose notoriously sense-scrambling work has discombobulated many an artlover, is that he is there, on screen, on time, and ready, as it turns out, for some hefty philosophical conversation on his new work.

Not to suggest that he is anything but entirely professional in any of his dealings; it is just that I remembered the first time I encountered his work, at the Venice Biennale of 2005, when I entered his installation in the German pavilion to be confronted by three uniformed Biennale security guards who instantly sang happily into my face: "This so contemporary! Contemporary! Contemporary!" Indeed it was, I thought, and marked Sehgal as one to watch.

The following year, in London's Institute of Contemporary Arts, another installation, another dislocating experience: a nine-year-old girl, who told me her name was Devon, said she wanted to interview me about the concept of progress. Before I could rally my response, she passed me to a youngish man, who passed me to a middle-aged woman, who passed me to an 81-yearold bookish type who had taught physics all his life and wondered, he said a little broken-heartedly, if it had all been worth it.

Those pieces of work in the early years of the new century, playful and profound, helped establish Sehgal as one of the most liberating figures in a contemporary art world, which was making itself dizzy with newfound commercial success and burgeoning public interest. Sehgal - a former dancer countered that trend by making work that involved no objects at all, just the unregulated and spontaneous results of random human interaction.

His subsequent shows, at New York's Guggenheim, Tate Modern, the Palais de Tokyo in Paris, have played more extensively with the evanescent dances of strangers. Sehgal's disdain of the object extends to refusing even to publish catalogues for his shows. (I remember asking for one at the ICA show, only to be told that it didn't exist, but I could pay £25 to have a word whispered in my ear by the bookstore assistant, to which I whispered "No, thank you.")

Expect more of the same, on an altogether grander and more sumptuous level, at the 18th-century baroque Blenheim Palace this month when Sehgal's latest piece is unveiled as the latest of the Blenheim Art Foundation's sevenyear-old commissioning programme. In terms of dramatic twists, he has some form to live up to. Two years ago, a show from another maverick talent with intent to confound, Maurizio Cattelan, attracted unusually intense tabloid coverage when the artist's 18-karat gold toilet, "America", was stolen, lock, flush and cistern, two days after the show's opening.

Sehgal's installation this year sounds less like a deranged episode of Morse, and more like something that would seem to fit the strange times. A swarm of local residents, specially cast for the project, will interact with visitors in the palace's Capability Brown-designed grounds, in what is described as a "fluid and porous choreography". Could there be a more resonant response to a year-



When art comes to life

Interview | Conceptual artist Tino Sehgal talks to Peter Aspden about his new

Blenheim Palace installation, a celebration of the warmth of human contact

Clockwise from main: Tino Sehgal's Tate Modern installation 'These Associations', 2012; Blenheim Palace; Sehgal in 2013 — Alamy; Wolfgang Tillmans



and-a-half of lockdown than a celebration of the warmth of human contact?

"That has been my principle for the last 20 years," Sehgal tells me in a Zoom call from Berlin. (He is of German and Indian parentage.) "But after the first lockdown, even for me, when I had my first meeting with someone, I thought 'Oh my God, I can really feel what's happening here. I can feel the energy of this person, the soul.' I didn't know what it was, I can't put words to it. But I did realise that, more than ever, there has been a deprivation of exactly that which I promote in my work."

Sehgal says he was inspired by the open, natural spaces of Brown's 2,000acre landscape. "We have had 100 years of the white cube [of the art gallery]. We have spent a lot of time in these white wall spaces. But the older I get, I feel they are quintessentially modern in a not-good way. I saw the park and, not that I know much about landscaping, I thought, 'Here is a master at work'. I had the feeling that I had when I first walked round Frank Lloyd Wright's

Guggenheim, and I haven't had since."

He says he regards Brown's work as a kind of "duet" with the planet. "He doesn't stand back and say, 'Nature is perfect, who am I?' He also doesn't say, like French gardening does, 'Humans can do it better.' He says, 'I am part of Earth too. I can enhance, it, I can work

with it, but I don't need to reinvent everything, because what the Earth has to offer is already at a pretty high level." So his own intervention makes it a trio? "Ha! Yes, you could put it that way."

One of the lovely things about Sehgal's shows, I say, is that they bring a smile to people's faces. Part of the "This so contemporary" show in Venice involved actors offering visitors half of their entrance fee back if they would talk to them about the market economy. I tried to claim my refund, I tell him, but the receptionist told me they had "run out of money".

"That was a bit of a fail, then," he says,



a little icily. It wasn't part of the show? "No, no, no, no. Sometimes things go wrong." He says he wanted that exhibition to be a "joyous" one. "I am not the most joyous person," he says. "It is not something that comes easily to me."

It is part of Sehgal's broader thesis about the art world that the idea of the lone, impassioned, vision-inspired (and mostly male) artist has pretty much run its course. "Part of visual art's success over the past 200 years is that it has had a certain clarity, because it is individuals expressing themselves in quite simple, short ways." Now, he says, it feels like the time for more fluid and more collaborative ways of describing the "complexity" of the world.

"What is individuality? It is the breaking of rigid bonds. We don't want to be bound by our religion, our parents, our class, because they are holding you back. We have had a couple of hundred years of that. OK, now we can move on. But where do we belong? And where do we move on to?" Hence Sehgal's emphasis on discourse, teamwork, and interrogation in his art. "It is a little bit pathetic, to be this star hero," he says of society's abiding obsession with individual achievement.

Sehgal's derision of material objects, and for the excesses of the capitalist economy generally, extends to his busi-

Now, Sehgal says, it feels like the time for more fluid and collaborative ways of describing the world

ness dealings. The sale of his works, which allows museums and even private collectors to install his "situations", is carried out with no written record of the transaction; the "contract" is reliant on the memory of those present at the sale.

I ask Sehgal how important it is that he is able to sell his work. "It is very basic. If you do something specialised, that specialised activity does not bring cereal to your table in the morning. If you want to turn that specialised activity into your breakfast, you have to find someone, a couple of people is enough, who are interested in it, and who will pay you for it.

"I feel that people have a lot of cultural reservations against certain marketplaces. On a superficial level, I get that. But that doesn't say anything about market transactions in itself."

I ask Sehgal finally about his contribution to a newly published little book, 140 Artists' Ideas for Planet Earth, edited by Hans Ulrich Obrist and Kostas Stasinopoulos, which takes the form of a single, unpunctuated sentence: "you are doing all of it". What does he mean?

"That you are a producer of reality, not just a receiver of reality. When you come to the museum, which is a highly legitimised ritual of western culture, I don't want to place you as just as a receiver. I want to configure a game where you are also an agent. That's always a vein in my work: that we as individuals, as consumers, as humans of the world, have power. We, also, decide the course of things."

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Artists back tech levy for creatives

The Art Market | Prince Harry finds favour at Sotheby's; Grenfell Auction donation gets re-sold; Harper's gallery keeps growing; London's National Gallery opens to young patrons

isual artists including Frank Bowling, Mark Titchner and Rachel Whiteread are among the leading creatives backing a campaign for the Smart Fund, a collaboration between the UK's cultural industries, technology companies and the government. This proposes a levy of between 1 and 3 per cent on electronic devices, such as smartphones, tablets and laptops, and is projected to raise £300m - with more possible should items such as Smart TVs or cloud-based storage enter the mix.

The scheme was lobbied to government this week and "the initial response was positive", says Gilane Tawadros, chief executive of the Design and Artists Copyright Society (DACS), the organisation behind the campaign.

Similar schemes run in 44 other countries and in 2018 paid out over £930m to creators, Tawadros says. The levy could raise up to £25m for visual artists alone, DACS finds. This would more than double the amount that UK artists currently receive in resale royalties; a pot of about £20m

Tech businesses are already grumbling about putting an additional burden on to consumers — though they could of course swallow the cost themselves. And the proposal seems timely in a post-Brexit and Covid-19 environment. "If this country is going to get out of a hole, then we have to start thinking about working in purposeful partnerships," Tawadros says. DACS finds that the creative industries overall contributed £111.7bn to the economy and accounted for 61,000 new jobs in 2019.

The Duke of Sussex might divide opinion in the wider world, but a 1997 painting of the young Prince Harry, made by Elizabeth Peyton in the year his mother died, found favour at Sotheby's London this week when it sold for an above-estimate £720,000 (£886,200 with fees, guaranteed by the auction house).

The work was one of 21 from a collection that punctuated Sotheby's Modern and contemporary art auctions on June 29 and accounted for £31.7m of the £156.2m total across two sales (including fees). Listed by Sotheby's as "a New York charitable family trust", ArtnetNews linked the collection to the real estate developer and former Museum of Modern Art chairman Jerry Speyer.

The consecutive auctions of Modern British art and broader Modern and contemporary art each came in within estimates, with enough bidding from Sotheby's Hong Kong saleroom to more than justify the move to earlier-timed sales this season.

The highest price of the sessions went to Wassily Kandinsky's striking "Tensions calmées" (1937), an abstract painting that last sold from the Solomon Guggenheim Foundation in 1964 for £10,000 and made £18.3m (£21.2m with fees) in the same saleroom on Tuesday (est £18m-£25m, third-party guarantee). The British art highlight was a 2002 portrait of the artist David Below: 'David Hockney' (2002) by Lucian Freud

Below right: 'Untitled' (2021) by New York-based artist Marcus Brutus

> Among Sotheby's Modern British art works offered this week was Yinka Shonibare's mannequin sculpture "Bad School Boy" (2014), which sold for £170,000 (£214,200 with fees). Its unnamed consignor had bought the work just four years ago for £160,000 (£200,000 with fees) when it was part of Sotheby's Art For Grenfell charity auction for the survivors of the devas-

Hockney by fellow painter Lucian

Freud, which had never come to auction

before and sold above estimate for

£12.8m (£14.9m with fees, third party

guarantee). Christie's equivalent Lon-

don and Paris evening auctions,

which took place on Wednesday, were

estimated to make between £118m

and £174m.

Reselling the work was clearly within the rights of its charity buyer,

tating 2017 Grenfell Tower fire.

to expand. Harper Levine, who has run

Harper's rare books and contemporary art gallery in East Hampton since 2010, is opening two more spaces, having already opened a second Manhattan gallery in December.

He now turns to Los Angeles, where he opens on the corner of Melrose and Crescent Heights later this year, and also has a new flagship space in New York's Chelsea, next to Hauser & Wirth and the High Line on 22nd Street. This will open in early 2022 with a solo show of the New York-based Marcus Brutus.

Levine propelled the careers of artists

'If this country is going to get out of a hole, then we have to start thinking about working in partnerships'



such as Genieve Figgis and Jennifer Guidi, who then moved to be represented by major galleries. Levine says that the real estate opportunities now available mean that he can "offer a larger platform and better visibility" for his artists, and therefore be more likely to retain them. "This is the primary rea-

son to expand," he says.

This week marked the official launch of The National Gallery London's first Young Patrons Group. The events and socialising programme is called Young Ambassadors, named after the gallery's renowned painting by Hans Holbein — "The Ambassadors" (1533) – an early example of a work that was bought with private funds.

The launch has been stop-start, confesses Caroline Costin Wright, manager of the Young Ambassadors, as it initially got going last autumn, but London's subsequent and lengthy lockdown forced a pause.

The group is open to would-be philanthropists aged 20 to 45 and costs £1,200 per year plus a suggested donation, similar to programmes run by London institutions such as the Serpentine Galleries and Tate Modern.

Unlike these, though, "the focus is on historic art, with a reminder that the gallery has been an amazing resource for living artists since it was founded", says the art adviser Harriet Clapham, co-chair of the Young Ambassadors. She shares the role with Sabine Getty, a jewellery designer whose husband is the great-grandson of the oil tycoon and philanthropist JP Getty (1892-1976).



13

Music | The hit TV show 'Mare of

Easttown' has focused attention on

the bands electrifying Philadelphia's

thriving scene. By Michael Hann

he success of the TV show Mare of Easttown had unexpected side-effects. For the musicians of Philadelphia there was a spike in visibility for what has quietly been one of American independent music's most productive cities over the past decade.

One character in the show had a band whose repertoire consisted of songs by the Philadelphia band Mannequin Pussy (and she wore a band T-shirt onscreen). That fictional band - called Androgynous – was coached by Michelle Zauner, who fronts the acclaimed group Japanese Breakfast.

Missy Dabice, who sings and plays guitar with Mannequin Pussy, was unprepared for the wave of interest the series provoked. "I didn't think people would be that interested in our role in it I just thought our fans would get a huge kick out of it. There was never going to be a venue for us on a TV show unless it was HBO." She laughs. "Not many programmes are keen to include a band called Mannequin Pussy."

The city's most famous musical contributions have come from the African-American community — the Philly soul sound of the 1970s, and hip-hop stars such as DJ Jazzy Jeff and Fresh Prince (the pre-Hollywood Will Smith), The Roots, Meek Mill and Lil Uzi Vert - but its indie scene has thrived in recent years. The War on Drugs have become an arena band; Kurt Vile, Alex G, Sheer Mag, Beach Slang, Modern Baseball, The Districts and Spirit of the Beehive have become cult and critics' favourites.

Many of Philadelphia's indie musicians aren't natives, but outsiders. Some come to study at one of the city's dozens of colleges and don't leave (Zauner is one of them). "I've heard a lot of musicians say that Philly is a place where they can be themselves," says John Vettese, a DJ at the station WXPN, who is known for supporting local bands.

"For one thing it is affordable [to live here] compared to cities like New York, Nashville or Los Angeles. And compared to a city like New York, it's kind of chill." He notes that Jake Ewald of Modern Baseball would be playing



Where indies flourish





3,000-capacity venues, then working the door at small clubs without being hassled when the band was not working.

The presence of so many students and the absence of the major labels and major media of the biggest cities means Philadelphia's musicians have tended to develop on a DIY network of house shows and impromptu venues. In the past decade, one of the most important DIY venues was a place called Everybody Hits — baseball batting cages by day, music venue by night.

"There were a lot of spaces cropping up and then going away," says Frances Quinlan of the band Hop Along. "People would be busted by landlords and local authorities. But then new places would come up in their stead. Anywhere that rent is affordable is going to draw creative people."

In the early years of the 2010s, when Japanese Breakfast were emerging, Zauner and her bandmates were playing shows in basements. "The Golden Teahouse was the era I came up in," she says. "It was this west Philly house where a lot of indie bands started. I remember Alex G, Porches, Frankie Cosmos and me" - all of whom have gone on to acclaimed careers - "playing a \$5 house show. West Philly was the house show place."

Then they would work their way towards clubs like Johnny Brenda's in the Fishtown district, the bohemian area of the city. And once they got big enough to tour, Philadelphia was an ideal base - within easy reach of Washington DC, Baltimore, New York, Pittsburgh and Boston, as opposed to the epic drives facing bands in the interior or on the west coast.

It's often that fertile city scenes lead to bands copying each other, a sort of musical regression to the mean. That hasn't been the case in Philadelphia: the success of The War on Drugs didn't lead to a rash of bands playing Springsteeninfluenced space rock. So Mannequin Pussy play powerful and melodic indie rock, with their hardcore punk back-

ground evident; Japanese Breakfast are an eclectic, genre-agnostic blend of electronica, indie rock and pop; Hop Along are a classic indie band, all jangling guitars; Spirit of the Beehive are all over the place, sometimes unlistenably harsh and sometimes sweetly melodic. No one sounds like anyone else.

"We are all so different, which is pretty remarkable, considering how often we share bills," Dabice says. And, compared to other cities, the artists have supported each other, she says. "That's not to say there isn't competition. In any arts scene there is always healthy competition, but in Philly it is very inspiring because a lot of people are working in new and exciting ways and you want to push yourself."

Mare of Easttown was broadcast, by happy coincidence, just before both Mannequin Pussy and Japanese Breakfast released new records - the former the EP Perfect, the latter the album Jubi*lee* — so there was an immediate uptick in visibility. Dabice says her band has started getting messages from older lis-

'We are all so different, which is pretty remarkable considering how often we share bills'

teners, who discovered them through the show. "That's cute," she says.

The irony is that this moment of exposure comes just as times are getting harder to be a low-budget musician in the city. Yes, Quinlan says, affordable cities attract creative people, but then creative people attract developers. "Around me now are lots of new apartment complexes I couldn't afford to live in. Recently in Fishtown I walked past a boutique hotel. It's alarming to see how people have cashed in on this romanticised vision of the city."

Dabice points out that gentrification has more serious effects than making it harder for indie bands to live cheaply. "New York companies are buying up residential homes, so everyday Philadelphians are being outbid by LLCs and corporations, people who have been here for generations. It is affecting black communities especially. Philly is a very diverse city, and as home prices go up, people whose families have been here for 70 years are being priced out of homes they grew up in."

And the beat goes on. Until it can't, because it's all condos.

'Jubilee' by Japanese Breakfast is out now on Dead Oceans; 'Perfect' by Mannequin Pussy is out now on Epitaph

Diversions

CHESS LEONARD BARDEN

Magnus Carlsen has an abundance of personal targets, but could be in danger of over-ambition, With over-the-board chess reviving after a year of online games, the world champion's thoughts should be focused on his €2m, 14game title defence against the Russian champion Ian Nepomniachtchi at Expo Dubai starting in November.

Top to bottom:

Michelle Zauner at the Sasquatch

Music Festival,

Washington

state, in 2018;

Missy Dabice of Mannequin

Pussy performs

in Barcelona in

Along's Frances

Quinlan — Stephanie Dore; Alamy; Julia Khoroshilov

2017; Hop

Japanese

Breakfast's

However, Carlsen has never won the biennial knock-out World Cup, so has

entered for its 2021 edition at Sochi this month. The No1 is also leading in the Meltwater Champions Tour, a series of online

tournaments played monthly until September. He seems overplayed, and

his online form has shown vulnerability, which continued this week at the Goldmoney Asian Rapid. Carlsen has had his victories, notably in a final move with a queen sacrifice. In Wednesday's quarter-

T & Täia i 2 i # 22 2

final against US champion Wesley So, he survived some anxious moments before winning the speed tie-break. The final (noon start) is

this weekend, free to watch on chess24.com. Before that, there is a semi-final between Russia's Vladislav Artemiev and China's Ding Liren.

2425

Nigel Short v Garry Kasparov, Amsterdam 1996. White to move. Short's poor career score against the alltime No 1 would have been much better if he had converted strong positions. Can you find the hidden winner White missed here? Solution, back page

BRIDGE PAUL MENDELSON

Some North players settled for 6NT; others invited with 5NT; some simply punted 7NT. West led 10♠. How would you plan the hand?

You might have four clubs, four diamonds, three hearts and two spades, but it is unlikely clubs will split, and the diamond suit requires a decision.

What about a bonus spade trick? Some declarers put in doomed them. You have a decision to make in spades:



delay until later. What kind of opening lead should West be making? Something safe. Leading 10♠ from ♠Q1098

Dealer: South Love All North East South West 7NT would be slightly risky.

Bear that in mind. Play low from dummy and win in hand with K♠. Unblock ♥AQ and cash three top clubs and K♥. Interesting information materialises: West started with only two clubs and **♥**1098. On the third club,

West discards a spade. This suggests that she is protecting something in diamonds but not in spades. As West holds ♥1098, to have led from Q109 against 7NT looks plain wrong. To play West for J♦ and East for Q♠ seems right. So, cash ♦AK and lead 8♦. When West plays low, finesse.

This holds and cashing A♠ fells East's Q♠. Such thinking won't always lead to success but, when it does, it will feel good.

POLYMATH 1,133 SET BY GOZO

ACROSS

1 Massenet opera about an Athenian courtesan, based on the novel by Anatole France (5)

4 Dorset town where its

- Pottery was founded on the Quay in 1875 (5) 7 Market town and cathedral city - and race course - in North Yorkshire (5)
- 10 Rocky peak rising 1,296 feet over Copacabana Beach (5,4,8)11 ----- Firth, an inlet of the
- Irish Sea separating Cumbria from Dumfries and Galloway 12 Intimidated or bullied into
- submission (10) 14 Headmaster of Rugby School whose style of teaching was described in Tom Brown's
- 15 Tim, creator of the Eden Project and who rejuvenated the Lost Gardens of Heligan
- 18 Weinberger's operatic Bagpiper (8)

School Days (6,6)

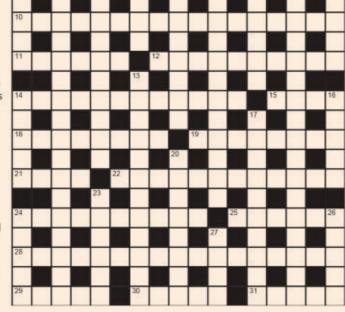
- 19 Hooked clasps used by stonemasons to hold blocks together (8)
- 21 Point of ----, the northernmost tip of the Isle of Man (4) 22 Remote West Highland
- peninsula where Corrachadh Mor is the most westerly point of the British mainland (12)
- 24 An afternoon social occasion in a ballroom, maybe (3.7)
- 25 Surname of US musical family of Merrill, Jay, Donny, Jimmy and Marie (6)
- 28 Red wine released annually on the third Thursday in November (10.7)

- 29 The Stadium of Light replaced ---- Park as Sunderland FC's ground in 1997 (5)
- 30 A US motherless calf (5) 31 William Gilbert, doctor and larger-than-life Victorian cricketer (5)

- DOWN 1 International matches at the Gabba, WACA and Newlands for example (5)
- 2 Oysters and bacon on toast (6,2,9)3 The purest and noblest

knight of the Round Table

- (3,7)4 School or college dance, originally in the US (4)
- 5 Second copy of an article from a periodical (8) 6 Public school activity played
- in the "Furrow" (4,4,4) 7 Industrial city in Britanny, capital of Ille-et-Vilaine (6) 8 1986 Lloyd Webber musical based on the novel by Gaston Leroux (7,2,3,5)
- 9 Silk voile (5) 13 Cold dish with apples. walnuts, celery and mayonnaise, named after a New York hotel (7,5) 14 Puccini opera (5)
- 16 "Typhoon", nickname of a 1950s England and Northamptonshire fast bowler (5) 17 State capital of Pennsylvania
- on the Susquehanna River (10) 20 Incessant (8)
- 23 Pot for fruity conserves (3,3) 24 River known as the "Tevere" to the Italians (5)
- 26 Town on the river Teith, near Stirling, with a well-restored 14th century castle (5) 27 French for 11 (4)



Solution Polymath 1,131



CROSSWORD 16,828 SET BY MUDD

- **ACROSS**
- 1 Lift fragment (6) 4Fruit drink (6)
- 8 Large vessel where blighter stores bread (7) 9 Ghastly female hack, say,
- touring Hackney (7) 11 Failing, where lids come down? (2,3,5)
- umpteen stairs extremely rapidly, initially? (4) 13 Beat both to pulp,

12 Might one be shooting up

14 Delicate thing, clutch a nightmare! (8) 16 In general, go down slope

defending right (5)

18 Attack humorous statement (5)

20One's high-maintenance

- bed needs shortening (4) 21 Bonkers theme, moving (10)23 Once more, deliver book
- (7)24Surprise final scene ends after dawn (7)
- 25 Those mentioning mystery writer (6) 26Unofficial digit, back into second place (6)

Jotter pad

- DOWN
- 1 Somewhere in Belgium, in European country (5) 2 An article in centre of fort,
- different (7) 3 Message about member not too much to get over?
- 5 Drake's cry, false (5) 6 Where button activated with difficulty (2,1,4)
- and games (9) 10 Sheep and cows etc, as it happens, standard (9) 13 Disaster coming around

sneakily, observing fun

- about noon, being late (9) 15 Entering Riga, some terrorists in tank (9) 17 Year end difficult for
- clerical office (7) 19 Learn to play tomorrow or the next day? (5,2)
- 21 Bit of fluff left, hoover having cleared house (5) 22 Last word said about very

on-off device (5)





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

Northern Ireland's tensions between
loyalists and nationalists still boil over into
violence, most strikingly among young
people. *Laura Noonan* reports from Belfast
on what this generation sees in its future

grew up 200 miles south of Belfast.
Northern Ireland's grass is the same
distinctive green as the fields of the
Irish Republic where I spent my
childhood. Its dramatic coastline
evokes the same feeling as Connemara's.
Belfast has a zone of shiny, modern
apartments and offices, the Titanic
Quarter, not unlike Dublin's Docklands.
And yet, for all the familiarity, so much
about Northern Ireland feels foreign.

It's not just the Union Jack flags that weave their way over and back across the Shankill Road, 15 minutes' walk from Belfast's main shopping street. It's not the enormous murals of men in balaclavas holding automatic rifles, a sight that still unnerves me. It's not the practicalities of a different currency, different road signs, different speed limits. It's more the sense of the place and my feeling of otherness within it.

Northern Ireland's conflict was the backdrop to the first 15 years of my life. After almost a decade away, I returned in April to cover the riots that erupted when loyalist protests against post-Brexit trading arrangements descended into violence. The unrest lasted more than a week. On the worst night, a bus was torched and water cannon were deployed for the first time in six years. It was a scary experience, heightened because of the news reports I remember from childhood. Back then, armoured police vans, blazing fires and masked rioters led to outcomes far deadlier than the scenes a few months ago.

This year marks the centenary of the partition of Ireland into an independent south and a north that is part of the UK. Cause for celebration in one community and condemnation in the other. And with Northern Ireland beginning another marching season, when unionists celebrate traditions with parades and bonfires, the region is bracing again.

Poverty, joblessness and the anxiety and boredom of lockdown all played a part in driving people on to the streets earlier this year. So too the struggle to find Northern Ireland's place in the UK after Brexit. But something else was going on too, something particular to its involuted past.

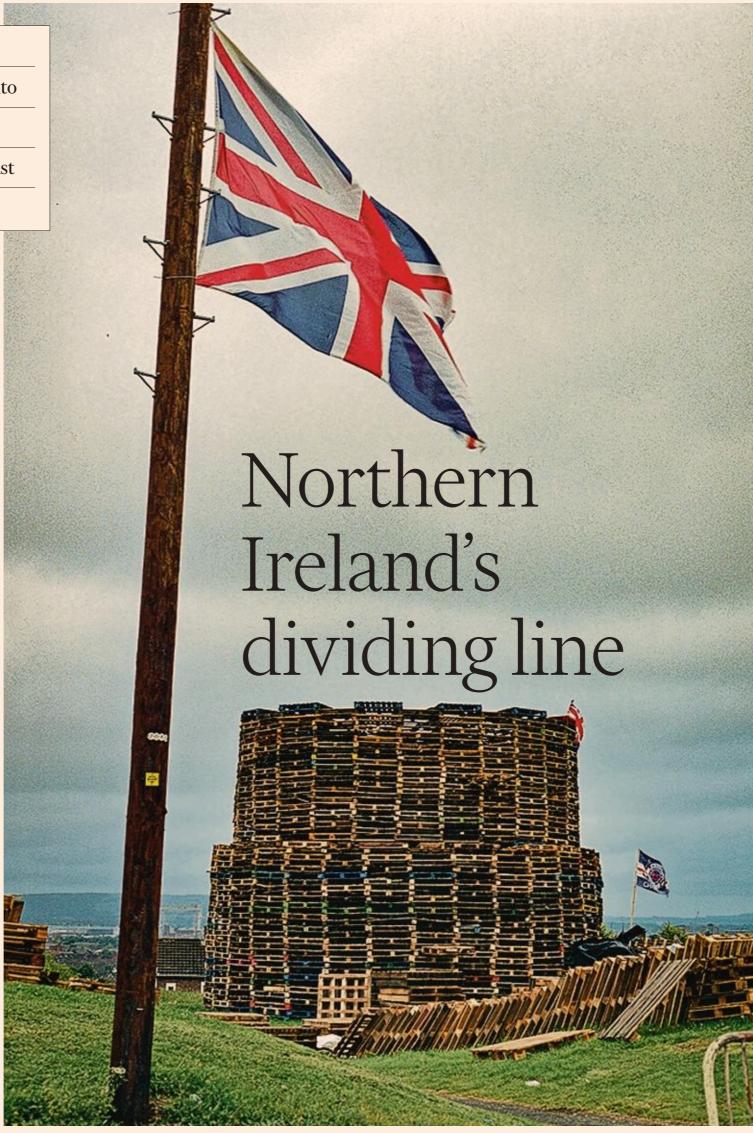
For many, the most striking feature of the April riots, from Belfast to Coleraine and Londonderry, also known as Derry, was the extreme youth of those charging police, hurling bottles and rocks and petrol bombs. Some were not yet in their teens. I have spent the past few months asking young people, and the adults who work with them, what they see for the future of the place they call home.

When I drive into a loyalist area, I'm quickly marked out because of the Republic of Ireland plates on my car. Some of the kids I meet delight in sharing their hatred of Catholics. When I ask one group what would make Northern Ireland better, a teenager replies that all the Catholics should be pushed out and their houses burnt. There are roads I don't park on, because the car could be a target for vandals. At one meeting, in an empty building in loyalist territory, my interviewee asks me if I have come alone, and I wonder if I shouldn't have.

The adults I meet tell me the roots of the recent unrest stretch back far further than the Northern Ireland protocol, the complex post-Brexit agreements that have become the unlikely subject of teenagers' banners and battle cries.

With that in mind, I travel to one of Northern Ireland's largest housing estates to meet Nathan Anderson. He was five years old when the 1998 Good Friday Agreement ended more than three decades of sectarian bloodshed. But he can remember the joy and relief in his loyalist Belfast community when family members and neighbours came home from prison, freed from their sentences under the terms of the landmark peace deal. Even as a child who didn't really understand, he says, "we knew the boys were getting out . . . That was fantastic to see."

Anderson was part of a promised generation: the first to grow up without the ever-present threat of bombings, shootings and riots that had claimed more than 3,600 lives. Now a 28-year-old single father of two boys, he still lives in the working-class area of Rathcoole that was home to his parents and four brothers. "There was five of us. Four are here — we've all got our own houses," he tells me during a walk round the estate.



Above: a bonfire on Black Mountain, to the west of Belfast, overlooking the city Rathcoole, about six miles north of Belfast, is a place of elaborate playgrounds and huge murals celebrating loyalist paramilitary groups. It is a place, says Anderson, where a few minutes' walk to the shop can take an hour because of "the people you run into" and where, during annual festivities to celebrate the Protestant victory at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690, children run freely in and out of each other's open houses. It was also one of the areas where, in April, loyalist protesters clashed with police for more than a week.

As we walk through streets where cars burned, the optimism of 1998 is distant. The Good Friday Agreement ended armed violence between the Protestants, unionists and loyalists who supported Northern Ireland's union with Great Britain, and the Catholics, nationalists and Republicans fighting for a united Ireland. But the communities remain on opposite sides of a fragile

political divide. "It's important to understand that peace agreements aren't fairy stories," Jonathan Powell, chief of staff to former UK prime minister Tony Blair at the time of the peace deal, told me. "People don't get to live happily ever after just because you've signed a peace agreement anywhere in the world."

The spark for the spring riots was the fallout from Britain's exit from the EU, which imposed a customs border with the rest of the UK that unionists see as a threat to their British identity. But the

The question of identity and culture is 'all around you. It's impossible to get away from: you see it, you hear it, you feel it'

Nathan Anderson

fuel was the deep dissatisfaction of loyalists, who have seen little improvement to their lives from the peace process and believe Catholics have progressed more quickly in education and jobs.

Anderson, who works in manufacturing and has organised community meetings around Brexit's consequences, is one of the disillusioned. In 2012, protests over the removal of the Union Jack over Belfast's City Hall turned violent, and he was arrested. Though he says he had no part in the violence, Anderson was convicted and sentenced to eight months for riotous assembly. He was 20.

"Before prison, of course I aimed high—all teenage boys aim high... [Now,] in a work sense, I have to aim low," he says. More violence could have a similar impact on Rathcoole's young, who he believes are driven to the streets as he was. "It was patriotic young kids who wanted to do something... so that's just how they went about it," Anderson

says, describing the omnipresent question of identity and culture. "It's all around you. It's impossible to get away from: you see it, you hear it, you feel it."

Every generation in Northern Ireland

has taken part in some kind of civil disobedience, he tells me. "It's like the culture . . . I'm not making it socially acceptable at all. I'm just explaining how easy it is for a community to get involved in, on both sides of the community . . . People just go and watch these things. It just became the norm."

During the April violence, community leaders and politicians appealed to protesters to "think of your futures". "What future?" was the response of many working-class teenagers and young adults I spoke to on both sides.

The areas where rioting broke out are some of the country's most economically deprived. Five of the 10 most deprived communities in Northern Ireland border Belfast's peace walls, according to a broad deprivation measure used by Northern Ireland's statistics agency. Scores for income, healthcare and unemployment are particularly bad. "There's that feeling of always being told, 'Youse are at the bottom of the line, youse will never achieve this;" says Alan Waite, co-founder of R-City, a community group created in 2013 to develop skills and opportunities for young Protestants and Catholics.

Around Belfast, youth clubs and community groups have been trying to stop the city's most vulnerable from being lured into violence. Earlier this year, for example, they loaded kids who were watching the riots on to buses and drove them to their centres and provided pizza and movies. (The gatherings were allowed even under lockdown.)

'People don't get to live happily ever after just because you've signed a peace agreement anywhere in the world'

Jonathan Powell

Such tactics are not always effective. "You're never going to beat a kid's adrenaline rush off a riot. You're not going to stop them," says Michael Logan, an 18-year-old who works part-time at Townsend Outreach Centre, a youth centre off the loyalist stronghold of the Shankill Road. Yet Logan was among those who went out to try to defuse things. He recalls the smell of petrol and "kids as young as 12 and 13 breaking bricks and stuff off the ground".

As a young teen, Logan used to attend a sort of fight club. He calls them "sectarian fights". Groups of teens from both sides would gather for pre-arranged clashes, usually around 50 on each side, though only 10 to 20 would actually fight, while the others watched. "At the start, it was just a game of chase. One side would run at the other, the other side would run back . . . but it started to get very dangerous," he says. Logan recalls the last night he went, when a young nationalist boy was beaten so badly he required intensive care in hospital. "The screams . . . "he says in a low voice, looking into the middle distance of the industrial kitchen we're chatting in. He never returned.

He believes the glorified violence of Northern Ireland's past was a big factor driving kids on to the streets recently. "They want to look up. They see their fathers and their grandfathers, their uncles who all fought in these paramilitaries, but they fought for a cause." That cause is no longer there, he says, but the feeling that no one is listening endures.

Paramilitary groups on both sides continue to exert control over communities to this day, according to the latest dispatch from the Independent Reporting Commission set up by the UK and Irish governments, and are believed to have been involved in the background of April's riot, though Winston Irvine, a former (Protestant paramilitary) Ulster Volunteer Force boss turned community worker, says the paramilitary angle is "way overblown".

Ruth Petticrew, 59, a former deacon in the Presbyterian Church, came to Belfast in her mid-twenties and has been running Townsend Outreach Centre for 30 years. Working on the frontline of communities during the Troubles was "horrendous", she says. "I look back and think I don't know I survived." Once, after agreeing to officiate at the funeral of a murdered 21-year-old, she received death threats from the loyalist Ulster Defence Association paramilitary group. She says she refused to back down, requesting only that if they were going to kill her, they "don't do it in front of young people [at the centre] because they'll never forget it".

Many of the challenges are mirrored in inner-city Catholic communities. Stephen Hughes says he inherited "nine





Left: Nathan Anderson at Rathcoole's bonfire site Above: Ruth Petticrew, who has run Townsend Outreach Centre for 30 years and worked on the frontline of the Troubles

Spectrum

15



Above: Stephen Hughes, of St Peter's Immaculata youth centre, says its personal development programmes can alleviate the damaging, 'all-consuming' cycle that some families are trapped in — Megan Doherty

kids and a chair" eight years ago when he took on the job of running St Peter's Immaculata youth centre near the Lower Falls Road, one of Belfast's most deprived Republican areas. Today the centre is used by 50 to 100 boys and girls six nights a week who gather to watch football, play computer games, colour in pictures and chase each other round. "It takes you away from stuff on the outside," says Sean, a 13-year-old who wants to be an engineer. By "stuff" he means "all them riots and all that happened".

Hughes, a 55-year-old bear of a man who laughs as loudly with the kids as he shouts when disciplining them, speaks about his charges with fatherly pride. Children can be suspended for misbehaviour but never expelled, he tells me. Hughes hopes this unconditional welcome — and personal development programmes that cover everything from how to brush your teeth to table manners — can alleviate the damaging cycle some families are trapped in. "It's very, very easy for that to become all-consuming," he says.

One night last month, as he and I drove between his centre and Petticrew's, we spotted a fire on a strip of grass between blocks of houses. By the time the fire engines were approaching, Hughes was on the phone trying to get a colleague to come and help stop the kids confronting the firefighters.

More than a month ago, loyalists began building the towering structures that they will burn on July 11. Setting them on fire ushers in the main event in Ulster's marching season and is intended to commemorate the 17th-century battle that initiated the ascendancy of Protestants in Ireland. Eleventh Night bonfires are typically accompa-

nied by marching bands and parties.

Some of the bonfire builders talk about the season in terms of learning skills such as team building, construction and organisation. They talk about the bonds forged over door-to-door calls to raise funds for materials to construct "the bonnie" and sleeping next to it overnight to defend it. They also talk about burning Republican paramilitary flags. Some events have sparked sectarian violence as well as clashes with the

In one of Belfast's most deprived areas, four boys between the ages of 15 and 21 take a break from gathering fuel for their neighbourhood's bonfires. When I ask them why so many young people took to the streets, all of them ask not to be named. "They should put the border where it's supposed to be," says the youngest. It's "supposed to be" between the Republic and Northern Ireland. Also, people should respect and understand that "we're British", he adds. In this city, says another, "you have to be violent to be heard".

These kids
'want to look up.
They see their
fathers and
grandfathers...
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but they fought
for a cause'

Michael Logan

The sense of voicelessness hasn't always been this acute. Donna McCracken, who used to run the Black Mountain Action Group in a loyalist area of Belfast and now works there part-time, says there was an "extreme change in attitudes in communities" after the flags protests in 2012-13, as people became more attuned to how their community was being marginalised and disadvantaged.

Protestants held the bulk of the region's land, wealth, jobs and power when Northern Ireland was created. Between 2001 and 2017, they lost more than 21,500 jobs, while Catholics gained more than 56,000, according to data from the North's equality commission, highlighting the gulf in the two communities' experiences since the Good Friday Agreement promised equal opportunities.

Protestants also feel the Police Service of Northern Ireland, created in 2001 to replace the Royal Ulster Constabulary, is more lenient towards Catholics, a perception furthered by the force's failure to prevent thousands of Republicans from attending the funeral last June of Bobby Storey, a senior Irish Republican Army figure, in defiance of Covid guidelines. A subsequent failure to prosecute attendees, including nationalist political party Sinn Féin's Northern Ireland head Michelle O'Neill, provoked outrage.

The perceived slights are heightened by loyalist fears that, once the 2021 census is counted, Protestants, who accounted for more than 62 per cent of Northern Ireland's population in 1926,

Left: Michael
Logan at
Townsend
Outreach
Centre: 'You're
never going to
beat a kid's
adrenaline
rush off a riot'

could be overtaken by Catholics as the region's largest denomination. That is a particularly alarming prospect as Sinn Féin escalates calls for a referendum on uniting Northern Ireland with the Republic.

"I really understand how Catholics were treated in Belfast and Northern Ireland — it was horrific," says Paula Robinson, 33, who attended Black Mountain as a teenager and now runs the group. "But putting the Protestant community down and doing the same thing isn't the answer. That's not equality."

The divides between Catholics and Protestants are at the root of most of Northern Ireland's challenges. Education is supposed to boost equality but instead amplifies segregation, dividing children from a young age, feeding fears and suspicions. Some believe the failures of education have increased the lure of paramilitary groups. "When their aspirations are so low and when their opportunities are very limited, it can be very difficult for people not to buy into that [criminal] lifestyle," says Hughes.

The system also exacerbates inequality - Northern Ireland sends eight times as many students per head as England to state-funded grammar schools based on entrance exams that favour well-off students, who can get tutoring or other support. The result is an education system that produces better A-level and GCSE results than in England and Wales but also has "pockets of underachievement" which, according to Northern Ireland's recently departed education minister Peter Weir, are linked to Northern Ireland's "divided society". Young people from middle-class families have reported knowing almost no one outside their own community before they went to university, with some citing Northern Ireland's divisions as one reason they will make their adult lives elsewhere, fuelling the brain drain that already afflicts the region.

With integrated schools slow to take off, youth groups try to bridge the gap. R-City came about when its founders realised how much common ground their loyalist and nationalist working-class youth groups had, and thought their goals could better be pursued together. The Catholic St Peter's centre and the Protestant Townsend centre also regularly run joint projects.

Logan credits a youth trip to the US in summer 2019 with members of St Peter's as changing his view "on the other side as a whole". He went there apprehensive, "partly because of the stories you hear growing up, things like the IRA - they put the fear into you in case that's what they're still like". He tells me that on the trip he found Catholics were "very similar" to him and they got on very well. When they returned home, they were asked to his youth club and he to theirs. Yet in Belfast hanging out on each other's territory poses challenges not found in most places. The clubs are a few hundred metres apart. But once the peace gates separating the communities are closed in the evenings, they are a 10-minute drive.

As Logan explains: "It's hard getting in and out. I wouldn't feel safe travelling over there, especially in the daytime. I'd be more scared because I'd be more easily seen." He believes he would be recognised because "everyone sort of knows each other", especially with social media.

Faced with such obstacles, new friendships can quickly falter, and have for years. Logan's mother went on a similar trip to the US as a youngster and made Catholic friends, but her son still grew up fearing the other side. Northern Ireland is rich with these sorts of reminders that people have to live in the world as it is rather than the one they might wish for.

Laura Noonan is the FT's Ireland correspondent

How to cope with the climate apocalypse



Simon Kuper

Parting shot

any people in rich countries tend to structure their lives as if on a spreadsheet. They plan their careers at 17 and their pensions at 25. A couple having a baby is projecting its genes 90 years ahead.

Our generation of westerners, raised in the most peaceful era in history, has come to imagine our personal futures as foreseeable. But the climate crisis upends all predictability. Climate change equals human change, and it requires reimagining our lives. So, how should we all live with the growing risk of disaster?

That's the question posed by the "Deep Adaptation" movement. Its guru, the British academic Jem Bendell, gets criticised for overstating the risk of "near-term societal collapse". But the truth is most of us probably underestimate it.

underestimate it.

Bendell's
premise is that
talk of climate
action by
governments,
corporations
and
individuals is
just talk.
Leaders
cheerily pledge
to hit zero-carbon
by 2050, when they
will be dead.

In truth, though, everybody's incentive is to keep the party going by emitting more carbon dioxide.

Each unit pumped into the atmosphere is an infinitesimal contribution to someone else's problem at some unknown future time. This will be true even for our children living with climate disaster.

Inevitably, then, carbon emissions kept rising until the pandemic. During the unprecedented economic shutdown, they dropped about 6.4 per cent — but that's still short of the 7.6 per cent fall required every year through 2030 to keep us on track for limiting the rise in temperatures to 1.5C.

Meanwhile, climate change is advancing faster than the cautious predictions of the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. A draft of the IPCC's next report, just leaked to Agence France-Presse, is the panel's scariest document yet, with increased predictions of droughts, floods and heatwaves by 2050. It also warns about the "tipping points" that could accelerate this future, such as the drying out of the Amazon rainforest or the collapse of ice sheets in Greenland and the Antarctic.

Greenland's sheet is melting seven times faster than in the 1990s. Today's climate disasters — such as the recordbreaking heatwave in the western US—are portents of worse.

Anyone predicting apocalypse faces two standard objections. The first is that the prediction demotivates people from taking action. That might be true, but then people aren't taking significant action anyway and the objection doesn't invalidate the prediction.

The second objection is that all past predictions of global apocalypse were wrong. However, past apocalypticism was a lower-probability bet because we only acquired the capacity to

annihilate ourselves once atomic bombs arrived in the 1940s. Progress has doubled our average lifespans and simultaneously enabled us to end the global story.

Most of us cope with this not by denying it but by not thinking about it. People in the burgeoning "sustainability" industry prefer to hype small fixes (this new plane will consume 10 per cent less fuel!) than contemplate the chances of everything going pop.

So how to live? The younger you are, the more urgent the question. On the most basic level, if you're buying a house, you're typically making a 50-year bet: the period of the average mortgage, plus the mortgage of the person who will buy it from you. I wouldn't buy in Miami today.

The rule of thumb is that

the safest regions in the

future will be the ones
that currently have
relatively mild or
cold climates.
Perversely,
this means
that the best
places to
escape
climate
disaster are
precisely those
that emitted most

carbon in the past:

northern Europe and

the northern US.

More existentially, adopt the outlook that almost all humans had until about the 1950s: don't make any presumptions about your future. Don't structure your life around distant payoffs. Which entity will be able to pay your pension in 2050?

Then there's the moral question: do you want to be part of a climate-destroying system? It's tempting to shove all the blame on the fossil-fuels industry, but almost everyone with a job in a developed country is complicit — shop assistants, hotel staff and journalists whose newspapers are funded by readers from carbonintensive industries.

Anyone with gas heating, a car and the occasional plane ticket lives off climate destruction. Almost everything we call "progress" or "growth" makes things worse. Our children probably won't admire our careers.

The stereotype of the apocalyptic survivalist is the lunatic in a tinfoil hat with an AK-47 on a mountaintop. (The upscale version is a mansion in New Zealand.) But there are more social ways of opting out. I witnessed one when I moved into the crumbling Prenzlauer Berg neighbourhood in East Berlin in 1990, just after the fall of communism.

Many of my new neighbours were young East Germans who had rejected what they considered the evil communist system. They had no official employment, or worked in low-status jobs as librarians or nurses or, like the young Angela Merkel, in non-communist professions such as physics.

Some lived off grid, without telephones, perhaps with stolen electricity. Their little community was riddled with informers, yet people helped each other, expecting nothing of the future. Oddly, they may have been our future.

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What's fuelling China's new online nationalists?

Tech world

People inside China are bearing the

brunt of attacks. Yuan Yang looks at what's changed

ast summer, a friend of mine told me that she found China's biggest social media platform Weibo was becoming "unusable" for feminists and liberals such as her. Tempers were so heated, Bao told me, that disagreements easily became personal pile-ons. After a friend became the centre of a social media storm, she posted a message: "We're all just blades of grass, what's the point of

fighting with each other?" Bao ended up becoming the next target.

At the time, we put it down to Covid-19, which, across the world, left people stuck at home, bored and anxious. They were just venting. But a year on, Chinese nationalist sentiment is even greater online. It used to be outsiders, a US politician criticising the government for instance, who received the worst of the attacks from bloggers. Now insiders

bear the brunt. Recently, Weibo influencers have gone after journalists at the Global Times, the English-language, state-owned tabloid, for being "traitors". (Some of the publication's journalists had criticised a government account's Weibo post mocking India's Covid death toll.) Earlier this month, the popular science blog Science Squirrels Club deregistered its Weibo account after a few lines in a post challenged a myth about historic Japanese experiments on Chinese prisoners of war.

What's changed? The audience, the platform or the government? All of them – in different ways.

Nationalist feeling has soared since the Chinese government all but eradicated Covid through stringent lockdowns and other measures. The fact that China's relationships with the US, India, Australia and other countries are under strain has offered a number of easy enemies.

What's on social media doesn't always reflect reality, in China as elsewhere. For Chinese people who only see the US via culture wars on Twitter, it can be easy to assume the country is on the brink of breakdown. Likewise, those reading Chinese social media from outside might think there are no liberals left. That isn't the case: many, such as Bao, have simply left social media. Before she did, she had an amusing exchange with someone who had sent her a barrage of insults online. "Our views are different, but I wouldn't attack you," Bao wrote.

The response: "That's the difference between liberals and nationalists."

Weibo has changed too. Its ecosystem of influencers has shifted vastly since Bao joined a decade ago, when online political discussion was still relatively freewheeling.

tively freewheeling.

After Xi Jinping became leader of the Chinese Communist party in 2012, crackdowns on political speech and even celebrity gossip limited what Weibo users were allowed to say. Influencers — who need to keep attracting followers and attention — have the difficult task of creating hot topics without touching political hot potatoes. For many, nationalism is a safe arena.

Influencers often earn their keep by promoting brands, as they do in other countries, and it's not unusual to find posts promoting washing machines alongside those on who should own the Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea, which are subject to a territorial dispute

with Japan and Taiwan. The same people who accuse, say, public intellectuals of "selling out to Japan" often sell Japanese products via sponsored posts.

The final element is the government's hardline approach, which has created an online climate ripe for nationalism. "On the topics of nationalism and feminism, our hands are tied," said a social media industry insider.

China's internet regulator, the Cyberspace Administration, aims to promote patriotic speech. But the line between fervent patriotism and aggressive nationalism is difficult to manage.

Bao believes that when "blades of grass" — ordinary users — attack each other, the government benefits because people are distracted from criticising it. While that's true, both government and company censors have an uneasy hold on China's new online nationalists. After all, they don't always do what's in Beijing's best interests.

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Spectrum

Why not apply **Marie Kondo** to Britain's statue wars?



Tim Harford

Undercover economist

eniger, aber besser. These three words less, but better – summarise the philosophy of the great German designer Dieter Rams. His striking designs, from Braun electronics to Vitsoe furniture, have been influential to the point of ubiquity. Apple's original iPod clearly resembles a Rams-designed radio.

But while "less, but better" is revered by designers, it's not the way most of us live our lives. Our homes are full of junk, our diaries are full of meetings and our attention is fragmented by dozens — hundreds? — of electronic interruptions a day.

Countercultural counter-clutter manifestos have been popular: Greg McKeown's Essentialism (get rid of unnecessary tasks and meetings), Cal Newport's Digital Minimalism (get rid of unnecessary apps and devices) and of course Marie Kondo's The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying (get rid of unnecessary possessions). But like Rams himself, they are swimming against the tsunami of digital, physical and mental "stuff".

Why do we accumulate so much? An intriguing explanation comes from one of the oldest ideas in behavioural economics: the "endowment effect". The term was coined by one of the fathers of the field, Nobel laureate Richard Thaler.

In his book Misbehaving, Thaler described wine connoisseur Richard Rossett's cellar, which contained bottles he had purchased for a few dollars that had matured into wines

worth hundreds. Rossett occasionally drank these fine vintages, yet he would never add to his cellar by buying wines at high prices, nor would he sell those he already had at a huge profit.

There is an inconsistency here: wine cannot logically be both too expensive to buy and too cheap to sell. This is the

endowment effect, by which we value possessions in part because they are possessions. Still, only an economist would find Rossett's behaviour odd. (Compounding the mystery, Rossett was the head of the economics department at the University of Rochester.)

While Rossett's case is an intuitive example, Thaler, Jack Knetsch and Daniel Kahneman also produced experimental evidence of the effect. In one study of students, half were given a commemorative mug. All were told to write down the price at which they would be willing to sell their mug – or to buy a mug if they started without one. Those with a mug were reluctant to sell for \$5. Those without one were reluctant to buy at half that price. This endowment effect suggests that the status quo matters far more than it should. Often we hold on to things for no reason other than that they are our things.



We could make an

active choice as to

who we wanted on

the pedestal for

the next quarter

of a century

go. This is not intended as a "detox". It's a blank slate, designed to change the status quo. At the end of this period, says Newport, digital tools should be allowed back in only as a deliberate choice, rather than because we sleepwalked into using them once and never let go.

Minimalists

understand the

quo and work to

counteract it.

Newport, for

the minimalist

power of the status

example, argues that

should begin with a

month-long period

essential tools are to

Everything else must

of digital fasting:

only the most

be allowed.

Kondo also fights the status quo. She advocates removing possessions from their usual setting and piling them all together, a bracing experience that reminds us just how much unnecessary stuff most of us own. Then, argues Kondo, look for what "sparks joy". Deciding to keep something from the pile becomes an active choice rather than a resigned acceptance of the status quo.

I was reminded of this as I pondered the argument over all the portraits and statues associated with the UK's colonial past. Nobody can pretend to resolve this with a single proposal, but it does strike me that we'd be in an easier place if we occasionally made

like Kondo and took them all down. We could put all the portraits and all

the statues in a big pile in the centre of each town or the lobby of each grand building. Then we could make an active choice as to who we really wanted on the pedestal for the next quarter of a century. Does Edward Colston really spark joy? Cecil Rhodes? Everyone who misses the cut could be stored away until a future round.

I can't imagine that happening to the portraiture of a Cambridge college or the statues in Trafalgar Square any time soon. Deliberately stepping away from the status quo is not always desirable and it is rarely easy.

But most of us have had to do just that over the past 15 months. Remember diary squeezes? Juggling the school run with an exercise class? The embarrassment of double-booking a dinner with friends and a night at the theatre? Neither do I. But logically these things must once have happened and they're starting to happen again.

In the desperation to get back to normality, to see people (anyone) and go places (anywhere), there's a risk that we miss the Kondo window of opportunity in which things have been reset and the endowment effect does not exist. I am trying to think, rather than simply revert to the status quo.

Not every task on my To Do list and every meeting in my calendar sparks joy, but I try.

Less, but better.

Tim Harford's new book is 'The Data Detective'

Parents paying thousands a year for a top education in the hope of getting their child into Oxbridge are finding success hard to come

by, writes Brooke Masters

short-changed."

ive years ago, my son would have got a place at Oxford. But now the bar has shifted and he didn't," says my friend, a City of London executive who has put several children through elite private schools in Britain. "I think he got

I've been hearing this more and more from fellow parents with kids at top day and boarding schools in recent years. Some of it sounds like whining: most of us like to think the best of our progeny. But my friend has a point. After years of hand-wringing about unequal access to elite higher education, admissions standards are finally shifting.

A decade ago, parents who handed over tens of thousands of pounds a year for the likes of Eton College, St Paul's School or King's College School in Wimbledon could comfortably assume their kids had a very good chance of attending Oxford or Cambridge, two of the best universities in the world.

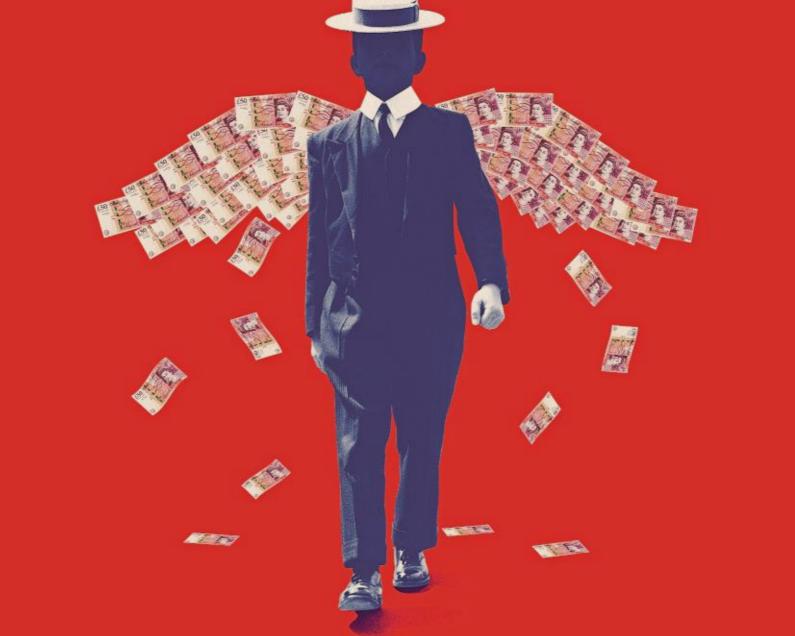
A 2018 Sutton Trust study showed that just eight institutions, six of them private, accounted for more Oxbridge places than 2,900 other UK secondary schools combined. When the headmaster of Westminster School boasted at an open evening that half the sixth form went on to Oxbridge, approving murmurs filled the hall. (I was there.)

But growing anger about inequality, rising applications from an improved state sector and a flood of international students have prompted Oxford and Cambridge to rethink. They give more credit to students who have overcome barriers on their way to top grades. This means fewer middling private school students groomed to excel at interviews are getting in. "We want to select the academically most able - the really strong candidates versus those that are average but have been well-prepared," says Samina Khan, Oxford's director of undergraduate admissions.

This is surely fair. But it also means that hothouse independent schools are losing their edge. At St Paul's, I heard one grouchy father press the high master to explain how he would protect the boys there from "social engineering".

What should parents do when a policy that is good for society seems bad for their kids? I feel genuine sympathy for anyone concerned for their child's future, but complaining about a loss of privilege comes across as tone deaf.

At Eton, attended by 20 UK prime ministers including the current one, the number of Oxbridge offers dropped from 99 in 2014 to 48 this year. At King's College, Wimbledon, offers have fallen by nearly half in two years to 27, The Sunday Times reported in February. Both schools still sit near the top of the national league tables for total offers.



Illustrations by Edmon de Haro

New school rules

But their students are finding it harder to get in, rankling parents who shell out up to £28,000 a year for day school or £44,000 for boarding.

The anger of wealthy, mostly white parents about losing the advantages they expected to be able to buy their children is part of a broader pattern of status anxiety among some sections of the British and American upper classes. It is out of step with reality: children from such backgrounds will typically enjoy greater opportunities and financial security throughout their lives. Nevertheless, the potency of this anxiety was on display in the US during 2019's "Varsity Blues" admissions scandal when actors and private equity giants were jailed for trying to buy their kids into Yale and Stanford, among others, with faked entrance test results and counterfeit athletic skills.

"When you have something that is very valuable to people, the system gets distorted," says Daniel Markovits, a Yale law professor and author of The Meritocracy Trap. "Attending these universities makes a difference in people's income and status . . . The parents see how much it costs them to live in the neighbourhoods they live in and send children to private schools, and they realise their children will be in the same bind."

Rise in annual applications to Cambridge since 1981 from just under 5,000 to 20,426 in 2020

For decades, some UK private schools traded on their high Oxbridge admission rate to help justify their astronomical and constantly rising fees. If that bargain no longer stands, what are they selling parents instead?

"Knowing what I know now, I would absolutely reconsider my decision" to choose elite boarding schools, the City executive tells me. "The fees are abso-

lutely out of whack with reality." He worries that he has disadvantaged his offspring. At his workplace, he says, applicants who attended top independent schools are treated with a "certain amount of sniffiness. 'Oh those guys got such a good education, of course they did well. We need someone hungrier."

Another parent, who attended Oxford but saw an Eton-educated son rejected, frets that attending a top independent school "has become a label that stays with you for life and it's not a good label. It means that when they are applying for university or jobs, they are at a disadvantage unless they are truly brilliant."

Sam Lucy, an archeologist, has served as an admissions tutor at Cambridge since 2009. She has little truck with parents who claim their children are getting the short end of the stick. "Nobody is



There's a 'mismatch in expectations. Parents say "I got in and you are as clever as me. Why haven't they made you an offer?"

Sam Lucy, Cambridge University

entitled to get into Cambridge. You have to earn your place by being serious about your subject and going above and beyond the school curriculum. No one should expect to get in, but if they do, they will have deserved it."

Lucy has been asked so many times why smart students are getting turned down that she carries a chart that illustrates what has changed. Since 1981, annual applications to Cambridge have risen from just under 5,000 to 20,426 last year. Highly selective state sixth forms

such as Harris Westminster and Brampton Manor in London have sprung up, partly to prepare children from disadvantaged backgrounds for Oxbridge and other top universities. They not only produce students with high exam scores and impressive essays, but also train them for interviews, an area where posh schools have long excelled. In 2021, 55 students at Brampton Manor secured conditional Oxbridge offers, exceeding Eton's 48; most have ethnic minority backgrounds, receive free school meals or were the first in their family to apply for university. Cambridge and Oxford have also had a big increase in overseas applications.

Meanwhile, the two universities, which promise small group teaching by dons and rooms in ancient stone quadrangles, have not expanded appreciably. That means it is roughly four times harder now to get one of the 6,800 places than it was when today's parents were applying. "That's the mismatch in expectations. Parents say, 'I got in and you are as clever as me. Why haven't they made you an offer?" Lucy says.

Outside the wealthiest sections of British society, the main critique of Oxbridge admissions is about too little inclusion, not too much. Some Cambridge colleges failed to admit a single black student between 2012 and 2016, and most state-sector students historically came from selective grammar schools or wealthy areas.

"The upper classes have a vice-like grip on Oxford admissions that they will not willingly give up," Labour MP David Lammy proclaimed in 2018 as he led a campaign for change that helped inspire rapper Stormzy to fully fund two scholarships for black students at Cambridge.

Several of the elite UK private schools were established in the late middle ages to provide free schooling to gifted boys from poorer backgrounds. Over the centuries, fee-paying pupils became more numerous and they took off as training grounds for the establishment and the administration of the British Empire.

Today, private schools educate 6.5 per cent of UK children, but as recently as five years ago they accounted for 42 per cent of Oxford's domestic intake and 37 per cent at Cambridge. Since then, the private school share has fallen sharply but it is still three in 10. That has sparked resentment among fee-paying parents without assuaging diversity campaigners. "It catches parents in a dilemma," says Mark Bailey, a former high master of St Paul's who now lectures at the University of East Anglia. "They may be committed to broad notions of social justice in the workplace and society, yet here is a situation where that aspiration cuts against them."

Independent school parents point out that state-private ratios that compare Oxbridge offers to the total stock of UK students are misleading. Oxford and Cambridge generally won't look at students unless they have at least three A or A* grades at A-level, and private schools churned out one of every four of them before the pandemic.

Those results are a key reason parents shell out school fees. "Why the heck would anyone ever pay the thick end of half a million quid (aged 4-18) per child pre-tax to send them to private school if it didn't give them seriously better grades than someone equally bright who went state?" asked one person on

Food & drink



Recipe | If we still can't travel, here's a seafood orzo dish that will take you to Italy. By Ravinder Bhogal

or years, I took travel for granted, skipping from here to there as I wished. I thought nothing of spending summer after summer in Italy, where I fell in love with ancient cities and winding passageways, sun-dappled vineyards and crystalline coastlines. Most of all, I fell in love with the intricacy and exuberance of the food.

As a cook, I am often asked about my favourite Italian meals. Most of them have been eaten at understated trattorias where the food is seasonal, prepared with fervour and served on bountiful platters. Measurements and portion sizes are contradictory to the soulful spirit of generosity ingrained in the cooks there. I have enjoyed toothsome pastas of various geometries, briny seafood and memorable regional dishes, including the unlikely crowd-pleaser of sugo perked up with nubs of foraged snail in Tuscany.

But it was at a restaurant by the beach in Trapani, when I was still sticky with salt from a morning swim, that I had a plate of food I still dream about -a zuppa di pesce so abundant with snowwhite flakes of fish and scarlet crustaceans that it was like an aquarium in a bowl, throbbing with garlic, chilli and wine. The broth itself was so rich with good olive oil that I mopped up every drop with the rest of the bread basket.

As I knocked back the dregs of my Negroni with its perfect curl of orange peel, I looked out at the watercolour view. Here was life shrunk to its best elements: sun, sea, good food and something refreshing to sip on. We don't really need much more. Until we can travel again, here's a recipe for a seafood stew inspired by that happy moment. The salinity of seafood cooked in a saffron broth with orzo should provide a portal for escape.

Ravinder Bhogal is chef-patron of Jikoni in London

Greener bottles

Jancis Robinson

Wine



US imports of glass containers from China increased 55 per cent to 2.1bn in the five years to 2018, according to US trade data; industry estimates that year were that 70 per cent of the bottles filled by American wine bottlers were sourced from China, and that proportion is likely to have grown since. America's domestic glass bottle industry has been shrinking too: between 2005 and 2011,

11 US glass container manufacturing plants closed, leaving 43.

Standard 75cl glass wine bottles vary in weight, from under 400g to more than a kilo. The heavier they are, the greater the carbon emissions from making and transporting them, which accounts for the greatest proportion of wine's carbon footprint.

Increasingly aware of this, I started noting bottle weights in my tasting notes in February, wishing to highlight producers who use particularly heavy or light glass. On this basis, I would say that the average bottle used for wine is about 550g, although it varies by country, with producers in the US and Argentina favouring some of

the heaviest. In a recent collection of tasting notes on eastern European wines, I found one used by the Georgian producer Dugladze weighed as much as 1,025g, whereas most bottles used by the Romanian producer Cramele Recas were only 345g. Recas co-owner Philip Cox points out that these lighter bottles the fatter burgundy shape is easier to make lighter than the straight-sided bordeaux shape cut transport costs by about

10 per cent. Although many of her winemaking peers in Napa Valley seem happy to use bottles weighing 800g or more, Cakebread is clearly serious about switching to much lighter bottles. But she refuses to source them from China.

"To my mind," she wrote to me, "it's not sustainable to buy a 400g bottle and then ship it nearly 7,000 miles."

Despite the impact on the atmosphere, shipments of empty bottles around the globe are growing. Every month, for

example, 200 shipping containers of glass bottles arrive in the UK from the Al Tajir bottle factory in Dubai – albeit, in this case, mainly for beer. In 2018, meanwhile, Croxsons, a glass bottle supplier based in south London, acquired a furnace in China to supply customers in the US, Australia and New Zealand.

In a 2015 report for FEVE, the association of European glass manufacturers, consultancy EY put the proportion of glass bottles that travel more than 300km from furnace to filling line at 44 per cent. While China is by far the world's biggest exporter of glass bottles, Germany is the second.

Some countries just don't have glass-production facilities or offer little choice. New Zealand, for instance, has a single producer, whose bottles Master of Wine Steve

Smith of Smith & Sheth has found so inconsistent that he imports bottles from Saverglass, based in France. According to him, Saverglass "seem well ahead of the pack on sustainability and their glass quality is first-class".

In line with increased awareness of sustainability, there has been a laudable trend to reduce bottle weights. In 2019, the average weight of bottles had fallen by 30 per cent over the previous decade, according to figures from Statista.

Accolade, the biggest wine bottler in the UK, has decreased its proportion of bottles over 500g from 17 per cent in 2017 to 3 per cent in 2020. Over the same period, the proportion of its bottles that weigh less than 390g has risen from 24 per cent to 42 per cent.

Yet for many, there still seems to be a perceived correlation between weight and wine quality. Sebastian Zuccardi is one of Argentina's most respected winemakers and his company is the country's leading organic producer. Yet he still uses some heavy 900g bottles for his Finca Piedra and Jose Zuccardi wines.

He points out they used to be even heavier: "It's really to do with consumers, because in some

markets, size and weight of the bottle continue to be important."

Indeed, part of the motivation for Croxsons' investment in China was to supply heavier bottles. Its website reports "concerns amongst some of Croxsons' customers that the industry has moved some bottles away from being superpremium, or even premium, to a lighter, standard-weight bottle. Clearly the risk to brands using a wrong-weight bottle is that consumers will feel a disconnection between the price point and the aesthetics that the bottle delivers."

The substantial Languedoc producer Gérard Bertrand is another advocate of organic vine-growing but persists with heavy bottles for his top cuvées. His justification is common: he argues they represent only a small proportion of his production and

> that he is doing his bit for the planet in the vineyard and by using lighter bottles for the rest of his range.

The problem is that producers such as he, by putting their more expensive wines in heavier bottles, encourage the perception that good wine comes in heavy bottles. In fact, the world's most expensive wines tend to be packaged really quite modestly. Bordeaux first growths, for instance, come in bottles that weigh not much more than 500g.

Chakana is one of Argentina's biggest

biodynamic wine producers. Winemaker Gabriel Bloise reports that when Chakana changed to lighter bottles 10 years ago, European markets welcomed it, but "in the USA we did meet resistance to lighter bottles and our importer says they have had a negative impact on sales . . . Asian markets insist on heavy bottles. But the only impact of heavy bottles is visual and they do not improve wine taste. We decided to spend the money [saved by choosing lighter bottles] on wine improvements (organics, biodynamics) rather than packaging, so we were able to improve quality, reduce the glass and keep our prices stable."

Angelos Iatridis of Greece's excellent Alpha Estate goes more than the extra mile along the path to sustainability and justifies the difficult-to-copy 887g bottle for his top Xinomavro as an anticounterfeit measure. He is another fan of Saverglass.

Cakebread ended her email with the hopeful observation that in the US, "supply chain issues are forcing local glass plants to dust off their old equipment". If "more wineries request locally made lightweight bottles, suppliers will take notice and there will be more options".

Seafood stew with orzo

Serves four

Ingredients

60ml extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for drizzling

1 small onion, finely chopped

2 celery stalks, finely diced 1 small fennel bulb, finely chopped

1 bay leaf

3 garlic cloves, crushed 2 tsp fennel seeds

Pinch of saffron threads

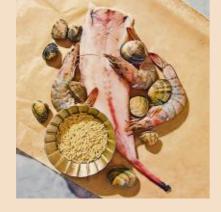
1/4 tsp chilli flakes

300ml dry white wine 400ml tomato passata

500ml fish stock

300g orzo, rinsed 1kg clams soaked in salted water for one hour, rinsed

2 monkfish tails, deboned and cut into bite-sized pieces



250g squid, cleaned, scored, and cut into 8cm pieces, tentacles halved 8 prawns, peeled, deveined, tails intact Coarsely chopped flat-leaf parsley

Lemon juice to taste

Sea salt and black pepper

1 Heat the oil in a large casserole or wide, deep frying pan over medium heat. Add onion, celery, fennel and bay leaf and sauté until soft and translucent. Scatter in the garlic, fennel seeds, saffron and chilli and stir until fragrant. Pour in the wine, bring to the boil and bubble until it is reduced to almost nothing.

2 Pour in the passata along with the stock and 750ml water, bring to the boil, then add orzo and simmer until al dente. This should take about 10 minutes. Add the seafood, cover and simmer until just cooked.

3 Season to taste, scatter parsley on top and squeeze in lemon juice. Drizzle with olive oil and serve immediately.

Mumsnet, the online parenting forum. Within the pool of high-achieving applicants, the Oxbridge colleges now rely on "contextual admissions" that look at how students have arrived at their top marks. "If someone has done really well despite being in care, that tells you something about their ability," says Oxford's Khan. "State schools are doing so much better, particularly in London. We are getting much stronger candidates than we used to."

Few private school parents openly dispute the need for this approach. They just hate the impact on their own children. "I agree we need social justice, but the problem needs to be fixed much earlier," says a St Paul's mother, who has donated generously to bursary funds that bring less-privileged boys to the school. "These [private school] kids are all really bright and it is unfair to penalise them at this point."

Of course, not all parents who choose private schools do so expecting their kids will win a top university place. Many are drawn by their exceptional facilities and low student-to-staff ratios. "We never had set in our mind that our kids would be going to Oxbridge or an equivalent," says Catherine May, who sent two boys to City of London School. "I've loved that we have well-rounded children and we were very grateful for the excellent pastoral leadership."

I attended one of the US's elite private schools 35 years ago. I and roughly half

of the class went on to Harvard and the rest of the Ivy League. These days, the school is still a top Ivy feeder, but that share is down below 30 per cent. Most of Harvard's undergraduate class is nonwhite (reflecting the US high-school population) and 55 per cent of undergraduates receive financial aid.

But there are two dirty little secrets that explain why so many springtime posts on my Facebook feed feature parents on the other side of the Atlantic boasting about their children's college destinations. Top American universities still offer "alumni preference" - children of graduates don't always get in but have a much higher acceptance rate and they of course find spaces for children of big donors. There is a back door for the 0.1 per cent and the connected, if not the merely wealthy. Oxford and Cambridge reject this. Cynics will tell you this is evident in their shabbier facilities and shallower donor pools.

All of which puts the heads of the UK's elite independent schools in a bind. On the one hand, they are under pressure to justify their tax-exempt status by improving access for poor and minority students, either by offering more bursaries or helping neighbouring state schools. On the other hand, they must also please their paying customers. And that means preserving their effectiveness at university admissions. "We feel quite irritated by politicians who bang on about independent-state school

ratios," says Barnaby Lenon, a former head of Harrow School who chairs the Independent Schools Council. "Onethird of the most needy bursary students at Oxbridge are from independent schools and top state grammar schools are stuffed with wealthy parents."

Optimists hope that the changing admissions profile will reduce the outsize hold Oxbridge has on the UK's psyche and its politics. "If more and more

3 in 10

Proportion of Oxford's domestic intake from independent schools, which educate 6.5 per cent of UK children

really talented kids are pushed to other universities, the reputation of those schools will rise. That's really valuable for society," says the Eton parent.

And indeed, many top independent schools now are scrambling to prove they can smooth the path for their students to other brand-name options inside the UK and, increasingly, abroad. They are hiring admissions officers who are experts not only in the requirements for US universities, such as SAT tests, but for other destinations such as Trinity College Dublin, McGill University in Montreal and Bocconi University, Milan.

St Paul's and St Paul's Girls' School even employ recent graduates of top American universities as "Colet Fel-

lows" to coach students through writing the personal essays favoured by the Ivy League. "The obsession with Oxbridge misses the point," says Sarah Fletcher, SPGS's high mistress. "Our job is to genuinely guide people to the right schools." This year, total UK applications to US universities shot up 23 per cent.

That may well be the right choice for students who are attracted to American institutions' liberal arts approach, which allows them to take a wider range of subjects, Lenon says. But, he adds, "it is not good for the UK if we send too many of our best students abroad because a proportion never come back."

For independent schools, the growing emphasis on international admissions is



all part of the expertise they sell. Consider their mastery of the Oxbridge admissions process, which requires students to apply to a specific college for a specific subject. The elite independent schools maximise acceptance numbers by dispersing applications away from the most oversubscribed subjects and colleges. That helped give the strongest schools an Oxbridge success rate of at least 33 per cent last year.

Then Covid-19 struck and A-levels were cancelled. Oxford and Cambridge had already made their offers, but they were caught up in the chaos. After schools assessed their students, the exams watchdog fed the results through an algorithm that reduced nearly 40 per cent of grades. Universities revoked thousands of conditional offers, with disadvantaged students hit worst.

When the government U-turned, restoring the teacher-assessed grades, Oxford and Cambridge found themselves with hundreds of extra students, driving total acceptances up 12 per cent to 7,692. "I still have no idea how colleges managed to find enough rooms to turn into bedrooms, but thankfully they did," Lucy says.

The bulge and another year of cancelled A-levels have put admissions tutors under pressure - teacher-assessed marks will probably produce grade inflation, but the facilities cannot accommodate another supersized class.

So they are making fewer offers — at

Oxford, just 3,541 for 3,300 places, down from 3,932 last year. "The landscape is more competitive than it has ever been," says David Goodhew, head of Latymer Upper School in west London. "High-flyers are still getting offers but universities were cautious because they got their fingers burnt last year."

Some private school parents worry that admissions tutors, faced with a plethora of candidates, will focus on improving their diversity statistics. They point to the lower offer numbers at the elite schools. "These great kids with flawless records are getting turned away not just by Oxbridge but Durham?" says the St Paul's mother. "How can that be?"

At Hills Road, a selective state sixthform college in Cambridge that gets similar offer numbers to Westminster, Jo Trump, principal, says that she is seeing slightly more Oxbridge offers to students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Now in her fourth year as principal, Trump has spent years trying to convince ambitious parents – some of them Cambridge dons — that it is not the end of the world if their children do not get to Oxbridge. "Things have changed dramatically in 30 years," she says. For parents, "it's about learning to let go a bit and learning to let students drive the process . . . Our job is to walk alongside them, not to go in front and drag them."

Brooke Masters is the FT's chief business

Life&Arts



SNAPSHOT

'Faces of Beale Street' by Ernest C Withers The Memphis-born photojournalist Ernest C Withers produced powerful work in the turbulent years of the civil rights movement, travelling with Martin Luther King and covering the 1955 Emmett Till murder trial. Three years after his death in 2007, Withers was also revealed to have been an FBI informant.

But that was just one chapter in the career of a photographer who spent almost seven decades capturing African-American life in all its richness: sporting events, funerals, proms, musical acts (among them BB King and Aretha Franklin), everything from the once-in-a-lifetime to the everyday. For all Withers' complicated legacy, his pictures offer a stirring celebration of black life.

Cheyenne Darko

'Ernest C Withers: I'll Take You There' is at the Fahey/Klein Gallery, Los Angeles, to July 31

Let's not be so laissezfaire about affairs

Jo Ellison

Trending

hould a man or woman's extramarital entanglements be a factor when judging their professional proficiency? There seems to be an enormous reluctance to pass judgment on a colleague's private life. In the thrill of excitement over Matt Hancock's affair with aide Gina Coladangelo, his peers lined up to remind us that the man should only be censured for professional impropriety, such as breaking lockdown rules or misappropriation of government funding. Few, if any, suggested that Boris Johnson should sack him because he'd been behaving like a douche.

I've never understood the leniency we extend to philanderers and adulterers. There seems to be a commonly held belief that such lapses in our moral judgment have little bearing on our competence at work. On the contrary, I find a person's sexual history to be the most telling thing about them. Surely one should need no further evidence of a person's character than the fact they have been revealed to be cheating on their spouse. If they can tell bald-faced lies about their activities to their friends, family and children, what makes anyone think they can be trusted to do their job?

But I take a very hardline view of adulterous behaviour, possibly owing to the strict Baptist fervour that spikes the family genes. True, I will delight in the sordid details of a bonkbuster tabloid scorcher, and eke out every column inch of detail, but I am also prone to overbearing sanctimony when discussing the repercussions, and will rarely consider forgiveness, even in the face of great remorse. Once a shit, always a shit, tends to be my verdict, though I've tried to be more openminded, and have listened to all the podcasts by the psychotherapist Esther Perel.

While I may have the morals of a scandalised Victorian, the world's attitude to infidelity has shifted to a far more generous point of view.

According to the US General Social

Survey, one in five men will cheat on their partners, with women not that far behind. In a 2016 survey by YouGov America it was revealed that more than a third of adults under 30 had engaged in sexual activity with someone other than their partner. Of these, just under half did so with their partner's consent.

But shouldn't politicians try to tamp their baser feelings down? Even the most libertarian of judges regarding the former health minister's imbroglio must see a transgression of the moral code to which he is supposed to have subscribed.

According to the Committee on Standards in Public Life, government ministers, like all public office holders, are supposed to adhere to the Nolan principles, seven Pollyanna-ish precepts ministers are meant to hold in some esteem. Chief among them is the

If someone can tell baldfaced lies to their friends and family why should we trust them to do their job?

idea that they should be selfless, "acting solely in terms of the public interest", while also showing integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, leadership and honesty to boot.

The ministerial code further instructs them to be "professional in all their dealings" and to have "proper and appropriate . . . working relationships". Hancock clearly failed to tick those boxes. And yet despite the censure that surrounded his exposure, I was surprised by how many people considered his romantic indiscretion to be an adjacent issue that should have

no bearing on his competence at work. It's a strange time in which to embark on an extramarital adventure. While the sexual revolution has found us more licentious, trying to have an affair is actually far more complicated than it might seem. Dating apps and technology have made casual sex

readily available but, as Hancock discovered, surveillance cameras and social media can leave one frightfully exposed. The camera phone has turned everyone into a paparazzo; a fruity text exchange on the dating app Raya can go viral if it gets into the wrong hands. Technology may have liberated us, but it has simultaneously made our lives transparent. It's hard to be clandestine when your partner can track your every movement on their phone.

Do our leaders have a responsibility to instil in us some moral vigour? As UK politics becomes mired in scandal, cronyism and corruption, one wonders whether we're all being smeared in Tory sleaze. And perhaps it's inevitable that infidelity is spiking when the culture has been stoked by a prime minister whose own career has been embellished by priapic lusts.

In May, we saw Boris Johnson marrying Carrie Symonds in a Roman Catholic ceremony at Westminster Cathedral, the first wedding to be undertaken by a prime minister while in office since 1822. This curiously awkward pantomime, in which Symonds was pictured barefoot next to her new husband, wearing a white dress inspired by "ancient Greek philosophy" and a flower crown, led one Twitter commentator to observe that the couple recalled a teenage schoolgirl being dropped off at the Coachella festival by her dad. Symonds' relationship with Johnson reportedly began when he was married to Marina Wheeler, and she was the Conservatives' head of communications.

No wonder everybody's at it.
Unfaithfulness is this year's hottest
trend. Hancock must have assumed
that his career would also be Tefloncoated. When the prime minister can
only manage a glancing
acknowledgment of the moral code of
which he is supposed to be an
exemplar, the lack of rectitude is
bound to trickle down.

Email Jo at jo.ellison@ft.com

The mechanisation of the beautiful game

Janan Ganesh

Citizen of nowhere

t was as inverse a relationship as Dorian Gray's with his portrait. For decades, Italy played a cold and defensive football that bucked their own nation's splendour. The

team is now among the easiest on the eye. Besides the obvious qualm — is Italy about to become a dump? — I cling to such mercies in a bland age for the game.

Euro 2020 is the first major tournament that has not held my attention since 1986, when I was four and there was no television at home. Were it not for the risk of bruising your abdomen with laughter, I would claim to have been working too hard.

The real problem has been in gestation for the best part of a decade. It started with the cult of "pressing" (running to recover the ball). It continued with the NFL-style rehearsal of attacking plays. Pep Guardiola once benched Thierry Henry for moving out of place in a sequence of passes. The fact that it had netted him a goal was scant mitigation. Add astronaut levels of physical conditioning to this micromanagement, and you have the mechanisation of a game whose central point is anarchic expression. Undivided into "sets", "pitches" or "phases", football at its best is as formless as a great city. The modern game has something of Canberra about it.

A proxy measure of the change is the physical shape of the players. They were once Rolling Stone-thin, all the better to turn on a *centime* and thread sinuous passes. Now even the most mobile positions — full backs, midfielders, wingers — have the tight-

shirted, gym-inflated look of a certain kind of City trader on a night out. I mostly salute the Americanisation of football: the data, the granular analysis, the consumer-friendliness. The one import I question is the idea that athleticism is intrinsically compelling. The place for it is athletics.

To say one good thing about the new game, it has taught me patience for the idea that development is not axiomatically progress. In most things, I am what the Canadian writer John Ralston Saul would call one of "Voltaire's bastards". I find modernist LA more beautiful than Prague. I view

Football at its best is as formless as a great city. The game now has something of Canberra about it

with suspicion the historical laundering of what we are no longer meant to call the Dark Ages. It is all I can do to keep my dinner in my stomach when some fool sells the lockdown as the path to more soulful living. Here I am, though, moping over football's artisans as the new breed of spinning jennies churn around them.

Younger readers will diagnose early-onset middle-age here, and its attendant nostalgia. Older ones might comfort me that sporting trends are cyclical. There was a moral panic in tennis when Pete Sampras and other ballistic servers first emerged. What followed them was a constellation of

genius that is still with us.

The green shoots of a stylistic renaissance have poked through in this tournament. There is Spain's Pedri, the competition's youngest ever starter. The Dutchman Frenkie de Jong is another who bears the telling stamp of the old school: he seems to run faster with the ball than without.

In the end, though, I sense their diaphanous promise will be brought to heel. This is a sport that now gives the time of day to that most soul-hollowing of statistics: distance covered.

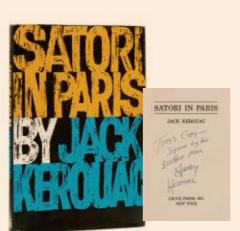
An examiner once said of the dazzling scholar Jeremy Wolfenden that "he wrote as though it were all beneath him; he wrote as though it were all such a waste of his time". From George Best to Ronaldinho, nations great and small had footballers with the same majestic languor. Italy at their meanest still accommodated Roberto Baggio, even as a ruined knee rendered him borderline immobile. The point is not that skill and wit have gone. Given the speed of the game, players need to be better than ever at controlling the ball and spotting opportunities. England alone have a couple of young masters.

It just that all this flair is wedged into a corset of defensive duties, clockwork passing patterns and — oh, the vulgarity — running. At club level, Kevin De Bruyne, perhaps the grandest talent left in the tournament, is a case in point. See him recover the ball, find his station out wide and whip a scudding cross, *ad infinitum*. It is beautiful, but so is a caged blue jay.

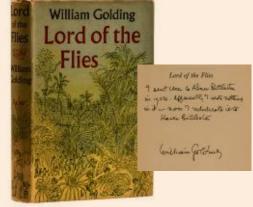
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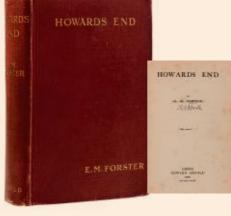
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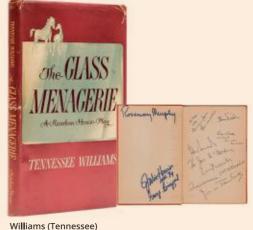
Kerouac (Jack)
Satori in Paris,
first edition, signed presentation inscription
from the author to his brother-in-law, 1966.



Golding (William)
Lord of the Flies,
first edition, signed presentation
inscription from the author, 1954.



Forster (E.M.)
Howards End,
first edition, signed by the author, 1910.
Est. £5,000-7,000



Williams (Tennessee)
The Glass Menagerie,
first edition, signed by the author
and 7 performers, [1945].
Est. £3,000-4,000

The FT Weekend Festival — join us at Kenwood House on September 4



This week we are thrilled to announce that renowned cookery writer Claudia Roden will be joining us at Kenwood to discuss her life in food and her

mate) Bf6 (the only try) 7 exf6 Qxf6 8 Bc5+ Rd6 9 Bxd6+ Kg8 10 Qh7 mate.

poet and playwright Inua Ellams, who will perform a poetry session inspired by his audience, and Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine developer Professor Sarah Gilbert, discussing lessons learnt from the pandemic. All this as well as wine tastings, food demos, live poetry and music. For passes, programme and more information visit ftweekendfestival.com

new book. Also on the bill are Gilbert, discussing lessons learnt **ftweekendfestival.com**Chess solution 2425 1 gxh5! Nxh5 (Rxd4 holds out longer) 2 Rxf7! Rxf7 3 Rxf7 Kxf7 4 Qxg6+ Kf8 5 Qh6+ Ng7 6 Bxg6 (threat 7 Qh8

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Game changers

In 2010, the Candy brothers' One Hyde Park

became a byword for excess. But the tastes of

today's billionaires have changed – and so has

London's luxury market, reports George Hammond

hen I visited 80 Holland
Park on a bright morning in June, the sun cast
light over piles of
unthumbed coffeetable books and creaseless down duvets
draped over vast beds. In a special room
designed for hosing down dirty dogs,
there was not a single fleck of mud.

Six of the immaculate flats in the new 25-home project — a modern rendering of five classic stucco-fronted, Holland Park town houses — have sold since hitting the market in October last year. But the building is still largely uninhabited.

The latest venture from property developer Christian Candy, 80 Holland Park is a stark departure from Candy's last grand project.

Along with his brother Nick, Candy built One Hyde Park in 2010, a development that transformed London's luxury housing market — and continues to test price records for UK flats today.

This time, Christian is going it alone and selling at prices that although high — the asking price on a three-bedroom penthouse is £15.35m — are nowhere near the nine-figure sums paid for flats at One Hyde Park.

"It could not be more different [to One Hyde Park]", says Roarie Scarisbrick, a prime London buying agent with Property Vision. "It is more BMW than Bentley."

As the developer synonymous with ostentatious London homes changes tack, could the UK capital's time as the pre-eminent billionaires' playground — and the era of its homes as the preferred parking space of global wealth — be coming to an end?

A shifting market

When it was completed in 2010, One Hyde Park in Knightsbridge wasn't just marginally more expensive than other blocks in the capital, it was in a different league. The first 45 flats sold went for an average of more than £20m each, with

one penthouse selling to Ukraine's wealthiest man for £136m, by far the most expensive flat ever sold in the UK at the time.

The development continues to be a byword for opulence and excess — as well as a lightning rod for anger about London's unequal housing market. Earlier this year, a flat in One Hyde Park sold for £111m, before stamp duty costs. Another, a penthouse owned by Nick Candy himself, is currently being marketed privately for £175m.

But much has changed since 2010, when the block was a symptom as well as a cause of a runaway market. Scrambling for safe places to park cash, and encouraged by rock-bottom interest rates and successive rounds of quantitative easing, the international ultrawealthy poured money into property in "global cities" such as London and New York.

Any damage the financial crash did to high-end house prices in London was rapidly reversed. Between 2010 and 2013, London had the fastest-growing prime property market in the world, according to estate agent Knight Frank. By the third quarter of 2013, its luxury homes were the most expensive in the world — at \$3,995 per sq ft, compared with \$3,917 in Hong Kong and \$3,101 in Manhattan.



(Clockwise from below) Nick (left)



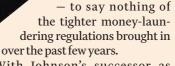


The torrent of cash entering the city's property market was still so great in 2014 that Boris Johnson, at the time London mayor, announced: "London is to billionaires what the jungles of Sumatra are to the orang-utan. It is their natural habitat."

But in the years since, the jungle has become harder to navigate.

"Planning has got tougher, taxes have got higher. The landscape has changed enormously," says Rupert des Forges, a partner at Knight Frank who has spent decades brokering deals in London's so-called super-prime market, where the entry fee is £10m — and who shows me around 80 Holland Park.

Targeted interventions by then-chancellor George Osborne increased the stamp duty burden for buyers in 2014 and again in 2016. At the same time, the market had to absorb reforms to taxation for homes owned through offshore and domestic companies, changes to inheritance tax and capital gains tax for



non-UK residents

With Johnson's successor as mayor Sadiq Khan introducing higher targets for affordable housing delivery, development economics have looked less favourable and prompted many private builders to look beyond London.

Add Brexit and the pandemic's travel restrictions into the mix, and the capital has not shared in the runaway house price growth seen across much of the country over the past 13 months.

On Tuesday, building society Nationwide put the annual growth of the average UK house price in June at 13.4 per cent, the fastest growth since November 2004.

But London has lagged, particularly in the market for the most expensive homes. Prices for £1m homes in central areas have fallen by about 17 per cent since 2014, according to LonRes, which monitors the London market.

The optics of super-prime development have changed too. The mayor who celebrated London's position as the habitat of billionaires is now the prime minister pursuing a "levelling-up" agenda explicitly aimed at reducing inequality between London and the rest of the UK.

In the midst of a health crisis, and an attendant recession, flashy interiors and price tags in the tens of millions are more likely to alienate than inspire.

Ballymore, a high-end but not super-prime developer with a number of projects in London, recently cut the ribbon on a swimming pool suspended 10 floors up between two blocks of luxury apartments.

The 25-metre long pool is intended as the *pièce de résistance* of Ballymore's Battersea development, but the show of opulence has been lambasted by critics — including in the pages of the Financial Times — who claim it is inappropriate in a city suffering an acute housing shortage.

Has Candy read the room?

Candy's new development is subtler, and the pricing is more sober than his previous outing at One Hyde Park. Two-bedroom flats start at £2.6m in 80 Holland Park. A three-bedroom flat has just sold for £9.1m, or £4,335 per sqft. That's a record for the W11 postcode, according to the developer, but still short of super-prime territory.

"Christian Candy knows the market better than anyone. He's catering to a very different audience in Holland Park to that in Knightsbridge," says Scarisbrick.

More than most high-end developments, 80 Holland Park is pitched at domestic rather than international buyers. Prospective buyers are still "migrants", says des Forges, but only from as far afield as "Knightsbridge or Chelsea". That is an advantage at a time when travel restrictions are hampering the overseas shopping trips of the hyper-wealthy.

The developers decided against marketing flats for sale before the entire

The mayor who celebrated London as a billionaires' habitat is now the prime minister of 'levelling up'

building was complete, an unusual move when many developments rely on deposits paid against unbuilt apartments in order to finance construction.

According to des Forges, Candy was deep-pocketed enough to go without cash from "off-plan" deals. But he also acknowledges that a sluggish market for luxury apartments in London had an impact.

"Off-plan sales have slowed with the market slowdown . . . it's easy to sell something ahead of completion in a buoyant market."

The development is likely to be Candy's "last hurrah," according to des Forges. "Residential development is a mercurial business, people come and go," he adds.

Tim Craine, head of research at Molior London, which monitors the property market, is more blunt: "Most developers do one cycle and quit. Either you make a load of money or go bust; either way you quit."

Continued on page 2





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House & Home

A shed load of ideas



Luke Edward Hall

Questions of taste

Are corner sheds naff? I need a new shed for my small but magical garden. It needs to act as a tool store and potting shed while being attractive at the same time, as it is the focal point of the garden. Alternatively, would a small summer house look Wendy-house-ish? What do you suggest?

I don't think corner sheds are naff but, as you say yourself, your shed will be the focal point of your garden. If I were you, I'd embrace this and fully commit. Build something impressive that you will enjoy looking at. After all, this new structure will have to be pleasant to spend time in, naturally, but you will spend an awful lot of time peeking at it from inside your house, and while enjoying your garden.

I know exactly what you mean re "Wendy-house-ish". Standard garden buildings can end up having this appearance very easily and, although sometimes charming, it is possible to do better.

Before taking a lease on my new studio in the country, I contemplated building a large summer house-cumworkroom at the end of my garden. I had grand plans. For inspiration, I looked to Clough Williams-Ellis, the architect and designer known chiefly as the creator of the Italianate village of Portmeirion in north Wales. I've not yet managed to get to Portmeirion, but I am an enormous fan of Williams-Ellis's designs for garden buildings, with their baroque detailing and simple corrugated iron construction.

I wanted to build a fairly straightforward shed and stick on the front a corrugated iron facade, shaped like billowing swags of fabric, to give the appearance of a tented

structure pitched in our meadowy patch of garden. I was dreaming along the lines of the Turkish Tent, which marks the final spot on the historic route through Painshill in Surrey, one of the finest remaining examples of an 18th-century English landscape park.

The whole thing would be set on wheels, meaning I'd be able to take my portable studio with me when we eventually leave our rented cottage. For various logistical reasons it wasn't possible to carry out my fantastical plans, but I hope I might persuade you to think outside the box.

If you can find a local builder or carpenter to help, the options really are endless, and you'll be able to avoid the cookie-cutter off-the-shelf Wendy house look. Think of the fun to be had: choosing timber and paint colours, finding doors and windows. Look to reclamation dealers such as Retrouvius and English Salvage as well as local yards for wonderful old examples.



a greyhound's head in the centre, and a very good shade of mint green glass. Do good research and see what styles take your fancy. Trew Turner

Ltd, based in Somerset, is a small company that specialises in building all manner of garden sheds, studios and buildings. I'm a fan of the ceramics studio the company made for the ceramicist Pip Hartle, with its blackpainted cladding.

When I was looking for a

workshop to help with my

project, many friends and friends of friends suggested I contact Rollo Dunford Wood, who, as Dunford Woodwork, builds all kinds of wondrous things, from furniture to cabins and tree houses. He also often seems to have the odd old wagon for sale. I love the idea of one of these getting a new life as a potting shed.

I noticed on Instagram recently the writer Fiona Golfar's new garden



How lovely would it be to set some of these stained glass panels into your potting shed walls?





(Left) Stained glass panels by Lassco; (above) 'Garden at Monk's House, Sussex', Vanessa Bell, 1947

building, constructed by a local carpenter and featuring a highly satisfying undulating roof and veranda. The veranda provides the perfect spot for pot plants and a blanket-covered chair or two.

This particular shed is a superb example of the classic Wendy house upgraded: the thought spent on those extra details along with the materials used give the whole thing a very elegant look. Yet it's all still pleasingly rustic enough to pass as a proper shed no doubt about that.

If you decide you'd prefer to buy something over commissioning, I suggest a company such as Wooden Workshop, which in the past has designed buildings to sit on staddle stones, complete with cedar shingle roofs. I absolutely love this idea: with a bit of extra height you'd get a fantastic perspective over your garden, and the stones keep the structure dry.

Whatever route you end up choosing, enjoy the process of designing your dream shed. Even though I couldn't pull off my folly, I loved those hours spent doodling and researching, attempting to conjure up something magical (and practical). And, hey, if anybody in the Cotswolds has a field they're not using, I'm ready. I still dream of that trompe l'oeil corrugated iron tent - veranda, stained glass, flags and all.

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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House & Home Unlocked

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Game changers

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The impact of Covid-19

In the 12 months to the end of March 2020, the month when pandemicrelated restrictions were first put in place in the UK, Knight Frank recorded some 112 super-prime sales with a combined value of £2.35bn. In the next 12 months, which took in three national lockdowns, there were just over 80 sales, totalling £1.35bn.

"We've had a real issue on deals at £20m-plus: that's the big money coming over from elsewhere in the world . . . People don't want to isolate for five to 10 days," says Charles McDowell, a buying agent.

But the reality is that the kind of people with at least £10m available to buy a home will not be constrained for long, even by a pandemic. Nor are they likely to have suffered from the economic chaos which has accompanied it. The total wealth of billionaires worldwide rose by \$5tn to \$13tn in 12 months during the pandemic, according to Forbes, as government stimulus flooded financial markets.

Happily for anyone selling superyachts or mega mansions, the superrich are proliferating.

"The thing you have to remember is that there are huge numbers of people with huge amounts of wealth. I get calls about people I've never heard of who have untold wealth," says McDowell. "Will billionaires come to London? They will."

Deals in the super-prime sector can be notoriously secretive. Estate agents often won't be, or can't be, drawn on details. "I have so many NDAs [nondisclosure agreements] they are like confetti," says one. But it is possible to catch glimpses, which give a sense of a market in which tastes are changing and despite Christian Candy aiming his new development at a more domestic, lower-value market, not all buying agents agree that that is where the demand is right now.

"Normally I would have one [client looking for a home] at £3m, one at £5m, one at £7m. At the moment it's only at the very high end," says Nathalie Hirst, a London-focused buying agent. She is currently searching on behalf of clients with price ranges of £10m, £17m and £50-£150m. "It's the best client list in terms of spending power I've ever had . . . I think super-prime is very much alive and well," she says.

Travel restrictions can still get in the way of deals. "I'm spending a lot of time taking videos for clients," says Hirst.





(From top) One Hyde Park took London's luxury market into a new league: flats sold for an average of more than £20m; **Bond Street** opulence - Hollie

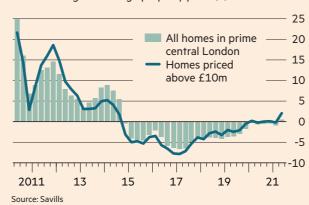
Typically, buyers are "75 per cent from overseas, mostly the Middle East or Hong Kong. It's still that," says Paul Roshan, a broker who is currently marketing office buildings in Belgravia and on Regent's Park to residential developers to convert into super-prime homes.

Waiting for the right billionaire to come along

The billionaires may still be coming, but their tastes have changed, says Rory Penn who, as head of Knight Frank

London's luxury property market: a decade of change

Annual change in average property price (%)



private office, advises the wealthy on their property purchases. A decade ago, the glitz of One Hyde Park set the tone and proved adept at attracting buyers from the Middle East and Russia, at the time the dominant property shoppers from overseas.

'The style today is less ostentatious . . . antique bronze as the metal of choice, not shiny gold'

Now, he adds, "There's such a variety of buyers in London: from Europe, the US, Asia as well as the other markets. The style today is less ostentatious, slightly more subtle, a more homely look . . . antique bronze as the metal of choice, not shiny brass or gold."

While trade in the prime market has become more laboured in recent years, at the very top end prices have continued to increase as tastes have become more refined. The most prestigious flats can trade for close to £10,000 a square foot, according to agents, though there are only a handful of newly built developments likely to come close to that bracket: such as Lodha's No 1 Grosvenor Square development, the Peninsula on Hyde Park Corner and Chelsea Barracks.

Another which might is the Glebe, an eight-home development in Chelsea that has been compared to One Hyde Park. There are parallels in the pricing - the penthouse of the Glebe is being marketed for close to £100m - but beyond that "there is no comparison", says David Salkin, a director at Orion Capital, the building's developer.

Where the Candys' block is all noise glass-fronted and jutting out into Knightsbridge – the Glebe is "180 degrees different: small, discreet, very confidential. Seven of the apartments

Who are the **Candy brothers?**

Nicholas, 48, and his brother Christian, 46, started on the property ladder in 1995, renovating a one-bedroom flat in Earl's Court with a £6,000 loan from their grandmother. After four years of developing flats in his spare time, Nicholas was able to give up his job in advertising to found Candy & Candy (later renamed Candy London) alongside his brother.

In 2004, the pair embarked on their most ambitious project to date, One Hyde Park in Knightsbridge, which broke records for the most expensive residential development in the world.

Christian was working as an investment banker when he quit to go into property fulltime with Candy & Candy.

In 2004, he established the CPC Group in Guernsey. Although focusing on exclusive international residential developments, such as the Richard Meier-designed 9900 Wilshire in Beverly Hills, CPC Group is also known for its high-profile projects in London.

In 2007, it bought Chelsea Barracks in a joint venture with the Qatari government for £959m, believed to be the most expensive residential property deal in the UK. Christian Candy resigned as a director of Candy & Candy in 2011.

Kristina Foster

have access from a private garage. Its aim is not to be seen," says Salkin.

At present, the Glebe might be fulfilling that role too well. One unit has sold since the project was completed at the turn of this year. "That discreet market is much harder . . . They take a long time to sell, you have to wait for that billionaire to come along," says McDowell, the buying agent.

Typically well-funded, developers of London's most expensive properties can wait it out. "While prices have become seemingly ludicrous, they do get through them," says Scarisbrick. Already-built prime properties have declined in value over the past six years, but "that hasn't been reflected in that new-build world. [The developers] put their fingers in their ears and kept shouting and got away with it," he says.

"It's just a question of waiting, we haven't compromised anything. We stand steady," says Salkin. "Every pot will find its lid."

George Hammond is the FT's property correspondent

The home in 50 objects #49: Clarice Cliff jug, c1930

This small earthenware, flat-sided creamer jug — with its geometric rings in light blue and grass green was designed by the late ceramic artist Clarice Cliff.

Titled "Bonjour", it was manufactured by AJ Wilkinson Ltd in Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent. Cliff was closely associated with the company at the height of her career, in the late 1920s and 1930s, and later for a short while she came to own the business.

A reflection of the fame she achieved, the Museum of the Home in London features several Cliff pieces. These include items from

other popular lines, such as "Crocus" and "Daffodil".

From a large, and largely poor family in the Stoke area — the Potteries — Cliff left school at 13 to work in the local industry. She took night classes at the art school in Burslem, a town dependent on its fine pottery output.

Cliff joined Wilkinsons about three years later in 1916 as an apprentice lithographer. Its owners, the Shorter family, sent her to London in the 1920s to study at the Royal College of Art. Before the decade ended, and in an era when "career woman" was a rarely heard term, the Shorters had given Cliff her own studio and

promoted her to art director. One of her prime talents was to make a virtue of imperfection. She experimented with rejected pottery, covering its defects with her own patterns and often vibrant colours.

Her "Bizarre" line captured the emergent confidence of the late 1920s. This and other lines that followed established her as a leading Art Deco ceramicist

Cliff's work made for mainly bright and relatively affordable homeware. Sales of it even flourished during the 1930s economic depression, vital for the survival of AJ Wilkinson Ltd. A shy artisan and artist, Cliff was

not foremost a self-publicist. After a lengthy affair, she married

company owner Colley Shorter in 1940, taking over the business after his death in 1964. During the second world war and the

utilitarian austerity of the

following years, her work's popular appeal had faded. In the mid-1960s, she retired and sold up. The market for Cliff classics began

to revive after her death in 1972. Today a wish to keep, not discard, the imperfect, and such TV shows as The Repair Shop and The Great Pottery Throw Down, suggest she is again within the spirit of the times.

A film on Cliff's life, co-produced by Sky and others, is currently in production.

Peter Chapman

museumofthehome.org.uk

Mykonos is ready to party again

Greece property | After 'the worst year

for sales in a decade', the island is attracting

wealthy buyers once again. By Liz Rowlinson

n the island of Mykonos the music is playing again.

DJs are back in the bars, where curfews have been relaxed this week, umbrellas are back on the beaches and the serpentine, whitewashed alleyways of the old port are again thrumming with tourists.

"It feels almost like Covid is disappearing and so everyone is much more relaxed," says French architect Aude Mazelin, who holidayed on the island as a student 23 years ago and never left. Today, she lives in a house she refurbished on Paraga beach, next door to Scorpios, a bohemian beach club full of driftwood daybeds and macramé hammocks where drinking and dining has resumed after lockdown measures.

"Last summer, it was like going back to how the island was when I first arrived: all the beaches were empty, it was so quiet!"

This has not been great news for the island's estate agents, for whom villa sales virtually dried up. "We don't want another 2020 but this year, thankfully, the island has suddenly opened up and we have some buyers arriving," says Roi Deldimou, of estate agency Beauchamp Estates.

International tourists and property hunters were largely absent last summer due to travel restrictions and, after Tourists and buyers have returned to the whitewashed alleyways of Mykonos – Alamy



'It feels almost like Covid is disappearing and so everyone is much more relaxed'

the end of June. As of this week, nearly 9,500 of Mykonos's population of 11,922 had been vaccinated, mainly with the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

The curfew has been lifted, nightclubs are open and private gatherings are allowed of up to 100 people. And, as part

of "Operation Mykonos", a dozen The curfew has

been lifted,

nightclubs are

open and yachts

and private jets

are trickling in

of "Operation Mykonos", a dozen drones have been monitoring the island's luxury villas and beach bars for any non-compliant "corona parties".

The island is famed for parties held within its distinctive sugar-cube villas (some with eight-figure price tags)

A visit by Jackie Kennedy in 1961 helped change the island from a backpackers' haven to jet-set playground

offering five-star services. Even before coronavirus, the HNWIs paying tens of thousands of euros for a week's accommodation preferred the privacy of detached villas in isolated clifftop or waterfront settings over big hotels, which are few and far between on the island.

The yachts and private jets are trickling back, but the coronavirus pandemic brought to an abrupt halt the decadelong run of summers of increasingly lavish parties, and more tourists than the last. One of the poorest Greek islands after the second world war, a visit to



Mykonos by Jackie Kennedy in the early 1960s started the trajectory that catapulted it from a backpacker magnet to a must-visit place for middle-class Greeks and summer playground for the international jet set.

Although air arrivals into Mykonos plunged from 474,081 in 2019 to 132,807 in 2020, according to figures from the Greek Tourist Federation, private jet arrivals into Mykonos have surpassed pre-pandemic levels. Between January and June, the number of such flights increased 17 per cent on the same period in 2019, according to WingX, an aviation intelligence company.

With no Land Registry figures available for Mykonos, it can be hard to determine annual transaction levels but long-established local agent Franceska Kalamara of Mykonos Dream Estates says 2020 was her worst year for a decade. In 2019 she sold eight properties and in 2020 just three villas.

"This year is going to be better. I have a sale going through at €25m for a very large property for a buyer based in London," she says.

Many of the holiday villas are owned by people with multiple properties or financial interests. Ibrahim Radwan, a Saudi Arabian architect who has been holidaying on the island since 1992, is selling one of his two homes on Mykonos — he has others in Athens, London, Paris, Washington and Lebanon. He says some vendors have very optimistic expectations about the value of their homes, especially when international buyers are still quite scarce.

Continued on page 4





Austrian/German farm owners are selling 3 farms in Romania (Timisoara, Arad)

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ALGARVE - PORTUGAL

House & Home

Continued from page 3

"Some people are asking crazy prices for their villas on this island now," he says — admitting that the €3.5m price tag of his home is perhaps a "little exaggerated".

Villa Bimo is a four-bedroom property, located on the fashionable Psarou beach — home to the notoriously hedonistic Nammos beach club — and where a few superyachts have already moored offshore. Until 2019, the property brought in a net annual revenue of 7 per cent from rentals from April to October, says Radwan, with rates of €6,000-€10,000 a night.

He's selling up to move on to other opportunities — he has his eye on nearby Paros, Antiparos or Milos. But he plans to stay in his other property, in Mykonos Town, before the season gets

'It is now a place to come to be seen and to party, to buy luxury brands and to lie on the beach with a hangover'

too rowdy. "The island is now a place where you come to be seen and to party, to buy luxury brands, and to lie on the beach with a hangover. It's a mistake if you come expecting to find authentic Greece," he says.

Psarou beach on the south coast marks the easternmost point where wealthy buyers tend to want a villa, says Deldimou. The most sought-after areas are in the west of the island: Aleomandra, Agios Lazaros, Agia Sofia, Tourlos, Agio Stefanos, Choulakia. These can offer views towards Mykonos Town, Delos Island and, especially, the glorious sunset.

High-spec villas with good sea views in these areas are marketed at €10,000-€12,000 per sq m, compared with examples on the less developed east side of the island at €5,000-€6,000 per sq m. In the less touristy north of the island — popular for wind and kite surfers — your money can also go further.

Ano Mera, the second-largest village after Mykonos Town, is where many locals live, says Areti Lampridi, who resides on the island full time and works in property: "You can buy a nice three-bedroom house for €300,000-€400,000."

Some businesses in the area have closed, she says. For jeweller Vassilis Kessaris, business dropped by 60 per



i / BUYING GUIDE

Total purchasing costs for a resale property on Mykonos come to about 8 per cent. VAT for new-builds — formerly 24 per cent — has been suspended for the international market and replaced by a 3 per cent transfer tax, bringing it in line with what locals pay if buying a primary home.

Incentives for property investment include the Golden Visa programme offering residency to non-EU investors purchasing a property worth more than €250,000. There's also a new non-dom tax regime (with a flat tax of €100,000), a retirement scheme (7 per cent flat tax for foreign retirees) and a digital nomad programme is being planned.

Direct flights to Mykonos are available from parts of Europe and the Middle East, or transfers from Athens take 35 minutes.

cent in 2020 — which he says is typical across retail and restaurant businesses in Mykonos. With an average sale of €10,000 (Rolex and Patek watches are big sellers), he's keeping his head above water. "But one-third of this summer is already lost," he says.

You need a lot of money to live on Mykonos now, says Athens-born Annie



Kalogirou, who owns a holiday home in Ornos, in the south-west of the island, with her French-Greek husband Alexi. It's on Costa Ilios, a private estate of holiday properties with a private beach. "When I returned to the island this spring, I was shocked to see prices in shops had gone up even further: three cans of sweetcorn in the super-

(Above and left) Mykonos Town; the island faces the challenge of balancing tourism and retaining tradition

Getty Images; Universal Images Group via Getty

ve and left) market in Mykonos cost €3.75; in conos Town; Cannes it was €1.50," she says.

From the French city she runs MykonosLuxury, a concierge service. Extravagant requests from her clients have included sending a private jet to Athens for popcorn-flavoured icecream — less of a stretch than the time camels were flown in from Kuwait for an Arabian-themed party in Nammos four years ago.

"It's a business island now, [it's] like the French Riviera," she says.

New Yorker Jeffrey Siger is returning to his holiday home on the edge of the Mykonos old town this week, 35 years after first arriving on the island. The author's latest novel, *The Mykonos Mob*, alludes to the "wildly profitable dark side of the island" that he says has evolved in recent years.

Like other Greek tourist locations, Mykonos faces the issue of balancing expanding tourism with preserving traditional ways. To those who suggest it is not authentic Greece any more he says this: "Mykonian families that once sold watermelons off the backs of donkeys are now major business owners; instead of migrating elsewhere, young Mykonians can stay and prosper. Fun and partying has always been a part of Mykonos. It's just the packaging that has changed."

PROPERTIES FOR SALE

MYKONOS



Villa Patricia, Kounoupas, €650,000

A three-bedroom, four-bathroom house in Kounoupas, overlooking Mykonos Town. The property, which includes a one-bedroom guest house, measures 180 sq m and is part of a complex of 14 houses. There is access to a shared pool. Available through Beauchamp Estates.



▲ Villa, nr Ftelia beach, €900,000

A three-bedroom, three-bathroom villa near Mykonos's north coast. The property, which measures 118 sq m, has a large patio with an outdoor pool and views down to Ftelia beach. The villa, which is called "Sunset Harmony", is available through Engel & Völkers.



▲ Luxury villa, Tourlos, €7m

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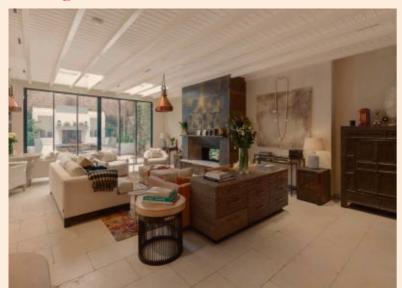
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An historic and beautifully restored house, located in the heart of the village, benefiting from well-maintained gardens.

6 bedrooms | 5 bathrooms | Swimming pool | Grade | listed

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Waltham St. Lawrence, RG10



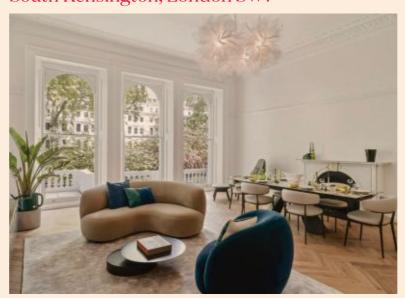
An exceptionally well-designed Georgian style country home with beautiful gardens in an edge of village setting.

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Wandsworth, London SW18



This impressive family house benefits from direct access on to Wandsworth Common via its large garden.

6 bedrooms | 2 bathrooms | 2 reception rooms | Garden | EPC D

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Llanvair Grange, Usk, Monmouthshire NP7



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Wapping, London ElW



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FTWeekend 3 July/4 July 2021

House & Home

Hot property The Great Lakes

By Maria Crawford



■ House, Dunkirk, New York, US \$2.395m

Where On Lake Erie, 43 miles along the coastline from Buffalo. Buffalo

airports take about 1h20m. What A seven-bedroom colonialstyle house built in 1933. A central "great room" has a fireplace and a vaulted, timbered ceiling. There are also covered patios, a butler's pantry, a study and a formal dining room.

Niagara International Airport is

less than an hour by car and flights from there to New York City's

Why The property's 5.3 acres include 261ft of lake frontage, with an outdoor seating terrace just on the edge of the water. Who Compass

► Estate, Lake Forest, Illinois, US \$10.95m

 $\label{eq:Where On the shores of Lake} \label{eq:Where On the shores of Lake} \label{eq:Where On the Shores of Lake}$ Michigan, 32 miles north of Chicago, about 40 minutes' drive. O'Hare International Airport is about half an hour by car. What A six-bedroom estate on 3 acres. The current property, completed in 2001, was built

around an original "great room" designed by Chicago architect Alfred Granger in 1928. Its 9,097 sq ft of living space also feature an office, library, home lower level, with lake views.

cinema and exercise room on the Why A landscaped bluff leads to a sizeable heated boathouse and 400ft of private beach. Who Luxury Portfolio

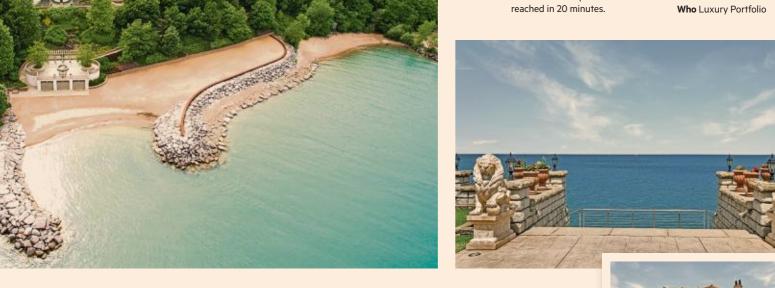


▼ Estate, Cleveland, Ohio, US

Where Less than 5 miles from the centre of Cleveland, the largest city on Lake Erie. Burke Lakefront Airport, which offers a weekday shuttle to Cincinnati and private charter flights, is a 10-minute drive, while Cleveland Hopkins International Airport can be

What A seven-bedroom property on 2 acres with marble floors and bathrooms, mahogany woodwork, two kitchens, a wine cellar and bar area.

Why Several formally laid-out terraces lead to the lakefront and include an indoor pool housed in a glass atrium. As well as the lake, the property has views



▶ Contemporary house, Lion's Head, Ontario, Canada C\$2.5m (\$2.033m)

Where On the Northern Bruce Peninsula, a 15km-wide stretch of land with Georgian Bay to the east and Lake Huron to the west. Toronto and its international airport are 260km to the south, about three and a half hours' drive. What A three-bedroom, threebathroom contemporary home with an exterior finished in red cedar from British Columbia. Inside, marble, reclaimed hemlock wood floors and even quartz

Why The property's location, clean lines and natural materials make it a peaceful retreat with little but the water, forest and views to

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Birdsong is beautiful, but what does it mean?

Nature therapy

Jonathan Guthrie

You may have to miss your favourite music festival but you can still enjoy the concerts of thrushes and blackbirds. Deciphering what they are saying is another matter

An open-air recital is one of the great pleasures of summer. You don your Panama hat and slump into a deck chair with a good glass of wine. As the heat of the day fades, you settle down to enjoy the music.

As for the singer, you cannot do better than a local performer. Opera stars such as Jonas Kaufmann and Anna Netrebko unaccountably refuse to perform for free in back gardens and parks. But blackbirds, thrushes and robins are all up for the gig.

You do not even have to throw a bouquet afterwards. A handful of mealworms will suffice.

Before the pandemic, birdsong was often drowned out by the noise of cars and aircraft. Then lockdowns turned down the volume. Many of us listened properly to birdsong for the first time in years.

It was a blessed escape during the months of grief and anxiety before vaccines were developed. Here was a parallel world, interlocking with our own, with its own standards of beauty and utility. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, a conservation charity, was bombarded with calls and emails demanding to know: "Is there suddenly more nature around?"

Now we are turning the background noise back up again. Let's hope an appreciation of birdsong – and of wildlife as a source of wellbeing will persist.

"It fills the heart with joy," says Mark Constantine, a birdsong expert and co-founder of cosmetics group Lush. "You could sit in your garden listening until the end of time and never understand birdsong entirely."

I had turned to Constantine to help answer a question that was bothering me. To humans, birdsong can be beautiful, engaging or beguilingly strange: but what does it mean to the birds?

Artist Gary Larson once drew a cartoon of a scientist whose invention translated barking dogs into English. The only word in the speech bubbles was: "Hey!" Similarly, animal behaviourist Konrad Lorenz interpreted the contact calls of geese as simply: "Here am I, where are you?" But there is complexity too.

My favourite backyard arias are performed in the late afternoon by a blackbird perched on the top of a tall tree. His melodious, trilling song stakes out his territory and advertises his vigour as a mate.

> Constantine reckons it can take several years for a male blackbird to reach concert standard. Younger birds often practise in lower-pressure venues - inside a bush, for example.

> Many songbird species have a canonic version of a mating song that varies from place to place. Until he can sing this competently, a young male is, as rappers Run DMC would have put it, "a high-school loser who never makes it with ladies".

The standard mating song of a garden bird is a bit like a public profile on a dating website. Constantine prizes more highly his recordings of "ecstatic" mating calls, directed by a male songbird at a single, receptive female. They are faster, quieter and, so far as the term can apply to wild animals, personal.

The antithesis is the ear-splitting alarm call my blackbird unleashes

when I surprise him foraging on the ground, equating to: "Stranger danger! Evacuate immediately!"

I could do without this melodrama, frankly. This blackbird knows me. He sees me every day. I feel like saying to him: "OK, someone baked four-andtwenty of your relatives in a pie? Too bad. It's time you moved on."

As for starlings, I'm not convinced even these avian absurdists know what their calls really mean. Martin Fowlie of the RSPB has one in his garden that imitates a duck.

A scientist once tried to teach a group of starlings new tunes from recordings. They hand out grants for sillier things, apparently. Rejecting the scientist's taste in music, the starlings worked up some very convincing imitations of his nervous cough and a tape player switching on and off.

Starling numbers have fallen by about two-thirds since the 1970s. Thanks to habitat loss, most songbirds have suffered similar declines. When I was a kid, the Dawn Chorus was sometimes so loud it woke me up.

"I remember being blown away by it," Fowlie says. No longer.

Most shamefully of all for Britons, there has been a catastrophic decline in larks, a bird emblematic of their own lush countryside in summer.

Health regulations now permit us urbanites to drive out of town and enjoy the remarkable display flight of these birds. They flutter slowly down from hundreds of feet above, uncurling their twittering, sibilant streams of song like banners across the sky.

Pick a patch of grass, stretch out, relax and watch them. The challenge is to spot the bird right at the top of its arc, when it is a tiny dot against the blue. You will be participating in a birdwatching tradition that has been going on since Stonehenge was just a Neolithic architect's concept sketch.

Equally, we can now go to socially distanced concert halls and hear Vaughan Williams' idyllic "The Lark Ascending". This popular classical piece evokes dewy-eyed nostalgia for a vanished rural England.

But unless we mend our destructive ways, only the human music will survive. The birds that inspired it will be gone.

Jonathan Guthrie is the head of Lex

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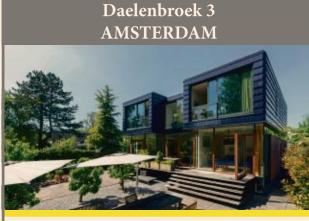
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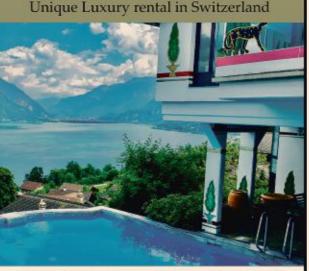
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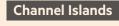






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House & Home

Interiors | The everyday

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inspired Ben Nicholson are

now on show alongside his

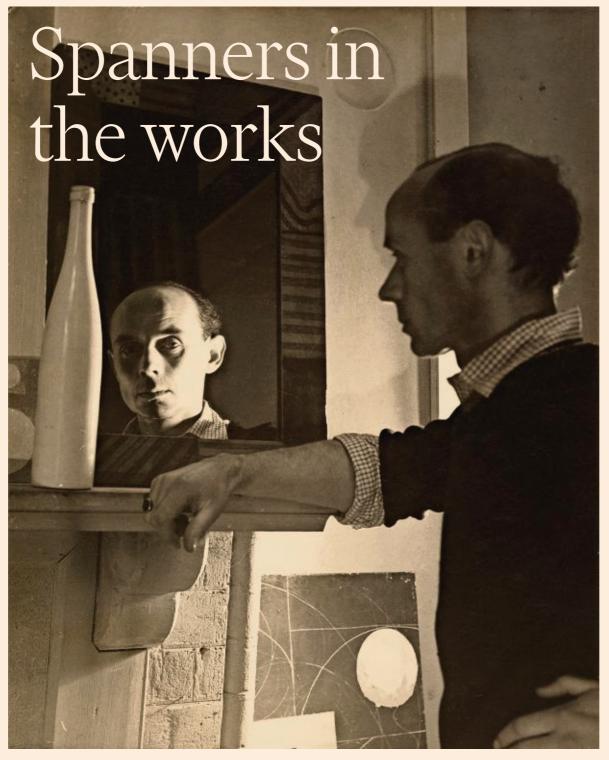
paintings. By Caroline Roux

n 1914, aged 20, the British artist Ben Nicholson painted a perfect rendition of a striped jug. Behind it is a sumptuous curtain and beneath it, its own shadowy reflection in a polished surface. Ten years later the jug reappears, this time as a flat stripy rectangle in one of the artist's first abstract works, "1924 (painting - trout)".

Now, 40 years after Nicholson's death, visitors to Pallant House Gallery in Chichester can see the jug, a piece of mid-19th century Staffordshire mochaware, in an exhibition that puts the objects Nicholson accumulated in his many studios - in London, Cornwall, Cumberland, Paris and Switzerland on display alongside the paintings in which they appear. First they'll find it in a 1933 photograph of the studio at The Mall Studios in Hampstead, which he shared with the sculptor Barbara Hepworth, his second wife. It is sitting on a shelf, surrounded by linocuts of Hepworth in classical Grecian profile, pots of brushes and Nicholson's paintings. And then they will see the jug itself on display, light bouncing off its surface glaze.

It seems extraordinary that so many apparently ordinary objects have survived: pewter mugs, glass decanters, cups, saucers, pickling jars, a Staffordshire pottery zebra, brass weights, a set of spanners. But for Nicholson, and many other artists before him, these everyday household objects were the things that provided inspiration.

At Paul Cézanne's studio in Aixen-Provence, you see a long shelf of jugs, bowls and cups and a walking stick hanging from a hook, which the artist used to observe how colours changed with the light. The contents of Matisse's studio went on a world tour in 2017 and 2018, and included a silver chocolate pot that appeared in paintings made over a 40-year period; it had been given to him as a wedding gift in 1898.



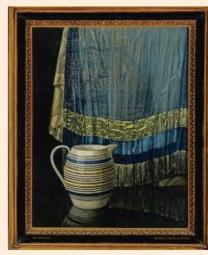
(Clockwise from main) Ben Nicholson, c1935; 'Striped Jug' (1914); spanners from Nicholson's private collection; the jug in the painting

Humphrey Spender, National Portrait Gallery London © National Portrait Gallery, London; Angela Verren Taunt. All rights reserved, DACS 2021; Barney Hindle/Pallant House Gallery

In Nicholson's case, he found the starting points for his artistic explorations, whether into landscape or abstraction, in the forms of tableware and tools, translating them into poetic plays of line and colour. The relatives who inherited these objects understood their value only too well, since they have kept them with as much care as the paintings they inspired. "It's amazing that 40 years after his death, these things are still around," says Simon

Martin, the director of Pallant House. "The spanners, his table, you'd expect them to disappear. But they were recognised as important by the people who've looked after them."

Nicholson was born into an artistic family. His father William was a bon viveur painter known for his still lifes and multiple affairs. His mother Mabel Pryde, also an artist, died when Nicholson was 24, after which William married his son's first love, Edie Stuart Wortley.



Ben Nicholson attended the Slade art college from age 16, where classmates included Paul Nash and Dora Carrington. He was said to have spent more time playing billiards than studying life drawing. It was a visit to Paris in the early 1920s, where he saw work by Picasso, that was more influential by far. (A 1934 meeting with Mondrian, and the atmospheric quality of his work and studio, had the same effect.)

In 1920 Nicholson married Winifred Roberts, a successful painter of plants and flowers; the couple had three children. But by 1931 he had met Barbara Hepworth, then married to sculptor John Skeaping, and by 1932, he was sharing her studio at The Mall. While he had absorbed Roberts' skilful use of colour into his work, from Hepworth he acquired a more sculptural approach.

The Hampstead studio was an intersection of life and art. The couple carefully curated the space and invited people in. They turned their linocuts into textile designs - there are some at Kettle's Yard, the Cam-

bridge house that collector Jim Ede turned into a "living museum" where he lived among ceramics and paintings and invited the public in. They made curtains for the critic Herbert Read, an important champion of Modernism. They even tried, and failed, to sell some designs to Fortnum & Mason.

Nicholson's preference was for a more discreet workspace, where he could dwell alone, contemplating the objects around him. At his studio in Castagnola, Switzerland, in the early 1920s, which offered captivating mountain views, he had the windows blocked out to eliminate any distractions. At 5 Porthmeor Studios, in St Ives, which he took on in 1949, two years before his divorce from Hepworth (leaving her with triplets), he opted for a space with roof lights, rather than one that looked out to sea.

Nicholson and Roberts had lived in a "modern" way, which meant white walls and very little furniture, partly a reaction to the flamboyant Edwardian lifestyle into which he had been born.

His desire to "bust up all the sophistication around me", which he declared early on, was reflected in the austerity of his work and his life. Disdainful of the cult of personality that often comes with success, he refused to be interviewed by journalists or appear in a film, and asked some recipients to destroy letters. While his contemporaries Hepworth and Henry Moore have their own museum and foundation respectively, Nicholson created his own fate in being far from a household name.



In the late 1990s, Sarah Jane Checkland set out to write Nicholson's biography. Most of the family refused to talk – according, they said, to his wishes - and letters were not shared. Though she succeeded in writing a very detailed book, this exhibition is perhaps a more inti-

mate portrayal of his life. "He spent so much time with them, studying them," says Lee Beard, a Nicholson expert, of the 90 objects on show, "and as you look, for example, from the pieces of glassware to the etchings and drawings hanging nearby, you make any number of connections.

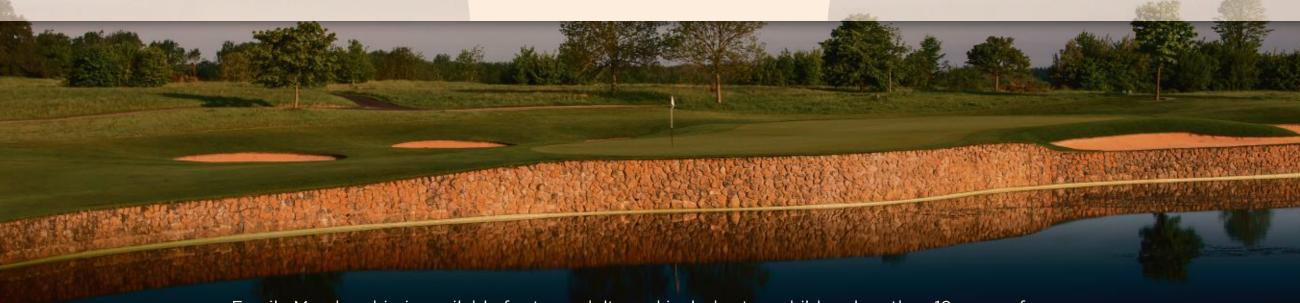
It makes the objects and the artworks feel so alive." For anyone who struggles to find a way into abstract art, they offer a door. But mostly, they are a tantalising glimpse into Nicholson's long, productive and slightly peculiar life.

"Ben Nicholson: From the Studio", until October 24; pallant.org.uk



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House & Home



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▲ Fasano plate by **Grace Sisters** £45 Hand-painted in Puglia by Ceramiche Nicola Fasano, this can work as a dinner plate or as a piece of wall art. gracesisters.com

> ► Wave dinner plate by Reiko Kaneko £38 Painterly wave glazing on fine bone china. Also available as a side plate, bread plate or platter. reikokaneko.co.uk



▲ Kyma porcelain dinner plate by

Handmade in Greece, this evokes the

tumbling waves of the Aegean Sea.

Themis Z £50

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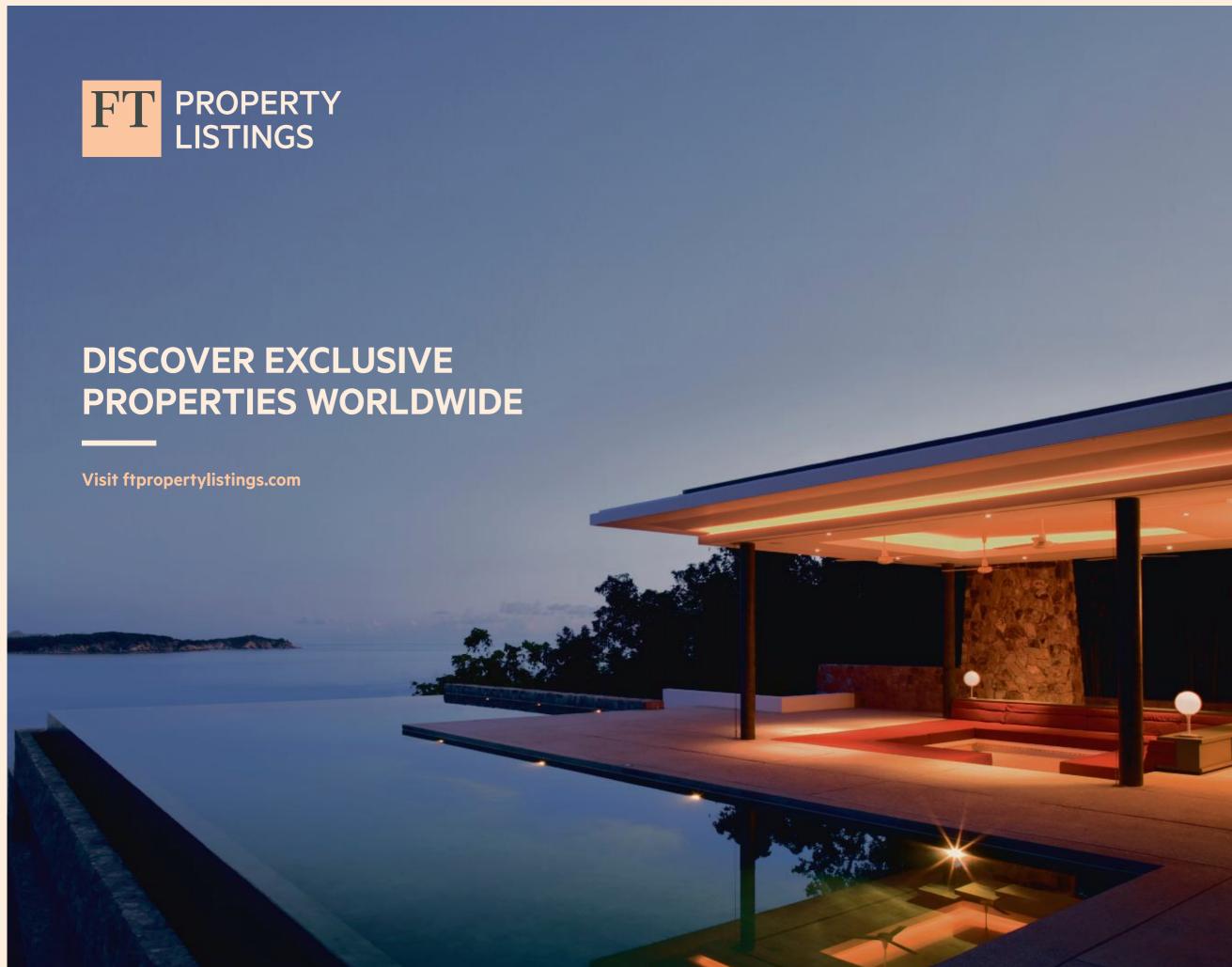
▶ Scalloped ceramic plate by By Alice from £40 Available in three colours, these playful plates come in serving, pasta, dinner and side sizes. by-alice.co.uk





▲ Fiore serving dish by Host £58 When sharing dishes this makes a striking centrepiece for the table. hosthome.co.uk





House & Home

Sniffy about rewilding

Wild flowers have little scent. Focus instead on

jasmine, lily, honeysuckle and orange blossom,

says our apostle of the perfumed garden

hank heavens I have never wilded my garden. It has become the buzz of the past two years in the media, especially from voices whose gardens are too big for them. Stand up to them and think hard before you act. I will return another week to at least eight reasons why I regard much of garden-wilding as a second-class cop-out. At this peak time for summer pleasure, I want to emphasise a ninth one: scent.

I am an apostle of the perfumed garden. White-flowered lily of the valley never turns up in sunny meadow plantings, but one of its traditional German names is "stairway to heaven". I realise that since Led Zeppelin and the guitarist Jimmy Page, the name has an alternative fan base in pop music. In the world of flowers, lily of the valley deserves it even more, as its finely spaced white flowers ascend like a stairway up the stem and have a truly heavenly scent.

It transports us heavenwards, so please tell me, you apostles of cow parsley, buttercups, daisies, yellow rattle, scabious, oxeye daisies: where are the scents lifting you to heaven in your patches of muddle on earth? In the next month meadowsweet has a moderate scent, but you will have to crawl through your beloved bugs and insects in order to detect it. Ragged robin, meadow cranesbill, wild carrot will leave you searching for it in vain.

Right now I am revelling in supreme scents, none of which ever wafts in wilded gardens. They are coming from mock orange blossom, lilies from China, selected honeysuckles and jasmine from southern Europe. All these plants are old friends, simple to grow and the unbottled essence of a great British summer. If you already have them, enjoy reading about your wise choices. If not, you know what to plant next.

Mock orange, or philadelphus, blossom is a delight to insects, pollinators and humans alike. I have grown many of the varieties on offer, but still return to the first one I encountered, quite simply the best. Philadelphus Belle Etoile has a heavenly scent that some compare to tangerines. The flowers are profusely borne, white but stained centrally with a purple blotch. Branches of it make wonderful cut flowers, best in big vases confined to them alone. Florists never sell them but they scent an entire room.

Belle Etoile was bred in 19th-century France, that source of so many fine garden plants, and is extraordinarily easy to grow. It reaches about 6ft in height and 6ft in width. Its scent is unsurpassed, especially on a summer evening when it releases it more strongly as the air cools after a warm day, the best time for scented gardens.

There are three points worth remembering. Belle Etoile does not do too well in dry shade, where the small flowered Philadelphus coronarius is the better choice. It is also not at its best in dry, hot conditions. It should be pruned only in July directly after flowering. If you cut it in winter or early spring you will spoil its summer season, because it



Robin Lane Fox

On gardens

(Clockwise from above left) Belle Etoile mock orange blossom and campanula; Graham Thomas honeysuckle; regal lilies

flowers only on growth it has made since its previous flowering.

The third point was particularly evident this year. Philadelphus can suddenly be afflicted with aphids in late spring and early summer. They cluster on the tips of the young stems and in one night cause them to go dark and become wrinkled. One hard spray with a hose will usually wash off the culprits and their eggs. The attack is shortlived and though the plant looks about to go into retreat it never does. New growths power on beyond the bug-infested pieces and by July they are forgettable.

This weekend, scented lilies mean regal lilies above all others, the ones with those white trumpets marked with a purple flush on their exteriors. These superb lilies are wonderfully easy to grow in pots, in which they can

be set on either side of the main entrance to a house and left to scent every exit and entrance, smelling cool and rich at the same time.

Bulbs cannot now be ordered until next early spring, when they should be planted in ordinary garden potting compost, no acidity needed. Plant them with about 3in of soil above their tips and then give them 3ft-long bamboo canes to support them. When they are about 1ft high, begin to feed them on liquid phostrogen. The trick is to continue feeding them on their way down after flowering. Prolonged feeding greatly improves flowering this year and next.

On the longest evening, June 21, I sat outdoors till dark and blessed my swaths of honeysuckle. A form of this scented beauty is native to English hedgerows but it never turns up in lists for wilded areas. The better varieties are selections such as the lovely pale Graham Thomas, early flowering and highly scented, and my two mainstays, the early and late Dutch honeysuckles: look for Lonicera periclymenum in the lists, belgica being the early one and serotina being the late one.

They will climb up walls if wired but I also grow them in a style well suited to small gardens. I select one main stem and cut off all others on a newly bought plant. I then isolate this stem, giving it a very solid cane as a support and cutting off all competitors until it is about 4ft high. Then I let it develop a head of side growths and I continue to prune them to keep the plant to about 5ft. The result is a small semi-standard feature, maintained by pleasant clipping throughout the summer. The flowers, picked or not, smell exquisite first on the early plant, then the late.

Here is an invaluable honeysuckle for north walls and all but the darkest shade: Lonicera japonica halliana, a winner from Japan. It will either grow flat on the ground, covering a

Sniff the seed-heads on your wilded cow parsley. After sneezing, see sense and buy these scented wonders

multitude of sins, or it will race up a shaded wall on a backdrop of netting fixed on wires. This honeysuckle's flowers open creamy white, then turn yellow, and their scent is intense, transforming the neglected back wall of a house. It is a rapid, infallible climber but the trick is to know that it can be cut right down in late autumn to a height of only 2ft-3ft, stopping it from becoming a tangled mess.

Jasmine means white jasmine, scented from heaven in high summer. In most of Britain, the one called Jasminum officinale Grandiflorum (or affine) is the safest bet, surviving any winter and growing up to 12ft even on a lightly shaded wall, the best site for it. A newish variation called officinale Clotted Cream flowers longer and is even more conspicuous but not quite so hardy. On walls in warm London or Mediterranean bolt-holes, the winner is polyanthum, the one we buy, forced, for Christmas indoors. Outdoors it is heaven on green legs.

If you have all these scented wonders in your garden, well done: celebrate them with me this weekend. If not, go and try to sniff the seed-heads on your wilded cow parsley. After sneezing, see sense and buy this foursome on the stairway to heaven.



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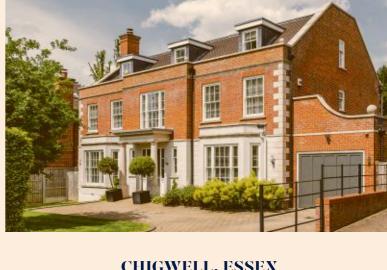
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WHAT ARE THEY?

At SailGP, the competitors are not pilots. Although they know a thing or two about taming gravity using just the power of the wind. They're not scientists, although they're quite familiar with the intricate mathematics of speed, the unforgiving physics of the elements, and the onboard chemistry that is the mark of all outstanding crews. They're not pioneers, although they keep field-testing the finest instruments craftsmanship can provide and continue pushing the limits of an art that has taken 6,000 years to perfect.

They're not dreamers, either. Except, maybe, for their profound belief that those who don't fall can fly.

#Perpetual



OYSTER PERPETUAL YACHT-MASTER II









BVLGARAI





HOW TO SPEND IT.

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ON THE COVER: Photography by SEAN & SENG Styling by TAMARA

Misty Kyd wears MARTINE ROSE cotton polo shirt, £294. CHLOE recycled stretch denim trousers, £646. BALENCIAGA vegetable tanned leather belt, £250, ALIGHIERI Oscura earrings, £250

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Nicola Moulton meets composer Max Richter at his new "art farm" and laboratory deep in the Oxfordshire woods

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Jan Dalley has a first a look at Hauser & Wirth's new island gallery off Menorca





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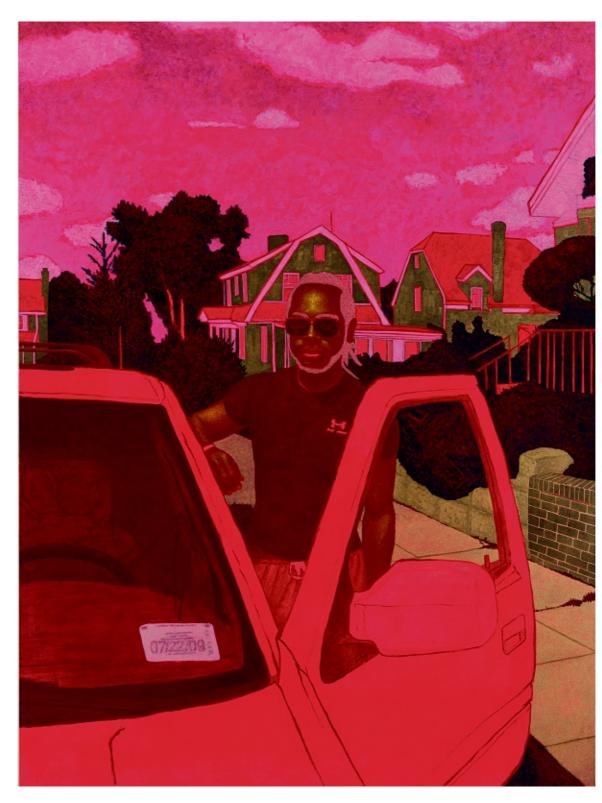
OPENING SHOT

NEON DREAMS

Arcmanoro Niles's luminous paintings shine a positive light on our perceived failures

The neon-toned canvases of New York-based painter Arcmanoro Niles show people engaged in seemingly mundane acts, often accompanied by small, alien-like creatures. These supernatural beings, which Niles refers to as "seekers", act as manifestations of the subjects' primal impulses and desires, inviting the viewer to imagine what events might have occurred around the scene. One painting shows a woman waiting at a bus stop, while a gremlin-like seeker with fiery pink eyes wields a knife in the corner; in another, a father and daughter sit on their stoop with their dog while a bawdy creature lurks in the background.

Now a new body of Niles's work is being collected into a book and exhibited at New York's Lehmann Maupin gallery. Featuring a series of portraits and still lives, as well as the artist's first landscape, the works show our perceived failures: a still life of a bedside table strewn with tequila bottles and receipts, a man getting into his car after being kicked out of his house, his iridescent gold skin and hair daubed with pink glitter, lending the painting a numinous quality. "All of these moments in life that people look at as failures are just a part of growing up," Niles says. "When I look back at my own experiences, they weren't really failures at all." SARA SEMIC Arcmanoro Niles: Hey Tomorrow, Do You Have Some Room For Me: Failure Is A Part Of Being Alive is at Lehmann Maupin, New York, until 28 August, with accompanying book at \$25



Kicked Out the House for Living Fast (I Never Held Love in My Gaze So I Searched for it Every Couple of Days), 2021, by Arcmanoro Niles

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EDDY GRANT

The Guyanese-British musician, who pioneered the musical style Ringbang, founded The Equals in 1965 before becoming a solo artist and scoring a number one hit with "I Don't Wanna Dance". His latest single, "I Belong To You", is from his album *Plaisance*; he is writing his autobiography. In this week's How I Spend It, he shares his love of restoring buildings: "I've found out that with any money I ever get, I just want to buy houses and do them up."



ARIANNA LAGO

The LA-based photographer finds inspiration for her quiet and painterly compositions in the everyday. "I like shooting things in a candid way in their natural environment. There's a kind of poetry in observing things as they are," she says. For this week's Aesthete column, she photographed film director and writer Gia Coppola in her home in LA: "I loved shooting with Gia, I felt comforted by her vulnerability, which enhanced her delicate beauty."



JAN DALLEY

The FT arts editor has been immersed in cultural journalism, writing and broadcasting for three decades. When not hitting print deadlines, she's busy in her role as a director of the Sid Motion Gallery in south London. For this issue, she writes about Hauser & Wirth's gallery and restaurant launch on the tiny, historic Isla del Rey in Menorca that she has known since she was a teenager. "Change isn't always for the good, but this time it is," she says.



TOM JAMIESON

With a background in documentary and photojournalism, Tom has taken portraits around the world, from protesters in Maidan Square during the 2014 Ukrainian revolution to disenfranchised young Iranians, refugees in Greece and Cornish trawler men. For us, he shot composer and pianist Max Richter in his Oxfordshire recording studio. "The morning with Max was exactly how I like to shoot; I had time to observe him in his environment," he says.



THE ARTISAN OF EMOTIONS - SINCE 1860



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Clockwise from top left

AN AMLASH POTTERY FEMALE FIGURE

Iran, c.early 1st millennium B.C. £10,000-15,000 Antiquities, 7 July

LEONARDO DA VINCI (1452-1519)

Head of a Bear £8,000,000-12,000,000 The Exceptional Sale, 8 July

ISAAC NEWTON (1642-1727)

Autograph manuscript, draft revisions to three sections of the *Philosophiae naturalis* principia mathematica £600,000-900,000 The Exceptional Sale, 8 July **CARLOS SCHWABE (1866-1926)**

La Porte d'or £100,000-150,000 British and European Art, 15 July

BERNARDO BELLOTTO (1721-1780)

A View of Verona with the Ponte delle Navi £12,000,000-18,000,000 Old Masters Evening Sale, 8 July

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ast week I spent some time in Bruton. A first trip to the Somerset haven of high fashionability, the excursion offered an alluring blend of art tourism, boutique hotels, local celebrity and artisanal iced buns. Its current popularity is due in no small

part to gallerists Iwan and Manuela Wirth, the art power duo behind Hauser and Wirth who opened a country outpost of their commercial gallery in a converted barn in 2014. The subsequent influx of interest – not to mention metropolitan and extremely wealthy Londoners - has since established Bruton as one of the most desirable places to visit in the UK. It has also continued a precedent, seen everywhere from Hobart to Marfa, Texas, wherein the creation of an arts hub has transformed the local culture.

With more than a dozen commercial spaces spread around the world, Hauser & Wirth will this month make a new claim on an unlikely cultural hot spot with the unveiling of a gallery on the tiny Isla del Rey. Situated alongside a former hospital on the island off Menorca, the new complex has been conceived in much the same spirit as its counterpart in Bruton, combining contemporary sculpture, selling exhibitions, dining opportunities and lots of native plants. Jan Dalley, the FT arts editor and long-time visitor to Menorca, was there last month to receive an exclusive preview ("It's a Trojan horse for art", page 38). After a prolonged period of virtual gallery interaction, it's envy-inducing to read her descriptions of this sun-baked space. Looking at Anna Huix's photographs of the shadow of a Louise Bourgeois spider cast on a wall at

> magic hour, or the glowing spaces revealed along the gallery's arcaded façade,







CREATING AN ARTS HUB CAN TRANSFORM LOCAL **CULTURE**



I long to visit this land of olive trees and cypresses now joined by man-made masterpieces, and luxuriate in art.

Another unexpected place of creative industry is unveiled on a trip to Luscombe Farm in Devon ("Luscombe Alight", page 23). The prolific output of the late artist Yasmin David was only discovered when, last summer, a huge

cache of paintings was found in a cupboard by her daughter, the filmmaker Clio David, while staying at the family home. David was part of an illustrious family with connections to Laurie Lee, Lucian Freud, Lady Kathleen Garman and the artist Michael Wishart, and her abstract works are only part of a biography that takes in a whole community of British intellectuals: more of that history is revealed in the retrospective that opens this month in honour of her work. Harriet Quick visits the farm - and seat of the Luscombe fruit juice empire – to unravel a

> fascinating story, while photographer Simon Upton captures a family home whose style embodies a near-lost postwar charm.

> Lastly in our artistic triumvirate, Max Richter, the composer and maestro of dreamy somnolence (his "eight-hour lullaby" Sleep has amassed more than 500m streams), has invited us to his new studio in Oxfordshire ("The Richter Scale", page 34). In conversation with Nicola Moulton, he shares his plans for a creative fulcrum he hopes will become a "real time" laboratory for experimental sound,

and his belief in the value of art for the good of all society. Certainly, Richter's past soundtracks have made my world feel far calmer and more uplifted. As an exercise in how to spend it kindly, this "art farm" is one to note. ■HTSI

For the best of How To Spend It straight into your inbox, sign up to our newsletter at ft.com/newsletters



Above: Max

Above right:

by Eduardo

entrance of

Elogio del vacío VI, 2000,

Chillida at the

Hauser & Wirth Menorca on Isla del Rey (page 38). Right: Luscombe

Farm, the home

of artist Yasmin David (page 23)

Richter (page 34).





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Gia Coppola

The film director, writer and winemaker loves Vans, Vegas and her grandfather Francis Ford Coppola's vineyard

INTERVIEW BY **BAYA SIMONS**PHOTOGRAPHY BY **ARIANNA LAGO**

Y PERSONAL STYLE SIGNIFIER is white Vans – the Classic Slip-Ons. I wear them constantly. They go with everything, so I don't have to think too much about what to wear. I like trying to create a uniform for myself. £52

THE LAST THING I BOUGHT AND LOVED was Augustinus Bader's The Cleansing Balm. The other thing that makes me happy is a good bath or body wash. I go for Nécessaire's The Body Wash, with eucalyptus, or hemp-derived Lord Jones CBD bath salts. Augustinus Bader The Cleansing Balm, £55. Nécessaire The Body Wash, \$25. Lord Jones High CBD Formula Bath Salts, \$65

AND ON MY WISHLIST is a really nice facial. I always go to Frankie Paige in Los Angeles. I hate when facialists tell you everything wrong that you're doing for your skin then push their products on you. Every facial with Frankie is different. She's like a psychic scientist and always knows what your skin needs. Her products are simple and efficient. I especially love her BFF product — it's a spot treatment but it isn't drying. *BFF*, \$35

WITH TIME ON MY HANDS, I have been learning more about wine. I was in Napa - where my grandfather [Francis Ford Coppola] has his vineyard – for a good portion of last year, and so I had much more time to focus on our wine project, whereas normally I feel really frazzled. The first go-around I was a little too distracted to put my best foot forward and now I'm really enjoying the blending process and trusting my instincts. My favourite is my red wine, Gia Red Blend - what I call the "fat cat" wine for the picture on the label - which has become my own go-to wine. Anytime I'm learning something is when I feel the most productive. Movies can be much more painful. the family coppola.com

I HAVE A COLLECTION OF cameras. I use point-and-shoot cameras, like the Yashica T3 or T2 and mix up different styles of film. I also like to borrow my uncle's old Hasselblad. I've collected them since I was young and also keep a hoard of my photos from over the years. That was what inspired

my wine bottles because I thought it would be fun to use old photos as labels.

I'VE RECENTLY DISCOVERED a book called Women Who Run With the Wolves: Myths and Stories of the Wild Woman Archetype by Clarissa Pinkola Estés. It's been popular with a lot of women in the past and it's interesting to hear about the psyche of matriarchy. It's made me think in a different way.

THERE'S SO MUCH FILM IN MY FRIDGE THAT I NEVER HAVE ROOM FOR FOOD

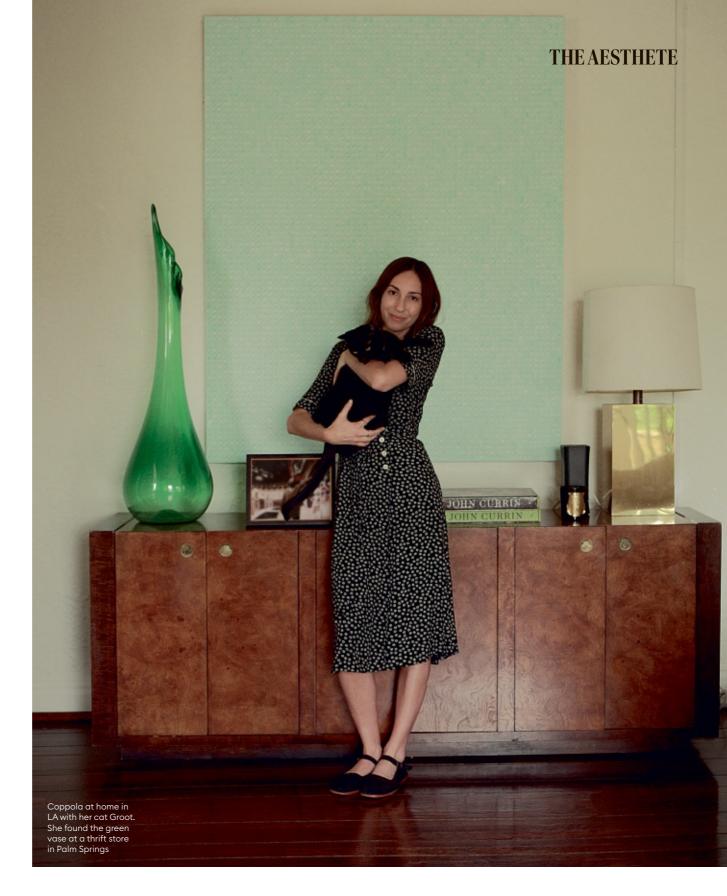
MY FAVOURITE ROOM IN MY HOUSE is my living room. It's the most aesthetically pleasing to me. I keep most of the art in here and a lot of my friends' artworks, such as Thomas Lynch, who does these trippy, psychedelic paintings referencing string theory. Or one by my friend Nick

Darmstaedter. He takes pennies and oxidises them, leaving pretty green imprints on the canyas.

RECENTLY, I HAVE RELIED ON my cat, Groot. And I really love to cook, doing something meditative with my hands. My family always cooked so I knew the basics but because of the pandemic I really had to step it up; going to the market in the right way to make sure you get all the right things and actually using them is such a skill. My aunt Sofia [Coppola] gave me a cookbook called *Small Victories* that has simple recipes that are light and good but not too complicated, and I love how it shows you how to repurpose your leftovers.

IN MY FRIDGE YOU'LL ALWAYS FIND film. There's so much film in my fridge that I never have room for food. I like to play around with different kinds but the one I use most frequently is Kodak 400 in





LUCIA BLOUSE

THE AESTHETE



Above: Groot with Coppola's "Fat Cat" Gia Red Blend wine. Left:

that you get this crazy grain. And Polaroids.

THE FILM THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING FOR

ME is Jaws. I saw it when I was seven and after that I no longer felt the same about water. It's a powerful movie that can affect you like that. I still love that film. It's pretty perfect. I remember that in college I was blown away by David Fincher's Zodiac, about the unsolved case of a serial killer around San Francisco. Having been raised in northern California, I was always fascinated by that story.

THE PODCAST I'M LISTENING TO is Pod Save America, for an update on politics that doesn't feel intimidating. And comedian Marc Maron's podcast. In his interviews he's able to really get to the core of the person and to hear about their thinking process.

THE PLACE I CAN'T WAIT TO GO BACK TO is

Cuba, which has amazing energy. And, now that restaurants have reopened, The Musso & Frank Grill on Hollywood Boulevard, which is one of the oldest restaurants in Hollywood. It's a steakhouse, so the food is traditional American, but it's as much about the nostalgic ambience and having a good martini. It's where Fitzgerald and Raymond Chandler used to go, to sit at the bar and work on their writing.

THE ONE ARTIST WHOSE WORK I WOULD COLLECT IF I COULD is

William Eggleston, I always admire his prints at museums. I love the photograph, from 1978, of a hand mixing a cocktail while on a plane. They don't print photographs like that any more.

THE BEST GIFT I'VE GIVEN RECENTLY was a stroller for one of our close friends who was having a baby. It wasn't so much the gift as the wrapping paper we made. We got some ordinary craft paper and covered it in stickers, drawings and messages and it just looked like a piece of art.

AND THE BEST GIFT I'VE RECEIVED **RECENTLY** is an amazing green crystal ball my friend Zac Posen gave me.

THE TECH I COULDN'T DO WITHOUT is my Kindle. I like to read paper books, too, but this is great to have on hand for travel. You can look up a word if you don't understand it and it saves all your highlights so you can just print them out.

AN INDULGENCE I WOULD NEVER FORGO is Top 40 music. My friends joke that I know every lyric to every song in the charts. I used to be cool and listen to obscure rock music and find new bands, but really I just have a fascination with pop culture. Still, I have playlists friends gave me that make me feel like I have better taste than I do.

MY STYLE ICON is Jeanne Damas. Her company Rouje is one of my favourites, full of classic pieces and dresses you can just throw on and magically seem put together. She also does really cute suits and coats.

A RECENT "FIND" is a book called Wine Girl, by Victoria James. I loved reading about James' personal journey, working her way

up to becoming one of the top female sommeliers. I never knew how complicated and expensive it is, especially for young women. It's a world I previously knew little about and found very interesting.

THE LAST ITEM OF CLOTHING I ADDED TO MY WARDROBE

was a short-sleeved shirt with a bright blue mosaic pattern, from Ciao Lucia. The label's founder,

Lucy Akin, uses really great fabrics such as silk crêpe de Chine. It's all pretty simple stuff that you can wear over and over again.

COPPOLA'S

THE OBJECTS I WOULD NEVER PART WITH are my dad's wallet or his camera, which I inherited. Those mean a lot to me.

THE BEAUTY STAPLE I'M NEVER WITHOUT

is Jo Malone Red Roses Cologne. It's something I've stuck to for years now. The lemon top note keeps it light and it mixes with me well. I feel strange without it. I've tried other scents but that's my favourite. £100 per 100ml

IF I DIDN'T LIVE IN CALIFORNIA.

I WOULD LIVE IN Las Vegas. I'm so curious as to what life would be like if you lived there. It is the epitome of Americana. I love that it goes all night. My grandpa used to say that it's a

great place to write because you can be in your room and get a burger at any hour and get off from being awake with everyone else and not feel lonely. It brings out this weirder side of a person that I find interesting. I like to go to the Peppermill diner when I'm there, where everything is neon. And it's really fun to go on the David Copperfield warehouse tour, which is very interactive.

MY FAVOURITE APPS are Postmates, Instacart or Venmo - all useful and transactional in some way.

IF I WEREN'T DOING WHAT I DO, I WOULD be a chef. As a kid I loved that idea. I worked at a restaurant when I was younger and it was so interesting to see the inner workings. It's similar to how a movie works, with all the different departments and the chaos and the running around. And it was fun and creative in just the same way too. ■HTSI

I SAW JAWS WHEN I WAS SEVEN AND AFTER THAT I NO LONGER FELT THE SAME ABOUT WATER



Above: Coppola's Jo Malone Red Roses

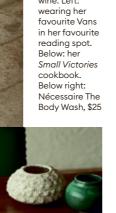


Cologne. Right: her Gucci loafers. Below: a painting by her friend Thomas Lynch

referencing string theory

















Right: the elm kitchen table at Luscombe Farm, a wedding gift from Lorna and Ernest Wishart. Below: Yasmin David at the Farm in 1962, a year after she and her family arrived

ART

LUSCOMBE ALIGHT

A cache of paintings discovered in a cupboard has unveiled a postwar talent and a fascinating life. By *Harriet Quick*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SIMON UPTON

here are ordinary household cupboards, and then there are cupboards that reveal unknown worlds, like the doors that open into CS Lewis's fantasy *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. One such portal was discovered by documentary director Clio David at her family home, Luscombe Farm in south Devon, one afternoon last summer. The cabinet — which she thought contained a jungle of bric-a-brac — housed a trove of more than 100 unseen paintings and drawings by her late mother, the artist Yasmin David.

"They were all so neatly stacked, it was almost as though she'd left them there waiting to be found," says Clio, who grew up on the farm with her two siblings before moving to London at the age of 19. Mostly unframed, the canvases and watercolours depict nature in vibrant shades and vigorous brushstrokes that render the light-infused Devon scenes almost abstract.

The cupboard, located in a bright Indian-yellow upstairs room that served as her mother's painting studio, had been a private place. The discovery of the unsigned, untitled work cast a whole new light on Yasmin's life as a female landscape artist

as well as on a huge tranche of family history. Clio had started to catalogue the many works ahead of a planned exhibition but this find was a turning point. "I took them out one by one and, oh my God! There were five big, square landscapes,

drawings and smaller works. I thought, we've really got something here," she recalls.

Born in 1939, Yasmin, who studied art in Sussex, came from a family that is

intricately intertwined with the cultural firmament of postwar Britain. The tree expands to English poet Laurie Lee (Yasmin's biological father); beauty and muse Lorna Wishart (her mother, who was married to publisher Ernest Wishart and was the lover of both Laurie Lee and Lucian Freud); to the poet Roy Campbell (her uncle); artist Michael Wishart (brother); Douglas Garman (her uncle, who had a long affair with Peggy Guggenheim); and to Kathleen Garman, the collector,

HER MOTHER WAS A LOVER OF LAURIE LEE AND LUCIAN FREUD dealer and second wife of sculptor Jacob Epstein. Their lives, loves and passions are chronicled in Cressida Connolly's book *The Rare and the*

Beautiful: the Lives of the Garmans.

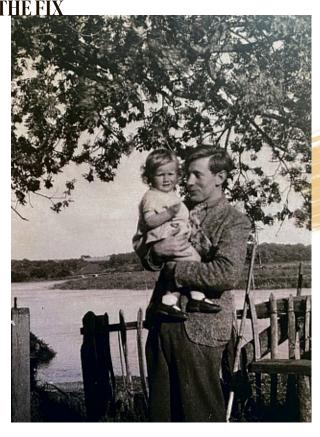
There is a nod to Lady Kathleen Garman in the retrospective of Yasmin David's work entitled *Into The Light* (opening today) at The New Art Gallery Walsall, which was built to house the collection of Clio's

great-aunt. The Garman Ryan Collection, gifted to the Borough of Walsall by Garman and her friend the sculptor Sally Ryan, includes work by Picasso, Braque, Cézanne, Géricault and Delacroix.

This will be the first significant show of Yasmin David's work, and with the cupboard bounty, the scope of what can be explored has suddenly become richer and deeper. It serves as a chronicle of an undiscovered landscape artist who painted quietly and prolifically for more than 50 years. Her



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ological father, Laurie Lee. sex, 1940. Below: their later d. Woman with a Tulip (1945)



constant subject was the thriving, fertile south Devon countryside, renowned for its magical 20ft-high hedgebanks that turn the lanes into a wild maze, and its orchards and dairy farms around the River Dart, which courses into the English Channel.

"My mother always worked from her own place, building her practice steadily over time. Her paintings are unique, and vet sit within the romantic English landscape tradition that zigzags from Richard Long and Paul Nash to Turner, and the pastoral visions of Samuel Palmer to William Blake," says Clio. "She made that tradition her own, among other postwar female artists." Together with her film editor husband, Chris Dickens (Slumdog Millionaire and Rocketman), Clio has made a short introductory film for the gallery site.

Yasmin and her husband, Julian – a Jungian analyst, therapist and teacher at the liberal arts school Dartington Hall (alumni include Lucian Freud, songwriter Kit Hain and literary editor Miriam Gross) – bought the tumbledown Devon dairy farm at auction in 1961. One wing of the house dates back to the 11th century. "No one else wanted it, the floorboards were falling through. Our three children were growing and I was pretending I was a farmer – producing milk, losing money, teaching and making cider," recalls Julian David, sitting by the fireplace wearing a smart ivory summer blazer. "There were still a lot of dialects in this area at that time and we loved that it was the real thing." The cider press turned into a successful venture and the Luscombe organic drinks brand (producing 9.5m bottles per year) is now run by his son, Gabriel, who

ives in a converted barn on the estate. Clio's sister, Esther, an artist too, lives nearby and is married to dairy farmer Oliver Watson, of the Riverford Organic dynasty.

Over the years, the couple turned Luscombe Farm, with its giant flagstone floors and peeling plaster walls, into a home. Today, with guinea fowl and ducks in the yard, barns, outhouses, a running stream,

a romantic Italianate garden and orchards, it appears like a reverie in the late-spring sunshine. "My mother was particular about how she wanted it to look – partially wild and untouched - and we kept it like that. Family, the farm, nature, painting... This is how she lived and she was just not interested in the art market," says Clio, who was married in the iris- and rose-planted

> walled garden at the house. Yasmin never showed her work during her lifetime. "She had a skin too few," remarks Julian of her sensitivity. "The pictures found in the cupboard? I've never seen them before. She painted the whole time and would come across things and hang them up.

"The day before she died, she said: 'Jules, I've decided that I agree with you, my work is good', and I read that as permission for me to show it. In her own lifetime, she could not bear the thought

of people looking at stuff and perhaps not getting the point. The point would be in the picture itself," adds Julian, who has created an informal gallery within the house.

Despite – or perhaps because of – the fact that she hailed from an

picturesque, capture nature in all its

YASMIN NEVER SHOWED HER **WORK DURING** HER LIFETIME. "SHE HAD A SKIN TOO FEW"

extraordinarily colourful bohemian family that helped to shape culture and thinking in postwar Britain, Yasmin rebelled into privacy. The oils and watercolours, far from polite and

Right and far

dairy farm Below: Julian

David in the

(Thicket)

above the

right: the house

beguiling and turbulent glory. Looking at a big canvas that hangs above the kitchen table on a terracotta-painted plaster wall, the effect induces a strange synaesthesia. One can almost hear the woodland stream that gushes through the centre frame and smell the emerald and citrine lady ferns, lichenclad oak branches and wild garlic. "She loved to watch the windy, watery, ever-changing light and seasons, which she painted mainly from her memory, but she also kept a notebook," explains Clio. One entry reads: "Jan: soft, cooler wind from the south-west, rain smelling – sky over the sea pale duck-egg blue washed with yellow – the sea itself murmuring gently, and behind the house (deeply, out of the bushes) a wood pigeon softly bubbling and re-winding down long, deep chambers of the inner ear."

Other works are more meditative. evoking the transcendent power of nature that Yasmin witnessed in the rapidly changing light, rolling clouds, hill tops and

valleys. One of her favourite studies was the view from a stretch of steep Devon lane that rises up in front of Luscombe Farm. She often painted in a cabin studio, kitted out with a burning stove in the grounds. "She always sought out the brilliant light, and we spent time in South Africa and Sicily. Yet spring in Devon is inimitable." Julian says.

AN INSCRIPTION There is more to this discovery BY LAURIE LEE IN HIS BOOK, A ROSE FOR WINTER (1955) than the paintings alone. Clio also



retrieved a stash of correspondence and paper clippings at the back of a rickety chest. The long letters written in ink and on flyweight paper are between Yasmin and her poet-writer father, Laurie Lee. Through a bit of sleuthing, Yasmin and tracked him down in her early 20s. Father and daughter forged a relationship with the tender letters revealing their shared love of poetry, art and the English countryside. "It was simply the greatest occasion of my life," Lee wrote of their reunion. Their relationship remained clandestine until Lee's death in 1997, at which point the tabloids revelled in the "secret love child" scandal, "I can understand why she did not show her work as there was such a huge amount inside her and she was growing as an artist. There is a side of her I am understanding more and more now," says Julian.

discovered she was his illegitimate daughter

SEASONS"

Left: oils by Yasmir room, Below; portrait of Yasmin – by Ronald Ossory Dunlop – and Julian David, above a row of old terracotta pots. Bottom: David's Woodland Stream series, c1998-2003



Yasmin David's work is now attracting serious critical attention. "In the postwar period. David's work sits in comparison with that of Joan Eardley, Barbara Delaney and Gillian Ayres, women following in the footsteps of those of the St Ives milieu in the 1930s: Barbara Hepworth in the field of sculpture, and Wilhelmina Barns-Graham and Margaret Mellis," writes art academic Dr Sophie Hatchwell. "Her work offers a way into thinking about the British landscape outside of traditional patriarchal

conquered or husbanded." Indeed, this will be "SHE LOVED THE EVERthe summer of overlooked CHANGING and hidden female artists **LIGHT AND** – in the UK, at least. *Into* the Light runs concurrently

frameworks – that is, as a territory to be

with Breaking the Mould, an exhibition of female sculptors at Yorkshire Sculpture Park with work by more than 50 artists including Rana Begum, Lygia Clark, Cathy de Monchaux, Elisabeth Frink, Anthea Hamilton, Holly Hendry, Barbara Hepworth and Rachel Whiteread. At Charleston in East Sussex, more than 50 works by the flamboyant artist Nina Hamnett, enmeshed in the Bloomsbury group, are currently on display. "There is a resurgence of interest in 20th century female artists. When you think of how many were practising, it is amazing how little has been told," Clio concludes. ■HTSI Yasmin David: Into the Light opens at The New Art Gallery Walsall on 3 July





Right: Yasmin With

Rose, a painting of David by Lorna

the vellow room that

studio, where the nev

Wishart, c1959. Below: Clio David ir

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GENDER EQUALITY IS NOT JUST A GOAL IT IS CRITICAL TO THE SURVIVAL OF THE PLANET GENERAL TO THE SURVIVAL OF THE PLANET GENERAL TO THE PLANET GENERAL TO



CHIME FOR CHANGE

FIGHTING TO ENSURE GENDER EQUALITY IS AT THE FOREFRONT OF OUR GLOBAL RECOVERY BECAUSE NONE OF US CAN MOVE FORWARD IF HALF OF US ARE HELD BACK

EQUILIBRIUM.GUCCI.COM/GENERATIONEQUALITY #ACTFOREQUAL



The 240-year-old Parisian jeweller, beloved

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALEX CRETEY SYSTERMANS



and appoints a new creative director. "We are driven by a sense of being both contemporary and the oldest maison in Place Vendôme." savs CEO Jean-Marc Mansvelt, who joined the company in 2015. He has been the main architect of change, instrumental in reframing the image and identity of Chaumet, which was acquired by LVMH in 1999. This reinvigoration is surely intended to capture a bigger share of the fine-jewellery market, which is estimated to grow to \$340-\$360bn by 2025. To create the look of the new London boutique, with its Lesage embroidered walls and powder-blue staircase, echoing the grey-blue skies of Paris, Mansvelt enlisted designer Patricia Grosdemange. The renovation, which has lasted a year, aims to entice clients into an intimate, storytelling space, generating an immersive buying experience that is as

cultural as it is transactional.

The jewellery showcased in the revamped stores demonstrates the continued exploration of Chaumet's most emblematic themes – the tiara, love of nature, belle époque refinement and a touch of '70s modernity. The recent Joséphine collection celebrates the maison's patron and muse, while the famous Napoleonic acrostic bracelet has recently been reimagined. Yet, despite the historical narrative. Mansvelt believes Chaumet's minimal, understated style chimes with today's quest for "something more essential".

CHAUMET WHITE-GOLD

AND DIAMOND

JOSEPHINE VALSE IMPERIALI NECKLACE

It is a challenge taken on by Chaumet's new creative director, Ehssan Moazen, who joined in March 2020 after a five-year stint at Tiffany & Co in New York. He works closely

Baron François Gérard, from the Château de llection. Top left: from left to right, creative director Ehssan Moazen, CEO and workshop lirector Benoît Verhulle. Right: Les Ciels de Chaumet high-jewellery collection. All items





diamond and Vivid

Red Mozambique ruby Torsade de

White-gold and

diamond Torsade de

White-gold and diamond

Torsade de Chaumet ring

DR DENNIS GROSS C+

Collagen Skin

Mist, \$30

GLOW RECIPE

Mist. \$28

FENTY

BEAUTY

What It Dev

TOM FORD

Chaumet earrings

with Benoît Verhulle, Chaumet's long-serving workshop director, only the 13th to hold the position in the maison's history. It is a collaborative relationship, with design working hand-in-hand with materials, gemstones, craftsmanship, technical innovation and ingenuity, so that, says Moazen, everyone in the company has an input, just as each artisan makes their own individual contribution. Moazen sees Chaumet as the ultimate Parisian maison, but also as much more than just a heritage brand. "We are playing with very clear design codes, with a consistent vocabulary, strong roots and a well-kept path through history. It is a challenge and responsibility to contemporise these codes, not to overdo them, and to make them relevant to today. It's about pushing the territories and perspectives of the brand."

TORSADE, CHAUMET'S latest high-jewellery collection, launches this month. The basic concept is a ribbon, the classic, linear motif stylised into a restless twist of diamond light, twirling and spiralling with a hint of sensuality. "We had to find a way to mix tradition and creativity, in a concept that is clear to understand and designs that are comfortable to wear," says Verhulle. "They look very simple, but are in fact very complex, in their details and three-dimensional aspect." One technique used to develop the illusion of movement was reverse-setting rose diamonds to represent the back of a ribbon as it twists and turns. There is, Verhulle adds, a shared passion with Moazen, which makes the conversation easy. "There is a great deal of emotion in the collaboration, from the person who dreams up the design, to the artisan who has a vision for realising it." Verhulle tells how his artisans switch easily from new technology to age-old hand skills.

This reinvigoration comes at a time of shifting priorities. Winston Chesterfield, director of Barton Consulting, specialists in the jewellery market, says: "There's a good

deal of appetite for heritage and stories, even sometimes told through antique pieces in store - people have mentioned being able to see the evolution of collections over decades." He adds: "Acquiring knowledge is a big super-trend for wealthy consumers. It's about being able to take something away from the purchase that's

"MANY FINE JEWELLERY BRANDS FEEL TOO OLD-FASHIONED"

pass on to others." At the same time, Chesterfield savs there's a greater desire for jewellery to be fun. "Many fine jewellery

useful, something they can

brands feel too fusty and old-fashioned, particularly for younger consumers."

Meanwhile, Mansvelt has seized on this moment to nurture Chaumet's march toward modernity. "This is not a moment of frenetic consumption, but of considered, enduring purchases, when people look for more substance, more value," he muses. "There is a new recognition of the emotional role of the iewel, and an understanding of the highjewellery creation as a true work of art." And he adds, an appreciation of a maison with longevity. The future, he feels, is bright for the jewellery world. And for Chaumet. **HHTSI**



THEFIX

_ SKINCARE

Dew the right thing There's nothing a quick spritz can't fix, writes Rosanna Dodds Craving new sensory stimulation? A brood of face mists are

ideal for breaking up the monotony of hours spent staring at a screen, as well as providing an extra buffer against our skin's biggest aggressors.

Drunk Elephant's Sweet Biome uses a cocktail of fermented sake extract, hops and kombucha to help restore, soothe and balance the microbiome. "Think of a good mist as a nutritional pop of vitamins, antioxidants and water-boosting substances," says founder Tiffany Masterson, whose latest launch was inspired by the nourishing components of sweat. A similar hit can be found from Tom Ford's Hyaluronic Energizing Mist and Chanel's Hydra Beauty Essence Mist, both of which contain an invigorating dose of vitamin E.

For an immediate moisture boost, look to offerings fro Dr Barbara Sturm, Givenchy and Glow Recipe, while Dr Dennis Gross has a formula to help fight against environmenta stressors. And lastly, for a make-up refresher, try a spritz of Fenty Beauty's What It Dew, a herbal-infused fine mist that be applied morning, night or whenever the mood strikes.



Cream-in-Mist, £48

DRUNK ELEPHANT Spray, \$42



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CHAUMET MORE

of the empress Joséphine, is embarking on a new journey, writes Vivienne Becker



White-gold and diamond earrings, £4,430 Eternel brooch



Joséphine Valse Impériale ring

PLAYING IT COLL



Athletic accents bring edge to the season's classic pieces. Photography by *Sean+Seng*. Styling by *Tamara Rothstein*. Model *Misty Kyd*

This page: LOUIS VUITTON poplin trench coat, £3,200. CHANEL stretch-jersey jacket, £5,190 (just seen), and jersey velvet trousers, £2,745. MIZUNO FOR MARGARET HOWELL running shoes, £225. BOTTEGA VENETA sterling-silver earrings, £270 for a pair

Opposite page: JIL SANDER BY LUCIE AND LUKE MEIER wool jacket, £2,190. RE-SEE vintage Balenciaga knit top, €680. BALENCIAGA denim and cotton poplin hybrid shirt trousers, £1,150. SALOMON S/LAB XT-6 trainers, £155. ALEX EAGLE x OTIUMBERG gold vermeil medium single earring, £69

Throughout: chair from a selection at roomsofclapton.com





Right: LOUIS VUITTON leather jacket, £4,800. ALEX EAGLE cashmere Cricket jumper, £420. MARTINE ROSE denim Maynard jeans, £275. PANTHERELLA wool socks, £14.50. ON RUNNING Cloudaway running shoes, £130. BOTTEGA VENETA sterling-silver earrings, £270 for a pair. CHANEL leather belt, £1,005

Below right: PROENZA SCHOULER cotton jacket, £1,940, and matching trousers, £1,055. MARTINE ROSE denim Yalta shirt, £395. SALOMON S/ LAB XT-6 trainers, £155



Above: GIVENCHY polyamide bomber, £1,590. MHL BY MARGARET HOWELL wool cardigan, £185, and denim twill jeans, £245. OTIUMBERG gold vermeil mini chunky twist hoop earrings, £130 for a pair. BOTTEGA VENETA sterling-silver and enamel chunky rings, £685 each

Opposite page: DIOR intarsia wool Check'n'Dior Pop cardigan, £1,400, and wool Check'n'Dior Pop dress, £2,800. MUJI cotton socks, £3.50. ON RUNNING Cloudflyer running shoes, £140. OTIUMBERG gold vermeil mini chunky twist hoop earrings, £130 for a pair



Model, Misty Kyd at Viva London. Hair, Shon Ju at The Wall Group. Make-up, Marina Belfon-Rose. Manicure, Naima Coleman. Photographer's assistants, Jack Snell and Victor Raré. Stylist's assistants, Andreea Georgiana Rădoi, Rosie Sykes and Georgia Pellegrino. Production, Madeline Jensen at Farago Projects. Special thanks to Alva East



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hen the composer Max Richter was 13, he got hold of a soldering iron and built his first electrical components. He had fallen in love with electronic music after hearing the German electro-music pioneers Kraftwerk, and his passion for inventing new sounds grew alongside his prowess at the classical piano.

This blend of the classical and modern, electric and acoustic, is a hallmark of Richter's beguilingly genredefying music, which is sometimes orchestral, sometimes digital and most often a marriage of the two. His postminimalist sound draws as much from composers like John Cage and Steve Reich as it does from the punk bands he listened to as a teenager.

Intense, haunting, exhilarating, provocative – it often feels as if he is part-composer, part-inventor. Given that he can lay claim to being the world's most-streamed "classical" composer, you will almost certainly have heard his work: Richter has written music for more than 50 film and TV projects, including HBO's My Brilliant Friend, Tom Hardy's Taboo and Charlie Brooker's Black Mirror. Fans of Bridgerton will be familiar with one of his best-known works, "Vivaldi Recomposed", which he described as "throwing molecules of the original Vivaldi into a test tube with a bunch of other things, and waiting for an explosion". But perhaps his most famous composition is *Sleep*, an "eighthour lullaby" released in 2015 intended to accompany a full night of restfulness and which, as of July 2020, had amassed close to 500m streams. Currently, he must surely be noted as the favoured composer of those working from home.

Richter was born in Hamelin, north-west Germany, but grew up in Bedford. He has described himself as a "cripplingly shy" child and was obsessive about music and books. He went on to study piano and composition at the University of Edinburgh and the Royal Academy of Music, completing his studies with the experimental composer and electronic pioneer Luciano Berio in Florence. For a time he earned a living as a pianist, and collaborated with British electronic group The Future Sound of London and the DJ Roni Size.

And here, 30 years later, he is still very much spanning the musical spectrum. Within the new studio he and his artist partner Yulia Mahr have built deep in the Oxfordshire countryside, his huge, light-filled workspace has a Yamaha grand piano at one end and an Apple computer and Moog System 55 synthesiser at the other. "We can do any sort of recording here," he says of the



studio, an expansive old barn that was once part of an alpaca farm. The original structure is now divided into separate rooms for both Richter and Mahr. Her airy studio sits across the front of the building, while the rest of the space is filled by a recording room, which can comfortably seat an orchestra of 30, and Richter's own domain, a huge, vaulted room, the exact dimensions for which he took from the loft he worked in when he, Mahr and their three children lived in Berlin.

"Obviously we've got the computers and the digital side, but we also have new machines so we can record to tape, which is super-important to me because I love the sound of analogue media," he says. "We can do something very retro here but we can also do a Dolby cinema mix, too – so we can span both ends."

This breadth is doubly important given the sheer range of Richter's work. Early on in his career, he took commercial work as a way of funding his solo projects, but that pluralistic approach has led to a career in which he is now as acclaimed for his soundtracks and ballet scores as he is for his own more personal work. In the past year. he reworked some of the music from his 2015 ballet Woolf Works for Kim Jones's Fendi spring/summer 2021 couture show and released *Voices 2*, a companion to the earlier work Voices, which premiered just before lockdown and which takes as its centrepiece the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. He crowdsourced readings of the text on social media and received hundreds of submissions in more than 70 languages, weaving the music through his chosen excerpts.

"I see the Declaration as all about potential," he says. "It would be wonderful to play it in front of audiences some more, because that text is so important at this moment where global societies and cultures are thinking about what the next step is, and there have been all kinds of power grabs in the area of rights. I just feel like I want it to be heard as much as possible, because it's just a great way to shine a light on those questions." In fact, its first post-lockdown airing is already scheduled: the Max Richter ensemble will perform it at the South Facing Festival in London's Crystal Palace Bowl on 28 August. Richter feels it will be an incredible moment: "Music is all about communication and for musicians not to be able to do that... it's like we really thirst for it. Performance is like a 'real-time' laboratory; it's where you find out what vou've made. The pandemic has been a disaster for the venues and institutions, the bands, the orchestras. I mean, it's been decimated. The government is going to have to step in more. Whole orchestras of musicians are retraining to do other things."

Richter talks quietly, thoughtfully, and in a way that, like his music, shifts seamlessly from the personal to the political. He says that the idea for a kind of rural studioretreat – or, as he and Mahr sometimes refer to it, an "art farm" – has been percolating for 20 years. They are united by their belief in the power of creativity to influence societal change – and Richter is driven by an unequivocal belief that music can help us navigate the big, difficult questions that we face as societies by providing "a place to think and reflect". Being able to transpose that idea into a physical space, one which comes with an atmosphere of both calm and creativity, has long felt to them both like an important project. "I guess both Yulia and I share an idea of how creativity and culture can fit into society, and what it can do within society," says Richter. "And that's to do with connecting people, and allowing people to 'speak' to one another in this different medium – which needs a place where that can happen."

By any standards it's an impressive building, with floor-to-ceiling windows giving views straight into the surrounding forest. But compared to the setup of most modern recording studios it's practically cathedral-like. Recording studios are often the least glamorous part of the musical process: windowless, airless rooms dedicated to the sound, not the person making it. "The thing that a lot of studios do is they build a machine, and you feel like you're



THE RICHTER SCALE

One of the world's most-streamed contemporary composers, Max Richter gives us an exclusive tour of his new "art farm" in the Oxfordshire woods

By Nicola Moulton. Photography by Tom Jamieson

Richter, Below:

studio built by

Richter and

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"ULTIMATELY WE'RE ALL TRYING TO FIGURE STUFF OUT BY MAKING THINGS"

inside a machine when you're in there, which in a way also disregards the fact that you have a body. So trying to make spaces for musicians that are humane, and inviting, and comfortable, I think is really important," says Richter.

Aside from it being a base where Richter can both compose and record, the idea is to make the studio available to others; particularly emerging artists and young musicians struggling to afford a studio, or even a place in which to experiment and create. "With studio time, you're always on the clock," says Richter. "And having that pressure can sometimes be quite stifling. We have space, and we have great facilities. We're exploring ways to put together a programme so that people have access to all of this." Alongside the studio, Richter and Mahr have had huts built in the woods so that visitors can stay for a few days at a time — and eventually there will also be a café to feed the creative team and visiting artists, too.

A transient hub, with artists and musicians coming and going, allows for the kind of creative serendipity that benefits everyone, says Richter. "Obviously I'm doing my work here... and I love the idea that one day there'll be some kind of mega Hollywood film project, and the next there'll be a bunch of kids trying something. I love the idea of these things being within proximity... because that sort of constellation can be so rich."

Beyond offering the practical support of world-class recording facilities, Richter is optimistic that the space may also open up ideological discussions about what



Max facts

THE COMPOSER'S MOST-STREAMED TRACKS

ON THE NATURE OF DAYLIGHT

From The Blue Notebooks (2004) **211m**

VLADIMIR'S BLUES

From The Blue Notebooks (2004) **155m**

DREAM 1

From Sleep (2015) **120m**

SPRING 1

From Recomposed by Max Richter: Vivaldi, The Four Seasons (2012) **82m**

A CATALOGUE OF AFTERNOONS

New track on the 15-year anniversary reissue of *The Blue Notebooks* (2018) **71m**

*Data correct as of June 2021



music can contribute in the wider world. In his solo work, he describes himself as a "composer and activist", and his music has responded to the Iraq war (*The Blue Notebooks* features actress Tilda Swinton reading excerpts from Kafka's *The Blue Octavo Notebooks*) and the London bombings of 2005 (*Infra*, inspired by TS Eliot's *The Waste Land*).

His new album *Exiles*, released in August, continues this exploration. The album's title work comes from a ballet commissioned by Paul Lightfoot and Sol León (resident choreographers of Dutch contemporary dance company Nederlands Dans Theater) in 2014 — the moment when the Syrian refugee crisis exploded in Europe, and debates became particularly polarised in Germany, where Richter was then living. "I think creativity is really about finding those things that you want to communicate, that you want to talk about," he says. "I think ultimately that's what we're all trying to do; to figure stuff out by making things. So a place like this, because it's sort of wide-open in a way, it becomes sort of a big question mark for somebody to walk into. And we just press 'record' and see what happens."

W

hat he most wants to do, he says, is allow emerging artists to realise they don't necessarily just need to "pick a lane" and stick to it, but should be able to pursue different avenues creatively. "Streaming has meant that people listen

really widely, because there isn't any risk. You don't have to spend 20 quid on the record or even go to the record shop – you just click and there you are; you're hearing something you probably wouldn't otherwise have heard. That's made a music culture that is very plural, and the categories are quite fluid now, which I think is really interesting."

Although he embraces technology so freely in his own work, Richter is also aware of the paradox that much of his music also seeks to find solace from the digital onslaught – nowhere more so than in *Sleep*, which has been staged around the world as an overnight performance, with the audience listening in camp-beds rather than chairs.

Throughout Covid, *Sleep* has taken on a life of its own and there's now an app that allows you to set sleep, meditation or focus schedules to Richter's music. When the idea of the Sleep app was first put to him, he wasn't sure it was a good idea, but now he sees it as an example of how technology can be a positive. "When I saw it I just thought, 'Wow, this is what the iPhone was invented for'." he says.

"I think that idea of technology as this kind of doubleedged sword is becoming more acute," says Richter. "I mean it's a tremendous enabler, of course... when I was a kid, if you wanted to write for orchestra, you had to go to university and learn how to do it, then persuade a bunch of people to sit down and play your stuff. Whereas now, if you want to write for orchestra, you can on your laptop make the sound of an orchestra... kind of. But on the other hand, technology is obviously deeply embedded in the kind of late-capitalist, neoliberal model — it's a symptom and a cause of that, and it's also what's putting us all in the hamster wheel. We're just learning how to deal with this stuff. It's going to take some time."

For Richter, technology needs the antidote of nature to provide the balance that will temper us creatively. It's why the studio could never have been built in a city. "I think there's a big thing about just being here, in nature," he says. "It's really a 'headspace' thing. People can come, hang out for a few days, do some work — but they're in the forest. And I think that's great. I just love that sort of balance. I suppose, if we think of the past year or so as a big question mark, then potentially, now, there is an opportunity to create some positive answers."

HTSI



Top: Richter in his Oxfordshire recording studio. Far left: huts will allow visiting artists to stay over. Left: a Moog System 55 synthesiser. Below: one of his notebooks on his Yamaha arand piano



"It's a Trojan horse for art"

Hauser & Wirth embraces unexpected gallery conversions. *Jan Dalley* takes a first look around its new space on the tiny Spanish island of Isla del Rey. Photography by *Anna Huix*





re often described our business model as a non-traditional gallery curriculum," says gallerist Iwan Wirth. "We've done things differently from the beginning."

We're talking about Hauser & Wirth's newest gallery/restaurant project, in a surprising location: a tiny island in the middle of the harbour at Mahon, in Menorca. Accessible only by boat, the Isla del Rey measures just 41,000sq m - you can stroll from one side to the other in a couple of minutes – and although for much of the year the sea around it is a heavenly blue, with sky to match, the winters bring vicious winds and a climate hardly suited to expensive art. At night, the rabbits and lizards have the place to themselves.

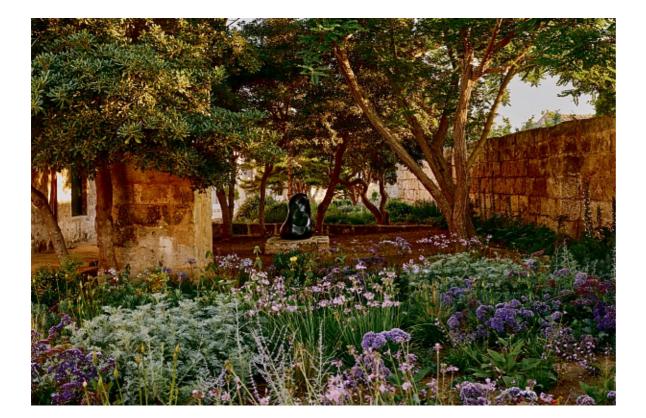
What's more, for a commercial gallery to bring blue-chip art to this place seems, at first, bizarre. This is the most low-glam of the Balearic islands, hardly a billionaire's playground, and its devotees like to keep it that way.

"Doing things differently", as Wirth puts it, has seen Hauser & Wirth grow into an art-world behemoth with more than a dozen galleries around the world and a roster of artists and artists' estates that is probably the world's largest. Yet somehow it retains the feel of a family business – it was established in 1992 in Zurich by Iwan Wirth, his wife, Manuela, and Ursula Hauser (Manuela's mother) - and in each of its many locations the gallery fits the local scene. So in Hong Kong that means a gleaming tower; in Manhattan, an elegant Upper East Side townhouse as well as a new-built West Side space near the High Line; in Los Angeles, a converted flour mill in formerly derelict Downtown with a restaurant with live chickens. In central London, whole tracts of Savile Row are converted into huge, airy white-box spaces, but in Bruton, Somerset, an ancient set of farm buildings has been made into a sort of compound with a restaurant and gallery in a converted barn, wonderfully extensive gardens, and spaces for resident artists and for educational and community projects.

This is, loosely, the model for the Menorcan idea. In the planning stages, the Wirths took a group of local officials from Mahon to visit Bruton: no doubt a clever sell, because getting permission to make their gallery on the Isla del Rey was never going to be easy. Although tiny, the island hosts significant historic structures. Dominating the skyline is a former naval hospital built in the early 18th century by the British, who then controlled Menorca. Its arcaded façade topped with a bell tower forms a U-shape with a chapel at one end around an old medicinal garden, now restored by volunteers. Since 2005 it has been protected by a Foundation and slowly brought back to life; it now houses a museum. But only a decade or so ago, the buildings were completely abandoned, crumbling and on the point of collapse.

And most people, if they did visit the old hospital, hardly even noticed a low line of ancient auxiliary buildings that runs across the island from one side to the other, a few dozen yards away. No one bothered with these. Just five years ago, they were in ruins – some parts nothing but rubble and collapsed beams, half overtaken by thick undergrowth. If you fought your way around them, pushing through thorny bushes and stepping gingerly over smashed tiles, broken beams and mucky rubbish, you would come to another of the island's treasures, the remains of a sixth-century Christian Basilica, scarcely regarded and almost impossible to see as it was surrounded by a hideous chain-link fence. Despite the island's startling natural beauty, and the gloomy romance of its history, the place was, frankly, pretty horrible.

It would have taken some imagination to guess that the site would be opening this month as Hauser & Wirth Menorca, the ruined buildings remade into a line of eight galleries, education spaces and offices, the former hospital kitchen transformed into a restaurant whose outdoor tables now look out through rescued trees onto the water, the gardens replanted



"LITTLE DID WE KNOW THAT PEOPLE WERE GOING TO BE RE-EVALUATING THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO NATURE AND TO CITIES"

and dotted with sculpture. And that chainlink fence around the Basilica ruins has gone.

Architect Luis Laplace, an Argentine who now runs his own design and architecture practice in Paris, talks with loving enthusiasm about the project he undertook with Mar Rescalvo Pons, the director of Hauser & Wirth Menorca. On a tour of the site, we talk about rescuing buildings, about the problems and regulations of historic listed structures, and about lizards. The Isla del Rey has a unique lizard, a bright green, fatfingered little thing with a long tail. Laplace designed special homes for them underneath built-in benches. "They don't like each other much so we had to make lots of different compartments," he says.

We talk about trees, a lot. On the site, swathes of dense undergrowth were laboriously stripped out, leaving the larger pines, olives and cypresses – though none grows very large on this wind-whipped island – so the buildings are surrounded by shade and half-veiled. Working to preserve trees sometimes only a few feet from the foundations was a building challenge, Laplace admits – pointing to one especially inconvenient pine, he tells me, laughingly: "Iwan said to me, 'If you move that tree. I'll kill you.'

"Even building the [access] steps, which involved taking out a single tree, was a long, long conversation. But Piet finally solved it by saying that it was a non-native tree and should go anyway."

He's referring to Piet Oudolf, the Dutch garden designer and writer who has created the landscaping and planting here. Oudolf is renowned for projects that include New York's High Line, and for gardens that use herbaceous plants and grasses in dramatic clumps and drifts, with an eye always on ecology. His lush, almost Monet-esque garden at Hauser & Wirth Somerset is one of the chief delights of the place. But the dry, rocky soil of the Isla del Rey and a volatile climate is a different proposition, one that Oudolf has approached by going local. His new planting focuses on the herbs and shrubs of the Balearic Islands. In June, rich clusters of purple and yellow were emerging, with lavenders, alliums and potentilla, camomile, what I guessed were camassia, and more.

As we walk, Mar Rescalvo shows me the sculpture dotted around the buildings. The first I have already seen:

a vibrant pink egg-shaped piece, Autostat (1996) by Franz West, that greets you when you dock at the little jetty on the island and which announces the gallery's presence in no uncertain terms. The entrance to the galleries themselves, up a paved, flower-bordered avenue directly facing the old hospital, is heralded by a corten-steel piece by Eduardo Chillida, Elogio del vacío VI (2000). The Spanish sculptor, Rescalvo tells me, was from the Basque country, but found in Menorca the wildness and stillness he needed for his work. She points me to a second piece by Chillida, Escuchando a la piedra III (1996), nestling under olive trees behind the restaurant. A small patina'd bronze abstract by Joan Miró, le Père Ubu (1974), continues the Spanish theme. Then, as she leads me into the courtyard entrance, there is the sculptural pièce de résistance, a 3m Spider (1994) by Louise Bourgeois.

But the buildings clamour for attention almost as much as the art. Talking to Laplace, we also spend a lot of time on ceilings. The once roofless structure that is now the restaurant – named Cantina and run by a local vineyard-restaurant called Binifadet – has a magnificent beamed roof that looks as if it has been in place for 200 years. But it is a new structure. "Every piece of wood," he says, "was found on the site. We gathered them all up, cleaned them – but not too much – and remade this roof on a model of local ships." He points out other details that echo the nautical setting: handles, hinges and latches made for boats, and the use of Menorcan craftspeople and makers for every possible element.

Despite this almost obsessive attention to the finer points, the overall feeling of this mighty undertaking is surprisingly light-touch. Iwan Wirth describes Laplace's architectural interaction with the buildings as "almost invisible", and I agree — if by that he means that the buildings created, some of which are at least 90 per cent new, already look as if they have always been there and have had only a light facelift.

When I ask Manuela and Iwan Wirth the obvious question – why this, why here? – they look at each other for a moment as if to imply that the choice was, to them if not to others, an obvious one. "Like so many times in our gallery life," Iwan Wirth replies, "these places choose us. Opportunities find us." Manuela's mother, Ursula Hauser,

Left: *Le Père Ubu*, 1974, by Joan Miró, in the garden designed by Piet Oudolf

had a holiday home on Mallorca, but it was a visit to the smaller island that planted the idea. "There are lots of great buildings in the world," he continues, "but you need to know what you want to do with them. And to be mad enough to put heart and soul and a lot of money into it."

They describe the decision as "instinct, backed up by strategy". "Little did we know that the art world was going to get decentralised, and that people were going to be re-evaluating their relationship to nature and to cities. We knew it would be an amazing place for people to visit and for artists to come and work – setting is so important."

Mahon has the largest natural harbour in the Mediterranean, some three miles long and deep enough for ships of any size. The small bays along its edges are now, of course, dotted with buildings, but there's still plenty of wild green space. The Isla del Rey sits about halfway down the harbour, so Mahon's picturesque town meets your eyes on one side, the mouth of the harbour and the open sea in the other direction.

The harbour's extraordinary size and depth made it strategically important enough, in the days of sail, for the great powers of the day - France, Spain and Britain - to fight over it bitterly. Against this setting, into this complicated and beautiful place, steps Hauser & Wirth's first gallery artist, Mark Bradford. At first, a painter from Los Angeles might seem a baffling choice. As does the arrival of a blue-chip name, now one of the most expensive living artists, in this small place. But, as Rescalvo explains to me, Bradford had been integral to the plans from an early stage. Some years ago the artist spent time in the Balearics and found the enchantment of the islands - and even knew the Isla del Rey itself. His new series of work, entitled Masses and Movements, is inspired by a 16thcentury map of the world thought to be the first ever mention in print of the word "America". The sense of sea crossings and trade routes, of migrations and resettlements, echoes through the Menorca exhibition, with globe sculptures as well as canvases, and a sitespecific mural that Bradford is currently creating with the assistance of art students from Mahon.

n e e n s n ti e E a a p it s

nd does Hauser & Wirth expect to sell these multimillion dollar works on a small Balearic island? That's not really the right question, these days. An artist of Bradford's stature will have a waiting list of eager buyers, private and institutional — it hardly matters where he shows the work. What does

matter is the creation of an environment that will inspire an artist, beguile visitors and provide a deeper cultural resonance. It's a symbiotic partnership between gallerist and artist that goes far beyond the simple selling transaction.

As the new galleries open, two of the rooms will be given over to an installation designed by Bradford that explores the vast complexities of global immigration. "This will be a multifunctional educational space," Rescalvo tells me, "and Mark will be there to develop it at the start." Menorca's schoolchildren and students will be involved as projects unfold, and Rescalvo, whose background is in music (she was director of the Balearic Symphony Orchestra), also has plans for performing arts.

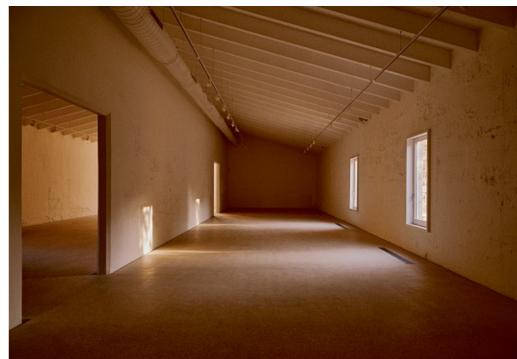
"It's important to have hired people from the island," emphasises Manuela. And they have certainly done that. Rescalvo herself is a Menorcan but, like so many talented people, she had to leave to find opportunities: now she is back, living in her grandmother's old house in Es Mercadal, a small town in the middle of the island. Her director of communications, Marta Coll, is another returnee, back in her Menorcan home town of Ferrerias after six years working abroad. The restaurant is run by





Far left: a walkway through the garden. Left: the shadow of *Spider, 1994*, by Louise Bourgeois. Below: the main gallery space, soon to be filled with works by LA artist Mark Bradford

"IT'S ABOUT OPENING YOUR MIND TO CONTEMPORARY ART IN A MAGICAL SETTING"



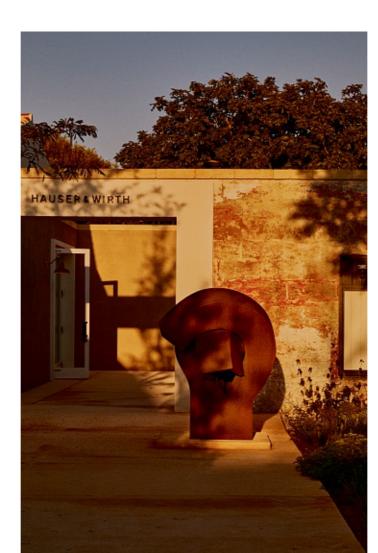
local vineyard owners, and staffed mostly from the island. Local craftspeople and makers, local talent — it has all won local approval. There will be free access to everything, and boats will run every hour; in the winter months when the galleries themselves are closed, the sculptures and gardens will still be open for walkers. "It is a public island", as Rescalvo reminds me. Hauser & Wirth doesn't own the real estate, and its initial 15-year lease (with an option to renew for 10 more) is already ticking. They make it clear that the success of the project, on both sides, will determine its future.

And what about that future? When I ask about next year's artists, it seems very much a game of wait-and-see. "The pandemic has taught us not to make so many plans," Rescalvo says, and although the first artist-in-residence will hopefully be in place in 2022, even that isn't yet firm.

So the plans for this all-round art centre, which they intend as a cultural resource for Menorca, are somewhat vague, if enthusiastic. In the end, Wirth is passionate first and foremost about the art itself. Rather beguilingly, he describes the creation of a gorgeous setting – the gardens, the restaurant, the ambience – as a "Trojan horse", almost a subterfuge, for bringing people to the art. "It's about accessibility, to open your mind to contemporary art, in a magical setting.

"It changes people's lives, touches their hearts. What more can you ask for?" **■HTSI**

Hauser & Wirth Menorca opens to the public on 19 July. Masses and Movements by Mark Bradford is showing until 31 October. hauserwirth.com





Left: *Elogio del vacío VI*, 2000, by Eduardo Chillida, at the gallery entrance. Above: the 18th-century naval hospital and bell tower

LONDON NEW YORK PARIS DÜSSELDORF MOSCOW SINGAPORE SHANGHAI QINGDAO HONG KONG GUANGZHOU TAIPEI SEOUL



ELIZABETH HARROD, SOLOIST, THE ROYAL BALLET

SAVOIR

EXTRAORDINARY BEDS

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CAN YOU KICK IT?

Wearable technology for sports is a big new thing. These strap-on devices for football boots are endorsed by Arsène Wenger and used by a small but growing number of football clubs.

Each Playermaker strap packs a six-axis motion sensor to sample movement 1,000 times a second. This way, in combination with a coach's iPhone (an Android app is said to be coming), players can measure and compare their performance in a wide variety of footballrelevant parameters including impact with the ground, foot rotation, ball releases, possession, kick velocity, time on the ball, number of sprints, distance covered, top speed, accelerations, decelerations and work rate.

With straps on each boot, you can also learn your kick velocity for each leg. Our test footballer, a 15-year-old being eyed by a Premiership club, was pleased and encouraged to learn that while he thought his right leg was dominant, he was actually kicking faster with his left.

Playermaker can also enable you, if you dare, to compare yourself with average performance stats of professionals. Test footballer's advice: "Don't if you want to avoid being discouraged." Playermaker UNO Kit, £199, playermakeruno.co.uk

HOME ALONE

I doubt if the past 18 months have been a great time for sales of home-security devices. But now that going out - and even away - is back, securing your home should be a re-consideration.

I have previously featured Arlo's webcams, which have an exceptional reputation but can

be complex multi-camera installations, with the cameras wired into a dedicated hub. It now has the Arlo Essential Indoor Camera, a simple, one-box security system that connects directly to your WiFi.

It provides most of the functions you would expect on a more expensive camera – 1080p HD video and motion alerts to your phone, night vision, zoom up to 12x, two-way audio communication to really spook intruders - and even more if you buy a small monthly subscription.

It also has a physical privacy shield for when vou're at home, which can be slid into position remotely from the phone app.

The system also sends viewable video to your Apple Watch if the camera detects suspicious movement - so you can avoid the gaucherie of getting your phone out in, say, a meeting. Arlo Essential Indoor Camera, £119, arlo.com

THE BEST BAR NONE

This soundbar from JBL, a West Coast audio brand beloved of sound engineers and professionals, is, at 70cm, smaller than its competitors - but trust me, it's awesome.

It's a simple plug-and-play installation and doesn't just give a better quality, stereo take on the tinny sound a flat screen produces but provides something close to full-on surround audio with amazing spatial effects of things flying around the room. JBL's "multibeam" design makes the extra speakers you normally need for surround sound unnecessary; it even calibrates automatically to suit the room it's in. The pretty good bass also obviates any need for a subwoofer.

If what you're watching is in the Dolby Atmos audio format (increasingly common on streaming services, especially Apple TV), it's even more arresting.

Another plus is that you can use the sound bar as a Bluetooth speaker for music. So, for £350 you're aetting a sound bar that's more discreet than most and as good as £700 models - and a really decent music system thrown in, Impressed, JBL Bar 5.0 MultiBeam, £349.99, uk.jbl.com



For more of Jonathan's reviews, visit ft.com/htsi (2) @thefuturecritic

his all-American barbecue, new to the UK from Utah, is a 68kg, four-wheeled temple to meat. Strictly speaking, the Traeger Ironwood 650 is not really a barbecue. You can barbecue with it, if your definition of barbecue is the application of radiant heat directly on to meat from a few centimetres' distance but Traeger's speciality is wood-fired ovens for cooking meat of all kinds in a bath of delicious hot wood smoke. This means whole chickens, joints of beef, briskets, racks of ribs etc are now cookable in the great outdoors, with superb smoky taste effects. We also had a great success with creating some home-smoked salmon.

The mechanism of the Traeger is interesting. You load approved wood pellets into a big hopper on the side of the oven. They're not too expensive and easily available in different flavours - cherry wood worked brilliantly for the salmon.

The pellets are then slowly transported to the electric element (the grill needs mains electricity) by way of a kind of Archimedes screw called an auger.

It's also WiFi-connected. So even if it's raining, as it was both times we tested it. you can control the temperature, the ferocity of the cook and other parameters from a phone app from the safety of the great indoors. There's an electronic probe to spike into cuts of meat that gives your phone or Apple Watch alerts if it's getting too hot or not hot enough. You can then remotely adjust the heat and the smoke level from wherever you are.

Can you do a steak or hamburgers as in a traditional barbecue, complete with the desirable heat stripes? Yes, you can, but since the top temperature is 260°C, it takes a little longer than on a basic chuck-it-on barbie.

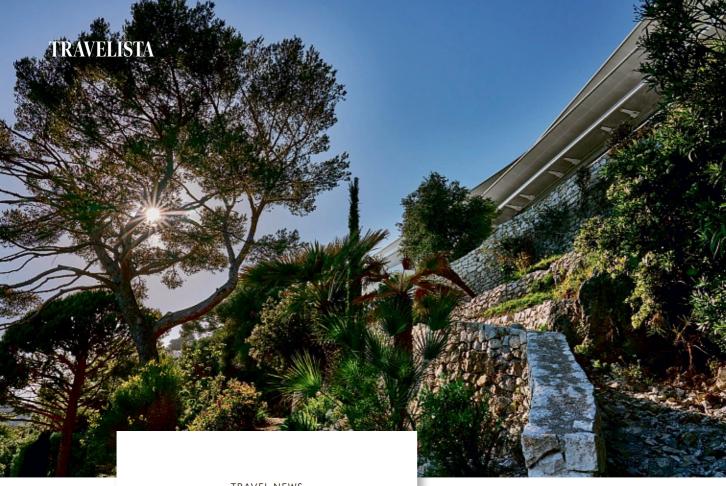
Traeger advises on methods, which work fine, but are slow; or you can find guides online about how to get a Traeger to do stripy steak more quickly. I particularly like a YouTube video by Kosmo's Q BBQ & Grilling store in Oklahoma City, which suggests what they call

a spot of "redneck engineering" to

do the trick with a Traeger. ■HTSI

DETAILS

£1,499, traegergrills.com



Left and below: the hills above Roquebrune



TRAVEL NEWS

Riviera revival

The Côte d'Azur welcomes a dazzling new resident, and other rooms with a view

WORDS BY MARIA SHOLLENBARGER

Elephant Sanctuary in northern Kenya

o the French Riviera, which feels back in a biggish way. Call it nostalgia, call it evidence of a new Roaring Twenties; whatever, the arrival of Maybourne - the hotel group behind Claridge's, The Berkeley and The Connaught - would seem to seal it. The talent marshalled for the making of the ultra-contemporary Maybourne Riviera, clinging to the hill above Roquebrune-Cap-Martin, is a pretty dazzling roll call: the likes of André Fu, Pascal Goujon and Pierre Yovanovitch are handling suite designs, while supernova chef Mauro Colagreco will oversee the rooftop restaurant, with Hiro Sato (who made his bones at Tokyo's Sushi Tokami, and now presides over Hakkoku in Ginza) bringing the sushi. Indoor-outdoor pools, check:



service spa, check. And for the water lovers? The private Maybourne Beach Club, naturally. maybourneriviera.com, from £875

ASAP ROCKIES

To lots of those stateside who are still warv of the labile nature of international travel permissions and restrictions, 813 private acres in the Rockies looks pretty good as summer holidays go. Aspen Valley Ranch, a collection of 12 residences, has been designed by two of Colorado's longtime leading architecture firms, Michael Fuller Architects and Poss Architecture. Spread across the samesaid private estate - a former family-owned ranch - they enjoy all the services of a five-star resort (that's thanks to Simon Chen, who ran The Little Nell for years before signing on here). They vary in style, but all have at least four

813 PRIVATE ACRES IN ASPEN LOOKS PRETTY GOOD AS SUMMER HOLIDAYS GO

bedrooms and multiple outdoor playingentertaining spaces (a couple stretch to 13,000sq ft). The terrain is ideal for cross-country skiing and sleigh rides, once the snow comes;

meanwhile, though, there are kayaks, paddleboards and wild swimming on the property's lakes and streams, and a wrangler primed to give barrel-racing lessons to the braver among the horseback riders (all of whom can enjoy day-long hacks through the surrounding woodland).

SLOW GOOD

We like the sound of "slow safari". It's how Will Jones, master Africa fixer and founder of Journeys By Design, describes Kalepo – a new exclusive-use, tented camp deep in Samburuland in Kenya's Northern Frontier District, created by long-time Kenyan hospitality purveyors Robert and Storm Mason. The charms of its ensuite tents (all with outdoor showers) and open-air living and dining areas do in fact manifest all that is "slow", from the locally produced textiles to the Swahili-influenced cuisine - much of it prepared, of course, with produce from the onsite gardens.

Beyond this there are the 390,000-odd acres of pristine, no-roads wilderness that's yours for the exploring (Jones has already taken to using Kalepo as an alternative base for his heli- and fly-camp safaris, but there are stunning hikes into the Matthews mountains that begin right outside your tent); and the equally unique draw of Samburu culture itself, with one of the original communities based close by. journeysbydesign.com, POA

RETURN OF THE SHACK

Fforest, the three-in-one retreat in west Wales – consisting of a farm, a coastal camp, and a converted granary - has been generating buzz with its signal mix of onsens, Georgian farmhouse and lofts, and elevated "Shacs", along with its array of coast-to-table dining. From summer 2021 its shacks can be joined up

to accommodate up to 24 people, so ideal for families and groups of friends keen on rambles and a jazzed-up clapboard-and-tin roof aesthetic, and there's an alluring new woodland dining venue. This outfit gets very good marks for its sustainability practices - something it's bound to bring to The Albion, the 23-room hotel in Aberteifi (that's Cardigan) that Fforest will open this winter, across two repurposed maritime warehouses on the Teifi River. coldatnight.co.uk, from £125 ■HTSI

(i) @mariashollenbo

Below: the Lodge at Fforest farm Bottom: one of the Shacs





DRINKING

Educating Margarita

The all-time feel-good cocktail has learned some spicy new tricks, says *Alice Lascelles*

Nothing screams what-the-hell quite like a Margarita. And if the world's top cocktail lists are anything to go by, that's the mood of many drinkers right now.

"It's a drink that gives people permission to have a good time," says Jeremy Blackmore of Sydney's premier mezcaleria Cantina OK! "You could drink one in a tuxedo or a silly hat, or both. It doesn't take itself too seriously."

Spicy Margaritas are especially hot in the US. At Brooklyn's Grand Army bar one of the bestsellers is a riff called the Johnny Blaze made with blanco tequila, lime, ginger and a habanero shrub that's "like having your head ablaze", says beverage director Robby Dow.

At Rita's in London's Soho, which opens this month, the agave-centric cocktail list leads with the Fresh Start, a twist on a Tommy's Margarita made with sancho pepper-infused tequila and garnished with tongue-tingling electric daisies for an extra kick.

Mexican flavours are the inspiration behind the Margarita al Pastor at Licorería Limantour in Mexico City – a verdant twist with a mix of coriander, mint, basil, chilli and pineapple that's more often found atop tacos al pastor.

At Cantina OK!, they like to serve their seasonal pineapple Margarita in a glass edged with fiery Japanese shichimi – a combination Blackmore describes as "close to perfection".

Views on how to rim a glass differ wildly but there is one consensus: plain old table salt is passé. At Toca Madera LA they serve their Mezcal Margarita with sal de gusano – a mix of dried agave worm, chilli and salt – and their Amante Picante cocktail with Tajin salt, a paprika-coloured mix of chilli, sea salt and tangy dried lime. The more traditional Toca Margarita comes with jet-black lava salt.

At Coa in Hong Kong – holder of the top spot in Asia's 50 Best Bars – the Margarita is served with three types of salt arranged around the rim of the glass. "You drink it clockwise, starting with sea salt, which is the most delicate, then grasshopper salt, and finishing with sal de gusano, which is the most flavourful," explains co-founder Jay Khan.

It's hard to imagine a Margarita without lime, but the team at Kol in London have done it – their smashable re-work is soured with verjus (tart, unripe grape juice) and yuzu sake instead. "Verjus has an amazing fruity acidity and the grape tannins give it an extra layer of complexity," says bar manager Maxim Schulte.

Even more inspired is Hacha's Mirror Margarita, a crystal-clear take that comes as a straight-up tequila twist and a mezcal version laced with kaffir lime, citrus and eucalyptus. "I wanted to create a multi-layered margarita that is like an HD version of the Espadin agave plant," says creator Deano Moncrieffe. Time to give the Margarita another shot. ■HTSI

③ @alicelascelles

Right: chefs Virgilio Martinez (left) and Santiago Fernández



While the Olympics provide the backdrop, most chefs welcome any chance to cook in Tokyo such is its renown as an epicurean hub. This is certainly true of Surrey-born Daniel Calvert, who up until last August was head chef at Belon in Hong Kong. Now he is overseeing the entire food offering (including a fine-dining restaurant, bistro and room service) at the Four Seasons

Hotel Tokyo at Marunouchi. Having already cooked in the "big four" cities of London, Paris, New York and Hong Kong (including at Pied à Terre, Epicure at Le Bristol and Per Se), Calvert says Tokyo was always the dream. "For the quality of products alone," he adds. "It's akin to cooking in Paris. It has the same romance. In Paris, life revolves around food. Tokyo is similar. People book restaurants three years in advance. Japanese diners know that if they go to a restaurant in June, they'd better be eating matsutake mushrooms. There is a seasonal expectation."

Sézanne, the Four Seasons' fine-dining restaurant, is named after a small city in the Champagne-Ardenne region in France, where Calvert's grandparents owned a small house. The menu builds on the work he began at Belon, which won a Michelin star within two years of opening for its simple, precise dishes rooted in French ingredients and techniques. The landmark dish was pigeon pithivier with fig and amaretto. Eschewing gimmicks or concepts, Calvert wants the 40-cover restaurant to "just serve great food and wine" and embody a sense of occasion and generosity. Expect classic tableware with Baccarat crystal and a champagne trolley offering varieties by the glass that you'd normally only see by the bottle.

Calvert is thrilled to have access to the city's exceptional produce, from "the best venison I've ever had" to "sensational" chicken. The latter he intends to use in a variation on Shanghainese drunken chicken, where instead

Below: dining at the Four Seasons Hotel Tokyo (right)



Let the hunger games begin!

Chefs are racing to open up shop in Olympic Tokyo. *Ajesh Patalay* fires the gun on two hotly awaited new destinations

of steeping the bird in yellow wine for a week,
Calvert will use Vin Jaune from the Jura.
Seasonal differences have also opened up
possibilities. Venison, available year-round
in Japan, can be paired with more than just
winter vegetables in dishes that incorporate
cherries or blueberries. "How about venison and
morels?" Calvert says excitedly.

Despite his aversion to gimmicks, the dessert menu promises a good one in the shape of a

passion fruit at Maz

FOOD & DRINK

Miyazaki mango dish. The flesh is scooped out, diced, marinated in rum with a touch of lime mousse, and turned into sorbet. This is spooned back into the frozen skin with meringue and scored like a halved mango with shortbread in whipped cream on top. It looks like a normal cut mango until you tuck in and is guaranteed "to put a smile on your face", he says.

Another hotly anticipated opening is Maz Tokyo from Virgilio Martinez. The Peruvian chef is behind Central in Lima, one of the top restaurants in the world. For Martinez,

too, Tokyo has always been a dream. He and his chef wife Pía León have been working on going there for years.

Set to open in the Akasaka neighbourhood later this summer, the single-service, 20-cover

restaurant will replicate the philosophy and look of Central, with Peruvian textiles and rugs and a stone-cut table at the entrance displaying many of the Peruvian ingredients that feature on the multi-course tasting menu. These might include grains and corn from the Andes, coffee from the Amazon, rare varieties of potato, cacao and root vegetable. Fish and other seasonal produce (Martinez raves about the "beautiful" Hokkaido scallops) will be sourced in Japan.

Martinez is evolving the menu from the one at Central, which celebrates Peruvian biodiversity (the country boasts more than 4,000 varieties of potato), with dishes created to showcase ingredients rather than follow traditional recipes. Expect raw fish preparations and quinoa-like grains, shaved vegetables and roots, clay-baked fish and oils made from Andean herbs such as bitter huacatay (Peruvian black mint) or muña (like lemon verbena), all in edible constructions that look unfamiliar but taste divine.

HTSI

③ @ajesh34



"THE BEST VENISON I'VE EVER HAD"

HOW I SPEND IT



hen I meet a house I love, it's like meeting a girl on the dance floor: there's just something about it that says, "Oh, come on Ed, choose me. It don't matter how much it's going to cost, you choose me and I'll see you alright." I suppose I'm a recreation of my father. He was a trumpeter and I became a trumpeter. He was also a mechanic and he taught me lots and lots about motor cars but also, in the early 1960s, he got involved in supplying homes, especially for people from the Caribbean. He taught me to recognise a Georgian house, a Victorian house, an Edwardian house, and so forth. It became a driver for me and I've found out that with any money that I ever get, I just want to buy houses and do them up.

My first house came soon after our band The Equals had had their first major success in the mid-1960s. It cost me £7,250 in Kenton, near Harrow. As houses went, it was the bare bones, but it was a very happy home; and it's very important to know when you've met a happy home, as opposed to when you've met somewhere where Dracula lived. My first, second and third child were all born there. It had apple trees and mulberries and blueberries and all kinds of berries in the back, so they had a really lovely beginning to their lives.

EDDY GRANT ON HIS MAGIC SPACES

ILLUSTRATION BY EMILIE SETO

By the time I realised I was going to be having my fourth child, I'd started to go down on my luck; I was out of The Equals and monies weren't coming in. I decided to set up a recording studio and borrowed money from the bank to buy what must have been the worst-kept building in Stamford Hill, north London. But I just fell in love with it. It was a massive Victorian house, with a coach house. I threw 28 skip loads of mud and rubbish out of that place, alone; alone, because I just didn't have the money to afford help. That place was my baptism of fire. But it became the magic space. It really was a place of tremendous inspiration. Every day was a party. The artists were competing against each

other to see who would be the first one to get that big hit out of there, like how it was with my man Berry Gordy in his Motown days. Of course, I was the last person and everybody was betting against me - "Ah, he can't bloody sing with that croaking voice". It's only years after I got the hit that I found out that they were taking bets against me. Every black musician in England, I reckon, passed through there.

So that property set me on the road. But it was when I decided to move to Barbados in 1982 that I took on

I'M JUST LED BY THE SPIRITS. THEY BRING ME TO PLACES. THEY TAKE ME FROM PLACES my biggest building project. I left my family behind in London for six months while I went in search of somewhere to build a home and a studio. Which is how I ended up buying the Bayley's Plantation. When I found it, it was in such a shoddy state that everybody told me, "Oh God, you're going to go down." I lived very rough while

I was building the studio. And we were recording in the place, while it was still being built, under the most horrible conditions. I'd sneak off to the cane fields to write songs. And the first one was "I Don't Wanna Dance". The second was "Electric Avenue". The third was "War Party". Almost as they appear on the album, that's how I wrote them.

Today, people come from all over the world to see Bayley's Plantation and to record here. Sting's recorded here, The Rolling Stones worked on *Steel Wheels* here. I didn't build it for other people, I built it strictly for me because I take so long to make records. Sting turned up out of the blue one evening and said, "Hi Ed, how's it going? I've come to look at your studio." And the first thing he did: he ran fully clothed and jumped into the pool. Then he went into the studio and started clicking his finger and then said, "Right, I'll see you." And off he went and jumped onto his plane. Then, a few weeks later, my wife said, "Ed, Sting wants to come into your studio." He made *The Dream of the Blue Turtles* there, his first solo record. And it spun him out into a totally different orbit.

One day, a gentleman came by to see me, and said, "Do you know what you've bought? You have bought, singularly, the most important piece of real estate in Barbados." And I said, "How the hell is that?" He says, "Heard of Bussa?" And I said, "No." "Well," he said, "he is the hero of this country. He led the island's 1816 slave revolt."

And it was really the luckiest place in the world for me. Every time I think about it, it brings a tear to the eye, because it could have all gone so far wrong. I didn't know anything about this place. I'm just led by the spirits. They bring me to places. They take me from places. I love this house because of its history; because there's an element of justice about it. I've been given something that, intellectually, has got endless value — value, as opposed to price. When I walk around this place, I walk around with reverence knowing that the great legs of the revolutionaries of 1816 that freed this country walked this same ground. **■HTSI**

Eddy Grant's latest single "I Belong To You", from his album Plaisance, is out now



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DIOR







FT Weekend Magazine

Northern Ireland through youthful eyes

A special report







'Before prison, of course I aimed high, all teenage boys aim high'

Growing up in Northern Ireland, page 16



'I heard one grouchy father press the high master to explain how he would protect the boys from "social engineering"

New school rules, p28

'As I knocked back the dregs of my Negroni with its perfect curl of orange peel, I looked out at the watercolour view'

Ravinder Bhogal, p38



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y @FTMag

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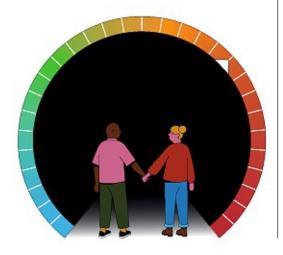




SIMON KUPER

OPENING SHOT

How to cope with the climate apocalypse



any people in rich countries tend to structure their lives as if on a spreadsheet. They plan their careers at 17 and their pensions at 25. A couple having a baby is projecting its genes 90 years ahead. Our generation of westerners, raised in the most peaceful era in history, has come to imagine our personal futures as foreseeable. But the climate crisis upends all predictability.

Climate change equals human change, and it requires reimagining our lives. So, how should we all live with the growing risk of disaster?

That's the question posed by the "Deep Adaptation" movement. Its guru, the British academic Jem Bendell, gets criticised for overstating the risk of "near-term societal collapse". But the truth is most of us probably underestimate it.

Bendell's premise is that talk of climate action by governments, corporations and individuals is just talk. Leaders cheerily pledge to hit zerocarbon by 2050, when they will be dead. In truth, though, everybody's incentive is to keep the party going by emitting more carbon dioxide. Each unit pumped into the atmosphere is an infinitesimal contribution to someone else's problem at some unknown future time. This will be true even for our children living with climate disaster.

Inevitably, then, carbon emissions kept rising until the pandemic. During the unprecedented economic shutdown, they dropped about 6.4 per cent - but that's still short of the 7.6 per cent fall required every year through 2030 to keep us on track for limiting the rise in temperatures to 1.5C.

Meanwhile, climate change is advancing faster than the cautious predictions of the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. A draft of the IPCC's next report, just leaked to Agence France-Presse, is the panel's scariest document yet, with increased predictions of droughts, floods and heatwaves by 2050. It also warns about the "tipping points" that could accelerate this future, such as the drying out of the Amazon rainforest or the collapse of ice sheets in Greenland and the Antarctic. Greenland's sheet is melting seven times faster than in the 1990s. Today's climate disasters – such as the record-breaking heatwave in the western US – are portents of worse.

Anyone predicting apocalypse faces two standard objections. The first is that the prediction demotivates people from taking action. That might be true, but then people aren't taking significant action anyway and the objection doesn't invalidate the prediction. The second objection is that all past predictions of global apocalypse were wrong. However, past apocalypticism was a lower-probability bet because we only acquired the capacity to annihilate ourselves once atom bombs arrived in the 1940s. Progress has doubled our average lifespans and simultaneously enabled us to end the global story.

Most of us cope with this not by denying it but by not thinking about it. People in the burgeoning "sustainability" industry prefer to hype small fixes (this new plane will consume 10 per cent less fuel!) than contemplate the chances of everything going pop.

So how to live? The younger you are, the more urgent the question. On the most basic level, if you're buying a house, you're typically making a 50-year bet: the period of the average mortgage, plus the mortgage of the person who will buy it from you. I wouldn't buy in Miami today. The rule

'Almost everything we call "progress" makes things worse. Our children probably won't admire our careers'

of thumb is that the safest regions in the future will be the ones that currently have relatively mild or cold climates. Perversely, this means that the best places to escape climate disaster are precisely those that emitted most carbon in the past: northern Europe and the northern US.

More existentially, adopt the outlook that almost all humans had until about the 1950s: don't make any presumptions about your future. Don't structure your life around distant pay-offs. Which entity will be able to pay your pension in 2050?

Then there's the moral question: do you want to be part of a climate-destroying system? It's tempting to shove all the blame on the fossil-fuels industry, but almost everyone with a job in a developed country is complicit - shop assistants, hotel staff and journalists whose newspapers are funded by readers from carbon-intensive industries. Anyone with gas heating, a car and the occasional plane ticket lives off climate destruction. Almost everything we call "progress" or "growth" makes things worse. Our children probably won't admire our careers.

The stereotype of the apocalyptic survivalist is the lunatic in a tinfoil hat with an AK-47 on a mountaintop. (The upscale version is a mansion in New Zealand.) But there are more social ways of opting out. I witnessed one when I moved into the crumbling Prenzlauer Berg neighbourhood in East Berlin in 1990, just after the fall of communism.

Many of my new neighbours were young East Germans who had rejected what they considered the evil communist system. They had no official employment, or worked in low-status jobs as librarians or nurses or, like the young Angela Merkel, in non-communist professions such as physics. Some lived off grid, without telephones, perhaps with stolen electricity. Their little community was riddled with informers, yet people helped each other, expecting nothing of the future. Oddly, they may have been our future.

••••••

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HA BOWLING

'I want to make the best painting in the world ever'



INVENTORY FRANK BOWLING, ARTIST

Frank Bowling, 87, is one of Britain's greatest living abstract painters. He was made an OBE in 2008 for services to art and was knighted in 2020. Known for his large-scale canvases and his sensual use of colour, he has made works that hang in major collections around the world.

What was your childhood or earliest ambition?

When I was 13 or 14, I wanted to be chief of police. I thought that I could be - that I would be - a great detective.

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

State school in New Amsterdam [in Guyana], then national service in the RAF when I arrived in England aged 19 in 1953. My art education started at Chelsea College of Arts, then City and Guilds Art School,

then the Royal College of Art and a term at the Slade.

Who was or still is your mentor?

The writer and critic Clement Greenberg. He was a father figure who spotted that I was a natural colourist and understood what I was trying to get at. His was a kind of influence that opened new directions, rather than made you feel that this was the direction in which you should go.

How physically fit are you?

I used to be an athlete. I played cricket and soccer and I was a sprinter, winning at 100 yards and the 440-yard dash. Now my body is ravaged by age.

Ambition or talent: which matters more to success?

Ambition is the central magnet. I got to the Royal College with almost no academic background. Although Vivian Pitchforth, my

tutor at Chelsea, always referred to me as "this fellow with talent", my success at the RCA was down to the confidence that Carel Weight, professor of painting, had in me.

How politically committed are you?

I'm politically aware. I'm depressed by poverty, unfairness and the ravages of capitalism. But my art is about paint, not politics.

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

I'd like to own the house where I live in Pimlico near the Tate Britain and have my family turn it into a museum when I'm gone.

What's your biggest extravagance?

Booze.

In what place are you happiest?

In the studio making paintings. I try to go every day and I have a good time there. That's where it's at.

What ambitions do you still have?

I want to make the best painting in the world ever.

What drives you on?

Anxiety keeps me painting. I want to get better. I'm always risking things with the old methods and processes, constantly trying to push things further and looking for what will surprise me in the work.

What is the greatest achievement of your life so far?

Living long enough to meet my great-grandson.

What do you find most irritating in other people?

When they've got the cheek to think that they can make better art than me.

If your 20-year-old self could see you now, what would he think? "Wow!"

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

A painting that I made in 1963 called "Lent", a diptych of two six-foot-square canvases. The council ordered some workmen to clear out my studio and "Lent" probably ended up in a skip.

What is the greatest challenge of our time?

Time seems to go by far too quickly. I'd like to see an end to poverty in the world and to end the wanton destruction of the planet.

Do you believe in an afterlife?

Sometimes. If there is one, I'd like to see my mother again. And my son, Dan.

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

Nine. It would be 10 if I could find "Lent" and all the other paintings that I've lost over the years.

..........

Interview by Hester Lacey.
"Frank Bowling: Land of Many
Waters" shows at Arnolfini,
Bristol's international centre for
contemporary arts, until September
26. His work is on display at the
Hauser & Wirth galleries in London
and New York until July 31.
arnolfini.org.uk, hauserwirth.com





ROBERT SHRIMSLEY THE NATIONAL CONVERSATION

Reply

"The tyranny of spreadsheets" (June 26/27) is an interesting

Horrible histories at the British Museum

olitical and cultural London is buzzing with the news that archaeologists have discovered amazing relics from a lost era which will now form a major exhibition. Word of the find came with the announcement that a fully intact George Osborne, the former chancellor, had been found under a pile of money at a boutique investment bank.

Osborne has now been installed as the centrepiece of a new exhibition at the British Museum, among other fossilised remains of the Cameron government. So significant is the find that Osborne has even been named chair of the museum, a ceremonial role that mostly involves raising money and refusing to give the Greeks back the Elgin Marbles.

Finding Osborne, who had been entombed in a gold-lined office surrounded by artefacts of his previous greatness, gives historians a complete picture of the lost Cameron government, a oncemighty regime that disappeared almost overnight and whose legacy and treasures were purged from official Conservative party history. The now lost civilisation of David Cameron was then regarded as a period of great enlightenment, liberalism and modernity - as long as you were not reliant on public services.

Historians date the period from roughly 15BB (Before Brexit), also known as 2005, when the mythical Cameron took over the leadership of his battered tribe, to June of 4BB, or 2016, when an electoral Vesuvius doomed the prime minister.

Cameron vanished, although Conservative ministers were occasionally subjected to a blizzard of texts about something called supply chain finance, which none of them understood. So complete was the disappearance that many in the later Boris Johnson government took to talking of the Cameron



ILLUSTRATION BY LUCAS VARELA

administration as if it were that of a different political party. The display will feature the shepherd's hut into which the politically shattered Cameron retreated after his Brexit defeat to write his memoirs, almost all copies of which survive at his publishers.

But of perhaps greater significance are the many values mostly lost under his successors. Visitors will marvel at the policy of cosying up to China and the badge saying "Beijing's BFF in the west", which all ministers were required to wear when visiting the country. And not talking about the Dalai Lama.

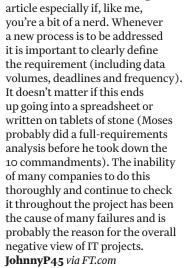
Museum-goers may be astonished to discover that as recently as 2015 the Conservative party did not hate the metropolitan elite and was keen to give the impression of modernity. There will also be a vitrine spotlighting High Speed 2, but unfortunately it has run over budget and may not open until 2035.

A room is devoted to Cameron's pet project, the Big Society. As yet the display is empty but curators say it was one of Cameron's "big ideas", so they are sure it is only a matter of time before they find evidence of its existence.

There is, unhappily, plenty of evidence of the impact of the austerity policies pursued by the government during that time, but apparently the new chair of the museum feels there may not be room for it in the exhibition.

Perhaps most remarkable are the exhibits devoted to Cameron's plan to end the Tory obsession with Europe, which in one sense he achieved, though not the way he intended. A poignant piece is the handwritten note from Chancellor Merkel of Germany promising to resist the candidacy of Jean-Claude Juncker for European Commission president. It sits in a large file entitled "Problems Angela will fix".

Some have been surprised that a government so keen to break with the Cameron era would appoint Osborne to such an important cultural role. But the ex-chancellor, who has taken on numerous posts since leaving office, studiously maintained good relations with the Johnson regime even as it ditched every policy he ever believed in, on the obviously wise precaution that you never know where your ninth job is going to come from.



y

@mapaulacaldas June 25 Such a highly recommended piece on the history of spreadsheets and how data management can save, or cost, lives.

.....

Re: "Chrystel Lebas's beautiful photography captures forests without end" (June 26/27). Beautiful and serene. What a welcome change from the sight of endless Zoom calls during the week. I can't stop looking at these photographs.

.....

Phi via FT.com

Re: "The new 20-second rule: how to tackle screen fatigue and sore eyes" (June 26/27). I tend to drive to Barnard Castle, rather than listening to one of your fancy optometrists.

Sued O'Nym via FT.com

Re: Gillian Tett's "I'm recruiting troops for the war on waste" (June 26/27). Not wasting food was something instilled in me as a child and, to this day, I'm a member of the "clean plate club". We live in the country and are perfectly happy to share our (partially) spoiled fruit and vegetables with the critters in our neighbourhood.

OldAndInTheWay 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

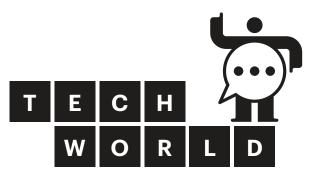
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BY YUAN YANG IN BEIJING

What's fuelling China's new online nationalists

ast summer, a friend of mine told me that she found China's biggest social media platform Weibo was becoming "unusable" for feminists and liberals such as her. Tempers were so heated, Bao told me, that disagreements easily became personal pile-ons. After a friend became the centre of a social media storm, she posted a message: "We're all just blades of grass, what's the point of fighting with each other?" Bao ended up becoming the next target.

At the time, we put it down to Covid-19, which left people stuck at home, bored and anxious globally. They were just venting. But a year on, Chinese nationalist sentiment is even greater online. It used to be outsiders, a US politician criticising the government for instance, who received the worst of the attacks from bloggers. Now insiders bear the brunt.

Recently, Weibo influencers have gone after journalists at the Global Times, the English-language, stateowned tabloid, for being "traitors". (Some of the publication's journalists had criticised a government account's Weibo post mocking India's Covid death toll.) In June, the popular science blog Science Squirrels Club deregistered its Weibo account after a few lines in a post challenged a myth about historic Japanese experiments on Chinese prisoners of war.

What's changed? The audience, the platform or the government? All of them - in different ways.

Nationalist feeling has soared since the Chinese government all but eradicated Covid through

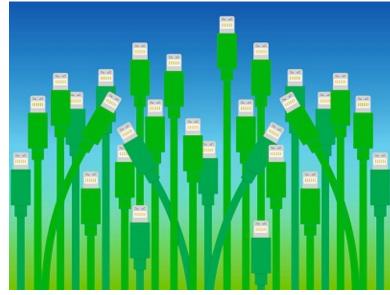


ILLUSTRATION BY PÂTÉ

stringent lockdowns and other measures. The fact that China's relationships with the US, India, Australia and other countries are under strain has offered a number of easy enemies.

What's on social media doesn't always reflect reality, in China as elsewhere. For Chinese people who only see the US via culture wars on Twitter, it can be easy to assume the country is on the brink of breakdown. Likewise, those reading Chinese social media from outside might think there are no liberals left. That isn't the case: many, such as Bao, have simply left social media. Before she did, she had an amusing exchange with someone who had sent her a barrage of insults online. "Our views are different, but I wouldn't attack you," Bao wrote. The response:

'Influencers have the difficult task of creating hot topics without touching political hot potatoes. For many, nationalism is a safe arena'

"That's the difference between liberals and nationalists."

Weibo has changed too. Its ecosystem of influencers has shifted vastly since Bao joined a decade ago, when online political discussion was still relatively freewheeling.

After Xi Jinping became leader of the Chinese Communist party in 2012, crackdowns on political speech and even celebrity gossip limited what Weibo users were allowed to say. Influencers – who need to keep attracting followers and attention – have the difficult task of creating hot topics without touching political hot potatoes. For many, nationalism is a safe arena.

Influencers often earn their keep by promoting brands, as they do in other countries, and it's not unusual to find posts promoting washing machines alongside those on who should own the Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea, which are subject to a territorial dispute with Japan and Taiwan. The same people who accuse, say, public intellectuals of "selling out to Japan" often sell Japanese products via sponsored posts.

The final element is the government's hardline approach, which has created an online climate ripe for nationalism. "On the topics of nationalism and feminism, our hands are tied," said a social media industry insider.

China's internet regulator, the Cyberspace Administration, aims to promote patriotic speech. But the line between fervent patriotism and aggressive nationalism is difficult to manage. "Platforms can't gently direct the influencers, lest they leak our conversations and cause even more trouble," says the insider. And even if posts are deleted, some controversies become big enough that they still burst into the open.

Bao believes that when "blades of grass" - ordinary users - attack each other, the government benefits because people are distracted from criticising it. While that's true, both government and company censors have an uneasy hold on China's new online nationalists. After all, they don't always do what's in Beijing's best interests.

Yuan Yang is the FT's deputy Beijing bureau chief

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@john_mitchell_fine_paintings



But while "less, but better" is revered by designers, it's not the way most of us live our lives. Our homes are full of junk, our diaries are full of meetings and our attention is fragmented by dozens - hundreds? - of electronic interruptions a day.

Countercultural counter-clutter manifestos have been popular: Greg McKeown's Essentialism (get rid of unnecessary tasks and meetings), Cal Newport's Digital Minimalism (get rid of unnecessary apps and devices) and of course Marie Kondo's The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying (get rid of unnecessary possessions). But like Rams himself, they are swimming against the tsunami of digital, physical and mental "stuff".

Why do we accumulate so much? An intriguing explanation comes from one of the oldest ideas in behavioural economics: the "endowment effect". The term was coined by one of the fathers of the field, Nobel laureate Richard Thaler.

In his book *Misbehaving*, Thaler described wine connoisseur Richard Rossett's cellar, which contained bottles he had purchased for a few dollars that had matured into wines worth hundreds. Rossett occasionally drank these fine vintages, yet he would never add to his cellar by buying wines at high prices, nor would he sell those he already had at a huge profit.

There is an inconsistency here: wine cannot logically be both too expensive to buy and too cheap to sell. This is the endowment effect, by which we value possessions in part because they are possessions. Still, only an economist would find Rossett's behaviour odd. (Compounding the mystery, Rossett was the head of the economics department at the University of Rochester.)

While Rossett's case is an intuitive example, Thaler, Jack Knetsch and Daniel Kahneman also produced experimental evidence of the effect. In one study of students, half were given a commemorative mug. All were



TIM HARFORD

THE UNDERCOVER ECONOMIST



Resisting the urge to return to the status quo told to write down the price at which they would be willing to sell their mug – or to buy a mug if they started without one. Those with a mug were reluctant to sell for \$5. Those without one were reluctant to buy at half that price. This endowment effect suggests that the status quo matters far more than it should. Often we hold on to things for no reason other than that they are *our* things.

Minimalists understand the power of the status quo and work to counteract it. Newport, for example, argues that the minimalist should begin with a month-long period of digital fasting: only the most essential tools are to be allowed. Everything else must go. This is not intended as a "detox". It's a blank slate, designed to change the status quo. At the end of this period, says Newport, digital tools should be allowed back in only as a deliberate choice, rather than because we sleepwalked into using them once and never let go.

Kondo also fights the status quo. She advocates removing possessions from their usual setting and piling them all together, a bracing experience that reminds us just how much unnecessary stuff most of us own. Then, argues Kondo, look for what "sparks joy". Deciding to keep something from the pile becomes an active choice rather than a resigned acceptance of the status quo.

I was reminded of this as I pondered the argument over all the portraits and statues associated with the UK's colonial past. Nobody can pretend to resolve this with a single proposal, but it does strike me that we'd be in an easier place if we occasionally made like Kondo and took them all down.

We could put all the portraits and all the statues in a big pile in the centre of each town or the lobby of each grand building. Then we could make an active choice as to who we really wanted on the pedestal for the next quarter of a century. Does Edward Colston really spark joy? Does Cecil Rhodes? Everyone who misses the cut could be stored away until a future round.

I can't imagine that happening to the portraiture of a Cambridge college or the statues in Trafalgar Square any time soon. Deliberately stepping away from the status quo is not always desirable and it is rarely easy.

But most of us have had to do just that over the past 15 months. Remember diary

'We could make an active choice as to who we really wanted on the pedestal for the next quarter of a century'

squeezes? Juggling the school run with an exercise class? The embarrassment of doublebooking a dinner with friends and a night at the theatre? Neither do I. But logically these things must once have happened and they're starting to happen again.

In the desperation to get back to normality, to see people (anyone) and go places (anywhere), there's a risk that we miss the Kondo window of opportunity in which things have been reset and the endowment effect does not exist. I am trying to think, rather than simply revert to the status quo.

Not every task on my To Do list and every meeting in my calendar sparks joy, but I try.

Less, but better.

Less, but better.

Tim Harford's new book is "How to Make the World Add Up"



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The thin line between deand Northern Ireland's tensions between loyalists and nationalists still boil over into violence, most strikingly among young people. Laura Noonan reports from Belfast on what this generation sees in its future Photography by Megan Doherty



grew up 200 miles south of Belfast. Northern Ireland's grass is the same distinctive green as the fields of the Irish Republic where I spent my childhood. Its dramatic coastline evokes the same feeling as Connemara's. Belfast has a zone of shiny, modern apartments and offices, the Titanic Quarter, not unlike Dublin's Docklands. And yet, for all the familiarity, so much about Northern Ireland feels foreign.

It's not just the Union Jack flags that weave their way over and back across the Shankill Road, 15 minutes' walk from Belfast's main shopping street. It's not the enormous murals of men in balaclavas holding automatic rifles, a sight that still unnerves me. It's not the practicalities of a different currency, different road signs, different speed limits. It's more the sense of the place and my feeling of otherness within it.

Northern Ireland's conflict was the backdrop to the first 15 years of my life. After almost a decade away, I returned in April to cover the riots that erupted when loyalist protests against post-Brexit trading arrangements descended into violence. The unrest lasted more than a week. On the worst night, a bus was torched and water cannon were deployed for the first time in six years. It was a scary experience, heightened because of the news reports I remember from childhood. Back then, armoured police vans on Belfast's streets, blazing fires and masked rioters led to outcomes far deadlier than the scenes a few months ago.

This year marks the centenary of the partition of Ireland into an independent south and a north that is part of the UK. Cause for celebration in one community and condemnation in the other. And with Northern Ireland beginning another marching season, when unionists celebrate their traditions with parades and bonfires, the region is bracing again.

Poverty, joblessness and the anxiety and boredom of lockdown all played a part in driving people on to the streets earlier this year. So too the struggle to find Northern Ireland's place in the UK after Brexit. But something else was going on too, something particular to its involuted past.

For many, the most striking feature of the April riots, from Belfast to Coleraine and Londonderry, also known as Derry, was the extreme youth of those charging police, hurling bottles and rocks and petrol bombs. Some were not yet in their teens. I have spent the past few months asking young people, and the adults who work with them, what they see for the future of the place they call home.

When I drive into a loyalist area, I'm quickly marked out because of the Republic of Ireland plates on my car. Some of the kids I meet delight in sharing their hatred of Catholics. When I ask one group what would make Northern Ireland better,

a teenager replies that all the Catholics should be pushed out and their houses burnt down. There are roads I don't park on, because the car could be a target for vandals. At one meeting, in an empty building deep in loyalist territory, my interviewee asks me if I have come alone, and I wonder if I shouldn't have.

The adults I meet tell me that the roots of the recent unrest stretch back far further than the Northern Ireland protocol, the complex post-Brexit agreements that have become the unlikely subject of teenagers' banners and battle cries.

With that in mind, I travel to one of Northern Ireland's largest housing estates to meet Nathan Anderson. He was five years old when the 1998 Good Friday Agreement ended more than three decades of sectarian bloodshed. But he can remember the joy and relief in his loyalist Belfast community when family members and neighbours came home from prison, freed from their sentences under the terms of the landmark peace deal. Even as a child who didn't really understand, he says, "we knew the boys were getting out... That was fantastic to see."

Anderson was part of a promised generation: the first to grow up without the ever-present threat of bombings, shootings and riots that had claimed more than 3,600 lives. Now a 28-year-old single father of two boys, he still lives in the working-class area of Rathcoole that was home to his parents and four brothers. "There was five of us. Four are here—we've all got our own houses," he tells me during a walk round the estate.

Rathcoole, about six miles north of Belfast, is a place of elaborate playgrounds and huge murals celebrating loyalist paramilitary groups. It is a place, says Anderson, where a few minutes' walk to the local shop can take an hour because of "the people you run into" and where, during annual festivities to celebrate the Protestant victory at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690, children run freely in and out of each other's open houses. It was also one of the areas where, in April, loyalist protesters clashed with police for more than a week.

As we walk through streets where cars burned, the optimism of 1998 is distant. The Good Friday Agreement ended armed violence between the Protestants, unionists and loyalists who supported Northern Ireland's union with Great Britain, and the Catholics, nationalists and Republicans fighting for a united Ireland. But the communities remain on opposite sides of a fragile political divide.

"It's important to understand that peace agreements aren't fairy stories," Jonathan Powell, chief of staff to former UK prime minister Tony Blair at the time of the peace deal, told me. "People don't ▶

The question of identity and culture is 'all around you. It's impossible to get away from: you see it, you hear it, you feel it'

Nathan Anderson



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◀ get to live happily ever after just because you've signed a peace agreement anywhere in the world."

The spark for the spring riots was the fallout from Britain's exit from the EU, which imposed a customs border with the rest of the UK that unionists see as a threat to their British identity. But the fuel was the deep dissatisfaction of loyalists, who have seen little improvement to their lives from the peace process and believe Catholics have progressed more quickly in education and jobs.

Anderson, who works in manufacturing and has organised community meetings around Brexit's consequences, is one of the disillusioned. In 2012, protests over the removal of the Union Jack over Belfast's City Hall turned violent, and he was arrested. Though he says he had no part in the violence, he was convicted and sentenced to eight months for riotous assembly. He was 20.

"Before prison, of course I aimed high – all teenage boys aim high... [Now,] in a work sense, I have to aim low," he says. More violence could have a similar impact on Rathcoole's young people, who he believes are driven to the streets as he was. "It was patriotic young kids who wanted to do something... so that's just how they went about it," Anderson says, describing the omnipresent question of identity and culture. "It's all around you. It's impossible to get away from: you see it, you hear it, you feel it."

Every generation in Northern Ireland has taken part in some kind of civil disobedience, he tells me. "It's like the culture... I'm not making it socially acceptable at all. I'm just explaining how easy it is for a community to get involved in, on both sides of the community... People just go and watch these things. It just became the norm."

uring the April violence, community leaders and politicians publicly appealed to protesters to "think of your futures". "What future?" was the response of many working-class teenagers and young adults I spoke to on both sides.

The areas where rioting broke out are some of the country's most economically deprived. Five of the 10 most deprived communities in Northern Ireland border Belfast's peace walls, according to a broad deprivation measure used by Northern Ireland's statistics agency. Scores for income, healthcare and unemployment are particularly bad. "There's that feeling of always being told, 'Youse are at the bottom of the line, youse will never achieve this,'" says Alan Waite, co-founder of R-City, a community group created in 2013 to develop skills and opportunities for young Protestants and Catholics (see page 23).

Around Belfast, youth clubs and community groups have been trying to stop the city's most vulnerable from being lured into violence. Earlier this year, for example, they loaded kids who were watching the riots on to buses and drove them to their centres and provided pizza and movies. (The gatherings were allowed even under lockdown.)

Such tactics are not always effective. "You're never going to beat a kid's adrenaline rush off a riot. You're not going to stop them," says Michael Logan, an 18-year-old who works part-time at Townsend Outreach Centre, a youth centre off the loyalist stronghold of the Shankill Road. Yet Logan was among those who went out to attempt to defuse things. He recalls the smell of petrol and the sight

of "kids as young as 12 and 13 breaking bricks and stuff off the ground".

As a young teen, Logan used to attend a sort of fight club. He calls them "sectarian fights". Groups of teens from both sides would gather for prearranged clashes, usually around 50 on each side, though only 10 to 20 would actually fight, while the others watched. "At the start, it was just a game of chase. One side would run at the other, the other side would run back... but it started to get very dangerous," he says. Logan recalls the last night he went to one of the fights, when a young nationalist boy was beaten so badly he required intensive care in hospital. "The screams..." he says in a low voice, looking into the middle distance of the industrial kitchen we're chatting in. He never returned.

He believes the glorified violence of Northern Ireland's past was a big factor driving kids on to the streets recently. "They want to look up. They see their fathers and their grandfathers, their uncles who all fought in these paramilitaries, but they fought for a cause." That cause is no longer there, he says, but the feeling that no one is listening endures.

Paramilitary groups on both sides continue to exert control over communities, according to the latest dispatch from the Independent Reporting Commission set up by the UK and Irish governments, and are believed to have been involved in the background of April's riot, though Winston Irvine, a former (Protestant paramilitary) Ulster Volunteer Force boss turned community worker, says the paramilitary angle is "way overblown".

Ruth Petticrew, 59, a former deacon in the Presbyterian Church, came to Belfast in her midtwenties and has been running Townsend Outreach Centre for 30 years. Working on the frontline of communities during the Troubles was "horrendous", she says. "I look back and think I don't know I survived." Once, after agreeing to officiate at the funeral of a murdered 21-year-old, she received death threats from the loyalist Ulster Defence Association paramilitary group. She says she refused to back down, requesting only that if they were going to kill her, they "don't do it in front of young people [at the centre] because they'll never forget it".

Many of the challenges are mirrored in innercity Catholic communities. Stephen Hughes says he inherited "nine kids and a chair" eight years ago when he took on the job of running St Peter's Immaculata youth centre near the Lower Falls Road, one of Belfast's most deprived Republican areas. Today the centre is used by 50 to 100 boys and girls six nights a week who gather to watch football, play computer games or colour in pictures and chase each other round. "It takes you away from stuff on the outside," says Sean, a 13-year-old who wants to be an engineer. By "stuff" he means "all them riots and all that happened".

Hughes, a 55-year-old bear of a man who laughs as loudly with the kids as he shouts when disciplining them, speaks about his charges with fatherly pride. Children can be suspended for misbehaviour but never expelled, he tells me. Hughes hopes this unconditional welcome - and personal development programmes that cover everything from how to brush your teeth to table manners - can alleviate the damaging cycle some families are trapped in. "It's very, very easy for that to become all consuming," he says.

One night last month, as he and I drove between his centre and Petticrew's, we spotted a fire on a ▶

OPENING SPREAD:
A BONFIRE ON BLACK
MOUNTAIN, TO THE WEST
OF BELFAST, OVERLOOKING
THE CITY

PREVIOUS SPREAD:
NATHAN ANDERSON AT
RATHCOOLE'S BONFIRE SITE

THIS SPREAD, CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT: RUTH PETTICREW AT TOWNSEND OUTREACH CENTRE; MICHAEL LOGAN IN THE CENTRE'S SPORTS HALL; STEPHEN HUGHES AT ST PETER'S IMMACULATA YOUTH CENTRE





These kids 'want to look up.
They see their fathers and
grandfathers... who all fought
in these paramilitaries, but they
fought for a cause'

Michael Logan



21

◀ strip of grass between blocks of houses. By the time the fire engines were approaching, Hughes was on the phone trying to get a colleague to come and help stop the kids confronting the firefighters.

ore than a month ago, loyalists began building the towering structures that they will burn on July 11. Setting them on fire ushers in the main event in Ulster's marching season and is intended to commemorate the 17th-century battle that initiated the ascendancy of Protestants in Ireland. Eleventh Night bonfires are typically accompanied by marching bands and parties.

Some of the bonfire builders talk about the season in terms of learning skills such as team building, construction and organisation. They talk about the bonds forged over door-to-door calls to raise funds for materials to construct "the bonnie" and sleeping next to it overnight to defend it. They also talk about burning Republican paramilitary flags. Some events have sparked sectarian violence as well as clashes with the police.

In one of Belfast's most deprived areas, four boys between the ages of 15 and 21 take a break from gathering fuel for their neighbourhood's bonfires. When I ask them why so many young people took to the streets, all of them ask not to be named. "They should put the border where it's supposed to be," says the youngest. It's "supposed to be" between the Republic and Northern Ireland. Also, people should respect and understand that "we're British", he adds. In this city, says another, "you have to be violent to be heard".

The sense of voicelessness hasn't always been this acute. Donna McCracken, who used to run the Black Mountain Action Group in a loyalist area of Belfast and now works there part-time, says there was an "extreme change in attitudes in communities" after the flags protests in 2012-13, as people became more attuned to how their community was being marginalised and disadvantaged.

Protestants held the bulk of the region's land, wealth, jobs and power when Northern Ireland was created. Between 2001 and 2017, they lost more than 21,500 jobs, while Catholics gained more than 56,000, according to data from the North's equality commission, highlighting the gulf in the two communities' experiences since the Good Friday Agreement promised equal opportunities.

Protestants also feel the Police Service of Northern Ireland, created in 2001 to replace the Royal Ulster Constabulary, is more lenient towards Catholics, a perception furthered by the force's failure to prevent thousands of Republicans from attending the funeral last June of Bobby Storey, a senior Irish Republican Army figure, in defiance of Covid guidelines. A subsequent failure to prosecute attendees, including nationalist political party Sinn Féin's Northern Ireland head Michelle O'Neill, provoked outrage.

The perceived slights are heightened by loyalist fears that, once the 2021 census is counted, Protestants, who accounted for more than 62 per cent of Northern Ireland's population in 1926, could be overtaken by Catholics as the region's largest denomination. That is a particularly alarming prospect as Sinn Féin escalates calls for a referendum on uniting Northern Ireland with the Republic.

"I really understand how Catholics were treated in Belfast and Northern Ireland - it was horrific," says Paula Robinson, 33, who attended Black Mountain as a teenager and now runs the group. "But putting the Protestant community down and doing the same thing isn't the answer. That's not equality."

The divides between Catholics and Protestants are at the root of most of Northern Ireland's challenges. Education is supposed to boost equality but instead amplifies segregation, dividing children from a young age, feeding fears and suspicions. Some believe the failures of the educational system have increased the lure of paramilitary groups. "When their aspirations are so low and when their opportunities are very limited, it can be very difficult for people not to buy into that [criminal] lifestyle," says Hughes.

The system also exacerbates inequality - Northern Ireland sends eight times as many students per head as England to state-funded grammar schools based on entrance exams that favour well-off students, who can get tutoring or other support. The result is an education system that produces better A-level and GCSE results than in England and Wales but also has "pockets of underachievement" which, according to Northern Ireland's recently departed education minister Peter Weir, are linked to Northern Ireland's "divided society". Young people from middle-class families have reported knowing almost no one outside their own community before they went to university, with some citing Northern Ireland's divisions as one reason they will make their adult lives elsewhere, fuelling the brain drain that already afflicts the region.

With integrated schools slow to take off, youth groups try to bridge the gap. R-City came about when its founders realised how much common ground their loyalist and nationalist working-class youth groups had, and thought their goals could better be pursued together. The Catholic St Peter's centre and the Protestant Townsend centre also regularly run joint projects.

Logan credits a youth trip to the US in summer 2019 with members of St Peter's as changing his view "on the other side as a whole". He went there apprehensive, "partly because of the stories you hear growing up, things like the IRA - they put the fear into you in case that's what they're still like".

He tells me that on the trip he found Catholics were "very similar" to him and they got on very well. When they returned home, they were asked to his youth club and he to theirs. Yet in Belfast hanging out on each other's territory poses challenges not found in most places. The clubs are a few hundred metres apart. But once the peace gates separating the two communities are closed in the evenings, they are a 10-minute drive apart.

As Logan explains: "It's hard getting in and out. I wouldn't feel safe travelling over there, especially in the daytime. I'd be more scared because I'd be more easily seen." He believes he would be recognised because "everyone sort of knows each other", especially with social media.

Faced with such obstacles, new friendships can quickly falter, and have for years. Logan's mother went on a similar trip to the US as a youngster and made Catholic friends, but her son still grew up fearing the other side. Northern Ireland is rich with these sorts of regular reminders that people have to live in the world as it is rather than the one they might wish for.

Laura Noonan is the FT's Ireland correspondent

Belfast

dream songs



R-City is a youth work and good relations charity based in Shankill, Belfast. Founded in 2013, it supports large-scale creative projects in Ireland and internationally. This year, R-City commissioned photographer Megan Doherty to develop a series of images capturing the experiences of young people under Covid-19 restrictions, during which they could

either stay at home alone or hang out outside.

Doherty spent time with teenagers in Shankill, Belfast Castle, Belfast Docks and elsewhere. Her images capture the alternative reality that is being a teenager, let alone a teenager in Northern Ireland during a pandemic. By photographing her subjects around well-known

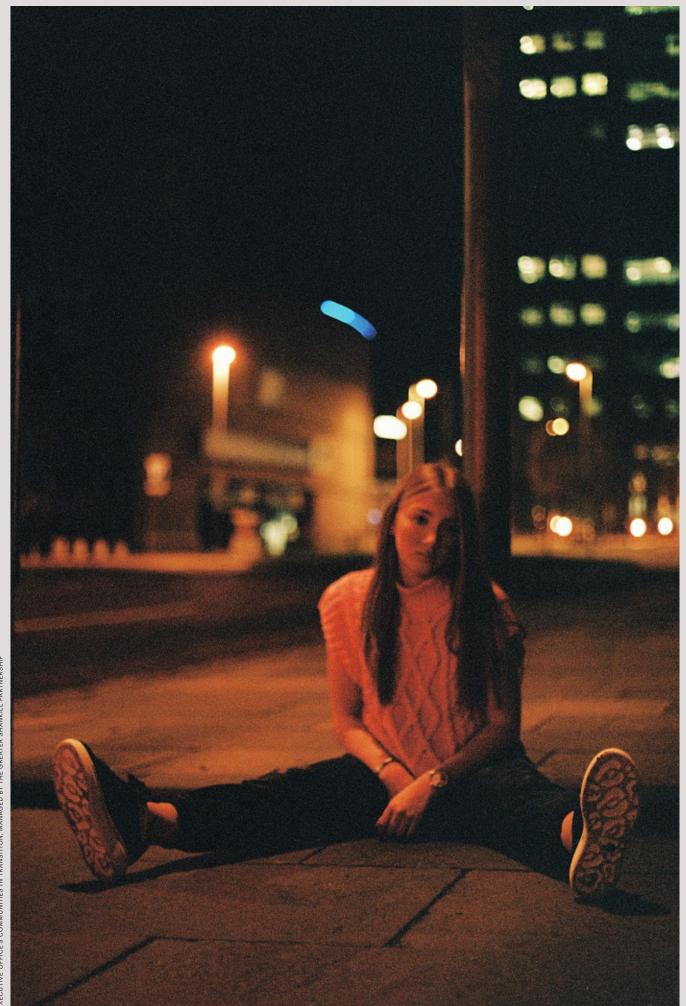
landmarks late at night, she lends them a dreamlike quality.

The photos here are part of a wider selection being brought together in a photo book to be launched in Belfast in July. The project was supported by the Executive Offices' Communities in Transition project, which is managed by Greater Shankill Partnership.









PROJECT COMMISSIONED BY UP! CULTURE + ARTS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH R-CITY, FUNDING BY THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE'S COMMUNITIES IN TRANSITION, MANAGED BY THE GREATER SHANKILL PARTNERSHIP

New school rules

Parents paying thousands of pounds a year for a top education in the hope of getting their child into Oxbridge are finding success harder to come by. *Brooke Masters* reports

Illustrations by Edmon de Haro



"Five years ago, my son would have got a place at Oxford.

But now the bar has shifted and he didn't," says my friend, a City of London executive who has put several children through elite private schools in Britain. "I think he got short-changed."

I've been hearing this more and more from fellow parents with kids at top day and boarding schools in recent years. Some of it sounds like whining: most of us like to think the best of our progeny. But my friend has a point. After years of hand-wringing about unequal access to elite higher education, admissions standards are finally shifting.

A decade ago, parents who handed over tens of thousands of pounds a year for the likes of Eton College, St Paul's School or King's College School in Wimbledon could comfortably assume their kids had a very good chance of attending Oxford or Cambridge, two of the best universities in the world.

A 2018 Sutton Trust study showed that just eight institutions, six of them private, accounted for more Oxbridge places than 2,900 other UK secondary schools combined. When the headmaster of Westminster School boasted at an open evening that half the sixth form went on to Oxbridge, approving murmurs filled the wood-panelled hall. (I was there.)

But growing anger about inequality, rising applications from an improved state sector and a flood of international students have prompted Oxford and Cambridge to rethink. They give more credit to students who have overcome barriers on their way to top grades. This means that fewer middling private school students who have been groomed to excel at interviews are getting in. "We want to select the academically most able – the really strong candidates versus those that are average but have been well-prepared," says Samina Khan, Oxford's director of undergraduate admissions.

This is surely fair. But it also means that hothouse independent schools are losing their edge. At St Paul's, I heard one grouchy father press the high master to explain how he would protect the boys there from "social engineering".

What should parents do when a policy that is good for society seems bad for their kids? I feel genuine sympathy for anyone concerned for their child's future, but complaining about a loss of privilege comes across as tone deaf.

At Eton, attended by 20 UK prime ministers including the current one, the number of Oxbridge offers dropped from 99 in 2014 to 48 this year. At King's College, Wimbledon, offers have fallen by nearly half in two years to 27, The Sunday Times reported in February. Both schools still sit near the top of the national league tables for total offers. But their students are finding it harder to get in, rankling parents who shell out up to £28,000 a year for day school or £44,000 for boarding.

The anger of wealthy, mostly white parents about losing the advantages they expected to be able to buy their children is part of a broader pattern of status anxiety among some sections of the

British and American upper classes. It is out of step with reality: children from such backgrounds will typically enjoy greater opportunities and financial security throughout their lives. Nevertheless, the potency of this anxiety was on display in the US during 2019's "Varsity Blues" admissions scandal when actors and private equity giants were jailed for trying to buy their kids into Yale and Stanford, among others, with faked entrance test results and counterfeit athletic skills.

"When you have something that is very valuable to people, the system gets distorted," says Daniel Markovits, a Yale law professor and author of *The Meritocracy Trap*. "Attending these universities makes a difference in people's income and status... The parents see how much it costs them to live in the neighbourhoods they live in and send children to private schools, and they realise that their children will be in the same bind."

For decades, some UK private schools traded on their high Oxbridge admission rate to help justify their astronomical and constantly rising fees. If that bargain no longer stands, what are they selling parents instead?

"Knowing what I know now, I would absolutely reconsider my decision" to choose elite boarding schools, the City executive tells me. "The fees are absolutely out of whack with reality."

He even worries that he has disadvantaged his offspring. At his global workplace, he says, applicants who attended top independent schools are treated with a "certain amount of sniffiness. 'Oh those guys got such a good education, of course they did well. We need someone hungrier.'"

Another parent, who attended Oxford but saw an Eton-educated son rejected, frets that attending a top independent school "has become a label that stays with you for life and it's not a good label. It clearly means that when they are applying for university or jobs, they are at a disadvantage unless they are truly brilliant."

am Lucy, an archeologist who specialises in Roman and Anglo-Saxon Britain, has served as an admissions tutor at Cambridge since 2009. She has little truck with parents who claim their children are getting the short end of the stick. "Nobody is entitled to get into Cambridge. You have to earn your place by being serious about your subject and going above and beyond the school curriculum. No one should expect to get in, but if they do, they will have deserved it."

Lucy has been asked so many times why smart students are getting turned down that she carries a chart that illustrates what has changed. Since 1981, annual applications to Cambridge have risen from just under 5,000 to 20,426 last year.

Highly selective state sixth forms such as Harris Westminster and Brampton Manor in London have sprung up, partly to prepare children from disadvantaged backgrounds for Oxbridge and other top universities. They not only produce students with high exam scores and impressive essays, but also train them for interviews, an area where posh schools have long excelled. In 2021, 55 students at Brampton Manor secured conditional Oxbridge offers, exceeding Eton's 48; most have ethnic minority backgrounds, receive free school meals or were the first in their family to apply for university. Cambridge and Oxford have also had a big increase in overseas applications.

Meanwhile, the two universities, which promise small group teaching by dons and rooms in ancient stone quadrangles, have not expanded appreciably. That means it is roughly four times harder now to get one of the 6,800 places than it was when today's parents were applying. "That's the mismatch in expectations. Parents say, 'I got in and you are as clever as me. Why haven't they made you an offer?" Lucy says.

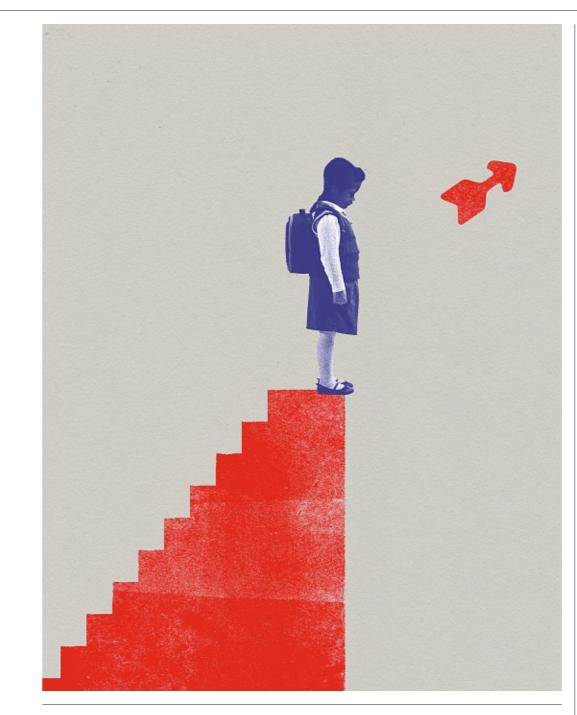
Outside the wealthiest sections of British society, the main critique of Oxbridge admissions is about too little inclusion, not too much. Some Cambridge colleges failed to admit a single black student between 2012 and 2016, and most state-sector students historically came from selective grammar schools or wealthy areas.

"The upper classes have a vice-like grip on Oxford admissions that they will not willingly give up," Labour MP David Lammy proclaimed in 2018 as he led a campaign for change that helped inspire rapper Stormzy to fully fund two scholarships for black students at Cambridge.

Several elite UK private schools were established in the middle ages to provide free schooling to gifted boys from poorer backgrounds. Over the centuries, fee-paying pupils became more numerous and they took off as training grounds for the establishment and the administration of the Empire.

Today, private schools educate 6.5 per cent of UK children, but as recently as five years ago they accounted for 42 per cent of Oxford's domestic intake and 37 per cent at Cambridge. Since then, the private school share has fallen sharply but it is still three in 10. That has sparked resentment among fee-paying parents without assuaging diversity campaigners. "It catches parents in a dilemma," says Mark Bailey, a former high master of St Paul's who now lectures at the University of East Anglia. "They may be committed to broad notions of social justice in the workplace and society, yet here is a situation where that aspiration cuts against them."

Independent school parents point out that stateprivate ratios that compare Oxbridge offers to the total stock of UK students are misleading. Oxford and Cambridge generally won't look at students unless they have at least three A or A* grades at A-level, and private schools churned out one of every four of them before the pandemic. ▶



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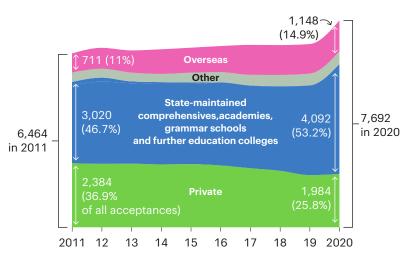
Rise in annual applications to Cambridge since 1981 from just under 5.000 to 20.426 in 2020

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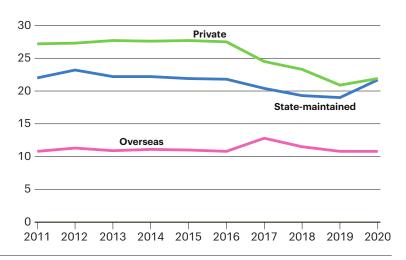
The share of students arriving at Oxbridge from private UK schools has fallen...

Combined acceptances to Oxford and Cambridge, by source



... as success rates have converged with state-maintained institutions

Oxbridge acceptances as a % of applications



SOURCE: FT ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM UNIVERSITY OF OXFOR AND UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE. © FT

◀ Those results are a key reason parents shell out school fees. "Why the heck would anyone ever pay the thick end of half a million quid (aged 4-18) per child pre-tax to send them to private school if it didn't give them seriously better grades than someone equally bright who went state?" asked one person on Mumsnet, the online parenting forum.

Within the pool of high-achieving applicants, the Oxbridge colleges now rely on "contextual admissions" that look at how students have arrived at their top marks. "If someone has done really well despite being in care, that tells you something about their ability," says Oxford's Khan. "State schools are doing so much better, particularly in London. We are getting much stronger candidates than we used to. It is getting more competitive for everyone."

Few private school parents openly dispute the need for this approach. They just hate the impact on their own children. "I agree we need social justice, but the problem needs to be fixed much earlier," says a St Paul's School mother, who has donated generously to bursary funds that bring less-privileged boys to the school. "These [private school] kids are all really bright and it is unfair to penalise them at this point."

Of course, not all parents who choose private schools do so expecting their kids will win a top university place. Many are drawn by their exceptional facilities and low student-to-staff ratios. "We never had set in our mind that our kids would be going to Oxbridge or an equivalent," says Catherine May, who sent two boys to City of London School. "I've loved that we have well-rounded children and we were very grateful for the excellent pastoral leadership."

I attended one of the US's elite private schools 35 years ago. I and roughly half of the class went on to Harvard and the rest of the Ivy League. These days, the school is still a top Ivy feeder, but that share is down below 30 per cent. Most of Harvard's undergraduate class is non-white (reflecting the US high-school population) and 55 per cent of undergraduates receive financial aid.

But there are two dirty little secrets that explain why so many springtime posts on my Facebook feed feature parents on the other side of the Atlantic boasting about their children's college destinations. Top American universities still offer "alumni preference" - children of graduates don't always get in but they have a much higher acceptance rate - and they of course find spaces for children of big donors. There is a back door for the 0.1 per cent and the well-connected, if not the merely wealthy. Oxford and Cambridge resolutely reject this. Cynics will tell you this is evident in their shabbier facilities and shallower donor pools.

All of which puts the heads of the UK's elite independent schools in a bind. On the one hand, they are under pressure to justify their tax-exempt status by improving access for poor and minor-

3in 10

Proportion of Oxbridge's domestic intake from independent schools, which educate 6.5 per cent of UK children

ity students, either by offering more bursaries or helping state schools in their neighbourhoods. On the other hand, they must also please their paying customers. And that means preserving their effectiveness at university admissions.

"We feel quite irritated by politicians who bang on about independent-state school ratios," says Barnaby Lenon, a former head of Harrow School who now chairs the Independent Schools Council. "One-third of the most needy bursary students at Oxbridge are from independent schools and the top state grammar schools are stuffed with wealthy parents."

ptimists hope that the changing admissions profile will reduce the outsize hold Oxbridge has on the UK's psyche and its politics. "If more and more really talented kids are pushed to other universities, the reputation of those schools will rise. That's really valuable for society," says the Eton parent.

And indeed, many top independent schools now are scrambling to prove they can smooth the path for their students to other brand-name options inside the UK and, increasingly, abroad. They are hiring admissions officers who are experts not only in the requirements for US universities, such as SAT tests, but also for other hot destinations such as Trinity College Dublin, McGill University in Montreal and Bocconi University in Milan.

St Paul's and St Paul's Girls' School even employ recent graduates of top American universities as "Colet Fellows" to coach students through writing the personal essays favoured by the Ivy League. "The obsession with Oxbridge misses the point," says Sarah Fletcher, SPGS's high mistress. "Our job is to genuinely guide people to the right schools." This year, total UK applications to US universities shot up 23 per cent.

That may well be the right choice for students who are attracted to American institutions' liberal arts approach, which allows them to take a wider range of subjects, Lenon says. But, he adds, "it is not good for the UK if we send too many of our best students abroad because a proportion never come back."

For independent schools, the growing emphasis on international admissions is all part of the expertise they sell. Consider their mastery of the Oxbridge admissions process, which requires students to apply to a specific college for a specific subject. The elite independent schools maximise acceptance numbers by dispersing applications away from the most oversubscribed subjects and colleges. That helped give the strongest schools an Oxbridge success rate of at least 33 per cent last year.

Then Covid-19 struck and A-levels were cancelled. Oxford and Cambridge had already made their offers, but they were caught up in the chaos. After schools assessed their students, the exams watchdog fed the results through an algorithm that reduced nearly 40 per cent of grades. Universities revoked thousands of conditional offers, with disadvantaged students hit worst.

When the government U-turned, restoring the teacher-assessed grades, Oxford and Cambridge found themselves with hundreds of extra students, driving total acceptances up 12 per cent to 7,692. "I still have no idea how colleges managed to find enough rooms to turn into bedrooms, but thankfully they did, so we didn't need to insist that anyone defer," Lucy says.

The bulge and another year of cancelled A-levels have put admissions tutors under pressure - teacher-assessed marks will probably produce grade inflation, but the facilities cannot accommodate another supersized class.

So they are making fewer offers - at Oxford, just 3,541 for 3,300 places, down from 3,932 last year. "The landscape is more competitive than it has ever been," says David Goodhew, head of Latymer Upper School in west London. "High-flyers are still getting offers but universities were uber cautious because they got their fingers burnt last year."

Some private school parents worry that admissions tutors, faced with a plethora of candidates with high predicted grades, will focus on improving their diversity statistics. They point to the lower offer numbers at the elite schools. "These great kids with flawless records are getting turned away not just by Oxbridge but Durham?" says the St Paul's mother. "How can that be?"

At Hills Road, a selective state sixth-form college in Cambridge that gets similar offer numbers to Westminster, Jo Trump, principal, says that she is seeing slightly more Oxbridge offers to students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Now in her fourth year as principal, Trump has spent years trying to convince ambitious parents – some of them Cambridge dons – that it is not the end of the world if their children do not get into Oxbridge.

"Things have changed very dramatically in 30 years," she says. For parents, "It's about learning to let go a bit and learning to let students drive the process... Our job is to walk alongside them. It is not to go in front and drag them."

Brooke Masters is the FT's chief business commentator

In search of Shandong's culinary sage

For centuries, Shandong cooking shaped elite Chinese culinary traditions.

Fuchsia Dunlop made a pilgrimage to Confucius' hometown and found its current grandmaster cooking up a storm. Illustrations by Ran Zheng

n my first evening in Jinan, the capital of north-eastern Shandong province, I was ushered into the private dining room of a restaurant specialising in roast duck. The room was full of men, but it was clear that the centre of attention was a diminutive woman with purplish permed hair and a sharp, sparkly expression in her eyes. Standing by the seat of honour, wearing a colourful knitted jacket with black trousers and sensible shoes, she commanded the room. Attentive young men refilled her teacup, while older ones hung on her every word. It didn't take me long to realise this was the person in Jinan I'd been most longing to meet: chef Wang Xinglan, grandmaster of Shandong cuisine. Shandong is the historical home

Shandong is the historical home of Confucius, who was born near the city of Qufu about 2,500 years ago. (His descendants lived in a mansion there until the 1930s.) From a gastronomic point of view, it is the epicentre of Shandong or Lu cuisine, one of China's so-called "four great cuisines" and the bedrock of elite Beijing cooking. Confucius' birthplace was in the ancient state of Lu, hence the name. During China's final Qing dynasty,

chefs from Shandong worked in the imperial palace kitchens and opened restaurants across Beijing. They became renowned for their deft knifework, swift stir-frying and profoundly delicious soups. They also gave the world Peking duck, braised spiky sea cucumbers with Beijing leek, explosively fried pig's kidneys and toffee bananas, among many other snacks and dishes.

Shandong insiders identify three distinctive local culinary schools: the food of Jinan, the seafoodbased cooking of the Jiaodong Peninsula and the elevated style of the Confucius Mansion, where emperors and high officials were entertained when they visited Qufu to make sacrifices to the sage. Confucius himself had little to say about food. While he famously refused to eat anything that was served without its proper sauce, he was more concerned with the ritual propriety of food than its flavour. His descendants, however, enjoyed a hereditary dukedom and lived in luxury, served by teams of private chefs.

Shandong cooking still underpins Beijing cuisine and permeates many other regional traditions. But it has faded from prominence in China and is little known abroad, having been eclipsed first by Cantonese cooking and then buried by an avalanche of Sichuanese chillies in recent years. Long experience has taught me, however, that almost every Chinese region is a treasure house of culinary creativity. And so, my appetite whetted by dishes I tried in Beijing, I headed for Jinan in 2019 on a Shandong culinary pilgrimage.

I'd heard about Wang Xinglan.

Now in her seventies, she is one of a vanishingly small number of women at the top of the Chinese culinary hierarchy. She began her training in 1960 at the age of 13, surviving a tough apprenticeship before making her name and going on to triumph at cooking contests. One of her fabled skills was slicing a piece of pork balanced on her thigh, a mere sheet of silk between blade and skin. In 1981, she was appointed to the small team charged with salvaging and repurposing the recipes of the Confucius Family Mansion, which had fallen into disrepair. Confucius' heirs abandoned the house before the communists won the civil war, and it had been desecrated during Mao's Cultural Revolution (1966 to 1976). These days, having outlasted all her (male) colleagues, she is officially recognised as the





Wang Xinglan in a test kitchen

◀ custodian of "Confucius Mansion Cuisine", a culinary tradition named after the father of the Chinese patriarchy.

In the restaurant, Wang greeted me with a cool, appraising eye. Aside from her son, all the men in the room, it turned out, were her apprentices. These men who had pledged formal allegiance to her as their teacher ranged in age from late teens to their sixties. The meal began with a series of toasts with shots of searingly strong *baijiu*. And then one of her apprentices, our host, unleashed a stupendous feast of Jinan specialities.

There were the famous pig's kidneys, intricately cross-hatched so they curled up in the wok like ears of wheat, wafting out a sweet fragrance of vinegar and garlic. Seasonal cattails, a juicy water vegetable, were served in a luxurious broth. Fried tofu, small fish, seaweed and other ingredients slow-cooked in vinegar made up the traditional *suguo*, or New Year's pot. By the end of the evening, I'd jotted down notes on 23 dishes, and the room was filled with a chaos of joyful drunkenness.

Throughout, Wang held court, giving our host precise and expert criticisms of the food. She also entertained everyone with her

keen wit and peals of infectious laughter. Then, to my relief and delight, she was so impressed by my omnivorousness, my note-taking and my culinary vocabulary that she announced she was going to take personal charge of my gastronomic education. "I hadn't imagined you'd be able to eat all this *xiashui*," she said, referring to the offal I had relished.

For the next six days, Wang and her apprentices shepherded me from restaurant to restaurant, feast to feast, to sample a scarcely believable range of delicacies. On the first morning, a couple of apprentices took me out for a few breakfasts of local noodles, griddled buns and the Jinan speciality of tianmo, a hearty millet gruel. Later, we met Wang for lunch in an oldfashioned house looking out over the picturesque canal along the old city moat. Another virtuoso display of cooking followed, including dainty knifework, local cured meats and a graceful seafood broth. And so the days unfolded as we ate our way around Jinan, visiting kitchens and fraternising with generations of local chefs. Halfway through the trip, I had already tasted 200 dishes.

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n the kitchens I visited, I was struck by the contrast between simple equipment - often

just a knife, board, wok and ladle – and the extreme technical complexity these tools are used to achieve. One Shandong chef in his eighties reeled off the names of nearly 40 cooking methods and then told me those were "just the basics".

Shandong chefs pride themselves on the type of stir-frying known as "exploding" (bao) for its intense speed and heat. Bao helps preserve the vitality of delicate ingredients such as kidneys and has at least seven distinct variations. Meticulous attention to huohou, the control of heat, is required to achieve the correct texture for each dish: the brisk tenderness of kidneys, the exquisite wobble and tautness of a sea cucumber, the silky succulence of sliced fish.

In the restaurant of one of Wang's senior apprentices, a young chef showed me how to make the classic Shandong pudding "three-non-stick" (sanbuzhan), named because it doesn't stick to dishes, chopsticks or teeth. Working intently with an oiled wok over carefully controlled heat, he transformed what looked like a raggy mess of sweetened, scrambled egg yolks into a perfectly smooth, springy golden pudding, which took nearly 10 minutes of beating with the back of his ladle. The result was sublime.

Although Shandong also has a tradition of delicious street food and folk cooking, high-level Lu cuisine is comparatively expensive, laborious and technically demanding. That's one reason it lost ground to the easy delights of more casual Sichuanese.

Cooking technique aside, an almost deranged level of attention was paid to the fun and drama of dining. At one lunch, an enormous copper cauldron full of hot stones was placed on the table. When hot broth and slices of raw fish were poured in, the fish cooked instantly in an eruption of seething heat. Storytellers in traditional robes entertained us to the accompaniment of bamboo



One Shandong chef in his eighties reeled off the names of nearly 40 cooking methods and then told me those were 'just the basics'

clappers. A chef released a ball of flame that hovered for a moment above a dish before disappearing. To me, it seemed like a reminder of how the joy and passion of Chinese cooking had re-emerged from the ashes of the Cultural Revolution.

One evening, driving back from yet another fabulous dinner, Wang told me about the gruelling start to her career. She spoke softly of the bleak, hungry years after the Great Leap Forward [1958]. She was one of nine children, desperate for a job, a lone girl in a world of men. "It was so difficult, so bitter," she said. "I was too short to stand at the chopping boards and had to force myself to be right-handed." For two years she did menial kitchen jobs, working from 6am to 11pm. She washed dried kelp, killed eels and turtles, and sliced pounds of kidneys. "There was such scorn for female comrades. Sometimes I cut myself and I daren't admit it, so I would just scald the cut in boiling water, clench my teeth and carry on."

Over time, her master chef recognised her diligence and "stopped seeing me as a female comrade". She warmed to the profession, cheered by the plaudits she won from the restaurant's customers. "By the time I was 17 or 18," she said, "I was famous all over the province."

A sea change came in the 1980s, when China held its first national culinary contest. The country's leaders proclaimed cooking was "art, culture and science" and, from then on, she said, "people gradually began to respect chefs". Over the years, her acclaim grew until she became a master chef

(pengren dashi) in both Shandong and Chinese cuisines, and was awarded a special grant from the State Council. Her professional association, the Lan Ru Tuandui, has some 8,000 members and admits apprentices with a Confucian emphasis on both culinary technique and personal integrity. "If you are not a person of good character," she said, "your cooking won't be any good either".

One afternoon, Wang showed me how to transform raw prawns into peonies for a Confucius Mansion banquet dish. She dusted a single, shelled prawn with starch, laid it on a board and repeatedly hammered it with a wooden mallet for a full eight minutes until the flesh had spread out into a translucent circle as thin as silk. The work was slow and painstaking, but when the flattened prawns had been blanched, plunged into iced water and piled on a serving dish, their resemblance to a peony was remarkable. Afterwards, she turned to me and said, "You've tasted 200 dishes, how about teaching me how to cook something English?"

There's not much an English person can teach one of the most celebrated Chinese chefs about cooking. Except, it turns out, roast potatoes. Setting aside the peony prawns, I parboiled potatoes in salted water, tossed them with hot oil, garlic and salt, and roasted them until they were crisp and golden. Shockingly simple as the recipe was, it met with Wang's enthusiastic approval. Both of my subsequent attempts to woo her, with apple crumble and with shepherd's pie, were less successful: "Shapeless," she declared.



ne day, Wang enlisted a couple of her young apprentices to drive us to Qufu, the home of Confucius.

We wandered through the faded Confucius Temple and listened to musicians performing traditional opera in the mansion gardens.

Outside the main shrine, I bought some sticks of incense, and Wang watched approvingly as I followed her instructions to make the ritual kowtows. Later we passed some villagers dressed in white rags performing an elaborate funeral ritual. "So feudal!" she said scornfully. "What era do they think they're in?"

Contradictions like this make
Wang all the more intriguing.
Another one is that this pioneering
chef who cracked open the maledominated kitchen hierarchy hasn't



By week's end,
I had tasted 308
dishes, and I was in
thrall to Wang like
everyone else. I
could see why men
of any age were
willing to obey her
every command

taken on a single female since she began accepting apprentices in the 1970s. "The greatest defect in female comrades," she told me, "is that they lack perseverance. Being a chef is tough: boiling hot in summer, freezing in winter, with masses of oil and smoke, and they just can't stand it."

I found it hard to keep up with Wang. Day after day, apprentice after apprentice would lay out their finest feasts. At the end of each meal, we would be offered noodles or buns because, regardless of how much you've eaten, in China it doesn't really count as a meal until you've had your *fan* (cooked grain foods). After dinner, Wang insisted on making arrangements for some interesting local breakfast. Between meals, she plied me with hot pastries and sweet potatoes from street vendors.

I could take eating everything in my stride, but the ritual toasting was a challenge. Every meal would commence not just with the obligatory toast that is common across China, but with several formal toasts followed by informal toasts throughout the meal. As each feast progressed, my notes began to slide and crash across the page, increasingly illegible. Around me, male chefs knocked back baijiu

as the atmosphere became more riotous. Sometimes they'd hold their glass upside-down over their heads to prove they were empty. Wang, urging me to show my respect to our hosts by toasting too, drank tea and remained serene.

Driving back from Qufu,
Wang turned to me and feigned
exasperation: "You've exhausted
me! I'm so tired I could die!"
In truth, I was the exhausted
one. As I sank into a food and
baijiu coma in the back of the car,
the master chef heatedly talked
gastronomy and cooking with the
two young apprentices in the front,
their discussion broken only by
gales of irresistible laughter.

By the end of the week, I had tasted 308 dishes, and I was in thrall to Wang like everyone else. I could see why young apprentices were willing to kowtow during their admission ceremonies and why men of any age were willing to obey her every command. She was stern, exacting, kind and hilarious, a tough, magnificent woman. I had travelled to Shandong in search of an imperial cooking tradition and had found a queen.

Fuchsia Dunlop's latest book is "The Food of Sichuan" (2020 Fortnum and Mason Cookbook of the Year)

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Ravinder Bhogal Recipes



Seafood for the soul

or years, I took travel for granted, skipping from here to there as I wished. I thought nothing of spending summer after summer in Italy, where I fell in love with ancient cities and winding passageways, sun-dappled vineyards and crystalline coastlines. Most of all, I fell in love with the intricacy and exuberance of the food.

As a cook, I am often asked about my favourite Italian meals. Most of them have been eaten at understated trattorias where the food is seasonal, prepared with fervour and served on bountiful platters. Measurements and portion sizes are contradictory to the soulful spirit of generosity ingrained in the cooks there. I have enjoyed toothsome pastas of various geometries, briny seafood and memorable regional dishes, including the unlikely crowd-pleaser of *sugo* perked up with nubs of foraged snail in Tuscany.

But it was at a restaurant by the beach in Trapani, when I was still sticky with salt from a morning swim, that I had a plate of food I still dream about - a *zuppa di pesce* so abundant with snow-white flakes of fish and scarlet crustaceans that it was like an aquarium in a bowl, throbbing with garlic, chilli and wine. The broth itself was so appealingly rich with good olive oil that I mopped up every last drop with the rest of the bread basket.

As I knocked back the dregs of my Negroni with its perfect curl of orange peel, I looked out at the watercolour view. Here was life shrunk to its very best elements: sun, sea, good food and something refreshing to sip on. We don't really need much more. Until we can travel again, here's a recipe for a seafood stew inspired by that happy moment. The salinity of seafood cooked in a saffron broth with orzo should provide a portal for escape.

Ravinder Bhogal is chef-patron of Jikoni in London; jikonilondon.com. Follow her on Instagram @cookinboots

Seafood stew with orzo

Serves four

- 60ml extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
 1 small onion,
- finely chopped
 2 celery stalks,
- finely diced
 1 small fennel bulb,
- finely chopped
- 1 bay leaf
- 3 garlic cloves, crushed • 2 tsp fennel seeds
- Pinch of saffron threads
- ¼ tsp chilli flakes
- 300ml dry white wine
- 400ml tomato passata500ml fish stock
- 300g orzo, rinsed
 1kg clams soaked in salted water for one hour, rinsed

• 2 monkfish tails,

- deboned and cut into bite-sized pieces • 250g squid, cleaned, scored and cut into 8cm
- pieces, tentacles halved • 8 prawns, peeled, deveined, tails intact
- Coarsely chopped flat-leaf parsley to serve
- Lemon juice to taste
 Sea salt and black pepper

- 1 Heat the oil in a large casserole or wide, deep frying pan over medium heat. Add onion, celery, fennel and bay leaf and sauté until soft and translucent. Scatter in the garlic, fennel seeds, saffron and chilli and stir until fragrant. Pour in the wine, bring to the boil and bubble until it is reduced to almost nothing.
- 2 Pour in the passata along with the stock and 750ml water, bring to the boil, then add orzo and simmer until al dente. This should take about 10 minutes. Add the seafood, cover and simmer until just cooked.
- 3 Season to taste, scatter parsley on top and squeeze in lemon juice. Drizzle with olive oil and serve immediately.



Photography by Aaron Graubart

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FTWEEKEND FESTIVAL

The Reawakening:
Imagining a post-pandemic world





lan McEwan
award-winning novelist



Sarah Gilbert creator of the AstraZeneca vaccine and Oxford University professor of vaccinology



Amia Srinivasan Oxford University professor of social and political theory



Max Richter composer and pianist

This September's FTWeekend Festival is set to be a true celebration with a theme that offers both hope and reflection: imagining a post-pandemic world. Returning as an in-person festival with our usual eclectic line-up of speakers and subjects, we will once again bring the FTWeekend you know and love to life across seven stages.

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Jancis Robinson Wine

Greener bottles

ware of the heavy carbon footprint of glass bottles, Rosemary Cakebread has been researching options for lighter bottles for her exceptional Gallica wines made in Napa Valley. She emailed me recently with her dismayed reaction to what this research has revealed: "What I've learnt is that more and more wine glass available on the West Coast is in fact made in China."

US imports of glass containers from China increased by 55 per cent to 2.1 billion in the five years to 2018, according to US trade data; industry estimates that year were that 70 per cent of the bottles filled by American wine bottlers were sourced from China, and that proportion is likely to have grown since. America's domestic glass bottle industry has been shrinking too: between 2005 and 2011, 11 US glass container manufacturing plants closed, leaving 43.

Standard 75cl glass wine bottles vary in weight, from under 400g to more than a kilo. The heavier they are, the greater the carbon emissions from making and transporting them, which accounts for the greatest proportion of wine's carbon footprint.

Increasingly aware of this, I started noting bottle weights in my tasting notes in February, wishing to highlight producers who use particularly heavy or light glass. On this basis, I would say that the average bottle used for wine is about 550g, although it varies by country, with producers in the US and Argentina favouring some of the heaviest.

In a recent collection of tasting notes on eastern European wines, I found one used by the Georgian producer Dugladze weighed as much as 1,025g whereas most bottles used by the Romanian producer Cramele Recas were only 345g. Recas co-owner Philip Cox points out that these lighter bottles - the fatter burgundy



As imagined by Leon Edler

shape is easier to make lighter than the straight-sided bordeaux shape - cut transport costs by about 10 per cent.

Although many of her winemaking peers in Napa Valley seem happy to use bottles weighing 800g or more, Cakebread is clearly serious about switching to much lighter bottles. But she refuses to source them in China. "To my mind," she wrote to me, "it's

'For many, there still seems to be a perceived correlation between bottle weight and wine quality'



not sustainable to buy a 400g bottle and then ship it nearly 7,000 miles."

Despite the impact on the atmosphere, shipments of empty bottles around the globe are growing. Every month, for example, 200 shipping containers of glass bottles arrive in the UK from Al Tajir bottle factory in Dubai – albeit, in this case, mainly for beer. In 2018, meanwhile, Croxsons, a glass bottle supplier based in south London, acquired a furnace in China to supply customers in the US, Australia and New Zealand.

In a 2015 report for FEVE, the association of European glass manufacturers, consultancy EY put the proportion of glass bottles that travel more than 300km from furnace to filling line at 44 per cent. While China is by far the world's biggest exporter of glass bottles, Germany is the second.

Some countries just don't have glass-production facilities or offer little choice. New Zealand, for instance, has a single producer, whose bottles Master of Wine Steve Smith of Smith & Sheth has found so inconsistent that he imports bottles from Saverglass, based in France. According to him, Saverglass "seem well ahead of the pack on sustainability and their glass quality is first-class".

In line with increased awareness of sustainability, there has been a laudable trend to reduce bottle weights. In 2019, the average weight of bottles had fallen by 30 per cent over the previous decade, according to figures from Statista. Accolade, the biggest wine bottler in the UK, has decreased its proportion of bottles over 500g from 17 per cent in 2017 to 3 per cent in 2020. Over the same period, the proportion of its bottles that weigh less than 390g has risen from 24 per cent to 42 per cent.

Yet for many, there still seems to be a perceived correlation between weight and wine quality. Sebastian Zuccardi is one of Argentina's ▶

Sustainability initiatives

- Effective recycling of glass bottles: glass, being inert, is the perfect material for fine wine designed for ageing. Because of their heavy carbon footprint, glass bottles should be recycled but few countries can claim to recycle a sufficient proportion of them. The US Environmental Protection Agency, for instance, calculates that about 55 per cent of all glass containers in the US end up in landfill each year.
- <u>Local bottle production</u>: Gallo, the biggest American wine producer, has its own glass bottle production facility producing more than 900 million a year from local materials
- Returnable bottles: the Gotham Project throughout the US, for example
- Refillable bottles: Borough Wines in London is the UK pioneer
- Paper bottles: Frugalpac of Ipswich in the UK is making headway with containers that are shaped like a glass bottle but weigh a fraction of one
- <u>Flat bottles made of recycled plastic:</u> designed by UK-based Garçon Wines for wines consumed soon after purchase (Sonoma County University calculated that 90 per cent of all wine is drunk within two weeks)
- . Cans: proliferating at pace, especially in the US, and highly convenient



◀ most respected winemakers and his company is the country's leading organic producer. Yet he still uses some heavy 900g bottles for his Finca Piedra and Jose Zuccardi wines. He points out they used to be even heavier: "It's really to do with consumers, because in some markets, size and weight of the bottle continue to be important."

Indeed, part of the motivation for Croxsons' investment in China was to supply heavier bottles. Its website reports "concerns amongst some of Croxsons' customers that the industry has moved some bottles away from being super-premium, or even premium, to a lighter, standard-weight bottle. Clearly the risk to brands using a wrongweight bottle is that consumers will feel a disconnection between the price point and the aesthetics that the bottle delivers."

The substantial Languedoc producer Gérard Bertrand is another advocate of organic vine-growing but persists with heavy bottles for his top cuvées. His justification is common: he argues they represent only a small proportion of his production and that he is doing his bit for the planet in the vineyard and by using lighter bottles for the rest of his range.

The problem is that producers such as he, by putting their more expensive wines in heavier bottles, encourage the perception that good wine comes in heavy bottles. In fact, the world's most expensive wines tend to be packaged really

quite modestly. Bordeaux first growths, for instance, come in bottles that weigh not much more than 500g.

Chakana is one of Argentina's biggest biodynamic wine producers. Winemaker Gabriel Bloise reports that when Chakana changed to lighter bottles 10 years ago, European markets welcomed it, but "in the USA we did meet resistance to lighter bottles and our importer says they have had a negative impact on sales... Asian markets insist on heavy bottles. But the only impact of heavy bottles is visual and they do not improve wine taste. We decided to spend the money [saved by choosing lighter bottles] on wine improvements (organics, biodynamics) rather than packaging, so we were able to improve quality, reduce the glass and keep our prices stable."

Angelos Iatridis of Greece's excellent Alpha Estate goes more than the extra mile along the path to sustainability and justifies the difficult-to-copy 887g bottle for his top Xinomavro as an anticounterfeit measure. He is another fan of Saverglass.

Cakebread ended her email with the hopeful observation that in the US, "supply chain issues are forcing local glass plants to dust off their old equipment". If "more wineries request locally made lightweight bottles, suppliers will take notice and there will be more options".

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Restaurants

Tim Hayward





HEDDON YOKOCHŌ, LEFT. DISHES INCLUDE TORI PAITAN RAMEN, SHIO KOSHO, SPICY KOREAN WINGS, YAKKO AND SPICY YAKKO TOFU

Heddon Yokochō, London

here are days when this job takes me to the oddest places. Follow me, then, as I wander through Soho, duck into an alleyway on the edge of Mayfair, am led down a flight of stairs and seated in a rickety booth.

This is not what you are thinking. I am lurking down here and paying for a private performance from, well, a bowl of noodles. This is London's first shuchu or "focus" booth, designed for the solitary contemplation of ramen, part of the heavily themed Heddon Yokochō.

In 1976, Tak Tokumine opened the Japan Centre nearby, serving London's expat Japanese community with packaged goods, utensils and magazines. Later incarnations also had food counters, bringing some of the earliest affordable Japanese food to London. I remember being introduced to my first *gyoza*, pork *katsu* curry and green tea in the basement off Piccadilly

Circus, years ahead of the easy thrills of Yo! Sushi or Wagamama. Tokumine has kept the business thriving through several changes of premises and, more recently, opening the upmarket Shoryu, which has attracted the attention of Michelin. Heddon Yokochō is his mid-range offering. While the private booths may be a clever response to pandemic restrictions, they also afford the noodle lover an intriguing opportunity.

In Japanese cities ramen consumption is an obsession, almost to the point of being a cult. Fanciers travel from shop to shop, seeking the bounciest noodles, the purest broths, the deepest tare and the most outré toppings. Yet perhaps the greatest noodle temples of all are those where the diner can sit in seclusion, cut off from sensory distraction and able to apply total attention to their meal.

I took my place at Heddon Yokochō facing a red curtain and, after a few calming sips of sparkling water, watched as a bowl was slipped under it like a sacrament. It was the simplest "Tokyo-style" ramen in which shoyu or soy sauce



'It is really lovely to step aside from the bubbling noise and confusion of social dining and actually concentrate on something'

Heddon Yokochō 8 Heddon Street Mayfair London W1B 4BU heddonyokocho.com Mains £11.90-£14.50 is the predominant seasoning in the clear chicken and pork broth. This is usually added by dressing the bottom of the bowl with a measured scoop of *tare*, the seasoned and concentrated sauce unique to every decent noodle counter. The medium thickness noodles, the menu informs me, are "Chijire wave". Emboldened by my solitude, I wave back.

I should probably apologise for the sneaking reference to X-rated booths in the first paragraph, but there is an unmistakable resonance with the solitary pursuit of the noodle. The plywood enclosure, after an initial overwhelming feeling of absurdity, really does liberate you to behave in new ways. I was able, for example, to stick my face down over the bowl and inhale deeply of its steamy vapours, something I would never contemplate doing in public for fear of being revealed as a colossal prat.

It worked though. I was able to focus undistracted on the faint maritime whiff of *kombu* and *katsuobushi* beneath the deeper waves of pork. I was able to turn my full attention to the absolute orange of the yolk of the *nitamago* egg as it gently wept over a near Fibonacci spiral of BBQ pork belly. I had both the liberty and inclination, dear reader, to watch nori wilt.

Stick a man in a wooden box, and it won't be long before he waxes philosophical. I began to dwell on the duality of existence, the yin and the yang, how on the one hand the broth was profound in its complex, ageless and mysterious flavours and yet still, somehow, a bit too salty.

I left that booth a changed man. It had been great, safe fun. It had been a great bowl of noodles, but there was something else. It is really lovely to step aside from the bubbling noise and confusion of social dining and concentrate on something. At times our job is one of managing overstimulation, so the focus booth was weirdly thrilling.

This time it was ramen, but I wouldn't mind renting the booth again, be it for bouillabaisse or a bacon bap. It should be mandatory for critics, once a month, like some weary old cop sent to spend time on the range. It felt like being reset.

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FROM LEFT: JAMES JOYCE, PHOEBE WALLER-BRIDGE, GEORGE COSTANZA, ORSON WELLES, FRAN LEBOWITZ AND NATHAN BROOKER

FANTASY DINNER PARTY

NATHAN BROOKER

The FT's House & Home editor invites a motley crew of raconteurs (and a friend of Seinfeld's) for a meal prepared by Ruth Rogers in the hills of the Italian Riviera

'm not sure if you're not allowed to drive there, or if it was just bad planning on our part, but when my buddy and I stayed in Portofino, on Italy's Ligurian coast, we had to park in the next town and hike around the wooded headland. It made arriving in this gem of a village, with its pastel-coloured houses tumbling down towards the harbour, even more magical. If that were possible.

I hear it's all Gucci and superyachts now - or at least it was before the pandemic - so we're heading up the hillside to a villa that overlooks the waterfront, with a garden full of lemon trees. This is the place for my dream dinner party: out in that garden on a balmy evening in early September, the trees festooned with little lightbulbs. At this height, you can just about hear the chatter

of the diners in the waterside trattorias, but can't make out the selfie sticks.

While I wait for everyone to turn up, I think I'll mix myself a drink - a cardinale, which is like a negroni, but you substitute the sweet vermouth for Riesling.

"You're not going to invite James Joyce, are you?" asked my wife when I told her about this assignment. She thinks it will make me sound pretentious and out of touch. And she's right. But I don't care. Joyce is the first name on the team sheet. And not just because he was the finest writer of the 20th century. He's also my banker - someone I can faithfully rely on to get drunker than me. "His capacity for alcohol was small," wrote his biographer Richard Ellmann, "and he was prone to drunken collapses." Some nights he might start quoting Dante or break into a boisterous Italian drinking song; other times he'd go home and write embarrassing little poems about how drunk and weird he'd been.

With that, the great man arrives: suit, eyepatch, ashplant and guitar. I pour him a drink. A double, I think. The silence is broken by a commotion in the street below - the screech of brakes and a barrage

of car horns. Joyce smiles, holds his glass aloft and, in the spirit of *Ulysses*, intones: *Introibo ad altare Dei*. Then downs the whole lot.

Behind him comes Fran
Lebowitz, flustered from whatever
is going on in the street. She takes
one look at Joyce. "You couldn't
get Nabokov?" she says to me and
heads to the drinks table for a cup
of coffee.

'Fran Lebowitz has realised George Costanza is, in fact, an idiot. And Orson Welles agrees'

Orson Welles is the next to arrive. A good dinner party needs a good raconteur, and Welles is one of the greats. I've lost whole afternoons watching back-to-back videos of him on YouTube being interviewed by Michael Parkinson.

Welles is followed by the actor and screenwriter **Phoebe Waller-Bridge**. She writes with such zip and empathy, I feel like she would be an exciting person to be around. I read that she's partial to a vodka gimlet - vodka, lime juice and sugar syrup in a frozen glass - so I make a round. Lebowitz sticks to coffee. Again, car horns blare in the street below.

The door slams open. It's **George Costanza**, frazzled, wispy hair on end. He got my text about not driving here, but decided to anyway because he thought his incredible ability to parallel park meant the advice didn't apply to him. God knows where he's left his car. He has brought a bottle with him, at least - Pepsi. I sit him next to Lebowitz, I figure the pair of New Yorkers can bond over traffic routes and everything they hate about the greatest city on earth.

So, who's in the kitchen? To be honest, I'd like a 70-year-old Italian nonna. Under 5ft tall, if possible, with big glasses and powerful forearms. She takes precisely zero crap from anybody and makes the most sensational wild boar ragù on the planet. Failing that, I'll take the great Ruth Rogers, co-founder of the River Cafe.

We start simple: artichokes, bitter chicory, perhaps a little Gorgonzola and a dry white wine. Costanza and Lebowitz are getting on like a house on fire. She's talking about people who walk too slowly on pavements, he's riffing about how toilet paper hasn't changed since the 1970s. Then the *primi piatti* arrive: linguini with truffles, oozing with butter under a mountain of parmesan. The mood is good. Welles is being his entertaining best.

By the time the main course comes - T-bone steak, rosemary, sautéed potatoes, paired with a bottle of Barolo - the wheels have started to come off. Lebowitz has realised Costanza is, in fact, an idiot. And Welles agrees. Unbeknown to me, Waller-Bridge has been passing around copies of Joyce's wildly intimate letters to his wife, Nora, and giggling about them. Joyce - who fails to see the funny side - is turning puce with indignation, or drink, or both.

"Jim," says Welles. "While we're waiting for dessert, why don't you play us a song?" Unable to refuse, he fetches his guitar. And just when it seems like the evening couldn't get any more embarrassing, Joyce starts singing an Italian aria, the beauty of which takes everyone quite by surprise.

And there we are, captivated in the moonlight by one of the greatest and strangest artists of the modern era. The night is young, the bar is well stocked. We hardly notice the plates of hot almond and orange cake placed in front of us, each slice slowly cooling under a melting dollop of mascarpone.

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 British head of state died 53 years after losing power?
- 2. Which American lawman died 48 years after taking part in the Gunfight at the OK Corral?
- 3. For which development charity did Prince William work in Chile in 2000?

- 4. Who is the only UK poet laureate to have had a child who became an Oscarwinning actor?
- 5. Which song has been a hit for Andrea **True Connection** (1976), Bananarama (1993) and Rachel Stevens (2004)?
- 6. Who was the Conservative leader at the 2005 general election?
- 7. What was the official name of West Ham's home ground until 2016 - often

known as Upton Park (above) because of its location?

- 8. In The Simpsons, who is the principal of Springfield elementary school?
- 9. Who is Harry Potter's only cousin?
- 10. In the life cycle of the salmon, what comes between fry and smolt?



The Picture Round

by James Walton

Who or what do these pictures add up to?

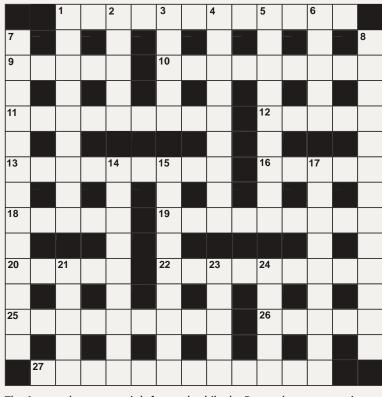


Answers page 10



The Crossword

No 546. Set by Aldhelm



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

ACROSS

1 Shining phenomenon (12) 9 Work of fiction (5) 10 One seeking election (9) 11 Extreme (9) 12 Boiling water vapour (5) 13 Small trinkets, bits and bobs (9) **16** Unspoken (5) 18 Beginning (5) 19 Neverending (9) **20** Thigh bone (5) **22** Enhancing (9) 25 Procession (9) 26 Players' playing cards (5) 27 Senior priest's title (4, 8)

DOWN

1 Ancient text to utilise CV craftily (9) 2 Athlete rising in the preliminaries (5) 3 Slice of flan - a chocolate snack (5) 4 Holding one, it rinses out soap, perhaps (9) 5 Composer composed satire about this colouring (5) king, that is (4, 5) 6 Stop legal proceedings when head of establishment intervenes (5) 7 Popular opinion's to do away with pretence, actually (2.5, 2.4)8 Almost go with it for treatment under the German medical specialist (13) 14 Wild tuna's to get better, of course (9)

15 Top gallery includes one against entrance (9) 17 Warned about poor education (9) 21 Film contest following second (5) 23 Audience's calm musical work (5) 24 Scots shout about

Solution to Crossword No 545





GILLIAN TETT

PARTING SHOT

The truth is out there... I guess



arlier this year, I found myself in the Pentagon, the vast headquarters of the American military apparatus, for a meeting, when I spotted a striking sign on a door. It seemed to indicate the office was dedicated to research into unidentified flying objects, aka UFOs. Security was tight, and yet I asked, "Is that a joke?"

I did not get a clear response. But in late June, the Pentagon released a widely discussed report revealing that officials have been studying sightings of UFOs - or, as they now prefer to call them, UAPs (unidentified aerial phenomena) - for many years.

Of 144 UAP sightings between 2004 and 2021, only one can be easily blamed on a normal object (in that case, a deflated balloon). "[We] currently lack sufficient information in our dataset to attribute incidents to specific explanations," the report concluded. Speculation about top-secret Russian, Chinese or even American technology, not to mention the wilder theories about aliens, has run rampant ever since.

But amid all the chatter about extraterrestrials, there is another intriguing question that the US government has been quietly studying: if aliens did show up, how might we communicate with them? The US government's efforts to look for, and potentially communicate with, aliens are well known to sci-fi devotees. Seti, short for "search for extraterrestrial intelligence", employs one hundred scientists from its base in Mountain View, California, part of Silicon Valley. (Where else?)

What is less well known, however, is that Seti is also working with archaeologists, anthropologists and other social scientists on the assumption that should we find somebody, we might want to say hello. Much of this is secretive, but back in 2014 Nasa published an extensive report on this work, titled "Archeology, Anthropology and Interstellar Communication".

Though it attracted little mainstream attention at the time, it makes for fascinating reading (and can easily be found online). "To move beyond the mere detection of such intelligence, and to have any realistic chance of comprehending it, we can gain much from the lessons learned by researchers facing similar challenges on Earth," explained a foreword by Douglas Vakoch, a clinical psychology professor emeritus at the California Institute of Integral Studies who was then "director of interstellar message composition" at Seti.

"Like archaeologists who reconstruct temporally distant civilisations from fragmentary evidence, Seti researchers will be expected to reconstruct distant civilisations separated from us by vast expanses of space as well as time," he noted. "And like anthropologists, who attempt to understand other cultures despite differences in language and social customs, as we attempt to decode and interpret extraterrestrial messages, we will be required to comprehend the mindset of a species that is radically Other."

In practical terms, this meant that the Seti team had analysed how archaeologists failed to interpret Mayan and Egyptian texts to see how to decode unfamiliar signals. They had pondered how "dead" ancient Greek culture transmitted signals into modern European thought and looked at how the anthropologist Ruth Benedict tried to "decode" Japanese culture for the US government during the second world war.

The research also explored the mistakes that physical anthropologists and archaeologists made when they first encountered Neanderthal fossils, most notably by presuming that this branch of humanity walked in a stooped fashion since the first excavation of bones indicated this. (It turned out those bones were from an individual with arthritis.)

'There is another question that the US government has been studying: if aliens did show up, how might we communicate with them?'

All of which led the Seti researchers to conclude that if they are going to communicate with aliens, they cannot use auditory signals since "the factors affecting the propagation of sounds could vary so much from planet to planet", noted cognitive scientist William Edmondson. Nor, he added, can they use symbols since "symbolic communication – in which the connection between sign and signified is arbitrary – is intrinsically limited".

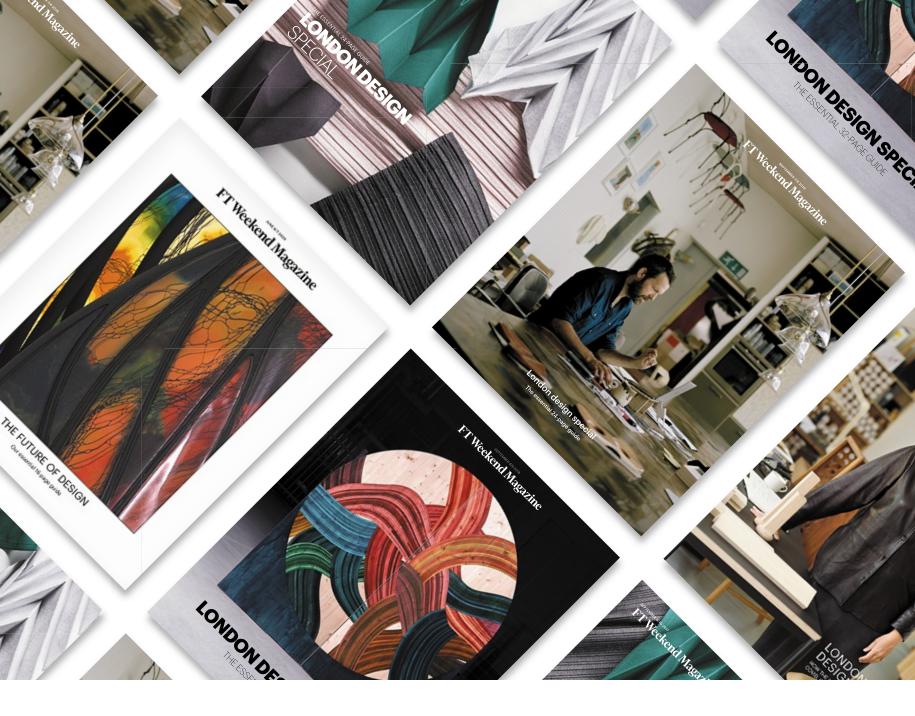
Instead, the group favours sending pictures of Earth into outer space or using maths-based quantitative signals, since these seem to be less dependent on any symbolic interpretation. But while prime numbers are presumed to be a universal construct, Vakoch has stressed that it would be dangerous to assume that numbers are perceived in a universal manner.

None of this, of course, casts any light on UAPs, which might perfectly well turn out to be any number of unexciting phenomena. Nor does it address the potential downsides of making contact, as described by physicist Stephen Hawking – and many great novelists, who fear that alien beings would not only be technologically superior, but also likely to wipe out humans.

Futile or not, I find it oddly cheering that at least part of the government has been devoted to thinking about the near-unthinkable in recent years and doing so with an admirably interdisciplinary approach.

And even if we never find any extraterrestrial life, the search for it helps to foster a debate about what it is that enables humans to communicate with other "alien" humans, across time and space on our own planet. Right now, that is badly needed – with or without any UFOs.

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