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Councillor Robert Rigby has been elected the new Right Worshipful Lord Mayor of Westminster following a vote at Full Council. Cllr Rigby has represented Regent's Park ward since 2010. His career at Westminster City Council has included senior roles including chair of the planning committee; deputy cabinet member for finance and regeneration; deputy cabinet member for parking and housing and chair of the Lord's community group.

Upon election, the new Lord Mayor said: "It is a huge honour and an enormous privilege to accept this role. Westminster is truly an international and multicultural city, and our diverse and vibrant

communities make it special and different from other London local authorities. I very much look forward to meeting and supporting our many communities across the city during my year of office."

He has chosen two charities to champion: the Cardinal Hume Centre, which looks after homeless young people and the MCC Foundation, which promotes cricket to different communities across the country through free training and matches.

The New Lord Mayor, aged 63, has lived in St John's Wood for more than 35 years. He has spent his working life in sales and marketing within the travel industry, including 20 years with Japan Airlines during which time he met his wife Emiko.

The National Gallery marks its bicentenary birthday, 200 years of bringing people and paintings together. The National Gallery in Trafalgar Square is one of the world's finest galleries, and it proudly sits at the heart of Westminster. This esteemed institution has brought an unparalleled collection of artistic treasures, drawing in many visitors from around the globe.

This August, Westminster City Council is collaborating with the National Gallery for a free outdoor festival, Inside Out. Together, the council promises to deliver 'Summer in the Square', a creative festival for children and families in Trafalgar Square. Visitors and residents will be able

to take part in a number of free activities and workshops.

Inside Out is a free and inclusive summer festival, produced by Westminster City Council and partners, that brings our city's world-renowned arts, entertainment and culture into the streets and open spaces of Westminster for all to enjoy.

The programme showcases live performances, cultural walking tours, outdoor exhibitions, family workshops, sculpture trails, installations and pop-up activities in accessible outdoor locations. In 2021 the Inside Out Festival won a National Campaign for the Arts 'Hearts for the Arts' award for Best Art Project.







£5 million fund to close health inequalities in Westminster

A £5 million programme to reduce Westminster's health inequality gap has been launched by the council. Funding by a Public Health grant is being given to 42 local community organisations to run free community-led activities designed especially for diverse groups to enable them to live a healthier lifestyle. Activities include fitness classes for teenage girls, social sessions for isolated residents and health education sessions.

Westminster City Council's pioneering Healthy Communities Fund is being used to get residents living healthier lives to reduce the borough's health inequality gap.

Despite 85% of residents reporting their health as good or very good, a baby born in the North of Westminster has an average life expectancy of 76 years. Whilst a mere 3 miles away, a child born in Knightsbridge and Belgravia has a life expectancy of 94 - a difference of 18 years and the largest health inequality gap in the country.

inequality gap in the country.

The funding will allow organisations to take a holistic approach to health, allowing residents to get involved in something they love, as well as offer an opportunity to discuss preventative healthcare issues, such as screenings and vaccinations and support with their mental wellbeing.

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EyeOnLondon founded in 2022 on the following principles.

- Committed to providing thought-provoking news & features.
- Delivering quality content
- Being a platform for nurturing trust and transparency within the media
- Cultivating the written and investigative talents of young journalist and interns.

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The editorial team at EyeOnLondon strives to ensure all information printed is true and correct at the time of publication. If you notice a story has been printed with an error or omission, please contact us through our website and we will be happy to amend as appropriate.

Cover image of Nelson's Column, Trafalgar Square, taken by Beata May.



Mayor commits to make London's waterways swimmable by 2034

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has called out the ongoing crisis of sewage in London's rivers and reaffirmed his commitment to produce a plan to make London's rivers clean enough to swim safely within the next decade.

The Mayor was re-elected for his third term last month. He has pledged to ensure utilities clean up London's waterways. This will follow on from the success of his world-leading work to clean up London's air where he has cut levels of toxic air pollution.

New analysis done by City Hall has shown that the sewage flowing into London's rivers in 2023/2024 was almost four times the amount for the same period the previous year. Between April 2023 and March 2024 Thames Water released sewage into

London's waterways for a staggering 12,105 hours, 37 minutes, equivalent to 504 days.

Sadiq called on Thames Water, the government and its regulators to clean up London's waterways. While the Mayor does not have the resources or powers to single-handedly force a change, he has pledged to work with key stakeholders to produce a plan that would clean our waterways within a decade – and hold Thames Water and the government to account to deliver on it. He made clear his plan is not just about the Thames but also about cleaning up other rivers, canals and water bodies so that in key places where it was safe and ecologically sound to do so, there would be more open water swimming possible in London.





TfL launches major initiative to encourage Londoners to try cycling on Sundays

Transport for London (TfL) is launching a major new programme of leisurely cycle routes and support to encourage Londoners who are new to cycling to explore the capital by cycle on Sundays. TfL Cycle Sundays, which has been developed in collaboration with leading cycling organisations, aims to offer beginner friendly journeys for Londoners, backed up by a range of support to make it even easier to try out cycling for the first time. Leisure cycling provides people with an easy and sustainable way to maintain their mental and physical wellbeing and build up confidence.

The routes have been selected by TfL and a range of partners including British

Cycling, Cycle Sisters, JoyRiders, London Cycling Campaign, Sustrans and Wheels for Wellbeing, and include park rides in Greenwich and Battersea, an accessible cycle tour of Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, a loop through parks in Haringey and many more spanning the capital. The routes give cyclists of all abilities a choice of leisure routes up to ten miles long on quiet roads and paths.

A full list of routes can be found on the TfL Cycle Sundays website, which also offers cycling discounts, links to cycling organisations and their events and access to our free online Cycle Skills course for new cyclists or anyone who needs a refresher to get cycling again.

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Voter ID, what you need to know

With the election coming up, it's important to know what forms of ID you can use when going to cast your vote. The UK Government has introduced a requirement for voters to show photo ID when voting at a polling station at elections.

You may already have a form of photo ID that is acceptable. You can use any of the following:

Passport, driving licence, this includes provisional licences, blue badge, certain concessionary travel cards, identity card with PASS mark (Proof of Age Standards Scheme), biometric immigration document, defence identity card, certain national identity cards, a Voter Authority Certificate (VAC)

You will only need to show one form of

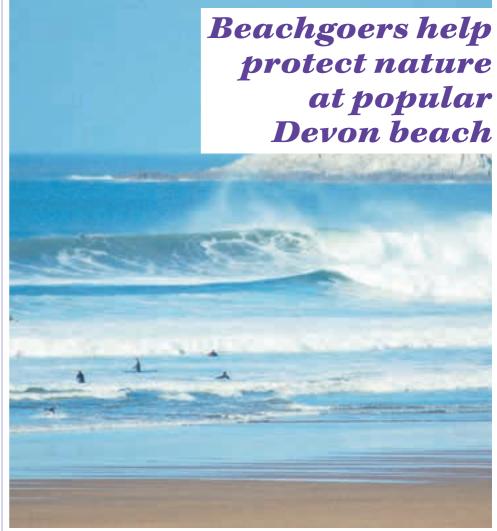
photo ID, but it needs to be the original version and not a photocopy. The name on your ID must be the same name you used to register to vote.

For more information on which forms of photo ID will be accepted, visit the Electoral Commission's voter ID webpage or call their helpline on 0800 328 0280.

If you don't already have an accepted form of photo ID, or you're not sure whether your photo ID still looks like you, you can apply for a free voter ID document, known as a Voter Authority Certificate. You can apply for this through the GOV.UK Voter Authority Certificate service.

Alternatively, you can complete a paper application form from your council.





The introduction of a silent disco to beach cleans at Woolacombe beach has seen a greater need for vital work to protect nature. By adding a 'tuneful twist,' rangers, in collaboration with Plastic Free Woolacombe are broadening the appeal for monthly beach cleans, welcoming new audiences, including young people.

A haven for surfers and bodyboarders, beachgoers to the three mile stretch of golden sands are swapping their boogie boards for 'grooving' while helping to do good work for the environment. Proving to be popular, numbers turning up to don headphones and grab litter have been on the rise with nearly 100 in one event back in April, triple the usual.

"It's great to be able to come out and help

the local community to keep the beaches clean and how you would like them for yourself," Louise Gavin, a volunteer at the most recent Silent Disco Beach Clean event on Sunday, 26th May, said. "It's important to us to help the local wildlife in any way that we can and work to prevent more plastic from getting into the ocean."

Located at the heart of the North Devon Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the beach and sand dunes welcome over 10,000 visitors every day during the summer. Monthly cleans help make the coastal locations safer for marine wildlife including seabirds gannets and puffins as well as marine mammals such as dolphins and seals. They also help to keep it a beautiful and clean place for visitors.

Hogs help conservationists protect butterfly

Conservationists working to save the country's most endangered butterfly have enlisted the help of hairy Hungarian hogs. Butterfly Conservation is working alongside the National Trust to employ the curly-haired Mangalitsa pigs at one of the charity's sites in Exmoor to help create the perfect habitat for the High Brown Fritillary.

Since 1978, the little orange insect with its black chequered wings has seen its numbers drop by 65% and lost 87% of its distribution across the UK. Now, it is only found in three locations in England, one of which is the sun-bathed Heddon Valley near Barnstaple, which offers ideal breeding grounds for the High Brown but high-growing trees and shrubs are taking over quickly.

This is where the hogs come in. The Hungarian breed of shaggy hogs and English Longhorn cattle are owned by the National Trust where they act as 'living lawnmowers.' They eat the plant to help create space for the tiny and delicate Common Dog-violets, the sole food plant of the High Brown caterpillars.

Butterfly Conservation has also identified an additional 10 National Trust locations where colonies of the butterfly could be introduced, but it needs to do further survey work and plan landscape restoration before that can happen. The work at Heddon Valley is building on the success in conserving the insects near Dartmoor where in 2022, it recorded a 20-year high in their populations.



LONDON'S ARTS & CU

In London, the upcoming sparked a series of debate

In London, the upcoming general election has sparked a series of debates within the Arts & Culture sector. The policies presented by the leading political parties — Labour, Conservatives, Reform, Liberal Democrats, and the Green Party—have the potential to change the landscape of arts and culture in the city. As Londoners prepare to vote, the future of museums, theatres, galleries, and independent artists is at a crossroads. EyeOnLondon examines what these manifesto promises mean for the Arts across the city.

Labour Party's Vision for Arts and Culture

Promises:

Under the leadership of Sir Keir Starmer, the Labour Party is making a strong commitment to making arts and culture accessible to everyone in London. As stated in their manifesto, Labour claims "arts and music will no longer be the preserve of a privileged few"

They have set out their "creative industries sector plan" as part of an "industrial strategy". This includes their proposals to support regional museums. The manifesto states: "Labour will improve access to cultural assets by requiring publicly funded national museums and galleries to increase the loans they make from their collections to communities across the country."

This creative renaissance has a champion in the newly minted Dame Imelda Staunton. The acclaimed actor, honoured by King Charles just this month, has thrown her weight behind Labour's artistic vision. "I welcome Labour's proposals set out by Keir Starmer to broaden opportunity and make sure all young people have access to the arts," Staunton endorses.

Examination:

Labour highlights a "creative industries plan" to democratise arts access, vowing to end its status as "preserve of the privileged few." However, key questions must be posed: What funding backs that claim? Beyond museum loans, how will they inject participatory cultural activities into underserved communities? While nurturing young creatives is endorsed, where are concrete education pathways for future artists? If deeming creative industries a jobs "engine," what targeted mechanisms will drive nationwide employment in film, music, gaming? The real test is meaningful grassroots/community investment beyond just museum loans. As their cultural vision shapes up, more nuanced details about funding, implementation and equity will judge if "access for all "rhetoric becomes real impact.

Conservative Party's Approach

Promises:

The Tory manifesto is rallying the troops to defend Britain's statues and monuments from the culture warriors. Protecting public memorials, even those tangled up in the nation's colonial legacy, is a clear priority. As the document states: "The Conservative Party will always protect our national heritage—including statues, monuments and memorials. We will keep our 'retain and explain' guidance under review to ensure it supports custodians in the preservation of our national history and heritage."

However, there is no large cash injection to revive the arts sector in the manifesto. Instead, the Conservatives are looking to the private sector to back the arts as their solution. "Government has the power to leverage philanthropy for good causes and cultural institutions," it states. "We will work with individuals, businesses, charities and other networks to find opportunities to unleash this even further."

While critics worry about consistency under this model, supporters contend it injects an entrepreneurial spirit into arts patronage. Rather than being

beholden solely to public priorities, private philanthropy empowers donors to get creative in supporting their cultural interests and pushing boundaries.

Examination:

The Tories are making a lot of noise about defending heritage monuments, but critics demand concrete funding plans to preserve assets long-term and provide balanced historical context under "retain and explain" guidance, not pushing one narrative. Glaring omissions: no new public funding for cultural institutions, relying on private philanthropy - but will donors favour elite organisations or can entrepreneurial patronage democratise arts funding? Mechanisms to incentivise and equitably distribute support are crucial. Moreover, while rallying heritage "warriors," where's the strategy nurturing modern, emerging talent without public investment? With no new arts money, how are systemic accessibility and education deficits tackled? Conservatives must show policies cultivating Britain's dynamic creative future beyond just protecting statues.

Reform Party's Cultural Policies

Promises:

The Reform Party, led by Nigel Farage, is positioning itself as a champion of change, with a laser focus on economic reforms and immigration policies. However, their manifesto named 'Our Contract with You,' which assures voters that Reform will "stand up for British culture, identity and values" is noticeably sparse when it comes to specific plans for supporting the arts and cultural sector.

While lowering taxes and reducing bureaucracy could theoretically provide more disposable income for potential arts donors, there is no evidence that the Reform Party itself or its supporters will invest in the arts/cultural sector.

Examination:

This absence of a clear cultural agenda has raised alarm bells among advocates and organisations within the arts community. Fears are mounting that the Reform Party's austerity policies could devastate smaller arts organisations and independent artists by slashing public funding they survive on. With no clear commitments to protect this sector, the party faces pressure to reassure stakeholders and balance economic revival with safeguarding Britain's cultural prestige.

Liberal Democrats: Arts Education and Public Funding

Promises:

The Lib Dems are really doubling down on arts education as a key part of their platform. Their manifesto specifically calls for introducing "a robust arts curriculum for all children from primary school onwards, ensuring children get exposure to a wide range of creative disciplines like music, drama, dance, visual arts and more.

Criticising the Conservatives over Brexit's 'detrimental' impact on cultural ties with Europe, the Lib Dems argue the Tories' deal has erected bureaucratic hurdles that make it extremely difficult for British artists and performers to tour and collaborate across the continent. The party condemns these newfound obstacles confronting the creative sector's ability to engage in cross-border cultural exchange.

Instead, the Lib Dems vow to negotiate "free and simple short-term travel arrangements for UK artists to perform in the EU, and European artists to perform in the UK." As the document states, this would "reopen vital cultural exchange" between Britain and its continental neighbours.

Examination:

The Lib Dems make claims like a "robust arts

curriculum" and easing Brexit touring rules, but key questions must be asked about their substance: What exactly constitutes "robust" standards and funding for creative disciplines? Beyond mobility, how will they nurture the professional arts economy intersecting education, visas, investment? Crucially, have they consulted the sector in shaping these platforms? Big rhetoric around "cultural exchange" and arts education rings hollow without more insightful details - funding, standards, policy mechanisms - to manifest their creative vision.

Green Party's Cultural Vision

Promises

In line with the Lib Dems stance on post-Brexit relations, the Green Party manifesto outlines plans to secure visa-free access to the EU for British artists and creatives seeking to work across the continent.

Domestically, the Greens are proposing significant funding boosts for the arts sector. Their manifesto pledges a £5 billion investment over five years to support local museums, theatres, libraries, and art galleries across the country. This financial commitment aims to ensure these cultural institutions remain open and thriving.

Additionally, the Greens have promised to exempt cultural events and activities from VAT. This policy would effectively lower ticket prices for everything from West End shows to local pub gigs, making them more accessible to the public.

Examination:

The Greens' big arts pledges - £5bn for venues, VAT exemptions - raise key equity and implementation questions: How do funds truly benefit all communities? What's the roadmap beyond sustaining institutions to nurturing new creativity, especially underserved areas? Accessibility must extend beyond tickets to transportation, disability, outreach. Their eco-advocacy via "creative projects" needs details. And while allowing visa-free EU access for UK creatives, what's the plan for attracting international talent and incorporating philanthropy?

Securing London's position as a world leader in Arts & Culture

London's arts and culture sector is more than just entertainment; it's an economic powerhouse. According to the official UK government estimates, the creative industries contributed £124 billion to the UK economy in 2022, generating billions in taxes each year. This sector supports thousands of jobs and attracts millions of tourists, boosting hospitality and retail spending.

Beyond economics, arts and culture are part of London's social fabric. They give voice to those from different backgrounds, bridging the gap between communities, and bringing people together through creativity. Cultural activities also contribute to mental well-being, offering spaces for relaxation and inspiration.

Despite its significance, the arts sector faces challenges like funding cuts, Brexit's impact on international collaborations, and the pandemic's devastating effects. However, beyond these obstacles come exciting opportunities to adapt and grow stronger. For example, artists and organisations can embrace the digital era to create and share their work in innovative ways.

As Londoners head to the polls, the future of the city's arts and culture sector hangs in the balance. Political parties offer various visions for supporting and enhancing this vital part of London's identity, whether through increased public funding, private investment, or sustainable practices.

The choices made today will shape London's cultural legacy for generations to come.

International News

Study Explores Growth of Supermassive Black Holes

Researchers have developed an advanced model to understand the growth of supermassive black holes located at the centres of galaxies. By combining X-ray observations with cutting-edge supercomputer simulations of galactic evolution, the team, led by Penn State astronomers, has crafted a comprehensive picture of black-hole growth from the early universe to the present day. Their findings were published in The Astrophysical Journal.

"Supermassive black holes in galaxy centres have masses ranging from millions to billions of times that of the Sun," said Fan Zou, a Penn State graduate student and the paper's first author. "Understanding how they become such giants is a question that has puzzled astronomers for decades, as tracking all the growth mechanisms reliably has proven challenging."

The growth of supermassive black holes occurs through two primary mechanisms: accretion of cold gas from their host galaxies and mergers with other supermassive black holes during galaxy collisions.

black holes during galaxy collisions.

"Black holes radiate strong X-rays when consuming gas from their host galaxies, which is crucial for tracking accretion-driven growth," explained W. Niel Brandt, Eberly Family Chair Professor of Astronomy and Astrophysics at Penn State, and a leader of the research team. "We utilised X-ray sky survey data from NASA's Chandra X-ray Observatory, the European Space Agency's X-ray Multi-Mirror Mission-Newton (XMM-Newton), and the Max Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics' eROSITA telescope, accumulated over more than 20 years, to measure this growth."

The researchers analysed data from a

sample of 1.3 million galaxies, including over 8,000 rapidly growing black holes. These galaxies and black holes were well characterised across multiple wavelengths—infrared, optical, ultraviolet, and X-ray—allowing for robust conclusions. The data revealed that more massive galaxies experienced faster black hole growth via accretion at all cosmic epochs.

To study growth through mergers, the team employed IllustrisTNG, a set of supercomputer simulations modelling galaxy formation and evolution from shortly after the Big Bang to the present.

the Big Bang to the present.

"By combining observed accretion growth with simulated merger growth, we have created the most realistic depiction of supermassive black hole development up to today," Brandt said. Their findings indicated that accretion was the primary driver

of black hole growth, while mergers made significant contributions over the last 5 billion years. The research also showed that black hole growth was more rapid when the universe was younger, and the total number of supermassive black holes was largely established around 7 billion years ago.

ago.
"Our approach allows us to track the growth of central black holes over cosmic time," Zou noted. "For example, our results suggest that the supermassive black hole at the centre of our Milky Way, with a mass of 4 million solar masses, likely grew relatively late in cosmic history."

This study was funded by the U.S. National Science Foundation, the Chandra X-ray Centre, and Penn State, with significant contributions from the shared IllustrisTNG simulation results.

DIGITAL ASSETS

EL SALVADOR PRESIDENT BETS ON BITCOIN

Earlier this year, El Salvador's president celebrated after a bitcoin reserve he bought with public money had "entered the black" as bitcoin prices rose. Since 2021, Nayib Bukele has spent over \$120 million (£95 million) of the central American nation's money in buying bitcoin

"Issue retractions and offer apologies," he called on his critics on X, formerly known as Twitter. But some economists say that the celebrations are premature as his high-risk bet is at the centre of a drive for bitcoin adoption.

The controversial populist was recently elected to a second term as his popularity in the nation remains high. According to a website tracking his bitcoin portfolio, the 2,764 coins he bought could become worth more than he paid for them. If he had sold them in March, he would make around \$3.7 million in profit. The figures are estimates based on his X posts as he announced each purchase.

Bukele posted a picture of a graph that declared his success in March but many noticed errors in his calculations, with the milestone having been reached a day earlier. "El Salvador's Bitcoin investments are in the black," he posted.

in the black," he posted.

He called out "literally thousands of articles and hit pieces that ridiculed our supposed losses."

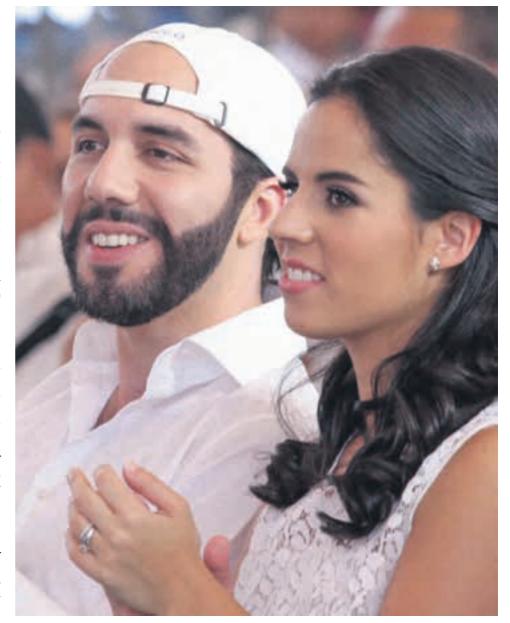
"It is important that the naysayers and the authors of those hit pieces take back their statements," he added. Many of these posts were praised by his supporters and bitcoin enthusiasts celebrated what they called a vindication of his foresight and the potential that digital currencies have to offer

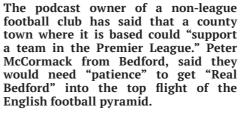
At one point, Bukele's bitcoin were worth half of what he had paid for them but with the price rising to \$44,000 per coin, this changed. The price rise is thought to be thanks to potential changes in financial rules over cryptocurrencies in the United States.

But many economists, including those within El Salvador, say that the milestone is not as significant as the El Salvador president would like to think. The \$120 million his government has spent on bitcoins is only a portion of the public funds used to promote the cryptocurrency to El Salvadoreans as the country became the first on the planet to make it legal tender in parity with the US dollar.

"The government spent a lot of money on the development of the Chivo Wallet application, on the installation of ATMs, which mostly do not work, on a \$30 bonus for all citizens over 18 years of age, on propaganda and international events," said director of the Institute of Sciences at the Francisco Gavidia University, in San Salvador, Oscar Picardo. "When you add up all the expenses, the result cannot be positive. The result is in red - and in intense red."

A BBC documentary about bitcoin takeup in El Salvador has found that most of the population were using the digital currency less than the president and other enthusiasts would like, despite the heavy investment.





start negotiating on an extension, but the team's long-term plan would be to move "somewhere bigger."

"We're a Bedford team and will only play football in the town," he wrote on X, formerly Twitter.

Attendance has also increased. When he took over in 2021, only around 30 to



He took over Bedford FC in 2021 and has secured a second successive promotion, allowing the side to compete in the Southern League Division One Central next season. That is the eighth tier of the English football league pyramid. With plans for Universal Studios to open a theme park in the area, the town is "only going to get bigger," he said.

The people in Bedford who "want to support a team and are excited by the project" are helping it make a profit. An American fanbase, accounting for 60-70%, are able to watch live coverage on streaming services, helping the team grow its brand.

McMullen Park ground, just off the A421 near Cardington and near to Bedford Town's ground, is run by the Bedford Borough Council with the lease running out in two years. Mr McCormack hopes to

40 people turned up to watch its matches. But last season, the average was 180 and this season, it hit nearly 250. Recently, the record was broken as a crowd of 1,000 turned up to see the team play.

The borough of Bedford is home to 174,000 people. However, "Burnley, in the Premier League, has a population of 90,000," he said. "Add to the fact Universal is coming here, Bedford is only going to get bigger. There's going to be more people here, the town can support a team in the Premier League. It needs financial backing and it needs a team that can make it happen. We've got the team and the financial backing - now it's just patience."

His goal was to reach the Football League within a decade, similar to Luton Town who last year won promotion to the top flight.





London boroughs share

concern over shortcomings in government plans for regulating the shortterm and holiday lets sector, warning they could worsen the capital's housing

In a letter to housing secretary Michael Gove, the cross-party group London Councils highlights the government's proposal to create a new planning 'use class' for properties already used as short-term lets.

Boroughs fear that automatically transferring short-term lets into this new planning category under permitted development rights will mean the overnight loss of thousands of homes from London's permanent housing stock. London Councils estimates there are at least 43,000 shortterm lets in the capital - equivalent to one in every 85 London homes - and believes a significant portion of these would qualify for the new planning category.

London Councils welcomes other aspects of the government's action on short-term lets, which will introduce much-needed new regulation and oversight of the sector. These include a mandatory national register of properties and continued planning permission requirements for future shortterm lets.

However, London Councils argues that automatically reclassifying existing shortterm lets into a new planning category – the 'C5' use class - without requiring planning permission undermines efforts to preserve homes for residents amid worsening housing pressures and homelessness rates.

The proliferation of short-term lets means less housing for permanent residents and higher prices in London's private rental sector, which has undergone significant turbulence in recent years.

Research published last year by London Councils found a 41% reduction in the number of London properties available for private rent since the Covid-19 pandemic, and Office for National Statistics data sug-gests London private rents increased 7% in the year to 2024 – the highest jump on

Data collated by London Councils in September 2022 found at least 11% of STLs in London appeared to exceed the 90-day limit on how often a property can be rented out as a STL before planning permission is required.

Given the difficulties securing accurate, up-to-date data on STLs in the absence of a national register, the actual figure is likely to be significantly higher. London Councils also considers the situation has worsened considerably since 2022. The problem is especially acute in central London boroughs where a large proportion - if not a majority – of STLs are believed to break the 90-day rule.

Boroughs also report that short-term lets are sometimes associated with spikes in crime and anti-social behaviour, which is another reason why stronger regulation is

London Councils is pushing for strict planning application rules to be maintained on all short-term lets and for local authorities to receive more resources for enforcement.





Nearly half of property and construction businesses have been stalled as a result of investor struggles. 39% were finding challenges with securing interest from investors, slowing their growth. What's more, 40% have found it difficult to borrow from banks and lenders.

The Greatest Leap study was conducted with 500 British CEOs, MDs, COOs and founders of medium-size and large businesses by advisory and accountancy firm Menzies. It hopes to better understand what is stalling the leap for businesses going from medium to large in the UK. A key component of this, the report found, was raising the capital to fund growth plans.

This was very clear in those who found it hard to secure external investment through VCs, Private Equity firms or private investors. While nearly two-fifths of businesses struggled to get these types of investments to fund the jump, this was very pronounced in certain sectors with the property and construction sector being among them.

It's imperative that businesses explore all possible avenues for attracting external investors. Many are overlooking potential routes, often due to misconceptions or unfamiliarity with the options available to them. Private Equity stands out in particular as one of these overlooked opportunities - there is some hesitancy out there among businesses due to a fear of losing control. but it

has huge potential to accelerate growth and impart strategic expertise, in the appropriate circumstances.

Those looking to pursue the route of borrowing from banks or other lenders had a similarly tough time. Four in ten claimed limited access to lending or were denied loans, citing these as their barriers to growth. Even if they were to be approved however, many were put off with the high cost of borrowing. The industry with the most difficulty in this area was legal services with nearly twothirds having limited access to lending and 77% citing high interest rates as the reason for stalled growth.

"Even in times of economic slowdown, there will always be an appetite to lend to or invest in a business with a robust business plan, clear growth trajectory and the right management team in place," Massey said. "If businesses are to attract and secure the lending or investment they need to bring their expansion plans to life, they must ensure that all of this is in order and they are putting themselves in the best possible position.

With the jump in business size proving difficult, Menzies is launching 'Are you ready for The Greatest Leap: How to accelerate your business ambitions,' a guide for business leaders looking to grow from a mediumsized business into a more established large enterprise. The guide offers research, expert insight, and strategic advice from its team of specialists to help leaders make the best

Around half of construction businesses



THE BOTTOM LINE by Doug Shanks

A SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT, GLASS HALF FULL

ILLEGITIMI NON CARBORUNDUM *(DON'T LET THE BASTARDS GRIND YOU DOWN)*

a few weeks before the election and harder still to avoid political bias or even stereotypes. Reform is shooting Sunak in the foot echoing Major's illegitimi, while Momentum in the form of the redoubtable Diane Abbott is trying to reverse the runes and keep the Tories in power. Rayner has reminded Starmer that some fights with the harder left aren't worth having, and Starmer has backed down showing hitherto unsuspected flexibility and some humour.

For all the largely meaningless fandango that is the pre-election dance, this article will assume the prognostications of the polls and perhaps the more scientific bookies that Labour will win.

Ideology to the left, right or even centre (is that an oxymoron?) is rarely the harbinger of economic growth as it promises change and instability. Political instability has been fostered not only by Brexit but political discord in its aftermath and in its implementation. Austerity has been mismanaged but the cuts were inevitable following a global banking crisis in which sadly the United Kingdom was a pawn. Lord Heseltine (who retains the aura of a bright young thing at 91) has said that this is a "dishonest election" because no one is mentioning Brexit. Wise words, but surely Brexit is being addressed between the lines. Sunak will try to appease the hardliners to check their drift to Reform with tough talk on Europe and Rwanda, while Tice and Farage do to Sunak what Abbott is failing to do to Starmer.

The markets dislike instability as Truss and Kwarteng discovered but we cannot expect an immediate bounce. The market will have discounted a Labour victory and ensuing comparative stability. That is unless the markets think what Alistair Campbell thinks, that is still a very long way to go.

What does this mean for business? Keir Starmer has established some authority. Whatever you think about the removal of Corbyn and the Abbott misstep. Starmer has driven Labour to the Centre. If you're carrying a Ming vase five miles across rough country to the finishing line, you don't raise Brexit. Starmer has ensured that there is little Labour Brexit baggage leaving him free to negotiate without the threat of warring factions. This must be good news for business in Britain. Brexit damaged the European Union, especially its most important economy, Germany. The Socialist's glass half full foretells lowering trade barriers and associated costs, freer movement of labour enabling growth. The virtuous circle might be completed by corresponding revitalised neighbouring economies.

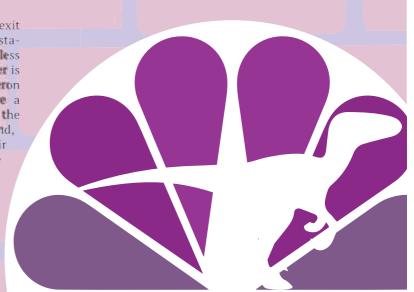
What does a Labour victory mean for the relationship with Scotland? Your correspondent's origins are declared in his name. Labour may do well in England but history tells us that Labour is unlikely to win a majority in Westminster without improving recent performances in Scotland. Businesses will hope that a strong centralist government

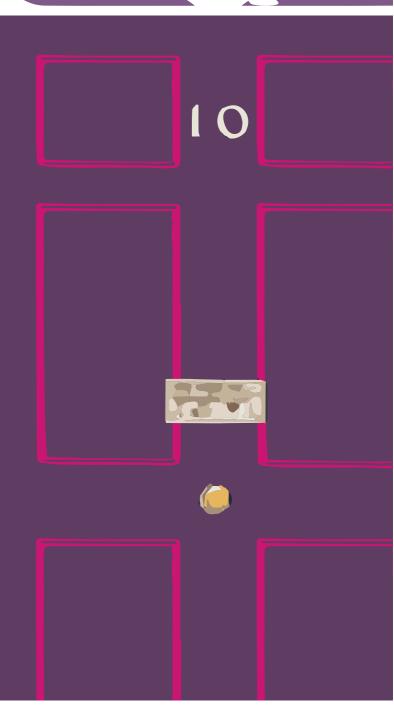
It is difficult to comment on business prospects will help heal the union. This and a softer Brexit (Scotland voted Remain) might encourage stability, benefiting the economy. Might we be less polarised if the governing party in Westminster is at least tolerably represented in Scotland. Cameron and Osbourne's misguided threats to starve a nation (I doubt the Queen purred over that) in the final days preceding the referendum in Scotland, in its apparent effectiveness, influenced their approach to remaining in Europe. Does Europe not need the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland as much as England needs Scotland? Remove one from the other in either case and the smaller unit is damaged by the wounds inflicted on the larger. Starmer is indeed fortunate that the SNP has chosen these months to implode. Although Scotland is an economy populated by a mere five million people, the relative harmony within the United Kingdom that might result may be as important as starting to heal the bruises of Brexit. One-Nation Socialism?

> Hesseltine may well be right, particularly from a Tory perspective but Starmer is proving more cunning than we thought, or did we suspect this superficially bland former Director of Public Prosecutions and eminent KC might be more politically adept than he seems. Starmer has allowed the business community by the barest of hints to assume that we'll re-engage with Europe without upsetting leavers unnecessarily. Business prefers diplomatic compromise to hardwired ideology

> The sting is in the tail. Heseltine's analysis might be extended. I have no idea what the big-hitting former Deputy Prime Minister and Thatcher nemesis' green credentials are, but I doubt he'd mind the suggestion that another gaping omission in the election dialogue is the environment. Casual empiricism at least hints that human-directed climate change is happening fast and affecting business faster than expected. This is happening at a bad time as Caroline Lucas decides that it's time for her lonely years to close as the Green spokesperson in Parliament on everything. Hopefully this is part of the Ming vase strategy (let's avoid Chinese punning allegories). If Brexit is being addressed in the background, businesses affected by climate change will nope that Starmer is developing responsible green policies, his silence reflecting the two-edged sword of climate denying votes. In an age of unprecedented access to the finest research, the electorate remains doggedly irrational.

> Businesses will hope that Starmer, like Blair before him, has reclaimed the centre ground and as the Tories drift to the right as the New Radicals, the Socialists become the New Conservatives. The glass is half full.







Enquiring Minds

Compiled & edited by Fahad Redha



Watercolour painting studio: urban landscapes

City Lit

Build your confidence and skills in outdoor watercolour painting in a variety of central London locations. You will be introduced to watercolour mixing and mark making in relation to painting the urban landscape. This course can be seen as a refresher or for students who have had a minimum amount of watercolour experience. The first session takes place in the studio at the City Lit where you will be introduced to basic watercolour paint and brushwork approaches. You then will spend each week at a location in central London painting different aspects of the urban environment. For example, you will go to Embankment Gardens to focus on nature and architectural details. Another session will be based on the South Bank to be inspired by the river Thames and it's bridges.

citylit.ac.uk July 30 - August 2

Business & Law

Business Foundation Bayes Business School

The Foundation Year is designed to prepare UK students for the key subjects that will form the core of the rest of your degree in Business Management. On successful completion of the Foundation Year you will have obtained a fundamental knowledge of mathematics, statistics, economics, IT and business management which will ensure that you are fully prepared to enter Programme Stage 1 of the main degree. The BSc Business Management (Foundation Year) degree will provide you with the skills required to forge a career in the corporate world or to enter the management consulting industry. It will also deliver the tools required by those who aspire to be entrepreneurs or business owners.

bayes.city.ac.uk Starts September 2024

Culinary

Jamie's Insanity Burger **Jamie Oliver Cookery School**

In this sizzling class, you'll discover the secrets to cooking Jamie's infamous Insanity burger. You'll learn to cook a patty to perfection; how to quick-pickle onions; how to achieve oozy cheese - and much, much more! Once your chef has revealed all, you'll crack on recreating your own masterpiece. While you're cooking, your chef will whip up two sides. Some spuds, and a simple side salad. Perfect to go alongside your showstopping burger. And with a beer thrown in for good measure, it's a marriage made in heaven!

jamieolivercookeryschool.com See website for dates

Language

Online General Welsh Lessons Language Trainers

If you would like to be able to communicate in Welsh in a wide range of scenarios (such as a job interview or a conversation with your in-laws), this could be the right course for you. All the lessons are completely tailored to you! Don't worry if you are an absolute beginner: your teacher will have Survival lessons prepared that focus on all the necessary skills you will need to get by. These include basic phrases (how to greet others, how to ask for help, polite requests, and more) and some notions of grammar and pronunciation while you get used to the language's rhythm and sounds. More advanced learners, instead, will begin with a personalised programme planned around their strengths and weaknesses. For instance, these students will learn with music, poetry, films, brochures or any other materials that spark their interest. Motivation is key!

languagetrainers.co.uk See website for dates

Science, Technology, Engineering, & Maths

Car care on a budget Hammersmith & Fulham Adult Learning

The practical content of the course covers basic servicing, including the replacement of service parts, fault investigation and diagnosis, M.O.T. inspection and preparation and minor repairs. The theory content will cover major vehicle systems like the engine, suspension and steering, tyres, brakes, electrics and how to buy second hand cars. By the end of the course you will have gained increased knowledge and understanding of how cars work, along with specific information of how to keep your own car in good working order as well as the 'language' and confidence needed to deal, more successfully with mechanics and the motor trade in general. This course is for car owners "who wish to maintain their car in a reliable and safe condition, cheaply.'

hfals.ac.uk **Date TBC**

Sport & Fitness

Personal Training Courses London **Train Fitness**

Train Fitness has delivered personal trainer courses in London for over 20 years and have a reputation for producing outstanding health and fitness industry graduates. Because of this, leading health clubs and employers look to recruit graduates from here for their placements. These courses are recognised internationally by leading organisations including the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport & Physical Activity (CIMSPA), and meet the criteria for official ACSM Approved Provider status. If you live in or near London and enrol on one of our Distance. Virtual (from home with live, tutor-led classes), or In-Person personal training courses, you'll visit our flagship head office venue located in central London.

train.fitness/personal-training-courses/

See website for dates



What, When, Where? Summer 2024 Pull-Out Supplement



Contemporary collecting: David Hockney to Cornelia Parker British Museum

Discover the significant collection of contemporary British art held at the Museum through a selection of around 100 prints and drawings, dating from 1960 to today. In 2001, the Museum received a grant from the Rootstein Hopkins Foundation to purchase works on paper by artists based in Britain. Founded by theatre and retail prop designers Adel Rootstein (1930–92) and Richard Hopkins (1927–2000), the foundation aimed to support living artists and designers.

Around 300 works have been acquired by the Museum as a result, transforming the contemporary Prints and Drawings collection. Presenting around 100 highlights from this group, the exhibition demonstrates the range and diversity of the works acquired, which include prints and drawings by various artists. It explores the relationship between the Museum's contemporary and historical collections through works of art inspired

by art history. **Great Russell Street WC1B 3DG** britishmuseum.org Until September 29

DANCE & OPERA

The Dream / Short Works / Rhapsody Royal Opera House

Frederick Ashton's masterful Shakespearian character study The Dream and his exhilarating ballet Rhapsody, created for the stellar talents of Mikhael Baryshnikov and Lesley Collier, come together again in this second mixed programme of Ashton ballets. Completing the demonstration of the master choreographer's abundant creativity is a selection of short works: Five Brahms Waltzes in the manner of Isadora Duncan, Ashton's homage to the legendary dancer; Hamlet and Ophelia, a restaging of the Hamlet Prelude choreographed for Margot Fonteyn and Rudolf Nureyev; plus The Walk to the Paradise Garden performed by The Sarasota Ballet.

Bow Street WC2E 9DD roh.org.uk

The Acrobatic Swan Lake

Sadler's Wells

A unique fusion of Western Classical Ballet and mesmerising Chinese Acrobatic Arts. The Acrobatic Swan Lake has dazzled sold-out audiences around the world and is now returning to London this Summer for a limited run. This awesome production, created by China's breath-taking Xi'an Acrobatic Troupe, is the first and only "ballet on shoulders" version of Swan Lake in its 147 year history. The critically acclaimed show is a testament to the transformative power of the performing arts; transcending cultural boundaries and connecting people through the universal language of creative expression. This 20th anniversary production follows an awardwinning 2008 World Tour and promises to be more spectacular than ever before, integrating more than 100 unique skills to capture the imagination and challenge limits. The Acrobatic Swan Lake promises to deliver an unforgettable, awe-inspiring experience for audiences of all ages. Rosebery Avenue EC1R 4TN sadlerswells.com

June 21-29

Acis and Galatea

Opera Holland Park

Composed in 1718 for private performance in the gardens of the Duke of Chandos's palace, and based on an episode in Ovid's, Metamorphoses, Handel's tragicomic serenata is a miniature masterpiece of love, loss and transformation. Birdsong and murmuring waters weave through the music as the sea nymph Galatea and the shepherd Acis celebrate their mutual love, enraging the lustful cyclops, Polyphemus. When Polyphemus attacks Acis, the shepherd is transformed into a natural spring, forever at one with the idyllic landscape and the tears of his beloved nymph.

Opera Holland Park Theatre, **Ilchester Place W8 6LU** operahollandpark.com July 19 - August 2

EXHIBITIONS

Wildlife Photographer of the Year

Natural History Museum Explore the planet's habitats, from sprawling urban metropolises to the deep polar seas, and meet the creatures that rely on these places. Come face to face with species at risk of extinction as well as those we've brought back from the brink. See first-hand how human activities, both good

and bad, are shaping the natural world we rely on. With soundscapes, videos, expert insights and stunning photography, you'll leave not only awe-inspired by the beauty and diversity of nature but also hopefully with a renewed drive to do what you can to protect it.

Cromwell Road. South Kensington SW7 5BD nhm.ac.uk **Until June 30**

Discover Degas & Miss La La

National Gallery

Degas's 'Miss La La at the Cirque Fernando' takes centre stage in this exhibition that sheds light on this work with newly discovered information about the painting and its sitter. This radical Impressionist masterwork records an extraordinary moment and features a remarkable figure - the circus artist Miss La La, or Anna Albertine Olga Brown (1858-1945). In 1879 Degas made the talented aerialist the subject of one of his most original and arresting paintings, capturing her in one of her most striking and perilous acts. Suspended from a rope held between her teeth by a leather mouthpiece, Miss La La is hoisted up towards the ceiling of the Cirque Fernando. Featuring new material, from rare, previously untraced drawings of her by Degas, to entirely unpublished photographic portraits of Miss La La, the exhibition turns the spotlight on her, and on the painting, telling their story for the first time at the Gallery.

Trafalgar Square WC2N 5DN nationalgallery.org.uk



Chris Isaak London Palladium

Over the course of his nearly forty-year career, Platinum-selling and GRAMMYnominated singer & actor Chris Isaak has performed to sold-out crowds across the globe with his long-time band Silvertone. His music and film credits include thirteen critically acclaimed studio albums, twelve chart-topping singles along with

several motion pictures, such as The Silence of the Lambs and That Thing You Do! His work has also taken him behind the scenes, creating music for multiple film soundtracks, including Eyes Wide Shut, True Romance, Wild at Heart, and Blue Velvet.

8 Argyll St W1F 7TF

lwtheatres.co.uk August 11



Art Now: Steve Huang

A new installation of sculptures, film and sound, trace the relationship between the food and land. Steph Huang uses techniques such as glass blowing, casting, film and sound to present a new installation of work. Inspired by her investigations into mass production and the history of the food industry, Huang creates poetic installations which question the effects that consumer culture has on our environment. The display will feature a brand-new film exploring scallop diving off the coast of Devon. It also features everyday objects transformed into sculptures that refer to both personal and collective memories.

Millbank SW1P 4RG tate.org.uk Opens July 12

FAIRS & FESTIVALS

Red Bull Soap Box Race

Alexandra Palace

Fasten your seatbelts, unleash your imagination: Red Bull Soapbox Race, the wackily-wheeled world of crazy creativity, where the most fearless and creative amateur drivers are challenged to create their own homemade Soapbox cart to race on a main stage, returns to Alexandra Palace Park in June 2024. Welcome to the pinnacle of non-motor racing! 60 teams will be judged on creativity, speed and showmanship, as they navigate the downhill course outside Alexandra Palace, with only gravity on their side.

Alexandra Palace Way N22 7AY alexandrapalace.com

June 22

London Film & Comic Con

Kensington Olympia

What better way to unleash your passion for the big screen than at the ultimate film and TV extravaganza? Dust off your cape and give your inner superhero an out-of-thisworld adventure at the return of London Film and Comic Con. From jumping off the Hogwarts Express to flying in fresh from the Tardis, take on your most epic quest yet with an iconic star-studded lineup! With everything from photoshoots to autograph sessions, meet the stars landing straight out of the world's iconic blockbusters.

12 Blythe Road W14 8UX olympia.london

2024 Hankook London EPrix

Excel

Formula E returns to ExCeL for the Season 10 Finale. Witness the crowning of a champion as the grid gets set for wheel-to-wheel action at motorsports only indoor and outdoor circuits. Alongside all the action on track, you can expect even more excitement in the Allianz Fan Village - Formula E's immersive fan festival at the heart of every EPrix. It's a full day's worth of entertainment, exploration and innovation waiting for you. Test your Formula E skills on the simulator, be wowed by thrilling performances and find your groove with live music, alongside much more to keep your race experience fully charged.

Victoria Dock, 1 Western Gateway E16 1XL excel.london

July 20-21

What, Who Summer 2024



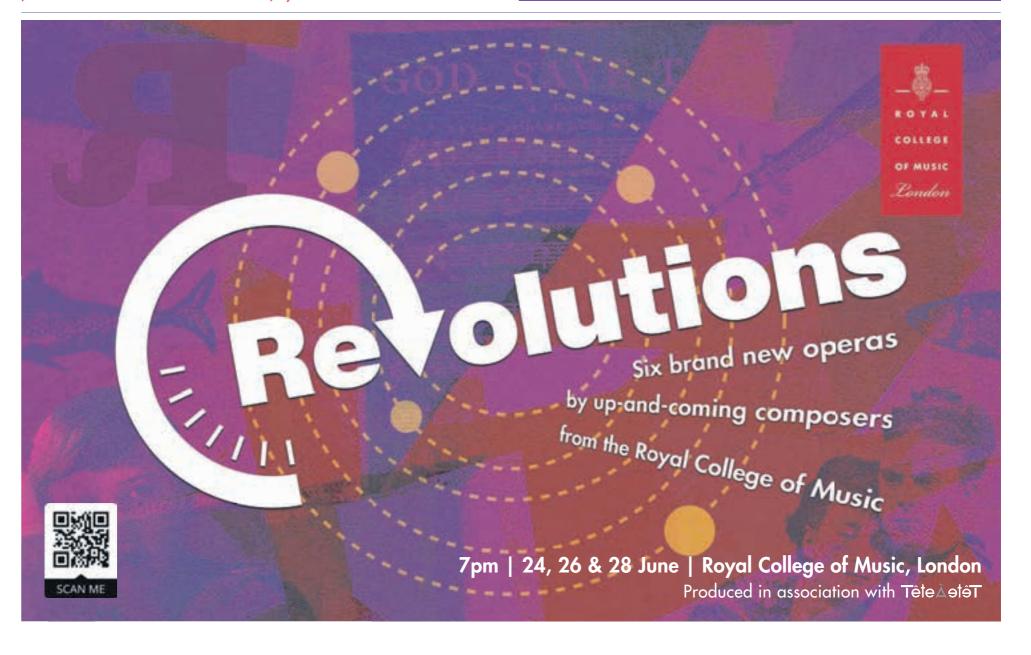
Snark Wai SEA LIFE

Sharks have lived in our oceans for more than 420 million years! That makes them older than trees! Their brains have evolved to become more intelligent and devoted to their senses – mainly their ability to smell. There are over 500 species of shark in our oceans and you'll meet lots of them when you explore our Pacific Shipwreck!

SEA LIFE Trust is actively working with the Shark Trust to campaign against unsustainable shark fishing in EU waters. SEA LIFE is also proud to be coordinating the European Black Tip Reef Shark breeding programme.

breeding programme.

Riverside Building, County Hall,
Westminster Bridge Road SE1 7PB
visitsealife.com
Ongoing



en, Where? Pull-Out Supplement



Terence Donovan

This is the first solo exhibition of Terence Donovan at the gallery. It is a celebration of Donovan's 40 year career, bringing works spanning from 1959 to 1995. Terence Donovan rose to prominence in London as part of a post-war "renaissance" in art, design, and music, representing a new force in fashion and, later, in advertising and portrait photography. Showcasing some of his iconic glamour 60s photographs, his work exhibited here

showcases one of the foremost photographers of his generation. Exquisite and rare sighted life-time vintage prints, unique contact prints, and numbered silver gelatin estate prints are all on display and available to collectors, along with a selection of rarely seen abstract black and white paintings inspired by Japanese calligraphy.

49 Dorset St W1U 7NF atlasgallery.com Until September 7

FAMILY & CHILDREN

Lost and Found Yōkai

Young V&A

Inspired by Young V&A's current exhibition, Japan: Myths to Manga, Young V&A has invited contemporary artists and designers from a host of disciplines to joyously transform umbrellas previously forgotten on London's transport networks, and donated via Transport for London's Lost Property office, into yōkai, as part of Young V&A's new major installation, Lost and Found Yokai. The free indoor installation takes visitors on a journey through Kasa-obake Alley, where umbrellas once lost around the bustling streets of London, now dance with life at Young V&A. The installation draws from traditions of yokai, a class of supernatural beings and entities that abound in Japanese folklore, literature, art and popular culture, in particular, the kasa-obake or umbrella monster. These playful spirits are a type of tsukumogami, everyday objects that receive a spirit and find new life as yokai on their 100th

Cambridge Heath Road, Bethnal Green E2 9PA vam.ac.uk Until September 1

Sam Wu is NOT Afraid of Ghosts

Polka Theatre

Sam Wu, is NOT a scaredy-cat (except he is). When a trip to the Space Museum goes terrifyingly wrong, Sam begins a mission to prove to everyone that he is a fearless space adventurer... Adapted for stage from Katie and Kevin Tsang's best-selling book, join Sam and his deadly pet snake sidekick as he faces his fears and tries to defeat the Ghost King once and for all at the premiere of this brand-new adventure. Sam Wu, is NOT Afraid of Ghosts, by Katie & Kevin Tsang.

240 The Broadway SW19 1SB polkatheatre.com

June 22 – August 18

FILM & PHOTOGRAPHY

Siân Davey: The Garden

The Photographers' Gallery Discover works from Siân

Discover works from Siân Davey's, The Garden, in a free outdoor exhibition in the Soho Photography Quarter just outside the Gallery. Starting in 2020, British photographer Siân Davey transformed her abandoned garden over three summers into a vibrant space, filled with wildflowers, birdsong and people. Together with her son, Luke, Davey cultivated a space rooted in love. They researched native flowers and

encouraged biodiversity, sourcing seeds and plants locally. When the flowers bloomed, they called in the community. Everyone had a place in The Garden; the mothers and daughters, the lonely, the marginalised, lovers, the traumatised and heartbroken and those that had concealed a lifetime of shame. The space became an expression of yearning, defiance, joy and interconnectedness.

16-18 Ramillies Street W1F 7LW thephotographersgallery.org.uk Ongoing

Simon Wheatley - Silverlink

Leica Gallery

Simon Wheatley is a London-based photographer who has become increasingly renowned for his raw and intimate photographic portrayal of the city and its communities. His first book 'Don't Call Me Urban! The Time of Grime' is recognised as one of the most influential UK photo books of recent times. Between 1998 to 2010 he photographed the overland train service he first encountered as The North London Line, which then became Silverlink after its privatisation. After extensive global travel, Wheatley continued to satisfy his wanderlust by instead travelling locally, exploring a part of the city he didn't particularly know that well - moving up and down this line that ran across London's northern innersuburbs.
64-66 Duke Street W1K 6JD leica-camera.com
Until July 21

MUSIC

Spirited Away

London Coliseum

Studio Ghibli's Oscar-winning Spirited Away, created by legendary animator and director Hayao Miyazaki is re-imagined for the stage by Olivier and Tony award-winning director of Les Misérables, John Caird. The original Japanese cast perform this extraordinary production with wildly imaginative puppets, dazzling set and costume designs and a live orchestra playing the magnificent original film score by Joe Hisaishi. A masterpiece of storytelling and stunning visuals, Spirited Away tells the enchanting tale of Chihiro who while travelling to a new home with her family, stumbles into a world of fantastic spirits ruled over by the sorceress Yubaba. When her parents are turned into pigs and she is put to work in a magical bathhouse, Chihiro must use her wits to survive in this strange new place, find a way to free her parents, and return to the normal world.

St Martin's Lane WC2N 4ES londoncoliseum.org

Until August 24





What, When, Where? Summer 2024 Pull-Out Supplement

The Lion King in Concert

Royal Albert Hall

Celebrate the 30th Anniversary of The Lion King with this Films in Concert spectacular. Experience the original animated classic roaring from the big screen, all whilst Hans Zimmer's Oscar®-winning score is performed live to picture. Featuring Chineke! Orchestra and London Community Gospel Choir, conducted by Sarah Hicks. Plus, special guests from the West End join us to celebrate 25 years of the stage musical. The Lion King follows the powerful story of Simba as he journeys from a wide-eyed cub to his destined role as King of the Pridelands with glorious colours and enchanting music. On Friday evening, there will be a special fashion moment to honour Disney's The Lion King 30th anniversary, in collaboration with a French luxury house.

Kensington Gore, South Kensington SW7 2AP royalalberthall.com Until July 6

TALKS, TOURS, & WALKS

Monique Roffey in Conversation

Foyles

Join the author of The Mermaid of Black Conch, Monique Roffey, for the launch of her electrifying new novel, Passiontide. Monique Roffey was born in Port of Spain, Trinidad, and lives in London. She is the author of seven novels and a memoir. The Mermaid of Black Conch won the Costa Book of the Year and the Costa Novel Award and was shortlisted for the Rathbones Folio Prize and the Goldsmiths Prize. Her other highly acclaimed books include Archipelago, which won the OCM Bocas Prize for Caribbean

Literature, The White Woman on the Green Bicycle and House of Ashes. In addition to her work as an environmental activist, she is a professor of contemporary fiction at Manchester Metropolitan University.

107 Charing Cross Road WC2H 0EB foyles.co.uk

THEATRE

Austentatious

Arts Theatre

The all-star Austentatious cast improvise a hilarious new Jane Austen novel every night! Inspired entirely by a title from the audience and performed in period costume with live musical accompaniment - it's a riotous, razor-sharp show where swooning is guaranteed. The revolving Austentatious cast include numerous, award-winning TV and Radio starring performers, including Rachel Parris (The Mash Report, Live at the Apollo), Cariad Lloyd (QI, Inside No.9, Griefcast, The Witchfinder), Joseph Morpurgo (Radio 4, Edinburgh Comedy Award nominee), Andrew Hunter Murray (No Such Thing As A Fish) and more.

6-7 Great Newport Street WC2H 7JB artstheatrewestend.co.uk

See website for dates

The Trumpeter Finborough Theatre

The UK premiere of The Trumpeter, a new solo play from Ukraine, starring Kristin Milward, following her success in the internationally acclaimed Pussycat in Memory of Darkness, opens at the Finborough Theatre for a four week limited season. Trapped beneath the Azovstal steel works



Deer herds have played a major role in Richmond Park's history and have shaped the landscape too. Red deer are the largest land mammal native to the British

Isles and in summer their coats are glossy

red. Fallow deer are smaller and their

summer coats, usually spotted, vary from

Deer in Richmond Park

TALKS, WALKS & TOURS

on the role of art in war. 118 Finborough Road SW10 9ED finboroughtheatre.co.uk

FANGIRLS

Lyric Hammersmith

Meet Edna: she's 14, she's a misfit, and she's in love with Harry. There's just one problem: Harry's in the world's biggest boy band, has 38 million fans, and doesn't know she exists. When Harry's band announces a tour stop in Edna's hometown of Sydney, Australia, she knows this is her destiny – her one chance to meet him. But how on EARTH will she get Harry's attention?! And exactly how far is she prepared to go in the name of love? If you think this is just a story about loving a boy band... think again. FANGIRLS is a thrilling and subversive

musical comedy about the danger of underestimating teenage girls. After multiple sell-out runs across Australia, including the Sydney Opera House, this brand new production of the multi-award winning, pop musical phenomenon FANGIRLS is about to take the UK by storm.

usually at the end of winter. Antlers are

made of bone which can grow at a rate of

up to 2.5cm a day. A soft covering known

as velvet helps to protect newly forming

antlers. It's then rubbed off by the male

once growth is complete, in time for the

Lyric Square, King Street W6 0QL lyric.co.uk

July 13 - August 24

People, Places & Things

Trafalgar Theatre

rut in September.

Ongoing

royalparks.org.uk

Richmond TW10 5HZ

Denise Gough reprises her Olivier Awardwinning role as Emma, a struggling actress whose life is spinning recklessly out of control. Gough's 'blisteringly funny, brilliantly physical and achingly human' (Financial Times) performance is once again thrilling audiences in People, Places & Things – hailed by critics as 'one of the greatest of her generation' (Independent). Emma was having the time of her life. Now she's in rehab. Her first step is to admit that she has a problem. But the problem isn't with Emma, it's with everything else. She needs to tell the truth. But she's smart enough to know that there's no such thing. When intoxication feels like the only way to survive the modern world, how can she ever sober up?

14 Whitehall SW1A 2DY nationaltheatre.org.uk
Until August 10

Compiled & edited by Fahad Redha



The Killers O2 Arena

American rock band, The Killer have today announced a headline show at The O2 as part "Rebel Diamonds" tour, taking place July 2024 celebrating the band's 20 years of hits. The new dates are the first time The Killers have played arena shows in the UK since 2017's Wonderful Wonderful tour. Rebel Diamonds is a curated dive into an impressive catalogue of songwriting and musicianship - one that has solidified the band as one of the

most important voices in rock 'n' roll over the last two decades. The album features at least one song from each of the band's seven studio albums. From the ground-breaking debut Hot Fuss, celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2024, to the band's latest full length LP, 2021's Pressure Machine, Rebel Diamonds showcases the group's versatility and staying power across the ever-changing alternative music landscape.

music landscape.
Peninsula Square SE10 0DX
theo2.co.uk



The art and antiques market has always generation revelations. factual, some pure speculation! Fact

speculation! Fact
on 15th May,
Sotheby's, New York,
sold 'Distractions
de Dagobert,' a
painting by Leonora Carrington (19172011), for £19.3 million – a record for
any British-born female artist. Having
sold at auction in 1995 for £277,000,
this accentuates the art market's everincreasing demand for important works
by female artists. Speculation – ever since
Bristol-based Banksy embarked on his
street art in the early 1990s, his identity
has remained a well-kept secret. In the
past, several names have been suggested,
including founder member of the band
Massive Attack, Robert Del Naja, and
TV presenter Neil Buchanan. In 2008,
'The Mail on Sunday' named him as

Robin Gunningham (b. 1974), a claim the newspaper staunchly still holds today. However, Banksy is being sued by two art collectors because of the artist's 'refusal' to authenticate Monkey Queen, a print which they acquired in 2020 for around £30,000. If the case goes to court, Banksy might have to reveal his full identity.

When it comes to recent surprises, it must be the announcement by the Marlborough Gallery on 4th April that it would, from June, be "winding down operations at the galleries in New York, London, Madrid and Barcelona." Founded in 1946, the gallery became a 'blue chip' art institution, fostering artists such as Henry Moore, Lucian Freud, and Francis Bacon. The gallery's art works are Henry Moore, Lucian Freud, and Francis Bacon. The gallery's artworks are thought to number around 15,000, with a combined value of approximately £200 million. The worry is: will the sudden disposal of such a large inventory have a negative effect on the art market? Perhaps not, as the collection will be progressively disposed of over several years disposed of over several years

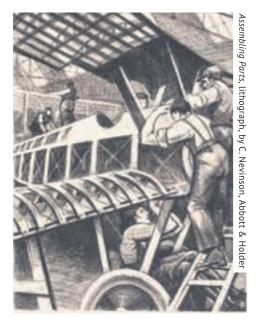




From Maps to Miniatures: London's Art scene this summer During the next few weeks, we are spoilt

for choice when it comes to events encompassing art and antiques. Let us start with **London Art Week (LAW)**, which, taking place between 28th June and 5th July, is best described as an in-gallery art fair with special presentations and talks both digital and live. For full details and an illustrated map pinpointing every venue by the talented artist Adam Dant (b. 1967), go to www.londonartweek.co.uk. Here is a small

In 1917, the British government's War Propaganda Bureau organised what must be the largest and most ambitious print project of the early twentieth century. Eighteen artists were commissioned to create a series of lithographs, each limited to 200 signed copies and 100 unsigned. Titled Britain's Efforts and Ideals in the Great War, the resulting 66 prints were shown for the first time at the Fine Art Society, New Bond Street, in July 1917. Unsold prints were then transferred to the Imperial War Museum, where they have remained for over a century. To coincide with LAW, Abbot and Holder, 30 Museum Street, WC1A 1LH, in collaboration with the Museum, are displaying, until 6th July, these iconic prints.



Among them are Making Soldiers, a set of six images by Eric Kennington (1888-1960) priced at £7,200, The Freedom of the Seas (£450) by Frank Brangwyn (1867-1956), and Christopher Nevinson's (1889-1946) Making Aircraft (six images priced from £3,750 to £15,000), which The Times (11th July, 1917) described as "as vivid as anything he [Nevinson] has ever done.'

Stephen Ongpin Fine Art, 82 Park Street, W1K 6NH, can always be relied on to display something exceptional and, from 24th June to 26th July, he proffers two exhibitions across three floors of his Mayfair gallery. The first, five years in the making, offers nearly thirty drawings by the Italian Giovanni Francesco Barbieri (1591-1666), better known as Guercino. With works dating from the 1610s to the 1660s, there are studies for his paintings together with landscapes and head studies. And, of course, the exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated, scholarly catalogue. The second offering is Italian Drawings from Private Collections. Further Old Masters can be discovered at Trinity Fine Art, 15 Old Bond Street, W1S 4AX, who present Jupiter and Juno, an engaging painting by Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617), while Lullo Pampoulides, 58 Jermyn Street, SW1Y 6LX invite you to discover The Outsider's Genius, featuring the longforgotten French baroque painter Louis Cretey (c.1635-after 1702).

Sculpture lovers should make their way to Stuart Lochhead, 35 Bury Street, SW1Y 6AU, who mounts Beyond Face Value: Likenesses as Metaphors in European Sculpture, the highlight of which is a monumental marble bust by Vincenzo Pacetti (1746-1820). A short walk away, Sladmore, 57 Jermyn Street, SW1Y 6LX, presents Equine - From Wild, to Tame, to Icon, which features examples by Antoine-Louis Barye (1795-1875), Rembrandt Bugatti (1884-1916), and Nic Fiddian-Green (b.

Moving on from LAW, there is, of course, much to venerate. For thirty years, Simon C. Dickinson, 58 Jermyn Street, SW1Y 6LX, has been a leading dealership in exceptional works from Old Masters to Impressionist and Modern art. Opening on 17th June and running through to 18th July, the gallery mounts an impressive display of Renaissance sculptures. With prices ranging from around £160,000 to nearly £2 million, highlights include Portrait of a Youth by Luca della Robbia (1400-1482), Gian Lorenzo Bernini's (1598-1680) Matilda of Canossa, and Massimiliano Soldani-Benzi's (1656-1740) intimately moving work Pietà.

Following its successful inaugural launch last year, **The Treasure House Fair**, Royal Hospital, Chelsea, SW3 4SR, takes place from 26th June through to 2nd July. An impressive line-up of 70 internationally renowned galleries – up 30% on last year – will feature over 20 collecting categories in the fields of fine art, furniture, antiquities, and jewellery. Art lovers will have much to deliberate over via prominent dealers, including Osborne Samuel, Crane Kalman Gallery, and Philip Mould, who will hang works by, among others, Simon Bussy (1870-1954), Mark Gertler (1891-1939), Duncan Grant (1885-1978), Nina Hamnett (1890-1956), Augustus John (1878-1961), and Cedric Morris (1889-1982).

Coincidentally, all six of the artists above exhibited with the New English Art Club (NEAC), whose annual exhibition takes place between 13th-22nd June at the Mall Galleries, The Mall, SW1. Like last year, I have the assignment to select one work from around 400 to receive the Anthony J. Lester Art Critic Award.

When a 29-year-old artist called Euan Uglow presented his first solo show in June 1961 at the Beaux Arts Gallery in London's Bruton Street, The Times wrote: "The cool, blond tonality of Mr. Uglow's paintings, his concern for space and volume, and above all the judgement which makes of each portrait, still-life, or nude a sum of precise calculations, carry a very real distinction of their own." He went on to be hailed as one of the most significant figurative painters of 20th-century British art. Uglow died on 31st August 2000 at his South London studio

after a battle against cancer aged 68, and Hazlitt Holland-Hibbert and Franki Rossi Art are presenting a loan exhibition marking their joint representation of the artist's Estate. Taking place at 38 Bury Street, St. James's, SW1Y 6BB until 19th July, there are 25 of Uglow's most notable nudes, still lifes, and landscapes, including works such as Yellow Dress, which have never been seen in public before. Accompanied by a catalogue featuring essays by Catherine Lampert and Andrew Lambirth, this is one of those unmissable events.

Elizabeth Meek, MBE, who was President of the Royal Society of Miniature Painters, Sculptors and Gravers (RMS) between 2004-2013, described working as a miniaturist as the most demanding of all painting genres and names some of the qualities required as: "Concentration, stillness of mind and body, and a dogged perseverance for perfection – the textbook miniature needs to be devoid of errors." I recommend a visit to the Bankside Gallery, Thames Riverside, 48 Hopton Street, SE1 9JH between 26th June and 6th July to view the RMS Annual Exhibition. With a maximum frame size of 15.24 x 11.43 cm (6 x 4.5 inches), the 400 plus works incorporate an extremely broad subject range, including landscapes, still lifes, marine, wildlife, and, of course, portraits. With His Majesty King Charles III as its Patron, the exhibition is one of the world's foremost displays of contemporary miniature art, plus prices start at a few hundred pounds. There are demonstrations, and admission is free.

Let us end our eclectic art roundup with something more avant-garde! With live music, hosted by fetish cabaret star Marnie Scarlet and drag legends Liquorish Black and Anna Phylactic, the opening soirée on 25th July (18.00-21.00, www.fluxexhibition.com for free tickets) of the Flux Exhibition, 206 Marylebone Road, NW1 6JQ, can best be described as zany. After the opening, this art extravaganza, which highlights the work of 80 contemporary, innovative artists, can be viewed until 28th

Arts & Culture by Simon Tait

Expressionists:

Expressionism, almost by definition, has no boundaries. It is arguably the most important movement in 20th century art, coming out of the first decade or so, from a century packed full of artistic invention and discovery. What it did was change the art from what we see of a subject, to what we feel about it.

It was also a contradiction to Impressionism, the gentle revolution that began in the 1870s with its devotion to nature, to painting in the open air, to conservative use of paint, to pastel colours, that took its name from Monet's 1872 Turneresque swirl of sea and sky, around a solitary silhouetted boat beneath a red sun, Impression, Sunrise.

The origin of the title of the Expressionists is less easy to pin down - it was probably used first in 1910 by an art historian, by which time the movement was already underway. And it was a crashing out from the 'pointless' academic tradition, a natural development through the Post-Impressionists, taking in other movements including Fauvism and Cubism, and groups the Bridge (Die Brücke) led by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner mostly in Berlin, and the Blue Rider (Der Blaue Reiter), a community of artists that settled in Bavaria. However, it was not only in painting: Expressionism was heard in music, read in poetry, watched on the stage, even lived in as architecture – Kandinsky himself was synaesthetic, seeing music in visual colour, which was to preoccupy him later in his story when he had become a composer.

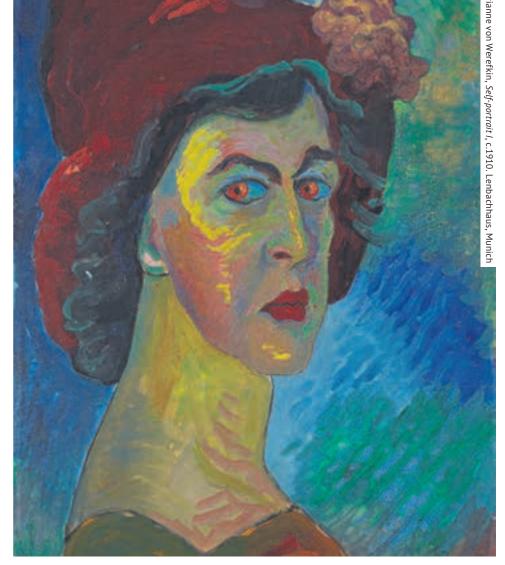
The Blue Riders, as this exhibition proposes, was the most influential, centred on the partnership of Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944) and Gabriele Münter (1877-1962). Both

were from moneyed middle class families; he was born in Moscow, she in Berlin. They met at art school in Munich in 1902, when she was 25 and he was 36, Kandinsky had abandoned his career as a law professor to paint and was already experimenting with the presentation of image as it is felt rather than seen. This partnership is at the heart of the exhibition and devoted to what was more of a community than a school of painting, attracting gifted but unconventional artists largely from Russia, Germany and the USA, to join them in bohemian Schwabing, Bavaria. "There I concerned myself with thoughts about 'pure' painting, pure art" Kandinsky wrote.

The exhibition focuses on the years of their life together (1902-1916), the years before Kandinsky moved into abstract and his famous dancing ceiling mobiles. There is a touching early example of their style in Kandinsky's 1903 presentation of Münter, in a floor length gown of electric blue, apparently in front of a camera tripod rather than an easel.

It is a large exhibition, drawn mostly from the extraordinary Lenbachhaus collection begun by the painter Franz von Lenbach in the 1920s, which eventually compiled the world's largest holding of Blue Rider pictures, including more than 90 Kandinsky paintings, mostly bequeathed by Münter in 1957. It also includes works by other Blue Rider artists such as Paul Klee, Franz Marc, Marianne von Werefkin and Franz Marc.

In fact 17 artists are included as part of or close to the group, giving a holistic sense of who the Blue Riders were, together and individually. Their work shows the influence they had on each other and that they took



from the likes of Van Gogh, Gauguin, Seurat, Cézanne, and Braque. They were unconventional socially as well as artistically, contemptuous of traditional practice in their search for the spiritual and the arresting, and not all particularly young.

In 1911 Kandinsky published the Blue Rider

In 1911 Kandinsky published the Blue Rider Almanac, effectively a handbook in words and pictures to Expressionism through the experiences of individual members of the group.

The ghost at this Expressionist feast, however, is the Blue Rider itself. The name comes from a 1903 oil-on-card painting by Kandinsky, which shows a horseman on a white steed galloping across a greensward, the contents – horse, rider, hills, trees, sky, clouds – compiled by colours rather than forms. It is not in the Lenbach cache but in a private collection in Switzerland and is presumably not available for loan.

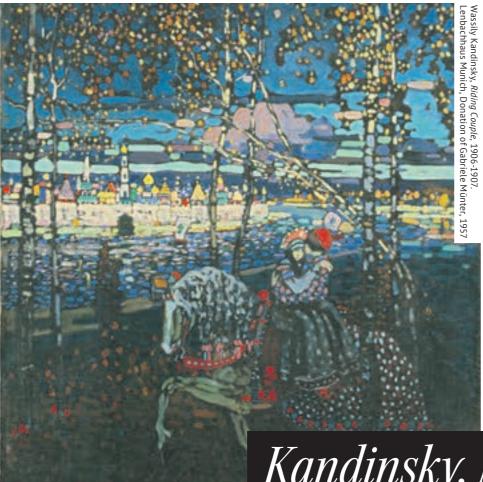
Instead, the show opens with another equestrian Kandinsky from a little later, Riding Couple, a more focused picture but with its narrative told in sharp, almost Pointillist colours. The subject figures are in the foreground in more subdued shades, while the architecture of the city across the water behind them glows brightly. It looks almost like an apprentice piece in its awkward references to classical shapes, like the high-stepping horse, in bold black lines, but marks another milestone in his journey to the more explosive drama of Expressionism, which was manifested a couple of years

later. Münter is introduced in the same room through photographs she took during her long holiday in America with her sister a couple of years before she met Kandinsky, in which she shows her first use of a creative medium before she took to paint.

As a painter we first meet Münter through the portrait of Kandinsky, a pared-down cross with a still life made with fierce colour and delineation (Man at the Table) to bring that signature dramatic effect, and the more gentle but no less striking portrait of the opera singer Olga von Hartmann.

Female Blue Riders had equal billing, and one of the most powerful images is by the Russian Marianne Werefkin – who had a long-term unconventional partnership with another Russian Blue Rider, Alexej Jawlensky. Her 1910 self-portrait, celebrating her 50th birthday, features a bold glare at the viewer through blazing orange eyes beneath a crimson hat, in strikingly bold strokes that smack of masculine assertion rather than feminine grace.

Rather than being influential wholly in their own right, the Blue Riders were a leading element in a wide movement that changed art forever, and is still influential now. It was a contemporary art that in the 1930s disgusted the Nazis so much they made their work the kernel of their 1938 exhibition of "degenerate art"; it has not only survived the Nazis, it is still freshly contemporary.



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Tate Modern, until 20th October.

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**Tate Modern, until 20th





Early Summer Cinema

BILLY CONNOLLY'S
BIG BANANA FEET
opens across the UK

Billy Connolly's Big Banana Feet opened theatrically on May 10th to tie-in with its release on BFI Blu-ray. This is truly hilarious documentary magic. A livener of Whiskey in the BFI bar set me up before the screening. Near me, two mature beard strokers were discussing an obscure Eastern European filmmaker, one Nobin Botgag. Possibly regarding an upcoming BFI season? Upon repetition, I realised that the pair were, in fact, talking about Billy Connolly's predilection for, er, "Knob and Bot, gags".

TV's Muriel Gray once surmised that Rik Mayall and Billy Connolly had both truly, "out-Willy waved and out-farted one another". Before the BBC TV series Bottom, there was certainly no contest. Billy had already won. Hands down. Leaning forward.

A key question, however, remained. How many old farts would be lingering downstairs in the BFI's screening room? Had some remained after The Wind In The Willows? As Big Banana Feet began, I lapsed back into my own 1970s alter ego, Airy Wiffin, surreptitiously blaming the creaking seat before wafting back into 1975.

Mid-1970s Glasgow, Dublin, and Belfast provided a window into another timezone. Glasgow's centre was filled with Municipal Victorian splendour and legendary Pubs; whereas Ulster's Belfast remained the epicentre of 'The Troubles' with British Troops situated on every street corner. It's against these grey Metropolitan backdrops that Big Banana Feet is set. The first significant documentary to be made about Billy Connolly. Directed by an Edinburgh-based independent, Murray Grigor, with his Scottish film crew following 'The Big Yin' throughout his first stand-up tour of Ireland.

Shot in the tradition of 'Direct Cinema' – a documentary technique utilised by the likes of Americans such as Albert Maysles and Fred Wiseman – this 'walk-and-talk' of observational filmmaking was sympathetically edited by Patrick Higson, a regular doppelgänger of the film's notable Scottish cameramen, Jan Pester and Mark Littlewood. They captured the essence of Billy at a career turning point, shortly after

his network TV debut on Parkinson.

The hairy bearded one, however, was not unique in his personal 'look' back then. In 1975, almost everyone had long hair and beards. "Even the women," added Billy, a decade later. During these shows, singersongwriter Billy was also filling his Big Banana Booted stand-up with his wryly written songs. Always neatly accompanied by his banjo playing. This aspect lingered on from his days touring as a 'Humblebum' with Gerry Rafferty, then noted for Stuck in the Middle with You and later Baker Street.

The daily rigmarole of walking up endless flights of stairs backstage is met, upon conclusion, by hordes of white-coated tea ladies, arriving with metal teapots that won't pour properly. Real-life Mrs. Doyles from TV's Father Ted. Grigor savours these moments as Billy milks 'teatime' for all it's worth. Truly hilarious documentary magic.

Throughout, Billy Connolly is seen on the streets chatting with the troops, lingering in pubs, and signing autographs. His warmth and affability shine through at every turn. Both onstage and off. Fully remastered and screening across the UK for the very first time, Big Banana Feet is showing at nearly 100 cinemas. Don't miss this hitherto 'lost' gem.

You'll laugh yourself silly.

DO NOT EXPECT TOO MUCH FROM THE END OF THE WORLD

A monochrome in-car side-on-shot sees a blonde twenty-something, Angela, continually driving through chaotic metropolitan traffic, while yelling swathes of abuse at road raging Bucharest drivers. They holler back in a tirade of verbal sexism. All risky real-life film making, serving to heighten the authentic narrative.

Black & White documentary naturalism is fused with ad-libbed witty Romanian dialogue. All here on a roller coaster journey. One which continually cuts back to true life tales of tragedy. Testimonials from disabled people, talking about their own compromised situations that are imparted to the documentary 'casting' intern Angela. This is all shot in scenes set against city traffic jams on routes to endless destinations.

Undertaken in Angela's capacity as the 'fixer' for a 'fictional' corporate documentary. Her tasked role is that of searching out 'appropriate' disabled people. Those who have suffered fateful accidents in the workplace. Poor people who'll consent to appearing in a corporate film for a 'take it or leave it' one-off small fee. Meanwhile, egomaniacal filmmakers plan and pre-produce their client's Health & Safety film set in 'former communist' Romania, while vibrant music punctuates adrenaline fuelled car journeys throughout.

Reviews

The movie is groundbreaking. Not least via a clever usage of Tik Tok technology, which initially threw me. Especially when a man called Bobita interrupts the monochrome film by suddenly appearing in Day-Glo colour via Angela's mobile. He is a sharp-tongued pornographer. One who bears an uncanny facial resemblance to Andrew Tate, who recently served time under Romanian house arrest. Bobita, however, is an anonymous AI generated fictional 'Phone App'. A misogynistic fictional alter ego that Angela has created to hide behind. All in order to help her make mischief, or to simply release her inner angst, while maintaining her anonymity.

These Tik Tok memes occur in outrageous fictional rants. Many are hilarious. Here, however, there is a fine dividing line between what is the actual storyline as the director intended, and what could be deemed to be a potentially flawed aspect of the movie. This see's the film's director, Radu Jude, treading a path that leaves you wondering, sometimes, what was meant? Not least via Angela's concluding Tik Tok rant on Putin. Irony? Or her truth? I'll go with her particular penchant for outrageous sarcasm, while letting off steam.

A telling line earlier in the film sees

someone asking Angela if she is still "making Porn" in her spare time? Angela replies, "Oh, it's just a bit of fun!" Clearly paying reference to her Bobita memes. Miss this crucial point and you'll be missing a key aspect of the film. Angela-as-Bobita appears to meme about whatever she wants. This is mainly at odds with her real life persona. One such scene shows a meme being made with Angela-as-Bobita, aided by a big-time filmmaker. Both tell the entire world to 'F***-off!'

Plot Spoiler. Look Away If Worried?

The final scene is a locked-off shot of some eighteen minutes. It reveals the betrayal of the documentary filmmakers towards their disabled cast. For anyone who has ever been involved in documentary filmmaking – or, for those who take an interest in the process – this is not only a revelation, but a glimpse into acts of compromised treachery. The documentary filmmakers betray all that is decent and 'honest' in spite of 'release form agreements'. This closer nails their final act of corporate treachery to a cross. Bang!

For some in the audience, however, the last scene might've required an extra leap of faith? A few left the Cinema shouting-out, "Taxi!" Nevertheless, Jean Luc Godard would've wholly approved. This closing scene is a pure homage to his style of film-making. It's exactly what it must've been like witnessing Godard's Le Mépris or Nic Roeg & Donald Cammell's Performance on the actual day that they were originally screened. Hearing the audience at The Prince Charles Cinema was a joy. They whooped and cheered-on Angela. Clearly loving this style of raw 'f*** you', filmmaking.

Without a shadow of a doubt, this is a benchmark in the history of modern Cinema. Catch the film online via Mubi, but only if you missed it at the cinema! A five star film from Director Radu Jude and his exemplary cast, who are namely, Ilinca Manolache, Nina Hoss, Uwe Boll, László Miske, and Dorina Lazar.





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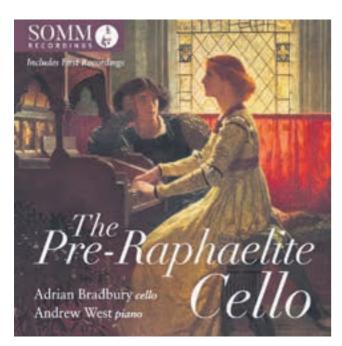


Classical Music by Simon Mundy

Recommended

Recordings

Simon Mundy (who has been reviewing recordings for nearly 50 years) will recommend a small selection of CDs released recently: no bad notices, just an interesting batch for the serious music lover.



The Pre-Raphaelite CelloWorks by Roger Quilter, Cyril Scott,
Percy Grainger and others

Adrian Bradbury (Cello) Andrew West (Piano)

SOMM Recordings SMOMMCD 0685

The title of this disc might seem baffling at first but the reasoning is solid. A pre-raphaelite revolution is what Percy Grainger, that ebullient Aussie and his group of English friends studying in Frankfurt before WW I, called the direction they wanted for music. So the CD also includes pieces by two of their tutors in Frankfurt, Iwan Knorr and Hugo Becker. There is another clever link too. Quilter, Grainger and Scott all wrote for the cellist Beatrice Harrison, famous for her recording with Elgar of his Violin Concerto. 2024 is also the centenary of her extraordinary BBC outside broadcast, playing solo as the nightingale sang in her garden. Several of the works here come from her archive (now a Trust which supported the recording) and appear on CD for the first time. For all those reasons, this is worth collecting. Beatrice's accomplished pianist sister Margaret, whom I knew, performed many of them with Beatrice. Adrian Bradbury and Andrew West are worthy champion successors. Bradbury has been guest principal cello with most of London's good orchestras and has a distinguished chamber music career. West leads the Kirckman Concert Society, which has given London recitals to generations of young musicians. Bradbury does not quite have the sweetness of tone for which Harrison was renowned but that does not detract from such a pioneering enterprise.

Richard Strauss

Don Juan, An Alpine Symphony, Also Sprach Zarathustra, Till Eulenspiegel

Philharmonia Orchestra Santtu-Matias Rouvali (Conductor)

Philharmonia Records SIGCD720 (2CDs)

The last complete concert Richard Strauss ever conducted was in the Royal Albert Hall on 19th October, 1947, with the Philharmonia Orchestra, then only two years old. It began with his tone poem on the story of Don Juan, making it fitting for this album to start with that piece, marking the orchestra's first recording with its new principal conductor. At 38, the Finn Santtu-Matias Rouvali is steadily making a name for himself



leading big forces and there are few bigger needs than for the four works here. The massive Alpine Symphony, at nearly an hour long in one vast panorama, requires a brass army of over 30 players. This and Also Sprach Zarathustra, with its famous beginning used by Kubrick in his film 2001: A Space Odyssey, are among the grandest purely orchestral works ever written and define the culmination of late Romanticism in music. Rouvali is at the perfect age to take them on - experienced enough to handle the task of giving the gentler moments breathing space, young enough to savour the adrenalin of the monumental. There is no point in listening to this with the volume turned down. If you don't want to bombard the neighbours, put on the headphones, listen alone and indulge in a bit of shadow conducting. Strauss and Sibelius were writing at much the same time and in the same sound world, so it is in Rouvali's blood and London's players love tackling these immense showcase works. Recorded in the Royal Festival Hall in 2021, the concert with the two biggest pieces enshrined here was also one of the first chances they had to get together properly after the COVID hiatus. The result is full of energy but also tenderness and it captures powerfully the sense of determination and conquest that Strauss was depicting.

Il n'y a pas d'amour heureux Works from 17th century Italy

La Palatine

Ambronay AMY316

At the other end of the soundscape is this compelling disc of pieces by Monteverdi, Luigi Rossi and their contemporaries from La Palatine, a quartet of young musicians playing viola da gamba, guitar, theorbo lute, harpsichord, chamber organ and percussion. The title of the disc, 'There is no happiness in love', is beautifully reflected in the plaintive selection of songs and instrumental movements. It actually comes from the one modern song included, by the French chanteur, Georges Brassens, his poignant message delivered with immaculate style by soprano Marie Théoleyre, who proves that the baroque courtly and 20th century smokey bar songs, fit the light soubrette voice equally well. Théoleyre's delivery of Rossi's lilting Begl'occhi che dite? (Beautiful eyes, what do you say?) is infectious, as are her partner Nicolas Wattinne's lute and guitar and Noémie Lenhof's gamba solos. None of the pieces are more than a few minutes long but they add up to a splendidly constructed recital and, over the last few weeks, I have found myself returning to this disc again and again when I want to be soothed and encouraged. There is a tragic postscript, however, for last December Wattine was killed in a skiing accident, making this superb recording a memorial as well as an introduction.



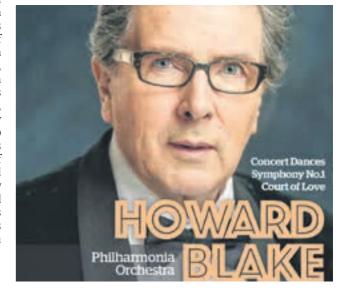
Howard Blake

First Symphony, Concert Dances for Piano and Orchestra, *The Court of Love, A Month in the Country*

Philharmonia Orchestra English Northern Philharmonia Howard Blake (Piano & Conductor) Paul Daniel (Conductor)

SOMM Recordings SOMMCD 0678

There was a time when Howard Blake was the nation's favourite composer, thanks to his music for Raymond Briggs's The Snowman," a cherished classic for every child watching Christmas TV. To mark Blake turning 80, SOMM has rereleased recordings of his music made between 1991 and '93, which show his purely orchestral mastery. So far he has written four symphonies, twelve concertos and three oratorios, as well as his familiar incidental work for film and TV. In that he falls into the same category as Richard Rodney Bennett and Christopher Gunning - composers who are famous for accompanying pictures but look to the concert hall too. His style, certainly in the short First Symphony - Impressions of a City, from 1967, derives much from Walton and Bernstein (no bad thing). In the Concert Dances from twenty-five years later he is closer to André Previn. Perhaps what has stopped Blake gaining widespread critical recognition is his relentless amiability. To make a literary analogy, he is the Alexander McCall Smith of music - the work beautifully crafted, always attractive but holding no terrors. There is a place for this distinctively kind music, though, aimed at easing rather than confronting the mind, and Blake is very good at it.



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Health & Wellbeing by Natalie Shanahan

The past decade has witnessed a remarkable surge in scientific advancements across various disciplines. The cost of human genome sequencing has plummeted from a staggering \$1 billion in 2003 to well under \$1,000 by 2022. This accessibility is evident in companies like 23andMe offering personalised DNA profiling for just a few hundred dollars. CRISPR, or clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeats, has emerged as a revolutionary tool for directly manipulating genes. It allows for precise editing, akin to modifying text, with the potential for inheritance if applied to egg and sperm cells. This groundbreaking technology has already yielded success stories in treating sickle cell disease and beta-thalassemia, and holds immense promise for tackling cystic fibrosis and cancer. Further fueling optimism, researchers at the University of Amsterdam recently achieved a significant milestone: eliminating HIV from infected cells in a lab setting using CRISPR, paving the way for a potential cure.

In addition to transforming agriculture, improving the environment and preventing disease, CRISPR also has the potential to rejuvenate cells. As we age compounds, such as proteins, can stick to DNA, turn genes on and off and modify their functions. These marks are known as the epigenome. Scientists are finding ways to remove these, restoring the DNA to its original state. Epigenetic marks are just one of the many biological mechanisms by which we age. The progressive loss of the body's ability to repair itself, leads to widespread cellular damage. Proteins and cellular detritus start to clog up organs and tissues. Chromosomes start to unravel and genetic mutations accumulate. Some cells become cancerous and immune defences weaken. Mitochondria, the powerhouses of our cells, fall into disrepair and the ends of our chromosomes, known as telomeres, start to wear down.

Another hallmark of ageing is cellular senescence. This is when cells have suffered some sort of irreversible damage and entered a state called senescence where they are beyond repair and stop dividing. They are the undead of cells, known as zombies. They pump out inflammatory chemicals that signal other cells to eat them up, removing them and their inflammation from the body. This process is called autophagy. As we age our bodies' abilities to clear away zombie cells decreases meaning they hang around creating chronic low-level inflammation, so analogous with ageing, scientists have named it "inflammaging". Senolytic compounds are chemicals that will remove these zombie cells, lowering inflammaging and therefore reducing chronic illnesses associated with old age, such as cancer, atherosclerosis, type 2 diabetes, osteoarthritis, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's and cataracts.

Many studies have shown that taking senescent cells from an old mouse and transplanting them into a young one, ages it prematurely and it acquires the diseases of old age. The opposite is also true. If you remove senescent cells from old mice, their condition improves!

Scientists are working on drugs that can clear out zombie cells. These senolytic drugs have already entered human trials! Dasatinib, a leukaemia treatment, and a plant pigment, quercetin, used in combination, have shown very promising results.

Another approach is senomodifiers,



which don't kill senescent cells, but encourage them to start dividing again. The most promising of these are based on resveratrol, a natural compound found in grape skin.

Metformin is an FDA-approved drug used successfully to treat diabetes for more than 60 years. Studies have already shown that metformin can delay ageing in animals. It may also influence fundamental ageing factors that underlie multiple age-related conditions in humans. The Targeting Aging with Metformin (TAME) Trial will test whether those taking metformin experience delayed development or progression of age-related chronic diseases—such as heart disease, cancer, and dementia.

Currently several supplements are available that purport to slow the ageing process. There are some promising results and a lot of potential, however it is early days and more human research is needed. There is always a risk when buying such supplements as they are not regulated and there is no way of knowing if you can get exactly what is advertised on the label.

In 2019, Google claimed a landmark achievement in computing: "quantum supremacy." Their machine, harnessing the bizarre laws of the quantum world, could solve calculations in seconds that would take traditional computers millennia. Since

then advances in computing, artificial intelligence (AI) have skyrocketed. In 2023, the University of Edinburgh developed an innovative method that employs artificial intelligence (AI) to identify senolytic drugs. By leveraging data from over 2,500 chemical structures extracted from past studies, the team successfully trained a machinelearning model to recognise the essential characteristics associated with chemicals possessing senolytic activity. Experiments conducted in human cells within the laboratory setting, unveiled the remarkable capability of three chemicals, namely ginkgetin, periplocin, and oleandrin, to eliminate senescent cells while preserving the integrity of healthy cells.

There are currently nine hallmarks of ageing, knowledge of which is advancing at a rapid pace. AI will no doubt speed this up further, meaning that various 'cures' to ageing could become a reality in the not too distant future. Unfortunately, this isn't likely to take the form of a single pill that will restore the youth and vigour of your 20s. It is more likely we'll see medications that work on specific aspects of ageing, reducing the risk of age-related diseases and offering several extra years of good health, with the added bonus of a longer lifespan. Life expectancy in the UK is going

up. Unfortunately, the number of years of good health is not increasing at the same rate. In the UK people are currently spending an average of 12 years in ill-health. This is 14% longer than 30 years ago.

This opens up many ethical and practical questions. Governments around the world are already consulting with scientists on what this means for society. Some might say an ageing population is a burden. However, on the flip side, more people actively contributing to the economy is a positive. Another common argument is that the population is already too large. Population models from the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation suggest a global peak around mid-century, followed by a decline to roughly current levels by 2100. Indeed, many serious demographers are worrying about underpopulation. The debates surrounding population ethics are numerous. Andrew Steel, author of Ageless: The New Science of Getting Older Without Getting Old, articulates this perfectly. On his website he offers a free chapter on the ethics of a world without ageing. We live in exciting times and science is advancing faster than ever. Let's hope it is used wisely and kindly for the benefit of all mankind.

ENVIRONMENT & SCIENCE by Natalie Shanahan

Preparing for Climate Change in London

Highway to Hell

London is underprepared for the frequency and severity of climate change currently experienced. We have known about the potentially devastating effects of climate change since the 1800s. In 1896, a seminal paper by Swedish scientist. Svante Arrhenius. first predicted that changes in atmospheric carbon dioxide levels could substantially alter the surface temperature through the greenhouse effect. Over subsequent decades more alarming evidence has come to light, warning us of the damage humanity is doing to the Earth. Since the 1940s, newspapers and scientific journals alike compare the threat of floods, fires, famine and pestilence with the four horsemen of the apocalypse. Some in jest and some in a desperate attempt to spur governments to act fast. A recent article in The Independent, titled "What to Wear in the Apocalypse" is a perfect example. This may seem dramatic. However, just a quick glance at recent headlines will confirm that climate change is upon us and we must act now to mitigate the effects and prepare our city for what is to come.

The London Climate Resilience Review (the Review) is an independent review, commissioned by the Mayor of London, to take stock of London's preparations for climate change and to make recommendations to advance London's climate resilience. The Mayor called for the Review following accelerating climate impacts in the UK and around the world. Currently London is underprepared for the impacts of climate change and so in his latest budget, the Mayor has proposed an additional £3M to accelerate climate adaptation work. This report states that London's main climate risks were rising sea levels, surface water flooding, heat, drought and wildfires.

Fire

In July 2022, the London Fire Brigade (LFB) was called to wildfires across the capital, as 40 C temperatures took hold. In one day, the brigade took 2,670 calls and responded to more than 1,000 fire incidents. According to the LFB, this was the busiest day since World War II. Many more wildfires were seen across London during the heatwave of 2022. Increasing the resources of the fire services will be essential. The availability of more high volume pumps, urban search and rescue and the ability to easily call upon the Fire and Rescue Services of neighbouring unaffected areas, will have to be optimised. However, seeking out vulnerable areas and putting preventive measures in place is a must. Vegetation can take years to recover and there will be a sustained impact on local wildlife. If there is peat in the burnt soil there would be even more carbon released from the burning, posing additional longer term implications.

Floods

Flooding has also become a regular event around the city. By 2080 sea levels could rise by approximately 80cm. The flash floods of 2021 turned roads into canals, stranded vehicles and closed tube stations.

It was predicted, in a 2008 report, that any time after 2030 the Thames barrier could be breached and London flooded. Regular work since then will have hopefully given us more time. The Thames Barrier is one of the largest movable flood barriers in the world. The Environment Agency runs and maintains the Thames Barrier as well as London's other flood defences. The Thames Estuary 2100 plan, sets out how flood risk will be managed in the Thames estuary, to the end of the century and beyond.

If London were to flood, there would be knock on effects on many other areas of critical infrastructure, transport networks, utilities and the environment. This kind of catastrophic disruption to the city would be enough to prompt a global recession.

According to the National Risks Register:

"Major recovery impacts and long-term economic, environmental, infrastructure and humanitarian implications would go beyond 2 years especially if significant repairs are required to infrastructure, homes and business. Mental and physical impacts on affected citizens will last for years. Businesses would experience significant impacts, and the long-term contamination of agricultural and other land would also be likely."

Although the government has established arrangements for minimising the risk from flooding including, the deployment of fixed and temporary defences, public warning and informing alert systems, and local and national response mechanisms, work still needs to be done to upgrade current flood defences and plan for where new ones need to be placed before 2050. Sustainable drainage systems and new sewage pipes need to be installed to handle future climate impacts.

New buildings with robust flood protection already incorporated will have to be a staple of the future.

Pestilence

With changes in temperature and humidity we will also see a change in the biodiversity of our wildlife. The warmer temperatures will attract tick and mosquito species not currently native to the UK, making it easier for them to survive, reproduce and establish a local population. This could lead to increased incidences of malaria and lyme disease. Health officials warn that by 2040 parts of the UK could be home to mosquitos capable of spreading dengue fever, chikungunya and zika virus. This is a worst case scenario but it highlights the fact that we need to act now and cut greenhouse gas emissions to avert some of the worst consequences. Aedes albopictus mosquitoes, a vector for dengue fever, were found at different sites in Kent (annually from 2016 to 2019) and London (2019) luckily, without establishment or transmission of exotic viruses. These are just a few examples of how non-native species can cause havoc. This highlights the need for accurate biodiversity surveillance measures. Luckily techniques have developed over recent years where the ambient environmental DNA found in air, water or soil, is sequenced and a species census is taken. Another new exciting method uses bioacoustics, which originated years ago in underwater studies, where sound reaches further than light. Paul Roe, from the Queensland University of Technology, runs a network of more than 300 permanent acoustic sensors distributed across the continent. These can be used to study entire ecosystems, from the effects of the invasive species and bush fires that are becoming more frequent with global warming, to tracking the behaviour of endangered species. Conservation organisations can even use it to listen for gunshots or chainsaws. Not all these reasons apply to London but this illustrates how we must invest in new technologies and education to ensure we have the best chance to survive what's to come.

Famine

As well as the many direct deleterious changes to the environment, these new weather patterns also pose several severe indirect threats. These are increased poverty, poor health and deterioration in mental wellbeing, especially amongst the most vulnerable in society. It is possible that there will be a reduced availability of affordable nutritious food and therefore an increased reliance on ultra processed foods, compounding these health effects. Already this year it is expected that the heavy rains will reduce the amount of produce from British and European farms. Life expectancy of lambs has decreased and some dairy cows have been unable to be turned out on to grass, meaning they will produce less milk. Droughts in Morocco are already affecting imports. Economists have warned this could cause food inflation to rise, meaning higher prices at supermarkets. Our dependence on food from highly climate-vulnerable countries is projected to increase, potentially impacting stable food supplies, particularly for fresh fruit and vegetables.

Other areas of the world more severely affected by extreme temperatures are more likely to experience civil unrest and war as their citizens struggle for liveable space and resources. There will be increased starvation, migration and death. The impact of these horrific events will be felt globally. Governments must take immediate action to alter this predicted future.





The best beaches



With the summer holiday season fast approaching, many EyeOnLondoners will be thinking of hopping on a plane to a European beach destination to soak up the sun.

This country is home to some of the most beautiful beaches in the world. From the golden sands of Bournemouth to the remote tranquillity of Sandwood Bay, the UK offers a variety of coastal getaways that cater to every type of beachgoer. Whether you're seeking a buzzing atmosphere, serene bays with crystal-clear waters, or rugged shores with breathtaking views, the UK's beaches provide a perfect escape for all.

Bournemouth Beach, Dorset

Bournemouth Beach has long been a destination for all ages, for many generations. Its sandy beaches and clear waters are some of the best in the country. But what really sets Bournemouth apart is the atmosphere. It's laid-back, with a California beach town kind of feel. At this Blue Flag beach you'll find people surfing, paddleboarding, or playing beach volleyball. The energy is just infectious. The promenade is lined with cafés, restaurants, and shops, making it a perfect spot for a family day out. Bournemouth's Victorian pier adds a touch of historic charm, while the nearby colourful gardens and parks are packed with people, walking, playing and picnicking. What's more, the bay enjoys its own 'microclimate' making it one of the warmest sports in the country.

Rhossili Bay, Swansea

Located on the Gower Peninsula in Wales, Rhossili Bay is often considered one of the most beautiful beaches in the UK. In fact, Rhossili Bay is the first beach to be awarded Britain's Best Beach by TripAdvisor's Travellers' Choice for the second year running, not to mention the 3rd best beach in Europe and 9th best in the world. The beach is popular for walking, surfing, and paragliding, and is home to a variety of wildlife, including seals and seabirds. The historic Worm's Head promontory is a must-see landmark at this National Trust site.

St Ives Bay, Cornwall

Kynance Cove, on the eastern side of Mount's Bay, Cornwall, is breathtaking. It's one of the best white sand beaches located on the Lizard Peninsula. Its turquoise

waters and unique white sand, surrounded



by towering cliffs and serpentine rock formations, create a truly stunning natural setting. Here you find the usual beach activities as it is popular for swimming, sunbathing, and exploring the nearby caves and rock pools. Be aware that during July, August and September the cove gets very busy and therefore there's limited parking.

Sandwood Bay, Sutherland Sandwood Bay in Scotland is one of the

most remote and unspoiled beaches in the UK. Accessible only by a four-mile walk, it offers a sense of isolation rarely found elsewhere. The beach features dramatic dunes, a freshwater loch, and striking sea stacks, with often wild and rugged conditions. This secluded spot is perfect for those seeking solitude and natural beauty, far from the hustle and bustle of modern life.

Blackpool Sands, Devon

Blackpool Sands is a beautiful shingle beach not far from Dartmouth. It's a crescent shaped beach surrounded by pines and evergreens and in an area of outstanding natural beauty (AONB). The clean, clear plenty happening throughout the year at the beach and castle including, dragon

hunts for the kids, spooky ghost tours after

waters make it ideal for swimming and

kayaking and the beach offers excellent

facilities including a café, shop, and water

sports equipment hire. It's a Blue Flag

beach known for its family-friendly atmos-

phere. Take your walking boots as the

nearby South West Coast Path provides lots

Bamburgh Beach, Northumberland Once the royal capital of ancient Northumberland, Bamburgh, is one of those places

that just oozes history and character.

Bamburgh Beach is famed for its dramatic

setting beneath the imposing Bamburgh

Castle. The wide, sandy beach offers stun-

ning views of the North Sea and the Farne Islands. It's a popular spot for walking,

surfing, and birdwatching. Take time to

wander around the ancient Castle walls and

towers, you can almost feel the weight of

the centuries pressing down on you. There's

of scenic hiking opportunities.

dark, even outdoor movie screenings on warm summer nights. The castle itself is a historic landmark, and the surrounding village of Bamburgh offers quaint pubs and charming shops, making it a perfect destination for history enthusiasts and beach lovers alike.

Brighton Beach, East Sussex

Brighton Beach is an energetic spot, known for its iconic pebble shore, Victorian pier and plenty of water sports. The beach is lined with bars, restaurants, and shops, creating a buzzing atmosphere year-round. Water sports such as kayaking and paddleboarding are popular here, as is beach volleyball and frisbee. Brighton Pier offers traditional seaside amusements, and the nearby Brighton Music Hall has an artist's quarter, for those seeking a more cultural

West Wittering Beach, West Sussex

West Wittering Beach is renowned for its natural beauty and excellent water quality. This Blue Flag beach features miles of golden sand backed by grassy dunes and offers stunning views of Chichester Harbour and the South Downs. It's a popular spot for windsurfing, kite surfing, and swimming. The extensive grassy areas are perfect for picnics, and the local wildlife adds to the beach's charm, making it a peaceful retreat from urban life.

Luskentyre Beach, Isle of Harris

Luskentyre Beach on the Isle of Harris is the jewel of the Outer Hebrides in Scotland. Here you can switch off - do nothing but take in one of the most beautiful beaches in the world. Its expansive white sands and crystal-clear turquoise waters are reminiscent of tropical shores. The beach is surrounded by mountains and offers a tranquil, almost otherworldly atmosphere. It's perfect for walking, photography, and simply soaking in the stunning natural

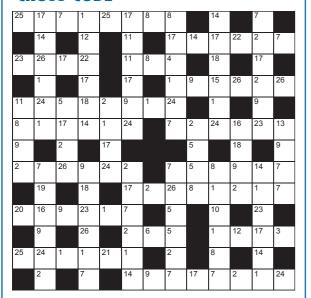
Barafundle Bay, Pembrokeshire Barafundle Bay in Wales could be mistaken

for a beach in the Caribbean, such is its beauty. This small, secluded bay features golden sand and clear blue waters, surrounded by dunes and pine trees. It's accessible only via a half-mile walk from the nearest car park, which adds to its untouched charm. The beach is ideal for swimming, picnicking, and enjoying a peaceful day away from the crowds, making it a favourite among those who discover it.





CROSS CODE



ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

ſ	¹ E	² T	3	4	5	6	7	⁸ L	9	10	11	12	13
Ī	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Each number in our Cross Code grid represents a different letter of the alphabet. You have three letters in the control grid to start you off. Enter them in the appropriate squares in the main grid, then use your knowledge of words to work out which letters should go in the missing squares.

As you get the letters, fill in other squares with the same number in the main grid and control grid. Check off the alphabetical list of letters as you identify them.

2

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9

6

1

7

9

5

8

4

8

6

MAGIC SQUARE

SUDOKU

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8 6 4

2

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4

8

2

1

6

Easy

WE'LL REVIVE WET CAR

Using all 16 letters of the phrase above, form four words each of four letters which will fit in the grid to form a magic square in which the words can be read both horizontally and vertically.



Each row and each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9, and so must each 3 x 3 box.

3

4

7

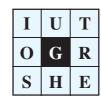
9

1

Quiz Challenge

- The 17th century pirate Edward Teach was better known by what name?
- In the Men in Black comedy sci-fi films, who starred opposite Will Smith?
- What H is a character in Italian commedia dell'arte and a type of small duck?
- In J.M. Barrie's novel Peter Pan, what is the name of the fairy?
- 'Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?' is the opening of a sonnet by which writer?
- champion Tyson Fury goes by
- At the 2021 Brit Awards, who won the British Female Solo Artist category?
- 8. Which alloy was named after the 18th century watchmaker who created it as a cheap substitute for gold?
- The TV detective Vera is played by which actress?
- 10. All members of the dragonfly family have how many wings?

WORD PYRAMID



NONAGRAM

How many words of four letters or more can you make from this Nonagram? Each word must use the central letter, and each letter may be used only once. At least one word using all nine letters can be found.

Guidelines: 36 Good; 43 Very Good; 50 Excellent.

Any word found in the Concise Oxford Dictionary (Tenth Edition) is eligible with the following exceptions: proper nouns; plural nouns, pronouns and possessives; hid person singular verbs; hyphenated words; contractic and abbreviations; vulgar slar words; variant spellings of the same word (where another va

1

4

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8

Spell out a 15-letter word or phrase by moving from one chamber to another within

the pyramid. You may only enter each of the chambers once and may only proceed through openinas in the walls. The first letter may appear in any chamber.

I $N \times E$ $\mathbf{Y} \times \mathbf{D} \times \mathbf{L}$ $\mathsf{T} \mathsf{X} \mathsf{E} \mathsf{X} \mathsf{D} \mathsf{X} \mathsf{B}$ $N^{\vee}M^{\vee}O$

FIVE ALIVE

GP	IR	OL	UO	PT
LI		NO		HE
AE	RY	SR	OI	EN
NA		RE		AI
TD	RO	ΥT	EA	LR

Hard

6

5

1

3

2

8

1

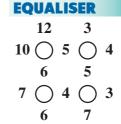
3

Clockwise nom top left – divide; multiply; subtract; add. Total: 8.

EQUALISER:

Here are two miniature fivesquare crosswords using the same grid – but the etters have been mixed up You have to letters belong to which

crossword.



Place the four signs (add subtract, multiply, divide) one in each circle so that the total of each across and down line is the same Perform the first calculation in each line first and ignore the mathematical law which says you should always perform division and multiplication before addition and subtraction.

This puzzle page is supplied by Sirius Media Services Ltd.

To try our new puzzle, Zygolex, go to

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SOLUTIONS

tig: trog: trogo: right; RIGHTEOUS; righto; rogue; roguish anest; anino; anise; anise; anapt; an dont; duot; dust; duf; diot; dionse; diont; girth; gist; gite; goes; goest; goett; goth; gore; goriest; gorse; gosh; goth; edoist; eidyt; eido; eidot; dyost; diro; dirt; :МАЯЭАИОИ

> Down – Giant; Onset; Penal.
>
> (2) Across – Pilot; Eyne; Dryer.
>
> Down – Plead; Lorry; Their. (1) Across – Group; Arson; Total. FIVE ALIVE:

Splice; 23 Vat; 25 Rwanda; 28 Islet; 29 Exile; 31 Hymn. Down – 1 Awry; 2 Cacti; 3 Reign; 4 Clever; 6 A la mode; 7 Yearning; 8 Plasma; 13 Now; 14 Idea; 16 Adhesive; 18 Utah; 20 Orchard; 21

Across – 1 Accuracy; 5 Hazy; 9 Recline; 10 Llama; 11 Via; 12 Winnie; 15 Spoon; 17 Drum; 19 Drowse; 22 Tavem; 24 Para; 26 Excel; 27 Whiten; 30 Ira; 32 Isaac; 33 Vullify; 34 Eddy; 35 опіск своггмовь:

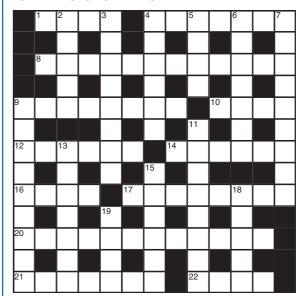
Abaft; 19 Free. Down - 2 Luton; 3 Minister; 4 Boiled; 5 Iago; 6 Twofold; 7 Limelight; 9 Common Iaw; 11 Narcosis; 13 Lighter; 15 Neared; 18 Abaff: 19 Free 12 Mallet; 14 Lapdog; 16 Orgy; 17 Merchant; 20 Literary star; 21 Warhead; 22 Site. Across - 1 Clam; 4 Bristol; 8 Standing-room; 9 Canister; 10 Fool;

:GIMARY9 GROW crew, rave, evii, MAGIC SOUARE: D 15 G 16 C K B R H L 02 D N 81 A $\begin{bmatrix} \mathbb{Z} & \mathbb{Z}$ 10 11 | X | 13 K

inchbeck; 9 Brenda Blethyn; 10 Four.

ONIX CHAFTERGE: 1 Bisckbesid; 2 Johnmy Lee Jones; 3 Harlednin; 4 Tinker Bell; 5 William Shakespesie; 6 Gypsy King; 7 Dua Lipa; 8

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD



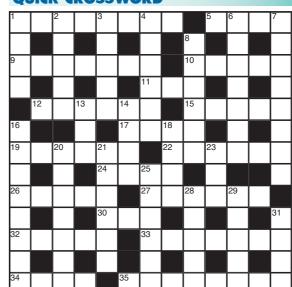
ACROSS

- 1. Grip most of the shellfish (4) 4. Fashionable port in good
- 8. Limited space for substitute
- at the altar! (8-4) 9. One's given the runaround
- in case (8)
- 10. Deceive the jester (4) 12. Crude metal left inside
- hammer (6) 14. Pet to drink first drop then
- 16. Gory mess of
- overindulgence (4) 17. Dealer from Venice? (8)
- 20. Asterisk by bookish celebrity (8,4)
- 21. Field marshal, perhaps. contains explosive material (7)
- 22. Place it in the Home

DOWN

- 2. Going from Honolulu to Naples using this airport? (5)
- 3. The first person in church is a clergyman (8)
- 4. Was angry when it bubbled up with heat (6)
- 5. Shakespearean was one in the past (4)
- 6. Heard to bend double (7)
- 7. People in this get plenty of publicity (9)
- 9. Do these regulations concern public land? (6,3)
- 11. Ross and I can be affected by drowsiness (8)
- 13. Not such a heavy boat (7)
- 15. Approached a revolutionary leader in distress (6)
- 18. Behind sailor at the stern of the vessel (5)
- 19. Release for nothing (4)

QUICK CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1. Correctness (8) 5. Misty (4)
- 9. Lean back (7)
- 10. Pack animal (5)
- 11. By way of (3)
- 12. ---- the Pooh (6)
- 15. Item of cutlery (5) 17. Percussion
- instrument (4)
- 19. Sleep lightly (6)
- 22. Inn (6) 24. Airborne soldier (inf.) (4)
- 26. Distinguish
- 27. Bleach (6)
- 30. lyricist (3)
- 32. Abraham's son (5) 33. Invalidate (7) 34. Whirlpool (4)

35. Temple to all gods (8) DOWN

- 1. Askew (4)
- 2. Desert plants (5) 3. Rule (5)
- 4. Intelligent (6) 6. In vogue (1,2,4)
- 7. Longing (8) 8. Bodily fluid (6)
- 13. At present (3) 14. Notion (4)
- 16. Glue (8) 18. US state (4) 20. Garden of fruit
- trees (7) 21. Join (6)
- 23. Large vessel (3) 25. African country (6)
- 28. Stile (anag.) (5) 29. Banishment (5)
- 31. Song of praise (4)



Gukesh Dommaraju succeeded in winning the recent FIDE Candidates Tournament and played history into the top pocket of his winner's jacket for the whole world to see for eternity! The Indian resolve following Anand's achievement in securing the World Chess title away from the Russians, and to build a national team strong enough to compete at the topmost echelons of world chess, has come home to roost, probably earlier than expected. The 17-year-old, as one of the triumvirate Indian representatives in this recent clash, has had a meteoric rise in the game and it is only right to look at some of his successes since it is no fluke that he came out on top in Toronto. Indeed, notable older players who had won through to this contest, such as Fabiano Caruana (USA) and Ian Nepomniachtchi (Russia), were in contention right up to the wire and had been two of the top favourites of the older generation to win the competition. As it happened, either of them could have forced a tie-break if they had won their last game, which coincidentally was against each other! Their game ended in a marathon-long draw where neither could get the better of the other, and this gave the youngster a winning result for the tournament, a half-point lead. The young prodigy broke Kasparov's record of 1984 when he was 20, and his only loss in Toronto was to Alireza Firouzja in round 6. The latter was, however, later in the Masters World Cup Tour compensated with a victory as the overall winner, beating Carlsen in the grand final even though having lost in the Division 1 section to the very same Carlsen.

The lead-up to Gukesh's dramatic and historic win at the recent Candidates tournament was signposted over the interim years, from his formative years starting in 2013 (b.2006), playing one hour, three days per week, morphing into playing tournaments at weekends after his chess tutor acknowledged his 'good performance'. He showed exemplary prowess, winning many top-flight tournaments. I give some of these successes, such as winning the under-9 years of age section of the Asian Schools Championship, 2015; the World Youth Chess Championships, under-12 category, 2018; won five gold medals at the 2018 Asian Youth Chess Championships in various categories; completed requirements

The Challenge

Whilst the world chess fraternity has had its eyes and minds set firmly on the new escapades ventured into by the youth of India, and primarily the Gukesh phenomena, pretender to the crown, the ex world champion Carlsen has been busy too, slaying the world's best chess players.

The 16th Champions Chess Tour Classic is currently under way and Carlsen has won the top division spot, although his tussle in the final games against Vincent Keymer proved dramatic, with the last game of 4 with 3 draws being decisive in Carlsen's favour.

The puzzle is taken from the final game where Carlsen as Black has played his king 45...Kc4. What was White's response?

The solution is opposite

Success for Gukesh

and was awarded the title of International Master, March 2017 at the Cappelle-la-Grande Open; on 15th January 2019, aged 12 years 7 months 17 days, became the 2nd youngest GM in history, to Sergey Karjakin's 17 days betterment!; 2022, August, 44th Chess Olympiad, realised a perfect opening score of 8/8 wins, defeating the USA's No.1 Fabiano Caruana in the process. He won the gold medal for top board for his team India-2.; August 2023, youngest player ever to reach an ELO rating of 2750; September 2023, officially passed Anand as the top-rated Indian player, the first time in 37 years that Anand was not in the top spot! The rest is worldbreaking news as we now know it, and come 20th November to 15th December this year when Gukesh will face Ding Liren, the current World Champion, the history of chess as we now know it may be shattered yet again with the youngest player ever wearing the world crown! Go Gukesh!

Kasparov hailed Gukesh's achievement by stating, '...an Indian

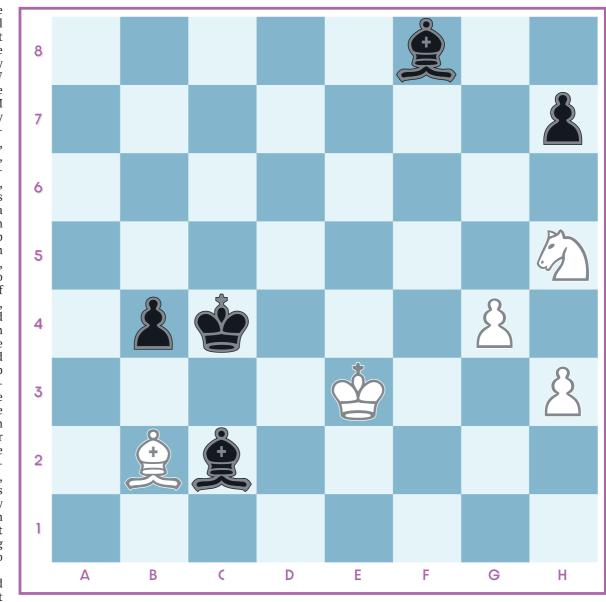
of Vishy Anand are on the loose!' Vishy has mentored numbers of the youthful Indian players and is regarded by them as a great hero! Gukesh now has the greatest chance of beating Kasparov's record set in 1985 by becoming the youngest World Champion when he won against Karpov. Whilst the underdog, Gukesh collected reams of highly delighted fans as he battled it out with rivals nearly double his age, closer to home and in the London League all the teams bar one, have been the underdogs for 22 years! Why this situation has been thus is entirely down to the strength of the Wood Green team who have been the annual winners since 2002! They have annually fielded a very strong professional team including seven GMs! Like Gukesh, as the young underdog, Hammersmith came up against them for their 'annual mauling' with only two IMs included and a young coterie and assortment of less experienced players, as mentioned in my last chess column. And, like Gukesh, Hammersmith prevailed, and Wood Green had the ignominy of losing their 'first game in 22 years!' James Moreby and Marco Gallana locked horns with GMs Johnathan Rowson and Neil McDonald!

earthquake in Toronto', and, '...the children

Gallana's game in particular tempted McDonald into pawn grabbing 'on the Queenside' after which the former's aggressive attack broke through the GM's defences for a brilliant win! Despite the sensational win, Hammersmith will have to maintain their winning streak in order to wrestle the crown away from Wood Green who have already said they are going to up the ante with 'full force players and no weaknesses or ground given for the future.

In Hindi speaking nations, Gukesh means virtue and is a Hindu boy's name, with the lucky number 8 in Indian numerology signifying new beginnings and opportunities! Alongside Gukesh's most recent and most important success in the Candidates tournament, he has a string of awards and accolades over his relatively short career that are really impressive. Chess has accelerated its profile globally in our new electronic age partly because it lends itself to geometric and mathematical analysis, which can be constructed and deconstructed in time and space, and its association with cerebral and glamorous amalgams (see The Queen's Gambit). The global interest and business investments have further induced expansions for avenues of chess and one such

entertaining prospect for us in this country is the resurrection of a version of the BBC television programme broadcast between 1976-1983 entitled, 'The Master Game'. A new 8-part chess programme with the title, 'Chess Masters' has applicants come contenders playing each other in order to attain the winning crown! Although the production company Curve Media hasn't released details for the format of the show, it seems that the World Chess Championship set for December this year may be a decisive and good time to release such a show?



The Solution

46. Bg7....? This proved to be a further mistake by White.
The game could have been kept alive with 46. M&P, Kc3. 47. Mf6...!
The game continued, 46.... Bxg7. 47. Nxg7, Kc3. (the pawn will promote).
48. Ne6, b3. 49. Nc7, b2.

